

# City of Great Falls Planning & Community Development Department

## Planning Division — 2012 ANNUAL REPORT



#2 Park Drive South  
P.O. Box 5021  
Great Falls, MT

Phone: 406-771-1180, ext. 438  
Fax: 406-454-3181  
[www.greatfallsmt.net](http://www.greatfallsmt.net)

## Table of Contents

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Message from the Director... 3

Boards and Commissions... 4

Key Projects... 6

Building Safety Division Overview... 20

Subdivision and Annexation Activity Table...Appendix A

Zoning Activity Table...Appendix B

## Message from the Director, Mike Haynes, AICP

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The Planning Division is part of the Planning and Community Development Department and is generally responsible for planning and zoning, long-range planning, transportation planning and historic preservation. The department provides one-stop shopping for the development community by combining planning services with floodplain administration, project review, design review, plan review, permitting, licensing, building inspections, final inspections and issuance of Certificates of Occupancy.

The department is also responsible for code enforcement activities, the downtown parking program, administering CDBG and HOME programs, revolving loan funds and the fair housing program. Additionally, we manage the City's real estate holdings and maintenance of the Civic Center. All of these functions are handled by 27 dedicated and hard-working permanent employees.

With regard to staffing of the Planning Division, in 2012 Comprehensive Planner Brant Birkeland took a position with the City of Long Beach, California, and was replaced by Ida Meehan, AICP, who has planning experience from Austin, Texas and Florida. We also brought on board Galen Amy, Planner I, to do both current planning and transportation planning, replacing the previous Transportation Planner I. Jodell Lepley was hired as a temporary GIS technician to help build our GIS capabilities especially in support of completing the 2013 Transportation Plan. Jodell Lepley's position is funded by federal transportation funds.

Outside of the Planning Division we hired John Dixon, an electrical inspector, to replace retiring Bob Lippel, and Jamie Gormley, a new Senior Community Development Technician, to replace Cindy Hoscheid, who was promoted within the city to a position with the Great Falls Housing Authority.

At the end of 2012, we saw the departure of Chairman Bill Roberts from the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission after completing three 3-year terms, the limit on consecutive terms allowed under city code. Also leaving the board in 2012 was former chairman John Harding, just short of completing three full terms on the board. Planning staff thanks both Bill and John for their outstanding service to the board and the community.

The 2012 Planning Division Annual Report focuses on some of the most important projects and initiatives our planners have been involved in throughout the year, some of which are ongoing in 2013. A full summary of cases heard by the Planning Advisory Board and Zoning Commission are in the Appendices.

For the second consecutive year, the Planning Division Annual Report includes a Building Safety Division Overview that provides information on development activity, performance of the Building Fund (an enterprise fund) and building permit activity. It also compares workload, staffing, services and fees with our peer cities in Montana. This overview is intended to track not only our performance in support of development in the City of Great Falls, but also our competitiveness with our peer cities.

Our goals for 2013 are varied but include completing the Imagine Great Falls 2025 process and seeking adoption of the Growth Policy, completing the 2013 update of the Transportation Plan and implementing the recommendations in the Downtown Master Plan. We will also strive to continue to improve our services and outreach to the development community and continue to seek efficiencies in delivering all of the services our Department provides.

## Boards & Commissions

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Planning Staff support or liaison efforts are effectively provided to the following Boards and Commissions:

### City Commission

Serves as the legislative and policymaking body for the City of Great Falls. The City Commission is composed of five elected officials: four City Commissioners and the Mayor. With guidance from various Boards, Commissions, and the City Manager, they adopt policies and procedures and enact ordinances and resolutions as necessary for the proper execution of governmental functions and responsibilities.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- First and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Commission Chambers; work sessions are scheduled immediately preceding the regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Gibson Room.

### Planning Advisory Board / Zoning Commission (PAB/ZC)

Advises the City Commission on many aspects of growth and development in Great Falls including amendments to the Growth Policy, zoning, land subdivision, annexation, transportation planning, planning roadway improvements, and related general planning issues.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- Second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 3:00 p.m. Work sessions may be held at 4:00 p.m. on the Monday preceding the Board meeting.

### Board of Adjustment / Appeals (BOA)

Hears and makes decisions on appeals regarding the administration of and variances from the Official City

Code of Great Falls (OCCGF), Title 17 Land Development Code or building regulations.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- The first Thursday of each month, as needed, or on demand, generally at 3:00 p.m.

### Design Review Board (DRB)

Reviews specified types of development proposals to ensure that the design and aesthetics conform to the review criteria contained in OCCGF, Title 17 Land Development Code. The Board may approve or deny, in whole or in part, or may modify and set conditions for approval, or provide advice and counsel.

#### *Meeting Schedule*

- Second and fourth Monday of each month, as needed, at 3 p.m.

### Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Advises the Cascade County Commission, Great Falls City Commission, Planning Advisory Board, and the Business Improvement District. The Historic Preservation Program promotes the preservation of historic and prehistoric sites, structures, buildings, and districts through the identification, evaluation and protection of historic resources within the jurisdiction of Cascade County and the City of Great Falls.

#### *Meeting Schedule*

- Second Wednesday of each month at noon.

## Boards & Commissions

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### **Parking Advisory Commission (PAC)**

Advises the City Commission, City Manager, and Community Development Staff on matters related to parking issues within the Downtown Parking District.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- Third Monday of each month at 3:00 p.m.

