

# STAFF REPORT

## Westside Woods Major Phased Subdivision

### *Preliminary Plat*

*Case# MP50-2209-002*

Christopher J. Brink, AICP  
*Director*

Community Development Department  
316 North Park Avenue, Room 445  
Helena, Montana 59623





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## Section 1 - Project Overview

The applicant, Sussex Development, has requested annexation into the City of Helena and preliminary plat review. The property, described as “the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312”, is a 58.85-acre site approximately 600 feet west of the intersection of Granite Avenue and Hauser Boulevard.

The proposal calls for a total of 100 lots, comprised of 92 lots intended for single family development, 4 lots intended for multifamily construction with 80 condominium units, and 4 open space lots. This will be developed over 4 phases according to the schedule set by the developer with phase 4 intending to be final platted in late 2029.

The proposed parkland dedication of approximately 13.410 acres is scheduled to be dedicated in smaller tracts in each of the 4 anticipated phases. The proposed dedication by the developer is over and above the 2.79 acres the applicant is statutorily required to provide. Parks staff has recommended that the proposed 13.410 acres of parkland be accepted with a condition that the forest fuels and noxious weed treatments be completed before dedication and/or is funded by the applicant. This recommendation was presented to the Consolidated Parks Board on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023. No action was taken on the proposal at that time. The item was tabled until their February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting date.

At their February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 meeting, the Consolidated Parks Board made a recommendation to the City Commission to accept the 13.410 acre dedication with a condition that forest fuels and noxious weed treatments be completed before dedication and/or be funded by the applicant.

The 8 proposed roads shown on the preliminary plat will be dedicated public rights of way. The developer’s traffic engineers have indicated that this project will attribute approximately 1,407 new vehicle trips per day at full build out.

## Section 2 - Staff Recommendation

Conditional Approval of the preliminary plat for the Westside Woods Major Phased Subdivision creating 100 lots and street rights-of-way from approximately 58.85 acres and to adopt the Findings of Fact and the conditions contained therein for the property legally described in the Findings of Fact.

## Section 3 - General Information

Application Date:	September 16, 2022
Application Complete:	September 27, 2022
Application Sufficient:	December 19, 2022
Meeting Dates:	Planning Board – February 21, 2023 City Commission – March 13, 2023
Applicant:	Sussex Development, Inc. 3060 Cabernet Drive #4 Helena, MT 59601
Property Owner:	Sussex Development, Inc. 3060 Cabernet Drive #4 Helena, MT 59601
Representative:	Jeremy Fadness WWC Engineering 1275 Maple Drive, Suite F Helena, MT 59601
Legal Description:	The SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312
General location:	600 feet west of the intersection of Granite Avenue and Hauser Boulevard in Lewis and Clark County, Montana.
Present Land Use:	Vacant
Adjacent Land Uses:	North: Residential East: Residential West: Residential South: City of Helena Open Space

Adjacent zoning:	North: R3 & R2 (Residential) East: Urban Residential Mixed Use (County), Upper West Side #9 (County) South: Rural Residential Mixed Use (County), City Open Lands West: Urban Residential Mixed Use (County)
Current zoning:	Pre-Zoned R-2 and R-3 Urban Residential Mixed Use (County)
Tract/Property Size:	Approximately 58.85 total acres.
2019 Growth Policy Land Use Designation:	Urban – Includes predominantly moderate to high density residential uses; may include public uses such as schools, churches, and open lands such as parks; and occasional commercial uses that serve the immediate area or are relatively small and low density. Within the County, it includes areas closer to the City; areas with few development constraints; areas that may be currently developed or could be redeveloped at higher densities; and may include a variety of uses including commercial and light industry.
Within Urban Standards Boundary:	Yes

## Section 4 - Public Comment

As of January 31, 2023, there have been over 50 comments received regarding the proposed subdivision and annexation. Staff began receiving comments prior to an official application being submitted and/or deemed complete. Comments received prior to staff application review and the determination of a sufficient application, have been kept as part of the overall case record and file but are not attached here, as there was no official sufficient application upon which to comment at that time. All public comments received after the application had been deemed sufficient and in general review are attached. Any comments received during and after the hearing conducted by the Consolidated Planning Board will be attached.

## Section 5 - Evaluation

### Draft Findings of Fact

The Helena City Code (HCC) § 12-2-9(B) provides the Consolidated Planning Board shall consider and weigh the primary review criteria found in § 76-3-608(3) Mont. Code Ann. and shall consider whether the proposed subdivision substantially complies with the City's Growth Policy, and whether the subdivision conforms to the provisions of State law, HCC Title 11 (zoning), HCC Title 12 (subdivision), and other rules and regulations in effect for the area to be subdivided.

For reference, the review criteria found in § 76-3-608(3) Mont. Code Ann. are the specific, documentable, and clearly defined impacts on agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and public health and safety, excluding any consideration of whether the proposed subdivision will result in a loss of agricultural soils. City of Helena staff, and as an extension, the Consolidated Planning Board and the City Commission, are provided guidance in evaluating the mentioned review criteria. This guidance is outlined in Chapter 10 of the 2019 City's Growth Policy.

The basis for the City Commission's decision to approve, conditionally approve, or deny a proposed subdivision "...is whether the subdivision application, preliminary plat, applicable environmental assessment, public hearing, planning board recommendations, or additional information demonstrates that development of the proposed subdivision meets the requirements of this chapter." The City Commission shall consider the same review criteria outlined in Montana Code Annotated § 76-3-608(3), and whether the proposed subdivision complies with State law, City Code, other rules and regulations in effect for the property being subdivided, and whether the proposed subdivision substantially complies with the City's Growth Policy.

## 1. Impacts to Agriculture

### *Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2012 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review states: *Agriculture is defined as the use of land for growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals to produce food, feed, and fiber commodities. Examples of agricultural activities include, but are not limited to, cultivation and tillage of the soil; dairying; growing and harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; and raising livestock, fur-bearing animals, or poultry. Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping house pets, kenneling, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes.*

- A. According to the application "The West Side Subdivision is not located on or near any prime farmland. A small portion of the site (<1%) contains soils that could contribute to farmland of local importance and is located at the northern boundary of the site; this soil is classified as the Musselshell-Cargo complex. The surrounding area is mostly comprised of residential areas or open spaces that are used for recreation. The subject property is currently used as vacant open space and has not been used for agriculture recently." There are no identified agriculture users in the immediate area.
- B. The property is located adjacent to the City of Helena and is surrounded by mostly residential and open space uses, much of which is owned by the City and is likely to remain as such. Traditionally, the subject property has been used as an open space with the previous and current owner's permission, providing access to the wider City of Helena trail system and Mount Helena Park.
- C. According to the Soil Survey completed on the property, most of the soils on the property are classified as Windham-Lap channery loams (73%) with varying slopes of 8% to 45%; Windham-Whitcow-Lap channery loams (18%) with slopes ranging from 15% to 45%, and Crago-Musselshell gravelly loams (9%) that have typical slopes of 4% to 35%. These identified soil types are not indicative of prime, active farmland.
- D. The property has limited utility as an agriculture site due to the grade changes and rocky soils

located on the subject parcels.

*Conclusion:*

This proposed major phased subdivision will not impact agriculture production.

## **2. Impacts to Agricultural Water User Facilities**

*Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2019 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review states: *Agricultural water user facilities are defined as facilities that provide water for irrigation and stock watering for the production of agricultural goods. They include, but are not limited to, reservoirs, ponds, ditches, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.*

- A. The application's Environmental Assessment (EA) does not specifically address agricultural water user facilities. There are, however, some references to water facilities in the Agriculture Impact section of the EA.
- B. The proposed 100 lot subdivision will utilize city water and wastewater services and there are no agricultural users or water facilities on the property or adjacent to the subject development or in the immediate vicinity.

*Conclusion:*

This proposed major subdivision will not impact agricultural water user facilities.

## **3. Impact to Local Services**

*Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2019 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review, defines "Local Services" as *all services provided to the public by the City of Helena, other local governmental bodies, or public utilities, including, but not limited to, transportation systems and non-motorized facilities, law enforcement, fire protection, drainage structures, water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, solid waste collection and disposal, parks, and schools.*

- A. This local services definition as stated in the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy will be applied during subdivision review subject to the following evaluation guidelines:
  - 1. Subdivision review should consider the recommendations of existing service and facility plans and compliance with other service needs assessments.
  - 2. Subdivision review could include the impact of the development on the levels of service, proximity of services, response times, and the subdivider's responsibility in the extension of services.
  - 3. The capacity and capability of local services is limited, and all developments should equitably participate in providing adequate services for, including replacement of consumed reserve capacity, to meet levels of service and facility design standards.

4. General design of local services within proposed subdivisions should be addressed during the preliminary plat review.
  5. Lack of adequate service capacity and capability within local services is adequate grounds for denial of subdivision approval when impacts of proposed subdivisions are not mitigated.
  6. Subdivision review shall include review of easements for the provision and maintenance of services.
  7. Subdivision review may require a percentage of improvements or specific types of improvements necessary to protect public health and safety to be completed before allowing bonding or other reasonable security for purposes of filing a final plat. An evaluation of the timing of infrastructure installation should be included in the subdivision review.
- B. Helena City Code §12-2-15 requires public improvements be installed in conformance with plans, specifications, and a construction schedule approved by the city.
- C. The applicant is proposing the following phasing schedule.
- Phase 1: December 2023  
Phase 2: December 2025  
Phase 3: December 2027  
Phase 4: December 2029
- D. The EA indicates that "The subject property will be annexed into the City of Helena. Streets and utilities will be extended to service the property; they will be designed to meet all regulations set forth by the City of Helena and MDEQ. Schools, infrastructure maintenance, and fire and police protections will be funded through property taxes generated from the lots. The subdivision will impact existing City of Helena water and sewer systems by increasing usage on those systems."

There is a concurrent Annexation action request along with this preliminary plat consideration.

Transportation:

- A. A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) was prepared for the project to analyze the impacts of the subdivision on the adjacent street network by Abelin Traffic Services (ATS). Traffic count data for this study was collected in August 2020, October 2021, and September 2022 on Granite Avenue, Hauser Boulevard, and Highway 12. Data was also obtained from a 2017 intersection count conducted by the Montana Department of Transportation at Granite Avenue and Highway 12.
- B. The TIS states "The proposed subdivision is anticipated to add up to 1,407 trips per day between Hauser Boulevard and Granite Avenue at full-build-out of the subdivision. The two primary routes to Granite Avenue will be via Hauser Boulevard with 80% of the vehicle trips and Knight Street with 20% of vehicle trips. Hauser Boulevard is currently an east/west collector road and traffic counts indicate that the road currently carries 700 vehicles per day. At full build-out of the subdivision, Hauser Boulevard between Park Drive and Granite Avenue is anticipated to have 1,826 vehicle trips per day. Knight Street is currently a local

road that services approximately 30 single-family residential homes within Overlook Estates Subdivision. Knight Street currently has approximately 283 vehicle trips per day and at full build-out Knight Street will have 564 vehicle trips per day. It is anticipated that 80% of the traffic from Hauser Boulevard from the development will utilize Granite Avenue to the north to access Highway 12 (Euclid Avenue) and 20% will utilize Hauser Boulevard to the east to access other parts of Helena or utilize other routes to get to Highway 12 (Euclid Avenue). Granite Avenue is currently a minor collector and traffic counts collected by ATS indicate a current traffic volume of 584 vehicle trips per day. Traffic counts on Granite Avenue have decreased significantly from the original traffic county in 2020 to the 2022 traffic count. In 2020 and 2021 the City of Helena was working on water and sewer installation project on the west side of Helena. Based on the traffic collected to date it appears the construction project was pushing additional traffic to Granite Street to access Highway 12. The project was completed in 2021 and it appears from the traffic counts that the traffic has dispersed to preconstruction patterns. At full build-out of the subdivision, Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Euclid Avenue (U.S. Highway 12) is anticipated to have 1,729 vehicle trips per day. All other roads adjacent to the subdivision will have varying amounts of traffic from several different access points but are anticipated to carry less than 1,500 trips per day.”

Several off-site improvements are recommended in the TIS to address the off-site impacts of the proposed subdivision.

The applicant is proposing the following public transportation/street improvements:

#### Phase 1

- This phase will consist of the construction of three new, internal streets – Crowley Court, Livezey Avenue/Livezey Court and Lee Court. Livezey Avenue and Crowley Court will both have direct access from Hauser Boulevard.
- An emergency access road will be constructed to the south to provide a secondary access for Phase 1. The emergency access road will be constructed within the footprint of proposed roads to be constructed in Phase 3 and will follow the horizontal and vertical alignments of the future roads; ensuring that the emergency access will meet City design standards.
- Hauser Boulevard will be upgraded as part of necessary off-site improvements for Phase 1, as recommended in the Traffic Impact Study. The portion of Hauser Boulevard immediately adjacent to the proposed subdivision boundary and extending north to Overlook Estates will be upgraded to the City’s local road standards with pavement, curb and gutter, boulevard, and sidewalk. The portion of Hauser immediately south of the subdivision boundary to the intersection with Park Drive will be paved only to the City’s local road width. The portion of Hauser from the intersection of Park Drive to the intersection with Granite Avenue will be paved only to the City’s minor collector road width.

#### Phase 2

- Livezey Court will be extended to the west and a cul-de-sac will be constructed at the end of the single-family lots section.



- No off-site road infrastructure improvements are required for Phase 2.

#### Phase 3

- One road will be extended with Phase 3, Lee Drive, and one road will be constructed, Brakeman Avenue/Brakeman Court. These internal roads, constructed as part of Phase 3, will follow the emergency access road alignment installed as part of Phase 1.
- Park Drive will be upgraded as part of Phase 3. The portion of Park Drive along the subdivision boundary, which is approximately from Woodward Avenue to Stuart Street, will be upgraded to full City local road standards and include pavement, curb and gutter, boulevards, and sidewalks. The portion of Park Drive not directly adjacent to the subdivision boundary will be improved to the City local road width and be paved only.

#### Phase 4

- One (1) public road will be constructed with Phase 4, Flowerree Court.

- C. City of Helena Code regarding Subdivision Regulations §12-4-2 states blocks may not exceed six hundred feet (600') in length except when a longer length is needed to meet grade limitations, the existing built environment, water bodies or railroad crossings, or industrial uses. Several of the proposed publicly dedicated streets will exceed the 600' maximum. The applicant has provided justifications for exceeding this length and is requesting this exception be granted. Details relative to these specific exception requests are located in Section 7 of this report.
- D. The TIS concluded that the following off-site improvements be recommended/considered:

#### Phase 1

- Livezey Avenue, Livezey Court, Lee Court and Crowley Court should be designed and constructed to City of Helena local road standards.
- The intersection of Livezey Avenue and Lee Court will be an uncontrolled intersection.
- Livezey Avenue and Crowley Court access to Hauser Boulevard will require stop sign control.
- An emergency access road from the intersection of Livezey Avenue and Lee Drive shall be constructed to a minimum 24-ft gravel surface south to Park Avenue following the future alignment for Lee Drive and Brakeman Avenue. A minimum 30-ft emergency access easement shall be provided on the Phase 1 final plat. The emergency access shall be maintained by the applicant or the HOA until the final alignment is constructed with Phase 3 and dedicated to the City of Helena.
- Hauser Boulevard directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision should be improved to the City of Helena local road standards.



- Hauser Boulevard not adjacent to the subdivision to the intersection with Hauser Boulevard should be paved to a local road width of 30-ft. It is not recommended at this time that curb and gutter and sidewalk be added to this section of road as adjacent existing roads are gravel and contain no sidewalks. This facilitates the existing stormwater drainage pattern for these streets.
- Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue should be paved to a minor collector width of 32-ft. It is not recommended at this time that curb and gutter and sidewalk be added to this section of road as existing Granite Avenue at this location and Hauser Boulevard east of Granite Avenue is paved with no curb and gutter or sidewalks. This facilitates the existing stormwater drainage pattern for these streets.
- Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School. A trail system will also be provided that will connect through the open space lots and the internal roads. The trail system will connect with existing City of Helena open space on the south side the subdivision providing pedestrian and bicycle access to the wider City of Helena trail system.
- The developer has agreed, in cooperation with Kessler School and Helena School District staff, to install a pedestrian actuated flashing crosswalk sign at the current crosswalk at the Overlook Boulevard and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a streetlight to provide for better pedestrian safety at this location. Further, the developer has agreed to the installation of bulb outs on the south end of the Kessler School property at the east leg of the Knight Street and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a flashing electronic speed limit sign south of this intersection in an effort to slow traffic speeds through the school area.

#### Phase 2

- Livezey Court should be designed and constructed to City of Helena local road standards.
- Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School. A trail system will also be provided that will connect through the open space lots and the internal roads. The trail system will connect with existing City of Helena open space on the south side the subdivision providing pedestrian and bicycle access to the wider City of Helena trail system.

#### Phase 3

- Brakeman Avenue, Brakeman Court, and Lee Drive should be designed and constructed to City of Helena local road standards.

- The intersection of Brakeman Avenue and Lee Drive will be an uncontrolled intersection.
- Brakeman Avenue access to Park Drive will require stop sign control.
- Park Drive directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision should be improved to the City of Helena local road standards.
- Park Drive not adjacent to the subdivision to Hauser Boulevard should be paved to a local road width of 30-ft. It is not recommended at this time that curb and gutter and sidewalk be added to this section of road as adjacent existing roads are gravel and contain no sidewalks. This facilitates the existing stormwater drainage pattern for these streets.
- Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School. A trail system will also be provided that will connect through the open space lots and the internal roads. The trail system will connect with existing City of Helena open space on the south side the subdivision providing pedestrian and bicycle access to the wider City of Helena trail system.

#### Phase 4

- Flowerree Court should be designed and constructed to City of Helena local road standards.
  - Flowerree Court access to Park Drive will require stop sign control.
  - Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School. A trail system will also be provided that will connect through the open space lots and the internal roads. The trail system will connect with existing City of Helena open space on the south side the subdivision providing pedestrian and bicycle access to the wider City of Helena trail system.
- E. All improvements proposed in the respective phases must be completed prior to final plat for each respective phase.
- F. This property has existing access points on Hauser Boulevard, Park Drive, and Flowerree Street and frontage onto State Highway 12. The applicant is planning on providing primary access from Hauser Boulevard, Park Drive and Flowerree Street with no direct connection to State Highway 12.
- G. Montana Department of Transportation has indicated that they would not support or approve any access onto Highway 12 for the subject development.

- H. The applicant is proposing street widths that comply with the City of Helena Engineering Standards but block lengths that are longer than 600'. The applicant has requested an exception from this standard that is explained in greater detail in Section 7 of this report.
- I. The applicant is proposing to improve only segments of Hauser Boulevard and Park Drive abutting the subject property to the city's complete streets standard, including boulevard sidewalks. Segments not directly abutting the subject property are proposed to be improved by paving only. The application materials state that this is to "facilitate the existing stormwater drainage pattern for these streets".
- J. As requested by the City of Helena, a study was performed at the intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue to determine if this intersection meets signalization warrants now or in the future. The study was based on traffic data collected in September 2022 by ATS and information from the traffic impact study.
- K. The analysis concluded that based on the traffic data collected for this project, traffic signal warrants are not currently met at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Granite Street, and it is not likely that a traffic signal will become warranted due to the construction of the West Side Woods development.
- L. The 2014 Greater Helena Long Range Transportation Plan Update identifies the section of Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to State Highway 12 as a Major Collector and shows the Highway 12 intersection level of service (LOS) to currently be D/E. By 2035 it is projected that this intersection will be operating at a LOS F/F if the intersection remains unsignalized. (Scale is A-F). There are no recommended improvements from the TIS for the intersection of Granite Avenue and Euclid Avenue (Highway 12) at this time.
- M. The 2014 Greater Helena Long Range Transportation Plan Update identifies both Hauser Boulevard and Park Drive as local roads.
- N. Transportation Systems staff recommends that the segment of Hauser Boulevard and Park Drive be improved to minor collector complete streets standards.
- O. Granite Avenue, Park Drive, Hauser Boulevard, and Flowerree Street will be the primary points for resident ingress and egress and emergency access to and from the development.
- P. Park Drive and Hauser Boulevard (north/south) should be built to minor collector Complete Street Standards.
- Q. Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue (east/west) should be built to Major Collector Complete Street Standards.
- R. Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street should be improved to Major Collector Complete Street Standards to improve connectivity.

