

# ANNUAL REPORT MADISON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

**Fiscal Year 2011-12**

[July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012]

**Note:** The activities listed were accomplished in cooperation with the Madison County Commissioners, County Planning Office and other County staff, town officials and staff, state agency personnel, and other dedicated local citizens.

1. **Subdivision Proposal Reviews.** The Planning Board reviewed four preliminary plats, which were approved with conditions by the Commissioners. Of the 5 pre-applications reviewed, 4 were for major subdivisions and the remaining 1 was a minor subdivision. Four final plats were approved by the Commissioners, who also granted extensions for 4 preliminary plats. One preliminary plat approval was converted to overall development review approval.

Approved Preliminary Plats					Final Plats	Pre-app.	Plat Extensions
Area	Number/Type of Lots			Acres			
	Single Family	Duplex/Triplex/Condos	Commercial	Total			
Big Sky	34			34	70		2
Madison Valley	4		3	7	17.79		3
Ruby Valley/ Jefferson/ Beaverhead	1			1	2.11	1	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>39</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>89.9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

2. **Subdivision Site Visits and Work Sessions.** There was one Planning Board development site visit and no work sessions this year, although many subcommittees met throughout the year on various topics. The Planning Board has made “Board Functioning” a regular part of the agenda, completing discussions on media and public participation, and then suspending as an agenda item until completion of the Growth Policy update.
3. **Planning and Subdivision Review Services.** Although there were no formal requests for review, Planning staff assisted individuals in Twin Bridges, Sheridan and Ennis who were interested in the subdivision process and converting structures to commercial condominiums.
4. **Building Envelope Changes.** Four building envelope changes were reviewed by the Planning Staff during the fiscal year; all were granted.
5. **Review of Subdivision Exemption Requests.** The Madison County Evasion Review Board (ERB) reviewed 45 exemption requests: 33 boundary adjustments; 9 family conveyances; 2 agriculture exemptions; and 1 utility exemption. Three requests were denied.

6. **Subdivision Compliance.** Most of the compliance checking this year was related to building envelopes, addressing and construction, particularly in Big Sky. The use of emergency access easements for general access in Pronghorn Meadows has been addressed.
7. **Conservation Easement Reviews.** The Planning Board commented on four Conservation Easements. Approximately 3,645 acres were conserved, all in the Madison Valley.
8. **Tower Permit Reviews.** No new tower permit applications were received this year.
9. **Big Hole Conservation Permits.** No Big Hole Conservation permit requests were made.
10. **Growth Policy.** The Planning Board used the Planning for People and Wildlife mini-grant received through Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to prepare and distribute a questionnaire addressing wildlife and other growth policy issues.
  - The questionnaire was sent to every box holder in Madison County, inserted in The Madisonian sent to all subscribers, and made available throughout the county and online. Paper questionnaires could be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to the Planning Office, or dropped off at more convenient locations throughout the county. Summarized questionnaire results were made available online, at the libraries throughout the County, and in County offices.
  - A total of 368 responses were returned. This represented 6% of the 6,327 people that make up the county population 18 years and older, which statistically insured that the results were an accurate portrayal of our county.
  - Based on the results, the current Growth Policy needs modest updating to comply with Montana statute and to represent county residents. The survey results are being used by the Planning Board to guide changes to the Growth Policy.

In addition to the questionnaires, the Planning Board also sponsored public forums throughout the County for public input on open-ended questions:

- What do you value most in your community?
- What do you see are the greatest threats to those values?
- What do you think should be done to maintain those values?
- Comments on the draft maps prepared through the CDBG grant.

The Planning Board has taken the lead on changes to the growth policy document.

Fourteen maps for inclusion with the Growth Policy were completed using a CDBG grant.

The WildPlanner tool for evaluating potential impacts on wildlife habitat and connectivity was completed. The predicted results were evaluated against conditions on the ground and found to be fairly accurate.

11. **Regulations.** Work on updates and new regulations continued in several areas.

- Revisions to the draft Airport Affected Area regulations for the Twin Bridges and Ennis Airports were made; additional revisions to make them easier to understand and use are being considered.
- The Commissioners decided not to implement the Streamside Setback regulations as an ordinance as recommended by the Planning Board. Instead, the Planning Board was directed to use the regulations as guidelines and to develop a way of promoting voluntary compliance with them. In a joint meeting in April, the commissioners expressed support for hiring a person who would work with landowners and others in site development.

