

# APPENDIX C

## Committee Meetings and Open House Meetings

# PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

MEETING WITH PLANNING BOARDS AND GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEES  
FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

Wednesday, April 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in Conrad Public Library

## Meeting Summary

### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members: Chris Berg, LeAnn Hermance, Paul Kronebusch\*, Dan Picard, Cheryl Curry, Kenneth Wheeler, Sr.\*
- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members: Karla Breeding\*+, Judy Ellis+, Laurie Eisenzimer+, Debbie Wilcox, Chris Berg+
- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members: Leo Malinak, Kurt Christiaens
- Others: Sandy Broesder (County Commissioner, County Planning Board), Ralph Caputo (Conrad Planning Board), Wendy Judisch (Conrad Planning Board), Corinne Rose (County Sanitarian), Jim Yeagley (County Contract Planner)
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt, Ken Markert

\* Also on Pondera County Planning Board

+ Also on Conrad Planning Board

### Meeting Purpose:

Introduce Consulting Team; Board/Committee member expectations; Review Project Approach and Schedule; Decisions on Logistics

### Discussion:

- Responses to the question: "What are your expectations for this growth policy?"
  - Need a workable tool, something that can be implemented
  - Address septic issues; where to put waste from septic pumping
  - More industry and jobs
  - Build on local natural resources to strengthen economy

- Clarify floodplain
  - Need adequate water, sewer
  - Help with tough choices for the future
  - Planning to keep industry and housing and increase both and to improve local infrastructure
  - Growth policy should be made available to economic interests (prospects?) to promote local economy
  - Clarify planning and promote the local economy
  - Make us more competitive in grants
  - Vision for the area
- Cossitt reviewed the overall approach to the growth policy and passed out draft outlines. There will be 8 meetings with the Growth Policy Committees over the course of 12 months. In the first few months, the consultant team will present background inventory information. After that the committee will work on goals and objectives. There will be two public meetings: one in the middle of the project and another when the growth policy is near completion. The Growth Policy Committees will finalize the draft with consideration for public comments received, and then make their recommendation to the Planning Boards. The Planning Boards will hold a public hearing before making their recommendation to the County Commissioners and Mayors of Conrad and Valier.

#### **Decisions and Follow-Up:**

- The Pondera County and Conrad Planning Boards have authorized the Growth Policy Committees to prepare the Growth Policy and submit to the Planning Boards.
- Valier will be appointing a Planning Board soon, hopefully with the same membership as the current Growth Policy Committee.
- There will be three separate growth policies – one for the county, one for Conrad, and one for Valier. The “background inventory” will be prepared as a single document for all three jurisdictions and be incorporated by reference into each separate growth policy.
- Committee members directed the consultant team to prepare a survey for the county. The previous county survey had poor response. Ken Markert will prepare a written plan for the survey (e.g., type, process, etc) and submit to the committees. Target timeframe for the survey is between the first and second public meetings.
- Committee members accepted the proposed Committee Charter with no changes. The Charter is the basis for how the Growth Policy Committees will operate.
- Cossitt will check schedules and get back with proposed meeting dates and times. The next will be in June. Committee members agreed that last Wednesday of the month works, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Conrad library.

- Submit news articles on this effort (to be prepared by consultant team) to Cheryl Curry who will submit them to the papers in Conrad, Valier, and Great Falls and to the radio stations (as announcements as relevant).
- Cheryl Curry is the spokesperson for all Growth Policy Committees.

# PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

## MEETING WITH GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEES FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

Wednesday, June 30, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in Conrad Public Library

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Cheryl Curry, LeAnn Hermance, Ron Jones, Ali Newkirk
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Trina Jo Bradley, Chuck DeBoo, Mark Grubb, Jack Holden, Ken Johnson, Paul Johnson, Aaron Jones, Paul Kronebusch, Dan Picard, John Shevlin, Kenneth Wheeler Sr.
- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Karla Breeding\*+, Laurie Eisenzimer+, Debbie Wilcox
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Judy Ellis, Barbara Shepard
- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: None
  - Not Attending: Rod Christiaens, Kurt Christiaens, Jack Holden, Diana Ketcheson, John Majerus, Leo Malinak, Jerry Sullivan
- Others: None
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

\* Also on Pondera County Planning Board

+ Also on Conrad Planning Board

#### Meeting Purpose:

Work on vision statements for each jurisdiction. Review inventory information to date.

#### 1. Follow-up to First Meeting

Anne Cossitt reported that since the last meeting, the consultants had spent most of their time working on background inventory information and maps. To date, three reports have been submitted: 1) Population, 2) Natural Resources, and 3) Public Facilities (Infrastructure).

## 2. Vision Statement

In response to the questions, “What makes this place special?” and “What would you want to retain into the future for Conrad, Valier, and Pondera County?”, Growth Policy Committee members responded with the following:

### Conrad

- Well laid-out, clean town
- Well-maintained and pride of ownership
- Sense of community – people take care of each other
- Small town atmosphere
- Safe
- Lots for kids to do
- Good Housing
- Centrally located – 1 hour to Glacier National Park, 50 minutes to Great Falls, 1.5 hours to Showdown Ski Area
- New gym, new auditorium in high school
- New shooting range facility
- Great 9-Hole golf course
- New community center

### Valier

- “Valier has Everything”
- Valier really has a lot for a town of 500 people—the lake, grocery store, regional newspaper, regional employer (engineering firm)
- Good schools
- Medical clinic

### Dupuyer

- Community Hall—and wonderful annual play
- Gateway to the Boone and Crocket Club’s Elmer Rasmussen Education Center (the education center is in Teton County, just over the county line about .5 mile, but the way to get there is via Dupuyer

### Brady

- Nice school in Brady sitting empty—community wants to do something with that school – academy? Extended care?
- Sees a role as a commuter community for Great Falls – only about 35 minutes from Great Falls – has small town atmosphere --- issue is there isn't much available housing

### Pondera County (general)

- Family, Friends, Community
- Beautiful nature, open space, Big Sky Country
- Best resource is our people
- Rural lifestyle
- Fishing and Hunting
- Quality Schools
- Good Housing

## **3. Inventory**

Anne Cossitt reviewed key points of each of the inventory reports with a power point presentation and with maps. Discussion points raised by Growth Policy Committee members are included below each topic.

