

# Carbon County

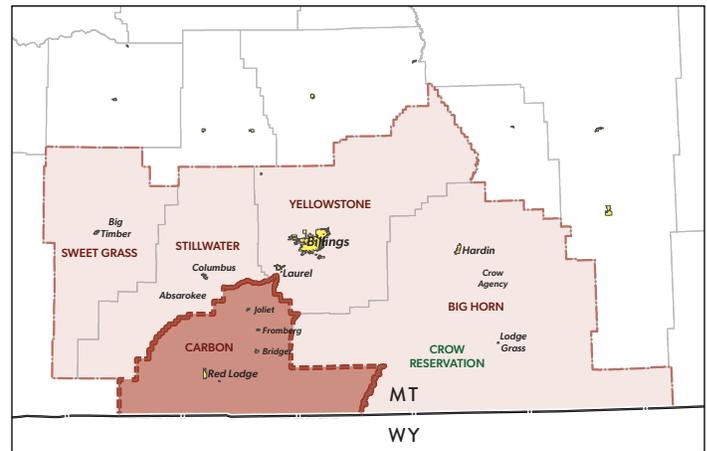
## ANALYSIS

Housing development patterns and needs in Carbon County reflect the diversity of the economy, perhaps more noticeably than its neighbors in the BRCD region. Moving away from an agriculture-based economy and toward a tourism and serviced-based one in the last several decades, the county has seen a shift in population from the Clarks Fork Valley to the City of Red Lodge, and to a lesser extent, smaller and more affordable communities closer to Billings.

Similar to Big Horn, Stillwater and Sweet Grass Counties, Carbon County's history of growth has resulted in an older housing stock, with new units reflecting a marketplace bearing higher-end, single family homes mostly in unincorporated areas. Slow multifamily growth in existing communities has exacerbated the housing shortage for middle-income people who are getting priced out, while a growing number of Billings commuters, newcomers and secondary-home owners are buying up inventory once affordable for renters.

While there is no one solution for increasing workforce housing supply in the county, assisting employers to build units for their workers through subsidies or other financial assistance may boost the number of available units. As Red Lodge continues to add housing, the unit types, sizes and tenancy models must shift to meet workforce needs. In Red Lodge, where local support for housing assistance is strong and where organizations like the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) have put frameworks in place, creative tools and funding sources may help redirect resources for this purpose. Although land and housing costs are not as cheap they used to be, the stage is set for partnerships between local jurisdictions, housing providers, community groups and employers that can help these active markets regain balance.

Figure 20: Carbon County Context



### Housing Growth Overview

Until recently, the county had an abundance of vacant and somewhat cheap residential land. Parcels both on municipal services and on platted and unbuilt lots between the Rock Creek benches all the way to the Yellowstone County line have been slowly built out. Escalating land prices are the result of this inventory going away. With few new subdivisions, buildable parcels are limited. As of mid-2021, only a few dozen vacant serviced lot existed in and around Red Lodge, down from about 240 a few years before.

Interviews indicated an overall housing boom since 2019, however geographically no one single area has been a major target of housing growth. Rather houses have been built on the abundance of lots created prior to the 2008 recession which were spread across the landscape. Subdivisions like Dot Calm Ranches, Rio Vista or Remington Ranch have been receiving areas, with Dot Calm Ranches adding about 36 houses since 2019.

The smaller communities of Roberts, Belfry, Bridger and Fromberg are serviced by special districts. By late 2021 most vacant lots in older subdivisions were occupied by single family homes.

The interior of the county, a desirable area for second or third homes, has seen an increase in high-priced home construction. In summary, the recent housing boom has certainly increased unit numbers, impacting Carbon

County's services and landscapes. But housing options for those serving the local economy continue to be more and more out of reach.

### ***Carbon County Growth Policy***

The county-wide growth policy is tasked with providing development guidance for a county that varies by climate, natural resources, tourism visitation and topography. As such the growth policy, updated in 2020, provided a basis for the county's smaller areas to implement their own policies. Due to their smaller size and slower growth, rural communities often do not have updated growth policies, or are in the process of an update. These places are recognized in the countywide policy, which acknowledges they receive uneven impacts between jobs and housing growth, including wages unable to keep pace with housing demand.

Housing supply, quality, and affordability in small places was a key issue identified in both the county and city growth policies. In addition, the growth policy acknowledges the risk of development impacts ground on water resources even through development of existing subdivisions, and offers policies to increase awareness of where issues may arise.

