



OUR  
**Missoula**  
*Growth Policy Update* —  
— *& Code Reform*



# Planning Board

Informational Presentation

11/12/2025

# Agenda

Project Update & Background

Land Use Plan Amendments

Code Layout: Overview

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Administration and Procedures

Chapter 4: Zoning

Chapter 5: Subdivision

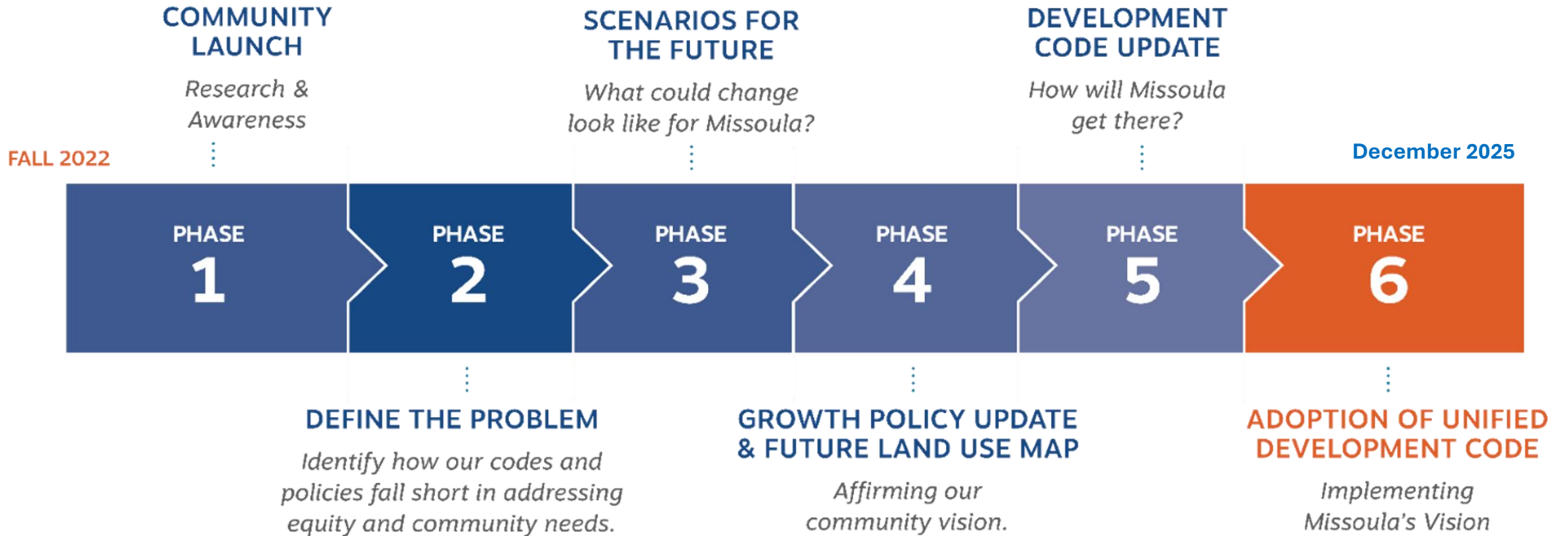
Chapter 6: Infrastructure Improvements

Key Dates

# Project Update & Background















# Our Missoula Phases



# Land Use Plan

## Place Type Designations

-  **Urban Residential High**
-  **Urban Residential Low**
-  **Limited Urban Residential**
-  **Rural Residential**
-  **Downtown**
-  **Urban Mixed-Use High**

-  **Urban Mixed-Use Low**
-  **Limited Urban Mixed-Use**
-  **Industrial and Employment**
-  **Civic**
-  **Open and Resource**
-  **Parks and Conservation Lands**

**Focus Inward**  
**The Goal:** Focus development and infill within the Plan area to minimize strain on infrastructure and prevent sprawl into sensitive and constrained lands.



**Environmental Quality & Climate Resilience**  
**The Goal:** Balance urban development with environmental protection and resilience through sustainable practices and mitigation of impacts to sensitive lands.



**Housing Choice & Access**  
**The Goal:** Develop a diverse, equitable, and resilient housing system that meets current and future needs and limits displacement.



**Health & Safety**  
**The Goal:** Ensure access to services and infrastructure that support health and safety.



**Community & Quality of Life**  
**The Goal:** Enable community access to opportunity as well as social, cultural, recreational, and public amenities.



**Economic Health**  
**The Goal:** Promote balanced growth by supporting commercial services with improved infrastructure and connectivity while also considering climate, mobility, and community compatibility.



## The Street Types

**Neighborhood Residential**  
 These streets provide multimodal access to and from adjacent residential properties. These streets are quiet, shady, and kid-friendly, an extension of your front yard. There is very little traffic and cars move slowly.



**Community Mixed-Use**  
 These streets are vitally important: multimodal corridors support dining, shopping, and employment opportunities, enhancing Missoula's character and economy. They connect residents from their neighborhoods to commercial and cultural centers.