## Non-Motorized:

- A. The application states “There are no existing sidewalk networks located near the subdivision with the exception of the Overlook Estates subdivision to the south of the development. It is proposed to construct Hauser Boulevard along the east boundary of the subdivision to City of Helena standards including sidewalks. The sidewalks from internal subdivision roads will connect to the new Hauser Boulevard sidewalks and will connect to the existing sidewalks in Overlook Estates providing for a continuous sidewalk network from the subdivision through Overlook Estates to the Kessler School and Highway 12.”
- B. Public bicycle and pedestrian facilities are not prevalent in the area. Large portions of the existing neighborhood are in unincorporated Lewis and Clark County which does not require development to meet complete street standards.
- C. The City of Helena requires that new roads meet complete streets standards except where specifically exempted. These standards include curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks for all classifications of roads.
- D. The posted speed limit is 15 MPH near Kessler Elementary School during school hours and then becomes 25 MPH south of Knight Street. Traffic counts conducted by ATS suggest a current ADT Volume of 1,600 VPD south of Highway 12.
- E. The developer has agreed, in collaboration with Kessler School and the Helena School District staff, to install a pedestrian actuated flashing crosswalk sign at the current crosswalk at the Overlook Boulevard and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a streetlight to provide for better pedestrian safety at this location. Further, the developer has agreed to the installation of bulb outs on the south end of the Kessler School property at the east leg of the Knight Street and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a flashing electronic speed limit sign south of this intersection in an effort to slow traffic speeds through the school area.
- F. Bump outs should be installed at either end of the Kessler School drop off point on Granite Avenue and to install a solar powered speed limit sign at the Granite Avenue and Knight Street intersection to increase pedestrian safety.

## Stormwater:

- A. The project area is located in a portion of the City of Helena’s West Side Drainage Basin and currently discharges to the Overlook Estates Subdivision. The proposed development plan will modify the existing flow patterns within the subdivision and downstream of the subdivision to reduce surface water impacts to Overlook Estates by piping upstream flows to the Overlook detention pond. Two ponds will be constructed, one in each drainage, to treat the water quality event and provide a capacity large enough to detain the post- minus the predevelopment runoff volume. Additionally, the ponds will attenuate flows such that the post-development runoff rate is less than the pre-development runoff rate at both the West and Overlook Outfalls. The analysis for these systems is provided in the PER included with the subdivision application. The PER shows an 18-inch PVC pipe which would connect the development and its stormwater ponds in phase 1 to the Overlook Estates stormwater pond.
- B. According to the City Public Works Department, the measures included in the PER will be adequate to handle the stormwater generated from this development.

## Water/Wastewater:

- A. Water will be supplied to the West Side Woods Subdivision through a water distribution system that is connected to the City of Helena distribution system. The water will be supplied for domestic, commercial, and fire protection uses. The water distribution system will be designed to meet the City of Helena Design Standards as well as the standards set forth in DEQ Circular 1. Water will be supplied through a looped network with minimal dead-end lines tied into existing water mains. The distribution system will be designed to meet the needs of the entire proposed subdivision at full buildout.
- B. From the analysis performed by the applicant's engineering team in the City's hydraulic model, the proposed water distribution improvements in the West Side Major subdivision provide adequate pressure and fire flow. No off-site improvements for water and wastewater were identified in the PER.
- C. The development to connect to the City of Helena system at four points. Two connections will be along Hauser Boulevard into a ten-inch water main, one connection at Overlook Boulevard to an existing eight inch main and one connection at Woodward Avenue to an existing eight inch main. These connections will be designed to City of Helena Engineering Standards.
- D. The City of Helena's main source of potable water from the Ten Mile Water Treatment Plant is the Crosstown Connector. This 24-inch water main runs through the property from east to west. This important water main is in a recorded 20-foot easement to construct, operate and maintain a 24-inch underground water transmission main.
- E. The future accessibility for maintenance, repair and replacement of the Crosstown Connector must be ensured in perpetuity without undue impacts to private property/residences, water, sewer and/or transportation infrastructure.
- F. The PER states that a "proposed road will be constructed over the existing transmission main to facilitate access."
- G. The existing City of Helena 24-inch diameter steel water main crossing the proposed subdivision, known as the cross-town connector, must be kept at its current burial configuration, and kept so that it is no shallower than 6.5 feet below ground surface (BGS) and no deeper than 7.5 feet BGS and its current alignment must be maintained. No additional fill shall be placed on top of its current alignment that will put it greater than 7.5 feet BGS. No cut shall occur on top of its current alignment that will put it less than 6.5 feet BGS.
- H. The City of Helena Engineering Standards require that sewer mains which are at or exceed 75% capacity are to be upsized by the developer. Downstream sewer mains that meet or exceed 75% capacity must be upgraded.
- I. The City Public Works Department initially reviewed the analysis and determined that it was not completed in accordance with the standards established in the City Engineering Standards. The initial analysis for the wastewater capacity analysis presented in the PER did not use a minimum Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.013$  as required by the City of Helena Engineering Standards Section 3.4.1. When City staff ran the capacity analysis using the submitted numbers from the PER and the Manning coefficient as per City standards, it was

found that 17 downstream sewer mains were at or exceeded 75% capacity post development. The project developer provided updated calculations utilizing the correct Manning coefficient. This updated data indicated that there is adequate sewer capacity.

- J. The project developer's initial analysis for the wastewater capacity contained in the PER stated that the existing collection system downstream of the West Side Subdivision has sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated peak flows from the subdivision for full build out of all phases. No downstream upgrades would be required as a result of the additional flows from the proposed subdivision as the capacity for the existing downstream infrastructure will not exceed 75% capacity based on existing and projected flows.
- K. A collaborative analysis of wastewater capacity between the City Public Works staff and the development team will be required during infrastructure plan review.

#### Other Services:

- A. St. Peter's Hospital Ambulance Service will serve the proposed subdivision. There are no indications that they cannot provide emergency services. The subdivision is located approximately 5.5 miles from St. Peter's Hospital. The response time for ambulance service would be between 14 and 16 minutes and in urban areas response time depends on traffic loading at the time of the call.
- B. The Helena Police Department will provide law enforcement services. As growth of the city continues and the distance for service is increased, response times will vary and are subject to unit availability and road conditions in the areas they must serve. The Helena Police Department has stated that they can and will service the subdivision if it is annexed. The HPD stated that response times will vary based on call volume/severity and staffing levels.
- C. The Helena Fire Department will provide fire suppression for the subdivision. The Neil Avenue fire station is located approximately 2 miles from the proposed subdivision. Response times will be between 8 and 10 minutes and in urban areas response time depends on traffic loading at the time of the call.
- D. The City of Helena will provide solid waste collection services for each lot within the subdivision. Each single-family lot will be responsible for contracting with the City of Helena for a receptacle and service. All solid waste collection will occur within proposed street rights of-way for single-family residential. Each multi-family lot will have designated areas for solid waste containers, see attached map for locations. Locations will be off private internal roads designed per City of Helena requirements to ensure proper access.

#### Parkland Dedication

- A. Parkland is required for major subdivisions per City Code §12-4-12 (C).
- B. The applicant is proposing to make a land donation of approximately 13.410 acres, scheduled to be donated and dedicated according to the development's proposed phasing schedule. The proposed dedication by the developer is over and above the 2.79 acres the applicant is statutorily required to provide. The proposed dedication is both directly adjacent to City of Helena open space and other portions of the Le Grande Cannon Trail as well as spread throughout the proposed development, providing connections from both internally as well



as outside of the development. A portion of the Le Grande Cannon Trail is within the land being proposed for parkland dedication, and the parkland dedication proposed by the applicant to transfer to the City of Helena ownership would solve this issue.

- C. A majority of the proposed parkland dedication is on slopes of 25% or more. There are some areas, however, that are much less severe relative to slope, lending those areas to future parkland development.
- D. Parks staff has recommended that the proposed 13.410 acres of parkland be accepted with a condition that the forest fuels and noxious weed treatments be completed before dedication and/or is funded by the applicant. This recommendation was presented to the Consolidated Parks Board on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and the Board concurred with the recommendation.
- E. At their February 1st, 2023, meeting, the Consolidated Parks Board made a recommendation to the City Commission to accept the 13.410 acre dedication with a condition that forest fuels and noxious weed treatments be completed before dedication and/or be funded by the applicant. A summary of their recommendation will be provided as an attachment to this report when available.
- F. The property is located within the boundaries of the Helena School District. Local public-school enrollment will increase slightly with the addition of the West Side Woods Subdivision to the City of Helena. The subdivision will feed into Kessler Elementary School, Hawthorne Elementary School, CR Anderson Middle School and Capital High School. The subject property is 0.3 miles from Kessler Elementary, 2 miles from Hawthorne Elementary, 1.2 miles from C.R. Anderson, and 2 miles from Capital High School. There are currently no bus stops proposed within the subdivision.
- G. Based on census data for Helena, Montana, there are 2.14 people per household within the City of Helena. The census also indicates that 19% of households are under 18 years old. Based on this we can calculate that 0.40 people per household are school age. The subdivision proposes 92 single family residential lots with 80 condo units for a total of 172 proposed households. It is anticipated that 70 school age children will be generated at full build-out of the subdivision. The subdivision is planned with 4 phases, Phase 1 in 2023, Phase 2 in 2025, Phase 3 in 2027, and Phase 4 in 2029. The proposed 70 students would be phased in over 6 years. The City of Helena Growth Policy indicates that the projected total enrollment for all schools within the Helena School District will be 9,310 students by 2025. The anticipated increase from the proposed subdivision accounts for 0.8% of total enrollment in 2025. It is anticipated that the existing school system can absorb the anticipated students from the proposed subdivision.

*Conclusion:*

Impacts to local services have been identified, to emergency service call time, increased demand on city services such as water and wastewater, impacts to existing stormwater run-off, in increase in traffic generated from the proposed development, and impacts to the non-motorized transportation network surrounding the development. These impacts can be mitigated with the applicant's proffered conditions, proposed mitigating improvements, and supplemented with the approval conditions recommended by City staff.

#### 4. Impact to the Natural Environment

##### *Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2019 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review, defines the “Natural Environment” as the physical conditions that exist within a given area, including, but not limited to, land, topography, climate, air quality, surface and ground water, wetlands and riparian areas, floodplains, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, light, and objects of historic, cultural, and aesthetic significance.

- A. The submitted EA concludes that “impacts to the natural environment are expected any time there is a change in land-use. The current rural-vacant land on the property will be changed to residential lots. Changing the land will modify the ecosystem in the immediate area but will have little effect on the larger scale. Easing the effects of the residential area will be aided by plans to incorporate open spaces within the subdivision with space for trails, storm water detention ponds, and natural landscape. During design and construction of this subdivision, all state and local regulations will be followed to protect water quality, prevent runoff rates from exceeding historic levels, and provide protection from noxious weeds.

Groundwater quality will see minimal impact from the implementation of the subdivision due to the use of City of Helena water and sewer facilities. The proximity of this parcel to municipal services while allowing open space corridors along existing watercourses attempts to serve as a balance between growth and preservation.

No geological or natural hazards have been identified on the property. Possible environmental contamination from nearby superfund sites or on-site pollution is also not likely.

One intermittent, seasonal drainage running through the eastern portion of the project site will be directly impacted by the implementation of the subdivision. During construction, care will be taken to minimize the impacts of the drainage. All codes set forth by the MDEQ and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be followed. Setbacks from lots, BMPs for sediment loading, and construction during low flow will be used to mitigate impacts to potential wetland features. The effect on the natural environment will be mitigated by dedication of parkland, open space, reseeding procedures, and wetland preservation practices. All infrastructure will be constructed to meet City of Helena and MDEQ design standards. Meeting these design standards will mitigate impacts to the natural environment.”

- B. The submitted EA states that “Information from the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP) website illuminates two species of concern that lie within Section 23 and 26, Township 10 North, Range 04 West. These two species include the Lesser Rushy Milkvetch (*Astragalus convallarius*) and the Wedgeleaf Saltbrush (*Atriplex truncata*). MTNHP indicates that the Lesser Rushy Milkvetch was listed as a species of concern due to invasion of noxious weeds and poor development within the Helena Valley. For the Wedge-leaf Saltbrush, it is listed as a species of concern due to its rare occurrence within the area. MTNHP also indicates two species of potential concern that may lie within the project site. These include the Small Yellow Lady’s-Slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) and the Slender Wedgegrass (*Sepnopholis intermedia*).

The proposed subdivision has a strong likelihood of encountering these four species due to its vicinity to the current open space of Mt. Helena. Prior to construction, proper precautions



will be taken to identify potential areas that may contain the species of concern. The developer will be cognizant of areas where these plant species may exist and will try to minimize disturbance of these areas to the best of their ability.”

- C. The applicant’s EA notes that there are no areas of historic or cultural significance associated with the subject property.
- D. The Westside Woods subdivision is on the periphery of the City and has many rural characteristics. The property is primarily wooded with stretches of grasslands, indicating a wide variety of flora and fauna. Due to the proximity to the city limits and the dense developments located therein, it is expected that there will be some impacts related to the natural environment.

This area is identified in the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy as being within the Urban Standards Boundary (USB). Land within the USB are areas where growth is expected to occur and that can be served with city services, particularly water and wastewater. This area is shown as “Urban” on the future land use map indicating that it is appropriate to be developed to densities currently found within the City of Helena.

- E. The applicant has not proposed any specific preventative measures to safeguard any species of concern on the property. The applicants has, as referenced in the proposed parkland dedication, a plan in place to mitigate noxious weeds on site, both before parkland dedication and during site development.
- F. Soil disturbance during construction of the proposed subdivision will increase the potential for spread of noxious weeds on the property and the surrounding area, including City of Helena Open Lands. A plan for noxious and invasive species control on any land dedicated as city parkland and all open space lots will be submitted and approved by the city and implemented prior to final platting.
- G. The application states in the EA groundwater sections that there are 8 wells in the area and that the static water level is between 40 and 128 feet in depth. It further states that groundwater is not a concern in the area where sewer mains will be constructed. Sewer mains will be constructed to MDEQ and City of Helena standards and will be watertight to ensure that leakage will not occur. Further, the subdivision will be served by City of Helena water. Individual wells will not be permitted within the subdivision. Therefore, direct drawdown of the groundwater from the subdivision is not anticipated due to water consumption from the subdivision. It is anticipated the subdivision will have no impact of groundwater resources.
- H. The proposed 100 lot subdivision will utilize city water and wastewater services. This development will not have an impact on depleting surface or ground water other than what is typical for any development. There are no wells or septic systems associated with this development that would potentially impact ground or surface water.

*Conclusion:*

This proposed major subdivision will impact the natural environment, but those conditions can be mitigated with the applicant’s proffered conditions and proposed mitigating improvements as well as supplemented with the approval conditions as recommended by City staff.

## 5. Impacts to Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

### *Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2019 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review, defines “Wildlife” as *animals that are not domesticated or tamed*. “Wildlife Habitat” is defined as *an area containing the environmental conditions essential to wildlife for feeding and forage, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting, or buffers from those areas. It also includes areas essential to the conservation of species protected by the Endangered Species Act or of special interest or concern to the State of Montana*.

- A. The applicant’s EA notes that within the proposed project site, there are no wildlife areas such as big game wintering ranges, migration routes, or important habitat for rare or endangered species. The seasonal drainage running through the project site may provide wildlife with a corridor and with security areas from the subdivision development and other adjacent residential uses. Minor modifications to this drainage may reduce wildlife travel into this area, causing them to migrate elsewhere. Natural landscape is essential for the continuing existence of wildlife; subdivisions pose a large threat to wildlife due to the amount of natural landscape that is removed. However, due to the size of the Westside Woods Subdivision, incorporation of open areas, and proper mitigation practices, the City believes that impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat will be marginal.
- B. A request for comments was sent to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), which in general agreed with statements made in the applicant’s Environmental Assessment. FWP staff did note that the drainages and open space areas located within the subdivision’s boundaries would not serve as wildlife habitat in a meaningful way. The comments forwarded to staff were from August 2021.
- C. The 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy notes urban density development is not intended to meet habitat needs of larger wildlife such as deer, moose, or elk or predatory species such as bear, mountain lions, or coyotes, and rural areas are more conducive to wildlife and wildlife habitat that are urban areas such as the City of Helena.
- D. This property is located on the outskirts of the City adjacent to city limits and is within the Urban Standards Boundary as identified by the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy. Such areas are not intended to be prime wildlife habitat areas.
- E. Encouraging subdivisions within the City’s urban growth area provides housing and development opportunities within an urban setting that can reduce development pressures on surrounding rural areas, which would in turn reduce development pressures on rural wildlife habitat.
- F. Utilization of city water and wastewater, which are regulated to minimize impacts to ground and surface water, should help to mitigate the subdivision’s impact to wildlife habitat.

### *Conclusion:*

There will not be significant impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitat associated with this development.

## 6. Impacts to Public Health and Safety

### *Findings:*

Chapter 10 of the Helena 2019 Growth Policy, Subdivision Review, defines “Public Health and Safety” as *a condition of wellbeing and security for individuals and the population as a whole within the community.*

- A. The West Side Woods Subdivision is proposed to be annexed into the City of Helena and provided with City water service. The subdivision’s water system will be designed to meet the City of Helena Engineering Standards and MDEQ requirements. The system will be designed to provide adequate flows and pressures, as well as fire hydrants will be provided throughout the development. Per the City of Helena Growth Policy, the subdivision is located in an area of moderate wildland fire hazard. There is adequate access from the subdivision via four access points into the development and the use of multiple adjacent streets to utilize in case of an evacuation. No specific fire mitigation plan was developed for this subdivision as it is located outside of high fire hazard area.
- B. This area is identified in the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy and by the USDA Forest Service as having a “moderate” wildland fire risk. Given this and the properties location directly adjacent to City of Helena Open Lands and US Forest Service Lands, a fire, if ignited has the potential to spread rapidly. These risks will be mitigated by using appropriate building techniques, proper fuels mitigation and overall maintenance of the adjacent open lands by the City of Helena. Fuels mitigation was performed on adjacent City of Helena Open Lands in 2020 and the applicant states an intention to perform proper fire mitigation on any open lands being dedicated to the City of Helena as parkland prior to such dedication.
- C. As identified as a potential proffered parkland dedication condition by the applicant, a fuels mitigation plan will be implemented on all parkland dedications and all open space lots prior to final plat approval for phase the respective phases.
- D. Safe water, wastewater treatment, and adequate storm water facilities are important components of public health and safety and will be provided with this subdivision. Proper installation is part of the infrastructure acceptance process and occurs prior to final plat approval.
- E. The Helena Police and Fire Departments will serve the property and help protect the subdivision from fire, and other dangers.
- F. The ability of fire apparatus to respond to a location quickly and maneuver once on site is vital to fire department operations and is a critical lifesaving capability.
- G. This subdivision has numerous dead-end roads which will meet minimum City standards. The applicant has indicated a willingness to work through design alternative to these dead-end streets during the design phase.
- H. The International Fire Code requires that all fire department access roads are not obstructed in any manner (International Fire Code §503.4).
- I. The International Fire Code requires all fire turnarounds be marked and signed where

required by the fire code official (503.3). This will occur during the infrastructure review and acceptance process prior to final platting of each phase.

- J. Subdivisions need adequate fire hydrants installed to provide fire protection to the property. While the applicant has indicated in the supplied materials that fire hydrant locations and flows are adequate to serve the project, the city, in reviewing fire protection final plans, will determine if the hydrant spacing and fire flows meet fire code requirements. Fire flow of at least 1750 gpm must be achieved throughout the subdivision. This will be ensured as part of the infrastructure review process.
- K. Improvements listed in City Code section § 12-2-15 will be installed, or a financial surety will guarantee their installation, prior to final platting of each phase including streets, sidewalks or other non-motorized paths, curb & gutters on both sides of the street, boulevard trees including irrigation, stormwater facilities, all street signage, electrical facilities, water mains, fire hydrants, wastewater mains.

*Conclusion:*

This development creates impacts on public health and safety. The impacts will be mitigated with the completion of the proposal adhering to City Code and as supplemented with conditions as recommended in the Findings of Fact.

## 7. Survey Requirements

*Findings:*

Compliance with survey requirements cannot be evaluated until the final plat is reviewed for approval.

*Conclusion:*

Survey requirements will be reviewed for completeness upon submission of the final plat for approval and a copy retained in digital format for City records.

## 8. Helena Subdivision Regulations

*Findings:*

Helena City Code § 12-1-5, Helena Subdivision Ordinance, Relationship to Zoning Ordinance states “Newly subdivided or replatted lands must conform to the requirements and provisions of the underlying zone as provided in the zoning ordinance, Title 11 of this code, as amended. This title shall apply to any and all areas under the jurisdiction of the city.”

- A. The proposed development must follow the City of Helena Zoning Ordinance, including all setbacks, lot coverage, parking, landscaping, and signage regulations.
- B. Helena City Code § 12-4-2(C) states that blocks may not exceed six hundred feet (600') in length except when a longer length is needed to meet grade limitations, the existing built environment, water bodies or railroad crossings, or industrial uses.

