Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Peter & Patricia Wooldridge/ Hidden Canyon Lodge (Upland Angler Lodge, LLC)

Complete Address: 2629 Old US Highway 91, Cascade MT 59421

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☒ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): zoning revisions - MU area close to Prewett Creek

Comment

Please see attached email with comments. Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-8-19	Date Reviewed:	2-11-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Feb. 8, 2019
Cascade County Planning Department and Board
Comment on Rezoning Proposal

To The Cascade County Planning Division & Board,

We own the Upland Angler Lodge LLC, DBA Hidden Canon Lodge at 2629 Old US Highway 91, Cascade, Montana 59404, which is currently operating under a special permit (Outfitter and Guide Facility).

Previously, the property was opened in 1990 and operated by Rick Pasquale (known as The Fly Fishers Inn). This property was also operated under a special permit (Outfitter and Guide Facility), and it offered guide and lodging services under that permit. It also operated as dining facility for area clients, outdoorsman and tourists alike, under a restricted headcount.

When we purchased the property, we met with various county planning division members (including Environmental Quality, Sanitation, Public Health, and multiple Planning staffers) and asked for guidance as to which permits were required to operate the facility in the same manner in which Mr. Pasquale operated the Fly Fishers Inn. Based on that guidance, we procured an Outfitter and Guide Facility Permit. We did our due diligence properly, and understood we were operating under the current county guidelines.

Unfortunately, as we approach our third season, county regulators now are questioning our operations, specifically as it pertains to allowing area residents and tourists to join us for dinners. The county does not appear to have a problem with us serving dinner to local outfitters and their guests. They understand that we have stayed within our head count guidelines as required by Environmental Quality and Sanitation. The county recognizes we work with multiple outfitters and their clients in the area, and the county understands we serve as a Booking Agent for outfitters as designated.

By rezoning the area from agricultural to mixed use, we believe it would allow us to work with the county regulators to find a solution to our current situation. The property has always operated under a specific headcount to ensure environmental safeguard. We are committed to continuing to operate in that manner as we value our environment and habitat of the Missouri River.

It is our philosophy and intent to operate in a manner that promotes growth in the area. We run a seasonal business, with a restricted headcount. We made an investment based on those factors. We also acted in reliance on our discussions with county regulators, that we would be able to pursue outside dinner operations within that headcount regulation. We maintain our core staff on an annual basis, not because we have to, but because employee continuity is healthy for our business, and more importantly, it is healthy for the local community the employees live in (our employees are not filing for unemployment in the off season, they have the ability to become permanent fixtures in their community, and in turn support the local economy year round).

To us, the importance of creating a mixed use area is that it allows us to be a supportive vehicle for growth in the area. By allowing us to expand more broadly into the dining arena, the county opens new avenues to support the local economy. Currently, the County interpretation of guidelines is to restrict our dining availability to existing outfitter relationships. The regulations state we are to operate "in conjunction with" outfitters, but somehow "in conjunction with" has been interpreted as "incidental to." We are not and do not wish to be "incidental to." We are and wish to continue working "in conjunction with," not only our local outfitter partners, but also with local area businesses.

By allowing us to operate in a mixed use fashion, we are able to advertise more broadly. We can partner more easily with our local communities and businesses (such as Malstrom AFB, United Way of Cascade County, Providence University, Benefis, Great Falls Rescue Mission, Humane Society, non-profit angling oriented groups, and community foundations, which all have already benefited from our partnerships and donations). Our intimate setting that lends itself to small groups (and fosters an environmentally sensitive stewardship), uniquely allows us to help promote area businesses as they find our facility a useful tool during their recruitment process (exposing potential employees to recreational benefits, culture, history and other hidden gems of the area). Local businesses have requested the use our facility for office parties and end of the season celebrations, as owners look to show employees gratitude for the year's hard work. We have business inquiries, looking for us to provide a unique entertaining experience in order to engage potential business partners or vendors. We want to offer something different to the area, while maintaining good stewardship of the nature and environment around us and promoting/introducing the unique experiences outside our doors to tourists and locals alike.

With that in mind, mixed use will also allow us to better serve the ever expanding outdoor recreation industry on which a great deal of Montana business relies (there is a great deal of research on this, but a recent article is referenced below). We currently work with and promote local tourist industry businesses (Central Montana Travel Planner, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park, GOSHAWK Ecotours, Adventure Caravans Inc., CM Russell Museum among others, not to mention all the local vendors we support). As we have been approached by area businesses such as these and others (which are outside the outfitting arena) to provide dining options for their various groups traveling in and around the area, Mixed Use designation would help us enhance their client experience, and in turn foster growth in those areas already identified as viable resources by the State/County (i.e Cascade County's Development & Growth Plan).

The outfitting and guide community is already extremely cut-throat, and restricting our advertizing/ client base to a limited pool of existing outfitter relationships hampers area growth and opportunity. By supporting a facility like ours to operate in a mixed use fashion, we can openly engage not only locally but also outside the traditional demographic. We believe creating opportunities to engage the non-fishing community helps us introduce that community to all the great experiences the local area has to offer. This would allow us to source new relationships for our local outfitting community, and those new clients would likely visit the area fly shops, gas stations, grocery stores, various state parks, etc…

In short, mixed use fosters responsible growth in the area. The local residents want places they can go to without narrow restrictions. People from Helena and Great Falls call to dine with us, as they pass through from a day out on the lake, river, or trails. Tourists staying in local AirBNBs or camping stop by all the time looking to have dinner. Unfortunately, instead of welcoming them with Montana Hospitality, we have to turn them away. Those are important missed touch points for the community

at large. Missed opportunities to introduce both members of the angling community, and just as importantly, the non-angling community to all the area has to offer. We happily promote so many area businesses and public resources - scenic tours with GOSHAWK Ecotours, fishing with local outfitters
and fly shops, horseback riding, state parks like Tower Rock/First Peoples Buffalo Jump/Gates of the Mountain, and Lewis and Clark Interpretive Centers, and wildlife viewing to name a few.

We want to support this great area, great people and all it has to offer. The rezoning proposal will provide us the local government support we need to remain a part of this community.

Regards,

Peter and Patricia Wooldridge
Owners, Hidden Canyon Lodge
2629 Old US Highway 91, Cascade MT 59421
hiddencanyonlodge@gmail.com

Article referenced above:
https://missoulian.com/news/local/outfitted-and-guided-experiences-drive-tourism-revenue-in-montana/article_92c6a516-2273-5da5-97bc-589007caaf62.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

Re: Public comment re zoning revisions from Peter and Patricia Wooldridge, Upland Angler Lodge LLC DBA Hidden Canyon Lodge

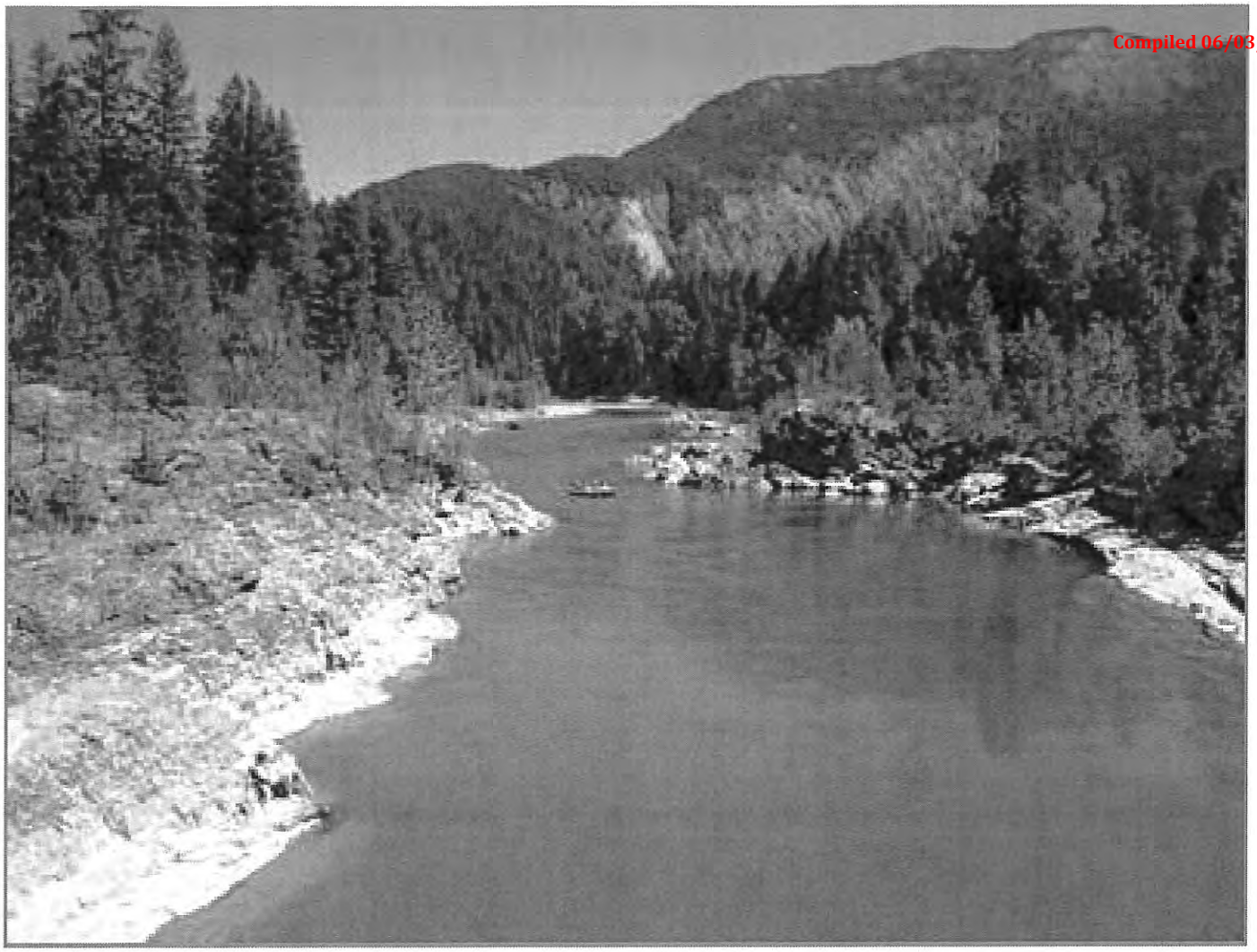
This article is referenced in our comment - this is the web page and the content is copied for your convenience below.

https://missoulian.com/news/local/outfitted-and-guided-experiences-drive-tourism-revenue-in-montana/article_92c6a516-2273-5da5-97bc-589007caaf62.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

UM STUDY

Outfitted and guided experiences drive tourism revenue in Montana

- KEILA SZPALLER keila.szpaller@missoulian.com
- Dec 2, 2018



Floaters enjoy a quiet reach of the Middle Fork of the Flathead River that passes through the heart of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. The river was one of the inspirations for the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Outfitting and guiding are bringing significant and growing dollars to Montana, according to a new report from the University of Montana's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research.

Last year, spending on outfitters and guides hit $374 million by nonresidents, or 11 percent of all visitor spending, according to the study. It reached the fourth-highest spending category by nonresidents, surpassed only by fuel, restaurants and lodging.

Jeremy Sage, economist and associate director of the institute, said one takeaway from the report is the growing importance of "experience-based tourism." The report is called "Montana's

Outfitting Industry: 2017 Economic Contribution and Industry-Client Analysis," and it is available online.

Compiled 06/03/19

"We're not just selling stuff," said Sage, lead researcher of the study. "We're selling experiences, and Montana has lots of experiences. The more we can provide quality ones … the more we can demonstrate the demand for Montana."

The findings come from a survey distributed to 1,090 email recipients, with a response rate of 35.6 percent, or 388. Of all respondents, 89 percent indicated "they provided some type of outfitting or guiding service in 2017."

The study noted a shift in outfitting and guiding. In the past, the industry was tied closely to hunting, fishing and rafting, but in recent years, it has grown to include other activities "of the Montana outdoor recreation experience." The report cited horseback riding and wildlife viewing as examples.

Mac Minard, executive director of the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association, agreed the experiences available in Montana are bringing tourists. He said even llama trekking, or classes in long-range shooting or Dutch oven cooking, can be draws for visitors.

"They're looking for an experience, not a destination," Minard said.

The report said outfitters and guides served more than 700,000 clients last year, and 63 percent of those were from outside Montana. The study counted the amount of money visitor groups who hired guides spent at $791 million.

Although the total amount is large, Minard said in rural economies such as Glasgow and Sidney, outfitting has a disproportionate benefit. In fact, he said that in discussions with tourism advisory councils, he has come to believe future sustainable tourism in rural economies will be tied heavily to the outfitted experience.

"It may be the lifeline of those communities economically," Minard said.

Sage also discussed spreading the wealth across Montana. As the industry takes hold and grows in the state, he said it will be important to minimize the "concentration of impacts" and maximize the shared benefit.

Compiled 06/03/19

"I think a key to it is understanding how we work to distribute these visitors and their activities across the state," Sage said.

The institute looked at the industry more than a decade ago, and Sage said one significant change is that people are spending more money on outfitted or guided experiences than on retail. The report described the change and impact:

"In recent years, nonresident visitor spending on outfitters and guides has surpassed that of spending on retail goods, making it the fourth-highest spending category behind only fuel, lodging, and dining out. This rise comes despite only 5 [percent] to 6 percent of the visiting population taking part in these activities.

"This observation reiterates findings from the 2007 Montana Outfitter and Guide study characterizing the outfitting industry as high value, low impact. The high value is generated via the high average daily spending ($481) compared to the average visitor ($128) as well as the extended length of time spent in the state (7.28 days) compared to the average visitor (4.73 days).

"The low impact is a statement to the low volume of visitors making up the high economic contribution."

The report also noted that 39 percent of all clients took part in water trips, such as rafting or kayaking adventures. "Fishing was the next highest client volume activity," said a news release about the report. "By revenue generated from the outfitters and guides, fishing and hunting outfitters stood above all others, with 33 and 24 percent of all outfitting revenues, respectively."

The report itself also cited factors that could "limit or deter" visitors from coming to Montana in the future, such as extended fire seasons. "If this trend of prolonged and damaging fire seasons continues, many of the businesses surveyed expressed concerns over their ability to adapt."

The study also noted "rivers in Montana have experienced their own battles with Mother Nature in recent years." It examined a specific temporary closure of a portion of the Yellowstone River and its tributaries due to an invasive parasite along with low water, high temperatures and recreational pressure.

"Should the need to increasingly curtail or restrict water-based recreation arise, significant economic impacts are likely to be felt across the region," the report said.

The study also cited a 2016 U.S. Department of Agriculture report on recreation trends projected through 2030. "Overall, 14 of 17 activities showed average declines in total days of participation when accounting for climate change. The percentage point decline was greatest for three activities: snowmobiling, undeveloped skiing (cross-country skiing, snowshoeing), and floating (canoeing, kayaking, rafting), accounting for average net decreases of 39, 36, and 9 percentage points, respectively."

Currently, the report about Montana notes fishing represents the largest "revenue generating trip types for the outfitters and guides themselves" at $76 million, and it cites hunting at $55.3 million. It also notes that 90 percent of fishing clients and 85 percent of hunting clients are from outside the state.

Report highlights

Highlights from "Montana's Outfitting Industry: 2017 Economic Contribution and Industry-Client Analysis":

- More than 700,000 individuals took a guided or outfitted trip in 2017 in Montana.
- Visiting groups who took a guided trip spent on average $3,501 per trip, while the average visiting group spends $606.

- In 2017, 5.4 percent of all visitors participated in a guided trip and spent $791 million while in Montana, accounting for nearly a quarter of all visitor (spending).
- Water based activities including rafting/floating/canoeing/kayaking (283,600 clients) and fishing (160,400 clients) represent the largest guided trip sectors when ranked by volume of clients.
- Fishing ($76.7 million) and hunting ($55.3 million) represent the largest revenue generating trip types for the outfitters and guides themselves. 90 percent and 85 percent of these clients, respectively, are from out-of-state.
- 61 percent of outfitted or guided trips that were land based took place on public lands.
- 28 percent of water based guided and outfitted trips accessed the waterways through a Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Fishing Access site.

Source: Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research at the University of Montana

Compiled 06/03/19

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Commenter Information

Name: KAREN CARLSON

Complete Address: 346 Stockett Rd, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

See attached:

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-5-19	Date Reviewed:	2-5-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Karen Carlson
346 Stockett Road
Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Re: Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

Comment:

After reading the policy draft, I do want to say that a lot of work was put into all the changes. I realize that everything has to reflect MCA and ARM. There are many improvements to the old policy.

My concern is that the new policy seems to ensure that we get the slaughterhouse and CAFOs. According to partial MCA 76-2-203, 1. Zoning regulations must be: (b) (ii) promote public health, public safety, and general welfare (iii) adequate provisions of transportation, water and sewage 2. In the adoption of zoning regulations, the county commissioners shall consider: (a) reasonable provision of light and air (b) effect on motorized & non motorized transportation systems, (d) the character of the district and the suitability for particular uses.I do not want Great Falls to be known as a cesspool!

Other parts of the country are suing the large industrial Ag companies that have compromised their water, air and land.

Great Falls has worked too hard to bring companies here to allow all the negatives that come with the slaughterhouse and CAFOs. Property values have gone down in the parts of the country that have slaughterhouses and CAFOs. I hope you take into consideration the people that will move if the slaughterhouse and CAFOs are allowed into Cascade County. Crime rates in slaughterhouse communities have increased due to the type of workers that are employed by slaughterhouses. The Sheriff's budget will have to be increased. I can't imagine driving up 10th Avenue South and it being lined with feces and urine. This alone will cause the City of Great Falls to increase their budget to keep our roads clean. Also, schools will have to provide teachers for students with English as a Second Language. These are just a few samples of extra costs to our County and schools. The extra costs will exceed the monies brought in by this type of industry. It makes you want to follow the money since we, the tax payers, will loose and have to pick up the tab. I hope you contact the people of Brooks Alberta before a decision is made.

Please remember the purpose of a planning board per partial MCA 76-1-102:
(1) It is the object of this chapter to encourage local units of government to improve the present health, safety, convenience, and welfare of their citizens and to plan for the future development of their communities to the end that highway systems be carefully planned; that the needs of agriculture, industry, and business be recognized in future growth; that residential areas provide healthy surroundings for family life; and that the growth of the community be commensurate with and promotive of the efficient and economical use of public lands.

I politely ask that the Public hearing of February 19 be kept open for public testimony due to the complexity of the zoning changes. The public needs time to understand how they will be effected. Please schedule future meetings until after 5:00pm to give the working people a chance to attend.

Thank you for your consideration!

Karen Carlson

Payton, Ian

From: BONNIE WARREN <bonniewarren4@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 3, 2019 9:33 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: East-side Slaughter house.

I oppose the re-zoning of this area to accommodate this project! It would negatively effect the City of Great Falls due to it's negative impact our air quality and the water table that flows into Giant Springs. As far as I can tell there would be no positive impact on our or the surrounding area and communities. Thank you for not changing nor allowing this business to come into our county. Bonnie Warren

4428 4 th Ave N Great Falls, MT. 59405.

Get Outlook for iOS

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2/4/19

Date Reviewed: 2/4/19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Kim Wermling <riversedgeasstlvg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 28, 2019 5:10 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: A Commuity Residential Facility with 9 or more residents.

I am writing in support of the proposed rule change. I have been waiting on said rule change so that I can correct the error made when the initial application was processed.

Kim Kraus-Wermling
Owner/ Administrator
River's Edge Assisted Living
4800 Lower River Road
Great Falls, MT 59405
406-952-0262

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 1-28-19
Date Reviewed: 1-28-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Sandee <sandeelou@charter.net>
Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2019 1:51 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: zoning changes

I am concerned that the time of the day you hold meetings does not allow for most of cascade residents to attend. When there is a matter that is as big and important as zoning changes (that could allow for a slaughterhouse and factory farms) that meeting should be held when residents can attend. Please consider an evening meeting so interested people have an opportunity to be involved. I would also ask that you announce in the news what you are proposing and get public comment before any changes are made. Transparency is needed in this issue to have a well informed community that you represent and supports your decisions.

Thank you,

Sandee Christensen
1312 41st St S
Gt Fall, MT 49405

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-10-19
Date Reviewed: 2-11-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Marilyn Kind

Complete Address: 581 Goon Hill Rd Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Friesen Food Park / Slaughterhouse

Comment

I favor businesses that benefit & support the Great Falls community and surrounding areas rather than supporting one profit mongering business at the expense of the community and surrounding areas and Montana at large. I am not in favor of the slaughterhouse. I am in favor of living a healthy life in an environment that guarantees my right to clean air and clean water in my pursuit of happiness.

I appreciate your consideration of my comment in hopes that you are willing and able to do the right thing for the community of people you represent. Please keep the Feb 19th hearing open for public testimony and continued through March.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Kind

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-6-19	Date Reviewed:	2-6-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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SCO

Public Comment Form Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division

121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401 **Phone: 406-454-6905**
Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Name: Duane Culver

Complete Address: 63 Hidden Valley Lane, Sand Coulee, MT

Comment Subject (please check one)

Special Use Permit Application
Subdivision
Zoning Text and/or Map **Amendment**

XO Growth Policy

O Variance

Floodplain Regulation **Amendment**

County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County **Street**

Subdivision Regulation Amendment Other (describe):

Comment:

I am extremely concerned about some of the proposed zoning changes for Cascade County and am very curious as to what has prompted these changes and who proposed them.

Also I am requesting that the meeting scheduled for Feb. 19 allow for public comment and be continued in March to allow adequate preparation for commenting on the proposed zoning changes. This meeting and all future open meeting should be scheduled for no earlier than 5 PM on weekdays to make it possible full public comment. When you suppress public attendance by scheduling morning meeting it makes people suspicious.

For Office U

se Only Date Reviewed: 2-6-19
Date Received: 2-6-19
Complete:
Yes
No i

Public Comment Form

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Commenter Information

Name: Marie May

Complete Address: 74 Hidden Valley Ln Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Planning Board Hearing Feb. 19, 2019

Comment

I request that the hearing on Feb. 19, 2019 allow for public testimony and be continued to March 2019 to allow for adequate preparation of public comment on the proposed zoning changes.

Additionally I request the March and any additional hearings be scheduled after 5:00 p.m on weekdays to allow for full public participation.

For Office Use Only						
Date Received:	2-5-19	Date Reviewed:	2-5-19	Complete:	☒ Yes	☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Skari & Sons Inc Skari <askari@itstriangle.com>
Sent: Friday, February 1, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Planning Comments

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2/4/19
Date Reviewed: 2/4/19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Robbie L Regenmitter

Complete Address: 620 Stockett Rd, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I would like to request the hearing on Feb 19 specifically allow for public comment and be continued to March 2019 to allow for proper preparation of my comments on proposed zoning changes. I would also like to hearing to be scheduled after 5:30pm so I could participate.

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Date Received:	2-4-19	Date Reviewed:	2-4-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919 planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

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Commenter Information

Name: Deborah Jenkins

Complete Address: 298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☒ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): Planning board public hearings

Comment

1) Please keep the public meeting scheduled for 2-19-2019 as an informational meeting and open for public testimony only, not to make any determination and close prematurely. Continue until at least May
2) I request that you change these public hearing meeting times to be held after 5:00 pm on a weekday to accommodate working residents that would like to participate in our local government decision such as this. Starting with the March meeting, please change all meeting times to evenings.
3) I am not sure if all supporting documents and materials have been posted on the county website and request that they are, myself and other public citizens need time to review all changes and related materials so we can understand the implications and effects on our community. Adequate time and information is reasonable to ask for.

Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	1-24-19	Date Reviewed:	1-24-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Karen Slotness

Complete Address: 13 Willow Run Lane Great Falls, MT. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes

Comment

I hear by request:

1) Planning board hearing presently scheduled for Feb 19 2019 to be delayed to allow for additional time for the public to review the changes requested and prepare for the hearing.

2) The Hearing scheduled on Feb 19th 2019 specifically allow for public testimony and be continued to March 2019 for adequate preparation of of public Comment on the proposed zoning changes.

3) The March 2019 hearing and any future hearings be scheduled after 5 pm on Weekdays to allow for full public participation. Thank you for your Consideration

Karen Slotness

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-15-19	Date Reviewed:	2-15-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Richard P. Slotness

Complete Address: 13 Willow Run Lane Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes

Comment

I hearby request:

1. Planning board hearing be delayed to allow additional time for the public to review the changes and prepare for the hearing.

2. The hearing scheduled on Feb 19th 2019 specifically allow for "public testimony" and be 'continued' to March 2019 for adequate preparation of public comment on the proposed zoning changes.

3. The March and any further hearings be scheduled after 5:00 pm on weekdays to allow for full public participation

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-15-19	Date Reviewed:	2-15-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Dana D. Rossmiller

Complete Address: 330 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT. 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Agricultural Zoning Change to Mixed Use 20 + 40

Comment

I think this is a significant change that will affect virtually every landowner in Cascade County. I don't feel that the public (landowners) has been informed about this major change that will have an impact on their property values. I think the public should be made aware of this proposed change through newspaper, TV and even mailed notices to all landowners. They should be informed and have the opportunity to have input on things that affect their property.

This proposed change should be delayed until the property owners have been informed and been given the opportunity to voice their opinions. Decisions like this should not be made in closed rooms by a few people, when it affects every property owner.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-14-19	Date Reviewed:	2-14-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMY KANTOROWICZ

Complete Address: 746 HIGHWOOD RD GREAT FALLS MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): ZONING CHANGES FOR CASCADE COUNTY

Comment

I AM REQUESTING THE PLANNING BOARD MEETING ON FEBRUARY 19, 201 TO BE DELAYED SO MYSELF AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HAVE ADDITIONAL TIME TO REVIEW THE EXTENSIVE CHANGES AND PREPARE FOR THE HEARING. I AM REQUESTING THE HEARING CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 19, 2019 TO ALLOW FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND BE CONTINUED TO MARCH 2019 FOR ADEQUATE PREPARATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES. I AM REQUESTING THE MARCH HEARING AND ANY ADDITIONAL HEARINGS SCHEDULED AFTER 5:00 PM TO ALLOW FOR FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-14-19	Date Reviewed:	2-14-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

2019-02-14 06:37 GTF ATCT 4064537736 >> P 1/1

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: PLAINS GRAINS LIMITED PARTNESHIP

Complete Address: 149 BICKFORD Rd, GREAT FALLS MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): FEBRUARY 19, 2019 ZONE CHANGE HEARING

Comment

WE WOULD LIKE to GO ON RECORD AS REQUESTING THE MEETING OF 2-19-19 BE CONTINUED TO MARCH 19, 2019 TO ALLOW FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH ADEQUATE PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT ON PENDING ZONE CHANGE.

ALL HEARINGS OF THIS MAGNITUDE MUST ALSO BE SCHEDULED FOR AFTER 5:PM ON WEEKDAYS SO COUNTY RESIDENTS CAN COMMENT.

THANK YOU

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-13-19	Date Reviewed:	2-13-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Ronald D. Scott

Complete Address: 93 Hastings Rd Cascade County MT

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Planning Board Hearing

Comment

We are requesting the hearing on Feb 19th specifically allow for public testimony and be continued to March 2019 for adequate preparation of public comment on the proposed zoning changes. The public needs more time to digest all the new changes.

We request the March and any additional hearing be scheduled after 5:00 pm on weekdays to allow for full public participation. Most people will not be able attend a 0900 AM weekday meeting.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-13-19	Date Reviewed:	2-13-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Commenter Information

Name: J. Casselli

Complete Address: 11 Red Coulee Belt, MT 59412

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): proposed zoning changes

Comment

Request web site maps be posted to the web in useable formats current pdf are large files that are not user friendly for viewing maps.
Please hold zoning meetings at times that are convenient for the public not just county officials .
Consider moving the February 19th meeting scheduled for 0900 to after work or school hours 4:30 or 6 pm Please consider later time for all additional meetings.

In addition, the zoning board continues to bring up these large scale zoning proposals every few years that are extensive with limited time for overall review. Past zoning changes have also not appeared to be consistent with how development or changes have occurred. Consider extending comment periods and review of this current zoning proposal.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-13-19	Date Reviewed:	2-13-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: ROBERT AND EARLYNE LASSILA

Complete Address: 149 BICKFORD Rd, GREAT FALLS MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

Comment

WE UNDERSTAND THERE IS A SCHEDULED HEARING ON FEB 19, 2019.
WE DO HEREBY REQUEST SAID MEETING BE CONTINUED TO
MARCH 19, 2019, AT LEAST. SAID MEETING SCHEDULE SHOULD
ALLOW FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY WHICH SEEMS TO DICTATE THAT
AFTER 5:00 PM ON WEEK DAYS IS BEST FOR FULL PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION. IN THESE IMPORTANT MATTERS.
THESE ZONING CHANGES AFFECT THE WHOLE COUNTY SO
PUBLIC INPUT IS DEFFINATLY NEEDED.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-12-19	Date Reviewed:	2-12-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

To the Cascade County Planning Board –

You may want to make these corrections in your new "Cascade County Zoning Regulations" booklet.

p.3 - Table of Contents
Use # 7.11 instead of 7.1 for Industrial (I) District General Requirements.

This same error is repeated on p. 108, where the heading is numbered 7.1 instead of 7.11.

p.7 - section 1.1 Purpose of Regulation Adoption on line 9, standards is misspelled (stndards).
"to establish adequate stndards for the provision of light, air, and open spaces."

Sincerely,
Nancy Ditchak
2-15-19

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-15-2019
Date Reviewed: 2-15-2019
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
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Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Nancy Ontchak

Complete Address: 3123 Park Burden Ln, Great Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment regarding the proposed Madison Food Park
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

see attached paper

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:		Date Reviewed:		Complete:	☐ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form
Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
Addressed to: Cascade County Planning Board

Commentor Information
Name: Nancy Dutchak
Address: 3123 Park Garden Lane; Great Falls, MT 59404
Date: February 15, 2019

Commentor Subject
Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment/ esp. regarding the proposed Madison Food Park

Comment:
I have some very grave concerns about the slaughterhouse that is proposed for a site east of Great Falls. I have been doing lots of research on slaughterhouse towns, and nothing that I have read is good. If you google "positive effects of slaughterhouses on communities" you come up with ZERO results, and only negative effects appear. As a matter of fact, most of what I have read is downright ALARMING!!

According to an extensive study done by the University of Iowa in 2005, the evidence suggests that host communities for slaughterhouses do experience some growth in employment, but the job growth tends to be concentrated in low-paying jobs. The negative wage effect of counties with meat-packing and processing swamps the positive employment effect. The result is that meatpacking employment grows at the expense of employment growth in other sectors of the economy. Is this what we want for Great Falls? No decent high-wage paying company will ever want to come to Great Falls once we become known as a slaughterhouse town. Therefore, this would not be an economic boon for Great Falls, but economic devastation.

The bad economic effects of this large slaughterhouse is bad enough, but even worse would be our decreased quality of life due to air, water, and land pollution, terrible odors, increased crime, increased low-income housing, increased truck traffic, over-burdened medical care and social services, and decreased property values. Already people on the east side of town are having problems trying to sell their houses, and I have heard of a number of people who will leave Great Falls if the Madison Food Park is built. Don't we want Great Falls to be someplace that is inviting to visit and pleasant to live in, rather than a place that is scorned and pitied because of the poor quality of life we will have if this project is allowed to go through?

The worst losers of all would be the poor people who work at the slaughterhouse. The people who work at large slaughterhouses have the highest rate of accidents and sickness than any other manufacturing job. That is probably why the turnover rate at these facilities approaches 90% every year. Why would we want to have a business in Great Falls that is so dangerous, unhealthy and unpleasant for the workers, and one that most of us would not want our children to work at? We can do so much better than this!!

I have included several articles with this comment form to back up my statements. One is from www.foodandwaterwatch.org, another is from www.sustainabletable.com , and the third one is an article from the Natural Resources Defense Council.

I have also included portions of the proposed Cascade County Zoning Regulations, and I have highlighted those sections that show the purpose of the Cascade County Planning Board is to promote, improve and protect the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and the general welfare of the people and property owners of Cascade County. I do not believe that this proposed project meets those standards, and I urge you to just say NO to this large-scale slaughterhouse. It would change our community for the worse and we would never recover from all of the bad effects. All slaughterhouses allowed in the county should be limited to employing 100 people or less (TOTAL employees, not per shift, and including office workers, floor workers and administration). Please do your own diligent research on how large slaughterhouses negatively affect communities, and then do the right thing for the people of Great Falls. Remember, you represent all of us and are elected to do what is right for the majority of Cascade County, and not just do what is beneficial to a large company in Canada and perhaps a few local investors.

Sincerely, Nancy Dutchak

From the Cascade County Zoning Regulations
SECTION 1. PURPOSE 1.1 Purpose of Regulation Adoption

These regulations are adopted for the purpose of promoting, improving and protecting the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and the general welfare of the people and property owners within Cascade County exclusive of incorporated cities and towns. The fulfillment of this purpose is to be accomplished by seeking the following objectives:
To provide for compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities:
To ensure proper living and working conditions and to prevent the development of blight and slums;
To establish adequate stndards for the provision of light, air, and open spaces;
To facilitate the provision of adequate transportation, and of other requirements and services such as water, sewerage, schools, open space, and parks;
To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County;
To protect residential, business, commercial, and industrial areas alike from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses and to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses;
To avoid the inappropriate development of lands and provide for reduction of flood damage;
To fix reasonable zoning standards to which buildings and structures shall conform;
To prevent such additions to, and alterations or remodeling of, existing buildings or structures as would not comply with the restrictions and limitations imposed herein;
To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses for the mutual benefit of all;
To isolate or control the location of unavoidable nuisance producing uses;
To define the powers and duties of the administrative and enforcement officers and bodies; and
To prescribe penalties for any violation of the provisions of this ordinance, or of any amendment thereto.

1.2 Interpretation, Conflict with Other Laws

In their interpretation and application, the provisions of these regulations shall be held to be minimum requirements, adopted for the promotion of public health, safety and the general welfare. Whenever the requirements of these regulations are at variance with itself or the requirements of other lawfully adopted rules, regulations, or resolutions, the most restrictive, or that imposing the higher standards shall govern.

PLANNING BOARD

The Cascade County Planning Board,authorized under §76-1-101, MCA,and tasked with an advisory role for ensuring the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, or order for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of community development.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT

A use that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction throughout the zoning classification district but which, if further controlled as to number, area, location, or relation to the neighborhood, would promote the public health, safety, welfare, order, comfort, convenience, appearance, prosperity, or general welfare. Special use permits may be permitted in a zoning classification district if a specific provision for such special use is explicitly listed in the Zoning District Regulations as a special use and a special use permit is issued by the Cascade County Planning Division upon approval of a Special Use Permit by the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustment.

8.18 LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS

The Cascade County Commission, in order to provide for a healthy community and environment, a more pleasant living environment, increased property values, and to provide for a lasting social, economic,

environmental, and aesthetic benefit to the county, has enacted the following landscaping requirements for all C, I-1, I-2, MU, and MH and as otherwise required in these regulations. The general purpose of these requirements is to make the county more attractive and aesthetically pleasing, promote and improve public health and safety through the abatement of noise, glare of lights, dust, and air pollution, ensure that land uses of different intensity have sufficient buffering between them to minimize negative effects, promote economic development by providing a high quality of life, enhance ambient environmental conditions by providing shade, air purification, oxygen regeneration, groundwater recharge, storm water runoff retardation, and heat abatement.

8.20 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (I-1) ZONING DISTRICT STANDARDS

All operations shall:

(1) store all raw material, finished products, machinery, and equipment, including company owned or operated trucks and motor vehicles, within an entirely closed building or sight-obscuring fence, berm, or other such improvement no less than six (6) feet in height unless waived or modified by the Zoning Administrator. This shall not preclude display areas for sales;

(2) emit no excessive obnoxious odors;

(3) exhaust no excessive waste into the air or create excessive dust by the industrial operation;

(4) discharge no untreated sewage or industrial waste into any streams or on open grounds without approval of said system by the appropriate authority

10.6 STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL SPECIAL USES

Before the Board of Adjustment can approve any Special Use Permit, it must first reach each of the following conclusions:

(1) Conditions may be required that the ZBOA determines if implemented, will mitigate potential conflicts in order to reach these conclusions.

(2) The proposed development will not materially endanger the public health or safety. Considerations are the following: a.Traffic conditions in the vicinity, including the effect of additional traffic on streets and street intersections, and sight lines at street intersections and approaches. b.Provision of services and utilities, including sewer, water, electrical, telecommunications, garbage collections, and fire protection .c.Soil erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff. D .Protection of public, community, or private water supplies, including possible adverse effects on surface waters or groundwater

.(3) The proposed development will not substantially injure the value of adjoining property or is a public necessity. Considerations are the following: a.The relationship of the proposed use and the character of development to surrounding uses and development, including possible conflicts between them and how these conflicts will be resolved. b.Whether the proposed development is so necessary to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community or County as a whole as to justify it regardless of its impact on the value of adjoining property.(4)The proposed development will be in harmony with the area in which it is located. Considerations are the following: a.The relationship of the proposed use and the character of development to surrounding uses and development, including possible conflicts between them and how these conflicts will be resolved.

https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/problems/factory-farming-food-safety

Factory farms pollute the environment and our drinking water, ravage rural communities, and harm the welfare of animals—while increasing corporate control over our food.

Factory Farming & Food Safety

Factory farming is an unsustainable method of raising food animals that concentrates large numbers of animals into confined spaces. Factory farms are not compatible with a safe and wholesome food supply. It's time to ban factory farms.

How did we get here?

Over the past three decades there has been an economic and geographic shift in how and where food animals are raised in the United States. Large scale factory farms have raising one type of animal have replaced small or medium scale farms that raised dairy and beef cattle, hogs, chickens and turkeys. The rise of factory farming has been driven by three factors: unchecked corporate power, misguided farm policy, and weak environmental and public health regulations.

Factory Farming Increases Corporate Control of our Food

As the number of companies that farmers sell livestock, eggs or milk to has decreased due to mergers and increasing consolidation of the food industry, the number of dairy, hog and beef cattle producers in the United States has also declined sharply over the last 20 years. The meatpacking, milk and egg processing industries have become more controlled by just a handful of big players and the remaining farms raising food animals have grown bigger. In the chicken industry, contract farming is now the norm-- meaning farmers sign up with a corporate integrator that provides the animals and the feed and micromanages the day-to-day operations on the farm--often through the use of unfair one-sided contracts. The real price farmers receive for livestock has trended steadily downward for the last two decades. Most farmers barely break even. Learn more about corporate control in our food system.

Bad Public Policy Facilitates Factory Farming

Misguided farm policy has artificially reduced the cost of feed. Since the passage of the 1996 farm bill, farm policy has encouraged overproduction of crops such as corn and soybeans. This overproduction harms family farms by reducing the value of these crops and forcing farmers to plant additional acreage in order to make a living. While this overproduction is bad for family farmers, it's a boon to the corporate agribusinesses that purchase these crops for use in animal feed and creates an indirect subsidy to the meat industry.

Waste From Factory Farms: An Environmental and Public Health Crisis

For several decades, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state governments have failed to regulate the environmental impacts of factory farms. When factory farms operate virtually unregulated the environment and nearby rural communities pay the price. The vast quantities of manure from factory farms can — and do — make their way into the local environment where they pollute air and water. Several municipal water systems in the midwest where many factory farms are located must regularly implement costly clean up techniques to remove factory farm pollution from the water supply in order to avoid public health disasters. Likewise, pollution from factory farms runs off into streams that feed into our major waterways like the Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes and Gulf of Mexico—contributing to algal blooms and dead zones that impact water supplies and destroy aquatic ecosystems, recreation and livelihoods.

Small, diversified farms that raise animals alongside other crops have always used manure as fertilizer without polluting water. The difference with factory farms is scale. They produce so much waste in one place that it must be applied to land in quantities that exceed the soil's ability to absorb it as fertilizer.

Factory Farms Threaten Public Health

Factory farms contribute to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Every single day, factory farms feed animals routine, low doses of antibiotics to prevent disease in filthy, crowded living conditions. In fact, 80% of the antibiotics used in the U.S. are by agriculture. Overuse of antibiotics creates conditions for bacteria to develop resistance to them, and when these antibiotic-resistant bacteria spread to humans either in our food supply, via animal to human transfer on farms, or through contaminated waste they can cause serious or even deadly antibiotic-resistant infections in people. Over two million Americans suffer from an antibiotic-resistant infection every year, and 23,000 people die. The FDA has known about the misuse of antibiotics since the 1970s, but has not required factory farms to stop this dangerous practice.

Factory Farms Create Food Safety Risks

The stressful, crowded conditions of factory farms make it easy for disease to spread, which can also lead to food safety risks. When thousands of beef cattle are packed into feedlots full of manure, bacteria can get on their hides and then into slaughterhouses where bacteria on even one animal can contaminate thousands of pounds of meat. In 2010, the crowded, unsanitary conditions at two Iowa egg companies caused a recall of more than half a billion potentially Salmonella-tainted eggs.

What's worse is that our government, at the urging of the biggest companies, is trying to essentially deregulate the inspection system for meat and poultry by allowing company inspectors to replace government inspectors, and allowing companies to increase line speeds making it nearly impossible to ensure that all birds and carcasses are closely inspected before heading to processing.

Community and Economy (www.sustainabletable.com, Grace Communications Foundation)

Agribusiness' large-scale and factory farms not only produce foods that can be harmful to our health and local environments, they also negatively affect a community's economy. With claims that its presence will create new jobs, invest in local business, and increase property value, many communities open their arms to these farms. Recent experience, however, has shown that when large-scale farms enter communities, replacing small farms, they can actually create an economic downturn.

Job Access

As recently as 2008, the US agricultural industry consistently experienced record profits, [F] but this agricultural boom did not create more opportunities for the average farmer or rural worker. The percentage of the rural workforce employed on farms dropped by about half throughout the 1980s and 1990s [F]and continues to fall in 2008 to under 2% of the US labor force. [F]Some of these job losses might be offset by increased opportunities in processing plants or related industries, but those new jobs are often located far away, so workers located near farms do not have access to them.

Many factory farms claim that by entering a community there will be an influx of jobs. In fact, most factory farm jobs pay such low wages that the work is a severe pay cut for local residents. Because of this, most must hire, or bring in, immigrant labor from Mexico and South America. [F] Labor conditions are often so horrible that on-the-job amputations are prevalent and health care is slim to non-existent. This atmosphere persists because immigrants unfamiliar with language, law and labor in the United States, are afraid to speak up or unionize. [F]

Local Business

While many workers have lost jobs as a result of industrial farming, farmers are losing control over the way they farm and the prices they can ask for their products because of contract growing. Today, few poultry growers actually own the chickens they raise, and hog-growers are increasingly raising their herds for outside owners as well. [F]These farmers have no say over what breeds of animals they raise, and are often required to buy feed and other products from the same companies that own their animals. As corporate farms grow bigger and more centrally-controlled, small farms are unable to compete and eventually disappear.

Large, industrial farms moving in, and contract growing on smaller farms, also affect non-farm local businesses. A Michigan study demonstrated that small hog farms proportionately spend almost 50% more at local businesses than large farms do, primarily because larger farms buy feed in bulk from sources outside of the community. [F]Since factory farms are vertically-integrated, farm materials are bought within the corporation, rather than at the local feed or hardware store. In addition, industrial farms are often too large to be locally supplied, so they must buy feed and other materials in bulk from distant suppliers. For example, Wisconsin dairy farmers – who traditionally grew their own feed on the same land where they kept their cows – have increased herd sizes beyond sustainability and subsequently turned to importing feed because there isn't enough local acreage for both cows and crops. [F]

Property Value & Tax Revenue

Despite the fact that industrial farms invest less in local economies than small farms, there is the claim that they increase property values and tax revenue. Class action lawsuits against factory farms in a number of states debunk this claim [F]and numerous studies have shown that property values are often negatively affected by large-scale livestock production, mostly due to undesirable and highly unpleasant odors coming from their facilities. An Iowa study showed that property values dropped approximately ten percent when large confined animal feeding operations were opened upwind of those properties. [F]One study of communities in Missouri demonstrated that houses located within one tenth of a mile of an industrial farm lost as much as 88 percent of their value. [F]

Evidence suggests that the effect of industrial agriculture on tax revenue is negative - many industrial farms receive large tax breaks, [F]abatements [F]and exemptions, [F]contributing little to local revenue. Though one Iowa study of hog farms suggested that local and state revenues increase when herd sizes grow toward 300 sows, they then decline as the herd size approaches 3,400. [F]Another report estimated that cattle feedlots have a large impact on local roads because of the constant transport of cattle in and out of the facility, and the funding required to maintain those roads offset any increased tax revenues that did come from the farm. [F]

Community Health

Factory farms directly affect community health by introducing potentially hazardous substances into the air and water. Air pollutants such as hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and particulate matter are released in significant quantities by large confined animal feeding operations, and all have the potential to negatively affect surrounding communities. [F]People living near hog farms, for example, often have increased respiratory problems, most likely due to the large quantities of ammonia emitted by these types of facilities. [F]One recent study indicates that children attending schools located near industrial farms may be at a higher risk for asthma. [F]

Large farms also often pollute local watersources, mainly through the release of nitrates and nitrites from chemical fertilizers. [F]A study of almost 2,000 wells across the country showed that 9 percent of domestic wells and 2 percent of public-supply wells had nitrate concentrations in excess of the EPA's maximum contaminant level. [F]Nitrate poisoning can cause dangerously low blood-oxygen levels in babies (or blue-baby syndrome), spontaneous abortions, and possibly cancer. [F]This is an especially serious problem in rural communities, because rural Americans are heavily reliant on groundwater and domestic wells. [F]

While many physical problems have been linked to factory farm runoff and air pollution, there is evidence that psychological and social problems can also result from living close to such facilities. [F]Studies suggest that symptoms such as fatigue, depression, and mood disturbances occur in higher proportions near confined animal feeding operations. [F]Several studies also suggest that the presence of industrial farms can cause an increase in disputes between neighbors and the loss of social status, mutual trust, social cohesiveness, and other measures of "social capital." [F] A study of one Oklahoma county from 1990 to 1997—a period in which large-scale hog farming was being introduced—indicated dramatic increases in violent crime, theft, and civil court cases. Counties which did not experience such changes in agricultural practices had decreases in all of those problems during the same period. [F]

"Industrial Farming and Your Health"

The New York Times ran a front-page story in May 2003 about the health problems associated with industrial livestock farms. The following excerpt provides a few examples of the many health problems that industrial agriculture can cause:

"Paul Isbell of Houston, Miss., started experiencing seizures after a hog farm moved in down the road. Jeremiah Burns of Hubbardston, Mich., now carries a six-pound oxygen tank with him. Kevin Pearson of Meservey, Iowa, carried a towel in his car because he vomited five or six times a week on his way to work. Julie Jansen's six children suffered flu-like symptoms and diarrhea when farms moved into their neighborhood in Renville, Minn. One of Ms. Jansen's daughters was found... to have neurological damage. She has problems with balance and has lost some feeling in her fingers." [F]

Local Environment

Industrial farms also take a toll on the environment in ways that affect the local community even when they don't pose an immediate threat to human health. For example, the particulate matter emitted from such farms contributes greatly to haze. [F]Foul odors—which are always a nuisance, but which may or may not be hazardous—are almost always emitted by large livestock operations. Ammonia emitted from farms can contribute to haze, loss in forest production, and a loss in biodiversity. [F]The nitric oxides produced in large quantities by farms, especially in manure application, [F]are among the leading sources of acid rain. [F]

Phosphorous and nitrogen pollution from fertilizers can cause fish kills, toxic algae blooms, and other significant changes in water systems. [F]Metals such as copper, zinc, lead, chromium, arsenic and cadmium are often added to animal feed, and when they are excreted through manure they often end up on fields as part of fertilizers. [F]They are all toxic to humans. Some of these metals, like copper [F]and cadmium, [F]can be directly absorbed by crops, and most of them can pollute drinking water as they either seep into groundwater or exit the fields along with other harmful pollutants via water runoff.

What You Can Do

- The best way to keep factory farms out of communities is by purchasing foods directly from small farmers. You can use Eat Well Guide to locate sources of sustainable meat and dairy in your area, and visit farmers markets, farm stands, or join a CSA [G] group to keep small farms afloat and factory farms out.
- Another way to build community around food and sustainable farming is by hosting a sustainable community event. Once you've found your local farmer, get your friends and neighbors together to celebrate and support local farms!

Did You Know?

- Odor alone – even if the individual chemicals that cause it are not hazardous – can cause adverse health effects in certain situations. [F]
- Fly infestations and light pollution are two of the many negative effects that industrial livestock facilities have on rural communities. These nuisances are not only damaging to quality of life of neighbors, but can also harm human health.

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These Montanans Don't Want an Industrial Slaughterhouse in Their Backyard

In the small city of Great Falls, residents push back against a Big Ag plant that would consume 3.5 million gallons of water—and produce 102,995 pounds of waste—per day.
February 01, 2019 Lora Shinn

Rion Sanders/Great Falls Tribune/USA Today Network

Stacy Hermiller was worried about her family's health and her property value when she found out a meat-slaughtering facility was being planned near her home east of Great Falls.

Stacy Hermiller has deep roots in Big Sky Country. A fifth-generation Montana resident whose family has lived there since 1901, she fits the state's outdoorsy profile, actively enjoying fly-fishing, hiking, backpacking, and all manner of wilderness pursuits.

In 2008, when Hermiller bought a 20-acre piece of property about eight miles southeast of Great Falls, she had a picture-perfect idea of the rustic life she'd build there. That was before she received the certified letter in the mail.

The letter described a proposed slaughterhouse in the works for the property next door. Hermiller's neighbor across the highway didn't receive such a letter; the county only notified those whose property shared a fence line with the project.

Curious, Hermiller looked up the plant's plans, detailed on the county's website. There, she discovered that the Canadian company Friesen Foods wanted to construct Madison Food Park—which would become the largest meat-processing plant in Montana—in her community, known mostly for its small-scale agricultural businesses and Air Force

base and as a gateway to several state and national parks. Friesen would transform 3,000 acres (a tract about six times the size of Disneyland) into a "multi-species food-processing plant for cattle, pigs, and chickens and the further processing facilities for beef, pork, and poultry."

Not only would the sheer size of the facility overwhelm Great Falls, a city of almost 60,000 residents, but it would also contribute a vast amount of pollution. For starters, it would produce more than 300 acres of treated industrial waste, to be disposed of in domestic waste lagoons. Across 260 days a year, its operators would process thousands of animals 24 hours a day in three eight-hour shifts, according to the project's application. Every day, dozens of trucks would transport animals to the facility and carry meat away, along the two-lane U.S. Highway 89. The parking lot would accommodate 1,900 vehicles.

"I was horrified. It was literally in my backyard," Hermiller says. The region was zoned for agriculture and didn't offer an adequate parcel of industrially zoned land. So the county planning board had voted to change allowable uses for the land under a special-use permit law. Hermiller notes that Cascade County advised its commissioners to vote the changes through—and that they ended up approving them unanimously. "The meeting was public, but it was not well advertised, so no members of the public were present to debate or offer comment," she says. As a result, when they first saw the plans, Hermiller and her neighbor were "dumbfounded and helpless. We just couldn't believe what we were looking at."

A physician's assistant at an orthopedic surgeon's office, Hermiller hadn't been active in local politics. But spurred by concerns about how an industrial slaughterhouse could impact the local environment and quality of life in Great Falls, she banded together with neighbors to learn more about the proposed food company and get organized, forming Great Falls Area Concerned Citizens.

"Citizens are right to be wary," says NRDC's Valerie Baron, an attorney focusing on sustainable agriculture and antibiotics as well as health and food. Though Friesen touted the promise of new local jobs, she notes, "Many slaughterhouse jobs are among the most dangerous. The risk of workplace injury is high, but there is also a significant risk from pathogens." Studies show that workers in slaughterhouses and factory farms are at risk from potentially deadly antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and Baron points out that workers can bring these bacteria home. Moreover, slaughterhouses can invite other environmental hazards, including an influx of heavy truck traffic, and can encourage other dangerous mega food-production facilities to move in.

Community meetings started with 60 or so residents in the fall of 2017. By the following spring, the Great Falls Area Concerned Citizens' presentations, with guest speakers from the Socially Responsible Agriculture Project and elsewhere, were attracting up to 450 attendees, according to Hermiller.

Waters at Risk

Residents are drawn to Great Falls for the area's natural beauty. What's more, homes are cheap and the air quality is good. The city even made a *Forbes* "25 Best Places to Retire" list, in 2015.

Water in this part of north-central Montana is a defining feature. Residents can hike a trail that winds for 58 miles along the state's longest river, the Missouri, which flows past Great Falls. Nearby are five waterfalls and one of the largest freshwater springs in the United States. Giant Springs (first recorded by Lewis and Clark in 1805) produces 156 million gallons of water per day, originating in an opening in the Madison aquifer in the nearby Little Belt Mountains. A wetland-rich wildlife refuge sits just north of Great Falls, and the Roe River, often called the "shortest river in the world," flows between Giant Springs and the Missouri.

"The Missouri River is the heart of the Great Falls community and the surrounding area," says Zack Strong, an NRDC attorney and wildlife advocate who grew up there. "We used to fish, swim, wade, paddle, and splash around with the dogs in the river throughout the year. Building the proposed slaughterhouse would put the Missouri at risk and jeopardize the local economy, wildlife, recreation, and residents' quality of life. Allowing the river to become polluted would be devastating."

Madison Food Park—so named for the aquifer it would pull from—would also rely heavily on the region's water, consuming a total of 3.5 million gallons of water per day via three or four deep-water wells. Great Falls residents know

this alone would spark conflict: Throughout Montana, agriculture interests and residents engage in "water wars" as they battle over access, notes Guy Alsentzer, executive director of the nonprofit Upper Missouri Waterkeeper. "There's a saying in Montana: 'Whiskey's for drinking, and water's for fighting,' " he says. Agriculture is also the single-largest source of nutrient and sediment pollution entering the waters of southwest and west-central Montana, according to the group.

In the original proposal, Friesen Foods estimated that 102,995 pounds of animal waste would be generated by the operation per day. It also anticipated that "99.6% of the solid and liquid waste produced" would be either recycled using anaerobic digestion technology; repurposed into agricultural commodities; or rendered into pet food, fertilizer, or other protein meal. The company, coincidentally, had previously focused on producing animal feed.

Alsentzer notes that despite the promises, the proposal was disturbingly lacking in specifics about how any of that recycling, repurposing, or rendering would be accomplished. "The entire facility's waste management is going to be a big threat to groundwater," he says. The proposed site is at the headwaters of Antelope Creek, and the nearby Sand Coulee Creek flows into the Missouri River.

In Montana, surface waters (including runoff or spills) are connected to the groundwater through a porous soil, and as anywhere, the groundwater interacts closely with local waterways. "You put any pollution into local groundwater and it probably affects nearby streams and rivers," says Alsentzer.

Most large-scale agricultural facilities take lagoon waste—a "nasty soup of strained blood and guts," as Alsentzer describes it—and spray it onto the property's soil and grass as fertilizer (and simply as a way to get rid of it). "It can have minimal impact for small-scale slaughterhouses," Alsentzer says, but not at the industrial level. "Whether the waste is stored as solids or liquids in open lagoons, the scope of likely water pollution is boggling."

The waste can contain some pretty bad stuff: for starters, nitrogen and phosphorus, which, should they leach into waterways, disrupt the food chain by creating oxygen-sucking algae blooms that kill off aquatic populations. There's also *E. coli*, antibiotics, and antivirals. "There's an overall cumulative threat," Alsentzer says, especially given that the Missouri River is less than 10 miles, as the crow flies, from the proposed slaughterhouse. "If there's a percolation into the groundwater from the lagoons, how will they even monitor for it, over dozens and dozens of acres?"

The record speaks for itself. Three-quarters of large U.S. meat-processing plants that discharge wastewater directly into streams and rivers violated their pollution-control permits in the past two years by discharging bacteria, pathogens, nutrients, and other materials, according to a report from the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP), based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency records.

Wait and Watch

In May 2018, without any official statement regarding its reasoning, Madison Food Park announced it would amend its application and requested more time to make the changes. "The widespread, vocal, consistent public opposition certainly played some role," Alsentzer says.

There's no deadline, so a new application could be submitted at any time. And Hermiller, who sold her property not long ago, suspects that Friesen will regroup and come back "bigger, stronger, and more effective." But she doesn't expect the community to back down from its fight against the Big Ag plant. "We don't want to be complacent."

"We have more cows than people in Montana," Hermiller observes wryly. "I'm not against the slaughterhouse industry; I want responsible beef slaughterhouses. This is not responsible ranching, and it's not what Montana was built on. We're the 'last best place on earth,' " she adds, stating Montana's unofficial motto. "Let's keep it that way."

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: ~~2-18-19~~ Complied 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-20

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Rhonda L. Gauthier

Complete Address: 14 11th St. North

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I disagree with making this area smaller.

0046

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Commenter Information

Name: Tammie Lynne Smith

Complete Address: 397 Highwood Rd., Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
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Comment

Please see attached letter.

Tammie Lynne Smith

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-19-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-20	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing February 19, 2019, 9:00 am
325 2nd Ave N
Great Falls MT

My name is Tammie Lynne Smith. I am a Cascade County resident. We own property and reside at 397 Highwood Road.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this public hearing regarding the Draft Cascade County Zoning Regulations. I was hard pressed to complete a comprehensive review of the planning department information and extensive file of supporting documents related to the draft regulations. The documents were released just one week prior to this hearing and included over 3,000 pages of narrative, legal code, and analysis.
I oppose the current Draft Zoning Regulations and request the Planning Board and planning staff provide further information, clarification, and analysis to the following specific concerns.
I will provide a written copy of my comments.

I. Zoning Maps do not include Legal Descriptions for the Boundaries of the Proposed New District.
Section 14.1.1(3) requires a legal description for the boundaries of the proposed district.

A. Have these been prepared for the new MU-20 or MU-40?
The zoning maps that are included as Section 4 of the zoning ordinance are actually vicinity maps as described in section 14.1.1(2) of the zoning application process.
These maps are not the same as legal descriptions as required by the zoning ordinance and the MCA.
B. When will such legal descriptions be available for public review?

II. Opposed to the Elimination of the Agricultural District
The Cascade County Growth Policy clearly states the importance of agricultural farmland. Eliminating the Agricultural District is in direct conflict with the existing Growth Policy. By eliminating this district, there is no longer any mechanism in the zoning regulations that will protect the most productive soil types and preserve family farm units. I oppose eliminating the agricultural district.

Eliminating the Agricultural district contradicts many of the goals and policies from the Cascade County Growth Policy. (detailed below) Under the proposed regulations the definition of the MU-40 District would allow"

"The MU-40 District is intended to provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential sites characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses."

Large-scale uses are clearly not compatible with goals adopted to protect productive soil types and maintain farming units. A review of zoning ordinances around the state of Montana indicate that establishing Agriculture Zoning districts and prohibiting industrial/manufacturing uses from locating in the AG district is the standard planning practice to protect encroachment on agricultural land. I request all existing land that is zoned as "A-Agriculture District" remains in this district.

A. There should be further analysis to determine where prime agriculture lands are located and how the proposed Mixed-Use districts will affect these lands.
B. I further propose that the zoning ordinance be amended to specifically protect prime agricultural soils in accordance with Section 8.6 of the Growth Policy.

Contradictions to Cascade County Growth Policy:
Chapter 2: Goals and Policies
<u>Goal 2: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development</u>.

Objectives:

C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed, land subdivisions and commercial development.

Goal 3: Maintain Agricultural Economy

Objectives:

A. Protect the most productive soil types.
B. Continue to protect soils against erosion.

Chapter 5: – Economic Conditions: Policies

1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.
2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.
10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.
11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land.

Chapter 8: Policy and Goal Implementation

8.2 Resource Protection Areas – Designation and Establishment

The following resource protection areas are hereby established as part of the Cascade County Growth Policy:

- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Forest Cover

8.3 Prime Agricultural Soil Area

The prime agriculture soils resource preservation areas are intended to contain those soil areas where it is necessary and desirable, (because of their high quality, availability of water, and/or highly productive agricultural and grazing capability), to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Therefore, the prime agricultural soil preservation areas of Cascade County are those areas where the soils have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), according to the NRCS definition of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.

8.6 Subdivision Development Requirements

If a parcel larger than forty (40) acres is proposed to be subdivided and that parcel is determined to have twenty-five percent (25%) or more area coverage of either of the Resource Protection Areas (Prime Agricultural Soils or Forest Cover Areas), then subdivision approval shall only be granted by the Board of Cascade County Commissioners when it makes findings that the subdivision will not significantly reduce the defined Resource Protection Area's functions, or if all of the following criterion are complied with:

- The applicant can realize a reasonable return on the fair market value of his land only by devoting the resource protection areas to uses that will significantly reduce their defined area functions.
- The applicant has no other land reasonably suited for the subdivision.
- The subdivision has been designed to minimize the reduction of the Resource Protection Area's functions.
- The subdivision must not significantly interfere with or jeopardize the continuation of agriculture or forestry on adjoining lands or significantly reduce their functions.

III. Clarification of Section 18 Unclassified Use Permits

Section 18 states the following:

"Unclassified uses are hereby said to possess characteristics of such unique and special forms that each use shall be considered as an individual case regardless of their underlying zone district."

The list of uses that are included in this section can be allowed in any zoning district if they go through the process outlined in the section. All of these uses are already listed as either permitted uses or special uses in other zoning districts in the regulations.

A. What is the rationale for allowing such uses in any district, even districts that are not suitable for such uses?

For example, according to this section a slaughterhouse, feedlot, and coal plant would all be able to apply for a permit in any residential district. It is my opinion that this section is unnecessary and should be deleted.

IV. Revise Definitions of the Zoning Districts to Reflect the Cascade County Growth Policy

It is not clear how the various definitions of the zoning districts relate to the Growth Policy. Zoning district definitions should demonstrate that such regulations are made in "accordance with the growth policy". When there is a conflict between the zoning district definition and the Growth Policy, this results in inconsistent land use decisions and places local governments zoning actions at risk of being overturned if challenged in court.

There is no analysis in the staff report indicating how the definitions were derived or how the definitions for mixed-use districts, MU-20 and MU-40, are linked to the growth policy. The only reference in the Growth Policy to mix-use development is in reference to developing safe, sanitary and affordable housing. (Goal 12, Objective H)

A. I propose that the zoning district definitions reference specific goals, objectives and policies from the Cascade County Growth Policy that are the basis of these definitions.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns. I look forward to additional time to complete further research and detailed evaluation for the March hearing.

Tammie Lynne Smith
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

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Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Kristian Spindler

Complete Address: 426 4th Ave North #30 Great Falls, MT. 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Please allow more access for cultivators so the fees aren't as high for it to be easier for patients to have access to our medicine bring the zoning areas ~~outside~~ into city limits. change the zoning laws so there not as strict would help us.

0051

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Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: MARKO FANGSRUD

Complete Address: 2923 3RD AVE. N. GREAT FALLS

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

PLEASE CHANGE ZONING TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE PROVIDER & PATIENT TO GET THE HELP WE NEED.

0052

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: JOSH TRAHAN

Complete Address: BLACK EAGLE

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe):

Comment

WE NEED TO OPEN ZONING BOUNDARIES FOR POTENTIAL DISPENSARIES OR CANNABIS GROWS TO CLOSE THE GAP FOR FOLKS THAT ARE IN NEED OF A NATURAL (NON-CHEM) SOLUTION TO PAIN, PTSD, ETC. RELIEF.

0053

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Compiled 06/03/19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

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Commenter Information

Name: Shandi Bighwood

Complete Address: 600 17th Ave S. #30

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

We need to have ready access to our medicine, the zones need to change so we can have easier access

0054

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Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Compiled 06/03/19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Dan T. Dooley

Complete Address: 1301 1st Ave N

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I think it should be allowed in small industrial! Why are we restricting access? Keep Great Falls money in Great Falls! Buy local Please.

Dan

0055

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Commenter Information

Name: Logan & Kallie Tinsen

Complete Address: 19 Stone Mill Lane Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☒ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): review of public information

Comment

please see attached

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Date Received:	2-17-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Dear Planning Board Members;

First, thank you for serving as planning board members on a volunteer basis. It is hard work and we appreciate it.

It is with tremendous trepidation I write this comment to you today. My concerns lie with the substantial zoning changes being proposed for Cascade County, with over 2000 sq. miles being proposed for changes. I as a landowner, along with many others, have been trying to work with county planning staff since November 2018 to help correct zoning inconsistencies. This has been met with great resistance. Many landowners have tried to request public information as to how these substantial zoning changes have come about. This again has been met with great resistance being referred to the county attorney before being allowed to review these public documents. It was not until after many citizens requested these documents that the county published them for all to see. Over 3,700 pages were posted on 2/12/19, how can a citizen or anyone for that matter, review this many documents to make an informed public comment to the board?

I, myself, have spent over 40 hours reviewing the proposed changes to make informed comments to you today. The **deletion** of the agricultural (A) district and reclassification to Mixed Use-20 and Mixed Use-40 is the most significant change. Reclassification of permitted uses and permitted uses by special use permits are the second most concerning change.

If you look at **appendix A** (in your packets):

Section 2 Definitions:
There are **40 changes** in this section. Twenty-five added or revised Ag definitions. Ag use definition previously excluded feedlots, it no longer does. The slaughterhouse definition now allows "temporary stabling" of animals. How long is temporary?

Section 3:
Agricultural (A) district removed in its entirety. Mixed use (MU) is revised to add mixed use-20 (MU20) and mixed use-40 (MU40). MU-20 is to "serve as a buffer" between MU-40 districts? If so, there is no MU-20 zoned land on highway 87 east to Belt or North to Havre. Why are these highways no considered "major transportation corridors"? Also of note, expansion of MU-20 designated parcels well beyond the "transportation route" to Sun River, Fort Shaw, Vaughn, Cascade areas.

MU-40 allows commercial feedlots (CAFO) and slaughterhouse with special use permit. It provides ONLY a one-mile restriction to "adjacent" residents at time of application. What is "adjacent"? Would "nearest" be better defined? MU-40 would also allow "temporary" and "permanent workforce housing" at what density and no definition of "temporary" is provided.

If Cascade County adopts these new zoning districts, the change to land use designation will affect millions of acres and thousands of land owners.

Section 4:
Maps are changed to reflect the deletion of agricultural (A) district and addition of MU-20 and MU-40.
Appendix B in your packets;

- "With the Agricultural district divided between the MU-20 and MU-40 geographies **there is less of a need for the use of the SUP process** since there are fewer potentially impacted residences and those around are likely to be involved in a productive land use." "Additionally, this protects productive land use areas from types of development driven by demand for amenity destinations which have infringed upon ranching and farming areas throughout the county and the state." If I understand these statements correctly, there is no need for a special use permit (SUP) in MU-40 districts due to MU-20 "buffer". If this is true, why is there not MU-20 zoned land on highway 87 East to Belt? Is this land not developing similar to land on I-15 South to Cascade?
- Growth Policy
    - By satisfying Goal 1, Objective A there is the possibility to violate Goal 9 of the growth policy. By allowing new business's to come in that are improperly zoned we put our farmland of statewide importance in grave danger.

Section 7:
There are **significant** changes in permitted and permitted through special use permit uses in mixed use and industrial districts.

- Many of the newly defined agricultural related uses have been allowed across multiple districts. There are no guidelines concerning size and scope that cross multiple zoning districts. This has the potential to alleviate a developers' need to seek re-zoning and can call into question the intended purpose of distinctly separate zoning districts.
- Two of the redefined definitions have been allowed in the **"Unclassified Use Permit"**
    - CAFO
    - Slaughterhouse

Section 18 Unclassified Use Permit:
Unclassified uses are hereby said to possess characteristics of such unique and special forms that each use shall be considered as an individual case **regardless of their underlying zone district**.

- If I understand correctly, a developed could avoid applying for a zone change by applying for this permit.
- This would keep the applicant for appearing before the county commission. The unclassified permit would be for ZBOA only. I feel these are too big of decisions to be made by appointed volunteers. Maybe only elected officials should have the power to approve such things.

In summary, this has been a limited review by one citizen that took 40+ hours to become as informed as possible before submitting public comment. I implore you to allow substantially more time for the citizens of Cascade County to review 3,700+ pages of material to become more informed. Having only one week to review makes it an impossible feat to be fully informed and prepared. The public hearing needs to be changed so more involved citizens can attend. Having a public hearing at 0900 on a weekday does not allow for sufficient public comment as a majority of citizens are working. I would ask future meetings are held in the evening to allow for maximum public participation.

Thank you for your time and consideration to my concerns of the county I was born, raised and continue to love and support.

Best Wishes,

Tinsen Pharm.D.

Logan Tinsen, Pharm.D.

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Date Received: 2-19-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Cynthia Outten

Complete Address: 600 17A ve.S. #28 Gt. Falls, mt. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): Zoning Ordinances Against Medical Marijuana Industry.

Comment

I am a Medical Marijuana User with a Valid medical Marijuana card. I disagree completely with the New Zoning ordinance against medical marijuana. The new Zoning Ordinance will create a tremendous hardship for me to be able to get my prescribed medication. I do not drive, due to my medical condition and must find a ride every time I need a refill or have my medication delivered to my home. ALL of my other medications are either picked up within the City limits or delivered to my home. My pharmacy is liscenced & follows all laws and is NOT being forced to relocate OR not being allowed to deliver to me. My dispensary for my LEGAL medical marijuana is liscensed and Also following all Laws! If made to move, and not deliver, I will NOT be able to get my prescribed medication. This puts a limit on my access and freedom of choice for my healthcare provider. I try VERY hard to buy Everything LOCAL. I am on a VERY Limited income and this will also raise the costs of my medication.

0060

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it will be forced to buy out of my area which will also hurt the Local Economy. I truly thought Cascade County had the Best Interests of the people And LOCAL Business at heart. Please reconsider your Zoning and Keep our jobs local AND our ACCESS to healthcare Local.

Thank-you

I truly feel we are being singled out because of the Type of medication we use. This is Discrimination and Not Right.

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Date Reviewed: 2/19/2019

Complete: Yes

Compiled 06/03/19

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Commenter Information

James Vennes
2-18-19

Name: James Vennes

Complete Address: 1820 15th St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I have lived and paid taxes in Cascade County for 29 years. I use medical marijuana as allowed by state law. The proposal by Cascade County Commissions to limit medical marijuana providers to heavy industrial sites 1000 ft away from residences where youth might gather amounts to prohibition. There are few available, affordable sites. Without a provider, I have no source. Secondly, this proposal is anti-business as my provider pays taxes and complies with the law. Please reconsider this plan. James Vennes

Date Received: 2/19/2019
Date Reviewed: 2/19/2019

Complete: yes

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Commenter Information

Name: Patricia A. Vennes

Complete Address: 1820 15th Street S., Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

My husband is a medical marijuana user. Over the years, he has often been unable to procure the cannabis that eases his pain. Previous to using cannabis, his doctors prescribed numerous drugs that caused him additional problems medically, even to the point of his considering suicide.

Now, using only medical marijuana, he is able to manage his pain and have a more positive outlook on living.

The zoning proposal now under consideration that requires any county grow operation to be limited to heavy industrial sites causes a hardship to providers who legally grow cannabis for their patients. There are a limited number of available, affordable sites that can be used for grow operations. Therefore, this proposed zoning requirement will have the effect of limiting availability of medical marijuana for the people who do have green cards but are unable to find a provider.

