



**Smart Growth America**

Making Neighborhoods Great Together

# Tactics and Techniques for Livable Communities in Small Cities, Towns and Rural America

## Maine Downtown Coalition

September 28, 2011 Portland, ME

# Smart Growth America . . .

. . . advocates for people who want to live and work in great neighborhoods. We believe smart growth solutions support businesses and jobs, provide more options for how people get around and make it more affordable to live near work and the grocery store. Our coalition works with communities to fight sprawl and save money. We are making America's neighborhoods great together.

# Overview

- How I got my grey hair
- Smart growth
- Issues in rural communities
- Leveraging smart growth concepts

# My background

- 30+ years public and private practice
- Professional Engineer
- Fellow of ASCE
- Professional Planner
- Member of AICP and APA
- Past President of MAP
- Community Development Director, McCall, ID
- Director of Missoula City-County Office of Planning and Grants



Portland, OR



World Trade Center PATH Terminal

# My experience – rural/small town

- Aspen
- Snowmass Village
- Basalt
- Carbondale
- Glenwood Springs
- Silt
- Rifle
- Gypsum
- Eagle
- Avon
- Beaver Creek
- Vail
- Minturn
- Granby
- Durango



Basalt, CO



Aspen, CO

# My experience – rural/small town

- Jackson
- Wilson
- Driggs
- Ketchum
- Hailey
- Bellevue
- Sedona
- Moab
- Chelan
- Stehekin
- Bend
- Sisters
- Redmond
- Joseph
- Enterprise
- Wallowa
- Lostine
- McCall
- Donnelly
- Cascade
- New Meadows
- Council



Basalt, CO



Aspen, CO

# My experience – rural/small town

- Sequoia National Park
- Kings Canyon NP
- Arches NP
- North Cascades NP
- Colorado National Monument
- Pinnacles National Monument



Basalt, CO



Aspen, CO

# What I've heard...



Wengen

# Smart growth is ugly.



Riomaggiore, Italy

We have no history with it.



Boston, MA

Nobody would want to live there.



Aspen, CO

It just doesn't work here.



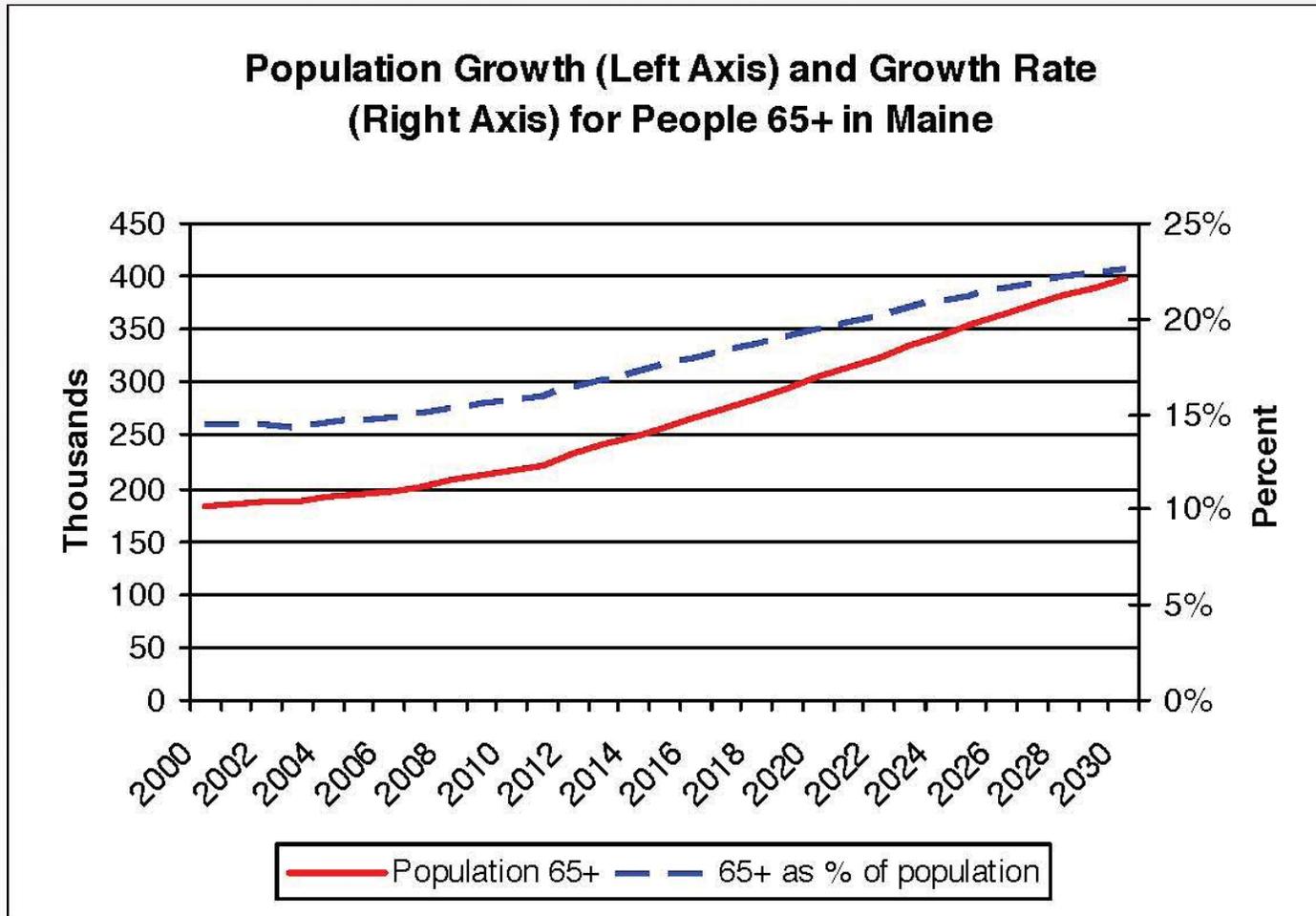
Pearl District, Portland, OR

# Shut up and drive!



Trend is not destiny.  
-Lewis Mumford

# The “silver tsunami”



Maine’s Aging Economy and the Economy of Aging, Charles S. Colgan, Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine, 2006

# U.S. Housing Projections

<b>Household</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2025</b>
With children	48%	33	28
Without children	52	67	72
Single	13	26	28

<b>U.S. as a whole</b>	<b>Supply 2003</b>	<b>Change needed 2025</b>
Attached	27 million	26 million more
Small Lot	22 million	30 million more
Large Lot (>7000 sq. ft.)	57 million	<i>22 million less</i>

Nelson, Arthur "Where Will Everybody Live?" EPA White Paper, Virginia Tech 2007

# Share of growth 2010-2030

- Households with children - 14%
- Households w/o children - 86%
  - Singles – 32%

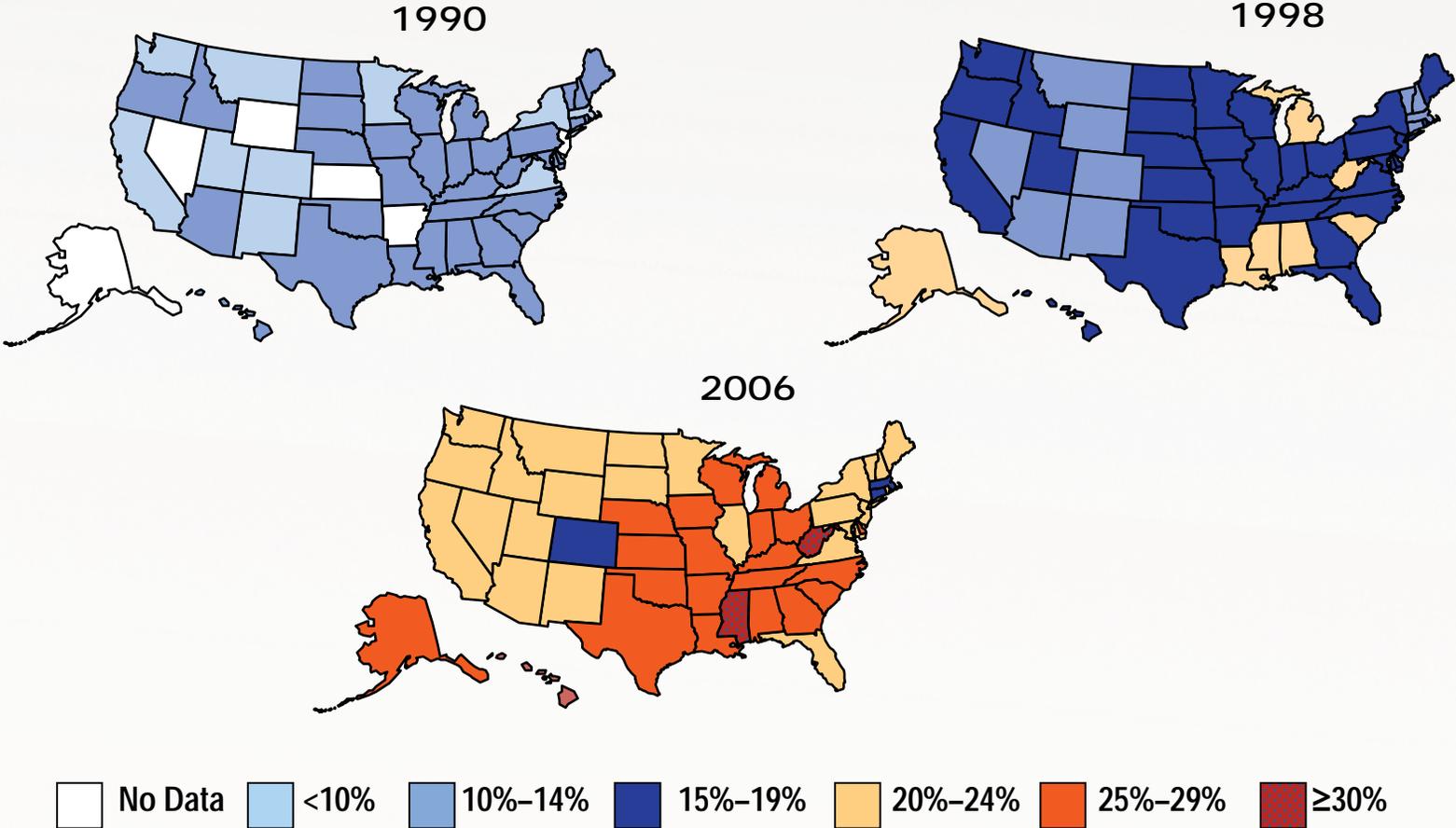


Bozeman, MT

*Source: Arthur C. Nelson, Presidential Professor & Director, Metropolitan Research Center, University of Utah*

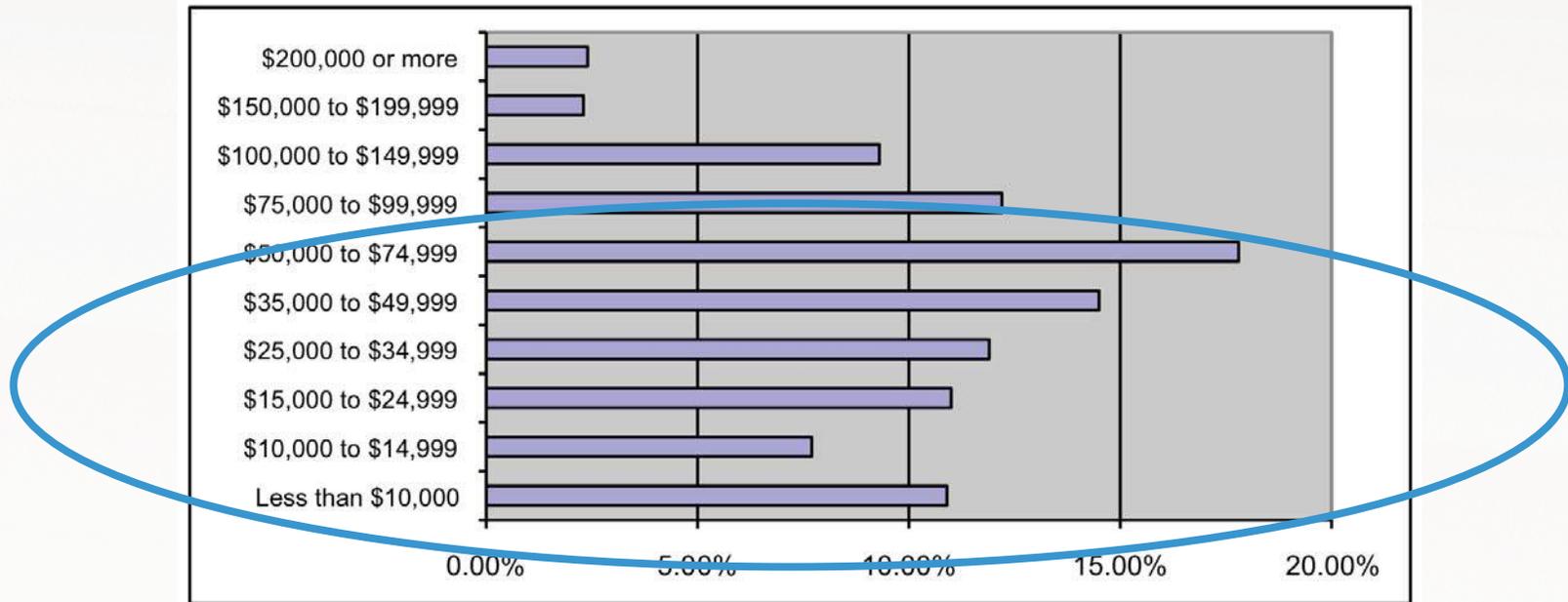
# Obesity Trends\* Among US Adults

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or about 30 lbs. overweight for 5'4" person)



# Housing affordability

About 80% of Portland families can't afford to buy median priced home



American Community Survey

# What is his inheritance?

- Old?
- Fat?
- Broke?
- Alone?



