

# Town of West Yellowstone

Tuesday, November 21, 2017

West Yellowstone Town Hall, 440 Yellowstone Avenue

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**7:00 PM**

Purchase Orders

Treasurer's Report & Securities Report

Claims ∞

Consent Agenda: **Minutes of November 7, 2017 Town Council Meeting** ∞

Business License Applications

- Four Winds Storage (update)

Advisory Board Report(s)

Town Manager & Department Head Reports

**Comment Period**

- **Public Comment**
- **Council Comments**

## NEW BUSINESS

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Adoption of the Growth Policy

Discussion/Action

Mistletoe Magic Exposition License

Discussion/Action

Christmas Stroll

Discussion/Action

- Encroachment Permit: banners, barrels, hayrides
- Outside Amplification Permit
- Special Event Permit (FYI)

Correspondence/FYI/Meeting Reminders

- Yellowstone Ski Festival, November 21-25, 2017
- Town Christmas Party, December 15, 2017



**Policy No. 16 (Abbreviated)**  
**Policy on Public Hearings and Conduct at Public Meetings**

Public Hearing/Public Meeting

A public hearing is a formal opportunity for citizens to give their views to the Town Council for consideration in its decision making process on a specific issue. At a minimum, a public hearing shall provide for submission of both oral and written testimony for and against the action or matter at issue.

Oral Communication

It is the Council's goal that citizens resolve their complaints for service or regarding employees' performance at the staff level. However, it is recognized that citizens may from time to time believe it is necessary to speak to Town Council on matters of concern. Accordingly, Town Council expects any citizen to speak in a civil manner, with due respect for the decorum of the meeting, and with due respect for all persons attending.

- No member of the public shall be heard until recognized by the presiding officer.
- Public comments related to non-agenda items will only be heard during the Public Comment portion of the meeting unless the issue is a Public Hearing. Public comments specifically related to an agenda item will be heard immediately prior to the Council taking up the item for deliberation.
- Speakers must state their name for the record.
- Any citizen requesting to speak shall limit him or herself to matters of fact regarding the issue of concern.
- Comments should be limited to three (3) minutes unless prior approval by the presiding officer.
- If a representative is elected to speak for a group, the presiding officer may approve an increased time allotment.
- If a response from the Council or Board is requested by the speaker and cannot be made verbally at the Council or Board meeting, the speaker's concerns should be addressed in writing within two weeks.
- Personal attacks made publicly toward any citizen, council member, or town employees are not allowed. Citizens are encouraged to bring their complaints regarding employee performance through the supervisory chain of command.

Any member of the public interrupting Town Council proceedings, approaching the dais without permission, otherwise creating a disturbance, or failing to abide by these rules of procedure in addressing Town Council, shall be deemed to have disrupted a public meeting and, at the direction of the presiding officer, shall be removed from the meeting room by Police Department personnel or other agent designated by Town Council or Operations Manager.

General Town Council Meeting Information

- Regular Town Council meetings are held at 7:00 PM on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at the West Yellowstone Town Hall, 440 Yellowstone Avenue, West Yellowstone, Montana.
- Presently, informal Town Council work sessions are held at 12 Noon on Tuesdays and occasionally on other mornings and evenings. Work sessions also take place at the Town Hall located at 440 Yellowstone Avenue.
- The schedule for Town Council meetings and work sessions is detailed on an agenda. The agenda is a list of business items to be considered at a meeting. Copies of agendas are available at the entrance to the meeting room.
- Agendas are published at least 48 hours prior to Town Council meetings and work sessions. Agendas are posted at the Town Offices and at the Post Office. In addition, agendas and packets are available online at the Town's website: [www.townofwestyellowstone.com](http://www.townofwestyellowstone.com). Questions about the agenda may be directed to the Town Clerk at 646-7795.
- Official minutes of Town Council meetings are prepared and kept by the Town Clerk and are reviewed and approved by the Town Council. Copies of approved minutes are available at the Town Clerk's office or on the Town's website: [www.townofwestyellowstone.com](http://www.townofwestyellowstone.com).

11/17/17  
17:36:40

TOWN OF WEST YELLOWSTONE  
Claim Approval List  
For the Accounting Period: 11/17  
For Pay Date: 11/17/17

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Report ID: AP100

\* ... Over spent expenditure

Claim	Check	Invoice #/Inv Date/Description	Vendor #/Name/ Line \$	Document \$/ Line \$	Disc \$	PO #	Fund Org Acct	Object Proj	Cash Account
43792		266 Utilities Underground Location		62.80					
	3035278	11/30/17 excavation notifications		62.80		WATER	5210 430500	357	101000
	3035278	11/30/17 excavation notifications		0.00		SEWER	5310 430600	357	101000
43794		1089 Gallatin County Treasurer		1,376.00					
	July 2015	11/29/17 Tech surcharge		380.00		COURT	7458 212200		101000
	July 2015	11/29/17 MLEA		435.00		COURT	7467 212200		101000
	July 2015	11/29/17 Public Defender		16.00		COURT	7468 212200		101000
	July 2015	11/29/17 Victims Assistance		545.00		COURT	7699 212200		101000
43802		2789 WEX Bank		2,978.65					
	11/01/17	07 Ford Expedition 6-54563A		22.61		SS	1000 450135	231	101000
	11/01/17	06 Dodge Durango 6-1374		206.30		PUBSER	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	17 Dodge Ram #1		262.25		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	17 Dodge Ram #2		220.27		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	10 Ford Expedition 6-000046		283.60		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	11 Ford Expedition 6-21425A		161.73		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	10 JD Backhoe		80.72		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	77 Int'l Dumptruck		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	Snow Blower		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	85 Ford Dumptruck		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	140 G Grader		73.74		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	CAT 936 Loader		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	91 Ford 6-582		59.34		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	15 Sweeper		82.25		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	97 Athey Sweeper		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	14 Water Truck		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	00 Freightliner Dump 6-60700A		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	2010 JD 772 Grader		191.30		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	02 Freightliner Dump 6-54564A		127.70		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	08 Ford Pickup 6-1450		306.65		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	08 GMC Pickup 6-1484		216.33		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	08 CAT 938H Loader		75.96		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	08 904B MiniLoader		40.86		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	93 Dodge 6-2010		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	YNP Truck #2		0.00		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000
	11/01/17	08 Ford Escape (multi-use)		156.99		DISPAT	1000 420160	370	101000
	11/01/17	14 Police Interceptor		160.25		POLICE	1000 420100	231	101000
	11/01/17	15 Ford F-250		249.80		STREET	1000 430200	231	101000

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43803	2558 Hebgen Basin Fire District	52,834.91					
	11/20/17 November 2017	45,501.58		FIRE	1000 420400	357	101000
	11/20/17 November 2017	7,333.33		FIRE	1000 420471	140	101000
43870	2099 Quick Print of West Yellowstone	64.30					
	9298 10/03/17 copies, colored sheets, binder	26.30		WATER	5210 430500	380	101000
	9206 09/13/17 signature stamp, judge	38.00		COURT	1000 410360	220	101000
43871	533 Market Place	35.25					
	02-582513 10/31/17 bags, water samples	7.69		WATER	5210 430500	220	101000
	03-467048 10/16/17 food for union meeting	13.75		ADMIN	1000 410210	220	101000
	02-557790 10/03/17 food for work session	8.67		LEGIS	1000 410100	220	101000
	03-467225 10/16/17 cleaning supplies	5.14*		LIBRAR	1000 411259	220	101000
43872	135 Food Roundup	20.60					
	01-396179 10/17/17 food, work session	13.43		LEGIS	1000 410100	220	101000
	10/10/17 supplies	7.17		RECRE	1000 460440	220	101000
43873	1934 Brenda Martin	383.40					
	11/02/17 B Martin, training in Missoula	383.40		DISPAT	1000 420160	370	101000
43874	2421 NAPA Auto Parts	814.32					
	10/31/17 auto parts and accessories	814.32		STREET	1000 430200	220	101000
43875	1751 Fiscal-Health Programs	115.00					
	FL 44516 11/15/17 Povah food license	115.00		POVAH	1000 411255	335	101000
43876	2991 West Yellowstone Star	117.04					
	2077 09/21/17 library newspaper ads	117.04		LIBRAR	2220 460100	398	101000
43877	3086 Golf Digest	22.97					
	10/16/17 one year subscription	22.97		LIBRAR	2220 460100	215	101000
43878	2997 The New Yorker	99.99					
	11/09/17 one year subscription	99.99		LIBRAR	2220 460100	215	101000
43879	2673 First Bankcard	180.00					
	178521218 10/13/17 Constant Contact	20.00		RECREA	1000 460440	327	101000
	1097 10/11/17 MT Library Assoc	160.00*		LIBRAR	2220 460100	335	101000

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43880	3087 Mark Duffey	13.95					
	11/06/17 ref, dbl charged for dog lichen	10.00		REFUND	1000 323030		101000
	11/06/17 ref, cc fee	3.95		REFUND	1000 420160	870	101000
43881	725 Swan Cleaners	74.00					
	7673 11/02/17 laundry	74.00		JAIL	1000 420230	390	101000
43882	951 Barnes & Noble	193.37					
	3562227 10/29/17 library books	86.29		LIBRAR	2220 460100	215	101000
	3562229 10/29/17 library books	107.08		LIBRAR	2220 460100	215	101000
43883	2507 Silvertip Pharmacy	380.89					
	11/09/17 comm help, Rx vouchers	380.89		SOCSR	7010 450135	358	101000
43884	2189 Custom Logo	114.00					
	16029 11/06/17 custom embroidery, uniforms	114.00		POLICE	1000 420100	226	101000
43885	2952 DIS Technologies	595.00					
	32440 11/05/17 monthly service	595.00		DISPAT	1000 420160	398	101000
43886	379 Energy Laboratories, Inc	836.00					
	118930 11/09/17 copper/lead water sampling	836.00		WATER	5210 430500	357	101000
43887	2673 First Bankcard	1,002.91					
	5510 10/04/17 meal, post pursuit review	105.76		POLICE	1000 420100	220	101000
	2097193 10/04/17 meal, Lt Governor meeeting	30.20		ADMIN	1000 410210	327	101000
	16454 11/13/17 Palmer, taser certification	435.00		POLICE	1000 420100	380	101000
	SI1508047 10/30/17 Taser repair	58.38		POLICE	1000 420100	220	101000
	6004 09/28/17 Bodyshield vest carrier	100.12		POLICE	1000 420100	226	101000
	5867551 10/04/17 halloween promotional items	273.45		POLICE	1000 420100	220	101000
43888	3066 Core & Main	1,825.20					
	H708678 11/02/17 hydrant repair	1,825.20			5210 430500	369	101000
43889	307 Fire Suppression Systems Inc	390.00					
	84423 11/01/17 fire extinguishing system serv	390.00		POVAH	1000 411255	350	101000
43890	2635 Jake's Automotive and Tire	1,916.98					
	17010 10/26/17 Dumptruck Tires, 2	607.66		STREET	1000 430200	239	101000
	16852 10/06/17 Dumptruck flat repair	50.00		STREET	1000 430200	239	101000
	16804 09/29/17 Durango Tires, 4	833.32		STREET	1000 430200	239	101000
	16873 10/10/17 Trailer tires, 4	426.00		STREET	1000 430200	239	101000

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43891	162 House of Clean 194456 09/08/17 cleaning supplies	454.90 454.90		PARKS	1000 460430	220	101000
43892	3090 Innovative Engineering, Inc. 1066 11/13/17 planning and designing	380.00 380.00		SEWER	5310 430630	937	101000
43893	3045 KIM WINTERS BIG SKY FENCE, LLC 891 11/14/17 Balance of BB fence in Park	7,110.00 7,110.00		PARK	4000 460439	930	101000
43894	1235 Yellowstone Rental & Sports 23644 10/27/17 Concrete Blanket 23617 10/16/17 Air compressor, 4days	404.00 144.00* 260.00		SDWLK STREET	1000 430262 1000 430200	365 533	101000 101000
43895	151 Gallatin County WY TS/Compost 101243 11/01/17 trash removal	449.35 449.35		PARKS	1000 460430	534	101000
43896	2800 RDO Equipment Co. W06643 10/30/17 938H Loader service P34225 11/08/17 Nuts, Bolts, Cutting Edge P34226 11/08/17 Hydraulic Hose W06631 11/09/17 Snow Blower Repair/service	26,610.28 467.68 548.38 48.77 25,545.45*		STREET STREET STREET STREET	1000 430200 1000 430200 1000 430200 1000 430200	361 361 361 369	101000 101000 101000 101000
43897	2813 Century Link 10/28/17 646-7949	62.00 62.00		STREET	1000 430200	345	101000
43898	2925 Daniel Sabolsky 10/11/17 Travel, Bozeman meetings 11/03/17 Travel, Bozeman training	259.38 96.30 163.08		ADMIN PERSON	1000 410210 1000 410800	370 370	101000 101000
43899	3089 CJL Sand and Gravel 64 10/25/17 110 yards road base	1,430.00 1,430.00		STREET	2820 430200	451	101000
43900	2099 Quick Print of West Yellowstone 2199 10/11/17 shipping, laptop 2250 10/17/17 shipping, taser 2196 10/10/17 shipping, water samples	67.64 37.58 16.61 13.45		POLICE POLICE WATER	1000 420100 1000 420100 5210 430500	311 311 357	101000 101000 101000
43901	2198 Westgate Auto Body 2871 10/31/17 repair, city pump truck	391.90 391.90		STREET	1000 430200	361	101000

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43902	3088 KM Service Company, LLC	5,892.00					
	9771 11/07/17 Learning Ctr bore, fiber optic	1,533.00		LRNCTR	1000 430263	357	101000
	9762 11/06/17 Learning Ctr, bore power	4,359.00		LRNCTR	1000 430263	357	101000
43903	764 General Distributing Co.	51.46					
	585393 10/31/17 gas cylinder rental	51.46		STREET	1000 430200	220	101000
43904	2673 First Bankcard	11,120.76					
	533-077112 10/05/17 My Place, Bozeman H2O trai	600.70		WATER	5210 430500	370	101000
	533-077112 10/05/17 My Place, Bozeman sewer tr	600.69		SEWER	5310 430600	370	101000
	45793626 10/20/17 CheapoAir, building inspecti	563.30		BLDINS	1000 420531	370	101000
	10/23/17 Const Exam Centr, Tanner	1,645.00		BLDINS	1000 420531	380	101000
	151309 10/10/17 MSU, water/sewer school	500.00		WATER	5210 430500	380	101000
	151309 10/10/17 MSU, water/sewer school	500.00		SEWER	5310 430600	380	101000
	1019503410 11/01/17 Dell, computer + software	1,939.05		BLDINS	1000 420531	212	101000
	9334731690 10/11/17 Emedco, 6 roll up signs	644.15		STREET	1000 430200	243	101000
	0020021-20 10/11/17 Lowe's, refridge/freezer	329.00		STREET	1000 430200	220	101000
	0562124 10/20/17 Home Depot, lights UPDL	293.70*		UPDL	1000 411252	220	101000
	1589011 10/13/17 Amazon, Code books	22.99		BLDINS	1000 420531	215	101000
	4873828 10/12/17 Amazon, Office Supplies	21.99		BLDINS	1000 420531	220	101000
	1727717240 10/05/17 DEQ, water test	140.00		WATER	5210 430500	380	101000
	BN3707 10/23/17 MaCon, ice rink parts	742.50		PARKS	1000 460430	220	101000
	93360038 10/13/17 esri, GIS license	1,425.00		SEWER	5310 430630	355	101000
	09/26/17 Home Depot, tile	636.00		UPDL	4000 460460	920	101000
	100444923 10/24/17 IN'L Code, bldg codes regis	398.00		BLDINS	1000 420531	380	101000
	554969544 10/27/17 Comfort Suites, H2O Patters	118.69		WATER	5210 430500	370	101000
43906	3030 Irma Vazquez	30.00					
	11/17/17 interpretation services	30.00		COURT	1000 410360	394	101000
43907	3091 Ben Coffin	30.00					
	11/17/17 interpretation services	30.00		COURT	1000 410360	394	101000
43908	2658 Delfino Salinas	60.00					
	11/17/17 interpretation services	60.00		COURT	1000 410360	394	101000
43909	2964 CITI CARDS	4,403.84					
	10/09/17 Amazon-disposable gloves	48.84		HELP	7010 450135	220	101000
	10/19/17 Book Peddler-supplies	72.62		LEGIS	1000 410100	220	101000
	10/24/17 Itunes-GoodReader, BS	4.99		LEGIS	1000 410100	220	101000
	10/26/17 Fall River-electric Siegel LC	3,118.32		SIEGEL	4000 470120	920	101000
	10/30/17 Nature's Design-Snaggletooth	700.00		ADMIN	1000 410210	870	101000
	10/30/17 Nature's Design-Snaggletooth	500.00		ADMIN	1000 410210	361	101000
	10/18/17 Freezer Wear Store-refund	-40.93		HELP	7010 450135	220	101000

# of Claims 43 Total: 125,655.04

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Fund/Account	Amount
1000 General Fund	
101000 CASH	\$103,966.03
2220 Library	
101000 CASH	\$593.37
2820 Gas Tax Apportionment	
101000 CASH	\$1,430.00
4000 Capital Projects/Equipment	
101000 CASH	\$10,864.32
5210 Water Operating Fund	
101000 CASH	\$4,130.83
5310 Sewer Operating Fund	
101000 CASH	\$2,905.69
7010 Social Services/Help Fund	
101000 CASH	\$388.80
7458 Court Surcharge HB176	
101000 CASH	\$380.00
7467 MT Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA)	
101000 CASH	\$435.00
7468 Public Defender Fee	
101000 CASH	\$16.00
7699 Victims Assistance Program	
101000 CASH	\$545.00
Total:	\$125,655.04

WEST YELLOWSTONE TOWN COUNCIL  
**Town Council Meeting**  
**November 7, 2017**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Johnson, Brad Schmier, Pierre Martineau, Cole Parker, Greg Forsythe

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Daniel Sabolsky, Finance Director Lanie Gospodarek, Public Services Superintendent James Patterson, Chief of Police Scott Newell, Social Services Director Kathi Arnado

The meeting is called to order by Mayor Jerry Johnson at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall, 440 Yellowstone Avenue, West Yellowstone, Montana.

Portions of the meeting are being recorded.

The Treasurer's Report with corresponding banking transactions is on file at the Town Offices for public review during regular business hours.

**ACTION TAKEN**

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- 1) Motion carried to approve the claims, which total \$140,113.26. (Martineau, Schmier) Schmier abstains from claim #43868.
- 2) Motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda, which includes the minutes of the October 13, 2017 Public Hearing & Special Town Council Meeting and the October 17, 2017 Town Council Agenda. (Schmier, Martineau)
- 3) Motion carried to waive the resort tax bond for Blue Ribbon Bungalow. (Schmier, Martineau)

**Public Comment Period**

Helen Rightenour addresses the Town Council as a former dispatcher and the mother of a current dispatcher. She says that the lack of heat in the dispatch area is still a problem and needs to be addressed. She says that to her knowledge, requests for turning up the heat have been denied and they actually have to turn on the oven and open the door as well as wrap up in blankets. Sabolsky says that he was unaware of the problem and will look into it tomorrow to ensure that they have what they need.

**Council Comments**

Johnson says that West Yellowstone lost one of its finer citizens on October 28, 2017, Clyde Whitman. Whitman was a captain in the Fire Department for many years and a life long resident. He also asks that everyone keep Peter Simon, Angela Search, Bonnie Cross and Tom Schaap in their thoughts. All are current or long-time residents of West Yellowstone and are battling health problems.

**DISCUSSION**

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- A) **Town Manager's Report:** Town Manager Dan Sabolsky reports that they are working on the business license ordinance. He says that a local couple recently donated \$100,000 to the West Yellowstone Foundation. Some of that money will be used to purchase defibrillators for police vehicles, repairs at the Povah Community Center, a new swing set in Pioneer Park, repairs to the sign at the Povah Community Center, a kiosk and bike racks in the downtown area, and a freezer for the food bank. Hebgen Basin Fire Department, the Library, and Little Rangers Learning Center also received donations from this same family. Sabolsky reports that they are about to release the RFP for legal services, setting up the drug and alcohol testing procedures, and establishing a process for building and zoning permits. He also reports that he met with several representatives from the Madison Addition and are working toward new legislation that clarifies that nightly rentals are not allowed in the Madison Addition. He says that he will email the Council about some of these issues as they develop during the week.

November 7, 2017  
Town Council Meeting  
Minutes, Page 2

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mayor Johnson mentions emails from Tim Daley and Randy Roberson concerning the Growth Policy.

The meeting is adjourned. (7:30 PM)

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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Town Clerk

# Town of West Yellowstone Business License Application

Business Name: Four Winds Storage  
 Applicant: Geoff & Billie Richards  
 Contact Person: Billie Richards  
 Mailing Address: PO Box 915 WYS MT 59758  
 Physical Address of Business: 535 Gubbin Ave WYS MT 59758  
 Phone Number: 406-640-1906 Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: bjr.washington@aol.com Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Property Owner of Record: Billie Richards

Subdivision: Old Town  
 Block: 6 Lot: 6-7

Zoning District, please mark one:

- B-3 Central Business District (Old Town)
- B-4 Expanded Business District (Grizzly Park)
- E-2 Entertainment District (Grizzly Park)
- PUD Planned Unit Development (Grizzly Park)
- Residential Districts, Home Occupations Only (Mad Add)
- New Business
- Change of Location
- Transfer of Ownership
- Name Change

- Is this business licensed by the State of Montana?  Yes  No Pending
- Appropriate City/County/Health Dept approvals (if applicable)  Yes  No (please attach) Pending
- If this business is located in Grizzly Park, has the business been approved by the Grizzly Park Architectural Committee (GPAC)?  Yes  No Spring

**Type of Business** Please explain in detail the following: number of units, seating capacity, etc. Contractors should list trailers and equipment and where these items will be stored.

RV sites, open storage, Espresso West Bake Shop  
Trapper Cabin  
Additional businesses operating from the same location.

Business License Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Resort Tax Bond: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Amount Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Applicant  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Applicant  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY				
Date Approved by Town Council: _____				
Date _____	Check # _____	Amount \$ _____	License # _____	
SCN _____	BLP _____	STX _____	BLC _____	RDX _____

October 27, 2017

Town of West Yellowstone  
PO Box 1570  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Dear Town Council Members,

Attached please find our applications for two (2) business licenses. Both these businesses are located at 525 Gibbon Avenue West Yellowstone, MT 59758 along with the current business of Four Winds Storage. License # 83 \$110.50 yearly.  
**We would like to combine/modify both these businesses with the Four Winds business license.**

The Espresso West Bake Shop: The bake shop will be used for the following: Baking all of our products we sell at our coffee shop and it will also be open to members of our neighbor/community for ice cream, coffee drinks and lunch items.

The shop will consist of an oven for baking, a refrigerator and storage for product used at our coffee shop. It will be open May-October each year.

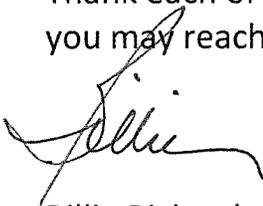
Gallatin County has our application and payment. They will be out for my inspection in April / May, weather permitting.

The Trapper Cabin is a nightly rental. It is a 2 guest maximum unit. There is no kitchen. It has a bathroom and sleeping quarters.

We are in the process of completely the license from Gallatin County Health Department for the Trapper Cabin as well as our other nightly rentals.

We have attached a check. The Town Clerk, Liz Roos, may complete the amount needed.

Thank each of you for your time on this matter. If you should have any questions you may reach Geoff at 406-640-1296 or myself at 406-640-1906.



