AGENDA
HIGHWAY 93 SOUTH CORRIDOR PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE
August 17, 2020

A Highway 93 South Corridor Plan Steering Committee meeting will be held Monday, August 17, beginning at 2:30 p.m. at the Whitefish City Hall City Council Chambers Conference Room at 418 East Second Street, Second Floor.

The agenda for the meeting will be:

A. Call to Order

B. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2020 Meeting

C. Appointment of New Committee Chair and Vice Chair

D. Review Draft Plan Chapters 1-3

E. Timeline and Next Steps

F. Next Meeting

G. Public Comment

H. Adjournment

Highway 93S Corridor Steering Committee

DRAFT Meeting #18 Minutes

January 21, 2020
2:30 pm, 2nd Floor City Hall, Council Chambers Conference room

In Attendance:
Committee Members: Mark Pascoli, John Muhlfeld, John Middleton, Roger Sherman, June Hanson, Marilyn Nelson, Steve Kane (Justin Lawrence and Ryan Hennen absent)

Staff: Dave Taylor, Hilary Lindh, Angie Jacobs

Public: Rhonda Fitzgerald, Amy Erickson, Randy Cogdill

A. Meeting called to order at 2:32 pm
B. Approval of December 16, 2019 meeting minutes
C. Review Revised Segment A Goals and Objectives and Draft Future Land Use Map
H. Lindh summarized the types of revisions made to the goals and objectives for segments A and B since the committee last saw them April – July. She then went through the goals and objectives for Segment A and a draft future land use map.

Public Comment and Committee Discussion on Segment A
R. Fitzgerald commented that she thought the language used in Transportation Goal 2 in Segment B (regarding value of bike and pedestrian facilities as valid transportation modes) was more robust and better than what was used in Segment A and suggested using that same language. Mayor Muhlfeld agreed.

She also asked that an example or definition of drought resistant species be included in the pertinent Environment and Open Space goal.

Regarding the draft future land use map that would change the land use where the Whitefish Motel is located on Kalispell Avenue from urban to general commercial to make zoning and future land use consistent, R. Fitzgerald would not formalize the exception of the motel with WB-2 SC (special conditions) zoning. M. Nelson agreed and believed it could open the door for more properties along Kalispell Avenue to transition to commercial. Mayor Muhlfeld also agreed the land use designation for the motel property should not be changed.

M. Nelson stated that she likes the concept of the bridges as gateways to downtown Whitefish and the emphasis on trail connectivity, trees, etc.

D. Review Revised Segment B Goals and Objectives and Draft Future Land Use Map
The committee reviewed the revised Segment B goals and objectives and draft future land use map. There was a discussion of retail in downtown versus what's allowed in the WB-2. Preserving the vitality of downtown may be a worthwhile narrative to include in the plan. M. Pascoli agreed that the downtown should remain the primary commercial center of Whitefish, but had concerns about outright rejecting the idea of expanding retail uses outside of downtown. He believed more mixed-use

development in the corridor, including some retail, would be a good direction to go. He noted downtown spaces are increasingly catering to visitors and if we hope to see Whitefish develop into a thriving year-round community serving both locals and tourists, we shouldn't limit our opportunities.

The committee also discussed the economic development goals including whether the WB-2 zoning district could be marketed to tech businesses as an attractive location. One of the economic development goals includes an objective to permit light manufacturing and assembly in the WB-2, where it is currently a conditional use. S. Kane noted if that change were made it would be important to develop appropriate development standards to ensure no impacts to adjacent uses. Mayor Muhlfeld is comfortable with the change if the committee could review those development standards as part of its work. M. Nelson doesn't see how the available large lots in the corridor could be economical for smaller businesses given the costs of the property. J. Middleton responded that if it isn't economical that's fine the market would dictate it but having the option would be good. A discussion of the conditional use permit (CUP) process followed, including the benefits to businesses if they don't need one. These include avoiding the time and fees associated with the CUP process, as well as the uncertainty of approval. M. Nelson noted that since we can't anticipate every possible proposed light manufacturing or assembly use, it would be safer to maintain the requirement for a CUP.

The Transportation goal regarding assessing the feasibility of a roundabout at the Highway 40 intersection was discussed. Traffic simulations run as part of the corridor plan demonstrated a roundabout could be very effective at the intersection. While many in the community have expressed dislike of this type of intersection in the survey, having a goal to consider the feasibility at some point in the future would keep more options open.

Regarding whether drought resistant species be required or recommended, M. Nelson believes there are other considerations in selecting species such as colors and timing of blooms, variety in size and shape, etc. An owner should have some flexibility in meeting landscaping requirements, and she suggested that either drought resistant species be recommended rather than required, or they be required for some percentage of, but not all, landscaping. She acknowledged that increasing irrigation water fees will also encourage use of drought resistant species.

The draft future land use map for Segment B was presented. R. Sherman noted that the residents of Great Northern Heights are very uneasy with the concept of extending Baker Avenue south to JP Road. They are concerned that southbound drivers would choose to drive through the neighborhood rather than enter the highway using the signal at JP Road. He suggested that if the conceptual road alignment could be shown curving further east as it approaches JP Road it might help to ensure southbound drivers turn left to the highway.

Public Comment on Segment B

R. Fitzgerald had several comments including the following:

- Revise Land Use Goal 1 second bullet to clarify
- The Downtown Master Plan calls for the architectural standards to be updated so she was pleased to hear that is happening
- Land Use Goal 4 Objective 1 – She did not agree that the CUP process is onerous or a deterrent. The process helps an applicant understand the development standards and produce better

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2020 WHITEFISH

Highway 93 South Corridor Plan

City of Whitefish

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

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1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Plan

As one approaches the City of Whitefish from the south by vehicle on Highway 93 and begins to descend from Happy Valley, a panorama of Big Mountain and the Whitefish Mountain Resort Ski Area unfolds and dominates the view. Before entering the City limits, the highway frontage on either side was recently zoned commercial by Flathead County and new businesses such as mini-storage facilities and boat dealerships have sprung up, mixed among nurseries and professional offices. Traffic runs at highway speeds and access to commercial properties is challenging. Approaching the major intersection with Highway 40, the backdrop on the horizon is dramatic, with the Whitefish Range, the Columbia Range, and spires from Glacier National Park vying for your attention. This is the gateway to Whitefish, and the first impression of many visitors. The speed drops to 45 mph and the corridor aesthetic begins to change into a somewhat typical commercial strip type of development. The highway is five lanes of often heavy traffic, with no medians to soften the sea of asphalt. Grass boulevards with smatterings of landscaping line the sides of the highway, with narrow sidewalks providing pedestrian access. Powerlines and cobra-style lights tangle the view overhead. Businesses such as grocery stores and chain stores are separated from the highway by large parking lots, often with minimal landscaping. Hotels sprout up on either side like foothills. Several vacant buildings and overgrown empty lots sour the impression but speak of future redevelopment opportunity. Highway 93 then further slows to 35 mph and crosses the Whitefish River, which is hidden in culverts and difficult to see. There the highway narrows into two-lane Spokane Avenue, traffic speed slows yet again, down to 25 mph, and the scale of buildings fronting the road diminishes into smaller businesses and then into historic homes, many retrofitted into commercial offices.

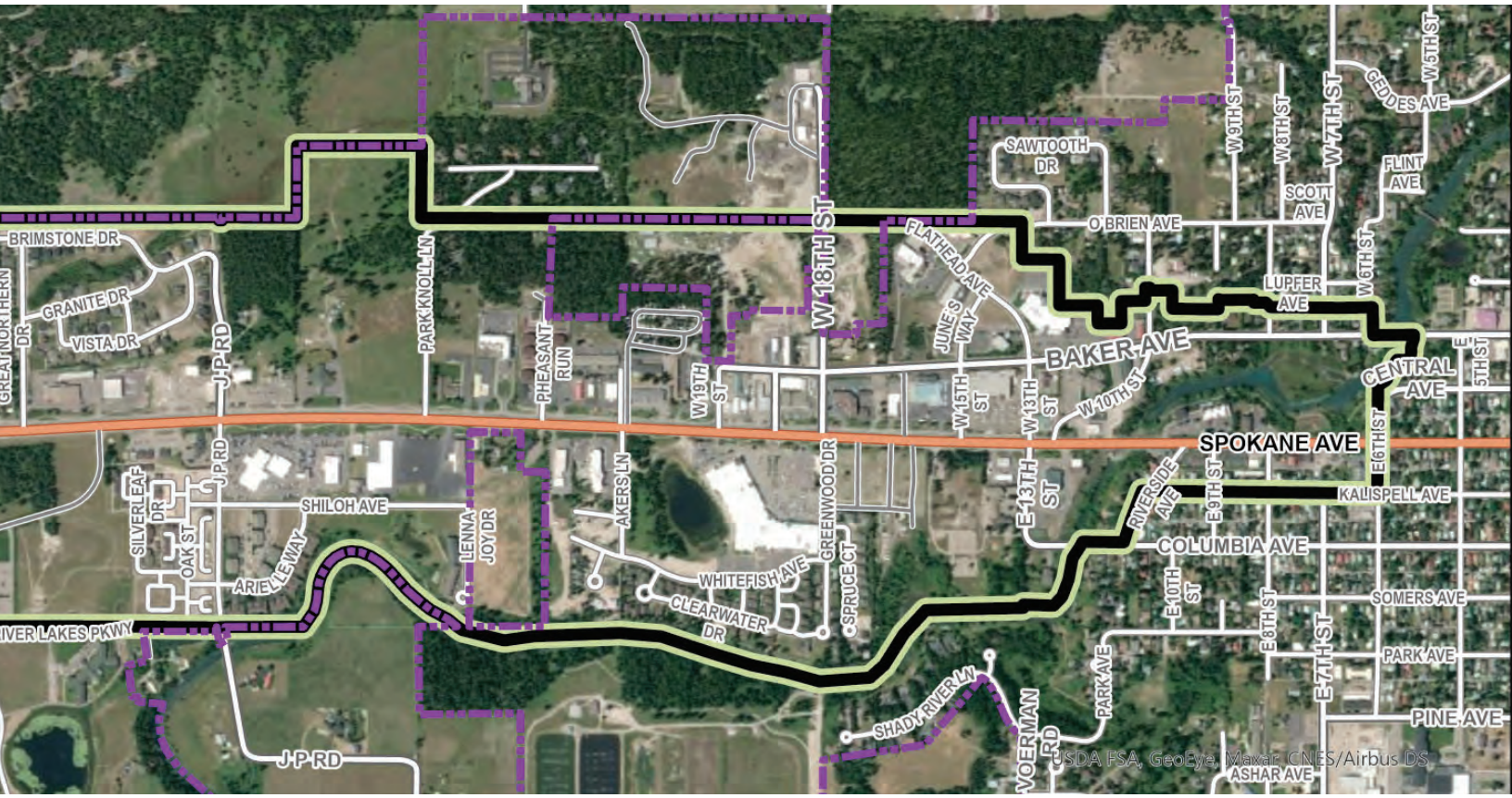
That is the Highway 93 South Corridor, and this plan will outline how it should grow and redevelop over the next twenty years.

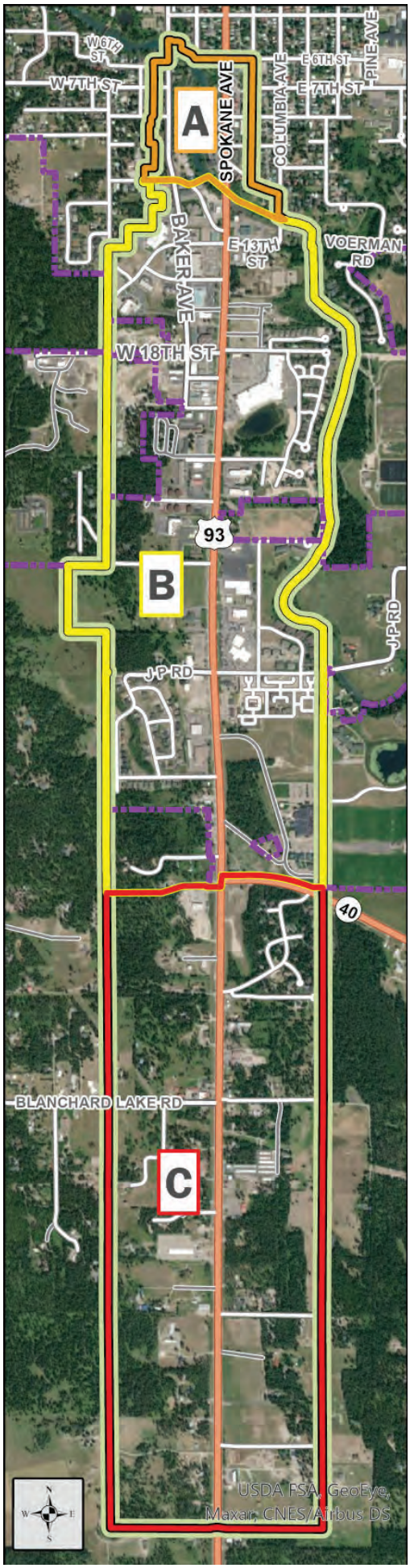
A corridor plan for Highway 93 South has long been a priority for the City of Whitefish. In 2007, the Whitefish City Council adopted the Whitefish City-County Growth Policy, a blueprint for how the City and surrounding areas should grow and develop. The plan established community goals, policies, and recommended actions for achieving those goals. Future Land Use Policy 10 called for the City to facilitate corridor plans for all major transportation corridors. Future Land Use Recommended Action 9 stated, "*The City shall formulate, or shall facilitate the development of, corridor plans for all major transportation corridors to address land use, transportation function and modes, noise, screening, landscaping, and all aspects of urban design*." City planning staff worked with consultants to create the Highway 93 West Corridor Plan, adopted in 2015, as well as the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor Plan, which was adopted in 2018. Work on the Highway 93 South Corridor Plan began in-house in 2018.

The Growth Policy recognized the complex nature of the issues plaguing the Highway 93 South corridor and specifically called for the creation of a corridor plan that would successfully address commercial growth; scale; architectural standards; landscaping/screening; utilities; trip generation; traffic safety, circulation, access; and bike/pedestrian facilities.

This plan evaluates the Highway 93 South corridor from East 6th Street south to about 1.5 miles south of City limits, with a focus on land use, transportation, the environment and open spaces.

Opportunities to improve economic diversity in Whitefish are also considered in the corridor. As early as 2002, a report prepared by the Jobs for Whitefish Taskforce and the Tom Hudson Company described the lack of economic diversity in Whitefish that followed decline in the timber harvesting and railroad activities of the town's early days. According to this report, the economy is now dominated by the tourism/visitor sector and should be diversified to improve resiliency to regional and national changes. Five years later, the Growth Policy also included a goal to seek ways to diversify the local base economy with compatible business and industries that protect the character and qualities of Whitefish. The Tourism/Visitor sector dominance of the economy contributes to the current scenario in which many service





workers and even professionals in public service do not earn wages and salaries that keep pace with the cost of living in Whitefish. As a result, many employees in Whitefish must live in other communities and commute for work. The Highway 93 South corridor, due to its zoning and ample land area, provides many opportunities for economic growth and diversity, as well as affordable housing.

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1.1 Planning Area and Segments

The planning area for the Highway 93 South Corridor Plan is linear and follows Highway 93 between 6th Street in Whitefish and the Growth Policy southern planning boundary, approximately 1.5 miles south of the City. The boundary generally includes property, commercial development, or neighborhoods that front on, or are directly affected by Highway 93 and Baker Avenue. It is primarily comprised of the WB-2 Secondary Business District, although the south end of the corridor includes county B-4 (equivalent of WB-2) and BS (Business Service). The east side of the corridor is generally bounded by the Whitefish River between the highway river crossing and JP Road. The west side is defined by the City/County boundary between 13th Street and just south of Great Northern Drive. South of JP Road and Great Northern Drive, the east and west boundary generally is defined by the section line. On the north end of the corridor, the study area includes one and a half blocks east of the highway. The western boundary encompasses Baker Avenue and the parcels within a half block fronting Baker Avenue.

Parcel size and land use vary along the corridor, resulting in a distinct character within three different segments:

- **Segment A** at the north end of the corridor between 6th Street and the Whitefish River has smaller lot sizes with commercial uses in relatively small buildings, some of which are converted single-family residences. Some residential uses remain.

- **Segment B** extends south from the Whitefish River to City limits near the Highway 40 intersection. The parcels are relatively large, with large commercial buildings, large parking lots, and large display areas.

- **Segment C** initially extended south from City limits to Blanchard Lake Road, approximately 0.5 miles from the Highway 40 intersection.

This draft southern boundary was loosely based on the extent to which city services feasibly could be extended. However, the draft boundary did not encompass all the County-zoned business service district or the area to which the 2007 Growth Policy designated Future Land Uses. In November 2019 the southern boundary of Segment C and the planning corridor area was extended south to the edge of Whitefish's former planning jurisdiction for the following reasons:

- Extending the boundary matches the extent of the City's 2007 Growth Policy planning area, Future Land Use mapping, and intended area to which the corridor planning effort was to be directed, and it maintains a city stake or interest in the future development of these areas outside city limits;
- It encompasses all properties recently rezoned by the County as secondary business (B-4) and business service (BS) district (from suburban agriculture, SAG-5) or as SAG-5 (from agricultural, WA-10 or WA-20);
- It provides an opportunity to reaffirm through a new planning document the City's desire to limit the extent of commercial development along the highway corridor by keeping the land use designation rural or rural residential where the County has not yet zoned it commercial; and
- It provides an opportunity to set goals and objectives that reflect the community's vision for the southern entrance to Whitefish.

Segment C is a combination of rural residential transitioning to commercial uses along the highway as it approaches the Highway 40 intersection, and residential and agricultural uses further from the highway. The southern half of the segment is primarily residential and agricultural.

