

Memorandum: Staff Recommended Amendments - Post Public Hearing

January 20th, 2026

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Overview

This memo covers staff recommended amendments to the Land Use Plan, Unified Development Code, and zoning map identified since the January 12th public hearing.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Clarify Transition of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) from Title 20 to UDC

Code Section: Division 1.1.04 Transitional Provisions, Section 1.1.04-F

Revised Code:

Section 1.1.04-F. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

1. The zoning regulations in effect prior to this UDC allowed for accessory dwelling units (ADU). "Accessory dwelling unit" was defined in the previous zoning regulations as "a separate dwelling unit within a detached house or a separate dwelling unit that occupies an accessory building that shares a parcel with a detached house". In other words, accessory dwelling units were either attached to the primary house or detached from the primary house under the previous zoning regulations.
2. Detached accessory dwelling units established prior to the effective date of this UDC shall be considered a one-unit house, as defined in Article 4.7 Building Standards. Structures containing a primary dwelling unit attached to an accessory dwelling unit that were established prior to the effective date of this UDC shall be considered a duplex, as defined in Article 4.7 Building Standards.
3. Accessory dwelling units are not included as a building type or use in this UDC. All parcels that allow for residential use are permitted a minimum of two dwelling units by right per Articles 4.2 Residential Districts, 4.3 Mixed-Use Districts, and 4.4 Special Use Districts. Additionally, all zoning districts that allow for residential use permit one-unit house and duplex building types, replacing the accessory dwelling unit designation.

Explanation: Numerous public comments were received throughout the code reform process expressing concerns and confusion over the lack of an accessory dwelling unit designation in the new code. This building type was not a necessary designation because all parcels that allow for residential allow at least a duplex or two houses. Most parcels allow for much more housing than two units. The ADU designation does not provide benefit as it results in the same density allowances but would add more unnecessary restrictions. Staff recommend including language in the transitional provisions to describe how ADUs are considered under the current code, and to clarify how the designation of existing ADUs have changed. This allows the public to search for the term "accessory dwelling unit" in the code and learn that their project will either be considered a house or a duplex.

Article 4.3 Mixed-Use Districts

2. Clarify Transparency Requirements for Structured Parking

Code Section: Section 4.3.03-E.3

Revised Code:

3. **Standards Related to Transparency**

- (a) All new buildings must comply with the transparency requirements of Table 4.3.03-~~56~~ Building Components.
- (b) For building additions, the facade of the addition must comply with the transparency requirements but there is no requirement to bring the existing portion of the facade into compliance.
- ~~(c)~~ Modifications to existing buildings are not permitted to increase the degree of deficit or non-conformity with the transparency requirements.
- ~~(e)~~~~(d)~~ Parking structures are not required to include glass in openings meeting the transparency requirements of Table 4.3.03-5.

Explanation: Staff recommend clarifying how transparency requirements are applied to structured parking (i.e. parking garages,) which are considered buildings. Without the amendment, the code can be interpreted to apply transparency requirements to parking structures. This type of structure cannot feasibly meet transparency requirements because glass windows would trap exhaust fumes in the structure. However, parking structures must provide openings meeting the transparency percentages in the table.

Article 4.7 Building Standards (Neighborhood Commercial and FAR)

3. Replace Staff Recommended Amendments #3 and #20 from 1/5/26 Memo

Code Section: Table 4.7.02-6

Revised Code:

Building Standards	
Number of Units per Building	See Zoning District
Building Placement	See Zoning District
Setback Exemption	Exempt from Front and Side Street setbacks in the U-R4 and LU-R2 Districts
Building Form and Components	See Zoning District
Building Specific Standards:	
Size: New Structure	Urban Residential Zoning Districts: The gross floor area of non-residential use(s) in new neighborhood commercial structures is are limited to 2,000 3,500 square feet.
	Limited Urban and Rural Zoning Districts: The gross floor area of non-residential use(s) in new neighborhood commercial structures is are limited to 3,500 -5,000 sf
Size: Conversion of Existing Structure	When an existing structure that was built prior to 2026 is converted to a neighborhood commercial building, there is no limit to the allowed floor area. If the conversion adds to the floor area of the existing structure, the maximum size cannot exceed the square footage limits stated for new structures.

Explanation: There have been multiple amendments approved by Council related to neighborhood commercial and floor area ratio. Two of the amendments were recommended by staff in the 1/5/26 Updated Staff Recommended Amendments Memo, in response to Planning Commission Recommendations (See Amendments #3 and #20 in 1/5/26 Memo). These two amendments increased the size maximum for neighborhood commercial, implemented a floor area ratio specific to neighborhood commercial, and were intended to count neighborhood commercial space towards the residential floor area ratio.

There was an error in the 1/5/26 memo. The code was not amended to count neighborhood commercial space towards residential floor area ratio, but the commentary is written to describe that the space does count towards residential floor area ratio. This error needs to be corrected, though there are different options for how to make the correction.

Council also approved an amendment that exempts dwelling units above neighborhood commercial from residential floor area ratio. Staff's recommended amendments from 1/5/26 complicate this additional amendment. If neighborhood commercial counts towards residential floor area ratio, but the units above the neighborhood commercial space are exempt, then neighborhood commercial only counts towards residential floor area ratio for dwelling units in a separate building or to the side of the commercial space.

All together, the amendments are confusing and do not meet the guiding principle of code reform to create simple, clear code. Staff recommend reducing the amount of regulatory layering in response to the most recent Council amendment and the need to correct a staff error. Essentially, staff no longer recommend most of the changes presented with the 1/5/26 memo.

In order to implement the exemption to floor area ratio for dwelling units above neighborhood commercial, staff recommend **revisions to amendments #3 and #20 from the 1/5/26** memo that:

- Still increase the neighborhood commercial size maximum.
- Do not implement a floor area ratio specific to neighborhood commercial.
- Exempt neighborhood commercial from floor area ratio.

If accepted by Council, the motion should state that this amendment replaces staff recommended amendments #3 and #20 from the Updated Staff Recommended Amendments memo issued 1/5/26.

Article 4.9 Site Development Standards

4. Apply Interior Parking Lot Landscaping to Downtown Core District

Code Section: Section 4.9.02-A.2.b

Revised Code:

2. **Applicability**

- (a) The landscaping requirements of this division apply to all land. The applicability of specific landscaping requirements varies and is addressed in each section of this division.
- (b) The landscaping standards of this division, except for Section 4.9.02-E Interior Parking Lot Landscaping, do not apply to the D-C Downtown Core district.

Explanation: Staff recommend applying interior parking lot landscaping to the D-C Downtown Core zoning district, while still exempting all other landscaping requirements. Parking lots generate a lot of heat and shading parking lots with trees prevents urban heat desert effect. Examples of downtown parking lots containing trees include: Caras Park, Holiday Inn, Kiwanis Park, City Hall, the Depot, and 201 W Main.

5. Exempt Parking Structures from Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping

Code Section: Section 4.9.02-F.2.c

Revised Code:

Section 4.9.02-F. Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping

1. Purpose

The purpose of perimeter parking lot landscaping is to minimize the impact of automobile-dominated areas on the public right-of-way and to promote a comfortable, safe, engaging, and attractive streetscape.

2. Applicability

The perimeter parking lot landscaping requirements apply to the following:

- (a) Installation or expansion of surface parking lots, drive-throughs, or vehicular use areas within 30 feet of a street or trail. The perimeter parking lot landscaping requirements do not apply to vehicular use areas behind a building that are not visible from the street.
- (b) The excavation and reconstruction of existing surface parking lots, drive-throughs, or vehicular use areas if such excavation and reconstruction involves more than 25% of the paved surface or 3,300 square feet of paving, whichever is less.
- (c) The requirements of this section do not apply to parking structures or driveways serving one-unit house, duplex, and rowhouse building types.

Explanation: Staff recommend explicitly exempting parking structures from perimeter parking lot landscaping. Without this amendment, it's unclear if the requirements apply to this type of parking. Placing parking inside of a building meets the purpose statement of this section without needing to meet the standards of the section.

Chapter 5 Subdivision

6. Clarify Number of Lots Allowed through Subdivision in Districts with a Density Maximum

Code Sections: Section

Revised Code:

Section 5.2.03-A. Lots

1. Lots shall comply with the applicable minimum lot widths and/or minimum lot areas in Chapter 4 Zoning.
- ~~1-2. In zoning districts with maximum density requirements, the number of lots shall not exceed the number of dwelling units permitted by the maximum density, based on the net lotted area. The allowance for two dwelling units on any parcel applies to lots once the plat has been filed and is not considered when determining the maximum number of lots allowed in the subdivision.~~

Explanation: R-R1, OP2, LU-R1, and LU-R2 have maximum densities due to constraints. However, minimum parcel area has been replaced by minimum lot width. In the current code, the minimum parcel area is the tool that dictates how many lots are possible in a subdivision to ensure that someone does not plat a number of lots that would exceed the densities specified in the district and Land Use Plan. Currently, the adoption draft does not provide an explanation of how many lots are possible within these districts. Staff recommend an amendment to provide applicants with this answer and clarify that the number of lots cannot exceed the number of dwelling units that would be permitted by the zoning district. This is necessary to ensure new subdivisions comply with the Land Use Plan.

Chapter 6 Infrastructure Improvements

7. Clarify Right-of-Way Improvements Apply to Mixed-Use

Code Section: Section 6.2.01-A-2.d

Revised Code:

- (c) New construction of a driveway approach onto a public or private street;
- (d) Non-residential construction ~~including mixed-use construction which requires additional new on-site parking;~~

Explanation: These changes clarify that ROW Improvements will be required not just for non-residential projects (commercial/industrial) but also specifically for mixed-use projects (part residential/part commercial), thereby removing any ambiguity from the type of project

impacted by this trigger. In addition, this change also removes the requirement for new parking, thereby making this trigger apply more broadly to all non-residential projects. This requirement will ensure that all new commercial construction, even smaller neighborhood commercial or mixed-use projects, will have ROW improvements such as sidewalk to safely facilitate pedestrian access.

Land Use Plan Amendments

8. Explicitly include a potential second runway among the considerations guiding the understanding of airport-related hazards.

Section 2. Land Use Policy Themes, Focus Inward

Policy Objective #3

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Restrict development in hazard-prone areas, mitigate development on sensitive lands, and focus growth towards safe, urbanized areas with existing infrastructure.

Key Issue

Missoula's growth is limited by environmental and safety factors that limit where and how development can occur. ~~natural features like steep hillsides, rivers, riparian areas, floodplains, wildlife habitats, and natural areas providing essential ecosystem functions~~ (see Figure 17, Environmentally Constrained Lands) restrict expansion due to ecological sensitivity and. ~~Developing in these areas can be risky, challenging, or against the community's values of preserving open spaces and sensitive lands for overall quality of life and well-being.~~ In addition, areas immediately southeast of the Missoula Montana Airport's existing runway and potential second runway face restrictions due to safety and noise hazards identified through crash risk analysis and the Missoula Montana Airport (MSO) Master Plan, discouraging residential and high-occupancy land uses. Together, these natural and safety constraints significantly shape the city's future growth potential.

Explanation: The Missoula Montana Airport includes a potential second runway in its long-range plans. Policy language is being updated to clarify that a potential second runway has been and will continue to guide the understanding of this constraint. This is a revision to the *2025 Amendments to the Our Missoula 2045 Land Use Plan* currently proposed for City Council review and adoption.

9. Explicitly include a potential second runway among the considerations guiding Airport Constraints.

Section 3. Place Types, Introduction, Key Terms.



Constraints

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This refers to the presence of environmental hazards, ownership, or limits to infrastructure that exist in an area that may inhibit or outright prohibit residential, commercial, or industrial development. The constraints within an area may also limit the amount of dwelling units or building types that may be developed on a parcel.

Environmental Constraints...

Ownership Constraints...

