

From: [Leslie Cooke](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Tidswell, Dan](#); scott@performance-ec.com; [Aspenlieder, Scott](#); [Gulick, Ed](#); [Shaw, Kendra](#); kendra.shaw@gmail.com; [Cole, Bill](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - rezoning at Rimrock and 70th Street West - application 1047
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 7:23:10 AM



Please include my public comments below at the zoning meeting tomorrow, May 7. I will not be able to attend in person.

I write to express my continued opposition to the existing zoning for the south end of Copper Ridge, now referred to as "The Trestles" - application 1047. Safety is a requirement that the zoning board is obligated to consider. My concerns center primarily around pedestrian and bicycle safety on and near Rimrock Rd as vehicle traffic loads continue to increase, and will certainly heighten should this application be approved.

From my perspective, the recent revision to the zoning change request is somewhat of an improvement over the original change request, but still creates high-density housing much too far from existing city services. The distance from the center of town necessitates that residents who would occupy these new dwellings MUST drive to reach any and all retail, office, school, or municipal services. While there is a small patch along the south side of Rimrock Rd near Molt Rd which is zoned commercial, it is unlikely to contain enough businesses to prevent the need to travel by car into the existing commercial areas in town. Rimrock Rd has become the de facto route from the far northwest end into town. Rimrock Rd is nearly 100% residential, and the increase in traffic on Rimrock is negatively impacting safety and overall quality of life for existing residents along and near Rimrock.

I do not oppose high-density housing in general. However, the location of this project concerns me, primarily around the issue of safety in the incumbent neighborhoods along Rimrock Rd, caused by increased traffic.

Rimrock Rd is both a neighborhood street and an arterial. The immense growth over the last 2 decades to the far northwest (ie Copper Ridge, Ironwood and others) has placed an enormous amount of commuting traffic on Rimrock Rd.

I believe this request, as well as any other zoning and/or zoning modification requests, seeking to increase the number of dwellings on the far northwest end of town, must take into account the increase in traffic on Rimrock Rd, and the related safety impacts. And developers who profit from these developments must share in the cost of needed studies and improvements to the roadways that branch out from the new neighborhoods.

With the soon to be open IBL (aka Skyway Drive), Rimrock Rd will see yet another uptick in vehicle traffic. Every increase in vehicle traffic has pedestrian and cyclist safety impacts.

The following safety concerns need to be addressed prior to approving any zoning change requests that create a significant impact on pedestrian safety:

- A study to locate and implement a further west route off of the Rimrocks. Zimmerman Trail is heavily used by both vehicles and large heavy trucks. The IBL will put more traffic on Zimmerman, which is a winding and narrow road on the side of a sandstone cliff, originally used as a shepherder trail. We need to understand how many vehicles turn left or right onto Rimrock Rd at the intersection of Rimrock/Zimmerman. And how many continue through the narrow portion of Zimmerman between Rimrock and Poly. The City, as well as the community as a whole, needs a plan to move some of the traffic coming down Zimmerman to a point further west, near where all the far northwest end development continues to occur. Developers who seek to increase housing volume to the far northwest end, which will cause an increase in vehicle traffic, need to financially support this study. Zimmerman is a key route to the airport. If Zimmerman is impacted adversely, and has to be closed for repairs, rock slides, or rebuilding, that forces airport bound traffic to travel east on Rimrock to N27th to reach the airport.
- Crosswalk Study on Rimrock Road. Rimrock between N27th and Shiloh only has 2 crosswalks that are not at controlled intersections. Developers who seek to increase housing volume to the far northwest end, which will cause an increase in vehicle traffic, need to financially support this study.
 - One of the 2 existing crosswalks does have a crossing light signal (Rimrock/Arvin). The other does not (Rimrock/Beartooth).
 - Children who live on the north side of Rimrock Rd, and the neighborhoods above Rimrock Rd, must cross Rimrock Rd to walk to school. There are no schools north of Rimrock Rd. Because walking to school across Rimrock is unsafe, many parents drive their children to and from school, which of course increases traffic congestion on Rimrock Rd, and in the neighborhoods around the several elementary schools that serve children above Rimrock Rd.
 - A crosswalk is needed at Rimrock and Rehberg. This intersection is not controlled by a traffic light, and the City does not plan one in the near future. In the meantime, this intersection has become unsafe during commuting hours when turning left onto Rimrock from Rehberg. This is in the area where middle schoolers could easily walk to Will James School. My own kids walked safely to Will James in the early 1990s, prior to Rimrock becoming such a busy street. There is a small change in elevation just east of Rehberg on Rimrock, which can create visibility issues for drivers who do attempt to turn onto Rimrock.
- A reduced speed limit school zone should be established on Rimrock Rd, from Shiloh or

41st St W, to a point east of 38th St West. (north of Arrowhead School). Commuting traffic coming east on Rimrock (from the far northwest neighborhoods) travels in a 45 MPH speed zone, which drops to 35 MPH at 41st St W. Unfortunately, when the light is "green" at Rimrock & Shiloh, a good number of these drivers continue at 45 MPH, often all the way to the Rimrock/Zimmerman intersection. And I have repeatedly observed many of them using the right-hand turn lane on Rimrock that exists between Shiloh & 38th to whip around and pass vehicles in the east bound driving lane whose drivers are observing the legally posted speed limit. Creating a lighted school zone would increase awareness and safety during the hours children are attempting to cross Rimrock to and from school. Please also note: Not only do children cross Rimrock to get to Arrowhead School, but they also cross to get to the baseball park areas south and west of Arrowhead, including Landon's Legacy Miracle Field.

