

A G E N D A R E P O R T

DATE June 21, 2005

ITEM Resolution No. 9501, Adopt the Great Falls Growth Policy

INITIATED BY Great Falls City-County Planning Board

ACTION REQUESTED Adopt Resolution No. 9501

PREPARED & PRESENTED BY Andrew Finch, Senior Planner

REVIEWED & APPROVED BY Benjamin Rangel, Planning Director

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the City Commission approve the following Motion.

MOTION:

“I move the City Commission adopt Resolution No. 9501.”

SYNOPSIS: Montana law requires a municipality’s zoning code and subdivision regulations to be in compliance with an adopted growth policy. The growth policy currently used by the City of Great Falls was adopted in 2003 by the City and Cascade County for the City-County Planning Board’s entire jurisdictional area. Due to the dissolution of the City-County Planning Board, effective July 1, 2005, the Great Falls City-County Growth Policy will no longer be in effect. Therefore, a growth policy for the City of Great Falls must be prepared and adopted before July 1.

Montana law requires preparation of a growth policy by a jurisdiction’s planning board, upon request by the governing body. It also allows a growth policy to be prepared for only a portion of a planning board’s or governing body’s jurisdictional area. To that end, and upon request by the City of Great Falls in a letter dated April 27, 2005, the Great Falls City-County Planning Board prepared and approved a growth policy for the City of Great Falls and recommended adoption by the City Commission.

At its regular meeting of June 7, 2005, pursuant to MCA 76-1-604, the City Commission adopted a resolution of intention to adopt the proposed growth policy. Resolution No. 9493 set June 21, 2005 as the date for the City Commission to consider adoption of the Great Falls Growth Policy. A notice of the passage of the resolution of intention was published in the Great Falls Tribune June 12, 2005.

BACKGROUND: On April 26, 2005, the Cascade County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to dissolve the Great Falls City-County Planning Board, effective July 1, 2005. As a result, the Great Falls City Commission approved the creation of a City Planning Advisory Board on May 17th, effective June 17th. This new Board will advise the City Commission and Departments on planning issues, including zoning, subdivisions, annexations, long-range planning and transportation.

In order to ensure this new Board is able to provide continued, uninterrupted planning services, guidance and advice, the City asked the City-County Planning Board to prepare amendments to the current Great Falls City-County Growth Policy to reflect the jurisdiction of the City only. It is

important that the City have a current and adopted growth policy for its jurisdiction so that zone changes and annexations can be legally processed.

To that end, amendments have been made to the existing Great Falls City-County Growth Policy. Most references to the Great Falls City-County Planning Board and County lands and operations in the City-County jurisdictional area have been removed. Although a full update of the Growth Policy is probably warranted some time in the near future, such an effort could not be made before July 1st due to the extensive research, analysis and public input that would be required. Therefore, the revisions have been limited to only those essential to make it clear that this is a growth policy for the City of Great Falls and does not cover a City-County jurisdictional area.

Pursuant to state law, the City Commission passed a resolution on June 7, 2005 to consider adoption of the Growth Policy at its regular meeting on June 21, 2005.

Due to the short timeframe and brevity of the changes, public notice was limited to an announcement at the April 26, 2005 City-County Planning Board meeting; a legal notice published on May 8th in the Great Falls Tribune; notice on the City of Great Falls and City-County Planning websites; a public hearing before the City-County Planning Board on May 24th; passage of Resolution No. 9493 on June 7th, announcing the City's intent to consider adoption of the growth policy; and, publication of passage of the resolution of intention in the Great Falls Tribune on June 12, 2005. The draft Growth Policy has been available on the website since May 6th with paper copies available at the Planning Office and the Great Falls Public Library. No comments have been received, and no comments were received at the public hearing before the Planning Board or at the City Commission meeting of June 7, 2005.

Attachments: 1) Great Falls Growth Policy
2) Great Falls City-County Planning Board Resolution
3) City Resolution No. 9493
4) City Resolution No. 9501

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, under the provisions of Title 76, Chapter 1, Part 6, Montana Code Annotated, the Great Falls City-County Planning Board is authorized the responsibility for preparation of a growth policy for all or a portion of the jurisdictional area of the Board, upon request by the City and/or County; and,

WHEREAS, on April 26, 2005, the Cascade County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to dissolve the Great Falls City-County Planning Board and associated jurisdictional area, effective July 1, 2005; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Great Falls, in order to ensure the continued and uninterrupted provision of planning services within the Great Falls incorporated City Limits, has requested that the City-County Planning Board prepare a growth policy for the City through revision of the current Great Falls City-County Growth Policy; and,

WHEREAS, the City-County Planning Board caused to be published in the Great Falls Tribune on May 8, 2005, a notice of public hearing describing the hearing to be conducted on May 24, 2005, and provided for public comment through notice of availability and on-line review through the City website; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with state statutes, on May 24, 2005, the City-County Planning Board did conduct a public hearing on the Growth Policy revisions, to provide the public an opportunity for comment and to speak for or against the revision of the Policy; and,

WHEREAS, after consideration of the above actions and comments provided by the public, the City-County Planning Board has determined that the revisions to the Great Falls City-County Growth Policy are appropriate and acceptable, and that the revised document should be adopted as the Great Falls Growth Policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND RECOMMENDED BY THE GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD:

That the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana adopt the Great Falls Growth Policy as the official growth policy for the City of Great Falls.

PASSED by the Great Falls City-County Planning Board this 24th day of May, 2005.

GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

William O. Bronson, President

ATTEST:

Benjamin M. Rangel, Secretary