**Neighborhood Greenway**  
 These streets connect people biking, walking, and using micromobility devices to nearby destinations and other neighborhoods. These low-speed streets often run parallel to more intense streets and provide enhanced crossings at major intersections.



**Regional Connector**  
 These streets are critically important to the regional travel network and generally serve as gateways to the urban core, where they often transition to Regional or Community Mixed-Use.



**Neighborhood Mixed-Use**  
 These streets support adjacent shopping, dining, and employment opportunities. They are located within/adjacent to residential neighborhoods and host a variety of low impact commercial activities along them. They often act as transitions between lower intensity and higher intensity uses.



**Regional Mixed-Use**  
 These streets serve as gateways, introducing people from around Missoula and the wider region to the city and its major destinations. These streets are critically important to the regional multimodal network, passing through areas of significant commercial land use and pedestrian activity. They carry high traffic volumes but must do so safely.



**Community Residential**  
 These streets are high quality residential corridors that also have an important function in the larger transportation network. They may serve popular destinations such as parks, schools, religious assemblies, and recreation areas.



**Industrial**  
 These streets serve adjacent industrial land uses that see frequent truck, freight, and delivery traffic. They should accommodate current uses while also being adaptable to and compatible with redevelopment into future land uses.





# Adoption and Amendment of Zoning Regulations (MCA 76-25-

(c) make a preliminary determination as to whether the zoning regulation and map as proposed or as amended would be in substantial compliance with the land use plan, including whether the zoning regulation or map:

- (i) accommodates the projected needed housing types identified in **76-25-206**;
  - (ii) contains five or more specific strategies from **76-25-302** to encourage the development of housing within the jurisdiction;
  - (iii) reflects allowable uses and densities in areas that may be adequately served by public safety, emergency, utility, transportation, education, and any other local facilities or services identified by the local government in **76-25-207**;
  - (iv) allows sufficient area for existing, new, or expanding commercial, industrial, and institutional enterprises the local government has identified in **76-25-208** for targeted economic growth in the jurisdiction;
  - (v) protects and maximizes the potential use of natural resources within the area, as identified in **76-25-209**;
  - (vi) minimizes or avoids impacts to the natural environment within the area, as identified in **76-25-209**; and
  - (vii) avoids or minimizes dangers associated with natural hazards in the jurisdiction, as identified in **76-25-209**; and
- (d) preliminarily determine whether the proposed zoning regulation, map, or amendment results in new or increased impacts to or from local facilities, services, natural resources, natural environment, or natural hazards from those previously described and analyzed in the assessment conducted for the land use plan.

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(d) The governing body may not adopt or amend a zoning regulation or map unless the governing body finds that:

- (i) the regulation, map, or amendment is in substantial compliance with the land use plan; and
- (ii) the impacts resulting from development in substantial compliance with the proposed zoning regulation, map, or amendment have been made available for public review and comment and have been fully considered by the governing body.

## Adoption and Amendment of Subdivision Regulations (MCA 76-25-403)

(c) make a preliminary determination as to whether the subdivision regulation or amendment to a subdivision regulation is in substantial compliance with the land use plan and zoning regulations, including whether the regulation or amendment:

- (i) enables the development of projected needed housing types identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations;
  - (ii) reflects applicable strategies from the land use plan and zoning regulations to encourage the development of housing within the jurisdiction;
  - (iii) facilitates the adequate provision of public safety, emergency, utility, transportation, education, and any other local facilities or services for proposed development, as identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations;
  - (iv) reflects standards that provide for existing, new, or expanding commercial, industrial, and institutional enterprises identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations for economic growth;
  - (v) protects and maximizes the potential use of natural resources within the area, as identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations;
  - (vi) contains standards that minimize or avoid impacts to the natural environment within the area, as identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations; and
  - (vii) contains standards that avoid or minimize dangers associated with natural hazards in the jurisdiction, as identified in the land use plan and zoning regulations; and
- (d) preliminarily determine whether the proposed subdivision regulation or amendment to a subdivision regulation results in new or increased potential impacts to or from local facilities, services, natural resources, natural environment, or natural hazards from those previously described and analyzed in the assessments conducted for the land use plan and zoning regulations.

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(c) The governing body may not adopt or amend a subdivision regulation unless the governing body finds:

- (i) the subdivision regulation or amendment to a subdivision regulation is in substantial compliance with the land use plan and zoning regulations; and
- (ii) the impacts resulting from development in substantial compliance with the proposed subdivision regulation or amendment to a subdivision regulation have been made available for public review and comment, which have been fully considered by the governing body.

