



Planning & Building Department: 2019 Annual Report



Newly Built Aspen Apartments on Colorado Avenue

Planning for Sustainable Growth and Affordable Housing

2020 has arrived, a fresh decade has begun. Whitefish is a special place, and people are visiting and moving here in droves. They are also building here. The last ten years showed a continual upward trend in growth in the City of Whitefish as we inched back to pre-recession numbers.

2019 was a decade high for new residential construction, with a total of 246 new dwelling units permitted, the most since 292 in 2005. That contributed over forty million dollars in community investment. A total of eight new commercial buildings were permitted. Those, along with commercial additions and remodels, totaled 5.5 million dollars in estimated project costs. Total building permits were the highest of the decade in 2019, almost 200 more than the previous high in 2018.

Land use permitting, including subdivisions, conditional use permits, and other types of planning applications continued to be busy in 2019. Eleven new subdivisions were preliminarily approved with 52 new lots. 15 subdivisions went to final plat, creating 233 new lots, the most in the decade. We also permitted 41 legal short term rental units in the City. Other permit numbers were similar to last year, with the biggest jump being the number of architectural review applications, which nearly doubled the previous decade high.

City planning staff worked on several important long range planning projects. We made headway on the Highway 93 South Corridor Plan, which will be completed in the Spring of 2020. We implemented a major component of our Strategic Housing Plan by adopting mandatory inclusionary zoning, which requires 20% of new units for multi-family and subdivisions to be deed restricted for moderate income households through the Whitefish Housing Authority.

We expect our robust growth to continue in 2020, perhaps slowing down a bit from 2019 numbers. Here's to a new year with fresh challenges and opportunities!

All the best,

David Taylor, AICP, Director of Planning and Building

Inside this issue:

<i>Land Use Permits</i>	2
<i>Population/Annexation</i>	3
<i>Subdivision Activity</i>	3
<i>Building Permit Activity</i>	4

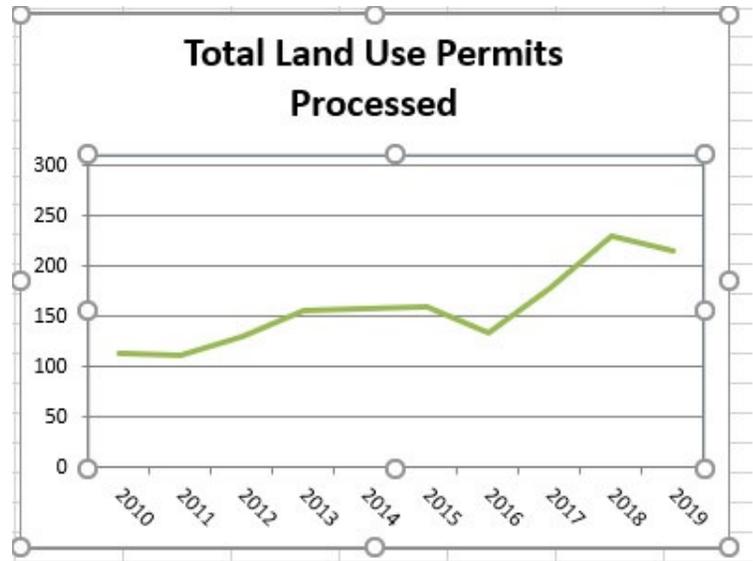
Special points of interest:

- 25 acres annexed
- 52 lots preliminary platted
- 233 lots final platted
- 24 conditional use permits
- 63 architectural reviews
- 8 variances
- 35 lakeshore permits
- 45 sign permits
- 158 code violations resolved
- 95 new single family home building permits
- 246 total new dwelling units
- 8 new commercial building permits
- \$46 million in construction-related community investment

2019 Land Use Permit Activity

Total land use permit activity in 2019 was the highest in the decade with the exception of 2018, a year whose numbers were skewed by a large volume of short term rental permits processed. The Planning Department administered a total of 214 permits in 2019, 41 of which were for short term rentals. This is compared to 103 short term rental permits in 2018 and 25 in 2017.

The department also processed 25 sign permits and 20 temporary sign permits, which is considerably less than previous years in the decade.