1.2 Planning Process

Steering Committee

On February 20, 2018, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 18-09, creating the Highway 93 South Steering Committee. The duration of the Committee was extended twice by resolution for a total of approximately 2.5 years. The Committee was made up of corridor business owners, residents, and appointed and elected officials. It generally met monthly to work with Planning staff to oversee development of the corridor plan and establish policy for the corridor planning area. Committee members also assisted with the public outreach and visioning sessions.

Plan Process

The plan followed the processes shown in the graphic on the next page as it developed:

Task 1 – Inventory of Existing Conditions
Growth policies, land use and transportation plans were reviewed for relevance to this plan. The following existing conditions were also inventoried:

- Population
- Socio-economic characteristics
- Highway and street circulation and facilities
- Non-motorized circulation and facilities
- Existing land uses, future land use designations and zoning
- Land ownership, including public lands
- Parks and cultural resources.

Chapter 2 of the plan provides the context of the corridor and describes existing conditions.

Task 2 – Develop Public Involvement Process
The public involvement process included facilitating a Steering Committee, holding Steering Committee Meetings, public meetings, and deploying an online survey. Public involvement is described in more detail in Chapter 2 of this plan.

The Planning staff and Steering Committee held committee meetings between May 2018 and xxxx 2020 where public input and participation was invited and noted. A public open house was held September 5, 2018, to provide an opportunity to learn about the project and provide feedback. A second public meeting was held January 8, 2019, and was a workshop style meeting where public feedback helped craft the vision for the corridor. An online survey was also developed to solicit public feedback on the corridor plan and was available for the public to take from January 1-February 14, 2019. A third public meeting was held in xxxx 2020 for review and comment on the draft plan.

Invitations to the public meetingswere advertised in the Whitefish Pilot and press releases to the Pilot, the Daily Inter Lake, and the Flathead Beacon and resulted in articles being published about the public meetings in those papers. Notifications of the public meetings and invitations to attend were also mailed to commercial property owners in the corridor. Email notices and invites to the

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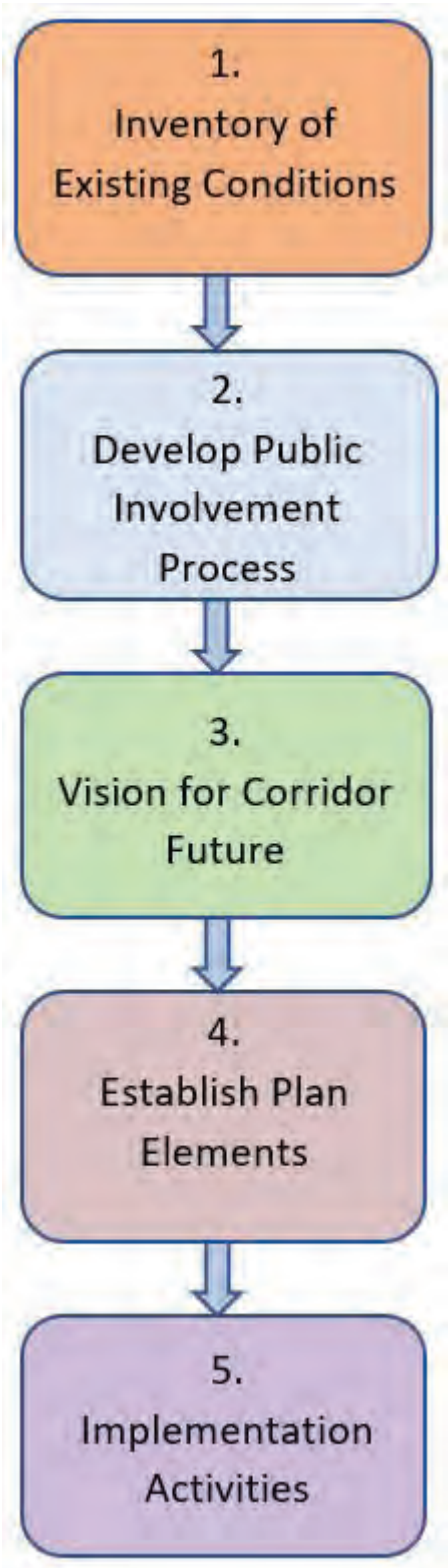


meetings and survey were also sent out to the Chamber of Commerce mailing list, the Explore Whitefish (Whitefish Convention and Visitor's Bureau) mailing list, and a list of parties interested in the corridor plan. Notification of the meetings and online survey was also included on the City's webpage for the plan and in the City's quarterly newsletter, and flyers advertising the meetings were posted in places of business and public locations.

Task 3 – Vision for Corridor Future
As part of the visioning task, Steering Committee meetings, input from the public visioning workshop, and the online survey were used to determine appropriate future land uses, transportation improvements, and goals for the environment and open space in the corridor. At the visioning workshop, groups of participants were asked to describe their best version of the corridor in the future. The 21-question online survey provided comprehensive feedback on community preferences for land use, the function of the transportation facilities, the environment and open spaces by segment. The input was used to craft a statement about the desired future condition of the corridor and its segments. Additional information describing the visioning process is included in Chapter 3.

Task 4 -Establish Plan Elements
Based on the vision for the corridor, goals and objectives were set for each of the three corridor segments (Chapter x). Guidelines were developed to address land use, scale, architecture, building and parking orientation, landscaping, urban design, transportation function and modes. The following elements are addressed by segment:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Environment and Open Space

Task 5 – Implementation Activities
The final task recommends a strategy for achieving the goals and objectives of the plan and realizing the vision of the corridor. Implementation activities include revisions to corridor zoning districts, establishment or revision of development standards for future private development in the corridor, and direction on the public transportation facility and right-of-way. A comprehensive list of implemention activities is found in Chapter 7 of this plan.

"Parking and safe foot travel are issues for this segment (A)" - anonymous online survey response

You're Invited!

Public Open House and
Plan Kick-Off Meeting

Wednesday, **September 5**, Anytime **5** pm – **7** pm
National Parks Realty, 601 Spokane Avenue

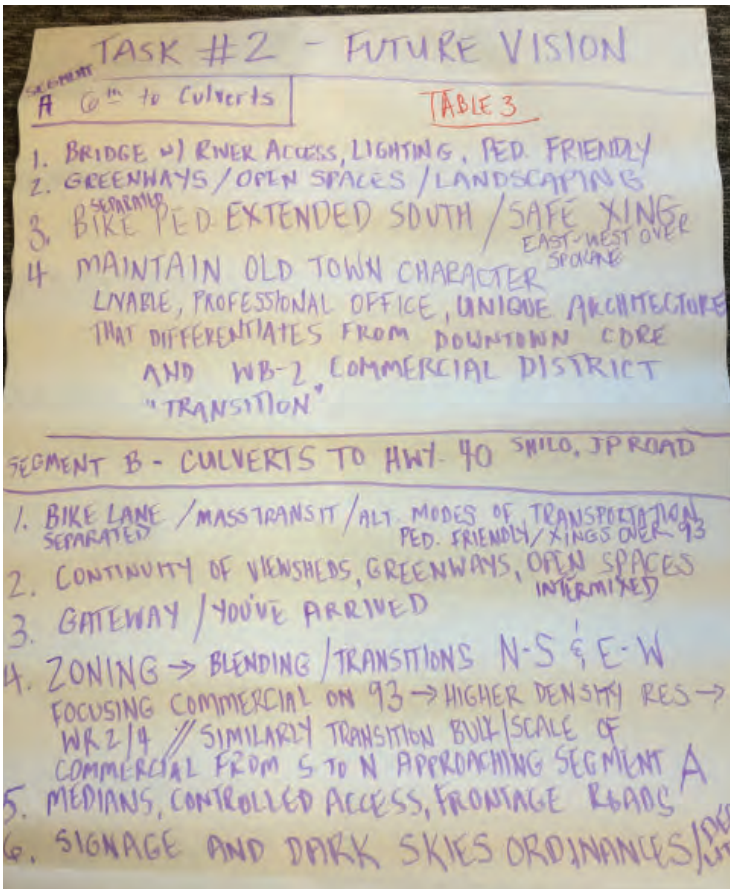
HIGHWAY 93 SOUTH CORRIDOR PLAN

City of Whitefish

Join City staff and Steering Committee members to learn about the:

- Planning Process
- Highway Corridor
- Future Opportunities for Involvement

Come help identify issues and opportunities for land use and transportation in the corridor!



2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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2.0 Public Involvement Process

The public involvement process included a series of meetings with the City Council appointed Steering Committee, three public input meetings, and an online survey. During the process there were several themes that emerged repeatedly. Concerns primarily related to traffic and congestion, accommodation of alternative modes of transportation, types of land uses allowed, and the aesthetics of both the public highway right-of-way and private developments along the highway corridor.

2.1 Steering Committee

The Highway 93 South Corridor Plan Steering Committee was appointed by the City Council to be a sounding board for feedback and direction as City Planning staff developed the corridor plan. Each of the XX Steering Committee meetings were open to the public and provided an opportunity for public comment.

The positions and committee members included the following:

City Council
- Mayor John Muhlfeld
- Ryan Hennen

Planning Board
- John Middleton, Chair (resigned July 2020)

Business Owners in or Adjacent to the Corridor
- Justin Lawrence
- Marilyn Nelson

Residential Owner-Occupied Property Owners in or Adjacent to the Corridor
- Roger Sherman
- Lisa Post (resigned March 2019)
- Steve Kane (appointed May 2019)

"At Large" City of Whitefish Residents
- Mark Pascoli
- June Hanson, Vice Chair

ADD PHOTOS OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS HERE

2.2 Public Meetings and Survey

Public Kick-off Open House

The first public meeting was held at the National Parks Realty building on September 5, 2018, and was structured as a public kick-off and open house. Roughly 25 people joined City staff and Steering Committee members to learn about the project and provide feedback. A draft corridor plan boundary was provided, as well as information on existing conditions. The public helped identify issues and opportunities in the corridor. A complete summary of the comments and concerns collected is provided in a table in Appendix X.

Issues identified during the meeting were related to the following:

- Land use: density of development, value of open spaces, commercial and residential uses).
- Transportation: traffic safety in the corridor (speed, congestion, center left-turn lane, left turns onto the highway from Blanchard Lake Road).
- Environmental and Open Space: water quality in Whitefish River

Opportunities identified included:

- Transportation: improve flow and safety of traffic (speed reduction, raised medians, roundabouts, intersection improvements, more road connections, reduce highway access, add frontage/backage roads, protected bikeways).
- Land Use: break up strip development with residential uses and areas of more concentrated commercial uses; aesthetics of the corridor (landscaping and entrance enhancements).
- Environmental and Open Space: preserve open spaces/green space.

Public Visioning Meeting

A visioning meeting was held at the Hampton Inn & Suites on January 8, 2019. Approximately 65 members of the public participated in the meeting, as well as about a dozen City staff and officials. Attendees were broken up into five smaller groups, each with 10 to 14 people. The groups were asked to complete a series of exercises and to present their group's consensus for each. The first exercise focused on the existing conditions in the corridor and asked groups to identify the best three places or features in the corridor. Top

ADD PHOTOS OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS HERE

features identified were primarily related to the environment and open space, including the view of Big Mountain and views in general, as well as the landscaping or natural vegetation, trees, forest and existing undeveloped areas. Other top features were related to land use and included the variety in the types and sizes of buildings, their setbacks from the highway, and other factors that serve to visually break up the look of the corridor. Additional features identified are included in the visioning summary in Appendix X.

Short presentations were given to provide information on trends Whitefish is experiencing and anticipated future scenarios regarding population, employment, housing, visitation and traffic. Given this information, as a second exercise the groups were asked to imagine the best-case future for each segment of the corridor. In general, the vision for the whole corridor is as an active and visually interesting place with a mix of land uses that meet the needs of residents. The corridor should accommodate people and alternative modes of transportation, not just single-occupant vehicles, and have abundant trees, landscaping, green space and views. A summary of all components outlined by the groups is provided in the visioning summary in Appendix X.

The third and final exercise asked the groups about the location and type of future residential units in the corridor. With the clarification that the question was not about whether this should or should not happen, participants were asked how 500 new residential homes and apartments could be built in the corridor in a way that maintains the values they described through the visioning exercise. Each group was given 20 stickers, each representing 25 housing units and a map of a segment of the Corridor showing undeveloped or underdeveloped areas that could potentially be used for housing. The groups placed the stickers on the map where they thought housing could go and indicated the type of housing that would be appropriate there. In general, groups located the greatest residential densities closer to downtown rather than further south, and east of the highway rather than west. The groups' selections are summarized in Appendix X.

Online Survey

The public was also invited to provide feedback on the corridor plan by taking an online survey developed using Survey Monkey. A total of 457 people completed the survey between January 1 and February 15, 2019 and provided some useful information about their preferences for land use, transportation, and the environment or open space in the corridor.

"Roundabouts were invented by Satan to tick people off." – anonymous online survey response

Regarding land use, over 90% of respondents believe that some improvement to, a lot of improvement to, or a complete overhaul of, the corridor aesthetic is needed. South of City limits, respondents noted the importance of preserving private property rights in their comments while also indicating maintenance of the rural character or feel of the corridor is desirable.

Responses to transportation related questions indicate that most people are opposed to the use of roundabouts in the corridor. About two-thirds of people thought roundabouts should not be considered for installation at signalized intersections. Instead, respondents generally believe new or better-connected bike lanes and routes, improved pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, and alternative parallel routes to downtown would be the most effective measures to take to improve movement

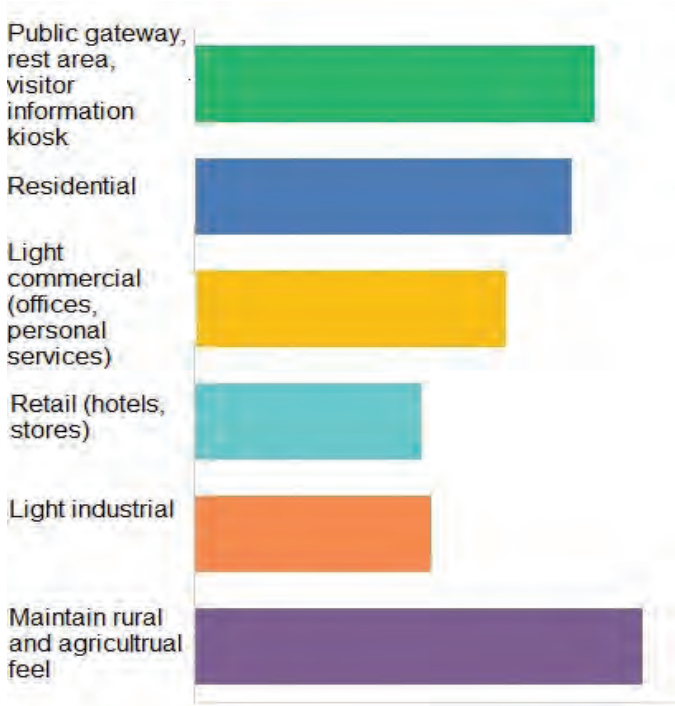
to downtown would be the most effective measures to take to improve movement through the corridor. More than two-thirds of survey respondents supported the concept of replacing the existing center turn lane with a raised median or a mix of raised median with center turn lane.

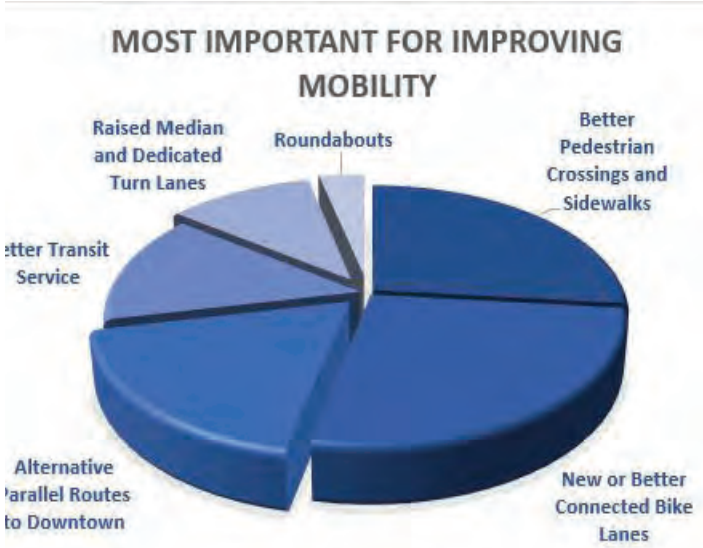
There were several questions relating to the environment and open spaces. Most respondents believed it is very or somewhat important the culverts that convey the Whitefish River under the highway be removed and replaced with a bridge. Additionally, most respondents supported the idea the City encourage or require preservation of open space or parkland in the corridor.

Complete survey results can be found in Appendix X.

QUESTION 17 OF THE ONLINE SURVEY

A distribution of answers to the question, "*What are the most appropriate future land uses in the Corridor as the highway approaches Whitefish from the south*?"





Public Draft Presentation

The third and final public meeting occurred on XXXX and was a presentation of the draft plan for the public to review and provide comment.

3. CORRIDOR CONTEXT: EXISTING CONDITIONS

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3.0 History

In the early 1900s, Spokane Avenue extended south from downtown to the Whitefish River, where it became Riverside Avenue. A 1907 plat of the neighborhood between 6th and 9th Streets shows that a bend in the river originally went as far east as the alley east of Spokane, indicating that extensive fill was used to construct Spokane Avenue in this location. An aerial photo from 1990 indicates how much fill has changed the river channel in this location.

There was no bridge across the river on Spokane Avenue until 1933 when the new State highway first connected Whitefish and Kalispell. And it wasn't until 1967 that land south of the river was brought into city limits. Portions of the old hospital property and Greenwood Terrace properties were annexed that year, and the highway commercial zone was amended to include lands between the river and city limits.

Following those annexations, the property that became the Mountain Mall and McDonaldswas annexed into the City limits in the late 1970s. The mall itself was constructed in 1984. Following its opening, the health of the downtown retail core suffered when several downtown businesses relocated to the mall.