The applicant has provided justification for the following exceptions (see Section 7 of this report):

- Livezey Avenue, from Hauser Boulevard to Lee Drive – 689.99’ (with a mid-block pedestrian crossing)
  - Lee Drive, from Livezey Avenue to Brakeman Avenue – 636.61’ (no mid-block pedestrian crossing)
  - Brakeman Avenue, from Park Drive to Lee Drive/Brakeman Court – 971.05’ (with a mid-block pedestrian crossing)
- C. Helena City Code § 12-4-2(D)(1), Helena Subdivision Ordinance, requires a minimum of two (2) public accesses for ingress and egress connecting to existing streets for each subdivision with a projected trip generation of more than 200 vehicle trips per day. Access to lots within the subdivision will be provided from current public rights-of-way (Park Drive and Hauser Boulevard) via four (4) access points. Once on the local street network, residents of the proposed development will have access to that local street network for travel beyond the development.

## 9. Local Subdivision Review Procedure

### *Findings:*

Certified public notices to adjacent property owners (within 300’ of the development) were mailed on January 9, 2023. Approximately 121 letters were mailed.

Notice of all scheduled hearings will be sent to the Independent Record for publication within 15 days of the respective hearings.

A public hearing is required for major subdivisions. The Planning Board will review this application at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and the City Commission will review this application at the Commission meeting to be held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, March 13, 2023.

The subdivision review and approval process are consistent with the requirements of the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act.

## 10. Easements

### *Findings:*

Helena City Code § 6-6-17, 6-2-6, and 6-3-4, require city infrastructure must be in right-of-way, city property, or in easements to the city. Therefore, easements to the city must be provided to accommodate access and maintenance of city-owned and maintained infrastructure.

- A. Helena City Code § 12-4-7, states “*Easements must be provided for utilities, drainage, and pedestrian access not located in public right of way.*” All utilities or other infrastructure that will be maintained by the City of Helena are within a proposed street ROW or easements that will be transferred to the City of Helena.

- B. Stormwater infrastructure, including basins, serving more than one lot must be located in ROW, on City owned lots that have adequate access, or if located on private land, must be located within an easement granted to the city that allows for access and maintenance and restricts any encroachments.
- C. New storm drainage facilities, “Pond A” and “Pond B” (as referred to in the PER), to be located on the north side of the proposed subdivision, will be, as proposed, on lands to be dedicated as City parkland.

*Conclusion:*

*The proposed subdivision, as supplemented with approval conditions, complies with the provision of easements within the proposed subdivision for the location and installation of any planned utilities or infrastructure improvements.*

## **11. Legal and Physical Access**

*Findings:*

- A. Montana Code Annotated § 76-3-608(3)(d) states a subdivision must be reviewed for “*the provision of legal and physical access to each parcel within the proposed subdivision and the required notation of that access on the applicable plat and any instrument of transfer concerning the parcel.*”
- B. The external streets being upgraded and the internal streets constructed will provide legal and physical access to each proposed lot. Lots will be assigned addresses from the roads in which they access after final plat approval.
- C. The names of all internal streets have been reserved and approved as part of the internal review process for this subdivision.

*Conclusion*

The proposal provides legal and physical access to all proposed subdivision lots.

## **12. Post Preliminary Plat Approval**

*Findings:*

Final plat approval may be granted if:

- A. The applicant develops the property in accordance with the preliminary plat application as previously approved.
- B. Satisfies the conditions of approval for each phase.
- C. In accordance with Sections § 76-3-507 and § 18-2-122 Mont. Code Ann., the plans for the public improvements must be complete and in compliance with standards of the City of Helena and the State of Montana, and bear the seal of a professional engineer for the

engineering, a professional land surveyor for land surveying and a licensed architect for the architectural; and

- D. The improvements are either constructed to completion and accepted by the City, or, pursuant to § 76-3-507 Mont. Code Ann., the applicant either:
- (a) provides a bond or other reasonable security, in amount and with surety and conditions satisfactory to the City Commission, providing for and securing the construction and installation of the improvements within 18 months from the date of final plat approval. Reasonable time extension may be granted by the City Commission provided binding or other security is also extended. The amount of the bond or security may be reduced in accordance with the completion and final City acceptance of portions of the required improvements, or
  - (b) applies for and receives approval by the City Commission for an incremental payment or guarantee plan.

## Section 6 - Growth Policy Analysis

The following analysis was also provided in the Annexation Application Staff Report. The annexation item was requested simultaneously with this Preliminary Plat request.

The 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy identifies this general area of the City of Helena (“West End”) as being best suited for an urban style of development. According to the Growth Policy, Chapter 3, *“Individual West end properties have suffered from aging or failing septic systems; elevated levels of nitrates in well-water test samples; lack of storm drainage, poorly constructed streets, and limited opportunities for pedestrian access.”* The proposed development provides opportunities to address issues that have affected the west side relative to water quality and transportation infrastructure. The Future Land Use Map identifies this same general area as Mixed Use, Suburban, and Urban, Urban being the designation for the property being considered for development.

The growth policy defines “Urban” as *“...moderate to high-density residential uses and may include public uses such as schools, churches, and open lands and occasional commercial uses that serve the immediate area or are relatively small and low-intensity.”*

The overriding theme of the 2019 Growth Policy Update is for the City of Helena to grow around urban centers which promote compact development in areas and clearly defined locations to be identified with neighborhood plans. These urban centers are meant to be complimentary and supportive of existing neighborhoods and in some cases multiple existing neighborhoods. As such these centers are more appropriately located along major transportation routes with good ingress and egress options for all users.

The subject property is not ideally suited for the most dense and intense set of uses or users and would be most appropriately utilized as a residential neighborhood. The R-2 and R-3 zone district designations that were given are supportive of this vision and the set of circumstances as they exist today. These zone districts are supportive of a mix of housing types and with elements of the zoning code like setbacks and height restrictions are supportive of public health and wellbeing.

With the zone district classifications of R-2 (Residential) and R-3 (Residential) this development as conditioned would meet that goal. This development, as conditioned, would also meet a number of the 2019 Growth Policy Goals and Objectives including:



[G.02] Support provision of housing that is safe, available, accessible, and affordable for all Helena residents.

[G.03] Provide high-quality, affordable and efficient public facilities and services in Helena that also prioritize the protection of public health, including residents and visitors.

[G.04] Provide and support Helena's parks and recreational opportunities on-pace with growth.

[G.06] Protect and enhance the quality of Helena's natural environment, conserving resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

[O.12] Promote and maintain development of a diverse housing stock, helping to:

- Minimize depletion of natural resources;
- Reduce land consumption and demands on the physical environment;
- Provide housing options for all residents;
- Optimize infrastructure use;
- Prepare Helena to meet emerging needs.

[O.14] Support the development of housing located in proximity to necessary services and quality of life assets, including generalized physical, technological, social and economic infrastructure

[O.20] Maintain public health and public safety as high priorities, providing necessary services and addressing potential hazards within and adjacent to City limits.

[O.22] Maintain municipal water and wastewater system quality and levels of service through ongoing system upgrades and maintenance.

[O.24] Give priority for future extension of services and annexations to property located within Helena's Urban Standards Boundary (USB).

[O.33] Foster open-space connectivity in and around Helena, helping link parks, open spaces, and water bodies, and providing opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle trails.

[O.43] Require street development or improvement projects to include facilities allowing persons of all ages and abilities to travel by automobile, foot, bicycle, and public transit.

[O.46] Require that subdivisions and other developments provide a transportation system that:

- Promotes connectivity where adjacent to developed areas;
- Provides for future connectivity with anticipated development;
- Incorporates 'traffic calming' measures where appropriate;
- Supports non-motorized transportation.

[O.49] Encourage new development to provide multi-modal access to nearby parks, trails, and green spaces.

[O.55] Minimize environmental degradation in areas with challenging physical and environmental characteristics, such as steep slopes, watercourses, drainage ways and wetlands.



[0.76] Support land use patterns that:

- Promotes compatible, well-designed development;
- Fosters the long-term fiscal health of the community;
- Maintains and enhances resident quality of life;
- Implements related master plans and/or facility plans.

[0.78] Encourage infill development on vacant and under-utilized land within the city, directing growth to areas currently served by, or in close proximity to, existing infrastructure and that harmonizes with the character of existing neighborhoods.

Overall, this development meets the goals and objectives of the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy.

## Section 7 – Requested Variances and Exceptions

### **Subdivision Regulation Variances**

The applicant is not requesting any variances from the City of Helena’s Subdivision Regulations. All design standards of the City, relative to the City’s Subdivision Regulations, will be met and followed without the need for variances from the City Commission. There are two exceptions from the City Code that are being requested.

#### ***Block Length: HCC 12-4-2(C):***

Section 12-4-2(C) of the Helena City Code states *“Blocks may not exceed six hundred feet (600’) in length except when a longer length is needed to meet grade limitations, the existing built environment, water bodies or railroad crossings, or industrial uses.”*

The applicant is requesting an exception from the City’s block length requirements and has included their requested exception allowance into the design for the development and have incorporated the design exception on the preliminary plat. The following block length exceptions have been incorporated:

- Livezey Avenue, from Hauser Boulevard to Lee Drive – 689.99’ (with a mid-block pedestrian crossing)
- Lee Drive, from Livezey Avenue to Brakeman Avenue – 636.61’ (no mid-block pedestrian crossing)
- Brakeman Avenue, from Park Drive to Lee Drive/Brakeman Court – 971.05’ (with a mid-block pedestrian crossing)

The applicant has provided the following justifications for the block length exception that is sufficient for the governing body to make a decision on the exception:

*“Several blocks exceed the 600-ft block length requirement. The block lengths are necessary due to topographic constraints of the site. The subdivision regulations allow for longer block lengths when a longer length is needed to meet grade limitations, the existing built environment, water bodies or railroad crossings, or industrial uses. There are three blocks that exceed the 600-ft block length requirement, Livezey Avenue from Hauser to Lee Drive (689.99- ft), Lee Drive from Livezey Avenue to Brakeman Court (636.61-ft), and Brakemen Avenue from Park Drive to Lee Drive (971.05-ft). The*

*exception applies to these proposed roads due to topographic constraints to meet grade limitations on the proposed roads. The subdivision regulations require a maximum road grade of 10% and 4% at intersections. Due to the existing topography the addition of additional intersection and connector streets would not allow us to meet the maximum grade requirements of the subdivision regulations. Further, there is an existing drainage on the east side of the development that divides the subdivision. To provide additional access to the project Livezey Avenue crosses this drainage and the best location to connect to Lee Drive is on the ridge. This is the only place that allows Lee Drive to meet required grade requirements. Due to the drainage, it would be difficult to connect Crowley Court over Brakeman Avenue and meet road grade requirements. Therefore, due to topographic constraints of the site we are requesting the exception, allowed within the subdivision regulations, to the block length requirements for these three blocks within the development."*

The requested exceptions are shown on the preliminary plat that has been submitted for review. Approval of the preliminary plat, as presented in the application will also be an approval of the requested exceptions. If it is the intent of the Planning Board to recommend otherwise and if it is the intent of the City Commission to approve without the requested exceptions, the motion should so state.

Approval of exceptions of the Subdivision Regulations does not require the same public process and level of review as does the variance process.

***Dead End Streets: HCC 12-4-2.E:***

The applicant has also integrated dead end streets into the subdivision design. Similar to block length exceptions, dead end streets are permitted within certain parameters, provided the justification for such streets has been made by the applicant.

Dead end streets are allowed only when the applicant can demonstrate a dead end street is necessary due to compelling circumstances such as enhancement of safety, compliance with the complete street's resolution 19799, topography constraints, mitigating disturbance of existing watercourses, mitigation of access obstructions, or a temporary dead-end street intended for future extension. Dead end streets may not exceed six hundred feet (600') in total length. Dead end streets longer than one hundred fifty feet (150') must have an emergency turnaround designed and installed according to the standards and requirements of the city. (Ord. 3167, 9-23-2013)

The applicant has indicated that there are compelling circumstances that exist for the proposed development and the use of dead-end streets and has provided the following justification; which will be further reviewed during the design and construction approval phases of project development:

- ***Crowley Court*** – The proposed Crowley Court would provide a direct connection onto Hauser Boulevard. Crowley Court is proposed to be constructed to the west from Hauser Boulevard with a cul-de-sac at the end of the street. The proposed cul-de-sac has a diameter of 97 feet from face of curb to face of curb, meeting the International Fire Code Institute Application Manual (1995 Ed.) and the City of Helena Engineering Standards. Extending Crowley Court further to the west would impact the existing drainage as a crossing of this drainage would be necessary to connect to Lee Drive. Additionally, the disturbance footprint of the natural topography would be large as the maximum fill height would be approximately 17 feet in the drainage and the maximum excavation height would be approximately 25 feet east of the drainage. See attached Dead-end Exhibit 1 for a plan and profile view of the adverse impacts of the Crowley Court extension.

- **Lee Court** – The proposed Lee Court would be constructed north of the proposed Livezey Avenue with a cul-de-sac at the end of the street. The proposed cul-de-sac has a diameter of 97 feet from face of curb to face of curb, meeting the International Fire Code Institute Application Manual (1995 Ed.) and the City of Helena Engineering Standards. Extending Lee Court further to the north would provide a connection to Overlook Boulevard. A connection to Overlook Boulevard would create safety concerns due to steep road grades that would also not be compliant with the City of Helena street grades code 12-4-3 along with non-compliant vertical curve k values for sag and crest curves. There is nearly 40 feet of elevation relief from the existing Overlook Boulevard to the proposed Lee Court cul-de-sac over a short distance. Road grades would be over 33%. These topographic constraints support the need for a cul-de-sac at this location. See attached Dead-end Exhibit 2 for a plan and profile view of the adverse impacts of the Lee Court extension.
- **Livezey Court** – The proposed Livezey Court would be constructed west of the proposed Livezey Avenue with a cul-de-sac at the end of the street. The proposed cul-de-sac has a diameter of 97 feet from face of curb to face of curb, meeting the International Fire Code Institute Application Manual (1995 Ed.) and the City of Helena Engineering Standards. Extending Livezey Court further to the west to connect to the adjacent private property would create safety concerns due to steep road grades that would also not be compliant with the City of Helena street grades code 12-4-3 along with noncompliant vertical curve k values for sag and crest curves. Road grades would be over 24%. There is an existing 24-inch water transmission main that would be impacted by the large excavation required to construct this road extension. Additionally, the connection to the property to the west is a private storage unit development with no public access. All these constraints support the need for a cul-de-sac at this location. See attached Dead-end Exhibit 3 for a plan and profile view of the adverse impacts of the Livezey Court extension.
- **Brakeman Court** – The proposed Brakeman Court would be constructed north of the proposed Brakeman Avenue with a cul-de-sac at the end of the street. The proposed cul-de-sac has a diameter of 97 feet from face of curb to face of curb, meeting the International Fire Code Institute Application Manual (1995 Ed.) and the City of Helena Engineering Standards. Extending Brakeman Court further to the north to connect to the Livezey Court would create safety concerns due to steep road grades that would also not be compliant with the City of Helena street grades code 12-4-3 along with noncompliant vertical curve k values for sag and crest curves. Road grades would be over 15%. These topographic constraints support the need for a cul-de-sac at this location. See attached Dead-end Exhibit 4 for a plan and profile view of the adverse impacts of the Brakeman Court extension.
- **Flowerree Court** – The proposed Flowerree Court would provide a direct connection to Park Drive. Flowerree Court is proposed to be constructed to the west from Park Drive with a cul-de-sac at the end of the street. The proposed cul-de-sac has a diameter of 97 feet from face of curb to face of curb, meeting the International Fire Code Institute Application Manual (1995 Ed.) and the City of Helena Engineering Standards. Extending Flowerree Court to Brakeman Avenue would create safety concerns due to steep road grades that would also not be compliant with the City of Helena street grades code 12-4-3 along with non-compliant vertical curve k values

for sag and crest curves. Road grades would be over 29%. These topographic constraints support the need for a cul-de-sac at this location. See attached Dead-end Exhibits 5 and 6 for a plan and profile view of the adverse impacts of the Flowerree Court extension.

Connectivity of internal roads within the development was utilized as much as possible but due to the extreme topographic hardships experienced at this location, utilizing dead-end streets to provide safe access to residents and to meet the City of Helena Engineering Standards and fire codes was necessary. A quick examination of mountainous areas along the City of Helena's southern border shows that there are numerous dead-end streets consisting of cul-de-sacs and hammerheads that have been constructed as similar topographic hardships were likely exhibited.

The above explanations and attached exhibits, in support of the use of dead-end streets for this development, are adequate and sufficient for the governing body to make a decision on the exception. The applicant has provided information sufficient to justify exceptions to the dead-end prohibitions at HCC 12-4-2(e).

## Section 8 - Staff Recommendation

Conditional Approval of the preliminary plat for the Westside Major Phased Subdivision creating 100 lots and street right-of-way from approximately 58.85 acres and to adopt the Findings of Fact and the conditions contained therein for the property legally described in the Findings of Fact.

The applicant may receive final plat approval upon completion of the applicant's proposal as set forth in applicant's preliminary plat application as accepted and modified by these additional conditions. This approval is in force for three (3) calendar years, except when extended as provided by law.

This preliminary plat approval by itself does not constitute approval and acceptance of the design and plans for construction and installation of any public infrastructure for the subdivision. The City's approval and acceptance of public infrastructure is subject to future review and approval of the detailed design, plans, and final construction of that infrastructure in accordance with city standards.

The following conditions shall apply to the preliminary plat approval and must be satisfied before the final plat may be approved:

1. The developer must submit an update to their Traffic Impact Study, including signal warrant analysis during the development and buildout of each project phase. New counts must be conducted during midweek while school is in session.
2. Based on an updated traffic impact study and signal warrant analysis for each phase, if a traffic signal or other off-site improvements are required, the developer must coordinate with MDT to review the installation of a traffic signal at the Granite Avenue and Highway 12 intersection, as well as any other off-site improvements. If MDT agrees with the off-site improvements or installation of a signal at this intersection, the developer shall proportionally share in the install or provide a bond, in an amount equal to a proportionate share, for a signal at this intersection or other off-site improvements.

3. All new road section asphalt widths must comply with City of Helena Engineering Standards.
4. The developer must revise the TIS to clarify types of vehicle crashes and if any serious injury or fatality crash occurred, describe any safety mitigation strategies.
5. With Phase 1 of project development, the entire length of Hauser Boulevard from Granite Avenue to the Overlook Subdivision must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks.
6. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to major collector standards on Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street.
7. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant shall coordinate with the City to install traffic calming mitigation measures at the intersection of Hauser Boulevard and Granite Avenue, such as a compact roundabout.
8. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant, in collaboration with Kessler School and Helena School District staff, must install a pedestrian actuated flashing crosswalk sign at the current crosswalk at the Overlook Boulevard and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a streetlight to provide for better pedestrian safety at this location.
9. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant must install bulb outs on the south end of the Kessler School property at the east leg of the Knight Street and Granite Avenue intersection as well as a flashing electronic speed limit sign south of this intersection in an effort to slow traffic speeds through the school area.
10. With Phase 3 of project development, Park Drive from Woodward Avenue to Hauser Boulevard must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks.
11. With Phase 3 of project development, Park Drive and Woodward Avenue must be connected, and the intersection constructed to City Engineering Standards for complete streets.
12. The existing City of Helena 24-inch diameter steel water main crossing the proposed subdivision, known as the cross-town connector, must be kept at its current burial configuration with allowed vertical adjustments, and kept so that it is no shallower than 6.5 feet below ground surface (BGS) and no deeper than 7.5 feet BGS, or as coordinated with the City, and its current alignment must be maintained. Except for perpendicular crossings, no additional utilities shall be placed within the Crosstown Connector Transmission Main's existing easement.
13. A plan for noxious and invasive species control on any land dedicated as city parkland and all open space lots will be submitted and approved by the city and implemented prior to final platting.
14. A fuels mitigation plan must be submitted and approved by the city and implemented on all parkland dedications and all open space lots prior to final platting.
15. Prior to final plat approval, any new storm drainage facilities must be within an easement granted to the City that allows for access and maintenance and restricts any encroachments.