# Engagement

- Substantial engagement prior to code drafting for Land Use Plan
- Post card sent to every resident and property owner in the city
- Three Frequent Code User Meetings in 2025
- Two events with Missoula Organization of Realtors
- Our Missoula Community Advisory Group (OMCAG) Meetings
- Open Houses on October 9<sup>th</sup> and November 5<sup>th</sup>
- Meetings and events with individual community groups and stakeholders
- City Chats in the Park
- Web and newsletter outreach
- Public comment opportunities – Engage Missoula, public meetings, email, mail



# Land Use Plan Amendments



# Amendments to the Land Use Plan

## What

Update & align the Land Use Plan with the UDC.

## Why

- To replace outdated content,
- Strengthen policies, and
- Reflect community input for sustainable growth & public well-being.

## How

Same adoption timeline as UDC. Separate from the UDC.

- UDC is an Ordinance (law).
- LUP Amendments are a Resolution (policy).
- **Voting on the Resolution is legally and clerically separate.**



# Amendments to the Land Use Plan

## 32 Map Amendments

- West Broadway → **Industrial** & Employment
- Grant Creek “horseshoe bend” realigned  
→ Urban **Mixed-Use** Low
- Citywide updates to align with **2025 PROST Plan**  
→ Parks & Conservation redesignations
- University of Montana parcels  
→ **Civic** to reflect public use
- Miller Creek Rd & Linda Vista  
→ **Mixed-Use** neighborhood node
- Rattlesnake winery/vineyard  
→ expanded for agricultural/working lands
- Riverfront block → **Mixed-Use**

## Text Amendments

- **Zoning districts** updated to align with new UDC (Title 22)
- **Childcare** centers now allowed in Industrial & Employment areas
- **Airport** Hazard Area added as a constraint for select Place Types & in Policy language
- **Street Types** Map clarified as illustrative
- Industrial **Mixed Use** (I-MU) renamed Transitional Mixed Use (T-MU)

# Code Layout: Overview



# Table of Contents

## **Unified Development Code**

Ch. 1: Introductory Provisions

Ch. 2: Administration & Procedures

Ch. 3: (Reserved)

Ch. 4: Zoning

Ch. 5: Subdivision

Ch. 6: Infrastructure Improvements

Ch. 7: Buildings & Construction (Reserved)

Ch. 8: Definitions





## Chapter 1: Introduction

- Basic legal information such as title, effective date, authority, compliance required, etc.
- Rules of language and ordinance construction
- How do we go from the current codes to a new code? Transitional provisions.
  - Allows permits to be submitted under either code for 60 days after effective date.
  - Honors previous approvals such as variances, conditional uses, ZCPs, design excellence approvals, etc.
  - Adoption draft will be updated to clarify subdivision approvals.





## Chapter 2: Administration and Procedures

- Guiding principle: "Clarify and consolidate development permit review decision authority to increase predictability".
- One stop shop for authority. Clarifies responsibilities of City Engineer, Planning Administrator, Historic Preservation Officer, Urban Forester, Parks Administrator, Planning Commission, and Historic Preservation Commission.
- Includes a "Process Crosswalk".
- Standards provisions for public notice.
- Appeal process – per new state law.
- Consolidated and aligned violation procedures



