

CREATING THE OLD AND NEW WESTS: LANDSCAPE AND IDENTITY IN
ANACONDA AND HAMILTON, MONTANA

by

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Earth Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This research employs case studies of Anaconda and Hamilton, Montana to explore the creation of the Old and New Wests. For nearly a century, Anaconda functioned as a copper smelting city. However, since the smelter closed the community has witnessed withering population losses, economic contraction, and investment withdrawal. Alternatively, Hamilton has a long history of recreational and leisure amenity investment. Recently, Hamilton's rapid population growth, economic expansion and considerable investment have transformed the community. This research seeks to understand and interpret the changes occurring in the contemporary Old and New Wests as well as to understand and interpret their historical geographic roots. By using the tools of cultural landscape analysis combined with the concept of place identity, this research argues that the shifting imprint of capital and the industrial and middle landscape ideals have been central forces in the creation of these distinctive modern regions.

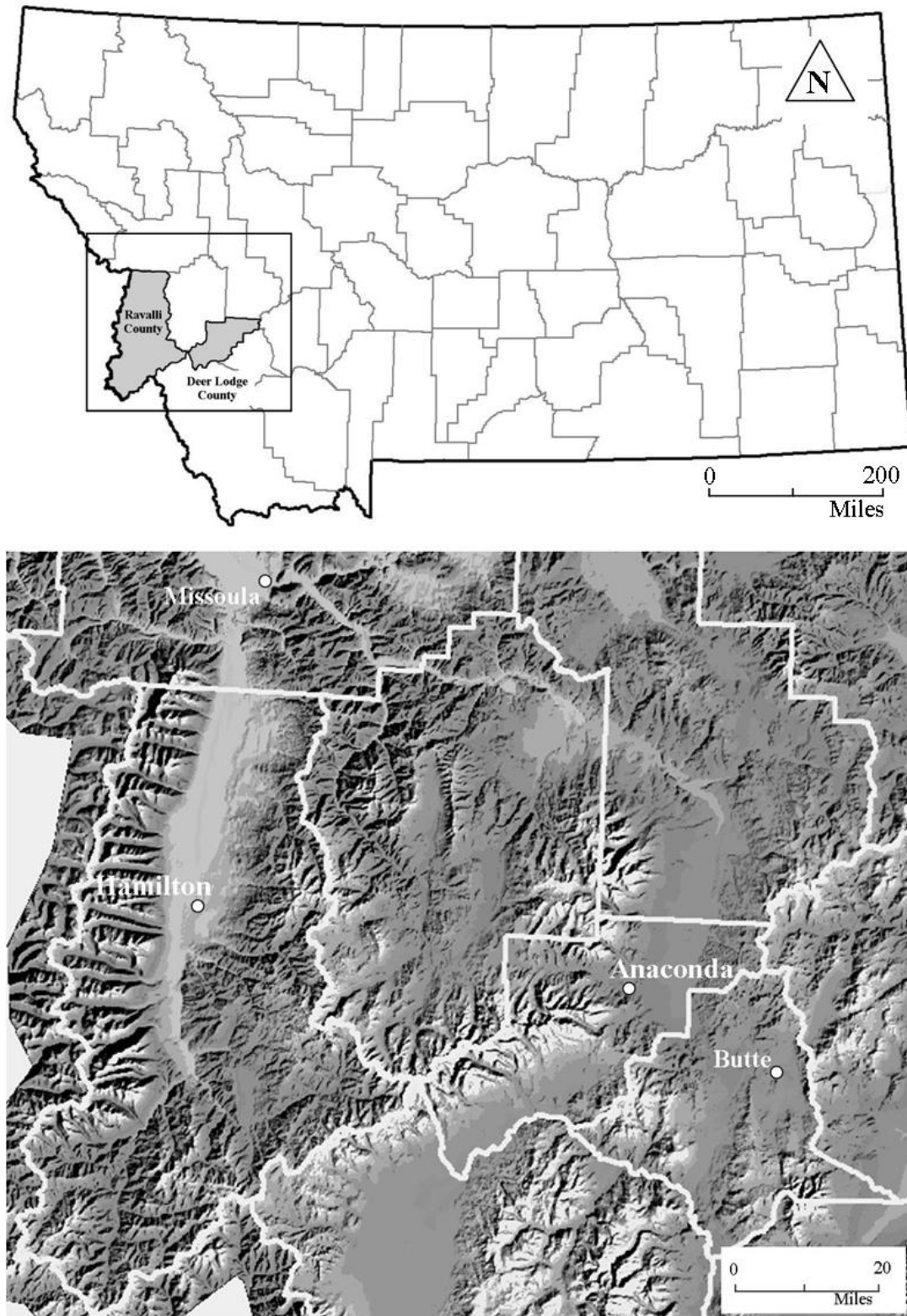
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Anaconda and Hamilton are two western Montana communities that share a common history and geography (Figure 1). Both communities are situated in majestic high mountain valleys surrounded by forests: Anaconda in the shadow of Mt. Haggin, Hamilton in the deep Bitterroot Valley. Both communities were founded by famed mining entrepreneur Marcus Daly as support for his wide-ranging economic interests: Anaconda smelted his copper; Hamilton harvested and milled the timber that supported his mining operations. Both communities leaned on traditional industries to support growing populations into the early twentieth century: Anaconda maintained a population of over 15,000 in 1920; Hamilton supported a population of over 10,000 in the same year.

Over the course of their history Anaconda and Hamilton have indeed shared many similarities, but since 1965, the two communities have followed different developmental paths. Anaconda has seen its industry and half of its residents depart, leaving behind a core group of citizens to salvage the community. Conversely, with Hamilton as its base, Ravalli County has tripled its population and seen hi-tech firms, metropolitan commuters and second home owners come to the area.

Two modern “Wests” collide in these western Montana places. “Old West” communities such as Anaconda, have witnessed withering population losses, economic contraction, and the withdrawal of investment from their communities. Alternatively, many communities in the non-metropolitan west have joined Hamilton in the ranks of the “New West” and have been transformed by rapid population growth, economic expansion and considerable investment. Every community that has dealt with such changes has

Figure 1. Anaconda and Hamilton, Montana. (Map by Author)



undoubtedly made many adjustments to respond to its new reality. These adjustments fundamentally alter the landscapes and place identities of these communities. However, the Old and New West surely did not simply appear in 1965, but instead were fostered through a series of historical geographic forces. This research examines landscape and place identity to interpret changes in the Old and New Wests, and also how historical geographic forces have precipitated those changes.

Research Objectives

This research has two objectives. The first is to understand and interpret the changes occurring in the contemporary Old and New Wests. By using the tools of cultural landscape analysis combined with the concept of place identity in two settings, I assess how the two regions have diverged. Both Anaconda and Hamilton have made unique adjustments to accommodate Old West decline and New West growth in the modern era, and have thus altered their landscapes and place identities.

The second objective is to understand and interpret the historical geographic roots of the contemporary Old and New Wests. Patterns, processes and ideologies that influenced the modern West emerge through historical landscape and place identity analysis. These historical geographical forces not only helped shape Anaconda and Hamilton into the Old and New West communities that they are today, but they continue to play an integral role in setting the stage for future changes in both communities. While their individual experiences are unique, Anaconda and Hamilton act as case studies of expanding and contracting communities throughout the American West. This research

interprets the narratives of change in these communities in order to create a basic framework for interpreting the broader patterns of changing landscapes and place identities in the Old and New Wests.

Although many geographers, planners, historians, and sociologists have studied elements of the Old and New Wests, the historical geography of the changing landscapes within these regions has yet to be thoroughly explored. In order to appreciate the not-so-subtle nuances of expanding and contracting western places, it is essential to begin collecting case studies at the community level. While these case studies will add to the larger literature of changing western landscapes, the specific value of my research is in the juxtaposition of the two communities, their historical development, and their responses to their current situations. This research approaches Anaconda and Hamilton—and by extension the Old and New Wests—from a geographical and historical perspective, thus providing an informed view of the evolution of these two Wests in place, over time.

Conceptual Framework

In the postwar era the United States has seen a significant population and investment shift to western places (Abbott 1993). This westward movement has been focused largely on metropolitan centers but has also fundamentally altered the population landscape of the non-metropolitan West (Cromartie 1999; Otterstrom 2003). But the populations have not been distributed evenly and “the result is a deeply divided regional landscape in which some westerners struggle to handle the influx of people while an hour

or two away streets and businesses sit empty and population loss persists” (Wyckoff 2002, 33). The waning Old and waxing New West stand at either end of this modern population dichotomy, but “population change [in either direction] represents more than a simple redistribution of people; it is an indicator and, in many instances, an instigator of a wide range of economic, social, cultural, political/policy, and environmental transformations” (Shumway 2001, 492). The changing landscapes of the Old and New Wests bear witness to the transformations that can occur as populations shift.

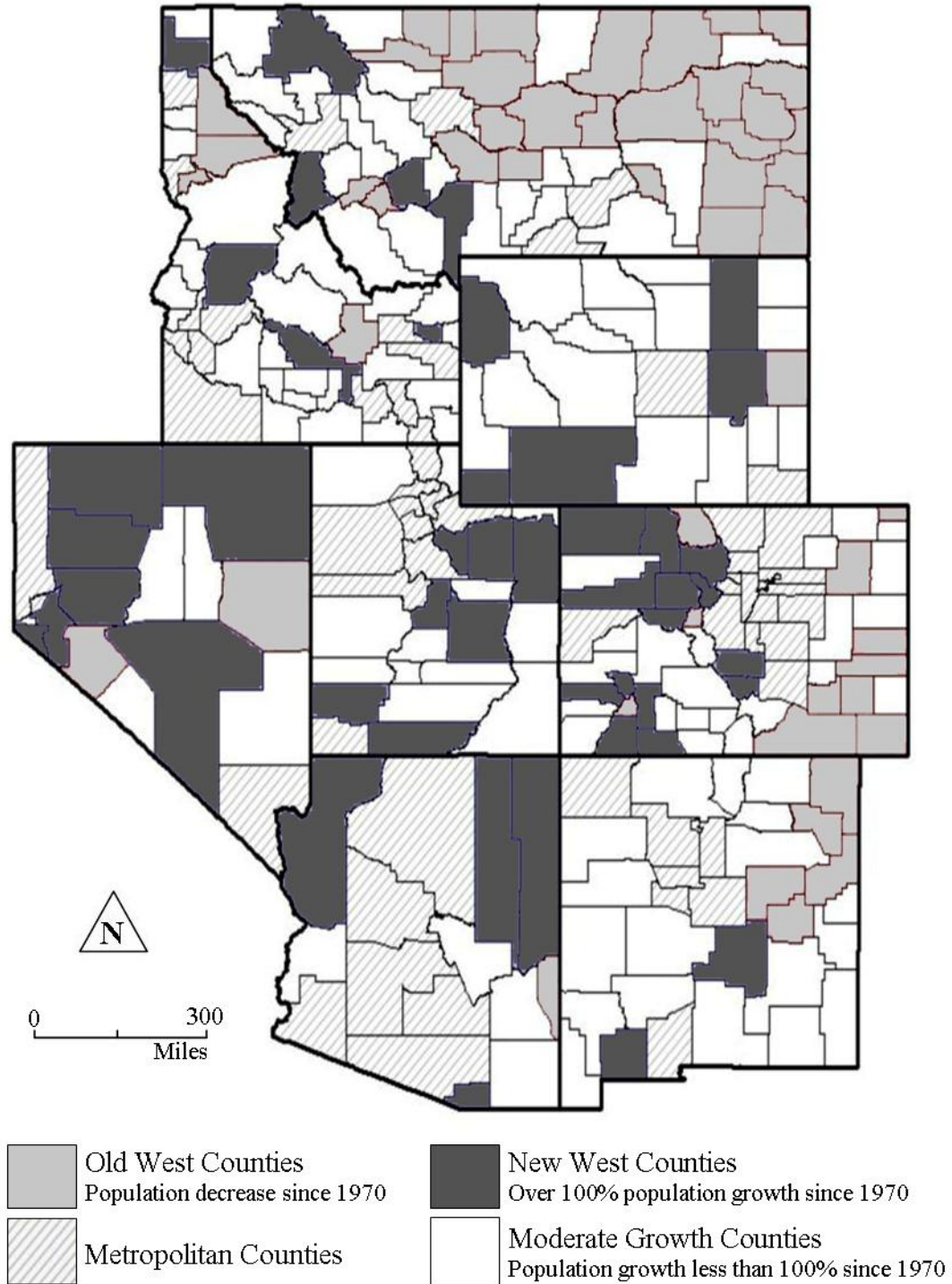
New West

The rapid growth of the non-metropolitan West is widely discussed among geographers. Populations in the non-metro West have risen quickly; in fact since the 1970s the rate of population change in the non-metropolitan West has consistently outpaced the other non-metro areas in the United States (Cromartie 1999, 3). Statistics such as these have led to a wave of population studies with titles such as “The Rural Rebound” (Johnson 1999), “Migrants Settling Far and Wide in the Rural West” (Cromartie 1999), and “Amenities Increasingly Draw People to the Rural West” (Rudzitis 1999). It is now common practice in geography to attribute the rapid rise of the non-metropolitan West to a few economic and social factors. The economic, technological, and transportation restructuring in the United States has allowed many industries to locate outside of urban areas, while modern residential preferences of footloose workers and retirees tend toward high amenity areas and places with rural lifestyles (Vias 1999, 14). These continuing population trends have contributed to the rise of the New West (Taylor 2004). New Western places can be identified by more than just population growth; they

can be pinpointed also by their high levels of environmental or natural amenities and their service or recreation based economies that stimulate this growth (Shumway 2001, 492). Places in the waxing New West, due to their service and amenity oriented economies, have a very distinct spatial distribution (Figure 2).

The body of research about the New West is growing, and often looks at some of the unique problems that face the region. Historians, geographers, and economists have written widely about issues of growth in the waxing New West. Some of this research simply assesses the expanding infrastructure necessary to accommodate burgeoning populations, while other research focuses on a broader array of economic and social issues that arise with growth. Service and amenity-based New Western economies are often cited for their employment growth, but castigated for the low wage, low skill jobs they create (Power 2001). Tourism and recreational development often play a large role in the seeming economic vitality of New Western towns and these issues are thoughtfully covered in *Little Town Blues* by Raye Ringholz (1992) and in Hal Rothman's *Devil's Bargains* (1998). Likewise in the *Atlas of the New West* William Riebsame (1997) writes at length about residential rural sprawl and warns about the impending overproduction of resorts and second homes. The changing social environment and the tensions between newcomers and established residents in the rural West are regularly reported on by Ed Marston and the *High Country News*, and are also often treated by Western scholars (Robbins 1996; Riebsame 1997; Taylor 2004). The changing social structure in the New West is at the heart of conflicts over environmental protection and resource use that are discussed by Gundars Rudzitis in *Wilderness and the Changing American West* (1996)

Figure 2. Map of the Old and New Wests. (Map by Author)



and other researchers in various publications (Ingram 1999; Gollehon 1999; Riebsame 1997, 80-93).

Along with the myriad economic and social changes occurring in the waxing New West, has come a transforming identity. Many scholars have weighed in on the debate over the new identity of the New West (Wrobel 1997, Rudzitis 1996, Riebsame 1997, Robbins 1996). What will the New West become? How do residents in the non-metropolitan New West identify with their new cultural landscape? Will New Western economic and social structures save these places from their traditional dependence on extractive industry or is the New West simply “a marketing tool for a classist, urban fantasy about the pastoral countryside”? (Taylor 2004, 1). This research seeks to provide a discussion of the historical development of waxing New Western places and place identities that will add to the literature that addresses these topics.

Middle Landscapes in the New West. In *Western Images, Western Landscapes: Travels along U.S. 89* (1989), Vale and Vale identify “images in the mind” that are prevalent in the American West. They discuss the West as empty quarter, frontier, Big Rock Candy Mountain, Turnerian progression, desert, protected wild nature, playground, and middle landscape as important images that define the West. Vale and Vale describe the middle landscape:

In much of the American West...the combination of nature and culture takes a distinctive form: wild nature and civilized culture remain distinct but in close juxtaposition to one another—a field of hay against a red rock slope, a cluster of homes on a desert plain, a small town in a mountain valley. Such landscapes suggest a stability of opposing forces in a balance, a harmony, a garden, a Middle Landscape (Vale and Vale 1989, 8).

In the middle landscape, “wild nature” is separate from the city, but the two are still closely juxtaposed. Indeed, the close juxtaposition of the two entities is the defining characteristic of the middle landscape that helps to shape the community’s development. Likewise, many New West communities share these middle landscape traits and thus have similar landscapes and identities. Had the Vales traveled along U.S. 93 instead of U.S. 89, they most certainly would have recognized how the idea of the middle landscape ideal has shaped Hamilton. This research argues that the middle landscape ideal has guided Hamilton’s development from its inception until it has become a New West community.

Old West

Often only miles away but worlds apart from the rapidly-growing New West is the Old West. These non-metropolitan western places did not take part in the “rural rebound” and have not expanded rapidly, but instead for years have slowly contracted. They may not always be what Marion Clawson called “dying communities,” but they are clearly “steady losers” (Clawson 1980, 72). Theories for the decline of these western places are fewer, but likely accurate in their simplicity: many Old West communities once relied on commodity-based traditional western economies that have since disappeared (Wyckoff 2002). Less tactfully, the *Atlas of the New West* dismisses these “few Interior West counties [that are] not growing fast” as merely “busted mining areas and declining timber communities” (Riebsame 1997, 57). Indeed Waning West places are often timber, agricultural, or mining communities, and thus their location within the West has very definite patterns (Figure 2).

Studies of the “emptying areas” (Lonsdale 1998) in the West have been fewer than those of growing areas. Most notably William Robbins treats a declining timber community in Oregon in *Hard Times in Paradise* (1988); Kent Ryden writes of the Coeur d’Alene Mining District in Idaho in *Mapping the Invisible Landscape* (1993); and William Wyckoff looks at the waning areas of Butte, Montana (1995) and Niobrara County, Wyoming (2002). Challenges for the Old West emerge in these works and in other research on contracting places. Economic issues are the key struggles for waning places; job losses, business closures, and falling land prices are paramount concerns (Robbins 1988; Marsh 1987; Malone 1986; Knapp 1995; Wyckoff 2002). Additionally, providing healthcare, schooling and basic services as these institutions contract and disappear is a constant struggle (Marsh 1987; Wyckoff 2002). Finally, maintaining the social fabric and identity of the community is a serious issue for waning communities (Robbins 1988; Knapp 1995; Marsh 1987; Wyckoff 1995; Wyckoff 2002). Despite the scope of these studies, the Center of the American West still calls for an examination of the “under-studied bust” and that “a better, deeper knowledge of the ‘busts’ would, concretely and directly, add to our capacity to cope intelligently with the whole cycle” (Limerick 2003, 10). One of the goals of this research is to add to this knowledge by examining the landscapes and identities of Old West communities.

Industrial Landscapes in the Old West. The American West has a legacy of industrial landscapes. The imprint of industrial mining has created distinctive industrial landscapes and identities throughout the West. Wyckoff describes the industrial landscape as “a landscape created for and oriented toward production, a place constructed

to extract wealth directly from the environment in which capital, people, and resources were brought together in dramatic ways.” Industrial landscapes were dominant during the industrial era, and the idea of an industrial landscape stirred the blood of many turn-of-the-century capitalists. However, these industrial landscapes that once were so central to western growth, have not weathered well. Again, Wyckoff describes the contemporary industrial landscape as a “still-distinctive landscape that is caught between the scars of its industrial past and the realities of its postindustrial future” (Wyckoff 1995, 478). The postindustrial landscape is now a more common occurrence in the contemporary West.

This research specifically analyzes Anaconda, an industrial Old West community, and maintains that industrial production is a key element of the commodity-based traditional Old West economy. Therefore, the lessons learned in this research can be usefully applied to other declining commodity-based Old West communities. This research argues that, like the middle landscape in the New West, the dream of the industrial landscape is central to understanding the historical, contemporary, and future development of the Old West.

Theoretical Framework

Place is the key concept in this research and is indeed one of the principal objects of study in the field of geography. The concept of place has a long history in geographical interpretation. Over time the term has accumulated myriad meanings so that now place can be as obvious as “a word that seems to speak for itself” (Cresswell 2004, 1) but simultaneously as abstruse as “one of the trickiest words in the English language”

(Hayden 1999, 112). This research examines three important themes associated with place: landscape, identity, and ideology.

Landscape

Landscape “refers to the signatures people leave upon the visible scene and what those imprints can tell us about a culture” (Wyckoff 1999, 6). Landscape studies have a long tradition in geography and many scholars have demonstrated that analyzing landscape offers valuable insight into place concepts such as history, culture, economic change, and community identity (Meinig 1979b; Groth 1997; Baker 2003, 109-155). Peirce F. Lewis reminds us that “all human landscape has cultural meaning” and can be “read” as a text that offers the researcher an “unwitting autobiography, reflecting our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears, in tangible, visible form” (Lewis 1979, 12). Landscapes can be read in many different ways. Donald Meinig offers “ten versions of the same scene” that identifies possible ways to view the landscape. The landscape can be viewed as nature, habitat, artifact, system, problem, wealth, aesthetic, history, ideology, and place (Meinig 1979b). Meinig’s exercise of looking at landscape in different ways along with recent scholarship indicates that landscape is more than just the materiality of lived conditions but is also a representation that imparts meaning. Similarly, if more directly, Don Mitchell points out that “landscape is always both a material form that results from and structures social interaction, and an ideological representation dripping with power” (Mitchell 1996, 35). This research looks at the landscape as both a material and social creation, and examines how those constructions change through time.

Looking at landscape change through time offers insights unavailable with only a temporally narrow view of the landscape. Alan Baker indicates that “studies of landscape necessitate a historical approach” (Baker 2003, 129). Michael Conzen calls the historical approach to landscape study the least developed of the principal approaches to landscape study in America, but it is a perspective that cannot be overlooked. “To view the landscape historically is to acknowledge its cumulative character; to acknowledge that nature, symbolism, and design are not static elements of the human record but change with historical experience” (Conzen 1990, 4). Both the built material landscape and the landscapes of representation I focus on acknowledge the “cumulative character” of the landscape and that landscapes “change with historical experience.” Through study of a landscape’s history it becomes possible to answer the three key questions Alan Baker asks of a landscape: how was this landscape made; why was this landscape made; and what did and does this landscape mean (Baker 2003, 129). Through the visible record, archives, and historical narratives the landscape historian can piece together what changed in the landscape and when—a chronology of landscape. But a chronological record “is not in itself history but the scaffold upon which one constructs history” (Meinig 1979b, 43). Only when the scaffolding is in place is it possible to answer questions about what the landscape means.

Place Identity

The idea of place identity provides insights into Baker’s question about a landscape’s meaning. Places develop and change identities through time, and these identities are essential to understanding any place. In fact one scholar nearly conflates

place and identity when he defines place as “the locus of individual and group identity” (Castree 2003, 165). Ben Marsh eloquently defined place identity as “the story a town tells itself, the town’s autogeography: What is this town? How did we get here? Why do we stay?” (Marsh 1987, 338). Recent scholarship indicates that in order for a strong, coherent place identity to occur there must be a consensus about the answers to Marsh’s questions (Larsen 2004, Harner 2001). When all members of a community agree on “What is this town? How did we get here? Why do we stay?” a strong place identity is the result.

However, rarely is there such accord. More often than not there is a polyphony of responses and indeed a polyphony of place identities in any community. Some researchers have surmised that “clearly places do not have single, unique ‘identities’” but instead “they are full of internal conflict” (Massey 2004, 70). This research explores how place identities vary, not only from individual to individual, but how they change through time. This internal spatial, individual, and temporal polyphony of place meanings is fruitful terrain for the historical geographer. By uncovering the various meanings people give to a community over time it is possible to come to better understand place identity (not necessarily “the” place identity) in a community.

Geographers have often looked toward identity to help reconstruct place, and recent scholarship increasingly integrates place identity into place-based studies, particularly in the American West. Communities dealing with shifting or busted economies (Ryden 1993, Wyckoff 1995, Keane 2004), changing ethnic identities (Smith

2002, Haverluk 2003) and the strains of tourism (Rothman 1998, Keane 2004) have all dealt in one way or another with reconstructing identities.

While an understanding of landscape is important for examining place identity, landscape alone is not sufficient. It is also necessary to understand the place identities that are present in any community—the invisible landscape and the projected landscape. The invisible landscape is illustrated by William James’ visit to the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina in the 19th century. As the philosopher journeyed through this new terrain he contemplated the landscape and saw only “unmitigated squalor,” “havoc,” and “charred stumps” in the recently cleared forest. He questioned his local guide how anyone could live in such a place and the guide proceeded to tell him what the landscape meant to him. James was taken back and mused later that “the clearing, which to me was a mere ugly picture on the retina, was to them a symbol redolent with moral memories and sang a very paeon of duty, struggle, and success” (Ryden 1993, 41). This is the essence of place identity. James’ local guide likely answered the questions “What is this town? How did we get here? Why do we stay?” and thus revealed important insights into place identity that James could not possibly have known. As James toured the place he was engaged in the visible scene and had some comprehension of what he saw. However, he was not privy to the insider’s view; he did not have the sense of place that his driver had—he could not see the invisible landscape of place identity. Every human landscape has a visible cultural landscape that offers insights into the history of the area, as well as an invisible landscape, consisting of personal lived experience, that provides a rich picture of place meaning and identity.

However, the invisible landscape operates within a framework of projected landscape. As opposed to the invisible landscape of personal experience, projected landscapes are organized efforts toward creating a place identity. Sharon Zukin argues that “new meanings of place result from deliberate image creation” (Zukin 1998, 627). Chambers of commerce, tourist bureaus, residential developers, industrial corporations, and others are key players in the deliberate creation of the projected landscape. In *Selling Places* (1998), Stephen Ward explores how civic leaders and organizations have marketed and promoted the projected landscape from 1850-2000. He argues that “place advertising remains perhaps the surest single test for the existence of the place selling impulse” (Ward 1998, 4). By exploring advertising images, Ward argues, a clearer sense of the projected landscape can emerge. Zukin argues that place images, “either deliberately orchestrated or accumulating by degrees,... have material consequences for the spatial forms and economic fortunes of specific cities and regions.” She describes the “urban imaginary” as “a set of meanings about cities that arise in a specific historical time and cultural space [that] change over time” (Zukin 1998, 628). Decoding the messages found in the urban imaginary allows historical geographers greater access into the complex relationship between the projected and invisible landscapes of place identity.

Ideology

Landscape and place identity cannot be understood as monolithic entities that exist in stasis and are created, exist, and shift without conflict. In fact, landscape and place identity can be interpreted, constructed, and imagined in countless ways varying through time and from actor to actor. Landscape and place identity are contested both on

the ground and in the human mind through time. Alan Baker observed that “historical studies of landscapes must be grounded in an analysis of material structures: they are properly concerned with tangible, visible expressions of different modes of production...” He continues:

But such material structures are created and creatively destroyed within an ideological context: such studies must therefore also acknowledge that landscapes are shaped by mental attitudes and that a proper understanding of landscapes must rest upon the historical recovery of ideologies (Baker 1992, 3).

While the material landscape is important, it cannot be separated from the ideologies that informed its creation. What are the ideologies that shape the landscapes and identities of the Old and New Wests? What forces drive the contested interpretations and prompt the changes apparent in these western regions?

This research maintains that capitalism is the underlying structure that drives change in the Old and New West. Capitalism has been the major force behind change in the West (Wyckoff 1999, 10; Hyde 1997, 95) and as such “provides structure, coherent organization, and a unifying theme for discussing change in the American West during the last two centuries” (Robbins 1994, xii). Patricia Limerick observes, “the West has offered an advanced curriculum in the uncertainty and impermanence of success” (2003, 2). Thus, the complex forces of capitalism are “extremely mobile” in place and time, and draw people and money to a place, thus leaving another place, and setting up the unequal distribution present in modern geographies of the West (Robbins 1994, 167). The landscapes and identities that result from the dramatically different patterns of population gain and loss in the Old and New Wests remind us of the larger historical and geographical impacts of capitalism within the region (Robbins 1994, x-xi; Rudzitis

1996). In a capital society, landscapes are produced by the dominant class that holds the means of material production. As landscapes are created and transformed they bear the heavy imprint of the power structure inherent in a capitalist society (Robbins 1994; Groth 1997). The imprint of power and capital is expressed clearly in the landscapes and identities of the Old and New Wests.

Under the broad framework of capitalism, though, there is room for slightly more nuanced analysis. The industrial and middle landscape ideals, discussed earlier, are central to that analysis in the Old and New West. It is clear that industrial landscapes in the West were formed as the spotlight of the capital economy shined on a specific mine, smelter, or city. It is not as clear how the ideal of the industrial landscape, as envisioned by capitalists, laborers, and city residents shapes the community. It is also fairly obvious that the middle landscape, the juxtaposition of nature and city, is created as leisure or agricultural capital selectively chooses a location for a middle landscape. It is not as clear how the middle landscape ideal, as envisioned by urban in-migrants, recreational vacationers, and long-time city residents, shapes the community. This research examines the capitalistic ideology of the industrial and middle landscapes of the Old and New Wests, thereby answering Baker's call to for the "historical recovery of ideologies."

Methods and Sources

Since the purpose of this research is to interpret the changing contemporary and historical landscapes and place identities of the Old and New Wests, I needed to perform my research on several levels using a variety of sources. In order to combine historical

narratives and critical interpretation of the changes happening in Anaconda and Hamilton, I blended the historical archival research of the historian with the field research methods of the geographer.

Before performing significant field research in Anaconda and Hamilton I carried out the bulk of my historical research. This line of research consisted largely of accessing collections at research centers, listening to oral histories, and collecting newspaper articles.

A large portion of my historical data collection took place during May and June 2005 at a variety of research facilities. I visited historical archives, including the Montana Historical Society in Helena, the Ravalli County Museum in Hamilton, and the Marcus Daly Historical Society and the Anaconda Local Development Corporation archives in Anaconda. Additionally, the Renne Library at Montana State University, the Burlingame Library at the University of Montana, the Hearst Free Library in Anaconda and the Bitterroot Public Library in Hamilton were all very helpful. While combing the archives and collections at these research facilities, I was able to piece together the historical record by looking at maps, city directories, photographs, planning documents, local histories, and secondary literature. The information I gleaned from these sources forms the core of my historical narrative.

Oral histories were a key component to my research. Oral histories were available for both communities at the Montana Historical Society archives in Helena. The Anaconda oral histories were originally conducted in 1983-1987 and 2003, and are found in the Montanans at Work, Metals Mining in Four Montana Communities, and Women as

Community Builders oral history collections. The Hamilton oral histories were conducted in 1982-1983 and were found in the Montanans at Work, Women as Community Builders, and General History oral history collections. In total, I listened to and transcribed portions of twenty oral histories. These historical records provided key components to my study of the changing place identities.

Another important part of my historical research were local newspapers. For both communities I looked at historical and modern newspapers and acquired copies of articles that highlighted either a narrative I hoped to follow, or simply dealt with any aspect of change in the city. I accessed the majority of the historical newspaper articles through vertical clippings files at either the local history archives or at the Montana Historical Society research room. These clippings files provided numerous news articles, or photo copies of the original articles, from each city's founding through the 1980s. I accessed more modern newspaper coverage by poring through print edition archives at the *Anaconda Leader* office in Anaconda and at the Ravalli County Museum in Hamilton. Finally, very recent news articles were accessed through online archive searches. Although sometimes time intensive, newspaper research has provided valuable assistance in reconstructing landscape changes as well as uncovering shifting place identities in Anaconda and Hamilton.

Following my historical research I commenced with my field work. While in Anaconda and Hamilton during July and August 2005, I interviewed local residents and gathered local data from a variety of venues. Interviews with local residents and leaders were a valuable addition to my research. I interviewed eleven residents in Anaconda and

Hamilton. Interviewees were selected for their civic, business, or other engagement in the community as per my previous research on each community. Interviews were set up via e-mail correspondence or over the telephone and interviewees were invited for a short interview. Most of the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and took place at the office of the interviewee. However, some interviews, especially with local history experts, lasted nearly an hour. Interviews were semi-structured as a common set of questions were prepared for each interview, but I did not address all questions in each interview depending on the interviewees experience in the city and the dynamics of the interview. However, I did ask each interviewee common questions about their perceptions of the changes in their community. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed. These interviews provided a rich source of information and perceptions that added appreciatively to my discussion of landscape and place identity change in Anaconda and Hamilton.

Besides performing interviews while in Anaconda and Hamilton, I also gathered a variety of contemporary information from a variety of community sources. During my visits to each community, I took photographs, recorded observations, and examined specific elements of landscape. My direct encounters with the cultural landscape were essential not only for data gathering, but inform nearly every aspect of this research. Fieldwork also consisted of collecting pamphlets, brochures, and other promotional publications from the chamber of commerce that show how the city is “selling” itself. I also gathered recent planning documents from city and county planning and government offices to help piece together the planning response to change. Additionally, I amassed

advertisements and snapshots of the contemporary city to add to my cache of iconography and images that contributes to understanding place identity in these cities. I collected these and other miscellaneous items that I only could have found by actively searching each city. By approaching the topic of landscape and identity change through historical archival and field research methods I was able to gather a body of evidence to support this thesis project.

Regional and Historical Context

The settlement and ensuing history of mountainous western Montana is familiar in the American West. The region was initially settled by Anglo-Americans in the 1860s during a gold rush, which quickly gave way to silver mining, and finally to copper mining in the 1880s. Ranching, farming and timber interests accompanied the rush and provided necessary resources for the mining camps. Western Montana remained largely self-contained, however, until the railroads entered the remote territory in the 1880s, after which the region saw an influx of outside capital and an increased outflow of its valuable timber and mineral resources. For decades extractive resources were the foundation of the region's economy, but recently traditional resource dependency has declined while dependency on its natural scenic and amenity resources has increased. If western Montana's story is similar to that of the larger American West, then Anaconda and Hamilton are excellent examples of the Old and New Wests. Although these communities have recently followed separate developmental trajectories, the landscapes of these places have been shaped by similar historical forces.

Anaconda has always been a one-industry town. The community was conceived as a copper-smelting site, grew and shrank as ore processing demands for the Anaconda Company fluctuated, and continued to be identified with the industry long after its famous smelter closed in 1980. Population figures in Anaconda are easier to trace than in Hamilton because Anaconda is the only incorporated place in Deer Lodge County. In fact, in 1977 the city and county consolidated their respective governments to the effect that population figures after that time reflect the total number of residents in the county. Within the years of industrial buildup and postindustrial fallout there is a complex narrative that speaks to the heart of the waning Old West.

Hamilton has nearly run the gamut of traditional western industries. The Bitterroot Valley and nearby mountain ranges are home to vast timber stands and when western Montana mining communities began to proliferate in the late-nineteenth century, Marcus Daly invested considerable effort into harvesting the area's lumber and building up Hamilton as a mill town. Timber in the mountains gave way to agriculture in the valley by the early twentieth century and Hamilton experienced significant development as investors bought land for fruit orchards. In wartime, agriculture was joined by federal defense spending so that Hamilton maintained a stable population through the mid-twentieth century. Since 1970, the Hamilton area has grown rapidly and has seen investment and residents arrive. Much of the growth has occurred outside of incorporated Hamilton. Hamilton is the county seat of Ravalli County and the center of a large functional region. At any given time in Ravalli County's history less than one third of the county residents live in incorporated areas, and by far the largest incorporated area is

Hamilton. This research treats Hamilton as a functional region that includes much of the county population. The growth in Hamilton, whether within the city limits or in the adjacent unincorporated land, solidifies the area's place in the waxing New West.

Anaconda and Hamilton's historical developmental trajectories, although different, can be divided into three general time periods. During the first period, from inception to 1920, the communities were creating their built landscapes as well as their place identities. From 1920 to 1965 the communities continued to develop their landscapes and identities while progressing toward the Old and New West changes that lay in the future. Finally, from 1965 until the present Anaconda and Hamilton transformed their landscapes and identities into the Old and New West landscapes that are apparent today.

Following Anaconda's founding in 1883 and Hamilton's in 1890, both communities created their built landscapes as well as their place identities. Western cities shaped during this boom period created landscapes of production oriented around the export of their raw materials, and Hamilton and Anaconda were no exceptions. By 1920 both cities had reached their initial apex when both the built environment and the identity of the community were largely established. By this time both communities enjoyed vibrant economies and had experienced significant population increases; Anaconda now housed nearly 12,000 people while Hamilton had a population of 1,700 and surrounding Ravalli County had a population of over 10,000. Also, during this time the communities clearly established their early place identities, which were largely centered around their

traditional industries; Hamilton was known for its timber and rich agricultural land while Anaconda was the “smelter city.”

The period between 1920 and 1965 was an era when the landscapes and identities that had formed in the early years became solidified in the communities. From 1920 to 1965 both communities maintained stable populations; Anaconda grew by three percent to just over 12,000 and Hamilton grew more rapidly as the city itself grew by forty-five percent to 2,500 and Ravalli County grew by twenty percent to just over 12,000. Populations aside, the Great Depression, World War II, and the post-war changes affected the communities in varied ways, and as some segments of their economies declined, others made up the difference so that relative to other areas in the United States, Hamilton and Anaconda were able to maintain a stable economic status. Incipient changes presaged the Old and New West changes that were still in the future.

Since 1965, Anaconda and Hamilton have followed different developmental paths, and both communities have experienced transforming landscapes. This period will be the focus of my research because it specifically addresses the changes that occurred in the Waxing and Waning Wests. Since 1965, Anaconda has tried to accommodate its industrial restructuring and post-industrial reality after the smelter closure. As a result, the community has witnessed a modified landscape and changing place identity. Alternatively, Hamilton has seen significant in-migration as the area has become a more desirable place to live and vacation, and as community services and historic preservation efforts have altered the look of the city and likely altered the community’s place identity,

The historical development of these two communities and their respective landscapes represent the changes that have occurred in the Old and New Wests.

Chapter Organization

The remainder of this research is divided into five chapters. Chapter two examines Anaconda and Hamilton from their individual founding in the late nineteenth century until 1920, when their landscapes and identities were initially being created. This chapter will establish the historical development of the built cultural landscape as well as the formation of place identities in both cities. Chapter three follows a similar framework as the previous chapter, but instead treats Anaconda and Hamilton from 1920 to 1965, a period when the landscapes and identities that had formed in the early period became solidified in each community. These chapters help to establish a baseline from which I compare landscape and place identity change in the following chapters. Chapters four and five are the heart of my research. Both chapters cover the period from 1965 until the present when Anaconda and Hamilton's landscapes underwent changes to adjust to their Old and New West realities. Chapter four discusses Anaconda's adjustments to population and economic decline and how the community's cultural landscape and place identity have been affected. Chapter five treats Hamilton's adjustments to growth, using its landscapes to illustrate that change. Finally, my concluding chapter offers generalizations about shifting place identity and synthesizes discussion of how the ideologies of the industrial landscape and middle landscape contribute to the creation of the Old and New Wests.

CHAPTER TWO: ANACONDA AND HAMILTON 1880-1920

This chapter explores Anaconda and Hamilton from their individual founding in the late nineteenth century until 1920, when their landscapes and identities were initially being created. During this early period, each community had a unique historical geography that helped shape the landscape and place identity. I argue that the pre-1920 historical geography of landscape development and place identity form the roots of the Old and New Wests.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first deals with Anaconda's landscape and place identity. In this section I explore Marcus Daly's vision of Anaconda as an industrial and political capital and how these founding visions helped shape the young city. The second section explores Hamilton's emerging landscape and identity. Marcus Daly's visions of Hamilton as both a landscape of production and leisure figure heavily into the city's development. For both of these sections I endeavor to weave landscape change and identity formation into a chronological historical narrative that sheds light on the creation of the Old and New Wests. Methods and sources for this chapter are similar to those outlined in the introduction. Specifically, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, city directories, photographs and newspaper accounts are utilized to reconstruct landscapes. Newspaper accounts, booster literature, and photographs helped me explore place identity in each community. Through these sources, a historical picture of these young communities starts to take shape.

Anaconda 1880-1920

From 1883 to 1920, Anaconda was influenced heavily by Marcus Daly and the Anaconda Company. Daly had ambitious plans for Anaconda from the very beginning. From 1883-1890 he saw Anaconda as an industrial center for his mining empire and built the city according to this purpose. From 1890-1900 he envisioned Anaconda as a new focus of social and political power within Montana and transformed the city to accomplish this vision. However, while Daly's community-shaping influence was important, it was not as long-lasting as the influence of the Anaconda Company. From 1900 to 1920, the Anaconda Company's industrial vision of the Smelter City became an increasingly important part of the community's landscape and identity.

Anaconda as Industrial Capital: 1883-1890

Anaconda's history begins, not surprisingly, in nearby Butte, Montana. In 1882, mining magnate Marcus Daly discovered rich copper deposits in the Anaconda mine in Butte. Late nineteenth-century demand for copper made the mine profitable, but since the ore had to be shipped to Wales for processing it was not as profitable as it could otherwise have been. To remedy the situation, Daly searched for a site to build his own ore smelter. Butte was not an acceptable site because it had neither the water supply nor the timber necessary for a smelter of the magnitude Daly envisioned. Perhaps most important though, the three small smelters already in Butte covered the area in a thick blanket of smoke and the Copper City was already engulfed in fierce smoke abatement

battles. This was clearly not the place to build what Daly hoped would be the greatest smelter in the world.

Founding the Smelter City. Daly and the Anaconda Company considered many sites for their new smelter, but finally chose a site twenty-six miles west of Butte along Warm Spring Creek that would become the town of Anaconda (Hoover 1950, 13). The site had a plentiful water supply, abundant timber in the surrounding forests and no pre-existing smoke nuisances or vigilant residents who would fight smoke abatement battles. The company bought 3,000 acres of land and the water rights to Warm Spring Creek in May 1883, and in that same month construction began on the Upper Works copper reduction plant on the north side of the Deer Lodge Valley (Morris 1997, 29).

By the time construction on the Upper Works was underway, the Anaconda Company had about 1,500 employees in what would become the city of Anaconda, but there was no town to house them. The obvious need to support company workers marked the beginning of Daly's great interest in his young town. From the outset Daly took great personal interest in the town. One version of the city's genesis narrative sets Daly at the top of a hill overlooking the townsite, visioning the existence of the city. While standing atop the hill Daly spotted a lonely cow meandering through the valley floor and said to his companions: "Do you see that cow? Main Street of our town will run north and south in a direct line from where we stand—right through that cow" (Eggleston 1908, 8) (Figure 3). Whether true or not, Daly was involved in many of the details in Anaconda's early development such as choosing the townsite, filing the townsite plat, and selecting

Figure 3. Anaconda looking north toward the Old Works, 1887. (Montana Historical Society)



“Copperopolis” as the town’s name. As it turned out “Copperopolis” had been pre-empted by another Montana town so the local postmaster, according to the local legend, chose the name “Anaconda” while filling out his paperwork and the name remained (*Anaconda Standard* 1923).

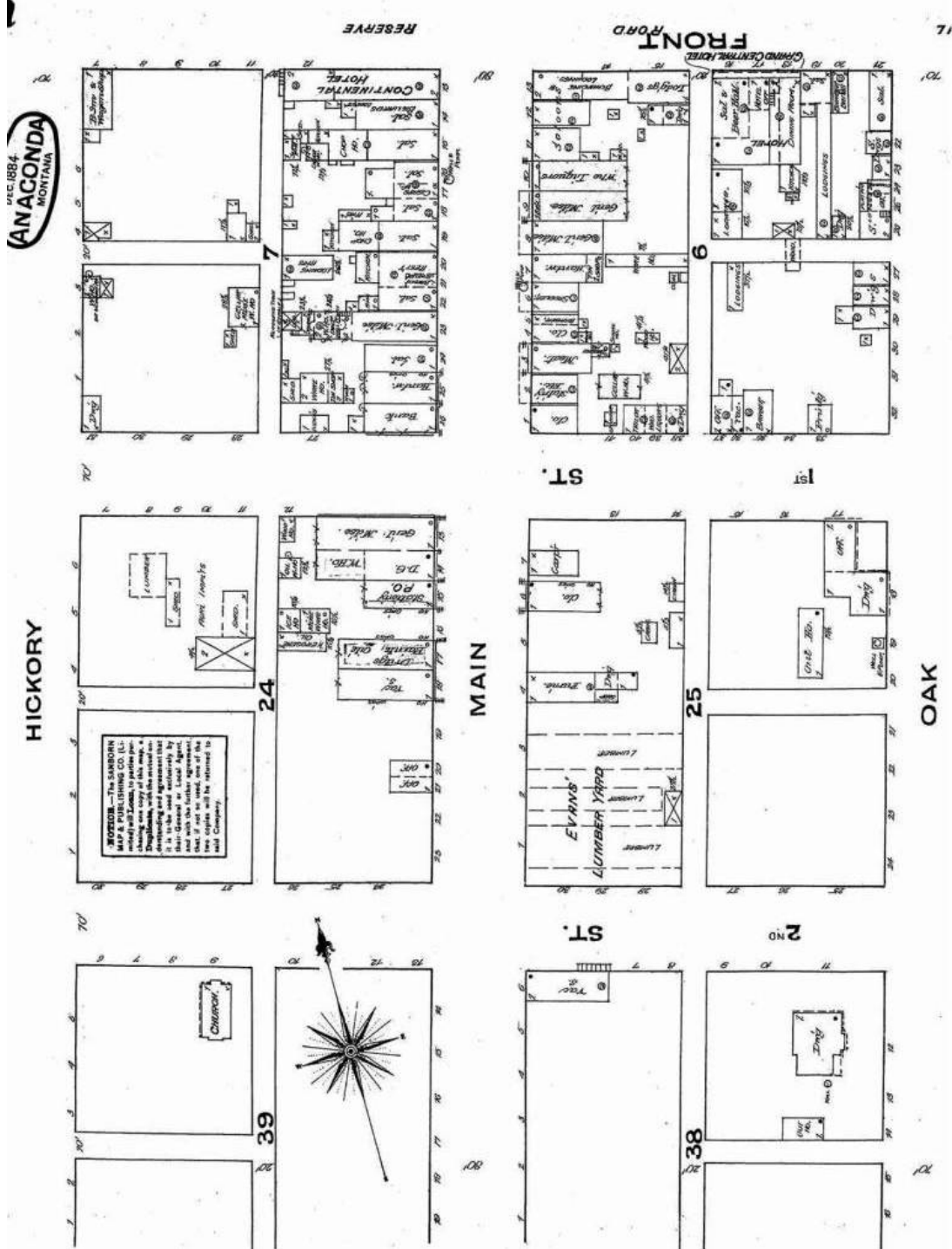
Building the Smelter City. The city’s early growth and appearance was similar, in many respects, to a typical late 19th century boom town, although still moderated by the controlling hand of the Anaconda Company. The city grew rapidly after the Upper Works smelter was completed in 1884. Initial growth areas appeared on the north side of town near the city’s industrial lifelines—the railroad depot and the Upper Works smelter. By the end of 1884 Anaconda already had its share of typical boom town commerce with

twenty saloons and sixteen boarding houses within one block of the railroad tracks.

