

Chapter 2. Description of the Harrison Avenue South Urban Renewal District History

The development of the Harrison Avenue South area mirrors national trends in urban development following World War II. As automobile ownership grew across the country, commuting distance was no longer a critical factor in deciding where to live, work and shop. The character of commercial development changed dramatically. “New shopping centers were automobile friendly, and the appearance of shopping malls with ample parking represented a clear commitment to motorized traffic by providing a concentration of shops on a scale only accessible by vehicles especially in areas where there was an absence of a commercial main street. The earliest shopping centers outside central business districts, such as the pioneering suburban shopping district in the Kansas City area, were built in the 1920s. There were, however, only eight of these centers in the whole country by the end of World War II. By 1970 the number had risen to an astonishing 4,000.” (Melosi)

Today, this era of automobile driven commercial business activity is changing. Evolving consumer behavior, changing demographics, high-priced gasoline, internet shopping, are all pointing to a new pattern of development. According to the Urban Land Institute, “it is it is becoming increasingly clear that strip retail is retail for the last century. The future belongs to town centers, main streets, and mixed-use development.” Between 1960 to 2000, there was an almost tenfold increase in U.S. retail space, from 4 to 38 square feet per person. For many years, retail space was growing five to six times faster than retail sales, resulting in noticeable vacancies in shopping centers and malls. “By some estimates, there is currently more than one billion square feet of vacant retail space, much of which has to be repurposed or demolished.” (MacMahon)

The Harrison Avenue South Area has clearly experienced this shift in commercial development patterns. The Butte Plaza Mall, an anchor of the area, is experiencing high vacancy rates, while the adjacent building, previously occupied by a K-Mart store is entirely empty. Large parking lots constructed to serve these businesses are generally unused.

In the surrounding neighborhoods, some of which date back to the first part of the twentieth century, infrastructure is substandard and/or deteriorating. Much of the area is built to rural, low density standards. Where they exist, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streets and lighting are found to be in poor repair. While not directly related to the loss of commercial activity in the area, the existing conditions of these neighborhoods contribute to overall blight and would benefit from investments in public infrastructure and general revitalization activities.

Area Description

The Harrison Avenue South URD includes commercial, industrial, residential, open space, and recreational land uses. Portions of the area fall outside the “urbanized area” and are more rural in character. Harrison Avenue South hosts the majority of the community’s visitor lodging accommodations and car dealerships. Given its proximity to the regional airport and the Interstate Highway System (I-90 and I-15 converge in Butte), Harrison Avenue South serves as an

important gateway to the community. The Interstate connects the area with Montana Tech, St. James Community Hospital and Butte-Silver Bow's historic central business district.

Map of the Harrison Avenue South Urban Renewal District (Figure 5)

