



Envision Gallatin

Growth Policy Update Virtual Open House

July 7th, 2026, 12 PM – 1 PM

Presentation Outline

- **What is the Growth Policy?**
- **Why does the Growth Policy need to be updated?**
- **Summary of proposed changes**
 - Updates to reflect Local Planning Efforts
 - General Updates
 - 2026 Data Updates to Future Land Use Map
- **Questions and Feedback**
- **Stay involved!**





What is the Growth Policy

Gallatin County Growth Policy

- Acts as a compass that guides the County's land use decisions.
- Montana state law declares that the County must consider the Growth Policy in decisions regarding development patterns, public structures or utilities, water and sewer facilities, and during the adoption or amendment of any zoning regulations.
- Contains background information on the County and establishes policies, written as general land use goals, organized by three themes: **Heritage**, **Open Space**, and **Opportunity**
- Includes a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) which depicts the goals and policies of the Growth Policy in the form of a map with corresponding density and land use recommendations.
- State law prohibits the Growth Policy being used as a regulatory document meaning that development proposals cannot be denied based solely on compliance with the Growth Policy.



What the Growth Policy Is and Is Not

The Growth Policy IS

- A guide for land use decisions
- A **tool** illustrating the community's **vision for growth**
- Meant to establish **goals, intent, and general guidance**
- Developed with extensive **public input and collaboration**

The Growth Policy IS NOT



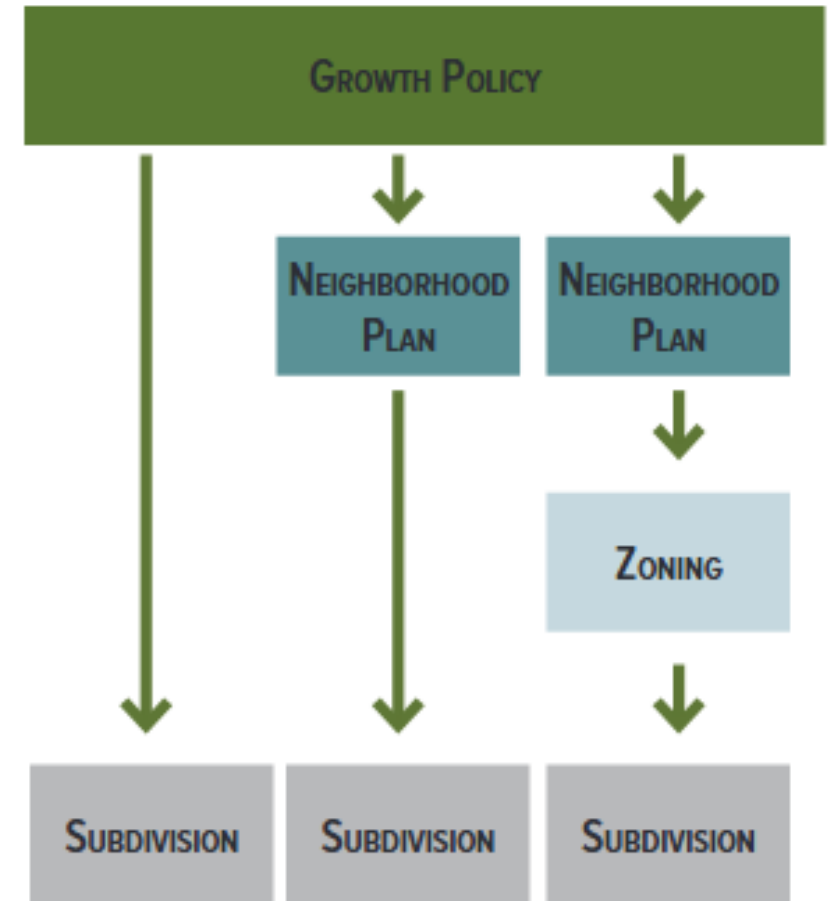
- A regulatory document
- **Zoning** (although it informs zoning)
- **Specific**, detailed standards
- Used or developed “**behind the scenes**”



Where Does it Apply?