Patricia A. Vennes

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Commenter Information

Name: Robbie Regennitter

Complete Address: 620 Stockett RD, Sand Coulle, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I have concerns regarding anything related to Medical Marijuana and it being isolated to Heavy Industrial Zoned areas. Cascade County is a large county and you are limiting it to one small area of the entire county. I didn't see any Heavy Industrial areas in Simms, Fort Shaw, Belt, Monarch, Neihart, Stockett, Cascade or anyother outlying areas of the county. I also seen that you issued a special use permit for a hemp processing facility to extract CBD from the plant. This is the exact same process used to extract THC from canabis. Will special use permits be issued for Medical Marijuana providers, or will they be discriminated against? I don't see any provisions for exceptions to be made. Can this be corrected?

For Office Use Only					
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- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I have a couple of concerns regarding 7.7 Mixed Used 40 zoning regulations. The first is 7.7.11 USES PERMITTED UPON ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT (4) Commercial Feedlot or Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation CAFOs are a high pulluting, fowl smelling operation, that does not belong in MU-40 zoned areas. They belong in Heavy Industrial zoned areas. The second item is 7.7.11 USES PERMITTED UPON ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT (27) Slaughterhouse. The same reasoning works for these operations. They also belong in Heavy Industrial zoned areas. To understand why, all anyone has to do is to visit a couple of CAFOs or visit a Slaughterhouse town and see the distruction they cause. Smell travels more than 1 mile. Pulluted aquifiers are damaged beyond repair. If tne members writing the regulations would visit these areas, they probably would outlaw them from our entire county. I don't want to be the one who has to tell my grandchildren that my generation didn't care about their health and quality of life. We do not need to sale our legacy to a foreign company.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-17-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Cindy <unkball@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 17, 2019 3:23 PM
To: Planning Comments

Dear Planning Committee,
I am writing to let you know that I am against the proposed zone permit change from agricultural to Mixed Use. I am unable to attend this meeting as it is on a work day and I am an elementary school teacher. We haven't had enough subs to cover with all of the illnesses going around right now. I would definitely attend an evening or weekend meeting and would like more information about why this change is being proposed. I am completely against the large scale industrial farming and slaughterhouse industry. My husband and I both come from local cattle ranching families and we are all opposed to this. We are obviously not opposed to animal husbandry and humane slaughtering practices, but we are 100% against against large scale industrial parks. We support Montana industries and local business, but this is in no way beneficial to our community or good for our environment. I hope you take the time to listen to the people that actually live here. I also can't imagine the changes this would bring to our school population and community resources, which are already underfunded.

My husband's family ranch address is 1513 Stockett rd (owned by Tom and Pam Kohut),my family's ranch is at 1059 e Eden Rd (owned by Carol Konesky Schroer), and my husband and I live at 915 33rd Ave S. Great Falls, MT 59405 where we own a home on .71 acres. All of us and many more friends and relatives (people from the local ranching community) are opposed to this change. I also am shocked by the total lack of information that is being put out about this "project." I continue to meet people who have never even heard of the MFP and I find this shocking. It sure would be nice if adequate information were put out for the community and community members were allowed to vote on this!
Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,
Cindy Schroer Kohut and family (Brad, Noah, and Sam)

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Commenter Information

Name: Michael Enk

Complete Address: Mailing: PO Box 1408, Great Falls, MT 59403 Residence: 6432 43rd St SW

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes

Comment

I am strongly opposed to changing Agricultural zoned land to Mixed Uses, thereby allowing many more kinds of uses and development which would threaten the open space and rural characteristics of these lands with industrial-type activities. I am especially opposed to allowing commercial feedlots, concentrated animal feeding operations, and slaughterhouses on land currently zoned as Agricultural. Zoning changes should be made on a case-by-case basis after full public review and environmental analysis of proposed development. Allowing such a broad array of non-compatible uses on land currently zoned as Agricultural undermines the purpose of thoughtful planning and guided development that best serves the surrounding community. Additionally, the relaxation to allow Unclassified Uses such as Slaughterhouses and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations regardless of the underlying zone district is unacceptible.

This proposal by the Planning Board is a grave disservice to the citizens of Cascade County who wish to protect their clean water, clean air, viewsheds, and agricultural landscapes. It would render previous zoning efforts meaningless and eliminate the sideboards for compatible growth across the county.

The proposed zoning changes are complex and comprehensive. A February 19th public hearing does not allow sufficient time for the public to review the changes in order to prepare questions for the hearing. I request this hearing be postponed until adequate disclosures have been made and time allowed for proper development of questions and alternatives by the public. Likewise, a March hearing for public comment would also be premature and an impediment to meaningful public participation. Furthermore, all public meetings should be scheduled after 5:00 pm to allow working citizens (whose taxes pay the salaries of county officials) to attend.

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Commenter Information

Name: Renae Munson

Complete Address: 3000 8th Ave North / Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
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- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Zoning Regulation "Revisions"

Comment

I OPPOSE the revisions to zoning regulations. Great Falls has been home to my family for six (6) generations for over 120 years. I have never considered living anywhere else. There are others in my family that have moved away that are wanting to move back to Great Falls because of our beautiful friendly town, clean water and air, and somewhat reasonable traffic. The revisions to the zoning regulations makes it easier for the MASSIVE slaughterhouse to be built...one of the LARGEST in the country. This WILL DESTROY our town. It will overburden our healthcare, our schools, our roadways, our prisons/jails and police.

200 feces spewing semis a week transporting 57K swine, 10K cattle on our roadways. You can't get from one end of town to the other without driving THROUGH town. That feces will be spread everywhere after getting on tires, drying blowing in the wind. It will diminish our river's edge trail (the truck route); it will drain our beautiful giant springs. During the fall, the seasonal transportation of livestock through town is VERY noticable. The smell is dreadful and the additional traffic is horrible too, but that's only a couple weeks of the year. Having that every day would impact ALL of our quality of life for the worse. Then add the expected 12K "New Residents" every 3-4 years and the impact that will have on traffic. 10th Ave South is already one of the busiest streets in the state. There is NO benefit to Great Falls to allow one of the biggest massive slaughterhouses in the country to be buildt here. This is a critical junction that will forever destroy Great Falls. A town that neighbors help each out, where folks are friendly at the store, the people here...love Great Falls as it is....so much that lots of miliary from MAFB usually retire here. All the reasons that people have to make Great Falls home will be destroyed to the revisions to regulations that are shielding us from a MASSIVE industrialized slaughterhouse. No one wants it.

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Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Jennifer Hicks

Complete Address: 2923 3rd Ave No, Great Falls, MT

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I would like to address the zoning changes occuring in Cascade county that will provide for and allow a massive slaughter house on land immedietly East to Great Falls. I feel our county commissioners have been extremely guilable and have not sufficiently researched the impact of such facility on our watershed, air quality, or infrastructure. Healthy economic growth cannot be based on promises by foriegn corporate promises that historically mean nothing. This facility will do nothing to support regional family farming and stands to follow industrial practices that have caused significant health problems for those that live around them. The evidence speaks for itself, as I am sure others will present. I am a lifelong asthmatic, been a productive citizen of this city, and looked forward to retiring here. I will be one of the people who will be forced to relocate if this comes to fruition and ruins our air quality. Who is going to pay for that relocation? Will I need to take legal action at the county or the state level? Who will take these low paying jobs that are increasingly becoming automated and will disappear? If our commissioners want to support the rich agricultural heritage of our Golden Triangle, the right move would be to focus on the needs of our family farms and ranches and not on the desires of multi-national organizations or groups that exploit us and our treasured resources. I ask that you remove the proposes zoning changes and remove the possibilty of a massively polluting factory and the harm it will bring.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-20-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: LaLonnie Ward

Complete Address: 70 McKinior Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Proposed changes to Cascade County Zoning Regulations

Comment

Thank you for reviewing written comment from those of us who are unable to attend the public hearing on February 19, 2019 regarding the proposed changes to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations.

As I have attempted to fully review the proposed changes, I am first overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude at the number of changes, and second, at the vastness of those changes. It is a considerable amount of information to digest in the short amount of time given to review the proposals. In that light, I will limit my input to the proposed change, that potentially will most directly, affect my family and me.

As 3rd generation farm owners, who reside east of Great Falls, we are greatly concerned with the proposed elimination of the "A" - Agricultural District, and reclassification of affected agricultural lands into MU-40. The majority of counties in Montana, including Cascade County as evidenced in it's growth plan, recognize the importance of agriculture, and the necessity to protect rural farms and ranches, from urban and industrial intrusion. Placing agricultural lands in MU-40 would effectively remove that protection.

Therefore, to ensure the preservation of the character of Cascade County's family farm and ranch community, we kindly request that the current "A" – Agricultural District be maintained and all properties currently zoned "A" remain in said District.

Your consideration of this matter is greatly appreciated.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-15-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: KRIS OLEYAR <que86@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 5:20 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: zoning change

I feel rezoning for CAFO/slaughterhouse will be a bad mistake for the area. This will destroy Great Falls,threatening our water, inceasing crime, driving away people from our community. I don't feel letting MFP using our area as their toilet/dumping ground will benefit our community.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-20 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-20

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Commenter Information

Name: Melissa M. Price

Complete Address: 1625 6th Ave. NW Gt. Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I need to have access to my medicine, this is too restricting. Please give them less restrictions and allow there to be providers.

0072

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-14-19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Tiffany Kuglin

Complete Address: 103 42nd St S. Great Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I believe that the city ordeniaces should be lifted for medical marijuana. It not only brings jobs but has a huge potential to help our opiod epidimic. The fact that you are willing to keep it out but allow a pain clinic is just crazy. Its like our city is saying they are ok with slowly killing people. You should be more willing to end that with something that is not so addictive and doesnt shut down your system in the long run. Its not all about smoking I would like to suggest our city officals do alot more research.

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Compiled 06/03/19

Date Received: 2-19-20

Date Reviewed: 2-20-20

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Commenter Information

Name: Sarah Whitney

Complete Address: 1517 13th Ave S. GF MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

please allow accessible medicine!!

0074

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Dustin Haffner

Complete Address: 3030 7TH Ave So. GF, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

0075

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Daniel Brian

Complete Address: 1535 3rd Ave SW

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

equality throughout the state for every patient. Sick people in need, Been try to come to market for over 5 years.

0076

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Compiled 06/03/19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☑ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Solomon Wise

Complete Address: 1600 9th Ave S Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Id like to see better access to medical marijuana within city limits and the county

0077

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Tatjanna Miller

Complete Address: 2101 1st ave N.

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe):

Comment

I feel like medical marijuana dispensaries Should NOT be limited to out of town. Each patient Should have access to their medication. Out of town dispensaries do nothing for the patient it also makes the most disabled and impoverised patients unable to access medication. ~~Ita~~ effectively "classing" medical marijuana to those w/ accessible transportation.

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Date Received: ~~2-19-19~~ Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Jennifer Hicks

Complete Address: 2923 3rd Ave No

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Clean agriculture!
Not polluting our air or water.
Freedom of access as per majority of voters in the state.

0079

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-20 Compiled 06/03/19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Tara L. Holloway

Complete Address: 914 20th Ave S. Great falls 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I need access to medicine. With the opiod crisis this is my only option. I have no transportation and need city bus service to get it.

If my provider needs to move his grow then he will be out business and I will be in so much pain I will be suicidal.

0080

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Tasia Knight Holmes

Complete Address: 816 6th Ave NW Great Falls MT 59404.

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe):

Comment

I Strongly disagree with the Cascade County, the proposed Zoning ordinances against the medical marijuana industry. These New ordinances ~~with~~ will create an undo hardship on patients & providers. it will make it harder to get medicine to the patient, possibly eliminate patients from getting the medicine. it will Also, take the freedom of choice away from the patients as they may have to settle for a provider. we will Also be pushing the small providers out, No more local providers. in other words we will be sending away that money. Great Falls Local Business will not see that money. Other Montana towns & cities will. There will Also be NO local job growth in Great Falls from the MMP.

0081

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19

Date Reviewed: 2-20-20

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

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Commenter Information

Name: Dana Mitchell

Complete Address: 432 26TH AVE NE GF MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Under the proposed zoning regulations it will cause undue hardships on patients. They should have a right to receive their medication without having to travel, especially since some of them have limited physical abilities. Also, they do not have the option to have someone else travel for them or pick up their medication within the limitations of the current medical marijuana laws.

0082

For Office Use Only

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Compiled 06/03/19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Rose Wethern

Complete Address: 5323 66th Ave SW GF Mt 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I strongly disagree with the cascade county new zoning ordinances against the medical marijuana industry - & with these new ordinances it will make it harder to access medicine for patients - will eliminate local providers & freedom of choice - and increase cost. this will create undue stress & hardship for patients, if a person has to travel out of the county to obtain their medicine - not to mention now forcing people to travel with marijuana. our city commission should be finding ways to capitolize on this booming new industry instead of trying to quash it. there are many other states that have amazing income from medical & legal marijuana -

0083

For Office Use Only

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Commenter Information

Name: Mary Ruth Ewen

Complete Address: PO Box 2672 Great Falls, MT 59403

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☒ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe):

Comment

As a landowner (farm & Ranch) in Cascade County I (we) are concerned about the lack of information about zoning changes that affect agricultural land in Cascade County. Many rumors make it difficult to know what is going on! It would seem to me that all landowners in the County should be made aware of changes and reasons for the change.

Since this is a busy time for farmers & ranchers, a March meeting in the late afternoon or evening would be beneficial. This would give the County residents both rural & urban to time review the changes

I also think more public notification needs to be made so there is knowledge of when & where the meeting will be held.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-19-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: M. BURTON

Complete Address: 3805-7th St. N.E. G.F.

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Most of the people that use med. don't have cars to pick it up. So, if you take it out of town, they can't get it.
M. Burton
2/1/19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-14-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

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Commenter Information

Name: Claire Reichert Baiz

Complete Address: (temporary address) 117 W Grove Street, Apt. 204, Mishawaka IN 46545

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Policy Changes

Comment

Please see attached letter (also in body of email). Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-16-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Claire Baiz <clairebaiz@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 16, 2019 1:17 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: ZONING PLAN COMMENT & FORM
Attachments: Public Comment Cascade County Zoning Form Baiz 2 19.jpg; CASCADE COUNTY ZONING CHANGE COMMENT 2 19.pages

16 February 2019

Cascade County Public Works Planning Division
121 Fourth Street North, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, Montana 59401

Dear ZBOA:

Awhile back, weeks after pivotal zoning changes were quietly implemented in Cascade County, a Special Use Permit (SUP) was filed — under the newly approved (and controversial) provision.

Now, neighbors, citizens, farmers, and other interested parties are faced with over 200 pages of proposed "tracked changes" for Cascade County's 181 pages of zoning regulations. What are the motivations behind this sweeping rewrite? Why now, when many of us are preoccupied with the Montana legislature? Why now, when rumblings of a re-filing of a divisive SUP are smoldering on social media?

Transparency, patience, fairness, and an abundance of caution are vital.

Proposed changes in zoning language conflict with Cascade County's 81-page Growth Plan (http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/361/Adopted2014_GrowthPolicy.pdf): if these regulations go into effect, agriculture would become another "Mixed Use" of rural land.

Cascade County's Growth Policy emphasizes that we "must encourage the growth of the agricultural economy." How does eliminating genuine "agriculture" as a distinct zoning category further that goal?

Changing "Agricultural" zoning to "Mixed Use" does not "protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development."

This change in wording does not "foster the continuance of agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests"?

How can Cascade County's Growth Policy "assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance," when the preservation of our agricultural heritage is not a priority in zoning definitions and regulations?

Changes in the current zoning structure would not "maintain the agricultural economy." Nor would they "preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens."

Words matter —as does their source. Please publish, on Cascade County's website, all supporting documents, input from developers, etc., drafts from other counties, etc., that might have informed or influenced these proposed changes in zoning policy.

These changes are unexplained, opaque, and ill-timed.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received:
Date Reviewed:
Complete: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Replacing "Agricultural" zones with "Mixed Use" chips away at the foundation of our economy, heritage and identity. The passage of these zoning changes would undercut Cascade County's potential leadership role in sustainable agriculture.

Respectfully,
Claire Reichert Baiz

Claire Reichert Baiz
GFHS Class of 1975, UGF Class of 1979 & Proud Great Falls Gal in Midwestern Exile
117 W Grove Street, Apt. 204
Mishawaka IN 46545

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Patricia Rosenleaf <prosenleaf1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 17, 2019 4:47 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: proposed changes

Dear Members of the Committee:
It seems to me that what you are trying to do is to carve out some land for this proposed slaughterhouse, which in no way represents anything but industrialized farming, a terrible and catastrophic misuse of not only our water but everyone dependent upon the Madison aquifer, an attempt to drum up some kind of employment though it be of the lowest, most demeaning, soul-stealing sort coupled with an inability on these members' parts to foresee the damage that said "food park" would do to this community. Who will pay for the schools, the housing, the unemployment (with the huge turnover in this history of these kind of enterprise), the disease, the fouled air, the infant mortality, etc? At the very least, we citizens should have a vote in this most ill-advised venture. How can you even consider, much less plot, to have this company move into our town when you know the overwhelming sentiment is against the idea? Do you not represent us? Do you really feel that you have the right to foist this on us without our input? Please reconsider this idea. When our neighbor to the north has laws against such "industrial parks," but you consider that their fears have no merit in this country, I can only shake my head in wonderment at such leadership. Please take into consideration the enormous damage that will be done by this plan and re-think what your proposal is doing.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-17-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Richard D. & Karen S. Pepos

Complete Address: 7 Hidden Valley Rd. Sand Coulee, MT. 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

My husband and I reside on a 20 acre parcel of land located at 7 Hidden Valley Rd, Sand Coulee, Montana. We purchased the land in 1992 and finished our home in 1993. We live approximately one mile south of US Hwy 89 on Hastings Road.

We are writing to you in opposition of the proposed processing plant called the "Madison Food Park, LLC. The proposed location of the plant is approximately 8.3 miles southeast of Great Falls and 1 mile east of our residence and acreage.

My husband and I saved a long time to purchase our property and finally be able to move our 3 sons out of Great Falls and in to the country. We wanted room for them to run, away from traffic, noise and close neighbors. We wanted them to experience viewing wildlife, breathe clean air, attend a Class C school and get away from City buses going up and down our street all day and any proposed industrial projects.

Now you intend to rezone nearby agricultural land which is technically "in our back yard" and build a processing that will drain our wells, pollute our fresh air, create noise and increase the traffic in our residential area!

The amount of water they intend to use is over 3 million gallons per day. Where is all this water and other waste going to go? All the waste water will flow to Box Elder Creek and the Missouri River causing massive pollution and our wells will probably go dry!

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-19-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: _____

Complete Address: _____

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment (Continued)

We already have to tolerate the occasional smell from the Hutterite hog farms south of us. Just how are they going to control the smell from 100,000 pounds of waste per day that's anticipated with this project?

They are planning to dispose of the industrial water waste by spaying irrigation on the fields nearby. Just how much irrigation can the fields handle and where will the excess sewage go?

The increased traffic and noise is also a concern. US Hwy 89 will be congested with large cattle trucks (200 per week) in addition to the proposed employee traffic (3000 employees) 24 hours per day on a single lane highway. The highway deaths on this road will most surely increase! The state would also have to add more lanes to the existing highway at taxpayers expense.

My husband and I moved out to the country to enjoy the peacefulness, fresh air and no close neighbors. With this proposed project our property values will definitely decrease. Would the board want buy a home in close proximity to an animal slaughtering plant? I think not!!

Our home and the current "paradise" that we enjoy would be replaced by stench, noise, excessive highway traffic, traffic accidents, dryed up wells and potential health issues!

In closing, we are strongly opposed to this project and are requesting that you deny their permit.

Respectfully,
Rick + Karen Pepos

Date Received: | Date Reviewed: | Complete: ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Nate A. Kluz

Complete Address: 597 Armington Road Belt MT 59412 (Physical)
PO Box 57 Belt, MT 59412 (Mailing)

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

The planning department has not completed a zoning change application. Section 14.1.1 provides specific application requirements for a petition to change the Cascade County Zoning regulations. Planning staff (Payton, Stone, Hopkins) represented to me on 2/15/19 that the Appendixes A+B listed on the county website agenda for the Planning Board meeting on 2/19/19 would suffice. These documents clearly do not meet the threshold of 14.1.1. The appendixes give incomplete justification for the "substantial" (County Press Release) changes being made. As such, consideration of the planning departments proposed zoning changes should not be made until a thorough analysis has been done considering all the requirements of 14.1.1. Also, I know of no MCA, ARM or county rules exempting the planning department from the requirements of 14.1.1. Planning staff on 2/19/19 was also unable to cite a legal exemption from these requirements.

I also find it offensive that public meetings about "substantial" changes are made during work hours. This puts an undue burden and chilling effect on citizen participation in government.

Thank you, Nate

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2/19/2019	Date Reviewed:	2/19/2019	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

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Commenter Information

Name: Stacy Hermiller

Complete Address: 2340 Northern Lights Dr Great Falls 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe):

Comment

I am writing to request future planning board hearings regarding the significant proposed zoning changes for Cascade county be moved to evening times so those of us working during weekdays can attend. This is a very critical matter affecting our community members and I believe special efforts should be made by the county to include public participation and input by all who are interested. I have comments and questions I would like addressed moving forward, and believe it would be beneficial to do so in a public forum. I was unable, like many, to attend today because of work.

I would also like to request that the planning board allow more time for public review of these massive changes prior to voting and making a recommendation to the Cascade County Commissioners. Please consider more meetings than what is currently proposed and at different times. Thank you.

2/19/19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-19-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Sherry Lynn Dow

Complete Address: 1433 Eden Road, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I am specifically writing to express concerns with the proposed changes to the county zoning regulations. Nothing should come as a surprise to us ordinary citizens when it comes to lack of government clarity and accountability at any level, and our local county government has certainly not disappointed in these areas over the past year or two. From the less than transparent beginning, the blatant push by county officials to support and assist Ed Friesen with development of the Madison Food Park, at the expense of local citizens, has been shocking and discouraging. Unless my understanding of the proposed changes is completely inaccurate, it seems county government is taking even further steps to ensure that industrial agriculture becomes the most prevalent industry within the confines of Cascade County. I was born and raised in a ranching family. The community I live in is all agriculture. Agriculture...not industrial agriculture. Those are not interchangeable terms. It doesn't take much Internet research to learn of the ills industrial ag has visited on the less fortunate communities in our country. And yet, those in a position to protect our community and agricultural way of life in Cascade County have instead chosen to embrace the beast and do all in their power to protect it, support it, and, in my opinion, ultimately profit from it's existence. Making countywide zoning changes specifically to support one player stinks of bad politics.....worse than the offending odor of the slaughterhouse and it's supporting CAFOs that these changes are trying to shove down our throats. It is time for the planning board and county commissioners to stop answering to one individual and start answering to the masses....those who have elected you to represent our best interests in this county. This starts with changes that are based in solid reasoning and need, not single-sided political gain or promises. It starts with being transparent in word and actions, and striving to give all citizens a voice by holding these discussions on a day and time when the majority of citizens are able to participate.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-17-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Laura Ravenscroft <ravensngf@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2019 11:20 AM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: zoning changes

Please do not make any changes to zoning in Cascade County that would allow companies like Freisen foods to build large meat processing plants. The disadvantages far outweigh the advantages. The pollution to our air and water would be devastating. Great Falls can't handle the huge increase in needs for schools and housing. Jan Cahill was at a meeting last year when he mentioned that this could cause an increase of up to 7000 new students if the full facility came in. He said we couldn't handle that many.

Slaugherhouses bring the need for feedlots. Our beautiful county would turn into a smelly feedlot area. It doesn't take a lot of research to see that their are MANY areas of our country that have regretted allowing these large industrial processors into their area. Lawsuits have been filed to get them to clean up the mess they made.

I have been a resident of Great Falls for 50+ years. If Freisen comes in, I will be moving. Asthma and air pollution don't mix. Studies show and increase in asthma and cancer in areas where these businesses are.

Sincerely,
Laura Ravenscroft

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-18-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Laura Hodges <laura_serena@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2019 1:34 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: zoning for the Madison Food Park

I will be at the meeting on Tuesday for a short time, but I can't stay. The fact that your meetings are during the hours that many people are at work is not specifically indicative of manipulation. However, it makes it difficult for people to participate in the process of rezoning.

The notion of the MFP is unacceptable for a variety of reasons. The Montana constitution states the right of Montana citizen to a healthy environment. Studies have shown that large-scale animal feeding operations and packing plants contribute to the deterioration of that environment. Animal processing is less destructive on a much smaller scale. In Cascade County we lack the infrastructure, including roads and railroads to allow such an operation to exist without real disruption for the citizens of Cascade County.

Agricultural processing is essential, but processing of crops can be done in a large scale without the deleterious effects of large scale animal processing. Again, animal processing needs to happen, but a large-scale project like the MFP with the attendant feeding operations is not acceptable.

As to the subject to employment, again the MFP makes no sense. We have very little unemployment. According to the presentations, the MFP would bring in 3,000 jobs. We don't have the population to provide workers. To bring in that many workers, plus their families (maybe 9,000 total or about 15% increase in our population) would put unsupportable strains on the city of Great Falls. We already do not have enough midprice housing available. Also, the potentially abrupt bump in the load on our educational system would be detrimental to the students who already live here. Also, our medical resources are barely adequate now, and a 15% increase in our populations would put lives of our citizens at risk.

Ultimately, what benefit could the MFP bring to our community, and what harm could it do? I heard that Mr. Friesen's project was not accepted in his Alberta home. Why would we accept what another place would not accept from one of their citizens?

Please do not do anything that would inflict this terrible idea on Cascade County. This has been my home, my parents' home, my grandparents' home and my childrens' home.

Laura Hodges, 2204 3rd Ave. No., Great Falls, MT 59401 406-231-8488

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-18-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

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Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: LaLonnie Ward

Complete Address: 70 McKinior Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): 2019 Zoning Regulations Revision

Comment

As I am unable to attend the Cascade County Planning Board hearing scheduled for February 19, 2019, and continue to struggle with comprehending all of the changes and the purposes of the changes proposed to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations, I hereby request an additional hearing be scheduled on a date to be determined by the Planning Board, but at a time more conducive to receiving public comment, such as in the evening.

Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-18-19	Date Reviewed:	2-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Christine <mesh1000@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2019 6:42 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Zoning Changes

HI
I am very concerned with the zoning changes you are considering . Especially the one that would allow the development of a slaughter house.
It was not long ago that Montana was in a drought and it could happen again. Clean water is a valuable resource and to allow a slaughter house access to this vital resources is reprehensible.
Question- What do you do when you have a leaky faucet? Why?
Friesen will have access to free water. They will not have to pay a bill. They tell you and us the amount of water the facility will use. Really, they are a corporation and once they have the approval they will do what ever they want to achieve the maximum payout at the cost to the Great Falls community.

Have you thought about the Malmstrom community? The US Air Force already downsized the missile program. The existing missiles could be manned remotely from the other Missile bases which has been discussed. Are you ready to gamble ? Would it be worth it ?

My last question.
Why is it that we have to vote if we want to allow chickens with in city limits but the citizens do not get to vote on the zoning change ? A change that would impact this city which is already struggling. We plan to retire here but if you allow Friesen to get his way . We are out of here.

Think of the legacy you want to be remembered by .

Christine

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-18-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: josh wagoner <wagonerjt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 8:51 AM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Re: Proposed Zoning Changes

I am requesting that Cascade County postpones the decision on the proposed zoning changes until at least mid-March and for this meeting and others like it be held in the evening when working people can attend. Cascade County needs to do better for the citizens that it is supposed to be serving. Improvements like this need to be made to improve trust and transparency and to stop discouraging public participation in our local government.

Josh Wagoner

710 5th Ave N, Great Falls, MT 59401

Sent from my iPhone

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Sandee <sandeelou@charter.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 1:36 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Meeting 2/19/2019

Your announcement of today's meeting stated "to allow for the presentation of oral comments regarding the proposed changes". You were not really receptive of oral comments. It is also obvious that you do not want public involvement by the resistance to changing meeting times and size of venue. When you will not address the many requests for this, it speaks volumes to the public.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Date Reviewed: 2-19-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Stacy Hermiller <stacyhermiller@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 1:22 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Planning board Meeting Minutes

When will the meeting minutes and/or audio feed of the planning board meeting from today be available for review. Will you be posting them to the cascade county website? I was unable to attend today because of work. I have also submitted a formal comment requesting changes be made to meeting times and more opportunities for meetings with the public be provided, so those of us trying to understand and intelligently comment or question components of the zoning changes have an opportunity to participate and have our questions answered. Zoning is so important to protect property owners. My family has sold our home east of town and moved into the city because we felt vulnerable with the looming threat of the Madison Food Park proposal and were not well protected by current zoning regulations. I still am very concerned that weaknesses in our zoning law and current proposal do not adequately protect property and homeowners in our region. Thank you!

Stacy Hermiller
2340 Northern Lights Dr.
Great Falls, MT 59401

4067819809

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 2-19-19
Date Reviewed: 2-20-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Burke Tyree <burke@tyreeinvestmentgroup.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 10:07 AM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Proposed Zoning Comments

Dear Planning Board,

My name is Burke Tyree at I live at 2819 8th Ave S., Great Falls, MT 59405.

I am a Real Estate agent and Fly-Fishing Outfitter on the Missouri River. I am 100% for the new proposal and think if we as a community want to see our town and people gain more income and keep a quality of life we need to allow more opportunities for business to blossom.

I am confident with proposal of mixed commercial use and the boards ability to stamp of approval will keep an equal balance of business and quality of outdoor life in these regions. If nothing changes Great Falls and the surrounding communities will continue to struggle with retaining the population and a good quality of living.

Thank you for making this change.

Sincerely,
Burke Tyree

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Dustin Young & Company Real Estate

COMMERCIAL Real Estate
REALTOR®

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-27-19
Date Reviewed: 2-28-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-1-19
Date Reviewed: 3-1-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Victoria Wells

Complete Address: 116 9th St SW Great Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I disagree with the Cascade Counties new Zoning ordinances against the medical marijuana industry! These new Zoning laws make it harder for people to get their medicine it is legal! It works & so unnessary to put these providers so far away. The roads are bad & unkept! I am an older person who struggles with daily pain. Someone who has a right to have pain & reasonably access to medicine. The way I understand the pain pill abuse is rampant Cascade County should be doing everything it can to help get these providers setup! Please do the right thing. Thank you! Victoria Wells

0104

For Office Use Only

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Commenter Information

Name: Randy Sandefur

Complete Address: 1700 6th Ave NO. Great Falls MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): MMJ dispensary

Comment

I dont agree with zoning changes limits my access to my medicine, the moving could limit supply due to plants not making the move

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-1-19	Date Reviewed:	3-1-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-1-19

Date Reviewed: 3-1-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: MICHAEL ONSTAD

Complete Address: 1615 SMELTER AVE, BLACK EAGLE, MT 59414

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

THESE NEW ZONING REGULATIONS ARE MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR PROVIDERS TO FOCUS ON PROVIDING LEGITIMATE PATIENTS LEGAL AND NECESSARY MEDICINE. IN FACT IT IS RUNNING MANY OUT OF BUSINESS WHILE ALLOWING ONLY A FEW VERY LARGE OPERATIONS TO SURVIVE.

I HAVE HAD 3 LOWER BACK SURGERIES, I WAS PARALYZED ON THE SECOND ONE. AT MY PEAK OF BEING ON PRESCIBED OPIATES I WAS TAKING 5 80mg OXYCOTIN WITH PERCOCET FOR BREAKTHOUGH PAIN. I SHOULD BE DEAD. I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO TO 1-2 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL TO GET THE MEDICINE THAT WAS KILLING ME, I WENT TO OSCO IN THE GROCERY STORE.

THIS MEDICINE HAS NO LETHAL DOSE, IT IS VERY EFFECTIVE FOR PAIN RELIEF, EPILEPSY, PARKINSONS AND OTHER AILMENTS. IT WOULD SEEM THAT IGNORANCE IS DRIVING THESE ZONING REGULATIONS. I WOULD ASK YOU LOOK AT THE ADVANCED RESEARCH COMING OUT OF ISRAEL.

GOD MADE THAT PLANT. HE DIDN'T MAKE OXYCOTIN.

For Office Use Only

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: STEPHEN L KIND

Complete Address: 581 GOON HILL RD. GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☑ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe):

Comment

AS A LAND OWNER IN CASCADE COUNTY I AM REQUESTING HEARINGS ON ZONING CHANGES BE HELD AT OR AFTER 5:00 PM TO ALLOW CONCERNED CITIZENS A CHANCE TO ATTEND.
I FIND IT VERY DISHEARTENING THAT THESE MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED, SEEMINGLY, TO DISCOURAGE PUBLIC COMMENT & ATTENDANCE.
I BELIEVE ALL ZONING CHANGES SHOULD BE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS AND NOT A 'ONE SIZE' FITS ALL.
BY DOING THIS IT WOULD ELIMINATE THE SUSPICION OF SOMEONE BEING 'WINED & DINED'.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-26-19	Date Reviewed:	2-26-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations & March 26, 2019 Planning Board Hearing

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Thank you for your timely response to the publics request to schedule further Planning Board Hearings at a time, and in a venue, that encourages and allows for greater public participation. The meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 26, 2019, at 4:30 pm in the Family Living Center is appreciated as is the five (5) minute public comment period.

The Public Notice states "the purpose (for the hearing) of considering adoption of staff initiated revisions to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations which impact all property which lies within the boundaries of Cascade County,"

1. Is the March 26, 2019 meeting intended to be the final Planning Board Hearing related to the proposed zoning changes?
2. Will planning staff or the Planning Board Members respond to the public's questions presented in writing up to the start of the hearing or previously presented orally at the February 19, 2019 Hearing?
3. When will planning staff prepare the Planning Board packets for the March 26, 2019 Hearing?
4. Will the Planning Board packet for the March 26, 2019 Hearing be made available to the public via the website or do I need to submit a Request for Information?

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	2-22-19	Date Reviewed:	2-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Weber, Jane
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 8:01 AM
To: Koehler, Martin
Cc: Clifton, Brian; Payton, Ian; Hopkins, Sandor R.; Stone, Michael; Briggs, Joe; Larson, James
Subject: Re: [cascadecountymt.gov] Contact Form Submission

All - please add this to the Zoning Regulations public comment file.

Thank you,
Jane

From: Koehler, Martin
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 7:19 AM
To: _commission
Cc: _informationservices
Subject: FW: [cascadecountymt.gov] Contact Form Submission

Forwarding this to you the Commision.

Martin H Koehler
Endpoint Specialist
Cascade County
325 2nd Ave North
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: +1 (406) 454-6793

From: webfeedback@cascadecountymt.gov <webfeedback@cascadecountymt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 4:27 PM
To: _informationservices <informationservices@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: [cascadecountymt.gov] Contact Form Submission

Dear Commissioners:
I am writing today to comment on why the original change was made in designating what can be built on the property in question. Why are you carving out a slaughterhouse use on non-industrial zoned land when none existed until one was proposed? You should know that your dealings are seen as extremely nefarious. You KNOW how most of the people of the city and county feel about this heinous proposal, and yet you persist in working toward that end. You are supposed to be representatives of the citizens of this county; not supreme deciders of what will happen despite the prevailing sentiment. At the very least, the future of this "Food Park" should be put to a public vote. I would be very surprised if even 10% of the voting public agreed with what you are doing. In that the doings have been "closed door" and sneaked in, your position is even more suspicious.
Patricia Rosenleaf

--
Patricia Rosenleaf
prosenleaf1@gmail.com
406-452-3941

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 2-21-19
Date Reviewed: 2-21-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Mike + Deborah Jenkins

Complete Address: 298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

See Attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-2-19	Date Reviewed:	3-4-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Date: 3/2/2019
To: Cascade County Planning Board; planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov
From: Michael and Deborah Jenkins; 298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472
Re: Public Comment: Part I of II.

We wish to submit our following comments for consideration while reviewing the proposed Cascade County zoning changes:

1. We both are life-long residents of Cascade County, own a small property east of Great Falls in which we reside and farm, work here and pay local taxes, and have a strong interest in seeing our community maintain and improve our healthy, safe, and prosperous environment.
2. We would like to note our appreciation for having a planning board involved in the process and that you are ensuring that public input is solicitated, heard, and considered. We are glad to know that the process includes checks and balances like this for best results.
3. We thank you for listening to the public and scheduling the next meeting in the evening and in a larger venue.
4. We applaud the Cascade County Planning Department staff for their efforts to initiate this review and we do believe changes are necessary.
5. We would like to give you a little background on our involvement with zoning change efforts.
    a. We became more involved with reviewing Cascade County zoning issues in 2017 when a bordering property owner made requests for a special use permit.
    b. We are a part of a large group of our neighbors and friends that have come together to review Cascade County zoning and processes. Our group has adopted the name Montanan's for Responsible Land Use (MFRLU).
    c. We have retained an experienced land use expert and together we have been researching our county zoning regulations, the growth policy, and best practices. We have been in continual contact with the planning department staff, county attorney, and commissioners. Through our research, we developed a zoning solution and have been attempting to collaborate with the planning department staff for their expert input and guidance, unfortunately to no valid avail. Our group met with staff in November and shared our preliminary drafted application to request these changes. We mistakenly thought they would be able to review our suggestions and offer input, however that was not the case, so we finalized and submitted our application on January 17th and requested a pre-application meeting. On February 7th, we met with the planning staff for the pre-application meeting and again we misunderstood that this would be a meeting where they could tell us if our application had covered all the bases and included everything that they would need to support the application content. We found out at that meeting that they do not review anything until the fee is received, at which point that would start the review process. We did not submit the fee payment yet for a few reasons. First, we wanted to be able to correct and add any additional information that the staff needed and didn't think we

could make any changes once the fee was paid. Second, it is unclear if we need to pay the fee when it is our understanding that a bordering land owner did not have to pay a fee upon their requested changes. Third, the staff made public their own proposal on January 18th, without submitting an application nor paying the fee. These factors are confusing the process logic of why we would then need to pay the fee.

d. Because the staff made it clear that they would not be able to get to our application for an unforeseen amount of time due to their time commitment required to spend towards their proposal as well as the length and complexity of our application content, we have not submitted the fee payment to proceed with our application and instead decided to publicly commenting on their application.
e. In order to determine what we think is the best solution for the county, we are comparing their proposal to our proposal and will submit a detailed summary in a Part II. We plan to get that to you within a few weeks.

Thank you for allowing for public input and considering it.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations Versions 1.0 through 3.99

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY

I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations and the Staff Report in support of the changes prepared for the Planning Board.

I discovered that the 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations, published on the Planning Division website, are dated October 2018 and labeled V4.1. Typically V4.1 indicates Version 4.1.

1. What is the history of the Draft Zoning Regulations?
2. Are copies of Versions 1.0 through 3.99 available?
3. Are there specific public document files for Versions 1.0 through 3.99 of the Draft Zoning Regulations?

In a meeting with Ian Payton and Michael Stone on February 07, 2019 regarding a separate public initiated Zoning Amendment Application, and in the Staff Report prepared for the Planning Board Hearing, the planning division indicates that the proposed zoning regulation changes are "staff initiated." Section 14 of the current zoning regulations confirm that zoning amendments may be intiated by the Planning Division but does not exclude the Planning Division from following the necessary steps including the preparation of the formal Application for Amendment and it's extensive analysis. The Application for Amendment is designed to support and clarify the need for a specific zoning amendment. Requirements include legal descriptions for boundaries of proposed districts, descriptions of existing land use of neighboring areas, anticipated impact on neighboring properties, and specific details to support the criteria, goals, and objectives of the Cascade County Growth Policy. The staff report prepared by the planning division does not provide the analysis of each proposed zoning change. I believe the planning division should prepare more detailed analysis.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-6-19	Date Reviewed:	3-7-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations & Cascade County Growth Plan

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY

I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations, the Staff Report, and the 2014 Adopted Cascade County Growth Plan. I am opposed to the 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations because the Cascade County Growth Plan has not been revised or updated in accordance with the requirements of MCA 76-1-601 (3)(f) prior to the substantive proposed changes. Cascade County's Growth Policy, adopted on May 27 2014 and in accordance with MCA 76-1-601, "serves as a comprehensive plan to provide guidance on decisions regarding land development and public investments." The Growth Policy is implemented through regulatory tools including the Cascade County Zoning Regulations. MCA 76-1-601 sets forth the criteria for Growth Policies that include community goals and objectives, inventories of the characteristics of the jurisdictional area, projected trends, strategies for development, and more. Of particular interest is MCA 76-1-601 (3)(f)(iii) which requires a timetable for reviewing the Growth Policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy if, and when, necessary. Page 10-1 of the Cascade County Growth Policy states the same. It is March 2019, nearly 5 years since the adoption of the current Growth Policy. When asked if the Growth Policy has been reviewed in accordance with the Timetable and Process on page 10-1, County Planners said "no." MCA 76-2-203 sets forth criteria and guidelines for Zoning Regulations. 76-2-203 (1)(a) states "Zoning regulations must be made in in accordance with the Growth Policy." Zoning Regulations exist to implement the Growth Policy. The Staff Report Appendix B justifies the elimination of Agricultural zones and the implementation of MU-20 and MU-40 zones citing a few objectives of Growth Policy Goals 1, 5, 9, and 11. What of Goal 2 protecting rural character and relationship with natural resources? Or Goal 3 maintaining our agricultural economy? I believe the Growth Policy is overdue for review. The review of the Growth Policy should occur, and changes adopted, prior to consideration of extensive zoning changes.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-8-19	Date Reviewed:	3-8-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Helen Coleman <hmoney5431@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 3:26 PM
To: Planning Comments; Robert Coleman & Helen

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-15-19
Date Reviewed: 3-18-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

March 4, 2019

City of Great Falls
Dear Zoning/Planning Board:

I Am deeply concerned about the zoning changes that are being proposed. You say it has nothing to do with the proposed slaughter house which you hope to foist upon Great Falls residents against the majority of our wishes, but we are not convinced. It is truly stunning to me that you would wish to do this to our city. The best thing we have going for us is clear blue skies and clean air. You are proposing filthy grounds, filthy air to breathe, filthy ground water, disease, hospitals that will be overrun with very low income workers coming in, many of them will be illegals as Canada does accept them in their country, and total infrastructure overhaul. Our taxes will skyrocket and our schools will be overrun. And crime will skyrocket. And please don't tell me I'm wrong in these assertions because deep down you know I'm right.

I can not for the life of me understand why you would be so determined to bring into our city such an abomination. Especially since it is a foreign country that wants to garbage up our city and state, so they can continue to advertise their country as "pristine". I believe having a Canadian owned refinery here is enough. Plus allowing their pipeline to come thru Montana is more than generous. Let them put their filthy slaughterhouse in their own backyard.

As I mentioned, it baffles me why our zoning/planning board would even entertain foisting such an abomination on our city. Forgive me if the only logical explanation I can come up with is a truly awesome golden carrot dangled before their eyes. I see no other plausible reason to explain it.

Bertha Olson
3448 14th Ave. So.
Great Falls, MT 59405

Bertha Olson

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-13-19
Date Reviewed: 3-13-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Hopkins, Sandor R.

From: Carolyn Craven <lifeisgood4us@xmailpost.com>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 1:56 PM
To: Planning Comments; Briggs, Joe; Weber, Jane; Larson, James
Subject: Cascade County Proposed Zonin Changes - Public Comments
Attachments: Public Comments 03.15.19.pdf

Attached please find additional comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Craven

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-15-19
Date Reviewed: 3-18-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 15, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

DEFINITIONS

1.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY

Any commodity produced from an agricultural use. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, grains, soybeans, hay, corn, timber, honey, fish, fruits, vegetables, crickets, or oil seeds.

RECOMMEND
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY-ANIMAL PRODUCTION
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY-CROP PRODUCTION

2.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

COMMODITY

An unprocessed material or other natural resource that is intended for sale or exchange. This includes, but is not limited to, crops, minerals, livestock, insects, or fish.

RECOMMEND
COMMODITY-ANIMALS
COMMODITY-CROPS

3.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

To raise animals as a process of producing a commodity or multiple commodities. This includes livestock ranching/farming on open range pasture, equine production, apiculture, aquaculture, entoculture.

4.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

CROP PRODUCTION: To grow crop plants as a process of producing a commodity or multiple commodities; mainly food and/or fiber products. This includes farms, orchards, groves, greenhouses, and nurseries primarily engaged in growing crops, plants, vines, or trees and their seeds.

THE PROPOSED NEW ITEMS OF "ANIMAL PRODUCTION" AND "CROP PRODUCTION" WOULD EASILY FACILITATE MY RECOMMENDATION ON ITEMS #1 AND #2 ABOVE.

5.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

BUTCHER SHOP

A retail store establishment where livestock is slaughtered, butchered, prepared, and packaged for sale or temporarily stored on-site. The scale of operation for a retail butcher shop shall not require stockyards or on-site stabling of animals to be slaughtered (see Slaughterhouse).

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

6.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATION (AFO)

A lot or building where the following conditions are met: (1) small or large livestock animals (other than aquatic animals) have been, are, or will be stabled or confined and fed or maintained for a total of 30 days or more in any twelve (12) month period; (2) crops, vegetation, forage growth, or post-harvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or building.

7.PROPOSED NEW DEFINITION

COMMERCIAL FEEDLOT

Current Definition

Establishments engaged in the fattening, raising, or breeding of animals typically for the commercial production of food, where the animals are fed primarily in pens, lots, or buildings (partially or wholly enclosed). Uses include but are not limited to hog ranches, poultry /egg farms, and cattle feed lots. The term does not include 4-H, FFA and other youth experiential learning programs, staging of livestock for immediate transport, or slaughterhouses. Pastures shall not be considered animal feedlots.

Proposed New Definition

An animal feeding operation (AFO) engaged in the raising or fattening of livestock animals for commercial purposes where the animals are confined at a high density relative to open range pasture raising and feeding operations with rotational grazing and stocking rates designed to sustain grazing pastures. Commercial feedlots are distinct from transportation stockyards where livestock are temporarily stabled or boarded as part of a process of transportation. The term does not include 4-H, FFA and other youth experiential learning programs.

CONCERNS

The disadvantages of feedlots include: 1) Large inputs of grain, fish meal, water and fossil fuels, 2) Greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), and hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), 3) Concentration of animal wastes that can pollute water, 4) Use of antibiotics that can increase genetic resistance to microbes in humans – there have been serious E-coli episodes related to large feedlot operations.

PLEASE READ THE BRIEF ATTACHED RESEARCH ON FEEDLOT ISSUES. THANK YOU!

Feedlot Issues Attachment is at the end of this paper.

RECOMMEND STRINGENT REGULATON OF NUMBERS AND SIZES OF FEEDLOTS DUE TO LAND, AIR AND WATER POLLUTION FROM FEEDLOTS.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

8.PROPOSED REVISION

CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFO)

~~Concentrated animal feeding operation means~~ (deleted from current definition; otherwise the same). An animal feeding operation (AFO) that is defined as a large concentrated animal feeding operation or as a medium concentrated animal feeding operation or that is designated as a concentrated animal feeding operation in accordance with 40 CFR §122. Two or more animal feeding operations under common ownership are considered to be a single animal feeding operation for the purposes of determining the number of animals at an operation if they adjoin each other or if they use a common area or system for the disposal of wastes. (See §75-5-801(2), MCA).

??? QUESTION FOR PLANNERS ???

1)What is the prescribed size (land area plus maximum number of animals at any point in time), to determine how much space is allocated to each animal for AFOs and CAFOs?

2) Can we require more stringent regulations to mandate fewer animals at a time that the current maximum number of animals currently allowed?

3) Are there limits anywhere in the proposed regulations for the number of CAFOs/AFOs/Feedlots that potentially could be approved? How much land is allocated for those uses?

RECOMMEND REGULATING HUMANELY APPROPRIATE SPACE FOR THE ANIMALS TO HAVE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT RATHER THAN THE CURRENT STATUS QUO OF EXTREMELY HORRIFIC CONDITIONS.

9.PROPOSED REVISION

LIVESTOCK LARGE

Current Definition

Animals such as, but not limited to, horses, cows, emus, llamas, alpacas, ostriches, and the like.

Proposed New Definition

Animals with a per head animal unit (AU)value greater than four-tenths (0.4) and used primarily for the purpose of providing food, clothing, or work. Animal Per head AU values for common livestock animals are provided in Section 8.

10.PROPOSED REVISION

LIVESTOCK, SMALL

Current Definition

Animals such as, but not limited to, goats, pigs, sheep and the like.

Proposed Revision

Animals used primarily for the purpose of providing food, clothing, or work. Per head AU values for common livestock animals are provided in Section 8.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

11. PROPOSED REVISION

INDUSTRIAL USES

Current Definition

Uses of land which are allowed by right or through the special permit process only in the I-1 or I-2 zoning classifications, as listed in these regulations.

Proposed New Definition

Land, structures, and/or buildings utilized for processes engaging in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products, where the new product is finished in the sense of being ready for consumption or utilization in an advanced manufacturing process. Additionally, such industrial uses may be accompanied by research and development and/or the preparing, sorting, packaging, temporary warehousing, and distribution of products. This definition applies to uses not otherwise defined in these regulations.

RECOMMEND CHANGING THE LAST SENTENCE TO "THIS DEFINITION APPLIES TO "USES ALLOWED THROUGH THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS".

12.PROPOSED REVISION

INDUSTRIAL, LIGHT

Current Definition

Place and/or building, or portion thereof, that is used or is intended for the manufacture, (predominantly from previously prepared materials), of finished products or parts, including processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, packaging, incidental storage, sales and distribution of such products, but excluding basic industrial processing. The term includes furniture production, metal fabrication, apparel manufacturing, printing, and publishing, and the like.

Proposed Revision

Place and/or building, or portion thereof, that is used or is intended for the manufacture, (predominantly from previously prepared materials), of finished products or parts, including processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, packaging, incidental storage, sales and distribution of such products, The term includes furniture production, metal fabrication, apparel manufacturing, printing and publishing

THE PROPOSED CHANGES FOR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (I-1) SPECIFY 32 PERMITTED PRINCIPAL USES PLUS A PRIVATE POWER PLANT AS AN ACCESSORY PERMITTED USE LOCATED ON THE SAME LOT WITH THE PRINCIPAL USE. ADDITIONALLY, THERE ARE 6 USES PERMITTED UPON ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT, INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL USE OF LAND. NONE OF THE PERMITTED USES INCLUDE AFO/CAFO/FEEDLOTS.

SECTION 8.20 OF THE PROPOSED ZONING SPECIFIES "LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (I-1) ZONING DISTRICT STANDARDS". THERE ARE 9 STANDARDS LISTED IN THE PROPOSED ZONING

RECOMMEND, AS PER PREVIOUS SUBMITTED COMMENTS, CHANGING AGRICULTURAL USE TO AGRICULTURAL-CROP PRODUCTION & AGRICULTURE-ANIMAL PRODUCTION AS THERE IS A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE IN EFFECTS OF THOSE TWO CATEGORIES.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

13.INDUSTRIAL, HEAVY

Current Definition

Place and/or building, or portion thereof, that is used or is intended for the following or similar uses: processing or manufacture of materials or products predominantly from extracted or raw materials; storage of or manufacturing processes using flammable or explosive materials; or storage or manufacturing processes that potentially involve hazardous or commonly recognized offensive conditions; the term includes motor vehicle assembly, oil refineries, textile production, sawmills, post and pole plants, log yards, asphalt and concrete operations, primary metal processing, and the like.

RECOMMEND DELETING "...AND THE LIKE" AS THAT IS TOO VAGUE.

THIS DEFINITION AND THE DESCRIPTION FOR HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (I-2) REMAIN UNCHANGED FROM CURRENT VERSION. THE PERMITTED USES ARE : 1) ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL USES NOT OTHERWISE PERMITTED BY LAW, 2) MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGISTERED PREMISES, 3) MEDICAL MARIJUANA TESTING FACILITIES. ADDITIONAL PERMITTED USES LOCATED ON THE SAME LOT WITH THE PERMITTED PRINCIPAL USE ARE: 1) ONE SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING REQUIRED BY AND INCIDENTAL TO THE OPERATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE, 2) AGRICULTURAL USE OF LAND; AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS. 3) PRIVATE POWER PLANT.

AGAIN, AS PER PREVIOUS SUBMITTED COMMENTS, THE IMPORTANCE OF SEPARATING AGRICULTURAL USE INTO TWO CATEGORIES OF AGRICULTURAL USE-CROP PRODUCTION AND AGRICULTURAL USE-ANIMAL PRODUCTION CANNOT BE EMPHASIZED ENOUGH AS THE EFFECTS ARE VASTLY DIFFERENT.

THERE ARE NO "HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (I-2) ZONING DISTRICT STANDARDS" LISTED!
RECOMMEND HAVING SPECIFIC ZONING STANDARDS (i.e. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS) LISTED FOR EACH ZONING DISTRICT.

THERE ARE NO MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT IN THESE USES.
RECOMMEND HAVING A MECHANISM FOR "OTHER USES" THROUGH THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS THAT WILL ALLOW PUBLIC INPUT.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

14.POWER PLANT

Current Definition

A facility that converts one or more energy sources, including but not limited to water power, fossil fuels, nuclear power, or solar power, into electrical energy or steam. A power generation plant may also perform either or both of the following: (a) operation of a transmission system that conveys the energy or steam from the generation facility to a power distribution system; (b) operation of a distribution system that conveys energy or steam from the generation facility or the transmission system to final consumers. For wind energy see Wind Energy Conversion System Definition. For solar energy see Power Plant, Solar.

RECOMMEND EXCLUDING COAL AS AN APPROVED ENERGY SOURCE, SO DELETE "BUT NOT LIMITED TO" AND ADD "...STEAM, AND EXCLUDING ALL SOURCES OF COAL.".

THERE IS NO REASON WE CANNOT HAVE REGULATIONS THAT ARE MORE IN ALIGNMENT WITH GREENER ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS.

15.POWER PLANT, PRIVATE

Current Definition

An electrical power generation facility that, regardless of fuel or energy source, is operated by a private property owner or lessee, and whose primary function is the provision of electricity to the permitted use(s) on the site the facility is located

RECOMMEND EXCLUDING COAL AS AN APPROVED ENERGY SOURCE.

16.RENDERING PLANT

Current Definition

Building used for storage and conversion of animal wastes and livestock carcasses into industrial fats and oils, various other products (fertilizer), or to be used for heating and energy production.

CONCERNS

1) Rendering plants generate significant volumes of wastewater. The wastewater contains contaminants that cannot be released directly to the rivers, streams, or lakes without proper treatment.

2) The rendering industry also has the potential for producing negative impacts on environmental quality. the handling and processing of organic raw materials produce significant amounts of undesirable biodegradable by-products that can have significant impacts on water and air quality.

3) The regulation of greenhouse gases and ammonia air emissions and total nitrogen, phosphorus, and dissolved solids wastewater discharges will be challenges in the near future.

4) Wastewater from rendering facilities contains the liquid that drains from uncooked raw material, including potentially pathogenic microorganisms.

5) There are four basic categories of environmental concerns regarding wastewater generated and discharged by rendering plants: protection of aquatic life, protection of human and animal health, protection of receiving stream aesthetics, and protection of water supply quality. Protection of aquatic life requires the most significant attention and expense in wastewater treatment.

[Source: Sindt, Gregory P.E., Environmental Issues in the Rendering Industry. Bolton & Menk.]

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

17.SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Current Definition

A building, structure, or facility where livestock and/or fowl is slaughtered and prepared for distribution to butcher shops or retail sales establishments such as grocery stores. A slaughterhouse is designed to accommodate the confinement and slaughtering of live animals to include packing, treating, storage or sale of the product on the premises.

Proposed Revision

A place, building, or structure where small or large livestock are temporarily stabled prior to slaughter and slaughtered. Additional processing may include butchering, preparing, or packing for off-site distribution or temporary storage for on-site sales.

RECOMMEND DEFINING LIVESTOCK AND FOWL SPECIES (i.e. ...WHERE COWS AND/OR CHICKEN, TURKEYS...). STRONGLY RECOMMEND EXCLUDING SWINE.

18.STREAMSIDE SETBACK

Current Definition

A fifty (50) foot setback rom any perennial-flowing stream or river to the outer wall of any structure. The established 50-foot setback distance is measured from the ordinary high water mark of the stream or river to the structure.

RECOMMEND A SETBACK GREATER THAN 50 FEET PER GROWTH POLICY ON WATER QUALITY. RECOMMEND SETBACK OF 100 FEET.

GOAL #8: PROTECT SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY FROM POLLUTION

OBJECTIVE H. PROMOTE POLICIES THAT ENSURE GREATER SETBACKS FOR COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT TO REDUCE THE RISK OF NEGATIVE IMPACTS.

19.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY

Any facility in which one or more agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value-added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations.

RECOMMEND DIVIDING INTO TWO SEPARATE CATEGORES: VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL-CROP COMMODITY AND VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL-ANIMAL COMMODITY

RECOMMEND SPECIFYING "LOCALLY-RAISED COMMODITIES" VS "IMPORTED COMMODITIES". RECOMMEND FOCUSING ON LOCAL CROP PRODUCTION AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION.

RECOMMEND REQUIRING A SPECIAL PERMIT PROCESS FOR VALUE-ADDED ANIMAL COMMODITY TO ALLOW PUBLIC INPUT.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

20.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT

An agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as milling wheat into flour, curdling milk in the production of cheese, melting honeycombs to make beeswax); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products).

21.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

WORKFORCE HOUSING, PERMANENT (LABOR CAMP)

A place, area, or piece of land where housing is provided for two (2) or more employees or prospective employees of another by any individual, firm, partnership, association, or corporation, that, for a fee, employs persons to render personal services for, or under the direction of, a third person, or that recruits, solicits, supplies, or hires persons on behalf of an employer, and that, for a fee, provides in connection therewith one or more of the following services: (a) furnishes board, lodging, or transportation for such employees or prospective employees; (b) supervises, times, checks, counts, weighs, or otherwise directs or measures the work of such employees; (c) disburses wage payments to such employees

22.PROPOSED NEW ITEM

WORKFORCE HOUSING, TEMPORARY (LABOR CAMP)

A facility as described under Permanent Workforce Housing except that it provides temporary or seasonal housing for two (2) more employees.

RECOMMEND ELIMINATING TEMPORARY HOUSING DUE TO CONCERNS ABOUT ENCOURAGING AN ITINERANT POPULATION. ALSO, THERE IS NO DEFINITION OF "TEMPORARY".

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

23. SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Current Definition

A use that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction throughout the zoning classification district but which, if further controlled as to number, area, location, or relation to the neighborhood, would promote the public health, safety, welfare, order, comfort, convenience, appearance, prosperity, or general welfare. Special use permits may be permitted in a zoning classification district if a specific provision for such special use is explicitly listed in the Zoning District Regulations as a special use and a special use permit is issued by the Cascade County Planning Division upon approval of a Special Use Permit by the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustment.

SECTION 10.6 LISTS "STANDARDS APPLIED TO ALL SPECIAL USES":

1) Conditions may be required that the ZBOA determines if implemented will mitigate potential conflicts in order to reach these conclusions.

2) The proposed development will not materially endanger the public health or safety.

3) The proposed development will not substantially injure the value of adjoining property or is a public necessity.

4) The proposed development will be in harmony with the area in which it is located.

5) The proposed development will be consistent with the Cascade County Growth Policy.

RECOMMEND CHANGING #3 TO:" ...WILL NOT SUBSTANTIALLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJOINING PROPERTY AND THE ADJACENT COMMUNITY...OR IS A PUBLIC NECESSITY".

USES ALLOWED UPON ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL PERMIT

1)LIGHT INDUSTRY

- **Includes "...agricultural use of land, agricultural buildings..."**

2) HEAVY INDUSTRY

- **No "Special Use Permit" process**
- **Includes "All Non-Residential uses no otherwise prohibited by law"**

3) MIXED USE-20

- **Includes, among other uses, "...airport, agricultural sales, value-added commodity processing facility, permanent workforce housing, temporary workforce housing, agricultural commodity storage facility, wild game processing facility..."**

4) MIXED USE-40

- **Includes, among other uses, "...commercial feedlot, concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO), slaughterhouse, rendering plant, value-added commodity processing, airport, bus transit terminal, freight terminal, railroad yards, junk yard, oil & gas exploration, power plant, permanent workforce housing, temporary workforce housing..."**

RECOMMEND AS PER PREVIOUS COMMENTS, CHANGING "AGRICULTURAL USES" TO "AGRICULTURAL-CROPS & "AGRICULTURAL-ANIMALS"

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

24.UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMIT

Current Definition

The Unclassified Use Permit is a permit issued to an applicant by the Cascade County Planning Division after approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment allowing a particular use, structure or activity not allowed as a matter of right regardless of the underlying zoning district.

SECTION 18. UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMITS

"Unclassified uses shall be subject to all applicable property development standards of the district in which they are to be located an the provisions within this section".

SECTION 18.1 Uses include, among others, slaughterhouses, concentrated animal feeding operations CAFO), power plant, airport..."

SECTION 18.5 STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL SPECIAL USES

1) The proposed development will not materially endanger the public health or safety

2) The proposed development is a public necessity or will not substantially impact the value of adjoining property

3) The proposed development will be in harmony with the area in which it is located

4) The proposed development will ne consistent with the Cascade County Growth Policy

IT APPEARS THAT THE STANDARD "The proposed development will not materially endanger the public health or safety" WAS INADVERTENTLY OMITTED AS IT WAS IN THE SUP STANDARDS.

RECOMMEND ADDING "... WILL NOT IMPACT THE VALUE OF ADJOINING PROPERTY AND ADJACENT COMMUNITIES...".

THE UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMIT PROCESS IS NOT THE BEST PLACE FOR HIGH IMPACT USES. RECOMMEND MODIFYING THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT FOR THESE TYPES OF USES.

RECOMMEND DIRECT APPROVAL/DENIAL AUTHORITY BY OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMITS AND SPECIAL USE PERMITS, RATHER THAN THE APPOINTED ZBOA AUTHORITY CURRENTLY IN PLACE (i.e. "...AFTER APPROVAL FROM THE CASCADE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS...").

THE ZBOA IS NOT DIRECTLY ACCOUNTABLE TO THE RESIDENTS IN CASCADE COUNTY.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

FEEDLOT ISSUES ADDENDUM

CONCERNS ABOUT FEEDLOT AND CAFO/AFO WASTES

Celender, K. *The Impact of Feedlot Waste on Water Pollution Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).* William & Mary Environmental Law & Policy Review. Volume 33 Issue 3 Article 7, 2009.

[Note: Pages 947-970, 162 scientific research citations. For easier reading I removed the citations]

EXCERPTS FROM THE ABOVE CITATION

Improperly managed CAFO waste "is among the many contributors to remaining water quality problems... [and] has caused serious acute and chronic water quality problems throughout the United States." The EPA only requires NPDES permits for those CAFOs that qualify as point sources of pollution, and does not regulate Animal Feeding Operations ("AFOs") too small to qualify as CAFOs, despite their potential for a collectively significant impact on water pollution. Furthermore, many of the requirements within the NPDES permitting system only apply to large CAFOs, such as effluent limitations," leaving regulation of small CAFOs to state discretion," and making national uniformity in regulation difficult.

The current methods feedlots employ in handling animal waste, such as sprayfields and lagoons, create substantial water pollution problems. Runoff from the sprayfields and lagoons may introduce heavy metals, pathogens, antibiotics, pesticides, and ammonia into ground and surface-water. In addition to numerous adverse effects on human health, contaminated runoff and spills have resulted in multiple fish kills.

Regulation only Applies to Certain CAFOs
The NPDES regulations only require those CAFOs which qualify as medium or large facilities, and in some cases small AFOs with certain characteristics, to meet the federal guidelines for managing animal waste. According to the EPA, the specific condition that triggers the classification of the AFO as a small or medium CAFO will be unique to each site. For this reason, the individualized NPDES permit issued based on the permit authority's best professional judgment seems to control discharge from the facility better. The EPA also mandates that only large CAFOs are subject to ELGs, while the permitting body uses its best professional judgment to set discretionary requirements for small and medium CAFOs. The EPA cites concerns about creating a lesser financial burden on the industry and the economic achievability of the regulations as the reasons for limiting federal regulation to large CAFOs. The recently expanded permitting requirements now apply to a greater number of large CAFOs, and have already added approximately $335 million to the feedlots' annual operating costs.

Feedlot companies may also have too much flexibility to create their own waste management plans and are not required to use modern technology, such as monitoring groundwater for contamination, to better combat pollution. Additionally, none of the regulations hold the corporations that contract with feedlots liable for any problems arising from waste disposal.

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Environmental Risks of Waste Lagoons and Sprayfields
CAFOs routinely spray the liquified animal waste contaminated with pathogens, antibiotics, pesticides, and ammonia onto agricultural land as "fertilizer," which ends up running off "into surface water, killing fish, spreading disease and contaminating supplies of drinking water." Runoff and animal waste (even if applied at appropriate rates) may also contain heavy metals, as well as undigested antibiotics and resistant bacteria, which may seep into groundwater or runoff into nearby surface water.

Higher Nitrate Levels
Water pollution around CAFOs has raised nitrate levels in nearby waters.89 Nitrate levels in excess of certain amounts increases the risk in infants of methemoglobinemia ("blue baby syndrome"), a condition capable of causing developmental deficiencies or even death.9" High amounts of nitrates in drinking water also correlates with spontaneous abortions in some cases. In addition to causing adverse effects in humans, excess nitrogen levels in water creates surplus algae growth, which chokes out nutrients and sunlight needed by fish and grasses. Thus, high nitrate levels not only extinguish animal and plant life but opportunities for human recreation, such as fishing. In Texas, farm runoff partly made up of animal waste has led to increased nutrient levels in the Gulf of Mexico, creating a "seven thousand square mile 'dead zone' of hypoxia (low oxygen) that cannot support most aquatic life." Hundreds of miles of rivers and streams and approximately 23,700 acres of lakes in Texas have also suffered serious pollution damage, primarily around where feedlots dominate.

Biological Hazards
Biological hazards may also result from improperly managed feedlot waste when bacteria and viruses common in animal fecal matter mix into nearby waters and contaminate swimming and drinking resources. The federal government has failed to provide restrictions on the concentration of microbial content in animal wastes that may permissibly be applied to land, though these restrictions exist for similar application of human wastes. The movement of microorganisms through the soil has also been observed, indicating that other contaminants such as antibiotics and chemicals may be capable of tainting groundwater.

Excessive Application of Wastes
Animal waste is frequently applied to sprayfields in excess of agronomic rates.9 9 This excess application contaminates soil, pollutes ground and surface water, harms crops, and wastes nutrients. For example, in September of 1997, runoff from chicken waste applied to a cornfield resulted in the death of over 50,000 fish in the Chesapeake Bay when it caused levels of Pfiesteria piscida, a toxic microbe, to rise to dangerous levels." While small, diversified farms may be capable of using all of the animal waste they produce as fertilizer for their crops, large CAFOs, "whose only 'crops' are animals," cannot possibly ensure appropriate application of waste to the land using agronomic volume standards.

Inherent Risks of Lagoons
While lagoons share many of the same problems as sprayfields, the structure of the lagoon itself poses a set of unique issues. CAFOs oftentimes construct lagoons, which are giant pits that store liquified animal waste, with dirt walls that are prone to rupture. Since the lagoons hold untreated waste, spillage into local water bodies poses a serious threat to water quality and public safety and may release millions of gallons of pollution.'" For instance, in June of 1995, an eight-acre lagoon containing hog waste collapsed and spilt 20 million gallons into New River in North Carolina. Waste lagoons can also lead to the proliferation of insects around CAFOs, such as flies that "breed in manure" and mosquitos that multiply

wherever water collects and remains uncleaned. 106 These pests may not only pose a nuisance, but may threaten the health of livestock and nearby citizens by promoting the spread of disease.'

Negative Impact on Local Residents
CAFOs may decrease property value of nearby residences, forcing long-time citizens to move from the area and can lead to the shutdown of family farms, making the claim that CAFOs enhance local economy questionable. For the most part, CAFOs have a tendency to hire migratory workers at low wages making competition difficult. Additionally, residents neighboring CAFOs have suffered from a higher incidence of certain mental health problems, such as tension, depression, anger, confusion, and fatigue.'
(Note: There are no requirements for small CAFOs/AFOc to have an NPDES Permit)
Proposed Solutions (p.961)

Alternative Approaches to Waste Lagoons and Sprayfields
A few alternative approaches include (1) Treating CAFO/AFO/Feedlot wastewater, 2) Collecting CAFO waste to produce biogas energy, 3) Composting CAFO waste (for dairy) are being researched and have potential. However, the proposed alternatives do not negate the problems associated with ruptured lagoons and over-application of waste on sprayfields. In reality, in order for water pollution problems associated with feedlot waste runoff to be effectively managed and prevented, CAFOs must begin to implement proven alternative methods to manage the mass quantities of animal waste produced.
[Note: These alternative approaches are costly to implement and unless required by regulatory agencies most CAFOs will not attempt to implement).

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS ABBREVIATED VIEW OF A 25-PAGE DETAILED ANALYSIS.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 03.15.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations & Zoning Regulation History

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY

I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations and the history of zoning regulations as presented in the 2017 and 2018 Annual Reports prepared for the Planning Board. The annual reports are well prepared and very informative. I appreciate the time and resources necessary to produce these annual reports and for making them available to the public.

I am opposed to the substantive changes in the 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations due to the lack of cooperative public participation in it's development.

In 2009 the planning division undertook rewriting and updating the zoning regulations. The rewrite process included and encouraged public work sessions and surveys from landowners who would be affected by the proposed changes. This spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the community and county staff set a strong precedent for furure zoning, development, and land use issues that were sure to arise as the county land use needs changed. Public participation remained high for the 2012 changes concerning the Flood Road and Military Overlay District changes. However, in recent years the planning division has failed to include or solicit participation from the public during the important developmental stage of zoning regulation updates. In 2016, 2017, and 2018 significant zoning changes were developed and the public was given just 30 days to respond to the changes prior to the Planning Board Hearing. No collaboration between staff and landowners, no surveys for public opinion, and minimal public comment periods for important changes to Unclassified User Permits, Agriculture Uses, and Medical Marijuana all written and passed under the guise of corrections to formating and compliance with MCA and ARM regulations. I believe the Planning Division and related departments should follow the established legal requirements and historical precedent allowing the public greater participation and opportunity to assist in land use and zoning policies PRIOR to their presentation to the Planning Board.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-16-19	Date Reviewed:	3-18-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Ron Vihinen <montanaron007@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2019 10:31 AM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Zoning changes

I am a third generation land owner living on the family farm just East of Great Falls. My grandparents, my parents and I have lived there since the early 30's. My parents and grandparents lived and made a living off of this land. We all made improvements to the land including family homes knowing that this land was zoned for agriculture. We made these improvements knowing that the land was zoned for agricultural use and free from massive, intensive, high impact operations such as slaughter houses, feedlots, CAFO, etc.

With the proposed zoning changes, this opens up the door for massive commercial agricultural related operations with no protection for families and the rural communities. Just look what happened to the rural Midwest when the big agricultural related corporations built plants without regard for citizens in the community. They built with one thought in mind (Profit) and with no regard as to what it does to the community, the land and the environment.