### **Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC)**

Responsible for managing the executive business of the Great Falls Urban Area Transportation Planning Process. The Committee approves the budget and work schedule for projects based on findings identified through the planning process. The committee decides agency responsibilities, approves all long and short range construction programs, and is responsible for transmitting all reports and recommendations to the various agencies for final adoption and implementation.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- Meets as frequently as necessary to carry out its duties.

### **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Provides technical advice to the Policy Coordinating Committee and technical direction to and coordination of staff concerning continuing Urban Area transportation planning.

#### *Meeting Schedule:*

- Second Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

### **Planning Division Team**

#### **Mike Haynes, AICP**

*Director of Planning & Community Development*

#### **Wendy Thomas, AICP**

*Deputy Director of Planning & Community Development*

#### **Andrew Finch**

*Senior Transportation Planner*

#### **Galen Amy**

*Planner I*

#### **Ida Meehan, AICP**

*Comprehensive Planner II*

#### **Jana Cooper**

*Current Planner II*

#### **Charlie Sheets**

*Development Review Coordinator*

#### **Ellen Sievert**

*Historic Preservation Officer*

#### **Jodell Lepley**

*GIS Technician*



## Key Project - Downtown Master Plan—Implementation

### Project Name

*Downtown Master Plan*

### Project Timeline

*Ongoing*

### Board / Commission Served

*City Commission*

*PAB/ZC*

### Planning Department Involvement

*Comprehensive Planning*

*Current Planning*

*Historic Preservation*

*Transportation Planning*

### City Staff Coordination

*Administration*

*Park and Recreation Department*

*Public Works Department*

*Housing Division*

### Project Summary

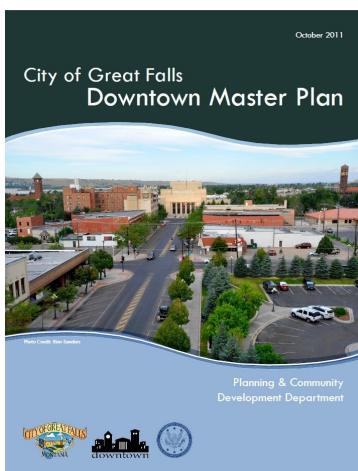
The Downtown Master Plan (the Plan) was unanimously adopted by the Great Falls City Commission on October 18, 2011. This action concluded a 14-month planning process that allowed over 100 community members to contribute nearly 1,200 volunteer hours to the development of the first plan created specifically for Downtown Great Falls.

One of the key recommendations of the Downtown Master Plan was to create a new Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, a dedicated funding source for downtown improvements. In 2012, the challenge was to maintain the positive momentum generated by completion of the downtown planning process by establishing the Downtown TIF and a group responsible for making recommendations to the City Commission on expenditure of TIF funds and implementation of the plan.

A Downtown Partnership was formed representing key stakeholders that participated in creation of the plan and supported its adoption. The group, comprised representatives of the City of Great Falls, Cascade County, Great Falls School District, City-County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, Great Falls Parking Commission, Neighborhood Council #7, NeighborWorks, DGFA, BID, GFDA and the Chamber of Commerce, met regularly to establish bylaws and incorporation as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Meanwhile, the Downtown Partnership agreed on a proposed TIF District boundary and planning staff completed the process of creating an Urban Renewal District, a statutory prerequisite for establishment of a TIF District. The process included public hearings before the Planning Board and the City Commission. On July 20, 2012, the Department of Revenue certified the TIF District with a base year of January 1, 2012. Increment generated from the TIF District will grow year over year and be available to fund public improvements within the district such as roadway improvements, streetscape, street lighting and landscaping to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment.

To maintain momentum created by the downtown master planning process, the Downtown Partnership embarked on three initiatives in the first 100 days after adoption of the plan. Priority gateway sign locations were identified, an "Art of Downtown" event was held as part of Western Art Week and the first phase of the 1st Avenue North underpass mural project was undertaken.



## Key Project - Growth Policy Update

### Project Name

*Growth Policy Update*

### Project Timeline

*November 2011 - Ongoing*

### Board / Commission Served

*City Commission*

*PAB/ZC*

### Planning Department Involvement

*Administration*

*Comprehensive Planning*

*Current Planning*

*Transportation Planning*

### City Staff Coordination

*Administration*

*City Clerk*

*Fire Rescue Department*

*Legal Department*

*Police Department*

### Project Summary

On August 6, 2012, Planning staff launched the public outreach phase of the Growth Policy Update process by holding a Community Open House in the Civic Center. The public outreach phase and its participation processes provide opportunities for the citizens of Great Falls to share ideas and visions for a more vibrant and prosperous community. This growth policy planning project, with its 2025 year horizon, is also referred to as Imagine Great Falls.

After the Open House event, a series of 12 working group meetings were held weekly from August through December 2012 to obtain community input and collaboration, especially with respect to four major issue areas. These were:

**Social** - Topics included population, housing, public safety, parks, and health and wellness.

**Environmental** - Topics included natural resources, open space, stormwater, conservation and environmental health.

**Economic** - Topics included economic and business development including energy and the military.

**Physical** - Topics included land use, transportation and infrastructure. In addition, participants were asked where the city should grow and what land uses should occur in the future.

All meetings were open to the public and each group produced a report which will be used with the survey results and other outreach activities to form recommendations for the city's future. To date over six hundred people completed surveys, 40 community groups received presentations and an estimated 270 volunteer hours were contributed to the working group process.

