

Zone Change 1078 Attachments

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CITY ZONE CHANGE APPLICATION FORM

CITY ZONE CHANGE Billings Zone Change # **1078** Project # **26-00049**

The undersigned as owner(s) of the following described property hereby request a Zone Change as outlined in the City of Billings Zoning Regulations.

Present Zoning A - Agriculture

Proposed Zoning: CMU1, NX1, N2, N3 and P1

PARCEL TAX ID# D00349 CITY ELECTION WARD Ward 5

Legal Description of Property: Proposed Lot 3 and Lot 4 of Barber Farm Subdivision. The Land is being subdivided.

Address or General Location (If unknown, contact City Engineering): North of Central Avenue between 48th St and 44th St

Size of Parcel (Area square feet or acres): 58.13 ac gross, 48.94 ac net

Present Land-Use: Agriculture/Undeveloped

Proposed Land-Use: Commercial & Multi-Family

*** Additional information may be required as determined by the Zoning Coordinator in order to fully evaluate the application.

Owner(s) Diana Lynne Browne, Donna Marie Barber-Schneider, Karin Ellen Barber

(Record Owner)

PO Box 121, Hogeland, MT, 59529

(Address)

(406) 399-5971

dbrowne16@aol.com

(Phone Number)

(email)

Agent(s): Taylor Kasperick, PE

(Name)

3412 Colton Blvd., Suite 202

(Address)

(406) 384-0080

taylor@performance-ec.com

(Phone Number)

(Email)

I understand that the filing fee accompanying this application is not refundable, that it pays for the cost of processing, and that the fee does not constitute a payment for a Zone Change. Also, I attest that all the information presented herein is factual and correct.

Signed by:  Date: 3/1/2026
Signature: _____
95323A95F42641A
(Record Owner - Digital Signature Allowed)

Zone Change 1078 Attachments



3412 Colton Boulevard, Suite 202 • Billings, MT 59102 • 406-384-0080

March 2, 2026

Dear Members of the Zoning Commission and City Council:

This letter summarizes how the revised Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) and Annexation Application for Lots 3 and 4 of the Barber Farms Subdivision meets the applicable criteria of the City of Billings Growth Policy and zoning regulations.

The subject property is contiguous to existing City limits (City limits are currently immediately south) and located in an area where significant public infrastructure investments have already been made, including the Monad Sewer Extension (2023) and the Central Avenue Water Line Extension (2024). Development of this property represents orderly urban expansion that capitalizes on existing infrastructure and aligns with the Growth Policy's direction to encourage development within and adjacent to City limits where services can be efficiently extended.

In response to prior Council and neighborhood feedback, the proposal has been materially revised to improve compatibility:

- NX1 zoning has been removed along Broadwater Avenue.
- N3 zoning now fully encompasses the west, north, and east edges of the development to create a lower-intensity transition adjacent to Sundance Subdivision and Cloverleaf Meadows.
- The applicant will commit, through the Annexation Agreement, to enhanced buffering with increased tree planting density (1 tree per 40 feet) along shared subdivision boundaries.

These changes strengthen neighborhood compatibility and ensure an appropriate transition between County low-density subdivisions and the proposed urban development.

The project provides a balanced mix of housing types through NX1, N2, and N3 districts. The anticipated overall density of approximately 6.9 dwelling units per acre falls between traditional low-density development and medium-density thresholds identified in City planning efforts including the 2016 Growth Policy as well as the forthcoming Billings 2045 Land Use Plan and Future Land

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Use Map. This density supports housing diversity while remaining compatible with surrounding development patterns.

The PND also clearly depicts parkland and open space exceeding the required 2% minimum. Park areas are sized to accommodate programmable amenities such as courts and playgrounds, addressing prior concerns and supporting community livability objectives.

With respect to transportation, coordination with City Planning and Engineering staff confirms that a connection to Bluegrass Drive West is not required at this time. Future connectivity options remain available without imposing immediate impacts on existing neighborhoods.

