



MISSOULA CONSOLIDATED PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes



Missoula County
Planning, Development & Sustainability
(406) 258-4657

City of Missoula
Community Planning, Development & Innovation
(406) 552-6630

Date: January 20, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

Location: Missoula County Courthouse, Sophie Moiese Room (in person) or TEAMS (virtually)

Members in Attendance: Josh Schroeder (Conservation District), Rick Hall (County Appt), Tung Pham (Mayor), Danny Tenenbaum (City Alternate), and Shane Morrissey (City Appt)

Members Absent: James Fountain (County Alternate), Danny Oberweiser (County Appt)

I. CALL TO ORDER [Time stamp – 0:07]

Shane Morrissey called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL [Time stamp – 0:13]

Analeshia Rodriguez called the roll. Four regular members and one alternate were present. City Alternate, Danny Tenenbaum, was promoted to voting member for the evening. It was noted he was appointed as Vice President in the prior meeting. A quorum was met.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES [Time stamp – 1:10]

Danny Tenenbaum moved, and Tung Pham seconded approval of the December 2, 2025, December 4, 2025, December 9, 2025 and December 16, 2025 minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS [Time stamp – 2:35]

Peggy Miller addressed the Planning Board with concern about the capacity of Missoula's aquifer water supply. She emphasized the need for an aquifer water supply study to better understand the water resources that are being drawn from our river systems. She cited examples from other communities where data centers have strained their water supply and energy demands. She explained that County and City staff officials need to contact USGS in order to get a cost estimate for an aquifer supply study and find state funding resources.

Mark Metzger expressed safety concerns regarding the entrance to the Blackfoot Crossing site at Cowboy Drive. He noted that ongoing excavation activity at the intersection poses a potential hazard to pedestrians.

V. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS [Time stamp – 16:08]

There were no staff announcements.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Kathleen Arthur, Planner II, Missoula County Planning, Development & Sustainability, Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront project – Growth Policy Amendment and Rezoning [**Time stamp – 16:15**]

STAFF PRESENTATION

Kathleen Arthur, Planner II, with Missoula County Planning, Development & Sustainability presented a proposal submitted by Gregory Morse of Blackfoot Crossing LLC, requesting a growth policy amendment and rezoning of property located at 8129 Cowboy Trail in the West Riverside neighborhood. Kathleen stated that the subject property consists of 107 acres located south of the West Riverside neighborhood, bordered by the Blackfoot River to the south, Highway 200 to the west, and public lands to the east. The site previously was used as a Stimson Lumber Company log yard, which closed operations in 2008, and has remained vacant.

It was explained that the current land use designation is Heavy Industrial Center, with a small northeastern portion designated Working Lands. The property is also located within a Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD). Kathleen noted that there is an existing closed, capped landfill on site consisting primarily of wood waste from prior industrial use, a small floodplain area along the Blackfoot River, and steep slopes on the eastern portion of the property.

The applicant is requesting a growth policy amendment to change the land use designations on the property:

- 20.3 acres to Commercial Center
- 41.1 acres to Neighborhood Commercial
- 14.8 acres to Resource and Recreation, and
- 30.8 acres to remain unchanged (Industrial and Working Lands)

The proposed rezoning would align with the land use designations being proposed.

Kathleen explained that staff's review focused on the Growth Policy and rezoning criteria, but highlighted key elements of the development proposal. She shared that the applicant has proposed a new water and sewer system to serve the development and be expandable to surrounding areas in the future, while clarifying that the surrounding neighborhood will not be required to connect. Kathleen also noted that the proposed Neighborhood Center land use designation requires a minimum density of eight homes per acre, and that the proposed water and sewer infrastructure is needed to attain the required density.

Staff presented a review of how the proposal complies with Chapter 8 of the Missoula County Growth Policy. She provided an overview of each proposed land use designation and explained how each aligns with goals and objectives of the Growth Policy. The Commercial Center land use designation is appropriate due to the property's location at a major regional transportation junction and supports the variety of uses allowed in the zone. While the applicant has proposed a travel plaza, staff noted that the Commercial Center designation allows for less hazardous and intensive uses than the existing Heavy Industrial designation, making it more appropriate given the site's proximity to residential communities and natural resources. Staff added that the designation is consistent with the Growth Policy due to highway corridor and transit access, the property's location within a TEDD District, the allowance for diverse housing types, and the proposal's development of infrastructure improvements to support the surrounding area and uses being proposed.

Staff described the proposal as including a mix of housing types. The Neighborhood Center designation is proposed for the majority of the site and is intended primarily for residential development. The development is designed to have a similar layout and be connected to the West Riverside community. It was noted that public comment has been supportive of residential and neighborhood-scale commercial development on the property.

Staff stated that the Open Resource and Recreation designation along the Blackfoot River would preserve and protect the riparian corridor, limit future development, and enhance public recreational access. They reported that public comment strongly supported the protection of open space and the enhancement of recreational opportunities. Staff further noted that development within the Working Lands designation would be limited due to site topography, which would preserve open space and protect views.

Kathleen stated that the proposal is consistent with and strongly supports several goals of the Missoula County Growth Policy. She highlighted that the West Riverside area was identified as a location most appropriate for expansion due to its transportation connectivity, walkability, neighborhood amenities, and community support for housing and land use changes. It was noted that the proposed land use designations and associated rezoning help compact development patterns, increase housing supply and diversity, support infrastructure planning, and emphasize neighborhood character and quality of life.

Kathleen summarized public feedback received on the project. Supportive comments included affordable housing, community-oriented commercial uses, trails and open space, a transition away from heavy industrial land use, development of a new wastewater system unaffiliated with the City and growth in the local student population. Opposition and concerns focused on the proposed travel plaza, increased traffic, potential high-density development, impacts on housing costs, changes to neighborhood character, and potential effects on groundwater supply and existing wells. In response to concerns regarding the travel plaza, staff explained that any future proposal would be evaluated through future development review, noting that any proposal would be subject to site development standards intended to mitigate impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. It was added that zoning regulations would limit traffic intensity, parking regulations would require screening, buffering, and landscaping, signage would be limited, and traffic studies would be conducted with mitigation measures required. Staff concluded by stating that agency review has been completed. The applicant continues to coordinate with reviewing agencies as the proposal moves forward, and no agency comments were submitted in opposition to the proposal.

DEVELOPER PRESENTATION [Time stamp – 36:03]

Jamie Erbacher, with WGM Group, and Gregory (Greg) Morse, representing Blackfoot Crossing LLC, presented an overview of the proposal and project background. Greg emphasized that the proposal is a community-developed project rather than a private equity project, and incorporates public feedback from the community. He described the project's community engagement efforts and also highlighted ongoing coordination with trail organizations to improve trail connectivity in the area.

Jamie clarified that the address 8129 Cowboy Trail refers to the inholding site containing the existing building and is not included in the proposed Growth Policy amendment or rezoning area. Greg stated that community feedback consistently supported reducing the scale of heavy industrial uses near residential neighborhoods, public lands, the Blackfoot River, and favored a transition toward mixed residential and commercial uses. He further explained that water and wastewater infrastructure limitations were being addressed through coordination with the

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), noting that a proposed public water system could serve the project and provide future connections to the surrounding community, with infrastructure investment supported by the site's designation as a TEDD. Greg expressed his support for delivering neighborhood-scale, attainable missing middle housing on the site. He described proposed public access improvements, including a trail easement connecting the east and west sections of Milltown State Park and public access easements that will connect to trails to U.S. Forest Service lands.

Jamie described how the proposal will retain entitlement for Blackfoot Crossing Phase One, which was the former West Bonner Log Yard Industrial Subdivision and consist of six lots, while the remainder of the property will be a five-lot minor subdivision. She noted that the project is currently on the final plat review for Phase One, followed by the requested growth policy amendment and zoning changes, infrastructure development, and eventually the residential subdivision. She also stated that the project is under DEQ review for a new public water and sewer system and that approvals are close to completion.

It was stated that the existing zoning designations extend to the Blackfoot River and the West Riverside neighborhood and do not reflect the current site conditions or protect the natural habitat. Jamie explained that the proposed growth policy amendments would align land use designations with future property boundaries. An Industrial Center designation is proposed adjacent to the West Riverside neighborhood to align with existing light industrial zoning. A Neighborhood Center designation is proposed for four future subdivision lots to support townhome-exempt residential development. Open Resource and Recreation designations are retained along the Blackfoot River to protect riparian habitat and provide buffering and recreation opportunities. Jamie added the Working Lands designation will be expanded to correspond with the future subdivision property boundaries.

For the proposed zoning, Jamie stated that industrial zoning would be retained in the northwest corner of the property. She explained that adequate buffering would be provided through the existing berm and no-build zone. She added that no development is planned within the Resource and Open Lands designation. Jamie then discussed the Commercial Center zoning proposed along the Highway 200 corridor. She explained that this designation allows a broader range of commercial uses and does have larger building size allowances.

Greg explained to the Board why Neighborhood Center zoning or Industrial Center Light was not proposed in place of Commercial Center. He clarified that community feedback indicated a need for more than small-scale commercial uses, including a grocery store, which would be restricted by Neighborhood Center building size limitations. He noted that major utility services, including a wastewater treatment facility, are not permitted in the Neighborhood Center district. He also addressed that residential uses and other community-serving uses are not allowed in the Industrial Center Light zoning district, which would conflict with the community goals for attainable housing.

It was highlighted that the subject property is located within a TEDD, and that TEDD funding is necessary to fund the infrastructure to support the project and for the development of housing and jobs. Jamie noted that the proposed travel plaza would contribute significantly to the district's tax base and would be located at the southern end of the site, farthest from neighboring residential development, with a berm providing visual screening. She stated that both the Missoula County Growth Policy and the Bonner West Log Yard TEDD Plan identify the property as infrastructure-deficient, and that this is the third ownership since the district's establishment and the first proposal to fully invest in public sewer and water infrastructure. She

reported that, if rezoned and developed, a public membrane bioreactor (MBR) wastewater system would be constructed and could be expanded in the future to serve surrounding areas. Prior concerns regarding well placement near the West Riverside neighborhood have been addressed by relocating wells as far south as feasible. Additional open space would be dedicated along the Blackfoot River, and public trail easements would be established in support of the County Trails and Pathways Plan. Jamie stated that the proposed land use and zoning designations are intended to better align with Growth Policy goals, community feedback, and site constraints.

Jamie summarized the proposed amenities, including a landscaped berm along West Riverside, a pedestrian walkway along First Street, and intersection improvements at Cowboy Trail that may include a roundabout. She described the extension of a public trail easement along the Blackfoot River and the continuation of non-motorized public access easements. She addressed community concerns regarding the lack of a density cap within the Neighborhood Center zoning designation and reported that the applicant is proposing to voluntarily limit development on Neighborhood Center-zoned lots to a maximum of 400 residential units. She also discussed concerns related to the timing of DEQ approval for the public water and wastewater systems. Jamie concluded by noting that discussions are ongoing with Missoula County regarding the formation of a water and sewer district, which could initially be operated by the developer and later transferred to the County, as well as the potential use of a Rural Special Improvement District (RSID).

See PowerPoint presentation slides.

BOARD QUESTIONS [Time stamp – 01:13:44]

Planning Board members asked clarifying questions regarding why a portion of the property remained designated as Working Lands rather than Open Space. Greg explained that this designation is maintained to allow for utility infrastructure, noting that a water tank is proposed for the area and the zoning is required to permit this use. Another Board member asked for more clarification on the proposed MBR wastewater system.

PUBLIC COMMENT [Time stamp – 1:16:28]

- Gary Matson, a resident of the West Riverside Neighborhood, expressed support for the proposed Commercial Center land use designation for Lots 23 through 27, noting that commercial development on these lots would generate tax increment financing (TIF) needed to fund the proposed MBR wastewater treatment facility, which he stated is necessary for the project to proceed. He also supported the proposed Neighborhood Center designation for Lot 5-8, emphasizing the importance of providing affordable and sustainable housing, including the potential for rooftop solar installations. He noted that the new housing would help support enrollment at Bonner School.
- Brie Shulman, a Bonner West Riverside homeowner, expressed concerns regarding the environmental and infrastructure sustainability of the proposed development. She stated that she is concerned about the addition of a second travel plaza along Interstate 90 and the potential development of 400 housing units. She emphasized concerns related to water availability and aquifer sustainability, noting that the Blackfoot River and Clark Fork River are currently at historically low levels. She inquired whether local residents would have priority access to water if the water levels decline. She also asked whether water quality and potential toxin levels would be monitored following construction and development.

- Jessica Glebke, an alternate member of the Bonner-Milltown Community Council, stated the community council submitted a letter that neither supports nor opposes the proposal and that her remarks were made in a personal capacity. She explained that she and her husband own property directly across from the project site. She expressed concern that the proposed zoning could result in development patterns similar to East Missoula. She also acknowledged staff's mitigation measures for the proposed travel plaza but stated that existing highway and travel plaza impacts already affect neighborhood air quality, noise, and emissions. She commented that the proposed travel plaza site could limit opportunities for neighborhood-serving businesses. Jessica encouraged consideration of commercial uses that would better serve local residents. She also questioned the funding mechanisms of the project. She expressed concern that future change in ownership could result in unintended impacts for the community.
- Shannon Smallwood, a resident of West Riverside, expressed concern about the project's potential to significantly change the character of the neighborhood. She echoed Jessica Glebke's concerns and also raised questions about the future stewardship and maintenance of the proposed public open space and river access areas. She concluded by asking who would be responsible for managing and maintaining these areas.
- Kirsten Miller, Executive Director of Ecocity Builders, stated that the Blackfoot Crossing project represents an opportunity to align housing affordability, climate resilience, and environmental stewardship. She noted that repurposing this land for housing and neighborhood-scale commercial uses would help prevent sprawl, protect agricultural lands, and transform an underutilized area. She highlighted the proposed sustainability measures, including solar energy, heat pumps, high-efficiency appliances, advanced wastewater treatment, and the potential use of locally produced biochar. She emphasized the importance of water stewardship and concluded by expressing support for the requested zoning and approval of the project.
- Jim Howard, Superintendent of Bonner School, spoke in support of the Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront development, including the proposed Growth Policy amendment and rezoning. He stated that Bonner School's most current challenges are rising housing costs, which are forcing teachers and families out of the Bonner, Milltown, and West Riverside communities, leading to declining enrollment and budget strain. He emphasized that the proposed project would address these challenges by enabling attainable housing within the Bonner community, helping families remain local, increasing student enrollment, and supporting the future of Bonner School within the community. He highlighted the importance of the proposed wastewater infrastructure and further noted that the addition of neighborhood-serving commercial uses, such as a grocery store, retail, and community amenities, would create a walkable, self-sustaining neighborhood that serves the community. He encouraged the Planning Board to recommend approval of the plan as its proposed.
- Judy Matson, a resident of the West Riverside neighborhood, spoke in support of the proposed rezoning. She acknowledged neighbors' concerns regarding potential changes to neighborhood character but stated that the proposal is consistent with West Riverside's historic role in providing housing for working-class residents. She summarized the area's history and described the proposed workforce housing as a continuation of its past history. She expressed that she believes the neighborhood would still remain a small, vibrant community with continued access to public lands and amenities.

- Brie Schulman asked how developers would be held accountable to prior commitments regarding affordable housing after zoning changes and permit approvals are granted.
- Jane Kipp, Vice Chair of the Bonner Milltown Community Council, stated that her comments were being made in a personal capacity. She expressed concern that the proposed development could result in high water usage and emphasized that these uses could affect water resources for residents in the West Riverside and Milltown areas. She questioned whether these impacts are being considered with sufficient review.

BOARD DISCUSSION [Time stamp – 1:45:17]

The Board asked clarifying questions regarding the definition of workforce housing and the County's ability to enforce a density cap under the proposed zoning. Kathleen confirmed that the County does not regulate density beyond what is permitted within the applicable zoning district. Ian Varley, Planning Manager for Missoula County Planning, Development & Sustainability, clarified that deed restrictions may be used to limit density but must be established and enforced through private agreements.

Greg stated that his personal goal was to deliver the most attainable housing feasible in Montana. He explained that this goal was supported by several factors, including the conversion of the subject property from industrial to residential use and its location within the TEDD. He clarified that workforce housing is recognized as eligible public infrastructure under the TEDD. He described his intent is to focus on missing middle housing types, including single-family homes. Greg also explained that the zoning was intentionally selected to support attainable housing by allowing smaller lots, reduced setbacks, and greater flexibility, which wouldn't be possible under zoning districts with strict density caps. John Wilke, Housing Specialist with the Department of Community and Economic Development, responded to questions regarding workforce housing requirements within TEDDs.

Tung requested clarification on the subject property's existing zoning designations, and staff confirmed that if the proposed motion were to fail, the existing zoning would remain unchanged. Ian clarified that the 10,000-square-foot limit primarily applies to nonresidential buildings, such as retail or office uses, and can also apply to commercial structures, including grocery stores.

Clarifying questions were asked regarding the Commercial Center zoning designation, specifically how those uses could change if the property were sold in the future. It was also clarified that a travel plaza differs from a standard gas station in that it may include limited truck parking, which is still subject to zoning parking maximums tied to square footage of the building. Shane asked about the riverfront area of the property, specifically about its ownership, long-term management, and public access. Ian stated that the plan is for the land to remain private but would include a public access easement. Greg added that he is also actively exploring options for management of the easement, including discussions with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) regarding potential acceptance of the easement, as well as conversations with Missoula County as a potential alternative pathway to FWP.

Greg explained to the Board that the development holds significant water rights, enough to support the project. He expanded upon the DEQ permitting process and emphasized that the project will not utilize exempt wells. He stated that the project is pursuing a fully permitted public water system rather than individual wells and will be providing a higher level of water treatment than what currently exists in the community. He added that the wastewater system is expected to be owned or operated by a public water and sewer district, with the possibility of being transferred to Missoula County as a special district. Shane asked whether the number of

residential units or allowed uses could be limited by available water supply. Ian clarified that claims regarding diminished water quantity or quality are generally handled through a state-level process, initiated by the landowner. He explained that the County's role is limited primarily to monitoring the conditions and coordination. Jamie added that if a well is affected and a senior water right holder experiences impacts, that individual may file a complaint with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

RECOMMENDED MOTION [Time stamp – 2:25:00]

Danny Tenenbaum made the following motion to approve the request, and Tung Pham seconded the motion:

THAT the Missoula County zoning map be amended to show the properties legally described as S21, T13 N, R18 W, C.O.S. 6988, PARCEL TRACT 1B, ACRES 107.09 as Industrial Center Light, Commercial Center, Neighborhood Center, Agricultural Working Lands (AGW40), and Resource and Open Space, based on the findings of fact and conclusions contained in the staff report.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Rick shared with the Board that he is the Chair of the of the Bonner Milltown Community Council, but stated that he was speaking in the professional capacity as a planner. He explained that the neighborhood has expressed opposition to heavy industrial development on the subject property. He noted that the Bonner Milltown Community Council generally opposes the proposed travel plaza, but did acknowledge that smaller-scale commercial development would not generate a sufficient tax base to finance the proposed wastewater treatment facility. He emphasized that attainable and affordable housing is a community priority and expressed concern that many nearby properties rely on aging septic systems that may pose environmental and public health risks. He added the proposed wastewater system would allow for future connections and could reduce the likelihood of annexation into the City. Rick concluded by stating that he supports the proposal primarily due to the wastewater infrastructure and housing benefits.

Josh noted the proposal involves substantial upfront infrastructure costs, self-imposed residential density limits, environmentally sensitive areas, advanced wastewater treatment requirements, and significant open space with potential public access. He emphasized the applicant's stated goal of delivering attainable housing and explained that the project's economics may need to come from more intensive commercial land uses due to these factors. He stated that, compared to the property's existing Heavy Industrial zoning designation, he viewed the proposed zoning as an acceptable long-term outcome. He added that the travel plaza and commercial lots could help de-risk the project, support TIF funding, provide attainable housing, and he indicated his intent to support the motion.

Tenenbaum echoed prior comments from Board members and expressed appreciation for Judy Matson's public testimony, noting that her historical context was valuable in understanding the area's history. He also acknowledged the testimony of Jim Howard and shared concerns regarding declining school enrollment. He stated that he was not overly concerned about the proposed residential density and expressed support for the motion.

Tung stated that he intended to support the motion. He noted that, given the site's long-term vacancy and existing Heavy Industrial zoning, he supported moving the proposal forward to establish more appropriate zoning for the area.

Shane concluded the discussion by expressing support for both the Growth Policy amendment and the Zoning Map amendment. He stated that the proposal appears consistent with community goals and public feedback and emphasized that the Board's role is to review the proposed Growth Policy and zoning amendments, which he found to be appropriate.

VOTE

With no further discussion, the board voted by roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

AYES: (5): Tung Pham, Josh Schroeder, Rick Hall, Danny Tennebaum, Shane Morrissey

NAYS: (0):

RECOMMENDED MOTION [Time stamp – 2:40:20]

Danny Tenenbaum made the following motion to approve the request, and Tung Pham seconded the motion:

THAT the Missoula County Land Use Map (Map 18) be amended to assign the Commercial Center, Neighborhood Center, Open Resource and Recreation, Working Lands, and Heavy Industrial Center land use designations to the property legally described as S21, T13 N, R18 W, C.O.S. 6988, PARCEL TRACT 1B, ACRES 107.09, based on the findings of fact and conclusions contained in the staff report.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Josh stated that, based on his prior review of the existing industrial subdivision, several lots rely on wells located on adjacent properties to meet septic system setback requirements and maintain buildable areas. He explained that this arrangement is impractical for heavy industrial uses under the current zoning designation.

VOTE

With no further discussion, the board voted by roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

AYES: (5): Tung Pham, Josh Schroeder, Rick Hall, Danny Tennebaum, Shane Morrissey

NAYS: (0):

VII. COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS [Time stamp – 2:43:05]

There were no communications or special presentations.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS [Time stamp – 2:43:10]

Board member, Tung Pham, reported that the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) approved a letter of support for the City's BUILD grant application. The Committee optimized the language to align with the current federal administration. The TPCC also approved the FY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment.

IX. OLD BUSINESS [Time stamp – 2:43:39]

No old business was reported.

X. NEW BUSINESS [Time stamp – 2:43:44]

No new business was reported

XI. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS [Time stamp – 2:45:05]

Shane encouraged elected officials to review the concerns raised by Peggy Miller during non-agenda public comment. Board members noted that the County has previously addressed cryptocurrency mining and data center uses through zoning regulations. Josh pointed out the Wye Infrastructure Plan and its reliance on an outdated aquifer study and emphasized the importance of fully understanding the availability of basic resources when planning for future growth.

XII. ADJOURNMENT [Time stamp – 2:48:24]

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Missoula Consolidated Planning Board January 20, 2026 – Transcription

This transcription was produced by transcription software. There may be discrepancies between this transcription and meeting dialogue. You can view the recording of the meeting at this link:

<https://missoulacomt.portal.civicclerk.com/event/9795/media>

Missoula Consolidated Planning Board

January 20, 2026 -Meeting Recording

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 30:18

All right folks.

602 so we're gonna look to get started here.

So I will call the Tuesday, January 20th, 2026 Planning Board meeting to order and

Alicia may we have a roll call.

Please roll call tune from.

Here, Danny Tenenbaum here. Josh Schrader.

Danny oberweiser.

Danny is absent, recall.

RH **Richard Hall** 30:51

Here.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 30:53

James Fountain.

James is absent. Shane Morrissey.

Here, Mr. Chair, we have four regular member present Members present in one city
alternate present.

Would you like to appoint Danny T as voting member for the evening? And just as a
note that he was appointed as Vice President in the last meeting?

I guess I probably should and I need to.

And yes, please, we have met Quorum.

Great. We'll move along on our business.

We have next the approval of the Minutes from the December 2nd, December 4th
December 9th, December 16th 2025 minutes.

Assuming that everybody read these really thoroughly, these were really short
meetings that.

We all participated in.

Does anybody have any additions, comments, edits to the meeting minutes?

And hearing none.
Would somebody mind making a motion please?
I'll move to approve the Minutes.
Great. Thanks, Danny.
TA 2nd.
I'll second second by Tong and any discussion.
Hearing none, we'll just do an up and down vote.
All those in favor, please say aye or yes, aye.

JS Joshua Schroeder 32:37
Yes.

RH Richard Hall 32:39
Hi.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 32:39
Any opposed?
Any abstentions?
Hearing only yeas, motion passes.
We will move on to public comment on non agenda items and so for folks in our audience here tonight appreciate everybody coming out.
This is for items that are outside of the public agenda.
Outside of the public hearings.
So if you were here to comment on the plaque river crossing project, just please hold that for a quick couple of minutes until after the presentation.
But if you're here to comment on non agenda items.
And for our folks online and Alicia or Jill will hopefully get some call in instructions on screen.
Proceed. Just give me one second.
I'm gonna try to read out the call.
The call in instructions just so that we can get people in the queue if they're calling in online. So just give me one second, OK.
So if you're calling in online, the phone number is 406-272-4824.

The phone conference ID is 210974812 pound and you will press *5 to raise your hand and lower your hand and *6 to mute and unmute.

If you're just on team.

You can just simply raise your hand, and with that, we will.

Come in house, since we have a comment and just a reminder to please state your name for the record. Thank you.

Go ahead.

I'm Peggy Miller, 1520 S 7th St. West.

I'm a homeowner and an herb grower and a medical herbalist.

I was planning to come talk about this.

Maybe next month.

Because I've been concerned for sometimes I used to be a water supply, groundwater surface, water nonpoint source pollution expert.

In a prior work habit, but since being here I sort of didn't pay much attention to the aquifer.

But I was having growing concerns as I saw the population increase and as I asked questions about how much we know about our aquifer and.

We need a water supply study.

And the USGS.

It's based in Helena.

Their water monitoring team of hydro geologists, engineers, they are capable of doing this. I call them to say, what would it cost to do not only a water supply?

Study of total aggregate.

You know what's in the Bitterroot?

The Blackfoot and the Clark Fork.

That is our water supply that we draw from.

What's the aggregate amount?

What would it supply?

Total population you know possible, but also what are his weaknesses?

Because aquifers have, you know, shallow areas, areas that you tap, thinking they're a deep area and they're not.

They're a small aquifer etcetera.

The reason I came tonight.

Is because I learned about.

And you may already have been talking about this totally. And for that I apologize for taking any of your time.

But I learned about the data centers and what they're using water supply wise and that rural communities are starting to be in an uproar because, you know, the AI data centers that medium to large data centre, which could come in and apply.

To be in Bonner in the Edge building to be down in Hamilton.

Tender stevensville.

It uses the amount of water a town of 50,000 Missoula uses.

That's how much water one medium to large data center uses.

Hood River has run out of water.

They have four of them.

Google's over there.

Sioux Falls is now in a huge fight because they underestimate their water needs. They get in and.

And it's huge.

And their energy demands are huge.

When I saw that and knowing that the Bitterroot could easily be approached and you actually can't stop, that's a different county.

You know, they could put one in in Hamilton and they may not be totally aware.

So I kind of thought I need to come in at least say this.

And apologize if you totally already understand this, I didn't realize.

How serious a problem it was and that our aquifer? Because the Bitterroot flows into our Clark Fork?

The Blackfoot flows into the Clark Fork.

Potomac could put one in, could accept, you know, and you might not have realized.

I didn't know how much you knew about it.

I have references in the packet I gave you about data centers. I just learned today about the Sioux fall one that's now causing another whole thing.

So basically looking at that I thought OK, you can say no, you know based just on their history, they should be over on the coastline.

Doing their own desalinization water supply.

They dump their wastewater back into the system so they could clean that up

themselves and produce their own energy.

They should be centralized units, not disrupting areas, but in addition them aside, let's say we say no.

Population increases can slowly tamper into our water supply, so we just simply need to know.

How much is there?

Aggregate, but also where are its weaknesses.

They actually can know where underground debris walls are that cause weaknesses in the system so that areas don't run out so that you can know, OK, that Eric, we can't put anybody.

More there you know 640 unit should go over there.

You know it.

It's highly useful, USGS said.

They can do this, I said.

How much would it cost?

They said we can't tell you as a citizen, we need a public official like planning board or a City Council.

To ask us to ask us if you guys call and ask and I put his name on the cover.

Just 'cause he's, you know, long history, lot of knowledge works with geologists around the state.

He was willing to talk to me briefly.

And we talked about this, he said. We are concerned.

We are concerned. I expressed my concerns, he said. We are also concerned.

But they need to ask us, and we would have to create a model of, you know, OK, this what you want to know, you know, what's it going to cost with?

But he also felt there was state funding.

Yes, yes. Felt, you know, he said.

I want this gonna be.

I don't think they're gonna do this cause of the cost, he said.

There are pockets in the state for this kind of research.

And he said there's concern there's growing concern not only because of the data centers coming in, but just population.

The aquifers are are iffy here and and so I just wanted to come to you and basically

say ask you.

To call to call USGS in Hell.

They're based in Helena. It's the Montana, Wyoming.

Division and they've got a team of Hydrogeologists and engineers and they'll work with, you know, they'll work with you and we could get this done and it should include the Bitterroot because that feeds our aquifer.

Ravali also and I'll I'll wrap up here.

I know you're going.

On to another project, but it's he's a nice guy, very approachable, very knowledgeable. If you Google Rodney Caldwell, USGS, he pops right up, you know? And he said just ask him, get them to ask us and we can work with them. And and there can be, you know.

We can find funding for this, so it's it's really important that we know this as a group of people living here.

What our water.

System and for planners in particular.

So I hope you'll contact him.

Please feel free to contact me. I put my data on the the first page is just the map but the second page is my comments.

And it has my if you want to ask any other questions, I'm happy to talk about it.

But he's really the person to talk about, and in my comments I also do point out.

The things that, in my opinion, need to be in the study.

You know, you may also add something, but that's so thank you for listening.

I appreciate it.

I appreciate your time.

Thank you, miss Miller.

Anybody else in house wanting to make a comment on non agenda items tonight?

OK. We will go ahead and close our public comment on non agenda items and.

We.

We can maybe circle back to Miss Miller's comments towards the end of the meeting.

We as a planning board don't have a ton of power over those things.

Virtually no power at all other than recommendation power.

But hopefully somebody in the city and we know that the county is here, we'll hopefully pass on a message for us so.
We'll move on to staff announcements.

