

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

June 2026



COMMENTS and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our partners who also assisted with the development of this comprehensive economic development strategy. Project partners (Steering Committee members) include James Bible (S&K Business Services and Sovereign Leasing and Financing, Inc.); Ruth Swaney (CSKT Finance Office); Erin Krantz (Job Service Polson); Marie Hirsch (Arlee Community Development Corporation); Eva Oruste; Michael Munson (Salish Kootenai College); Michelle Mitchell (Tribal Education Department); Erma Haynes (Enrollment Department); Melinda Charlo (Tribal Personnel Indian Preference Office); Jody Perez (Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority); Zachary Camel (Mission Valley Power); and Bryon Miller (S&K Gaming). We would also like to thank Velda Shelby, who has either assisted with editing this document or has provided assistance to the committee.

Most importantly, we would like to thank the Tribal Elders and the Tribal Council for their thoughtful guidance and perspective. Tribal Council members include Michael Dolson (Chairman), Jami Pluff (Vice-Chair), Danielle Matt (Secretary), Carole Lankford (Treasurer), Tom McDonald (At Large District), Martin Charlo (Pablo District), James Steele Jr. (St. Ignatius District), Greg Dumontier (Arlee District), Len Twoteeth (Elmo District), and James “Bing” Matt (At Large District).

-- Janet Camel, CSKT Planning Director and Principal Author

-- James Bible, EDA Planner and Author

**RESOLUTION
OF THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF
THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION, MT**

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA) FOR A THREE-YEAR PLANNING GRANT AND FOR APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES' COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES THAT

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes is the duly recognized governing body of the Flathead Reservation; and

WHEREAS, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) are committed to the sound planning and management of Flathead Reservation resources; and

WHEREAS, the CSKT have directed the Economic Development Office (EDO) to fill the important need of diversification of revenues and protection of resources as the CSKT strive for self-sufficiency and planned economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the CSKT have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with S&K Business Services/Sovereign Leasing and Financing (SKBS) to provide business planning support to CSKT and Tribal member-owned businesses as part of the Statement of Work detailed in the EDA Planning Grant application and in CSKT's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); and

WHEREAS, S&K Business Services (SKBS) leads Flathead Reservation Workforce and Economic Development Coalition meetings to identify regional or Reservation-based industry trends, employment opportunities, Tribal member workforce gaps, and related employment enhancement strategies to guide sustainable Tribal economic development on the Flathead Reservation; and

WHEREAS, SKBS has worked with CSKT's EDO to update the five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy by garnering input through surveys and meetings with Coalition partners, businesses, and organizations, and by conducting in-depth research to collect accurate and current statistical data for the Flathead Reservation; and

WHEREAS, CSKT Tribal staff and community leaders have submitted comments and contributed updated data for the CEDS; and

WHEREAS, with Tribal Council approval of the draft CSKT Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, a 30-day public comment period will be initiated.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation approves the application for a three-year EDA Planning Grant to be administered during the three (3) year period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2029; and

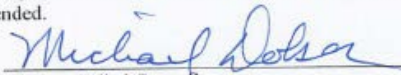
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tribes shall enter into a new Memorandum of Agreement and Subaward Agreement with S&K Business Services/Sovereign Leasing and Financing, to remit the EDA award to SKBS, less IDC retained by CSKT; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tribal Council Chairman and designated representative are hereby authorized to negotiate and execute the grant contract and any modification thereof; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation will adopt the updated CSKT Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, pending completion of the 30-day public comment period.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes on August 18, 2026, with a vote of 9 for, 0 opposed, and 0 not voting, pursuant to the authority vested in it by Article VI, Sections 1 (a), (c) and (u) of the Tribes' Constitution and Bylaws; said Constitution adopted and approved under Section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984), as amended.


Chairman, Tribal Council

ATTEST:


Tribal Council Secretary

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or Strategic Economic Development Plan includes goals, objectives, and action steps for the next five years and beyond to improve the Flathead Reservation economy. It includes input from Tribal members, Tribal government programs, the nonprofit sector, and the private sector, including Tribal corporations and small businesses. The plan also incorporates issues identified over the past several years in the state of Montana's Main Street Montana strategic planning process and in multiple tribal cultural and natural resource plans and policies. CSKT's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was developed with input from an interdisciplinary, interagency steering committee. The partners who comprise that committee include:

- Salish Kootenai College
- Job Service Polson
- Montana Department of Commerce
- Lake County and Arlee Community Development Corporations (non-profits)
- Mission Valley Power – local electric utility
- S&K Business Services
- S&K Gaming
- Multiple tribal government departments, including Personnel, Education, Finance, Economic Development, and Human Resources Development

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tribal Council, Salish/᠒lispé Culture Committee and Elders, and Kootenai Culture Committee and Elders also played a role in reviewing the list of proposed economic development activities outlined in this document.

CSKT receives annual funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to conduct economic planning activities. An outcome of these activities is a rewrite of CSKT's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years. CSKT also receives funding from the Montana Department of Commerce to provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs and to conduct feasibility studies for Tribal projects.

The following strategic plan meets CSKT's goals and objectives for economic development and incorporates the information gained in CSKT's 2014 Sustainable Economic Development Study as well as new information obtained since.

According to EDA, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, or CEDS, "is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic road map to diversify and strengthen regional economies" (EPA CEDS Summary of Requirements).

This strategy describes the background setting of the Flathead Reservation economy, including information about Tribal history, demographics, the physical environment, existing Tribal businesses, job training programs, and entrepreneurial resources, as well as economic trends, the relationship to the outside economy, and other economic performance factors.

The plan identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the reservation economy, as well as opportunities and threats, which is called a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis, in concert with CSKT's values and goals for reservation development, guides CSKT's economic development strategy and action plan.

Evaluation and performance measures are incorporated into the action plan, as well as a strategy for addressing economic resilience.

2 FLATHEAD RESERVATION ECONOMIC SETTING

The Flathead Indian Reservation is home to three tribes—the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d’Oreille, and one band of Kootenai people. The reservation is situated between the two largest cities in Western Montana—Missoula and Kalispell. U.S. Highway 93 is the main transportation artery in Western Montana, spanning the length of the reservation and connecting it to Missoula, Kalispell, and beyond.

The reservation encompasses more than 1.3 million acres and intersects with four counties—Lake, Missoula, Sanders, and Flathead. There are four incorporated cities or towns on the reservation—Polson, Ronan, St. Ignatius, and Hot Springs—and several other non-incorporated communities. These include the Flathead Lake-side communities of Dayton, Elmo, Big Arm, Finley Point, and Blue Bay in addition to Pablo (where the Tribal headquarters is located), Charlo, Ravalli, Arlee, Evaro, Sčilíp (Dixon), Camas Prairie, Lonepine, and Niarada. Because the Reservation was illegally opened to non-Tribal settlement in 1910, some of these communities have greater numbers of Tribal residents than others.

The Flathead Reservation is unique in that it is the last, remaining homeland of three distinct Native American tribes. It is essential that the reader of CSKT’s economic strategy understand the history of the Tribes and the make-up of the reservation before studying the Tribes’ strategies for future development.

2.1 CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES’ HISTORY

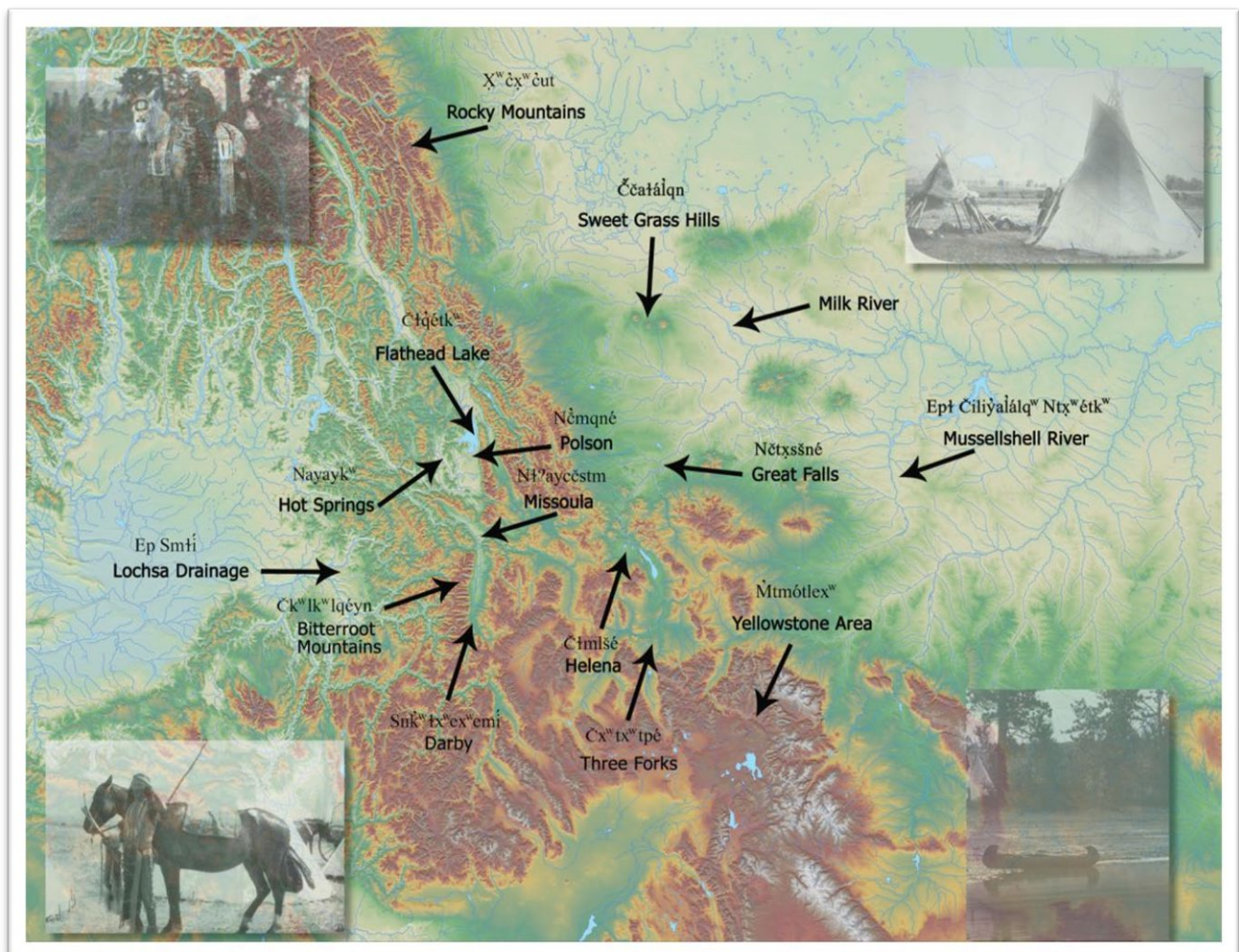
The history presented here is an excerpt of the History and Culture Chapter of CSKT’s Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan (1996). It is a “compilation of Tribal elders’ oral histories, European American historical interpretations, and professional research on treaties and other documents. Because language barriers and cultural differences have, at times, led Western historians to misunderstand events that involve the Tribes, it is useful to draw upon the oral histories of the Salish and Kootenai peoples as well as the historical record.

SALISH CULTURE (Sqélixw—The People)

“On the Flathead Reservation, the designation ‘Confederated Salish’ encompasses not only the Bitterroot Salish and the Pend d’Oreilles but also Kalispel and Spokane Indians who settled on the reservation. Elders say that these and other tribes were once one Salish speaking tribe. Thousands of years ago this ancestral tribal group divided into a number of different bands that later became tribes and occupied much of the Northwest, from British Columbia to Montana and beyond....²

“Before the time of the reservation, the Salish tribes gained subsistence from a tribal system of hunting, fishing, and harvesting. The quest for food began in the early spring with the bitterroot harvest.... Along with bitterroot, the people harvested other plants... [for food and medicine] The people fished year-round. In summer and fall, the Salish hunted and picked berries.... All these activities were communal; the people worked together and helped each other.”

"In the fall, the men concentrated more on hunting, while the women dried the meat and prepared hides for robes and buckskins. The Salish hunted many different animals, but mainstays were deer and bison. Every year, the people traveled east of the mountains, where game animals were plentiful...."



“The earth was good to the tribes. It provided not only food but also material for making lodges, tools, clothing, and games. The Salish made lodge coverings from elk and buffalo hides and fashioned tools such as needles, mauls, and grinding stones from wood, bone, and rock. The Salish traveled long distances to collect raw materials that were not available locally. The Salish had a strong trade relationship with the Nez Perce and traded bitterroot and high-quality buckskin for Nez Perce cornhusk bags filled with camas....”

“Before the introduction of the horse, the Salish used travois to haul possessions between camps. The people-built travois by tying a hide between two poles. The load rested in the hide....”

KOOTENAI CULTURE (’aq̓smaknik’—The People)

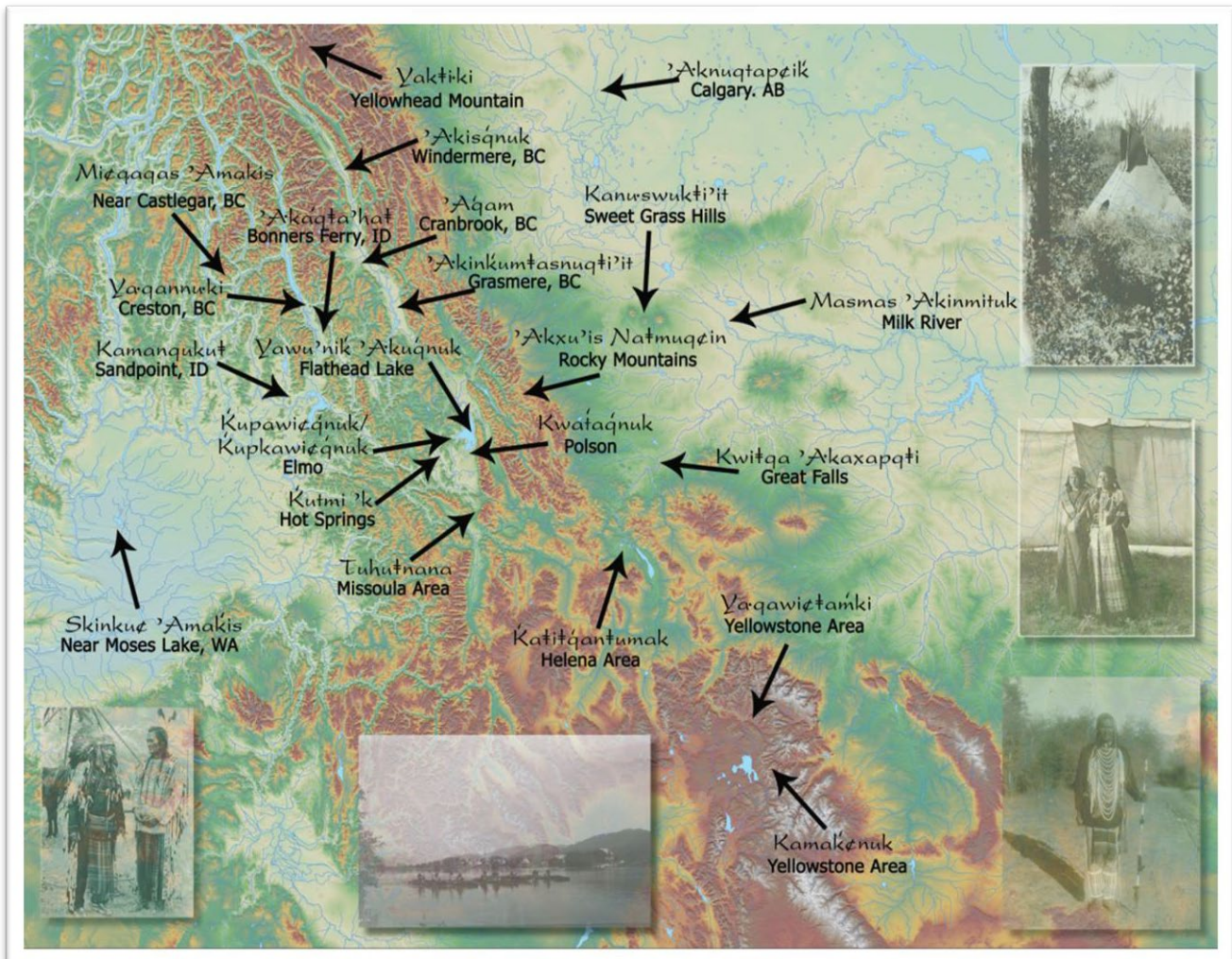
“Before contact with non-Indians, the Kootenai Nation (also spelled Kootenay or Kutenai) numbered over ten thousand. Kootenai Indians inhabited what is now eastern British Columbia, the southern half of Alberta, northern Idaho, eastern Washington, and Montana. The Kootenai band that lived in the Dayton area called itself A’kicqanik, which translates as “Fish Trap People.” The name comes from the Kootenai practice of setting traps in the creeks during the large fish runs.

“The Kootenai [also] moved seasonally over a large territory. The seasonal round began in the early spring when the people traveled to fishing grounds. There, the Kootenai caught bull and cutthroat trout, salmon, sturgeon, and whitefish using a simple bone device and line or harpoons with a detachable, barbless point. The people also set traps and weirs in streams.”

“In early May, as the fishing season came to a close, the root harvest began. The people dug bitterroot, camas, and other roots. In mid-June the band traveled east of the divide to hunt buffalo. Weeks later the people returned with heavy loads of meat. From mid- to late summer the Kootenai harvested serviceberries, chokecherries, huckleberries, and other fruits. When fall approached, some of the Kootenai organized communal deer drives; others returned to the Plains to hunt buffalo. The tribe caught surplus food for winter.”

“Deer were the most accessible and abundant of the game animals, and deer meat was one of the most essential foods, but the Kootenai also hunted elk, moose, caribou, buffalo, mountain sheep and bear, and birds such as grouse, geese, and ducks....”

“The Kootenai lived in skin and mat-covered tepees (the latter woven from tulle and dogbane). The people used canoes to transport family and gear and to fish for salmon and manufactured a unique covered canoe with a long projection at both bow and stern.”



A Portion of the Aboriginal Territory of the Ksanka Band of Kootenai Indians—Map courtesy of the CSKT Natural Resources Department and Kootenai Culture Committee (CSKT Climate Change Strategic Plan, 2013).

“During times of peace the Kootenai traded with other tribes, such as the Shoshone, Nez Perce, and Blackfeet. Other tribes coveted the native tobacco cultivated by the Kootenai. The Kootenai traded it and famous tanned buckskin hides for stones used to make pipes, various tools, and material goods.”

HISTORICAL IMPACTS ON SALISH AND KOOTENAI RESOURCES

For many thousands of years, since time immemorial, the people gained subsistence from a system of hunting, fishing, plant harvest, and trade, moving seasonally over a large territory that reached throughout and beyond the vast Columbia River Basin. Yet in less than 1/3 of the time of the tribes' existence in the Northwest, the Tribal economy changed dramatically.

The late 1600s and early 1700s introduced horses and firearms to the region, making inter-tribal warfare more frequent and deadly. Smallpox and other epidemics struck in the late 1700s. The early 1800s brought the fur trade that wiped out vast populations of bison and small mammals that provided food, materials for tools, and hides for shelter and clothing.

With the signing of the Hellgate Treaty in 1855, the Bitterroot Salish, Pend d'Oreilles, and one band of Kootenai people were linked together as residents of what they believed to be the Bitterroot and Flathead Valleys in Canada. The chiefs ceded millions of acres of aboriginal territory to retain the Bitterroot and Flathead Valleys for the Tribes' exclusive use and benefit, along with the right to hunt, fish, and harvest within uninhabited areas of Tribal aboriginal lands.

The treaty negotiated between the sovereign nations of the United States of America, the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d'Oreilles, and the Kootenai brought the federal government's promise of peace, health care, education, tools, and resources that would assist Tribal leaders in providing for the people.

But promises were not kept, and the three tribes were eventually forced to live within the boundaries of the 1.3 million acres of the Jocko Reserve, known today as the Flathead Reservation. Aside from a few small parcels, the Bitterroot Valley was taken from the Salish. Some natives were killed when they hunted on uninhabited aboriginal land outside of the reservation.

Then more land was taken, this time from within the reservation for

- government agents and the Catholic Church for agriculture and schools
- the railroad
- individual Indian allotments, despite Tribal delegations sent to Washington, D.C., to protest privatization of reservation lands
- over 18,000 acres for the National Bison Range
- nearly 46,000 acres for reservoir or power development
- over 61,000 acres for state school purposes
- over 400,000 acres for homesteaders.

By 1912, the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreilles Tribes, as three nations, had less than 400,000 acres remaining, much of which was mountainous or inaccessible. While individual Tribal members received private land allotments, some in 1908 and some in 1922, many eventually lost their land tracts to tax sales or fraud. Today, less than 3% of the reservation is individually owned trust land.

Non-tribal business development began affecting the economies of the CSKT as far back as the late 1700s, when the fur trade brought the market system to the northwest. A foreign trade system, foreign currency, language, education, legal, and land ownership systems took their toll on traditional native economies over the decades—an impact from which it is taking centuries to recover.

And homesteading, land subdivision, and land sales to non-tribal people shifted the population and natural resource balance of the reservation. In the 1900s, the number of Tribal members living on the reservation grew by about 2,000, while the non-member population grew by more than 21,000, placing more than 10 times the pressure on the natural resource base as Tribal growth.

After the Tribes were forced to stay within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation, pro bono attorneys and others helped the Tribes work within the foreign, non-Indian legal and land ownership structure to buy back Tribal lands and take control of Tribal lands and resources.

In 1935, as a result of the Indian Reorganization Act, the Salish, ʔlispé, and Kootenai people adopted a constitution and bylaws and became officially known as the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation. The Tribes ratified a corporate charter on April 25, 1936, becoming the first tribes in the United States to adopt both a tribal constitution and a corporate charter.

As one of the first 10 self-governance tribes in the nation, the CSKT used the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1976 (Public Law 93-638) to contract with the federal government to assume management responsibility for 65 federal programs on the Flathead Reservation, including management of Mission Valley Power, the reservation's electric utility. CSKT also manages 69 Tribal programs and an additional 194 federal, state, and other grant programs, with a \$200 million overall budget in 2025.

Today the CSKT population has grown to over 8,000 members, the majority of whom reside on the Reservation. The total Flathead Reservation population is 31,394; there are 12,381 households and 198 industries on the Reservation, with 14,880 employed individuals (IMPLAN 2019).

The CSKT now own and manage more than 64% of the 1.3-million-acre Reservation and are governed by a ten-member, elected Tribal Council that represents Tribal members from eight geographical districts on the Reservation—Arlee, Sčilíp (Dixon), St. Ignatius, Ronan, Pablo, Polson, Elmo, and Hot Springs—and two at-large reps. CSKT employs 1400 people (including 200 seasonal employees), 80% of whom are CSKT members.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC DATA

This section has been updated with public web-sourced data. Census figures below use ACS 2024 five-year estimates for the Flathead Reservation. Mission West figures use ESRI estimates/projections dated September 29, 2025. Because ACS and ESRI use different methods and reference dates, the values should be read with their source notes rather than treated as interchangeable.

Primary website citations for this section: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2024 five-year estimates via Census Reporter, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/25000US1110-flathead-reservation/>; Mission West Community Development Partners, Flathead Indian

Reservation data page, ESRI data dated 2025-09-29, <https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation>; Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024, https://lmi.mt.gov/_docs/Publications/LMI-Pubs/LocalAreaProfiles/Flathead_COP_2024.pdf.

POPULATION DATA

The 2024 ACS five-year estimate places the Flathead Reservation population at 32,167 residents, with 12,341 households and 15,518 housing units. The ACS profile reports a median age of 43 and a land area of 1,935.7 square miles. Mission West/ESRI estimates the 2025 population at 32,610 and projects 34,434 residents by 2030.

Indicator	Current estimate	Comparison / projection	Website citation
Population	32,167 (ACS 2024 5-year)	32,610 (ESRI 2025); 34,434 projected for 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Households	12,341 (ACS 2024 5-year)	12,804 (ESRI 2025); 13,411 projected for 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Median age	43 (ACS 2024 5-year)	44 (ESRI 2025)	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Housing units	15,518 (ACS 2024 5-year)	15,590 (ESRI 2025); 16,203 projected for 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Land area	1,935.7 square miles	16.6 people per square mile	Census Reporter ACS 2024

Sources: Census Reporter, Flathead Reservation profile (ACS 2024 five-year estimates), <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/25000US1110-flathead-reservation/>; Mission West Community Development Partners, Flathead Indian Reservation data page (ESRI data dated 2025-09-29), <https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation>.

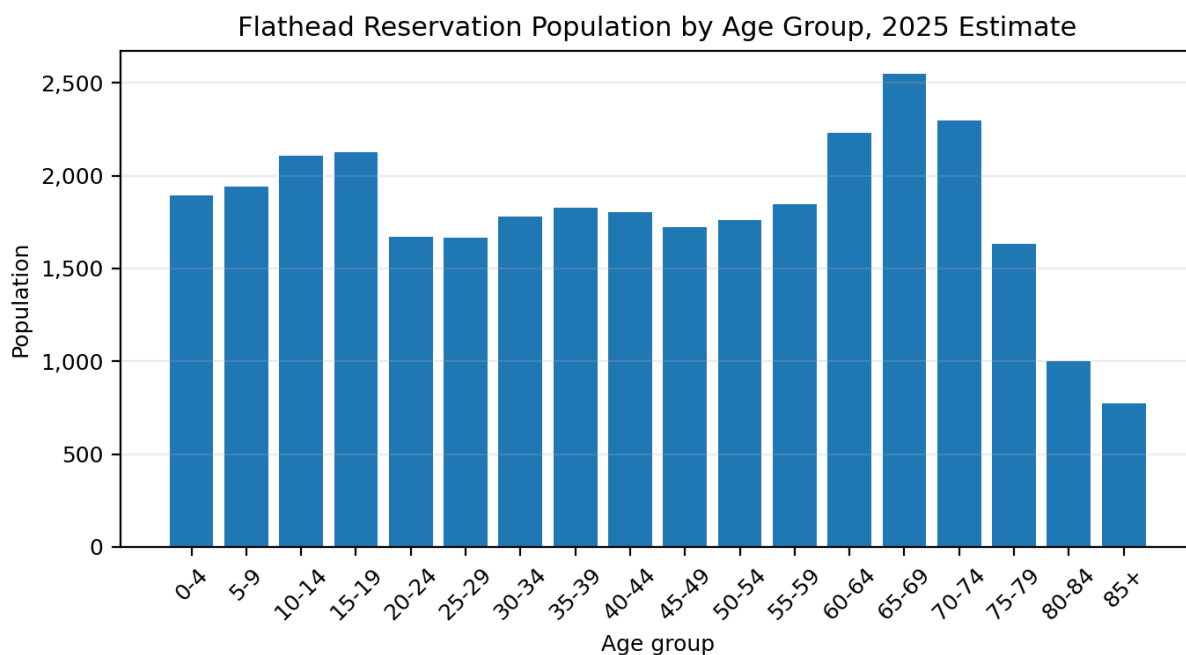


Figure 1. Flathead Reservation population by age group, 2025 estimate. Source: Mission West Community Development Partners / ESRI, data dated 2025-09-29.

