



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**



Prepared For: Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP),  
Montana Department of Commerce

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## 1.0 Introduction

The [Montana Land Use and Planning Act \(MLUPA\)](#) requires communities to include an analysis of the existing conditions for various elements within their jurisdiction. This guidance document provides the framework and the resources available for a community to develop a full Land Use Plan. While there are various elements researched and assessed for inclusion into a Land Use Plan, it is important to note that in many cases data can overlap in various sections of the plan depending on community priorities and how a community chooses to present information in their plan. For instance, parks and recreation could be included in the assessment of natural resources or in local services and facilities. It is at the community's discretion to choose where to include data and/or information throughout the Land Use Plan. For the purposes of this document, data may be excluded within a particular section as guidance may be provided on how to reference that data in another section.

A thriving community is often described as a great place to live, work, and play. Economic development plays a large role in the success of a community and its ability to thrive. It is important as it encompasses the conditions that would assess an economy's well-being and quality of life and identify processes and strategies for improvement.

To begin this process, the community should begin by compiling a list of data resources to utilize in the research of the existing conditions for each element.

### Existing conditions to be analyzed for the following elements

- Housing
- Local Services/Facilities
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Environment
- Hazards
- Land Use
- Population and Demographics

### Tip #1

**If you plan to utilize a data source  
that is not listed, verify that the  
source is reliable**

### Quick Links

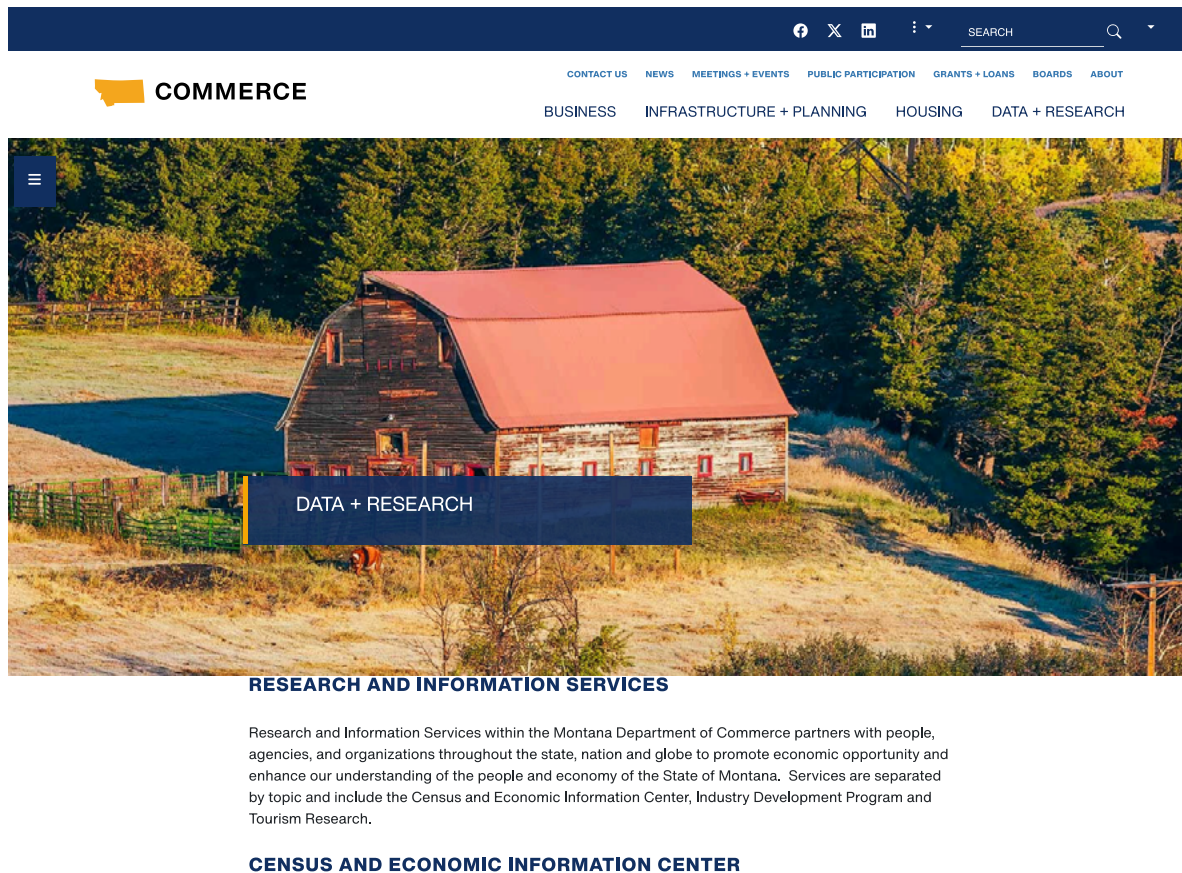
- › [United States Census Bureau](#)
- › [Headwaters Economics](#)
- › [Montana Department of Commerce](#)
- › [Montana State Library GIS Data](#)
- › [Department of Revenue](#)
- › [Montana Department of Labor](#)

## 1.1 Existing Conditions

The first step in this analysis is to understand the existing conditions as they relate to economic development within a community. Some of the most common methods of obtaining socioeconomic and economic development information are to view the Montana Department of Commerce website, the American Community Survey website, Montana Department of Labor and Industry, decennial census reports, or Headwater's Economic Profile System (EPS) website.

