

# GROWTH POLICIES: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR LOCAL LEADERS



## MONTANA CODE ANNOTATED

Title 76. Land Resources and Use

Chapter 1. Planning Boards

Part 6. Growth Policy

## WHAT IS A GROWTH POLICY?

- A growth policy is a community's official guide used to make decisions about the future, particularly with regards to land use, infrastructure, and services.
- A growth policy identifies the goals, policies, and projects that each jurisdiction will work towards.
- A growth policy provides the legal basis for adopting or updating land use regulations.
- A growth policy is not a regulatory tool and cannot be used to solely to make decisions on proposed land use projects or development. It must be coupled with other factors.

## WHY CREATE A GROWTH POLICY?

- Create a common vision for the future of a community.
- Help create and maintain the type of community that residents want.
- Identify goals, objectives, and achievable projects to make the common vision a reality.
- Provide a consistent framework for decision making and reduce ambiguity and inconsistency in the decision-making process.
- Provide the legal basis for the creation or update of any regulations such as zoning or subdivision regulations.
- Increase a community's competitiveness for limited state and federal grants funds that help pay for infrastructure: water, sewer, bridges, buildings etc.

## CONTENT OF A GROWTH POLICY

- The growth policy statute identifies the minimum content that must be included in the document.
- The statute does not define the level of detail to which each element must be described, that is entirely up to the governing body to decide.
- Depending upon the issues faced by a community, some topics will be more important than others.