Several developments, however, indicated that the town was to be more permanent than the few blocks of saloons and boarding houses suggested. Two short-lived hotels with lofty appellations—the Grand Central Hotel and the Continental Hotel—solidified the track-front real estate. A growing collection of hardware and drug stores and barbers filled in the rest of the cultural landscape. However, Anaconda was not to be a town for the itinerant worker only. Two churches were already in operation by the end of the city's first year. Anaconda's early mix of boomtown and permanence portrays a city in demographic flux; although more than 1,500 employees worked at the smelter in 1884, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company estimated the city's permanent population at only 800 by the end of its first year (Sanborn 1884).

Anaconda showed signs of becoming a smaller version of bustling Butte, but the Anaconda Company's vision dictated a somewhat different future for the developing industrial city. Unlike Butte, where miners and their mineshafts all existed in the same haphazard landscape, Anaconda was to be a rationally planned community. The community was laid out in a grid, and though the residential community was far enough from the railroad depot and the smelter not to interfere with company operations, it was still close enough so that the smeltermen could walk to their jobs (Figure 4). Daly's Township Company, which operated out of the city's first bank, sold city lots and ensured that Anaconda developed as a city where families could be raised, but where smelting production was still king. An early report in the 1885 Butte City Directory indicates that Anaconda had made a good start at being a respectable city: "From end to

Figure 4. Detail of Anaconda's original townsite, 1884. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1884)



end Anaconda wears a tidy air. Its streets are clean, its homes are cozy, and its dooryards are well kept” (Morris 1997, 33).

Over the next four years Anaconda’s population grew five-fold and the built landscape was transformed to accommodate the burgeoning population. By 1888, the city of 5,000 residents had 8 hotels, 13 boarding houses, 31 rooming houses, 55 saloons, 16 restaurants and cafes, 18 grocery stores, 7 blacksmiths, 19 barbers, 11 churches, 17 lawyers and 15 doctors, as well as the Lower Works, an addition to the Upper Works smelter (Morris 1997, 194; Sanborn 1888). Main, Commercial, and Park streets acted as the central corridors for the city’s development. Specifically, early development areas were located near the railroad complex and close to the smelter, illustrating the city’s strong orientation toward industrial production. The four-year-old city had not only grown into its industrial role, but also began to grow out as well. By 1890 the steady migration of smelter workers forced the community to expand and the city reached from the north to the south walls of the narrow valley in order to house all 6,500 residents (Sanborn 1890) (Figure 5). Population growth and urban development combined to produce a city that began to reach the industrial aspirations that Daly and the Anaconda Company had for the young smelting community.

Anaconda as Political Capital: 1890-1900

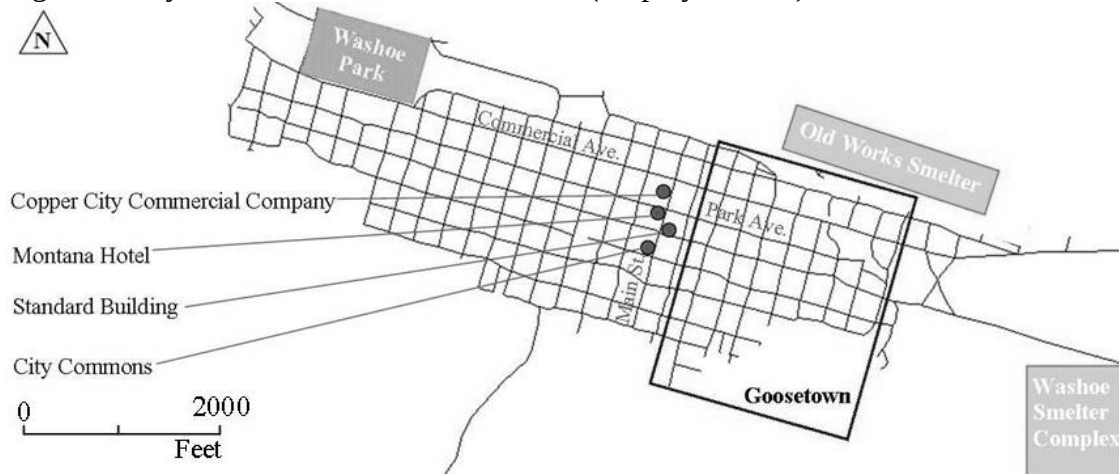
During the early 1890s, Marcus Daly added complexity to the city’s landscape with his visions of the city as a center of social and political power. Montana’s state capital had not yet been decided and Marcus Daly was determined to make Anaconda the state capital. In order to compete with W.A. Clark, another copper king, who wanted

Figure 5. Anaconda looking north, 1896. (Montana Historical Society)



Helena to become the state capital, Daly invested considerable effort into shaping Anaconda's landscape to become a suitable leading city. Under Daly's guidance, Anaconda saw advanced public improvements. Electric home and street lighting, running water and indoor plumbing in most homes, paved sidewalks and streets, a large fire department, a library, churches, schools, and parks all helped ensure that Anaconda was more than an average mining boomtown. The city even had a streetcar system to shuttle workers and residents around the city. The streetcar system ran from Washoe Park on the west to the Lower Works smelter in the east and was owned and operated by the Anaconda Company (Morris 1997, 103-105).

Figure 6. Key sites in Anaconda, 1884-1920. (Map by Author)



Building a Political Capital. The *Butte Miner* commented that “Anaconda is truly marvelous in its growth and stands in evidence of the faith, courage and enterprise of its citizens” (Shoebotham 1956, 76). However, while the city as a whole confirmed the “enterprise of the citizens,” in this early era three projects—the *Anaconda Standard*, the Copper City Commercial Company, and the Montana Hotel—were evidence of Marcus Daly’s broader vision for the city (Figure 6).

In 1889, Anaconda had a newspaper, the *Anaconda Review*, but Daly felt that he needed his own newspaper and demanded that it be the best one in the region. The *Anaconda Standard* was born when, during a political battle with rival W.A. Clark, Daly was continually attacked in the Clark-owned *Butte Miner*. Daly imported an editor from Syracuse, NY, generously bankrolled the project, and built the *Standard* a top-of-the-line newspaper office on Main Street. The paper printed its first edition in 1889 and declared itself “the vigorous child of a wide awake town” (Morris 1997, 79). The *Standard* gained instant notoriety for its excellent local, regional, national, and international coverage and

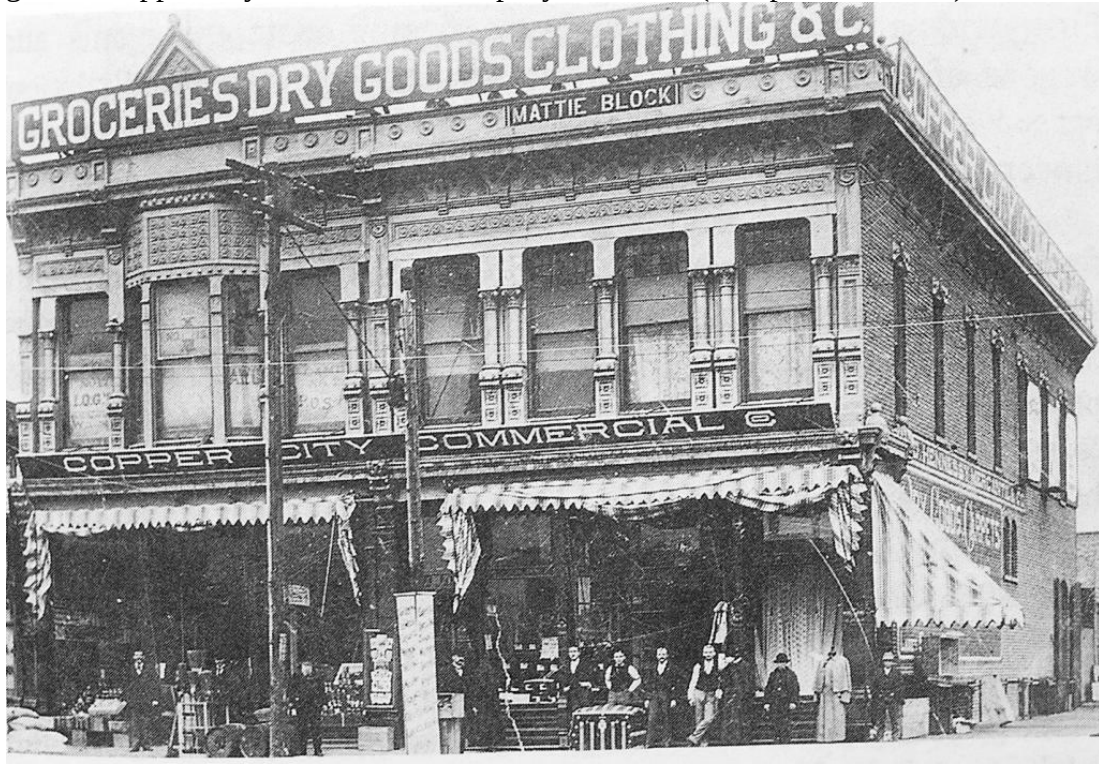
soon had a circulation of 20,000; every town of consequence in the Intermountain West had an *Anaconda Standard* bureau (Kelly 1983, 20). Most importantly the *Standard* became Daly's powerful political voice in his battles with W.A. Clark. The founding of the *Anaconda Standard* illustrates the importance of Daly's political vision for Anaconda. The *Standard* building also was an important landmark in the community that suggested the visual imprint of Daly's company (Figure 7). The prominent location of the building, as well as its modern appointments showcased the important role that the *Standard* played in the community.

Like many company-oriented cities during this era, Anaconda had a company store, but Daly ensured that this company store was not just another store, but the crown of the commercial landscape. The Copper City Commercial Company, established in

Figure 7. Anaconda Standard Building, ca. 1890. (Dolan 1983, 17)



Figure 8. Copper City Commercial Company, ca. 1890. (Campbell 1981, 18)



1892, occupied half a block on Main Street and was not only the heart of the city's consumer society but also a major hub of activity, employing over 100 people (Figure 8). The store had many departments, each of which was larger and had better selection than any of the single-good stores in the town. The Copper City's spring store opening drew all members of the community. One commentator described the store opening: "Thousands of people stream through the spacious store to admire the beautiful things in this place. Social events in Anaconda are the opening nights at the mammoth store" (Dolan 1983, 28).

The company store sold everything from groceries to hardware to toys, and although company employees *could* shop elsewhere, they were expected and encouraged

to shop at the company store (Morris 1997, 112). Encouragement often came from a Copper City solicitor who would “single out the newcomer and communicate certain messages to him. He would be asked if he liked his job and should he like to continue working he would be expected to trade at the Copper City” (Dolan 1983, 27). Even without these infamous tactics, many residents likely would have still shopped at the Copper City. Daly had intended the Copper City to be a monument to Anaconda’s vibrant community and strong economy, but the heavy hand of the company store ultimately would only play into the hand of his opponents.

The Montana Hotel, a grand four-story building completed in 1889, was one of the first signature elements of the city landscape. Built even before the city hall, the company store, or the county courthouse, the Anaconda Company-owned Montana Hotel was designed to send a message that Anaconda was destined to become an important regional city (Figure 9). Daly was careful to make sure no one missed the grand opening of the hotel that he confessed was “the apple of my eye” (Shoebotham 1956, 105). The *Anaconda Weekly Review* mused on the prospect of the opening festivities:

Next Monday, July 1, 1889, the finest and best-equipped hotel in this part of the country with all modern improvement will be open to the public of this city, and in fact to the public of the Territory. Fifteen hundred invitations have been issued to people here and in all parts of the union. The ball in the evening will surpass for excellence of dress anything ever attempted in Montana. Special trains will come into Anaconda during the day from Helena, Butte, Deer Lodge, Dillon, Great Falls, and in fact every city or town of any importance in the territory (DeHaas 1967).

The prospective regional social importance of the hotel was evident in a description of the hotel layout: “The main floor will abound with cozy nooks where millionaire and miner may chat, where the lounge will find quiet retreat, and where Montana’s

Figure 9. Montana Hotel, ca. 1890. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



politicians may meet at one time and not seriously jostle one another” (DeHaas 1967).

The Montana Hotel was set aside as space for displays of social power. The Montana Hotel, although it was often woefully vacant, anchored the cultural landscape and served as a constant reminder that Anaconda was designed to be a city of great political and social importance.

The Capital Fight and Daly’s Waning Interest. These impressive monuments on Anaconda’s cultural landscape revealed Marcus Daly’s grand aspirations for the town and his own political fortunes in the state. For Daly social power meant political might. Through the city and its institutions, Daly gained political power and economic clout as he says in 1888: “When the business magnates of the country cross the Continent, they

run their cars into Anaconda to call on me. They respect me in my proper sphere. That is enough satisfaction for a man who started out in the world with as little capital as I had” (Shoebotham 1956, 94). But visiting dignitaries, as flattering as they were, were not enough for Daly; he wanted his city to be home to the permanent capital for the State of Montana. The 1894 battle for the state capital between W.A. Clark’s Helena and Daly’s Anaconda brought Anaconda’s political aspirations to a head.

The capital fight was bitter on both sides. During the campaign Daly spent one million dollars on voting drives, which were sometimes actual drives where citizens, inebriated on Daly’s dime, were ushered to the voting booths to cast their vote for Anaconda. During the campaign, the city of Anaconda was painted as a backwater town that had very little culture or prestige and that was owned by a vicious corporation. The *Daily Yellowstone Journal* of Miles City reported:

Is there any claim that the Anaconda of Mr. Daly is a hog? One cannot speak of this town as a community in the same sense that we have spoken of Helena, for the reason that it represents but one idea and one purpose. Marcus Daly is the town. Its people do his bidding and nothing else. It has no more pride than a deserted Indian Village, for it knows that whenever it becomes Mr. Daly’s pleasure, it will cease to exist...this makeshift of a town, this counterfeit presentment of a community of free and untrammelled Americans; this little principality peopled by dagoes and ruled over with despotic sway by ‘King Marco’ (Shoebotham 1956, 137).

Anaconda narrowly lost the 1894 vote after only obtaining eighty-one percent of the votes in its own Deer Lodge County. In Helena, Clark was welcomed as a hero and Daly was literally burned in effigy; in Anaconda, no one spoke of the election and the newspapers were quiet on the issue.

Daly's personal interest in Anaconda waned after this difficult—and costly—loss. Not only had Daly lost, but his city's reputation had been marred. After 1894, Daly continued to invest in his industrial vision of Anaconda, but he no longer lavished his paternal attentions on the city. He had planned to build a large public library, but the idea died after the state capital defeat. Additionally, he had set aside for himself a city block on Sixth Avenue where he intended to build a mansion, but after the election he no longer wanted to build it (Toole 1948, 131). Instead he built his mansion and devoted his time and attention to Hamilton, his timber town in the Bitterroot Valley. Daly spent an increasing amount of time on his ranch and with his race horses. He also wanted to concentrate on the growing concern of providing timber for his mining operations. Daly wrote what can be seen as his farewell address to Anaconda in the *Anaconda Standard* in 1896: "I like to see Anaconda prosper as it has for year after year, and I am also glad that it is one of the important centers in the prosperity of the state" (Shoebotham 1956, 145). While Daly still envisioned the city as an important regional center, after the defeat of 1894, he began his exit from the city he built, and Anaconda was left to develop as an industrial capital without its founding father.

Development Momentum. Marcus Daly's withdrawal from Anaconda did not cripple the city; in fact, the city continued to grow steadily. Spenser Tripp, a young Anaconda entrepreneur, indicated that building and growth continued unabated in the first months of 1895:

Anaconda has improved in the last six months so that you would not know the place. A dozen big brick blocks have gone up or are in the course of erection, giving the town the appearance of an eastern place, with the big library and a

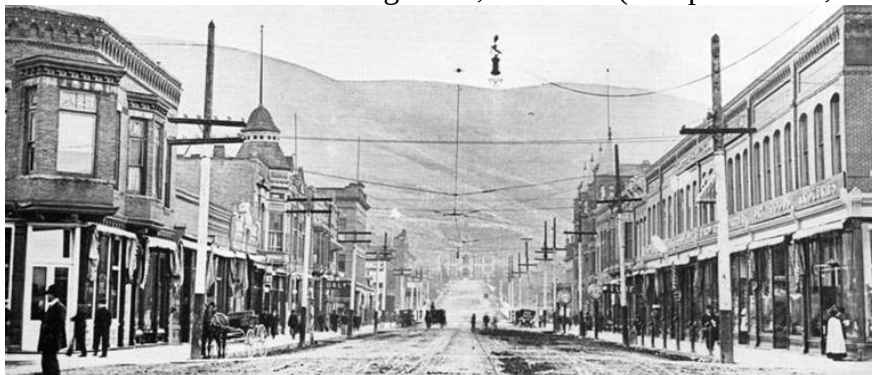
\$40,000 city hall. This will be no country village, the census, just completed, gives the population at 8,000, a good sized village (Dolan 1983, 38).

Investment in the smelter city continued at a headlong pace with the 1895 construction of City Hall on Commercial Avenue, the establishment of Hearst Free Library in 1898 on Main Street, the 1900 completion of the Deer Lodge County Courthouse at the head of Main Street, and the construction of numerous commercial buildings on Main, Park and Commercial Streets (Sanborn 1903) (Figure 10). Indeed, Spenser Tripp was correct when he observed that as the 19th century came to a close “Anaconda is getting more and more metropolitan every day” (Dolan 1983, 36). At the turn of the century one local commentator had a positive view of the city’s future:

With these vast smelters and the business that comes to the city through them it requires but little foresight to see what the future of Anaconda will be with its fine public buildings, educational facilities, street car service, electric light and water power systems, and its 10,000 bright, energetic people, it is already a little giant among western cities, and what the next ten years will make it we can only conjecture (Anaconda 1901).

As this commentator argued, the community continued to benefit from the improvements that Daly and the Anaconda Company made during the capital buildup, but the real future of the community lay in the “vast smelters and the business that comes to the city through

Figure 10. Anaconda Main Street looking south, ca. 1903. (Campbell 1981, 16)



them.” Daly’s death in 1900 was a further reminder that the larger social and political vision for the community had been abandoned and that Anaconda’s landscapes and identities once again became almost exclusively oriented to its importance as an industrial center.

The Creation of an Industrial Landscape and Identity: 1900-1920

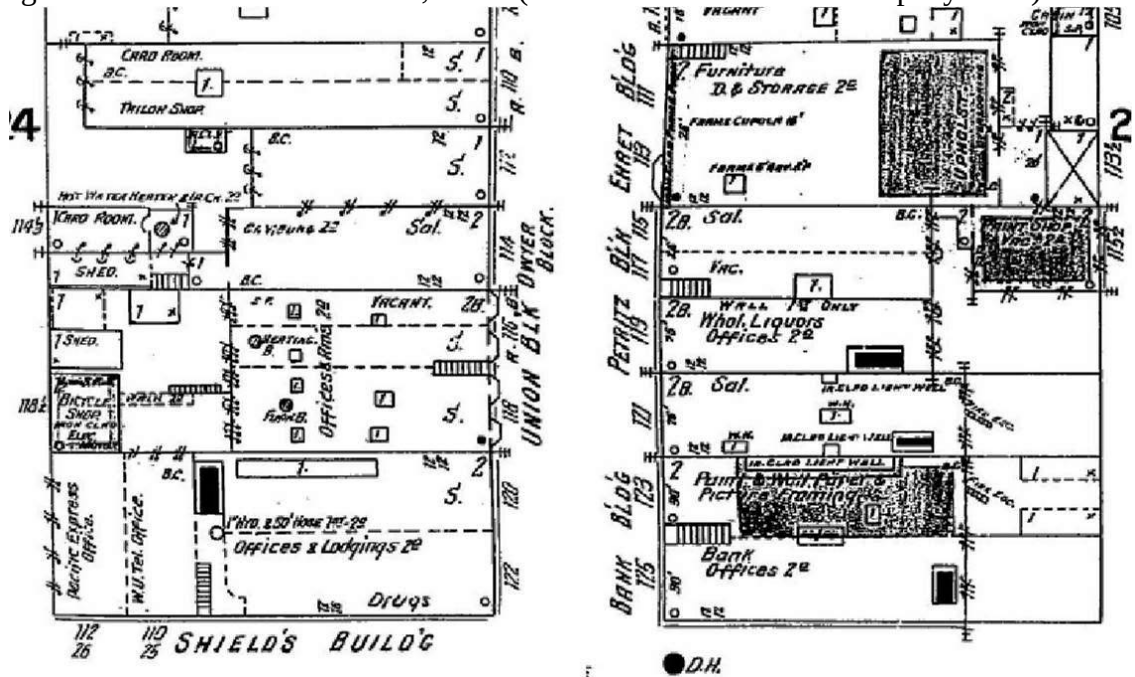
Despite Daly’s short-lived aspirations for Anaconda as a place of regional social and political power, Anaconda was first and foremost a place of industrial production. Anaconda’s smelting operations played an important role in the Anaconda Company’s industrial framework. Company mines in Butte produced trainloads of copper ore that were shipped to the smelter at Anaconda everyday. From the train, the ore navigated the processes at the smelter where the company would crush, concentrate, roast, cool and prepare to ship the smelted ore to the refinery in Great Falls. When the copper left the smelting process in Anaconda it was 99 percent pure, yet needed the refining processes that were only available in Great Falls. Anaconda’s smelting operations filled an essential link in the middle of the Anaconda Company’s industrial process. Within this framework, Anaconda created a strong industrial identity and landscape from 1900 to 1920. During this period, the company constructed the new Washoe Smelter that provided the economic stimulus to grow the city. Increasing demand for copper, competition, and output from the Butte mines, prompted the Anaconda Company to replace the Upper and Lower Works with a new, larger ore reduction plant in the southeast corner of Deer Lodge Valley. The Washoe Reduction Works was designed to be the largest and most modern smelter in the world and would handle 5,000 tons of ore a day. Both the Upper

and Lower Works working together could only handle 4,000 tons per day. The increased output at the Washoe Works, completed in 1903, stimulated population growth. The community grew nearly 25 percent from 1900 to 1920, until the city had 11,668 residents. The increased population and industrial activity helped to shape the industrial landscape and identity in Anaconda during the early 20th century.

Industrial Landscape. As the Anaconda Company increased production at the new smelter, the urban landscape in Anaconda was becoming increasingly industrial. The commercial and residential landscapes were riddled with reminders of the influence the company had on the eponymous city.

Anaconda's commercial urban core expanded to serve the increased residential population. Previously, the Copper City Commercial Company's heavy-handed policy had stymied significant commercial growth. However, when the company's policy changed in 1901 and shopping at the company store was no longer a condition of employment, there was a surge in commercial development. Commercial blocks sprouted throughout the emerging central business district. The Ida Block on Main Street; the Weiss, Walker, and Parker Blocks on Commercial Avenue; and the Parker, Peckham, and Thibidou Blocks on Park Avenue were all part of the building boom (Figure 11). The retail and services that these new businesses provided stimulated Anaconda's economy. The Copper City continued to be a local institution and kept pace with the new competition until it closed its doors in 1921.

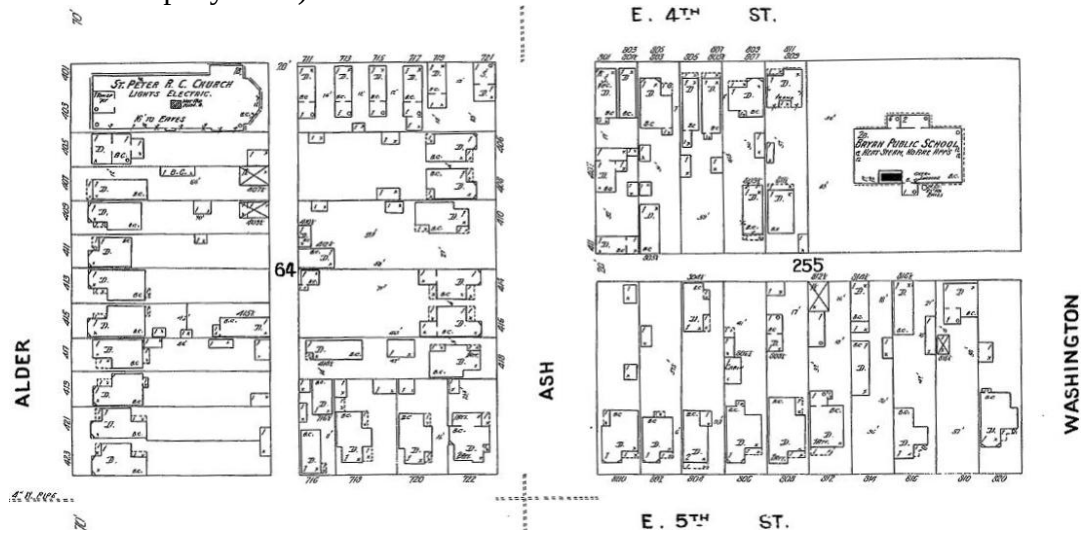
Figure 11. Anaconda Main Street, 1903. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1903)



The new commercial corridors were alive with activity in the early 1900s. Streets bustled with the activity that stemmed from steady employment and a healthy economy. The company's streetcar system crisscrossed through the community and shuttled workers to the smelters, drinkers to the bars, and shoppers from store to store. Some of the busiest commercial and most popular residential areas lay along the streetcar tracks. An important stop on the streetcar route was Goosetown (see Figure 6).

At the foot of the smelter, on the extreme eastern edge of the city, Goosetown was a convenient neighborhood for immigrant laborers. Thousands of immigrants from all over Europe came to Anaconda to find work at the copper smelter, and many of them made Goosetown their home. The working-class neighborhood offered low-cost housing,

Figure 12. Detail of a portion of Goosetown residential district, 1903. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1903)



quite literally, in the shadow of the smelter. The Anaconda Company had no part in the planning of the community, and this is readily apparent in the casually planned nature of the neighborhood. Small, narrow, inexpensive lots, simple workers' cottages with haphazard bachelor cabins in many backyards, boarding houses, and small businesses show the working-class character of the neighborhood (Figure 12). Churches such as the Austrian Roman Catholic, Free Swedish Mission, Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran and Serbian Orthodox only hint at the ethnic diversity in the working-class community.

Outside of Goosetown, other additions were made to the city's residential landscape. As work on the Hill increased, need for more worker housing influenced the creation of the Eastern Addition in 1915, and the Alder and the First Western Additions in 1916. Even the rural suburbs began to sprout in the shadow of the smelter. The communities of Opportunity and Mill Creek, at the foot of Smelter Hill's eastern slopes, began to house smelter workers in 1910. Other residential neighborhoods, mostly west of

Main Street housed company management and local businessmen. By 1915, a collection of Queen Anne-style homes and mansions appeared on Hickory and Locust streets and housed the community's merchant and upper-class residents.

Everywhere one looked, the impress of the Anaconda Company was visible. The recreational landscape was exclusively a company creation. Washoe Park and the City Common are the most visible examples of the company's role in creating a recreational landscape (Figure 13). In 1901, the company dedicated an empty lot in downtown to the city for use as a park and recreation area. The commons served as an important social hub for the city. During the summer the park was used for baseball games and outdoor musical entertainment. In the winter the park was iced over and used as a skating rink and also housed the Anaconda Company Christmas Tree in the center of the park. In 1906, the company created Washoe Park. Washoe Park sits on about 65 acres on the north central part of the city. The *Standard* reported that in creating Washoe Park "it is the purpose of the management to provide a park suitable in every way for the children and their mothers" and for it "the people of Anaconda are grateful for the consideration given to their wants" (*Anaconda Standard* 1906a). Washoe Park served as the end of the line for the company streetcars (Smelter Hill was on the other end) and was a popular stop for city residents on the weekends.

By 1920, the Anaconda Company had created an industrial landscape that was visibly and functionally geared toward copper production. From its inception, the city was oriented toward the smelters. In the early days, the commercial and residential lands closest to the smelters were at a premium, and then when the Washoe Smelter was

Figure 13. Baseball game at the Anaconda City Common, ca. 1900. (Morris 1997, 161)



completed in 1903 the city stretched eastward to meet it. Most dramatically, the support industries for the smelter developed rapidly. The Anaconda Company Foundry, a brickyard, a large steam generator powerhouse, company administrative offices, as well as workshops for a host of carpenters, masons, electricians and pipefitters were all situated close to Smelter Hill.

Transportation networks, both of labor and industrial materials, also were key components in Anaconda's developing industrial landscape. In order to accommodate the swift movement of smeltermen to and from their worksites, Daly laid tracks for streetcars that ushered the men to and from work daily. Just as labor needed to be transported to the smelter, so did copper ore. However, the Montana Union railroad that brought the ore to the smelter charged 75 cents a ton. These high rates significantly affected the production

costs of the company's copper. By 1893, Daly had terminated his contract with the Montana Union. In partnership with James J. Hill and the Great Northern railroad, the company built the Butte, Anaconda and Pacific line that ran from Butte through Anaconda and continued west to Hamilton. Shipping rates fell to 25 cents a ton as the rail line continued to expand through the early 20th century (Morris 1997, 104-106). Of all Daly's industrial developments, the Washoe Smelter in particular stood as a harbinger of employment and industry, and it substantiated the city's existence when it was in operation.

Industrial Identity. Anaconda's vibrant copper smelting industry was an ever present part of city life in the early 20th century. As previously discussed, the imprint of industrial production was written powerfully on the landscape through working class neighborhoods, company-donated city infrastructure, and the presence of the Washoe smelter. Just as the landscape was clearly oriented toward industrial production, the identity that community residents shaped for the city was also industrial. More specifically, place identity in Anaconda was easily recognized in the community's response to industrial copper production's most obvious byproduct—smelter smoke.

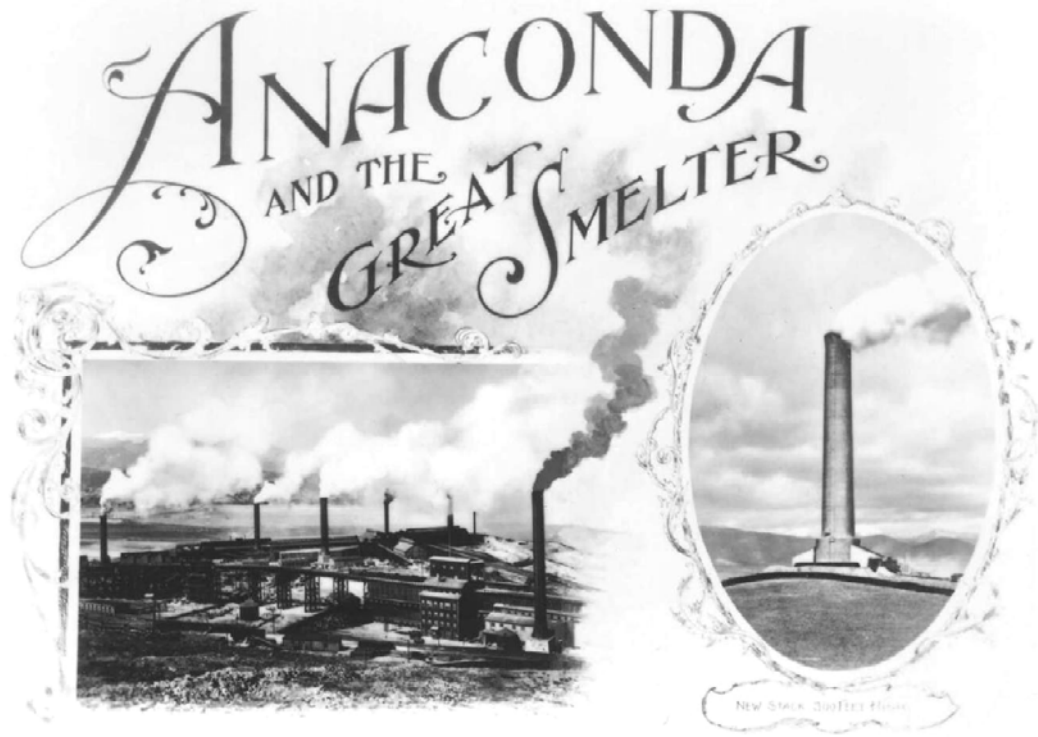
Smoke pollution had rarely been a serious problem in Anaconda before the Washoe Works were constructed in 1903. The Upper and Lower Works produced a cloud of smoke large enough that a correspondent for the *Minneapolis Tribune* wrote that “for a distance of thirty miles the great clouds of smoke that rise from among the mountains indicate the location of Anaconda and the greatest copper smelter in the world” (Shoebotham 1956, 77). Yet the Old Works were reasonably well situated in the

northeast corner of Deer Lodge Valley so that the prevailing winds carried most of the emissions to the south and southwest where they often skirted the city and were absorbed by the mountains and forests, thus avoiding serious contention with city dwellers or nearby ranchers and farmers (Morris 1997, 184).

Smelter design combined with poor placement to doom the new Washoe Works not long after it was built. The new smelter was similar to the Old Works in that each smelting unit had its own stack, but none of them were of a sufficient height to readily disperse the noxious emissions. Almost immediately valley farmers and ranchers began to protest the new smelter, complaining of dying livestock and poisoned produce. The company quickly settled 102 of the 107 damage claims for a total payment of \$340,000, but complaints kept coming in. By the next year, the company announced that “the gases which have heretofore escaped from the stacks of the Washoe smelter, and which have done damage to vegetation, are about to be placed under control” by a new 300-foot stack (*Anaconda Standard* 1903).

The new Washoe Smelter, with its impressive 300-foot smokestack, did not appear to abate the spread of noxious smelter smoke, but instead only diffused its effluent over a much larger area (Figure 14). The new smelter not only caused a denser cloud of toxic smoke to enshroud the city, but it also increasingly affected the surrounding countryside. Shortly after the Washoe smelter began operations, the Deer Lodge Valley and the city of Anaconda were enshrouded in a toxic cloud produced by the smelter smoke that settled over the city and many residents claimed that when the wind was right they could taste the sulphur in the air. Anaconda was under a nearly continual haze of

Figure 14. The New Washoe Works smelter complex, 1903. (Montana Historical Society)



smoke from the smelter stacks, and arsenic-laden flue dust thickly blanketed the surrounding slopes. Indeed, estimates suggest that as much as fifty-nine pounds of arsenic trioxide and notable quantities of sulphur dioxide, copper, antimony, lead, zinc were emitted daily from the stacks of the Washoe smelter (MacMillan 2000, 87). This amount of discharge gave the whole valley a thick topsoil of toxins—so much so that after years of operation at the Washoe Smelter the company had the denuded mountainsides immediately behind the smelters swept for settled flue dust so that they could resmelt the dust for its copper content. Ultimately, the swept dust yielded over six million dollars worth of copper (MacMillan 2000, 92).

In 1905, The Deer Lodge Farmers' Association, a league of over one hundred farmers and ranchers, spoke out against the new smelting operation and blamed the company for dying livestock and poisoned crops. They claimed that "the Washoe Smelter belches forth such an enormous volume of these poisonous gases that the mind is incapable of comprehending the vast pollution of the atmosphere in its vicinity" (MacMillan 2000, 87). The company naturally denied any culpability in the death of cattle and poor crops and insisted that there was no problem. The group of Deer Lodge Valley agriculturalists demanded that the company abate or desist the smoke nuisance and filed suit against the company in the 1906 case *Fred J. Bliss v. the Anaconda Copper Mining Company*.

The events surrounding the *Bliss* case highlight a movement in Anaconda that transformed public perception of smoke from industrial waste into economic salvation. Public perceptions of smoke played a role in creating and transforming Anaconda's place identity. Before smoke could shape identity though, it had to be transformed; smoke had to become a clear boon to the industrial community and a uniting force behind the community's identity. As such, the case of the smoke farmers does not provide a narrative for this argument, but instead provides the impetus for the creation of a new perception of the smoke-filled urban environment. As a result of efforts by the company to sway public opinion to support the continuation of smelting, the Anaconda Company performed environmental alchemy by transmutating smoke into a benefit to the community.

The company-owned newspaper, the *Anaconda Standard*, spoke loudly and clearly against the “smoke farmers” and in support of the Anaconda Company. The *Standard* first broke the news about the smoke case by reporting: “The public is aware that a ranchers league has been formed for the purpose of attempting...to close the smelting plant in Anaconda...on the allegation that the smelter smoke is the ruin of valley land and crops and stock.” Immediately the ranchers league was established as the adversary to the future prosperity of the community because their purpose was only to shut down the smelter. The *Standard* continued to belittle the case by saying that it is in fact the ranchers and their dandelions that are the real problem, not the smoke.

Fields...of a smoke farmer are filled with dandelions. There are acres and acres of them, which if allowed to propagate at their present rate in the valley, will be a greater menace to the hay lands than the smoke from the Washoe Smelters. The wind that carries the gray seed of this vegetable pest is laden with greater danger to the farms than is the wind that blows the smoke from the works at Anaconda (Kelly 1983, 60)

Transforming dandelions into a greater nuisance than arsenic-laden smoke is just the sort of alchemy that was common for industrial cities in this era.

Anaconda was not alone in creating a pleasant image of industrial smoke in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By this time there was a significant discourse mediating smoke and urban space. Many wealthy capitalists and wage laborers around the United States perceived smoke as the ultimate indicator of economic progress and health (Stradling 1999). In nearby Butte, the 1886 *Butte Miner* touted the virtue of smoke by comparing it to commerce. “The thicker the fumes the greater our financial vitality, and Butteites feel best when the fumes are thickest” (Smith 1987, 75). Copper King William Clark even ascribed cosmetic powers to smoke: “I must say that the ladies

are very fond of this smoky city...because there is just enough arsenic there to give them a beautiful complexion, and that is the reason the ladies of Butte are renowned wherever they go for their beautiful complexions” (MacMillan 2000, 32).

Many Anacondans also attributed smelter smoke with positive qualities. Not only was smelter smoke alleged to be more benign than dandelions, but in the tenor of the age it could be seen as a beacon of the economic vitality of a city. During the *Bliss* case hearings the newspaper reported: “Facts pertaining to the direct and indirect effects of a closing down of the Washoe plant at Anaconda...were the main things brought out yesterday at the smoke hearings.” If the shock of discussion of closing down the smelter was not enough to jar the reading public, the article continued by asking residents to “consider the results that would follow the granting of a writ of closing down the smelter” (*Anaconda Standard* 1906b). Without the smelter and its signature smoke, the city would wither and die. The company-owned newspaper had fostered a perception of the industrial environment that transmuted smoke into an essential environmental element if the city was to survive.

Beyond simple rhetoric in newspapers, the Anaconda Company used other means to promote the health and vitality of the environment within Anaconda’s smoke zone. During this period, the company sponsored the Deer Lodge County exhibit at the Montana State Fair in order to counteract regional farmers’ claims that smelter smoke was damaging the valley’s agricultural potential. At these exhibits the company exhibited a wide variety of blue ribbon crops that according to the *Standard* surprised many people. An article in a regional newspaper carefully transcribed an exchange between a farmer

from eastern Montana and the Deer Lodge exhibit director that ended with the farmer shaking his head in surprise: “I guess you people can raise something over there besides smoke” (*Daily Intermountain* 1905). Indeed, by the estimation of the company the valley was nearly edenic. In a series of photographs commissioned by the company for evidence in the Bliss trial that they sarcastically referred to as the “Smoke Damage Series” it is obvious that healthy fields and livestock were the order of the day around Anaconda (Figure 15).

Figure 15. The Anaconda Company’s “Smoke Damage” series of photographs, 1910. (Montana State University Special Collections)



The company also established experimental farms at three locations within the Deer Lodge Valley and raised crops and livestock to prove that the valley was still very productive agriculturally. These pieces of self promotion by the company served to reinforce their stance that the smoke from the smelters at worst had no effect on the agricultural land in Anaconda, and more likely aided the creation of a healthy land. This healthy land was boosted in Montana newspapers with headlines and subtitles that brought attention to the city of Anaconda where the “Markets are Unexcelled” and “Big mercantile establishments were prepared to furnish the farmer everything he wants located in near-by towns” (*Anaconda Standard* 1909). Through company booster promotions, Anaconda became the center of a highly productive agricultural valley. During the smoke case trial the Anaconda Company attempted to create a natural and economic environment in which the company and its smelter smoke were essential.

When the courts finally gave their decision that the farmers in the smoke zone had been affected only to a “very slight degree” and awarded Bliss \$350, Anacondans were elated and “exultant blasts of the whistles on the Hill heralded to Anacondans...news of the decision. Brass bands, trailed by hundreds of boys, marched the streets and roman candles and rockets made the air brilliant” (Kelly 1983, 60). A cartoon in the *Standard* the day after the decision illustrated the tenor of the city towards the smoke farmers and the smelter smoke (Figure 16). The comic depicts an angry smoke farmer falling back after the judges decision broke the rope signifying the injunction that had been wrapped around the base of the smelter, threatening to choke or topple it. Meanwhile citizens, miners, and businessmen rejoice as a cloud of smoke fresh from the stack exudes the

Figure 16. Comic in the *Anaconda Leader* following the smoke case, 1911. (MacMillan 2000, 104)



words, “Plenty, Peace, Good Times, Prosperity.” The smoke spewing from the smelter was the salvation of the city and it blessed the lands under its pall with everything a generous nature could bestow. Below the cartoon a local bard penned the mock anthem that includes the quatrain:

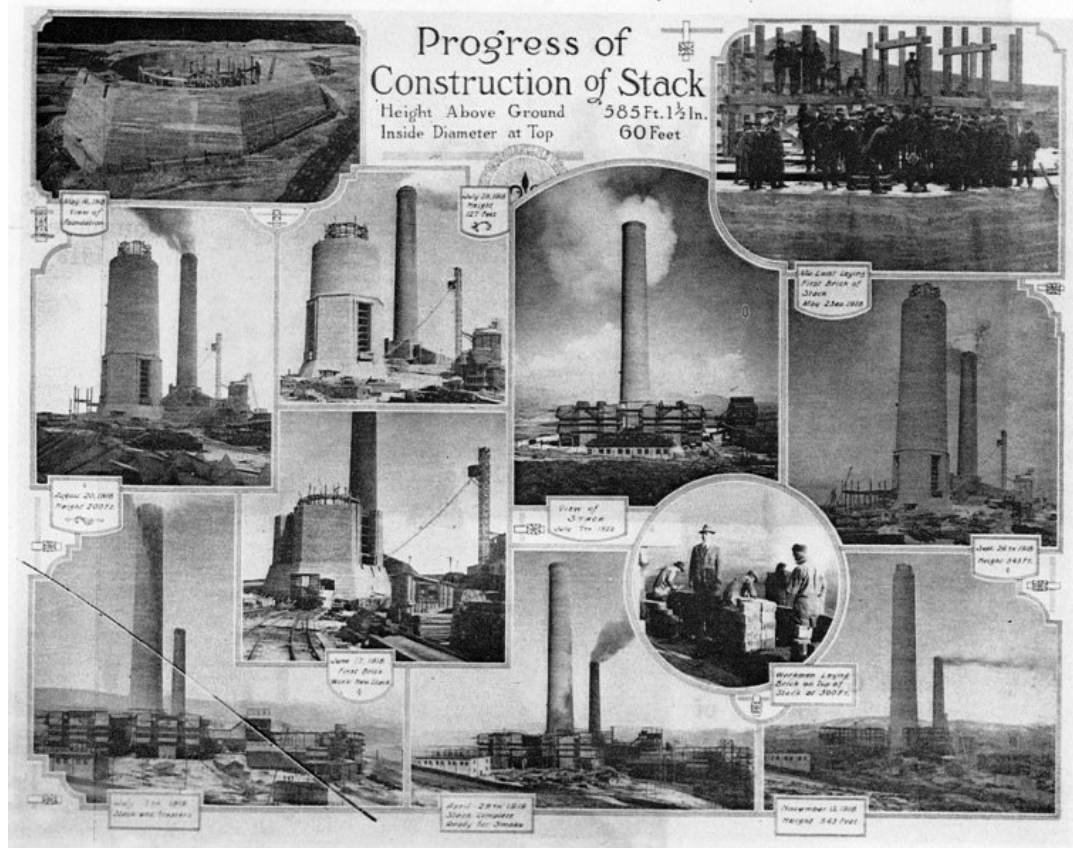
And the furnaces' red glare, the whistles' keen blare
 Gave proof through the night that our smoke was still there!
 The smoke of the smelters! Long may it flow
 In the heavens above, o'er the earth here below! (*Anaconda Standard* 1911).

