

Missoula Board of County Commissioners

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES COVER SHEET



THURSDAY, APRIL 09, 2026 – 2 PM

Hybrid meeting – Missoula County Courthouse Annex Sophie Moiese
Room/Microsoft Teams

[Click here to view the meeting recording.](#)

Time stamps (in green) correspond to meeting recording above. Please click to
the time stamps listed to view a particular item in the meeting.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

Chair Josh Slotnick
Commissioner Juanita Vero

Staff Present:

Cheryl Hartman, Commissioners' Office
John Hart, County Attorneys' Office
Tim Worley, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Erik Dickson, Public Works
Matt Heimel, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Katy Reeder, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Andrew Hagemeier, Community and Economic Development
Lauren Ryan, Community and Economic Development
Christina Dewar, Commissioners' Office
Annie Cathey, Commissioners' Office
Mattie Scott, Commissioners' Office
Tenzin Lhaze, Communications
Patricia Spotted Wolf, Commissioners' Office
Carey Powers, Communications
Melissa Fisher, Commissioners' Office
Katy Reeder, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Kevin Dantic, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Jason Mitchell, Public Works
Kathleen Arthur, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Anne Hughes, Commissioners' Office

1. **CALL TO ORDER** *[Time stamp – 0:02]*
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *[Time stamp – 0:04]*

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT [Time stamp – 0:23]

Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.

4. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS [Time stamp – 0:37]

- a. Proclamation: National Public Safety Telecommunications Week
- b. Proclamation: National volunteer Recognition Week
- c. Proclamation: Earth Day

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA [Time stamp – 6:17]

6. CURRENT CLAIMS LIST [Time stamp – 06:33]

Claims received as of March 26, 2026 to April 1, 2026 by the Commissioners' Office total \$842,084.21.

7. HEARINGS

a. Final Resolution: Establish a School Zone and Speed Limit for Seeley Lake Elementary School [Time stamp – 06:49]

Erik Dickson, Public Works

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Board of County Commissioners of Missoula County hereby adopt and approve the resolution to establish a school zone and school zone speed limit on portions of Pine Dr. and School Ln. at Seeley Lake Elementary School.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Resolution 2026-061 Book:1126 Page:1326]

b. Rattlesnake Creek 310 Permit [Time stamp – 12:00]

Matt Heimel, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the 310 Permit application for Clayton Moore to replace a deck, stairs, and treat cottonwood trees at 700 East Broadway in the Rattlesnake Creek riparian area, subject to modifications based on review of the Missoula County 310 Administrative Rules.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Signed RCA and 310 Permit Application sent to Matt Heimel]

c. Larch Meadows Minor Subdivision [Time stamp – 18:11]

Katy Reeder, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the Larch Meadows Subdivision be approved, based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law in the staff report, and subject to the recommended conditions of approval in the staff report.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Letter 2026-111 was sent to Montana NW C. in c/o Sean Admundson.]

- d. **Missoula Rural and Frenchtown Rural Fire District TIF Assessment** *[Time stamp – 42:58]*

Lauren Ryan, Community and Economic Development

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve \$150,000 of TIF funding to fund a Fire Needs Assessment for Missoula Rural Fire District and Frenchtown Rural Fire District.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Signed RCA was sent to Lauren Ryan.]

8. OTHER BUSINESS

[None]

9. ADJOURN

Chair Slotnick – Called the meeting to adjourn at 2:55 p.m.

BCC Public Meeting April 09, 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 on the county's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/missoulacounty> or contact the commissioners' office to obtain a copy.

Dialogue in the transcription attributed to "Sophie Moiese Room" is for all speakers that attended the meeting in person. Attendees that participated virtually are labeled individually.

0:02

For Thursday, April 9th, would you please join me in the pledge?

0:04

Pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic which it stands, One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

0:23

Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the Aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispell people.

0:30

We have some public announcements first on closed captioning.

0:37

Hello, everyone.

0:37

If you're joining us for this meeting virtually today, instructions for turning on closed captioning or on your screen.

0:43

If you're joining us in person, we'll have closed captioning on all the screens here in the Sophie Louise room.

0:49

Just a friendly reminder, there will be multiple chances during the meeting for public comment.

0:53

In person and virtually, the chair will open discussion for public comment after each staff presentation.

0:59

Please respectfully keep your comments to 3 minutes.

1:02

If you're calling in on Microsoft Teams, we ask that you use the Raise Hand feature.

1:06

This is the small hand button at the top of your screen.

1:10

If you're calling in on the phone, you'll need to push *5 to raise your hand.

1:13

Then once called upon, you'll need to hit *6 to unmute.

1:17

If you have any questions during the meeting, please come and find me.

1:20

Thank you.

1:21

Thanks Cheryl.

1:22

And we have 3 proclamations.

1:25

Can I do one?

1:26

Yes.

1:28

I'll begin with telecommunications.

1:30

Whereas public safety was a first service provided by a government to its residents and the safety and well-being of both residents and emergency first responders continue to be one of the foremost concerns of Missoula County.

1:41

And whereas, ensuring public safety and well-being requires ability to receive calls for help and immediately dispatch responders to provide assistance.

1:49

And WHEREAS 911 is a critical first step in delivering public safety services.

1:54

And WHEREAS the public safety telecommunications who work at 911 demonstrate exceptional commitment, dedication and professionalism and their mission to answer calls for help from residents and visitors, dispatch emergency response agencies and maintain a communication link with responders to ensure their safety.