Billie Richards

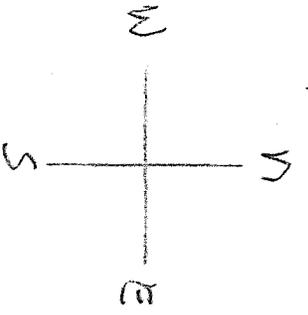


Geoff Richards

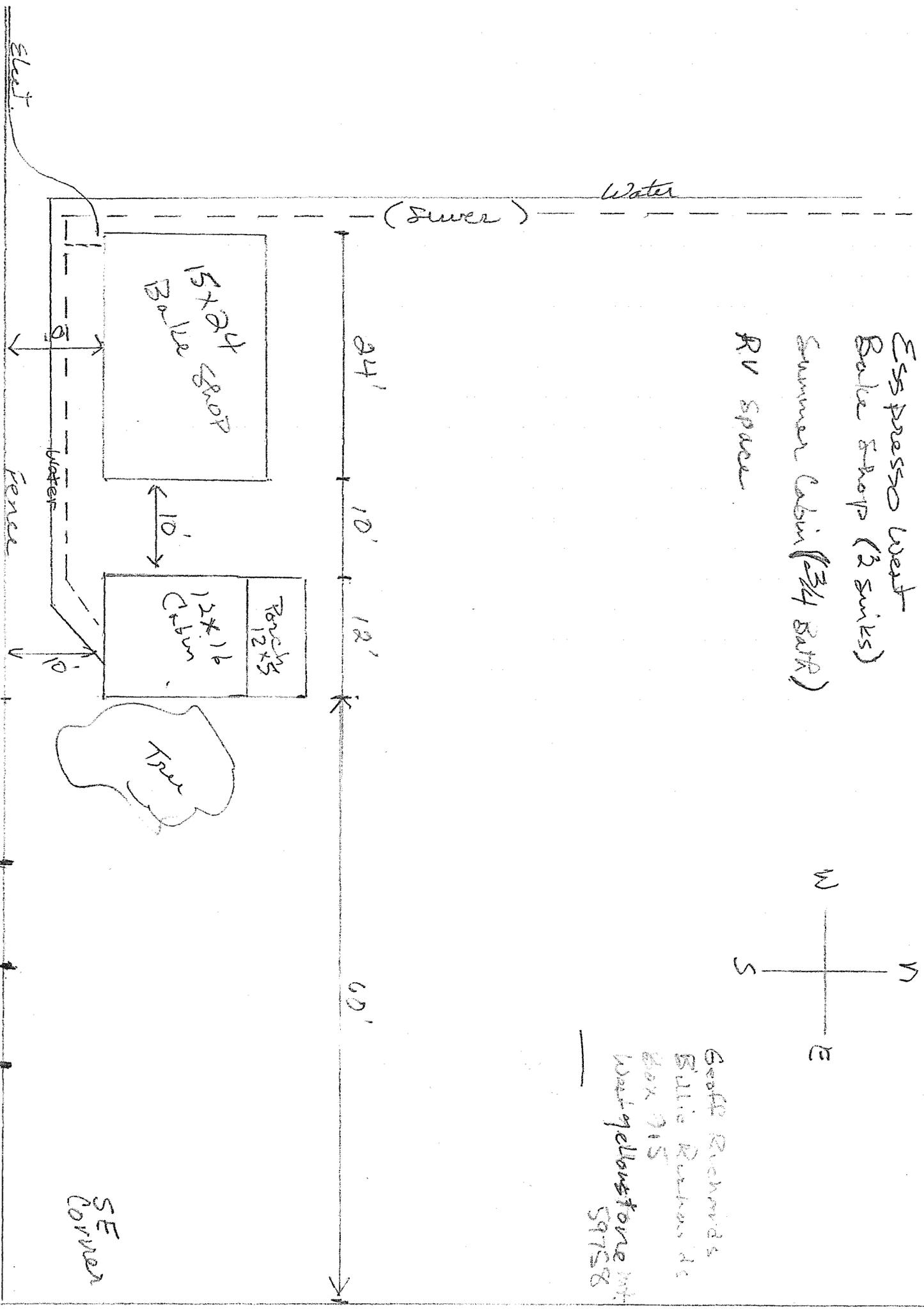
Espresso West  
Bakery Shop (2 Swiks)

Summer Cabin (3/4 Bath)

RV Space



Geoff Richards  
Bullie Richards  
Box 915  
West Yellowstone mt.  
59758



lot: 6 Block: 6 505 Cabin

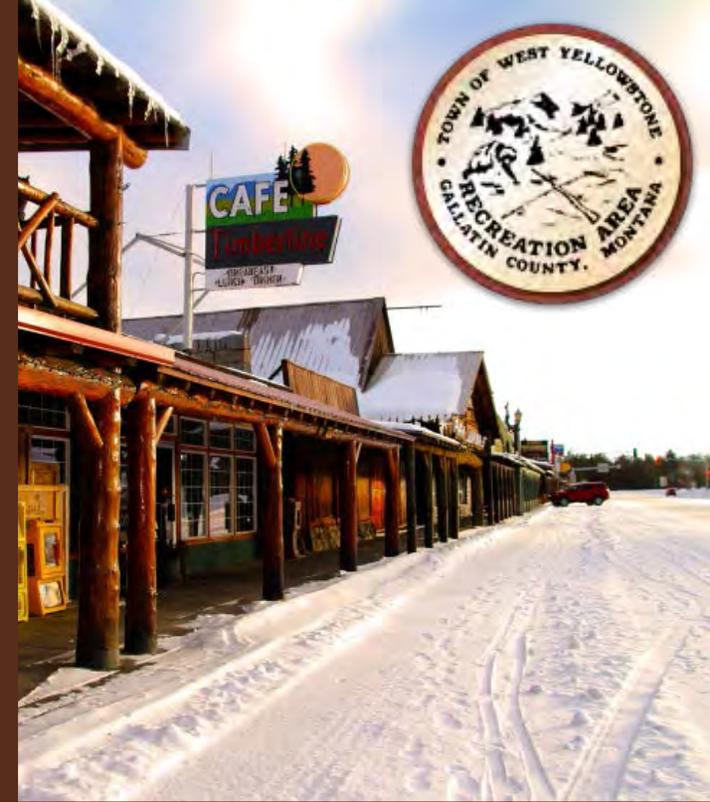
30' Gate

24'

# West Yellowstone, MT Growth Policy Update

## September/October 2017

### Town Council Draft



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**Reserved for Planning Advisory Board Resolution**

# Acknowledgments

## West Yellowstone Town Council

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Cole Parker

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Northern Rocky Mountain

Economic Development District



## Thank You Citizens of West Yellowstone!

A special thanks to all of the dedicated residents of the West Yellowstone community who contributed to this plan on their free time by participating in public meetings and submitting your thoughts and ideas. Your time, efforts and ideas are very much appreciated and reflected in this plan.

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# Introduction

## What is a Growth Policy?

A growth policy is a long-range comprehensive plan for a community that addresses land use, natural resources, the economy, public infrastructure, housing, and other topics identified by the community and required by state law – MCA 76-1-601. At its roots, a growth policy attempts to answer the following three questions: 1. Where are we today? 2. Where do we want to be tomorrow? and 3. How do we get there? The second two questions are the heart of the growth policy document and are intended to reflect the goals and aspirations of the West Yellowstone community.

At its core, a growth policy includes big-picture goals, strategic objectives, and detailed implementation actions that assist the Town Council in their decision-making process. This growth policy is intended to be goal-oriented, with a detailed implementation section describing actions, timelines, and partners who will assist in realizing West Yellowstone’s community goals.

## How Are Growth Policies Used?

West Yellowstone’s Growth Policy lays out a path for achieving the Town’s vision for the future. While not a regulatory document, the growth policy is intended to be used to identify community priorities and provide guidance for Town officials on managing and allocating scarce resources. In short, a growth policy lays out the steps for how a community can get where it wants to be in the future.

The implementation section of the growth policy includes a series of goals with accompanying objectives and actions.

**Goals:** Broad statements describing a desired future condition

**Objectives:** General descriptions of the steps West Yellowstone needs to take to meet its goals. Objectives should be attainable and measurable.

**Actions:** Specific steps needed to achieve objectives.

The implementation sections are what drives the growth policy, and are intended to guide how funding is allocated and workplans are created.

## Guiding Future Development Patterns

Growth policies serve to guide the development and updating of local regulations including West Yellowstone’s Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Code. For subdivisions, Montana state law requires growth policies to establish how the subdivision primary review criteria will be defined and evaluated in making decisions on proposed subdivisions, as well as how the governing bodies will conduct public hearings. For zoning, the growth policy serves to guide the anticipated update of the zoning regulations, considering how the development environment in West Yellowstone has changed over the years, and how it will change in the future. Lastly, this growth policy provides guidance for how the newly acquired 80-acres west of Town will be developed to ensure that future development is compatible with existing development and to achieve the goals set forth in this plan.

## Why Now?

State law requires growth policies to be reviewed every five years

and updated at the discretion of the local governing body (the Town Council). West Yellowstone’s current growth policy was updated in 2006. Since that time, West Yellowstone has gone through the national recession, witnessed record annual visitations to Yellowstone National Park, and acquired 80 acres from the United States Forest Service. At the same time, many of the issues facing West Yellowstone in 2006 continue today, including housing affordability and the seasonality of the local economy. Additionally, new issues have come to light including short-term commercial rentals and how best to develop the 80 acres. Because of these changing circumstances, West Yellowstone began updating the current growth policy in 2016 to ensure that current conditions are considered and the Town strategically addresses the issues facing West Yellowstone now and in the future.

## Growth Policy Framework

This growth policy provides comprehensive analysis of growth and development in West Yellowstone and covers all the requirements of state law in the following eight chapters:

- Introduction – Chapter 1
- Key Issues – Chapter 2
- Implementation – Chapter 3
- Coordination – Chapter 4
- Wildland-Urban Interface – Chapter 5
- Subdivision Review – Chapter 6
- Conditions, Trends, & Projections – Chapter 7

To provide added direction for moving forward, Chapter 2 – Key Issues – serves to focus the growth policy on the most pressing issues facing West Yellowstone now and in the near future. The seven issues, shown below, were identified early in the growth policy update process and represent priorities for the Town. All of the key issues are important. They are not listed in order of priority.

- Housing Affordability and Availability
- Short-term Commercial Rentals
- Developing the 80-acres
- Town Appearance
- Zoning in Old Town
- Economy
- Water and Sewer

While several of these issues are not new to West Yellowstone, the fact that they continue to persist reinforces the need to take a fresh look at how best to address them.

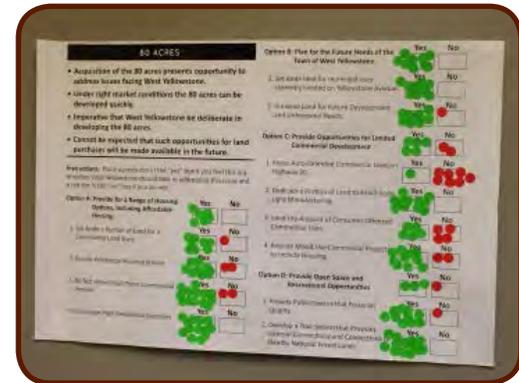
## Public Process

The public process for West Yellowstone’s Growth Policy update was designed to provide ample opportunities for input from a diverse array of community stakeholders. At the outset of the update process, a project website was created ([www.planwestyellowstone.com](http://www.planwestyellowstone.com)) which served as a clearing house for information on the growth policy and provided an open opportunity for community members to provide input.

The public process kicked off in December of 2016 with key issue identification. First, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from West Yellowstone to identify the most pressing issues facing the town. Second, an economic focus group was conducted to drill down into the issues facing West Yellowstone’s economy. Finally, a public meeting was held on December 7, 2016 where members of the general public were led through an exercise to identify key issues and begin to discuss opportunities for addressing those issues.



With the seven key issues identified, the process then moved to developing a series of options for addressing each key issue. To review the options with the community, a second public meeting was held



on March 1, 2017. Following that meeting, public feedback was used to develop goals, objectives, and actions to provide specific direction for addressing each key issue. The goals, objectives, actions were incorporated into a draft growth policy which was then vetted by the West Yellowstone Planning Advisory Board and Town Council.

# Vision

This document serves as a statement of the West Yellowstone community’s values and aspirations. The vision statement below reflects how West Yellowstone residents want the Town to appear and function for the next 20 years.

*In the year 2037, West Yellowstone continues to be the primary gateway to Yellowstone National Park. In addition, West Yellowstone has developed a strong identity characterized by a thriving and quaint downtown, strong year-round local businesses, and caring citizens. As a result, West Yellowstone has become a destination in and of itself serving to attract new residents seeking a livable community close to abundant natural beauty.*

*Though housing vacancies remain low, West Yellowstone residents can find high quality housing within their means and the Town’s seasonal workforce is provided suitable living arrangements. While tourism remains the primary economic driver, West Yellowstone has been successful at attracting small niche businesses which have enabled a stronger year-round economy that is supported by residents and visitors alike.*



# Key Issues

## Key Issue – Housing Affordability and Availability

West Yellowstone has a lack of available rental and affordable owner-occupied housing for both year-round residents and summer employees. Private developers are constrained in their ability to build additional housing because the Town is surrounded by the Custer-Gallatin National Forest and Yellowstone National Park. Seasonal residents have also purchased homes that are only occupied for a short portion of the year. While there are numerous vacant lots in the Madison Addition, these lots are either unaffordable for many West Yellowstone residents or unavailable for purchase. Because of the limited supply of affordable buildable parcels, land and housing costs in West Yellowstone are high, especially when considering household incomes. As of 2015, median household income in West Yellowstone was 20% lower than in Montana and 39% lower than in Gallatin County. The lack of housing impacts most income levels, from those needing housing assistance to middle income residents.

The lack of available affordable housing impacts economic development efforts and is a significant issue for West Yellowstone's seasonal summer workforce. Employees coming to work during the summer tourist season are challenged to find affordable rental housing. In some instances, employees are forced to live in campgrounds or squat on nearby Custer-Gallatin National Forest land. Several employers have stated they will not hire someone if they do not already have housing.

One problem lies with large seasonal employers, such as hotels, who do not provide housing for their employees. The lack of available

workforce housing has made it difficult for employers to attract employees during the summer tourist season. Several employers, particularly the Delaware North Corporation, have been buying existing housing units for their seasonal employees. While this helps to house West Yellowstone's seasonal work force, it also takes housing units for year-round residents off the market. Also, there is little incentive for companies to keep employee housing well maintained and attractive.

## **Addressing Housing Affordability and Availability**

### **Goal 1: Increase Supply of Affordable and Workforce Housing**

#### **Objective 1.1: Support Non-Profit Efforts to Build Affordable Housing**

**Action 1.1.1: Support the Human Resource Development Council's (HRDC), and other non-profits, efforts to build affordable housing units.** HRDC owns a lot in the Madison Addition and has plans to build four to six affordable housing units, with the intention that they would be affordable in perpetuity through deed restrictions or by other means. However, this plan is currently on hold because of a building moratorium due to low water supply, although two duplexes could be built currently if the lot were subdivided. There are a variety of ways West Yellowstone could continue to support this project including waiving sewer and water connection fees.

**Action 1.1.2: Continue to work with Habitat for Humanity on constructing affordable housing.** In the past year, West Yellowstone has been working with Habitat for Humanity to build affordable owner-occupied housing units on Town-owned land. In 2016 West Yellowstone, in conjunction with Habitat, applied for a \$450,000 grant to construct affordable housing, however, the grant was not awarded. Once the building moratorium is lifted, West Yellowstone could again apply for funding for Habitat (or another organization/agency) to build affordable housing on Town-owned property.

#### **Objective 1.2: Increase Use of Assistance & Education Programs**

**Action 1.2.1: Work with HRDC on transitioning low-income households to home ownership using down payment assistance.** HRDC's down payment assistance program provides up to \$30,000 towards a down payment for income eligible, first time home buyers. This program can help remove one of the biggest hurdles to home ownership for low-income households – saving up enough money for a down payment. As a result, this program can be utilized by West Yellowstone residents to secure long-term housing and remain within the community.

**Action 1.2.2: Work with HRDC, lenders, and realtors on providing home buyer education classes.** Buying a home can be a daunting process for first time home buyers. Home buyer education classes are a helpful resource for people who may be unfamiliar with the process or who may not realize they are able to buy a home with the right preparation. Transitioning rental households to owner-occupied households is a good way to provide year-round residents with a long-term housing solution, thereby enabling them to remain

in West Yellowstone.

### **Objective 1.3: Provide Incentives for Private Construction of Affordable Housing**

**Action 1.3.1: Provide density bonuses for developers who agree to construct affordable housing units.** Density bonuses allow a developer to go above the maximum density allowed by zoning, if the additional density provides affordable housing units. For example, if the maximum density allowed by zoning were a four-plex, a density bonus could allow for the developer to construct a six-plex, provided that the two additional units were dedicated affordable with deed restrictions.



**Action 1.3.2: Waive sewer and water connection fees for developers who agree to construct affordable housing units.** Waiving water and sewer connection fees for affordable housing projects can lower the per-unit construction cost of developments, providing a financial incentive for developers to construct affordable housing as part of residential development projects. Projects requesting fee waivers must be reviewed under set criteria to ensure the waivers are consistently applied.

### **Objective 1.4 Develop a Regulatory Approach to Constructing Affordable Housing**

**Action 1.4.1: Require a minimum percentage of residential development to be affordable – inclusionary zoning.** This approach, known as inclusionary zoning, requires residential development to contribute to providing affordable housing in West Yellowstone. This approach would require defining affordability based on income and number of persons that will be living in the unit. Under this requirement, developers would be required to either provide affordable units on-site or off-site if locating units on-site is not practical. To ensure rental and for sale units remain affordable in perpetuity, the required affordable units would be subject to permanent deed restrictions that address price and occupancy, or the units could be placed in a land trust. To offset impacts to small scale development, there are various exemptions to the affordable housing requirement that could be put in place, including redevelopment of an existing residence, accessory dwelling units,



and/or development of infill housing units. The exact percentage to be required can be developed during the zoning update or through a separate ordinance at a later date.

**Action 1.4.2: Require new large-scale commercial developments to provide workforce housing for employees.** This approach, known as commercial linkage, requires commercial developments to construct housing for their employees either on-site or off-site. Commercial linkage is intended to offset increased demand for employee housing by requiring commercial developments to provide housing in proportion to their number of employees. Because commercial linkage requires workforce housing based on proportional impact, it is essentially an impact fee. This requires developing a report documenting, among other things, the relationship between commercial development and demand for new housing, as well as how the required number of housing units, or fee, will be calculated. This approach can be effective in creating dedicated workforce housing, though can also be complex to establish and administer.

## Key Issue – Short-Term Commercial Rentals

Being a gateway to Yellowstone National Park, West Yellowstone has long been home to short-term commercial rentals – a.k.a. nightly vacation rentals. With the rise of Internet based vacation rental services such as Air BnB and Vacation Rental by Owner (VRBO), it is easy for landlords and homeowners to convert monthly rentals (or for sale housing) to short-term commercial rentals, with increased profits. A quick search on Air BnB yields 140 short-term commercial

rentals in West Yellowstone with an average nightly rate of \$183. The result is that existing housing stock is effectively being taken off the market for seasonal employees and year-round residents. This situation further exacerbates issues surrounding housing availability and affordability as short-term commercial rental conversions decrease supply and, as a result, may drive up monthly rents. In addition, it is unknown how many short-term commercial rentals in West Yellowstone are paying the Town’s resort tax, Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) tax, and Montana’s lodging facility sales and use tax.

Short-term commercial rentals are beneficial to West Yellowstone at the same time as they negatively impact housing availability and affordability. Short-term commercial rentals provide alternative lodging options for visitors, satisfying a niche unfilled by hotels. Furthermore, hotel vacancies can be hard to come by in West Yellowstone during busy summer months and short-term commercial rentals provide additional accommodation space for West Yellowstone’s tourist economy. Lastly, short-term commercial rentals provide a supplemental income stream for residents renting out a room or their entire home. In some cases, this supplemental income can allow residents to remain in West Yellowstone without having to leave in order to find additional work in the off-season.

## Addressing Short-Term Commercial Rentals

There are both positive and negative outcomes resulting from the high number of short-term commercial rentals. The approaches for addressing short-term commercial rentals outlined below are aimed at addressing negative outcomes while preserving the positive aspects of short-term commercial rentals.

## Goal 2: Mitigate the Adverse Impacts of Short-Term Commercial Rentals

### Objective 2.1: Expand on Processes for Registering Short-Term Commercial Rentals

This approach includes baseline safety inspections, allows the Town to track the number and location of short-term commercial rentals, and provides an avenue for collecting resort and TBID taxes.

**Action 2.1.1: Require a short-term commercial rental application and fee.** This would allow the Town to keep track of how many short-term commercial rentals are in West Yellowstone and where they are located. The fee should cover the cost of reviewing applications and administering the program.

**Action 2.1.2: Require inspection by the fire department.** Inspections by the Fire Department ensures that short-term commercial rentals are safe for public use. This could be done as part of the short-term commercial rental application process. As with the above option, the application fee should cover the cost of inspection.

### Objective 2.2: Regulate Short-Term Commercial Rentals Through Zoning

**Action 2.2.1: Do not allow short-term commercial rentals in residential districts.** This action is aimed at preserving rental and for-sale options in residential districts and protecting the character of existing residential neighborhoods.

**Action 2.2.2: Allow short-term commercial rentals in certain commercial and mixed use zoning districts.** This action is aimed at ensuring short-term commercial rentals still have a place in West

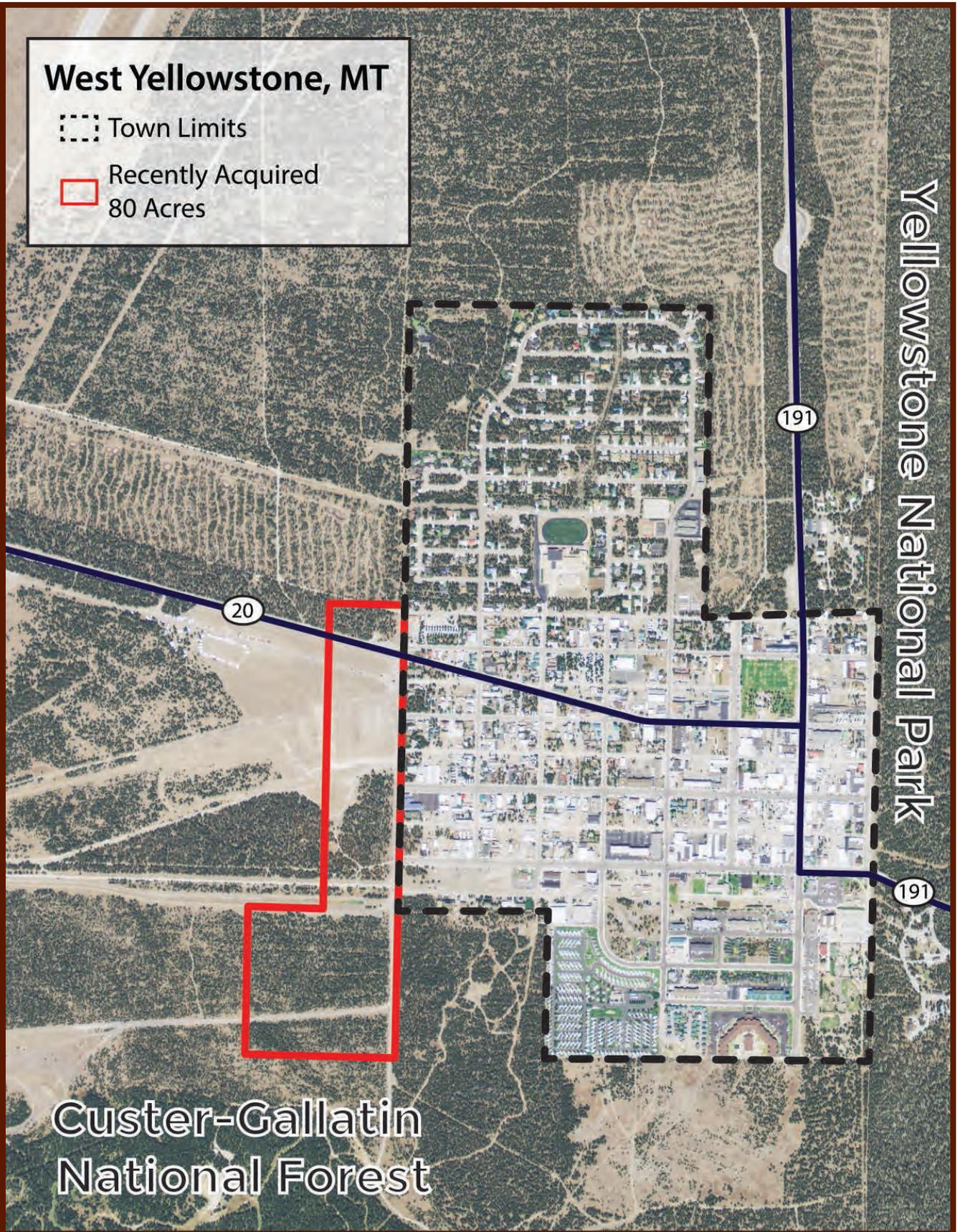
Yellowstone, while also preserving areas for residential and other commercial uses. Currently, the only area zoned residential, the Madison Addition, does not allow short-term commercial rentals through covenants. However, this action will add a second level of regulation for short-term commercial rentals and provide direction for potential future residential districts in West Yellowstone.

**Action 2.2.3: Require short-term commercial rentals to provide off-street parking through zoning.** This ensures that neighboring property owners do not become frustrated with a lack of available on-street parking. In areas where off-street parking may not be available the Town could lease on-street parking to short-term commercial rental owners. While West Yellowstone requires a parking plan through the business licensing process, this would provide an added level of parking regulation for short-term commercial rental operators who do not obtain a business license.

## Key Issue – Developing the 80 Acres

In 2016, West Yellowstone purchased 80 acres of vacant land from Custer-Gallatin National Forest (see Map 1). The acquired 80 acres presents a unique opportunity to address several of the issues facing West Yellowstone. While 80 acres may seem like an ample amount of land, it can quickly be developed under the right market conditions. As a result, it is imperative that West Yellowstone be very deliberate in developing the 80 acres, as it cannot be expected that such opportunities for land purchases will be made available in the future.

Map 1 - 80 Acres Map



## Addressing Developing the 80 Acres

The intent with the growth policy is not to explicitly lay out the minute details of how the 80 acres will be developed. This will come later during a process devoted to developing a specific site plan and through implementation of development agreements. Rather, the growth policy, and the actions laid out below, are intended to establish a framework for developing the site plan by providing broad policy guidance for the 80 acres. Later in 2017, the site planning process will seek to realize the policies through specific recommendations for the location, scale, and character of development.

### Goal 3: Ensure Development of the 80 Acres Supports a High Quality of Life for Residents

#### Objective 3.1: Provide Open Space and Recreational Opportunities

**Action 3.1.1: Provide public spaces that focus on quality.**

Public spaces add to the quality of life of a community and are an important infrastructure



component of any town or neighborhood. However, as land is at a premium in West Yellowstone, it may not be the most efficient use of land to dedicate large swaths of the 80 acres to public spaces, unless the public spaces are viewed as temporary until greater needs

emerge. With this approach, the focus would be on creating small quality open spaces that provide opportunities for physical activity, mingling, and enjoying the natural



beauty. Examples of amenities include playgrounds, splash parks, basketball courts, horseshoe pits, picnic areas, people watching venues, and/or a small bandstand. An iconic entrance to the western edge of Town along Highway 20 could also be developed. This would encourage visitors to get out of their vehicles and see what attractions West Yellowstone has to offer.

**Action 3.1.2: Develop a trail system that provides internal connectivity and connections to nearby National Forest and National Park lands.** An internal trail system should be established to provide for both recreation opportunities and access for residents and tourists to Yellowstone National Park and Custer-Gallatin National Forest. This internal trail network would connect residential and commercial areas in the 80 acres to the rest of the Town and the outlying areas. The trail system would connect to the surrounding Custer-Gallatin National Forest, which provides access to world-class recreational opportunities including the Rendezvous Trail system.