More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly.

– Woody Allen

# Some recent, more hopeful trends

- The younger generation sees cars as a burden not a ticket to freedom
- Aging baby boomers want a more active and less isolated lifestyle
- Large lot housing in suburban areas is overbuilt
- Other housing choices in all price brackets are under-built
- People are willing to trade house size for proximity to key destinations

# Shaping the future we want



# What is smart growth?



Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops, and schools.

These strategies support thriving local economies and protect the environment.

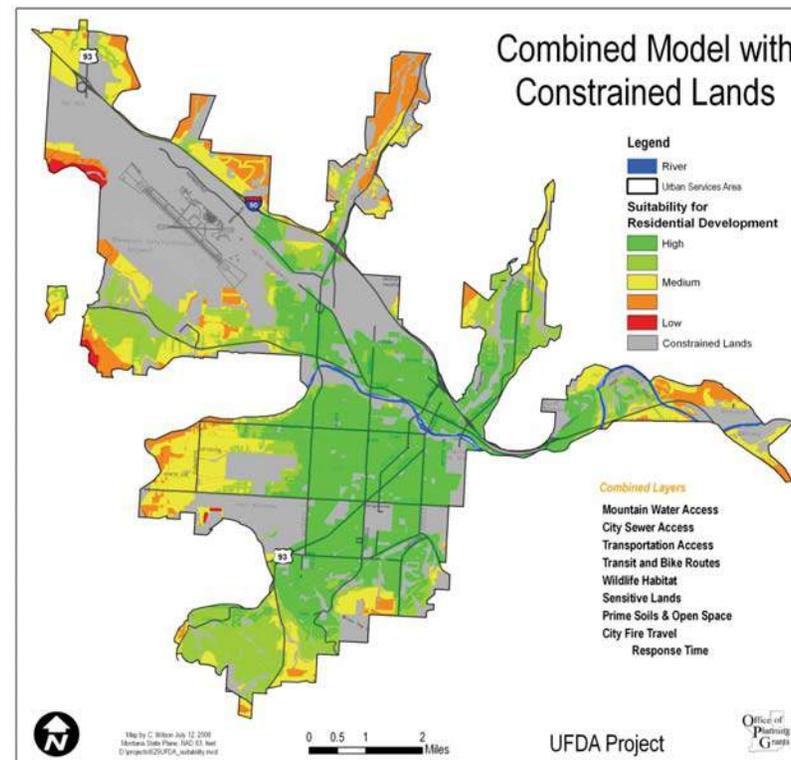


# What is Smart Growth?

- Creates complete neighborhoods where daily needs are close at hand
- Creates a safe, inviting environment for walking
- Puts jobs and schools within reach of residents
- Provides a variety of transportation options
- Fosters distinctive and attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Preserves natural beauty, parks, and environmentally-critical areas
- Makes development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
- Makes efficient use of public investment in infrastructure, schools, and services



# Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities



# Outstanding in its field



St. Louis exurbs

# Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

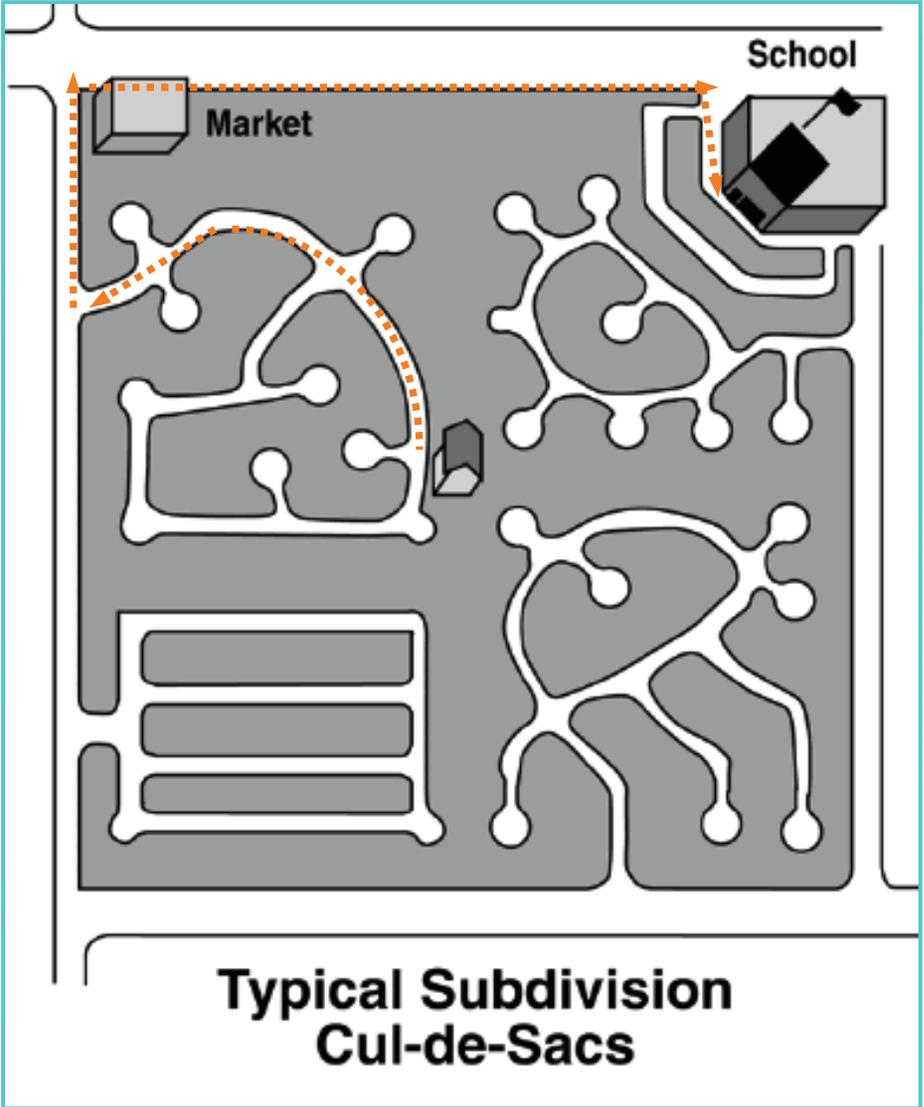
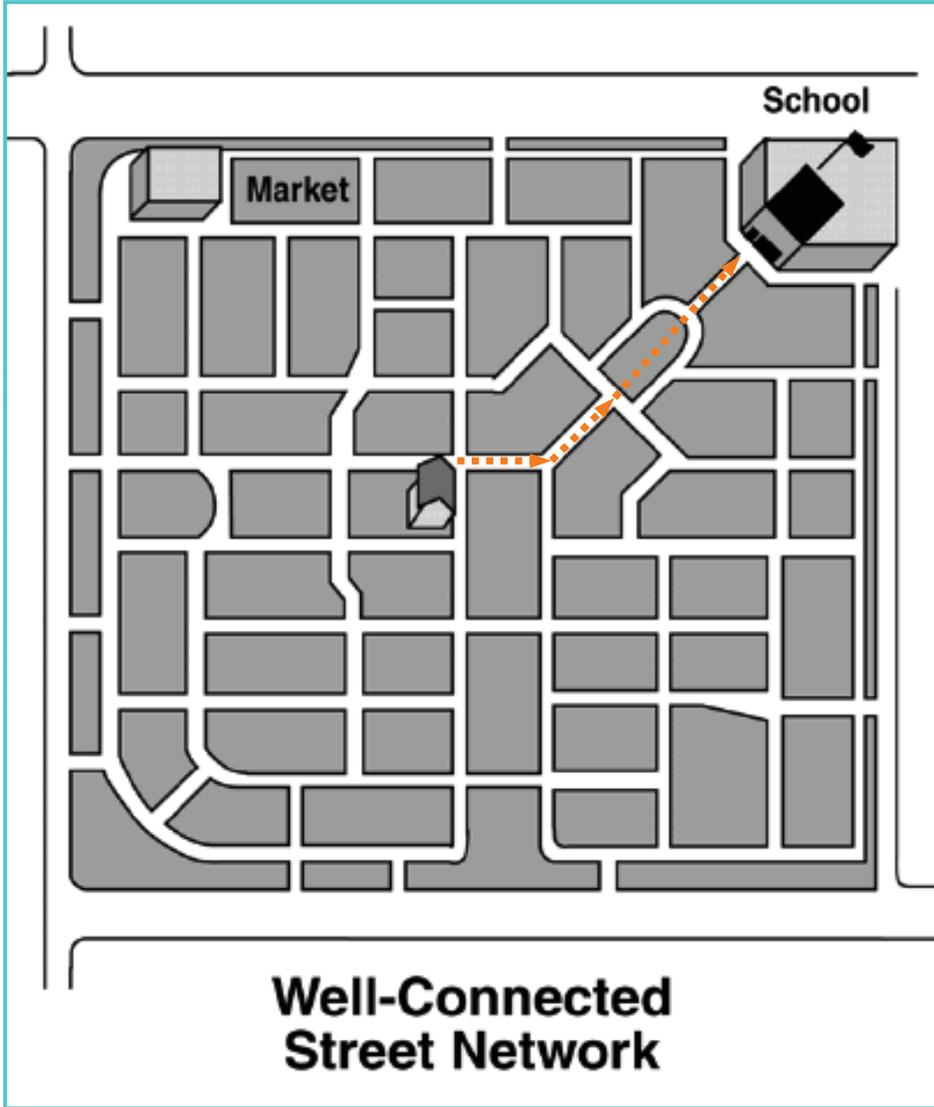


August 11, 1970



# Create Walkable Neighborhoods





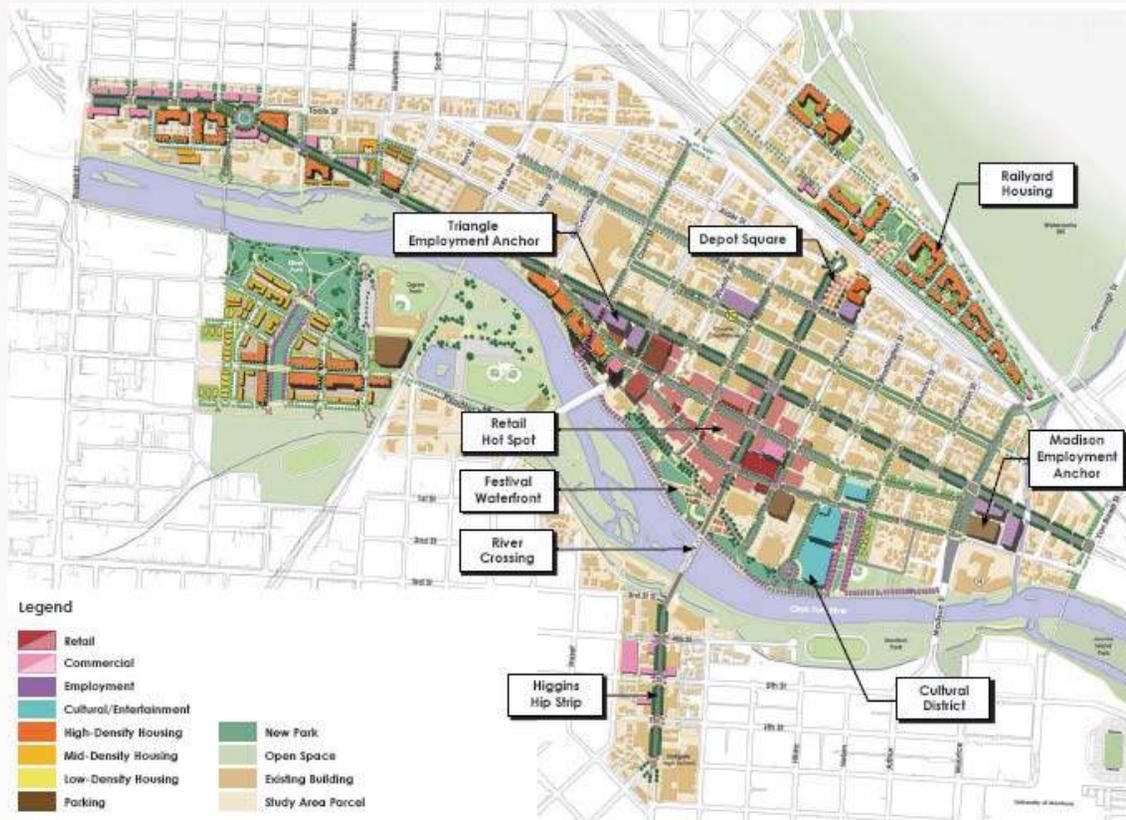
# Take Advantage of Compact Building Design