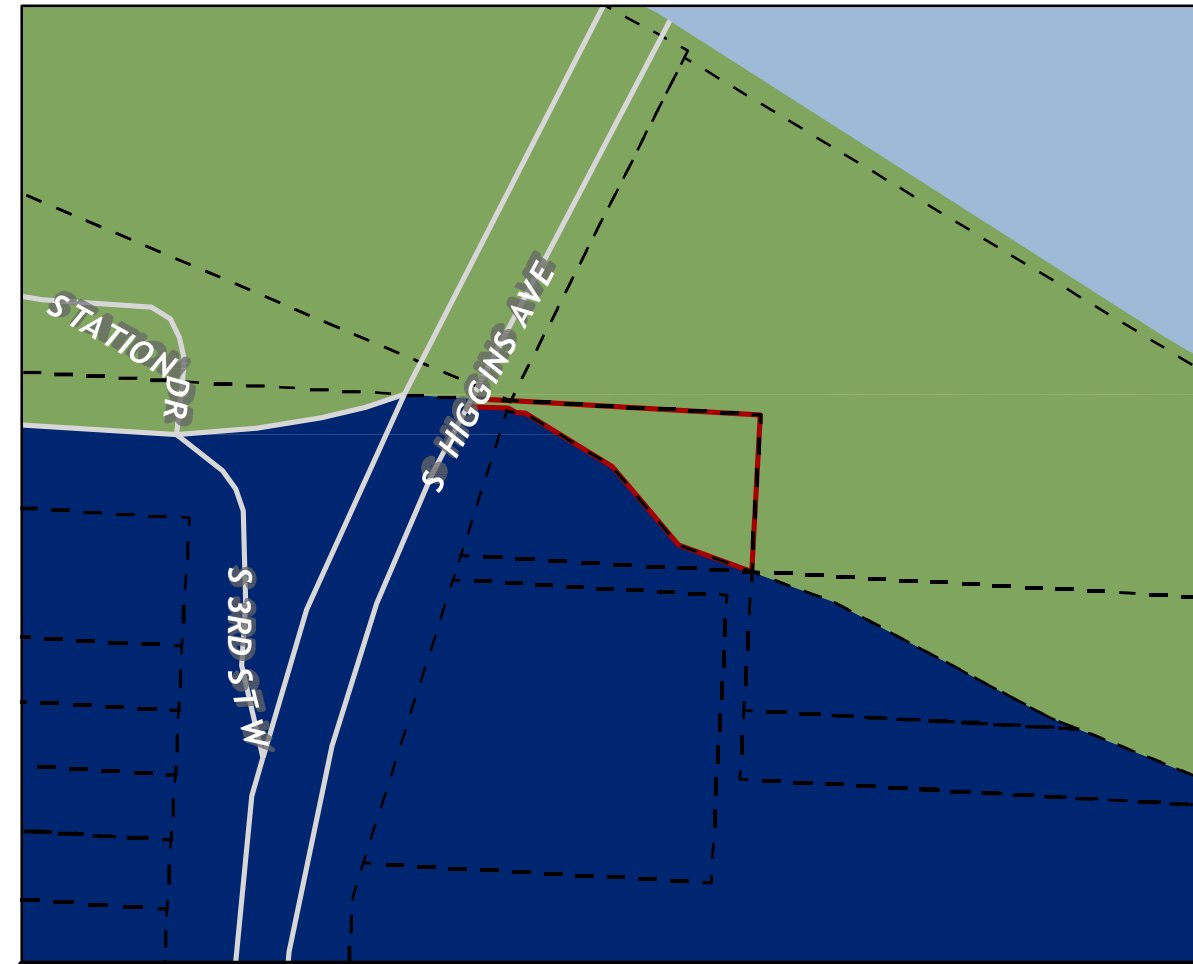
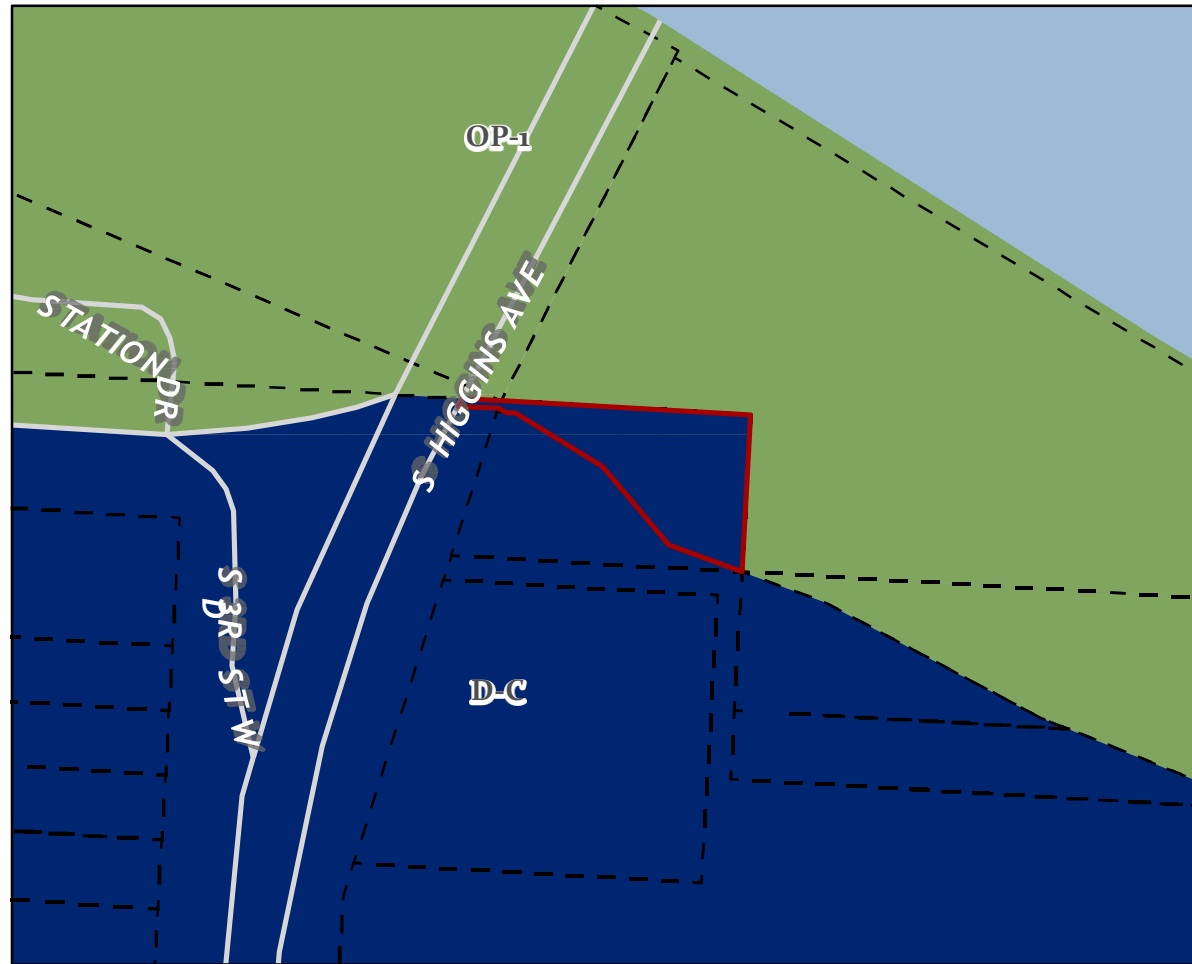
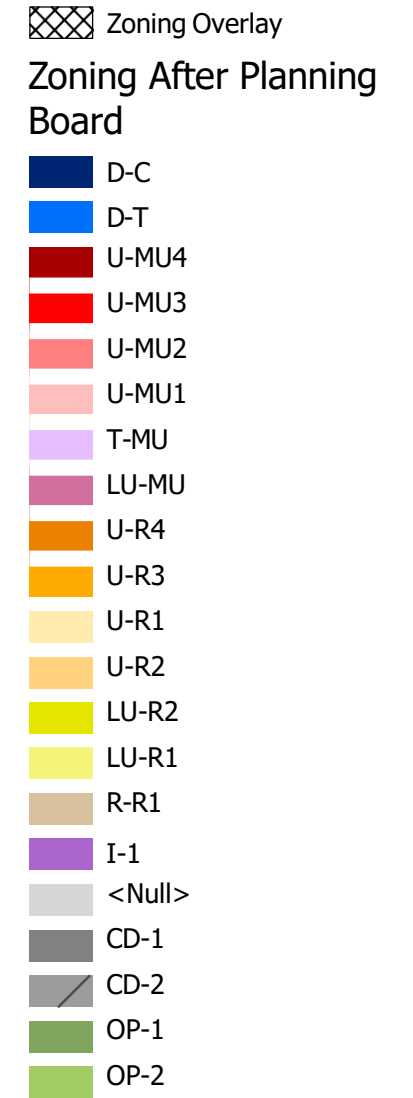
Airport Constraints exist within the Plan area. These are present within the Airport Hazard Area, as referenced in the Focus Inward Land Use Policy Theme. The boundaries are based on an analysis of crash data and noise contours for the Missoula Montana Airport's existing runway and potential second runway, where there is an increased concern over safety and noise. Uses that attract gatherings of large groups of people and places of public assembly are not recommended. and residential uses should be limited in such areas.

Explanation

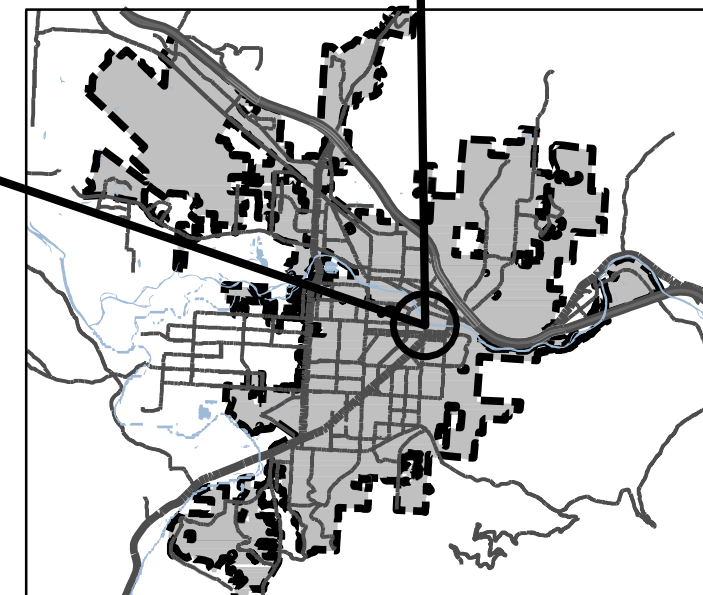
The Missoula Montana Airport includes a potential second runway in its long-range plans. Policy language is being updated to clarify that a potential second runway has been and will continue to guide the extent of this constraint. This is a revision to the *2025 Amendments to the Our Missoula 2045 Land Use Plan* currently proposed for City Council review and adoption.