JS Joshua Schroeder 43:54

Shane, sorry to interrupt, Mr. Chairman. It just looked like we had another public commenter online possibly waving his hand.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 43:56

Yep, go ahead, Josh. Yeah.

I missed it, OK.

Sorry I missed it.

I will reopen public comment briefly and call on the gentleman with.

Physical hand raised.

I'm sorry I don't see a name, but go ahead.

NT No New Truck-Stop 44:20

Yeah, I just went to comment on the current safety of the intersection they put up.

Two new signs today basically saying watch out for trucks trucks coming through.

There's large dump trucks going through with trailers, with kids going through that intersection.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 44:45

Sir. Sir, can I just interrupt you for one quick second?

NT No New Truck-Stop 44:45

It's right.

Right next.

Sure.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 44:48

Could you say your name for the record?

NT No New Truck-Stop 44:50
Mark.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 44:51
OK, great.

NT No New Truck-Stop 44:53
Yeah, metzger.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 44:53
Last name please.
Great. Thank you.

NT No New Truck-Stop 44:58
Yeah. So my concern is not on an agenda right now.
Major excavations going on right there, they put up two signs today saying watch out for trucks. There's large trucks with large trailers coming in and out there all day today.
Kids ride their bikes without their parents.
Through that intersection, there's a State Park. There's trails right next to it.
Seems like it's already a, you know, safety concern.
So I just want to bring that up. Thanks a lot.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 45:33
Mark, can I ask?
I think I missed the portion of your comment where you were talking about.
Can I ask you for a clarification on where this was going on?

NT No New Truck-Stop 45:46
Oh, at the entrance to.
Insurance to Blackfoot crawl scene.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 45:54

OK.

Great. Thank you.

NT **No New Truck-Stop** 45:56

Yep, right at right at Cowboy Drive.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 46:17

Thank you for your comments. We will.

Close the public comment on the non agenda items and move on to staff announcements of which I don't believe we have any.

So we'll move into our public hearings for the evening or a public hearing for the evening. The Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront Project, the Growth policy amendment and rezoning, Kathleen Planner 2, with Missoula County Planning and development.

The County planning, development and sustainability will be presented.

Please go ahead.

My good here.

All right, my good evening.

My name is Kathleen Arthur and I'm a planner with the Missoula County Department of Planning, Development and Sustainability.

This evening I'll be presenting a proposal from Gregory Morse, a Blackfoot Crossing LLC, for a growth policy amendment and rezone of a property located at 8129 Cowboy Trail in the W Riverside neighborhood.

The property is approximately 107 acres and is located adjacent to and South of the W Riverside neighborhood.

It is bordered by the Blackfoot River to the South Hwy. 200 to the West, and public lands to the east.

The property was used as a log yard for the Stimson Lumber Company, which closed operations in 2008. The current land use designation is industrial center heavy with a small portion of working lands on the eastern portion.

This designation is due to the historical use as a log yard.

The property is also designated as a targeted economic development district.

These districts are intended to support economic development.

And growth through the development of infrastructure, this property was selected due to its proximity to I-90 and city of Missoula Infrastructure.

The property is currently vacant and has been for over a decade.

There is an existing closed capped landfill on site consisting mostly of wood waste that is leftover from previous industrial use.

There's a small portion of flood plain along the Blackfoot River, which abuts the property to the South. There are some steep slopes on the eastern portion.

The property is located at a major highway junction at I-90 and Hwy. 200.

The property is served by Mountain Lion Transit and the Bonner Streetcar Trail borders the property to the West.

The owner is requesting a growth policy amendment on the property.

Currently, the property is designated as Heavy Industrial Center with a small segment of working lands on the eastern portion.

The proposal would change the land use designations on the property from heavy industrial to 20.3 acres of commercial center, shown here in red 41.1 acres of neighborhood commercial shown in Pink 14.8 acres of resource and recreation shown in green and 30.

.8 Acres would remain unchanged.

This includes the industrial and working lands designations.

The proposal also requests the rezoning of the property. The existing zoning is primarily comprised of industrial center heavy.

There are also portions owned Industrial Center, light and agricultural working lands.

The proposed zoning would align with the land use designations also being proposed.

The proposed zoning districts are community commercial, Industrial Center, light, neighborhood, commercial resource and open lands and agriculture working lands.

And assessing the applicants proposal, staff analysis was primarily focused on the growth policy and rezone criteria. However, we feel it is important to highlight some features of the development proposal as they are essential components in our assessment of the proposed land use designations the applicant has proposed a.

Water and sewer system for the development. The system will be built so that it can be expanded to surrounding areas in the future.

Sure, hooking up to the system will not be a requirement for existing neighborhoods. The proposed land use designation of neighborhood center requires a minimum density of eight homes per acre. Without this infrastructure, attaining that density would not be possible.

Chapter 8 of the Missoula County Growth policy contains specific criteria that must be met by private parties seeking to amend the growth policy.

The purpose of the criteria review is to give a basis for the governing bodies determination if the proposal is consistent with the Missoula County Growth Policy and the 2019 Missoula Land use Element, the following slides will show an overview of each proposed land use designation.

And how they comply with the goals and objectives of the growth policy.

The Commercial center designation is appropriate due to a number of factors being located at a major regional transportation junction makes it well suited for the variety of uses allowed in the zone, many of which are listed here.

Auto oriented services, food and lodging are all potential uses allowed in this designation.

The developer has proposed a travel Plaza for the site that will be discussed later on.

The Community commercial land use designation allows for some intensive uses.

However, the current heavy industrial designation allows for hazardous intensive uses. The Community commercial designation is a much more appropriate designation due to its proximity to residential communities and natural resources.

The Commercial center designation is consistent with the growth policy due to many factors located on a major highway interchange at Hwy. 290, The use is allowed for in this designation would be appropriate.

A diversity of housing types will be allowed, increasing potential housing diversity as a designated Ted District, the development of commercial use as a goal for this area.

The proposal includes the development of infrastructure to support the uses.

Is being proposed and would also enhance the surrounding area.

Public comment has been supported of changing the land use designation on this lot. However, some recent responses to the proposed travel Plaza have been negative and we will discuss those.

The neighborhood center designation is being proposed for a bulk of the property, primarily for residential use.

The proposal calls for the development of a variety of housing and commercial development, including detached dwellings, multi family housing and neighborhood scale businesses.

The development of housing in this designation will have a similar layout and be connected to the neighboring W Riverside community.

Pathways, multimodal transportation infrastructure and community spaces are planned as well.

There are a variety of uses allowed in this designation that could serve the development and the surrounding community.

The neighborhood center designation is consistent with the growth policy. The location is appropriate due to its adjacency to the W Riverside community along with good access to a highway corridor and transit connectivity.

Medium density residential housing.

Available to own and rent is appropriate for this location and strongly supports the goals of the growth policy. As a designated Ted District, the development of commercial use.

This is also a goal for this area.

The proposal includes the development of infrastructure, including paths and multimodal streets, to enhance walkability and connectivity.

Public comment has been supportive of residential and commercial development on the property.

The open resource and recreation designation is being proposed for the corridor alongside the Blackfoot River.

This designation is appropriate as it preserves the riparian corridor along the river. It will also protect the corridor from future development and potentially enhance recreation for the public.

This designation at the at this location strongly aligns with many goals of the growth policy.

It will buffer the Blackfoot River from additional development in perpetuity, protect a wildlife corridor and preserve the riparian environment.

The proposal includes a public trail easement connecting the Bonner Street car trail and parking area on Anaconda Street, with public lands to the east.

Public comment strongly supports the enhancement of recreation opportunity.

And the protection of open space on the property.

The Working Lands designation is being proposed for the northeastern portion of the property. This area on the property is comprised of steep slopes and is surrounded by public lands. Development of this designation is limited and the topography of the site is also a limiting factor. This designation will.

Protect views and preserve open space.

The Working Lands designation will protect the steep slopes from development.

It will also preserve wildlife habitat and buffer the neighboring public lands.

The plan allows for increased public access to these lands, enhancing recreation opportunities. Public comments strongly supports the enhancement of recreation opportunity and open space for the property.

The proposal supports many of the goals outlined in the growth policy.

A few are very strongly supported and I would like to highlight them here.

Goal number one is to conserve vital natural resources, including surface and groundwater, air quality, agricultural resources, iconic landscapes, Fish and Wildlife species and their habitats, and native plant communities.

Goal two is to promote the responsible use and enjoyment of publicly owned land. Waters goal #8 proactively plan and provide for the logical growth of communities while protecting rural character and sustaining county resources by guiding development to areas most suited for it.

Goal #10 provide opportunities for a wide range of housing choices, especially for those who are homeless or experienced.

High costs for housing relative to income.

Goal #12 promote healthy active.

Communities, a thorough analysis of the proposal and all the growth policy goals is available in the staff report.

The Missoula County Land use element is amendment to the 2016 growth policy document.

It lays out actionable plans and strategies to implement the goals of the growth policy. It provides a plan for the physical framework needed to facilitate unique neighborhoods.

It aims to preserve working lands, agriculture areas and naturally functioning systems by accommodating planned growth in areas that have existing infrastructure.

And other growth capacity elements.

The W Riverside area has been identified as one of four locations most appropriate for expanding the physical framework needed to facilitate the development of unique neighborhoods.

In Missoula County, it is a neighborhood where essential elements of a livable community exist and could be expanded upon.

It has good transportation connectivity, high walkability, low hazard risk, a neighborhood school, and a district identity to expand upon.

The residents of W Riverside have expressed support for housing and a change in land use designation for the property. The primary hindrance to site development is the lack of sewer and water infrastructure, which is a key component of the applicant's proposal. The proposed land use designations for.

Property and the corresponding proposal facilitate key objectives in the land use element, including the building of compact development patterns, providing adequate area for housing supply, promoting a wide range of housing types, using infrastructure already in place, planning for new infrastructure and emphasizing character and quality of life.

The proposal includes a rezone of the property.

The proposed zoning will align with the proposed land use designations.

The review criteria for a zoning amendment are concentrated on alignment with the growth policy, public health and safety impacts on resources and the surrounding region, and congruence with surrounding zoning districts.

A comprehensive review of these criteria can be found in the staff report.

The proposed zoning is consistent with the proposed land use designations and therefore is made in accordance with the growth policy.

The proposed zoning is designed to secure safety from fire and other dangers, promote public health, public safety and general welfare, and facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements.

The zoning code implements the 2019.

Missoula area land use element, which considers the appropriate type and density of development based on location, site constraints and levels of infrastructure.

The zoning code includes bulk and dimensional requirements, landscape standards

and minimum lot size requirements. Per the descriptions in the land use element. Blackfoot Crossing LLC hosted 2 community engagement forums on February 4th and July 14th of 2025.

They attended the Bonner Milltown Community Council meetings and the proposal was posted on the Missoula County Voice page for public review and comment.

Legal advertisement announcing public meetings for the proposal were published in the MISSOULAIAN on January 6th and January 13th.

Legal notices were posted at the County Courthouse, the county administration building, the Missoula Post Office, The Bonner Post Office and on site at the property on Anaconda St. 1st St. and W Riverside Dr. adjacent property owners within 500 feet of the parcel were notified by mail on.

January 12.

Public feedback from these forums up to today's date can be summarized as follows. There was support for affordable housing, community oriented commercial space trails and open space on the property. Transition away from heavy industrial land use a new wastewater system unaffiliated with the city of Missoula, and growth of the student population in the school.

Opposition and concerns included development of the new travel Plaza, increase in traffic, potential high density.

We have new housing impacts on the cost of housing, changing character of the existing neighborhood and potential impact on groundwater supply and existing wells.

Due to the public comments in opposition to the proposed Travel Plaza, staff thought it would be important to address these concerns the best we can at this time.

We recognize the potential to assume the new Travel Plaza development would resemble the town pump across the highway.

There are many site development standards that will come into play once a development proposal is submitted.

These standards would mitigate the impacts of the travel Plaza on surrounding neighborhoods.

The zoning regulations would limit the amount of traffic and parking regulations would require screening, buffering and landscaping on the site.

Signage would be limited and traffic studies have been conducted and traffic mitigation will be required.

Request for agency comment has been completed.

The applicant has incorporated any recommendations and continues to work with agencies as the proposal progresses.

There were no agency comments in opposition to the proposal.

Great. Thanks, Kathleen.

Is there anybody from the developer side that wishes to provide?

A.

Presentation.

Jamie, if you could just say your name.

Greg, you can jump up here.

Yeah, I was at the interest moment.

All right.

Thank you for your time tonight and all of your time with the UDC.

I know that that's been a big lift for all of you, so I appreciate that. And Jamie Erbacher with WGM group, with me tonight is Greg Morris or Gregory Morris of Blackfoot Crossing LLC.

I'm gonna start out and let Greg kind of introduce the team a little bit and then I will jump back in and we're gonna kind of flip flop between our presentation here tonight.

Fantastic. I first of all wanted to say thank you to Kathleen and Ian for being up this effort from the county perspective.

Given also Jenny Dixon, who is I think out this month but and also to all the board members for volunteering your time to do these kinds of things. My name's Greg Morse.

I am a Montana resident.

I own property in Missoula, including this property.

I consider myself to be a public lands advocate.

I also am on a housing nonprofit board in in Bozeman where I reside.

I apologize in advance for my football team.

And I just wanted to sort of highlight that this is a community developed project.

This is not a private equity project.

This is a bunch of friends and family who got together, who saw a opportunity to help improve Missoula County. In my opinion, life is too short.

To approach things from the perspective of not being a good neighbor.

And I've done our best in going through this process to listen to as many people as possible and to incorporate as much feedback.

From people on that.

So I want that's a little background briefly about myself. Other members of the team include WGM, Jeff Smith and Jamie.

Move on to the next slide.

We did a tremendous amount of community engagement on this project.

I've been a very active supporter of community organizations.

We've been hosting hikes on the site 'cause right now the only way to access a lot of the trails in the area is by trespassing on our site, which we are trying to open up to the community as a public lands advocate. We've been having lots of meet.

With, with Bonner, Milltown Community Council, we partnered with them.

On a neighborhood cleanup for cleaning up trash in the area, we've worked with getting abandoned vehicles off W Riverside Drive.

We've reached out to the school district and Fire District and FWP and county and and are really just trying to be a good neighbor and to listen to as much feedback and incorporate as much feedback as possible into the organization.

But also one thing I wanted to highlight is we've been doing a lot of work to to connect trails.

In the area, there's.

A. So we've been talking with the Bitterroot Trail preservation allowance about trying to get trails that are extending out of the property.

So just a few of the things that were taking a look at.

Thanks Greg.

Jump back in for just a moment again. Jamie Erbacher WGM group.

So maybe just one quick clarification.

I know that Kathleen had referenced 8129 Cowboy Trail.

That's actually the in holding site where the existing building is located.

So just want you to all know that we are not rezoning or amending the growth policy for that property. The actual property that we are on is does not have an address as

of right now.

So as Kathleen mentioned, this was historically part of the Stimson Lumber Company property and operated.

As the log yard, the majority of the operations occurred South of the Blackfoot River. However, logs and millions were stored on the subject property after the mill shut down in 2008, ending roughly 122 years of continuous lumber production. The property sat vacant for years. In 2014, a new building was built, known as the Harris Ther.

And that's the building that's on this inholing property.

It's operated for a few years manufacturing custom thermal process equipment such as heat exchangers, pressure vessels and storage tanks.

This building, again while not on the subject property, is at the center of the subject. Property after Harris Thermal closed up shop, Flying Colors Group purchased the in holding property and the subject property. Mr. Wolfenden of Flying Colors Group subsequently leased the building.

To the TV production series, Yellowstone, who operated out of this building and used the surrounding grounds for production of that series.

During the time that Mister Wolfe and own the subject property and the inhaling lot, he worked with WGM to gain approval for the 28 Lot Industrial Subdivision. As we were in the early stages of working and preparing to file that final plat, the subject property sold to.

Blackfoot Crossing LLC.

Recognizing that the type of industrial uses that this property was zoned for was not ideal based on the market and the location brought Blackfoot crossing.

Contacted WGM and the local community to understand the market and.

The location and how they could develop a better vision for this property.

Over time, Greg with Black Rock Crossing recognized that he shared many of the same values and goals of the community.

So with that said, before we even considered purchasing the property, the first thing we started to do was to reach out to local community members to try to understand if what our vision for the property was in in line with what the Community's desires were and to.

That end, we got a lot of positive feedback.

Universally, we've heard that the scale of industrial uses next to a residential area and next to public lands, namely Bond and Milltown State Park.

Blackford river.

Was not a something people were excited about. As you may know, the heavy industrial district is basically designed for things that should not be placed next to these types of areas.

So we took that feedback and we also heard and and you'll see a a presentation from I think 2009 where the Community did a visioning session.

It looks a lot like the development we proposed, where it's a combination of mixed residential and commercial uses.

In order to make this work from a development perspective, we have to solve the sewer and water problem.

And to that end, we have been working very aggressively with Department of Environmental quality and local organizations to build a public water system in the area that's designed to serve our project, but also have the potential to be expanded to serve the surrounding community. For those of you.

Who? Don't know, the W Riverside neighborhood is the most dense concentration of septic and wells in the state of Montana.

It has between 4008 thousand square foot lots with wells in septic.

This is a problem.

A slow moving train wreck is the way I would describe it and.

Our installation of this water and sewer district will provide a path for those community members to be able to access water and wastewater at any point in the future. Only if they choose that this is not something that we intend or would be jammed down anybody's th.

But it will be the cheapest way to to solve that problem at a point in future.

And the reason that I'm particularly excited about the opportunity on the site is the westbanner logyard targeted Economic Development District has the capacity to help us build this infrastructure. Both the wastewater infrastructure, the water infrastructure and ultimately to be able to put infrastructure in place to reduce the. Cost of housing.

I did mention the fact that I'm on the Treasurer and executive Committee member of Family Promise of Montana.

Excuse me. Of Galvin Valley and Bozeman.

Attainable housing is the reason I get up in the morning every day.

It makes life a lot more interesting when you can approach and look at these kinds of things.

I am incredibly excited about the opportunity to deliver the most attainable housing we possibly can on the site, and to that end we are planning to build smaller neighborhood scale, missing building middle housing.

We're not talking about building leather golf course community on the site.

And then as a public lands advocate myself.

I am incredibly excited about making sure that there's a connection between the two sections of the honor Milltown State Park on the East and West property, which are currently separated by our property and and creating that trail easement along there. I'm also very excited about granting public access easements to the trails that go up to.

Into the US Forest Service land.

And so we've really done our best to try to incorporate a number of kind of key components to this project to satisfy both things that I think are the right thing to do, but also things that are consistent with what the Community has been asking for is this.

Project perfect. No, this project is not perfect.

There is there will, if everything was perfect.

No project would ever get built, but I feel like we've created.

A.

You know, a reasonable project that satisfies.

And provides a lot of positives for the community and that's, you know what our goal and objective is.

So getting to this, this vision that Craig, that Craig has just described, we recognize that we started with the West rivers or the excuse me, the West Bonner Log Yard subdivision as an industrial subdivision, we had entitlement rights for 28 lots.

We looked at that and we said could we just utilize that move forward and just amend the the growth policy and the zoning.

After talking with Greg, listening to some of the feedback that he had gained from the community, we decided that probably was not the best option.

To move forward with. So instead what we are going to do is we will retain the entitlement rights for Blackfoot crossing phase one, which was the former Westbrook Yard subdivision, and we will file those six lots, which is our which are outlined in red here.

And then we will do A5 lot minor subdivision on the remaining portion of the property.

So we are currently working on the final plat.

For this phase, one of Blackfoot crossing and the next step is the zoning and growth policy amendment, which is before you today developing the sewer and water infrastructure, and then eventually that residential subdivision.

The project is already underway.

The site, although it's not designated technically a Browns field as a DEQ class 3 landfill on it, as well as large amounts of wood waste on it. I'm proud to say that in partnership with the Department of Environmental Quality, we've secured the first permit to UN Landfill A.

State of Montana.

And so we're actually working with the company right now.

Those are some of the trucks that are leaving the site right now.

To basically haul off that material and turn it into a beneficial use.

So all of that wood waste is actually being turned into landscaping.

So that is already underway.

We're also just doing some grading on the site right now as as we speak, because there is wood waste pockets all throughout the site and we have to get those remediated before any kind of construction can take place on the project.

We are also have been are currently under DEQ review.

For the establishment of a public water and sewer system on the site, we have submitted maybe our 3rd or 4th application to the Department of Environmental Quality and are very close to to getting that wrapped up.

And then right now, obviously we're going through the growth policy and zoning amendments. If that proceeds as we hope, the next phase would be for us to take a look at a townhome exempt development to start construction on the attainable housing.

Portion of the project.

You know, ideally, we'll probably start putting infrastructure in later this spring or early summer.

For phase one of the project.

And I did want to sort of highlight when I spoke about.

Our how our project kind of aligned with what occurred in history, you can go to the next slide actually.

Gary, I think you were involved in this from 2009.

This is a sketch of what the community asked for in 2009 of the site and what you'll see is a combination of community serving commercial, various different types of housing types from smaller lots.

Lots to larger lots, and that's effectively what we've tried to deliver with this project.

So Jimmy, if you have something to add to that, yeah. Thank you.

I think as you'll see here that they have in 2009 they had also positioned the commercial along that Hwy. 200 corridor. Obviously open space along the river. And I'm imagining hillside as well going up to Woody Mountain.

So really, we took this and we said, OK, can we get to this or somewhat close to this development?

To meet these community goals.

Kathleen showed this map before.

This is the existing land use map or growth policy map indicating that a majority of the property is heavy industrial center.

There is a small chunk of the property, about 10 acres, that is currently designated as working lands.

And again, this just doesn't fit within this area.

It does not protect any habitat.

This designation goes all the way up to the Blackfoot River.

Goes all the way up to the northern boundary of the W Riverside neighborhood and essentially all the way up to the open space along the east side of the property.

Our proposed growth policy, land use designation change will involve changing.

Area specific to future property boundaries.

So those future properties boundaries represent the Blackfoot crossing phase one on the West side and then on the east side will be the minor subdivision.

The cross hatching is indicative of the first subdivision and the area that does not

have cross housing hatching is.
The proposed minor subdivision.

We do have industrial center designation planned for against the the W Riverside neighborhood and the reason that we did that is that it is currently zoned light industrial, which does comply with that industrial center growth policy designation. So it was partly a request from the county to match the current zoning designation. But then also recognizing that that in holding lot.

Is designated as Heavy Industrial Center and that getting potential users to locate there. It may not be an industrial use could be challenging because you're fairly confined by that existing heavy industrial center designation.

And then there is a large berm that is on the north side of that property as well. And that's in the CA-1 and CA-3.

Locations there.

And I think I'm gonna skip ahead and we'll just go into the details here.

So the neighborhood center designation, this is four of the five lots for the future subdivision.

This here is where Greg does proposed to do the future townhome exempt development.

And really looking to provide housing at 8 dwelling units per acre or greater. I'll talk about a cap later on because there were concern some concerns.

From the neighbors that the corresponding zoning for this does not have a cap. It's just a minimum density.

But overall, this growth policy designation does plan for mix of uses, small scale neighborhood services as well as that residential.

The Commercial center designation is probably where we have heard the most concerns coming from and again because of the potential for a travel Plaza that may locate on a portion of this property.

Again, the proposed commercial center designation does seem most appropriate for this area based on the location next to Hwy. 200 and near I-90.

Across the way there is also.

A commercial designation of that neighborhood center or semi commercial. I guess I should say.

But we are retaining along the river.

Open and resource designations there.

I think I've talked a little bit about industrial center already.

We do intend to expand the Working lands designation to correspond with the future subdivision property boundary.

I think this also makes sense here, as much of the land in the brown color is fairly steep slopes and so development on this land should be constrained.

And left in the most natural state as possible.

Back to the open and resource open resource and recreation designation, again against the Blackfoot River.

Protecting wildlife wildlife habitats, providing a buffer between future uses of either residential and or commercial.

And.

That's pretty much it there.

Walk into the zoning amendment.

Here is our current zoning map.

Kathleen showed.

Icla along the W Riverside neighborhood ICH for much of the property, and then the eastern portion is currently zoned AGW 40, which is a a working lands designation.

When Mr. Wolfenden owned the property WGM.

Did work with the county to get the ICL designation near the W Riverside neighborhood.

Knowing that the current growth policy designation for the entire property was heavy industrial center and so we felt that at least that was a compromise to get it to a lower intensity industrial zoning designation.

But still recognizing that there were a number of concerns that they would have industrial up against.

Their potential property.

So going forward.

For the proposed zoning.

As I mentioned, we are going to keep industrial in the northwest corner. We do feel that there is an adequate buffer that will be provided by that firm, that berm is required to be maintained through the 1st subdivision with a no build zone and it will also we.

Are proposing that it would be maintained with the 2nd Subdivision 2 where industrial land is.

Again.

I go into this a little bit.

We'll hit the open and resource first.

This zoning district protects the natural landscapes, the waterways and the Fish and Wildlife habitats. It is mostly designed to be open space.

As Kathleen mentioned, the subdivision both subdivisions proposed a trail easement through this area.

Otherwise, nothing is really planned for this area.

Umm.

The neighborhood center, fairly similar to the growth policy designation, Residential 8 dwelling units per acre and.

A small scale neighborhood uses, so I think that Max building size in the North Carolina is 10,000 square feet.

So again, it's just that smaller neighborhood type use.

Commercial Center again along that highway corridor.

Recognizing that this could include small retail shops, the large retail centers, office buildings, restaurants and the auto oriented uses.

The CC does have larger building size allowances.

And some additional commercial uses as well.

If you want to tackle this one or you want me to, yeah, it was raised in the.

Staff report that there are two other potential zoning categories that might be appropriate for the if you can go back, I'm just going to refer to it. This area that's currently flagged as CC and I just wanted to highlight.

Those two zoning uses and why we didn't request those.

And did not suggest those when we worked to the county.

The first one is neighborhood center.

We've heard very clearly from the Community, they would like more than basically a mini market in the area. They'd like community service, community resource, commercial in the area and the neighborhood center zoning has a limit on building size that would preclude a grocery store.

Most of them also in order to make this project work and to be able to serve the

community and provide that wastewater system.

A major utility services are also not allowed in a neighborhood center district. That would include a wastewater treatment plant.

As I told you that there's a slow moving disaster on in the neighborhood of the north with regards to wastewater.

Because of that, we can't actually place a wastewater treatment plant.

On the north side of the property, because the soil is so degraded, and so if we had neighborhood center zoning, we would be unable to implement the wastewater treatment system.

It also does allow gas stations, not necessarily the travel plazas.

The other possible zoning that was offered by staff is the Industrial Center light designation.

I'd like to go back to highlight that the Community has requested attainable housing. Residential is not allowed in industrial center light.

No eating drinking establishments, preschool, retail sales or other types of community serving uses would be allowed in that industrial center like designation.

And interestingly enough, a travel Plaza is still allowed in a industrial center like designation as a special exemption, and so the challenge with that zoning is.

You still have the path for a travel Plaza, but you lose a lot of the other community serving.

Commercial activities that the community has been telling us and and and very interested in.

And so that's the reason why we, in partnership with the county and the Community, have identified particular zoning districts that we have selected and we would ask that be moved forward.

I'm going to highlight sort of one thing about the travel Plaza.

This property is unique in that it's a targeted economic development district.

The because of the fact that it has a targeted economic development district on this property, we can do the things that we are proposing to do, build a wastewater treatment plant, build attainable housing.

One of the challenges is that last year.

In meetings with the state.

The property tax for centrally assessed projects.

Namely utility services.

Were reduced by 30%.

Our largest single taxpayer on the property is northwestern energy.

That actually eliminated our ability to bond for our targeted economic development district in 2029.

The targeted economic Development district expires.

We have to bond to extend the targeted economic development district to be able to execute on our vision of building this wastewater plant.

And building attainable housing and commercial and jobs in the area.

We need somebody today that is willing to make a major investment in building in our targeted economic health such that we can extend that district's life and be able to execute on this vision.

As people may have noticed, 2025 is not 2024 or 23 or 22.

There is a much smaller choice of people that are looking at building large projects at this time, and so I would like to highlight the fact there is a very strong reason why.

Having a somebody building something significant on the site occurs.

I would also like to add that everything the Community has asked for in terms of mitigations we have offered and then some we have offered.

A large roundabout we have offered.

We've offered roundabouts, we've offered trails, we've offered a path to the local school we've offered.

Many different components.

To be able to make this deal work.

And make it viable. And the thing I'd also like to highlight is that we've also located the site as far South from the neighborhood, neighboring residential development as possible, which has a large berm shielding it from the the residential neighborhood. In addition to that.

The.

Interestingly enough, a travel Plaza is actually allowed right next to the neighborhood in the Industrial Center Light Zone.

So we've really done our best to try to incorporate people's concerns. As I said, no projects perfect, but we've done our absolute best to to get where we have today.

So the Missoula County Growth policy and the Westinner logyard targeted Economic Development district have both identified the subject property as infrastructure deficient.

The Bonner West.

Logyard district.

That Ted was established in 2014.

It encompasses all 117 acres. As Greg mentioned, it's not only his property, but the substation as well as what I refer to as the Harris Thermal Building.

As we noted, it's been a challenge to find a developer that can address the deficient infrastructure and execute a plan for future development.

This will be the third owner since 2014, when the Ted was established, and this is the first developer to fully invest in a public sewer and water system. In 2023, Missoula County worked with the nearby community of W Riverside to understand their concerns related to.

Infrastructure in the area to learn the neighborhood's vision and to establish a path. Work together. While concerns of new development were expressed, there were also desires or interests in improving the local infrastructure.

We all know that this is quite difficult.

For the county to do, unless there are private funds contributing to the need, if the property is rezoned and developed.

A new MBR system wastewater system will be developed. The system could be expanded in the future, as Greg has mentioned, to extend beyond the property boundaries if the community desires so. The new public wastewater system will also be developed prior concerns expressed with the Westborough Yard subdivision.

With well placement near the existing W Riverside neighborhood.

Have been taken into consideration and moved as far South as feasibly feasibly possible. Road and walkway improvements will be made along 1st St. and the develop as the development builds out.

Additional Open space will be dedicated for public use along the river, and trail easements will be established, furthering the goals within the county trails and pathways plan.

Past legislative sessions expanded the definition of infrastructure to now include workforce housing.

As such, the request for NC Zoning will support future workforce housing, and my understanding is that while workforce housing is largely undefined, the community and economic Development Department with Missoula County is establishing parameters. If tax increment financing is used to support workforce housing, which will help address.