## **12. Education, Training**

- Several webinars on planning related topics, including social media strategies, land use and Montana water resources, and “Why are They Difficult?” (Montana Superhost).
- Planning Board members attended workshops on Communication Training Workshop (Dick Brooks), and a Big Hole Incentive Program workshop.
- Several presentations by experts were made during Planning Board meetings, including: Margie Edsall (MC Weed Coordinator), Chris Mumme (MC Director of Emergency Services).
- Staff attended the Montana Association of Planners conference, Southwest Montana Planners Meeting (Anaconda), training on use of the Wild Planner tool, Western Governors’ Wildlife Council (Seattle), River Fund meetings (Helena), meeting on the proposed US 287 Wildlife Corridor Study (Bozeman), Board Training, Growth Policy Forums, Community Wildfire Protection Plan meetings, Accident Investigation Training (mandatory), and Madison County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (sponsored by Headwaters RC&D).

## **13. Road Naming and Addressing**

- Addresses were assigned and verified as needed. Problem areas were corrected as they were discovered. Diligent effort over the past few years reduced the number of problems and problem areas. Working with the Sanitarians office, addresses are now assigned and verified when construction/demolition and/or septic permit applications are made.
- Two roads were named.

**14. Planning Board Membership (see attached roster).** Laurie Schmidt was elected as President and Richard Meehan as Vice President. Two members tendered their resignations: Jan Kliver Banks (Conservation District representative) and Don Loyd (at-large member); neither has been replaced.

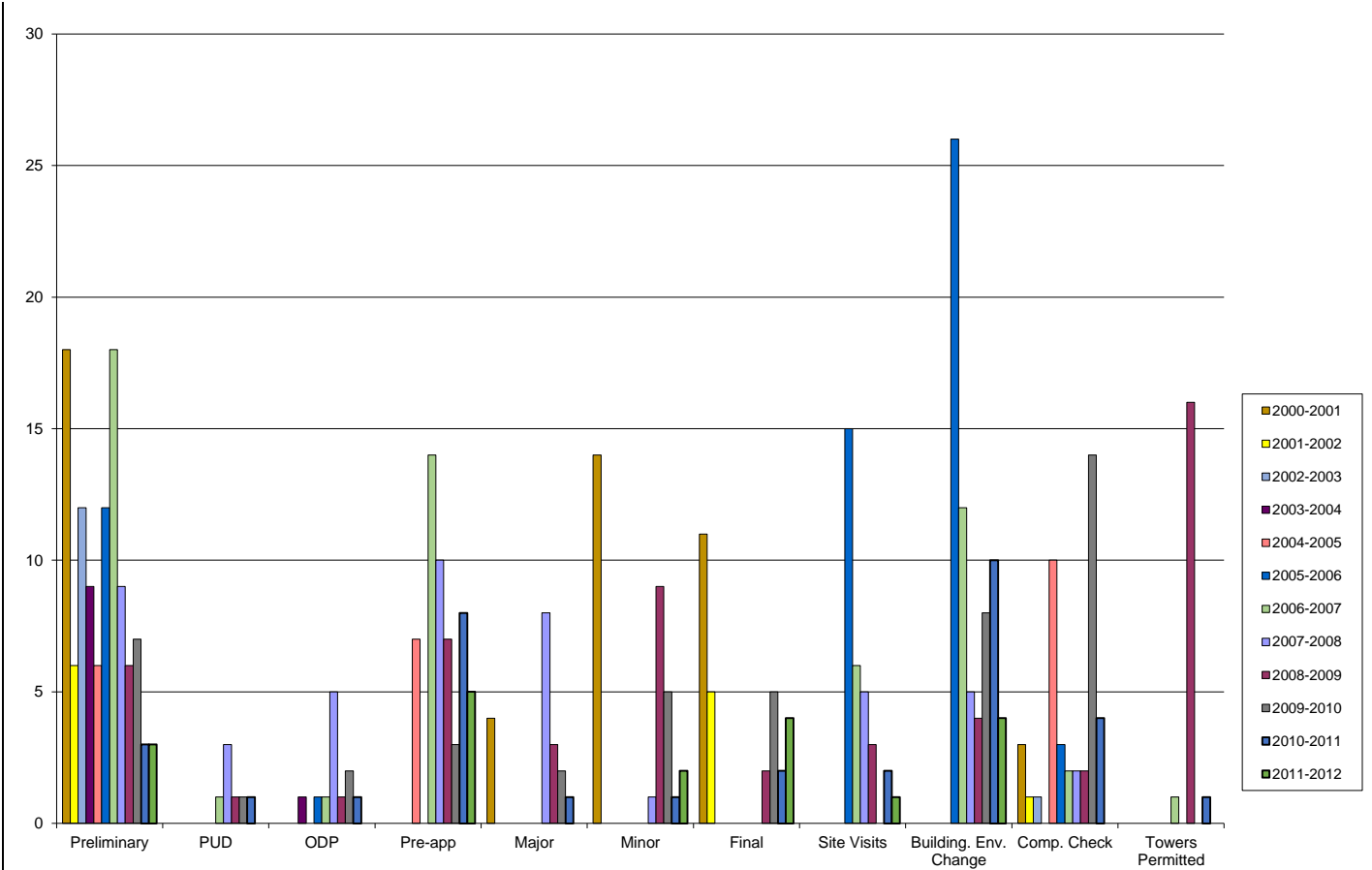
**15. Planning Staff.** Charity Fechter remains as Planning Director and Leona Stredwick remains as Planning Technician.

