



MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY

GPHY 365 Geographical Planning

Public Participation 101

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Introduction

The outputs included in this report were part of a collaboration with the City of Bozeman. Both groups find that communicating/understanding how and when the public can participate in planning actions and decisions is difficult. Our project entailed developing “Public Participation 101” material that the city may use in the future. Students had two tasks. The first task was to present definitions of common public participation terms (public comment, public meeting, public hearing, public notice, and public protest). The second task was to illustrate how to give effective public comment for one of the following planning actions: zone map amendment, zone text amendment, or growth policy amendment. The first part of the document includes students’ definitions, while the second part includes information on effective public comment.

GPHY 365 has a service learning component, which include the following learning objectives and goals: 1) Become conversant in legal definitions of public participation related to community planning and development and where public participation is outlined in Bozeman’s Unified Development Code and Community Plan; 2) Understand and communicate how community members can provide effect written or verbal public comment; and 3) Practice and expand professional skills including how the design of public facing communication pieces to aid public understanding of public participation.

Class members included:

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Thank you to our partners who helped review various versions of the outcomes you see today!

Karen Filipovich, *Northeast Neighborhood Association*

Tonya Stevens, *University Neighborhood Association*

Dani Hess, *City of Bozeman Community Engagement Coordinator*

Danielle Garber, *City of Bozeman Associate Planner*

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Definitions

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Definitions 101

What is public comment?

Public comment is the main way citizens can get involved in the city planning process. It is your opportunity to make your voice heard on the issues that matter to you. Public comments can be submitted in writing, or voiced at public hearings.

While public comment is an official way to get your voice heard, there are a multitude of ways to be publicly engaged in the community, which can all be found through the QR code below.

Public Hearing vs. Public Meeting

The distinction between a public meeting and hearing is very important if you want your voice heard. The below table summarizes some of the main differences between these two similar events.

Learn More About how to Get Involved

Scan Me!



How do I make a public comment?

What is the difference between public notice and protest?

What is the difference between a public hearing and a public meeting?

What is public notice vs. protest?

A public notice is required of the government to let the public within 150 feet of a property undergoing a change.

Protest is a right given to landowners that possess land within 150 feet of a proposed rezoning or other action. Protests are required to be in writing and require signatures and more information.

Hearing	Meeting
A specific type of meeting where a decision is made and public input is required	Any situation where a governing body meets to discuss issues pertaining to them
Citizen participation required	Citizen participation not required
Where official public comments are heard by government officials	Official public comments are not made in all public meetings
A final official decision can be made	A consensus can be reached, but the decision is not finalized

Public Participation Fact Sheet: Zone Map Amendments

Navigating the world of public participation can first seem very daunting to uninformed citizens. In order to provide clear and effective public comment, it is very important to understand the differences between the different mediums in which public participation takes place.

★ **Public Comment**

- Public comments can be made at public meetings and must include the name and address of the speaker(3 minute limit)

★ **Public Notice**

- A municipality is required to publish notice of a hearing or action in a newspaper of regular circulation in the same county as the action and must include:
 - Brief description of the action
 - Date, time, location
 - Contact information

★ **Public Protest**

- A protest is a written opposition to an action. The protestor must be a property owner directly affected by the action.

Public Meetings

-Provides opportunity for public to gain information
-must be kept to an appropriate time constraint

Public Hearings

-Provides public with opportunity to make comments
-For zone map amendments, a notice of public hearing will be sent to property owners within 200 feet of the proposed site.

*Definitions outlined in Montana Code Annotated: leg.mt.gov

Key Terms Explained

Terms such as Public Meeting and Public Hearing are frequently used, but few know the difference. Learn the difference below!

PUBLIC PROTEST

When signed in writing allows for the following: a description of the action protested; a statement of the protestor's qualifications to protest, including ownership of property affected by the action; and the address of the person protesting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The actual action of giving oral or written testimony for or against a proposed idea.

PUBLIC HEARING

Purpose of providing reasonable opportunity for citizen participation prior to final decisions, while at a minimum allowing for both oral and written testimony for and against the issue.