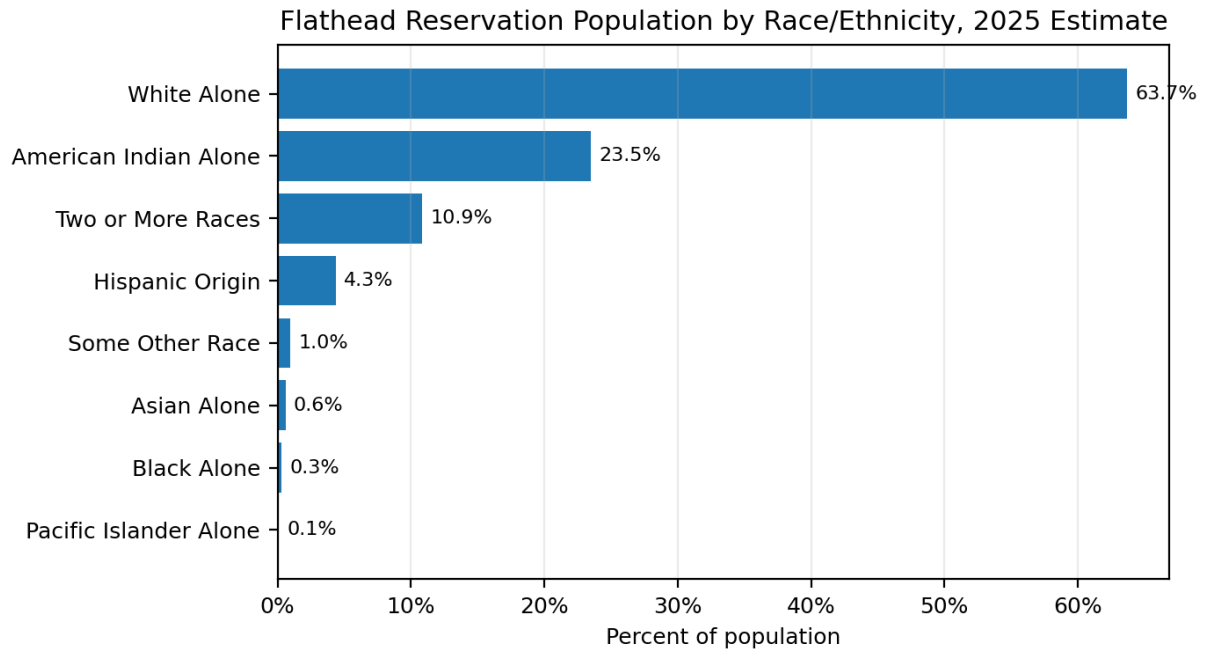


Figure 2. Flathead Reservation population by race/ethnicity, 2025 estimate. Source: Mission West Community Development Partners / ESRI, data dated 2025-09-29.

SOCIOECONOMIC DATA

Reservation-level income, poverty, housing, education, and labor market indicators have been refreshed below. The public sources cited here describe the whole Reservation population; they do not isolate CSKT-enrolled members from nonmembers. Current tribal-member-specific statistics should be verified using CSKT enrollment, Personnel, DHRD, Tribal Health, and other internal program records or a new member survey.

PER CAPITA INCOME AND COST OF LIVING

The 2024 ACS five-year estimate reports Flathead Reservation per capita income of \$33,327 and median household income of \$60,144, compared with \$44,673 and \$80,734 for the United States. Mission West/ESRI estimates 2025 per capita income at \$31,332 and 2025 median household income at \$58,628, with 2030 projections of \$33,639 and \$63,558, respectively. Because ACS does not publish a local cost-of-living index in the profile used for this update, housing value is included as a cost pressure indicator: the ACS median value of owner-occupied housing units is \$380,000, while Mission West/ESRI estimates a 2025 median home value of \$461,450.

Indicator	Flathead Reservation	Comparison / projection	Website citation
Per capita income	\$33,327 (ACS 2024 5-year)	\$44,673 United States; \$31,332 ESRI 2025; \$33,639 ESRI 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Median household income	\$60,144 (ACS 2024 5-year)	\$80,734 United States; \$58,628 ESRI 2025; \$63,558 ESRI 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Median owner-occupied home value	\$380,000 (ACS 2024 5-year)	\$461,450 ESRI 2025; \$489,561 ESRI 2030	Census Reporter ACS 2024; Mission West ESRI 2025
Persons below poverty line	18.6% / 5,896 people (ACS 2024 5-year)	12.5% United States	Census Reporter ACS 2024

Sources: Census Reporter, Flathead Reservation profile (ACS 2024 five-year estimates), <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/25000US1110-flathead-reservation/>; Mission West Community Development Partners, Flathead Indian Reservation data page (ESRI data dated 2025-09-29), <https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation>.

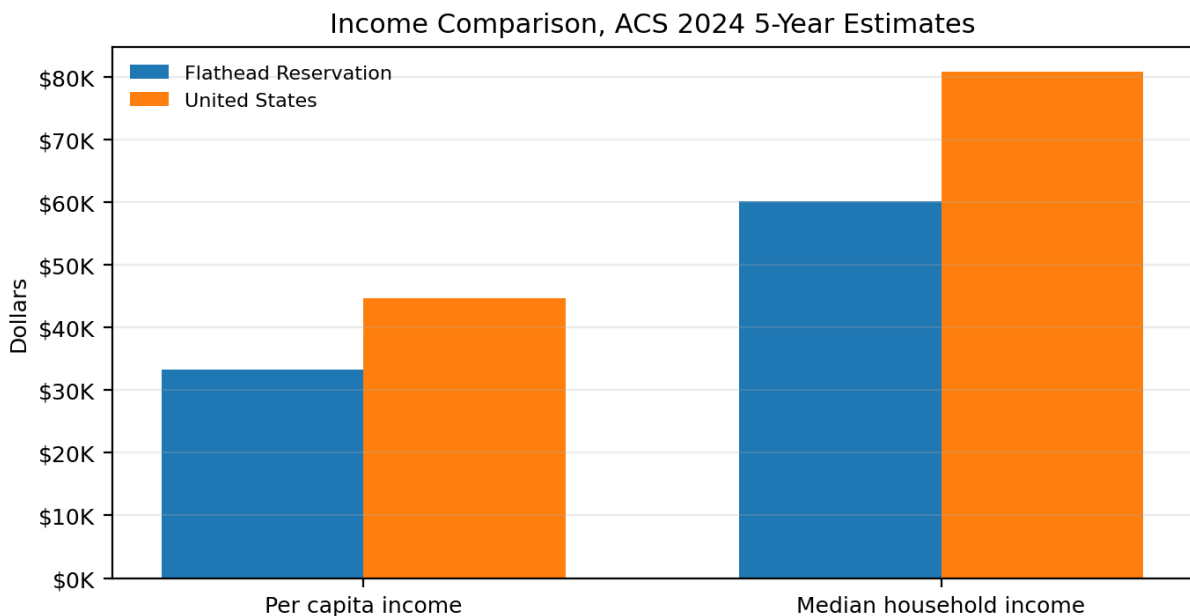


Figure 3. Income comparison using ACS 2024 five-year estimates. Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2024 via Census Reporter.

POVERTY

The ACS 2024 five-year profile estimates that 18.6% of Flathead Reservation residents, or about 5,896 people, are below the poverty line. This is about 1.5 times the national rate shown in the same profile. Earlier CSKT survey findings remain useful as historical context, but the current Reservation-level poverty statistic should be cited from the ACS 2024 profile unless a newer approved Tribal member survey is available.

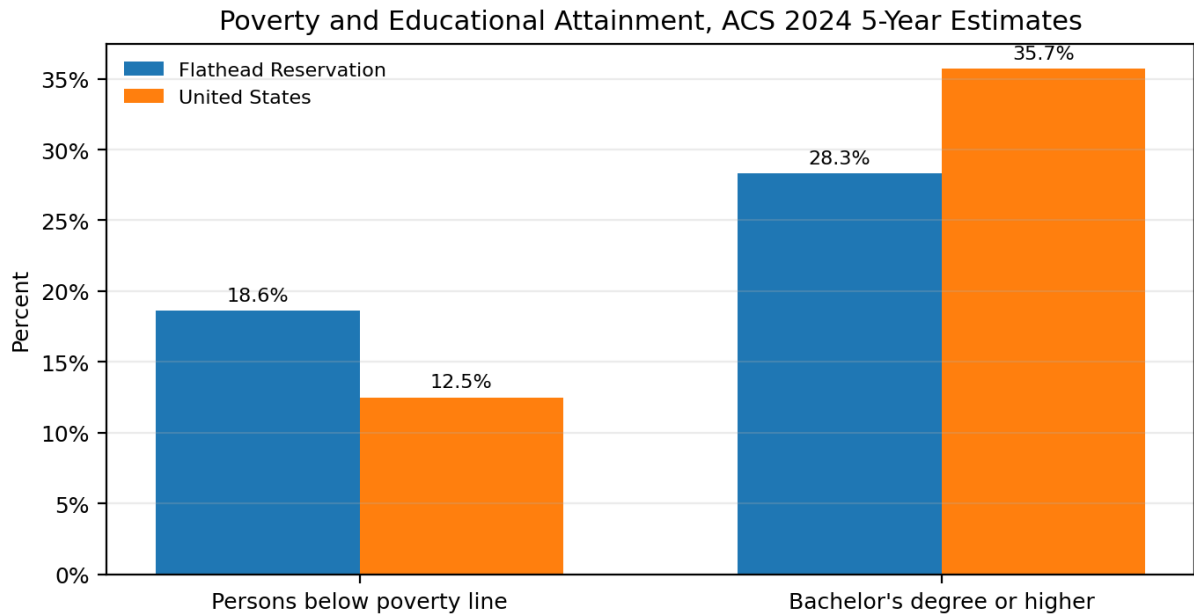


Figure 4. Poverty and educational attainment comparison using ACS 2024 five-year estimates. Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2024 via Census Reporter.

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

The ACS 2024 five-year profile reports that 91.9% of Flathead Reservation residents age 25 and over have completed high school or higher, and 28.3% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Mission West/ESRI's 2025 education counts provide additional detail for residents age 25 and over, including 5,303 high school graduates, 4,770 residents with some college and no degree, 3,542 residents with an associate's degree, 4,222 residents with a bachelor's degree, and 2,150 residents with a graduate degree.

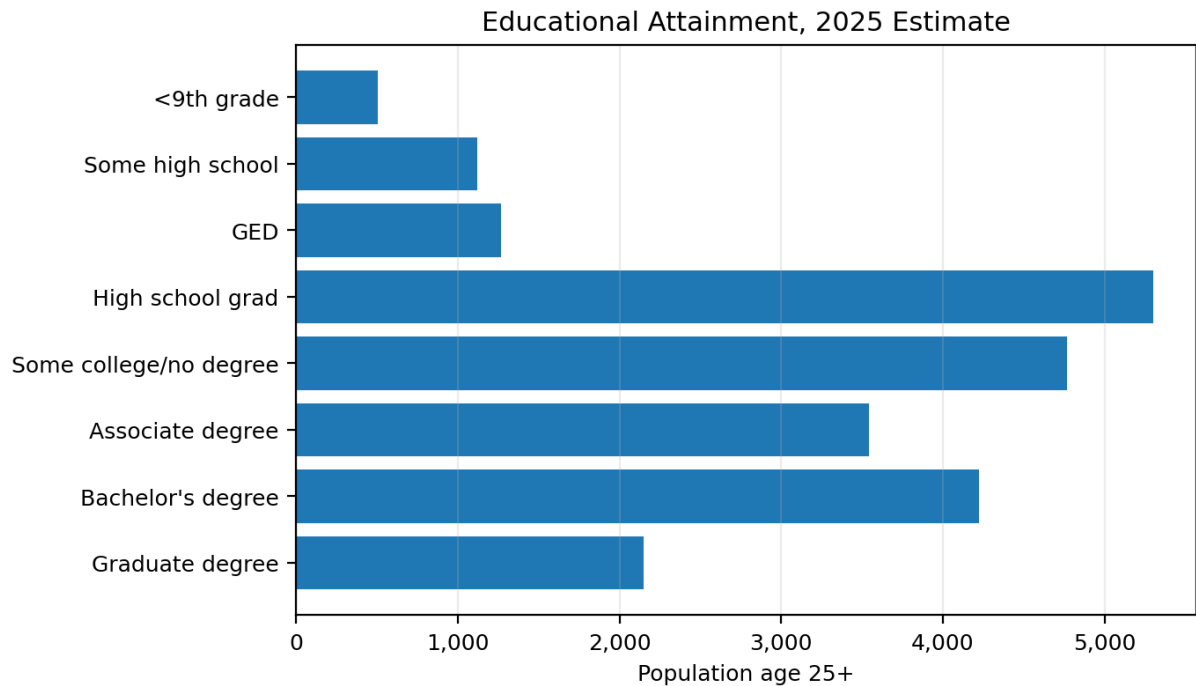


Figure 5. Educational attainment for population age 25 and over, 2025 estimate. Source: Mission West Community Development Partners / ESRI, data dated 2025-09-29.

Sources: Census Reporter, Flathead Reservation profile (ACS 2024 five-year estimates), <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/25000US1110-flathead-reservation/>; Mission West Community Development Partners, Flathead Indian Reservation data page (ESRI data dated 2025-09-29), <https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation>.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

The Montana Department of Labor & Industry 2024 Economic Overview of Flathead County includes a Flathead Reservation labor force summary showing a labor force of 14,101, employment of 13,566, and an unemployment rate of 3.8%. This figure is a current public labor-market measure for the reservation area and should replace the older ACS 2015-2019 unemployment figure in the general reservation-level narrative.

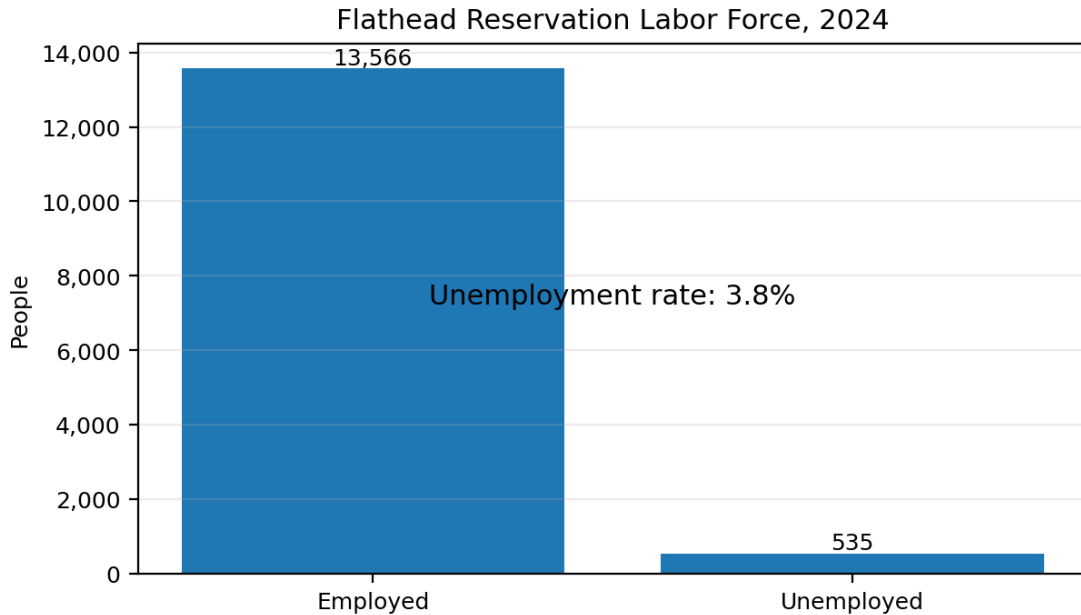


Figure 6. Flathead Reservation labor force status, 2024. Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024.

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Mission West/ESRI estimates 1,494 total businesses and 12,536 total employed workers on the Flathead Indian Reservation in 2025. The largest employment categories reported on the public data page are Public Administration, HealthCare/Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Educational Services, Accommodation/Food Services, and Food Service/Drinking Places. These figures are not directly comparable to ACS worker-class tables because they are employer/industry estimates from a different source.

Indicator	Estimate	Year/source	Website citation
Labor force	14,101	2024, Montana DLI profile	MTDLI Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024
Employed	13,566	2024, Montana DLI profile	MTDLI Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024
Unemployment rate	3.8%	2024, Montana DLI profile	MTDLI Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024
Total businesses	1,494	2025, Mission West/ESRI	Mission West ESRI 2025
Total employed	12,536	2025, Mission West/ESRI	Mission West ESRI 2025
Workers 16+	12,307	2025, Mission West/ESRI	Mission West ESRI 2025

Sources: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Economic Overview of Flathead County 2024, https://lmi.mt.gov/_docs/Publications/LMI-Pubs/LocalAreaProfiles/Flathead_COP_2024.pdf; Mission West Community Development Partners, Flathead Indian Reservation data page (ESRI data dated 2025-09-29), <https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation>.

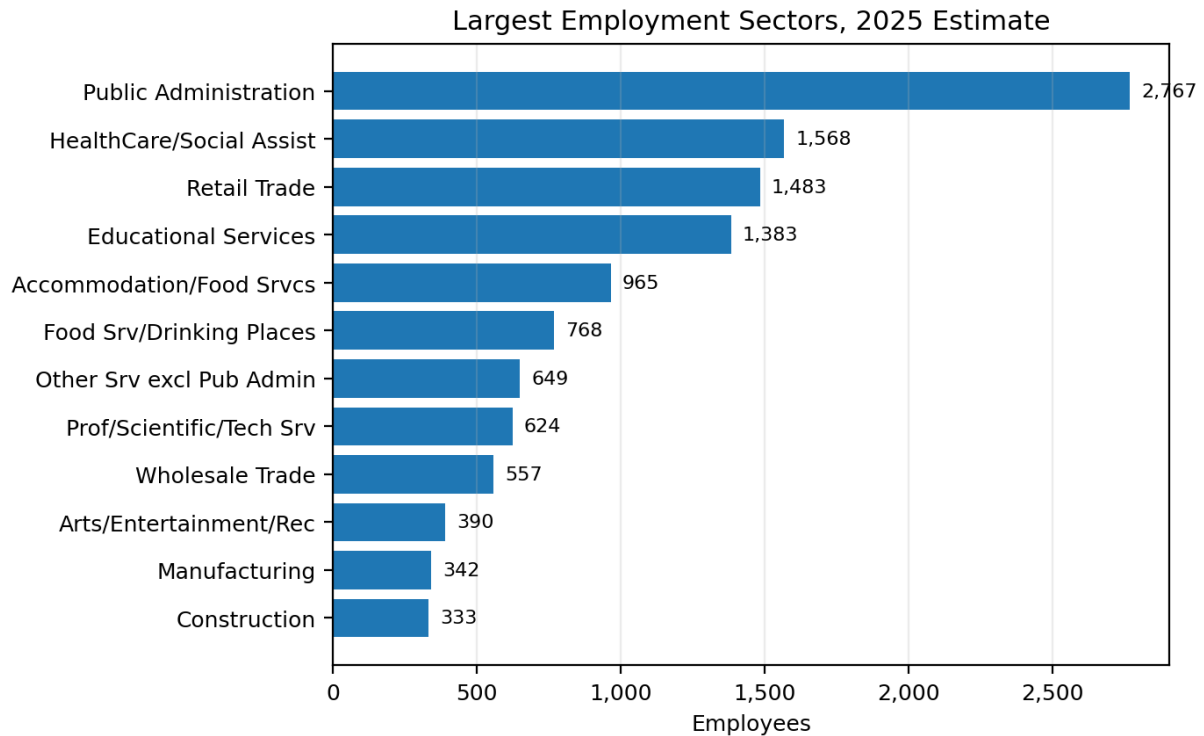


Figure 7. Largest employment sectors on the Flathead Indian Reservation, 2025 estimate. Source: Mission West Community Development Partners / ESRI, data dated 2025-09-29.

TRIBAL MEMBER-SPECIFIC DATA NOTE

The public websites cited above report reservation-wide estimates. They include Tribal members, members of other tribes, nonmembers, and non-Indian residents living or working within the geographic area. Current CSKT member-specific employment, income, training, and business-ownership statistics should be updated through CSKT administrative records and/or a new Tribal member survey before final adoption if member-specific performance measures are needed.

Website source	Use in this section
https://censusreporter.org/profiles/25000US1110-flathead-reservation/	ACS 2024 five-year population, households, income, poverty, housing, education, and U.S. comparisons.
https://www.missionwestcdp.org/site-map/our-communities/p/v/data/item/1501/flathead-indian-reservation	ESRI 2025/2030 population, housing, income, age, race, education, business, commute, and NAICS employment estimates.
https://lmi.mt.gov/_docs/Publications/LMI-Pubs/LocalAreaProfiles/Flathead_COP_2024.pdf	Montana Department of Labor & Industry 2024 Reservation labor force, employed workers, and unemployment rate.
https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data.html	General ACS data source description and access tools.

2.3 PHYSICAL SETTING¹²

Most of the Flathead Reservation is rural in character. However, because it is located in the far western portion of Montana between the urban communities of Kalispell and Missoula, the reservation has several small towns that are mostly located along U.S. Highway 93—the principal travel artery that connects the reservation to Kalispell and Missoula.

Nestled within the Rocky Mountain Plateau, the reservation is roughly 60 miles long and 40 miles wide, and approximately 1,318,558 acres¹³ in size. The reservation comprises the lower quarter of the Flathead River Basin and encompasses the south half of Flathead Lake and the Lower Flathead River. The abundant waters in the Flathead Basin provide outstanding recreation and hydropower opportunities.

- ¹ The majority of this section includes excerpts from the Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan.
- ² Tribal Geographical Information System database, April 2015.
- ³ Some Tribal Elders refer to the Lower Flathead River as the Q̓lispé River. Its Salish name is Ntx̓we.



The spectacular Mission Mountains form the eastern boundary of the reservation and vary in elevation from six thousand feet at their north end to ten thousand feet at McDonald Peak, northeast of St. Ignatius. The Rattlesnake Mountains form the southeast boundary, and the Reservation Divide (or Nine-Mile Range) defines the southwest boundary. The east edge of the Cabinet Mountains forms the reservation's west boundary, and the north boundary extends west from these mountains, across the middle of Flathead Lake, to the Mission Mountains.

The low-lying Salish Mountains stretch south from the north boundary to the central part of the reservation. This range separates two north-south valleys. On the east side there is the Mission Valley, and on the west, the more arid and sparsely populated Little Bitterroot River Valley. Other principal valleys and basins include Camas Prairie, the Big Draw, and the Jocko Valley. The Lower Flathead River and its tributaries drain them all.

Forests cover much of the mountains in the region. Wetlands and riparian areas are abundant in many areas. The Mission Valley has hundreds of kettle lakes, or potholes, and an extensive irrigation system to sustain agricultural productivity throughout the dry months. The Little Bitterroot Valley is known for its geothermal groundwater.

2.3.1 CLIMATE

Because the western half of the reservation lies in the rain shadow of the Cabinet Mountains, it receives less precipitation than the east half. (Camas Prairie is one of the driest areas in Montana.) Mean annual precipitation in the valleys range from twelve inches on the west side to sixteen inches or more in the east. About half of this falls as rain.

The mountains are considerably wetter. Annual precipitation in the Mission Mountains, for example, reaches as much as one hundred inches, mostly in the form of snow. Typically, the lower elevation mountains receive twenty to thirty inches.

A moist, maritime influence from the Pacific Ocean dominates the reservation area, especially during winter months when low-lying clouds blanket the region. Precipitation falls on a fairly

regular basis throughout the year, although May and June are about twice as wet as other months.

The mean annual temperature in the valleys is approximately 45° F. Winter temperatures are moderate. They average 27° F due to the sheltering effect of the Mission Mountains and the Continental Divide. Warm, southern Chinook winds occasionally moderate these systems, as do cold Arctic air masses that can drop temperatures to below -20° F for several days.

In July and August, when temperatures fluctuate from the high 70s to the low 100s in the valleys (although 100° days are infrequent), a drier, continental climate dominates. The growing season lasts approximately one hundred days and runs from May to September.

2.3.2 SOILS

Reservation soils were formed from residual materials or from materials deposited by glaciers, streams, and wind. Wind deposits include volcanic ash from Washington and Oregon.

The soils of the southern Mission Valley are influenced by fine textures that inhibit the downward movement, or percolation, of air and water. This makes development challenging in some areas. The Pablo, Jocko, and Moiese areas, on the other hand, have sandy-gravelly soils that allow water and air to move much more easily.

Soils in the Round Butte, Valley View, and Lonepine areas are dominated by silts and clays that were deposited in standing water from the days of Glacial Lake Missoula, which covered a major portion of the reservation after the last major ice age. They are formed in materials with layers, or varves, that enable water to move horizontally more easily than vertically, until it reaches a less restrictive soil zone. In many areas' soils formed in glacial till and are generally loamy with moderate to high quantities of boulders, cobbles, and gravel. Some areas have groundwater levels near the land surface. Some soils have a high sodium and/or salt content, and others have high iron content. These qualities can lead to higher development and water treatment costs, which must be factored in when considering new development.

In most of the valleys, the soil is deep and the gradient often gently sloping, which makes these areas more suitable for agriculture.

Mountain and foothill soils are steep and mostly well drained, with large amounts of broken rock. Rock outcrops are a common occurrence.

2.3.3 MINERALS

Given the diversity of land formations and soil types on the reservation, topsoil, clay, sand, gravel, and landscape rock are the materials that are currently mined on the reservation. Tribal Elders are opposed to mining these materials in sensitive cultural areas, and the Tribes require that cultural clearance be obtained prior to any ground-disturbing activities on the reservation.

Historically, Tribal people used small amounts of stone and clay for building, hunting, fishing, warfare, and domestic and religious purposes. Commercial development of mineral resources started in the early 1900s. Since 1917, when construction of the irrigation reservoirs started, work crews have mined sand and gravel for multiple projects, including road building. Builders have removed small quantities of building stone and clay.

Pockets of precious metals have been located on the Reservation and following the opening of the Reservation to non-Indian settlement in 1910, miners staked many claims and established a few mining operations between 1910 and 1949 (Crowley 1963). These small-scale mines produced modest quantities of gold, silver, and copper and are no longer active.

In the mid-1980s, several oil companies leased large tracts of land and explored gas and oil. This activity subsided shortly thereafter, and oil companies now show little interest in further exploration.