## **16. Summary of Planning Activities**

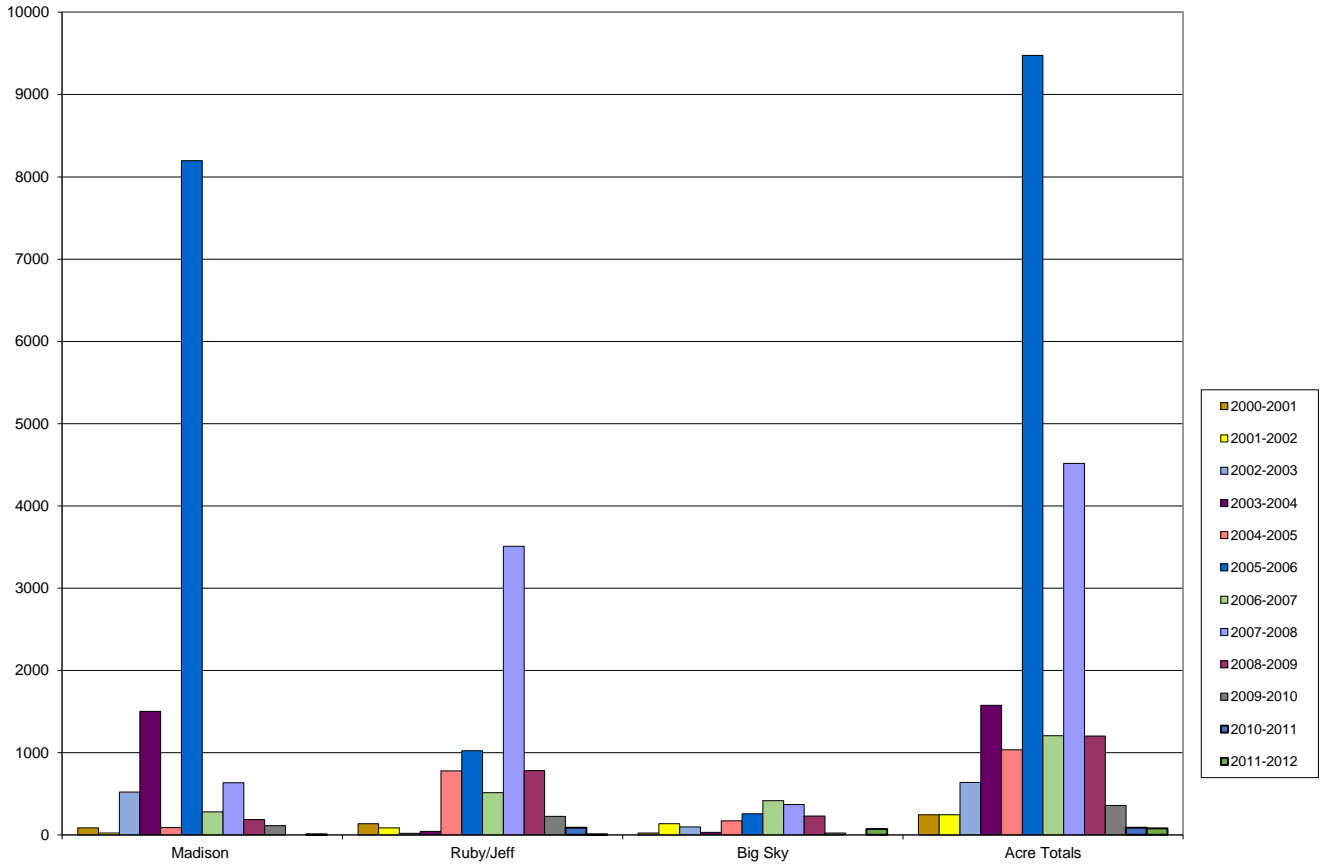
- ✓ Airport Affected Area regulations reviewed and revised.
- ✓ Staff site visits of proposed subdivisions.
- ✓ Building Envelope changes.