I am not opposed to development if the public is informed of the positives and negatives of each project. We should be allowed to vote on it and not allowing a small group of people to make a decision that affects the entire county. It is too easy for a small group of people to be easily influenced or have a conflict of interest.

I love Montana and the rural life it has to offer. I am strongly opposed to the zoning changes with no controls ie. special use permitting. We need controls in our zoning to ensure that large projects are required to provide an impact statement with solutions of how their project will affect traffic, pollution (water and air), schools, housing, and our public welfare costs.

Respectively,

Ronald Vihinen
Resident and Cascade County Land Owner

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-16-19
Date Reviewed: 3-16-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-14-19
Date Reviewed: 3-14-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

March 13, 2019

Cascade County Planning Division
Attn: Alex Dachs
121 4th Street North #2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401

Re: Proposed Madison Food Park Slaughter Plant

I am writing to vehemently protest and strenuously object to the planned slaughter plant known as Madison Food Park by Friesen Foods, LLC. It is no secret that this industry comprises 8 of the top 20 polluter's in the US and its low wage job offerings force them to recruit and hire among the vulnerable population.

This 3018 acre slaughter plant for pig, chicken and cattle will produce, at full production, 102,995 pounds of solid animal waste daily. It would be stored on site in so called massive anaerobic lagoons the size of 70 football fields directly adjacent to creeks flowing into the Missouri river! This plant plans on waste water spray fields 1,500 acres in size!

What guarantee that this toxic sewage will not contaminate or poison nearby creeks, Missouri river, private water wells and the Madison Aquifer? Where will this waste water go during our cold winters, such as this last February 2019 when temperatures did not go above freezing for 32 straight days? Slaughter plants around the US are constantly being sued for this very reason.

In addition, this plant would use 4.5 million gallons of water daily from the Madison Aquifer. This is the amount of water used by the city of Butte every day! With water being a precious commodity, is this a wise use of our water resources?

All of this just 8 miles east of Great Falls city limits. It is a know fact that slaughter plants produce a foul stench traveling many miles damaging property values and severely damage our quality of life.

The impact to the city of Great Falls will be phenomenal. How will Great Falls citizens handle the over crowding of schools, burdened

medical/fire/police/traffic services? Where will this increase population live given the limited housing and rental market we have now? How are we as citizens going to deal with increased crime?

Who will pay the cost of all the infrastructure needed to accommodate the increase in population? It will be us, the taxpayers! All legitimate questions that are not being addressed.

The Cascade County Commissioners on March 26 want to change the zoning to accommodate this toxic polluting plant. Isn't this change considered spot zoning? I ask as a concerned citizen to stop this change and protect our city and quality of life.

Do not allow the Cascade County Commissioners to change the proposed zoning laws!

Carl Jurenka
4119 Central Avenue
Great Falls, MT 59405

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

* Name: John Dutchak

* Complete Address: 3123 Park Garden LANE. Great Falls, MONT. 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

See attached sheet.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-14-19	Date Reviewed:	3-14-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

TO: Cascade County Planning Division
FROM: **John Dutchak**, 3123 Park Garden Lane, Great Falls, MT 59404
RE: Proposed Zoning Changes

I am writing to you to express my opposition to the proposed zoning changes in Cascade County. The main change I am opposed to is changing all "Agriculture District" zoning to "Mixed Use-20 and Mixed Use-40" zoning. This zoning proposal conflicts with several goals of the Cascade County Growth Policy, such as:
*to protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development.
*to preserve and enhance our rural, friendly and independent lifestyle.
*to assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance.
*to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.

These proposed changes will sacrifice our beautiful open spaces to industrialized and intensive uses with no further public input. Once these changes are made, we will never be able to reverse the damage that is done to our lifestyle and to our environment. I believe that the current proposed zoning changes, and any future proposed changes, should reference the goals, policies and objectives from the Cascade County Growth Policy. I also believe that any "intensive uses" like the proposed Madison Food Park that would have such a huge impact on the community should be put to a vote of the people in the county and not just be left to the Planning Board or the County Commission to decide. It doesn't take a lot of research to find out that there MANY areas of our country that have regretted allowing these large industrial processors into their area. (Please see the enclosed article "Factory Farms Destroy Communities".)

In any zoning changes, a distinction should be made between animal-based and plant-based "Value-Added Processing Facilities" because the impact on the community of an animal-based facility is potentially far greater than that of a plant-based facility. All animal-based facilities should be required to go through a special permit process so that the permits are conditional and public input is considered for each case.

All Cascade County permitting requirements should be based on potential impact on the community. "Permitted" uses allowed by right should only be for low-impact operations in order to simplify the process for small businesses and family farms so that they may develop and grow in the appropriate zones. "Larger in scale" and "intensive" uses (such as CAFOs and slaughterhouses and power plants) should be required to meet higher standards and therefore should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process with public input.

It does appear to me that the proposed zoning regulations with the "Unclassified Use Permit" are designed to make the process and permit approvals easier for unpopular high impact and intensive operations (such as CAFOs and slaughterhouses), yet more difficult for small businesses (like tourist-based businesses). This is not in the best interest of the people of our community and is totally UNACCEPTABLE!! We expect you to represent the best interests of the people of our community rather than catering to the interests of any large corporation.

There are very good alternatives to large industrialized agriculture (see the enclosed article on "CAFO Alternatives and Solutions"). I believe that all of our zoning should encourage entities such as family farms, organic farms, SPO's (Smart Pasture Operations), and Farm Cooperatives. These would be MUCH better for our economy, our community and the environment than a large-scale slaughterhouse and CAFOs.

It is the standard practice in most counties in Montana to have Agricultural Zoning districts, and to prohibit industrial or manufacturing uses in those AG districts in order to protect encroachment on agricultural land. To ensure the preservation of Cascade County's family farm and ranch community and to maintain our wonderful quality of life here, I strongly urge that the current "A-Agricultural District" be left as it is now and that all properties currently zoned "A-Agricultural" remain in that Zoning District.

Sincerely,

Factory Farms Destroy Communities

By SRAP (Socially Responsible Agricultural Project), 2019

Factory farms, officially called Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), make the worst possible neighbors. People forced to live close to CAFOs often report becoming sick from toxic gases produced by decomposing animal waste. They can't even enjoy their own backyards or open their windows on summer nights because the stench from CAFOs miles away is overwhelming. Residents near CAFOs also report an increase in pest infestations, including rodents and swarms of flies. Family and friends often refuse to visit because the smell is so unbearable.

But it's much more than the intolerable smell that impacts rural communities. Manure runoff from CAFOs contaminates streams, rivers, and lakes that were once recreation centers and tourist destinations. Over-application of manure on fields near residences can also cause wells to become contaminated, threatening the health of anyone coming into contact with the water.

CAFOs take a tremendous economic toll on communities, too. Property values plummet whenever a CAFO moves in. Some owners living near CAFOs have filed property tax appeals and won in court, demonstrating that their homes and properties lost significant value due to these industrial-scale facilities. All CAFOs entice communities with the promise of increased tax revenue, but the falling values of the properties surrounding CAFOs negate any promised increase.

Not only do communities lose income when CAFOs move in, they are also forced to increase expenditures on the development and maintenance of infrastructure, especially roads and bridges damaged by heavy CAFO truck traffic. Once a CAFO shuts down, communities are then left with depressed economies, low property values, and costly, often irreparable environmental damage.

Unlike traditional family farms, which purchase feed, supplies, and building materials from local businesses, CAFOs typically purchase everything from outside of the region while paying their workers a very low wage. Consequently, CAFOs provide little to no stimulus for local economies, while imposing prohibitive costs. Wherever CAFOs come in, family farms are driven out of business–and when family farms and the good jobs they provide disappear, rural main streets become ghost towns.

CAFOs are a resource extraction industry, draining the wealth from communities and leaving behind polluted water, foul air, broken roads, and sick residents. The only ones who benefit from CAFOs are their CEOs and corporate shareholders, who profit from polluting the environment, paying workers low wages, treating animals inhumanely, and devastating rural economies.

CAFO Alternatives and Solutions---Phil Anderson
Thursday Mar. 3rd, 2016 (From the Duluth, MN READER)

Huge factory farm operations called Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) are growing in number. The advocates for CAFOs claim they are a necessary, more efficient way to produce cheap food. But is this true? Are there economical alternatives to industrial agriculture?

Opponents to CAFOs, backed up by a growing body of research, say there are better ways to economically raise meat. CAFOs are not the inevitable result of market forces. Alternative production methods can be economically efficient and technologically sophisticated, and can deliver abundant animal products while avoiding most of the problems caused by CAFOs

Are Factory Farms more Efficient?

Large CAFOs are not the only farming method that can be efficient or profitable. Recent studies by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) show that almost 40 percent of medium sized animal feeding operations are about as cost effective as the average large hog CAFO, and many other studies have provided similar results.
In addition CAFOs do not necessarily result in lower prices for meat, milk, and eggs for consumers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics show that retail prices for meat, milk, and eggs have continued to rise, in some cases dramatically, during those periods when animal production was moving off of independent family farms and into contract CAFOs.
CAFOs only appear to be more efficient because they do not account for all the costs of production. Cheap subsidized feed grains are a major hidden advantage. Large factory farms have a tremendous cost to the environment and public health and well being. CAFOs are not more efficient when the environmental costs are taken into account. In addition CAFOs have benefited from taxpayer supported pollution cleanup programs. Public policies that allow overuse of antibiotics at the expense of public health allow CAFOs to exist. In Kewaunee County taxpayers have contributed over $14.4 million dollars in federal and state subsidies and grants to the CAFOs.

What are the alternatives?

Opponents of CAFOs say smaller operations using a mixture of traditional and new methods can work without the downsides of huge factory farms. There is evidence that operations smaller than CAFOs can be cost-effective. Hog hoop barns, which are healthier for the animals and much smaller than CAFOs, can produce comparable or even higher profits per unit at close to the same price. Research in Iowa has also found that raising hogs on pasture may produce animals at a lower cost than CAFOs. Other studies have shown intensive rotational grazing can produce milk at a cost similar to confined dairy operations, but with added environmental benefits. Pasture operations have lower start up costs. Rotational grazing is resource efficient and does not require energy and capital-intensive inputs such as heating, ventilation, and cooling systems, housing construction, imported industrial feeds, and mechanized manure management systems.

Even traditional family farms could compete with a level playing field. Thousands of family farmers are managing appropriately-scaled, grass-fed meat, dairy and egg farms. One Iowa study said, "It is important to realize that Iowa can raise hogs profitably, sustainably, and humanely without incurring the costs that now burden county governments. Iowa has over 1,000 hoop structures that raise hogs on deep bedded straw without resorting to inhumane confinement, industrial manure disposal, and tax breaks. Iowa independent hog producers also raise hogs for natural livestock producers such as Niman Ranch, Organic Valley, Patchwork Farms, Eden Pork, and a number of other "alternative" and "niche market" hog brands. With the consumer trend toward natural and organic foods, farmers can see a profit while employing sustainable practices that have minimal negative environmental impact

Better Solutions

Farm cooperatives have traditionally been a way for small farmers to better compete. Strengthening this proven organizational solution could be better for communities, small farmers, and the environment. Many smaller farmers provide more economic boost to a local area than large operations. There is a growing desire by consumers for locally grown food. Few large CAFOs sell products locally without going through distant middlemen.

Nostalgia for the good old days of small family farms is not necessarily the answer. Many small farms operations are not good at handling manure run off. They are just smaller and less noticeable. But the huge size of many CAFOs is inherently a problem. We must find solutions that meet the needs of local communities, consumers, and the environment. If we don't we may find that "cheap" food can be very expensive.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

3-12-19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-12-19	Date Reviewed:	3-12-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 12, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED CHANGES

Excerpts From

CASCADE COUNTY GROWTH PLAN

GOAL #1 Sustain & strengthen the economic being of Cascade County Citizens.

B. Stabilize and diversify the county's tax base by encouraging the sustainable use of its natural resources.

C. Identify and pursue primary business development that complements existing business, which is compatible with communities and utilizes valuable assets. Identify and pursue targeted business development opportunities to include, but not limited to, manufacturing/heavy industry, telecommunications and youth/social services.

D. Promote the development of cultural resources and tourism to broaden Cascade County's economic base.

One of the above goals is "primary business development that complements existing business, which is compatible with communities...". Before proposing any zoning changes, did anyone ask the" public" – the citizens of our communities and rural areas in the county what our visions would be?

The tourism we have would likely decline with these proposed zoning regulations. The types of industries being promoted in these mixed use zoning districts are not in alignment with the sustainable use of natural resources, development of cultural resources, and tourism.

GOAL #2 Protect & maintain Cascade County's rural character and the historic relationship with natural resource development

A . Foster the continuance of agriculture & forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests

B .Preserve Cascade County's scenic beauty and conserve its forests, rangelands and streams, with their abundant wildlife and good fisheries.

C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed land subdivisions and commercial development.

D. Assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance.

Many of the proposed zoning changes have revolved around animal production including feedlots, slaughterhouses, rendering plants, butcher shops, etc. These and some other heavy industries, including refineries, do not "preserve the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests", and they do not "preserve the scenic beauty and conserve rangelands and streams with their abundant wildlife and good fisheries". They also do not "assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance.

The United Nations' four-hundred page report, "Livestock's Long Shadow" and other research studies confirm that livestock production is in the "top three environmental contributors, leading to environmental problems, including increased greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation, water pollution, and increased health problems".

GOAL #3 Maintain agriculture economy.

A. Protect the most productive soil types.
B. Continue to protect soils against erosion.
C. Protect the floodplain from non-agricultural development

These proposed changes allow heavy industries to use our most productive soils, with possible outcomes of overuse and

GOAL #5 Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County Citizens

These increased industries throughout the county in mixed use areas are not preserving "the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle enjoyed by Cascade County Citizens", which includes clean water, clean air, open spaces and communities that are culturally rich, friendly and welcoming.

GOAL #8 WATER QUALITY: Protect surface & groundwater quality from pollution.

These proposed zoning changes do not thoughtfully provide any protection for our pure water, prime farming land, clean air and incredible water resources. Reviews of large animal production industries reveal dead zones, polluted water, irreparable land damage, and toxic air. Increasing heavy industrial uses seems like a 19th century approach to future growth and environmental stewardship.

C.K. Craven 03.12.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

GOAL #9 WORKING LANDSCAPES: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests.

"The heritage of the area in agriculture....and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas and farmlands..." speak about maintaining environmentally friendly, smaller sustainable farms, thereby preserving the intrinsic beauty of natural grazing areas and farmlands. Smaller sustainable farms typically are in harmony with the environment. Interestingly, the 2014 Growth Policy also states "every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County".

Concentrated animal feeding, slaughter operations, and ancillary industries historically pollute land, water and air and irreparably alter and destroy the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas and farmlands. (per numerous peer-reviewed published research articles).

The goals in the 2014 Growth Policy were originally adopted in 1982 and most recently affirmed in 2006 and 2014. As stated by our county leadership, "These goals continue to provide the best overall direction for county planning."

GROWTH POLICY-CHAPTER 5- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

FINDINGS

- The "family farm" is Cascade County's predominate form of agricultural operation.
- The trend toward farm consolidation is slowing. Recent studies suggest the return after taxes of a 1,200 acre and a 1,500 acre wheat farm to be about the same per acre.
- There appears to be sufficient capital for present farming units to increase their size of operation.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND CONSTRAINTS

1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.
2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.
4. Efforts should be made to discourage commercial strip development along major thoroughfares.

5. Efforts should be made to stabilize and develop employment and economic activity.

6. Environmental as well as economic perspectives should be considered in any future development.

7. Efforts should be made to attract non-transportation sensitive industry to Cascade County.

8. Utilization of locally produced agricultural products and raw materials should be encouraged.

11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land.

12. Minimize, to the greatest degree possible, the adverse social and environmental impacts of development and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth.

13. Encourage economic activities to locate in those areas most economically, socially and environmentally appropriate, as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies.

1) Recommend the Planning Board & Planners revisit these well stated goals directly above.

2) Recommend the Planning Board & Planners access information about the deleterious effects of these large animal production industries on the environment and on the social fabric of communities.

3) Recommend the public be invited to participate in the process of the Growth Policy and then new Proposed Zoning Changes.

C.K. Craven 03.12.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

The following excerpts are from extensive peer-reviewed research I have read on the topic of large scale animal processing.

A 2008 Pew Commission report concluded: "Economically speaking, studies over the past 50 years demonstrate that the encroachments of industrialized agriculture operations upon rural communities result in lower relative incomes for certain segments of the community and greater income inequality and poverty, a less active "Main Street," decreased retail trade, and fewer stores in the community.

A 2006 study commissioned by the State of North Dakota Attorney General's Office reviewed 56 socioeconomic studies documenting the economic impacts of industrial agriculture in general on rural communities. The studies consistently "found detrimental effects of industrialized farming on many indicators of community quality of life, particularly those involving the social fabric of communities."[28] The only kinds of economic development attracted to "industrial agricultural communities" are other environmentally polluting and socially degrading industries. **This is not sustainable economic *development*; it is industrial economic *exploitation*."**

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 03.12.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

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Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

3-8-19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-12-19	Date Reviewed:	3-12-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 8, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

1) ***Process***: I have concerns about the process used to develop these proposed zoning changes. The MCA requires review of the county growth policy at least every five years and the most recent growth policy review was in 2014. It appears that zoning changes should be in alignment with the growth policy, so the 2019 revision of the growth policy should be completed with public input before any zoning changes are proposed. The 2017 MT Code Annotated requires both city and county zoning changes be "made in accordance with the growth policy". [Title 76, Chapter 2, Part 2 County Zoning, Part 3 Municipal Zoning).

2) ***Legal Descriptions***: The Zoning Ordinance (Section 14.1.1(3) requires a legal description for the boundaries of each property affected by the proposed changes and I do not see that.

3) ***Public Comments:*** Additional time is needed for analysis of these extensive zoning changes and for adequate public comment. This is not a process that can be expedited and there is an historical precedent to allow the public an appropriate opportunity to provide informed input. The additional legal descriptions must be included and the public should have access to all records of the planning department, including the previous versions of these proposed zoning changes, the individuals involved in making these changes, the review and revision procedures and the rationale behind the changes.

   RECOMMEND: At least one more evening meeting in three-four weeks for public comments and questions. This issue has significant far-reaching impacts and most of our population is not even aware of these changes.

   - The Montana Constitution states: "Section 8: Right of Participation. The public has the right to expect governmental agencies to afford such reasonable opportunity for citizen participation in the operation of the agencies prior to the final decision as may be provided by law". Article II, Section 8.

4) ***Agricultural Use:*** The proposed changes have eliminated Agricultural Use zoning and replaced it with Mixed Use 20 and Mixed Use 40, which allows light and heavy industry. I am strongly opposed to these current proposals as many industries, power plants, slaughterhouses, etc. have a much greater possibility of having adverse environmental and social impacts than family farms, natural cattle grazing pastures, plant-based agriculture or commercial zoning. Having MU20, MU 40 available in previously zoned agriculture land is not acceptable. Recommend keeping the current Agriculture zoning we have as the proposed changes will allow open spaces to be developed by industrialized and intensive uses, often with significant environmental and health effects, and without public input.

5) ***Agricultural Use:***

Current Definition: The use of land for periodic livestock sales and the like, tree farming or growing or producing field crops, livestock, and livestock products for the production of income, excluding feedlots. Field crops include, among others, barley, soy beans, corn, hay, oats, potatoes, rye, sorghum, and sunflowers. Livestock includes, among others, dairy and beef cattle, goats, horses, sheep, hogs, poultry, game birds and other animals including deer, rabbits, and mink. Livestock products include, among others, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, meat, fur, and honey.

Proposed Definiton: The use of land for crop production, animal production, aquaculture, apiculture, entoculture, or forestry.

Recommend having two separate definitions: Agricultural Use-Crop Production and Agricultural Use-Animal Production.

Agricultural Use-Crop Production

The use of land for tree farming or growing or producing field crops for the production of income. Field crops include, among others, barley, soy beans, corn, hay, oats, potatoes, rye, sorghum, and sunflowers.

Agricultural Use-Animal Production

The use of land for animal production, including livestock and livestock products, aquaculture, apiculture, and entoculture for the production of income, excluding feedlots. Livestock includes, among others, dairy and beef cattle, goats, horses, sheep, hogs, poultry, game birds and other animals including deer, rabbits, and mink. Animal products include, among others, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, meat, fur, and honey.

NOTE: Feedlots would be a separate, definition, category, and management.

This is the current definition of "Agriculture" in the Cascade County Subdivision Regulations. Of note is that there is no mention of feedlots I this document. Also of note is that there is not even a definition of "Agriculture" in the current zoning or the proposed zoning changes.

AGRICULTURE --- Cascade County Subdivision Regulations July 11, 2018

All aspects of farming or ranching, including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

C.K.Craven 03.08.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: THOMAS A. BAIZ, JR

Complete Address: 117 W. GROVE ST. #204 MISHAWAKA IN 46545

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

SEE ATTACHED LETTER

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-12-19	Date Reviewed:	3-12-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Dept.
121 4th St. North, Suite H/I
Great Falls MT 59401

8 March 2018

Dear Planning Board,

I am deeply connected to Cascade County. It's where my wife was born, and where we raised our children. We have family in Great Falls. Though I'm not living here now, I come back often. In many ways, it's home.

As a retired Great Falls attorney, I appreciate the effort that went into this substantial revision to Cascade County's Zoning Regulations.

These proposed regulations, however, are ill-timed, opaque, and too comprehensive.

Why now? A cursory Google search of "Mixed Use Zoning" yields no results for rural planning — online references are relevant only to urban examples. Where did this idea come from? Please provide your sources of information and inspiration, along with a list of existing rural areas that replaced "Agricultural Zoning" with "Mixed Use." How has that worked out for other rural areas?

The protocol for this huge change is open to criticism and perhaps legal action. Why should it be easier for Cascade County officials to change the entire 181-page Zoning law than it is for one individual to attempt a change within a single parcel? Why is Cascade County exempt from the processes it mandates others to follow? Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1 details the process for citizens who want or need a zoning change. This ordinance requires a detailed analysis submitted by staff *prior to the hearing*. Why has this important step been omitted?

While I appreciate the hard work it took to write over 200 pages of zoning revisions, it's important to openly establish guiding principles, determine the need for change, and be optimistic that updated policies will help Cascade County thrive in challenging times.

According to Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601, Cascade County's Growth Policy requires a review every five years. Please solidify a broader policy before enacting substantial zoning changes.

I urge the Planning Board and County Commission to reject this zoning change, and to try to articulate a common vision through a mandated Growth Policy Review.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Baiz, Jr.
tombaizjr@gmail.com
Attorney at Law, Retired
117 W Grove Street, Apt. 204
Mishawaka IN 46545

Payton, Ian

From: janstony@3rivers.net
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2019 11:25 AM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Revisions to zoning regulations

Good morning,
I am concerned about possible zoning revisions perhaps opening the way for an industrial sized slaughterhouse to emerge east of Great Falls. I think landowners and their neighbors should definitely have input as to whether their land remains classified "agricultural" or is re-designated as "mixed use." And I feel very strongly that there is an environmental difference between a low-impact and a high-impact operation, a difference between a plant based operation and an animal based operation. A high-impact large animal facility should have to meet different standards than a small-plant based operation. The two entities should be treated separately in terms of zoning considerations. I trust the planning board has reviewed its Growth Policy and recalls what our goals and vision for this community have been and are. I have nightmare visions of what could happen to our valuable resource of plentiful and clean water if we endanger and corrupt it with inevitable leakage and the smell of football field-sized lagoons.
The ramifications of any huge change to a community require deep thought about future ramifications.
Sincerely,

Janet Carter
2005 3rd Ave N
Great Falls, MT 594

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 3-11-19
Date Reviewed: 3-11-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Claire Reichert Baiz

Complete Address: (temporary address) 117 W Grove Street, Apt. 204, Mishawaka IN 46545

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Policy Changes

Comment

Please see attached letter (~~See in body of email~~). Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-11-19	Date Reviewed:	3-11-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Dept.
121 4th St. North, Suite H/I
Great Falls MT 59401

4 March 2019

Dear Planning Department:

Though I spent nearly all my life in Montana, at the moment I'm in the Midwest, helping my husband care for his elderly parents.

I am learning more than I wanted to know about senior care, which is not surprising. I'm more surprised by what I'm learning about how poor planning is tearing the heart of the heartland.

According to the February 27, 2019 issue of *The American Conservative,* "The decline of rural communities and consolidation of the American food system was the result of deliberate policy choices ...made by politicians from both parties who favor multinational corporations at the expense of rural communities. Rural America can thrive once again, but only if we're willing to challenge ... the current system."

We need better planning, from the ground up.

There's no way our grandparents would call what I am seeing in the Midwest "agriculture" — thousands of confined protein units under one metal roof, consuming and excreting, flank-to-hoof. This isn't Yankee ingenuity; it's corporate servitude: farmers have to sign up or go under. China's Smithfield and Brazil's JBS rule the roost — and wallow in the profits — from Iowa to South Carolina.

Though it may be too late to stop this in the Midwest and Southeast, we can make better planning decisions here in Cascade County.

Big changes often begin with benign words — a few tweaks to definitions ... in the case of new zoning regulations, by displacing the word "Agriculture" with "Mixed Use."

This zoning proposal's allowance for "intensive" and "larger scale" development may wind up being a de-facto zone change.

Cascade County needs to discover, protect and promote what we have.

I'm seeing for myself: Big Ag is a bad neighbor.

This wholesale re-write of Cascade County's zoning regulations would be a potent disincentive for sustainable development — at the worst possible time. While Conrad just got a large oilseed plant and a commitment to hemp processing, while organic ag is growing by double-digits in Montana, does Cascade County want to open its arms to an industry that, by its very nature, precludes sustainable agriculture?

A broad alliance of landowners, neighbors, family farms, Conservatives, Progressives, environmental groups, water conservation organizations and more will stand our fertile ground against what amounts to a zone change for every parcel currently designated "Agricultural" to "Mixed Use."

I urge you to reject the proposed changes to Cascade County's Zoning Regulations.

Sincerely,

Claire Baiz
(temporary address)
117 W Grove St. #204
Mishawaka IN 46545

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Shannon E. Guilfoyle

Complete Address: 13 Homestake Ln, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I oppose the adoption of the Cascade County Planning Departement's staff-initiated zoning changes for the following reasons:

1) As a landowner in Cascade County, I want the land surrounding my rural home to maintain its agricultural zoning status. I do not agree with the "mixed-use" designation; specifically, MU-20 and MU-40, as my surrounding neighbors own over 40 acres and I have every right to expect that my neighbors would be required to participae in a permitting process when considering a "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility" on their land.

2) "Unclassified Use Permits" should be reviewed by BOTH elected officials and the Zoning Board of Adjustments. A direct approval/denial of permits by the officials directly accountable to the residents of Cascade County is highly advised.

The Planning Board needs to recommend denial of the proposed zoning changes and complete the review of the Cascade County Growth Policy as required by (MCA) 76-1-601 (3)(f) PRIOR to reviewing proposed changes to zoning within Cascade County.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-15-19	Date Reviewed:	3-19-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: KATHRYN A MILER

Complete Address: 10 HOMESTAKE LANE GT FALLS MT 59405 (mailing only: PO BOX 7486 59406)

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): RE: Proposed Revisions to Cascade County Zoning Regulations

Comment

Of great concern to me is the appearance of not following the Zoning Ordinance protocols for amendments/changes per current legal process.

The current growth policy was adopted in 2014 and the proposed changes are premature of the 5 year review outlined in the Cascade Co. Growth Policy.

The Cascade Co Zoning Ordinance requires detailed analysis of any changes and so far the process is using a "Broad Brush" to propose future changes for a large amount of acres affecting many Cascade County residents.

The proposals also offer very vague terminology to describe the proposed areas of use.

These changes will effect many residents of Cascade Co, our groundwater, air quality + property values.

Please to NOT rush this process — TAKE CARE with the proposals!!

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3/19/19	Date Reviewed:	3-19-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Arlyce Reichert

Complete Address: 1409 4th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT 59405-2415

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): ZONING CHANGES

Comment

please see attached letter

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-19-19	Date Reviewed:	3-19-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Dept.
121 4th St. North, Suite H/I
Great Falls MT 59401

March 9, 2019

Dear Planning Department:

It was a daunting task for me and 99 fellow Montanans: we had a legislative mandate, hard-fought elections, extensive preparations, and 60-days of public debate to write Montana's 1972 Constitution.

Then we had to convince Montanans that our new Constitution was worth their vote.

Our 27-page Constitution replaced a 57-page document that had been written to favor big interests — primarily big copper — back in 1889. The mandate for change was obvious.

Who is pressing for extensive changes in Cascade County's zoning regulations in 2019? Eliminating Agricultural Zoning devalues our heritage, our economic base, and our future.

While I commend the County — and especially the volunteer members of the Zoning Board — for their effort, the public needs more time to understand and respond.

Why do we need these changes — and why now?

With only two hearings and the distraction of the legislative session in Helena, there has not been enough time to understand the motivations and consequences of over 200 pages of tracked changes to Cascade County's 181-page Zoning Regulations.

We need more time, more community education, greater solicitation for public input, more convenient hearing times and a more rigorous protocol for passage of sweeping changes.

With the withdrawal and impending re-application for a massive, controversial Special Use Permit (SUP), I worry that the hasty passage of zoning changes might add unnecessary fuel to what is sure to be a rough fight regarding industrial agriculture.

I learned as a delegate to the Montana Constitutional Convention that positive change requires a clear mandate, open meetings, succinct explanations, and plenty of opportunity for public input.

I respectfully request that the need for, and rationale behind, these changes in zoning regulations be publicly demonstrated.

Sincerely,

Arlyne Reichert

Arlyne Reichert
Delegate, Montana Constitutional Convention
Former Montana State Legislator
1409 Fourth Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

cc: Cascade County Commissioners Larson, Weber & Briggs

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: JEFFREY PATTERSON

Complete Address: 2213 GRAPE CT, GREAT FALLS MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

As a local business owner, attracting and maintaining talent for my technology firm is not easy. Great Falls does not have the technology professional population that Missoula, Bozeman, and Billings enjoy.

I have concerns with the proposed modifications from the county AG zones to MU40. MU20 seems appropriate (though I have concerns with some of the special permit uses). As I study the maps of the proposed MU40 regions, they cover much of the waterways that feed into the Cascade County basin and Great Falls water supply. Also, some of the proposed MU40 zones are very close to population centers.

I appreciate that the county has a "special permits" process for certain environmentally and socially impactful activities. However, even with these "special permit" requirements, I have sincere concerns that the possibility of these environmentally and socially impactful activities will have a negative impact on my ability to attract top talent.

I am concerned that these MU40 allowances will entice businesses to look to Cascade County as an epicenter for low-income job attractors via special-permitted principal business (such as a rendering plant, quarry, or another transient workforce attractor), or through an environmentally impactful principal business (such as a rendering plant, slaughterhouse, or solid waste disposal site).

Great Falls already suffers from one of the lowest median incomes in Montana's urban centers. By attracting businesses that expand on the demand for low skilled, low-income labor, Cascade County weakens our opportunity to attract businesses like mine: those interested in investing in the hope of growing a local high tech industry. Please consider protecting Cascade County's economic future by removing these high-impact allowances from MU40 or, better yet, striking MU40 from the Cascade County zoning allowance and only allowing AG and MU20.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

From: pgorpur@mac.com <pgorpur@mac.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2019 3:23 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - Proposed Zoning Regulation Changes

PUBLIC COMMENT FORM -

3-23-19

Commenter Information:

WL Gorsuch
41 Prospect Drive
Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject:

Proposed Zoning Changes

I have significant concerns about the zoning revision process and recommended substantial land use changes. These are listed as follows:

1. Conflicts with current Cascade County Growth Policy. I want Cascade County to grow — but this seems dangerous.

2. Mixed Use 20 and 40 - some of the uses seem too industrial - oppose these

3. Unclassified Use Permits - do not agree with the addition of Slaughterhouses and Concentrated Animal Feedlots to this use permit.

Please reconsider implementing these zoning changes.

Sincerely,

WL Gorsuch

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

From: Carol Bradley <carol.bradley@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:23 AM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Cc: Weber, Jane <jweber@cascadecountymt.gov>; Larson, James <jlarson@cascadecountymt.gov>; Briggs, Joe <jbriggs@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Public comment re: proposed revisions to Cascade County Zoning Regs

Dear Cascade County Planning Board members,

I'm writing to ask that you vote not to the proposed revisions to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations put forth by the Planning Department. I have several concerns about the proposed revisions, the biggest of which is that county residents, particularly landowners who would be most affected by the changes, have not been given enough of an explanation of the changes, or time to provide input.

For generations, Cascade County has enjoyed its status as a premier agricultural setting. To suddenly redefine millions of those acres from agricultural to mixed use opens the door for all kinds of questionable activities/businesses — entities that could overnight diminish the lives of local residents and sharply reduce the value of their land. To be honest, I'm incredulous that these proposed revisions are even on the table. Thankfully, they don't have go to any further. You have the power to stop these proposed revisions and make certain the landowners you represent aren't thrown under the bus in the name of possibly very controversial and adverse businesses. I hope and pray that's the decision you make.

Thank you for your time.

Carol Bradley
1826 3rd Ave. N.
Great Falls
406-453-5761

Sent from my iPad

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Robert Mehnke

Complete Address: 8293 US Hwy 89 Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

SEE ATTACHED

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board March 21, 2019

Comments Pertaining to the Rezoning Proposal

I am a fourth generation farmer, rancher, and landowner in Cascade County. I lived and worked on the family ranch that my great grandparents started, until my marriage fifty years ago. I now live on my husband's family farm and ranch that his great, great grandparents started. With over 100 years of combined hard work, dedication, countless trials, and tribulations, I am concerned about how this tradition and lifestyle can be carried on by my sons and their families. I find myself asking, "Why do we do what we do"? The first thing that comes to mind is "it's a lifestyle", but it is also a "commitment" rarely seen in the world today. I feel, we, as a family farm and ranch, are dedicated to the land, to our community, and also to the basic rural lifestyle that makes us unique and distinct from vast portions of society. With that basic understanding, I believe the best way to preserve this lifestyle and the community that we all enjoy, in Cascade County, is to "not" fix that which is not broken.

I am very concerned that the proposed changes in rezoning agricultural land could alter permanently the exact things we all enjoy. We, who live here like our rural lands in Cascade County free of large industrial complexes, I expect and desire an environment that is free of pollution and odors that make life miserable. I have no desire to have massive amounts of traffic and all the social problems associated with large groups of poverty -stricken labor forces that these industrial complexes are known to attract. I worry about how this change will affect my sons and their families, who farm our land now and in the future. The life style that we live now has been a wonderful way to raise a family. My concern is for not only our children and grandchildren, but for the land that we love and the wide-open spaces that brought us here. I feel we already have what most of the rest of the world desires. I love the clean air, water and wide-open healthy spaces. I feel privileged to live in a community that many parts of the country wish they could replicate. It's for these reasons and countless others that I ask; "What are we all talking about"? I feel we have a pretty good community already. Why are we trying to fix that which is not broken? I would recommend leaving the care of the land in the hands of the people that have been doing it right all along. In my opinion, we don't need to change anything. We, who are living, in Cascade County, like it the way it is, in my opinion.

Rezoning the vast majority of the agricultural land in Cascade County to MU-20 and MU-40 designations essentially allows massive slaughterhouses, feedlots, confined animal feeding operations and other high impact industries to proceed without public hearings, public comment or the standard conditions required through a "special permit" process. It appears, to me, that while these changes are designed to make high impact and intensive operations less accountable to the public and easier to proceed, it also makes it more difficult for small businesses, like tourist based enterprises to start up, in essence making our community less attractive to friendly, low impact businesses. In addition, unfortunately, with the current and likely future health of agriculture, a lot of farms/ranches are looking at alternative sources of revenue like outfitting/guiding, beds and breakfasts, road side stands, family friendly business, etc. In my opinion, there is no reason a new mixed-use designation for agriculture land is needed, except to circumvent

public input and public opinion in favor of fast tracking questionable enterprises. I feel we already have a successful zoning designation in place. The proper format of public comment and decision is the cornerstone of protecting our rural agricultural lands and communities. In my opinion, it is wrong to embrace a format and system that stifles the current process of open discussion and transparency, in the name of encouraging a fast tract to a supposed business that could very well destroy everything we currently cherish. I feel, everyone in Cascade County deserves to have a strong and powerful voice in preserving and protecting the uniqueness of our agriculture lands in Cascade County.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns about the Rezoning Proposal.

Sincerely,

Robyn Mehmke

Robyn Mehmke

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19 Compiled 06/03/19

Date Reviewed: 3-25-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Helen Coleman

Complete Address: 11 Homestake Lane

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I oppose the proposal of allowing "value-Added Agriculture Commodity Processing Facilities in the new MU-40 districts.
THis is an enormous proposal that has huge impacts on the local ranches and other landowners in this area. Plus, it does not differentiate between animal and plant commodities.

Try to picture the difference between a seed farm and a pig farm, Which one would provide. a, fresher cleaner vision and odor? There is an enormous difference between animal and platn processing facility and should definitely be treated differently in the zoning regulations. Certainly a suggestion might be a special use permit and public input for either usage, Protection of these choices and the values we placed on these choices also protects the future financial value of our homes.

Who exactly enjoys the "value added " agriculture Product? Not the rancher who ownes the MU-40 land nor the neighbors to this land....Cascade County planners work for the people of Cascade and should be aware of the impact of animal based products..and plant based products... Not all of these products require the intensity of thesameconcern.

Let me add to my opposition of this Value Added Agriculture Processing Facilities the definitions of RENDERING PLANTS..Not only distance is a concern but the health impacts to people in the area is of the upmost concern and research should be completed prior to any zoning changes that have been discussed.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: CARL R MEHMKE

Complete Address: 432 HIGHWOOD Rd., GREAT FALLS, MT. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): PLANNING BOARD

Comment

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

* SEE ATTACHED *

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County planning board March 20, 2019

Comments pertaining to rezoning proposal

I am a sixth generation farmer, rancher, and landowner in cascade county. I have lived and worked my entire life on the family farm that my great great great grandparents started. With over 130 years of combined hard work, dedication, countless trials, and tribulations later I sit here wondering how to carry on this tradition and lifestyle. I find myself reflecting and asking why do we do what we do? The first thing that comes to mind is "it's a lifestyle", it is also a "commitment" rarely seen in the world today. But first and foremost, I feel we as a family farm are dedicated to the land, to our community, and the basic rural lifestyle that makes us unique and distinct from vast portions of society. With that basic understanding, I believe the best way to preserve this lifestyle and the community that we all enjoy in Cascade County is to "not" fix that which is not broken.

These proposed changes in rezoning agricultural land can potentially and will likely alter the exact things we all enjoy. We like our rural lands in Cascade County free of large industrial complexes, we expect and desire an environment that is free of pollution and smells that make life miserable. We have no desire to have massive amounts of traffic and all the social problems associated with large groups of poverty stricken labor forces that these industrial complexes are know to attract. It seems fairly simple. We already have what most of the world is wanting. We have clean air and water. We have wide open healthy spaces. We have communities that many parts of the country wish they could replicate. It's for these reasons and countless others that I say "what are we all talking about". We have a pretty good community already. Why are we trying to fix that which is not broken? Just leave the care of the land in the hands of the people that have been doing it right all along. We don't need to change anything. We like it the way it is.

Rezoning the vast majority of the agricultural land in Cascade County to MU-20 and MU-40 designations essentially allows massive slaughterhouses, feedlots, confined animal feeding operations and other high impact industries to proceed without public hearings, public comment or the standard conditions required through a "special permit" process. It also appears that while these changes are designed to make high impact and intensive operations less accountable to the public and easier to proceed, it also makes it more difficult for small businesses like tourist based enterprises to start up, in essence making our community less attractive to friendly low impact businesses. Unfortunately with the current and likely future health of agriculture a lot of farms/ranches are looking at alternative sources of revenue like outfitting/guiding, beds and breakfasts, road side stands, family friendly business, etc. I see no reason this new mixed use designation for agriculture land is needed except to circumvent public input and public opinion in favor of fast tracking questionable enterprises. I strongly feel we currently have a successful zoning designation in place already. The proper format of public comment and decision is the cornerstone of protecting our rural agricultural lands and communities. We should never embrace a format and system that stifles the current process of open discussion and transparency in the name of encouraging a fast tract to a supposed business that could very well destroy everything we currently cherish. Everyone in the county should always have a strong and powerful voice in preserving and protecting the uniqueness of our agriculture lands in Cascade County.

Sincerely: Carl R Mehmke

Carl R Mehmke

3/25/19

Cascade County Planning Dept.
121 4th St N, ste H-1
GTF MT 59401

Dear Planning Board -

I am writing to you to voice my objection to your change in zoning for the proposed "Madison Food Plant".

The path this zoning change took, did not follow previous ones, and opens up a huge environment of mistrust between the public and the zoning board.

I am requesting you do your due diligence in completing the 5 year review (MCA 76-1-601(3)(f) before proposing any changes to the zoning ordinance

Your detailed analysis (sec 14.1.1(6)) should be part of your official staff report PRIOR to the public hearing + be publicly available for review long <u>before</u> the hearing.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 3/25/19
Date Reviewed: 3/25/19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Contin →

Your use of the term's "mixed use" and "unclassified use" opens up a Pandora's Box for future development.

Your decisions should be based on potential (worse case) impact, to protect the Citizen's of Cascade County.

For example, your "workforce housing" definition has NO maximum density defined, based on human health & resources of water and wastewater.

I want to believe the zoning board is here to serve & protect our community.

This is an ill-thought-out proposal on EVERY issue. Zoning laws should protect citizens, our environment & leave a legacy our kids can be proud of. Lets work to preserve our "last best place"
Allowing an enterprise to step in and trash our community is a horrifying proposition and I urge you to stop this.

Thank you.

P Shafer

Patty Shafer (406) 750-3544
172 Highland Rd
GTF 59405

DR. CHERYL REICHERT M.D., PH.D.
Pathologist • 51 Prospect Drive
Great Falls, MT 59405
Home Phone (406) 727-1964

March 23, 2019

Cascade County Planning Dept.
121 Fourth St. North, Suite H/I
Great Falls, MT 59401

re: Proposed Cascade County Zoning Changes

Dear Cascade County Planners and Commissioners:

I am very concerned about the numerous proposed zoning changes in Cascade County that might result in conversion of agricultural and residential zones to mixed and industrial use. It doesn't take rocket scientists to understand what is at stake. Elementary school students can easily differentiate between industrialized sites vs. farms and suburban residential properties.

I also object to the utilization of "Special Use Permits" as developer tools to fundamentally alter the character of neighborhoods and communities. People build their homes with the expectation that unpleasant and unwelcome industrial intrusions will not alter their quality of life and adversely impact their most substantial financial investment.

During the recent Russell Art Week, I heard visiting Western scholar Dr. Larry Peterson describe Great Falls as "Paradise" to an audience of hundreds of art and history buffs. Why we would we sacrifice that growing reputation to the altar of poorly paying &/or dangerous jobs that will rob quality of life from the many to satisfy the ambitions of a few? I am also concerned about expensive health and social problems that often accompany heavy industrialization.

Our zoning laws should be fair, consistent, and long lasting. Thank you for considering my comments in your deliberations.

Respectfully yours,

Cheryl M. Reichert

Cheryl M. Reichert, MD, PhD

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3/25/19
Date Reviewed: 3/25/19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations & Growth Policy for the Commercial Zoning District

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY
I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations, the final Staff Report, and the Cascade County Growth Policy.
I am opposed to the stated intent for the Commercial zoning district because it is not in accordance with the Cascade County Growth Policy in allowing commercial strip development along transportation corridors.
See the attached Commercial Zoning Intent and Cascade County Growth Policy.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

1. **<u>The stated intent for the Commercial zoning districts is not in accordance with the Cascade County Growth Policy because it allows commercial strip development along transportation corridors.</u>**

Proposed Zoning Language

7.10 COMMERCIAL (C) DISTRICT

7.10.1 INTENT - The C District is intended to provide for commercial developments of differing scales along major transportation corridors to supplement commercial developments available in the City of Great Falls.

7.6 MIXED USE - 20 (MU-20) DISTRICT

7.6.1 INTENT - The MU-20 District is intended to provide for exurban residential development and mixed uses along major transportation and amenity corridors. The district serves as a buffer zone between denser MU development and less dense, more intensive use in the MU-40 district.

Discussion: Like the AG-District, the MU-20 district general sales, specialty sales, and convenience sales and manufacturing sales are special uses. The proposed regulations would add restaurants and taverns as special uses in the MU-20 District. The proposed zoning map indicates that the zoning district extends along major highways in a land use pattern that is indicative of strip development. As noted below, the Growth Policy expressly discourages this type of development.

Relevant Cascade County Growth Policy Goals, Objectives and Policies

<u>Goal 2: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development</u>.

Objectives:

C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed, land subdivisions and commercial development.

<u>Goal 9: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests.</u>

Objectives:

H. Encourage in-fill development of urban and transitional areas already committed to development where community facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively in order to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands.

<u>Goal 11: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character, encourage efficient use of land.</u>

Objectives:

A. Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development.

B. Encourage cluster development to locate near existing towns and rural, more densely populated settlements and discourage poorly designed, unsafe land subdivisions and unsafe commercial development.

CHAPTER 5 – ECONOMIC CONDITION : POLICIES

4. Efforts should be made to discourage commercial strip development along major thoroughfares.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Monte + Lisa Thompson

Complete Address: 8 Brick Yard Lane Great Falls, MT, 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

We are writing to let you know we are opposed to the vague description/uses of the MU-40 Lots. MU-40 leaves land open in Cascade County for a wide variety of uses - some could be positive, but some could be negative, which we are opposed to and don't want.

Our main area of concern and where our opposition lies is in the MU-40 Lots, in which there are no set standards for how this land could be used like there is with the MU-20 Lots. Why is there no standards for the MU-40 Lots? This needs to be and should be addressed as this is an unclassified use permit and its not correct and should go through the proper zoning process, for an example, who would want a rendering plant or stockyard on a MU-40 Lot with no road set back? Things like this need to be and should be considered. MU-40 leaves the land in Cascade County open for a high probability of the land to be used for a negative impact on Cascade County and the environment. There just needs to be more clarification on uses.

We believe that Cascade County in general wants to grow in many ways, but this isn't the growth we want.

Have you truly thought about why you're changing the "Rules" from Ag to Mixed Use? Perhaps instead of making everything so wide open and vague, a more

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3/25/19	Date Reviewed:	3/25/19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Monte + Lisa Thompson
8 Brick Yard Lane
Great Falls, MT 59405

defined defenition needs to be put in place and specific guidelines for the mixed use because the general public deserves to know and better understand the new zoning regulations.

If the ZBOA can't explain how the new zoning requirements work, the general public will be more confused and not understand. My wife and I are concerned County Citizens and in a group (MFRLU) "Montanans for Responsible Land Use" who want to see the land in Cascade County used in a responsible way now and into the future.

In closing, have you truly thought about why you're changing the "Rules" from Ag to Mixed Use? If the ZBOA can't explain how the new zoning requirements work, the general public will be more confused and not understand. This should be a "team/community" effort in which we all want to know whats going on to better improve our lives and the future lives of our children and to take pride in our decisions.

Thank you for taking the time to read our thoughts and ideas on clarifying the guidelines on zoning usage for the MU-40 lots.

Sincerely

Monte & Lisa Thompson

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations & Guest Ranch

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY
I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations, Staff Repor,t and all of its attachments.
I am concerned about the discrepancy in the Guest Ranch permit process. Guest Ranch on parcels 20 acres or greater require a Special Use Permit in the new MIxed Use 20 district, but are a Permitted Use in the Mixed Use 40 district.
Please provide further information regarding the rationale behind these determinations.
It appears consideration is being provided disproportionately to larger operators with the lack of state agency involvemen required of Special Use Permits imposed on smaller operators.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Payton, Ian

From: Callie Alley <calliealley97@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2019 5:36 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: 2017 Madison Food Park application

To the Cascade County Planning Board,

I am contacting you in regards to the 2017 Madison Food Park application. The Cascade County Zoning Regulations absolutely must be revised. I've lived in Great Falls my entire life. Now my best friend will be giving birth to a wonderful baby boy any day now. I myself will be having a child of my own. By allowing the Madison Food Park application to go through, you will effectively destroy Great Falls and Cascade County as a whole. Not only will you be driving out the wild life and taking away water supply, you will also be getting rid of every great thing about Great Falls. The smell alone is going to drive families away. Not to forget about the fact that you'll be exposing everyone near to cancer causing substances. You will be forcing hard working military members and their families to be subject to unhealthy conditions. You will be forcing cruel and unusual conditions on Cascade County. I for one will not stand for it. I can guarantee you that this will ruin Great Falls. Once everything is destroyed, once everyone is gone, the financial infrastructure of this town and county will be gone and no more. Yes you may be supplying horrible jobs to people in desperate need, but you'll be ruining every single life, big and small, near this place. Do not allow this application to go through. Do not allow such a detrimental place to come into the beautiful home we have. You will make it into nothing.

From Callie Smith

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-21-19
Date Reviewed: 3-22-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Payton, Ian

From: Sandee <sandeelou@charter.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2019 3:41 PM
To: Planning Comments
Subject: Zoning

I own ranchland and am very concerned about the way you are proposing to rezone cascade county. Agriculture land should be just that and not zoned for industrial use or agricultural with special permit use. Our natural resources need to be protected for the local rancher and not be subject to a large industrial company who will literally put the local rancher out of business. I want environmentally friendly growth and once you allow large industry companies to take over our agricultural lands it will ruin our county.

Alan Christensen
406-454-5772
1312 41st St. S
Gt Falls, MT 59405

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 3-21-19
Date Reviewed: 3-21-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

Comments Submitted 03.08.19, 03.12.19, 03.15.19, 03.21.19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-21-19	Date Reviewed:	3-21-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 21, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

PLANNING BOARD STAFF REPORT 03.26.19

PLANNING DEPT GROWTH PLAN GOALS REFERENCED IN STAFF REPORT 3.26.19

Goal 1 Objective A (9)

Stimulate the retention and expansion of existing businesses, new businesses, wholesale and retail businesses, and industries including agriculture, mining, manufacturing/processing and forest products.

Goal 2 Objective A (1)

"Economic contribution and intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, forests"

Objective C (1)

Foster the continuance of agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests.

Goal 3 Objective A (2)

Protect the most productive soil types.

Objective B (1)

Protect soils against erosion

Goal 5 Objective A (1)

Maintain Cascade County's citizens independent lifestyle and minimize local governmental intervention, to the extent possible, consistent with the requirements of a continually evolving economy and constantly changing population.

Objective D (1)

Encourage the continued development of educational programs and facilities, recreational opportunities and spaces and health services for all county residents.

Goal 9 Objective F (1)

Encourage open buffers between rural residences and adjoining agricultural lands.

Goal 10 Objective B (2)

Encourage subdivision designs that do not restrict wildlife movement and preserve important wildlife habitat and corridors.

Goal 11 Objective A (4)

Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development.

Goal 12 Objective A (1)

Work to maintain an adequate land supply for diversity of all housing opportunities,

Objective B (1)

Consider the locational needs of various types of housing with regard to proximity of employment, and access to transportation and services.

Objective F (1)

Encourage group homes, foster care facilities, and facilities for other special populations are equitably distributed throughout the county, yet near daily services.

C.K. Craven 03.21.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

PD=Planning Department Staff Report in Draft Document 3.26.19

GOAL 1 SUSTAIN & STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF CASCADE COUNTY CITIZENS (10 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.5.9 Mixed Use Permitted Principal Uses
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
    - Added "Butcher Shop, Convenience Sales, Alcohol Distillery, Wild Game Processing"
    - 1Moved "Vehicle Repair & Casino" from Permitted Principal Use to Special Use
- PD Changes 7.5.10 Mixed Use Accessory Uses On Same Lot w/Principal Use
  - Goal 1 Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
- PD Changes 7.5.11 Mixed Use Permitted Uses w/SUP
    - Added, "Garage, Private, Federal Firearms Retailers/Dealers, Event Center, Multi-Family Dwelling, Large Contractor Yard"
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
  - Goal 12, Objective B "Location needs of housing & proximity of employment..."
- PD Changes 7.6.10 Mixed Use 20 Permitted Accessory Uses on Same Lot w/Principal Use
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
- PD Changes 7.7.10 Mixed Use 40 Permitted Accessory Uses on Same Lot w/Principal Use
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
- PD Changes 7.10.10 Commercial District Permitted Accessory Use on Same Lot w/PU
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & /expansion of businesses..."
- PD Changes 7.10.11 Commercial District Permitted Uses Upon Issuance of SUP
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
- PD Changes 7.12.2(2) Light Industrial (I-1) Permitted Principal Uses=Industrial
  - Goal 1, Objective A "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."
    - Added "Value-Added Commodity Processing Facility" as allowed use
- ***PD Agriculture District Rezone Justification***
  - *Goal 1, Objective A* "Stimulate retention & expansion of businesses..."

GOAL 2 PROTECT & MAINTAIN CASCADE COUNTY'S RURAL CHARACTER & THE COMMUNITY'S HISTORIC RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (6 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.11.1 Industrial Requirements/Area Requirements/Minimum Lot Areas For Each District (RR-SR1-SR2-UR-MU20/MU40)
  - Goal 2, Objective C "Preserve open space setting"
- PD Changes 8.2.5.2 Electric Fencing
  - Goal 2, Objective A "Intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, forests"

GOAL 3 MAINTAIN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY (4 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.6.2 Mixed Use 20 & 7.7.2 Mixed Use 40 Minimum Lot Size
  - Goal 3, Objective A "Protect the most productive soil types"
  - Goal 11, Objective A "Preserve the county's open space setting..."
- PD Changes 7.6.6 & 7.7.6 Lot Coverage
  - Goal 3, Objective A "Protect the most productive soil types"
  - Goal 11, Objective A "Preserve the county's open space setting..."

C.K. Craven 03.21.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

- PD Changes 8.18.2.5 Parking Lot Paving
  - Goal 3, Objective B "Protect soils against erosion"

GOAL 4 RETAIN THE PRESENCE OF THE US MILITARY IN CASCADE COUNTY (4 OBJECTIVES)

GOAL 5 PRESERVE & ENHANCE THE RURAL, FRIENDLY & INDEPENDENT LIFESTYLE CURRENTLY ENJOYED BY CASCADE COUNTY CITIZENS (4 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.2.4 (7) Rural Residential/Uses Permitted w/SUP
  - Goal 5, Objective D "Encourage...health services for all county residents"
  - Goal 12, Objective F "Encourage group homes..."
- Added "community residential center with nine occupants or more" as a special use
- ***PD Agriculture District Rezone Justification***
  - *Goal 5, Objective A "Maintain Cascade County's citizens independent lifestyle...."*

GOAL 6 PROMOTE & MAINTAIN A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES SAFETY, EFFICIENCY & IS COST EFFECTIVE (9 OBJECTIVES)

NO REFERENCES BY PLANNING DEPARTMENT FOR THIS GOAL

GOAL 7 MINIMIZE RISK OF FIRE BY MANAGEMENT & PLANNING & TO PERMIT THE EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT SUPPRESSION OF FIRES IN ORDER TO PROTECT PERSONS, PROPERTY & FORESTED AREAS (8 OBJECTIVES)

NO REFERENCES BY PLANNING DEPARTMENT FOR THIS GOAL

GOAL 8 PROTECT SURFACE & GROUNDWATER QUALITY FROM POLLUTION (9 OBJECTIVES)-

NO REFERENCES BY PLANNING DEPARTMENT FOR THIS GOAL

GOAL 9 FOSTER THE HERITAGE OF THE AREA IN AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION & THE INTRINSIC NATURAL BEAUTY OF GRAZING AREAS, FARMLANDS & FORESTS (8 OBJECTIVES)

- ***PD Agriculture District Rezone Justification***
  - *Goal 9, Objective F "Encourage open buffers between rural...& agricultural"*

GOAL 10 MINIMIZE IMPACT TO WILDLIFE & FISHERIES (4 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.6.2 & 7.7.2 Mixed Use 20 & 7.7.2 Mixed Use 40 Minimum Lot Size
  - Goal 10, Objective B "Subdivision designs to...preserve wildlife habitats"
- PD Changes 7.6.6 & 7.7.6 Lot Coverage
  - Goal 10, Objective B "Subdivision designs to...preserve wildlife habitats"

GOAL 11 PROTECT & MAINTAIN CASCADE COUNTY'S RURAL CHARACTER, ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT USE OF LAND (8 OBJECTIVES)

The reference below is about "Lot Width"

- PD Changes 7.1.1.3 Residential District Requirements/Area Requirements/Lot Width…
  - Goal 11, Objective A "Preserve the county's open space…"
- ***PD Agriculture District Rezone Justification***
  - *Goal 11, Objective A "Preserve the county's open space…"*

GOAL 12 SUPPORT EFFORT TO ENSURE RESIDENTS OF CASCADE COUNTY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN SAFE & AFFORDABLE HOUSING (10 OBJECTIVES)

- PD Changes 7.1.3.2 Residential District Requirements/Area Requirements/Front Yard
  - Goal 12, Objective A "Maintain adequate land…for housing…"

GOAL 13 PROTECT AREAS NEAR MISSILE SITES FROM ENCROACHMENT & INCOMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT (12 OBJECTIVES)

APPENDIX 2: AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT REZONE JUSTIFICATION

"Staff finds that the following goals are served by the proposed split of the Agricultural District into MU-20 and MU-40:"

Goal 1, Objective A: Retention & expansion of business…

Goal 5, Objective A: Maintain independent lifestyle…

Goal 9, Objective F: Encourage open buffers…

Goal 11, Objective A: Preserve open space…

C.K. Craven 03.21.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

PLANNING DEPT STAFF REPORT

03.26.19

GROWTH POLICY GOALS USED

USED 8 GOALS

USED 13 DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES

OUT OF 96 POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES

SO USED ONLY 13% OF POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES

USED #1/A 9x **USED #3/A 2x**

USED #11/A 4x **USED #10/B 2x**

USED #2/A, #2/C, #3/B, #5/A, #5/D, #9/F, #12/A, #12/B, #12/F – 1x Each

OF THE 13 DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES, USED 1 (9x,) 1 (4x), 2 (2x), 9 (1x)

9 ARE FROM #1/A "SUSTAIN & STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC WELL-BEING"

4 ARE FROM #11/A "OPEN SPACE…ENCOURAGE CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT"

SO…

THESE 2 OBJECTIVES ACCOUNT FOR 13 REFERENCES OUT OF A TOTAL OF 26 REFERENCES TO OBJECTIVES IN THE PLANNING REPORT

50% (13/26) OF PLANNING DEPT REFERENCES CAME FROM ONLY 2 OBJECTIVES 1/A & 11/A

(Some Objectives Used Multiple Times, Some One Time, as per above)

The PD used 26 references from 13 different objectives.

So 13 different objectives used with 96 possible = 13.5% of possible objectives used.

65% (17/26) of references from only 4 different objectives = 4.2% of the 96 possible objectives.

50% of references from only 2 objectives = 2.1% of possible objectives

100% OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES ARE BASED ON ONLY 13% (13/96) OF GROWTH POLICY OBJECTIVES

THERE IS NO MENTION OF GOALS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION, WATER QUALITY, CLEAN AIR, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, TOURISM, PRESERVING CASCADE COUNTY'S SCENIC BEAUTY…

ALSO, THERE IS NO RATIONALE FOR THE NEW ADDITONS OF "BUTCHER SHOP", "ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATION (AFO)", "VALUE-ADDED COMMODITY PRODUCT", "VALUE-ADDED COMMODITY PROCESSING"," WORKFORCE HOUSING", AND NO RATIONALE FOR DEFINITION CHANGES IN "COMMERCIAL FEEDLOT" OR "INDUSTRIAL" USES.

C.K. Craven 03.21.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT USED ONLY 4 OBJECTIVES (PRIMARILY BUSINESS/ECONOMIC (#1A, #5A, #9F, #11A) OUT OF THE 96 TOTAL OBJECTIVES (4.2%) OF THE POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES) IN THE 2014 GROWTH POLICY

TO JUSTIFY CHANGING

CURRENTLY ZONED AGRICULTURAL LAND TO

INDUSTRIAL MU-20 AND MU-40

THERE WERE NO REFERENCES TO TRANSPORTATION; PROTECTING SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER FROM POLLUTION; PROTECT AND PROMOTE CASCADE COUNTY'S RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE; PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TOURISM TO BROADEN CASCADE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC BASE; PRESERVE CASCADE COUNTY'S SCENIC BEAUTY AND CONSERVE ITS FORESTS, RANGELANDS AND STREAMS, WITH THEIR ABUNDANT WILDLIFE AND GOOD FISHERIES; ASSURE CLEAN AIR, CLEAN WATER, A HEALTHFUL ENVIRONMENT, AND GOOD COMMUNITY APPEARANCE; AMONG OTHERS.

It appears the above references to the Growth Policy in the Planning Department Staff Report for 03.26.19 were "after the fact", as there were no references to the Growth Policy in the initial Proposed Zoning Changes. These references were in a document apparently created after initial public comments were received and in anticipation of the March 26 meeting, if I understood the response to my query correctly. They do not appear to reflect a thoughtful rationale based on all of the goals and objectives in the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy.

If these references to the Growth Policy were part of the process for proposed zoning changes, please clarify why they were not included at the time of releasing that document. Thank you!

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 03.21.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Sandee Christensen
1312 41st St S
Gt Falls, MT 59405

March 20, 2019

Cascade County Zoning Board,

I believe when an issue as big as rezoning Cascade County is being considered, you do it to do no harm and have the best interest of the people you represent in mind. A blanket rezoning of land will allow for industries that do not fit in with the agriculture around it. My husband and I are landowners outside of Belt and want to protect our agriculture status and not have an industrial site move in next to us. There should be impact studies done, input from citizens, and consideration of environmentally friendly facilities before rezoning.

Do not leave it open ended with VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITIES. We all know what that would allow for. We need to be selective in what we want in our county that would not impact our environment. I want to protect the land (my land) from an industry that could bring pollution, noise, and infrastructure concerns to Gt. Falls. I do not know of any city/county fighting to have this type of industry. They are however, fighting to eliminate and regulate them. We need to learn from them and not have that situation happen here.

The rules on zoning need to be very specific and protective of our land, water, air, and citizens in Cascade County. Countywide zoning like you are proposing would put our land in jeopardy and allow for industry that may not fit in and would impact the agriculture around it. Your decisions will be lasting and will change this county forever.

Sandee Christensen

Sandee Christensen

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-21-19

Date Reviewed: 3-21-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Sherry Lynn Dow

Complete Address: 1433 Eden Road, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

I am deeply concerned with the proposed zoning changes being considered by the County Planning Board on March 26th...both with the process to date for how these changes have been developed, as well as the changes themselves. I am concerned that County Planning Staff do not appear to have been following any precedent for these suggested changes. I am concerned that, to date, there has been very little opportunity for public input in this process...prior to it reaching the Planning Board for their approval. Changes of this magnitude to the zoning regulations in Cascade County should require input from landowners impacted by those changes, yet no survey of any kind was given to landowners. The Cascade County Growth Policy seems to have been developed to help guide these types of decisions to ensure a positive future for our county citizens, yet in this case that policy appears as though it is being completely disregarded and suggested changes are being made without consideration for Cascade County residents. As a person who was raised in agriculture in Cascade County and still lives in an agricultural community (really, who doesn't other than those residents living within the city limits of Great Falls), I find it very disheartening that support for these changes means a complete lack of support for agriculture in our community. The willingness to completely eliminate the agriculture category from our county zoning speaks volumes about the importance planning staff places on agriculture. Mixed-use definitions allowing slaughterhouses and CAFOs is not supporting family agriculture or the agriculture lifestyle deemed important by the county government when they implemented the current growth policy. Story after story can be found with a quick search of the Internet detailing the ills to the rural economy and agricultural families when industrial agriculture is allowed to flourish in an area. These proposed zoning changes give a free pass to industrial agriculture without any ability by the local citizens to have a voice. As members of this community, please do the right thing and show your support for our agricultural families by voting against these proposed changes, and by insisting that County Planning Staff follow all rules, laws and precedents in proposing future zoning changes in Cascade County.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-21-19	Date Reviewed:	3-21-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Mark L. Conway

Complete Address: 7685 US Highway 89, Belt, MT 59412

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☒ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Page 97, line 27. It is obvious to me that you are trying to sneak in a new provision for zoning so the Slaughter House can go through without any public comment. Money is not everything. If you believe that this will bring good quality jobs to Cascade County, please go visit a slaughter house in any other state. Those are not jobs for you kids, unless you want drug addicts, illegal aliens, and ex-cons in your neighborhood. Yes a few people will work there in the beginning but it is not a nice place to work. Most of the people that work there will not be from the local area. There is no reason to make these kinds of changes that make it easier for people to do what the majority do not want.
It is obvious that someone on this board has special interest in these changes.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-20-19	Date Reviewed:	3-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

From: BONNIE WARREN <bonniewarren4@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:36 AM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Rezoning for 'slaughter house

Absolutely do NOT allow this !! It would pollute water air & ground . There is nothing positive about this meat processing project.

Get Outlook for iOS

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

From: Dorothy Filson <djfilson@bresnan.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 24, 2019 7:06 PM
To: Weber, Jane <jweber@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Proposed zoning changes eliminating all agricultural zoning and replacing with light and heavy industry (MU-20, MU-40)

Please make these comments part of the official public comments.
Thank you,
Dorothy Filson
PO Box 553
Bozeman MT 59771

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

PO Box 553
Bozeman MT 59771

March 24, 2019

To: Cascade County Planning Department
Cascade County Commissioners

These comments are in response to the proposed zoning changes that are being considered that would accommodate the approval of the Madison Food Park, a massive slaughterhouse operation on the outskirts of Great Falls. Please make them a part of the official public comments.

The presence of such a business is concerning on a number of levels. The air, land and water pollution are significant and will impact anyone living in the vicinity. And, since water flows downhill, the runoff would have major impacts on connecting waterways as far as the Missouri.

Because of the horrifying work conditions of killing animals all day, every day in brutal ways, those who agree to take these jobs are often desperate for money and frequently have other aggressive or violent tendencies and/or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In other areas where such operations exist, there is a corresponding increase in crime by these workers which impacts all elements of the community where it is located. Quite often workers are brought in (some of them illegal). Their behavioral and criminal activities have a profound impact on the social fabric of the community. And, for those who can no longer tolerate the working conditions and don't have the money to leave, they become a burden on the services and taxpayers of Great Falls and Montana.

Due to the degradations of the environment, the social problems, air and water pollution, etc. you will see property values plummet. And, when that happens, it will be harder to recruit vital professionals to locate to Great Falls such as doctors, teachers and anyone who want to live in a safe, healthy environment with stable

property values. In short, it would greatly and negatively impact the reputation of Great Falls.

It has been consistently shown that animal agriculture is one of the leading causes of global warming. The methane emitted is worse for the atmosphere than carbon dioxide.
As water becomes increasingly scarce, it makes more sense to use what land and water resources we have to grow crops for people, not livestock. It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produces just 1 pound of meat. Only 25 gallons of water are required to grow 1 pound of wheat. You can save more water by not eating a pound of meat than you can by not showering for six months.
Responsible citizens and elected officials should be addressing these issues and considering the impacts of current decisions on future generations.

These are just the facts of the situation. And, as our climate grows increasingly warmer, it will be even harder to grow crops due to a lack of water and viable land.

I ask that you apply common sense and forward vision regarding the impacts these zoning changes would have in Cascade County and the rest of Montana.
It behooves us all to be good stewards of the great land we have in Montana.
Many others throughout the country and the world wish they were as fortunate.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Filson

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Walter Mehnke - Walt Mehnke

Complete Address: 8293 US Hwy 89, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

PLANNING BOARD

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

* SEE ATTACHED *

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning board

March 21, 2019

Comments pertaining to rezoning proposal

I am a 5th generation farmer, rancher and landowner in Cascade County. I have resided and worked on my farm for over 70 years. The farm and ranch has been my sole source of revenue my entire life. I understand the importance of caring for the land and my community in order to be successful and the community to be healthy. I have two sons that are currently farming and ranching on my property. They have young families and plans to not only keep the farm that I have lived on all my life, but to also to improve this farm.

I believe the proposed rezoning of agriculture land is not to be taken lightly. My understanding is that Cascade County should, at the very least, complete a 5-year review prior to any proposed rezoning changes. Furthermore, I feel and believe that the Cascade County government officials should be following their own policies that read, "protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with resource development". In order to do that, public comment and decision needs to be encouraged. We simply can not change the zoning of agricultural land in order to fast track large scale industries before all appropriate input is collected.

I understand that in order for our community to progress into the future, we must be open to change. Proposed change for Cascade County is something that can not be taken lightly, but with that change the community can not only look at the potential positive impacts we also need to look at the potential negative impacts. The negative impacts have to be given more weight than the positive impacts, for it is much harder to reverse a negative than to maintain a positive. I believe an old saying is very appropriate here, "The road the hell is sometimes paved with good intentions".

Sincerely,

Walter Mehmke

Walter Mehmke

Cascade County Commissioners
RECEIVED
MAR 25 2019

Sent to planning

Charles Bocock
51 Prospect Drive, Great Falls MT 59405

March 24, 2019

Cascade County Planning Department
121 4th St. N.
Great Falls, MT 59401

Dear County Planners and Cascade County Commissioners:

I am somewhere on the steep learning curve of trying to figure out what mischief lurks behind the proposed 2019 zoning changes. I well remember the heated discussions regarding spot zoning and special use permits for the now defunct Highwood Generating fiasco, and I am concerned that while the current players have changed, the script is pretty much the same, "Developers trying to Sell us a Bill of Goods".

It is my understanding that zoning regulations are supposed to protect the people who chose to live and work in defined areas. These regulations should not be subjected to change for each "dog and pony show" that comes to town.

I chose to retire in Great Falls because I appreciate the clean air and the quality of life. I have family living north of Denver in residential neighborhoods that have been raped by operators of smelly feedlots for cattle and disrupted by underground fracking for natural gas. Why can't we learn from these irrevocable mistakes?

Joni Mitchell's lyrics tell us "you don't know what you've got until it's gone". Let's not lose those values we cherish most here in the middle of the *Last Best Place*. Just say no!

Sincerely yours,

Charles Bocock

Charles Bocock

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 3/25/19
Date Reviewed: 3/25/19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Gloria Burrows

Complete Address: 111 Life Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☒ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Good Growth Imperative

Comment

After having studied Casc. County's "Growth Policy Analysis," I see how much the citizens of Cascade County have been kept ignorant, esp. regarding MU20 & MU40. Emergency meetings must be held as soon as "Emergency Public Service Announcements have been made by TV, Radio, Newspapers, Social Media Online & word of mouth!

Obviously our Cascade County Commissioners have not been able to or willing to monitor all, if any of the crucially necessary issues involved in our Agricultural zoning changes being proposed (MU20, MU40 and Unclassified Use Permits.

No zoning changes must be allowed until the PUBLIC has been totally informed. The disastrous impact of these "Mixed Use" zoning changes will destroy our county in every way: infrastructurally, environmentally, etc.

We need positive change, only. Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Judson T. Burrows.

Complete Address: 111 Tipe Rd Great Falls Mont. 59405.

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☑ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Growth Policy by Voting Public.

