

From: [Becky Fox](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RESPONSE REQUIRED: Copper Ridge zoning request
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 8:35:59 AM



Dear Ms. Cromwell,

I am writing to you in regard to the request to re-zone the far west section of the Copper Ridge subdivision, near Rimrock Road and 70th Street West. As I'm sure you are aware, Williams Homes is seeking to re-zone a section of the Copper Ridge subdivision and proposing to build a 450-unit apartment complex in the far west end of Copper Ridge (Rimrock & 70th). The request is to re-zone single family homes to multi-family units.

The most concerning issue this potential change brings will be the added burden to our already taxed School District #2. The elementary, middle, and high schools that our neighborhood is zoned for are already at capacity. If you allow this re-zoning to happen every single one of the west-end SD2 schools will have to carry this burden. Unfortunately, the children and teachers will be the ones who suffer the consequences of your decisions.

The city infrastructure is not in place to support the re-zoning change. The entrances to the neighborhood (multiple on Rimrock), the intersection of 62nd & Grand, and 70th & Grand do not support current rush hour traffic let alone the addition of 750+ more vehicles. And frankly, the lack of infrastructure stretches well beyond the immediate intersections of the neighborhood.

During the neighborhood meeting that was held on January 25, 2024, the Williams Homes rep. that was present indicated once this apartment complex was built, Williams Homes has no plans to remain in Billings. This should be of major concern to You and the City of Billings. They have no incentive to make Billings a better community. They are strictly looking to make a profit and exit the state. Williams Homes employees often lie about issues and make promises they do not keep. If this behavior is already happening, imagine the mess they will leave behind when they exit.

This will negatively affect property values which is in contrast to the criteria for re-zoning. The City of Billings has already failed the homeowners of Copper Ridge Neighborhood by not requiring foundation piers to be placed during construction. I sincerely hope You will make the right decision and vote against the re-zoning of the far west end of the Copper Ridge subdivision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
Becky Fox

From: [Jennell March](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#); [Berns Brenda](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Copper Ridge Rezoning Request
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 2:01:24 PM
Attachments: [34276.jpeg](#)
[20240115_084242.jpg](#)



Dear members of the Zoning Commission

We have been residents of Billings since June 2023. We moved from Williston, North Dakota into a Williams Home on the Copper Ridge development on the west end of town. We looked at houses all over Billings, but once we started looking on the west end, we knew that was exactly where we wanted to end up. We loved the peaceful neighborhoods and the spectacular views. We have a 1-year-old son, so a huge selling point for us was seeing how many families were in the area and the walking paths/park.

We recently heard about the rezoning of Copper Ridge and are genuinely concerned about how it will affect the community. While we would like to say that we love our Williams Home, that is sadly not the case. Once we discovered that they were the ones planning on developing further west, we felt the need to reach out. We were excited to move into our new home, but quickly began to lose our enthusiasm, as it became apparent that Williams had used substandard building practices and materials.

During the cold snap in January, we noticed that two of the bedrooms on one side of our house were much cooler than the rest of our home. While in my son's room one day, I noticed that there was ice on the outlets, I checked the other room and sure enough, ice was on that outlet as well. I pulled the outlet covers off and could feel air coming in. My husband called the Williams Homes Warranty Center, and they sent over their electricians. When they came in and looked, they told me that the ice was completely normal and that houses had to "breathe" and it was just condensation buildup. They also told me it was safe to use the outlets, and I told them I would definitely not be using them. I was also told at that time it was unusually cold and it wasn't normal for it to be this cold in Montana(which set off red flags for me).

We decided to hire a local electrician to come assess the situation. He said the ice was likely due from lack of insulation, which we had assumed, but wanted to hear from an outside source. He also said in his 15 years of working in Billings as an electrician he had never seen ice buildup like we had in our house. I've enclosed pictures for your reference.

My husband continued to push the issue with Williams Homes Warranty Center, and their solution to the problem was to spray foam under the siding of the outside of the house. Not only did it leave a huge mess, it did not resolve the problem.

While we were looking for a home last summer, we had looked at multiple Williams Homes,

during that time a rep for the company told us that the future homes they would build would be without upgrades (using acrylic countertops instead of the quartz countertops the model homes had, air-conditioning, landscaping, etc.) to cut costs because they were no longer making money off their builds. With that knowledge now, it leaves me to wonder what the quality of their future development will look like.

With all that in mind, we moved to Williston, North Dakota in 2011 during the oil boom, and experienced all the strain that comes with sub-par developers, building homes and apartments as quickly as possible, and then leaving town. Our home in North Dakota was a boom build, and we are afraid we will be facing some of the same problems now in this home, here in Billings. It was not unheard of in our previous neighborhood to hear about cracked foundations, flooding, and houses settling at a rapid rate.

We bought a house in the more desirable area of Williston, where they had built an apartment complex in the center of the neighborhood. It was common for most neighborhoods in Williston to have an apartment/duplex nearby. Sirens, loud music, and fireworks were a part of our everyday norm.

