

Design Guidelines as A Planning Tool

Applied to Red Lodge, MT

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2/21/2009

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The City of Red Lodge:

Red Lodge, the county seat of Carbon County, is located in south central Montana, approximately 60 miles southwest of the city of Billings. The community is situated in a valley at the base of the Beartooth Mountains, and is a gateway to Yellowstone National Park and the Absorka-Bearthooth Wilderness Area. Residents and visitors are attracted to Red Lodge's scenic beauty, outdoor recreational opportunities, and western heritage. Red Lodge is home to a variety of residents, ranging from service industry workers to second-home owners, from cowboys to outdoor enthusiasts. The diverse mix of residents, visitors, and outdoor and cultural opportunities are all key components in the community identity of Red Lodge.

The 2000 Census lists the population of Red Lodge at 2,177 people. As of July 2007, the population was estimated to have grown to 2,449, an increase of 12.5%. The population of Red Lodge is nearly exclusively white at 96.1%. American Indians comprise the next highest percentage of the population at 1.1%. In the 2000 census, the median age of residents in Red Lodge was 41.7 years, which was higher than the national average of 35. Eighty-nine percent of residents have a high school degree, with 24% having obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. In 2000, there were a total of 1,415 housing units in the community. Of the total housing units, 547 were single family, owner-occupied, with a median value of \$102,800. The median family income in Red Lodge in 2000 was \$40,260. Of the 2,177 residents of Red Lodge, 208 (9.7%) were below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau).

In its early history, the economy of Red Lodge was primarily concentrated on coal mining and other resource extraction activities. The early economic activity led to the migration of Europeans to the community. The economy of Red Lodge has been supported by agricultural activities throughout its history as well. The community is surrounded by large mountain valleys that provide prime cattle grazing opportunities. The economy of Red Lodge has largely transitioned from agriculture and extraction activities to tourism, recreation, and retirement based activities.

Red Lodge is part of the greater Billings trade market area. "The relationship between Red Lodge and the Laurel/Billings area is symbiotic. Billings area residents regularly visit Red Lodge because of its charm and distinctive goods; Red Lodge residents shop in Billings for items not available locally or for better prices. Red Lodge residents use medical services in Billings for more serious health care issues. This regional relationship perpetuates Red Lodge's chosen character" (Growth Policy, 6). This relationship contributes to the tourism and recreational nature of the community's economy, as many of the visitors to Red Lodge are from the Billings area.

The tourism and recreation- based economy began with the construction of the Beartooth All American Road that linked Red Lodge to Yellowstone National Park. The highway, which opened in 1936, continues to draw visitors to the community. In 1960, The Grizzly Peak Ski Area opened approximately 6 miles outside of Red Lodge. Over the next 40 years, the ski area evolved into Red Lodge Mountain Resort, a full-scale family resort that includes an 18 hole golf course and provides residential home sites

as well. Additionally, the vast open spaces and natural amenities that surround Red Lodge provide many recreational opportunities.

The tourism and recreation-based economy is largely seasonal. Although tens of thousands of tourists pass through Red Lodge in the summer, the number diminishes considerably when the Beartooth All American Road is closed between mid-October and the end of May (Growth Policy, 5). A majority of the commercial activity in Red Lodge occurs in the downtown core of the community. Downtown businesses, accounting for approximately 95% of all commercial activity in Red Lodge, cater to tourists and the recreational community (Growth Policy, 6).

In addition to attracting visitors to the area, the recreational opportunities and natural amenities have attracted many permanent residents to the community. From 2000 to 2006, the community has grown at a rate of 2.2% annually. This trend is expected to continue, as the population of Carbon County is expected to grow by 34.5% between 2000 and 2030. Of the 34.5% increase in population, approximately 81.5% is expected to be found in people over the age of 65 (Montana Dept. of Commerce).

Because Red Lodge and Carbon County are expected to see considerable growth in the future and given Red Lodge’s nature as a tourism and recreation destination, there is concern about whether design guideline should be adopted, and if adopted how design guidelines should be used as a planning tool. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to determine if design guidelines should be created in the community of Red Lodge, and if guidelines should be applied to a specific district, and finally if the guidelines should be mandatory or advisory in nature.

Image 1: City of Red Lodge



Source: Author

Planning In the Rocky Mountain West:

The Rocky Mountain West is in a state of transition, changing from an area once viewed as vast, rugged, and remote, to a rediscovered region with favorable conditions for rapid growth and development. The transformation is characterized by rapid population growth, speculative real estate markets, and suburban style development with little regard for the unique cultural, historical, and natural values held by residents of the Rocky Mountain West. These changes are shifting the historical development patterns, cultural attitudes, economic status, and land and resource development once found in this region.

The transformation taking place in the Rocky Mountain West has been facilitated by advancements made in the fields of transportation and telecommunications along with and an overall increase in technology that has decreased the perception of isolation and increased accessibility to the region. The increased accessibility has produced a greater demand for the natural amenities and resources found in the Rocky Mountain West, primarily increased demand for land.

Conflict is often inevitable in areas experiencing transformation and rapid growth, and the Rocky Mountain West is no different. Private property rights have traditionally enjoyed strong support throughout the Rocky Mountain West, but the area is experiencing a growing trend in support of local planning, regulation, and control over private property (Jackson & Kuhlken, 2001). Disputes over the use of land, and the regulations which guide the development of land have produced a social disagreement in the region between advocates of personal property rights and those who support land use regulations and decision making processes. This conflict has forced many local, county, and even state governments to evolve their land use planning and resource management process.

The process is further complicated by outside, special interest groups attracted to the area. These groups range from the Wise Use Movement that promotes unregulated personal property rights and land use development to groups such as the Sierra Club that seeks to stop or at least slow development and conserve all natural areas.

Although there are extremes on both sides of the debate, many citizens value well planned and controlled growth and development. These groups have worked to shift the argument from pro-growth vs. anti-growth, to smart growth vs. careless growth. Larger cities and towns throughout the Rocky Mountain West have the resources to educate citizens, property owners, and developers about smart growth practices. These cities are often able to accommodate moderate growth and development, while preserving the natural beauty and integrity that has drawn people to the region. This has been accomplished by complimenting traditional zoning and comprehensive plans with design guidelines for historic districts or entrance corridors, or it has been accomplished by adopting form based codes for specific districts. Many larger cities in the Rocky Mountain West have adopted progressive land use planning techniques to combat the problems they faced early on in this fundamental transition.