# Encourage Transportation Choice



# Mix Land Uses



# Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

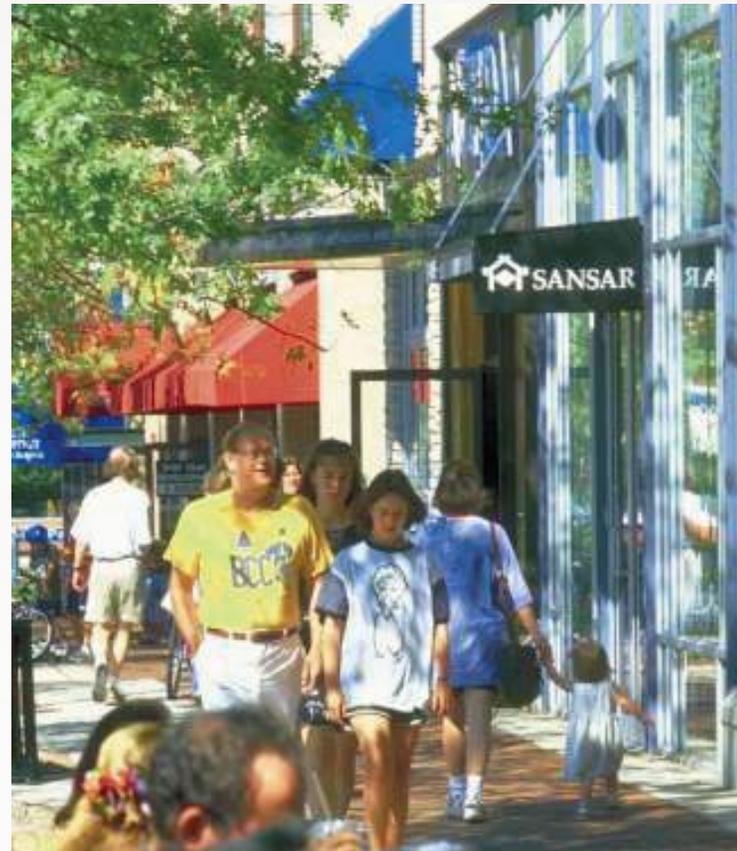


# Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas



# Support Pedestrian Scale Development

- Support the change of street standards to meet pedestrian needs
- Bring schools, stores, offices and other uses closer to where people live
- Promote development that's designed for people not cars



# Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective



# Who is involved?

- Citizens
- Neighborhoods
- Civic organizations
- Government
- Developers
- Lenders
- Designers
- Builders



Portland, OR

# The Role of Citizens

- **Get educated** about the importance of smart growth and spread the word.
- **Get involved** early in comprehensive community planning.
  - Urge local leaders to create a community-based vision for future growth
- **Attend planning meetings** and insist on:
  - Quality design that fits in with the community
  - Track record of success
  - Integrated with the transportation system

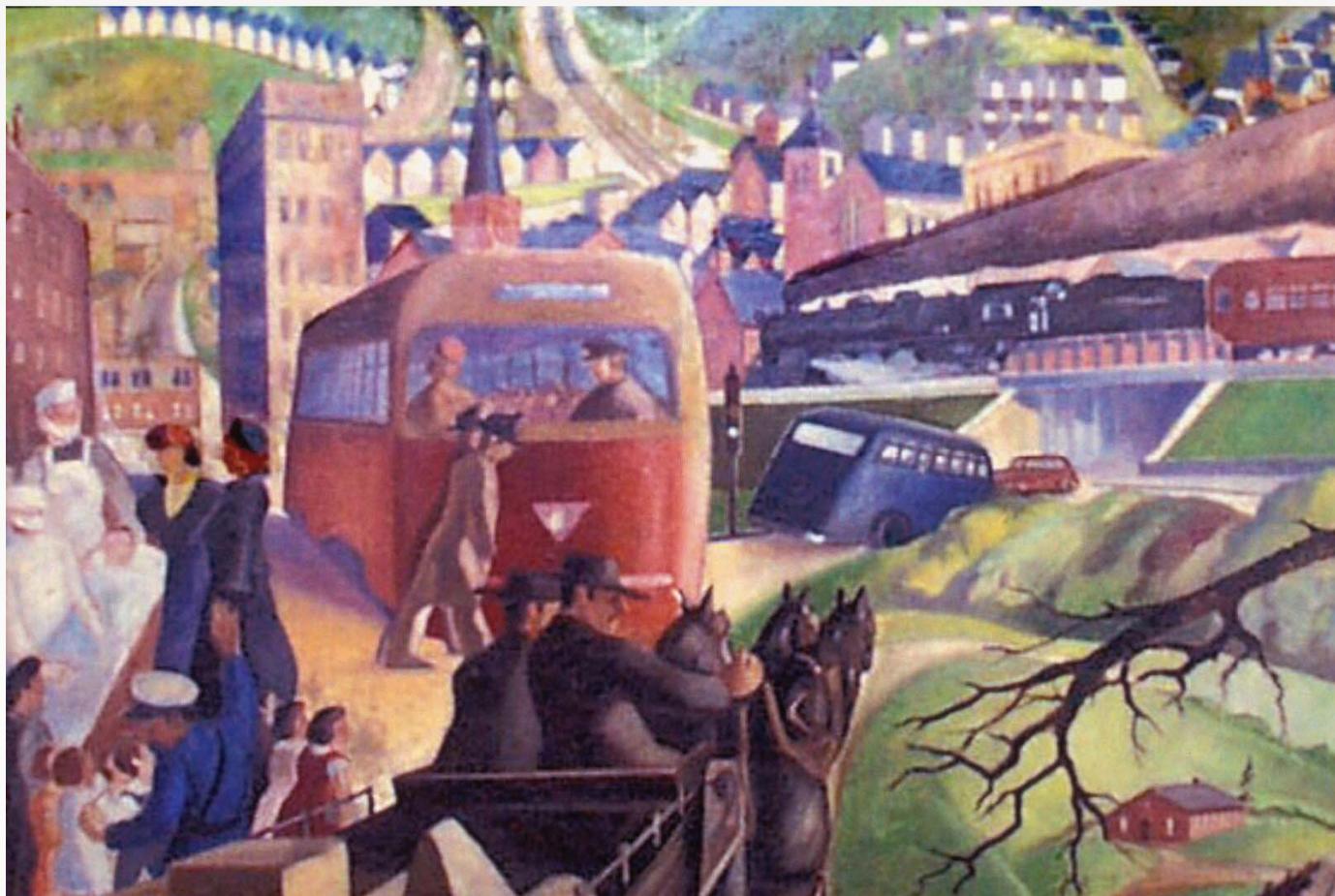
# The Role of Business Leaders

- **Attend planning meetings** to support good projects
- **Advocate** for zoning law changes that allow for higher density and mixed uses
- **Locate** businesses near public transportation and existing infrastructure
- **Encourage employees** to actively support proposals for higher-density housing near jobs and transportation

# The Role of Elected Officials

- Change the regulatory climate
  - Update our zoning/land use regulations
- Change the economic climate
  - Density bonuses
  - Tax deferrals and reductions
  - Fee waivers
  - Setting aside or buying down the cost of land
- Change the dialogue
  - Educate citizens – smart growth brings new amenities, new jobs, new tax revenues, new retail
- Change the political climate
  - Build citizen support for smart growth by creating a community-based vision for growth
  - Assure citizens you will insist on quality

# What people are thinking



Wilkinsburg, PA



# The Role of Sustainable Communities in Economic Recovery

Funding Provided by the Ford Foundation

# Survey Methodology Overview

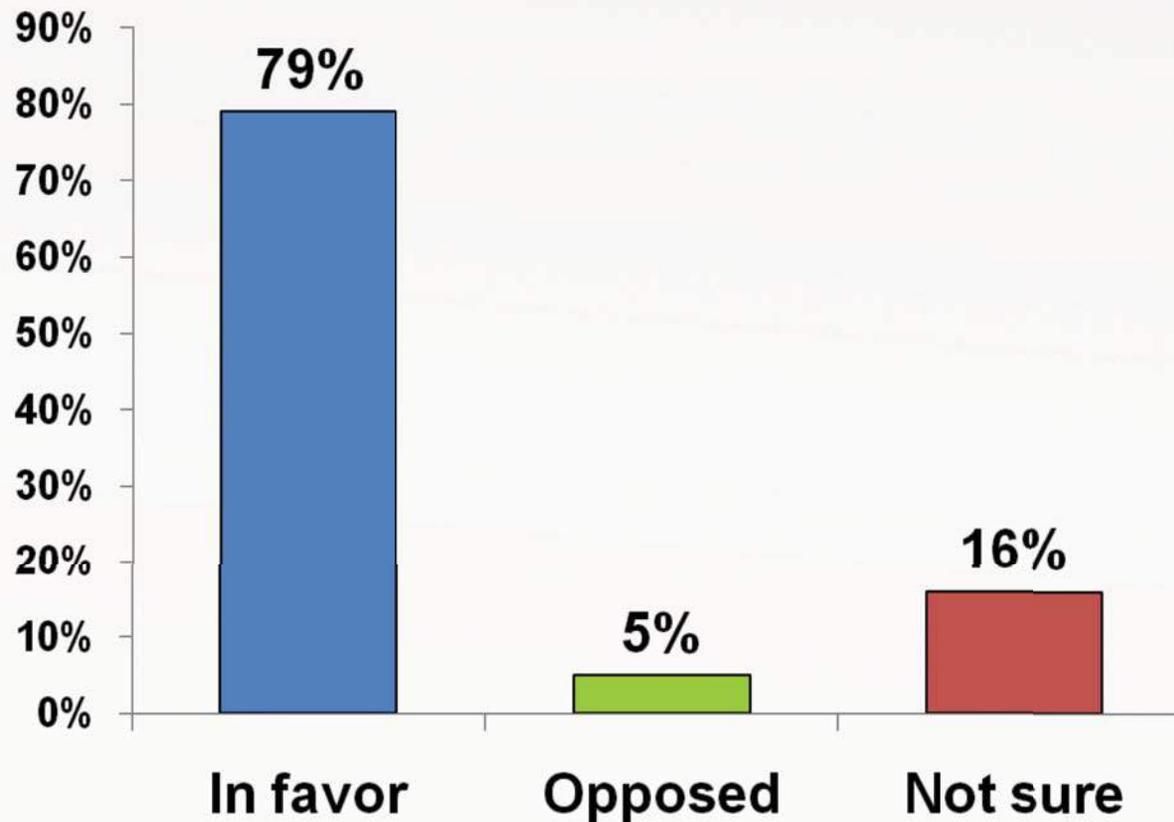
- Questionnaire designed by Collective Strength and reviewed by Harris Interactive
- 1,200 interviews from October 21 to November 1, 2010
- Results calibrated to Census estimates for age, race, income, gender and region
- Plus or minus 3% margin of error



*An urban, suburban or rural community that has more housing and transportation choices, is closer to jobs, shops or schools, is more energy independent and helps protect clean air and water.*

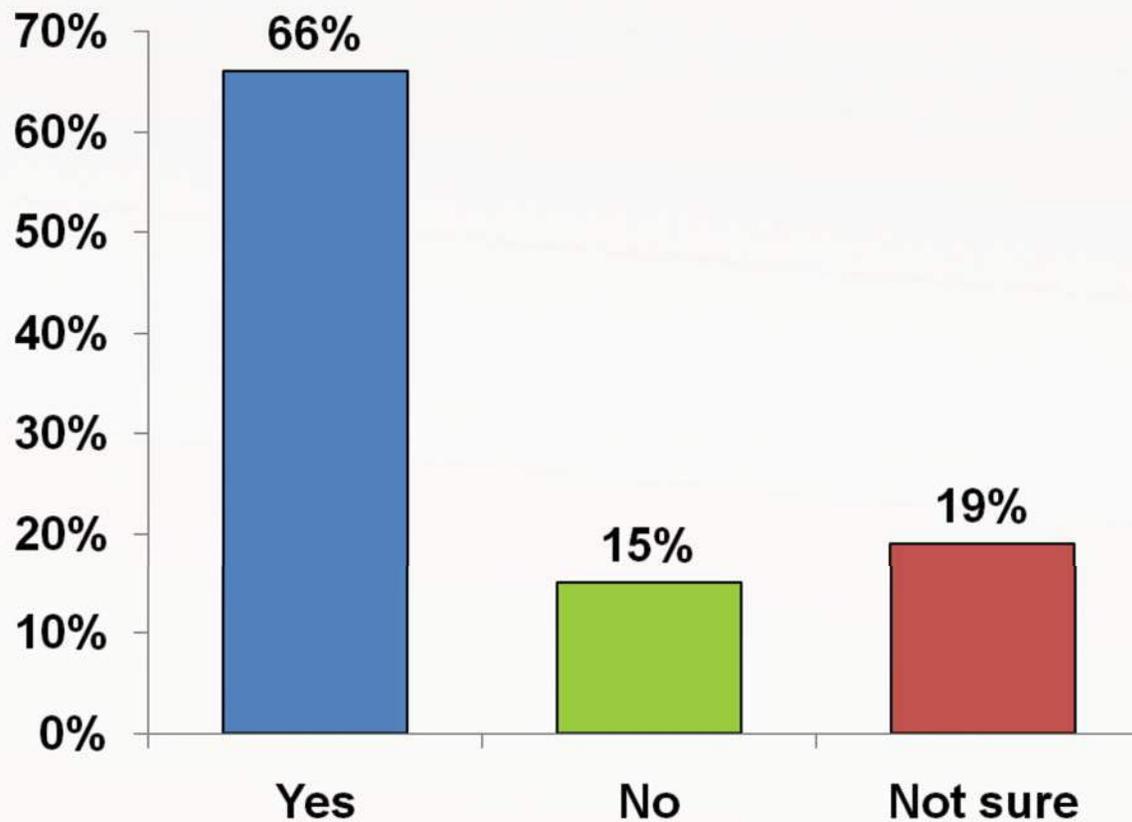


# Support for Sustainable Communities (with Definition)



Q: For the remainder of this survey, please use the following definition of sustainable communities: An urban, suburban, or rural community that has more housing and transportation choices, is closer to jobs, shops or schools, is more energy independent, and helps protect clean air and water.