The Highway 93 right-of-way from about 5th Street south to the Highway 40 intersection became part of the City in 1995, within which opened the door for a wave of annexations in the corridor in the 1990s as far south as the Les Schwab property and in the 2000s to the new North Valley Hospital and Great Northern residential subdivision. Water and sewer mains were extended to the Highway 40 intersection in 2002. Most wholly surrounded properties in the corridor were annexed in 2012.

Regarding Baker Avenue, the first bridge across the river appears to have been constructed in the 1920's. As recently as 1990, Baker Avenue ended at 10th Street, which intersected with the highway south of the river (photo left next

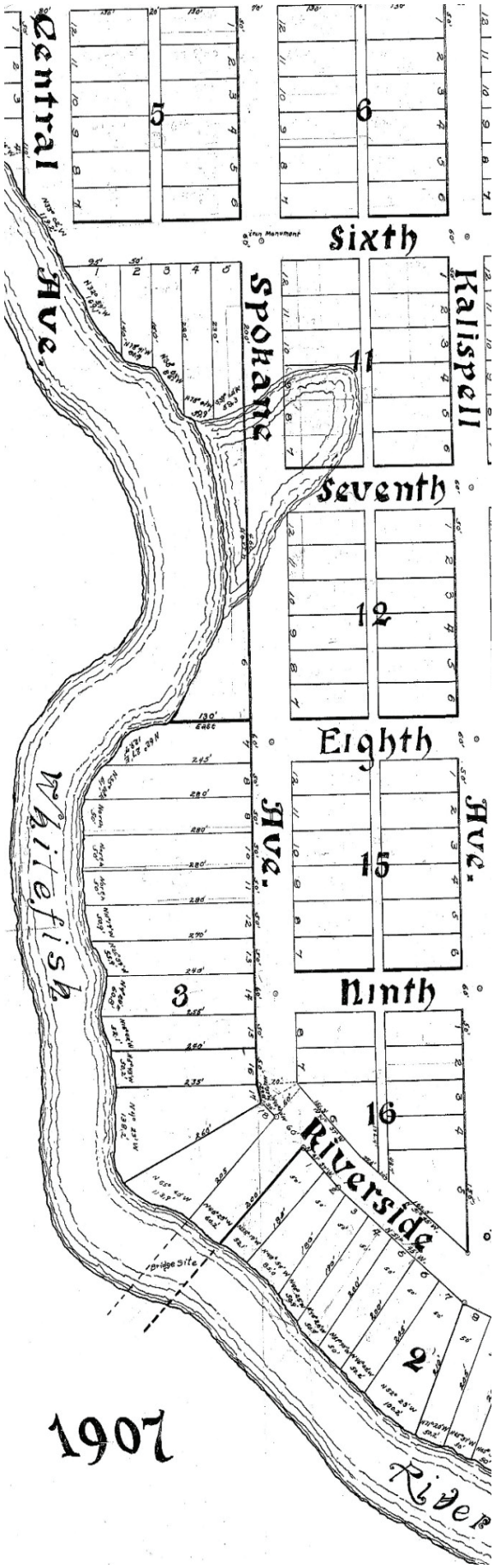
1990 aerial photo of Spokane Avenue and Whitefish river

Aerial perpsective of Mountain Mall and McDonald's building

page). Baker Avenue was eventually extended to 19th Street, and the right-of-way annexed into the City in 1995. The properties along the Baker Avenue extension were added to the secondary business (WB-2) zoning district as well as a business park (WB-4) and some industrial and warehousing (WI) properties.

When Highway 93 was first constructed between Kalispell and Whitefish, it was a two-lane highway. There were no signalized intersections in the Corridor until about 1995 when 13th Street and Commerce Street (Mountain Mall) were extended west to the Baker Avenue extension. A major 1998 reconstruction project upgraded the highway between Highway 40 and 13th Street to a five-lane highway (two lanes northbound, two lanes southbound, and a center two-way left-turn lane. The environmental impact statement for the highway project considered adding a raised or depressed median instead of a two-way left-turn lane, but some business owners in the corridor resisted the idea due to concern about limiting highway access for customers. The environmental impact statement concluded that a median would be appropriate when traffic volumes warrant it. A traffic signal was installed at the JP Road intersection in 2008 following reconstruction of the road on the east side of the highway and extension of the road west to Great Northern Heights. The signal at the Highway 40 intersection was also installed around 2008.

Zoning along the highway has been secondary business since these properties came into the City. Zoning further from the highway has been single family residential on large lots, suburban residential, and agricultural. Development adjacent to the highway has historically and predominantly been commercial with single-family residential located intermittently on large, intact parcels (red parcels on map on page 16 show where a single house per lot was constructed sometime before 2003). Starting in the mid-2000's, substantially more single-family and higher density residential housing was added to the corridor closer to the highway. Many residential projects of various densities have been constructed in the last 16 years, including Riverpark, River's Edge, Riverwood Park, Riverwalk, Great Northern Heights, Whitefish Crossing, Riverview Meadows, and Alta Views.



1907 plat map of Spokane Avenue

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The Blanchard Lake Zoning District, which encompassed the Highway 93 corridor south of the Highway 40 intersection, was implemented by Flathead County in 1993. Prior to this effort, there was no zoning south of City limits. The district was zoned SAG-5 (Suburban Agricultural) for the first mile south of the intersection and AG-20 (Agricultural) for the next mile and a half. In 2017 a zoning text amendment was adopted by the County which rezoned the properties with highway frontage from SAG-5 to Secondary Business (B-4) or Business Service district (BS), and from AG-20 to SAG-5, as described more fully in the following pages.

Development of the corridor has been guided by several planning documents over the years. These include growth policies, land use, economic development, and transportation plans. Those guidance documents relevant to this plan are summarized and reviewed in the following descriptions of the existing population and socio-economic characteristics; land ownership; existing land uses, future land use designations and zoning; highway and street circulation and facilities; non-motorized circulation and facilities; and parks and cultural resources are also provided in this chapter.

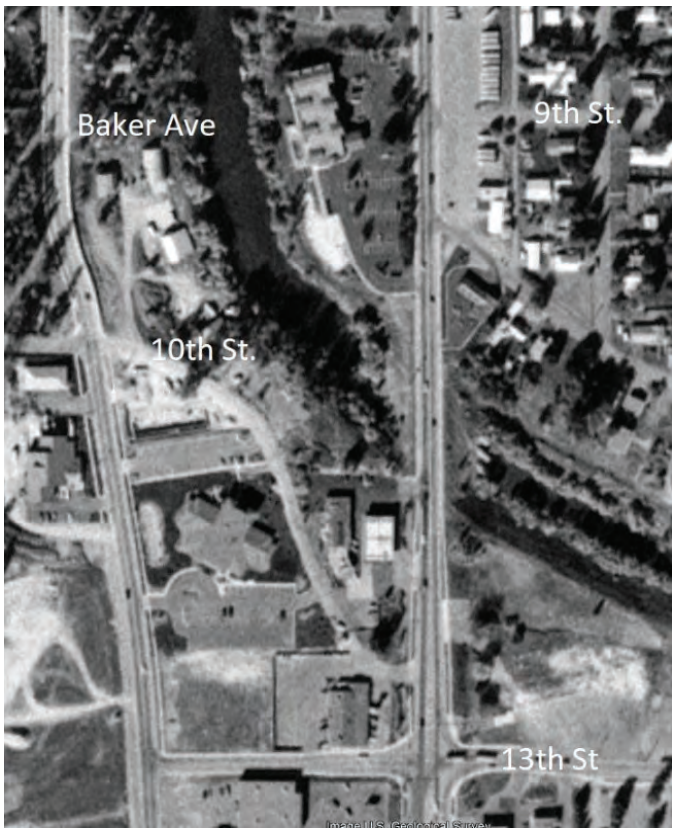
3.1 Comprehensive Growth Policies

Whitefish City-County Growth Policy, 2007

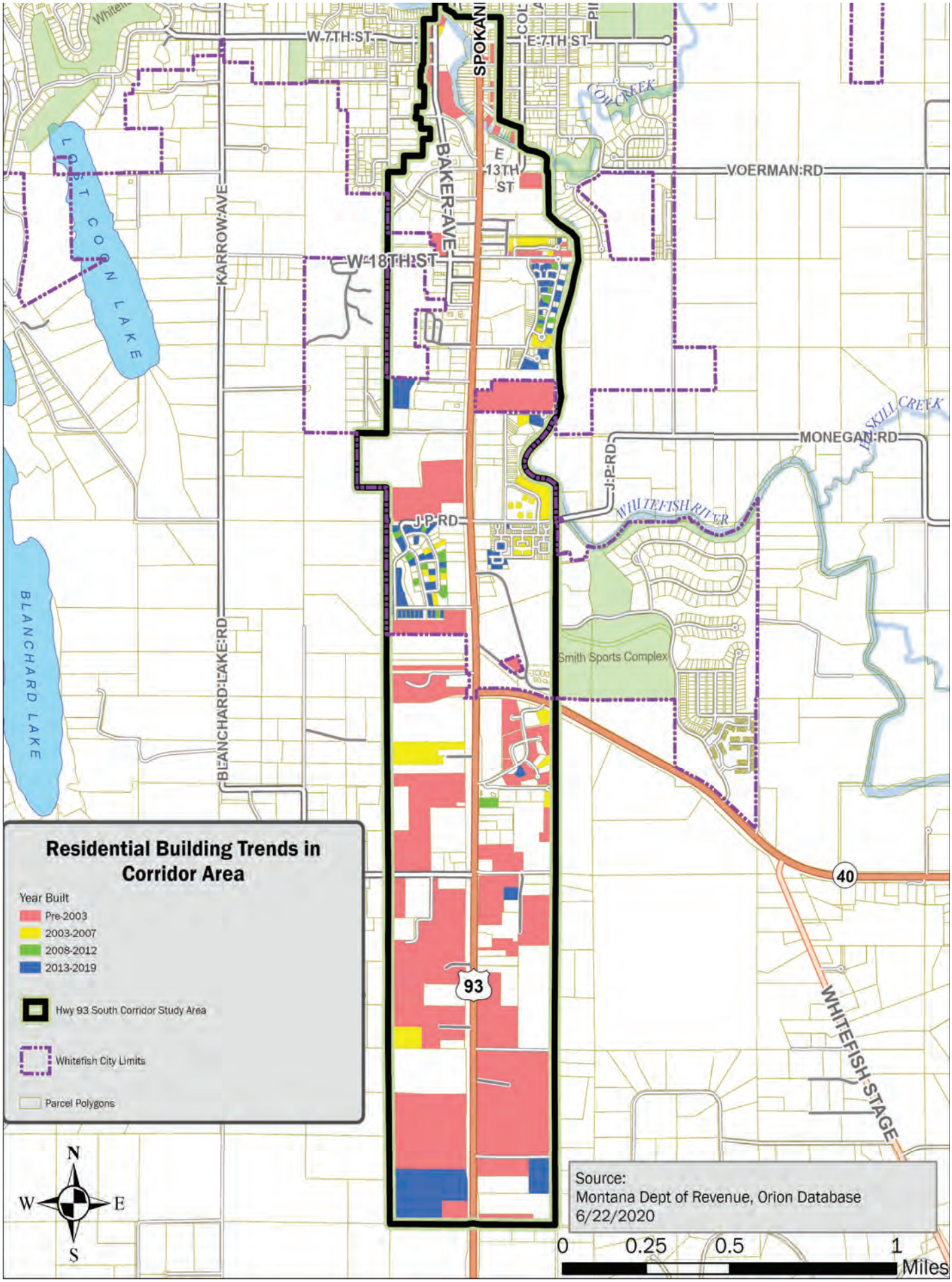
The Whitefish City-County Growth Policy guides and controls development in the corridor planning area. It identified issues and set goals related to future growth and land use. Maintaining the character and small town feel of Whitefish is an important theme of the Growth Policy. Factors affecting character were described as a diversity of residential types and densities, and a scale of development appropriate to surrounding developments. There was also an emphasis on retaining downtown Whitefish as the commercial and cultural center of the community as opposed to the corridor. Attractive landscaping and a functional pedestrian way were identified as important components of the existing Highway 93 South commercial corridor and called for maintaining the existing quality of development. Big box stores were viewed as detrimental to the character of Whitefish. As a result, City code was revised to require conditional use permits for buildings greater than 10,000 square feet in the highway district.

Among the several implementation actions of the Growth Policy was the need to formulate and adopt specific corridor plans,

Baker Avenue 1990



Baker avenue 1995

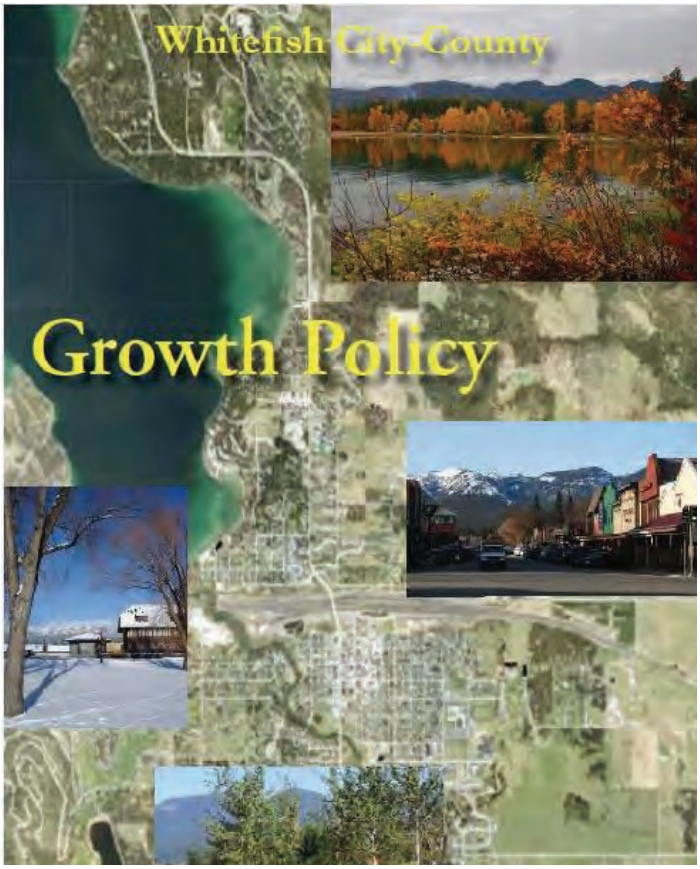

Residential Building Trends in Corridor Area
Year Built
Pre-2003
2003-2007
2008-2012
2013-2019
Hwy 93 South Corridor Study Area
Whitefish City Limits
Parcel Polygons
Source:
Montana Dept of Revenue, Orion Database
6/22/2020
0
0.25
0.5
1
Miles
N
S
E
W
W 7TH ST
E 7TH ST
SPOKANE
BAKER AVE
E 13TH ST
W 18TH ST
KARROW AVE
VOERMAN RD
MONEGAN RD
J P RD
BLANCHARD LAKE RD
LOST COON LAKE
BLANCHARD LAKE
COLL CREEK
WHITEFISH RIVER
LAKESKILL CREEK
Smith Sports Complex
WHITEFISH STAGE
93
40

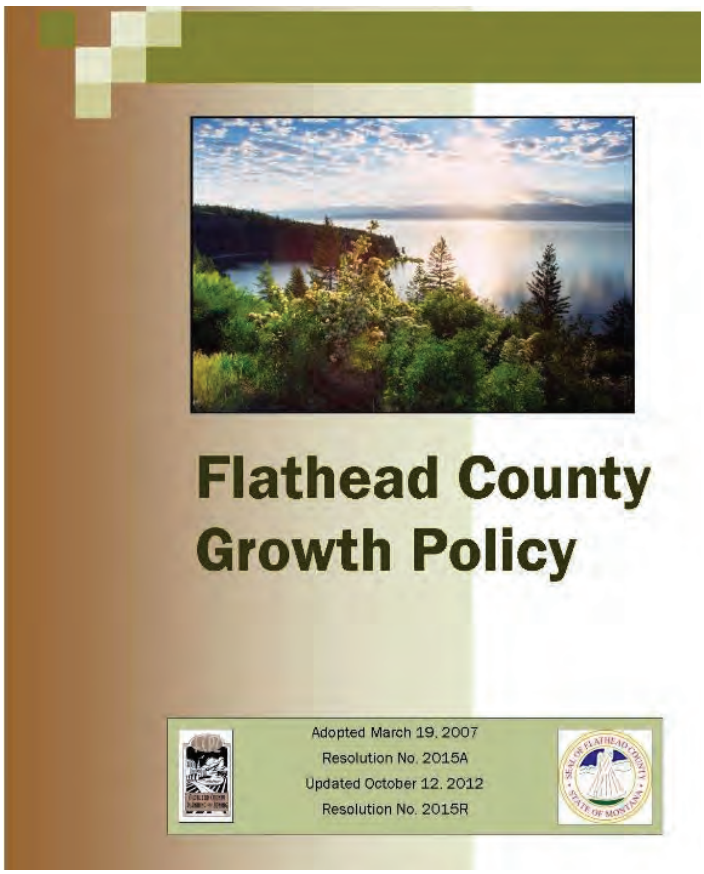
the top priority being the Highway 93 South Corridor. The Growth Policy specifies any Highway 93 South Corridor Plan must address commercial growth; scale; architectural standards; landscaping/screening; utilities; trip generation; traffic safety, circulation, bike/pedestrian facilities; and access.

A large component of the Growth Policy is the Future Land Use designation and map indicating the type, density, and spatial extent future growth in the Whitefish area should take. Future land use is described in more detail under Land Use and Zoning. This document updates the Future Land Use map for the corridor area.