RESOURCES

Website: <https://www.bozeman.net/>

Location of City Clerk: 121 N Rouse, Suite 201
Bozeman, MT 59715

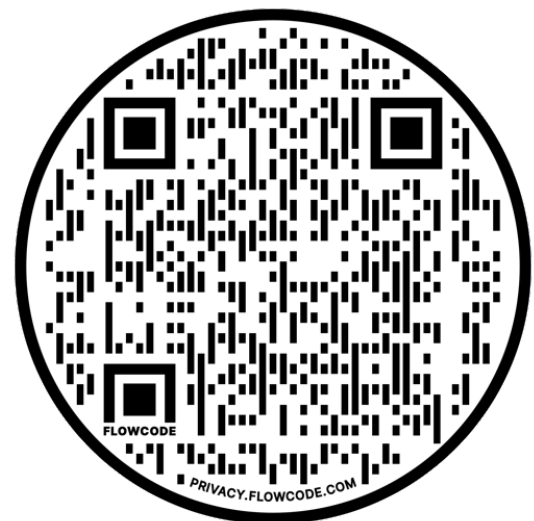
Phone Number: (406) 582-2320

PUBLIC NOTICE

Giving awareness of a proposal by announcing the pending submittal, giving its general purpose and allowing public information on the proposal on the department's website.

PUBLIC MEETING

Any meetings of municipal governing entities created by a municipality must be open to public. With appropriate minutes being kept and meetings made available upon request to the public for inspection and copying. Closed meetings permitted, under circumstances.



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Public comment

Input given from the public to a government organization proposing legislation



Public notice

A notice given by a government organization to alert citizens on actions taken that could impact them. This alerts them to take action for or against the legislation.

Public protest

Property owners within a certain distance of a proposed change in zoning submit a written protest that must include their signature, all property owners' names, and the address of the property.



Public meeting

A meeting hosted by a government organization to facilitate opinions about current events in the community. These meetings do not always allow for public comment

Public hearing

A public meeting facilitated by a government organization where citizens can offer comments and concerns however officials are not obligated to act on them



[Facebook.com/Bozeman.gov](https://www.facebook.com/Bozeman.gov)

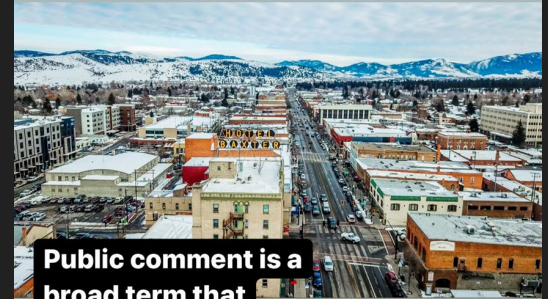


[Twitter.com/cityofBozeman](https://twitter.com/cityofBozeman)

ADDRESS:
20 E. Olive St. 1st Floor
PO Box 1230
Bozeman, MT 59771
PHONE:
(406) 582-2260

Definition 1: Public Comment

What is Public Comment?



Public comment is a broad term that mainly refers to emails sent to agenda@bozeman.net and word spoken during public hearings!

It's Public Record too!

Definition 2: Public Notice

What is Public Notice?

Public Notice is required for almost all government actions and must be posted either in newspapers or on magazines



You can even click on the link to get e-notifications tabs stay up-to-date on what's happening in our lovely city!

[BOZEMAN.NET](https://www.bozeman.net)

Definition 3: Public Protest



**PUBLIC
PROTEST**

**PROPERTY OWNERS WITHIN
150' OF A PROJECT OR DECISION BROUGHT
BEFORE THE CITY MAY SUBMIT FORMAL PROTEST**

**PUBLIC PROTEST MUST INCLUDE: ALL OWNERS
OF THE PROPERTY'S NAMES AND SIGNATURES, AND THE
ADDRESS OF THE AFFECTED PROPERTY**

**THIS PROCESS IS
DESIGNED TO PROVIDE AN ORGANIZED
WAY TO APPEAL AN AMENDMENT
FOR THOSE IN THE AFFECTED AREAS**

Definition 4: Public Meeting

Public Meeting:



A public meeting is an event in the community where city planners talk about issues while allowing citizens to be present for the discussion. Comment may be allowed sometimes, but is not a necessity

Definition 5: Public Hearing

Public Hearings:

These hearings are to help decision makers gauge public interest and opinion on proposed actions

This is when you can make your voice heard to the Community Development Board and City Commission on local development projects

A well thought out comment which specifically references City codes will give the decision makers the most to consider!