# Does your region need more Sustainable Communities?



Q: Do you think that the region of the county in which you live needs more sustainable communities?

# Economic Messages

## % Agree

- 84%** Our country is too dependent on oil. We need to change that.
- 82%** Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much.
- 82%** Rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.
- 75%** Infrastructure spending on roads, trains, and buses create jobs and help the economy get stronger.
- 66%** We need to rethink the way we develop housing and transportation in this region. The way we have been doing it isn't working for most people.
- 58%** I believe that economic growth and environmental quality are interconnected goals. We can't have one without the other.
- 58%** Housing and transportation are in the infrastructure category that makes up 35% of the US economic base. We can't fix our economy unless we fix our housing and transportation problems first.

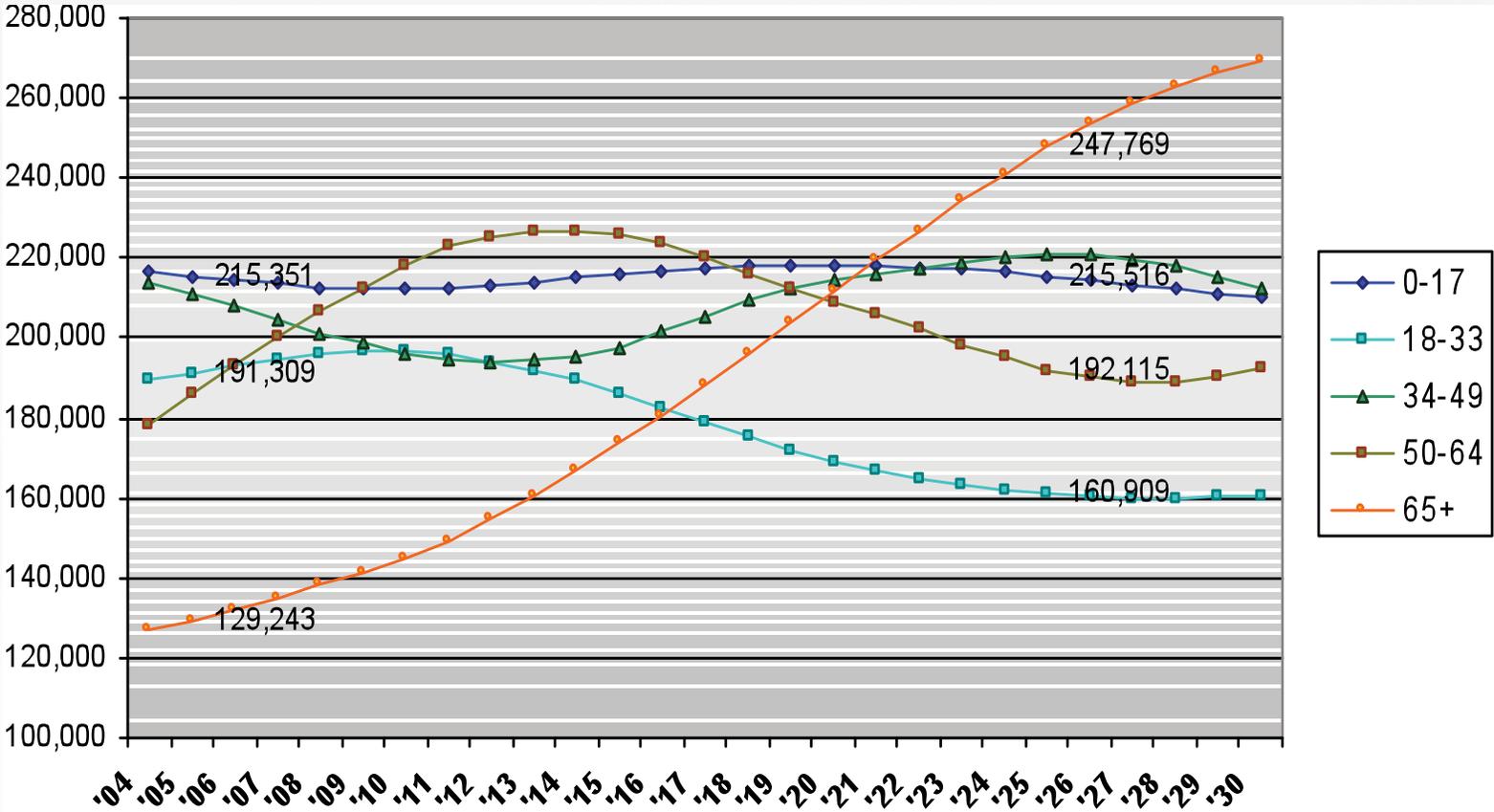
# Issues in rural/small town communities



# The state we live in



# Demographics



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005

Graph courtesy of Dr. Larry Swanson, O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West, U. of Montana

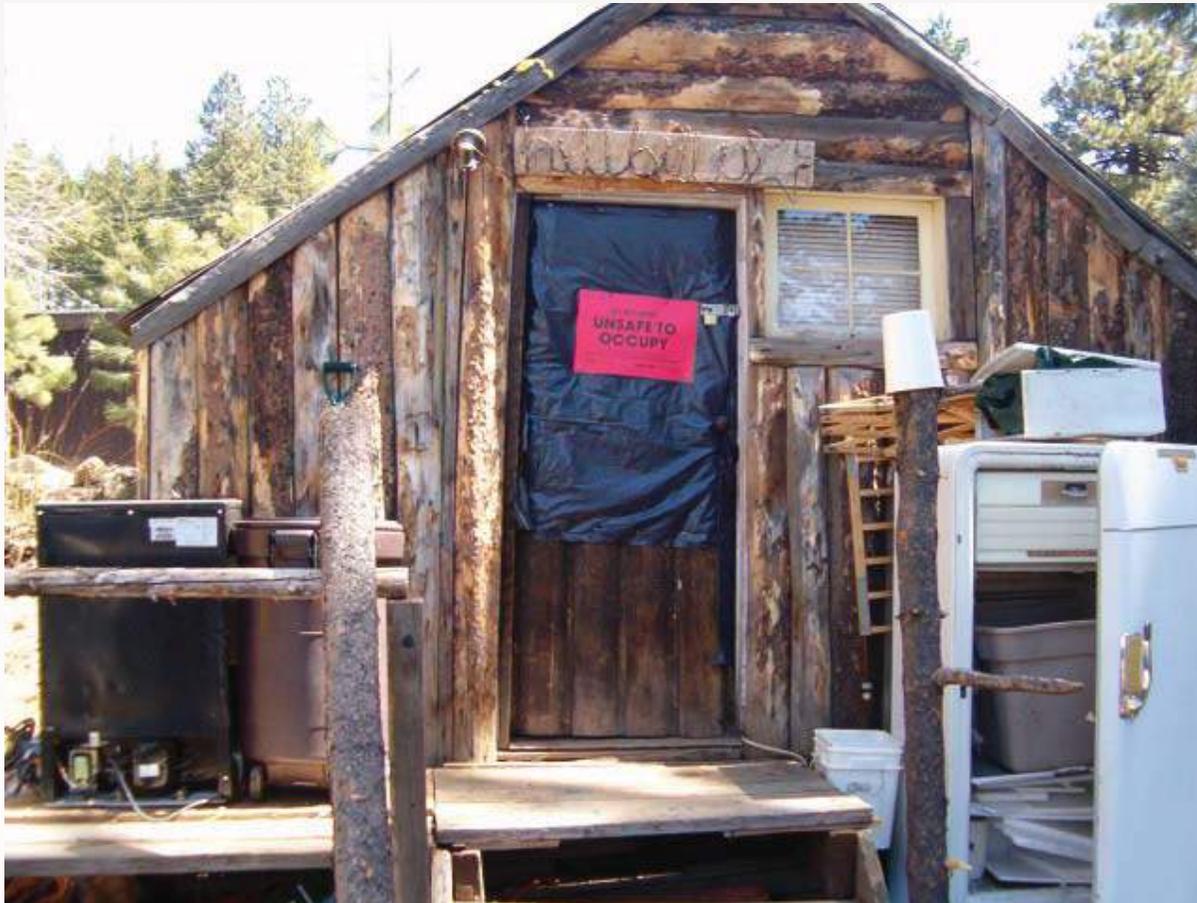
# Urban levels of traffic



# Transportation choice



# Housing for workers



# Housing for families



# Infrastructure capacity



# Environmental issues



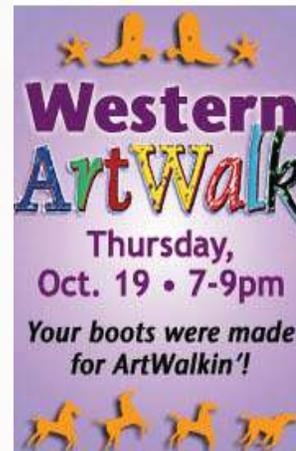
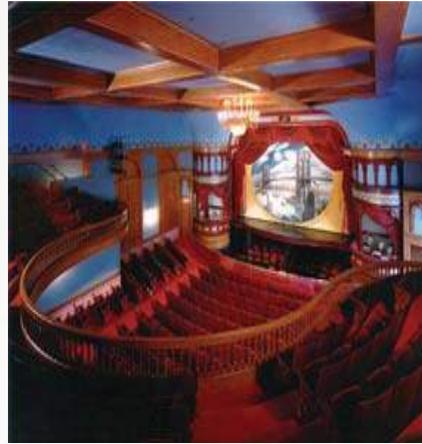
# Economic viability of downtown



# Workforce development



# A vibrant cultural community



# Lifelong learning and civic involvement



# Remember why you live here...



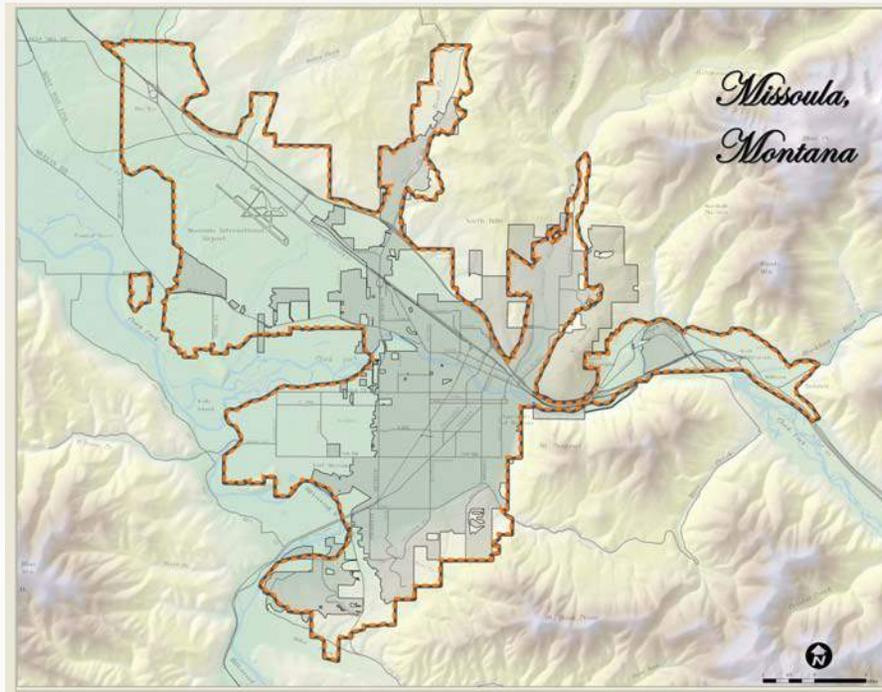
The best way to predict the future  
is to invent it.