Flathead County Growth Policy 2007, 2012
Several of the goals and policies stated in the Flathead County Growth Policy are applicable to the corridor south of City limits:

- Goal (G)6: ensure there is adequate commercial land that is safely accessible and efficiently serviceable; and Policies P.6.1-5: encourage internal interconnected roads; restrict commercial development in unsafe, inaccessible, remote rural areas; conserve resources and minimize transportation demand by encouraging redevelopment and infill of existing commercial areas in the county;
- G7: consider existing community character in commercial land development; and Policies P.7.1-6: encourage commercial development that is visually and functionally desirable; encourage mixed-use developments where appropriate;
- G11: protect scenic resources; and P.11.1-5: identify development impacts that threaten gateway areas and develop land use guidelines that mitigate these impacts without prohibiting development;
- G22: ensure there is available, accessible and adequate business infrastructure; and P.22.2: promote business centers and industrial parks in areas served by sufficient infrastructure and with consideration of proximity to population densities;
- G23: maintain safe and efficient traffic flow; and P23.1-12: limit private driveways; restrict development in areas without adequate road improvements; encourage frontage roads and internal vehicle circulation;
- G46: honor the integrity and purpose of existing neighborhood plans, including South Whitefish, Blanchard Lake, and Highway 93 South Whitefish Corridor Plan and Zoning Amendment (south of Whitefish city limits);
- G49: growth and development around Whitefish that respects the geographic,





cultural, and historic heritage of the city.

As a more general Vision statement, the County seeks to protect scenic views; promote a diverse economy; manage transportation; maintain the identity of rural communities; protect access to and interaction with parks and recreation; properly manage and protect the natural and human environment; and preserve the rights of private property owners.

Whitefish City-County Master Plan 2020 (Adopted 1996, Superseded by 2007 Growth Policy)
Although it has no legal bearing on long range planning efforts currently under way, review of this plan is useful from a historical perspective to understand how long some concepts have been considered and recommended for Whitefish. The 1996 Whitefish City-County Master Plan 2020 was superseded by the 2007 Growth Policy and rescinded by Flathead County in 2016. Under the Transportation Element, recommendations included:

- Widen US Highway 93 from MT 40 north to the Whitefish River including two through travel lanes in each direction, and a center landscaped median incorporating left-turn lanes at intersecting streets and drives;
- Develop a one-way couplet of streets with northbound traffic on Spokane and southbound traffic on Baker between 2nd and 7th streets;
- Construct new 7th Street bridge over river;
- extend 7th Street east of Spokane to Kalispell Avenue;
- Extend Baker Avenue to the Chalet Motel;
- Prepare an alignment study for a system of parallel and side streets in the
- Highway 93 South commercial area including a new north/south road east of the mall extending north from JP Road to 18th Street and consider extension of Columbia Avenue to 18th Street.

Under the Parks and Open Space Element, the plan recommended development of an entryway park at Highways 93 and 40, including landscaped medians and parkways.

3.2 Land Use Plans and Zoning

Whitefish City Zoning Ordinances
Whitefish zoning code was first adopted in 1982 but has been amended many times since. Most of the corridor planning area is zoned for Secondary Business (WB-2, WB-2/WPUD, and WB-2 Casino Overlay) in parcels fronting the highway. These lots are backed by lots zoned for Two-family Residential (WR-2) between 6th and 13th Streets, and by One-family Residential (WR-1 or WR-1/WPUD), some Estate and One-family Limited Residential (WER, WLR), High Density Multi-family Residential (WR-4/WPUD), with limited areas of Business Park (WB-4) and Industrial and Warehousing (WI) between 13th Street and the City limits.

The intent of the secondary business district is to provide for those retail sales and services typically characterized by the need for large display or parking areas, large storage areas and by outdoor commercial amusement or recreational activities. In the secondary business district, structures must be set back 20 feet from the front property line. There are no side or rear setbacks unless the property abuts a residential district, in which case a 20-foot greenbelt is required along the property lines. Structures with a building footprint of 10,000 square feet or greater require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Building height is limited to 35-feet.

The City code also includes provisions related to landscape requirements, lighting and parking standards, sign regulations, water quality protection, architectural standards, dwelling groups, fences and retaining walls, home occupations, erosion and sediment control. In the Secondary Business district, a five-foot-wide landscaped buffer is required along street frontage with a large canopy tree or two small ornamental trees every 50 feet of frontage. When a parking lot fronts a street, the five-foot-wide landscaped buffer must provide a 50% visual screen within three years of planting. The amount of off-street parking depends on the use of the property. Professional offices and financial institutions require one parking space per 400 square feet of gross floor area, for example, while medical or dental offices require one parking space per 150 square feet of gross floor area. Exterior lighting must be designed to prevent over-lighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and sky glow. The Highway Sign District regulates the types of signs allowed in the Corridor by recognizing the needs of auto-oriented businesses while trying to avoid the clutter and confusion often associated with linear highway development. Mixed-use and non-residential development standards were adopted in 2019 to more clearly inform the design of these types of structures.

2017 Whitefish Strategic Housing Plan
The Whitefish Strategic Housing Plan outlined a step-by-step approach for addressing workforce housing needs in Whitefish. It

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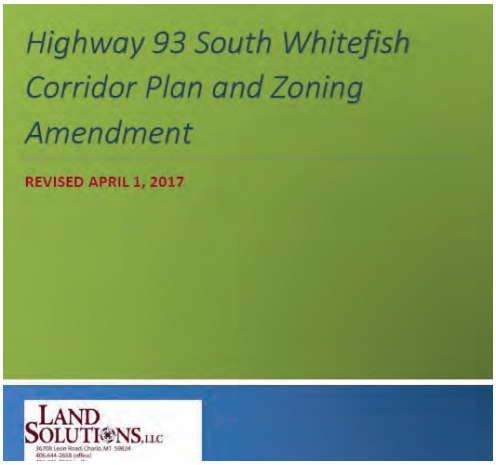
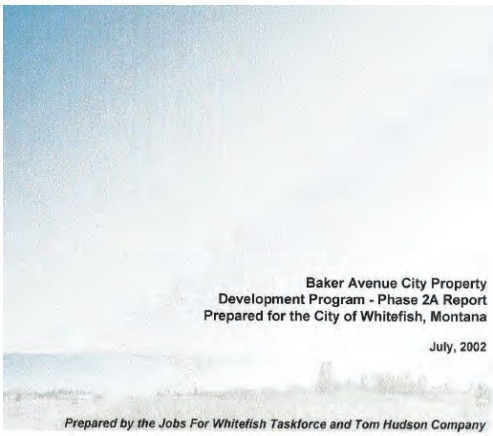
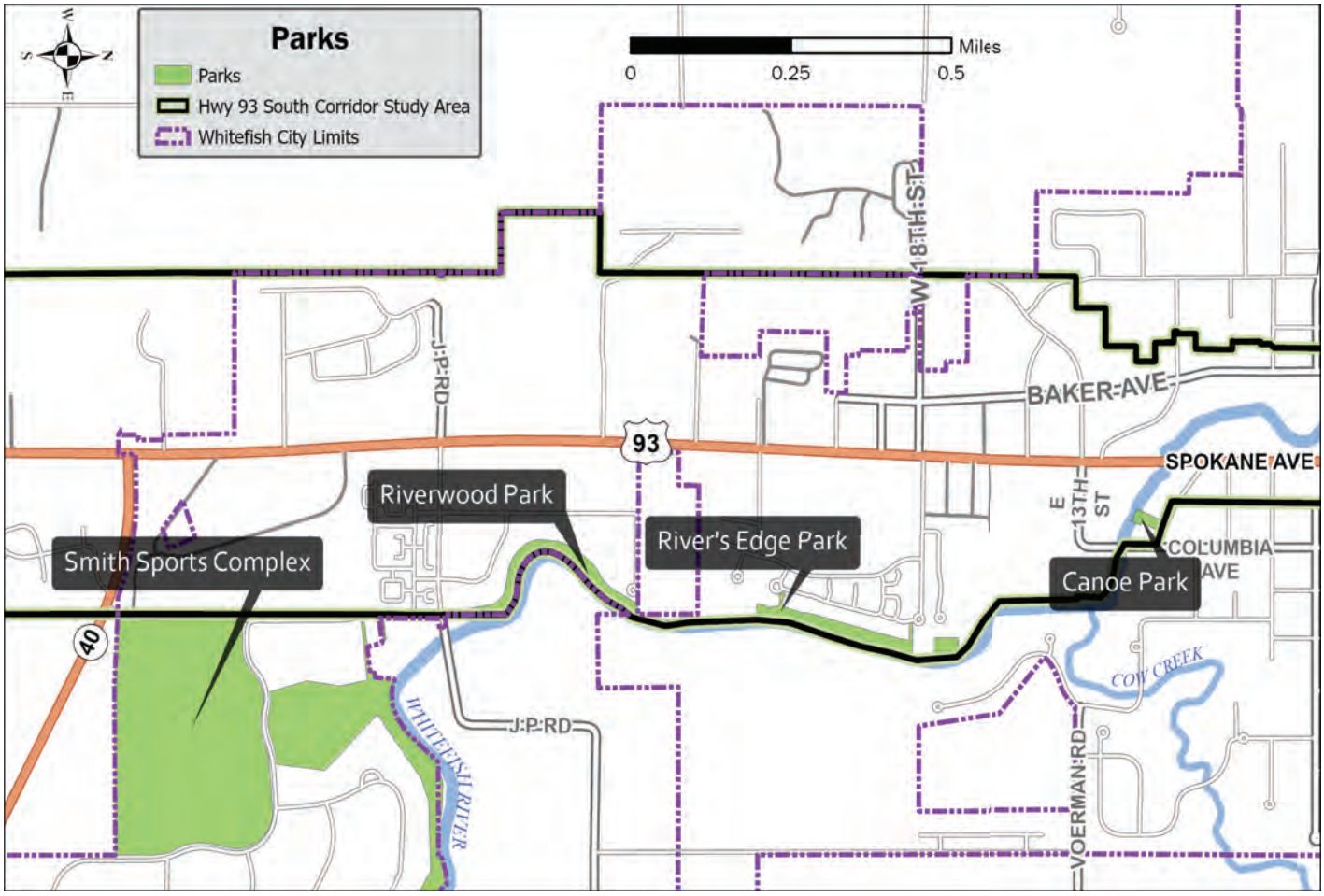




recognized commercial zones as areas of opportunity for increasing the supply and diversity of housing choices for the workforce. Zoning for Affordability was a recommended strategy with the most relevance to the corridor planning area. Specifically, the plan recommended allowing deed restricted affordable housing by right and free market housing through Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and/or Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) in the Highway 93 South corridor. With the adoption of the Legacy Homes Program in 2019, the City of Whitefish has taken steps to implement this strategy. As of July 2019, any multi-family residential dwellings that are 100% deed restricted for long-term affordability are permitted in the WB-2 zoning district. Additionally, up to four free market multi-family dwelling units above ground floor commercial are also permitted. Otherwise, free market multi-family residential is allowed throughout the WB-2 with a CUP. Single-family housing (whether attached townhouses/condominiums, or detached houses) can be developed through the PUD process in the WB-2.

2017 Highway 93 South Whitefish Corridor Plan and Zoning Amendment/Flathead County Highway 93 South Zoning Overlay
Residents and landowners south of Whitefish City limits and within the corridor planning area sponsored development of the Highway 93 South Whitefish Corridor Plan and Zoning Amendment, prepared by Land Solutions, LLC. Flathead County adopted new zoning and a zoning overlay for the area based on this document.

Previously, zoning was primarily suburban agriculture within a mile of the City, with minimum lot sizes of five acres. Further south along the corridor land was zoned agricultural with 20-acre minimum lot size. In 2017 the County rezoned to extend the secondary business district from Highway 40 to Russell Road (retail sales and services typically needing large display or parking areas, large storage areas, outdoor commercial amusement or recreation); and added a business service district south of Russell Road and beyond Blanchard Lake Road (nonretail limited commercial services and light industrial uses – light manufacturing, office/warehouse showrooms, contractors, wholesale trades). South of the commercial zoning, agricultural zoning was changed to suburban agriculture. The County also added a Highway 93 South Whitefish overlay which has since been renamed a more generic highway overlay (HO). The HO includes design standards for



architecture, landscaping, buffering, signage, building, lighting, parking and circulation (frontage/backage roads) that are modelled on the City's standards for the secondary business district and are meant to maintain and improve the visual quality of the gateway to Whitefish.

2015 Whitefish Downtown Business District Master Plan
While the 2015 Whitefish Downtown Business District Master Plan only covered the downtown area north of East 6th Street, it did make statements pertinent to the Corridor Plan. It did not support added driving lanes on Spokane Avenue/Highway 93 but did propose a protected bikeway along the entire length of Highway 93 South to the City limits and supported addition of another southbound driving lane on Baker Avenue. The plan also envisioned a downtown "Gateway" to be located at 13th Street and Spokane Avenue/ Highway 93 that would include transition wayfinding elements to announce the entrance to downtown.

2013 City of Whitefish Parks and Recreation Master Plan
The Parks and Recreation Master Plan included goals related to trail/path connectivity, water access, and park development and acquisition. The 2016 Connect Whitefish described under the Transportation Plans section on page X superseded this plan's goals related to trail/ path connectivity, but its goals to improve access to the Whitefish River and to develop and add to the park system remain relevant to the corridor planning area. In particular, the plan called for development or upgrades of Canoe Park, River Park, River's Edge Park and Riverwood Park.

North Valley Hospital Campus Neighborhood Plan Revised 2009 (original plan adopted 2004)
This document outlined a plan for the North Valley Hospital campus, which included the hospital and related medical offices northeast of the Highway 93 and Highway 40 junction. It was written as an amendment to the 2007 Growth Policy and all proposed future uses are medical as designated by existing zoning for site. The plan included some goals relevant to the corridor planning

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area: to in no way promote or encourage commercial development south of the Highway 40 intersection, and to continue to prohibit commercial development within the hospital campus. It also outlined policies to encourage campus design that acknowledges the geographic and aesthetic position of the site as a community gateway and to encourage good design on the adjacent commercial zoned properties.

1998 South Whitefish Neighborhood Plan, amended 2000
The South Whitefish Neighborhood Plan was developed following a request for extension of city services to the neighborhood, which encompasses the Highway 93 Corridor between approximately Akers Lane on the east side of the highway and Pheasant Run on the west side of the highway, south to the Highway 40 junction. The plan included policies regarding major street alignments, recommendations for a design review program to enhance the south entrance to Whitefish, and the extension of Baker and Columbia Avenues south to parallel Highway 93. A separate transportation plan was developed to support these recommendations in 1999 and is described in more detail under Transportation Plans starting on page X.

Blanchard Lake Area Zoning District 1993
In 1992 the Whitefish City-County Planning Board initiated establishment of the Blanchard Lake Area Zoning District to be consistent with a Flathead County Commissioners directive to establish countywide zoning. The district was 18 square miles of land located southwest of Whitefish and included the Highway 93 corridor south of Highway 40. Previously the area had no zoning. Within the corridor planning area, zoning was SAG-5 (Suburban Agricultural) and AG-20 (Agricultural). SAG zones are intended to protect and preserve smaller agricultural functions and to provide a buffer between urban and unlimited agricultural uses, encouraging concentration of such uses in areas where potential conflict of uses will be minimized. AG zones are intended to protect and preserve agricultural land for the performance of a wide range of agricultural functions, and to control the scattered intrusion of uses not compatible with an agricultural environment, including but not limited to residential development.

County staff recommended no commercial zoning along Highway 93 because it would conflict with Whitefish Master Plan policies, which were against expansion of commercial development along the highway south of Whitefish. Staff noted that commercial zoning in this area (which is 12 times the size of downtown Whitefish) would adversely impact downtown Whitefish and would not be of a scale that is characteristic of the area. Additionally, strip commercial development in a rural area would conflict with the primary function of the highway, which was designated and built to provide fast travel between areas.

3.3 Economic Development Reports

Baker Avenue City Property Development Program Plan 2002
Completed in June 2002 by the Jobs for Whitefish Taskforce, this plan identified a need to diversify the economy of Whitefish. The focus of the study was the future use of city-owned property on Baker Avenue, a parcel within the Highway 93 South Corridor. The study found that the property would be best used to fulfill Whitefish City business development goals. The study established the following top priorities for future use of the Baker Avenue

property:

- More career-oriented, higher paying jobs
- Support growth of and complement existing local businesses
- Fit Whitefish character
- Support diversification of new businesses

The team also established secondary business development priorities, some of which included:

- Provide goods/services to local/regional customers
- Provide "career" jobs
- Address need for public services
- Provide mixed use, including housing

Overall the business development priorities were intended to build a diversified, healthy economy that enables local citizens to live, work and play in Whitefish year-round.
The key finding of the Baker Avenue plan was that the Whitefish economy had weakened during the prior two decades as a result of the decline of the railroad industry and the rise of the tourism industry. The basis of the finding was that a lack of diversification in the local economy, whether dominated by railroad or tourism, was not healthy and that tourism industry wages were inadequate for the cost of living in Whitefish. Tourism continues to dominate the Whitefish economy today and wages have not kept pace with the cost of living in Whitefish.

Flathead County, Montana Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2017
The Flathead County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) guides the economic growth of Flathead County including the City of Whitefish. The purpose of the CEDS is to help ". . . create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, and improve living conditions." The CEDS resulted from a planning process involving broad community participation to identify strengths, threat and opportunities in the region including within Whitefish in particular.

The CEDS identified the following opportunities and issues for Whitefish:

- Increase shoulder season tourism visitation and expenditures to continue building a robust year-round economy
- Attracting more retirees but not enough young entrepreneurs
- Housing needs assessment underway to address workforce housing issues
- Need to coordinate on land use issues with County
- Lack of land zoned for industrial use to attract business

The CEDS also resulted in five goals:

- Enhance and expand workforce development and educational opportunities for residents in order to provide a skilled workforce for local businesses and increase regional competitiveness.
- Expand and diversify the economic base to create higher paying jobs through efforts to promote business start-ups and attract new business to the region.
- Support the maintenance and enhancement of the physical infrastructure that is needed for sustainable economic growth in Flathead County.
- Build on the region's strengths and assets to support, retain and grow existing businesses.
- Develop and maintain a positive quality of life to ensure communities are appealing and healthy places to live, work, recreate and conduct business.

The CEDS reinforced the need and strategy identified in the 2002 study to diversify Whitefish's economy to become less reliant on tourism.