- In the County's planning jurisdiction, which excludes the jurisdictional areas of incorporated cities like Bozeman, Belgrade, Manhattan, Three Forks and West Yellowstone
- Informs the development of neighborhood plans, zoning, and subdivision regulations
- Has varying degrees of influence in different parts of the County

Area of the County:	Growth Policy Influence:
Unzoned land without a neighborhood plan	Highest
Unzoned land with a neighborhood plan	Higher
Zoned land under "part 2" zoning laws	Medium
Zoned land under "part 1" zoning laws	Medium



What are the main points?

- Development should be **connected to existing infrastructure**, water and sewer districts
- Development should be proximal to existing communities and services to **reduce commute times and traffic**
- Impacts on **water use and water quality** should be minimized
- The right to **farm and ranch** should be protected and agricultural heritage preserved
- **Wildlife** habitat and corridors should be preserved for intrinsic value and public enjoyment
- **Open space, trails, and recreational** opportunities are highly desired
- The County should allow for a variety of **housing options** and **affordability** should be prioritized



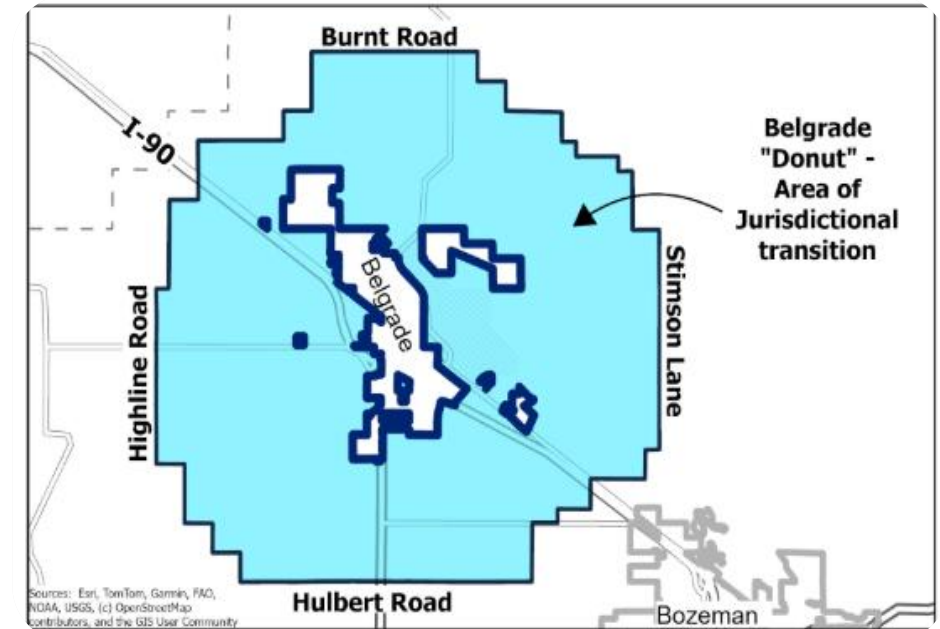


Why update the Growth Policy?

Why update the County's Growth Policy?