Small communities and rural government agencies on the other hand can be disadvantaged when addressing the multiple issues and conflicts associated with rapid population growth, changing cultural attitudes, and land and resource development. Often, these communities do not have the resources,

such as a local planning department, to properly address these challenges. Communities that have not experienced rapid growth and development in the past may fall victim to development pressures and make decisions based on economic incentives and short term goals.

In many of the small Rocky Mountain communities experiencing rapid growth and development, land use planning, if conducted at all, is accomplished by zoning ordinances and building inspections (Jackson & Kuhlken, 2001). The communities may not have adopted a comprehensive plan to guide growth and development. This lack of planning may be due to lack of resources, or trepidation on the part of elected officials to enter into what is potentially a volatile political situation.

In some cases, small communities have taken advantage of State land grant universities offering planning education through extension services. Other communities have acquired funds to hire consulting firms to produce comprehensive plans. Some rural counties have formed planning boards, or created planning departments, as have some rural communities. These processes have allowed some small communities in the Rocky Mountain West to combat many of the problems associated with uncontrolled, rapid growth and development.

As previously stated some communities, particularly larger cities and towns in the Rocky Mountain West have enhanced their traditional land use planning and zoning regulations with more advanced planning tools. These tools have enabled communities to proactively address issues related to growth and development and provide citizens with well planned, sustainable places to live, work, and play. One tool that is becoming prominent in the Rocky Mountain West and throughout the United States is design guidelines and review. The use of design guidelines and review is an aesthetic control that is widely debated. It has many supporters; however, it has its critics as well. Design guidelines and review have been applied to districts in communities, such as entry way corridors or historic districts, or in some cases cover entire communities. As automobiles serve as the primary mode of transportation in the region, many communities have identifiable entry way corridors located where highways enter into the community. Red Lodge has identified four entryway corridors into the community.

Red Lodge Community Entrances:

The 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy identifies four primary Community Entrance districts. Each Community Entrance provides residents as well as visitors with an initial visual image depicting the character of Red Lodge. Much like Red Lodge itself, each Community Entrance has experienced growth and development. With the proper guidance and planning, entrances into the Red Lodge will provide a positive image to visitors and a warm welcome home to residents.

Entrances into the Red Lodge come from the four cardinal directions.

- U.S. Highway 212 provides the entrance into Red Lodge from the north and south.
- State Highway 308 provides the entrance into Red Lodge from the east
- State Highway 78 provides the entrance into Red Lodge from the west

Although there are similarities among Community Entrance corridors, each poses unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for future growth and development. The 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy summarizes the current character and land uses of each Community Entrance Corridor. The City of Red Lodge Land Use Map showing community entrance districts and other uses found in Red Lodge is displayed in Attachment 1.

Southern Entrance

Land use along the south entrance to Red Lodge is predominantly commercial, but U.S. Highway 212 borders Rock Creek for roughly 36% of the total frontage (total frontage is measured along both sides of the highway) between West Fork Road (formerly known as Ski Run Road) and 16th Street. Because most commercial buildings, parking lots, and signs are small, the cottonwoods along the creek dominate the view from the road in this area (Growth Policy, 21).

Northern Entrance

Entering Red Lodge from the north involves a sequence of varying visual impressions. The 212 North Corridor includes lands within the City of Red Lodge and Carbon County. The 212 North Corridor begins at Two Mile Bridge Road and extends down the valley floor to the intersection of 5th Street and Broadway Avenue. On the west side of U.S. Highway 212, city limits begin at Two Mile Bridge Road and consists of vacant land followed by the golf course. The golf course is followed by a mix of vacant parcels, vacant structures, and commercial and low density residential uses. Carbon County agricultural lands and rural residential lands extend down the east side of the highway from Two Mile Bridge Road to the fringe of existing commercial development. The Red Lodge Brewery, formerly the pea cannery, dominates the view to the east with its height and bulk as you enter 'town'. Mount Maurice and the Beartooth Plateau dominate the view to the south. The curve in the highway directs travelers' attention to the visitor center, which is followed by a mix of commercial and residential uses along the road. The entrance to the Central Business District is marked by the totem where Oakes Avenue veers west from Broadway Avenue (U.S. Highway 212). While the hospital complex and Sam's Tap Room will be dominant visual features, much of the frontage between Two Mile Bridge Road and State Highway 78 is currently vacant. Additional commercial development along this 212 North Corridor is occurring as a result of the extensions of city water mains discussed in Chapter 11, Infrastructure and City Services (Growth Policy, 21).

Eastern Entrance

The descent from the East Bench on State Highway 308 offers mountain vistas up the Rock Creek Valley and a postcard view across Red Lodge, showing off the city's compact form and definite center. The only development here occurs just before State Highway 308 intersects U.S. Highway 212, in an area where its visual impact is absorbed by the trees along Rock Creek (Growth Policy, 21).

Western Entrance

Travelers coming from the northwest on State Highway 78 pass dispersed commercial and residential uses, followed by industrial uses before entering city Limits. Entering city limits views of the cemetery, the rodeo grounds, Country Club Estates Subdivision and public lands are obvious before dropping down Brewery Hill from the West Bench into the city. Much of the frontage between the north edge of the Country Club Estates and the intersection of State Highway 78 and U.S. Highway 212 is currently low to mid density residential or undeveloped (Growth Policy, 21).

The four Community Entrance Corridors each display a unique character and diverse mix of land uses. All four corridors witness varying degrees of traffic volume and use at varying times throughout the

year. In recent years, commercial, residential, and industrial development has begun to intensify along U.S. Highway 212 along the northern entrance into Red Lodge. Commercial developments requiring large quantities of land have recently been approved for this corridor, including a new Red Lodge Ales facility, and the Bearthooth Medical Campus.

The northern entrance has also witnessed increased planning efforts in recent years. The Highway 212 Controlled Access Management Plan (CAMP) is one example of the increase in planning activities taking place along this corridor.

