

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide public comment on the proposed amendments to the UDC and Zoning Map at last night's City Council Public hearing.

Based on Sean McCoy's follow-up question regarding my comments on the 10/1/2025 Our Missoula mailer that announced the 11/5/2025 Our Missoula Open House at the Public Library, which was received by East Missoula Residents, I realized that the point I was trying to make regarding those mailers received by East Missoula Residents may not have been clear.

That 10/1/2025 mailer was the *first time* East Missoula residents were made aware of the Our Missoula Growth Policy Update and Code Reform effort in the project's three-year history. When a concerned East Missoula resident reached out to one of our County Commissioners about the mailer and the Our Missoula Code Reform project, that commissioner made an inquiry to the Engage Missoula team about East Missoula residents' receipt of the mailer.

Within 24 hours of that inquiry the following notice was posted to the Engage Missoula's Our Missoula Code Reform home page which read as follows:

Attention:

Important Clarification About the Zoning Mailer

If you received a mailer titled "Important Information About the Zoning of Your Property" but **do not live within Missoula City limits**, please note: If your property is **outside city limits (in the county)**, you can disregard the mailer—the proposed zoning changes will **not** affect you or your property.

Why you received it:

On **October 1, 2025**, the City of Missoula mailed notices to city residents and property owners as part of the *Our Missoula Code Reform* project. To reach those groups, a mailing list was created using ZIP codes that may include both city and county addresses. As a result, some county residents received the notice in error.

We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any confusion.

(See screenshot in Appendix A)

It is true that the planned Aspire subdivision is the *only* parcel within East Missoula that is considered part of City of Missoula, and it is slated to be up-zoned to UR-3 from its current zoning of RT5.4/NC-A. Concerned East Missoula Residents have been vocal about their opposition to that plan, and the Consolidated Planning Board has proposed an amendment to the Zoning Map to address that concern that City Council will consider as part of its vote at the 1/26 City Council Public Hearing.

That said, the proposed FLUP Zoning Map also specifies planned updates to the **Place Types** applied to all of East Missoula, the planning of which East Missoula residents were *not* given the benefit of participating in prior to the 10/1/2025 mailer.

Per the Public Participation discussion on page 5 of the November 13, 2025 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2025 Amendments to the Our Missoula 2045 Land Use Plan, Staff Report and Referral which addresses the project’s compliance with **Section 106: Public Participation** requirements specified in The Montana Land Use Planning Act (The Planning Act), 76-25, staff states the following:

Section 106: Public Participation

The Planning Act requires continuous public involvement, guided by creation and adoption of a Public Participation Plan, in the planning and adoption of land use policy objectives and regulations.

5. Throughout the *Our Missoula* project, city staff have maintained consistent, relationship-based engagement with the community, focusing on collaborative education, experience-sharing, and raising awareness of key issues.
6. The *Our Missoula* public engagement structure for the Land Use Plan and map is comprised of four Phases: Phase 1 included a community kick-off event that introduced the project and engaged residents in storytelling to shape its foundation. Phase 2 focused on defining the problems. Public feedback was gathered to define community concerns around equity in land use, culminating in workshops where residents shared what they value in their neighborhoods. Phase 3 introduced Scenarios for the Future, using workshops and open houses to explore housing diversity and growth preferences, informing a preferred scenario to address housing and equity needs. Phase 4 involved community presentations, stakeholder input, and final adjustments before public hearings and the adoption of the Land Use Plan. Phase 5 follows the adoption of the Unified Development Code, which has included several community Open Houses and presentations; individual mailers were sent to every address in the Land Use Plan Area and there has been consistent opportunity for online engagement.
7. The amendments proposed at this time have benefitted and resulted from the above engagement. The amendments were not explicitly mentioned in Phases 1-4 and have been introduced at the final stages of Phase 5.
8. **The public has been involved throughout the creation and adoption of the Land Use Plan, Land Use Regulations, and resulting amendments. The process provided continuous and extensive public notice, review, comment, and participation in the development of the land use plan, regulations, and resulting amendments.**

Based on the 10/1/2025 mailer “error” when that mailer was sent to East Missoula residents not just City residents, it appears that the “community” and “public” referenced in Staff’s discussion of compliance with Public Participation requirements by the Our Missoula Code Reform project was taken to mean only the community/public *within the City of Missoula borders*, which would have excluded non-city residents whose property *would* be affected by place type changes specified in the current FLUP Zoning Map. It may be that, because the project considers East Missoula (with the exception of the Aspire parcel) to be “out of jurisdiction” per figure 32 on

page 116 of the Our Missoula 2045 Land Use Plan document (see appendix B), that designation may have driven the project’s communication strategy to the affected community/public and why East Missoula was not considered subject to project outreach.

