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City of Helena

DATE: May 7, 2019

TO: Helena City Commissioners
Lewis & Clark County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director
Ellie Ray, Planner II/Grants Coordinator

RE: LAND USE REGULATION IMPEDIMENTS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Since January, the City Planning Division has held three meetings in tandem with two Housing Task Force meetings to determine what facets of the city's zoning code, if any, warrant potential amendment in order to promote housing development in the community. The following listing is a compilation of the proposed amendment areas:

1. Increase lot coverage allowance in the R-1/R-2 Residential Districts from 30% and additional 5% for a porch to 40% (*timeline: 1-2 years*)
 - a. Consider a density bonus for encouraging a second unit (duplex, accessory dwelling unit) in the R-1/R-2 Districts (*timeline: 2-5 years*)
2. Increase maximum height allowances in residential districts as follows (timeline: 1-2 years)
 - a. R-1/R-2 Districts → 30 feet maximum (currently 24 feet)
 - b. R-3 District → 36 feet maximum (currently 24 feet)
 - c. R-4/R-O Districts → 42 feet maximum (currently 36 feet)
 - d. R-U District → no change proposed; currently set at a maximum height of 42 feet
3. Increase maximum height allowance in B-2 (General Commercial) District to 60 feet maximum from 42 feet (*timeline: 1-2 years*)
4. Remove T-district standards from code due to the increased burden such regulations place on building of higher density housing (*timeline: 2-5 years*)
5. Remove lot area requirement in the R-3 and R-4/R-O districts (2,000 and 1,200 square feet per dwelling unit for multiple dwelling units, respectively) (*timeline: 1-2 years*)

6. Consider increasing distance from 300' to 700' to qualify for parking reductions for multifamily properties in proximity to Capital Transit stops (*timeline 1-3 years*)
7. Establish requirements for underlying zoning in any future residential planned unit developments (*timeline: 2-5 years*)
8. Consider overhauling Title 11, Chapter 7: Mobile Home Parks (*timeline: 2-5 years*)
9. Consider design standards for nodes that may be developed with the 2019 Growth Policy update (*timeline: 2-5 years*)
10. Consider changes to parking and landscaping standards (ex: allowing up to 50% of parking for multifamily dwelling units to be met with on-street parking) (*timeline: 2-5 years*)