

Applicant letter and pre-application meeting notes
Zone Change #947 – 505 and 521 S Billings Blvd

Hanser's Properties LP
ZONE CHANGE APPLICATION FROM RESIDENTIAL 6000
TO CONTROLLED INDUSTRIAL

Statement of Proposal

The owner, Hanser's Limited Partnership, is seeking a zone change for the property. The property is located at 505 and 521 South Billings Boulevard, and is approximately two acres in size.

The existing zoning is Residential 6000 and the applicant is requesting a zone change to Controlled Industrial in order to match the adjacent property they own to the north. The applicant's intent is to expand their existing auto storage facility into these two acres. A concurrent Special Review is also being undertaken to allow the salvage and storage operation use. The existing residential houses on the site will be removed (probably in a few years), and the site will be improved with one to two feet of gravel. The site's elevation will blend with the adjacent residential houses to the south, and similar screening and landscaping will be constructed along all property frontages. Most importantly, storm water run-off from the constructed site will be contained on-site, and storm water will be cleaned and monitored through a State-approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Accompanying Responses to Questions in Zoning Application Form

1A. In what ways is your proposal consistent with the goals and policies of the adopted Growth Policy?

LAND USE ELEMENT

Goal 1. Predictable land use decisions that are consistent with neighborhood character and land use patterns.

The adjacent properties include a mix of zoning and uses. Directly to the north and west, the properties are zoned Controlled Industrial. Properties to the south and east are zoned Residential 6000 and 7000. The proposed zoning and use would be consistent with the adjacent Controlled Industrial zoned properties adjacent to South Billings Boulevard.

Goal 4. Contiguous development focused in and around existing population centers separated by open space.

The development would be an expansion of an existing and long-standing business base consisting of towing and recovery, truck and car repair, used and rebuilt automatic transmissions, and a salvage company which provides auto parts to Billings and the surrounding population. The proposed

zoning would allow for a contiguous development in an existing and well established population center southwest of the Billings Central Business District. The overall Hanser's business consists of about 24 acres of development, and the proposed two acres of expansion would equate to an 8% increase in land area. All surrounding properties are within the City of Billings and most have been developed already, and the proposed use will be sensitive and compatible with the character of the adjacent neighborhoods and properties. There is an existing elementary school to the south (Newman Elementary) and a regional soccer field (Amend Park) to the southwest. These provide good open space areas for the neighborhoods and community. In addition, South Billings Boulevard offers quick and convenient access to Interstate 90 via a modern interchange. City infrastructure surrounds the property and development will make use of city resources in a cost effective manner.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1. Coordinated economic development efforts that target business recruitment, retention, and expansion.

Hanser's is a 51 year old company multi-divisional company specializing in automotive repair, automatic transmission rebuild and wholesale distribution, and salvage dismantling for late model used cars and pickups. Parts are sold both locally and across the United States, and they are a part of a towing/recovery network that spreads across southeastern Montana from Livingston, Big Timber, Columbus, Lewistown, Billings, and Hardin. Within this towing recovery network, Hanser's has an emergency spill and hazmat response team that works closely with the local fire departments, large trucking companies, law enforcement, and other hazardous spill response teams.

In 2015, the Hanser's payroll was \$4.8 million for an average of 98 fulltime equivalent employees throughout all of its divisions. The fulltime equivalent employee earns an average of \$55,000 a year, and the employee benefits include health insurance, life insurance, dental and vision insurance, 401K, personal time off (PTO), and holiday pay.

Because Hanser's does business outside the area, over 50% of the money generated from its operations comes from other states. This outside money is then regenerated into the economic base of the community through payroll and purchases.

The zone change and special use permit approval will allow for retention and expansion of an existing business in Billings. It will also strengthen the area economy by bringing in outside money which will be "turned over" many times via payroll, medical, purchases and sustaining living wage jobs.

GOAL 2 : Increase the median income of households and individuals.