Again, we moved out to the west end of Billings to escape what we had experienced in Williston. What we were initially told was, that this was strictly an area for residential homes, and that appealed to us for all the reasons listed above. We appreciate you taking the time to read this email, and hope that we helped influence the decision to reject the zoning request.

Thank you,
Jack and Jennell March

From: [Kim Tallant](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Berns, Brenda](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] COPPER RIDGE CONCEPT & ZONE CHANGE
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 10:57:03 AM



Nicole & Brenda

Why is it okay to keep expanding with new homes/apartments on the west end, when there isn't the infrastructure to handle what is existing now. Rimrock and Grand Ave especially.

I have lived off Rimrock for 28 years and I have seen no improvements to Rimrock road past 54th Street. Trying to turn left on Rimrock in the morning with the continuous traffic and speed coming from both directions is difficult. Traffic coming from the west of 58th is nonstop especially at peak times.

Why isn't there something being done with a Traffic Impact Study **before** adding more housing. A round about is not the solution at 62nd.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kim Tallant

From: [Berns Brenda](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: FW: Zoning change in Copper Ridge
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 2:19:19 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)



Brenda Berns
Planning Clerk
bernsb@billingsmt.gov

billingsmt.gov

2825 3rd Ave. N
Billings, MT 59101
P 406.247.8610

From: Turner, Mark <Mark.Turner2@BNSF.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 1:59 PM
To: Berns Brenda <bernsb@billingsmt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zoning change in Copper Ridge

Hello Brenda,

I am writing to you over my concerns on the proposed zoning changes to Copper Ridge Subdivision.

I have lived in it for about a year and a half now and truly love it out here.

I was shocked to learn about the proposed changes allowing multi family homes out here. The thought of that many more vehicles traveling through the winding neighborhood and on the adjacent roads makes me want to move. Right now, there is an excessive amount of traffic it seems on Rimrock and Grand in this area. The thought of hundreds of more cars everyday on these roads seems like a serious issue.

I am also concerned over the fact that almost everyone who built/bought homes out here asked about the zoning of our neighborhood. I would have never bought my house if I had known that there was a possibility of this. No one that I have talked to would have. This urban growth is not at all compatible with what is already built in this neighborhood. That is the reason for the original zoning. Along with this, the stability of our homes that we have all purchased will be decimated. People that moved to this neighborhood did so because of the peace and quiet. Not to be grouped with multiplexes which will not maintain our property value or way of life with the increased traffic through the neighborhood.

Lastly for me and most important to me are the schools. We have an exceptional school

system and properly managed right now. If we include multi family homes out here, schools like Ben Steele will not be able to accommodate these new students.

I actually feel sad that we have a developer from another state trying to change the zoning of our neighborhood and ruin our way of life to make more money. Those of us left living in this neighborhood as well as the whole city will be dealing with the repercussions of them trying to make a quicker buck long after they are gone. We will have to deal with the traffic issues, school systems, and overload for an area that was never planned for multi family complexes.

Thanks for your time in this.

Mark Turner | **BNSF Railway** | General Foreman | Laurel, MT | ✉ Mark.Turner2@BNSF.com | 817-234-3001 Office | 406-794-4947 Cell |

From: [Ron Pearson](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Berns Brenda](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zoning Request for Copper Ridge Subdivision
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 10:20:22 AM



Nicole Cromwell, City of Billings Zoning Coordinator

Brenda Berns, City of Billings Planning Division Clerk

RE: Proposed Rezoning parts of Copper Ridge Subdivision

My wife and I are residents of Copper Ridge subdivision residing at 3107 70th ST W, Billings, Montana 59106.

We are writing to express opposition to changes / amendments proposed to Copper Ridge subdivision by Sanderson Stewart in a letter dated January 18, 2024, from John Halverson, LEED AP, Land Planner of Sanderson Stewart. Letter was copied to Nicole Cromwell, Zoning Coordinator/ Code Enforcement Supervisor, City of Billings.

Reference: Notice of Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting for Zone Change at Lots 15 and 16, Block 3 of Copper Ridge, 7th filing, and Lot 15A, Block 3 of Copper Ridge Subdivision, 8th Filing.

The change request involves 3 tracts of land, changing their current zoning from N3- Suburban Neighborhood to a combination of N1-First Neighborhood, NX1 - Mixed Residential 1 (1-4 dwelling units per structure), NX-3 Mixed Residential 3 (5 or more dwelling units per structure), and P1 - Open Space, Parks, Recreation. We understand that this request has been since modified.

We respectfully oppose any changes to the existing zoning to Copper Ridge Subdivision. This is based on the likelihood that property values within the existing adjoining parts of Copper Ridge Subdivision will be adversely affected by introduction of significantly more housing units and population density on smaller lots than those originally platted in Copper Ridge Subdivision, and by the impact of significantly more traffic on Rimrock Road and 70th Street West resulting from the projected additional population. We also believe the proposed zoning change is an attempt by the current developer to bail out of a short-term downward trend in housing demand. Vacant land is much preferred short term over over-built land.