2.3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Reservation enjoys a Class I Airshed rating, as well as outstanding water quality, both of which are managed by the Tribes' Environmental Protection programs with assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A diverse variety of wildlife inhabits the Reservation. Over 300 species of birds occur either as breeding birds or as seasonal or wintering migrants. In addition, the reservation provides habitat for nearly 70 species of mammals and several species of amphibians and reptiles.

The variety of wildlife is largely a function of the diversity of habitats encompassed within the reservation, which include semi-arid sagebrush/grasslands, lush wetlands, aquatic areas, riparian zones, agricultural lands, forested mountains, and high-elevation tundra. Each provides habitable niches that are occupied by several wildlife species.

The same is true for fisheries. More than 70 high mountain reservation lakes are ideal for trout because of their clear, cold, and relatively pristine waters. The south half of Flathead Lake supports trout, bass, whitefish, and perch. Many of the Reservations' irrigation reservoirs support bass and pike, as well as perch and trout. The reservation's 500-plus miles of rivers and streams also support many fisheries and provide critical spawning sites for the Lower Flathead River's trout species.

2.3.5 LAND-BASED CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources are precious Tribal resources. They encompass the Tribes' elders, languages, cultural traditions, and cultural sites. They include fish, wildlife, and plants native to the region and landforms and landmarks. Tribal elders and languages are perhaps the most vital of these resources because they teach and communicate the histories and traditional lifestyles of the Tribes. Traditions depend on land-based cultural resources, which include native fish and wildlife and their habitats, edible and medicinal plants and the areas where they grow, and prehistoric

and historical sites, and other land areas where Tribal members currently carry on cultural traditions.

Hunting, fishing, plant harvesting, hide-tanning, food and medicine preparation, singing, dancing, praying, feasting, storytelling, and ceremonies are examples of age-old traditions that rely on the land and the community of life it supports.

Although each of the Tribes on the reservation possesses distinctive beliefs and practices, the people share one important similarity: Tribal people value the Earth—its air, water, and land—as the foundation of Indian culture.

In the words of the Salish/Ḡlispé Culture Committee:

The Earth is our historian. It is made of our ancestors' bones. It provides us with nourishment, medicine, and comfort. It is the source of our independence; it is our Mother. We do not dominate Her but harmonize with Her.

The Tribes believe everything in nature is embodied with a spirit. The spirits are woven tightly together to form a sacred whole (the Earth). Changes, even subtle changes that affect one part of this web, affect other parts.

Protecting land-based cultural resources is essential if the Tribes are to sustain Tribal cultures. This is one of the most important goals of Tribal land and natural resource management on the Reservation. It is also a goal that the Tribes have for Tribal aboriginal territories managed by other entities.

CSKT has established a Tribal Preservation Office that records the locations of precious cultural resource sites and maintains a repository of information related to cultural resources. The office, in concert with the Salish/Ḡlispé Culture Committee and the Kootenai Culture Committee, also reviews all new development proposals on the reservation prior to and sometimes during ground disturbance and development. The office also works with federal and other agencies in Tribal aboriginal territory to identify and protect cultural resources.

2.3.6 LAND USE

The Tribes value many reservation areas as watersheds, fish and wildlife habitats, and cultural sites. The CSKT has set aside nearly 92,000 acres of prime forest in the Mission Mountains as the first tribally designated wilderness in the nation. Over 94,000 additional acres of “primitive areas” have been set aside for use only by Tribal members and their spouses and children. Additional roadless areas and wildlife management areas have also been designated. Land use is also limited along the Flathead and Jocko Rivers, Post Creek and Crow Creek, and the Ninepipe Reservoir area and in a buffer zone created to protect the Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness.

Thousands of acres remain for timber harvest, however, which must be conducted in an environmentally safe manner in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Tribal forest management plans. The Tribal Forestry Department generated approximately \$1.2

million in revenue from harvesting 9.4 million board feet of timber in 2020. The department employs as many as 300 people, including 150-175 seasonal employees.

The Tribes recently purchased a major hydropower generation facility on the Lower Flathead River. Officially known since 2015 as the **Seli's Ksanka Qlispe' Dam**, the project is the first major hydropower facility owned by a Tribal Nation in the United States. CSKT also operates one small-scale facility in the foothills of the Mission Mountains.

The largest land use on the Reservation is agriculture. Vast rangelands provide grazing opportunities for cattle growers, and the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project provides water for crops and livestock across much of the reservation.¹⁶ Other land uses include residential, commercial, industrial, utility, and government/institutional development. The Tribal Lands Department (TLD) manages nearly 2,000 home sites, business, agricultural, utility, and transportation land leases and permits across the Reservation. The Department generated \$931,719 of revenue in Tribal Fiscal Year 2019.

Recreational areas that attract visitors to the reservation include the Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness (the first Tribally designated wilderness in the United States), Flathead Lake, the National Bison Range, the Ninepipe and Pablo Wildlife Refuges, the Flathead River, and the Jocko River. These and many other areas provide the setting for a variety of recreational activities, particularly during the summer. Although recreational use is most frequent during the summer months, winter activities such as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing are also popular.

Rivers, lakes, streams, and roadless areas, such as the Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness, receive the majority of recreation use on the reservation. Most of these resources are on Tribal land. Recreation permits are required for people to recreate on Tribal lands if they are not enrolled members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The Tribal Natural Resources Department sells those permits and works with a few non-Tribal businesses to assist with permit sales.

2.3.7 LAND OWNERSHIP

Tribal land ownership is fragmented, in part because of the Flathead Allotment Act that opened the reservation to non-tribal homesteading in 1910. The Tribes have spent millions of dollars since that time to purchase back hundreds of thousands of acres that were taken and now own the majority of the land on the Reservation. Other land ownership includes the individually owned trust parcels or allotments¹⁷ that are owned in whole or in part by the Tribes and/or individual Native Americans. The federal government holds title to tribally owned trust lands.

⁴ CSKT owns roughly 400,000 acres of rangelands on the reservation.

⁵ The irrigation project serves nearly 180,000 acres on the Reservation (Littleboy, FIIP, 2010).

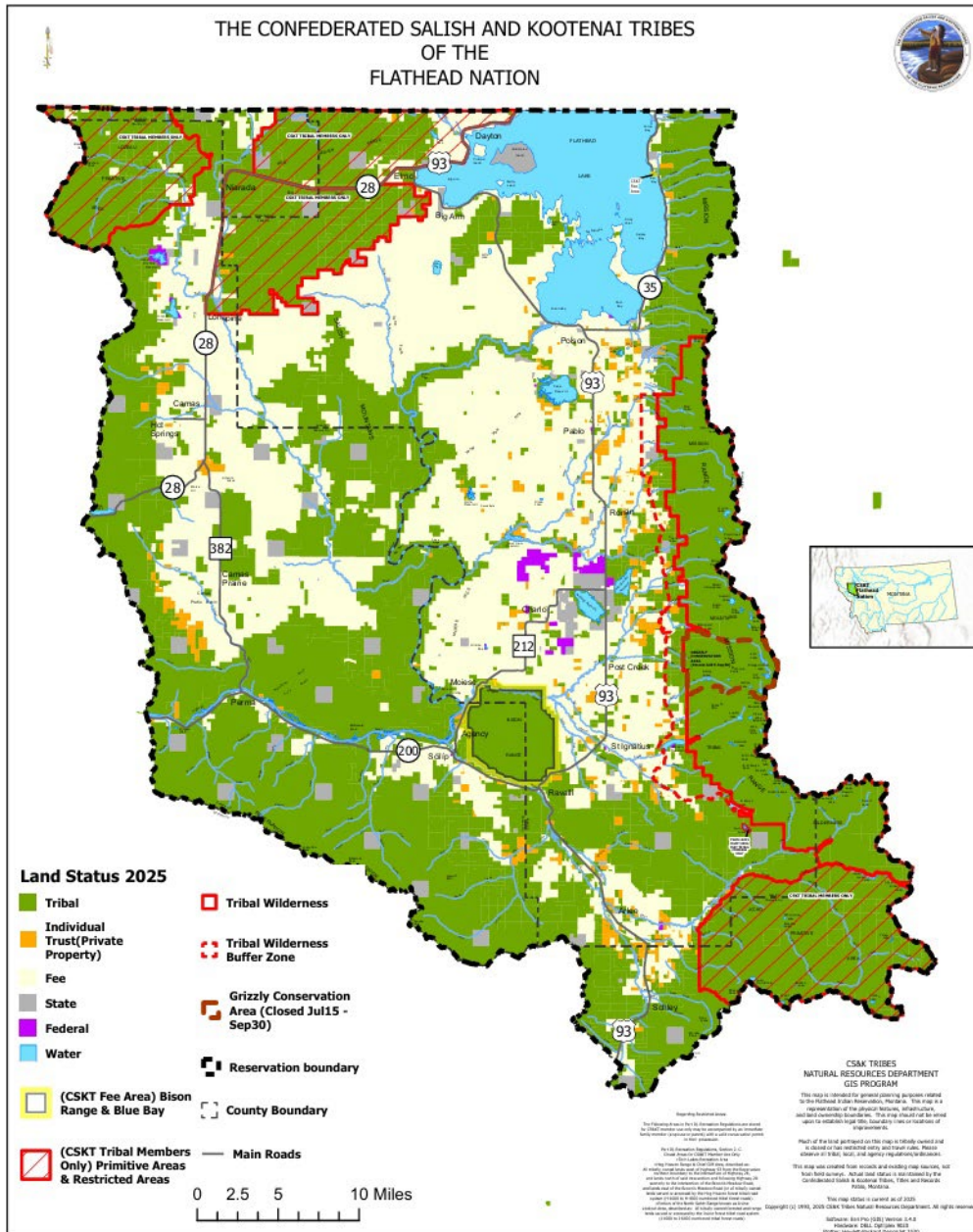
¹⁷ For purposes of this document, an allotment is a tract of Tribal land that, pursuant to the Flathead Allotment Act (33 Stat. 304), was removed by the Secretary of the Interior from communal ownership and conveyed by trust deed to individual members of the tribes. Most, but not all, allotments were created in 1908 and 1922. All allotments were assigned by the secretary with a unique number, which is of record with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

and allotments on behalf of the owners. The remainder of reservation lands is held in federal, state, or fee-simple ownership as depicted in the Land Status map on the following page. The percentage of landownership is shown in the following table. With the transfer of the National Bison Range back to Tribal ownership in 2021, federal land ownership will decrease significantly. The range is the large purple area shown on the following map.

FLATHEAD RESERVATION LAND OWNERSHIP 2020	
Tribally Owned	62.2%
Individually-Owned Trust	2.3%
Fee	31.0%
State	2.8%
Federal	1.7%

The Tribes have also purchased other lands in western Montana for the protection of cultural sites and wildlife habitat.

¹⁸ For purposes of this document, fee land is land that is not in trust status, nor is it federally or state-owned or owned by the Tribes' entire membership. Some of the fee status land on the reservation, included in the table and on the following map, is owned by individual Tribal members.



2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND HOUSING

As noted in the Western Rural Development Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2012-2017, "The rapid and sustained growth of the region has put a serious strain on infrastructure, including transportation and public facilities, most notably as the growth relates to public safety. Upgrades [are occurring to] ... accommodate an increased volume of traffic *and* make travel safe for pedestrians and non-motorized transport. In most cases, upgrades to water and wastewater systems are needed to ensure a safe and ample water supply.... [Finding the] funding to pay for the necessary upgrades and new facilities is a constant struggle."



Kicking Horse Water and Wastewater Lines Replacement Project – 2020

2.4.1 WATER/WASTEWATER

Water resources on the Flathead Reservation are extensive. They include both surface water and ground water. Municipalities and developments depend on ground water for domestic use. Most surface water is used to provide habitat for fisheries as well as irrigation.

CSKT, the State of Montana, and the United States have been working for decades to develop a water rights settlement that quantifies the water rights of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes on and off the Flathead Reservation and provides for the administration of water rights on the Reservation. In 2015 the Montana Legislature passed the compact, and in December of 2020

It was passed by the United States Congress and signed into law as the Montana Water Rights Protection Act by the President. CSKT ratified the compact in January 2021.

Groundwater is the primary source for drinking water on the Reservation. While some residences use creeks or Flathead Lake for their water supply, use of this water for drinking or bathing is not encouraged, because surface waters can be contaminated by animals and other factors.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have collected water quality data for many reservation surface waters and have established surface water quality standards that are more stringent than state standards. Regarding groundwater, the reservation has seen elevated nitrate levels in some areas, and all new drinking water wells are tested before use to ensure that they meet safe drinking water standards. Community water systems are tested monthly for fecal coliform contaminants, and on a regular basis for other potential contaminants, according to a testing schedule required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Flathead Reservation has multiple community water systems, and 27 systems are managed by CSKT's Salish Kootenai Housing Authority. Other systems are managed by private water user organizations, the CSKT Maintenance Department, or the nine public sewer and/or water districts incorporated under Lake or Sanders County.

Some of these systems, as well as most rural residences on the Reservation, use individual septic tanks and drain fields for sewage disposal. CSKT and CSKT's Housing Authority manage 12 community wastewater treatment systems, and there are 10 additional treatment systems on the reservation. One is operated by the Tribal Maintenance Department, and the other nine are operated by public sewer districts, including those operated by the reservation's four incorporated towns of Polson, Ronan, St. Ignatius, and Hot Springs.

2.4.2 IRRIGATION WATER

The Bureau of Indian Affairs operates the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), the primary surface water delivery system for agriculture on the Reservation. Originally designed to promote economic development for the Tribes and individual Tribal members, it now serves many non-Indian farms as well as Tribal farms. Other surface water sources for agriculture are delivered through small ditches and canals, many of which were developed for Tribal lands and allotments before construction of the FIIP.

2.4.3 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Lake County operates the only licensed county landfills on the reservation. One landfill is located southwest of Polson and only takes compost (grass trimmings and leaves) and most construction demolition materials. The other landfill is located between Polson and Pablo, next to the County Transfer Station. It accepts tree trimmings and untreated wood waste only. The Transfer Station next door is the central hub for the collection of other types of waste, such as municipal waste, appliances, and recyclables.

Reservation residents who live in the Lake County portion of the reservation either haul waste directly to the Transfer Station, have their waste collected by Republic Services (a private waste collection and disposal company), or use roll-off waste containers located near Charlo, Ravalli, and Rollins. Residents of Sanders County who do not pay an annual solid waste fee to the county can use a roll-off site near Hot Springs for a fee. Residents of the S̄c̄il̄ip district of Sanders County may dump their waste at the Charlo or Ravalli roll-off sites due to semi-annual fees paid to Lake County. Missoula and Flathead Counties have no solid waste disposal facilities on the Reservation; however, Republic Services serves the Missoula County portion of the Reservation. All of the municipal waste generated on the Reservation is eventually hauled to the company's private landfill in Missoula.

The Lake County Transfer Station also accepts recyclables, including:

- newspaper
- cardboard
- Aluminium cans
- office paper
- assorted plastic scrap metal
- magazines & catalogs
- phonebooks
- tin/steel cans

The county also has bins for some recyclables in Polson, at SKC in Pablo, and at Harvest Foods in Ronan. The county hosts an annual “electronic” waste recycling weekend.

2.4.4 ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

The Flathead Reservation is served by Mission Valley Power (MVP), a federally owned nonprofit electric utility that is maintained by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes pursuant to a Public Law 93-638 contract. According to a 2011 article from the Char-Koosta News, Mission Valley Power purchases 78% of its electricity from the Bonneville Power Administration. The ... [Selis Ksanka Qlispe (SKQ)]¹⁹ Dam provides 21%, and one small hydroelectric-producing dam on the Flathead Reservation and other small alternative energy producers account for the remaining one percent.” MVP offers several energy conservation incentives. Electricity costs on the reservation are some of the lowest in the United States due to the availability of hydropower resources in the Northwest region of the United States and the subsidized block of power provided by CSKT's Energy Keepers, Inc., as authorized by the Tribal Council.

There are no natural gas companies on the reservation; however, propane and fuel oil are available.

Small solar energy systems have been installed at a few residences and businesses.

¹⁹ Purchased by CSKT in September 2015.

2.4.5 COMMUNICATION

Flathead Reservation communications services include internet, telephone, television, and radio.

2.4.5.1 BROADBAND INTERNET AND TELEPHONE

Several different telephone and wireless communications companies provide services on the reservation. In recent years, telephone companies have been upgrading telephone lines to fiber optics or microwave transmission. Ronan and Polson have access to relatively fast internet speeds, but most of the remaining communities on the reservation have access to only moderate speeds at higher costs. As reported in CSKT's 2014 Job and Training Needs Survey, one-third of Tribal members ages 18-60 lived in households where there was no working internet access. CSKT has installed four new wireless communication towers and is in the process of installing micro-pops. Contact Chuck for an update on TCBP in various reservation communities to eventually serve Tribal Law and Order mobile communication and Tribal member internet needs. This effort will increase resiliency and improve the ability of Tribal employees, entrepreneurs, and students to work and study from home during the pandemic and into the future.

2.4.5.2 TELEVISION

Some western Montana television stations cover the reservation. These stations are located in Kalispell and Missoula. The Public Broadcasting System has two towers on the reservation (Jette and Moiese Hill) and broadcasts from Bozeman, Montana.

2.4.5.3 RADIO

AM and FM radio stations in Missoula, Kalispell, Whitefish, and Polson cover the Reservation.

2.4.6 EMERGENCY SERVICES/SAFETY

2.4.6.1 FIRE PROTECTION

According to the Mission West Community Development Partners' Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022, "Lake County supports one fire department per 1,844 people, with one fire department per 93 square miles," whereas Sanders County oversees "one fire department per 713 people and one fire department per 172 square miles." Furthermore, "[w]ithin Lake County, there are [18] volunteer fire protection districts (VFDs), supported primarily through taxes to provide fire protection throughout the county. The CSKT Division of Fire also provides protection in wildland areas" (2022, pg. 57). Meanwhile, Sanders County contains 16 fire departments, spread from Scilip to Thompson Falls, Montana (pg. 59). "Most of the designated fire districts have 12 to 15 volunteers; however, districts located in Polson and Ronan have approximately 30 to 40 volunteers" (2022, pg. 58).

Moreover, "Additional support for volunteer fire organizations comes through grants administered by the State Forester, mill levies, loans administered by USDA Rural Development, and local fundraising efforts, including donations from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes." All of the fire districts and the wildland fire protection agencies belong to the Lake County Fire Association, which purchases joint insurance for the VFDs and reinvests the savings into the

local departments.” The county also has a “Fire Action Plan” that identifies fire-fighting resources and lists contacts in the case of a fire. Most units are dispatched through the Lake County 911 office, although Arlee does receive some calls dispatched through Missoula, and Hot Springs [and Sčilíp] are dispatched through Lake and Sanders Counties” (Mission West Community Development, 2022, pg. 58). As funding permits, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have been assisting landowners to create “defensible space” around homes in the wildland-urban interface to create safety against wildfires. “Firewise” design has saved thousands of homes from destruction through recognizing “simple, effective steps to help communities reduce the risk of destruction from wildfire” (National Fire Protection Association, n.d.).

2.4.6.2 AMBULANCE

The Polson and Ronan Ambulance Services are privately-owned companies, primarily serving Polson, Ronan, and Pablo, “offering 911 emergency responses, inter-facility transfers, and arranged care.” Their services “specialize in critical care, advanced life support, and basic life support [...] servicing hospitals, convalescents, physicians, fire departments, and private/public events” transport (Polson & Ronan Ambulance, n.d.). The Mission Valley Ambulance Service covers the St. Ignatius area, the Arlee Ambulance Service serves Arlee, and the Hot Springs Ambulance covers Hot Springs and Camas Prairie. Missoula and Kalispell hospitals offer life-flight air ambulance helicopter service for the reservation.

2.4.6.3 POLICE PROTECTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Tribal Police Department and jail, located in Pablo, maintain jurisdiction over misdemeanor, juvenile, and felony offenses involving Tribal members. Summarized within the Mission West Community Development Partners’ Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2022–2027, “The CSKT Tribal Police respond to calls for service, investigate crimes, enforce traffic laws, execute arrest warrants, serve process, provide court security, and conduct search and rescue operations” (2022, pg. 56). The department has two investigators: one criminal investigator and two narcotics investigators. The department has 20 full-time officers and 20 patrol cars, and it maintains a separate dispatch center from the county. The Tribal jail has a capacity for 49 inmates, but Polson, Ronan, and St. Ignatius also have contracts for additional jail space with Lake County. According to the Tribal Police Department, as of December 2025, there are eight detention officers. The Tribal Juvenile Probation Department has three juvenile probation officers and two adult probation officers. Juvenile offenders are housed at facilities in Kalispell or Missoula. The counties, however, are included in criminal jurisdiction alongside CSKT law enforcement due to Public Law 280, which gives the state of Montana more direct authority than federal authorities. According to the CEDS report, “CSKT is the only tribe in Montana that has authorized Public Law 280” (2022, pg. 56).

The Tribal Fish and Game Conservation Program enforces regulations governing fish, wildlife, and recreation on the Reservation. The program employs ten full-time game wardens, who are largely stationed at the Bison Range but regularly monitor all corners of the reservation. The game wardens also have a cross-deputization agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (Dan McClure e-mail correspondence, 12-07-25).

The Lake County Sheriff’s Department is made up of the sheriff, undersheriff, detention captain, patrol lieutenant, detention sergeants, patrol sergeants, and support staff. As of December 2025, the department employs a total of 46 staff members, including three school resource officers, one domestic violence investigator, 24 officers, 20 detention and jail personnel, and two civilian staff in administration. Funding for the department comes from various sources, such as mill levies and grants.

Additionally, the Sheriff’s Office operates a boat patrol funded through a mill levy, along with two volunteer search and rescue groups: one in Lake County (40 members) and one off-

reservation in Swan Valley (14 – 16 members). The current ratio of paid officers to the population is about 1:1,200, which is below the national average of 1:1000. Calls for Polson, Ronan, and St. Ignatius are routed through the Lake County 911 center.

The county or state has jurisdiction in the unincorporated areas for felony crimes and non-tribal misdemeanors. Patrol units are dispatched via the Lake County 911 center, overseen by the county's Office of Emergency Management, and calls for Polson, Ronan, and St. Ignatius are also routed through the same call center. According to the CED, law enforcement and detention facilities are the costliest items in the Lake County budget, and they "are funded by the county's general fund, along with mill levy funds that have increased the budget by 5% and account for approximately 30% of that fund." The Lake County jail was built in 1975 and underwent an upgrade and expansion in 2000 to accommodate up to 42 adult inmates and two juveniles" (2022, pg. 56). Juveniles are detained for no more than 24 hours.

The Polson Police Department employs 15 full-time officers, one reserve police chaplain, and one civilian police clerk/crime scene technician (Chief George Simpson e-mail correspondence, 12-10-25). Ronan has a Chief of Police, five officers, a K9, a special service officer, and a reserve officer (City of Ronan, n.d.). St. Ignatius has two full-time officers, one part-time officer, two reserve officers, and four active patrol units (Chief Jason Acheson e-mail correspondence, 12-10-25).

The Montana State Highway Patrol enforces regulations on state highways and has an office in Polson, staffed by seven officers between Polson and Ronan and a total of 25 officers in the Region 6 district. Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the U.S. Forest Service provide wardens and law enforcement officers who enforce regulations on non-Tribal/public lands.

2.4.6.4 DISASTER SERVICES

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Program collaborates with county, state, and federal authorities to support Reservation residents during natural or man-made disasters. CSKT's 2017 Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan states that "historically, CSKT residents have dealt with floods, wildfire, harsh winter storms with extreme cold and blizzards, severe summer storms with damaging thunderstorms, drought, and hazardous material incidents [spills]." " While most hazards cannot be eliminated, their effects can be mitigated" (CSKT-Disaster Services, 2016, p. 1-1). The plan profiles significant hazards to the community, identifying mitigation projects that can reduce those impacts and minimize potential damage. In 2022 to 2023, CSKT built off of the 2016 and 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plans and authored Annex D of the Western MT Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was facilitated by Montana Disaster and Emergency Services ("MT DES") and approved by FEMA in 2025 as the recognized Hazard Mitigation Plan in effect until 2029. The updated plan strengthens collaboration across jurisdictions while taking greater consideration of climate changes in regional natural hazards and how to better prepare resilient communities to adapt to the "new normal" (CSKT-Disaster Services, 2024).

CSKT also has a 2010 Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that designates "disaster responsibilities to Tribal personnel in the mitigation of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural and/or man-made disasters. The EOP applies to all Tribal government departments and agencies tasked with assisting in disasters or emergencies. It outlines the fundamental policies, strategies, and general procedures to control the emergency from its onset through the post-disaster phase." The EOP typically differentiates from hazard-specific emergencies, like wildfire, to functional emergencies, such as setting up an evacuation shelter, and each individualized plan identifies in advance, where possible, the respective authorities who can best fulfill officer roles and duties within an Incident Command System (ICS) structure. The EOP further "defines disaster-specific procedures and describes the range of Tribal response, recovery, and mitigation resources available to save lives, reduce human suffering, and protect public health, safety, property, wildlife, natural resources, the environment, and the local economy from the harmful effects of natural and man-made disaster emergencies." Ultimately, "The CSKT EOP addresses the full scope of complex and ever-changing requirements needed in anticipation of or response to threats or acts of terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies" while recognizing the key players, critical timelines, and crucial resources (i.e., mutual aid) significant to response and recovery efforts (CSKT-Disaster Services, 2010, p. 1). The 2026 EOP is under review for updates and is projected to be approved by Tribal Council before being republished in early summer 2026 online via the Natural Resources Department's website, under the Division of Environmental Protection.

2.4.7 HEALTH SERVICES

Two major hospitals, St. Luke Community Hospital in Ronan and St. Joseph Hospital in Polson, offer emergency, outpatient, and inpatient services on the Reservation. Private clinics are also found in these two towns, as well as in Hot Springs and St. Ignatius. Dental clinics are located in Polson, Ronan, and St. Ignatius. The Tribal Health Department (THD) operates medical clinics for Native American patients in St. Ignatius, Ronan, Polson, and Elmo and recently opened a new clinic in Pablo at Salish Kootenai College to serve college students and staff. The THD provides dental and optical services at the clinics in St. Ignatius and Polson. Over the past decade, the Tribal Health Department has created 70 jobs, and expenditures for Indian healthcare exceed \$10 million annually, excluding Medicaid or private insurance payments. THD's annual payroll is \$9 million (Johnathan Owens interview, 1-6-21). The Tribal Health Department employs 248 individuals, including 158 CSKT members, 18 members of other tribes, 7 CSKT 1st descendants, and 65 nonmembers.