The smoke from the smelters was never more fundamental to the natural and economic environment in Anaconda than during the *Bliss* smoke case.

By February 1917, the *Standard* ran a headline shouting that that “Largest Stack in the World to be built at the Smelter.” The ensuing article offered two reasons for the creation of the new stack: “The stack is needed to care for the smoke now made at the smelter, and the old stack which has been considered big, should be higher. But the big reason and the real immediate reason, is that the waste through the current system is too great” (*Anaconda Standard* 1917). In essence, the company recognized that there may have been a smoke problem, but that consideration was not as important as the fear of losing precious copper in the smoke.

The new stack grew in size and importance over the next year until the final brick was laid in 1918, making it the largest chimney in the world at 585 feet 1^{1/2} inches tall (Figure 17). The stack, and more importantly its smoke, continued to be an important symbol to city residents. Occasionally, the smelter would shut down for a period and the smoke stopped. The frequent and irregular closures of the smelter were a constant concern for the smeltermen and their families and the sign of smoke was a powerful symbol. During the smoke case, the Anaconda Company had performed environmental alchemy and an element of noxious urban nature was represented as more important than any other considerations. In the aftermath of the case, smoke played a powerful role in shaping residents' place identity in Anaconda during the early 20th century.

Figure 17. The Washoe Smelter stack completed, 1918. (Campbell 1981, 9)



The community's response to smelter smoke pollution was not the only window into Anaconda's place identity in the early 20th century. The words that contemporary Anaconda historians used to celebrate the city's 25th and 40th birthday also reveal its industrial identity. In Anaconda, Marcus Daly was revered quite literally "in a spirit of filial reverence" (Eggleston 1908, 5). After all "Mr. Daly not only founded the city, he became warmly attached to it and he was intensely loyal to its welfare. He was, in fact, first and last Anaconda's best and most helpful friend" (*Anaconda Standard* 1923). Scattered throughout remembrances of Anaconda's past are generous amounts of respect and praise for the city's industrial founder. While local reporters gave Marcus Daly credit

for the creation of the industrial city, they also celebrated the rise of the smelting industry with page after page of descriptions of the size, output, and characteristics of the smelters and their attendant facilities. One commentator boasted in 1908 that “Anaconda has the distinction of having been the home, at some time or other, of nearly every man now living who is prominent in the copper smelting world” (Eggleston 1908, 26). The same commentator repeatedly referred to Anaconda as the “Copper City.” While this appellation was typically given to Butte, Anacondans saw that the city also had a place in the pantheon of copper-oriented cities. Interestingly, the city’s celebratory founding narratives never mention the failed attempt to gain the state capital, Daly’s reduced presence after the city lost the capital, or that there were ever any problems with smelter smoke in the community.

Hamilton 1890-1920

Local history tells the story of Marcus Daly’s first visit to the Bitterroot Valley as a young, poor Irish immigrant miner in 1864. As he traversed the valley he was struck first by the scenic grandeur of the area—the rugged peaks that surrounded the valley, the plentiful wildlife, the broad valley floor—it all enraptured the young Daly. But the lore continues that the budding copper industrialist, as impressed with the scenery as he was, was equally smitten by the easily accessible dense stands of fir and pine that littered the bench lands of the valley. From this experience Daly set his dreams on returning to the Bitterroot to reap the benefits of the lush valley (Jiusto 2000, 11). This introduction to the Bitterroot Valley set the stage for Daly’s founding of Hamilton in 1890. Daly founded

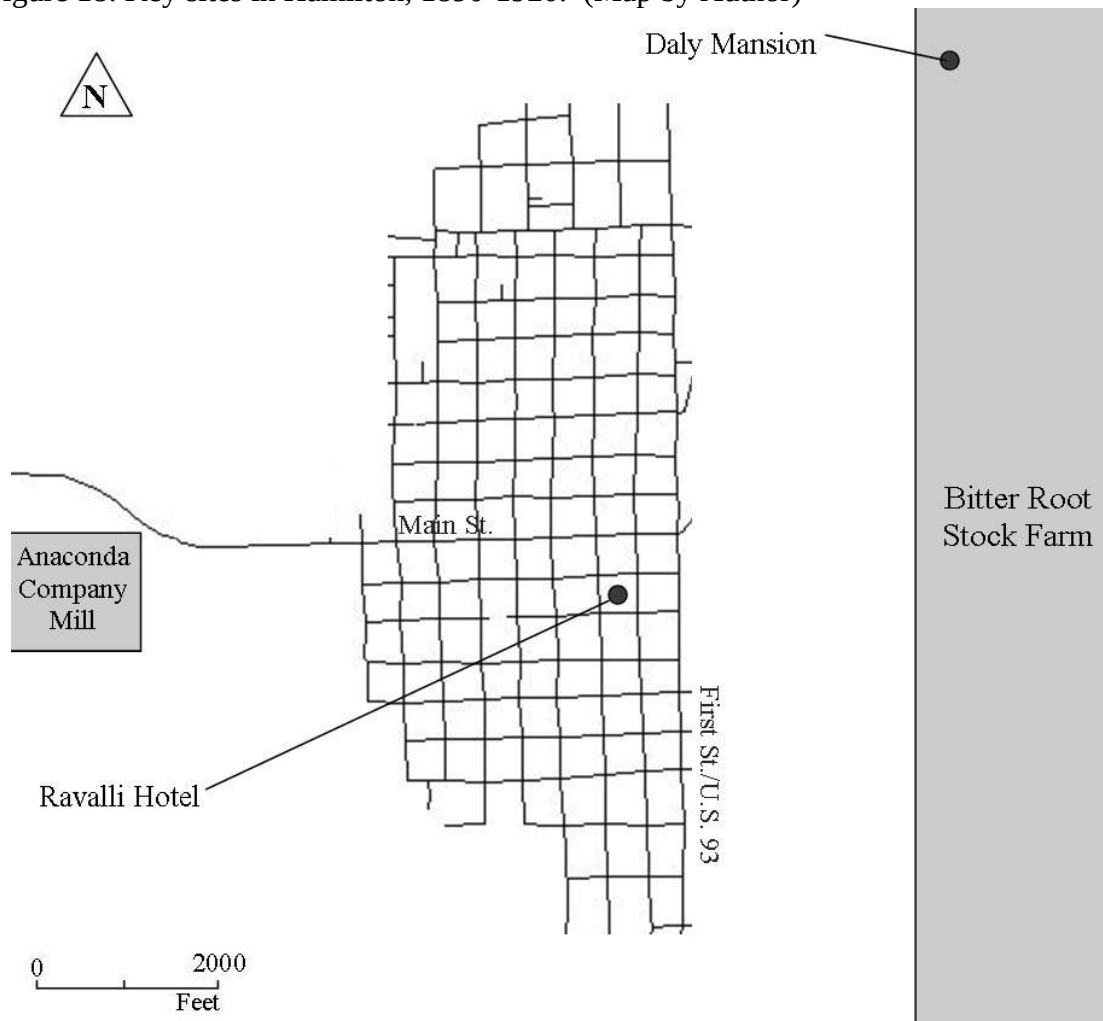
Hamilton as a city both rich in scenic beauty and in commercial timber. Daly's dual vision helped shape the development of the cultural landscape and influenced the early place identities associated with the city.

A Landscape of Production and Consumption: 1890-1900

The Daly-owned Bitter Root Development Company filed the townsite plat for Hamilton in September 1890. The original plat lays out a square town of seven blocks by seven blocks divided by wide streets—a classic railroad T-town with a railway running along the eastern border of the town with Main street perpendicular running east-west. In its plan, Hamilton was not particularly imaginative, but then again cutting edge design was not the Bitter Root Development Company's purpose in developing Hamilton. The city was created to support Daly's interests that flanked the city on the east and west: the Anaconda Company Lumber Mill was situated west of town and the Bitter Root Stock Farm was east of the city (Figure 18). Daly's vision of the commercial value of the timber in the Bitterroot Valley prompted him to build the Company Mill that infused the young city with a production-oriented landscape. On the other hand, Daly's aesthetic appreciation for the bucolic landscapes of the Stock Farm shaped the city and its hinterlands in very different ways.

Landscape of Production. Commercial logging activity in the Bitterroot Valley first began in 1888, when the Northern Pacific's Missoula & Bitter Root Railroad penetrated the valley as far south as Grantsdale. This opened up millions of acres of timber in virgin forests. Daly desired this timber to support the Anaconda Company's

Figure 18. Key sites in Hamilton, 1890-1920. (Map by Author)

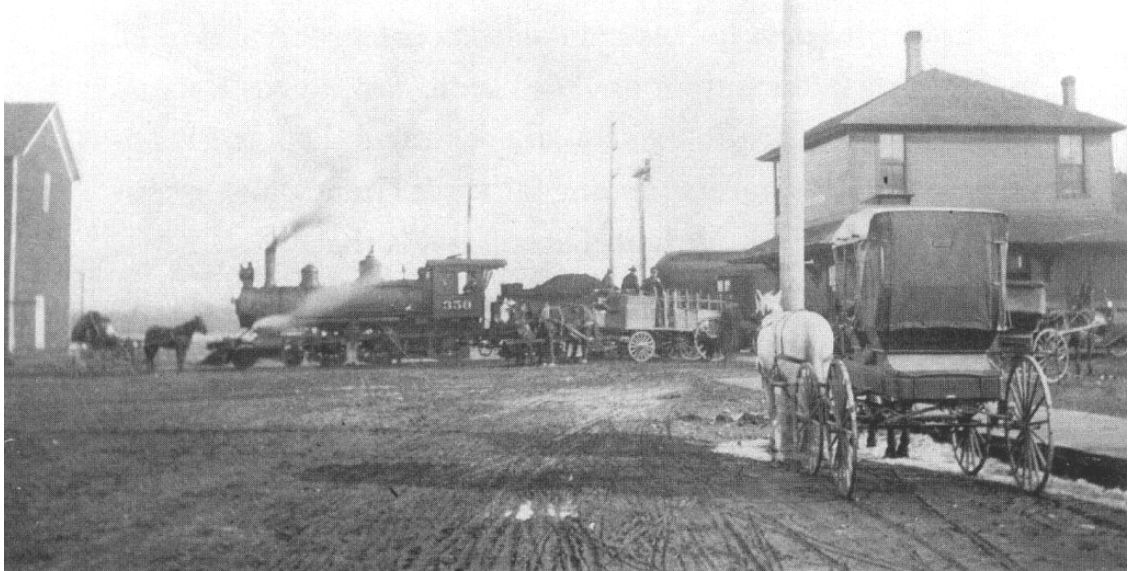


tree-intensive mining and smelting operations in Butte and Anaconda and so he purchased 700,000 acres of forested land from the railroad, the federal government, and from other valley property owners (Jiusto 2000, 13). Mills sprouted all along the Bitterroot River as large-scale logging began. The Anaconda Company Mill, or the Big Mill as it was often called, was the largest of them all. The Anaconda Company Mill's log runs on the Bitterroot River provided a vibrant economic impetus that supported many of the residents of the young city.

Hamilton's early economy was visible in the city's late 19th century urban landscape. The strong presence of the Anaconda Company was the most obvious sign that Hamilton was oriented around resource extraction and processing. The Anaconda Company Mill, the company housing close to the mill, and the company store all highlighted the company's presence. Moreover, the Bitter Root Development Company, a branch of the Anaconda Company, owned the townsite and sold parcels to residents and businesses. In Hamilton's early years, the city revolved around the Big Mill and providing for the needs of the mill workers.

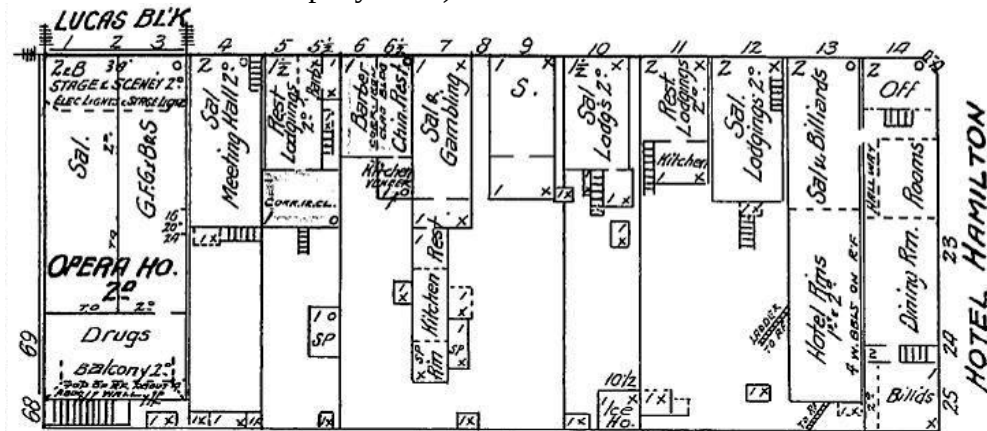
A reporter for the *Weekly Missoulian* traveled to Hamilton in 1894, and his comments upon arriving at the city center painted a picture of the vibrant young city. "Arriving at Hamilton, the traveler is immediately struck with the apparent liveliness of the situation," the traveler commented. Stepping off of the train, our traveler would have been greeted by the central business district. The CBD took shape predominantly on Main, First and Second streets. First Street bordered the railroad tracks and housed the many warehouses that catered to the import-export activity involved with the rail station, while Main and Second streets were the commercial center of the city (Michels 1987, 29) (Figure 19). By 1896, Hamilton's central city boasted a large company store, three additional general merchandise stores, a book store, five fruit and confectionary stores, two meat markets, three livery stables, twenty one saloons, a wholesale liquor store, a flour mill, a bank, six churches, two schools, three newspapers, six lawyers, six doctors, two dentists, an opera house, and the county courthouse (Sanborn 1896). These streets, with their accumulation of retail and services, formed the economic core of the

Figure 19. Hamilton Main Street looking east toward First Street, ca. 1894. (Jiusto 2000, 14)



growing community (Figure 20). Our traveler continues his tour of “lively Hamilton” with “an exquisite meal at the Hamilton hotel across from the depot,” and a stop at the company store where he is impressed at how “every detail of an extensive metropolitan commercial institution has been observed and successfully accomplished in the arrangement of this great enterprise” (*Weekly Missoulian* 1894).

Figure 20. Hamilton Main Street’s 100 block illustrates commercial activity, 1896. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1896)



After touring the central business district, the *Weekly Missoulian* correspondent encounters the Anaconda Company Lumber Mill (Figure 21).

Leaving the Bitter Root Development company's stores the traveler continues along the main thoroughfare in a westerly direction until the immense saw mill and factor of the company is encountered at the extreme western limit of the town and situated on the banks of the Bitter Root river, where is also located the dam where are caught and confined until drawn up into the mill and converted into lumber or manufactured articles, the immense drives of logs that are felled and driven down the stream during the early spring.

The Anaconda Company Mill was the most modern of all of the mills on the Bitterroot River. The dam at the mill, replete with icebreakers, log chutes, and even fish ladders to allow game fish to migrate, created a pond capable of holding 40 million board feet of logs (Michels 1987, 16). By the time the mill was operational in 1892, the holding pond had over 20 million board feet of Bitterroot trees that had recently “yield[ed] up their lives for the good of man,” and were ready to be “handled in the most approved up-to-date way of doing such things at the great Hamilton mills in sawing time” (Ravalli Hotel ca. 1895). Full scale production at the Big Mill meant processing nearly 35 million board feet of timber during roughly six months of operation. Most of the lumber produced left the valley on railcars bound for the Butte mines or the Anaconda smelter. The timber industry directly employed over 300 sawyers and supported Hamilton's early growth.

Figure 21. Anaconda Company Lumber Mill, ca. 1890. (*Western News* 1910, 15)



Hamilton's residential settlement was influenced by the placement of the Mill and the railroad. Mill workers lived in the shadow of the mill on Seventh Street in a working class neighborhood made up of unpretentious, one story, wood frame buildings. The mill houses were tightly grouped on the block with very little side lot space. This working-class neighborhood was connected to the mill by wooden boardwalks. These wooden boardwalks helped city residents recognize quitting time "by the noise of the many heavy boots made as their wearers—hardy men all—plodded east from their work" (Jiusto 2000, 15). Not all residents were working class mill workers though. Merchants, company managers, and other wealthy Hamilton residents lived in more affluent neighborhoods that filled in the original square block townsite. However, as the population expanded to 1,257 by 1900, the original townsite was no longer adequate and additions were necessary. The 1894 Riverview Addition in the north quickly became a working class district, while the Southside Addition catered to more affluent residents (Michels 1987, 45).

Landscape of Consumption. After experiencing all of the sights of Hamilton's central city and working-class landscape, our *Weekly Missoulian* correspondent concluded his tour at Marcus Daly's Stock Farm. The author comments: "It has been frequently stated, and probably not without reason, that any mention of the Bitter Root valley is incomplete without extended comment on the many features of Mr. Daly's marvelous stock farm, lying principally within easy access to Hamilton" (*Weekly Missoulian* 1894). Indeed, the Stock Farm represents Marcus Daly's vision of Hamilton as a landscape of consumption.

In 1886, even before logging activities had commenced in the valley, Daly established a large multipurpose recreational estate. Daly's Stock Farm eventually blossomed into a 26,000-acre setting where Daly created a year-round luxury home for his prized race horses, and a seasonal family residence (Figure 22). As an equestrian center, the Stock Farm had few peers. Horse training facilities included an outdoor race track, a half-mile indoor winter training track equipped with its own heating plant, a fully outfitted veterinary clinic, and a large brick stable called "Tammany's Castle" in honor of Daly's most famous horse (Jiusto 2000, 12). As a seasonal residence for the Daly family, the Stock Farm was in a class all its own. Daly built a mansion in 1890 and spent as much leisure time here as he could afford (Figure 23). This first mansion, a renovation of the farmhouse that had previously been on the property, met the needs of the Daly family. However, even this early mansion paled in comparison to the radically remodeled version that appeared in 1909. The new mansion served as the primary residence of Margaret Daly following Marcus' death in 1900.

The Stock Farm was not recreation and leisure for all interested parties, but instead was an integral part of Hamilton's economy. The facility employed nearly three hundred Hamilton residents to manage the stables, tend the mansion and grounds, and to grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Our traveler, upon seeing the estate, did not see the Stock Farm's agricultural production, but only the leisure consumption of "the massive buildings of the Marcus Daly stock farm, the palatial residence, the training quarters, stables and other outbuildings necessary and common to a thoroughly equipped fancy stock farm" (*Weekly Missoulian* 1894).

Figure 22. Marcus Daly's 26,000-acre Bitterroot Stock Farm, 1910. (Marcus Daly Estate 1910, map insert)

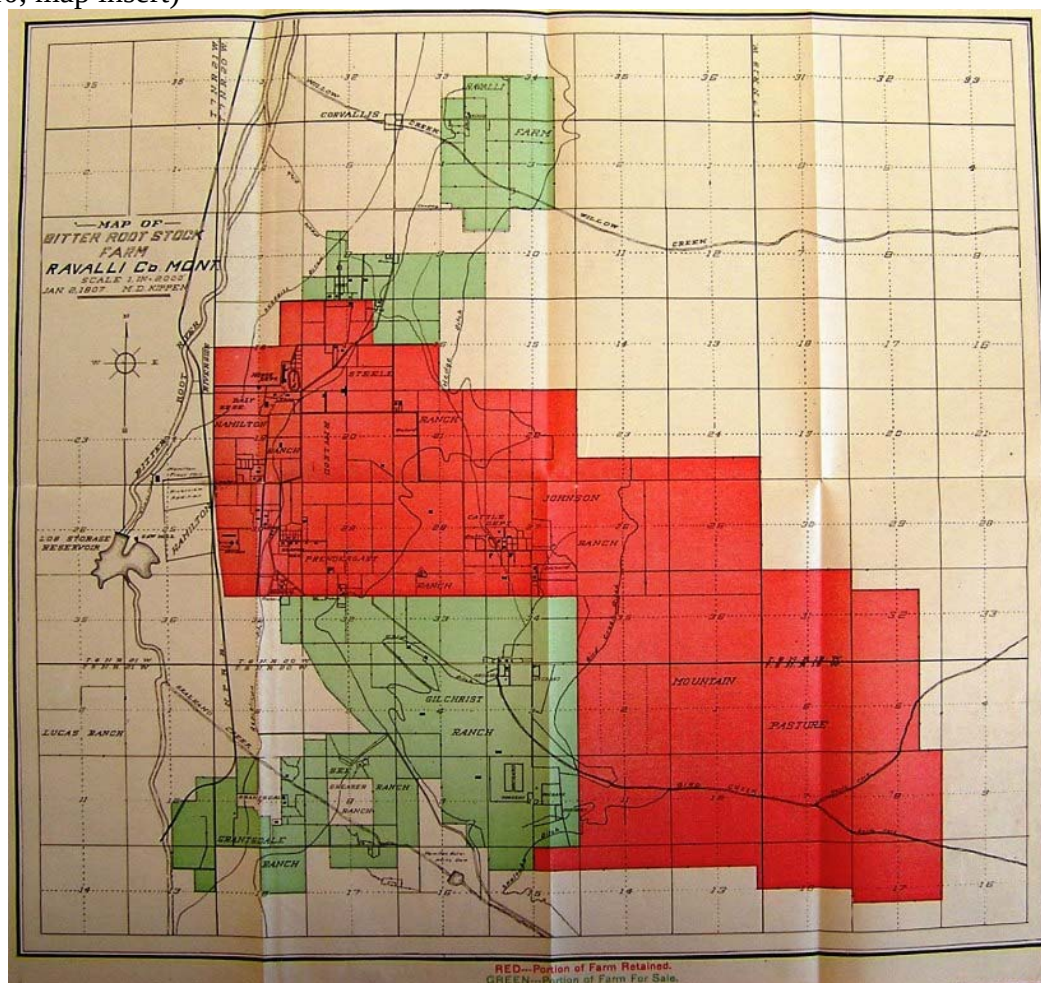


Figure 23. The Daly Mansion on the Bitter Root Stock Farm near Hamilton, 1895.
(Ravalli Hotel 1895)



By 1896, the Stock Farm's influence spread to the city. Located in the heart of the city, the Ravalli Hotel was established because Marcus Daly did not have enough room at his Stock Farm mansion for all of his guests. The hotel served as overflow accommodations for Daly's guests, but also operated as a resort for wealthy tourists (Figure 24). According to the promotional pamphlet, *A Summer at the Ravalli*, the hotel was "one of the most elegantly equipped hostelries in the Northwest" and the contained 52 bedrooms with electric light chandeliers, marble wash basins supplied with hot and cold water, sumptuous carpeting, call and return call electric bells, and steam heat radiators (Ravalli Hotel ca. 1895).

Figure 24. Tourists at the Ravalli Hotel in Hamilton, 1907. (Montana Historical Society)



Promotional literature for the Ravalli Hotel markets all of Hamilton as an excellent vacation destination. Indeed, it paints a picture of Hamilton as a city that was the perfect blend of beautiful scenery and urban amenities. All of the glories of nature apparently coalesce in Hamilton itself: “Set in the midst of this land of dreams, these happy hunting grounds, lies Hamilton, the jewel of the valley.” Hamilton is portrayed as the center of the valley from where the tourist or resident can experience “glorious forests,” revel in “the great Daly ranch,” and see “great fields of grain and grasses grow and ripen before your eyes.” But unimproved natural wonder is not the only attraction that the Ravalli and the city of Hamilton could offer, the city also can provide urban amenities as well. “And if you take less kindly to the more strenuous sports and pleasures, you will still find Hamilton and Ravalli the ideal mountain and country resort, with refined and pleasant townspeople” (Ravalli Hotel ca. 1895).

Already by 1900, Hamilton was being marketed as an urbanized middle landscape. The *Summer at the Ravalli* pamphlet commented that in spite of “all its progressiveness Hamilton is a most pleasant little city” (Ravalli Hotel ca. 1895). The relationship between city and nature had also become such a significant part of Hamilton’s identity that when Ravalli County offered a description of its principal cities, natural beauty could hardly be separated from the core of the city. The turn of the century description reads: “Hamilton, the metropolis and county seat of Ravalli County, is a beautiful growing town of two thousand inhabitants. The town...is famed for its beautiful, healthful surroundings” (Ravalli Abstract Company 1900). Hamilton’s

relationship with both nature and city would be articulated and promoted by many community promoters in the future.

The Creation of a Middle Landscape: 1900-1915

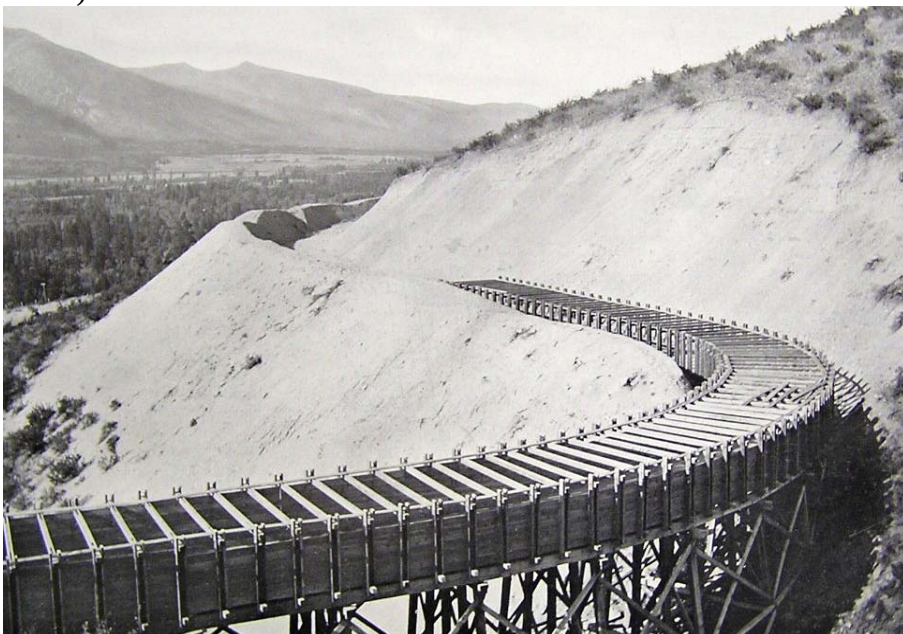
The turn of the century marked the beginning of a significant set of changes in Hamilton. Both the landscapes of consumption and production were in flux. Marcus Daly's death in 1900 triggered a shift in focus for the Stock Farm as all of his race horses were sold and the facility discontinued its racing and breeding operations. Also by 1900 there were early signs that the readily accessible timber in the Bitterroot Valley was nearing depletion (Michels 1987, 19). So with the Stock Farm undergoing a mission realignment and with a waning timber industry, nearly a quarter of the community's residents left the city only a few years into the new century.

Even as the city faced an uncertain future, seeds of change also were being sown. All of the land that was now denuded of timber was easily cleared, given that there was little underbrush in the previous forested area. In 1900 the *Western Lumberman* accurately predicted that "in a few years the stump wastes are bound to be transformed into fine farms and orchards, as much of the land is comparatively level, easily irrigated with the soil being a rich sandy loam" (Jiusto 2000, 18). Perhaps Marcus Daly had recognized the same potential for the valley. Shortly before his death he promoted a large irrigation system that was designed to turn the east bench into productive agricultural land. Daly's Ditch was a 43-mile-long irrigation system that took water from the Bitterroot River and dispersed it throughout the Stock Farm, making it the largest in the state and one of the largest in the West at that time (Michels 1987, 50). Once fully

irrigated the Stock Farm produced award winning results that included McIntosh Red apples. At the same time as irrigation works were underway, other harbingers of good fortune were rolling out of the Company Mill. In 1903, the mill manufactured 150,000 apple boxes and 52,000 berry crates—five times the number produced five years earlier. A new source of economic development, landscape creation, and identity formation was on Hamilton's horizon.

The Stock Farm's success in its apple orchards spawned an even larger irrigation and land development operation. Adding to successes at the Stock Farm, the Bitterroot Valley Irrigation Company (BRVIC), backed by Chicago financiers, started work on the Big Ditch in 1905. The Big Ditch was an 80 mile canal, extending from Lake Como in the south to Stevensville in the north, designed to irrigate 45,000 acres of land on the east side of the Bitterroot River (Figure 25). The creation of the canal was an enormous

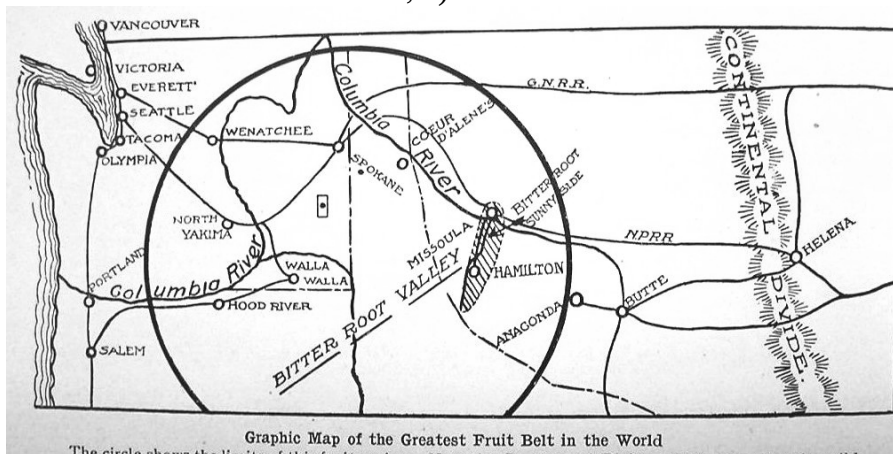
Figure 25. A section of the Big Ditch near Hamilton, 1907. (Bitter Root Valley Irrigation Company 1907)



undertaking. Four years after it began, a steam shovel dubbed Li'l Giant finished chewing a 24-foot wide and 6-foot deep canal (Jiusto 2000, 20). But for the BRVIC, creating the canal system and selling irrigation rights was secondary to their main purpose. The BRVIC's principal vision was to subdivide the land into ten and twenty-acre parcels to be promoted and sold as irrigated apple orchard lands. By 1909, over 15,000 acres of land in the Bitterroot Valley had been subdivided into the small apple tracts. The construction of the Big Ditch and the influx of land investment created an economic and demographic boom period in Hamilton that continued for several years, reaching its zenith around 1910. In 1909 the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company estimated the city's population had risen to 3,300, nearly quadrupling the town's population thirteen years earlier.

Apple Boom Place Identity. Subdivided land alone did not draw apple investors to Hamilton and the Bitterroot Valley. As early as 1907, land boosters had begun an extensive place marketing campaign that promoted the Bitterroot Valley as prime apple country and Hamilton as the "Capital of the McIntosh Red" (Figure 26). The Bitterroot

Figure 26. The Bitterroot Valley was part of the "Greatest Fruit Belt in the World." (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 4)



Valley and Hamilton were fundamentally transformed by the promotional campaign for the apple boom. Not only were there more people inhabiting the city—meaning increased development of the urban landscape—but the new residents imported new visions that added another dimension to the city’s identity.

Recreating Hamilton’s and the valley’s identity as prime apple country involved an extensive promotional campaign that was well underway before the Big Ditch delivered its first drop of irrigation water. In many ways the booster rhetoric was similar to other western land settlement schemes of this era. Indeed, promise of irrigation, townsite plans, non-local capital, and fantastic claims about not-quite-proven lands were all hallmarks of speculative real estate boosterism during this era. Yet in many ways the Apple Boom in the Bitterroot was unique; this land development scheme promoted apple orchards to wealthy urbanites.

Apple boom-era promotions of the Bitterroot Valley sought to draw non-agricultural investors to the valley with a set of themes that emphasized ease, recreation and scenery. Land promoters knew that the images of a farmer’s long days of hard work were not likely to draw non-farmers to their land, so instead they painted pictures of ease. In fact, by all accounts land companies did their best to actually make it easy. Orchards for the urban emigrant farmer were generally sold in ten or 20-acre parcels—small orchards that had the prospect of being very easy to be maintained, even by an urban emigrant agriculturalist. At the Stock Farm, potential investors could “procure a ‘ready-made’ ranch, fenced, irrigated, cultivated and beautified” (Marcus Daly Estate 1910, 1). Other settlers had the option of purchasing undeveloped land at a more reasonable price,

or they could simply pay a bit more and “the Company will contract to do the initial work of preparing the land, planting the trees, and caring for the property for a period of one year from planting, after which time it will be turned over to the purchaser” (BRVIC 1912, 25). Conceivably, potential estate owners could walk into their orchard and pluck a delicious apple on their very first day as farmers (Figure 27). With this sort of ease, the new resident could be part time agriculturalist and full time recreationalist.

The potential for outdoor recreation occupied a prominent spot in any discussion of orchard land development. Often topics of fishing, hunting, golf, and mountain

Figure 27. Bitterroot Valley apple farmer near Hamilton, 1907. (Bitter Root Valley Irrigation Company 1907)



climbing were given significantly greater emphasis than secondary considerations of climate, growing season, pests, and other practical matters. The valley was presented as a place of leisure and consumption first and a place of agricultural production second. One promotion asked “Are you tired of ‘fished out’ places?” and proceeded to invite the reader to the Bitterroot Valley: “It’s great here! Until you whip these mountain streams with your fishing tackle you won’t know the kind of fishing that *can still be had*” (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 29). Another advertisement listed the ten “Convincing Reasons” to invest in Bitterroot Valley fruit lands. Naturally, one of the key reasons was the “hunting, fishing, and mountain recreation” (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a) (Figure 28). Pamphlet after pamphlet exclaimed that the hunting, fishing, golf, and mountain climbing in the apple orchard lands are all “unexcelled in America” (BRVIC 1912, 9).

Scenery was another related theme that played prominently in the Bitterroot Valley’s promotional rhetoric. The Valley’s scenery was often compared with other

Figure 28. Recreational Hunting near Hamilton, 1910. (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 4)



places. Comparisons ranged from the rather pedestrian description that “There are few places in America which can compare with the Bitter Root Valley in scenic attractiveness” (BRVIC 1912, 7) to the more exotic comparison that “Its canyons...are like the canyons of the Andes or Himalayas and afford never ending pleasure to lover of inspiring scenery” (BRVIC 1912, 7). In fact, “So enthusiastically has the Bitter Root valley been praised that it has been favorably compared, time and time again, with the valleys of Switzerland” (Marcus Daly Estate 1910, 16-17). All of these comparisons assert that the valley’s beauty can be recognized even by the discriminating urban tastes. One newspaper article tells the story of a group of well-traveled men on a New York train that were “all united in praise of celebrated tourist shrines.” One man on the train who admitted that he had been to the Alps, Egypt, Switzerland, and the Holy Land, finally could not take any more and interjects that “I have traveled somewhat myself, and I have never seen anything that beats the Bitter Root valley in Montana.” Indeed as the newspaper proceeds, “The statement was unexpected, but incontrovertible” (*Western News* 1910, 29). The beauty of Bitterroot Valley vistas can even be appreciated by wealthy, well traveled, Eastern city dwellers.

The themes of ease, recreation, and scenery dominated promotions of the Bitterroot Valley during the apple boom. The master narrative of all of the promotion though is that the valley is nearly Edenic. This theme was expressed in the expressive prose, stunning photographs, and even crude verse.

FOR SALE—8,000 acres of land—good as is made.
 Land of sunshine and natural beauty.
 Land famous for its farming resources.
 Land improved by the best efforts of Marcus Daly.

Land of a perfect irrigation system.
 Land of every grain and grass.
 Land of fruit par excellence.
 Land immune from frosts, pests and crop failures.
Land of health, wealth, homes and opportunities for all.
 (Marcus Daly Estate 1910, 20)

As the valley was being promoted as an apple farmer's paradise, the city of Hamilton was seen as an urbanized middle landscape. By 1910, Hamilton newspapers regularly referred to Hamilton as "The Capital of the McIntosh Red," "Apple Town," "Apple Empire," "Metropolis of the Valley," or more generally "a great country capital" or "the hub of this vast rural empire." These appellations do not only reflect the city's agricultural function as center of the Bitterroot Valley but they also represent the city's more important role as the center place for the empire that was built around the wealthy eastern urbanites. Many of the gentlemen apple farmers spent the summer months on their orchard estates in the country and their presence in the country also influenced the city of Hamilton itself. These landed gentry that the *Western News* called "the eastern class who, having the leisure that financial independence brings" gave Hamilton "the distinction of being the most cosmopolitan community in Montana" (*Western News* 1910, 14). Hamilton's cosmopolitan character would only increase as more visitors came to city each year. One commentator noted:

Hamilton is destined to be the summer social capital of Montana. Situated as it is, in the midst of a lovely valley, it has but two competitors for the vacation trade—the Yellowstone Park and the Glacier National Park. The population of Montana is increasing rapidly. Its new residents will soon be earning vacations. The larger cities will send out an exodus each year. Vacationists are 'spenders,' and the distribution of their money in Hamilton will play no small factor in building the city (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 14-15).

On the other hand, the cosmopolitan social capital was often also portrayed as merely a small rural village noted for its relationship with nature. A 1910 pamphlet commented that “Hamilton is a delightfully situated spot in this valley, dropped down in the midst of great pine-covered mountains” (Marcus Daly Estate 1910, 23).

During the apple boom era, Hamilton seemed to straddle these two views of the city. It was at once not quite a true urban center, but more than a rural village. Hamilton therefore became an urban middle landscape that negotiated the exchange between the city services and country. Hamilton was the urban center whose city services allowed one booster to note that “telephones and electric lights in the orchard homes furnish the conveniences of city life without its disadvantages” and further that newcomers to Hamilton “from large eastern cities are delighted to find conveniences usually associated only with city life” (BRVIC 1912, 13). While the reality was likely somewhere in between those two standards, city boosters recognized that the community’s urban identity was in flux. The editor of the *Western News* called for Hamilton to “discard the few remaining village traits...and become a better town.” Further he continued that “it should be a most distinctive town, even in its progress, combining all the charm of the west with the needs of a growing city” (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910b, 14-15). In this editor’s view the transition from village to town had already occurred, and the progress required to become a city was in the not too distant future. In order to make this next transition, Hamilton would continue to mediate the relationship between the city and nature to create a unique middle landscape.

Apple Boom Landscape. The apple boosters' intensive place-selling approach affected how the Bitterroot Valley's rural and Hamilton's urban landscape developed. The small apple orchard tracts filled in much of the valley while the demand for urban services initiated a building boom in Hamilton.

Central to the land development scheme was its appeal targeted towards well educated, socially connected, and financially comfortable citizens from urban areas. Other land development schemes in the West were focused on drawing the yeoman farmer or the immigrant to settle new homestead areas, but the Apple Boom looked for the gentleman farmer. Apparently the promotions worked. By 1912, one land promotion pamphlet reported that "Already, hundreds of highly intelligent people from the East have purchased land from the Company, set out orchards, made improvements, and are living happy and contented in this garden spot of the North American Continent" (BRVIC 1912, 25).

Educated urbanite settlers flocked to the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed subdivision development, aptly named University Heights. Indeed, it was heavily supported by faculty at the University of Chicago, who in turn enlisted the interest of faculty at Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Northwestern Universities (Michels 1987, 66). University Heights, located 15 miles south of Hamilton, was a BVRIC project begun in 1909. The development was designed to attract "university men and women" or "people of that general type who stand well socially, intellectually, and financially in their eastern communities" (*Western News* 1910a, 26). The *Western News* described the future community:

The opportunity of making a splendid investment and enjoying the delights of out-of-door life by banding together in a summer colony appealed strongly to the university instructors.... The joys of hunting, fishing and mountain climbing will be indulged during the summer residence, and these will be coupled with the advantage of an economical living (*Western News* 1908).

Wright's plan to accommodate this cerebral crowd was to have a central clubhouse, tennis courts, and water features occupying the center of the development and 53 individual cabins surrounding the core. In his design Wright placed the cabins in line with the topography of the site so that each cabin could receive fresh mountain air and 200 degree views across the valley to the Sapphire Mountains (Figure 29). The project was never completed, but by 1910, the clubhouse and twelve cabins had been built (Johnson 1987).

Figure 29. Frank Lloyd Wright's plan for University Heights, 1909. (Johnson 1987, 19)



Figure 30. Typical apple boom-era estate near Hamilton, 1907. (Bitter Root Valley Irrigation Company 1907)



University Heights was not the only development that attracted large numbers of wealthy urbanites. Investors, mainly from the Midwest and Northeast, flocked to the Bitterroot Valley. In 1908 and 1909 alone, over 15,000 acres of land were purchased by investors and newcomers. Ranch sizes averaged 10-20 acres with a few large estates upwards of 1,000 acres (BRVHS 1998, 81) (Figure 30). But again, the pioneering spirit of the yeoman farmer was rarely to be had in the subdivision developments such as University Heights, Mountain View Orchards, Summerdale, or Sunny Side. Individual estates bore titles such as Rose Bank Cottage, Fair View, and Buena Vista. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce also suggested similar names such as Sunny Knoll, Longue Vue, The Tree Tops, Meadowmere, Breezy Bank, and Sunnyslope (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 26) (Figure 31). Each subdivision development was made up of not

Figure 31. Panorama of the Bitterroot Valley, 1910. (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a, 4)



only small orchard estates, but each also included large guest inns complete with highly attentive staff, golf courses, and bright McIntosh-apple-red cars that toured prospective buyers around the valley (BRVHS 1998, 81). A landscape of consumption was forming in the Bitterroot Valley.

Hamilton's urban landscapes developed along with the apple boom. A 1910 *Western News* article noted that "the rapidly increasing population with its developed prosperity will demand all the foodstuffs and conveniences" (*Western News* 1910, 14). Indeed, construction in the central city happened quickly as the city of Hamilton capitalized on this new influx of capital, residents, and residential and commercial development.

The central business district developed rapidly during the apple boom. One local commentator presaged the change in the commercial core: "Hamilton, being the hub of this vast rural empire, is and will be the trade center and the originating and receiving point of traffic, for the wealth produced in the surrounding country...will naturally reflect upon the commercial enlargement of the city" (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1910a 15). That Hamilton was the metropolis of the valley is clearly indicated by the dominant role that city played in outfitting apple growers. Main Street was lined with business offices, farming supply stores, banks and lending institutions (Figure 32). Indeed, anything that a wealthy farmer needed, including high-order goods, real estate services, or advice from the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, were available only in the city. Accordingly, the commercial district was transformed as wood-frame buildings were removed to make way for large commercial blocks. Main and Second streets, still the

Figure 32. Hamilton Main Street during the apple boom looking west, 1910. (Jiusto 2000)



commercial core of the city, saw the construction of six of these large commercial blocks that added permanence and stability to the city. Other new buildings, dedicated to financing, land sales, a library and church buildings filled in any open space in the city's commercial district (Michels 1987, 71-72). Hamilton's central location, county seat status, and vibrant business community were all amplified as the apple boom propelled the city's urban landscape development.

Population growth influenced new residential development in Hamilton during the apple boom. Considerable property in Hamilton was still in the possession of the Anaconda Company, but the company sold most of its remaining land and developed the Pine Grove townsite in 1910 adjacent to the southern border of the original Hamilton

townsite. This new residential subdivision, named after a successful commercial apple orchard, added 22 new blocks to the city and was quickly billed as Hamilton's most desirable residential area (Michels 1987, 66). Residential infilling, street improvements, and landscaping elements further accommodated the needs of the city's new migrants.

The End of the Apple Boom: 1915-1920. By 1913, hundreds of investors had acquired orchard lands under the Big Ditch project and over 15,000 of the 25,000 total acres had been sold. Investors came with a variety of intentions, but, for most, making money on McIntosh Reds was secondary to leisurely summer living. It was also a prosperous time for many Hamilton residents, business was good and the Ravalli Hotel was busy. However, the apple boom busted as quickly as it came and Hamilton and its hinterland keenly felt the effects. As early as 1913, problems began. Simultaneously, a blight hit many orchards and destroyed much of the crop, and the federal government brought suit against the officers of the BRVIC, charging them with fraudulent land dealings. By 1916, after a Chicago bank foreclosed on a mortgage, the BRVIC filed for bankruptcy and two years later all company assets were sold for delinquent taxes.

A land official for the Missoula Chamber of Commerce summarized the growth and demise of the land scheme best:

The results of this over-intensive campaign soon filled the valley with settlers who purchased land, built homes, planted orchards, platted golf courses and at once convinced themselves that their Utopia had been found. A few months, or possibly a few years, taught these people that it was necessary to care for the trees in order to secure a crop. Good citizens but poor farmers, soon learned that they had entered into something they knew nothing about, with the result that many of them became discouraged and moved to other sections, leaving their property revert back to the county (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1925, 1).

However, while the would-be farmers abandoned their lands, other farmers in the valley put in the necessary work and showed that the land could produce generous yields of potatoes, wheat, oats, and assorted vegetables. In 1921, a group of these farmers formed the Bitter Root Irrigation District (BRID), acquired funds from the Bureau of Reclamation, made improvements on the irrigation system, purchased vacant lands and resold them (Wiley 1923). The main difference between the BVRIC and the BRID was that the BRID was not in the land business, but in the irrigation business. This management change brought stability to valley agriculture because BRID was willing to sell the land for an average price of \$30 an acre instead of up to \$400 an acre. For the BRID, with more people irrigating, there would be a lower cost for all members of the irrigation district (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1925, 2).