# Chapter 4: Zoning



# Place Type Designations



Urban Residential High



Urban Residential Low



Limited Urban Residential



Rural Residential



Downtown



Urban Mixed-Use High



Urban Mixed-Use Low



Limited Urban Mixed-Use



Industrial and Employment



Civic



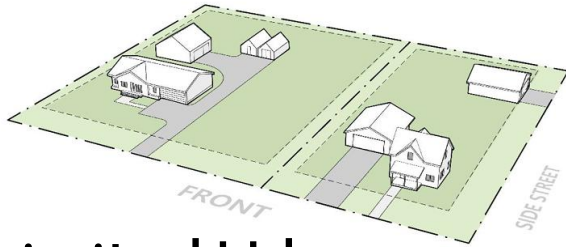
Open and Resource



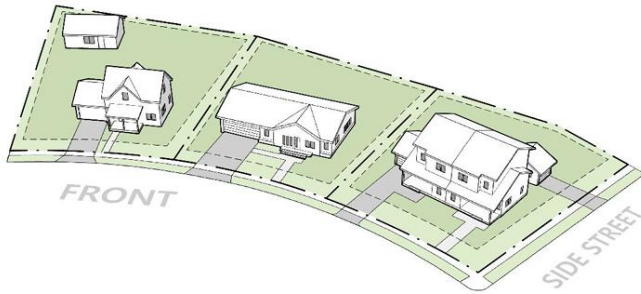
Parks and Conservation Lands

# Residential Contexts

Rural



Limited Urban

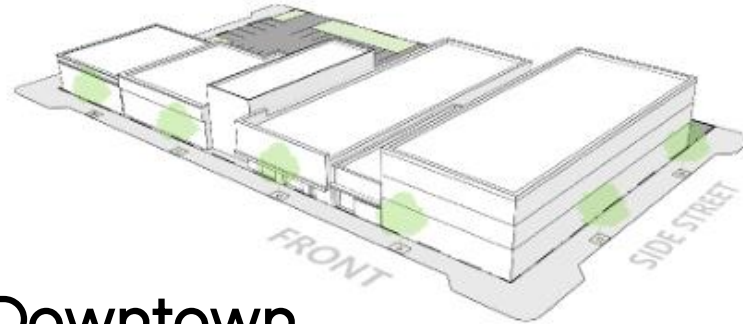


Urban

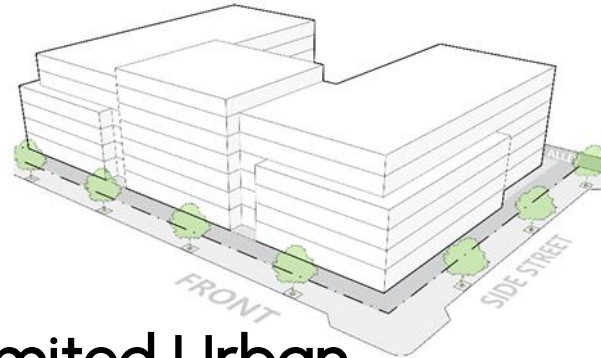


# Mixed-Use Contexts

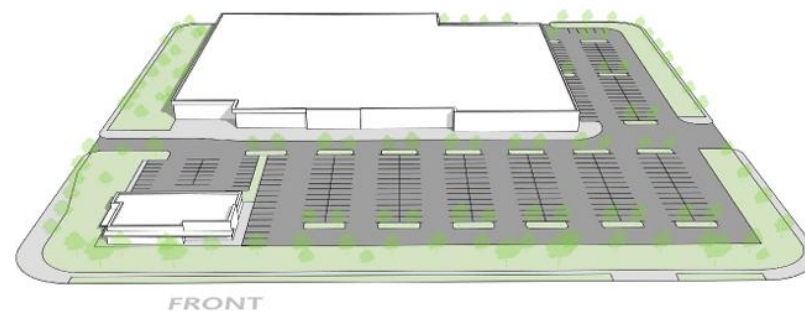
Urban



Downtown



Limited Urban



# Special Use Contexts

Industrial



Open Space



Civic



# Residential Districts

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT NAME
R-R1	Rural Residential
LU-R1	Limited Urban Residential 1
LU-R2	Limited Urban Residential 2
U-R1	Urban Residential 1
U-R2	Urban Residential 2
U-R3	Urban Residential 3
U-R4	Urban Residential 4

# Special Use Districts

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT NAME
<b>T-MU</b>	<b>Transitional Mixed-Use</b>
<b>I-1</b>	Limited Industrial
<b>I-2</b>	Heavy Industrial
<b>OP-1</b>	Open Space
<b>OP-2</b>	Open and Resource Lands
<b>CD-1</b>	Civic District 1
<b>CD-2</b>	Civic District 2
<b>A</b>	Aviation

# Mixed-Use Districts

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT NAME
<b>U-MU1</b>	Urban Mixed-Use - Neighborhood 1
<b>U-MU2</b>	Urban Mixed-Use - Neighborhood 2
<b>U-MU3</b>	Urban Mixed-Use - Community 1
<b>U-MU4</b>	Urban Mixed-Use - Community 2
<b>D-T</b>	Downtown Transition
<b>D-C</b>	Downtown Core
<b>LU-MU</b>	Limited Urban Mixed-Use

# Understanding FLOOR AREA RATIO

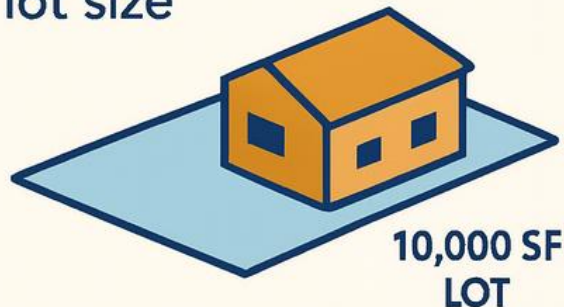
## How It Works



FAR = building  
floor space  
÷ lot size

Example: = building floor space ÷ lot size

FAR = building  
floor space divided by  
lot size



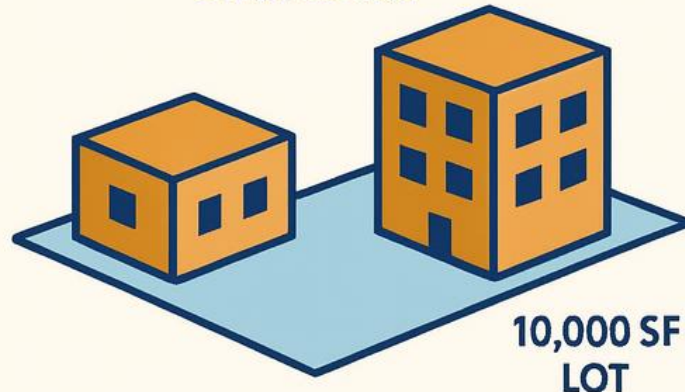
## Why Cities Use It



Guide density  
& height



Balance growth  
with infrastructure  
& neighborhood  
character



## Think of It Like This



FAR is a  
“budget” for  
how much  
building can  
go on a lot.