Staff will hold a follow-up event in early 2013 to offer preliminary recommendations for review in preparation for the adoption process. The Planning staff is committed to taking a holistic, innovative, and citizen-based approach in its work. Public hearings will be held in the Spring of 2013 before the Planning Advisory Board and the City Commission.

The City's Growth Policy is an official document, required by the State of Montana and formally adopted by the Commission, that helps plan for the community's future. It establishes policy for land use decisions and service delivery. This plan will take a strategic approach in addressing potential problems and identifying opportunities for the future.



## Key Project - Land Development Code Amendments

### Project Name

LDC Amendments

### Project Timeline

January 2012 - June 2012

### Board / Commission Served

City Commission

PAB/ZC

### Planning Department Involvement

Current Planning

### City Staff Coordination

Public Works Department

Engineering Division

Building Division

### Project Summary

On April 10, 2012, the PAB considered and recommended approval of a set of Land Development Code amendments proposed by planning staff.

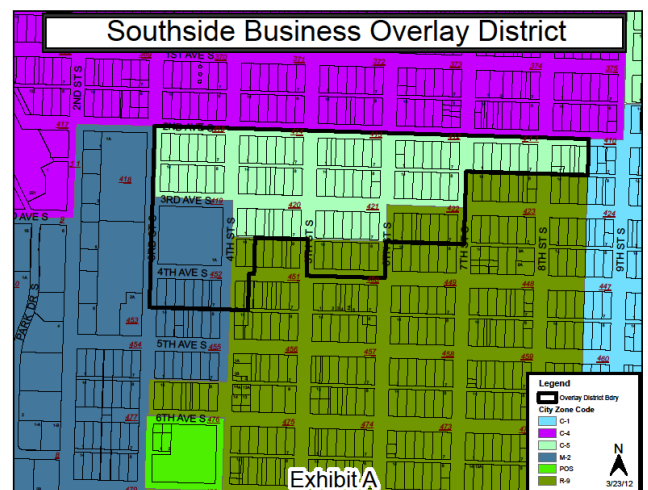
Staff proposed to specifically allow “bonus” living spaces in detached accessory structures such as garage apartments in response to fielding many questions from homeowners about options for housing their adult children, elderly relatives, etc., when expansion of the principal residence is technically infeasible. The accessory structures must be clearly subordinate to the principal structure and carry applicable setbacks and development standards to protect neighbors. Bonus living spaces cannot be rented as separate dwelling units where that would violate zoning but can accommodate dependent relatives or visitors.

Staff proposed creation of a “Southside Business Overlay District” for an area immediately south of the Central Business District that would allow additional uses, including warehouse and light industrial. The area is characterized by old industrial buildings that are vacant or underutilized and the changes were designed to encourage reuse and redevelopment.

It was also proposed to add some permitted uses to the C-5 (Central Business Periphery) zoning district and add C-5 to the zoning districts in which community gardens may be permitted with administrative approval in lieu of a CUP.

Finally, it was proposed to expand the P&CD Director’s discretion to waive minimum off-street parking requirements to include the C-5 as well as the C-4 zoning district, and eliminate the “payment in lieu” provision of \$1,000/space for every space waived. That provision had not been exercised in many years.

On May 15, 2012, City Commission accepted Ordinance 3087 on first reading and set the public hearing to consider the code amendments. City Commission adopted the development-friendly, business-friendly and homeowner-friendly package of amendments as proposed by staff on June 19, 2012.





## Key Project - AgriTech Industrial Park

### Project Name

AgriTech Park

### Project Timeline

May 2012 - January 2013

### Board / Commission Served

City Commission

PAB/ZC

### Planning Department Involvement

Current Planning

### City Staff Coordination

Fire Rescue Department

Public Works Department

Parks and Recreation Department

Engineering Division

Building Division

### Project Summary

The AGRI-TECH PARK is a proposed rail-served heavy industrial park with an emphasis on value-added processing of agricultural products.

The subject property is generally located north of 18th Avenue North, west and east of 67th Street North. The property comprises  $\pm 196.549$  acres of which  $\pm 193.684$  is proposed as industrial lots and  $\pm 2.865$  is the right-of-way of 67th Street North.

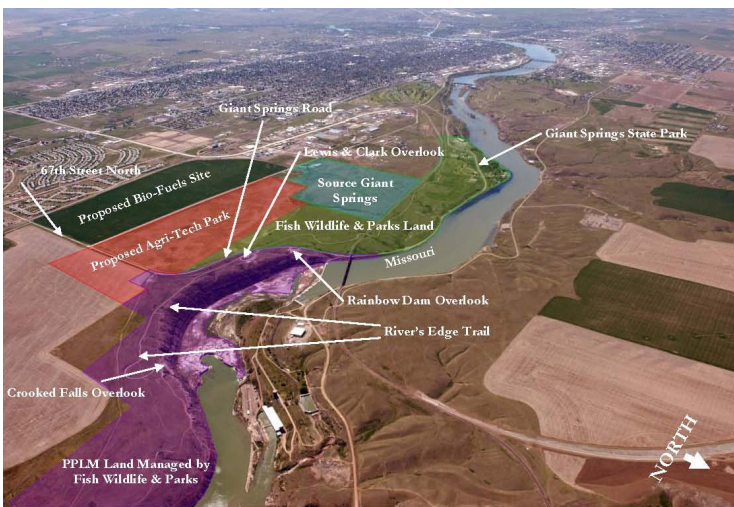
The subject property is contiguous to the large undeveloped I-2 zoned property that has been slated for development of an ethanol (now Montana Advanced Bio-fuels) plant since the early 1990s.

