

INFORMATION ITEM

House Purchase in Montana Western's Approved Acquisition Zone
University of Montana Western

**Legal Description: Parcel B, Benson Minor Subdivision, Section 19, Townsite 7 South, Range 8 West,
Beaverhead County, Montana**

Montana Western is proposing the purchase of a house on 1.77 acres (see legal description above). This triangle shaped property borders campus on two sides and a neighboring hay field on the other side. It is one of two properties left to purchase in Montana Western's approved acquisition zone.

The original 4.63 acre plat was a single owner property with a private access road at the end of Cornell Street. It was subdivided in 1994 into a 1.77 acre lot with the house and carport (Parcel B) and a 2.86 acre lot with a storage shed (Parcel A). It is not in the city limits and the 1.77 acre lot and home are serviced by a septic system and well. The access road divides the lots and is used by both owners.

In 1998, Montana Western purchased Parcel A. This property, at the end of the city street adjacent to Montana Western's dormitories, has been critical not only for future growth, but currently for storage, overflow parking, a wellness fitness course, and the sustainable student and community gardens, which are part of greening the campus. The gardens are also a critical piece of the botany program under Experience One. Parcel B, which sits between Montana Western owned-Parcel A and the campus dormitories and parking lots, is not conducive for either party as a private non-campus residence.

The proposed purchase not only will provide space for the eventuality of requiring more residence halls and parking but can provide an immediate benefit in several ways. The fire access road between Cornell Street through the dorm complex to the PE Building is in poor condition. This access road has been included in Montana Western's Long Range Building request as a health and safety issue for several bienniums. The appropriate fix would be a new road through the current property line of Parcel B and the dormitory parking lot. Another current safety use would be for the on-campus equine science classes. These classes require bringing horses to campus for laboratory activities. Students and faculty currently drive trailers and drop off horses in an alley by a restaurant and day care next to campus, which requires turning trailers on a city street. Parcel B would allow the appropriate space for the day labs and much safer horse trailer access and turnaround. Additionally, once the entire property, Parcels A and B, belong to Montana Western, we can also address the critical storage need on campus and develop a greenhouse for the botany program.

We are currently pursuing the required appraisals and working with the owner to negotiate a sale. Montana Western's proposed purchase would not exceed \$200,000 and the debt would be serviced through rental income from the current house and property use fees/rent. If approved, the purchase would be financed through being rolled into a University of Montana revenue bond issue or through an InterCap loan.