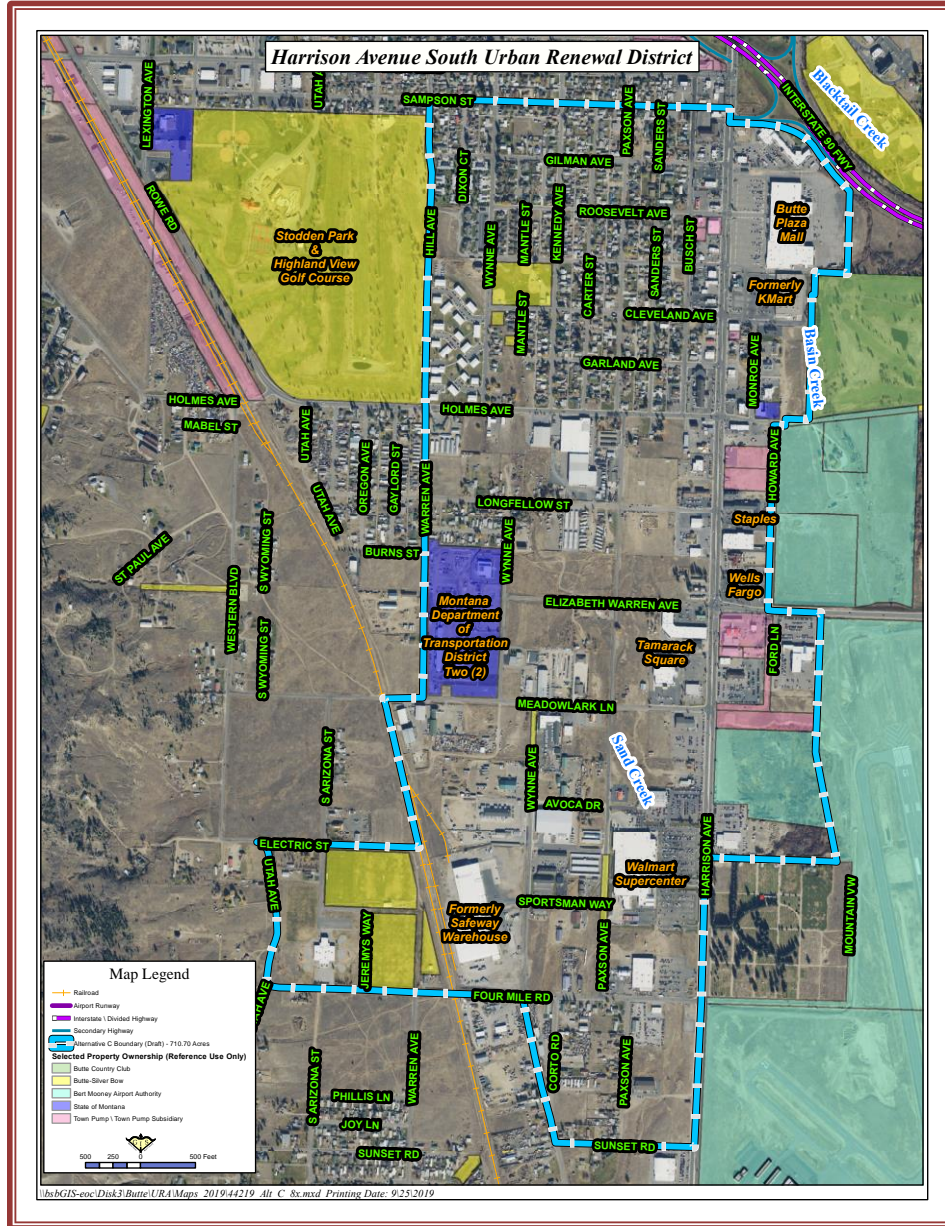


Figure 5 – Harrison Avenue South Urban Renewal District

Land Uses in the Urban Renewal District

The land use within the URD consists of a broad mix of uses ranging from commercial, including small and large retail, visitor lodging, automobile sales and service and professional services; residential, including single family, multi-family, mobile homes and industrial.

General Boundary Description

The Harrison Avenue South URD encompasses an irregularly shaped portion of the Flats covering roughly 710 acres. The area falls into portions of: Sections 29, 30, 31 and 32, T3N, R7W, and Section 6, T2N, R7W. The URD is generally described as bounded on the north by Sampson Street and Interstate 90/15, and on the south by Sunset Road. On the east side it parallels with Harrison Avenue South. On the west side it runs along Wynne Avenue, Four Mile Road, Utah Avenue, Electric Street, the railroad right-of-way, Meadowlark Lane and South Warren Avenue.

The Harrison Avenue South Urban Renewal District is located entirely within Census Tract 6 but does not include all of Census Tract 6. The Growth Policy does not include Census Tract 6 in the Urban Cluster and describes it as being on the periphery of the Urban Cluster, but Census Tract 6 is not considered by the Growth Policy to be included in the less dense urban transitional areas.

Legal Description of the Urban Renewal District

The "Harrison Avenue South Urban Renewal District," is generally described as an irregularly shaped area, approximately 710.74 acres, typically comprised of street centerlines, tax parcel boundaries, and lines extended across road and railroad Right of Way. The area is sited in portions of: Sections 29, 30, 31 and 32, T3N, R7W, and Section 6, T2N, R7W.

Beginning at a point where Hill Avenue and Sampson Street intersect, thence east along Sampson Street, 317.50 feet, more or less to its intersection with Dixon Street, thence east along Sampson Street, 286.50 feet, more or less to its intersection with Wynne Avenue, thence east along Sampson Street, 597.70 feet more or less, to its intersection with Kennedy Avenue, thence east along Sampson Street, 314.00 feet more or less to its intersection with Carter Street, thence east along Sampson Street, 284.00 feet more or less to its intersection with Paxson Avenue, thence east along Sampson Street, 301.80 feet more or less to its intersection with Sanders Street, thence east along Sampson Street, 298.20 feet more or less to its intersection with Busch Street, thence east along Sampson Street, 336.70 feet more or less to its intersection with Harrison Avenue, thence south along Harrison Avenue, 135.36 feet, more or less to a point, thence easterly along a line extended, 91.00 feet more or less to a point on the north boundary line, Parcel A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 404A, thence east and southeasterly along the north boundary line of Parcel A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 404A, 836.00 feet, more or less to its intersection with the north east boundary line, Tax Parcel No. 0000746410, a portion of the southwest quarter section of Section 29, T3N \ R7W, thence south easterly along north east boundary line, Tax Parcel No. 0000746410, 419.00 feet more or less to its intersection with the northwest corner, Tax Parcel No. 746400, a portion of the north half, of the south west quarter