The applicant, Great Falls Development Authority (GFDA), made application in May 2012 for annexation of  $\pm 196.549$  acres with an initial zoning of I-2 (Heavy Industrial), and a major subdivision to subdivide the land into 10 lots; eight lots west of 67th Street North and two lots east of 67th Street North.

The project moved through the approval process until November 2012, when the City Commission debated balancing the desire for economic development with environmental protections.

Ultimately, the City Commission approved annexation of the subject property on November 7, 2012 but remanded matters of zoning and the final plat back to the PAB/ZC with direction that they consider a zoning of PUD—Planned Unit Development on the property; a designation that would ensure the City could enforce mutually agreed-upon development standards on end-users.

City Commission approved the PUD zoning, the Final Plat and the Annexation and Development Agreement for the project on January 15, 2013.



## Key Project - ADF Industrial Development

### Project Name

ADF Group

### Project Timeline

November 2012 - January 2013

### Board / Commission Served

City Commission

PAB/ZC

### Planning Department Involvement

Current Planning

### City Staff Coordination

Fire Rescue Department

Public Works Department

Engineering Division

Building Division

### Project Summary

The applicant, ADF International Inc., requested annexation and initial City zoning of I-2 Heavy Industrial of a property generally located west of the International Malting Plant and east of U.S. Highway 87, on the north side of Great Falls. ADF made the request in order to develop a steel fabrication complex to be located on the 100-acre subject property.

ADF's proposed development will consist of a new 100,000 square foot structural steel fabrication complex. Adjacent to the new facility, ADF will set up a large structural steel fabrication and pre-assembly yard.

ADF's goal is to begin work on the yard's infrastructure and break ground on construction of the new facility in the spring of 2013. They plan to be operating the facility by the second half of 2013, with other expansion phases to be considered in future years, as demand grows.

The proposed development is in partnership with the Great Falls Development Authority and Great Falls College MSU. The College's role in the partnership is to fill the local workforce needs of ADF Group by providing training for high-quality fitters and welders.

The proposed development is compatible with the 2005 Growth Policy, as it advances specific Goals, Policies, and Action Strategies contained within the related plan elements, and it is also in line with the general themes and principles found in the document. The Applicant presented the proposed project to Neighborhood Council 3, which expressed support for the project.

On December 11, 2012, the PAB/ZC recommended approval of the annexation and zoning as recommended by staff.

The project moved forward to City Commission for 1st Reading of the Zoning Ordinance on January 15, 2013 and final action by the Commission is expected at a Public Hearing set for February 5, 2013.



## Key Project - Calumet & Gendco Rezoning

### Project Name

Calumet Montana Refining &  
General Distributing Company  
Rezone

### Project Timeline

September 2012 - January 2013

### Board / Commission Served

City Commission

PAB/ZC

### Planning Department Involvement

Current Planning

### City Staff Coordination

Fire Rescue Department

Public Works Department

Engineering Division

Building Division

### Project Summary

Calumet Montana Refining (Calumet) requested rezoning of  $\pm 17.81$  acres of land from C-2 (General Commercial) and I-1 (Light Industrial) to I-2 (Heavy Industrial) in order to utilize the recently acquired former Westgate Mall property located west of their existing oil refinery operations.

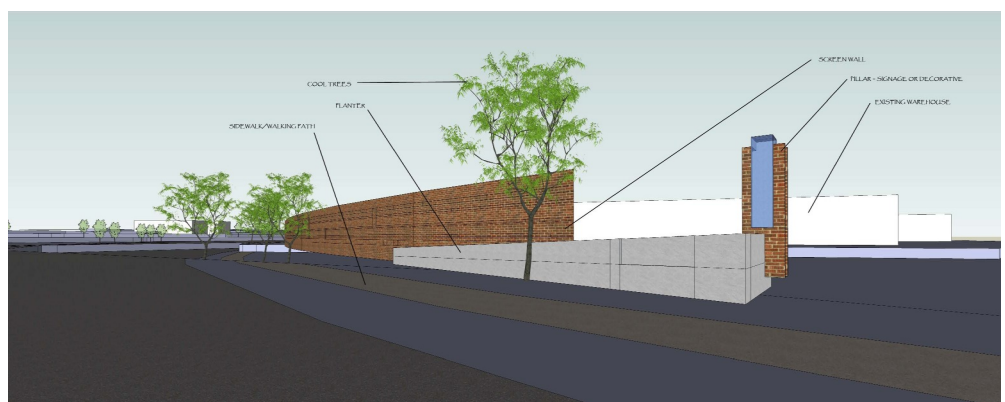
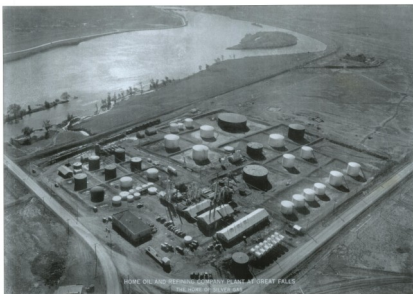
Calumet also requested approval of an amended plat of their property which adjusts and aggregates nine lots into seven lots with the proposed  $\pm 17.81$ -acre Lot 5 intended for industrial uses and the other six proposed lots lining 3rd Street NW.