By 1920 Hamilton was once again struggling economically. By 1916, the accessible timber had largely been cut and the Company Mill was already disassembled and its machinery moved to other mills, the Stock Farm operated at a much smaller scale than it had previously, the apple boom had come and gone, the Ravalli Hotel had been consumed by fire in 1919, and even Frank Lloyd Wright's University Heights fell into disrepair. Essentially all growth in Hamilton came to a standstill. United States involvement in WWI from 1914 to 1918 brought no relief to the community, and even after the war, the economy remained depressed (Michels 1987, 76-78). After years of rapid and varied development, Hamilton was in the midst of an economic depression and would not find relief until the early 1920s.

Conclusion

By 1920, the roots of the Old and New West were already visible in Anaconda and Hamilton. In Anaconda, Marcus Daly's visions of a political capital were wholly abandoned and the community was closely tied to the Anaconda Company's industrial smelting operation. The industrial landscape, evident in the growing smelters and the heavy imprint of the Anaconda Company on the urban landscape, combined with the wide-spread celebration of smelter smoke, signaled a solidly industrial community. In Hamilton, the landscape of production that grew around the Company Mill faded as the landscape of leisure blossomed during the apple boom. Hamilton built its landscape and identity around its role as a middle landscape, by providing urban retail, commercial, and real estate services for the new landed gentry.

While these industrial and middle landscapes were still very new, they proved remarkably resilient. As Anaconda continued to develop, the industrial landscape was always an important part of the community, even as it became an Old West community. Moreover, in Hamilton, the dream of a middle landscape continued to dominate its landscape and identity as Hamilton became a part of the New West. Thus, even in this early period, the roots of the Old and New West are clearly visible in the landscapes and identities of Anaconda and Hamilton.

CHAPTER THREE: ANACONDA AND HAMILTON 1920-1965

This chapter explores Anaconda and Hamilton between 1920 and 1965. During this period, both communities experienced considerable fluctuations in their economic and demographic situations, which in turn had significant effects on landscape and identity. In Anaconda, landscape and identity continued to be shaped by industrial production on the Hill. Hamilton's landscape and identity were shaped by the forces of the middle landscape ideal. From 1920 to 1965, each community more solidly fixed its position in a historical geographic trajectory that ultimately leads to the Old and New Wests we see exemplified in the communities today.

Much like the previous chapter, this chapter consists of two sections. The first section deals with Anaconda's landscape and place identity. This section explores Anaconda's experience of following the unpredictable industrial employment and production cycles at the smelter. The second section explores Hamilton's landscape and identity as the community dealt with a period of economic struggle and slow growth. For both of these sections I once again try to weave landscape change and identity formation into a chronological historical narrative that sheds light on the creation of the Old and New West. Methods and sources for this chapter are similar to those outlined in the introduction. Specifically, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, city planning documents, photographs and newspaper accounts are utilized to reconstruct landscapes. Oral histories, newspaper accounts, promotional pamphlets, and photographs help explore place identity in each community. Through these sources, a historical picture of the emerging Old and New West begin to take shape.

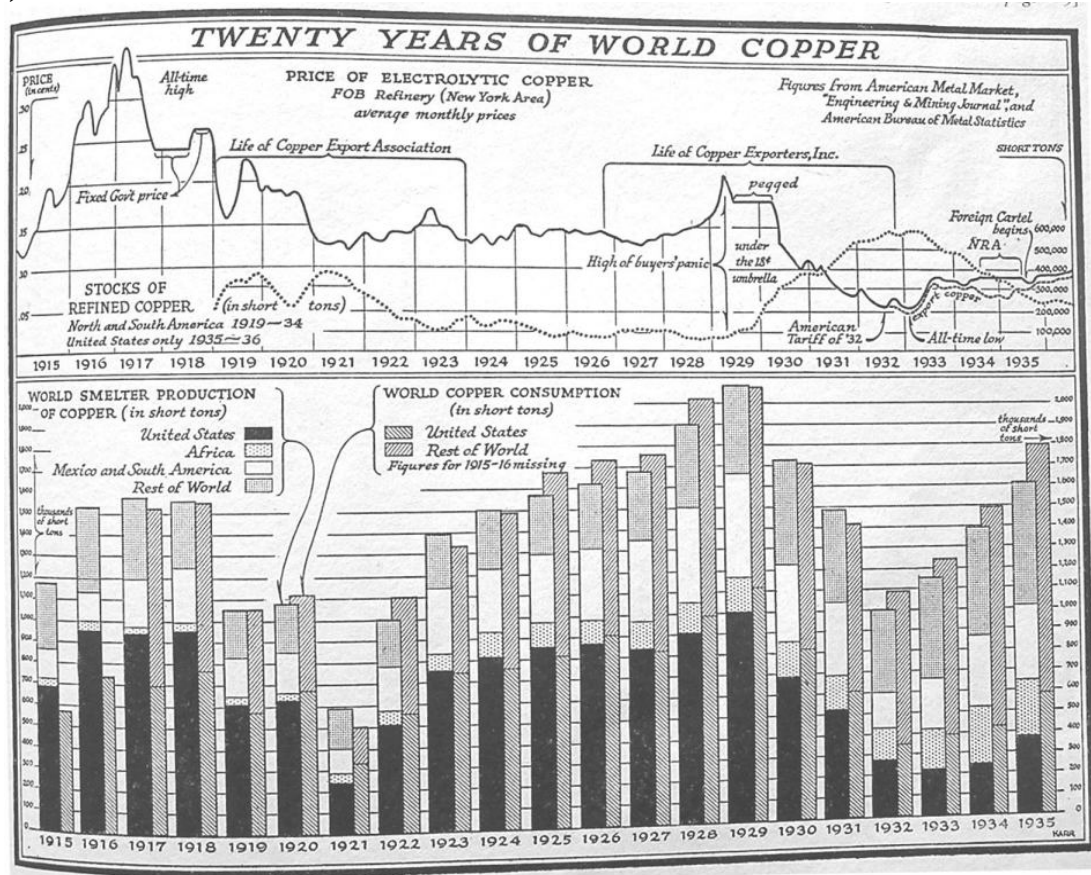
Anaconda: 1920-1965

From 1920 to 1965 Anaconda's landscape and identity became increasingly tied to the vicissitudes of the Anaconda Company. Even as the company underwent periods of remarkable growth and precipitous decline and the urban landscape shifted with periods of investment and disinvestment, the city's identity became increasingly tied to industrial production at the smelter.

An Uncertain Industrial Economy: 1920-1940

The 1920s through the 1940s were tumultuous and complex times in the copper industry. Unstable copper prices contributed to many changes in the mines in Butte and the inexorably linked smelting operations in Anaconda. As worldwide copper markets were in flux, the Anaconda Company struggled financially during periods of uncertain copper markets (Figure 33). The copper-oriented communities of Butte and Anaconda felt the effects of the shifting price structures. Perhaps even more than the company, the smelter workers of Anaconda keenly felt these changes. During this period wages dropped to \$3.75 a day until the smelter shut down for ten months, rose to \$5.50 while the city exploded to 12,494 people, crashed back to \$3.75 while nearly a third of smelter workers were laid off at the onset of the Depression, and finally rose sharply during the war economy. Even though international markets, depressions, and wars complicate the historical narrative, the significant place shaping factors during this period were the community's increasing dependence on and distrust of the Anaconda Company. Anaconda's landscape and identity during this period reflect the turbulent community.

Figure 33. Fluctuating worldwide copper market, 1915-1935. (*Fortune* December 1936, 95)



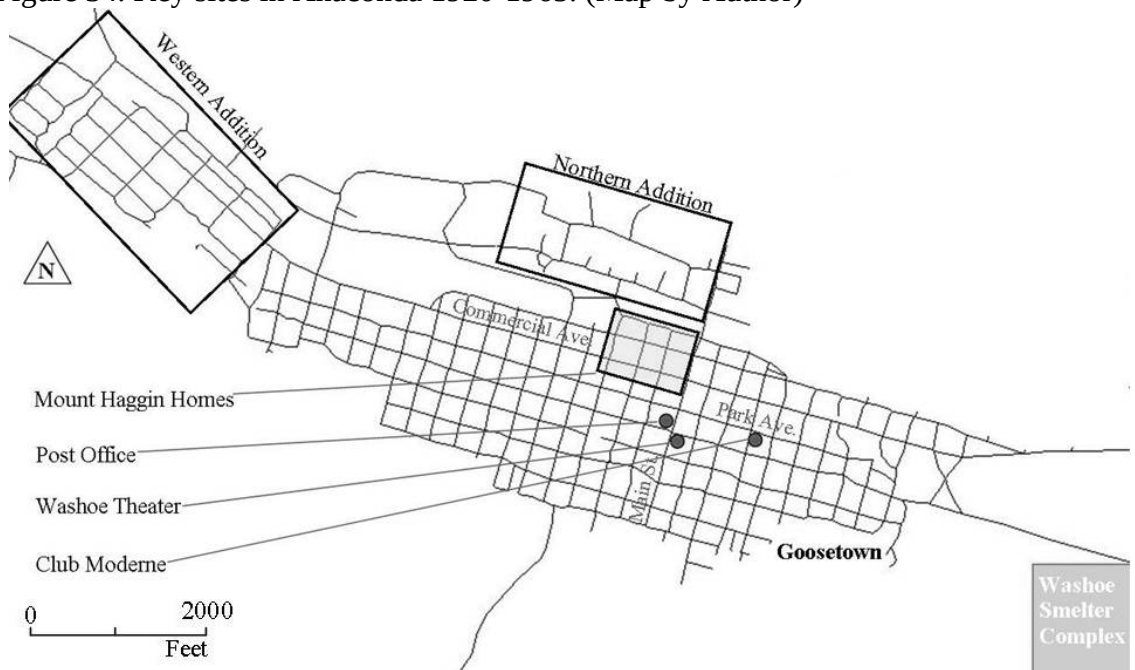
The tumultuous rise and fall of copper prices, wages, and hopes of community residents served to polarize the city that became simultaneously a union town and a company town. The industrial imprint of the Anaconda Company became increasingly noticeable in the community's landscape while the strong labor union presence influenced place identity.

Woven throughout Anaconda's landscape and identity is a thread of struggle between labor and capital. For the first fifty years of its existence the community responded to changes in smelter operation with only minimal objections. Typically, an increase in jobs, city services or other benefits were enough to placate the city's

unorganized labor. However, as the community matured and as copper production became increasingly unstable, the union movement caught hold. In its early years, Anaconda had attracted a young male immigrant population, but as the workforce matured, single men were replaced by workers with families. As such, many smelter workers now had more invested in their jobs and the community and were unwilling to simply leave if they were unsatisfied with the conditions of their employment. In this changing demographic setting, organized labor's power increased and the company-labor relationship became ever more strained.

One of the first real tests of community unionism in Anaconda was the region-wide Mine-Mill strike in the spring of 1934. The Butte and Anaconda unions, demanding better wages, a closed shop, and shorter work schedules, went on strike. The strike lasted over four months, but as the winter approached Anaconda's anxious smeltermen agreed to a partial contract and voted to return to work. The vote in Anaconda was 476 to 69 in favor of returning to work, the most lopsided vote in the region (Mercier 2001, 51-55). The hasty agreement only partially achieved labor's demands and the lopsided vote reflected the community's dependence on the company paycheck. But although the community was as dependent as ever on the company, the unions were becoming more confident and powerful. As the 1930s came to a close labor had negotiated, among other things, the summertime Smeltermen's Day holiday, a day to celebrate the efforts of the city's workforce (Mercier 2001, 56). Anaconda's increased community unionism in the 1930s illustrates the extent to which Anaconda's residents challenged the power of the company and became a union town.

Figure 34. Key sites in Anaconda 1920-1965. (Map by Author)



Landscape. Despite the power of the unions, Depression-era copper prices and the ensuing wage cuts and layoffs still shook the smelter city. From 1930 to 1940, Anaconda's population decreased by 12 percent to just over 11,000 residents. A period of slow landscape change characterized Anaconda during the 1930s (Figure 34).

The period of slow growth in the 1930s is evident in the evolution of Anaconda's commercial landscape. During the Depression, Anaconda, like many other communities nationwide, saw virtually no new development. By the mid-1930s development in the city center was still slow but a few buildings on Main, Park, and Commercial housed new tenants or underwent minor cosmetic adjustments. For example, the Mahie Block on East Commercial Avenue underwent a series of ownership changes from one of the city's first dry-goods stores, to a drug store, and finally ended the century as a plumbing supply store. Another commercial block on East Commercial Avenue received a new modern-

style 1930s façade after the original front face was partially destroyed by fire. Finally, the Anaconda Leader building on Main Street was transformed from Daly's Place, a popular saloon, into the Anaconda Company's hiring and pay office.

During this period of slow development, only a few notable buildings were constructed. The U.S. Post Office, built in 1932, anchored the commercial district on Main Street. While the overall architectural design is typical of most federal buildings, underneath the building is unique to Anaconda. The interior basement and foundation walls are constructed of discarded brick from the Old Works smelters (Comp 1979, 9). The impressive art-deco style Washoe Theater, completed in 1936, demonstrates the optimism that some residents had about the future of their industrial community when the smelter reopened following the Mine-Mill strike. The 1,000-seat theater featured an elaborate dome mural titled "Montana" that seemed to ensure the future of the community by illustrating the dependence of modern civilization on copper (Mercier 2001, 55). Finally, Club Moderne, built on East Park Avenue in 1937, illustrated optimism in the community's future with the streamlined art deco bar.

Anaconda's residential neighborhoods also developed very slowly during the 1930s. A Works Projects Administration (WPA) residential housing survey, begun in 1939, highlighted the poor state of the housing in Anaconda after years of non-investment, and the striking geography of housing differences between management and labor. The report of the housing survey, "Housing in the Smelter City Anaconda," showed that over 80 percent of Anaconda's homes were built between 1895 and 1919, and that less than ten percent of the city's houses had been built since 1920. This pattern

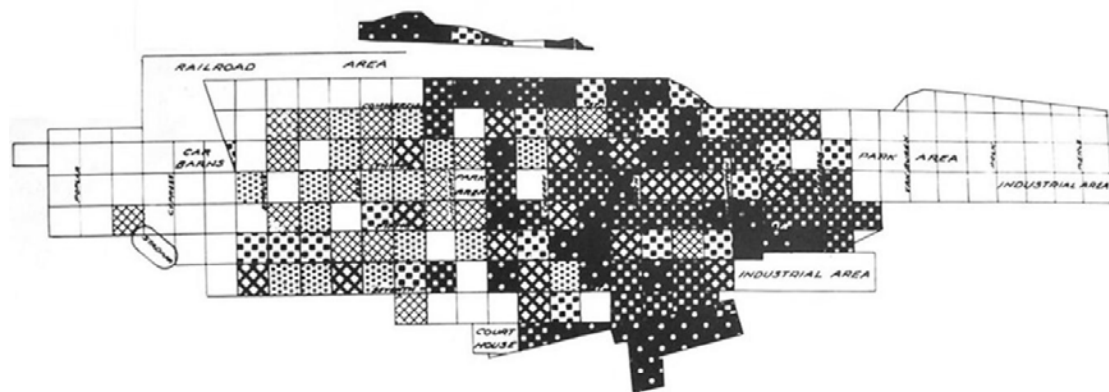
of rapid residential investment followed by very little investment caused problems for Anaconda's housing stock.

By the time of the 1939 survey, only a quarter of the houses were deemed to be in good condition, while over 40 percent of Anaconda's families were living in substandard housing (Figure 35). As might be expected, Goosetown, the working class neighborhood east of Main Street, comprised a large percentage of the substandard housing.

Substandard housing, according to the 1939 survey, was defined as a home that

needed major repairs, is unfit for use, has no private flush toilet, has no private bath, has no running water, has no installed heating facilities, has no electric or gas lighting facilities...and if there are more than 1.5 persons per room or if there are two or more families in the dwelling unit (Works Projects Administration 1941, 36).

Figure 35. Condition of residential structures map, 1939. (Works Projects Administration. 1941)



CONDITION OF RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES MAP

ANACONDA, MONTANA

LEGEND

PERCENT OF RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES
IN NEED OF MAJOR REPAIRS
OR UNFIT FOR USE

0 %	1 %	9 %
10 %	19 %	29 %
20 %	39 %	40 %
30 %	59 %	

By the late 1930s, Goosetown homes were older, more crowded, needed more repairs, and rented for low prices than other neighborhoods in Anaconda. West of Main Street, the homes of company managers and local business owners were newer, needed fewer repairs, rented for higher prices, and almost all of them had indoor plumbing.

The WPA housing study concluded by situating Anaconda's housing problems with other communities around the United States:

While Anaconda's housing conditions do not exhibit the severity which is found in many other cities, the fact remains that there is much which could be done to improve the lot of those low income groups who live in dwellings which are below the American standard (WPA 1941, 50).

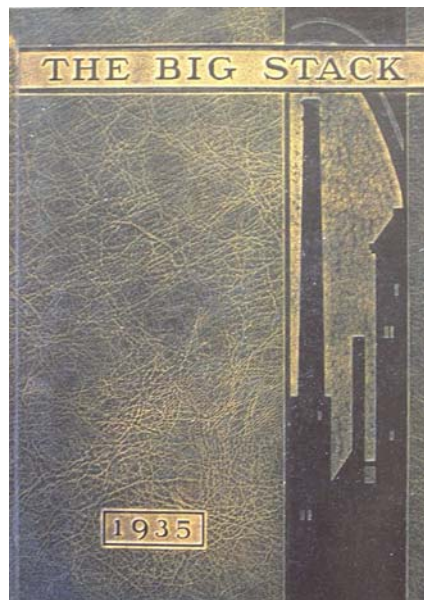
The "low income groups," or smelter workers, were a significant portion of Anaconda's population in the 1930s. The working class residential landscape, the WPA argued, was in need of renovation so that it could meet the "American standard."

The Anaconda Company helped to build the city's recreational landscape and illustrated that Anaconda was still very much the company's town. Throughout the Depression the company, apparently looking for a way to keep good relations with the community while still not spending much money, lent inexpensive support to bolster the community's recreational landscape. In a Depression-era report the company reported spending close to \$100,000 in Anaconda on "welfare work." This welfare work amounted to the upgrading and maintenance of city parks, building and maintaining sports stadiums, sponsoring several softball and bowling teams, bankrolling the semiprofessional "Anodes" football and baseball teams, and providing the annual Christmas tree lighting in the City Common (Mercier 2001, 57). Over 75 community projects, associations, and activities, funded by the company, bolstered the community's

recreational landscape. The company's contributions to building up the city's recreational landscape illustrate the continuing extent to which the Anaconda was still very much a company town.

Identity. Anaconda's urban identity reflected the shifting, sometimes contested role played by the company. Some city residents embraced the industrial landscape. For example, Anaconda High School named its yearbook *The Big Stack*, its newspaper *Copper Glow*, and within their pages celebrated the virtues of the company and industrial production (Figure 36). Likewise, city promotional pamphlets during this period invariably featured heroic images of the stack keeping watch over the city below. Visitors were encouraged to take a tour of the Hill, gawk at the "sheer size" of the Washoe Smelter, and then to wonder at the "industrial spectacles" of the smelting operation (Anaconda ca. 1938).

Figure 36. Anaconda High School's yearbook, *The Big Stack*, in 1935. (Montana Historical Society)

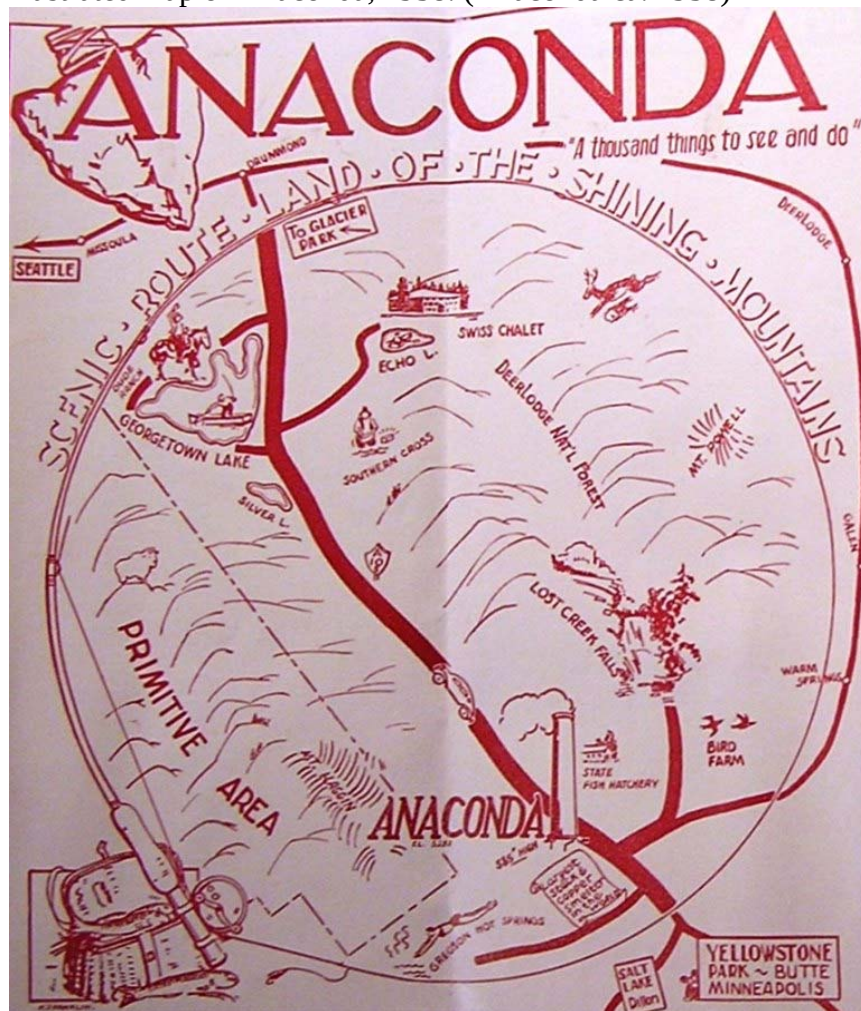


Other city residents only saw this type of pandering as evidence of the “copper collar” that city leaders and residents were forced to wear by the company. Dora Mee, a likely-pseudonymous critic, published a 1933 exposé, “The Copper Carbuncle,” that revealed the abusive company/city relationship. The author bristled at the high prices of the water and electricity services the company sold to the city, and complained about the visible neglect that the company showed toward the city. Specifically, she commented on the way that dependence on the company stymied the further development of the city. She indicated that “gaunt windows” were common in Anaconda, but in Deer Lodge, a town that had not given away its private rights “business buildings loom up spic and span” (Mercier 2001, 43).

Even tourism was closely linked to production at the Washoe Smelter. One effort at tourism development in the 1930s stands out. Besides the usual road paving, upgraded sewer systems, and other improvements that often accompanied Depression-era work programs, WPA funds were also used to build a ski jumping hill just outside of the city. Promoted by a local member of the U.S. Ski Jumping Team, the hill was to be used as the premier attraction in Montana’s Winter Carnival in 1934. The Carnival brought figure skating, dog races, and ski jumping to the community and was such a popular event that it even made money in its third year of operation (Kelly 1983, 69). Although the event was short-lived, by the mid-thirties the addition of the Winter Carnival caused city leaders to boast that it had become the “St. Moritz of the Rockies,” a title that it would not hold for long, if indeed it ever did (Anaconda ca. 1938).

Yet somehow the city never caught on as a large tourist destination because the looming presence of the company and its stack was always in the background, if not the foreground. Promotional pamphlets during this period promote Anaconda as the “Land of the Shining Mountains,” yet the dominant feature in the illustrated map is not the mountains or lakes, but the giant smelter spewing smoke (Figure 37). Indeed, the heavy influence of the Anaconda Company was a particular handicap when the community attempted to promote itself as a winter resort. The omnipresence of the Washoe Smelter

Figure 37. Illustrated map of Anaconda, 1938. (Anaconda ca. 1938)



and the community's gritty industrial appearance stymied any effort toward a significant tourist economy. Although Anaconda boasted that it was "a very desirable and beautiful place to live," and even for a time shed the "smelter city" byline to become "The Friendly City," it still had a industrial landscape of the highest order (Anaconda ca. 1938).

Whether for good or ill, culpability for Anaconda's fortunes always lay with the company and the Washoe Smelter. As a result, the Anaconda Company and its smelter shaped the landscapes and identities of the 1930s city.

Postwar Industrial Development: 1940-1965

From 1940 to 1965 Anaconda grew steadily. The city's population only grew from 11,000 to 12,000 between 1940 and 1960, but Deer Lodge County grew much more rapidly. The industrial landscape and identity also became more solidified in the community during this period. Newly-built housing for post-war laborers reshaped the landscape. Community residents' continuing interactions with smelter smoke offers insights into place identity.

Landscape. Just as downturns in copper prices and company production often caused Anaconda to suffer, improvements in smelting activity contributed to urban growth. The wartime exodus of smelter workers and high demand for copper combined to precipitate a serious labor shortage on the Hill. The company tried to recruit new workers, but in the war economy an isolated one-industry town was not the best place to make good money, nor was the grueling work of smelting the most desirable work. As a result, despite efforts to increase production, the company saw declining employee

numbers from 1940 to 1946. Even with the wartime labor shortage the Anaconda Company still emerged after the war as the world's largest copper producer. So, as veterans returned after the war, employment was high and the future appeared bright for copper production and for the city.

Rapid postwar employment growth transformed the residential landscape. As employment increased to over 2,500 and more residents returned, the city found itself in a severe housing pinch that triggered a building boom unmatched since the 1890s. The resultant wave of housing development both improved and intensified residential housing in the city center while also expanding the city's existing footprint. The new housing development that had the most impact within the city was Mount Haggin Homes, an 80-unit housing project on Anaconda's north side. In order to clear room for this new federal housing project, the Anaconda Housing Authority, an organization established after the 1939 housing survey reported widespread substandard housing, purchased all property between Main, Commercial, Front, and Locust Streets, some of the city's most dilapidated housing, and razed the old structures (Kelly 1983, 71). The new development replaced the ramshackle old houses with 80 one- and two-story units with landscaped grounds and government-subsidized rents.

In the course of this postwar residential building boom, the city expanded to its full extent. Within a few years after the war, the company and the Anaconda Housing Authority opened the Second Western Addition (a fifty unit development north of Warm Springs Creek) and Mountain View Meadows (another large development adjoining the city) (Kelly 1983, 71-72). Anaconda now spanned the width of the valley and was bound

by the Washoe smelter complex on the east and by the narrow valley on the west (see Figure 34). New housing not only resulted in expanding the footprint of the city, but it also relieved some of the more crowded residential neighborhoods within the city. As more housing appeared on the local market, Goosetown was relieved of some of its residential housing pressure and the informal cabins that had formerly filled the backyards of Goosetown residences were no longer needed to house the hundreds of bachelor smelter workers.

Anaconda's downtown commercial core expanded to meet the needs of the growing population. Moderate growth occurred in the traditional downtown core, while newer development occurred on a burgeoning commercial strip on the city's eastern edge. During the 1950s, the Anaconda Company sold part of company-owned East Anaconda Park to a private firm for the development of a new supermarket. The new supermarket did not start an immediate land boom, but other businesses soon followed and moderate strip development occurred east of the city. The traditional central business district still met most of the daily needs of Anaconda's residents.

The initial postwar boom could not sustain the community indefinitely. During the 1950s and 1960s, the company and the community faced a number of challenges that threatened the future of smelting production at the Washoe smelter. Major strikes in 1954, 1957, and 1959, changes in international mining operations, and technological advances all made the Anaconda operation less profitable than it once had been. Foremost among these challenges were new technologies in Butte that ultimately cost several hundred Anaconda residents their jobs. In reaction, Anaconda city leaders,

recognizing the risks inherent in a one industry town, tried to broaden the city's industrial base through the creation in 1958 of the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). The organization's efforts to attract new investment were ultimately unsuccessful and the corporation quickly dissolved after the initial shock of the layoffs, but one of the IDC's plans had significant effects on Anaconda's commercial landscape.

A central idea in the IDC's plan to revive the city was to restore the historic Montana Hotel, the grand hotel that Marcus Daly built when he dreamed of Anaconda as the state capital. The Anaconda Company had owned and operated the Montana Hotel since its construction, but as operating losses exceeded \$50,000 a year, the company decided to cut its ties with the old hotel. The Industrial Development Corporation tried to purchase the Montana Hotel to assure its continued operation, but in 1958 an out-of-town corporation took possession of the building. It did not take long before the new owners recognized that in order to realize a profit on their investment they would have to raze the building and sell the land. Outraged Anacondans banded together to stop the demolition of the city's landmark hotel and in 1960, the newly-formed Montana Hotel Corporation purchased the building. With ownership back in the hands of local people, the corporation renamed the hotel the Marcus Daly Hotel and proceeded to lose money. In the first two years the corporation lost \$24,000, but by the third year the net loss had been reduced to only \$54. Over the next few years the Marcus Daly Hotel underwent minor renovations and the new owners attached a new economy motel to the original structure (Hawley 1984; Forssen 1963). Despite the new investment, the newly christened Marcus Daly Hotel was restored to what it had always been: a woefully vacant hotel and

Figure 38. Montana Hotel, ca. 1971. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



important city landmark (Figure 38). The fight to save the Montana Hotel illustrated some of the challenges that the industrial community went through during the late 1950s.

Identity. The Washoe Smelter still loomed over Anaconda, and its smoke shaped everyday life in the city. Many aspects of the urban industrial experience in Anaconda were clouded by the production on the Hill. From 1940 to 1960, city residents continually needed to reimagine industrial smoke to cope with their lives in the smelter city.

Postwar life in Anaconda continued to revolve around work at the Washoe smelter. Long hours, low wages, and uncertain employment from one day to the next were only a few of the laborers' concerns. The interior landscape at the smelter was

hazardous, but it was still the place where many community residents spent the majority of their time (Figure 39). Workers generally began their careers in the most dangerous working environments, which meant that nearly every working man in town had been exposed to the harsh conditions. A local sketch posed:

When you graduated from high school, you were assured of three gifts. Some benevolent person in your family would give you a lunch bucket, somebody else would give you a thermos, and you could go down on the smelter road and get a slip and go to work (Rosenleaf 1981).

Figure 39. Noxious interior environment at the Washoe Smelter, 1942. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



Thus, a young man walked from the high school into the arsenic refinery or the dust recovery conveyance where every year the company would provide him with “three pair of leather gloves, fifty yards of gauze every week, one pair of wool coveralls every month, and all the arsenic you could eat” (Dickson 1986). Gases, smoke, flue dust and other by-products often caused severe damage to workers’ health but employees were responsible for their own protection. Many workers resorted to an array of innovative safety gear: gauze or sanitary napkins to filter out dusts and gases, cotton for ears to reduce noise, and women’s bloomers under clothing to limit skin exposure to acids (Figure 40).

Figure 40. An arsenic flue worker in Anaconda, 1942. (Mercier 2001)



When the working day was over, the recent high school graduate would leave the Hill and take the streetcar to one of the many local bars on Main Street. Many smelter workers believed that the standard boilermaker, a shot of whiskey and glass of beer, helped clean and relax lungs full of smelter gases and smoke so that they “could get pretty well organized to go home and you’d get rid of the smoke” (Schwartz 1986). Even with the poisonous interior environment, the Washoe smelter complex was the place where Anacondans felt they needed to be. One retired smelter worker described the simple logic of why he and others stayed: “what the hell you gonna do, you gotta make a living” (Bolkovatz 1986). The interior industrial landscape was particularly noxious, but everything that the smoke represented kept a steady flow of workers making their way up the hill to the Washoe. The smelter was the most noxious landscape, yet the lure of a livelihood transformed the most toxic landscapes into the busiest part of the city.

While the effluent from the smelting process that spewed from the stack was a mere hint of the conditions on the interior of the smelter, its effects were real enough. While company and city literature always indicated that the smelter’s smoke floated away on the prevailing westerly winds, some members of the community saw it differently. The union paper, *Smeltermen’s Voice*, indicated in 1954 that the wind *did* move the smoke, but it only moved somewhere else in the city:

The smoke conditions from the converter department are bad. The men from all over the hill are complaining. The gas is going down into the Ferr-Manganese department when the wind is blowing in that direction. When the wind is blowing in another direction some other department is getting the works. Then if the wind is blowing away from the smelter the residents down town are suffering from the fumes (*Smeltermen’s Voice* 1954).

Indeed, all city residents, not only the smelter workers dealt with the stack's effluence regularly. City residents often remark about being able to taste the sulfur in the air, or even being able to "feel the acid gas on you and it burned when you breathed" (Hansen 1986). Perhaps recognition of the city resident's everyday encounters with the smoke prompted the company to provide free oxygen treatment at the hospital to anyone in the community who needed it (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 34). Despite that gesture though, union journalists noticed the large numbers of women in Anaconda with lung cancer and suggested that there was a relationship between the smoke and the disease. *The Voice* concluded: "So if the Company is more interested in profits than they are interested in the health of their employees and the health of the people of Anaconda—we'll be seeing you—in the graveyard" (*Smeltermen's Voice* 1954).

Urban flora also struggled in the industrial atmosphere. Area gardens and lawns felt the weight of the smoke as fine mists of sulfur dioxide and arsenic regularly settled over all vegetation within the urban area. An Anaconda-Deer Lodge National Forest employee remembered the plight of city residents trying to maintain a green lawn:

[They'd work] their heads off to have a nice yard...and the smelter fumes were killing it as fast as they could plant it.... A person would say, 'Look at my lawn how yellow it's gettin', just what's the matter with it?' I'd [say]... 'It's the smelter fumes.' And he shut up like a clam. He wouldn't talk about it anymore. They're hard on anybody that tried to make it look like the smelter fumes were doing it (White 1983).

The "green grass," a park close to the smelter was a popular place for the city's children because somehow it managed to maintain its health and was the only grassy field left in

the city. In this urban industrial setting, any living and healthy vegetation was accorded special status in the community.

Although many residents realized that the toxic air was bad for vegetation and personal health, they also recognized that the smoke continued to bring “plenty, peace, good times, and prosperity” to their community. Still, some community members recognized the negative consequences the smelter had on their urban environment, and a few even attempted to mitigate the situation. In 1961, the Anaconda Garden Club was formed “To beautify our homes and community; to aid in promotion and protection of plants and birds; to promote civic improvement and conservation of sky, seas and land.” While this mission statement may not appear at first glance to be out of the ordinary, the first program of the organization—“Roses Can Grow in Anaconda”—illustrates the very basic start the group was making. No doubt the members of the Anaconda Garden Club had devised a special method that would allow roses to grow in this toxic environment and this was indeed a significant accomplishment (Deer Lodge County History Group 1975, 151). Another resident would regularly go with the local Boy Scout troop to plant trees on the barren hillsides on the south side of the city (Figure 41). After many failed attempts he stopped planting trees because simultaneously he recognized that “the darn things wouldn’t grow there” and also “the ACM told me real nicely, they would appreciate it if I didn’t plant any more trees up there” (White 1983). Despite these and other efforts, the smelter continued to dominate the flora and fauna in the landscape.

Despite the negative effects of the smelter activity on the city, the community endured and even continued to celebrate the smelter effluent. The stack continued to

Figure 41. *Fortune* magazine's impression of the hills surrounding Anaconda, 1936. (*Fortune* December 1936, 85)



symbolize economic (in)security for Anaconda residents. As one smelter worker noted “Everybody would get up in the morning and they look and see if there was smoke coming out of that stack and if there was, God was in his heaven and all was right with the world, and we knew we were going to have a paycheck” (Vine 1986). Residents had reason to see that “God was in his heaven” when the Hill was fully active. When the smelter was at full production, one resident recalled that the city was a “crowded and bustling place. I mean, you go downtown and it’s just like being in a big city, bumper to bumper” (Nyquist 1986). Another resident recalled that “you could go downtown at one o’clock in the morning and you would see almost as many people as you would at one o’clock in the afternoon because there was that much nightlife and that much excitement

in the town” (Hansen 1986). The pulse of the city beat with the activity at Anaconda Company smelter.

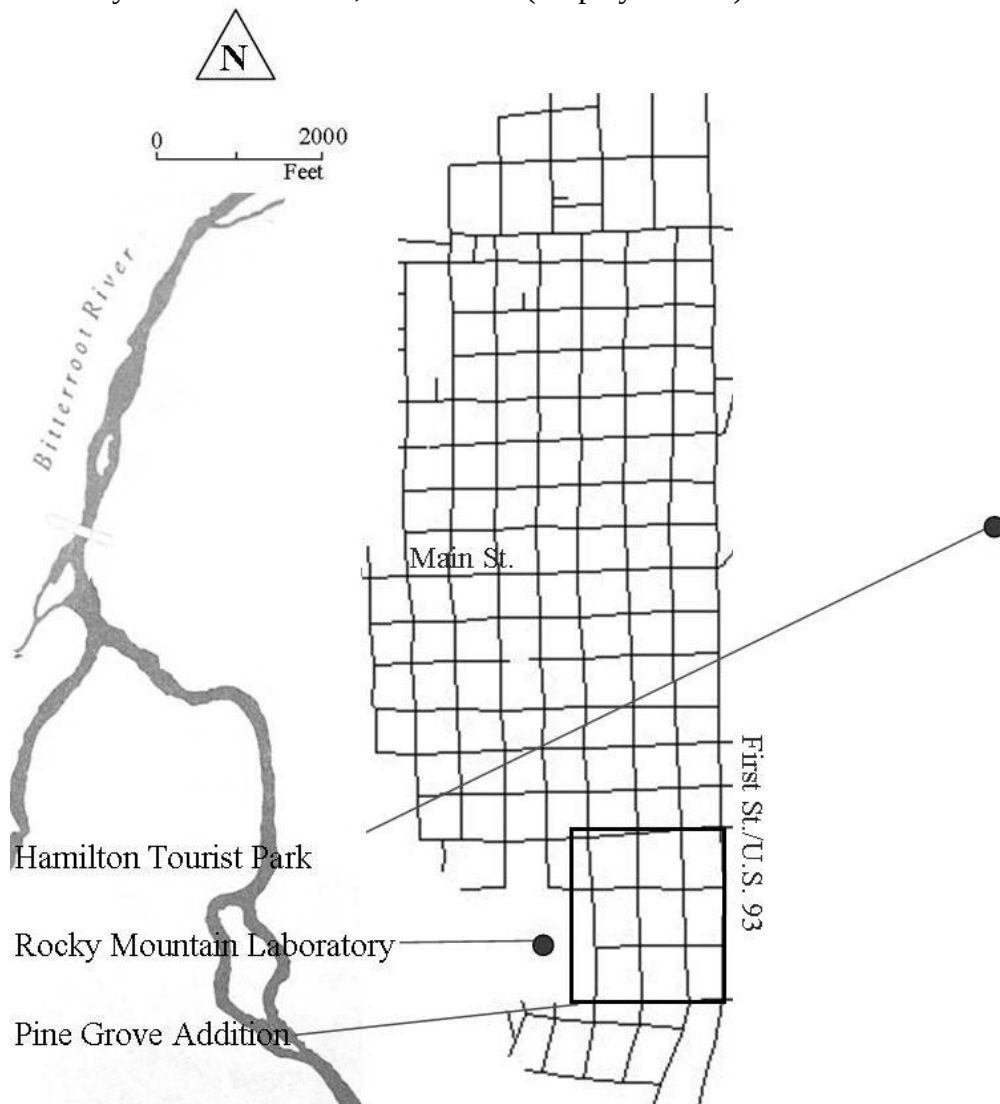
Anaconda’s heritage, once dominated by the tales of Marcus Daly and the founding of the Smelter, became increasingly separated from that heritage during this period. The continuing struggle between labor and the company, the noxious working environment, and uncertain employment, all distanced Anaconda residents from any romantic notions of smelter city life. While local historians and reporters continued to honor Daly’s founding of the city, the erection and development of the Washoe smelter is usually only stated as a fact. Instead, Anacondans shift their celebrations to their new heritage of smelter working. During the 1930s the city began observing Smeltermen’s Day, a day-long festive celebration to commemorate the important role of the city’s smelter workers. By 1967 the city boasted that “Marcus Daly could not claim ownership of Anaconda now. It belongs to the workers” (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 38). This sort of separation from the history of the company is delicate as the smelter continued to be the city’s lone industry, but it is clear that shifting the focus from the company to the role of the smelter workers is a critical element of the story that this city told about itself during this period.

Hamilton: 1920-1965

The period from 1920 to 1965 was a challenging economic time for Hamilton. The apple boom had already ended and there were few prospects for future development. During this time, Hamilton’s landscape and identity were tied both to its urban evolution

and to the products of the Bitterroot Valley (Figure 42). Indeed, even in a period of slow overall growth, the idea of the middle landscape was important in Hamilton. An influx of laboratory scientists in the 1930s and local residents' plans for economic development in the 1950s illustrate how the area's potential was imagined and perceived by both locals and outsiders. As Hamilton's meaning shifted through time, so did the city's cultural landscape and place identity.

Figure 42. Key sites in Hamilton, 1920-1965. (Map by Author)



A New Middle Landscape: 1920-1945

By 1920, the decline of the timber industry and the crash of the apple orchard land development boom left Hamilton's economy in peril. A quarter of the city's residents left Hamilton as they were unable to find employment. It seemed as though Hamilton's middle landscape busted along with the apple boom. However, by 1920, a new local economy helped to support the community and continue the middle landscape ideal. This time the impetus for the middle landscape was of a different sort, but one that still attracted new amenity-seeking residents to Hamilton. This time it was not timber, irrigated benchlands, or even beautiful scenery that would boost the economy, but rather a disease-ridden tick.

For decades, Bitterroot Valley ranchers, timber workers, and anyone who worked in the mountain foothills, had been prey to a vicious fever that claimed over 80 percent of those who contracted it. During the late 1800s, as cases and deaths continued to rise, local knowledge identified snowmelt water or sawdust piles as the disease vector. By 1906, U. S. Public Health Service researchers identified the Bitterroot Valley as the epicenter of the fever and proven that the disease was spread by tick bites. The whole of the valley was not uniformly virulent; the valley west of the Bitterroot River was disease-ridden while the east side of the river was relatively disease free. In order to better understand the new Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and its striking geography, state government researchers established a field station in a cabin on the west side of the Bitterroot Valley near Hamilton.

Government researchers began a mandatory tick control program for local stock as a means to control the spread of the tick fever during the 1910s. A key element of the regimen forced cattle, horses, sheep and goats to swim through-arsenic filled tubs in hopes that the ticks would drown during the process. However, this program was only partly effective and wholly unpopular with local ranchers. Ultimately, the controversial program slowed the spread of the fever, but did not stop it. In 1921, eleven more cases of the fever were contracted in the valley with one hundred percent mortality.

In response to the fever's continued virulence, the U. S. Public Health Service agreed to fund a more extensive research program. The research focus shifted from eradicating the ticks to creating a vaccine for the deadly Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Vaccine research began in the "schoolhouse lab," an abandoned Hamilton schoolhouse remodeled into a rudimentary laboratory (see Figure 42). The setting for the lab was ideal. It was west of Hamilton about two miles outside of the city center, isolated from other residents, and close to Blodgett Canyon, a key tick collection and research area. Work at the makeshift lab was dangerous, as creating the vaccine involved raising millions of infected ticks. Eleven of the sixteen lab workers contracted the fever, and three of them eventually died (Hardin 1990, 119-121). This effort, though, resulted in a vaccine for Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever in 1924.

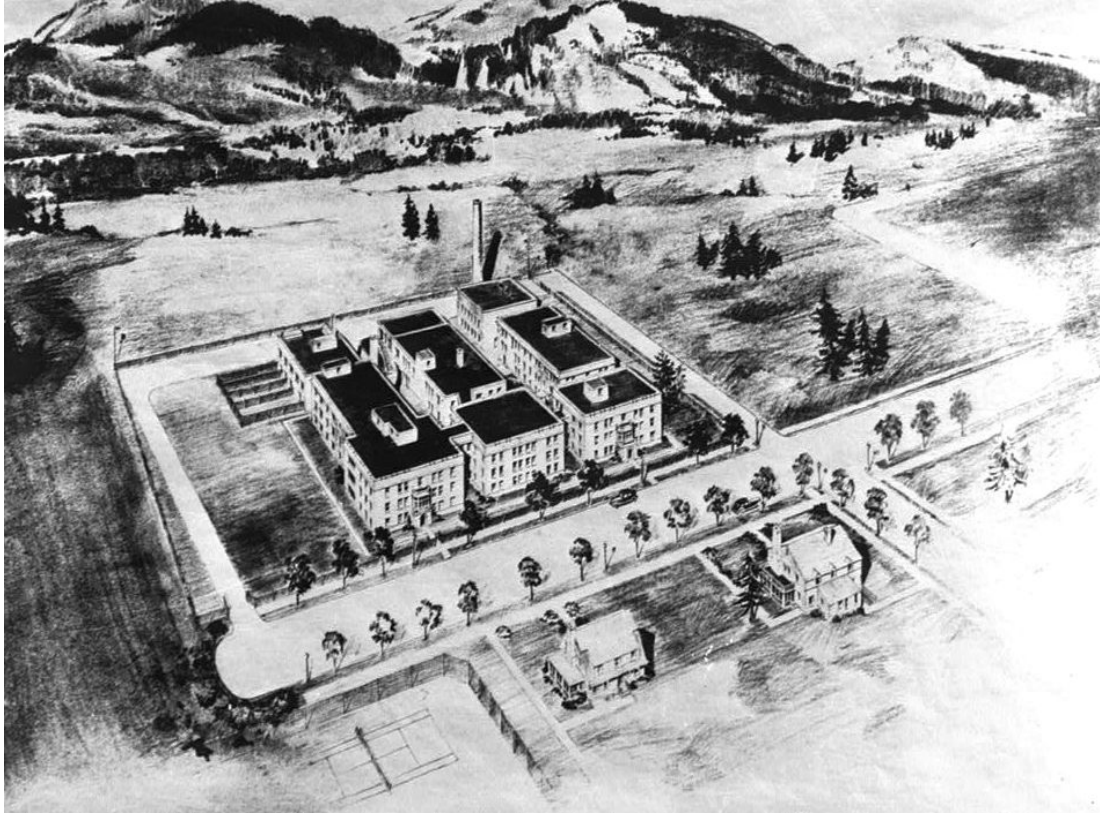
Fearful local residents were thankful for the vaccine, but not for the negative national press the vaccine received. In 1927, *Country Gentleman* magazine published an article that painted a grim picture of the valley while dramatizing the vaccine's creation. The author described the onset of the disease season as "the terror of the spotted fever

begins to stalk in the Bitter Root Valley.” He continued: “In that sad territory the doors of the empty ranch houses creaked and whined on the hinges, singing a lonesome song for fathers who had died and brothers and sisters and mothers who had gone away” (Hardin 1990, 136). The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce was “ablaze with a wave of indignation” about the negative press they had received and feared that it would halt the development of the community (Hardin 1990, 137). Ultimately, though, the dramatic story of the tick-borne fever actually did the opposite by promoting a surge in development in the city.