2:10

And whereas these public safety telecommunications provide these this vital service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, working long hours with difficult schedules to process more than 120,000 calls annually in Missoula County.

2:24

And whereas the crucial role of public safety telecommunications is often unseen and under recognized.

2:30

Now therefore, we, the Missoula Board of County Commissioners recognize the week of April 12th through 18th, 2026 as National Public Safety Telecommunications Week.

2:39

We thank the Telecommunications in 911 for all their efforts and work hard under very difficult circumstances and the hard work they do under very difficult circumstances.

2:50

The community truly would not be safe without them.

2:52

We also encourage the community to recognize the importance of 911 services and to thank these dedicated individuals in writing your Board of Missoula County Commissioners.

3:03

Thanks Juan, I have one as well.

3:08

Whereas volunteers are one of our county's greatest resources.

3:12

And whereas volunteers adapt to the changing needs of our communities and continue to show their resilience and creativity in finding new ways to help people and encourage others.

3:22

And WHEREAS these volunteers improve Missoula County with their dedication, willingness to share time and expertise, and ability to meet community needs to make a lasting difference.

3:32

And WHEREAS Missoula County relies on volunteers in several ways, including board and council members who provide valuable insights on county operations and initiatives, as well as volunteers who help support county departments and functions.

3:47

And whereas we wish to honor and recognize volunteers collectively and the many contributions they make that enhance Missoula County's quality of life.

3:56

Now therefore, we, the Missoula Board of County Commissioners, in coordination with Missoula Aging Services, do hereby proclaim the week of April 20th to the 26th of 2026 as Volunteer Recognition Week.

4:10

And we encourage all residents to join us in recognizing our County's volunteers this month and throughout the year.

4:16

Dated this 9th day of April 2026.

4:19

Signed your Missoula County Commissioners and when we have one last proclamation.

4:26

OK.

4:27

Whereas, the climate crisis is caused by human activity, especially the burning of fossil fuels, and is harming people and natural systems locally and around the world through worsening environmental disasters, public health emergencies, and economic disruption.

4:40

And WHEREAS, climate solutions, including solar power and other clean energy options, are affordable, available, and create significant additional benefits like economic development, lower energy costs, and clean air and water.

4:51

And WHEREAS since its founding in 1970, Earth Day has united citizens around the world and a shared commitment to take action to protect our planet's natural systems and the people who rely on them.

5:01

And WHEREAS, the City of Missoula and Missoula County have committed to climate action for many years in alignment with a 2015 Paris Agreement, have shared commitments to climate resilience via the Climate Ready Missoula Plan and to achieving 100% clean electricity for the Missoula urban area, And are dedicated to policies and programs like our shared Electrified Missoula campaign that support the clean energy transition.

5:25

And WHEREAS the Earth Day 2020 sixth theme of Our Power, Our Planet recognizes the urgent need for global investment in clean energy and energy savings and the importance of action from local communities and individuals, it also underscores the significant social, economic and public health benefits of climate solutions within our country and offers a role for everyone to act now.

5:47

Therefore, we, the Missoula Board of County Commissioners and the City of Missoula and the State of Montana do hereby recognize the 22nd of April, 2026 as Earth Day and call on our communities, including all residents, all residents, businesses and institutions to engage in meaningful climate actions that are necessary to achieve our goals.

6:05

Dated this 20th and ninth days of April 2026 Your Missoula County Commissioners and City of Missoula Mayor Andrea Davis.

6:14

Thanks, Juan.

6:17

Do we have any public comment on items not on the agenda in the room or online?

6:25

Or does anybody want to say anything about these proclamations?

6:32

OK.

6:33

Our current claims list, claims received as of March 26, 2026 to April 1, 2026 by the Commissioner's Office total \$842,084.21.

6:46

We have 1234 hearings today.

6:49

The first one is Marone Eric Dixon.

6:51

And this is about establishing a school zone and speed limit for Seeley Lake Elementary School.

6:58

Thank you.

6:59

Good afternoon.

6:59

Commissioners Eric Dixon with the Public Works department.

7:02

This request is to close the hearing and consider a resolution for the establishment of a school zone and school zone speed limit on portions of Pine Dr.

7:13

and School Lane at the Sea Lake Elementary School.

7:17

We open this hearing on March 5th after receiving a request from the school last fall with concerns about the existing signs and speed limit around the school.

7:29

Christina Hartman is a Superintendent and she contacted me to ask what we could do to clean up the area.

7:35

Call out more attention to the school zone with some additional signage.

7:42

Current state law requires that we work with the school district when establishing or altering a school zone and school zone speed limit.

7:50

And since we did not have anything on record where we have officially taken that action, Miss Hartman took the request through the school board and the community council in Seeley lake and the support was unanimous for establishing a school zone.

8:05

And you'll see on this, not that one on this resolution exhibit, this is the proposed extent of the school zone.

8:13

And through their discussions in See Lake, it was ultimately decided that they wanted to request a permanent 20 mile an hour school zone speed limit around the school.

8:23

Miss Hartman did present some background information on that at the first hearing and she is online today to provide additional comment or answer questions if needed.

8:33

But just in general with this request, it was clearly necessary that we needed some additional signage.

8:39

This is an exhibit of what is in place now and it does not really call a lot of attention to the fact that there is a school in the area, particularly an elementary school with a lot of young children, a lot of parents, a lot of bus activity.

8:53

So anyone not familiar with the area may not necessarily recognize that this is a school zone.