### Population

- Most people in the county are residents for purposes of the census—e.g., list this as their primary residence, but in fact many people in the county actually go south for the winter, so they aren't necessarily permanent year-round residents
- Older people may stay in their own homes longer in Valier because there is no senior living center in the town. So if they want to stay in their community, they have to stay in their own homes.
- People come to Pondera County because it's known to be an easy place to collect welfare and to find cheap housing.
- Where possible, distinguish Heart Butte from the rest of the county's unincorporated areas. Heart Butte statistics are so different from the rest of the county, they skew results. Same may also be true for the colonies, which also tend to have more young children than the rest of the unincorporated areas of the county.

- Why no statistics for Dupyer and Brady? Brady and Dupuyer do not have separate statistics (like Conrad, Valier, and Heart Butte) because they are not incorporated municipalities nor a “census designated place.” Heart Butte is a census designated place.
- Dupuyer is not really growing.
- Valier—out-of-county ownership there more than anywhere because of Lake?

#### Natural Resources

- Ground water is good in some places – closer to front range—e.g., Dupuyer.
- Discussion of “Important Places” in the County:
  - Rocky Mountain view
  - Oil and Gas (but note that oil and gas and logging on federal forest system lands not allowed currently)
  - Water, Water!
  - “Rock City” north of Valier— sandstone formations
  - Lake Frances – huge recreation draw
  - Charlie Lincoln Ranch – FWP site recently acquired on both sides of Marias River
  - Fishing and Hunting—but maybe less so than before along front range - issue of grizzlies along fishing rivers near front range
  - Lewis and Clark site on Two Medicine river
  - Swift Dam – recreation

#### Public Facilities and Infrastructure

- MATL will NOT be completed in 2010; maybe it will get started this year. The sub-station is almost done.
- Key findings at front of this report were contradicted by information in the report that indicated there was capacity in water and sewer systems (or these were currently being expanded)
- Dupuyer- they tried at three different elections in 4 years to get a water and sewer system district. Failed by more votes each time. Concern is that water wells are shallow and therefore there is a greater potential for contamination from septic systems.
- It’ll be at least ten years before a water line connects to Brady—just no funding

#### **4. Wrap-up**

Those present discussed possible reasons for such poor attendance at the meeting and possible solutions (see follow-up notes).



**Decisions and Follow-Up:**

- Cheryl Curry will:
  - Check to see if the Pondera Port Authority can also “host” the Growth Policy website
  - Talk to John Shevlin to see if he can include information about upcoming Growth Policy meetings on his weekly radio show
  - Copy of growth policy work to date to the Health Fair later this summer/fall
  
- Anne will:
  - prepare a news release regarding this meeting and another for upcoming meeting
  - copy planning board members and elected officials regarding growth policy meetings and information
  - Get “review copies” of Growth Policy work to-date to city halls (Valier and Conrad) and to county court house. Purpose is to set it out as display copy on the counter so people can see how this is progressing.
  - Distinguish unincorporated areas of county separate from Heart Butte where possible.

## PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

MEETING WITH GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEES  
FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

Wednesday, July 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in Pondera County Court House

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Cheryl Curry, LeAnn Hermance, Ron Jones, Paul Kronebusch, Dan Picard, Kenneth Wheeler Sr.
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Trina Jo Bradley, Chuck DeBoo, Mark Grubb, Jack Holden, Ken Johnson, Paul Johnson, Aaron Jones, Ali Newkirk, John Shevlin,
- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Karla Breeding\*+, Laurie Eisenzimer+, Judy Ellis, Barbara Shephard
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Debbie Wilcox
- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: None
  - Not Attending: Rod Christiaens, Kurt Christiaens, Leo Malinak, Jerry Sullivan
- Others:
  - Valier: Cathy Brandvold, Judy King (Planning Board Members); Mayor McKenzie Graye
  - Pondera County: Commissioners Cynthia Johnson and Sandra Broesder
  - Kit Finlayson and Lois Miller
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

\* Also on Pondera County Planning Board

+ Also on Conrad Planning Board

#### Meeting Purpose:

Continue working on Growth Policies—prepare for public open houses, work on vision statements and draft goals for each jurisdiction, review background inventory

**5. Follow-up to First Meeting**

Pondera Port Authority is hosting the Growth Policy website. Cossitt Consulting is now sending notices of upcoming meetings to Growth Policy Steering Committee members, planning board, and city and county officials. Completed all portions of the inventory in draft format.

**6. Vision Statement**

Anne Cossitt presented draft vision statements for each jurisdiction, using information received at the June 30 steering committee meetings. Those present suggested several changes resulting in the vision statements below. Each vision statement is a work in progress at this time.

SUGGESTED PONDERA COUNTY VISION:

*Pondera County is ~~the undiscovered~~ a unique treasure of Montana. We value our family, friends, and community, hard-working agricultural background, small town rural lifestyle, and fishing and hunting. We embrace opportunities for economic development, diversity and better lives, respectful of the extraordinary natural and human resources of our county.*

SUGGESTED CONRAD VISION:

*Conrad is a vibrant city of families and neighbors, with a historic downtown and quiet neighborhoods that reflect pride of ownership and friendliness. Conrad is the ~~quiet, small town center jewel~~ of the Northern Montana Rocky Mountain Front, with plenty an abundance of activities, services, and amenities. Within a short drive, there is access to more urban activities right in town and diverse recreation. ~~and urban activities within a one-hour drive.~~*

SUGGESTED VALIER VISION:

Valier is the small town that has it all—lakefront recreation, camping, fishing, airport, mountain vistas, shopping, regional employers, quality schools, shady tree-lined family neighborhoods, and residents who care about each other and their town.

## 7. Inventory

Anne Cossitt briefly reviewed key points of each of the inventory reports for economy, public services, housing, agriculture, and land use with a power point presentation and with maps. Those present had some comments as noted below:

### Public Services:

- Take out the information on the high rate of accidental deaths in the county; it changes from year to year and it doesn't really belong under the discussion of public services.
- Take out the information on the empty school building in Brady – rephrase it as a building available for another use and put into the section on the economy

### Agriculture

- The numbers need to be updated with the newest report.