### Economic Development Districts

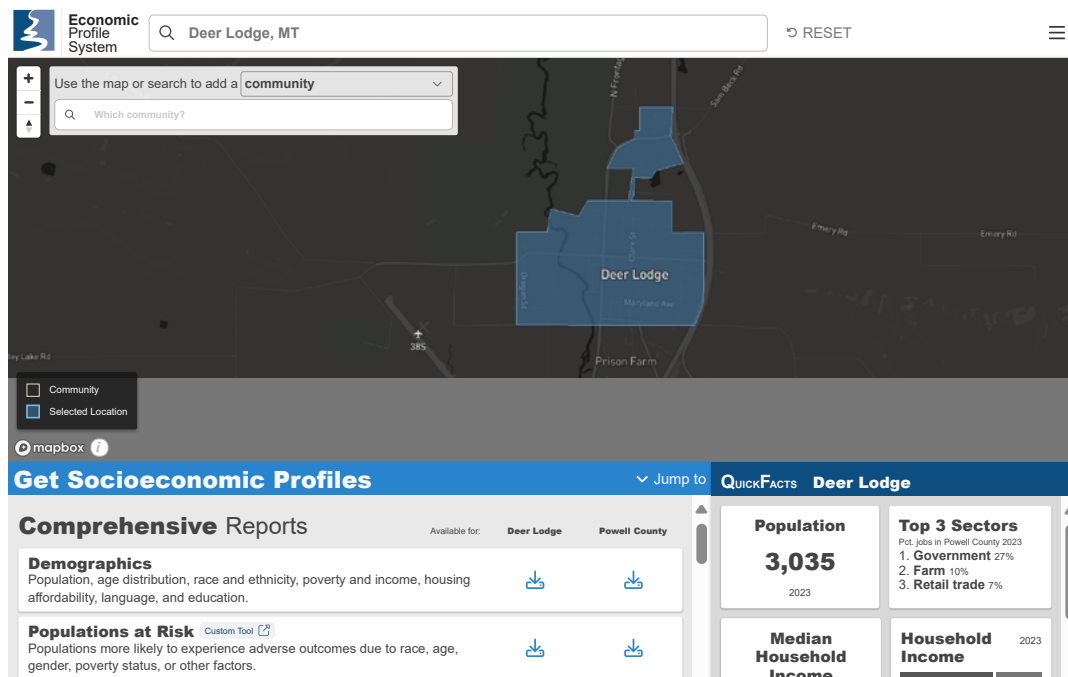
- › [Bear Paw Development Corporation of Northern Montana](#)
- › [Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.](#)
- › [Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation](#)
- › [Great Northern Development Corporation](#)
- › [Headwaters Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.](#)
- › [Montana Business Assistance Connection, Inc.](#)
- › [Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District](#)
- › [Snowy Mountain Development Corporation](#)
- › [Southeastern Montana Development Corporation](#)



**Figure 1:** Figure 1. Montana Department of Commerce Website

 [Click here to see online](#)





**Figure 2:** Headwaters Economic Profile System, Socioeconomic profile

[Click here to see online](#)

## 1.2 Occupations and Industries

Information regarding common occupations and industries located within a community can be found through Headwater's Economic Profile System, and the American Community Survey (ACS). It is important to note the Headwaters EPS system primarily utilizes data from either the ACS or the decennial census in their downloadable PDF and Excel spreadsheets. Note the Headwaters EPS system primarily utilizes data from either the ACS or the decennial census in their downloadable PDF and Excel spreadsheets.