Calumet proposed to retain C-2 zoning on the remaining  $\pm 7.577$  acres of their property along 3rd Street NW with a plan to accommodate additional commercial development on Lots 1-4, 6 and 7. It was also proposed that any development of the site would trigger construction of a minimum 8-foot high wall and installation of landscaping that would buffer the industrial-zoned area from the commercial corridor as well as construction of a new section of paved bike-ped trail connecting Smelter Avenue to the River's Edge Trail.

In an associated application, General Distributing Company (Gendco) requested rezoning of their  $\pm 2.19$  acre property at 430 17th Ave NE from I-1 to I-2. Gendco is a manufacturer and distributor of gases in high pressure cylinders. Gendco is close to full build-out in this location and does not have plans for expansion. The owners requested the rezoning in order to bring their property into conformance with the Land Development Code.

On November 13, 2012, the PAB/ZC recommended approval of the rezoning and subdivision as recommended by staff.

On January 15, 2013, City Commission approved the amended plat for Calumet and committed to rezone the Gendco property to I-2, but tabled final action on Zoning Ordinance 3100 until February 5, 2013 over concerns with rezoning Lot 5 to I-2 (Heavy Industrial).





## Key Project - Optimum Facility

### Project Name

Optimum—Conditional Use Permit

### Project Timeline

October 2012 - December 2012

### Board / Commission Served

City Commission

PAB/ZC

### Planning Department Involvement

Current Planning

### City Staff Coordination

Fire Rescue Department

Public Works Department

Engineering Division

Building Division

### Project Summary

The applicant, Bresnan Communications, LLC, requested a Conditional Use Permit for Lot 3E, Medical Tech Park, herein referred to as the subject property, to allow an Unconcealed Telecommunications Facility on a portion of the property. The subject property is located on 21st Avenue South just west of 23rd Street South. Note that the proposed development for Lot 3E is an Optimum facility. Optimum is a subsidiary of Cablevision Systems Corporation that acquired Bresnan Communications in 2011. The subject property is zoned M-1 Mixed-use district in which an Unconcealed Telecommunications Facility is conditionally allowed. The property is currently owned by the City of Great Falls. City Commission approved the sale of the subject property, subject to the approval of the Conditional Use Permit, at a meeting held on August 7, 2012.

The applicant is proposing to relocate and consolidate their Great Falls operations on the subject property. This will include construction of a single story commercial building which will consist of a customer service center, private office space, telecommunications rooms and a warehouse space to support their operations and services.

A 50-foot high communications tower will be located the southwest corner of the building. Four satellite dishes will be located adjacent to the communications tower south of the building. A 15-foot continuous evergreen landscape buffer shall be provided along the southern property boundary to screen the telecommunications facilities.

The project is consistent with the Growth Policy goals and objectives that foster economic development, enhanced communication and telecommunications and appropriate community facilities. The project was presented to Neighborhood Council 5 for review and comment, and these comments were presented to the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission (PAB/ZC) and addressed in the staff report.

On October 23, 2012, the PAB/ZC recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit, subject to conditions recommended by staff, and City Commission concurred with the adoption of Resolution 10002 at a public hearing held on December 18, 2012.





## Key Project - 20th Street South Sidewalk

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**Project Name***20th Street South Sidewalk***Project Timeline***Completed Summer 2012***Planning Department Involvement***Transportation Planning***City Staff Coordination***Engineering Division**University of Great Falls***Project Summary**

A new sidewalk connecting the major shopping complexes on 10th Avenue South with the residential and educational destinations along 20th Street South was installed in 2012.

This public/private partnership was proposed by the University of Great Falls and approved by the City Planning Advisory Board and City Commission. The University provided the 13.42% required to match the federal Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funds.

Since its construction in the 1960s, the University has lacked adequate pedestrian access, including access for the mobility impaired. Further development in the area of the Great Falls College-MSU, the McLaughlin Research Institute, and various residential developments, as well as the Target/Albertson's shopping complex, has driven the need for safe sidewalks and curb ramps.

Planning staff coordinated development of this project, including obtaining engineering and inspection services from the City's Engineering Division. The project installed about 1500 lineal feet of new sidewalk, including ADA ramps. It now provides a safe, continuous pedestrian route between 10th Avenue South to the new campus housing on the southwest corner of the University of Great Falls campus, and to the main campus itself.

Completed under budget at \$70,000, the project provides much needed pedestrian connections in the neighborhood and emphasizes the City's commitment to public-private partnerships, and to building a connected transportation system that serves all users.



## Key Project - Centene Baseball Park Landscaping

### Project Name

*Centene Park Landscaping*

### Project Timeline

*Completed Summer 2012*

### Planning Department Involvement

*Transportation Planning*

### City Staff Coordination

*Park & Recreation Department*

*Great Falls Baseball Club*

### Project Summary

Named “Centene Stadium,” the City’s baseball stadium and field is the home to Great Falls’ minor league baseball team, the Great Falls Voyagers. Originally constructed in the 1940s, the stadium, field and surrounding site has undergone numerous upgrades in recent years to provide for the future of baseball in the community.

In 2010, the City Commission and the Great Falls Baseball Club signed a Memorandum of Understanding outlining improvements to be made to the City-owned baseball stadium and the surrounding complex. Although the Stadium and parking lot had received facelifts, the pedestrian accesses to and around the south side of the Stadium remained unimproved. Additionally, the area was mud in wet weather, retaining runoff from the building and helping to give the facility an unfinished look. In 2011 and 2012, the City Planning & Community Development Department staff oversaw a project using Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funds to complete beautification and provide functionality at the entrance to the Stadium.