Housing - There is low income senior housing in Valier

## 8. Developing Broad Goals

Cossitt presented a one-page example of goals, and then asked those present what goals they wanted, resulting in the following list:

- Septic disposal issue in rural areas (county- Conrad)
- Protection of agricultural heritage and rights (county)
- Code of the West (county)
- Flood prone/ flood plain map (not Valier)
- Keep our young people in communities here- Come Home Pondera Program
- Valier- Expand opportunity at airport for private planes to bring in recreationists (town has airport zone)
- Expand tourism- something to draw people into town (entire county)
- Enhanced and expanded senior care opportunities (Valier) esp. long term (entire county)

- Need more moderate income housing- workforce housing (entire county)
- Address blighted homes and other buildings, inc commercial (entire county)
- Fire department needs- new buildings, equipment, ect.
- Emergency services- Volunteers and training
- Enhance internet and cell service countywide- cell service bad all over, internet good in Conrad, 3 Rivers has fiber optic cable in eastern part of county, Pondera county is under-served; Identify- map of existing
- Annexation policies
- Weeds
- Water discharge permits
- Medical marijuana (Valier, county)

## **9. Open Houses in Valier and Conrad**

County Commissioner Cynthia Johnson indicated that due to a late harvest, it would be better to shift the next meeting to a few weeks later. Cossitt will review schedule and get back to the committees. It was tentatively agreed that the meetings would either be September 21-22 or September 28-29.

Cossitt suggested that the first day the meeting be held in Valier, with a steering committee meeting from 5:30-7:00 p.m. and an open house from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The next day the meeting would be held in Conrad with the same schedule. Those present agreed generally to that concept.

Cossitt described the open house format. This is an informal gathering, not a public hearing. At each location there would be maps and materials for review. There will be two consultant team members at each meeting to answer specific questions and to make a short presentation. Steering committee members are asked to attend open houses and be available to discuss process and listen to comments.

## **10. Wrap-up**

### **Decisions and Follow-Up:**

- Cossitt will get back on dates for next meetings and open houses
- It was requested that the steering committee meetings be scheduled from 6:30-8:30, instead of 5:30 – 7:30 (exception is upcoming meetings scheduled to take place just before the open houses).



# **PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY**

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE  
FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

September 28, 2010 at Valier Civic Center

## **SUMMARY**

### **Attending:**

Mike Yakos

Ken Wheeler

Tom Hoover

Velda Loch

McKenzie Graye

Leo Malinak

Judy King

Cheryl Curry

Ron Jones

Ali Newkirk

**Open House Purpose and Format:**

The meetings are an opportunity for members of the public to learn more about the growth policies, ask questions, and provide comments and feedback. Exhibits, maps, and background information were on display and available for review and comment. Consulting Team Members Anne Cossitt and Ken Markert attended to explain materials and answer questions. Cossitt and Markert had a brief power point presentation explaining process. Handouts included a list of initial ideas about goals, which was also included space for comments that participants could return at the open house or send in later.

**Comments Received:**

- How would/should the town of Valier expand?
- The municipal boundaries do not currently include the area of the railroad, but what if in the future the railroad is abandoned? Should the town think about including the area of the railroad in the town limits?
- The land where the airport is now would be an excellent place for Valier to grow within its own boundaries. Since the land is adjacent to the lake, it would a prime location for other uses. There was discussion in the group present of the pros and cons of the airport existing location.
- A question was raised about the possibility of creating a HUB zone for industrial development near/adjacent to Valier.



## PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

MEETING WITH GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEES  
FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

Tuesday, September 28, 5:30 -7:00 p.m., in Valier Civic Center

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Cheryl Curry, Ron Jones, Ali Newkirk
  - Not Attending either in Valier on Tuesday- Sept 28 or Conrad Sep 29: Chris Berg, Trina Jo Bradley, Chuck DeBoo, Mark Grubb, Jack Holden, Ken Johnson, Paul Johnson, Aaron Jones, Paul Kronebusch, John Shevlin
- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: None in Valier
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Debbie Wilcox Karla Breeding\*<sup>+</sup>, Laurie Eisenzimer<sup>+</sup>, Judy Ellis, Barbara Shephard
- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: Judy King, Tom Hoover
  - Not Attending: Kurt Christiaens, Leo Malinak, Cathy Brandvold, Jeff Cleveland, Cary DeBoo, Renee Gabbard
- Others:
  - No Guests at the Steering Committee meeting
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt, Ken Markert

\* Also on Pondera County Planning Board

+ Also on Conrad Planning Board

#### Meeting Purpose:

Continue working on Growth Policies; review additional elements of the growth policy, refine initial broad goals.

### 11. Follow-up to July Meeting

Meeting for August was rescheduled to end of September per request at meeting in July. Since July, work has been focused on getting ready for the public open houses and other elements of the growth policy. Meeting summary of the July meeting was posted on the Port Authority website.

### 12. Survey Questionnaire

Ken Markert reviewed the process and schedule for the upcoming questionnaire. Steering committee members discussed what questions they wanted to see on the survey. Ken reviewed the nine questions he laid out as options, but indicated the Committee would need to narrow the list to 4 or 5 questions. Growth Policy Committee members concurred their preference was to include questions #4, 5, 7, 8, and 9 from the draft survey, along with #10 (which Ken encouraged should be used regardless because it is an open-ended question), and #1 (if there was room). It was suggested that some of the items for #3 could be moved to question #4 (e.g., recreation opportunities).

### 13. Other Elements of the Growth Policy

Anne Cossitt reviewed materials on two requirements for growth policies.

#### Fire/Wildland Fire requirements.

For fire/wildland fire, 76-3-601, MCA states that the growth policy will include:

An evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area, including whether or not there is a need to:

- Delineate the wildland-urban interface; and
- Adopt regulations requiring
  - Defensible space around structures
  - Adequate ingress and egress to and from structures and developments to facilitate fire suppression activities; and
  - Adequate water supply for fire protection

Pondera County has a Community Wildfire Protection Plan with a number of specific recommendations that address the Growth Policy requirements. Cossitt recommended that the jurisdictions implement the recommendations of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Requirements related to Subdivision Review. State law (76-3-601, MCA) requires the growth policy include:

A statement explaining how the governing bodies will:

- Define the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); (Note that these are the criteria used to determine the impact of subdivisions on agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, natural environment, wildlife, wildlife habitat, local services, and public health and safety) and
- Evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a);
- How public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.

Cossitt outlined several different options for the growth policy committee members. No decision was made on a specific recommendation. (Note that the following evening in Conrad, Cossitt indicated that a simple proposal would be to outline a process for “how” each of the subdivision pieces would be met. The growth policy could state that the planning board would consider the definitions and criteria in the model regulations that are available from the Montana Association of Counties, also any new model regulations that might come from the Montana Community Technical Assistance Program (in Dept of Commerce), and local experience in Pondera County. Cossitt indicated the county regulations already address public hearings, and she had only a few suggested changes (as noted in the handout).

#### **14. Refining Draft Goal Statements**

Committee ran out of time and did not discuss draft goal statements.