2.4.8 TRANSPORTATION

2.4.8.1 ROADS

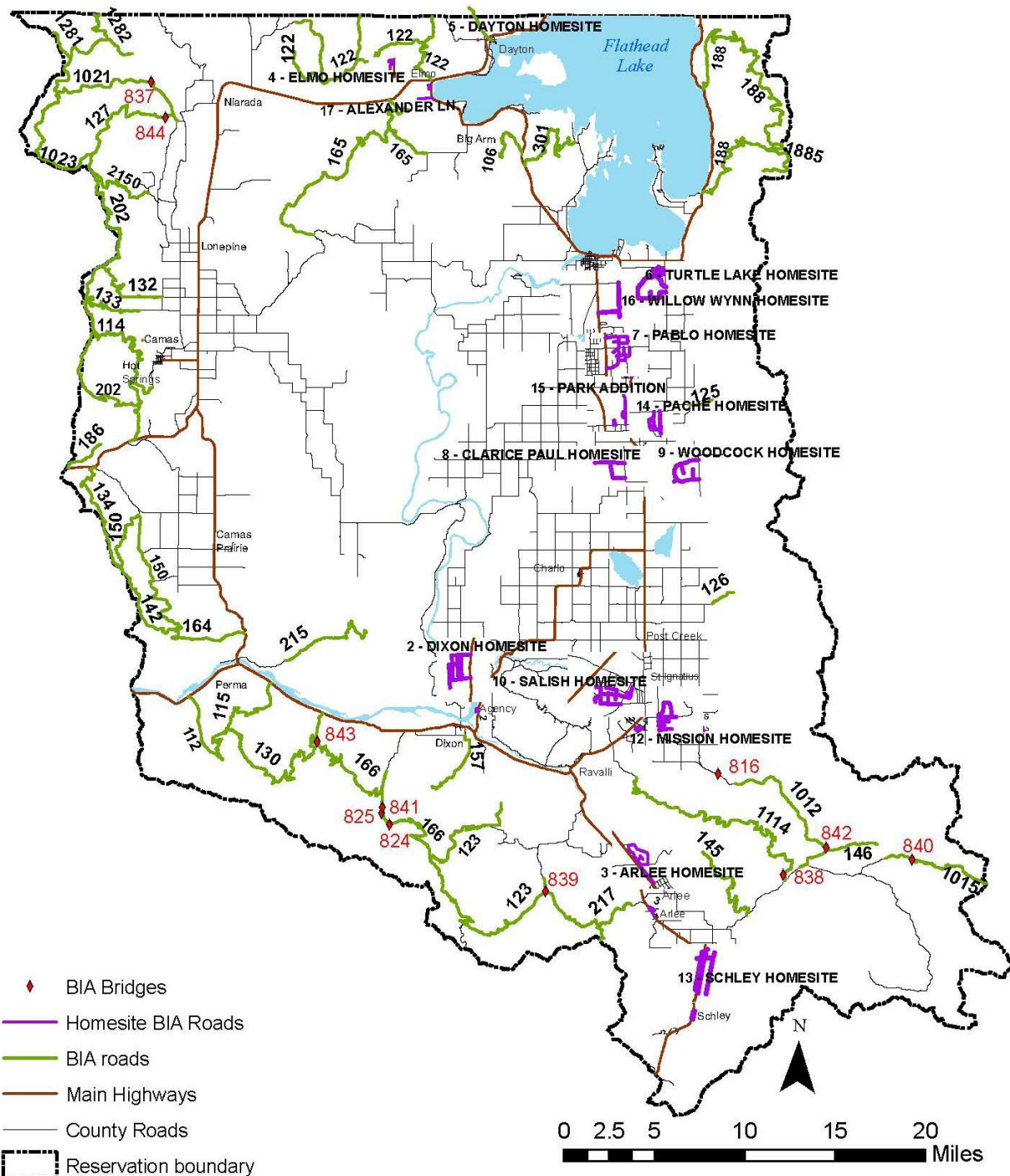
Nearly 4,197 miles (6,754 km) of Tribal, BIA, other Federal, state, city, and county roads exist on the Flathead Reservation, including 1,870 miles of roadway open to public use:

- Tribal Forest Roads—2,580 miles (4,152 km), of which approximately 33,340 miles (53 km) are on the Indian Reservation Road System [IRR] (2017 National Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory [NTTFI])
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Roads 21 – 372.5 328 miles (600 km) – all of which are on the IRR NTTFI
- National Highway System (U.S. Highway 93) -- 89 miles (143 km)

²⁰ Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) are defined as "public roads, including roads on the Federal-Aid System, that are located within, or provide access to, an Indian reservation or Indian trust land..." (23 U.S.C. 101[a]). There are approximately 1,650 miles (2,655 km) of Flathead Reservation roads on the IRR; most of the remaining road mileage consists of private roads.

²¹ The BIA Road System "includes all public roads within the official BIA inventory database for which approval has been obtained by the assistant Secretary or his designee. These roads must have public right-of-way before expenditure of Highway Trust Funds (HTF) on construction projects." (57 BIA 1.3B [1]). The BIA system serves both residential areas and forested areas. Forest roads provide access for timber sales, recreation, fire control, and cultural activities. The BIA system cannot include single-purpose roads, such as a road that solely serves a utility facility or agricultural land, i.e., administrative roads.

THE BIA ROAD SYSTEM



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- State Road System—165 miles (266 km) of State roads are in two categories: 99 miles (159 km) of state primary highways (Highways 35 and 200) and 66 miles (106 km) of state secondary highways.
- City Streets—70.5 miles (113 km) of city streets are in the incorporated towns of Polson, Ronan, St. Ignatius, and Hot Springs.
- County Road System—Approximately 920 miles (1,481 km) are county roads:
 - 685 miles (1,102 km) in Lake County
 - 202 miles (325 km) in Sanders County
 - 17 miles (27 km) in Flathead County
 - 16 miles (26 km) in Missoula County

2.4.8.2 BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATHS

In addition to pedestrian sidewalks that have been built in many reservation communities, the Tribes, cities, counties, the Montana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have built several bicycle/pedestrian pathways on the reservation. These pathways occur in the following locations:

- Along Highway 35, south of Flathead Lake
- In Polson, Pablo, Ronan, and St. Ignatius
- Along U.S. Highway 93 from Big Arm to Big Arm State Park, from Polson to Ronan, and from Arlee south to Coldwater Lane
- Along a portion of Round Butte Road west of Ronan

Several new projects are scheduled for the next five years. These are listed in the Action Plan section of this document.

2.4.8.3 AIRPORTS

Four public airports exist on the reservation near Polson, Ronan, St. Ignatius, and Hot Springs. The following data is from the 2020 Montana Airport Directory:

Hot Springs. This Sanders County-owned airport is located east of Hot Springs, at an elevation of 2,763 feet. Its asphalt runway is 3,880 feet by fifty feet. It has a lighted beacon, and there are no fuel or repair services available.

Polson. Located across the Lower Flathead River from downtown Polson, this city/Lake County-owned airport occurs at an elevation of 2,936 feet. Its asphalt runway is forty-two hundred feet by seventy-five feet, and part of the runway exists on tribally owned land. It has a lighted beacon, and 100LL and Jet A fuels are available, as are major repair services.

Ronan. Located north of Ronan, this town-of-Ronan/Lake County-owned airport lies at an elevation of 3,089 feet. Its asphalt runway is forty-eight hundred feet by seventy-five feet. It has a lighted beacon and 100LL and Jet A fuel available. Tribal Fire Control is located next to this airport and utilizes it for fire suppression aircraft. Agricultural aerial spraying services also utilize this airport.

St. Ignatius. This Lake County-owned airport is also owned by the Town of St. Ignatius. At an elevation of 3,006 feet, its asphalt runway is 2,610 feet by sixty feet. It also has a

lighted beacon. 100LL of fuel and repair services are available.

There are no major commercial airlines or air freight services on the reservation.

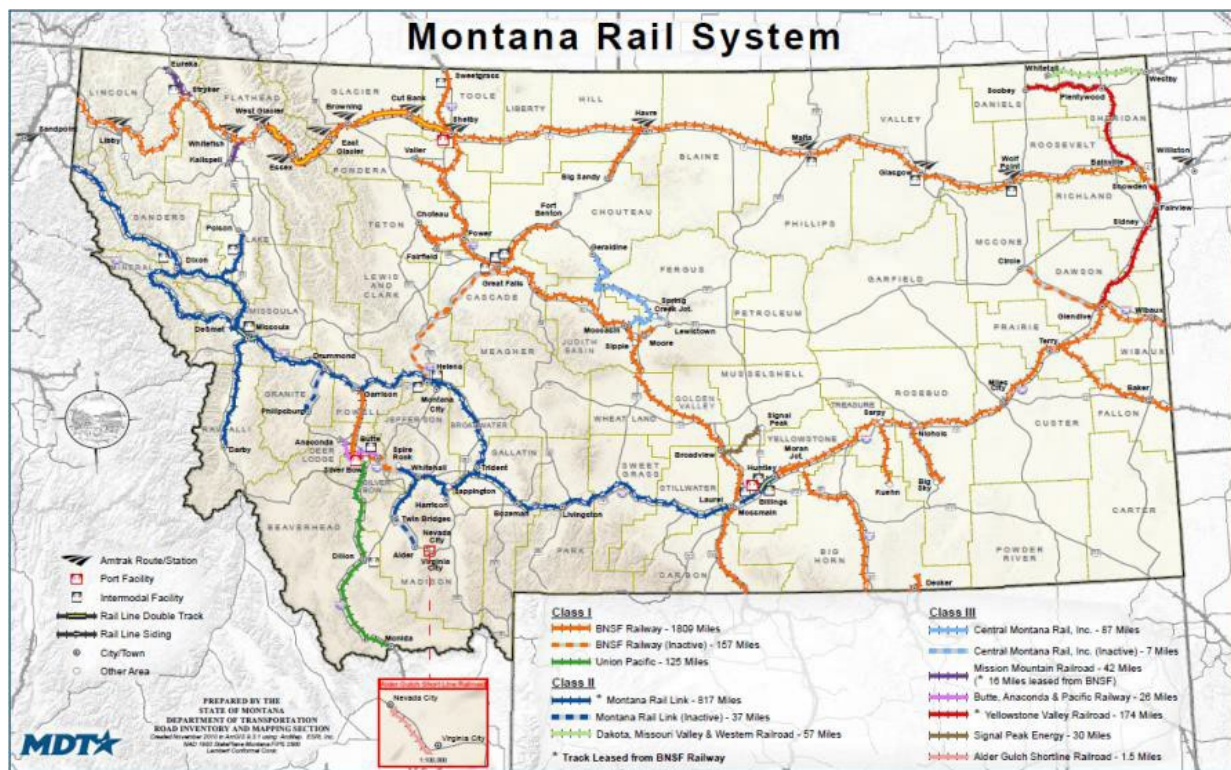
Air ambulance helicopters provide life-flight services to Missoula and Kalispell. They serve hospitals in Polson and Ronan and make emergency landings nearly everywhere.

The Tribes also use helicopters to monitor and manage natural resources and to conduct fire reconnaissance and suppression and maintain a heliport at Ronan for these purposes.

2.4.8.4 RAIL

In 1883 the Northern Pacific Company built a railroad across the south end of the reservation. They completed a spur line from Scilip to Polson in the early 1900s.

Today, Montana Rail Link owns both lines. They use the main line approximately three days a week for hauling inter- and intrastate freight. They have not used the spur line to Polson since 2012. The spur line from south of Polson to Polson has been converted to a bicycle/pedestrian path.



Source: www.mdt.mt.gov/travelinfo/docs/railmap.pdf

2.4.8.5 TAXI CABS

There are three taxicab services on the reservation. These are Annie's Taxi, a tribal-member-owned company in Polson; Polson Taxi Service; and South Lake Taxi, also located in Polson.

2.4.8.6 TRIBAL TRANSIT

The CSKT Transit Program provides low-cost bus transportation for Reservation residents and employees throughout the Reservation and to Missoula, Montana. CSKT Transit has several regularly scheduled routes and drop-off/pick-up points. The Transit Program also provides individualized transportation if requested at least 24 hours in advance for on-reservation transport and 48 hours in advance for off-reservation transportation.



PHOTO BY CORKY SIAS, DHRD TRANSPORTATION MANAGER

2.4.9 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Education is a key factor for the economic well-being of Tribal members, and for creating a strong workforce.

CSKT operates multiple educational programs and schools to promote knowledge about Tribal culture, incentives for education, and opportunities for employment. These programs include:

- Early Childhood Services (Early Head Start and Head Start)
- Nk'wusm (a Salish language immersion school)
- Two Eagle River High School (which also includes 8th grade)
- Salish Kootenai College

In addition, the Tribal Education Program provides college scholarships and works with Tribal and non-Tribal Reservation schools and Indian Parent Committees to encourage high school graduation and post-secondary education. Monetary incentives are provided to Tribal middle school and high school students for good attendance and grades.

Public schools are in 10 Reservation Communities, including

- Arlee – Elementary, Middle, and High School
- Charlo – Elementary, Middle, and High School
- Dayton – Elementary School
- Sčilíp – Elementary School
- Hot Springs – Elementary, Middle, and High Schools
- Pablo—Elementary School, Two Eagle River School
- Polson – Elementary, Middle, and High Schools
- Ronan – Elementary, Middle, and High School
- St. Ignatius – Elementary, Middle, and High School
- Valley View – Elementary School

Private schools include the following:

- Glacier View School – located between Ronan and Pablo, off of Highway 93
- Mission Valley Christian Academy – east of Polson, on Highway 35
- Mountain Heights Mennonite School in Ronan

2.4.10 HOUSING

According to the Western Rural Development Region CEDS (2020), “more than 75% of all housing units in Lake County [much of which lies within the Reservation] are single-family, detached [homes], and the majority of homes (63.9 percent) have been constructed since 1970. Just over 74% of the housing stock is occupied, and of the occupied housing, one-third is renter-occupied, and two-thirds are owner-occupied. However, these numbers do not reflect occupancy of seasonal homes, the majority of which are located in the Swan Valley [off reservation] and Flathead Lake areas. When the seasonal homes were not counted as vacant, Lake County had a 5.4% vacancy rate in 2010.

With a recent influx of out-of-state residents buying up homes and property on the reservation due to the pandemic and forest fires in California and Colorado, this vacancy rate has closed, and many renters have been displaced as the homes they were renting have been sold. Housing values have escalated while wages only slightly increased. The average Reservation family struggles to find affordable housing.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes established the Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority in 1963. According to the Housing Authority’s website (1-2021), “The Housing Authority is managed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners that meets twice a month. Each commissioner is appointed by the Tribal Council and serves a staggered four-year term. The commissioners employ an executive director, who has oversight of six different departments....” “Nearly 700 units are under management, which include rental, homeownership, 50 units of tenant-based assistance, and an 80-lot trailer park.”

Fortunately, most of these units have rent based on the individual's or family's income. However, estimates from several Tribal programs indicate that there could be as many as 200 Tribal individuals and families who have housing insecurities.

In 2020, CSKT created a Homelessness Task Force, which created 14 permanent, supportive housing units and purchased 7 manufactured 3- and 4-bedroom homes, 9 homes east of Pablo, and several duplexes in various locations to begin to address the homelessness problem. Temporary housing in Polson and new supportive housing in Ronan for families and those leaving foster care and the tiny homes project. The task force is developing a long-range homelessness response plan.

Additional information can be found in section 2.8.3.3.

2.5 EXISTING TRIBAL BUSINESSES AND REVENUE-PRODUCING PROGRAMS

2.5.1 TRIBAL ENTERPRISES

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes own the following six parent corporations. Each is governed by a Board of Directors who report to the Shareholder (the Tribal membership), who are represented by the Tribal Council.

2.5.1.1 S & K ELECTRONICS, INC.

S & K Electronics (SKE) is a high-tech manufacturing company located in Pablo. SKE is CSKT's oldest Tribally chartered corporation; it has been in business since the mid-1980s. SKE is a state-of-the-art contract manufacturer producing printed circuit board assemblies, custom cables and wirelasses, and electromechanical systems assemblies. SKE's customer base is major defense contractors, and items for land, sea, and air are produced. SKE is deemed essential to the warfighter and always strives for 100% quality and 100% on-time delivery. The SKE charter is for long-term sustained employment for the Flathead Reservation. Continued capital investment in equipment and facilities along with ongoing employee investment and education has led to the doubling of shipments in the past three years and continued growth into the future.

2.5.1.2 S & K BUSINESS SERVICES, INC. (FORMERLY S & K HOLDING COMPANY, INC.)

S & K Business Services, Inc. (formerly named S & K Holding Company, Inc.) was Tribally chartered in 1992 and recently reorganized under the name of S & K Business Services. The company manages Boulder Hydro, a small-scale hydroelectric facility located on Tribal property northeast of Polson, as well as S & K Self-Storage in Pablo, which earns revenue to support the corporation. S&K Business Services has one subsidiary company, Sovereign Leasing and Financing, Inc., which manages equipment and vehicle leases for Tribal programs and private, Tribal member-owned businesses. The company offices are located north of Pablo, where entrepreneurs can receive assistance with business planning, marketing, and financial management. In addition to business support services, S & K Business Services manages one Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for CSKT. The company employs 1 CSKT Tribal member, 1 CSKT first-generation descendant, and one member of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe.

2.5.1.3 S & K TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

S & K Technologies, Inc. (SKT), is a federally chartered Section 17 corporation. Headquartered in St. Ignatius,

Montana, SKT oversees and manages nine wholly owned limited liability companies (LLCs) for the benefit of its single shareholder, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. These award-winning LLCs employ over 1,000 people at several offices across the United States.

States and locations abroad. SKT provides a broad range of services in the fields of aerospace, information technology, engineering, security, construction, and other professional support services to both federal and commercial clients.

2.5.1.4 EAGLE BANK/S&K BANCORP

Eagle Bank was state-chartered in 2006 and is truly a “community-owned bank,” as it is owned by the CSKT membership. It is one of only 18 banks nationwide that are owned by Native American tribes. Its holding company, S & K Bancorp, is organized under Section 17 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The bank is regulated by the State of Montana Division of Financial Institutions and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. S & K Bancorp is regulated by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Eagle Bank continues to grow conservatively, with assets totaling over \$194 million. As of January 2025, the bank services 1,705 deposit accounts totaling \$174.2 million and 668 loan accounts totaling \$90.1 million. The bank has 18 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee, including 2 CSKT Tribal members, 3 CSKT descendants, and 3 members of other Native American Tribes. Eagle Bank is located in Polson and has a total of 7 ATMs in the Mission Valley, located in Evaro (Grey Wolf Peak Casino), St. Ignatius, Pablo (Tribal Complex & SKC), and KwaTaqNuk Resort in Polson.

2.5.1.5 S & K GAMING, LLC

S & K Gaming, LLC, operates three properties—the KwaTaqNuk Resort and Casino in Polson, Gray Wolf Peak Casino north of Evaro, and the Big Arm Resort Casino in Big Arm, Montana. Gaming employs up to 185 people during the peak summer season. KwaTaqNuk is a 108-room hotel located on the southern tip of Flathead Lake. It has a restaurant, lounge, patio bar, 12 suites, an indoor swimming pool, a marina, and meeting and banquet facilities that can accommodate more than 250 people. The gaming operation consists of 219 Class II gaming machines. KwaTaqNuk also manages a second marina in Polson, which includes several RV slips and a dump station. Big Arm Resort operates 37 Class II gaming machines, a marina, 30 full-service RV hook-ups, 20 cabin spaces, a restaurant, and a boating fuel station. Gray Wolf Peak Casino has 345 Class II machines, a gas station, golf simulators, and a sports bar and grill.

2.5.1.6 ENERGY KEEPERS, INC.

Energy Keepers, Inc. (EKI), a section 17 federally chartered, diversified energy company, is a fundamental component of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT) Tribal Economic Development Strategy. Serving as co-licensee and operator of the 208-megawatt Selis Ksanka Qlispe Hydroelectric Project, EKI engages in the marketing and trading of electricity and natural gas across U.S. markets. Over its inaugural decade, EKI has remitted in excess of \$250 million to CSKT. Going forward, the strategy for fortifying returns involves sustained reinvestment aimed at modernizing and expanding core assets, expanding market access, and strengthening financial capacity. This reinvestment is anticipated to drive company growth, resulting in a broadened asset base and expanded marketing and trading presence throughout the North American energy markets.

2.5.1.7 SQK Quality Meats Inc.

SQK Quality Meats, Inc., is a new Tribal meat processing and composting facility for processing beef, pork, bison, and other wild game products. The company is a federally chartered Section 17 corporation with six employees. This corporation is working with the Tribal Food Sovereignty Program and other programs to promote food security on the Reservation. It will assist Tribal livestock producers with revenue generation by offering certified USDA products.

2.5.1.8 Fish Keepers

Fish Keepers is a Tribal nonprofit company.

2.5.2 TRIBAL AFFILIATES

Tribal affiliates work in conjunction with the Tribal corporations and other Tribal government programs to provide education, workforce training, and infrastructure to support the Tribal membership. These affiliates include Salish Kootenai College, the Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority (previously described under section 2.4.10), and Mission Valley Power (see section 2.4.4).

2.5.3 TRIBAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE-PRODUCING PROGRAMS

2.5.3.1 TRIBAL CREDIT PROGRAM

The Tribal Credit Program was established in 1936. Its mission is to “improve the social and economic condition of [the] CSKT membership by providing sound, equitable, and accessible loans through a sustainable revolving loan program.” The program provides mortgage loans for housing as well as business and agricultural loans for up to \$400,000, education loans, Short-term loans and loans to CSKT enterprises are also available. As of December 2020, Tribal Credit has over \$7.4 million in short-term loans, \$1.75 million in education loans, and nearly \$37.8 million in long-term loans in its portfolio. (Pete White, Tribal Credit Manager, 2-4-21).

2.5.3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE—The Bison on Flathead Lake

In addition to managing several grant programs and completing feasibility studies for CSKT, the Tribal Economic Development Office manages a rental property on Flathead Lake that generates a profit for the Tribes.

2.5.3.3 TRIBAL LANDS DEPARTMENT

As mentioned previously, the Tribal Lands Department (TLD) manages nearly 2,000 home sites, business, agricultural, utility, and transportation land leases and permits across the Reservation. TLD also provides probate, title plant, appraisal, agricultural, and other real estate services for CSKT and individually owned Indian trust property owners. The Department generated \$931,719 of lease and permit revenue in Tribal fiscal year 2019.

2.5.3.4 TRIBAL FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

The Tribal Forestry Department generated approximately \$1.2 million in revenue from harvesting 9.4 million board feet of timber in 2020. Tribal Forestry also manages greenhouses in Ronan and Pablo, providing trees, shrubs, sedges, and grasses for Tribal as well as non-tribal land restoration projects. The department employs as many as 300 people, including 150-175 seasonal employees.

2.5.3.5 NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Natural Resources Department (NRD) manages the Tribal Bison Range in Moiese, Blue Bay Campground on Flathead Lake, several wilderness trails and campsites, and two urban parks. The department also collects revenue from Tribal recreation permits.

2.5.3.6 TRIBAL PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

The Tribal Preservation Department functions as a historic preservation office and reviews proposed development projects for potential impacts to cultural resources on the reservation and in aboriginal territories. The department charges fees for this review and negotiates.

contracts with the U.S. Forest Service and other agencies to conduct cultural resource surveys on federal and other lands.

2.5.3.7 TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Tribal Education Department manages CSKT's Three Chiefs Culture Center and Gift Shop north of Pablo. The Center is one of two Tribally owned repositories for Tribal artifacts.

2.5.3.8 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

In addition to managing human resource development programs, the Department of Human Resource Development (DHRD) manages the Tribal Transit Program. DHRD also manages the Quick Silver Express II gas station and convenience store in Pablo, which provides customer service and other training opportunities for Tribal members in entry-level jobs. When the business makes a profit, the funds are used as matching funds for transit program grants. Since opening in 2007, Quick Silver Express II has provided multiple full-time jobs, training cashiers and gas attendants in retail service.

2.6 EXISTING TRIBAL JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following programs provide workforce training opportunities on the Flathead Reservation. Each of these programs is described in greater detail in the attached Workforce Training Directory (see Appendices).

2.6.1 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DHRD)

The Tribal Department of Human Resource Development operates several programs that provide training and work experience.

2.6.2 PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT INDIAN PREFERENCE OFFICE

The Personnel Department's Indian Preference Office provides CPR and 1st Aid training and Road Construction Flagger Training, usually every spring, before construction season begins.

2.6.3 SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE

Salish Kootenai College (SKC) offers programs that can meet the training needs of many Tribal members to qualify them for some of the professions that show the most potential for growth in the region. A partial list of degree and certification programs follows, and a brief description of each of the certificates and degrees offered is included on the SKC website. Contact SKC regarding these and any new training opportunities.

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OFFERED AT SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE

Salish Kootenai College Educational Programs

WORKFORCE CERTIFICATIONS and SHORT-TERM TRAINING

Bookkeeping and Payroll	Computer Applications	Digital Fabrication
Emergency Medical Technician	Geospatial Science (GIS)	Grant Projects Operations
Flagging	Phlebotomy	Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)
Construction Trades		

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION: 1-YEAR PROGRAMS

Bookkeeping and Payroll	Dental Assisting Technology	Emergency Services
General Studies	Grant Projects Management	Health Science Studies
Highway Construction Training	Hospitality Operations	Medical Assisting Technology
Medical Billing and Coding	Medical Office Assistant	Office Assistant

ASSOCIATE DEGREES: 2-YEAR PROGRAMS

Business Management	Digital Design Technology	Chemical Dependency Counseling
Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education P:3	Elementary Education
Fine Arts	Forestry	General Science
Grant Projects Management	Health Promotion Practices	Hydrology
Information Technology	Liberal Arts	Native Language Teacher Education
Mathematical Science	Psychology	Tribal Governance and Administration
Tribal Historic Preservation	Wildlife and Fisheries	

BACHELOR'S DEGREES: 4-YEAR PROGRAMS

Business Administration	Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education P:3
Elementary Education	Forestry	Hydrology
Information Technology	Life Sciences	Secondary Education – Mathematics
Psychology	Nursing	Secondary Education - Science
Social Work	Tribal Historic Preservation	Tribal Governance and Administration
Wildlife and Fisheries		

GRADUATE DEGREES: MASTER'S Natural Resources Management

2.7 RESOURCES THAT CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT TO TRIBAL MEMBER BUSINESS OWNERS

Several resources for Tribal member business owners and prospective entrepreneurs are available, including grant and loan opportunities and technical assistance opportunities. A few of the Tribal programs that provide services are described here.

2.7.1 S&K BUSINESS SERVICES

S&K Business Services (formerly known as S&K Holding) provides business support services to Tribal entrepreneurs, including technical assistance with business plan development and grant

applications; access to a computer, copy machine, fax machine, and conference room; office, warehouse, and storage unit space for rent; and referrals to vendors and appropriate government or other regulatory agencies. Their affiliate corporation, Sovereign Leasing and Financing, Inc. (SLF), offers leasing options for business equipment and vehicles.