Public Comment



- A chance for the community to share their opinions with the city council
- Comments can be made during agenda items number 7 or number 9
- All comments are limited to 3 minutes
- Comments can be made during the meeting itself, or in writing to agenda@bozeman.net

Public Notice



- When the city of applicant notifies the public about a proposed project
- Required by state law and usually done through newspaper, e-notification on city's website, and a sign posted on property itself
- Purpose- to inform the public about the date, time, and place of the public hearing regarding a specific project

Public Protest



- When the public gets together and petitions against or for projects
- Must be in writing and describe action protesting, include addresses of people protesting and must be signed by more than one person
- A chance for the community to share their opinions with the City Commission or other citizen advisory board

Public Meeting



-A chance for the public to express their feelings with city council

-Open to the public

-Also a chance for community members to get up to date on what is going on in the community

Public Hearing



- A public meeting that is regarding a specific proposal or project
- Comments go on record for later use by the public in a hearing but not a meeting
- A meeting that is open to the public and also provides an opportunity for the public to comment on a given decision, proposa,or topic

Effective public participation for amendment processes

Zone Text Amendment



Broadly defined, “zoning” is a set of legal regulations that dictates land use and permissions on any given plot of land in a municipality.

In Bozeman, these rules can dictate things like the number of stories and heights of buildings, sizes of yards and other open spaces, building uses and many other things. (Bozeman Community Plan, pg. 71)

“Zone Text Amendments” refer to the specifications and requirements applied to all plots of land which fall under any one given zoning designation. Therefore, zone text amendments and alterations have a very widespread impact on landowners within the governing body’s zoning plan boundaries.

We have compiled several helpful insights regarding ZTAs to improve citizen understanding of the process as a whole and lead to more productive public input in the future.

ZTA Application - ZTAs can be initiated by The City Commission, City Manager, Zoning Commission, Planning Board, or local Property Owners. Once initiated, an application provided by the Department of Community Development must be filled out, with special requirements for certain applicants. At least one public hearing on the amendment must be held, before being voted on by the City Commission.

Public Hearing - When commenting at a public hearing regarding a zone text amendment, consider not only how the change will affect you, but also its larger impact on the rest of the community where the regulations will also be updated. Consult pages 73 - 78 of the Community Plan to highlight specific benefits or shortcomings of the proposed action.

Written Comments - Comments can also be submitted for hearings in writing. In the written format, ZTA comments are characterized by a solid outline of what is to be accomplished in the proposed amendment. These written comments range anywhere from 1 to quite a few pages, depending on the amount of detail desired by the author, or the intended purpose of the comment.

Protest Provision - If the change in text is approved at the city commissions behest, it will have 30 days before going into effect. This allows the people a chance to protest the change and get the signatures of 25% or more within the area (or within 150 ft. of said area) to initiate a review of the plan. This will then require a 2/3rds majority of the City Commission to make the amendment approved.

Public Meetings - These provide the public an opportunity to listen to discussions regarding the proposal and gain general information on both effects the change will have, and when discussion will occur. The City Commission might make changes to the proposal or extend the time for implementation. This is where the public notice will occur and citizens have the opportunity to gain knowledge of the proposal.

Contact Bozeman:
(406)-582-2260
20 E Olive St. 1st Floor
PO Box 1230

Amending the City of Bozeman's Growth Policy

Scan Me!