Image 2: U.S. Highway 212 Entering Red Lodge from the North



Source: Author

Residents of the many small communities north of Red Lodge, the city of Billings, and people traveling on Interstate 90 enter Red Lodge from the north. It is clear that the Northern Community Entrance is typically the first and last image of Red Lodge that residents and visitors have in their travels to and from the community. The Northern Community Entrance on U.S. Highway 212 experiences the highest volume of year round traffic, is witnessing commercial growth, and is the subject of an increasing amount of planning work. For these reasons the Northern Community Entrance is the ideal candidate for design guidelines advising future growth and development.

Planning in Red Lodge:

In order for design guidelines to be effective, a community must have a strong planning system established. The City of Red Lodge has been progressive in its planning activities since community planning first began in the early 1990's. The following is a brief history of community planning in Red Lodge and a description of how design guidelines relate to established planning documents and regulations.

The first Red Lodge Master Plan was completed and adopted by the City Council in 1995. The original Red Lodge Master Plan was the result of a planning effort conducted by the City of Red Lodge and the Bearthooth Front Community Forum, a local non-profit organization concerned with the overall quality of life in Red Lodge. The Red Lodge Master Plan was implemented and used until the City Council adopted the 2001 Red Lodge Growth Policy. The 2001 Growth Policy was the result of an extensive public participation led planning effort throughout the community.

In 2007, the Red Lodge City Council prompted the Red Lodge Planning Department to update the 2001 Growth Policy. The 2001 Red Lodge Growth Policy was the guiding document in the creation and implementation of the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy. The experience and knowledge of the city planning staff was enhanced by multiple public review and information sessions, public comments, and citizen participation to create the final Growth Policy which was adopted by the Red Lodge City Council in August, 2008. The overall purpose of the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy is to enhance and sustain the sense of place that has been established in the Red Lodge. The Growth Policy seeks to protect Red Lodge from the “Rapid, unplanned development that has eroded the character, livability, and appeal of small towns throughout the West” (Growth Policy, 2). Although the Growth Policy is not a regulatory document, Montana Statutes state that “after adoption of the Growth Policy, the City Council must be guided by and give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the Growth Policy” (MCA 76-1-605).

The 2008 Growth Policy is formulated into multiple chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of growth or development in Red Lodge. The 2008 Growth Policy consists of a policy statement that generally directs staff recommendations and City Council decisions. This statement is followed by a description of public involvement in developing the policy, facts guiding the policy, and an overarching goal upon which the policy is based. Finally, a catalog of investments and regulation strategies for implementing the policy are documented. Investment strategies are defined as an investment of time, money, or energy by the City of Red Lodge. Regulation strategies on the other hand, require an amendment to the Development Code, Growth Policy, or other planning documents that guide policy. The 2008 Growth Policy provides policy statements for the following districts and land use categories found in the City of Red Lodge: the central business district, the entrances to the city, residential neighborhoods, public lands, open space, trails and parks, and the wildland-urban interface.

POLICY & GOALS FOR COMMUNITY ENTRANCES:

The policy statement guiding Community Entrance districts in the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy states the following:

“Red Lodge will prevent sprawl by directing growth through incentives, regulations, and pricing mechanisms along with ensuring that development occurs both within desired spatial parameters and at densities that are high enough to support transit, walkability, and other positive characteristics of a compact community. Goals of the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy support Community Entrance urban renewal efforts and new developments that are complementary to the Central Business District. Development in the community entrances shall include rich architectural, historical, and neighborhood texture and shall not compete with the Central Business District. Maintaining a healthy central business district is a vital goal of the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy” (Growth Policy, 24).

The policy statement is followed by the Community Entrance goal which states:

“Classic strip development and sprawl will not be allowed. Development at each of the four entrances must present Red Lodge as a unique and welcoming community. As property develops the gridded street network will be expanded into the Community Entrances in order to promote connectivity. The entrances to Red Lodge shall grow and develop around a network of city streets and the planned system of trails, parks and open spaces“(Growth Policy, 24).

There are multiple investment and regulatory strategies found in the 2008 Growth Policy supporting the policy statement and goal listed above. Of these strategies, the following play a prominent role in shaping the design guidelines for the Northern Community Entrance corridor.

Community Entrance Investment Strategies shaping Design Guidelines:

- The efficient functioning of the highways serving Red Lodge shall be upgraded to ensure that points of access are controlled, speed limits are appropriate, classic strip development and sprawl are discouraged, safe wildlife crossings are created, and multi-modal connections are provided (Growth Policy, 24).
- “Welcome to Red Lodge” signs shall be placed at all four entrances to the city in accordance with Montana Department of Transportation regulations. Community organizations should be encouraged to participate in developing the entry signs (Growth Policy, 25).
- Parking should be provided at community entrances and trailheads. These should have informational signs and maps of the trails system (Growth Policy, 25).
- Major commercial developments impose additional costs on public facilities and services. They are potentially inconsistent with the existing community character and future community objectives. The role of such development must be appropriately limited (Growth Policy, 25).
- Managing runoff will encourage planning for entire sites rather than piecemeal division of land. The coarse soils of the Red Lodge area make infiltration a viable runoff management strategy in many cases as long as storm or melt water is directed onto an area with appropriate vegetative cover (a traditional grass hay meadow is fine - a manicured lawn is not, although lawn areas can be used to convey runoff to infiltration areas) and at least some fine textured material in the upper four feet of the soil profile. The presence of clay lenses in the soil makes infiltration slow in parts of the city (Growth Policy, 25).

Community Entrance Regulatory Strategies shaping Design Guidelines:

- The Red Lodge Development Code requires that new developments have safe access to public streets and roads. The Red Lodge Development Code shall require development in the 212 north Corridor to adhere to the Controlled Access Management Plan in order to discourage strip development. The city shall encourage public right of way connections to build on the city’s existing network of local streets, augmenting the Controlled Access Management Plan (Growth Policy, 26).
- All developments will be required to provide adequate off-street parking, including parking for the disabled. Shared access and appropriately designed parking will be required (Growth Policy, 26).
- The Development Code will prohibit continuous curb cuts and control the width, angle, grade, visibility, street and driveways access to highways. The use of reverse frontage shall be required

for all Community Entrances. Site design standards shall require the placement of structures to shield parking from view of the highway to combat typical strip development and aid in keeping Red Lodge's entrances unique (Growth Policy, 26).