In 1927, the State of Montana legislature set aside \$60,000 for the creation of a permanent research facility to study the spotted fever more closely. The scientists involved proposed that the new laboratory be built in Missoula to take advantage of the University of Montana’s resources, but fearing that the ticks would escape the research facility and infect the university campus, the state preferred for the lab to be in Hamilton. When the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce purchased and donated land for the laboratory, the decision was made. By June 1927, ground was broken for the lab in the Pine Grove Addition in southern Hamilton (Harden 1990, 139). The lab complex, completed in 1928, consisted of one central building used for laboratory research, an “animal house” used to cage the animals awaiting testing, and a “tick yard” used to store hibernating ticks.

The federal government purchased the lab from the state in 1931 and it became a part of the National Institute of Health. The physical facilities at the lab continued to grow as a new building was added in 1932 and a third building in 1936. Two residences

Figure 43. Rocky Mountain Lab in Hamilton, 1930. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



for employees were added on Fourth Street adjacent to the lab property, creating a residential buffer between the growing facility and the Pine Grove neighborhood (Michels 1987, 78-81). By 1938 the main core of the research campus was complete with ten buildings (Figure 43).

The lab's mission continued to develop. The war in Europe shifted the Rocky Mountain Lab's (RML) focus away from vaccine research to vaccine production. In 1942 and 1943 alone, the lab produced a half million doses of typhoid vaccine and over three million doses of yellow fever vaccine (Jiusto 2000, 26). It was largely because of the RML that Hamilton's sluggish economy was revived and that it fared so well during the

national depression in the 1930s. As the number of ticks in the laboratory increased, so did the residents in the city. Hamilton's population grew by 25 percent between 1930 and 1940, reaching a population of almost 2,500 residents. Growing demands for laboratory assistance helped the growth of the city. In 1930, RML had 24 permanent employees and by 1940 employment was around 150.

Identity. The increasing number of RML scientists had significant effects on Hamilton's place identity. Since many of the new residents were educated, middle class urbanites, they brought with them differing visions of their new community (Figure 44). Even before the real influx of RML scientists came to the community, the impact of the new residents and their visions of the community were clear. Local protest over the construction of the new lab in 1927 foreshadowed how the community would be shaped by the input of the new resident scientists.

Figure 44. Scientists at the Rocky Mountain Laboratory in Hamilton, 1942. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



Local residents protested when it was announced that the Rocky Mountain Laboratory would be built in Pine Grove, a south Hamilton neighborhood. As soon as ground was broken on the new building in 1927, a group of angry Hamilton residents filed an injunction to halt the construction of the new laboratory. The plaintiffs argued that the laboratory's proposed location, just outside of Hamilton's business district and in the middle of a residential neighborhood, would threaten both the safety and the property values of the city and the neighborhood (see Figure 42). They argued that the laboratory would introduce "deadly poisonous insects and other menaces" that would pose a potential health risk to nearby residents (Grandstaff 1989). The plaintiffs feared that field assistants would come back from the tick infested west side with ticks "on their horses and clothing, and their beds, and they will ride up to the institution" and thereby infect the densely populated east side (Hardin 1990, 140). Local witnesses decried the siting of the nuisance saying that membership at the nearby Hamilton Golf Club had already declined since the announcement of the laboratory. Another plaintiff said "I don't believe it would be possible to give property away in Pine Grove if the laboratory is built there" (Grandstaff 1989). A core group of property owners and business interests refused to have the tick research laboratory in their collective east side backyard.

The laboratory scientists were of a different opinion. They argued that potential health risks were unfounded and that the community would actually benefit from the lab being sited on the east side. Laboratory personnel often spoke of the local residents' fears and how they avoided the land west of the river in the spring, and were generally very afraid of the tick-borne fever (McKee 1983). Robert Cooley, a chief research scientist

commented: “To bring the laboratory into town will help, gradually, to allay unreasonable fear, and will help to educate everyone” (Hardin 1990, 140). Cooley continued, contending that the laboratory would empower residents and give confidence to future investors: “Some day residents...will say to visitors who come to the valley that ‘we used to be afraid to go across the river. Now we have the laboratory right in town.’ This will do much to reassure people who think of settling and making business investments” (Hardin 1990, 140). The scientists’ view ultimately took precedence over the worried landowners, the court ruled against the plaintiffs, and construction on the laboratory proceeded.

The new Rocky Mountain Laboratory held an open house in 1928 and it immediately became a popular attraction for Hamilton residents. The innovative safety features at the laboratory must have won the confidence of the community. Rounded floor joints throughout the building prevented ticks from hiding in any hard corners, a superheating chamber for worker clothing was designed to kill any ticks hiding in fabric seams, and even a small moat surrounded the perimeter of the building that promised to drown any wayward ticks. The tick fortress became popular in the community, and the open door policy turned wide-eyed residents into even more of a nuisance than the ticks. The laboratory became what Cooley called “a rather popular place for visitors to go. People in town like to take their guests out there and show them through the building” (Hardin 1990, 142).

In this experience, the scientists’ views of Hamilton’s scientific value took precedence over the local resistance. While this story shows RML scientists having a

narrowly conceived vision of the community, the new Hamilton residents eventually shifted their visions of the community. They began to see the city as a middle landscape.

The new residents fit well the migrant profile made familiar by the apple orchard boom. Reminiscent of the University of Chicago faculty that invested in subdivisions such as University Heights, these new migrants were typically university educated and from larger urban centers. Some of the newcomers expected the same city services that they had had before moving to Hamilton and found small city life stifling. For example, a lab technician remembered how “[one worker’s] wife wouldn’t live in Hamilton, she had to have the stores and tea shops and things like that, of course she wouldn’t be happy here” (McKee 1983). More common, though, was the laboratory scientist that welcomed the reprieve from big city life and the recreation possibilities that Hamilton afforded. The same lab technician continued:

But we had people who came here who wanted to be away from that [city life], those ones did alright, and they blended in. What happened is that they liked to hunt and fish...and these people take up things like that and they take up camping, outdoor living, that’s what they want, they want to get away from the rat race (McKee 1983).

These new residents relocated to the community to enjoy full employment and a recreational lifestyle; Hamilton’s situation in the Bitterroot Valley met both of these requirements. Indeed, the RML scientist population welcomed the promise of the middle landscape that Hamilton offered.

Landscape. The residential, commercial, and recreational demands of the RML scientists helped shape Hamilton’s landscape during this period. From 1920 to 1940, as the Rocky Mountain Laboratory grew, Hamilton developed to meet the needs of the new

Figure 45. Hamilton's Main Street looking east, 1942. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



population. Hamilton's commercial and residential service infrastructure also developed and the city began to provide a larger array of services. A newly-paved Main Street, still the core of the city's commerce, was completed in the 1930s (Figure 45). In addition, a new commercial block, movie theater, creamery, and post office transformed downtown.

Hamilton's residential districts grew modestly during this period. The 1910 Pine Grove addition continued to fill with new housing for RML employees, including the Pine Apartment building in 1938 near the laboratory. Hamilton High School, with its twelve classrooms, auditorium and gymnasium was built in 1930. The Marcus Daly Hospital, donated by Margaret Daly, was completed in 1931. Both of these structures were modeled after the architectural style of the RML (Michels 1987, 83-84). While not

as extensive as the developments had been in earlier years, Hamilton's new cycle of growth was considerable, especially considering the nationwide economic depression. In fact, new construction in the 1930s was significant enough to prompt the *Western News* headline in December 1935 that read "Building Progress in Hamilton Exceptional" (Michels 1987, 86).

Two major efforts focused on recreation and tourism development during this period of measured growth. They included the Hamilton Tourist Park and the promotion of improvements along U.S. Highway 93. As WWI came to a close, automobile touring became more popular in the American West. In 1920 Missoula created Montana's first automobile tourist park and it was not take long before the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce to recognize the advantages of having a tourist park. In 1921, Hamilton opened its tourist park, created from twelve acres of land donated by Margaret Daly from the Stock Farm's holdings. With its landscaped grounds, artificial lake, and central lodge, the park was apparently of such a quality that the Chamber of Commerce received many letters from pleased patrons (Figure 46). One visitor from Washington state wrote at length about the facilities at the park: "Here at Hamilton there is very little left undone to make the camp a restful spot... The grounds are entirely in lawns with a good sized pond along one side. But the lodge is the crowning glory of the camp. The commodious dressing rooms and lavatory with toilet and shower baths, where an abundance of hot and cold water are on tap at any hour of the night or day...appeal to the dust stained motorist" (Thorning 1989a).

Figure 46. Hamilton Tourist Park, ca. 1921. (Montana Historical Society)



The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce also actively promoted “Scenic Highway 93” so that visitors to the park and the city would be able to travel to the community in relative comfort. In 1930, U.S. 93 from Missoula south to Lolo was surfaced, but the remaining mileage through Hamilton was still gravel. Hamilton business interests spearheaded an effort to pave the balance of the road all the way to Hamilton and thus tie its tourist traffic to U.S. 93. One newspaper article suggested that “It has been predicted that with further improvement and advertising this route will be one of the most popular in the West” (Thorning 1989b). The eventual improvement of the highway made Hamilton more easily accessible to tourists and leisure seekers, and helped U.S. 93 promotions put the Bitterroot Valley on the map as a scenic destination.

Outside of the city, Hamilton’s hinterland also developed during the 1930s. During the depths of the Depression, an estimated 300 farming and ranching families

relocated in the Bitterroot Valley from drought-plagued eastern Montana and the Dakotas. With the addition of these migrants, Ravalli County's population increased by more than twenty-five percent during the 1930s to nearly 13,000 in 1940. Owing to the vast quantities of land that were still available after the apple orchard boom ended, these migrants were able to squat and subsist on either abandoned or tax-forfeited land. As a result the land use pattern of small acre estates that began in the apple orchard days continued through the Depression. By 1939, Ravalli County was home to approximately 1,600 farms and ranches, with more than 75 percent less than 40 acres (Pollinger 1939, 15). The new farmers migrated to the Bitterroot Valley to earn a living, but stayed because of the beauty of the area. A 1939 report explained the drought farmers continued existence in the valley:

They came to the Bitter Root Valley, perhaps with no intention of staying. But the valley appealed to them as they made its acquaintance. They liked the way the mountains rose above the valley, and the way the river wound about among the farmlands. So they stayed (Pollinger 1939, 13).

The new farmers, like many new valley migrants during this period, were drawn to the area by economic means but stayed for non-economic reasons.

Slow Postwar Development: 1945-1960

Following the steady growth of the 1930s and early 1940s, Hamilton faced a postwar slump. War veterans returned after the war only to find that there were few jobs available in Hamilton, and the ones available paid less than other areas. Many of these veterans left the city and the county in search of better employment and the community saw a population loss from 1950 to 1960. While the losses were modest for both

Hamilton and Ravalli County, particularly troubling was that most of the loss stemmed from fewer young families between the ages of 25 and 39 (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 29). Additionally, almost all of Hamilton's western Montana neighbors were gaining population and expanding their economies. City leaders, concerned about the city's future, met to discuss how the community should proceed.

Identity. In April 1945, a group of engaged community residents convened a meeting to plan the future of the community. This series of meetings was unique, though, for instead of planning for typical development issues, this group of city leaders met to plan for the place identity of the community. Minutes from the first meeting record that:

Mayor Iten opened the meeting by explaining that this is to be a group to study community needs from the human side, intermingled with the economic side, and that the proper way to approach the subject is to find out who and what we are and why we are here—what we want, from the human standpoint (Notes 1945, 1).

Indeed, by answering questions of “who and what we are and why we are here,” city leaders sought to define the community's identity.

Throughout the conference many speakers commented that “there were many people who lived here for other reasons than economic—the climate, people, etc.” (Notes 1945, 2). A central theme for the conference was that economic considerations were not the top priority when residents chose to migrate to or stay in Hamilton, but instead they came for “personal preference” (Notes 1945, 2). Foremost among what made people choose to work or live in Hamilton were the “physical aspects, an ideal climate, abundance of natural assets, and the fact that the small town offers a closer knit group than there is in a city” (Notes 1945, 2). In the estimation of these city leaders, the

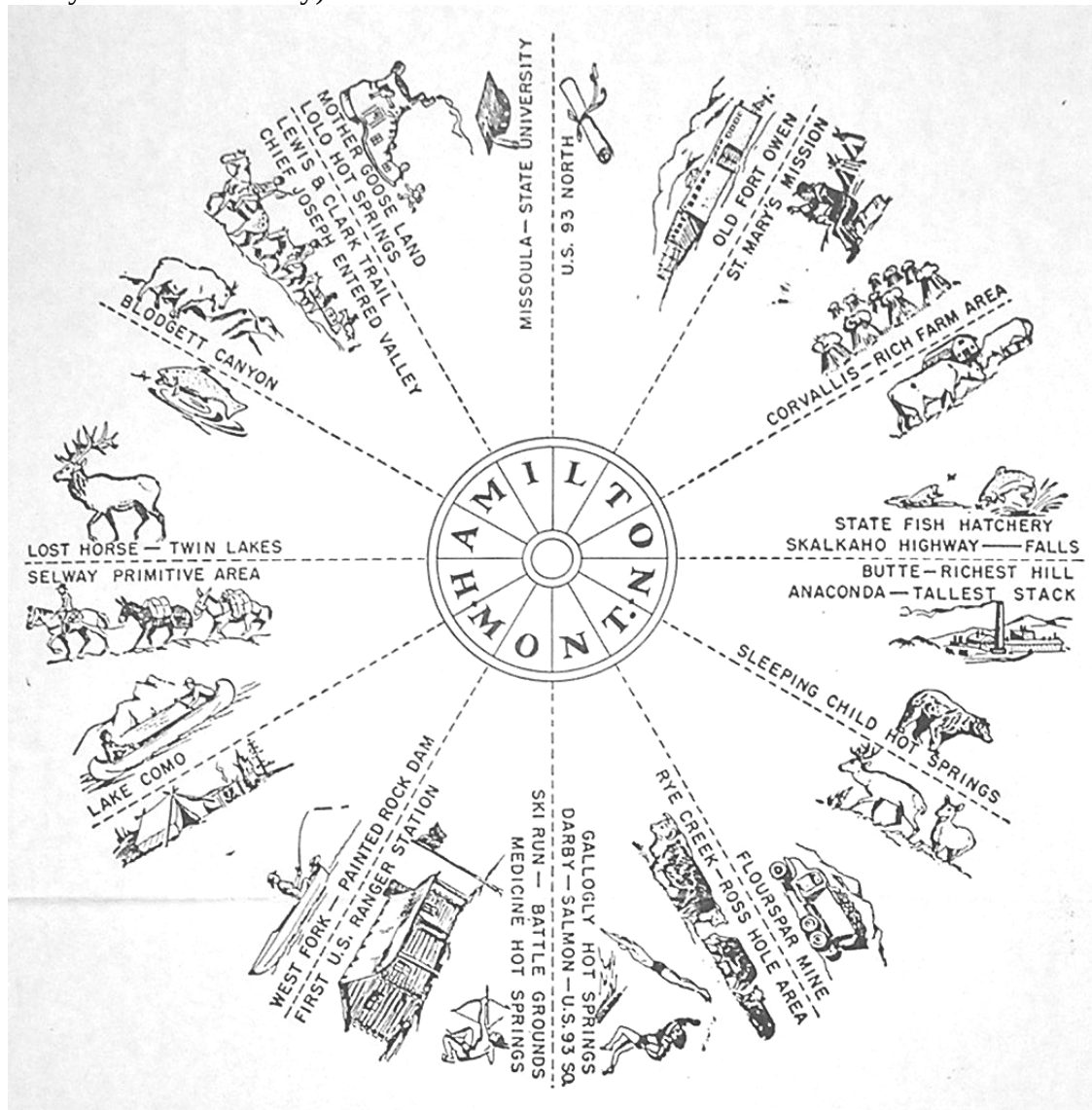
combination of natural beauty and small town life not only made Hamilton a great place to live, but offered a place identity anchored in the middle landscape. To develop the middle landscape identity further, the group of city leaders decided that “Hamilton’s best prospect for development lies in its tourist and recreational facilities” (Notes 1945, 9).

Over the next few years, tourism, recreation, and scenic beauty defined Hamilton and the Bitterroot Valley. During this period, community promotional materials relied heavily on Hamilton’s proximity to the natural beauty and history. One local publication graphically places Hamilton as the “Hub of the Bitter Root Valley” while the nearby economic, recreational, and historic aspects in the surrounding area are the spokes (Figure 47). The community greets the potential visitor with a pamphlet entitled “Hi There, Neighbor: Welcome to Hamilton, Montana In the Beautiful Bitter Root Valley.” The panels of the pamphlet are awash with images of blue-ribbon trout streams and sweeping vistas juxtaposed by downtown street scenes and written descriptions of the city’s history and economy.

Hamilton’s scenic and recreational potential also caught the attention of the regional press. In a 1954 *Weekly Missoulian* article entitled “Hamilton Young but Rich in History” the author notes that the “The valley is a sport and recreation center...with superb fishing in the Bitter Root River and numerous streams and lakes, and outstanding skiing facilities.” The author continues:

The Bitter Root Valley has about everything from agriculture to golf courses, but perhaps its most outstanding feature and the one which strikes the persons viewing it for the first time is the whole scene. By highway...the newcomer [is] suddenly confronted with a view of the sweeping reaches of the miles wide valley (Forssen 1954).

Figure 47. Hamilton represented as the “Hub of the Bitterroot Valley,” ca. 1960. (Ravalli County Historical Society)



In many respects, the place descriptions that this journalist uses vary but little from similar *Missoularian* reports in the early 1900s. The city was still situated amidst a beautiful valley that provided stunning vistas.

Interestingly, as Hamilton's middle landscape identity was being articulated by local and regional residents, Marcus Daly's imprint on the city was often given

considerable attention. The 1954 *Missoulian* reporter began his article with the story of Daly and the Bitterroot. “Becoming a country gentleman after he had scaled the heights as a mining tycoon,” the author wrote, “Daly turned to the Bitter Root Valley, which had charmed many before him...There is no record that Marcus Daly waxed poetic when he first saw the Bitter Root Valley, but he certainly was captivated” (Forssen 1954). The reporter continued to discuss the Stock Farm, the Daly mansion, and the commercial timber industry that Daly spearheaded. Nine years earlier, the 1945 council of city leaders concluded the reporters’ thought: “It was Marcus Daly’s mining interests that were responsible for Hamilton’s very existence and that nearly all public establishments here owe their inception to Marcus Daly” (Notes 1945, 6). As the middle landscape identity became more concrete by the 1950s, Marcus Daly, the city’s resident “country gentleman” became an important figure in the community’s identity.

Landscape. In 1939, an observant state employee wrote about Hamilton: “The Bitter Root Valley is scenic.... But people can’t live on scenery” (Pollinger 1939, 15). Even though city leaders promoted Hamilton’s spectacular recreation and scenery, Hamilton’s economy remained sluggish during the 1950s. In 1960, an outside observer prepared a regional study of Hamilton that offered broad insights into the community’s recent past. While the report is neither exhaustive nor official, it provides a general picture of the community during the 1950s. The author indicates that the postwar period had been a slow time for landscape change in the community. New development in either the city center or in the outlying residential areas was nearly non-existent as there was

neither a growing population nor a vibrant economy. Continuity in the economic, urban, and social structure is the key theme in Hamilton's development in the 1950s.

According to the 1960 report "Hamilton is a slowly changing community. It is essentially the same as it was ten years ago" (Byrd 1960, 8). The urban structure had not changed much as wealthy residents continued to live in the south and east of the town, and the working classes continued to live in the north and in the west. Employment continued to be dominated by the seasonal work and by the RML. In the summers the U.S. Forest Service employed 40 people and the Bitterroot Stock Farm employed around 100 workers, many of whom were farmers whose plots of land were too small to live on year round. The RML continued to employ about 150 workers who, according to this author, had a positive impact on the community due to their scientific education and training (Byrd 1960, 6).

The city also continued to exercise a large influence on the surrounding hinterland. Farmers continued to come into the city to conduct business, send their children to Hamilton schools, and to participate in local community social institutions. Thus, as the author put it: "Consequently there is quite an intermingling of the town and country population" (Byrd 1960, 6). Besides a short-lived uranium mine south of the city that operated in 1956 and 1957 and exported over 1,200 tons of uranium ore, Hamilton's hinterland was still largely an agricultural, ranching, and scenic recreational landscape.

Hamilton's slow economy and dwindling population alarmed city business interests. The *Western News*, in particular, launched an assault on the dire economic and demographic straits in which Hamilton and Ravalli County found themselves. The

newspaper established recreation and leisure development as the ticket to economic health. In a timely article the *Western News* observed that the valley's scenery belies the fact that the community is struggling:

From the surface impressions a casual observer would get when passing through the picturesque Bitter Root Valley, it would be difficult to believe that it is an economically depressed area.... But despite these surface impressions of well being and rural tranquility, Ravalli county has some deep-seated economic problems (Ozmon 1963).

The newspaper identified the root of the economic depression as too much reliance on the Rocky Mountain Laboratory, arguing it needed to focus on bolstering and promoting the tourism industry. The article identified the tourist economy as a viable form of economic development because first, "there are always people of means, even in 'bad times' who have money to spend on recreation" and second, "we possess marvelous scenery, lots of fresh clear water, an isolated wilderness area of vast acreage" and third, "the fact is that large numbers of people come to the valley annually just for vacation and recreation purposes" (*Western News* 1961). In the *Western News'* view, these factors added up to a ready-made tourism industry, if the community would more actively promote itself. This healthy industry would, in turn, bolster the population because people would be able to find employment to match the scenery. The newspaper commented: "Frequently we hear people tell us that...they would prefer to reside in the Bitter Root—if only they could make a good living here" (*Western News* 1961). If the tourist and recreational economy could begin in earnest then, at least in the *Western News'* view, Hamilton would rebound from its economic and demographic doldrums.

Conclusion

By 1965, the roots of the Old and New West were already firmly planted in Anaconda and Hamilton. Anaconda had developed a strong industrial landscape that depended on the company for its maintenance. Meanwhile, the community's place identity was also firmly industrial. As Anaconda continued to develop, the industrial landscape was always an important part of the community, even as it became an Old West community. Hamilton, on the other hand, had continually redefined its middle landscape. Even through slow and uncertain periods, the community remained focused on its position between nature and city. Moreover, in Hamilton, the dream of a middle landscape continued to dominate the landscape and local community identity, even as Hamilton became a part of the New West after 1965.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANACONDA 1965-2005

By the late 1960s, Anaconda's industrial landscape and identity had been solidified in the community. For nearly a century the powerful economic, environmental, and social force of the Anaconda Company and the Washoe smelter had been key shapers of the city's industrial landscape, but the shifting international economics of copper and increasing environmental controls precipitated major changes in Anaconda's industrial future. Leading up to the smelter closure in 1980, large-scale job loss, urban renewal, and a reinvigorated industrial identity shaped the community. Since the Washoe smelter shutdown, much of Anaconda's population, employment, and air pollution have vanished but the industrial landscape and identity so prevalent in much of the Old West have largely remained.

This chapter explores Anaconda since the late 1960s when the population and economic base of the industrial landscape began to decline. It examines industrial depression before the smelter shutdown, the immediate effects of the shutdown, and the city's post-industrial landscape and identity. Urban economic and land use planning documents, personal interviews with long-time city officials, and newspaper accounts are utilized to reconstruct the landscape of the pre-shutdown depression. Oral histories and newspaper accounts are the central sources for exploring the immediate effects of the smelter closure. Environmental Planning Agency reports, city land use planning documents, and personal communications with city officials are key sources for reconstructing the post-industrial landscape. Finally, interviews, oral histories,

promotional materials, newspaper accounts, and planning documents aid in uncovering the shifts in post-industrial identity in the community.

Industrial Restructuring: 1965-1980

The smelter shutdown in 1980 came to a city that had already weathered significant economic depressions. Strikes, temporary shutdowns, layoffs and the other vicissitudes of industrial production were commonplace in Anaconda since its inception. However, the large-scale layoffs in the mid-1960s were especially troubling for the community. The years leading up to the smelter's final shutdown reveal patterns of shifting industrial landscape and identity.

Between 1960 and 1965, Anaconda Company employment in the Smelter City dropped from 3,050 to 1,700. The most precipitous decline came in 1964 when the company built a new ore concentrator in Butte, a process that had previously been performed in Anaconda. As a result, freight shipping activity at the smelter declined, thereby forcing the railroad to reduce its employment from 633 to 152 (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 4). One report vividly described the situation as segments of the local economy faltered one by one "like a row of dominoes standing on end in a long row" (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 2a). Concern swept through the community as the city quickly lost nearly 20 percent of its population. Unemployment never rose higher than 8.5% simply because most laid-off workers left the city to look for jobs elsewhere (Deer Lodge County

Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 35). A 1967 economic planning document painted a vivid picture:

When a city loses nearly 20% of its population almost overnight, deep and serious cuts in the economy are a natural course of events. All constructions came to an abrupt halt. Business was staggered and many firms simply folded up....Empty store fronts, like missing front teeth, showed gaps in the central business district (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 35).

Indeed, by 1965, “The City of Anaconda was literally driven to its knees” (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 5). Fearful of the future of the community if the company were to continue eliminating jobs, Anaconda civic leaders revived the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and once again tried to attract new industry to the community.

Restructuring the Industrial Identity

To promote the city, the Industrial Development Corporation underwent an intensive place-selling campaign in 1965. Smelter workers funded the IDC through a voluntary payroll deduction program called the “Dollar a Month Club.” With the help of these funds, the IDC hired a professional industrial development specialist, placed advertisements in business publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, and started a letter-writing program that mailed 200-400 personal letters per week to selected industrial firms throughout the United States. The president of the IDC delicately explained the idea of the campaign to save the city:

If there is an industrial firm, anywhere in the United States, which can be located in Anaconda, we’ll find it. We do not intend, of course, to stop with only one firm but will continue this program indefinitely until the Anaconda area develops an industrial diversity that will free the community from a one-employer industry. This is not to say that we do not appreciate the Anaconda Smelter, which created

the town of Anaconda, but we want other employers of various types to...lessen the blow to the economy which is always possible in a situation where a community is dependent on one employer (*Montana Standard* 1965).

This official took pains to recognize that the smelter was an appreciated and vital element of the community economy, while still making clear IDC's intention to insure that the smelter would no longer be the community's sole employer. The ensuing campaign quite literally tried to "sell" Anaconda to industrial firms by highlighting the industrial prowess of the city as well as the quality of urban life.

The IDC circulated its 1965 industrial promotion brochure, "Introducing Anaconda, Montana," among industrial magnates around the country. The booklet portrayed Anaconda as a site with excellent industrial infrastructure. After all, IDC argued, "because Anaconda has been an industrial community from its first inception, it has available all the attributes necessary for successful and profitable operation of industry." The brochure identified the obvious site characteristics such as land resources, utilities, and transportation linkages, but it also described community residents and recreational amenities as integral parts of the city's industrial infrastructure. Anaconda's "hardworking men...probably constitute our richest resource," the brochure explained (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 3).

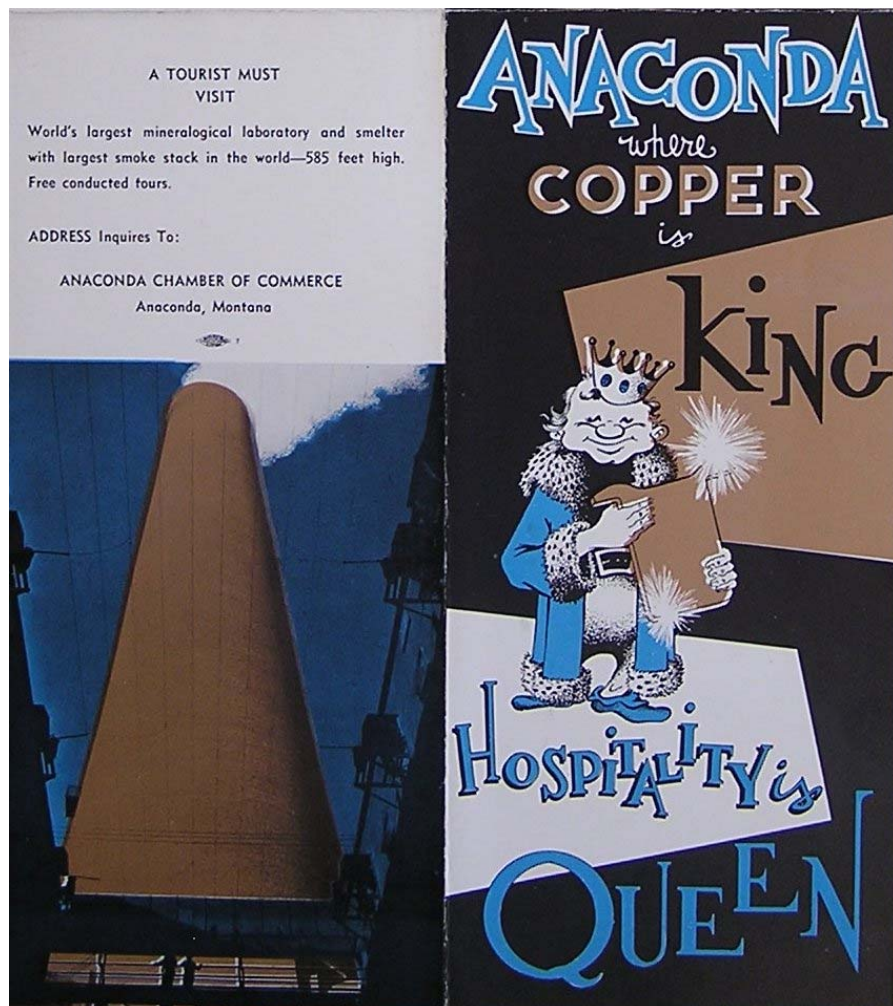
While the labor force was the richest resource, the recreational amenities of the area vitalized that resource. According to the pamphlet, hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, skiing and other recreational amenities could serve two functions for the prospective industrial firm. First, recreational amenities meant that Anacondans would work for lower wages. Instead of spending their time and money on frivolous shopping,

Anaconda workers' "pleasures and luxuries are simpler, less expensive, [and] probably less frequent" because "our people seek relaxation and entertainment in the unsurpassed mountains, streams and lakes that are in such plentiful supply and are located so close to the community" (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 11). Second, recreational amenities served to increase worker productivity. After all, "with evenings and weekends filled with healthy recreational pursuits, most people return to work refreshed and restored" (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 19). This healthy recreation-oriented lifestyle fostered a vibrant and efficient workforce that "go to bed sooner, sleep longer hours and more soundly than residents of larger communities. They have established [that] regularity and ample hours of sleep are an efficiency factor" (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1965, 11). The Industrial Development Corporation expected that Anaconda's recreation-vitalized workforce would surely make the community an excellent place to locate heavy industry.

In many respects, Anaconda's attempts to lure industry during the late 1960s were wholly unsuccessful. Of the "hundreds of thousands" of industrial firms that the Industrial Development Corporation estimates it contacted, only 227 responded to the letters. Of those only eight requested additional information, while the others indicated that they had no intention of relocating into the community. Potential developments such as a steel mill, a phosphate plant, and a wool processing plant never materialized, but a Youth Job Corp Camp that provided about 60 jobs did locate in the community in 1966 (Keating 1984). The effort to attract industry, however, painted a vivid picture of the community during this uncertain period.

Anaconda's economic identity was more production-oriented than ever. Industry was the lifeblood of the city, and industry is what they sought to bring into the city. Even when boasting of its tourism-related amenities, industry was paramount. Recreational amenities and friendly local workers were described so as to make them industrial assets in a promotional pamphlet titled: "Anaconda: Where Copper is King and Hospitality is Queen" (Anaconda ca. 1968) (Figure 48). All other considerations were secondary to the industrial production at the Anaconda Company's Washoe Smelter. A description of the

Figure 48. "Anaconda: Where Copper is King, Hospitality Queen," 1968. (Anaconda 1968)



city in the late 1960s attempted to illustrate the dominance that industry had on the city's landscape: "On the one hand [Anaconda is] the most beautiful country in the world, and on the other extreme, the clashing grinding vortex of America's greatest producer of copper pours out its red metal to keep our vaunted industrial complex provided with the indispensable metal" (Deer Lodge County Industrial Development Corporation 1967, 1).

Restructuring the Industrial Landscape

Still reeling from the cutbacks by the Anaconda Company in the late 1960s, Anaconda lost 2,283 people from 1960 to 1970. Declining populations were nothing new to Anaconda, but this time it was different because the population loss was combined with uncertainty about the future of the Anaconda Company in the community. The large layoffs in 1964 were still fresh in city leaders' minds and they looked for a means to bolster the economy to prepare for the future of the community. County officials employed two outside consulting groups to prepare reports on the status of the community and offer recommendations for improvement. Both the 1969 Anaconda Comprehensive Plan and the 1973 County-Wide Plan Report help assess the condition of the community in the early 1970s.

The plans highlight the population and economic instability that have been part of the community through the influence of the Anaconda Company. Although the language is not as vivid, the 1973 plan mirrors the argument found in a similar 1969 plan that recognized that "the problems of a one-industry town are extremely apparent in Anaconda" and emphasized problems associated with the "roller coaster type of employment pattern" (Anaconda Deer Lodge City-County Planning Board 1969, 2-4).

Indeed, the “roller coaster” employment pattern had serious effects on the city. Extended periods of low employment accompanied by disinvestment in city retail services had left the central business district in disarray, the 1973 study contended:

Because of the dramatic fluctuations in manufacturing employment in the last fifteen years, proprietors of trade and finance establishments must feel a certain amount of uncertainty regarding future sales. To an extent, this uncertainty has reflected itself in the run down appearance of the Anaconda central business district. Anaconda is not capturing the volume of trade that it could with more effective merchandizing and improvements to its central business district (Deer Lodge County Planning Board 1973, II-25).

The lack of investment in the central business district translated into a steady flow of Anaconda dollars leaving the city. Anaconda’s 48 percent “retail capture” in 1971 indicated that more than half of Anacondans funds were being spent elsewhere. Butte’s corresponding 133 percent retail capture identifies the magnetic pull that drew away the money (Deer Lodge County Planning Board 1973, II-33). These capture percentages were not favorable in 1971, but were even less favorable in 1968 when over three quarters of the retailers in the commercial core responded in a survey that investment in the downtown area was necessary. The 1969 plan reported that “recommended improvements for the downtown were almost unanimously to remodel or raze the substandard buildings and to bring in new businesses and employment” (Anaconda Deer Lodge City-County Planning Board 1969, 8).

Unless improvements were made, the loss of retail dollars would only get worse in the future, the consultants argued. Both plans forecasted strong population growth in the community. The 1973 plan foresaw population in the county increasing by as much as 40 percent by 1995. If the city did not improve its retail landscape it would lose an

increasing percentage of its retail dollars to Butte. As these planning documents illustrate, during the early 1970s Anaconda was entrenched in a bleak discourse of company dominance, retail loss, and a deteriorating central business district combined with an ill-defined and uncertain prospect of future growth. These conflicting ideas resonated with Anaconda city leaders in the 1970s and provided the impetus for a wave of creative destruction illustrated by efforts to build a shopping mall in the city and by the partial demolition of the Montana Hotel. Although not connected institutionally, mall construction and the Montana Hotel demolition were certainly inspired by the same discourse.

Urban Renewal. The Anaconda Urban Renewal Agency was formed in 1970 in order to respond to the perceived central city decline and improve the community's economic condition. Funded by the federal Housing and Urban Development program, the agency laid out a plan to revitalize the city's commercial landscape. An important component of their plan was to respond to the loss of retail dollars by developing an indoor shopping mall in the city center. By providing an attractive and modern space for retailers to locate, mall promoters argued, Anaconda would stem the tide of retail loss and thereby provide for the continued viability of the city's commercial core (Manning 2005). As proposed in 1973, the 197,000 square-foot mall was to be sited on six blocks located in the center of the city (Figure 49). Even though those four central blocks were already occupied, the Urban Renewal Agency had no problem purchasing properties and preparing them for demolition. Even the State Historical Preservation Officer, whom the agency had to work through to receive clearance to redevelop, did not see any buildings

Figure 49. Aftermath of Urban renewal. Highlighted are the lots demolished during the 1970s program. (Aerial photo by Montana Natural Resources Information System, map by Author)



of historic importance in the affected area. The only remaining hurdle for Urban Renewal was approval from the city voters before the way would be clear to begin demolition and mall construction.

While the growth coalition in the community was excited about the prospect of rehabilitating the city center with a new shopping mall, many members of the community were not as sure. The mall proposal seemed like it would pass the community-wide vote easily. Early reports in the *Anaconda Leader* indicated that only a month before the scheduled vote, 64 percent of residents were wholly in favor of the mall and discussion of

the mall proposal filled the city council chambers with throngs of eager supporters

(*Anaconda Leader* 1974a). The *Leader* was filled with letters to the editor that supported the mall proposal by asking questions such as:

Are we going to shuffle along behind casketbearers to the inevitable graveyard of downtown by voting down another ‘dream’ that can be a reality? ... We’re not going to stumble along East Park for the next half century and watch the buildings continue to deteriorate, the alleys grow even worse, while we wave goodbye to shoppers traveling west right out of town (*Anaconda Leader* 1974b).

However, while the local growth coalition may have grabbed most of the headlines in support of urban renewal efforts, opponents disregarded those reports, and considered the *Leader* just a “propaganda platform” for mall supporters (Hansen 2005). Mall opponents, mostly smelter workers, took informal polls while at work and remember that “everybody I talked to on the Hill and around town were opposed to the mall” (Hansen 2005). A fierce battle raged through the community in the debate over the proposed mall replete with sound trucks and pamphlets blanketing the community with the CBD-decline/mall-salvation arguments. The prolific campaign ultimately fell short of its goal and did not sway the mass of Anaconda voters and the urban renewal proposal was defeated by 38 votes in the June 1974 referendum.

Even though the proposal was voted down by the community, the City Council chose to ignore the vote and a few weeks later approved the first phase of the mall construction. Between 1975 and 1978, the Urban Renewal Agency (which changed its name to Community Development Agency after the community vote) proceeded with demolition of many of the buildings it had slated to remove. However, even as bulldozers ripped through downtown, a group of concerned citizens formed the Citizens Defense

Fund to oppose further demolition of historic structures. In 1978 the citizens group filed an injunction to halt further local demolition. The injunction was upheld by the courts and construction on the mall was effectively halted (Anaconda Visioning 1995 4; Keating 1984, 15). But the bulldozer's path, once leveled, is irreversible and many lots in the CBD were already razed. Halting mall construction after it had already begun left considerable gaps in the city's urban core.

Milo Manning, who was involved with the Urban Renewal Agency's efforts, explained the options available for the empty city lots: "What do we do? Do we sell them to anybody who wants to come in like Hardees and Pizza Hut?" By the early 1980s, that is exactly what happened as Hardees and Pizza Hut built franchises in the middle of the city (see Figure 49). Manning continues to explain the tenor of the time: "We wanted to keep a historic aspect, but maybe we would take whoever came in, we didn't care that much." He continues, "It probably would have been a lot better, in after thought, had they went through a major rehab program with the buildings downtown and kept the historic aspect, but that wasn't the thing to do back in those days" (Manning 2005).

Montana Hotel. The shopping mall was not the only attempt at redeveloping Anaconda's commercial core. The Montana Hotel also underwent serious redevelopment in the 1970s. The Montana Hotel Corporation, the local group that purchased the hotel to save it from demolition in 1959, faced heavy financial burdens, continued losses, and potential bankruptcy by 1975. Their economic straits forced them, in 1976, to sell the landmark property to Gene Higgins, a local developer. Once the property changed hands though, all of the hotel's commercial tenants went out of business and Higgins boarded

up the hotel and let it lay vacant. Rumors of Higgins' intentions to demolish the city landmark swept through the community. These rumors increased when Higgins began selling, piece by piece, any item in the old hotel that had any value. Soon trademark items were sold to interested out of town buyers, most notable being the locally famous mosaic of Tammany, Marcus Daly's famous race horse, which was sold to the Marcus Daly estate in Hamilton. Even some local Anacondans participated in the demolition of the building by carrying home silverware, monogrammed linens, and even the marble fireplace facings for "safe keeping" (Howard 1978, 17-18). The final blow to the Montana Hotel's position as the trademark of Anaconda's urban landscape came in 1979 when Higgins succeeded in removing the top two floors of the structure including the distinctive turrets (Figure 50). The now-two story Montana Hotel was converted into an office/shopping complex that retained very little of the local historical significance to the community. By 1986, the site meant so little to local residents that one Anacondan commented: "People don't like the Montana Hotel anymore. They don't even like to go in there and shop" (Dewing 1986).

The remodeling of the Montana Hotel and the redevelopment of the downtown area changed the face of Anaconda's commercial core. While the mall never materialized, the preparation for the mall left a significant imprint on the urban landscape. Fears of urban decline and what might happen to the future of the city if the smelter shut down drove city business owners and officials to attempt to revamp their commercial urban space. Whether they were the "Urban Development destroyer squad" as one city commentator argued (Howard 1978, 18), or simply business and civic leaders

Figure 50. Montana Hotel under demolition, 1979. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)

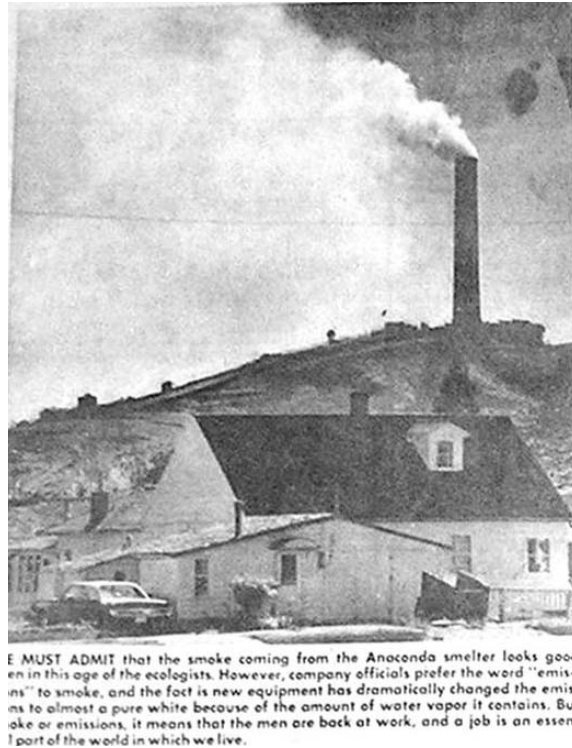


trying to do their best to redevelop the city, the urban renewal and city redevelopment efforts significantly reshaped the landscape. During the tumultuous 1970s, Anaconda's urban landscape saw a number of additional changes that paralleled the shifting landscape of declining industrial production. As the company began its slow withdrawal from the community, the urban landscape changed to reflect fears about the city's economic future.

Changes on the Hill: 1970-1980

Even as Anaconda's urban core was transformed through renewal and redevelopment efforts, work on the Hill continued with little change. Anacondans' views of smelting activity had changed little since the turn of the century, even though the

Figure 51. The Washoe Smelter stack above a home in Anaconda, 1971. (*Anaconda Leader* 1971)



environmental movement in the United States was moving towards an increasingly critical view of heavy industry. The majority of residents still celebrated the smoke that poured from the smelter stack. In 1971, the *Anaconda Leader* published an image of the Washoe Smelter in full operation towering over a residential house with the caption:

We must admit that the smoke coming from the Anaconda Smelter looks good even in this age of the ecologists. However, company officials prefer the word "emissions" to smoke... But smoke or emissions, it means that the men are back at work, and a job is an essential part of the world in which we live (*Anaconda Leader* 1971) (Figure 51).

