EXHIBIT 1
DATE 3.8.05
SB 195

# Quality Growth Act

## SB 195 Senator Wheat

**The Problem** - Cities and counties are not currently planning together to accommodate future growth efficiently - this includes how and where they will invest in infrastructure and services. *This fact raises the cost of providing services for taxpayers and homeowners, and leads to a growth pattern that limits housing choices.*

This lack of planning between cities and counties means that fewer and fewer families can afford to live in town. Unfortunately, this also means that those families have to pay higher costs for travel and for the maintenance of individual septic and wells, and that taxpayers are having to pay for increasing costs of providing infrastructure and services further away from towns.

**Solution** - This bill, for the first time, will bring cities and counties together to plan for efficient future growth. The result will be lower taxes spent on infrastructure and services, and more livable and affordable homes.

**Creates incentives for high quality growth** - This legislation creates incentives for development to locate in locally designated quality growth areas. Quality growth areas are places where growth can occur most efficiently over the next twenty years. This bill also encourages local governments to do what they can to ensure that the average Montanan family can afford a home in and around our cities and towns.

**No new regulatory powers or responsibilities** - This bill does not create new regulatory powers or responsibilities for local governments. This bill creates a reasonable fee to pay for the planning necessary to ensure that local governments can provide efficient services and infrastructure for new growth.

**Will not stop growth outside of cities and towns** - This bill will not require anyone to develop land nor will it restrict development outside of locally designated quality growth areas.

Instead, this bill helps ensure that cities and towns grow efficiently and it protects the right of residents in areas outside cities to have a voice in how their areas will grow.

**Gives counties a voice in urban growth** - This bill will also give counties a voice in where cities extend their infrastructure.

This bill only affects the nine fastest growing counties and those with the largest populations and the incorporated cities and towns in those counties. These counties include:

Gallatin; Lewis and Clark; Missoula; Ravalli; Cascade; Flathead; Lake; Silver Bow; and Yellowstone.

How the Quality Growth Act works:

1. First, the nine fast growing and most populace counties and their cities **use census data to project their future growth** for the next 20 years;

2. Cities and counties then use existing urban densities or at the existing densities for rural centers to **calculate how much land will be needed to accommodate future growth** for the next 20 years and **where it can occur most efficiently**;

3. After taking into account the amount of growth that can be accommodated within their cities' limits, **counties work with each of their cities to jointly designate quality growth areas immediately adjacent to each of those cities;**

4. Counties, at the same time, may identify their existing rural centers and designate quality growth areas for each of them;

5. Cities and counties then **inventory existing public facilities** - transportation systems, sewer and water systems, and law enforcement facilities - and **plan how to provide services to quality growth areas**.

6. A **jurisdiction's infrastructure spending** would then need to be in accordance with the planned extension of those public facilities for quality growth areas;

7. Counties and cities also need to **propose land use management techniques**, which can be incentive based and/or regulatory, in order to accomplish the following four goals:
    a. Guide development into quality growth areas;
    b. Ensure that there is adequate affordable housing built in quality growth areas to meet the need; and,
    c. Protect people and property from hazards including fire and floods.