Belgrade Extra-Territorial Planning Jurisdiction (ETJ or "Donut") Transition

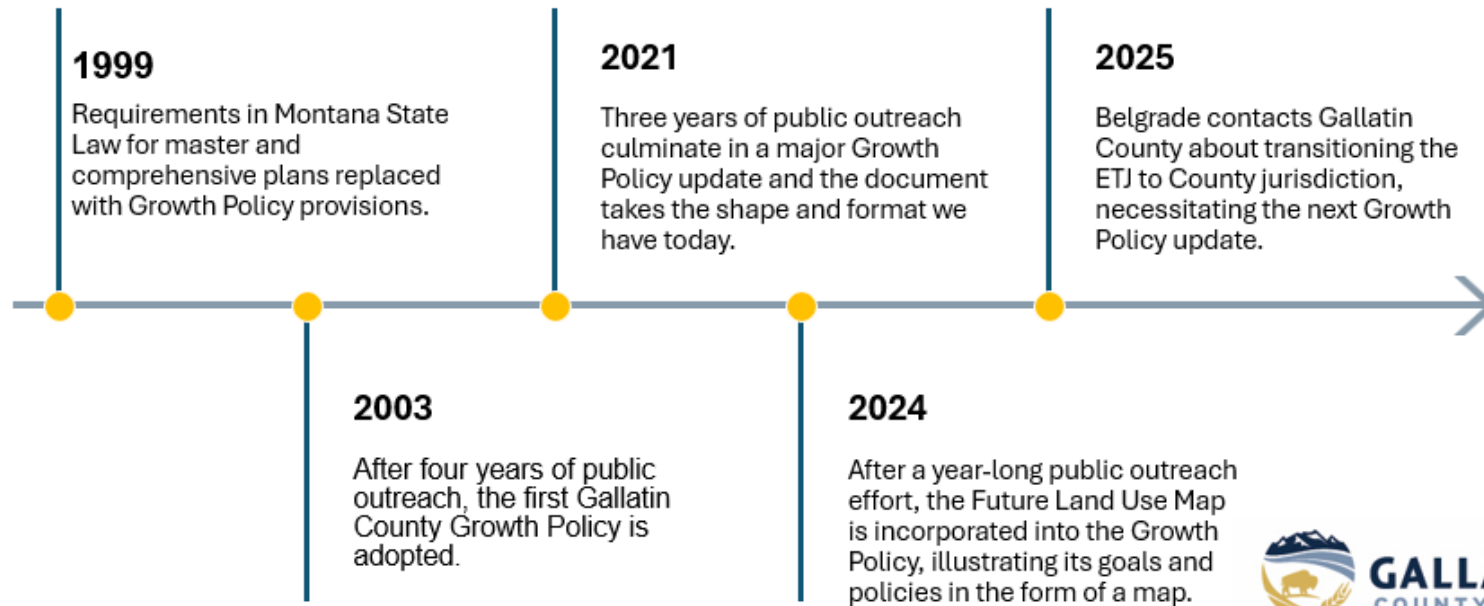
- The City of Belgrade requested to transition planning and development review responsibilities in their ETJ to Gallatin County, effective July 1st, 2026
- The County's Growth Policy must now be updated to include the former ETJ and ensure a consistent approach to planning across the County.
- While the County is now responsible for development review and land use planning within the former ETJ, the City of Belgrade is still depicts how property in this area will be zoned once annexed (brought into) the City.
- Once the County's Growth Policy update is complete, it will only apply until land in the former ETJ is annexed into the City of Belgrade.
- Due to limited infrastructure and services in the County, the Growth Policy recommends lower densities and less intense development than would be allowed in the City of Belgrade. Once annexed, development can be connected to important City services like water and sewer.



Why update the County's Growth Policy?

State Law Review Mandates

- Montana state law requires County Growth policies to be reviewed to determine if updates are needed at minimum of every 5 years. The last comprehensive Growth Policy update was in 2021, so the Belgrade ETJ updates and the 5-year review updates are happening concurrently
- The Growth Policy has been amended recently with robust community input, meaning that the scope of this update is limited to changes necessary to incorporate the former Belgrade ETJ, remove outdated information, update data, clarify some passages, and correct typos.



GALLATIN
COUNTY



Envision Gallatin





Summary of Proposed Changes

The Scope of the 2026 Growth Policy Update is Limited to:



Changes necessary to show that the Belgrade ETJ is now in the County's jurisdiction



Clarification of ambiguous passages and correction of typos

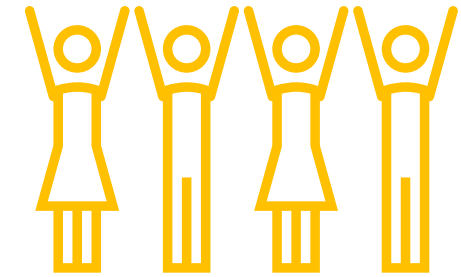


Updating of outdated information



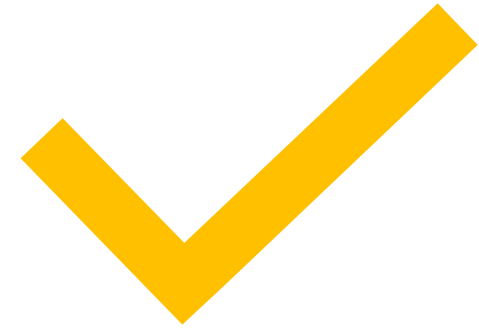
Updates to reflect local planning efforts