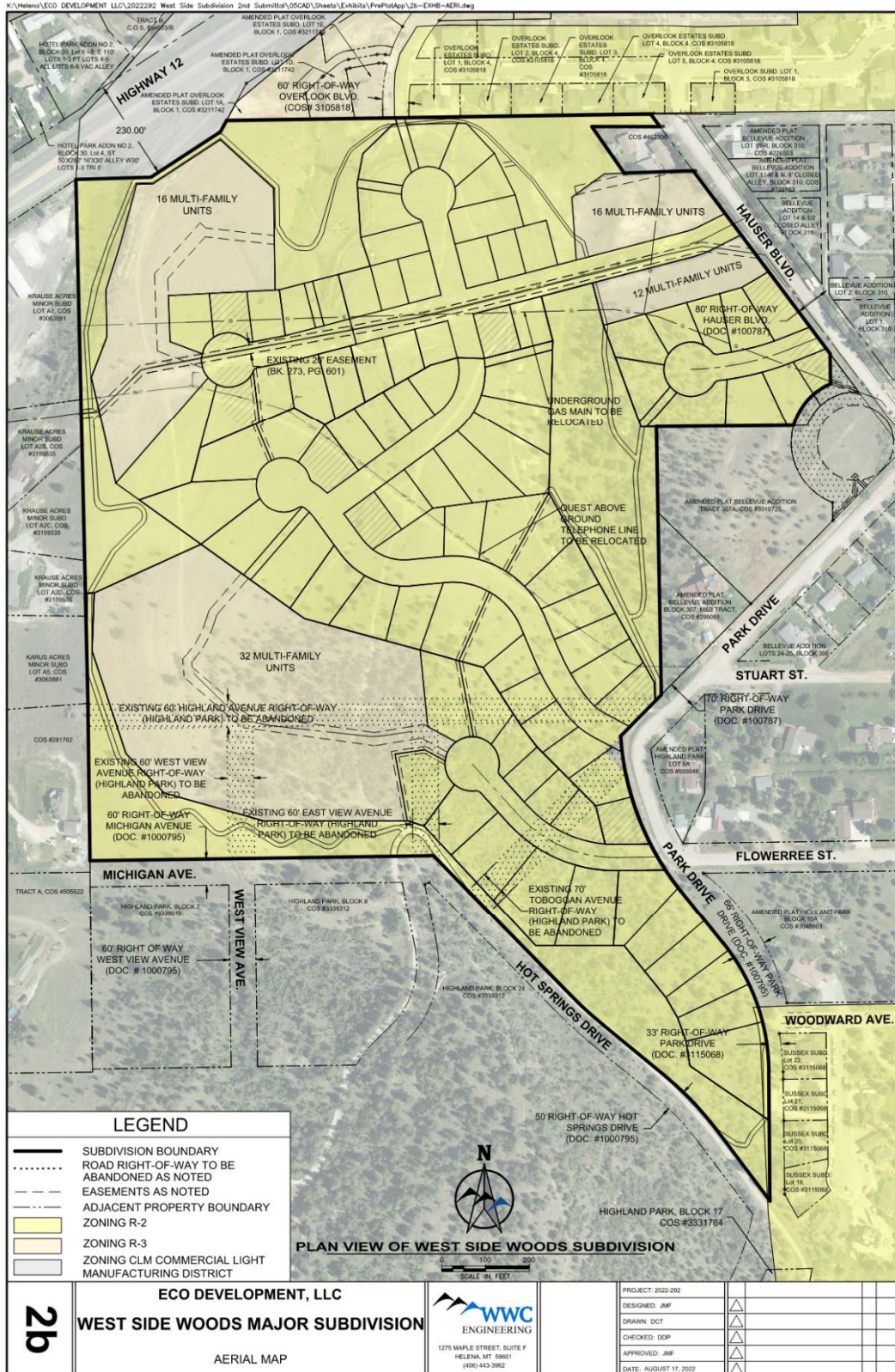
16. Updated flow meter data and downstream sewer capacity calculations shall be prepared and submitted to the City for each development phase. In accordance with city standards, if updated flow meter data and capacity calculations require upgrades, all sewer mains that are at or exceed 75% capacity will have to be upsized by the developer.
17. The project developer must provide the City a water system design report that fully evaluates and analyzes the available storage and any additional storage required for the proposed phases of the development, due to its size and potential impacts on the water distribution system. This report must be provided prior to infrastructure review for the initial phase of development. If the submitted water system design report indicates the need for additional storage, said storage must be available prior to final plat approval of the phase which triggered the additional storage requirement and prior to final plat approval of each subsequent phase of the development.
18. Improvements listed in the Traffic Impact Study to be completed in Phase 1 must be completed prior to final plat of Phase 1.
19. Improvements listed in the Traffic Impact Study to be completed in Phase 2 must be completed prior to final plat of Phase 2.
20. Improvements listed in the Traffic Impact Study to be completed in Phase 3 must be completed prior to final plat of Phase 3.
21. Improvements listed in the Traffic Impact Study to be completed in Phase 4 must be completed prior to final plat of Phase 4.





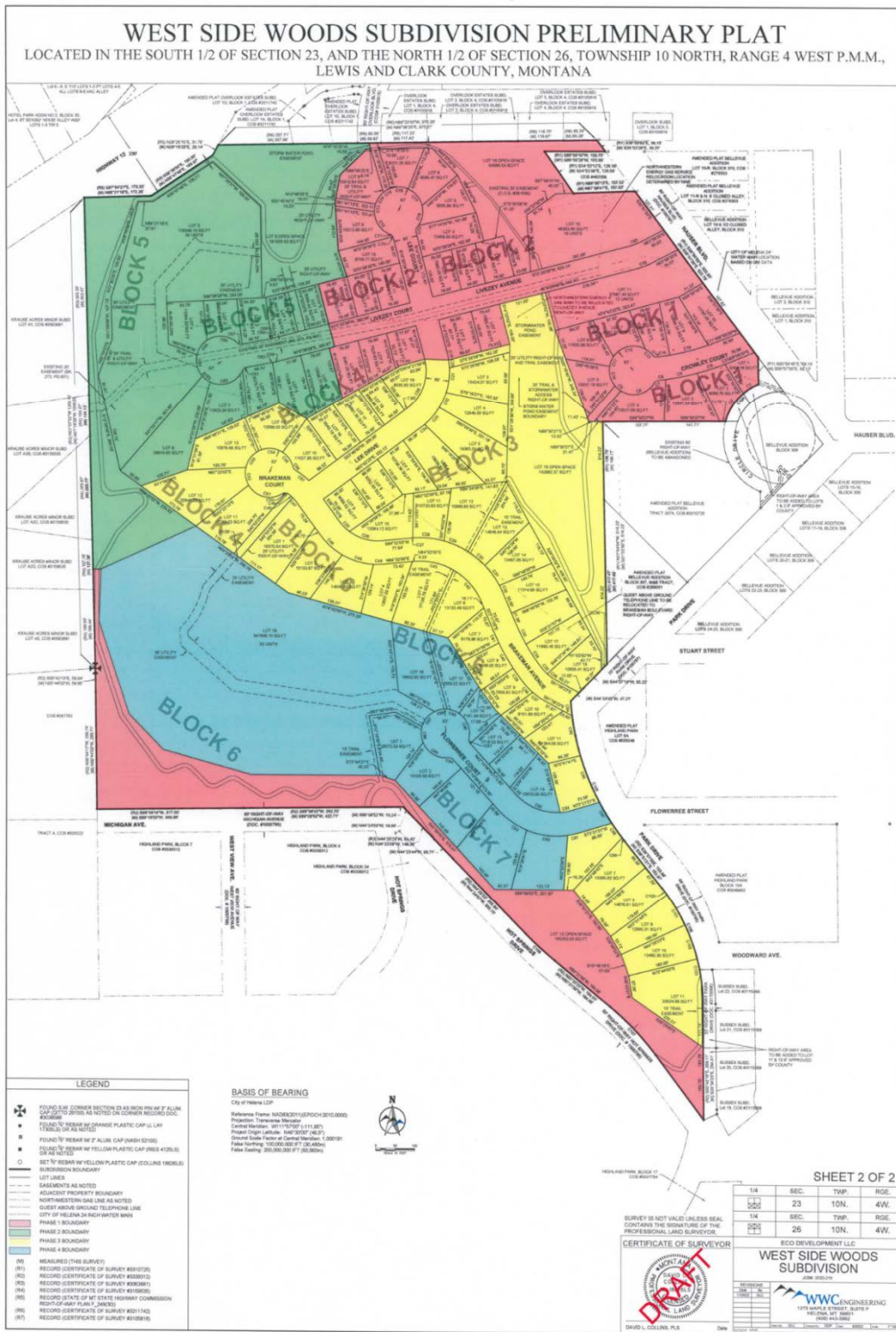


Vicinity Map





Preliminary Plat



## Appendix B – Comments

**Internal/City Department  
General Review Comments**

Jamie Clark

1. Water – Cross Town Connector Main - The existing City of Helena 24-inch diameter steel water main crossing the proposed subdivision, known as the cross-town connector, must be kept at its current burial configuration, and kept so that it is no shallower than 6.5 feet below ground surface (BGS) and no deeper than 7.5 feet BGS and its current alignment must be maintained. No additional fill shall be placed on top of its current alignment that will put it greater than 7.5 feet BGS. No cut shall occur on top of its current alignment that will put it less than 6.5 feet BGS. Its future accessibility for maintenance, repair and replacement must be ensured in perpetuity without undue impacts to private property/residences, water, sewer and/or transportation infrastructure.

2. Water – Cross Town Connector Main - The City makes no claims or assertions as to the condition or overall integrity of the Cross Town Connector main and any damage or adverse impacts to this main or its appurtenances as a result of the proposed development shall be the sole responsibility of the developer.

3. Water – Hauser Boulevard 10 Inch Water Main - The existing ten-inch water main proposed for multiple connections to the proposed subdivision located on Hauser Boulevard is approximately 123 years in age and currently has no known connections. The City makes no claims or assertions as to the condition or overall integrity of this main. The developer shall connect to this main at their own risk and shall mitigate, repair, replace and remedy any damage and/or impact(s) to this water main and any associated infrastructure and residences/private property as a result of their development of the subdivision, disturbance and/or installation of connection(s) to this main. This includes having City personnel tap and or install connections to this main.

4. Sanitary Sewer – Downstream Sanitary Sewer Capacity - The wastewater capacity analysis presented in the development PER does not use a minimum Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.013$  as required by the City of Helena Engineering Standards Section 3.4.1. When the reviewer ran the capacity analysis using the submitted numbers from the PER and the Manning coefficient as per City standards, it was found that 74-75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity post development.

For the proposed subdivision Phase I design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 74 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 28 mains at 50-60%, and 46 at 61-75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase II design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 74 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 25 mains at 50-60%, 48 at 61-75% capacity, and 1 main at over 75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase III design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50%

capacity, with 23 mains at 50-60%, 39 at 61-75% capacity, and 13 mains at over 75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase IV design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 20 mains at 50-60%, 38 at 61-75% capacity, and 17 mains at over 75% capacity.

A figure showing the impacted downstream sanitary sewer mains believed to be exceeding 50% capacity as per preliminary calculations for each of the proposed subdivision phases has been included.

The wastewater capacity analysis in the PER bases its flow assumptions on sewer flow readings taken during the COVID pandemic, when the schools and businesses were closed and much of the non-residential uses within the City were not contributing to wastewater flows. The flow numbers presented are not indicative of typical flows. The final design should be engineered/based on up to date and non-pandemic sanitary sewer flows. Calculations based on information presented in the PER for the proposed subdivision indicate that significant downstream impacts to the sanitary sewer collection system are likely to be expected because of the proposed subdivision.

The developer of the proposed subdivision will need to demonstrate and ensure that adequate downstream sanitary sewer collection system capacity exists within the existing City of Helena sanitary sewer system, upsize existing downstream sewer segments impacted by the proposed development as per City of Helena Engineering Standards Section 3.4.1 and/or mitigate potential impacts to the existing City of Helena Sanitary Sewer Collection System.

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Jamie Clark

4. Water - Water Storage in the Malben High/Low/ Valley pressure zones will need to be analyzed as part of the infrastructure design of this subdivision. Finished water storage may be required to be constructed for a development of this size.

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PUBLIC  
WORKS

## General

## Findings of Fact:

1. The parcel of land under review is proposing a four-phase 59 acre development consisting of 92 single-family residential lots, 3 multifamily lots with 80 condo units and 5 open space lots.
2. The main access for the subdivision is off existing Hauser Boulevard which is currently a dirt road. Hauser Boulevard is classified as a Major collector. It is a thru street and funnels to Granite Street which is also a Major Collector.
3. The proposed subdivision is bordered by Highway 12, several residential areas and City of Helena Open Space.
4. Trash – The solid waste pickup sites are shown in the Preliminary Engineering Report. There are trash pickups on private streets, City Solid Waste will not pickup trash on private streets.
5. A project of this magnitude and including steep cut and fill slopes, and steep building sites seems to warrant a geotechnical report or slope stability analysis, and this was not found in the submittal.
6. There is an emergency access road proposed to provide ingress and egress, this road must be developed and maintained throughout the building of the subdivision.

## Recommended Conditions:

## General:

1. Any new infrastructure must comply with Helena City Code and be reviewed by The Engineering Division. Review will be based on the MPWSS and the 2013 City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards.
2. All development should adhere to and follow guidance of The City of Helena's Master Plans regarding sanitary sewer, water, storm water, and streets.
3. Engineered designs, plans and specifications for water, sewer, and storm drainage to serve the development requires further approval by Public Works Department prior to any construction of any facilities intended for City ownership.

## Water

## Findings of Fact:

1. There is a 24" steel water main on the north side of the proposed development. The steel main is the Cross-Town Connector that supplies water from Ten Mile water treatment plant to the residents of Helena. No connections will be allowed to this main.
2. There is a 10-inch water main located to the east of the development running north west down Hauser Boulevard. The main was installed in 1898 and is made of cast iron the approximate length is 890 feet, the condition is unknown.
3. Water pressures as within the proposed subdivision are excessively high as presented in the PER. Pressure reducing systems are typically required for any areas that exceed 120 psi system pressures.

## Recommended Conditions:

## Water:

1. The Cross-Town Connector shall not have cover exceeding 6.5 feet. This is to ensure when the main needs to be replaced or maintained it can be done safely within right of way.
2. Water main will need to be extended through the entire subdivision at full build out. Every lot must have physical access adjacent to a water main.
3. Please modify the existing proposed water distribution system to keep system pressures between 30 and 120 psi.

## Sewer

## Findings of Fact:

1. There is an 8-inch sewer main adjacent to the proposed project site located in Hauser Boulevard to the east of the proposed development. This sewer main dumps into the sewer main going north down Granite Street.
2. There is an 8-inch sewer main adjacent to the proposed project site located in Hauser Boulevard to the north of the proposed development.



This sewer main flows east and dumps into the Granite Street sewer main and flows north.

3. The Granite Street sewer main continues north across Euclid Avenue and continues to flow around Spring Meadow Lake, across agricultural land and then down Brady Street. The Design Report for the proposed subdivision has flow meter data from the sewer main in Brady Street. The report cites the highest flow they monitored occurred in manhole 531-6 (on Brady Street) and was 492.45 gallons per minute. The design report states that the data was taken in the fall of 2020.

4. Wastewater Capacity Analysis – The wastewater capacity analysis in the PER bases its flow assumptions on sewer flow readings taken during the COVID pandemic, when the schools and businesses were closed and much of the non-residential uses within the City were not contributing to wastewater flows. This reviewer believes that these flow numbers are not indicative of typical flows.

#### Recommended Conditions:

##### Sewer:

1. Sewer main will need to be extended through the entire subdivision at full build out. Every lot must have physical access adjacent to a sewer main.
2. The final design should be engineered/based on up to date and non-pandemic sanitary sewer flows.
3. Sewer Design Report should adhere to City of Helena Engineering Standards for Sewer Main Design section 3.4.1-3.4.5 when determining capacity.

##### Storm

#### Findings of Fact:

1. There are ephemeral drainage channels that run through the subject property. The proposed development plans to provide two storm water detention ponds for storm water runoff control and water quality treatment within these existing drainage channels. No perennial streams are located within the subject property.
2. Two storm water detention ponds will control runoff rates to or below the pre-existing (historic) rates for storms up to the 100-year event and convey those discharges in a storm pipe to the Overlook Estates storm water detention pond.
3. The storm pipe conveying discharges from the storm water detention ponds to the Overlook Estates Detention Pond is located off the West Side Subdivision property and through existing utility easements and right-of-way in the Overlook Estates Subdivision.
4. Storm water drainage basin SWS A is 26.5 acres, planned for development, and routed to storm water pond A.
5. Storm water drainage basin SWS B1 and B2 is 267.7 acres, planned for development, and routed to storm water pond B.

#### Recommended Conditions:

##### Storm:

The West Side Subdivision's Preliminary Engineering Report, Section 4.0 Storm Drainage shows preliminary plan layout and routing of the storm water system which appears to generally be able to conform to the City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards, however, additional storm water design modifications are necessary for final design which will cause alterations to the layout and configurations of the storm water facilities in order to conform to the City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards.

General comments on the Preliminary Engineering Report, Section 4.0 Storm Drainage to be incorporated into the final design are as follows:

1. Show storm drainage easement on the drainage report exhibits and make all drainage easement accessible from right-of-way.
2. Utilize the Montana Post Construction Storm Water BMP Design Guidance Manual for the design of the storm water ponds, their outlet structures and to calculate the water quality treatment volume.
3. The maximum allowable road grade for maintenance for access to the storm water ponds is 10%.

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Lou Antonick

West side Woods Major Subdivision

Phase 1 proposed site plan

Four-Phase 59-acre development with 92 single family residential lots, 3 multifamily lots (80 condo units) and 5 open space lots.

1. Site plan, infrastructure and Building review must comply with 2012 International Fire Code (IFC) and any associated standards listed as adopted by the City Commission in 06-2014
2. Full Building Review will be completed by the Helena Fire Department – Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau (HFD-FPIB) using all applicable chapters of the 2012 IFC at the time of permit submittal.
3. Fire Department Access per 2012 (IFC) Chapter 5 – Fire Service Features. This chapter contains the requirements for fire service access and fire protection water supply that enables the Helena Fire Department to respond to an emergency at this subdivision.
4. Section 501.4 Timing of Installation. When fire apparatus access roads or a water supply for fire protection is required to be installed, such protection shall be installed and made serviceable prior to and during the time of construction except when approved alternative methods of protection are provided. Temporary street signs shall be installed at each street intersection when construction of new roadways allows passage by vehicles in accordance with Section 505.2.
5. Marked access roads and fire protection water supply must be in place before any large amount of combustible building materials is placed on site and before any construction is initiated. Buildings under construction are vulnerable to fire and other types of construction incidents, such as injuries. Access roads and water for fire protection are essential for fire-fighting purposes. Temporary street signs are also valuable to emergency responders because the streets in new developments will most likely not be familiar to them nor be on their maps.
6. A fire apparatus access road is defined in the 2012 IFC as a road that provides fire apparatus access from a fire station to a facility, building or portion thereof. This is a general term inclusive of all other terms such as fire lane, public street, private street, parking lot lane and access roadway
7. Fire Apparatus Access Roads:
  - 503.1 Where required. Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided and maintained in accordance with Sections 503.1.1 through 503.1.3.
  - 503.1.1 Buildings and facilities. Approved fire apparatus access roads shall be provided for every facility, building or portion of a building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction. The fire apparatus access road shall comply with the requirements of this section and shall extend to within 150 feet (45 720 mm) of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building or facility.  
Exception: The fire code official is authorized to increase the dimension of 150 feet (45 720 mm) where:
    1. The building is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, 903.3.1.2 or 903.3.1.3.
    2. Fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an approved alternative means of fire protection is provided.
    3. There are not more than two Group R-3 or Group U

occupancies.

503.1.2 Additional access. The fire code official is authorized to require more than one fire apparatus access road based on the potential for impairment of a single road by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors that could limit access.

? Additional access roads may be required by the fire code official based on his or her knowledge of traffic patterns, local weather conditions, terrain or the anticipated magnitude of a potential incident

8. Fire Apparatus Access Road Specifications.

503.2.1 Dimensions. Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6096 mm), exclusive of shoulders, except for approved security gates in accordance with Section 503.6, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches (4115 mm)

503.2.3 Surface. Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capabilities. This includes the emergency access road which includes continuous snow plowing in the winter months.

503.2.4 Turning radius. The required turning radius of a fire apparatus access road shall be determined by the fire code official. For the City of Helena, this radius is determined using the largest truck. If you need this information, I can send in a separate email.

503.2.5 Dead ends. Dead-end fire apparatus access roads in excess of 150 feet (45 720 mm) in length shall be provided with an approved area for turning around fire apparatus. See the City of Helena Engineering Standards for the dimensions and requirements.