Map Amendments

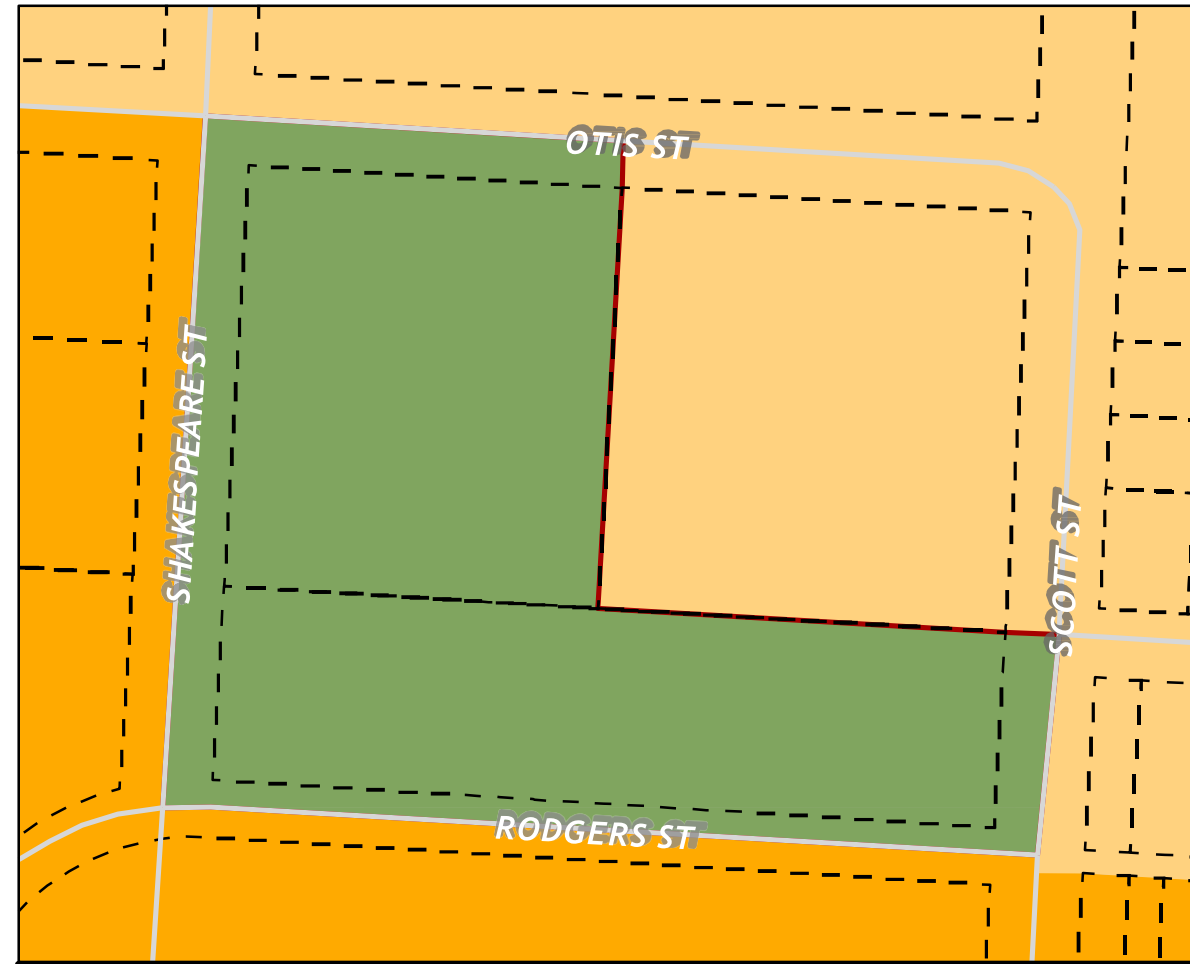
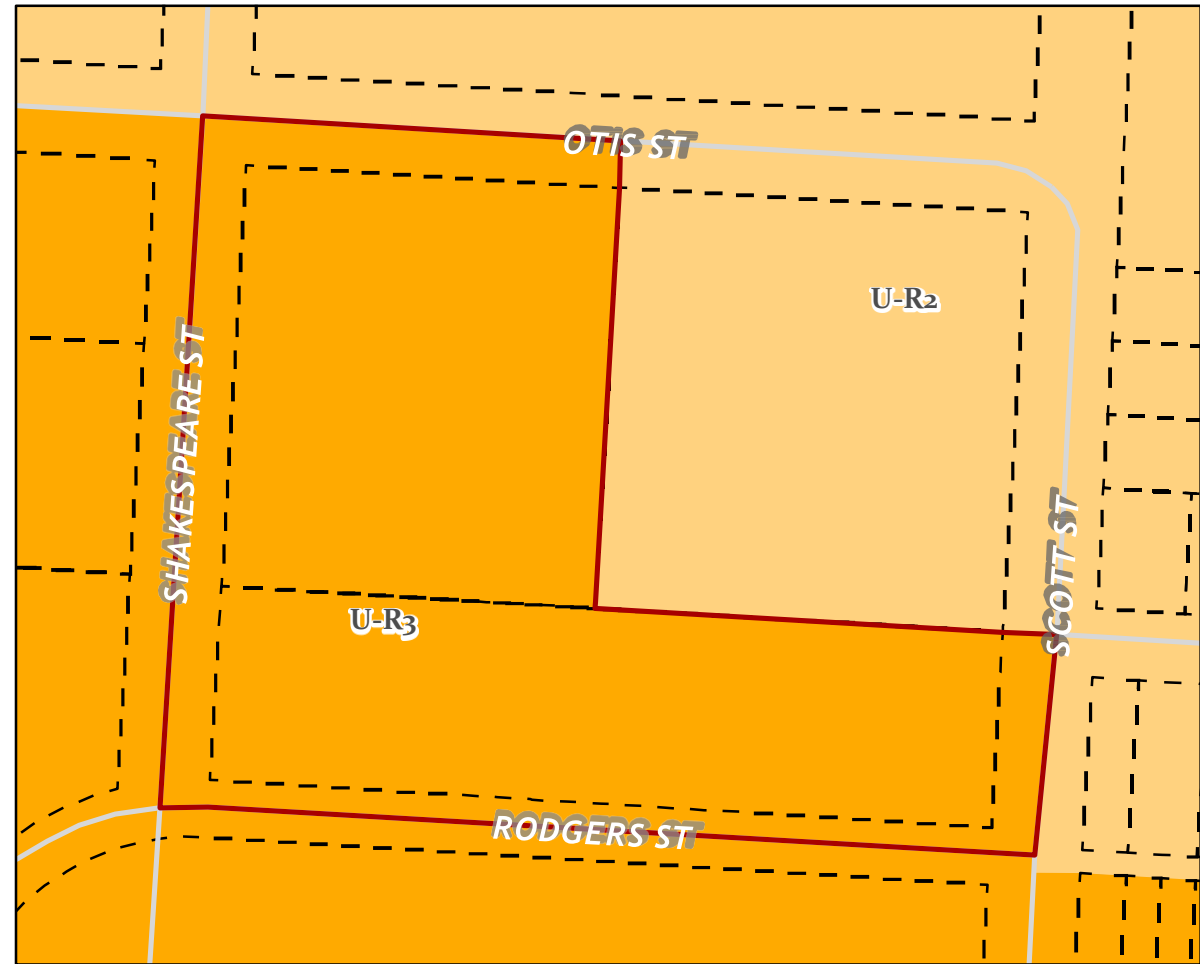
1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

























Update Explanation: The Missoulian Site at 500 S Higgins Avenue was rezoned in recent years in conjunction with a subdivision exemption to create lots that followed the previous Land Use Plan Designation (now Place Type). One of the parcels rezoned to OP1 was inadvertently zoned D-C on the draft zoning map. Staff recommend an amendment to OP1 Open Lands to align the zoning boundary with the Place Type boundary.

