

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Easement Application, Operations Facility (City Public Works)-Penwell Bridge Trust Parcel
Proposed Implementation	
Date:	Fall 2022
Proponent:	City of Belgrade (Belgrade Public Works Department)
Location:	Section 36, Township 01 North, Range 04 East (SE1/4NE1/4, SW1/4NE1/4)
County:	Gallatin County
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The City of Belgrade is applying for an easement to permanently occupy state-owned Trust Land by constructing and operating a Public Works Department operations facility for the City of Belgrade, Montana. The acreage encumbered totals 28.173 acres. (See attached Appendixes). The purpose of the proposed easement would be to provide the City of Belgrade an easement for a Public Works Facility to include: Administrative Facilities, Equipment Materials Storage, Passenger Vehicle and Light Equipment Maintenance, Stormwater Management Facility, Law Enforcement Processing, Storage and Compound, Materials Storage Bays, Equipment and Material Staging Area, Heavy Vehicle Storage and a Maintenance Facility.

Appendixes:

- Appendix A-Vicinity Map
- Appendix B-Topographical Location Map
- Appendix C-Aerial Photo of the proposed project area on Trust Land
- Appendix D-Aerial Photo of the project provided by the proponent
- Appendix E-Magnified View-Aerial Photo provided by the proponent

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

The DNRC posted a public scoping notice for this project on DNRC's website on August 23, 2022. Individual scoping notices were sent to the entities listed in the table below on the same date.

Agencies, Groups or Individuals Scoped:	Response:
DNRC, Landowner	Neutral
City of Belgrade	Proponent/Licensee is in favor of the project.
Dept of Transportation	Potentially interested state agency
Dept. of Environmental Quality	Potentially interested state agency
Dept of Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Potentially interested state agency
Gallatin County Commissioners	Potentially interested county government officials
Superintendent Office of Public Instruction	Montana Board of Land Commissioners
Gallatin Airport Authority	Potentially interested adjacent entity
Sen. Gordon Vance	Montana Senator
Rep Jedediah Hinkle	Montana Representative

The DNRC received one comment from the MDOT on September 1, 2022. This comment is addressed in this document in item #18 "DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES".

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

The proponent is responsible for coordinating with the appropriate government agencies to obtain the required permits and authorization for the implementation of the proposed project.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the proposal to issue an easement to City of Belgrade for the construction and operation of a Public Works Department operations facility on 28.173 acres of State Trust Land. This facility will not be built on state land and an alternate site must be located to provide the services intended.

Alternative B (Proposed action) – Approve the proposal to issue an easement to City of Belgrade for the construction and operation of a Public Works Department operations facility on 28.173 acres of State Trust Land.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i>

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

The USDA soil survey for Gallatin County indicates the soils on this site are classified as 12.1% Beaverell-Beavwan complex, 0 to 2% slopes; 66.4% Beavwam Loam, 0 to 2 % slopes; 15.4% Beaverell Loam, 0-2% slopes; and 6.1% Beaverell cobbly loam, 0 to 2% slopes.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to geology and soils will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – The proposed alternative would create permanent impacts to the geology and soil quality associated with the construction activities and the operations of the public works facility. The development would permanently alter the site from an open grassy pasture to a fully developed city-managed operations facility.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

There are no groundwater resources present. The surface water resources consist of irrigation ditches which predated State ownership and more recently constructed sewer lagoons (adjacent). The development activities must be reviewed, permitted, and authorized by the City of Belgrade and other regulatory agencies or authorities. Irrigation infrastructure and services provided must remain in place or be altered with proper and lawful authority.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution will result.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – The proposed alternative may or may not create short-duration impacts and/or permanent impacts to irrigation systems associated with project activities. Cumulative effects to water quantity and distribution may occur as a result of the project.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

The parcel is located just north of the Belgrade Airport and the City of Belgrade sewage lagoons. Residential and agricultural land are other uses adjacent to this parcel. The parcel is currently unutilized range land, there will be an increase in particulate introduced to the air during construction and operation.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No impacts to air quality will result.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – The proposed alternative would create temporary impacts to the air quality associated with the construction and operation activities of the public works facility. Permanent, cumulative effects to air quality may occur due to the on-going operation of the facility.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