Thank you for your attention to this!

Respectfully submitted,

Ron and Gerri Pearson
3107 70th ST W
Billings, MT 59106-1621

Cromwell, Nicole

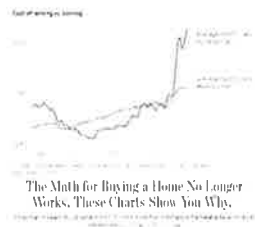
From: Eric Panknin <psichi07@ymail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 12:18 AM
To: Cromwell, Nicole; Berns Brenda
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rezoning of West Rimrock

I'm writing in opposition of the proposed zoning change for the copper ridge neighborhood or CITY Zone Change 1047 PZX-24-00063.

To begin, I read the builder's petition answers to the rezoning questions and they appear to make a lot of assumptions and wishful thinking instead of factual reality. No one can predict what will happen in the next twenty years. There may be growth, maybe not. Billings could grow or Billings could not be here.

First, they have not finished the original section they started back in 2022 and stated at the community meeting they have no intention to. After less than two years into this project it appears they made very poor decisions. The homes they built were never intended for buyers in this area. The cost of these homes are 15 times the median salary of Billings. When they had a meeting with the neighborhood back in November of 2022, I brought this concern to the builder representative and was told that's none of my concern.

At the recent meeting and in the builders' response, they claim that everywhere they build the median home price increases in the area. This is false and very dishonest. The past two years have been an artificial run up in home prices. Billings has never had a median price this high. It is also currently cheaper to pay rent than a mortgage in the Billings area, indicative of a "housing bubble." Price discovery hasn't met for this area or what the value of homes would be in a normal market.



Second, based on their inability to sell these homes, they will now try something else to see if it will work. Since they haven't finished their first phase due to what appears as not understanding the market and poor research, it would be safe to assume the same will happen in the proposed change. It would be a great detriment to the community if the same happens. Home owners in the community would face the negative consequences of the builders' poor decisions.

Third, they assume a small shopping center in the area will be built in the near future. Commercial real estate is currently in a downturn and not expected to normalize in the near future. Rabobank, Morgan Stanley and Starwood capital, firms involved in commercial real estate, state the commercial real estate sector hasn't found a bottom. A lack of liquidity will remain constant and expect current owners to have problems filling space as well as go into bankruptcy and foreclosures in the next five years. Attempting to get funding would be a challenge as well as the costs of building on farmland, as well as finding tenants.

This center alone would not be sufficient for lower income people the builder is targeting as they tend to shop at bulk stores or discount grocery, which is closer to city center. This population would desire not to be that far out from those places. The cost of living in the area is not advantageous, especially now in this high inflationary period and especially during the winter months.

Fourth, this population would also need public transportation, which is limited in this area. This would not be cost effective for the city to have a bus route that is far out from the city center. Per a University of Michigan study titled "How affordable are Accessible Locations" from 2020 by Matan Singer, lower income people live in areas where transportation is cheap and accessible. This would be a challenge for the city as well. It would increase costs at a time residents and the city could least afford it.

Fifth, the builder also states installing a roundabout on Rimrock and Molt will alleviate traffic of all the new residents, especially if there are hundreds more cars. There is no study proving a roundabout will relieve heavy traffic. The roundabout in the area is planned. It could be years before it is installed. The current road will definitely not be able to handle heavy traffic. There are two roads accessing that area and they both are only two lanes. They wouldn't be able to create more lanes as the builder would need to buy the surrounding land as well. This area also doesn't always get plowed after snow which can make access difficult for all types of vehicles.

Sixth, having a higher population in this area would also increase the water and sewer demand exponentially on the west end having multi-family buildings instead of regular single family homes. It would also create heavy demands on electricity. A project like the one the builder wants would put a heavy strain on public works on the west end. The builder is not taking into account multi family buildings that use more than single family homes.

Seventh, the builder is also trying to do this plan in other areas they are located in Montana. It appears they don't have an understanding of the area and are trying another unproven idea and hoping it works. The builder has left the original section they started in looking like a war zone (i.e. dug out lots, empty foundations. They have been sitting like this for almost two years. It has been unbearable to deal with living in this neighborhood. It shouldn't be this difficult owning a home in copper ridge because a builder doesn't appear to know what they're doing.

Finally, The residents in the area are against this and displayed this at the zoning meeting. The builder does not care about those who've been here for years prior to they're arrival. It appears the meeting was "going through the motions" and they're going to do what they want regardless of previous zoning plans and current residents wishes.

Most of the residents live out in the neighborhood as it's away from the city. They moved in with the understanding this area would be single family homes. They like the rural setting without having a large population in one area. The builder behaves as if they have more rights than the established community. Saying things in the meetings like: "well do you think the people that originally own homes out here felt the same when they started building out here." "Well that's part of living in the city, you're just going to have to get used to it." "I'm well within my rights to build what I want because your city council approved it. You have a problem with it take it up with them."