Growth Policy
Amendment
Criteria



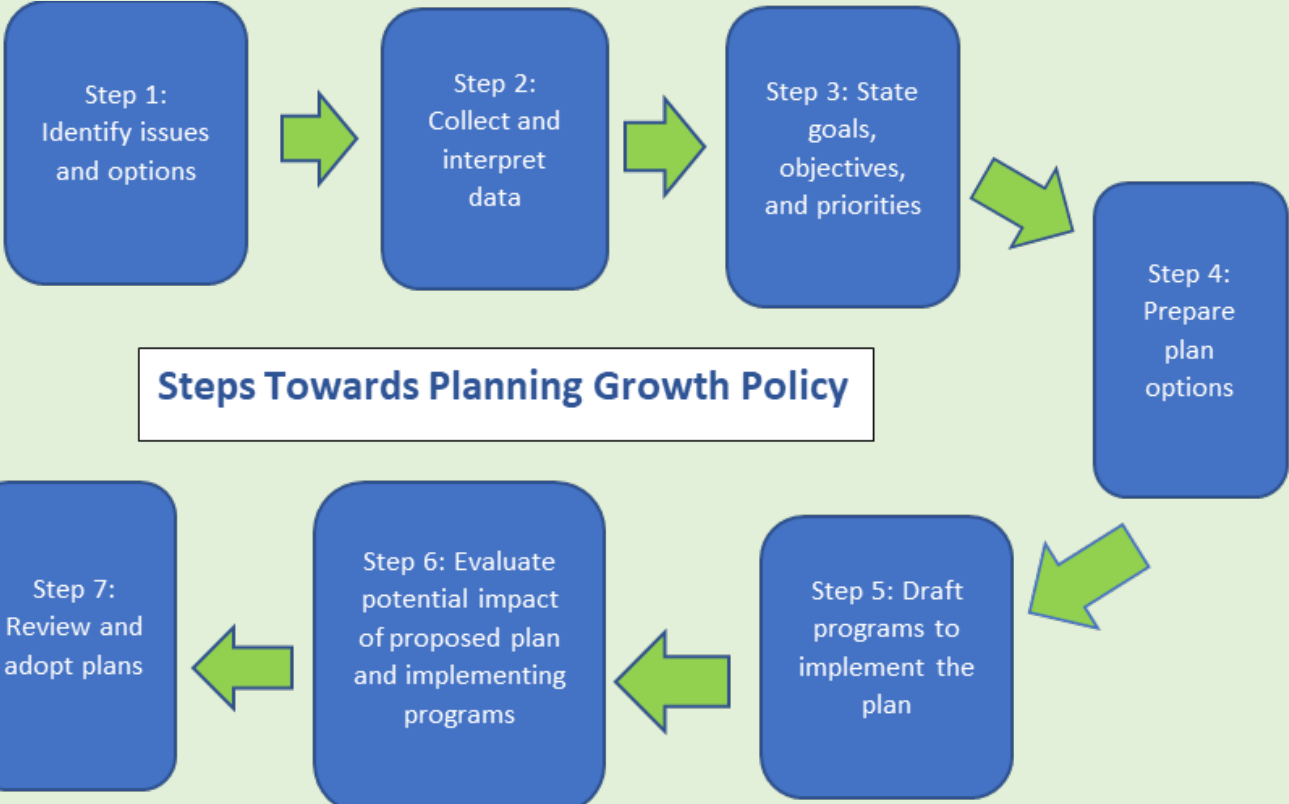
Does the proposed amendment improve the growth policy which better responds to the needs of the general community

Does the proposed amendment create inconsistencies within the growth policy between goals and objectives?

Is the proposed amendment consistent with the overall intent of the growth policy? How so?

Does this amendment adversely affect the community as a whole?

What is Growth Policy?
Growth policy is a long-range plan meant to guide the development and public policy decisions that shape the physical, environmental, economic, and social character of the jurisdictional area included within the plan.



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Zone Text Amendment

WHAT IS IT?

A ZTA is a request to modify and/or revise regulations over an area and its use, placement, spacing, and size of land and buildings.

AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC COMMENT INCLUDES

1. A heading to your public comment directly referring to the title of the proposal you are commenting on
2. Establish your credibility by providing your name, address, and duration at the mentioned address, and what you do
3. A summary of your information providing evidence that supports your statement against or for a proposal referencing why it rejects or supports aspects of the checklist

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Submit your application to Bozeman Department of Community Development
2. Staff will review your application if deemed complete
3. Public notices
4. Goes through the zoning commission and planning board
5. The City Commission considers all the information
6. Project approval

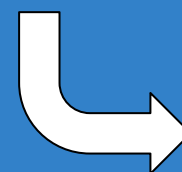
Checklist to create a ZTA

- Does the new zoning agree with Bozeman's growth policy?
- Is new zoning secure from fire or other natural hazards
- Does the new zoning promote general welfare / public safety
- Does the new zoning facilitates adequate transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements
- The new zoning doesn't restrict light and air
- Effect on transportation system (motorized and non-motorized)
- Is the new zoning compatible with urban growth of Bozeman
- Does the new zoning promote character or town, district, and/or neighborhood
- Is the new zoning suitable for particular uses
- Does the new zoning conserves value of other properties
- Does the new zoning encourage appropriate use of area

WANT TO PROTEST A ZTA??