8:59

So with this resolution, we would propose to call out the existence of the school with a little more thorough and current standard signing plan that would allow the local Sheriff's Department to enforce the school zone speed limits with penalties up to double the normal fine within a school zone.

9:27

So this is just a a great opportunity to upgrade the entire area for an elementary school.

9:35

And so with that, that's the background information I have and would ask if we wanted to consider that resolution.

9:43

Awesome, thanks.

9:45

Does Miss Hartman have anything to you'd like to add?

9:50

Yes, thank you very much.

9:51

I just wanted to confirm that yes, we, I appreciate working with Eric and helping us notify that this is a school zone.

9:59

On top of that, we are the Central Park to our whole community, which is why I requested for a year round full time speed zone for that area.

10:12

Thanks.

10:12

So that answers an obvious question.

10:16

Juan, do you have any questions?

10:18

I do, I do not.

10:21

Do we have resolution language?

10:41

And Claire, I would recommend the the first one.

10:43

I was not sure if there was sorry you threw us a curveball.

10:47

We have to pick I I didn't have an or I didn't have an or in there.

10:50

I didn't know if there would be concerned with the so just to cover my bases.

10:55

The first motion is the recommended.

10:57

Thank you, Sir, Thank you.

10:59

I move that we establish a school zone and a permanent 20 mile per hour school zone speed limit on portions of Pine Dr.

11:06

and School Lane at the City Lake Elementary School.

11:09

I will second that and call for any public comment on this.

11:15

OK, seeing none all in favor.

11:17

Aye.

11:18

Thanks a lot Eric and and thanks Miss Hartman for doing this work.

11:23

Thank you very much.

11:25

Next up, Matt Heimel.

11:36

Matt, it's true you're bringing us back to 1946.

11:43

I know it would be if you'd addressed for for 1946, that would have really been good.

11:48

You're a small guy, Matt.

11:56

Yeah.

11:59

All right.

11:59

So good afternoon, commissioners.

12:00

I'm Matt Heiml with Planning, Development and Sustainability and this agenda item is a A310 permit for

some work to an existing structure, restaurant structure built around 1972 over Rattlesnake Creek right over the the Creek at 700 E Broadway.

12:17

And essentially this comes down to building maintenance and some precautionary tree cutting of some trees that are growing along the the structure.

12:26

So first I'd like to there we go.

12:30

So for some context, we don't see a lot of 310 permits in the the county and in in general a 310 permit is 1 of numerous kind of 1 of numerous kinds of permits we can see on a water body.

12:42

And one of the central key points is looking at if there's any change to the state of a stream, change to the straight state of a stream bank, and some other key factors you look for, whether they're impacts to the soil erosion or other sort of a central elements that have the riparian area in intact.

13:01

And it's very peculiar in Missoula County that the Board of County Commissioners has jurisdiction over 310 permits within the 1946 city limits.

13:12

And that goes back to the way that the conservation district was created in reference to the municipal boundaries at that time in 46.

13:20

So in short, within those 46 limits, it's the county that will review A310 permit and outside that will be the conservation district.

13:30

Specifically, we're at 700 E Broadway over Rattlesnake Creek and on the east side of the of the structure in the east Bank of the Creek, there are several Cottonwood trees that are right up against the structure.

13:42

And there's also some a small portion of existing deck and stairs that needs to be replaced in kind.

13:48

So here's a picture of those existing deck and stairs to be replaced and some larger Cottonwood trees that are really growing right up against the structure and hanging over the roof that pose a threat.

14:01

And here's another couple pictures of those trees right up against it.

14:06

And we are recommending approval of of the permit, recommending approval of the replacement of deck and, and stairs as proposed.

14:15

The application calls for leaving the roof structures intact and cutting the tree trunks about two feet off the ground.

14:21

And fish, wildlife and parks and the water quality and and staff do recommend modifying the the tree treatment to leave the trunks intact up to the lower roof line to provide some snags for habitat.

14:35

And also a modification that existing trees or adjacent trees shrubs in the Creek bank cannot be disturbed.

14:42

And for every two Cottonwood treated, 2 conifers would be planted in the vicinity of the project.

14:48

So we have 10 parentheses to remind me that I'm sorry, I'm confused.

14:52

I thought you said that the stumps were like 2 feet to be left 2 feet.

14:56

I or the application references that they they would be left about two feet and and the proposed or the recommended modification.

15:03

Oh, thank you.

15:04

OK, have them cut so that they're in line lower roof.

15:07

OK, sorry.

15:08

And we would have up to 10 conifers planted.

15:13

And I do have a recommended motion and I think the applicant is actually here with us this afternoon as well.

15:17

Great.

15:18

Would the applicant like to speak to this?

15:28

I think hit the make sure you say your name, Sir, just so it's in the record.

15:32

Thank you.

15:32

My name is Clayton Moore and my wife and I are the current owners to Suzette's Organics.

15:37

We have one location in Hamilton and we've been wanting to come to Missoula for several years now.

15:43

So in being able to find this location, we closed on that building in July.

15:48

I was like the first week of July and the second week of July, there was a tree landed on the building.

15:55

And so the the largest tree there, all of the branches are actually hanging over all of our units.

16:04

And we also had a branch fall off of that.

16:07

It missed all the units, but it poked a hole through the roof.

16:10

So we've just had some issues with the trees.

16:12

And so that's why we were just requesting to be able to remove the trees and be able to, you know, again, not disturb anything concerning the the the stream beds.

16:21

We'd have all those boomed out.