- The city shall review large scale development applications with specific development and site plan review criteria. A large-scale development is any development that will contain thirty-five or more dwelling units or two thousand or more square feet of commercial or industrial building space (Growth Policy, 26).
- A major commercial development is any that proposes 10,000 square feet or more of commercial or industrial space. Major commercial developments shall design buildings to include specific elements for adaptive multi-tenant re-use. Such elements may include but are not limited to compartmentalized construction, including plumbing, electrical service, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. The building design shall also allow for: the interior subdivision of the structure into separate tenancies; facades that readily adapt to multiple entrances and adapt to entrances on all but one side of the building; and other elements of design which facilitate the multi-tenant re-use of the building and site (Growth Policy, 26).
- The Red Lodge Development Code will protect pedestrians by requiring developments to provide sidewalks or trails and by prohibiting cash-in-lieu payments. Regulations shall allow for cash-in-lieu of sidewalk payments only within the Red Lodge Country Club Estates. The installation of bicycle racks should also be encouraged (Growth Policy, 27).
- The appearance of development in the community entrances should be consistent with Red Lodge's historic image. All development in the entry corridors will be subject to Design Review. Community Entrance Design Review standards shall be augmented to articulate site design standards to enhance the quality of development in the entry corridors and the arrival sequence pattern as you enter the community. The standards will not be the same as those used in the central business district, but they should encourage developers to adapt themes found in the city's historic commercial architecture and site layout patterns. Design standards shall incorporate additional architectural detailing, reverse frontage, improved public spaces, provisions for alternative modes of transportation, hardy, native landscape, and the implementation of strategies of the Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development (Growth Policy, 27).
- Zoning and other regulations shall encourage infill development and a mix of compatible uses in the entry corridors including a mix of mid to high density housing (Growth Policy, 28).

LAND USES FOUND IN COMMUNITY ENTRANCE

The Northern Community Entrance is zoned as a Community Entrance (CE) district. The CE district allows a number of land uses ranging from commercial/retail to agriculture. According to the 2006 Red Lodge Development Code, the purpose of the CE zoning district is to: "Provide areas for highway-oriented commercial and limited light manufacturing uses" (Development Code, 2).

According to the 2008 Growth Policy, the Community Entrance land use designation should be viewed as: "An area for mixed uses, including healthcare, residential, office, retail, and small scale industrial uses that are more urban in character. Site plan standards shall require reverse frontage, controlled access, landscaping and other appropriate design considerations to shape development patterns in this area and complement the city center. A continuation of the city street network is desired in these areas.

The highway corridors should be dramatically changed from the current single purpose function of moving vehicles to multi-modal corridors” (Growth Policy, 43).

Image 3: Beginning of Northern Community Entrance



Source: Author

In order to determine if design guidelines are appropriate for the Northern Community Entrance, the following presents a history of design guidelines, as well as critiques of and support for their creation and implementation.

Design Guidelines as a Planning Tool:

Aesthetic controls of land use seek to protect or enhance the quality of urban and rural life by regulating the appearance, additions and changes, and land uses in the built environment. Aesthetic controls are implemented in a wide variety of forms, and they can regulate an equally broad array of factors found in the built environment. Traditional or Euclidean zoning regulations, form based codes, subdivision regulations, and design guidelines and review all have the ability to shape the aesthetics found in the built environment. These regulations typically address a diverse mix of aesthetic characteristics including: building size and shape, configuration, orientation, minuet architectural details, facades, colors, and materials (George & Campbell, 2000).

Scheer (1994) broadly defines design guidelines and review as “the process by which private and public development proposals receive independent criticism under the sponsorship of the local government, whether through informal or formalized process.” Schiffman, (1988) claimed that design guidelines and review “seeks to promote the orderly and harmonious growth of a community in a manner that reflects public determination of what the city or county should look like in the future.” In relation to other land use regulations, design guidelines and review are commonly used by communities in two

basic forms. First of all, design guidelines and review can be written into zoning codes or other regulatory documents, and are mandatory or legislated. On the other hand, design guidelines and review can be advisory, and they may simply advise a developer or property owner on the design preferred by a community for a specific area or the entire community. Aesthetic controls must work in coordination with existing community planning documents and policies. They are ineffective as standalone documents or policies.

Although design guidelines and review are a relatively new phenomenon in the Rocky Mountain West and across the U.S., local jurisdictions are rapidly adopting design guidelines into their planning repertoire. In a national survey, Lightner (1992) found that 78 percent of communities in the U.S. have implemented some form of design review. This study found that when examining larger communities, design review was applied to a variety of areas throughout these communities. Seventy-nine percent of large communities implemented design review in historic districts, 46 percent for downtown areas, 25 percent for neighborhood commercial areas, and 21 percent for waterfronts or other scenic areas. In a 1994 survey of 370 cities and towns across the country, Scheer found that 83 percent of towns responding to the survey used some form of design guidelines and review. In addition to implementing design guidelines for specific districts or corridors, 85 percent of the communities utilizing this tool, included design guidelines throughout the city. Scheer's survey supports the statement that design guidelines and review are a relatively new phenomenon, as 60 percent of the communities surveyed had implemented design review in the previous 10 years (Scheer, 1994).

The implementation of design guidelines and review, like many land use regulations, are widely debated in many communities in the United States. Supporters of design guidelines and review claim that these regulations enhance the quality of life and preserve the unique character and vitality of a place, while protecting property values. Successful design guidelines typically contain an initial policy statement that describes the desired public good found in the built environment. The second component provides a performance oriented statement that describes a specific action or treatment to the built environment. These first two essential components are usually followed by supplementary information and illustrations. Supplementary information provides definitions or further instructions to achieve the public good. Illustrations are an important component in design guidelines. Illustrations, in the form of photographs and sketches, are essential to clarify the intent of the guideline and the subsequent public good the guideline seeks to achieve. It is difficult to convey ideas and strategies for achieving public interest through quality design with text alone. Illustrations can provide developers, designers, and concerned citizens with a visual description of the intended public benefit.

Critics of design guidelines and review claim these regulations are merely cosmetic, overly bureaucratic, and a violation to free speech and private property rights. Scheer summarizes the criticisms of design guidelines and review into two basic categories: easy problems and endemic problems (Scheer, 1994). Easy problems are problems associated with the "newness" of the design review process. These problems are essentially due to mechanical difficulties and will eventually be solved as this regulation comes of age. Endemic problems on the other hand are more difficult to identify, much less solve. Endemic problems are based on four root issues: power, freedom, justice, and aesthetics.