503.2.6 Bridges and elevated surfaces. Where a bridge or an elevated surface is part of a fire apparatus access road, the bridge shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with AASHTO HB-17. Bridges and elevated surfaces shall be designed for a live load sufficient to carry the imposed loads of fire apparatus. Vehicle load limits shall be posted at both entrances to bridges when required by the fire code official. Where elevated surfaces designed for emergency vehicle use are adjacent to surfaces which are not designed for such use, approved barriers, approved signs or both shall be installed and maintained when required by the fire code official.

503.2.7 Grade. The grade of the fire apparatus access road shall be within the limits established by the fire code official based on the fire department's apparatus. The grade can not exceed 10% per City of Helena Engineering Standards.

503.2.8 Angles of approach and departure. The angles of approach and departure for fire apparatus access roads shall be within the limits established by the fire code official based on the fire department's apparatus.

503.3 Marking. Where required by the fire code official, approved signs or other approved notices or markings that include the words NO PARKING—FIRE LANE shall be provided for fire apparatus access roads to identify such roads or prohibit the obstruction thereof. The means by which fire lanes are designated shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition at all times and be replaced or repaired when necessary to provide adequate visibility. These must be posted in every Cul-de-sac, they must be visible and there must be enough posted to clearly identify no parking anywhere in the cul-de-sac.

503.4 Obstruction of fire apparatus access roads. Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum widths and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 shall be maintained at all times.

9. Fire protection water supply installed per City of Helena

Engineering Standards and the following sections in the 2012 IFC and including Appendix C.

507.5.1 Where required. Where a portion of the facility or building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction is more than 400 feet (122 m) from a hydrant on a fire apparatus access road, as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the facility or building, on-site fire h

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Lou Antonick

FIRE

hydrants and mains shall be provided where required by the fire code official.

Exceptions:

1. For Group R-3 and Group U occupancies, the distance requirement shall be 600 feet (183 m).

2. For buildings equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2, the distance requirement shall be 600 feet (183 m).

507.5.2 Inspection, testing and maintenance. Fire hydrant systems shall be subject to periodic tests as required by the fire code official. Fire hydrant systems shall be maintained in an operative condition at all times and shall be repaired where defective. Additions, repairs, alterations and servicing shall comply with approved standards.

507.5.4 Obstruction. Unobstructed access to fire hydrants shall be maintained at all times. The fire department shall not be deterred or hindered from gaining immediate access to fire protection equipment or fire hydrants.

507.5.5 Clear space around hydrants.

A 3-foot (914 mm) clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of fire hydrants, except as otherwise required or approved.

507.5.6 Physical protection.

Where fire hydrants are subject to impact by a motor vehicle, guard posts or other approved means shall comply with Section 312.

10. Each applicable section of 2012 IFC, Chapter 33 – Fire Safety during construction and Demolition must be in place at all times. This outlines general fire safety precautions for all structures and occupancies during construction and demolish operations. These requirements maintain fire protection, limit fire spread and establish the appropriate operations of equipment and promote a prompt response to fire and emergencies.

11. A phased approach for this development will require a new review when each phase is submitted. As a phase is completed every requirement must be in place to ensure safe and effective fire and emergency response.

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Doug Smith

PARKS

Proposed Parks Board Recommendation: Motion to approve proposed parkland and platted open space, Lots 6,12,16,19 – Totaling 13.4095 acres, with the condition that forest fuels and noxious weed treatments are completed before dedication and/or funded by applicant.

The City-County Parks Board determined that further discussion is needed so Westside Woods topic was tabled by the board. The discussion will take place Wednesday, February 1st at the next meeting City-County Parks Board meeting.

1/12/2023 10:35:10 AM

Mark Young

TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEMS

1. All new road section asphalt widths must comply with Engineering Standards.
2. Revise Traffic Impact Study (TIS) to clarify types of vehicle crashes and if any serious injury or fatality crashed occurred, describe any safety mitigation strategies.
3. Revise TIS to clearly justify right-turn reductions per MUTCD guidance and associated mitigations.
4. Provide Signal Warrant documentation/worksheets to support the Signal Warrant Analysis narrative given in the TIS.
5. The applicant must submit an update to their Traffic Impact Study, including signal warrant analysis during buildout prior to final annexation of each phase. New counts must be conducted during midweek while school is in session. (Each Phase)
6. The entire length of Hauser Boulevard from (Granite Avenue to the Overlook Subdivision) must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 1)
7. The applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to major collector standards on Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street. (Phase 1)
8. The applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to minor collector standards on Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Hauser Boulevard. (Phase 4)
9. The length of Park Drive from Brakeman to Hauser must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 3)
10. The length of Park Drive from Woodward to Brakeman must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 4)
11. Park Drive and Woodward Avenue must be connected and the intersection constructed to City Engineering Standards for complete streets. (Phase 4)
12. Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue must be annexed into the city and built to City Engineering standards for a local road including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 4)
13. The applicant must eliminate the dead ends on Flowerree Court, Brakeman Court and Livesey Court. The City recommends connecting Flowerree to Lee Drive and Brakeman Avenue to Livesey Avenue.
14. If the 33' of vacated Park Drive south of Woodward Avenue is not going to be added to the proposed subdivision, work with the Parks Department to dedicate it as parkland. (Phase 4)

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Mark Young

TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEMS

15. The applicant shall coordinate with the City to install a traffic calming mitigation measure at the intersection of Hauser Boulevard and Granite Avenue, such as a compact roundabout.
16. The applicant shall coordinate with the City on a new wider cul-de-sac design for implementation on Lee Court.

1/25/2023 10:35:36 AM



January 24, 2023

**TO:** Mark Young, PE  
City of Helena

**FROM:** Andrew L. Bratlien, PE

**SUBJECT:** West Side Woods Traffic Impact Study Review

This memorandum documents the comments associated with the review of the West Side Woods Subdivision Traffic Impact Study (TIS) report, dated December 2022.

### **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The West Side Woods Subdivision, referenced herein as the “Project”, is located south of Euclid Ave and west of Hauser Blvd and Park Dr in Helena, Montana. The Project proposes a total of 92 new single-family detached dwelling units and 80 multifamily dwelling units to be constructed in four phases on a currently-undeveloped site. Site access will be provided via new roadway and sidewalk connections to the existing street network. A complete project description is provided in the TIS report.

### **NONMOTORIZED CONNECTIVITY**

The TIS report recommends street widening with no sidewalks on Hauser Blvd from Park Dr to Granite Ave and on Park Dr from the project frontage to Hauser Blvd. The TIS report indicates the following:

*Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School.*

The report does not describe nonmotorized travel distance from the project to/from Kessler School. The proposed connection via Knight Street would increase pedestrian and bicycle travel distance from the south portion of the project to Kessler School by over 500 feet relative to the shortest path via local streets Flowerree Street (from Park Dr to Granite Ave), Park Drive (from project frontage to Hauser Blvd), Hauser Boulevard (from Park Dr to Granite Ave), and Granite Avenue (Flowerree St to Knight St). Given the difference in travel distance, Project-generated nonmotorized trips are likely to utilize these streets, which do not currently provide safe and accessible nonmotorized facilities.

The TIS recommendations would result in the City annexation of several sections of Project-impacted public streets with pedestrian safety deficiencies. City Code of Helena (CCH) 12-4-2 states that “public rights of way that are dedicated to the City must be designed according to the standards and requirements of the City.”

It is recommended that the Project provide safe and accessible sidewalks along the following routes which are anticipated to be utilized by Project-generated pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to and from Kessler School:

- Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
- Park Drive from project frontage to Hauser Boulevard
- Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
- Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Knight Street

## VEHICLE CRASH DATA

The report provides a summary of five-year crash history data but does not specify crash severity. It is recommended that the report document any serious injury or fatal crashes which occurred in the study area within the five-year crash history analysis period. If serious injury or fatality crashes occurred, the report should describe possible safety mitigation strategies.

## SIGNAL WARRANT ANALYSIS

The TIS report describes a signal warrant analysis for the intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue. The following Comments relate to the signal warrant analysis:

- **General.** Warrant analysis cites *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) guidance for reducing minor approach right-turn volume on approaches with one through/left-turn lane plus a right-turn lane. This review acknowledges that sufficient pavement width exists to support a shared through/left-turn lane plus a right-turn lane on the northbound Granite Avenue approach at Euclid Avenue. However, the approach is currently striped as a single left/through/right-turn lane. A right-turn volume reduction is not appropriate, per MUTCD guidance, unless Granite Avenue is proposed to be rechannelized to provide a shared through/left plus exclusive right-turn lane.
- **Warrant 1 – Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates an MUTCD minimum minor approach volume threshold of 70 vehicles per hour (vph) for Warrant 1 Condition B (70% volume level). The correct minimum threshold for a one-lane minor approach is 53 vph.
- **Warrant 1 – Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report does not clearly indicate the 2029 With-Project eighth highest-hour minor approach volume. It is recommended that the report describe the methods and assumptions used to develop the eight highest-hour volume forecasts. The report should also document the eight highest hour volumes for major and minor approaches. Future volume forecasts may assume daily peaking factors remain consistent with traffic counts provided in the TIS report.

An independent warrant analysis indicated that 2029 With-Project volumes will include an eighth-highest hour minor approach volume of 50 vehicles per hour on Granite Avenue, which is 3 vph lower than the minimum Warrant 1 Condition B (70% volume level) threshold of 53 vph. The analysis indicated that the intersection is anticipated to satisfy Warrant 1 Condition B for 6 hours during a typical weekday. This independent analysis indicated that the intersection will be near to satisfying eight-hour signal warrants by the 2029 analysis horizon.

- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates an MUTCD minimum minor approach fourth-highest-hourly volume threshold of 80 vph. The correct minimum threshold for a one-lane minor approach, with 70% volume adjustment applied, is 60 vph.

- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates a fourth-highest-hour minor approach volume of 69 vph. It is recommended that the report describe the methods and assumptions used to develop the four highest-hour volume forecasts. The report should also document the four highest hour volumes for major and minor approaches
- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates that the intersection will satisfy Warrant 2 if right-turn volume reductions are not applied. Right-turn volume reductions are not appropriate for a shared left/through/right-turn lane, per MUTCD guidance. The report should clearly indicate that Warrant 2 is satisfied in the 2029 With-Project condition.

An independent warrant analysis indicated 2029 With-Project fourth-highest volumes of 971 vph on the major approaches and 75 vph on the minor approach, indicating that Warrant 2 is satisfied.

- **Warrant 3 – Peak Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report cites 2022 peak-hour traffic volumes of 1,100 vph on the major approaches and 59 vph on the minor approach. It is recommended that the warrant analysis focus on 2029 With Project traffic volumes. It is further recommended that the Warrant 3 analysis consider volume peaking on the minor approach, which occur during off-peak periods on Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12).

An independent warrant analysis indicated 2029 With-Project peak-hour volumes of 838 vph on the major approaches and 176 vph on the northbound Granite Avenue approach, where peak hour was defined based on the highest hourly volume on the minor approach. The independent analysis concluded that Warrant 3 is satisfied.

- **Warrant 8 – Roadway Network.** The report indicates that Warrants 1, 2, and 3 are not satisfied. However, Warrants 2 and 3 appear to be satisfied, as indicated above. Per the Greater Helena Area LRTP, Euclid Avenue is a Principal Arterial and Granite Avenue is a Major Collector. Warrant 8 is satisfied.

Traffic volumes and signal warrant analysis worksheets associated with the independent warrant analysis are provided in Attachments 1 and 2.

## **CROSSWALK EVALUATION**

The TIS crosswalk analysis was based on 2021 and 2022 traffic and pedestrian volumes. It is recommended that the analysis consider 2029 With Project vehicle and pedestrian volumes.

The crosswalk evaluation does not provide guidance or analysis of potential pedestrian crossing treatments. However, the TIS recommendations indicate that a pedestrian-actuated flashing crosswalk sign is proposed at the Overlook Blvd/Granite Ave crosswalk.

It is recommended that the crosswalk evaluation be expanded to justify the selection and location of the proposed pedestrian crossing treatment. Given the proximity of Euclid Avenue 250 feet to the north of the Overlook Blvd/Granite Ave crosswalk, it may be desirable to coordinate with Kessler School to relocate the pedestrian crossing to eliminate the possibility of vehicle queues stacking to Euclid Avenue during periods of peak pedestrian demand.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are provided for consideration:

- It is recommended that the Project provide safe and accessible sidewalks along the following routes which are anticipated to be utilized by Project-generated pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to and from Kessler School:
  - Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
  - Park Drive from project frontage to Hauser Boulevard
  - Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
  - Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Knight Street
- The intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue is anticipated to satisfy MUTCD traffic signal Warrants 2, 3, and 8 in the 2029 With Project condition, assuming full Project buildout. Traffic volumes at Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue should be monitored and signal warrants reevaluated with each phase of the proposed four-phase development.
- The crosswalk evaluation be expanded to justify the selection and location of the proposed pedestrian crossing treatment, with consideration for 2029 With Project vehicle and pedestrian volumes. Relocation of the pedestrian crossing may be desirable.

Attachment 1. Euclid Avenue & Granite Avenue Traffic Volume Development

Attachment 2. Euclid Avenue & Granite Avenue Signal Warrant Analysis

Euclid & Granite 3-day 12-hour counts, start 9/26/2017

Aggregate Day	NBR	NBT	NBL	Rolling Hr	Rank	Time	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	Rolling Hr	Rank
7:00 AM	14	0	0	0	98	7:00 AM		65	0	0	2	67	7	814
7:15 AM	17	0	3	3	121	7:15 AM		68	0	4	100	5	881	13
7:30 AM	23	0	3	3	140	7:30 AM		80	1	4	116	3	910	11
7:45 AM	32	0	5	136	2	7:45 AM		113	4	6	152	17	874	14
8:00 AM	31	1	6	108	4	8:00 AM		78	11	14	92	13	750	24
8:15 AM	32	0	7	80	10	8:15 AM		69	15	17	97	8	705	33
8:30 AM	19	1	2	48	14	8:30 AM	1	78	2	2	79	6	657	37
8:45 AM	10	0	0	33	32	8:45 AM	0	80	3	6	74	5	632	39
9:00 AM	6	0	3	30	30	9:00 AM	1	67	1	0	87	7	609	41
9:15 AM	7	0	0	29	40	9:15 AM	0	60	0	4	82	12	629	40
9:30 AM	5	0	2	26	45	9:30 AM	0	60	3	4	67	9	634	38
9:45 AM	5	0	1	27	43	9:45 AM	1	71	1	2	61	9	684	36
10:00 AM	7	0	1	29	40	10:00 AM	0	67	0	3	105	8	728	29
10:15 AM	5	0	0	28	42	10:15 AM	1	61	1	9	87	4	712	32
10:30 AM	8	0	0	32	34	10:30 AM	1	97	1	8	74	12	724	30
10:45 AM	7	0	1	32	34	10:45 AM	0	91	5	5	86	2	719	31
11:00 AM	6	0	0	31	36	11:00 AM	0	87	0	6	72	2	703	34
11:15 AM	8	0	1	30	38	11:15 AM	101	3	4	63	4	738	25	43
11:30 AM	7	0	0	27	43	11:30 AM	98	1	7	79	3	761	23	38
11:45 AM	6	0	1	31	36	11:45 AM	94	2	3	72	2	781	20	38
12:00 PM	5	0	0	34	29	12:00 PM	2	94	1	12	89	4	819	17
12:15 PM	6	0	1	37	23	12:15 PM	0	97	1	9	86	5	777	21
12:30 PM	10	0	1	38	18	12:30 PM	1	81	0	6	116	4	766	22
12:45 PM	8	0	2	37	23	12:45 PM	0	94	0	7	95	15	733	26
1:00 PM	7	0	1	38	18	1:00 PM	57	0	12	84	7	703	34	
1:15 PM	6	0	2	37	23	1:15 PM	76	0	11	90	10	731	28	37
1:30 PM	9	0	1	34	29	1:30 PM	84	1	7	80	3	732	27	37
1:45 PM	10	0	2	37	23	1:45 PM	83	0	9	81	8	797	19	37
2:00 PM	6	0	1	34	29	2:00 PM	95	3	13	69	8	850	15	36
2:15 PM	4	0	1	33	32	2:15 PM	130	9	4	14	72	8	922	9
2:30 PM	10	0	2	87	13	2:30 PM	106	10	18	94	6	934	7	34
2:45 PM	9	0	0	92	8	2:45 PM	114	11	18	107	8	915	10	37
3:00 PM	5	0	1	96	6	3:00 PM	0	93	3	12	97	2	933	8
3:15 PM	45	1	15	95	7	3:15 PM	0	124	1	17	90	1	1001	5
3:30 PM	15	0	2	44	16	3:30 PM	0	108	1	17	82	6	1093	2
3:45 PM	11	0	1	36	28	3:45 PM	1	108	1	17	82	6	1093	2
4:00 PM	4	0	2	37	23	4:00 PM	0	150	2	13	110	3	1108	1
4:15 PM	6	1	1	47	15	4:15 PM	1	126	0	16	125	7	1047	3
4:30 PM	8	1	1	51	11	4:30 PM	0	180	4	23	116	2	1004	4
4:45 PM	10	0	2	50	12	4:45 PM	0	126	2	14	85	3	884	12
5:00 PM	13	1	2	50	12	5:00 PM	1	97	0	14	100	5	847	16
5:15 PM	10	0	2	43	17	5:15 PM	2	105	1	22	98	4		
5:30 PM	8	0	1	38	18	5:30 PM	0	94	0	27	82	2		
5:45 PM	9	1	2	38	18	5:45 PM	1	88	2	20	79	3		
6:00 PM	9	0	1	38	18	6:00 PM								
6:15 PM	5	0	2	38	18	6:15 PM								
6:30 PM	8	0	2	38	18	6:30 PM								
6:45 PM	10	0	2	38	18	6:45 PM								

US12 & Henderson Helena West: 9/22/22 AM: 9/28/22 PM

Time	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	Rolling Hr	Rank
7:00 AM			65	0	2	67	7	814
7:15 AM			68	0	4	100	5	881
7:30 AM			80	1	4	116	3	910
7:45 AM			113	4	6	152	17	874
8:00 AM			78	11	14	92	13	750
8:15 AM			69	15	17	97	8	705
8:30 AM	1		78	2	2	79	6	657
8:45 AM	0		80	3	6	74	5	632
9:00 AM	1		67	1	0	87	7	609
9:15 AM	0		60	0	4	82	12	629
9:30 AM	0		60	3	4	67	9	634
9:45 AM	1		71	1	2	61	9	684
10:00 AM	0		67	0	3	105	8	728
10:15 AM	1		61	1	9	87	4	712
10:30 AM	1		97	1	8	74	12	724
10:45 AM	0		91	5	5	86	2	719
11:00 AM	0		87	0	6	72	2	703
11:15 AM	101		3	4	63	4	738	25
11:30 AM	98		1	7	79	3	761	23
11:45 AM	94		2	3	72	2	781	20
12:00 PM	94		1	12	89	4	819	17
12:15 PM	0		97	1	9	86	5	777
12:30 PM	1		81	0	6	116	4	766
12:45 PM	0		94	0	7	95	15	733
1:00 PM	57		0	12	84	7	703	34
1:15 PM	76		0	11	90	10	731	28
1:30 PM	84		1	7	80	3	732	27
1:45 PM	83		0	9	81	8	797	19
2:00 PM	95		3	13	69	8	850	15
2:15 PM	130		9	4	14	72	8	922
2:30 PM	106		10	18	94	6	934	7
2:45 PM	114		11	18	107	8	915	10
3:00 PM	0		93	3	12	97	2	933
3:15 PM	0		124	1	17	90	1	1001
3:30 PM	0		108	1	17	82	6	1093
3:45 PM	1		108	1	17	82	6	1093
4:00 PM	0		150	2	13	110	3	1108
4:15 PM	1		126	0	16	125	7	1047
4:30 PM	0		180	4	23	116	2	1004
4:45 PM	0		126	2	14	85	3	884
5:00 PM	1		97	0	14	100	5	847
5:15 PM	2		105	1	22	98	4	
5:30 PM	0		94	0	27	82	2	
5:45 PM	1		88	2	20	79	3	

Ranked Minor, With Overlapping Hours

Rank	Time	Minor
1	7:30 AM	140
2	7:45 AM	136
3	7:15 AM	121
4	8:00 AM	108
5	7:00 AM	98
6	3:00 PM	96
7	3:15 PM	95
8	2:45 PM	92
9	2:30 PM	87
10	8:15 AM	80
11	4:30 PM	51
12	4:45 PM	50
13	5:00 PM	50
14	8:30 AM	48
15	4:15 PM	47
16	3:30 PM	44
17	5:15 PM	43
18	12:30 PM	38
19	1:00 PM	38
20	5:30 PM	38
21	5:45 PM	38
22	6:00 PM	38
23	12:15 PM	37
24	12:45 PM	37
25	1:15 PM	37
26	1:45 PM	37
27	4:00 PM	37
28	3:45 PM	36
29	12:00 PM	34
30	1:30 PM	34
31	2:00 PM	34

Non-Overlapping Hours (Top 8 Minor)

Rank	Time	Minor	Major
1	8:00 AM	108	750
2	7:00 AM	98	814
3	3:00 PM	96	915
4	5:00 PM	50	847
5	1:00 PM	38	703
6	4:00 PM	37	1108
7	12:00 PM	34	819
8	2:00 PM	34	850

AM  
PM

Euclid Ave & Granite Ave Traffic Signal Warrant Volume Development

	Major	Minor
AM Project Trips	20	58
PM Project Trips	62	38

Volume Factors as % of AM Peak H

Time	Major	Minor
7:00 AM	100%	91%
8:00 AM	92%	100%

2022

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	750	108
7:00 AM	814	98
3:00 PM	915	96
5:00 PM	847	50
1:00 PM	703	38
4:00 PM	1108	37
12:00 PM	819	34
2:00 PM	850	34

2029 Without Project

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	818	118
7:00 AM	888	107
3:00 PM	998	105
5:00 PM	924	55
1:00 PM	767	41
4:00 PM	1209	40
12:00 PM	894	37
2:00 PM	927	37

Volume Factors as % of PM Peak H

Time	Major	Minor
12:00 PM	74%	35%
1:00 PM	63%	40%
2:00 PM	77%	35%
3:00 PM	83%	100%
4:00 PM	100%	39%
5:00 PM	76%	52%

Euclid Ave Growth Factor 1.091

Project Trips

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	20	58
7:00 AM	18	53
3:00 PM	51	38
5:00 PM	47	20
1:00 PM	39	15
4:00 PM	62	15
12:00 PM	46	13
2:00 PM	48	13

2029 With Project

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	838	176
7:00 AM	906	160
3:00 PM	1049	143
5:00 PM	971	75
1:00 PM	806	56
4:00 PM	1271	55
12:00 PM	940	50
2:00 PM	975	50



# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

City/Town: **Helena, MT**  
 County:   
 Division:   
 Data Date: **2029 with Prj**  
 Major Route: **Euclid Ave (US 12)**  
 Minor Route: **Granite Ave**

Analysis Performed By: **Transportation Solutions**  
 Date Analysis Performed: **1/5/2023**  
 Project Number if Applicable: **222071:02**  
 Weather Conditions:   
 Appr. Lanes: **2**      Critical Approach Speed (mph): **55**  
 Appr. Lanes: **1**

### Volume Level Criteria

1. Is the critical speed of major street traffic > 70 km/h (40 mph) ?  Yes    No
  2. Is the intersection in a built-up area or isolated community of <10,000 population?  Yes    No
- If Question 1 or 2 above is answered "Yes", then use "70%" volume level  70%    100%

### WARRANT 1 - EIGHT-HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

Warrant 1 is satisfied if Condition A or Condition B is "100%" satisfied. Satisfied:    Yes    No

Warrant is also satisfied if both Condition A and Condition B are "80%" satisfied, given adequate trials of other remedial measures have been tried.