The community's concerns about affordable and attainable housing.

As we've seen, the industrial development in Missoula is changing.

We no longer desire to find the need for industrial centers or uses in a near dense neighborhoods as it is now uses that could be proposed on this property include anything that require an air quality permit, such as gravel or asphalt operation.

Highly flammable uses or noisy uses.

Zilla County is currently undergoing an update to the Industrial Land study, and while we do not know the results of that yet.

The prior studies.

Indicate that there's an excess supply of industrial zoned lands. Given the current market rate and absorption rates, and that all the potential sites could be redeveloped to accommodate non industrial or non manufacturing uses.

As we look to support the goals of the growth policy, we have strategically proposed land use designations and zoning designations that are appropriate for the site and for the area.

Previously, the Blackfoot River Corridor was designated and zoned for heavy industrial use.

This this is not a desire of Greg or the Community.

As such, and in support of the fish, wildlife, fish, wildlife and natural habitats along the Blackfoot River, we are proposing the resource and open lands designation.

I I think I've mentioned before my general philosophy in in working with the Community is to do my best to be a good neighbor.

We've talked a little bit about the site cleanups and abandoned vehicles that we've cleaned up.

Hosting things on the property.

And I I can also honestly say that.

Had another developer probably owned this property. It would have very likely been a asphalt plant with a gravel pit.

Because that's the thing that doesn't require wastewater.

And as you know, there's a project going up the Blackfoot River that.

A lot of people are very unhappy with and This site is zoned specifically for that, and so we've taken a lot of risk at trying to make this change and provide something that's a little better for the Community and that's what we're we're doing the best to listen.

And respond to that. Again, not perfect, but we feel that it it threads the needle with a lot of different.

Challenges and opportunities.

So while the minor subdivision is not under your purview, I just thought I would share what that looks like.

Some of the amenities that we are keeping.

And things that we've heard are important to the community.

So we've mentioned the berm along W Riverside, there is going to be a walkway along 1st St. and intersection improvements which could include a roundabout.

We're and by the way, that's the path to The Walking path to school for kids. Yes, thank you.

And that does connect into the boxcar trail as well.

Extending an easement along the Blackfoot River.

And then continuing to maintain non motorized access easements for FWP in the United States, Forest Service for motorized use.

Otherwise it will be nonmotorized to the public.

This is the future 5 lot subdivision along.

Along with three distinct common areas, those common areas will be adjacent to other common areas within the first subdivision.

And allow for one lot, which would be lot 4 of industrial use and four lots of neighborhood center.

This is the phasing plan for that subdivision.

Phase one.

Basically consists of one lot via the South side of Cowboy Trail and then that common area along the river. By providing that common area along the river with the first phase, that will help with the trail easement dedication.

A little bit more on community feedback.

Umm.

I think we've kind of pretty well lit all that.

We had all those.

And I think we've hit most of this.

And I think Kathleen mentioned it as well, but not having a cap on the neighborhood center zoning designation was a concern of the neighbors. And so since the zoning cannot be conditioned as part of our subdivision application and our covenants, we are restricting the NC zoned lots to.

Be limited to a Max of 400 units total on those.

Another concern that we heard is that what if we get this zoning approved, but then the public and wastewater system don't get approved by DEQ?

Then what?

So now we have a zoning designation that can't be built out, and I know there's a lot of words on the screen, but basically how I see this process that could play out is that if we get a recommendation for approval from planning board, we then go to.

The Board of County commissioners, the County commissioners, they hear the growth policy first.

The zoning second, the subdivision third. They make their recommendation. Or excuse me, they make their decision on that, assuming they are all approved or approved with conditions.

The subdivision could, could, could be conditioned upon the final zoning being accepted by the Commissioners.

There is a 30 day waiting period.

From the resolution of intent that the Commissioners adopt.

To the final resolution and in the off chance that we do not have adeq approval yet by that time frame, Blackfoot crossing or Greg could request that the Commissioners hold off on signing that final zoning resolution or the Commissioners could elect to do so themselves.

And I think this should provide the assurance to the Community as well as the Commissioners, that we do intend to build this system and that we do intend to follow through with the intent that Greg has here for this project.

I think one other concern that we just heard is wastewater treatments are expensive. How are you gonna actually pay for this?

And so Greg has run his proforma time and time again.

He has looked at the density and said OK, even if we have to limit the density, we could still do this.

He is working and talking with the county right now about creating a water and sewer district.

That believe your thought would be that you would run it for the first few years.

And then eventually turn that over to the county. And there's also the option for a rule special Improvement District.

With all that, I think we're done and open to any questions.

Great. Thanks, Greg and Jamie.

Do we?

And that's the end of the presentations for the evening. Great.

Are there any very quick clarifying questions from planning board folks or should we just move on to public comment?

I just had a maybe for my own benefit.

Why maintain a working lens as opposed to making it open space?

Is that just to give you some more control over what's going to be put there?

Yeah, I think it's because of the utility.

I think we're gonna be applying for a permit to put a a water tank on there.

Yeah. And in order to do that, it requires that zoning is what I recall off the top of my head and that is what that area zone currently as well got it.

Thank you.

Any other quick clarifying questions from planning board folks.

I guess could you give a quick explanation as to the what an MBR is?

A MBR is a membrane bioreactor.

So I don't go shouting this from.

The tops, but I I consider myself an environmentalist, built a net zero energy house.

This is something that I have a lot of interest in, both professionally and personally, and because we are next to the Blackfoot River.

My instruction to our engineering team who's building the wastewater treatment plant was delivered the absolute best water treatment that we possibly can, and membrane bioreactor is the technology that is the highest level of treatment that's being currently used in the state of Montana.

Our water that could be coming out of this plant is is designed for, that's a one which is basically reuse quality water that you could literally put back into the ground and drink.

And so a membrane bioreactor is not the cheapest technology.

It is the is the best technology.

So you will not find us shirking any part of that this project.

I just rather do the right thing and and and not have concerns.

Answer your questions.

I know way too much about wastewater treatment now.

I did not know when I started this process.

We have a long conversation about membrane bioreactors. A few months ago, when we were talking about the Y infrastructure plan.

So you've heard it before.

Probably heard it too much.

Happy to talk about it for coffee one day.

OK, not seeing any other planning board members with quick clarifying questions, we will move into our.

Public public comments, if we get the column instructions.

So if you're calling in.

On on your phone, phone number is 406-272-4824.

The phone conference ID is 210974812 pound.

You press *5 to raise your hand and be recognized and *6 to mute and unmute. And if you are in the audience here today and wish to make a public comment.

Please come up and just a reminder to say your name before your public comment.

And we're asking that you would try to keep it to three minutes. We do have timers up here just to try to clue you in if possible. So thank you.

I always hate being first, so I'm not sure why I am.

Is this thing working?

OK.

My name is Gary Matson and I am a 60 year resident of Milltown.

I we've lived in W Riverside and raised our palm in there and been involved in most of the things that have gone on there for those sixty years, so I'm happy to to be living there and I I'm a strong supporter of Greg Morris and his vision for.

Developing what we've called the West.

Logyard I support the land use designation of Commercial Center for lots 23 to 27.

It's been my understanding that commercial development in these lots would provide the basis for TIF funding that would enable the wastewater treatment facility the MBR.

This facility is necessary for the Blackfoot crossing project to proceed.

I approve of the designation of neighborhood Center for LOT 528. Greg has shared his vision of the residential development plan for this area.

The 400 units, which would bring much needed affordable and sustainable housing.

Talking about being able to put solar panels on the roofs of those houses, so doesn't get any better than that.

The new affordable housing would bring in the families needed to rebuild the student population of Bonner School.

Which is lowest now that it's ever been.

I have confidence in developer Greg Morse and believe he will achieve his goal to continue collaborating with residents and make the Blackfoot crossing development a new and viable asset to the community.

Thank you for this opportunity, Amit.

Thank you, Mr. Matson.

I see online we have.

Brie.

Free if.

You want to make public comment.

Feel free to unmute yourself and please introduce yourself.

BS **Brie Shulman** 1:49:55

Yeah. Hi. My name is Bruce Shulman.

Can you hear me OK?

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 1:49:59

Yes, we can. Thank you.

BS **Brie Shulman** 1:50:00

OK, great. I lived over in the Bonner W Riverside neighborhood as a home owner here now for about 6 years.

And I have some questions about the environmental sustainability and the infrastructure sustainability.

So I'm just looking at the the Missoula growth policy guiding principles.

And one of them being environmentally sound in support of healthy communities over the long term.

So I'm feeling a little worried about adding a second, a second travel Plaza for travelers on 90 on I-90, and also the influx of. I think Greg might have just said something around 400 units.

My concern is about the water. It sounds like a good plan to make sure that the water is really safe for those within the new neighborhood.

I'm concerned about the water.

Goals of our aquifer as they stand.

I know the Blackfoot is the lowest that it's been since it was started being recorded in the 30s and that is part of what feeds into the Clark Fork Aqua River, which has also been on a steady decline.

And I understand that there's not individual water rights.

Correct me if I'm wrong over here, so I'm curious.

If there is a way to ensure that local residents have priority access to water.

Water should the water levels run too low to support Travel Plaza in addition to the current homes around it, and also if there's any toxin levels that are being tested as an impact after the development of of all the structures.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 1:51:57

Great. Thank you, Brie.

And I apologize for cutting in here, but we'll take in all the public comment and then we will ask questions of staff and the developer and things like that. After all, the public comment is taken and we don't address it 1 by 1.

So just so you know that that's our process.

Thank you.

My name is Jessica Glebke.

I'm an alternate on the Bonner Milltown Community Council.

I would ask you to reference. I made sure the letter was.

Included in your materials today that we wrote neither in support nor opposition to this project.

That being said, I these comments are mine and not as a representative of the Community Council.

I just wanted to say that I, my husband and I own a property directly across the street from Mr. Morris's property and I've been involved in the neighborhood surveying for this property before. Mr. Morse bought the property.

Currently, one thing that residents constantly say is they don't want us to end up like East Missoula, and the proposed zoning.

While we can make promises about covenants, only apply while Mr. Morse owns the property.

Otherwise, the zoning leads us right back to what E Missoula currently looks like.

I also wanted to say that I appreciate the acknowledgement of the opposition to the Travel Plaza.

And the potential mitigation.

The county is talking about, but we see, hear and smell, despite berms and everything else.

Town pump all day long. It's.

Because of the highways, because of the the travel Plaza we already have.

Our emissions in our neighborhood, if you're walking in the morning, are they're stifling and more traffic closer to our neighborhood is really it's.

I understand the necessity, but there's concern with that as well.

The last I heard, it's proposed for 15 acres and the other part of that I see is 15 acres of lost potential of businesses that could actually serve not only Bonner Mill Town.

Terra, Blackfoot corridor people are coming down from Potomac.

People are coming in from Clinton.

There's a lot of people that can be served by by businesses that actually serve the people that live here and not the people that are just coming off of the highway.

We currently live in a food desert.

As I've mentioned before, we don't need more corn dogs and pizza.

We don't need a 10,000 acres supermarket either. We just need something that can serve our communities.

Kind of. In closing, I would just say that zoning is very hard to take backwards. I have concern about Mr. Morse's funding mechanisms. If he has to put a travel Plaza on this property and that's what's going to allow everything else to happen. What I mean, how close to the edge are we talking? If a if a tax structure changes? If the Ted sunsets, if we can't get something else in place? What do we do with that? And what are the people that going to do that perhaps purchase the property? That Mister Morris has made has been again very accommodating with communicating with our neighborhood and everything else. But if something falls apart and somebody else takes this property over and the zoning is in place, it could be very bad for our neighborhood. So thank you. Thank you, Jessica. Hello, my name is Shannon Smallwood. I actually live directly opposite of Jessica I, my mother and I own property on 9th and W Riverside. We're right on the corner. And I've spent a lot of time trying to. I don't know come to terms with this as someone that's lived there since 2019 and it's gonna change just the entire. Well, you know. Vibe of the neighborhood. I know we need housing. I know we need all these things. I have all the same concerns as Jessica. And I love the like Blue Sky version that people have. I really wish that I shared it. Looking to the future of our economy in general and the concerns about funding for this project, I have the same as Jessica. I just wanted to voice those to you guys. But I also wanted to express concern about or so I don't know how familiar you are with the area. But right now the river and the connecting lands are all pretty protected by like just the fact that it's someone's property and so only really like people who.

Are OK with trespassing. Can get back there.

So I'm wondering when it's open, it's these designated, you know?

Open spaces.

And lands and connecting properties like who is in charge of kind of stewarding that area because you're opening it up to all the people that are in theory, going to be living in these houses as well as just the general public.

And I was wondering if it's the Parks Department, is it, you know, who is going to be in charge of making sure that these areas are kept pristine and are parks and are nice for everyone to be in there?

'Cause, you know, even at this point it's, you know, you run into people back there so.

I just wanted to bring that up and I don't know if anyone thought about that and.

The voice.

My concern in general about the project so.

Great. Thank you, Shannon.

Hello, my name is Kirsten Miller.

I live in Missoula.

I'm executive director for nonprofit Eco City Builders. I Co direct the Co build Montana initiative and I lead the future build team at the University of Montana College of Business.

And tonight I'm speaking just from my professional experience and commitment to community health and sustainability.

I think Blackfoot crossing although as.

Gregory says it's not 100% perfect a work in progress, but I do think it represents a real opportunity to align affordability, resilience and environmental stewardship.

Advancing the county's vision for sustainable community focused growth.

Eco City builders and our local partners, including the future, build UM student team, are eager to collaborate with the developer, local communities and Missoula County to help realize the vision.

Repurposing this land from previous industrial site for housing and neighborhood commercial use prevents sprawl, protects agricultural land, and transforms an underused space into a healthier, more productive community asset.

Economically, it could bring in new energy and investment into historic

neighborhoods, offering an opportunity for more inclusive prosperity rooted in Bonner and mill towns, working class tradition.

The project aspires to incorporate a sustainability measures like solar energy, heat pumps, high efficiency appliances and advanced wastewater treatment.

Using this is my key 'cause using locally produced biochar in construction and landscaping could further enhance soil health, water retention, carbon sequestration and infrastructure resilience.

As everyone knows, water stewardship is central and the project needs water, smart fixtures, green infrastructure and native landscaping.

Water should be used efficiently while removing contamination and returning cleaner water to the environment.

Establishing shared Community services within a walkable radius would enable Blackfoot crossing to reduce traffic impacts and lower transportation costs.

Residents and neighbor and neighbors.

And additionally, spaces for cooperative local businesses like Food co-ops, Maker spaces, shared childcare services, could create local jobs and boost economic and social well.

Being so, in conclusion, I think Blackfoot crossing offers a really good opportunity to combine best practices in design, sustainability, affordability and community driven.

Models and I encourage you to support the requested zoning. I think this decision should serve well the region and its people for generations to come.

Thank you.

Thank you for your comments.

Good evening. My name is Jim Howard and I'm the Superintendent at Bonner School.

I strongly support the Blackfoot crossing riverfront development, including the Growth policy amendment and rezoning as proposed by Gregory Morse.

Honor School's biggest challenges right now are skywiting skyrocketing housing costs, pushing our teachers and families out of poverty and Milltown and W Riverside, and the resulting drop in enrollment.

Is squeezing our budget and threatening our ability to provide the quality education that Bonner schools long provided.

This project remedies that by enabling affordable homes right here in our right in the Bonner community.

Homes that will help our families stay local, boost our student numbers and secure Bonner schools future as the heart of our community.

Crucially, the plan includes the proposed wastewater infrastructure that makes this residential growth safe and responsible.

It protects the Blackfoot River corridors, ecology and environment by treating the wastewater effectively on site.

Without discharging into the river and that sort of thing, far better than the potential heavy industrial uses, a gravel pit or other polluting activities allowed under current zoning.

Combined with the grocery store, retail and community amenities in a balanced mixed-use design, this creates a walkable, self-sustaining neighborhood that will really serve our community.

So I ask.

And really encourage you to recommend the plan as it's proposed.

And thank you for your attention.

Thank you, Mr. Howard.

Hello, my name is Judy Matson.

I'm also a resident.

Of W Riverside and I'm here in support of the proposal. As before, you tonight and the rezoning. I hear the young people in in my neighborhood because we all share the same small space. And I I hear their concerns and they're worried that it's not going to be.

As Nice as it is right now.

Not only am I older person an elder, but.

Say, but I'm also a student of history, and I've done a lot of research on the history of that area.

Clear back to the Zogs who came here before the mill even started in 1886.

They were here three years before that and they saw this as a cultural land and they did grow crops. And then in 1911.

Mrs. Sag saw the need for homes for people that were working class people.

And she created the 1st.

Residential subdivision in the area the first four blocks of W Riverside, where many of our neighbors that are here tonight live and love in. In the 1920s she created.

Blocks 5 through 9, which is the entirety of W Riverside right now, and I guess as a historian of sorts, I see the proposal to add.

Workforce housing on the West.

Former W Hog Yard, Bartlett crossing property as a jet, as a an outgrowth of what's always been there.

Opportunity for working class people. I think the neighborhood will be as wonderful as W Riverside is now.

It's young, vibrant families. We have access to all the open resources of the mountain.

We have a State Park.

A small, humble community.

That has really has it all.

So I'm totally in favor of this. Thank you.

Thank you, miss Matson.

Online, I do see your hand up again and I do believe you've already made a comment.

Are you intending?

Are you requesting to make another comment?

We typically do not allow it, but if you would make it very quick under 30 seconds, I would allow it.

BS Brie Shulman 2:06:18

Sure. I'll say really quick.

I appreciate that.

I'm curious what accountability looks like when statements about a form but affordable housing is made.

How are developers held accountable to the operational definition of affordable housing once that zoning has shifted in, the permits are granted.

Thank you.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 2:06:40

Great. Thank you.

Anybody else in house wanting to make a comment tonight?

OK, I'm not seeing anybody else in house.

I'm not seeing anybody online.

So we're going to go ahead and close.

Our OK. OK.

Yep, Jane, I see you and go ahead.

JK Jane Kipp 2:07:31

OK.

I'm Jane kipp.

I am the vice chair of the Bonner Milltown Community Council.

These are my personal comments on this. I believe that with some of the uses that that are going to be in this development for 100 homes.

The possibility of a travel Plaza.

The possibility of.

A hotel that the water uses.

Are going to be.

Very high here.

And I'm not sure that they're being considered.

Minutely as as they probably need to be. If you have a hotel, you might have swimming pools, you might have hot tubs. If you have a travel Plaza, you might have car washes and other uses and that it is going to affect the people in W Riverside.

And probably the people in milk do thank you.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 2:08:34

OK.

Thank you, miss Kip.

OK.

Believe that's everybody right now.

So we're gonna go ahead and close our public comment period.

And.

I would like to take a 5 minute break to use the bathroom if that's OK with everybody.

And then we'll reconvene and.

Ask our questions and have our discussion.

Thank you.

No.

You know.

Alright, it's reconvene if we can.

All right, folks, we're gonna get started again.

Thanks for your participation.

OK.

So we are going to move into questions from planning board members if there's questions of.

Either staff or the developer go ahead.

Go ahead, Rick.

RH

Richard Hall 2:15:50

You have to say my name.

I don't know otherwise hi.

I wanted I wanted one of the questions was about affordable housing.

And I know Greg had mentioned workforce housing.

That is a definition for affordable housing, and maybe you could explain to us what that definition is.

And I think it's sometimes called attainable housing.

And then the other question I had.

The developer is.

The concern that comes up repeatedly is that.

Should you not the the land has been a lot of things.

And a lot mostly vacant over the years.

And should this not come to fruition, the Community's concern has been what you know, even though you're you agree to a building.

Cap the zoning does not.

But that building cap on it and what method does the Community have of knowing that? Should your project fail that the next person that comes in doesn't try the same project with much, much, much denser housing?

So those are two questions and sorry, I'm a little *****.
I have AI have a Mexican cold, so they're especially bad.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:17:25

And Rick, did you specifically want the developer to answer those questions or should we allow staff to work on that too?

RH **Richard Hall** 2:17:33

Either either one that that you know the second question about how how the restriction could follow the land is kind of for legal and staff.
So anybody that can answer?

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:17:46

OK.

Maybe I'll ask Kathleen to tackle part number two of the first of the question.

You know what?

What mechanisms does the county have if I'm I'm trying to interpret Rick's question, what mechanisms does the county have to?

Enforce a density cap limit and with your current tools on the property, if any.

Yeah, that's easy. We don't.

Our zoning regulations are what they are and we would not enforce or maintain or have anything to do with a private covenant situation and all the things that have been discussed with Greg in the Community, we wouldn't have anything to do with that.

As far as I understand.

And there are no tools at your disposal to be able to.

I understand that traditionally we're not able to condition approval.

Of of zoning there, there aren't any tools in your disposal to condition it in any way.

Is that correct?

That is correct.

OK. And I will say, you know, we have in that zone like site design standards that it's not like you can just build out the lot line and it's like the maximum everything goes. We have a lot of site design standards to make communities like this you know.

Have lots of space and you know fire safety and all kinds of mechanisms would limit the density, but we absolutely have no nothing to do with.

Limiting.

Density outside what the zoning regulations say.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:19:29

Can there be deed restrictions?

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:19:36

Can you say that again, Rick?

RH **Richard Hall** 2:19:37

Can there be deed restrictions?

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:19:41

I'll jump in here too.

My name is Ian Barley.

I'm a planning manager here at Missoula County.

There can be restrictions, but those have to be enforced privately.

Yeah, the county's kinda gotten out of the business of deed restrictions and putting them in themselves.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:19:59

But the developer could.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:20:01

Yes, the developer couldn't.

But they would have to come up with a mechanism right to do the enforcement of that.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:20:02

Thank you.

And the deed restriction travels with the property correct.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:20:10

Yeah, most of them run.

Yeah, well, they'll run with a land. Exactly.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:20:13

Thank you.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:20:15

Rick, do you mind if I hold up on your first question?

Tung has a quick follow follow up question.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:20:20

Absolutely.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:20:23

I just want to clarify I I.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:20:24

I mean, I don't mind.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:20:30

The decision was made about the density in this area with a land use policy. The growth policy back in 2019. As I understand it.

Is that a fair statement? Meaning the county has done a ton of work.

And also did the recent rezone specifically took a lot of time to spend that so the whatever density targets were?

Created then are still applied.

So a lot of Fair statement.

Yes, that's a correct statement.

And then I I don't know.

I don't if staff was around at the time, but.

Can you provide any color as to whether or not the the additions or the environment

has changed significantly between when this was initially designated?

Where you know, with the develop policy versus now, meaning like has anything materially changed like in terms of the the zoning?

I guess.

Well, I guess more more to the point, I feel like the only thing that is one of the main things that has changed certainly since 2019.

Is is the acute need for housing, so if anything we need more housing. That's what's changed.

No, this was certainly the developer is choosing a very like kind of housing friendly designation right through this neighborhood center designation, right with it.

It has an actual like a minimum, not a maximum.

And so, and there's nothing substantial that has changed with how that zoning has been applied. You know, since you know, either the passage of the the growth policy or the implementation of the zoning itself in 2022, like it's been relatively consistent.

Thank you.

So then to get back to Rick's first question and apologies, Rick, if I butcher this, but I think it has to.

It was dealing with the definitions of.

Maybe not definitions, but what the intent behind affordable housing is workforce housing.

RH **Richard Hall** 2:22:35

Workforce housing, correct?

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:22:37

And.

And what implications the that has in development and what are the developers intentions behind behind that?

I guess so far we haven't heard anything about.

You know.

Deed restricted housing, I guess.

Or or anything like that.

It would maybe meet.

You know other goals, but I guess maybe my interpretation of it is, is, is this market rate housing and is there, is there anything in the pipeline that is ensuring that it is? Affordable and or workforce housing, is that reasonable Rick?

I.

I guess that question is maybe to Mr. Morris.

Yes, so.

As I mentioned, my personal goal is to build the most attainable housing that you physically can build in the state of Montana, and this project has a number of elements that support that, namely the value of the land being. It was originally industrial and now it's being turned.

To to residential the targeted economic development.

District.

Et cetera, et cetera.

That said, and the fact that I'm an Eagle Scout, so that's my offering for my own personal goal with this.

That said, a lot of people I think are skeptical of me, and I probably rightfully so, just because most developers don't talk the way that I talk.

And so the way that I we're attempting to address this issue is.

The after this is approved.

The path for us to be able to deliver attainable housing is using the westminor log yard, targeted economic Development District a couple years ago, the state got together and added.

A.

Quote workforce housing as a form of public infrastructure in the targeted economic development district language.

The targeted economic development district is administered by the Missoula County Board of Commissioners.

And the economic development team.

This project.

Plans to use funds from the targeted Economic Development district to be able to deliver both jobs and attainable housing. If I don't do what I say, I'm going to do, or if somebody after me doesn't do what they say they're going to do, well then they're not going.

To get access to those funds.

And given that this prop property has a resource deficiency, anybody who tries to develop this property.

Is going to wanna get access to those funds. And so although at this stage of our development, it does not specifically.

Answer that question.

There will be a path and a series of public hearings with regards to the allocation of those funds that I think will address that.

So that would be.

Al.

Wish we could answer it today, but it's it will be answered as part of that Ted process. I.

I don't know if that question was thoroughly answered.

I also have a something that I could add on the the building cap the density restriction.

Am I OK to discuss that?

As discussed, the county really does isn't in that business anymore.

That said, I heard loud and clear from the community that they have an interest in this not becoming a bunch of huge apartments.

The good news is when I approached this project.

I also felt the exact same way.

My goal is developing missing middle homes, single single.

Homes.

Attached homes, detached homes.

Maybe fourplexes?

Maybe 6 plexes, but the six plexes would look like a house as opposed to a apartment building.

And when we looked at the the density cap which we proposed to do as a private deed restriction on these lots.

We did that because it was both in line with what we wanted to do and what we've heard from the Community. And so although that is not part of the this approval process, it's something yet again that we're doing to make sure that we we do what we.

Say we're going to do and.

I don't think that you know technically impacts the the designation, but people have asked the question well, why didn't we decrease the zoning district from neighborhood commercial?

To one of the less dense districts because it goes against affordability. If we were to go to some of the other zoning districts that had density caps, we have larger lots. We'd have larger setbacks and we'd have a number of criteria that would make the property more expensive and so we selected the zoning category that will allow us to deliver the most attainable housing, and that was NC.

And.

The way that we're going to address the fact that.

It's probably overly dense for what?

The community wants is with a private restriction that would go and run with the land.

Thank you, Mr. Morris.

JW **John Wilke** 2:28:13

I can kinda speak to that as well.

This is John Wilkie, the housing specialist.

I work in the Department of Community Economic Development.

And just to answer the question of what's in the pipeline in terms of requirements for workforce housing within the TEDS, we do have a draft policy that we'll be presenting to the MDA board next week.

So this is still a draft policy.

It may change, but.

Within that policy, we kind of have two different tracks for housing.

We have what we're calling attainable housing.

And affordable housing.

Affordable housing is kind of big.

A affordable what you think of when you typically think of affordable housing like tax credits, community Land Trusts, Section 8, and then attainable housing is more market based.

Housing that is, in theory, supposed to be below market.

And in doing that, the parameters we've set for those housing developments, which I believe is what?

Mr. Morris will be building. We're asking for smaller unit sizes, smaller bedroom sizes, modest finishes, modest amenity amenities, smaller lot sizes and increased density. So that means that, yeah, there's no income verification required, no price cap, no resale restrictions, no length of affordability or anything like that with the attainable housing.

Tract of this policy.

And I'd be happy to provide more details of what the sizes look like.

In terms of square footage, if you'd like.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:29:58

Thanks John.

Rick, did we get your question adequately adequately answered?

RH **Richard Hall** 2:30:03

I think so, yeah. Thank you.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 2:30:06

Thanks.

Other planning board questions before we move into motions.

Yeah. Kathleen, do you mind pulling up the the map of the existing zoning?

So IHC's industrial, commercial, heavy.

IICH OK.

So just so I understand, this is the current zoning, so it's no longer heavy.

Except for whatever the one that is heavy.

So if if this motion fails, then this would stand.

And presumably and so we would just play this out if then that discourages the developer, he sells it, then whoever buys it could take advantage of this existing zoning.

Without any changes.

Yeah, whoever bought this property could proceed with the zoning that's in place.

Thank you.

I'm just gonna point out 'cause you had asked earlier about the neighborhood commercial zone that you can kind of see just like on the corner here that there is there's existing neighborhood center zoning.

So it would be adjacent the new neighborhood center zoning would be because there's not a lot of it around the county, honestly, but there is some.

In proximity to the lot.

Can you pull up the next slide, please?

So in the NC area that's listed here.

That can be a mix of residential and commercial and the buildings can be I I think you said up to 10,000 square feet.

I can look I'm not a Gmail.

So just trying to play this out in my head.

So this you know if if.

Mr. Morris or some other developer wanted to come in and build, you know, you know.

50 unit building.

That 50 unit building would be limited to 10,000 square feet, so that would actually not be allowable in that zoning district.

Is that mathematically speaking?

Are you saying that they would or or would they build a one 50,000 square foot building?

Is that what you're proposing?

That like what they would do, yeah, correct.

I mean, they could, but I heard Mr. Morris say is goal is a lot of single family residential duplex, you know, 4 plexes, potentially 6 bucks is potentially, but whatever whatever form the building took, it would need to be less than 10,000 square feet.

That says commercial and mixed-use buildings can range from 1000 to 45,000, but that's like a commercial, OK, like a big grocery stores in the NC.

Yes, OK. But for residential, yeah.

Yeah, we should. We have a look at the. Oh, OK.

Yeah, the zoning has a principal building, maximum square foot footprint of 10,000 square feet.

Just make some exceptions right for single household and two household dwellings

without having to include the garage so you know, like essentially you could cobble together perhaps.

Like a six Plex, maybe that would be.

10,000 square feet or more, but OK.

But I mean, in reality, if you were to, you know, seemingly the largest thing that you could build is A10 Plex under those current regulations, you know, ten, 1000 square foot.

Units or something like that.

Is that making up a square footage for a unit? But.

That's that's in reality the cap.

Is the thing that is governing the number of units, is the amount of square footage allowed within building itself.

Well, I'm gonna.

'Cause we have a similar designation in East Missoula, right? And I think that there are larger buildings that get built because I think that the unit that really governs is the, you know, essentially the the dwelling unit is the density, right.