- Immanuel Kant

# Leveraging smart growth concepts



# Missoula Urban Fringe Development Area Project



*Planning for  
about 15,000  
new  
households  
over the next  
20 years*

### Building Permit Activity

	<b>Building Permit Report (Units)</b>			
	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>Multi-Family</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>FY2001</b>	285	22	260	<b>567</b>
<b>FY2002</b>	365	38	297	<b>700</b>
<b>FY2003</b>	419	130	981	<b>1,530</b>
<b>FY2004</b>	367	32	327	<b>726</b>
<b>FY2005</b>	457	28	166	<b>651</b>
<b>FY2006</b>	374	32	47	<b>453</b>
<b>FY2007</b>	303	28	125	<b>456</b>
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>2,570</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>2,203</b>	<b>5,083</b>
<b>Average/year</b>				<b>726 Units</b>

FY Runs from 7/1-6/30

Based on City of Missoula Building Permit Data

Date: 12/05/2007

20 years of new development x 726 dwelling units/year = **14,520 units**

# Information and Outreach

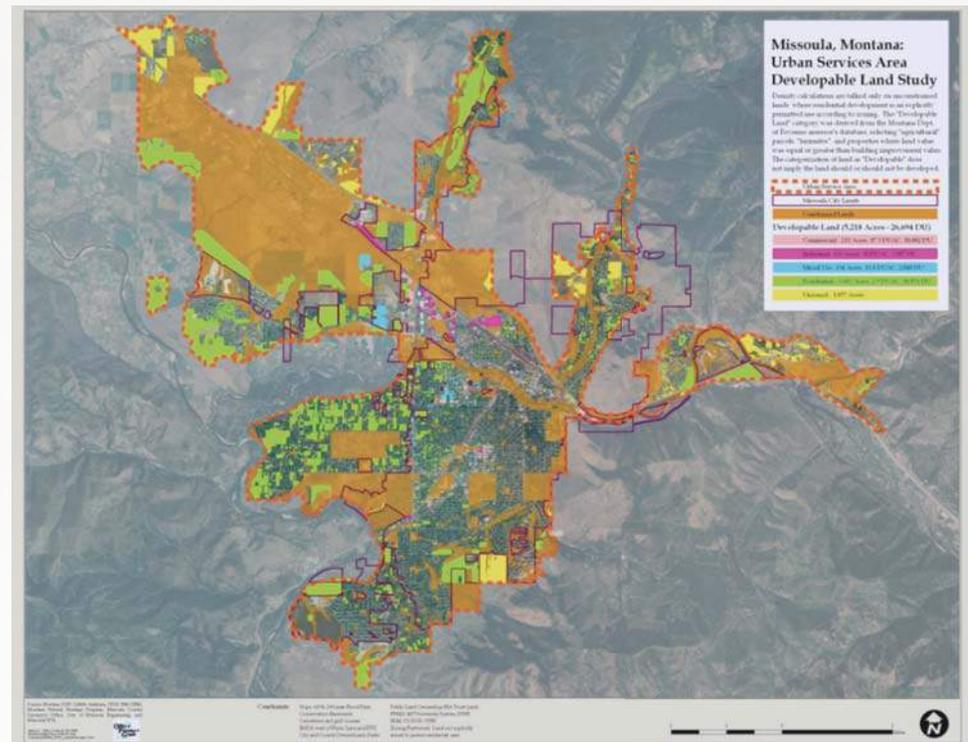
- Three cycles of meetings
- 70+ presentations, including:
  - BCC/Mayor/Council
  - Planning Board
  - Community Forum, Neighborhood Councils, Community Councils/County neighborhoods
  - Business/Economic Development groups
  - Service clubs
  - General public meetings
- Public Hearings
- Website and media



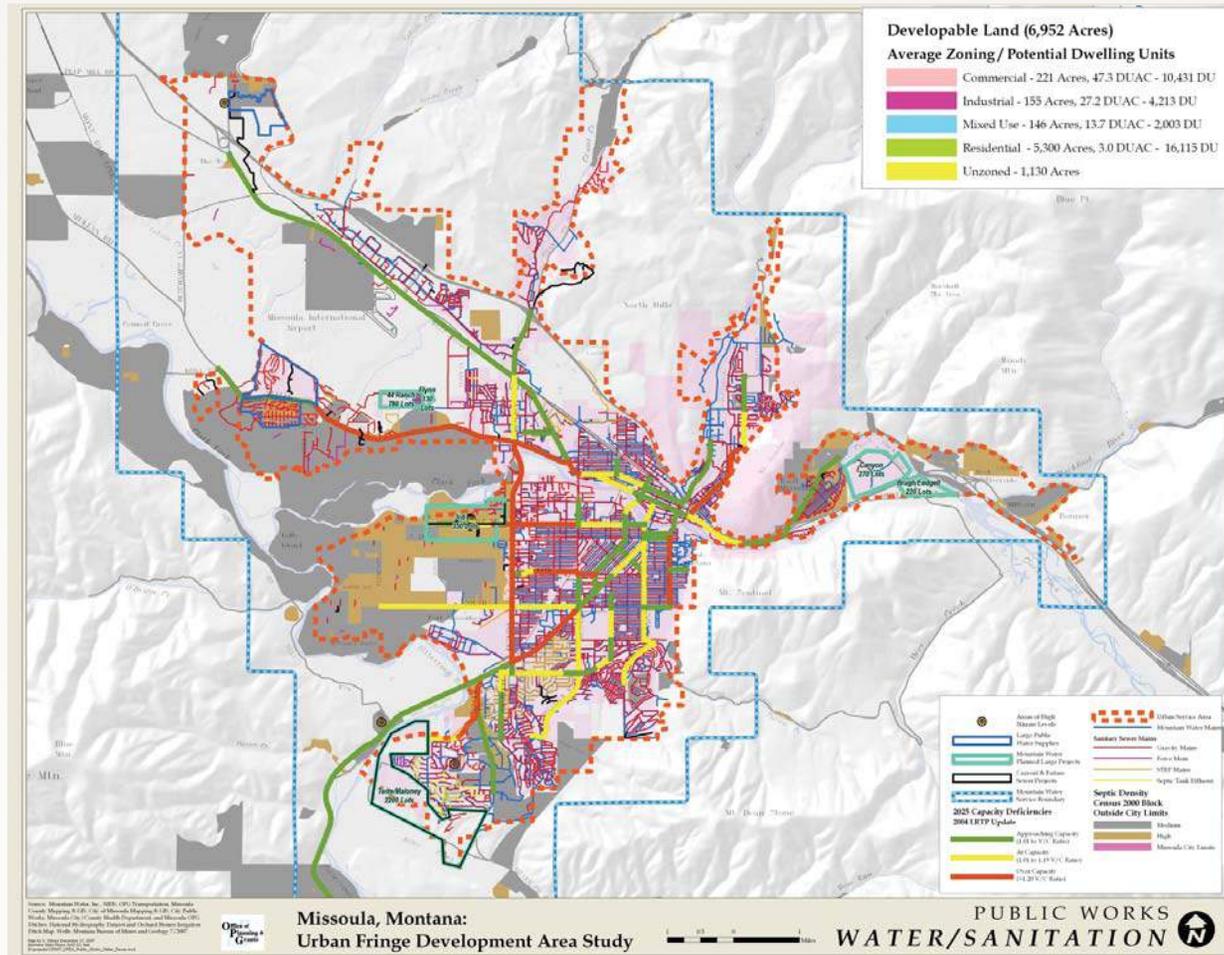
Bozeman, MT

# Supply of developable urban lands

- Developable Land – 5,218 Acres
- Zoned – 26,694 dwelling units
- Unzoned – 3,641 dwelling units