Adequate trial(s) of other remedial measures tried:  Yes    No

*List Remedial Measures Tried (Required for 80% Combination of A & B)*

#### Condition A - Minimum Vehicular Volume & Condition B - Interruption of Continuous Traffic

**100% Satisfied:**    Yes    No

**(Used if neither Condition A or B is satisfied) 80% Satisfied:**    Yes    No

		(volumes in veh/hr)		Minimum Requirements				Eight Highest Hours							
								8 AM	7 AM	3 PM	5 PM	1 PM	4 PM	12 PM	2 PM
		Approach Lanes		1	2 or more										
		Volume Level		100%	70%	100%	70%								
<b>W - 1A</b>	<b>100%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		500	350	600	<b>420</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		150	<b>105</b>	200	140	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1B</b>	<b>100%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		750	525	900	<b>630</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		75	<b>53</b>	100	70	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1A</b>	<b>80%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		400	280	480	<b>336</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		120	<b>84</b>	160	112	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1B</b>	<b>80%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		600	420	720	<b>504</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		60	<b>42</b>	80	56	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

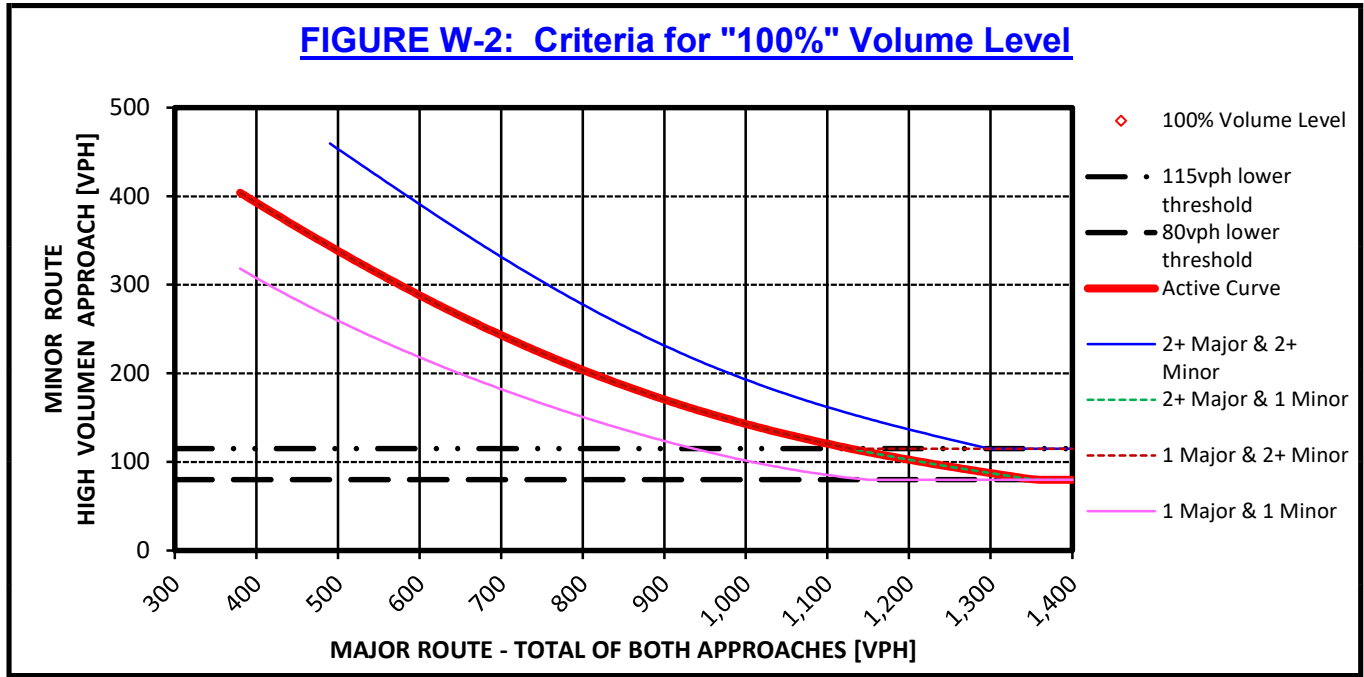
## WARRANT 2 - FOUR-HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

Satisfied:  Yes  No

*If all four points lie above the appropriate line, then this warrant is satisfied.*

	Four Highest Hours			
	8 AM	7 AM	3 PM	5 PM
(Volumes in veh/hr)				
SUM of Both Approaches on Major Street	838	906	1,049	971
Highest Minor Street Approach	176	160	143	75

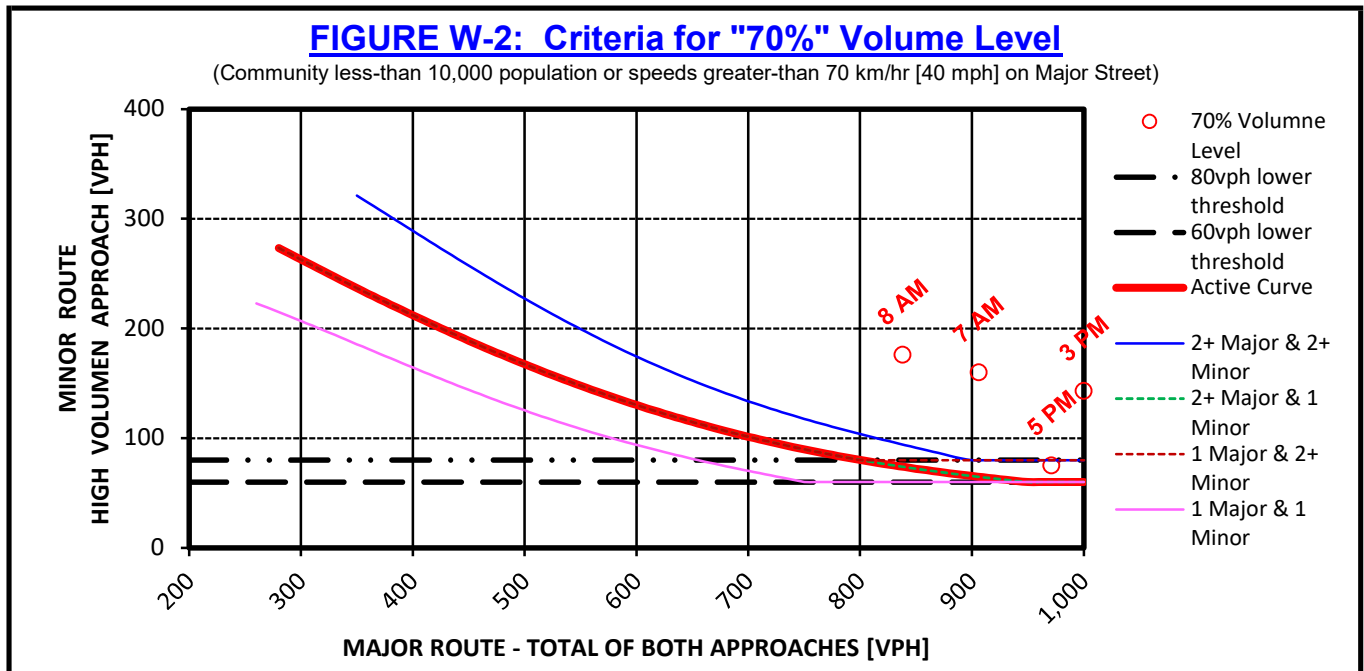
**FIGURE W-2: Criteria for "100%" Volume Level**



*\* Note: 115 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 80 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.*

**FIGURE W-2: Criteria for "70%" Volume Level**

(Community less-than 10,000 population or speeds greater-than 70 km/hr [40 mph] on Major Street)



*\* Note: 80 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 60 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.*

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

## WARRANT 3 - PEAK HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

This signal warrant shall be applied only in unusual cases, such as office complexes, manufacturing plants, industrial complexes, or high-occupancy vehicle facilities that attract or discharge large numbers of vehicles over a short time period.

Applicable:  Yes  No  
 Satisfied:  Yes  No

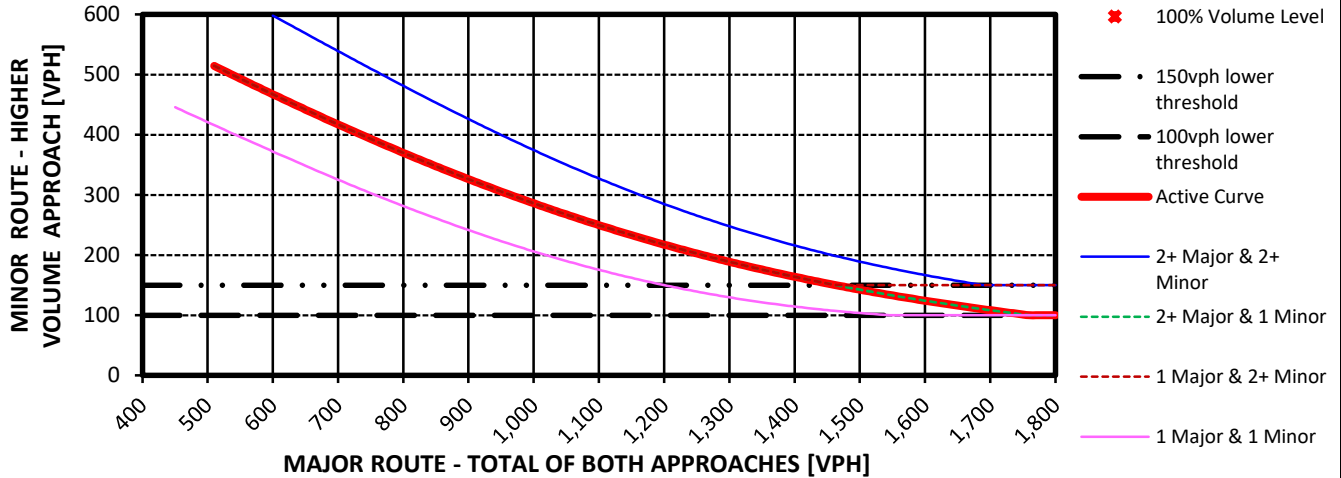
Signalization shall be considered if a point lies above the appropriate line or the Delay criteria is met.

Unusual case(s) justifying this Warrant:

School vicinity

Peak Hour Data		
Peak Hour	Major Route	Minor Route
8 AM	838	176

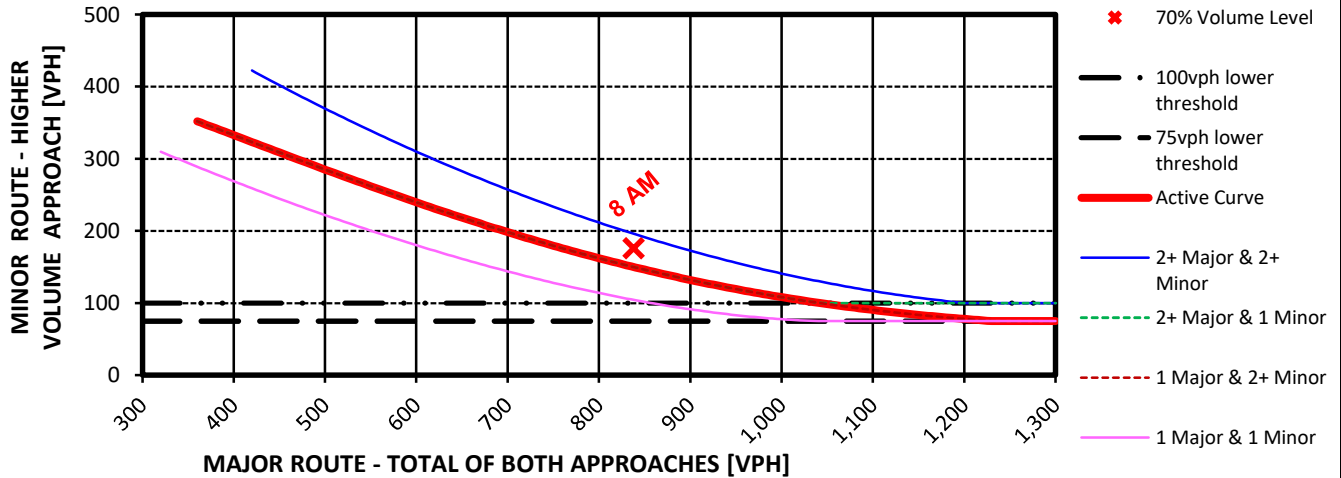
FIGURE W-3: Criteria for "100%" Volume Level



\* Note: 150 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 100 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.

FIGURE W-3: Criteria for "70%" Volume Level

(Community less-than 10,000 population or speeds greater-than 70 km/hr [40 mph] on Major Street)



\* Note: 100 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 75 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.

DELAY CRITERIA	1. Delay on Minor Approach (vehicle-hours)				2. Volume on Minor Approach (veh/hr)				3. Total Entering Volume (veh/hr)						
	Approaches		Lanes		Approaches		Lanes		Number of Approaches		Volume Criteria				
	Approaches	1	2	Approaches	1	2	3	4	No. of Approaches	3	4	Volume Criteria	650	800	
	Delay Criteria:	4.0	5.0	Volume Criteria	100	150	3	4	Volume Criteria	650	800	Volume:	1,023		
Delay:	0.9		Volume:	176		Fullfilled?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	Fullfilled?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

## WARRANT 7 - CRASH EXPERIENCE

Satisfied:  Yes  No

This warrant is intended for application where the severity and frequency of crashes are the principal reasons to consider the installation of a traffic control signal. The need for a traffic control signal shall be considered if an engineering study finds that criteria 1, 2, and 3 are met.

Criteria		Fulfilled?	
		Yes	No
1. Adequate trial of alternatives with satisfactory observance and enforcement has failed to reduce the crash frequency as shown below:			
			X
2. How many crashes within the past 12 months? For this criteria to be met, five or more reported crashes, of types susceptible to correction by the installation of a traffic control signal, must have occurred.	1		X
3. If Warrant 1A or Warrant 1B are 80 percent satisfied of the current values or if Warrant 4, 4-hour or peak, is met at the 80 percent values.		Met?	
		Yes	No
Warrant 1, Condition A, Minimum Vehicular Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X
Warrant 1, Condition B, Interruption of Continuous Traffic (80 percent satisfied):			X
Warrant 4, Four-Hour Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X
Warrant 4, Peak Hour Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X

## WARRANT 8 - ROADWAY NETWORK

Satisfied:  Yes  No

This warrant is used to encourage the concentration and organization of traffic flow on a roadway network. This warrant is satisfied if one of the following 2 criteria is met and both routes meet at least one of the characteristics of a Major Route below.

Criteria		Met?		Fulfilled?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Both of the criteria to the right are required in order to be met.	a. Please enter the total existing, or immediately projected, entering traffic volume during the peak hour of a typical weekday. Requires a minimum of 1,000 vehicles to be met.	X		X	
	b. Based on an engineering study, does the 5 year projected traffic volumes, for this location, meet one or more of Warrants 1, 2, or 3 during an average weekday? *	x			
2. Enter the total existing, or immediately projected, entering volume for each of any 5 hours of a non-normal business day. (Saturday or Sunday). 1,000 vph for each hour required.	← Hour				
	← Volume				X

\* Supporting data required for verification of the projected 5 year traffic Warrants.

A major route, as used in this signal warrant, shall have at least one of the following characteristics:		Met?		Fulfilled?	
Characteristics of Major Routes		Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Is it a part of the street or highway system that serves as the principal roadway network for through traffic flow?	Major Route	x		X	
	* Minor Route		X		
2. Does it include rural or suburban highways outside, entering, or traversing a city?	Major Route	x		X	
	* Minor Route		X		
3. Does it appear as a major route on an official plan, such as a major street plan in an urban area traffic and transportation study?	Major Route	x		X	
	* Minor Route	x			

\* This is a minor route, but for the purposes of this Warrant, shall be considered as the other major route.

**Note:** Supporting data shall be required to verify the routes meet one of the characteristics of a major route.



**External Agency  
General Review Comments**

## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** April Sparks  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2023 8:09 AM  
**To:** Christopher Brink  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

FYI



### April Sparks

Administrative Assistant III, Community Development Department  
(406) 447-8490 | [apsparks@helenamt.gov](mailto:apsparks@helenamt.gov) | [helenamt.gov](http://helenamt.gov)  
316 N. Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623



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**From:** Cotton, Brittany <[bcotton@mt.gov](mailto:bcotton@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2023 3:45 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment <[citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

MDT's Comments are the same as they were on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022:

MDT facilities do not appear to be directly accessed by the Westside Woods Major Subdivision. Please contact the Butte Maintenance Chief, Jim Pesanti (494-9628) if it is determined modifications to MDT's system are required to accommodate the proposed development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment again,  
Brittany Cotton  
Montana Department of Transportation  
SIAP Transportation Planner  
406.444.6126

---

**From:** Wosoba, LeRoy <[lwosoba@mt.gov](mailto:lwosoba@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 2:20 PM  
**To:** Cotton, Brittany <[bcotton@mt.gov](mailto:bcotton@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

Brittany,  
Looks like you were the last to work on this development, it's getting further along in the process. I'd like you to continue tracking and handling this development review. As they aren't directly access our roadway our comments/involvement will likely be limited.