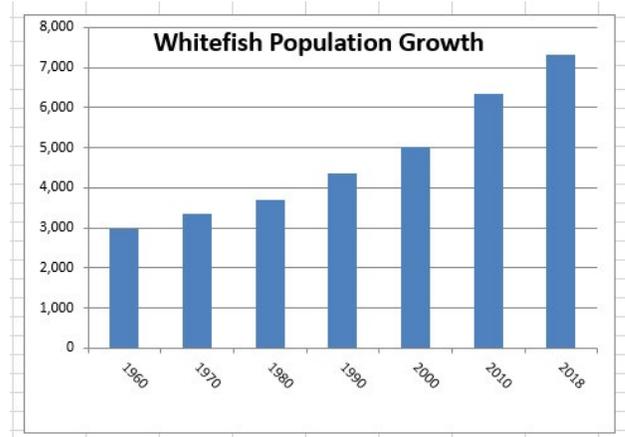


Land Use Permits: 2010-2019

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Preliminary Plat Applications	4	1	1	6	5	12	7	8	12	11
Final Plat Applications	4	1	1	5	5	6	4	9	0	15
Conditional Use Permit	5	9	13	15	11	20	9	15	14	24
Planned Unit Development	2	1	3	3	4	0	2	3	9	0
Architectural Review	20	14	22	21	31	38	29	26	31	63
Zone Change	0	4	0	6	9	5	10	24	10	5
Variance	5	8	4	7	2	4	2	8	4	8
Water Quality Permits	10	8	11	11	3	1	2	1	0	0
New Food Vendor Permit	1	1	3	2	2	3	2	6	5	4
Temporary Use Permit	1	5	7	5	3	2	1	0	1	1
Short-Term Rental Permit				1	5	3	15	25	103	41
Floodplain Permit	1	1	5	4	1	2	2	0	1	3
Lakeshore Permit	35	28	40	40	41	38	26	36	17	35
Subdivision Exemption	21	20	13	25	29	17	19	13	17	32
Zoning Text Amendment	4	7	5	2	5	4	2	2	4	7
Subdivision Text Amendment	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Growth Policy Amendment	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	1	1	0
Total Land Use Permits Processed	114	112	129	156	158	159	133	177	229	214

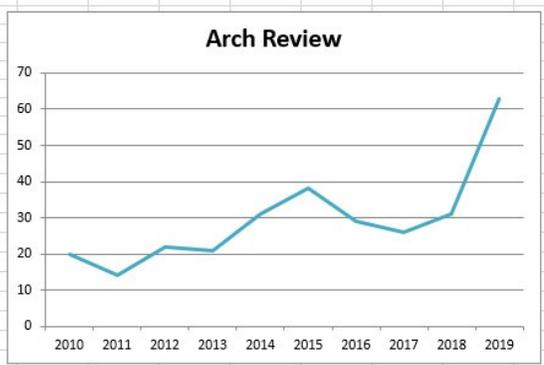
Population Growth

According to the US Census Bureau estimate for Whitefish, the population was 7,309. This is a 15% increase in population from April 1, 2010. Flathead County grew by about 12% and the State of Montana grew by approximately 7.4% since the 2010 census.



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018
Whitefish	2,965	3,349	3,703	4,368	5,032	6,357	7,309
Flathead County	32,965	39,460	51,966	59,218	74,471	90,928	102,106
Montana	674,767	694,407	786,690	799,065	902,195	989,415	1,062,305