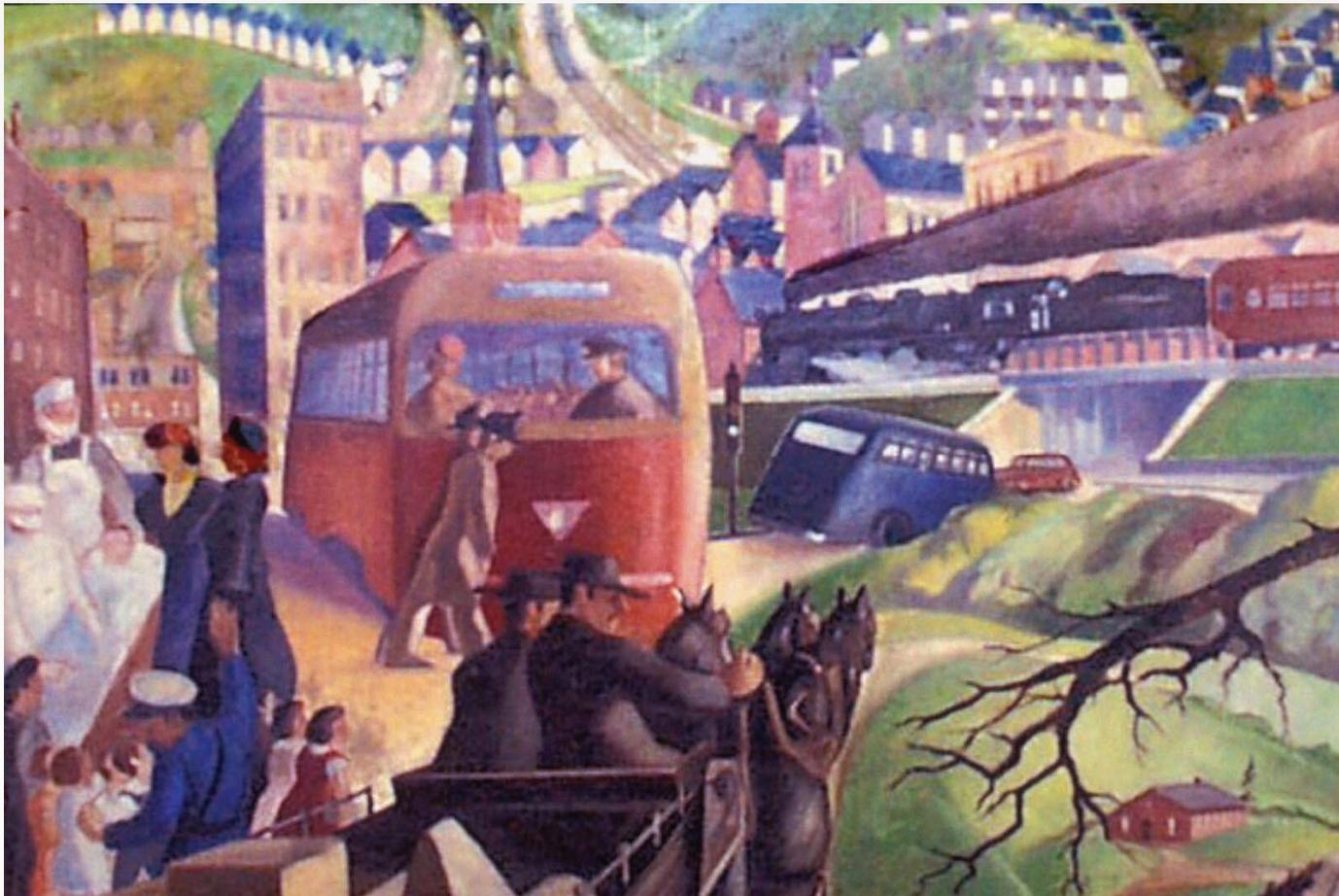


# Infrastructure



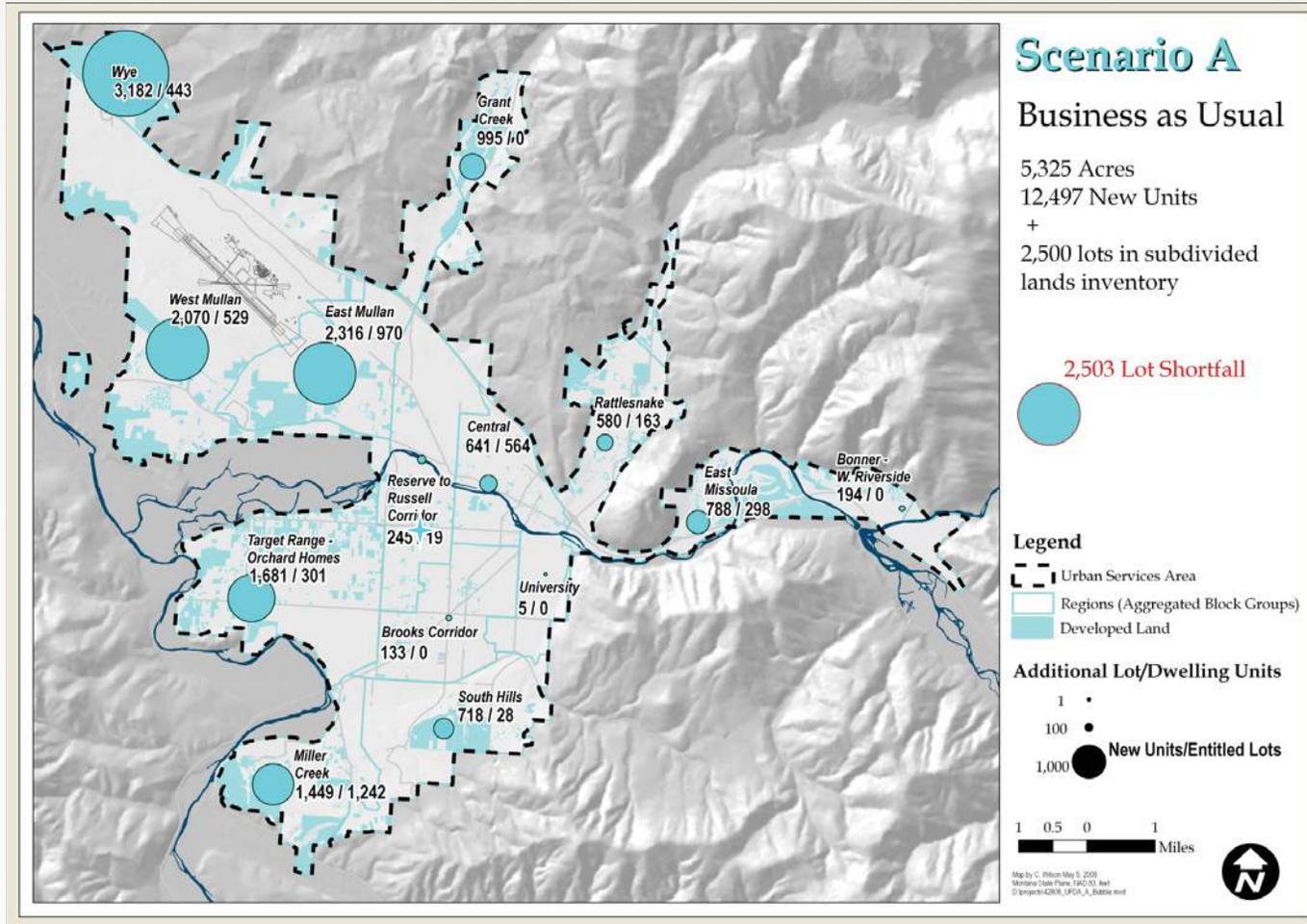


# Scenario development

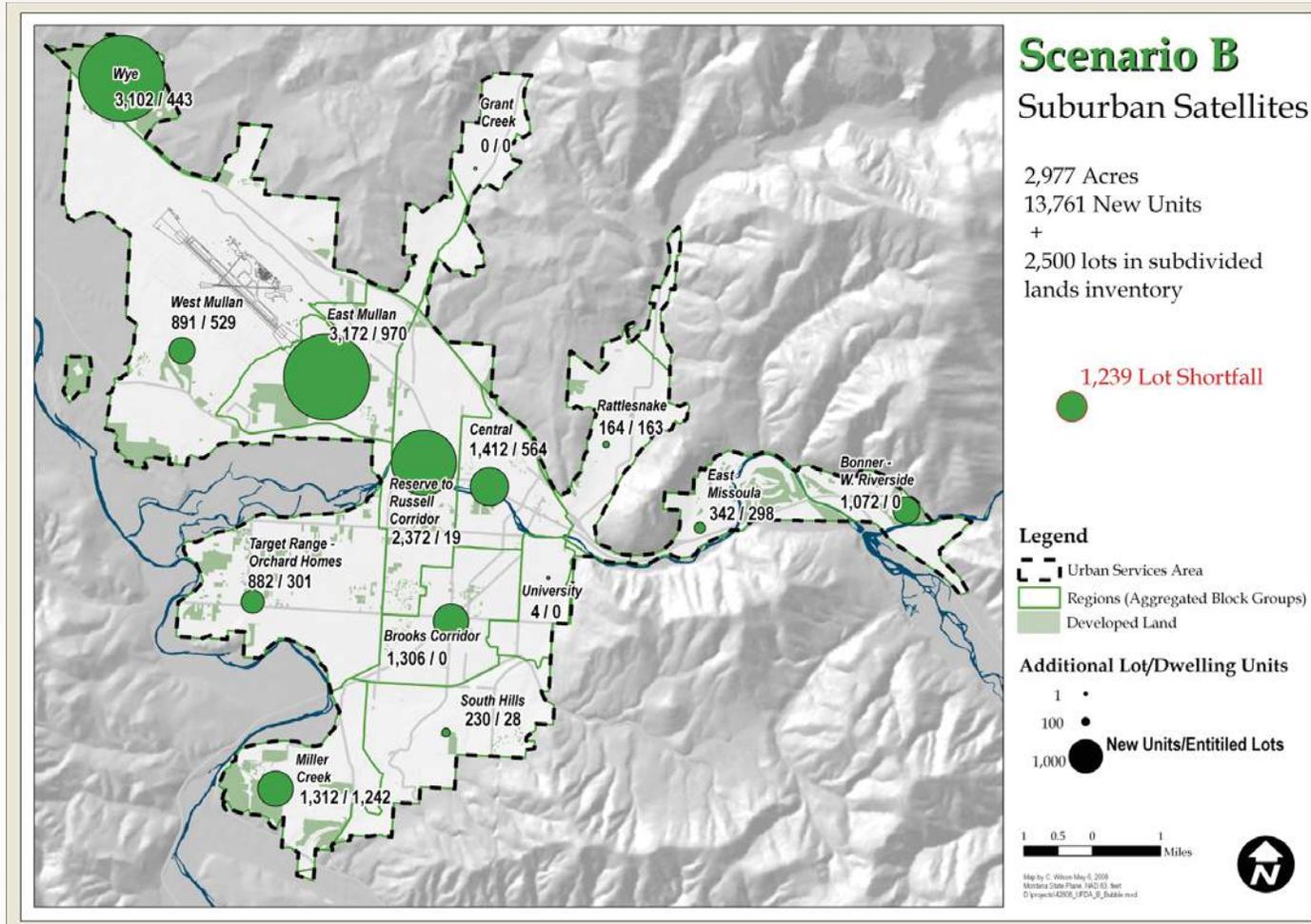


Wilkesburg, PA

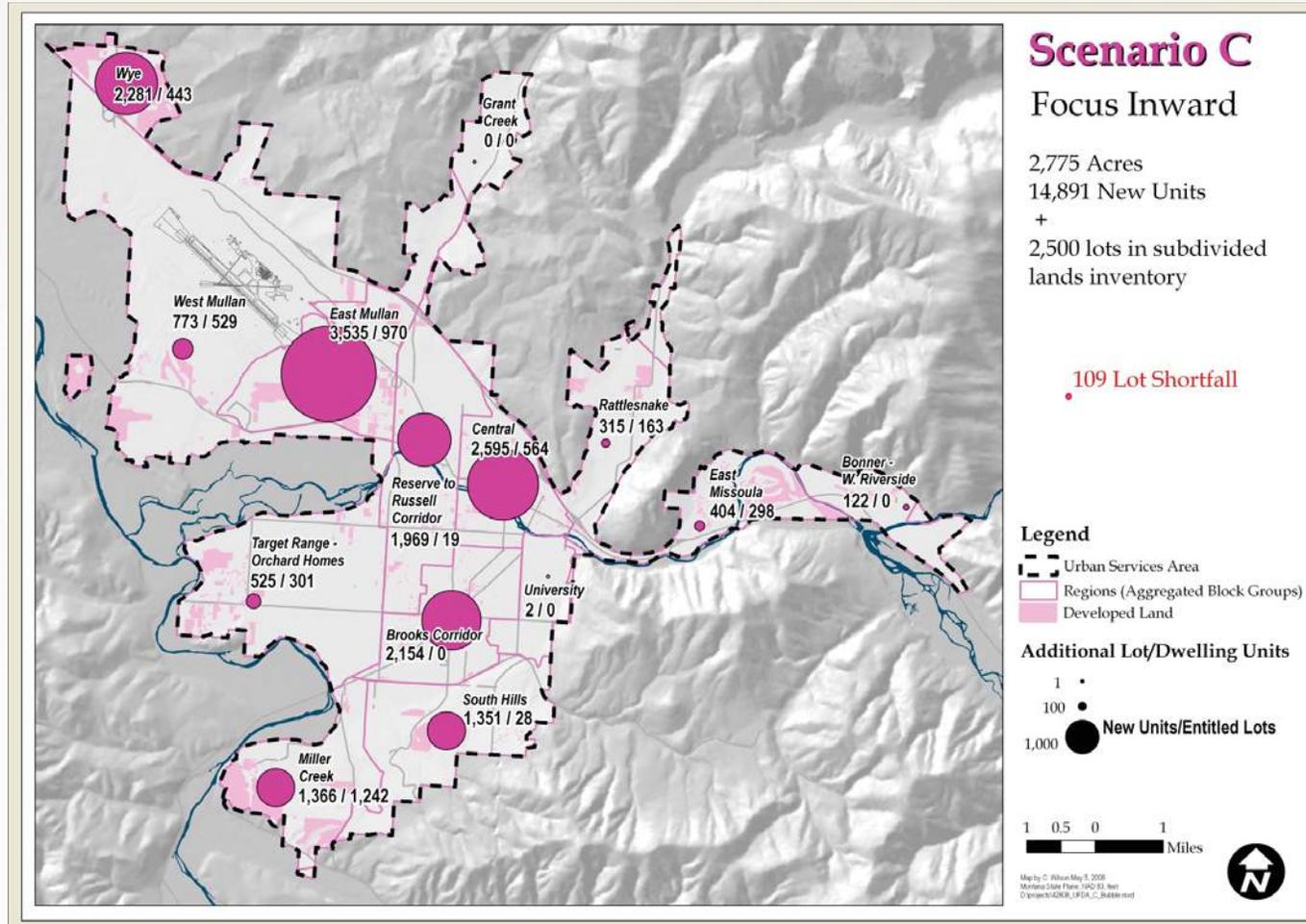
# Scenario A



# Scenario B



# Scenario C



# Suitability Analysis

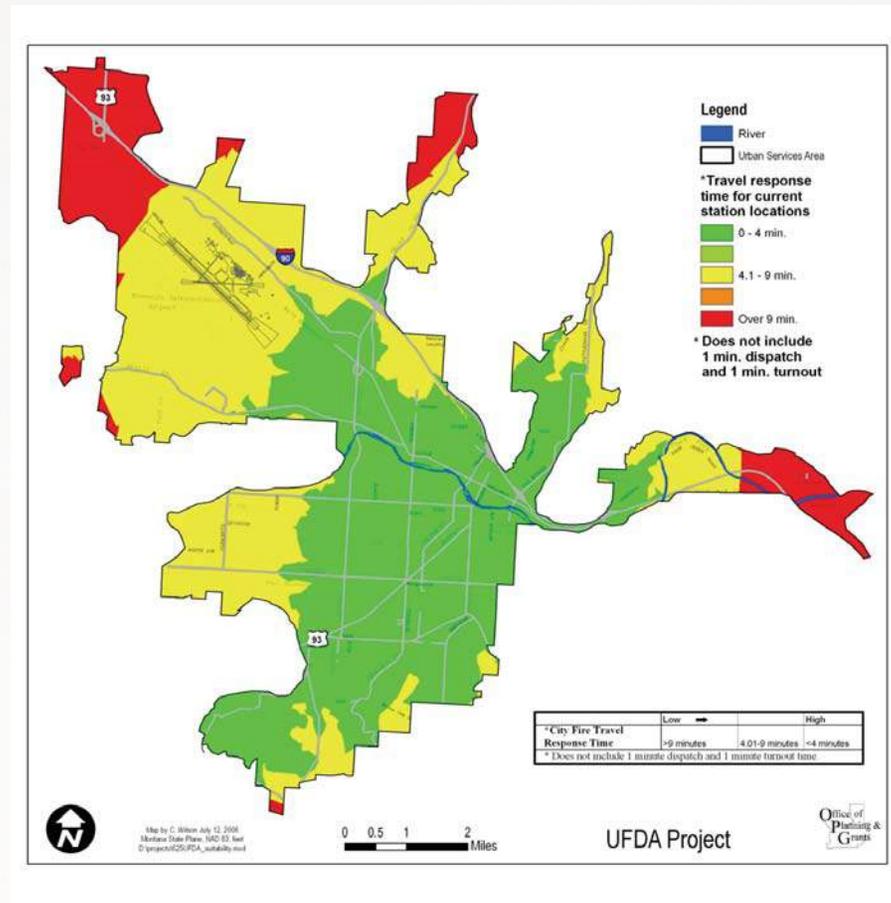


Photo by Linda Thompson/Missoulia

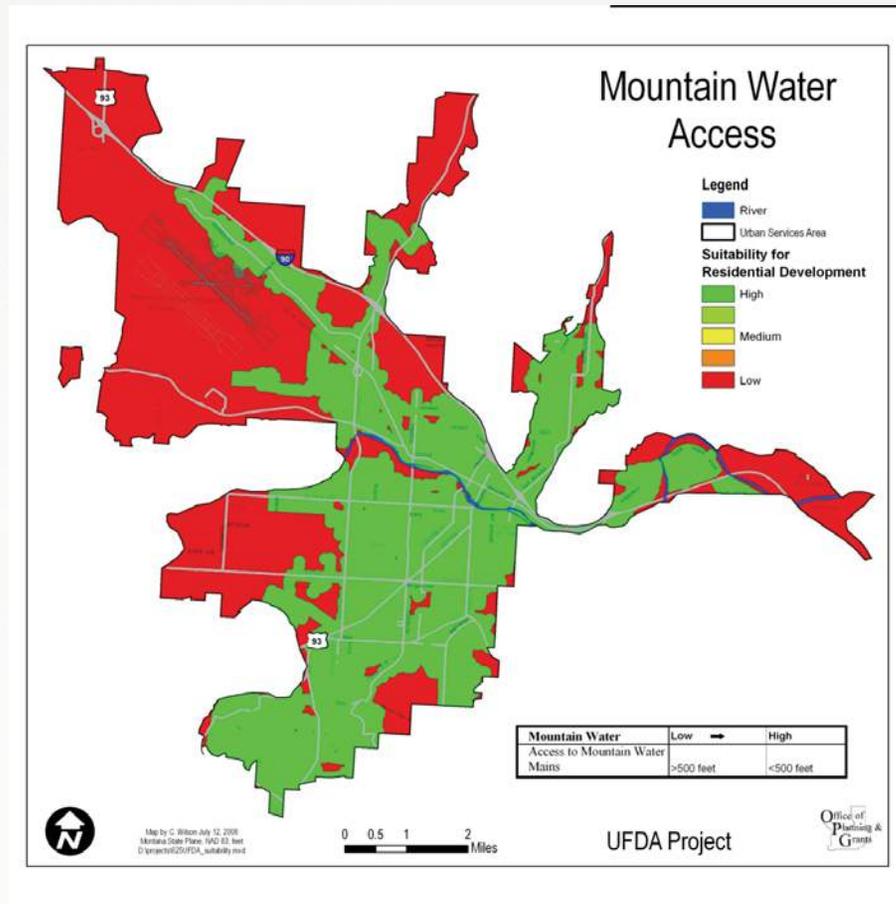
# Suitability Analysis

- GIS tool to assess the lands inside the Urban Services Area as to their relative suitability for residential development.
- Suitability can be defined in terms of:
  - physical and cultural limitations of the land and public services
  - community goals as expressed in the Growth Policy