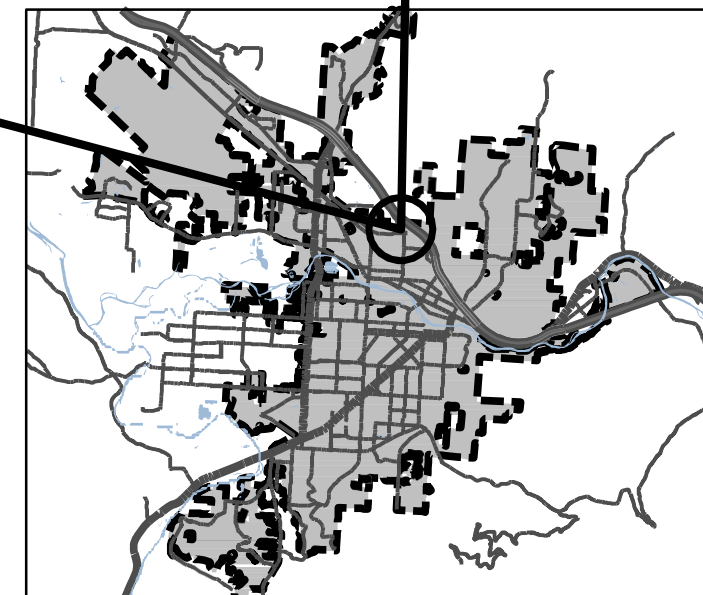


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

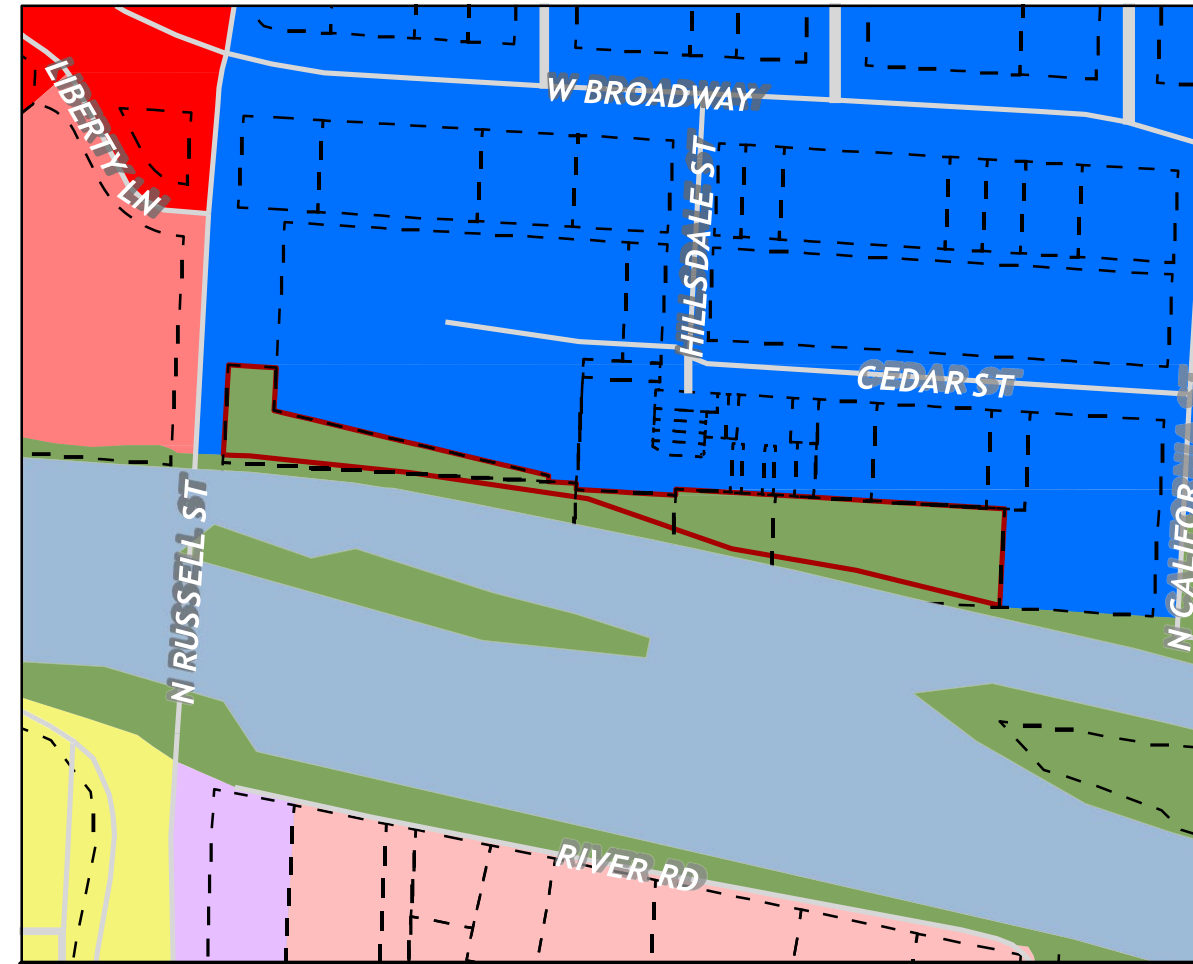
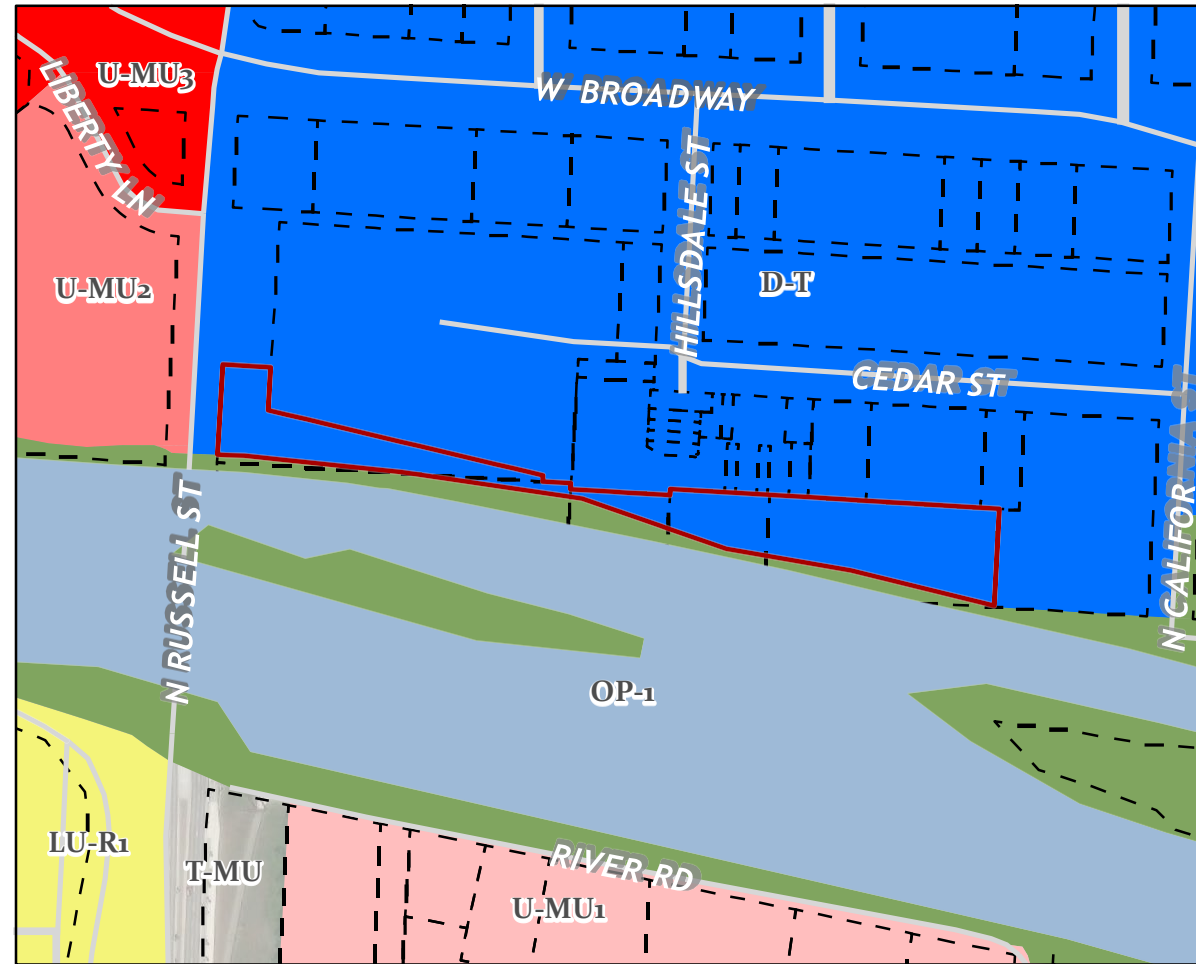


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Update Explanation: Staff recommend an amendment to align the zoning map with the recently adopted Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan (PROST). The recommended amendment zones a park identified through PROST as OP1 Open Lands.

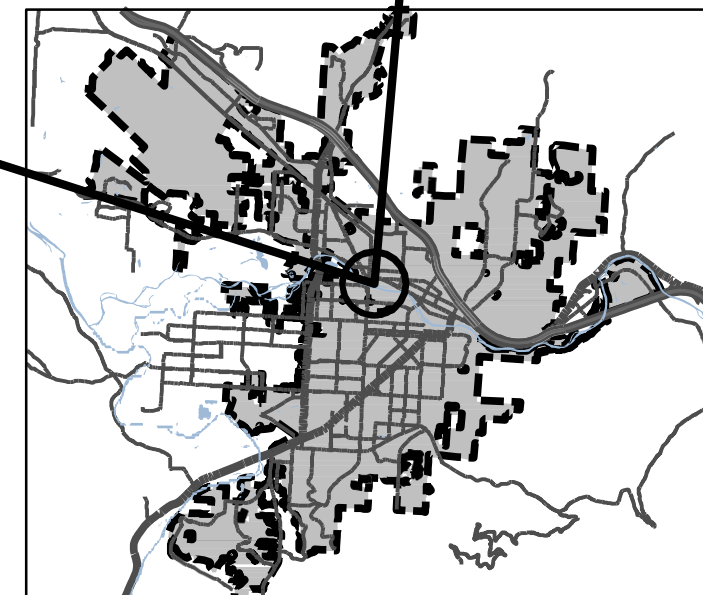


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

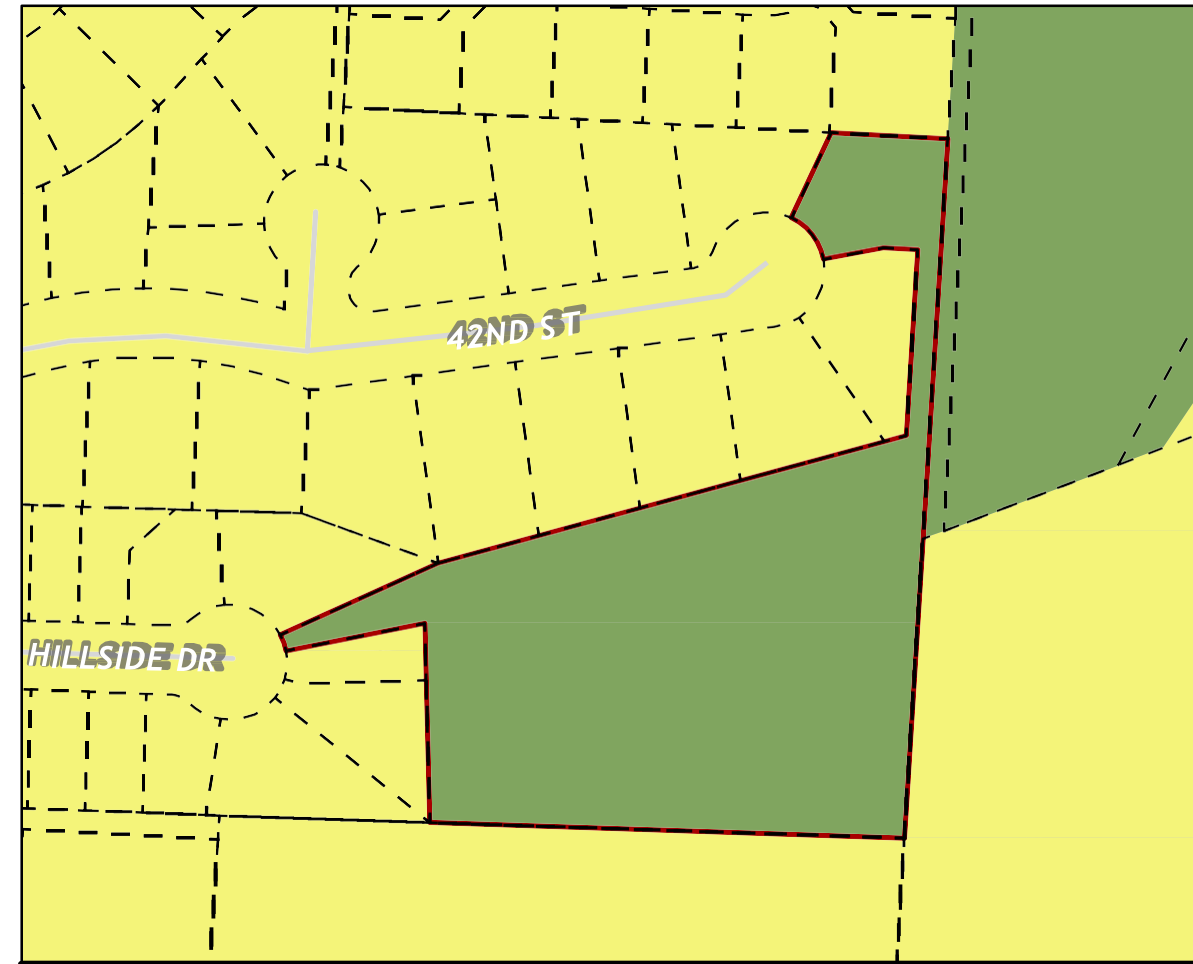
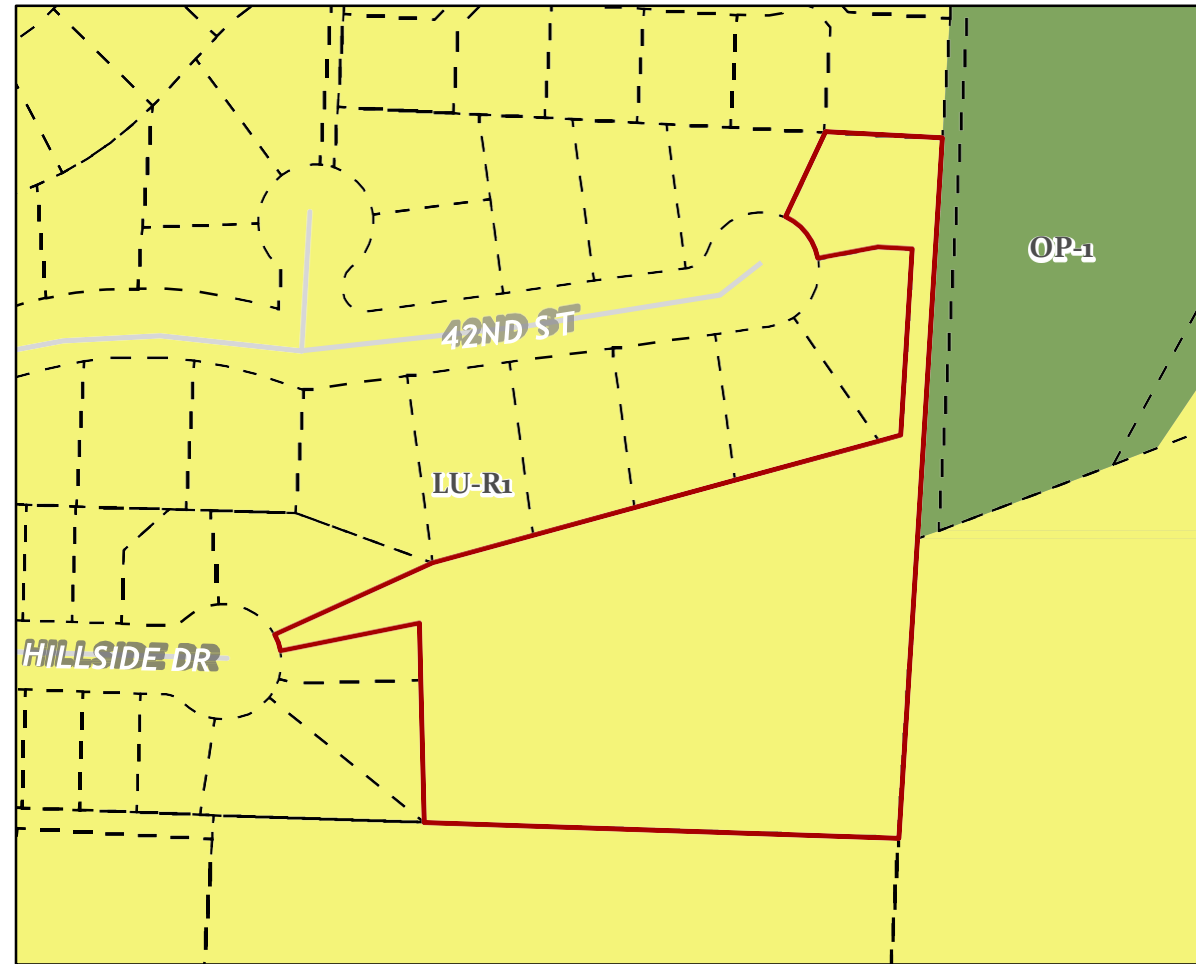


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Update Explanation: Staff recommend an amendment to align the zoning map with the recently adopted Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan (PROST). The recommended amendment zones a park identified through PROST as OP1 Open Lands.