Architectural Review 2010-2019



Subdivision Activity: 2010-2019

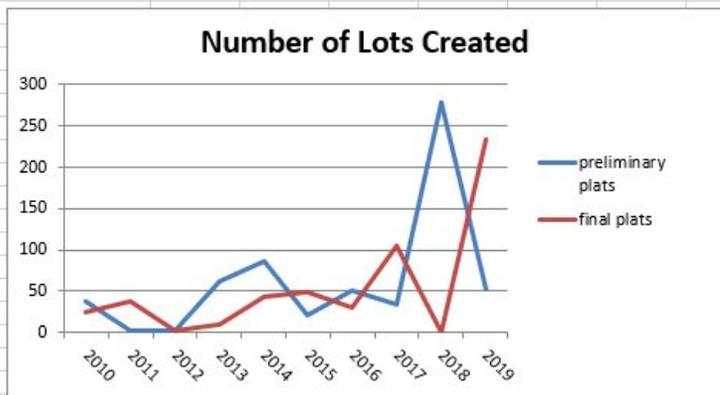
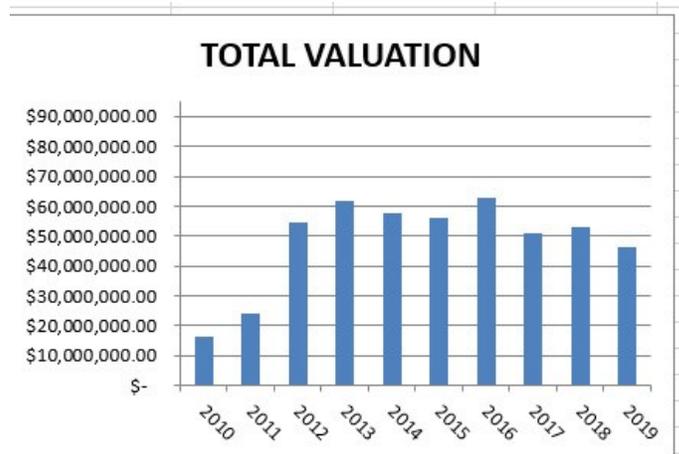
The city reviewed 11 preliminary plat applications for a total of 52 new lots. This is considerably less than 2018's 278 new lots. The City also approved 15 final plat applications for 233 new lots in 2019, which is by far the most in the decade.

Annexations: 2010-2019

The City of Whitefish expanded its boundaries by 24.9 acres in 2019. Over the past decade, the city has expanded its boundaries by approximately 334 acres.

2010	3.52
2011	4.65
2012	28.83
2013	2.02
2014	53.93
2015	16.7
2016	26.44
2017	141.38
2018	31.1
2019	24.9

Construction Permit Valuation 2010-2019



City of Whitefish

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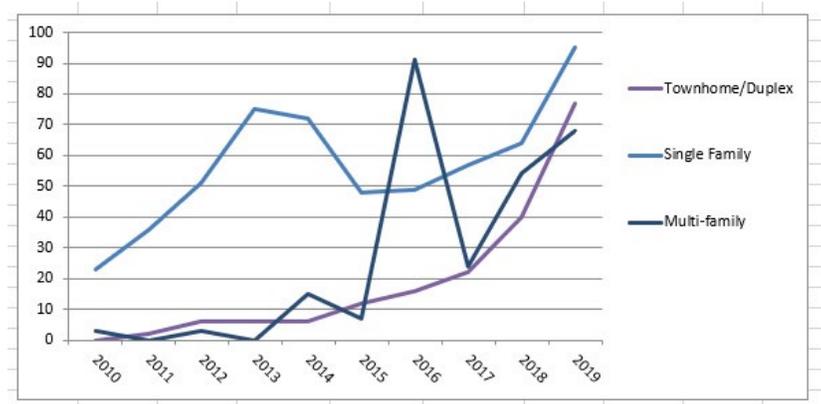


New Muldown Elementary School Project Under Construction

Building Permit Activity

The total number of new residential construction units in 2019 was the most in the decade, nearing the high in 2005 of 292. The increase encompassed single family, townhome/duplexes and multi-family alike. Commercial permit activity was about the same as 2018, with a few more projects but less valuation. Total building permits last year were a decade high by a considerable amount.

Residential Permit Types



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Single Family Residential	23	36	51	75	72	48	49	57	64	95
remodel - SFR	61	66	75	68	65	55	39	57	38	47
addition - SFR	16	17	25	14	27	31	42	44	36	22
Townhouse/Duplex	0	2	6	6	6	12	16	22	40	77
remodel - TH/DU	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
addition - TH/DU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Multifamily (units)	3	0	3	0	15	7	91	24	54	68
remodel - MF	0	0	1	3	7	0	0	5	1	0
addition - MF	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS	26	38	60	81	93	67	156	103	158	246
Commercial	1	3	2	5	2	4	11	5	5	8
remodel - com	36	30	22	40	28	22	35	30	28	29
addition - com	4	2	0	8	8	7	11	6	9	5
TOTAL COMMERCIAL	41	35	24	53	38	33	57	41	42	42
Electrical permits	137	156	159	176	184	170	208	181	208	231
Mechanical permits	77	107	97	134	157	144	135	141	151	212
Plumbing permits	79	95	95	148	152	139	147	133	203	230
TOTAL PERMITS	360	431	435	592	624	553	703	599	762	961