## **Goal 4: Prioritize Residential Uses on the 80 Acres**

### **Objective 4.1: Provide for a Range of Housing Options, Including Affordable and Market Rate Housing**

**Action 4.1.1: Set aside a portion of land for a community land trust.** Community land trusts are nonprofit organizations that own land on which housing is located, with the structures being owned by individuals. Community land trusts provide affordable home ownership opportunities by removing land prices from the home buying equation, thus also reducing speculative land purchases. Under this action, West Yellowstone could sell a portion of the 80 acres to a community land trust to ensure that land will be preserved in perpetuity for affordable housing. West Yellowstone could work with HRDC, Habitat for Humanity, or a similar organization on being the land trust or the Town could work with local residents and organizations to develop a local nonprofit community land trust.



**Action 4.1.2: Ensure workforce housing is built.** The lack of workforce housing in West Yellowstone is a primary concern for employers seeking to house the Town's sizable seasonal workforce. The newly acquired 80 acres provides an opportunity to at least partially alleviate this issue. Workforce housing could be in the form of dormitories or could be integrated with other housing types. In either case, West Yellowstone would likely need to partner with a housing organization on construction and management as the Town does not want to get into the business of managing workforce housing.

**Action 4.1.3: Do not allow short-term commercial rentals.** Short-term commercial rentals can serve to decrease housing availability and affordability by effectively taking rental and for-sale housing off the market. To ensure the preservation of affordable housing, West Yellowstone will seek to not allow short-term commercial rentals on the 80 acres.

**Action 4.1.4: Encourage high residential densities through zoning and subdivision regulations.** High residential densities will allow West Yellowstone to make efficient use of the 80 acres and increase housing supply to the fullest extent possible, thereby serving to increase housing affordability. Higher residential densities can be achieved through zoning using a variety of tools including establishing smaller lot sizes, allowing greater building heights, allowing multiple units by ownership on single lots (condo-minimizing), limiting the amount of land dedicated to single family housing, and/or reduced setbacks. Additionally, West Yellowstone could also look to encourage townhouses and multi-family buildings (through zoning or planned unit developments) to increase residential density on the 80 acres.

## Goal 5: Plan for the Future Needs of the Town of West Yellowstone

### Objectives 5.1: Provide Space for Current and Future Town Needs on the 80 Acres

**Action 5.1.1: Set aside land for municipal uses currently located on Yellowstone Avenue.** By moving some municipal uses to the 80 acres, West Yellowstone could open up Yellowstone Avenue for future development opportunities on Town owned properties, which in turn could help finance utility extensions, affordable housing, and a new municipal service complex on the 80 acres.

**Action 5.1.2: Set aside land for future development and unforeseen needs.** As the future is uncertain, it may be prudent for West Yellowstone to set aside land for unforeseen future needs, which could include a school complex. This will prevent the Town from finding itself in a situation where additional land is needed, but opportunities for acquisition are not available.



**Action 5.1.3: Create a Development Plan for the 80 acres.** A development plan for the 80 acres would include, a highest and best use analysis, alternative site development strategies, identification and valuing portions of the 80 acres that might be sold off to finance housing and diversification needs, recommendations for areas that are most suitable for housing, and suggestions for high level housing funding strategies, which may include the use of impact fees. The Planning Advisory Board, Town Council and the public will all play a vital role in review of the site plan.

## Goal 6: Provide Opportunities for Strengthening the Local Economy on the 80 Acres

### Objective 6.1: Allow Limited Commercial Development

**Action 6.1.1: Consider a portion of the land for small-scale light manufacturing.** By zoning, and dedicating, land for small-scale light manufacturing and small businesses, West Yellowstone can diversify its economy by recruiting businesses that produce niche products or provide specialized services. To be successful, this approach for economic diversification will need to be coupled with a targeted businesses recruitment strategy, and appropriate pricing, with focus on partnerships with regional and state economic development agencies.

## Key Issue – Town Appearance

West Yellowstone residents have expressed interest in making the Town a destination rather than only a gateway to Yellowstone National Park. The gateway perception is partly a result of West Yellowstone's appearance. An improved appearance would encourage more visitors

to extend their stay in Town. Ideas to improve the community have centered around improving the streetscape along Canyon Street and Yellowstone Avenue. An appealing environment would make these more inviting places for people to walk, shop, and congregate. An attractive town encourages new businesses and residents to relocate within the community. It demonstrates a community's commitment to sustaining local businesses and maintaining a high quality of life for residents.

## Addressing Town Appearance

### Goal 7: Improve the Appearance of West Yellowstone

#### Objective 7.1: Create Programs and Regulations for Improving the Appearance of West Yellowstone

**Action 7.1.1: Develop design guidelines.** Design guidelines are often applied in commercial districts and provide recommendations for building designs and aesthetics. Examples can include guidance on building style, building materials and colors, minimum levels of transparency on building frontages (windows), maximum setbacks and/or certain types of awnings. Areas in West Yellowstone that could benefit from design guidelines include Canyon Street, Yellowstone Avenue, Madison Avenue, Highway 20, and the 80 acres.

**Action 7.1.2: Develop a façade improvement program.** Façade improvement programs use financial incentives to encourage property owners and businesses to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings and storefronts. Financial incentives can take the form of matching grants, loans, tax incentives, and/or design

assistance. Typically, façade improvement programs are tied to a set of specific design guidelines.



**Action 7.1.3: Develop landscaping requirements.** One way to improve the appearance of West Yellowstone is to increase the amount of landscaping, using landscape requirements which could be embedded in the zoning code. Typically, landscape requirements require new developments to provide green spaces, trees, and/or

shrubs based on the size of the development and its relation to the street. Several parking lots in West Yellowstone do not have landscape buffers between the sidewalk and the parking lot or street. The result is stark and urban, which is uncharacteristic of an old western town



located in the forest. Landscape requirements can help improve the appearance of the Town, provide shade from the summer sun, and provide a buffer for pedestrians walking on sidewalks. The types of vegetation and materials would need to be climate appropriate and withstand the harsh treatment by snowplowing.

**Action 7.1.4: Develop a dark skies ordinance.** Dark skies ordinances (also known as outdoor lighting ordinances) are intended to reduce light pollution. Dark sky ordinances serve to improve night time aesthetics by increasing the number of visible stars and can save the Town money on energy expenses. This is not to be construed as a prohibition on outdoor lighting as some lighting is necessary, but it should be designed to prevent unnecessary glare.

## **Objective 7.2: Create Quality Public Spaces**

**Action 7.2.1: Develop the interior parks off Canyon Street into seasonal public parks and more formal parking areas.** Currently, the interior parks off Canyon Street are primarily used for parking and snow storage. This approach could include providing clearly visible signage that identifies parking areas, paving and striping certain alleys

and interior parking areas, and creating public spaces (separate from parking). The public spaces would offer public art and nice areas to sit and enjoy a meal while listening to music on a summer evening. The areas could also be used for art shows, street vendors and other temporary uses.



However, the interior parks would still be used for snow storage during winter months.



**Action 7.2.2: Create streetscape improvements along main streets and at key intersections.** Many communities have developed signature paving, lighting, street furniture, landscaping, and sidewalk improvements to create a unique identity in commercial areas. This would require developing an illustrated plan and budget, and would require close coordination with the Montana Department of Transportation and local business owners.



### **Objective 7.3 Preserve the Historic Character of West Yellowstone**

**Action 7.3.1: Restore and utilize the historic structures in Heritage Park.** The railroad structures in the Oregon Shortline Historic District are a gateway to the past and provide a template for design of future municipal and larger scale private buildings. Restoring the structures is costly, so adaptive reuse will be a necessary to generate income and ensure proper upkeep. The Town should also seek grants and donations to invest in the restoration of these historic structures. Zoning or design guidelines may be appropriate to perpetuate the character and preservation of the historic district.



**Action 7.3.2: Maintain railroad right-of-way sight lines through Heritage Park and the entire Historic District.** Looking west the railroad corridor provides a clear view into the Custer-Gallatin National Forest, and provides the potential for the development of a walking and biking trail adjacent to the historic rail line. Preserving site lines through this area will maintain West Yellowstone’s visual connection to the nearby natural environment which is a valued aesthetic asset.

## **Key Issue – Zoning in Old Town**

With the exception of the Madison Addition, most of West Yellowstone is zoned commercially. The Old Town area (zoned B-3 Central Business District) allows for a variety of commercial and residential uses. What has transpired in this area is a mix of retail, general commercial, hotels, and scattered residential dwellings. The result is a mix of land uses that, in certain areas, detracts from the appearance of West

Yellowstone. One concern is that because the B-3 district allows such a wide variety of uses, there will be pressure on existing residential land uses to be converted into commercial uses where investment returns tend to be higher. These conversions tend to decrease housing supply and raise the cost of the remaining residential units. If a developer were to buy up existing residential properties for the purpose of constructing a hotel, this would remove multiple residential properties from the market, thereby decreasing housing supply and further exacerbating the housing affordability problem. However, residents have expressed the desire for Old Town to continue providing for a mixture of uses.



## Addressing Zoning

An update to West Yellowstone's zoning ordinance and regulations will take place following the adoption of this growth policy update. The growth policy provides the basis for the amendments needed for the update. The regulatory details will be developed during the update process.

## Goal 8: Ensure Land Uses in Old Town Support the Needs of West Yellowstone Residents

### Objective 8.1: Provide for a Mixture of Residential and Commercial Land Uses

**Action 8.1.1: Maintain a mixture of residential and commercial land uses in Old Town.** This action would permit Old Town to continue its mixed-use B-3 development pattern. Both commercial and supporting residential would be allowed on the same parcel when possible to encourage home based businesses.

## Key Issue – The Economy

The Town of West Yellowstone was founded on the tourism industry and has never strayed from its roots. Unfortunately, the side effect of this historic trend is the business community lacks diversification. Local businesses only have seven months in which to earn sufficient revenues to cover their overhead and turn a profit. Despite these handicaps, West Yellowstone has done very well with the limited resources generated by a tourist dependent economy.

A significant amount of visitor traffic passes through West Yellowstone every year. Annually, between mid-April and early November, almost 1.9 million tourists access Yellowstone National Park via West Yellowstone. West Yellowstone provides the gateway for 42% of the visitors to America's most popular national park. This large influx of tourists elevates the population of the Town from 1,400 people to upwards of 10,000 per night. The hotels and restaurants are overwhelmed with patrons with spillover filling hotels and restaurants up to 100 miles away. Fifteen years ago, there were

numerous changes in winter usage in Yellowstone National Park that produced catastrophic impacts on the Town's winter economy. These changes limited the number and type of snowmobiles, number of snow-coaches, and limited private individuals from entering the park. After many years of trying to rebuild the winter economy, the Town continues to struggle to attract visitors in the spring and fall shoulder seasons.

## Addressing the Economy

### Goal 9: Diversify West Yellowstone's Economy

#### Objective 9.1 Attract Entrepreneurs and Work-From-Home Professionals.

**Action 9.1.1: Work with regional and state partners on expanding high speed Internet in West Yellowstone.** Increasing digital capacity is a central element of diversifying the economy, enabling entrepreneurs and telecommuters to locate in West Yellowstone.

**Action 9.1.2: Assist new businesses opening in, and moving to, West Yellowstone.** The Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District has existing programs and is developing new ones to help recruit businesses, which should be supported and utilized by the Town.

#### Objective 9.2: Develop a Coordinated Strategy for Retaining Existing Businesses and Recruiting New Business to West Yellowstone

**Action 9.2.1: Organize a business owner's round table.** A business owner's round-table provides a forum where local business

owners and community leaders can discuss challenges, needs, and opportunities for retaining existing businesses and attracting new ones.

**Action 9.2.2: Employ the community business matching process to attract new businesses that are compatible with West Yellowstone.** Community business matching is a strategic process where communities identify desired industries to sustain healthy economic development. The focus is on businesses and industries which are desirable to and compatible with West Yellowstone. This process would be useful in identifying potential small-scale light manufacturing and outdoor-oriented businesses that may be suitable on the newly acquired 80 acres and elsewhere.

### Goal 10: Strengthen West Yellowstone's Off-Season Economy

#### Objective 10.1: Capitalize on Visitors to the Greater Yellowstone Region

**Action 10.1.1: Develop regional partnerships with Big Sky, Ennis, and other nearby communities.** West Yellowstone has established partnerships with Yellowstone National Park, Big Sky, Ennis, and southeast Idaho. When West Yellowstone's tourist economy is booming, Big Sky is in its down season; when Big Sky is filled, West Yellowstone is quiet. When one community is hiring seasonal workers, the other is laying them off. Bozeman, Ennis and Idaho are gateways to West Yellowstone. The Town needs to encourage and expand the scope of planning and strategy sessions with its regional partners. The action would serve to maximize resources, share visitors, share workers and strengthen the greater regional economy.

## **Objective 10.2: Retain Year-Round Consumer Oriented Businesses**

**Action 10.2.1: Work with local business owners on how the Town can support them in staying open during winter months.**

## **Objective 10.3: Increase Efforts to Promote West Yellowstone as a Winter Destination**

**Action 10.3.1: Increase the number of winter and off-season events in West Yellowstone.**

Adding several off-season events can be an effective way to bring people into local businesses, build community, and encourage visitors to Town during a time of year when visitation is low. Potential ideas include, first Friday events during the holiday season; additional cross-country skiing, dog sledding, and snowmobiling themed events with a focus on in-town activities; and snow biking races. Another project that will help increase visitation and encourage tourists to stay in West Yellowstone year-round is the proposed riparian/river otter exhibit at the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, which the Town strongly supports.

## **Key Issue – Water and Sewer**

The ability of West Yellowstone to develop the newly acquired 80 acres and accommodate future development hinges on the Town's ability to provide sufficient water and sewer capacity. A decrease in flow of water at West Yellowstone's primary water source, Whiskey Springs, has forced the Town to issue a moratorium on new commercial and multifamily water connections. West Yellowstone

has plans to drill a new well in the near future, though it is not expected to be fully operational until late 2017 or early 2018. In terms of sewer infrastructure, while West Yellowstone's system of sewer mains has sufficient capacity, the sewer lagoon is near full capacity and is unable to accommodate any new discharge from the development of the 80 acres or anticipated hotel development in the Old Town area. West Yellowstone is currently in the process of developing a new sewer lagoon and is working through the process with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

## **Addressing Water and Sewer**

### **Goal 11: Provide for Long-Term Municipal Water Supply and Sewer Capacity**

#### **Objective 11.1: Encourage water conservation**

**Action 11.1.1: Analyze water flows throughout the Town to determine where leaks are occurring and fix leaks or replace water mains as needed.**

**Action 11.1.2: Provide incentives for water conservation during high-usage months.**

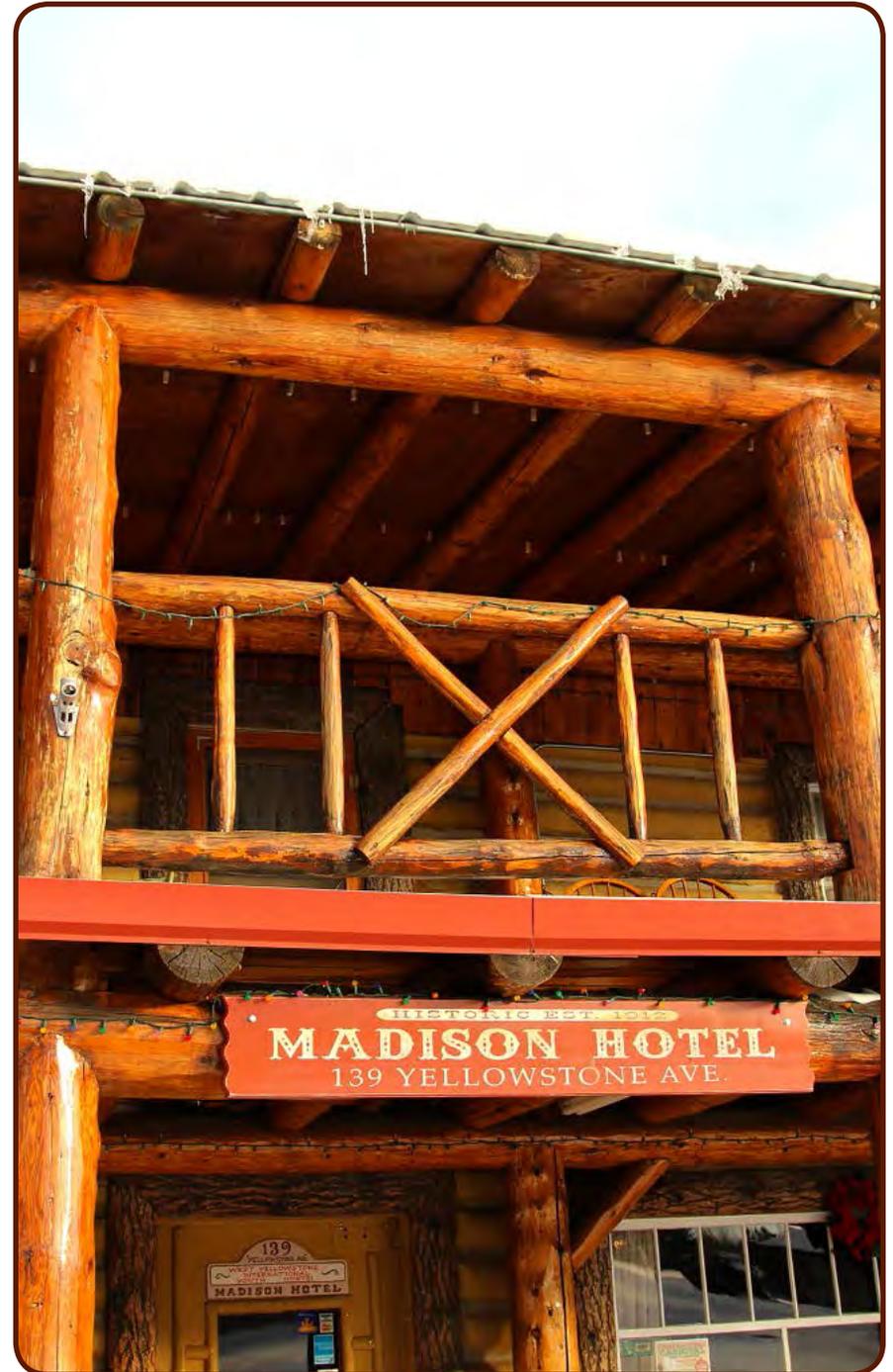
**Action 11.1.3: Consider requiring low-flow fixtures in new residential and commercial developments.**

#### **Objective 11.2: Increase Water Supply**

**Action 11.2.1: Develop a new Town well to supplement the well at Whiskey Springs.**

**Objective 11.3: Ensure sufficient wastewater capacity**

**Action 11.3.1: Increase capacity of West Yellowstone's sewer lagoon.**



# Implementation

The West Yellowstone Growth Policy is intended to be a working document that is implemented to achieve the Town's vision for the future. This section provides a guide for putting the plan into action. The implementation table below lists a series of goals and objectives aimed at achieving the Town's vision and addressing the seven key issues facing West Yellowstone. For each objective, individual actions are included to provide a specific direction forward. Following the implementation table is a description of potential funding options for consideration in implementing the actions described.

It is important to note that the complexity of implementing each action will vary. The implementation table is organized to layout a timeline for implementing actions and to identify partnering agencies and organizations. However, as conditions change, West Yellowstone's priorities may change as well. As such, the timelines in the implementation table are intended to be used as a guide, with adjustments based on changing circumstances.

## Timeline

The timeline column outlines, generally, the expected amount of time to implement each action. Timelines are organized in the following manner:

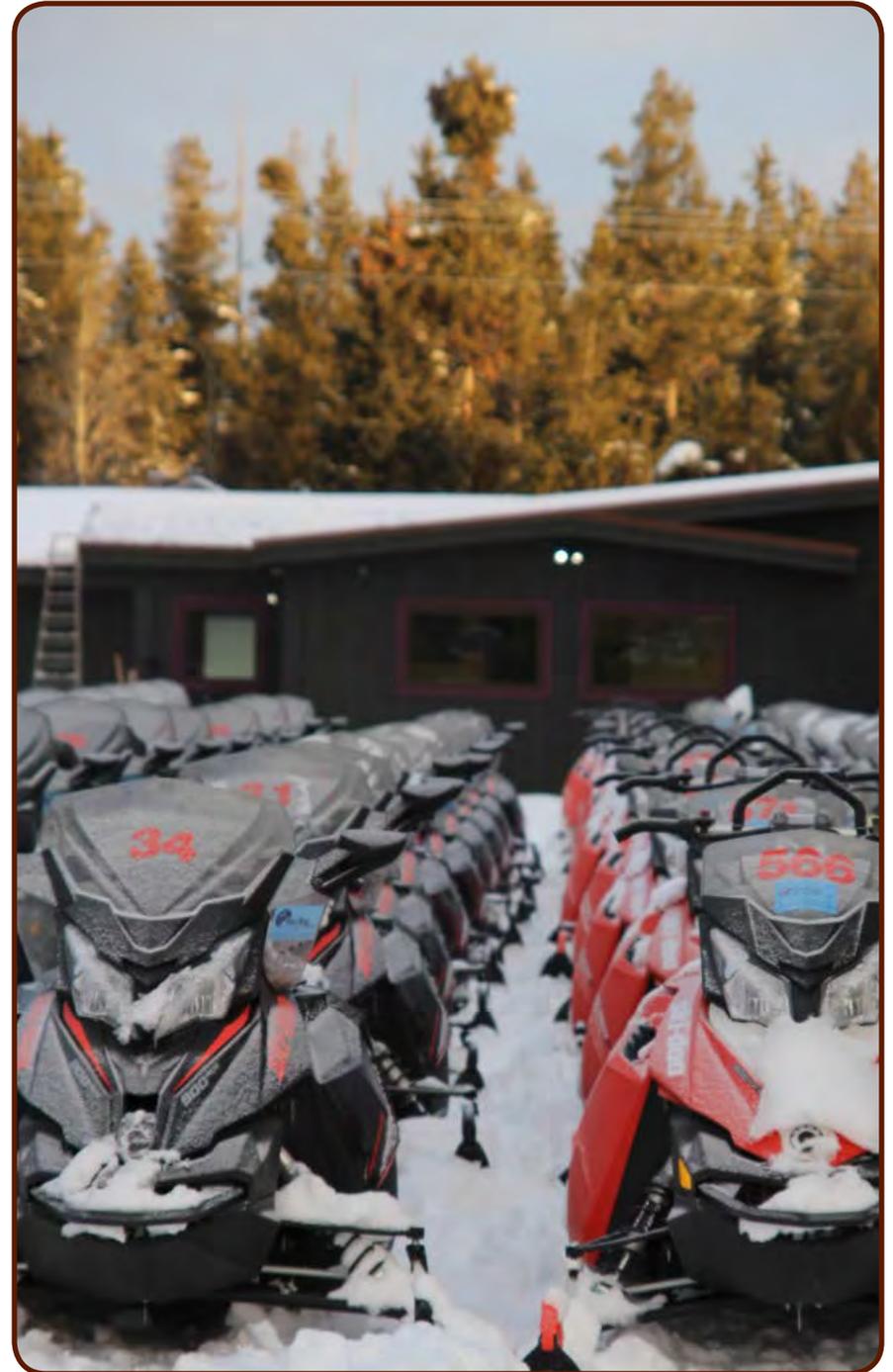
- *Short-term*: initiated or completed within 1 to 3 years of adoption of the growth policy
- *Mid-term*: initiated or completed within 4 to 6 years of adoption of the growth policy
- *Long-term*: initiated or completed within 6 years or longer after adoption of the growth policy
- *On-Going*: occurring continually



## Partners

Recognizing that implementation will require working with other agencies and organizations, the partner(s) column identifies the parties likely to play key roles in implementation of each action. Partners are identified using the following acronyms.

