



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Memorandum

DATE: September 24, 2020
TO: Emily Gluckin and Dave DeGrandpre, Development Services
FROM: Ben Brewer, Associate Planner, Development Services
RE: McNett Subdivision Application, Sufficiency Review

APPLICABLE PLAN: Our Missoula 2035 Growth Policy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed McNett subdivision. According to state law, subdivision applications should be consider the growth policy. This analysis will describe the land use designations and relevant policies pertaining to the proposed project based on the Our Missoula: City Growth Policy 2035.

ASSESSMENT BASED ON OUR MISSOULA: CITY GROWTH POLICY 2035

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS BASED ON PROPOSED 2035 GROWTH POLICY

Neighborhood Mixed-Use is the land use designation within the potential amendment area:

This area is intended to distinguish, create, maintain and enhance areas that already provide primarily local service within a neighborhood. These areas support and help give identity to individual or small groupings of neighborhoods by providing a visible and distinctive focal point. Commercial uses that may be a part of the neighborhood mixed-use include retail, offices, entertainment, professional services, eating and drinking, and shopfront retail that serve a market at a small neighborhood scale. Medium high density residential development is also encouraged in this area.

This area is also considered a Node which should support a concentration of mixed activities that provide amenities, services and gathering spaces in a neighborhood. They are identified as areas for concentrated mixed-use pedestrian friendly development creating focal points for community gathering and transit. They are identified throughout the community, in a variety of scales, to reflect areas with the potential for limited mixture of uses at crossroads leading into or part of a neighborhood, and have the potential to bring together multi-modal transportation activities to serve as a hub for a particular area. These areas also have the potential for future transit oriented development and help to emphasize the significance of pedestrian-friendly streetscape development on a variety of scales of streets. Office, retail, and residential uses are envisioned to be integrated.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS OF THE 2035 GROWTH POLICY

Several goals and policies of the Our Missoula City Growth Policy 2035 that apply to the proposed development. The general policy direction of the 2035 Growth Policy is for more efficient use of existing land and infrastructure within the urban area and to move toward efficiency through redevelopment and development that is accessible to pedestrians and those using alternative transportation. The following list identifies the most relevant to this particular proposal.

Specific Relevant Policies are

- Neighborhoods should have easy accessibility to amenities and local services to meet the needs of an expanding diverse population.
- Encourage new development to locate in areas close to existing service systems.
- Support compact development and mixed-use developments to reduce costly expansion of infrastructure.
- Support pedestrian-scale design that encourages non-motorized transportation and social interaction, especially in areas of the City that are now predominantly vehicular-oriented (e.g. Brooks Corridor).

Conclusion and Comments

The proposed subdivision and associated zoning complies with the growth policy for the recommended land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed Use. However, it is difficult to fully evaluate this conclusion without specifications on what type of development and uses are proposed for the proposed new lots. The growth policy recommends a mix of residential and commercial uses in this land use designation that lead to compact, walkable, and well-connected developments that are accessible in a variety of transportation modes. The additional Node designation is intended to emphasize this area as a place that should support local services and fulfill community needs. If, for example, this subdivision were to be developed solely with multi-dwelling apartment buildings, it would not be consistent with what the growth policy desires in a Neighborhood Mixed Use and Node land use designation. There are indications in the application that this type of development is specifically what is being planned for (specifically in the answers to how parkland dedication requirements will be met) and this raises concerns of whether this type and scale of project is appropriate for this location, given the lack of surrounding services and infrastructure (absent of transit) at this time. It also appears that the types and levels of pedestrian connectivity called for by the Growth Policy may be lacking in the proposed plan by not providing alleys, which implies that access to the lots will be in the form of private driveways off of public streets leading to internal parking facilities and drive lanes. Ideally, in order to achieve options for cross connectivity and in order to reduce on-street loading, the blocks created in this subdivision would provide alley rights of way.

The development within this subdivision should be able to support mixed use including neighborhood services. While the zoning district does not preclude the development of neighborhood services, the characteristics of the proposed subdivision could certainly restrict neighborhood service development immediately or in the future. By early consideration of the function and design of mixed use, the applicant has the ability to incorporate alley needs for loading and unloading, extra height for ground floor commercial spaces and supportive pedestrian environments that allow for people to gather within the potential node.

Although this is not a review for annexation, we would like to take the opportunity to provide a reminder that the following considerations are included in the recently adopted City Annexation Policy:

(NOTE: these are not the only considerations that should be considered in the annexation policy.)

- The City should pursue cost-effective annexation opportunities that advance equal sharing of community and financial resources of those areas of the community who are utilizing and benefitting from the existence of the community resources.
- Any annexation by the City should be guided by the current City Growth Policy, include land uses which will help sustain city services, and include mixed-use, highly walkable neighborhoods as guided in the current growth policy.

One additional comment is a clarification that, if this subdivision is meant to be developed through TED, since it is not providing plans for any TED developments at time of subdivision review, each lot will be limited to 20 dwelling units based on current requirements in Title 20 zoning. Review of TED plans concurrent with the subdivision would allow up to

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not point out that this area is included in the upcoming Mullan Area Master Plan project area, which, when adopted, would provide many opportunities for a project design in this location that would bring about the type of mixed use, walkable, compact neighborhood design that the Growth Policy desires.