- **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** incorporated
- **Safe Streets for All Action Plan** recognized as providing safety analysis/recommendations
- **Urban Transportation District** operating Streamline/coordinating transit services
- **Model Zoning Code for Affordable Housing** accepted as a reference document
- **Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan** tied to health, safety, housing goals



Other General Updates

- Updates made to reflect **changes in state law**
- Some policies edited to **apply recommendations broadly** rather than to specific zoning districts
- Certain passages edited for **specificity and clarity**
- **Typos and formatting** issues resolved



Scan the QR code to visit the
project webpage & learn more
about the update!



2024 Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

- The FLUM is a **spatial illustration of the goals** articulated in the Growth Policy.
- The process to create the FLUM was driven by outreach and data that informed a suitability model and additional steps, which are described in a story map and in Chapter 8 of the Growth Policy.

► Gallatin County Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

[Home](#)[Step 1 - Development Suitability Analysis](#)[Step 2 - Creating the FLUM](#)[The FLUM](#)[Data Sources and Collaborators](#)

Public Feedback collected during the Growth Policy and first round of outreach for the FLUM were **directly translated** into model criteria (shown in the table below) for the suitability model, which forms the foundation of the FLUM.

MODEL CRITERIA/RANKING

% Weight	Category/Criterion	Suitable	Moderately Suitable	Less Suitable
40%	Proximity to Community Cores and Municipalities	Within Community Core / Municipal Boundary	≤1/4 mile from Community Boundary	>1/4 mile from Community Boundary
30%	Within Established Water/Sewer District Service Area (including Municipal)	Within Service Area	Within, but only one Service	Out of Service Area
15%	Wildlife Resource Value on Private Land	Urban / Urbanizing Areas	Lower Value	Core Habitat & Higher Value
10%	Within Wildfire Risk Area	Very Low	Low	Moderate / High
5%	Slope (%)	≤ 5%	> 5% to ≤15%	> 15%
Protected or Constrained Areas: Floodplain & Watercourse Commons, Steep Slopes, Other Jurisdictions/Public Lands, Conservation Easements				

[Link to Story Map - Process to Create 2024 FLUM](#)