This general area consists of urban, suburban residential and commercial activities. This particular state parcel consists of vegetative groundcover, which is primarily western wheat grass, blue bunch wheat grass, green needle grass, sedges and forbs. There are areas infested with spotted knapweed and cheatgrass. There are no rare plants on the site.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No impacts to vegetation cover, quantity and quality will result.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – Implementation of this alternative would create permanent impacts to vegetative cover. The development would permanently alter the site from an open, grassy pasture to a fully developed city operations facility.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

This parcel contains marginal habitat used by birds and wildlife similar to the remaining adjacent undeveloped lands and neighboring agricultural land. Due to extensive commercial and residential development in much of the area adjacent to the project area, this project will not greatly diminish compatible habitat in this area.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No impacts to terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitat will result.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – Implementation of this proposed alternative would create permanent impacts to terrestrial, avian life and habitat associated with the construction activities and the operations of the public works facility. The development would permanently alter the site from an open grassy pasture to a fully developed city operations facility. Wildlife species that use the field will be dispersed to available open spaces, most being agricultural.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS conducted for Township 1 North, Range 4 East lists the following species of concern in the report: Grizzly Bear, Little Brown Myotis, Golden Eagle, Great Blue Heron, Veery, Black-billed Cuckoo, Bobolink, Cassin's Finch, Hooked Snowfly, and Western Pearlshell. Zero potential species of concern were listed. The Bald Eagle is the only special status species. The Department is unaware of occurrences of these species within the project area.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to unique, endangered, fragile or limited resources will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) –Implementation of this proposed alternative would create permanent impacts to any limited unique, endangered, or fragile species during the construction activities and the operations of the public works facility on state managed lands. Due to the proximity of the City of Belgrade and the associated residential and commercial activities combined with the active agricultural operation on and near the tract, this parcel is not suited to be considered critical habitat.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search results revealed that no cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE.

Because the project area was previously cultivated, proposed developments are expected to have *No Effect to Antiquities*. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed project. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to historical and archaeological sites or resources will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to historical and archaeological sites will occur as a result of the construction activities and the operations of the public works facility on State Trust Land.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The site and the surrounding lands are relatively flat. There is a residential subdivision located directly east across Lagoon Road from this site. To the south, southwest and west are the City of Belgrade, sewage lagoons, and the Bozeman International Airport. North of the parcel is irrigated Ag land. The site contains no prominent topographic features.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to aesthetics will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – The proposed alternative would cause permanent impacts to aesthetics during project implementation and the subsequent facility operations. The project would result in heavy equipment and construction vehicles in the area and a permanent facility including buildings and equipment storage. Project implementation would also cause a temporary increase in noise levels due to the number and type of equipment used. Lesser permanent increases to noise levels are likely due to daily operations at the new facility. There would be resulting noise during work hours. There are residences, commercial operations which include a storage facility, water treatment plant, and an international airport in the vicinity of the project area. The proposed action would minimally add to the existing noise levels.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

The area does not contain limited resources. Nearby activities consist mostly of residential, commercial, farming and ranching operations.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to demands on environmental resources will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – Implementing the Proposed Alternative is not expected to result in any significant impact on environmental resources.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

The City of Belgrade has official plans as the project area is adjacent to the City of Belgrade (proponent), including a long-range transportation plan. DNRC has completed two recent MEPA documents regarding this parcel of State Trust Land. A capability inventory was conducted in 2019 which resulted in the reclassification of the parcel from grazing to other/commercial. An Environmental Assessment Checklist was completed in March 2022 to issue a utility ROW for the installation of a forced sewer main. The DNRC is not aware of other projects or plans being considered in the project area regarding this Environmental Assessment Checklist. The permits required by other local, state and federal agencies or departments for the proposed project must be obtained by the proponent. Implementing the Proposed Alternative is not expected to result in any significant impacts to existing plans, studies or projects.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i>

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The proposed project would create human health and/or safety risks associated with the project’s construction activities. Issues associated with heavy traffic may occur and are the proponents’ responsibility to mitigate and resolve.