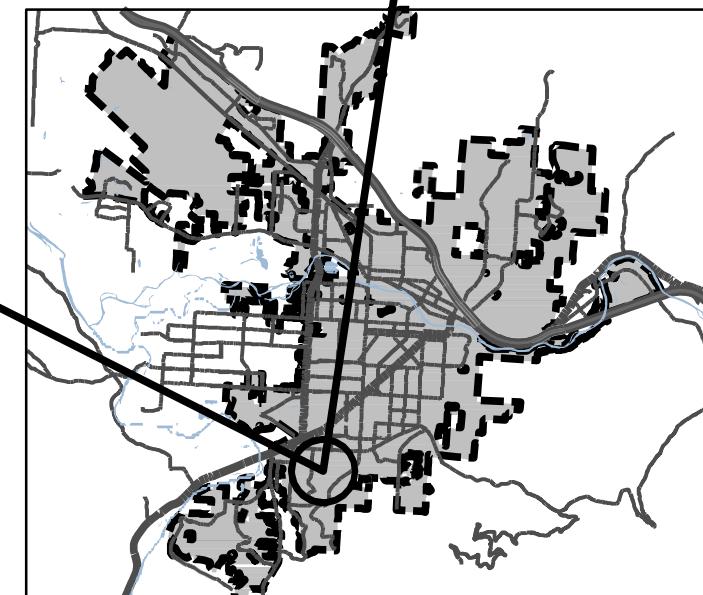


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

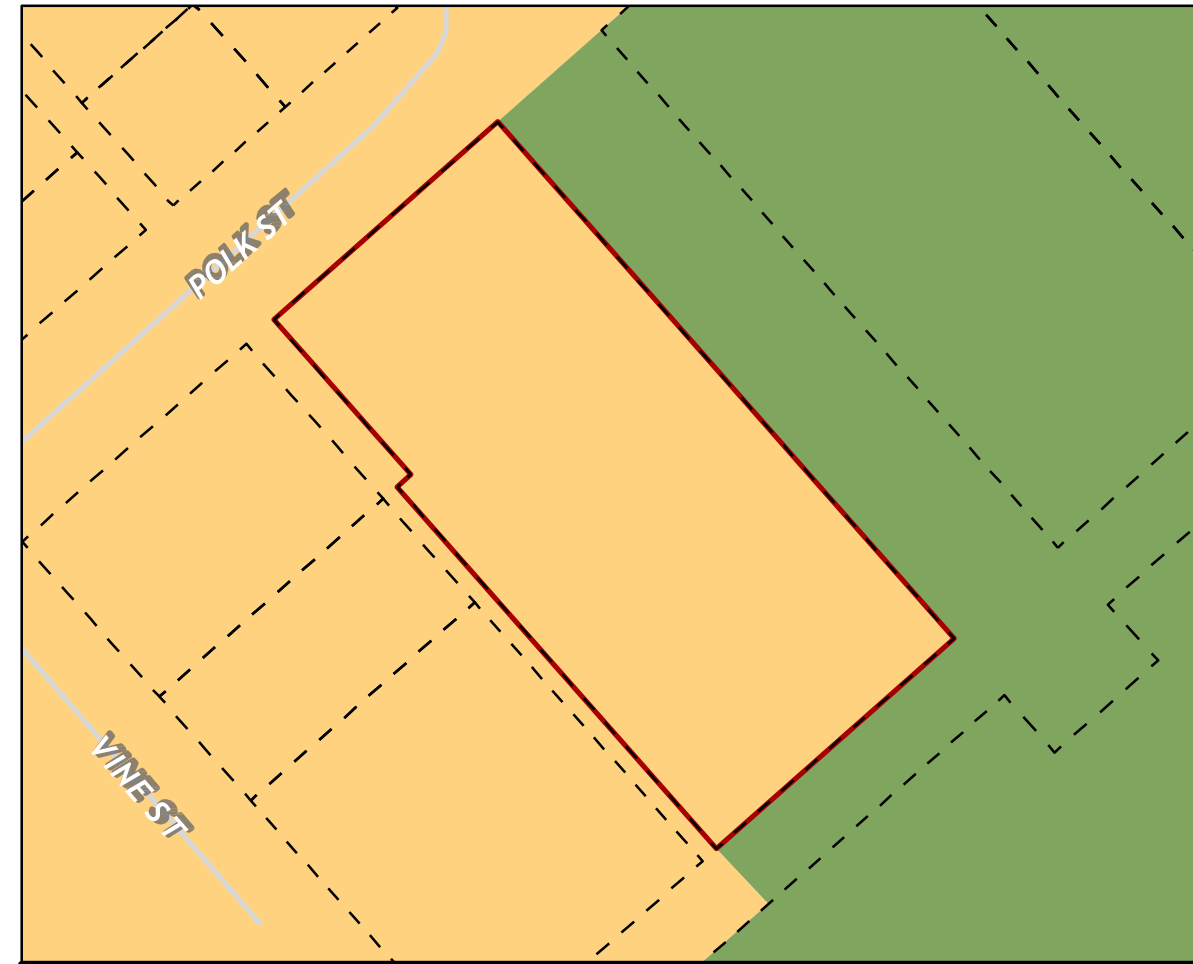
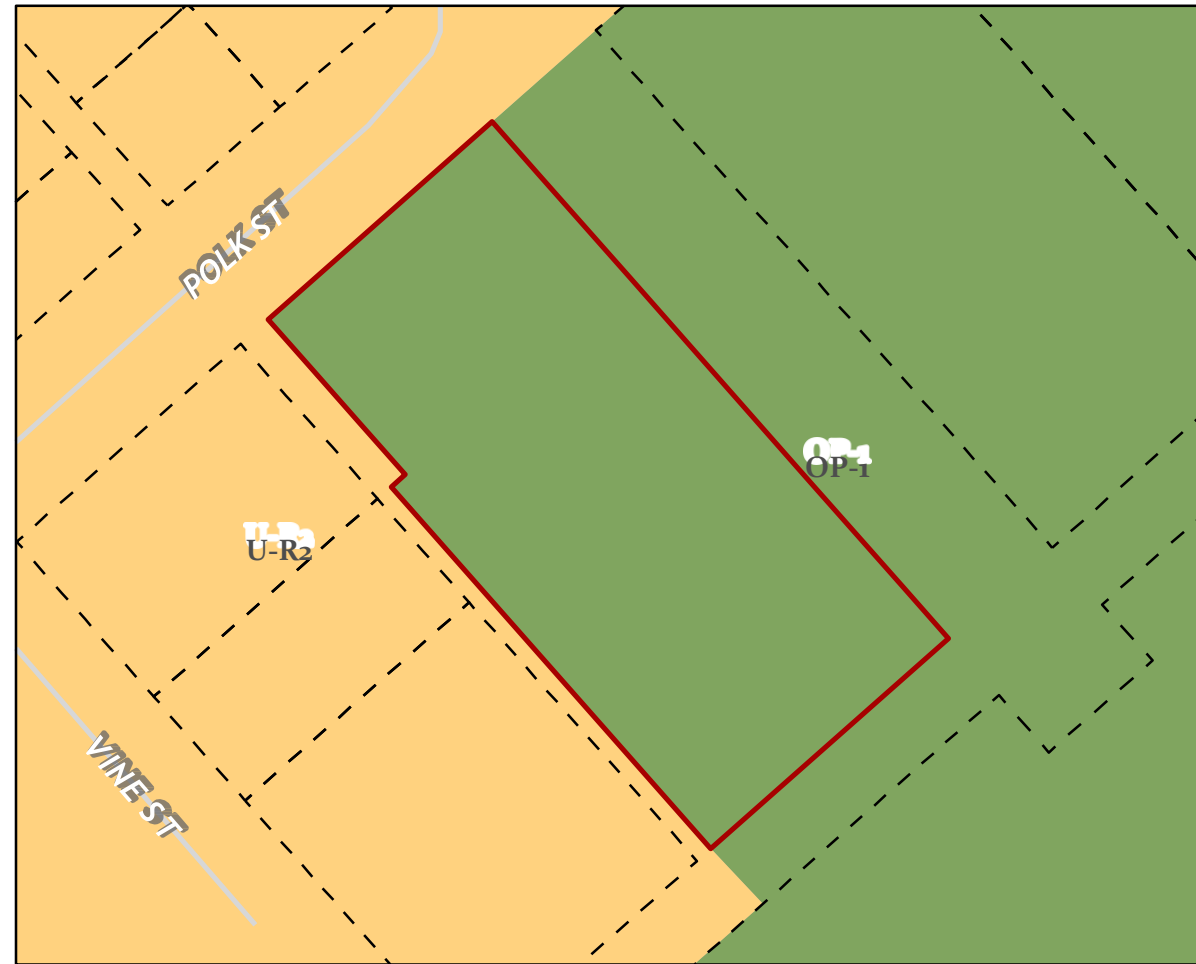


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Update Explanation: Staff recommend an amendment to align the zoning map with the recently adopted Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan (PROST) . The recommended amendment zones a park identified through PROST as OP1 Open Lands.

