

## Zone Change #972 – Western Sky Lot 2A-1

Prior to any recommendation to the City Council, the Zoning Commission shall consider the following:

### 1. *Is the new zoning designed in accordance with the Growth Policy?*

The proposed zone change is consistent with the following guidelines of the 2016 Growth Policy and the West Billings Neighborhood Plan (2001):

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan goals and objectives stated the need to locate compatible uses and offer a range of housing choices and development densities the West Billings Plan adopted a number of Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies. The proposed zone change is consistent with the following adopted Policies of **Planned Growth Goal 1: Establish Development Patterns that Use Land More Efficiently**

- *Policy A “Promote efficient utilization of land within the West Billings planning area by promoting well designed, more pedestrian friendly, urban development patterns with a mix of uses and an efficient, creative use of land.”*
- *Policy K “Increase residential densities within the West Billings planning area by approving requests for residential zoning that are consistent with this plan.”*
- *Policy M: “Development in the West Billings planning area shall provide for a variety of residential types and densities.”*
- *Policy N: “Medium and high-density residential development (including elderly and disabled housing) should be located nearby and within walking distance to commercial centers, medical facilities parks, and recreational amenities.”*
  - The proposed zoning of RMF-R and RMH is conforming and compatible with goals of the West Billings Neighborhood Plan. This lot is located south of the developments that front on King Ave West, a principal arterial street. The parcels north of the subject property are developed with a single housing choice. The proposed zoning will allow this developer to offer a different mix of housing choice and development density. The proposed development will have good access to outdoor activities and is in close proximity to commercial centers and transportation options.

### **Essential Investments, Strong Neighborhoods and Home Base:**

- 1) Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired.
- 2) Planning and construction of safe and affordable interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings.
- 3) Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities (community gardens, dog parks, viewing areas), and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community.
- 4) Zoning regulations that allow a mixture of housing types provide housing options for all age groups and income levels are desired.
- 5) Walkable neighborhoods that permit convenient destinations such as neighborhood services, open space, parks, schools and public gathering spaces foster health, good will and social interaction.
- 6) A mix of housing types that meet the needs of a diverse population is important.
- 7) Common to all types of housing choices is the desire to live in surroundings that are affordable, healthy and safe.

8) Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings.

- The proposed zoning would help expand an existing neighborhood with more housing choices for smaller households within an area that is safe and attractive. The developer intends to build an inter-connected system of trails and paths so the residents have access throughout the area without having to drive. The concept development plan includes cottage court residential areas, a clubhouse and outdoor area, trail connections to the Shiloh Conservation Area and will be compatible with the intended development to the west. The proposed landscaping and streetscape will ensure the livability of this neighborhood .

2. *Is the new zoning designed to secure from fire and other dangers?*

The new zoning requires minimum setbacks, open and landscaped areas and building separations. The new zoning, as do all zoning districts, provides adequate building separations and density limits to provide security from fire and other dangers.

3. *Whether the new zoning will promote public health, public safety and general welfare?*

Public health and public safety will be promoted by the proposed zoning. The current zoning of the parcel occurred over a number of years after the original subdivision, King Meadows, was abandoned. The new zoning will allow a greater variety of housing choices and will not increase the overall density of this lot. In fact, there is a 1-acre reduction in area zoned RMF-R. If the site is developed as proposed a total of 291 new dwelling units would be added to the neighborhood. The 13 acre lot to the north – Hoop Dreams Apartments – there are 304 dwelling units. The parcel with frontage on King Ave West is 9.6 acres and is developed for 198 apartment dwelling units.

4. *Will the new zoning will facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirement?*

Transportation: The proposed zoning will have a measurable effect on the transportation system. The applicant and agent have prepared a traffic study that has been reviewed by the City Traffic Engineer as part of the subdivision application. The traffic study will make recommendations on the location of street access, any contributions needed for off-site impacts to other street intersections and any capacity increase needed due to new traffic from the development.

Water and Sewer: The City will provide water and sewer to the property. There will be no additional impacts to the system from the proposed zoning.

Schools and Parks: Schools may be affected by the proposed zoning, although it is not known the number of children that may become residents of the new development.

Fire and Police: The subject property is served by city public safety services. The Police and Fire Departments had no concerns with the zone change.

5. *Will the new zoning provide adequate light and air?*

The proposed zoning provides for sufficient setbacks to allow for adequate separation between structures and adequate light and air.

6. *Will the new zoning effect motorized and non-motorized transportation?*

The new zoning will have an effect on vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The traffic study prepared by the applicant for the City Traffic Engineer's approval will determine the level of traffic impact and any mitigation required. Non-motorized travel – walking and biking – is an essential part of the circulation plan both within the proposed development and connecting to adjacent areas including Hogan's Slough, Hoop Dreams development to the north and the Shiloh Conservation Area Trail system to the east. The Subdivision Improvement Agreement (SIA) for this new subdivision has conditions for trail and sidewalk improvements as well as pedestrian safety measures.

Traffic counts in the area on King Ave West and 48<sup>th</sup> St West are well below the expected volume on a principal arterial street. King Avenue West has an average daily traffic volume of 8,010 vehicles per day at this location, less than Poly Drive at 13<sup>th</sup> Street West. 48<sup>th</sup> Street West is less than most local streets with about 860 vehicles per day. As development increases in the area, these 2 arterial streets will need to build in additional controls, management facilities and safety features. MDT retains jurisdiction over the management of King Avenue West and the City will manage 48<sup>th</sup> St West where it has been annexed to the city. 44<sup>th</sup> Street West is already entirely included within the city limits.

7. *Will the new zoning will promote compatible urban growth?*

The new zoning does promote compatible urban growth in this area. The Hoop Dreams development to the north has a much higher density than the proposed density of this development. The proposed development plan is to offer a variety of housing choices, with services available to the residents and the public. North and east is the St. Vincent's Healthcare PD that will provide commercial and retail services at the intersection of King Ave West and Shiloh Road along with an 80+/- acre medical campus to the north and west. The proposed uses and development is compatible with this urban growth pattern.

8. *Does the new zoning consider the character of the district and the peculiar suitability of the property for particular uses?*

The proposed zoning does consider the character of the district and the suitability of the property for the proposed use. This area between Shiloh Road and 48<sup>th</sup> St West is an area undergoing rapid growth that is in need of more housing choices. The proposed zoning will provide these housing options and it is compatibility with adjacent property. The property is suitable for the proposed use given its location in the area.

9. *Will the new zoning conserve the value of buildings?*

The property is currently undeveloped. Approval of the zone change will provide more certainty to surrounding land owners and may help to stabilize property values of adjacent buildings.

10. *Will the new zoning encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the City of Billings?*

The proposed zoning may encourage the most appropriate use of this land in Billings. This specific location and use is appropriate.