Based on the fact that easy problems typically associated with the newness and structural aspects of design guidelines seldom prevent the successful implementation of design guidelines, endemic problems will be the focus of this analysis. Endemic problems are more complex and must be identified during the process of creating design guidelines in order to determine the feasibility of this planning tool. The following will describe the four aspects of endemic problems as described by Scheer.

Power: The fundamental question when considering the issue of power is the question of “who”. Who will judge design guidelines, whose tastes will matter, whose interest is it to control the quality of development taking place? Within this overall issue of power, Scheer identifies two specific concerns with design guidelines. First, review of design guidelines is the only field where a lay person (typically a city planner) is allowed to rule over professionals (typically architects). Secondly, design review is grounded in personal, not public interests. Scheer states that the architects hired for design should be the judge of the quality and appropriateness of designs, with the single exception being the design of public spaces. In this case, Scheer acknowledges that planning staff and community input are appropriate and legitimate.

Freedom: Scheer argues that design guidelines and review infringe on the individual freedom that is inherently protected by the Constitution of the United States. Specifically, “Is design review a violation of the First Amendment right to free speech?” and more generally is there government interest in overriding the free speech of design? Scheer argues that a community would need to define a very powerful public interest that would override the protection of the free speech that she believes is afforded to architectural design. Scheer also warns that design guidelines, by excluding diverse design, can suppress a minority viewpoint and perspective. The final argument regarding freedom states that design guidelines reward ordinary performance or design and punishes extraordinary performance or design. This argument is grounded in the belief that design guidelines produce monotonous urban form and do not allow architects to utilize their creativity in designing buildings and places.

Justice: The primary criticism raised in relation to justice is that some forms of design review are more “fair” than others. Essentially, some communities or districts within a community have more transparent and consistent guidelines and review procedures than others. Specifically, Scheer criticizes design guidelines as being arbitrary and vague with judgments not restricted to the locations intended to be covered by design guidelines. It is feared that once design guidelines are adopted for a specific area, the guidelines will be applied to all sections of a city by overzealous planners. Another issue raised is that design guidelines merely represent a “starting point” for untrained planners and members of a design review board to over regulate a site or specific building. Finally, Scheer claims that design guidelines, and more specifically design review, lack due process in appeal processes and is often difficult to protest.

Aesthetics: The final endemic problem concerns aesthetics, and the often difficult judgment that is made between quality design and poor design. According to Scheer, this judgment could be simplified by completely removing aesthetic characteristics from design guidelines. Instead the focus should be on the “shared values” identified by community citizens and planning officials. According to this concern, the concept of beauty and what is or is not aesthetically pleasing varies in a large degree among

individuals. Furthermore, it is argued that principles found in design guidelines tend to be abstract and universal and do not address site or community specific concerns. Finally, the aesthetic criticism is used once again as a platform to argue that design guidelines and design review foster monotonous, uniform places that lack creativity and diversity.

Each endemic problem must be addressed during the process of creating and implementing design guidelines. The following is a case study of design guidelines created for the Northern Community Entrance, followed by an evaluation of the design guidelines based on Scheer's endemic problems.

Information gathered through the review of literature and the analysis of design guidelines, was combined with the goals and policies of the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy to produce design guidelines for the Northern Community Entrance corridor of Red Lodge. The design guidelines are currently a work in progress and will ideally be completed before the fall of 2009. In addition to the text provided in the draft design guidelines, photographs, sketches, and drawings will be used to illustrate community visions and goals promoted by the design guidelines.

Northern Community Entrance Design Guidelines:

Design guidelines are intended to guide the general form and relationship of development along the Northern Community Entrance, in relation to the plans, goals, and objectives of the City of Red Lodge, the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy, and citizens of Red Lodge. The primary source guiding the creation of the Northern Community Entrance design guidelines were the goals, policies, and strategies for the community entrance districts found in the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy. The information found in the Growth Policy was supported by a review of design guidelines implemented by communities throughout the United States, conversations with planners who have created and implemented design guidelines, and a review of literature on design guidelines in the planning field. Using this information, the design guidelines were created by the author, CTA Senior Planner Brent Moore, and City of Red Lodge Planning Staff.

ROLE of DESIGN GUIDELINES:

The following design guidelines are intended to provide the citizens of Red Lodge, private property owners, and developers in Red Lodge with an advisory document that will:

- Present clear development concepts based on goals found in the City of Red Lodge 2008 Growth Policy.
- Provide citizens, developers, property owners, and designers transparent guidelines for future growth, development, and re-development taking place along the Northern Community Entrance corridor.
- Provide text and illustration of modern and sustainable design concepts to make the Northern Community Entrance corridor special and unique.
- Design Guidelines are broadly focused and are meant to encourage the creative application of design principles.
- Design Guidelines value creativity, rather than conformity.

- Design Guidelines are meant to increase the long term valuation in property, as well as promote sustainable, functional, and aesthetically pleasing development along the Northern Community Entrance.

The design guidelines are structured to provide a clear understanding of a shared community vision and goals through a series of policy statements, followed by guidelines to achieve the intended vision. A policy statement is provided, documenting the overlying theme on which the guidelines are based, followed by guidelines to help implement the policy.

Design Guidelines are provided in the following categories: Building Orientation, Building Mass and Scale, Parking, and Vehicular and Pedestrian Access.

Building Orientation:

Policy Statement:

The orientation and arrangement of buildings plays a significant role in guiding the development envisioned for the Northern Community Entrance corridor. Proper building placement within and throughout a site or development can create uniform street edges, provide sustainable open spaces, and create an aesthetically pleasing environment when entering Red Lodge from the north. Performance standards found in the 2008 Growth Policy, such as reverse frontage and shielding parking lots with attractive buildings and landscaping, will ensure that sites are compatible with the development in the Central Business District. Building orientation guidelines support the performance standards, and will facilitate development that capitalizes on the natural beauty that draws many visitors and residents to Red Lodge.