It's the homes per acre.

And there's no.

Maximum there I think this is probably the neighborhood. The 10,000 square foot, if I'm I'm fairly certain and someone can correct me if I'm wrong.

Here is the. Yeah, it's the footprint. And it it's gonna largely apply to, like, nonresidential buildings, right?

So it's essentially it's putting a cap on the size of like sores or office buildings, right?

That could be built here. OK. But and grocery stores and things of like would be allowed in that NC area. It could as long as they met that 10,000 square foot.

Yeah, got it. OK, right.

Umm.

Yes. My other question is, is?

Believe you had a slide that showed the allowed uses in the.

CC zoning designation.

Could you pull that back up again? Again, just kind of going back to.

You know, if if Mr. Morris were to sell the land, like what other allowed uses could be allowed in these specific areas and just trying to.

Get to a point where you know there's a lot of uses allowed in various areas and.

You know.

So I I guess the question.

From from one of the commenters was, you know what else could be built here? And

I suppose the list.

This is the list in the communities in the CC area.

Should the travel Plaza not be built, or should something else?

Be able to be built on the on the parcel.

Yeah, this list is pretty comprehensive in terms of the uses allowed.

Yeah, it seems like it's pretty permissive district in terms of uses.

That's correct. Yep.

And travel plazas are allowed under the existing zoning, right?

The travel Plaza would be allowed in the the Industrial Center, zoning, that kind of the more northern portion.

I think is a special exception, but there would be a pathway to make a travel Plaza now.

OK.

Yeah, it could be. Actually, I'm gonna take.

Cial pulses have a weird there's a couple of sets of sets of, like very specific.

Rules that apply to travel plazas, right? One is a distance to the you have to be close to an interchange, essentially, and it meets that criteria.

However, it also has to front onto a major highway and so I don't know if the ICL the the like industrial section would technically qualify for a travel Plaza.

I don't.

I don't know if it would work.

Sorry, I'm gonna get we're we're way into like zodi know.

Yeah, we have discussed it like, but not super in-depth.

Yeah. Because we just look at the proposal, kind of sure as.

Yeah, I was just wondering if there's a difference in allowable uses.

With this versus what?

What's what's being proposed?

The other question I have is just it came up right now.

What's the difference between a travel Plaza and a gas station like truck parking?

Just truck parking, OK.

Yeah, traveling, like can allow a certain amount of truck parking with them.

Yeah, trucks.

Yeah, exactly.

It has a certain amount of like places for trucks to park. Now that being said, like they still have to meet various like parking, our zoning has parking maximums, right?

So it's like you can only then it's linked to the square footage of the building, so there's only so much parking that they can acquire. They can kind of put in for, and that would counts for trucks as well.

Got it.

Yeah, we were like, we wanted to make it really clear that like that if a travel policy were to be approved here or like proposed here, it would look very differently than the one across the street because of the different rule sets that happen here.

I think Miss Smallwood asked this question about the.

The the the Open lands, I guess, or the I think it was really on the the green buffer area fronting the river.

Is that going to be?

Is that intended to remain private?

Is that intended to be handed over to the county? Who manages it?

And are there going to be any access easements associated with that?

I believe that I heard there was going to at least be a walking access easement, but you know who's gonna take over management of those lines? Yeah, right now.

So yeah, they they offer the land as the the plan is the the landlord in private, but there will be a public access easement and I think it's a 20 foot wide easement right that would connect that the trail on the southwest corner there to the public land.

On the east side.

But yeah, there's no plan right now for the county to take it over.

There's no plan for anyone to take it over.

It would stay a public.

It would stay up, you know, public easement on private land.

And.

This question is a question that I've personally asked because there are when you have riverfronting property, people use it and this is a concern I personally have for

both the neighborhood as well as our own development purposes.
And so we have engaged with fish, wildlife and parks to propose to them that we would grant the easement to FWP.
They have not yet accepted that, but we've also engaged with Randy.
And chat in the county as a backup strategy to grant an easement to the county, possibly as a path to getting it to FWP.
So the answer is it's something we're thinking about.
It's a little bit out of our control, but it's something that we're actively.
Working on.
But don't have the exact answer to it yet other than it's going to become public.
And we're trying to figure out who exactly will be the.
The taker of that easement.
All right.
Thank you, Mr. Morris.
There were some questions about.
Water usage.
Water rights and.
Could it's like Mr. Morris wants to answer this question, but I will.
I'll ask the question.
You know what?
What guarantees are there and what is the permitting process?
With I'm assuming that this is not not an exempt well situation.
And what guarantees are there that the water rights that are granted to you by DEQ are gonna be followed?
And what is that?
Can you outline what that process looks like?
Please.
This is Greg Morris again.
So a couple of things.
We we own significant water rights, so we have significant enough rights to develop the site.
As you know, there is a discrepancy in many places between the water rights and the actual water that's under the ground.

This is something that we're very much aware of and it sort of guides how we've chosen to handle our wastewater on site.

So so first of all, originally there were 28 wells proposed on the site.

We've consolid.

Ated across the property, including right next to the neighborhood to the north, which is of concern in our applications to the Department of Environmental Quality for our water and wastewater plant.

We've consolidated those wells into.

One well with a backup.

Well, because DEQ requires it.

And we've relocated those wells on the other side of the property, away from the residential district.

As we're going through this development process, we will drill a well and then DEQ requires that we conduct a pump test of those wells.

You're required to pump out of that well for some long period of time.

I I think it's like a week or something like that. 120% of the water that you anticipate pulling out of that well.

And then after that or during that process, you also measure the water level at surrounding wells to make sure that as you pump test the well at the Max 120% of the maximum capacity, you're not impacting the aquifer and that is a requirement of the DEP.

Of Environmental Quality to be able to issue us a public water permit for the site.

You mentioned the exempt well thing for those of you who aren't aware, it's a very. Common way for real estate developers to get around water restrictions where you install a bunch of 10 acre foot wells. We're not doing that.

We're not working around, we're doing it the right way.

The last part of this that I want to add is that we are building a very high end water treatment plant.

The end result of that is the water comes out of the ground, it gets used, it gets treated to a very high level to reuse standards.

And then it goes back into the ground. And if you look at the ratio of the water that is actually consumed versus the ratio of the water that is actually.

The ratio of the water that is used to the water that is pulled out of the ground 90%

of the water that is consumed goes back into the ground.

So this is the exact same thing that happens in the neighborhood to the north on W Riverside, where they have a well that pulls water out of the ground.

But then it goes into a cesspool in their backyard and it's untreated. And so in our instance, we're doing extremely high quality treatment of that water before we put it back into the ground.

And so from that perspective, I think we've are in the process of more than satisfying Department of Environmental quality's requirements and we're exceeding the water treatment level.

Of the surrounding community, dramatically.

Any follow up questions on that from anybody?

Sort of related follow up question. There was a public comment from A W Riverside property owner.

Who was, I think, interested in joining?

Correct with the wastewater system. And so I guess what sort of information can you provide for property owners in the area?

I've I've spoken with that, that gentleman. And so again our guiding philosophy here is we don't want to jam anything down anybody's throats, but we're there when you need us and ultimately the system is going to be owned or operated by a public water sewer district with.

A board of directors.

And hopefully.

At some point in the future, it's actually taken over by in Missoula County as a special district and so.

We're we are over designing the system to have capacity just to surround this, this supporting community, but we do not.

We are not building that capacity to date, but we will have.

A system that can serve well beyond our boundaries.

And so I do see this. I I think I said earlier my presentation that I consider housing.

I consider housing to be development for.

Economic development for the county. I believe that a wastewater treatment plant is ultimate. Ultimately, economic development for the county.

And there will be a there still will be a public process on our environmental impact

report for this wastewater treatment plant, which should be coming out any day. And I just we've we've gone as far as we possibly can to deliver the best treatment. And that we we we physically can.

Would I be correct in saying that the number of units and types of uses?

Could potentially be limited by.

By the water on the site. So in a hypothetical, let's say you know you design your system and you're running it at 120% of your, you know, perceived usage and the and the wells of other, you know, neighboring properties drop.

What? What recourse does the county have to or the state to dial back your?

Withdrawal rate in order to accommodate other nearby land owners.

I actually don't know the answer to that question.

All I know is there's the aquifer test which theoretically address that.

I mean, we own water rights.

For.

More houses than we can then we propose to build on the site.

So there. But there's also the distinction between the rights and the availability of water.

I will tell you that on the site there is a well that produces 1000 gallons per minute, which is a for those of you in the well industry is, I've been told, is a massive well.

There is a large amount of water underneath the property there is.

A lot of concern from the Community about water because when they.

Remove the Milltown dam.

That reduced the level of the Blackfoot River next to the property and next to the W Riverside neighborhood by about 20 feet, and wells levels dropped by about 20 feet. But the dam is already gone, and so it's never been raised to me by any of the hydrogeologists that I've spoken with.

Orwell drillers, or DEQ that there's any shortage of water underneath this particular site.

I mean basically from with 1000 gallons per minute. Water is like falling out of the wells basically.

Thanks, Mr. Morris. Kathleen or Ian, do you have any idea of what that would look like from a a county or state perspective if?

You know, I I trust that.

What Mr. Morris is telling us is true, but in a situation where.

You know the the demand for this development is more than.

What the wells can produce will not diminishing other people's existing wells.

What would?

What would be the remedy? Something like that?

Generally the the procedure is is that hopefully that that every well owner right has the ability to to get a water right, right and hopefully many people in that neighborhood have those water rights. And if they feel that they're, you know, their water level is diminished or you.

Know that the quality of the quantity of the water that they're pulling.

Thing right has gone down.

They can.

There's essentially a state process, right?

That to figure this out, like OK, is this, you know, who is who is, who is the problem.

Right. And but it has to be sort of begun, you know, on the part of the landowner who feels that and then they they take that that generally to the.

State the county doesn't have a strong role in that other than to just sort of like help monitor conditions, right?

Like the the Missoula's, the county's.

Water District right is is in place in this particular location.

Right. So there's a certain amount we do know about the wells and and the water levels and stuff like that, but generally it's a state process that kinda plays out to figure out, OK.

Well, who needs to essentially turn off their water and then and then you get into that the classic like water, right thing of like first in line 1st and right. Like whoever has the oldest right.

You know it's gonna win.

That's just how it's all.

That's just how the stage structure works. Thank you.

Go ahead, Jamie.

So I think that process that Ian was explaining, sorry Jimmy Erbacher with WGM group is regarding the senior water right users. And so if there is an effect to a well and there are senior user then they can file a complaint with the DNRC and that is

who.

Handles those claims and so if there is an issue with water levels dropping then they can go to the DNRC assuming they are senior water user.

Great. Thank you.

Any other planning board members have questions.

OK, I'm not seeing anybody.

If not, then I would entertain a motion and then we can begin our discussion.

Kathleen, can we pull the motion?

Up.

Make a motion.

I move that the Missoula County land use map map 18 be amended to assign the Commercial Center Neighborhood Center Open Resource and recreation working lands and industrial center land use designations to the property legally described as track 1B of COSC 988. Based on the find.

Of fact and conclusions contained in the staff report.

Thank you. Danny, do you have a second?

A second second by tongue discussion.

Go ahead, Rick.

RH Richard Hall 0:50

Again, I pardon my croaking.

I've been.

I'm the chair of the bonder Middletown Community Council currently, and I will also speak as a planner, not as a member of that, but.

The the neighborhood is pretty much made clear that the desire for this property has not industrial property.

When it was, it's been historically zoned that, that's one of the reasons that when we did the rezoning, when we did the code reform.

Previously.

I actually put a motion for it to keep it light industrial because it would have been proposed to be heavy industrial. I know the neighborhood adjacent to it is not thrilled with industrial. The other issue is that the land.

Is definitely underutilized.

I mean, it's been sitting there unused.

Multiple owners have tried to make it work with as industrial lots and it's not happening.

It's also adjacent to the river and the previous plant went right up to the river.

And as someone pointed out, one of the things that happens near rivers are quarries. And processing plants.

You know this is the.

This is the a little remnant of the old mill that just happened to be on the other side of the river from them from the mill.

And but it is really part of a residential area.

That said.

We are.

We don't desire a travel Plaza.

I think that's pretty uniform.

Sentiment that we've heard on the Community Council, but as Greg pointed out, it does not pencil out.

To be able to fund the check without a taxpayer large enough to begin building the base so that they can bond out for the treatment plan.

So, you know, we discuss.

It's a necessary evil that we don't like, but.

But nothing smaller. Pencils out for the developer.

I know that 'cause I talked to him personally about and other people.

You know, I want to point out that.

Bonnie, Milltown and as a member of the Community Council, one of our stated goals is attainable housing for that area.

It's full of.

Affordable housing trailer parks, many of them that have been there 50 plus years. Even longer than that.

There are a lot of septic tanks and it's always been my concern that even in a mobile Home Park.

They and most share one septic tank amongst 2 units. There are no community septs.

There are very few community wells.

And I'm not sure why.

I mean, when they subdivided the homes.

For the mill houses that were done in Milltown or in Bonner, those got individual wells.

I think one is shared individual wells and septic I believe.

And what I like about this is look, we are going to having community septic system that people can connect to means that when you reach the useful life of your septic tank which a lot of people will be doing in the area.

They can have an opportunity to connect to the system and I can tell you that though the drain fields are played out in this area because.

The density. If your septic tank went bad, I'm not sure what you would do.

And it's right on the river as well. So you know it's just bad all the way around.

It's bad for the environment, it's bad for the community.

And also having a community septic system.

Gives us, makes it much less likely that we become part of the city in Missoula and the one thing I can tell you that's pretty uniform through people that live in the county is that they don't want to live in the city.

And that goes from East Missoula all the way to Burr Clinton and and beyond.

They like their independence.

They want to be independent from the city. They want to be in the city, they move there.

And this helps give us that.

I will also point out that having a travel center as much as we dislike it.

Also makes the value of the property more affordable to those places that.

Are near it, not necessarily the neighborhoods that are established because they're not next door to it, but.

As a developer pointed out, it's a it's. It's a former industrial site.

It has some kind of iffy uses in the past and.

You know, I I think that.

It will become affordable but but you know our concern is that.

That those deed restrictions keep it at a certain level of density, but we also recognize that without density, there's no affordability.

And then we end up having a subdivision.

That we can't afford and that is not what we want to have happen in Bondi, Milltown. Affordability is what what our community is about. There's a lot of retired people. There's a lot of working people there that simply can't afford. A single family residence and live in mobile Home Park. So we do not wanna be priced out of our own neighborhood. So that's a concern to us as well, but I will say that. I support this because of the treatment plans and I understand why the Travel Plaza allows that to happen. So and and it's and I know the community supports housing. Beyond that, you know I can't tell you how dense it's going to be, but we do have an opportunity to weigh in on all those things down the road. In every case, this development. So. I'm going to vote for the for the motion.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 7:57

Thanks Rick.
Go ahead, Josh.

JS **Joshua Schroeder** 8:01

Yeah, I'll. I'll piggyback on on Rick's comment. I guess first of all I just want to, you know, give kudos to the developer. This is a a difficult complex. Ambitious mixed-use project. That he's taking on. I think given the combination of the upfront infrastructure costs, the. Self-imposed residential density limits. The environmentally sensitive area and the need for really high level water treatment. The inclusion of significant open space with possibly public access. And a stated goal of delivering, if not affordable, attainably priced housing. Project economics need to come from somewhere. Right, so you Add all of those together and it gets it gets difficult. And I guess it's clear to me that those project economics, at least some of them.

Need to come from a more intensive commercial land use.

Right. That commercial center that permits a travel center amongst many other commercial uses.

So the question that I guess I'm wrestling with and maybe it's a question for the board too, is, is that intensity increased intensity most I think specifically on the commercial center.

Area being proposed in advanced because it represents the best long term land use for that area.

In this location, or because that's what's required to make the project pencil, or both?

I guess the way I'm looking at it is, given the existing zoning of heavy industrial where each lot to my understanding is gonna have its own septic and own well, right?

Exempt wells.

I'm leaning towards it being an acceptable long term land use outcome.

And.

Functioning as.

Unnecessary financing component to get this project capitalized.

You know, maybe that Travel Plaza lot or lots helps de risk. The project initially helps fund the TIF.

And gets the affordable housing online so.

This is a tough project to execute.

It really is.

So, you know, kudos to Mr. Moore's. I hope he's done this before.

And I guess I intend to.

I intend to support the motion.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 11:00

Thanks Josh.

I'll keep it short because I basically agree with what Rick and Josh have already put forward.

I just want to give a shout out to Judy Matson.

I really appreciated your testimony and your historical context.

I wish we had a Judy Matson for every project that comes before this board to

provide that context because it doesn't really come to us in the agenda packets that we get and it's so helpful to understand, you know, what came before.

Even if you go all the way back to, you know, pre statehood, it's still helpful to really understand.

And I also want to give a shout. He's not in the room right now because he left. But the testimony from the Superintendent from Bonner School, I really appreciate that personally, because I work in a school that's currently also seeing a major enrollment drop because of lack of.

New housing construction and it's depressing.

It's depressing to see the number of kindergarten classes go from 4:00 to 2:00.

While I've been working there and I hope it doesn't fall any further, but it's a real big concern of mine under enrollment in schools, falling enrollment in schools, and just generally inability for young families to really plant their roots in Missoula.

I could say more.

I personally am not really that concerned about residential density here.

I when I heard you mentioned 6 Plex as the most dense housing you build.

Your planning or your thinking about building?

I I would.

I think more would potentially be appropriate. This seems like it's gonna be a really great place for people to live, and I think more families should be able to plant their roots here in the way that they've been been able to plant their roots in other parts of.

Missoula.

So with that, I'll just say that I also support the motion and I'm not going to try and comment again on the zoning motion. I think just here.

Yeah, I played a sports motion.

I'm very empathetic to the public comments and I really appreciate them.

I and again I I.

Josh is right.

This is a very difficult project, but the fact that this has been empty for so long and the fact that the current zoning is SKU's very industrial.

I'm supporting this largely to move forward like we need to do something here.

It may not work out.

I can't comment on the travel Plaza all of that, but we have developer who's interested in trying to make this work.
And that and we should take the first step.
So I'm I'm looking to support the the next step.
Worst case, we have better, more appropriate zoning for the area, regardless of what happens to it versus what is currently here.
So that's that's my plan to put this.
Yeah. Thanks.
I I was planning on only commenting on the land use plan, but obviously it's tied pretty intricately with the zoning slide that's gonna follow here in a minute.
I also intend to support this and mainly for the reasons that you just expressed like the.
You know the the the land use plan amendment that is proposed here and the zoning plan amendment.
That is proposed here, seems in line with the Community goals, although the travel center might not.
That's not a foregone conclusion either.
And we are not here reviewing a development proposal.
Over here reviewing.
Growth policy amendments and zoning amendments and.
And in my view, these seem appropriate.
To to what we've heard in public comments and to the community at large.
So I intend to support it.
Guess with that, maybe we have a roll call. Vote please.
Roll call.
Vote to prom. Yes. Annie tenenbaum. Yes, Josh Schrader.

 **Joshua Schroeder** 15:07
Yes.

 **Analeshia Rodriguez** 15:09
Recall.

RH Richard Hall 15:11

Yes.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 15:12

Shane Morrissey.

And it is unanimous. The motion passes.

May we have the next?

Please somebody wouldn't mind.

I moved at the Missoula County zoning map be amended to show the property legally described as track 1B of COSC 988AS Industrial Center Light Commercial Center, Neighborhood Center, agricultural working Lands AGW 40, and resource and open space. Based on the findings of fact and.

Conclusions contained in the staff report.

RH Richard Hall 15:50

I just want to correct you that you're saying C nine 888-6988.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 15:58

I can read it again. Thank you.

I'm not gonna read it again, 6988.

Thank you for the correction.

All right. Moved by Danny.

Is there a second?

A second second by Tuneln discussion.

Does anybody have any further discussion? They want to add to this?

Go ahead, Josh.

JS Joshua Schroeder 16:20

I was just gonna mention one thing that relates to the existing industrial subdivision.

I've looked pretty it's been a while ago, but I look pretty close at some of the lots in that subdivision. And if I recall correctly, a number of them had.

Wells located on adjacent lots in order to accommodate.

The septic.

Requirement in order to keep enough distance away from them and maintain a building envelope. And I think you know that's just not ideal if you're in a heavy industrial user and you're coming in to buy a piece of property and you need to get an easement across the.

Property that is adjacent to you because you're well is located there.

So there's just a number of of issues that.

Like that that exist with the current plan.

So I just thought I'd I'd mention that that just occurred to me.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 17:24

Thanks Josh.

Anybody else?

Maybe have a roll call vote please.

Roll call.

Vote to Pham? Yes, Danny tenenbaum.

Josh Schrader.

JS **Joshua Schroeder** 17:43

Yes.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 17:44

Recall.

RH **Richard Hall** 17:46

Yes.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 17:47

Shane Morrissey.

And it is unanimous.

The motion passes.

Thank you.

Thank you everybody for your public comments and for the insight into.

Into the proposed developments.

Thanks for the presentation.

We'll hopefully buzz through the rest of the agenda here. Communications and special presentations. We have none.

Committee reports. Yeah. TPCC met this afternoon.

They approved a letter of support for the city's build grant application.

I think the big take away from there is that they're kind of optimizing the language for the current administration to try to.

Tweaking some things, so hopefully that'll go well.

And then also the approval to the FY20 26 tip amendment, some some funding.

OK. Thanks for doing that old business.

I don't believe we have any old business.

New business. I don't believe we have any new business comments from planning board members.

Go ahead, Josh.

JS Joshua Schroeder 18:59

I just wanted to say I got a nice letter from the mayor.

I think all of us probably did, thanking us for all the hours and time and work on the UDC.

And yeah, I appreciated that.

That was that was nice.

I don't know or never met her, but appreciated that.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 19:22

I didn't get a nice letter, Josh.

RH Richard Hall 19:22

I definitely wanna suck.

AR Analeshia Rodriguez 19:24

I'm just kidding.

RH **Richard Hall** 19:25

I got one no.
So I just.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 19:30

Go ahead.

RH **Richard Hall** 19:31

I just wanted to add that I think this is possibly my last meeting because February 4th I think is our first meeting of the new.
M club.
With Missoula County consolidated land use board, but I like our acronym.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 19:50

We do have a meeting on February 3rd, but there's nothing on the agenda. It's to approve the minutes for today's meeting.

RH **Richard Hall** 19:58

Oh, that's right.
Just a, just a kind of a phone in deal, OK.
I'll be there.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 20:07

Yeah, it's not.
It's not goodbye yet, Rick.
I guess the only thing that I wanted to point.
Our Commissioners and maybe public officials too is the non agenda public comment item from Miss Miller on the water supply study and just wanted to acknowledge that we received that and ask our ELECTEDS to.
Please take that seriously and look into it as as they can anything else on planning board comments.
Yeah, just a quick follow up on on Miss Miller's comments as well.

I don't know if she was aware of folks aware, but we spent a lot of time with the zoning around.

Crypto mining, which I think has a lot of protections against, I think a lot of the considered thing might have it didn't address water specifically, but I think we have a lot of protections in place for data centers.

RH Richard Hall 21:10

Yeah. In in bond or miltown, you cannot have a data center or crypto mining unless you produce your own power.

AR Analessia Rodriguez 21:20

Yeah. And I believe M's Milder's comments were really regarding.

Water usage and potential water usage and obviously I I don't know.

I am certainly not a hydrologist, but how you know surrounding areas potentially outside of Missoula County or outside of Missoula City's limits could potentially impact.

Our own water quality.

So think that.

You know, it might not be something that they necessarily have control of, but you know, cooperation goes a long way. So, Josh.

JS Joshua Schroeder 22:00

Yeah, I was just going to mention when we saw the Y area infrastructure plan.

That was a point that I brought up.

I think that the plan was based on a on a hydrology or aquifer study that was over 10 years old.

And.

I think it'd be a good idea for them to update that study to determine, you know, the suitability of the aquifer for the growth that's planned there.

And so.

You know, maybe that's something that Miss Miller can.

Look into and use as a way to.

You know, try to push an effort to get a wider study done or start there and expand

it.

I'm not sure, but I I agree.

I mean, I think if we're going to be planning for all this growth, we need to understand the availability of the basic resources.

RH **Richard Hall** 22:58

And I'd like to mention that the proposed data center in the middle of nowhere in Montana has a closed loop water system, and they recycle their own.

So, but I'm not saying I support data centers, I'm just saying that that is how most of them are designed.

AR **Analeshia Rodriguez** 23:17

Thanks Rick.

Sounds like that's it.

So we will adjourn. Thank you, everybody.

● stopped transcription

MISSOULA WATER SUPPLY STUDY NEEDED

I'm Peggy M. Miller, 1520 S. 7th st. West, Missoula, homeowner, herb grower, medical herbalist, and once a national water supply/surface/groundwater/water quality "expert", highlandwinds@gmail.com, 406-541-7577.. 1/16/26

We in Missoula County and city, need to know our total Missoula aquifer water supply, so applications by huge consumers like AI Data Centers, that are looking for areas like ours, who can consume water equal to a town of 50,000, and therefore drain local water supply quickly, (and then dump their waste water back into the public supply), can be rejected by town and county officials, but also to know the areas of our aquifer most susceptible to reduction in water table height from increased general population and drought. Our Missoula Aquifer is a sole source aquifer that flows generally north or south by west in direction, from south of Darby, down from Potomac, and east of Missoula to over past Frenchtown and Huson. If a large data center construction application was accepted by the Bitterroot river area, Bonner, or Clinton area, for example, it could rapidly draw down water supply of Missoula, which depends on the Clark Fork, Blackfoot and BitterRoot River watersheds, as major replenishing sources for Missoula needs. The Blackfoot contributes roughly 54% to our aquifer replenishment at Milltown. (see picture). If such a data center were placed at Bonner or in the Bitterroot, Missoula city might find it quickly had very serious water shortages. Globally, communities are starting to contest these data centers who install themselves and then reveal their true water supply needs. They are best located where a desalinization of salt water (oceanside location) is possible.

A comprehensive Missoula Aquifer water study, conducted by USGS, who historically does such work, local and state water engineers and hydrologists, is possible, and in fact pockets of funding from the state might be available. *In order to get a cost estimate for such an aquifer supply study, and locate funding sources, county and/or city officials need to contact Rodney Caldwell, USGS Helena based hydrogeologist/director of Montana/Wyoming projects:* (our Missoula hydrogeologists are tapped right now due to ongoing water system study) . Dr. Caldwell agrees there is reason for concern and a study would be highly useful and is accustomed to drawing on knowledge of and working in a coalition framework with specialists around the state.

Study
→
→
This Missoula Aquifer Water Supply study should do following at minimum:

- a) Prepare an analysis of the size of the Missoula Aquifer that comes up with an approximate estimate of total water supply in Missoula aquifer and estimates population it would serve at current use levels (current resident consumption and irrigation and commercial consumption).
- b) Analyzes the areas of our aquifer that are shallow, and so most vulnerable to overtapping, and the presence of underground "walls" from glacier debris that could hamper access of some wells to deeper aquifer draw. This section of study is critical in that future planning of developments, both commercial and residential, requires an understanding of those areas that use the Missoula Aquifer which are facing or approaching a tapping overload so that development placement can be planned.

Rough Description: Subsurface aquifers like the Missoula Aquifer which provides rain/snow/river fed water to our population comprised mainly of the 30 foot deep – 150 foot deep "river of water/ sand" that sits on a semi-impervious bed of shale surrounded on side by bedrock, and such (very compact, with little water) fill easily with good rainfall and snow melt but the subsurface flow of the subsurface water in sand/silt is continuous so it drains quickly if not replenished. Furthermore, the lake-like design of our aquifer edges are shallower but other areas can be unexpectedly shallow also due to unrefined glacier retreat design. Well history helps to track some of this geologic design but much is unknown and needs review due to the dependence we have on this one source of water, particularly as population grows.