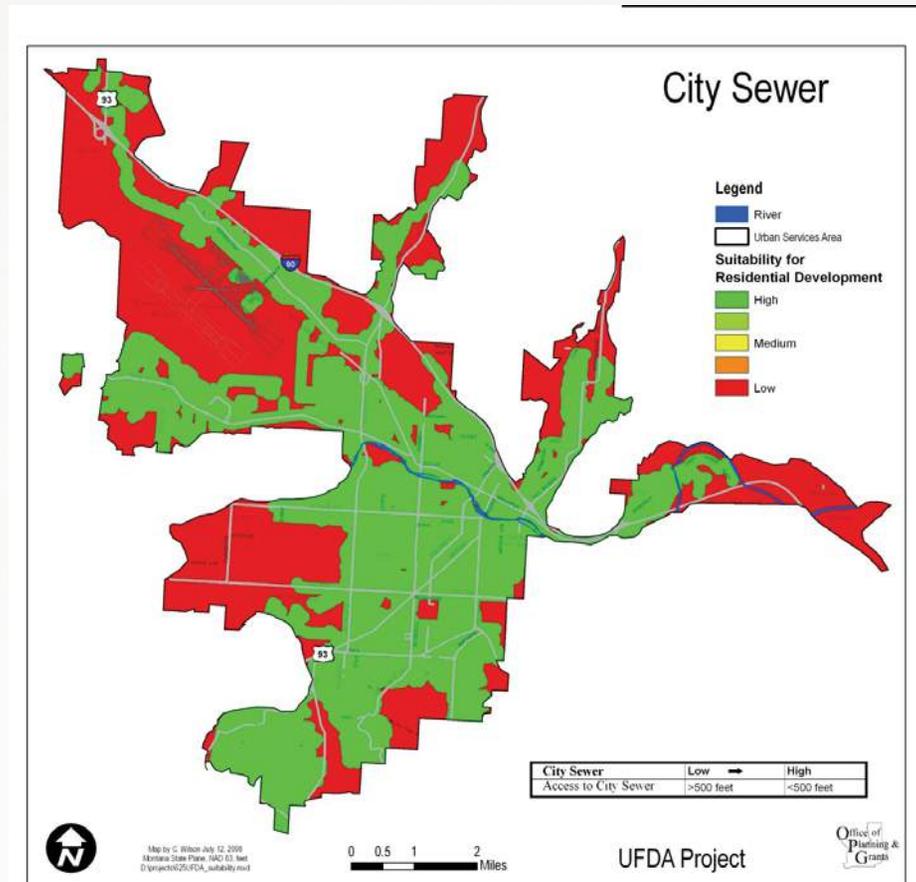
# City Fire travel response time



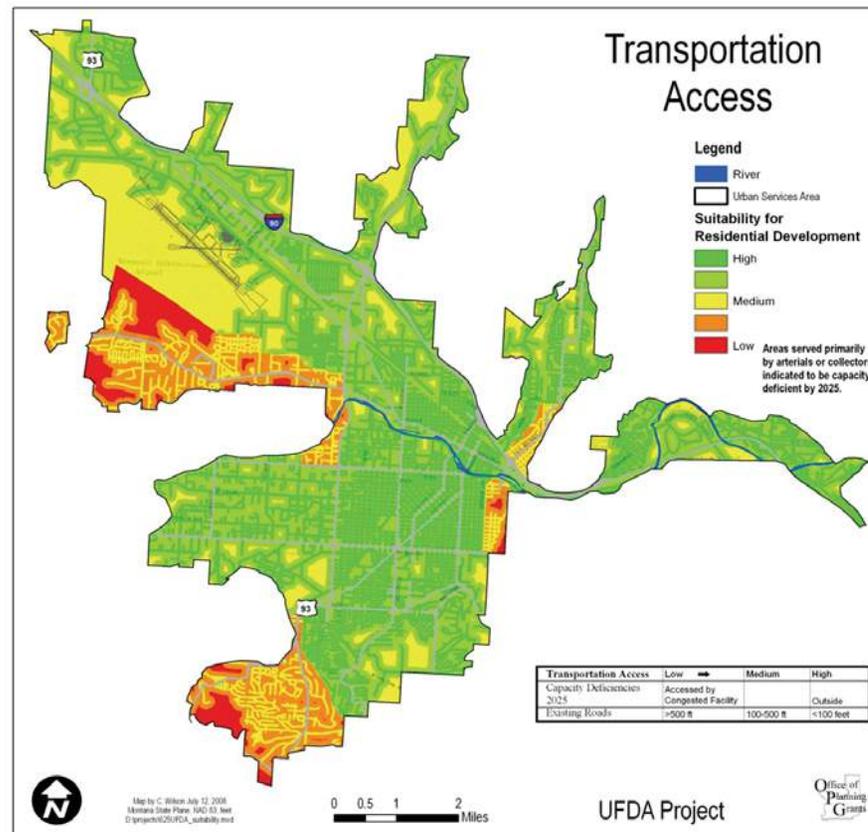
# Access to Mountain Water lines



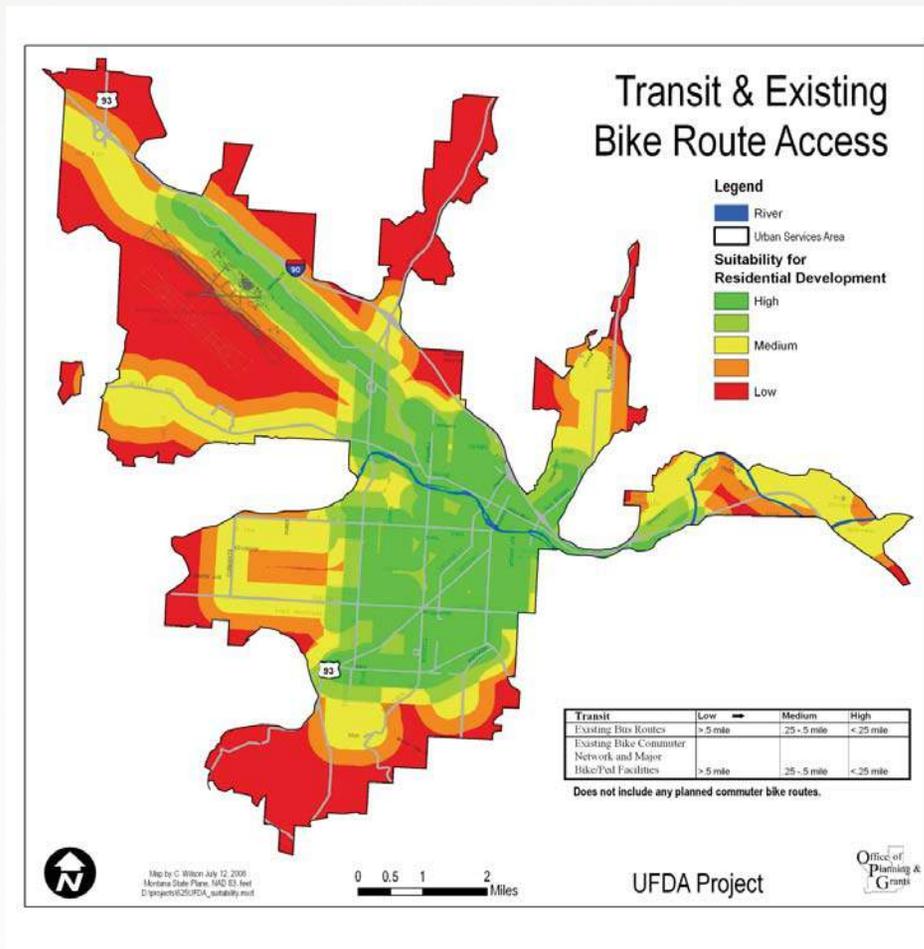
# Access to City sewer



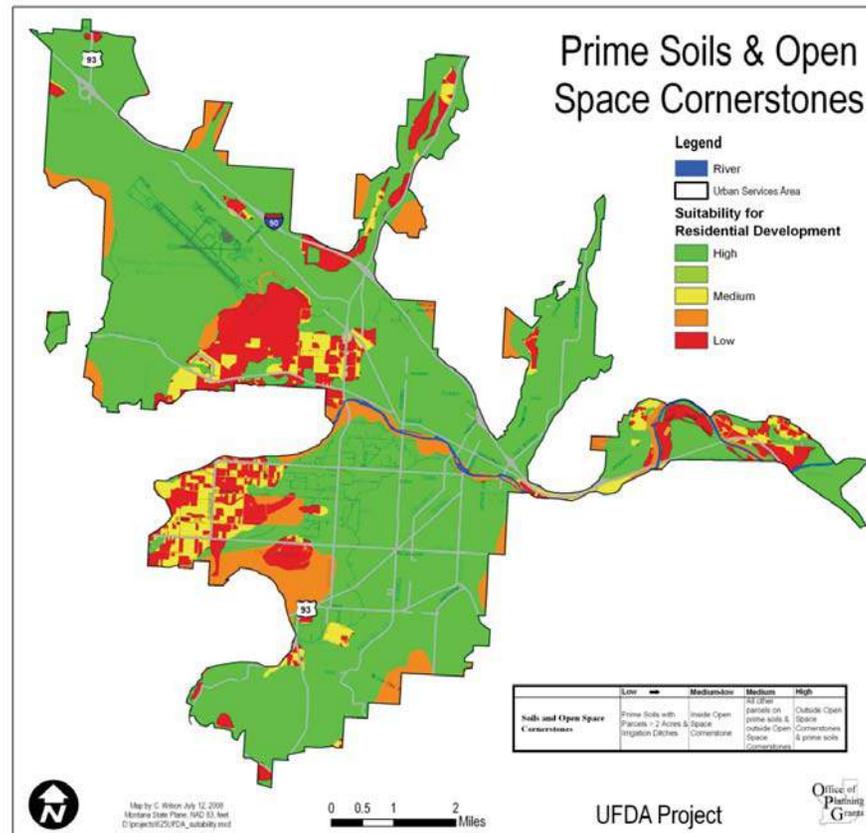
# Access to roads



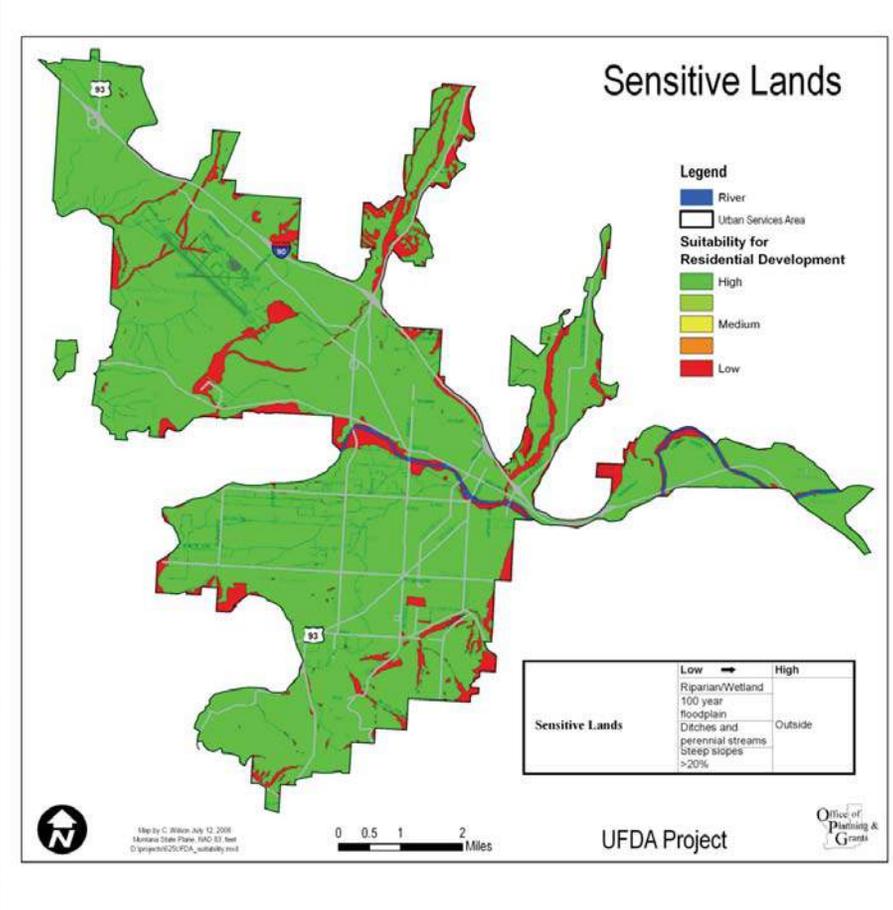
# Access to transit and bike routes



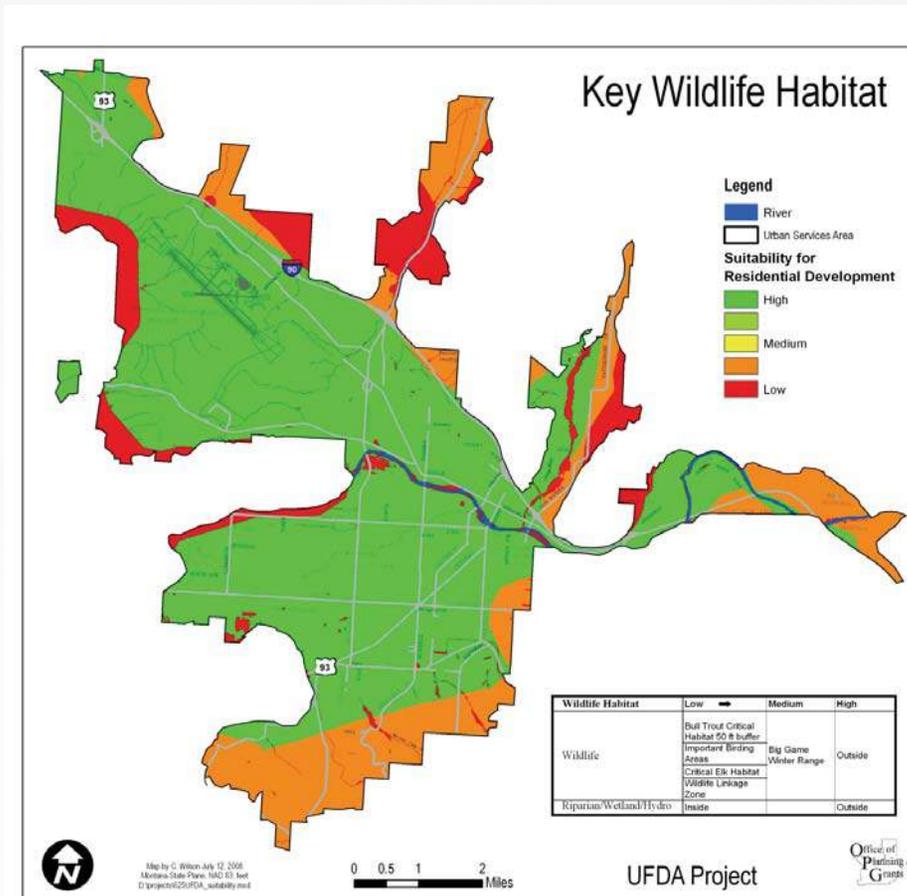
# Prime soils and open space cornerstones



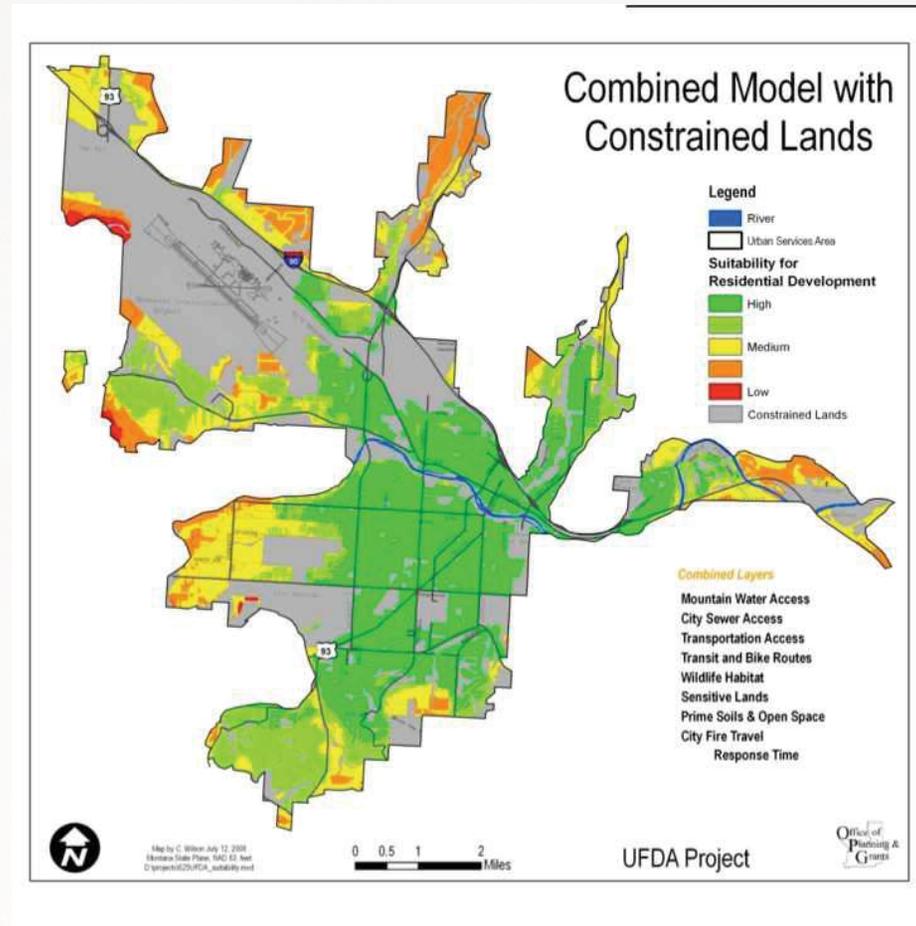
# Sensitive lands



# Key wildlife habitat

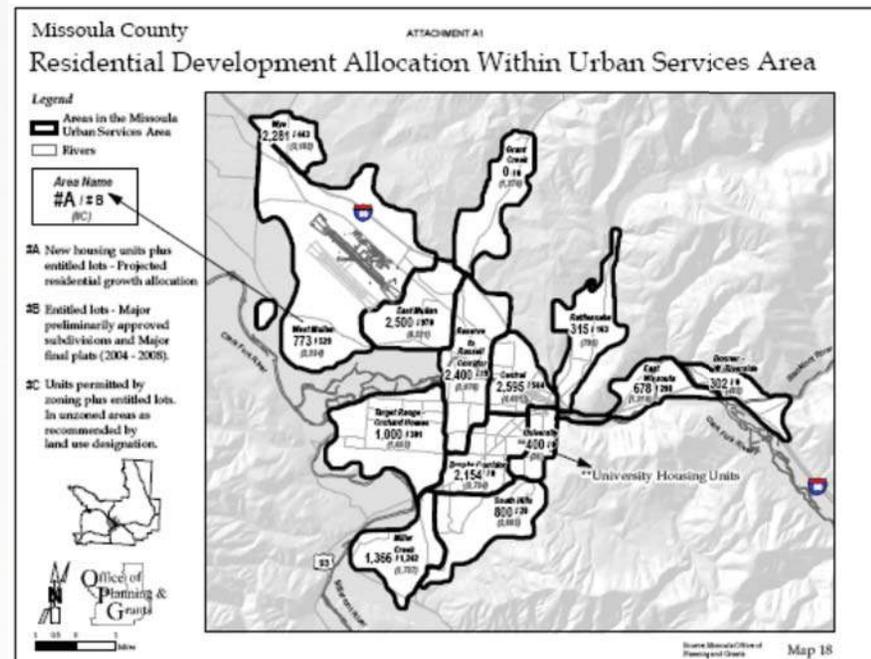


# Combined model with constrained land



# Residential Allocation Map

- Annexation and zoning decision
- Infrastructure investment
- Neighborhood planning



# McCall, Idaho

- A community of 3,700 people
- Boise metropolitan area, approximately 100 miles to the south
- A 5,500 acre alpine lake
- Three ski mountains and a lift served tubing hill
- Ponderosa State Park
- Established downtown
- Established second home community
- Airport with capacity for expansion
- Physical and civic infrastructure and a city government staffed to manage change
- [www.mccall.id.us](http://www.mccall.id.us)



# Zoning and subdivision ordinances

- Project commenced in late 2000
- Public review draft – July 2005
- Rewrite advisory committee – July-August 2005
- Commission adoption draft – October 2005
- City and County Planning & Zoning Commission recommendation for adoption – December 2005
- City Council adoption – February 23, 2006
- County Commission adoption – March 27, 2006



# Regional competitiveness

- Professional offices not permitted on ground floors fronting the street in the CBD
- Ten percent formula restaurant cap
- Ten percent formula retail cap