Guidelines:

1. Buildings and structures should be oriented towards U.S. 212.
 - Buildings should be located adjacent to the street or immediately behind pedestrian spaces in order to create a definable street edge.
 - The front of a building should not be oriented towards the back of another building.
 - Orientation of buildings towards parking facilities should be a secondary concern when placing buildings. Orienting buildings on a site towards U.S. 212, and pedestrian and bicycle trails will create an uninterrupted, continuous, and uniform street edge.
2. Buildings setbacks should be at uniform distances.
 - Buildings that are setback at varying distances from U.S. 212 interrupt the street edge created by other developments.
 - Minimum setback requirements may be relaxed in order to encourage new development to be built in a uniform fashion, at or near the public right of way.
 - All buildings oriented towards U.S. 212 should not vary at a distance of more than 20% from the setbacks of surrounding buildings.
3. Close attention should be paid to the arrangement of buildings within developments.
 - The location and mixing of uses should be compatible with adjacent uses to avoid any possible nuisances.

- Buildings should be compatible with height, mass, scale, and aesthetic character of surrounding uses.
 - Buildings should be arranged to facilitate the maximum amount of shared facilities, such as surface parking lots and driveways.
4. Building orientation and arrangement should define and create open space.
- Buildings within a multiple unit development should cluster together to create open public space, such as parks, green spaces, or plazas.
 - Public open spaces should be designed to be used for active recreation or transportation between or among developments.
 - When there is a large distance between buildings, landscaping should be used to define public space and bring the development to human scale

Building Mass and Scale:

Policy Statement:

Building mass and scale play a substantial role in the attractiveness of Community Entrances. Designing buildings at the proper mass and scale will help Red Lodge obtain many of its goals and objectives for future growth along the Northern Community Entrance. The 2008 Growth Policy states that development and re-development shall include a high quality architectural element that does not compete with the Central Business District. Much of the development projected to take place along the Northern Community Entrance corridor has extensive land use requirements. Building mass and scale shall be as compact as possible, and sites should be developed to decrease sprawl. Building mass and scale shall emphasize the human scale, and not dominate the natural beauty and historic architectural integrity of Red Lodge.

Guidelines:

1. Buildings should avoid long, monotonous fronts, sides, and facades. Long, continuous building fronts make a building appear unfriendly and not at human scale.
 - If a building or structure has a long, continuous front or side wall, the wall can be broken into individual, equal sized bays to provide variation, depth, and a human perspective to large structures. Human scaled fronts and facades improve the pedestrian experience, and remove the unfriendly perception of large buildings.
 - On large lots the building of a series of smaller, compatible structures is preferred to the construction of a single large building.
2. Developments should mix compatible uses within structures and throughout entire developments.
 - Commercial/Retail uses should be located on the first floors of buildings, with residential and office uses located above the street level.
 - Minimum setback regulations should be relaxed for mixed use and commercial buildings to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide a walkable commercial space.
3. Structures should provide variation in architectural components of building fronts and facades to establish a human scale.

- Variation in materials, textures, colors, and patterns can reduce the perceived massiveness of a building, and make large buildings appear at the human scale.
 - Architectural features such as windows, columns, and piers can decrease the perceived size of a large building and bring the building size back to human scale.
4. Traditional floor to floor heights should be maintained for all developments.
 - Traditional ceiling heights in residential developments are 8 – 9 ft. in height.
 - Traditional ceiling heights in commercial and office space are 10-15 ft. in height on the first floor and 8-12 ft. in height on subsequent floors.
 - The use of horizontal trims, contrasting colors, textures, or surfaces can define floor changes
 5. The City of Red Lodge may consider relaxing maximum lot coverage and height regulations to advance goals found in the 2008 Growth Policy and design guidelines, on a case by case basis.
 - New development should adhere to regulations regarding building mass and scale as found in the City of Red Lodge Development Code.
 - Maximum heights of buildings found in Community Entrances are 35 ft.
 - Maximum lot coverage of buildings found in Community Entrances is 80%.
 - The City of Red Lodge will consider relaxing maximum lot coverage and height regulations
 6. Buildings shall be designed for re-use
 - Buildings within a new development should be built to house multiple uses and tenants.
 - Large buildings should be designed for the potential internal subdivision of the building. The building should include facades and frontages that are adaptable to creating multiple street-oriented entrances.
 - Infrastructure, such as plumbing, electrical, and heating and cooling should be compartmentalized and accessible for multiple tenants.

Parking:

Policy Statement:

The design, placement, and number of parking facilities have a substantial impact on the function and aesthetic value of any development along the Northern Community Entrance. Design guidelines addressing parking issues will help the City of Red Lodge achieve goals and objectives for development taking place along the corridor. Although future pedestrian and bicycle paths will connect new development along the corridor with existing uses in Red Lodge, most people will be traveling to this area by automobile. Therefore, it is important that parking is provided in the most efficient, convenient, and unobtrusive manner throughout the Northern Community Entrance

Guidelines:

1. Developments should provide adequate (as defined in the Development Code), but not excessive surface parking.
 - Shared parking techniques should be utilized by developments or buildings with different peak use times.

- Shared parking facilities should be accessed by secondary or connector streets within new development, not by U.S. 212.
 - Developments should utilize on-street parking as much as possible to provide the adequate amount of parking
2. The City of Red Lodge may consider maximum parking requirements for new development constructed in the Northern Community Entrance corridor.
 - A maximum number of parking spaces should be established for the size or use of buildings and structures in new developments.
 - Parking requirements should be decreased for developments that incorporate design guideline goals and objectives into plans.
 3. Development projects should minimize the negative visual impacts of surface parking lots.
 - The majority of parking shall be located at the rear or sides of buildings to emphasize the building and open space as the primary component of any development.
 - Buildings should be oriented towards U.S. 212 or pedestrian and bicycle paths. Orientation towards surface parking lots should be a secondary concern.
 4. New development projects should avoid large expanses of surface parking lots.
 - Large surface parking lots should be divided into smaller, multiple lots.
 - Surface parking lots should contain natural landscape features and landscaped pedestrian paths.
 - Small, non-contiguous surface parking lots should be connected to other parking lots, and buildings by pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Access and Circulation:

Policy Statement:

The City of Red Lodge has worked with the Montana Department of Transportation to create and implement the U.S. 212 CAMP. New development taking place along the Northern Entrance corridor should follow recommendations found in the CAMP as well as goals and objectives found in the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy. Sites should incorporate the extension of the gridded network of streets to compliment the CAMP. New development should provide for multi-modal connections and amenities, as well as shared approaches and access points.