Alternative A (No Action) – No work will occur. Existing conditions will persist. No direct impacts to Human Health and Safety will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) –The City of Belgrade, its employees and contractors are responsible to identify and mitigate the risks associated with the action alternative. Constructing and operating the proposed facility is expected to enhance services to the community. Implementing the proposed alternative is not expected to result in any detrimental impact on Human Health and Safety.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Nearby activities consist mostly of residential, commercial including the airport, farming and ranching operations adjacent to the City of Belgrade.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to industrial, commercial and agricultural activities/production will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) –Permanent impacts to industrial, commercial and agricultural activities and production may occur during the construction and operational phases of the project slightly. The proposed action will enhance the City of Belgrade’s public works and other operational functions.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The project would be completed in a relatively short timeframe, and it will sustain current employment, but the project is not anticipated to create permanent jobs in addition to those already provided by the City of Belgrade and its private contractors.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No lasting impacts to quantity and distribution of employment are anticipated.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The land is exempt from property taxation and would continue to generate no revenue for local taxing jurisdictions.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – It is not anticipated that an increase of local or state tax revenues will result from the project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

The parcel currently has a very low demand for government services except for a very small wildfire risk. The area roads are public as county roads, state highways or federal interstate. The proponent is responsible to communicate impacts to Gallatin County and other pertinent agencies in regard to the use of roads accessing the project. Increases in traffic including associated attributes and hazards resulting from the work associated with this project will likely be minimally increased. The single comment received by DNRC from MDOT indicates the department’s concern that “traffic congestion” will increase with new development in the Belgrade area. Traffic issues will likely increase as result of this project combined with other non-related development in the Belgrade area-however-increased capacity for the City of Belgrade services will serve the community in the future as the area is seeing unprecedented growth. This issue will likely occur with or without the implementation of this project.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to traffic, road uses, or government services will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – The proposal may increase demands in traffic services in the area. Federal and State Highway systems including secondary HWY 290 (Dry Creek Road) may be indirectly impacted by increasing traffic congestion.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

The parcel is not within the Belgrade city limits, but it is within the city of Belgrade’s extra-territorial zoning jurisdiction. Any proposed use will have to go through the City’s conditional use process, and a conditional use permit issued if applicable. Since this project is proposed by the City of Belgrade, compliance is assumed. DNRC is not aware of other plans or projects in the area.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to local environmental plans and goals will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No impacts to local environmental plans and goals are anticipated occur.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The parcel, located adjacent to agricultural land, the airport, commercial and residential development, offers minimal recreational opportunities. The dominant recreation on the property is dog walking. This activity will likely persist on the remaining, undeveloped State Trust Land (480 acres less 28.17 acres in this project).

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No significant impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities are anticipated to occur.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

The proposal is not anticipated to include changes to housing or developments adjacent to the state land and near or in the City of Belgrade. The results of the project will enhance city services to accommodate increased development.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) –Direct or cumulative effects to population or housing in the areas adjacent are not anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity. The state parcel is in a transitional (suburban to rural) area adjacent to the City of Belgrade.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No impacts to the area’s social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities are anticipated to occur

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The state parcel is in a transitional area adjacent to the City of Belgrade. The project area is not distinguished as unique or diverse.

Alternative A (No Action) – No impacts to cultural uniqueness and diversity will occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – No impacts to the area’s cultural uniqueness and/or diversity are anticipated to occur.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The purpose of the proposed easement is to provide the City of Belgrade an easement for a Public Works Facility to include: Administrative Facilities, Equipment Materials Storage, Passenger Vehicle and Light Equipment Maintenance, Stormwater Management Facility, Law Enforcement Processing, Storage and Compound, Materials Storage Bays, Equipment and Material Staging Area, Heavy Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility. The total acres to be encumbered by the easement are 28.173 acres. While permanent impacts to the parcel will occur, the project is perceived as necessary by the City of Belgrade. Also, the project aligns with DNRC’s mission to achieve the “highest and best use” of State Trust Land for the benefit of the trust beneficiaries. In this case, the Common Schools Trust is the recipient. A recent appraisal of the property in May 2022 resulted in a value of \$65,000 per acre. The total revenue from this easement will be \$1,831,050.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Andy Burgoyne	Date: September 26, 2022
	Title: TLMD Program Manager, Central Land Office	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (Proposed action) – Approve the proposal to issue an easement to City of Belgrade for the construction and operation of a Public Works Department operations facility on 28.173 acres of State Trust Land.