Thanks,  
LeRoy



---

**From:** Tierney, Michael <[mtierney@mt.gov](mailto:mtierney@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 1:29 PM  
**To:** Wosoba, LeRoy <[lwosoba@mt.gov](mailto:lwosoba@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

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**From:** Christopher Brink <[CBRINK@helenamt.gov](mailto:CBRINK@helenamt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 1:11 PM  
**To:** Peggy Benkelman <[PBENKELMAN@helenamt.gov](mailto:PBENKELMAN@helenamt.gov)>; [rweltz@helenaschools.org](mailto:rweltz@helenaschools.org); Greg McNally <[GMCNALLY@lccountymt.gov](mailto:GMCNALLY@lccountymt.gov)>; English, Leata <[LEnglish@mt.gov](mailto:LEnglish@mt.gov)>; FWP General <[fwpgen@mt.gov](mailto:fwpgen@mt.gov)>; Tierney, Michael <[mtierney@mt.gov](mailto:mtierney@mt.gov)>; [jskinner@mt.gov](mailto:jskinner@mt.gov); Roger Baltz <[rbaltz@lccountymt.gov](mailto:rbaltz@lccountymt.gov)>; Dutton, Leo <[ldutton@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ldutton@lccountymt.gov)>; [sanderson@lccountymt.gov](mailto:sanderson@lccountymt.gov); [jchambers@lccountymt.gov](mailto:jchambers@lccountymt.gov); Jeff Wadekamper <[jwadekamper@helenairport.com](mailto:jwadekamper@helenairport.com)>; Brian Obert <[bobert@mbac.biz](mailto:bobert@mbac.biz)>  
**Cc:** Michael Alvarez <[MALVAREZ@helenamt.gov](mailto:MALVAREZ@helenamt.gov)>; Ellie Ray <[ERAY@helenamt.gov](mailto:ERAY@helenamt.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

City of Helena Development Collaborators;

The City of Helena Planning Staff has been reviewing applications for Annexation and Major Subdivision review for Westside Woods. The development team for the project has completed their application sufficiency review and their proposed project has now moved on to the general subdivision review stage. Please review the posted application materials and if warranted, please provide comments by the specified deadline either directly to me or via our department email address ([citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov)).

Comments should be provided no later than January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 by the COB.

Planning Staff will assemble appropriate city staff members to review both internal and external agency comments the week of January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Attached is a copy of the primary preliminary plat application and the preliminary plat. The complete application materials and resubmittals can be found here - <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects> [[helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov)]

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions/comments.

Thank you!

Chris



**Christopher J. Brink, AICP**

Director, Community Development Department

(406) 447-8445 | [cbrink@helenamt.gov](mailto:cbrink@helenamt.gov) | [helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov) [[helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov)]

316 N. Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623

[\[facebook.com\]](https://www.facebook.com) [\[twitter.com\]](https://twitter.com)

## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** Maes, Stephanie <smaes@mt.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 11:19 AM  
**To:** Derek - Sussex Construction  
**Cc:** Sharon Haugen; David Knoepke; Michael McConnell; Ron Bartsch; Mark Young; Fogarty, William; Wingerter, Jim; Brelin, Stanton; Kilts, Kristina; Moeller, Zach  
**Subject:** RE: Approach to Highway 12

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Derek,

MDT and City of Helena staff met to discuss your email below and the request for direct access to Euclid Ave/US 12/N-8 to serve the West Side Subdivision. MDT had previously reviewed an approach request to US 12 in this vicinity, and we stand by our earlier decision to deny the request for an access in this area. This decision is based on our review of the Traffic Impact Study, which provided no compelling need for an additional approach to US 12, the limited sight distance, drainage issues and potential safety implications.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this email, please let me know.

Thank you,  
Stephanie

---

**From:** Derek - Sussex Construction <Derek@sussexconstruction.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 14, 2021 3:43 PM  
**To:** Maes, Stephanie <smaes@mt.gov>  
**Cc:** shaugen@helenamt.gov; DKNOEPKE@helenamt.gov; Michael McConnell <MMCCONNELL@helenamt.gov>; Ron - Sussex Construction <rbartsch@sussexconstruction.com>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Approach to Highway 12

Hi Stephanie,

Thank you for taking the time to speak over the phone yesterday. As discussed, we are looking into an approach to the proposed West Side Subdivision. It is a little farther West than the original approach that we requested this Summer. We understand the MDOT will have an internal meeting and discuss this proposed approach. Once a decision is reached, we will be notified.

I have cc'd City of Helena Staff on this email. If you are able to let us know if MDOT would consider an approach at this location that would be great.

Requested Approach (In Blue):



Expected Trips Per Day (Generated By Subdivision) \*\*Note – Trip Counts may be up to twice as much if the subdivision traffic is analyzed based on maximizing Zoning :

**Table 2. West Side Subdivision Expected Trip Generation by Phase**

Land Use	ITE Code	Quantity	Rate	Weekday Trip Ends	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
					Rate	Trips	Rate	Trips
<b>Phase 1 - 2021</b>								
Single-Family	210	28	9.44	264	0.74	21	0.99	28
Condominium	220	28	7.32	205	0.46	13	0.56	16
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>469</b>		<b>34</b>		<b>44</b>
<b>Phase 2 - 2023</b>								
Single-Family	210	13	9.44	123	0.74	10	0.99	13
Condominium	220	16	7.32	117	0.46	7	0.56	9
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>709</b>		<b>51</b>		<b>66</b>
<b>Phase 3 - 2025</b>								
Single-Family	210	42	9.44	396	0.74	31	0.99	42
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>1,105</b>		<b>82</b>		<b>108</b>
<b>Phase 4 - 2027</b>								
Single-Family	210	11	9.44	104	0.74	8	0.99	11
Condominium	220	32	7.32	234	0.46	15	0.56	18
<b>Total at Full Build-out</b>				<b>1,443</b>		<b>105</b>		<b>137</b>

Thank you,

Derek Davis – Project Manager



## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** Dan Karlin  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 15, 2023 10:51 AM  
**To:** Christopher Brink  
**Cc:** Jenny Chambers; Kevin Horne; Christian Lehnert  
**Subject:** City of Helena Subdivision Request for Comments

Director Brink,  
Lewis and Clark County Public Works has completed a team review of the Westside Woods and Craftsman Village Subdivisions based on the information you provided to Director Chambers and offer the following comments.

**For Westside Woods:**

We believe it would be best if the applicant paves the sections of Hauser Blvd. and Floweree Street in accordance with City of Helena standards and annex them to eliminate County equipment from being present and necessary in an area surrounded by the City. If annexation is not feasible, we would request the applicant pave the sections of Hauser Blvd. and Floweree Street be paved in accordance with the City of Helena standards to eliminate the need for graders in the area. Stormwater management has historically been problematic and a close look at the stormwater management plan by City staff is recommended. We also note that a noxious weed control plan is required for soil disturbances within the County. The plan should be submitted to the office of the Noxious Weed Coordinator for approval prior to any soil disturbance.

**Craftsman Village:**

The information submitted indicates annexation to the City. Additional traffic will utilize 282, which will have an impact on MDT, the City of East Helena, and the County as Runkle Parkway is extended to the west to, and adjacent to the Padbury properties. We also note that a noxious weed control plan is required for soil disturbances within the County. The plan should be submitted to the office of the Noxious Weed Coordinator for approval prior to any soil disturbance.

Thanks,

Daniel Karlin, PE  
County Engineer  
Lewis and Clark County Public Works  
3402 Cooney Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
Office: (406) 447-8034  
Fax: (406) 447-8368  
[dkarlin@lccountymt.gov](mailto:dkarlin@lccountymt.gov)





MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 3 Headquarters  
1400 S 19th Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

8-3-2021

Michael McConnell  
Community Development Department  
316 N. Park Ave, Room 402  
Helena, MT. 59623

Dear Mr. McConnell,

Thank you for the opportunity to remain engaged as the city continues to move ahead with the Westside Major Phased Development. With our stewardship responsibilities for fish, wildlife and recreation resources, FWP appreciates being able to provide information that can inform your decisions.

Just as we have seen use increase at our state parks and fishing access sites, we understand there is an appetite for outdoor recreation opportunities—and, specifically trails. The commitment of the developer for additional trails connected to the popular existing Mt. Helena trail system is consistent with FWP's mission to enable public access to recreational opportunities.

FWP has reviewed the final Environmental Assessment dated June 25, 2021. Regarding the resources and habitat found at the location of this proposed subdivision, we note that elk and mule deer use the surrounding area for winter range. We suggest the developer retain where possible the native sagebrush/grassland vegetative communities due to their importance for wildlife habitat.

The EA suggests the narrow seasonal drainages will provide corridors and security for big game. While true in a limited sense, research has shown that to fully provide these benefits corridors typically need to be a minimum of one mile in width for elk and one-half mile in width for other ungulates.

FWP has responded to conflicts with black bears in the vicinity, and grizzly bears are expanding their occupied habitat and have been documented in the greater area. To reduce the likelihood of attracting wild carnivores into the subdivision, and to reduce the incidence of human-wildlife conflicts, FWP recommends effective bear-resistant procedures for storing and disposing of trash.

We have included some additional reference material that might be of value to your office and the developer as you consider the future phases for this subdivision; please see attached.

Anticipating there will be future interest in developments in the general vicinity of Mt. Helena City Park, FWP would welcome the opportunity to visit with your office about long-term planning to meet the recreation, wildlife, and development interests in this area.

Sincerely,

Marina Yoshioka  
Regional Supervisor, Region 3

## **Additional Reference Material**

### **General**

FWP's working document *Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development in Montana*, is a resource for developers and planning offices to consult. We reference page numbers in the document that might be applicable to the Westside Major Phased Development.

### **Water Bodies**

The draft EA indicated that there are ephemeral drainage channels on the subject property, see pp. 7–10 & C26–C29 (FWP 2012) for recommendations for subdivisions around water bodies.

### **Wildlife Species**

The greater area including the West Side Subdivision supports a number of species that are classified as Montana SOC. These are species that may have a state rank of S1, S2, or S3 (status ranks range from S1 (greatest concern), to rank 5 (least concern), and these species may be further classified under the state's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS; FWP 2005), in which case they have been identified because they are in greatest need of conservation. Vegetated buffers between nesting sites and development or power lines for avian SOC should be maintained (pp. 18–20 & C82–C124, FWP 2012).

FWP recommends that the developer consider the design recommendations referenced in FWP's Subdivision Recommendations (2012), specifically the winter range and shrub/grassland sections (discussed in more detail below).

FWP has documented elk less than one mile from the property during winter aerial surveys. We expect that some big game species may inhabit the property regularly or on occasion (mule deer) and may cross the property (mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and elk), given its proximity and continuity with both the City's Mount Helena park land and US Forest Service land adjoining City property.

### **Big Game Winter Range**

The property is within elk and mule deer winter range. Winter range information may be found on the FWP website here:

<https://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/caps/#::~text=The%20Crucial%20Areas%20Planning%20System,program%20and%20For%20policy%20questions> or here <http://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/caps/> (instructions at the end of this document indicate how to get the big game winter range layer to display).

Winter range is critically important to ungulates. Elk were located within 1 mile during winter surveys and may occur on adjoining properties or on the subject property--More thorough reconnaissance would be necessary to make this determination. In some areas, elk do not utilize their winter range now, due to the loss of winter range habitat to development and the ongoing human disturbance associated with development. While in other developed/developing areas, elk continue to arrive in winter, leading to conflict.

FWP's Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development recommends linkage widths are a minimum of one (1) mile for elk and one-half (½) mile for other species; for white-tailed deer, mule deer, and moose, linkage should be along riparian corridors where present (FWP 2012). Facilitating



wildlife movement around the development occurring in the area by maintaining linkage (undeveloped habitat) will hopefully curb the number of human-wildlife conflicts. However, as we have observed within the city limits of Helena, mule deer will likely also be residents of the subdivision, and as observed in other nearby areas, for example Three-Mile Creek, Scratchgravel Hills, and the North Hills, elk may occasionally be found around homes and consume standing crops, haystacks, and other private property. Mule deer should be expected to occur on the property at any time of year.

### **Human-Wildlife Conflicts**

FWP recommends that wildlife conflicts be recognized in this planning phase.

#### *Mule Deer & Elk*

Future residents should expect to have mule deer, elk, and other wildlife, within or in the vicinity of the subdivision. Native plants are more tolerant of foraging by wildlife, and the county extension office may provide information on how to landscape with native species.

#### *Bears & Mountain Lions*

Where there are mule deer, there will likely be mountain lions, as observed across the urban-wildland interface around the Helena Valley and areas north and south of Helena. FWP has responded to conflicts with black bear in the vicinity. Grizzly bears are expanding their occupied habitat and were documented in the greater area. Either species of bear may on occasion move through the area. Future residents should expect that carnivores will be in the vicinity of the subdivision and may on occasion be within the subdivision. To reduce the likelihood of attracting wild carnivores into the subdivision, and to reduce the incidence of human-wildlife conflicts, FWP recommends an effective bear-resistant procedure for storing and disposal of trash (pp. 13 & C54–C61, FWP 2012).

### **Hunting**

This parcel is located in deer/elk hunting district (HD) 335. There are resident mule deer and elk in the immediate vicinity, and hunting occurs in the immediate vicinity. Public hunting is expected to occur nearby due to the presence of huntable populations of game species, depending on public access or private property owners' interest (pp. 12–13 & C47–C53, FWP 2012).

### **Vegetation**

The draft EA states that there are grass, shrubs, and pine trees on the property. FWP considers sagebrush an important shrub habitat. *Native grassland and native shrub habitat types are considered a Tier 1 ecosystem, or ecosystem in greatest need of conservation, in Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (MCFWCS 2005). The fragmentation and loss of native grassland and native shrub habitat patches should be minimized. Habitat patches important to wildlife and wildlife connectivity should be maintained and the loss of large habitat patches should be minimized. Native grassland and shrubland bird populations, especially Species of Concern, should be maintained. The spread of invasive, non-native plant species should be reduced.* Please refer to Section E of the Subdivision Recommendations for recommended design standards; they apply here, because the native grassland/shrub habitat patch is larger than 25 acres and would provide reasonable measures to mitigate impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (pp. 14–17 & C5, FWP 2012). *[FWP] has long recognized the importance of sagebrush/grassland vegetative communities as wildlife habitat. Efforts to manipulate these communities concern FWP because of the potential implications to wildlife; please also refer to the*

bulletin referenced below. The area included in this proposal likely includes a host of bird species, and may include Species of Concern, that utilize the native sagebrush and the native grassland as breeding and nesting grounds—More thorough reconnaissance would be necessary to make this determination. FWP recommends that the sagebrush be left standing wherever possible, as it increases diversity and water retention and reduces erosion, in addition to providing important habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

### **Public Land**

The proposed development is adjacent to City of Helena property, which adjoins the Mount Helena City open space, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation land, US Forest Service Land, and Bureau of Land Management Land.

### **Reference Materials**

- *Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development in Montana*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/living-with-wildlife/subdivision-recommendations>
- Natural Heritage Program SOC Reports  
<http://mtnhp.org>
- *Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy - Full Strategy*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/wildlife-management/state-wildlife-action-plan>
- *Sagebrush Bulletin*  
[https://eplanning.blm.gov/public\\_projects/lup/36511/45862/49563/Western%20Watersheds/Montana%20Sage%20Brush%20Review.pdf](https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/lup/36511/45862/49563/Western%20Watersheds/Montana%20Sage%20Brush%20Review.pdf)
- *A Landowner's Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences:*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/binaries/content/assets/fwp/conservation/land-owner-wildlife-resources/mt-fence-guide-second-edition.pdf>
- *The Role of Fish and Wildlife Evidence in Local Land Use Regulation:*  
[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2233554](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2233554)
- *Living with Wildlife* brochures are available at FWP offices and online:  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/wildlife-management/living-with-wildlife>

### **Prior Contact/Comment on this Subdivision**

A map of the proposed subdivision and a letter dated 8/26/20 requesting review was received from WWC Engineering. FWP replied with a letter dated 9/8/2020 requesting more information and indicating that we would review a draft EA once prepared.



**Community Development and Planning**  
**Lewis and Clark County**

316 N. Park Ave. Room 230 Helena, MT 59623  
Phone: 406-447-8374 Fax: 406-447-8398  
e-mail: [planning@lccountymt.gov](mailto:planning@lccountymt.gov)



Date: January 13, 2023

To: Christopher Brink, AICP, Director, City of Helena Community Development

From: Greg McNally, Director, Lewis and Clark County Community Development and Planning

**Re: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation**

Mr. Brink,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation project. The Lewis and Clark County Community Development and Planning staff have the following comments regarding the proposed project:

- 1) The Board of County Commissioners have conditionally approved the abandonment and discontinuance of the unconstructed right-of-ways for Highland Park, West View Avenue, East View Avenue and Toboggan Avenue, all located in Highland Park. The conditions to abandon and discontinue these right-of-ways have not been fully met and should be met prior to final plat approval of this project.
- 2) The Board of County Commissioners have conditionally approved the abandonment and discontinuance of the right-of-way for Circle Place located in the Bellvue Addition. The conditions to abandon and discontinue this right-of-way has not been fully met and should be met prior to final plat approval of this project.
- 3) According to the 2020 Tri-County Regional Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), the subject property is identified as having a moderate local hazard rank. The Local Hazard map in the CWPP is useful in understanding the scope of the wildfire hazard risk under extreme conditions. It represents the wildfire hazard risk in a worst-case scenario. The CWPP includes discussions of strategies and tactics to reduce wildfire risk.
- 4) Prior to any soil disturbance, a weed management plan should be submitted for approval by the County Weed District and the subject property should be certified as weed-free.
- 5) Stormwater management should be considered to avoid stormwater run-off in excess of current volumes and to control soil erosion.
- 6) Additional traffic is likely to occur on nearby roads outside the City Limits of Helena creating greater need for dust management on gravel roads and overall maintenance on all roads. Consider the impacts to off-site roads outside the City Limits of Helena and a proportional share contribution for future improvements.

- 7) The subject property is not located within a floodplain.
- 8) Existing development may encroach into the right-of-way for Hauser Boulevard adjacent to this project.
- 9) Dedicated parkland should include space(s) for off-street parking to discourage on-street parking by park users. Facilities within dedicated parkland should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If you have any questions about the comments we have provided, please feel free to contact me for further discussion.

Sincerely,

  
Greg McNally, Director

# **General Public Comments**

Save Helena Westside (SHW) supports development that prioritizes public health and safety. As currently proposed, the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision will have significant negative impacts to public health and safety. This letter is meant to propose conditions and considerations to address those negative impacts.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to “avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed.” Therefore, SHW believes the following infrastructure upgrades are needed as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Construction of a road connecting the subdivision to existing roads to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane, per City Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) to accomplish the following:
  - Provide additional emergency access in the event of local emergencies or evacuation. (See attached United States Forest Service fire models for how quickly this neighborhood might have to evacuate under typical fire season conditions.)
  - Turn one of the long dead-end streets (Livezey Ct) into a through street.
  - Offer an alternative road for construction traffic to use throughout the course of the project to avoid school routes.
  - Reduce daily traffic impact at peak times around Kessler School and on surrounding neighborhood streets.

The private landowner of American Storage LLC, Tim Davis, has provided a signed letter of intent to the City to sell or grant an easement to allow for the construction of such a connection to the existing Park Lane. (See January 28, 2023, email correspondence from SHW).

2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards as detailed in the staff reports for the previous application (see the January 12, 2022 Annexation Staff Report and November 9, 2021 Subdivision Staff Report)** – In conjunction with #1 above, Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Park Dr and Flowerree to the west of Granite, should be upgraded to include sidewalks for safety of pedestrians.

This recommendation is in alignment with the conclusions of January 3, 2023, Kessler School Walkability Audit (see the attached report).

In addition to the need for the above stated conditions of annexation, SHW is also concerned about the safety impacts of the long block lengths and dead-end streets within the subdivision. On April 25, 2022, local wildfire expert, Pat McKelvey, spoke to the City Commission during public comment regarding the concerns he had about wildfire and evacuation safety with the WSW proposal. Mr. McKelvey urged the Commission that when the WSW proposal comes before them again, to consider the risks in fire and evacuation. We would ask the City Staff do that very thing now, when weighing out your recommendations and conditions.

We believe that without including the conditions listed above and addressing the safety concerns relating to long block length and dead-end streets, the WSW proposal does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads and sidewalks, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities.

-SHW Directors

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:30 AM

---

**From:** LesLee Brinton <59935mt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:04 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We support the comments presented by Save Helena Westside with regard to giving land to the city for the park. Part of what they want to "gift" to the City is badly in need of fire mitigation and is so incredibly steep that no one can use the land anyway. *They* need to clean up the land they own, not fob it off on Helena taxpayers!

While initially positive toward Sussex, I have been increasingly concerned by their tactics in trying to force through a huge development that has incredibly inadequate access roads and puts the safety of westside residents in danger from daily traffic congestion and difficulty getting emergency services into and out of the area. This proposed "gift" to the city park is another reason I do not trust these folks.