### Demographics

Red Lodge, MT

#### Occupations and Industries

	Red Lodge, MT	United States
Civilian employees > 16 years, 2023*	1,255	159,808,535
Management, professional, & related	494	67,078,603
Service	265	26,378,165
Sales and office	239	31,858,939
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0	931,499
Construction, extract, maint, & repair	82	7,880,599
Production, transportation	170	20,775,153
<b>Percent of Total</b>		
Management, professional, & related	39.4%	42.0%
Service	21.1%	16.5%
Sales and office	19.0%	19.9%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.0%	0.6%
Construction, extract, maint, & repair	6.5%	4.9%
Production, transportation	13.5%	13.0%

### Tip #2

Headwaters Economic Profile System has the capability to compare data to another community for reference (nearby city, county, or United States)

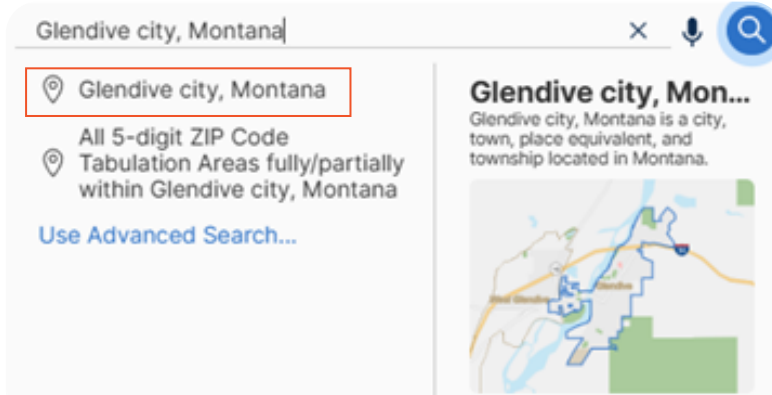
**Figure 3:** Headwater Economic Profile System, Demographic Download Example

[Click here to see online](#)



### 1.3 Median Household Income (MHI)

Income distribution within a community has often been viewed as an indicator of economic well-being. Large numbers of households in the lower end of income distribution indicate economic hardship while a bulge in the middle can be interpreted as the size of the middle class. Median household income can be obtained by using the American Community Survey (ACS), filter your results by first searching for your community in the search bar.

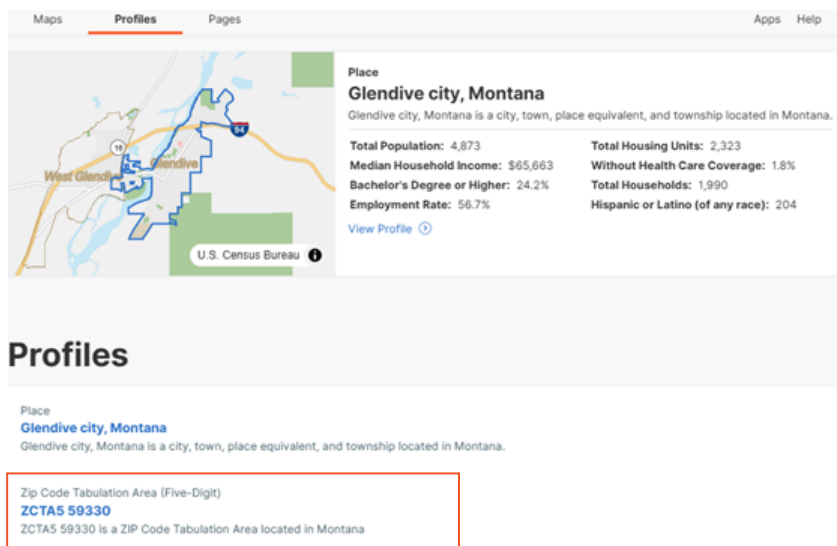


**Figure 4:** American Community Survey, City search

#### Tip #3

Median Household Income information can be found utilizing the Headwaters Economics and Montana Department of Commerce websites as well; however, the data is sourced from the U.S Census so ACS is likely to have the most updated data set available

Select the 'Profiles' tab and a Zip Code Tabulation Area will be present underneath. The Zip Code Tabulation Area data set will provide more details regarding Median Household Income.



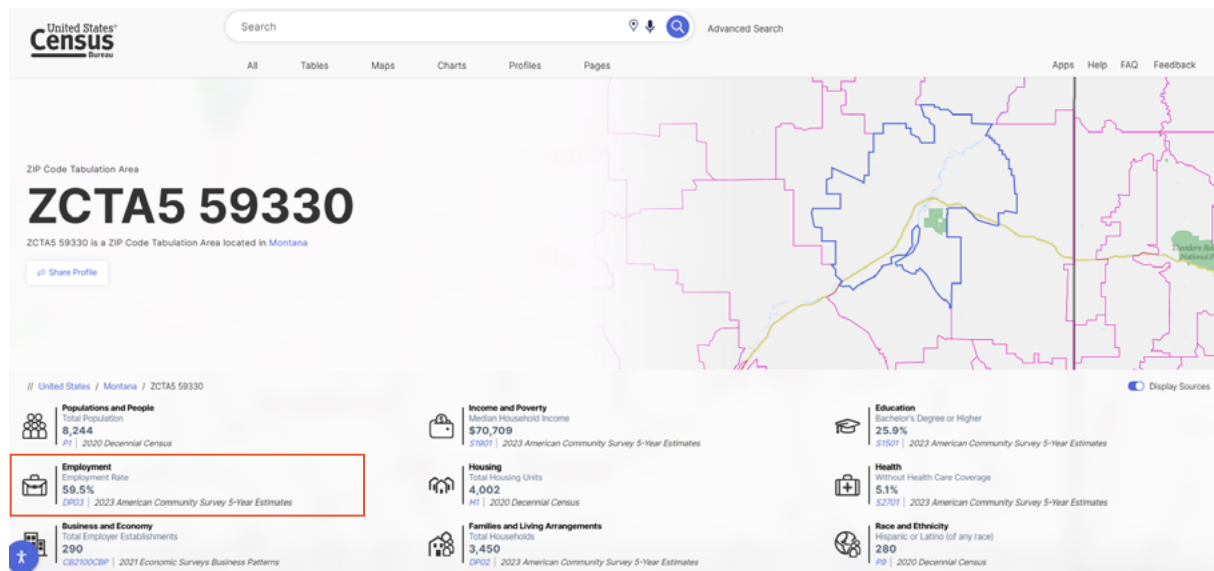
**Figure 5:** American Community Survey data table