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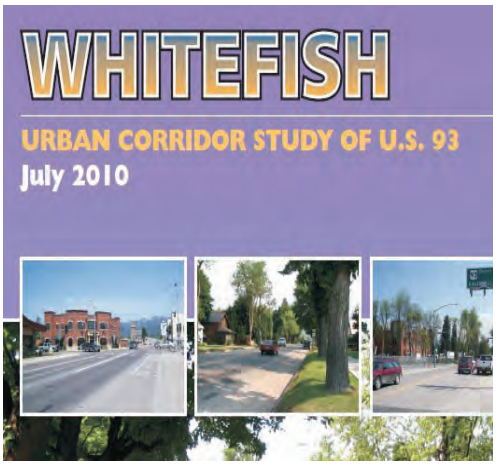
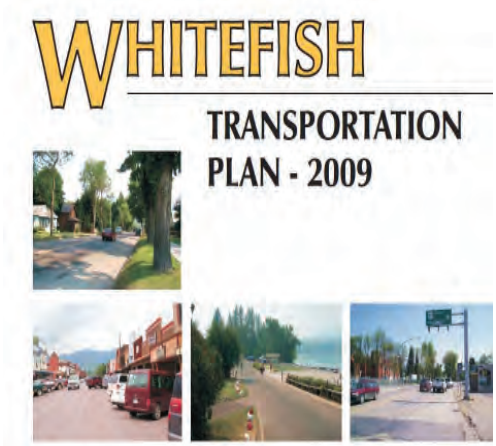
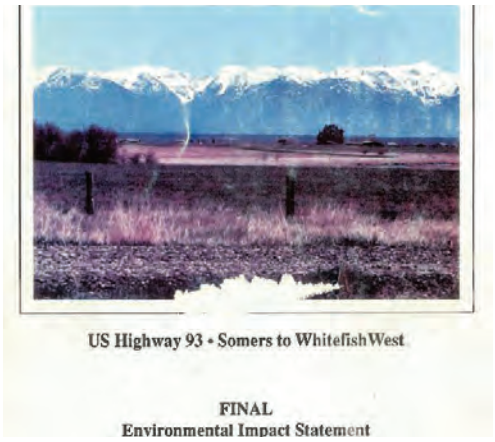






3.4 Transportation Plans

2016 Connect Whitefish Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The 2016 Connect Whitefish Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan established policies, actions and projects for improving connectivity, safety, wayfinding, maintenance, programming, and funding of non-motorized transportation facilities. Within the corridor planning area, proposed projects included a two-mile bicycle route with signing and marking between 6th Street and the Highway 40 intersection; improved connectivity for the Whitefish River Trail, which would cross the highway when complete; a shared-use path that crosses the highway at 7th, 13th, and 18th streets; and bus shelter locations along Highway 93.

2010 Whitefish Urban Corridor Study of US 93

The study was a Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) planning document that evaluated how corridor needs have changed since a final environmental impact statement for the highway between Somers and Whitefish was completed in 1994. The study encompassed the Highway 93 corridor and Baker Avenue from 13th to 2nd Street and is discussed in more detail in the description of Segment A in Chapter 4. Overlap with this plan is between 6th and 13th Streets.

The study included a screening level assessment of design configurations and strategies that were: 1) considered in the US Highway 93 Somers to Whitefish West Environmental Impact Statement; 2) developed for the corridor since the Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision was issued; and 3) other options that may have been applicable. Two configuration options were reviewed more extensively based on assessments; corridor improvements were recommended and prioritized under either configuration. Of interest for this Corridor Plan are the following road configurations considered:

- Modified Alternative C (Offset) Configuration: Between 13th and 2nd Streets, two lanes northbound and one lane southbound on Spokane Avenue/Highway 93; two lanes southbound and one lane northbound on Baker Avenue; widen the Baker Avenue bridge to accommodate three lanes of traffic; two lanes eastbound and one lane westbound on 13th Street; a new traffic signal at the intersection of Baker Avenue and 13th Street.
- Contra-Flow Configuration: Between 7th and 2nd Streets, two lanes northbound

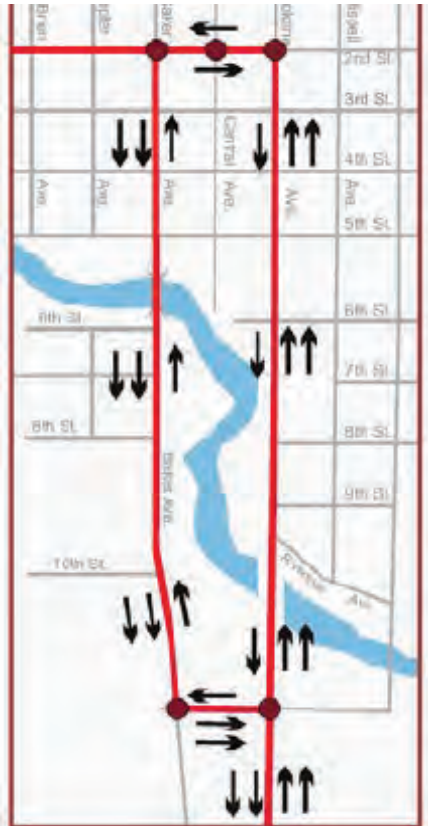
and one lane southbound on Spokane Avenue/Highway 93 (two lanes north and southbound between 7th and 13th Streets); two lanes southbound and one lane northbound on Baker Avenue; widen Baker Avenue bridge to accommodate three lanes of traffic; connect Baker and Spokane Avenues on 7th Street with a new bridge over the river providing two lanes eastbound and one lane westbound.

2009 Whitefish Transportation Plan
The 2009 Whitefish Transportation Plan identified transportation problems and deficiencies throughout the City and considered a bypass to Highway 93. It did not recommend the development of a bypass corridor for Highway 93 through Whitefish because it would not significantly reduce traffic on the highway, would not solve future traffic issues, and had a lack of any state highway support/funding. Instead the plan recommended strengthening the existing transportation grid system, providing additional east/west connectivity, and requiring roadway corridor development in vacant land if, and when, the land develops. Specific improvements recommended for the Corridor Planning Area include the following:

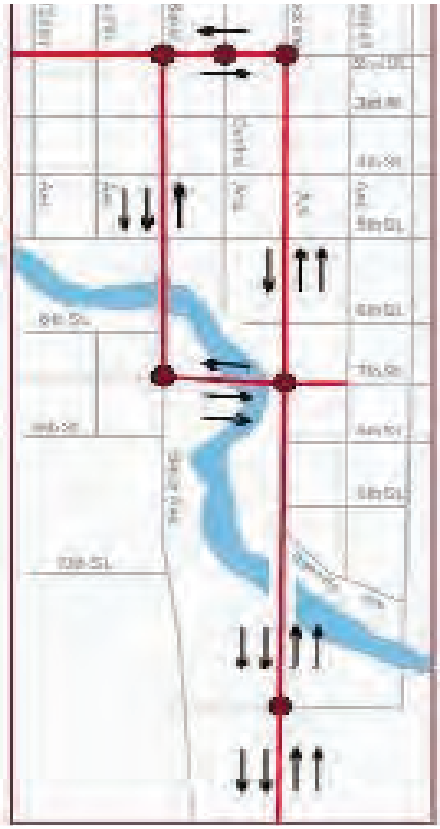
- Improve the intersection of 13th Street and Highway 93
- Install a traffic signal at 13th Street and Baker Avenue
- Extend Columbia Avenue south from 13th Street to JP Road
- Extend Baker Street south from 19th Street to JP Road
- Construct a bridge across the river to connect Baker Avenue and Spokane Avenue/ Highway 93 at 7th Street; extend 7th Street east of Spokane Avenue/Highway 93 to connect Spokane and Kalispell Avenues

The Plan also included recommendations for corridor preservation; access management; the Safe Routes to School program; transportation concurrency for non-motorized facilities; and it identified public transit opportunities.

2001 Southeast Whitefish Transportation Plan
The study area for the 2001 Southeast Whitefish Transportation Plan included areas east of Highway 93 between Highway 40 and 2nd Street. The plan addressesd two major concerns: 1) how vehicles access town from the southeast, especially from Voerman Road and Park Avenue; and 2) how the road system should develop southeast of town, assuming a transition from agricultural to residential uses. As such, it made several recommendations for future local streets and collectors, most of which are east of the corridor planning area.



Modified Alternative C (Offset) Configuration



Contra-flow Configuration

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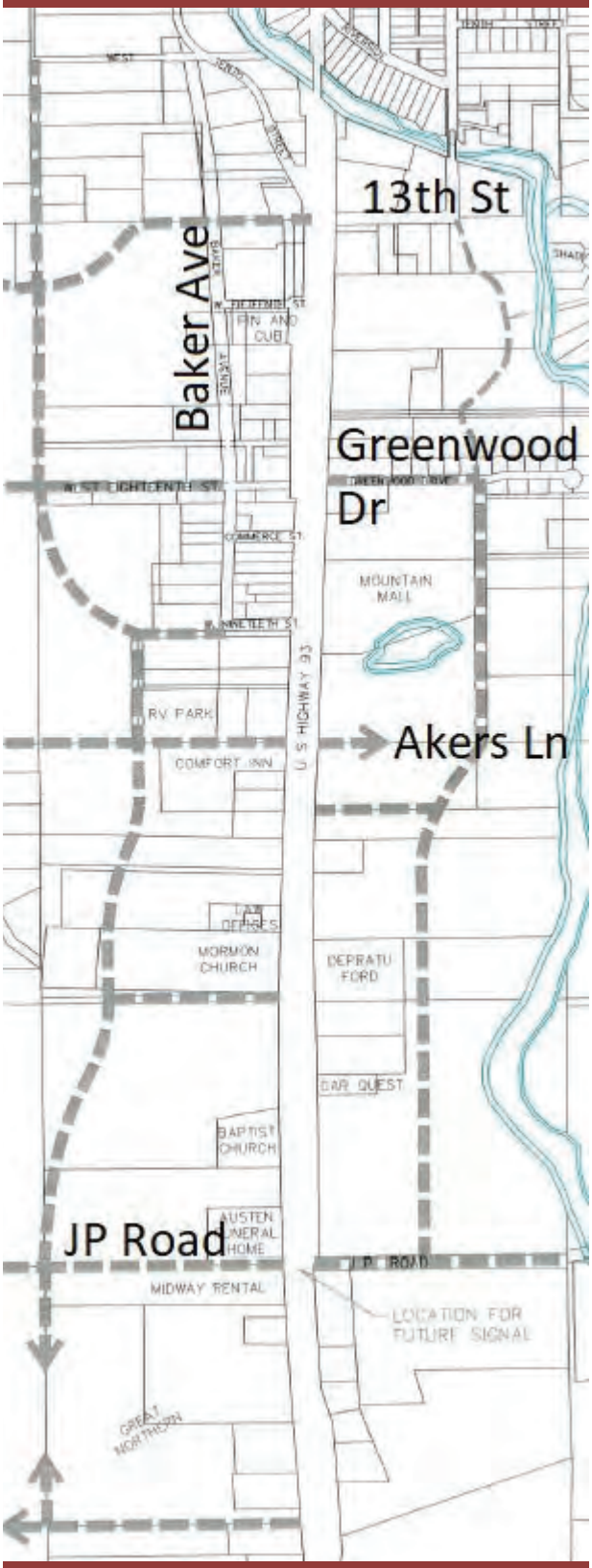


1999 concept for an expanded road network - South Whitefish Transportation Planning Project

Within the corridor planning area, the plan recommended extending 7th Street across the river to connect Baker Avenue and Spokane Avenue/Highway 93.

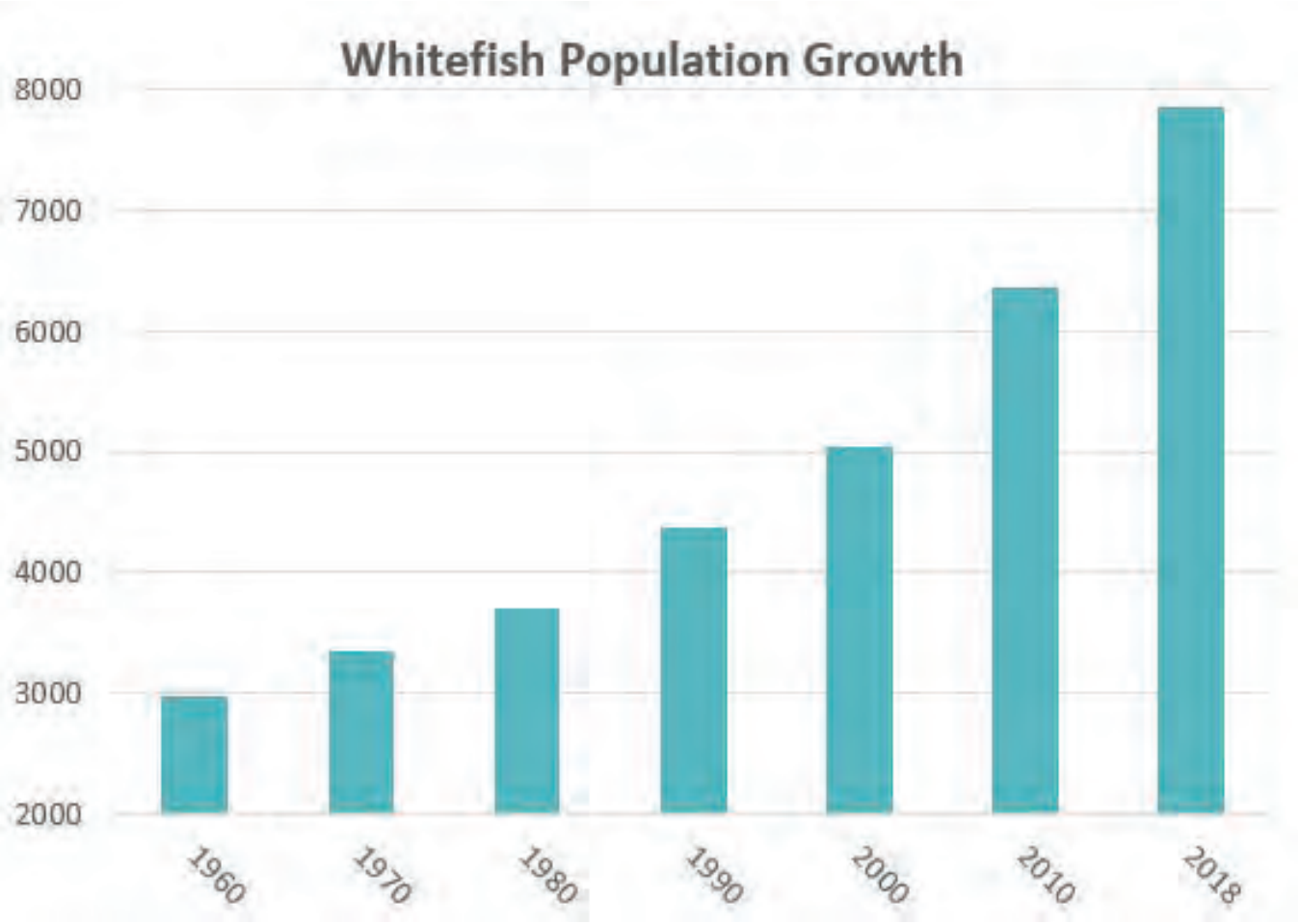
1999 South Whitefish Transportation Planning Project
The 1999 South Whitefish Transportation Planning Project was a companion follow-up document to the 1998 South Whitefish Neighborhood Plan. It proposed the following transportation corridors as alternatives to Highway 93:

- North-south connectors between Greenwood Drive and JP Road and between Baker Ave and JP Road
- East-west connectors at JP Road west to Karrow Avenue, extensions of 18th and 13th Streets, and new roads at three other locations with no existing roadways

The plan also recommended design standards for roadways including location of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and signals.

1994 US 93 Somers to Whitefish West FEIS/ROD
This 1994 Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision considered six build alternatives through Whitefish between 2nd and 7th Streets. The preferred alternative, Alternative C-3, included a one-way couplet with two lanes northbound on Spokane Avenue/Highway 93, two lanes southbound on Baker Avenue, and a new 7th Street bridge to connect Baker and Spokane Avenues.

For Highway 93 between the Whitefish River and Highway 40 the environmental impact statement considered turn lane, median, or combo alternatives. The environmental impact statement also considered an alternative route for Highway 93 to bypass Whitefish, but the bypass concept was eliminated from future consideration. The selected alternative was the combo, where some segments would have a center two-way left turn lane and some segments would have a depressed grass or raised median to separate the travel lanes. The preferred configuration was a four-lane facility with a raised median when traffic volumes warrant it. The record of decision noted that if a five-lane configuration (four-lane with center turn lane) were built (which it was), it would be wide enough to accommodate a future raised median (urban section). For the highway south of Highway 40, the environmental impact statement included a separated shared-use path as a component of all alternatives considered.



3.5 Population and Economic Trends

Population and Housing

Population data for the City of Whitefish is available from the U.S. Census Bureau in 10-year increments, with the most recent data coming from the 2010 census; population is estimated in the intervening years and is available from the Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Future population projection data is available at the county level from the Census Bureau and Montana Department of Commerce.

The ACS five-year population estimate for the City of Whitefish of 7,309 residents in 2018 is more than a 45% increase since 2000, and an almost 15% increase since 2010 (above). The ACS five-year population estimate for the Whitefish zip code area, which includes the city and surrounding areas, was about 13,656 in 2017. The area's population continues to grow at a steady pace with the potential for accelerated growth over the next twenty years. Note that U.S. Census data does not account for the number of second or vacation homes owned by non-residents in Whitefish or the surrounding area. The 2016 Whitefish Area Workforce Housing Needs Assessment indicated that about one-third of homes in the Whitefish area are owned by non-residents. Part-time occupants of these homes use City services seasonally but are not accounted for in census data.

The portion of the corridor planning area within City limits currently represents 8 percent of Whitefish's total population and housing units (586 people and 370 housing units). This percentage has increased from 6 percent in 2010 indicating the corridor planning area within City limits has increased in importance in meeting the need for housing in Whitefish.