- CC – West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce
- FWP – Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- GC – Gallatin County
- HBFD – Hebgen Basin Fire District
- HH – Habitat for Humanity
- HRDC – Human Resource Development Council
- MAP – West Yellowstone Marketing and Promotions Advisory Board
- MDT – Montana Department of Transportation
- NRMEDD – Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District
- TBID – Tourism Business Improvement District
- USFS – United States Forest Service
- WY – Town of West Yellowstone
- WYED – West Yellowstone Economic Development Council
- WYF – West Yellowstone Foundation
- WYSEF - West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation
- YHC – Yellowstone Historic Center
- YNP – Yellowstone National Park



## Goal 1: Increase Supply of Affordable and Workforce Housing

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
1.1	Support Non-Profit Efforts to Build Affordable Housing	1.1.1 Support the Human Resource Development Council's (HRDC), and other non-profits, efforts to build affordable housing units.	WY, HRDC	Ongoing
		1.1.2 Continue to work with Habitat for Humanity on constructing affordable housing.	WY, HH	Ongoing
1.2	Increase Use of Assistance & Education Programs	1.2.1 Work with HRDC on transitioning low-income households to home ownership using down payment assistance.	WY, HRDC	Ongoing
		1.2.2 Work with HRDC, lenders, and realtors on providing home buyer education classes.	WY, HRDC, local realtors and lenders	Ongoing
1.3	Provide Incentives for Private Construction of Affordable Housing	1.3.1 Provide density bonuses for developers who agree to construct affordable housing units.	WY, local developers	Short-Term
		1.3.2 Waive sewer and water connection fees for developers who agree to construct affordable housing units.	WY	Short-Term
1.4	Develop a Regulatory Approach to Constructing Affordable Housing	1.4.1 Require a minimum percentage of residential development to be affordable – inclusionary zoning.	WY	Short-Term
		1.4.2 Require new large-scale commercial developments to provide workforce housing for employees.	WY	Mid-Term

## Goal 2: Mitigate the Adverse Impacts of Short-Term Commercial Rentals

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline	
2.1	Expand on Processes for Registering Short-Term Commercial Rentals	2.1.1	Require a short-term commercial rental application and fee.	WY	Short-Term
		2.1.2	Require inspection by the fire department.	WY, Hbfd	Short-Term
2.2	Regulate Short-Term Commercial Rentals Through Zoning	2.2.1	Do not allow short-term commercial rentals in residential districts.	WY	Short-Term
		2.2.2	Allow short-term commercial rentals in certain commercial and mixed use zoning districts.	WY	Short-Term
		2.2.3	Require short-term commercial rentals to provide off-street parking through zoning.	WY	Short-Term

## Goal 3: Ensure Development of the 80 Acres Supports a High Quality of Life for Residents

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline	
3.1	Provide Open Space and Recreational Opportunities	3.1.1	Provide public spaces that focus on quality.	WY	Mid-Term
		3.1.2	Develop a trail system that provides internal connectivity and connections to nearby National Forest and National Park lands.	WY	Mid-Term

## Goal 4: Prioritize Residential Uses on the 80 Acres

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
4.1	Provide for a Range of Housing Options Including Affordable and Market Rate Housing	4.1.1 Set aside a portion of land for a community land trust.	WY, HRDC	Mid-Term
		4.1.2 Ensure workforce housing is built.	WY	Mid-Term
		4.1.3 Do not allow short-term commercial rentals.	WY, HRDC, local developers, local employers	Mid-Term
		4.1.4 Encourage high residential densities through zoning and subdivision regulations.	WY	Mid-Term

## Goal 5: Plan for the Future Needs of the Town of West Yellowstone

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
5.1	Provide Space for Current and Future Town Needs on the 80 Acres	5.1.1 Set aside land for municipal uses currently located on Yellowstone Avenue.	WY	Mid-Term
		5.1.2 Set aside land for future development and unforeseen needs.	WY	Short-Term
		5.1.3 Create a Development Plan for the 80 acres.	WY	Short-Term

### Goal 6: Provide Opportunities for Strengthening the Local Economy on the 80 Acres

	Objectives	Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
6.1	Allow limited commercial development	6.1.1 Dedicate a portion of land to small-scale light manufacturing and non-tourist businesses.	WY	Mid-Term

### Goal 7: Improve the Appearance of West Yellowstone

	Objectives	Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
7.1	Create Programs and Regulations for Improving the Appearance of West Yellowstone	7.1.1 Develop design guidelines.	WY	Short-Term
		7.1.2 Develop a façade improvement program.	WY	Mid-Term
		7.1.3 Develop landscaping requirements.	WY	Short-Term
		7.1.4 Develop a dark skies Ordinance.	WY	Short-Term
7.2	Create Quality Public Spaces	7.2.1 Develop the interior parks off Canyon Street into seasonal public parks and more formal parking areas.	WY	Long-Term
		7.2.2 Create streetscape improvements along main streets and at key intersections.	WY	Long-Term
7.3	Preserve the Historic Character of West Yellowstone	7.3.1 Restore and utilize the historic structures in Heritage Park.	WY, YHC	Long-Term
		7.3.2 Maintain railroad right-of-way sight lines through Heritage Park and the entire Historic District.	WY, YHC	Ongoing

## Goal 8: Ensure Land Uses in Old Town Support the Needs of West Yellowstone Residents

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
8.1	Provide for a Mixture of Residential and Commercial Land Uses.	8.1.1 Maintain a mixture of residential and commercial land uses in Old Town.	WY	Short-Term

## Goal 9: Diversify West Yellowstone's Economy

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
9.1	Attract Entrepreneurs and Work-From-Home Professionals.	9.1.1 Work with regional and state partners on expanding high speed Internet in West Yellowstone.	WY, Internet Service Providers, NRMEDD	Mid-Term
		9.1.2 Assist new businesses opening in, and moving to, West Yellowstone.	WY, NRMEDD, WYED, CC	Ongoing
9.2	Develop a Coordinated Strategy for Retaining Existing Businesses and Recruiting New Business to West Yellowstone	9.2.1 Organize a business owners round table.	WY, local business owners, NRMEDD, WYED, CC	Ongoing
		9.2.2 Employ the community business matching process to attract new businesses that are compatible with West Yellowstone.	WY, NRMEDD, CC, WYED	Mid-Term

## Goal 10: Strengthen West Yellowstone's Off-Season Economy

	Objectives	Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
10.1	Capitalize on Visitors to the Greater Yellowstone Region	10.1.1 Develop regional partnerships with Big Sky, Ennis, and other nearby communities.	WY, NRMEDD, Big Sky, Ennis	Short-Term
10.2	Retain Year-Round Consumer Oriented Businesses	10.2.1 Work with local business owners on how the Town can support them in staying open during winter months.	WY, local business owners, NRMEDD, CC, WYED	Ongoing
10.3	Increase Efforts to Promote West Yellowstone as a Winter Destination	10.3.1 Increase the number of winter and off-season events in West Yellowstone	WY, TBID, MAP, WYED	Short-Term

## Goal 11: Provide for Long-Term Municipal Water Supply and Sewer Capacity

	Objectives	Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
11.1	Encourage water conservation	11.1.1 Analyze water flows throughout the Town to determine where leaks are occurring and fix leaks or replace water mains as needed.	WY	Ongoing
		11.1.2 Provide incentives for water conservation during high-usage months.	WY	Mid-Term
		11.1.3 Consider requiring low-flow fixtures in new residential and commercial developments.	WY	Mid-Term
11.2	Increase Water Supply	11.2.1 Develop a new Town well to supplement the well at Whiskey Springs.	WY	Short-Term
11.3	Ensure sufficient wastewater capacity	11.3.1 Increase capacity of West Yellowstone's sewer lagoon.	WY	Short-Term

## Goal 12: Enhance Recreation Opportunities in and Around West Yellowstone

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
12.1	Develop Safe and Connected Non-Motorized Transportation Options and Recreation Opportunities	12.1.1 Complete gaps and make safety improvements on the Frontier Trail.	WY, WYF, FWP, MDT, CC	Mid-Term
		12.1.2 Explore a rails-to-trails conversion on the old Oregon Short Line railroad bed from West Yellowstone to Reas Pass	USFS, WY, GC, FWP	Long-Term

## Goal 13: Maintain Public Infrastructure

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
13.1	Ensure Streets and Alleys are Maintained as Needed	13.1.1 Repave streets	WY	Long-Term
		13.1.2 Pave alleys leading to parks off Canyon Street	WY	Long-Term

## Goal 14: Protect Lives and Property from Wildfire

Objectives		Actions	Partner(s)	Timeline
14.1	Reduce wildfire risk	14.1.1 Carry out wildland fuels treatments on the southern and western borders of Town	USFS, HBFD, YNP	Mid-Term
		14.1.2 Adopt and implement fire protection and defensible space guidelines and/or regulations	HBFD	Mid-Term

## Funding Options

### Local Options

#### General Obligation Bonds

The sale of general obligation bonds can be used to finance public improvements in West Yellowstone. State statutes limit the level of bonded indebtedness.

#### West Yellowstone Resort Tax

West Yellowstone assesses a 3% tax on certain luxury goods and services. Revenues from the resort tax can be used for any activity that the Town is authorized to perform, with the tax having been used to finance infrastructure improvements, staffing, and town amenities. A portion of the total resort tax collected (2.5%) is dedicated to marketing and promoting West Yellowstone.

#### Impact Fees

Impact fees are assessed to new development and are intended to finance the added cost of infrastructure in proportion to the impact of new development. They cannot be used to maintain existing infrastructure or fix existing deficiencies.

#### Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a special district that allows a community to borrow against the area's future tax revenues. The money raised through a TIF district is invested in infrastructure projects that will encourage development within the district. Revenues created by the increased tax base in the district are used to pay off the debt.

#### West Yellowstone Tourism Business Improvement District

West Yellowstone's Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) collects a \$1.00 per night fee on all lodging facilities with ten or more rooms and typically collects \$250,000-\$300,000 annually. The TBID revenues fund marketing efforts, events, and local brick and mortar projects. The TBID Board has the option to raise the per night fee if approved by the local lodging facilities and the Town.

#### Business Improvement District

A business improvement district (BID) is a special district where an additional assessment is placed on commercial properties. The funds generated by the special assessment must be used to fund projects and programs that benefit the property owners within that district. In Montana, they are commonly used in downtowns and are referred to as downtown business improvement districts. The use of funds is governed by a board of property owners or their representatives from the district. A BID is different than TBID, in that the assessment is on all commercial properties in the district.

### Grants

#### Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

This grant program, administered through the Montana Department of Commerce, assists communities with housing, public facilities and neighborhood renewal projects. Communities must have matching funds for CDBG projects and the governing body must be the applicant.

## Treasure State Endowment Program

The Treasure State Endowment Program is administered by the Montana Department of Commerce and helps local governments with infrastructure planning as well as constructing or upgrading drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary or storm sewer systems, solid waste disposal systems and bridges.

## Big Sky Trust Fund

The Big Sky Trust Fund provides funding to promote sustainable economic growth, with financial assistance for job creation and planning projects. Local governments are eligible for job creation project grants while planning project grants are only available to Certified Regional Development Corporations, Tribal Governments, and Local Development Corporations.

## Gallatin County Resource Advisory Committee

The Gallatin County Resource Advisory Committee is an official advisory committee to the USFS that makes recommendations for funding projects that benefit federal lands.

## Transportation Alternatives

The Transportation Alternatives program is a federal program administered by the Montana Department of Transportation which provides funding for non-motorized transportation projects.

## Montana Office of Tourism Grant Program

This program awards funds to projects that strengthen Montana's economy through the development and enhancement of the state's tourism industry. The grant program offers funding in four categories.

## Main Street Grants

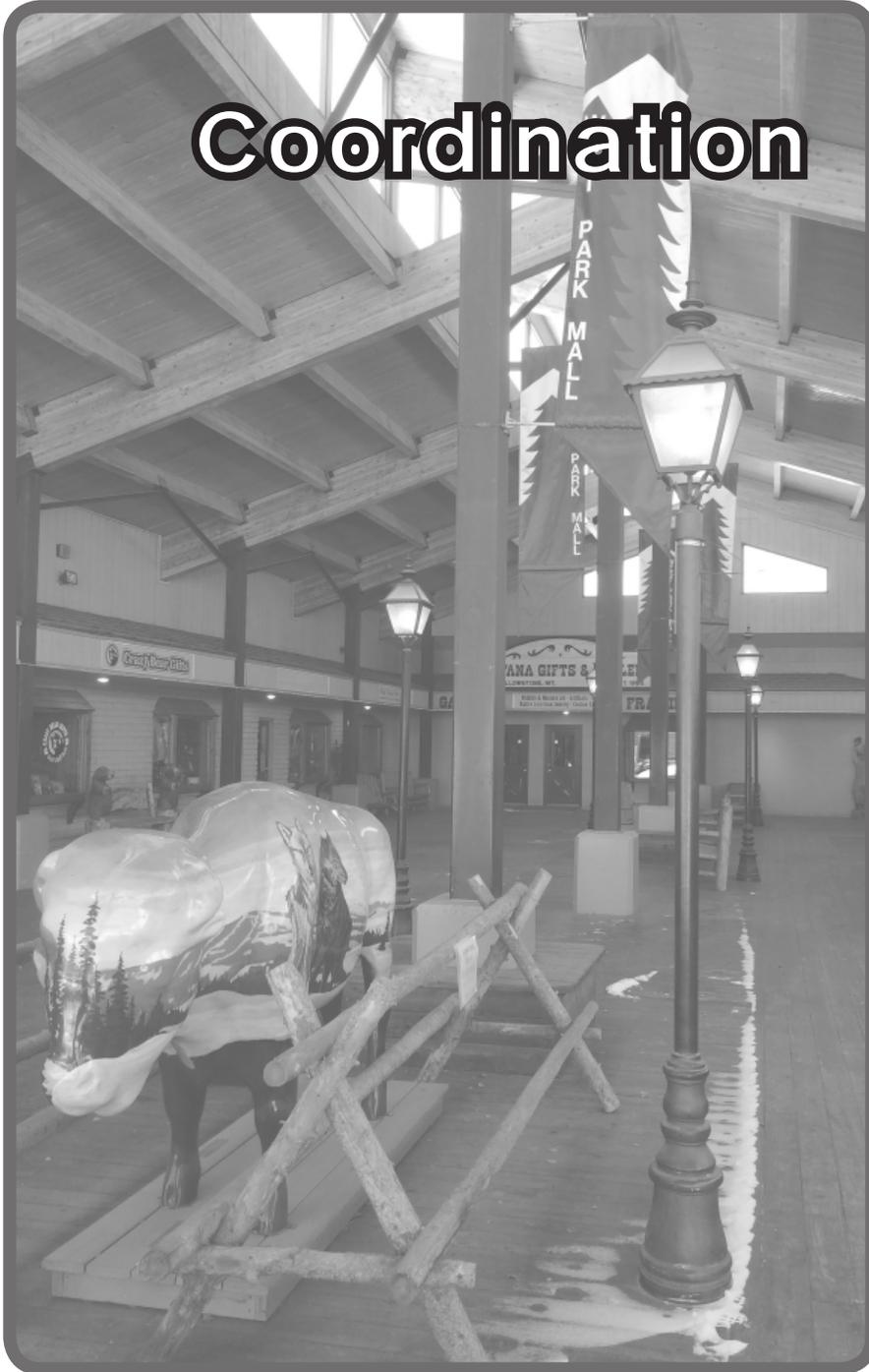
The Montana Main Street Program helps communities strengthen and preserve their historic downtown commercial districts by focusing on economic development, urban revitalization, and historic preservation through long-range planning, organization, design, and promotion.

## Recreational Trails Program

The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) is a federal program administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. RTP grants can be used for a variety of purposes including constructing and maintaining trails, and building infrastructure associated with recreational trails. West Yellowstone has successfully used RTP grants in the past to fund cross-country ski and snowmobile trail maintenance and grooming.



# Coordination



Under Montana law a growth policy must provide direction on how the governing body plans to coordinate with other levels of government. In the case of West Yellowstone this pertains to federal agencies including the USFS and the National Park Service (NPS), as well as local government entities including Gallatin County. With the exception of the police department, West Yellowstone does not have formalized agreements set up for intergovernmental coordination, yet enjoys strong relationships with nearby local governments and federal agencies. Lines of communication between West Yellowstone and other levels of government are open, with the entities having a history of shared problem solving. For example, West Yellowstone is currently coordinating with Big Sky and Ennis on regional economic development issues and is exploring how the communities can increase cooperation. In addition, the Town maintains open communication with the Custer-Gallatin National Forest on issues impacting the Town and the national forest. Lastly, West Yellowstone and Yellowstone National Park also maintain open dialogue on issues affecting the Town. It is intended that intergovernmental coordination will stay strong by maintaining open communication lines and meeting to solve problems as needed.

# Wildland-Urban Interface

## Overview

West Yellowstone residents know that wildfires are a fact of life each summer. From the fires of 1988, which burned over one million acres, to the most recent Maple Fire of 2016 that burnt over 45,000 acres and came within three miles of West Yellowstone, residents are aware that each summer brings the potential for large wildfires.

In 2006 Gallatin County developed the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to better prepare for the impacts of wildfire on public safety and property. The Gallatin County CWPP defines the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) as the “zone where structures or other human development meet and intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels,” noting that it is in this area there is a risk to life, property, and infrastructure in the event of wildfires. Being surrounded by lodgepole pine forests in the Custer-Gallatin National Forest and Yellowstone National Park, West Yellowstone fits the description of a community located in the WUI. The Gallatin County CWPP identifies areas potentially at risk of wildfire, noting that West Yellowstone is completely within the WUI.

The Custer-Gallatin National Forest has been active over the years in implementing thinning projects around Town to reduce the potential impacts of wildfire, including north and east of the Madison Addition. However, areas that have yet to receive treatment are south and west of Town, which will become increasingly important as the 80 acres becomes developed. The Custer-Gallatin National Forest is aware of the need for treatment in this area, with hopes for treatment in the coming years.

Within West Yellowstone the Madison Addition is an area of particular concern. In the Madison Addition homes are surrounded by dense pockets of lodgepole pine and landscape vegetation with little to no defensible space throughout the neighborhood. In the recent past, the Hebgen Basin Fire District received a three-year fuels mitigation grant which, including matching money, totaled \$100,000. Under the grant the fire district focused on education and fuels reduction projects in and around West Yellowstone. Part of the fuels reduction work focused on removing vegetation and creating defensible space around private residences. In the end, however, the district was not able to spend all the money available, citing challenges with getting individual homeowners to take advantage of the fuels reduction work offered under the grant.

### State Law Requirements

State law requires that growth policies provide an evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire, and to determine if there is a need to delineate the wildland urban interface and adopt regulations requiring defensible space around structures, provide adequate ingress and egress, and to require adequate water supplies. As pointed out in the Gallatin County CWPP, West Yellowstone is identified as being in the WUI as in-town development is completely surrounded by lodgepole pine forests. With the current situation in the Madison Addition, and anticipated development of the 80 acres, there is a need to develop regulatory guidance for addressing potential impacts from wildfire. Additional regulations could take the form of a defensible space ordinance, building regulations on allowed roofing and siding materials, and subdivision standards for water supply and ingress and egress.



# Subdivision Review

Montana state law requires growth policies to include statements on how governing bodies will conduct subdivision review. Specifically, state law requires growth policies to state how the subdivision primary review criteria will be defined and used in making decisions regarding proposed subdivisions, as well as how governing bodies will conduct public hearings on proposed subdivisions.

## Primary Review Criteria

The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act requires that subdivision proposals be evaluated for their impact on the following seven primary review criteria:

- Agriculture
- Agricultural water user facilities
- Local services
- The natural environment
- Wildlife
- Wildlife habitat
- Public health and safety

Unless exempted under state law, when preparing a subdivision application, a subdivider must identify the anticipated impacts on the primary criteria. In the event adverse impacts are anticipated, the subdivider is required to present realistic measures to mitigate impacts. Each subdivision proposal is unique and as such there are no established guidelines for determining adverse impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. To determine if adverse impacts exist, and whether mitigation is needed, West Yellowstone will evaluate each subdivision proposal to determine whether adverse impacts are likely, and will work with developers to identify

appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, West Yellowstone will seek comment from public agencies, service providers, and other experts to determine whether adverse impacts are likely and whether mitigation should be required. In all cases, mitigation measures should be related and roughly proportional to the expected impact.

This section serves to define the seven primary review criteria and provide guidance as to evaluating whether adverse impacts exist.

## Agriculture

### Definition

Agriculture means the use of land for growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals to produce food, feed, and fiber commodities. Examples of agricultural activities include, but are not limited to, cultivation and tillage of the soil; dairying; growing and harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; and the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry. Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets, kenneling, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes. The definition of agricultural land also includes land considered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service to have a soil of agricultural importance and lands devoted to a soil conservation or rangeland management program.

### Evaluating Impacts on Agriculture

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on agriculture, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- The amount of agricultural land removed from production.
- The amount of agricultural land with soil considered prime or having statewide or local importance by the Natural

Resources and Conservation Service.

- Potential conflicts between the proposed subdivision and adjacent agricultural operations including interference with the movement of livestock or farm machinery, maintenance of fences, proliferation of weeds, harassment of livestock by pets, odors, visual quality.

## Agricultural Water User Facilities

### Definition

Agricultural water user facilities shall mean those facilities which provide water for agricultural land or provide water for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, canals, pipes, head gates, tanks, drains, reservoirs, ponds and developed springs used for agricultural purposes.

### Evaluating Impacts on Agricultural Water User Facilities

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on agricultural water user facilities, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- The location and proximity of an agricultural water user facility.
- Potential conflicts between facility users and subdivision residents.
- The rights of all water right owners and users of the facility.

## Local Services

### Definition

Local services mean any and all services provided to the public by

local government entities or public utilities such as transportation systems, including non-motorized facilities, parking, law enforcement, fire protection, drainage structures water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, recreation, parks, libraries or schools.

### **Evaluating Impacts on Local Services**

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on local services, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- The goals and objectives of existing plans.
- Increased demand on services and need to expand services as a result of the proposed subdivision. Lack of adequate service capacity and capability of a local service may be grounds for denial if the impact cannot be mitigated by the applicant.
- The cost of providing services by determining the per capita or per lot cost of services and current and anticipated tax and fee revenue.

### **Natural Environment**

#### **Definition**

The natural environment means that physical, chemical, and biological factors that exist within or influence a geographic area or community. These factors include, but are not limited to, geology, soils, topography, climate, surface water, groundwater, floodplain, vegetation, and objects or places of cultural, historic, or aesthetic significance.

#### **Evaluating Impacts on the Natural Environment**

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on the natural

environment, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- Riparian or wetland areas
- Vegetation cover or type
- Noxious weeds
- Important or sensitive natural habitats
- Surface and groundwater quality
- Stream bank stability
- Erodible soils
- Cultural and historic landmarks
- The amount of open space preserved for natural resource conservation
- Results of water and sanitary facility inspection for all proposed lots
- The number of cuts and fill on slopes as a result of road or building construction

### **Wildlife**

#### **Definition**

Wildlife means birds and animals that are not domesticated or tamed.

#### **Evaluating Impacts on Wildlife**

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on wildlife, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- Potential for human-wildlife conflicts.
- The number of wildlife-friendly amenities, such as preserved open space, enhanced habitat or wildlife protection devices.

## Wildlife Habitat

### Definition

Wildlife habitat means an area containing the complex of environmental conditions essential to wildlife for feeding and forage, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting, or buffers for those areas. It also includes areas essential to the conservation of species protected by the Endangered Species Act or of special interest or concern to the State of Montana.

### Evaluating Impacts on Wildlife Habitat

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on wildlife habitat, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- The presence and potential destruction of wildlife habitat.
- Proposed subdivisions proximity to migration routes.
- Water quality of aquatic species.

## Public Health and Safety

### Definition

A condition of well-being, reasonably free from danger, risk or injury, for a community at large, or for all people, not merely for the welfare of a specific individual or a small class of persons. Conditions that relate to public health and safety include, but are not limited to, flood hazards, geologic hazards, dam failures, avalanches, air quality, water quality, toxic or hazardous substance exposure, fire or wildfire hazards, proximity to high voltage power lines or high pressure gas lines, noise, air or vehicular traffic hazards, parks and recreation facilities, and threats to life, health, safety and wellness.

## Evaluation Impacts on Public Health and Safety

When evaluating a proposed subdivision's impact on public health and safety, West Yellowstone will consider the following factors.

- Potential hazards to residents of the proposed subdivision from high voltage lines, high-pressure gas lines, highways, railroads, or railroad crossing and nearby industrial or mining activity.
- Any public health or safety hazards created as a result of the proposed subdivision, such as traffic or fire conditions, contamination or depletion of groundwater supplies, accelerated stormwater runoff, widening of existing floodplain or flood hazard areas.

## Public Hearings

Public hearings provide the opportunity for individuals who have an interest in or may be impacted by a proposed subdivision to express their concerns to Planning Advisory Board and Town Council. Montana's Subdivision and Platting Act requires public hearings for major and subsequent minor subdivisions. This section serves to outline how public hearings will be conducted by the Planning Advisory Board and Town Council for proposed subdivisions in West Yellowstone.

1. Notice of the public hearing will be published in a newspaper at least 15 days prior to the hearing date.
2. At least 15 days prior to the hearing, notifications will be sent, by certified mail, to the subdivider, each property owner of land adjoining the proposed subdivision, and each

purchaser under contract for property adjoining the proposed subdivision.

3. A quorum, consisting of a majority of Planning Advisory Board members and Town Councilpersons, is required for official action. When a quorum is not present, no action on the item will be taken and the hearing will be rescheduled to the next available meeting date for which public notice requirements can be met.
4. At the hearing a staff member, or contract reviewer, will give a summary of the staff report pointing out key issues, findings and recommendations, followed by board or council members being given the opportunity to ask questions of staff.
5. The subdivider and/or their representative will be given the opportunity to provide a summary of the subdivision proposal and address the key issues, findings and recommendations. In the case of a hearing before the Town Council, the subdivider may also discuss their preference for mitigation. Councilpersons will then be given the opportunity to ask questions of the subdivider.
6. The presiding officer will ask for public comments from proponents, opponents and others, followed by the subdivider being given the opportunity for rebuttal. In the interest of time, the presiding officer may limit the amount of time members of the public are given to speak so long as everyone desiring to speak has a reasonable opportunity.
7. The presiding officer will close the public hearing for board

or council deliberation. During this time board or council members may ask questions of the subdivider, staff and any members of the public. Due to late hour or other extraordinary circumstances, a public hearing may be closed and continued at a later date.

8. The board will deliberate and make a recommendation (Planning Advisory Board) or decision (Town Council) on the application.
9. Prior to voting on the subdivision application, board or council members will review the subject matter contained in the public comments and discuss whether and how the comments impacted their decisions.
10. Planning Advisory Board recommendations and Town Council decisions will be supported by written findings of fact and conclusions of law.

# Conditions, Trends & Projections

**WEST YELLOWSTONE · MONTANA**  
Population 1,232 • Elevation 6,660 • Established 1908

*Destination Adventure*



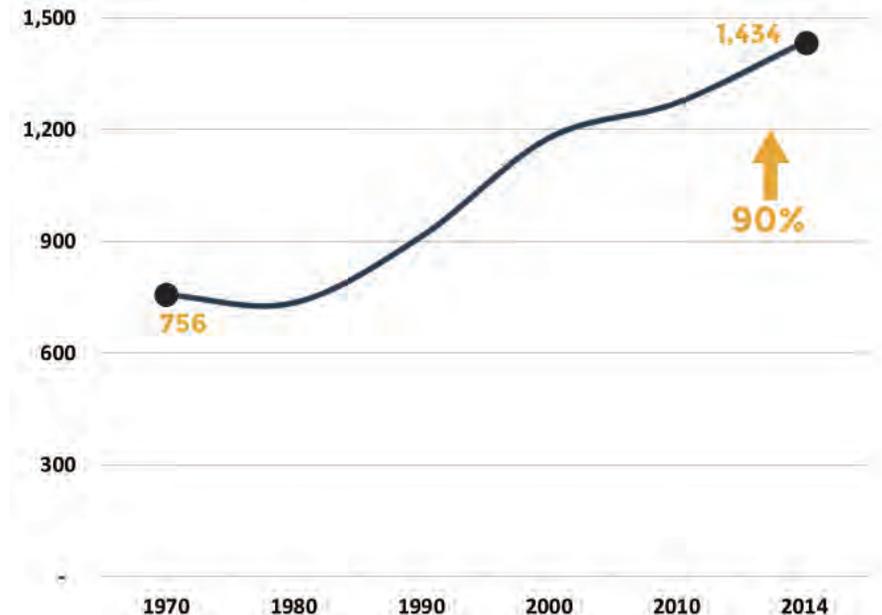
*Visit our* **Historic U.P. Railroad Depot & Museum**  
YELLOWSTONE & CANYON STREET .. MAY - MID OCT



## Population

As of 2014 the population of West Yellowstone was estimated at 1,434, a 22% increase since 2000 when the population stood at 1,177. Since 1970, West Yellowstone's population has grown steadily, with the 1990s being a period of high population growth, followed by a period of more moderate growth between 2000 and 2010 – see Figure 1. More recently however, West Yellowstone is once again showing signs of high growth, with the population increasing by 13% between 2010 and 2014 from 1,271 to 1,434 – an average annual growth rate of 3.21%.

