

OLD BELLE ROAD AREA STUDY
LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
Part 2 of 2

Prepared Jointly
By:
The Planning and Zoning Departments
Of:



The City of Spearfish



Lawrence County

Introduction:

Two public meetings were held in 2009 to gather information from residents regarding their preferences for the future of this area where urban growth meets rural agricultural lands. The comments from these two meetings are contained in part 1 of this study.

Purpose and Use of This Document:

Often, the public deals with changes in land use when a specific request for change in zoning or for a use permit is being considered by the governing body. The City of Spearfish and Lawrence County planning staff and officials has jointly created this document to express the key goals and strategies desired by the community before the actual application or request is made.

What are the advantages to this approach rather than waiting until the actual request is made?

- 1) It helps the public and decision makers identify where changes are most likely going to occur.
- 2) It provides additional support to the city/county comprehensive plan, by offering more refined ideas for what qualities a well-conceived development plan should include.
- 3) It requires the land owner to demonstrate how their request fits with the goals of the community.

What this document will not do:

- 1) Initiate a change in zoning or annexation of county land.
- 2) Amend any existing comprehensive plan or zoning code.

How is this document recognized and used?

The City and County planning commissions and governing bodies have approved this document for use in the analysis of land use changes that are requested by county and city landowners. These are general guidelines and recognize that each request is unique, and that the specifics of each request should also be considered in the context of each entity's traditional planning policies as well.

Land Use Character Areas

A question that eventually is asked when it comes to a land use decision is: *"Is this consistent with what we want for the future?"* The primary goal of this document is to help answer this question. The map attached to this document illustrates the existing conditions of the study area. For the majority of the study area, the current agricultural and large lot development patterns are desired to continue in the future. For properties that are within ½ mile of I-90 and

immediately adjacent to the Old Belle Road, changes from this pattern are expected in the next 10 years. This ½ mile distance represents an approximate area where water and sewer infrastructure could be reasonably extended in a cost effective manner if more intense land uses are proposed. In any scenario involving extending public infrastructure, an economic analysis should be performed to demonstrate to the public and decision makers what the fiscal impact will be to the public for such an extension.

It is important to note that there are several properties that do not fit any of these descriptions below. Examples are industrial uses like the gravel pit and the trucking/salvage yard, an assisted living community, fish hatchery, dairy, etc. Additionally, some properties are final platted into a lot configuration that is significantly more intense than what may be envisioned by these guidelines and it is recognized that these approved plats represent a land use right that is not subject to these guidelines.

With these known exceptions aside, the future land uses expected in this area can generally be described as being in one of 3 types. Within each of these areas, it is possible that unique land uses will be proposed that do not meet the exact description of each character area, but if the proposed land use is compatible with surrounding uses, then it would be encouraged, and add variety and sustainability to the community. It is not possible to list the specific uses envisioned, since each would need to be reviewed based on its own merits, however the following general guidelines should be followed:

- 1) The volume and pattern of traffic that would result from the use can be accommodated through site design or by upgrades to the road network.
- 2) The use does not generate negative effects off the property resulting from noise, odor, dust, smoke, or other environmental nuisance.
- 3) The arrangement of buildings, access, parking, and activity areas are located so as not to create negative off-site effects described in paragraph 2.
- 4) Significant natural vegetation, creek and ground water resources are protected.
- 5) That there is a reasonable balance between the cost of public services, and the tax revenues that might be generated by such development.

The Three Land Use/Character Areas

1) Agricultural/ Ag Conservation **/Large Lot Residential Areas**

This area is considered to be the principal land use of the area. Beyond what exists today, expansion of these farming and



ranching activities should have a minimal environmental impact to air, water, and transportation resources. In addition to the agricultural uses, there are large lot residential parcels where there is no income producing crop or livestock activity, but the owners enjoy the acreage, country setting, and raising of animals for personal enjoyment and recreation. Land owners that are interested in taking additional steps to vest the agricultural lifestyle should consider the use of conservation easements as a way of protecting this rural lifestyle.

2) Transitional Areas

This area acts as an intermediate land use between the large tracts of agricultural land in the northern areas of the study boundary, and the more intense suburban neighborhoods. Currently, areas such as the Hardy subdivision and properties on Valley Vista Drive represent the general character of what could be considered a transitional area. The overall development character will be 8 homes per 40 acres in order to form a transition to lower intensity land uses such as the Ag/Ag Conservation areas. These areas would not be served by public infrastructure.

3) Suburban Areas

Toward the south end of the area, suburban residential land uses exist in the Reserve community, and this land use is likely to be a continuing trend in the future for properties that can take advantage of public water and sewer. This development type should include a range of residential densities: 1) large lot residential having a density of 1 home per 1 or 2 acres. 2) medium density neighborhoods having densities up to 3 or 4 homes per acre, 3) neighborhoods of greater than 4 homes per acre, including apartment dwellings. The larger lots should be concentrated near the edges of the development parcel where there might be lower intensity transitional or agricultural uses nearby. Considering the concentration of population that may be present in this area in the future, other land uses such as schools, churches, commercial services are intended for this area and are currently planned within the Reserve master plan. If additional lands need to be considered for commercial use, they should be oriented toward major streets and away from locations where traffic impacts, noise, and activity would be incompatible with the adjacent properties.



General Planning Strategies

The following are specific goals that each development request should be evaluated by, and are described in the following sections:

Streets and Transportation Systems

At the time of rezoning or use permit approval, potential upgrades to the collector and arterial streets should be identified, or payments in lieu of street improvements should be included in a development agreement before construction or platting takes place. This is of particular importance where growth occurs in areas that may be surrounded by a much lower intensity of development. As these surrounding areas fill in, there needs to be adequate public funds available to provide the necessary upgrades to the street network to support the community.