- 40,000 SF max building footprint
- 100,000 SF max shopping center square footage
- Drive-ups prohibited in CBD



# Dark sky

- New code in response to citizen input
- Protect and promote the public health, safety and welfare, the quality of life, and the ability to view the night sky, by establishing regulations and a process for review of exterior lighting.
- Three years to commercial compliance
- Twelve months to residential, institutional compliance



# Design review



- Process for using *Design Guidelines*
- The *City of McCall Design Guidelines* is a separate document
- Design review approval required for just about everything except a single family home less than 3,500 square feet that is not in the Scenic route or Shoreline zones
- Subdivisions with design review procedures approved by the City would be exempt from this requirement

# Affordable Housing Incentives in Zoning Ordinance

- R-16 Zone District
- 60 dwelling units/acre in CBD
- 40 dwelling units/acre in CC
- New NC zone
- Residential development in commercial zones only as a part of mixed use project

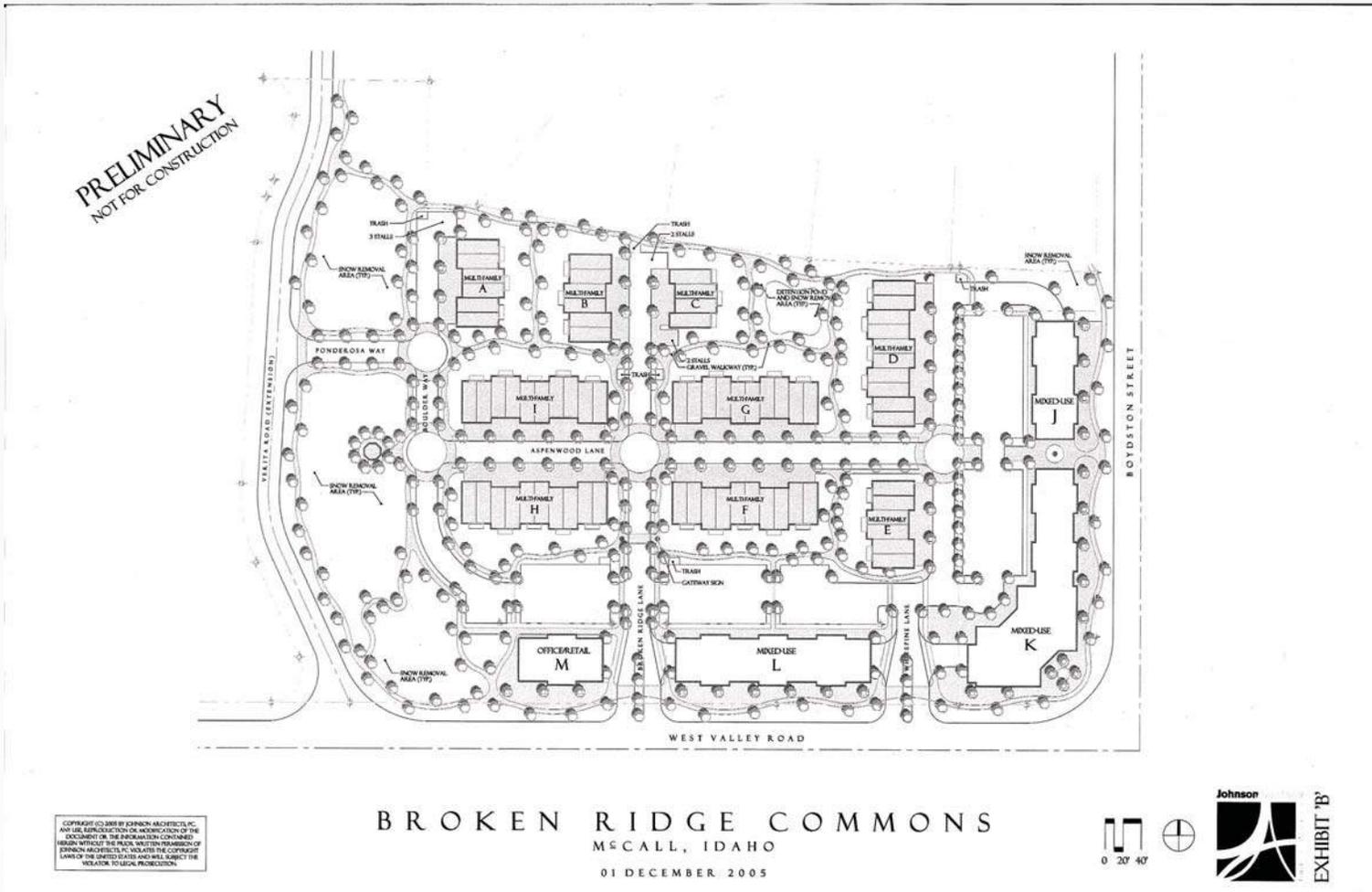


# EPA smart growth grant



- Grant award – July 2005
- Workshops – October 2005
- Comprehensive plan amendment recommended by P&Z – January 2006
- Comprehensive Plan Amendment adopted February 9, 2006

# Results



# Results



**Smart Growth America**  
Making Neighborhoods Great Together

# Lessons learned



- Seize the day
- Communicate
- Share
- Leverage
- KISS

We have the freedom to make informed, humane, and intelligent choices about the kind of world we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We also have the freedom to make uninformed, selfish, and stupid choices. Which will it be? - Greg Pahl