2.7.2 CSKT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

CSKT's Economic Development Office (EDO) has managed a small business grant program since 2010, assisting 63 Tribal member-owned businesses with capital for business start-up or expansion, equipment, supplies, insurance, rent, and other operating costs. The Office also provides some technical assistance for business owners and served on the review committee for Montana's Indian Equity Fund program, which provides three or more additional grants per year for CSKT members living on and owning businesses on the Flathead Reservation. In 2020, utilizing CARES Act funding, the Office worked with S&K Business Services to award 110 grants to Tribal businesses that were struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EDO has created a mailing list of Tribal member business owners for notification of upcoming meetings, grants, and training opportunities. EDO works with SKBS to provide multiple free training workshops for Tribal entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs to discuss Tribal procurement, Indian preference, and other policies and issues, as well as to provide information about grants and loans for small businesses and business basics, bookkeeping basics, personal finance, QuickBooks, and social media marketing workshops. In 2021, the EDO hosted tourism and Native American Made in Montana workshops. EDO's Economic Development Director is a member of the Montana Economic Developers Association.

2.7.3 CSKT INDIAN PREFERENCE OFFICE.

The Tribes' Indian Preference Office is part of the Personnel Department, and it maintains a list of Tribal member-owned businesses that are certified as Indian Preference businesses. This "Business Listing" is published on CSKT's website, www.cskt.org, at the Employment tab. All Tribal entities are required to use this listing when procuring services. Tribal member business owners are encouraged to register with the Indian Preference Office.

2.7.4 SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE (SKC)

SKC offers two-degree programs in business management:

- Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration
- Associate of arts degree in business management

The programs are designed to provide students with essential business skills and the knowledge needed to start and operate a successful business, including the development of business and marketing plans, management techniques, and accounting practices.

2.7.5 TRIBAL CREDIT PROGRAM

Tribal Credit offers loans to members under two categories for business operation: farm/ranch loans and business loans. (Under their policy, farm/ranch loans do not technically qualify as business loans.)

Farm/ranch loans may be approved at up to 5% interest for:

- Purchase of cattle or other livestock
- Farm operation
- Purchase of equipment

Business loans may be approved at up to 5% interest for:

- Purchase or construction of a business facility
- Purchase of a business
- Business operating capital
- Purchase of equipment

2.8 ECONOMIC TRENDS, RELATIONSHIP TO THE OUTSIDE ECONOMY, AND OTHER ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE FACTORS

2.8.1 EMERGING OR DECLINING INDUSTRY SECTORS

The Flathead Indian Reservation has a fair mix of industries. Exiting the recent downturn in the economy, the reservation is seeing strong growth in a variety of industries such as construction.

During the period ranging from January 1, 2020, to January 1, 2021, the Job Service Polson database showed that 1,399 jobs were available in the county, which includes a significant portion of the Flathead Reservation. There were other jobs available that were not posted in this database and were not quantifiable here. Health care careers and positions for drivers continue to lead the job opportunities. (Please note that while it is extremely difficult to provide complete quantitative data about the number of jobs in each field, the following shows a breakdown by keywords. This is not a scientific survey; however, the former Director of Job Service Polson, Project Partner Debra Krantz, believes this is representative of the types of jobs they are seeing locally.

Keyword	# of postings		Keyword	# of postings
driver	49		CDL	6
nurse	43		C.N.A.	11
RN	24		health	97
home health	53		caregiver	43
retail	42		clerk	5
cashier	14		clerical	5
receptionist	10		administrative assistant.	22

sales	32		food	20
cook	12		server	1
food service	17		housekeeping	14
day care	0		teacher	10
teller	2		finance	11
accountant	62		bookkeeper	2
HVAC	3		production	58
laborer	15		construction	12
farm	8		automotive	6
mechanic	10		machinist	0
manager	96		supervisor	25
computer	42		information technology	38

When looking at all of western Montana, the following table shows 32 occupations where there have been over 30 annual job openings and at least 1% annual growth. This table also lists the average annual wage for those occupations and highlights those occupations that most interested unemployed Tribal members, according to CSKT's 2014 Job and Training Needs Survey.

Western Montana Labor Market: 30+ Annual Openings and Growth of At Least 1% Per Year

Occupation	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Total Annual Openings	Average Wage (Year)
1. Personal Care, Child Care, Fitness Instructor, Recreation	2.4%	168	\$21,460
2. Computer and Mathematical Occupations (Computer and Info Sci)	2.2%	75	\$64,770
3. Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides	2.0%	93	\$22,180
4. Health Technologists and Technicians	1.9%	138	\$30,010
5. Food and Beverage Serving Workers	1.8%	457	\$18,100
6. Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1.8%	43	\$28,110
7. Woodworkers (cabinet makers or finish carpenters)	1.7%	40	\$28,710
8. Financial Specialists	1.6%	76	\$54,440
9. Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	1.6%	47	\$46,640
10. Information and Record Clerks	1.5%	212	\$24,310
11. Health-Treating Practitioners (Registered Nurse)	1.5%	189	\$58,840
12. Restaurant Hosts and Hostesses, Dishwashers	1.5%	90	\$18,150
13. Counselors, Social Workers, and Other	1.5%	87	\$38,000
14. Grounds Maintenance Workers	1.5%	55	\$30,000
15. Medical Assistant, Dental Assistant, Medical Equipment Preparer, Veterinary Assistant, etc.	1.5%	43	\$30,700
16. Construction Trades Workers	1.4%	197	\$37,090
17. Financial Clerks	1.4%	167	\$31,120
18. Building Cleaning and Pest Control Workers	1.4%	152	\$22,610
19. Motor Vehicle Operators	1.4%	133	\$39,430
20. Cooks and Food Preparation Workers (Culinary Arts)	1.4%	127	\$28,000
21. Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1.4%	109	\$27,710
22. Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1.4%	42	\$43,300
23. HVAC Mechanic, Machinery Mechanic, Medical Equipment Repair	1.3%	93	\$50,180
24. Business Operations Specialists	1.3%	81	\$45,420
25. Sales Representatives, Services	1.3%	53	\$46,640
26. Security Guards, Ski Patrol, Transportation Screeners, etc.	1.3%	52	\$22,690
27. Material Moving Workers	1.2%	89	\$40,000
28. Retail Sales Workers	1.1%	515	\$21,820
30. Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Mechanics, Installers, and Repair	1.1%	90	\$38,520
31. Metal Workers and Plastic Workers	1.0%	33	\$30,500
32. Law Enforcement Workers	1.0%	30	\$47,380

Occupations highlighted in yellow are those that unemployed Tribal members said interested them most.

Occupations highlighted in green are those in which unemployed Tribal members are most interested in training.

Sources: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana; Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Region 1, 2012-2022 Projected Employment. Region 1 includes Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, and Sanders Counties.

Timber production and jobs are bouncing back somewhat after the initial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic and other factors caused local mills to reduce the amount of "load" they would take from local timber sales. This in turn affected the demand and prices followed downward. [In early 2021,] prices and demand are now trending upward in the region, and local mills are slowly following suit." (Tribal Forestry Department Head Tony Incashola, Jr., Jim Durglo, telephone communication, 2-22-21).

2.8.2 RELATIONSHIP TO LARGER REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMIES—ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Unlike more remote Indian reservations, the Flathead Reservation is located in the center of western Montana's growing economy. The reservation is bordered on the south by Montana's second largest urban trade center, Missoula County, and on the north by one of Montana's fastest-growing counties, Flathead County—home to world-class skiing in Whitefish and located next to Glacier National Park. And because the reservation is located on the major transportation arterial that links these areas—U.S. Highway 93—there is some spillover effect from passing tourists and economic leakage as reservation residents travel to the cities to buy goods and services.

Recreationists and new residents come to the Reservation from these cities and beyond because the Reservation is blessed with spectacular natural resources, including Flathead Lake, the Ninepipe and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges, the National Bison Range, the Mission Mountains, and the Jocko and Flathead Rivers. However, overuse of some areas and uncontrolled growth in others are affecting tribal members' cultural practices, including fish, plant, and berry harvesting.

CSKT currently offers lake trout fishing derbies on Flathead Lake and is considering commercial fish sales due to increased populations of lake trout—a non-native species introduced into the lake by recreational fishermen years ago. Lake trout has outcompeted native fisheries in the lake, and the Tribes and State Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks are working to restore the native fisheries.

To lessen the impact of tourism, CSKT are considering the development of itinerary planning for tourists and encouraging Tribal member trained guides to provide cultural education-based tours. Tours that were available at the Peoples Center Museum in Pablo are on hold due to a fire at the center. Staff have relocated their offices and gift shop to St. Ignatius and renamed the center the Three Chiefs Culture Center.

2.8.3 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING THE ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE RESERVATION

2.8.3.1 WORKFORCE ISSUES

According to the 2014 CSKT Sustainable Economic Development Study and Tribal Job and Training Needs Survey, nearly 3 out of every 5 Tribal members who are employed work for CSKT. Approximately 23% work for a private or non-profit company, and less than 7% are self-

employed. If a federal shutdown should occur again, or if severe cutbacks are made to the Tribes' self-governance compact and Public Law 638 contracts, Tribal funds could not sustain Tribal employee wages.

Also, according to the study, the unemployment rate for Tribal members living on the reservation, ages 18-60, is 13.9%, which is considerably higher than the 10.8% rate for 2012 reported by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry for all people ages 16 and older in the reservation's labor force. While overall reservation unemployment had dropped to 4.9% in 2020, we were not able to capture

While Tribal government and its corporations have made great strides toward employing Tribal members, there remains a gap in employment and wages for many. The poverty rate for American Indian families in Lake County (the largest county within the Reservation) continues to be triple that of white families. CSKT's Department of Human Resource Development manages several income assistance and workforce development programs and provides services to 60 percent of the tribal members residing on the Flathead Reservation with Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Child Care, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), and General Assistance funds—another indicator of the unemployment/underemployment rate of the Tribal population.²²

As mentioned previously, according to the ACS Community Survey 5-year estimate (2015-2020), the unemployment rate overall in Lake County among those 16 and older was 4.0%. The unemployment rate within the boundaries of the reservation was 7.4% according to the ACS Community Survey (2015-2019). These numbers are most likely increasing due to the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2014 Survey also showed that, on average, Tribal members expressed a willingness to commute 30 miles one-way to work. A majority of Tribal members (54.5%) were willing to commute off the Reservation to work if they could return home each night, while 45.5% were unwilling to do so. The ACS Survey reported that of the employed 11,990 Tribal and non-Tribal workers above the age of 16, 880 worked from home, and 11,110 were willing to commute an average time of 19.1 minutes to their place of employment.

2.8.3.2 GAPS IN THE TRIBAL WORKFORCE

The Job and Training Needs Survey and resulting Sustainable Economic Development The study focused closely on four groups of Tribal members:

1. Unemployed or not in the workforce
2. Near or below the poverty threshold
3. Young adults
4. Women

²² DHRD, Annual 477 Report to the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development, 2008.

Among unemployed Tribal members or those who were not in the labor force, most previously worked in low-skill and low-wage jobs. The jobs included:

- Janitors and Cleaners
- Home Health Aides
- Wildland Firefighters
- Security Guards
- Dishwashers
- Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
- Gaming Cage Workers
- Farmworkers and Laborers

In addition, the unemployed no longer in the labor force were much more likely to have low levels of education attainment than were other Tribal members. Almost 2 in 10 unemployed Tribal members (17.3%) and those not in the labor force (17.6%) completed less than a high school diploma or GED, compared with only 1 in 10 Tribal members overall (9.7%).

Most Tribal members who lived in a household below the poverty threshold also worked in entry-level or lower-skill occupations, including

- Janitors
- Home Health Aides
- Landscaping Workers
- Cashiers
- Dishwashers
- Maids

Tribal members living below the poverty threshold were significantly more likely to have a high school diploma or G.E.D. (16.9%) when compared to all Tribal members (9.7%).

In contrast, many Tribal members living in near-poverty households already had significant levels of job training. The higher-skill occupations reported by those who lived in near-poverty included:

- Accountants and Auditors
- Teachers
- Rehabilitation Counselors
- Community and Social Service Specialists

The lower-skill occupations reported by near-poverty Tribal members also required significant training and included home health aides, woodworking machine operators, and truck and tractor operators.

Evaluating the survey data for workforce achievement gaps is not always appropriate for young adults, since they are just beginning their labor force experiences. However, one gap that appears in the data is particularly significant. Proportionately more Tribal members ages 18-34 (15.2%)

had not completed high school or a G.E.D. than had all Montanans ages 18-34 (11.0%). Similarly, fewer young adult Tribal members had completed bachelor's degrees (13.7%) than had all of Montana's young adults (20.2%).

Finally, clerical, or administrative, jobs dominate the list of the top 10 occupations of female Tribal members ages 18-60. The top ten occupations include:

1. Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
2. Accountants and Auditors
3. Home Health Aides
4. Janitors and Cleaners
5. Cashiers
6. Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
7. Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
8. Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other
9. Other Management Occupations
10. Nursing Assistants

2.8.3.3 HOUSING CONCERNS

In addition to livable wage employment, home ownership can also improve economic stability. Significantly fewer American Indians own their homes than the rest of the Reservation population (U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2007-2011).

Owner and Renter Occupied Housing Units		
Housing	American Indian	Total Population
Owner Occupied	59.4%	67.6%
Renter Occupied	40.7%	32.4%

The Tribes are fortunate to have the Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority (SKHA), a critical component toward helping Tribal members become self-sufficient. It maintains approximately 500 low-rent properties, 30 Tribal membership participant properties, 19 transitional living units for homeless families and individuals, 60 trailer park lots, and 50 rental assistance slots (SKHA, January 2021). SKHA provides housing rehabilitation, emergency home repair, and weatherization assistance for eligible Tribal members.

In addition to housing, SKHA provides valuable infrastructure and educational programs for membership managing 26 community sewer and/or water systems throughout the reservation and providing homebuyer education classes. SKHA also provides down payment assistance for qualifying Tribal members seeking to purchase a home.

While SKHA assists a significant number of low-income families, there are many who are not served due to eviction or SKHA's limited funding to serve those on their waiting lists. The number of units SKHA has to offer has recently been limited due to contamination by

methamphetamine use or manufacture; over 40 units were closed in recent years until cleanup funds and certified workers became available to make the homes safe for habitation.

In 2020, CSKT purchased the Starlite Motel and renovated it to become the Morning Star Apartments, which will provide housing and supportive services for 14 individual homeless Tribal members and will be operated by the Tribal Defenders Office, with provided TBA rental vouchers from SKHA. In 2021 SKHA is scheduled to construct 6 additional low-rent units in Pablo.

In addition, CSKT purchased six manufactured homes and one modular home in 2020 for families with housing insecurities related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Five are located at Maggie Ashley Trailer Park in Pablo, and two at the Tribes' Kicking Horse property.

Some Tribal members are trying to obtain residential lease lots from the Tribes on which to place a mobile or modular home or to construct a home; however, some of the existing community sewer and water systems managed by SKHA are at capacity and cannot accommodate additional homes. Funding from the Indian Health Service to assist with sewer and water facilities for dispersed Tribal residential lots (those not within the areas served by community systems) has declined significantly in recent years. This factor makes it more difficult for Tribal members to own their homes, as many do not have the means to pay for a well and sewage treatment system for their homes.

2.8.3.4 INADEQUATE CULTURAL AND RECREATION FACILITIES

While the City of Polson and the Town of Ronan each have a bowling alley and a movie theater, none of the other Reservation communities have these amenities. Tribal community centers have been built in Arlee, St. Ignatius, Sčilíp Agency, Elmo, and Hot Springs, but they need considerable maintenance. A bowling alley was built in Hot Springs, but it is not being used due to high operating costs and a leak in the roof. A longhouse was built in St. Ignatius for cultural activities and wakes, and Arlee's and Elmo's community centers are also used for cultural activities and wakes, but there is no large facility for wakes in the Ronan, Pablo, or Polson areas—communities with the highest numbers of Tribal members as compared to other communities.

The Flathead Reservation Boys and Girls Club recently purchased and renovated a new facility in the Town of Ronan and built a new facility in Polson. The Tribal Health Department operates fitness centers in Arlee, St. Ignatius, Ronan, and Elmo and has relocated the Ronan facility to the Kicking Horse property southeast of Ronan.

Elmo's Koostahtah Hall is also in major disrepair and has been boarded up. Tribal youth and families in the Elmo community have no indoor recreational facilities for basketball or other activities.

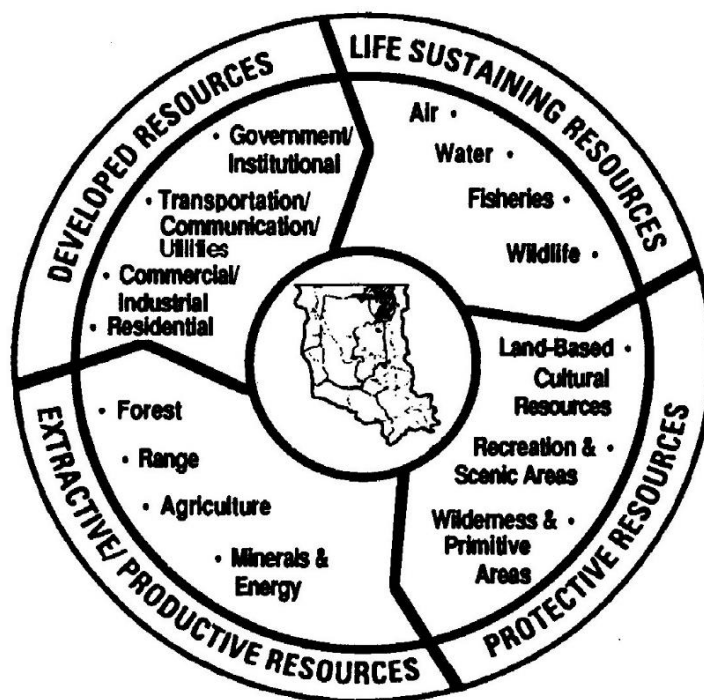
2.8.3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND LAND USE

To protect the Class I airshed, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, wetlands, floodplains, prime farmlands, scenic areas, and other culturally important resources of the Reservation, the Tribes

completed a Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan and a Land Use and Growth Projection Study in 1996. The comprehensive plan describes the following:

- the condition of 15 natural resource and land use categories (shown in the following diagram)
- resource management policies, laws, and programs
- the publics and managers' concerns about the resources
- management goals, alternatives, and objectives for all 15 categories

The following illustration depicts the interconnection between these resources. The Tribes adopted a policy of integrated resource management, where potential impacts on all land uses and natural resources must be considered before developing one resource, and the protection of cultural resources, air and water quality, and fish and wildlife are the first priority.

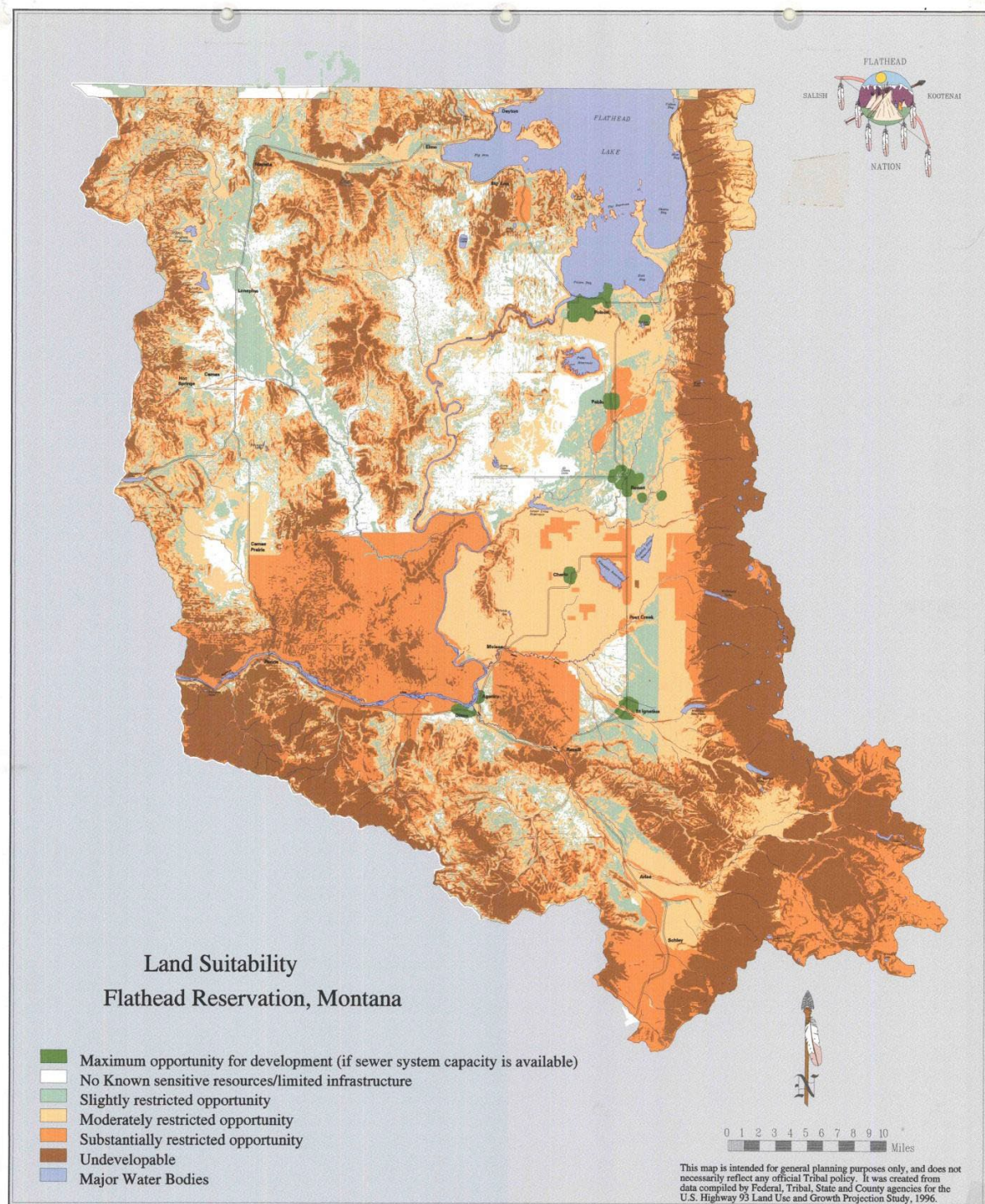


The U.S. Highway 93 Land Use and Growth Projection Study was completed when the Tribes were facing high levels of non-Tribal growth on the reservation, and the proposed expansion of U.S. Highway 93 through the reservation was threatening Tribal resources and cultural values. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes created a team of Tribal and county planners and included a consultant who worked for the Montana Department of Transportation to conduct a public opinion poll about growth and resource protection on the reservation.

Poll results showed that the majority of Reservation residents wanted to protect water quality, wetlands, other wildlife habitats, farmlands, scenic areas, and more. The Tribes' planning director, hydrologist, wildlife managers, and computer mapping staff mapped the reservation's wetlands.

prime farms, floodplains, vulnerable aquifers, steep slopes, sensitive wildlife habitats, and scenic areas along Highway 93. The team established sensitivity values for these resources, and the planning director created a land suitability model that included the reservation's community sewage treatment districts and towns. The model resulted in a Land Suitability Map that shows those lands that have maximum opportunities for development, those that are undevelopable, and those with varying degrees of opportunity (depending on the types and sensitivity of the natural resources occurring in those areas).

This map, and site-specific environmental assessments that comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and Tribal natural resource protection and historic preservation policies, have guided new Tribal development on the Reservation since 1996.



The “undevelopable” areas depicted here are slopes that are steeper than 35% and are not suitable for building construction due to high erosion potential, inaccessibility for emergency vehicles, and other factors. The dark orange color includes sensitive aquifer areas, areas that frequently flood, areas of wildlife concern, etc. (Please refer to the 1996 Land Use and Growth Project Study for additional information about this map.)

Tribal policy encourages high-intensity land uses to occur near existing infrastructure that has the capacity to accommodate new development. Sensitive wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, surface and ground water, and cultural resource areas are protected by management plans and regulations, including plans for grizzly bears and other sensitive species, the Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness and Buffer Zone, the Lower Flathead River Corridor, forest management, noxious weed management, and fisheries. In addition, these resources are protected by the mitigation requirements of programmatic environmental assessments and policies for residential and commercial lease development, the Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance, the Shoreline Protection Ordinance for Flathead Lake, Cultural Resource Protection and Historic Preservation ordinances; and a septic system permitting ordinance—to name only a few.

Brownfield sites have also been mapped and targeted for cleanup. One such site is located at Sčilíp Agency, where a former municipal dump and post and pole yard await final clean-up. This location has a rail spur and may be used again for commercial or industrial purposes in the future.

2.8.3.5.1 LAND USE PATTERNS AND LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Tribal commercial lots are generally located in towns where they have access to paved streets and utilities. Vacant commercial lots are currently available on Tribal land just outside of Hot Springs and in Elmo, Pablo, St. Ignatius, and Arlee. The Tribal Economic Development Office has completed environmental review and mapped 5 additional lots in Arlee, 3 in Elmo, and 3 in Pablo. Pending environmental review, Highway 93 frontage may also be available for commercial development in St. Ignatius. Some of these lots are temporarily permitted for Christmas tree sales, firework stands, and other uses. Not all of them have the physical infrastructure needed to be "turnkey" lots for permanent development, and many entrepreneurs do not have the revenue to finish developing the infrastructure or even develop the building needed to house a business. Funding is limited, and growth has slowed in many of these communities with the recent recession. The Tribes will continue to seek funding to fully develop some of these lots when feasible.

The development of a Tribal business park north of Pablo, which could attract new business to the reservation and provide commercial lots for Tribal member-owned businesses, has been challenging partly due to a lack of maintenance on the railroad line adjacent to the park site. Development of a frontage road parallel to U.S. Highway 93 that would serve the park is also needed.

Salish Kootenai College cannot expand its facilities, and other new businesses cannot develop in Pablo because the Pablo community water system does not have adequate water storage for fighting fires at new non-residential facilities.

2.8.3.5.2 CLIMATE CHANGE

In September 2013, the CSKT adopted a Climate Change Strategic Plan “to improve the Tribal community's and its lands’ resiliency to climate change by effectively informing planning decisions made by the Tribes....” The Climate Change Plan states that “all models predict warmer

temperatures, lower snowpack, more frequent and severe droughts and floods.... Fire severity can be expected to increase given warmer and drier conditions....”

The plan predicts impacts on air quality and states that, as climate change accelerates, it is increasingly expected to outpace the ability of wildlife to respond and adapt. Approximately 30% of all species could be lost by 2100.... In the Rocky Mountains, warming is projected to cause a loss of up to 42% of current trout habitat by the end of the century. Invasive species, including noxious weeds, pine and spruce beetles, and others, are expected to continue to spread, partly due to declining or weakening native species and warmer temperatures. Warmer waters are also expected to benefit invasive aquatic species and aquatic pathogens.”

As stated earlier in this document, Tribal traditions depend on land-based cultural resources, which include native fish and wildlife and their habitats; food and medicinal plants and the areas where they grow; prehistoric and historical use sites; and other land areas where Tribal members currently carry-on cultural traditions.