Owners can “spend”  
that budget by  
spreading out or  
stacking up—any  
combination within  
the limit

## Zoning Tools in Residential Districts

- Floor Area Ratio \*updating to allow slightly larger homes in LU-R1 and LU-R2
- Permitted building types \*adding general building type as permitted in R-R1
- Maximum dwelling units per building
- Setbacks
- Maximum height \*slightly modifying height in UR-3 and UR-4
- Maximum building width \*removing maximum width for rowhouse units and increasing maximum width for full rowhouse building
- Minimum lot width \*adding an exception for duplex and rowhouse lots



## Zoning Tools in Mixed-Use Districts

- Permitted building types (all types allowed in all districts)
- Maximum dwelling units per building \*removing limit for rowhouses
- Build-to-zone and build-to-width \*recalibrating for more flexibility
- Setbacks (LU-MU only)
- Maximum height
- Upper story setback \*slight modification to street wall height
- Maximum building width \*removing maximum width for rowhouse units.  
Generally increasing allowable building widths across multiple districts.
- Ground floor transparency \*reducing required percentage. Eliminating residential standard for districts (not building types).



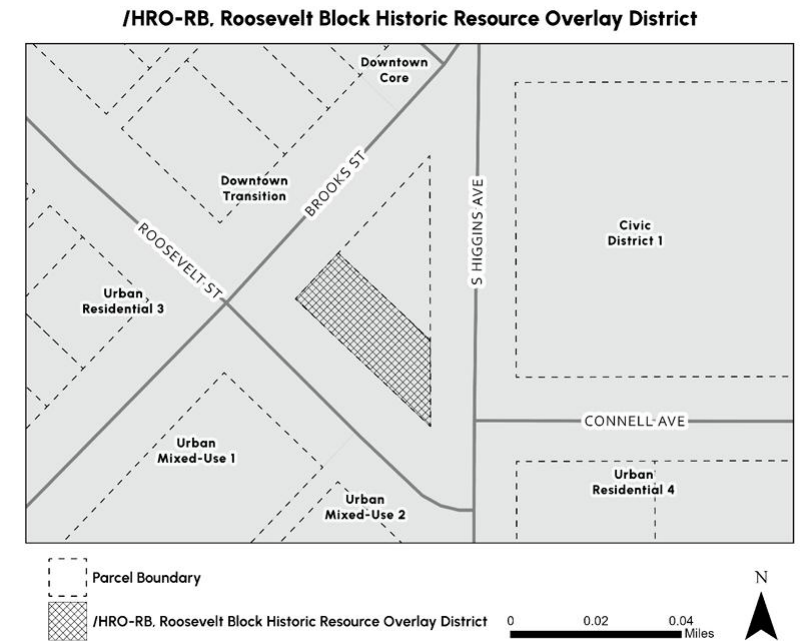
## Zoning Tools in Special Use Districts

- Permitted building types
- Maximum dwelling units per building
- Minimum lot area (I-1 and I-2 Industrial districts only) \*removing from T-MU
- Density maximums (T-MU, OP-2, and CD-2 only)
- Setbacks
- Maximum height
- Building coverage (OP-2 only)
- \*Renaming I-MU to T-MU and describing context