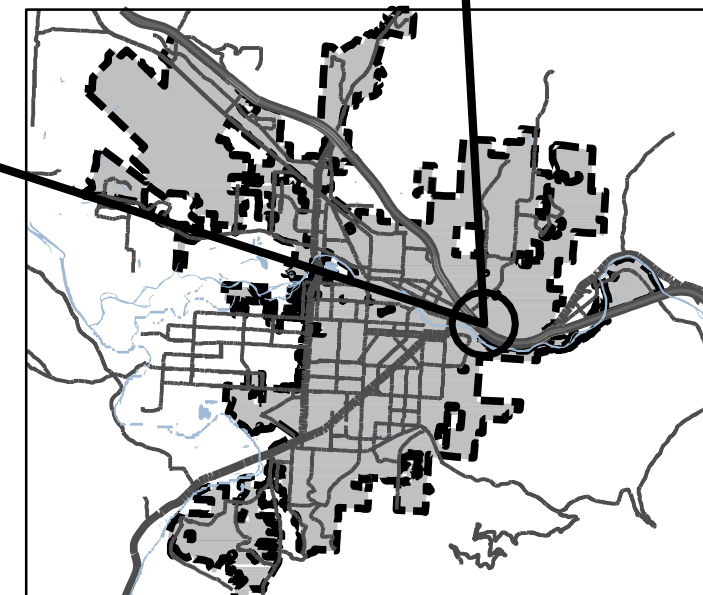


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

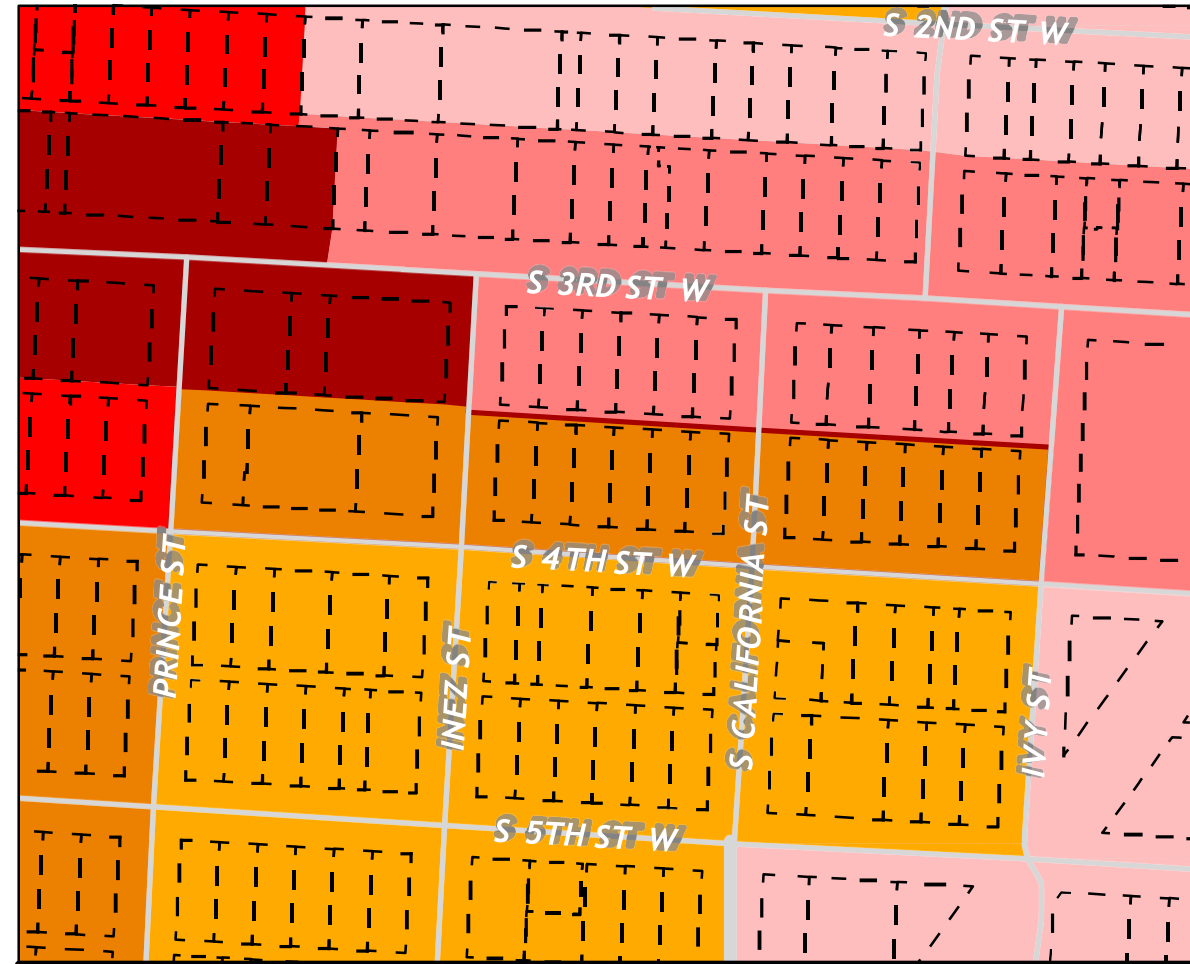
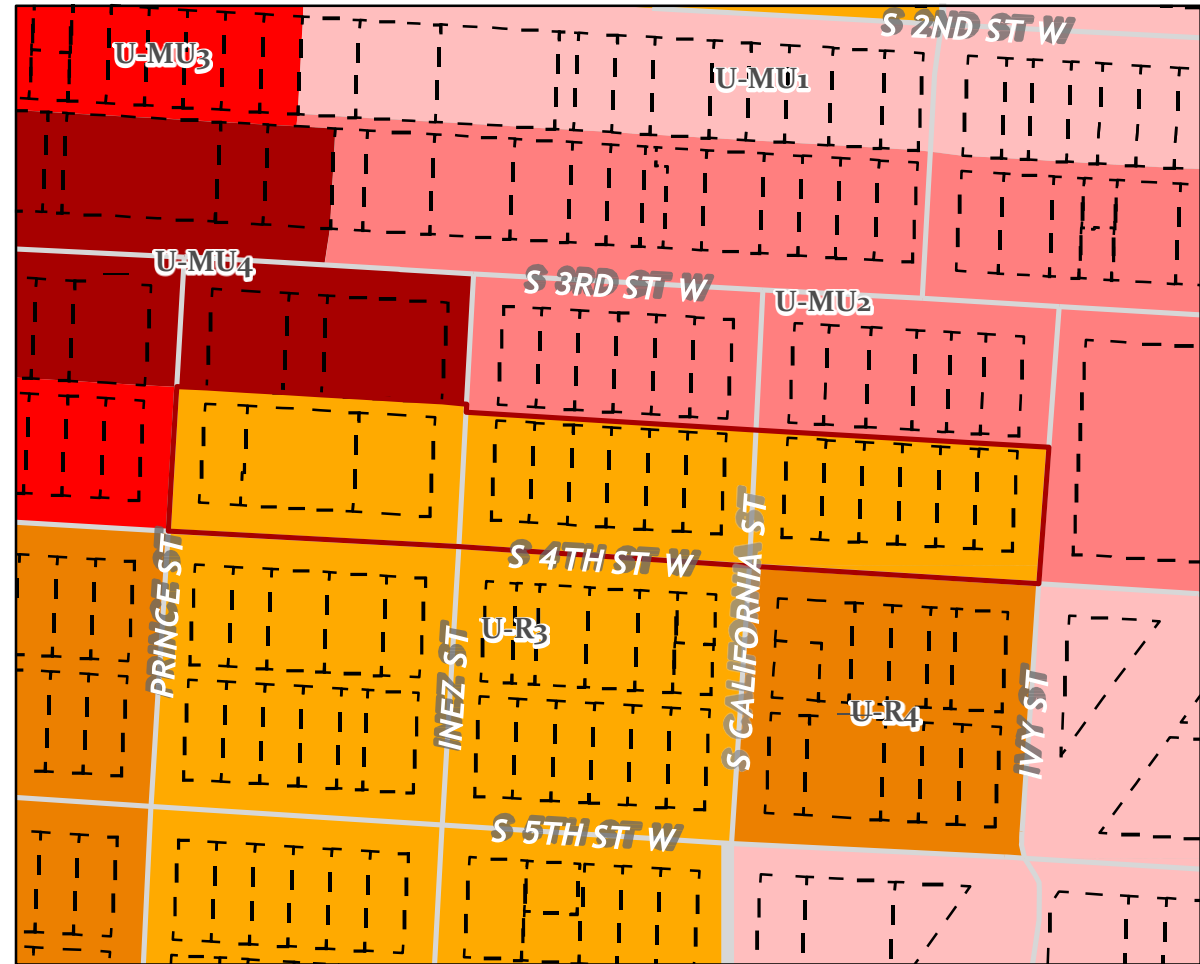
























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Update Explanation: This parcel was incorrectly identified as being owned by government. The parcel was zoned OP1, but is actually privately owned. Staff recommend an amendment to U-R2 to align the zoning of this privately owned parcel with surrounding privately owned parcels.