- Bike lane study: The City plans to implement a project on Rimrock from 17th St W to Zimmerman which would slightly widen the bicycle lanes, by narrowing the driving lanes. I believe, as do some others, that the volume of traffic is too high on Rimrock to safely support bicycle lanes at all, unless other safety measures are implemented. Developers who seek to increase housing volume to the far northwest end, which will cause an increase in vehicle traffic, need to financially support this study.
- On street parking study: As a resident of Rimrock Rd since 1988, I have seen the traffic volume steadily increase. There was a profound increase following the widening of Rimrock, and removal of on-street parking. And the removal of on-street parking has tended to increase speeding during late night hours. I have heard Mayor Cole on multiple occasions state that putting parking back onto Rimrock Rd would help calm the traffic. He's right. This issue needs to be studied. Developers who seek to increase housing volume to the far northwest end, which will cause an increase in vehicle traffic, need to financially support this study.

I respectfully request that our zoning officials consider the safety of residents on Rimrock Rd before approving this or other zoning requests on the far northwest end of Billings. I support responsible growth in our City, and as such, residents of the incumbent neighborhoods deserve that their safety be considered. Safety is first and foremost in quality of life.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie Cooke

Resident of Rimrock Rd since September 1988

From: [Dustin Sasken](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zone Change 1047 - Copper Ridge 7th & 8th Filing - N3 to P1 and N1
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 9:07:03 PM

The proposed development at Copper Ridge 7th & 8th Filing is not in congruence with the surrounding neighborhoods, the roads ARE NOT designed for heavy, dense population traffic. The traffic increase is already noticeable, adding more density will surely increase it more. There is no walkable amenities in the area and there are no sidewalks or trails that provide access to the amenities 2 miles down the road. There is a small section of land that is zoned commercial but we have not seen or heard of the use of the land. It could be a Town Pump. I would not consider this a type of walkable community building establishment.

The schools are OVER CAPACITY. With potentially adding more people there could be a need for redistricting because Arrowhead and Boulder schools will not be able handle more students. Which could potentially displace kids from there current schools.

At minimum, please consider keeping the proposed area zoned as N3 (Residential Neighborhood).

If the city of Billings wants more population dense neighborhoods then we propose:

1. The developer should REQUIRED to do a traffic study AFTER the roundabout is complete, and they need to incur the cost of road expansions that will be necessary.
2. We need a BUFFER ZONE for the properties that were built on the perimeter on the open field, as they bought the homes anticipating additional N3 neighborhoods.

Thank you,
Dustin Sasken

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Karen Gill](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zone Change 1047
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 11:33:53 PM

We are writing to strongly object to the N1 zone change request. The proposed project is inconsistent with the established architectural design and density of the existing neighborhoods in Copper Ridge. Williams Homes assured home buyers that new projects would remain in line with homes already in existence. This requested action represents a broken promise. We are at the outer city limits of Billings. Due to lack of bus service, retail stores, and schools, this is not the time or place to be building dense housing.

As far as we can see, the only reason for creating these smaller properties is to increase revenue for the builder.

Sincerely,
Robert and Karen Gill
7095 Copper Bend Blvd
Billings, MT 59106

From: [Tracy Samek](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re zoning
Date: Sunday, May 5, 2024 11:56:56 PM

I am unfortunately able to make it to the meeting on the seventh however, I want to voice my opinion on the insanity of the addition of this area with so many people. The infrastructure around here is not designed for that dense of a population.

This IS NOT a compromise, the proposed development IS NOT in congruence with our surrounding neighborhoods, the roads ARE NOT designed for heavy, dense population traffic, and we the tax payers will PAY MORE PROPERTY TAXES when our neighborhood roads need redone.

The schools are OVER CAPACITY, and this area IS NOT designed for dense population.

WE WANT the proposed area to remain zoned as N3 (Residential Neighborhood). If the city of Billings wants more population dense neighborhoods then we propose:

1. The developer is REQUIRED to do a traffic study AFTER the roundabout is complete, and they need to PAY FOR THE ROAD expansions that will be necessary.
2. We need a BUFFER ZONE for the properties that were built on the perimeter on the open field, as they bought the homes anticipating additional N3 neighborhoods.