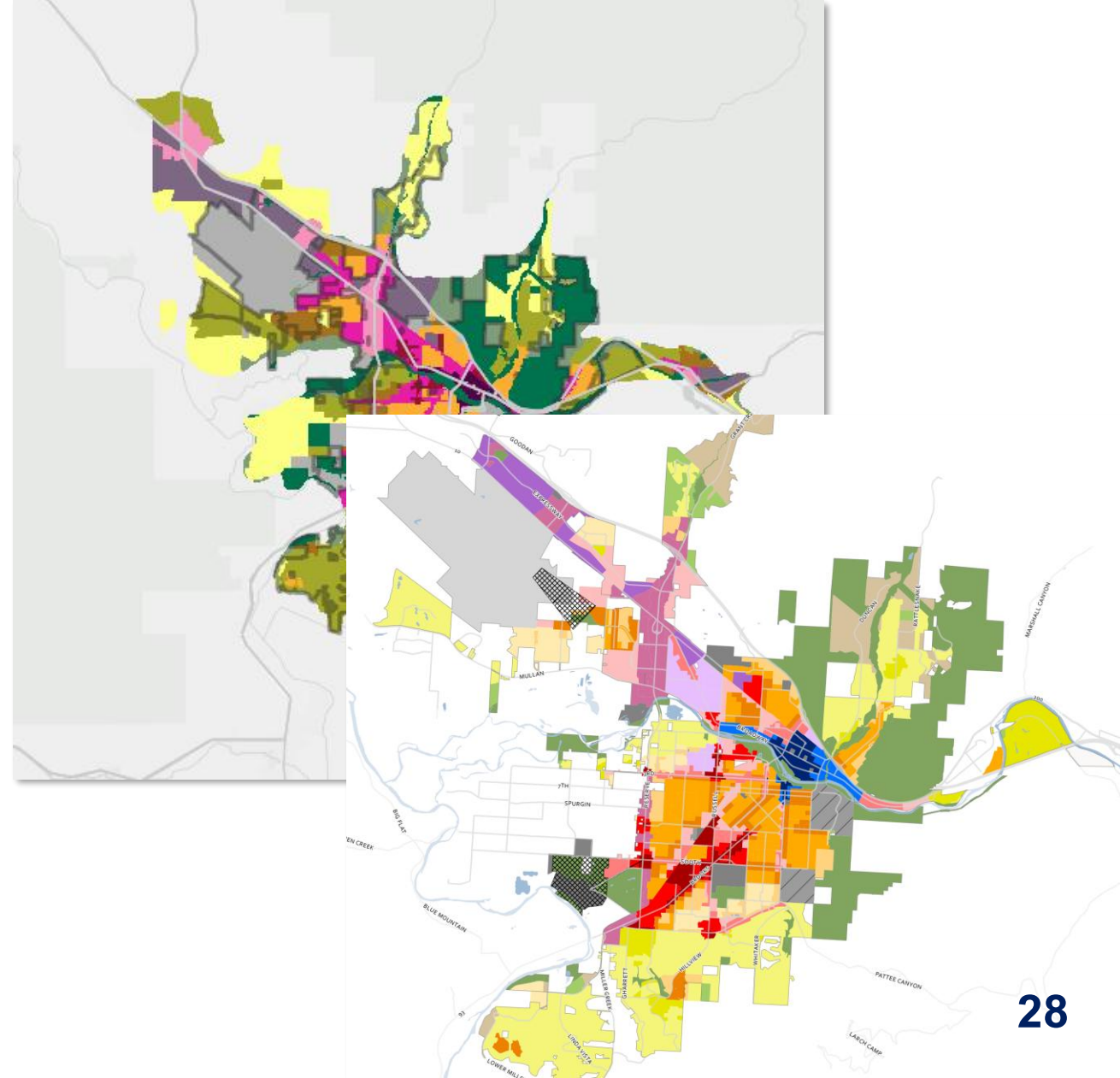
# Zoning Overlays

- Article 4.5 Overlay Districts
  - Will contain one overlay – the Airport Hazard Overlay \*added for adoption draft
- Article 4.6 Historic Preservation and Historic Overlay Districts
  - Fort Missoula
  - Roosevelt Block
  - Marshall House
  - Sacajawea \*added with adoption draft



## Key Considerations

- Zoning Map covers all properties within City limits, using the new zoning districts.
- Zoning Map aligns with the Place Type Map, which is part of the adopted Land Use Plan.
- Housing capacity from the Zoning Map will be able to accommodate the projected population growth for the urban area through 2045.
- Residential opportunities are distributed through mapping of new Residential and Mixed-Use zoning districts so that upzoning is not concentrated in vulnerable neighborhoods.



## Article 4.8 Uses

- Includes a use table, describing which uses are permitted or prohibited in each district \*
- Conditional uses are eliminated and instead uses are permitted or prohibited outright.
- New/updated parking requirements and bike storage requirements are listed in the use table.
- Article contains use specific requirements. Notable improvements include:
  - Simplified wireless communication facility regulations.
  - Aligned tourist homes to previous Title 5 update regarding short term rentals.
  - Revising houseless shelter classifications to recognize different sizes and types of shelters.
  - Reduced standards for solar panels and wind energy systems to align with climate goals
  - Increased buffer distance between dispensaries from 500 ft. to 1,000 ft.
  - Clarified agriculture uses can sell and create products from crops or animals raised on

# Minimum Parking Requirements

State Law (HB 492):

The City cannot require:

- Parking for dwellings under 1,200 square feet
- More than 1 space for dwellings over 1,200 square feet
- Parking for existing buildings and changes of use
- Parking for affordable housing, day cares, and assisted living



Local Proposal:

Parking is not required for:

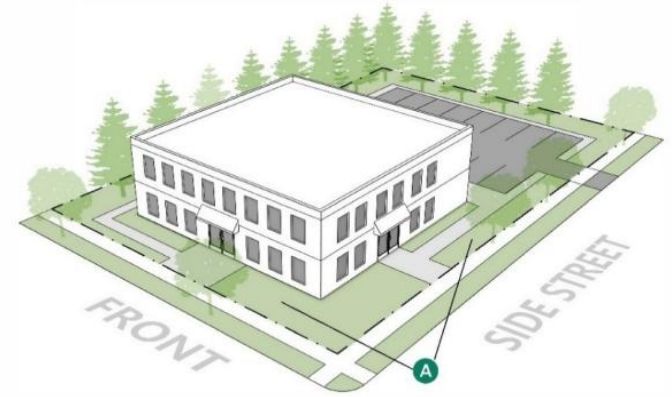
- Residential
- Day Cares
- Assisted Living
- Existing structures
- Changes of use