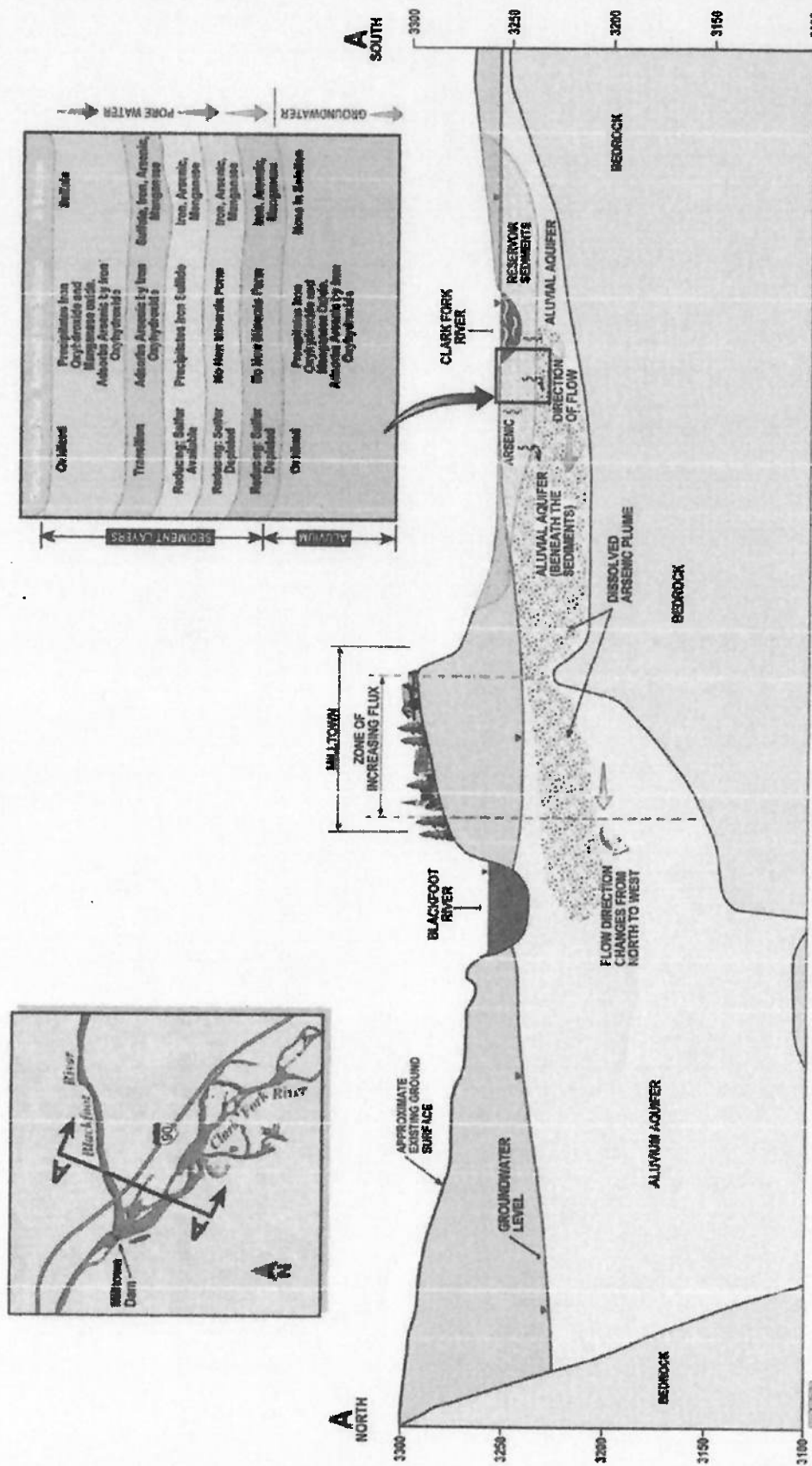


EXHIBIT 2.5
Conceptual Model: Cross-Section of Hydrological System and
Geochemical Processes in Maltown Reservoir

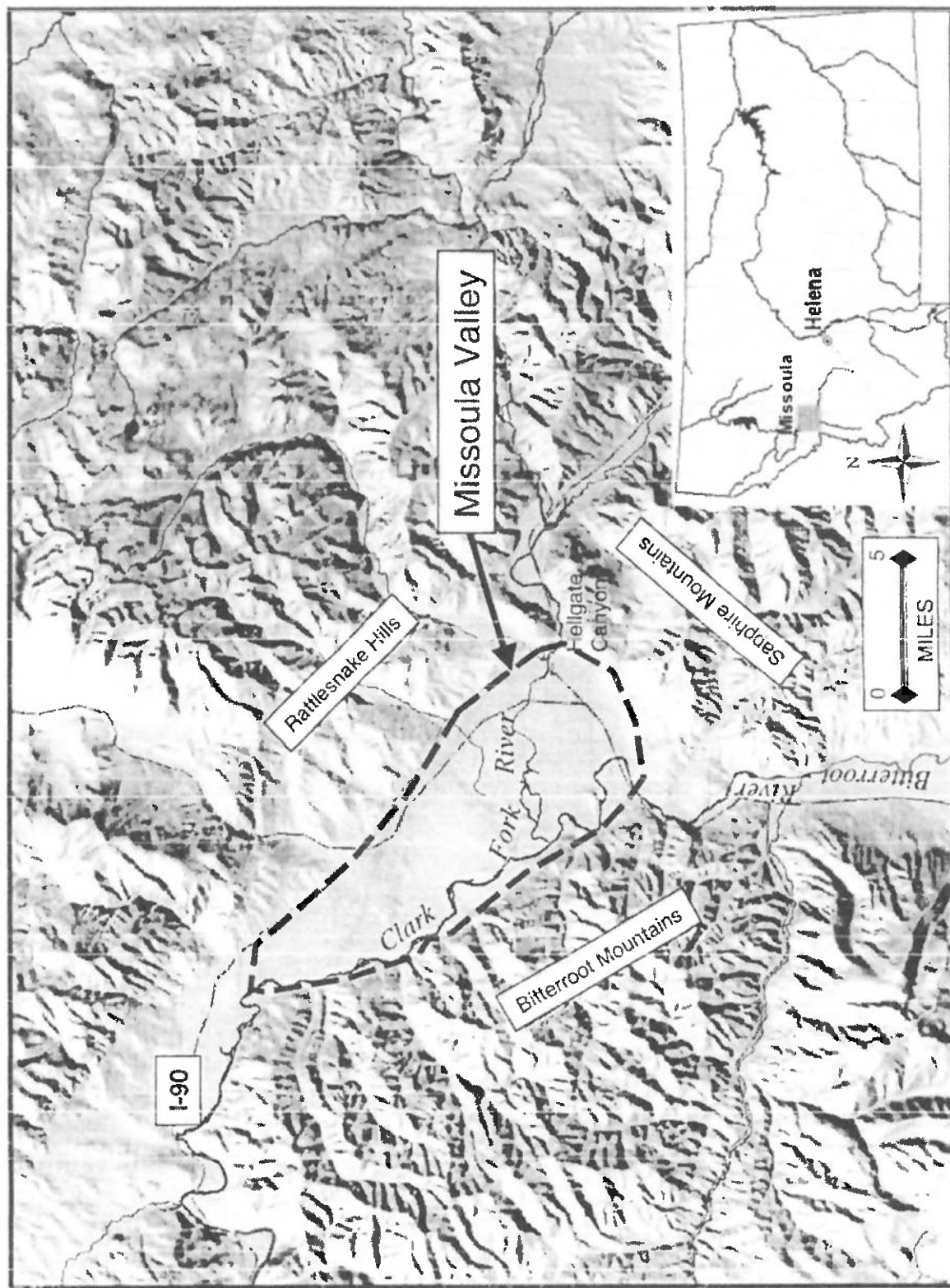


Figure 1. The Missoula Valley is located in southwest Montana near the confluence of the Clark Fork and Bitterroot rivers.

References and quotes: (prep by Peggy M Miller, highlandwinds@gmail.com, 406-541-7577)

Data Center - https://www.columbiariverkeeper.org/2025/stop-data-center-expansion/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=21938712625&gbraid=0AAAAACPnzFDdQel_NM_QtcYeJxD4I3hfK&gclid=CjwKCAiA4KfLBhB0EiwAUy7GATlqavzHHjYPUNX_XggHaNFipGR75nwaeJspAXEkrtqK3sJdnWaRhoC95MQAvD_BwE

Big Tech's Data Center Expansion Threatens Columbia and the Climate *By: Kelly Campbell, Policy Director*

High Country News:

The West's data centers suck (water and power)

From simple searches to chatGPT, the big digital buildup threatens the grid and water supplies. [*Jonathan Thompson*](#) July 28, 2025

“sustainable” bitcoin mining is an oxymoron, given the enormous amounts of power and water data centers consume. The massive server banks that run nearly every aspect of our digital world churn away in warehouse-like buildings in Phoenix, Las Vegas, rural Washington and Wyoming, each gobbling as much electricity as a small city to process AI queries, cryptocurrency extraction and other aspects of our increasingly cloud-based society. The harder they work, the hotter they get, and the more power and water they need to cool off.

Data Centers – summary (ai)

Data centers use vast amounts of water primarily for cooling servers, with consumption increasing significantly due to AI workloads, leading to local water stress, especially in arid regions, impacting communities and agriculture. While traditional evaporative cooling systems are water-intensive, new technologies like direct-to-chip cooling, closed-loop systems, and locating data centers in cooler climates or using recycled water offer ways to improve efficiency, though overall water usage remains a major sustainability challenge for the industry. (Ai)

How Water is Used

- **Cooling Systems:** Evaporative cooling towers release steam to cool equipment, consuming large volumes of freshwater.
- **Heat Generation:** Servers generate intense heat, requiring constant water supply to maintain operational temperatures.
- **AI's Impact:** AI processing demands more water, with estimates suggesting a single AI query can use a significant amount of water, adding to the strain.

Scale of Consumption

- **Massive Volumes:** Large data centers can use millions of gallons daily, comparable to a small town's water supply. **Corporate Examples:** Google reported using over 5 billion gallons in 2023, with a growing percentage in water-scarce areas. **Local Strain:** In places like Iowa, a single data center's usage can equal several days of residential water supply, and in Georgia, communities face contaminated or depleted sources.

together this data center background brief to share what we've learned with you.

Missoula Aquifer: Tracing Ground-Water Flow in the Missoula Valley Aquifer, Southwest Montana By John I. LaFave , jlafave@mttech.edu Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Ground-Water Assessment Open-File Report 17 June 2002

"Missoula Valley Aquifer The city of Missoula is underlain by unconsolidated Pleistocene deposits of the Missoula Valley aquifer, a designated sole-source aquifer by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Materials in the aquifer were deposited by glacial melt waters and range in size from fine sand and silt to gravel and cobbles. The aquifer is 100 to 150 feet thick and is bounded below by relatively impermeable, fine-grained Tertiary sediments (figure 4). Three lithologic units have been identified throughout most of the aquifer (Woessner, 1988): the top unit (unit one) is 10 to 30 feet thick, composed of very permeable coarse sand to boulders; the middle unit (unit two) is as much as 40 feet thick and composed of silt and fine sand and is a low permeability horizon within the aquifer; the basal unit (unit three) is composed of 50 to 100 feet of highly permeable, coarse-grained sand and gravel (figure 5). Unit three is the most prolific zone in the aquifer, wells reportedly yield as much as 4,100 gallons per minute (gpm). Few wells penetrate the base of unit three, so the basal configuration of the aquifer is poorly known. Ground-water in the Missoula Valley aquifer is unconfined, the water table ranges from 10 to 60 feet below the surface. Ground-water flow paths through the aquifer are important because they also describe paths that would likely be taken by contaminants. The potentiometric surface in June 1999 mimics the slope of the land surface; ground water flows from the Clark Fork River southwest toward the Bitterroot River and its confluence with the Clark Fork River; the gradient across the study area was 0.002 (figure 6a). In March 2000, water levels were 5 to 12 feet lower than they were in June 1999 (figure 6b); wells closer to the Clark Fork River show slightly larger declines. The general configuration of the potentiometric was similar to that of June 1999 with the same direction of ground-water flow, although the hydraulic gradient across the study area was slightly smaller. Leakage from the Clark Fork River is estimated to provide 80 to more than 90 percent of the recharge to the aquifer (Woessner, 1988; Miller, 1991); other sources include underflow through Hellgate Canyon, and precipitation. Water leaves the aquifer as discharge to the Bitterroot River, evapotranspiration, and as pumpage from wells. Water levels fluctuate seasonally and are closely tied to discharge in the Clark Fork River (figure 7). Annual water-level fluctuations in wells are on the order of 5 to 10 feet; however, the fluctuations are more pronounced in wells near the Clark Fork River and become muted downgradient along the flow path.

These are results for [missoula aquifer contributions of bitterroot river valley](#)

Search instead for [missoula aquifer contributions of bitterroot river valley](#)

AI Overview

The Bitterroot Valley significantly contributes to the larger Missoula aquifer system, primarily through the Bitterroot River, which flows north and joins the Clark Fork, recharging the extensive glacial outwash aquifer beneath the Missoula Valley with vast amounts of groundwater, supplemented by irrigation returns and mountain runoff, creating a massive, shared water resource vital for Missoula's sole-source drinking water supply. This connection means water management in the Bitterroot, especially agricultural practices, directly impacts the quantity and quality of water in the Missoula aquifer, influencing recharge rates and potential contaminants.

How the Bitterroot Valley Feeds the Missoula Aquifer

1. **River Flow & Infiltration:** The Bitterroot River flows north, and its water infiltrates into the ground, recharging the Missoula aquifer along its path through the valley.
2. **Glacial Deposits:** Both valleys are filled with deep glacial deposits (sand, gravel, cobbles) from [Glacial Lake Missoula](#), forming a huge, interconnected aquifer system.
3. **Irrigation Return:** A significant portion of recharge comes from flood irrigation, where water seeps from fields and canals back into the ground.
4. **Mountain Runoff:** Rainfall and snowmelt from the surrounding mountains also contribute to recharge.

Impact on Missoula

- **Sole Source:** The Missoula aquifer, fed partly by the Bitterroot, is Missoula's sole source of drinking water, supplying thousands of households.
- **Connectivity:** Surface water and groundwater in the region are closely linked; changes in the Bitterroot Valley's water use can affect Missoula's supply.

Water Quality & Management Concerns

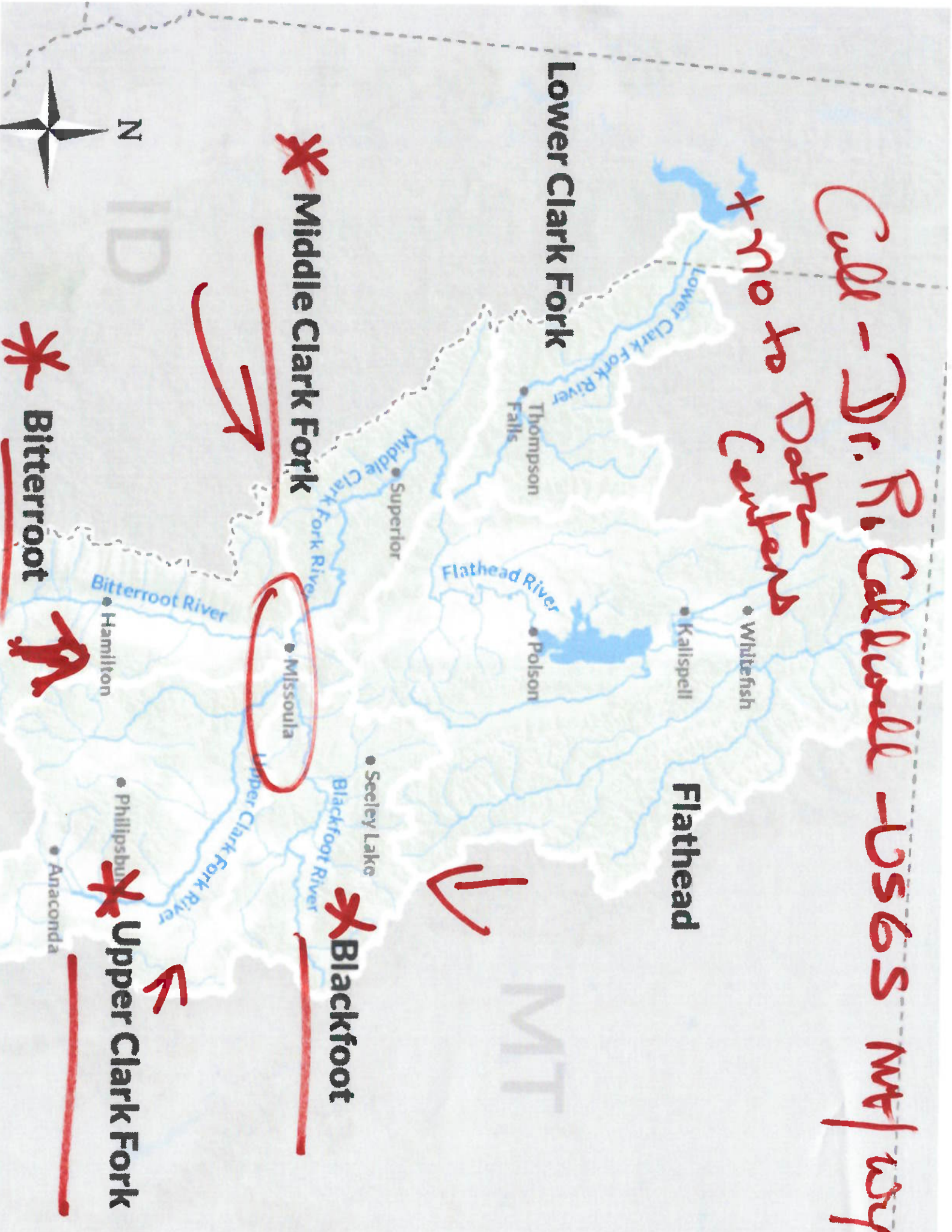
- **Vulnerability:** The shallow, porous nature of the aquifer makes it susceptible to contamination from stormwater, septic systems, and agricultural runoff.
- **Land Use Matters:** Practices like switching from flood irrigation to sprinklers or lining canals can reduce recharge, impacting the aquifer, notes [Bitterroot Star](#).
- **Nutrient Loading:** Municipal treatment plants in the Bitterroot Valley, like Lolo and Hamilton, add nutrients, highlighting the need for management to protect water quality, according to the [Missoula Current](#).

The Bitterroot River watershed is crucial for Missoula's water, as its flows recharge the [Missoula Valley Aquifer](#), the city's sole source of drinking water, with snowmelt and rainfall seeping through glacial deposits, making the river system's health vital for supplying clean water to thousands of residents, alongside other tributaries feeding the larger Clark Fork River system.

Key Contributions & Connections:

- **Aquifer Recharge:** The Bitterroot River and its tributaries (like Lolo Creek) carry water from the surrounding mountains, much of which infiltrates the valley floor to replenish the underground aquifer that Missoula relies on.
- **Clark Fork System:** The Bitterroot River flows north to join the Clark Fork River just north of Missoula, connecting the entire watershed to the larger regional water system that feeds the city.

Call - Dr. R. Caldwell - USGS NW 154
+ no to Date
Confers





Growth Policy Amendment and Rezoning Request: Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront

Date: January 20, 2026

Property Location: 8129 Cowboy Tr

**Applicant: Gregory Morse, Blackfoot
Crossing LLC**

Technical Representative: WGM Group

Planner: Kathleen Arthur

Location

8129 Cowboy Trail in the West Riverside Neighborhood



Background

- History: Stimson Lumber Co log yard
- Land use designation: Industrial Center, Heavy
- Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD)

Existing Conditions

- Vacant
- Landfill
- Physical features
- Location & transportation access



MISSOULA AREA LAND USE MAP (JUNE 6, 2019)
BLACKFOOT CROSSING AND BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT
MISSOULA COUNTY, MONTANA

Legend
 Land Use Designation
 Open, Resource And Recreation
 Agriculture
 Working Lands
 Rural Residential And Agriculture
 Residential
 Neighborhood Residential
 Planned Neighborhood
 Neighborhood Center
 Commercial Center
 Live/Make Neighborhood
 Community Mixed Use
 Civic Employment Center
 Industrial Center
 Heavy Industrial Center

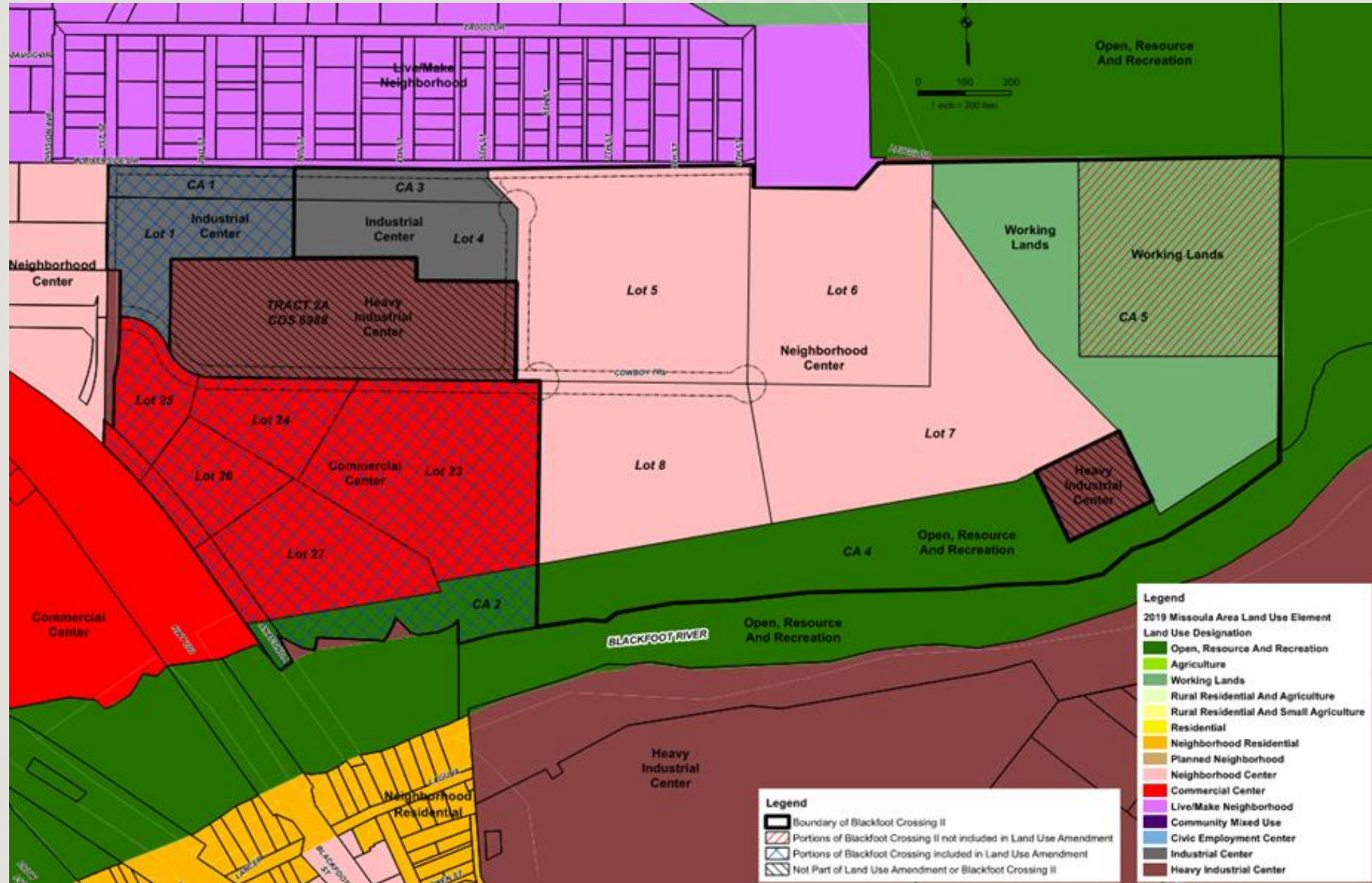
Legend
 Boundary of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront
 Portion of Blackfoot Crossing Included in Land Use Amendment

Scale: 0 150 300
 1 inch = 300 feet

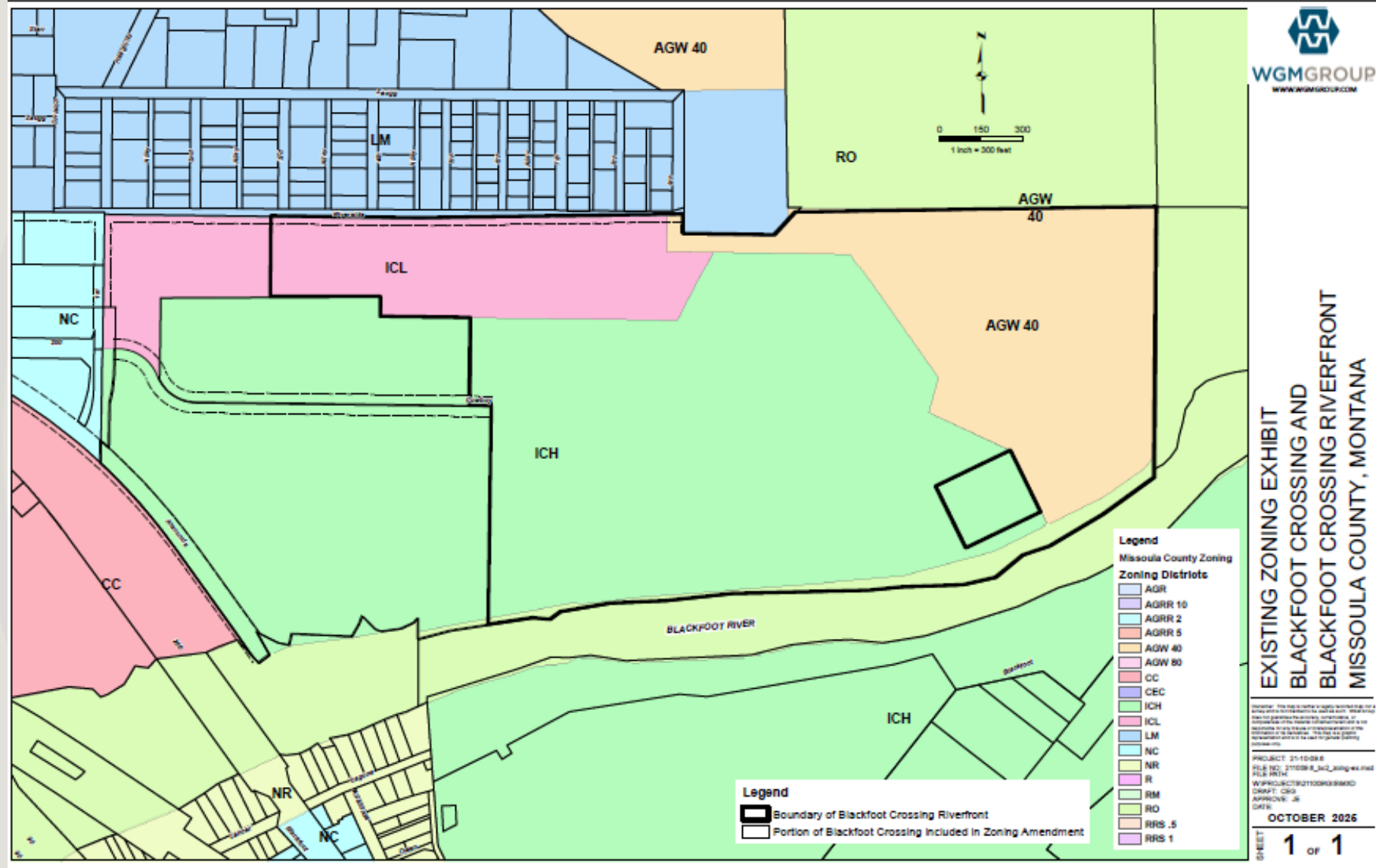
PROJECT: 21-10-08-B
FILE NO.: 227089-B_Land_Use-Map
FILE NAME: W:\PROJECTS\2021\202108\B\Map
DRAFT: CHG
APPROVE: JS
DATE: 10/06/2021

OCTOBER 2026
1 of 1

Proposed Land Use



Rezone: Existing Zoning



PROPOSED ZONING EXHIBIT
BLACKFOOT CROSSING AND
BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT
MISSOULA COUNTY, MONTANA

Legend
 Boundary of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront
 Portions of Blackfoot Crossing included in Zoning Amendment
 Not Part of Zoning Amendment or Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront
 Portions of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront not included in Zoning Amendment

Legend
 Missoula County Zoning Districts
 AGR
 AGRR 10
 AGRR 2
 AGRR 5
 AGW 40
 AGW 80
 CC
 CEC
 ICH
 ICL
 LM
 NC
 NR
 R
 RM
 RO
 RRS 5
 RRS 1

Scale: 1 inch = 300 feet

Project: 21-10-09-6 (Pv02)
 File No: 211009-6_blackfoot_crossing-pxr.mxd
 File Path: W:\PROJECTS\211009\GIS\MXD
 Draft: CGO
 Approve: JE
 Date: OCTOBER 2025

1 OF 1

Proposed Infrastructure

- Applicant is proposing public water and sewer infrastructure to serve the development
- The surrounding neighborhood will not be required to connect. But it will be built to expand in the future.
- Without this infrastructure, the planned development wouldn't be feasible and some zoning requirements couldn't be met.

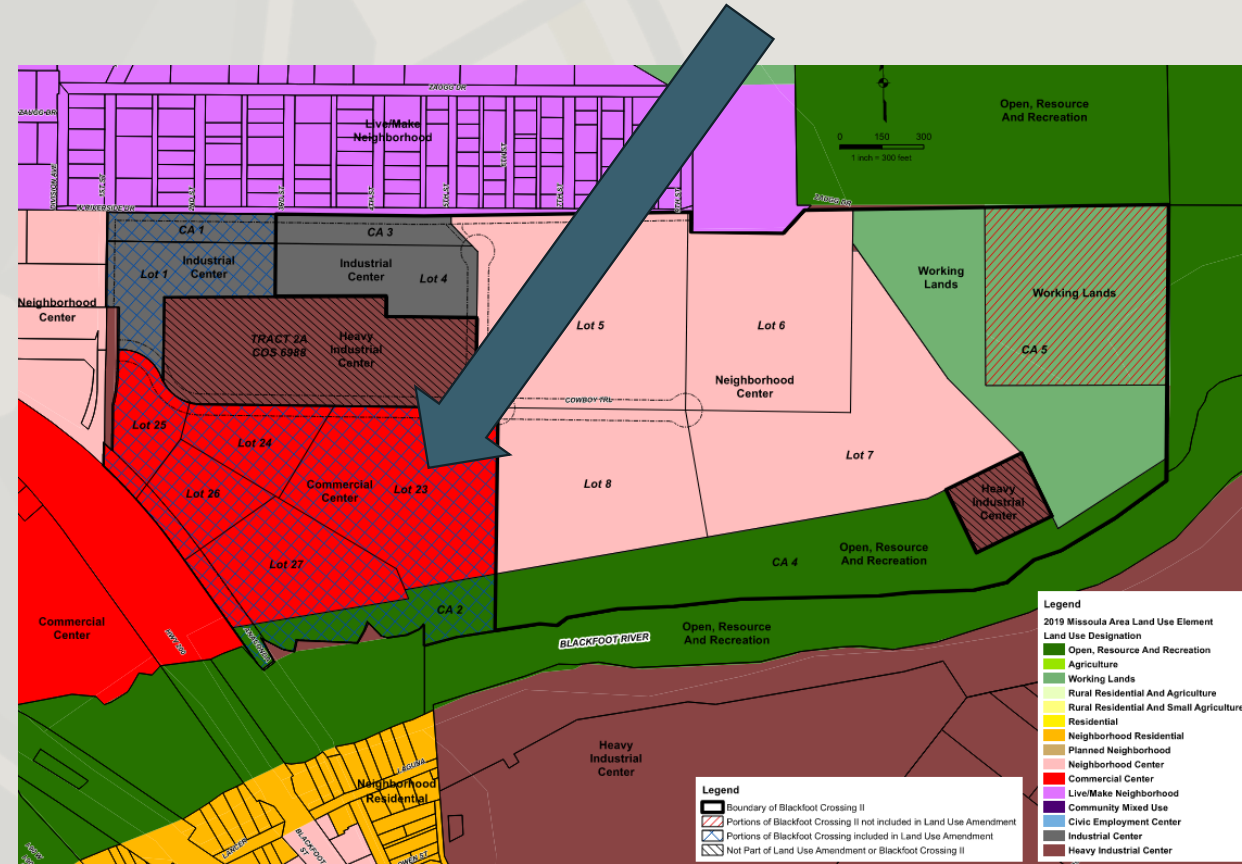
Growth Policy Amendment Review Criteria

1. The amendment substantially complies with the applicable guiding principles, goals, and objectives of the growth policy and accompanying Land Use Designation Map, except as specifically addressed in the amendment request
2. The amendment is consistent with the applicable goals, objectives, and land use designations of the applicable area plan (if any), except as specifically addressed in the amendment request.
3. The amendment is designed to meet a need that is otherwise not being met.