You must present signatures from at least 25% of owners from the area proposed to change. In order for the amendment to continue to be approved even after a protest, there must be a favorable vote of two-thirds of the voting members.

Scan Me



Submitting your public comment is as easy as emailing agenda@bozeman.net

Effective Public Comment for Zone Map Amendments

What is a Zone Map Amendment?

A Zone Map Amendment (ZMA), requests a change of zoning to an existing parcel or as part of an annexation to a property that requires a zoning designation.

In order to aid in providing effective public comment, specifically regarding Zone Map Amendments, The City of Bozeman has compiled this "Dos and Don'ts" sheet.

Do:	Don't:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Present your arguments in a polite and calm manner.★ Reference specific codes and ordinances relevant to your argument.★ Combine your efforts with other citizens. This will help amplify your voice.★ Get organized! Research and meet with a team and create a plan.★ Become educated in the processes in which you will deliver your public comment.★ Be patient. Meetings and hearings can often be lengthy, with only small amounts of time dedicated to the topic you wish to comment on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Do not become emotional. Be polite and respectful while providing comments.★ Do not provide solely anecdotal evidence, as it is less effective than referencing policy.★ Do not be unprepared. Rehearse and practice your delivery. It is a good idea to write down your talking points.★ Do not limit yourself to personal experiences. The more people you reference, the greater your argument's influence will be.★ Do not view the city as your opponent or your enemy. It is in everyone's best interest to work together and public comment is always appreciated and welcome.

Tips and Tricks

- ★ Reference previous ZMAs that are similar to your case. The precedence of these previous decisions can help (or hurt) your goals.
- ★ Speak to a city representative or individual who is knowledgeable on the topic you are commenting on. They can help answer any questions you may have so you can formulate a stronger argument.
- ★ Use all forms of public comment available to you. Written comment and spoken comment are even more effective when used together.
- ★ Reference the city's ZMA evaluation checklist(QR code) Be prepared to answer the included review criteria questions at subsequent public meetings or hearings.

ZMA evaluation checklist



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What is a zone map amendment and why does it matter?

A Zone Map Amendment (ZMA) is a request to change the boundary of an existing zoning district or it may propose a change from the current zoning to another type of zoning in the same district.