Thank you
Tracy Samek

From: [John and Ruth Moore](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zone Change 1047
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 3:25:43 PM



Good afternoon,

I am writing to state my continued opposition to the proposed Zone Change 1047 for the Copper Ridge neighborhood. This email is attached to my previous email, which detailed my objections to the proposed change. Those objections remain valid; the revised plan still increases traffic without providing supporting infrastructure, increases the burden on already overcrowded schools and is not aligned with Healthy Community Design Principles. I hope that my first email will be included in the comments for this revised change.

Additionally, I would strongly urge the Zoning Commission to really take into consideration the traffic impact of this revised plan on the adjacent, existing homes in Copper Ridge. When we bought our home less than two years ago, Shiny Penny Way was shown as ending in a cul-de-sac at approximately the start of this revised planned. Shiny Penny Way, and Bronze Blvd. to a lesser extent, will become cut-through streets for a good portion of the area covered by the zoning change. We would not have purchased our home knowing it would eventually sit on a heavily trafficked street.

One solution to offset the increase in cut-through traffic would be to leave Shiny Penny Way, and possibly Bronze Blvd., as cul-de-sacs. It is not without precedent to have an area of increased density housing adjacent to the Copper Ridge and Falcon Ridge neighborhoods without connecting streets. The duplexes at Signal Peak Ave. and Rimrock Road (near the placement of the new roundabout) do not have connecting streets into the other neighborhoods.

Alternatively, requiring a third entrance on Rimrock Road closer to the east end of the proposed development (for example, there is a cul-de-sac shown on the plans that could easily be made to connect to Rimrock Road) would help alleviate the increase in traffic due to drivers cutting through the neighborhood.

On a side note, Williams Homes still shows Shiny Penny Way as ending in a cul-de-sac (not as a through street) on the map of available lots in their model homes. There is no information advising prospective buyers of the proposed zoning change (at least as of April 28, 2024). Their lack of transparency has understandably angered many of the current residents; it feels dishonest and does not encourage confidence in their willingness to take anything other than their profit into consideration. When neighbors at our neighborhood informational meeting said they have been lied to by the developer regarding the development of that parcel, I tend to believe them, insofar as they were at the very least not necessarily told the entire truth.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ruth Moore
7002 Shiny Penny Way

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "John and Ruth Moore" <mooresontheroad@yahoo.com>

To: "tidswelld@billingsmt.gov" <tidswelld@billingsmt.gov>, "aspensieders@billingsmt.gov" <aspensieders@billingsmt.gov>, "crowmwelln@billingsmt.gov" <crowmwelln@billingsmt.gov>, "bernsb@billingsmt.gov" <bernsb@billingsmt.gov>

Sent: Sun, Mar 3, 2024 at 1:46 PM

Subject: Zone Change 1047 - Copper Ridge

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](#)

From: [Lydia Piper](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zone Changes
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 2:53:55 PM



To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I were very excited about purchasing our retirement home in Copper Ridge Subdivision three years ago. We found it to be very peaceful, great neighbors and out of the rat race of a city with no traffic but yet close enough to get what we needed in town.

Now we are having to deal with the plan for the zone change with ridiculous apartments, home that will reduce the value of our current homes and having the horrible issue of terrible traffic. There is only 2 ways out of this area, right now there is only one due to the closure of Rimrock for the round a bout. The traffic has become crazy just because of this closure. Imagine what it will be like with all the new building.

We were happy to see Oakland and Infinity home builders to leave this area and now we have Williams, who is used to California. Someone needs to let him know this is not what we want in Montana. And to return to California.

I hoped this would be our last home purchase but if this plan continues we will be selling and looking elsewhere!

See you at the meeting hoping to bring you all down!

Sincerely and concerned home owner,
Mark and Lydia Piper
3047 Forbes Blvd.
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [shaun hoover](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] zoning change proposal 62nd and rimrock area
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 2:20:00 PM



hello,

zoning change proposal 62nd and rimrock area:

The schools are OVER CAPACITY, and this area IS NOT designed for dense population.

WE WANT the proposed area to remain zoned as N3 (Residential Neighborhood). If the city of Billings wants more population dense neighborhoods then we propose:

1. The developer is REQUIRED to do a traffic study AFTER the roundabout is complete, and they need to PAY FOR THE ROAD expansions that will be necessary.
2. We need a BUFFER ZONE for the properties that were built on the perimeter on the open field, as they bought the homes anticipating additional N3 neighborhoods.

thank you

resident 3399 lucky penny cir, 59106

From: [Howard Evans](#)
To: [Cromwell, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Tidswell, Dan](#); [Aspenlieder, Scott](#); [Gulick, Ed](#); [Shaw, Kendra](#); [Cole, Bill](#); [Leslie Cooke](#); seanandhilljohnson@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Public Comment - rezoning at Rimrock and 70th Street West - application 1047
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 9:03:00 AM



Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force fully endorses the public comments submitted by Leslie Cooke.

While our RNTF members are not in the immediate area of the zoning request, west-end development profoundly impacts traffic in our neighborhoods as asserted in the public comment contained herein.

Howard Evans
Chair, Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force