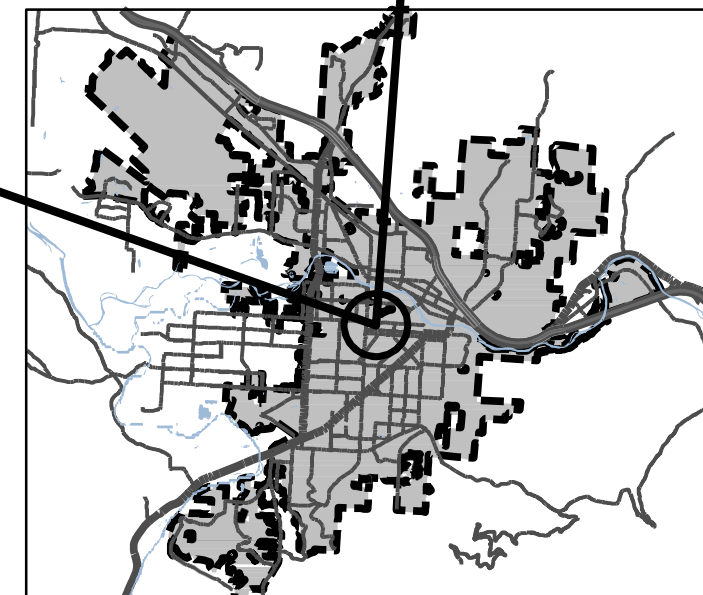


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments

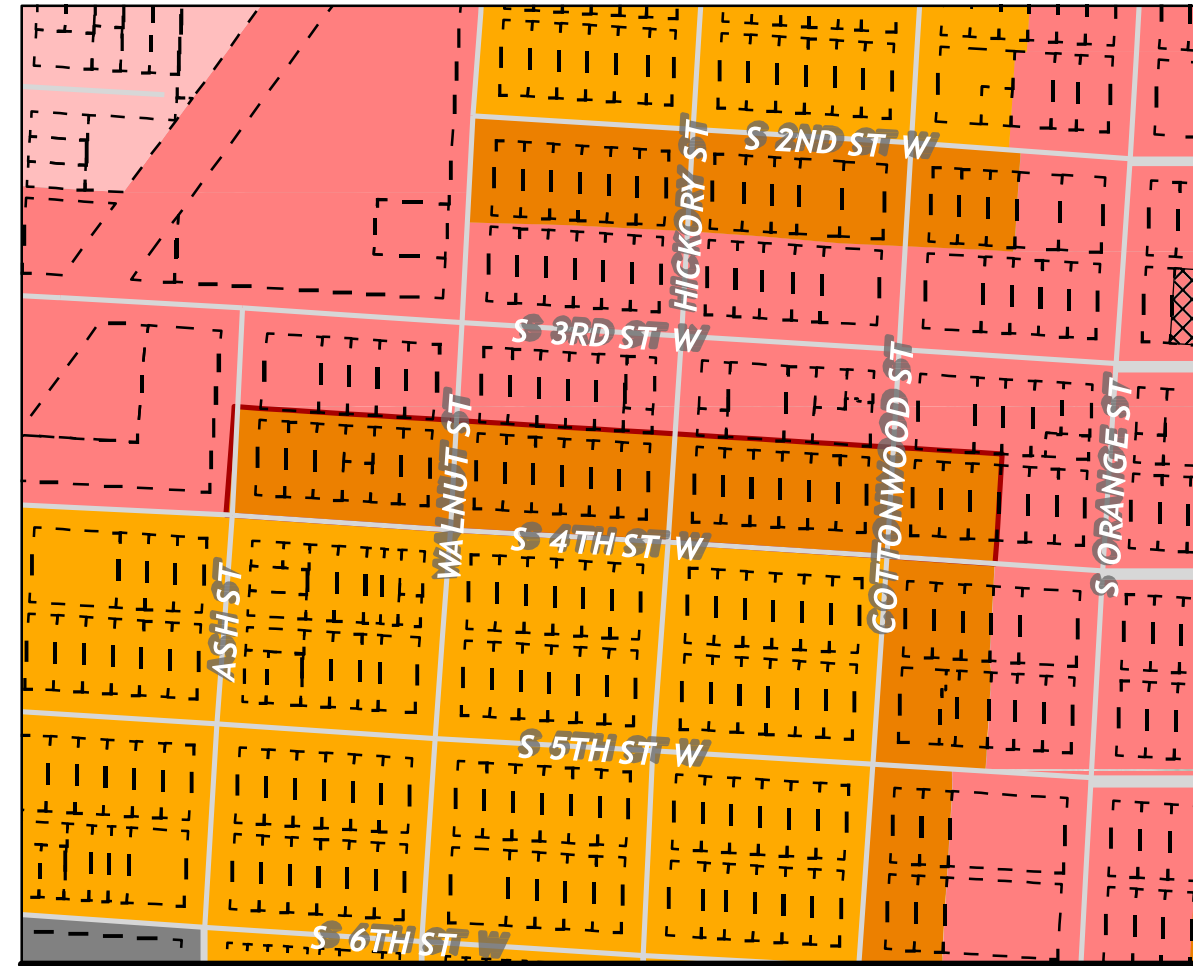
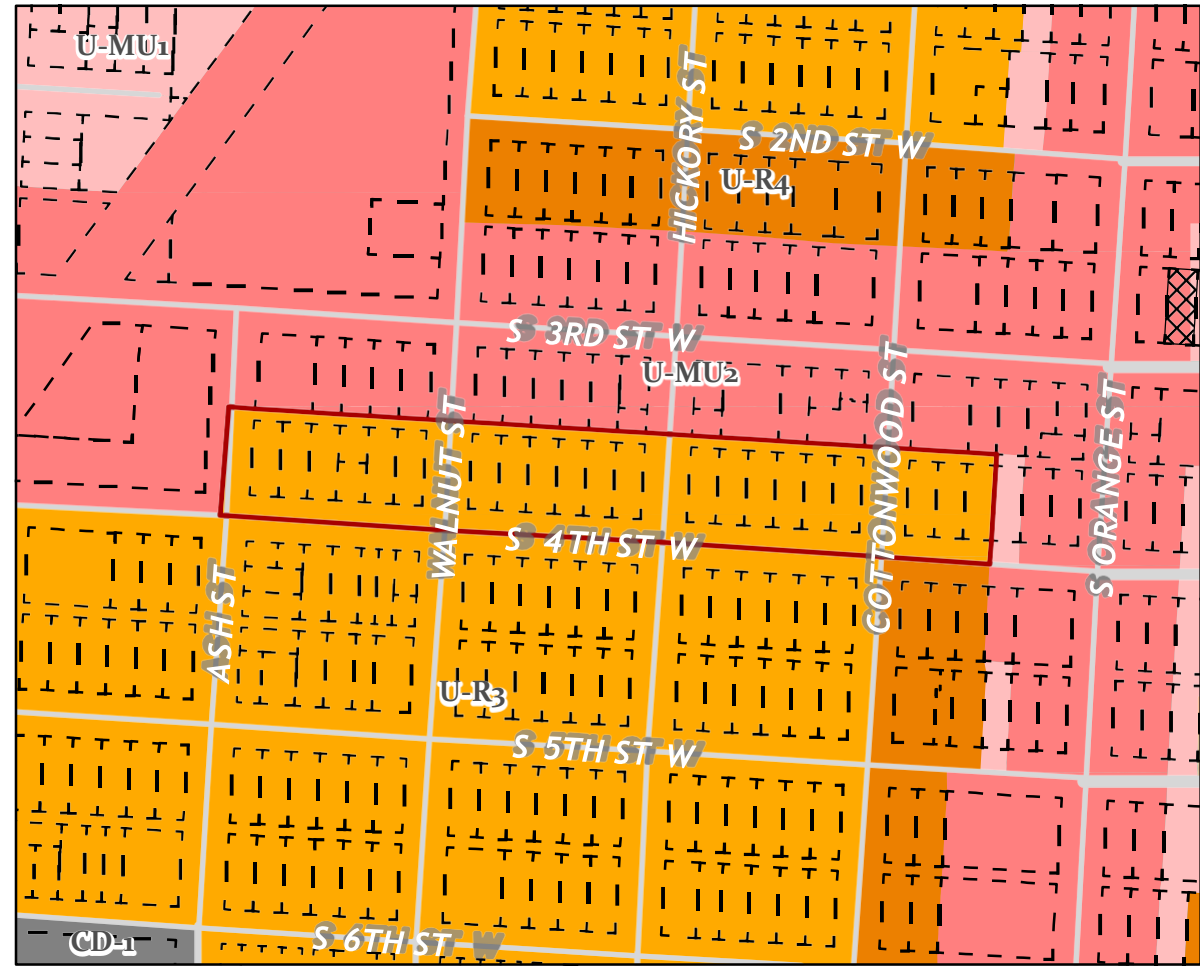


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Update Explanation: Staff recommend an amendment to create a transition zone between a mixed use district and the UR-3 zoning district. The amendment zones three half-blocks UR-4 in order to create a transition area. The blocks west of this area includes a UR-4 transition and the amendment corrects an inconsistency.

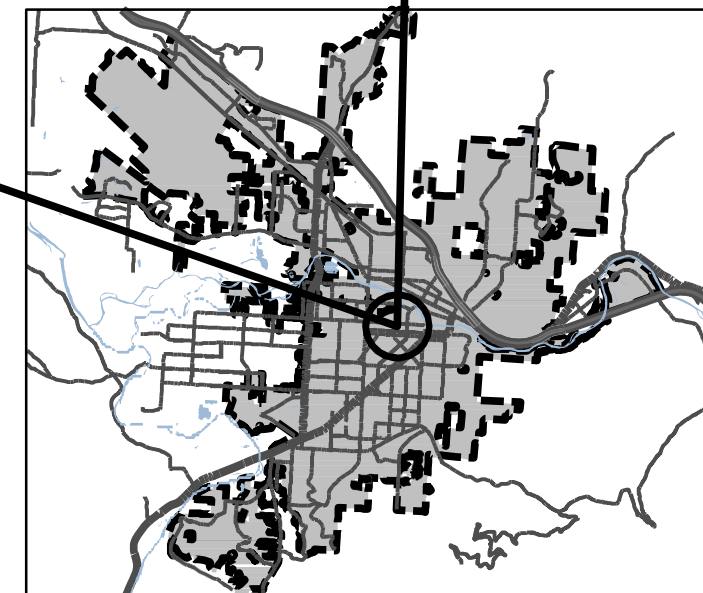


1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments



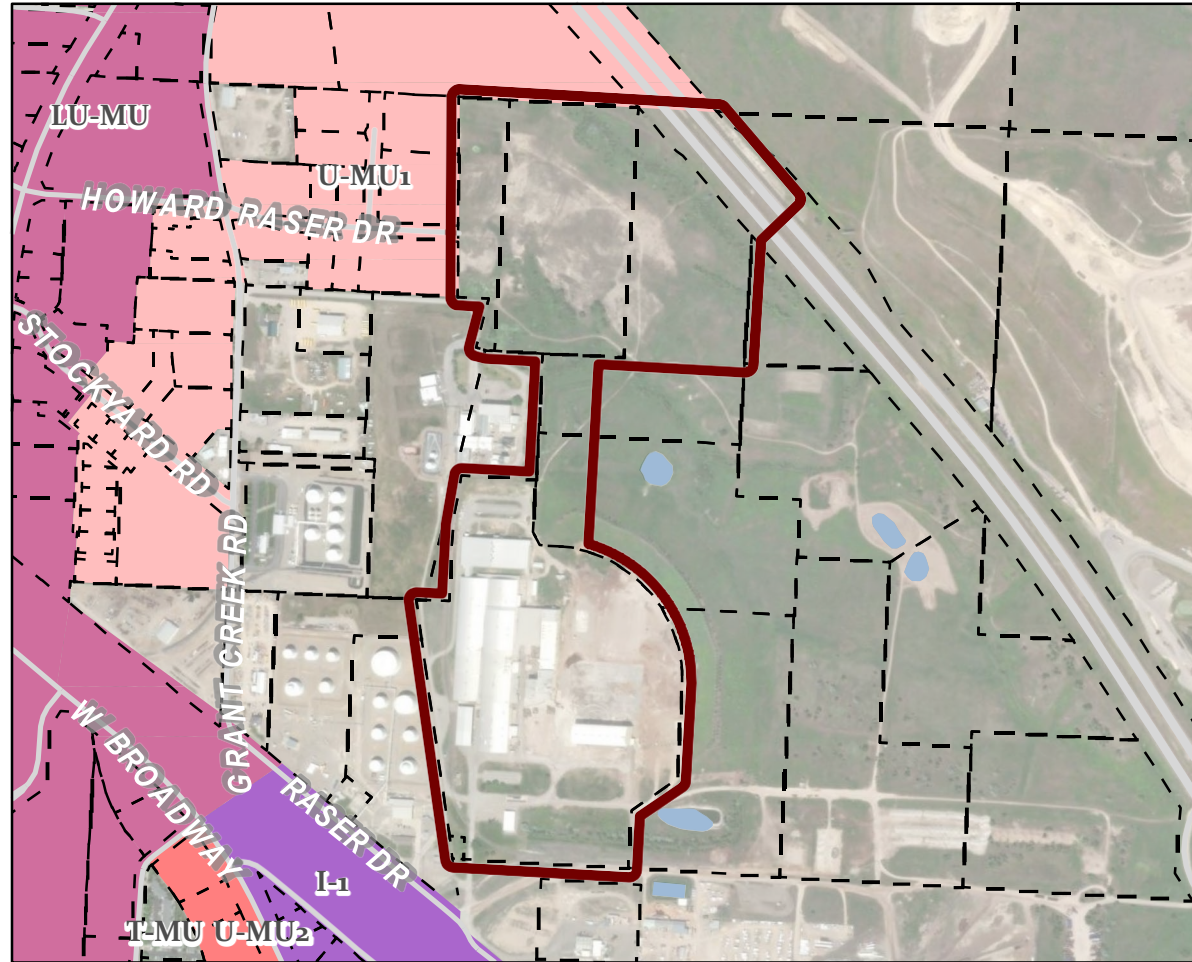
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Update Explanation: Staff recommend an amendment to create a transition zone between a mixed use district and the UR-3 zoning district. The amendment zones three half-blocks UR-4 in order to create a transition area. The blocks west of this area includes a UR-4 transition and the amendment corrects an inconsistency.