Out of state builders, especially from California should not be dictating what goes on in this area. No one that works for the builder lives in copper ridge. They don't have to deal with the poor decisions they make.

My opinion is they never should have expanded here and should sell the land. If this change was approved it would lead to people selling their homes and a decrease in property values and taxes. This would be myself and other neighbors I spoke with. It would diminish the rural feel of the area as they try the next best thing to make money since their first idea didn't work.

I hope zoning and the city will reject this proposal and keep the original.

Eric Panknin
7035 Shiny Penny Way
Billings, MT 59106
(406) 506-8961

From: [Hillary Johnson](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#); brensb@billingsmt.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zone Change 1047 Concerns
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 10:05:14 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)



Good Morning,

I am writing you on behalf of the proposed zoning changes for the land west of Rimrock and 70th Street. I am aware this application will be "re-worked" and am eager to see the proposal based upon these changes. Prior to the extension being officially granted, and the zoning changes being re-worked, I wanted to express concerns that I personally have, and those I have heard amongst my community members over the past few weeks. I will be referencing the application provided for this zone change in my response below:

The safety of all users and the connectivity of the transportation are important criteria to consider in roadway designs and transportation plan.

While the roads in the existing neighborhoods and potential future neighborhoods are designed for low speeds to help manage and calm traffic, the main road to access these neighborhoods is Rimrock road. This road is currently a 2 way road, and quite narrow at the entrances of the West End Neighborhoods. There is no turn lane, and it is one of the last to be plowed during the winter. Adding more congestion (developer has stated at the neighborhood meeting it could be anywhere from 400-900 additional cars) will put continued stress on this road and subsequently the neighborhoods. It will increase the traffic throughout the main and existing neighborhood roads, increasing safety concerns amongst the residents. Emergency vehicles will also have increased response time using this road, with increased traffic, which is a risk to those needing emergency services.

Planning and construction of safe and a affordable interconnected sidewalk and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings

The proposed strain the increased traffic will put on Rimrock, may potentially require a traffic study and subsequent road widening when the stress of the road is quantified with the potential new development. When the road is required to be widened, the property to be cut into would most likely be these current existing green spaces along the side of the road, providing enough space between an high speed (speed limit 50mph) road. Therefore, cutting into these green spaces would reduce the area between the sidewalk and the road compromising safety and the livability of this neighborhood in Billings.

Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired

While the infrastructure may be present (water, sewer, etc) to continue to build additional neighborhoods, this proposed development will not increase the safety in the current or future neighborhoods. With increased traffic on an already stressed roads, more wrecks are likely to occur, especially with the road being at the current speed it is. (50mph). In addition, safety is compromised when emergency response vehicles have increase response time. According to a traffic study done by MDOT, there were a total of 27 crashes at the intersection of 62nd and Rimrock during an 11 year period. While the number of wrecks is not the particular issue, it is the fatality rate. 14 of those wrecks resulted in fatal and serious injury. Yes, there is a round about planned at this intersection. After speaking with MDOT, the intersection was supposed to be started January 1 under construction. It was then pushed back to April 1 pending the utility work being completed. Utility work is currently underway and is not estimated to be

done on time in order to start the roundabout construction. It would be unwise to approve the zoning change (that would result in increased traffic) to a risky area in which the response to the fatalities is not yet started the construction, and the final results are not known on how, if at all, this is going to improve the safety in our neighborhoods.

A multi-use community recreation facility is desirable

There are currently P1 zoning throughout the existing neighborhood, and in the proposed rezoning area. This is not the same as a community recreation facility. In MT, the use of the parks is weather dependent, with lower use in the colder months. This area of town is several miles from the closes indoor recreation facility, several of which are not for public use, and require memberships. In addition, a large portion of the P1 proposed space is served as more of a "green belt" between current housing that exists in current neighborhoods. While it is classified as "Park" it does not truly function in that way but to provide more of a "buffer" against the future dense housing proposed. The proposal also has a "future trail along the southern edge of the railroad track". In Billings, often times the last portions to be developed are the parks. Copper Ridge Neighbors, despite being told that a P1 Park was planned and subsequently zoned, secured private funding for the existing park due to the fact it wasn't actually put in by the developers when the subdivision was complete.

The history and heritage of Billings are cornerstones of our community

Many of the home owners, if not all, in this area bought our houses so far West of town because we wanted to be connected to the City and all it has to offer, but wanted to live in a quiet neighborhood with less crime, less traffic, and easy access to city trails and parks. The history of the West End proposal did not include apartments, etc. and was designed for families looking to live in a different environment but still apart of Billings. If this proposal is passed, this history of Billings will be completely disregarded.

Community Fabric

Attractive streetscapes provide a pleasant and calming travel experience in urban and suburban neighborhoods

As previously stated above, the Rimrock is not designed to take on this much increased use and as a result, the pleasant and calming travel experience will be severely compromised. Currently, often times taking children to school (which there are none in this neighborhood so all have to be transported in privately or by bus) the road is congested all the way up and past the intersection of Shilo and Rimrock. To say this proposal meets this criteria is quite the opposite. There is limited area to landscape except for the P1 area (which could be compromised when the road needs to be widened) creating risks and stress on those utilizing this roadway every day.