The type of housing units located in the corridor is also important to its role in the City's overall economic health and future growth. Because of the significant number of visitors to Whitefish in both summer and winter, the community includes hotel, motel and camping facilities as well as housing units dedicated to short term rental. In 2010 about 18 percent

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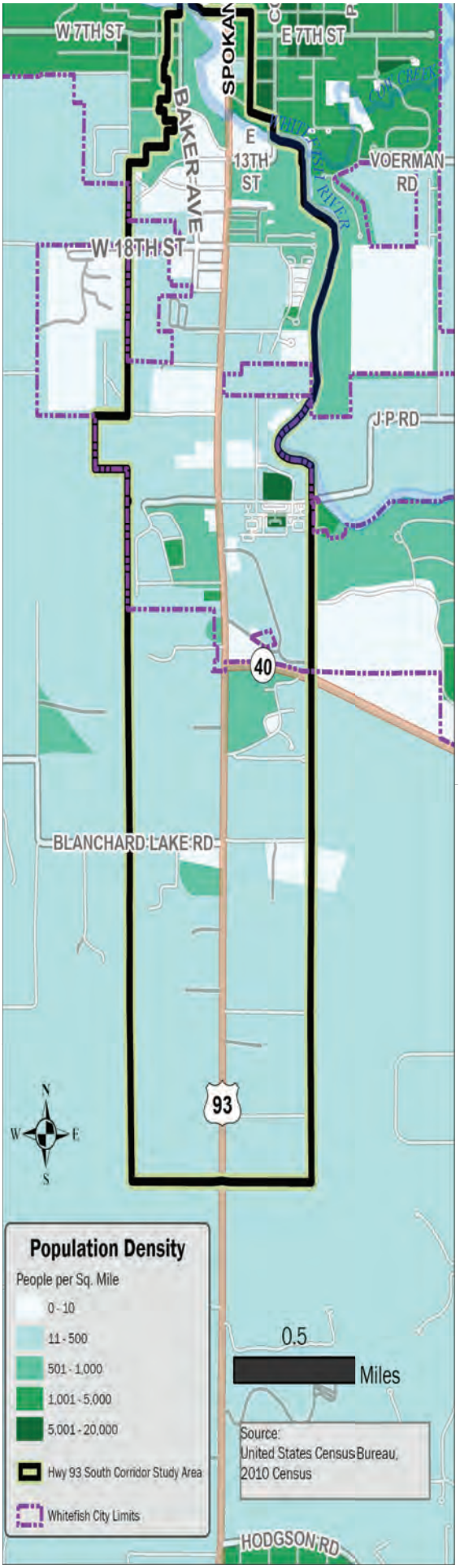


of the total housing units in Whitefish and 6 percent of the total housing units in the corridor planning area within City limits were categorized by the U.S. Census Bureau as seasonal units. This difference reflects the focus of the corridor on local serving development, including the hospital, supermarkets and building supply stores.

The corridor has several lodging facilities including the TownePlace Suites by Marriott, the Best Western Rocky Mountain Lodge and the Hampton Inn & Suites. The lodging facilities serve both the tourist trade and lodging associated with the hospital. Within City limits the corridor planning area contains 29% of the Whitefish market area's guest rooms. The market area includes lodging outside City limits such as at Whitefish Mountain Resort.

Employment

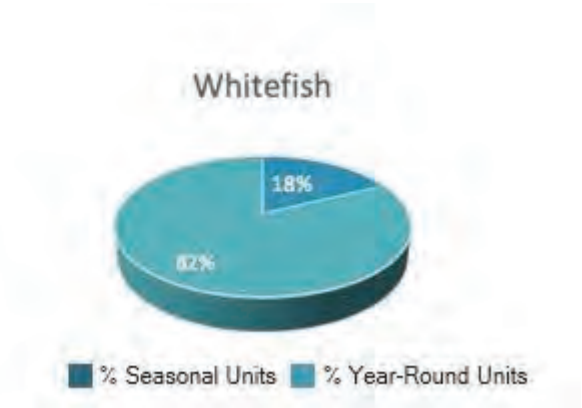
Employment in Whitefish is concentrated in the sectors that support tourism with 41.7 percent of total jobs in accommodation and food services; arts, entertainment and recreation; and retail trade sectors (Table 3.1 in Appendix X). Health care and social assistance and educational services represent 26.5 percent of total employment, the next largest jobs category represented. For comparison, 33.6 percent of all jobs in Flathead County are in the same tourism related categories, with a majority of those in retail trade indicating a broader retail base serving the region. Flathead County has a higher percentage of employment in manufacturing, wholesale trade, management of companies and administration and support businesses than Whitefish.

Whitefish total employment increased by an estimated 970 jobs, or almost 30 percent, over the thirteen-year period 2002 to 2015 (the latest year for which data is available.) Thirty-six percent of the growth in employment occurred in tourism related categories including accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment and recreation and retail trade. However, only four of the 970 new jobs were in the corridor planning area within City limits.

Tourism

As indicated above, tourism is the largest economic sector in Whitefish. The Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates that overnight visitors to Whitefish grew by an average of 5.2 percent annually from 2010 to 2017 to almost 678,000 visitors. In 2016, non-Montana resident visitors spent over

Type of Housing Units Occuring within the Corridor Planning Area and the Entire City of Whitefish



$500 million in Flathead County. Average spending per visitor in Flathead County was used to estimate visitor spending by category for Whitefish visitors based on best available information (Table 3.2, Appendix X). Total visitor spending in Whitefish for 2017 was estimated to be over $145 million. A Whitefish specific visitor spending survey would provide data that more closely reflects the spending habits of Whitefish visitors.

Retail Performance

In addition to visitor spending, local and regional residents also spend money to eat, shop and participate in activities in Whitefish. If the amount of money that average households in Whitefish will spend is the demand (resident market capacity in Table 3.3), then retail performance or sales (estimated actual spending) is the supply.

In Table 3.3 (Appendix X) a negative number in the column labeled ***Difference*** indicates residents are leaving Whitefish to shop at building materials and garden stores. This data does not account for the relocation and expansion of Nelson's Ace Hardware in the corridor planning area in 2019, a move that has responded to this opportunity. For most categories, however, spending exceeds estimated capacity. This is typical of a tourism-based economy when only the market capacity of residents is considered. The actual market capacity or demand should be based on a combination of resident and visitor spending.

There are two sources of information to estimate visitor spending capacity. The first is based on the distribution of visitor spending in Flathead County (estimated by the University of Montana Institute for Tourism & Recreation [ITRR]) applied to Whitefish visitation. The second is to compare the first estimate to the actual resort taxes collected in the categories subject to the tax. The comparison indicates estimated visitor spending based on ITRR data underestimates visitor spending in Whitefish for the retail categories in which resort tax is collected (Table 3.4, Appendix X). Resort tax is not collected on motor vehicles and parts dealers, furniture and home furnishings, electronics and appliances, building materials, garden equipment and supplies, or gasoline, so this comparison only applies to the retail categories of retail stores and food services and drinking places. The discrepancy between estimated and actual spending in some retail categories suggests that estimates of visitor spending in Whitefish based on ITRR data for the County are conservative.

When the estimated resident and visitor spending capacity is combined and compared to the estimated actual spending, overall market performance indicates that demand exceeds supply in several more categories (Table 3.5, Appendix X).

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In addition to the building materials, garden equipment and supply stores category, the gasoline store and overall retail store categories show supply is not meeting demand. Within the retail store category, several subcategories are also not meeting demand including food & beverage, general merchandise, and miscellaneous retail (Table 3.6, Appendix X). With the 2019 closure of Shopko in the general merchandise subcategory, this deficit is expected to increase.

This analysis is based on estimates and assumptions relating to typical household and visitor spending patterns and average store performance. More specific actual spending for non-resort tax retail categories in Whitefish is not currently available. However, the analysis indicates that the combined spending of residents and visitors could support additional retail options for general merchandise and food & beverage in Whitefish. Capturing the demand for new retail spending could occur in the Corridor Planning Area or any of the areas and retail districts of Whitefish (downtown Whitefish, Wisconsin Avenue corridor, etc.) and depends on community policy decisions related to development patterns.

3.6 Transportation Facilities

The transportation network within and around the Corridor Planning Area plays a significant role in its physical development and growth. This network of streets, roads and highway should be coordinated to form a system that provides efficient internal circulation as well as facilitates through traffic. Streets serve two basic functions: 1) moving multiple modes of traffic, and 2) providing access to adjacent lands. Each street is classified and designed for the specific function or combination of functions it is meant to serve. This functional classification system forms the basis for planning, designing, constructing, maintaining and operating the street system. For these reasons, urban streets are generally designed and developed in a hierarchy comprised of the following types:

A major arterial is a major road or highway with moderate to high speeds and high traffic volumes. Major arterials provide access to the regional transportation network and move traffic across the county and between cities and communities. Access to abutting lands is limited. Traffic volumes would typically exceed 15,000 vehicles per day. Highway 93, known as Spokane Avenue north of 13th Street, is the

Building materials store in the corridor.

Food and beverage businesses in the corridor.

major arterial in Whitefish and in the corridor planning area. Between Blanchard Lake Road and 13th Street, the highway has two north bound driving lanes, two south bound driving lanes, and a center two-way left turn lane. North of 13th Street, the highway narrows down to just one north bound and one south bound driving lane with no center lane. Bikes are accommodated on the shoulder of the road or on the adjacent sidewalk. The sidewalks are continuous along both sides of the highway but vary in condition, aesthetics, and the degree to which they are buffered from vehicle traffic. Pedestrian crossing opportunities are limited to marked crosswalks at the 13th Street, Commerce Street, JP Road, and Highway 40 signalized intersections.

A minor arterial is a major road with moderate speeds designed to collect or move traffic from one major part of the community to another or to move traffic to and from the major arterial system. Traffic volumes would generally range from 5,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day. Within the Corridor Planning Area minor arterials include Baker Avenue. Baker has one north bound and one south bound driving lane. There is a bike lane painted on both sides of the road shoulder and there is continuous sidewalk on the east side of the road. The sidewalk on the west side of the road extends from 6th Street south to about halfway between 15th and 18th Streets. There are marked crosswalks at the 13th and 10th Street intersections. The planned extension of Baker Avenue south to JP Road would also likely be classified as a minor arterial.

A collector is a secondary street with moderate speeds and low to moderate volumes. Such streets collect local traffic from neighborhoods and carry it to adjacent neighborhoods or to the arterial system. Such streets typically serve a neighborhood or area with 150 or more dwellings and carry 1,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day. Collectors in the Corridor Planning Area include West 7th Street and 13th Street. West 7th Street has a sidewalk on the north side of the street only. There are sidewalks on both sides of 13th Street and pedestrian crossing opportunities at Highway 93 and Baker Avenue, but no designated bike lanes. Planned extensions of Columbia Avenue south to Greenwood Drive and of Whitefish Avenue south to Shiloh Avenue likely would be classified as collectors, as well.

A local street is a minor street intended to serve individual sites, buildings or lots, and provide access to residential neighborhoods.

Local streets either feed into collectors or provide destination access off collectors. All other roads in the Corridor Planning Area not mentioned above fall into this category. There are sidewalks along one or two sides of some (but not all) of these roads, and no bike lanes.

Traffic

Traffic data is collected by MDT and traffic consultants working for the City or developers of proposed projects. Traffic counts conducted along Highway 93 between 2003 and 2018 indicate traffic volumes increased an average of 1% annually over 15 years (Table 3.7, Appendix X). Projected traffic volumes for 2030 were made in 2009 and included in the Whitefish Transportation Plan. The traffic volume in the corridor is projected to increase 30% to 40% over the next 10-15 years.

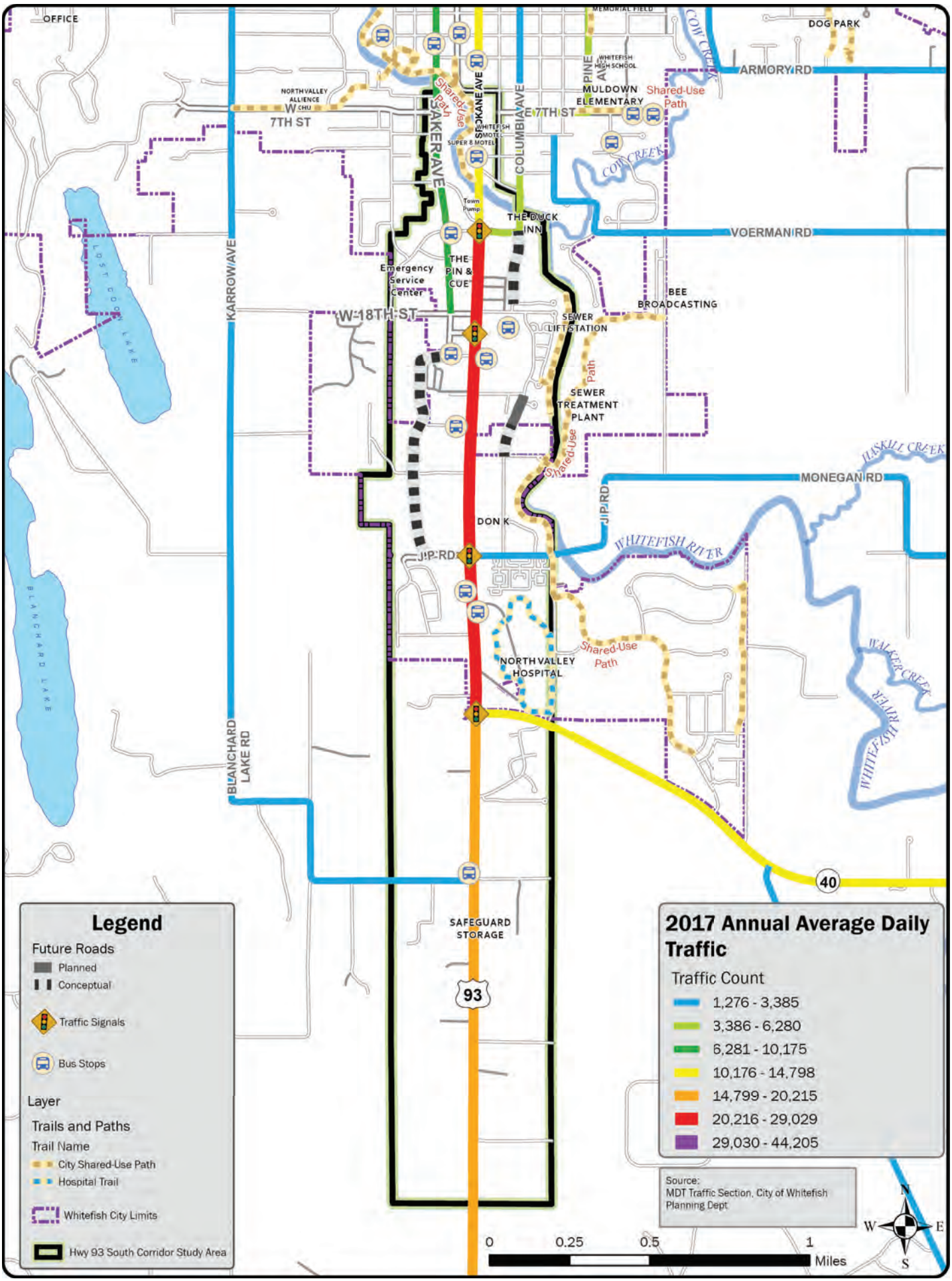
WHITEFISH ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES PROJECTED FOR 2030*	
North of WF River Bridge	18,000
13th St to Green-wood Dr	30,000
*Source - 2009 Whitefish Transportation Plan	

WHITEFISH ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES PROJECTED FOR 2030*	
North of WF River Bridge	18,000
19th St to JP Rd	35,000
0.5 mi N of MT 40	30,000
0.5 mi S of MT 40	25,000
HWY 40 E of US 93	15,000
*Source - 2009 Whitefish Transportation Plan	

As part of this plan development, Abelin Traffic Services (ATS) created a traffic model for the Corridor Planning Area using existing and potential future scenarios. The model was used to produce intersection and corridor simulations for traffic on Highway 93 South **(link to simulation videos, paper data in Appendix X?)** with a variety of different roadway and lane configurations. Currently several intersections in the corridor have a poor level of service (LOS) based on the wait times for vehicles in the morning (Existing AM) and evening (Existing PM) at those intersections (measured in seconds per vehicle, or Sec/Veh in Table 3.8).

Southbound sidewalk on Spokane Avenue near 8th Street.

Bus stop along Pheasant Run on the west side of Highway 93 South.


OFFICE
MEMORIAL FIELD
DOG PARK
COW CREEK
ARMORY RD
PINE AVE
WHITEFISH HIGH SCHOOL
MULDOWN ELEMENTARY
Shared-Use Path
NORTH VALLEY ALLIENCE CHU
7TH ST
W
E 7TH ST
MONTANA AVE
COLUMBIA AVE
BAKER AVE
WHITEFISH MOTEL
SUPER 8 MOTEL
Town Pump
THE DUCK INN
VOERMAN RD
KARROW AVE
Emergency Service Center
THE PIN & CUE
BEE BROADCASTING
W 18TH ST
SEWER LIFT STATION
SEWER TREATMENT PLANT
LOST COW LAKE
HASKILL CREEK
MONEGAN RD
J P RD
DON K
WHITEFISH RIVER
NORTH VALLEY HOSPITAL
WALKER CREEK
BLANCHARD LAKE
BLANCHARD LAKE RD
40
SAFEGUARD STORAGE
93
Legend
Future Roads
Planned
Conceptual
Traffic Signals
Bus Stops
Layer
Trails and Paths
Trail Name
City Shared-Use Path
Hospital Trail
Whitefish City Limits
Hwy 93 South Corridor Study Area
2017 Annual Average Daily Traffic
Traffic Count
1,276 - 3,385
3,386 - 6,280
6,281 - 10,175
10,176 - 14,798
14,799 - 20,215
20,216 - 29,029
29,030 - 44,205
Source:
MDT Traffic Section, City of Whitefish Planning Dept.
0
0.25
0.5
1
Miles
N
W
E
S

LEVEL OF SERVICE CLASSIFICATION		
LOS	Description	Delay per Vehicle
A	Very low delay	<10 seconds
B	Good progression	10-20 seconds
C	Limit of acceptable delay	20-35 seconds
D	Start of traffic breakdown	35-55 seconds
E	High delay	55-80 seconds
F	Congested, unacceptable delay	>80 seconds

Vehicles at intersections with a LOS A experience very low delays, or less than 10 seconds delay per vehicle. An LOS C is the limit of acceptable delay, with delays of 20-35 seconds per vehicle. Delays of 35-55 seconds per vehicle result in a LOS D and are the start of traffic breakdown. An LOS F results in unacceptable delays of greater than 80 seconds per vehicle. Commercial and residential development projects already approved but not yet constructed in the corridor (planned projects) could push current LOS grades lower, and potentially to unacceptable, unless improvements are made.