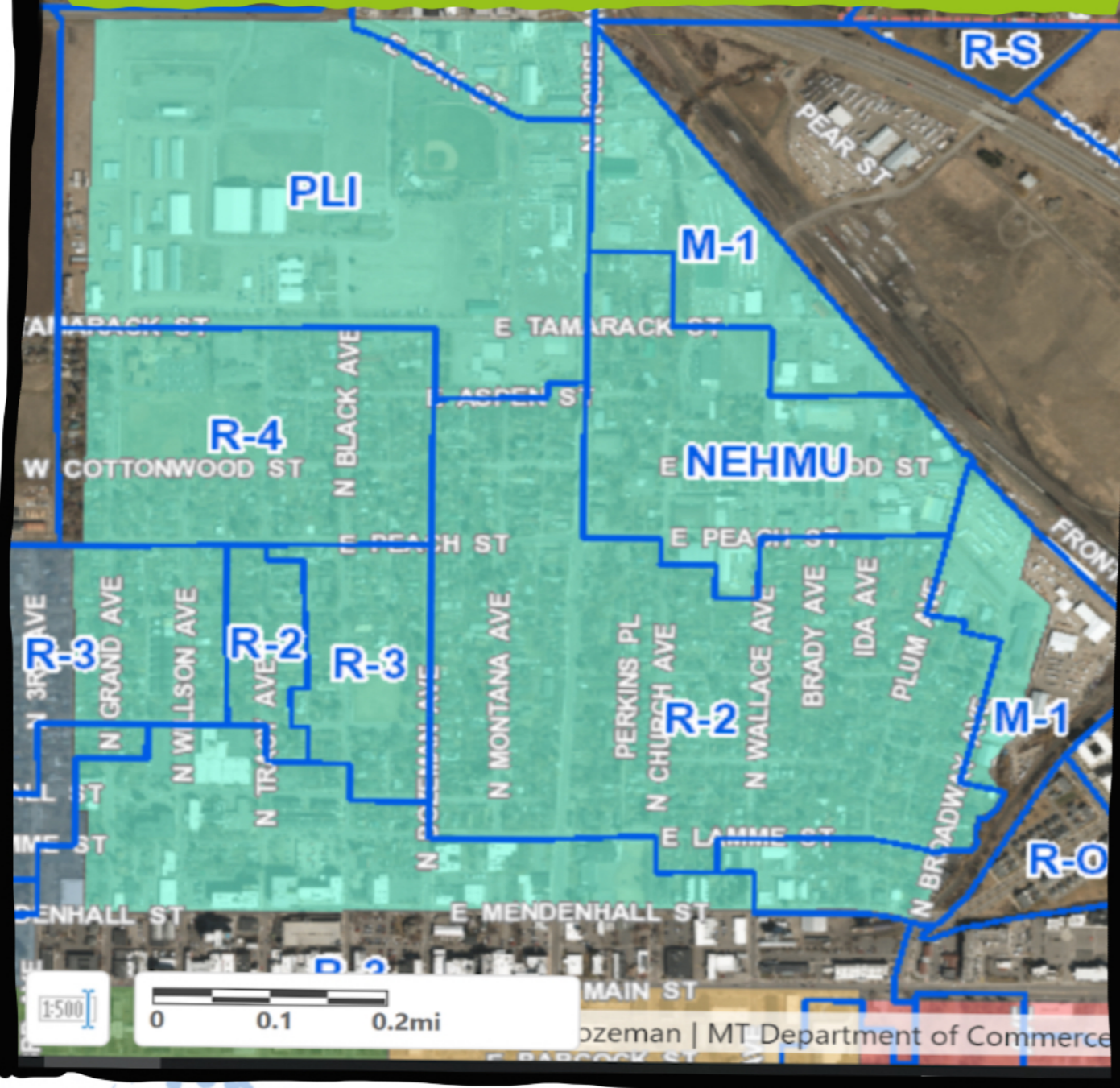
How do I give effective and respectful public comment?

1. Thoroughly review the zoning amendment at issue.
2. Have clear, defined objectives.
3. Cite legal authority when appropriate and provide credible examples.
4. Keep comments brief and relevant to the specific issue.
5. Provide sensible alternatives and solutions.
6. Keep your emotions in check, even when the issue is contentious.