In summary, the revised PND and Annexation:

- Promote logical, contiguous growth,
- Utilize existing infrastructure investments,
- Provide compatible zoning transitions and enhanced buffering,
- Exceed minimum open space requirements,
- Offer a mix of housing types and planned density consistent with the City's Growth Policy,
- Support fiscally responsible expansion of the City's tax base.

Based on these factors, the application is consistent with the City of Billings Growth Policy and zoning framework and meets the applicable approval criteria.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Taylor Jay Kasperick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Taylor Kasperick, PE
Project Manager

Zone Change Questions

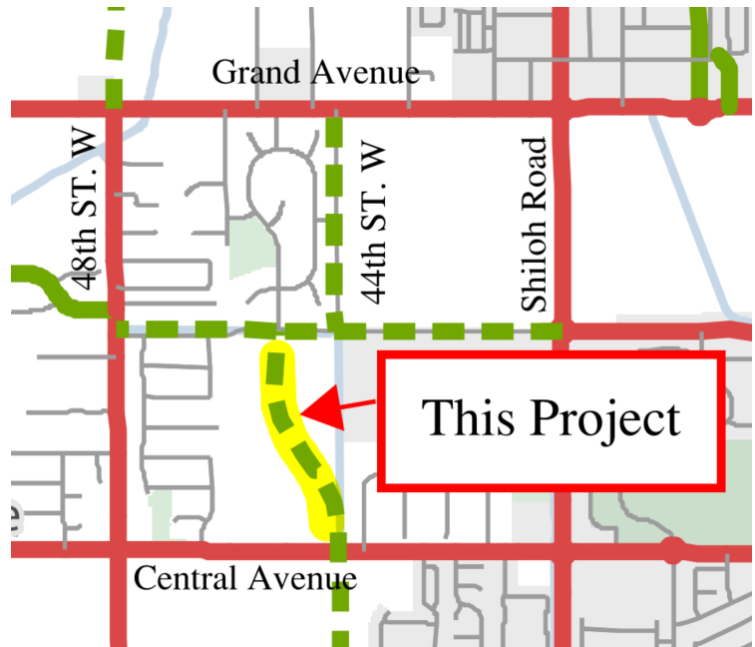
Lots 3 and Lot 4 of Barber Farm Subdivision, Yellowstone County, Montana. Having a gross area of approximately 58.1 acres

1. Explain how the proposed project is consistent with the adopted Growth Policy, Neighborhood Plans, and other applicable city development policies.

Essential Investments – The proposed project is located north of Central Avenue which is a critical corridor for growth of the City. The development will utilize city services south of Central Avenue which have been extended by the City (investment in this area being developed in the City) and a previous project. Development of property adjacent to existing infrastructure is more cost effective and falls in line with the Essential Investment growth guideline.

As part of this project, a north/south collector road will be constructed improving the transportation system in the area. This collector will connect Central Avenue (Principal Arterial) to Broadwater Avenue (Collector) between the two major North-South arterials in the area, Shiloh Avenue and 48th Street West. The roadway constructed as part of this project is eventually planned to connect to 44th Street West to provide another North-South collector roadway for residents travelling to and from Grand Avenue and Central Avenue.

The proposed zoning has the potential to bring a mix of single-family housing, duplexes and even up to fourplexes in a small portion of the project. This provides several options for residents looking to relocate to the area and has the potential to help add to the City tax base. Additionally, as part of the development of this project Broadwater Avenue will be extended, moving one step closer to providing an additional east-west roadway. Additionally a 24" water transmission line will be extended



through the subdivision to provide service for the project in addition to further the City’s capital investment plan for water provision in the greater West Billings area.




Strong Neighborhoods – The proposed zoning will help develop a stronger neighborhood for the area with zoning that helps allow for a mixture of housing types, as mentioned from single-family housing potential, up to fourplexes in some areas. This will help provide housing options for all age groups and income levels within the area as well as providing the opportunity for businesses to utilize the commercial districts along Central Avenue. The combination of housing choices as well as the potential for commercial businesses will help create a stronger community for the neighborhood, and has been promoted in all growth scenarios within the Growth Policy. It should be noted that the anticipated density of residential dwellings for the proposed development is approximately 6.93 units/acre (approximate number of units divided by the net area to be annexed in Phase I and the north portion of Phase II). This falls in between the low and medium densities outlined in the 2016 Growth Policy, and is not “high density”. Excerpts from the 2016 Growth Policy reflecting the “public preferred” scenario are included below, which call for medium density housing in the subject area.

Scenario Map Legend

Hypothetical Facilities/Infrastructure

-  Branch Libraries
-  Elementary Schools
-  Community Parks
-  Co-located Police/Fire Stations
-  Bus Routes
-  Arterials & Collectors

Land Use Type

-  Commercial High Density
-  Commercial Low Density
-  Commercial Medium Density
-  Industrial Light-Craftsman
-  Institutional
-  Mixed Use
-  Open Space Conservation
-  Open Space Park
-  Residential High Density
-  Residential Low Density
-  Residential Medium Density

1 hexagon = 5.739 acres or approximately
2.8 city blocks

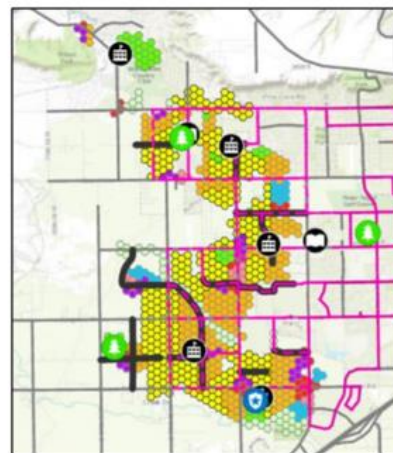
Residential high & mixed use density = 16 d.u./acre

Residential medium density = 9 d.u./acre

Residential low density = 5 d.u./acre

Growth Scenario Planning

WEST PUBLIC PREFERRED (WPP)



Home Base – As mentioned, this zone change will expand on the mix of housing options offered in the area. From single-family homes to the north,

west and east as well as the mix of housing options to be available in the new development to the south, this project will provide housing options that the Growth Policy identifies as just below medium density. Not only does this help diversify an area that is predominantly single family residential, low-density development, but it helps the City more affordably expand the infrastructure to a larger number of potential users due to the lower cost of service. The Home Base growth guideline also emphasizes walkable neighborhoods. With the development of this property, walkways will be constructed connecting Central Avenue to Broadwater Avenue allowing pedestrian access through the project.

2. Explain how the proposed project meets the 10 zone change criteria.

a. Is the new zoning designed in accordance with the growth policy?

The new zoning adheres to the City of Billings growth policy through its expansion of mixed community uses by following Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) guidelines with residential diversity incorporated into the development. The project incorporates multi-modal components with access to trails and parks included to give residents options. The use of commercially zoned districts along principal arterials allows businesses to secure ideal properties and keeps residential homes away from busy roadways.

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

There will be fire hydrants located an adequate distance throughout the interior of the development with a maximum spacing of 500-ft, meeting all City of Billings Fire Codes. Additionally, the project will bring fire services with hydrants to an area of the West End that only operated on dry hydrants within the BUFSA or didn't have close fire suppression availability at all. Construction on the property will comply with building regulations and zoning code to allow for appropriate separation of buildings and proper lighting for public safety and security. The site is also located outside of any floodplain.

c. Will the new zoning promote public health, public safety, and general welfare?

The proposed zone change will diversify the surrounding neighborhood and create opportunities for housing in what is now considered the "missing middle" within the Billings West End. Buildout of this vacant land will bring more public eyes to the area to help keep watch on public safety. This zone change also requires landscaped or natural open areas to be incorporated within the development which will improve the general well-being of the neighborhood and encourage residents to use services within walking distance to their residence in the neighborhood.

Traffic impacts from the new zoning have been studied and recommendations have been provided as part of this process. The report suggested the construction of turn lanes along Central Avenue that could serve both the proposed development as well as 44West/Clearwater to the south. The study also suggested based on the

development of this proposed subdivision and the newly constructed subdivision to the south, improvements to Central Avenue will be necessary by 2029. Yellowstone County has also contracted design improvements for the intersection of Central Avenue and 48th Street West. Currently, these improvements are anticipated to include the construction of a new traffic signal as well as left turn lanes in all directions. The project is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

d. Will the new zoning facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks and other public requirements?

The change in zone will require the development to extend water and sewer mains from the existing mains located in Central Avenue. The development is not particularly close to MET transportation, however, this development has the potential to be utilized by MET due to the ongoing development in the area and bus stops being located at Shiloh and Central. Additionally, the commercial districts being proposed have the potential to bring services into the neighborhood that previously would have been much farther from the existing neighborhoods. As part of the PND process a minimum of 2% of the land will be required to be dedicated as parkland. While the minimum 2% will be dedicated and proposed, it is anticipated more than this will be utilized as park based on final layout of the development. This development will utilize City water and sewer infrastructure rather than individual wells and septic systems common in County developments, which helps preserve the water quality and quantity of the underlying aquifer for those adjacent County developments, and helps offset the cost of services provided by the City.

The project has the potential to add additional stress to the already over capacity Meadowlark Elementary School (approximately 112% over enrolled as indicated by the 2022 redistricting study) as well as Ben Steele Middle School (approximately 111% over enrolled as indicated by the 2022 redistricting study). These schools are already over enrolled so any additional development in this area has the ability to add even more stress. While the proposed development would bring more school aged children to the area, a recent study by Na Zhao of the National Association of Home Builders highlights the difference in number of public school children per housing unit by structure type. The study indicates existing single-family detached homes average approximately 0.43 school aged children per unit (it is assumed these numbers are similar to those of Sundance Subdivision, Cloverleaf Meadows and Shiloh Estates Subdivision). If this project was developed as owner-occupied single-family detached homes, as many of the neighbors prefer, the number of school aged children increases to approximately 0.50 per unit. This average is significantly higher than that of newly constructed, renter-occupied duplexes, which average approximately 0.37 school-

aged children per unit. In short, based on the Billings Public School (BPS) District's website, BPS is continually evaluating growth in new areas and attendance at district schools in an effort to determine if district boundaries need to be amended in order to balance students within each school.

e. Will the new zoning provide adequate light and air?

The proposed zone change will have some impact on light and air as the property will move from agricultural use to residential, however, the open space requirements will allow for adequate lighting and air for the property and surrounding area. Any improvements to the land must adhere to the zoning requirements for lighting laid out by the City's Zoning Code which directly addresses open areas and light.

f. Will the new zoning affect motorized and nonmotorized transportation?

As this project proposes the conversion of agricultural land to residential, additional residents will move into the area which will in turn impact motorized and nonmotorized transportation in the area. Traffic impacts from the new zoning have been studied and recommendations have been provided as part of this process. The report suggested the construction of turn lanes along Central Avenue that could serve both the proposed development as well as 44West/Clearwater to the south. The study also suggested based on the development of this proposed subdivision as well as the newly constructed subdivision to the south, improvements to Central Avenue will be necessary by 2029 to accommodate the traffic of each development, as well as continued and ongoing development further west in Yellowstone County. Yellowstone County has contracted design improvements for the intersection of Central Avenue and 48th Street West. Currently, these improvements are anticipated to include the construction of a new traffic signal as well as left turn lanes in all direction. The project is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

g. Will the new zoning promote compatible urban growth?

The proposed zoning will promote compatible urban growth as it is nestled between low density residential on the north, east and west sides and medium density residential immediately to the south of the project area. High density residential is located even further south, further indicating the proposed mix of residential uses will act as medium density housing option between high density further to the south and low density north of the development. This zoning will allow for new residents to move into a thriving and safe neighborhood that can easily meet most of their needs in the immediate area. The proposed zone change provides the desired step-back in density placing commercial along the arterial corridor (Central Ave.) and stepping back to mix density residential to the north. The proposed mix in commercial and residential, is what both City Council and urban growth policies ask

for in new neighborhood development. The proposed plan will introduce new housing variety and density to this area of the Billings West End while creating walkable neighborhoods with commercial designations to service the surrounding areas.

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

The area of the proposed development is currently surrounded by single-family, residential subdivisions on the north, east and west sides of the property, which are all County subdivisions being served by individual wells/well public water supplies and onsite septic wastewater treatment systems. South of Central Avenue, directly across from the proposed development, the city has already approved annexation and zoning for a similar medium-density development. The zoning south of Central closely matches what is proposed for this development with commercial districts located near the principal arterial (Central Avenue) stepping back to a medium density mixed-residential area. It should be noted the anticipated dwelling density of the proposed development is approximately 6.93 units/acre (approximate number of units divided by the net area to be annexed in Phase I and the north portion of Phase II), which is below the value for medium density housing the Growth Policy, but above low-density housing. The proposed project follows a similar setup with different zone districts for residential. Utilizing a mixed-residential north of the proposed commercial district with lower density residential on the interior of the development, away from Central Avenue.

Approximately 85% of the proposed PND zoning consists of single family home districts (42% is proposed as N2 and 43% is proposed as N3), in which duplex housing buildings are allowed per State of Montana legislation. Simply put, the N2 and N3 zonings proposed are the least dense zoning available to be put forth in an application, with the reported density of 6.93 units/acre being based on the planned development incorporating duplex housing.

i. Will the new zoning conserve the value of buildings?

The proposed zoning will conserve the value of buildings in the area by creating new amenities for nearby subdivisions while not intruding upon them. Multiple studies have been conducted looking into the claims that multi-family developments reduce property value to surrounding single family homes. One paper in particular, written by Mark Obrinsky and Debra Stein at the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, cited multiple studies that came to the same conclusion; there is no evidence that multi-family rental developments decrease the property value of surrounding properties. In addition to this study, there are numerous examples within the City of Billings itself that point to this, with high-value homes and neighborhoods maintaining their values while being adjacent to rental properties. Examples of this include Forrest Park

Subdivision (12-plex and Billings Housing Authority rentals immediately adjacent across 24th Street West) and Shiloh Pointe Subdivision (rental townhomes and duplexes immediately south).

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

By proposing zone districts that allow for single-family residential, duplexes and fourplexes in the development, the project adheres to the City of Billings initiative to lower cost of service to the City, making the development the most appropriate use of the land and providing a necessary mix of housing alternatives to existing large lot single family residences and the higher-density residences being constructed south of the project area. The proposed development provides commercial uses along the principal arterial (Central Avenue), steps back to mixed-residential north of the commercial area, and finally decreases density towards the interior of the lot. This helps provide a mixture of housing options and places potential higher density areas closer to the arterial roadway.

3. Does the new zoning fit with the existing or planned developments within the area?

The new zoning has a similar proposed density and zoning districts to the development located directly south across Central Avenue, and southeast in Twin Pine Townhome development, largely consisting of duplex residential dwellings. Additionally, the proposed development density of roughly 6.93 units/acre (approximate number of units divided by the net area to be annexed in Phase I and the north portion of Phase II) is just under the West Public Preferred (WPP) scenario from the 2016 Growth Policy, which has the subject area identified for medium density housing (9 dwellings per acre). Proposing a mixture of housing options in this area of town helps provide the “missing middle” medium density housing that will fit alongside the existing large lot single-family residential, county subdivisions, and those higher density uses south of the area near Monad Road. The commercial districts will allow the development to provide neighborhood diversity by incorporating commercial uses for those nearby residences to utilize close to their home base.

When assessing the new zoning’s fit with existing adjacent developments, it should be noted the two immediately adjacent developments (Sundance Subdivision and Cloverleaf Meadows Subdivision) are both County Subdivisions. On each lot within these subdivisions, developers and owners incorporate an onsite wastewater treatment drainfield, which inherently increases the necessary lot size to fit the necessary infrastructure. As this development will be served by City water and sewer, it is impractical to compare the lot sizes of those adjacent County developments to that which is proposed in this development. With that being said, the proposed zoning consisting of ~85% of single family zoning is the best fit available within City zoning options.