Figure 1 - Population Change 1970 - 2014

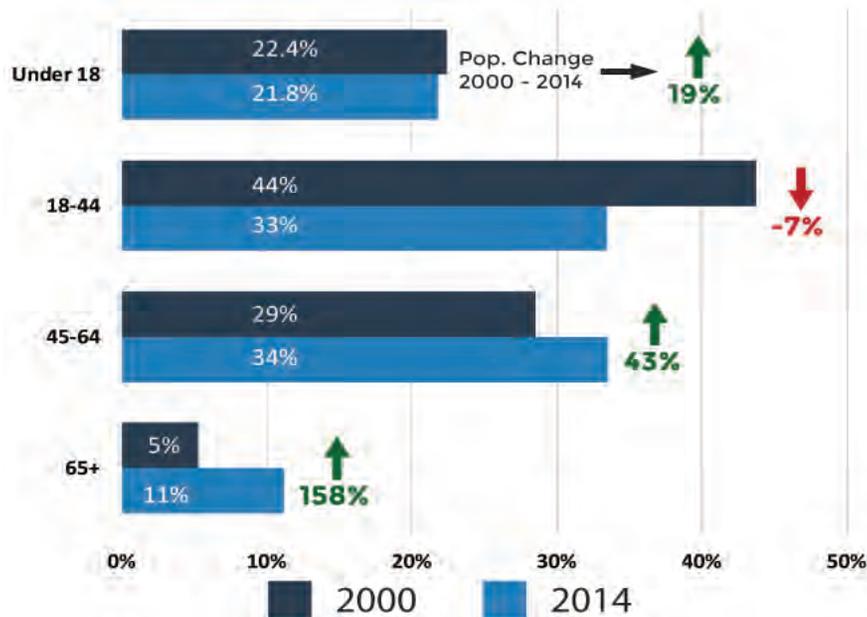


Source: American Community Survey and U.S. Census

## Age Distribution

As of 2014, the 45-64 age group made up the largest share of West Yellowstone’s population at 34%, followed by 18-44 (33%), under 18 (22%), and 65+ (11%). As shown in Figure 2, these percentages indicate change since 2000, with decreases in the percentage of the 18-44 and under 18 age groups, and increases in the 45-64 and 65+ age groups. Most notable is the fact that the number of individuals over the age of 65 more than doubled between 2000 and 2014, increasing by 158%. By comparison, Gallatin County and Montana, while also aging relative to the United States as a whole, saw 67% and 31% respective increases in their 65+ populations during this time. Also notable is the increase in individuals aged 45-64, because in 20 years these individuals will be at or near retirement age and will likely have different needs in terms of housing, mobility, and

Figure 2 - Age Distribution 2000 & 2014



Source: American Community Survey and U.S. Census

healthcare. Taken together, these trends point to a population that is growing older with a decreasing share of school-aged children.

## Racial Composition

As of 2014, estimates show white as the most common race of West Yellowstone residents, which is also the case in Gallatin County and Montana. As Table 1 shows, West Yellowstone’s Hispanic and black

Table 1 - Racial Composition 2014

	West	Gallatin	MT
White	89.3%	93%	87%
Hispanic	6.5%	3%	3%
Black	3.3%	0%	0%
Native American	0.6%	1%	6%
Other	0.4%	2%	2%
Asian	0.0%	1%	1%
Hawaiian	0.0%	0%	0%

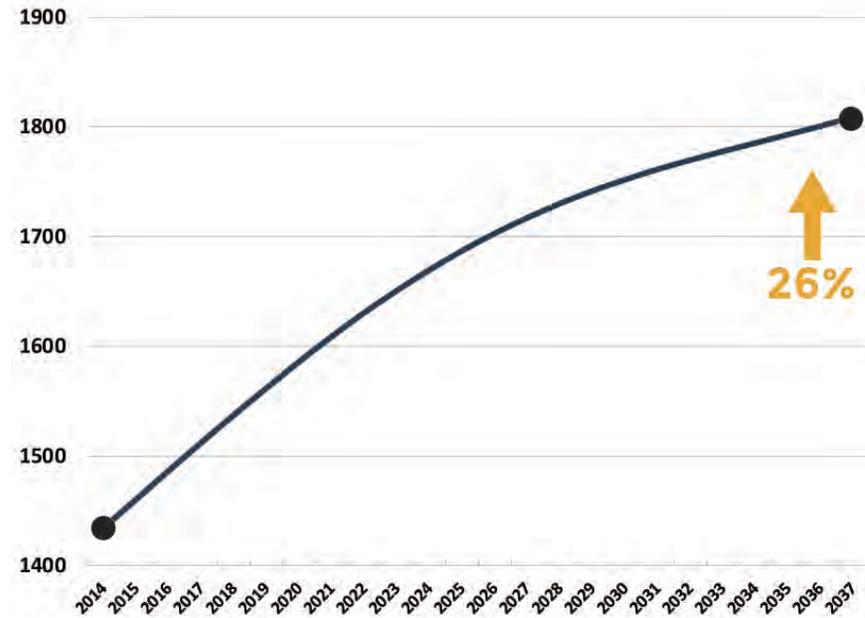
Source: Decennial Census and American Community Survey

populations are substantially larger than that of both Gallatin County and Montana on a percentage basis.

## Projections

The State of Montana’s Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC) provides county level population projections produced by Regional Economic Models, Inc. In the absence of municipal level projections provided by CEIC, Gallatin County’s projected growth rates were used as a proxy to develop a population projection for West Yellowstone. As seen in Figure 3, the Gallatin County growth rate projects West Yellowstone’s total population increasing by 26% by 2037.

Figure 3 - Population Projection



Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center

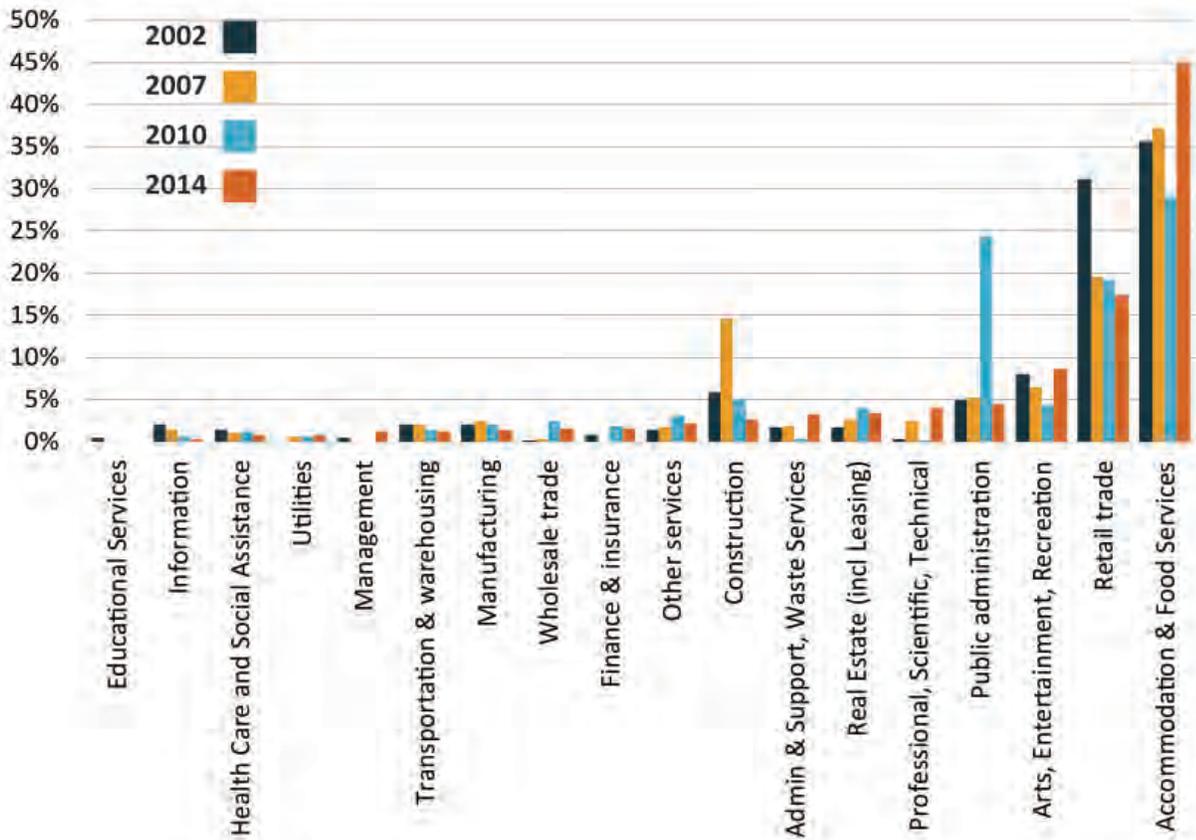
## Economy

### Employment

Between 2002 and 2014 the number of total primary jobs<sup>1</sup> in West Yellowstone increased by 16%. The industry sectors employing the most people as of 2014 were all service oriented industries, and included accommodation and food services; retail trade; and arts, entertainment, and recreation, accounting for 45%, 17%, and 9% of primary jobs, respectively – see Figure 4. During this time, out of the 18 industry sectors analyzed, 11 saw increases in employment. The industries experiencing the highest nominal employment growth were accommodation and food services; professional, scientific, and technical; and real estate – see Figure 5. The industry sectors experience the largest employment decreases were retail trade, construction, and information.

<sup>1</sup> A primary job is the highest paying job for an individual worker.

Figure 4 - Employment Share By Industry



Source: U.S. Census - OnTheMap

Figure 5 - Employment Change By Industry 2002 - 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - OnTheMap

## Housing

In 2014, there were an estimated 955 housing units in West Yellowstone. The housing stock in West Yellowstone is made up of 47% multi-family housing, 42% single-family housing, and 11% mobile homes. Since 2000 there has been a noticeable increase in multi-family housing units – see Table 2.

**Table 2 - Types of Housing Units**

	2000	2014	Change '00 – '14
Housing Units	798	955	20%
Single Family	343	404	18%
Multi-Family	313	446	42%
Mobile	142	105	-26%

Source: American Community Survey and U.S. Census

As of 2014, 70% (665) of housing units in West Yellowstone were estimated to be occupied and 30% were vacant, representing a small decrease in the percent share of vacant housing units since 2000 – see Table 3. The high percentage of vacant housing units is likely due to seasonal homes and/or homes used for vacation rentals. According

**Table 3 - Housing Occupancy Indicators**

	2000	2014	Change '00 – '14
Housing Units	798	955	20%
Vacant	288	290	1%
For Seasonal Use	162	126	-22%
Occupied	518	665	28%
Owner Occupied	195	258	32%
Renter Occupied	323	407	26%

Source: American Community Survey and U.S. Census

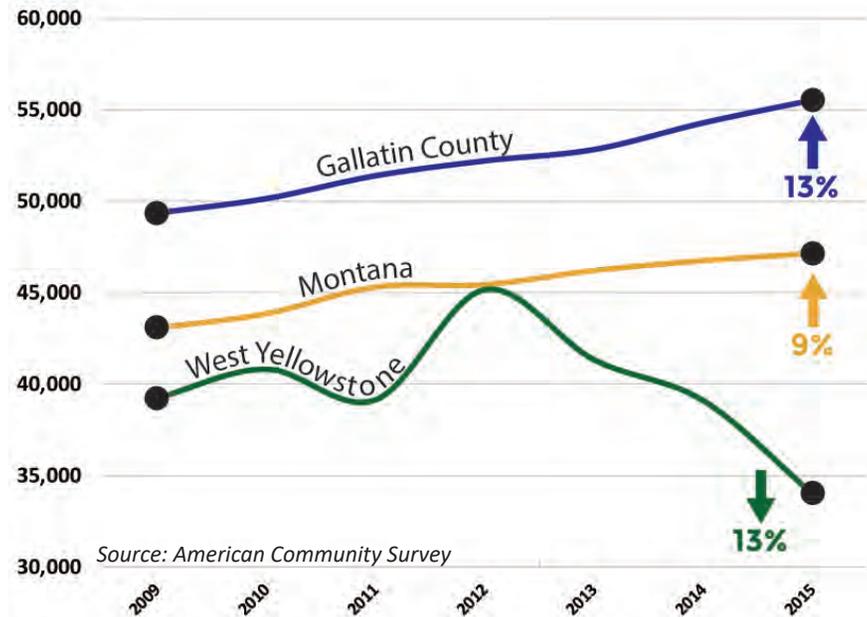
to American Community Survey data, an estimated 43% of vacant housing units were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use and, as discussed below, many homes in West Yellowstone are offered as nightly vacation rentals. Of the 665 occupied housing units, 39% were owner occupied and 61% were renter-occupied.

The median housing value as of 2014 in West Yellowstone was \$274,200 (60% increase since 2000), which is higher than both Gallatin County (\$263,200) and Montana (\$187,600). When looking at rents however, West Yellowstone's median rent is below that of Gallatin County and Montana. In 2014, the median rent in West Yellowstone was \$600 (17% increase since 2000), slightly less than Montana at \$696 and substantially less than Gallatin County at \$850, which is likely driven up by rental demand in Bozeman. While rents may be comparatively lower in West Yellowstone, incomes are also lower than in Gallatin County and Montana. As Figure 6 shows, median household income in West Yellowstone has decreased since 2009, while in Gallatin County and Montana it has increased. As of 2015, median household income in West Yellowstone was 20% lower than in Montana and 39% lower than in Gallatin County.

## Housing Affordability

Looking at housing cost burden (paying more than 30% of household income on housing) is helpful in providing a snapshot of housing affordability in West Yellowstone. In 2014, an estimated 24% of homeowners in West Yellowstone had a housing cost burden – see Figure 7. The financial challenges are even greater for renters, with 42% of renters in West Yellowstone having experienced a housing cost burden in 2014.

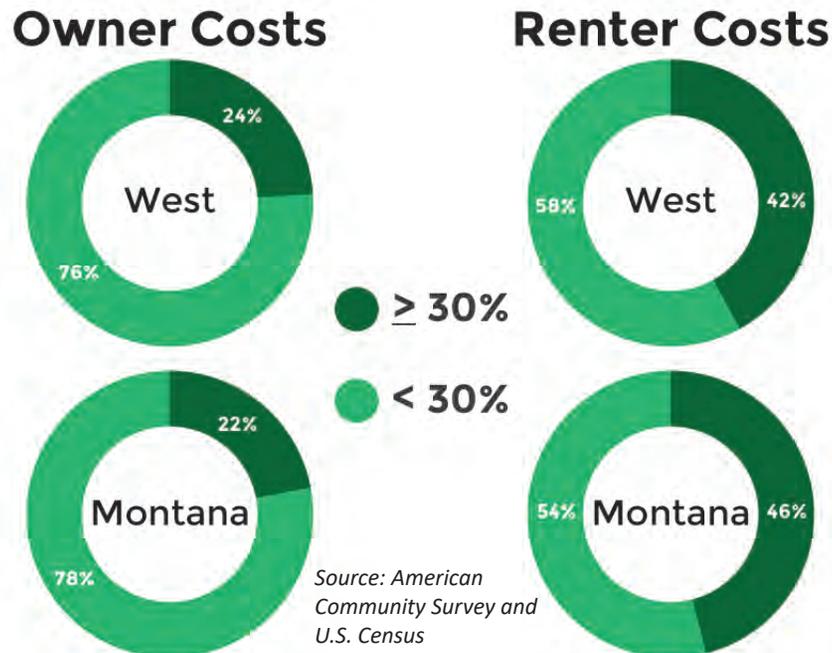
Figure 6 - Median Household Income 2009 - 2015



## Housing Needs Assessment

In response to the challenges associated with providing affordable housing for year-round residents and seasonal workers, in 2015 West Yellowstone conducted a housing needs assessment. The housing needs assessment identified several issues pertaining to the availability of affordable housing in West Yellowstone and residents' ability to pay for housing. The assessment found that West Yellowstone has a large low-income population that drives demand for affordable housing. Analysis from the assessment confirmed that there is insufficient supply of affordable for-sale housing for low income households. In the rental market, the assessment found that rental housing appears to be affordable for low income households (those at 30%-50% of Area Median Income), but the number of available units is insufficient to meet demand. At the same time, the assessment also noted that both rental affordability and availability is an acute problem for the lowest income (minimum wage) households. However, analysis of supply and demand in the West Yellowstone rental market is complicated by the seasonal fluctuations in population and employment as well as by employer provided housing. Additionally, the rental market is impacted by the large number of vacation homes and short term rentals.

Figure 7 - Homeowner Costs and Rent as a Percent of Income - 2014



## Barriers to Housing Development

West Yellowstone is surrounded by federal land, resulting in a limited amount of land for development. This lack of available land for development results in high property values relative to other similarly sized communities. Additionally, land use in West Yellowstone is disproportionately zoned for commercial uses. The housing assessment found that there are numerous vacant lots in

the Madison Addition, however, these lots remain unaffordable for the majority of West Yellowstone residents. It is anticipated that development of the 80 acres west of Town will help in alleviating some of the issues facing West Yellowstone with regard to housing affordability and availability. Other barriers include high construction costs, short building season and the lack of skilled tradespeople.



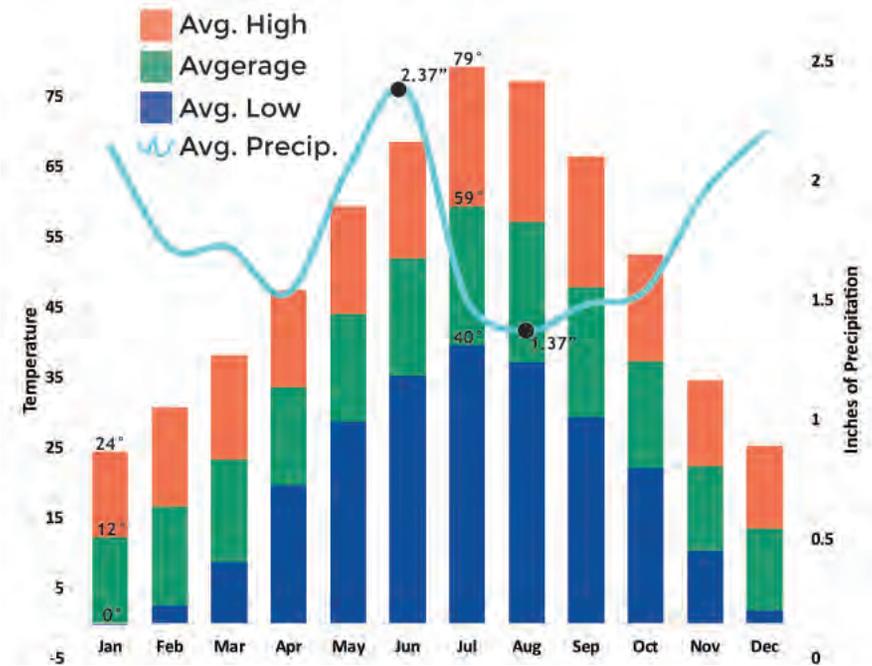
## Natural Resources

West Yellowstone is located just below 7,000 feet in elevation and experiences a subarctic climate characterized by cold winters and short warmer summers – see Figure 8. West Yellowstone is surrounded largely by Lodgepole pine forests with pockets of Douglas Fir and shrubby vegetation near south fork and main fork of the Madison River – see Map 2. The dominant water feature around West Yellowstone is the Madison River to the east, which flows out of Yellowstone National Park into Hebgen Lake, north of Town.

## Sand and Gravel Resources

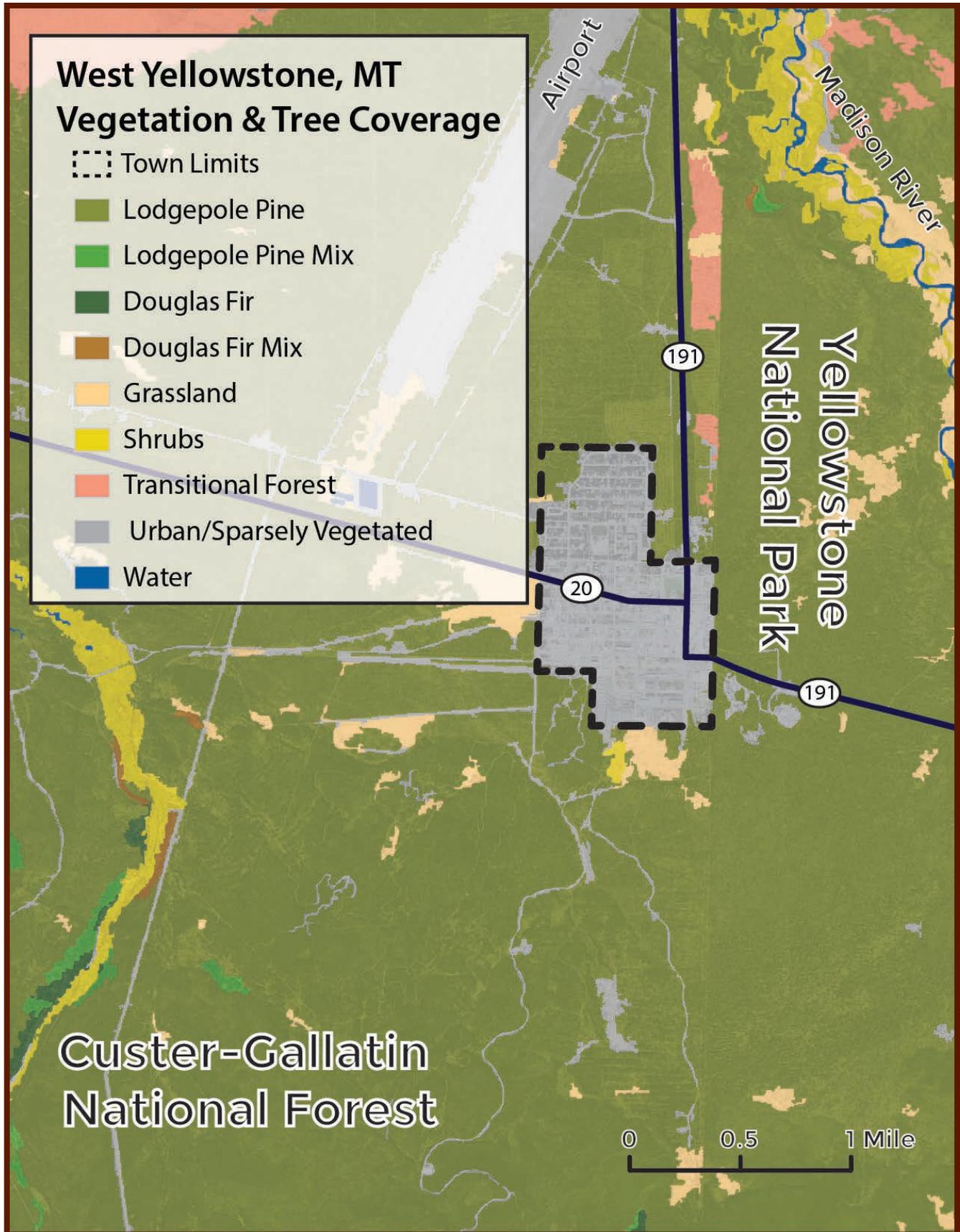
Sand and gravel are key components of many infrastructure projects from the building and maintenance of roads to home construction. Because of the transportation costs associated with sand and gravel, it is most effective for the extraction of these resources to be near

Figure 8 - Climate

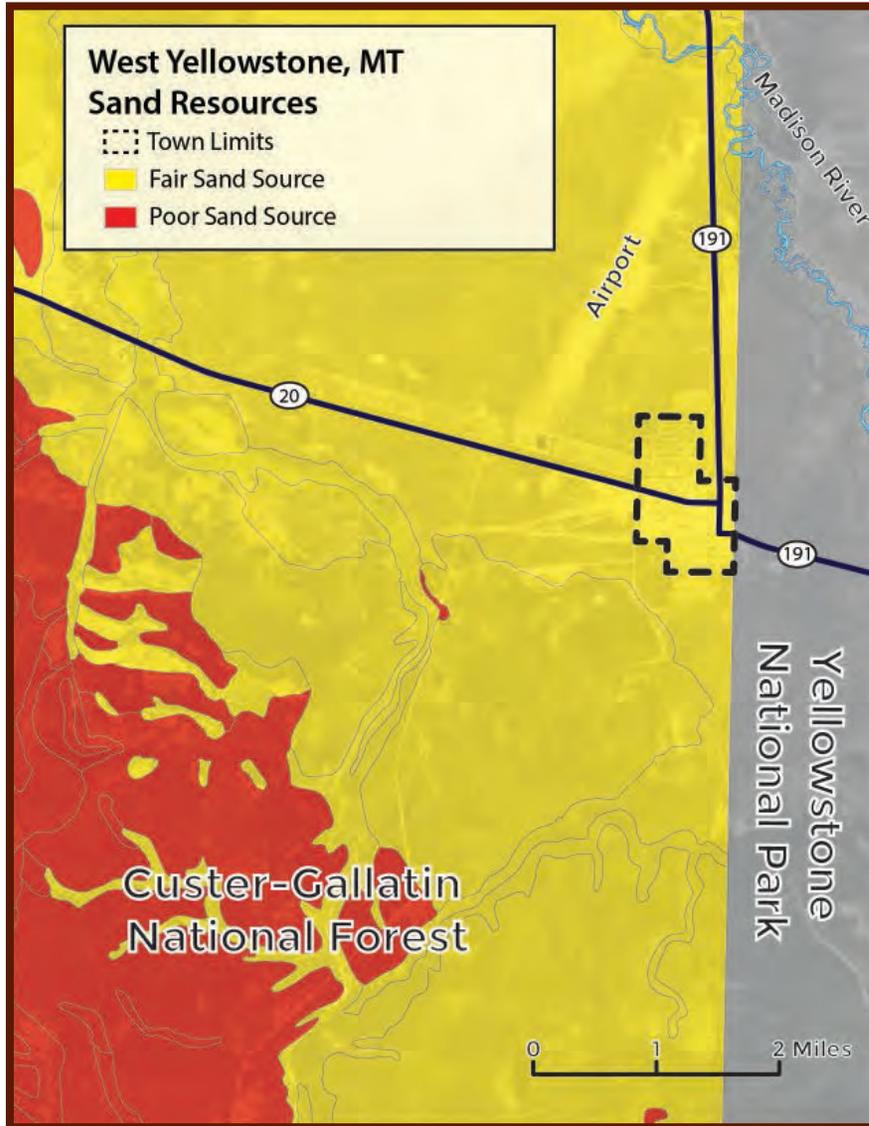


the end user. However, sand and gravel extraction operations generate noise, dust, and truck traffic, which are not desirable near residential and some commercial land uses. There are currently no sand and gravel extraction operations within West Yellowstone or in the immediate vicinity of town. However, there are several permitted open cut mining operations in Gallatin County north of West Yellowstone and one permitted open cut mine in Madison County, west of town. As shown in Maps 3 and 4, the area around West Yellowstone is thought to be an adequate location for sand resources with pockets of gravel resources to the southwest. However, as West Yellowstone is surrounded by national forest and park it is unlikely that sand and gravel extraction operations will be developed in the future.