Envision Gallatin



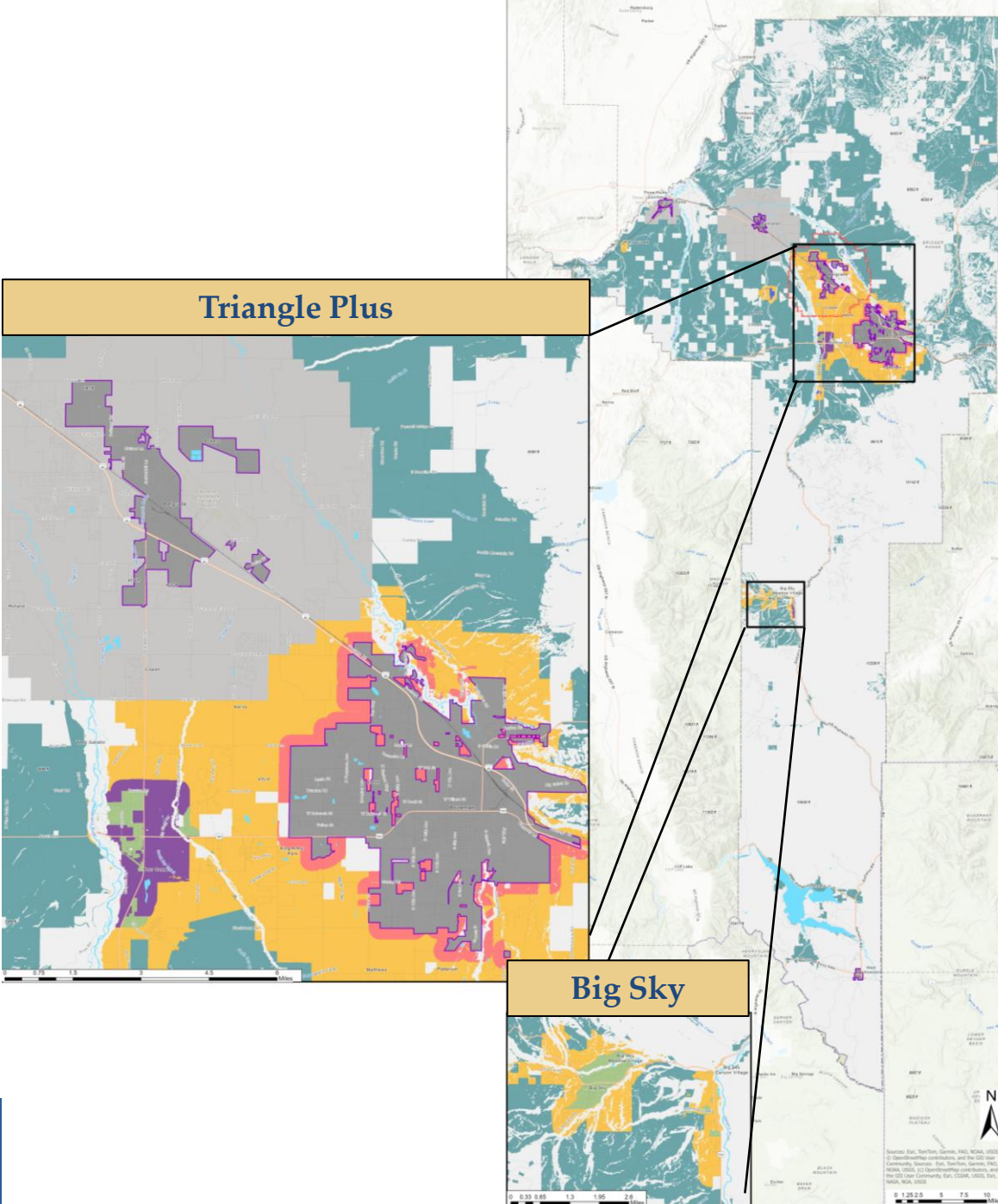
2024 Future Land Use Map

- The map depicts **future land use categories** that show areas of the County that are less and more suitable for different intensities of development.
- The FLUM also includes **special topics** that correspond to each future land use category and **overlays**.

[Link to Story Map -
Process to Create
2024 FLUM](#)



Envision Gallatin



Future Land Use Categories

URBAN GROWTH AREAS



RURAL GROWTH AREAS



ANNEXATION HOLDING AREAS



PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE HOLDING AREAS



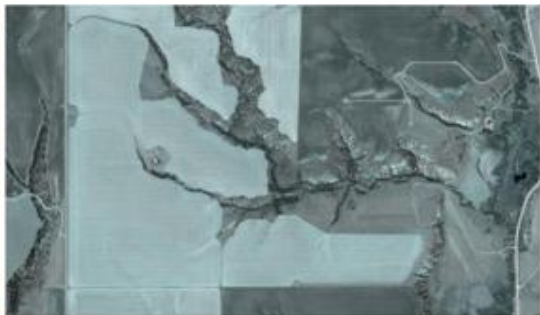
Future Land Use Categories in the FLUM contain recommendations for:

- Purpose
- Development patterns
- Typical uses
- Base density, lot sizes
- Design standards and other considerations

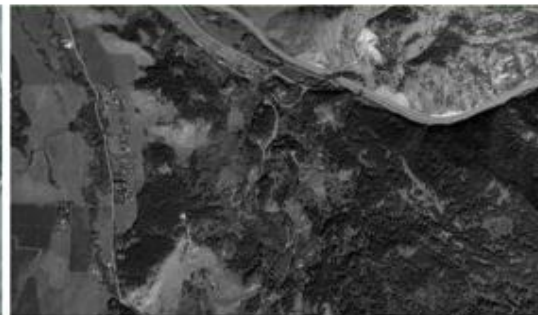
MANAGED GROWTH AREAS



OPEN AND WORKING LANDS



PUBLIC, PROTECTED, & CONSTRAINED LANDS



[Details in Chapter 8 of the draft update to the Growth Policy on the project page](#)