Guidelines:

1. Automobile access from U.S. 212 to new development should be restricted to strategic access points identified by the CAMP
 - The CAMP has identified strategic locations for ½, ¾, and full access points connecting U.S. 212 to future development.
 - Development taking place along the corridor should provide only the minimum number of curve cuts and driveway access points. Development projects should work together to share curve cuts and driveways as much as possible.
 - Internal automobile circulation should be planned as an organized, clearly identifiable, hierarchy of roads.

- Roads within new development should not exceed the minimum width required by the City of Red Lodge.
 - Traffic calming techniques should be used to make circulation throughout new development safe, friendly, and enjoyable for all modes of transportation.
2. Development projects should include a network of paths and trails to encourage and enable multi-modal transportation throughout the Northern Community Entrance corridor.
- All buildings, parking lots, and open spaces should provide access to the multi-purpose trail proposed in the CAMP.
 - Bicycle parking structures and spaces should be provided at strategic designated locations within all new development or redevelopment.
 - Signage, road markings, and way-finding should be provided to help facilitate bicycle transportation.
 - Where bicycle and multi-purpose trails cross automobile lanes, unique design features should be used to identify bicycle and multi-purpose trails. Designated crossings, changes in color, textures, or materials are examples of unique features that can be utilized.

The design guidelines listed above were created based on information gathered through review of literature and the analysis of design guidelines used by communities throughout the Rocky Mountain West. Many of the criticisms of design guidelines found in the literature review were addressed in the creation of the design guidelines.

Endemic problems were acknowledged, although indirectly, when determining the most appropriate way to create and implement design guidelines in Red Lodge. The decisions were made through a series of meetings and conversations between the Red Lodge Planning Department, primarily staff planner Lindsay Johnson, Brent Moore, a Senior Planner with CTA Architects and Engineers and former planning director of Red Lodge, and the author.

The first issue that was addressed concerned the best geographic location in Red Lodge to implement design guidelines. Through an academic literature review including a review of design guidelines adopted by communities throughout the United States, it was determined that communities often adopt corridor specific guidelines, rather than guidelines covering entire communities. The review indicated that design guidelines were most often applied to historic districts or highway corridors leading into communities.

The Red Lodge Zoning Code and Growth Policy identifies four specific “community entrance corridors” that provide access to the central community from the surrounding areas. These corridors were determined to be the ideal location to begin the discussion of where to apply design guidelines. After identifying the community entrance corridors as the best location to adopt design guidelines, the question then shifted to whether design guidelines should be created for and applied to all four corridors, or to a single corridor.

As previously discussed, each corridor is unique, specifically when considering land uses, traffic volume, development intensity, and topography. For these reasons, it was determined that the most appropriate process would be to create design guidelines specific to a single corridor. The Northern Community Entrance Corridor was selected, based on the fact that it is the primary entrance into and out of the community, it is home to the highest volume of year round traffic, and it is anticipated that the corridor will continue to experience growth and development.

The endemic problems of power and justice came into consideration in the selection of the Northern Community Entrance corridor as the initial location to create and implement design guidelines. When considering power, did we, as planners, have the power and knowledge to determine what constitutes quality or poor design in this corridor? Does the community have the power to require, or even suggest the appropriate style and design a developer or property owner should use? In regard to justice, is it fair to adopt design guidelines for one community entrance corridor and not the other three? Will this place an unfair burden on property owners or developers considering developing land along the corridor?

These questions, initially raised when determining the most appropriate location for design guidelines and review, led to the next principle issue: Should the design guidelines be regulatory and written into the zoning code, or should the design guidelines be used as an advisory document that simply provides citizens, property owners, and developers a document indicating the community's vision of quality design for the Northern Community Entrance Corridor? To answer this fundamental question, we addressed multiple issues. First of all, the development pattern currently taking place in and around Red Lodge was considered. As previously stated, the Northern Community Entrance Corridor has witnessed increased growth and development in the recent years. Two major commercial developments have recently been approved, and initial construction began on these projects in the late summer of 2008. These projects included a new facility for Red Lodge Ales, and the Beartooth Hospital Complex.

A principle concern of adopting design guidelines as a mandatory measure dealt with the perception of over regulation. The city recently adopted a downtown assessment and action plan as well as a trails plan. This led to concern that adopting another plan or regulatory document may give citizens, property owners, and developers the perception of government interference and over regulation. Additionally, the community's small population and the number of able citizens willing to serve on a design review board presented an additional concern. Although the community of Red Lodge is generally regarded as having a highly educated population, there was concern with filling a design review board with citizens with ample knowledge of design related issues.

These issues and concerns are similar to issues and concerns Scheer has raised with the adoption of mandatory design guidelines and review. The issue of power, as defined by Scheer, once again was taken into consideration. Specifically, who would be the judge of quality design? Without a properly formulated design review board, design decisions would have to be made by planning staff which may have created skepticism in the development and design communities. The issue of justice came into consideration as well. If a project is denied on the basis of design, Scheer argues that often the architect and developer financing the project must either drop the project all together or continue on with a project that has been altered from the original plan. This issue may cause property owners or developers to choose alternative locations for projects which is not the intention of design guidelines.

The endemic problems of power and justice were once again addressed in the decision to create advisory design guidelines. Through the discussion of these issues, in the general context of development in Red Lodge, and specifically, along the Northern Community Entrance Corridor, it was determined that design guidelines would be most successful as an advisory tool. Although an advisory document does not have the same regulatory power as mandatory design guidelines, we felt that advisory design guidelines would provide property owners and developers with a consistent framework depicting the community's vision for the area.

Once the decision was made to create design guidelines as an advisory document, the next issue to be addressed regarded the structure and content of the design guidelines. A literature review and an analysis of adopted design guidelines indicated that design guidelines vary in the design detail that they address. Some design guidelines are extremely specific, and regulate the slightest architectural detail. Others focus on broad elements of design, such as building bulk and orientation, parking issues, and site access.