- ✓ Growth Policy questionnaire prepared, distributed, summarized, and analyzed; community forums held; document revisions/updates.
- ✓ Parks and Recreation District formation – provided technical assistance
- ✓ Big Hole River – subcommittees on floodplain/mapping and landowner incentives.
- ✓ Streamside protection guidelines with site development assistance/position.

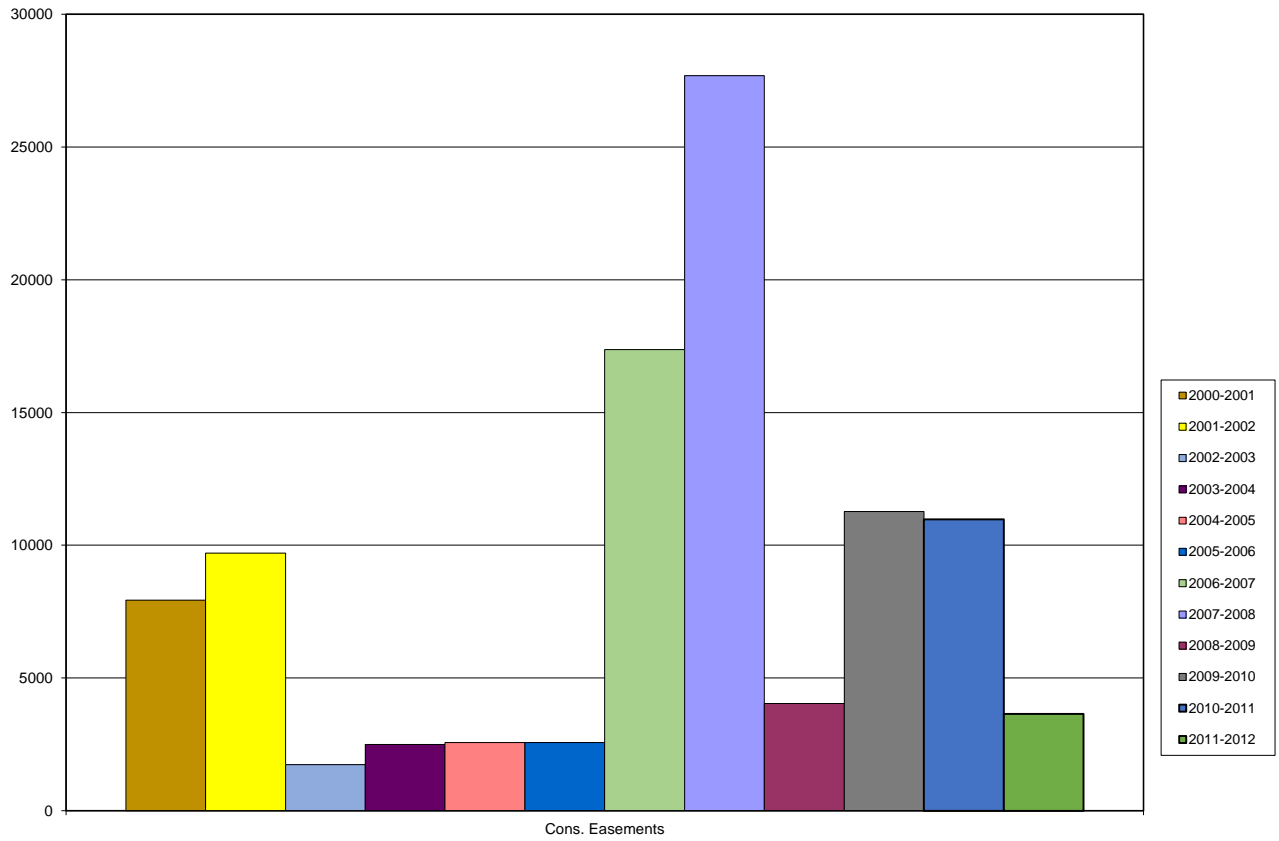