section, Section 29, T3N \ R7W, thence south along the west boundary line, Tax Parcel No. 746400, 747.00 feet, more or less to its intersection with the north boundary line of Parcel 000, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 47A, thence westerly along the north boundary line of Parcel 000, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 47A, 294.00 feet more or less to its intersection with the northeast corner of Tract D, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 367A, thence south, 204.95 feet, thence west, 21.10 feet, thence south, 397.70 along the east boundary line, Tract D, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 367A, to the north east corner, Tract A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 878A, thence south along the east boundary line, Tract A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 878A, 691.97 feet to a point on the north sideline, White Boulevard, thence west along the south boundary line, Tract A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 878A, and the north sideline, White Boulevard, 153.62 feet, to the east sideline Howard Avenue, thence south along a line extended to the south side line, White Boulevard, 63.50 feet more or less, to a point on the north boundary line, Tract 8, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 602A, thence west along the north boundary line, Tract 8, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 602A, and a line extended, 104.00 feet more or less to its intersection with the Howard Avenue, thence south along Howard Avenue, 1680.00 feet, more or less to its intersection with Elizabeth Warren Avenue, thence east along Elizabeth Warren Avenue 480.00 feet more or less to a point, thence south along a line extended 48.00 feet more or less to the northeast corner, Tract A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 741B, thence south along the east boundary line, Tract A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 741B, 864.58 feet to the north east corner Parcel 1, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 728A, thence south along the east boundary line, Parcel 1, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 728A, 152.00 feet to the northeast corner, Parcel 2, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 248B, thence south along the east boundary line Parcel 2, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 248B, 1,016.14 feet to the northeast corner Parcel B, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 448B, thence south along the east boundary line Parcel B, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 448B, 311.45 feet to the south east corner Parcel B, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 448B, and a point on the north boundary line, Parcel 1, Plat No. 226B, thence west along the north boundary line Parcel 1, Plat No. 226B, 36.00 feet more or less, to the north east corner Parcel 2, Plat No. 226B, thence west along the north boundary line Parcel 2, Plat No. 226B, 285.00 feet to the northwest corner Parcel 2, Plat No. 226B, thence west along the north boundary line Parcel 1, Plat No. 226B 512.00 feet more or less to the southeast corner Parcel A, Certificate of Survey, (COS) 448B, thence west along the north boundary line Parcel 1, Plat No. 226B, 303.52 feet to the northwest corner Parcel 1, Plat No. 226B, thence west along a line extended 50.00 feet more or less to its intersection with Harrison Avenue, thence south along Harrison Avenue, 1,307.90 feet more or less to its intersection with Four Mile Road, thence south along Harrison Avenue 1,321.30 feet more or less to its intersection with Sunset Road, thence west along Sunset Road, 669.90 feet more or less to its intersection with Paxson Avenue, thence west along Sunset Road, 593.20 feet more or less to its intersection with Wynne Avenue, thence northwesterly along Wynne Avenue, 217.10 feet more or less to its intersection with Corto Road, thence northwesterly along Wynne Avenue, 1,147.40 feet more or less to its intersection Four Mile Road, thence west along Four Mile Road, 983.70 feet more or less to its intersection with Warren Avenue, thence west along Four Mile Road, 468.20 feet more or less to its intersection with Jeremys Way, thence west along Four Mile Road, 427.20 feet more or less to its intersection with S Arizona Street, thence west along Four Mile Road, 428.60 feet more or less to its

intersection with Utah Avenue, thence north and north westerly along Utah Avenue, 1,383.20 feet more or less to its intersection with Electric Street, thence east along Electric Street, 597.80 feet more or less to its intersection with S Arizona Street, thence east along Electric Street and Electric Street extended, 875.45 feet more or less to its intersection with the west railway track, lying within the Right of Way boundary of the former Chicago, Milwaukee, ST Paul, and Pacific Railroad, thence northwesterly along the west railway track of the former Chicago, Milwaukee, ST Paul, and Pacific Railroad, 1,387.20 feet more or less to its intersection with Meadowlark Lane, thence east along Meadowlark Lane, 351.50 feet more or less to its intersection with Warren Avenue, thence north along Warren Avenue, 1,319.00 feet, more or less to its intersection with Burns Street, thence north along Warren Avenue, 203.30 feet more or less to its intersection with Browning Street, thence north along Warren Avenue, 291.70 feet more or less to its intersection with Longfellow Street, thence north along Warren Avenue, 826.15 feet more or less to its intersection with Holmes Avenue and Hill Avenue, thence north along Hill Avenue, 2,284.95 feet more or less to its intersection with Gilman Avenue, thence north along Hill Avenue, 508.90 feet more or less to its intersection with Sampson Street, the point of beginning. This Urban Renewal District (URD) will include all lots, parcels, and tracts of land within the described boundary and all adjacent rights-of-way.