#### **15. Wrap-up and Next Steps**

It was suggested that annexation be a topic for the next steering committee meeting. It was also suggested that it was time for Valier’s Growth Policy Committee to meet on its own to address the specific needs of the town of Valier.



# PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

September 29, 2010 at Conrad High School Commons

## SUMMARY

### **Attending:**

Brian Fladstone

Judy Ketterling

Rick Moss

Mary Ann Ries

Bev Widhalm

Shane Sullivan

Harold D. Olson

Betty M. Olson

Ron Prewelt

Juanita Prewelt

Cathleen Reafferty

Jim Morren

Jim Miller

Lois Miller

Wendy Judisch

**Steering Committee Members Present:**

LeeAnn Hermance, Dan Picard, Karla Breeding, Barbara Shephard

**Open House Purpose and Format:**

The meetings are an opportunity for members of the public to learn more about the growth policies, ask questions, and provide comments and feedback. Exhibits, maps, and background information were on display and available for review and comment. Consulting Team Members Anne Cossitt and Ken Markert attended to explain materials and answer questions. Cossitt and Markert had a brief power point presentation explaining process. Handouts included a list of initial ideas about goals, which was also included space for comments that participants could return at the open house or send in later.

**Comments Received on Initial Goal topics (at meeting or on comment sheets):**

- There are a lot of veterans in this town – what can be done to assist veterans with disabilities, work for veterans and services for veterans?
- Need to address not just housing overall, but rental housing in this plan. There is a need for rentals for young families, elderly individuals, and low to middle-income families and individuals
- “More recycling – especially cardboard and plastics. There are multiple small initiatives in towns but nothing comprehensive. Surely there are grants we can pursue to support this. Additionally I think it’s important to find ways to attract and support/sustain new businesses in Conrad.
- “Code of the West” - need more information about what that is
- What is the medical marijuana issue?
- Something needs to be done to assist Brady

## PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

MEETING WITH GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEES  
FOR PONDERA COUNTY, CONRAD, AND VALIER

Wednesday, September 29, 5:30 -7:00 p.m., in Conrad High School Commons

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: LeeAnn Hermance, Dan Picard
  - Not Attending either in Valier on Tuesday- Sept 28 or Conrad – Sept 29: Chris Berg, Trina Jo Bradley, Chuck DeBoo, Mark Grubb, Jack Holden, Ken Johnson, Paul Johnson, Aaron Jones, Paul Kronebusch, John Shevlin
- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members
  - Attending: Karla Breeding\*+, Barbara Shephard
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Debbie Wilcox, Laurie Eisenzimer+, Judy Ellis
- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: Leo Malinak
  - Not Attending either in Valier or Conrad: Cathy Brandvold, Jeff Cleveland, Cary DeBoo, Renee Gabbard
- Others:
  - No Guests at the Steering Committee meeting
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt, Ken Markert

\* Also on Pondera County Planning Board

+ Also on Conrad Planning Board

#### Meeting Purpose:

Continue working on Growth Policies; review additional elements of the growth policy, refine initial broad goals.

#### 16. Follow-up to July Meeting

Meeting for August was rescheduled to end of September per request at meeting in July. Since July, work has been focused on getting ready for the public open houses and other elements of the growth policy. Meeting summary of the July meeting was posted on the Port Authority website.

## 17. Survey Questionnaire

Ken Markert reviewed the process and schedule for the upcoming questionnaire. Steering committee members discussed what questions they wanted to see on the survey. Ken reviewed the nine questions he laid out as options, but indicated the Committee would need to narrow the list to 4 or 5 questions. Growth Policy Committee members concurred their preference was to include questions #2, 4, 5, 7, and 9 from the draft survey, along with #10 (which Ken encouraged should be used regardless because it is an open-ended question). Dan Picard was going to talk to a few farmers/ranchers to see if there might be changes to the way #5 was worded. Those present agreed that "stream-side vegetation" item should be deleted from #5.

## 18. Other Elements of the Growth Policy

Anne Cossitt reviewed materials on two requirements for growth policies.

### Fire/Wildland Fire requirements.

For fire/wildland fire, 76-3-601, MCA states that the growth policy will include:

An evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area, including whether or not there is a need to:

- Delineate the wildland-urban interface; and
- Adopt regulations requiring
  - Defensible space around structures
  - Adequate ingress and egress to and from structures and developments to facilitate fire suppression activities; and
  - Adequate water supply for fire protection

Pondera County has a Community Wildfire Protection Plan with a number of specific recommendations that address the Growth Policy requirements. Cossitt recommended that the jurisdictions implement the recommendations of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.



Requirements related to Subdivision Review. State law (76-3-601, MCA requires the growth policy include:

A statement explaining how the governing bodies will:

- Define the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); (Note that these are the criteria used to determine the impact of subdivisions on agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, natural environment, wildlife, wildlife habitat, local services, and public health and safety) and
- Evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a);
- How public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.

Cossitt indicated that a simple proposal would be to outline a process for “how” each of the subdivision pieces would be met. The growth policy could state that the planning board would consider the definitions and criteria in the model regulations that are available from the Montana Association of Counties, also any new model regulations that might come from the Montana Community Technical Assistance Program (in Dept of Commerce), and local experience in Pondera County. Cossitt indicated the county regulations already address public hearings, and she had only a few suggested changes (as noted in the handout).

Those present agreed that the requirement for addressing subdivision would be best met by the process outlined by Cossitt.

#### **19. Refining Draft Goal Statements**

Committee ran out of time and did not discuss draft goal statements.

#### **20. Wrap-up and Next Steps**

Next meeting will be in November.

Committee requested more information on the International Fire Code.

VALIER GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Valier Civic Center

**Meeting Summary - DRAFT**

**Attending:**

- Valier Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: Cathy Brandvold, Jeff Cleveland, Renee Gabbard, Leo Malinak,
  - Not Attending: Cary DeBoo
- Others:
  - Mayor McKenzie Graye, Tom Hoover
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

**Meeting Purpose:**

Focus specifically on goals and land use for town of Valier. Also provide status report on overall project effort and schedule, etc.

**21. Follow-up to September Meeting**

Last meeting was in September and included a steering committee meeting and open house in Valier and another in Conrad. At the steering committee meeting in Valier, participants requested that the next round of steering committees be focused on each individual jurisdiction and that information on annexation be provided.

**22. Survey Questionnaire**

Surveys have gone out to a random sample of persons who own property in the unincorporated areas of Pondera County. The deadline for responses is in a few weeks and we should have results by the next open house.

**23. Summary of Annexation Process**

Anne Cossitt reviewed a two-page summary of the annexation process in Montana.