A consulting engineer, Thomas Dean & Hoskins, was hired to design the project, as well as conduct construction oversight. Staff worked closely with the project applicant (Great Falls Baseball Club) and the Park & Recreation Department to install functional and attractive improvements. The final features included sidewalks from each exit, leading to a sidewalk adjacent to the driveway around the perimeter of the Stadium; underground connections to the storm sewer from the roof drains; positive grading to direct runoff away from the building; sod, shrubs and trees; an irrigation system; and bike racks.

Completed within the budget for a total cost of \$125,000, the work was finished by Kuglin Construction ahead of schedule in time for the opening of the 2012 baseball season.



## Key Project - Montana Downtown Conference

### Project Name

*Montana Downtown Conference*

### Project Timeline

*October 24-26, 2012*

### Board / Commission Served

*HPAC*

*BID*

### Planning Department Involvement

*Historic Preservation*

*P&CD*

### Project Summary

In October, Great Falls hosted the most comprehensive downtown development and historic preservation gathering in Montana. The Montana Downtown Coalition, of which Great Falls is a founding member, holds an annual conference that brings together downtown professionals, business leaders and community champions for three days of great ideas, inspiring speakers, innovative solutions and a chance to network with peers from around the state. Additionally, attendees were given tours of the city and introduced to the history and assets of the community.

The Historic Preservation Office worked with the Business Improvement District (BID) to arrange venues, create graphic materials, solicit corporate sponsors and arrange speakers and educational sessions.

The City of Great Falls is an associate member of the Montana Department of Commerce's Main Street program and as such is eligible to apply for technical assistance grants. In 2012, the Preservation Office successfully applied for a grant to bring Donovan Rypkema to Great Falls as a keynote speaker for the Downtown Conference. Rypkema, Principal of Place Economics, lectures internationally on economic and preservation issues related to rehabilitation, community development and commercial revitalization.

City Manager Greg Doyon, Planning & Community Development Director Mike Haynes, Planner II Jana Cooper, and Training and Development Coordinator Mark Wilmarth, all showcased the City of Great Falls in presentations/panels during the conference.

In addition to rave reviews regarding content, conference attendees were favorably impressed by the Civic Center and the Events staff, which provided "seamless" service in providing room set-ups and technical assistance.





## Key Project - Technical Assistance Program

### Project Name

*Technical Assistance Program*

### Project Timeline

*January 2011—June 2012*

### Board / Commission Served

*HPAC*

### Planning Department Involvement

*Historic Preservation*

*Comprehensive Planning*

### Project Summary

In 2011, Great Falls was successful in obtaining \$21,500 in grant funding from the Preserve America program through the State Historic Preservation Community Revitalization Project to establish the Downtown Technical Assistance Program (TAP). As an integral part of the downtown master planning process, the TAP will provide strategies to encourage the adaptive reuse, rehabilitation and preservation of historic buildings and sites in downtown Great Falls. The purpose is to provide potential developers with assistance in the form of building feasibility studies. In the initial phase of the program, three feasibility studies were completed for the Rocky Mountain Building, the Arvon Block and the Baum-Trinastich Building. The Baum-Trinastich rehabilitation is nearly complete and developers are currently using the studies to plan the rehabilitation of the Rocky Mountain and Arvon Buildings.

With \$5,986 remaining in the Preserve America grant, we were able to obtain additional funding from an Economic Development grant and the Great Falls Business Improvement District (BID) to complete two additional feasibility studies for the GG Mill Building at 112 First Ave. South and the Suhr Warehouse at 117 Park Drive. We continue to work with the building owners to develop rehabilitation partnerships/plans.

With the initial grant of \$21,500 and the \$45,000 match (some in-kind), the potential exists to generate at least five to eight million dollars in rehabilitation in downtown Great Falls.

Planning & Community Development is exploring options to continue the program.



Baum-Trinastich Building



Suhr Warehouse—117 Park Drive



Mill Building—112 First Avenue South



## Key Project - Great Falls High School

### Project Name

*Great Falls High School*

### Project Timeline

*January 2012 - December 2012*

### Board / Commission Served

*Historic Preservation*

### City Staff Coordination

*City venues for the ornaments*

*included: City Library, Civic Center*

*Events Office, Visitor Information*

*Center as well as the Planning &*

*Community Development Office.*

### Project Summary

Great Falls high School was completed in 1930 at a cost of \$1.15 million. Eighty-two years later, the Collegiate Gothic style school is the subject of both a master plan for rehabilitation and a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register is the official Federal list of resources considered worthy of preservation. The GFHS nomination has passed the State Review Board and is expected to be listed early in 2013.

The Historic Preservation Advisory Commission selected GFHS as the subject for its annual Official City of Great Falls ornament. The ornament, the fifth in a series, provides the HPAC with a discretionary fund for its educational programs and projects.

The ornament was an overwhelming success. It kept five venues busy throughout the holiday season and over 1,250 ornaments made their way across the country and into the homes of GFHS alumni, yielding over \$10,000 for historic preservation programs and projects.