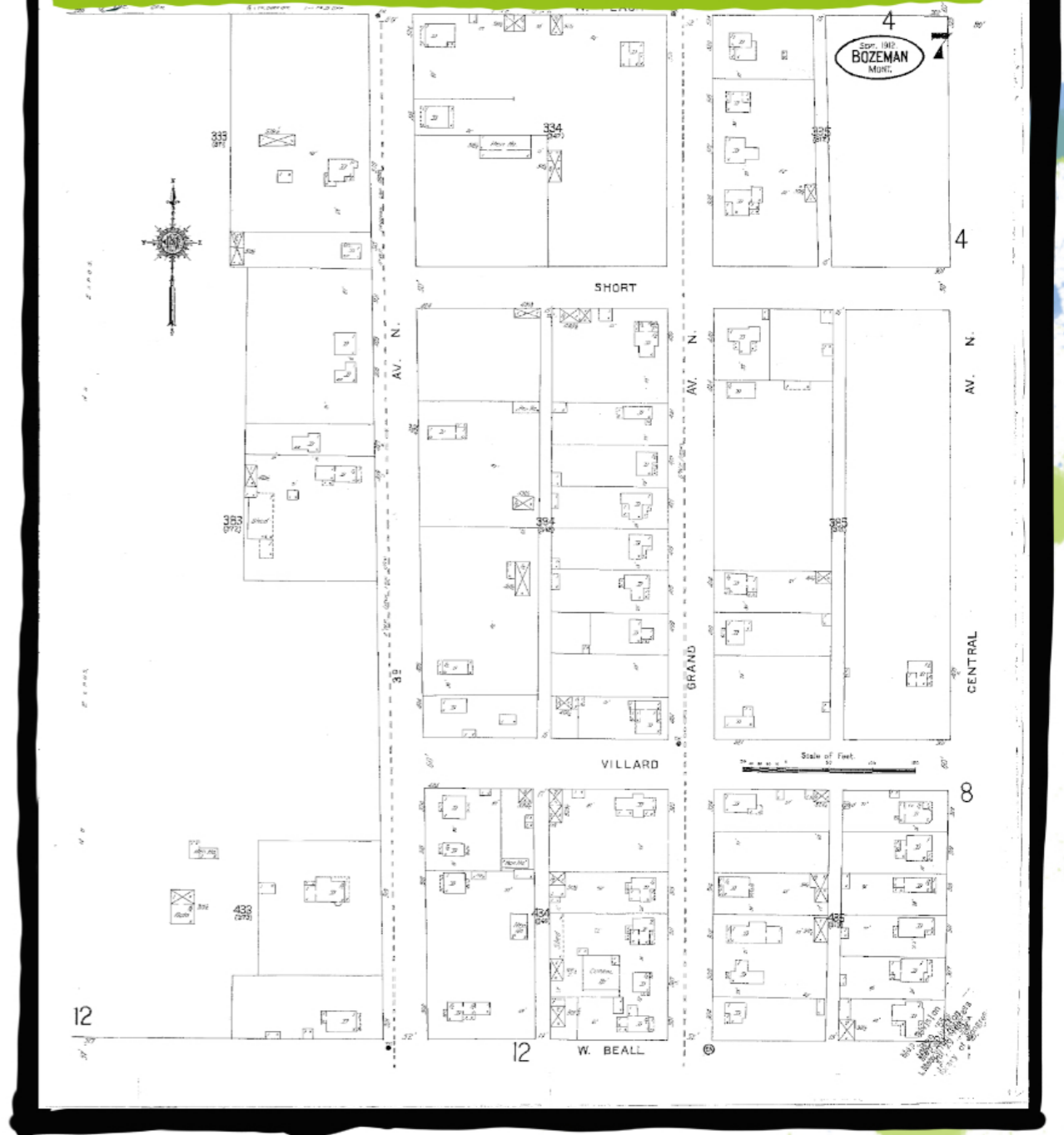


Linktree to City of Bozeman Zone Map Amendment / Community Development Viewer

Present view of the Northeast Neighborhood



Past view of the Northeast Neighborhood



R-S	Residential Suburban District
R-1	Residential Single-Household Low Density District
R-2	Residential Two-Household Medium Density District
R-3	Residential Medium Density District
R-4	Residential High Density District
R-5	Residential Mixed-Use High Density District
R-O	Residential-Office District
RMH	Residential Manufactured Home Community District
B-1	Neighborhood Business District
B-2	Community Business District
B-2M	Community Business District - Mixed
B-3	Central Business District
UMU	Urban Mixed-Use District
M-1	Light Manufacturing District
M-2	Manufacturing and Industrial District
B-P	Business Park District
PLI	Public Lands and Institutions District