Walkable neighborhoods that permit convenient destinations such as neighborhood services, open spaces, parks, schools and public gathering spaces foster health, good will and social interactions

Consistently in the application, this proposed changed is pitched as being close to a "central node" of 62nd and Rimrock being that is zoned for commercial development. It is difficult to classify this as a "central node" being that it currently has no development in place, and sites are still available with no purchases or plan for development in place. With that being said, the next closes "node" would be the Shilo commercial area, which is several miles from the proposed area. Not only is it several miles, no walking paths exist past the intersection of 54th

and Rimrock so it is nowhere near "walkable". There are not any current plans in place to develop this path, and with the citizens voting down the recent parks bond, the funding will be put toward other projects, rather than a large one like this. The schools are several miles away and are not in a safe, walkable distance.

Public safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents and businesses

The property under proposal is within the city but the response of emergency response to these areas is increased compared to those closer within the city which compromises public safety. In addition, public safety becomes more in question with higher, dense population housing. In our neighborhood, we have had very limited issues with the uptick of crime the city of Billings has seen over the last year in particular. With increasing the amount of dense housing in this area, the public safety is at risk.

Community investments that attract and retain a strong, and diverse workforce also attracts businesses.

The goal of the proposed change is to attract diverse demographic to this area of Billings. Here in our neighborhood, we are all "working class" residents. the property's proximity to the 62nd and Rimrock "central node" was estimated by the developers to decrease transportation costs. As previously stated, this area is not a central node and doesn't have any current business or concrete plans for what the businesses may potentially be in this area. It has been zoned as commercial for several years with no businesses choosing to operate in this area.

West Billings Plan

Plan for a mix of land uses that reduces automobile usage by locating stores, housing, schools, and recreation within a very short drive (or walking distance) from each other in compact neighborhoods with pedestrian-oriented streets

Again, the proposed area is several miles from stores, schools, and recreation beyond that of the proposed zoning P1-Parks. The schools are not walkable, nor are businesses, entertainment etc. to this area.

The 10 zoning Change Criteria:

Whether the new zoning is designed in accordance with Growth Policy

The concerns listed above are those and how the new proposal does not support the growth in accordance with the Growth Policy.

Whether the new zoning considers the character of the district and the peculiar suitability of the property for the particular use

There are small areas in the current neighborhoods with zoning other than N3 zoning. Prior to entering the existing Copper Ridge division, a small area of NX2 zoning exists along Rimrock. Although the proposed zoning is "consistent" with this small area, the proposed zoned area will connect in with the existing N3 copper Ridge homes, while the other NX2 zoned areas do not. The proposed changes are not consistent with existing areas and does not promote compatible growth nor does it consider the character of the current properties.

Whether the new zoning will conserve the value of buildings

The risk of the new proposal has a chance to decrease home value in this area of the City. In addition, with increased amount of traffic, noise, increased response time, increased distances from commercial areas, etc. it will detract from the value of the existing homes.

Whether the new zoning will encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the City of Billings

The new proposal will provide more dense housing, but the location is not appropriate. Increased density housing requires the city infrastructure to be able to support it. Beyond utilities, the infrastructure of the City of Billings is not yet ready to support dense housing in this area, being several miles from DEVELOPED COMMERCIAL nodes, schools, indoor recreation areas and others.

Whether the new zoning is designed to secure from fire and other dangers

With all the water running off of the rims, this area has had issues with flooding historically, as well as settling in the neighborhoods requiring extensive home renovations to increase stability. The building of high dense housing in this area is unwise and as mentioned before, also has increase response time for emergency vehicles.

Whether the new zoning will promote the public health, public safety, and general welfare

No. The development designed packs dense housing into areas in which owners bought their homes to be out of the "city" with access to city services, and with current areas zoned to be similar, subsequent housing. With dense housing comes increased crime, increased noise rates, and will have negative effects on those already residing in this area. The city also poses risk to having "affordable" housing in an area close to railroad tracks causing increase likeliness of injuries occurring from inappropriate use of the area.

Whether the new zoning will facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks and other public requirements.

The proposed neighborhood will increase traffic significantly on narrow roads. The schools in this area are already overloaded. Per communication with Dr. Garcia, the superintendent of instruction for School District 2, the enrollment data is as follows:

| School Name | Level | uilding Ca23 | Enrollme | Utiliz |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------|----------|--------|
| Arrowhead | ES | 460 | 429 | 93% |
| Boulder | ES | 416 | 502 | 121% |
| Meadowlark School | ES | 460 | 556 | 121% |
| Poly Drive | ES | 329 | 303 | 92% |
| Ben Steele | MS | 743 | 740 | 100% |
| Billings West | HS | 1731 | 2194 | 126% |

Increasing the enrollment numbers in these schools that are already literally overflowing would be a misuse of the resources available in Billings. In addition, the time that it requires to bus a higher amount of children to already overflowing schools, will increase the amount of time the busses spend in the current and new neighborhoods, as well as requiring additional bussing services to be put in place to support the need for transportation given the large distance to the schools.

