

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a Growth Policy?

A growth policy is a tool communities use to implement planning efforts. It is an official public document adopted and used by a local government as a guide to make decisions about the community's physical and economic future. A growth policy connects a community vision for the future with actionable, real-world policy and projects, which ultimately shape the identity of a community.

### A Growth Policy is:

- Official public document
- Broad scope
- Applies to specific geographic area
- Identifies goals and guidelines for the long haul
- Living document meant to change as community needs change



A living document is meant to reflect the community's vision for its future. As that vision and the needs of a community change.

## Is a Growth Policy a Regulation?

No, a Growth Policy itself is not a regulatory document. However, a Growth Policy does work with local zoning and subdivision regulation to manage and mitigate the effects of change.

## Is my community required to adopt a Growth Policy?

While growth policies are not required in Montana, one must be adopted before a city or a county may adopt or amend "Part 2" Zoning Regulations, and all local subdivision regulations must be created in accordance with an adopted growth policy. According to state law, zoning and subdivision regulations must conform to the goals and objectives listed within a growth policy.

## How can community planning and the adoption of a Growth Policy help my community?

A growth policy provides a legal foundation necessary for the development of responsible policy and regulations. A growth policy may also improve efficiency and accountability for elected official and staff by providing the support and information they need to make sound strategic decision-making.



Inspires investment and economic health



Enhances safety



Preserves community features



Builds public consensus and understanding

• Promotes affordable housing



Minimizes infrastructure costs



Maintains property values



Ensures land availability



## Interested in learning more?

[www.comdev.mt.gov](http://www.comdev.mt.gov)

You'll find additional videos, information about statutes, a quick-reference guide, information about possible funding sources to assist your community with planning, and contacts within the Department of Commerce, Community Technical Assistance Program.