**24. Draft Future Land Use Maps for Valier**

Committee members discussed the alternative future land use maps for Valier –1) the “Compact Community Alternative” and 2) the “Expansive Community Alternative.” In the Compact Community Alternative, most development would occur at town densities and infill would be promoted before annexation or extension of city services. As the town fills in vacant lots, efforts would be made to re-locate the airport in the long-term (20 years or more) to provide for more residential building within city limits. In the Expansive Community Alternative, the airport would stay in city limits, development would outside of existing town limits in a sprawling rural residential pattern with lots varying in size from one acre or so to much larger. Participants selected the “Compact Community Alternative” with no changes.

## 25. Draft Broad Goal Statements

Participants discussed the following issues;

- Need to address vacant-abandoned derelict buildings –need to demolish or repair/upgrade
- Most sewer extensions will also require lift stations
- Desire to have businesses move in that would be clean industry and employ 25-50 persons
- High school is losing students; we need to do something to get families here to stay to keep school viable
- People are interested in moving to Valier as a bedroom community (to Shelby, Cutbank, Browning), but there are no rentals available—there is a market for duplexes, rentals

The following changes were suggested to the draft goals:

Goal A: Economy – add discussion in strategies that includes need to look at what other similar communities are doing to stimulate their economies; identify the need for a grantwriter

Strategy C-1: Change as follows: *Improve condition of commercial and residential buildings ~~arees~~ that are deteriorated, vacant or need repair.*

Strategy C-3: Note need to coordinate with the county on cell and wind tower facilities as these will mostly be located outside of town limits.

Strategy E-2: Change as follows: *~~Consider developing~~Develop a new five-year Capital Improvements Program every five years (with first in 2013) so that infrastructure needs can be more comprehensively and publicly reviewed than likely through annual updates. (Note: the town has already committed to developing a five-year program)*

Strategy F-2: Change as follows: *Support fire department and emergency medical response to ensure continued service and actively recruit volunteers. (Note: the ambulance department is now five persons with two about to retire.)*

Strategy G-2: No change, but note that existing events include Homesteader Days and Fishing Days.

## 26. Other Elements of the Growth Policy

Cossitt briefly reviewed other elements of the growth policy, including inter-jurisdictional coordination – how the town and county will coordinate on matters related to the Growth Policy.

## **27. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

Next meeting will be Tuesday, January 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m. and the purpose will be to finalize draft plan for open houses.

# VALIER – CONRAD - PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

## PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 15, 10a.m. - noon

Conrad Library

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: Cheryl Curry, LeeAnn Hermance, Ron Jones, Paul Kronebusch, Dan Picard, Ken Wheeler
  - Not Attending: Chris Berg, Trina Jo Bradley, Chuck DeBoo, Mark Grubb, Jack Holden, Ken Johnson, Paul Johnson, Aaron Jones, Ali Newkirk, John Shevlin,
- Others:
  - None
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

#### Meeting Purpose:

Focus specifically on goals and land use for the unincorporated areas of Pondera County. Also provide status report on overall project effort and schedule, etc.

#### 28. Follow-up to September Meeting

Last meeting was in September and included a steering committee meeting and open house in Valier and another in Conrad. At the steering committee meeting in Valier, participants requested that the next round of steering committees be focused on each individual jurisdiction and that information on annexation be provided.

Growth Policy Committee Membership. Anne Cossitt reviewed Pondera County Growth Policy Committee membership status with those present. Many of the members have never attended any meetings or have only attended one meeting. Many have never responded to the phone calls and email messages requesting a response about attending an upcoming meeting. Chris Berg indicated that he no longer could serve. Committee Members asked Anne to follow up with other members who have never attended or only attended once to see if they still want to serve. At this point, those present agreed that it was late to be including people who had not participated to date.

### **29. Survey Questionnaire**

Surveys have gone out to a random sample of persons who own property in the unincorporated areas of Pondera County. The deadline for responses is in a few weeks and we should have results by the next open house. Cheryl Curry reported that response rate to date was 37%.

### **30. Summary of Annexation Process**

Anne Cossitt reviewed a two-page summary of the annexation process in Montana.

### **31. Draft Future Land Use Maps for Pondera County**

Committee members discussed the draft future land use map for the unincorporated areas of the county. Participants concurred that the future land use map looked about right and had no specific changes. The group did, however suggest some changes to the narrative as follows:

Page two under “Planning Direction for the Agricultural Area”

Third bullet that reads: “Energy-related development including oil and gas production and wind energy are appropriate for provided they do not impair agricultural operations. Committee members felt that “do not impair” could be interpreted to mean no impacts – when in fact energy-related development could be generally compatible and minimally impact agricultural operations and that would be acceptable.

Fourth bullet: “Major subdivisions are not appropriate for this planning area.” Need to clarify that major subdivisions would be appropriate within some of the expansion areas around towns.

Last bullet: “New developments should avoid diminishing the available water or otherwise harming existing agricultural irrigation and drainage systems.” More information or clarification is needed on this as it is not clear what this is intended to address.

Page three: typo on last bullet – delete the word “including” from the sentence.

### **32. Draft Broad Goal Statements**

Participants discussed the following items:

- Acronyms: Be sure and spell these out the first time they are used.

- Add a strategy in this document to support or encourage the Brady School to be once again part of Pondera County school system (instead of its current administrative location as part of the Dutton School District).

Goal A: Economy – Add specifics about the Pondera Port Authority and the RC&D in Shelby. Spell out Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Goal B: County Land Development Patterns

- Add in a strategy to adopt a “Right-to-Farm” policy
- B-5 strategy – “infill” needs to be defined

Goal C: Public Safety

- C-3 – This needs to be re-worked in coordination with LeeAnn Hermance, Floodplain Coordinator – the county is in the process of determining what should be done with floodplain analysis on Pondera Creek (note: Pondera Creek flows south of Conrad; Pondera Coulee is to the north).

Goal E: Infrastructure

- E-3. “Mitigate the growth-inducing affects of new water supply pipelines as new lines are extended to rural areas of the county.” Delete word “rural” and replace with “unincorporated.” What would “mitigation” be?
- E-4 – Add regional water projects to potential effects to county roads and bridges.

Goal F: Drinking Water

Note: the water at the Dupuyer School is not potable.

Goal G: Natural Areas

Delete the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – it can too easily be confused with the trans-continental wildlife corridor effort, which is not supported locally.

### **33. Other Elements of the Growth Policy**

Cossitt briefly reviewed other elements of the growth policy, including inter-jurisdictional coordination – how the town and county will coordinate on matters related to the Growth Policy.

