



Envision Gallatin

LAND USE & HOUSING STRATEGY

Steering Committee Meeting #1

November 8, 2023 | 1:00-3:00pm

Attendees:

Jackie Haines - NRMEDD, Executive Director

Matt Fulton - Planning and Zoning Commission

Ted Guis - Planning Board

Zach Brown - County Commission

Lori Christensen - Health Offices, City/County Health Department

Lila Fleishmann - HRDC, Community Development Director

Discussion:

Questions:

1. What is the current state of zoning reform in the County?
 - a. Text/map amendments are driven by applicants, not a process led by the County (as they struggle to wrap their arms around the 20-some odd zoning districts)
 - b. The recent administrative updates were not meant to be substantive, they were intended to bring uniformity and clarity to the various types of zone districts across Gallatin County.
2. What does a final document [in terms of this process] impact? What are the implications?
 - a. The FLUM is meant to be a tool for the County to guide decision making, rather than a lever that changes grant funding or resources.
 - i. A literal roadmap that provides a basis for staff and board/commission decisions
 - b. RHS should also not be related to grant/federal funding. Again, just a tool.
3. What kind of specificity in the housing strategy should be expected?
 - a. EPS wants to provide as much specificity as possible to create an "action plan" that highlights who's best equipped to do each thing.
 - b. An important part of the RHS is helping different communities understand their role in providing housing and highlighting what tools and best practices
4. Why are the FLUM and RHS tied together?
 - a. The County received CDBG funding to pursue the creation of a Regional Housing Strategy, and the timing of that project lined up well with the creation of the FLUM. This is great, because it's useful to tie the land use discussion to the housing development discussion (what types of housing should go where, and how much is needed).
5. Do these types of plans influence how MDOT prioritize their projects?
 - a. Zach Brown: probably not, MDOT is often reactive.
 - b. Sean: To Darcie's earlier point, providing MDOT with proof of a plan could be beneficial to getting MDOT attention in this area.
 - c. Belgrade interchange is 6-10 years out (according to MDOT)
6. Is the FLUM regulatory?
 - a. No, as part of the Growth Policy, the FLUM is non-regulatory

DW: As much as there is coordination happening around the County, there is so much work going on that there is still room for more communication between the communities/NGOs/municipalities.

Vice Chair = Lori Christensen

General Discussion:

1. WHAT SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE CES?
 - a. Lila receives questions about how this work intersects with other initiatives-- we need to craft explicit language that (1) highlights how they are different and (2) find ways to avoid "reinventing the wheel" in the housing arena
 - b. Need a deliberate and intentional outreach to groups interested in potential future zoning
 - i. Group A: people and organizations who are advocates for zoning (nonprofits, organizers, etc.)
 - ii. Group B: people who have trepidation around the zoning discussion
 1. One way to reach out to the AG community would be through the Canal Companies
 2. The AG extension agent also has an email list
 3. AGAI - <https://agaimt.com/>
 - iii. Developers, designers, realtors
 1. Southwest Montana building industry association - <https://swmbia.org/>
 2. Montana contractor's association - gravel miners
 - iv. HOAs
 - c. Transportation-related groups
 - i. Bozeman Airport Authority (has municipal authority)
 1. There is existing tension between the airport and Belgrade
 - ii. Big Sky Area Resort District may be doing a transportation study
 - d. Chamber of Commerce(s) function as a useful listserv
 - e. Hybrid meetings stink but are also good (!)
 - f. Hispanic/Latino communities
 - i. Bienvenidos - <https://bienvenidosgv.org/>
 - ii. Community liaison
 - iii. Success often comes from focus groups led by community liaisons
 - iv. El Mercado in Four Corners functions as a community hub
 - g. Rural fire departments
 - i. WUI focus
 - h. Forest Service
 - i. Northwest Energy -- not a large market for renewable energy in this community (State) at this time
2. ARE THERE PARTICULAR ISSUES YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED THROUGH THIS PROJECT?
 - a. From a planning board standpoint, the Growth Policy is very subjective. So the more objective (numerical(?)) we can make the map, the more the Planning Board would feel comfortable supporting their decisions.
 - i. DW: we are going to try to thread the needle to allow flexibility but we could provide some range of density brackets that would improve predictability

- b. From a zoning standpoint, all of the County's zoning districts behave really differently (usually based on who lives in the district). Hoping that this project can add to the broader community's understanding of how different land uses can work together.
 - c. Would love to see something that takes industry growth into account
 - i. Natural resource extraction (gravel) is a large industry and, in particular, Belgrade is apparently fit for both gravel mining and residential development.
 - d. May need to consider minimum densities in areas where water and infrastructure exist.
3. HOUSING
- a. What would be helpful to the County? What would you like to see?
 - i. We need to help the county understand what role, as an organization, the County can plan in the regional housing game.
 - ii. Make sure County housing strategies intersect with city housing strategies/projects.
 - 1. Looking for ideas about what areas might be appropriate for LIHTC development (in Belgrade, West Yellowstone, etc.)
 - iii. Preserve naturally-occurring affordable housing and get creative/stay open minded about affordable housing types (e.g., mobile and manufactured home parks)
 - b. Need to coordinate between water and sewer districts to understand where services may be available in the future
 - c. How to develop housing on land that the County owns (land banking, land inventory, etc.)
 - d. **Hard to overstate that only the richest people in the entire country are able to purchase new housing here-- this is a message that needs to be told.**
 - e. Charter Development is reserving 1/3 of apartments in a new development for workforce housing

NEXT STEPS:

Steering Committee #2: December 13th

- Draft land use and policy audit
- Draft County land use profiles and housing needs assessment

Steering Committee #3: January 31st

- Review/discuss draft county land use profiles and housing needs assessment