Place Types in the FLUP Maps of 12/2020 vs 12/2025

The Missoula Urban Area Future Land Use Designation map amended Dec 14, 2020 (see appendix C) designated all East Missoula as “Neighborhood Mixed Use” with the future Aspire parcel designated at a lower density and with an Urban Agriculture overlay. The “Neighborhood Mixed Use” designation was close to the “Live Make” Missoula County zoning designation that East Missoula residents fought for and won.

Fast forward to the current Missoula Urban Future Land Use Place Types Map (figure 30 on page 110 of the Our Missoula 2045 Land Use Plan document – See appendix D), the East Missoula Place Types are now split between **Urban Mixed-Use Low** along the Highway 200 corridor, and **Urban Residential High** for the rest of East Missoula.

Missoula residents should have been included in the planning of and public participation in those proposed changes from the beginning of the process.

It’s not too late for City Council to remedy the exclusion of East Missoula Residents from earlier participation in the project. I would ask that you carefully consider the Consolidated Planning Board’s proposed amendments to change the Place Type of the Aspire parcel to Limited Urban Residential from Urban Residential High, and the Zoning designation from UR-3 to LU-R2, and review the arguments put forward in support of those amendments by Board members and East Missoula Residents.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Andrew Hirss
4628 Stoneybrook Way
Missoula, MT 59802
510-435-2328

Appendix A

Oct 7 2:16 PM

engagemissoula.com/hub-page/our-missoula?utm_source=ehq_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ehq-DRAFT-ZONING-FRAMEWORK-NOW-AVAILABLE&utm_campaign=website&utm_medium=email&utm_...

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OUR Missoula
Growth Policy Update
& Code Reform