26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Significant environmental impacts are not expected to occur as a result of the proposed easement on state land. The parcel involved is located within the city annexation area and is suitable to be used by the City of Belgrade. The easement complies with all known state, county, and local laws and regulations. Granting this easement will allow for city infrastructure to be placed on state land to accommodate for the growing population in the area while satisfying the fiduciary responsibility of the Department.

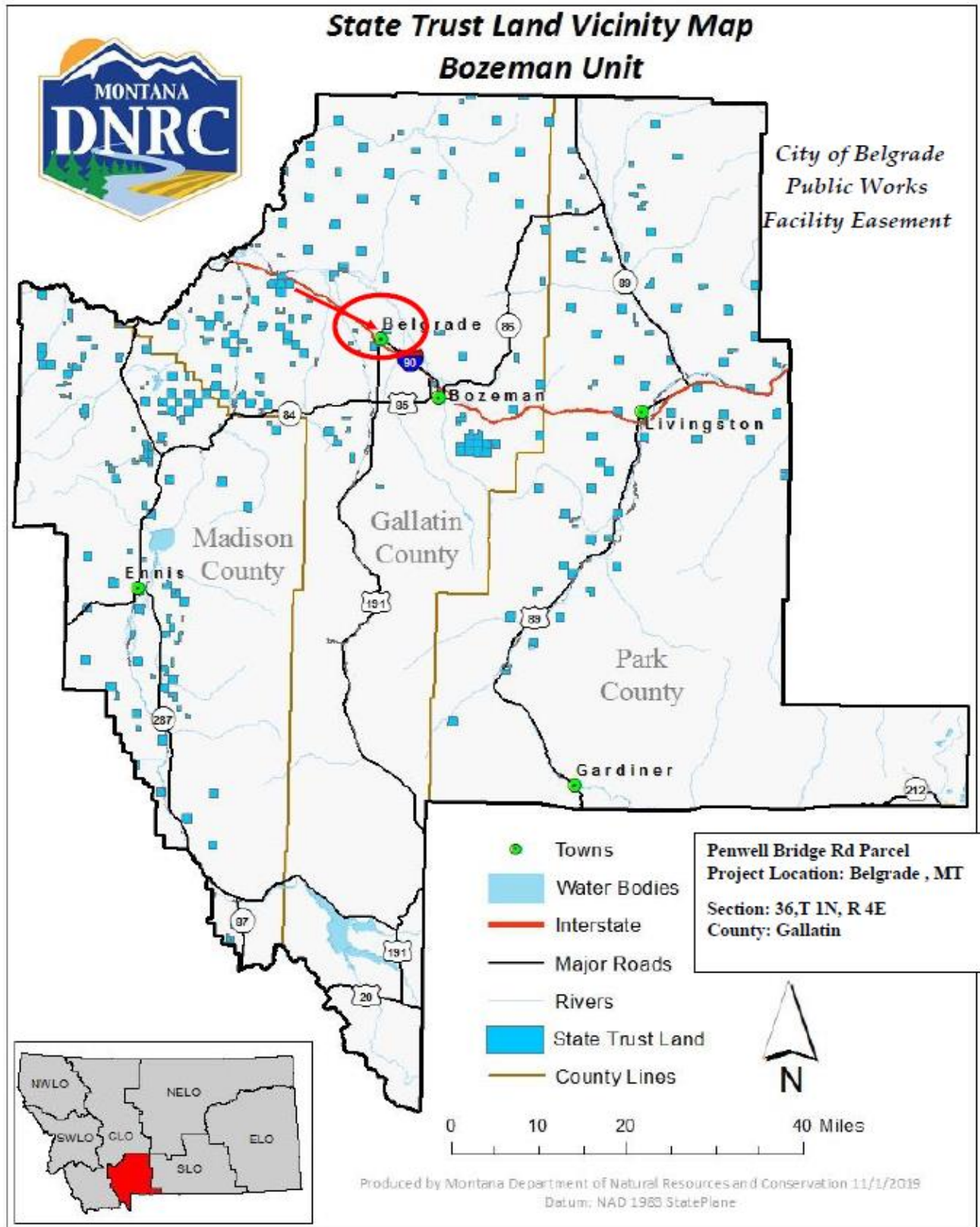
27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The environmental analysis for this project is appropriate and additional analysis is not needed.