16:23

So it didn't that was that was our request.

16:26

Thank you.

16:27

Thank you.

16:30

Juan, do you have any questions?

16:32

No, Clayton answered all of my questions.

16:38

So there's some any any other public comments?

16:44

OK, some.

16:45

I move to approve the 310 permit for Clayton Moore to replace a deck, stairs and tree Cottonwood trees at 700 E Broadway in the Rattlesnake riparian area.

16:54

Excuse me, Rattlesnake Creek riparian area subject to modifications based on review of the Missoula County 310 administrative rules.

17:03

All right, I'll second that and call again for any public comment.

17:07

One, can we call this the chicken adobo resolution?

17:10

That's what I want.

17:11

We're very excited for you to open, Sir.

17:13

Yes.

17:13

And then yes.

17:14

And thanks for the history lesson, Matt.

17:18

Aye.

17:18

OK, all, all seeing no public comment.

17:21

All in favor.

17:22

Aye.

17:22

All right.

17:22

Thanks a lot and good luck, folks.

17:26

Katie, reader.

17:29

Thank you, Matt.

17:52

I hope.

18:03

OK.

18:08

Good afternoon commissioners to this afternoon.

18:11

I'll be presenting Large Meadows minor subdivision.

18:14

For the record, my name is Katie Reeder, planner with planning, Development and sustainability.

18:19

This is a proposal submitted by Mountain Constructions, Inc Joining us today is Sean Amundsen with Four O 6 Engineering serving as the project's technical representative.

18:34

The subject property is situated approximately 5 miles north of the Interstate 99 mile exit.

18:42

This graphic shows the applicants are proposing to subdivide 12.31 acres into three lots, which results in an average density of approximately 1 home per four acres with each intended lot for single family residences.

18:57

No variances were needed as part of of this proposal.

19:03

The site is situated in a rural area with an existing single family residence, fencing, and road infrastructure.

19:10

The subject property is characterized by rural residential and agricultural uses including pasture, grassland, and forested lands with areas historically used for hay and or alfalfa production.

19:25

Large Meadows was reviewed under these primary criteria outlined in state laws and the Missoula County Subdivision Regulations.

19:33

These criteria include agriculture, agricultural, water user facilities, local services, natural and cultural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, OH, and public health and safety.

19:50

The Missoula County Regional Land Use Guide, adopted in 2002, designates this area as open and resource land.

19:58

This designation is intended to protect.

20:01

Natural resource lands limited limit development where services are constrained and preserve the area's rural character.

20:08

While is not primarily intended for residential development, the growth policy does allow for limited low density residential use, generally no more than one dwelling per 40 acres.

20:19

The subject property is currently unzoned.

20:21

I would also like to note that the parent parcel has existed in its current configuration of approximately 12.31 acres since 1967, prior to the adoption of the growth policy.

20:36

State and local regulations require subdivisions to mitigate impacts to agriculture and agricultural water user facilities.

20:44

Section 3, Point 1.4 of the Missoula County Subdivision Regulations provides a framework to balance development with agricultural preservation.

20:54

The subject property and surrounding area are primarily used for grassland, pasture, and small scale agriculture, and agricultural use in the area has remained consistent over time.

21:05

Soils on the property are classified as farmland of local importance, supporting continued agricultural viability.

21:13

While the proposed subdivision will convert a limited portion of the property, the overall agricultural character is expected to remain and the proposal continues to support small scale agricultural use on the resulting lots.

21:28

The subdivision will be served by existing roadway infrastructure including Ranch Lane and Ridgewood Dr., which connect to W 9 Mile Rd.

21:37

and provide access to Hwy.

21:39

10, W and Interstate 90.

21:41

All roads serving the subdivision are existing county maintained roadways and are adequate to support the proposed development.

21:49

No new public or private roads are proposed.

21:52

The subdivision is expected to generate minimal traffic with approximately 20 vehicle trips per day associated with two additional residential units.

22:00

Access to the individual lots will be provided via new driveways, which will require approach permits from Missoula County Public Works and must meet applicable driveway standards.

22:13

Water for the subdivision will be provided by individual wells.

22:17

Groundwater is available in the area with well data indicating reliable depths, and total water use for the subdivision is estimated at approximately 9.8 acre feet per year, which remains within Montana's exempt groundwater thresholds.

22:35

In accordance with House Bill 681, a condition of approval requires submittal of a Notice of Intent for exempt well water usage and final water allocations per lot will be documented in the subdivision covenants.

22:48

Wastewater will be treated through individual septic systems with DEQ and Missoula County Sanitation Review required prior to development.

22:57

This site is located in an area with potential for seasonal high groundwater and additional groundwater monitoring may be required as part of the sanitation review process to ensure long term protection of water resources.

23:14

Solid waste services are available to the subdivision through private providers serving the area.

23:20

The subdivision is located within the Frenchtown School District and is estimated to add approximately 4 school aged children.

23:27

School serving that area are located approximately 13 miles from the site.

23:32

Based on the small scale of the subdivision, no adverse impacts to local services, including schools, are anticipated.

23:42

The subdivision is located within the wildland urban interface where wildfire risk is known and ongoing consideration.

23:51

While the fire hazard assessment classified the site as a moderate risk, portions of the area are identified as having higher wildfire hazard potential.

24:00

Given this context, wildfire mitigation is key, is a key component of the proposal and is addressed through both covenants and conditions of approval.

24:09

These measures include the installation of residential fire sprinkler systems and the use of Class A fire rated roofing materials.