Traffic Signals

There are four traffic signals located in the corridor planning area at the intersections of Highway 93 with Highway 40, JP Road, Commerce Street and 13th Street. Providing intersection traffic controls at regular intervals of 0.25 to 0.5 miles along a roadway corridor provides a balance between access along a corridor and through movement of vehicles. If traffic signals are spaced too closely together (less than 0.25 miles between signals) or at irregular intervals, the through movement along a corridor is compromised. If traffic signals are spaced too far apart, then access to and from adjacent properties becomes difficult. Ideally, traffic signals should be spaced a consistent distance apart to promote vehicle platooning along the primary route and traffic signal coordination. New signals are usually installed only when they become warranted by traffic volumes or projected growth in an area.

The traffic signals in the corridor planning area are located with approximately half-mile spacing on section lines except for the Commerce Street signal which is about 0.3 miles from the 13th Street signal and about 0.7 miles from the JP Road signal. The Commerce Street signal provides good access to the Mountain Mall but is not the best location for providing access to areas east of the highway other than the mall. Greenwood Drive is at a

TABLE 3.8. HIGHWAY 93 SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) SUMMARY

Location on Highway 93	*Existing AM*		*Existing PM*		*AM With Planned Projects*		*PM With Planned Projects*	
	Sec/Veh	LOS	Sec/Veh	LOS	Sec/Veh	LOS	Sec/Veh	LOS
Highway 40	20.3	C	26.5	C	25.7	C	35.5	D
JP Road	8.6	A	12.5	B	10.4	B	17.2	B
Commerce Street	9.4	A	15.0	B	9.8	A	22.9	C
13th Street	29.4	C	29.4	C	44.0	D	78.3	F

half-mile spacing with existing traffic signals (other than the Commerce Street signal) and would provide good access to the east side of the highway. However, due to its proximity to the Commerce Street signal, a new traffic signal at Greenwood Drive is not recommended unless it were to replace the Commerce Street signal. Removal of the Commerce Street signal would have consequences for access to the Mall and would require further evaluation.

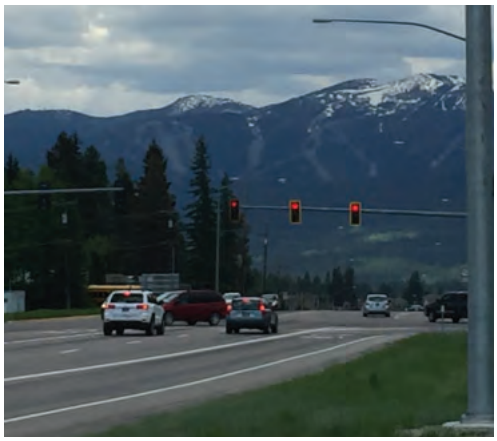
3.7 Services and Utilities

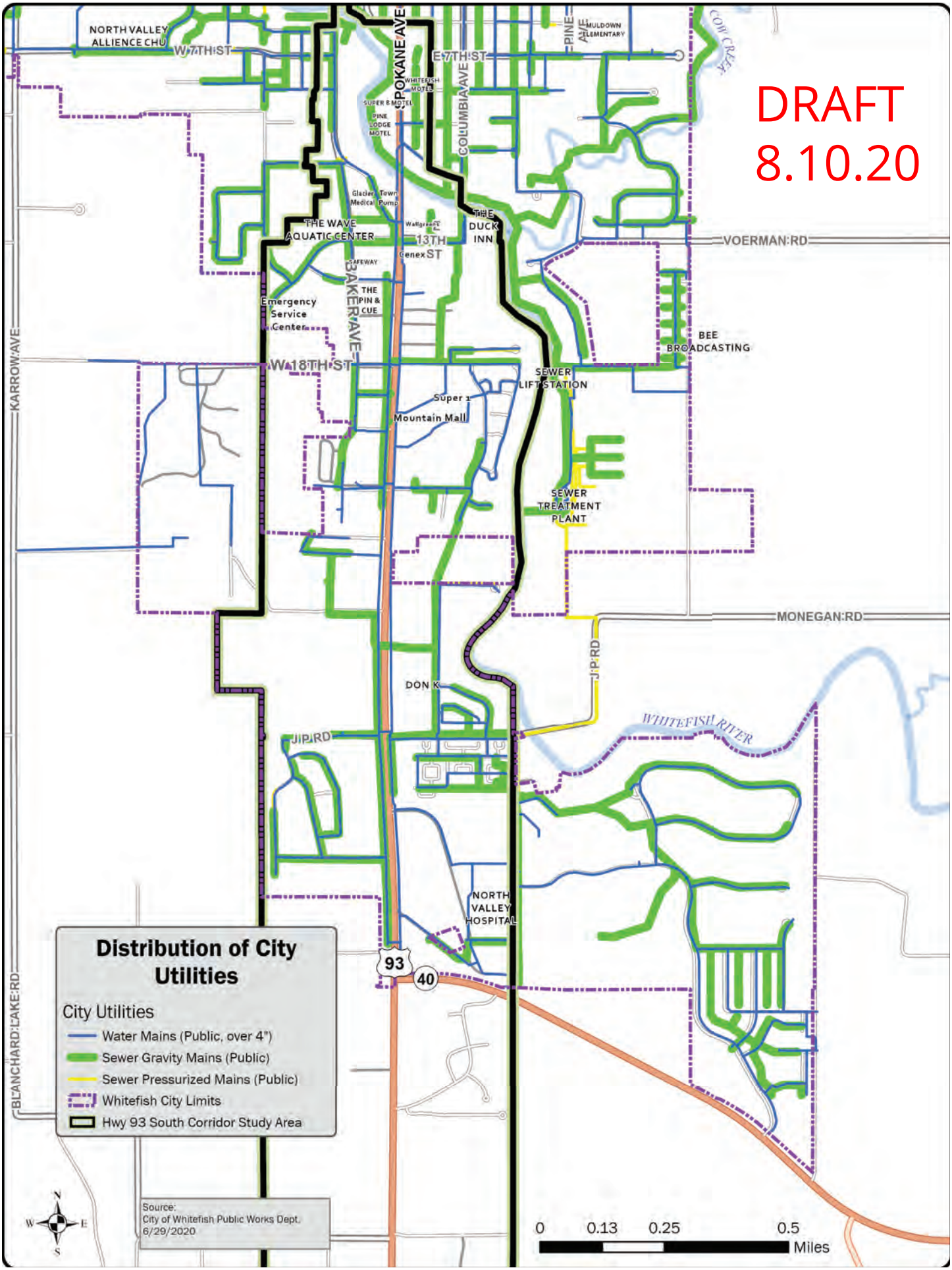
Public Utilities and Services

City water and sewer services are available to properties throughout the corridor between 6th Street and City limits near Highway 40 (see Utility Map). South of City limits (Segment C) property owners must rely on private wells and septic systems. There are separate stormwater collection systems (which include drains, mains, culverts, detention areas, and discharge points) installed throughout much of the corridor within City limits, and these discharge to the Whitefish River. South of City limits, collection, storage and discharge of stormwater is up to the property owners. Electrical power is provided by Flathead Electric Cooperative throughout all segments of the corridor.

Private Utilities and Services

Private utilities and services in the corridor include natural gas and high-speed internet offered through wireless, cable, DSL and fiber connections for business use in the corridor. Shipping is available through UPS, FEDEX, and other nationwide providers.

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Distribution of City Utilities
City Utilities
Water Mains (Public, over 4")
Sewer Gravity Mains (Public)
Sewer Pressurized Mains (Public)
Whitefish City Limits
Hwy 93 South Corridor Study Area
Source:
City of Whitefish Public Works Dept.
6/29/2020
0
0.13
0.25
0.5
Miles
NORTH VALLEY ALLIENCE CHU
W 7TH ST
E 7TH ST
POKANE AVE
COLUMBIA AVE
PINE AVE
MULDOWN ELEMENTARY
COW CREEK
WHITEFISH MOTEL
SUPER 8 MOTEL
PINE LODGE MOTEL
Glacier Town Medical Pump
THE WAVE AQUATIC CENTER
Walgreens
13TH ST
Genex
THE DUCK INN
VOERMAN RD
SAFEWAY
BAKER AVE
THE PIN & CUE
Emergency Service Center
BEE BROADCASTING
KARROW AVE
W 18TH ST
SEWER LIFT STATION
Super 1
Mountain Mall
SEWER TREATMENT PLANT
MONEGAN RD
J P RD
DON K
WHITEFISH RIVER
NORTH VALLEY HOSPITAL
93
40
BLANCHARD LAKE RD
N
W
E
S

3.8 Land Use and Zoning

Existing Land Use

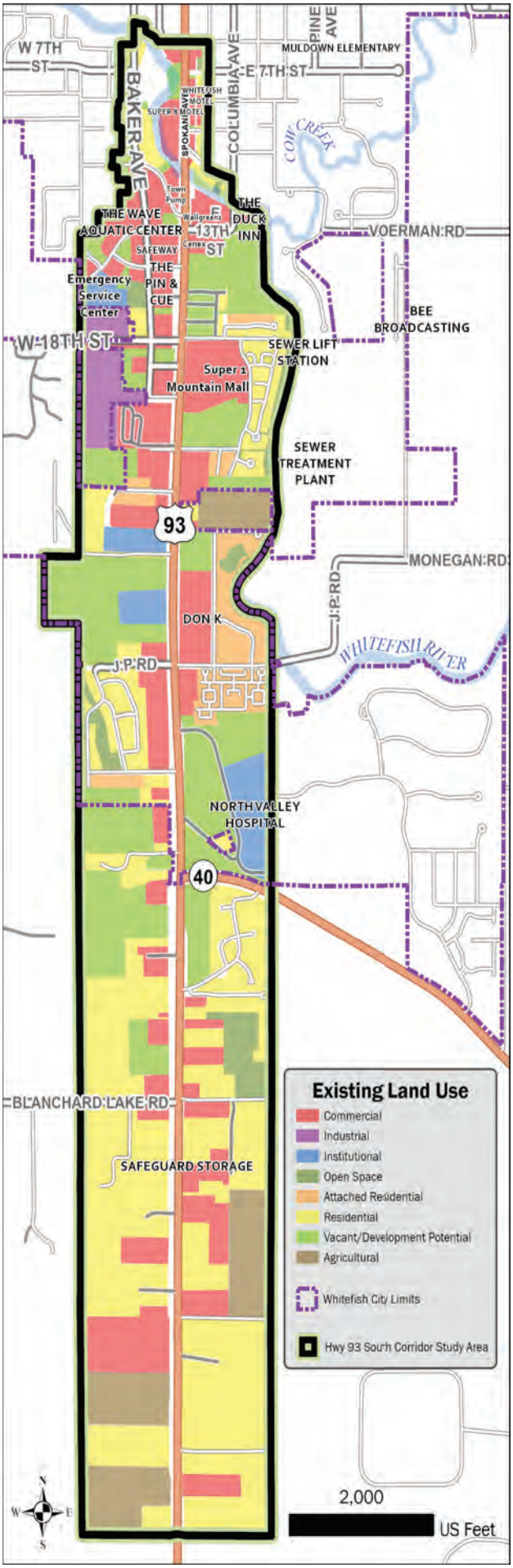
On the north end of the corridor planning area, between 6th Street and the Whitefish River crossing, the parcels fronting the highway are used primarily for providing professional services, lodging, and other commercial purposes. Exceptions are found between 6th and 8th Streets where there is a small retail jewelry store that is legally non-conforming, a conditionally permitted fly-fishing store and guide service, and a vacant building. East of the highway, parcels can be accessed via an alleyway; most parcels east of the alley are single-family residential on Kalispell Avenue. Exceptions are the Whitefish Motel between 8th and 9th streets and some vacant parcels north of the 7th Street right-of-way. On the east side of Kalispell Avenue are more single-family residential uses, as well as an electrical station between 6th and 7th Streets. Parcels facing Baker Avenue south of the river are primarily used for single-family residential. Two professional offices are conditionally permitted between 8th and 10th Streets.

From the Whitefish River and 10th Street south to the City limits, uses are a mix of commercial, professional, medical, lodging, restaurants, residential, churches, and hospital. Vacant buildings and lots are interspersed throughout and are depicted on the map to the right.

South of City limits to the south end of the corridor planning area, land uses are mixed with single-family residential lots alternating with parcels used as professional and medical offices and other small businesses. Beyond the county zoned business service district, there are several businesses such as a native plant nursery and storage facilities, while much of the land use remains rural residential. Behind the parcels fronting the highway, land use is suburban residential with some limited agriculture.

Future Land Use

The 2007 Growth Policy designated future land uses for the Whitefish area based on the community's vision for the future and projected growth. From 6th Street to Great Northern Drive and the North Valley Hospital, land use adjacent to the highway is designated for general commercial purposes, defined by auto-oriented commercial and service uses. Primary access is meant to be by automobile with ample parking provided on site.



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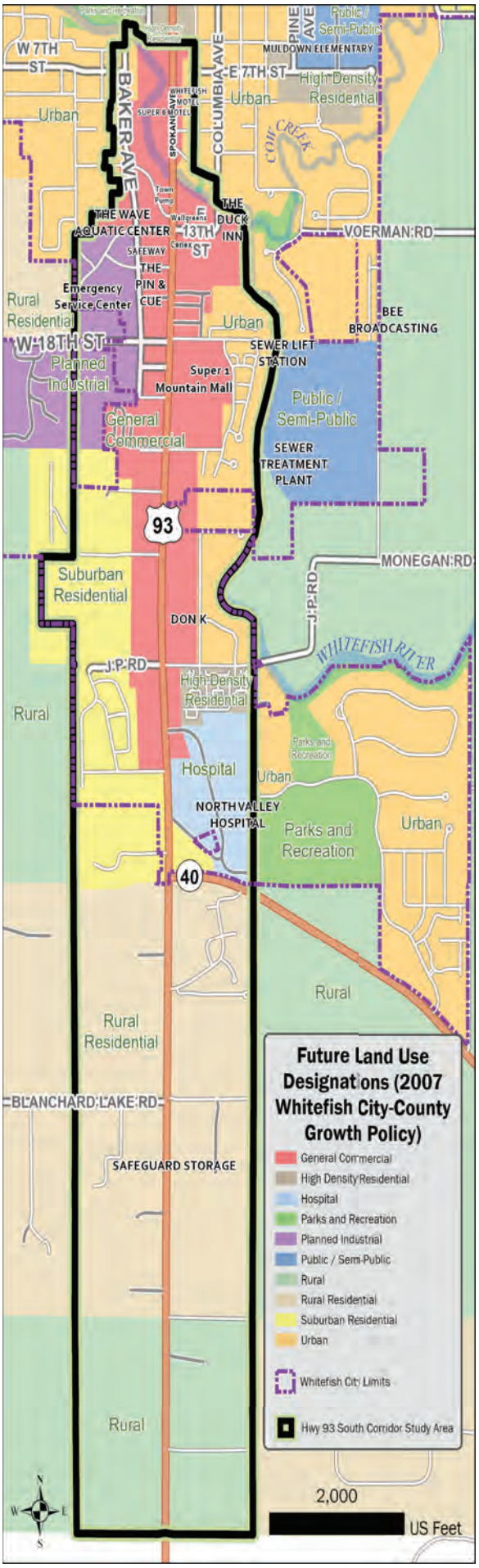
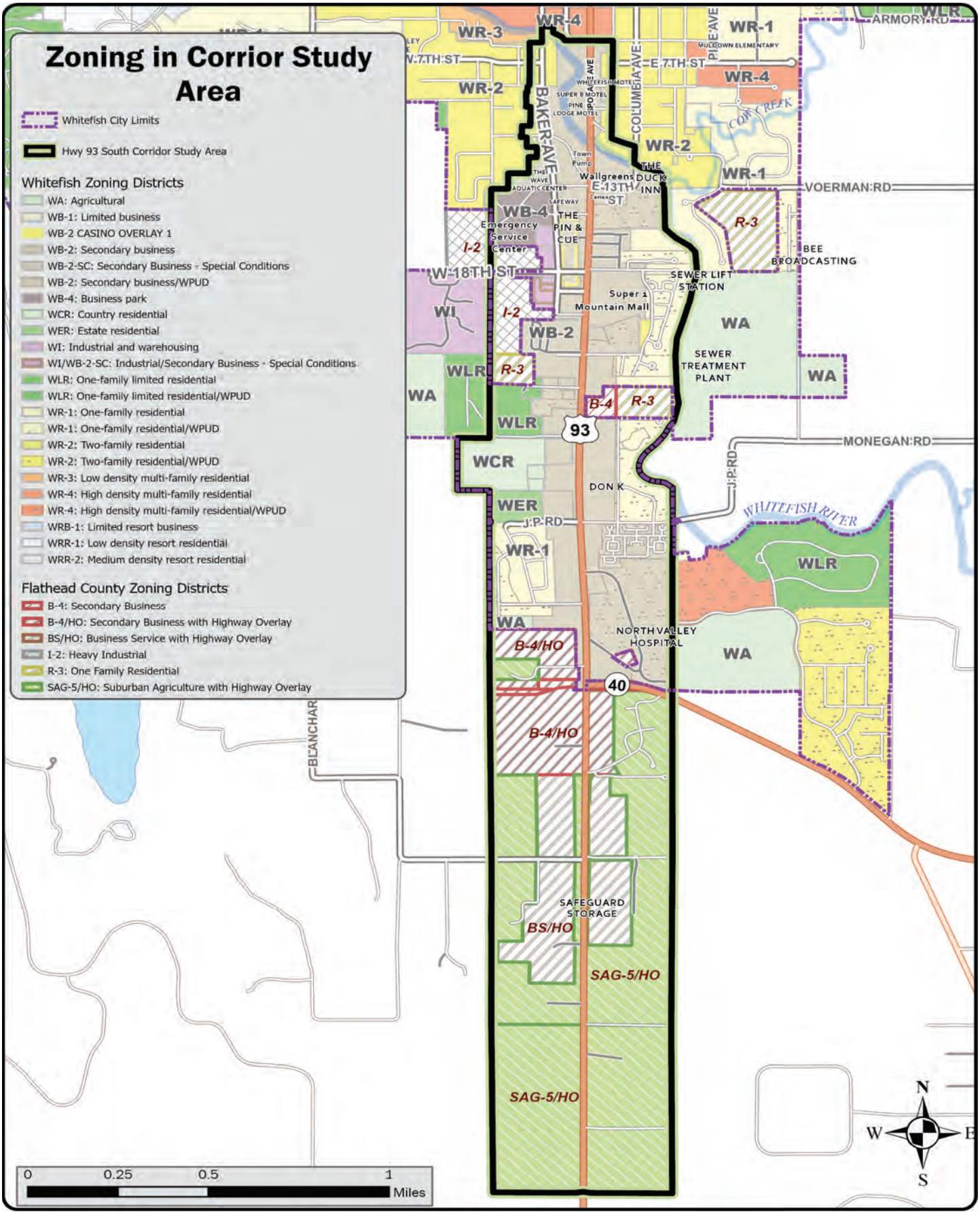


The planned industrial land use designation off Flathead Avenue and West 18th Avenue west of Baker Avenue is meant for vital industries that don't compete with commercial development for land and don't need drive by traffic to generate business. The hospital land use designation is applied where medical office development is desired. The North Valley Hospital and related medical offices and services fall into this category.