Whether the new zoning will provide adequate light and air

The community is being developed in an area where there is currently an abundance, however the increased use of multi-story, dense housing will limit that and therefore does not meet this requirement

Whether the new zoning will affect motorized and non-motorized transportation

Again, there is no developed commercial area within walking distance, or several miles of driving distance, down a road that does not have developed walking paths past 54th street. Walking, bicycling, and utilizing the path is not feasible and should not be considered to meet this criteria. If this passes in the future with similar plans, the developer will be required to make traffic adjustments which will then cut into developed P1 park space in order to expand the road, thereby decreasing the amount of recreation area, and increasing the risk to public safety.

Other

In addition to all the above points and concerns, there are a few additional things I'd like to take a moment to point out.

The rezoning requirements are that the current landowners within 0.25 miles or 1320ft are given notice of the neighborhood meeting in order to discuss the upcoming proposal. On January 25th the meeting was held. There are several neighbors within this required area that were never notified. A few letters were sent out, post marked and dated for January 18th. This does not meet the mandatory minimum of 15 days' notice required by the City of Billings.

The current landowners, Williams Homes, is based out of California and do not have the best interest of the Billings Residents at their core. Although not reflected in the meeting minutes at the neighborhood meetings, the comment was made by a representative that this was one of the "last projects in Billings before (we) plan to get out".

I would implore you consider the above information, along with the comments received by my fellow neighbors. It is my request that if an extension for the application is granted, that the developer/owner will be given until April. If they are given the extension until May, it is my request that an additional neighborhood meeting will have to occur with the PROPER notification as required by Billings Re-zoning laws.

As you are aware, it is not uncommon for landowners and developers to request an extension for zoning applications in hopes that the opposition will "fizzle" or decrease in order to make the task at hand easier. Given the fact there are many residents in the City beyond just those of Copper Ridge, I ask that you give my proposal consideration for extension, or continue as originally planned for a City Council vote on March 25th.

I appreciate your time and consideration and am happy to discuss any concerns you may have further.

Respectfully,

Hillary Johnson

Cromwell, Nicole

From: John Moore <jemoore98@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 6:38 AM
To: Cromwell, Nicole
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Zoning Changes in West Rimrock Area

John E Moore

7002 Shiny Penny Way

Billings, MT 59106

(850) 723-4379

3 March 2024

Nicole Cromwell

Zoning Coordinator

City of Billings

Dear Ms. Cromwell,

Please accept this submission in advance of the Zoning Commission meeting regarding the proposed zoning changes in the West Rimrock area. Also, please let me know if I need to resend this email with a signed letter so it may be added to the official record of the meeting.

Thank you.

I am writing to inform you of my opposition to the zoning change in the West Rimrock area/Copper Ridge development requested by Williams Homes. In essence, the zoning request will significantly increase the density of dwellings at the furthest end of the City of Billings and the Copper Ridge development. My opposition is based on the items outlined below:

1. Traffic and infrastructure. The placement of high-density housing at the very end of Rimrock Ave, a 2 lane road which is the only access to the development, will have a significant negative impact on existing residents of Copper Ridge and the residents of the proposed development. With a planned increase in density to 450 dwellings, it is possible that up to 1000 new vehicles will need to transit to and from the development on Rimrock.

2. Education. Children from this area are currently transported to Boulder Elementary. Boulder, like most schools in the Billings area, is at capacity. The addition of significantly more students into an already stressed and crowded school doesn't seem a logical choice. Schools, like all infrastructure, should be an early part of the planning process for city development. To my knowledge, no new elementary schools are opening in the West End of Billings to handle the currently planned growth. To add high density housing without prior planning does not seem wise.

3. Incompatibility with the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention Healthy Community Design principles. A key element of Health Community Design is decreasing dependence on the automobile by building homes, businesses, schools, churches, and parks closer to each other so that people can more easily walk or bike between them. Placing high density housing at the most distant edge of the city is not inline with these principles. In fact, it is in direct opposition. If this zoning change is approved, more children will be placed on buses and transported to school and more workers will need to get in cars to drive to work. For those who may want to bike to work, there is no safe route for them to take.

I am not opposed to growth in the Magic City. But growth needs to be thoughtfully planned to benefit all members of our wonderful community.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

John E. Moore

Cromwell, Nicole

From: John and Ruth Moore <mooresontheroad@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 1:50 PM
To: Cromwell, Nicole
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zoning change 1047 - Copper Ridge

Ms. Cromwell,

I strongly oppose the proposed zoning change (1047) in the Copper Ridge neighborhood area at the far west end of Rimrock Road proposed by Williams Homes.