**It's Time to Update
Our Vision and Take Action!**

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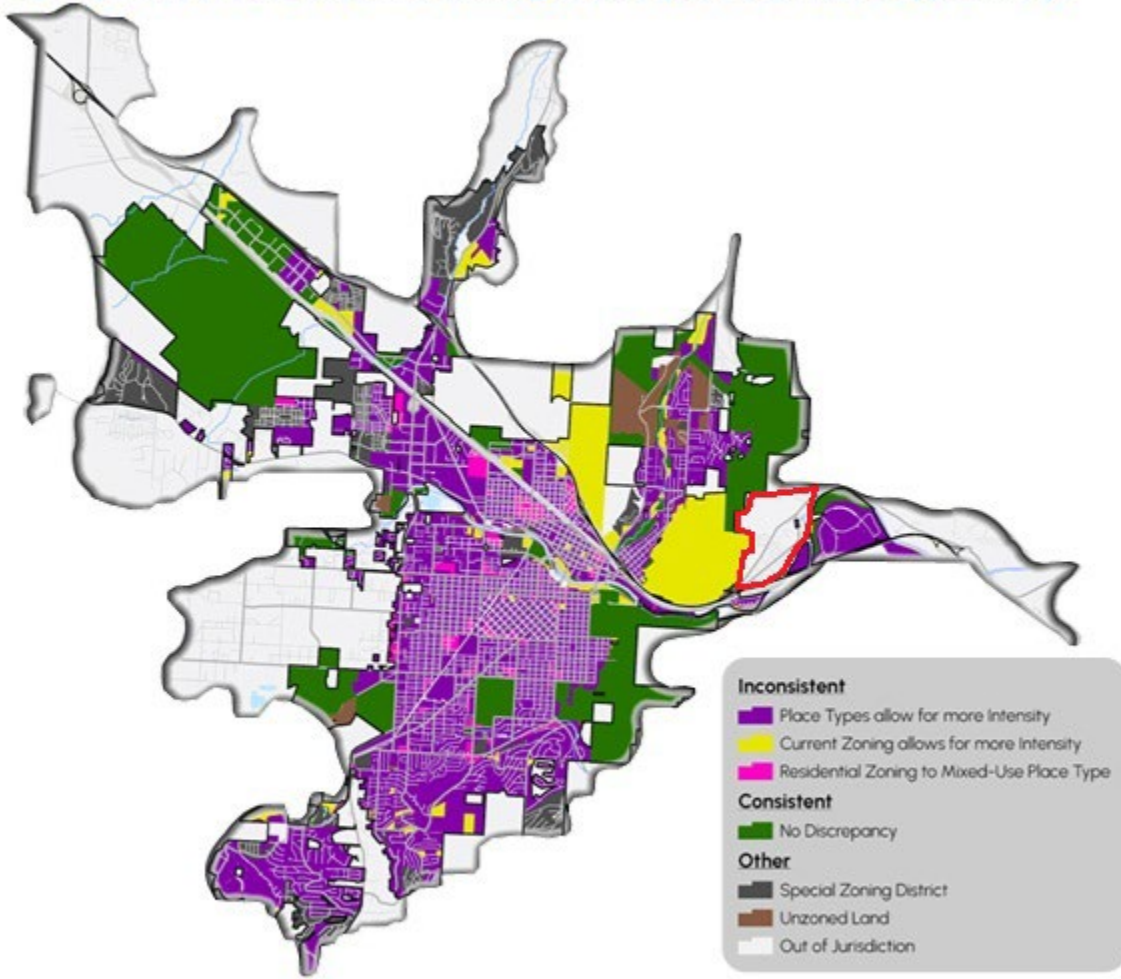
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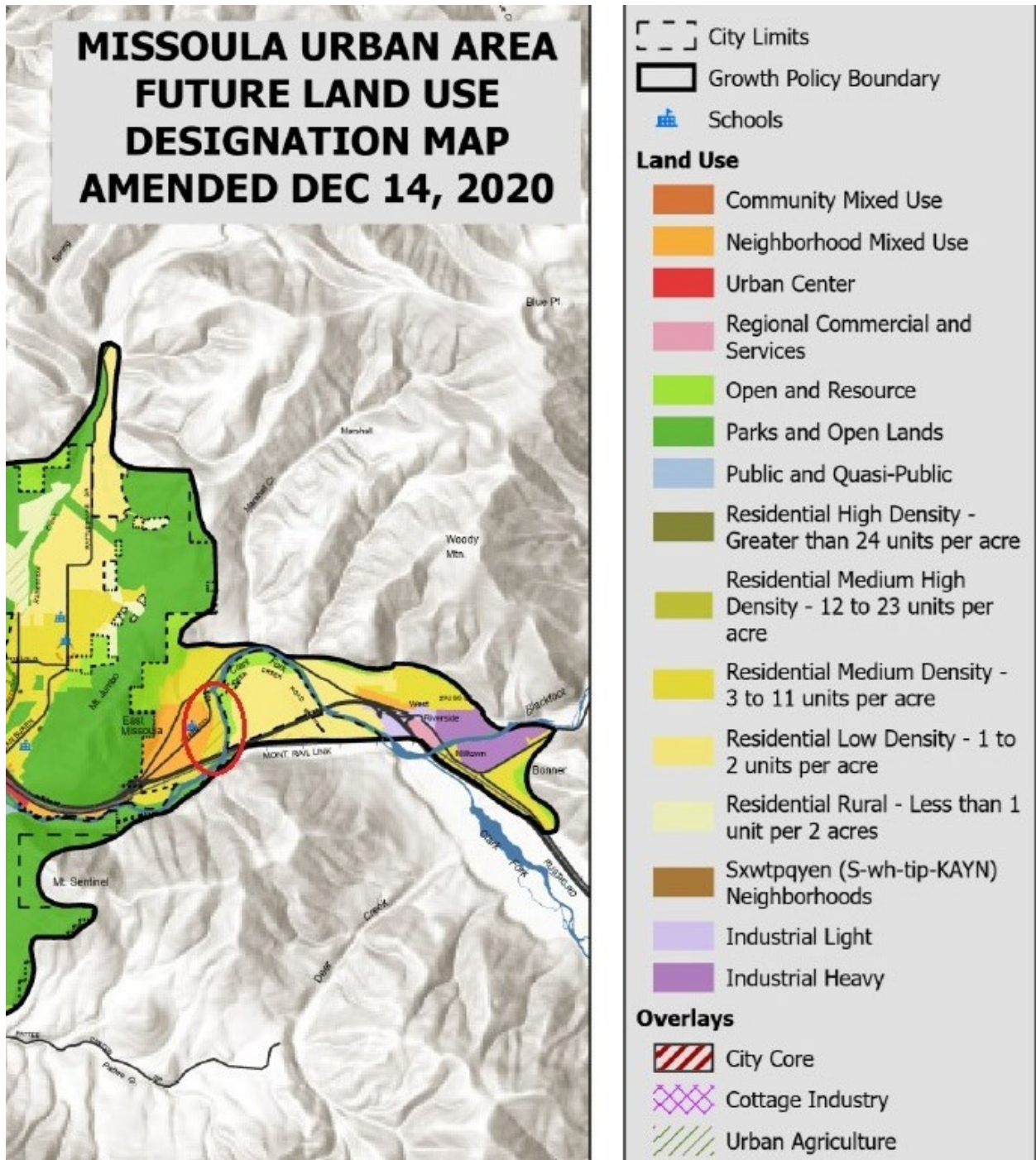
Appendix B

Figure 32.