24:17

In addition, the project includes A requirement for non combustible building materials for siding, decks and railings.

24:23

While this measure is not specifically required, based on the Fire Hazard Assessment scoring, staff is recommending it as an additional level of mitigation due to the site's location within the WUI.

24:35

The rationale for this requirement is that non combustible materials significantly reduce the likelihood of structure and ignition from embers and radiant heat.

24:46

This measure is intended to improve long term structure survivability and reduce overall wildfire risk.

24:52

The subdivision is served by the Frenchtown Rural Fire District, located approximately .9 miles from the site.

25:02

The subject property consists primarily of grassland and Meadow with some lightly forested areas and does not contain steep slopes, wetlands or riparian resources.

25:12

No known historical or cultural resources have been identified on the site.

25:18

The surrounding 9 Mile Valley includes a mix of rural residential and agricultural development, with large areas of adjacent public lands providing broader habitat continuity.

25:29

Wildlife species in the area include deer, elk, black bear, and other common wildlife, and the property is located within mapped winter range for elk and whitetailed deer.

25:43

The area is also recognized as a part of a broader landscape that supports wildlife movement, including grizzly bear habitat.

25:50

Potential impacts to wildlife are addressed through mitigation measures including incorporation of Montana Fish wildlife and parks, living with wildlife recommendations, and a requirement for bear resistant garbage containers to reduce human wildlife conflicts.

26:06

Based on agency and organizational review, including input from 5 Valleys Autobahn, the scale of the proposed subdivision is not expected to result in significant impacts to wildlife habitat beyond those typical of rural residential development.

26:21

Disturbance from development will be addressed through required revegetation and weed management plans to ensure long term site stability and control of noxious weeds.

26:34

Staff received public comment expressing current concerns related to groundwater, wildlife, agricultural land, and preservation of real character, as well as concerns regarding consistency with the growth policy and the accuracy of information provided in the application.

26:51

These concerns were considered as part of the review.

26:54

Groundwater impacts are addressed through required DE sanitation review and ground monitoring where applicable.

27:01

Agricultural use in soils re evaluated and while a limited portion of the property will be converted, the site is identified as supporting continued small scale agricultural use with overall agricultural character expected to remain consistent with the surrounding area.

27:17

Wildlife considerations are addressed through subdivision review and mitigation measures, including the incorporation of the Living with wildlife recommendations and requirements for the bear resistant garbage containers.

27:30

With respect to rural character.

27:31

The subdivision maintains relatively large lot sizes and with that staff is recommending approval.

27:38

Commissioners, here's your language.

27:41

Thanks Katie.

27:42

Would the applicant like to speak to this?

27:52

Thanks Katie.

27:54

Commissioners Name's Sean Amundsen.

27:56

I'm with four O 6 engineering.

27:58

I'm going to try not to go too much overlap with what she just discussed.

28:04

I, I want to stick specifically to the public comments that we received on this.

28:10

Not all-encompassing.

28:11

There was a lot of information sent in, but I've tried to hit on the big ones.

28:15

There were some issues with growth policy and, and how that's interpreted and how it's implemented.

28:20

I just wanted to point out to everybody that within 1/2 mile radius of this property, there's nine parcels within this size category of a three to six acre parcel.

28:32

There's only one parcel within within 1/2 mile of this property that falls within the 40 acre category.

28:38

All other parcels are smaller than 40 acres.

28:42

I think it's important for public commenters and everybody to understand that the Missoula County Growth Policy is a guidance document and it's not land use regulation.

28:52

It guides the future growth.

28:59

Sean, I don't mean to interrupt, but yeah, I mean, yes, I do mean to interrupt it.

29:02

But Katie, do you have a an image that shows what Sean was talking about the the right an aerial of the so folks can see the proximity of the other developments?

29:19

Because I know I can't imagine 1/2 mile.

29:46

That's great.

29:49

For reference, the half mile is about to where that larger 400 acre parcel is to the north.

29:55

If you zoom out a little bit, Katie, you kind of see that bigger l-shaped parcel.

30:02

The edge of that is effectively about 1/2 a half mile radius.

30:06

Thank you so much.

30:07

Yeah.

30:11

And to to add to that, just to to discuss some of the goals in the growth policy 11.

30:17

Big one here is direct.

30:20

A goal is direct development to occur in a scale supported for infrastructure and services existing as Katie discussed.

30:29

We're not proposing any new roads.

30:31

There's no sorry.

30:42

We're not, we're not proposing to extend any new roads or bring in any urban level utilities into this parcel.

30:50

Another goal in the in the growth policy is to protect public health and safety as we always try to do with everything we do.

30:58

The subdivision was evaluated for groundwater, sanitation, and wildfire considerations appropriate for a minor subdivision.

31:07

Another goal in the growth policies maintain real character while accommodating incremental growth.

31:13

The subdivisions is designed to preserve the natural character of the Nine Mile Valley, providing large residential lots that allow for small scale agriculture.

31:22

As Katie discussed as well, another goal in the in the growth policies to ensure fair, predictable, and lawful development.

31:31

This application was reviewed under adopted subdivision regulations.

31:34

Found complete and recommended for approval by staff.

31:42

Another big thing that got cut up or or brought up in public comment was groundwater and water resources.

31:50

This project will keep the existing well with the existing house and two new wells will be proposed according to historic well logs.

31:59

Well logs in the area yield about 20 gallons per minute, which is which more than suffices for state sanitation approval.