#### Tip #4

When using Census data, verify first whether it is decennial data, or ACS data. It is important to note the differences as some data sets are only published during the decennial census and others are provided in more recent ACS 5-year estimates

## 1.4 Labor Force and Unemployment

The same steps that were taken above to determine the Median Household Income can also be used to access Labor Force and Unemployment information. To avoid scrolling through all information provided in the Zip Code Tabulation Area data set, 'Race and Ethnicity' can be selected on the top of the page and will link directly to the desired information.



**Figure 6:** American Community Survey, Zip Code Tabulation Area

## 1.5 Income

The Headwaters Economic Profile System will produce a demographic report for a community that outlines household income distribution.

### Demographics

Red Lodge, MT

#### Income

	Red Lodge, MT	United States
Per Capita Income (2023 \$s)	\$44,784	\$43,289
Median Household Income^ (2023 \$s)	\$43,857	\$78,538
Total Households, 2023*	1,414	127,482,865
Less than \$10,000	57	6,214,601
\$10,000 to \$14,999	39	4,531,954
\$15,000 to \$24,999	325	8,370,687
\$25,000 to \$34,999	97	8,726,561
\$35,000 to \$49,999	215	13,308,310
\$50,000 to \$74,999	201	20,077,013
\$75,000 to \$99,999	200	16,202,717
\$100,000 to \$149,999	105	22,198,277
\$150,000 to \$199,999	58	11,843,136

**Figure 7:** Headwaters Economic Profile, Income Example

[Click here to see online](#)



## 1.6 Building Permits

The majority of Montana communities have some sort of tracking or permitting system that allows them to accurately maintain a database that includes the number of building permits filed each year. A community can work with local staff to collect building permit information from previous years (minimum 5 years) for analysis. If a community does not have the capability to track building permits, they may be able to contact the Montana Department of Labor and Industry for any permits that have been filed with the state (<https://bsd.dli.mt.gov/building-codes-permits/permit-applications/building-permits/>) The trends displayed from the assessment of building permit numbers and types could provide insight into anticipated growth in areas such as housing and employment sectors.

## 1.7 Existing Land Use

As every incorporated community has existing zoning and, in most cases, associated zoning maps, properties should be analyzed for the number of properties and/or acres zoned residential, commercial, and industrial within the community. This will provide information about existing uses within the community and subsequently assist in appropriately planning for future land uses, more specifically when preparing or amending a Future Land Use Map. GIS is a commonly used tool with the capability to assess the acres and percentages of land use types in and around a community.

## 1.8 Additional Analysis

Montana Land Use Planning Act, Section 12, 1(c), references additional analysis that must be completed regarding economic development. MLUPA states that a community must assess the following:

- Extent to which local characteristics, assets, and resources support or constrain existing and potential enterprises, including access to transportation to market goods and services
- Historic, cultural, and scenic resources and their relationship to private sector success in the jurisdiction
- It is encouraged that any community that is unable to complete this additional analysis, should seek assistance from a local economic development corporation, Department of Commerce, or consultant.

## 1.9 Implementation

Local communities should utilize the data that is obtained during this portion of the MLUPA to help drive an economic boost in their community. This can typically be done by fostering investment in infrastructure and enhancing workforce development. Implementation of this section would likely take on a multi-faceted approach that identifies any incentives for businesses to invest in the local community and determine whether the housing, infrastructure, and local services are able to support the specific economic growth that is identified. Success in implementing this section into the Land Use Plan would require collaboration between the local jurisdiction and county (to manage relationships as it pertains to extraterritorial jurisdiction, as defined in [MCA 7-1-4111](#), when land use regulations can extend beyond planning boundaries), state agencies, private sector partners, and economic development corporations to ensure that resources are allocated effectively within the jurisdiction.