Those present also suggested that the Growth Policy be titled the “Comprehensive Plan” as many people do not see the county as growing and it is confusing.

The Committee members present suggested that Cossitt see if the growth policy committees of Valier and Conrad would be available to meet on Wednesday Feb 23, prior to the open house in Conrad. It was suggested that the steering committee meeting be from 6:00-7:30 and the open house from 7:30 to 9:00. Primary purpose of the combined steering committee meeting would be to discuss future development and coordination on lands outside municipal boundaries.

### **34. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

The County Commissioners have requested that the next Pondera County Growth Policy Committee meeting be held on January 27, Thursday from 10 a.m.- noon. (Note: this per conversation held between Anne Cossitt and Commissioner Cyndi Johnson after the Steering Committee meeting.)

Cossitt offered to also meet with folks in Dupuyer and Brady when she comes for the next meetings in January. Dan Picard suggested doing it in the morning at the Co-op in Brady. Cossitt asked for at least one steering committee member to attend in Brady and Dupuyer. Dan said he could not make the session in Brady and Paul Kronenbusch was suggested. In Dupuyer, the general store was suggested. Cossitt will contact Ali Newkirk.

Cossitt will prepare a news article regarding the listening sessions in Dupuyer and Brady, once dates times finalized.

Committee members requested Anne to bring the maps that were presented at the September open house. These can be used to set up information posts at various locations (like banks). Cheryl Curry offered to assist.



## VALIER – CONRAD - PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

CONRAD GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Conrad Library

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Conrad Growth Policy Committee Members:
  - Attending: Karla Breeding, Laurie Eisenzimer, Barbara Shephard, Rick Moss
  - Not Attending: Debbie Wilcox, Judy Ellis
- Others: None
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

#### Meeting Purpose:

Focus specifically on goals and land use for Conrad area. Also provide status report on overall project effort and schedule, etc.

#### 35. Follow-up to September Meeting

Last meeting was in September and included a steering committee meeting and open house in Valier and another in Conrad. At the steering committee meeting in Valier, participants requested that the next round of steering committees be focused on each individual jurisdiction and that information on annexation be provided.

Committee members suggested Anne Cossitt call Debbie Wilcox since she has not attended the last few meetings.

#### 36. Survey Questionnaire

Surveys have gone out to a random sample of persons who own property in the unincorporated areas of Pondera County. The deadline for responses is in a few weeks and we should have results by the next open house.

### **37. Summary of Annexation Process**

Anne Cossitt reviewed a two-page summary of the annexation process in Montana.

### **38. Draft Future Land Use Maps for Pondera County**

Committee members discussed the alternative future land use maps for Conrad—1) the “Compact Community Alternative” and 2) the “Expansive Community Alternative.” In the Compact Community Alternative, most new development would occur at town densities with less sprawling land use. In the Expansive Community Alternative, city edges would become less distinct as low density development extends around the town. Participants selected the “Compact Community Alternative” with the following changes/comments:

- Existing Land Use- Zoning Summary (presented previously but also reviewed at this meeting): the summary left out the “Trailer Park Zone- Mobile Home Park” description.
- Discrepancy in zoning district titles in map and in narrative: Low Industrial – Limited Commercial. Participants preferred “Low Industrial” to “Limited Commercial” and “Heavy Industrial” to “Industrial”
- Page 4, first bullet under “Industrial” –“Uses” – the description is the same as for “Low Industrial” (Limited Commercial). Needs to change to reflect heavier uses in the paragraph that describes “Industrial.” Also, need to specifically reference the highway rest stop as a public use and provide other examples if applicable of acceptable public uses.
- Note that the area in dark purple (area along railroad tracks) on the map floods easily – if it rains heavily there is standing water in this area
- Page 6, second paragraph. Narrative describes four primary expansion areas, but looks like only three on the map.
- Karla Breeding said she would provide a map of the airport influence area.
- Page 6, last paragraph before “Expansive Community” -- add city water to last sentence that says” City sewer service should not be extended here except for town-pattern development.”
- Clean up typos.

### **39. Draft Broad Goal Statements**

Participants discussed the following items:

- Strategy E-4 (re: Main Street corridors) – add landscaping to the list of possible improvements

### **40. Other Elements of the Growth Policy**

Cossitt briefly reviewed other elements of the growth policy, including inter-jurisdictional coordination – how the town and county will coordinate on matters related to the Growth Policy.

### **41. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

Committee members suggested the meeting on January 26 be held from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Also suggested that there be a Conrad coffee shop “listening session” when Cossitt returns in January (similar to the sessions in Brady and Dupuyer). Karla Breeding offered to check to see if the mayor would be interested in attending.

# VALIER – CONRAD - PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

## VALIER GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 25, Civic Center in Valier

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Valier Growth Policy Committee and Planning Board:
  - Attending: Cathy Brandvold, Jeff Cleveland
  - Not Attending: Kurt Christaens, Renee Gabbard, Tom Hoover, Judy King, Leo Malinak
- Others:
  - Mayor McKenzie Graye, Cheryl Curry, Joseph Evans
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

#### Meeting Purpose:

To review draft growth policy prior to public meeting in February; finalize schedule and approach

#### 1. Follow-up to Previous Meeting

No changes to the meeting notes from previous meeting.

#### 2. Survey questionnaire – update

Cossitt briefly reviewed the county survey results; pointing out that nearly three-quarter of all county landowners would like to see development in or near existing communities, which coincides with the Valier’s preference for new development within town limits.

#### 3. Review-Discussion of Initial Draft Plan

Cossitt quickly discussed the basic components of the plan, pointing out that Part 4 includes the timeline for implementation as well as other miscellaneous requirements of state law. These include certain provisions for subdivisions, wildland fire, infrastructure strategy. She pointed out that the subdivision section does not include definitions for the “608(3)(a) criteria,” the

topics that a subdivision must be reviewed against to determine any significant effects and necessary mitigation. Instead, the growth policy identifies the process for determining definitions and the “evaluation” of impacts. The mayor will check with the town attorney to determine if identifying process (instead of individual definitions and evaluation criteria) is adequate for the growth policy.

Much discussion on the two alternative land use plans. Cossitt reviewed information on the airport obtained from the Aviation Division of the Montana Department of Transportation.

Committee members agreed to release the draft plan as is for the next open house in February.

#### **4. Priority-Setting**

Those present agreed that the top priorities to begin in the first year would be to file the municipal boundary with the clerk and recorder, update zoning to conform with the growth policy, begin work to facilitate more quality rental housing, and initiate annual review and annual work plan to implement growth policy.