32:08

As Katie had said before this, the DNRC has come out with a new process for what's called the six O 2 I form and it's a notice of intent and that effectively we we submit to them and that guarantees the amount of water right that we have for this parcel.

32:25

And as she said, a total of 9.88 acre feet each existing dwell, each residence will have .4 acre feet for domestic use and then 2.88 acre feet for lawn and garden watering.

32:45

In one of the public, in the public, one of the public comments somebody was concerned about aquifer depletion.

32:56

What I wanted to bring to everybody's attention is prior to this being subdivided the the owner before my client purchased it, he irrigated the pasture with the well that was there.

33:08

And by just doing some quick calculations here and using some aerial photos, they were running approximately 9 hand lines off an irrigation main.

33:19

Using conservative estimates, they were pumping 4 to 5 gallons per minute per head, which comes out to about 36 to 45 gallons per minute the entire irrigation season.

33:32

I think everybody can understand that that is a huge amount of water and domestic flows are just substantially smaller than that.

33:41

So if you know that person's concern was depleting the aquifer, I firmly believe that this is actually better for that aquifer.

33:50

For instance, if a peak instantaneous flow of these three residences taking a shower at one time, we're talking about 7 1/2 gallons per minute, not 50 gallons per minute, and that's just for 30 minutes.

34:04

Just just for reference, additional precautions were taken to protect the aquifer.

34:16

Each lot will be required to obtain a state approved well and sanitation approval ensuring protection for water quality.

34:22

As Katie discussed before, it was a requirement by the Missoula County Health Department to do some groundwater monitoring there to make sure that the separation of four feet is there and is adequate for proper treatment of effluent.

34:37

Additionally, when my client purchases property, the first thing he did was he put in a new septic system for that existing house.

34:46

The other system was old, it was undersized.

34:49

This one was put in new in December.

34:53

So it's ensuring proper treatment of the effluent from the existing house.

35:00

Another big point in the public comments was wildlife and natural environment.

35:05

As Katie said before, there's no wetlands on the property, no riparian areas on the property.

35:11

The subdivision is near public lands, but it's not adjacent to public lands.

35:16

The wildlife presence is acknowledged.

35:20

Wildlife uses this, but occasional or seasonal use doesn't equate to critical habitat.

35:29

To mitigate some of these things, we reached out to FWP and they sent us the Living with wildlife covenants that we have implemented into the covenants for the subdivision.

35:41

We acknowledge that Nine Mile Valley is bear habitat and for that reason there's a condition of approval for using bear proof garbage cans.

35:51

I'd also like to note that the Five Valleys Audubon Society noted that the grassland within the proposed subdivision provides some wildlife habitat value.

35:59

However, based on the scale and context of the proposed development, the habitat does not appear to warrant specific mitigation measures beyond those already incorporated into the subdivision design.

36:13

There were some public comments about traffic, roads and dust.

36:20

The traffic generated from a three three lot minor subdivision is negligible and is within the Rural Rd.

36:26

standards at in the subdivision regulations.

36:31

All roads leading this subdivision are county maintained.

36:36

The county review has not identified any unsafe access or or Rd.

36:41

failure under current standards.

36:46

Unfortunately, dust dust and maintenance is a common practice with real living and gravel roads.

36:52

It's just something that we all have to deal with when we live in somewhere like that.

37:00

One person had commented that he was they were concerned that this was going to increase their taxes.

37:09

It's hard to speculate and it's feels unsupported.

37:12

From my perspective.

37:14

I don't know how that would work.

37:16

So I don't have the greatest answer, but I just don't think that applies.

37:21

And I don't know if anybody else could answer that for them, but and then there was allegations of inaccurate or incomplete information and from one of the public comments.

37:35

When we prepare applications, we use the best available data that we can get and we have evidence supporting our findings.

37:41

The application was reviewed by professional staff and deemed complete and sufficient for for the review.

37:48

Differences of opinion regarding land use or impact interpretation do not equal inaccuracies is what I'd like to put across there.

37:58

Some final thoughts on the subdivision from my end.

38:01

As Katie had stated, there's no variances with the subdivision.

38:05

We're following the subdivision rules exactly how they're written.

38:10

I think it's also important to, for everybody to understand that if this wasn't a subdivision submittal, there's there's really nothing stopping my client or anybody else in the Nine Mile Valley to submit a KOSA rewrite to the health department and put two buildings on the on a piece of property with, with no governing body review and very limited planning staff input.

38:36

Just just to give some reality of that situation.

38:45

You know, change is unsettling for for everybody, especially up 9 Mile.

38:51

It's not intended to transform the character or or the community or diminish what makes the place special.

38:59

We recognize and respect neighbors concerns.

39:01

We're committed to ongoing transparency and clear communication in compliance with the county standards.

39:08

This project reflects in an effort to balance private property rights with long term health, safety and livability of the community.

39:16

So I'm available for any questions you may have.

39:20

Thank you very much.

39:21

Wait, Sean, I did have a question.

39:23

What you're talking about the taxes, I'm sorry, the the comment was that taxes would increase or their land value would decrease.

39:30

They were concerned that their taxes would increase due to the subdivision.

39:34

Yeah, OK.

39:36

Do you want I just 'cause I'm into this as an issue?

39:39

I can't see that there would be any noticeable change in increase or decrease from this level of addition to total property in Missoula County.

39:49

Also, this doesn't require any new infrastructure.

39:52

I I can't see there'd be any measurable change.