A few of the younger city residents, though, began to question the environmental impact of the smelter. One local resident, a self proclaimed hippie, "hated the smelter because it was the big Smaug, like in *The Hobbit*, you know that big dragon that polluted the valley

and stuff” (Nyquist 1986). While this view was unpopular in Anaconda, it was closely aligned with the direction of federal environmental legislation.

During the late 1970s, smelting activity on the Hill came under close federal scrutiny. Reports by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) combined with the burgeoning environmental movement signaled the beginning of the end for the smelter. OSHA ranked the Washoe Smelter among the most hazardous to worker’s health of any copper smelter in the country. The EPA found high levels of carcinogens in Anaconda vegetable gardens—levels that ranged from 19 parts per million (ppm) of cadmium to 275 ppm of arsenic when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration considered levels higher than 7 ppm as a significant health hazard. EPA tests during the late 1970s also found that children’s hair in Anaconda contained over 19 ppm of arsenic, a level over 200 times the amount found in the hair of children in other *smelter* towns (Mercier 2001, 195-196). Nearly a century of smelter smoke had produced significant effects on the health of the community residents, and these effects could not be ignored by the federal regulators. Federal safety and clean air regulations began to impinge on the Anaconda Company’s profits.

In 1977, within a setting of decreased profits and increasing regulations, the Anaconda Company sold out to Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO). This shift in corporate control changed the relationship between the community and its largest employer. One local resident summarized the effects of the corporate changeover on employment:

Anaconda Company always seemed to hire three times as many people as they needed. You know there was three people to do one man’s job. And when the

Atlantic Richfield took over, they got rid of all this extra help. They didn't need it, they didn't want it. They just eliminated 'em (Dewing 1986).

The shift in corporate employment strategy carried over into the relationship with the community. Gone was the Anaconda Company's paternal influence and keen interest in the affairs of community that bore its name. Again, an Anacondan identified a representative change: "When the Anaconda Company quit us, this new outfit that bought the smelter didn't maintain the parks anymore" (Dewing 1986). As perceived by many community residents, ARCO's apparent disinterest in the community was unsettling. They likely saw their new employer withdrawing from the community, but until 1980, Anacondans could not imagine how far ARCO would actually withdraw.

Within a few years ARCO came to the conclusion that the Washoe smelter was no longer profitable for the company. Even with the increased federal ambient air standards, there were many measures that the company could have taken to meet the requirements, but they were not economical. In a letter to the Montana congressional delegation dated November 4, 1980, Ralph Cox, ARCO-Anaconda company president, summarized the options:

Our studies indicate that it would cost between \$300 and \$400 million to retrofit the Anaconda Smelter at about 85 percent of its current capacity to comply with federal health and environment regulations...Even after making an investment of this amount, the operating costs of the smelter would be significantly higher than today's cost. Therefore, this option was ruled out... (Hurlbut 1981, 37).

This decision signaled the beginning of the end for the Washoe smelter in Anaconda.

Rumors of a potential shutdown swept through the city in 1980 and local workers swarmed the state capital and demanded that the clean air regulations be lifted. The EPA relaxed its rules to accommodate the community's demands and offered to extend the

clean air deadlines until 1988. Even this offer could not persuade the company to maintain a presence in the city, and the specter of a shutdown loomed even more ominously. In response, over three hundred company employees protested at the Anaconda courthouse that the company “be forced” to operate the smelter for another eight years, all this to no avail. Despite federal and state relaxation of pollution control requirements, state offers to help finance the upgrading of the smelter, congressional offers of tax credits to rebuild facilities, and other concessions, the company still did not make any promises about keeping the smelter open (Mercier 2001, 198-199).

The Shutdown

On September 29, 1980, ARCO announced that it was closing the smelter for good. Mel Stokke, Anaconda native and plant manager at the Washoe, remembered that “the silence was deafening” when he broke the news to the smelter workers. The community went into shock and mourning. The flag at the Washoe smelter flew half-mast while throughout the community smelter workers called the head office to find out the status of their careers, only to receive a message recorded by the emotional plant manager reporting: “We’re down. The smelter is closed and it’s doubtful we’ll ever be open again” (Hurlbut 1981, 37).

ARCO’s exit from the city immediately changed the community. Almost overnight one thousand jobs and a payroll of \$10 million were eliminated. Unemployment approached 20 percent even after the city lost over 2,000 residents as laid-off smelter workers fled the city in search of employment. The largest payroll in the community was now the unemployment benefits that ARCO offered, but \$3,500 up front

and between \$100 and \$140 per week for up to a year were not enough to support the fragile economy. One resident remembered the immediate post shut down fallout: “Everybody was scared to death. They didn’t buy anything. The merchants in town were all screaming. They weren’t buying clothes, they weren’t buying cars, this was for a year, everybody was in a panic” (Dewing 1986). In the first few post-smelter months, fourteen businesses closed, retailers were unable to unload their merchandise, and real estate availability skyrocketed while prices plummeted (Economic Development Administration 1981, 48). The financial panic apparently drove many Anacondans to seek professional help as by March 1981 client caseloads for alcohol abuse, drug treatment, and mental health rose 35, 46, and 40 percent respectively (Economic Development Administration 1981, 43).

Becoming Old West: 1980-2005

The smelter shutdown’s immediate effects on the community were drastic. Long-term effects were equally sweeping. Since the shutdown, city leaders and remaining residents have been constantly re-visioning what their community should be. While parts of Anaconda’s story may be unique—highly contaminated land, Superfund cleanup, etc.—other parts of the story—struggling economy, falling population, identity reconstruction, etc.—are familiar to many other Old West communities. Anaconda’s geographies of post-industrial landscape and identity have helped shape the community since 1980.

Post-Industrial Landscapes

Nearly a century of industrial copper smelting left a distinct imprint on Anaconda's landscape. Unfortunately, when ARCO shut down the smelter, the legacy of smelting remained in the form of industrial waste. An inventory of the waste left behind in Anaconda revealed 5,000 acres of tailings ponds; 150 acres of black slag piled high, creating foreboding black mountains at the east entrance to the city (Figure 52); a 6,000 acre toxic industrial complex complete with the largest brick chimney in the world; and an estimated 200,000 tons of arsenic-laden dust scattered throughout dozens of square miles of the Deer Lodge Valley.

Fortunately for Anaconda, new federal industrial cleanup legislation meant that Anaconda was not totally abandoned to clean up the post-industrial landscape. Before 1981, if an industrial polluter abandoned the site, they would have very little

Figure 52. Slag piles surround the Washoe Smelter in Anaconda, 1979. (Library of Congress American Memory Project)



responsibility for its cleanup. When ARCO shutdown the smelter in September 1980, the company thought to avoid full responsibility for the post-industrial cleanup, and for a short time they appeared to have succeeded. Fortunately, soon after the smelter's closure, Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). Among other initiatives, CERCLA created Superfund, a federal program administered by the EPA that was designed to enforce industrial cleanup. A key element in the CERCLA legislation was that it had a retroactive liability clause that held past polluters responsible for cleanup. So, in 1982, when the EPA created the Anaconda Smelter Superfund site and placed it number 48 out of 1,200 on the infamous National Priorities List, ARCO was named as the "potentially responsible party," thereby mandating that they pay all cleanup costs (Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Planning Board 1992, VIII-5). The community was relieved to have a partner in the cleanup process, especially considering that the 200 square-mile site covered not only Smelter Hill, the surrounding slag piles, and the tailings ponds, but it also included the whole city of Anaconda.

One of the main environmental problems in the community was arsenic-contaminated soil. For decades the Washoe smelter blew arsenic-rich smoke through its trademark stack. The height of the stack allowed a percentage of the element to be caught before it entered the atmosphere, but the accumulation of years of harmful emissions left a rich topsoil of toxins throughout the Deer Lodge Valley and within Anaconda itself. Arsenic-contaminated soils were one of the main concerns for the EPA, the city of Anaconda, and ARCO when they began to plan for how to protect the environmental and

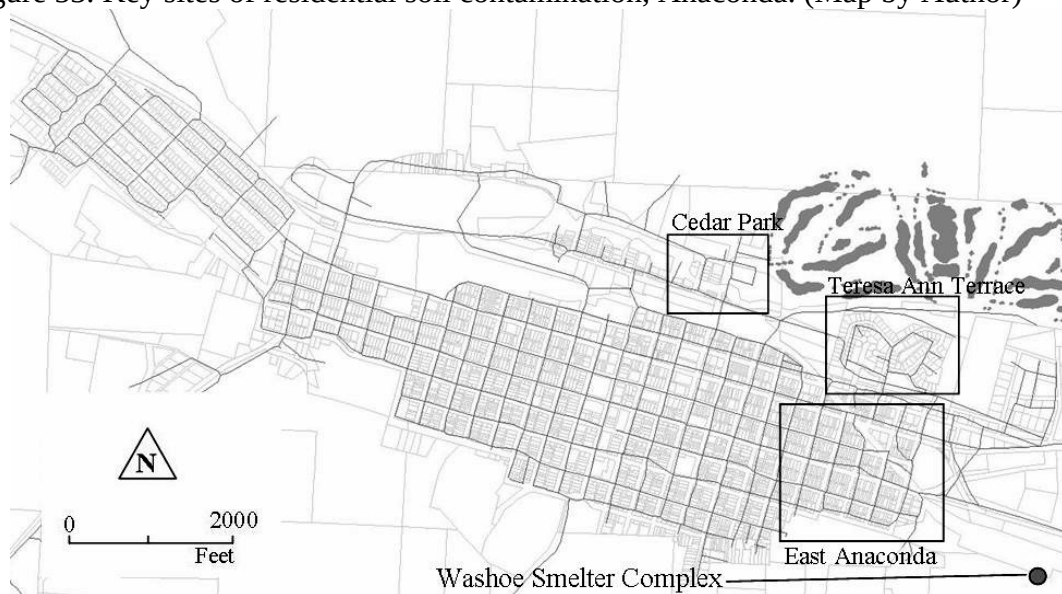
economic health of the community. A key outcome of the planning process was the establishment of residential, commercial/industrial, and agricultural/recreational zones based on allowable levels of arsenic contamination. Arsenic contamination levels in residential areas could be up to 250 ppm arsenic, commercial/industrial land could have up to 500 ppm, and agricultural/recreational land could have contamination up to 1,000 ppm. These action-level based zones were important not only to the community residents whose health was at risk, but they would also play an important role in the development of the post-industrial urban landscape.

Residential Landscape. The post-industrial economy has affected Anaconda's residential landscape. Older housing dominates Anaconda's housing stock. Today, 90 percent of the homes in Anaconda were built before the smelter closed. Since 1980, Anacondans have only needed to build a few new dwellings to keep pace with demand. For example, in 1990, only four new dwellings were built. However, that number has risen nearly every year so that in 2004, 32 new houses were built. A 2001 planning document attributes this rise in homebuilding to the "new trend [of] frustrated and dissatisfied urbanites from out-of-state communities, as well retired persons and outdoor and recreational enthusiasts, looking to Anaconda as a choice community with a relaxed, high quality-of-life" (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 2001, 5). The document optimistically indicates that "this view can only increase population, and thus will unavoidably force that community to develop new standards for housing and development." (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 2001, 5). Still, the aging housing stock is a concern for many residents. In a 2001 survey of city residents, many

respondents listed “empty dwellings” or “small, crowded homes” as some of the issues that beset the community’s residential landscape. At the time of the community planning survey, the average home price in Anaconda was \$70,700. Since that time, prices have continued to fall.

The slow development and low housing prices across the residential landscape have undoubtedly been affected by the community’s contaminated soils (Figure 53). Shortly after the EPA began its study of Anaconda’s residential soils the agency realized there were some possible serious health threats. As early as 1986, families with young children were evacuated from the Mill Creek community, located two miles east of Anaconda on the western border of Smelter Hill. The EPA found extremely high contamination levels in the 140-acre community. Even at soil depths down to 42 inches, arsenic contamination levels were as high as 4,000 ppm well above the community-wide average of 638 ppm, and the 250 ppm acceptable level for residential areas (EPA 1988).

Figure 53. Key sites of residential soil contamination, Anaconda. (Map by Author)



By 1988, it was clear that all the Mill Creek residents were in serious danger and the whole community was evacuated. Eventually all 37 houses were condemned and demolished so that there is little trace that there ever was a Mill Creek community on the landscape today (EPA 1988).

Where the Mill Creek experience may have been dramatic, remediation efforts within Anaconda were more wide ranging. Due to their proximity to the smelter, neighborhoods on Anaconda's east side experienced elevated contamination levels. In 1992, contamination levels over 1,000 ppm were found in subdivisions in northeast Anaconda. These findings caused a stir in the community. Residents, familiar with what had happened in Mill Creek, worried that their neighborhood would have the same result. Since contamination levels were lower this time, ARCO simply was able to replace the contaminated soil with fresh soil and revegetate 19 yards in the Teresa Ann Terrace subdivision and 14 yards in Cedar Park Homes (EPA 1996; Shovers 2004, 66). However, as soils testing in Anaconda continued, it became clear that "elevated concentrations in the community of Anaconda are highest in the eastern portion of the city, which is closest to the primary source, the stack" (EPA 1996). EPA studies showed that of Anaconda's 551 city blocks, the average arsenic contamination level was 186 ppm with a maximum test score of over 500 ppm in residential areas on the east side of the city. The study also found that the highest levels of lead contamination were in the central portion of the city with an average contamination level of 328 ppm lead.

In 1996, the EPA created a Community Soils Plan that outlined remediation efforts on "hot spots" at the individual residential yard level. The EPA intended that this

plan would remediate all residential soils that were over the action level of 250 ppm arsenic. After weighing its options, the EPA favored the treatment that would excavate and dispose of contaminated soils and renew the yards with fresh soil and sod. The proposed cost for this option was just over \$10,000 per yard. ARCO, on the other hand preferred burying the waste in place by essentially diluting the soil through tilling and then putting a new lawn on top at only \$7,500 per lawn. In another effort to cut costs, ARCO also contested the 250 ppm residential soils action level and argued that it should be at least 297 ppm (EPA 1996). Ultimately, the EPA's alternative was chosen for the estimated 50 yards that would need to be decontaminated in east Anaconda (EPA 1996).

Unfortunately, soils are not the only contamination issue in the community. High arsenic levels are also found within area homes. In 2004, the *Montana Standard* reported how a resident developed a severe rash while remodeling her attic. Tests revealed that the thick layer of dust in her attic contained significant levels of arsenic. When the story broke, ARCO came to clean the house, and now the EPA is currently working to revamp its residential land remediation plan to include homes, as well as their yards (Haffey 2004a). The pall of the smelter smoke fell over the entire community of Anaconda, and residential property owners paid the price of years of pollution.

Industrial Landscape. Economic development has also been difficult on much of Anaconda's contaminated land. The imprint of industrial pollution has inhibited the community's efforts to redevelop industrial lands since the smelter shut down. After the closure, city leaders hired a professional industrial developer to help promote the city and its industrial benefits. Unfortunately, these efforts were met with few positive results. A

1981 letter-writing campaign to 390 corporations was designed to entice larger firms into the area, but not a single corporation even responded to the letter. Media advertisements placed in several of the country's largest newspapers also yielded no positive response, but only managed to catch the eye of five individuals that inquired about job openings in the area. While few large corporations were interested in the community, a few smaller operations jumped at the chance to receive the essentially free money from the city's \$3 million pot. Overall, ten companies were given loans. The end result of the loans was that the Loan-Grant Business program loaned out \$3.3 million to companies that ultimately created only \$3 million dollars in revenue for the city. It was not quite the successful seed funding that the development interests had hoped for.

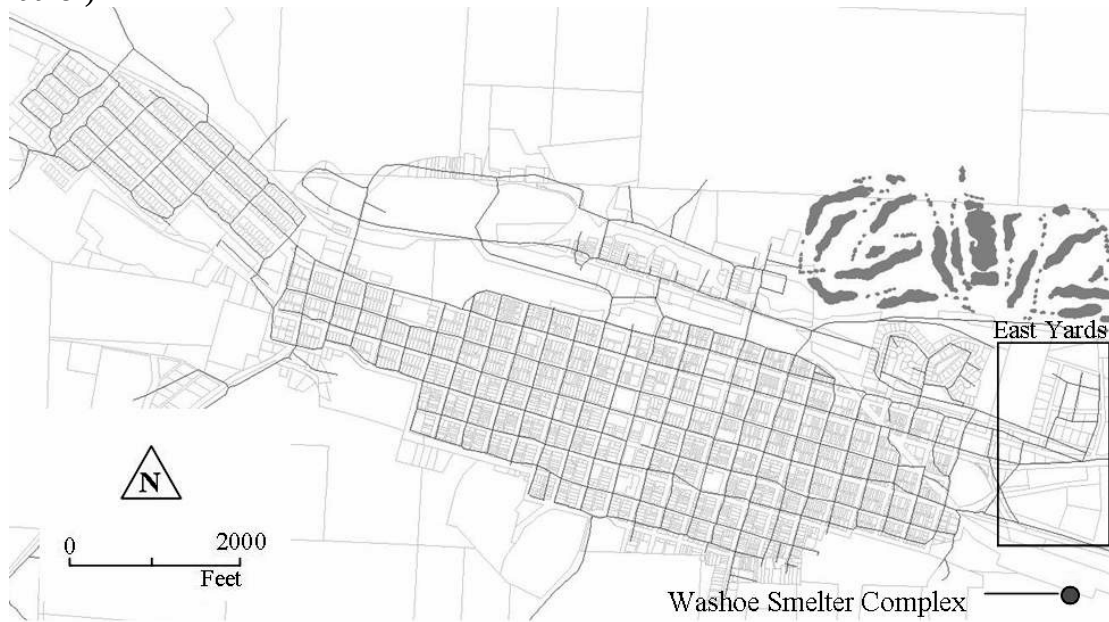
One of the failures seems to stick most clearly in the minds of local Anacondans. The Grizzly Boot Company, a plastic helmet manufacturer with a dubious financial record, received one of the largest start up grants from the program. Anacondans recall repeatedly the sore memories of that fiasco. One Anaconda city leader said "they got taken for a ride with this helmet factory that they gave...over a million to, and it was going bankrupt before they got it" (Vine 1986). Other residents remember how poorly the money was managed when it was given to Grizzly Boot: "Those people knew that plastics firm was no good when it was in Hamilton and they turn around and give them millions of dollars, for what, for nothing, they weren't in business for six months" (Kloker 1987).

In the larger picture, many residents talked about how poorly the industrial advertising efforts were managed, noting how "the money was thrown away" (Kloker

1987) to the “snake oil salesmen” who prey on crippled economies (Finnegan 1987). The sort of financial bungling that residents perceived in the post-shutdown economic redevelopment efforts stems back to the Urban Renewal program in the 1970s. One resident remembered that the Urban Renewal program “created a lot of divisiveness within the community. By the time the Anaconda Company money came there was a great deal of apathy. And people figured it was going to get blown, they were going to get screwed out of it and they just didn’t care. And that apathy exists here today” (McKeon 1986).

Since the smelter shutdown, a few commercial/industrial firms have tried to site new facilities in Anaconda, but have ultimately been dissuaded by land contamination issues. Many of the proposed developments have been in the East Yards, an already remediated parcel of land that ARCO donated to the county for development (Figure 54). Even as early as 1986, Pamida Stores, a regional retail discount chain, was planning to establish a store on Anaconda’s east side. Milo Manning, then city-county planner, related the ultimate demise of the proposal: “Then ARCO handed them the deed that was 26 pages thick with all of the indemnities and all of this stuff...and they said ‘nah, we don’t want to mess with that’ and we never saw them again” (Manning 2005). The litany of restrictions tied to the land remediation process was apparently enough to cause a large chain to alter its growth strategy and not site a new store in Anaconda. Other potential commercial/industrial prospects made it as far as testing the soil. Jim Davison, Anaconda Local Development Corporation chairman, commented on what happened when a large corporation tested the soils on a piece of property they were considering for industrial

Figure 54. Key sites in Anaconda's industrial land redevelopment efforts. (Map by Author)



development: “they got there, got a foot below, found tailings, and they turned around and left” (Davison 2005).

Most recently, though, the Oregon-based Bi-Mart chain, was preparing to site a store in the beleaguered East Yards. The retail chain was even comfortable with the knowledge that they were developing on a piece of reclaimed land. Unfortunately, the 7.6-acre site that Bi-Mart chose was the exact parcel that the Anaconda Company Acid Plant had occupied thirty years earlier. Again, Jim Davison explained the rest of the story: “They understood what the contamination was, and it was locked into slag, and it was underground. And they were perfectly happy with that...until they ran into Beryllium” (Davison 2005). Further soils testing revealed significant quantities of beryllium in the allegedly remediated soil. Anaconda officials tried to convince Bi-Mart to continue its development plans by removing over 7,000 cubic yards of beryllium-

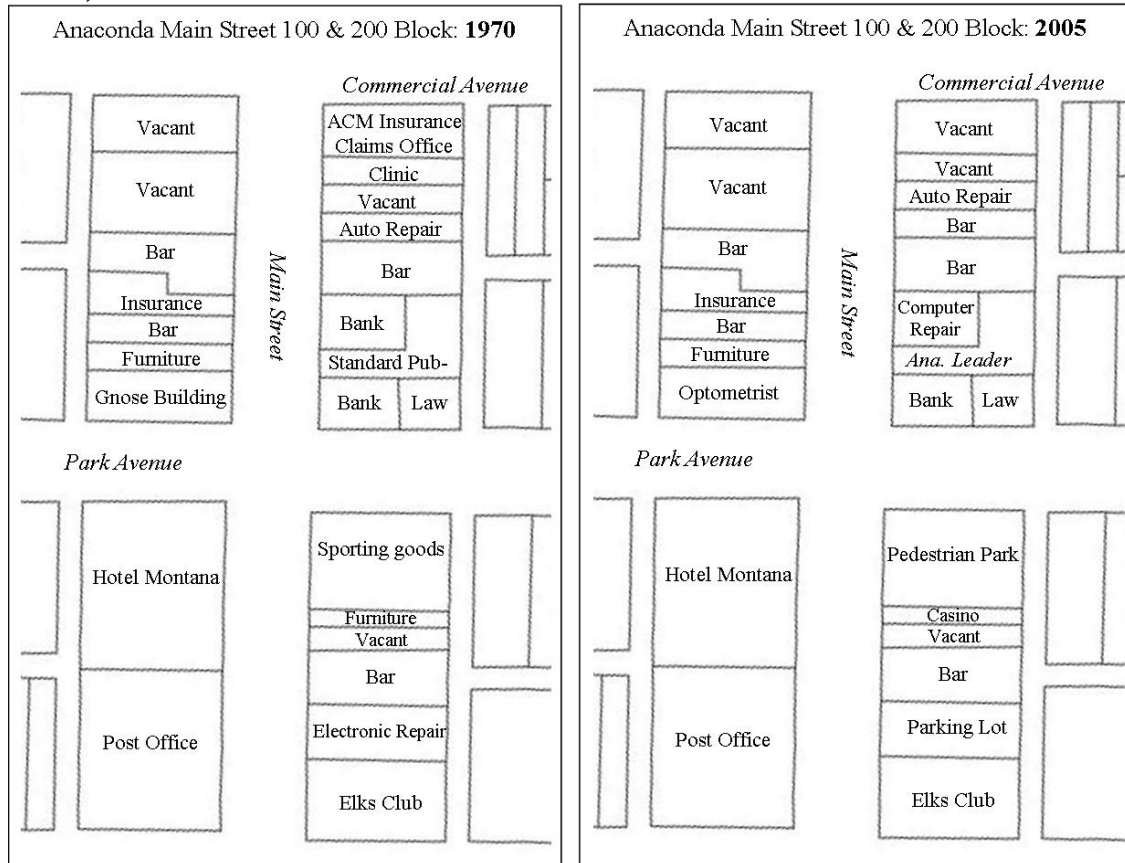
contaminated soil from the site, but ultimately the chain retailer canceled its plans to build on the site and even requested reimbursement for the unexpected costs in the building proposal (Haffey 2004b). Contaminated commercial/industrial land continues to make development difficult in Anaconda.

As efforts to clean up the industrial waste scattered throughout Anaconda continue, city leaders wonder if geography and history have conspired against future development in the city. Jim Davison, Anaconda Local Development Corporation director, explained:

The geography of where you place the infrastructure has been an ongoing problem. The continued problems of where you can place development because... of the contamination levels. Where Deer Lodge County would normally develop to the east and out into the broad valley, more and more there are covenants put on there for no residential developments. For industrial purposes... it is going to create more problems for infrastructure, available lands, transportation problems, etc. (Davison 2005).

Additionally, the history of contaminated land uses has necessitated severe restrictions on land use in the community. Much of the land east of town is still owned by ARCO and is subject to a number of covenants that restrict construction or development and conservation easements that restrict commercial development to preserve open space. This complex mosaic of property use restrictions on ARCO's land makes potential development of these lands difficult. The cleanup process has taken much longer than initially anticipated. One resident explained: "I would have bet you a million bucks back in 1995 that the clean up would be done by now. The lack of cleanup is a real problem for the community's development. Until the "Love Canal look" is gone they are going to have problems developing" (Andreozzi, 2005).

Figure 55. Land use on a segment of Anaconda Main Street in 1970 and 2005. (Map by Author)



Downtown Anaconda. Since 1965, Anaconda's downtown landscape has also witnessed the pains of the waning Old West. The consequences of years of reliance on a single industry are written poignantly across the contemporary downtown landscape. A selection of the Main Street retail setting highlights the themes visible throughout the city (Figure 55).

Between 1970 and 2006 Anaconda's downtown landscape has experienced a shift as many buildings are now removed, significantly altered, or laying vacant. Even in this two block section of Main Street, building removal is widespread. The Durston Block,

located on Park and Main Streets, was destroyed by fire in 1984. However, after the building burned, the sporting goods store that had occupied the ground floor of the building never relocated in the city and the building was never rebuilt. Even on this prime real estate, the highest use for the now-vacant land was to build a small pedestrian park where the building had once been (Figure 56). Similarly, the Beneficial Life building that had been an electronic repair shop in 1970, was demolished to make way for a small

Figure 56. Durston Block on Anaconda Main Street in 1981 (top) and 2004 (bottom). (top, Library of Congress American Memory Project; bottom, Author's collection)



parking lot (Figure 57). However, the small lot is often vacant, as the retail function of the CBD is rarely vibrant enough to fill the lot.

Vacancy and dilapidation combine in this two-block selection of Main Street. The intersection of Commercial Avenue and Main Street seems to have been struggling in 1970, but in the ensuing years this struggle has become more pronounced. The Electric Light Building housed the Anaconda Company Insurance Claims Office in 1970, the

Figure 57. Beneficial Life building on Main Street in 1981 (top) and 2004 (bottom). (top, Library of Congress American Memory Project; bottom, Author's collection)



Figure 58. 100 Block of Main Street, 2004. (Author's collection)



Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Employment Services through much of the 1980s, and now sits vacant. The advertisement on the window tries to attract investors with promises of “Busy Location, Great Location, Great Price,” but the building still fails to entice any new occupants. At a slightly broader scale, the 100 block of Main Street’s overall dilapidated appearance seems to highlight the landscape of neglect and disinvestment that characterize Anaconda’s downtown (Figure 58).

Post-Industrial Identity

Despite the community’s ongoing efforts to clean up and revive the post-industrial landscape, the community still had what one potential developer called a “Love Canal look.” Barbara Andreozzi, Montana State University Extension Agent, has dealt extensively with the community’s redevelopment and has seen how the “Love Canal look” has affected the city’s development. In interviews with companies that once

considered siting in Anaconda, she said that a common theme was that the companies said “similar to what the tourists told us is ‘it looks dead, it looks like nothing can grow here, like you’re a Love Canal or something’” (Andreozzi 2005). The “Love Canal look” has not just been a problem of aesthetics, but has greatly affected how the community saw itself and how it presents itself to outside interests.

Life in the smelter city changed after the shutdown as residents had to “learn to live again” after their post-shutdown lives were interrupted like a “dream that ended in a nightmare” (Gardipee, 1986). The dream of economic security through copper smelting had created a strong identity in the smelter city. While the events of 1980 changed that perception superficially, the deep-seated identity remained. For example, the *Anaconda Leader*, whose masthead had previously featured a smoking stack, removed the image of the stack although the paper still was “Serving the Friendliest City under the Big Sky” (Figure 59). Even though some superficial reminders were removed, the essential

Figure 59. *Anaconda Leader* masthead before and after shutdown (top 1973, bottom 1981). (*Anaconda Leader* 1973, 1981)



economic identity of the community was still intact. A waitress at a local café indicated that, judging by what customers talked about after the smelter closed down, things had hardly changed at all. She said, “The punchers are still punching, and the cranemen are still driving crane, and the truckdrivers are still driving trucks” (Dewing 1986). It would seem that the complex dreams of smelting operations that Anacondans had dreamed for nearly a century were not over, but merely took a slightly different shape.

Anaconda needed to create a new image for itself as city officials sought to redevelop its decimated economy. When ARCO shut down the smelter, the corporation gave the city-county a \$3 million economic readjustment fund to help out in the redevelopment process. Before using that money, the community assessed its economic situation in the 1981 economic redevelopment plan. The introduction to the plan shows that the community was extremely aware of its economic plight. It notes:

The only opportunity for the community to recover from the smelter closure, hold its labor force, and stave off large scale population decline is to develop or attract new industry to the area. The community has been an industrial town since its founding in 1883, and without industry it has no future (Economic Development Administration 1981, 2).

But as the report continued, a small silver lining appeared when discussing the city’s opportunities for development now that the smoke is gone. “The smelter closure provided the unexpected benefit of ridding the local area of air pollution. The concept of a pristine environment can be a selling point for a community seeking economic development” (Economic Development Administration 1981, 66). Now that the stack no longer polluted the skies, the city was free to develop its recreational attractions to promote its tourist industry.

In post-shutdown Anaconda, dreams of heavy industry regularly faltered. In the absence of a large industry to rescue the city from its economic straits, city residents and leaders turned to tourism as the last best hope for the community. One city leader commented: “We’re hanging all of our ornaments on one tree—tourism” (Vine 1986). Perhaps, though, relying on a tourist economy was an act of quiet desperation for the community, because by almost any measure Anaconda did not have a strong tourist resumé. Tourism statistics for 1980 were not promising. In the year that led up to the smelter shutdown, the small tourism industry employed about 50 people and provided only one half of one percent of the city’s revenue, placing it 45th out of Montana’s 56 counties in terms of the importance of the industry to the local economy. In fact, the only large attraction that the city had was the smelter, which brought in about 2,000 visitors for tours during 1980. But by the time the community was trying to bolster its tourist industry, the smelter was closed, dismantled and no longer a part of the tourist landscape (Economic Development Administration 1981, 20).

A lack of a major tourist draw was an inhibiting factor in Anaconda’s tourist development, but the negative image that the traveling public had of the city would prove to stymie any effort at attracting visitors. In 1985, the city hired a consulting firm to prepare a tourism management plan for the community. The plan noted that while Anaconda has a lively industrial history, historic buildings, and friendly local residents, it had a serious image problem with which to contend. Many survey respondents used words like “unattractive, ugly, desolate, barren, and dead” to describe the community or worse, thought the community was not memorable at all. Over half of the visitors

mentioned the spectacular but distant stack as the first thing that came to mind when they thought of Anaconda. These image problems posed a serious challenge for developing a tourist industry in Anaconda (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 1985a).

Yet even before these data were gathered Anaconda had tried to put a better image on its urban identity. Almost immediately after the smelter closed, city leaders began a program of urban beautification that included extensive street landscaping and the dramatic nighttime illumination of the county courthouse. One resident recalls the tree planting efforts that were part of the makeover of the rough industrial landscape with a grin:

Their immediate answer was to plant trees.... They're all dead now.... An industrial sociologist will tell you that this is the first sign of hysteria. We will go back to the land...to planting trees, to the greenness, to the seed and the soil. That was the first thing that they did here, which to me was the first indication that the community was industrially dead (McKeon 1986).

Although these small efforts were well intended, judging from the reaction of survey respondents in 1985, they were not enough to remake Anaconda's longstanding image as a grim (post)industrial city.

Still Anaconda tied much of its economic fate to tourism. Stemming from the 1985 Tourism Management Plan, tourism development in Anaconda took a multifaceted approach that sought to tie the scenic mountains, forests, and lakes surrounding the city with the historic heritage of the community. Anaconda's first attempts at tourism following the smelter closure promoted their access to the nearby splendor of public lands that had escaped logging, mining and industrial degradation and pollution. The community tried to remake its identity as the "Gateway to the Pintlars" and "Halfway

Figure 60. “Anaconda, Montana: Halfway between Yellowstone and Glacier Parks,” 1985. (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 1985b)



between Yellowstone and Glacier Parks” (Anaconda Local Development Corporation ca. 1982) to become a recreational gateway city full of “space...silence...and clean air where the eagle flies” (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 1985b) (Figure 60). But the 1985 tourism management plan counseled against this tactic. The planning consultants said that while these promotions might bring people into the area, they might suggest that “Anaconda is a better base for exploring the surrounding area than it is a destination in and of itself.” Thus, if visitors were recreating in the mountains, then they would not likely spend the night in local hotels, eat at local restaurants, or in any way contribute to the community’s economy. The 1985 plan suggested instead that the Anaconda’s unique industrial heritage should be the city’s focus in its tourism marketing efforts. The consultants encouraged the city to make tourism “part of the fabric of life in Anaconda,” to “develop a theme for Anaconda,” and to “package the town into a series of experiences” (Anaconda Local Development Corporation 1985a, 19).

But even before the planning consultants suggested preserving heritage for tourism purposes, a group of ex-smelter workers had already created the Save our Stack committee, designed to preserve Anaconda's industrial heritage landscape. When ARCO shut down the smelter in Anaconda, it also shut down the refinery in Great Falls. Much to the dismay of many Great Falls residents, the company demolished the refinery stack. Some Anaconda residents worried that their smelter was next and so formed the Save the Stack committee. The group lobbied state legislators, raised money, and did everything they could to preserve the stack for future generations. Bob Vine, president of the committee, remembers the reasons why he wanted to save the community landmark:

I and others felt that it was a symbol, and we used this as a theme [of our presentations]. It's a symbol of the men and working-men and women that worked in the smelting and refining business in Montana—a monument to them. Deep down in my heart I felt that this is the only remains we have left—everything else is going to be gone. You could look at that mountain now, you could never know there was a smelter there unless you saw the stack (Vine 1986).

The stack was preserved and ultimately became a state park, even if only a state park to be viewed from a distance. By saving the Washoe smelter chimney from destruction, the community had preserved just the sort of heritage spectacle that the future tourist developers might value. Indeed, by 2000 the view of the Washoe smelter stack was integrated into the community's heritage landscape as the Short Stack Interpretive Site (Figure 61). The 2.2-acre site on the east side of the town is close to the smelter and features a replica of the stack's 60-foot interior diameter at the top, as well as a representation of the 86-foot diameter of the base. Looking over the short stack wall, the interior is filled with deep black slag that represents looking into the dark heart of the real stack. Around the memorial site, placards discuss the smelting process and the

Figure 61. Anaconda Smelter “Short Stack” interpretive site, 2005. (Author’s collection)



historic development of the smelting industry in Anaconda, while memorial bricks indicate the wide-ranging support for the project from community donors.

Anaconda has turned to its smelting heritage to remake its identity. Even the Anaconda Leader has reinserted the Washoe Smelter stack into its new masthead (Figure 62). Particularly, though, the results of a 1995 community visioning exercise articulated the perceptions that Anacondans had for their community. When asked to discuss the positive aspects of their community, residents’ continually commented on the qualities of small town life and the city’s historic quality. These comments contributed to the 1995 community vision statement that city officials drafted, which begins: “Anaconda-Deer

Figure 62. *Anaconda Leader* masthead, 2000

Lodge County will, as a Community, preserve our rich heritage and common values while retaining and enhancing our turn-of-the century image...” (Anaconda Deer-Lodge County Planning Board 2005, 1-5). Over the next few years Anaconda invested in a series of projects that sought to enhance the city’s heritage landscape. The community preserved and retrofitted the antique street lighting system that still lights 35 blocks of the Goosetown Historic District. The community has made additional efforts to preserve and restore the narrow lots, secondary rear residences, boardinghouses, and neighborhood bars in the working-class community. Other efforts to renovate the City Commons park at the center of the city and created the “short stack” interpretive site at the base of Smelter Hill illustrate the community’s attempts to enhance the city’s industrial heritage landscapes.

Old Works Golf Course

Perhaps the most impressive example of Anaconda’s newly-refurbished identity is the site of the Old Works smelter that has been redesigned and reimagined into the Old Works golf course. The Old Works golf course is located on the remains of the Upper and Lower Works smelters on the north side of Anaconda. The course represents one

development opportunity that actually occurred *because* of the hazardous waste left in place. Since the Old Works smelters were replaced and destroyed by the Anaconda Company in 1903, all of the masonry was left on site and the site was strewn with piles of rubble, slag, and an extensive flue system (Fiege 1985, 34-35). The acreage, so close to the city center, was a potential site for some kind of development, so when the city-county manager noticed a golf course sitting on an abandoned sawmill site in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, he thought that the same approach might be used in Anaconda. City officials liked the idea because it could possibly bring in sound economic development; ARCO liked the idea because it would cost only \$39 million to cap the contaminated soils in place but \$60 million to remove them (Shovers 2004, 69). Soon, ARCO conveyed the land to the city-county government and a group of local officials joined together to form the Arrowhead Foundation that would bring the idea to fruition. After advertising for course designs, the foundation chose Jack Nicklaus' design that incorporated the historic features of the smelter. In 1993, ARCO, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, and Nicklaus signed a \$1 million contract to construct the course (Shovers 2004, 67) (Figure 63).

With the help of the EPA, the Anaconda Company, and outside investors, 220 acres of Superfund site was capped, sealed, revegetated, and Jack Nicklaus-designed fairways and greens were arranged atop the smelter waste. The course incorporates decrepit smelter flues, roasters, and industrial waste into the world's first smelter-refuse themed golf course. To continue the smoke/smelter theme, pulverized black slag serves as the medium for the "sand" traps and even a few out-of-bounds toxic hot spots remain

Figure 63. Old Works golf course in Anaconda, 2004. (Montana Natural Resources Information System)



on the course (Figure 64). Although the Old Works appears to be a first rate golf course, Anaconda officials joke that it is not a golf course at all, but instead it's a creative irrigated mining cap. "Golf courses are not allowed under Superfund. But irrigated mining caps are" (Davison 2005). Nevertheless, by July 1997, Jack Nicklaus stood on the 18th green of the "irrigated mining cap" to dedicate the Old Works Golf Course.

The course received both immediate praise and contempt from local and national sources. The golf press raved about the course and in May 1999, *Golf Magazine* ranked the course the best public golf course in Montana. Mostly though, reports of the golf course were based on the transformation of the course. *Golf Magazine* reported: "In sum, hell with the fires burned out has been turned into a golf heaven by an unlikely consortium of town fathers, corporate chieftains, the Environmental Protection Agency— and the Golden Bear." Others were not enthusiastic about the new course. A vocal local

Figure 64. Slag traps at the Old Works golf course in Anaconda, 2004. (Author's collection)



contingent did not like the idea of the course and thought that the city should have tried harder to attract another “smokestack industry” (Shovers 2004, 67). The golf course, which the *High Country News* called “the world’s most ironic golf course” (Ring 1997), worried some environmentalists who saw capping the waste as only a maneuver to avoid a more expensive clean up. “It’s sleight of hand. They don’t have to do removal, they cap it. They don’t have to worry about cleaning groundwater. It’s absurd” (Robbins 1994). Additionally, the long term viability of the project is another concern of critics who worry that Anaconda Deer Lodge County lacks the funds to accomplish the future monitoring of the site without ARCO’s continued support (Shovers 2004, 69).

While the Old Works course may be enough of a spectacle to draw golfers from all 50 states each year, the overall economic benefit to the community is not as impressive. Milo Manning, a city leader involved in planning the golf course, explained the downside to the large numbers of out of state visitors: “We thought we would see a lot more economic development as a result of the golf course and it really hasn’t materialized like we’d thought. There are quite a few out-of-staters coming to play, but I don’t think they stay that long” (Manning 2005). Perhaps to remedy this situation, Anaconda local officials have been promoting a site for a golf resort that would entice golfers to stay longer. In 2002, a California-based developer proposed a \$6 million luxury resort on 2.38 acres adjacent to the course. The developer had even paid the county \$20,000 for the parcel and was preparing to break ground, when a disagreement between the developer and the general contractor caused the developer to abandon the project and the contractor to place liens on the property totaling around \$350,000. After coming so close to a resort hotel that would boost the economy, the county ultimately only received the parcel that is now tainted by liens.

The Old Works Golf Course is a vivid example of how Anaconda is trying to revision its Old West industrial landscape into a post-industrial, New West landscape. The Old Works smelter site, arguably like much of Anaconda, was a site that had been abused and abandoned by the company. Just as the golf course planners found unique value in the old smelter site and rehabilitated it into an asset, perhaps Anacondans might still transform some of the negative aspects of economic stagnation, population decline, and a very palpable industrial landscape into an asset for the community.

Conclusion

Even as Anacondans attempt to redream these liabilities into assets, populations ebb and few real economic development opportunities beckon. Population estimates for 2003 set Deer Lodge County population at 8,953 while Anaconda itself likely sits around 6,000. The population continues to age and young people continue to leave. School enrollment drops every year so that now only 1,325 students are enrolled in county schools, less than half of what enrollment was in 1980 (Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Planning Board 2005, 2-31). City leaders recognize the demographic problems the community is having: “There’s nobody around anymore. The workforce is gone. What you have is a lot of senior citizens... And your rest homes are expanding because they are running out of room. You start to think about the young kids, there’s nothing here, they’re leaving” (Manning 2005). City residents worry about a future filled with a withering population and the effects that will have on their community.

Anaconda’s Old West future is ensured at least for the short term. The degree to which city residents, planners, and officials can continue to cleanup the city, reinvent the city’s image, and build on potential heritage tourism ideas will decide how long the city will remain an Old West community.

CHAPTER FIVE: HAMILTON 1965-2005

By the late 1960s, the fruit orchards of the Bitterroot Valley that once lured so many with promises of leisurely living and bumper crops were undergoing a rapid conversion from irrigated agricultural land to subdivided homesites. In this modern reprise of the apple boom, Hamilton once again solidified its position as a middle landscape, but this incarnation features a more clearly defined contest to determine whose middle landscape it was going to be. Long time residents, seasonal residents, anti-government groups, pro-planning groups, wealthy residents, low income residents, environmentalists, and developers all converge in Hamilton after 1965 and add their individual visions of the middle landscape to the complex mixture. These sometimes-disparate groups contest how the area's scenic and recreational potential should be promoted, what the proximity to Missoula means to the community, and what role government should play in community development. These and other questions collide in modern Hamilton. The results are displayed in the community's New West landscape and identity. These contests and questions, however, ensure that the prospect of maintaining a middle landscape in Hamilton is more tenuous than ever.

This chapter explores Hamilton since the late 1960s. Since that time, amenity migrants, tourists, and second-home owners have stimulated economic and population growth. This chapter explores how new residents' visions of the community helped shape Hamilton's New West landscape and identity. Land use planning documents, photographs, and newspaper accounts are utilized to reconstruct the landscape of the New

West. Interviews with city officials and residents, promotional materials, newspaper accounts, and planning documents aid in uncovering Hamilton's New West identity.

The Subdivision Boom: 1965-1975

In the early 1960s, Hamilton's economy was seriously depressed. However, a combination of changing lifestyle preferences of older Americans and rapid urban growth in Missoula precipitated changes in the economy of the Bitterroot Valley. In Hamilton, the most notable changes came as the agricultural lands in the surrounding valley witnessed accelerating subdivision after 1965. The influx of new residents shaped the way that the community was marketed, as well as the way that the area landscape developed.

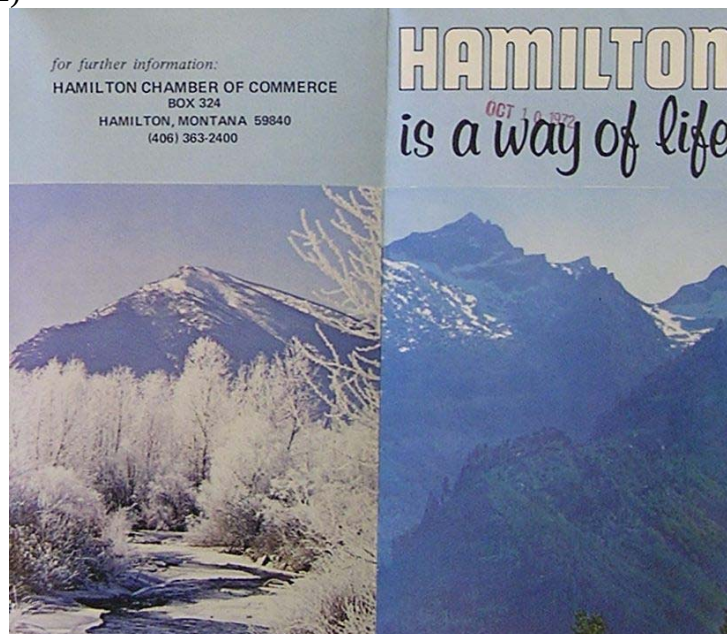
Subdivision Boom Place Identity

The *Western News* encouraged the community to consider tourism's economic potential to revive the area. By the logic of the *Western News*, the community needed to rely on a powerful triad of site and situation characteristics to revive its tourist economy. The first important factor was the presence of outside wealth. "There are always people of means, even in 'bad times' who have money to spend on recreation" the *Western News* argued, and these outsiders may choose to come and visit Hamilton. Second, the city needed to promote its access to scenery. The newspaper argued that the city's proximity to "marvelous scenery, lots of fresh clear water, an isolated wilderness area of vast acreage" would attract wealthy recreationists. Thirdly, the city had an excellent location due to its proximity to the larger urban center of Missoula. "The fact is that large

numbers of people come to the valley annually just for vacation and recreation purposes” and many of them came from or through Missoula (*Western News* 1961).