Additionally:

- Commercial and industrial parking requirements are reduced

## Article 4.9 Site Development Standards

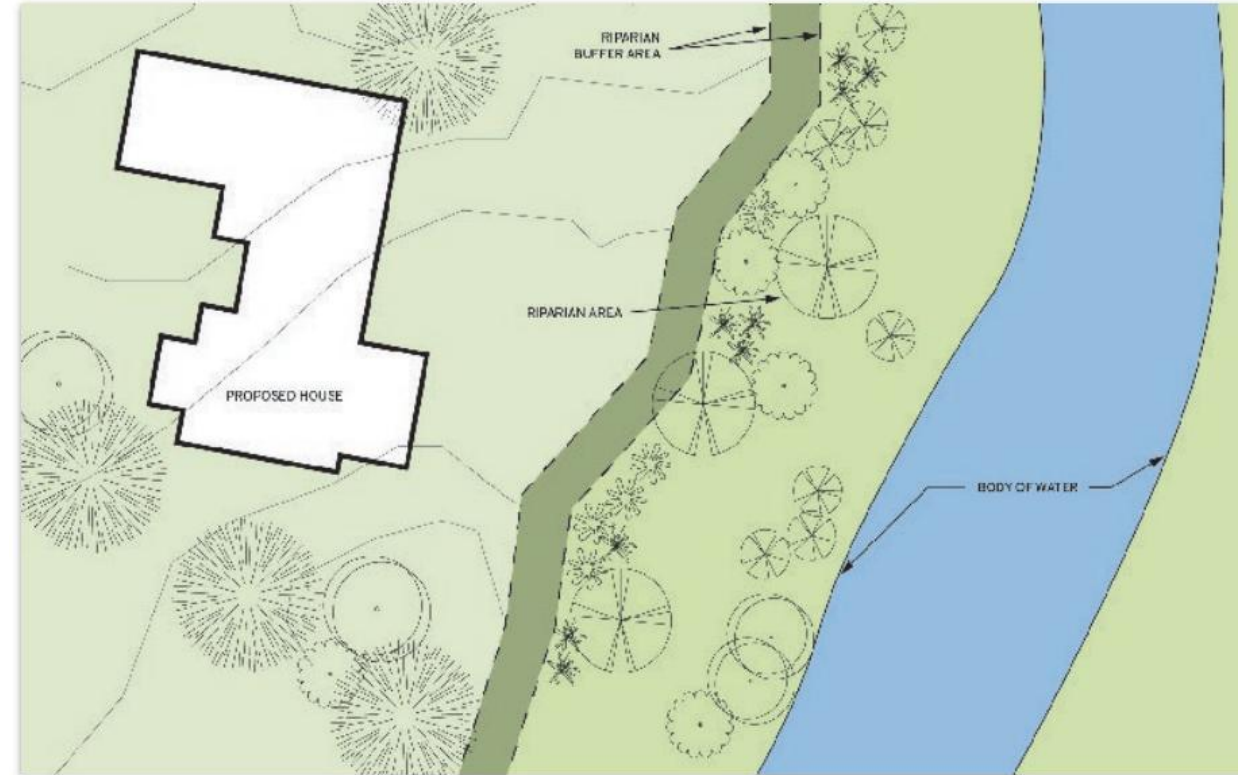
- Parking Placement & Bicycle Storage
- Landscaping
  - Reduction in required percentage of landscaping.
  - General site landscaping applies to non-residential, mixed-use, and sites with 7 or more dwelling units.
  - Incentives to reduce required area (pollinator gardens, native prairie, and green roofs).
  - Clarify applicability of landscaping to building additions and parking lot expansions.
  - Activity areas:
    - Triggered at 7 or more units \*to be updated with adoption draft
    - 150 sf per dwelling unit required, to a maximum of 20% of the parcel area
    - Cash-in-lieu is now an allowed option
    - More types of spaces and amenities qualify to meet the requirement
    - Counts toward general site landscaping requirement



## Article 4.11 Natural Resource Protection

- Removed hillside standards and mapped districts with this constrain in mind
- Riparian Resources
  - To be addressed with a future phase – substantial research and coordination needed
  - Clarified applicability
  - Simplified language
  - Codified current riparian resource buffers for transparency (no change in policy)
  - Carried over special Grant Creek realignment buffer from Title 21