Comment

Growth policy is fine to consider as long as the final judgement of these deliberations are approved by the Voting Public.

We have General Voting every 2 Year, so I see no need for a planning board to make County decisions.

I see the Planning Board more as a steering Board instead of a takeover Institution, not Judge, Jury & Executioner !!!

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Glen Coulter

Complete Address: 99 Fife Road Great Falls MT. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

It seems to me that people on a planning board need to be aware that there are various kinds of agriculture and some need more restrictions than others. A large grain growing farm is much less offensive in many ways than a CAFO would be to any neighbors. The pollution and erosion of our environment and great way of life in Cascade County is at risk.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Janet Carter

Complete Address: 2005 3rd Ave. N Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Who/what entity is behind the proposed zoning regulations? The changes put forth appear to pave the way for high impact animal operations in our midst. Who worked on these proposed changes & why?

J. Carter

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Leanna Coulter

Complete Address: 99 Fife Road, Great Falls, MT 59405-8064

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): the overall process of land use and zoning changes

Comment

I am concerned about the land use and zoning changes being considered by Cascade County. The citizens of Cascade County need to be made aware of the proposed changes and the effect that they will have on every citizen and everyone should have an opportunity to vote on the proposed changes. I attended the February 19, 2019 meeting at the county office in an effort to find out what is going on. I left more confused than when I arrived.
Changing land use from agricultural to mixed use is ambiguous and not defining boundaries of mixed use zones makes it even more unclear. I understand changes where proposed in October 2018 that were not made public. I believe since changes affect all citizens, all changes should be subject to public notification and public input. Also all proposed changes should be subject to impact studies. All information should be made public by more than on line

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Glen Coulter

Complete Address: 99 Fife Road Great Falls Montana 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe):

Comment

In reviewing the zoning changes proposed by the Cascade County planning board I am concerned by the fact that there was no opportunity for landowners of the county to have input into the policy. There appears to be no legal descriptions of properties but just classifies all Ag land as Mixed use either MU20 or MU 40.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Glen Conlter

Complete Address: 99 Fife Road Great Falls, Mont. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

The proposed changes in the zoning of agricultural land in Cascade County will have a very adverse affect on the tourist industry that is so important to our county and state if CAFOs and pollution type industry is allowed to settle here.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Nancy Zadick

Complete Address: 1901 Whispering Ridge Drive, Great Falls, MT

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Proposed revisions to zoning regulations

Comment

See attached document.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-22-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

March 21, 2019
Public Comment
Cascade County Planning Commission on proposed revision to zoning regulations

My comments concern the process by which the public has been made aware of the planned revisions to the zoning regulations. I attended the February Planning Committee meeting. County Planning staff was asked by the Planning Commission chair to present the proposed revisions. The staff simply read the revisions rather than provide rationale for the revisions and possible impact to cascade county landowners and residents from the revisions. I am not a planning professional, yet I am able to discern that the change from "agriculture" to "mixed use" can have profound impact on land owners and neighbors. I implore Chair Merja to provide or instruct the planning staff to provide the public with rationale and impact statements at the March meeting and then offer the public adequate time to study this information. Without this information I believe the planning commission and the cascade county commission can't possibly make informed decisions as to the merit of adopting the proposed revisions.

Sadly if this information is not forthcoming, then I believe such information is already know to staff, the planning commission and the county commissioners and hasn't been made available to the public. Where is the sunlight in that kind of government?

Nancy Zadick
1901 Whispering Ridge Drive
Great Falls, MT 59405

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Commenter Information

Name: Janelle YATSKO

Complete Address: 674 Stockett Road Stockett MT 59480

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): MMJ Rezone

Comment

Please See Attached letter :)

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:		Date Reviewed:		Complete:	☐ Yes ☐ No

o whom it may concern, Janelle / Dale Yatsko are writing this variance and or hardship
etter.

his letter is concerning our registered medical marijuana grow at 55 Gibson flats Roac
nit number four in district A..

Ve have been at this location for 4 years now.. Prior to this address, we were out by
enterville. We were told by Cascade County Planning board that we needed to be in
gricultural District with the grow.. We then at that time approached Dave and Sandy
ickman about property they had on Gibson Flats Road... They agreed to rent us a
uilding that would meet the County requirements. In doing so, the Dickman's had to
urchase additional property from a neighbor to be 20 plus acres so we would meet the
gricultural District that the cascade county said we had to be in with our grow.. At this
me we entered into a long term lease agreement With Dave and Sandy Dickman. We
ere into the County planning Board on several occasions to try to purchase a location
ermit with no luck. We were told every time by the planning board that the location
ermit was not needed, because the county wasn't issuing any yet. As long as we were
roperly licensed with the state of Montana, And the planning board knew where we were,
nd the location was district A (Farm Ag.) we would be allowed to operate.. we asked the
ounty planning Board on several occasions to classify our industry. We also asked for the
easons our industry is heavy industrial since it is a medical program run by the state of
Montana.

Ve went to a meeting in November of 2018 with the planning board and the County
ttorney Josh Racki. In this meeting we were given the letter from the County Attorney
tating that our Grow was in the Proper Zone. In the letter from the Cascade County
ttorney it specifically states that the grow is in the proper cascade county zoning of
istrict A (Agricultural District). It was then told to us in Late December that we were now
ot in compliance with the grow. We then confronted the planning board and they told us
hat the new zoning laws make us illegal in our A District, that the county has put us all in
ince 2004. Janelle then asked the planning board how the county attorney came up with
he information that was on the letter they gave us in November 2018 that stated we were
n the safe zone for our grow.. The planning board told us that the information the county
ttorney used, came from the planning board. The planning board also told us that they
ere directed by this administration and all the past administrations back to 2004 to put
ll medical marijuana grows in agricultural districts. We then applied for a Location Permit
gain in December 2018. It was denied because we were not in compliance with the new
oning laws that have not even been adopted yet..

ecause of this decision by the County not to sell us our Location Permit, we are writing
his letter to show that Cascade County's new zoning laws that they are trying to enforce
s causing us severe financial hardship for our business.. Our landlords not only purchased
nore property to meet the counties requirements, they also built the building to our
equirements to meet our grows needs.. This was a huge financial burden to our landlords.
t is also a huge burden to us.. we entered into a long term lease agreement and have 11
ears and 3 months left on that agreement. We are committed to paying $2000 a month
or the rest of the term of our agreement.. We also have about another $80,000 in the
uilding of our own..

lso the I-2 heavy industrial areas you are pushing us all to, have NO available property for

ent. So we would have to build from the ground up.. We have investigated and received
erbal Quotes from contractors.. the lowest estimate we got to buy land, put in water
ewer power gas, and build same size building we have right now, the costs start at
850,000 Plus. Lets not forget the permits and the time it will take to complete this
rocess.

dd our remaining lease to the $850,000 to build new, we are looking at a minimum of 1.1
.3 million dollars.. there are not very many businesses in Cascade County or the state of
Montana that can absorb that kind of cost for a move that is unnecessary by Cascade
County. If the county proceeds with this zoning and not grandfathering us in, in the
ocations that they had previously approved for several years, Cascade County Will be
nowingly putting us out of business and forcing us into a bankruptcy. There also is no
anks that will lend at this time to our industry.

n the counties new zoning regulations, it states that these new rules and regulations
annot impose any financial hardships on the businesses in the county. We feel these new
oning laws and regulations will indeed create financial hardship for us and will run us out
f business and force us into a bankruptcy because of our lease agreement and the costs
f relocating into the zoning areas that the county is trying to implement. We also feel the
ounty never looked into these new areas as far as the feasibility for the grows and the
torefronts in our industry. Because if they did, they would have realized there is nothing
ut there for us to rent or purchase. Unless we build from the ground up. The couple
roperties that were available are renting for More money then some of the highest retail
roperty in the city of Great Falls. Since the county is forcing us into these areas, The
eople who had these couple properties are now charging ridiculous prices. This is called
xtortion. We looked at one property that was on the market for two years for $375,000
nd couldn't sell it. and now the owner of that same property said that since the county is
orcing us all into the I-2 heavy industrial areas, there isn't any property out there he said
So now he wants $750,000 for the property that he could not sell at 375,000 for over 2
ears. All the providers that are storefronts only are out of county owned and farmed. I
elieve there are only one or two providers that actually are located and grow in the O2
rea. This is because us other five providers have been in the county/District A Where you
ut us from the beginning. Again I have a letter from the county attorney from November
, 2018 stating we were fine for our grow operation. Ultimately the patients will be the
nes to suffer all over again. Their access to medicine will be harder and limit their
reedom of choice. Their freedom of choice becomes monopolized and eventually more
xpensive. Forcing local grows or providers that have been longtime established and in
ompliance with the cascade county and the state into an I2 area is contrary To your
Cascade County mission statement goal number one, sustain and strengthen the
conomic well-being of Cascade County citizens. What happened to your statement of
Being able to leverage available local resources encourage the growth of the agricultural
conomy ,improve local trade capture for cascade county businesses?

The problem is there is so much information to go over and discuss. And we have tried to
schedule several meetings with the cascade County commissioners to help inform them of
he current status of the industry and the underlying status of the current industry. There
s a ton of mathematics that are behind the store fronts that the commissioners and the
general public needs to know. And being a local provider we have a very clear
understanding of the numbers game that is driving the industry at this point. there are

ome very large players in this industry that want to be the top three and destroy the small
usinesses. This completely goes against the cascade county mission statement.
incerely and thank you.
anelle and dale Yatsko

Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: DALE YATSKO

Complete Address: 674 Stockett Road Stockett MT. 59480

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): MMJ Rezone

Comment

See Attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:		Date Reviewed:		Complete:	☐ Yes ☐ No

To whom it may concern, Janelle / Dale Yatsko are writing this variance and or hardship letter.

This letter is concerning our registered medical marijuana grow at 55 Gibson flats Road unit number four in district A..

We have been at this location for 4 years now.. Prior to this address, we were out by Centerville. We were told by Cascade County Planning board that we needed to be in Agricultural District with the grow.. We then at that time approached Dave and Sandy Dickman about property they had on Gibson Flats Road... They agreed to rent us a building that would meet the County requirements. In doing so, the Dickman's had to purchase additional property from a neighbor to be 20 plus acres so we would meet the Agricultural District that the cascade county said we had to be in with our grow.. At this time we entered into a long term lease agreement With Dave and Sandy Dickman. We were into the County planning Board on several occasions to try to purchase a location permit with no luck. We were told every time by the planning board that the location permit was not needed, because the county wasn't issuing any yet. As long as we were properly licensed with the state of Montana, And the planning board knew where we were, and the location was district A (Farm Ag.) we would be allowed to operate.. we asked the County planning Board on several occasions to classify our industry. We also asked for the reasons our industry is heavy industrial since it is a medical program run by the state of Montana.

We went to a meeting in November of 2018 with the planning board and the County Attorney Josh Racki. In this meeting we were given the letter from the County Attorney stating that our Grow was in the Proper Zone. In the letter from the Cascade County attorney it specifically states that the grow is in the proper cascade county zoning of District A (Agricultural District). It was then told to us in Late December that we were not in compliance with the grow. We then confronted the planning board and they told us that the new zoning laws make us illegal in our A District, that the county has put us all in since 2004. Janelle then asked the planning board how the county attorney came up with the information that was on the letter they gave us in November 2018 that stated we were in the safe zone for our grow.. The planning board told us that the information the county attorney used, came from the planning board. The planning board also told us that they were directed by this administration and all the past administrations back to 2004 to put all medical marijuana grows in agricultural districts. We then applied for a Location Permit again in December 2018. It was denied because we were not in compliance with the new zoning laws that have not even been adopted yet..

Because of this decision by the County not to sell us our Location Permit, we are writing this letter to show that Cascade County's new zoning laws that they are trying to enforce is causing us severe financial hardship for our business.. Our landlords not only purchased more property to meet the counties requirements, they also built the building to our requirements to meet our grows needs.. This was a huge financial burden to our landlords. It is also a huge burden to us.. we entered into a long term lease agreement and have 11 years and 3 months left on that agreement. We are committed to paying $2000 a month for the rest of the term of our agreement.. We also have about another $80,000 in the building of our own..

Also the I-2 heavy industrial areas you are pushing us all to, have NO available property for

rent. So we would have to build from the ground up.. We have investigated and received verbal Quotes from contractors.. the lowest estimate we got to buy land, put in water sewer power gas, and build same size building we have right now, the costs start at $850,000 Plus. Lets not forget the permits and the time it will take to complete this process.

Add our remaining lease to the $850,000 to build new, we are looking at a minimum of 1.1 1.3 million dollars.. there are not very many businesses in Cascade County or the state of Montana that can absorb that kind of cost for a move that is unnecessary by Cascade County. If the county proceeds with this zoning and not grandfathering us in, in the locations that they had previously approved for several years, Cascade County Will be knowingly putting us out of business and forcing us into a bankruptcy. There also is no banks that will lend at this time to our industry.

In the counties new zoning regulations, it states that these new rules and regulations cannot impose any financial hardships on the businesses in the county. We feel these new zoning laws and regulations will indeed create financial hardship for us and will run us out of business and force us into a bankruptcy because of our lease agreement and the costs of relocating into the zoning areas that the county is trying to implement. We also feel the county never looked into these new areas as far as the feasibility for the grows and the storefronts in our industry. Because if they did, they would have realized there is nothing out there for us to rent or purchase. Unless we build from the ground up. The couple properties that were available are renting for More money then some of the highest retail property in the city of Great Falls. Since the county is forcing us into these areas, The people who had these couple properties are now charging ridiculous prices. This is called extortion. We looked at one property that was on the market for two years for $375,000 and couldn't sell it. and now the owner of that same property said that since the county is forcing us all into the I-2 heavy industrial areas, there isn't any property out there he said So now he wants $750,000 for the property that he could not sell at 375,000 for over 2 years. All the providers that are storefronts only are out of county owned and farmed. I believe there are only one or two providers that actually are located and grow in the O2 area. This is because us other five providers have been in the county/District A Where you put us from the beginning. Again I have a letter from the county attorney from November 9, 2018 stating we were fine for our grow operation. Ultimately the patients will be the ones to suffer all over again. Their access to medicine will be harder and limit their freedom of choice. Their freedom of choice becomes monopolized and eventually more expensive. Forcing local grows or providers that have been longtime established and in compliance with the cascade county and the state into an I2 area is contrary To your Cascade County mission statement goal number one, sustain and strengthen the economic well-being of Cascade County citizens. What happened to your statement of Being able to leverage available local resources encourage the growth of the agricultural economy ,improve local trade capture for cascade county businesses?

The problem is there is so much information to go over and discuss. And we have tried to schedule several meetings with the cascade County commissioners to help inform them of the current status of the industry and the underlying status of the current industry. There is a ton of mathematics that are behind the store fronts that the commissioners and the general public needs to know. And being a local provider we have a very clear understanding of the numbers game that is driving the industry at this point. there are

some very large players in this industry that want to be the top three and destroy the small businesses. This completely goes against the cascade county mission statement.

Compiled 06/03/19

Sincerely and thank you.

Janelle and dale Yatsko

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Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): _____

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Thank you for posting the draft Staff Report for the March 26, 2019 Planning Board Hearing on March 11, 2019 allowing more reasonable time for public review. I have also reviewed the Board member documents that were posted on March 19, 2019, one week prior to the March 26, 2019 Hearing, including the final Staff Report.

The Public Notice for the March 26, 2019 Hearing states "Public comment is welcome and, as a general rule, will be limited to five (5) minutes so as to allow all interested parties an opportunity to comment in a fair and timely manner." However, the newly published Agenda does not include an item under 4.A. for public comments although the text of the Staff Report includes [Public Comment xxxx] and [Planning Board consideration of public comments] after each zoning section.

Please clarify how Public Oral Comments will be conducted at the March 26, 2019 Hearing.

1. Will participants be allowed five (5) minutes to comment on each section as is currently presented in the Staff Report?
2. Will participants be allowed only one (1) five (5) minute comment period at the end of any one section?

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-20-19	Date Reviewed:	3-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

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Commenter Information

Name: Gary Zadick

Complete Address: 1901 Whispering Ridge, Great Falls, CASCADE COUNTY, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): New Zoning Regulations

Comment

1> The process intends to eliminate or insulate the Board of Commissioners. They are attempting to wash their hands of the biggest zoning redo in our history.

2> The process has the appearance of being arranged to smooth the way for the Madison Road Park

3> Zoning everything outside the city effectively as multiple use is the same as abandoning zoning and permitting.

4> There has not been explanation for each change and no notice of meetings regarding all earlier versions of the proposed plan, in my opinion violating open meeting and public participation rights under our Constitution and statutes. You have not followed County Ordinance 14.1.1

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-20-19	Date Reviewed:	3-20-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

P. 2

Public comment - by Gary M Zadick

5> The proposed new zoning regulations do not adequately protect rural residents who would be affected by a large animal facility - smell, air, water issues are not confined to just ADJACENT properties. Setbacks need to be properly set.

6> The proposed new zoning regulations do not adequately provide for permitting and imposition of limitations for large facilities which would have an impact beyond its property boundary.

March 20, 2019

Gary M Zadick

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Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Helen Coleman

Complete Address: 11 Homestake Lane, Gt. Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): unclassified Use Permits

Comment

Elected officials should be accountable to the public when "unclassified Use Permits are allowed in any zoning district

Confined animal feeding operations, feedlots & power plants are included.

Its definite that community impacts should be addressed prior to approval.

These high impact operations require elected officials approval NOT appointed volunteers.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-20-19

Date Reviewed: 3-20-19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-20-19

Date Reviewed: 3-20-19

Compiled 06/03/19

Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Helen Coleman

Complete Address: 11 Homestake Lane - Gt. Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☒ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe):

Comment

All of us writing these forms + those reading them agree - we are interested in Cascade agriculture area

Apparently the growth policy adopted in 2014 should be reviewed every 5 yrs.

The zoning ordinance 14.1.1 provided an adequate process but this is not being followed. More important a public hearing should have been part of the staff review. This also did not happen.

The express results means the many people impacted by these proposed growth policies have NOT been solicited nor heard. My concern is WHY was the public NOT provided a forum to express their concerns with these proposed growth policy changes!

0221

Public Comment Form

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Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Logan Tinsen

Complete Address: 19 Stone Mill Lane, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Why change Agricultural to Mixed Use? A quick internet search will tell you this zoning strategy is mostly done in urban areas not rural areas. Where is the analysis and data to support such a change if it is not being done in other rural communities? Comprehensive planning using participatory stakeholder - people likely to be affected, those with differing points of view and citizen engagement process should be undertaken in such substantial proposed zoning changes. Justification should include fiscial impact analysis, cost of infrastructure studies, traffic modeling, water quality assessments, identification of prime agricultural lands, etc. The proposed zoning is focusing on short-term results, not on long-term implications and impacts of development in aggregate. The economic, social, and environmental impacts of development are often significant and are being overlooked. This is one of many reasons why I OPPOSE the Cascade County zoning amendments as written and I'm asking the Planning Board to not pass to the County Commissioners. Thank you for all your hard work and effort on a volunteer basis.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

From: robert lassila <60buick@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 2:37 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Zone changes

Robert Lassila 149 Bickford Rd Great Falls 59405

I am writing in opposition to the proposed zone changes.
The changes overlook many subjects and there has been very little in promoting research in locating projects.
The changes seem to severely limit public participation in considering large projects. These changes seem to pave the way for a misguided project, such as, locating a garbage landfill within sight of Giant Springs or, maybe Shaw Butte, west of Great Falls.
I demand to have a voice in wether my or my neighbor's property stays as Agricultural or is changed to Mixed use.
I believe the public should have a vote on important additions to our county taxbase.

Robert Lassila, landowner

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

From: JOHN LEATHAM <johnleatham@cs.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 1:04 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Proposed revisions to Cascade County Zoning Regulations

To: Cascade County Planning Board

Dear Sirs;

I feel that the proposed revisions to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations to rezone "Agricultural" Districts to "Mixed-Use" Districts is an attempt to keep the people of Cascade County from having the ability to have an input into the planning, development, and use of large areas in the county. I am specifically thinking of the proposed meat packing plant, but my concerns are about plans for future development.

Therefore I am against the proposed revisions of rezoning large areas from Agricultural to Mixed-Use.

Thank you for consideration of my opinion and your service to our county.

Yours truly,

John Leatham
500 North Main
Box 88
Neihart, Montana 59465

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Jeff Winter

Complete Address: 1204 24th Ave. SW, Great Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): Proposed revisions to Cascade County zoning regulations

Comment

Please see attached.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

To: Cascade County Planning Board
From: Jeff Winter
Re: Proposed revisions to Cascade County zoning regulations
Date: March 25, 2019

The Cascade County Planning Division staff have proposed a major overhaul of the current zoning regulations, without any clear and convincing explanation of why such changes are necessary. I have spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the proposed changes, and am left puzzled by the rationale for many of them. Unfortunately, I am left to conclude that the reason for proposing so many changes at the same time is to deflect attention from a hugely significant change to the zoning regulations which is buried within the complexity of the proposed revisions.

The proposed revisions create a new "Mixed Use - 40 (MU-40)" district in which a "Value Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility" is a permitted use without need for a Special Use Permit. After cross-referencing a number of other definitions and provisions within the proposed revisions to the zoning regulations, it appears the proposed Madison Food Park project fits squarely within the definition of "Value Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility." This project would be located in an MU-40 district under the proposed regulations, thus allowing it to completely sidestep the Special Use Permit process.

It seems hardly coincidental that these proposed revisions to the county zoning regulations came about shortly after Madison Food Park withdrew its application for a Special Use Permit. Now it appears the Cascade County Planning Board (CCPB) is seeking to pave the way for Madison Food Park to move forward with its plans in a streamlined and unregulated manner, by changing the rules for all land and business owners in Cascade County. But what would motivate the CCPB to place the interests of Madison Food Park above those of its citizens and constituents? The citizens of Cascade County deserve an answer.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of transparency between the CCPB and the public. I am aware of a group of citizens who have requested information as to how and why these proposed changes to the zoning regulations came about. To my knowledge, none of the requested information has been provided. If the CCPB is unwilling to shed some sunlight on this matter, then it only reinforces the perception that something is going on behind the scenes to benefit the proposed Madison Food Park project at the expense of the citizens of Cascade County.

This perception is further reinforced by the Staff Report for the March 26, 2019 CCPB hearing. Appendix 5 of the Staff Report shows how various land use scenarios, involving slaughterhouse and feedlot facilities, would play out under existing zoning regulations and the proposed revisions. By carefully describing the parameters of these land use scenarios, the Apppendix shows that certain slaughterhouse and feedlot facilities would still be subject to Special Use Permit requirements under the proposed

revisions to the zoning regulations. But, with the exception of a "dairy products manufacturing plant," the Appendix conspicuously omits the land use scenario of a "Value Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility," which is a permitted use and not subject to the Special Use Permit requirements. This is misleading and only raises additional questions as to the underlying motivation for the proposed revisions.

I strongly encourage the CCPB to carefully consider the implications of the proposed revisions to the zoning regulations and to take the concerns of the citizens of Cascade County seriously. Transparency on the part of the CCPB would go a long way toward easing these concerns. If these proposed revisions are rubber-stamped by the CCPB despite these concerns, and without strict compliance with all required procedures, then litigation is virtually certain, in which case the actions of the CCPB and its staff, and their relationship with Madison Food Park, will be closely scrutinized.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

From: Gessaman <rkkgessaman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:50 AM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Comments on new Zoning Regulations

Dear Planning Board Members:

Montanans For Responsible Land Use (MFRLU) has done an excellent job addressing many of the zoning regulations proposals. I agree with the positions that MFRLU takes as outlined in blue or rose shaded areas. It is critical that the County continues to protect property owners from expansion of industry into agricultural areas that affects the health of the public and the environment. We must protect our ground water/aquifers as these resources are critical to our existence. We don't want another white elephant like the benighted HGS Coal Plant located in Cascade County. Projects must be environmentally sound as well as economic - something the coal plant proposal never managed to achieve.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Gessaman
1006 36th Ave NE
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-452-7106

SECTION II: Procedural Issues

Note: These issues are challenges with the methods the Cascade County (CC) Planning Staff used to propose their revisions. They need to be addressed in whole or part in the official public record for this proposal. Consider addressing those that concern you in your comments.

A. The Cascade County Planning Department's process is flawed for the following reasons:

1. Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601 (3)(f) requires the Cascade County Planning Board to review the Cascade County Growth Policy at least once every five (5) years after adoption. The current Growth Policy was adopted in 2014 (linked below) it outlines the vision and goals which become the foundation of the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances adopted by the County Government.

http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/361/Adopted2014_GrowthPolicy.pdf

MFRLU believes the Cascade County Government should complete their 5-year review of the Cascade County Growth Policy before proposing detailed changes to the Zoning and/or Subdivision ordinances.

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Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

2. The Cascade County Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1 outlines a specific process for amending the Zoning Ordinance. The Cascade County Planning Department is not following their own legally adopted process.

MFRLU believes that ALL amendments (even those proposed by the County Planning Staff) should follow the process from Section 14.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

3. The Cascade County Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1(6) requires a detailed analysis of each change IAW MCA 76-2-203. The detailed analysis should be part of the official staff report PRIOR to the public hearing and should be published with ample time for public review. These analyses have not been provided.

MFRLU believes the Cascade County Planning Staff is required to prepare a detailed analysis for EACH proposed change. The public needs to be given a reasonable amount of time to review the analysis and background information used to develop the official proposal. This analysis also needs to be presented to the public at the next hearing.

4. The Cascade County Planning Department has established a precedent in how they prepare and present staff reports – including the 2009 process for amending the Zoning ordinance. The 2009 effort included multiple work sessions as well as a survey of the landowners directly impacted by changes. The staff presentation and analysis on 19 February 2019 did not follow precedent for county-initiated amendments to their ordinances. No work sessions were held. Zero public input was solicited. Thousands of property owners in Cascade County will be impacted by these changes, but no survey was conducted to assess the impact.

MFRLU believes the Cascade County Planning Staff should follow legal requirements AND historical precedent to give the public an appropriate opportunity to shape policy, analyze the results and respond to the Planning Department's ultimate proposals.

5. Section 14.1.1(3) requires a legal description for the boundaries of a proposed district change. The Cascade County Planning Staff has proposed redefining the zoning of millions of acres in Cascade County from Agricultural to Mixed Use (MU) zoning without preparing legal descriptions of the affected properties. They've only published a vicinity map IAW Section 14.1.1(2).

MFRLU believes the Cascade County Planning Staff should compile the legal descriptions of all of the affected properties and legally notify the landowners of the pending zone change.

6. The proposed regulations published on the Cascade County Website are dated October 2018 and labeled "update V4.1." The process the Planning Staff used to develop and subsequently edit V1, V2, V3, V4.0 of the proposed regulations has not been made public.

MFRLU believes regulatory changes of this magnitude should involve public input from the very beginning.

MFRLU believes the County Planning Staff should release all records of the versions of the proposed regulations dating back to the initiation of their process. The records need to include the individuals involved in drafting the proposal, their communications with each other, review and revision procedures, and the rationale behind the changes as the proposal was developed.

SECTION III: Overarching Issues

Note: These issues are broad in nature, and represent a fundamental shift in the way our Cascade County Government is approaching zoning and land use. These should generate the most discussion and public comment.

A. **The Cascade County Planning Department has proposed changing the legal definition of all "Agricultural" Districts to "Mixed-Use" Districts.** The staff will most likely describe the change as being administrative in nature to better capture our local economy. There are numerous concerns:

1. Under the proposed regulations the definition of the MU-40 District would, "provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential site characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses."

MFRLU believes that redefining the zoning regulations governing millions of acres as "Mixed-Use", with the result of allowing more "intensive" and "larger in scale" uses, is more than an administrative change. The county is essentially proposing a new type of district, "Mixed Use", and then proposing a legal zone change for every parcel currently zoned "Agricultural" to the newly defined "Mixed Use."

***Cascade County Landowners should have input into whether their land (and their neighbors) stay "Agricultural" or go through a legal zone change to "Mixed Use." I think this is extremely important!**

The proposal is a wholesale change directly conflicting with the following portions of the adopted Cascade County Growth Policy:

a. Goal #2 of the Growth Policy states: *"Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development."*

* This includes objective C: *"preserving Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed land subdivisions and commercial development."*

MFRLU believes the proposed policy will sacrifice open space to industrialized and intensive uses with no further public input.

b. Goal #3 of the Growth Policy states: *"Maintain the agricultural economy."*
* This includes objective A: "Protect the most productive soil types" and

objective B: "Continue to protect soils against erosion"
** Paragraph 8.3 also goes into detail on protecting prime soils

MFRLU believes the proposed policy fails to protect our most productive soils from both development and erosion because more intense and larger uses will be allowed without a conditional permitting process or public input.

c. Goal #5 of the Growth Policy states: *"Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens."*

MFRLU believes the proposed policy fails to preserve and enhance our rural, friendly lifestyle because more intense and larger uses will be allowed without a conditional permitting process or public input.

d. Chapter 5 – Economic Condition: Policies states:

"1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.

2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County." And,

"10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.

11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land."

MFRLU believes the proposed policy fails to adhere to these adopted economic policies.

2. As currently defined in the proposal, the MU-40 district does not apply performance standards as it does in I-1 "Light Industrial" and other areas.

MFRLU believes that performance standards need to be be applied for each district based upon the impact that district will have on its neighbors and county as a whole.

3. The goals in the Cascade County Growth Policy (linked again below) were originally adopted in 1982 and affirmed in 2006 and 2014. As stated by our County Leadership, *"These goals continue to provide the best overall direction for county planning."*

MFRLU agrees 100% with the goals written in 1982 and believes the proposed changes are contrary to them.

***MFRLU believes that each zoning district definition, and every future proposed change, should reference the goals, objectives and policies from the Cascade County Growth Policy which justify their inclusion in the ordinances.**

http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/361/Adopted2014_GrowthPolicy.pdf

B. **The Cascade County Planning Department has proposed allowing "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facilities" as a permitted use in the new MU-40 districts.** The definition of "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility" makes no distinction between animal-based commodities and plant-based commodities. It makes no distinction between locally-raised commodities and commodities imported from other states, regions, or countries.

1. A "permitted use" means they are allowed by right – without public hearing, public comment or the standard conditions required through a "special permit" process. Those standard conditions and the public hearing process would address traffic concerns, pollution, smells, soil erosion, etc.

MFRLU believes that animal-based and plant-based "Value-Added Processing Facilities" should be defined and treated separately in our Zoning regulations.

*** A farmer-owned single-elevator seed cleaning operation should be treated differently than a 3000+ employee industrial park with 100-acre sewage lagoons.**

**** A low-impact environmentally-friendly operation processing locally grown crops should be treated differently than an intensive high-impact operation processing imported animal units.**

MFRLU believes all "intensive" uses, including "VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED" should be required to go through at least a special permit process so the permits are conditional and public input is considered for each case.

MFRLU believes all Cascade County permitting requirements should be based on potential impact. "Permitted" uses allowed by right should be for low-impact operations in order to simplify the process for small businesses and family farms so they may develop and grow in the appropriate zones. "Larger in scale" and more "intensive" uses should be required to meet higher standards and therefore should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process.

C. The Cascade County Planning Department has expanded the inclusion of "Unclassified Use Permits" in their proposed regulations. The list of uses included in this section can be allowed in ANY zoning district if they go through the permitting process in the Zoning regulations and updated with this proposal. The uses allowed include slaughterhouses, confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), feedlots and power plants. The permit process does not involved elected officials – only the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBOA)

MFRLU believes the "Unclassified Use Permit" process is designed specifically for intensive, high-impact operations that would have a difficult time getting a Zone change approved. This attempt to make it easier for unpopular operations (slaughterhouses, CAFOs, power plants, etc.) is contrary to the point of having zoning in the first place.

MFRLU believes the approval process for intensive and high impact operations (slaughterhouses, CAFOs, power plants, etc.) should be the responsibility of ELECTED officials (Cascade County Board of Commissioners), not appointed volunteers (Zoning Board of Adjustments).

MFRLU believes the most appropriate process for intensive and high-impact operations would be the PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) process outlined in section 7.14. The PUD process could be modified to include the high impact uses proposed for the UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMIT process, ensuring all community impacts are addressed before the operation is approved.

***If "Unclassified Use Permits" existed in 2004, the SME Highwood Coal-fired Generating Plant would not have needed to apply for a zone change (which ultimately was determined to be illegal), it could've gotten one of these permits. As a result, it would most likely be our neighbor today!**

D. In general terms, it appears that the proposed zoning regulations are designed to make processes and permit approvals simpler for high impact and intensive operations (such as

CAFOs and slaughterhouses), yet more difficult for small businesses (like tourist-based business).

MFLRU believes that, without exception, the amount of scrutiny a business or operation faces for permitting and approval should be based on the impact to the neighborhood and community.

SECTION IV: Definitions and Details

Note: These issues are changes to the details within the proposal by the Cascade County Planning Department. Minor changes to a definition or what a zone allows can drastically

impact what is allowed on your neighbor's land. Consider addressing the items which concern you most in your comments.

A. **The proposed regulations changed the definition of "Slaughterhouse" to include "Temporary Stabling" but does not define "temporary".** This proposal would allow industrialized agriculture to combine feedlot operations with a slaughterhouse.

MFRLU believes "Temporary Stabling" for slaughterhouses should have a defined limit and recommends 72 hours per live animal.

B. The proposed regulations define "AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY" as: *"Any commodity produced from an agricultural use. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, grains, soybeans, hay, corn, timber, honey, fish, fruits, vegetables, crickets, or oil seeds."*

MFRLU believes the "AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY" definition should be separated into two components (defined below) because the potential for impact is significantly greater for certain commodities.

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED: ***"Any commodity produced from an agricultural use involving livestock, poultry, fish and/or insects. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, honey, fish, or crickets."***

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED: ***"Any commodity produced from an agricultural use grown through traditional horticulture and farming. This includes, but is not limited to grains, soybeans, corn, timber, fruits, vegetables and oil seeds."***

C. The proposed regulations define "VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY" as: *"Any facility in which one or more agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value-added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations."*

MFRLU believes the "VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY" definition should be separated into two components (defined below) because the potential for impact is significantly greater for certain commodities.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED: ***"Any facility in which one or more animal production based agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value- added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations."***

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED: ***"Any facility in which one or more crop production based agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value- added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations."***

D. The proposed regulations define "VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT" as: *"An agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as milling wheat into flour, curdling milk in the production of cheese, melting honeycombs to make beeswax); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products)."*

MFRLU believes the "VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT" definition should be separated into two components (defined below) because the potential for impact is significantly greater for certain commodities.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – ANIMAL BASED: ***"An animal-based agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as curdling milk in the production of cheese, melting honeycombs to make beeswax); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products)."***

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – PLANT BASED: ***"A plant-based agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as milling wheat into flour); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of***

the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products)."

E. MU-20 and MU-40 both allow for "TEMPORARY" and "PERMANENT WORKFORCE HOUSING" without defining density of the housing and limits on what is temporary. Inclusion of these uses for MU districts may result in work-camp conditions similar to those found in the Bakken oilfield developments.

MFRLU believes both "WORKFORCE HOUSING" definitions should include a maximum density based on human health, water supply, and waste-water standards. "TEMPORARY WORKFORCE HOUSING" should be limited to a specific timeframe. Further research and input on density and time limits should be conducted.

F. MU-40 district regulations refer to "ADJACENT" residences when applying set-backs.

Impacts such as smell, noise, traffic and pollutants travel beyond "ADJACENT" properties.

MFRLU believes "NEAREST" is more appropriate than "ADJACENT"

G. MU-40 district allows for a "RENDERING PLANT" without a set-back. "RENDERING PLANTS" are potentially among the most impactful operations in terms of odor, pollutions, noise and traffic.

MFRLU believes "RENDERING PLANTS" should have the furthest set-backs possible (at least 1 mile) from the nearest existing residences. Further research in the health concerns regarding rendering facilities needs to be conducted before determining an appropriate setback.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Brian Neilsen

Complete Address: 13 Homestake Lane, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☑ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Please see attached document. Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board,

I strongly oppose the proposed changes in the new Zoning Regulations for Cascade County. I grew up in Great Falls and moved back from Missoula eleven years ago to raise our family and run my outfitting business on the Missouri River. One month after refinancing our home in preparation for updates and remodeling, my wife and I learned of a potential Slaughterhouse spanning over 3000 acres just over a mile from our new home. The potential for declining well water, poor air quality, increased industrial traffic and polluted water downstream of Great Falls could devastate our family and our way of life.

I feel the proposed new Zoning Regulations skip right by the growth policy put forth by Cascade County in 2014. The new changes seem to give an open pass for industrial agriculture. The arrival of a slaughterhouse and the CAFO's that could coincide with the slaughterhouse will threaten our clean air, clean water, traffic, property values and a variety of other issues. As a Cascade County resident, I should have input into whether adjacent properties stay utilized as traditional agriculture or go through a legal change and become "mixed Use". Among numerous other statements for positive growth in Cascade County, the growth policy states "preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade citizens" and "aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County. These two statements alone do not coincide with the new proposed regulations. Please reconsider the new regulations in order to maintain and ensure the integrity, safety and clean environment of Cascade County and its neighboring counties.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Brian Neilsen

Owner/Outfitter

Missouri River Guides

406-240-3715

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received:_____

Date Reviewed:_____

Complete: ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Logan Tinsen

Complete Address: 19 Stone Mill Lane, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Please See Attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Dear Cascade County Planning Board,

Thank you for your volunteered time to serve our great county. I write to you today in OPPISITION of the current changes to the county zoning brought forth to you by the county planning department. Here are the major issues (in no order of importance) I have with the new zoning and why I oppose the changes.

1) **No MU-20 district along highway 200 East to Belt.**
In the planning staff report Appendix 2 accompanied by Map 1 and 2. It is stated using a computer generated statistical tool aided in coming up with the MU-20 and MU-40 distinct boundaries. By looking at the county map it explains why this is. If you look to the West on I-15 toward Manchester and Vaughn those smaller towns exist quite close to Great Falls (less than 10 miles), which would explain why people cluster and the parcels are smaller. Not to mention the Sun River flows in that direction too. The same goes for I-15 toward Ulm (less than 10 miles) and Cascade. The Missouri river also runs along I-15 making for smaller parcels, places people cannot build, if they do, its in clusters. When going East on highway 200 toward Belt the first incorporated town is Belt (20 miles). If one looks at the Montana Cadastral the parcels (in acres) of land on I-15 between Ulm and Cascade that are designated for MU-20 that exclude the Missouri River portion are similar in size to the parcels of land on highway 200 from Great Falls to Belt. Yet, this was not re-zoned as MU-20? Why is highway 200 not considered a major highway corridor for the growth of Great Falls? I feel this analysis by the planning department is a flawed oversight that needs addressed immediately!

2) **Changing "Agricultural" to "Mixed Use" zoned land**
This is not simply an administrative definition change. This is a proposal that will change millions of acres in Cascade County to allow more "intensive" and "larger in scale" uses. This is essentially a new type of district, "Mixed Use", and proposing a zone change for every parcel of land currently zoned agricultural to newly defined mixed use. Section 14.1.1(3) requires a legal description for the boundaries of a proposed district change. The planning department has failed to do this. I as a taxpayer and landowner in Cascade County should have input whether the land stay zoned as agricultural or go through a legal zoning change to mixed use. In 2009, the county set a precedent for amending zoning. The 2009 effort included multiple work sessions as well as a survey of the landowners directly impacted by changes. Thousands of landowners will be impacted by the proposed changes, but no survey was sent out. In 2019, zero work sessions were held, zero public input was solicited (until just before the February 19th meeting) the proposed regulations published on the Cascade County website are dated October 2018 and labeled "update V4.1.". Where and whom had input on the previous three versions?

3) **Growth Policy**
The growth policy is up for review every five years, 2019 is that year. Per Montana Code Annotated (MCA) local governments must include as part of their growth policy, "*a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy... and revising the policy if necessary.*" Section 10 of the Cascade County Growth Policy will include an assessment of the following issues (not all inclusive):
    - Significant changes in existing trends and conditions or projected trends;
    - Changes in community goals;
    - Plausibility and ability of the county to achieve stated goals and policies;

- **Public input suggesting the need to make changes;** and
- Knowledge of specific and identifiable amendments that would improve the Cascade County's Growth Policy's usefulness, so that it better serves the public.

Several of the zoning re-writes **do not comply** with the current growth policy.

- Goal 1, Objective A; A large part of the proposed zoning (MU-20) excludes a major highway corridor in Highway 200. This has the potential to discourage business to build/expand in a direction well suited for expansion.
- Goal 5, Objective A; Commercial projects that would have required a special use permit (SUP) in in Agricultural district now will no longer require a SUP. What changed to where these same projects will now not need an SUP in MU-20 zoned land? Where is the data supporting this?
- Goal 11, Objective A, Goal 2, Objective C; MU-20 does not exist along Highway 200. What is promoting cluster development along this major transportation corridor ensuring protection of Cascade County's open space?
- Goal 3, Objective C; **Protect the floodplain from non-agricultural development.** A majority of the proposed MU-20 land would be in the floodplain according to Flood Insurance Study for Cascade County, flood insurance rate maps (FIRMS), and FEMA pursuant to 76-5-201, MCA. Many of the commercial uses proposed in the MU-20 district would not be allowed in the floodplain based on the Cascade County Floodplain regulations and MCA. Cascade County had flooding in these areas as recently as 2011 and 2018.

Section 12 of the growth policy states, "The Cascade County Planning Board will continue to work closely with the City of Great Falls and Belt, Cascade and Neihart to cooperate and coordinate the local planning and economic development efforts." To my knowledge, this was not done.

There are many other areas where the new proposed zoning regulations do not conform with the current growth policy. This needs to be addressed before moving forward with the substantial zoning changes.

4) **Not following Cascade County zoning ordinance**

The Cascade County Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1(6) requires a detailed analysis of each change MCA 76-2-203. The detailed analysis should be part of the official staff report PRIOR to the public hearing and should be published with ample time for public review. The analyses that have been provided are not in-depth enough to make an educated informed decision. Very little to no background information has been provided nor in a timely fashion.

5) **Agricultural commodity**

There is no delineation between an animal-based or a crop-based value added agricultural commodity or the facility in the proposed zoning regulations. Animal-based and crop-based "Value-Added Processing Facilities" should be defined and treated separately in our zoning regulations. This cannot be emphasized enough. These two distinctly different commodities have vastly different effects. These facilities can be developed without a special use permit in MU-40. This would greatly circumvent the public input process. "Permitted" uses allowed by right should be for low-impact operations in order to simplify the process for small businesses and family farms so they may develop and grow in the appropriate zones. "Larger in scale" and more

"intensive" uses should be required to meet higher standards and therefore should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process.

6) **Unclassified Use Permits**
The list of uses included in this section can be allowed in ANY zoning district if they go through the permitting process in the zoning regulations updated with this proposal. The uses allowed include slaughterhouses, confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), feedlots and power plants. The permit process does not involved elected officials – only the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBOA). The approval/denial process should be the responsibility of ELECTED officials (Cascade County Commissioners), not appointed volunteers ZBOA. The ZBOA is not directly accountable to the residents of Cascade County. An unclassified permit is not the appropriate place for intensive and high-impact operations. The PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) process outlined in section 7.14 could be modified to include uses proposed for the UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMIT process, ensuring all community impacts are addressed before the operation is approved.

7) **Zoning inconsistencies**
There is zoned land by the Foothills Ranch subdivision zoned for commercial use. Based on the zoning definitions this would allow for "land uses which are allowed by right or through the special review process in the C, MU, I-1 and I-2 zones, as listed in these regulations." Nowhere else in the county does this exist unless it's near industrial zoned land. This is discouraged in the growth policy Goal 8, Objective H.
All medical marijuana facilities are to be zoned I-2 but a slaughterhouse, rendering plant, etc. can be zoned in MU districts.

In conclusion, I recommend a **DO NOT APPROVE** as written to the county commissioners. There are too many substantial changes to the proposed zoning without data to backup the proposed changes. There as been insufficient time for educated/informed public input. There has been no input from the City of Great Falls, the town of Belt, Cascade, etc. as to how these substantial changes will affect their growth. This, as well as other inconstancies is in direct disregard to the Cascade County Growth Policy. There is a big discrepancy in not zoning Highway 200 East to Belt as MU-20. The parcel sizes are similar to that being proposed as MU-20. The proposed MU-20 zoned land is in the floodplain and has significant restrictions for use.

Thank you for taking time to read my letter and the reasons I strongly **OPPOSE** the zoning changes to Cascade County as currently written.

Best Wishes,

Logan Tinsen PHARM.D.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Erin Tingey

Complete Address: 8359 US Hwy 89 Great Falls, Mt 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): Proposed New Zoning Regulations

Comment

I live in Cascade County on 28 acres, surrounded by currently zoned Agricultural land. These propsed zoning changes will directly effect me and my family as they will allow many more intensive and large scale uses adjacent to our home. I would ask the Board to please consider my concerns over these proposed changes. First, these changes do not align with many of the goals stated in the Cascade County Growth Policy. The proposed changes do not protect the "rural character," "agricutlrual economy," or "preserve and enhance the rual friendly and independent lifestyle" as stated in the Growth Policy. The proposed changes are allowing more intensive, large scale industrialized uses. And not even with a conditional permitting proess, public imput, or even specific performance standards. The changes seem like a wide open door. Many new intensive, invasive uses will be permited without any checks or balances. The propsed changes also do not address the impact these new uses will have the the land, soil, water, air, pollution, neighboring property and many more issues. The expansion of "Unclassified Use Permit" is especially worrisome. It makes it much easier for high impact, instensive operations to gain permit approval. These kinds of operations should go through careful, through publicly involved scrutiny. The whole reason for zoning is protect and plan for impact. The changes seem to disregard the purpose of zoning. I also am concerned that the "Unclassified Use Permit" will not need approval of elected officals. These are just a few of the many concerns I have with the proposed zoning regulations changes. Overall it feels like these are not clarifications or simple changes, but are truly a zone change under the guise of revisions.
If Cascade County Planning Department wants to be a more indutrialized zoned county then please make sure these changes include conditions and performance standards to protect our land, air and water and neighboring properties.
Thank you for reading my comments and concerns.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
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Commenter Information

Name: J. Casselli

Complete Address: 11 Red Coulee Belt, MT 59412

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): proposed Agricultural zoning changes

Comment

Not in support of the blanket change from Agricultural to MU-20/MU-40 (additional comments not fitting on this form have been sent in a separate correspondence)

Revisions to Agricultural terms Appendix 4 do have merit and would provide clarifications. It is recommended that that the following be included with the proposed definitions list:

- Include forage in the definition for Agricultural use
- Add value added marketing and concept to the definition list e.g. Farm to Table
- Add other grown or harvested fiber to the definition of Agricultural commodity

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

03-26-19

J.Casselli
11 Red Coulee
Belt, MT 59412

RE: Zoning Proposal

Please find comments not fitting on the public comment form for submission below:

- In review of the extensive proposed changes I do not feel moving completely away from the Agricultural Zoning District to the proposed mixed use zoning will meet the goals and objectives of the CC growth policy as it is being presented.
- I support sustainable forest and agricultural economic growth in the county, including goals (1,5,9,11) of the growth policy, however the proposed changes appear to be a way for county planning to reduce special use permitting to allow for more growth by right that may not be sustainable or smart and would reduce input from local affected landowners and other publics.
- With goals in the growth policy centering on rural, open and agricultural use it would be expected that an agricultural zoning district would remain, not be fully changed to mixed use!
- The MU-20 and MU-40 as outlined in your Appendix 2 information show as an example MU-20 allows tourist homes or B and B's but not for MU-40. Ranch tourism has economic value as well as other value added services. Small parcels as well as larger parcels should be allowed to take advantages of these types of smart sustainable endeavors that allow open and working lands to stay viable and thus better meeting county growth goals outlined into the future.
- The Proposed changes appear to look at favoring the larger industrial style Ag development on any MU-40 ground even though much of this is prime agricultural ground (once gone it is gone) without the infrastructure to support larger non-ag development (road systems, fire protection).
- A statement in Appendix 2 that use is one or the other is not totally true. Smaller parcels that may be residential can and do have niche agricultural use no different than larger farm operations having side markets or value added businesses. When considering uses such as organic production, farm to table operations, small forage growers and farmers market producers, forest products it does not matter (and should not) for parcel size and often times does occur at or on residential parcels regardless if it would be in your MU-20 or MU-40 there is still economic benefit of these ag activities. This would also relate to other small homebased or "hobby type" business that have economic benefit that could now change to needing a permit. These should not be subject to additional permits if already allowed under state or federal law or under current agricultural district to encourage entrepreneurial endeavors while also meeting the objective of minimizing local government intervention in goal 5 of the growth policy.
- A <u>change</u> in use or <u>use outside of the current</u> primary land use to a larger industrial operations that has major natural resource or other land use impacts should still be subject to review as currently required and not just be a principle use. Zoning must take into account the site specific conditions for soils, watershed, transportation and other social and environmental constraints.
- The county has already provided changes to zoning in creating larger focused development areas to support industrial and large scale development close to rail and transportation such as

North of GTF (malt plant/ADF) and the Agri-park park area. Rational for these areas was to encourage development in these areas and not everywhere as now being proposed in MU-40.

- Cluster development with larger open parcels surrounding in theory sounds sustainable however over time is usually just more sprawl that continually leads to annexed areas to larger urban towns and by default the goals for open space and rural character are no longer conserved or valued. To meet desired goals the county should be looking at existing or addressing subdivision rules in order to also meet the growth policy goals 5,9,11 as opposed to this blanket zoning change proposal.

Public Comment Form

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Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: John Tingey

Complete Address: 8359 US Highway 89 Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): New Zoning regulation changes proposed March 2019

Comment

I would like to express my concern and opposition to the proposed changes to th zoning regulations. I disagree that many of the proposed changes to the zoning regulations support the established growth policy adopted in 2014. The goals clearly state that Cascade County planning board wants to protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character, maintain the agricultural economy, and preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens. These proposed changes start off wrong by proposing a change in agricultural zoned properties to "mixed use" properties. This is a mistake. "Large scale and intensive uses" are not in harmony with Cascade County's rural character. In the proposed changes there is no protection to the adjacent landowners and their right to enjoy their rural and indepentent lifestyle. It had been proposed to change the zoning definition of thousands of parcels of land to "mixed use." Every owner of these parcels must be notified prior to the changes that their land and their neighbors land will be zoned "mixed use" instead of agriculture. It is imperative that the planning department notify each landowner. Cascade County landowners must have input in whether they want their land and neighbor's land changed to "mixed use." I am not an expert in zoning regulation changes but it does not appear that the impact of these proposed changes have been thoroughly evaluated. The impact to Cascade County by allowing "mixed uses" in agricultural land are enormous and there is no protection to the adjacent landowners in the current proposed changes. If this is the new direction for Cascade County then a lot more citizens need to be aware of the changes. I proposed that none of these changes be approved until the Cascade County growth policy had been completely rewritten.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH

Complete Address: 397 HIGHWOOD ROAD, GREAT FALLS, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Mixed Use -40 and Cascade County Growth Policy Analysis

Comment

TO: PLANNING STAFF, PLANNING BOARD, COUNTY ATTORNEY
I have reviewed the Draft Zoning Regulations, the final Staff Report, and the Cascade County Growth Policy.
I am opposed to the proposed change Agricultural to Mixed Use 40 zoning districts.
See the attached MU-40 and Cascade County Growth Policy Analysis.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-22-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Zoning Amendments
Growth Policy Analysis for Proposed MU-40 District

I. Growth Policy Analysis

This analysis was conducted for the proposed MU-40 District. According to the staff report, the existing Agricultural District was split into to districts to reflect current land development patterns. As noted in the staff report and on the maps, most of the development activity has occurred in the area that is now the MU-20 District. The regulations for this district are not significantly different from the existing regulations for the Agriculture district. As demonstrated by the following analysis, however, the proposed MU-40 District is predominantly agriculture in nature with very limited mixed-use. The statement of intent and the regulations for the district do not match the prevailing land use and rural character of the district.

> **MU-40** - The MU-40 District is intended to provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential sites characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses.

It would be more appropriate to maintain the current Agriculture District zoning with the primary purpose of protecting prime farmland and maintaining the rural character.

> **A Agricultural District -** The purpose of this district is to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes, small scale value-added agricultural uses and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Regulations in this district are intended to protect the most productive soil types, by encouraging non-agricultural and large-scale development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land and to minimize environmental concerns.

The following table list relevant policies, goals and objectives from the Growth Policy and references additional analysis and discussion to that demonstrate the proposed MU-40 District is not in substantial compliance with the Growth Policy.

Table 1: Growth Policy Analysis for MU-40 District

Goal, Objective or Policy	Substantially Compiles	Comment
Goal 1: Sustain and strengthen the economic well-being of Cascade County's citizens.	Partial	Inappropriate location of large scale intensive uses can have serious fiscal impact on county residents. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
A. Stimulate the retention and expansion of existing businesses, new businesses, value-added businesses, wholesale and retail businesses, and industries including agriculture, mining, manufacturing/processing and forest products.	Partial	Provides for businesses but should limit such uses to suitable locations. **See Issue #1**

B. Stabilize and diversify the county's tax base by encouraging the sustainable use of its natural resources.	No	Does not protect prime agricultural soils. **See Issue #4**
C. Identify and pursue primary business development that complements existing business, which is compatible with communities, and utilizes available assets. Identify and pursue targeted business development opportunities to include, but not limited to, manufacturing/heavy industry, telecommunications, and youth/social services.	Partial	Provides for businesses does not utilize available assets near communities with infrastructure and services. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
Goal 2: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issues #2, 3 & 4**
C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed, land subdivisions and commercial development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issue #2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**
Goal 3: Maintain Agricultural Economy	Partial	Increases average lot size in MU-40 district to 40 acres but has no provisions to protect farmland. **See issue #4**
A. Protect the most productive soil types.	No	No suitability analysis. No protection for productive soil. **Issues #1 & 4**
D. Support the development of value-added agricultural industry in Cascade County utilizing the products from the regional area.	Yes	Provides for value-added agriculture in MU-40 District.
Goal 5: Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade Count's citizens		Large scale intensive uses are not compatible with rural lifestyle. Local government intervention and fiscal impact to county residents would increase to provide infrastructure and services to such uses in remote rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 5, 6**
A. Maintain Cascade County's citizens independent lifestyle and minimize local governmental intervention, to the extents possible, consistent with the requirements of a continually evolving economy and constantly changing population.	No	
Goal 6: Promote and maintain a transportation system that provides safety, efficiency, and cost efficiency.	No	Significant traffic safety hazards and cost to maintain rural roads. **See Issue #5**

Goal 8: Protect surface and groundwater from pollution.	No	No suitability analysis to identify soils that are inappropriate for on-site wastewater treatment systems that may result from large scale uses. **See Issue #1**
A. Discourage development with on-site wastewater treatment systems in areas having inappropriate soils or high groundwater, as indicated on the revised Cascade County soil maps, to help prevent the contamination of groundwater supplies.	No	
Goal 9: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests.	Partial	Farmlands are permitted use but large scale intensive manufacturing uses will take farmland out of production and are not compatible in rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 4**
G. Encourage agricultural landowners considering land subdivision to develop the least agriculturally viable portion of their properties.	No	No provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
H. Encourage in-fill development of urban and transitional areas already committed to development where community facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively in order to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are costly to serve and are not near existing development. **See issue #2, 5, 6**
Goal 11: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character, encourage efficient use of land.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are not near existing development and can unsafely locate in areas lacking adequate emergency services. **See issue #2 & #6**
A. Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development.	No	
B. Encourage cluster development to locate near existing towns and rural, more densely populated settlements and discourage poorly designed, unsafe land subdivisions and unsafe commercial development.	No	
CHAPTER 5 – ECONOMIC CONDITION : POLICIES		
1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.	No	There is no protection of prime farmland. MU-40 District is not located around existing communities. **Issue #2 & #4**

2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.	Partial	MU-40 statements mentions family farms and increases minimum lot size but also encourages large scale uses that will take farmland out of production. **See Issue #4**
6. Environmental as well as economic perspectives should be considered in any future development.	No	There is not suitability analysis to determine environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issue #1**
8. Utilization of locally produced agricultural products and raw materials should be encouraged.	Yes	Farms and value added agriculture are permitted
10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated. there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. **Issue #4**
11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land.	No	Eliminates ag zoning and no provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
12. Minimize, to the greatest degree possible, the adverse social and environmental impacts of development and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and expensive to serve. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
14. Encourage economic activities to locate in those areas most economically, socially and environmentally appropriate, as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
6. Local Services – Policies		
6. Using the subdivision review process, discourage development in areas where it is not economical for the county to provide services such as road maintenance, school bus service, fire, police protection, or snowplowing. Persons purchasing land in these areas should be informed, in writing, to the fact that some services may not be provided by the county.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
7. Facilitate the appropriate development and maintenance of roads, public utilities, and community facilities.	No	

Chapter 7: Natural Resources **7.5 Land Unit: Landscape Unit Benches & Dissected Benches** 1. Since the existing land use of the benches and dissected benches landscape unit is predominately agriculture, special consideration should be given to protect this use. 2. Any development or change in the use of the land should be in a form suited to the natural lay of the land. 3. Since a wide variability of limitations exists, extensive on-site evaluations should be made before any proposed action is taken.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated and there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that with steep slopes and in environmentally sensitive areas. There is no suitability analysis to determine limitations for development. **See Issues #1, 2, 3, 4**
8.3: Prime Agricultural Soil Area The prime agriculture soils resource preservation areas are intended to contain those soil areas where it is necessary and desirable, (because of their high quality, availability of water, and/or highly productive agricultural and grazing capability), to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Therefore, the prime agricultural soil preservation areas of Cascade County are those areas where the soils have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), according to the NRCS definition of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.	No	Ag Zoning is eliminated and replaced with a district that allows large scale intensive uses that take ag land out of production and does not protect prime farmland. **Issue #2,3,4**

II. Discussion of Issues

Issue #1: Lack of suitability analysis to determine the most appropriate areas for industrial and business land uses

The MU-40 District encompasses approximately million acres[1] and includes varied landscapes such as mountains, floodplains, canyons, cropland, pasture and open space. The Growth Policy describes potential hazardous features throughout the proposed MU-40 District such as flooding, erosion, landslide, soil creep and earthquake faults. The proposed zoning regulations would permit large scale intense manufacturing processes related to value added agriculture anywhere in this district without any review process that would consider the suitability of the proposed site for development or ensure that the use meets the basic considerations of public health, safety and welfare. Because the proposed MU-40 district is so vast such businesses may attempt to locate in areas with poor soils, steep slopes, high groundwater and other hazards that render the site unsuitable for development due to public health and safety concerns. Additionally, an industrial use could be located in remote areas that lack adequate emergency services, public facilities or transportation networks. This can all result in significant fiscal impact on county taxpayers to provide services to large scale intensive uses in remote locations. According to the Montana Code annotated (MCA) 76-2-304, zoning regulations must be:

(b) Designed to:
(i) secure safety from fire and other dangers
(ii) promote public health, public safety and the general welfare
(iii) Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements

In order to meet these requirements, standard planning practice relies on an extensive analysis to determine areas that are most suitable for industrial and commercial development. Such analysis examines soils, slopes, wetlands, floodplains, prime farmland, environmental hazards, emergency response times, road capacity, land cover, existing land use and other similar factors. Such information is readily available from the Montana State Library- Natural Heritage Program, USDA Soil Maps, Montana Cadastral data and other sources. The background information that was posted on the County's web site only analyzed parcel sizes and permit data. Not even basic existing land use data was mapped to verify staff's "intuition" or what was "suggested" by the parcel analysis. The permit data is not complete and does not represent accurate land use patterns.

Lack of a such basic analysis results in haphazard development in areas that lack the infrastructure or local services to support such a use and, due to site features, can create serious public health and safety concerns. Specifically, large-scale intensive uses would be allowed to locate anywhere in an area of over a million acres that has varied landscapes, lacks services and a contains a multitude of potential hazards.

[1] The estimate is of the amount of acreage that is designated as MU-40 is based on a tabulation the number of townships that are completely mapped as MU-40 zoning, plus the number of townships that are at least 50% mapped as MU-40. Since there are 36 square miles per township, the resulting calculation indicated that there were at least 1,548 square miles designated as MU-40 or 990,720 acres. Since townships with less than 50% of the land area designated as MU-40 were not included in this tabulation, the amount of acreage is an undercount. For discussion purposes, this report rounds up the number to 1 million acres.

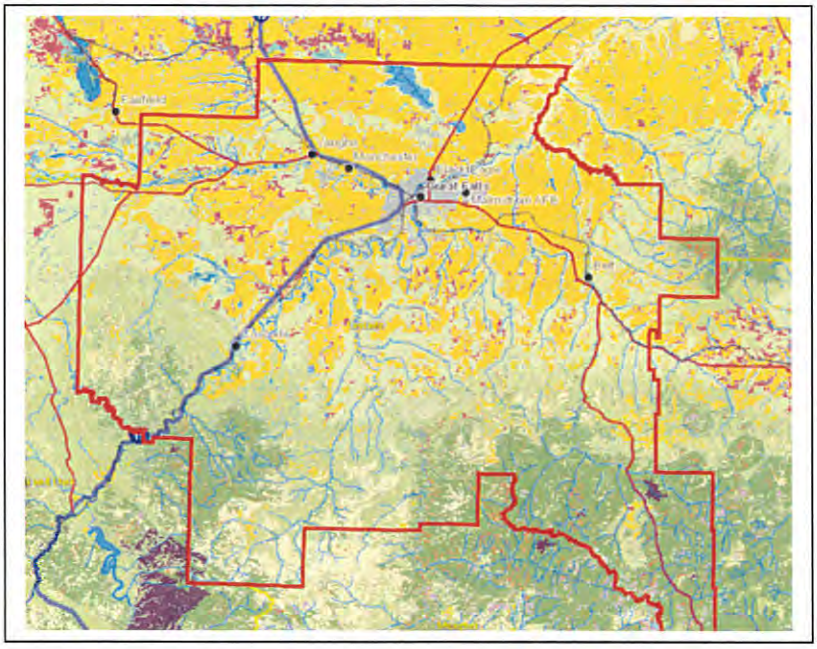
Issue # 2. The proposed intent for the MU-40 District does not match the prevailing land use.

The MCA 76-2-203 (2) states that the County shall consider,

"(d) The character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses."

The previous section discussed suitability. This section addresses the character. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, only 4% of the county is classified as "Developed Area". As indicated below, most of the "Developed Area" is located in and around Great Falls with some developed land in outlying communities. The land area located in the proposed MU-40 district is classified as Cultivated Crops, Prairie/Grassland, Forest/Woodland, and Pasture/Hay.

Map 1: Land Cover Cascade County



Legend: Major Types of Land Cover

- Developed
- Agriculture
- Conifer-dominated forest and woodland
- Rocky Mountain Foothill Woodland-Steppe Transition
- Grassland Systems
- Deciduous Shrubland
- Wetland and Riparian Systems
- Introduced Vegetation

Source: http://mtnhp.org/mapviewer/?t=1

The March 26 staff report notes that the proposed zoning regulations are designed to, "... cater to their predominant land use characteristics..." In regards to prevailing land use, the staff report states that:

> "Crop production is the prevailing productive land use in the northern and north-central parts of Cascade County while animal production is the prevailing productive land use in the southern half of the county (this is clearly demonstrated by the USDA CropScape map for the county.) Manufacturing operations tend to be located along major transportation routes such as railways and arterial roadways."

The staff report also references a "Map 2" which indicates the types of zoning location conformance permits that have been issued throughout the county. An examination of the map indicates that in the proposed MU-40 District, only 16 permits were of a business or industrial nature.[2] Approximately 55 permits were issues for residential or ag related structures. Only the electric generating stations and the asphalt plant represent uses that would be considered "large scale" and "intensive" and the electric generating station has

[2] These permits were issued for quarrys, wind turbine, country club, asphalt plant, ag sales, small engine sales/repair, paint ball, cell towers and an electric generating station.

since been dismantled. Clearly this does not represent a "mixed-use" land pattern with large scale intensive uses. The prevailing use is agriculture and grasslands and the statement of intent should reflect this.

The staff report concludes that the Mixed-Use District is appropriate because the Agricultural District already allows for a mix of uses characteristic of commercial districts, industrial districts and residential districts. It should be noted that the Montana Supreme Court stated uses allowed by current zoning are a consideration only **after** a thorough consideration of prevailing use.

> "The County cites *North 93 Neighbors* for the proposition that a court applying the first prong of the *Little* test may look to the land uses allowed under current zoning rather than the prevailing uses in the area. We analyzed the land uses allowed by current zoning in *North 93 Neighbors* only *after* we thoroughly had considered the existing uses in the area. Our conclusion that the prevailing uses were not significantly different from the proposed use was based on our consideration of both the prevailing uses *and* the uses allowed by current zoning." (Plains Grains vs. Cascade County.)

As demonstrated in the discussion above, the prevailing use is inarguably rural agriculture and not mixed use. The commercial and industrial uses are only allowed as special uses and can only be granted if the Board of Adjustment can make findings that the proposed development will not "materially endanger" the public health, safety, or welfare; that the development will not harm surrounding property values unless it is deemed to be a public necessity; and that the development will be "in harmony" with the area in which it is to be located. The fact that the Board must make these findings suggest that there are potential issues with compatibility of commercial and industrial uses.

In reality, most of the special use permits that have been granted are located in the area designated as MU-20. In the MU-40 District less 20 than non-residential/agricultural permits have been issued which hardly qualifies categorizing this district as mixed use. Since the prevailing use by far is agriculture, it is more appropriate to maintain the Agricultural District with the purpose of protecting prime farmland and eliminate some of the special use that are rarely, if ever uses. This would reflect the actual land use in the district, meet multiple objectives of the Growth Policy and meet the MCA requirement that zoning reflect the character of the district.

IOne proposed revision that is of particular concern in regards to compatible land use is changing the existing term from "light manufacturing and assembly" to "manufacturing. The rationale is that this term is not defined in the current regulations. There is, however, a term for "Industrial, light" that is more consistent with term "light manufacturing". The proposed change to the term manufacturing would allow heavy industrial uses would differ significantly from the predominant land use and should not be allowed. Light industrial uses that are permitted as a special use as long as they meet the performance standards for such uses that are contained in the I-1 zoning district would be more appropriate.

Issue 3: The definition of "productive" use is not compatible with rural areas and is inconsistent with the purpose of zoning regulations that are stated in the Cascade County zoning ordinance.

The term "productive use" as defined by staff includes crop production, animal production and manufacturing. Grouping these dissimilar uses together is inconsistent with the following purpose of the Cascade County Zoning Ordinance.

> **1.1.6** To protect residential, business, commercial, and industrial areas alike from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses and to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses;

Agricultural uses and manufacturing uses have distinct features that require them to be treated as separate classes of uses. Agriculture uses are related to food production, are characterized by open undeveloped areas, do not require urban infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer and relies on a the work force that is typically limited in size with operators and laborers who often live on-site. Manufacturing uses, however, take land out of food production, requires urban infrastructure, primarily requires a large workforce that must commute to the job site and generates year-round truck at much higher volumes than farming or ranching operations. Manufacturing uses are incompatible with the rural residences that are part of the agricultural landscape.

Theses differences are uniformly recognized in zoning ordinance that have separate zoning districts and development standards for these different classes of uses. There is no precedent for grouping these uses together. There is no definition of "productive use" in the zoning ordinance, growth policy, or Montana Code Annotated that matches staff's definition. The North American Industry Classification System and Planners Dictionary that were cited in Appendix 1 as the basis for the definitions included in the zoning ordinance do not include a term for "Productive Use" and clearly defines agriculture and manufacturing as different classes of uses. "Productive Use" as referenced in USDA soil surveys or by the Growth Policy, only refers to crop production. Grouping agricultural uses such as crop production and animal production with "manufacturing" is also at odds with other purpose statements included in the Cascade County zoning ordinance:

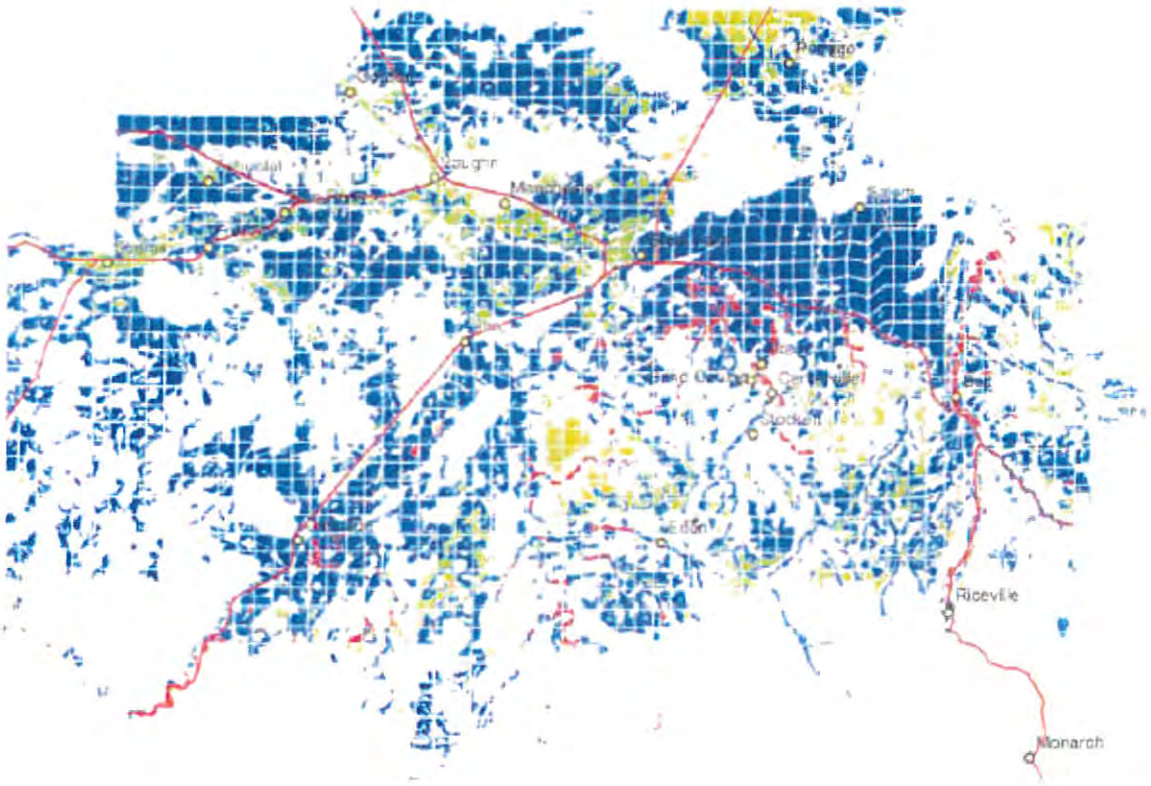
> **1.1.4** To facilitate the provision of adequate transportation, and of other requirements and services such as water, sewerage, schools, open space, and parks;
>
> **1.1.5** To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County;
>
> **1.1.7** To avoid the inappropriate development of lands and provide for reduction of flood damage;
>
> **1.1.10** To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses for the mutual benefit of all;
>
> **1.1.11** To isolate or control the location of unavoidable nuisance producing uses;

For the reasons stated above, manufacturing uses must be evaluated separately from agriculture uses and must be subject to standards to address the impacts from industrial processes that characterize this use. As noted previously, performance standards apply in the "Light Industrial District" should apply to manufacturing processes in all districts.