The need for safe and efficient unpaved paths and trails is a growing concern. Residents enjoy horseback riding, walking, bicycling and running, however they feel there is a lack of safe routes and corridors for this activity. The County is encouraged to plan and implement trail and path networks for this purpose. The City of Spearfish has approved path networks within and through the Reserve development, and connection to this system is encouraged. Key destinations/routes include the major roadways such as Old Belle Road, Westview Loop, Chicken Creek Road and the Spearfish Creek corridor. Other smaller drainage ways and flood plains such as the Higgins Gulch drainage way should also be pursued for these types of systems. Placing a trail within existing rights of way require approval by the respective governing agency.

Water and Sewer System Planning

A significant water resource exists to serve the area with the new 12 inch water line located in the Old Belle Road right of way. The current City of Spearfish policy for tapping this water line is that the property being served by the line should be annexed, or if the City Council approves tapping without annexation, then a pre-annexation agreement would be needed between the City and the property owner(s) being served. Special tap fees apply to the extension of this line.

Additionally, the City of Belle Fourche controls a 14 inch water main in the study area which currently has a limited number of residential taps onto it. If more than a single residential tap were desired, it would require engineering analysis prepared by the applicant/developer to determine what upgrades might be necessary to provide the desired level of service. Any upgrades would be the financial responsibility of the applicant/developer and also at the discretion of the City of Belle Fourche.

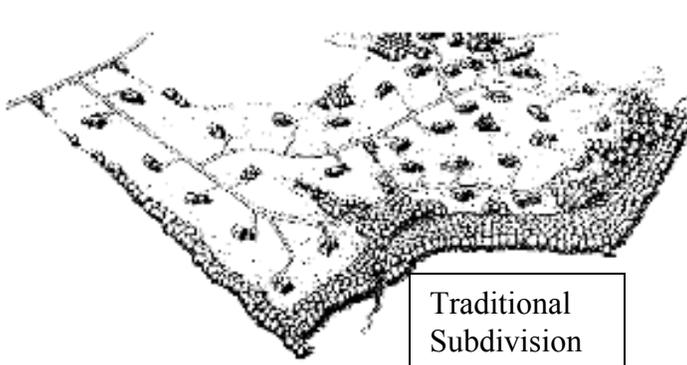
Sewer issues are important considerations in this area because of the ground water and surface water resources of the area. The attached map identifies an area called the Spearfish Creek Protection Area, where there needs to be special consideration given to how development may avoid impacting this sensitive area. For properties lying outside this area, during years of high precipitation, water

tables rise to un-predictable levels in the soil profile. Similar to water services, sewer could be extended in an annexation scenario, or if not being annexed, only with the consent of the Spearfish City Council and most likely with a pre-annexation agreement. Where sewer is not available or economically not feasible, new technology exists in waste water treatment systems that do not depend on the traditional septic tank with drain field. Projects that use this new technology will be preferred over those that do not. Septic is not permitted in the areas that feed the Belle Fourche water supply, as shown on the attached map.

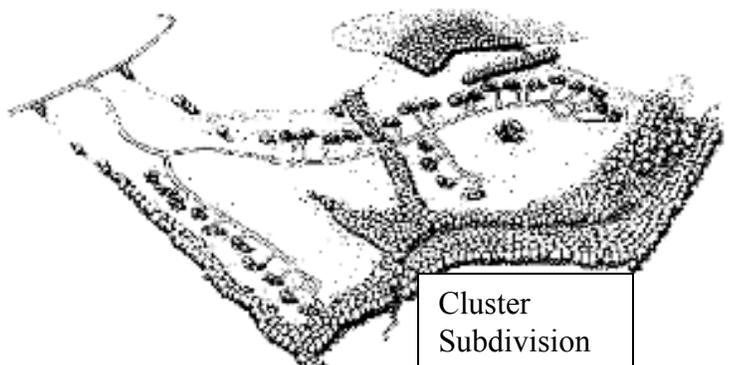
Site Planning

Opportunities exist on each property to create an environment that creates a well balanced community that steers development toward the most suitable locations, and provides quality open spaces that protects natural resources in permanent open space dedications. The following are planning techniques that are suggested to reach this goal:

1. Generous setbacks along Old Belle Road should be provided when development of more intense, suburban neighborhoods are proposed. A minimum of 100 feet is a suggested width of this buffer, however the same result can be achieved with less width where significant natural vegetation or high quality new landscape installations are provided.
2. Neighborhood design should include a balance of housing and open spaces. Techniques such as clustering and coving should be implemented for neighborhoods having an overall density of more than one home per acre.
3. For neighborhoods where lot sizes exceed one acre, building sites that work within topographic constraints, ground and surface water resources, natural vegetation buffers, and scenic views are encouraged over those that do not.
4. The Spearfish Creek Protection area should be adequately buffered in order to maintain this environmentally sensitive area as an open space resource. The actual dimensions and locations of this area should be refined as individual requests for development are made. The applicant/owner is responsible for demonstrating the extent of this protection area as it applies to their development plan.



Traditional
Subdivision



Cluster
Subdivision



*Coving is a system of varied front setbacks to create more interest and meaningful front yard spaces.
Illustration courtesy of Ward Development Company & Rick Harrison Design Studio*

5. Conclusion

This region contains unique settings and opportunities for the continuation of a rural lifestyle, but is also poised for growth in the future, provided that there are adequate public services and infrastructure to support it. If the existing land use patterns change, adequate buffering and creative solutions to achieve compatibility between agricultural and non-agricultural uses will be key issues for these projects to demonstrate compliance with.