By the early 1970s, Hamilton built upon these key factors for attracting tourist development. The city began to market itself more aggressively to the wealthy out-of-state visitors that the *Western News* saw as integral to the future development of the city. Promotional materials created by city business leaders envisioned the community as the recreational center of the Bitterroot Valley. Images in a 1972 pamphlet showcased winter skiing, mountain meadows in the spring, fly fishing in the summer, and fall foliage along the Bitterroot River that signaled that Hamilton was indeed a destination “in every season.” The city was no longer merely a city, but now “Hamilton is a way of life” according to the title of a promotional pamphlet (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1972) (Figure 65).

Figure 65. “Hamilton is a way of life” pamphlet cover, 1972. (Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 1972)

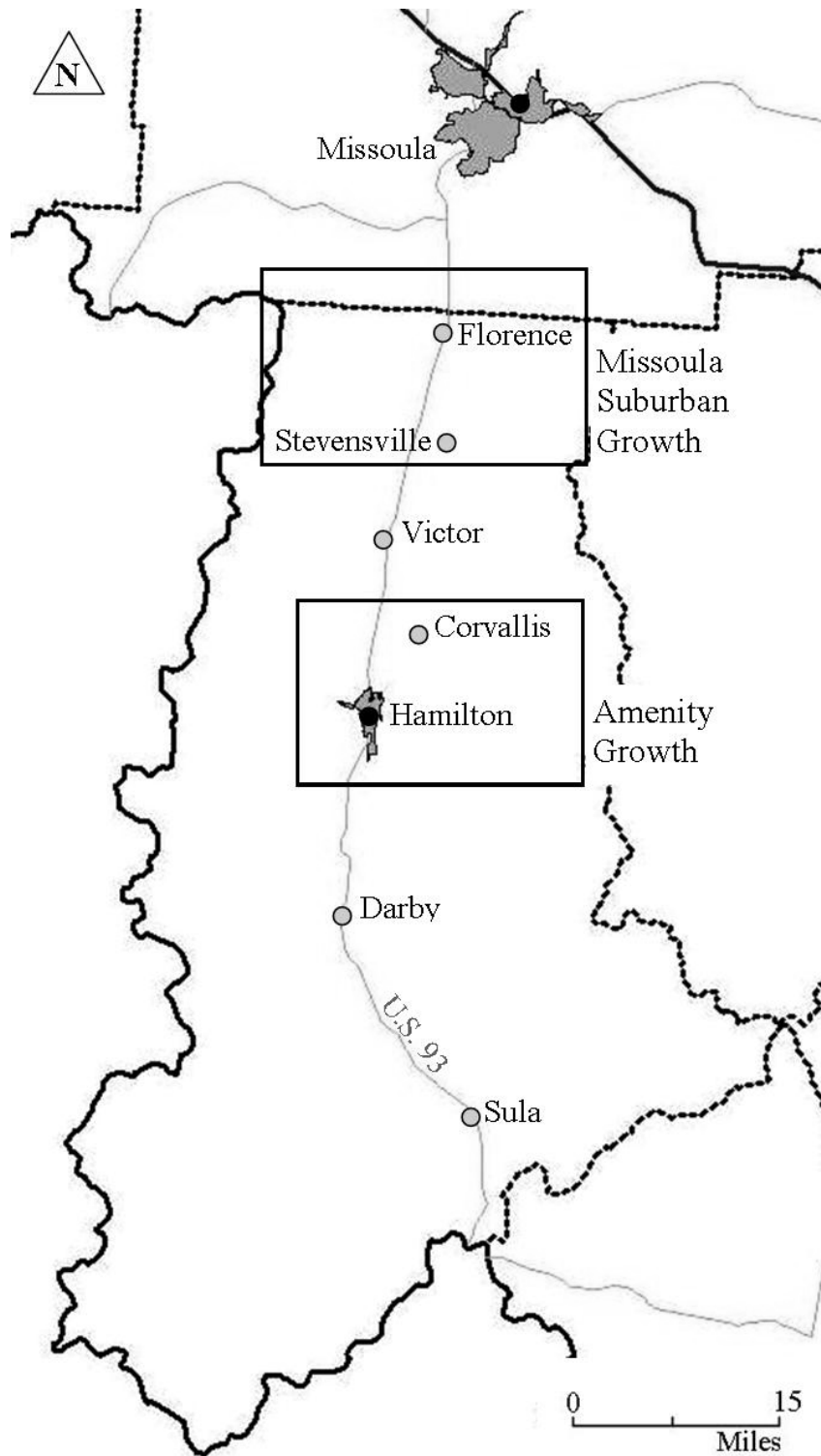


Just as the *Western News* had predicted, visitors flocked to the Bitterroot Valley. However, many decided not to be merely visitors but become residents. By the early 1970s a residential subdivision boom was sweeping through the valley. Many of the failed apple orchard plats that had reverted to agricultural land were once again being subdivided and replatted. Agricultural land surrounding Hamilton was subdivided and populated by wealthy out-of-state interests that had begun to value the Bitterroot Valley not only as a place to visit, but also as a place to live seasonally or retire. Like the apple gentry that had come 60 years earlier, another wave of amenity migrants sought the Hamilton “way of life” and were rapidly settling Hamilton’s rural hinterland.

Landscape of Subdivisions

The incipient rural subdivision boom began quickly. A Ravalli County subdivision inventory report in 1973 indicated the rapidity of the development. In 1965, 2,675 acres of rural land were subdivided in the county, a number that increased steadily until the county recorded subdivision of 13,808 acres in 1972 (Montana Division of Planning and Economic Development 1973, 8). The widespread subdivision had a distinct ownership geography that mirrored the reasons behind the subdivisions. This geographic distribution did not escape Ravalli County officials as the 1973 report posited that “The rural land subdivision is encouraged by suburban pressures of Missoula in the northern portion of the county and by retirement or recreational stimuli in the southern area” (Montana Division of Planning and Economic Development 1973, 15) (Figure 66). The ownership statistics for the county confirm the pattern. Half of the acreage was purchased by Ravalli County residents, but the other half was divided almost equally

Figure 66. Clusters of subdivision growth in Ravalli County in the 1970s. (Map by Author)



among Missoula County residents and out of state residents. The spatial division of the subdivision likely fell along those lines with Missoula County residents subdividing property to make way for Missoula sprawl in the northern part of the valley, while out of state owners were subdividing for leisure pursuits around Hamilton.

The origins of the out-of-state subdivision activity had its own distinct regional geography. Ownership was heavily weighted toward the western states, from which seventy-five percent of the out-of-state property was owned. Of the out-of-state ownership, California residents were the biggest owners. Californians alone made up nearly half of the out of state property ownership. These out-of-state buyers, especially Californians, played a significant role in shaping the rural subdivision landscape. By 1973, the average Californians purchased eleven-acre lots, twice the lot size of the average Ravalli County resident (Montana Division of Planning and Economic Development 1973, 42). These statistics illustrate that the purposes of the in-state and out-of-state owners were different. The out-of-state owners were more oriented toward becoming landed gentry around Hamilton, while the in-state tended more toward the Missoula suburban development in northern Ravalli County. Located in the heart of the Bitterroot Valley, Hamilton was discovered by western amenity migrants, not sought after by Missoula County suburbanites. The subdivision boom began to consume land around Hamilton and already by 1972 over 5,000 acres of the 40,000 acres that surrounded the city had been platted and subdivided (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 45).

Data on the early subdivision boom show that new residents were contributing to shifting economic and demographics in Hamilton. A 1972 planning document included a top-heavy population pyramid that revealed that over one third of Hamilton's residents were over the age of 55. From this data planners concluded that "most of Hamilton's growth since 1960 has resulted from retired or semi-retired people being attracted to the area" (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 32). These older migrants to Hamilton preferred to live outside the city limits in larger tracts of land and so the population outside of the city was growing much more rapidly than it was inside the city. This is illustrated by the different rates of growth in reported population statistics. From 1960 to 1970 Ravalli County's population grew by nearly twenty percent while Hamilton's population grew by only one percent. It would seem that most of the early subdivision growth was not occurring in Hamilton. However, planners in 1972 delineated a 40,000 acre Hamilton "sphere of influence" that revealed a more striking growth pattern (Figure 67). From 1960 to 1970 the Hamilton planning area grew from 4,100 to 6,150 people, a fifty percent population increase. The same pattern occurred in the 1970s as Hamilton grew by only seven percent, but the Hamilton planning area grew at a much faster rate (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 36).

Even though the population growth was occurring largely outside the city limits, the effects of this rise were felt throughout the community. The beginnings of stress on the local community were evident in a comment by one long-time resident, looking back on the 1970s:

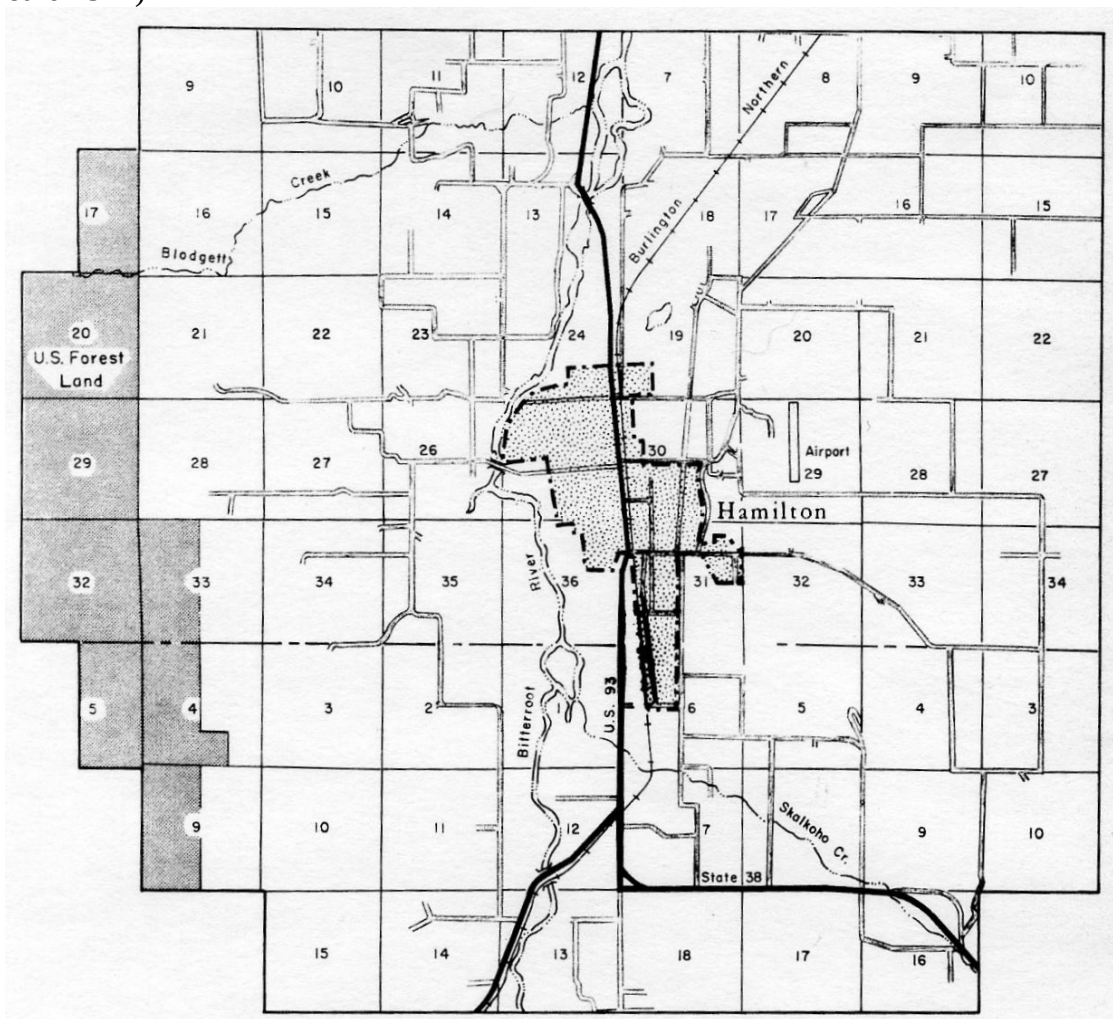
In the last ten to fifteen years people [have been] coming in and buying up the property...I can't understand why they pick the Bitterroot, because I think there's

other places in the state of Montana that would be better than the Bitterroot, but there's an awful influx of people in the Bitterroot (Thorning 1982)

When he was asked why everyone was moving to the valley he simply responded: "Its quiet, you can get out in the woods...there are people who like that" (Thorning 1982).

Demographic data from Hamilton in the 1960s and 1970s confirms that indeed, "there are people who like that," and those people tended to be older retirees who prefer to live outside of the city.

Figure 67. Hamilton's "sphere of influence," 1972. (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972)



The sudden demand for the land in the Bitterroot Valley changed the economic landscape around Hamilton. Not since the apple orchard development boom had land around Hamilton been so valuable. The old apple orchard lands, often sold based on the original apple orchard plats, were being sold for prices ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 per acre in 1972, a dramatic increase over what they had been worth only a few years earlier (Montana Division of Planning and Economic Development 1973, 14). One Hamilton resident commented on his remorse for not buying up more of the land when it was so cheap after the apple boom: “There were hundreds of acres around here where...you’d see vacant houses and old orchards that had gone back [to agriculture]. This land was available and I’ve often thought ‘I should have bought it,’ because when we hit this last boom that land went for hundreds of dollars an acre” (McKee 1983).

Indeed, with enough foresight, a Hamilton investor could have made a considerable sum of money, but the other side of the equation challenged the traditional agricultural economy in the community. One Bitterroot farmer was forced to sell his 19,000 acres in 1972 when his children did not want to take over the farm. He explained: “It was not easy but we didn’t want to get into debt” (Thorning 1982). Similarly, during the 1970s thousands of acres of farmland changed hands from farmer to developer to private property owner. As the land shifted uses and wealthy retirees and semi-retirees came to the area, the economic landscape changed. Some Hamilton old-timers were unsure about the newcomers moving into the community and buying up the expensive land. One old-timer could not understand the new economic setting of which he was now

a part: “What I can’t figure out is what they’re doing, what they’re living on, maybe that’s the change that’s come. They must be creating their own work” (Lockwood 1982).

A Growing Community: 1975-1990

Many of the newcomers to the Hamilton area were not creating their own work at all, but instead were part of a new growth-based economy. The early years of the population boom in Hamilton indicate that the new migrants brought distinct visions of their new home—visions that necessitated a middle landscape.

Place Identity in the Growing Community

Migrants continued to flock to Hamilton to enjoy the Bitterroot Valley’s scenery and recreation while simultaneously living on Hamilton’s urban services. By the mid 1970s, real estate advertisements in the local newspapers promoted Hamilton’s distinctive position as the center of the recreational hinterland and possessor of city services. Attention grabbing headlines such as “Best of Two Worlds” highlighted how one house was “close to town with all of town’s advantages yet 1.5 acres allows for country style living.” Another property with the headline of “Close to Town” was on “a quiet country road” that offered “a panoramic view of the valley.” Yet still others asked the potential home buyer “Are you looking for end of the road privacy without end of the road problems?” (*Ravalli Republic* 1978). The dream of having the “best of two worlds” impacted the community’s planning efforts as well as how the city’s landscape developed.

Landscape of the Growing Community

The “end of the road problems” that the real estate advertisements spoke of, were not only real concerns for homeowners, but for the city and county as well. To deal with the rapid subdivision growth on county land outside the city, the City of Hamilton and Ravalli County both turned toward comprehensive planning studies.

Planning the Rural Subdivision Landscape. Through the early boom years in the Bitterroot Valley there was very little regulation on growth. Neither Ravalli County nor the City of Hamilton had a plan that foresaw, much less regulated, such growth. The rapid development of Hamilton’s hinterland during the late 1960s and early 1970s prompted the city to form the Hamilton Planning Board and hire a planning consultant to help prepare a comprehensive plan for the area. At the opening public meeting as part of this planning study, the Chairman’s comments spoke to the need for planning in the city: “The past was beautiful and it is gone. The present is great and it is changing. The future is beyond our control UNLESS we study what we have, and what we need, and what we can do to assure the orderly and desirable development of our community” (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 4). Foremost among the future issues that the planners recognized was the growth of rural subdivisions. If rural subdivisions were not somehow integrated into the urban infrastructure the effects on the city residents would be serious.

The planning report indicated:

The desire of many to live in the rural areas will result in continued residential growth outside the city. This development can endanger the water supply for some due to sewage wastes. It tends to add school busing and other costs which must be paid by the taxpayers as a whole (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 58).

The planners urged the city to look toward creating a subdivision plan and regulations for the outlying areas beyond the city limits. Even at this early stage of subdivision development around Hamilton, there were warning signs of future problems with that type of land use pattern.

At the county level, other themes emerged in the land use planning effort. During the comprehensive planning process, the county recognized that in order to maintain a healthy growth rate, they must protect the nature and city service-based elements that were driving growth. Thus, planners set a series of goals that were “centered on the proposition that the county citizens cherish the rural life style” and “encourage those policies and plans that promote our natural environment and would appeal to the public for their recreation, touring wants and retirement living” (Ravalli County Planning Board 1976, 4). To achieve these goals the 1976 comprehensive plan set goals to protect the natural landscape while monitoring development. The plan called for aesthetic consideration with subdivision development to protect the views that continued to draw visitors and residents to the valley:

The manmade parts of Ravalli County’s landscape should be compatible with the natural environment in the county. Any future construction within the county should blend with, enhance or otherwise fit into the natural world of the Bitterroot Valley. No manmade project should be a blot upon the landscape (Ravalli County Planning Board 1976, 20).

The planners argued that if the valley continued to develop as it had in the past few years then valley vistas would be seriously compromised. The plan stated that “Some sort of order is needed if the growth of Ravalli County’s population...is not to produce a rural slum and a blighted landscape” and it concluded that “a sprawl of eyesores the length of

the Bitterroot Valley will please no one” (Ravalli County Planning Board 1976, 21).

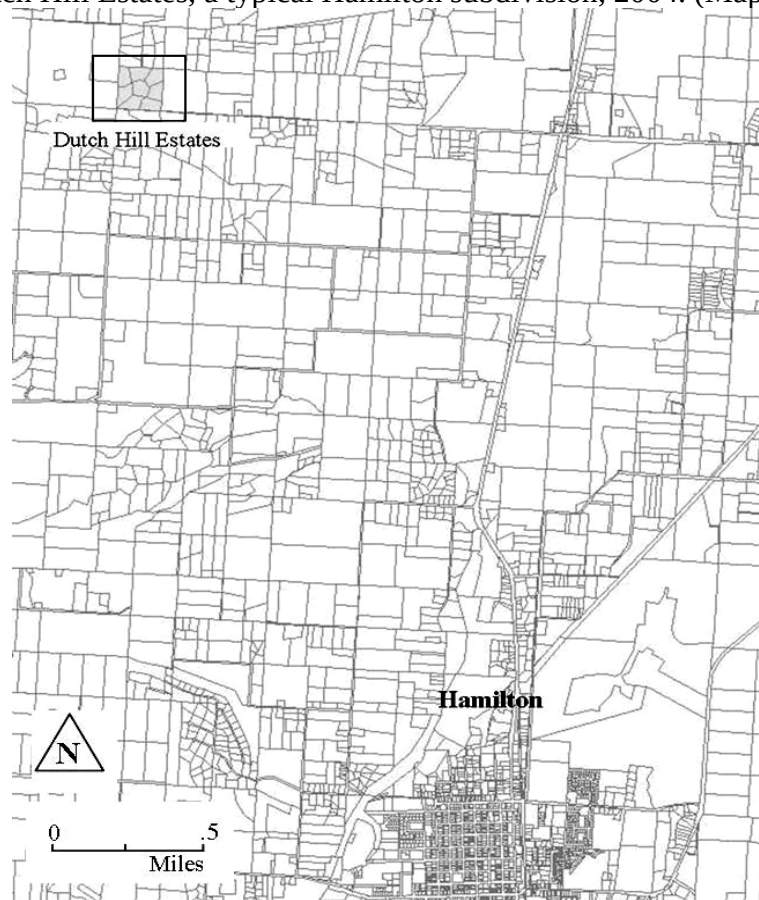
Here, Ravalli County planners recognized the powerful impact that widespread development could have on the landscape. By painting the landscape in words usually reserved for larger metropolitan cities, the planners warned against upsetting the delicate balance between nature and city.

Surely, this sort of language was intended to motivate Ravalli County officials to establish a stricter regulatory structure that would guide development on county land. Instead, the county planners proposed a number of alternative measures to county-wide zoning such as community, voluntary neighborhood, special county zoning districts, in order to “avoid the pitfalls, rigidity, and control that county-wide zoning might create” (Ravalli County Planning Board 1976, 21). A serious attempt at broad county-wide planning in the area would have to wait until the future, when perhaps vistas filled with “rural slum” and a “sprawl of eyesores” would prompt the county to respond.

There were many subdivision projects around Hamilton during the initial subdivision boom. These early subdivisions differed little from the more recent land developments. One example of a typical development is Dutch Hill Estates subdivision located northwest of the Hamilton city center. This 1996 project subdivided a 40-acre plot into eight, five-acre parcels (Figure 68). Considering the widespread subdivision that had already occurred in the surrounding area, the project may have seemed inconsequential to some residents. Yet this project is representative of the struggles inherent in placing a new subdivision within the county.

As part of the planning process, the county board assessed the potential impacts of the subdivision upon agriculture, agricultural water users, local services, natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and public health and safety. Opponents of the subdivision argued that the proposal would negatively affect each of the areas of concern. One resident commented, “I don’t think we should be guessing. I get concerned when I look around and see all the subdivision lots for sale, and continue approving more.” This resident saw overdevelopment as a real concern in the community, and even called for “a moratorium on all subdivisions until we have some real data” (Hopkin 1996). Despite the controversy, the subdivision was ultimately approved. The result is a typical subdivision,

Figure 68. Dutch Hill Estates, a typical Hamilton subdivision, 2004. (Map by Author)



virtually indistinguishable from the many other five-acre subdivided lots, with unconnected curvilinear streets that surround Hamilton. In the eyes of some residents, the development of subdivisions such as Dutch Hill Estates meant that the “rural slum” that planners had warned about was now visible on the landscape.

Planning the Urban Landscape. The expansion of subdivisions in the county also had effects on Hamilton’s urban landscape. The planners comments indicate that the city’s core and residential areas were well planned and in adequate condition:

The central business district is one of the better planned areas. It presents a good impression for the community. Likewise, the Hamilton City residential area is well laid out according to the 1890 city plan. The nice lawns, trees and landscaping are a credit to the community. Schools, and churches appear well dispersed throughout the city to conveniently serve the population of the city (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 45).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the residential areas and central business district had seen a few changes. Residential development infilled the original city blocks and the Rocky Mountain Laboratory employed around 150 people. Services for residents increased when the new Marcus Daly Hospital was built in 1975 on west Main Street. Most notably the Hamilton Hotel, a Main Street landmark since 1900, was razed and a service station put in its place. The new service station highlights a key theme in Hamilton’s changing city center. The new gas station did not front onto Main Street, as the Hamilton Hotel previously had, but instead faced U.S. Highway 93.

As subdivisions sprouted in Hamilton’s hinterland, U.S. 93 increasingly dominated the local commercial landscape. New land, new buildings, and new services pulled Hamilton consumers away from downtown and toward the emerging strip that ran

through the city. Planners believed, however, that this new strip threatened the valuable image of the city. The planners saw the U.S. 93 strip as a blight on the city's image and indicated that: "The present appearance of US Highway 93 in Hamilton and near the city leaves much to be desired... [while it] should be one which attracts the tourist, causes all visitors to recognize a pleasing and well kept city and encourages the citizens of the area to take pride in Hamilton" (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 64). Instead, the strip showed an unsightly "mixture of residential, industrial and commercial development scattered along the three mile stretch. Numerous gasoline and fuel storage yards are adjacent and inside of the central business district" (Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972, 45). The unplanned commercial strip was not only deemed an eyesore by city planners, but perhaps more destructively the road was becoming an increasingly important part of the urban commercial scene. Whereas previously most commerce was conducted in Hamilton's CBD, increasingly consumer shopping was migrating to the U.S. 93 strip. New standalone shopping centers, surrounded by parking and new facilities took a decided edge in fighting for consumer dollars in Hamilton.

By 1980, the CBD which earlier "was one of the better planned areas" and "presents a good impression for the community," increasingly stood in the economic shadow of U.S. 93 strip development. In 1980, a group of city business leaders proclaimed that the CBD had a "bad case of the urban uglies" and asked, "Is their life left in downtown Hamilton?" While the Hamilton Development Commission's short-lived and ill-received project, "Mainstreet: Mall of the '80s" never materialized, the questions they raised highlight downtown Hamilton's struggles within the shadow of the unsightly,

but commercially successful U.S. 93 corridor (*Ravalli Republic* 1980a, 1980b). The emergence of the U.S. 93 commercial strip and the decline of Hamilton's traditional urban core represent some of the effects that the continued development of the hinterland had in the city.

Becoming New West: 1990-2005

Since 1990, population growth has continued in Hamilton. During the 1990s, Ravalli County was the fastest growing county in Montana and one of the fastest growing counties in the entire United States, as measured by percentage change in population. Over the ten year period, the county grew by 44 percent with four to six percent per year growth occurring between 1991 and 1996. Land development kept pace with the population growth during the 1990s. Subdivision approvals in Ravalli County increased over the course of the decade, peaking in 1996. In 1991, the county approved subdivision for 124 lots on 433 acres for an average lot size of 3.5 acres. Those numbers rose steadily each year until 1996 when the county approved 521 lots on 4,800 acres for an average lot size of over 9 acres. Since then, the number of approvals has varied. In 2001, the county only approved 148 lots on 658 acres for a lot size of 4.5 acres, while in 2005, the county approved 702 lots on 1,600 acres for an average lot size of 2.3 acres (Ravalli County Planning Board 2004).

Concomitant with the subdivision of the Bitterroot Valley, the housing economy, replete with homebuilders, real estate agents, and associated industries also bloomed and added housing stock to the county at a staggering rate. Housing starts in the county

increased from 257 in 1991, to a high of 501 in 1994, and fell back to 396 by 2001. Not only were more homes being built, but the nature of the homes and homeowners were changing. One homebuilder commented, “We are seeing higher-end homes now than when the valley was building in the 1970s. We saw the same thing in the 1970s but it seemed to be families moving in. Now it seems they are retired” (Kiewit 1992b).

Accordingly, average home prices in Ravalli County rose from \$61,500 in 1990, to \$135,000 in 2000, and finally to \$168,500 in 2004. The strong real estate market in the early 1990s helped to double the number of real estate agents in two years from 70 in 1990, to 154 in 1992 (*Ravalli Republic* 1992). The number of businesses also increased in the early 1990s and continues to increase today. The Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce, headquartered in Hamilton, saw their membership jump from 189 in 1990, to 370 in 1992, and to 573 in 2005 (Kiewit 1992b). Even the local U-Haul representative noticed a pattern in the migration as more U-Haul trucks were dispatched to Hamilton from Seattle and Sacramento than from anywhere else. While the raw numbers may be underwhelming, the high rates of growth are evidence that the development-oriented economy is booming in the Hamilton area.

Migrants continue to move to the area, bringing with them different values, experiences, and visions of what their ideal middle landscape should be. Public discourse analysis and landscape observations help identify how both new migrants and old residents continue to transform Hamilton’s contemporary place identity and landscape.

Creating a New West Identity

Even as the Bitterroot Valley continued to grow, Hamilton received national attention for its qualities as a place to visit, live, and retire. In 1987, Rand McNally's *Retirement Places Rated* publication ranked Hamilton as the 18th best place to retire in the United States. This type of press reinforced itself and more people came to visit the area each year. Increasingly, visitors considered relocating to the area. During the peak of the summer tourist season in 1990, the Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce, located in Hamilton, received 557 relocation requests, their most ever. The following year, they received 850 (Kiewit 1992a). As accolades and relocation requests poured in for the city, the *Ravalli Republic* asked "What is the valley doing to get this kind of free publicity?" and answered "Just being its sweet self, it seems" (Rhodes 1987). There were other reasons besides just being "sweet," though, that people flock to Hamilton in large numbers.

Throughout the 1990s and until today, migrants have been coming to Hamilton for its combination of natural beauty and small town life—indeed, Hamilton continues to be something of a middle landscape for retirees and semi-retirees. Initially, the small town lifestyle and natural beauty lure visitors and potential residents to the area, but the urban amenities such as healthcare, convenient location, and city services makes it possible for them to move there. When talking about either their own reasons for relocating to Hamilton, or the perceived reasons for others moving to the city, residents note several characteristics that help define its middle landscape.

Natural Beauty. A special section in the March 3, 1992 edition of the *Ravalli Republic* started with the headline, “The Bitterroot Valley has been targeted as the place to live” (Figure 69). Another headline offered the reason for the influx of newcomers when it posited that “The Valley’s natural beauty is attracting urban refugees.” The article began:

Perhaps nothing draws and holds residents to the Bitterroot Valley more than does its resources. Its mountains, forests, lakes, streams and river, clear air, wildlife and wilderness are immeasurably attractive. The beauty of this place and endless recreational opportunities, more than anything else, attract new residents who seek to do business here, raise their children, or retire (*Ravalli Republic* 1992)

These urban refugees that the *Republic* speaks of seem to indicate the same thing—the beauty of the valley is what initially prompted them to migrate to Hamilton. Resident descriptions of their first visit to the Bitterroot Valley are easy to find, and many of them have a similar storyline that ends with the individual being struck by the natural beauty.

Figure 69. “The Bitterroot Valley has been targeted as a place to live,” 1992 (*Ravalli Republic* March 3, 1992).

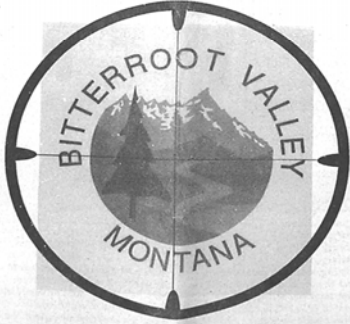
The Bitterroot Valley Has Been Targeted as the Place to Live

Nowhere is the growth of the Bitterroot Valley more obvious than in the area of construction of new homes and businesses.

Ravalli County is growing. We are the second fastest growing county — second only to Flathead County — in the state. In this, the second issue of the *Ravalli Republic's* series on growth, we'll focus on the housing boom, some of the costs associated with increased population and what's being done to plan for the future.

According to the 1990 figures compiled by the local board of realtors, agents sold \$30 million

worth of residential, bare land and commercial property. They sold 310 homes with an average



price of \$69,160. The realtors sold 155 bare land parcels for \$3.5 million. In January of 1990, there were 70 agents on the MLS roles. This January there were 154 agents.

Some have estimated that the county population will reach 100,000 by the year 2000. County leaders will have to decide what path development is going to follow.

For many, the valley's growth is a double-edged sword. On one hand, their businesses are doing well but the quality of their lives has diminished due to greater population pressures.

One resident shared his transcendent moment while driving south from Missoula to Hamilton. He recounts:

A long straight stretch of road where the valley floor is flat and covered with farmland, and where the snowcapped Bitterroot Mountains on the west and the Sapphire Mountains on the east rise abruptly from the valley. I was overwhelmed by the beauty and scale of it; I had never seen anything like it before. It filled me with a sense of peace, and with an extraordinary perspective on my place in the world (Diamond 2005, 28).

Other residents, when asked about why people move to Hamilton had similar, if less personal encounters with place. One resident answered: “Because you walk out the door and there it is. It’s right there. I mean everywhere you turn in the valley you see the national forest. And that is why many of the new residents have moved here, because of that view” (Bull 2005). Another resident answered why so many wealthy people choose to have second homes in the area. He answered:

The reason everyone else chooses to come to Hamilton... I think if you look at the people that make up the town of Hamilton, these are generally people that love the outdoors, that are a little bit health conscious, like to hike, like to fly-fish, maybe hunt. Its people that enjoy being in the outdoors. You take that and combine that into an area like the Bitterroot Valley where you’ve got the mountain ranges, both the Bitterroots as well as the Sapphires. Its Gods country, it’s the last great place (Guzik 2005).

The beauty and the associated mountain recreation are the major draw for many seasonal visitors, part time residents, and full time retirees.

These types of amenity-seeking migrants have an effect on the valley surrounding Hamilton. The Bitterroot National Forest director commented that “as the hordes continue to move up and down these scenic canyons it is going to have an impact” (Bull 2005). Joe Petrusitis, Mayor of Hamilton, is also concerned but does not see the same picture in the city that the Forest Service sees in the surrounding wilderness. The Mayor

commented that “the older people don’t get out there hiking that much. I think there were more people hiking and camping in the old days then there are now. People today want all the comforts of big city life. There again it is a different kind of person moving in” (Petrusitis 2005).

City Services. The “comforts of big city life” that the Mayor spoke of are also an important part of Hamilton’s growth equation. According to many migrant narratives, it was more than simply the beautiful vistas and opportunities for outdoor recreation that drew people to Hamilton—it was also the small town life. One resident placed both nature and city as part of the quality of life that drew her to the community. “It was the quality of life up here,” she commented, “it was the outdoors, the openness, and also the small town life” (Wade 2005). Just as in Hamilton’s past, new residents are willing to live in the natural beauty of the Bitterroot Valley only if there are the accompanying city services that make up part of the “small town life.”

Similar to real estate advertisements in the 1970s, one of the most popular selling points for a property is access to city services such as paved roads, city water, and proximity to urban retailing. These urban traits complement the nearby natural beauty and provide an attractive package of large, beautiful acreages with easy access to the city and its associated services. One can buy a “New Home with Big Views” that sits on “8 plus acres with irrigation. Room for your animals. Location is great and paved road. Country feeling.” Or enjoy “Comfortable Country Living” that offers “country living yet only 10 minutes from town.” However, the most spectacular offering might be the “Montana Luxury Lifestyle” that offers “Seclusion at its best...that is just 20 minutes

from Missoula or Hamilton and is just off a paved county road” (Bitterroot Valley Board of Realtors 2005).

While these real estate advertisements appear to offer the finest in middle landscape living, often these promises are difficult for the municipal government to support. Inevitably in these types of settings, the City of Hamilton ends up providing many more services than they have population. Dale Huhtanen, a local official involved in city government in the 1990s, is concerned about how the outlying areas siphon services from the city. He says that people “move in on the fringe but they don’t want to annex into the city, but they want as many of the services as they can get, but they don’t want to pay for the services, so they will wait until they are forced to come in.” He continued. “But you don’t get the tax base for four or five years. That lag in the tax base really hurts for providing services” (Huhtanen, 2005). Physical services such as road maintenance and police services are just a few of the strains that Hamilton faces.

Huhtanen continues:

When I was working for the city...people would say, ‘Why do you need fourteen police officers?’ Well you need fourteen police officers because you are serving twice the population. We had nothing statistically, but we could say that the population was 3,700 but we probably served 5,000 everyday. I mean I would have just loved to put a tollbooth up on some of the roads to help pay for some of the services (Huhtanen 2005).

Thus, by locating near the city many recent migrants receive more than their fair share of city services.

Hamilton: The Anti-California. For a century, Hamilton’s identity has been painted in terms of what is—a small city surrounded by beauty—and what it is not—a

large city surrounded by urban problems. The wholesale denial of large city life is largely a reaction to newcomers' experiences and old timers' perceptions of urban problems.

Invariably, California is cited as the epitome of urban problems. Californians have had a large impact on Hamilton's development. During the 1990s, over half of the Chamber of Commerce's total relocation requests came from Californians, most of the U-Haul trucks arriving in Hamilton came from California, and an inordinately large portion of subdivided land in the valley went to California land owners. It is clear that

"Californians" (often loosely defined as any wealthy out-of-state newcomer) have a presence in Hamilton. In response to the "California invasion," Hamilton residents are careful to set themselves apart from the problems they either experienced or perceive in California.

One resident tells of a conversation he has had with many California transplants:

"'Why did you move from California?'" he asks.

They always gave one of two answers: 'Well I didn't like the people there, it was too crowded, smoggy, I just didn't have any good neighbors.' Or they would say 'Well I was surrounded by orange groves...but they pulled up the orange trees, planted houses, and now it is too crowded' (Kyle 2005).

According to this observation the reasons to move from California are to either escape the ills of city life including congestion, rude people, and pollution, or to escape overdevelopment. These urban refugees come to Hamilton, and compare it to the California they recently left. One set of California transplants recounts their West Coast visits: "Nowadays, after each of my monthly four-day visits to California, I want to get out of there: I feel, 'They're like rats in a cage!'" The new Hamiltonian continues, "As an example of what I don't like about California, I was recently back there for a meeting,

and I took a walk on the town street. I noticed that people coming in the other direction lowered their eyes and avoided eye contact with me” (Diamond 2005, 66). Again, the associated ills of city life are readily apparent in California. Hamilton is the antithesis of that—a small city noted for its friendly small town people and beautiful uncrowded land.

There are problems, though, with the influx of Californians into the area. Not all of the local residents appreciated the wave of newcomers. One long time resident had no place for the Californians who came into the area and tried to tell him how to run his ranch, and imported new ideas for life in Hamilton. He commented that “for these people I wish a hard winter,” with the understanding that a excessively cold winter would effectively drive out any Californians. Some new residents felt the effects of this type of animosity. One California transplant remembered:

When I first got here, everyone was from California. You almost didn’t say you were from California because it was a bad word. And I don’t get that anymore. If you go through back issues of the *Ravalli Republic* back in 1995 every week there would be some kind of slam against the newcomers and the Californians—‘Don’t Californicate’” (Wade 2005).

While there have been, and will likely continue to be, tensions between the new Californians and the long time Hamilton residents, both groups share the fundamental belief that Hamilton represents an anti-California. In California, a once beautiful and desirable place to live, the balance between city and nature that held for so long became lopsided on the side of development. In order to avoid the same fate, and preserve the middle landscape way of life, Hamilton residents old and new alike denounce the overdevelopment that is associated with California.

Planning for the Middle Landscape. Preserving the ideal middle landscape amidst rapid growth has been problematic for Hamilton. In recent years, city and county officials have begun to use the tools of land use planning to preserve the Bitterroot Valley. Indeed, planning board and city council meetings have been key sites for contesting differing versions of the middle landscape. As such, the planning process highlights the tensions inherent when there are so many differing place identities.

Hamilton has a tradition of strong conservative political attitudes. Some of the consequences of these attitudes have been manifest in the traditional opposition to land use planning. Representing the extreme fringe of the Bitterroot Valley population, groups of survivalists and polygamists oppose government involvement of any kind. While neither of these groups are involved in the planning process, other less extreme county residents oppose heavy government involvement. Thus, when regulatory planning measures were proposed in 1970s, a majority of Ravalli County landowners felt that individuals, not governments, should have ultimate control over private land use.

However, as the boom of the 1990s occurred and landowners saw subdivisions sprout all around them and their visions of the middle landscape begin to disappear, feelings toward government involvement in land use slowly changed. Steve Powell, Ravalli County Commissioner in the 1990s explained: “With increasing growth pressure, the same people who used to be anti-government are now concerned about growth. They say that their favorite recreation area is becoming crowded, and they now admit that there have to be rules” (Diamond 2005, 65). A 1993 survey of Ravalli County residents quantified the change in attitude, and found that survey respondents overwhelmingly

identified the need for planning as the most important issue facing the county (Swanson 2001). This apparent concern, though, has yet to translate into a successful attempt at significantly increasing the presence of planning in Ravalli County.

Through the heady growth years in the mid 1990s, the county struggled forward with a woefully outdated 1981 comprehensive plan. In 1998, the county headed an effort to update the old plan with a document known as Vision 2020. This document argued that “throughout the County, unique communities and neighborhoods are threatened by unplanned growth” (Ravalli County Planning Board 1998, 4). Promoters of the Vision 2020 update appreciated the policy statements that would protect agricultural land from development, adopt impact fees on new developments, plan for the U.S. 93 corridor, protect riparian areas from development, and place regulations on subdivision size. As might be expected, the very mention of planning divided the community. Groups such as Bitterrooters for Planning praised the document as “logical, controlled growth that protects our resources and values, yet provides for the desired stimulation and reward that growth brings to the citizens of Ravalli County” (Dey 1998a). Alternatively, the Ravalli County Coalition of Concerned Citizens argued against the master plan update because “a vote for Vision 2020 gives them the right to control property rights” (Dey 1998b). Amidst fierce public debate, Vision 2020 found its way to the ballot in 1998 and was defeated by county voters 5,767 to 4,508. Looking back on the Vision 2020 fight, one engaged resident remembered: “I realized that when I read the 2020 document that those planners were way too progressive for this county. It was a beautiful plan but it didn’t stand a rats chance in hell” (Wade 2005).

In 2004, Ravalli County residents were involved in another planning effort with the Ravalli County Growth Policy. A Growth Policy is not a regulatory document but is a set of long range goals that aim at guiding future growth. The planners felt it necessary to print in boldface type “The Growth Policy is not a regulation, and it must recognize and respect individual property rights” (Ravalli County Planning Board 2004, 2). Ravalli county residents debated this document fiercely and in time it gained widespread support. The *Ravalli Republic* printed comments from residents that illustrate the role of the middle landscape myth in the creation and adoption of the new Growth Policy. One resident said, “I think we need one. If we don’t control [growth], it’s going to look like California—we’ll just have one-acre lots around here” (Green 2004). Another resident saw planning as a means to halt the continuing decline of his middle landscape dream: “We need more management of what’s happening to us. My neighborhood used to be country, and then it was suburbia, and now its commercial sprawl” (Green 2004). Planning initiatives illustrate the visions that country officials and residents have of their community. In these two planning initiatives we see the power that the middle landscape idea holds in Ravalli County and in Hamilton.

Creating a New West Landscape

The power of the idea of the middle landscape extends further than just into the resident narratives, planning documents, and public discourse. It is written onto Hamilton’s landscape in important ways.

The wave of incoming migrants in search of the middle landscape has changed Hamilton. Migrants with visions of country living with city amenities impose that vision

on the land; moreover, they bring their previous experience with them to their new home.

One resident offered a small scale, but illustrative example. She recounted:

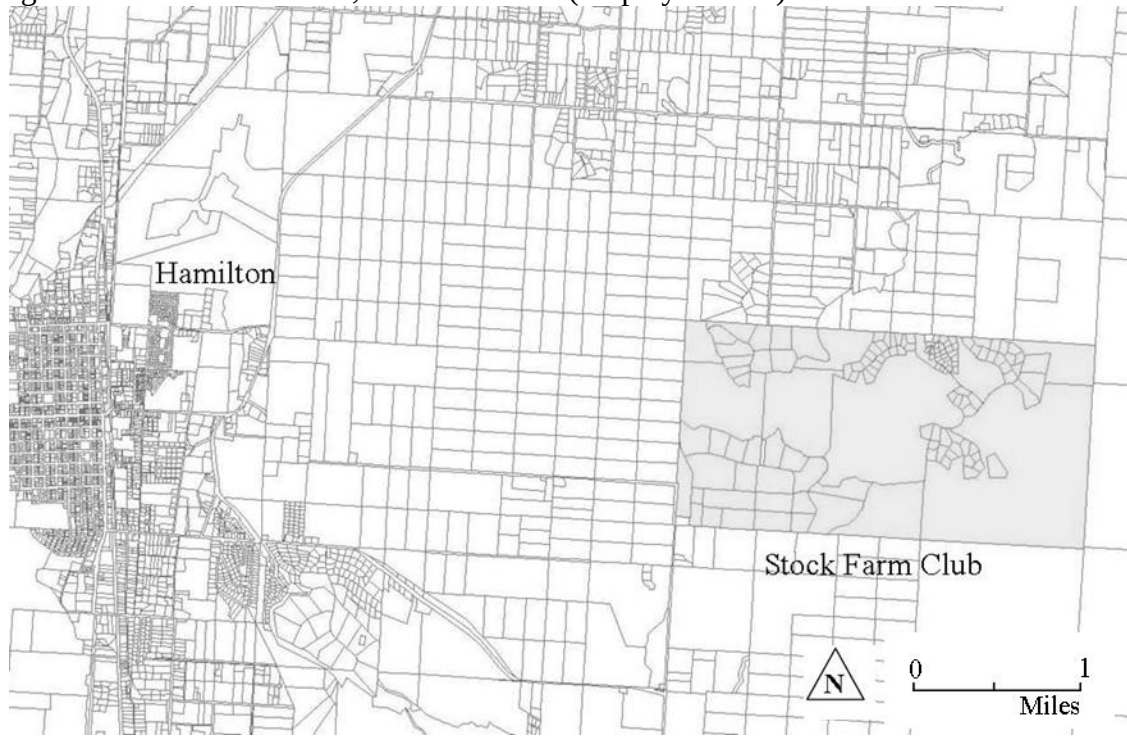
We have a friend from California and he's built a house up here and he comes up in the summer to work on his house and every time he comes up here he pours more concrete. And we're all looking at him like [*snicker/sneer*]. He lives surrounded by concrete back home. He has this beautiful expanse of open field and he just pours more concrete. We try to get him to invest in natural grasses, but he brings his mentality with him, and we all do (Wade 2005).

As more "Californians" come to Hamilton, the city becomes more like the place they just fled. Crowded roadways, increasing pollution, tightly packed clusters of homes built over once-agriculturally productive land, and the other associated ills of urban and suburban living around the country become more prevalent in Hamilton.

Residents, new and old alike, create and engage in Hamilton's middle landscape narrative. These widely held views about Hamilton's role as a city become woven into the cultural landscape in the city. Two illustrative examples are the Stock Farm Club gated community, and the contemporary interplay between U.S. 93 and Main Street.

The Stock Farm Club. Since Hamilton's founding, Marcus Daly's Bitterroot Stock Farm has been a part of the community as a ranch, farm, orchard, and landmark. Now the Bitterroot Stock Farm has a new place in the community, but this time as an exclusive residential development (Figure 70). In 1996, Charles Schwab, the wealthy brokerage house owner, acquired 2,600 acres of Marcus Daly's historic property to create the Stock Farm Club, a private gated golf community. The *Ravalli Republic* summarized the idea behind the complex when it announced: "The Marcus Daly Stock Farm may soon house wealthy golf enthusiasts from around the country...or it may just be home to

Figure 70. Stock Farm Club, near Hamilton. (Map by Author)



those who want to experience the essence of the Montana experience, but not necessarily the entire Montana winter” (Hopkin 1996). The subdivision proposal stated that the enormous land holding would be divided into 125 residential homesites that would vary in acreage from 1.5 to 35 acres, house a Tom Fazio-designed golf course, have thirty miles of trails, and set aside 1,400 acres of the development in conservation easements. The proposal passed through the county approval process quickly and was called well-planned, innovative, and creative by the county planner.

By selling homesites at a minimum price of \$500,000, and requiring a \$125,000 club membership initiation fee, the developers ensured that none but the fabulously wealthy would even consider building at the Stock Farm. Most of the advertising was

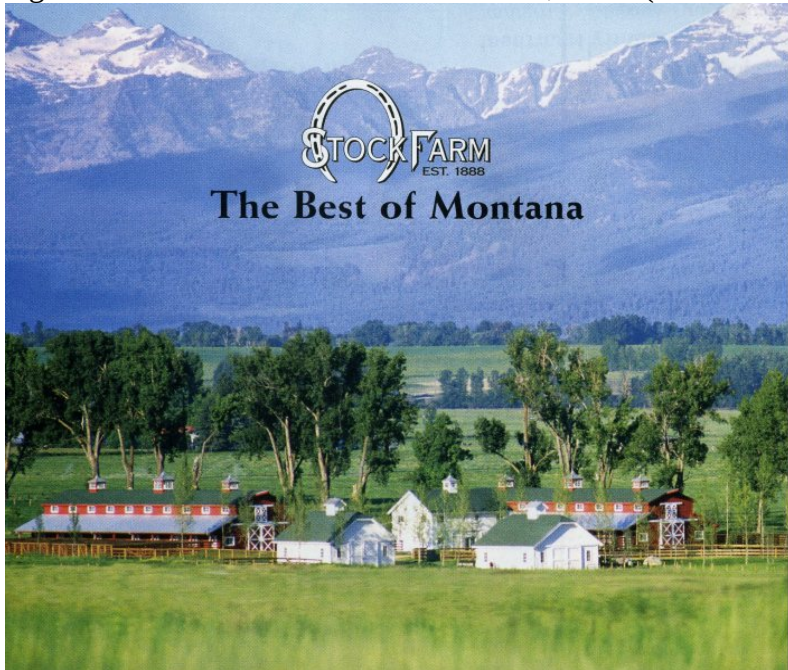
through word-of-mouth, but occasionally a well-placed Stock Farm advertisement would invite potential investors to:

Embrace the idyllic promise of fly fishing uncrowded streams, and powder skiing just a short drive away. Explore 2,600 beautiful acres, an authentic horse ranch under protection of just its second owner in history. In addition to the stunning Tom Fazio golf course, you'll enjoy a fully staffed equestrian facility, a convenient jet airport five minutes away, and a 27,000 square foot log clubhouse. Place yourself at the doorstep of all Montana has to offer (Stock Farm Club 2005) (Figure 71).

To wealthy investors, visitors, and part year residents, the Stock Farm promoted itself as a middle landscape by its association with the natural setting and urban amenities, but also associates itself with the Marcus Daly middle landscape heritage.

The Stock Farm's promotional website advertises the development's central place in the Bitterroot Valley middle landscape. Located at the heart of the beautiful valley "where canyon streams empty fresh water into the trout-filled Bitterroot River," club

Figure 71. Stock Farm Club advertisement, 2005. (Stock Farm Club 2005).



STOCK FARM
EST. 1888
The Best of Montana

**Bitterroot Valley,
Western Montana**

Embrace the idyllic promise of fly fishing uncrowded streams, and powder skiing just a short drive away. Explore 2,600 beautiful acres, an authentic horse ranch under the protection of just its second owner in history. In addition to the stunning Tom Fazio golf course, you'll enjoy a fully staffed equestrian facility, a convenient jet airport five minutes away, and a 27,000-square-foot log clubhouse. Place yourself at the doorstep of all Montana has to offer.

A limited number of mountain homesites, private furnished cabins and club memberships are available.

Call Jim Schueler today at 406/375.1888
Broker/Owner

members are offered the opportunity to take club-organized excursions to the surrounding valley for horseback adventures, fly fishing trips, and hunting expeditions. Nature does not stop at the gates and fences of the development, though. Inside the gates, the elk-viewing gazebo allows club members the opportunity to cast a long gaze over some of the 1,400 acre conservation easement that hosts numerous wildlife species. The Stock Farm Club capitalizes on the vistas in the distance as well as the abundance of open land in the development and thereby connects the elite club firmly to nature. Yet as close as the development is to nature, only two miles west of the development, promotional materials boast Hamilton's "full-service health club, four major supermarkets, full medical facilities and a 4,300-foot county airfield." Moreover, if Hamilton's urban activities do not satisfy residents, perhaps Missoula's "vibrant character, exciting dining and shopping opportunities, and one of the country's best heart hospitals" might. While the larger community offers plenty of urban services, within the development, club members can find everything they may need so that they do not have to venture out into the community often. Fine dining and attentive staff at the massive clubhouse, ensure that the club members can focus their attention on the back nine.

To ensure that the Stock Farm Club is firmly situated as a middle landscape, the developers and promoters made every effort to write Marcus Daly's heritage into the landscape. Perhaps club members can identify with Daly's desire to find the perfect landscape of leisure. According to a Stock Farm publication, Daly saw his vacation ranch in a perfect place between city and nature. The pamphlet reads: "Daly quickly recognized the ranch would provide his family with a perfect alternative to the crowds and fast pace

of the city. Like other turn-of-the-century gentlefolk, the Daly family turned its attention to recreational pursuits.” Throughout the Stock Farm landscape are other reminders of the romantic Daly era. Golf course flags and tee boxes are colored with Daly’s trademark copper, green, and silver, all of the roads are named after Daly’s horses, the cottonwood trees planted on the grounds are from sprigs from the trees at the Daly mansion, and each of the homesites are designed to imitate the type of architecture that Daly originally built on the property (Figure 71). But perhaps most importantly, is the vision of an elite middle landscape that provides the best in service for residents. A club manager stirs memories of the Daly-era and even later apple boom developments when he explains: “This is for a person with a very busy, busy lifestyle and he doesn’t want to manage a ranch but wants to be a part of it. Everything is taken care of, so they just have to worry about fishing, hunting and golf” (Williams 2002).

The elite Stock Farm Club, which the *High Country News* called “one of the most prominent gated developments closing off pieces of Montana’s countryside,” has established divisions in the community (Williams 2002). Everyday Hamilton residents are familiar with the wealth of the Stock Farm members, and this sets up a striking wealth boundary in the community. One longtime Hamilton resident offered his view of the wealthy Stock Farm residents’ impact on the community:

Those outsiders have different priorities from us here: what they want is privacy and expensive isolation.... They like wildlife, fishing, hunting, and the scenery, but they’re not part of the local community. Their attitude is, ‘I came here to ride my horse, enjoy the mountains, and go fishing: don’t bother me with issues I moved here to get away from’ (Diamond 2005, 61).

Other residents are not as kind. A waitress at a local restaurant said “They have money and we don’t. They walk in and you know right away they’re from the Stock Farm. They expect the world to wait on them right now, and it’s all about them. It’s like a whole other life.” (Williams 2002). Within the public discourse the wealth boundary is real, and not difficult to trace, but on the land it is equally striking. Land bordering the Stock Farm, which sells for a premium due to the status associated to being near the Stock Farm fences, sells from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per acre. On the other side of the fence residential acreage sells from \$60,000 to over \$600,000 per acre. Within Hamilton’s larger middle landscape, the Stock Farm Club has established an elite middle landscape vision that will continue to effect Hamilton’s development.

U.S. Highway 93 and Main Street. The Stock Farm is a small, if meaningful, example of a development that expresses on the landscape the vision of a particular group. The City of Hamilton itself also bears the imprint of a more complex mosaic of visions and dreams of what type of middle landscape Hamilton should be. The history of recent development of the city’s most important crossroads, Main Street and U.S. 93, illustrate how contested visions are written into the landscape.

The divergent paths taken by Main Street and U.S. 93 began in the 1970s and intensified through the 1990s. The highway rapidly grew to become a challenge for the community even as it developed with motels, shopping centers, and chain restaurants. The Main Street streetscape continued to deteriorate even while adding an array of higher-end retail establishments that catered to the changing population of the community.

U.S. Highway 93 runs north-south through the heart of the Bitterroot Valley and is the main transportation corridor for the travel within, and into, Ravalli County. The road serves as a vital link that connects Hamilton with Missoula, and brings visitors and dollars into the community. But for decades some aspects of U.S. 93's development have troubled many city residents. Indeed, a 1970 view of U.S. 93 shows a dispersed commercial landscape of gas stations, budget motels, and agricultural supply stores that line the strip (Figure 72). Since the 1970s, planners have noticed that "Ugly or sprawling development along the highway would discourage its use by tourists," and that "Congestion with lowered speed limits along further sections of the highway would discourage all kinds of traffic." Planners in 1976 concluded that this type of congestion and sprawl was detrimental to the community's "economic and aesthetic health" (Ravalli County Planning Board 1976, 26).

However, warnings such as these did not seem to do much to prohibit strip development on the highway. By the 1990s, the highway had blossomed with a wide array of chain stores, fast food restaurants, large retailers, professional offices, and strip malls each surrounded by a large parking lot. As Hamilton's population grew, congestion on the four lane road that runs through the middle of the city became increasingly bothersome to residents. More drivers began using the arterial road system that paralleled the highway, and congestion spread throughout the city. The 1994 Community Needs Assessment Survey for the city of Hamilton indicated the road's visual appeal, not strip development or congestion, was the top concern about the road. Indeed, it is among the most troubling concerns residents had about their community. U.S. 93 played a central

Figure 72. U.S. 93 land uses. In 1972 (left) the northern portion of the corridor is undeveloped. By 2004 (right), the U.S. 93 corridor is has filled in significantly. (left, Hamilton City-County Planning Board 1972; right, Montana Natural Resources Inventory System)

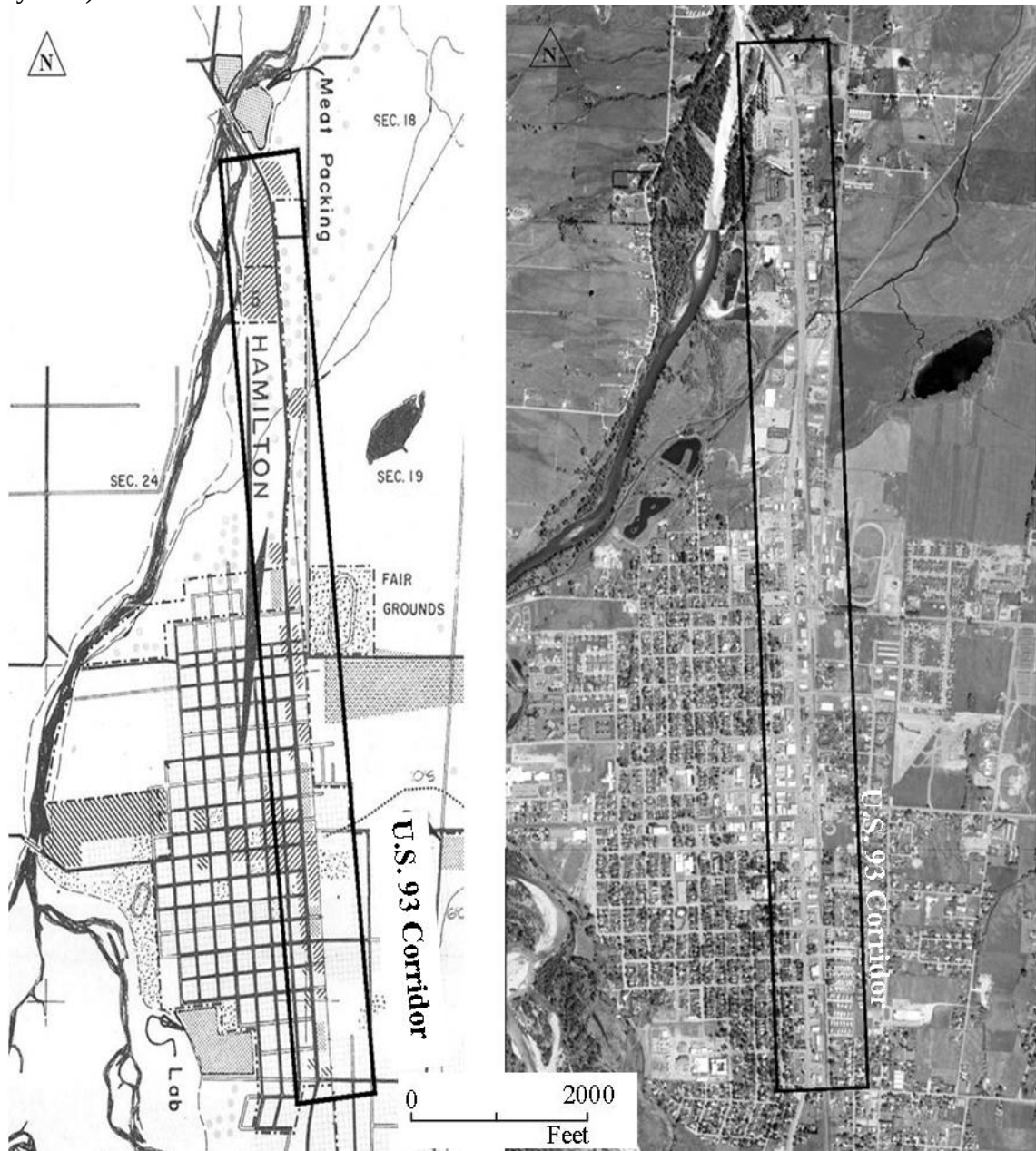


Figure 73. U.S. 93 through Hamilton, 2005. (Author's collection)

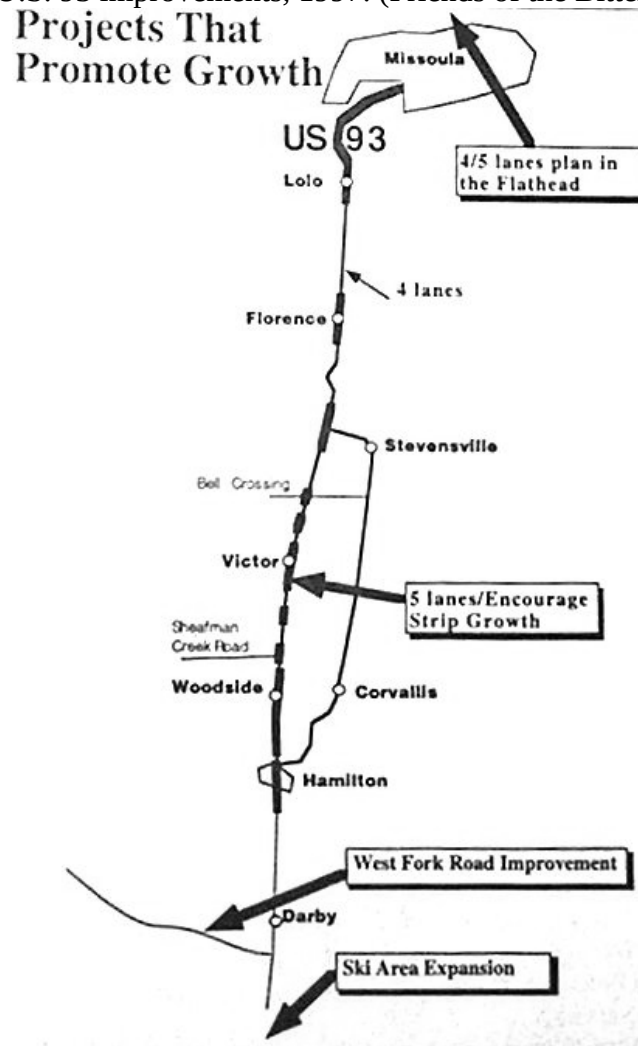


role in the community's economic, transportation, and aesthetic landscape, and many city residents were concerned about the future of the thoroughfare (Figure 73).

In 1997, though, the debate over U.S. 93 came to a head when the Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) proposed improving the highway through the Bitterroot Valley between Missoula and Hamilton, thereby creating a strong new link between these two urban centers (Figure 74). MDOT's stated goals for the project were to make the undivided two lane road safer, relieve congestion, and provide for future growth in the valley. Few people argued with the goals to make the road safer, as the animal kill rate on the stretch of road was one of the highest in the state, and relieving congestion seemed a worthy goal to most. However, the goal to provide for future growth was more contentious.

Two proposals dominated the public debate on how the highway should be improved. In the public discourse, both proposals transcended mere highway

Figure 74. Map of U.S. 93 improvements, 1997. (Friends of the Bitterroot 1997).



improvement, but instead became a defining vision of the community's future. To many residents the decision would define the valley. One group remarked that:

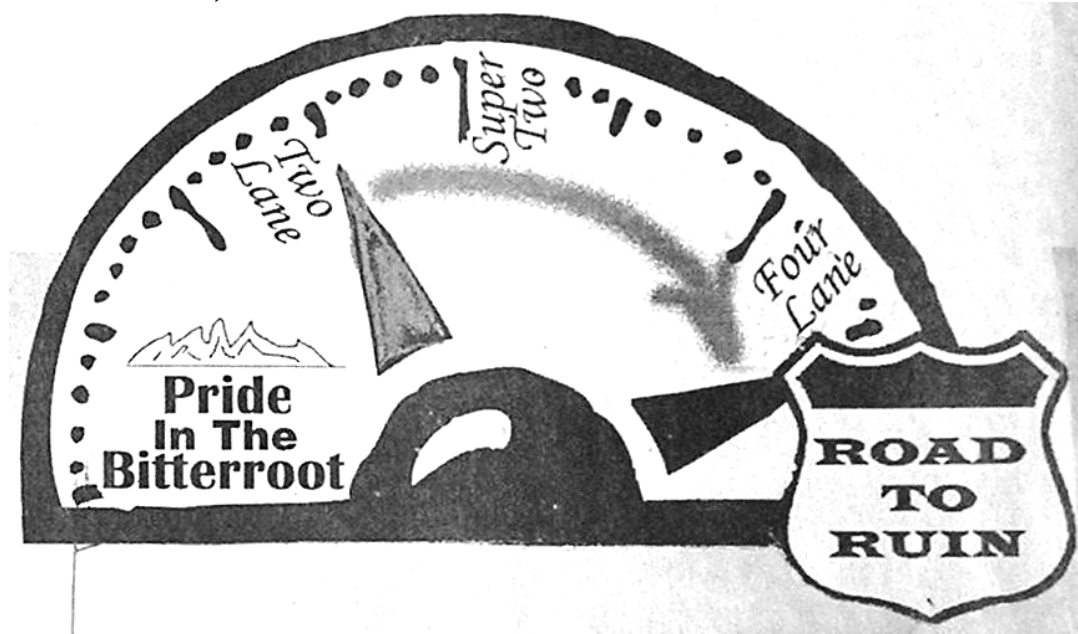
The Bitterroot Valley faces a decision that is going to have far reaching and permanent impacts on what kind of community we live in. Most people who live in this valley are here for the rural life-style, intact communities, and the natural beauty. These values and Pride in The Bitterroot are what gives the Bitterroot Valley its character (Friends of the Bitterroot 1997).

Essentially, the decision about how to improve U.S. 93 would determine whether the middle landscape could be preserved or not.

The first proposal, MDOT's "preferred alternative," was to create a four-lane undivided highway from the Ravalli County's northern line to Hamilton. This proposal would create a high-speed connection that would shorten commuting time to Missoula, and thus strengthen the link between the two cities. MDOT supported this proposal, citing the need to provide adequate transportation for the large numbers of people that had moved to the Bitterroot Valley and the many thousands more that are projected. Opponents saw the four-lane highway as *promoting* growth, not providing for it, often citing the "if you build it, they will come" maxim (Forsgren Associates, 1996).

The opponents of the four-lane improvement, most recognizable in a Hamilton-based group, The Friends of the Bitterroot, supported the Super Two improvement proposal. This improvement would maintain a two-lane road, but would widen lanes and shoulders, add passing lanes, and provide a turning lane to transform the road into a safer, more efficient two-lane highway. By limiting the improvement to two lanes, albeit a Super Two, the Friends of the Bitterroot argued that the goals of making the road safer and lessening congestion would be met. The key difference was that the Super Two would provide for growth that had already happened, while not necessarily promote future development. By so doing, the Friends of the Bitterroot argued that the Super Two would come closer to preserving the quality of life and "pride in the Bitterroot" (Figure 75). They worried that "an increase in highway capacity will accelerate growth, increase subdivisions, pull money away from main street businesses, and drain Ravalli County's tax base" (Friends of the Bitterroot 1997) The Friends of the Bitterroot characterized the

Figure 75. U.S. 93 as either “Pride in the Bitterroot” or “Road to Ruin,” 1997. (Friends of the Bitterroot 1997)

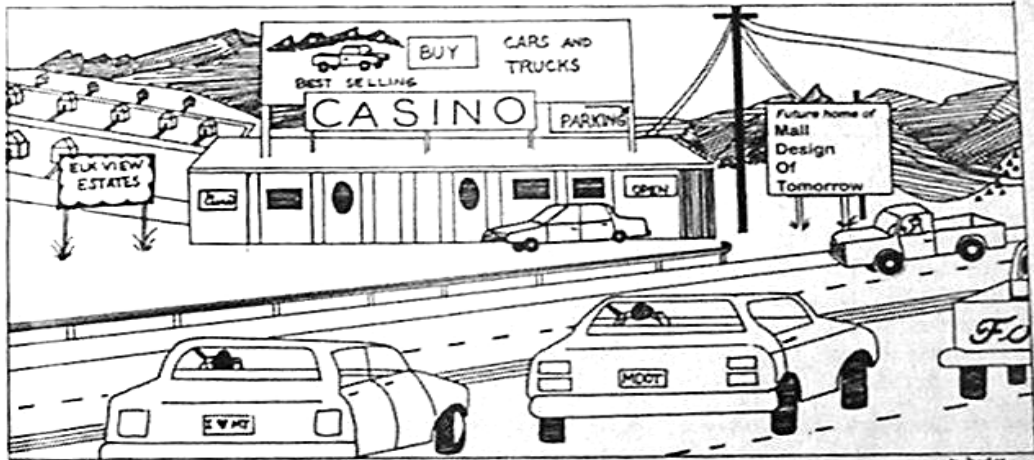


Super Two landscape as a pristine valley, filled with vanpools of happy riders, rustic log cabins, and grazing elk. Meanwhile the four-lane proposal replaced the van pool with bumper to bumper single rider vehicles, the log cabin with a casino and billboards, and the grazing elk with a subdivision named elk view estates (Figure 76).

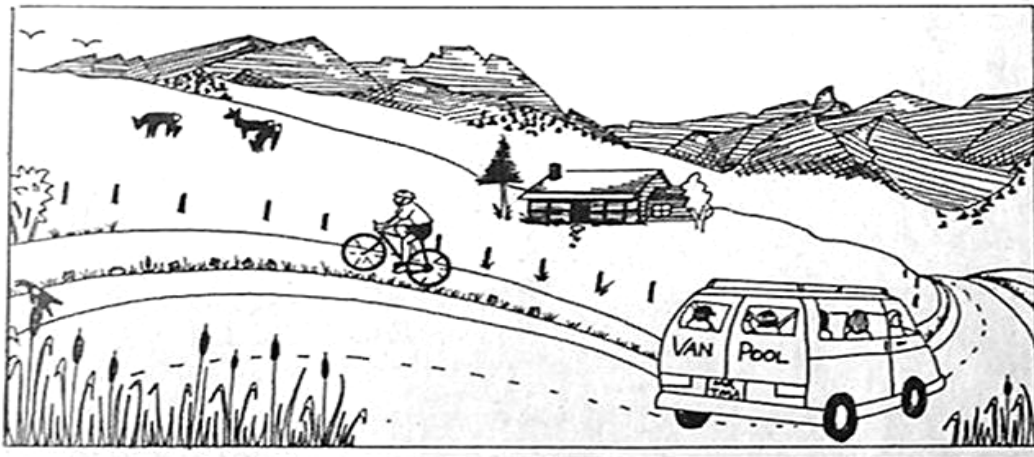
The MDOT ultimately chose the four-lane undivided highway. The whole project has yet to be completed and it is unclear how the expanded highway will shape the future of Hamilton and the Bitterroot Valley. The planned road expansion certainly has not slowed down strip development or congestion as U.S. 93 passes through Hamilton. The developmental momentum of the commercial strip is well established and the future appears to focus on even more automobile-oriented development. Since 1970, gas stations have given way to used car lots, small retailers have given way to big box discount stores, and local retailers have given way to national chain stores. Perhaps the

Figure 76. Visions of how U.S. 93 could affect the Bitterroot Valley, 1997. (Friends of the Bitterroot 1997)

MDOT Plan



Super-Two



most disturbing trend to some Hamilton residents is the rapid development of fast food chain stores. In recent years, chains such as McDonalds, Papa Murphy's, Taco Bell, among others national retailers, have established outlets along the commercial strip. The casual, disparate development of the 1970s has been transformed into a dense strip of

commercial development (Figure 72). While the impact of the road widening is still unclear, it is clear that as more retail services sprout along the strip, Hamilton's downtown has felt the impacts.

Main Street and the surrounding central business district have been the core of the community since Hamilton's founding. However, the downtown core has struggled to keep pace with the growing retail primacy of the U.S. 93 commercial strip since the latest population boom began in the 1970s. Main Street's comparative lack of parking, retail variety, and affordable shopping continues to send Hamilton consumers to the new developments along the strip. The retail exodus led to a period of disinvestment in downtown that left the sidewalks cracked, retail space vacant, and a bland and unattractive streetscape. Lisa Wade, a Hamilton resident active in downtown revitalization, explained that "Once you have an old infrastructure like an old downtown, the challenge is to not let it become dilapidated. It is less expensive to take raw land on 93 and develop it" (Wade 2005).

Even with its declining economic importance and dilapidated urban streetscape, Main Street and the central business district continue to be important parts of the urban social and economic infrastructure. Several banks, the post office, and the city and county offices continue to draw residents to the city center during the day, while dining, specialty shopping, and street festivals draw people downtown on the weekends and evenings.

Yet the changes in the downtown landscape have been significant since 1970. A representative urban block on Main Street tells much of the story. The 100 block of Main

Figure 77. Changes along a segment of Hamilton's Main Street, 1970 and 2005. (Map by Author)

Hamilton Main Street 100 Block: 1969		Hamilton Main Street 100 Block: 2005	
<i>Second Street</i>		<i>Second Street</i>	
<i>Main Street</i>	Downing's Pharmacy	Downing's Pharmacy	Fords Department Store
	Range Cafe	Sapphire Suites	
	Signal Bar	Signal Bar	Montana Gold Realty
	Malone Agency	Professional Offices	Gift Corral/Florist/Antiques
	Farmers Insurance	Montana Mortgage Co.	Kendricks Hair Salon
	Oxlo Hotel	Western States Realty	Main Street Rug Co.
	Silver Dollar Pool Hall		Red's Office Supply
	Vacant		Atlas Travel
	Ponderosa Bar	Ponderosa Bar	Wagner Moor Emporium
	Bruce's Tap Room	Silver Coin Casino	Citizens State Bank
	State Farm Insurance	Parking Lot	
<i>First Street/U.S. 93</i>		<i>First Street/U.S. 93</i>	

Street has changed dramatically during the New West changes (Figure 77). Noticeable changes are the intrusion of typical New West stores. Realty offices, professional offices, and specialty gift shops, florists, and rug shops have taken the place of insurance agencies, bars, hardware stores, and barbershops. These results are not limited to this block in particular, but instead are visible throughout the city. Main Street, with its multi-story commercial blocks, is the heart of the central business district. Nearby side streets, with their mix of converted Victorian-era homes and newer office complexes, provide additional retail and government services. In recent years Hamilton's CBD has added high-end gift shops, antique shops, book stores, coffee shops, art galleries, ice-cream and candy shops, and a number of real estate offices, to the banks, office supply stores, and professional offices typically found in a small city CBD (Figure 78). However, the influx of specialty shops fundamentally changed downtown. Lisa Wade contends that with the

Figure 78. The 100 block of Hamilton's Main Street, 2005. (Author's collection)



type of development happening now, “downtown gets left to just be specialty shops. It is kind of turning into just a place for tourists to come shop with gift stores and things” (Wade 2005).

Downtown landowners responded to a 1997 survey with comments that identify Hamilton's Main Street as a key element in preserving the middle landscape. One business owner commented that “Keeping downtown viable as a retail center with locally-owned businesses that reflect the character of the area is vitally important if Hamilton is to escape becoming nothing more than a strip of gas stations and fast food joints along 93” (Davis 1999). Not all business owners were equally as enthusiastic about wholesale change, but even those still recognized the agents of change in the downtown. “We moved here almost six years ago believing we would live in a small Western town. Instead, real estate purchases by Californians have ruined the area.” The same owner continued, “We do not want anything to change but to go back to the way it was 10 years ago” (Davis 1999).

To combat the complete cession of downtown to tourists, and battle against the newer strip development along U.S. 93, a group of downtown business owners pushed to revive downtown Hamilton. Since the short-lived attempt in 1980 to revitalize downtown, Hamilton business leaders have tried unsuccessfully to renovate the city's urban core. Now, with increasingly rapid change, the time was right to promote downtown redevelopment. The coalition of downtown business owners sought to fund improvements that would revitalize downtown Hamilton such as providing low interest loans for storefront renovation, purchasing land for parking facilities, and funding special activities and festivals in the downtown area. The activity with the biggest impact thus far was the creation of the Downtown Hamilton Business Improvement District in the late 1990s (DHBID).

The DHBID urged the community to recognize the need for downtown improvement. In the organization's logic, Main Street and downtown represented an important part of the community.

Growth in Ravalli County will continue as newcomers look for a great place to live. The nature of Downtown business is changing as the demand for quality goods and individual services provided in a 'hometown' environment increases. People like our Downtown because it reminds them of what their downtown was like when they were growing up. The preservation and development of our historic district is *critical* to the quality of life of our valley (Downtown Hamilton Business Improvement District 2002).

By preserving the downtown, DHBID argued, the small town way of life will be preserved. Otherwise the community would become synonymous with U.S. 93, the blighted passage through town...where huge parking lots separate boxy buildings [and] walking from one to another is not only unappealing, it's hazardous" (Jiusto 66, 2000).

Figure 79. Hamilton Main Street with some DHBID decorative features, 2005. Notice the seasonal decorations, planter boxes, and street furniture. (Author's collection)



“With logic like this, DHBID supporters convinced the Hamilton City Council to create the special improvement district despite letters of protest from 36 percent of the property owners. The project included plans for new sidewalks, gutters and curbs, underground infrastructure, crosswalks, decorative corners, decorative lighting and trees, banners, hanging baskets, garbage cans and bike racks in a six block area of downtown (Figure 79).

Conclusion

Hamilton's future will likely continue to focus on managing growth and preserving a middle landscape. However, residents are beginning to realize that these issues will not happen without a concerted effort. A few visions of the future of the area shed light on resident perspectives on their future. A 2004 *Ravalli Republic* editorial recognized the challenges of maintaining this growth and development:

Of course, we shouldn't complain. A growing community is a vibrant, exciting community. If you don't agree, just ask the residents of dozens of eastern Montana towns with imploding population figures, empty, dying schools and unemployment figures in the double digits. They'd give anything to have our 'problem.' ... Of course, it's no mystery why Ravalli County is such a magnet to new residents. Just look outside. Clean air, clean water, low crime, reasonable real estate cost (at least compared to many places) and neighbors anyone would be proud to live next to. The challenge is to maintain the quality of life that makes the Bitterroot Valley such a Mecca for newcomers. And it won't happen by accident. (*Ravalli Republic* 2004).

New West growth in the Bitterroot Valley cannot continue forever, particularly without a concerted effort to manage development. The degree to which city residents, planners, and officials can manage the conflicting identities of old-timers and new-comers and the conflicting land use pressures of development and preservation will determine how long the economic growth will last.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The historical geographies of Anaconda and Hamilton—and indeed the Old and New Wests—are unique and varied. However, this research has explored questions that contribute to the study of these two disparate, yet proximate, regions in the contemporary American West. This concluding chapter synthesizes the insights gained from these two case studies and relates them to broader considerations about the changing region. Indeed, small nonmetropolitan communities throughout the West can benefit from exploring possible answers to a few important questions that will help situate their current experiences historically and geographically. What were the historical forces that created the Old and New West? What insights do landscape and identity offer into understanding the recent Old and New West changes? What does the future hold for the Old and New West?

Historical Forces that Created the Old and New Wests

Many historical forces have influenced the creation of the Old and New Wests. In more than a century of historical contingency and geographical change at local, national, and international scales, a myriad of factors shaped the distinctive places and regions visible today. However, this research argues that the shifting imprint of capital and the industrial and middle landscape ideals have been central forces in the creation of these modern regions.

Capitalism Shifts

It is clear that the shifting winds of capitalism have played a transformative role in the creation of the Old and New Wests (Wyckoff 1999, Hyde 1997, Robbins 1994). In Anaconda, the demand for copper quite literally created the city. The exigencies of locally processed copper ore gave the city an industrial purpose that stimulated economic development for nearly a century. As Anaconda developed, the national and international copper markets shifted so that the city's smelting industry followed the ebbs and flows of copper prices and smelter worker wages. Finally, the most dramatic impacts came when capital's spotlight shifted wholly away from the community when the smelter shut down. This dramatic shift had serious repercussions in the community and offered Anaconda a crash course in becoming an Old West community. Since then, the spotlight has shone all around Anaconda, but has yet to find the Smelter City again.

Hamilton's experience in the capital economy has been different, but has had no less of an impact. Instead of capitalism in the form of industrial buildup though, Hamilton has seen the imprint of shifting patterns of leisure, recreation, and amenity capitalism. From its earliest days, Hamilton was a destination for the leisured class. Whether it was Marcus Daly and his gentleman's ranch, apple boomers and their hobby orchards, or Rocky Mountain Laboratory workers and their expectations of the amenities in the community, Hamilton has always been within the gaze of leisure capitalists. The economic, technological, and transportation restructuring in the United States since the late 1960s has allowed capital to flow into amenity locations, while modern residential preferences of footloose workers and retirees tend toward these New Western places. The

post-1960s economy has allowed residential consumers to satisfy their desire for cultural values of open space, rural lifestyle, and scenic beauty. This conversion to the behavioral approach to residential decision making has had profound effects on the community. Leisure capitalism has ignited development in the community as the American amenity-seeking market has identified Hamilton as an excellent place to live fulltime or seasonally. Capitalism's spotlight continues to shine on Hamilton and other New West communities. In both Anaconda and Hamilton, and by extension similar communities, the broad shifts in the capital economy have played an important role in transforming these examples of the Old and New West.

Industrial/Middle Landscape Ideal

Even while capital demands have shifted, the persistence of the industrial and middle landscape ideals has been remarkable. Visions of the industrial landscape occupied the view of Anaconda Company officials from the community's earliest experiences. The requirements of the copper smelting industry created the landscape and the identity of the community. These industrial landscape visions, once articulated on the landscape and identity of the community, proved relentless. Even as the community rode the waves of boom and depression, the industrial landscape ideal established in the early period continued to sustain the community. Even after the smelter closed, the city continued to be constructed in industrial terms. Anaconda residents, in large part, still revere their industrial landscape and maintain the ideology that built their community. Even Anaconda's efforts to redefine itself and create a new economic future have been envisioned through the golf course and its industrial legacy. The industrial landscape

ideal has been a persistent thread throughout the evolving landscape and identity of Anaconda, and a thread familiar to many Old West communities.

Similarly, the middle landscape has been a persistent thread in Hamilton's historical geography. Beginning in earnest with the apple boomers that saw Hamilton as the urban center of their tamed garden valley, and then continuing as RML workers recognized the middle landscape of recreation and full city services, Hamilton has long been idealized as a middle landscape to migrants. These migrants, both historical and contemporary, bring with them visions of the middle landscape that ultimately leave an imprint on the community. The middle landscape ideal has persisted to the present as Hamilton's new migrants continue to recognize the area's unique combination of natural beauty and urban amenities. Like other New West communities, as the middle landscape ideal has persisted, Hamilton has experienced significant growth. In both Anaconda and Hamilton, persistent landscape ideals have helped to shape the contemporary Old and New West.

Landscape and Identity in the Old and New Wests

Anaconda's distinct landscape and identity are easily identifiable across much of the Old West. Decaying infrastructure, slow housing markets, and abandoned storefronts are typical scenes throughout much of the waning Old West. This research has shown illustrative examples of this type of landscapes of disinvestment in Anaconda, and has found no significant departures from anticipated findings. In particular, industrial Old West landscapes often are burdened with the additional strain of contaminated land.

Anaconda's community-wide land contamination is an example of how decades of industrial production can stymie the development efforts of a community. Anaconda's enduring industrial identity continues to play an important role in the community's postindustrial reality. For example, when Anaconda residents defined the city's heritage, the unanimous response was "smelting." This production-oriented heritage has effects on the contemporary postindustrial identity of the community. Even now that copper smelting is no longer active in the community, Jim Davison, Anaconda Local Development Corporation chairperson, argues that the prospect of future heavy industry continues to dominate the local urban identity. "The community is both cynical and in denial. They just go about their daily lives and they have a malaise or a depression. Until something really shocks them, they don't crawl out of that malaise" (Davison 2005). This "malaise" provides a challenging environment for future development that exists in many Old West communities where residents are simply waiting for a large industry to rescue the local economy.

Hamilton's landscape and identity reveal the amenity development taking place in the community. The landscape signatures reconstructed through this research are not surprising. Downtowns filled with specialty shops and high-end retailing, widespread rural subdivision, and high real estate prices, are not new observations about the New West. Hamilton's experience has been typical of the well-documented New West landscape development pattern. Hamilton's New West identity reveals the tensions inherent in maintaining a middle landscape ideal. Hamilton's New West heritage celebrates Marcus Daly and his personal contributions to the community. Invariably,

community residents answered “Marcus Daly” when they were asked about the community’s heritage. The middle landscape identity that Marcus Daly typifies has real effects on the New West identity that simultaneously celebrates growth while fighting against it. As New West growth and development continues, there appears to be an increasingly wide gap in the place identities of Hamilton residents. In Hamilton and the New West, landscape and identity signatures reveal a close tie to amenity lifestyles and the struggle to maintain the middle landscape, but less and less agreement on what those ideals are and how to attain them.

The Future of the Old and New Wests

Anaconda’s resumé of national forest adjacency, a nearby ski resort, and a championship golf course, would suggest that the city was a natural fit to transform into a New West community. However, this sort of development is still on the distant horizon. Perhaps the “malaise” of the community dampens the entrepreneurial investment that is necessary to promote these attributes. Perhaps most community residents simply do not want new development and want to exist in their comfortably aging community. Perhaps the toxicity of the environment effectively repels development. Whatever the cause, New West development does not currently factor into the community’s immediate future. Additionally, like much of the Old West, the prospect of continual decline is a very real concern. One long time resident tells a story that illustrates the fears of some Anacondans as well as the perceptions of some of Anaconda’s young people:

We were down in Texas and we drove through all these little towns on the byways and my wife was telling my son: ‘You know you see all of these little

one-street towns , dead, that you drive through and its about three blocks and there's nothing there, I'm afraid that Anaconda's going to be like that someday.' He says: 'What do you mean, it's that way right now' (Manning 2005).

This simple story illustrates the very real concern that the community could continue to lose population until it becomes a veritable ghost town. While Anaconda appears to be approaching the low population threshold of viability, the community is actually caught at a liminal population level. Southwest Montana is riddled with examples of communities, like the previously mentioned Texas towns, that withered once their economies failed. Alternatively, nearby Butte has weathered the loss of large-scale copper mining only to recently increase its population. What lessons can small Old West cities learn from larger communities such as Butte? Like Anaconda, many nonmetropolitan communities in the West are struggling to maintain population and economic viability.

Many residents envision a bright future for Anaconda. They predict that Anaconda will be discovered by amenity residents when nearby locations no longer provide a middle landscape. One resident sees even a direct connection between Hamilton and Anaconda: "Maybe as Hamilton grows and grows and grows people will start looking elsewhere, perhaps even come over here" (Andreozzi 2005). Other residents have the same hope for their community. Milo Manning commented that "a lot of people are looking here because now the Bitterroot is getting so populated [that] they are starting to look here for land it's a little cheaper and traffic isn't as bad" (Manning 2005). These residents recognize that the combination of natural beauty and small city life in Hamilton is what draws residents to the Bitterroot Valley. Additionally, these Anaconda residents

recognize that when the Bitterroot Valley's delicate middle landscape balance is upset, that their own valley might be next in line to receive the amenity migrants. However, as this research illustrates, it has been difficult for Anaconda, and other industrial Old West communities to remake their landscapes and identities to compete more effectively in the amenity-oriented economy.

Hamilton's efforts to maintain a middle landscape have been successful thus far, but the pressures are becoming more intense and the divisions more pronounced. Ultimately, the question in Hamilton, as with all of the New West, is one of sustainability. Can the middle landscape be preserved in such a way that the area is still an attractive location? Thomas and Geraldine Vale believe it is not likely. In their travels around the American West, the Vales saw communities similar to Hamilton that had tried to mix the ideals of the middle landscape with rapid growth and progression, thus causing stress on the community. They argue that when communities "attempt to merge more than one mental image in a given landscape scene" that the effort is "hampered or frustrated by the incompatibility of certain combinations of the images" (Vale and Vale 1989, 160). They continue:

The Middle Landscape image is inconsistent with the completion of the Turnerian Progression; yet people living in small towns often welcome economic growth that will enhance their standards of living...even though such change will necessarily threaten what they perceive to be the benefits of their Middle Landscape existence (Vale and Vale 1989, 160).

Perhaps the New Western middle landscape is imperiled due to rapid growth and widespread development. What is the maximum threshold that a middle landscape can support before it becomes simply another city? Nearby Missoula may offer insights into

what could be Hamilton's future. Missoula's rapid growth and accompanying urban problems has prompted many Missoula residents to bemoan the loss of the city's middle landscape. Alternatively, other residents continue to celebrate the middle landscape of a city where one commentator observed that "a realtor runs through it" (Ghose 1998). The population threshold for maintaining a balance between natural beauty and city services is therefore quite subjective. However, many rapidly growing nonmetropolitan New West communities are in danger of waiting too long before taking proactive measures to plan effectively for middle landscape preservation.

At least a few Hamilton residents recognize the long-term uncertainty of their situation and are attempting to plan for the future. One resident recognized the impermanence of New West growth: "As for the long-term effects of growth, there will be cycles here in the future, as there have been in the past, and in one of the cycles the newcomers will go back home." This resident continues, "The price of land here will rise until it gets too high, at which point prospective buyers will start a land boom somewhere else with cheaper land" (Diamond 2005, 67-68). The grim prediction that Ravalli County will inevitably reach its development limit weighs heavily on the minds of community residents. Some residents already have seen how overdevelopment is beginning to have some effects on the Hamilton's population. A few individuals are preparing to relocate to Anaconda because they see the valley as either "too crowded" or simply "not livable anymore" (Manning 2005; Davison 2005). While these are only a few individuals, they may represent a larger exodus in the future as development and population pressures in Hamilton continues to increase.

Will the middle landscape ideal be lost when development is so widespread? What will happen after that? What does a post-middle landscape look like? These questions are posed in many New West communities. Hamilton's future, like much of the New West, relies on special care in planning for the sound development that maintains the middle landscape ideal. Without careful planning, the fragile balance between natural beauty and urban amenities will be lost. However, with the populations on the rise and increasingly diverse images of what the middle landscape should be, the ideal becomes increasingly difficult to maintain.

Conclusion

The Old and New Wests, as illustrated by Anaconda and Hamilton, are creations of capital and the persistence of the human imagination playing out through place identity and across the landscape. Industrial and leisure capital built these communities while visions of the industrial and middle landscape have maintained the communities since then. Changing landscapes and place identities offer insights into the historical creation of these communities, particularly into the Old and New West incarnations currently visible. While the persistent visions of the industrial and middle landscape do not determine the future of these communities, they do provide a strong foundation for understanding the historical and future geographies of the Old and New West.

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