Envision Gallatin



Special Topics and Overlays

Special topics have recommendations that correspond to each future land use category

- Agriculture
- Housing
- Transportation and Connectivity
- Accessibility
- Water Quality and Quantity

Overlays contain specific recommendations or highlight special considerations within certain areas of the County

- Wildlife Overlays (Wildlife Safe Movement, Bear Conflict Mitigation)
- Groundwater Recharge Overlay
- Groundwater Nitrate Overlay
- Conservation Easement Overlay
- Open Space and Parkland Overlay
- Soils of Agricultural Importance Overlay



[Details in Chapter 8 of the draft update to the Growth Policy on the project page](#)



2026 Data Updates to Future Land Use Map

The 2026 draft FLUM was created using the same process followed in the 2024 Amendment to the Growth Policy with updated data including:

- Former Belgrade ETJ area included in suitability analysis and assigned Future Land Use Map categories
- Airport Influence Area depicted
- Inclusion of new or updated data that impacts annexation holding areas and public infrastructure holding area boundaries including:
 - Canyon Water and Sewer boundary (updated)
 - Bozeman's Wastewater Facilities planning area (updated)
 - Belgrade's water and sewer infrastructure planning area from the Utilities Master Plan (added)
- Canyon Water and Sewer District boundary re-classified as planning area to reflect status as not yet operational and providing sewer but not water services
- Updated parklands, open space, conservation easements
- Updated fire data
- Updated public lands data
- Updated municipal boundaries

[Link to Storymap
Comparison 2024 & 2026
Draft FLUM Update](#)



2026 Data Updates to Future Land Use Map

New in 2026 Draft!

AIRPORT OVERLAY

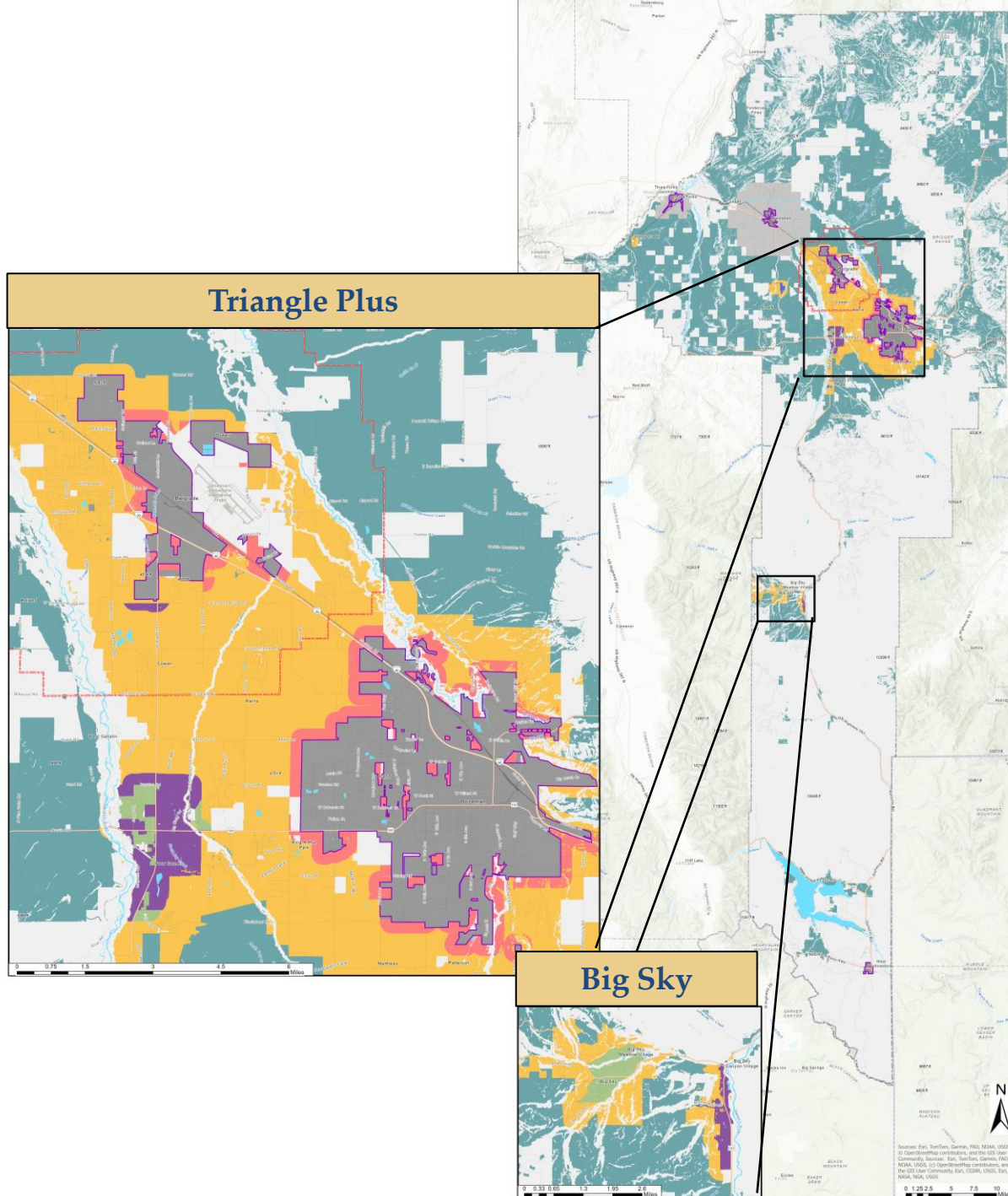
PURPOSE: The Gallatin Field Airport has specific requirements for development in the Airport Influence Zone. This overlay identifies areas where special land use rules and development standards related to the airport may apply.