Issue 4: There are no zoning provisions to protect prime agricultural land.

The definition of "Prime Agriculture Areas" in Chapter 8 of the Cascade County Growth Policy states that these lands should be protected "from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities". Clearly, large scale intensive land uses and manufacturing operations are not compatible with this Growth Policy definition. While small scale "value-added" operations may be appropriate as a special use, the growth policy is very clear that prime agricultural areas should be preserved. (Goal 3, Obj. A, B & D; Chapter 5 – Policies 2,6,10,11, and 12; Section 7.5 and Section 8.3) Given the emphasis that the Growth Policy places on preserving prime agricultural areas, the zoning ordinance should maintain the Agriculture district for the purpose of protecting the areas that are designated as prime farmland as designated on the following map from the Cascade County Growth policy. Replacing the Agriculture District with a mixed use district intended for "large scale" and "intensive" uses takes lands out of agriculture production and does not comply with the Growth Policy.

Cascade County
Farmland Classification Map



As stated by the American Farmland Trust, "once farms are bulldozed and paved over, that land is gone forever." The proposed regulations do not make any distinction between development on non-productive soils or development on prime farmland. In order to comply with the Growth Policy, the regulations should include provisions to protect this resource. In addition to the potential loss of valuable prime farmland, the United States Department of Agriculture, notes other concerns with development in agricultural areas:

> "Land use and land-use changes have important economic and environmental implications for commodity production and trade, open space, soil and water conservation, air quality and atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, and other areas of policy relevance."

https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2017/december/a-primer-on-land-use-in-the-united-states/

The American Planning Association states the following regarding farmland protection:

> "Farmland protection plans help local governments inventory important farmland, set goals for its protection, and identify strategies for implementation. Such strategies include agricultural zoning, agricultural buffers, right-to-farm ordinances, transfer or purchase of development rights programs, farmland mitigation requirements, and cluster or conservation development regulations.
>
> Other important aspects of agricultural protection zoning include prohibitions of non-farm development on prime agricultural soils, establishing agricultural buffers between working farms and encroaching residential development to minimize land-use conflicts, and codifying right-to-farm provisions that protect farmers from nuisance complaints."
>
> https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/farmlandprotection/

A review of county ordinances in Montana indicated that prohibiting industrial uses in agricultural districts is standard practice. Although food processing is allowed as an accessory use in some counties, these are small scale operations where the agricultural use is still the predominant use of land.

Flathead County	Dairy permitted in AG District. Slaughterhouse, distillery, food processing are only permitted in industrial districts
Missoula County	Food processing & slaughterhouse permitted as accessory use
Yellowstone County	Does not permit any commercial or industrial uses in Ag Districts
East Gallatin County	Only agriculture and residential uses are permitted
Gallatin County – Spring Hill	Packing, storing, and processing of products **grown or raised on premised** are permitted uses.

Issue 5: There is not adequate transportation infrastructure to support large scale intensive mixed use in the proposed MU-40 District

Transportation concerns are of paramount importance in drafting zoning regulations. The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:

> "(b)(iii)Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools parks and other public requirements"

One reason for limiting manufacturing uses to Industrial zoned areas that are located near municipalities is that these districts are located near transportation networks that have the capacity to accommodate high volumes of traffic and heavy equipment loads. Many of the roads in the proposed MU-40 District, however, are either gravel roads or county maintained roads that are not designed for high volume traffic or heavy loads. According the Montana Department of Transportation:

> "When snow, ice and frozen ground thaw in late winter and early spring, some road beds and base gravel become saturated and their ability to carry truck loads is reduced. The potential for severe highway distress during the freeze-thaw cycles is high. Older highways are more susceptible to frost action than highways constructed to today's standards."
> https://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/loadlimit_policy.shtml

While agricultural machinery is transported on county roads, this equipment is only in operation on a seasonal basis and traffic volumes are low. A large-scale intensive manufacturing operation, however, typically generates year-round traffic, high volumes of truck traffic and continuous deliveries and transport of products throughout the day. Employees commuting to work can also generate high average daily trips. The proposed regulations would allow manufacturing operations associated with "value-added" agriculture anywhere in the MU-40 District with only the need to acquire a location conformance permit. This type of operation can locate on roads that do not have the capacity to carry the heavy loads or traffic volumes associated with a manufacturing use. There is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to upgrade and maintain roads for large-scale intensive uses located in these rural areas. Traffic related to such uses can also increase the risk for serious health and safety concerns related to traffic accidents:

- Gravel roads with heavy high-speed traffic create dust resulting in air quality concerns and low visibility.
- Bridges in rural areas are not designed for heavy truck traffic. There has been no mapping to indicate where there are bridges that may have structural problems that should be addressed prior to allowing heavy traffic loads.
- At grade railroad crossings in rural areas without adequate warning signals or gates can result in fatal train – vehicle traffic
- Remote areas in the county have long response times for public safety and emergency vehicles to respond to accidents.

According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan-2017,

> "Privately-owned vehicles provide transportation for individuals in Cascade County using the federal interstate and state highway systems as well as county and private roads. Trucks and trailers carry interstate and intrastate cargo. Highway accidents caused by severe weather and high speeds occur frequently. Railroad related hazards such as derailments, toxic spill contamination, and vehicle collisions are a threat to Cascade County residents. According to the NTSB, more than 80 percent of

public railroad crossings do not have lights and gates, and 60 percent of all railroad accidents occur at these unprotected crossings."
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address traffic concerns and potential traffic hazards. Given that the road networks do not have the capacity for large scale and intensive uses, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas.

Issue 6: There is not adequate emergency services to support large scale intensive manufacturing businesses in the MU-40 District

The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:
"(b)(i) secure from fire and other dangers

Large-sale intensive development and manufacturing uses should only occur in areas with adequate emergency services to respond to potential accidents and hazards related to such types of developments. According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan the primary concerns with manufacturing development in the remote rural areas are described below. (See Attachment).

- Hazardous Materials – The release of hazardous materials is rated as high. The regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls where almost all of the current manufacturing/industrial facilities are located. A hazardous materials release that occurred in remote rural areas of the county may not be discovered immediately and once discovered, the response time in critical situations would be lengthy due to distances and, as noted previously, the poor condition of the some current rural roads that do not allow high speed travel.

- Wildfire – The risk of wildfire in Cascade county is rated as very high. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact, disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation. According to the Cascade County CWPP, issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire include: 1) the semi-arid landscape 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and the provision of efficient access for firefighting equipment. Manufacturing development on large parcels, however, may not be required to go through subdivision review. A "value-added" agriculture manufacturing operation that does not require subdivision or special use review can develop in remote areas located in the service area of volunteer fire districts that have long response times and limited personnel. There would be no requirements such a development contain the design elements for fire protection.

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and

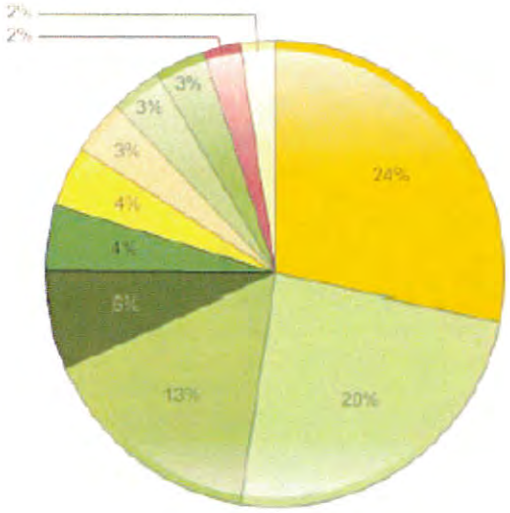
the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address concerns about emergency services, wildfire and potential hazards. Since locating manufacturing uses and large-scale intensive uses in remote rural areas will increase the risks of hazardous materials spills and property loss due to wildfires, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas. In addition to public safety concerns, there is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to provide emergency services for large-scale intensive uses that could locate in these remote rural areas.

Attachment 1: MT Natural Heritage Data Base Land Cover Statistics

Montana Ecological Systems - Land Cover Report

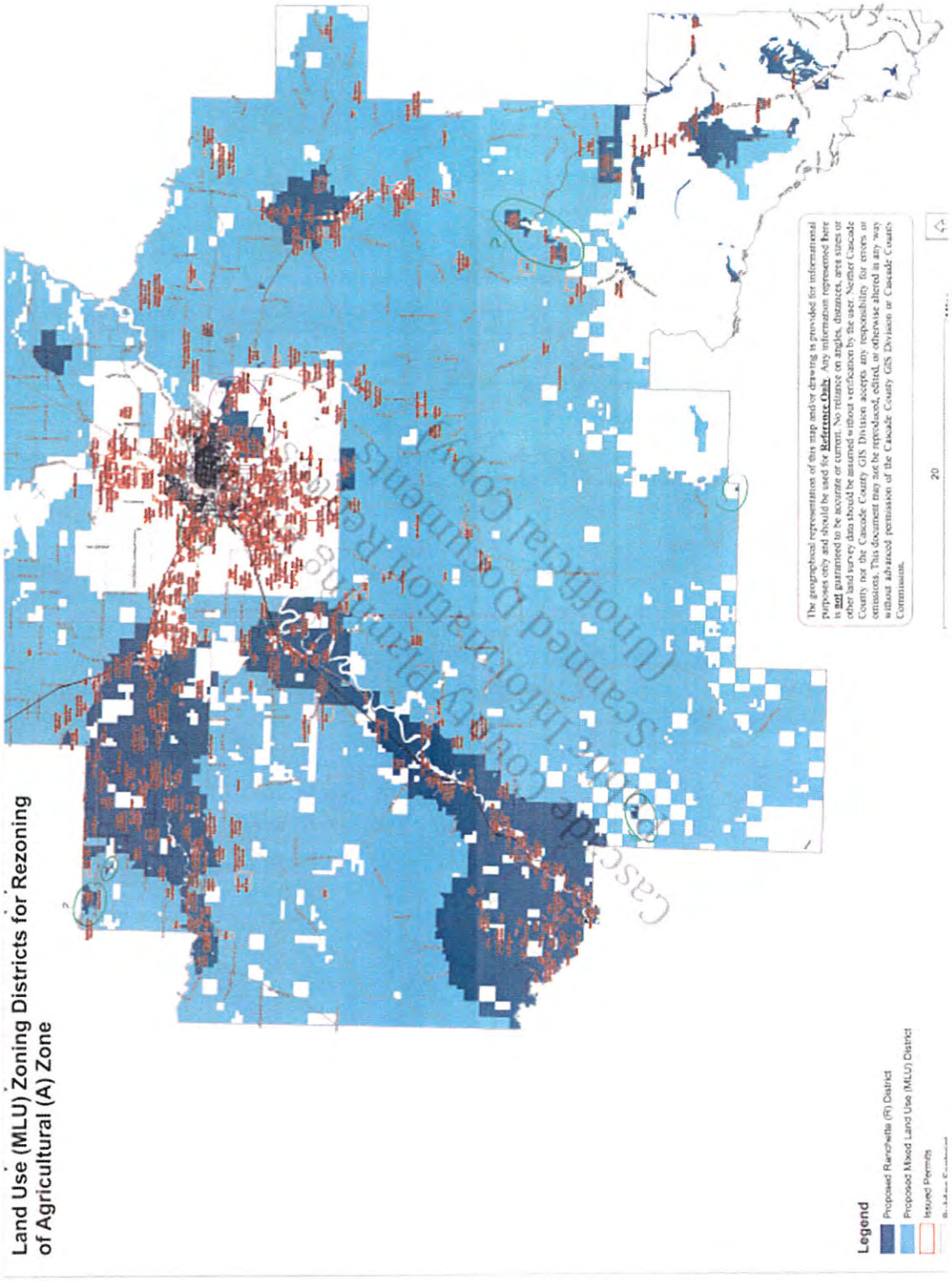
Cascade County

1,733,233 Acres (1.84% of Montana)



24%	Cultivated Crops	3%	Montana Sagebrush Steppe
20%	Great Plains Mixedgrass Prairie	3%	Great Plains Shrubland
13%	Rocky Mountain Lower Montane, Foothill, and Valley Grassland	3%	Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland and Savanna
6%	Rocky Mountain Montane Douglas-fir Forest and Woodland	2%	Introduced Upland Vegetation - Annual and Biennial Forbland
4%	Rocky Mountain Lodgepole Pine Forest	2%	Big Sagebrush Steppe
4%	Pasture/Hay		

Attachment 2: Map 2 – Cascade County Zoning Permit Overlay



Cascade County Planning Department
Scanned Documents
Unofficial Copy

Attachment 3: Cascade County Multi-Hazard Plan – Excerpts
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

1. Hazardous Materials

A hazardous material release is the contamination of the environment (i.e. air, water, soil) by any material that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics threatens human health, the environment, or property. Hazardous materials, including petroleum products and industrial chemicals, are commonly stored and used in Cascade County and are regularly transported via the region's roadways, railroads, and pipelines. A release of hazardous materials from both fixed and transportation incidents pose possible threats involving emergency response. Hazards range from small spills on roadways to major transportation releases on railways or pipeline ruptures contaminating land and water.

Regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls.

Vulnerability & Risk

Cascade County has no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities or along transportation routes or in the vicinity of facilities that store large quantities of hazardous materials or petroleum products.

The U.S. Department of Transportation regulates the ways in which non-radioactive hazardous materials can be transported. Currently, there are no designated HAZMAT routes in central Montana. So, these materials can be transported through Great Falls and Cascade County with few restrictions. (Great Falls Growth Policy, 2013).

There are no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities, along transportation routes, or in the vicinity of facilities which store large quantities of hazardous materials/petroleum products.

Transportation of hazardous materials through Cascade County on highways, pipelines, and by the railroads could result in an accident or derailment that would have the potential to impact Cascade County residents. Although there is no history of significant incidents, the potential for a hazardous material accident in Cascade County is present.

The volume and type of hazardous materials that flow into, are stored, and flow through communities will determine exposure to a potential release of hazardous materials. An accidental or intentional release of materials could produce a health hazard to those in the immediate area, downwind, and/or downstream. Some hazardous materials occur in the gaseous phase and are denser than air; therefore, having the potential to collect in low places.

2. Wildfire

A wildfire is an unplanned fire, a term which includes grass fires, forest fires and scrub fires, both man-caused and natural in origin. Severe wildfire conditions have historically represented a threat of potential destruction within the region. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact,

disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation.

Wildfire risk is the potential for a wildfire to adversely affect things that residents value - lives, homes, or ecological functions and attributes. Wildfire risk in a particular area is a combination of the chance that a wildfire will start in or reach that area and the potential loss of human values if it does. Human activities, weather patterns, wildfire fuels, agricultural practices, values potentially threatened by fire, and the availability (or lack) of resources to suppress a fire all contribute to wildfire risk. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land and with the change of agricultural practices, i.e. no-till farming, have created significant wildland fire risk in parts of Cascade County.

Fire season is the result of low rainfall, high temperatures, low humidity, and thunderstorms, high winds and lightning. Varied topography, semi-arid climate, and numerous human-related sources of ignition make this possible. Over 60 percent of fire starts in Cascade County are caused by lightning. Man-made fire starts account for the remainder including; debris burning, fireworks, campfire neglect, careless smokers, downed powerlines, or heated farm equipment in dry grass or crops. Only a fraction of fire starts are arson. BNSF representatives at the MHMP public meeting indicated that the railroad scrubs equipment to minimize sparks. There were only 1 or 2 fires started by the railroad in Cascade County in 2016.

Major wildfires can occur at any time of year. **Table 4.3-1** presents warning and advisory criteria for wildfire and a description of prohibitions that land management agencies can put into effect to reduce fire risk and prevent wildfires during periods of high to extreme danger.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Fire Weather Watch	A fire weather watch is issued when Red Flag conditions (see Red Flag Warning) are expected in the next 24 to 72 hours.
Red Flag Warning	A red flag warning is issued when Red Flag criteria are expected within the next 12 to 24 hours. A Red Flag event is defined as weather conditions that could sustain extensive wildfire activity and meet one or more of the following criteria in conjunction with "Very High" or "Extreme" fire danger: • Sustained surface winds, or frequent gusts, of 25 mph or higher; • Unusually hot, dry conditions (relative humidities less than 20%); • Dry thunderstorm activity forecast during an extremely dry period; • Anytime the forecaster foresees a change in weather that would result in a significant increase in fire danger. For example, very strong winds associated with a cold fronteven though the fire danger is below the "Very High" threshold.
Fire Warning	A fire warning may be issued by local officials when a spreading wildfire or structure fire threat ens a populated area. Information in the warning may include a call to evacuate areas in the fire's path as recommended by officials according to state law or local ordinance.
Dense Smoke Advisory	Dense smoke advisories are issued when the widespread visibilities are expected at a ¼ mile or less for a few hours or more due to smoke.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Stage 1 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire without a permit except in Forest Service developed camp or picnic grounds. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.
Stage 2 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending or using open fire campfires or stove fires. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or within a three foot diameter cleared to mineral soil. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting devise properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.

Source: National Weather Service (NWS, 2016); National Interagency Fire Center, 2016 (gacc.nifc.gov/.../r2ftc/documents/Fire_Restriction_Chart.pdf)

Cascade County has large areas of private agricultural lands (81.7 percent). The federal government manages approximately 12.4 percent of the total land in the County including portions of the Lewis and Clark National Forest (178,412 acres) and BLM land (24,627 acres). The State of Montana manages a 5.2 percent of the acreage. This scattering of government and private ownership can present unique firefighting challenges.

Cascade County has witnessed a number of large wildfires that have destroyed property and affected wildlife habitat, scenic resources, and air quality. Between 1992 and 2012, a total of 70 fires burned 6,337 acres in the county. The majority of these fires occurred in the months of July and August and were caused by lightning and farm equipment. The wildfires were generally less than one acre in size and were extinguished within one day. **Table 4.3-2** presents wildfire listings from the Montana DNRC over 100 acres with statistics on structures lost and suppression cost where available.

Problems with wildfire also occur when combined with the human environment. People and structures near wildfires are threatened unless adequately protected through evacuation or mitigation. Should fires occur, structures within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) are very vulnerable. The WUI is the zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. A WUI exists anywhere that structures are located close to natural vegetation and where a fire can spread from vegetation to structures, or vice versa. The most extreme situation with respect to fuel conditions and values at risk occurs in rural subdivisions where numerous high-value individual homes and subdivisions are location in the WUI in close proximity or within the wildland boundary. A significant loss of life could occur to residents, firefighters, and others who are in the wildfire area and do not evacuate. The CWPP identifies the following WUI areas in Cascade County: the Dearborn Area, including Cooper Ranch and Stickney Creek; Hardy - Missouri River Corridor; Logging Creek Area; the southwest side of the Highwood Mountains adjacent to the National Forest; and, the Missouri, Sun and Smith River corridors. The current and potential development of portions of Cascade County into residential lots of varying sizes will contribute to the WUI fire problem for the fire protection agencies in the county (Firelogistics, 2008).

According to the Cascade County CWPP, five primary issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire. These include: 1) the semi-arid landscape and poor moisture regime that due to the lack of moisture during any of the four seasons can place the county into a fire season throughout a large share of the year; 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and ageing population in Neihart; 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior, especially under windy conditions, and provide for challenging wildland fire suppression efforts; and, 5) a very high risk subdivision with the high potential for suffering loss of life, property and resources from a wildland fire. Cascade County communities listed in the Federal Register as "Communities at Risk" from wildland fire include Monarch and Neihart (Firelogistics, 2008).

Often regional electric infrastructure passes through wildland and non-irrigated agricultural areas. In particular, the electric substations, transmission lines, fuel tanks, and radio transmission towers are not often equipped to withstand the heat from a wildfire. A wildfire could disrupt electricity or communications should this infrastructure be damaged.

Smoke from wildfires outside Cascade County have impacted local air quality. Most smoke comes from the southwest, west, and north. However, the consistent wind in area minimizes the public health hazard that wildfire smoke poses elsewhere in the state.

Probability and Magnitude

Cascade County's history with wildfire, dry and windy weather conditions, large acres of the county in CRP, and private access roads to rural subdivisions has prompted the MHMP Planning Team to identify wildfires as a significant hazard. Although the primary concern is to structures and the interface residents, most of the costs associated with fire, come from firefighting efforts. Wildfires can also have a significant impact on the regional economy with the loss of agricultural output, timber, natural resources, recreational opportunities, and tourism.

Future Development

Wildfire disasters can be mitigated through comprehensive land use planning that includes housing development design, fuels management, and public education. Land use regulations can reduce the incidence of wildland fire by addressing defensible space and access for emergency vehicles. Cascade County addresses wildfire in their Growth Policy and Subdivision regulations.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response in order to protect persons, property, and natural resource areas. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures in such a manner so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and to permit efficient access for firefighting equipment. Areas rated as extreme, high or medium WUI must comply with special design standards including:

- Access and Evacuation – Roadside vegetation must be maintain so roads will service as escape routes and fire breaks. There must be a minimum of two approach routes to ensure one than one escape route and access routes by emergency vehicles. Building Density Requirements - Densities in areas of steep slopes and/or dense forest growth shall be reduced through minimum lot standards.
- Vegetation Management - A vegetation management plan is required that will reduce fuel loading and hazard rating and provide continuous maintenance of the fuel load. The plan must include guidelines for defensible space, fuel breaks and greenbelts, and a plan for continuous maintenance.
- Water Supply – A fire-fighting water source and access to that source must exist and be maintained as defensible space. Requirements for water supply systems are stipulated and may include fire hydrants or storage tanks.
- Fire Protection Covenants are required stipulating that property owners must maintain fire protection water supplies and fire protection systems (defensible spaces, driveway routes, fuel breaks) in perpetuity.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

Comments Submitted 03.08.19 - 03.12.19 - 03.15.19 - 03.21.19 - 3.23.19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-24-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 23, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

1) Please provide definition of "natural resource development".
   - 2014 Growth Policy Goal #2:
     - *Protect & maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development"*
   - Cascade County Zoning 11.7 Natural Resources Protected:
     - *The provisions of these regulations shall not prevent the complete use, development or recovery of any mineral, forest or agricultural resources by the owner thereof.*

I would assume that natural resources include land, water, soil, plants, trees, minerals. With unpredictable weather occurring due to climate change, including drought, I would suggest that careful consideration be given to the sustainability of our water supply. MT has been in drought conditions or trending towards drought conditions for the past several years, obviously with the exception of the extremely heavy snowfall this year.

2) Please note in MT Code 76-2-203: Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations:

76-2-203. Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations.

(1) Zoning regulations must be:

(a) made in accordance with the growth policy

(Note: The Growth Policy contains provisions to "protect our surface and groundwater" and to "assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance".)

(2) In the adoption of zoning regulations, the board of county commissioners shall consider:

(a) reasonable provision of adequate light and air;

(b) the effect on motorized and nonmotorized transportation systems;

(c) compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities;

(d) the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses;

(e) conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdictional area

THESE ZONING REQUIREMENTS WERE NOT ADDRESSED THOROUGHLY

C.K. Craven 03.23.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

3) I recommend the Growth Policy be revised to the required 2019 Growth Policy and that sufficient public comments be allowed to contribute meaningful and well-researched recommendations with enough time to accomplish that and with enough advance notice of the public hearings (more than one) to allow the public to accommodate their schedules in order to attend. After the required 2019 revised/updated Growth Policy, then proceed with zoning changes and public input.

4) Please divide all "Agricultural" definitions into "Agricultural-Crop" and "Agricultural-Animal" to **provide clarity and appropriate assessment of impact on zoning. There is a world of difference between grain production and commercial feedlots, slaughterhouses, rendering plants, etc.**
   - "Value-Added Agricultural Product-Crops"
     "Value-Added Agricultural Product-Animals"
   - "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility-Crops"
     "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility-Animals"
   - "Agricultural Commodity-Crop Production"
     "Agricultural Commodity-Animal Production"

5) Please provide rationale for adding the following items and reference your rationale to the Growth Policy Objectives.
   - "Butcher Shop"
   - "Animal Feeding Operation (AFO)"
   - "Value-Added Commodity Product"
   - "Value-Added Commodity Processing"
   - "Workforce Housing, Permanent"
   - "Workforce Housing, Temporary"

6) Please provide definitions for the following:
   - Please define "Temporary" in terms of specific time/days
   - Please define "Temporary Stabling" in terms of specific time/days and density of animals
   - Please define density of "Workforce Housing – Permanent & Temporary"
   - Please define "Cluster Development"
   - Please define "Productive Land Uses"
   - Please define "Conventional Agricultural Uses", specifically differentiating between crop production uses and animal production uses.

7) Please provide rationale for definition changes in "Commercial Feedlot" (especially the addition of "where the animals are **confined at a high density relative to open range pasture raising**...")
   - **How many animals are allowed in a specific measurement of land?**

C.K. Craven 03.23.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

8) Please clarify in 7.12 Light Industrial District. 7.12.2 Permitted Principal Uses.
   - (2) Industrial Uses (see Section 8.21)
     - Section 8.21 is "Per Head Animal Unit Values"

I am not seeing the connection between "Per Head Animal Unit Values" and "Industrial Uses". Please explain and please also identify the "Industrial Uses" intended in 7.12.2 (2).

9) Please provide rationale for allowing "All Non-Residential uses otherwise not permitted by law" in Heavy Industrial to be permitted uses by right with no option for public comment.
   - Recommend deleting ..."allowing All Non-Residential uses otherwise not prohibited by law" **and replacing with "All Non-Residential uses not specified above and not prohibited by law may be submitted for consideration through the Special Use Permit process." This would allow public comment.**

10) Please provide rationale for including "Oil and gas exploration, drilling, production, and operations in 8.13 (which is the only industry that requires a Special Use Permit for location in MU-40).
    - **Recommend deleting "Oil and gas exploration, drilling, production and operations" from any new zoning in Cascade County.**

11) It seems counterintuitive to designate Open Space as "intended to provide for open space recreation and environmental relief in residential areas, riparian zones, and amenity areas" and then include parking lots and on-site construction offices.
    - **Recommend deleting the "parking lots" and "on-site construction offices" in order to fulfill the intention of providing space for recreation and environmental relief in residential areas, riparian zones and amenity areas".**
      - **Please add a parking lot for visitors who want to participate in the recreational opportunities. Please clarify that specific use and exclude parking lots for any business use.**

12) In 8.20 there are "Light Industrial (I-1) Zoning District Standards and 10.6 has "Standards for Special Use Permits" plus 18.5 "Standards Applicable to All Unclassified Uses".
    - **Please explain rationale for not having "Zoning Standards" for "Heavy Industrial", "Mixed Use 20" and "Mixed Use 40".**

13) Please provide rationale for not using the terms "AFO, CAFO, Slaughterhouse, Rendering Plant, Commercial Feedlot" in any examples of references to Growth Plan Goals (relevant to a healthy environment; clean water, air and land; preserving open spaces, etc.) and instead used references like this one referenced to Goal #11 Objective A: "Preserve the county's open space setting..."
    - PD Changes 7.6.6 & 7.7.6 Lot Coverage

C.K. Craven 03.23.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

14) Please clarify rationale in Section 18 .Unclassified Use Permits that would potentially allow CAFOs, and slaughterhouses with an Unclassified Use Permit in any zoning district. This seems counterintuitive as CAFOs and slaughterhouses are already allowed in MU40 with a Special Use Permit.

RECOMMEND DELETING CAFOs AND SLAUGHTERHOUSES FROM THE LIST OF "USES PERMITTED WITH AN UNCLASSIFIED USE PERMIT" IN 18.1

- **There is already a path through Special Use Permits to accommodate applications for CAFOs and slaughterhouses in MU40 .**

15) Cultural Resources
- Goal 5 Objective B states "Preserve and promote Cascade County's rich cultural heritage, rooted in natural development..."

There is no mention of avoiding land associated with historic properties or landmarks.

16) Transportation
- Please provide rationale for not addressing issues related to transportation and traffic flow in these proposed regulations
  - With the proposed heavy industries and heavy animal production CAFOs, feedlots, etc. transportation is a significant concern. There will like be major changes in number and types of vehicles using 10th Avenue South in Great Falls as well as the adjacent highway systems.
  - Additional transportation routes and/or increased numbers and weights of vehicles should be carefully considered. In addition to air pollution from heavier transportation there is also noise pollution.

17) Please provide rationale for not referencing any goals related to the following:
- Protecting surface and groundwater from pollution [Goal 8]
- Protect and promote Cascade County's rich cultural heritage [Goal 5/B]
- Promote the development of cultural resources and tourism to broaden Cascade County's economic base [Goal 1/D]
- Preserve Cascade County's scenic beauty and conserve its forests, rangelands, and streams, with their abundant wildlife and good fisheries [Goal 2/B]
- Promote and maintain a transportation system that provides safety, efficiency, and is cost effective [Goal 6]
- Assure clean air, clean water a healthful environment and good community appearance [Goal 2/D]

C.K. Craven 03.23.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

18) Please provide rationale for deleting #1 in the current zoning regulations in Section 1. Purpose. 1.1

THE CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS INCLUDED 13 OBJECTIVES,
ONE OF WHICH WAS OMITTED IN THE PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS:
"To provide for compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities;"

- To ensure proper living and working conditions and to prevent the development of blight and slums;
- To establish adequate standards for the provision of light, air, and open spaces;
- To facilitate the provision of adequate transportation, and of other requirements and services such as water, sewerage, schools, open space, and parks;
- To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County;
- To protect residential, business, commercial, and industrial areas alike from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses and to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses;
- To avoid the inappropriate development of lands and provide for reduction of flood damage;
- To fix reasonable zoning standards to which buildings and structures shall conform;
- To prevent such additions to, and alterations or remodeling of, existing buildings or structures as would not comply with the restrictions and limitations imposed herein;
- To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses for the mutual benefit of all;
- To isolate or control the location of unavoidable nuisance producing uses;
- To define the powers and duties of the administrative and enforcement officers and bodies; and
- To prescribe penalties for any violation of the provisions of this ordinance, or of any amendment thereto.

PLEASE PROVIDE RATIONALE FOR ELIMINATING THE ONE ITEM ABOVE FROM THE CURRENT OBJECTIVES

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 03.23.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Mike + Deborah Jenkins

Complete Address: 298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

See Attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Mike and Deborah Jenkins
298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472
Public Comment, part 2

The Cascade County Planning Department's proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations are highly contrary to our vision of what a progressive and responsible county looks like. These proposed changes will have severe negative impact upon residents, businesses, and the culture of our towns as well as rural Cascade County. This could also be far-reaching to other counties in Montana. To address items of specific interest that have initially jumped out at us, per section as you requested:

Section 1: Purpose

1.1 Purpose of regulation adoption and **1.2 Interpretations, Conflicts, and Other Laws:** These are so mindfully written with thorough clarity. *We believe that any proposed changes should be referenced back to this written purpose and MCA 76-2-203 Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations to assure compatibility and 'finding of facts' outlined.*

- **Cascade County Growth Policy (CCGP):** It is our understanding that the zoning and subdivision ordinances are required to comply with the Cascade County Growth Policy (CCGP). The Cascade County Zoning Regulations currently states in Section 1.2 Interpretations, Conflict, and other laws, "Whenever the Board of County Commissioners of Cascade County and the Cascade County Planning Board are called upon to consider the adoption of a new zoning district or the amendment to an existing zoning district, zoning district regulations, or zoning district map, the Commissioners and Planning Board shall be guided by the following statutory provision: Montana Code Annotated § 76-2-203 (20157). Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations. (1) Zoning regulations must be: (a) made in accordance with the growth policy. Many of the proposed changes are not compliant with the CCGP as it currently reads. The following are examples:
    - **'Agricultural' to 'Mixed-Use' Districts:** Changing the legal definition opens a plethora of problems. First, the proposed definition for MU-40 indicates that the uses would be "...more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing 'residential' site characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses". Doesn't the current definition of "agricultural" allow for 'traditional' farming and ranching uses on acreage over 40 acres already? The 'more intensive' and 'larger in scale' is what scares us. *We would not want to see a large-scale and intensive operation on our neighbor's 40, 41, 45, 50-acre lot. That just doesn't make sense for responsible land use nor neighborly relations.*
    - **CCGP Goal #2:** The proposal contradicts the goal to "protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historical relationship with natural resource development" which includes objective A,B, D and C "preserving Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed land subdivisions and commercial development." *We believe that Cascade County landowners should have a say in what defines appropriate use of their own land as well as their neighbors and that the 'agricultural' definition supports that process. We would like to maintain our rural character by preserving valuable farmland and open spaces while providing opportunity to responsible small, and large, scale farmers and ranchers. Industry belongs near town developments as appropriately designed to specifically accommodate. All Cascade County permitting requirements should be based on potential impact. 'Permitted' uses 'allowed by right' should still be reviewed but reserved for low-impact operations to help simplify the process for small businesses and family farms so they can develop and grow in the appropriate zones. "Larger in scale" and more "intensive" uses should be required to meet higher standards and should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process. We would like to see the research to support this proposal that we believe contradicts these goals and explanation of how this proposed change supports goal 2.*

- **CCGP Goal #3**. Land protections: The CCGP states in Goal #3 to "maintain the agricultural economy" and includes in the objectives A to "protect the most productive soil types" and B to "continue to protect soil against erosion. We believe that it is our responsibility as land stewards to assure the health of our highly valuable soils where we live, in Cascade County. We need to have forethought about future generations and not a short-sighted view toward making a quick buck that might pillage these valuable lands/soils. Maintaining and improving the productivity of our soil is essential and can only be done with soil recovery in mind. Over-use, mis-use, and subjection to erosion are real threats that could damage our lands, economy, and community character and it would take years to recover. We view this proposal of zoning changes as a real threat to a healthy environment. *We would like to see language that assures compliance with goal 2 and makes sure that public input is sought and considered for drastic deviations from what has already been determined as appropriate use per the zoning district.*
- **CCGP Goal #5**: Economic Condition and Lifestyle: Goal #5 states to "preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County citizens." Policies listed in the Economic Conditions Report, Section 5.10 state "1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities. 2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County. 10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County. 11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land." It seems clear that changing the zoning to mixed use with less public input and less restrictions would defeat this goal. The proposal does not apply performance standards in MU-40 districts as it does in I-1 "light industry" and other areas. It is highly likely that changing the zonings to MU20 and MU40 would result in a huge and negative impact to all county citizens. Without proper consideration including broad reaching input, 'more intense' and 'larger in scale' operations would likely increase traffic, adversely affect wildlife, and increase pollution, including water, soil, air, noise, garbage, sight, and smell. New industry, in the properly zoned area, may create an increase in our population that would require time to plan accordingly to accommodate the needs for housing and public services. Zoning regulations that open up a free for all type atmosphere will be contra to this goal and *we think having guidelines that are in agreement with this goal and generally accepted by the citizens is critical to maintain a respectful, friendly, and responsible environment. We would like to maintain and even improve our environment that is clean, friendly, functional, and has viable economic opportunity for any citizen that is inclined.*
- **CCGP Goal #7.** "F. Promote adequate water supply systems. I. Encourage wetland protection to preserve waterfowl and other wildlife habitat." *We believe that changing these changes would place wetlands into MU districts and place them at risk. We would like to see justification as to how this change proposal supports this goal and objections.*
- **CCGP Goal #8.** "H. ... greater setbacks for commercial, industrial..." *It is unclear how this proposal is accomplishing this goal and we would like explanation as to how it is being accomplished.*
- **CCGP Goal #9.** "F. Encourage open buffers between rural residences and adjoining agriculture land". "G. Encourage...to develop the least agriculturally viable portion..." *We would like to see how this proposal accomplishes this goal.*
- **CCGP Goal #11.** "A. Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development. B... near existing towns and rural, more densely populated settlements and discourage poorly designed, unsafe land subdivisions and unsafe commercial development." *We would like to see how this proposal encourages this goal.*
- **CCGP Goal # 12.** Objection H. states "encourage compatible mixed-use development." *If this this the objective of the proposal, we would like to be shown a better explanation of how this proposal accomplishes this.*

- **Economic Condition Report Section 5.1 - Agricultural Employment:** "The importance of agriculture to the economy of Great Falls cannot be over emphasized.... Findings...near ideal environment for prairie grasslands and ... small grains." *We think the zoning change proposal should take special note that this mentions "agriculture" and not "industry".*
- **Economic Conditions Report Section - 5.10 Economic Activity and Constraints: Manufacturing. Policies. 1.** "Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities. 2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County...4. Efforts should be made to discourage commercial strip development along major thoroughfares...6. Environmental as well as economic perspectives should be considered in any future development. 7. Efforts should be made to attract non-transportation sensitive industry to Cascade County. 8. Utilization of locally produced agricultural products and raw materials should be encouraged...11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land. 12. Minimalize...the adverse social and environmental impact of development and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth...14.... most economically, socially, and environmentally appropriate, as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies..." *We believe these specific policies should be reviewed, and reviewed again, and the proposal should be reflective of each of them, giving justification, and including public input.*
- **Natural Resources Report Section 7.2 – Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Reservoirs: Wildlife:** "...Portions of the Missouri River and the Smith River are considered "high value", or "critical" for use by whitetail..." *We request the proposal include documentation of how this proposal supports wildlife.*
- **Natural Resources Report Section 7.5 Soils: Policies.** "1. Land use... predominately agriculture, special consideration should be given to protect this use. 2. Any development or change in the use of the land should be in a form suited to the natural lay of the land. 3. ...extensive on-site evaluations should be made before any proposed action is taken." *It is unclear that this policy has been given consideration and we would request justification as to how the proposed changes compliment the policy.*
- **7.7 Uplands:** Policies: 2. If any development takes place, extensive on-site evaluations should be made. Criterial withed should be: soil limitation, ground and surface water, geologic hazards, slope, adverse effect on wildlife habitat, visual impact, effects on recreational uses and access. 3. Land use controls should be based on the aforementioned criteria and agricultural use should be given top priority." *We would like to see how this proposal has accomplished these policies and given agricultural use top priority.*
- **7.9 Buttes: Policies.** "2. The Buttes should remain undeveloped to protect the natural beauty of this landscape unit." *We would request that the proposal maps identify the Buttes and assure the zoning supports this policy.*
- **8.1 Method of Implementation**: "...It takes into account the concerns expressed by the rural citizens of Cascade County by controlling the impacts of the more intense developments that may occur and protecting certain resource." This clearly states that citizen input was considered for the CCGP. We believe this document is a good representation of citizens and should considered with all relevant decisions. *We would like assurance that this has happened and justification of how any proposals comply.*
- **8.2 Resource Protection Areas designed and establishes:** "...prime agricultural soils and forest cover...protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures, or activities..." *We request justification that the proposal support this, of the detailed mapping these areas.*
- **8.6 Subdivision Development Requirements:** "...Subdivision developments must receive... approval from the ...County Commissioners...If a parcel larger than 40 acres is proposed to be subdivided and that parcel is determined to have 25% or more area coverage of ...Prime Agricultural Soils or Forest Cover Areas...approval shall only be granted...if all of the following criterion are complied with...If the

parcel... is determined to have any portion of the Flood Hazard Evaluation or Butte Conditional Development Areas, that portion shall not be subdivided for any non-agricultural or non-open space uses, structures, or activities." The proposal seems to strongly be promoting only economic development and it is unclear whether this has been taken into consideration. *We would like to see justification as to how it has.*

- **8. Policy and Goal Implementation: "**... A timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy, if necessary. The CCGP will be reviewed by the Cascade County Planning Board at their annual meeting each year...(as required by 76-1-601 (3)(f) MCA)...must issue "findings of fact" that weigh the effect..." We don't see that this has occurred, and it now has reached the five years since it was adopted in 2014. *We believe that reviewing the CCGP should be the starting point to assure it is a true reflection of what is best for our county. Zoning changes should then be made after this obligation is completed and any changes should be referenced to explain how they are in accordance to the CCGP.*
- **11.1 Definitions:** These definitions, such as agriculture, do not match the proposed definitions. *We would like to see these definitions reviewed, updated accordingly, and changes to the zoning regulations matching them.*
- *We believe these are still valid goals for our county and we would like to preserve the family farm and protect our productive agricultural land. We believe that changes should fully reflect this mission and performance standards need to be applied to each district based upon the impact the it would have its neighbors and the county as a whole.*

Section 2: Definitions

1. **Agricultural commodity**: The proposal combines animal-based and plant-based commodities into the same category. *We would like to see these separately defined. Animal-based should include clarification if it would include livestock, poultry, fish, and/or insects. This would include, but is not limited to, livestock, raw mild, honey, fish, crickets, and/or wild game and birds. Plant or crop -based should clarify if it would include grains, soybeans, corn, fruit, vegetables, oils, seeds, and/or timber, but not limited to.*
2. **Agricultural Commodity Storage Facility**: The definition currently references plant-based commodities, referencing "store bulk food stuffs...including grain elevators...", and the term title should reflect that. *We think there should be a separate definition for animal-based versus plant-based commodity storage facilities.*
3. **Agricultural Use**: We notice the original definition specifically "excluded feedlots" and the change does not reflect that. *We would like reasoning for this change in particular. This term also should be split if it's reference dictates.*
4. **Animal Shelter**: *The definition should define 'temporary' for the time allowed to house each animal as well as the total animals per area allowed.*
5. **Butcher Shop**: *The definition should define 'temporary' for the time allowed for on-site storage.*
6. **Campground**: *The definition should define 'temporary' for the time allowed to occupy.*
7. **Commercial Feed Operation**: *The definitions should set a maximum for "high density" number of animals.*
8. **Community Center**: Why would this be changed to "day use" only? This would affect events such as wedding receptions held in the evening. It is unclear the need to differentiate from an Event Center. *We would like an explanation for day use only, and for the definition to clarify what "short-term" means.*
9. **Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)**: *The definitions should clarify what "large concentrated" means in terms of animal heads.*
10. **Equine Production**: *Add "aka horses" to help confirm understanding.*
11. **Glare**: *We would like to know who/what determines the result of annoyance, etc. and have that clearly stated.*
12. **Freight Terminal**: *The definition should clarify what "temporary" storage means.*

13. **Guest Ranch**: *The definitions should clarify what "temporary" rental accommodations means.*
14. **Site Preparation**: The current definition states that it does not require a Location/Conformation Permit. The activities listed such as leveling terrain, establishing internal roads, etc. could be extreme changes to the landscape and should be approved beforehand. *We would like to see this exclusion for a permit requirement reviewed and explained.*
15. **Slaughterhouse**: The proposal adds 'temporary' stabling to slaughter house operations, but it fails to clarify what is meant by 'temporary'. Is that 8 hours, 8 days, 8 months? It seems this could cause slaughterhouse operations to also serve as feedlots. *We would like to see this clearly defined, with no more than 72 hours per live animal. Another confusion point is the mention of "on-site sales". If this is not the intent of a slaughterhouse, it should be removed.*
16. **Special Use Permit**: *The definitions should include mention of a requirement to notify the public and opportunity to comment prior to its issuance.*
17. **Unclassified Use Permit**: The definition states that the approval is made from the ZBOA. It is unclear why the elected Commissioners wouldn't be the final deciding authority on these requests. *We believe this process should be reviewed and should establish a requirement to inform the public and allow for comment before making a determination.*
18. **Value-added agricultural commodity processing facility**: The proposal does not differentiate between animal-based and plant-based for processing facilities and these should be looked at separately because of the potential impact differences. As an example, there is a huge difference between a slaughterhouse operation and a grape vineyard, especially on property that is only 40-50 acres. It further doesn't address a distinction between locally-raised commodities versus those imported into the county, particularly from other states or countries. *We would like to see the regulations separately define for plant-based and animal-based commodities, add clarity that this includes one or more animal or plant production, and write language into the policy that supports locally-grown or raised. The reference to "Value-added" is very vague, broad in scope and each instance should be evaluated to weigh the potential impact or benefit to The County.*
19. **Value-added agricultural product:** The proposal does not differentiate between animal-based and plant-based product and these should be looked at separately because of the potential impact differences. *We would like to see these separately defined. Examples to list for animal-based product should not only include packaged meats but also include curdling milk, cheese production, and melting of honeycombs to make beeswax, which is not all inclusive. The plant-based definition should include the example of milling wheat into flour, etc. Again, the reference to "Value-added" is very vague, broad in scope and each instance should be evaluated to weigh the potential impact or benefit to The County.*
20. **Workforce Housing, Permanent (Labor Camp):** The definition fails to address a maximum number of housed employees per defined area, nor any structural requirements. Because Permanent Workforce Housing is allowed for MU20 and MU40 as written in this proposal, this leaves an opening for misuse. As an example, any industry on even a 21-acre property could construct dense housing of trailers or shacks to house an unlimited number of workers, and potentially families, for an unlimited amount of time. This would not only be an unpleasant experience for those living in the crowded environment but also to neighboring properties with traffic, noise, potential conflicts due to poor living conditions, garbage, smells, etc. *We believe that this definition should establish a maximum number of people per a defined area and clarify the infrastructure requirements. Consideration should be made based on human health, water supply, waste-water standards, and community impact. We believe that thorough research should be done and provided to the public before determining what would be the best solution.*
21. **Workforce Housing, Temporary (Labor Camp):** *The definition needs to clarify what is meant by "temporary or seasonal" housing.*

Section 4: Zoning Map

1. **Exhibit A-1 Cascade County Zoning Maps:** This proposal does not seem logical and appears to blanket much of the previous 'Ag' land to MU40. As an example, our land of 21 acres and the map shows that we would be zoned MU40 along with our neighbors and many others that have 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 acres. Further, it is our understanding that MCA Section 14.1.1(3) requires any proposed changes include legal descriptions of the affected properties. The vicinity map the staff published in IAW Section 14.1.1(2) does not comply with this requirement *We think further consideration needs to be made with regard to how these MU20 and MU40 zones are proposed. We would also like to see legal descriptions on this map as well as property boundaries so that a clearer picture is given. This should be provided before any decision is formally made and we request that this proposal does not get closed before this is provided in advance of a final comment period and landowners that are directly affected should be legally notified.*

Section 7: District Regulations

7.1.1.1 Minimum Lot Areas: The proposal eliminates Agricultural (A) Districts. Mixed Use is listed as 6400 square feet, yet most of the current larger A Districts are being proposed to be changed to MU, and Residentials have a larger 'minimum lot area' requirement. This makes no sense. The intent of MU doesn't seem to match the map as it is applied. *We would like this reviewed and explained. We would like to see Ag zoning left alone and MU should be utilized in other areas that would better match the intent.*

7.1.1.2 Previously Described Lots: The proposed change gives all permit authorization to the Zoning Administrator (which is the Planner in absence of one), prior to adoption of "this Zoning Resolution". First, authorization can't be given prior to the approval and adoption of these changes. Second, giving one person sole discretion for a determination like this defeats the purpose of transparency and public participation. *We think this section should be removed.*

7.1.1.3 Lot width and minimum lot area for building site: It is clear that this area is decreased to 6400 square feet to meet the objective of MU designation. Decreasing creates higher concentration of buildings. *We disagree with the direction of this intent and would like the area left at 7200 square feet, and increase the minimum lot size for MU to 7200 square feet if MU districts are added.*

7.2.2(7) (RR-5), 7.3.2(14) (SR-1, SR-2), and 7.4.3(15) (UR), 7.5.9(1) (MU) a. and b. Permitted Principal Uses: Limited Agricultural uses: The proposal restricts the ratio of large livestock to two animals per acre, and small animals are allowed at a ratio of four per acre. It is our opinion that this should be set at one large animal per five acres and one small animal per one acre. *We would like to know where the data came from to determine this ratio and we request that justification is given to these standards.*

7.2.3(4) (RR-5), 7.3.3(4) (SR-1, SR-2) and 7.4.3(4) (UR), 7.5.10(4) (MU) Permitted Accessory uses located on the same lot with the principal use - (4) Towers, etc.: These are defined as at least 10 feet high but does not set a maximum height. *We would like to see further restrictions to the height of structures and believe this section should also be subject to a special use permit and should be placed in that section 7.2.4.*

7.2.4 Uses Permitted upon issuance of a special use permit: *We would like the distance requirement for feedlot or concentrated animal feeding facilities to remain but changed from 1 mile of an adjacent residence to 4 miles from the border of an adjacent property owner. (10) Motorized Sports Entertainment should also be adjusted similarly. This section further establishes 1 mile from any adjacent residences for animal stabling or processing and we would like this to be changed to the same at 4 miles from the border of any adjacent property owner. A residential home may be a distance from the property boundaries, and this should not be the factor to allow the operations to be placed closer.*

7.5 Mixed Use (MU) District. 7.5.1 Intent: If the intent is to provide for "higher-density residential development", it is mis-guided as it attempts to replace 'ag' districts with MU. *We believe MU should be reserved for areas that are closer to developed towns, not in A Districts, if this is the intent.*

7.5.2 Minimum Lot Area and 7.53 Building Height: "No minimum" and "No Restrictions". It is confusing why there is a separate general MU along with MU-20 and MU-40. Lack of minimal lot area requirement is contractor to the MU-20 and MU-40. *We would like to see this reviewed and clarification made.*

7.5.8 Site Plan: The review and approval are solely at the discretion of the Zoning Administrator (the Planner in absence of one). *We believe this should go through the same criteria for approval as all other plans, including public notice and input, with the elected commissioners as the final authority agent.*

7.5.9(2) jj Permitted Principal Uses: Agricultural Commodity Storage Facility. With this defined to include animal-based commodity and no restrictions to size or duration, and no MU minimum lot area (7.5.2), all indications point to the possibility of unlimited animal storage on a minimal sized lot for an unlimited amount of time. As an example, what would prevent by this language the storage of 500 cows on a 1-acre lot? *We believe that this section should specify plant-based vs animal-based commodities, and the quantity per acre. (4) Mobile Home Park, (6) Gravel Pit, and (7) Wild Game Processing also should have minimal lot size requirements.*

7.5.10 Permitted Accessory uses located on the same lot with the permitted principal use: (3) exterior spot lights: *We would request further review of indirect spot light effects on neighboring residential areas as well as public roadways and this section should be rewritten to support the best restrictions.* (4) Towers and Residential Wind Turbines; *We believe there needs to be height restrictions as well as clarifying the location distance from neighboring property lines.*

7.6.2 MU-20 Minimum Lot Area: This does not address a maximum lot size so it is confusing if a lot that is 40+ acres could also be assigned to this district. *If we understand this section correctly, we think that a range should be used, such as 20-39 acres, to eliminate any confusion. Or, Does Minimum Lot Area refer to designated lots/tracts within the district? For example, could an MU-20 district be 320 acres of total area with a maximum of 16 lots? And, for consideration as an MU-40 district, does this then restrict **ALL** lots/tracts within that district to at least 40 acres? Is there a limit for the **Maximum** area of MU-20 and MU-40 districts? We think that elaborating with more clear definitions and descriptions with intentions outlined, of both MU-20 and MU-40, can clear up confusion and misunderstandings and we would like to see these provided to the public.*

7.6.9(9) (MU-20) and 7.7.9(9) (MU-40); permitted principal use: (9),(7) Commercial dairy. The language is vague and further adds confusion by stating "20 acres or greater". *We believe this should be more specific as to how many dairy animals are allowed on a MU20, as well as distance from the property line. (11) Golf driving ranges; We believe this also should be noted as to the distance from the property line and clarified if this refers to commercial vs private. (14),(10) towers, etc; Again, this should be clarified to the height maximum and the reiterate the distance requirements from the property line.*

7.6.10 (MU-20) and 7.7.10 (MU-40) permitted accessory uses located on the same lot with the permitted principal use: (5) Private Power Plant; *We would like to see restrictions specified to height, distance from the property line, and noise level pollution and this further should be issued only with a special use permit and the requirements associated.*

7.6.11 (MU-20) and (MU-40) uses permitted upon issuance of a special use permit: (2) quarry. *We would like to see the impact of noise and traffic considered and reviewed more, and reduce the operational hours to no great than 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*(39) Value added agricultural commodity processing facility and (51) Agricultural commodity storage facility; *Again, this should be separated between animal-based and crop/plant-based because of the drastic difference of impact to neighboring property owners.* (49) Permanent workforce housing should not be a consideration for a MU20. (53),(46) power plant, *commercial wind farms should not be allowed on MU20.*

7.7 MU-40. 7.7.11 Uses permitted upon issuance of a special use permit: (4) "Commercial Feedlot or Concentrated animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) if located on a tract of land 40 acres minimum and no adjacent residences are within 1 mile at the time of application". We think it this is contrary to the intent of the CCGP and would produce damaging results. *We believe CAFO's should be only considered on larger acreage, 120 acres minimum, and located at a greater distance from not only any residence but also from property boundaries. The minimum should be set at 4 miles from the*

nearest property boundary. A residence may not yet be built on a property but that doesn't mean the owner should be adversely deterred from building a home on their choice spot because a CAFO has been built close to their intended residential site. (22) Solid waste disposal sites; *We disagree that these should be even a consideration for property of 40 acres and should be re-examined for a larger size requirement and extensive distance from other property boundaries.* (27) Slaughterhouse and (28) Rendering plants; *We believe this should not be allowed on 40 acre properties and the minimum distance requirement should be at least 4 miles from any adjacent property line and no more that 2 miles from a nearest residence.* (31) *We believe Power Plants should be subject to a greater degree of regulations for SUP consideration.* (41) *Permanent Workforce Housing should not be a consideration for MU40 districts, with 40 acres as the minimum size. This would contradict the residential restrictions per district. A larger acreage area should be required for consideration and should go through an SUP review with public input.*

7.12.2 Light Industrial (I-1) District Permitted Principal uses: (3) Agricultural commodity storage facility and (4) Value added ag. Commodity processing facility. *We think both should be restricted to plant-based commodities for light industrial, as well as restricting (28) Power plants and commercial wind farms, (30) gravel pit, and (32) power plants, solar from I-1.*

7.13.2 Permitted principal uses for I-2 District: (1) *We think that "unless modified or waived by the Zoning Administrator" should be removed. One person should not be placed in the position to make these determinations alone and without guidelines.* (2) Medical marijuana registered premises shall only be permitted in I-2 Districts. *We would like to know the reasoning behind this requirement for this plant-based commodity operation as singled out from others.*

Section 8 Supplementary Regulations

8.2.5.2 Electric Fencing: The proposal prevents use of electric fence on MU districts, but doesn't that include 20 – 40+ acre properties, many of which have livestock that require electric fencing. *We think this section should remove the restrictions to MU districts.* Further, (4) prevents use of electric fence in conjunction with barbed wire fencing. *We think this restriction should be eliminated because there are many instanced that this common practice is required to secure the safety of the animals and any property nearby.*

8.8 Towers and Facilities: (8) We agree that there should be turbine noise limitation hours (8:00 pm to 8:00 am) but *we would like to see the noise free time extended to 5:00 pm until 8:00 am, and the acceptable dB(A) should be reconsidered for stricter noise reductions.*

8.20 Light Industrial (I-1) Zoning District Standards: These are all great and wonder why they are not listed as applicable for other zones, including Heavy Industry. *We would like to see the inclusion of other zone districts included as well as well as adjusting the hour for operations conducted between 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. We believe it would be more socially respectful to change that to 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*

Section 9 Permit Requirements

9.2.4 Location/Conformance Permit. Expiration: *We agree with having this clearly included.*

Section 10 Standards for Special Use Permits

10.1 General Provisions: "...the ZBOA can approve, deny, or approve with conditions...". *We think that the final decision should be made from the elected Cascade County Commissioners.*

Section 14. Procedures for amendments

14.2 Hearing before the planning board: *No mention of notice requirements is made and we would like to see it added, the same as for a Commissioners hearing.*

14.3.1 Hearings before the board of county commissioners. 14.3.1 notice of a public hearing: *(a format error needs correction)* "...45 days before...five public places...once a week for 2 weeks in the newspaper..." *From experience, we believe this is not enough time nor format for clear and evident notices to be seen and communicated. We would like to see the 'five public places' identified and at least a few consistent so that the public can regularly review these areas. We also would like to see the postings in the newspaper written with more clarity, in larger font, and in a manner that is eye-catching to the reader. We also would like the direct notification of property owners that are directly affected, either by mail, hand delivered, or email.*

Additional Comments:

Detailed Analysis: The Cascade County Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1(6) requires a detailed analysis of each change IAW MCA 76-2-203 to be a published as part of the official staff report prior to the public hearing. We have not seen these yet and would like to review to help form a better understand and educated opinion. We believe these should also include justification as to how the changes would comply with the CCGP, specific to the relevant goal, objective, and policy.

Public Input: In the past, it appears that the process for amending Zoning ordinances demonstrated more public outreach to inform the public, solicit opinions, and consider input. Survey's of landowners that would be directly impacted by proposed changes as well as many more work sessions were afforded. That set a precedence that is not being followed now. We have not seen or heard of any survey efforts to obtain landowner input, nor evidence of multiple working sessions. January 18th was the first time that we heard about this proposal, despite the numerous meetings, emails, and phone calls that our neighbors and us have had with the planning staff. We specifically asked, even up into January, if they are working on changes, what they are considering, when they started, and when they expected to be ready to submit any proposals. We were given vague responses that indicated they were only in the thinking and verbal discussion phase and they didn't know when it would produce a formal request for changes. It is also confusing to have an indication that this proposed draft was a 4th version, if we understood that correctly. The proposed regulations published on the county website dated October 2018 are laved V4.1. If that means 'version 4.1, where are the original and previous versions? If that is so, where are all the notes and transparency for any previous working sessions? *We would like to express our opposition to the manner that this proposal has been conducted and presented due to the lack of timely transparency and forthright communications. Moving forward, we would like to see the planning staff follow all legal requirements and precedence setting processes when working on any policy changes. Citizens need complete information in order to have educated opinions, and appropriate time to analyze pros and cons of the proposal so that we can give thorough responses. This would hopefully eliminate the notion of automatic "permitted use", or use by right, as it has been referred to.*

Thank you for reading this to the end and considering our concerns, questions, suggestions, and requests. We respect the position you are in, the magnitude of this project, and the complexity of the process.

Respectfully,

Mike and Deborah Jenkins

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Mike + Deborah Jenkins

Complete Address: 298 Hastings Road, Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

See Attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Zoning Amendments
Growth Policy Analysis for Proposed MU-40 District

I. Growth Policy Analysis

This analysis was conducted for the proposed MU-40 District. According to the staff report, the existing Agricultural District was split into to districts to reflect current land development patterns. As noted in the staff report and on the maps, most of the development activity has occurred in the area that is now the MU-20 District. The regulations for this district are not significantly different from the existing regulations for the Agriculture district. As demonstrated by the following analysis, however, the proposed MU-40 District is predominantly agriculture in nature with very limited mixed-use. The statement of intent and the regulations for the district do not match the prevailing land use and rural character of the district.

> **MU-40** - The MU-40 District is intended to provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential sites characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses.

It would be more appropriate to maintain the current Agriculture District zoning with the primary purpose of protecting prime farmland and maintaining the rural character.

> **A Agricultural District -** The purpose of this district is to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes, small scale value-added agricultural uses and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Regulations in this district are intended to protect the most productive soil types, by encouraging non-agricultural and large-scale development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land and to minimize environmental concerns.

The following table list relevant policies, goals and objectives from the Growth Policy and references additional analysis and discussion to that demonstrate the proposed MU-40 District is not in substantial compliance with the Growth Policy.

Table 1: Growth Policy Analysis for MU-40 District

Goal, Objective or Policy	Substantially Compiles	Comment
Goal 1: Sustain and strengthen the economic well-being of Cascade County's citizens.	Partial	Inappropriate location of large scale intensive uses can have serious fiscal impact on county residents. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
A. Stimulate the retention and expansion of existing businesses, new businesses, value-added businesses, wholesale and retail businesses, and industries including agriculture, mining, manufacturing/processing and forest products.	Partial	Provides for businesses but should limit such uses to suitable locations. **See Issue #1**

B. Stabilize and diversify the county's tax base by encouraging the sustainable use of its natural resources.	No	Does not protect prime agricultural soils. **See Issue #4**
C. Identify and pursue primary business development that complements existing business, which is compatible with communities, and utilizes available assets. Identify and pursue targeted business development opportunities to include, but not limited to, manufacturing/heavy industry, telecommunications, and youth/social services.	Partial	Provides for businesses does not utilize available assets near communities with infrastructure and services. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
Goal 2: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issues #2, 3 & 4**
C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed, land subdivisions and commercial development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issue #2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**
Goal 3: Maintain Agricultural Economy	Partial	Increases average lot size in MU-40 district to 40 acres but has no provisions to protect farmland. **See issue #4**
A. Protect the most productive soil types.	No	No suitability analysis. No protection for productive soil. **Issues #1 & 4**
D. Support the development of value-added agricultural industry in Cascade County utilizing the products from the regional area.	Yes	Provides for value-added agriculture in MU-40 District.
Goal 5: Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade Count's citizens	No	Large scale intensive uses are not compatible with rural lifestyle. Local government intervention and fiscal impact to county residents would increase to provide infrastructure and services to such uses in remote rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 5, 6**
A. Maintain Cascade County's citizens independent lifestyle and minimize local governmental intervention, to the extents possible, consistent with the requirements of a continually evolving economy and constantly changing population.		
Goal 6: Promote and maintain a transportation system that provides safety, efficiency, and cost efficiency.	No	Significant traffic safety hazards and cost to maintain rural roads. **See Issue #5**

Goal 8: Protect surface and groundwater from pollution.	No	No suitability analysis to identify soils that are inappropriate for on-site wastewater treatment systems that may result from large scale uses. **See Issue #1**
A. Discourage development with on-site wastewater treatment systems in areas having inappropriate soils or high groundwater, as indicated on the revised Cascade County soil maps, to help prevent the contamination of groundwater supplies.	No	
Goal 9: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests.	Partial	Farmlands are permitted use but large scale intensive manufacturing uses will take farmland out of production and are not compatible in rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 4**
G. Encourage agricultural landowners considering land subdivision to develop the least agriculturally viable portion of their properties.	No	No provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
H. Encourage in-fill development of urban and transitional areas already committed to development where community facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively in order to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are costly to serve and are not near existing development. **See issue #2, 5, 6**
Goal 11: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character, encourage efficient use of land.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are not near existing development and can unsafely locate in areas lacking adequate emergency services. **See issue #2 & #6**
A. Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development.	No	
B. Encourage cluster development to locate near existing towns and rural, more densely populated settlements and discourage poorly designed, unsafe land subdivisions and unsafe commercial development.	No	
CHAPTER 5 – ECONOMIC CONDITION : POLICIES		
1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.	No	There is no protection of prime farmland. MU-40 District is not located around existing communities. **Issue #2 & #4**

2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.	Partial	MU-40 statements mentions family farms and increases minimum lot size but also encourages large scale uses that will take farmland out of production. **See Issue #4**
6. Environmental as well as economic perspectives should be considered in any future development.	No	There is not suitability analysis to determine environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issue #1**
8. Utilization of locally produced agricultural products and raw materials should be encouraged.	Yes	Farms and value added agriculture are permitted
10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated. there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. **Issue #4**
11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land.	No	Eliminates ag zoning and no provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
12. Minimize, to the greatest degree possible, the adverse social and environmental impacts of development and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and expensive to serve. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
14. Encourage economic activities to locate in those areas most economically, socially and environmentally appropriate, as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
6. Local Services – Policies		
6. Using the subdivision review process, discourage development in areas where it is not economical for the county to provide services such as road maintenance, school bus service, fire, police protection, or snowplowing. Persons purchasing land in these areas should be informed, in writing, to the fact that some services may not be provided by the county.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
7. Facilitate the appropriate development and maintenance of roads, public utilities, and community facilities.	No	

Chapter 7: Natural Resources **7.5 Land Unit: Landscape Unit Benches & Dissected Benches** 1. Since the existing land use of the benches and dissected benches landscape unit is predominately agriculture, special consideration should be given to protect this use. 2. Any development or change in the use of the land should be in a form suited to the natural lay of the land. 3. Since a wide variability of limitations exists, extensive on-site evaluations should be made before any proposed action is taken.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated and there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that with steep slopes and in environmentally sensitive areas. There is no suitability analysis to determine limitations for development. **See Issues #1, 2, 3, 4**
8.3: Prime Agricultural Soil Area The prime agriculture soils resource preservation areas are intended to contain those soil areas where it is necessary and desirable, (because of their high quality, availability of water, and/or highly productive agricultural and grazing capability), to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Therefore, the prime agricultural soil preservation areas of Cascade County are those areas where the soils have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), according to the NRCS definition of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.	No	Ag Zoning is eliminated and replaced with a district that allows large scale intensive uses that take ag land out of production and does not protect prime farmland. **Issue #2,3,4**

II. Discussion of Issues

Issue #1: Lack of suitability analysis to determine the most appropriate areas for industrial and business land uses

The MU-40 District encompasses approximately million acres[1] and includes varied landscapes such as mountains, floodplains, canyons, cropland, pasture and open space. The Growth Policy describes potential hazardous features throughout the proposed MU-40 District such as flooding, erosion, landslide, soil creep and earthquake faults. The proposed zoning regulations would permit large scale intense manufacturing processes related to value added agriculture anywhere in this district without any review process that would consider the suitability of the proposed site for development or ensure that the use meets the basic considerations of public health, safety and welfare. Because the proposed MU-40 district is so vast such businesses may attempt to locate in areas with poor soils, steep slopes, high groundwater and other hazards that render the site unsuitable for development due to public health and safety concerns. Additionally, an industrial use could be located in remote areas that lack adequate emergency services, public facilities or transportation networks. This can all result in significant fiscal impact on county taxpayers to provide services to large scale intensive uses in remote locations. According to the Montana Code annotated (MCA) 76-2-304, zoning regulations must be:

(b) Designed to:
(i) secure safety from fire and other dangers
(ii) promote public health, public safety and the general welfare
(iii) Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements

In order to meet these requirements, standard planning practice relies on an extensive analysis to determine areas that are most suitable for industrial and commercial development. Such analysis examines soils, slopes, wetlands, floodplains, prime farmland, environmental hazards, emergency response times, road capacity, land cover, existing land use and other similar factors. Such information is readily available from the Montana State Library- Natural Heritage Program, USDA Soil Maps, Montana Cadastral data and other sources. The background information that was posted on the County's web site only analyzed parcel sizes and permit data. Not even basic existing land use data was mapped to verify staff's "intuition" or what was "suggested" by the parcel analysis. The permit data is not complete and does not represent accurate land use patterns.

Lack of a such basic analysis results in haphazard development in areas that lack the infrastructure or local services to support such a use and, due to site features, can create serious public health and safety concerns. Specifically, large-scale intensive uses would be allowed to locate anywhere in an area of over a million acres that has varied landscapes, lacks services and a contains a multitude of potential hazards.

[1] The estimate is of the amount of acreage that is designated as MU-40 is based on a tabulation the number of townships that are completely mapped as MU-40 zoning, plus the number of townships that are at least 50% mapped as MU-40. Since there are 36 square miles per township, the resulting calculation indicated that there were at least 1,548 square miles designated as MU-40 or 990,720 acres. Since townships with less than 50% of the land area designated as MU-40 were not included in this tabulation, the amount of acreage is an undercount. For discussion purposes, this report rounds up the number to 1 million acres.

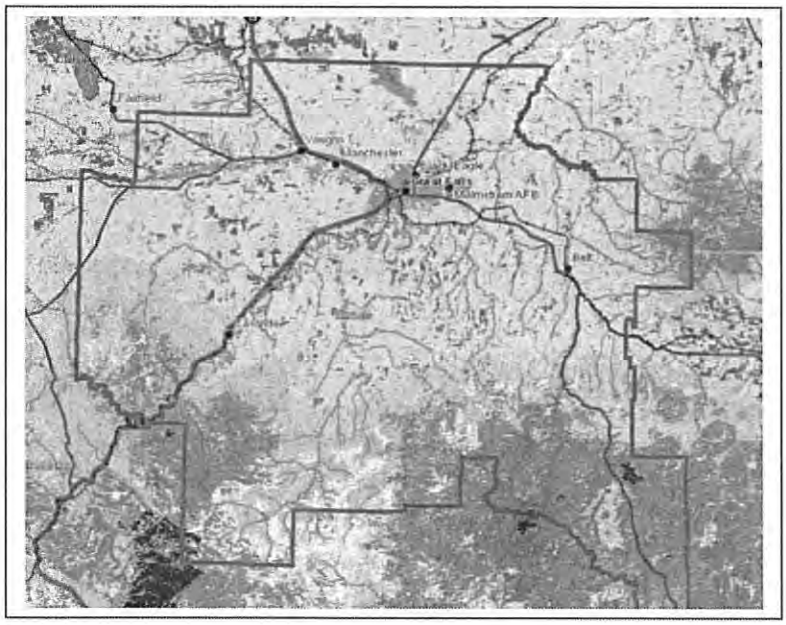
Issue # 2. The proposed intent for the MU-40 District does not match the prevailing land use.

The MCA 76-2-203 (2) states that the County shall consider,

"(d) The character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses."

The previous section discussed suitability. This section addresses the character. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, only 4% of the county is classified as "Developed Area". As indicated below, most of the "Developed Area" is located in and around Great Falls with some developed land in outlying communities. The land area located in the proposed MU-40 district is classified as Cultivated Crops, Prairie/Grassland, Forest/Woodland, and Pasture/Hay.

Map 1: Land Cover Cascade County



Legend: Major Types of Land Cover

- *Developed*
- *Agriculture*
- *Conifer-dominated forest and woodland*
- Rocky Mountain Foothill Woodland-Steppe Transition
- Grassland Systems
- *Deciduous Shrubland*
- Wetland and Riparian Systems
- *Introduced Vegetation*

Source: http://mtnhp.org/mapviewer/?t=1

The March 26 staff report notes that the proposed zoning regulations are designed to, "... cater to their predominant land use characteristics..." In regards to prevailing land use, the staff report states that:

> "Crop production is the prevailing productive land use in the northern and north-central parts of Cascade County while animal production is the prevailing productive land use in the southern half of the county (this is clearly demonstrated by the USDA CropScape map for the county.) Manufacturing operations tend to be located along major transportation routes such as railways and arterial roadways."

The staff report also references a "Map 2" which indicates the types of zoning location conformance permits that have been issued throughout the county. An examination of the map indicates that in the proposed MU-40 District, only 16 permits were of a business or industrial nature.[2] Approximately 55 permits were issues for residential or ag related structures. Only the electric generating stations and the asphalt plant represent uses that would be considered "large scale" and "intensive" and the electric generating station has

[2] These permits were issued for quarrys, wind turbine, country club, asphalt plant, ag sales, small engine sales/repair, paint ball, cell towers and an electric generating station.

since been dismantled. Clearly this does not represent a "mixed-use" land pattern with large scale intensive uses. The prevailing use is agriculture and grasslands and the statement of intent should reflect this.

The staff report concludes that the Mixed-Use District is appropriate because the Agricultural District already allows for a mix of uses characteristic of commercial districts, industrial districts and residential districts. It should be noted that the Montana Supreme Court stated uses allowed by current zoning are a consideration only **after** a thorough consideration of prevailing use.

> "The County cites *North 93 Neighbors* for the proposition that a court applying the first prong of the *Little* test may look to the land uses allowed under current zoning rather than the prevailing uses in the area. We analyzed the land uses allowed by current zoning in *North 93 Neighbors* only *after* we thoroughly had considered the existing uses in the area. Our conclusion that the prevailing uses were not significantly different from the proposed use was based on our consideration of both the prevailing uses *and* the uses allowed by current zoning." (Plains Grains vs. Cascade County.)