39:55

The sense of property values could change if the buildings that are constructed here, and I'm not saying you would ever do this, Sir.

40:01

Imagine the buildings that were constructed here were unsightly or unattractive.

40:05

Someone could make the case then that now property values are lower.

40:08

But we're talking about a subdivision.

40:10

We have no design standards in Missoula County.

40:11

You guys can build whatever you want as long as you get a building permit.

40:14

So I don't believe there's a real any real tax implications from the specific active subdivision.

40:21

Thank you.

40:23

Any other questions at the moment?

40:27

Thanks.

40:28

Any public comment on this in the room or online?

40:36

OK, Juan, what do you think?

40:39

Well, maybe John Hart, you could refresh or remind us again the what's the purpose of a growth policy if you can't lean on it?

40:51

I mean, because you have neighbors in this area that are are frustrated and saying that, well, I mean, the growth policy is a guidance document.

41:01

It's a snapshot in time.

41:03

I don't remember the vintage of the growth policy for this particular part of Missoula Valley, but it's it's, it's probably not that close in time.

41:20

That doesn't mean that we should ignore it.

41:24

You, you are required to be guided by it.

41:27

But you also cannot deny a land use proposal based solely on incompatibility or perceived incompatibility with the growth policy.

41:41

Thanks.

41:42

Thanks.

41:46

I don't have any other questions.

41:48

You want to?

41:49

Yeah, OK.

41:50

I move that the Large Meadow subdivision be approved based on the findings of facts and conclusions of law on the staff report and subject to recommended conditions of approval in the staff report.

42:00

I'll second that and call once again for any public comment in the room or online.

42:08

OK, seeing none all in favor, Aye.

42:12

Good luck guys.

42:20

Next up, Laura, 9.

42:53

Good afternoon, Commissioners.

42:54

Lauren Ryan, Community and Economic Development Specialist.

42:58

I'm here to present the request for TIF funding for a fire needs assessment study for both the Missoula Rural Fire District and the Fidgetown Rural Fire District.

43:12

So I'll just quickly provide an overview of the presentation today.

43:17

I'll discuss the project background and provide context for this particular study.

43:22

I'll also outline the goals that we're aiming to achieve and the parties that are going to be involved in the process.

43:30

I'll also walk through the projected project cost and cover the expected time frame and end with a recommended motion.

43:41

So the Y infrastructure plan, which the commissioners adopted in January of 2026, serves as the foundation for this assessment.

43:50

The plan specifically targets the Y1 and Y2 Ted's, which are the key focus areas of the study.

43:59

The plan itself intends to highlight the necessities for more thorough analysis of fire and emergency services within these regions.

44:09

This is his key step towards ensuring that the infrastructure and the services in the Y1 and Y2 Ted areas can meet the demand now and in the future.

44:20

Growth.

44:21

The assessment will set the stage for understanding the current capabilities of the fire and emergency services and identify the gaps and needs for the fire and emergency services.

44:37

So, as I mentioned, the study will encompass both Missoula Rural Fire District and Frenchtown Rural Fire District.

44:43

Both of those districts fall within the Y1 and Y2 Ted areas.

44:51

The key goals of this project are to review the existing capacity in the Y1 and Y2 Teds.

44:59

So this means that the study will assess the current state of Fire Protection services, including the infrastructure and resources available.

45:08

And so this will review will provide a baseline to understand where improvements are needed in these districts.

45:16

Next, the study will evaluate and forecast the infrastructure, facilities, staffing and capital investments required in these areas.

45:26

So this will involve looking ahead and predicting what will be necessary to meet future demands effectively in these areas.

45:34

Our objective here is to ensure that as the community grows in these areas that Fire Protection services can keep pace and provide adequate services.

45:47

Additionally, the study will forecast the phased infrastructure and resources that will be critical as we anticipate growth in this area both near term and long term.

45:58

Secondly, the key goal will be to identify effective implementation and funding strategies for Fire Protection services.

46:06

So this will mean that the study will explore various options to ensure that Fire Protection services are funded and effectively implemented to meet the future demands of the area.

46:21

So this project will involve multiple parties.

46:24

Of course, we will involve the fire chiefs from both Missoula Rural Fire and Frenchtown Rural Fire District.

46:30

Both of the fire chiefs have been involved so far in developing the RFP that would be published.

46:38

Missoula County Office of Emergency Management will also provide guidance in the process and myself or either Flanna will be involved in the process as well.

46:50

So this proposal did go both to the Missoula Development Authority and Missoula Jurisdictional Advisory Committee.

46:57

And I'll mention that the Missoula Jurisdictional Advisory Committee that is comprised of the school districts, fire districts and transportation district affected by Ted's and it was brought to their consideration at their March meeting and both of these boards voted unanimously for approval.

47:16

So we have a project total request of \$150,000 from TIF funds, 50,000 of that would be coming from the Y1 fund and 100,000 from the Y2 fund proposed project timeline.

47:35

So if this request were to be approved today, we would look at publishing that RFP this month.

47:41

In May, we would work on the interview and selection process from the consulting firm, a signed contract in June of 2026 and completing the the study itself end of 2026, potentially into early 2027.

48:00

And with that, I have a recommended motion in front of you.

48:04

Do believe we have one of the fire chiefs here if they want to provide any input, but happy to answer any questions.

48:11

Thank you.

48:12

Please come on up, Sir.

48:20

Commissioners, thank you.

48:22

Damian Frisbee, Fire Chief for Frenchtown Rural Fire District.