Figure 4.11.02-2: Example Vegetation Map



## Article 4.12 Multiple Buildings on a Parcel

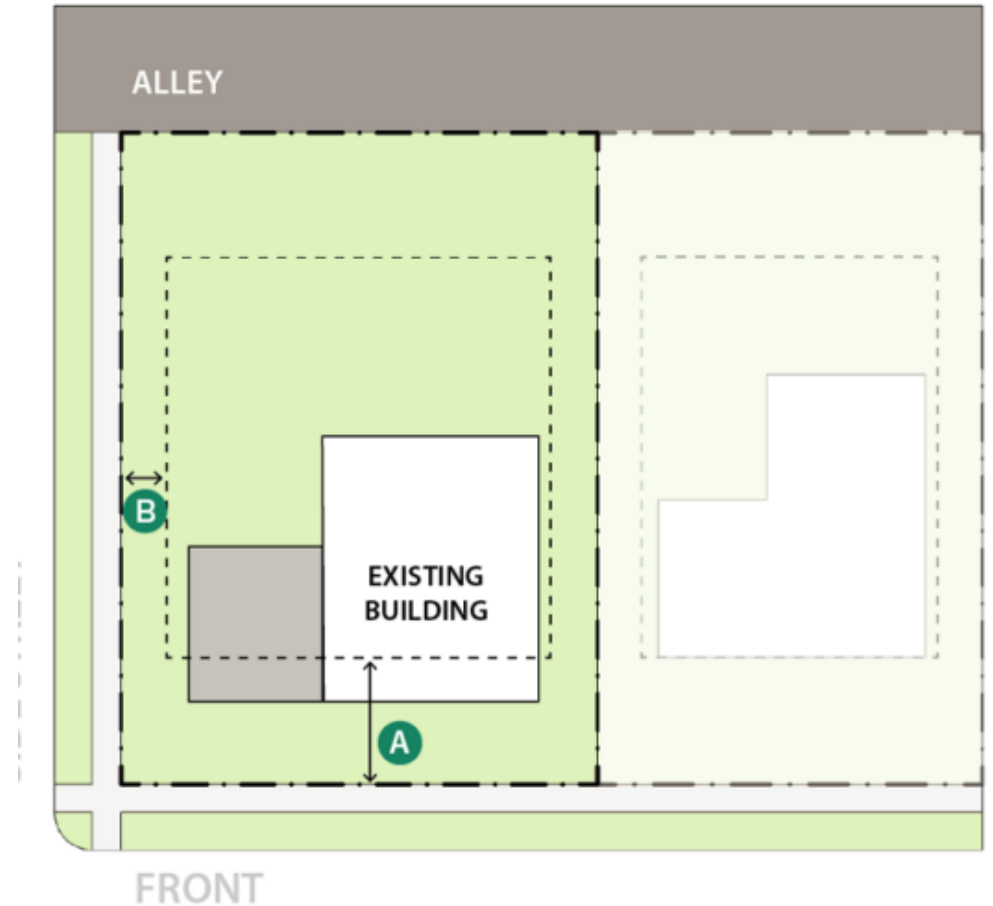
- Codified and defined existing process for phasing development with multiple buildings
- Determination on when subdivision is required for development of large parcels
  - Necessary to create blocks and connectivity aligning with Place Type descriptions
- Townhome Exemption Development (TED)
  - Simplified standards related to site constraints while protecting public health and safety
  - Clarifies submittal and declaration requirements
  - Recalibration of standards elsewhere in code eliminate need to file declaration or secure use restriction agreement prior to construction
- Manufactured Housing Parks
  - Entirely new process aimed at allowing more affordable housing options

Allows for easy creation of manufactured housing parks through ZCP instead of subdivision

## Article 4.13 Nonconformities

- Eliminated restrictions on non-conforming lots. They already exist, use them!
- Relaxed restrictions for expansion of structures that are non-conforming to setbacks.
- Replacement of non-conforming structures still allowed.
- Non-conforming uses can now add building additions, if impact on neighborhood is not increased.

**Figure 4.13.03-1** Nonconforming Addition



## Article 4.15 Zoning Procedures

- Zoning Compliance Permits – Cleaned up language.
- Rezoning – Updated to reflect state law changes.
- Variances – Updated to reflect state law changes. Now administrative (approved/denied by staff).
- Annexation – Added to code for clarity.
- Eliminated processes: Design Excellence Review, Design Review, Administrative Adjustments, Conditional Uses, PUD Rezoning, NC Overlay Rezoning, Public Forum



# Chapter 5: Subdivision



## Chapter 5 Subdivision

- Processes revised to align with state law.
  - Subdivision preliminary plats are reviewed and approved/denied by staff.
  - Public noticing and analysis of comments required.
- Language amended to be more user-friendly.
- Reorganized design standards between code and the *Manual*.
- Changed from a maximum block length to a maximum block perimeter.
- Parkland dedication updates
  - Regulations are now legible.
  - Amount based on estimated number of dwelling units per lot in a subdivision.
  - Allows for cash-in-lieu, and improvements in lieu of parkland area.



## Upcoming Public Hearings

- Planning Board/Commission
  - November 18th
  - November 20th
  - December 2nd
- City Council
  - December 10th – LUP
  - December 15th – City Council Meeting
  - December 17th – LUP
  - December 22nd – City Council Final Consideration