As demonstrated in the discussion above, the prevailing use is inarguably rural agriculture and not mixed use. The commercial and industrial uses are only allowed as special uses and can only be granted if the Board of Adjustment can make findings that the proposed development will not "materially endanger" the public health, safety, or welfare; that the development will not harm surrounding property values unless it is deemed to be a public necessity; and that the development will be "in harmony" with the area in which it is to be located. The fact that the Board must make these findings suggest that there are potential issues with compatibility of commercial and industrial uses.

In reality, most of the special use permits that have been granted are located in the area designated as MU-20. In the MU-40 District less 20 than non-residential/agricultural permits have been issued which hardly qualifies categorizing this district as mixed use. Since the prevailing use by far is agriculture, it is more appropriate to maintain the Agricultural District with the purpose of protecting prime farmland and eliminate some of the special use that are rarely, if ever uses. This would reflect the actual land use in the district, meet multiple objectives of the Growth Policy and meet the MCA requirement that zoning reflect the character of the district.

IOne proposed revision that is of particular concern in regards to compatible land use is changing the existing term from "light manufacturing and assembly" to "manufacturing. The rationale is that this term is not defined in the current regulations. There is, however, a term for "Industrial, light" that is more consistent with term "light manufacturing". The proposed change to the term manufacturing would allow heavy industrial uses would differ significantly from the predominant land use and should not be allowed. Light industrial uses that are permitted as a special use as long as they meet the performance standards for such uses that are contained in the I-1 zoning district would be more appropriate.

Issue 3: The definition of "productive" use is not compatible with rural areas and is inconsistent with the purpose of zoning regulations that are stated in the Cascade County zoning ordinance.

The term "productive use" as defined by staff includes crop production, animal production and manufacturing. Grouping these dissimilar uses together is inconsistent with the following purpose of the Cascade County Zoning Ordinance.

> **1.1.6** To protect residential, business, commercial, and industrial areas alike from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses and to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses;

Agricultural uses and manufacturing uses have distinct features that require them to be treated as separate classes of uses. Agriculture uses are related to food production, are characterized by open undeveloped areas, do not require urban infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer and relies on a the work force that is typically limited in size with operators and laborers who often live on-site. Manufacturing uses, however, take land out of food production, requires urban infrastructure, primarily requires a large workforce that must commute to the job site and generates year-round truck at much higher volumes than farming or ranching operations. Manufacturing uses are incompatible with the rural residences that are part of the agricultural landscape.

Theses differences are uniformly recognized in zoning ordinance that have separate zoning districts and development standards for these different classes of uses. There is no precedent for grouping these uses together. There is no definition of "productive use" in the zoning ordinance, growth policy, or Montana Code Annotated that matches staff's definition. The North American Industry Classification System and Planners Dictionary that were cited in Appendix 1 as the basis for the definitions included in the zoning ordinance do not include a term for "Productive Use" and clearly defines agriculture and manufacturing as different classes of uses. "Productive Use" as referenced in USDA soil surveys or by the Growth Policy, only refers to crop production. Grouping agricultural uses such as crop production and animal production with "manufacturing" is also at odds with other purpose statements included in the Cascade County zoning ordinance:

> **1.1.4** To facilitate the provision of adequate transportation, and of other requirements and services such as water, sewerage, schools, open space, and parks;
>
> **1.1.5** To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County;
>
> **1.1.7** To avoid the inappropriate development of lands and provide for reduction of flood damage;
>
> **1.1.10** To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses for the mutual benefit of all;
>
> **1.1.11** To isolate or control the location of unavoidable nuisance producing uses;

For the reasons stated above, manufacturing uses must be evaluated separately from agriculture uses and must be subject to standards to address the impacts from industrial processes that characterize this use. As noted previously, performance standards apply in the "Light Industrial District" should apply to manufacturing processes in all districts.

Issue 4: There are no zoning provisions to protect prime agricultural land.

The definition of "Prime Agriculture Areas" in Chapter 8 of the Cascade County Growth Policy states that these lands should be protected "from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities". Clearly, large scale intensive land uses and manufacturing operations are not compatible with this Growth Policy definition. While small scale "value-added" operations may be appropriate as a special use, the growth policy is very clear that prime agricultural areas should be preserved. (Goal 3, Obj. A, B & D; Chapter 5 – Policies 2,6,10,11, and 12; Section 7.5 and Section 8.3) Given the emphasis that the Growth Policy places on preserving prime agricultural areas, the zoning ordinance should maintain the Agriculture district for the purpose of protecting the areas that are designated as prime farmland as designated on the following map from the Cascade County Growth policy. Replacing the Agriculture District with a mixed use district intended for "large scale" and "intensive" uses takes lands out of agriculture production and does not comply with the Growth Policy.

Cascade County
Farmland Classification Map

As stated by the American Farmland Trust, "once farms are bulldozed and paved over, that land is gone forever." The proposed regulations do not make any distinction between development on non-productive soils or development on prime farmland. In order to comply with the Growth Policy, the regulations should include provisions to protect this resource. In addition to the potential loss of valuable prime farmland, the United States Department of Agriculture, notes other concerns with development in agricultural areas:

> "Land use and land-use changes have important economic and environmental implications for commodity production and trade, open space, soil and water conservation, air quality and atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, and other areas of policy relevance."

https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2017/december/a-primer-on-land-use-in-the-united-states/

The American Planning Association states the following regarding farmland protection:

> "Farmland protection plans help local governments inventory important farmland, set goals for its protection, and identify strategies for implementation. Such strategies include agricultural zoning, agricultural buffers, right-to-farm ordinances, transfer or purchase of development rights programs, farmland mitigation requirements, and cluster or conservation development regulations.
>
> Other important aspects of agricultural protection zoning include prohibitions of non-farm development on prime agricultural soils, establishing agricultural buffers between working farms and encroaching residential development to minimize land-use conflicts, and codifying right-to-farm provisions that protect farmers from nuisance complaints."
>
> https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/farmlandprotection/

A review of county ordinances in Montana indicated that prohibiting industrial uses in agricultural districts is standard practice. Although food processing is allowed as an accessory use in some counties, these are small scale operations where the agricultural use is still the predominant use of land.

Flathead County	Dairy permitted in AG District. Slaughterhouse, distillery, food processing are only permitted in industrial districts
Missoula County	Food processing & slaughterhouse permitted as accessory use
Yellowstone County	Does not permit any commercial or industrial uses in Ag Districts
East Gallatin County	Only agriculture and residential uses are permitted
Gallatin County – Spring Hill	Packing, storing, and processing of products **grown or raised on premised** are permitted uses.

Issue 5: There is not adequate transportation infrastructure to support large scale intensive mixed use in the proposed MU-40 District

Transportation concerns are of paramount importance in drafting zoning regulations. The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:

> "(b)(iii)Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools parks and other public requirements"

One reason for limiting manufacturing uses to Industrial zoned areas that are located near municipalities is that these districts are located near transportation networks that have the capacity to accommodate high volumes of traffic and heavy equipment loads. Many of the roads in the proposed MU-40 District, however, are either gravel roads or county maintained roads that are not designed for high volume traffic or heavy loads. According the Montana Department of Transportation:

> "When snow, ice and frozen ground thaw in late winter and early spring, some road beds and base gravel become saturated and their ability to carry truck loads is reduced. The potential for severe highway distress during the freeze-thaw cycles is high. Older highways are more susceptible to frost action than highways constructed to today's standards."
> https://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/loadlimit_policy.shtml

While agricultural machinery is transported on county roads, this equipment is only in operation on a seasonal basis and traffic volumes are low. A large-scale intensive manufacturing operation, however, typically generates year-round traffic, high volumes of truck traffic and continuous deliveries and transport of products throughout the day. Employees commuting to work can also generate high average daily trips. The proposed regulations would allow manufacturing operations associated with "value-added" agriculture anywhere in the MU-40 District with only the need to acquire a location conformance permit. This type of operation can locate on roads that do not have the capacity to carry the heavy loads or traffic volumes associated with a manufacturing use. There is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to upgrade and maintain roads for large-scale intensive uses located in these rural areas. Traffic related to such uses can also increase the risk for serious health and safety concerns related to traffic accidents:

- Gravel roads with heavy high-speed traffic create dust resulting in air quality concerns and low visibility.
- Bridges in rural areas are not designed for heavy truck traffic. There has been no mapping to indicate where there are bridges that may have structural problems that should be addressed prior to allowing heavy traffic loads.
- At grade railroad crossings in rural areas without adequate warning signals or gates can result in fatal train – vehicle traffic
- Remote areas in the county have long response times for public safety and emergency vehicles to respond to accidents.

According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan-2017,

> "Privately-owned vehicles provide transportation for individuals in Cascade County using the federal interstate and state highway systems as well as county and private roads. Trucks and trailers carry interstate and intrastate cargo. Highway accidents caused by severe weather and high speeds occur frequently. Railroad related hazards such as derailments, toxic spill contamination, and vehicle collisions are a threat to Cascade County residents. According to the NTSB, more than 80 percent of

public railroad crossings do not have lights and gates, and 60 percent of all railroad accidents occur at these unprotected crossings."
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address traffic concerns and potential traffic hazards. Given that the road networks do not have the capacity for large scale and intensive uses, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas.

Issue 6: There is not adequate emergency services to support large scale intensive manufacturing businesses in the MU-40 District

The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:

"(b)(i) secure from fire and other dangers

Large-sale intensive development and manufacturing uses should only occur in areas with adequate emergency services to respond to potential accidents and hazards related to such types of developments. According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan the primary concerns with manufacturing development in the remote rural areas are described below. (See Attachment).

- Hazardous Materials – The release of hazardous materials is rated as high. The regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls where almost all of the current manufacturing/industrial facilities are located. A hazardous materials release that occurred in remote rural areas of the county may not be discovered immediately and once discovered, the response time in critical situations would be lengthy due to distances and, as noted previously, the poor condition of the some current rural roads that do not allow high speed travel.

- Wildfire – The risk of wildfire in Cascade county is rated as very high. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact, disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation. According to the Cascade County CWPP, issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire include: 1) the semi-arid landscape 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and the provision of efficient access for firefighting equipment. Manufacturing development on large parcels, however, may not be required to go through subdivision review. A "value-added" agriculture manufacturing operation that does not require subdivision or special use review can develop in remote areas located in the service area of volunteer fire districts that have long response times and limited personnel. There would be no requirements such a development contain the design elements for fire protection.

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and

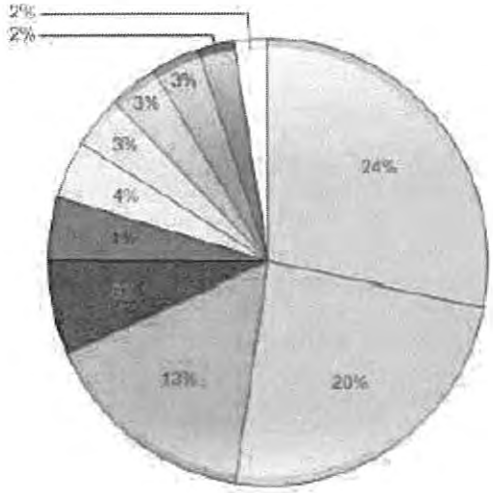
the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address concerns about emergency services, wildfire and potential hazards. Since locating manufacturing uses and large-scale intensive uses in remote rural areas will increase the risks of hazardous materials spills and property loss due to wildfires, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas. In addition to public safety concerns, there is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to provide emergency services for large-scale intensive uses that could locate in these remote rural areas.

Attachment 1: MT Natural Heritage Data Base Land Cover Statistics

Montana Ecological Systems - Land Cover Report

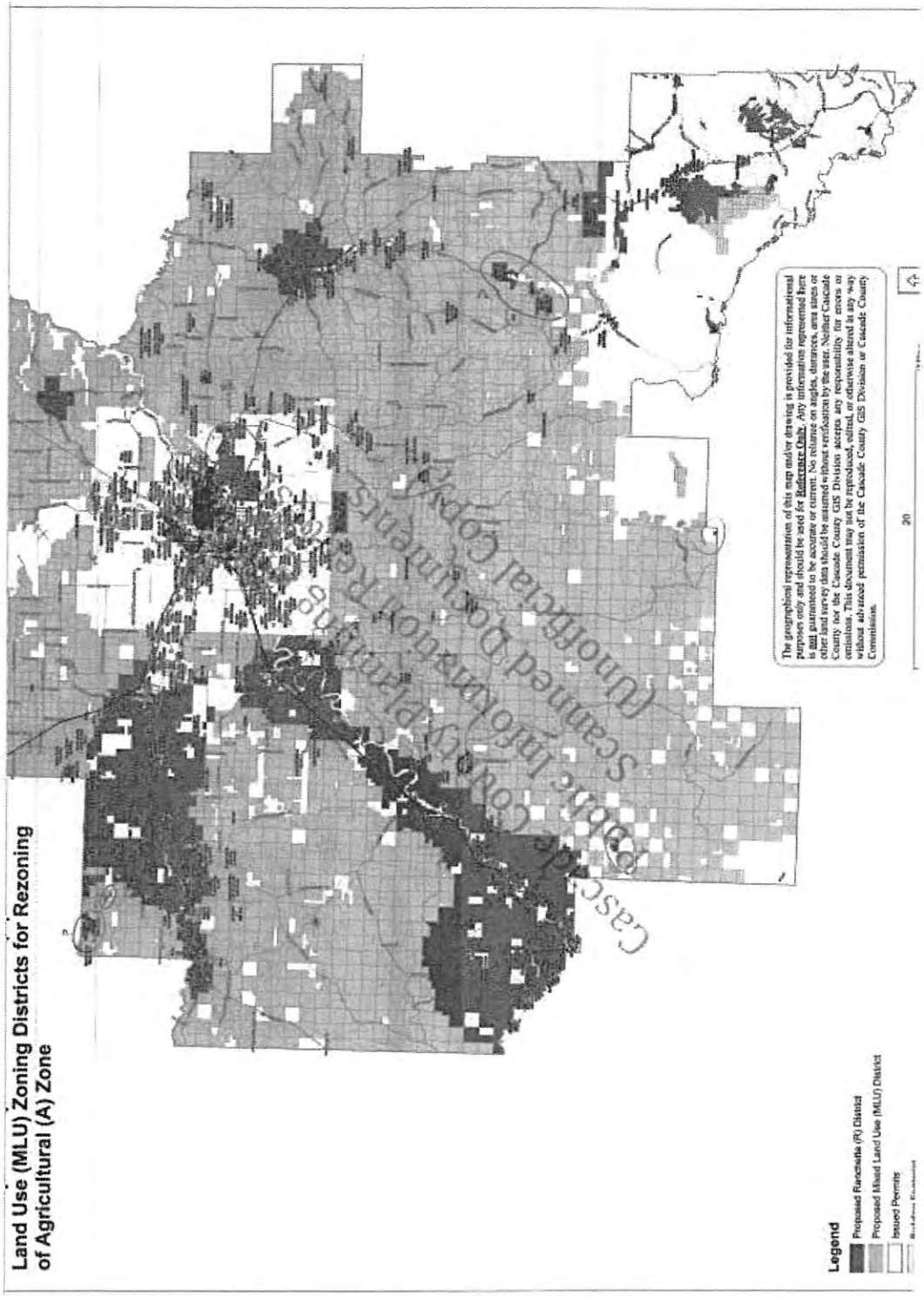
Cascade County

1,733,233 Acres (1.84% of Montana)



24%	Cultivated Crops	3%	Montana Sagebrush Steppe
20%	Great Plains Mixedgrass Prairie	3%	Great Plains Shrubland
13%	Rocky Mountain Lower Montane, Foothill, and Valley Grassland	3%	Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland and Savanna
6%	Rocky Mountain Montane Douglas-fir Forest and Woodland	2%	Introduced Upland Vegetation - Annual and Biennial Forbland
4%	Rocky Mountain Lodgepole Pine Forest	2%	Big Sagebrush Steppe
4%	Pasture/Hay		

Attachment 2: Map 2 – Cascade County Zoning Permit Overlay



Cascade County Scanned Unofficial Copy

Attachment 3: Cascade County Multi-Hazard Plan – Excerpts
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

1. Hazardous Materials

A hazardous material release is the contamination of the environment (i.e. air, water, soil) by any material that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics threatens human health, the environment, or property. Hazardous materials, including petroleum products and industrial chemicals, are commonly stored and used in Cascade County and are regularly transported via the region's roadways, railroads, and pipelines. A release of hazardous materials from both fixed and transportation incidents pose possible threats involving emergency response. Hazards range from small spills on roadways to major transportation releases on railways or pipeline ruptures contaminating land and water.

Regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls.

Vulnerability & Risk

Cascade County has no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities or along transportation routes or in the vicinity of facilities that store large quantities of hazardous materials or petroleum products.

The U.S. Department of Transportation regulates the ways in which non-radioactive hazardous materials can be transported. Currently, there are no designated HAZMAT routes in central Montana. So, these materials can be transported through Great Falls and Cascade County with few restrictions. (Great Falls Growth Policy, 2013).

There are no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities, along transportation routes, or in the vicinity of facilities which store large quantities of hazardous materials/petroleum products.

Transportation of hazardous materials through Cascade County on highways, pipelines, and by the railroads could result in an accident or derailment that would have the potential to impact Cascade County residents. Although there is no history of significant incidents, the potential for a hazardous material accident in Cascade County is present.

The volume and type of hazardous materials that flow into, are stored, and flow through communities will determine exposure to a potential release of hazardous materials. An accidental or intentional release of materials could produce a health hazard to those in the immediate area, downwind, and/or downstream. Some hazardous materials occur in the gaseous phase and are denser than air; therefore, having the potential to collect in low places.

2. Wildfire

A wildfire is an unplanned fire, a term which includes grass fires, forest fires and scrub fires, both man-caused and natural in origin. Severe wildfire conditions have historically represented a threat of potential destruction within the region. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact,

disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation.

Wildfire risk is the potential for a wildfire to adversely affect things that residents value - lives, homes, or ecological functions and attributes. Wildfire risk in a particular area is a combination of the chance that a wildfire will start in or reach that area and the potential loss of human values if it does. Human activities, weather patterns, wildfire fuels, agricultural practices, values potentially threatened by fire, and the availability (or lack) of resources to suppress a fire all contribute to wildfire risk. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land and with the change of agricultural practices, i.e. no-till farming, have created significant wildland fire risk in parts of Cascade County.

Fire season is the result of low rainfall, high temperatures, low humidity, and thunderstorms, high winds and lightning. Varied topography, semi-arid climate, and numerous human-related sources of ignition make this possible. Over 60 percent of fire starts in Cascade County are caused by lightning. Man-made fire starts account for the remainder including; debris burning, fireworks, campfire neglect, careless smokers, downed powerlines, or heated farm equipment in dry grass or crops. Only a fraction of fire starts are arson. BNSF representatives at the MHMP public meeting indicated that the railroad scrubs equipment to minimize sparks. There were only 1 or 2 fires started by the railroad in Cascade County in 2016.

Major wildfires can occur at any time of year. **Table 4.3-1** presents warning and advisory criteria for wildfire and a description of prohibitions that land management agencies can put into effect to reduce fire risk and prevent wildfires during periods of high to extreme danger.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Fire Weather Watch	A fire weather watch is issued when Red Flag conditions (see Red Flag Warning) are expected in the next 24 to 72 hours.
Red Flag Warning	A red flag warning is issued when Red Flag criteria are expected within the next 12 to 24 hours. A Red Flag event is defined as weather conditions that could sustain extensive wildfire activity and meet one or more of the following criteria in conjunction with "Very High" or "Extreme" fire danger: • Sustained surface winds, or frequent gusts, of 25 mph or higher; • Unusually hot, dry conditions (relative humidities less than 20%); • Dry thunderstorm activity forecast during an extremely dry period; • Anytime the forecaster foresees a change in weather that would result in a significant increase in fire danger. For example, very strong winds associated with a cold front even though the fire danger is below the "Very High" threshold.
Fire Warning	A fire warning may be issued by local officials when a spreading wildfire or structure fire threat ens a populated area. Information in the warning may include a call to evacuate areas in the fire's path as recommended by officials according to state law or local ordinance.
Dense Smoke Advisory	Dense smoke advisories are issued when the widespread visibilities are expected at a ¼ mile or less for a few hours or more due to smoke.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Stage 1 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire without a permit except in Forest Service developed camp or picnic grounds. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.
Stage 2 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending or using open fire campfires or stove fires. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or within a three foot diameter cleared to mineral soil. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting devise properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.

Source: National Weather Service (NWS, 2016); National Interagency Fire Center, 2016 (gacc.nifc.gov/.../r2ftc/documents/Fire_Restriction_Chart.pdf)

Cascade County has large areas of private agricultural lands (81.7 percent). The federal government manages approximately 12.4 percent of the total land in the County including portions of the Lewis and Clark National Forest (178,412 acres) and BLM land (24,627 acres). The State of Montana manages a 5.2 percent of the acreage. This scattering of government and private ownership can present unique firefighting challenges.

Cascade County has witnessed a number of large wildfires that have destroyed property and affected wildlife habitat, scenic resources, and air quality. Between 1992 and 2012, a total of 70 fires burned 6,337 acres in the county. The majority of these fires occurred in the months of July and August and were caused by lightning and farm equipment. The wildfires were generally less than one acre in size and were extinguished within one day. **Table 4.3-2** presents wildfire listings from the Montana DNRC over 100 acres with statistics on structures lost and suppression cost where available.

Problems with wildfire also occur when combined with the human environment. People and structures near wildfires are threatened unless adequately protected through evacuation or mitigation. Should fires occur, structures within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) are very vulnerable. The WUI is the zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. A WUI exists anywhere that structures are located close to natural vegetation and where a fire can spread from vegetation to structures, or vice versa. The most extreme situation with respect to fuel conditions and values at risk occurs in rural subdivisions where numerous high-value individual homes and subdivisions are location in the WUI in close proximity or within the wildland boundary. A significant loss of life could occur to residents, firefighters, and others who are in the wildfire area and do not evacuate. The CWPP identifies the following WUI areas in Cascade County: the Dearborn Area, including Cooper Ranch and Stickney Creek; Hardy - Missouri River Corridor; Logging Creek Area; the southwest side of the Highwood Mountains adjacent to the National Forest; and, the Missouri, Sun and Smith River corridors. The current and potential development of portions of Cascade County into residential lots of varying sizes will contribute to the WUI fire problem for the fire protection agencies in the county (Firelogistics, 2008).

According to the Cascade County CWPP, five primary issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire. These include: 1) the semi-arid landscape and poor moisture regime that due to the lack of moisture during any of the four seasons can place the county into a fire season throughout a large share of the year; 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and ageing population in Neihart; 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior, especially under windy conditions, and provide for challenging wildland fire suppression efforts; and, 5) a very high risk subdivision with the high potential for suffering loss of life, property and resources from a wildland fire. Cascade County communities listed in the Federal Register as "Communities at Risk" from wildland fire include Monarch and Neihart (Firelogistics, 2008).

Often regional electric infrastructure passes through wildland and non-irrigated agricultural areas. In particular, the electric substations, transmission lines, fuel tanks, and radio transmission towers are not often equipped to withstand the heat from a wildfire. A wildfire could disrupt electricity or communications should this infrastructure be damaged.

Smoke from wildfires outside Cascade County have impacted local air quality. Most smoke comes from the southwest, west, and north. However, the consistent wind in area minimizes the public health hazard that wildfire smoke poses elsewhere in the state.

Probability and Magnitude

Cascade County's history with wildfire, dry and windy weather conditions, large acres of the county in CRP, and private access roads to rural subdivisions has prompted the MHMP Planning Team to identify wildfires as a significant hazard. Although the primary concern is to structures and the interface residents, most of the costs associated with fire, come from firefighting efforts. Wildfires can also have a significant impact on the regional economy with the loss of agricultural output, timber, natural resources, recreational opportunities, and tourism.

Future Development

Wildfire disasters can be mitigated through comprehensive land use planning that includes housing development design, fuels management, and public education. Land use regulations can reduce the incidence of wildland fire by addressing defensible space and access for emergency vehicles. Cascade County addresses wildfire in their Growth Policy and Subdivision regulations.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response in order to protect persons, property, and natural resource areas. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures in such a manner so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and to permit efficient access for firefighting equipment. Areas rated as extreme, high or medium WUI must comply with special design standards including:

- Access and Evacuation – Roadside vegetation must be maintain so roads will service as escape routes and fire breaks. There must be a minimum of two approach routes to ensure one than one escape route and access routes by emergency vehicles. Building Density Requirements - Densities in areas of steep slopes and/or dense forest growth shall be reduced through minimum lot standards.
- Vegetation Management - A vegetation management plan is required that will reduce fuel loading and hazard rating and provide continuous maintenance of the fuel load. The plan must include guidelines for defensible space, fuel breaks and greenbelts, and a plan for continuous maintenance.
- Water Supply – A fire-fighting water source and access to that source must exist and be maintained as defensible space. Requirements for water supply systems are stipulated and may include fire hydrants or storage tanks.
- Fire Protection Covenants are required stipulating that property owners must maintain fire protection water supplies and fire protection systems (defensible spaces, driveway routes, fuel breaks) in perpetuity.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Tanya and Victor Murphy

Complete Address: 33 Enger Cutoff Road, Belt, MT 59412

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): 2019 Zoning Regulations Revision

Comment

Please see the attached letter (2019ZoningRegulationRevisionPublicCommentLetter_Murphy_20190324) for comments on the proposed 2019 Zoning Regulations Revision for Cascade County. A second document is also attached and incorporated by reference (MU-40 and Cascade County Growth Policy Analsysis).

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Tanya and Victor Murphy
33 Enger Cutoff Road, Belt, MT 59412

As a native-born Montanan (born in Great Falls, Montana – Cascade County) and landowner in Cascade County for the last 15 years, I would like to submit the following comments and remarks to the Cascade County Planning Division, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, and County Commissioners pertaining to the proposed Zoning Regulation Revision.

The proposed revisions to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations are listed as version 4.1. I would like to know when and how the County was going to legally and officially notify residents of proposed land use changes in and adjacent to private property. I have resided in Cascade County for almost 15 years on land zoned for agriculture and would have my land designation changed to MU-20 non-conforming under the proposed regulations. Adjacent landowners would be zoned as MU-40. I believe that I have a right to be notified of and to comment on proposed changes to land uses that immediately impact me. The County should place a halt on the planning process until they have done their due diligence with county residents who would be impacted by proposed changes. The County should follow their legal requirements and historical precedence to give the public an opportunity to know about and shape county policy. Cascade County Zoning Ordinance Section 14.1.1(3) requires a legal description for the boundaries of a proposed district change, and Section 14.1.1(6) requires a detailed analysis of each change. The proposed planning regulations would re-zone millions of acres in Cascade County from Agricultural to Mixed Use without preparing legal descriptions of the affected properties or providing the analysis to the public. The only document indicating proposed changes is the vicinity map.

The County Commissioners (Section 1.2 (2)(b)) are required to consider the effect of motorized transportation systems. In addition, Cascade County's Growth Policy (Goal 6) states "Promote and maintain a transportation system that provides safety, efficiency, and cost efficiency." I agree with this statement, but do not see how it is compatible with the proposed MU-40 District. The recent re-route of portions of Highway 89 between Belt and Great Falls, especially between mile post 78 and 80 was poorly engineered. Rather than providing for safety, the road was designed so that traffic moving from the Enger Cutoff road south-bound onto Highway 89 have no way to see on-coming traffic. Although the center lane is available to quickly merge into, this lane is often not maintained in the winter so traffic from Enger Cutoff has to drive blindly into potential on-coming traffic. I would like to know how the County is going to ensure that an actually safe transportation system can be designed to accommodate mixed uses in the County with increased transportation needs. How is the County going to address the already hazardous driving conditions around Enger Cutoff if it allows increased traffic on Highway 89? I am opposed to the potential of additional traffic, predominantly large vehicles, on Highway 89 resulting from the proposed MU-40 District.

The potential for industry under MU-40 and associated special use permits to move into the County also creates a potential for increased traffic on dirt/gravel rural county roads. Semis hauling dirt and gravel from the pit on Enger Cutoff road to recent highway projects had no restrictions as to their speed. As a resident living immediately adjacent to this road, my family and I were subjected to large quantities of large, heavy vehicles moving at excessive speeds throughout the week and weekend. Rural roads are not designed to safely accommodate passing vehicles at high speeds. I am opposed to additional, unrestricted traffic causing safety hazards to local residents and increases in noise pollution and dust as a result of changing land designation from Agriculture to Mixed Uses (MU-40). I am opposed to MU-40

being allowed with no provision for impacts to County residents – transportation system, increased noise and dust pollution, safety hazards to people and animals, etc.

The Zoning Administration or their designee in the Cascade County Planning Division has authority to approve land uses specified in special use permits or unclassified use permits under MU-20 and MU-40. Cascade County Commissioners and other officials were elected to make decisions for the county after research, analysis, discussion, public notification, community input, and careful consideration of the facts. They cannot and should not abdicate their role in making decisions that affect all members of Cascade County. I am opposed to non-elected, volunteer positions making decision to permit large scale, intensive land uses that impact my family's and my health, well-being, and economic status under the Uses Permitted Upon Issuance of a Special Use Permit section (Section 7.7.11) in the proposed MU-40 District. This provision is a quick way to allow a large scale, intense, and impactive activity without proper analysis, public notification, and planning.

Unclassified Use Permits should not be allowed under the proposed planning regulations. Land uses that do not currently conform to specified zoning districts must be required to go through an open planning process, whereby, planning regulations would be amended. County Commissioners would have to approve the zoning district change and use after analysis and planning. As it is currently written, planning regulations would allow the non-elected, volunteer board to approve a large scale, intensive activity without proper public notification, planning, analysis, or full disclosure of impacts to surrounding landowners, resources, and uses. Unclassified Use Permits should be abolished from the planning regulations.

Revised planning regulations propose allowing "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facilities" as a permitted use in the MU-40 districts. A "permitted use" means they are allowed by right – without public hearing, public comment or the standard conditions required through a "special permit" process. Those standard conditions and the public hearing process would address traffic concerns, pollution, smells, soil erosion, etc. I am opposed to allowing value-added commodity processing facilities to be "permitted." These land uses should be specifically addressed within the zoning regulations and approved by the County Commissioners.

Exhibit A-1 provides a map of the proposed zoning districts. MU-20 appears to be appropriate along the Highway 200 and I-15 corridor, but is strangely absent along Highway 87 and 89 corridors. **I propose that the MU-20 District be added to the Highway 87 and 8 corridors to add consistency to the planning and zoning process.** MU-40 should not be applied to these corridors. This change would also remove bias to allow certain industrial applications to move unimpeded through the process along these highway corridors. Zoning districts should be consistent in how they are applied. Zoning the highway corridor to MU-20 would allow the goal of retaining the rural characteristic to be achieved, especially for local residents and tourists traveling the highways. What is different between the Highway 200 and I-15 corridor and the Highway 87 and 89 corridors? Why is MU-40 not placed on the southeast side of Great Falls where it is more appropriate given the industrial zoning allowed in and around town? Why is this area listed as MU-20 when the Highway 87 and 89 corridors are not?

I am opposed to the proposed MU-40 district that would allow commercial feedlots (high density of livestock raising and feeding), concentrated animal feeding operations, composting facilities, industrial uses, commercial kennels, junk yards, power plants, rendering plants, slaughterhouses, solid waste disposal sites, unclassified uses, and workforce housing. These uses have the potential to disrupt my

family's rural lifestyle that is surrounded by agriculture, clean air, beautiful views, and limited noise. Increased traffic, chemical use, and influx of labor could place my family in unsafe, unhealthy situations. Rendering plants and slaughter houses, in conjunction with their associated odor, soil and water pollution, noise, traffic, workforce housing, and impacts to wildlife should not be allowed within Cascade County since they are an economic benefit to a limited number of individuals but have long-term negative impacts and consequences to current residents of the county.

Define the time period for "temporary stabling." Although I am highly opposed to having large scale, intensive use industries within the rural community and on lands currently zoned for agricultural use, I insist that there be a definition/defined time period to 'temporary.' I recommend that temporary be no more than 24 hours. Residents that may be located next to temporary stabling facilities do not need to be impacted by the smells emitted from livestock that are stabled.

The proposed MU-40 District does not protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character.

The proposed MU-40 District does not protect prime farmland and would allow large scale intensive land uses to be located in areas that are unsuitable for development, such as on steep slopes and in environmentally sensitive areas. There is no provision to complete a suitability analysis to determine limitations for development.

The proposed intent for the MU-40 District does not match the prevailing land use. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, only 4 percent of the County is classified as Developed Area. The Developed Areas is located in and around Great Falls with some developed land in outlying communities. The area proposed MU-40 is currently classified as and used for agriculture, grassland, woodland, and riparian habitat.

I agree with and incorporate by reference the Cascade County Zoning Amendments Growth Policy Analysis for Proposed MU-40 District comments provided by Montanans for Responsible Land Use (attached).

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

/s/ Tanya and Victor Murphy

Cascade County Zoning Amendments
Growth Policy Analysis for Proposed MU-40 District

I. Growth Policy Analysis

This analysis was conducted for the proposed MU-40 District. According to the staff report, the existing Agricultural District was split into to districts to reflect current land development patterns. As noted in the staff report and on the maps, most of the development activity has occurred in the area that is now the MU-20 District. The regulations for this district are not significantly different from the existing regulations for the Agriculture district. As demonstrated by the following analysis, however, the proposed MU-40 District is predominantly agriculture in nature with very limited mixed-use. The statement of intent and the regulations for the district do not match the prevailing land use and rural character of the district.

> **MU-40** - The MU-40 District is intended to provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential sites characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses.

It would be more appropriate to maintain the current Agriculture District zoning with the primary purpose of protecting prime farmland and maintaining the rural character.

> **A Agricultural District -** The purpose of this district is to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes, small scale value-added agricultural uses and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Regulations in this district are intended to protect the most productive soil types, by encouraging non-agricultural and large-scale development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land and to minimize environmental concerns.

The following table list relevant policies, goals and objectives from the Growth Policy and references additional analysis and discussion to that demonstrate the proposed MU-40 District is not in substantial compliance with the Growth Policy.

Table 1: Growth Policy Analysis for MU-40 District

Goal, Objective or Policy	Substantially Compiles	Comment
<u>Goal 1: Sustain and strengthen the economic well-being of Cascade County's citizens.</u>	Partial	Inappropriate location of large scale intensive uses can have serious fiscal impact on county residents. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
A. Stimulate the retention and expansion of existing businesses, new businesses, value-added businesses, wholesale and retail businesses, and industries including agriculture, mining, manufacturing/processing and forest products.	Partial	Provides for businesses but should limit such uses to suitable locations. **See Issue #1**

B. Stabilize and diversify the county's tax base by encouraging the sustainable use of its natural resources.	No	Does not protect prime agricultural soils. **See Issue #4**
C. Identify and pursue primary business development that complements existing business, which is compatible with communities, and utilizes available assets. Identify and pursue targeted business development opportunities to include, but not limited to, manufacturing/heavy industry, telecommunications, and youth/social services.	Partial	Provides for businesses does not utilize available assets near communities with infrastructure and services. **See Issues #1, 5 & 6**
Goal 2: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issues #2, 3 & 4**
C. Preserve Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed, land subdivisions and commercial development.	No	Large scale and intensive uses are not compatible with rural character. **See Issue #2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**
Goal 3: Maintain Agricultural Economy	Partial	Increases average lot size in MU-40 district to 40 acres but has no provisions to protect farmland. **See issue #4**
A. Protect the most productive soil types.	No	No suitability analysis. No protection for productive soil. **Issues #1 & 4**
D. Support the development of value-added agricultural industry in Cascade County utilizing the products from the regional area.	Yes	Provides for value-added agriculture in MU-40 District.
Goal 5: Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade Count's citizens	No	Large scale intensive uses are not compatible with rural lifestyle. Local government intervention and fiscal impact to county residents would increase to provide infrastructure and services to such uses in remote rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 5, 6**
A. Maintain Cascade County's citizens independent lifestyle and minimize local governmental intervention, to the extents possible, consistent with the requirements of a continually evolving economy and constantly changing population.		
Goal 6: Promote and maintain a transportation system that provides safety, efficiency, and cost efficiency.	No	Significant traffic safety hazards and cost to maintain rural roads. **See Issue #5**

Goal 8: Protect surface and groundwater from pollution.	No	No suitability analysis to identify soils that are inappropriate for on-site wastewater treatment systems that may result from large scale uses. **See Issue #1**
A. Discourage development with on-site wastewater treatment systems in areas having inappropriate soils or high groundwater, as indicated on the revised Cascade County soil maps, to help prevent the contamination of groundwater supplies.	No	
Goal 9: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests.	Partial	Farmlands are permitted use but large scale intensive manufacturing uses will take farmland out of production and are not compatible in rural areas. **See Issues #2, 3, 4**
G. Encourage agricultural landowners considering land subdivision to develop the least agriculturally viable portion of their properties.	No	No provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
H. Encourage in-fill development of urban and transitional areas already committed to development where community facilities and services can be provided cost-effectively in order to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are costly to serve and are not near existing development. **See issue #2, 5, 6**
Goal 11: Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character, encourage efficient use of land.	No	MU-40 District promotes large scale intensive development in areas that are not near existing development and can unsafely locate in areas lacking adequate emergency services. **See issue #2 & #6**
A. Preserve the county's open space setting by encouraging cluster development.	No	
B. Encourage cluster development to locate near existing towns and rural, more densely populated settlements and discourage poorly designed, unsafe land subdivisions and unsafe commercial development.	No	
CHAPTER 5 – ECONOMIC CONDITION : POLICIES		
1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities.	No	There is no protection of prime farmland. MU-40 District is not located around existing communities. **Issue #2 & #4**

2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.	Partial	MU-40 statements mentions family farms and increases minimum lot size but also encourages large scale uses that will take farmland out of production. **See Issue #4**
6. Environmental as well as economic perspectives should be considered in any future development.	No	There is not suitability analysis to determine environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issue #1**
8. Utilization of locally produced agricultural products and raw materials should be encouraged.	Yes	Farms and value added agriculture are permitted
10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated. there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. **Issue #4**
11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land.	No	Eliminates ag zoning and no provisions to protect prime farmland. **See issue #4**
12. Minimize, to the greatest degree possible, the adverse social and environmental impacts of development and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and expensive to serve. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
14. Encourage economic activities to locate in those areas most economically, socially and environmentally appropriate, as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
6. Local Services – Policies		
6. Using the subdivision review process, discourage development in areas where it is not economical for the county to provide services such as road maintenance, school bus service, fire, police protection, or snowplowing. Persons purchasing land in these areas should be informed, in writing, to the fact that some services may not be provided by the county.	No	Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that lack infrastructure, emergency services and in environmentally sensitive areas. **See Issues #1, 3, 5, 6**
7. Facilitate the appropriate development and maintenance of roads, public utilities, and community facilities.	No	

Chapter 7: Natural Resources **7.5 Land Unit: Landscape Unit Benches & Dissected Benches** 1. Since the existing land use of the benches and dissected benches landscape unit is predominately agriculture, special consideration should be given to protect this use. 2. Any development or change in the use of the land should be in a form suited to the natural lay of the land. 3. Since a wide variability of limitations exists, extensive on-site evaluations should be made before any proposed action is taken.	No	Ag zoning is eliminated and there are no provisions to protect prime farmland. Large scale intensive land uses can locate in areas that with steep slopes and in environmentally sensitive areas. There is no suitability analysis to determine limitations for development. **See Issues #1, 2, 3, 4**
8.3: Prime Agricultural Soil Area The prime agriculture soils resource preservation areas are intended to contain those soil areas where it is necessary and desirable, (because of their high quality, availability of water, and/or highly productive agricultural and grazing capability), to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Therefore, the prime agricultural soil preservation areas of Cascade County are those areas where the soils have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), according to the NRCS definition of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.	No	Ag Zoning is eliminated and replaced with a district that allows large scale intensive uses that take ag land out of production and does not protect prime farmland. **Issue #2,3,4**

II. Discussion of Issues

Issue #1: Lack of suitability analysis to determine the most appropriate areas for industrial and business land uses

The MU-40 District encompasses approximately million acres[1] and includes varied landscapes such as mountains, floodplains, canyons, cropland, pasture and open space. The Growth Policy describes potential hazardous features throughout the proposed MU-40 District such as flooding, erosion, landslide, soil creep and earthquake faults. The proposed zoning regulations would permit large scale intense manufacturing processes related to value added agriculture anywhere in this district without any review process that would consider the suitability of the proposed site for development or ensure that the use meets the basic considerations of public health, safety and welfare. Because the proposed MU-40 district is so vast such businesses may attempt to locate in areas with poor soils, steep slopes, high groundwater and other hazards that render the site unsuitable for development due to public health and safety concerns. Additionally, an industrial use could be located in remote areas that lack adequate emergency services, public facilities or transportation networks. This can all result in significant fiscal impact on county taxpayers to provide services to large scale intensive uses in remote locations. According to the Montana Code annotated (MCA) 76-2-304, zoning regulations must be:

(b) Designed to:
(i) secure safety from fire and other dangers
(ii) promote public health, public safety and the general welfare
(iii) Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements

In order to meet these requirements, standard planning practice relies on an extensive analysis to determine areas that are most suitable for industrial and commercial development. Such analysis examines soils, slopes, wetlands, floodplains, prime farmland, environmental hazards, emergency response times, road capacity, land cover, existing land use and other similar factors. Such information is readily available from the Montana State Library- Natural Heritage Program, USDA Soil Maps, Montana Cadastral data and other sources. The background information that was posted on the County's web site only analyzed parcel sizes and permit data. Not even basic existing land use data was mapped to verify staff's "intuition" or what was "suggested" by the parcel analysis. The permit data is not complete and does not represent accurate land use patterns.

Lack of a such basic analysis results in haphazard development in areas that lack the infrastructure or local services to support such a use and, due to site features, can create serious public health and safety concerns. Specifically, large-scale intensive uses would be allowed to locate anywhere in an area of over a million acres that has varied landscapes, lacks services and a contains a multitude of potential hazards.

[1] The estimate is of the amount of acreage that is designated as MU-40 is based on a tabulation the number of townships that are completely mapped as MU-40 zoning, plus the number of townships that are at least 50% mapped as MU-40. Since there are 36 square miles per township, the resulting calculation indicated that there were at least 1,548 square miles designated as MU-40 or 990,720 acres. Since townships with less than 50% of the land area designated as MU-40 were not included in this tabulation, the amount of acreage is an undercount. For discussion purposes, this report rounds up the number to 1 million acres.

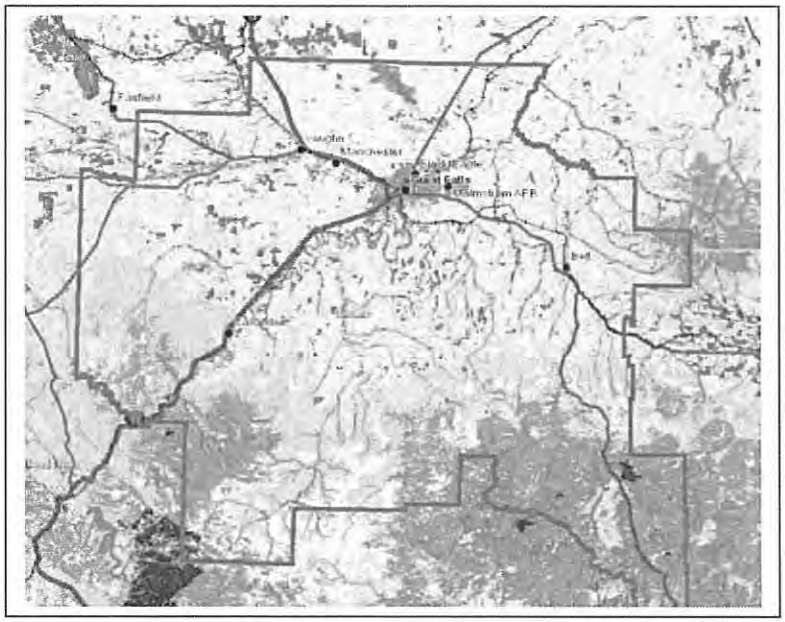
Issue # 2. The proposed intent for the MU-40 District does not match the prevailing land use.

The MCA 76-2-203 (2) states that the County shall consider,

"(d) The character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses."

The previous section discussed suitability. This section addresses the character. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, only 4% of the county is classified as "Developed Area". As indicated below, most of the "Developed Area" is located in and around Great Falls with some developed land in outlying communities. The land area located in the proposed MU-40 district is classified as Cultivated Crops, Prairie/Grassland, Forest/Woodland, and Pasture/Hay.

Map 1: Land Cover Cascade County



Legend: Major Types of Land Cover

- *Developed*
- *Agriculture*
- *Conifer-dominated forest and woodland*
- Rocky Mountain Foothill Woodland-Steppe Transition
- Grassland Systems
- *Deciduous Shrubland*
- Wetland and Riparian Systems
- *Introduced Vegetation*

Source: http://mtnhp.org/mapviewer/?t=1

The March 26 staff report notes that the proposed zoning regulations are designed to, "... cater to their predominant land use characteristics..." In regards to prevailing land use, the staff report states that:

> "Crop production is the prevailing productive land use in the northern and north-central parts of Cascade County while animal production is the prevailing productive land use in the southern half of the county (this is clearly demonstrated by the USDA CropScape map for the county.) Manufacturing operations tend to be located along major transportation routes such as railways and arterial roadways."

The staff report also references a "Map 2" which indicates the types of zoning location conformance permits that have been issued throughout the county. An examination of the map indicates that in the proposed MU-40 District, only 16 permits were of a business or industrial nature.[2] Approximately 55 permits were issues for residential or ag related structures. Only the electric generating stations and the asphalt plant represent uses that would be considered "large scale" and "intensive" and the electric generating station has

[2] These permits were issued for quarrys, wind turbine, country club, asphalt plant, ag sales, small engine sales/repair, paint ball, cell towers and an electric generating station.

since been dismantled. Clearly this does not represent a "mixed-use" land pattern with large scale intensive uses. The prevailing use is agriculture and grasslands and the statement of intent should reflect this.

The staff report concludes that the Mixed-Use District is appropriate because the Agricultural District already allows for a mix of uses characteristic of commercial districts, industrial districts and residential districts. It should be noted that the Montana Supreme Court stated uses allowed by current zoning are a consideration only **after** a thorough consideration of prevailing use.

> "The County cites *North 93 Neighbors* for the proposition that a court applying the first prong of the *Little* test may look to the land uses allowed under current zoning rather than the prevailing uses in the area. We analyzed the land uses allowed by current zoning in *North 93 Neighbors* only *after* we thoroughly had considered the existing uses in the area. Our conclusion that the prevailing uses were not significantly different from the proposed use was based on our consideration of both the prevailing uses *and* the uses allowed by current zoning." (Plains Grains vs. Cascade County.)

As demonstrated in the discussion above, the prevailing use is inarguably rural agriculture and not mixed use. The commercial and industrial uses are only allowed as special uses and can only be granted if the Board of Adjustment can make findings that the proposed development will not "materially endanger" the public health, safety, or welfare; that the development will not harm surrounding property values unless it is deemed to be a public necessity; and that the development will be "in harmony" with the area in which it is to be located. The fact that the Board must make these findings suggest that there are potential issues with compatibility of commercial and industrial uses.

In reality, most of the special use permits that have been granted are located in the area designated as MU-20. In the MU-40 District less 20 than non-residential/agricultural permits have been issued which hardly qualifies categorizing this district as mixed use. Since the prevailing use by far is agriculture, it is more appropriate to maintain the Agricultural District with the purpose of protecting prime farmland and eliminate some of the special use that are rarely, if ever uses. This would reflect the actual land use in the district, meet multiple objectives of the Growth Policy and meet the MCA requirement that zoning reflect the character of the district.

IOne proposed revision that is of particular concern in regards to compatible land use is changing the existing term from "light manufacturing and assembly" to "manufacturing. The rationale is that this term is not defined in the current regulations. There is, however, a term for "Industrial, light" that is more consistent with term "light manufacturing". The proposed change to the term manufacturing would allow heavy industrial uses would differ significantly from the predominant land use and should not be allowed. Light industrial uses that are permitted as a special use as long as they meet the performance standards for such uses that are contained in the I-1 zoning district would be more appropriate.

Issue 3: The definition of "productive" use is not compatible with rural areas and is inconsistent with the purpose of zoning regulations that are stated in the Cascade County zoning ordinance.

The term "productive use" as defined by staff includes crop production, animal production and manufacturing. Grouping these dissimilar uses together is inconsistent with the following purpose of the Cascade County Zoning Ordinance.

> **1.1.6** To protect residential, business, commercial, and industrial areas alike from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses and to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses;

Agricultural uses and manufacturing uses have distinct features that require them to be treated as separate classes of uses. Agriculture uses are related to food production, are characterized by open undeveloped areas, do not require urban infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer and relies on a the work force that is typically limited in size with operators and laborers who often live on-site. Manufacturing uses, however, take land out of food production, requires urban infrastructure, primarily requires a large workforce that must commute to the job site and generates year-round truck at much higher volumes than farming or ranching operations. Manufacturing uses are incompatible with the rural residences that are part of the agricultural landscape.

Theses differences are uniformly recognized in zoning ordinance that have separate zoning districts and development standards for these different classes of uses. There is no precedent for grouping these uses together. There is no definition of "productive use" in the zoning ordinance, growth policy, or Montana Code Annotated that matches staff's definition. The North American Industry Classification System and Planners Dictionary that were cited in Appendix 1 as the basis for the definitions included in the zoning ordinance do not include a term for "Productive Use" and clearly defines agriculture and manufacturing as different classes of uses. "Productive Use" as referenced in USDA soil surveys or by the Growth Policy, only refers to crop production. Grouping agricultural uses such as crop production and animal production with "manufacturing" is also at odds with other purpose statements included in the Cascade County zoning ordinance:

> **1.1.4** To facilitate the provision of adequate transportation, and of other requirements and services such as water, sewerage, schools, open space, and parks;
>
> **1.1.5** To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County;
>
> **1.1.7** To avoid the inappropriate development of lands and provide for reduction of flood damage;
>
> **1.1.10** To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses for the mutual benefit of all;
>
> **1.1.11** To isolate or control the location of unavoidable nuisance producing uses;

For the reasons stated above, manufacturing uses must be evaluated separately from agriculture uses and must be subject to standards to address the impacts from industrial processes that characterize this use. As noted previously, performance standards apply in the "Light Industrial District" should apply to manufacturing processes in all districts.

Issue 4: There are no zoning provisions to protect prime agricultural land.

The definition of "Prime Agriculture Areas" in Chapter 8 of the Cascade County Growth Policy states that these lands should be protected "from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities". Clearly, large scale intensive land uses and manufacturing operations are not compatible with this Growth Policy definition. While small scale "value-added" operations may be appropriate as a special use, the growth policy is very clear that prime agricultural areas should be preserved. (Goal 3, Obj. A, B & D; Chapter 5 – Policies 2,6,10,11, and 12; Section 7.5 and Section 8.3) Given the emphasis that the Growth Policy places on preserving prime agricultural areas, the zoning ordinance should maintain the Agriculture district for the purpose of protecting the areas that are designated as prime farmland as designated on the following map from the Cascade County Growth policy. Replacing the Agriculture District with a mixed use district intended for "large scale" and "intensive" uses takes lands out of agriculture production and does not comply with the Growth Policy.

Cascade County
Farmland Classification Map

As stated by the American Farmland Trust, "once farms are bulldozed and paved over, that land is gone forever." The proposed regulations do not make any distinction between development on non-productive soils or development on prime farmland. In order to comply with the Growth Policy, the regulations should include provisions to protect this resource. In addition to the potential loss of valuable prime farmland, the United States Department of Agriculture, notes other concerns with development in agricultural areas:

> "Land use and land-use changes have important economic and environmental implications for commodity production and trade, open space, soil and water conservation, air quality and atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, and other areas of policy relevance."

https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2017/december/a-primer-on-land-use-in-the-united-states/

The American Planning Association states the following regarding farmland protection:

> "Farmland protection plans help local governments inventory important farmland, set goals for its protection, and identify strategies for implementation. Such strategies include agricultural zoning, agricultural buffers, right-to-farm ordinances, transfer or purchase of development rights programs, farmland mitigation requirements, and cluster or conservation development regulations.
>
> Other important aspects of agricultural protection zoning include prohibitions of non-farm development on prime agricultural soils, establishing agricultural buffers between working farms and encroaching residential development to minimize land-use conflicts, and codifying right-to-farm provisions that protect farmers from nuisance complaints."
>
> https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/farmlandprotection/

A review of county ordinances in Montana indicated that prohibiting industrial uses in agricultural districts is standard practice. Although food processing is allowed as an accessory use in some counties, these are small scale operations where the agricultural use is still the predominant use of land.

Flathead County	Dairy permitted in AG District. Slaughterhouse, distillery, food processing are only permitted in industrial districts
Missoula County	Food processing & slaughterhouse permitted as accessory use
Yellowstone County	Does not permit any commercial or industrial uses in Ag Districts
East Gallatin County	Only agriculture and residential uses are permitted
Gallatin County – Spring Hill	Packing, storing, and processing of products **grown or raised on premised** are permitted uses.

Issue 5: There is not adequate transportation infrastructure to support large scale intensive mixed use in the proposed MU-40 District

Transportation concerns are of paramount importance in drafting zoning regulations. The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:

> "(b)(iii)Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools parks and other public requirements"

One reason for limiting manufacturing uses to Industrial zoned areas that are located near municipalities is that these districts are located near transportation networks that have the capacity to accommodate high volumes of traffic and heavy equipment loads. Many of the roads in the proposed MU-40 District, however, are either gravel roads or county maintained roads that are not designed for high volume traffic or heavy loads. According the Montana Department of Transportation:

> "When snow, ice and frozen ground thaw in late winter and early spring, some road beds and base gravel become saturated and their ability to carry truck loads is reduced. The potential for severe highway distress during the freeze-thaw cycles is high. Older highways are more susceptible to frost action than highways constructed to today's standards."
> https://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/loadlimit_policy.shtml

While agricultural machinery is transported on county roads, this equipment is only in operation on a seasonal basis and traffic volumes are low. A large-scale intensive manufacturing operation, however, typically generates year-round traffic, high volumes of truck traffic and continuous deliveries and transport of products throughout the day. Employees commuting to work can also generate high average daily trips. The proposed regulations would allow manufacturing operations associated with "value-added" agriculture anywhere in the MU-40 District with only the need to acquire a location conformance permit. This type of operation can locate on roads that do not have the capacity to carry the heavy loads or traffic volumes associated with a manufacturing use. There is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to upgrade and maintain roads for large-scale intensive uses located in these rural areas. Traffic related to such uses can also increase the risk for serious health and safety concerns related to traffic accidents:

- Gravel roads with heavy high-speed traffic create dust resulting in air quality concerns and low visibility.
- Bridges in rural areas are not designed for heavy truck traffic. There has been no mapping to indicate where there are bridges that may have structural problems that should be addressed prior to allowing heavy traffic loads.
- At grade railroad crossings in rural areas without adequate warning signals or gates can result in fatal train – vehicle traffic
- Remote areas in the county have long response times for public safety and emergency vehicles to respond to accidents.

According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan-2017,

> "Privately-owned vehicles provide transportation for individuals in Cascade County using the federal interstate and state highway systems as well as county and private roads. Trucks and trailers carry interstate and intrastate cargo. Highway accidents caused by severe weather and high speeds occur frequently. Railroad related hazards such as derailments, toxic spill contamination, and vehicle collisions are a threat to Cascade County residents. According to the NTSB, more than 80 percent of

public railroad crossings do not have lights and gates, and 60 percent of all railroad accidents occur at these unprotected crossings."
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address traffic concerns and potential traffic hazards. Given that the road networks do not have the capacity for large scale and intensive uses, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas.

Issue 6: There is not adequate emergency services to support large scale intensive manufacturing businesses in the MU-40 District

The MCA 76-2-203 requires that the zoning regulations **must** be designed to:

"(b)(i) secure from fire and other dangers

Large-sale intensive development and manufacturing uses should only occur in areas with adequate emergency services to respond to potential accidents and hazards related to such types of developments. According to the Cascade County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan the primary concerns with manufacturing development in the remote rural areas are described below. (See Attachment).

- Hazardous Materials – The release of hazardous materials is rated as high. The regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls where almost all of the current manufacturing/industrial facilities are located. A hazardous materials release that occurred in remote rural areas of the county may not be discovered immediately and once discovered, the response time in critical situations would be lengthy due to distances and, as noted previously, the poor condition of the some current rural roads that do not allow high speed travel.

- Wildfire – The risk of wildfire in Cascade county is rated as very high. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact, disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation. According to the Cascade County CWPP, issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire include: 1) the semi-arid landscape 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and the provision of efficient access for firefighting equipment. Manufacturing development on large parcels, however, may not be required to go through subdivision review. A "value-added" agriculture manufacturing operation that does not require subdivision or special use review can develop in remote areas located in the service area of volunteer fire districts that have long response times and limited personnel. There would be no requirements such a development contain the design elements for fire protection.

Under the current regulations, "value-added" agriculture is a special use and must go through a public review process to address such concerns. The proposed regulations, however, allows "value-added" agriculture and

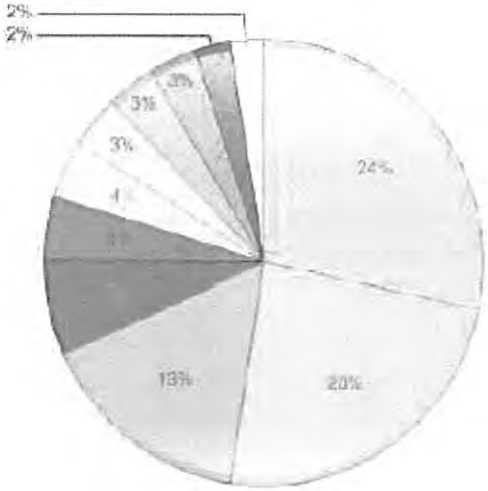
the accompanying manufacturing processes as a permitted use. By removing this special use requirement, there are no safeguards to address concerns about emergency services, wildfire and potential hazards. Since locating manufacturing uses and large-scale intensive uses in remote rural areas will increase the risks of hazardous materials spills and property loss due to wildfires, the county should be discouraging the location of such uses in remote rural areas. In addition to public safety concerns, there is the potential for significant fiscal impact to county residents to provide emergency services for large-scale intensive uses that could locate in these remote rural areas.

Attachment 1: MT Natural Heritage Data Base Land Cover Statistics

Montana Ecological Systems - Land Cover Report

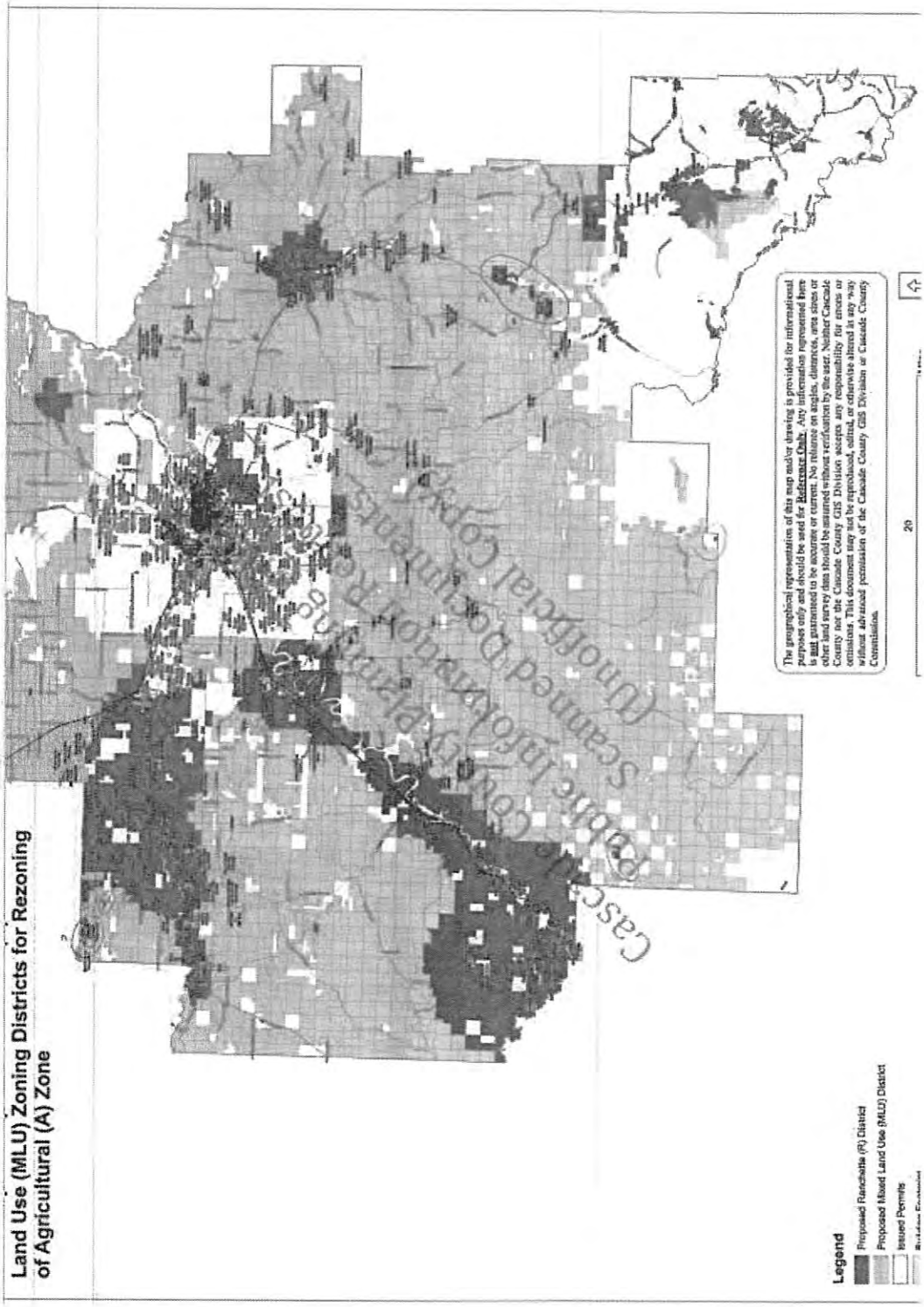
Cascade County

1,733,233 Acres (1.84% of Montana)



24%	Cultivated Crops	3%	Montana Sagebrush Steppe
20%	Great Plains Mixedgrass Prairie	3%	Great Plains Shrubland
13%	Rocky Mountain Lower Montane, Foothill, and Valley Grassland	3%	Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine Woodland and Savanna
8%	Rocky Mountain Montane Douglas-fir Forest and Woodland	2%	Introduced Upland Vegetation - Annual and Biennial Forbland
4%	Rocky Mountain Lodgepole Pine Forest	2%	Big Sagebrush Steppe
4%	Pasture/Hay		

Attachment 2: Map 2 – Cascade County Zoning Permit Overlay



Cascade County Planning Department
Public Information Record
Scanned Document
(Unofficial Copy)

Attachment 3: Cascade County Multi-Hazard Plan – Excerpts
http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/departments/disaster-and-emergency-services/Final_2017_PDM_Plan_Cascade.pdf

1. Hazardous Materials

A hazardous material release is the contamination of the environment (i.e. air, water, soil) by any material that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics threatens human health, the environment, or property. Hazardous materials, including petroleum products and industrial chemicals, are commonly stored and used in Cascade County and are regularly transported via the region's roadways, railroads, and pipelines. A release of hazardous materials from both fixed and transportation incidents pose possible threats involving emergency response. Hazards range from small spills on roadways to major transportation releases on railways or pipeline ruptures contaminating land and water.

Regional hazardous-material response trailers are positioned in Great Falls.

Vulnerability & Risk

Cascade County has no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities or along transportation routes or in the vicinity of facilities that store large quantities of hazardous materials or petroleum products.

The U.S. Department of Transportation regulates the ways in which non-radioactive hazardous materials can be transported. Currently, there are no designated HAZMAT routes in central Montana. So, these materials can be transported through Great Falls and Cascade County with few restrictions. (Great Falls Growth Policy, 2013).

There are no land use regulations that restrict building around industrial facilities, along transportation routes, or in the vicinity of facilities which store large quantities of hazardous materials/petroleum products.

Transportation of hazardous materials through Cascade County on highways, pipelines, and by the railroads could result in an accident or derailment that would have the potential to impact Cascade County residents. Although there is no history of significant incidents, the potential for a hazardous material accident in Cascade County is present.

The volume and type of hazardous materials that flow into, are stored, and flow through communities will determine exposure to a potential release of hazardous materials. An accidental or intentional release of materials could produce a health hazard to those in the immediate area, downwind, and/or downstream. Some hazardous materials occur in the gaseous phase and are denser than air; therefore, having the potential to collect in low places.

2. Wildfire

A wildfire is an unplanned fire, a term which includes grass fires, forest fires and scrub fires, both man-caused and natural in origin. Severe wildfire conditions have historically represented a threat of potential destruction within the region. Negative impacts of wildfire include loss of life, property and resource damage or destruction, severe emotional crisis, widespread economic impact,

disrupted and fiscally impacted government services, and environmental degradation.

Wildfire risk is the potential for a wildfire to adversely affect things that residents value - lives, homes, or ecological functions and attributes. Wildfire risk in a particular area is a combination of the chance that a wildfire will start in or reach that area and the potential loss of human values if it does. Human activities, weather patterns, wildfire fuels, agricultural practices, values potentially threatened by fire, and the availability (or lack) of resources to suppress a fire all contribute to wildfire risk. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land and with the change of agricultural practices, i.e. no-till farming, have created significant wildland fire risk in parts of Cascade County.

Fire season is the result of low rainfall, high temperatures, low humidity, and thunderstorms, high winds and lightning. Varied topography, semi-arid climate, and numerous human-related sources of ignition make this possible. Over 60 percent of fire starts in Cascade County are caused by lightning. Man-made fire starts account for the remainder including; debris burning, fireworks, campfire neglect, careless smokers, downed powerlines, or heated farm equipment in dry grass or crops. Only a fraction of fire starts are arson. BNSF representatives at the MHMP public meeting indicated that the railroad scrubs equipment to minimize sparks. There were only 1 or 2 fires started by the railroad in Cascade County in 2016.

Major wildfires can occur at any time of year. **Table 4.3-1** presents warning and advisory criteria for wildfire and a description of prohibitions that land management agencies can put into effect to reduce fire risk and prevent wildfires during periods of high to extreme danger.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Fire Weather Watch	A fire weather watch is issued when Red Flag conditions (see Red Flag Warning) are expected in the next 24 to 72 hours.
Red Flag Warning	A red flag warning is issued when Red Flag criteria are expected within the next 12 to 24 hours. A Red Flag event is defined as weather conditions that could sustain extensive wildfire activity and meet one or more of the following criteria in conjunction with "Very High" or "Extreme" fire danger: • Sustained surface winds, or frequent gusts, of 25 mph or higher; • Unusually hot, dry conditions (relative humidities less than 20%); • Dry thunderstorm activity forecast during an extremely dry period; • Anytime the forecaster foresees a change in weather that would result in a significant increase in fire danger. For example, very strong winds associated with a cold front even though the fire danger is below the "Very High" threshold.
Fire Warning	A fire warning may be issued by local officials when a spreading wildfire or structure fire threat ens a populated area. Information in the warning may include a call to evacuate areas in the fire's path as recommended by officials according to state law or local ordinance.
Dense Smoke Advisory	Dense smoke advisories are issued when the widespread visibilities are expected at a ¼ mile or less for a few hours or more due to smoke.

Table 4.3-1. Warning, Advisories and Restrictions for Wildfire

Warning/Advisory/ Restriction	Description
Stage 1 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire without a permit except in Forest Service developed camp or picnic grounds. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.
Stage 2 Fire Restriction	No building, maintaining, attending or using open fire campfires or stove fires. No smoking unless in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or within a three foot diameter cleared to mineral soil. No operation of welding, acetylene, or other torch with an open flame. No operation or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting devise properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.

Source: National Weather Service (NWS, 2016); National Interagency Fire Center, 2016 (gacc.nifc.gov/.../r2ftc/documents/Fire_Restriction_Chart.pdf)

Cascade County has large areas of private agricultural lands (81.7 percent). The federal government manages approximately 12.4 percent of the total land in the County including portions of the Lewis and Clark National Forest (178,412 acres) and BLM land (24,627 acres). The State of Montana manages a 5.2 percent of the acreage. This scattering of government and private ownership can present unique firefighting challenges.

Cascade County has witnessed a number of large wildfires that have destroyed property and affected wildlife habitat, scenic resources, and air quality. Between 1992 and 2012, a total of 70 fires burned 6,337 acres in the county. The majority of these fires occurred in the months of July and August and were caused by lightning and farm equipment. The wildfires were generally less than one acre in size and were extinguished within one day. **Table 4.3-2** presents wildfire listings from the Montana DNRC over 100 acres with statistics on structures lost and suppression cost where available.

Problems with wildfire also occur when combined with the human environment. People and structures near wildfires are threatened unless adequately protected through evacuation or mitigation. Should fires occur, structures within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) are very vulnerable. The WUI is the zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. A WUI exists anywhere that structures are located close to natural vegetation and where a fire can spread from vegetation to structures, or vice versa. The most extreme situation with respect to fuel conditions and values at risk occurs in rural subdivisions where numerous high-value individual homes and subdivisions are location in the WUI in close proximity or within the wildland boundary. A significant loss of life could occur to residents, firefighters, and others who are in the wildfire area and do not evacuate. The CWPP identifies the following WUI areas in Cascade County: the Dearborn Area, including Cooper Ranch and Stickney Creek; Hardy - Missouri River Corridor; Logging Creek Area; the southwest side of the Highwood Mountains adjacent to the National Forest; and, the Missouri, Sun and Smith River corridors. The current and potential development of portions of Cascade County into residential lots of varying sizes will contribute to the WUI fire problem for the fire protection agencies in the county (Firelogistics, 2008).

According to the Cascade County CWPP, five primary issues make the county particularly vulnerable to wildfire. These include: 1) the semi-arid landscape and poor moisture regime that due to the lack of moisture during any of the four seasons can place the county into a fire season throughout a large share of the year; 2) the wind generated from the Rocky Mountain Front Range can turn an ignition into a large wildland fire in a very short period of time; 3) the size and scale of the county, scattered numbers of outlying fire stations, significant reduction in number of people willing to volunteer as fire fighters in the county, and ageing population in Neihart; 4) lands in CRP which can be easily ignited and could result in extreme fire behavior, especially under windy conditions, and provide for challenging wildland fire suppression efforts; and, 5) a very high risk subdivision with the high potential for suffering loss of life, property and resources from a wildland fire. Cascade County communities listed in the Federal Register as "Communities at Risk" from wildland fire include Monarch and Neihart (Firelogistics, 2008).

Often regional electric infrastructure passes through wildland and non-irrigated agricultural areas. In particular, the electric substations, transmission lines, fuel tanks, and radio transmission towers are not often equipped to withstand the heat from a wildfire. A wildfire could disrupt electricity or communications should this infrastructure be damaged.