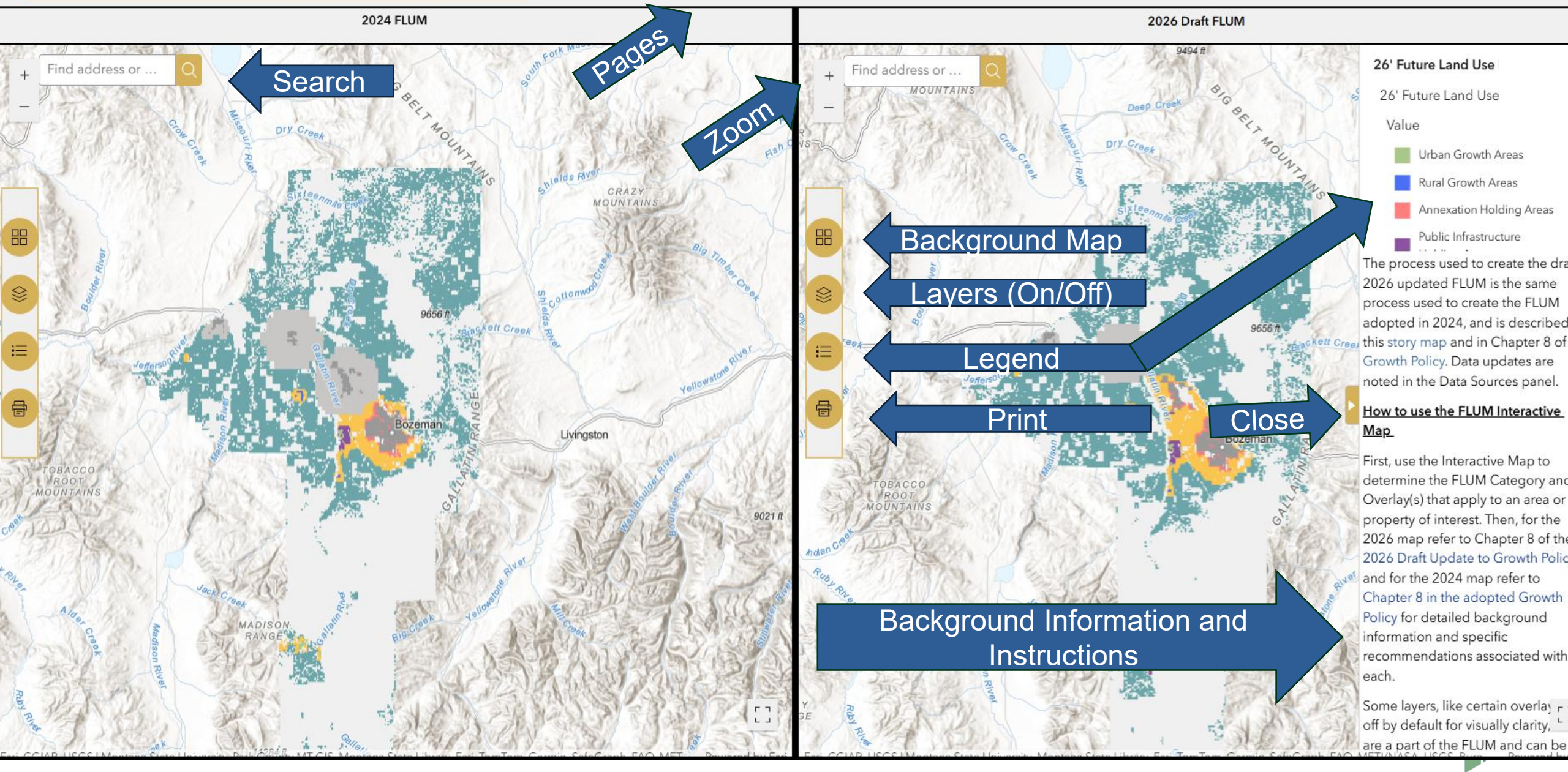


[Link to Storymap](#)
[Comparison 2024 & 2026](#)
[Draft FLUM Update](#)



Envision Gallatin







Questions and Discussion

Questions? Share your Ideas!

1. Are there any other clarifications or updates needed in the Growth Policy to reflect the ETJ transition?

Ideas....

2. What should the County keep in mind during the Belgrade ETJ transition?

Infrastructure needs and protection of ditches.

3. Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Is there a regional water initiative because independent w/s districts present challenges for municipal expansion/general expansion of services. Noted difficulty connecting with different standards/layouts.



Share your Ideas

1. Are there any other clarifications or updates needed in the Growth Policy to reflect the ETJ transition?

Ideas....



Share your Ideas

2. What should the County keep in mind during the Belgrade ETJ transition?

Ideas..



Share your Ideas

3. Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Ideas..



How to participate!

Register or complete registration on [Envision Gallatin.com](https://envisiongallatin.com)

If you instead want information on **Current Planning**, which includes the review of individual development proposals under existing regulations and requests for *targeted* changes to zoning other regulations, see the Planning Department's [main webpage](#).

Register for Updates and Outreach Activities

Explore and engage with long-range projects happening now!