Hunting, fishing, plant harvesting, hide-tanning, food and medicine preparation, singing, dancing, praying, feasting, storytelling, and ceremonies are examples of age-old traditions that rely on the land and the community of life it supports.

The Climate Change Plan states that the CSKT Historic Preservation Office “recognizes that it is unknown if it is possible to reverse climate change, but that the Tribes need to protect cultural resources as much as possible while looking for solutions—that this work must be done now.” Cultural resources are being lost, altered, or destroyed as lands are logged, tilled, mined, or developed for housing, businesses, roads, and more. Before any Tribal development occurs, or any development occurs on federal lands, with federal funds, or through a federal action, the developer must obtain a Tribal cultural clearance.

The plan's strategy is to continue to assess reservation impacts from climate change, with considerations “provided for the built, natural, and social environments, with specific focuses on nine sectors, which include forestry, land, fish, wildlife, water, air, infrastructure, people, and culture.” Goals, action steps, partners, and potential funding sources for each sector are described on pages 52-64 of the plan, and plan implementation is being coordinated by a Climate Change Oversight Committee. The goals and action steps are also listed in the action plan portion of this plan. For more information, the Climate Change Plan is located at <http://nrd.csktribes.org/component/rsfiles/download?path=EP%252FCSKTClimatPlan.pdf>. The CSKT Climate Change Committee is currently working on an update to the plan.

2.8.3.6 TRIBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAWS AND POLICIES

Tribal laws and policies that apply to economic development include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Tribal Constitution*
- *Tribal Corporate Charter*

- *Flathead Reservation Corporation Ordinance 54A*—describes the rules followed by CSKT for chartering and regulating economic development corporations organized under the Tribes’ Constitution.²³
- *Gaming Ordinance 92D (Amended)* regulates all forms of gaming conducted within the boundaries of the reservation.²⁴
- *Limited Liability Ordinance 104A* - provides the rules followed by CSKT for chartering limited liability companies under Tribal law; may be used to organize solely-owned and member-owned companies.²⁵
- *Resolution #03-100 Establishing Policy and Procedures for Board and Committee Memberships*
- *Tribal Council Policy to Strengthen the Owner/Operator Relationship with Tribally Owned Businesses (Corporations)*
- *2015 Sustainable, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)/Plan* – Some of the objectives in this strategy have been completed, and others are ongoing and listed in this new CEDS. Upon adoption by the Tribal Council, this 2020 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will replace the 2015 CEDS.
- *Tribal Procurement Policy*—adopted by Tribal Resolution 11-246 in 2011, requiring that Tribal purchases of goods and services follow a priority of sources:
 1. government sources first
 2. then Indian businesses, and
 3. Lastly, other commercial organizations/vendors.

Tribal government entities are encouraged to purchase items through Property and Supply Department staff members, who can assist them in adhering to the priority of sources policy. Tribal entities do not utilize property and supply are required to follow the priority of sources listed above and document the vendor selection on the purchase requisition.
- *Indian Preference Ordinance* – established “to counter the effects of discrimination against Indians and to promote Tribal and individual economic self-sufficiency ... so that preference is granted to qualified Indian employees and qualified Indian-owned entities within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation whenever permitted by federal law.” This preference is also applicable for the award of contracts and subcontracts for the procurement of services, materials, supplies, and equipment required for work to be performed. First preference is given to CSKT member-owned businesses that bid within 10% of the low bid or price quote for a product or service and allows them to adjust their

²³ To review a copy, go to www.cskt.org. Click on the “Services” button at the top of the page, then click on “Economic Development” and look for the “Available Documents” at the bottom of the page.

²⁴ A Gaming Commission, consisting of three licensed Tribal members appointed by the Tribal Council, is responsible for the administration of gaming licenses, promulgating gaming rules pursuant to the ordinance, game operations, and internal fiscal affairs relating to gaming operations.

²⁵ To review a copy, go to www.cskt.org. Click on the “Services” button at the top of the page, then click on “Economic Development” and look for the “Available Documents” at the bottom of the page.

bid to meet the low quote. Second preference is given to any other Indian-owned business.

Tribal Procurement and Indian Preference Policy Compliance – While Indian preference and procurement policies establish a process for using Tribal member-owned businesses in the procurement of goods and services, non-compliance with these policies by some departments is a concern.

3. ECONOMIC STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT)

The following identification of the reservations' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) provides a platform from which to develop an action plan for economic development priorities. It answers, "Where are we now?" and helps identify assets that can be leveraged, weaknesses and threats that should be acknowledged and remedied (if possible), and opportunities that could improve the Reservation economy.

3.1 STRENGTHS

3.1.1 PEOPLE, CULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The people and the rich culture and environmental quality of the Tribal homeland are the Reservation's greatest strengths.

3.1.2 PARTNERSHIPS

Another major strength is the partnerships that continue to be developed to improve the economic well-being of Tribal members and other Reservation residents. For example, the Tribes have been working with a Steering Committee of Sustainable Economic Development Project Partners to guide the development of this Sustainable Economic Development Strategy. These partners have identified an abundance of resources that can be utilized to help the Reservation economy. **Steering Committee Partners** include:

- Salish Kootenai College
- Montana Department of Commerce
- Lake/Sanders County Job Service
- S&K Business Services/Sovereign Leasing and Financing
- Lake County Community Development Corporation
- Multiple Tribal government departments, including
 - Education
 - Forestry/Fire Control
 - Lands
 - Human Resource Development
 - Finance Office
 - Personnel

Other potential partners who can assist with economic development include the following:

- U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) – planning and infrastructure development grants
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – planning and infrastructure grants and loans
- Small Business Administration and Business Development Centers
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs – loan and grant opportunities
- U.S. Treasury Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Program

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Adult Children and Families Agency, Administration for Native Americans (ANA) – planning and workforce development grants
- U.S. Department of Transportation – TIGER grants
- Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI)
- ONABEN: A Native American Business Network
- Montana Indian Business Alliance (MIBA) – see attached Business Resource Directory
- Montana Department of Commerce
 - Native American Business Assistance Program
 - Funds Tribes to provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs.
 - Offers small grants for entrepreneurs (see Business Resource Directory)
 - Funds Tribal economic development feasibility studies and plans.
 - Big Sky Trust Fund
 - Grants for Preliminary Architecture and Engineering Reports
- Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA)
- Montana Associated Technology Roundtables (MATR)
- Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA)—This national, not-for-profit organization works with tribal governments and enterprises and provides educational resources and forums about business, finance, and accounting, including information about best practices. NAFOA also provides professional idea-sharing and networking opportunities for its members. See www.nafoa.org.
- Other potential grant funders include:
 - Kellogg Foundation
 - MJ Murdock
 - Kresge Foundation
 - Shakopee Tribe
 - Seminole Nation
 - OP&WE Edwards Foundation
 - Charlotte Martin Foundation
 - Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation
 - Orton Foundation
 - Lower Flathead Valley Foundation
 - Bill Gates Foundation
 - Kraft Foods
 - Blue Cross/Blue Shield Foundation
 - Northwest Area Foundation
 - St. Luke Foundation
 - Nike N7
 - Apple Foundation
 - Notah Begay Foundation
 - Wal-Mart
- Additional agencies that aid entrepreneurs are listed in the attached Business Resource Directory.

- Other agencies that provide apprenticeship opportunities and workforce training are listed in the attached Workforce Training Directory.

3.1.3 OTHER STRENGTHS

Additional strengths are listed in the following SWOT analysis that was completed in late 2014 by the Steering Committee. After compiling the previous Economic Setting section of this document, CSKT's Economic Development Office and Sovereign Leasing and Financing Company identified additional strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats that were added to the Committee's SWOT analysis.

3.2 WEAKNESSES OR CHALLENGES

3.2.1 BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

At least two-thirds of the 771 Tribal members who completed the 2014 CSKT Job and Training Needs Survey said their household faced at least one of the following barriers to employment, and almost half said their household struggled with two or more of these barriers.

Job Training or Education-Specific Barriers Experienced by Tribal Members	
Training or education-specific barrier	% Tribal Members
Lack of money for education or training	43.4%
Lack of computer skills	33.8%
Lack of education	32.9%
Lack of job skill training	30.7%
Lack of work experience	30.1%
Lack of job search training	20.2%

In addition to the barriers listed in the table, Tribal member survey respondents noted the following as the most important barriers to a job, job training, or education.

- ❖ lack of transportation
- ❖ problems associated with disabilities and health
- ❖ discrimination

- ❖ criminal charges or addiction
- ❖ no driver's license

3.2.2 OTHER WEAKNESSES OR CHALLENGES

Additional weaknesses or challenges are listed in the following SWOT analysis.

3.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The creation of Opportunity Zones has led to incentives for many groups and governments to pursue development in areas previously thought to be too challenging or potentially hindered by the economic distress of that land base. One such project is the revitalization of the Camas Bathhouse in the Sanders County region. Currently, CSKT is amid restructuring many organizations within the government, and it is not clear if outside investment will be beneficial to the goals of CSKT. The Tribes will continue to evaluate the opportunity when assessing this project.

The following table lists the opportunities and threats identified by the Steering Committee and during the analysis of the reservation's economic setting.

3.4 CSKT SWOT ANALYSIS TABLE

Strengths	Weaknesses or Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
Growing Collaboration with State/Federal Government Social Media Fosters Community University and Educational Systems Salish Kootenai College Stable Government Family Perspective Diverse Training Resources, Partnerships, and Collaboration Survey and Study Data Entrepreneurship Training Opportunities: - S&K Bus. Services/ Sovereign Lsg. & Financing.	Barriers to Employment More Single Parent Families No Employee Loyalty – No Guarantee of Pension Media Sensation vs. Emotional Honesty Micromanaging Transportation System and Resources Change in Value of Employment vs. “having a job” Media Has Shifted Our Ideas & Changed Our Society More. Quickly	Mission West CDP Provides Training for Business Owners High School Juniors Meet with Tribal Education Re: Job Trends & Opportunities Networking with Retiring Small Businesses Tribal or Rez Bucks, Pablo Business Park. SKC & Job Corps Training Opportunities MT Department of Commerce Tourism Training – Maria Valandra looked at community values. Indian Pref. Office – Tribal Member Job Opportunities and Contractor List	Abundance of Caution! (Slow) Lack of Apprenticeship and Work Experience Opportunities Cost of Living—Inflation! — People Need to be Paid a Livable Wage Substance Abuse – Worker Reliability/Job Retention Concerns Fee Landowners—Continued Land Subdivision and Resource Development/Overuse in Sensitive Natural and Cultural Resource Areas Hopelessness in the Minds of Youth Environmental Discontinuity, Global Warming, Climate Change, Food Supply Cost of Secondary Education Economic Leakage



- Montana Community Development. Corp. (CDC) - Lake Co. CDC - Small Business Administration. Indian Preference Ordinance & Office Many Educated, Professional People Broad Natural Resource Base, Pristine, Scenic Environment Unique Cultural Setting and Knowledge Base—Culture Committees and People’s Center New Bicycle/Pedestrian Pathways Providing Alternative Transportation and Recreation Opportunities in Warmer Months Partnership with Job Service Polson	Some tribal corporations pay lower entry-level wages than tribal governments. Lack of Motivated, Trained Workers for Some Jobs and Everyday Job Tasks Consume Too Much Time—Hard to Focus on Culture Must Live in Two Worlds & Survive in Both Lack of Marketing Re Benefits of Indian Preference Office & Non-Compliance w/Ordinance It’s Hard to Connect With Shifting Goals & Priorities Too Much Governmental The dependence-welfare system incentivizes low-income status. Lack of Financial Resources Too Many Distractions in Mainstream Society	Help Non-Native Community Understand support for tribal businesses is support for family (Tribes are like a large family who need to support each other.) Free Testing and Classes at SKC for Individuals to Obtain High School Equivalency Certificate International Economy Value(s) of Culture, Place, and History to Others—Promote Tribally-Guided Tours, Native Crafts Vendor Stands, Canoe Building, and Races on Flathead Lake DHRD Transit MT Main Street Goal to Work w/SKC to Fund More Apprenticeships Char-Koosta – Market Tribal Businesses & Indian Preference Benefits	Non-Native Lake Trout Out-Competing Native Fish Populations in Flathead Lake Effects of Federal Budget Sequestration and Continuing Resolutions on Tribal Compact/638 Contracts and Corporation Contracts Natural and Man-made Disasters
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	- Cell Phones - Video Games - TV—Little Focus on Community Lack of Soft Skills - Respectful Communications - Service Orientation Degradation of Values (Social Fabric) No Consensus on Path to Take Amongst 8000+ Members Internal Resistance from Some Departments or Entities in Following Established Policies Regarding Bid Opportunities & Employment Short-Term Wants (Mass Media Demands) Tribal members are unwilling to work for non-tribally affiliated entities.	Growing Population on Rez Growing Market for Made in Montana/Native Products SKQ Dam SQK Quality Meats Development of Hot Springs Area Water Compact Salary Survey Entrepreneurial Incentives - Grants - Marketing Thru Media Gift Cards - Owner Gets Benefit - Gift Card Receiver Gets A Good Meal A few Flathead Lake lots may be available for development and lease. Tribal Education Dept. Scholarships	
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	Membership is not informed about job training opportunities. Many Members Renting versus Owning Homes—No Equity Housing and Home Site Waiting Lists – Need to Develop More Residential Lease Lots Need for No-Cost Computer Literacy Training for the Unemployed Lack of Work Experience Economic and Resource Sustainability Limited # of Tribal Commercial/Industrial Lots for Bringing in Outside Business and Serving Tribal Entrepreneurs Infrastructure \$ Needed to Develop a Business Park	SKC's LSAMP Scholarship & International Research Programs American Indian College Fund Scholarships Dual Enrollment and STEM Program with SKC for High School Students Over 1/3 of Tribal Members Responding to the Survey are Very Interested in Starting a New Business. Food Sovereignty Ideas/Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center/SKC Alternative Energy and Energy Conservation Opportunities Other Tribal Programs to Form a Coalition Climate Change Plan and Planning Group / EAGLES	
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	Inadequate Water Storage at SKE Resulting in Increased Fire Insurance Rates Inadequate water storage in Pablo has resulted in a moratorium on new Commercial Dev't. – College can't expand Succession Planning Needed for Retiring Tribal Managers Lack of Adequate Recreational and Fitness Facilities in Many Communities—limited for youth even with the recent build of skate parks No large facility for Tribal wakes in the Ronan/Pablo/Polson areas	Fishing Derbies and Commercial Fish Sales of Flathead Lake Trout Funding for training through WIOA and HELP-Link programs operated by Job Service Polson. Access to job readiness skills training and apprenticeship information. Work Experience & Emergency Hire CSKT Job Opportunities Small Business Administration assistance Frequent entry-level CSKT jobs are available. Day labor postings are available from Job Service Polson. New Tribal Broadband System	
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	Substance Abuse Affecting Adults and Children of Abusers—Need Education, Prevention, Treatment, and Aftercare 1/5 of the unemployed do not have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Indian Health Service Funding Cuts for Sewer/Water Infrastructure Increasing Electricity Costs Sćilíp Agency and Old Dumpsites Need Clean-Up Need Skilled Workers for Higher-Paying Jobs Need to Update Tribal Administrative Procedures Ordinance Tribal Building Maintenance Needs Few CSKT day labor opportunities and many		
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	Tribal members cannot hold a permanent full-time job. Losing Traditions/Way of Life Difficulty getting into a substance-abuse treatment center Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic		
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4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION, ACTION PLAN & EVALUATION

This section is divided into three subsections:

- Strategic Direction – which includes the vision and goals that CSKT has for economic development on the reservation
- Action Plan – the specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives and steps CSKT and its partners plan to take to accomplish these goals, including reasonable cost estimates and potential funding sources and objectives that address economic resilience.²⁶
- Evaluation – the measures of success that determine whether the goals and objectives have been met

4.1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Over a decade ago, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes adopted vision and mission statements. While these are long-range statements that apply to more than economic development, they provide the comprehensive direction that must guide CSKT's economic action steps.

4.1.1 TRIBAL VISION

The traditional values that served our people in the past are imbedded in the many ways we serve and invest in our people and communities, in the way we have regained and restored our homelands and natural resources, in the ways we have built a self-sufficient society and economy, in the ways we govern our reservation and represent ourselves to the rest of the world, and in the ways we continue to preserve our right to determine our own destiny.

4.1.2 TRIBAL MISSION

Our mission is to adopt traditional principles and values into all facets of Tribal operations and services. We will invest in our people in a manner that ensures our ability to become a completely self-sufficient society and economy. And we will provide sound environmental stewardship to preserve, perpetuate, protect, and enhance natural resources and ecosystems.

4.1.3 VALUES

The following Tribal values are written on the walls of the CSKT People's Center in Pablo and should be incorporated into all efforts for Tribal resource management and economic development:

- Commitment
- Honesty
- Trust
- Vision

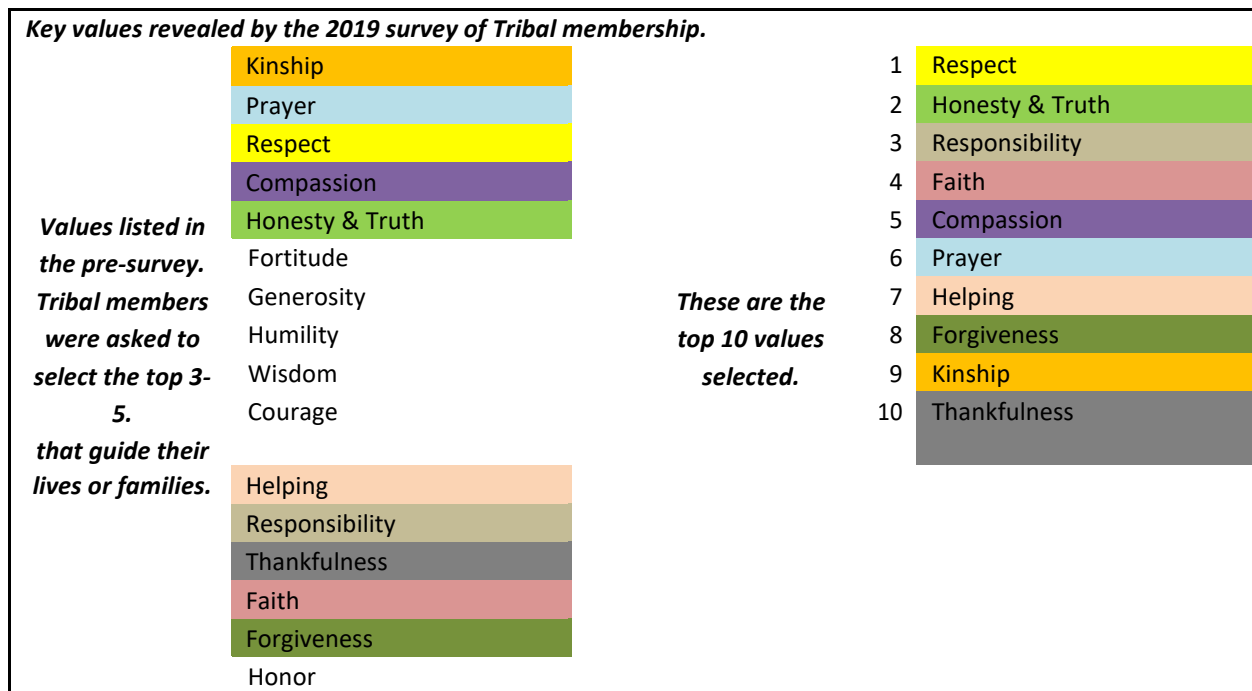
²⁶. Economic resilience is the ability to withstand and quickly recover from, and possibly avoid, economic "shocks" or disruptions.

- Cooperation
- Courage
- Respect
- Spirituality

Other values that are important to the partners who worked on this strategic plan include:

- Equality
- Loyalty
- Generosity
- Family
- Freedom
- Creativity

Core values identified by the Tribal membership in a survey of Tribal members living on the Flathead Reservation in May of 2019.



4.1.4 TRIBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The following economic development goals were adopted by the Tribal Council in 2007 and reaffirmed in 2013:

1. Reinforce traditional principles and values into all facets of Tribal operations and service, including investing in our people in a manner that ensures our ability to become a completely self-sufficient society and economy.
2. Provide a sustainable economy for our next generation (20- to 25-year horizon) that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Protect and develop the Tribal economy by taking advantage of the unique qualities and opportunities of the tribal government status while protecting the environment.
 - b. Provide alternative revenues and job opportunities for the next generation.
 - c. Develop the skills and knowledge of our people.
 - d. Provide a broad range of opportunities for Tribal members by stimulating the Tribes' private sector and facilitating economic growth.
 - e. Provide alternative development opportunities, including those that add value to our natural resource base and create marketable products instead of just selling raw materials off to outside parties.
3. Provide for near-term economic development (five- to ten-year horizon) that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Diversify revenue sources so as not to be dependent on limited sources such as the government, timber, and energy.
 - b. Bring in investments and revenue from outside sources.
 - c. Maximize the flow of money in the local Tribal economy.
 - d. Extend the range of CSKT economic influence and businesses beyond the local economy while promoting and protecting the interests of Tribal entrepreneurs.
 - e. Invest in Tribal members' education and skills for the jobs of the future.
 - f. Establish curriculum at local colleges and training institutions that serve the economic and business opportunities of the Tribes.
 - g. Make a transition from the current Tribal philosophy of employment to employability.
 - h. Create business opportunities for individual Tribal members to participate in the local, regional, and global marketplace.
 - i. Take advantage of development opportunities provided by the reservation setting, including alternative energy, water development, utilities, pipelines, and other transmission initiatives.
 - j. Develop policies for internal capacity building, workforce development, Tribal procurement strategies, and other measures that will create alignment between government services and economic development opportunities.
 - k. Establish targets for enterprise return on investment/profitability and funds for reinvestment in existing enterprises as well as investment in new enterprise opportunities.
 4. Establish and monitor standards for enterprise/corporate business planning to assure all chartered enterprises meet business planning standards and use plans to facilitate linkages between Tribal goals and enterprise strategies.
 5. Establish a process for preparation and periodic update of a CSKT government-wide strategic plan that embraces and sets goals for all aspects of the Tribes, including governance, economic development, natural resources, human resources, community/infrastructure development, and traditional/cultural values. It is the policy of the Tribal Council to initiate a broad-based government strategic planning effort, including linkages of the strategic plan to Tribal processes for budgeting and resource allocation.

4.1.5 CSKT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND TASKS IDENTIFIED AS PART OF THE MAIN STREET MONTANA (PLANNING) PROJECT

On June 18, 2014, brainstorming session between Tribal and State of Montana leaders, the following goals, objectives, and tasks were identified for the Flathead Reservation. The goals are based on four of the five “pillars” of the economy that were identified in the Main Street Montana (Strategic Planning) Project—a business plan for Montana by Montanans—that was initiated in 2013.

GOAL 1: Train and Educate Tomorrow’s Workforce Today

Objective 1: Support high school graduation and K-12 workforce and college readiness

Recommended Partners: Salish Kootenai College (SKC), Tribal Early Childhood Services and Education Departments

Tasks:

- More parent/teacher conferences per year
- A focus on Head Start and early learning
- More cultural relevance in education
- Prioritize attendance.
- School-to-work initiative
- Job shadowing
- Career exploration and readiness
- College preparation awareness – including for parents

Objective 2: Support higher education and training opportunities for CSKT students

Recommended Partners: SKC, CSKT Executive Team, Lake County Job Service

Tasks:

- Apprenticeships and Internships
- Succession Planning (for CSKT positions with impending retirements)
- Trade programs
- Support of PAID internships
- Value system emphasis
- Provide funding for training.
- Parental awareness of college readiness

GOAL 2: Create a Climate that Attracts, Retains, and Grows Businesses Objective: Create SUSTAINABLE employment at MEANINGFUL wages.

Recommended Partners:

Tasks:

- Attract electronic-based companies
- Identify the available labor force.
- Identify employer needs.
- Healthcare
- Childcare
- Personal care

GOAL 3: Build Upon Montana's [CSKT's] Economic Foundation

Objective: Support infrastructure development that enables economic growth.

Recommended Partners: S&K Electronics President, Sovereign Leasing & Holding President, CSKT Economic Development and Housing Authority Directors, MVP, Tribal IT Department, USDA Rural Development

Tasks:

- Provide a "last mile" connection for broadband.
- Train people about the real uses of superfast broadband, such as health, business, and education applications (not just Facebook).
- Educate the public about priorities and potential on the Reservation. Help dispel myths so there is less fear about investing here. Public education about CSKT.
- Expand water and sewer capacity in our communities.
- Re-development agency, which applies for grants
- Housing
- Storefronts or office space for business incubators
- Adopt Uniform Commercial Codes—Tribal Secured Transaction Act

GOAL 4: Nurture Emerging Industries and Encourage Innovation

Objective: Develop more business mentorship and management programs for access to new and developing businesses.

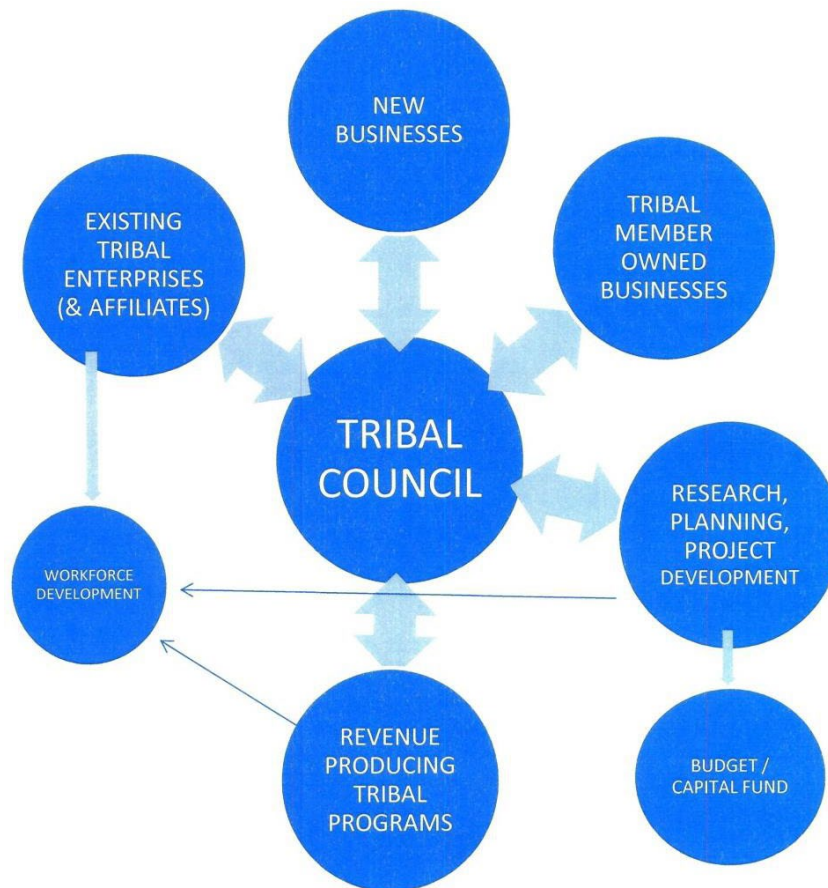
Recommended Partners: Former Joe's Jiffy Stop Owner (Binky Bowman), CSKT Planning Director, Sovereign Leasing/Financing staff, Montana and Lake County Community Development Corporations, SCORE

Tasks:

- Provide incentives for mentorship.
- Identifying and growing centers and funding for centers and mentors
- Vetting process for mentors
- Define and locate best-practice existing programs.
- Develop a statewide program.
- Mentor government contractors
- Corporate mentorship
- Support new agricultural enterprises.