#### **5. Format for Open House-Public Meeting**

Open house format with formal presentation like last time worked fine. Those present were open to the combined county-town format, as was done in the first open house. Those present agreed on 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 for open house and no separate growth policy committee meeting before or after.

Cossitt will prepare two articles for the newspaper outlining issues prior to the open house.

#### **6. Listening Session**

Group decided to have a “listening session” at the One Stop on Wed a.m. following the open house (7-8:30 a.m).

#### **7. Growth Policy Committee and Coordinating with Planning Board and Town Council**

Kurt Christiaens has attended only the first meeting. Cossitt was requested to contact to see if he still wants to be active. Cossitt is also to call Judy King to clarify role on planning board.

## **8. Finalize Schedule/Approach**

After the public open houses, the growth policy committee and planning board will finalize the draft growth policy via email with Cossitt Consulting. A conference call can be arranged if needed. The next time the consultant will come to Valier is to attend the planning board hearing. Cossitt Consulting will prepare notices for the public hearing, which will be held in April. Once the planning board makes its recommendation after the public hearing, the town council will make its decision. It is anticipated that the decision could be finalized in May.

## **9. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

Cossitt will prepare for the public open houses in Valier.

## VALIER – CONRAD - PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

### CONRAD GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 26, Conrad Library

5:30-7:30 p.m.

#### Meeting Summary - DRAFT

#### Attending:

- Conrad Growth Policy Committee
  - Attending: Karla Breeding, Judy Ellis, Laurie Eisenzimer, Richard Moss, Barb Shephard
  - Not Attending: Debbie Wilcox
- Others:
  - Gary Dent, Wally Larson, Betty McBratney, Jay Taylor
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

#### Meeting Purpose:

To review draft growth policy prior to public meeting in February; finalize schedule and approach

#### 10. Follow-up to Previous Meeting

No changes to the meeting notes from the previous meeting.

#### 11. Listening Session – results

Karla Breeding, Laurie Eisenzimer and Judy Ellis attended the “listening session” at the Home Café in Conrad on Wednesday morning from 7:30-9:00 a.m. along with Anne Cossitt. Contact was made with about 12-15 people, some of whom had not heard of the growth policy, and some of whom had received surveys or had attended the open house. Of those who were interested in discussing, most had questions rather than opinions.

#### 12. Survey questionnaire – update

Cossitt briefly reviewed the county survey results; pointing out that nearly three-quarter of all county landowners would like to see development in or near existing communities, which

coincides with the Conrad's preference for new development in municipal limit (and for municipal limits to expand as needed).

### **13. Review-Discussion of Initial Draft Plan**

Committee agreed to submit the draft growth policy to the public (for the open houses) as is with the following changes – use the latest future land use section (presented at the meeting) and add a specific strategy to encourage rental housing (similar to Valier's). Also noted that there are some typographical errors in Part Two – incorporation date of Conrad and population projection was incorrect (too low).

The committee discussed the land to be zoned that the city owns for the new industrial commercial park east of the north interstate interchange. What is in the plan now is fairly general and includes commercial, light-industrial, and offices. The group discussed the possibility of a truck stop or hotel up in that area. They agreed to leave the description as is.

Committee members also agreed that a motel on the south end of Conrad (as discussed at last meeting) was not likely a possibility and should not be specifically addressed in the plan. Currently there is little space in the municipal limits for a hotel/motel on the south end of the city and developing it south of city limits could encourage strip development.

Those present also clarified that Pondera Coulee should be called Pondera Creek.

### **14. Priority-Setting**

Those present agreed that the priorities for the first year should include filing the municipal boundary, zoning update, rental housing, and annual review and annual workplan for growth policy implementation.

### **15. Format for Open House-Public Meeting**

Open house format with formal presentation like last time worked fine. Those present were open to the combined county-city format, as was done in the first open house. Those present agreed on 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 for open house and no separate growth policy committee meeting before or after.

Cossitt will prepare two articles for the newspaper outlining issues prior to the open house.

### **16. Growth Policy Committee and Coordinating with Planning Board and City Council**



Corrections were made to the lists for Conrad. Cossitt will contact City Clerk for current list of planning board members. There is overlap between membership of Growth Policy Committee, Planning Board, and City Council. Cossitt encouraged good communication with planning board and council so that members anticipate the plan and understand how it was created so that adoption of the growth policy is a smooth process.

**17. Finalize Schedule/Approach**

After the public open houses, the growth policy committee will finalize the draft growth policy via email with Cossitt Consulting. A conference call can be arranged if needed. The draft growth policy will then be forwarded to the Planning Board with Growth Policy Committee recommendation to adopt. The next time the consultant will come to Conrad is to attend the planning board hearing. Cossitt Consulting will prepare notices for the public hearing, which will be held in April. Once the planning board makes its recommendation after the public hearing, the city council will make its decision. It is anticipated that the decision could be finalized in May.

**18. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

Cossitt will prepare for the public open houses in Conrad.

**VALIER – CONRAD - PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY**

**PONDERA COUNTY GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, January 27, Conrad Library**

**10:00 a.m - noon**

**Meeting Summary - DRAFT**

**Attending:**

- Pondera County Growth Policy Committee
  - Attending: Cheryl Curry, LeeAnn Hermance, Paul Kronenbusch
  - Not Attending: Ron Jones, Ali Newkirk, Dan Picard, Kenneth Wheeler
- Others:
  - Commissioner Sandy Broesder, Wendy Judisch
- Consultant Team: Anne Cossitt

**Meeting Purpose:**

To review draft growth policy prior to public meeting in February; finalize schedule and approach

**19. Follow-up to Previous Meeting**

No changes to the meeting notes from the previous meeting (OK as changed per edits from Dan Picard).

**20. Listening Session – results**

Ali Newkirk hosted the listening session in Dupuyer. There were only a handful of people who stopped by. There were general questions about the growth policy and also concern expressed about water quality in Dupuyer. The school has water that is non-potable, but their well is deep, so it is not the same as the issue of pollutants in the shallower aquifer that is the source of most drinking water supply in Dupuyer. Also, people clarified that not everyone shares the concern of drinking water in Dupuyer.

Paul Kronenbusch attended the listening session with Anne Cossitt in Dupuyer. Kronenbusch and Cossitt spoke with about 10-12 individuals there. There were general questions and specific concerns raised about Brady – the school, in particular—but nothing that would indicate a change in the plan as currently drafted.