Commercial Center Designation

Allowed uses under Commercial Center zoning

- Administrative Facility
- Airports, helipads *
- Animal services small, boarding
- Business equipment sales and service
- Cannabis dispensary
- Casinos
- College/University
- Community residential facility
- Cultural service
- Daycare center/home
- Residential (8 homes/acre min)
- Eating and drinking establishments
- Entertainment venues: small, medium, large
- Financial service
- Food and beverage sales
- Funeral and internment services: crematorium*
- Galleries and exhibition space
- Gasoline and fuel sales
- Homeless shelter & meal center
- Hospital
- Lodging: B&B, hostel, hotel, motel
- Manufacturing and production: artisan, limited
- Medical facility, walk-in clinic
- Mobile food court
- Nursing home
- Park
- Parking structure
- Personal improvement service
- Professional office
- Retail
- RV Park
- Travel Plaza
- Utilities
- Vehicle: maintenance, repair, sales, storage



Commercial Center Designation

The Commercial Center designation allows for intensive uses however, the current designation of Heavy Industrial also allows for intensive uses, including landfills, junk yards, waste transfer stations and gravel pits.

Commercial Center compliance with the Growth Policy

a)Location

b)Housing

c)Economic Development

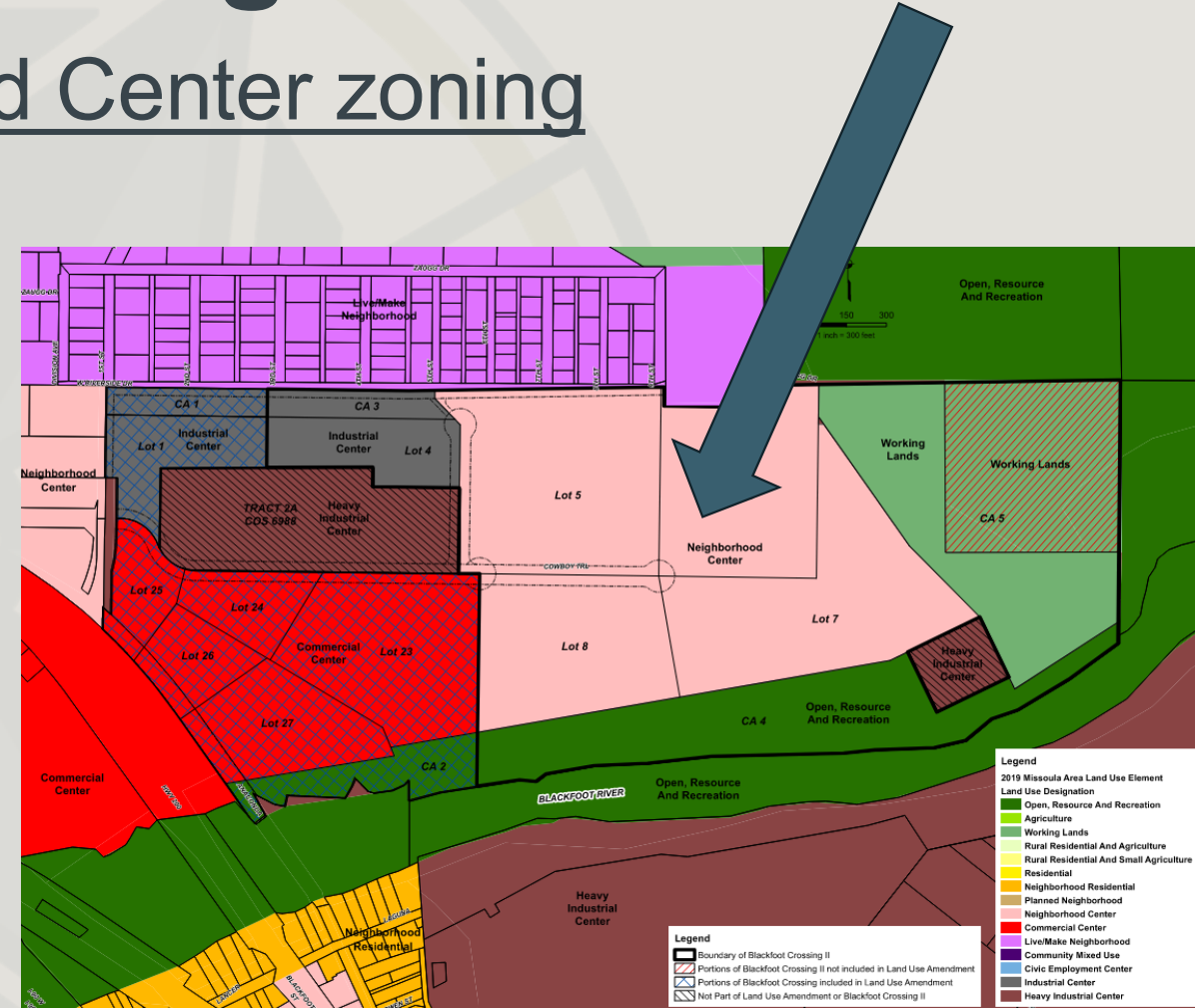
d)Infrastructure

e)Public Support

Neighborhood Center Designation

Allowed uses under Neighborhood Center zoning

- Administrative Facility
- Animal services small
- Community residential facility
- Cultural service
- Daycare center/home
- Residential (8 homes/acre min)
- Eating and drinking establishments
- Entertainment venues: small, medium
- Financial service
- Food and beverage sales
- Funeral home
- Galleries and exhibition space
- Gasoline and fuel sales
- Homeless shelter & meal center
- Hospital*
- Lodging: B&B, hostel, hotel, motel
- Medical facility, walk-in clinic
- Mobile food court
- Nursing home
- Park
- Personal improvement service
- Professional office
- Retail
- School
- Utilities (minor)
- Vehicle: maintenance, repair, sales, storage



Neighborhood Center compliance with the Growth Policy

a)Location

b)Housing

c)Economic Development

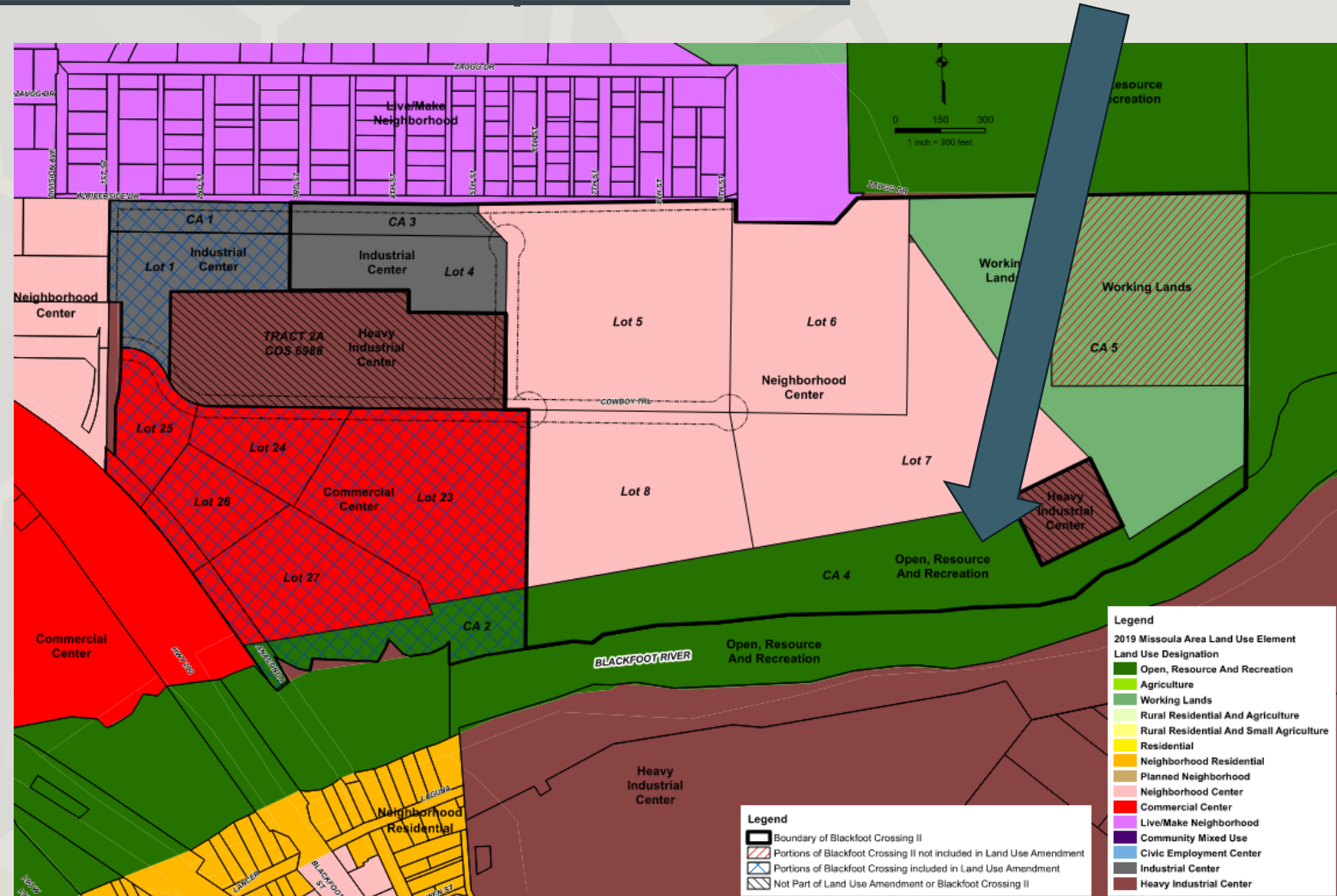
d)Infrastructure

e)Public support

Open, Resource and Recreation Designation

Allowed uses under Resource and Open Lands zoning:

- Administrative Facility
- Agriculture
- Campground
- Open space
- Park
- Recreation developed outdoor
- Recreation passive
- Resource extraction*
- Utilities (minor)



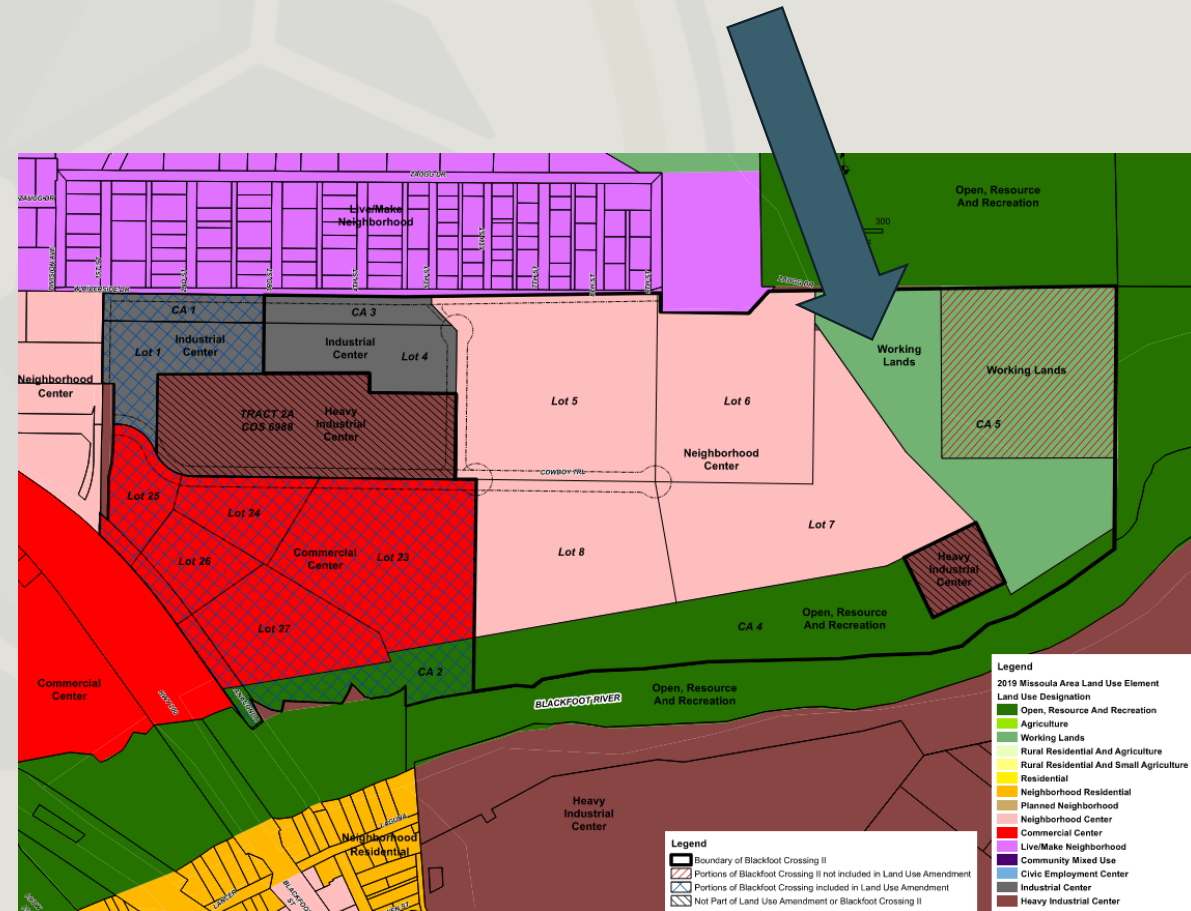
Open Resource and Recreation compliance with the Growth Policy

- a)Protect surface water and riparian
environment**
- b)Recreation**
- c)Public support**

Working Lands Designation

Allowed uses under Agriculture, Working zoning:

- Administrative Facility
- Agriculture
- Animal Services
- Campground
- Funeral Services
- Guest Ranch
- Agricultural & Artisan Manufacturing
- Open space
- Park
- Public Safety Facility
- Recreation Active
- Recreation developed outdoor
- Recreation passive
- Residential (1du/40ac)
- Solar Energy Systems
- Utilities (minor)



Working Lands Designation

a)Protect steep slopes

b)Recreation

c)Public support

Key Growth Policy Goals

- Goal 1: Conserve vital natural resources including surface and groundwater, air quality, agricultural resources, iconic landscapes, fish and wildlife species and their habitats, and native plant communities.
- Goal 2: Promote the responsible use and enjoyment of publicly-owned lands and waters.
- Goal 8: Proactively plan and provide for the logical growth of communities while protecting rural character and sustaining county resources by guiding development to areas most suited for it.
- Goal 10: Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing choices, especially for those who are homeless or experience high costs for housing relative to income
- Goal 12: Promote healthy active communities

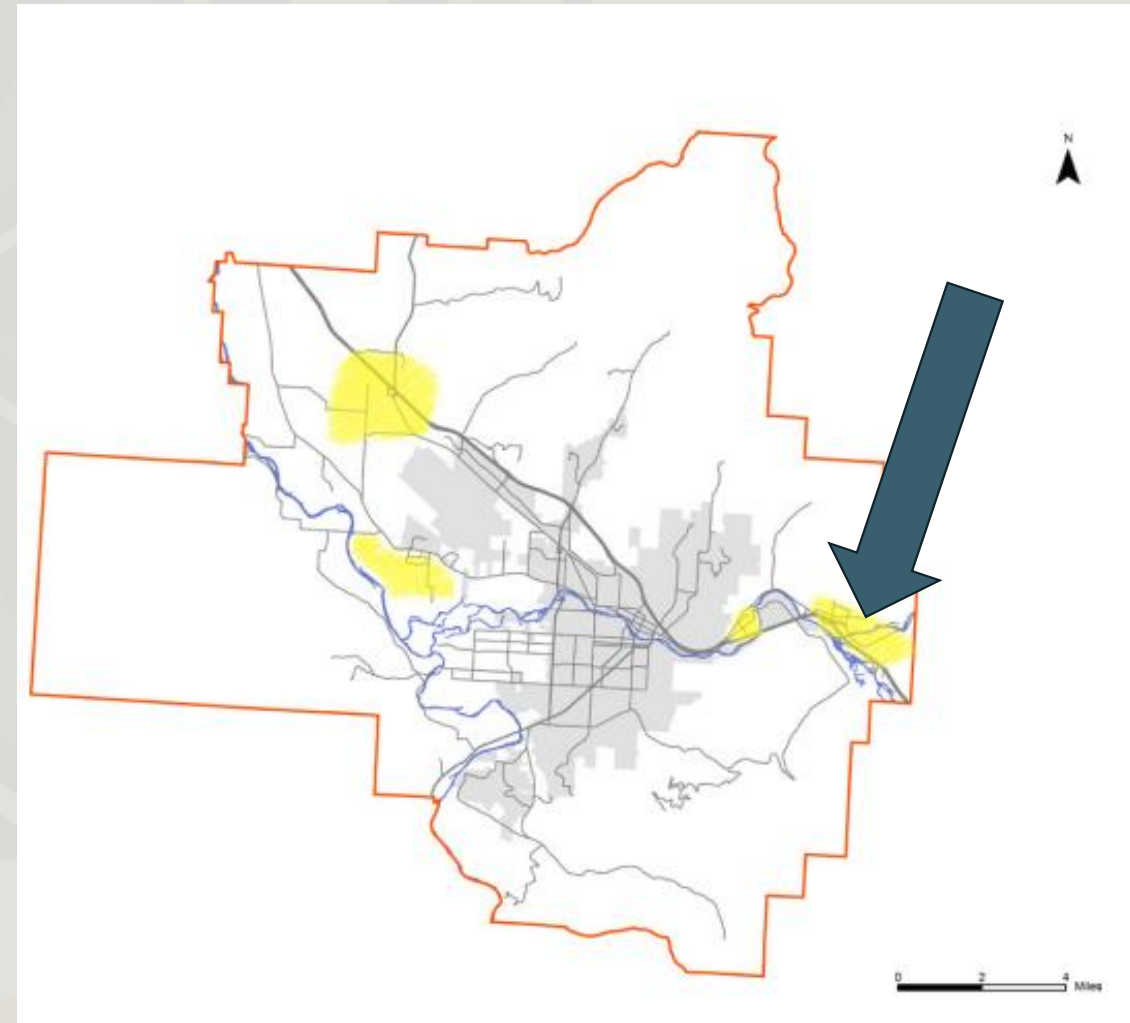
2019 Land Use Element

- Provides a plan for the physical framework needed to facilitate unique neighborhoods.
- Preserves working lands, agricultural areas and naturally functioning systems by accommodating planned growth in areas that have existing infrastructure and other growth capacity elements



Plan for the **Physical Framework** Needed to Facilitate Unique Neighborhoods

- Missoula County's role is to enable the evolution of existing and emerging neighborhoods to capture their distinct identity and sense of place.
- These neighborhoods have higher levels of infrastructure and services than other locations
- Investment in infrastructure and using public-private partnerships will be necessary



Amendment to Zoning Map Review Criteria

1. Zoning regulations must be made in accordance with the Growth Policy.
2. Zoning regulation must be designed to:
 - (i) *secure safety from fire and other dangers;*
 - (ii) *promote public health, public safety, and general welfare; and*
 - (iii) *facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements*
3. In the adoption of zoning regulations, the board of county commissioners shall consider:
 - (i) *reasonable provision of adequate light and air*
 - (ii) *the effect on motorized and nonmotorized transportation systems.*
 - (iii) *compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities*
 - (iv) *the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses*
 - (v) *conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdictional area*
4. Zoning regulations must, as nearly as possible, be made compatible with the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities.

Findings

- The proposed zoning is consistent with the proposed land use designations and, therefore, is made in accordance with the growth policy.
- The proposed zoning is designed to secure safety from fire and other dangers; promote public health, public safety, and general welfare; and facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.
- The zoning code implements the 2019 Missoula Area Land Use Element which considers the appropriate type and density of development based on location, site constraints, and levels of infrastructure. The zoning code includes bulk and dimensional requirements, landscape standards, and minimum lot size requirements per the descriptions in the Land Use Element.

PUBLIC NOTICE

2025

- Blackfoot Crossing LLC hosted two community engagement forums
- Blackfoot Crossing LLC attended Bonner Milltown Community Council meetings
- The proposal was posted on the Missoula County Voice page for public review and comment

2026

- Legal advertisement announcing public meetings for the proposal were published in the Missoulian on January 6th and January 13th
- Legal notices were posted at the County Courthouse, the County Administration Building (199 W Pine), Missoula Post Office (200 E Broadway), Bonner Post Office (7298 HWY 200 E), and onsite at the property on Anaconda St, 1st St, and West Riverside Dr
- Adjacent property owners within 500 feet of the parcel were notified by mail on January 12th, 2026.

Public Comment

Supports

- Affordable housing
- Community oriented commercial
- Trails and open space on property
- Transition from heavy industrial
- Wastewater system, unaffiliated with the City of Missoula
- School growth

Opposes/ Concerns

- Travel Plaza
- Increase in traffic
- Density of new housing
- Impacts on cost of housing
- Change of character to existing neighborhood
- Potential impact on ground water supply and existing wells

Travel Plaza Use and Zoning

Travel plazas are intensive, 24-hour operations with impacts such as light, noise and traffic

A travel plaza built in this location would look different than the one across the street:

- a) maximum lot coverage and parking would limit the overall built area and truck parking allowed
- b) Landscaping would buffer impacts of the use
- c) Sign regulations would limit the number of signs and sign size
- d) Commercial center designation is about 800 ft from the existing residential and is shielded by a vegetated berm

Agency Comment

Responding Agencies:

- Missoula County Floodplain Administrator, Matt Heimel
- Missoula County Parks, Trails, and Open Lands Manager, Nick Zanetos
- Missoula County Public Works Transportation Planner, Glenn Ingram
- Missoula County Rural Fire District, Deputy Fire Marshal, Peter Giardino
- Missoula County Community and Economic Development, Director, Andrew Hagemeyer
- Montana Department of Transportation, Project Manager, Erin Watt
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks, Fisheries Management Biologist, W. Ladd Knotek
- Lolo National Forest Missoula District, Ranger, Crystal Stonesifer

Recommended Motion

I move THAT the Missoula County Land Use Map (Map 18) be amended to assign the Commercial Center, Neighborhood Center, Open Resource and Recreation, Working Lands, and Industrial Center land use designations to the property legally described as Tract 1B of COS 6988 based on the findings of fact and conclusions contained in the staff report

Recommended Motion

I move THAT the Missoula County zoning map be amended to show the property legally described as Tract 1B of COS 6988 as Industrial Center Light, Commercial Center, Neighborhood Center, Agricultural Working Lands (AGW40), and Resource and Open Space, based on the findings of fact and conclusions contained in the staff report



Missoula
C O U N T Y



BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT

MINOR SUBDIVISION, GROWTH POLICY & ZONING
AMENDMENT

BLACKFOOT CROSSING LLC
JANUARY 20, 2026



WGMRGROUPTM
Community Values. Inspired Futures.



AGENDA

- Team & Project Introduction, Goals, Approximate Timeline
- Growth Policy Amendment
- Zoning Amendment
- Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront Minor Subdivision
- Community Feedback: Water & Wastewater

TEAM

About the Blackfoot Crossing Team

- Developer: Greg Morse, Montana resident and Missoula property owner with a background in public lands advocacy and housing non-profit board member
- Partners: Not Wall Street, rather friends and family, community
- Civil, Planning, Environmental: Jeff Smith and Jamie Erbacher at WGM Group



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Associations

- BMCC
- Front Step CLT/Pro Housing Missoula
- Habitat for Humanity
- Clark Fork Coalition
- FVLT
- Bonner Homes West
- Bitterroot Trail Preservation Alliance

Sponsorships

- Bonner Milltown Community Cleanup
- West Riverside abandoned vehicle cleanup
- Bonner Milltown History Center – hosted two history hikes

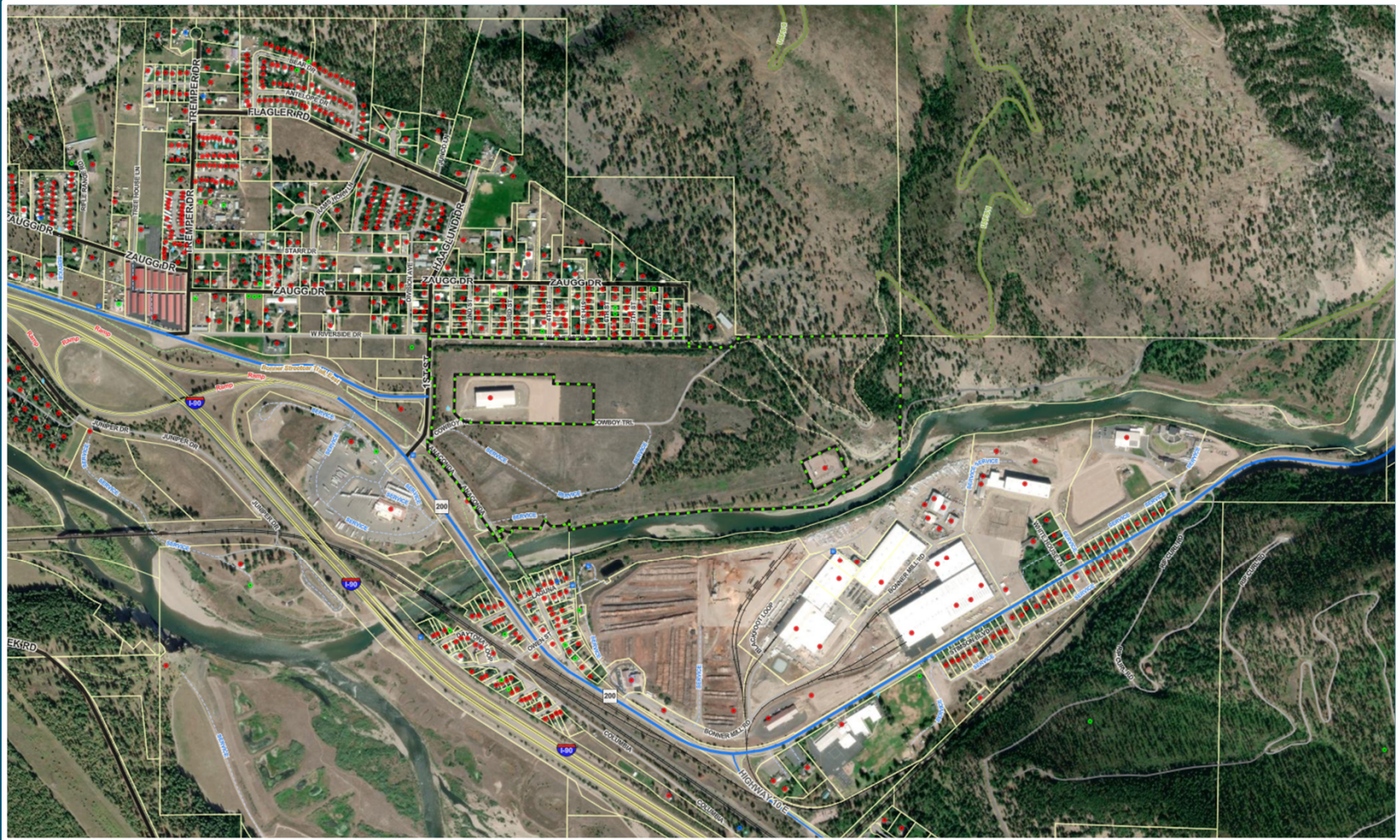
Local Businesses

- Bonner Property
- Kettlehouse Brewing
- Kettlehouse Amphitheatre
- Town Pump
- Willis Industries

Agencies

- Bonner School
- Missoula Rural Fire District
- Montana FWP
- Missoula County
- Representative Connie Keogh
- Senate Candidate Monica Tranel

BLACKFOOT CROSSING DEVELOPMENT



BIG-PICTURE GOALS

- Reduce the scale of heavy industrial uses near residential and public lands, consistent with prior community feedback.
- Re-zone property to allow mixed residential and commercial uses
- Build a sewer and water (drinking and fire) utility serving the subject property but expandable to the surrounding community
- Use the West Bonner Log Yard TEDD to build infrastructure allowing for attainable housing and jobs
- Embrace smaller, neighborhood scale, missing middle housing
- Increase public access to enhance existing natural amenities (trails, rivers, mountains) and open the property to the community

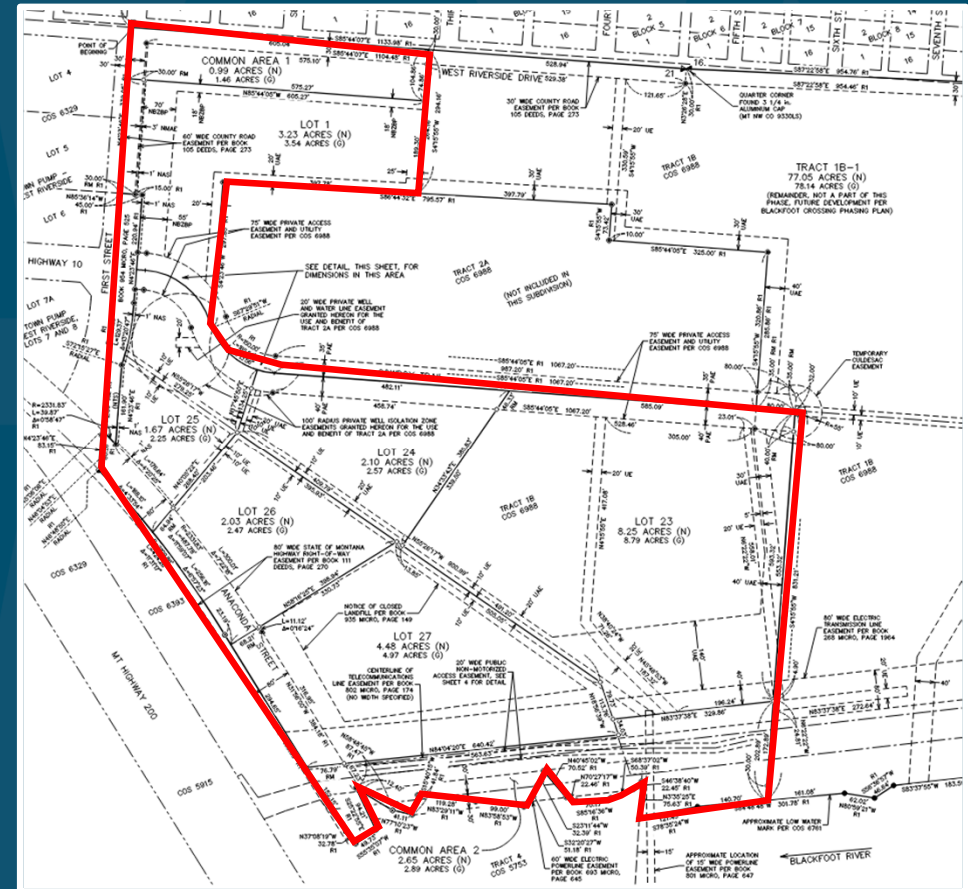
HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS VISION?