Further from the highway to the east and west, the future land use designation is urban on the north end of the corridor, urban and suburban residential in the middle of the corridor length, and rural residential or rural south of the Highway 40 intersection. There is also a small area designated for high-density residential, which is meant to accommodate multi-family apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Urban is a residential designation with mostly one- and two-family types of residences with densities of 2 to 12 units per acre. Suburban residential is primarily lower density residential (0.4 to 2.5 units per acre) with single-family homes and some low-density town homes. Rural residential is less dense again, with 2.5 to 10 acre lots per home. Rural areas are designated for farmlands with extremely low density residential.

Zoning

The zoning that applies within the corridor planning area is illustrated on Figure X and summarized in Table 3.9 (or pie chart). Most of the area is zoned for Secondary Business (WB-2, WB-2/WPUD, and WB-2 Casino Overlay in Whitefish; B-4/HO in the County) or Business Service District/Highway Overlay (BS/HO) in parcels fronting the highway. These lots are backed by lots zoned for Two-family Residential (WR-2) between 6th and 13th Streets; High Density Multi-family Residential (WR-4/WPUD), Business Park (WB-4), and Industrial and Warehousing (WI) between 13th Street and the City limits; One-family Residential (WR-1, WR-1/WPUD), One-family Limited Residential (WLR), Estate, Country or Rural residential (WER, WCR, and R-2.5 in the County), and Suburban Agriculture (SAG-5 in the County) are found throughout the rest of the corridor.


Zoning in Corrior Study Area
Whitefish City Limits
Hwy 93 South Corridor Study Area
Whitefish Zoning Districts
WA: Agricultural
WB-1: Limited business
WB-2 CASINO OVERLAY 1
WB-2: Secondary business
WB-2-SC: Secondary Business - Special Conditions
WB-2: Secondary business/WPUD
WB-4: Business park
WCR: Country residential
WER: Estate residential
WI: Industrial and warehousing
WI/WB-2-SC: Industrial/Secondary Business - Special Conditions
WLR: One-family limited residential
WLR: One-family limited residential/WPUD
WR-1: One-family residential
WR-1: One-family residential/WPUD
WR-2: Two-family residential
WR-2: Two-family residential/WPUD
WR-3: Low density multi-family residential
WR-4: High density multi-family residential
WR-4: High density multi-family residential/WPUD
WRB-1: Limited resort business
WRR-1: Low density resort residential
WRR-2: Medium density resort residential
Flathead County Zoning Districts
B-4: Secondary Business
B-4/HO: Secondary Business with Highway Overlay
BS/HO: Business Service with Highway Overlay
I-2: Heavy Industrial
R-3: One Family Residential
SAG-5/HO: Suburban Agriculture with Highway Overlay
WR-4
WR-3
WR-2
WR-1
WB-4
WB-2
WI
WLR
WA
WCR
WER
I-2
R-3
B-4
B-4/HO
BS/HO
SAG-5/HO
W 7TH ST
E 7TH ST
W 18TH ST
E 13TH ST
BAKER AVE
COLUMBIA AVE
PINE AVE
ARMORY RD
VOERMAN RD
MONEGAN RD
J P RD
BLANCHARD
COW CREEK
WHITEFISH RIVER
93
40
MULCOWN ELEMENTARY
WHITEFISH MOTEL
SUPER 8 MOTEL
PINE LODGE MOTEL
Town Pump
THE WAVE AQUATIC CENTER
SAFEWAY
Wallgreens
THE DUCK INN
Emergency Service Center
THE PIN & CUE
Super 1
Mountain Mall
SEWER LIFT STATION
BEE BROADCASTING
SEWER TREATMENT PLANT
DON K
NORTH VALLEY HOSPITAL
SAFEGUARD STORAGE
0
0.25
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1
Miles
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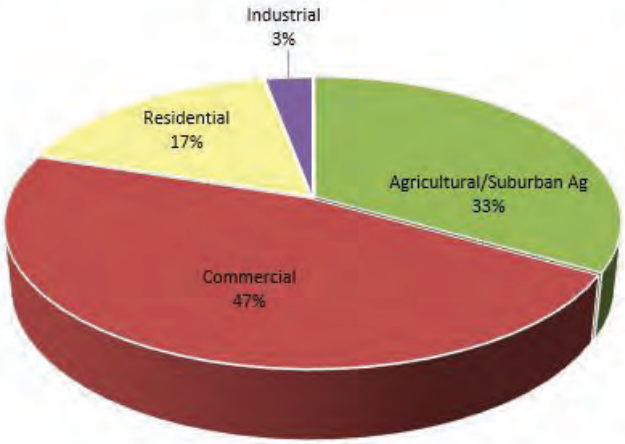
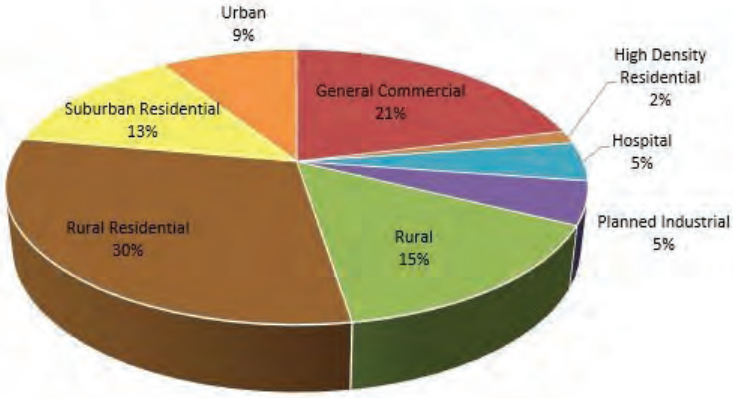
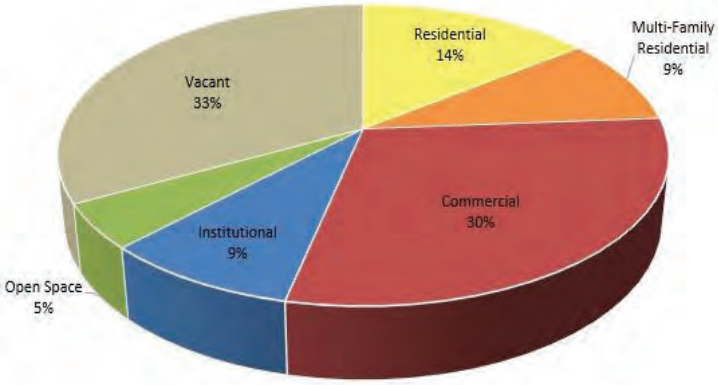
Types and Proportion of Zoning Available in Corridor



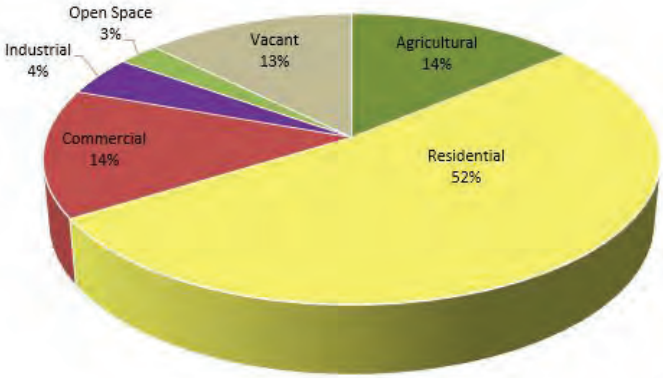
Future Land Use Designation in Corridor - 2007 Whitefish City-County Growth Policy



Proportion of Existing Uses in Corridor Within City Limits



Proportion of Existing Uses in County Section of Corridor



3.9 Environment

The natural environment includes several components that may influence where development and what type of development is appropriate in the Corridor Planning Area. These environmental features are protected by federal, state, or local regulation, and/or they enhance the area's unique beauty and have value to the community. These include steep slopes and topography, natural vegetation, wetlands and riparian areas, the Whitefish River and floodplains, and depth to groundwater.

Topography/Steep Slopes

Slopes greater than 30% grade are not considered suitable for development unless the design or construction methods used can eliminate the hazards associated with building on steep slopes (Whitefish Subdivision Regulations §12-4-4). Slopes greater than 10% grade will likely need a geotechnical review before a subdivision is approved.

Natural Vegetation

Landcover in the Corridor Planning Area where not developed is a mix of montane grasslands and mixed conifer forests. Montane grasslands in northwest Montana are dominated by rough fescue with Idaho fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass, and western wheatgrass abundant or present. The mixed montane conifer forests in the corridor planning area are primarily dominated by Douglas-fir with western larch, grand fir, ponderosa pine and lodgepole pine. There are also small stands of wetter forest in the corridor planning area that include western hemlock and western red cedar.

Wetlands and Riparian Areas

Montana Natural Heritage Program mapping indicates a linear complex of emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands extending northwest from the Highway 40 intersection, through the Great Northern Heights subdivision, to the Assembly of God property west of Park Knoll Road (Figure X). Wetlands and riparian areas associated with the Whitefish River are present in a few locations along the north and east side of the corridor planning area. There was also a small emergent wetland and pond mapped within the Alta Views development (now filled); an excavated stormwater pond in the Riverwood Park subdivision; a small excavated pond east of the Dalen Dental property, a large excavated pond south of Mountain Mall, and an impounded stormwater pond on Baker Avenue below the City's Emergency Services Building.

Around wetlands a buffer of 100 feet for single-family residential development and 125 feet for multi-family residential and commercial development, plus a 10-foot setback from the buffer must be maintained unless the wetland type or size is exempt from the water quality protection regulations (Whiteish Zoning Regulations §11-3-29).

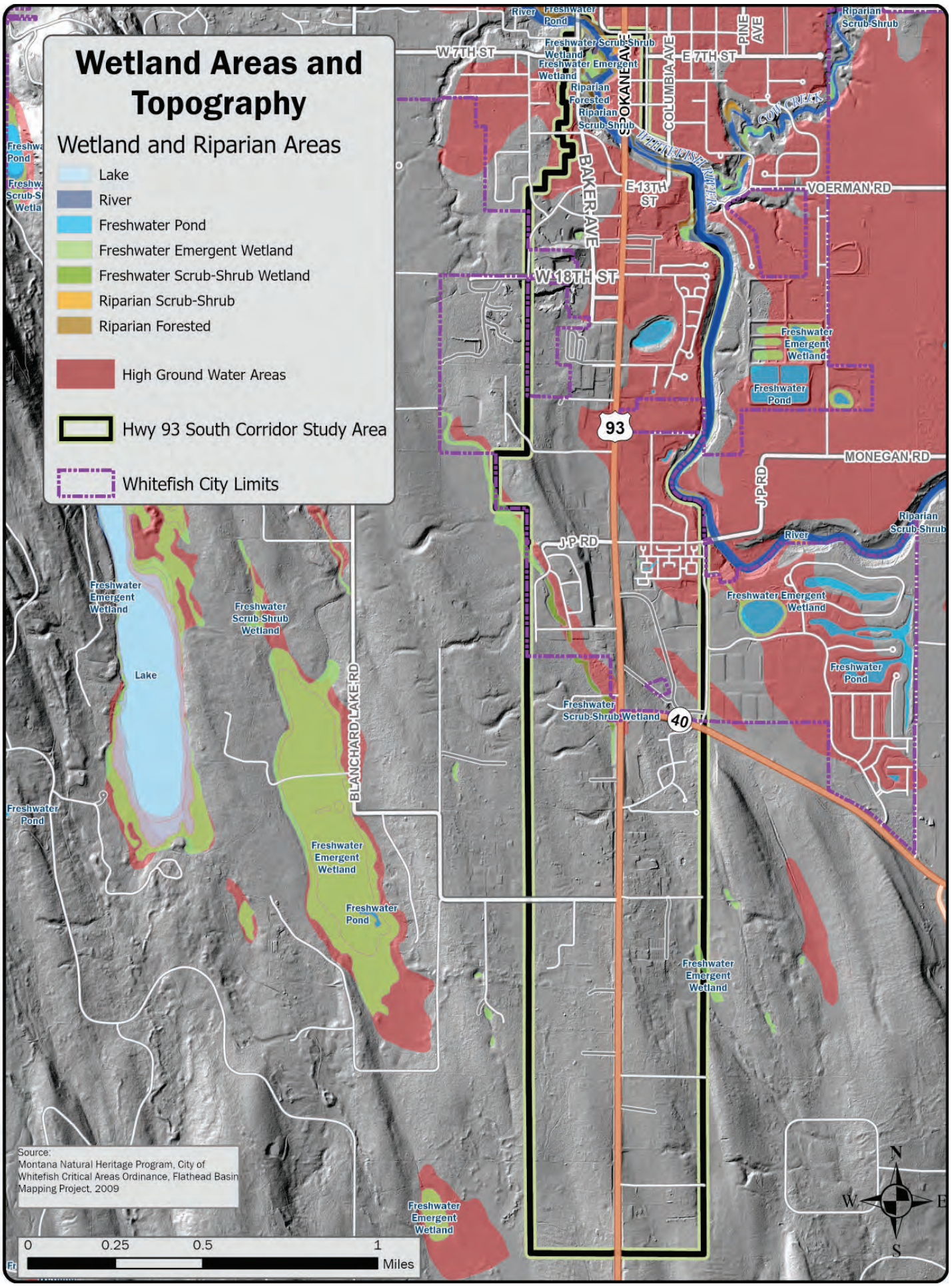
Whitefish River and Floodplains

The Whitefish River and its associated floodplain bisect the northern part of the corridor with bridges at both Baker Avenue and Spokane Avenue (Figure X). The river forms the eastern boundary of the corridor planning area from the Columbia Avenue bridge south to just upstream of JP Road, at which point it turns further east and away from the corridor. Structures are not allowed in the river buffer or setback areas. The buffer is 75 feet or to the top of bank (whichever is greater) and the setback is no less than 20 feet beyond the buffer. The purpose of the buffer is to protect the water quality of the river, while the setback is intended to protect the buffer from human disturbance.

High Groundwater

Areas with potential for high groundwater occur throughout much of Whitefish, including in the corridor (Figure X next page). Areas with high groundwater are not suitable for development unless the hazard is eliminated or overcome by design and construction methods (Whitefish Subdivision Regulations §12-4-4).

DRAFT 8.10.20


Wetland Areas and Topography
Wetland and Riparian Areas
Lake
River
Freshwater Pond
Freshwater Emergent Wetland
Freshwater Scrub-Shrub Wetland
Riparian Scrub-Shrub
Riparian Forested
High Ground Water Areas
Hwy 93 South Corridor Study Area
Whitefish City Limits
W 7TH ST
E 7TH ST
SPOKANE AVE
COLUMBIA AVE
PINE AVE
BAKER AVE
E 13TH ST
W 18TH ST
VOERMAN RD
MONEGAN RD
J P RD
BLANCHARD LAKE RD
COW CREEK
WHITEFISH RIVER
93
40
Lake
Source:
Montana Natural Heritage Program, City of Whitefish Critical Areas Ordinance, Flathead Basin Mapping Project, 2009
0
0.25
0.5
1
Miles
N
S
E
W

Three large diameter culverts convey the Whitefish River under Spokane Avenue between 9th and 13th Streets.

outcomes. She agreed with M. Nelson that we can't anticipate all possible uses that would be permitted, so keeping the CUP is safer.

- In favor of intermittent raised medians
- Transportation goals – she doesn't see mention of the backage road concept previously discussed and askes that it be included
- In favor of roundabouts
- 10th Street easement – the road used to be the main entrance to downtown before the Spokane bridge was constructed. City should reclaim and use it.
- Environment and Open Space Goal 1, Objective 3, Landscape fingers are also recommended in the Downtown Master Plan to help interrupt the strip view, concept should have more emphasis

E. Next Meeting – scheduled for February 18, 2020

F. Adjournment – 4:55pm

DRAFT