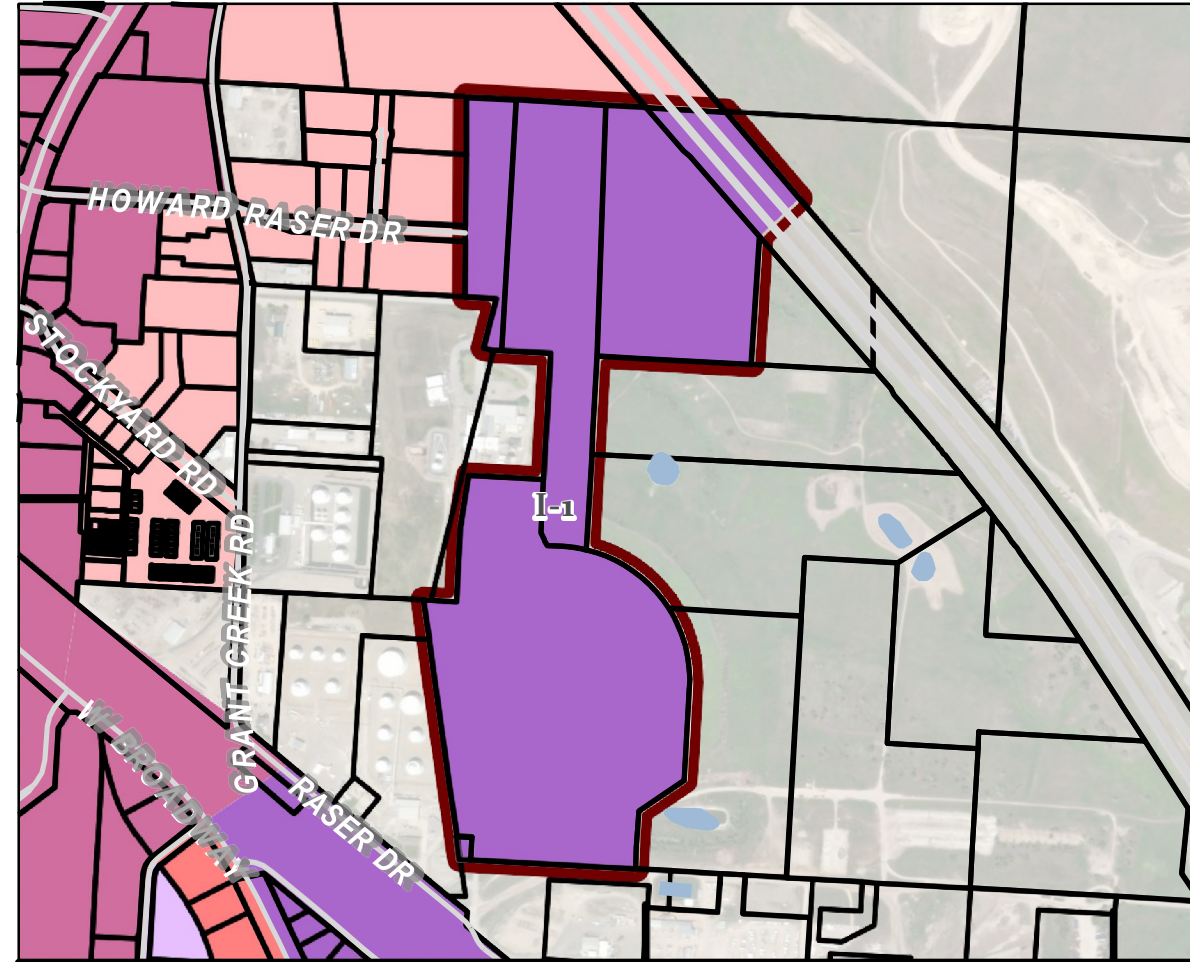



1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments























Adoption Draft Zoning:



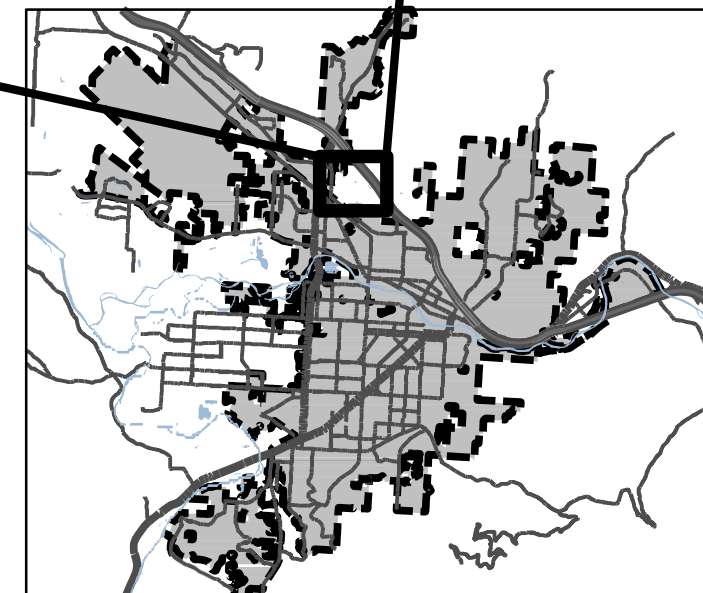
Proposed Zoning Change: **I-1**



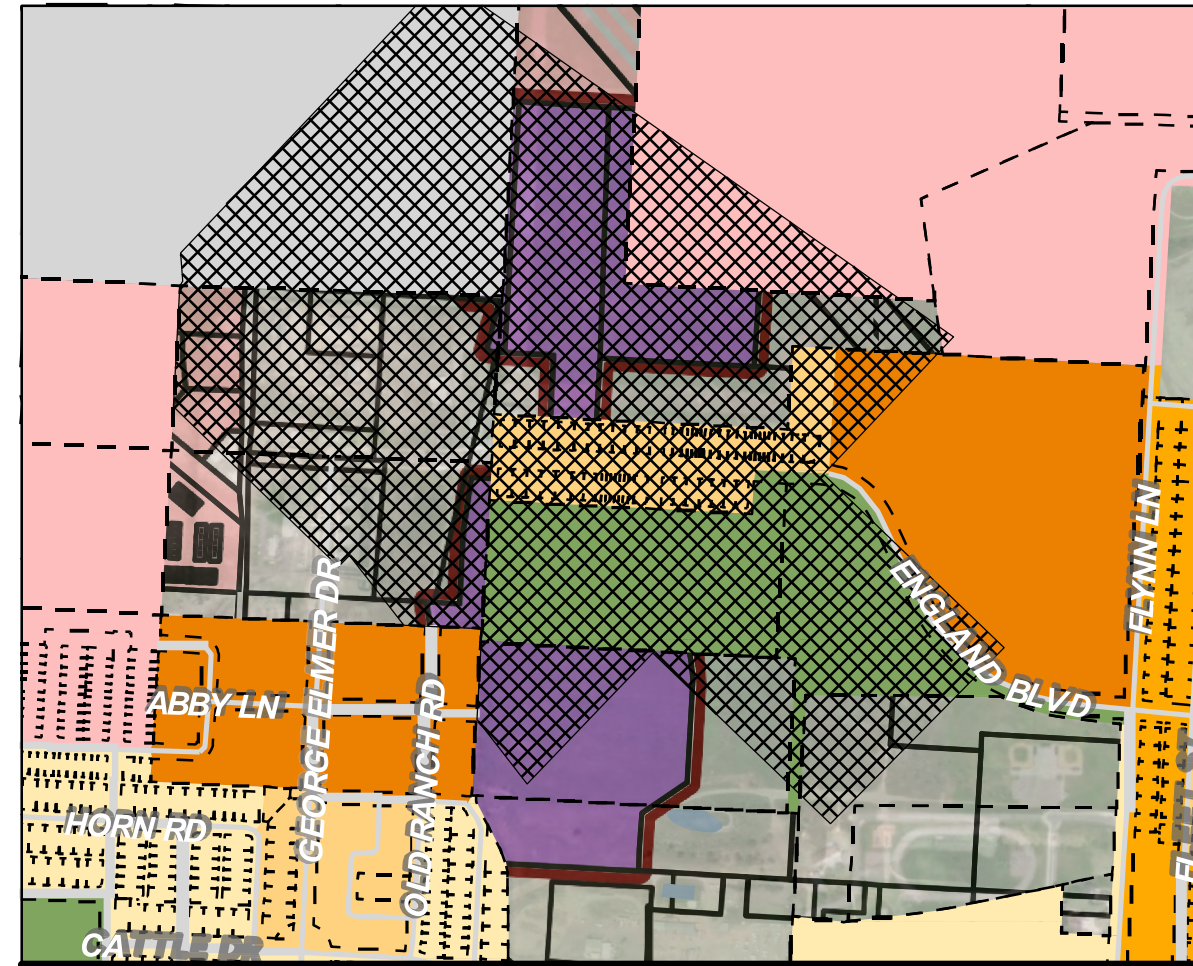
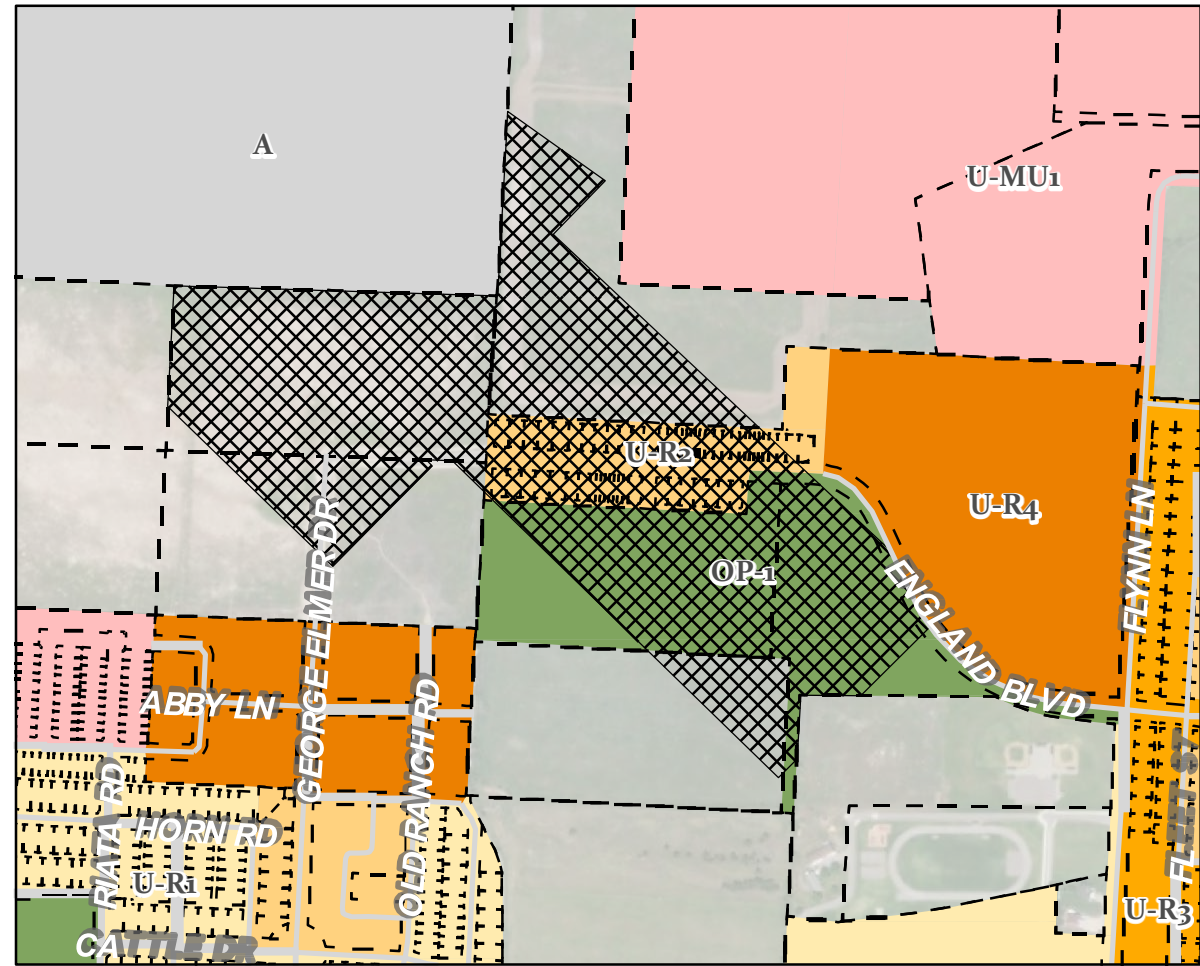
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 Zoning After Planning Board

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Update Explanation: City Council approved an annexation for the Roseburg/Story House site this month. As a result, the parcels must be added to the zoning map with an amendment. The recommended zoning is I-1, which is comparable to the approved Title 20 M-1 district approved with the annexation.



1/20/26 Staff Zoning Map Amendments



- Airport Hazard Overlay
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Update Explanation: Staff continued conversations with the Airport Authority and recommend a mapping change to the Airport Hazard Overlay. The map is amended to cover more of the area previously within the EADA zone of Title 21 zoning code. This amendment reduces allowable densities in areas more prone to plane crashes. The additional land included in the overlay through this amendment already has similar density restrictions under the current zoning code.