With the knowledge that design guidelines vary greatly in the design detail that they address, it was necessary to determine how specific the Northern Community Entrance design guidelines should be in order to be effective. This question was based not only on the context of development taking place in Red Lodge, but it was also based on the context of the design guidelines serving as an advisory document. Ultimately, it was determined that the most successful design guidelines focus less on specific architectural elements and focus more on general themes and goals valued by the community and articulated in the 2008 Red Lodge Growth Policy.

This decision regarding the content of design guidelines forced us to address the issue of aesthetics, as described by Scheer. Here it is noted that many critics of design guidelines have suggested that specific aesthetic or architectural elements should be removed from design guidelines, and guidelines should instead focus on shared community values. This is precisely what was done in the case of the Northern Community Entrance Corridor of Red Lodge. Instead of focusing on specific building color, exterior materials, or acceptable window trim material, the Northern Community Entrance Corridor design guidelines promote general community goals that are based in four categories: Building Orientation, Building Mass and Scale, Parking, and Access and Circulation. Scheer questions a community's ability to regulate the artistic freedom of architects and designers. This was not an issue in Red Lodge. Montana, like a majority of states, provides communities with the ability to regulate land uses based on aesthetics alone (Garvin & Leroy, 2003). Therefore, the issue of freedom as described by Scheer was not addressed during the creation of design guidelines.

In conclusion, it was determined that the design guidelines created for the Northern Community Entrance Corridor would be used as an advisory document to be distributed to citizens, property owners, and developers throughout the community. When completed, the design guidelines will be available at public places, such as the city library, city parks, and even public schools. The guidelines will also be available in the office of the Chamber of Commerce and at local real estate agencies. As previously discussed, advisory design guidelines do not have the same regulatory impact as mandatory design guidelines. Property owners and developers may choose to ignore the design guidelines and simply meet the minimum zoning standards required by the community.

It is our hope that property owners and developers will find value in adhering to the design guidelines. If property owners and developers follow the guidelines, the design of individual buildings and sites, as well as the corridor as a whole will improve. The property value of all development found along the corridor will increase. If the city is upfront with property owners and developers regarding the design that they envision for the corridor, and property owners and developers meet these design suggestions, it is likely that both sides will save valuable time and resources. The economic struggles found throughout the U.S. have had a negative impact on both property developers and municipalities. In this current economic downturn, it is even more important that communities and developers and property owners work together to insure that the built environment of communities throughout our country continue achieve high design standards.

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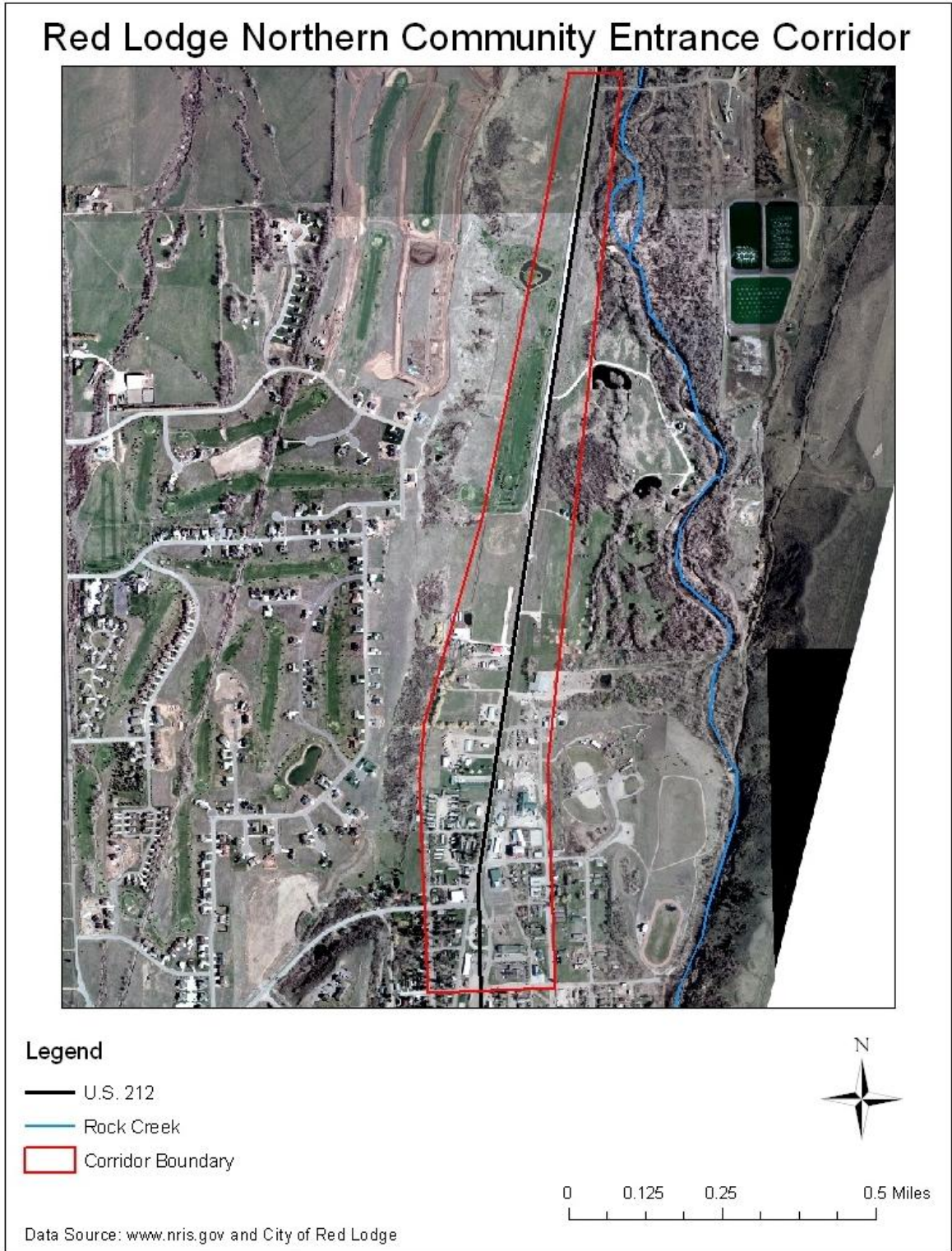
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Attachment 1: City of Red Lodge Land Use Map



Source: City of Red Lodge

Attachment 2: Northern Community Entrance Corridor Boundaries



Map Prepared by Author