Smoke from wildfires outside Cascade County have impacted local air quality. Most smoke comes from the southwest, west, and north. However, the consistent wind in area minimizes the public health hazard that wildfire smoke poses elsewhere in the state.

Probability and Magnitude

Cascade County's history with wildfire, dry and windy weather conditions, large acres of the county in CRP, and private access roads to rural subdivisions has prompted the MHMP Planning Team to identify wildfires as a significant hazard. Although the primary concern is to structures and the interface residents, most of the costs associated with fire, come from firefighting efforts. Wildfires can also have a significant impact on the regional economy with the loss of agricultural output, timber, natural resources, recreational opportunities, and tourism.

Future Development

Wildfire disasters can be mitigated through comprehensive land use planning that includes housing development design, fuels management, and public education. Land use regulations can reduce the incidence of wildland fire by addressing defensible space and access for emergency vehicles. Cascade County addresses wildfire in their Growth Policy and Subdivision regulations.

The Cascade County Subdivision Regulations require all subdivisions to be planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize the risk of fire and to permit effective and efficient response in order to protect persons, property, and natural resource areas. Design elements of the subdivision include the placement of structures in such a manner so as to minimize the potential for flame spread and to permit efficient access for firefighting equipment. Areas rated as extreme, high or medium WUI must comply with special design standards including:

- Access and Evacuation – Roadside vegetation must be maintain so roads will service as escape routes and fire breaks. There must be a minimum of two approach routes to ensure one than one escape route and access routes by emergency vehicles. Building Density Requirements - Densities in areas of steep slopes and/or dense forest growth shall be reduced through minimum lot standards.
- Vegetation Management - A vegetation management plan is required that will reduce fuel loading and hazard rating and provide continuous maintenance of the fuel load. The plan must include guidelines for defensible space, fuel breaks and greenbelts, and a plan for continuous maintenance.
- Water Supply – A fire-fighting water source and access to that source must exist and be maintained as defensible space. Requirements for water supply systems are stipulated and may include fire hydrants or storage tanks.
- Fire Protection Covenants are required stipulating that property owners must maintain fire protection water supplies and fire protection systems (defensible spaces, driveway routes, fuel breaks) in perpetuity.

From: nick mehmke <nickmehmke17@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 4:18 PM
To: Briggs, Joe <jbriggs@cascadecountymt.gov>; jlarson@cascadecountmt.gov; Weber, Jane <jweber@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Rezoning proposal

To whom it may concern,
I have attached a letter detailing my feelings pertaining to the proposed rezoning.
Thank you
Nick Mehmke

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-21-19
Date Reviewed: 3-27-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Cascade County planning board

I am a organic farmer and rancher in cascade county, I grew up on my families farm where four generations before me raised their families to follow a ideal to work hard, honesty, and to leave the land better than you found it. I followed a wondering path from our farm to great restaurants that followed the same themes hard work, honesty, and a care for the things that matter most to you my life lead me back to my family farm where I hope to raised a sixth generation to love what the best of Montana can offer; Beautiful untarnished environment, a strong sense of home , and a special place that is not driven by simple greed of short term profit on that stands on ideals of what is truly best for the community and the following generations.

The proposed changes to rezoning of agricultural land would put what we feel is our most precious part of cascade county at jeopardy, by opening up any rural space in cascade county to large industrial sites we are risking our environment, health of our citizens, and putting the influence and Money of corporations ahead of our future generations. I ask the [planning board if they have weighted the risks to the president that they set, and wonder what is the motivation for pushing through such a rezoning that works to side step the process of public hearings and comment, what personal gain do they have for such action.

By and large we are a state that thrives on tourism and agriculture as its base revenue and in one flail swoop we are planning to hinder both of those industries for cascade county in favor of a highly speculative venture that has high risks of being devastating for our community, environment, and future generations. As I stated before I am a Fifth generation Montana farmer that strives to raise my family in the same way I was raised. I fear for my children and I fear for my organic farm and it troubles me that our elected representatives would put the interests of large corporations and out of state money before the community that they were elected to represent and I take pause if these are the decisions that will win the day. I ask should we whole sale our environment and community wonton and cheaply or will strand by ideals that serve to make cascade county a place that the next five generations will have as our parents left us.

Nick Mehmke

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: MICHELLE PATTERSON

Complete Address: 2213 GRAPE CT, GREAT FALLS, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

The public of Cascade County should be solicited by expansive surveying before and during the consideration of zoning changes that would affect not only direct landowners but also nearby citizens (to include all in the Great Falls city limits who would also be affected by zoning changes outside city limits). The public ought to have absolute access to all records of the County Planning Staff's proposed regulations including the various versions (V1,V2,V3,V4.0) and the persons who drafted them, along with all communications among proposal participants and the reasoning behind each proposed change. The work done for the public should be readily accessible by the public.

Future planning for Cascade County should be in accord with its Growth Policy goal to "protect and maintain this county's rural character and our community's historical relationship with natural resource development." Changing Agricultural acres to Mixed Use acres, especially MU-40, is counterproductive against that goal by allowing for intensive and larger in scale land uses. Any changes to zoning should support the good goals that were well-made in 1982 and re-affirmed in 2006 and 2014. Mixed Use-40 land uses are especially adverse to these long-held goals of Cascade County. The land surrounding Great Falls should remain Agricultural and not be considered for MU-20 and MU-40 zoning, especially not without extensive public surveying and input over at least a five-year period. Any intensive land use considerations and decisions should then be made only by the elected Cascade County Board of Commissioners and not by the Zoning Board of Adjustments. The elected commissioners should seek extensive public input before approval of intensive land uses (which should not be allowed access to Cascade County through Unclassified Use Permits).

Small business owners can choose other Montana counties in which to grow our companies, and Cascade County will make itself unattractive to current and potential companies if it radically deteriorates its long-held character, culture and quality of life by degrading the zoning surrounding Great Falls from Agricultural to MU-20 and MU-40. Hold the goals, values and character of Cascade County intact by discouraging and protecting against industrialized and intensive land uses. Keep our county zoned Agricultural to preserve Cascade County's open space; to protect our soils, water and air; to follow through to "preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County citizens." Please do not sacrifice the dearly-cherished Cascade County lifestyle and long-held goals to MU-40 intensive land uses.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	4-1-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

From: Tammie Lynne Smith <tammielsmith@3riversdbs.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 3:23 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>; Payton, Ian <ipayton@cascadecountymt.gov>; Stone, Michael <mstone@cascadecountymt.gov>; Hopkins, Sandor R. <shopkins@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR MARCH 26 2019

TAMMIE LYNNE SMITH
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

Attached are the hard copies of my public comments for the Planning Board Hearing on March 26, 2019.
Please include in the public record.

Thanks,
Tammie Lynne Smith
Landowner

This email message and its attachments (if any) may contain confidential or other protected information. This email and its contents are intended solely for the use of the intended individual or entity recipient. The disclosure of the contents of this email to any individual or entity, other than the intended party, is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient and have received this communication in error, please notify the sender by immediately replying to this message and then deleting it from your system.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 4-1-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing March 26, 2019, 4:30 pm
Family Living Center – Expo Park
400 3rd St NW
Great Falls MT

My name is Tammie Lynne Smith. I am a Cascade County resident. We own property and reside at 397 Highwood Road. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this public hearing regarding the Draft Cascade County Zoning Regulations.

Zoning Regulations Section 1 – Purpose

Zoning regulations are adopted for the purpose of promoting, improving, and protecting the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, and the general welfare of the people and property owners within Cascade County. Montana Code Annotated §76-2-203 provides well-defined criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations.

Montana Code Annotated §2-3-101, 103, & 111 also provide and guarantee the Public's right to participate in agency decisions that are of significant interest to the public including the submission of written comments and oral presentations at public hearings.

When the Planning Board Packets were prepared for board members and released to the public, the staff report indicated 90 written comments regarding the proposed revisions had been received in the planning office. I have reviewed and prepared an analysis of the public comments through March 25, 2019, 5:00 pm.

Public Comment Forms & Letters received	137	
Public Comment Forms & Letters Complete	126	
Public Comment Forms & Letters Incomplete	11	
Total Number of Specific Comments Contained in Forms & Letters	811	
Comments opposed to the Planning Division and Zoning Changes Specifically	274	34%
Comments opposed to the elimination of Ag and implementation of Mixed Use	262	32%
Comments specific to the lack of Public Participation in the Process	65	8%
Comments specific to new and revised Definitions	66	8%
Comments specific to Medical Marijuana	42	5%
Comments specific to the Zoning District legend and Zoning Maps	37	4%
Comments specific to Madison Food Park	36	4%
Comments specific to Unclassified Use Permits	16	2%

I hope the Planning Board earnestly considers the opposition expressed by the citizens of Cascade County. Comprehensive and expansive zoning changes should be developed with collaboration between the citizens of the county, the planning division, and elected officials.

Tammie Lynne Smith
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing March 26, 2019, 4:30 pm
Family Living Center – Expo Park
400 3rd St NW
Great Falls MT

My name is Tammie Lynne Smith. I am a Cascade County resident. We own property and reside at 397 Highwood Road. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this public hearing regarding the Draft Cascade County Zoning Regulations.

Zoning Regulations Section 2 – Definitions

The draft zoning regulations added or revised 40 terms and/or phrases in the definitions section. These terms and/or phrases are used to define permitted uses, accessory permitted uses, and special use permitted uses throughout the zoning regulations.

Planning staff have included additional remarks addressing the five primary reasons for the definition changes and Appendices 1 and 4 identifying the source and applied use of the terms and/or phrases in the Staff Report.
Several terms have not been defined or quantified.

1. The revised definition of Slaughterhouse includes "temporary stabling." Please consider further defining temporary as a time limit for a slaughterhouse facility in the MU40 district.
2. Neither "Temporary" or "Permanent Workforce Housing" definitions were changed in the draft zoning regulations, however, neither type of housing is defined with density limits or timeframes to differentiate temporary from permanent. To protect Cascade County from the same housing crisis faced in eastern Montana and the Bakken Field development please consider further defining these housing types for the MU20 and MU40 districts.

I hope the Planning Board considers the public comments by the citizens of Cascade County. Comprehensive and expansive zoning changes should be developed with collaboration between the citizens of the county, the planning division, and elected officials.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns. I look forward to additional time to complete further research and detailed evaluation for the March hearing.

Tammie Lynne Smith
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing March 26, 2019, 4:30 pm
Family Living Center – Expo Park
400 3rd St NW
Great Falls MT

My name is Tammie Lynne Smith. I am a Cascade County resident. We own property and reside at 397 Highwood Road. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this public hearing regarding the Draft Cascade County Zoning Regulations.

Zoning Regulations Section 4 – Zoning Maps

The draft zoning regulations contain three new county maps representing the change of the Agricultural district to the Mixed Use 20 and Mixed Use 40 districts. Page 3 of the Staff Report references the new maps. Appendix 2 provides narrative of the programming software, used by planning staff, utilizing parcel sizes and the relationship of objects (buildings, structures vs open space) and their density to justify boundaries for the new mixed-use districts. In addition, planning staff developed an "overlay" map of use permits previously issued by the planning division to compare with the land use patterns. Planning staff indicate that some minor edits and manual editing occurred while completing the boundaries.

MCA §76-2-304 defines the standards for zoning regulations. In order to meet these requirements, standard planning practice relies on extensive analysis to determine areas that are most suitable for industrial and commercial development. Examining soils, slopes, wetlands, floodplains, prime farmland, and similar factors are essential to creating zoning districts. This information is readily available through USDA Soil Maps, Cadastral and other sources. However, planning staff did not incorporate even basic land use data in their analysis and boundary setting for MU20 and MU40.

The proposed MU40 district will include approximately 1 million acres of land. Creating a new district map without fully exploring all facets of the parcels within the new boundaries can lead to haphazard development that lacks infrastructure or local services. Poor planning ultimately becomes a financial hardship for the county and leads to potentially serious health and safety concerns for its citizens.

I hope the Planning Board considers the full implication of industrializing our Agricultural land and agrees to reevaluate the proposed zoning changes. It is not too late to say no. Comprehensive and expansive zoning changes should be developed with collaboration between the citizens of the county, the planning division, and elected officials.

Tammie Lynne Smith
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing March 26, 2019, 4:30 pm
Family Living Center – Expo Park
400 3rd St NW
Great Falls MT

My name is Tammie Lynne Smith. I am a Cascade County resident. We own property and reside at 397 Highwood Road. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this public hearing regarding the Draft Cascade County Zoning Regulations.

Zoning Regulations Section 7 – District Regulations

Kate McMahon is one of the leading Land Use Experts in Montana. Recognized for her extensive experience, attention to detail, and thorough knowledge of Montana land use statues she is sought after by attorney's, local governing bodies, and landowners when issues of land use and zoning are called to question or debate. Ms. McMahon participated in the Plains Grains Ltd v Cascade County spot zoning lawsuit from 2005 – 2009. The landowners and citizens of Cascade County have once again engaged her services to help us understand the impact of, and challenge the proposed zoning changes.

I've distributed a copy of the Cascade County Zoning Amendment Growth Policy Analysis for Proposed MU-40 District prepared by Ms. McMahon for your review. The report provides detailed analysis of MU-40's compliance with the Growth Policy's Goals and Objectives. MCA §76-2-203(a) requires zoning regulations be made in accordance with the Growth Policy.

The Growth Policy contains:
5 – Primary Goals
8 – Specific Goals
94 – objectives to attain these goals, and
17 – sub objectives.
Certainly not all of the adopted Goals and Objectives in the Growth Policy are pertinent to the proposed MU-40 zoning district. However, it is important for all of us, county officials, staff, and the public to remember that the Growth Policy serves as a comprehensive plan to provide guidance on decisions regarding land development and public investments. The Growth Policy is a living document that is required, by MCA §76-1-601(3), to be reviewed and updated every five years. The Cascade County Growth Policy was adopted in May 2014 and is now five years old.

The Staff Report presentation for Sec 7, District Regulations, provides a single Goal and Objective compliance point for all permitted, accessory use, and special permit use changes in the various districts. It is disconcerting that approval and adoption of these significant use changes are supported by satisfying one Goal and Objective. Appendix 2 offers further justification for the proposed MU-20 and MU-40 districts and cites compliance with four Goals and 1 Objective for each goal in support of the vast changes.

The McMahon report presents compelling discussion that the proposed MU-40 district fails to comply in part or wholly with 8 of the Policy's adopted Goals and 12 of their corresponding objectives. In fact, the proposed MU-40 district does not:
1. Sustain and strengthen the economic well being of Cascade County's citizens.
2. Protect and maintain the county's rural character
3. Maintain the Agricultural economy
5. Preserve or enhance the rural, friendly, and independent lifestyle of the county's citizens
6. Promote or maintain a transportation system that provides safety and efficiency
8. Protect surface and groundwater from pollution
9. Foster the heritage of the area's agriculture, or
11. Protect or maintain the county's rural character and efficient use of land.

In addition, the MU-40 district does not comply with:
1. Chapter 5's Economic Condition policies,
2. Chapter 6's Local Services policies,
3. Chapter 7's Natural Resource protections, or
4. Chapter 8.3's Prime Agricultural Soil Area requirements.

I hope the Planning Board earnestly considers the opposition expressed by the citizens of Cascade County. Comprehensive and expansive zoning changes should be developed with collaboration between the citizens of the county, the planning division, and elected officials.

Tammie Lynne Smith
397 Highwood Rd
Great Falls MT 59405

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Lynn + Naomi McKelvey

Complete Address: 350 Hastings Rd. Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

We oppose the proposed regulations and are specifically concerned with some of the details.
* See the attached letter.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3/26/19	Date Reviewed:	4/1/19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Dear Planning Board Members,

We oppose this effort to amend the Cascade County Zoning Regulations and have concerns about the specific details in the proposal.

1) We opposed the effort to shift away from the "Agricultural" nomenclature to "Mixed Use." It goes against Cascade County's adopted Growth Policy and is contrary to what we feel is the best future for our community. We believe protecting agricultural values, family farms and what they provide for our county is far more valuable than anything the new industrialized uses in "Mixed Use" could possibly provide.

2) The definition of "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility" makes no distinction between animal-based commodities and plant-based commodities. It makes no distinction between locally-raised commodities and commodities imported from other states, regions, or countries. "Value-Added" needs to be split by animal and plant based commodities and should be restricted to locally produced commodities (developers should not be able to claim processing imported Canadian commodities as value-added). Where each use is allowed should be determined by impact. We would suggest the following definitions:

   AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED: "Any commodity produced from an agricultural use involving livestock, poultry, fish and/or insects. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, honey, fish, or crickets."

   AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED: "Any commodity produced from an agricultural use grown through traditional horticulture and farming. This includes, but is not limited to grains, soybeans, corn, timber, fruits, vegetables and oil seeds."

   VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED: "Any facility in which one or more locally-raised animal production based agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value-added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations."

   VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED: "Any facility in which one or more locally-raised crop production based agricultural commodities are physically processed in such a way that results in a value-added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations."

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – ANIMAL BASED: "An animal-based agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as curdling milk in the production of cheese, melting honeycombs to make beeswax); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products)."

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – PLANT BASED: "A plant-based agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as milling wheat into flour); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products)."

3) The proposed regulations fail to measure the potential impact on the community and use that estimate to determine which permitting process the applicant must follow. We believe all Cascade County permitting requirements should be based on potential impact to neighbors and communities. "Permitted" uses allowed by right should be for low-impact operations in order to simplify the process for small businesses and family farms. Larger scale and more intensive uses should be required to meet higher standards and therefore should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process (including public review and public hearings). The community and its citizens have a right to know what is being planned and have a right to speak for or against it.

4) The proposed regulations would expand the potential recipients of "Unclassified Use Permits" to include slaughterhouses, confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), feedlots and power plants. These permits can be in any district and bypass the need to seek a public zone change and have the application reviewed by elected representatives. We believe that the approval process for intensive and high impact operations (slaughterhouses, CAFOs, power plants, etc.) should remain the responsibility of ELECTED officials (Cascade County Board of Commissioners), not appointed volunteers (Zoning Board of Adjustments). Those potentially unpopular developments should be subject to the highest levels of scrutiny and go through the public processes required by a formal zone change.

5) The proposed regulations do not set a standard setback for "Rendering Plants." Rendering plants are among the most potentially impactful uses. As a result, they should be required to meet some of the highest standards for permitting.

6) The proposed "Mixed Use" definitions allow for "Temporary Workforce Housing," but do not define what is temporary and what is permanent. The ordinance needs to set a standard and base it on water, waste-water, traffic, noise, crime and other potential impacts.

7) The proposed "Mixed Use" definitions refer to "Adjacent" properties when measuring and mitigating impacts. Impacts such as noise, odor, traffic and pollution travel beyond just the adjacent properties. The term "Nearest" should be substituted.

8) The proposed regulations change the definition of "Slaughterhouse" to allow "Temporary Stabling" of animals, but does not define temporary. Temporary needs to be defined and should be limited to 72 hours.

9) The proposed regulations limit tourism in the "Mixed Use" zones. Bed and Breakfasts, VRBOs, Air BnBs, Outfitting, Guiding, and the related industries are a positive use of Cascade County's natural resources. Mitigate the impacts of these uses, but allow landowners the opportunity to make a living from them. They highlight the best Montana has to offer and bring resources to our communities.

Overall we encourage you to scrap these proposed regulations because of their flaws. If you must recommend them, then please consider our changes above to improve them.

Sincerely,

Conn & Naomi McKelvey
350 Hastings Rd.
Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: John + Naomi McKelvey

Complete Address: 350 Hastings Rd., Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

We oppose the proposed regulations because they are contrary to the adopted Cascade County Growth Policy.
* See attached letter

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	4-1-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Dear Planning Board Members,

We oppose this effort to amend the Cascade County Zoning Regulations on the basis that these amendments represent a fundamental shift in how County government approaches land use and zoning.

The current Zoning Regulations are not perfect, but they align fairly well with the stated goals:

Goal #2 of the current Cascade County Growth Policy, reviewed and affirmed in 2014, states: *"Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development."* This includes objective C: *"preserving Cascade County's open space setting by encouraging new development to locate near existing towns and rural settlements and by discouraging poorly designed land subdivisions and commercial development."*

Redefining the zoning regulations governing millions of acres as "Mixed-Use", with the result of allowing more "intensive" and "larger in scale" uses, is more than an administrative change. It is contrary to this goal and objective. The proposed regulations also sacrifice open space to industrialized and intensive uses with no further public input.

Goal #3 of the current Cascade County Growth Policy, reviewed and affirmed in 2014, states: *"Maintain the agricultural economy."* This includes objective A: *"Protect the most productive soil types"* and objective B: *"Continue to protect soils against erosion."*

The proposed policy fails to protect our most productive soils from both development and erosion because more intense and larger uses will be allowed without a conditional permitting process or public input.

Goal #5 of the current Cascade County Growth Policy, reviewed and affirmed in 2014, states: *"Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens."*

The proposed policy fails to preserve and enhance our rural, friendly lifestyle because more intense and larger uses will be allowed without a conditional permitting process or public input.

Chapter 5 – Economic Condition: Policies goes on to elaborate: *"1. Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses do not adversely affect agriculture and are located around and in existing rural communities. 2. Every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County."* And, *"10. Aggressively develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County. 11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural Land."*

The proposed policy fails to adhere to these adopted economic policies.

One County Commissioner and the County Planning Staff have both admitted to wanting these changes to ease the Zoning workload on them. Our government should not be attempting to extricate themselves from difficult decisions. The amount of oversight and in scrutiny in Zoning and Permitting should be directly related to the impact a project has on the community, not related to a governing body wishing to distance themselves from a difficult decision.

"Permitted" uses allowed by right should be for low-impact operations in order to simplify the process for small businesses and family farms so they may develop and grow in the appropriate zones. "Larger in scale" and more "intensive" uses should be required to meet higher standards and therefore should be expected to go through a more intensive permitting process.

The goals in the Cascade County Growth Policy were originally adopted in 1982 and affirmed in 2006 and 2014. As stated by our County Leadership, *"These goals continue to provide the best overall direction for county planning."* We agree 100%!

Conn & Naomi McKelvey
350 Hastings Rd.
Sand Coulee, MT 59472

From: Debbie Ruggerie <ugfdba@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 1:25 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Concerns regarding Cascade County proposed new zoning regulations

As a resident of Cascade County, I am very concerned with the way Cascade County leadership is going about changing zoning regulations. According to state code, the county's growth policy must be reviewed in 2019. I believe this review must be done prior to changing the zoning regulations. A growth policy and zoning regulations should compliment one another, not be at odds with one another. Furthermore, the proposed MU-40 districts are too broadly and vaguely defined. The proposed zoning regulations need to allow for more careful consideration of enterprises that significantly impact our community, especially when those impacts negatively affect the community. In addition, it appears that the proposed zoning regulations will limit public input and diminish public protections. Cascade County residents and leadership should work together to establish an updated growth policy. Then amend the zoning regulations to support the growth policy and provide clarity.

So much about these proposed changes point to an effort to pave the way for the slaughterhouse and the inevitable CAFOs to support the slaughterhouse. Those facilities will have a lasting impact on our community. So rather than rush the proposed zoning regulations through, we as a county need to decide how we want to grow, what constitutes growth, and what impacts are we willing to tolerate for growth by undertaking a comprehensive review of the growth policy first.

For these reasons, I cannot support the change in the proposed zoning regulations. But I hope we can work together to create a better plan our county.

Sincerely,
Debra Ruggerie
Cascade County resident

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 4-1-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

From: JOHN LEATHAM <johnleatham@cs.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 1:12 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Proposed revisions to Zoning Regulations

To: Cascade County Planning Board

I have been a property owner and voter in Cascade County for some 40 years. My foremost concern, as is the mission of the Montanans for Responsible Land Use, is *Responsible Land Use, Safe Environment and Community Vitality.*

I am currently against the change from Agricultural Districts to Mixed-Use Districts within the county. The Mixed-Use formula seems to evade the important issues when researching any proposed new business under its guidelines.

The proposed meatpacking plant outside of Great Falls is a prime example of this district change.

Communication & Notification of residents of a proposed new business:
(I was sent no notification of the intent of business until after the sale.)
The public needs to be given time to review information and speak to issues at hand.

There must be *Community Involvement* through investigation, regulations and standards pertaining to proposed business & industry. (small and large magnitudes)
Community impact not only for neighboring lands but county wide should be addressed.

Example: Business of the magnitude & scope of the proposed meatpacking plant would be felt city, county & statewide.

*Environmental water & waste concerns
*Source of workers outside of the area
* Workers housing availability
*Overcrowding of schools & education expenses
*Crime, Safety & Law Enforcement issues for Cascade County citizens with population growth.

Ag. - Mixed-use zoning does not cover any of the concerns for citizens pertaining to this example.

Cascade County & Montanans deserve Clean Air, Pure Water and Safe Living with Pristine Mountain Views!

The Planning Commission & Citizens need to protect this Big Sky Landscape in their goal of growing the population and expansion of new business and industry in the future.

Linda Leatham
500 North Main
Neihart, Mt. 59465

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 4-1-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Conn & Naomi McKelvey

Complete Address: 350 Hastings Rd., Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

We oppose the proposed regulations because the process used to write them is seriously flawed.
*See attached letter

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Dear Planning Board Members,

We oppose this effort to amend the Cascade County Zoning Regulations on the basis that the entire process has been flawed from the very beginning.

The Montana legislature gave local governments the mandate to create a formal growth policy in order to create a grassroots-based vision to guide their Zoning and Subdivision regulations. Cascade County last reviewed their Growth Policy in 2014. Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601 (3)(f) requires a revision of local growth policies every five years. If the Zoning regulations and resulting zoning map require such a comprehensive update, shouldn't the review of the Cascade County Growth Policy be the first review on the agenda? Then it would truly remain the guiding document for growth and ensure public input is considered from the beginning.

The Cascade County Planning Staff has also failed to follow the amendment process outlined in Section 14.1.1 of the existing regulation. They've publicly stated that they have the right to follow a different path. That may be legally true, but an honest, open, and transparent government would understand how important it is for the government to follow the same rules they've established for the citizens. The planning staff has also been very slow to release information publicly. They've only released information at the last minute and when demanded by citizens. The first version of the proposed zoning regulations was named "V4.1" and is dated in October 2018. When was the process started? What was going on between V1.0 and October? Why was the October version not released until after the New Year? Who had input on versions 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, and 4.0? Were they developers, citizens or just government officials? Local government should be an open book. If these questions cannot be answered in an honest and forthright manner then it is further evidence that the entire process has been flawed from the beginning. Historically the amendment process employed by Cascade County has been much more open and forthright. This county government needs to return to that precedent.

Changing the definition of the zoning classification of our property, and that of our neighbors, from "Agricultural" to "Mixed Use" by amending the zoning regulations is a back door route to essentially changing the zoning through a formal zone change. It has the potential to drastically impact our neighborhood, our community and our county without going through a formal public process. That is unacceptable as citizens.

Govern at a higher standard. Scrap this version of the updated regulations and start over by completing the 5-year review of the Growth Policy. Then use the input into the Growth Policy as a starting point to begin the process of amending the Zoning Regulation. From the very beginning you should involve the public, and finish by ensuring every meeting, every e-mail, every phone call, and every document is transparent and open.

Sincerely,

Conn & Naomi McKelvey
350 Hastings Rd.
Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Nate Kluz

Complete Address: 597 Armington Road Belt, MT 59412

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ■ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Proposed Cascade County Zoning Changes

Comment

Please see attached comments.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

I concur with these previously submitted comments in most all respects:

Tinsen 2/17/19
Schroer-Kohut 2/17/19
Enk 2/18/19
Ward 2/18/19
Claire Reichert-Baiz 2/16/19, 3/4/19
Pepos 2/19/19
Hermiller 2/19/19
Wagoner 2/19/19
Kind 2/26/19
Tammie Lynn Smith 2/22/19, 3/6/19, 3/8/19, 3/16/19
Jenkins 3/2/19
Vihinen 3/16/19
Dutchak 3/14/19
Thomas Baiz 3/8/19
Guilfoyle 3/18/19
Miller 3/19/19
Craven 3/8/19, 3/12/19, 3/15/19

The best comment I have seen is by Arlyne Reichert on 3/9/19. We would all be well served by reading this esteemed community member's comment multiple times. Arlyne's thoughtful comment sums up the frustration many Cascade County residents are having with this process.

The comments noted above portray a grave sense of concern and confusion about what exactly the Planning Division (PD) is trying accomplish with the substantial proposed zoning changes. There are far more questions than the PD is willing or able to answer.

I still do not understand why the PD has not submitted an application for zoning change as required in the Cascade County Zoning Regulations (CCZR) 14.1.1. I asked the deputy director of public works and planning administrator, Ian Payton to clarify why the planning division was exempt from the application process according to 14.1.1. County Attorney Yonker responded (E-mail on 2/25/19) that 14.1.1 was applicable only to private petitioners. Attorney Yonker's legal opinion is that:

Section 14.1.1 of the CCZR pertains to citizen amendments through a petition process, which is also consistent with MCA 76-2-101 (frequently called Part 1 zoning). Part 1 zoning is a citizen driven process, which must be initiated via a petition.

Below is MCA 76-2-101 in its entirety:

MCA 76-2-101. Planning and zoning commission and district. (1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (5), whenever the public interest or convenience may require and upon petition of 60% of the affected real property owners in the proposed district, the board of county commissioners may create a planning and zoning district and appoint a planning and zoning commission consisting of seven members.

(2) A planning and zoning district may not be created in an area that has been zoned by an incorporated city pursuant to 76-2-310 and 76-2-311.

(3) For the purposes of this part, the word "district" means any area that consists of not less than 40 acres.

(4) Except as provided in subsection (5), an action challenging the creation of a planning and zoning district must begin within 6 months after the date of the order by the board of county commissioners creating the district.

(5) If real property owners representing 50% of the titled property ownership in the district protest the establishment of the district within 30 days of its creation, the board of county commissioners may not create the district. An area included in a district protested under this subsection may not be included in a zoning district petition under this section for a period of 1 year.

This section of MCA speaks to the creation of citizen initiated zoning districts and the creation of zoning when it does not already exist. This is something different than than specific citizen zoning changes requests. CCZR section 14 allows citizen initiated zoning change requests by application pursuant to meeting the criteria of 14.1.1. MCA 76-1-10 is inapplicable to individual citizen initiated zoning change requests in Cascade County.

Attorney Yonker continues:

The Planning Division is proposing revisions to the CCZR. This process is through MCA 76-2-201 (frequently called Part 2 zoning), which specifically authorizes the County Commissioners to "...adopt or revise zoning regulations...."

MCA 76-2-201 states:

Montana Code Annotated 2017
TITLE 76. LAND RESOURCES AND USE
CHAPTER 2. PLANNING AND ZONING
Part 2. County Zoning
County Zoning Authorized
76-2-201. County zoning authorized. (1) For the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, a board of county commissioners that has adopted a

growth policy pursuant to chapter 1 is authorized to adopt zoning regulations for all or parts of the jurisdictional area in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(2) For the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, a board of county commissioners that adopted a master plan pursuant to Title 76, chapter 1, before October 1, 1999, may, until October 1, 2006, adopt or revise zoning regulations that are consistent with the master plan.

This section of MCA authorizes County Zoning by county commissioners. No mention of county planning departments or divisions is made. Furthermore, MCA 76-2-203 states a County must address these criteria and guidelines:

Montana Code Annotated 2017
TITLE 76. LAND RESOURCES AND USE
CHAPTER 2. PLANNING AND ZONING
Part 2. County Zoning
Criteria And Guidelines For Zoning Regulations
76-2-203. Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations. (1) Zoning regulations must be:

(a) made in accordance with the growth policy; and

(b) designed to:

(i) secure safety from fire and other dangers;

(ii) promote public health, public safety, and general welfare; and

(iii) facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

(2) In the adoption of zoning regulations, the board of county commissioners shall consider:

(a) reasonable provision of adequate light and air;

(b) the effect on motorized and nonmotorized transportation systems;

(c) compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities;

(d) the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses; and

(e) conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdictional area.

(3) Zoning regulations must, as nearly as possible, be made compatible with the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities.

The CCZR 14.1.1(6) is taken verbatim from MCA 76-2-203. Staff reports for the 3/26/19 planning board meeting do do address these issues.

Attorney Yonker continues:

The Planning Board and/or the Commission is not required and will not go through a citizen petition process.

Unfortunately, the county attorney is wrong when she says CCRZ section 14.1.1 is limited to private parties.

To the contrary, Section 14 specifically states as follows:

14.1 APPLICATION
An amendment to the Zoning Resolution [regulations or map(s)] may be initiated on a motion from the **Board of County Commissioners** of Cascade County or by one (1) or more of the **residents or landowners** within the jurisdictional area of the Zoning Resolution or by the **Cascade County Planning Division**. A petition for an amendment to the Zoning Resolution **shall** be submitted to the Planning Board for study and recommendation.

The next section, 14.1.1, gives the application requirements that county has failed to provide prior to consideration by the planning board.

In short, there is no exception to Section 14 procedures by reason of the petitioner being the PD.

It may sound curious for the planning board to submit the requisite application to itself, but the intent of the regulation is to insure the PD has done its homework and to permit the public access to essential information and the rationale underlying the petition. Transparency is a hallmark of democracy.

Nowhere in Section 14 is there an exemption saying or suggesting that the PD is exempt from preparing and submitting an application . To the contrary, the regulation specifically states that a petition for amendment "shall" be submitted. The Montana code cited by the county attorney also provides no exemption. In fact, MCA 76-2-203 suggests that a county application is a requirement.

No one has asked the planning division to use the petition process as described in MCA 76-2-101, as that appears to be the process for adopting zoning in areas where zoning does not exist or for the creation of citizen initiated zoning districts(CIZD). I do not believe the county attorney's office has offered sufficient legal opinion to justify the planning division being in any way exempt from CCZR 14.1.1. The county and planning division should need to meet this very low threshold prior to a consideration of the proposed changes by the Planning Board. The citizens of Cascade County deserve to have the PD follow its own regulations and that of the state of Montana

The volume and scope of changes in the proposed zoning changes are overwhelming. For an introduction to the potential problems with the proposed changes please refer to the three comments submitted by Carolyn Craven.

One specific issue that I haven't seen adequately covered in the comments refers to two new terms in the proposed changes. The terms *value-added agricultural commodity processing facility* and *value-added agricultural product* are inappropriate specific call-outs for permitted principle allowable uses in the proposed zoning regulations. These terms are overly broad and ambiguous and unsuitable for a permissive zoning scheme. The broad spectrum of potential uses under these terms would be better described by commonly understood and defined terms from sources such as the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). Value-added businesses and land uses can be better described by any number of more widely understood terms and concepts, such as, but not limited to: processing, commodity marketing, light industrial, heavy industrial, industrial park, alcohol brewery or distillery, manufacturing, rendering plant, CAFO, butcher shop, slaughterhouse, roadside stand, specialty sales or general sales. It is very troubling that terms such as these that are so broad and ambiguous are allowed as a permitted principal use. To my knowledge, these are not commonly used terms in other zoning regulations in Montana or the planning profession. Removing these terms would do nothing to diminish the current or future agricultural development pattern, but including them would introduce a climate of uncertainty and instability.

I have also been disappointed by the county's response to citizen questions and requests for information. The responses at the planning division and county attorneys office have ranged from cordial and timely to curt, recalcitrant and unresponsive. For example, I have had trouble getting a response from the PD about the logic behind the lot coverage areas in the new proposed MU-20 and MU-40 zoning districts. I want to know what are the standard accepted practices for determining these ratios for professional planners and other Montana counties in similar situations. The planning division has not responded to these questions. The county attorney's office has been cordial via conversations and correspondence. That said, the county attorney's office has made one thing abundantly clear (Racki and Yonker): they represent the county (Planning Board, PD and County Commissioners) and have no obligations to the citizens of Cascade County in planning matters.

The promulgation of substantial zoning changes by the PD should be an open, transparent and deliberative process between the county and citizens of Cascade County. The American Planning Association (APA) accredits professional planners through membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). This community could benefit from professional planning that is bound to the AICP code of ethics and professional conduct, particularly Part A Section 1. This states:

A. Principles to Which We Aspire

1. Our Overall Responsibility to the Public

Our primary obligation is to serve the public interest and we, therefore, owe our allegiance to a conscientiously attained concept of the public interest that is formulated through continuous and open debate. We shall achieve high standards of professional integrity, proficiency, and knowledge. To comply with our obligation to the public, we aspire to the following principles:

a) We shall always be conscious of the rights of others.

b) We shall have special concern for the long-range consequences of present actions.

c) We shall pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions.

d) We shall provide timely, adequate, clear, and accurate information on planning issues to all affected persons and to governmental decision makers.

e) We shall give people the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs that may affect them. Participation should be broad enough to include those who lack formal organization or influence.

f) We shall seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs.

g) We shall promote excellence of design and endeavor to conserve and preserve the integrity and heritage of the natural and built environment.

h) We shall deal fairly with all participants in the planning process. Those of us who are public officials or employees shall also deal evenhandedly with all planning process participants.

-https://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode/

In conclusion, the current process is shambolic at best. The citizens of Cascade County deserve much better processes from the county. Any substantial changes to the zoning regulations need to be open, transparent and deliberative. A good place to start would be with a more community based bottom-up approach to the Cascade County Growth Policy that is up for review in May. There is considerable community interest is putting our county on a stable development path through this process.

I would request that the planning board not recommend these PD initiated zoning changes or any other PD initiated substantial changes until such a time that improved processes for citizen involvement in the planning process are developed. All substantial PD changes should also cease until a new Cascade County Growth Policy is complete.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Linda Lassila

Complete Address: 151 Bickford Road, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations

Comment

See attached letter

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

I am writing in opposition to the 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations.

Montana's leading industry is agriculture. There are 59 million acres of land in farms and ranches in Montana. A great proportion of them are in Cascade County. This is an exorbitant amount of land and should not be included with another land use such as Mixed Use. Farmers are good stewards of the land, protecting it from soil erosion, thus retaining the integrity of the land. The land in Cascade County is some of the highest yielding in the state, contributing to Cascade County and Montana's strong economy.

The Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustments is a small group made up of 5 members. They have the exclusive power and authority to independently hear and decide zoning appeals and applications for zoning variances and special exceptions. This is a huge responsibility, plus working without receiving any compensation. If there are fewer zoning districts, it may take less working time on the board's behalf, but the public will ultimately pay the price with consolidating districts. The magnitude of these proposed changes should require notification and input from every landowner in the county.

We make our living from producing crops. The family farm should be protected. If it is classified as Mixed Use, it could adversely affect agriculture. Therefore, I am opposed to deleting the Agricultural District.

Linda Lassila

Linda Lassila
151 Bickford Road
Great Falls, MT 59405
Cascade County Landowner and Farmer

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Daryl Lassila

Complete Address: 151 Bickford Road, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): 2019 Draft Zoning Regulations

Comment

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

In opposition to the Draft Zoning Regulation

When hearing of the across the county rezoning project.....I was speechless. And I can't help but think of the many others being without words.

Agricultural land in Cascade County is some of the best to grow a crop. High production farm ground is in big demand and carries a large price premium, all for the rights to produce a crop to feed the world.

Property used and zoned as Agricultural, deserves to be left labled solely as Agricultural zoning.

Any and all applications for rezoning need to be looked at and considered on an individual basis, not as a countywide free for all, endangering ground needed to grow crops well into the future.

Daryl Lassila
151 Bickford Road
Great Falls MT 59405
Cascade County Landowner and Farmer

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

Comments Submitted 03.08.19 - 03.12.19 - 03.15.19 - 03.21.19 - 3.23.19 - 03.25.19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 25, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

PERMIT PROCESS FOR HIGH IMPACT INTENSIVE USES

Based on a large body of scientific research in the United States on the adverse effects of industrialized animal production (i.e. CAFOs, AFOs, commercial feedlots, rendering plants, slaughterhouses) and on the United Nation's detailed 400-page report ("Livestocks's Long Shadow – Environmental Issues and Options"), as well as various other government articles and reports on adverse effects (EPA, TN, CO, NC, IA, CA...}, it seems logical to base permitting of these industrialized operations on potential impact according to this research.

- The current permitting process appears to be simplified for the high impact and intensive uses yet more difficult for small business (i.e. tourist-based business).
- It would be appropriate to only consider permits for the Industrialized Animal Production industries (i.e. CAFOs, AFOs, Commercial Feedlots, Rendering Plants, Value-Added Animal Commodities) and high-impact Heavy Industries (i.e. Power Plants, Oil & Gas) via higher standards with a more intensive process using the Special Use Permit with public input.

Recommend adding "Potential Impact" in the considerations for permitting high impact intensive Industrialized Animal Production industries (CAFOs, AFOs, Commercial Feedlots, Rendering Plants, Value-Added Animal Commodity Processing) and Heavy Industry (Power Plants, Oil & Gas) operations. These larger and more intensive uses with a high impact should be required to meet higher standards and undergo a more intensive permitting process.

- For those businesses and industries with a low impact, it would also seem logical to allow "permitted by right" in the specific appropriate zoning district to thus simplify the process for family farms and small businesses.

SETBACKS

Growth Policy Goal 8

- Objective D: *Require all construction to be setback from streams and to be in compliance with applicable regulations, in order to prevent water quality degradation and stream bank erosion.*
- Objective H: *Promote policies that ensure greater setbacks for commercial, industrial, and multi-family development to reduce the risk of negative impacts.*
    - The standard setback is 50' and that is what is used in these zoning regulations

Based on the Growth Policy Goal 8 Objective H "*...ensure greater setbacks for commercial, industrial and multi-family development to reduce the risk of negative impacts*", I recommend a 100 ft setback requirement for all commercial, industrial and multi-family development to reduce the risks of negative impacts.

C.K. Craven 03.25.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

DEFINITIONS

- Please add definitions for the sizes per number of animals allowed in CAFOs, AFOs, and commercial feedlots. The size of the CAFO is directly related to impact on the environment.
    - i.e. Small CAFOs, Medium CAFOs, Large CAFOs, etc.

GROWTH POLICY AND MU-20, MU-40, HEAVY INDUSTRY DISTRICTS

The proposed zoning changing all "Agricultural Districts" to "Mixed Use-20 and Mixed-Use 40 Districts" and is redefining over a million acres to Mixed Use, resulting in more intensive and larger scale uses. This proposal will sacrifice current open space to industrialized and intensive uses. This is in direct conflict with the following 2014 Growth Policy objectives:

- Goal 2, Objective C: *Preserve Cascade County's scenic beauty and conserve its forests, rangelands, and streams, with their abundant wildlife and good fisheries.*
- Goal 2, Objective D: *Assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and god community appearance*
- Goal 5*: Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens*
- Goal 8: *Protect surface and groundwater quality from pollution*

RECOMMEND MAINTAINING AGRICULTURAL ZONING AND ELIMINATING MU-20 & MU-40

MU-40 allows CAFOs, slaughterhouses, rendering plants, power plants, oil & gas exploration and other high impact intensive uses via a Special Permit Process. MU-40 does NOT have any Zoning District Standards.
Heavy Industrial currently allows "All non-residential uses not otherwise prohibited by law to be permitted WITHOUT EVEN A SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS. So there is no opportunity for any public permit! Heavy Industrial does NOT have any Zoning District Standards.

NONE OF THE GROWTH POLICY GOALS ABOVE ARE BEING CONSIDERED WITH THESE DISTRICTS AND THESE USES

1) **RECOMMEND ZONING DISTRICT STANDARDS FOR EACH DISTRICT.**

2) **RECOMMEND REQUIRING HEAVY INDUSTRY TO IMPLEMENT A SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS STATING "ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL USES NOT OTHERWISE PROHIBITED BY LAW MAY BE CONSIDERED USING THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS."**

C.K. Craven 03.25.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

TOURISM

If these proposed zoning changes are approved it is highly likely that tourism will all but vanish from Cascade County. There are numerous examples of other U.S. cities with animal production facilities that have environmental problems and are not tourist stops. **The current industrial model is not sustainable given its high input costs, rising energy demands, fresh water needs, effects on climate change and adverse environmental and health impacts.**

- Goal 1 Objective D: *Promote the development of cultural resources and tourism to broaden Cascade County's economic base.*
- Growth Policy 6.6 Recreation and Tourism Policy: *Encourage recreation and tourism, especially in the areas that are compatible with agricultural use.*

There is a growing trend for future sustainable tourism in rural economies, especially in our regional magnificent outdoor experiences. A recent Great Falls article on an outfitting tourism business highlighted the amount of tourism coming into our county for outdoor experiences. This is an excellent example of a high value sustainable industry with a low environmental impact. If tourism is impacted this will affect our tax base and also affect employment levels.

PRIMARY ISSUE

I participated fully in reading the proposed changes and providing comments on many of these changes. However, the overarching issue is really to discard these proposed changes, create the required 2019 Growth Policy and then have more public input with the Growth Policy, followed by creating any needed zoning changes with additional public input. The Growth Policy encompasses the vision that many of us in Cascade County would like to see for sustainable development and environmentally neutral businesses and industries that protect our natural resources; ensure clean water, land and air; and enhance the social fabric of our communities, farms and ranches throughout the county.

C.K. Craven 03.25.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

ADDENDUM

- **From a report on CAFOs by the American Public Health Association**
  - In calling for a nationwide moratorium on CAFOs, the American Public Health Association cited more than 40 scientific reports **indicating health concerns related to CAFOs**. The citations include research from such prestigious institutions as the University of North Carolina Medical School, the University of Iowa Medical School, and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. In testifying before a U.S. congressional committee, the Director of the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health cited **scientific evidence concerning the contamination of air, water, soil, and foods with toxic chemicals, infectious diseases, antibiotic resistant bacteria, and E. coli** (Robert Lawrence, MD, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Superfund Laws and Animal Agriculture, Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials.
    - http://energycommerce.house.gov/reparchives/108/Hearings/11162005hearing1714/Lawrence.pdf
    - American Public Health Association, *Association News*, 2003 Policy Statements, http://www.apha.org/legislative.

- **CAFOs' Effect on Communities can be Catastrophic**
  Pete Eshelman
  Friday, September 22, 2017
  Pete Eshelman, a Roanoke resident, is a farmer and CEO of Joseph Decuis.

I am a businessman, restaurateur, farmer and owner of Joseph Decuis, an award-winning culinary destination in Roanoke. Over the past 20 years, I have dealt with many of the issues associated with the decline and revival of our rural community. I have firsthand experience with both the threats and the opportunities in developing rural communities and with promoting sustainable, innovative agriculture in our state.

I was troubled by public statements made by State Sen. Jean Leising recently in Greensburg, touting the benefits of "expanding animal agriculture in Indiana" and pointing to "the number of new jobs and regional sales" that more CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations or factory farms) would bring to different parts of our state. Unfortunately, Leising's claims are misleading and simply not credible for several reasons.

The data she relied on come from a "study" that was funded by the Indiana Soybean Alliance – a major lobbying group for the livestock industry with a substantial financial interest in supporting CAFOs. They intentionally create confusion. The findings of major research institutions and universities are that CAFOs reduce property values, diminish quality of life, harm the environment, threaten public health and do not in any way promote economic development.

C.K. Craven 03.25.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

Study after study shows that degradation in air quality, which reduces quality of life in the area surrounding a CAFO, will have a measurable, direct and statistically significant negative effect on property values. One study found that only landfills have a worse effect than CAFOs on adjacent property values. This loss in property value can affect tax assessments and therefore a county's tax revenue. In addition, CAFOs do not pay for the damage they cause to county roads and infrastructure – or for the health costs, accidents and environmental damage they cause. Instead, these are all financial drains that must be supported by the community's tax revenue.

But even if one assumed the Soybean Alliance's study findings were true, they do not support Leising's claim that CAFOs are good for Indiana. For example, the study looked at the central Indiana region covering 16 counties and estimated that every $3.15 million in additional regional livestock sales would provide $701,000 in new income and create 28 new jobs.

But when averaged over the 16-county region, these figures paint a less promising picture; a $3 million increase in livestock sales would provide a mere $43,812.50 in new income and create just fewer than two new jobs per county – hardly a windfall return on investment. Factor in the negative externalities that CAFOs impose on the environment, public health, quality of life, property values, and local roads and bridges, and the study's promise of economic development is laughable.

Here is an alternative plan: Invest in a healthy environment with open spaces and quality outdoor recreation amenities to drive tourism, create good-paying jobs and provide innumerable economic development opportunities. In 2012 alone, outdoor recreation in Indiana generated $9.4 billion in consumer spending, created 106,000 direct Indiana jobs, $2.7 billion in wages and salaries, and produced $705 million in state and local tax revenue.

Investment in tourism, agritourism, local food economies and quality outdoor recreation amenities provides substantial opportunities to improve health outcomes, boost property values, attract new businesses, and enhance quality of life for residents, while making any community – rural or urban – a more attractive place to live. Allowing more CAFOs to spoil the land, air and water quality with massive amounts of untreated animal waste – more than the human population of Indiana produces – will predictably do just the opposite, particularly when located near rural communities, and densely populated and environmentally sensitive areas.

2019 www.journalgazette.net
Fort Wayne IN 46802

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 03.25.19
Homeowner, Great Falls

From: Charlie Bumgarner <bumranch@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 11:29 AM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: proposed zoning regulations

To Cascade County Planning Department,
I am a land owner in cascade county and am very concerned about the proposed changes to the zoning regulations. I am all for growth and business opportunities in Cascade County and would have liked to have been notified as a neighbor of the proposed project so I could have weighed in on the impacts that it will have on the community. Zoning changes and this project will take good farm ground out of production. Truck traffic will increase an already very busy highway and will stretch the limits of an already crowded truck bypass in Great Falls. The environmental challenges could have huge impacts on the water system and dealing with the waste water. The proposed changes would change the whole dynamics of our agricultural community. I would imagine property taxes would increase to pay for needed updates and put more cost to us.
I have read the Cascade County Growth Policy and it seems like the proposed changes are in conflict with the policy and should be reviewed.
For these reasons I am against the proposed changes.
Thanks,
Charlie Bumgarner
C Lazy J Ranch
Great Falls

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 3-28-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

From: Karen Flater <krflater@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:35 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Cascade County Planning Board

Dear Cascade County Planning Board,

Please do not make zoning changes that will allow industrial agriculture to come in to our county and destroy our beautiful and tranquil land and our people. As citizens we all have a lot invested in our city, county and state and want to keep it this way for future generations to enjoy instead of driving our citizens away and any chance for better land use than industrial agriculture.

I come from a family of farmers who took care of the land, crops and livestock and took pride in all they did. These zoning changes will destroy that very valuable and much needed and desired way of life for us all.

As our elected representatives it is up to you to provide and protect Cascade County citizens with the best possible life of clean air, water, soil and enjoy all our county has to offer making us proud to invite visitors to show off the beauty that surrounds us. Industrial agriculture will be a scourge upon the land and drive people away.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karen Flater
406-750-6487

Sent from my iPhone

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-25-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Tammy Kantorowicz

Complete Address: 746 Highwood Rd, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
[X] Other (describe): **Proposed Zoning Regulations**

Comment:

Please see attached document.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board
Public Hearing March 26, 2019, 4:30 pm.
Family Life Center, Expo Park
Great Falls, MT

Tammy Kantorowicz, property owner
746 Highwood Rd, Great Falls, MT

March 25, 2019

I appreciate your consideration of moving this meeting time to the afternoon.

Reviewing the proposed Cascade County Zoning Regulations and researching how the proposed changes will affect the county has been a daunting task.

I object to the current proposed zoning regulations. I have not seen an updated county growth policy for 2019. My comments relate to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy.

MCA 76-2-203 (1) Zoning regulations must be made in accordance with the growth policy and designed to secure safety from fire and other dangers, promote public health, public safety and general welfare, and facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

My objections relate to the elimination of Agricultural Zoning District and the implementation of Mixed Use 20 and Mixed Use 40 Zoning Districts, the addition of Slaughterhouse and Concentrated Animal Feedlots to Mixed Use 40 districts, Section 18's Unclassified Use Permits, and Temporary housing definition.

Montana Legislature has recognized the importance of agriculture and mandated that state laws protect, enhance and develop agriculture. By changing these zoning regulations, this will allow operations that are detrimental to the community of Cascade County.

Concentrated Animal Feedlots and slaughterhouses contaminate ground water and surface water becoming a lingering source of viral contamination. In addition, elevated nitrates in drinking water can lead to nitrate poisoning. This can be especially harmful to infants leading to blue baby syndrome and possible death. Nitrate poisoning causes low blood oxygen in adults and can lead to birth defects, miscarriages, and poor general health. Nitrates are speculated to cause higher rates of stomach and esophageal cancer. Private Wells are a higher risk of nitrate contamination. This impacts residents who reside near such an operation.

T. Kantorowicz
746 Highwood Rd
March 25, 2019

Contamination of surface water can cause ammonia and nitrogen build up which leads to death of aquatic life. This will make the water inhabitable. Algal blooms that occur in these environments eventually promote the grown of harmful bacteria. This impacts any fishing activities near such an operation.

The depletion of ground water lowers water quality, puts economic pressure on residents to drill new wells, and can cause the surrounding plant life to die off due to lack of water. This impacts surrounding farms and ranches. Dry land crops rely on ground water. Crop yields will be impacted as well as available grass for livestock.

Even though Concentrated Animal Feedlots and slaughterhouses appear to fit the definition of agriculture, they have a negative impact on the surrounding land. These impacts are counter to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy 2.1 Goal 2, 2.2 Goal 8 and Goal 10 by not ensuring clean water, destruction of natural beauty of grazing areas and farmlands and impacts wildlife and fisheries. It is also counter to Goal 3 due to the high potential of contamination to the surrounding soil. This is also contrary to MCA 76-2-203 (1) by impacting public health and water supply.

Other problems with these operations include:

Air Quality

The gaseous emissions caused by these operations pollute the air with ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, methane, and particulate matter. These pollutants cause respiratory irritant, chemical burns to respiratory tract, skin and eyes, severe cough, chronic lung disease, inflammation of the moist membranes of eye and respiratory tract. There is consistent evidence of increased asthma in surrounding communities. Small particulates absorbed by the body can have systemic effects including cardiac arrest. Orders from the operations can be smelled from miles away. These odors cause severe lifestyle changes for individuals in surrounding communities.

These impacts are counter to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy 2.1 Goal 2 by not ensuring clean air and impacts Recreation and Tourist Trade. This is also contrary to MCA 76-2-203 (1) by impacting public health and general welfare.

Currently the residents and visitors of Cascade County enjoy activities on the Missouri River and the Rivers Edge trail. These activities would end because of the severe smell from these types of operations.

T. Kantorowicz
746 Highwood Rd
March 25, 2019

Insect Vectors

These operations become a breeding ground for insects that carry bacteria or pathogens to humans including microbes that can cause dysentery and diarrhea. Areas near these operations experience a much higher fly population.

These impacts are counter to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy 2.1 Goal 2 and MCA 76-2-203 (1) by not ensuring a healthful environment and general welfare.

Migrant workers

These operations emphasize hiring migrant workers because they do not unionize. Without a union to argue for worker rights, working conditions are poor and wages are low. Turnover rate of employees is high for these operations.

By adding the term temporary housing without clear definition, this seems to set the path for man camps that would accommodate these migrant workers. These camps in other areas have been a hot bed of criminal activity. This is counter to MCA 76-2-203 (1) because it endangers public safety.

I feel strongly that I should have input into whether the land surrounding me is agricultural or industrial especially in cases that have a strong environmental and economic impact. I believe these changes will take away my ability to object to those businesses that will have a negative impact.

I believe in growing Cascade County in a responsible manner aligned with historic growth policies adopted in 1982 and affirmed in 2006 and 2014.

I believe responsible growth would be to bring in businesses that increases the ***desirability*** of the county.

Businesses that would have a ***positive*** impact such as legume processing, oil seed refineries, and flourmills would bring in people who can afford to build or buy homes within the county. It helps grow the county by demand for amenities such as quality restaurants, shopping, and entertainment. Quality amenities spur tourism demand for the area. These businesses are aligned with the 2014 Cascade County Growth policy by strengthening the economic well-being of citizens, maintains the agricultural economy, maintains historic relationship with natural resource development and enhances the lifestyles currently enjoyed by Cascade County's citizens.

I encourage the Planning Board to collaborate with the public to find those sources that increase the ***desirability*** of the county that will encourage growth.

Thank you for consideration of my comments.

T. Kantorowicz
746 Highwood Rd
March 25, 2019

References

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Understanding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations and Their Impact on Communities

National Institutes of Health, Impacts of Waste from Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations on Water Quality

Labor Practices in the Meat Packing and Poultry Processing Industry: An Overview

Agricultural Protection in Montana: Local Planning, Regulation, and Incentives

United States Geological Survey, Groundwater depletion

T. Kantorowicz
746 Highwood Rd
March 25, 2019

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: LaLonnie Ward

Complete Address: 70 McKinior Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): Proposed Changes to CC Zoning Regulations - 2019

Comment

Planning Board Members,

Under the proposed zoning regulation changes, our farmland would be rezoned from the Agricultural District to the new Mixed Use – 40 District (to which I have previously objected). Because MU-40 and MU-20 would permit for Value Added Agricultural Processing Facilities, currently only allowed by Special Use Permit, these uses must be more clearly defined based on their impact to the land, to adjoining landowners, to the environment, and to the community (i.e., dust, noise, traffic, erosion, odor, etc.). For example, the impacts of a less intensive use, such as the making of wheat straw pellets, greatly contrast with the impacts of a hog processing plant. As others have commented in this Public Comment forum, separating the definitions of plant-based operations and animal-based operations, their origins, and how they are treated in the proposed regulations would be more constructive. Landowners and the citizens of Cascade County are entitled to voice their concerns, their opposition, or their support of any project in their community with high impact.

Your consideration of this matter is greatly appreciated.

LaLonnie Ward, Cascade County Citizen and Landowner

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Denny Ward

Complete Address: 70 McKinior Road, PO Box 6063, Great Falls, MT 59046

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): 2019 Proposed Zoning Regulation Changes

Comment

I oppose the addition of Unclassified Use Permits in the staff initiated changes to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations (Sec 18) for the following:

1) The verbiage "characteristics of such unique and special forms" is vague and subjective. The saying 'One man's trash is another man's treasure' is applicable here. Any such use should require an approved Zone change, or issuance of a Special Use Permit in the appropriate zoning district.

2) Unclassified Use Permits uses would not require the approval or denial by our elected officials, circumventing their accountability to the citizens of Cascade County.

Thank you,
Denny Ward, Cascade County Resident and Landowner

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: *LaLonnie Ward, Dennis Ward, Janny May-Kinion*

Complete Address: *70 McKinior Road, Great Falls, MT 59405*

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): *2019 Proposed Changes to Cascade County Zoning Regulaitons*

Comment

Members of the Planning Board,

We are Cascade County Agricultural District landowners and strongly oppose the proposal to amend the zoning of our farm property from the Agricultural District to Mixed Use – 40. We find the proposed amendment to be in direct conflict with the Cascade County's Growth Policy. Rather than minimizing local government intervention (Goal 5, Objective A), the change in zoning to hundreds of thousands of acres in Cascade County's Agricultural District to two new Districts: Mixed Use – 40 and Mixed Use – 20, is substantial overreach. Furthermore, should this change be approved, more industrial and intensive type uses would be allowed to the said existing Agricultural District properties, and our current right as landowners to provide input as to the impact of those uses would be greatly diminished. There may be justifiable need for the addition of mixed-use districts to buffer between residential and agricultural districts; however, changing parcels from the Agricultural District to mixed-use districts should follow the current process for a legal zoning change.

Your consideration of this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
LaLonnie Ward, Dennis Ward, Janny Kinion-May

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

DATE: March 24, 2019

TO: Cascade County Planning Department & County Commissioners

FROM: Carolyn Craven

RE: **PUBLIC COMMENTS 03.23.19**

I just discovered that on page 5, #18 I made an error. When I was researching this, I clearly saw the numbered list of 13 objectives in the Current Zoning Regulations. When I compared to the 2019 Proposed Zoning Regulations, I saw 12 objectives on an unnumbered list and apparently just did not see the separate paragraph a couple lines above the indented list of 12 objectives. That short paragraph is the first objective of the current list. So all 13 of the current objectives are in the Proposed Zoning Regulations. I apologize for that error.

So, one less page to read. ☺

I respectfully suggest that this first objective "To provide for compatible growth..." be removed from "paragraph location" and placed back in the list, as it is in the Current Zoning Regulations. It is clearly one of the objectives.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-24-19

Date Reviewed: 3-27-19

Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Michael Enk

Complete Address: Mailing: PO Box 1408, Great Falls, MT 59403 Residence: 6432 43rd St SW

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☑ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes

Comment

Please see my attached comments on the following pages.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-27-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments on Cascade County 2019 Zoning Regulations Revision

I choose to live in Cascade County for it's open space, uncrowded rural landscapes, clean air and access to public lands. Our Growth Policy was developed with the goal of protecting those same qualities with a fundamental commitment to "To zone all properties with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout Cascade County" and "To foster a more rational pattern of relationship between residential, business, and industrial uses". The Agricultural District regulations are key to preserving the current quality of life in Cascade County, and the proposed revisions run counter to those goals. More specifically, MU40 would facilitate an irrational haphazard pattern of development across our rural agricultural landscapes.

The proposed MU40 District would allow large scale, intensive land uses that do not match and are not compatible with the prevailing land use and rural character of the district. These areas are predominantly agricultural in use. Allowing major manufacturing and other industrial uses would violate many of the Growth Policy goals because it does NOT protect rural character, prime agricultural soils and farmland, open space, independent lifestyles, surface water, groundwater or environmentally sensitive areas. MU40 fails to promote an efficient transportation system and does not encourage commercial and manufacturing uses to be located around communities. MU40 does not encourage development to occur on non-productive agricultural lands, nor would it minimize the adverse social and environmental impacts of such development. In no way does MU40 preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of prime agricultural soils and protect them from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities.

In sum, the proposed MU40 runs counter to the major themes of the Growth Policy with no suitability analysis to support the appropriate designation of industrial use areas. Instead, MU40 throws the doors open to all kinds of large-scale intensive development that would be incompatible with prevailing rural uses and inconsistent with public health, safety and general welfare objectives. Replacing the Agricultural District with MU40 would definitely not facilitate an efficient transportation system or delivery of public services. Furthermore, the grouping of crop production, animal production and manufacturing into a single "productive use" category to be allowed in MU40 is a violation of the central purpose of the Cascade County zoning ordinance: "to ensure that land allocated to a class of uses shall not be usurped by inappropriate uses".

The process used to develop these revisions is itself troublesome and flawed. The Cascade County Planning Board is proposing major changes to zoning ordinances without completing the required 5-year review of the Growth Policy. The public has not been provided with a detailed analysis of each proposed change to the zoning ordinance, nor ample time to review such analyses and fully participate in the development of alternatives. No work sessions or landowner surveys were conducted prior to the 02/19/2019 staff presentation of the proposed zoning changes. No legal descriptions have been compiled for the millions of acres of Agricultural-zoned lands which would be redefined to Mixed Use, nor have the landowners been given adequate legal notification of the pending zoning change. It is indisputable that the County Planning Staff has not conducted a fully-transparent revision process and that public review has been lacking from the outset. Where indeed are the earlier versions of the proposed regulations and why wasn't public input sought for their development?

The wholesale redefining of "Agricultural" parcels to "Mixed Use" in order to allow more intensive and larger in scale uses without fully considering the impact on neighboring

properties is antithetical to the overarching purpose of zoning regulations. It threatens to sacrifice open space to industrial or intensive uses with little or no further public input. By eliminating or reducing the need for conditional special use permits, these proposed revisions are contrary to numerous goals of the Growth Policy as discussed above. Furthermore, MU40 fails to provide necessary performance standards to limit the impact of development on neighboring properties.

I am strongly opposed to allowing poorly-defined "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facilities" in MU40 without thorough public review and comment. A special use permit that addresses concerns about pollution, traffic, soil erosion, visual quality and other environmental or social impacts is absolutely necessary for this kind of development. It is irrefutable that a low-impact environmentally-friendly operation processing locally-grown plants and animals must be treated differently than an intensive high-impact operation processing thousands of pounds of trucked-in animals daily, using millions of gallons of water and producing huge volumes of solid and liquid wastes. Uses "permitted" by right in a predominantly agricultural zoning unit should only be for low-impact operations such as small businesses and family farms.

I adamantly object to the inclusion of expanded "Unclassified Use Permits" in the proposed regulations to include slaughterhouses, CAFOs and power plants. Facilitating such intensive and high-impact operations undermines the very purpose of the zoning process. The proposed revisions provide no assurance that these kinds of high-impact uses would come under proper purview by elected officials and be allowed only if all community impacts are addressed. The threats posed by industrial agricultural operations to family farms and ranches and to our quality of life in Cascade County cannot be overstated. Permitting such operations by right in MU40 directly conflicts with the Growth Policy. Alternatively, it would be much more appropriate for proposed intensive and high-impact development to follow the Planned Unit Development process of section 7.14.

I agree with the recommendations of Montanans for Responsible Land Use that "Agricultural Commodity", "Value-added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility" and "Value-added Agricultural Product" should be separated into "Plant-Based" and "Animal-Based" by definition because the potential impact from the related operations is significantly and substantially different. I also agree with MFRLU that "Workforce Housing" needs to be defined to include maximum density based on human health considerations (water supplies, waste treatment, etc.) and that "Temporary Workforce Housing" should have a specific time limit. More explicit definitions are needed to avoid the creation of undesirable "work-camp" situations like those seen in the Bakken Oil Field development.

Finally, I feel most strongly that "Rendering Plants" must be required to have at least a one-mile setback from the nearest existing residences. These operations are well-documented to have huge unavoidable impacts on air quality and the human environment of neighboring properties.

Michael Enk
PO Box 1408
Great Falls, MT 59403

From: Marilyn Cron <marilyncron@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Comments for tonight

Dear Commissioners,

As a member of the community of Great Falls and a resident of Cascade county I have very negative opinions regarding proposed changes in allowing unlimited numbers of animals on different sized lots in our county. The impact of pollution on land, in air and in the water is of grave concern. Coins will not replace health for ourselves and our children. I urge you to not change the strict limitations we need to protect our health and that of future generations
Regards
A concerned taxpayer
Marilyn Cron
1401 3rd West Hill Drive
Great Falls, MT 59404

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 3-27-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Chris Leatham, Owner, Bighorn Outdoor Specialists Inc

Complete Address: 3200 1st Ave North, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Zoning Changes

Comment

I am writing to share my objections to the changes proposed to Cascade County Zoning regulations. As a business owner and a home owner in Cascade County, I feel that these changes would negatively impact several aspects that are valuable to me, both personally and professionally. Agricultural land should not be converted to mixed-use zoning in one fell swoop. The Special Use Permit process would allow for input from all parties, as well as impact studies with regard to traffic, water, drainage, emergency services, noise, etc.

I value the open space, clean and quiet environment, rural atmosphere that Cascade County offers. Likewise, my customers come to Central Montana precisely for these reasons. While I am not opposed to growth or development per se, I feel strongly that we must use caution and adhere to the vision that represents the place that we all want to live and work.

These changes have the potential for far to great an impact to not be fully vetted by the public.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-27-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Commenter Information

Name: Beth Leatham Owner, Bighorn Outdoor Specialists Inc

Complete Address: 3200 1st Ave North, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Zoning Changes

Comment

I am writing to express my opposition to the sweeping zoning changes being proposed for Cascade County. As a home-owner and a business owner, I feel strongly that simply allowing all Agricultural Land to be reclassified as mixed-use would be a mistake with broad and diverse negative impacts to our quality of life. Specifically, I am concerned about noise, traffic, environmental degradation and boom/bust development that will leave us with a thoughtless, ramshackle sprawl.

I struggle to see why the zoning board feels this change must be made wholesale, rather than through the granting of Special Use Permits on a case-by-case basis. While I am by no means opposed to thoughtful and deliberate growth, the residents and business owners of Cascade County have the right to be involved in the growth of our communities.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-27-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☑ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: Susan Hillstrom

Complete Address: 607 3RD Ave SW, Great Falls, MT 59404

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Cascade County Planning Department is not following their own legally adopted process for amending the Zoning Ordinance outlined in Section 14.1.1. the proposed zone changes do not align with GROWTH POLICY. A detailed analysis of each zone change has not been provided for public review. Each zone change should reference goals in GROWTH POLICY. Thousands of property owners in Cascade County will be impacted by these zoning changes, but NO public input was solicited, NO survey was conducted to assess the impact.
Where are the legal descriptions for the boundaries of proposed district changes? this is required in Section 14.1.1 (3)
Landowners need to be legally notified of these proposed zoning changes. Cascade County landowners should have input into whether their land remains "Agricultural" or "Mixed Use".
Cascade County Planning Department has proposed allowing "Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facilities" as a permitted use in the new MU-40 districts - but makes no distinction between animal or plant based commodities OR between locally raised or imported commodities. It is obvious you want to make it easier for CAFOs and slaughterhouses - HUGE CONFLICT WITH GROWTH POLICY! Follow Section 7.14! Planned Unit Development (PUD) NOT "Unclassified Use Permit"

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Stacy Hermiller

Complete Address: 2340 Northern Lights Drive Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

My name is Stacy Hermiller. I appreciate the opportunity to express my concerns regarding the process and significant changes being proposed by the planning department of Cascade County regarding zoning and land use. As I draft this comment, I have decided to represent the personal side of the impacts on families and property owners adversely affected by zoning that does not adequately protect them. I fear weakness in the process of determining zoning regulations along with people trying to promote their own economic agendas places property owners at risk. We have seen and I have lived through the negative impacts of zoning that we once believed would protect our property and qualit of life. We learned the hard way in the fall of 2017, that zoning can be changed under our noses without us realizing it and we were left initially feeling helpless to defend ourselves. A weakness in the process culminated into a huge emotional and agonizing battle as our neighbors scrambled to understand, speak to, and defend their rights. It has taker a tremendous toll on many of us over the past 1 1/2 years, and yet, the battle is still in its infancy. I believe responsible zoning should both promote healthy growth in a county and community while also protecting existing property owners. I believe responsible zoning in Cascade County needs to protect our agricultural land and heritage, as well as our generational family farmers and ranchers. I do not believe it is appropriate to have zoning regulations that would allow for Heavy Industrial facilities, such as the proposed Madison Food Park, to be built in locations that are not zoned for heavy industry. The scale of Indutrial agricultural facilities as well as the secondary impacts of Industrial factory farming needs to be considered, defined, and strictly regulated. The current changes seem that they would actually allow large scale Industrial Agricultural facilities to be built in areas that would be less regulated than if they were required to be built on land zoned for heavy industry. It is an attempt to circumvent regulations that are very important to protecting our environment, homes, and quality of life. I am concerned that there was no public input sought in developing these

For Office Use Only					
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Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Stacy Hermiller

Complete Address: 2340 Northern Lights Drive Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
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- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

new zoning changes. Over the past year we have asked for transparency from the the County Government. I believe we have the opportunity here to reset the board and improve the process of initiating zoning changes. However, that means prior to any decision being made about the current proposal the planning department needs to take a few steps back. In the spirit of transparency and involving community members in decision making processes that impact their lives significantly, I am asking for the planning department to include community members in the process of developing these zoning changes. I think there should be work groups offered with staff. I can assure you there are many people who now pay attention to and care about responsible zoning, who could truly provide productive input. these changes need to be looked at, debated, and considered from multiple lenses not just from the agenda of a small number of people's ideas for what they want to promote for their own economic agendas.