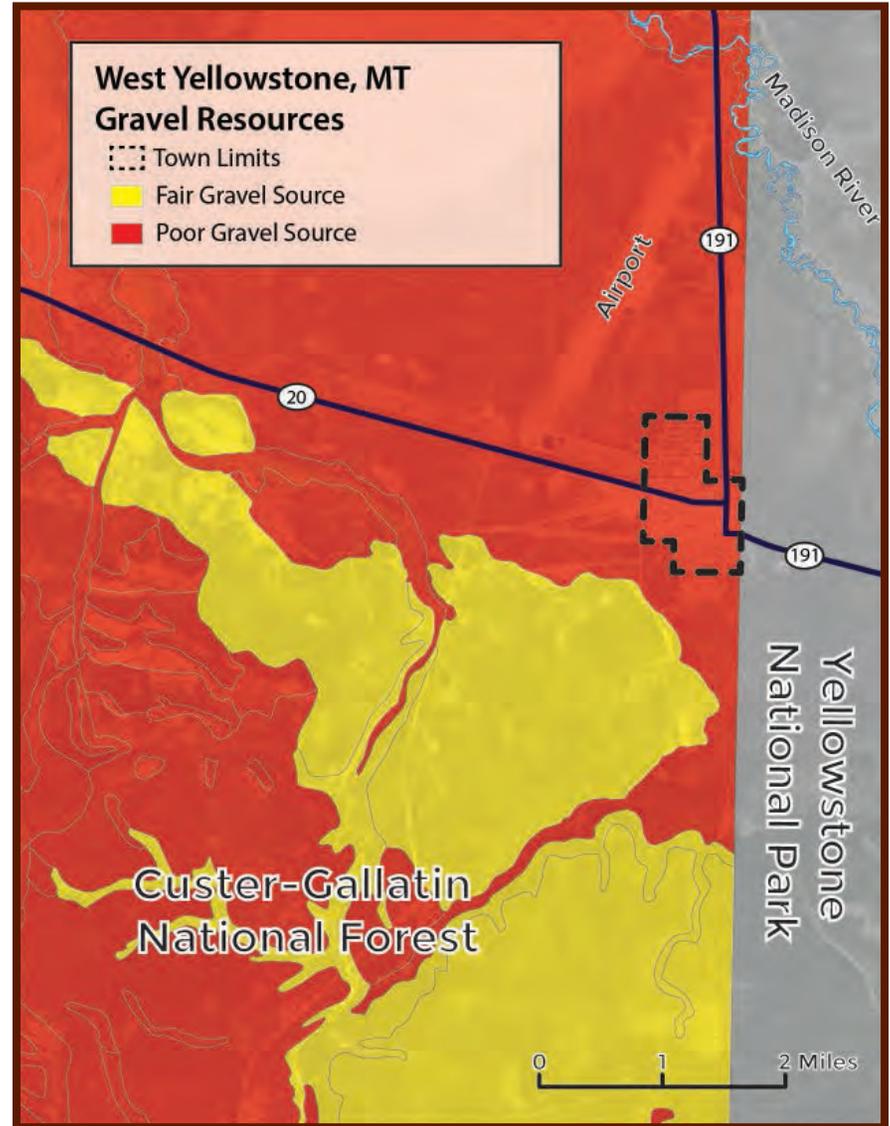
Map 2 - Vegetation



Map 3 - Sand Resource Availability



Map 4 - Gravel Resource Availability



## Land Use

West Yellowstone is completely surrounded by public land, making the Town in effect an island with little room for growth outside its current boundaries – see Map 5. The Town did recently purchase 80-acres from the Custer-Gallatin National Forest immediately west of Town. However, it cannot be expected that such opportunities for land purchases will be made available in the future.

There are three main distinctive areas of West Yellowstone – the Madison Addition on the north end, Old Town in the middle, and the Grizzly Addition on the south end – see Map 6. The Madison addition is exclusively residential and is where West Yellowstone’s school is located. Old Town contains a mix of residential and various forms of commercial businesses. On the east end of Old Town consumer oriented commercial businesses and hotels dominate, primarily along Canyon Street, Yellowstone Avenue, and Madison Avenue. On the west end of Old Town there is a mix of single family and multifamily residential housing with various commercial businesses interspersed throughout the area. Old Town also encompasses the Oregon Short Line Historic District, which is a four-block area along the south side of Yellowstone Avenue between Boundary Street and Faithful Street. The property and buildings in the district were donated to the West Yellowstone in 1966 by the Union Pacific Railroad. The Union Pacific Railroad built the main structures within the district between 1909 and 1929, which were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. Lastly, the Grizzly Addition on the south end of Town is comprised primarily of uses serving the needs of visitors to West Yellowstone including accommodations, restaurants, and the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center.

## Land Use Classifications

The Montana Department of Revenue’s tax classifications provide a high-level view of the different classifications of land in West Yellowstone. The classifications identify lands by use for tax purposes, including residential, commercial, vacant, exempt (non-taxed), centrally assessed (utilities) and non-valued (parks) properties. Map 7 shows the land use mix in West Yellowstone based on these land

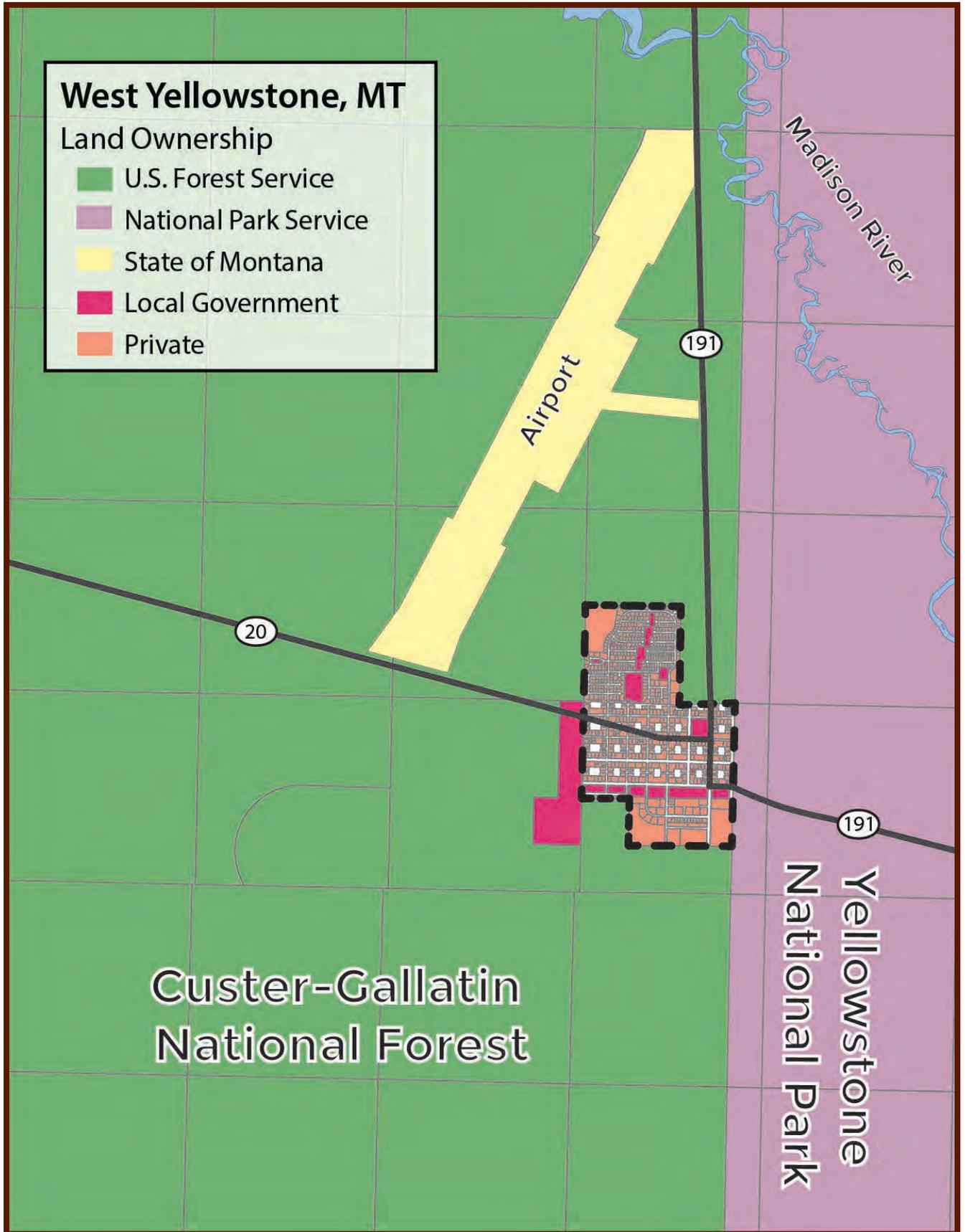
classifications, while Table 4 shows the total acreage and percent share for each land classification. These calculations do not include public right-of-way such as streets and alleys. As can be seen, commercial is the dominant land use in West Yellowstone followed by residential, exempt, and vacant.

Table 4 - Land Use Classifications

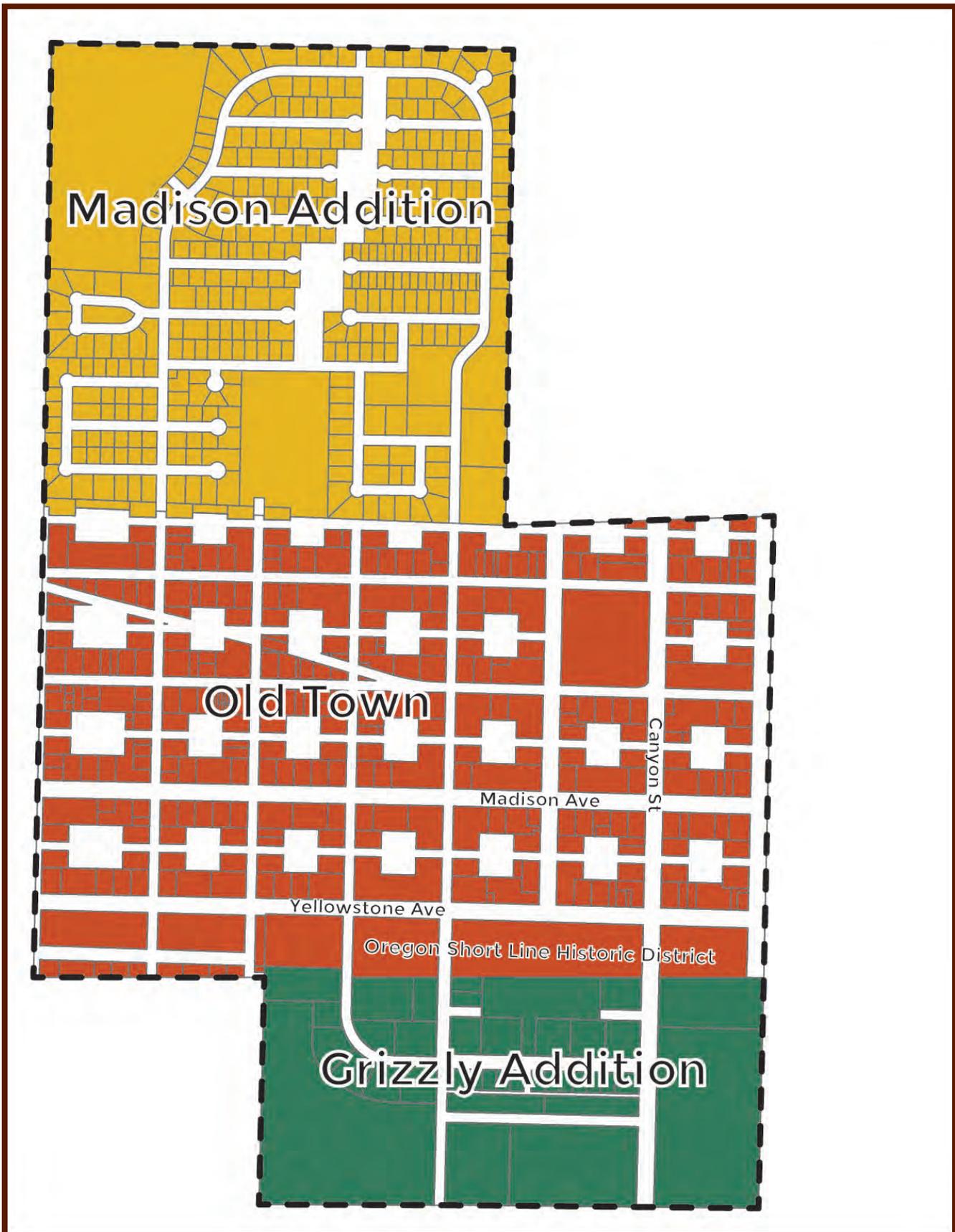
	Acres	% of Total
Commercial	122	34.2%
Residential	97	27.2%
Exempt	54	15.2%
Vacant	50	13.9%
Non-Valued	18	4.9%
Mixed Use	12	4.3%
Centrally Assessed	1	0.3%
Total	356	100.0%

Source: Dept. of Revenue

Map 5 - Land Ownership



Map 6 - Areas of West Yellowstone



Map 7 - Land Use Classifications



## Zoning

West Yellowstone’s zoning defines and regulates land uses within the Town. Map 8 shows the zoning districts in Town with descriptions provided below.

### Residential – Single Family

West Yellowstone has two single family residential zoning districts – residential single family low density (R1) and residential single family medium density (R2). The intent of the R-1 and R-2 districts is to provide for and preserve neighborhoods composed of single family dwellings and to protect these areas from incompatible uses.

### Residential – Multi-Family

West Yellowstone has two residential zoning districts permitting multi-family dwellings – Residential Medium Density (R-3) and Residential Medium Density Apartments (R-4). The intent of the R-3 and R-4 districts is to promote a diverse array of housing options including both single family and multi-family dwellings. The R-3 and R-4 districts are also intended to address West Yellowstone’s need for affordable housing.

The areas of the Madison Addition that are zoned R-3 have been developed in a manner more consistent with R-2 zoning for single family, medium density. These areas are surrounded by R-2 zones and developers have chosen to build medium density housing units instead. Since R-3 and R-4 zones allow for both lower and higher densities, the lower densities apparently proved to be more desirable. The result of this lower density development is fewer housing units available, thus exacerbating the affordable housing problem.

### Central Business District

The Central Business District occupies all of Old Town and is intended to encourage commercial uses and building styles that are traditional and rustic in nature. This matches the older commercial sections of West Yellowstone and preserves existing historic structures.

### Expanded Business District

The expanded business district is intended to provide land for commercial uses that generally require a greater degree of direct access by vehicles, on-site parking, and depend less on pedestrian access for sale of goods and services.

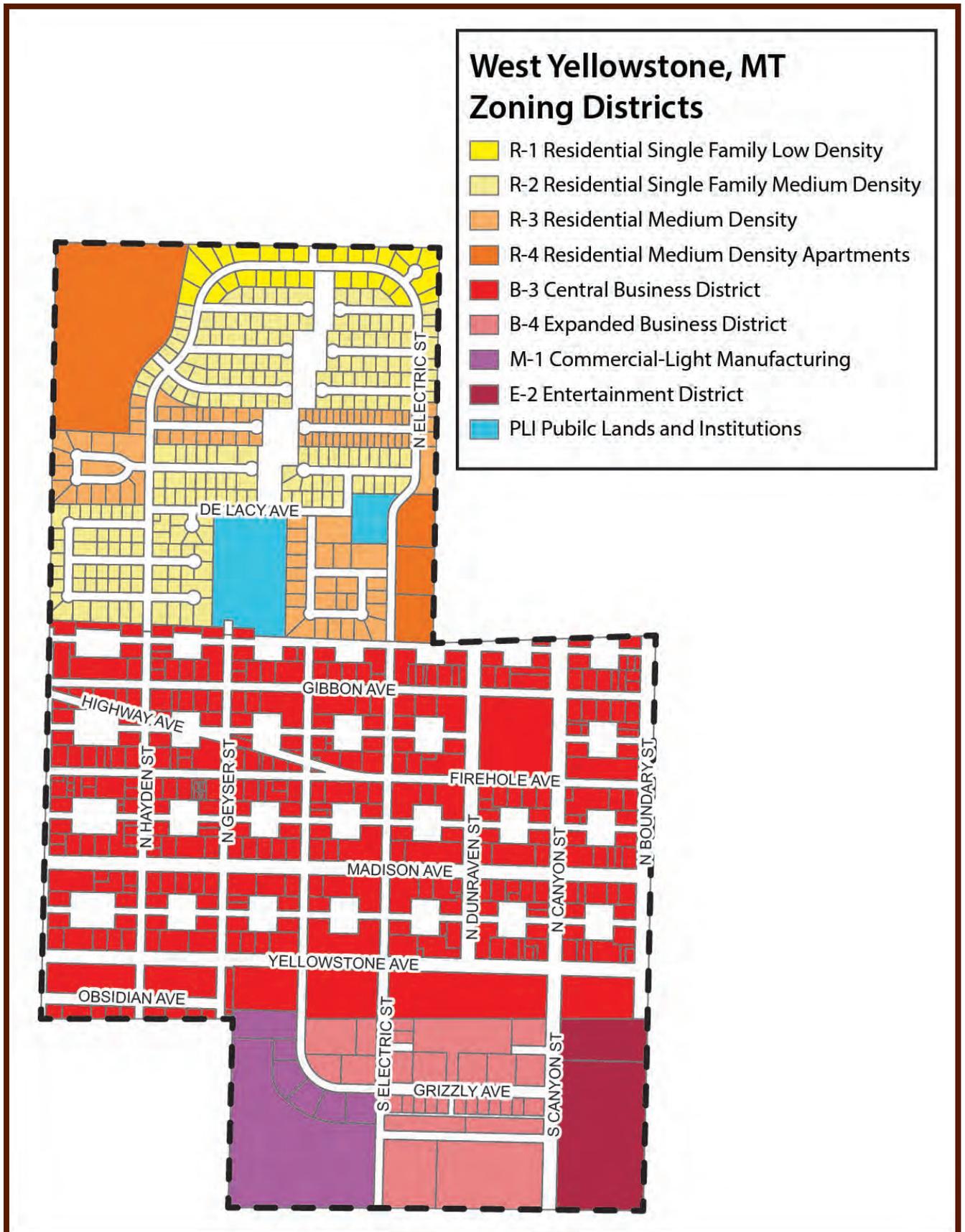
### Entertainment District

The intent of the entertainment district is to provide for uses which are geared towards public entertainment and educational purposes for people visiting the area. Small commercial retail uses are only allowed in order to complement existing primary uses.

### Commercial-Light Manufacturing

The commercial-light manufacturing district is intended to provide a space for wholesale trade, storage, warehousing, trucking and transportation terminals, light manufacturing and similar activities. At present time, the majority of the area zoned commercial-light manufacturing is occupied by an RV park.

Map 8 - Zoning Map



## Local Services

### Law Enforcement

Law enforcement in West Yellowstone consists of the West Yellowstone Police Department (6 officers), the Gallatin County Sheriff's Department (2 resident officers), and the Montana Highway Patrol (1 officer). In emergency situations rangers from Yellowstone Park (3 officers at West Gate) and the Custer-Gallatin National Forest (1 resident officer) can assist the local law enforcement officers.

### Fire Protection

Fire Protection in West Yellowstone is provided by the Hebgen Basin Fire District. The Department is capable of fighting structural and wild-land fires. The district has four stations and 10 paid employees (chief, assistant chief, seven firefighters, and administrative assistant) as well as 16 volunteers. All paid firefighters staff the fire station in West Yellowstone which is home to two ambulances, a ladder truck, a structure fire engine, a brush truck, and a water tender. Based on current call volumes the district would ideally be able to hire an additional paid firefighter.

### Medical Services

Medical services in West Yellowstone are provided by a health clinic operated by Community Health Partners, which is partially funded by the Town of West Yellowstone. The health clinic was renovated in 2011, giving residents and visitors in the Hebgen Basin a state-of-the-art facility where medical staff treat both acute and chronic medical concerns. The main provider at the clinic is a nurse practitioner who is supported by physicians from Bozeman Deaconess Hospital Big Sky

facility. CHP is connected to specialists through local hospitals and the Gallatin Mental Health Center.

### Education

West Yellowstone School District is a K-12 public education school system serving the Town of West Yellowstone with an enrollment of approximately 252 students in 2016, a 40% increase since 2006. Recently the district passed a \$6.9 million bond that will provide the district with four new classrooms, a music room, stage, and multipurpose room. This new addition will ensure appropriate space and instructional environments exist for student achievement. The challenges facing the school include hiring and retaining qualified teachers due to the high cost of living in West Yellowstone and the lack of affordable housing for families and employees. The Town has also faced the lack of a consistently open daycare, which has hampered parents' ability to work and businesses ability to attract employees with children.

### Solid Waste

Solid waste disposal in the area requires special considerations due to the presence of bears and the remoteness of West Yellowstone. Currently, solid waste is disposed of at a solid waste transfer station approximately four miles north of Town. From here, solid waste is transferred 118 miles to the county landfill at Logan, Montana.

### Power

Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative supplies electric power to West Yellowstone. The system was recently upgraded in response to frequent power outages in the area. Natural gas is supplied by Energy

West and is only available to residents within Town, the airport, USFS compound, and the Yellowstone National Park compound.

## Telecommunications

Telephone service to the Hebgen Lake Basin is supplied by CenturyLink. Internet services are available locally in either a dial-up or satellite format. Recently, Safelink Internet purchased the Internet company, Grizzly Internet. This includes its subsidiary, Fremont Communications, that is in the process of installing a fiber optic network around Town.

## Public Facilities

### Roads

West Yellowstone streets are set up in a grid pattern within Old Town and the Grizzly Addition. The Madison Addition is laid out in a series of cul-de-sacs surrounded by an outer loop connecting to Old Town. All streets and avenues are paved and maintained through sweeping, crack sealing, and slurry sealing. Pedestrian circulation remains a problem in the winter months when many sidewalks are covered with snow. Currently, the interior park areas inside Old Town blocks are used for snow storage.

Streets in West Yellowstone are nearly 30 years old and nearing the end of their useful life. The Town recently completed a crack seal project to prolong their life however, due to intense freezing and thawing, deterioration continues. The Town's capital improvements plan (CIP) calls for a \$3.3 million project to repave streets, which is expected to occur at some point in the future. West Yellowstone also has identified paving the alleys leading to interior parks in the

CIP with alleys off Canyon Street being the highest priority. On an annual basis, the Town will continue to repair and replace sidewalks as need arises and budget allows.

### Airport

During the summer months, commercial air service is provided by a Delta Airlines affiliate, at Yellowstone Airport, which is owned by the State of Montana. In addition, the airport also houses a USFS Smokejumper Base and Aerial Tanker Firefighting Base. Typically, during the summer months, there are over 30 employees protecting the region from forest fires. These employees live and contribute to the Town of West Yellowstone and the surrounding community. Although there have been some discussions by USFS of moving their facilities to another location.

Aside from the USFS base, the airport provides roughly 32 local part time/full time jobs between the State of Montana, TSA, the airline, fixed base operator, rental cars, and a restaurant. The community-visioning plan has identified a desire to have the airport remain open year-round. However, residents recognize that doing so would involve a considerable amount of investment.

### Sewer

West Yellowstone's sewer distribution system is made up of a combination of clay and PVC pipe. Clay pipes, installed in the 1960s, serve the Old Town area south of the Madison Addition and north of Yellowstone Avenue, while PVC pipes serve all other areas in Town. There are two lift stations in Town which pump wastewater to a sewage lagoon system to the west on the airport property. The sewer distribution system in Old Town is in need of repair due

mainly to the age of and nature of clay pipe, which is prone to break down over time. While West Yellowstone's system of sewer mains has sufficient capacity, the sewer lagoon is nearing full capacity and is unable to accommodate development of the 80-acres and anticipated hotel development in Old Town. West Yellowstone is currently in the process of developing a new sewer lagoon and is working through the process of obtaining a sewer discharge permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. West Yellowstone will continue to identify needs and plan sewer projects through the Town's CIP.

## **Water**

West Yellowstone's primary water source is Whiskey Springs, a natural spring southwest of Town. A well at Whiskey Springs pumps water to a storage tank, where water is then gravity fed into Town. Because West Yellowstone's water comes directly from a spring it is not treated, though the Town does have water treatment abilities if necessary. During times of peak water usage, or low flows, an additional well (Railroad well) kicks on automatically when the Whiskey Springs tank runs low. West Yellowstone's water distribution system runs on a loop, which was installed in the late 1980's. The Town's water mains are constructed of ductile iron pipe, which is known for its durability and having a long-life span.

A recent decrease in water production at the Whiskey Springs Well, has forced West Yellowstone to issue a moratorium on new commercial and multifamily water connections. Until a new water source is identified, West Yellowstone's water system cannot accommodate development of the newly acquired 80-acres or anticipated hotel development. West Yellowstone is currently working on identifying a

new water source and hopes to drill a new well sometime in 2017 with the hopes that it will be fully operational in late 2017 or early 2018. The proposed site of the new well site is located in the southwest corner of the 80 acres. As with its sewer system, West Yellowstone will continue to identify needs and program water projects through the Town's CIP.

## **Parks and Trails**

West Yellowstone has eight in Town parks, as well as two trail systems in and immediately adjacent to town (see Map 9). In addition, there are numerous recreational opportunities in the Custer-Gallatin National Forest and Yellowstone National Park immediately adjacent to Town.

### **Parks**

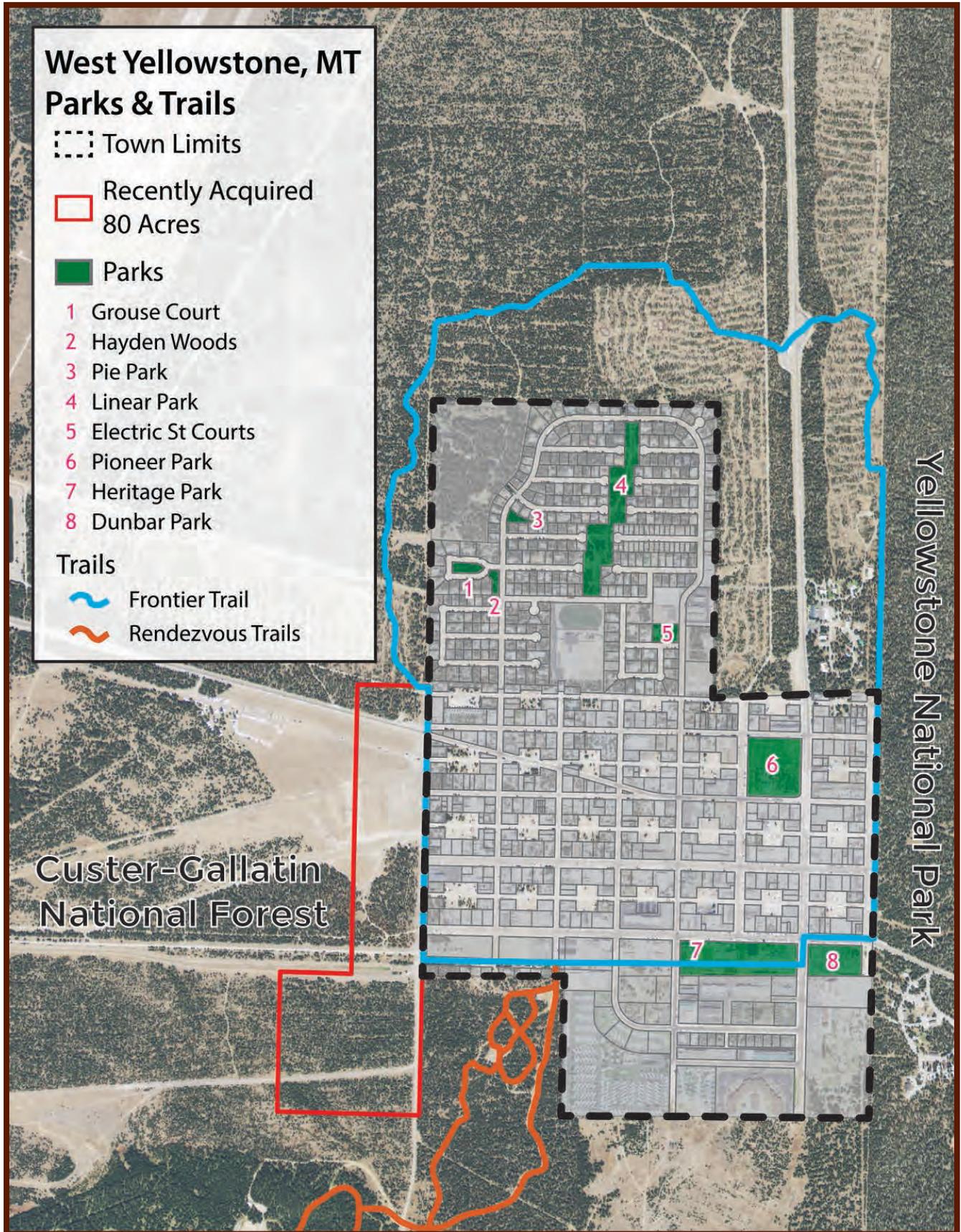
#### **Heritage Park Historic District**

This four-block area in the Oregon Short Line Historic District encompasses the original structures built by the Union Pacific Railroad between 1909 and 1929, as well as the railroad right-of-way. The property was donated by the Union Pacific Railroad to West Yellowstone in 1966. Since that time various buildings have been converted into, the Union Pacific Dining Lodge Convention Center, the Yellowstone Museum, the West Yellowstone Clinic and the West Yellowstone Court House.

#### **Pioneer Park**

Pioneer Park is a six-acre park in the center of town. This park area was established in the 1960s and was improved with grant funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Facilities include,

Map 9 - Parks and Trails



baseball diamonds, soccer nets, playground equipment, basketball court, picnic shelters, BBQ grills, bathrooms and water. During summer months Pioneer Park hosts music in the park, car shows and other city wide events. In winter, the northwest corner of the park is flooded for use as a Town skating rink.

### **Electric Street Basketball and Tennis Courts**

This area was the result of the Rural Electric Authority (REA) now known as Fall River Electric, abandoning a pole yard. Near churches, schools, and residential units the park is an ideal location for basketball and tennis courts. Additionally, it is removed from the main tourist access so locals can enjoy recreational pursuits. Lighting was added in 1999 expanding the time it can be utilized. As use continues additional enhancements may be needed including, bathrooms, small playground, shelter, and landscaping.

### **Linear Park**

Linear Park is located in the Madison Addition and is open to all West Yellowstone residents. The park consists of a paved walkway running north-south through a forested area. Linear Park is valued for its natural setting, which will continue to be maintained through planting additional native landscaping on an as needed basis.

### **Dunbar Park**

Dunbar park is located east of the Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center. The park consists of a grass area, trees, a footpath and a picnic area. With its location at the eastern edge of the Oregon Short Line Historic District, there is a monument that recognizes the area as the eastern terminus of the Oregon Short Line Railroad. The park is used extensively in the summer as a picnic area and a resting place

for travelers.

## **Trails**

### **Rendezvous Trails**

On the south end of Town, the Rendezvous Ski Trails provide some of the best cross-country skiing in Montana. The trail system includes over 21 miles of groomed trails and a world-class biathlon range with electronic targets and handicap-accessible targets. Maintenance and development of the Rendezvous Trails is a cooperative effort between the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Ski Committee, the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation, and the Hebgen Lake Ranger District of the Custer-Gallatin National Forest.

### **Frontier Trail**

The Frontier Trail is 3.8 mile loop trail around West Yellowstone, that is popular with walkers, runners, and cyclists. The trail sits on land owned by the Custer-Gallatin National Forest and the Town of West Yellowstone. While the trail is used heavily by visitors and residents alike, there are several gaps and safety improvements which need to be addressed. These improvements include

- Constructing new short sections of sidewalk between Yellowstone and Obsidian Avenues and on a portion immediately east of Electric Street.
- Laying asphalt on the section between Obsidian Avenue and Electric Street.
- Installing safe pedestrian crossings in Town.
- Installing lighting on the southern portion of the trail.

At the time of writing, West Yellowstone was in the process of applying for a Transportation Alternatives grant from the Montana Department of Transportation to make these improvements.

additional attraction for West Yellowstone.

## Recreation Outside of West Yellowstone

Recreation opportunities outside of West Yellowstone abound. In addition to Yellowstone National Park, recreation options include hiking, biking, camping, snowmobiling, four-wheeling, cross-country skiing, hunting, and fishing. There are many opportunities for increasing recreation opportunities on nearby national forest lands, which will require coordination between West Yellowstone and the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. One such opportunity is developing a snowmobile parking area immediately outside of Town on the Custer-Gallatin National Forest, which could also be used for parking during summer months. This would provide a space for snowmobilers to park large trailers and off-load their machines to use on National Forest trails and roads, while also being close enough to Town that they would be able to easily access services. Preliminary ideas have identified the area along the north side of Highway 20, adjacent to the 80 acres, as a potential site. Another opportunity is converting the old Oregon Short Line railroad bed, at the southwest end of Town, to a non-motorized trail from West Yellowstone to Reas Pass. This would require replacing a bridge over the South Fork of the Madison River which was removed, as well as several other bridges between West Yellowstone and Ashton, Idaho. From Reas Pass the dirt railroad bed is bikeable, though sections are in need of improvement. Farther south near Driggs, ID it becomes a paved path. A fully developed non-motorized trail between West Yellowstone and Driggs could be an iconic destination for touring cyclists and could help add an



**YELLOWSTONE**  
**HISTORIC CENTER**

THE HERITAGE OF TRAVEL TO YELLOWSTONE

Post Office Box 1299

Phone/Fax:

406-646-7461

West Yellowstone, Montana 59758

E mail: [info@yellowstonehistoriccenter.org](mailto:info@yellowstonehistoriccenter.org)  
Website: [www.yellowstonehistoriccenter.org](http://www.yellowstonehistoriccenter.org)

October 23, 2017

Mr. Daniel Sabolsky  
Town Manager  
Town of West Yellowstone  
440 Yellowstone Ave.  
P.O. Box 1570  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Mr. Sabolsky,

The Yellowstone Historic Center Board of Directors would like to see the language modified in Objective 7.3, Action 7.3.1 in the West Yellowstone, Montana Growth Policy Update, September/October 2017 Town Council Draft. Specifically, they would like the last sentence to read "Zoning or design guidelines should be implemented to perpetuate the character and preservation of the historic district."

Sincerely,

Kaitlin Johnson  
Executive Director  
Yellowstone Historic Center  
220 Yellowstone Ave.  
P.O. Box 1299  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

**From:** Daley Family <[snowwalker17@aol.com](mailto:snowwalker17@aol.com)>  
**Date:** November 2, 2017 at 5:39:26 PM MDT  
**To:** Jerry Johnson <[jjohnson@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:jjohnson@townofwestyellowstone.com)>, [BSchmier@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:BSchmier@townofwestyellowstone.com), [CParker@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:CParker@townofwestyellowstone.com), [GForsythe@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:GForsythe@townofwestyellowstone.com), [PMartineau@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:PMartineau@townofwestyellowstone.com), Liz Roos <[JPatterson@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:JPatterson@townofwestyellowstone.com)>, Dan Sabolsky <[dsabolsky@townofwestyellowstone.com](mailto:dsabolsky@townofwestyellowstone.com)>  
**Subject:** Final Draft Growth Plan

November 2, 2017

TO:  
Town of West Yellowstone  
Mayor and Town Council  
Street Superintendent  
City Manager

Gentlemen:

Let me take a moment to compliment you all on your dedication to the Town of West Yellowstone as evidenced by your willingness to take time out of your busy careers, business endeavors, and personal lives committing yourselves to terms of service to our little town. Community service is a commendable undertaking and I thank you for willingness devote yourselves to this important work.

As you all know, I have been a member of the West Yellowstone Planing board for several years now, and it may be that I can offer you some suggestions which you might find insightful as you consider adopting the proposed Growth Plan as presented by Land Solutions of Choteau, Montana. No doubt you are all aware that I am one of the longest-tenured residents of West Yellowstone; in fact, I am a “native”, having lived all of my 66 years here in the little mountain village. It turns out that I am discovering more and more that I am now the de facto tribal memory here in the high country. If personal experience and witness are of value to you, I would like to think that I can be of assistance. What I hope to offer you is a historical perspective, and as has been said: “Past is prologue.”

Let’s start with an accurate identity: West Yellowstone has been, and continues to be today, a seasonal resort community catering to the needs of the touring public as they travel to and from Yellowstone National Park. Ours is a service economy, pure and simple. If anyone tells you otherwise, they are either ignorant of the facts or they are pursuing some personal agendum. Without Yellowstone Park, there is no plausible reason for the community of West Yellowstone to exist. Do not allow yourselves to be misinformed in this regard.

Perhaps taking a moment to consider the demographics of West Yellowstone would be wise. Let’s limit our examination to the summer season, since it is by far the dominant period of economic activity and is the time of highest population numbers. The 2015 Census lists a population of 1339, 92% white and 7.73% Hispanic, which obviously accounts for most of the

populace locally. I'm assuming that these figures represent current, year-round residents, as the summertime numbers are surely higher, perhaps double these figures—let's say about 2500. While interesting, these numbers provide no real insight regarding the make-up of the community in that they provide only a set number in time and a racial break-down of the populace.

An approach of more utility might be one which seeks to measure the populace's attachment to West Yellowstone in terms of time in residence and commitment to the community. Let's use the prospective summertime population number. Now, there are no statistics that I am aware of that delineate the populace in this fashion, nonetheless this method may be more enlightening:

- 5-10% Natives—permanent residents, old families, deep roots
- 15-20% Long-term Locals, up to 25 years or more—fairly stable, a few leave or die each year
- 20-25% Short-term Locals, fewer than 5 years—transient, come and go on a 2-5 year basis
- 10-15% Seasonal Residents—snowbirds and the like, often with vacation homes
- 10-15% Refugees/Floaters—1-2 years in residence at most, nearly all are transient
- 15-20% Summer Employees—changes seasonally, yearly

Obviously, these are certainly not official figures by any means; they are merely my estimate as to how the town is actually constituted—largely a product of the “SWAG Method” (Scientific Wild-Ass Guess). Still, I'd bet they aren't too far out of line, and I don't know if anyone else has any more accurate numbers in this regard.

This brings us to the subject of the need for a Growth Plan. Undoubtedly, it's wise to plan for the future. The question becomes: “Who shall we plan for?” As you can see 50-70% of the populace turns over—that is, they are replaced—within the typical 5-year time frame. The natives and the long-term locals who are most continuously impacted, both culturally and financially, by any growth plan, comprise only about 30% of the residents here in town. Yet it is they for whom West Yellowstone really represents “home”; the other 70% are merely passing through. It's my feeling that the stable population of the town should not be made to endure unnecessary change for the benefit of those to whom West Yellowstone is nothing but a stopover. Just incidentally, it is my assessment that the overwhelming majority of those comprising this group would prefer less change and disruption of the prevailing system rather than more. I mention this because, you see, the “old-timers” and natives are generally not of the type who attend public meetings, so their voices are seldom heard. Mostly they are not those who want to “shake-up” the world.

West Yellowstone is by and large a community of refugees, many of whom have emigrated here from urban areas seeking a solution to whatever problems or exigencies life has thrown their way. Typically, these folks find that their problems don't go away simply because they have changed location, and within a few years, they become as dissatisfied with West Yellowstone as they had been with their previous location and move on to somewhere else. Often, the experience of a few West Yellowstone winters is enough catalyst to prompt the move. In other cases, the lack of high-paying job opportunities does the trick. It turns out that most folks who initially think they can get by on less than they were making in more urban environs change their minds. In any case, as has been previously mentioned, about 70% of the populace here locally is in flux, coming and going in 1-5 years.

An incomprehensible characteristic—at least to those of us in the old-timer or native cohort—of the many transient types who continuously move through our little town is this: ostensibly these people have moved to West Yellowstone to escape from (or at least leave behind) their former places of residence, yet within a surprisingly short time these same people begin to find fault with West Yellowstone and strive to recreate the same constructs here that they have so recently fled. Now it is not my intention to be cruel in describing this behavior, but simply to point out the incongruities inherent in such behavior. The overwhelming majority of the transients who come through West Yellowstone never really move here; they may be here physically, but they are actually living back where they came from—they retain the values, mores, proclivities, preferences, habits, and engrained attitudes prevalent in the areas from which they have emigrated. Theoretically, they were dissatisfied with their previous municipality (they, after all, left it in preference for West Yellowstone), but upon arriving here, they very soon seek to reconstitute it. They expect the same municipal services and housing choices and amenities and employment opportunities here that they had “back home.” In fact, their justification for any and all increased services and/or amenities or changes in ordinances or zoning or law enforcement issues, etc. invariably begins with the phrase: “Back where I come from....”

So...as you endeavor to determine what is appropriate to a “growth plan” for West Yellowstone, I would suggest to you that many of the voices you may be hearing have some very big expectations of a little town. In fact, the majority of the voices you are no doubt hearing are expressing a distinctly urban or suburban and, almost certainly, an “out-of state” mindset. A good share of the ideas you are hearing, in my opinion, do not reflect West Yellowstone values or aspirations. As Dorothy said to Toto: “... I don’t think we’re in Kansas anymore...”; the implication being that perhaps we should adjust our behavior to accommodate our new circumstances. In the case of the prospective Growth Plan, the transient population appears to be saying just the opposite: “West Yellowstone, you must change to accommodate our ideas for the short time we are here (no matter what the cost).” West Yellowstone is a truly unique locale, and what is popular or what works in the urban/suburban areas or in other geographical regions of our country is often inappropriate or unworkable here. It is my opinion that some of the changes recommended by Land Solutions in the proposed Draft Growth Plan fall under this rubric—more on this later.

There’s an old saying in Montana that has been in near constant use since my childhood: “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!” I would posit to you that when you give people an opportunity to complain, they will—whether those complaints have validity or not! Actually, things in West Yellowstone are working just about as well as can be expected; there really are not a great number of problems concerning the operations of the town or the civic direction that have not or are not being addressed in a rational way—thanks to your continued efforts. The folks recommending dramatic changes, by and large, are just confused; they simply don’t understand what is going on. As mentioned earlier, they have come here from different zeitgeists; what is going on here is not wrong or deficient, it is merely different from what they have come to expect. For innumerable reasons, West Yellowstone is not living up to their expectations, and their reaction is to demand that West Yellowstone conform to the model of community they have in their minds. The fine folks at Land Solutions, to a certain degree suffer from this same myopia—you really do have to be intimately involved with the goings-on here locally for many,

many years before you even begin to really “get” West Yellowstone; it’s so very different from anywhere else! A more reasonable approach would be to simply assimilate and enjoy what we have to offer.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Land Solutions has presented you with a largely acceptable document. However, I do retain some reservations concerning certain aspects. It would take a document nearly as extensive as the Public Hearing Draft itself to discuss the many initiatives and ideas included therein, and obviously that would be a bit excessive, I will limit my comments to a few vital issues:

1) An inherent quality of nearly all regulation is that it advantages one segment of the populace invariably to the disadvantage of another segment. All good regulation should endeavor to avoid this pitfall. With this in mind, let me state unequivocally that no attempt should be made to alter or rezone the B-3 or “Old Town” section of West Yellowstone.

This B-3 district was put in place, wisely enough, to allow freedom of usage and all the benefits that accrue in that regard through natural development and innovation. The Grizzly Park and Madison Addition areas are heavily restricted—Grizzly Park being strictly a commercial and entertainment district, and the Madison Addition being reserved completely for residential uses—so the Old Town section was left largely unrestricted, as it has historically been, in order to preserve its original character and allow for an “escape valve” or “pressure release” mechanism for those who wished to pursue business or creative residential dreams in a more unfettered way. (Insofar as residential uses are concerned, Old Town lots are about 3 times the size of Madison Addition lots and bear no restrictive covenants, making them preferable for some people.) Regardless of what you may have been told, this situation has endured and worked to the benefit of the community and its economy to this day.

There is a false concept being bandied about that the western part of Old Town is residential in character. A cursory examination of the Land Use Classification Map on page 36 of the proposed Growth policy shows that at least 2/3 of the land contained therein is commercial or mixed use in nature, and it’s my own view that some of the lots shown as residential are actually being used commercially at this moment. To call this section residential would be a gross misstatement of fact as it is obviously more commercial than anything else. I see little justification for designating this area in any way residential other than personal preference. I bring this issue up now because this idea was initially articulated by Land Solutions during the Planning Board’s review process. It has been a source of concern for many in the community, a goodly number of whom voiced their opposition to this concept during our meetings. It continues to be a source of concern in that certain troubling elements—really the pretext that supports the idea of rezoning Old Town—remain in the document despite continued efforts to excise them, notably beginning with paragraph 4, page 16, KEY ISSUE—ZONING IN OLD TOWN and continuing through paragraph 3, page 17, GOAL 8. I feel the Planning Board, myself included, was remiss in failing to remove these paragraphs in that they contain unnecessarily derogatory descriptions, erroneous subjective judgments, specious conjecture, and conflated goals. In essence, we removed part of the textual tumor, but left a significant portion which I fear might grow and reconstitute itself. I

wholeheartedly recommend and hope that you as a council will finish the job we were unable to complete by removing these offending, misleading, and potentially damaging paragraphs.

Restricting the commercial applications currently and historically available to the owners of land in Old Town would severely diminish the sale value of their lots, essentially depriving them of decades, if not lifetimes, of effort in paying off their own purchases of these properties—certainly something to consider from an ethical and/or humanistic standpoint. I implore you not to allow any taint of this possibility to remain in the growth plan document. The disenfranchisement of those for whom West Yellowstone is truly home in order to favor the transient element who are just passing through would truly be a travesty! At the very least, present owners and their families should be duly compensated for any change in zoning that alters property values or limits future activities on property they have purchased and owned with the understanding that commercial and/or multi-use development was allowed in B3, Old Town.

(2) Another point serious enough to warrant consideration: How should the new 80-acre addition west of Old Town be utilized?

I can tell you this much: For at least the past forty years that I am aware of, the most continuing and vociferous gripe expressed locally has been that there aren't sufficient housing opportunities here in West Yellowstone; therefore the only reasonable and responsible thing to do at this point in time is to dedicate the entire 80 acres to housing and such municipal uses as are deemed necessary to support the effective governing of the Town. After such a prolonged period of discontent over lack of housing potential, no other usage seems conscionable in my mind. Do not allow yourself to be swayed by spurious, uninformed, or self-serving arguments promoting large-scale hotel complexes or swim centers or medical centers or retail complexes or industrial parks or warehouse districts or convention centers or concert/events venues—all of these are just noise! The foremost and enduring need remains housing, nothing else should even be considered for those 80 acres. PERIOD! This area is where those advocating more residential options within West Yellowstone should be concentrating their efforts!

(3) West Yellowstone has traditionally been a place where people could live as they chose. There is a certain amount of arrogance associated with the concept that certain people can tell other people how they may live or how they may design their houses or businesses or how they must keep their premises or how they may or may not utilize their own property. Historically, culturally, we here in West Yellowstone we have been of the opinion that people are largely free to do their “own thing.” You might say that we have, for the most part, been free of the excessive constraints so often imposed on those living an urban existence (I can't imagine that there are many natives or long time residents who would wish to live an urban or suburban lifestyle.), and we have notably respected each other's rights of self expression and commercial undertaking. We may not have endorsed what our neighbor was doing with his or her land, but we have nearly unanimously adhered to the concept that it was his or her right to do what they wanted on their own property—live and let live has long been the rule of thumb for getting along in our isolated little community.

It appears to me that a good share of the issues being promulgated by those agitating for change (some of which are contained within the proposed Growth Policy) are in fact more Chamber of

Commerce-type concerns than they are governmental in nature. In point of fact, it would be my assessment that those for whom West Yellowstone is truly home and not a stopover on the way to someplace else (the mostly unheard 30%, by my accounting) are happy when there exist these things: sufficient water supply; adequate sewage capacity; well-maintained streets, sidewalks, alleys, curbs, and drainage systems; and expeditious snow removal. It is also a boon if the Town is solvent and effectively administered, and if conflict and strife are kept to a minimum. It is issues such as these that are of paramount importance to long-term residents, and therefore issues such as these that deserve the most consideration.

Generally, the best advice that can be given in regard to any decision-making process is this: keep it as simple as possible. It is my sincere belief that the best course of action relative to the future of West Yellowstone is to maintain the B-3 district just as it is and to designate the entirety of the newly acquired 80 acres as strictly residential—any other approach is fraught with serious contention and is most likely a mistake. Further, I believe that any sensitive operation, such as the compilation of the Growth Plan is best accomplished with a scalpel, not a chainsaw—small, incremental, attainable, reasonable changes are more preferable than spectacular alterations.

The limitations of the letter format are obvious; if you have any questions you would like to ask of me, do not hesitate to contact me in person, via phone or email, or by conventional mail. My contact information is as follows:

PO Box 644

[119 North Faithful Street](#)

[West Yellowstone, MT 59758](#)

home phone [406-646-7539](#)

cell phone [406-539-1334](#)

email [snowwalker17@aol.com](mailto:snowwalker17@aol.com)

Sincerely yours,

Timothy Edward Daley

# EXPOSITION LICENSE APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

Exposition: Mistletoe Magic - Holiday Bazaar  
 Sponsor Organization: Three Wise Women  
 Sponsor Address: PO Box 344  
 Contact Person: Stacey Schmier, Diana Morris, Debby Hermanson  
 Contact Phone: 646-1345 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address: SASCHMIER@AOL.COM  
 Date(s) of Event: Dec. 1-2 2017  
 Location of Event: The Gusher

Respond to all sections either on the applicable sheets, or attach sheets as needed. A complete application should be submitted a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event.

- A. Exposition detail: Use the attached sheet to describe the expo in detail and any special accommodations you are requesting from the Town.
- B. Site Plan: Detail the physical layout of the expo on the attached site plan and return with the application.
- C. Vendor List: Provide a list of the names and addresses of all participating vendors 14 days in advance.
- D. Fees: Fees are \$50 for vendors not already licensed in West Yellowstone or \$250 for the entire event.
- E. Resort Tax: The sponsor must post a \$1500 bond in accordance with Chapter 3.12 of the West Yellowstone Municipal Code ([www.codepublishing/MT/WestYellowstone.html](http://www.codepublishing/MT/WestYellowstone.html)). Vendors must collect 3% on all resort tax applicable sales and remit to the Town by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month of the event. Most retail sales are subject to resort tax. Please review Chapter 3.12 of the WYMC for further information. The bond will be returned within 90 days of remittance of the resort tax.

Application Fee: \$ 50<sup>00</sup>  
 Bond: \$ 1500.00  
 Total Due: \$ 50<sup>00</sup>

*S. Schmier*  
 Signature of Applicant  
11/1/17  
 Date

## FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Department	Initials	Date	Comments
Pub Services			
Fire			
Police			
Administration			

Notes/Conditions: We are asking for the fee to be reduced to \$50 and the bond waived

Approved

Denied

Town Clerk

Date

# EXPOSITION LICENSE APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

## Exposition Detail

Use this sheet to describe your event in detail including expected sales, type of sales, layout, show tents, canopies, fencing, cars, security, toilets, seating, stage, etc. and any special accommodations you are requesting from the Town. Please also address parking, trash collection and disposal, expected number of participants and spectators, signs, and amplified sound (if applicable).

We are proposing to host a holiday craft bazaar featuring local artisans and crafters to sell their wares. We will have 10-15 vendors.

Operation will be Friday, Dec. 1, 2017 4-8 pm and Saturday, Dec. 2, 2017 10-3 pm. We have secured the Gusher for this event.

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year for this event and we have made sure that city tax was collected and turned in and will do so again this year.

# EXPOSITION LICENSE APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

Event: Mistletoe Magic Holiday Bazaar Date(s) 12/1 12/3 2017

## Vendors

Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Vendor Name: Diana Morris  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Stacey Schmier  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Carrie Pope  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Pam Talasco  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Teton View Lavender  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Amy Schmier  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Liz Bryers  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Vendor Name: Connie Cusick  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of sales: \_\_\_\_\_  
Resort Tax applicable: YES NO

Monika Rogers  
Jennifer Holyer  
Daley Girls

**APPLICATION TO MAINTAIN AN ENCROACHMENT**

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

DATE: 11/20/17 → 12/9/17

APPLICANT: West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Christmas Stroll

ADDRESS: 30 Yellowstone Avenue, West Yellowstone, MT 59758

PHONE: 406 646 7701

INTEREST IN PROPERTY: Town of West Yellowstone

OWNER OF RECORD'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_ See map attached

Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning District Number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please describe specifically the construction and size of the proposed encroachment. On the reverse of this application, please provide a sketch of the proposed encroachment.

2 Banners: one at the SW corner of Pioneer Park, one at the bear island by the Christmas Tree (see map)

3 fire barrels for smore. One @ Pioneer Park near rink, one @ Madison Canyon & one @ Yellowstone Canyon (see map)

Hayride on 12/9 from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM - see map.

Mary Ann Grottel  
Signature of Applicant

West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce

For Office Use Only:  
DECISION BY TOWN COUNCIL

Approved    Disapproved

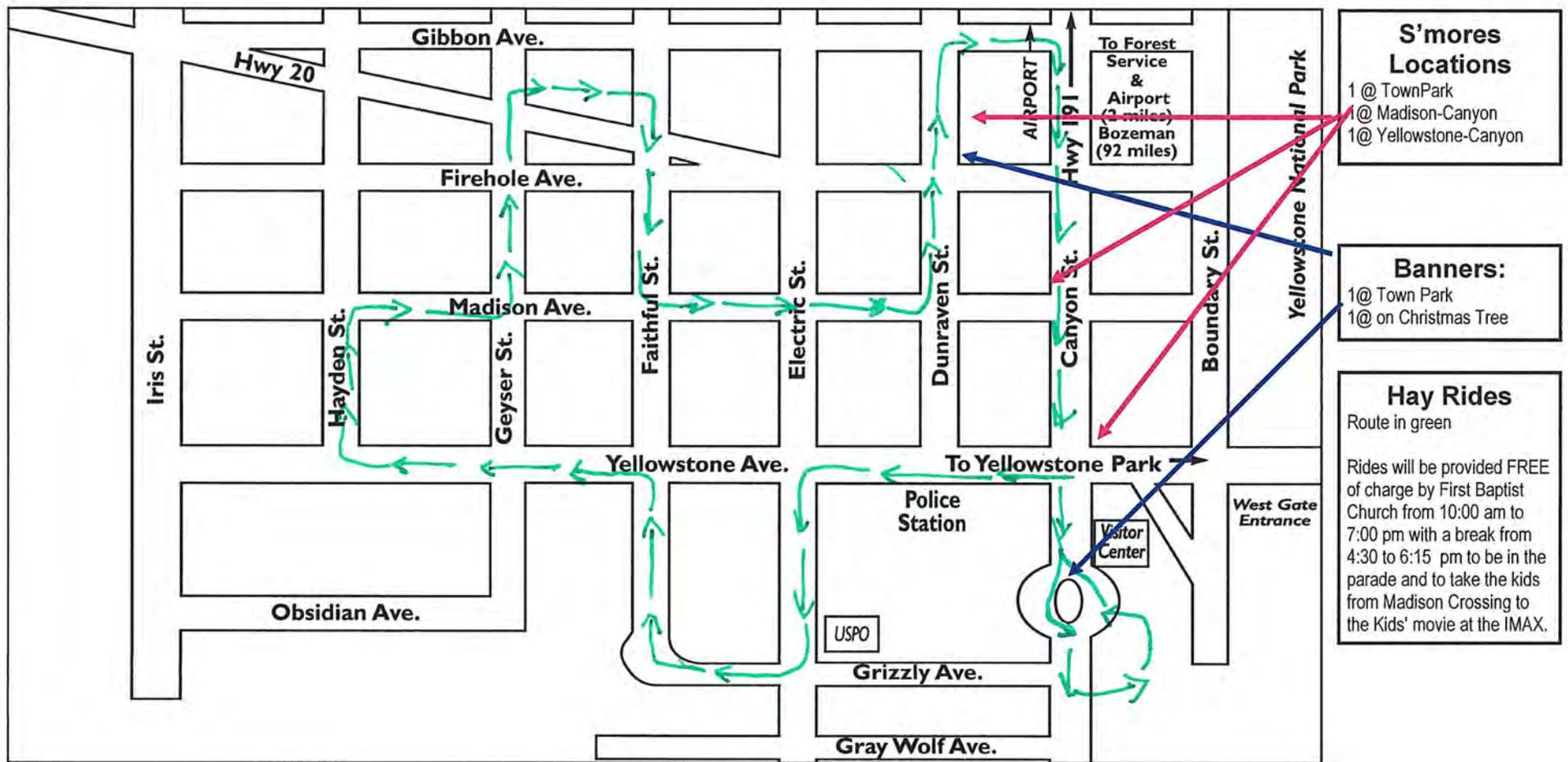
11/17/17  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor/Operations Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

# WEST YELLOWSTONE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## ENCROACHMENTS FOR BANNERS, FIRE BARRELS AND HAY RIDES



**Application for Outside Amplification Permit**  
**Town of West Yellowstone**  
**Gallatin County, Montana**

**Event:** West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Christmas Stroll 2017

**Contact Person:** Marysue Costello

**Address of Contact Person:** 30 Yellowstone Avenue,  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

**Phone Number:** 406-646-7701

**Signature of Property Owner of Record:** Town of West Yellowstone

**Date(s) of Event:** Saturday, December 9, 2017

**Location:** Downtown in all directions from the intersection of Canyon Street and Madison Avenue

**Amplification between the hours of:** 4:00 AM/PM and 9:30 AM/PM

**Description of Event:** Seasonal background music for the events of the  
Christmas Stroll.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Marysue Costello for Chamber of Commerce*  
Signature of Applicant  
11/17/17  
Date

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>		
<b>Decision by Town Council:</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Disapproved</b>
<b>Conditions:</b> _____		
_____		
_____		
<b>Signature of Mayor/Operations Manager:</b> _____		
_____		
<b>Date</b>		

# SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

Event: Christmas Stroll 2017 & Winter Season  
 Sponsor Organization: West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce  
 Sponsor Address: PO Box 458 or 30 Yellowstone Avenue  
 Contact Person: Marysue Costello and Amy Jackson  
 Contact Phone: 406-646-7701 Fax: 406-646-9691  
 E-mail Address: director@destinationyellowstone.com  
 Date(s) of Event: Saturday, December 9, 2017  
 Location of Event: Pioneer Park to South Canyon Street: December 9, 2017, 4:30 - 6:00 pm

Respond to all sections either on the applicable sheets, or attach sheets as needed. A complete application should be submitted a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event.

- A. Event detail: Use the attached sheet to describe your event in detail and any special accommodations you are requesting from the Town.
- B. Site Plan: Detail the physical layout of your event on the attached site plan and return with the application.
- C. Liability Insurance: Please provide a copy of the event's liability insurance naming the Town of West Yellowstone as additionally insured. Liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$750,000 per claimant/\$1,500,000 per occurrence and include alcohol liability, if applicable. The Operations Manager may grant exception to these limits based on general public health, safety and welfare associated with the request for exception, as well as the liability risk and the applicant's ability to pay.

Application Fee: \$ 25.00  
 Administration Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Marysue Costello for West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce*  
 Signature of Applicant

Total Due: \$ 25.00 *11-17-17 paid*

11/17/17  
 Date

## FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Department	Initials	Date	Comments
Pub Services			
Fire			
Police			
Administration			

Notes/Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Approved

Denied

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

# SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

## Event Details

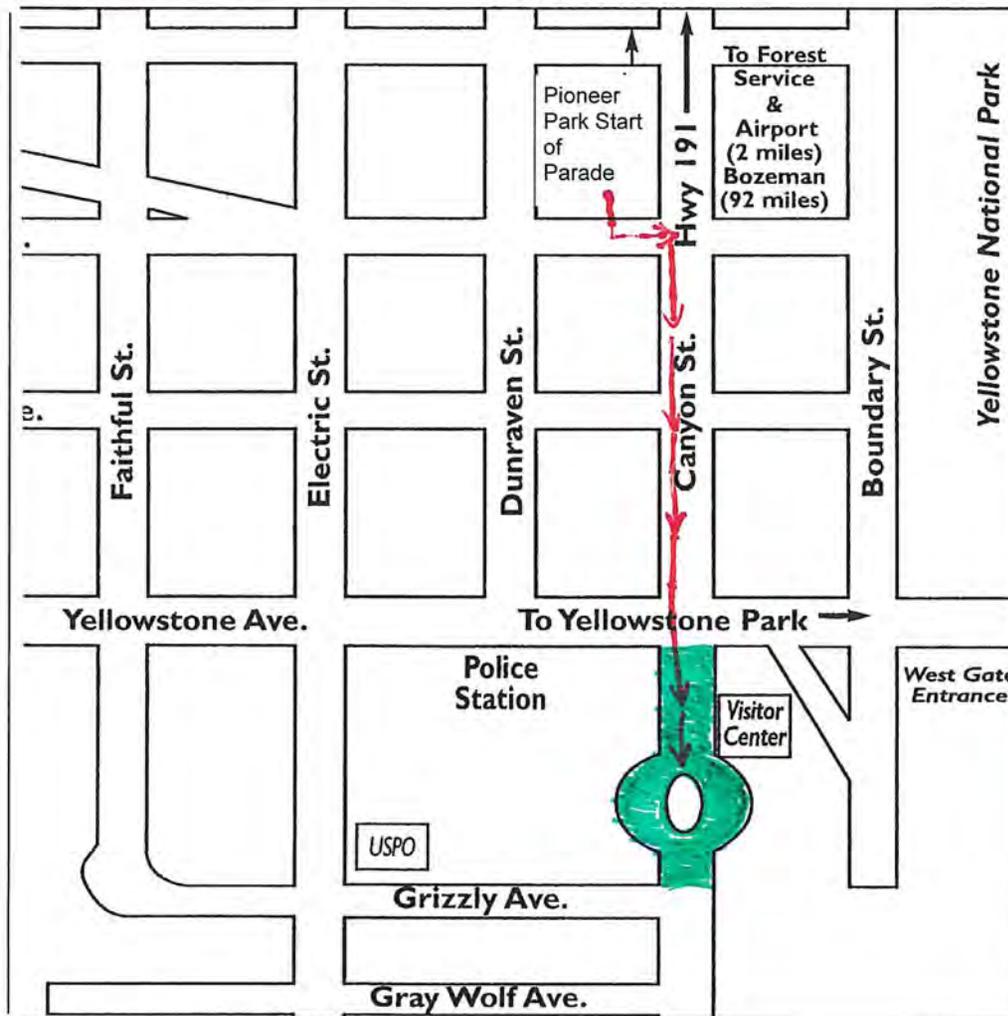
Use this sheet to describe your event in detail including location, routes, directions, show tents, canopies, fencing, cars, security, toilets, seating, stage, etc. and any special accommodations you are requesting from the Town. Please also address parking, trash collection and disposal, expected number of participants and spectators, signs, and amplified sound (if applicable). Public drinking and public display of alcoholic beverages must conform with Section 9.12.020 of the West Yellowstone Municipal Code. The public place where the event will be held must be specifically exempted by resolution of the Town Council before alcoholic beverages may be allowed. Please attach a separate letter addressed to the West Yellowstone Town Council to make this request. If anything will be sold at the event, an Exposition Business License must also be obtained. Please describe any sale activity below and attach the Exposition Business License application.

This year's annual Christmas Stroll will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2017. Shopping will be encouraged all day. In lieu of a Parade of Lights, there will be a foot parade and the Chamber will be encouraging businesses to decorate and light up for a chance to win cash prizes.

The following schedule covers the planned events. It is also a request to have South Canyon Street between Yellowstone Avenue and Grizzly Avenue temporarily closed from approximately 4:15 to 5:30 pm to accommodate activities of the stroll.

- 10:00 am: Stroll and Reindeer Games at businesses begin for the day. S'mores stations open and Hay Rides begin (*see encroachment permit for these items*)
- 4:00 pm: Close Canyon street from Yellowstone Avenue to Grizzly Avenue to vehicular traffic until after Santa lights the tree and he and Mrs. Claus lead the crowd north on Canyon to shopping.(approximately 5:15 pm)
- 4:30 pm (or when the Police Department determines the time if different) temporarily stop traffic at Dunraven and Highway 20, Canyon and Firehole, Canyon and Madison and Canyon and Yellowstone.
- 4:40 pm Strollers, vehicles, bikes, snowmobiles (should there be sufficient snow) will be led by Hebgen Basin Fire transporting Santa and Mrs. Clause. Don Perry with his truck and with Christmas music to encourage carolers will leave the Town Park and parade South on Canyon street to the Town Tree.
- 4:55 pm Santa and Mrs. Clause arrive to conduct the lighting of the tree and distribute candy canes to the children.
- 5:10 pm Santa and Mrs. Clause will stroll back North on Canyon Street to Madison Crossing for photo ops.
- 5:30 pm Hay rides begin from Madison Crossing to the IMAX for the kids' movie
- 6:15 pm Kids' movie begins and stroll continues
- 8:00 pm Ice skating and sledding get underway at the Town Park.
- 9:30 pm Good Night!

# West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce 2017 Christmas Stroll & Parade



## Parade Route

Approximately 4:30 pm start.

All participants welcome! Decorate your vehicles, your bikes, your skis, yourselves!! Pioneer Park Parking lot, then South on Canyon to Town Tree just south of Yellowstone Avenue.

## Area closed: 4:00 to 5:15 pm.

Canyon Street between Yellowstone and Grizzly Avenues. Tree lighting and Santa greeting.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK  
P.O. Box 168  
Mammoth, Wyoming 82190-0168



N2219(YELL)

NOV 14 2017

Mayor Jerry Johnson  
440 Yellowstone Avenue  
P. O. Box 1570  
West Yellowstone, Montana 59758

Dear Mayor Johnson:

Thank you for confirming, via email, your participation in the Yellowstone-Grand Teton Biosphere Reserve Area. The report on the biosphere was updated to include your community and has been sent to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Recently, the U.S. State Department announced its decision to withdraw from UNESCO. The Biosphere Reserve Program is part of UNESCO. While this announcement was made, the State Department also indicated it would remain engaged in programs such as the Biosphere Reserve Program.

Regarding the Biosphere Reserve report, we anticipate feedback on our proposed biosphere area changes in March or April 2018. Around that time, a committee meets on behalf of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program and reviews our report, making a recommendation to the MAB Council. In June, the MAB Council will meet and officially make a determination on our additions to the biosphere area. Occasionally, the MAB Committee will ask for clarification on items included in the report, which could delay the official approval.

Based on past experience, we do not anticipate any difficulties with our proposal to expand the biosphere area to include Grand Teton National Park; John D. Rockefeller Memorial Parkway; the National Elk Refuge; Gardiner, Montana; West Yellowstone, Montana; Colter Pass, Cooke City, Silver Gate, Montana; and Jackson, Wyoming. *However, our newly proposed biosphere area will not be official until the MAB Committee has made a decision sometime in 2018.*

If you are interested, a copy of the final biosphere report is available. Please contact Christie Hendrix at [Christie\\_Hendrix@nps.gov](mailto:Christie_Hendrix@nps.gov) for a copy. We also understand that your community may decide to highlight your participation in the biosphere area. After we have received the official biosphere approval, our staff can help provide marketing and branding materials.

Please let us know if you have any further questions. Also, if you have any suggestions for how our newly expanded biosphere and its partners can share information or improve collaboration (e.g., annual meetings, conference calls etc.), please let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel N. Wenk". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Daniel N. Wenk  
Superintendent

# SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Town of West Yellowstone  
Gallatin County, Montana

Event: Yellowstone Ski Festival  
 Sponsor Organization: West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce  
 Sponsor Address: P.O. Box 458, West Yellowstone, MT 59758  
 Contact Person: Moira Dow  
 Contact Phone: 617-697-6126 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address: info@SkiRunBikeMT.com  
 Date(s) of Event: November 21-25; December 2-3, 2017  
 Location of Event: Railroad bed from Geyser to Iris Sts; Iris Street to South Plateau Rd

Respond to all sections either on the applicable sheets, or attach sheets as needed. A complete application should be submitted a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event.

- A. Event detail: Use the attached sheet to describe your event in detail and any special accommodations you are requesting from the Town.
- B. Site Plan: Detail the physical layout of your event on the attached site plan and return with the application.
- C. Liability Insurance: Please provide a copy of the event's liability insurance naming the Town of West Yellowstone as additionally insured. Liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$750,000 per claimant/\$1,500,000 per occurrence and include alcohol liability, if applicable. The Operations Manager may grant exception to these limits based on general public health, safety and welfare associated with the request for exception, as well as the liability risk and the applicant's ability to pay.

Application Fee: \$ 25.00 /s/ Moira Dow Moira Dow  
 Administration Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Applicant  
11/8/17  
 Total Due: \$ 25.00 pd 11-13-17 Date

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

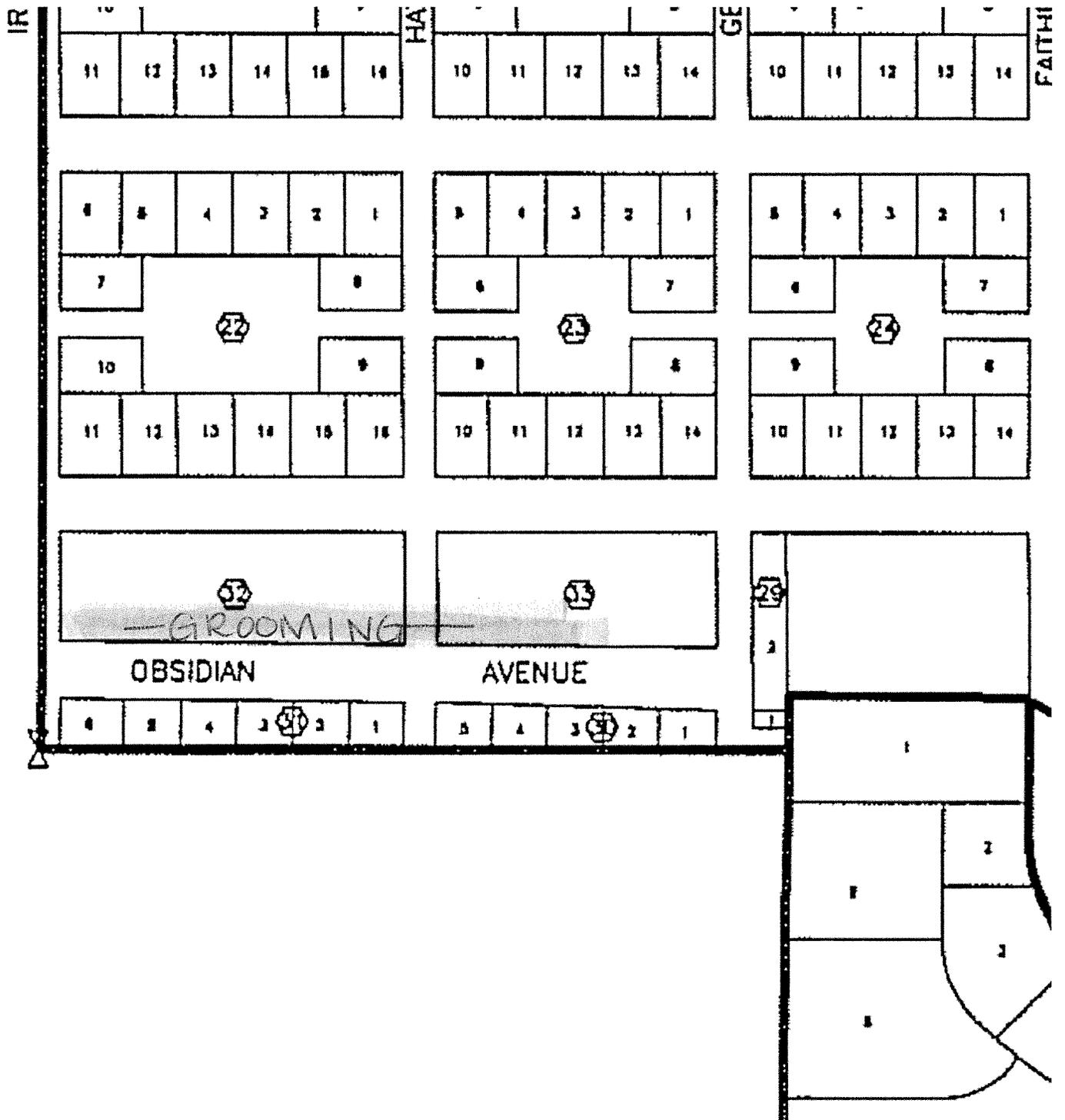
Department	Initials	Date	Comments
Pub Services	<u>ASD</u>	<u>11-17-17</u>	
Fire	<u>SB</u>	<u>11/15/17</u>	
Police	<u>SN</u>	<u>11/13/17</u>	
Administration	<u>AS</u>	<u>11/16/17</u>	

Notes/Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved

Denied

E. Roy  
 Town Clerk  
11-18-17  
 Date



The YSF would like to groom the old railroad bed along Obsidian Avenue. It won't interfere with any roads or construction of the Seigel Learning Center building.

The YSF would like to set up "No Parking" signs along Yellowstone Ave, Obsidian Ave, Geyser St, and Parkway A to manage skier parking.

The YSF would like to plow the South Plateau Rd from Town to the crossing of the ski trails and requests help from the Public Services with plowing and sanding. We would also like to groom a ski track using a snowmobile Ginzu groomer along the sidewalk from the Yellowstone Lodge (S. Electric) onto Faithful St and behind the WestMart Building. This is to help with skier safety and to try to alleviate the pedestrian traffic along potentially icy roads.

In the event of a very significant snowfall, YSF would like to be able to groom a track at Pioneer Park (similar to the M-120 track used by Kids N Snow) for skiers to use at night or just for fun. All other events take place on USFS property or at the Holiday Inn.



Yellowstone Ski Festival  
West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 458  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

November 17, 2017

Town of West Yellowstone  
PO Box 1570  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Dear Town Operation Manager,

On behalf of the Yellowstone Ski Festival, I would like to formally request town support in the event of significant snowfall from November 21-25, 2017. Upwards of 2500 cross-country skiers are anticipated to be in West Yellowstone during this time period. The Town of West Yellowstone has been very supportive of this event in the past and I thank you for your continued support.

Services requested if weather conditions prove necessary:

- Plowing of South Plateau Road from town to the junction of the trails
- Plowing of the Povah Center Parking Lot
- Additional cleaning service and supplies for the public bathrooms located at the Rendezvous Trailhead Building

The Yellowstone Ski Festival is a key source for a variety of revenue during the month of November. I look forward to working with the town to ensure a positive experience for skiers and locals alike.

Please contact me at 617-697-6126 or [info@skirunbikemt.com](mailto:info@skirunbikemt.com) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Meina Dow*

Yellowstone Ski Festival Program Director



Yellowstone Ski Festival  
West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 458  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

November 17, 2017

Town of West Yellowstone  
PO Box 1570  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a request to exempt the Yellowstone Ski Festival event from remitting resort tax on the following elements of the events held on November 22, November 25, December 2, and December 3:

- Race registrations

Yellowstone Ski Festival is requesting the exemption for the following reasons:

- Funds generated from the event are used to maintain the infrastructure of the public lands of the Rendezvous Ski Trails (West Yellowstone Municipal Code 3.12.130 – O – 2)
- The festival is a primary financial supporter the West Yellowstone School Nordic Ski Team and the After-School Ski Program (West Yellowstone Municipal Code 3.12.130 – O – 1)
- Entrance fees to the races are capped by the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Association (USSA), the sanctioning body of the event (West Yellowstone Municipal Code 3.12.130 – O – 4)
- The organizations hosting the event are the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce and the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation, both of which are local entities with physical addresses in the 59758 zip code (West Yellowstone Municipal Code 3.12.130 – O – 7)

Resort tax will be collected and remitted for:

- Trail pass sales
- Clinic registration
- Retail sales

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Yellowstone Ski Festival Program Director