Done

- Step 1: Industrial Subdivision

Next Steps

- Step 2: Zoning / Growth Policy Amendment
- Step 3: Sewer and Water Infrastructure
- Step 4: Residential Subdivision



Blackfoot Crossing Phase 1

BLACKFOOT CROSSING APPROXIMATE TIMELINE

Landfill Remediation	• Approved • Remediation underway
Grading	• Approved • Construction early 2026
Blackfoot Crossing Major Subdivision	• Approved • Construction to begin spring of 2026
Wastewater Plant and Discharge Permit	• Under DEQ Review • Construction to begin spring 2026
Growth Policy/Zoning Amendments, TIA, Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront Minor Sub.	• Under review • January 20 Planning Board Hearing, March 05 BCC Hearing
Townhome Exempt Development	• Spring 2026
Horizontal Construction	• Roads, infrastructure • Spring 2026
Vertical Construction	• Buildings • Summer 2026



COMMUNITY GOALS:

2009 Bonner Milltown Community Council Housing Committee – Desired Types of Development



- Medical center
- Retirement living
- Commercial and mixed-use

GROWTH POLICY AMENDMENT

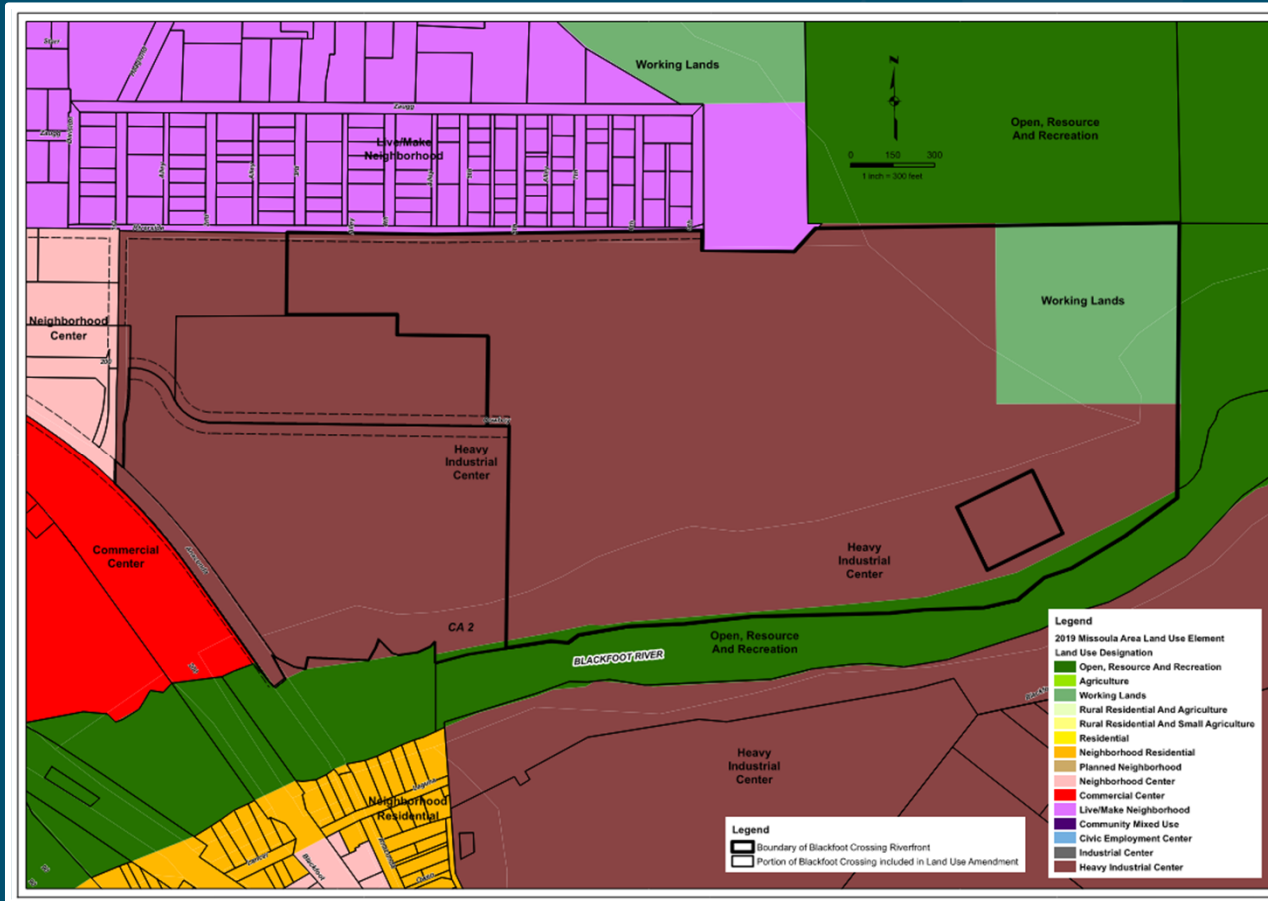
Current Land Use Designation: Heavy
Industrial Center

Proposed Land Use Designation: Industrial
Center Light, Neighborhood Center,
Commercial Center and Open, Working
Lands, Resource and Recreation



1/27/2026

HEAVY INDUSTRIAL CENTER LAND USE DESIGNATIONS



GOALS

- Provides places to manufacture, process, store, distribute goods/services
- Impacts may include noise, odors, clutter, or hazardous materials

LAND USES

- Solid waste, power generation, processing, pipeline terminals, etc.

CHARACTER

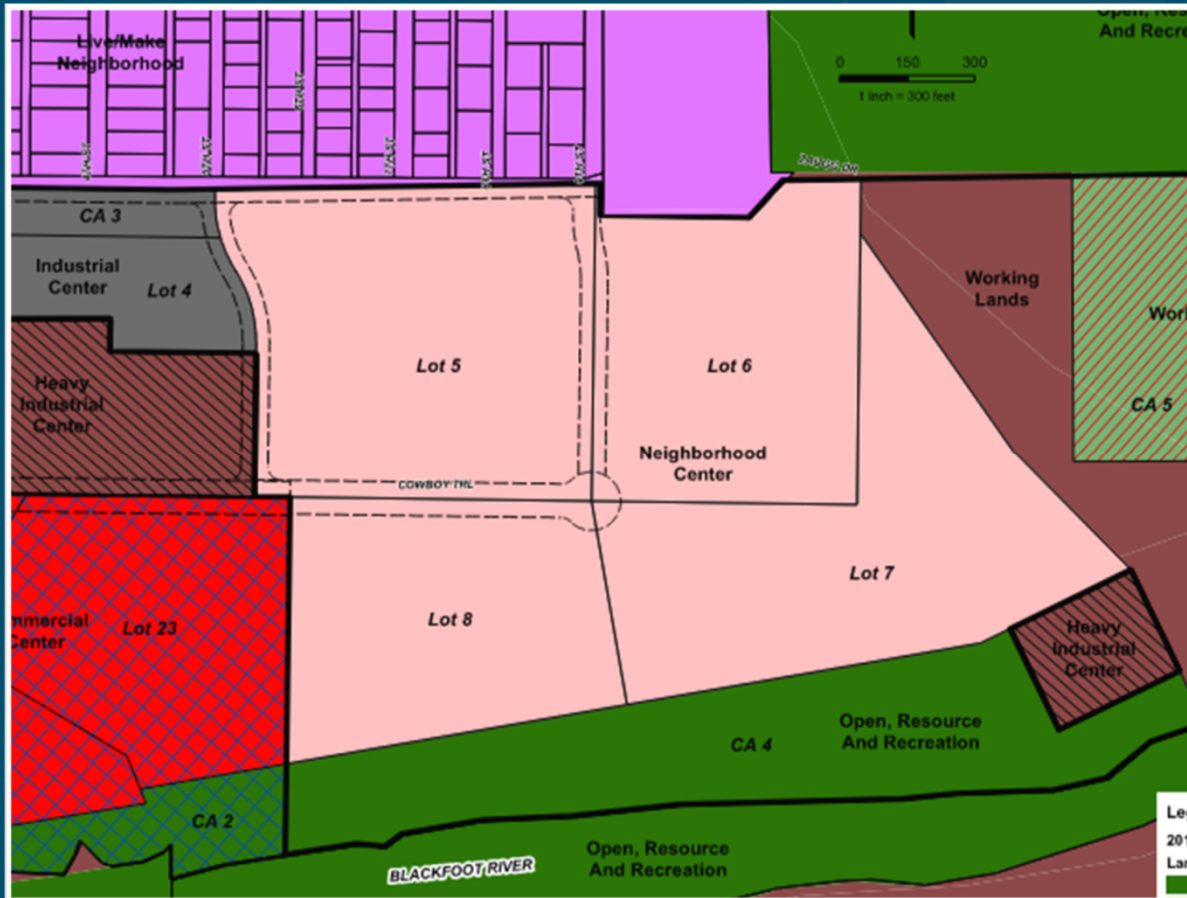
- Uses may be incompatible adjacent to residential
- Buffers should separate this land use from less intense land uses
- Buildings are sited with a minimum distance from streets and lot lines
- Development is sited away from streams, riparian corridors, and wetlands

Changing Land Use Designation from: Heavy Industrial Center

The map displays the 2019 Missoula Area Land Use Element. Key features include:

- Neighborhoods:** Live/Make Neighborhood, Neighborhood Center, Commercial Center, Heavy Industrial Center, Neighborhood Residential, and Neighborhood Center.
- Land Use Designations:** Open, Resource And Recreation; Working Lands; Agriculture; Rural Residential And Agriculture; Residential; Neighborhood Residential; Planned Neighborhood; Neighborhood Center; Commercial Center; Live/Make Neighborhood; Community Mixed Use; Civic Employment Center; Industrial Center; Heavy Industrial Center.
- Lot Numbers:** Lot 1, Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4, Lot 5, Lot 6, Lot 7, Lot 8, Lot 23, Lot 24, Lot 25, Lot 26, Lot 27.
- CA Designations:** CA 1, CA 2, CA 3, CA 4, CA 5.
- Tracts:** TRACT 2A, DDS 8988.
- Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront Project:** Boundary of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront; Portions of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront not included in Land Use Amendment; Portions of Blackfoot Crossing included in Land Use Amendment; Not Part of Land Use Amendment or Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront.
- Scale:** 0, 150, 300 feet.
- North Arrow:** Indicated by a north arrow pointing towards the top of the map.

PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



GOALS

- Focal point and center of activity, opportunities for retail, service, and employment within five-to-ten-minute walk
- Accommodate higher intensity residential

LAND USES

- Mix of residential, neighborhood services, offices, retail, and institutional uses

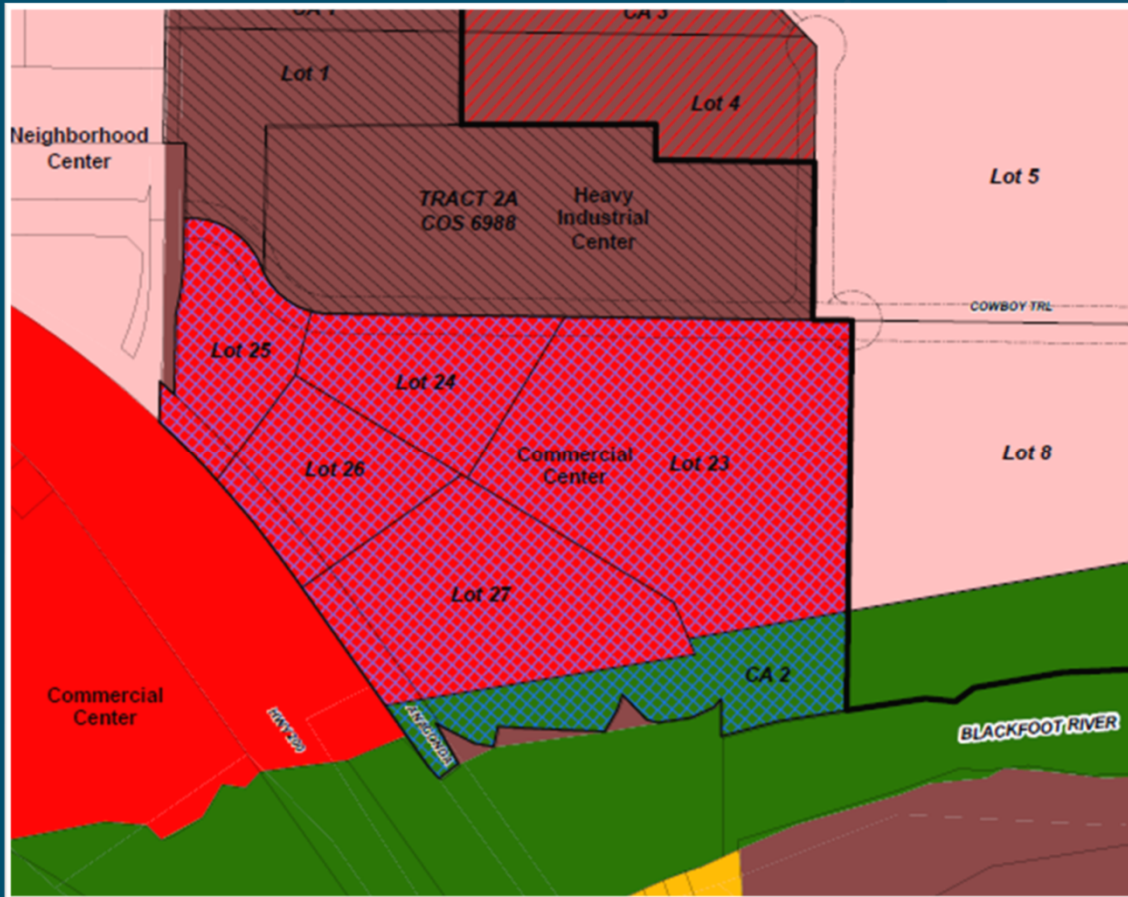
CHARACTER

- Mix of uses can be both horizontally and vertically integrated
- Parking and utilities toward the rear of buildings
- Building design complements adjacent uses
- Neighborhood Centers typically located on arterial or collector roads

INTENSITY

- Residential density is 8 units/acre or greater, requiring connections to public sewer and water
- Commercial and mixed-use buildings may range from 1,000 sf to an anchor size 45,000 sf

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL CENTER



GOALS

- Supports retail, services, and employment
- Encourage a mix of commercial and higher intensity residential uses in a connected, walkable pattern

LAND USES

- Primary uses include auto-oriented retail, lodging, offices, food service, and automobile services
- Secondary uses may include residential

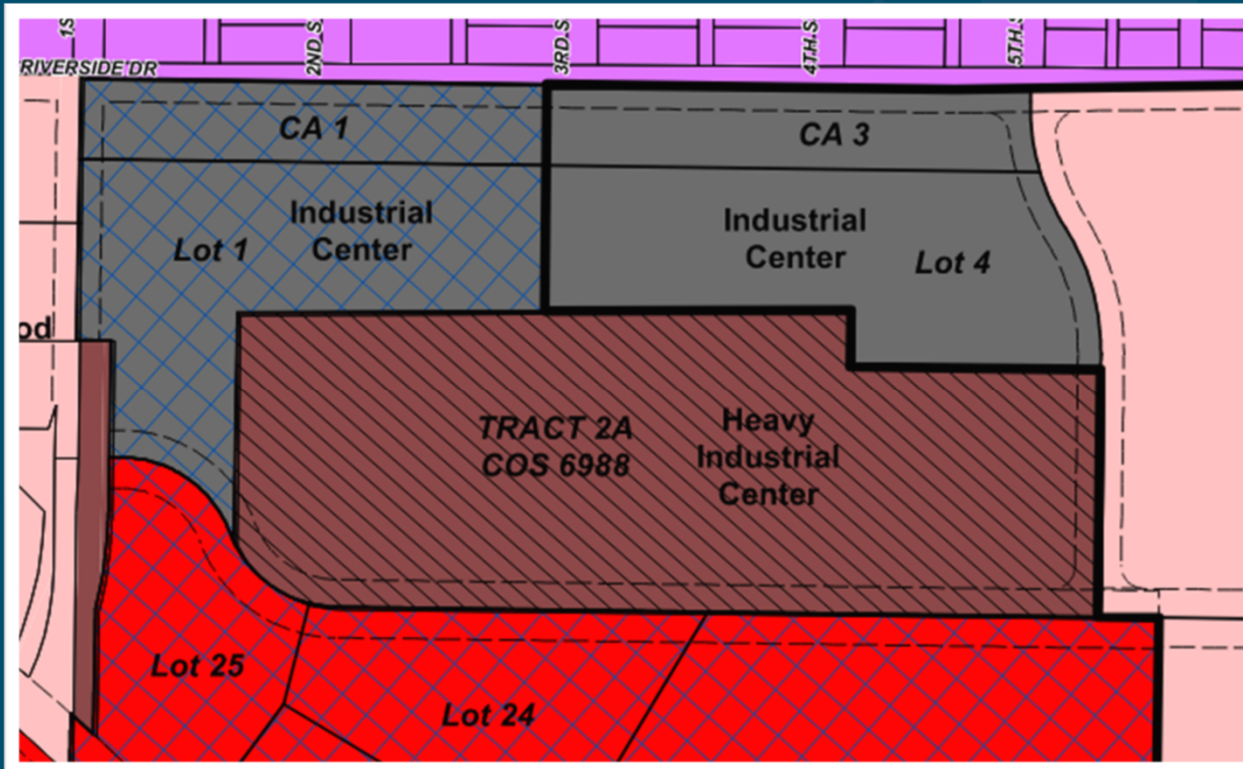
CHARACTER

- Typically single-use or small to large shopping centers
- Parking and utilities are generally located toward the rear of buildings
- Areas are expected to redevelop and experience infill, transitioning to a more vertically mixed-use place
- Buildings are set back a minimum distance from streets and lot lines

INTENSITY

- Density is 8 units/acre or greater, requiring public sewer and water
- Commercial and mixed-use buildings may range from 1,000 sf to 80,000 sf, with anchor uses such as grocery stores

PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL CENTER



GOALS

- provides places where people work, create, build, store, and distribute goods and services

LAND USES

- Land use is a mix of office, research, studios, manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution

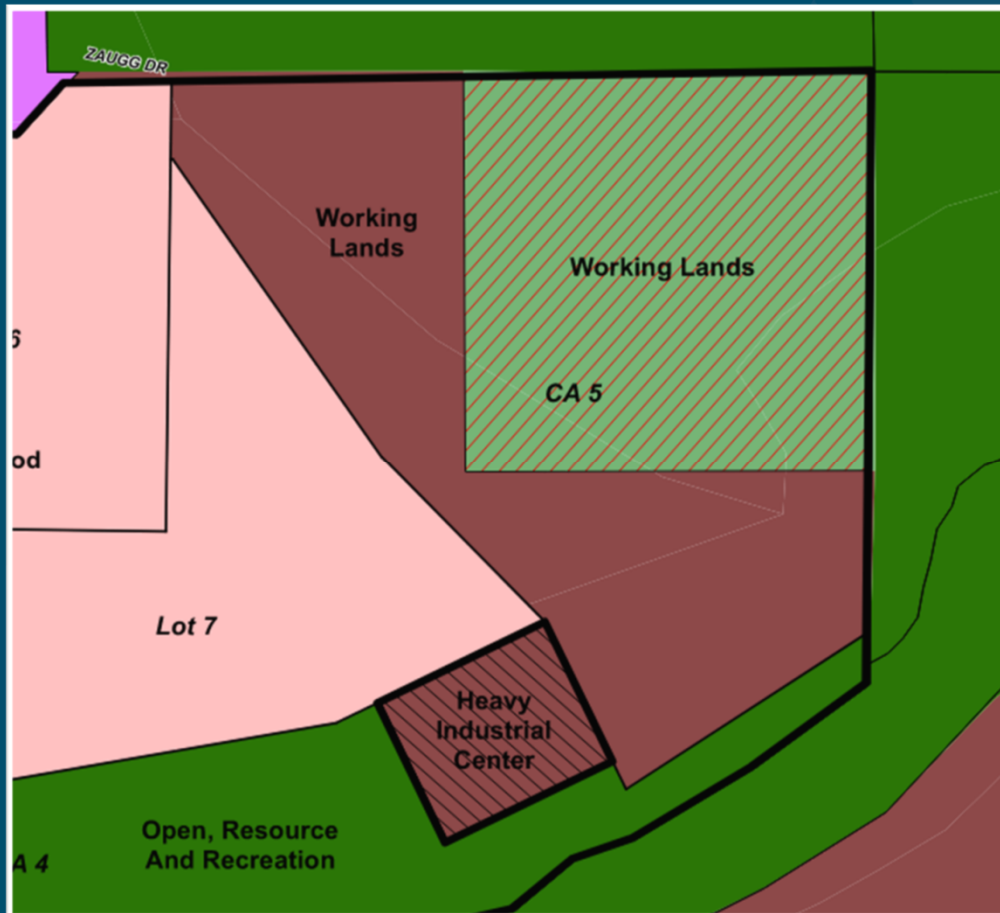
CHARACTER

- Buildings are typically single use but may host a mix of uses that integrate horizontally rather than vertically, having shared walls rather than shared ceilings or floors
- Buildings are sited with a minimum distance from streets and lot lines
- Development is sited away from streams, riparian corridors, and wetlands to protect sensitive natural features and waterways and fish and wildlife habitat and movement corridors

INTENSITY

- Building size varies depending on context and need and could range from small (1,000 square feet) to very large (over 150,000 square feet)

PROPOSED WORKING LANDS



GOALS

- Support rural lifestyles and nature-based economic opportunities
- Preserve natural landscapes, waterways, wildlife habitat and corridors, and water quality and quantity
- Limit development in hazard areas to protect public health and safety

LAND USES

- Primary uses include residential, agriculture and agriculture-related activities, grazing, timber production, natural resource-based industries, and recreation
- Secondary uses may include home-based manufacturing, fabrication, commercial kitchens, and artist studios

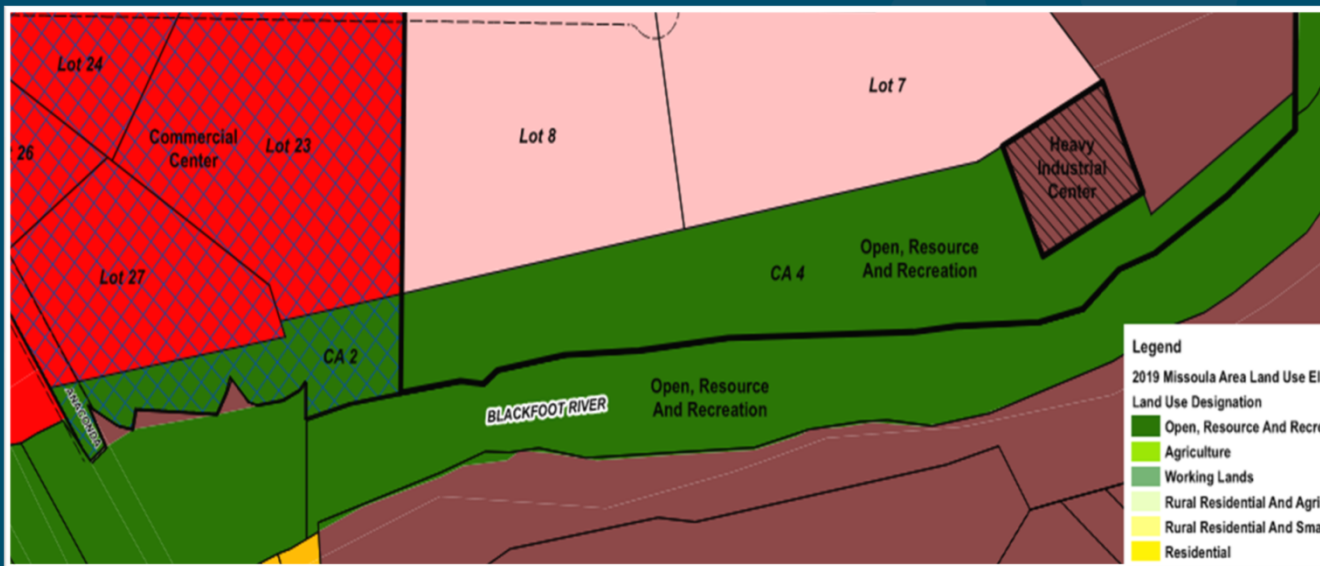
CHARACTER

- Limited infrastructure and services
- Landscapes range from relatively pristine natural areas and waterways to lands with a history of human stewardship
- Most undeveloped land remains in agriculture, rangeland, timberland, or a natural state
- Development is designed to protect important resources such as agricultural lands, sensitive

INTENSITY

- Building sizes vary by context and need, ranging from approximately 1,000 to over 150,000 square feet

PROPOSED OPEN, RESOURCE AND RECREATION



GOALS

- Protect natural landscapes, waterways, wildlife habitat and corridors, and water quality and quantity
- Allow agriculture, grazing, timber production, and recreational access
- Safeguard public health and safety in hazard-prone areas, including floodways

LAND USES

- Uses include open space, wildlife habitat, agriculture, rangeland, timber, and recreation
- Open, Resource, and Recreation is intended for public lands and areas with development constraints, such as floodways

CHARACTER

- The area is primarily natural and undeveloped, supporting open space, wildlife habitat, agriculture and rangeland, timber, and recreation
- Development is limited, and where allowed, must avoid or accommodate sensitive resources such as floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, wildlife corridors, steep slopes, and natural landscapes and waterways

INTENSITY

- Development is limited, but structures for administrative purposes may be acceptable

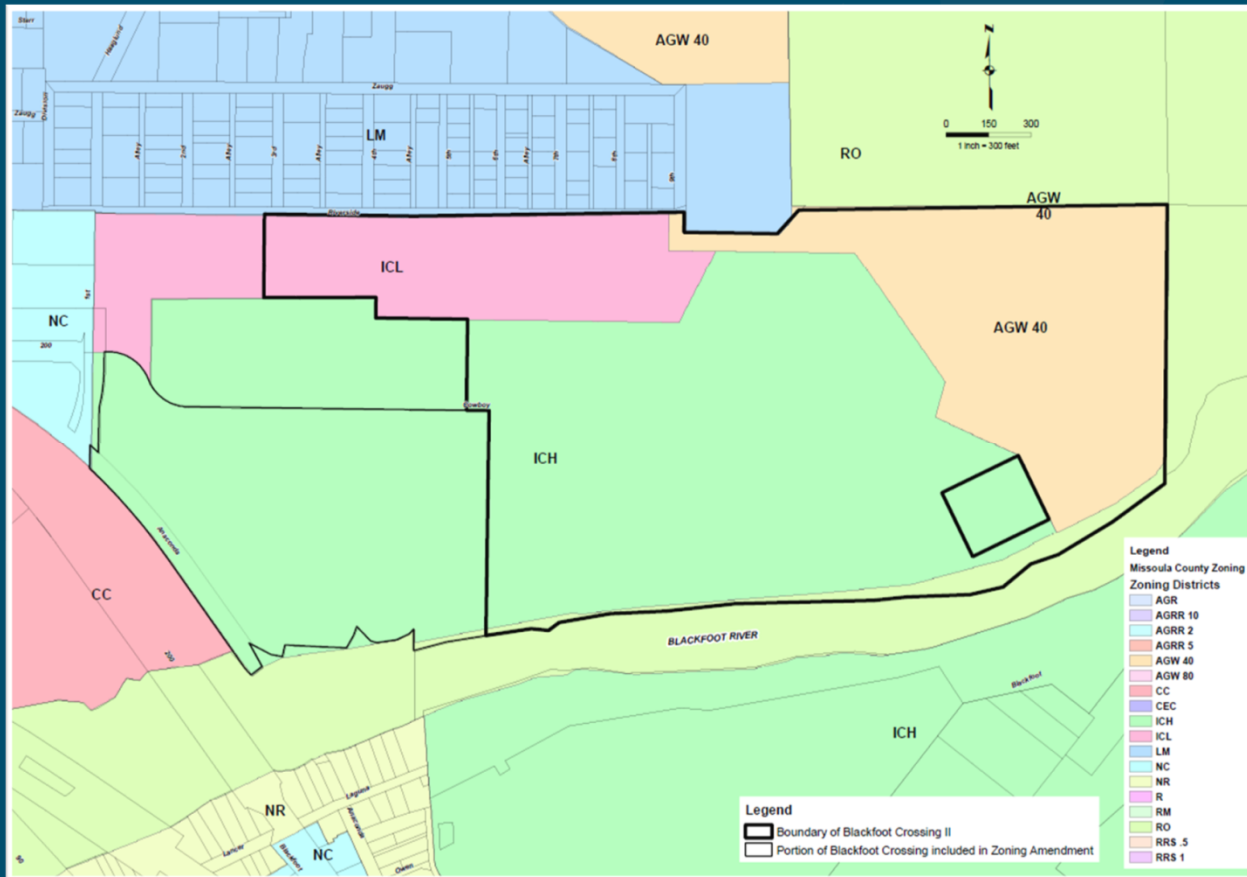
ZONING AMENDMENT

Changing Zoning District: Industrial Center
Heavy and Industrial Center Light

Proposed Zoning District: Neighborhood
Center, Commercial Center, Resource and
Open Lands



CURRENT ZONING



Industrial Center Heavy

Intended Uses: Industries involving the processing, manufacturing, and remanufacturing of materials, potentially including outdoor storage and some incidental sales.