Comparison of Current Zoning to Proposed Place Type Map

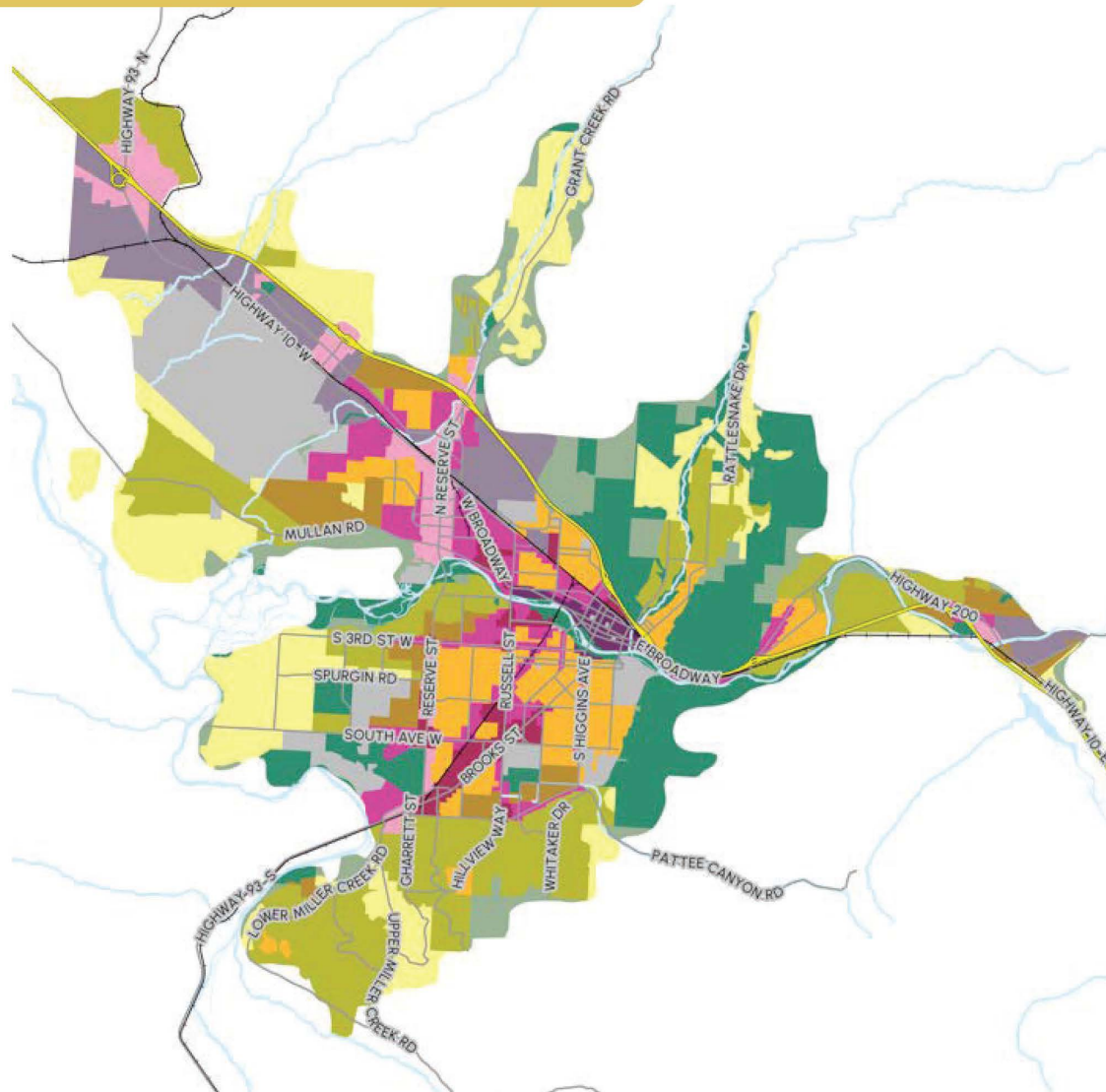


Appendix C



Appendix D

Figure 30. Place Types Map



- Downtown
- Urban Mixed-Use High
- Urban Mixed-Use Low
- Limited Urban Mixed-Use
- Urban Residential High
- Urban Residential Low
- Limited Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Industrial and Employment
- Civic
- Open and Resource
- Parks and Conservation Lands



The intent of this map is to convey the community's vision for growth and change, and to guide implementation of necessary changes to the City's zoning map, zoning districts, subdivision requirements, and other land use regulations.

The Place Types designated in this map are approximate and must be read in conjunction with the Place Type descriptions and policy statements found within the Land Use Plan. Any policy decisions based on the designations should consider site-specific conditions.

The Land Use Plan (LUP) and Place Type map are not intended to interfere with, abrogate or annul any covenant, deed restriction or other agreement between private parties.