4.1.6 GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE EDO PLAN OF OPERATIONS

The Tribes' Economic Development Office (EDO) works within Tribal government to facilitate efforts in seven areas of economic development as illustrated below.



Tribal Council-approved goals for the CSKT Economic Development Office include the following:

1. Facilitate reporting and communications between Tribally-Owned Corporations/Enterprises and the Tribal Council/Shareholder
2. Complete Due Diligence on New Business Proposals Submitted to CSKT by Outside Business Interests
3. Support Capital Fund Advisory Committee
4. Assist Tribal Member Entrepreneurs and Prospective Entrepreneurs with Access to Capital, Training, and Other Business Development Needs
5. Support Revenue-Producing Tribal Programs, including Review of Land Acquisition Proposals with Revenue-Producing Potential.
6. Research and Plan for the Best Use of Tribal Assets
7. Coordinate with Other Governmental Entities Regarding Economic Development, Planning, and Workforce Development

4.1.7 PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE MEMBERSHIP IN THE JOB AND TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY

The top priorities for economic development on the Reservation that were identified by the 771 Job and Training Needs Survey respondents, in order of priority, include the following:

1. Provide financial support to individuals who are starting their own businesses.
2. Attract businesses to the reservation.
3. Increase the Tribes' gaming activities / venues.
4. Develop or support retail businesses that sell food, clothing, gas, or other consumer products.
5. Develop Tribally owned agriculture businesses.
6. Improve utility infrastructure such as water quantity, sewage treatment, waste disposal, access to natural gas, or low-cost power.
7. Develop or support businesses that are in or in support of the health care industry.
8. Develop or support businesses that take advantage of tourism.

4.1.8 2019 TRIBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES (NW AREA FOUNDATION VIBRANT TRIBAL ECONOMIES PROJECT)

In 2018, CSKT received funding from the Northwest Area Foundation to study economic leakage on the Reservation and consider methods to recirculate Tribal dollars within the Reservation economy. The key is to encourage individuals and companies to "Buy Local" as much as possible in order to support and grow the local businesses that create more jobs and bring additional revenue and resources to the Reservation economy. In 2019, as part of the Foundation's Vibrant Tribal Economies project, the Tribes studied IMPLAN data for the reservation and regional economies. Combining past priorities with this new data, the CSKT Economic Development Office worked with the Tribal Council to identify ten economic development priorities:

1. **Agri-Business*/Food Sovereignty**** with an initial focus on marketing grass-fed, tribally raised beef (107 total jobs possible as reported by regional IMPLAN data for beef cattle ranching and farming, including a small feedlot, processing center(s), and dual-purpose ranching and farming. 293 jobs are possible when grouped with other farming and ranching. In 2020 the Tribal Council established a Food Sovereignty Task Force to consider more diverse crops and expand food processing efforts for local and regional distribution.
2. **Forest Product Development (e.g., tiny homes, small, "smart" starter home kits/modular construction)** With Tribal woods workers struggling to make ends meet and residents struggling to find affordable housing, this is a business that some feel could be set up possibly at the former Job Corps Center. (31 potential direct or indirect jobs for wood products and 64 construction jobs per IMPLAN data)
3. **Hot Springs Rejuvenation Project**** (87 jobs for hotels/motels possible in the region per IMPLAN data). When combined with entertainment, tourism, and food services, there are 560 potential jobs in the three-county region.

4. **Culturally Appropriate Tourism* **** (to possibly include Arts and Crafts Vendor Support) (Tourism is a huge industry in Montana, and the reservation's natural beauty and proximity to Glacier National Park draw tourists here.)
5. Nursing/Retirement Home and **Community Care Facilities – Treatment Center*** (57 jobs possible in this sector per IMPLAN data.) In 2020, the Tribal Council established a Homelessness Task Force that identified the need for permanent, supportive housing (PSH) for individuals with housing insecurities. Outpatient treatment could be provided at a PSH center. CSKT will open a 14-unit facility in early 2021 as a pilot project with "Wrap-around" services to help individuals get back on their feet through financial literacy, mental health, substance abuse, diet, and other types of counseling, based on their needs.
6. **Energy development/conservation**, including installation of solar panels where feasible** (This is a resource sustainability and climate change adaptation goal.) There could be 21 potential new jobs in the Energy & Utilities section according to the IMPLAN data for the region.
7. **Real Estate Development and Property Management** – such as Housing, Commercial Lot/Business Park Development, Polson Airport Hangars, and RV Parks (208 total regional jobs possible as reported by IMPLAN data.)
8. **Warehousing and Storage** (67 total regional jobs possible per IMPLAN data). A business plan was completed for one project in 2020, and another will be completed by mid-2021.
9. **Individual and Family Services – Day Care Centers (Child and Adult)** (Prior to the pandemic, Salish Kootenai College offered free training for people interested in starting or managing a day care center. When the pandemic hit, many day care centers closed, and employees struggled to find childcare in some reservation communities. Due to the aging population, CSKT should explore the feasibility of developing an assisted living facility.
10. **Technology** (Initial feasibility study completed). Many grant opportunities are available for improving broadband. CSKT was awarded a license for 2.5 GHz spectrum and is building a system to improve internet access for the Tribal government and the membership. CSKT needs to explore the business management aspect of this project.)

*Identified as a top priority by the membership in the 2014 survey

**Identified as a high priority in CSKT's 2015 Sustainable, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy/Plan.

This list does not include some of the categories identified from 2019 regional IMPLAN data, including

- Wholesale trade, which could bring in 224 potential new jobs, either directly, indirectly, or induced
- Insurance and other financial investment activities, 193 total potential jobs
- Service to buildings, 100 possible jobs
- Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping, and payroll: 82 possible jobs

In early 2021, the Tribal water compact was approved, which created additional priorities for irrigation system improvements and Tribal management of the National Bison Range, which was restored to Tribal ownership.

4.1.9 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE GOALS

4.1.9.1 PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN

The local hazard mitigation goals of the Tribes' Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan are:

- Enhance Early Warning Systems
- Minimize risk of wildfire at the urban interface (where housing development adjoins the forest).
- Improve firefighting capabilities.
- Reduce risk of hazardous material incidents
- Reduce risk of biological hazards
- Secure integrity of utilities and infrastructure
- Enhance emergency response systems through E-9-1-1.
- Reduce impacts from wildfires.
- Reduce impacts from flooding
- Secure integrity of cultural sites

4.1.9.2 CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN

As described in Section 2.8.3.5.2, the CSKT Climate Change Strategic Plan focuses on nine areas, including forestry, land, fish, wildlife, water, air, infrastructure, people, and culture. The goals for these areas include ensuring:

- The health of natural resources through research and effective planning and management
- Access to housing and power through research and long-range planning
- The health and safety of people through improved planning, coordination, and system development
- Cultural preservation through education and advocacy

4.2 ACTION PLAN

The following action plan merges these six sets of economic development goals and priorities for the Flathead Reservation into seven overall economic development goals for the Reservation and the Tribes. Where possible, the plan lists specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives and steps that CSKT and its partners plan to take to accomplish these goals. Some of these objectives are scheduled to be accomplished within the next 1 to 5 years, and some are long-range goals. A few completion dates and costs will be determined after this strategy is published. Where known, the objectives include reasonable cost estimates and potential funding sources, as well as a section for “Measures of Success” to aid in the evaluation of whether or not the objectives have been reached.

This action plan is a work in progress, and it will be revised as additional information comes to light or as priorities change.

4.2.1 CURRENT PRIORITIES

Many priorities need to be addressed, such as improving access to capital for entrepreneurs, job creation, economic resiliency, and utilization of reservation resources to generate revenue for funding essential services. The Tribal Council has rated the following objectives as to whether they are high, medium, or low priorities.

FIVE-YEAR AND LONG-RANGE ACTION PLAN

GOAL 1: Educate, Train, and Provide Work Experience for Tribal Members for Today's and Tomorrow's Employment Opportunities						
Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates & Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Implement the Tribal Workforce Training Strategy that focuses on the training and career interests of unemployed tribal members and, where possible, livable wage occupations. Where the Region is Experiencing Job Growth	High	- Identify gaps between Tribal members' training interests, the availability of local living wage jobs, and the training opportunities needed to fill those jobs. And consider CSKT's need to fill jobs as long-term Tribal managers retire in the next few years (succession planning). - Work with local educators and training programs to fill those gaps. - Develop and fund a <u>free</u> training program for Tribal members to address barriers to employment such as - No funds for education or training or transportation - Lack of computer skills - Lack of job skill training (interpersonal skills, organizing time, customer service, safety, etc.) - Lack of job search training (resume development, career planning, how to search for a job, filling out applications, interview skills) - Ensure training facilities are accessible to the disabled. - Assist members with access to computers with internet for online training. - When the COVID-19 pandemic is over, provide DHRD Transit services for training programs (be sure members	Leads: CSKT Economic Development Office (EDO), Department of Human Resource Development (DHRD) Others: Job Service, Salish Kootenai College (SKC), Montana Apprenticeship Program, consultants, IT Department, CSKT Education Department, and other partners	Ongoing Ongoing	Year 1 covered by CSKT's ANA grant with future funding for years 2-5 from Workforce/Entrepreneur Coalition partners, as available	Completion of a sustainable training schedule that addresses computer literacy, job search, and job skill training. A decrease in the unemployment rate for Native Americans living on the Reservation. Completion of a curriculum program that prepares Tribal members for work in sectors showing annual job growth of at least 1%—8 members trained per year

		know to call 24 hours in advance for rides.) • Identify work experience opportunities and place members into those positions; work on technical skills needed for those positions. Examples include: ○ On-the-job training projects for SKC highway construction students. (SKC teaches technical skills for 2 school quarters, and then students train on job sites for the last quarter.) • Address discrimination issues through policy enforcement and education. • Address other barriers to employment by improving awareness of and access to existing programs that address: ○ Health Issues ○ Criminal Records ○ Addiction Issues • With our partners, provide <u>free</u> introductory business workshops for the top occupations that interested most Tribal members, accountants, auditors, and budget analysts. • Gather additional members' contact information at public meetings and from correspondence resulting from press releases, social media, etc., and contact members to sign up for the free training. • Find members interested in attending Code School and other types of online computer programming training.		2026-2031	Computer literacy training; DHRD	
2. Support High School Graduation and K-12 Workforce and College Readiness	High	• Implement tribal education priorities, including • Continue focus on child development through Head Start programs. • Develop family wellness activities and continue the family mentoring program.	CSKT Early Childhood Services (ECS) Dept.	Ongoing	Part of Annual Budgets	Improved school attendance and graduation rates.

		and establish holistic family partnerships to include work with a cultural liaison. • Develop parent/child education engagement skills training. • Communicate about the importance of school attendance (a priority) through billboards, flyers, webpages, and Facebook pages. • Promote career exploration, readiness, mentoring, and job shadowing. • Develop a student records database and data-sharing agreements with schools to improve instruction and support. Native students, incl. teacher training for Res'n. schools that are willing to participate • Provide CSKT history and cultural/tribal awareness training—PIR day, monthly People's Center activities, etc. • School-to-work initiative—Create work-experience-based curriculum in partnership with SKC and Two Eagle River School. • College preparation awareness – including for parents	CSKT Social Services, Probation, Defenders, and ECS Depts. Lead: CSKT Education Department Others: Indian Ed. Committee and Parent Committees CSKT Education Dept. Education Dept., Salish Kootenai College, Two Eagle River School, Public School Districts	2026-2031 Ongoing To be determined Ongoing	Part of CSKT Ed. Dept. budget	Lower unemployment and truancy rates among teens.
3. Support Higher Education and Training Opportunities for CSKT Students	High	• Creation of more apprenticeships and internships • Compile an inventory of most needed staffing positions and develop a "succession planning" strategy for CSKT positions with impending retirements. • Offer more trade programs (e.g., housing inspectors, appraisers, property management) according to economic needs. • Find support for PAID internships. • Provide funding for training. • Continue scholarship programs	Lead: Tribal Education Department Others: Salish Kootenai College, CSKT Executive Team and Health & Human Resources departments, Lake County Job Service, EDO partners	Ongoing	U.S. Dept. of Labor, Mt. Dept. of Labor and Industry, Gear-Up Program, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); cost to be determined	More Tribal members are gaining work experience to prepare them for full-time work. Trained Tribal members are ready to fill positions as long-time CSKT employees retire.

4. Other Assistance	High	Continue to support flexible work schedules and telecommuting options for CSKT and other employees, where compatible with jobs and supervisor's needs.	CSKT	Ongoing	Annual program budgets.	Reduced child and eldercare conflicts for employees. Reduced vehicle emissions from commuters.
		Assist members in developing "bundling a livelihood" strategies by combining a variety of seasonal and part-time sources of earnings and income to create the equivalence of a full-time livelihood.	S&K Business Services	Ongoing	EDA planning grant; cost to Be determined.	Increased income for seasonal and self-employed workers.

GOAL 2: Assist Tribal Member Entrepreneurs and Prospective Entrepreneurs with Access to Capital, Training, and Other Business Development Needs to Stimulate the Private Sector and Decrease Reliance on Tribal Government Employment						
Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimate and Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Provide Grant Opportunities for Tribal Member-owned Businesses	High	Serve on the state's review committee for Indian Equity Fund grants up to \$14,000 for 2-3 CSKT Tribal members/year.	CSKT Planning Director, S&K Business Services General Manager (SKBS GM)	Mt. Indian Equity Fund – FY2022-2025 if authorized by the state legislature	CSKT's MT-STEDC grant and Tribal funds \$40,000/year Mt. Dept. of Commerce Indian Equity Fund. USDA Rural Business & Cooperative Services (RBCS)	3-5 grants awarded in FY 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26.
2. Provide technical assistance and, upon request, direct Tribal entrepreneurs to lending agencies.	High	- Provide one-on-one assistance to Tribal members for business plan development, operations and financing, grant and loan applications, and more. - Market this assistance, as well as SBA online business courses and computer availability at S&K Business Services and CSKT EDO. - Describe options for business structuring. - Describe options for loans from the Tribal Credit Program, local banks, and community development corporations. - If needing collateral, refer to the Montana Dept. of Commerce Native American Collateral Support Program.	Lead: SKBS GM Others: Mission West Community Development Partners (MWCDP), EDO staff, Flathead Reservation Extension Office	Ongoing	Part of CSKT EDO, SKBS and MWCDP budgets; \$20,000 Nat. Amer. Bus. advisors grant from Mt. DOC to SKBS in FY22-26 if funded by the Montana Legislature, SBA, and USDA RBCS	Assistance is provided to 37 tribal member-owned businesses and prospective businesses annually.

4. Provide Entrepreneurial Training and Networking Opportunities for Tribal Members and Business Owners	High	• Create e-mail lists of Tribal member business owners and potential owners and e-mail them about entrepreneur training opportunities. • Incorporate existing local and federal training opportunities into a Tribally sponsored entrepreneur training program for Tribal members based on needs identified in EDO's 2014 Job and Training Needs Survey and follow-up entrepreneur surveys and workshop evaluations. Host an annual virtual Tribal member business owner meeting to distribute training and resource information; listen to concerns, procurement, and Tribal preference policy issues; and provide brainstorming and think-tank sessions. • Develop computer stations at Tribal community centers.	Lead: CSKT EDO staff Others: MWCD, SBDCs, SBA, Montana DBE Office, SKBS, EDA, SKC	Ongoing January-June; annually as funding permits Annually as funding permits.	CSKT EDO Budget MWCD & SBDCs, training budgets; DHRD & ANA grant funds CSKT EDO funds USDA RBCS	Over 150 Tribal members received information about training opportunities for business owners and those interested in owning a business. 8 Tribal members trained each year in business planning, finance, basic accounting, marketing, resume development, preparing competitive proposals, bonding and insurance, and more. 15 Tribal members attending an annual meeting to discuss entrepreneurial issues and opportunities.
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5. Help advertise Tribal member-owned businesses.	High	• Offer social media marketing workshops for entrepreneurs.	Lead: CSKT EDO staff & SKBS	2027	Ongoing	More Tribal member businesses listed on the Indian Preference list; 1 newspaper supplement printed; 52 business profiles printed.
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6. Assist S&K Business Services or Salish Kootenai College with establishing an incubator to support Tribal member-owned businesses.	Medium	• Support S&K Business Services in their efforts to provide technical assistance to Tribal members starting or expanding a business. • Identify resources and potential products, skills, and services already present at Salish Kootenai College and within the retired, professional, or under-employed workforce, and explore incubation and leveraging of enterprises based on these resources. • Explore potential for obtaining additional CDFI funds.	SKBS GM, SKC, and EDO		To be determined.	A sustainable business incubator program is available for Tribal entrepreneurs.
7. Identify Suitable Locations for Businesses	Medium	• Update Council on Property Management Inventory and proposed locations for commercial lease lots. • Upon request, recommend suitable sites for business owners to lease from the tribe. Lands Department.	Planning Director, Tribal Lands Department, Property Management Team	Ongoing	CSKT EDO budget	Tribal commercial lots are available for lease in most Reservation communities.
8. Support Tribal Arts and Crafts Vendors	Medium	• Work with Tribal artists and Mission West Community Development Partners (CDP) to help other Tribal artists learn the ropes of selling at farmers' markets and craft fairs. in addition to Pow Wows.	Lead: CSKT EDO Others: Three Chiefs Culture Center, Montana Department of Commerce, Mission West CDP, Arts and Crafts Vendors	2028-2029	CSKT NABA and ANA Grants' budget	Tribal arts and crafts vendors have increased sales, with the ability to sell their products online to tourists and more locals.
9. Explore and Evaluate Various Business Structuring Options and Policies to Maximize Assistance and Success	Low	• Providing training on the cooperative model of business organization, targeting sectors where this form of organization has the potential to create economic benefit in the form of revenues, cost-sharing, job/work experience, and community building for addressing social issues.	SKBS, Mission West CDP	Ongoing		Training completed for entrepreneurs and staff.

GOAL 3: Create a Climate that Attracts, Retains, and Grows Businesses that are Compatible with CSKT Cultural and Environmental Protection Values

Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates & Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Support Infrastructure Development in Appropriate Areas that Enables Economic Growth	High	- Provide a “last-mile” connection for broadband, where economically feasible. - Train people how to use the internet and e-mail on their smartphones. Educate the public about priorities and potential on the reservation, about buying locally to recirculate dollars in the reservation, thereby supporting more local jobs. Help dispel myths so there is less fear about investing here. Public education about CSKT. - Expand/maintain water and sewer capacity in our communities. - Continue tribal transportation committee activities. - Utilize community development corporations and experienced grant writing consultants with high success rates to apply for grants. - Improve availability of affordable housing (See Homelessness and Tiny/Small Homes Projects.) - Develop commercial lots for lease (see Polson West and Big Arm Store Feasibility Studies). - Develop storefronts or office space for business incubators. - Adopt the Uniform Commercial Code-Tribal Secured Transaction Act.	Leads: CSKT EDO staff and SKBS GM Others: Mission West CDP, S&K Electronics President, Roads Program, IT, DHRD and other departments, SKC, Housing Authority Director and Sewer/Water staff, Mission Valley Power, Tribal Legal Department, and consultants	Ongoing	USDA Rural Development, EDA, Indian Health Service, State of Montana, Mission West CDP, CSKT EDO	Additional community sewer/water system capacity with repaired infrastructure where needed, additional homesite and commercial lease lots, expanded last-mile broadband connections
				Ongoing		
				Dependent on legal staff availability		Adopted the Uniform Commercial Code or policy.

	High	• Construction of Reservation Road, Bridge and Safety Projects, and continued BIA transportation system annual maintenance according to the following priorities: ○ St. Mary's Lake Road Bridge Replacement ○ W. Fork Revais Creek Bridge Replacement ○ Elmo – Indian Avenue ○ S. Arlee Homesites (Finley Lakes) Rosalie Lane ○ Round Butte Road Pedestrian Path ○ Sčilip Agency Homesite Streets ○ Heavy Road Maintenance Projects ○ Chip Seals ○ Big Arm to Elmo Path ○ Safety Projects • Highway 93 expansion project coordination	Lead: CSKT Roads Program Others: Transportation Committee and Lands Department	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing as funding allows	Tribal Transp. Program/Federal Highway Admin. BIA; \$185K Safety Funding Mt. Dept. of Transportation	
2. Continue to Explore the Feasibility of Developing a Business Park North of Pablo, Adjacent to Existing Tribal Corporations & Commercial/Industrial Development, to Bring in Outside Businesses (and to Provide More Water Storage for S&K Electronics to Reduce Fire Insurance Costs)	Medium	• Complete a preliminary engineering report to be compliant with potential funders' requirements. • Log property, keeping some trees for green buffers. • Re-contour while maintaining vegetated berms next to the former People's Center. • Install power and communication lines. • Drill a new well or estimate costs to connect to Pablo Sewer/Water District. • Install water distribution lines and a storage tank. • Develop a frontage road and internal streets. • Market lots for lease.	Lead: CSKT EDO Others: SKC Highway Construction Training Program, EDA, USDA		EDA, USDA, SKE, CSKT, Mission West CDP, Big Sky Trust Fund	Constructed business park with at least one new lessee.

3. Complete Polson West Project	High	• Complete a preliminary engineering report to be compliant with potential funders' requirements and a final plan to include the surveyed lot, road, utility easements, and utility lines. • Construct infrastructure pending funding availability. • Market lots for lease.	Lead: CSKT EDO Others: SKC Highway Construction Training Program, EDA, USDA, Gaming, Tribal Lands, Property Management entity	Ongoing Ongoing To be determined.	EDA, USDA, CSKT, Big Sky Trust Fund	Constructed multi-use property with at least one new lessee.
4. Address Overcrowded Living and Working Conditions to Reduce Exposure to COVID-19	High	• Upgrade sewer/water infrastructure at the Kicking Horse property to provide safe drinking water and sanitation for Tribal offices relocated to the center and for existing and new residences.	Lead: EDO/SKHA Others: Consultants/Contractor	Ongoing	CSKT	Tribal employees are working in less crowded offices and are better able to socially distance during a pandemic.
5. Create/Hire Real Estate Development and Property Management Entities and Develop Vacant Lands Where Appropriate	Medium	• Determine the best property management strategy for asset maintenance and return on investment. • Continue to explore the feasibility of developing property for storage units, warehouses, and other revenue-generating uses.	EDO, Tribal Lands, Legal Department, Tribal Credit, Policy Analyst, SKBS	Ongoing	CSKT, grant funding	Appropriate mix of entities and policies established for maintaining and managing Tribal building and land assets. Plans in place for developing or leasing vacant Tribal properties.
6. Facilitate Development of Child/Elder Care and Assisted Living Centers	High	• Assist with feasibility studies/business plans for establishing additional childcare, adult care, and assisted living facilities. • Encourage entrepreneurial operation of these facilities where appropriate.	EDO and other CSKT departments and entrepreneurs	Ongoing	CSKT, grant, and business owner funding	Availability of safe childcare and elder care in reservation communities.

7. Complete Due Diligence on New Business Proposals Submitted to CSKT by Outside Business Interests	Medium	• In consultation with Tribal administration, establish a due diligence review process and report format, using industry standards, to summarize the outcome of a due diligence review.	CSKT Economic Development Director	Ongoing	CSKT	Approved due diligence process for reviewing outside business proposals.
		• Upon Council request, complete initial screening to determine compatibility with Tribal goals, such as potential for sustainable employment with livable wages. • Complete background checks on key management personnel and any other key investors. • Assemble a team of subject matter expertise to review the proposed business plan. • Present a preliminary report to the Council with a go/no-go recommendation.	Economic Development Director with assistance from a business analyst consultant	Within 2 months of receipt of new proposals	Part of EDO Budget: CSKT	To be determined.
8. Improve Tribal Member Job Opportunities and Profits Generated by tribal corporations through enhanced strategic planning and improved communication with the Shareholder.	Medium/High	• Work with Tribal corporations to ensure timely updates to the Shareholder about audit results, annual progress and dividends, revenue projections, and planning. • Identify corporations' livable wage employment opportunities and encourage membership training for those opportunities.	Economic Development Director	Annually – Approx. 1/5 SKE; 1/10 EKI; 2/30 Gaming; 3/10 SKT; 6/30 Eagle Bank; 7/15 S&K Business Services	Part of EDO and corporate budget.	At least 1 annual meeting between the Shareholder and each corporation is conducted, with reports and audits distributed to Council, Finance Director and EDO staff at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
		• Coordinate a mid-year meeting between all corporations and the Shareholder	Economic Development Director	Annually	EDO budget	A mid-year meeting between the Shareholder and all corporations is held each fall to assist with Tribal revenue projections for the upcoming fiscal year.

		• Ensure that corporations meet business planning standards and address linkages between Tribal goals and enterprise strategies. • Collect data and complete the Annual Economic Scorecard for all Tribal Corporations, describing the business sector(s), listing major corporate successes, dividends, employment and training opportunities for Tribal members and others, charitable donations and value added to the local and regional economy, and the amount invested in each corporation to date and return on investment from each corporation to data.	Economic Development Director	Ongoing Annually	Part of EDO and corporate budgets	Current strategic plans for all 6 Tribal corporations are on file in the EDO office and are in compliance with policies. A scorecard summary is included in the CSKT Annual Report for the membership and presented at community and other meetings upon Tribal Council request.
		• Conduct Board Member training and orientation as needed for existing and newly appointed board members regarding the elements of general corporate structure, governance, and board responsibilities.	Corporation CEOs or Economic Development Directors to Contract with Trainer(s)	Every three years or sooner as new board members are appointed	To be determined	All corporations' board members are trained and able to carry out management oversight responsibilities.