## **21. Survey questionnaire – update**

Survey respondents Forrest L. and Georgina M. Long won the dinner at the Lighthouse and Donovan and Reta Weisgram won the dinner at Joe’s Steakhouse.

Cossitt reviewed survey results with committee. The committee walked through each response to the question regarding possible goals for land use planning to determine if any additional goal or objective was needed for the plan. The committee agreed that the responses validated what was in the plan and felt that the plan goals and future land use section adequately covered the survey responses on this question. No changes were needed to the plan as a result of the survey responses (other than to add survey results as background information).

## **22. Review-Discussion of Initial Draft Plan**

Changes noted as follows.

Planning Area Boundary – jurisdictional area of the planning board has not been filed. Part One, page 1, includes a recommended boundary – it needs to be amended to indicate the area includes “deeded” lands within Blackfeet Reservation that are wholly owned by non-tribal members. Cossitt will send Sandy Broesder the process outlined in law for filing planning area boundaries.

Public Safety Goal – add information in context portion about the PDM plan updates and need to address Dupuyer floodplain.

Change planning strategy F-1 to read: Encourage privately initiated analysis of drinking water quality in the Dupuyer area.

Part Four-Coordination with Municipalities (page 5): Check on correct notification for Conrad ( 2 miles) regarding subdivision review and comment. County will submit subdivisions within one mile of Valier for review. Also add statement regarding coordination on expansion areas around each municipality.

Those present agreed that the county could coordinate with incorporated municipalities on preferred land use patterns in future expansion areas identified in the growth policies for Valier and Conrad.

OK'd change from name of document from "growth policy" to "comprehensive plan."

### **23. Priority-Setting**

Those present agreed that the priorities for the first year should include updating the subdivision regulations, addressing floodplain matters, implement the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan recommendations, and annual review and annual work plan for implementing the growth policy.

Paul Kronenbusch said that another committee he is on keeps a checklist of the actions items in their plan and lists which have been accomplished. Cossitt suggested she could prepare an initial checklist to accompany the growth policy.

### **24. Format for Open House-Public Meeting**

Format at last open house worked fine. The county open house will be held in conjunction with the open houses in Valier and Conrad.

### **25. Committee Membership**

Those present indicated that those persons who have not attended a meeting or only attended one meeting should be removed from the Growth Policy Committee. Sandy Broesder said that she is no longer on the Pondera County Planning Board, per the recommendation of the Montana Association of Counties consulting attorneys.

### **26. Growth Policy Committee and Coordinating with Planning Board and County Commissioners**

There is overlap between membership of Growth Policy Committee and Planning Board. Cossitt encouraged good communication between Growth Policy Committee and other planning board members and County Commission so that adoption of the growth policy is a smooth process.

### **27. Finalize Schedule/Approach**

After the public open houses, the growth policy committee will finalize the draft growth policy via email with Cossitt Consulting. A conference call can be arranged if needed. The draft growth policy will then be forwarded to the Planning Board with Growth Policy Committee

recommendation to adopt. The next time the consultant will come to Pondera County is to attend the planning board hearing. Cossitt Consulting will prepare notices for the public hearing, which will be held in April. Once the planning board makes its recommendation after the public hearing, the county commission will make its decision. It is anticipated that the decision could be finalized in May.

## **28. Wrap-Up and Next Steps**

Cossitt will prepare for the public open houses in Conrad and Valier.

**GROWTH POLICIES FOR CONRAD, VALIER, AND PONDERA COUNTY**  
**SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY OPEN HOUSES AND LISTENING SESSIONS**

**February 22, Open House – Valier, 7:00-8:45 p.m.**

Participants: 6

Anne Cossitt presented an overview of the results of the county survey and also work on the growth policies for Valier and Conrad to date.

Discussion during the open house included the following:

Generally, those present liked the concepts of the “compact town alternative” but do not want to see airport moved. Someone indicated that larger airplanes will need a bigger airport anyway. Those present indicated they might need to re-assess moving the airport if the planes were bigger or there was a lot of noisy traffic. Cheryl Curry suggested keeping the airport in the long-range plan and assessing every 5 years with scheduled plan updates. Everyone seemed to be OK with using the northwest portion of the airport—it’s currently being proposed as the area for new Babe Ruth baseball fields, which could transition to residential use in the long-term.

Some people seemed to think the holding area (Compact Town Alternative) was preferable to the “status quo” of the “rural-residential” and others wanted to be able to build as they pleased.

There was general consensus that the proposed zoning within town boundaries was a good idea.

**February 23, Listening Session – Valier – One Stop; 7-8:30 a.m.**

Spoke with a half dozen or more folks there. Comments included the following:

“You can’t turn the land north of the railroad into business area, it’s too valuable for grain production.”

“This place could really take off with the oil and gas development that’s occurring (going to occur) in Cutbank and Heart Butte. That could result in 150 or more new jobs.”

“This town just won’t let anybody do anything. Someone wanted to build a new shop (construction related) but he didn’t have sewer connection so they wouldn’t let him build. That’s just not right.”

“Airport needs to stay.” Reasons varied: good for town to have planes fly there; my house is on edge and I have a view but if they put houses there I will lose my view.

“Airport needs to go.”

Airport was designed so that planes do not fly over town (look at runway layout). Most used runways are the east west – as that is direction of winds.

Most people seemed OK with using NW portion of airport for residential expansion as needed.

**February 23, Listening Session – Valier- Panther Café, 11:00 a.m. - noon**

No one was interested in talking. Handed out the info sheet with the web site address to a 6-8 persons.

**Wednesday, Feb 23 – Conrad Open House, 7:30 -9:00 p.m.**

Participants: 13

Anne Cossitt presented an overview of the results of the county survey and also work on the growth policies for Valier and Conrad to date.

Discussion during the open house included the following:

Several comments and questions related to mobile homes. One fellow wants to see mobiles without foundations in their own mobile home courts; they can be quite nice and he grew up in one. Not the kind of thing that is on the east side of the tracks in Conrad, but something much nicer.

What is the difference between a mobile home and manufactured housing? Mobile homes are pre-1976. Manufactured housing is post 1976. They can still be “mobile” – without a foundation and ready to be picked up and hauled by truck. Most new manufactured housing is intended for more permanent foundations.

There is a wide variety of quality in manufactured housing. Need for standards to address. Otherwise afraid today’s manufactured homes will just end up being like pre-1976 mobile homes.

In future land use, focus on infill on vacant lots and also decrepit buildings that should be torn down – where is the help/aid/resources to help with decrepit structures?