Get help with Registration

Register for the Envision Gallatin email list and to participate in online activities by [clicking here](#).

If you were previously registered you may simply need to confirm you still want to get emails by completing registration or resetting your password. If you have any issues contact the Planning Department.

Detailed instructions are linked here:

1) [How to Register](#) 2) [How to Complete Registration](#) 3) [Forgot Password or Email Already Registered Error](#)

Signing up for the Envision email list allows you to receive information about, and invitations to participate in, things like comprehensive regulation changes and policy initiatives that shape growth and development in the County's jurisdiction. For information about individual development proposals within the County (current planning), click [here](#) to visit the Planning Department's homepage.

Comment form for proposed changes open through Sunday July 19th

<https://envisiongallatin.com/growth-policy-update-belgrade-etj-transition/surveys/comment-form-growth-policy-update-belgrade-etj>

Envision Gallatin



Stay Informed & Engaged!

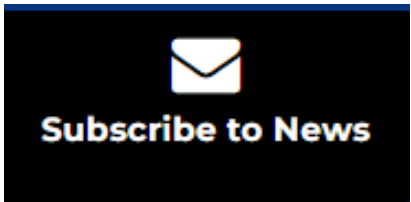
Multiple Long-Range Planning Projects

 Envisiongallatin.com

 envision@gallatin.mt.gov

 Planning: 406-582-3130

 Gallatin County

 Emailed newsletter
www.gallatinmt.gov

 YouTube Gallatin County


Instagram @gallatin_county

 Gallatin County Government

 @Gallatin County

 BOZEMAN DAILY
CHRONICLE

Legal Notices

Envision Gallatin