Hanser's has a continued employee training program in all of its divisions. This continual investment in employees helps increase median income of households and individuals. In the transmission department, Hanser's belong to AAA, ATRA and ATSG. In the salvage department, they belong to URG8000 and ARA Gold Seal. In the wrecker department, the company belongs to the Towing & Recovery Association of America, the Montana Tow Truck Association, and other organizations that enhance the towing industry. Hanser's also partners with the Billings College of Technology to help with training of potential mechanics. This partnership helps reduce dependency on other education or social programs in the community.

Hanser's spends \$1,000 to \$5,000 per employee each year to keep up-to-date with the latest technology in their specific divisions. For example, wrecker operators maintain current Hazardous Waste Operator and Emergency Responder (HAZWOPER) certification, hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) with all endorsements in double, triple, and hazardous material transport, maintain certification in traffic incident management including flagging certification, and are certified by the Montana Disaster and Emergency Response Services (DES). Hanser's houses classes annually for forklift training, flagging certification/re-certification, HAZWOPER certification, and confined spaced entry training. Operators are also Wreck Master certified in towing and recovery. All of this training and support for employees helps improve the quality of life for all residents.

NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

GOAL 6: Protection of groundwater, surface water, riparian areas, air quality, and productive agricultural land.

As previously stated, the existing Hanser's facility is under full compliance with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) General Permit through its Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Maintaining and protecting the public health through the SWPPP is critical for the continued protection of surface and subsurface water. The SWPPP (which has been attached to this application) is developed and maintained by the establishment of control measures that keep pollutants from being discharged from the site.

Before any salvaged vehicle is stored on the site, all fluids from each vehicle is safely drained and disposed at the on-site automotive parts dismantling center. In addition to removing all fluids, there are prescribed control measures that provide further protection from petroleum products, antifreeze and sediment reaching any stormwater outfall. The two acres being proposed for a zone change will contain Oil-Water Separators (OWS) and Absorbent Booms to collect any residual pollutants of concern. The existing salvage yard and the one being proposed will be designed to slope towards storm drain inlets that are connected to the Oil-Water Separators. As stated in the SWPPP, every Oil-Water Separator and Absorbent booms are inspected by trained and dedicated staff every 7 days and after a storm event, and all necessary repairs or cleaning is performed. Good Housekeeping

practices like these are followed on the entire Hanser's site, and are important features that will protect groundwater, surface water, and related natural resource and public health elements.

1B. Explain your need for the intended zone change and why the property cannot be used under the existing zoning. Explain how the new zoning will fit in with the existing zoning and land uses in the immediate area.

Hanser's was started in 1963 as a two-bay service station. Today, it has over 60,000 square feet of automotive repair and salvage supported building space on approximately 24 acres of land. The success of Hanser's has always been by steady and measured growth. This has allowed the company to grow and respond to customer's demands, thereby creating a sustainable business. The proposed two acres of land lies directly south of the existing 12 acre pick-a-part and salvage operation. The existing zoning of the land is Residential 6000 and it fronts on South Billings Boulevard, an important arterial connecting many commercial and industrial properties to I-90. The new zoning will fit with the existing zoning because it will match the Controlled Industrial zoning to the north and west. More importantly, the development of the property under this zoning and property ownership will be mindful of being a good neighbor by the following actions:

- Sight obscuring screening fences will be constructed along all property frontages. Special attention will be given to the south portion of the lot where there are adjacent residences living on Rebecca Place, and along Newman Lane where there are long established neighborhood residences.
- As a result of the Neighborhood Meeting held on May 24th, there will be a gap of about 2 to 4 foot between the backyard fences along Rebecca Street and the new sight obscuring fence for Hanser's. Along this transitional area, Hanser's will place heavy duty weed fabric and crushed landscape rock, and will maintain this area against weeds and debris. In addition, a security gate will be installed at each end of the fence along the residential property to secure the gap area from unwanted activity.
- The property will be designed so that there is not as much fill and gravel placed on the site. This will provide for better transitional grades with the adjacent residential properties.
- The property inside the fences will be graded to drain to internal storm inlets, which will be tied into Oil-Water Separators and Absorbent Booms. As outlined in the section above, the site will be monitored and tested under a State-issued Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWMPP) permit.

MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT: Hanser's Zone Change and Special Review			
Project No: 16032			
Meeting Location: Hanser's Automotive, 430 S Billings Blvd		Meeting Date: 5/24/16 4:00 to 6:00 PM	
Meeting Subject: Neighborhood Meeting		Prepared by: Bill Morgan	
Attending:	Ralph Hanser (H)	Scott Hanser (H)	Jim Johnson (H)
Chad Hasler (H)	Bill Morgan (SS)	Leon Pattyn	Alma Cabillan
	Morris Nielsen	Tom Ruschewicz	Barbara Prewitt
Date of Issue: 5/25/16			

Minutes:

Ralph Hanser and Bill Morgan moderated the meeting, which was held in an open house style;

- Ralph gave a summary of the Hanser Business, including the steady growth and expansion of the existing 12 acre facility on South Billings Boulevard, and how this proposed 2 acre expansion would fit in well and serve the community.
- Bill gave a summary of the proposed project elements, which included the following:
 - The property to be expanded upon is just south of the current facility and is approximately two (2) acres in size.
 - The existing buildings on the site will be removed (within a 2 to 5 year period of time) and the area cleaned up.
 - A new building may be constructed in the future to help support the pick-a-part and salvage operation.
 - The site will be improved with one to two feet of gravel, and will taper to the south to blend with the adjacent residential houses.

- Similar screening fences will be constructed along Newman Lane and adjacent to residences to the south.
- All storm water run-off will be contained on-site.
- Similar to the existing facility, no access will be from Newman Lane. All access will be from South Billings Boulevard and the existing site.
- The property will also need a concurrent Special Review to allow the salvage and storage operation use.
- Tentative meeting dates for the Zoning commission and City Council were discussed.
- Ralph reiterated how important it was to hear about the neighbor's concerns so that issues could be discussed and addressed up front.
- Questions from the homeowners included a request for more information on how all storm drainage was to be retained on site. Jim and Chad of Hanser's discussed how the existing site is designed to keep all stormwater on site, and that the site has a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Residents toured the existing facility to see the features of the stormwater system.
- Another question neighbors to the south living on Rebecca Place had to do with the location and height of the screening fence. General discussion ensued regarding a plan to have about 2 to 3 feet between the site's fence and the fencing along the back of the lots, and that this space could be constructed with a sturdy weed fabric and gravel (all maintained by Hanser's). In addition, in order to provide for good security, a locked gate would be constructed between these two parallel fences in order to keep people from walking in this area.
- There were also some questions and discussions regarding if it was possible to help ease existing drainage ponding along Newman Lane. Pending City approval, it was discussed how Hanser's could help by partnering with City to build some storm inlets on Newman Lane near the Mitchell Street intersection. The inlets would help get water off of the Newman Lane grade, which would then help ease the potholes and deterioration of the gravel driving surface. There is existing storm drain pipe in this vicinity that the inlets could tie into.
- No specific other specific concerns with the proposed Zone Change and Special Review were expressed by the homeowners in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:00 pm

**Southwest Corridor Task Force
P.O. Box 80441
Billings MT 59108
406 670-4395**

June 5, 2016

Zoning Commission and City Council

Re: Proposed Zone Change and Special Review for Hanser's

Dear Zoning Commission and City Council:

It is our pleasure to write a letter of support for the submitted Zone change and Special Review applications for Hanser's on South Billings Boulevard. The Southwest Corridor Task Force heard a presentation by Hanser's at our May 26, 2016 meeting and is fully supportive of the proposed two acre expansion. We understand that a Zone Change from Residential 6000 to Controlled Industrial is necessary and that a concurrent Special Review will allow Hanser's to expand their automotive salvage and storage operation.

Throughout the years, Hanser's has been a responsible neighbor and has; provided support for many working families in the task force area. We offer our full support to these two planning actions in front of you.

Sincerely,



Tom Ruschkewicz
Chairman