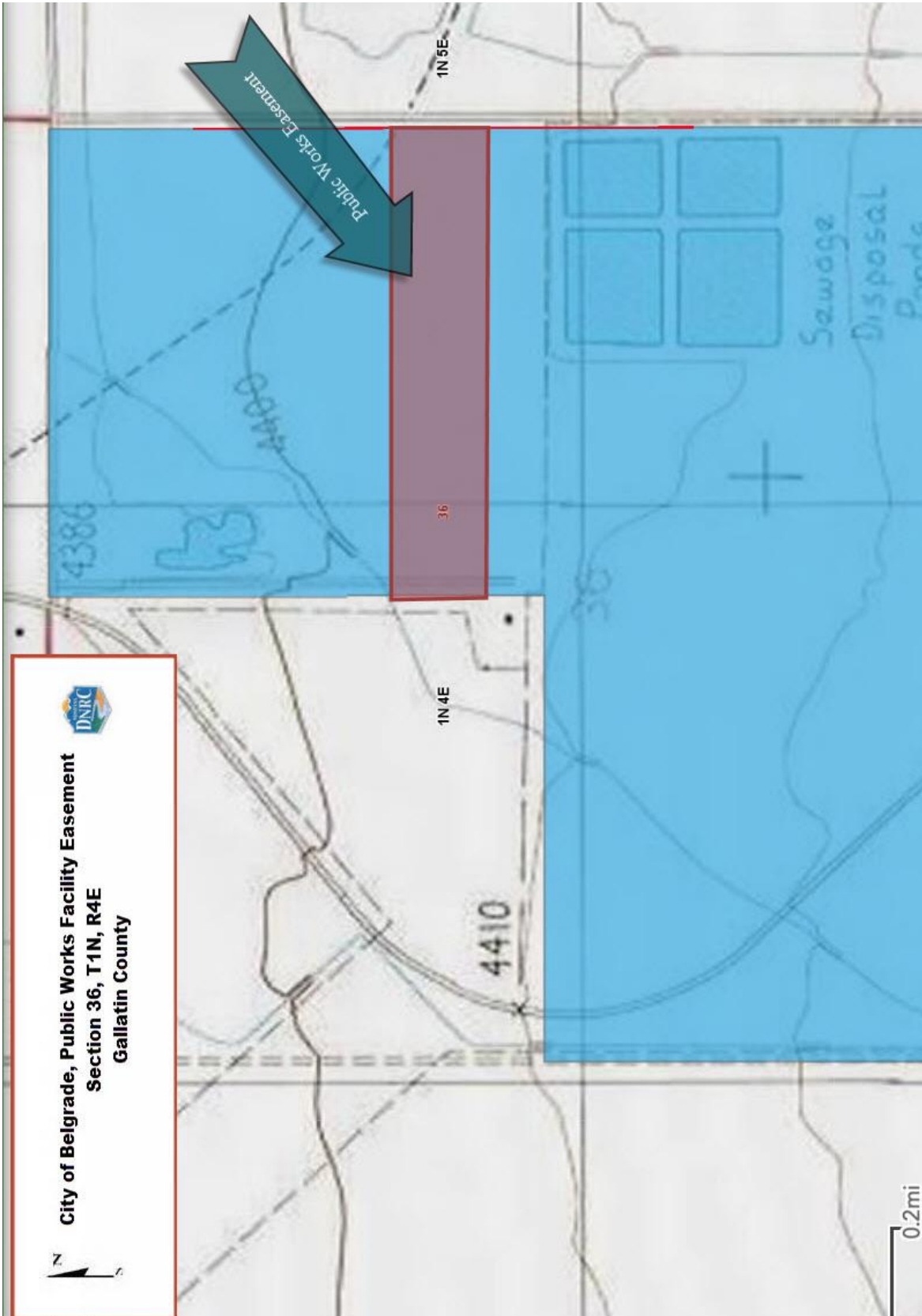
EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Erik Eneboe
	Title: Conrad Unit Manager and Acting Bozeman Unit Manager
Signature:	
	Date: September 26, 2022