This zoning change will greatly increase the density of the development area and will have a significant negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood. My reasons for opposition to this change are outlined below:

1. Increased Traffic without Supporting Infrastructure - Rimrock Road is a two lane road running along the southern side of this development, and it is the only access road. There are no other access roads because the area is bound by the railroad and the existing West Copper Ridge neighborhood on all other sides. With a planned increase in density of up to 450 dwellings, it is reasonable to assume that approximately 1,000 new vehicles will be transiting Rimrock Road (and/or cutting through West Copper Ridge). Increasing density to these numbers at the far end of Rimrock Road does not make sense.

A new roundabout is in the works at the intersection of Molt and Rimrock Roads, but, at approximately 1.5 to 1.75 miles from this development, it will not help to ease the burden of access.

2. Increased Burden of Schools - Children from this area attend Boulder Elementary, Ben Steele Middle School and West High. Boulder and West are at or over capacity. Adding more students does not seem like a logical decision. I understand that the school district is separate from the City; however, schools, as well as other infrastructure, should be a vital part of the equation when considering increasing density in development. To my knowledge, no new schools are planned that would serve this area.

3. Not Aligned with Healthy Community Design Principles - Key elements of healthy design principles include the mixture of residential, commercial, recreational and other zones to promote walkable neighborhoods, increase neighborhood character and decrease reliance on automobiles. Placing high density housing at the farthest edge of the city is the opposite of healthy community design. If anything, in this case, it is the direct opposite. This zoning change will put more kids on buses and increase traffic on a road not designed for it as people need to get to work. Perhaps less of a consideration, but, biking is not an option as there is no safe route connecting our neighborhood to the existing trails at this time (and this zoning change can not provide that access).

I do understand and support the need for planned growth and increased housing density in some areas of our beautiful city. However, such growth needs to be thoughtfully planned and beneficial to the overall community. With that in mind, I hope you take my thoughts into consideration and oppose this zoning change.

Please contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Ruth Moore
7002 Shiny Penny Way
West Copper Ridge neighborhood
850-723-4378

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [SALLY PANKNIN](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#); [Berns Brenda](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Petition Rezoning of West Rimrock
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:22:37 PM

This is my opposition to the proposed zoning request by Williams Homes in CopperRidge.

We purchased our home through the original developer Oakland Built Homes and we were told and shown by an artist rendering the future of the development was to consist of single family homes and green spaces. That consistent flow of a community feel, private yards, views of the Rims, not seeing oversized homes or apartment buildings and minimal traffic is why we bought a home in this particular subdivision.

Since then Oakland has sold the remaining lots to Williams Homes a California based builder who is now turning CopperRidge into a California style beachfront area with its two story (not split level as the local builders use) multi colored homes with tin porch rooftops and RV garages. Williams Homes heard about the displeasure the current residents have with the two story houses blocking views and towering over yards and invading privacy in our homes and yards. The representative was condescending with his replies stating that “he was well within his rights as a builder to build what he wants” and if we had an issue to “take it up with the city because the city approved the plans”

The developer has no interest in improving the CopperRidge community nor benefiting Billings residents . They are unable to sell the \$540k+ homes they built and are now trying another way to use the parcels to make a profit. The builder can't complete the housing it has started. There are multiple dirt piles and holes throughout the subdivision because they started the excavation, dirt outline formation but never commenced with building. How are they going to manage project housing? Will it be outsourced for management or will it be sold to someone else just so they can make a few dollars?

Consider the strain adding 450+ apartments (averaging 5 people per unit) will have on city services, trash removal (apartment buildings use dumpsters and the wildlife will have a daily buffet available), emergency services and schools that service our area. Will there be added police patrols, more officers available for calls, ambulatory, fire stations and bus transportation? There are only two ways into the subdivision and each are two lane roads, it can't accommodate 900 + additional vehicles and that many vehicles in a small area increases the likelihood of car accidents, pedestrian to vehicle accidents and more incidents involving collisions with wildlife.

The original subdivision request by Oakland needs to be followed. Just because the property changed hands doesn't change the fact that the approval was granted on the information submitted by Oakland, it was to be single family homes only! This isn't about some builder's “rights” we, the residents of this community, residents of Billings have to live in this subdivision. We will have to live with the consequences of a rezoning change, not the builder. It shouldn't be this stressful to live in a place I was glad to call home.

Please don't approve the rezoning application. Billings doesn't need to be another Bozeman.

Thank you for your time
Sally Huntley-Panknin

From: [Tanya Saunders](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Copper Ridge going change
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 5:51:43 PM

Dear Madame,

I have lived in Copper Ridge since Nov 2020. I love it here because of the openness and the quiet. I don't hear the traffic or the gunfire that I did when I lived near Burlington School. I enjoy walking the paths around here because I do not feel afraid to be by myself as a single walker. I feel the zoning change would negatively affect the neighborhood. I oppose the proposed zoning change.

There are several reasons why I do not think this is a good idea. First of all, I do not think Rimrock Road could handle another estimated 500 cars. It can not handle the volume it has right now. The condition of this 2 lane road is terrible. We are expecting to have a round-about at some point, but the rest of the road will not change for the foreseeable future.