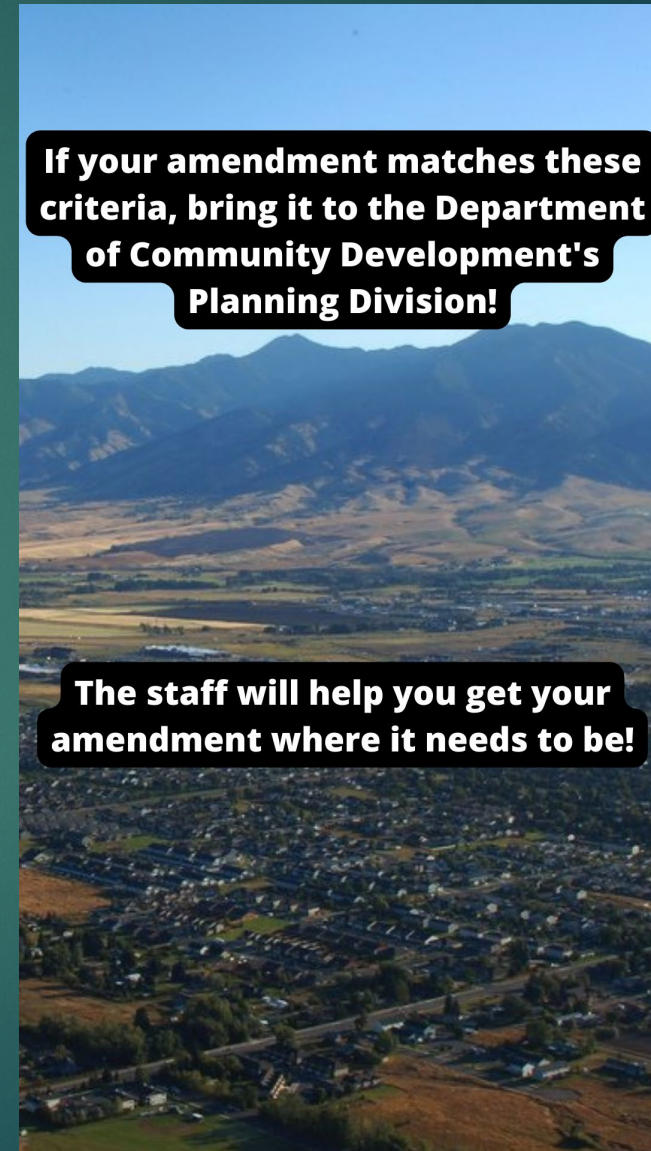
ADDRESS:
20 E. Olive St. 1st Floor
PO Box 1230
Bozeman, MT 59771
PHONE:
(406) 582-2260

Growth Policy Amendment Information

- ▶ Social Media Card Format



Growth Policy Amendment Information, cont.



Public hearing Information



"Hey, what's up with that building going up down the street?"

Are you a Bozeman resident who would like to be more involved with your community?



Provide Public Comment!

Email your city commissioners at agenda@bozeman.net



Visit www.bozeman.net/meetings for more information.

URBAN PLANNING

COLLEGE SOPHOMORES

ARCHITECTURE

@planningpeeps



ENGINEER

ENGINEER

F*cking CITY PLANNER

ENGINEER

ENGINEER

MEMEY

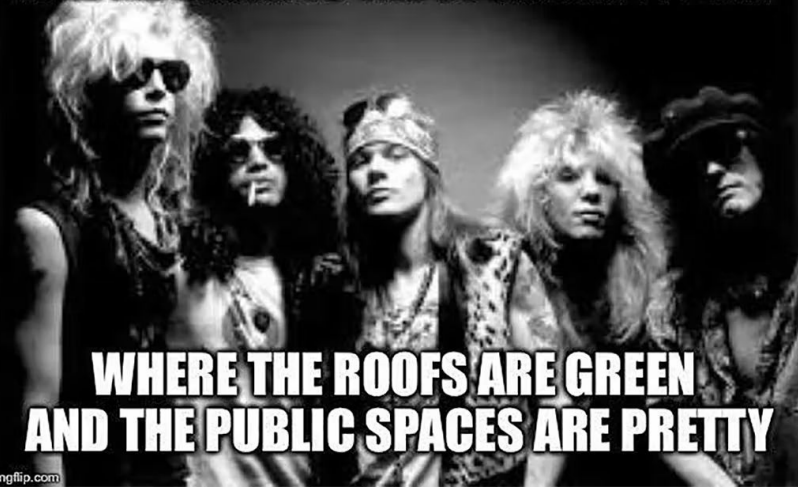


Preserving exclusionary single-family "neighborhood character"



Multifamily, enhancing "neighborhood character"

TAKE ME DOWN TO THE SUSTAINABLE CITY



WHERE THE ROOFS ARE GREEN AND THE PUBLIC SPACES ARE PRETTY



THAT'S OUR SECRET

THERE IS NO PLAN