Generally, the 2020 Carbon County growth policy directs urban-scale growth to existing communities to preserve agricultural lands and open space.

### ***Red Lodge Growth Policy***

Housing policy in the 2020 Red Lodge growth policy update focused on increasing housing supply through increased density, revitalizing older housing, green building retrofits and infill development.

Particular goals and implementation strategies that inform this Study include:

- Aim to increase density toward the city's core to increase population and income diversity.
- Consider new zones that allow tiny homes and manufactured units.

- Encourage/partner with non-profit and private sectors to increase affordable ownership and rental units.
- Update zoning regulations now increase density in the city center.
- Use density bonuses, reduced impact fees or other incentives, planned unit developments relaxed design standards or mixed uses to encourage density and the private supply of affordable rental/owner housing.

### Future Land Use

Red Lodge provides a Future Land Use Map as a guide for long-range transition, including identifying area for high- and medium-density housing. This map (Appendix) was used as an input for locations of opportunity sites in the Land Suitability Analysis.

### ***Red Lodge Housing Needs Assessment***

A 2020 Housing Needs Assessment was performed by the RLACF which used a survey to better understand the landscape of housing conditions throughout the community in order to make future recommendations that help meet city affordable housing needs. Applicable findings from the assessment include:

- Younger generations typically leave Red Lodge to seek better housing and economic opportunities, while younger families and retirees are continuing to move to town.
- A prominent decline occurred in the \$25,000 to \$75,000 income range.
- Lower and higher incomes were more dramatically polarized compared to the state.
- The percentage of home values over \$1,000,000 had increased for the first time in recent years.
- Condominium ownership was strongly needed based on income ranges however there is a growing decrease of this housing choice.
- Affordable housing options are very limited and supply had almost completely dried up.

### **Land Use and Zoning**

Carbon County: The county administers a Development Permit system that coordinates non-residential uses and building permits issued by the state. In coordination with the growth policy, dense, multifamily housing would be directed toward existing communities and county land use/subdivision regulations are less appropriate for housing types that accommodate affordable or workforce units, except in unincorporated areas where adequate services can be provided through special districts.

Density Towards Red Lodge’s Center: Zone districts in the city center include C-4, Central Business and C-1 Central Business Transition, surrounded in most places by R-3, Residential Medium Density. C-1 zones do not allow for more than two units and are unlikely a good fit to achieve the density needed for a suitably dense project. The C-4 zone is the main mixed use district allowing for historic and new dense multifamily with a combination of non-residential uses, up to a height of four stories. The C-4 zone is applicable for a dense affordable project as it allows for multifamily over two units, however C-4 zoned areas would require property assembly to create a project of enough size to contribute to new affordable units.

Residential Zones: Based on the density parameters of this Study, the R-3, Medium Density and R-4, High Density Residential zones provide the density needed for development of affordable housing. Particularly the locations of R-4 zones are in areas with vacant lands and adequate infrastructure. R-3 zones have a maximum height of 30 while R-4 zones permit up to 40 feet, allowing for increased design flexibility for multi-story buildings.

Short-Term Rentals: A short-term rental is defined by the city as a home rented to the general public for 30 days or less. Survey information received for the 2020 Housing Needs Assessment found that half of rentals provided by landlords in the city are short-term or vacation rentals.

Short-term rentals have a strong affect in reducing housing availability for the workforce. An amendment to the Zoning Regulations was established to preserve neighborhood character, to designate which zones STRs are allowed and to create system to track such rentals.

### **Economic and Demographics**

Carbon County is the third largest county in the Beartooth RC&D region, with a population of approximately 11,000. Carbon County is located to the south of Yellowstone County and includes the eastern portion of the Beartooth mountain range. The largest municipality is Red Lodge, which is a regional gateway to the area’s outdoor recreation. Over the past decade, Carbon County has gradually faced increasing growth pressures. Since 2010, the county has added nearly 1,000 residents, with a notable increase between 2019 and 2020, indicating a higher level of in-migration.

Carbon County has the most expensive housing in the region. Over the past five years, the median home sale price has risen significantly, increasing from \$244,200 in 2016 to \$391,000 in 2020, which equates to annual appreciation of 12.5 percent. As of 2020 Carbon County has the highest median home sale price and the fastest rate of appreciation in the 5-county region. The housing market in 2020 experienced a notable surge in demand. Sales volume increased to 135 sales, 31 percent higher than in 2019, while median sale price increased by \$86,000 or 28 percent over 2019. The increases in prices and sales volume are part of a larger trend seen through out the Mountain West driven by “amenity migration” during the COVID-19 pandemic.

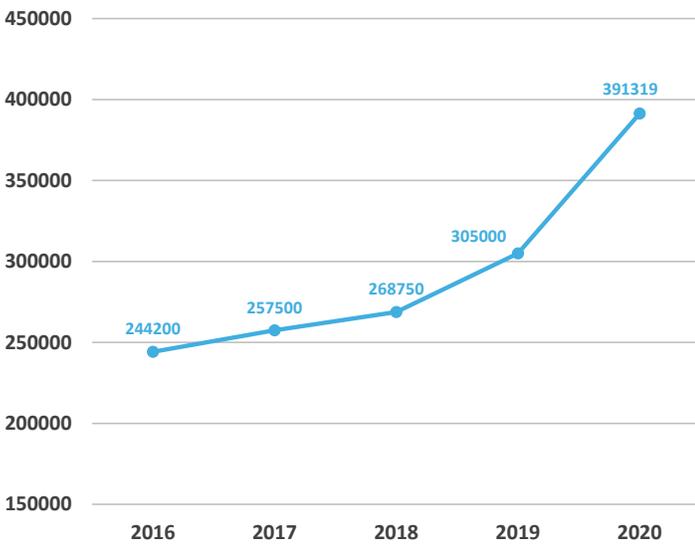
#### **Workforce Housing Targets:**

##### **Carbon County**

Estimated Units Needed:

2021:	<b>60</b>
2022:	<b>60</b>
2023:	<b>61</b>
2024:	<b>61</b>
2025:	<b>63</b>
5-Yr Total:	<b>303</b>

**Figure 21: Carbon County Home Sales Prices**



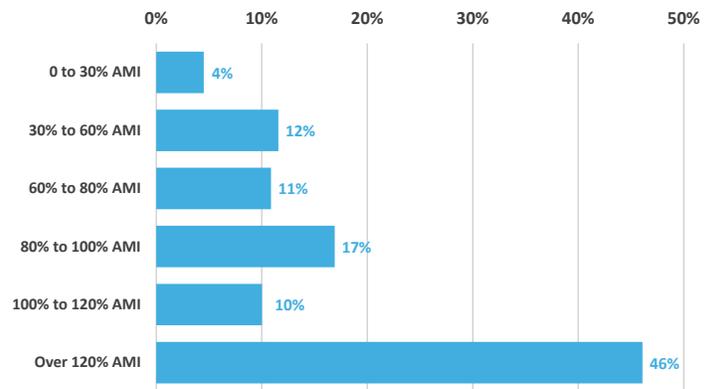
Source: MLS; Economic & Planning Systems

Relative to incomes, sale prices in Carbon County were especially high in 2020 and a large portion of home sales were only affordable to the most affluent households. As shown in Figure 22, 56 percent of all home sales were only affordable to households above the area median income (AMI), while 46 percent were only affordable to households above 120 percent of AMI. Compared to other counties in the region, a much higher share of sales in Carbon County were only affordable to high-income households above 120 percent of AMI. In comparison, the share of home sales only affordable to households above 120% of AMI was 17% in Yellowstone County, 25% in Stillwater County, 35% in Sweet Grass County, compared to 46% in Carbon County.

In terms of cost burden, 27 percent of all households in Carbon County spend over 30 percent of their monthly income on housing, with a greater prevalence among renter households. Cost burden is especially common among households below 80 percent of area median income, as 70 percent of renter households and 40 percent of owner households below this income level are cost burdened. This information indicates that rental housing development should be the highest priority in Carbon County.

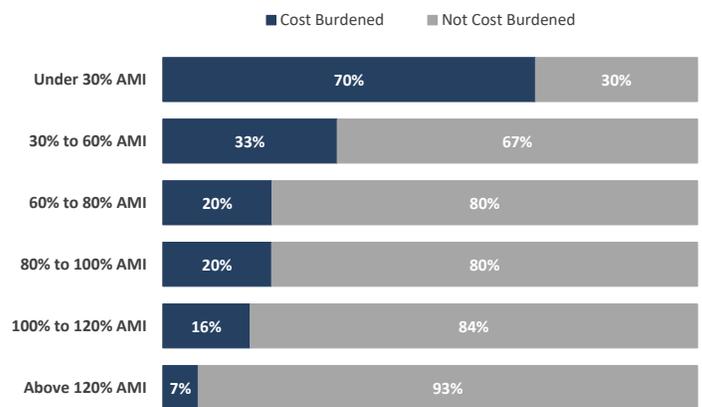
From 2010 to 2019, employment growth in Carbon County outpaced growth in the housing stock. Over this period, the County gained 272 jobs, equating to an overall increase of 11 percent, while the housing stock only grew by 4 percent. Second homes comprise

**Figure 22: Carbon County Housing Costs by AMI**



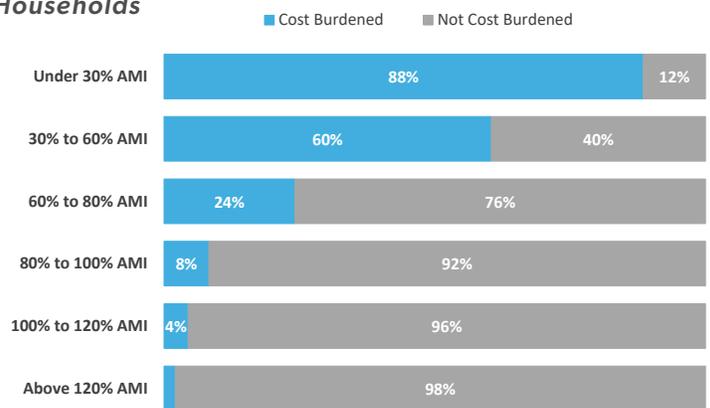
Source: MLS; Economic & Planning Systems

**Figure 23: Carbon County Cost Burdened Households**



Source: Economic & Planning Systems

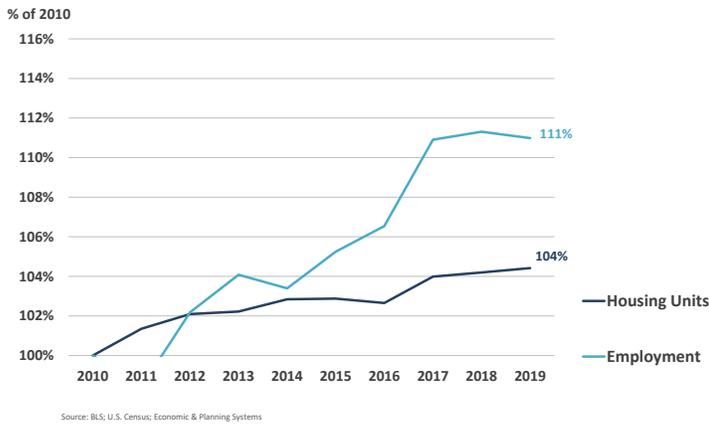
**Figure 24: Carbon County Cost Burdened Renter Households**



Source: Economic & Planning Systems

approximately one-third of all housing units in Carbon County which limits the availability of housing stock for the local workforce. The prevalence of second homes also drives up prices because buyers typically have higher incomes and more wealth than local residents and set the market's expectations of value.

**Figure 25: Carbon County Housing and Employment Growth**



Additionally, the high housing costs in Carbon County relative to income indicate that much of the existing housing stock is not affordable to the local workforce.

Employment in Carbon County steadily grew over the past decade, increasing by 300 jobs between 2010 and 2019, until a small, pandemic-induced contraction in 2020 (Figure 25). The economy is driven primarily by tourism. In 2020, tourism-related sectors, including Accommodation and Food Services, Retail Trade, and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, accounted for approximately one-third of all employment. Jobs related to local, state, and federal government, or public administration also comprise a large portion — 20% — of all employment in the county (Figure 27).

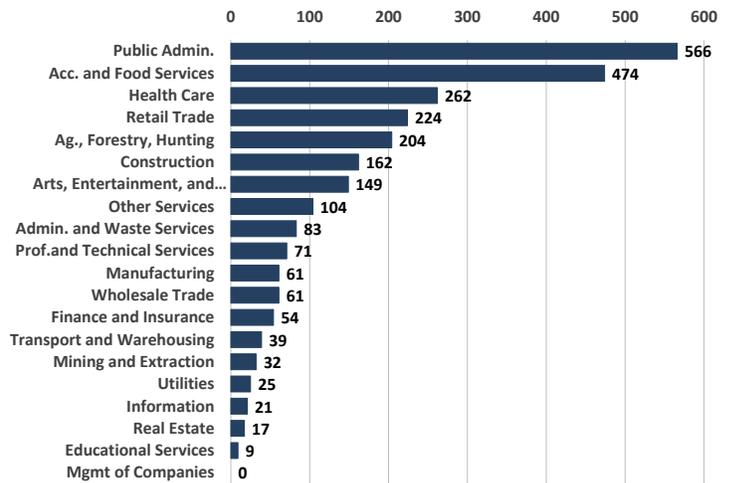
**Figure 26: Carbon County Wages**

Description	Acc. and Food Services	Health Care	Retail Trade	Arts and Rec
Annual Average Income	\$18,928	\$45,760	\$25,896	\$20,800
Household Income (1.5-person HH)	\$28,392	\$68,640	\$38,844	\$31,200
Affordable Monthly Rent	\$710	\$1,716	\$971	\$780
Affordable Housing Price	\$108,900	\$296,300	\$157,600	\$122,000

Source: BLS, Economic & Planning Systems  
 L:\BRCDSTUDY\_20\BRCD Docs\2\_Project\_Data\2.10\_Supporting\_Docs\Implementation and data\BRCD Report Charts.xlsx|Table 1

The average annual wages of tourism-related sectors is relatively low, at \$19,000 for Accommodation and Food Service jobs (not including tips), \$20,800 for Arts and Recreation jobs, and \$25,900 for Retail Trade jobs (Figure 26). These wages, as part of a 1.5-person household, can afford a monthly rent ranging from \$710 to \$971 and a housing sale price ranging from \$108,900 to \$157,600. With a countywide median sale price of \$391,000 in 2020, households working in these sectors

**Figure 27: Carbon County Employment Sectors**



are priced out of the for-sale market by a wide margin. The rental market still may supply units at these price points, but such units are not commonly available for rent.

In Carbon County, 69 percent of all units are occupied and 31 percent are considered vacant, mostly as second homes. Among occupied units, three-fourths are owner-occupied and one-fourth are renter-occupied. As the housing stock in Carbon County grew by 278 units between 2010 and 2019, much of that growth was driven by single-unit, owner-occupied housing units. At the same time, the stock of renter-occupied, multi-unit housing decreased slightly. This indicates that the market has primarily been delivering single family homes.

**Figure 28: Carbon County Housing Occupancy**

Description	2010	2019	2010-2019		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
<b>Housing Units</b>					
Occupied Units	4,149	4,524	375	42	1.0%
Vacant Housing Units	<u>2,143</u>	<u>2,046</u>	<u>-97</u>	<u>-11</u>	<u>-0.5%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,292</b>	<b>6,570</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
Occupied % of Total	66%	69%			
Vacant % of Total	34%	31%			
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>					
Renter Occupied	1,123	1,068	-55	-6	-0.6%
Owner Occupied	<u>3,026</u>	<u>3,456</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>1.5%</u>
<b>Total Occupied Units</b>	<b>4,149</b>	<b>4,524</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
Renter % of Occ.	27%	24%			
Owner % of Occ.	73%	76%			
<b>Units in Structure</b>					
Single-Unit	5,278	5,520	242	27	0.5%
Multi-Unit	308	295	-13	-1	-0.5%
Mobile Home	<u>706</u>	<u>755</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0.7%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,292</b>	<b>6,570</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
Single Unit % of Total	84%	84%			
Multi-Unit % of Total	5%	4%			
Mobile Home % of Total	11%	11%			

Source: U.S. Census; Economic & Planning Systems  
 L:\BRCDSTUDY\_20\BRCD Docs\2\_Project\_Data\2.10\_Supporting\_Docs\Implementation and data\BRCD Report Charts.xlsx|Table 2

### **Stakeholder Input**

City staff and local employers were interviewed to understand immediate impacts and needs as a result of housing conditions. Findings from these conversations include:

- Teachers, healthcare and most middle-income workers are qualified to accept job offers but are unable to finalize contracts due to housing costs.
- Development and labor cost for construction have escalated to the point of making affordable units prohibitive to construct.
- Legacy policies have made the conveyance of city-owned land for affordable projects nearly impossible due to charters that prohibit the sale of land below market value.
- Employers are willing to build housing for their own employees but require assistance to create a feasible project.
- Demand for condominium ownership housing is high across all income range but only high-end price points may be feasible.
- Vacant or underutilized properties in existing communities are available for affordable housing development however costs for services, development, inability to supply land at below-market costs, and political will have hampered their feasibility.
- Multifamily projects may be feasible but in this area demand for single-family/lower density is preferred.

### **Infrastructure Assessment**

Red Lodge: Municipal water and sewer systems generally have capacity to serve growth at current rates, however one or two substantial projects may require upgrades particularly to the sewer system.

- A water system preliminary engineering report identified deficiencies in the existing system, particularly due to condition of water mains or insufficient fire flows, which may impact new development in the northern area of town. This informs the Land Suitability

Analysis and the location of opportunity sites in this Study.

- As a result of storm water entering the city sewer system a 1% resort tax was established to mitigate this impact.

County Infrastructure: Most of the rural county is served by well and septic systems, and concern has been raised on ground water contamination. Ongoing wellhead protection efforts must be monitored in accordance with the county and local growth policies. Private water systems serve many rural subdivisions and their owners maintain those systems. Due to these and many other reasons, the Land Suitability Analysis aims to identify parcels in municipalities or on public systems where the risk of further degradation is unlikely and would be monitored and would have financial support from the local operator or municipality.

As noted in the county growth policy sewer districts in Roberts, Belfry and Edgar will likely require future upgrades and improvements which may require increase in rates or other funding. The Land Suitability Analysis considers this by focusing on communities where ongoing maintenance and funding options may be more capable of adequately serving new housing development.

Public water systems serve the communities of Red Lodge, Bridger, Joliet, Fromberg, Bearcreek, Belfry and Roberts. These systems are monitored by the state Department of Revenue and district managers and currently have no known deficiencies, however master planning would be required should growth expand beyond existing rates.

### **IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT**

Construction of rental housing is recommended as the priority in Carbon County. No rental housing has been developed in recent years and renters face the greatest shortages and lack of affordability.

### **Resort Tax**

A resort tax is an additional sales tax applied to certain non-essential goods (i.e., hotels, restaurants, bars, ski resorts) for the purpose of generating revenue in Montana communities with tourism-driven economies. To levy a resort tax, the Montana Department of Commerce must declare a community a resort area, which is limited to towns with a population below 5,500 or unincorporated areas with a population below 2,500. In addition, the major portion of an area's economy must be based on tourism, a judgment made by the Department of Commerce. Once officially declared a resort area, the implementation, rate, duration, and exact allocation of a resort tax is decided by local voters through a ballot initiative. Ten Montana communities currently have a resort tax, including Red Lodge, Whitefish, and Big Sky. The resort tax rate is typically around 3 percent and revenue is most commonly used for public infrastructure improvements, parks, and emergency services.

Red Lodge currently has a resort tax that generates approximately \$850,000 annually, none of which is allocated to housing. While it is possible for resort tax revenue to be allocated to housing, changing the current allocation would require voter approval. This presents a political hurdle, although one worth considering given the potential benefit of securing a permanent funding stream through the resort tax. In any case, the resort tax would provide a small amount of funding relative to the costs associated with supporting affordable housing.

### **Short-Term Rental Fees**

Local governments may regulate land use and business activities under the police power which includes the power to levy fees. Many local governments have fees on STRs for functions such as registration, code enforcement, and inspection. There is growing interest in mountain and tourism communities in defining workforce and affordable housing as a service and community infrastructure and levying fees on STRs to fund affordable housing programs including construction.

The City should consult legal experts on Montana law

around fees and taxes prior to embarking on an effort to levy new fees on STRs. A nexus study may be needed to establish the nexus between the fee being charged and service or program being provided. A fee levied on STRs would be restricted to funding directly related housing and enforcement/compliance programs and not use for general revenue purposes.

### **Community Land Trusts**

A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit organization that holds property for the purpose of community stewardship and long-term housing affordability. The premise of the CLT ownership model is that it separates ownership of land from ownership of improvements on the land. In sale transactions, the buyer only purchases the improvements, while the CLT retains ownership of the underlying land, reducing the purchase price for the buyer. In order to effectively serve low- and moderate-income people, potential buyers typically must be below a certain income threshold. The purchase price is also made affordable through a deed restriction, in which the appreciation and future sale price of the home is limited by a resale formula. The benefit of CLTs is that they expand the accessibility of home ownership to a much wider demographic that would otherwise be priced out of the home market, while also preserving long-term affordability without the need for additional subsidy.

Trust Montana is a CLT active across Montana, with a significant presence in the Carbon County and Red Lodge area. Trust Montana typically obtains property through donations and partnerships, although it is seeking ways to build capacity and purchase land. In Red Lodge, Trust Montana is working with Habitat for Humanity and the Red Lodge Community Foundation to build twelve homes that will be placed under Trust Montana's ownership and will be deed restricted. As Trust Montana continues to evolve, expanding the use of the land trust model will be an effective way to create and preserve affordable units in Carbon County.

### ***Expansion of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)***

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are an additional typically small dwelling unit added to an existing structure or on the same lot. Expanding the supply of ADUs is a way to grow the housing stock at a relatively low cost, given the lower barriers than single family home or apartment development, such as land availability/ cost and infrastructure development and costs. ADUs typically rent or sell at a lower price point than traditional forms of housing, appealing to low- and moderate-income households. ADUs are a potentially effective policy approach in Red Lodge, given the limited availability of developable land as well as an existing stock of single homes. ADUs are built by the private market typically and not by local governments which usually have limited funds for affordable housing development.

Expanding the supply of ADUs can be accomplished through a few different approaches. Relaxing regulatory barriers to their development is a critical step, as ADUs are often restricted or not allowed in residential areas. While ADUs can be built at a lower cost than traditional single family homes, they still pose a financial burden for homeowners to build, and homeowners may need financial incentives to build them.

### ***Land Use Code***

Along with the growth policy recommendation, this Study finds that a density bonus system for market rate projects that include affordable units would aid in increasing overall project feasibility by enabling affordable developers to assemble parcels. Demolition and site preparation would reduce feasibility therefore density bonuses could offset those costs by creating additional for-sale or for-lease units.

# Land Suitability Profile: Red Lodge, Carbon County

Figure 29: Land Suitability Map, Red Lodge



## LAND SUITABILITY

Red Lodge's compact and historic townsite in the Rock Creek drainage elevated the importance of choosing sites that would be compatible with urban form and neighborhood character. Key action considerations for selection of suitable lands for housing sites included:

- There is a desire for compact, smaller mixed use development in the core and in appropriate zone districts: The Land Use Code and growth policy aim to incentivize projects that promote dense, walkable form in character with the historic downtown that can contribute to housing supply.
- Due to city policies there are few publicly-owned sites for land conveyance for use in projects. Most sites are privately-owned therefore other mechanisms are needed to make a feasibility project.
- Identify privately-owned land for potential acquisition to assist employers to develop workforce housing.
- Utilize suitable lands outside of the core that already has adequate zoning (e.g R-4 district).
- Adaptively reuse underutilized buildings and sites (e.g. the old hospital site, the canning/brewing building) to help produce historically-sensitive mixed use projects similar to the Roosevelt Center.
- Many small private parcels sit vacant therefore start with a right-sized catalyst project and replicate on similarly sized lots.

Figure 30: Land Suitability Table, Red Lodge

Site	Acres	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Owner Type	Site Conditions	Potential Unit Range	Overall Housing Potential
A	1.34	Vacant industrial site	Commercial Mixed Use (C-2)	Private	Historic multi-story brewing/canning facility, industrial use; requires adaptive reuse with potential cleanup; historic district .	8-16	Medium
B	16	Vacant land	Community Entrance North (C-3-N)	Private	Hwy 87 access; large site suitable for larger multifamily project, only portion of site needed.	Varies on final lot size; 30-40+	Medium
C	0.46	Vacant residential lot	High Density Residential (R-4)	Private, multiple owners	Opportunity for High School workforce project, amalgamation of several parcels needed.	8-12	High
D	0.65	Vacant residential lot	High Density Residential (R-4)	Private	Vacant parcels in high-density zone, applicable for small multifamily project for nearby workforce.	6-10	High
E	17.8	Vacant	Airport (P-1 A)	City of Red Lodge	Ideal site for large multifamily project, only may require boundary line adjustment, adjacent to existing apartments.	Varies on final lot size; 30-40+	High
F	0.5	Vacant	Community Entrance North (C-3-N)	Private	Island parcel located <i>within</i> site 'E', access would need to be accommodated.	4-6	Low
G	0.43	Parking lot	Community Entrance South (C-3-S)	Private	Main street lot surrounded by high-character homes, used as employee lot for Stillwater Mine, could be used as mine workforce housing.	6-10	Medium
H	0.57	Single family residence, mostly vacant	Community Entrance South (C-3-S)	Private	Mostly vacant lot, older residence on property.	6-10	Medium
I	2.0	Underutilized healthcare clinic	High Density Residential (R-4)	Private	Former healthcare clinic, potential adaptive reuse, has been planned for reuse as housing in past but failed.	12-18	Low
J	1.1	Vacant Lot	High Density Residential (R-4)	Private	Adjacent to existing affordable units, appropriate zoning, some utility upgrades may be required.	20-30	Medium