Secondly, there are no schools out here and no plans to build any. The elementary school children are bused to Boulder or Meadowlark School. Those schools are overcrowded as it is. Adding multiple apartment buildings could potentially add a hundred more elementary kids.

Lastly, all the newly constructed houses are built on piers as the ground is unstable. Is it possible to build a large complex like an apartment building on piers? What if that is not done and the building shifts and partially sinks?

I do believe Billings needs apartments. I just think Copper Ridge would not be a good place for them. If Rimrock Road would be 4 lanes from Shiloh to 70th and an elementary school is in walking distance of Copper Ridge, then I would not have any opposition. However, I do not see either of those happening.

Thank you for your time,

Tanya Saunders

Zone Change 1047

Received via email to Nicole Cromwell

March 5, 2024

Martha and I regret that we are out of state together as you prepare for this evenings zoning meeting. We are reluctant to support rezoning and further expansion of the westward aspect of WH Copper Ridge 54. We respectfully ask for the city to consider the concerns of the existing homeowners in copper ridge as well those of the rural and ranch homeowners with nearby tracts of land.

As for us, we ask you to take into consideration the effect and impact on recreational, western pleasure and sport horse owners at our barn and riding facility, High Plain Stables. The horses and riders need some protection from the urban onslaught pressuring their boundaries. Please help us preserve and protect the tradition and value of riding and our deep respect for the horses here in this corner of Montana. Martha and Greg McDowell

Cromwell, Nicole

From: Gulf Group <gulfgroupnow@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 11:43 AM
To: Cromwell, Nicole
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerning West Rimrock rezoning petition

To whom it may concern

Hello my name is Rene Scott we live at 7046 Copper View Way, Billings, MT 59106. We are close to the new proposed subdivision by Halverson at West Rimrock and 70th.

My background was in large scale development. I helped build and decorate hotels around the country. I also handled projects like this, when dealing with the EDC Economic Development Corporation to get free land tax savings and City buy in.

What I know what these developers are proposing for our combine neighborhood. This project is something that I would have placed in a blighted area or at the edge of the city. But not next to a thriving upper end area of the city. With major potential growth for comparable homes, and true middle-class living. As There is so much potential for growth here off of Rimrock.

So the demographics that this type of development will be pulling is much lower cost-of-living homes stacked on top of one another. Pulling in rental properties owners and temporary residence So please consider that there is a serious safety element to that type of residence to the city resources, and the existing neighborhoods.

So, with those demographics they would start pulling from our property values to the surrounding homes and neighborhoods plus tone of the area.

The price point on these homes are way below What's currently in our neighborhood. This type of development would ultimately would be a drain on the style and quality of the neighborhood, the city, tax revenue, and the quality of life that We expected when we paid a higher price for this area. The ability to enjoy the view of the rims would be destroyed due to the apartment complex taking over the air real estate.

This development has one purpose. It is to put as many people in the square footage allowed to make the developers the most returns on their money.

Once they've sold their properties, they are gone from the area they no longer care what happens to the current residence Nor the city.

I am not happy with this nor are our neighbors.

This type of development will ultimately steal our property values. Along with our magnificent views Of the rims. Then our resources, Our road our taxes, schools , due of all the extra people that will bring to the area.

I would like have Billings reevaluate due to the large scale of development that could possibly go this direction. I think this is shortsighted by all concerned. We're trying to build neighborhoods here. This will put a strain on the transportation on Rimrock, our sewage, we will have to pay

extra taxes for new schooling. Also, the demographics that this brings in for apartment complex comes along with travelers and government voucher living. Not good for a thriving neighborhood.

But mostly this will destroy our neighborhood. I moved here with the thought that new development would be consistent with what we currently live in. That is not what this is. I highly recommend that the City work with this development to bring in the housing as it's needed but it does not need to go next to the type of homes here off the Rimrock area.

You are basically sucking the life out of our neighborhood. As this is not compatible urban growth. Please forgive my letter being so hasty I had a very short time To write this as I just mafe aware that these needed to be in before noon today. If I had more time, it would have been much more professional, but I think you get the general overall message. My name is Rene Scott and I will do whatever is needed professionally to stop Or at least modify this type of development. I wish that the city and these developers would consider something more comparable to what we have here and I think the neighborhood is even good with Upper end townhomes, but not an apartment complex.

Thank you.

Zone Change 1047

Received via email to Nicole Cromwell

March 5, 2024

Martha and I regret that we are out of state together as you prepare for this evenings zoning meeting. We are reluctant to support rezoning and further expansion of the westward aspect of WH Copper Ridge 54. We respectfully ask for the city to consider the concerns of the existing homeowners in copper ridge as well those of the rural and ranch homeowners with nearby tracts of land.

As for us, we ask you to take into consideration the effect and impact on recreational, western pleasure and sport horse owners at our barn and riding facility, High Plain Stables. The horses and riders need some protection from the urban onslaught pressuring their boundaries. Please help us preserve and protect the tradition and value of riding and our deep respect for the horses here in this corner of Montana. Martha and Greg McDowell