48:25

I just want to say thank you for your time.

48:26

We appreciate the help from everybody getting this going and hopefully it can help us in our future endeavors for taking care of our districts.

48:35

Thank you.

48:35

Great.

48:35

Thank you.

48:36

Thank you.

48:41

When do you have any questions?

48:42

I do not I just can't help myself but rant a little bit Ranch what?

48:47

So I'm really excited about this and I want to I mean everybody here knows this.

48:51

I know, but I guess others may be online don't know about this or I can say it for Griffin.

48:55

I think Griffin's buying some pants right now on the just you know, it's teasing you.

49:01

Just the nature of how these TIF districts work.

49:04

There is a finite sum of money in the world of taxes, whether we're inside or outside of a TIF district inside of a TIF district in the county.

49:12

It's a Ted.

49:13

We freeze revenue that goes to the different tax and jurisdiction dictions at the year of inception of the district.

49:21

So it's 2026 forever in the Ted district until the thing sunsets.

49:26

But taxes change every year they go up.

49:28

As new development happens, the amount of taxes collected from within one area would increase.

49:34

The way this works, that increase that increment doesn't go to any of the jurisdictions, instead gets put in a fund.

49:39

So we can do projects around infrastructure that would facilitate further development inside the district.

49:44

But that means during the duration of the life of the district, the county, the fire districts, school districts don't get some of the money they would ordinarily be getting and yet still have a mandate to provide services.

49:57

Whether that's Fire Protection or planning and zoning and elections, public safety or education.

50:02

The mandate remains.

50:03

But the revenue side is decreased.

50:06

With this study, we're hoping to get a better handle on how much revenue would actually be needed according to how much growth happens.

50:13

And hopefully as we go forward, we can modulate how much revenue comes into the TIF and how much goes back to the jurisdictions to make sure that we can get the fire districts the dollars they need to provide the level of public safety that's actually required inside the district.

50:29

Such as?

50:30

Too much jargon for y'all, but at least I said it out loud.

50:33

I'm really excited about this and yet this is only the revenue side.

50:38

I'm also excited about in the future doing some studies around the cost side.

50:43

This is the cost side.

50:44

I'm looking at the I want to do some studies around the revenue side.

50:47

How much would be generated for the district?

50:51

How much development would generate, how much revenue so we could modulate?

50:55

This will get us clear on how much Fire Protection would cost.

50:58

I want to figure out how much revenue would be generated over time at one level of development so we can keep these things in rough balance and still allow the district to generate a fund that could meet the needs of establishing the infrastructure that's required.

51:15

It's a balancing act really, what would be needed is new revenue from some outside source, but there is no outside source.

51:21

It's just us.

51:23

So we got to figure out how we manage what we get and shortchange ourselves in other areas and invest in other areas.

51:29

And it's a balancing act.

51:31

And if we go forward with this, we'll be going forward with better information.

51:35

End of rant.

51:36

Excellent rant.

51:39

Is there any other public comment?

51:40

Any public comment?

51:41

If you, if you tell me I'm all wrong, I'm good with that too.

51:44

You can.

51:45

Oh thanks, I move that the board approved 50,000.

51:50

Oops, sorry Kevin Davis.

51:55

Thank you Commissioners, can you hear me?

51:58

Yep great Kevin Davis, member of the public.

52:02

I kind of feel obligated to speak public comments since very little others seem to be available.

52:09

I'm at work, probably one of the many mazzillions that are at work to pay our property taxes and just to be mindful of how those public funds are being spent.

52:19

And not necessarily to counter the rant of Commissioner Slotnick, but just to reiterate what I stated at last meeting about TIF, and that is there are side effects.

52:33

And I think we need to give credence to those side effects in the meetings I've had with fire head Superintendent of schools and law enforcement that are concerned about TIF districts and the reality that TIF funding does pull public funds away from Fire Protection law enforcement in schools.

53:03

And I just think since we're talking about a study today and yet another use of TIF, that study does need to include those side effects and how we're addressing those and how we make projects like this sustainable.

53:17

Because I get concerned when I do hear from fire chiefs that TIF is hurting the districts that they're serving.

53:27

So please keep that in mind.

53:28

It's more of an observation today because when I said this at the last meeting, I was also the only other public commenter, but that wasn't even covered in the media that we're reading today about the meeting.

53:41

Three different sources this week preached about all the benefits of TIF, but no one seems to be wanting to acknowledge those side effects.

53:50

So I hope we can all look to to that more, not to be a downer, but just a realist that TIF isn't always what it what we hope it is.

54:02

And and it doesn't serve the many needs that we have.

54:07

And instead of it just serving large scale developers and certain staff at the county, we need to make sure it's serving all the public.

54:16

So thank you.

54:19

Great.

54:19

Thanks, Kevin.

54:21

Thank you, Kevin.

54:23

And yes, I, I hope the study will get to those answers.

54:27

So you did the motion.

54:31

I did not.

54:32

Oh, sorry, I guess.

54:34

Is there any other public comment?

54:36

Any other public comment?

54:40

OK, I move that the board approved \$50,000 of TIF funding from the Y Ted and \$100,000 of TIF funding from the Y to Ted to fund a fire needs assessment for the rural Fire District and Frenchtown Rural Fire District.

54:56

I'll second that and once again call for any more public comment.

55:01

OK.

55:02

All in favor, aye, I do believe we're all done.

55:07

Thanks everybody for coming.

55:11

Thank you, Lauren for doing that.