**Prepared: August 28, 2012**



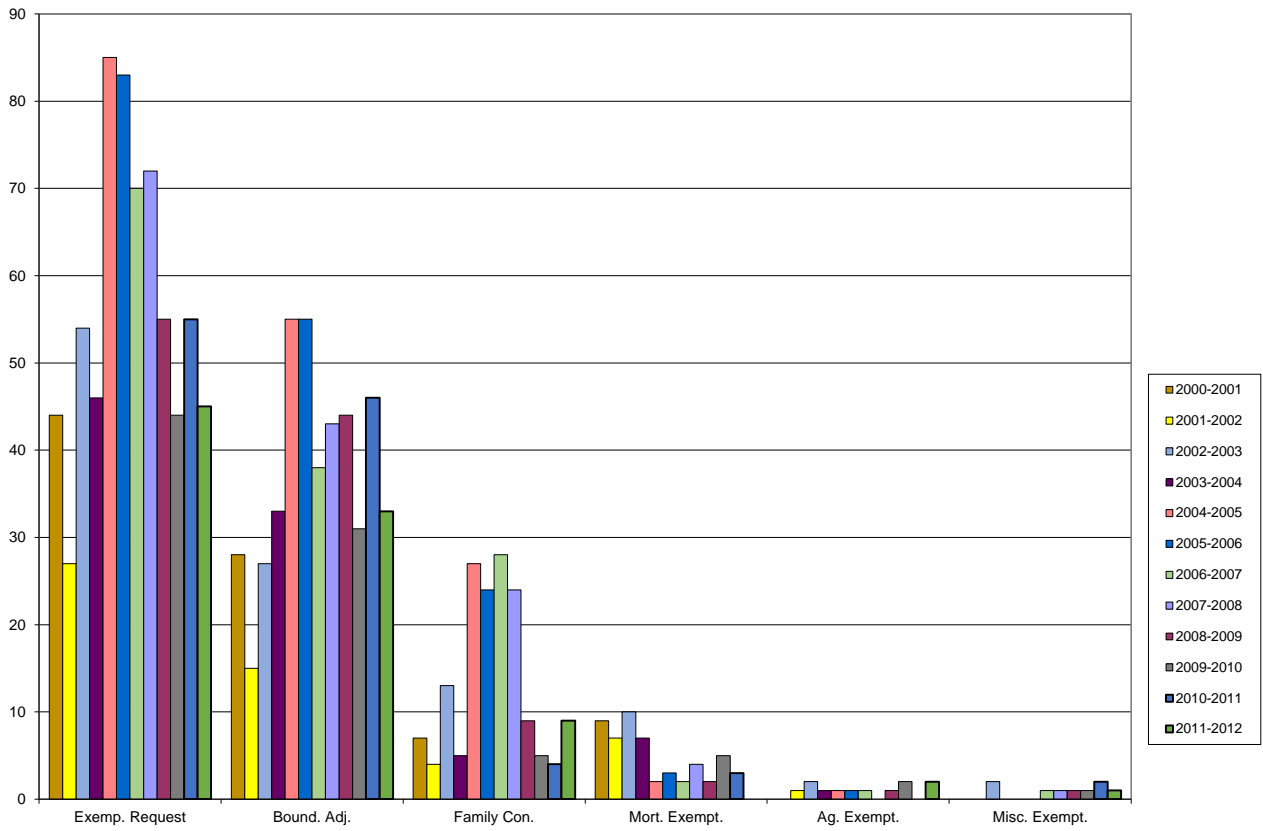
Subdivision Data



Subdivision Acreage

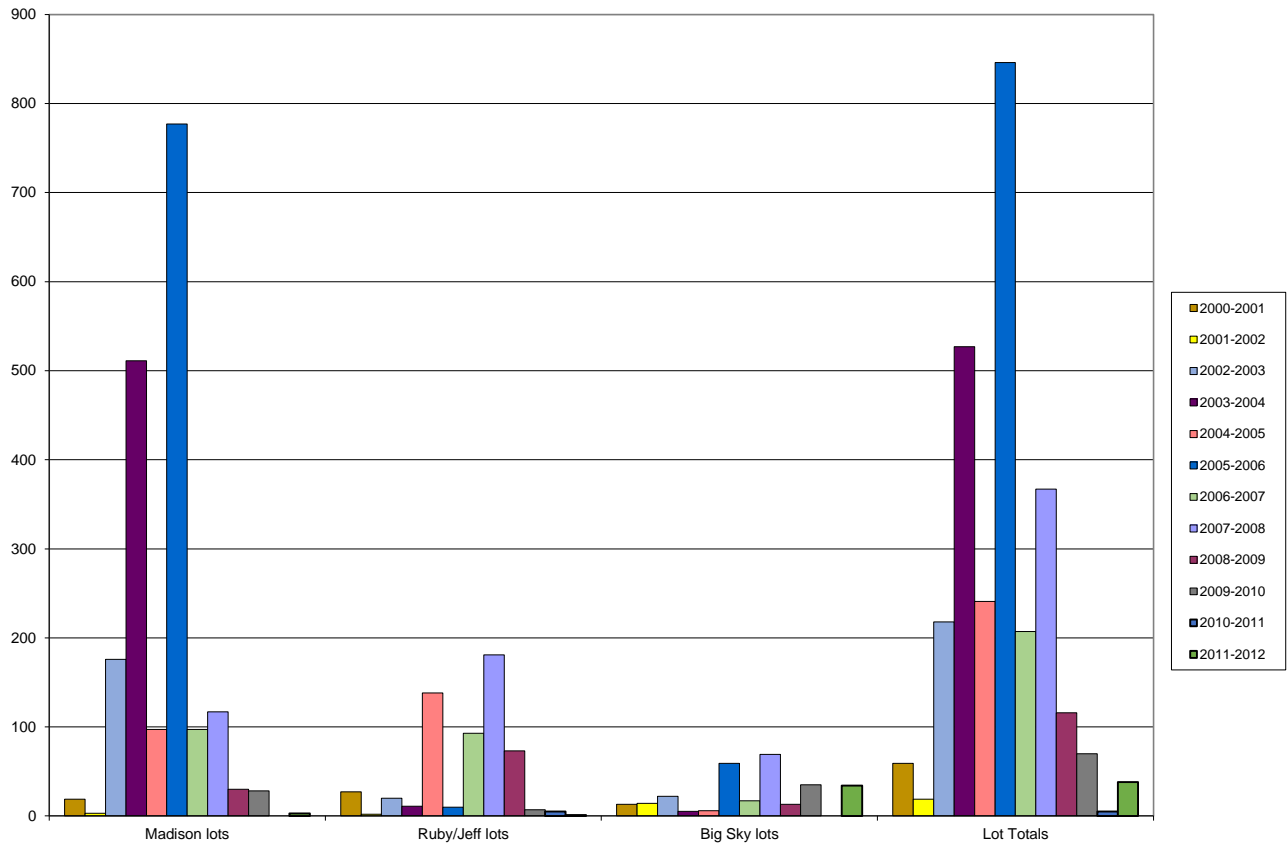


Conservation Easement Acreage



Evasion Review





Subdivision Lots