In closing, I would like to attest to how the changes made to special use permit allowable uses nearly 2 years ago negatively impacted my life and my family. You will notice, my address has changed. We felt vulnerable and unprotecte as well as disregarded by the county. The processes the planning department engaged in, and the changes made put everything we loved about where we lived, just outside of town, in jeopardy. We ultimately decided to sell our home, far below our initial advised asking price. We had to disclose that we were a border property of the Madison Food Park land. We lost many showings because of this. Our property value and eventual sale price were negatively impacted. I have moved into city limits, and gave up the quiet peaceful country lifestyle I enjoyed. I don't feel like it is safe to invest in a property out-of-town without constantly worrying how things are going to change that will negatively impact the property value, environment, and quality of life I once enjoyed. I have visited with so many people over the past year experiencing anguish over this issue. They don't deserve the negative labels, such as NIMBY. They don't

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:		Date Reviewed:		Complete:	☐ Yes ☐ No

Compiled 06/03/19

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Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Stacy Hermiller

Complete Address: 2340 Northern Lights Drive Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

deserve to be disregarded by the county and the planning department. They deserve to be heard and their concerns seriously considered. I am asking the planning board to consider the flaws in the process that have led us to where we ar today. Please take this opportunity to insure things are done correctly and fairly and are representative of what the residents of Cascade County want while also promoting healthy growth. The Growth Policy is due for review and approval. Perhaps all of these zoning changes currently being proposed need to be put on hold until after the Growth Policy is reviewed and updated.Consider reccommending more study, definititions, and public input as being part of a nev zoning proposal drafted with the planning department, developers, and property owners. Consider advising the process for change be addressed so it is more representative, transparent, responsible, and protective of landowners and our environment. Thank you for your time, consideration of my concerns, and respect for the concerns of my friends and neighbors.

3/26/19

Stacy Hermiller

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:		Date Reviewed:		Complete:	☐ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Commissioners
RECEIVED
MAR 26 2019
Compiled 06/03/19

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

X Planning

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Commenter Information

Name: Charlotte Mehmke

Complete Address: 8244 US Highway 89; Great Falls, MT. 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☑ Other (describe): MU-40

Comment

I oppose this proposal. Cascade County should be main farm-ag not multi-purpose.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

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Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
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Commenter Information

Name: Sue Ann Stephenson-Love

Complete Address: 300 Southridge Ct #29 GF 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

Please see attached

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-29-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board

I am in opposition to and extremely troubled by the proposed amendments to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations. In many regards. This comment will address my most serious concern, that being the proposed change in the definition of "Agricultural District". If this amendment were adopted, all County lands previously designated "Agricultural", would with a sweep of the pen, be categorized as Mixed Use Districts. This envisions and would facilitate a whole scale change in the traditional nature and beauty of this County. One of the treasures of living in this County is viewing the wide open spaces and beautiful rural landscape. These treasures are irreplaceable. It is my firm belief that if all of these beautiful parcels of land in the County were now swept into the category of mixed use district, the results will be devastating. Rather, I believe that if certain parcels of land are deemed to be suitable for mixed land use (as that term will be defined), then each such proposed change should be addressed individually on its own merits. Broadly defining all now designated Agricultural lands into Mixed Use is ill-advised and certainly not in the best interest of maintaining the inherent beauty of our County. I urge that this proposed amendment not be adopted.

Thank you for your attention to this message.

Sue Ann Stephenson-Love
300 Southridge Court
Great Falls, MT 59405

From: Ted Obro <tedeo406@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2019 3:02 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Planning..

Well I did not hear of the planning meeting on Tuesday untill Wednesday. Anyway I feel the CAFCO Madison food park would be a detriment to Cascade county. Property values would drop, pollution and water contamination would be a major concern. Our schools are not Bi-linguol as teachers will need to speak Spanish (workers families). We don't have enough low income housing as it is, so don't let this happen.

Ted Obro
428 51st St So.
Great Falls., Mt.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-27-19
Date Reviewed: 3-27-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

From: Stuart Lewin <stuartlewin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 2:00 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Cc: Hilary Ransdell Lewin <hjrlewin@gmail.com>; Aart Dolman <aartdolman@icloud.com>
Subject: Missouri River Citizens , Inc. comments on proposed 2019 Cascade County Zoning Regulation Changes

Dear Cascade County Planning Board

Attached are Missouri River Citizens , Inc. comments on proposed 2019 Cascade County Zoning Regulation Changes
Please add these to the official record.

Thank you.

S Lewin

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 4-1-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

MISSOURI RIVER CITIZENS INC.
515 THIRD AVENUE NORTH
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA
59401

Missouri River Citizens (MRC), a non-profit MT Corporation, organized to promote green belt- open space and wise land use along the Missouri River

March 26, 2019

Cascade County Commissioners
Cascade County Planning Department (via email)
325 2nd Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

RE: Proposed new 2019 County Zoning Regulations Changes

Dear Cascade County Commissioners and Planning Department:

We write in opposition to the above-captioned matters.

MISSOURI RIVER CITIZENS, INC. (MRC) MISSION STATEMENT:

We are a citizens' action group. We keep watch over (monitor) Missouri River activities pertaining to stream flow; vegetation; natural and riparian areas; wildlife and aquatic life; water quality and pollution (discharge and non-point); recreation; subdivision; commercial, industrial, domestic uses; transportation systems; brownfields; and trails; on lands bordering the Missouri River, particularly in Cascade County.

Our mission is to increase public awareness of issues germane to the protection and use of the Missouri River as a living river, past, present, and future. We wish to ensure that future generations (as well as those presently living) will have a living Missouri River that protects fisheries, water quality, the drinking water supply, flows, and wildlife, while still promoting economic activity in the Missouri River Basin.

In addition, we want the residents of Great Falls to enjoy and participate in our river corridor (not just drive by). The Rivers Edge Trail and the Tenth Street Bridge provide opportunities for solitude and exercise on the banks of the Missouri and, in the case of the historic Tenth Street Bridge, over it, without having to fight the ubiquitous automobiles for space and quiet.

We believe that urban trails are as important as wilderness trails, and may be more important in that they allow urban dwellers to enjoy the natural beauty of Big Sky Country without having to travel long distances by car to get there.

The Missouri River/Sun River system here in Great Falls is a natural wonder to be enjoyed by all.

FAILURE OF THE PROPOSED 2019 CASCADE COUNTY ZONING REGULATIONS

Even though the County agreed to develop a countywide Missouri River Corridor Plan via the Missouri River City-County corridor plan adopted several years ago, that goal was omitted in the County Growth Policy Plan adopted May 27, 2014. Furthermore, the new Growth Policy Plan failed even to mention the value of protecting our rivers to the economic, recreational and environmental well being of all. However, presumably Objectives D and F in Goal 2 (page 2-2 of the 2014 Growth Policy Plan) could be construed to cover Missouri Corridor issues:

> D. Assure clean air, clean water, a healthful environment and good community appearance.
>
> ....
>
> F. Continue to work with federal and state agencies to redevelop properties within Cascade County which are currently undergoing Superfund and Brownfields processes.

These two objectives are under Goal 2 of the 2014 Growth Policy Plan, which is to "Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and *the community's historic relationship with natural resource development.*" (Emphasis added). It is clear that the last clause of this Goal 2 must be revised to properly protect the River. If "natural resource development" continues to be our goal, without regard to protecting the quality of the Missouri River's water, we will end up with more Superfund sites.

As it stands, the 2014 Growth Policy Plan is a great disappointment. However, the proposed new Zoning Regulations themselves fail to address Missouri Corridor pollution, development, and river protection issues. Changes in the zoning regulations from Agricultural to the new Mixed Use fail to address River Corridor issues. This is adding error upon error.

THE CASCADE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S PROCESS IS FLAWED

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601 (3)(f) requires the Cascade County Planning Board to review the Cascade County Growth Policy at least once every five (5) years after adoption. The current Growth Policy was adopted in 2014. It outlines the vision and goals that become the foundation of the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances adopted by the County government. *See* http://www.cascadecountymt.gov/df/361/Adopted2014_GrowthPolicy.pdf

MRC agrees with the comments of Montanans for Responsible Land Use (MFRLU) and believes the Cascade County Government should complete their 5-year review of the Cascade County Growth Policy, making the changes noted above, before adopting any new changes to the Zoning or Subdivision ordinances.

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Gregory and Jamie Bonilla

Complete Address: 712 54 Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☒ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

PLEASE SEE SIGNED COMMENT, ATTACHED

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	4-1-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

March 26, 2019

Cascade County Planning Division
Zoning Board of Adjustments
Board of Cascade County Commissioners
121 4th Street North
Great Falls MT 59401
Planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Dear Board Members:

The proposed amendments (changing the current agricultural designations to either Mixed Use 20 or Mixed Use 40) to the Cascade County Zoning Regulations are troubling in several aspects. First, the proposed amendments are a thinly disguised attempt to ease the path to authorization for the well-publicized Friesen slaughterhouse, which has significant public opposition. The proposed amendments therefore serve as a means to circumvent public opposition to the slaughterhouse by ultimately limiting the public's ability to object because the slaughterhouse would conform to the new zoning regulations.

Second, the Cascade County Growth Policy was updated in 2014, or five years ago. Pursuant to state law, the growth policy must be reviewed every five years. Thus, the growth policy is ripe for review. Given that zoning regulations must, pursuant to Montana Code Annotated § 76-2-203(1)(a), be made in accordance with he growth policy, it makes little sense to change the regulations prior to reviewing the growth policy with which, the proposed amendments arguably do not comport. In other words, the planning staff seems to be putting the cart before the horse.

Third, the proposed amendments do not comport with the lengthy requirements of § 14.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance. It must be noted that, imbedded in the requirements of § 14.1.1(6) is a verbatim recitation of the requirements of Montana Code Annotated § 76-2-203. Further, § 14.1.1(6) requires a statement which addresses each item contained in § 76-2-203. In contravention of the County's own regulations, the current proposal contains no such statement. The rule of law should apply to the County as much as it should apply to any other applicant contemplated by the Zoning Regulations.

Fourth, there is no legal description of the proposed district(s) as required by § 14.1.1(3). There is only a vicinity map. Again, the County does not appear to be complying with its own regulations. This will prove fatal to the County's rezoning efforts.

Fifth, it should not be overlooked that a change from Agricultural to Mixed Use is a substantive, rather than an administrative, change in the Zoning Regulations and in the lives of Cascade County residents. Any attempt to characterize the amendments as administrative would ignore the enormous impact the amendments would have on the County's residents.

Additionally, the County's rationale for the change of zoning designations is flawed. Appendix 2 of the staff report provides the rationale. It is expressed in Appendix 2 that MU-20 affords the opportunity to ensure that, for example, amenity development occurs along transportation

corridors or near population centers. However, the portion of the County east of Great Falls is slated for a MU-40 designation despite the fact that the area is near the third largest city in Montana, the area is along a State highway, and is also near another incorporated town (Belt). This would be precisely the area which should, according to the County's proposed changes and rationale for said changes, be destined for a MU-20 designation rather than a MU-40. The County's "rationale" for eliminating Agricultural zoned lands and designating them as MU-20 or MU-40 contradicts itself. Thus, Appendix 2 appears to be merely a justification, (and a very thinly disguised one), of allowing CAFOs/slaughterhouses near population centers and on or near prime agricultural lands rather than a justification for beneficial zone changes.

Further, Appendix 2 states that an additional benefit to the MU-40 designation "protects productive land use areas from types of development driven by demand for amenity destination which have infringed upon ranching and farming areas throughout the county and the state." Perhaps this is a statewide issue, perhaps not. Regardless, the question is not what the state's problems are, but what Cascade County is going to do about a perceived zoning issue in Cascade County. No examples were given in the rationale concerning unwanted development in agricultural areas. Even if such a problem exists, the assumption is implicit that only the MU designations can save the day. These are merely assertions and assumptions. Nothing more.

Finally, the proposed amendments are contrary to several goals as stated in the current growth policy. Specifically, the growth policy goals include protecting an maintaining the County's rural character and maintaining an agricultural economy. The proposed amendments do not, ultimately, adhere to these goals since mixed use zones allow many other uses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gregory and Jamie Bonilla

Gregory Bonilla

Jamie Bonilla

During this review MRC urges that Missouri River Corridor issues, goals, and planning processes as set forth in the Missouri River Corridor Plan (MRCP) should be made a part of a new Cascade County Growth Policy Plan. The City and the County should commit themselves to the vision promulgated in the MRCP, including having Cascade County develop a countywide Missouri River corridor plan.

Without revising our Growth Policy Plan first, before proposing new zoning regulations, not only are not following State law, but we are putting the cart before the horse and pursuing a dangerous path that could easily result in catastrophic results for the quality of life in our county. The failure of Cascade County's 2014 Growth Policy Plan can easily be seen where the County participated with the city in promoting the expansion of the refinery. The refinery itself is a Superfund site, and now it is expanding, right on the edge of the River.

There is nothing more important to human survival in today's world than clean water! Here in Cascade County we are blessed with this wonderful Missouri River. It is our most important and defining asset. How can we risk the River by permitting continued potential Superfund sites to be developed in the Missouri River Corridor?

What do you suppose the citizens of Fort Benton would think about what we are doing here in Cascade County? Their drinking water comes out of the Missouri. For that matter, what does the City of Great Falls think? We also take our drinking water out of the Missouri. As the River becomes more polluted through Cascade County's shortsighted growth policy plans, we all suffer, we and our neighbors.

We can and should do much better. Let's amend the 2014 Growth Policy Plan to provide strategies to improve our care for our rivers. Then we can propose zoning law changes that will best provide for our future.

As Missouri River citizens, we should all demand it.

Sincerely yours,
MISSOURI RIVER CITIZENS, INC.

Stuart Lewin

Aart Dolman

Hilary Ransdell-Lewin
Members of the Board of Directors

cc: Great Falls City Commissioners

From: Camille Consolvo <caconsolvo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 3:00 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - Planning and Zoning Proposed Changes

It is my understanding that the Cascade County Planning Department is proposing to change the legal definition of all "Agricultural" Districts to "Mixed-Use" Districts. I have heard that this is more administrative in nature to better capture the local economy.

I have several concerns with this: 1.) Under the proposed regulations the definition of the MU-40 District would, "provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential site characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses." Redefining the zoning regulations that govern millions of acres as "Mixed-Use," with the result of allowing more "intensive" and "larger in scale" uses is more than an administrative change. This is essentially proposing a new type of district, "Mixed Use," and then proposing a legal zone change for every parcel currently zoned "Agricultural" to the newly defined "Mixed Use." I believe that Cascade County residents and landowners should have input into whether their land (and their neighbors) stay "Agricultural" or go through a legal zone change to "Mixed Use."

Camille Consolvo
2717 3rd Ave. N.
Great Falls, Montana 59401

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-26-19
Date Reviewed: 4-1-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

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Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

Comments Submitted
03.08.19
03.12.19
03.15.19
03.21.19
03.23.19
03.25.19
03.26.19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-26-19	Date Reviewed:	3-28-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn Craven 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT

I am a native Montanan and am currently a resident and homeowner in Great Falls. I have reviewed these proposed zoning changes and have submitted several public comments during this process. I have a few additional comments....

Globally there is growing pressure to increase our environmental awareness and regulations to prevent pollution. **Increasing industrial use, especially those industries with high environmental pollution track records, seems like a 19th century approach to 21st century future sustainable growth and environmental stewardship.**

There is considerable peer-reviewed scientific research that promotes successful smaller sustainable farms relying less on the large chemical industries and mega-animal production industries. According to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy, the" family farm" is Cascade County's predominate form of agricultural operation. A small slaughterhouse for local use and food distribution somewhere in the county is very appropriate. But we have a mandate to prevent water pollution and preserve our water resources, our rich and productive land, and clean air. A mega-sized arena with a smorgasbord of slaughterhouses, feedlots, rendering plants, large confined animal feeding operations and other heavy industries is not needed to support our local ranchers and their animal production.

This issue is a non-partisan community issue and has far-reaching effects on future generations. Allowing large slaughterhouses, feedlots and their related industries are a significant part of these new definitions and proposed zoning changes. Over the past few decades research studies indicate results of water and air pollution, land contamination, lower relative incomes, greater income inequality, a far less active "main street" with fewer stores, and declines in our community health and well-being. A 2006 study commissioned by the State of North Dakota Attorney General's Office reviewed 56 socioeconomic studies documenting the economic impacts of industrial agriculture in general on rural communities. The studies consistently found, in addition to adverse environmental effects, "detrimental effects of industrialized farming and animal production on many indicators of community quality of life, particularly those involving the social fabric of communities. The only kinds of economic development attracted to 'industrial agricultural communities' are other environmentally polluting and socially degrading industries". This North Dakota study concluded by stating "**This is not sustainable economic *development*; it is industrial economic *exploitation*.**"

We can say NO to these proposed zoning changes promoting mega-sized animal production and other heavy industries throughout our previously zoned Agriculture land and we can SAY "YES" TO SOMETHING BETTER!

We have an opportunity to create the kind of world we want with sustainable economic growth and without adverse environmental and social consequences. It is our collective responsibility as citizens and government officials to be well-informed before we make decisions. It is my hope that we will collectively choose the opportunity to "take the high road", rather than succumb to the environmentally, socially, and ethically "low road" epitomized by large industrial animal feeding and slaughter operations as well as other polluting heavy industries. Numerous reasons to choose the "high road" include maintaining environmental quality, public health, and the social fabric of our communities in an ethical and sustainable manner for the most benevolent outcome for our community and the planet. We – you, me, republicans, democrats, farmers, ranchers, government employees, teachers, office workers – all of us from every walk of life - WE ARE RESPONSIBLE for the environmental, social and moral legacy we leave to today's children and future generations in this magnificent "Last Best Place".

Respectfully,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

From: Kate Buckles <kate.a.buckles@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:37 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Cascade County Planning Board

I think that county government officials need to follow their own protocol. I think that when these types of zoning changes are being made, the information should be made available to the public and the public should be able to voice their opinion. The consequences of certain zoning changes may be monumental and may change our county and our state forever. I grew up in Great Falls and had planned on staying here. Some of the changes changes being made are not conducive to me or anyone else wanting to live here! Thank you.

Kathy Buckles
(406)-750-6559

Sent from my iPhone

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-28-19
Complete: ☐ Yes ☒ No

From: josh wagoner <wagonerjt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 10:28 PM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Re: Proposed Zoning Changes

I spent nearly the first two decades of my adult life working hard and eagerly waiting to be able to afford to buy my first home. I was finally able to make my dream a reality in Great Falls. Much of my money and free time goes into restoring my very old house and making my yard look as beautiful as I know how to, and I receive frequent compliments on both. My neighborhood, the Lower Northside, contains what a lot of people, and what I sometimes, consider to be undesirable, but the crime could be worse, the gorgeous historic houses make up for the clunkers, and I'm good friends with many of my neighbors. I could live somewhere more hip with a more thriving population of younger people, I'm often asked why I don't, and I could make more money elsewhere, but Great Falls has a lot going for it and it has so much potential with the right leadership and direction. Generally the people are very nice, there's a feeling of a Midwest farm community but with all the perks of the Rockies and the West, such as the amazing mountains a short drive away in three directions and wide open and undeveloped space as far as the eye can see, with real family agriculture, both farming and ranching obviously thriving, a famous and glorious river running right through town, rich history, traffic issues and sprawl that are minor enough to be more than acceptable, and blocks and blocks of old homes and businesses that would make any architect or anyone with any taste in architecture drool. So, I chose to make by far the biggest investment I'll ever make and purchase the most valuable thing I'll ever own in life, my house, right here. In addition to that, I volunteer my time every week for causes that help people right here in the community, I give my neighbors a hand and they give me a hand, I shop locally, and I donate money to local causes too, because I care about this place, I'm good for the community and the community is good for me, but one thing keeps me up at night, discourages me, and keeps me prepared to up and move at any time, and that's the threat of poor planning and absolutely the wrong growth that is always lurking and seems imminent due to the insistence of the Cascade County government to not look out for me and my fellow citizens as of late. I feel this way, and rightly so, as someone who lives in the heart of town, not as one of the unfortunate families who live rurally where the county is proposing to allow this pell-mell and harmful growth, and that's because these changes will negatively affect all of us, far and wide. I have more than two decades left in my career, hopefully followed by a long and enjoyable retirement, and I'd like to do it here, without seeing my neighborhood and community riddled by crime, traffic, sprawl, overstressed schools and services, a fouled environment, and all the other consequences that will inevitably come with these proposed zoning changes, drastic and confusing changes that would be laughable if they weren't so sad and pathetic.

Since Edward Friesen privately met with county commissioners and revealed his slaughterhouse dream, after which I was told by the county that I couldn't discuss the slaughterhouse with my own county commissioner, and changes were shortly thereafter made to the zoning wording to Friesen's great benefit, it has constantly AT MINIMUM seemed that the commissioners, the planning department, and especially the Great Falls Development Authority, and make no mistake that the GFDA is essentially a wing of the local government and enjoys the use of our local government dollars, are insistent on making it impossible for Friesen's dream not to be realized. The drastic, wholesale and posthaste attempted changes to the zoning regulations are the latest and some of the clearest evidence of this. Despite "value-added agriculture" being a huge buzzword for the GFDA, such a vague term has no place in our county zoning regulations, and neither does "mixed use" zoning. Such terminology needs to be discarded and replaced with specific definitions for different types of growth with vastly varying consequences to all of us in the area, and the greater the ramifications of each industry, such as a

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Date Received: 3-25-19
Date Reviewed: 3-28-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

slaughterhouse, which would be right near the top of the most damaging industries we could allow to move in, the greater the restrictions and public involvement must be in what should be the necessary application process. Public involvement is imperative every step of the way. I'm sure the GFDA will oppose this, and they seem be driving this mess, probably behind closed doors, but what should we expect, they're the very definition of pell-mell, relentlessly pushing industrial agriculture and heavy industry in such ridiculous places as adjacent to the most visited State Park in Montana, at the same time increasing truck and train traffic on a main thoroughfare, River Drive, that doesn't appear to be able to be expanded due to a massive cliff and river on one side and businesses all along the other and which frequently backs up for blocks whenever even a short train crosses the road coming from this brilliant (sarcasm) "ag" park. Paris Gibson, who truly did brilliantly design this town with trees and parks and a logical grid, would without doubt roll over in his grave if he saw what our development "Authority" is doing now. Maybe that also partially comes from the conspicuous lack of planning department employees with planning degrees. Speaking of agriculture and industrial and the planning department, contrary to what the planning department believes, all agriculture is not industrial. There's a big difference between 3,000 acres consisting of grass and sage or wheat, a few Quonset huts, barns, silos, a house or two, windbreaks, and maybe a few acres of broken down old trucks and tractors and 3,000 acres of sewage lagoons, parking lots, and buildings. One is agriculture and one is industrial. One is a good neighbor, pleasing to the eye, a refuge for wildlife, a place you could hunt or fish or show your kids, real Montana, and the other is, well, the exact opposite. They're not the same and should be classified in no way as the same, or even referred to as distant cousins. I am a professional in the habitat and resource protection field and I'm positive agriculture and industrial do not belong together and are far from one and the same. Please stop trying to pretend like they do and are. Also, please stop insulting our intelligence by pretending that our kids are leaving Great Falls because there aren't enough industrial agriculture jobs, like the slaughterhouse or an egg sorting plant or other "value-added" processing plants. This couldn't be farther from the truth and you know it. I could write pages on just this subject, what types of culture and jobs would keep our kids here, but I'll spare you if you'll quit this charade.

Among many other concessions I'd like to see from the county is removing Carey Ann Haight from facilitating planning meetings, and others similar public meetings, where she treats the public, which you would think she should be serving, with such disdain, contempt, and condescension. It really does not encourage public participation or feelings of goodwill toward Cascade County government. I also implore the county to give us back our confidence in you and don't make us worry that you're going to sell us a bill of goods and stick us with a ruined last best place. I'm free enough and marketable enough to leave and start over, if need be, although I don't want to, and I'm sure many of those working in our county government have the financial means to do the same, but I would bet a majority of Cascade County residents aren't in the same fortunate situation as we are. I ask you to make us trust you. Let us trust you. I am not and never have been anti-government. I'm not one who works for the government, or greatly benefits from government programs, while decrying the government. I know government is useful and necessary, and as someone who believes in the principles or subsidiarity and solidarity, strong local government with plenty of public involvement is especially important, but you have, again, AT MINIMUM, given the appearance of doing shady backroom deals, allowing nepotism, rushing changes through without adequate public involvement, and even allowing conflicts of interest. I appeal to you to be above reproach and to do the right thing. All growth is not good growth, and neither is opening the door to a hodgepodge of who knows what all over the county through vague terminology and wording that even intelligent lay people don't understand. Collaborate with us to grow Cascade County in the right way. Protect our homes and investments and families. We deserve that, to keep this a great place and make it an even better place. I know my commissioner, Jane Weber, and her husband,

are good people, good neighbors, who care and who do great things in the community, and I've heard good things about commissioner Larson. Please, serve your constituents well and honorably, prepare for and prevent future negative consequences of poor decisions, and reign in rash planning and development before it's too late. Encourage us by making us believe in you and what you're doing and I promise we will support you.

Thank you,

Josh Wagoner
710 5th Avenue N.
Great Falls, MT 59401

March 25, 2019

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Erin Tropila

Complete Address: 811 5th Ave N, Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☐ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ■ Other (describe): Proposed zoning policy changes

Comment

Please see attached letter. Thank you.

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-25-19	Date Reviewed:	3-27-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Cascade County Planning Board
121 4th St N, STE 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401

March 25, 2019

Members of the Planning Board:

I commend the various departments for the lengthy work involved to date regarding zoning proposal changes. In keeping with growth standards for any city or county, the effort involved is obvious. Opening up time for public comments is crucial to any public policy process. Thank you for arranging a more suitable time and place for the resultant meeting and for your volunteer service to the county.

After perusal of the vast documentation related to the proposed zoning changes in Cascade County from Agricultural to MU20/40, I respectfully submit my thoughts/observations.

The **Cascade County Growth Policy** is grossly outdated; growth policy must be current for evaluative purposes when considering changes, and especially comprehensive changes. If zoning changes are indeed a valuable growth-related option at this time, updated growth policies, and clear and vetted opinions regarding such are required. A brand new Cascade County Growth Policy should be initiated.

I cannot locate in any documentation any indication that landowners/stakeholders have requested such sweeping rezoning changes either in Cascade County or anywhere else in the United States. I have not successfully located any documentation where **a proposal to rezone all agricultural land in an entire county from AG to MU20/40** or equivalent has taken place. I cannot locate any documentation that any agricultural stakeholder in Cascade County or any other county in the United States has proposed changing zoning for property that is not owned by that stakeholder. There is no benchmark for the outcome of implementation of such a scope. What is the rationale for a sweeping zone change for all agricultural property in one county that appears not requested, not vetted and not part of a policy implementing a current growth policy?

If the intent of zoning changes is to align for prevailing uses, why is the scope of MU 40 so far beyond current uses? Procedures for appropriate zoning reassignment on an as-needed basis appear sufficient as is. The public has not been informed as to any denial or undue constriction for projects that are factually/legally appropriate under existing zoning laws for Cascade County. The procedure for Special Use Permits and special consideration for new projects is already established and the public has not been given any indication that current zoning laws are insurmountable. We cannot anticipate every use, its impact on adjacent landowners, city and county residents, mutual natural resources and taxpayer-financed resources such as roads and services. All stakeholders must have the capacity to protect their assets. There is nothing in current process to reject valuable projects with value-add to our communities and the county. To broaden zoning allowances for "what if" scenarios is irresponsible, myopic and in opposition to state-mandated growth policy formulation.

Lastly, what is the remediation for a worst-case scenario? What if well meaning but unintended consequences harm? What is the exposure of the county and our extensive resources in what appears to be an untested experiment in rezoning?

I appreciate the opportunity to convey my concerns and I look forward to hearing more specific information regarding the same.

Respectfully,

Erin Tropila

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Kirsten Krauss

Complete Address: 1925 3rd Ave N Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Regulations changes for Cascade County

Comment

See Attached comments re:
Process of Amending Zoning Ordinances

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Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

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Commenter Information

Name: Kirsten Krauss

Complete Address: 1925 3rd Ave N Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Regulation changes for Cascade County

Comment

See Attachment comments re: Agricultural zoning to Mixed-Use

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☐ Yes ☒ No

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

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Commenter Information

Name: Kirsten Krauss

Complete Address: 1925 3rd Ave N Great Falls, MT 59401

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☐ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Regulation changes for Cascade County

Comment

see Attached comments re. Unclassified Use Permit proposal

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Date Received:	3-24-19	Date Reviewed:	3-25-19	Complete:	☐ Yes ☒ No

April 7, 2019 ① of 5

Cascade County Commissioners
RECEIVED
APR 09 2019

Cheryl L. Walker
P.O. Box 6983
Great Falls, MT
59406

Cascade County Commissioners
325 2nd Ave. N.
Great Falls, MT
59401

Honorable Cascade County Commissioners,

Isn't it communist-leaning and basically a tendency toward centralized government, which I understand communism is, to slap Great Falls with an acopalypse-meeting slaughterhouse to be prepared

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Date Received: 4-9-19
Date Reviewed: 4-9-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

for the end times or war,
when, I assume, it is
anticipated dinner meat
won't arrive on trucks
or airplanes?

Wouldn't we want our citizenry
to take care of that when
the time comes, if it
comes? I mean, I know
cows are cute, with
those big soulful eyes.
But I think American
citizenry all over America

April 7, 2019

is capable of taking care of business when it comes to killing some cow or finding some mean person to do it.

Isn't that our job? Killing animals to eat? Unless it isn't part of our diet?

Do we really need our government to protect our right and our ability to do it?

April 7, 2019 Compiled 06/03/19 ④ 5

I couldn't. But I certainly don't expect to run out of freezer options. And I don't see how a slaughter facility is instrumental in that. It isn't. People are. And governance.

So I am opposed to the zoning changes being considered. We have

April 7, 2019
5 of 5

a right to raise our own food or find someone to do it for us.

There is no shortage of butcherable-capable people for butcherable-eligible animals. We don't need some corporate or government-enabled facility to do it for us.

Cloud Walker

Montanan for 5 years.
Never raised a cow.
Never butchered a cow.
So what do I know?
Sorry. Thanks for reading! :)

Like farms and families. Not experienced there, either

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
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Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ☒ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☒ Other (describe): Proposed Zoning Changes Cascade County

Comment

Please see attached written comments. Thank you!

Comments Submitted
03.08.19
03.12.19
03.15.19
03.21.19
03.23.19
03.25.19
03.26.19
Please note I agree with comments submitted by Tammie Lynne Smith, Conn & Naomi McElvey, Nate Kluz,
Dr. Cheryl Reichert, Charles Bocock, Missouri River Citizens, Michael & Deborah Jenkins, Arlyne Reichert
4-14-19
4-15-19

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	4-15-19	Date Reviewed:	4-15-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

April 15, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

GROWTH POLICY

Thank you to Chairman Merja and the members of the Planning Board for accommodating requests for the later time and larger venue used for the March public meeting and for reading and responding to the public comments to date.

There have been numerous public comments recommending that the 2014 Growth Policy be updated via a series of public input sessions prior to even thinking about changing any zoning regulations. Below please find references from *MT Code Annotated, MT Local Government Board Handbook 2011, MT Planning Board Members Handbook 2009, MT Growth Policy Resource Book 2009, MT Dept of Commerce Community Needs Assessment 2007*, and *Cascade County Growth Policy 2014* to reinforce the legal and ethical requirements to update the Growth Policy, which is due to be updated in May 2019. Based on the recommendations in these documents, it is likely that a Growth Policy update with numerous opportunities for public input via small groups and public meetings could easily take several months prior to beginning any possible zoning changes. I am respectfully requesting that the Planning Board will vote to "take some other action related to preparation of a growth policy" (SB 326) and vote to "prepare a growth policy to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, general welfare, efficiency, and the economy" (MCA 76-1-106). I also respectfully request that the Planning Board provide numerous opportunities and venues for public input for a revised Growth Policy over the next several months. The information below provides several pertinent references from these documents as the basis for these requests.

"Positive change requires a clear mandate, open meetings, succinct explanations, and plenty of opportunity for public input". **Arlyne Reichert, Public Comments 3-9-19**

References

- The 2003, Montana Legislature amended the 1999 growth policy statute through SB 326. The amended statute "Authorizes the planning board to recommend that a growth policy <u>be adopted</u> or <u>not adopted</u> or recommend that the governing body <u>take some other action related to preparation of a growth policy</u> after the public hearing.
- Upon request of the public body, "the planning board will prepare a growth policy to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, general welfare, efficiency, and the economy". (MCA 76-1-106)

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

1)MONTANA CODE ANNOTATED (MCA) 76-1-601

Development of a Growth Policy (76-1-601, MCA): In Montana, a growth policy is an official public document adopted and used by local governments as a general guide for decisions regarding the community's physical development. Growth policies were previously known as, and you may still hear them referred to, as "master plans" or "comprehensive plans." A growth policy itself is not a regulatory document; rather, it is an official statement of public policy to guide growth and manage change for the enhancement of the community.

2) *Excerpts from* MONTANA CODE ANNOTATED 76-2-203

Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations.

(1) Zoning regulations must be:

- (a) made in accordance with the growth policy; and
- (b) designed to:
  - (i) secure safety from fire and other dangers;
  - (ii) promote public health, public safety, and general welfare; and
  - (iii) facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

(2) In the adoption of zoning regulations, the board of county commissioners shall consider:

- (a) reasonable provision of adequate light and air;
- (b) the effect on motorized and nonmotorized transportation systems;
- (c) compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities;
- (d) the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses; and
- (e) conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdictional area.

(3) Zoning regulations must, as nearly as possible, be made compatible with the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities. History: Sec. 4, Ch. 246, L. 1963; R.C.M. 1947, 16-4704; and. Sec. 15, Ch. 582, L. 1999; and Sec 3, Ch. 87, L. 2003; and. Sec. 7, Ch. 446, L. 2009.

3) *Excerpts from* MT LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD HANDBOOK 2011

The planning board serves to advise the local governing body. The board may propose policies for: subdivision plats; development of public ways, places, structures, and utilities; issuance of improvement location permits; and laying out public ways and services. Upon request of the public body, the planning board will prepare a growth policy to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, general welfare, efficiency, and the economy (MCA 76-1-106). The governing authorities shall also require the county planning board to recommend boundaries and appropriate regulations for the various zoning districts (76-2-204).

4) *Excerpts from* MT PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS HANDBOOK 2009

- County Planning Board, 76-1-211, MCA
  - At least one member of a county planning board must be a member of the governing board of a conservation district.
- Definitions 6-1-103. As used in this chapter, the following definitions apply:
  - (4) "Growth policy" means a comprehensive development plan, master plan, or comprehensive plan that was adopted pursuant to this chapter before October 1, 1999, or a policy that was adopted pursuant to this chapter on or after October 1, 1999. (p113)

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

- Relationship with Governing Body
  - As mentioned before, the planning board serves in an advisory function to the governing body (76-1-106, MCA). This combination of planning board recommendations and governing body decisions influences land use in a community. Because the relationship between the two bodies is so important, the two should meet periodically to discuss issues regarding community planning and land-use policy. If the governing body has certain policies it wishes to pursue, the planning board needs to understand them, and how the governing body would like to achieve them. Conversely, the planning board members should share their concerns and ideas with the governing body. Ultimately, the two entities may not agree on policy or how to implement it, but at least each will be informed so they can make decisions and recommendations accordingly.

- Community planning entails a lot of time, work and resources. It includes making difficult decisions and is neither quick nor easy. Ultimately it should be a process that benefits all Montanans by providing:
  - Sustainable rural lifestyles and vibrant cities and towns.
  - Conservation of rural landscapes.
  - Balance between economic growth and quality of life.
  - Education and engagement of the public.
  - A sound basis for land use decisions. (p22)

- Conservation of Landscapes
  - Planning can help conserve landscapes which provide important public benefits such as wildlife habitat, storage of floodwaters, groundwater recharge and view sheds that would be difficult and expensive to replace if damaged. (p23)

- In order for zoning regulations to be effective and legally sound, they must be developed in a manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives found in a community's growth policy. (p29)

- Public participation is not only required under statute, but local governments must encourage participation by developing local procedures for such purposes. Section 2-2-103, MCA, states that "Each agency shall develop procedures for permitting and encouraging the public to participate in agency decisions that are of significant interest to the public. The procedures must ensure adequate notice and assist public participation before a final agency action is taken that is of significant interest to the public." Adequate notification is critical for not only ensuring public participation but also to avoid any litigation that could arise for not following statutory procedures. Section 2-3-104, MCA spells out that "An agency shall be considered to have complied with the notice provisions of 2-3-103 if:
  - an environmental impact statement is prepared and distributed as required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act, Title 75, chapter 1;
  - a proceeding is held as required by the Montana Administrative Procedure Act;
  - a public hearing, after appropriate notice is given, is held pursuant to any other provision of state law or a local ordinance or resolution; or
  - a newspaper of general circulation within the area to be affected by a decision of significant interest to the public has carried a news story or advertisement concerning the decision sufficiently prior to a final decision to permit public comment on the matter." (p33)

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

5) *Excerpts from* MT GROWTH POLICY RESOURCE BOOK 2009

- The purpose of this publication is to help local officials and Montana citizens understand how they can work to manage change and preserve the quality of life in their communities through the tools provided by Montana's planning statute.

> ** In this publication, the term "community" or "communities" will be used broadly to include all of Montana's general-purpose local governments, towns, cities, and counties.*

- The Montana Environmental Quality Council report, *Planning for Growth in Montana,* identified several benefits of community planning, including the following:

1) *Fosters wise and thoughtful investments in major public facilities, such as roads, water and sewer systems, solid waste, and fire protection.*
2) *Makes communities safer and healthier by encouraging well-designed streets, protecting water quality, and deterring development in unsuitable areas such as floodplains, wetlands, fault zones, and unstable slopes.*
3) *Helps to make a community more attractive to investment by businesses and industries.*
4) *Protects special community values, such as historic, cultural, scenic and natural features, or rural, agricultural character.*
5) *Builds public consensus and greater understanding of issues within the community.*
6) *Promotes affordable housing.*
7) *Identifies growth patterns that minimize the cost to provide local services and infrastructure.*
8) *Maintains property values for residential, commercial, and industrial properties by preventing nearby incompatible or degrading uses.*
9) *Ensures that adequate amounts of suitable land are available for residential, commercial, and industrial growth.*

- Many communities find that their land use policies are written after the fact as a consequence of subdivision review, rather than in advance through a thoughtful process of community planning.
  - A statement in the Great Falls City-County Comprehensive Plan sums up why any community, growing or declining, should plan for its future:
    - **"Planning allows the community to envision its future and proactively work to achieve it, instead of just reacting and moving from one short-range, quick-fix solution to another, as events occur."**

- In the 2003, Montana Legislature amended the 1999 growth policy statute through SB 326. The amended statute:
  - Authorizes the planning board to recommend that a growth policy be adopted or not adopted or recommend that the governing body take some other action related to preparation of a growth policy after the public hearing.
    (Under the previous statute, the planning board was only authorized to recommend the proposed growth policy, regardless of the comments received at the public Hearing. (p11)

- Section 76-1-601, MCA identifies several elements that must be addressed as part one of the growth policy. The statute does not define the extent to which each element must be described. The **required** elements include: *[among ten total required elements]* (p13)
    - Community goals and objectives;
    - Maps and text that describe the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area (including information on land uses, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities, natural resources, and other characteristics);

- In order for zoning to be effective (and legal), the zoning regulations must be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the growth policy. (p46)

- Under Montana statute, planning boards are the only public entities authorized to prepare growth policies. Creating a growth policy takes considerable time and effort by the planning board and its planning staff or consultant. The more thorough the process is, the more time will be necessary for completing the plan, developing the implementation tools, and carrying out the policy. (p15)
    - It should be noted that MCA sections 76-1-601(2)(f)(ii) and (iii), require the local government to include as part of the growth policy *"a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy; and a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy, if necessary."* It is during this review that a community should determine if the existing goals and objectives are still appropriate or if they need to be updated. (p21)

- One of the most important phases of the development of a growth policy is the articulation of community goals and objectives. The development of goals and objectives provides the philosophical framework for the growth policy. The growth policy goals and objectives are statements describing the way the community wants to develop socially, economically, and physically. They are intended to guide the growth and development of the city, town, county, or other planning area covered by the growth policy. (p18)

- The EQC report, *Planning for Growth in Montana,* encourages a "community visioning process" as a preliminary step in defining goals and objectives. "Community visioning" is defined as "a process through which a community imagines the future it most desires and then plans to achieve it." According to the EQC report, an advantage of this approach is that it results in a positive statement and emphasizes areas of agreement. (p18)
    - The EQC report *"concluded that more emphasis must be placed on planning and implementation measures rather than relying on subdivision review alone to address growth."*

- Since the goals and objectives are the foundation for the growth policy, broad public participation in the formation of those goals and objectives is crucial to assure the success in developing the growth policy and implementing it. Public participation in local decision making is fundamental to our democratic process of government. Public participation cannot be ignored, or poorly planned and carried out. While successful citizen participation is a crucial element in developing a growth policy, it is also possibly the greatest challenge in the process. (p22)

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

- The growth policy must describe the projected long-term trends for each of the inventory items and other elements proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing body. (p24)

- A land use study is basic to effective land use planning and to the use of implementation tools as zoning or subdivision regulations. A land use study analyzes the way in which community lands are being used: (residential, commercial, industrial, agriculture, public, transportation). Sometimes information may be easier to analyze in tables or charts. However, maps depicting information are likely to be more easily understood by the general public. Therefore, most land use studies use maps show various information (e.g. topography, vegetation, parcel density, road networks), supported by descriptive, analytical narrative and documentation. One of the best ways to begin a land use study is by creating base maps. These are maps that visually show you the inventory of your community: roads, parcels, public facilities, lakes, streams, rivers, vegetation, wildlife, floodplains etc. (p25)

- Closely related to projected land use is the topic of access and transportation. The physical layout and spatial arrangement of the land uses have to be logically related to a transportation network that provides efficient movement of people and goods. (p29)

- Along with the land use study, the physical and environmental characteristics and constraints of a community must be assessed within the geographic limits of the planning area. Physical and environmental characteristics and constraints are some of the most important factors in determining which areas are most appropriate for development. In this element of the growth policy, information on topography, slope, geology, soils, vegetation, hydrology, wildlife, climate, flood and earthquake hazards, and other topics are presented. The interrelationships between different physical and environmental characteristics and suitability for development, human activities, and land uses should be considered. It is especially important that environmental constraints for different types of land development activities and land use activities be identified. Key natural (i.e. prime agricultural lands, big game winter range, wetlands, floodplains) and historical or archaeological resources that may need additional protection or accommodation should also be identified. (p33)

- MCA 76-1-601(2)(c) requires *"projected trends for the life of the growth policy for each of the following elements: land use; population; housing needs; economic conditions; local services; natural resources; and other elements proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing bodies"* be included as part of the growth policy. (Note that the only topic described in the data-gathering section above that is not included here is public facilities. That is because the statute specifically requires the development of *"a strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and Bridges")*. (p35)

- MCA 76-1-601(2)(d) requires that the growth policy must have *"a description of policies, regulations, and other measures to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives established pursuant to [this planning process]."* (p37)

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

- Summary: A variety of background information and studies are undertaken to produce a greater understanding of the community, and as preparation for guiding growth. Such broad topics as economics, population, land use, transportation, physical land characteristics, public facilities, public services and housing are examined in varying detail, related to each other. Information sources include published and unpublished documents, private citizens in the local communities, and local, state, and federal public agencies or non-profit organizations. Those characteristics and items capable of being mapped are graphically displayed on base maps of the planning area. Visually depicting such information through maps, charts, or graphs helps the public to discern physical relationships and the public and local officials to draw conclusions and develop action plans. A summary of any related background or special studies should be made available for public review in an easily understandable format. (p36)

6) *Excerpts from* CASCADE COUNTY GROWTH POLICY 2014

- The Cascade County Growth Policy serves as a comprehensive plan to provide guidance on decisions regarding land development and public investments.
  - Because growth policies have a significant impact on the ability to develop private land, a thorough public involvement process is critical to formulating these strategies.
  - This growth policy's designated growth areas are the result of time intensive public involvement efforts.
- The first Cascade County Development Plan was created "through the use of community surveys, citizen advisory committees, public hearings, and citizen comments (Cascade County Growth Plan 2014, (p11)
- Subsequent iterations of the Cascade County Growth Plan involved extensive public involvement including "public hearings, conducted in Monarch, Sun River, Centerville, Cascade, Belt and Great Falls" with opportunities for additional public input, ideas and suggestions.
- In the current 2014 Cascade County Growth Plan, the authors stated that "more extensive updates to the Growth Policy may require a re-write with additional public participation in the future". (p12)

I strongly urge we follow the above recommendations of our county leaders!

- In Chapter 3, Public Participation, of this 2014 Growth Policy, the authors wrote that:
  - Since the goals and objectives are the foundation for the growth policy, broad public participation in the formation of those goals and objectives is crucial to assure the success in developing the growth policy and implementing it. Public participation in local decision making is fundamental to our democratic process of government.
  - Public participation cannot be ignored, or poorly planned and carried out. While successful citizen participation is a crucial element in developing a growth policy, it is also possibly the greatest challenge in the process.
  - Good public participation can highlight concerns and issues not always apparent to the local planners or officials. It can provide a voice for diverse interests and helps a community "buy into" the reasons for a growth policy. If the public has been part of the process then they will have "ownership" of the final document. An additional benefit of public participation is that when properly documented, it gives significant legal support to the growth policy when it is officially adopted by local government. Growth policies that reflect the vision of a community through citizen participation and that comply with Montana's statutory requirements will generally withstand most legal challenges.

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

7) *Excerpts from* COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS / MT DEPT OF COMMERCE 2007

> ***"The future now depends on people all over the country working together to make things better in their particular place. It depends on people in different kinds of places - large and small towns, urban and rural neighborhoods - asking themselves what can we do to make this community a more hopeful place to be young, a more rewarding place to work, and a more friendly place to grow old."***
>
> Alice Rivlin, former Director of the Congressional Budget Office & Vice-Chair of the Federal Reserve Board

- This can be an excellent opportunity to ask "what's good about our community and how can we make it better?" Identify the positive aspects of the community and develop a strategy for building upon them to make the community an even better place to live.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven 04.15.19
Homeowner

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 Fax: 406-454-6919

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form.

Commenter Information

Name: RON UDALL

Complete Address: 50 GREENRIDGE LANE GT FALLS 59405

Comment Subject (please check one)

☐ Special Use Permit Application ☐ Subdivision ☐ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment

☑ Growth Policy ☐ Variance ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment

☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street

☐ Other (describe): ML40 AND MADISON PARK FOODS

Comment

I FEEL THAT ML40 IS PREMATURE AND AT TIMES WITHOUT MERIT. I FEEL THAT PROMISES WERE MADE IN THE PAST TO CANADIAN INTERESTS. I HAVE VERY LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN THE DECISION MAKING SO FAR BY THE CO. COMMISSIONERS AND I BELIVE THEY HAVE ERODED THE PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THEM. I ALSO GROWING WEARY OF THE "GOOD OLE BOY" ATTITUDE OF CASADE CO GOVERMENT. THE CONCERNED CITIZENS THAT WOULD BE SEVERELY IMPACTED BY MADISON FOOD PARK ARE FIGHTING AN UPHILL BATTLE AGAINST A PREJUDICED PLANNING STAFF AND COMMISSION. FEELING CAN NOT BE TRUSTED. IF YOU WILL DO YOUR HOMEWORK MADISON FOOD PARK SHOULD BE A HUGE RED FLAG. IF ML40 ERODES THE ZONING BOARDS ABILITY TO OVERSEE COUNTY PROJECTS YOU HAVE DONE A HUGE INJUSTICE TO CASCADE COUNTY. I FEEL THAT A HUTTERITE FUNDED PROJECT LIKE MADISON FOOD PARK IS A POOR WAY TO GROW CASCADE COUNTY, THE COMMISSION WILL GIVE THE TAX BENEFITS AWAY AND WE WILL BE STUCK WITH

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	5-3-19	Date Reviewed:	5-3-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

ENTRY LEVEL JOB, HIGHER CRIME AND MORE PEOPLE ON WELL FARE AND MEDICADE, FURTHER BURDENING (over)

THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY. IF CASCADE CO IS SO DEADSET ON CATERING TO A CANADIAN COMPANY (A POOR ONE) THEN HAVE THEM PROVIDE AMERICAN FUNDS HELD IN ESCROW, SO THAT WHEN THEY BUILD WHATEVER THEY ARE GOING TO BUILD THIS WEEK (IT CHANGES CONSTANTLY) AND LEAVE A HUGE MESS WE DON'T HAVE TO CLEAN IT UP. I THINK ALOT OF THE CHANGES ARE TO ALLOW MPF AN EASIER PATH TO BUILD. YOU PEOPLE NEED TO INVESTIGATE YOUR NEW BUSINESS PARTNER AND SPEND SOME TIME DOWN WIND OF A HUTTERITE COLONY. WE STRUGGEL FOR NEW BUSINESS but I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CITIZENRY OF CASCADE CO. SHOULD HAVE TO BEND OVER FOR BAD DECISIONS FOR A BIASED COMMISSION AND PLANNING BOARD SO THAT THOSE TWO ENTITIES CAN TELL EACH OTHER WHAT A GREAT JOB AND WHAT FORWARD THINKERS THEY ARE. IN FACT THEY ARE BARELY THINKING PAST THE NOSE ON THEIR FACES

Ron Udale

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406-454-6905 | Fax: 406-454-6919
Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ■ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

05.21.19 Planning Board Hearing on Growth Policy Revisions
05.31.19 Zoning Definitions
06.01.19 Agricultural Zoning

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	6-2-19	Date Reviewed:	6-3-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

June 1, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS
AGRICULTURE ZONING

***Excerpts from* MONTANA CODE ANNOTATED 76-2-203**

Criteria and guidelines for zoning regulations.

(1) Zoning regulations must be:
- (a) made in accordance with the growth policy; and
- (b) designed to:
  - (i) secure safety from fire and other dangers;
  - (ii) promote public health, public safety, and general welfare; and
  - (iii) facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

(2) In the adoption of zoning regulations, the board of county commissioners shall consider:
- (a) reasonable provision of adequate light and air;
- (b) the effect on motorized and nonmotorized transportation systems;
- (c) compatible urban growth in the vicinity of cities and towns that at a minimum must include the areas around municipalities;
- (d) the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses; a
- (e) conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdictional area.

(3) Zoning regulations must, as nearly as possible, be made compatible with the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities. History:Sec. 4, Ch. 246, L. 1963; R.C.M. 1947, 16-4704; and. Sec. 15, Ch. 582, L. 1999; and Sec 3, Ch. 87, L. 2003; and. Sec. 7, Ch. 446, L. 2009.

The 2019 Cascade County Proposed Zoning Regulations (CCPZR) recommend "splitting the current Agricultural District into the Mixed Use-20 and Mixed Use-40 Districts". Staff Report Appendix 2 03.26.19

I respectfully recommend maintaining the current boundaries of all the Agricultural District zoning, which is strongly supported in the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy, as discussed below.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

- The 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy (2014 CCGP) includes maintaining **agricultural economy as one of the five primary goals** (Goal 3). The intent is to "protect the most valuable soils, protect against soil erosion, protect the floodplain from non-agricultural development and support the development of value-added agriculture in Cascade County utilizing the products from the regional area (Objectives A, B, C, D)".

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Goal #3 and Objectives A, B, C, D.

- Another of the five primary goals (Goal 2) is to "protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development".

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Goal #2.

- In the 2014 CCGP, another goal (Goal 9) is to "**foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands**, and forests". Objective F states "encourage open buffers between rural residences and adjoining agricultural lands" and Objective G states "encourage agricultural landowners considering land subdivision to develop the least agriculturally viable portion of their properties".

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Goal #9 and Objectives F and G.

These increased industries throughout the county in mixed use areas are <u>not</u> preserving *"the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle enjoyed by Cascade County Citizens"*, which includes clean water, clean air, open spaces and communities that are culturally rich, friendly and welcoming.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

- In the 2014 CCGP, section 5.10, Economic Activity and Constraints, several policies pertain to agriculture.
  - 'Every effort should be made to protect and maintain **farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County** (Policy 2)".
  - "Develop, protect & enhance **the agricultural economy** of Cascade County (Policy 10)".
  - "Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land (Policy 11)".

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Section 5.10 Policies 2, 8, 11.

- The 2014 CCGP, Section 8.3, Prime Agricultural Soils Area, states:
  "The **prime agriculture soils** resource preservation areas are intended to contain those soil areas where it is necessary and desirable, (because of their high quality, availability of water, and/or **highly productive agricultural** and grazing capability), to preserve, promote, maintain and enhance the use of such areas for agricultural purposes and to protect such land from encroachment by non-agricultural uses, structures or activities. Therefore, the **prime agricultural soil preservation areas** of Cascade County are those areas where the soils have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), according to the NRCS definition of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance."

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Section 8.3.

- In 2014 CCGP Section 8.2, Resource Protection Areas Designation and Establishment states:
  "The following resource protection areas are hereby established as part of the Cascade County Growth Policy: ▯ **Prime Agricultural Soils** ▯ Forest Cover"

Removing agricultural zoning and replacing with MU-20 and MU-40 is in direct conflict with the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy Section 8.2.

- The 2014 CCGP Chapter 11, Review Criteria states:
  "Under the provisions outlined in Section 76-1-601 (3) (h) (i) MCA, growth policies must include a discussion regarding how governing bodies will define the criteria in Section 76-3-608 (3) (a). The basis upon which the local governing body makes a decision to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove a subdivision is whether the preliminary plat, environmental assessment, hearing and planning board recommendations or additional information demonstrates that development of the subdivision meets the requirements as set forth in Section 76-3-608, MCA. The statute requires that governing bodies must issue "findings of fact" that weigh the effect on the following criteria: ▯ **Agriculture** ▯ **Agricultural Water Facilities** ▯ Local Services Natural Environment ▯ Wildlife ▯ Wildlife Habitat ▯ Public Health and Safety.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

Cascade County will evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in Section 76-3-608 (3) (a). Subdivision review will include written findings of fact as to whether or not the proposed subdivision will have an impact the six criteria outlined by Section 76-3-608 (3) (a).

Agriculture and agricultural use occupy a prominent place in the 2014 CCGP. It is <u>one of the five primary goals</u> and <u>one of two resource protection areas</u> in the 2014 CCGP. Removing Agricultural zoning is definitely not consistent with the history of Cascade County and with the Cascade County Growth Policies over the years. MCA 76-3-608 considers agriculture essential to be assessed by governing bodies required to issue "findings of fact" that could affect agriculture and the other five categories above.

- Chapter 11 Section 11.1 Definitions includes MCA 76-1-601, which requires Cascade County to include definitions of the criteria outlined in Section 76-3-308(3)(a). Those are listed as follows:

  AGRICULTURE
  All aspects of farming or ranching, including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

  AGRICULTURAL WATER USER FACILITIES
  Those facilities which provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, head gates, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.

Replacing agriculture zoning with mixed use zoning is not consistent with the heritage of Cascade County and the continued importance of sustainable family farms, crop production and livestock grazing, as evidenced by state law, historic precedence and county zoning regulations.

- Chapter 5 Economic Condition of the 2014 CCGP states: "The economy of Great Falls and Cascade County is tied to **three key elements**: Military spending in support of Malmstrom AFB and the Montana Air National Guard, **Agricultural Spending**, and Health Care Services.

This further emphasizes the importance of our agricultural zoning in Cascade County.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

- Chapter 5 Section 5.6 Manufacturing Employment in the 2014 CCGP provides the following data: ⍰ **Agricultural Products.** The 2012 data indicates that 447 persons are employed in the manufacture of food and another 86 are employed in beverage and tobacco product manufacturing. Included in these employers are two large flour milling operations, a malting barley plant, a pasta production plant, and a feed producing operation. The sector represents a fairly stable economic base and while dependent somewhat on agriculture prices, it should provide about the same employment through 2020.
- Chapter 5 Section 5.8 in the 2014 CCGP states: The *"family farm" is Cascade County's predominate form of agricultural operation".*
- Chapter 5 Economic Conditions in the 2014 CCGP lists several policies related to agriculture and agriculture use:

  1.Commercial and manufacturing uses should be encouraged, if such uses ***do not adversely affect agriculture*** *and are located around and in existing rural communities.*
  2. Every effort should be made to ***protect and maintain farming units****, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County.*
  4. Efforts should be made to ***discourage commercial strip development*** *along major thoroughfares.*
  5. Efforts should be made to stabilize and develop employment and economic activity.
  6. ***Environmental as well as economic*** *perspectives should be considered in any future development.*
  7. Efforts should be made to ***attract non-transportation sensitive industry*** *to Cascade County.*
  8. Utilization of ***locally produced agricultural products*** *and raw materials should be encouraged.*
  10. Develop, protect, and enhance the agricultural economy of Cascade County.
  11. Encourage future development to locate on non-productive or marginally productive agricultural land.
  12. ***Minimize****, to the greatest degree possible,* ***the adverse social and environmental impacts of development*** *and encourage beneficial effects of orderly growth.*
  14. Encourage economic activities to locate in those areas ***most economically, socially and environmentally appropriate,*** *as determined by the County Planning Board and other public agencies.*

Replacing agricultural zoning with mixed use zoning is in opposition to the prominent role of agricultural land in Cascade County and to the Policies #1, # 2, #4, #5, #6,# 7, #8, #10, #11, #12, #14 in Chapter 5 Economic Conditions in the 2014 CCGP.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

- In the 2014 CCGP, Section 6.7 *Recreation and Tourist Trade*, the policy states: "Encourage recreation and tourism, especially **in the areas that are compatible with agricultural use".**

- In the 2014 CCGP, Section 7.2 *Natural Resources*, the policy states: "**Since the rivers, lakes, streams and reservoirs are the highest priority landscape unit in terms of agriculture**, aesthetics, wildlife habitat and recreation, development of water systems for domestic and **agricultural uses** should be subject to review by the Cascade Conservation District and should be in compliance with Montana's Stream Bank Preservation Act (SB310)"

The 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy states *"every effort should be made to protect and maintain farming units, because the family farm is important in the economy of Cascade County".*

The 2019 Cascade County Proposed Zoning Regulations (CCPZR) are redefining over a million acres of land into Mixed Use-20 (MU-20) and Mixed Use-40 (MU-40), resulting in allowing "more intensive" and "larger-in-scale" uses as well.

This is in direct violation of the overarching goals stated in the 2014 CCGP focusing on the importance of our agricultural land.

The heritage of the area in agriculture....and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas and farmlands..." **speak about maintaining environmentally friendly, smaller sustainable farms, thereby preserving the beauty of our open spaces, rural character, natural grazing areas and farmlands. Smaller sustainable farms typically are in harmony with the environment.**

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

Montana Code Annotated 2017

TITLE 76. LAND RESOURCES AND USE

CHAPTER 2. PLANNING AND ZONING

Part 9. Agricultural Activities

Agricultural Activities -- Legislative Finding and Purpose

76-2-901. Agricultural activities -- legislative finding and purpose. (1) The legislature finds that agricultural lands and the ability and right of farmers and ranchers to produce a safe, abundant, and secure food and fiber supply have been the basis of economic growth and development of all sectors of Montana's economy. In order to sustain Montana's valuable farm economy and land bases associated with it, farmers and ranchers must be encouraged and have the right to stay in farming.

(2) It is therefore the intent of the legislature to protect agricultural activities from governmental zoning and nuisance ordinances.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 309, L. 1995.

RECOMMEND MAINTAINING OUR CURRENT AGRICULTURAL ZONING, WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY THE 2014 CASCADE COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

A healthy agricultural district is essential to the well-being of our county. Among the many benefits are the open spaces, wildlife habitats, food security, economic activity, and quality of life, which is consistent with many goals and objectives in the 2014 CCGP, including two of the five primary goals:

"Maintain agricultural economy" [Goal 3]

and

"To preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County Citizens". [Goal 5]

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

Public Comment Form

Cascade County Public Works Department Planning Division
121 4th St N, Suite 2H-2I Great Falls, MT 59401
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Email: planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov

Instructions

This form is for providing public comment to the Cascade County Planning Division for review by any one or more of the following review and/or approval boards: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBOA), Planning Board, or Board of County Commissioners. Only complete submissions will be included for board review. Please provide the relevant information for each section below. A complete submission provides all of the following: commenter name and address, comment subject, and commentary on the subject issue(s). If additional space is needed for commentary, please attach additional sheets to this form. Completed forms may be submitted in person at the Planning Division office or by email at planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov.

Commenter Information

Name: Carolyn K. Craven

Complete Address: 101 14th Avenue South, Great Falls MT 59405

Comment Subject (please check one):

- ☐ Special Use Permit Application
- ☐ Subdivision
- ■ Zoning Text and/or Map Amendment
- ■ Growth Policy
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Floodplain Regulation Amendment
- ☐ Subdivision Regulation Amendment
- ☐ County Road Abandonment/ Discontinuation of County Street
- ☐ Other (describe): _____

Comment

05.21.19 Planning Board Hearing on Growth Policy Revisions
05.31.19 Zoning Definitions

For Office Use Only					
Date Received:	6-7-19	Date Reviewed:	6-5-19	Complete:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

May 31, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CASCADE COUNTY PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS

DEFINITIONS

Agricultural Use, as defined in the 2018 Cascade County Zoning Regulations (CCZR), is "The use of land for periodic livestock sales and the like, tree farming or growing or producing field crops, livestock, and livestock products for the production of income, excluding feedlots. Field crops include, among others, barley, soy beans, corn, hay, oats, potatoes, rye, sorghum, and sunflowers. Livestock includes, among others, dairy and beef cattle, goats, horses, sheep, hogs, poultry, game birds, and other animals including deer, rabbits, and mink. Livestock products include, among others, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, meat, fur, and honey.

Agricultural Use, as defined in the 2019 CCPZR, is "The use of land for crop production, animal production, aquaculture, apiculture, entoculture or forestry".

Both definitions recognize the importance of agriculture, both crop-based and animal-based, in Cascade County.

1) <u>Agricultural Commodity</u>
   - The 2019 CCPZR define *Agricultural Commodity* as "Any commodity produced from an agricultural use. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, grains, soybeans, hay, corn, timber, fish, fruits, vegetable, crickets, or oil seeds".

Recommend the above definition be divided into two separate definitions as the potential impact is significantly greater for certain commodities.

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED

Any commodity produced from an agricultural use grown through traditional horticulture and farming. This includes, but is not limited to, grains, soybeans, hay, corn, timber, fruits, vegetables and oil seeds.

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED

Any commodity produced from an agricultural use involving livestock, poultry, fish and/or insects. This includes, but is not limited to, livestock, raw milk, honey, fish, or crickets.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

2) <u>Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility</u>
   - The 2019 CCPRZ define *Value-Added Agricultural Commodity Processing Facility* as "Any facility in which one or more agricultural commodities are physically produced in such a way that results in a value-added agricultural product and is not otherwise defined in these regulations.

Recommend the above definition be divided into two separate definitions as the potential impact is significantly greater for certain commodities. Also recommend giving examples of "value-added".

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – CROP PRODUCTION BASED

Any facility in which one or more agricultural commodities are physically produced in such a way that results in a value-added crop-based agricultural product (/such as milling wheat into flour) and is not otherwise defined in these regulations.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PROCESSING FACILITY – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED

Any facility in which one or more agricultural commodities are physically produced in such a way that results in a value-added animal-based agricultural product (such as making yogurt or cheese from milk) and is not otherwise defined in these regulations.

Definition retrieved from the internet...

Commodity vs. Product: An Overview....

A **commodity** is a raw material used to manufacture a finished good. A **product,** on the other hand, is the finished good sold to consumers. Both commodities and products are part of the production and manufacturing process—the main difference being where they are in the chain.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

3) <u>Value-Added Agricultural Product</u>

- The 2019 CCPZR define *Value-Added Agricultural Product* as "An agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as milling wheat into flour, curdling milk in the production of cheese, melting honeycombs to make beeswax; (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the vale of that commodity (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products."

Recommend the above definition be divided into two separate definitions as the potential impact is significantly greater for certain commodities.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – CROP PRODUCTION BASED

An agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as flour from milling wheat); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the vale of that commodity (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products).

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT – ANIMAL PRODUCTION BASED

An agricultural commodity that has undergone any one or more of the following processes: (1) a change in the physical state or form of the commodity (such as cheese from curdling milk, beeswax from melting honeycombs); (2) a production process of a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products); (3) the physical segregation of an agricultural product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the vale of that commodity (such as an identity preserved marketing system utilized, for example, in non-GMO products).

PLEASE REFER TO PREVIOUS COMMENTS ON DEFINITIONS SUBMITTED ON MARCH 15, 2019

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

MISSING DEFINITIONS

- There are no definitions in the 2019 CCPZR for "Mixed Use", "Mixed Use-20", "Mixed Use-40", "Commercial Dairy" and "Temporary Stabling". An "intent" is provided for the MU, MU-20, MU-40, but *"intent" does not seem to be specific or regulatory in nature* and does not identify maximum parameters (i.e. "higher-density", "small scale", etc.)
  - *Commercial Dairy*
    - Please define the specific purpose and parameters
    - Maximum number of cows
    - Minimum space per cow
  - *Temporary Stabling*
    - The 2019 CCPZR define Slaughterhouse as "A place, building, or structure where small or large livestock are *temporarily stabled* prior to slaughter and slaughtered. Additional processing may include butchering, preparing, or packing for off-site distribution or temporary storage for on-site sales."
      - Define "Temporary stabling" in terms of maximum length of time (i.e. 48 hours), maximum number of animals, and minimum amount of space per animal.
  - *Mixed Use*
    - 7.5.1 Intent

      The MU District is intended to provide for higher-density residential development with residential services and limited commercial uses operating at a small scale. This district allows small towns throughout the county to maintain local services and expand residential development.
  - *Mixed Use-20*
    - 7.6.1 Intent

      The MU-20 District is intended to provide for exurban residential development and mixed uses along major transportation and amenity corridors. The district serves as a buffer zone between denser MU development and less dense, more intensive uses in the MU-40 district.
  - *Mixed Use-40*
    - Intent
      - The MU-40 District is intended to provide for mixed land uses that may be more intensive in character and larger in scale while allowing residential sites characteristic of traditional farming and ranching uses.

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

The MU-20 District intends to provide "*mixed uses along major transportation and amenity corridors*". This is in violation of the following from the 2014 CCGP:

Chapter 5, Policy #4: *"Efforts should be made to discourage commercial strip development along major thoroughfares"*.

The MU-40 District is not well-defined (i.e. "more intensive", "larger in scale") and is in violation of the following primary goals from the 2014 CCGP:

Goal 2: "*Protect and maintain Cascade County's rural character and the community's historic relationship with natural resource development*".
Goal 2, Objective A: "*Foster the continuance of agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands and forests*".
Goal 2, Objective I: "*Encourage the growth of the agricultural economy*".
Goal 3: "*Maintain agricultural economy*".
Goal 3, Objective A: *"Protect the most productive soil types"*.
Goal 3, Objective B: "*Continue to protect soils against erosion*".
Goal 9: *"Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contributions and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests"*.

RECOMMEND ELIMINATION OF THE PROPOSED MU-20 AND MU-40 DISTRICTS

RECOMMEND RETAINING THE CURRENTLY ZONED AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn K. Craven
101 14th Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

C.K. Craven
Homeowner

From: Karen Flater <krflater@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 12:39 AM
To: Planning Comments <planningcomments@cascadecountymt.gov>
Subject: Zoning changes

To Cascade County Commissioners,

I am writing to urge you to not make zoning changes that will allow Madison Food Park to be built in our county. Do not make changes that will even allow a cheese processing plant from this company to come in. Once their foot is in the door they will bring a nightmare to our county, city, state and our citizens lives and health.

In case any of you have forgotten, a cheese processing plant is what Friesen said they would start with. "In the initial application and followup presentations, Friesen has indicated plans to start with the cheese processing facility and ramp up to the slaughterhouse facilities." DO NOT ALLOW FRIESEN AND HIS COMPANY ANY FURTHER IN TO OUR COMMUNITY!

Friesen also stated in a letter in 2018 that it would take 7-10 years to build giving us time to adjust (see attached). Our city, county and citizens should not have any financial or personal adjustments to make of any kind to a business coming in nor should we want to. This monstrosity will impact us financially (personal and government) as well as our mental and physical health and create huge strains on our public services. We already do not have room in our jails and cannot take care of our homeless. Our city and county do not have the resources to house, feed, provide schooling and health care for the approximate 12,000 people (mostly immigrants) that these facilities bring in to work in these poor conditions.

It is your jobs to protect the citizens of your county and I strongly suggest you do your homework and get the facts before you make any zoning changes. We as citizens have a right to clean air, water and free from harm and you have been elected to make sure that happens.

Thank you for your time,

Karen Flater
523 4th Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

Sent from my iPhone

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: 5-21-19
Date Reviewed: 5-21-19
Complete: ☒ Yes ☐ No

[redacted]

MADISON FOOD PARK LLC

May 18, 2018

Cascade County Planning Dept.
1214th St. North #2H-21
Great Falls, MT 59401

Re: Madison Food Park LLC, ("MFP") Special Use Permit ("SUP") Application
Attention: Mr. Brian Clifton, Director of Public Works, Great Falls, Montana

Dear Mr. Clifton,

We would like to update and inform you that MFP is continuing to assemble information in order to evaluate qualified industry professionals, scientific technologies, robotic systems and the best methods to implement these technologies into our proposed Food Park Campus ("FPC"). In order to maximize the benefit to Montana communities, we will ensure that we minimize the use of natural resources (water), install the most efficient, sensible, scalable and biologically-based nutrient recovery of waste water and employ the best usage of existing infrastructure. We would also incorporate traffic studies and labor market research in the State of Montana. It is important to note that the primary goal of MFP is to establish its facilities with a net positive contribution to the County of Cascade and surrounding communities.

MFP is a small family-owned company recently incorporated in the State of Montana, which does not raise livestock. Therefore, we must align and partner with Montana-based & family-owned ranchers, milk producers, livestock producers and grain growers with similar goals. Those goals are to produce, process and market naturally raised foods for the local, national and foreign marketplace(s), while maintaining Montana's clean air, water and soil. We believe that Montana's economy will [illegible] with these value-added facilities and processing the livestock and agriculture products right here.

We forsee that this project will take between 7 to 10 years to complete, and we are determined that the development and growth of our contemplated state-of-the-art facilities will be conducted in a responsible and ethical way. This gradual process will enable the County and surrounding communities to absorb, adjust and accommodate the infrastructure demands, with the least amount of interference or negative impact to accustomed lifestyles of local citizens.

We would like to proceed with the SUP amendment(s), however, we insist on being accurate and wish to employ science-based and proven-effective technologies, so that the FPC can be completely developed according to the evolving site plan, with the least amount of negative impact on the environment. Maintaining good stewardship of the building site, surrounding lands and sensitivity to the immediate neighbors is of the utmost importance to MFP.

It is expected that an amendment(s) will follow in the next **180 days** approximately, depending on the length of time it takes to receive further information, required for amending the SUP(s).

Sincerely

Edward **Friesen**

President Madison Food Park, LLC

[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone