

7. PUBLIC FACILITIES

The section includes discussion of the following types of facilities:

- **Facilities of Richland County, City of Sidney, and Town of Fairview**
- **Utilities** -- power providers (electricity, natural gas, etc.), telecommunication providers (telephone, internet).
- **Privately owned facilities that may serve a specific population** such as persons who are served by a privately operated central water or sewer system, such as in a trailer court or high density subdivision.

Richland County owns and maintains the following facilities:

- Community Services Building
- Richland County Court House
- Fairgrounds
- Law Enforcement Center
- Library
- Nutter Building (old post office)
- County Shop-Repair Shop-Office
- County roads and bridges

The city of Sidney owns and maintains the following facilities:

- City and Fire Hall
- City Shops (public works maintenance equipment etc.)
- Parks, Trails, and Swimming Pool
- City Water and Sewer Facilities
- City Streets
- Solid waste collection equipment

The town of Fairview owns and maintains the following facilities:

- Town hall (includes police and justice offices)
- Town Shops (public works maintenance equipment etc.)
- Fire Hall
- Parks, Trails, and Swimming Pool
- Town Water and Sewer Facilities
- City Streets

Public schools are owned and maintained by local school districts and are separate from the properties managed under the authority of the Richland County Commissioners, Sidney mayor and council, and the Fairview mayor and council. Public schools are discussed in the public services section of this Growth Policy.

Fire facilities are described in the public services section of this Growth Policy.

Transportation

Public transportation facilities in Richland County consist of highways, county roads and city streets, rail, and an airport facility.

Roads and Highways

The state is responsible for maintaining all primary and secondary highways in the county, unless other provisions have been made for maintenance. There are no four-lane interstate highways in Richland County; the closest Interstate is I-94, approximately 54 miles to the south. State highways include Highway 16, which follows the Yellowstone River Valley from Glendive to Sidney where it veers to the north and west to intersect Highway 2 in Roosevelt County north of the Missouri River. Highway 200 extends east from across the county through Lambert and Enid, to Sidney, where it follows the Yellowstone River Valley to the North Dakota border. Highway 23 extends from Highway 16 south of Sidney to North Dakota. State secondary 201 runs east-west from Fairview to Highway 13 north of Circle in McCone County. State secondary 202 extends from Highway 23 southeast to North Dakota. State secondary 261 runs from Wibaux in Wibaux County north to Highway 23. All of the state routes are paved with the exception of an approximate 20 mile stretch of road on the western portion of state secondary 201 in Richland County and a portion of state secondary 261.

Traffic on the state highways has increased significantly since the onset of the recent oil activity. The condition of state secondary 201 has noticeably deteriorated during that time. The Montana Department of Transportation has indicated that the route is not on the priority list for renovation and has no current plans for improvements on this route.

Highway 16 is designated as a National Highway of Significance, indicating its importance at the national level. With this designation, the highway will continue to be a priority for maintenance and upgrades.

Richland County Roads

County Road Numbering System

16: State Highway
23: State Highway
100s: East-West County Roads
200s: State Highways
300s: North-South County Roads

The majority of public roadways in the county are county roads. County road maintenance includes ongoing surface maintenance, snow removal, and dust suppression (on gravel roads). The county road system is numbered. There are 134 bridges in the county road system. There are approximately 1,240 miles of county roads, most of which are gravel surface. Paved county roads include roads in Savage and Lambert

and county road #107 to the coal mine west of Savage, #350 also known as cemetery road, and #328. Road #350 was paved as part of the last oil and gas boom—the road extends from north of Sidney to Highway 201 west of Fairview. Road #328 extends north from Lambert to Highway 201 and was paved in 2005 in response to increased use from oil development in that area in the past five years.

The County Road & Bridge Department is formulating a Capital Improvement Account to enable planned maintenance, replacement, and construction of its assets. To this end, they have inventoried all the county road equipment on a depreciation schedule and have identified life expectancy and replacement year and estimated cost. All county roads and rights-of-way have been inventoried, identified by type (see inset), and rated for current condition.

Oil development since 2000 has had a serious impact on county roads. The current oil development appears to have a core geographic area that cuts an approximate 10-mile wide diagonal from the county's northwest corner to the southeast. Initially, the impact was in a localized area, but as the field and exploration expand, few areas of the county have been left undisturbed. An above average road system was in place to absorb this renewed industry. As of May 2006, the County Public Works Director estimated that more than half of the county's 1,240 miles of road had been impacted by oil exploration and production.

The heavy equipment used for exploration and development takes its toll on the roads. According to an article in *Governing* magazine, engineers estimate that a fully loaded truck—a five-axle rig weighing 80,000 pounds, the interstate maximum—causes more damage to a highway than 5,000 cars. Heavy trucks create more dust than passenger vehicles and reduce the expected life of the roadway. Increasing a truck's weight to 90,000 pounds results in a 42 percent increase in road wear. Pavement designed to last 20 years wears out in seven. (Patton).

Historically, in the time between the last oil development boom that went bust in the mid 1980s and the current activity, the county road system sustained traffic from passenger vehicles, occasional bus, delivery truck, and trucks transporting local resources during late fall and winter. The Public Works Department reports traffic flows currently at 24-hours per day, in all weather and road conditions.

Conditions now require that all roads be surfaced with gravel at a minimum. Previously, the county had used other materials like klinker (aka scoria) which is available for a close haul distance in the northwest part of our county. A 3-inch lift of scoria was laid on County Road #317 in January, by March it was pulverized to dust so now the county must haul gravel 35 miles to maintain this road. Gravel is a resource that is scarce in two-thirds of the county so the county has negotiated gravel leases outside of Richland County and contracted to haul gravel to stockpile areas.

County Road Classification System

Major Collector: Designed for service travel of primarily intra county importance. Serves important travel generators (i.e., county seats, schools, mining)

Minor Collector: Designed for land use access and spaced at intervals consistent with population density

Local: Designed for access to adjacent land – short distances.

Excerpted from the Montana Dept. of Transportation publication:
A Guide to Functional Classification, Highway Systems and Other Route Designations in Montana

In the Fall of 2005, the County Public Works Department performed a condition inventory on 293 miles of Collector and 667 miles of Local gravel roads. Using a condition rating from 1 to 10, with 10 being best, it was determined that more than half a million cubic yards of gravel would be needed to bring county gravel roads to a rating of 5, or fair condition. Estimated current cost for the gravel is \$2.6 million. The Public Works Director estimated that it could take four years to lay the gravel at current rates, assuming that the other roads not in need of upgrading in Fall of 2005 were able to stay at a condition of 5 or higher over the course of that four years.

The oil companies are improving miles of right-of-way that were used seasonally or as trails. The county works to ensure that they are built to county standards, but it is difficult for the Public Works Department to monitor all of the activity.

The high percentage of gravel roads, increased heavy truck traffic and resulting dust is an issue for many county residents. Factors for determining if a gravel road should be upgraded to paved include the likelihood for future impacts to continue over a period of time, cost of initial upgrade, and costs of long-term maintenance. Initial costs of paving a road are rising with costs of oil. Cost of asphalt rose 120% between 2005, when it cost \$175/ton, and July 2006, at \$390/ton. Estimated cost in July 2006 of paving a gravel surface road is \$215,000 per mile.

The ability of the county to respond to increasing needs of the road system is limited by staff resources and ability to contract some work. In 1987, the Road & Bridge Department had 37 employees and a good fleet of equipment carried over from the oil boom of the early 80's. As budgets fell, the fleet was reduced since the workforce was reduced to a low of 21 employees in 2001. As of July 2006, the Road and Bridge Department had 29 employees but was having difficulty finding contractors. (Refer to the Economics section of this Growth Policy for more information on how lack of available workers is affecting other businesses.)

Sidney

The City of Sidney is responsible for city streets in the city limits. The city has standards for streets, sidewalks, curb, cutter, and lighting which are applied to new developments within city limits or that are annexed. The city provides street sweeping and snow removal on city streets. Terry Meldahl, Sidney Public Works Director, has prepared a 10-year plan to rebuild and overlay streets. Timing would be sequenced with improvements needed for water mains, avoiding potential for newly rebuilt or re-paved roads to be torn up later to address underground water and sewer facilities.

A truck bypass, to route heavy trucks around Sidney, has been on the radar for at least 25 years. It was identified in the 1980 Update of the Sidney City-County Comprehensive Plan. It continues to be an issue for the Sidney area, noted by Mayor Bret Smelser and others. In the late summer of 2006, a proposal to fund a feasibility study of a bypass from County Road 348 north to Highway 16 was being considered by the U.S. Congress.

There are some pedestrian traffic issues in Sidney. On the north end of town, the lack of a traffic light at the corner of Holly and Central (intersection of Highways 200 and 16 at the north end of Sidney) makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross the highway to get to the post office. The Department of Transportation has indicated that the intersection

does not meet minimum traffic requirements for a traffic light. On the south end of Sidney there are few crosswalks for pedestrians to enable them to cross the broad four lanes, although there are businesses and hotels on each side of the road.

Fairview

Town of Fairview is responsible for streets within the town's limits. Streets include both gravel and paved surfaces. Most of the town is without curb, gutter, or sidewalks. Repairs are handled on as-needed basis. There are no major scheduled improvements planned at this time.

Air Transportation

The Sidney-Richland airport is operated by the Richland County Airport Authority. As of July 2006, Big Sky Airlines is the single commercial carrier providing three flights daily to/from Billings on weekdays, one flight to/from Billings on Saturday, and two flights to/from Billings on Sunday.



Photo courtesy of Richland County website

The Airport Authority is diligent about compliance with state and federal regulations with the bonus that by doing so it is eligible for funding opportunities. The airport was one of the first in the state to meet new requirements for airports with passenger service with planes carrying less than 20 passengers (requirements met in the past year). The airport has a designated airport-influence area and associated zoning (developed in 1998-1999),

intended to ensure that adequate flight space and safety and to comply with applicable state and federal laws. (Henderson)

Having an annual enplanement total of greater than 10,000 has enabled the airport to be classified as an air carrier airport. This designation created eligibility for \$1million/yr of entitlement funds from the FAA. For the last five years, major improvements have included the resurfacing of runways, reconstructing the ramps and taxiways, electrical upgrading and safety improvements, building a maintenance facility, purchasing snow removal equipment, and land acquisitions to expand the safety spaces. Future plans include additional concrete ramp construction, parallel taxiways, expanding the perimeter fencing, terminal improvements, and developing a commercial park. (Huotari)

The airport improvements have retained the 85,000 pound design loading on its main 5,700 foot runway which provides the potential to land large aircraft safely. (Henderson) This has been a real asset to the community as witnessed by the frequent use by corporate jets in the last five years.

Two Fixed Based Operators provide services that make the airport a full-featured complex. Services include major mechanical repairs, maintenance, annual inspections, fueling, flight instruction, check rides, overnight plane storage up to a size G-3, and private shuttle service. (Huotari)

General aviation remains active at the airport and appears to have increased in the last few years. (Huotari)

The Sidney-Richland Airport Authority administers the operations at the Fairview Airport. This grass strip historically services private aircraft and seasonal commercial crop spraying activity. (Huotari)

Rail

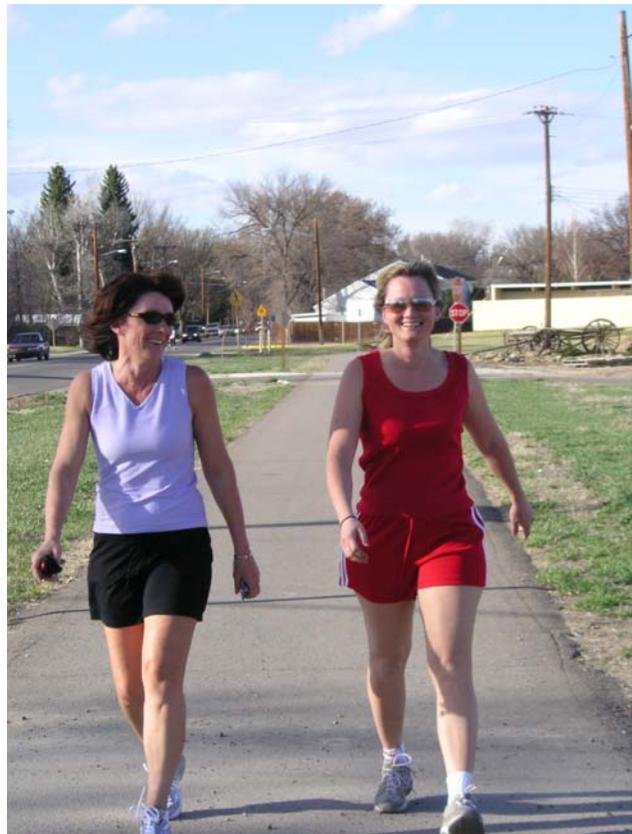
The Yellowstone Valley Railroad operates the section of Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad from Glendive to Snowden. There are no other operating rail lines in Richland County. The line moves approximately 8,000 carloads per year, primarily sugar and grain. (Sheldon)

This unique stretch of rail serves as a critical link during times of derailment on either the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe line on the south or the Great Northern line on the north. Trains are detoured on this line due to lack of many north-south connecting links. This importance adds security for the continuance of this line for many years. (Huotari)

The closest passenger rail service is Amtrak, which generally parallels U.S. Highway 2 to the north of Richland County.

Pedestrian Trail Systems

Sidney and Fairview have pedestrian walkways, both of which have been developed at least in part when irrigation ditch laterals were placed underground, allowing recreational use of the surface. Both systems are separated by grass and other buffers from streets with motorized traffic except where necessary to cross streets in some locations. Both



systems are used primarily for recreational purposes (rather than for local commuting by means other than motorized vehicle).

Sidney has a trails plan, developed in 1996 with Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funding. Trail development is about 65% complete. The trail is a paved surface extending from 5th St. SW and 14th Avenue SW then across South Central just south of 8th Street SE for about another 700 feet. The next phase of development will be to take it to the high school. The trail is a popular place to walk, jog, exercise dogs, and bicycle.

Fairview has a paved pathway of approximately three blocks in length, extending from Fairview School to Ellery Avenue (Highway #200). The pathway has potential to be extended at some time in the future, but there are no plans at this time to do so.

Water Supply Systems

Public Water Supply Systems

The state of Montana defines and differentiates among public water supply systems as follows:

Public water supply system: a system for the provision of water for human consumption from any community well, water hauler for cisterns, water bottling plants, water dispenser, or other water supply that has at least 15 service connections or that regularly serves at least 25 persons daily for any 60 or more days in a calendar year. (DEQ)

There are three types of public water supplies.

Community water system: a public water supply system which serves at least 15 service connections used by year-round residents or that regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents.

Transient non-community water system: a public water supply system that is not a community water system and that does not regularly serve at least 25 of the same persons for at least 6 months a year. This system primarily serves a transient population (cafes, bars, campgrounds, motels, etc.).

Non-transient non-community water system (NTNC): a public water supply system that is not a community water system and that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year. Examples are separate systems serving workers and schools. (DEQ)

Table 7.1 displays all the operating public water supply systems in Richland County. Groundwater is the source of all public water supplies in Richland County with the exception of Montana Dakota Utilities, which uses the Yellowstone River as a surface water source.

For persons not supplied with water from a public water supply source, most rely on individual wells. In Montana, most individual wells are not required to be filed with the state, however, in order to assure a water right, filing with the state is necessary. Statistics from the Ground-Water Information Center of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology indicate a total of 3,750 wells in Richland County, of which 1,575 are for domestic use.

Operators of public water supply systems are responsible for regular maintenance (keeping up with changing treatment filters, for example), repair and replacement (such as repairing breaks and replacing line as necessary), and monitoring and reporting to the state of Montana regarding compliance with drinking water standards.

Keeping up with state and federal water quality standards can be a major issue for public water suppliers. Standards can require new equipment and procedures. Difficulty with conforming to these requirements is one of the main reasons the area northwest of Sidney, which had a public water supply operated by property owners, requested annexation into the city of Sidney.

Table 7.1 Public Water Supply Systems in Richland County

# served	
	Community Water User Systems- Municipal Areas
703	FAIRVIEW TOWN OF
130	LAMBERT SEWER AND WATER ASSN
5000	SIDNEY CITY OF
	Community Water User Systems-Other
45	MOUNT PLEASANT ESTATES
120	RICHLAND CO VALLEY VIEW WUA
75	SIDNEY CIRCLE HOMEOWNERS ASSN
50	TJS ENTERPRISES INC
	Transient Non-Community Systems
116	DEPOT THE
433	FOUR SEASONS TRAILER COURT
125	M AND M CAFE
40	REYNOLDS WAREHOUSE GROCERY SIDNEY
25	SADIES CAFE AND SIDNEY LIVESTOCK
50	SIDNEY COUNTY MARKET NO 201
116	SIDNEY GYMNASTICS CLUB
433	SUNRISE MOTEL THE
125	VALLEY FUEL AND SUPPLY
	Non-Transient Non-Community Systems
25	MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES CO
70	RAU SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 21
149	SAVAGE PUBLIC SCHOOL
	Inactive systems
10	Includes 4 trailer courts (Hilltop Estates, Lagoona, M&R, and R-5)

Source: Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Table 7.2 Summary of Sidney, Fairview, and Lambert Water Supply Systems

Community	Water Source	Capacity	Recent or Planned Upgrades
Sidney	7 wells	The treatment facility could handle an additional 20%, but system is limited for expansion without additional main line and storage facilities	Expanded to include the area annexed in northwest along Highway 16 in last 18 months; need to replace approximately 4 miles of 60 to 90 year old cast iron water main
Fairview	2 wells	Likely some room for additional hook-ups, not quantified	Redid water system with 6 inch line from tank to Johnson Subdivision in 1997; All fire hydrants were recently flow tested; will be installing one new hydrant in the Johnson subdivision (awaiting parts); no other planned improvements
Lambert	2 wells	Could handle an additional 10%	Put in new well in 2004; Currently putting in a Reverse Osmosis system, plans to install meters, and need to replace "saddles" where lines to residences and businesses connect to main lines

Sources: Terry Meldahl, Sidney Public Works; Lyle Carlson, Fairview Public Works; Brian Ligon, Lambert Sewer and Water Association

Sidney

The Sidney water supply system provides water to all developed locations within the city limits with the exception of the area east of the railroad tracks, where water supply is individual wells. The city extended the system to serve the recently annexed area northwest of Sidney. That area had been served with a community water system operated by the subdivision. Complications of administering the system and keeping up with state and federal requirements were major factors in the subdivision's decision to request to be annexed into the city.

The Sidney system water source is seven wells, with average depth around 110 feet. The most recent wells were put on line in 1985 and 2000. There are three storage facilities (one tower, two tanks on the hill), a booster station, and a water treatment facility built in 1987. There are approximately 27 miles of distribution lines.

The existing water supply and treatment facility is adequate for current use and could support an additional 20 percent, but city water is limited for further expansion by the existing distribution system. Larger and/or additional main lines and storage facilities would be needed to serve a major increase in city water customers. The existing distribution system has capacity to serve existing developed and undeveloped lots within the current city limits (assuming use at similar to current averages).

Anticipated major expenses related to the treatment facility include the replacement of two of the three filters. One filter was recently replaced in 2000, but the other two are near the end of their life cycle. The filters remove iron and manganese, which affect the color and taste of the water. Cost of replacing the filters is estimated at \$250,000 each.

The existing system includes approximately 20,000 feet of cast iron water main installed between 1916 and 1940. This 65-100 year old pipe is at the end of its useful life and was identified in the comprehensive plans prepared in the 1980s as needing replacement. The older the system, the more breaks in the line. On average, there are three to four breaks per year on these older mains in Sidney. Current cost of replacement is estimated at \$1.5 million. The public works department has it planned as a 10-year project. The project is currently on hold until it is considered and approved by the city council.

Fairview

The Fairview system provides water for all developed areas within the town limits except for a few blocks at the south end of town. The Fairview, Montana public water system extends service to the elementary school in East Fairview, North Dakota, as well as to some residences along that line. Other residents of East Fairview, North Dakota rely on individuals wells for water supply.

The Fairview system is in good shape with few breaks despite some older 4-inch line installed in 1935 and 1953. A portion of the water system was re-built with 6-inch line in 1997 (from tank to Johnson subdivision). The system was recently flow tested to check all fire hydrants, and one new hydrant is being added in the Johnson subdivision. The town has two storage tanks, a 300,000 gallon storage tank on the hill and a 100,000 gallon tank. Typically only the 300,000 gallon tank is in use at any one time; it is difficult to operate both at the same time because the lower unit will overflow as the higher unit is filling.

Lambert

The Lambert Sewer and Water Association has been working to upgrade their system. They raised \$800,000 with partial funding from Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The project was to fund the Reverse Osmosis (RO) system and to install meters. Lambert wells are 1500-1600 feet and utilize the Fox Hills Sands aquifer. Water is high in fluoride, sodium, and solids, and will be addressed by the RO system, which is currently being installed. The meter installation is on hold because of difficulties finding contractors to do the work.

Sewer Systems

The state of Montana defines public wastewater system as follows:

Public wastewater system: a system for collection, transportation, treatment, or disposal of wastewater that serves 15 or more families or 25 or more persons daily for a period of at least 60 days in a calendar year.

There are currently no classifications in Montana for public wastewater systems that operate with septic and drainfield. Individual wastewater systems are permitted by the county sanitarian.

The state certifies public wastewater systems that discharge into surface water. Existing systems can operate without a state permit to discharge to groundwater (permit system initiated in the mid-1990s) until the system needs to be upgraded or an environmental problem with the existing system is identified.

Four communities in Richland County have public wastewater systems—Sidney, Fairview, Lambert, and Savage. Only Fairview and Savage are permitted discharge systems (Sharbono and Logan). Other systems serving residents in Richland County include Sunrise Inn and the Sidney-Circle subdivision (Logan).

Keeping up with state and federal water quality standards can be a major issue for management of public wastewater systems. Standards can require new equipment and procedures.

Table 7.3 Summary of Community Wastewater Systems

Community	Discharge Permit	System	Capacity	Recent or Planned Upgrades
Sidney	None required	2-cell lagoon	Any major expansion in any direction except to the south would require new main collection lines	3 rd cell needed, need to slip-line main line
Fairview	Required	3-cell lagoon	Would need to dredge sludge from main cell prior to any major expansion	Will need to eventually dredge sludge from main cell
Lambert	None Required	2-cell lagoon	Would need to add another cell	Need to add another cell
Savage	Required	1-cell lagoon	Cell has design capacity for 300, serves 250 at present	Measures needed to come into compliance with existing and anticipated federal standards, including likelihood of additional cell(s) and effluent flow measuring device

Sources: Terry Meldahl, Sidney Public Works; Lyle Carlson, Fairview Public Works; Brian Ligon, Lambert Sewer and Water Association; Kelly Logan, Richland County Sanitarian, DEQ Statement of Basis (for Savage System)

Sidney

The Sidney sewer system serves all developed areas in the city limits with the exception of the newly annexed area in the northwest along Highway 16. This area was built as subdivisions with individual septic and drainfield systems, which continue in use at present.

The existing treatment system is a two-cell lagoon, located southeast of Sidney near the Yellowstone River. The separation distance between the lagoons and the Yellowstone River has diminished since the construction of the lagoons due to change in the riverbanks from flooding. The city has since built up the bank with rip-rap (permitted by



the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) to protect the lagoons. The lagoon is classified as a “non-discharge” facility but the city is required by the state to monitor the quality of surrounding groundwater. A third cell is needed to address water quality deterioration at an estimated current cost of \$12 million. The city is actively negotiating to purchase 150 acres adjacent to the current facility. The land would be used for the third cell and for surface disposal of the sludge.

There are approximately 32 miles of line in the collection system. The public works capital improvements plan for

the sewer includes need to slip-line 75,000 feet (approximately 14 miles). Slip-lining is an alternative to complete replacement of lines and basically involves installing liners into existing lines. The improvement is needed because the H₂S gases present in the sewage decays the existing pipe material (mostly clay tile) causing breaks. Cost of slip-lining was estimated in July 2006 at approximately \$4.5 million.

The existing system is adequate for current needs. Any major expansion in any direction except to the south would require new main collection lines. Although the newly annexed area in the northwest part of the city has no current need to be added to the system, adding that area would not be feasible without expansion of existing main lines leading to the lagoon.

The comprehensive plans prepared in the 1980s identified a number of needed improvements and constraints for future expansion. A number of these have been addressed, such as the west to south side interceptor, but others remain outstanding. The most pressing needs for the sewer system overall are the need to add a third cell to the lagoon system and the slip-line project.

Fairview

The Fairview wastewater system serves the developed area within town limits, except for the area in the northwest corner on the other side of the irrigation canal. The Fairview, Montana system does not extend to East Fairview, North Dakota, which has its own system.

The Fairview, Montana system consists of three cells. The main cell, constructed in the 1960s, is located in North Dakota. The two other cells, located in Montana, were constructed in the 1980s. The system is working satisfactorily and no major planned improvements are scheduled at this time. The main cell would need to be dredged before any major increase in hookups, and will need to be dredged eventually regardless.

Lambert

The Lambert sewer system was built in the late 1960s in response to groundwater contamination from the cumulative effects of individual septic-drainfield systems. The collection system was described as in good shape by the operator. A new cell will be needed to handle the “reject” water from the new RO system installed to improve the quality of water supply.

Savage

The Savage lagoon is a three-acre, single cell lagoon serving approximately 250 residents. The facility was built in 1967 in response to groundwater contamination from the cumulative effects of individual septic-drainfield systems. The facility usually discharges once a year to an unnamed irrigation overflow ditch that flows into the Yellowstone River downstream from the discharge point. (Vojacek)

The Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit for the Richland County Savage lagoon was issued on December 18, 1995, became effective on February 1, 1996 and expired October 31, 2000. The county submitted a Short Form 2A application to renew the permit on April 14, 2000. The permit was determined complete on April 14, 2000 and is administratively extended until it is renewed. (MDEQ)

The county has been advised that the system will likely need an additional 1-2 cells and an effluent flow measuring device in order to comply with applicable requirements.

Solid Waste

The Richland County Solid Waste District administers the operations of the landfill located 11 miles northwest of Sidney and 11 miles west of Fairview. This Class II and Class IV Landfill was built in 1995 with a design life of 110 years. In addition to the landfill, the Solid Waste District maintains canister sites in the communities of Savage, Lambert, and Elmdale and contracts the hauling of this garbage to the landfill. These canister sites are accessible at any time for household quantities only.

The city of Sidney and town of Fairview provide collection services within their respective jurisdictions. The eastern one-third of the county can contract with a private hauler for rural collection services. (Huotari)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

Richland County has 20 community parks, county fairgrounds, and a number of other recreational facilities in the county. Other areas used for recreational purposes include state of Montana fishing access sites, wildlife management areas, and reservoirs.

Some significant recreational facilities have been initiated and maintained by the private sector. There are several examples, the indoor hockey arena in Sidney, built by the local hockey leagues and affiliated groups, the gymnastics club building, also constructed by local

groups, and the acquisition of the Fairview Bridge and Cartwright Tunnel by the Fairview Chamber of Commerce. The bridge and tunnel were used only by trains until 1926, when the bridge was planked and then used for highway traffic. In 2002, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad officially presented the Fairview Bridge and Cartwright Tunnel to the Fairview Chamber of Commerce. The area is now a tourist and local attraction, with special festivities on an annual basis.



Table 7.4 Municipal and Community Parks and County Fairground

Park	Description	Area (acres)
Sidney Parks		
Brattin	Triangular piece of grass and trees	.2
East Park (Quillings)	Picnic shelter, playground equipment, outdoor ice rink in winter/soccer field in summer, warming house, restrooms	2.2
Fischer	Playground equipment and grass lawn	2.7
Hansen	Playground equipment and open area	1.1
Johnson	Playground equipment and open area	2.0
Lalonde	Playground equipment, picnic area	1.0
Lyndale	Playground equipment, basketball court, 2 softball fields, restrooms and concession, picnic area	3.8
Moose	1 lighted baseball field with bleachers, restrooms and concessions, storage building, gravel parking lot	6.1
North Park (Water Tower)	3 ball fields (T-ball), bleachers, basketball court, playground equipment, bathrooms	2.0
Nutter	Lawn and trees	1.0
Peterson	Playground equipment, open space, trails	4.8
South Meadow	2 adult ball fields, bleachers, covered dugouts, snack shack, parking area (soon to add a 3 rd ball field)	9.0
Swimming Pool	Swimming pool and sand volley pit area (which will be area of expansion for new water slide)	
Tennis Court and Arboretum	4 tennis courts, arboretum with trees and rock gardens	2.0
Trail System	Recreational Trail System	
Truck Route	Basketball court, picnic table, playground equipment	1.0
Veterans Memorial	Playground, picnic facilities, performing arts pavilion	7.0
Wilkinson	Heavy brush, high groundwater and volunteer tree growth	3.0
Sidney Total	17 Park Facilities + Trail System	48.9
Fairview Town: Sharbono Memorial	Pool, basketball court, tennis court, picnic tables, playground equipment, RV hookups, parking lot	
Fairview Town Trail	3-block trail	
Lambert Community Park	Playground equipment, picnic area	
Savage: Maschera	Horseshoe pits, volleyball court, playground equipment	
County Fairgrounds	Buildings, livestock barns	
Richland Park	Playground equipment, rustic day use in wooded river bottom, boat ramp.	
Anderson Park	Undeveloped open area	

Source: Sidney Public Works, Fairview Clerk, County records, County Public Works

Sidney

The Sidney City Parks Board manages the park and trail system in Sidney. The parks department consists of one full time staff person responsible for all 17 park facilities and a total of nearly 50 acres. Seasonal staff is hired for park maintenance, including mowing. Major new developments in the park system include the continued work to complete the trail system, a third ball field at South Meadow Park, and the addition of a water slide for the city pool. Terry Meldahl, Public Works Director, is concerned about the large areas of open space (not designated as some other use) that need to be mowed and maintained and the city is looking at various options to reduce those areas with xeriscaping and other means.

Fairview

Fairview community members have been working to replace the pool, built in 1959 and which is reportedly leaking approximately 3,000 gallons of water per day. The estimated cost of a new facility with bathhouse, lap pool, and play pool was \$742,800 in April 2006. The county was approached by the community members to help fund the project, for which \$70,000 has been raised to date. (Sidney Herald, April 2006)



County

Richland County is looking at potential renovation and/or expansion at the fairgrounds. The plans are in the works, and include an update to the commercial building and addition of an indoor livestock arena. (Sidney Herald, April 12, 2006)

Increased local demand stimulated the refurbishing of Richland Park located 5 miles northeast of Sidney along the Yellowstone River. This once vibrant park was near decay due to lack of funds and continued vandalism. After receiving an FWP grant in 2005, the park is in the reconstruction phase. A new boat ramp is to be completed in 2006 with plans for a picnic shelter, day use fire pits, two concrete outhouses, and refurbished playground equipment to be completed by 2007. (Huotari)

Table 7.5 Other Public and Privately Operated Recreation Facilities in Richland County

Facility-Recreation Area	Location	Ownership/Management (Public or private sector)
Gartside Reservoir	Crane area	State of Montana
Elk Island Wildlife Management Area	Savage area	State of Montana
Seven Sisters Wildlife Management Area	Crane area	State of Montana
Fox Lake Wildlife Management Area	Lambert area	State of Montana
Kuester Reservoir	East of Lambert	State of Montana
Fishing access sites	Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers	State of Montana
Fairview Bridge and Cartwright Tunnel	East of Fairview	Located in North Dakota but gifted to the Fairview Chamber of Commerce, which actively maintains and improves the area with other partners in North Dakota
Golf Course	Sidney area	Private-country club
Hockey Rink	Sidney	Local Group built and maintains the facility primarily for youth hockey leagues – the only indoor hockey rink in eastern Montana
Bow Hunters Club	Sidney area	Local club
Saddle Club	Sidney area	Local club
Bowling	Sidney	Private
Movie Theater	Sidney	Private

Note: This list identifies some of the major recreation facilities in the area, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list

Utilities

Power

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Association

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Association (LYREA) is headquartered in Sidney. The Association provides power to approximately 4,000 metered locations and maintains 1,800 miles of power lines in Montana and North Dakota. The company is a cooperative owned by the member-users.

LYREA serves all of Richland County with the exception of Savage, Fairview, and Sidney. Don Prevost, of LYREA, indicates that in the five year period from 2000-2005, there were 76 new commercial connections in the LYREA service area, almost all of which were related to oil development. When the wells first start they run on portable power units run by gas, but then they go to electric. Providing electric to all these locations required LYREA about a year ago to hire two contractors in addition to the regular staff as they could not keep up with the demand. Oil production has had a positive effect on LYREA electric rates—there hasn't been a rate increase since 1993.

There is potential for future increased demand in rural electricity from the agricultural sector as many irrigators are looking to switch from flood irrigation to sprinkle irrigation. (Prevost)

Montana Dakota Utilities

Montana Dakota Utilities (MDU) distributes natural gas and propane and operates electric power generation, transmission, and distribution in Richland County. They provide electric service in those locations not served by the LYREA, primarily Sidney, Fairview, and Savage. MDU operates the Lewis and Clark Electric Generating Station located in Sidney.

Telecommunications/Internet

U.S. West Communications

US West provides telephone services and internet connections in Richland County.

Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative

Mid-Rivers provides telephone service to 28,000 square miles in 20 counties of eastern Montana and one county in North Dakota. It is the largest land mass telephone cooperative in the continental United States. With implementation of satellite broadband service, Mid-Rivers provides High-Speed Internet access to 100 percent of its service area.

Conclusions and Projected Trends

Richland County has important transportation infrastructure resources—an airport that can handle large aircraft and with considerable potential for commercial growth, rail service with little chance of abandonment due to its strategic location and use for re-routing between the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe line on the south or the Great Northern, and Highway 16 as a National Highway of Significance.

Roads and highways are experiencing more heavy truck traffic as a result of the oil development. Local residents identify Highway 201 as a particular safety problem because of the ruts, general poor surface condition, and increased traffic. County gravel-surface roads deteriorate quickly under the heavy trucks, and dust and traffic are problems for local residents. County Public Works Department is working to identify methods to address these issues in the short- and long-term, and as a start has inventoried the condition of all county roads as baseline over the past year. Getting ahead of the curve for impacts is difficult for a variety of reasons including speed at which impacts are occurring, lack of local sources of gravel, difficulty in finding contractors. Impacts to roads will reduce when oil exploration and development phase is complete and wells are in production phase.

Of the three communities with public water supply (Sidney, Fairview, and Lambert), two need work. Sidney's system needs replacement of approximately 4 miles of 60 to 90 year old cast iron water main. In order to accommodate any major new residential development, Sidney's system would need additional main line and storage. Lambert's

system is in the process of being upgraded, recently installed a reverse osmosis system, but cannot find contractors to install the meters. Lambert will also need to replace connections to individual lot laterals. Fairview is in satisfactory condition now, but would need to be examined if a major new development were to connect.

Of the four communities with public wastewater systems (Sidney, Fairview, Lambert, and Savage, three need work. Sidney needs a third cell in its lagoon system and also needs to slip-line the main lines. Lambert needs another cell and may require changes to their lagoon system without any additional growth (Logan). Savage needs an effluent monitoring device and may need to install an additional cell or cells. A major new development in any of these communities would require some expansion of the system.

Rebuilding and overlaying streets in communities with public water and/or wastewater is most efficiently done at the same time that upgrades are made to the water and wastewater systems. Consequently, needed street improvements will likely be delayed until the water and waste water systems are addressed.

The county's solid waste system has capacity for another 100 years.

The Sidney City walking trail system is well-used and work is underway for its expansion. The city has a trails plan.

Richland County residents are dedicated to their youth, as evidenced by the extent and variety of public and private recreational systems.