## Key Project - National Historic Preservation Month

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**Project Name***Historic Preservation Month***Project Timeline***May 2012***Board / Commission Served***HPAC***Planning Department Involvement***Historic Preservation***Project Summary**

The Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) annually celebrates preservation successes in Great Falls and Cascade County with a Preservation Awards Reception. The Commission selected five projects to be honored in 2012. Efforts to repair, restore and rehabilitate three residences and a cemetery, along with a new Central Avenue building, were recognized during National Historic Preservation Month.



Michael and Charlotte Chamberlain purchased the residence at 625 3rd Avenue North in 2004 and have steadily and carefully been restoring their home, with real dedication to maintaining the character and original integrity.



Rob, Gina and Ashly Forsberg took the former Unitarian Church/nine unit apartment building at 309 4th Street North and rehabilitated it for single family use, breathing new life into the building and the neighborhood.



Dr. Dale and Pam Schaefer like to fix up old houses and purchased a rundown home at 606 5th Avenue North and restored it to showcase quality. The couple “demonstrates the spirit that helps keep our historic neighborhoods thriving,” Carol Bradley said in the nomination for the property.

## Key Project - National Historic Preservation Month



The Great Falls Cemetery Association and Highland Cemetery were recognized for their dedication to repair and restore the heavily vandalized headstones and markers at the historic Highland Cemetery. Tom Stewart and his crew were specifically recognized in the nomination for acting quickly and skillfully to restore the damage.



The new Public Drug Co. Building at 324 Central Avenue is consistent with guidelines for new construction with historic districts and contributes to the masonry, terra cotta and commercial character of the Great Falls Central Business Historic District. The new building complements and supports the district and reflects significant design and material characteristics within the district.



The Historic Preservation Advisory Commission presented the Black Eagle Community Center with a Check for \$500 to assist with drafting a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the building that originally housed the Anaconda Employees Club.



### *You Are Invited*

*The 2012 Great Falls-Cascade County  
Historic Preservation Awards  
Thursday, May 24, 2012  
Missouri Room of the Civic Center  
5:30 PM to 7:00 PM  
Light hors d'oeuvres  
"Discover Cascade County's Hidden Gems"*



*Special presentation for the  
Black Eagle Community Center*

The Preservation Award reception is held annually as part of National Historic Preservation Month activities. The theme nationally for 2012 was "Discover America's Hidden Gems."



## Building Safety Division Overview

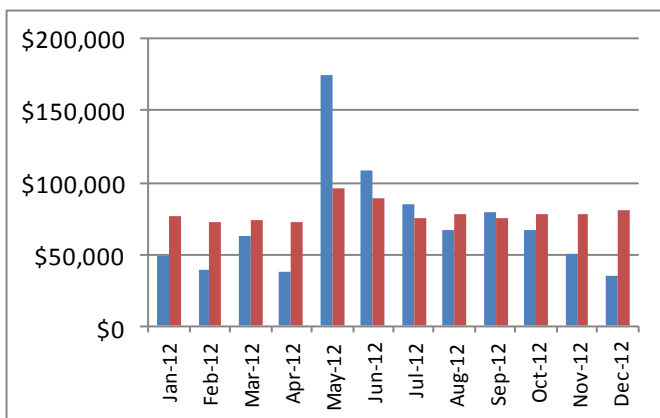
For calendar year 2012, the Building Division issued building permits for projects valued at \$67,232,326. That compares with a project valuation of \$69,674,970 for calendar year 2011. While that is a small year-over-year decrease, it is a quite encouraging level of development activity in a slow economy.

Total fund revenues for 2012 were \$854,746 and total fund expenses were \$946,683. While that is a shortfall of \$91,937, it compares favorably with the previous 24 months (2010 and 2011) which saw the building reserve fall \$432,616 from \$636,069 to \$203,453. It is hoped that revenues and expenses will continue to converge in 2013, as it will be first full calendar year that new permitting fees have been in effect, and an automatic adjustment for inflation will take effect on July 1.

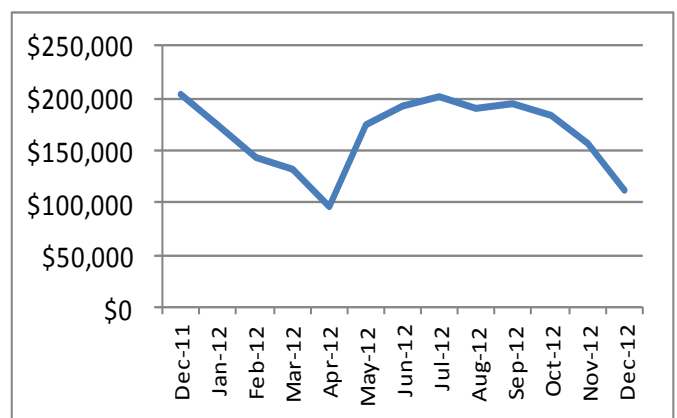
For 2012, the Building Division issued 508 building permits compared with 597 for 2011. This reverses the trend that had seen the number of building permits issued increase from 385 in 2009, to 485 in 2010, to 581 in 2011.

Operational changes for 2012 included hiring Electrical Inspector, John Dixon, to replace retiring Bob Lippel, helping pave the way for a planned transition to combination inspectors. A “dual track” plan review system that substantially improved review time for residential/minor projects was instituted and outreach efforts expanded.