Figure 31: Land Suitability Site Examples, Red Lodge



Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2018



- Number of Opportunity Sites: **13**
- Average Opportunity Site Size: **3.14 Acres**
- Number of Jobs within 5 Miles: **1,601**
- Largest Employment Sector: **Services/Hospitality, Education/Health Care**
- Largest Employers:
  - » **Beartooth Hospital & Health Center, 100-249 Employees**
  - » **Red Lodge Pizza Co/Bogarts: 100-249 Employees**
- Inflow/Outflow Commuting Pattern:
  - Employed in the Area but Living Outside: 879
  - Employed and Living in the Area: 528
  - Living in Area but Employed Outside: 393
- Main Commuter Destination: **Billings**

# Land Suitability Profile: Joliet, Carbon County

Figure 32: Land Suitability Map, Joliet



## LAND SUITABILITY

With a limited commercial base Joliet serves as a bedroom community to Red Lodge and Carbon County, as well as Yellowstone County. Maintaining community character is critical, therefore directing growth to areas served by the water and sewer districts while maintaining a small town scale means smaller infill or modest expansions will benefit the mid-county housing base without overextending its services. Key action considerations for selection of suitable lands included:

- Find opportunities to partner with schools and other community institutions for land partnerships.
- Keep the scale in line with the older neighborhoods and housing stock.
- Consider mobility impacts and safety for pedestrians, particularly if projects are developed north of Highway 212.

- Work with landowners in planning for future town growth and extension of services/annexation on suitable sites identified at periphery.

Figure 33: Land Suitability Table, Joliet

Site	Acres	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Owner Type	Site Conditions	Potential Unit Range	Overall Housing Potential
A	0.96	Ball fields	Public	Joliet School District	Portion of school lands, could be used for smaller modular units for district employees.	4-6	High
B	0.27	Vacant residential lot	R-1	Private	Low density residential zoning; smaller project possible.	1-3	Medium
C	2.3	Agriculture		Private	Unincorporated agricultural land, difficult access conditions.	6-12	Low
D	0.45	Vacant residential lot	R-1	Private, multiple owners	Property assembly ideal for larger site, rezoning likely.	2-6	Medium
E	0.23	Vacant residential lot	R-1	Private	Small townsite lot, ideal for duplex/triplex.	2-3	Low
F	0.44	Vacant lot	R-1	Church/ Institutional	Optimal site for low-medium density affordable project, likely would require rezoning; possible for senior/ assisted living units.	4-6	Medium
G	3.6	Agriculture	Not mapped	Private	Would require annexation and rezoning; likely high-valued property.	6-10	Low
H	3.8	Agriculture	R-1	Private	Low density area; likely high-valued property.	4-10	Low
I	3.6	Vacant/Open space	Not mapped	Private	Undeveloped riparian land, adaptable to extension of street grid.	8-14	Medium
J	4.4	Vacant/Open space	Not mapped	Private	Highway corridor with limited access, on school-side of community; possible for linear attached single family development.	10-20+	Medium

Figure 34: Land Suitability Site Examples, Joliet



- Number of Opportunity Sites: **10**
- Average Opportunity Site Size: **1.94 Acres**
- Number of Jobs within 5 Miles: **261**
- Largest Employment Sector: **Education**
- Largest Employers: **Joliet Public Schools**
- Inflow/Outflow Commuting Pattern:
  - Employed in the Area but Living Outside: **86**
  - Employed and Living in the Area: **5**
  - Living in Area but Employed Outside: **200**
- Main Commuter Destination: **Billings**