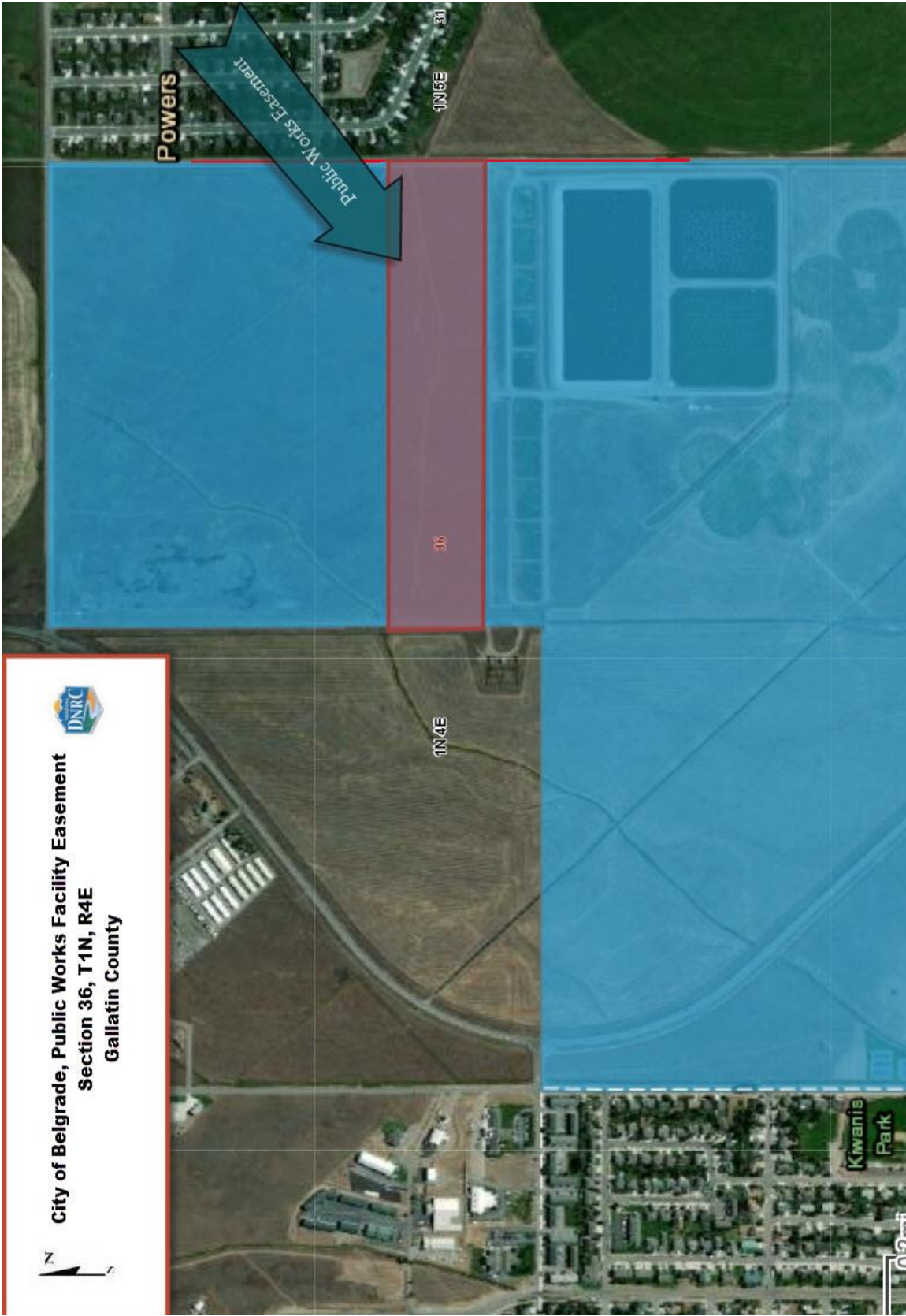
Appendix A-Vicinity Map



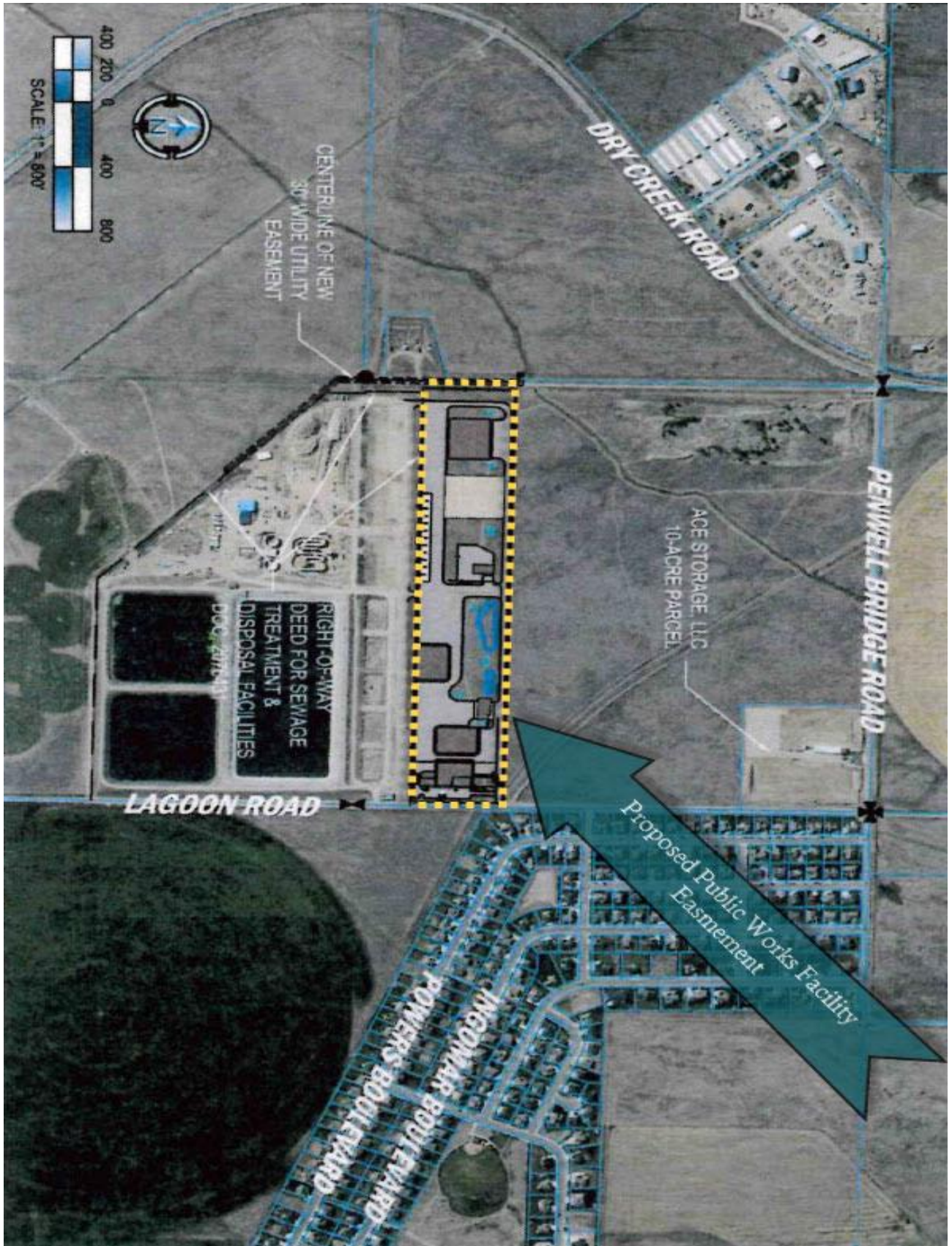
Appendix B-Topographical



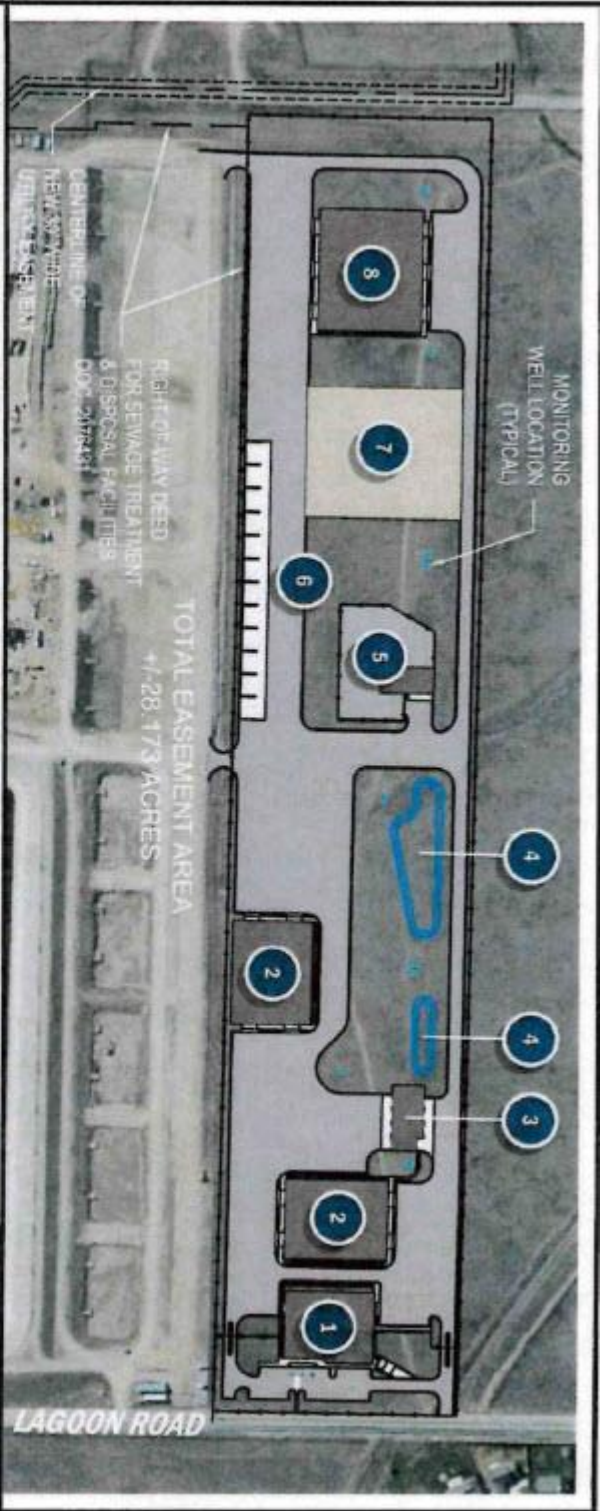
Appendix C-Aerial



Appendix D- Map/Aerial Image provided by the proponent




Appendix E- Enlarged Proposed Facility-Image provided by the proponent



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|----------|--|----------|---|
| 1 | ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITY | 5 | POLICE EVIDENCE FACILITY & IMPOUND LOT |
| 2 | EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS STORAGE FACILITY | 6 | MATERIALS STORAGE BAYS |
| 3 | PASSENGER VEHICLE & LIGHT EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE FACILITY | 7 | EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS STORAGE PLUS STAGING AREA |
| 4 | STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY | 8 | HEAVY VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE FACILITY |





PROPOSED CITY OF BELGRADE OPERATIONS CENTER

MONTANA DNRC EASEMENT SITE

EASEMENT OVERALL SITE LAYOUT PLAN

ENLARGED VIEW

DATE: 08/05/2022	SHEET:
DRAWN BY: TEE	EX-C
REVIEWED BY: -	SCALE: 1" = 300'