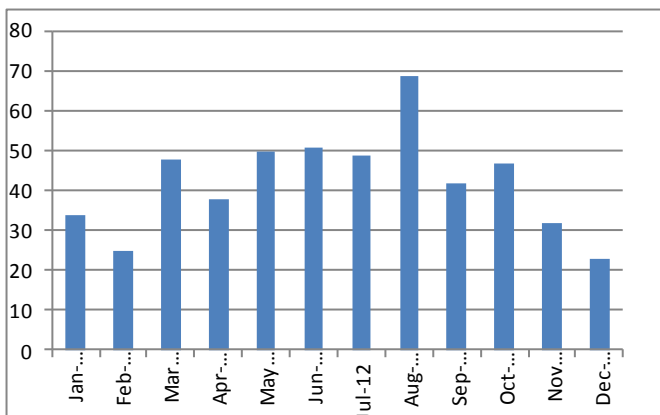
**Building Fund Revenues and Expenses 2012**



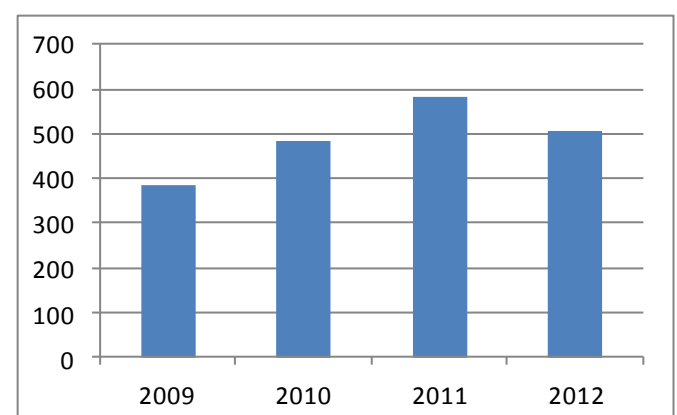
**Building Fund Reserve 2012**



**Building Permits Issued Monthly 2012**



**Building Permits Issued Annually 2009 - 2012**





## Appendix A. 2012 Subdivision and Annexation Activity Table

Note: Table Updated February 6, 2013

Project Name	Annexation	Planning Board Subdivision Action			No. of Lots or Condos	Planning Board Consideration and Action Taken	Final Disposition
		Min.	Prel	Final			
Northview Addition, Phase 7	X			X	12 Lots	11/8/2011 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
AgriTech Park Addition	X		X	X	10 Lots	7/10/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 01/15/2013
Praise Tabernacle	X			X	Amended Plat Consolidating 8 Lots into 1 Lot (Worship Facility)	5/8/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 01/15/2013
Steel Etc.	X				1 Lot Industrial	5/8/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Shumaker Washbay	X				1 Lot Industrial	6/12/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1517 17th Ave SW	X				Amended Plat Consolidating 2 Lots into 1 Residential Lots	6/12/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1527 17th Ave SW	X				Amended Plat Consolidating 3 Lots into 1 Residential Lots	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1359 13th Ave SW	X				1 Lot Residential	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Northview, Phase 8	X			X	12 Lots Residential	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Stone Meadows Phase II	X			X	30 Lots Residential	7/17/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
ASI Elderly Housing Development	X				1 Lot Multi-family Residential	10/23/2012 Approved w/conditions	Pending City Commission Approval
ADF Group	X				1 Lot Industrial	12/11/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 02/05/2013
Carter Park Townhomes		X			3 Lots Residential	8/14/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Calumet Montana Refining				x	Amended Plat Consolidating 9 Lots into 7 Residential Lots	11/13/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission

## Appendix B. 2011 Zoning Activity Table

Note: Table Updated February 6, 2013

Project Name	City Rezoning (Conditional Use)	City Zoning in Conjunction w/Annexation	Type of Change	Zoning Commission Hearing & Action Taken	Final Disposition
Northview Addition, Phase 7		X	Assigned PUD Planned unit development to property	11/8/2011 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
AgriTech Park Addition		X	Assigned PUD Planned unit development to property	7/10/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 01/15/2013
Praise Tabernacle		X	Assigned R-3 Single-family high density to development, approved a conditional use permit for a Worship Facility	5/8/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 01/15/2013
Steel Etc		X	Assigned I-2 Heavy Industrial to property	5/8/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Shumaker Washbay		X	Assigned I-2 Heavy Industrial to property	6/12/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1517 17th Ave SW		X	Assigned R-3 Single-family high density to property	6/12/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1527 17th Ave SW		X	Assigned R-3 Single-family high density to property	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
1359 13th Ave SW		X	Assigned R-1 Single-family suburban to lot	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Northview, Phase 8		X	Assigned PUD Planned unit development to property	6/26/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Stone Meadows Phase II		X	Assigned R-3 Single-family high density to property	12/13/2011 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
ASI Elderly Housing Development		X	Assigned R-6 Multi-family high density to property	10/23/2012 Approved w/conditions	Pending Approval: On-hold by applicant
ADF Group		X	Assigned I-2 Heavy Industrial to property	12/11/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission 02/05/2013
Calumet Montana Refining & General Distributing Company Rezone	X		Rezone from C2 and I-1 to I-2 Heavy Industrial district; Amended Plat relocating and consolidating 9 lots into 7	11/13/2012 Approved w/conditions	Pending Approval: Remanded to Planning Board for PUD zoning Gendco approved 02/05/2013
424 8th Ave SW	(X)		Conditional Use to allow a Contractor Yard Type 1 in R-1 zoning District	8/14/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission
Optimum Facility	(X)		Conditional use to allow an Unconcealed Telecommunications Facility on a portion of the site	10/23/2012 Approved w/conditions	Approved by City Commission