GOAL 4: Nurture Emerging, Sustainable Industries and Encourage Innovation						
Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates & Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Renovate the CSKT Geothermal Hot Springs Facilities at Hot Springs to provide a healing center for local residents and regional and international tourists.	High	• Complete cost analysis and obtain funding to upgrade the 'Big Medicine' facility. • Revise conceptual drawings if needed and cost estimates. Demo structures or portions thereof (including lead paint abatement and abatement of asbestos in roof). • Drill a new bathhouse well and test water quality at Cornhole and Big Medicine wells?	EDO staff and consultant	As funding allows.	CSKT, Shakopee, other	The healing center is open and generating a profit.
2. Promote Culturally Appropriate Tourism on the Reservation	High	• Promote the Three Chiefs Culture Center. • Support cross-cultural member-guided educational tours of the reservation in approved reservation locations. • Explore development of a tourist itinerary planning enterprise. • Complete a Feasibility Study for the Bison Range	CSKT Education Dept./EDO S&K Business Services, EDO staff, and consultants	Ongoing	Education and EDO budgets	Increased number of visitors hiring Tribal member guides.
3. Promote Food Sovereignty and Sustainably Develop and Distribute Local Foods to Decrease Dependence on Imported Foods and Improve Health of the People	High	• Support existing agricultural producers, including grass-fed beef producers, and package local foods for local distribution. • Promote individual and community gardens. • Inventory greenhouse space, seed storage, nursery stock, and other facilities needed for food production and processing. • Develop agricultural enterprises and greenhouses that fill any nutrition gaps with locally raised foods.	CSKT Food Sovereignty Committee and other CSKT members & Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center. Lead: To be determined Others: EAGLES clubs, 4-H, Flathead Extension Offices, Ag.	Ongoing	Part of their annual budgets.	Increased use of local food processing facilities A completed feasibility study and business plan for developing needed infrastructure and generating revenue to support a sustainable local food system.

		- Examine markets for forest/prairie/rangeland-based harvesting, collecting, and value-added marketable products/services in areas without cultural issues. - Develop additional action steps such as providing markets to sell products, e.g., a grass-fed beef project (also explore the Oneida model).	Producers, Individuals, FSA, NRCS, SKBS			An increase in the amount of local foods grown, processed, and consumed on the Reservation as measured by an increase in the number of local meat and produce processors and local food purchases by Reservation residents and businesses.
4. Develop new renewable energy resources on the Reservation.	Medium/High	Conduct a feasibility study for the development of a solar farm on the reservation, utilizing new technology for overcast skies.	Lead: EKI Others: EDA, US Dept. of Energy, BIA, CSKT, SKBS		US Dept. of Energy, BIA	Completed feasibility study for commercial solar power development.
5. Enhance energy conservation by installing energy-efficient appliances, lighting, better insulation, and solar panels where feasible and promoting use of Tribal Transit, ridesharing, and alternative means of transportation.	High	- Promote a Super Good Cents-type program that provides incentives for increased building insulation and use of energy-efficient appliances and lighting. - Explore whether or not the Tribal Housing Ordinance requires energy conservation methods for new construction and remodeling projects. - Continue to promote the Tribal Transit Program. - Explore funding and incentives for creation and use of a car-ride-share program. - Continue development of bicycle and pedestrian paths.	Lead: CSKT EDO & SKBS Others: EDA, US Dept. of Energy, BIA, SK Housing Authority, and CSKT Maintenance Dept. Mission Valley Power CSKT DHRD	Ongoing	US Dept. of Energy, BIA, MT ICED; cost to be determined MVP	Completed feasibility study. Increased number of homes seeing reduced energy costs. Completed study of ordinances and recommendations for amendments. Completed study with recommendations.
6. Kicking Horse Small Homes Project	High	- Complete Infrastructure Replacement Project - Review/Finalize Lot Layout and As-Built Map with Lands Dept. and Council	Lead: CSKT EDO and Maintenance staff	2021 and ongoing	EDA, NW Area Foundation, other	8 residential lots with upgraded utility hook-Ups for small homes

		Obtain electronic as-built and lot boundary files for GIS and TAAMS and PDFs for other staff.	Others: EDA, SKC, NW Area Foundation, other potential partners			Additional lots with sewer/water stub-outs for future development Completed Tiny Homes Study and Business Plan
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GOAL 5: Provide Community Wellness, Recreational, and Cultural Facilities that Support Traditional Principals and Values

Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates & Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Develop a Community Center in Ronan	Medium	• Revise conceptual drawings from the review committee, the Ronan community, and the Tribal Council. • Seek grants and other funding for construction. • With council approval of facility financing, construct the facility.	Lead: Salish Kootenai Housing Authority Director Others: Committee (including Tribal Maintenance Program Manager)	To be determined.	To be determined.	A completed center.
2. Provide an Indoor Recreation Facility in Elmo for use, especially during winter months.	High	• Complete conceptual drawings and cost estimates for facility construction. • Gain approval of conceptual drawings from the Kootenai community, Council and Tribal Maintenance Program. • Seek grants and other funding for construction. • With Council approval of facility financing, construct or remodel facility.	CSKT Administration and Maintenance Programs	To be determined.	To be determined.	An upgraded center that is used by Tribal youth, families and others for healthy activities.
3, Develop basketball courts near baseball diamond west of Pablo Elementary School	Medium	• Obtain ownership verification • Obtain design and funding	Tribal Health	To be determined.	To be determined.	Outdoor basketball facility being used by the community.

GOAL 6: Research and Plan for the Best Use of Tribal and Reservation Assets, Aligned with the Cultural Values of the Seliš, Ksanka and Qlispe People

Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates and Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Explore, in partnership with grassroots community members, the development of a culturally based and community-driven substance abuse prevention/education/treatment/aftercare program.	High	- Identify housing options and locations. - Identify all resources and actions currently in place to assist the homeless and draft a Homelessness Response Plan. - Develop a strategy that includes hands-on job and life skill development while healing (both during treatment and after care). - Maintaining continuity of staff members working with individuals—trust is key! - Additional action steps to be determined.	Lead: SKHA, EDO, Tribal Defenders Office Others: Tribal Health Department, DHRD, Tribal Council, and other Homelessness Committee members (department staff)	Ongoing	HUD, CSKT	14 individuals have shelter and are working with counselors to improve their mental health and personal finance skills and recover from addiction as needed. A coordinated program that reduces the number of homeless Tribal members, babies born with addiction issues, and the number of children placed in foster care each year due to addicted parents. A sustainable wellness program that addresses education, prevention, treatment and after-care.
2. Update Comprehensive (Land Use and Natural) Resources Plan	Medium	Multiple steps are specific to this project, including mapping of Tribal commercial lots and government-use facilities.	Lead: CSKT Planning Director Others: NRD and Lands staff	2021-Ongoing	\$58,000; BIA compact and CSKT EDO funds	Completed update of two volumes containing 22 chapters.
3. Clean up S̄c̄il̄ip Agency and dumpsites for future use.	Medium	Complete the steps outlined in the recommended clean-up plan.	CSKT Brownfields, Solid and Hazardous Waste Program and Consultant	To be determined.	US EPA, MT DNRC	Land lease completed for the site.
4. Maintain and consolidate existing Tribal buildings to reduce long-range	Medium/High	- See steps outlined in the maintenance work plan. - Find funding to complete projects.	CSKT Maintenance Program, Executive Team	Ongoing	CSKT	Upgraded structures that result in energy and maintenance cost savings.

maintenance costs and improve energy efficiency.		Plan new structures, consolidating old buildings where possible, as long as funding permits and long-range maintenance and operational costs can be reduced.				
5. Support existing Tribal government revenue-producing programs and evaluate new program proposals, including review of land acquisition opportunities with housing development or revenue-producing potential.	Medium	- Provide business analysis where needed. - Assess revenue forecasts, risk assessment and mitigation, management and staffing requirements, etc. - Identify opportunities and constraints for land parcels. - Complete environmental and infrastructure analysis, land survey coordination, and develop a plan for newly acquired land parcels upon Council request.	Lead: Director of Tribal Services Others: CSKT EDO, S&K Business Services, Consultants	Ongoing	To be determined.	At least 3 programs, proposals, and/or opportunities reviewed per year.
6. As funds are available, recommend Tribal Capital Fund investment in Tribal enterprises that are competitive and generate a profit and that prioritize land- and community-based culturally aligned objectives that provide jobs that factor in climate change and sustainability and possibly create marketable, value-added natural resources. based products.	Low	- Complete business plans, cash flow analysis, and due diligence - Consider the number of sustainable, livable wage jobs that could be created by the investment.	Project Proponent, CSKT Administration, EDO, Capital Fund Committee	Ongoing	Amounts vary; The proponent pays planning costs; review costs are covered by a portion of tribal program budgets.	Consistent implementation of Capital Fund policy.
7. Develop and Implement Tribal Ordinances Where Needed	Medium	Update Tribal Administrative Procedures Ordinance regarding former Executive Secretary's role	CSKT Legal Department			An updated Admin. Procedures Ordinance.

8. Continue to coordinate with other governmental entities regarding economic development and planning, including response to natural and man-made disasters and climate. Change	High	• Conduct monthly meetings of the Tribal Emergency Response Commission (TERC)/Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). • Implement the CSKT Emergency Operations Plan and pre-disaster mitigation plans as needed.	Lead: CSKT Disaster Emergency Services Coordinator Others: Lake County/Flathead Reservation TERC/LEPC Response Committee	Ongoing Ongoing	Part of Disaster Emergency Services Budget	CSKT and other local officials are prepared to respond to natural and man-made disasters, protecting the safety of the Reservation residents.
	High	• Update and Implement the Climate Change Strategic Plan	Climate Change Oversight Committee, including CSKT Culture Preservation Office, EDO, Forestry, Lands, Natural Resources Depts., Mission Valley Power	Ongoing	See Plan – some to be determined.	A strategy for protecting the most vulnerable cultural and life-sustaining resources.
	Medium	• As a board member, participate in Mission West Community Development Partners board meetings to ensure proposed projects support Tribal economic development goals and Tribal member entrepreneurs. Expand partnership to track non-Tribal economic trends in the region and assess economic vulnerabilities. This could be accomplished during their CEDS update process every 5 years.	Tribal Council representative or staff member	Every 5 years during the Western Region CEDS update		Tribal member entrepreneurs are receiving free or low-cost training. The food processing center is assisting Tribal member agricultural producers to create value-added products.
	Medium	• As a board member, participate in Lake County Planning Board meetings to ensure proposed projects do not create a negative impact on Tribal resources and that county	CSKT Planning Director or appointed representative	Ongoing	Part of CSKT Economic Development	Sensitive lands and resources are protected, and new development is

		Land use regulations are consistent with Tribal ordinances/policy where possible.			Office or other Tribal Dept. Budget	utilizing existing infrastructure where capacity exists, maximizing the efficient use of infrastructure investments.
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GOAL 7: Develop a System that Maximizes the Flow of Money in the Local, Tribal Economy and Reduces Economic Leakage.						
Objectives	Priority Level	Action Steps	Responsible Individuals and Entities	Date To Be Completed	Cost Estimates & Funders	Measure(s) of success
1. Develop a Buy Indian/Buy Local Marketing Campaign	Medium-High	Work with the American Independent Business Alliance and Char-Koosta News to develop promotional materials.	CSKT EDO, SKBS	To be determined. (T.B.D.)	CSKT; NWAf; Montana Independent Business Alliance	Data collected from Tribal corporations and the Tribal government show an increase in purchases from on-reservation businesses, especially from Tribal vendors. The estimated overall percentage of economic leakage has decreased.

5 Evaluation AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In addition to the multiple measures of success listed in the action plan, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will continue to track the following:

1. **Job creation and retention.** The Tribal Economic Development Office annually tracks the number of jobs retained (and created) by each Tribal corporation, by Tribal government, and by those Tribal member business owners who start or expand a business and receive a small business grant from the Tribes.
2. **Infrastructure improvement and expansion.** This will be documented with regard to:
 - a. Increased capacity for new or existing businesses and housing (measured by the number of additional units that could be served by sewer, water, and new road projects)
 - b. Improved air quality with new pavement versus dusty gravel roads (# of miles paved)
 - c. Improved safety with bridge reconstruction (# of bridges reconstructed)
 - d. Enhanced recreational activities with sidewalks and bicycle/pedestrian paths in areas where none previously existed (#of miles built)
3. **Entrepreneurial resources.** The Tribes will track the number and types of services provided to entrepreneurs, such as training classes and number of participants served; the number and dollar amounts of grants provided; the number and dollar amounts of loans provided; the number of Tribal member-owned businesses registered with the Indian Preference Office; and so on.
4. **Worker training and increases in earnings and wages.** This will be measured by the number of job training classes, internships, and apprenticeships provided and participants served and any increase in American Indian/Alaska Native household income on the reservation.
5. **Education attainment.** This will be measured by high school and college graduation numbers and the numbers of training certifications awarded.
6. **Community health.** Lower numbers of Tribal members with diabetes and heart disease, a decrease in the number of babies born to drug-addicted parents, a decrease in the number of children placed in foster care, lower incarceration rates, an increase in the number of people participating in healthy community events—these numbers would indicate improvement in the health of the community.
7. **Environmental and cultural resource protection.** The Tribal Natural Resources, Forestry, and Historic Preservation departments have several performance measures that they track annually.

The Tribes will also report additional trends as needed to meet the objectives listed in the action plan.

6 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Economic resilience is a community's ability to withstand or avoid a major disruption to the area economy. Disruptions can be a major downturn in the following:

- locally produced goods or services
- consumer spending
- a key industry or industries that play a large role in the regional

economy other disruptions could be:

- a natural or human-caused disaster, such as wildfire, floods, drought, or a pandemic
- the impacts of climate change
- closure of a major company and the resulting loss of employment

To respond to these disruptions or shocks to the Reservation economy, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' economic development entities and emergency response staff members must consider two types of initiatives:

- steady-state or long-term initiatives that help the community withstand an economic disruption, and
- responsive initiatives that improve a community's ability to recover after a disaster or economic shock

6.1 STEADY-STATE OR LONG-TERM INITIATIVES

6.1.1 CSKT CEDS, COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCES PLAN, AND PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN

The development of this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) includes long-range objectives to address economic sustainability. As noted previously, the Tribes are in the process of updating the Comprehensive Resources Plan as well as a climate change adaptation plan and met with Tribal members and local, state, and federal entities to update the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for the Reservation. This work integrates Tribal planning activities on the reservation related to economic development, land use, natural resources, and disaster and emergency response.

6.1.2 DIVERSIFICATION AND STABILITY

Promoting entrepreneurship, food sovereignty, infrastructure improvements, sustainable housing and commercial development, and activities related to culturally appropriate tourism are some of the ways that the Tribes are working to expand the diversity of the reservation economy. Management of a major hydropower generation facility, the Reservation electric utility, Eagle Bank, and the Tribes' other corporations and revenue-producing programs rounds out this diversity.

Development of a food sovereignty plan and system, exploring sustainable housing development, expanding alternative means of transportation and communication, promoting energy conservation, and managing the power generation and distribution systems of the Reservation all work to promote economic stability.

6.1.3 WORKER RESILIENCY

Workforce training that strengthens general job skills is a key focus of CSKT. The results of the 2014 Job and Training Needs Survey of the Tribal membership guided development of a training initiative that began in 2016. It includes two training tracks:

1. Entrepreneur training (business planning, accounting, marketing, and more). These skills can be transferred to any business operation.
2. Worker training (computer literacy, customer service, financial literacy, and more). Tribal and local vocational rehabilitation programs also provide training for workers transitioning from one industry to another.

6.1.4 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND EARLY WARNING TOOLS

Tribal geographic information system (GIS) data has been developed to map areas that occasionally or frequently flood, so we can avoid those areas for future development. GIS is also used to map steep slopes, wetlands, prime farmlands, critical wildlife habitats, scenic areas, and more that also guide development away from potential hazards or sensitive lands or lands needed for agriculture or subsistence hunting.

Maps have been created that show areas that would be flooded if any one of the several dams located on the Reservation were to break. An early warning system has been developed for emergency response personnel to contact individuals living in an area that could be impacted. The Tribes also use GIS for mapping areas with severe wildland fire potential and other purposes.

Maps are also being created to identify existing and potential development sites.

An economic scorecard has been developed by the Tribal Economic Development Office to track Tribal corporation employment and return on investment trends to assist in assessing the Reservation economy as affected by Tribal enterprises. The scorecard also tracks total purchases from Tribal vendors to keep money circulating within the local economy. Work could be expanded in partnership with the Lake County Community Development Corporation to track non-Tribal economic trends in the region and assess economic vulnerabilities. This could be accomplished during their CEDS update process every 5 years.

6.1.5 TELECOMMUNICATION AND BROADBAND NETWORK REDUNDANCY

Access Communications (formerly the Ronan Telephone Company) serves the majority of the Tribes' government buildings, health and safety services, and many residential and commercial ones.

areas on the reservation. Blackfoot Telephone provides residential and commercial services at the south end of the reservation, and CenturyLink provides services to Polson and other areas. Access Communications recently installed new fiber optic lines to provide greater redundancy within their system on the Reservation, and CSKT recently installed four new communications towers. Redundancy allows for uninterrupted telecommunication and internet services for internet users should damage occur on one of the lines.

6.1.6 PROMOTION

Promotion of the reservation is a double-edged sword when the Tribal population is currently outnumbered by non-tribal people. While the Tribes are the main economic driver within the community and continue to promote this fact in a positive light, there remains a small group of vocal individuals who ignore Tribal sovereignty and the positive contributions that the CSKT brings to this special place—the last remaining homeland of three tribes. Attracting more people to the Reservation who do not understand or respect Tribal sovereignty and cultural and natural resource values can be a detriment to Tribal goals. The Tribes will continue to protect and promote the outstanding cultural and natural resource qualities of the Reservation, but the extent of this promotion to outside entities can only be done with utmost care.

6.2 RESPONSIVE INITIATIVES AND INFORMATION NETWORKS

As mentioned previously in this document, the Tribes have a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan in place, as well as an Emergency Operations Plan. These plans define key personnel, roles and responsibilities, and the actions that need to be taken during an emergency.

The Tribal Disaster Emergency Services Manager and the Lake, Sanders, and Flathead Counties Emergency Management Coordinators meet regularly to discuss emergency responses. The Tribal and Lake County managers co-chair a Unified Command Center/Committee that has been meeting weekly with the Mission Valley Power general manager, government officials, and others during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Emergency Services Manager and Coordinators implement the Emergency Operations Plan and, as part of the Unified Command Center, address emergency response to the pandemic, including office closure recommendations, locations of sites for individuals to quarantine, coordinating vaccine and testing events, and coordinating with health care providers. They provide sand and bags at various locations when they anticipate flooding events and plan other emergency response events as needed, including evacuations and sheltering.

These entities also work together with the Tribes' Natural Resource and fire control staff to coordinate impact assessments related to floods, drought, wildland fire, and recovery and mitigation planning.

Local chambers of commerce exist in four Reservation communities. The Tribes sponsor an annual meeting with all tribal corporations and, after the pandemic ends, will resume annual meetings with Tribal member business owners.

6.2.1 POST-DISASTER PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND RECOVERY

The Western Rural Development Region (WRDR) in Montana, in which much of the reservation lies, has an updated CEDS document that lists post-disaster planning and implementation tasks. The Lake County Community Development Corporation, newly renamed Mission West Community Development Partners, pledges to assist the Tribes and communities within the region with the following tasks:

- “Assess the nature and magnitude of the disaster
- Assess the impact on local and regional economies (business, industry sectors, labor market, etc.).
- Assess the impact on transportation and public infrastructure.
- Assess the impact on housing, schools, and health care facilities.
- Develop and/or implement a recovery timeline.”

Recovery activities would be listed and prioritized. Government and private sector resources would be identified, roles and responsibilities established, and timelines estimated to accomplish each task according to recovery benchmarks.

The 2020 update of the WRDR CEDS states that “the best way to build resiliency to disasters is to direct future development to safe locations” and away from hazard areas (such as fault lines or areas that frequently or occasionally flood). While this is already being done by CSKT to some extent with regard to the location of new development, CSKT should consider development and enforcement of building codes and setback requirements (in addition to building standards already in place) to protect from earthquakes, flooding, wildfire, and other disasters.

The WRDR CEDS notes that:

The ability of a local economy to rebound after a disaster (resiliency) dictates the success of the community’s long-term recovery (sustainability). The return of jobs, tourism, capital investments, and other indicators of economic health is dependent upon housing recovery, infrastructure restoration, environmental restoration, and social service provision. The involvement of the private sector in the post-disaster planning process is imperative for determining the priorities and actions that will be beneficial to restoring the local economy. Consideration must be given to the different obstacles that could potentially hinder economic recovery, such as access to transportation corridors that provide for the movement of goods and services, both imported and exported; those that small businesses will face in keeping doors open and maintaining employees; decisions large employers will have to make about whether to relocate; opportunities for sustainable diversification of the economic base; and job training and workforce recruitment needed to meet altered market conditions after a major disaster.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CSKT have worked closely with Tribal corporations to ensure employment stability, encouraging telework where possible; investment in and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and other measures to reduce the spread of the virus, such as through social distancing, electronic instead of in-person meetings, and requiring employees and visitors to sign in and get a temperature reading before being allowed entrance to Tribal headquarters. Weekly communication with major Tribal employers was required during the first several months of the pandemic to gauge the severity of any financial setbacks. Federal PPP loans kept some of these corporations afloat, especially S&K Gaming, LLC.

Unfortunately, “small businesses are more likely than large businesses to either never reopen after a major disaster or fail shortly after reopening.” Several factors may be involved in these failures, including the extent of damage to a community, timing of reopening, and lack of financial reserves.” (WRDR CEDS, 2020) During the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants, bars, caterers, art galleries, casinos, and cattle producers were hit hard during closures. Tribal grants and loans, as well as low-interest and reimbursable loans offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), can and have helped businesses recover from disasters to some extent.

But depending on the type of business and the type of disaster, not every business can survive. Technical assistance provided by the SBA, SKC, CSKT, S&K Business Services, and local non-profit community development corporations is also important for business recovery or restructuring. Disasters can affect customer demand for certain products or services, and some businesses may want to re-think their business plans to adapt to changing consumer demand.

Support for the workforce is also critical, such as ensuring the availability of childcare, housing, access to elementary and high school education for children, and access to information about reopening plans. Some workers may be displaced due to a disaster if their jobs are not considered essential or can no longer be sustained due to a downturn in the industry in which they work. Workforce training programs are vital to provide new skills for displaced workers so they can find work in sustainable or growing industries during and after a disaster.

“Ideally, essential service businesses that are less vulnerable to disasters should be integrated into ongoing economic development activities. Industries targeted for attraction and incentive programs after a disaster should be those that will provide a more disaster-resilient and sustainable economy for the community and are appropriate for the post-disaster circumstances.” (WRDR CEDS, 2020 update)

Community infrastructure must also be maintained prior to, during, and after a disaster—to keep communication and supply lines open; evacuation routes open; and access to health care, police and fire protection, and other emergency services maintained. Maintenance of roads, bridges, airports, communications towers, power facilities, emergency services facilities, and equipment is essential for disaster mitigation and recovery. Capital reserves are important for unexpected or extreme situations—such as when a major access road washes out or an evacuation must be conducted on short notice.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities is also essential, especially during a health emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Essentially, planning ahead for potential emergencies stemming from a natural or man-made disaster is critical. Utilizing and building upon the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and other emergency operations plans will help the reservation community become more prepared and more resilient. Inter-agency and inter-governmental communication and cooperation are required for economic survival.

7 APPENDIX 1: FLATHEAD RESERVATION POPULATION BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The following tables show where Reservation residents lived at the time of the 2010 Census. It is important to note that the first table only describes the locations of those individuals who identified themselves as AI/AN alone in the 2010 census and does not include the additional 2,096 individuals who identified themselves as AI/AN in combination with other races.

American Indian and Total Population for Flathead Reservation and Related Areas

Geography	American Indian Population					
	Census		% Change	Estimate		% Change
	2000	2010	2000-2010	2011	2012	2011-2012
Flathead Reservation	6,999	7,042	0.61%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Flathead County	864	1,068	23.61%	1,142	1,141	-0.09%
Niarada CDP**	17	10	-41.18%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake County	6,371	6,395	0.38%	6,472	6,671	3.07%
Arllee CDP*	301	304	1.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Big Arm CDP*	40	75	87.50%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlo CDP*	78	32	-58.97%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dayton CDP*	3	10	233.33%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmo CDP*	97	134	38.14%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Finley Point CDP*	69	59	-14.49%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Jette CDP*	10	19	90.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kerr CDP*	3	7	133.33%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kicking Horse CDP*	37	92	148.65%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kings Point CDP*	14	7	-50.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pablo CDP*	928	1,287	38.69%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Polson	651	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ravalli CDP*	33	7	-78.79%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rocky Point CDP*	1	5	400.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ronan	599	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
St. Ignatius	352	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Turtle Lake CDP*	173	150	-13.29%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Missoula County	2,230	2,952	32.38%	3,012	3,007	-0.17%
Evato CDP*	147	146	-0.68%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sanders County	487	511	4.93%	516	485	-6.01%
Dixon CDP*	44	41	-6.82%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hot Springs	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
LonePine CDP*	7	5	-28.57%	n/a	n/a	n/a

American Indian and Total Population for Flathead Reservation and Related Areas (continued)

	Total Population					
	Census		% Change	Estimate		% Change
Geography	2000	2010	2000-2010	2011	2012	2011-2012
Flathead Reservation	26,172	28359	8.36%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Flathead County	74,774	90928	21.60%	91301	91663	0.40%
Niarada CDP**	50	27	-46.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lake County	26,588	28746	8.12%	28947	28986	0.13%
Arlee CDP*	602	636	5.65%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Big Arm CDP*	131	177	35.11%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlo CDP*	439	379	-13.67%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dayton CDP*	95	84	-11.58%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmo CDP*	143	180	25.87%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Finley Point CDP*	493	480	-2.64%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Jette CDP*	267	253	-5.24%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kerr CDP*	17	251	1376.47%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kicking Horse CDP*	80	286	257.50%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kings Point CDP*	169	151	-10.65%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pablo CDP*	1,814	2254	24.26%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Polson	4,041	4488	11.06%	4588	4585	-0.07%
Ravalli CDP*	119	76	-36.13%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rocky Point CDP*	107	97	-9.35%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ronan	1,812	1871	3.26%	1912	1912	0.00%
St. Ignatius	788	842	6.85%	850	852	0.24%
Turtle Lake CDP*	194	209	7.73%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Missoula County	96,178	109299	13.64%	110138	110977	0.76%
Evandro CDP*	329	322	-2.13%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sanders County	10,287	11413	10.95%	11440	11408	-0.28%
Dixon CDP*	216	203	-6.02%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hot Springs	531	544	2.45%	552	553	0.18%
LonePine CDP*	137	162	18.25%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

n/a = Not available

CDP = Census designated places. CDPs are delineated for each decennial census as the statistical counterparts of incorporated places. CDPs are delineated to provide data for settled concentrations of population that are identifiable by name but are not legally incorporated under the laws of the state in which they are located. The boundaries usually are defined in cooperation with local and tribal officials. These boundaries, which usually coincide with visible features or the boundary of an adjacent incorporated place or other legal entity boundary, have no legal status, nor do these places have officials elected to serve traditional municipal functions.