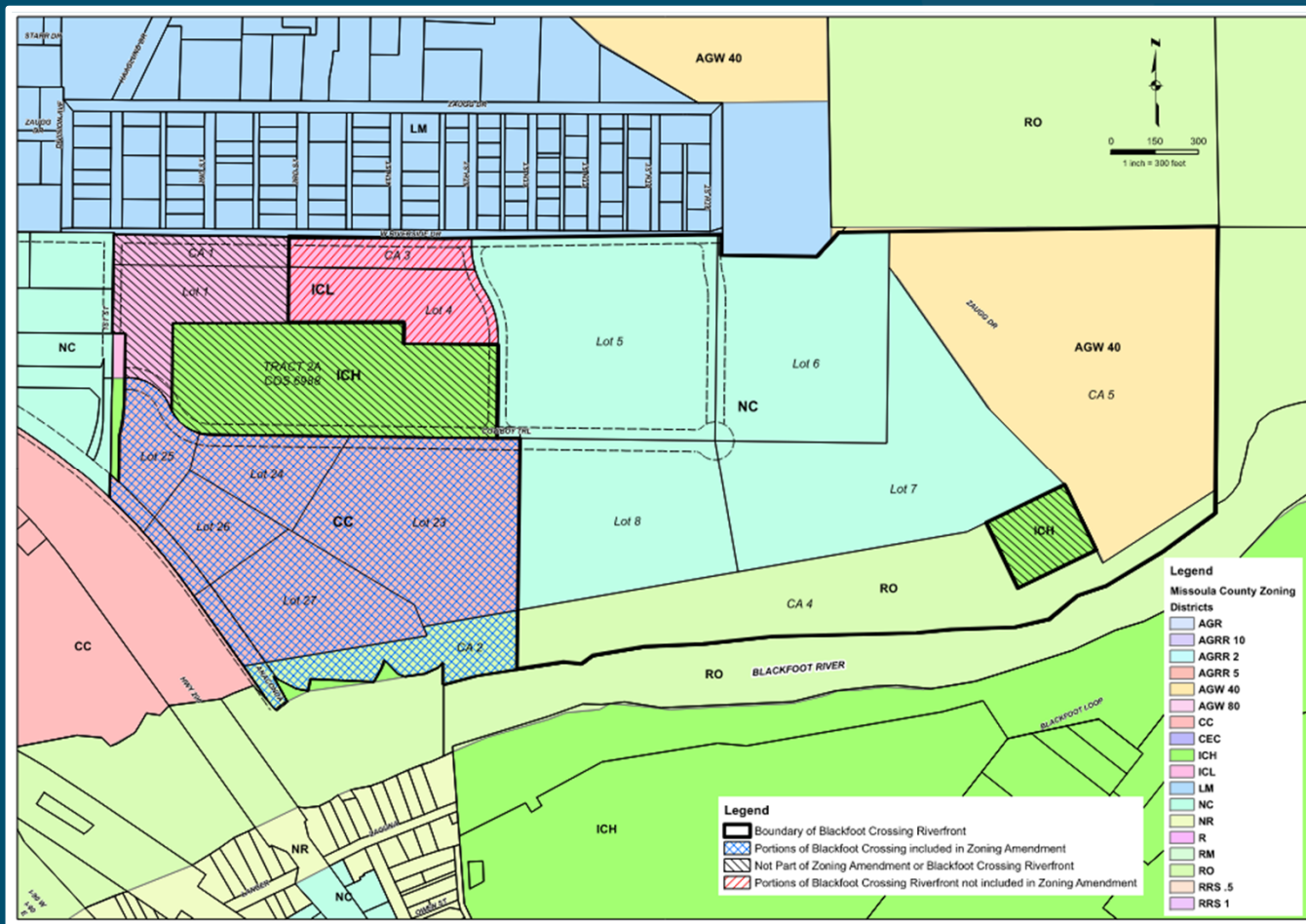
Industrial Center Light

Intended Uses: Production, processing, fabrication, and assembly of products like electronics, appliances, furniture, and other consumer goods. Also, facilities for storing goods, wholesale operations, and logistical distribution.

Agriculture Working Lands 40

Intended Uses: Primarily restricted to farming and related activities and one unit/acre.

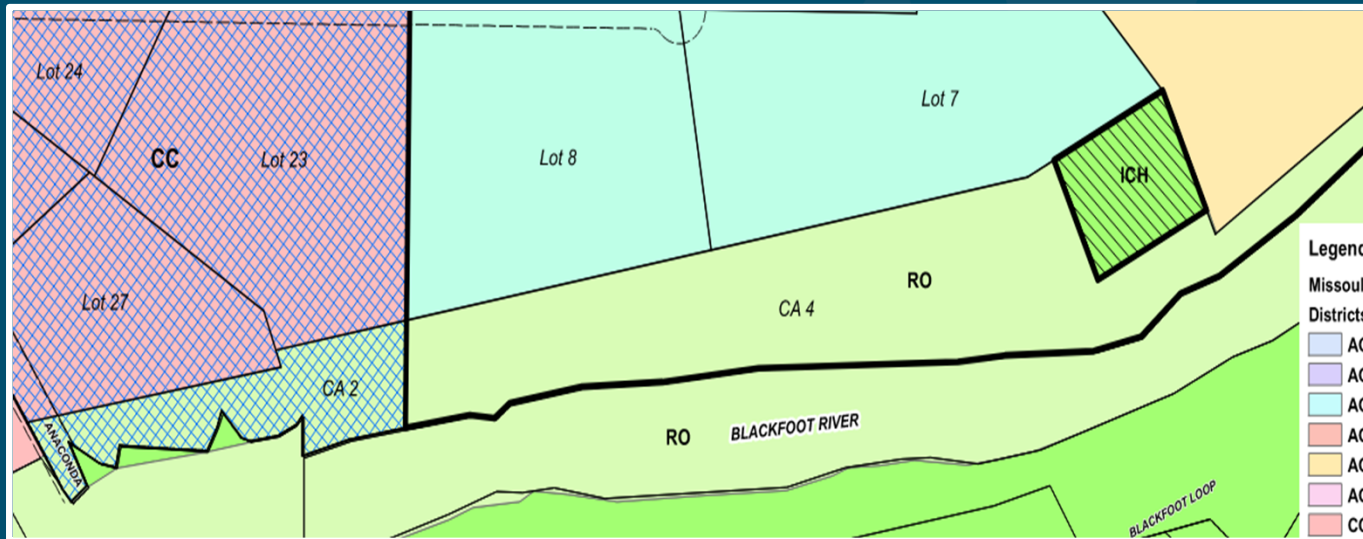
PROPOSED ZONING



Changing Zoning District
 from: Industrial Center
 Heavy and Industrial Center
 Light

To: Neighborhood Center,
 Commercial Center,
 Resource and Open Lands

PROPOSED RESOURCE & OPEN LANDS



Purpose:

To protect natural landscapes, waterways, and fish and wildlife habitat and minimize risks to public health and safety.

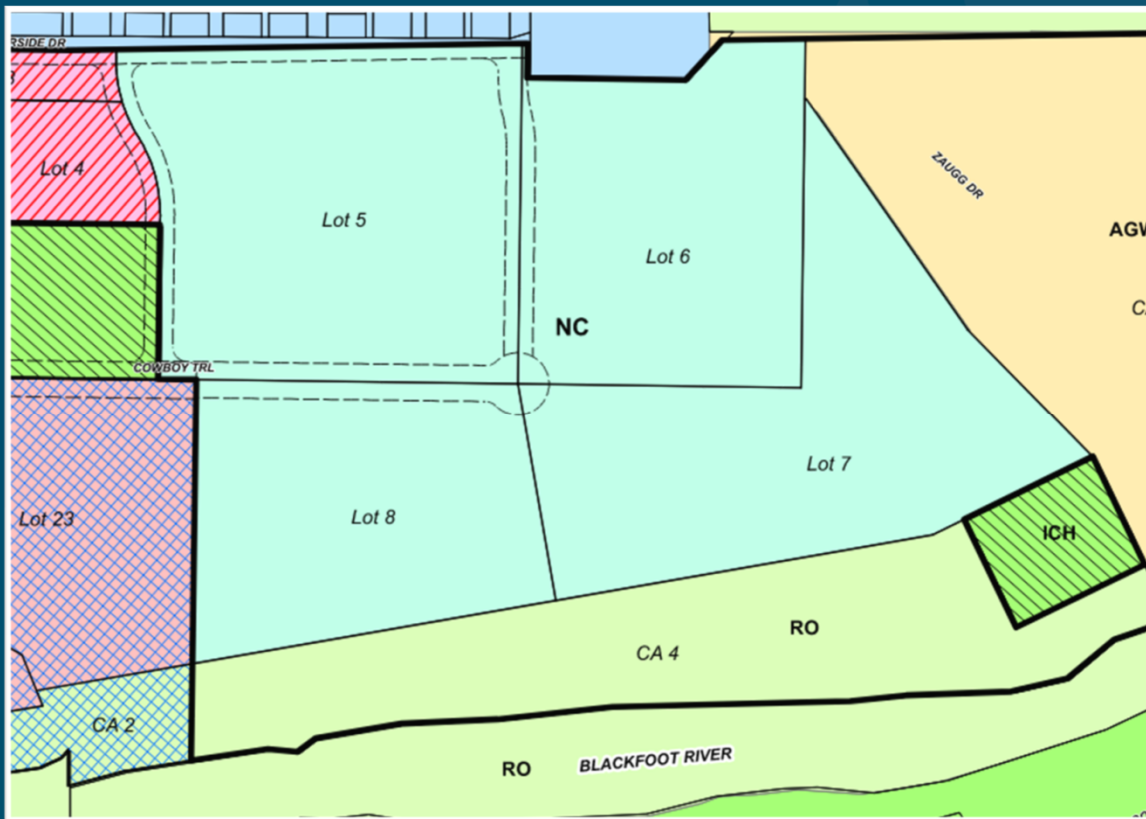
Uses:

These zones are limited to undeveloped open space, agriculture, silviculture, and passive recreation.

Connectivity:

Trail network connectivity and developed access points are encouraged to guide use away from sensitive areas and support recreational amenities meeting required site design elements.

PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



Mixed-use:

NC zoning districts typically permit both residential (8 du/acre) and commercial development, including multi-family housing, retail, restaurants, offices, and community facilities.

Pedestrian-friendly:

These zones often have building design that encourages walkability, and proximity to sidewalks to promote pedestrian activity.

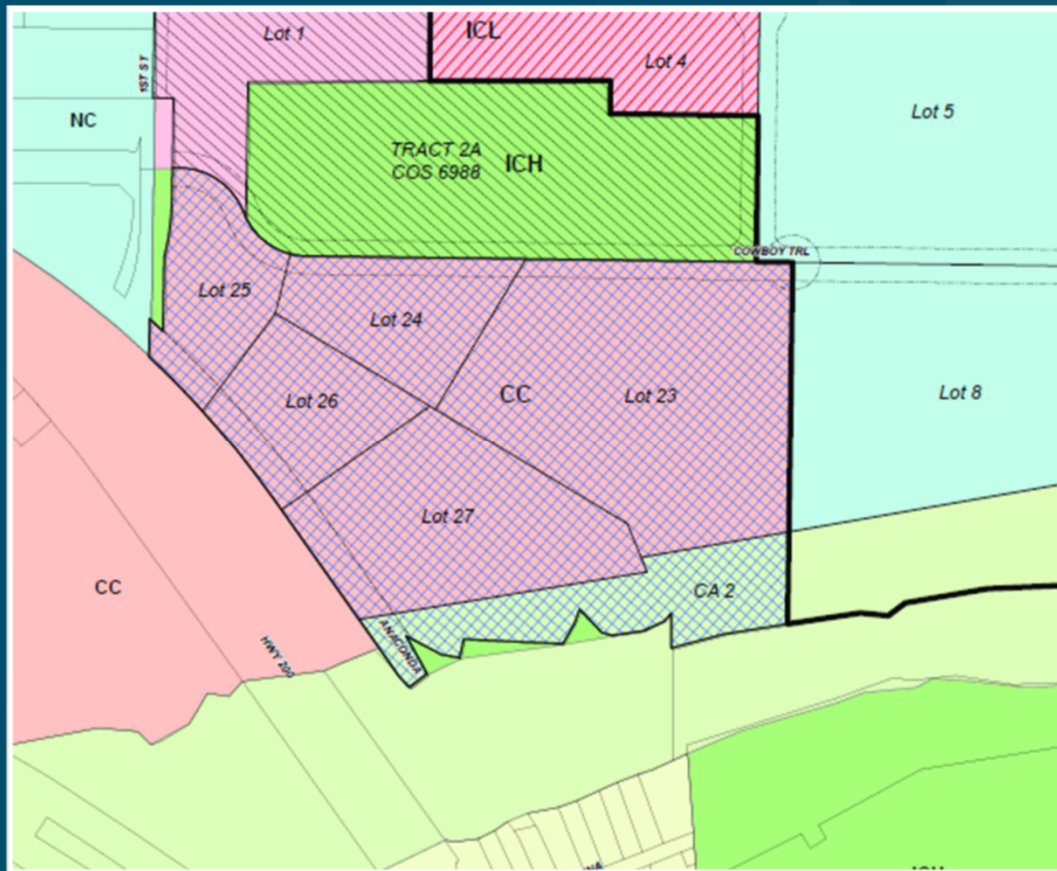
Integration with neighborhoods:

NC zoning is designed to be compatible with surrounding residential areas and new development is sensitive to the character of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood scale development:

Neighborhood Center zoning provides limited, clustered commercial activity in Neighborhoods, often less intense, reflecting its role in serving the needs of nearby residents.

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL CENTER



Purpose:

Provide retail, services, and employment opportunities. Almost exclusively commercial but may support higher intensity residential (8 du/ac) in horizontal and vertical mixed-use development.

Business Types:

Small retail shops to large shopping centers, office buildings, restaurants, and auto-oriented uses.

Building Regulations:

Site design must promote walkability, connectivity between uses, and access for multiple transportation modes.

Impact on Communities:

Commercial zoning helps shape the character and functionality of a community. It can influence property values, traffic patterns, and the overall atmosphere of a neighborhood.

WHY NOT NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER OR INDUSTRIAL CENTER LIGHT IN PLACE OF COMMERCIAL CENTER?

- **Neighborhood Center**

- Limited building size does not facilitate grocery stores, medical facilities
- Major utility services are not permitted
- Limited uses
- Allows gas stations

- **Industrial Center Light**

- Residential is not permitted
- No eating and drinking establishments (restaurants)
- No pre-school, retail sales
- Travel Plaza permitted as special exception



IS A TRAVEL PLAZA A REALITY?

It's not out of the question, BUT

- TEDD funding is necessary to fund the infrastructure to support the development and develop housing and jobs
- Property tax changes on centrally assessed properties (the sub-station) changed the increment calculation and decreased \$\$
- A travel plaza adds significant tax base to the TEDD
- Updated zoning regulates site and building design resulting in a building that would be more cohesive to mixed-use development
- Located as far south from neighboring residential development, with a large berm shielding direct view



IMPLEMENTING THE GROWTH POLICY

Supporting recreation and protection of environment

- Promote responsible public land and water use
- Improve public access
- Develop trail systems trail connections between communities and public land
- Limit development in hazardous and sensitive areas
- Expand and maintain connected trail, pathway, and sidewalk networks

Supporting housing

- Increase the share of the community that is served by public water and wastewater
- Provide opportunities for and support development of a wide range of housing options
- Pursue creative financing and public funding to provide housing for underserved populations

Economic development

- Promote economic development that benefits communities throughout Missoula County
- Support local businesses
- Expand economic opportunities in rural areas
- Facilitate well-designed commercial and industrial development with infrastructure
- Use TEDD and TIF funding to assist with redevelopment efforts



COMMUNITY DIRECTED INITIATIVES

- Be a good neighbor through ongoing community engagement
 - Supporting site cleanups and addressing abandoned vehicles
 - Participating in BMCC and hosting BMHC activities
 - Building relationships with neighbors and a deliberate approach to choosing partnerships
- We listened and responded:
 - By retaining the berms in all industrial areas
 - By relocating proposed wells away from existing wells
 - By conducting a traffic study to guide proposed improvements



BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT MINOR SUBDIVISION



1/27/2026

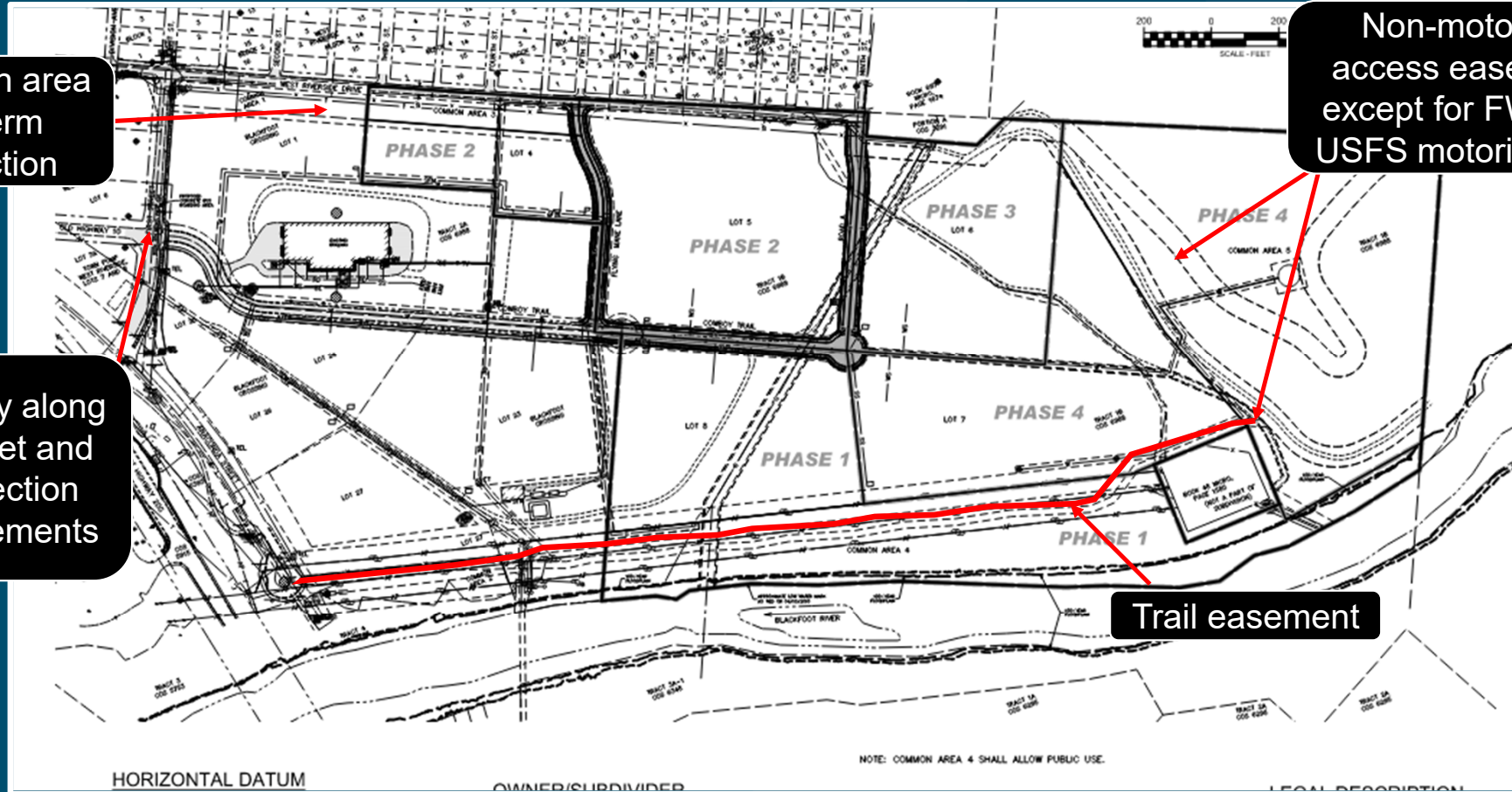
BLACKFOOT CROSSING DEVELOPMENT

Common area
w/ berm
protection

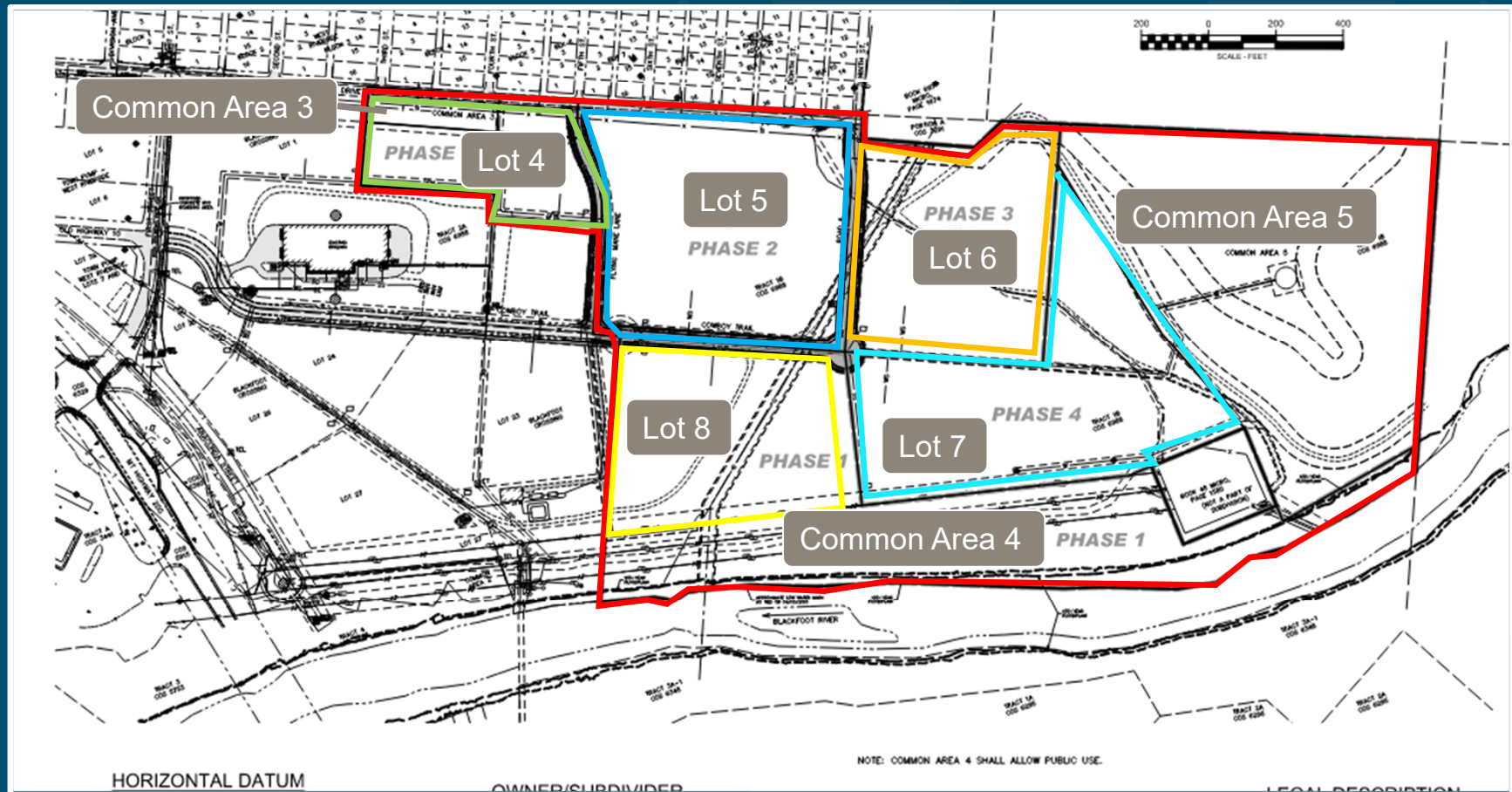
Walkway along
1st Street and
intersection
improvements

Non-motorized
access easements
except for FWP and
USFS motorized use

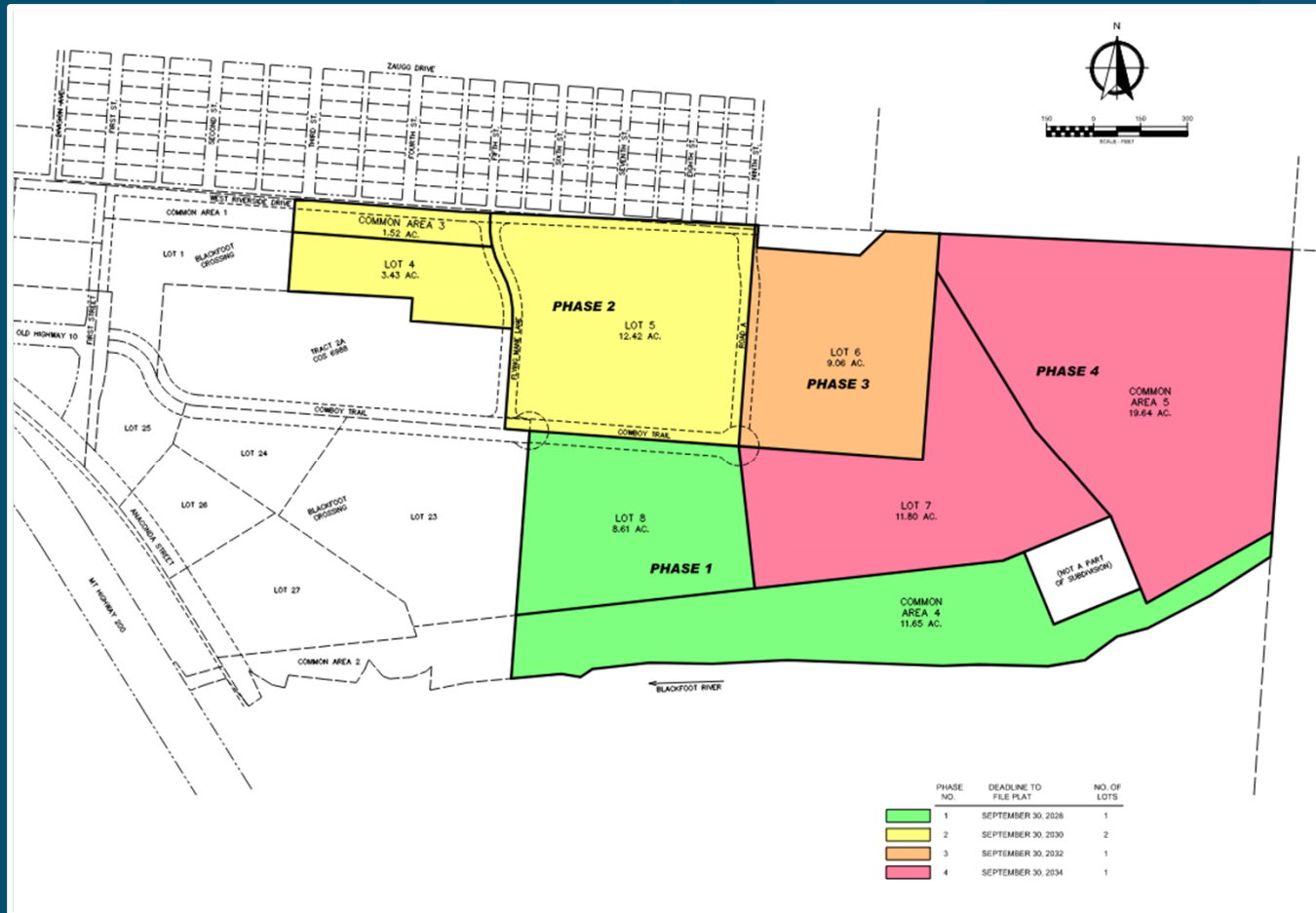
Trail easement



BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT MINOR SUBDIVISION



BLACKFOOT CROSSING RIVERFRONT PHASING PLAN



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



1/27/2026

WATER & WASTEWATER

What we've heard:

- Concerns about existing water and sewer infrastructure, but don't want to be forced into a sewer and water system
- Would love options for the future without being annexed
- Concerns around existing wells

WATER & WASTEWATER STRATEGY

- Install a public water system to serve the development
 - Mitigation: wells were relocated to not impact existing wells
- Install a wastewater treatment plant to serve the development
 - Using the highest quality treatment currently used in Montana which surpasses legal requirements
- Both systems will be designed to provide opportunity for expansion if desired by the community

LIMIT DENSITY BUT MAKE IT AFFORDABLE ZONING ALLOWS 8 DU/AC OR GREATER – THAT’S TOO MUCH!

Concerns related to:

- Density of housing development
- Impacts on housing affordability
- Change to character of the existing neighborhood
- Impacts on the neighborhood including increased noise, light, vehicle exhaust
- Groundwater supply and potential impact on existing wells

Covenant Restriction

- Land Uses: All Lots may be used for any purpose consistent with the local government zoning regulations applicable to the Property
 - Lots 5-8 of Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront shall be restricted to a total of 400 residential dwelling units
 - The building type shall not be restricted, so long as they are compliant with the Missoula County Zoning Regulations



ZONING APPROVAL WITHOUT AN APPROVED PUBLIC WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEM? – THEN WHAT?

The hearing process:

The growth policy and zoning amendments go to the Planning Board. Planning Board makes a recommendation for approval, approval with modified conditions, or denial.

After Planning Board, the growth policy, zoning amendments, and the subdivision will go to the commissioners for approval, approval with modified conditions or denial.

- All three of these can be approved at the same hearing. The growth policy must be decided first, followed by the zoning, and then the subdivision.
- Assuming commissioner approval of the zoning, they will approve a resolution of intent to rezone the property. After 30 days, the final zoning resolution could be signed by the Commissioners at a subsequent hearing. If the wastewater system is not approved by DEQ by the time the county is ready to sign the final zoning resolution Blackfoot Crossing LLC could request that timeframe be extended.
- The subdivision could be conditioned on the final zoning resolution being adopted by the Commissioners. This would prevent the creation of split zoned lots, which is prohibited by the zoning regulations and ensure that the public water and wastewater system are approved.
- In order to file the final plat for the Blackfoot Crossing and Blackfoot Crossing Riverfront subdivisions, the public water and wastewater system must be approved by DEQ and either installed or guaranteed by a bond. If by chance the wastewater system does not get approved, then the zoning would not be approved and conditions of subdivision approval could not be met, which would mean the subdivisions could not be filed.



WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS ARE EXPENSIVE - HOW WILL YOU PAY FOR THIS?

- The wastewater treatment plant pencils with the allowed and planned density of the proposed zoning districts
- A water and sewer district could be created
- A rural special improvement district (RSID)

THANK YOU!

Jamie Erbacher



406.728.4611



jerbacher@wgmgroup.com