Please help save Mt. Helena's park and protect the safety of Helena residents.

Sincerely,  
LesLee and David Brinton  
2543 Overlook Blvd  
Helena



## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Cory Chenoweth <cory.chenoweth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Thank you for taking the time to consider comments regarding the upcoming meeting regarding the Westside Woods subdivision.

My biggest questions concerns about this project are as follows:

1. Much of the proposed park land is on a steep (over 20%) slope. I don't believe these areas are of public benefit. Additionally, it looks to me like the areas "donated" are the undesirable, unbuildable, and storm drainage areas. Really the only part of the proposal that is beneficial to the public is the small partition that LeGrande already goes through.
2. This plan was already denied once, and I can't find any substantial changes/improvements the developer has made, which is unfortunate.
3. I have also have concerns with access (multiple cul de sacs), mobility accommodations.

Overall this "park land" looks to be the undesirable portion of land that isn't suitable for building and, if accepted, the parks department will be responsible for weed control, and fire mitigation for portions of land that aren't of desirable use for the public. I'd like to see a designated park land that is flat and can be used for sports (soccer, lacrosse, football, etc) fields, an area for pond hockey, as well as a traditional playground with a jungle gym/swings/slide.

Please, once again, vote against this terrible proposal as it places a burden on city parks to maintain these areas with very little return on investment, as the proposed land is steep, rocky, overgrown and undesirable.

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 7:48 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Objection to WW "parkland" designation

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Re: Westside Woods subdivision parkland dedication

Parks Board Members,

Thank you for committing your time and expertise to improving access for all to parks and open spaces.

We submit these comments with various perspectives.

- We have moved to Helena from hometowns that experienced radical, exponential growth.
- We are low income landlords of a single family home that is directly adjacent to the proposed Westside Woods. This home has twice been my primary residence.
- I was a daily bike commuter from the proposed Westside Woods eastern boundary to the State Capital for years. I was an active hiker of the upper Westside and taught our kids how to ride bikes on the low traffic, dirt road portion of Hauser Blvd. and adjacent subdivision land.
- My family has attempted to re-zone and develop property at a highway and overpass for over 3 decades in Oregon. I know, very personally, the delays, costs and frustrations of codes and laws as well as "the rules;" the latter being the invisible and unethical realities of politics and money.
- We have evacuated 2 times in 3 years from active forest fires; the most recent starting from a lightning strike across the street from our home. The 8 acres of charred land and trees are less than 70 feet from our driveway.
- I am a staunch noxious weed hater and diligently identify and "killer" of noxious and invasive weeds, having taught my three oldest children including a 7 year old to pull baby tumbleweeds. We have purchased expensive native grass seed and actively plant and water those to combat invasive and noxious weeds.

### **STORM WATER DRAINAGE PONDS ARE NOT PARKLAND; Lot 6 and Lot 19 are not parkland**

Helena has many beautiful parks which are enjoyed by a large minority, if not by a majority of residents and tourists. These parks have grass, playgrounds and wide graveled or paved accessible pathways.

Other Helena city owned storm water drainage ponds are NOT classified as parkland, **thus it would be unfair, illogical and UNETHICAL to consider ANY portion of a storm water drainage pond as “parkland.”**

Since many humans cannot equitably and safely use storm water drainage ponds for recreation, classifying such lands as “parkland” opens the City to litigation.

Can children roll down the grass of a storm water drainage pond? My kids do not miss an opportunity to roll down the hills at the capital but is it safe for children to roll down the hills of a storm drainage pond? Can children ice skate on storm water drainage ponds? Can local organizations host an Easter Egg hunt in storm drainage ponds?

Can wheelchair users enjoy and navigate the incline of a storm water drainage pond? If not, then storm drainage ponds ARE NOT PARKLAND.

Lot 6 and lot 19 are NOT PARKLAND.

### **INCREASE TAX BASE, INCREASE PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUE BY EXTENDING LOTS 4-11**

Lots 4-11 are premium lots. They are the furthest lots from the high density from apartment complexes as well as the noisy highway. They are the highest elevation and will have the best view.

The City and the developer can maximize the tax base and profits by extending the southern boundaries of these lots all the way to the furthest edge of Lot 12. This would eliminate the eastern half of the “parkland” donation of Lot 12 that the developer is offering to the City.

Aside from the small section of the LeGrande Cannon Trail that is on Lot 12, the remainder of Lot 12 is steep, rocky, UN-USEABLE LAND FOR THE PUBLIC and thus, for the City.

If I was going to buy a premium lot, I would welcome the opportunity to have a larger lot which increases my flexibility to build to suit. This would also allow me to create whatever privacy options I need and desire between my premium lot and a popular recreation trail.

Extending each of those lots, will provide additional square footage for private owners to improve their privacy from a frequently used hiking trail.

I encourage the Parks Board and the City to consider and recommend extending the southern facing boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to reduce the liability of the City, to increase the tax base of the City and to increase the profits of the developer. A win, win, win.

Increasing the tax base instead of increasing maintenance costs for the City will benefit every single human being in Lewis & Clark County.

## **FIRE SAFETY AND WEED MITIGATION: LOT 12 IS NOT PARKLAND**

Private property owners are better equipped and better motivated to maintain land, reduce forest fire risk and mitigate weeds.

Expanding private property boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will improve fire safety and weed mitigation.

- During fires and evacuations, emergency authorities ask residents to **leave water hoses hooked up and ready for fire fighters to use**. Private ownership will naturally provide for more water and hoses locally sourced at each of those lots in the event of a fire.
- Improved privacy. With an extended lot length, each private owner will be able to ensure their desired level of privacy between their private home and 700+ acres of public, open land.
- As individuals or as a small collective, the future property owners can request assistance to mitigate noxious and invasive weeds. With expanded property lines, private water and hoses will have better success than occasional maintenance from a publically hired crew.

## **NARROW EASTERN SECTION OF STEEP, ROCKY, WEEDY “Lot 12 parkland” IS LUDICROUS**

Mount Helena City Park is 620 acres of amazing parkland available to everyone. The Prickly Pear Land Trust owns the land directly south of LeGrande Cannon Trail and is fully connected from LeGrande Cannon Trail to Mount Helena City Park.

There is NO VALUE for the people by adding the narrow eastern half of Lot 12 which is the downhill, steep, rocky, weedy land north of LeGrande Cannon Trail when everyone is going to access the hundreds acres of fully open land, fully park land that is 5 feet to the south.

Strapping the City of Helena with the maintenance of this measly and pointless skinny stretch of land between an established hiking trail and private land owners is LUDICROUS.

What value does the narrow strip of dangerously steep and overgrown land in Lot 12 provide to the people as “parkland?”

None.

Steep, rocky and weedy land is not “parkland.”

## **WHERE IS THE WW ART TRAIL WALK?**

The developer's ill guided and expensive marketing stunt to endear citizens to the use of the open land of the property with the large beautiful "RSVP" signs alerted the entire County to the controversy, safety concerns and shenanigans surrounding Westside Woods.

The very chic Westside Woods website, <https://westside-woods.com/>, clearly presents Westside Woods as an "Art Trail Community." The website presents Westside Woods as bringing a wonderful, expansive "art trail walk" to the western edge of Helena. The website makes NO mention that the taxpayers will be paying to BUILD and MAINTAIN these trails.

However, the subdivisions application is asking the current and future City of Helena tax payers to build and maintain over half of the "Art Trail Communities' " trails—the most difficult, most steep, most EXPENSIVE half of these trails.

The website and PowerPoint present the walking trails as a gift from Westside Woods to citizens. There is no distinction that the trails will actually be paid for by tax payers: <https://westside-woods.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/JAN-24-City-Commission-Meeting-WW-PRESENTATION-.pdf>

Offloading the most expensive trail sections to the City of Helena is unfair.

If the City of Helena, Parks Board, Prickly Pear Land Trust and Westside Woods come to a secure agreement that the western half of Lot 12 and agree that a wiggly trail in the northwest corner of the subdivision adds value to the public, than I am not opposed to the western half of Lot 12 being designed "parkland."

However, this requires an ironclad, detailed and truly cooperative agreement between the City of Helena, Prickly Pear and the Westside Woods BEFORE tax free "parkland" status is deemed for the western half of Lot 12.

Sincerely,  
Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd  
Helena 59601

Sent from my iPhone

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Jessie Herbert <jbherbert127@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 11:34 AM  
**To:** planning@lccountymt.org; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Comment for Parks Board regarding Westside Woods Subdivision proposal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I would like to share a comment and concern about a parkland dedication for the Westside Woods proposed subdivision. I reside at 2522 Woodward.

I am opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is not suitable for all mobilities. Certain lots within the subdivision (6, 16, 19, and some of lot 12) is very steep, rocky, and not suitable for general city park activities, and would not be accessible for residents with mobility problems, and would place an unnecessary burden on the City for fire mitigation and snow removal.

Thank you for accepting my comment. If needed, I can be reached for further comments or questions at 406-207-1010.

Jessie Herbert-Meny

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I'm a lifelong learner, are you?

**From:** [Matt Johnson](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Parks Board public comment for Jan 3, 2023 public meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 4:51:50 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Helena Planning Department and Parks Board,  
I'm writing to provide public comment regarding the Westside Woods subdivision proposal, specific to park land and open space requirements.

My wife and I and our two young children reside at 2690 Park Dr, immediately adjacent to the proposed development. We have a long term vested interest in this project.

The current proposal for parkland and open space dedication is unacceptable for the numerous reasons already discussed. Those lots are generally unusable and are proposed to maximize the developable area since they are steep and not conducive to development. They will also translate to a maintenance liability for City of Helena taxpayers.

In general, my wife and I are in agreement with the position of Save Helena Westside (SHW):

"SHW believes the option that is in the best interest of the area residents is the for the parkland dedication to include only the Legrande Cannon walking trail portion of Lot 12, in addition to providing land suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park facility that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities."

It also shouldn't be ignored that there is a substantial existing trail network through this area that has been used by area residents for several decades. Everyday we observe numerous neighbors use the network, some to access Legrande Cannon and some stay in the area itself. The recent stunt by the development team to close the network unless their petition was signed is concerning as to whether trails are a priority, as claimed in their marketing materials, and it's unclear if trails will actually be constructed and by whom.

The current proposed trail system is vague in the current application, it appears on some exhibits but not on most. It's unclear whether trails through the subdivision will be required. The current proposed trails also substantially deviate from the existing network, and won't provide access to Legrande Cannon and other recently acquired trails with a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed by area residents for several decades.

We would like to see proposed trails follow the existing trail network to maximum practical extent as a condition of approval, and include a natural vegetation buffer that will provide a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed over the past several decades.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and consider preservation of the existing trail network as a requirement, in addition to the position of SHW.

Best,



Matt and Jen Johnson  
2690 Park Drive

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dick Josephson <dickj3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:11 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Distinguished Parks Board Members:

We would like to request that you defer your decision regarding this newest application until such time as the density of this development is reconciled. As you may be aware it is at the root of much concern about traffic flow, safety, and infrastructure. Considerable challenge is underway at this time and will be addressed in the coming months.

Should the developer be required to reduce the number of households, reconfiguration would likely provide areas that are much more conducive to parkland use than are lots 6, 16, 19, and 12. These areas appear to be marginally useful at best.

While they may comply with the percentage of acreage requirements, do they comply with the spirit and intent of the requirements for parkland set asides? Perhaps this deficiency is attributable as well to the density proposed by the developer.

We are appreciative of your efforts to assure that our Helena community overall, and each neighborhood within it advance in a way that is beneficial to us all while still allowing the developer a successful outcome. A delay in your deliberations will provide the opportunity for Westside Woods to be welcomed into our Westside.

Debora Speyer  
Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court

**From:** [Ish K.](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Parkland at Helena West Side  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:54:21 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

We support the parkland dedication that includes the small portion of Lot 12 that contains a short section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail, with the balance of the required land dedication being from areas suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park within the subdivision.

And we are opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is steep and/or otherwise not suitable for sports fields or a proper city park that could be used by persons of all ages and abilities, including persons requiring handicapped access. This includes Lots 6, 16, 19, and the balance of Lot 12 that does not contain the Legrande Cannon walking trail. These lots consist mostly of very steep grades, with water drainage and water holding areas, and steep, rocky areas around the outer boundaries of the proposed subdivision. They are not suitable for general city park activities. And they certainly would not be accessible by residents with any significant mobility problems.

These lots would also place a perpetual burden on the City for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal on adjacent sidewalks.

Please consider sharing your comments with the Parks Board members via email over this New Year's weekend. This will allow them to consider your concerns during the public meeting on Wednesday. Also, please consider joining the zoom meeting to show public interest and, if desired, offer comments at that time as well.



## Heather Kahler

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**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 8:52 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods parkland

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Park Board and Planning Commission Members

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of land being offered as a fulfillment of new development open/park spaces. I'm concerned for two primary reasons:

The building of lot 12 will, at best, negatively impact the Legrande Canyon walking trail. I am a retired homeowner in the neighborhood and I have physical limitations with my mobility; I use the section of this trail heading west from Silverette frequently during the non-snowy days because the gentle slope and wide path are accessible for persons with mobility issues like myself and enjoyable for many others. This trail is a gem used by all varieties of neighborhood residents, and is the result of many people working very hard to enhance the outdoor experience for a wide variety of uses. I hope it will not be diminished for a few lots.

My other concern is the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

I hope you take these issues seriously as they impact those of us who call this neighborhood home.

Regards,

Judy Ludwig  
592 Granite Avenue

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods subdivision land use  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:03 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:27 AM  
To: County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
Subject: Westside Woods subdivision land use

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Parks Board Members,

Hello, we are residents of the west side of town. We have concerns about the proposed land use for the steeper portions of the Westside Woods subdivision. Many of the residents here are worried about access to park land dedications for all to be able to access. These areas are not suitable for the activities that are proposed. Please consider the lots are mostly steep, rocky and have water drainage holding areas. How will this impact the area in the long run. I am very much in favor of development of the area if it is done with knowledge of the future access for all ages and abilities.

Mark and Theresa Maleki  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt 59601

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 8:51 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I was told you will be reviewing the Westside Woods development tomorrow for parks land. Please consider accepting Lot 12 that gives access to laGrande hiking area but do not accept any other land that is too steep or not usable for athletic fields or is accessible to all people no matter their disability. Helena lacks athletic fields for all sports and this should be a priority for accepting any parks lands for development. Developments should not be donating unusable land to the city parks department that the city then has to maintain.

Thank you for considering these thoughts when looking at the current proposal.

Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St  
Helena MT 59601

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Colin McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 9:56:13 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board Member,

I am a resident of Le Grande Cannon Blvd and I have concerns about several options in the current proposal for the Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision (all but the first option). I regularly use the Le Grande Cannon Trail (at least 2-3 times per week) year round, as do hundreds of others in the area with varying needs. I am concerned with any options that do not include maintaining this historic trail for public use, and providing additional open space to a very crowded redevelopment plan by the developer. Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. The trail access needs to be maintained - it is one of the few flat trails on Mount Helena truly accessible to multiple needs groups. My rationale follows:

During the previous application process for this subdivision, the Parks Board recommended that a small portion of Lot 12 that contains a section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail be accepted as parkland dedication, with the remaining land requirement being fulfilled by the developer by paying cash in lieu of the remaining land balance. The Parks Board rejected all options that included the steep land areas that were not suitable for general park use, including the majority of Lot 12 (except the small portion containing Legrande Cannon walking trail). They also rejected consideration of the steep, unusable lots 6, 16, and 19. They voiced their concerns with these steep areas not being of value to all residents, as well as concerns that the city would be responsible for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and other maintenance of these steep areas. These were good decisions and I supported them.

The Parks Board also discussed whether they could recommend that the developer provide land that is suitable for use as a developed park area, but were advised by the (now former) Community Development Director Sharon Haugen that the board was not allowed to consider any options not submitted by the developer, so this option was not considered previously. However, during the current application process, the Helena Director of Parks and Recreation (Doug Smith) has indicated that the Parks Board can consider recommending that land suitable for a developed park be dedicated to the city to fulfill the parkland dedication requirement.

Also discussed during the previous application for this subdivision was the fact that a short section of the Le Grande Cannon trail was actually built on the subdivision property (within the proposed Lot 12) instead of within the established right of way. This prompted the developer to recommend including all of Lot 12 as the parkland dedication property. But the Parks Board rejected this option due to the fact that Lot 12 mostly consists of very steep terrain and is unsuitable for park use. In the end, the Parks Board's recommendation to the City Commission included only the section of Lot 12 that contained the Le Grande Cannon

trail, with the balance of the land requirement being fulfilled by cash in lieu of land.

Also during the previous application process, there were some discussions of having the Kessler School grounds available for park use, as well as some mention of Spring Meadow park facilities being nearby. However, Kessler grounds are not accessible for persons with mobility limitations and Spring Meadow does not include a developed park or sports field. There has been enough high-density residential development in this area already such that significant additional open space is necessary to accommodate additional high-density residential development - especially when development plans will remove the easily accessible open space used by many existing residents.

Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. I understand the developer wants to maximize his ROI with development of the most desirable land, but in my opinion the City needs to set a precedent with developers to show they consider the long-term needs of the community over the short-term capital concerns of developers. There are plenty of developers that would have much better plans for developing this property than the current, as they continue to blunder through now their second irresponsible and publicly adverse application. Please make decisions that will allow the west side to be more than dense residential development with nowhere for our small kids to play.

Thank you for your service to our community, as well as time and consideration.

Colin McCoy

**From:** [Terri McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Parkland Dedication (public comment)  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 12:36:11 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Parks Board Members  
Re: Westside Parkland Dedication  
From: Helena homeowner

I write to encourage you to keep Helena's neighborhood trails and parks accessible for all as currently undeveloped areas are being considered for future growth in housing, roads and other amenities. As I understand it, the Board is considering a land dedication for a neighborhood park on the west side that includes a portion of the Le Grande Cannon walking trail as well as other surrounding areas, some of which should not be considered suitable to meet planning requirements for subdivisions and/or other construction projects.

I've seen the map, and while I support a parkland **dedication that includes the land that crosses/contains the Le Grande Cannon walking trail (some of lot 12)**, I ask the Board to **reject entirely parkland dedications on lots 6, 16, 19 and the remainder of lot 12**. You all are the experts, and I hope it goes without saying, but this land is clearly not suitable for a proper city park due to its terrain. In fact, I cringe to think about what would have to happen to the land to make these areas suitable to house one of our cherished neighborhood parks—let alone make it accessible for young, old, able-bodied and non-able bodied citizens.

There has to be a better way. It seems to me like this parkland proposal is trying to meet some city requirements I'm not aware of as cheaply as possible without any concern for the folks who actually live, recreate and pay taxes here.

Terri McCoy  
3240 Le Grande Cannon Blvd  
Helena MT 59601

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dan & Colleen Nichols <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 5:54 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in regard to the park land dedication for the Westside Woods subdivision. I have resided at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and am in support of the parkland dedication that includes a small portion of LeGrande "boulevard" walking trail. However I am adamantly opposed to the city accepting any other land that is steep or not usable for a city park or sports field that could be used by all people regardless of age or mobility issues.

I am a senior citizen who regularly walks in our neighborhood and deal daily with the steep grades throughout our area. The areas that the developer is proposing for parkland are steep, rocky and would certainly not be accessible for to anyone with a mobility issue. These areas are also going to be difficult for the city to maintain. The developer states that he wants a subdivision that is accessible and people friendly, he should certainly consider an appropriate park or sports field. The area that is south of Kessler school is already quite busy and could not support the density of the proposed large subdivision.

Please consider my comments when you make a decision that will impact our neighborhood forever.

Thank you,

Colleen Nichols

**From:** [Sarah Perry](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Jan 4th discussion of parkland dedication  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:30:29 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks Board,

I am writing as a resident of Helena's Westside with comments regarding your January 4th, 2023 agenda item to discuss the proposed parkland dedication for the Westside Woods Subdivision.

I would ask that you please recommend the option from the memo stating, "**Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [LeGrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.**"

That very option was discussed in the August 25, 2021 Parks Board meeting with the previous application of this subdivision. Former City Parks Director Kristi Ponozzo recommended this option of a developed park/playground citing Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2019; #76-3-621 // Parkland Dedication Requirement. Per #76-3-609, #4, which states:

The governing body, in consultation with the subdivider and the planning board or park board that has jurisdiction, **may determine suitable locations for parks and playgrounds** and, giving due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider, may determine whether the park dedication must be a land donation, cash donation, or a combination of both.

Director Ponozzo mentioned the LeGrande Cannon Trail portion of Lot 12 would be approximately .9 acres of parkland dedication. The remainder would be 2.8 acres to meet the 3.33 acre parkland dedication requirement.

I am in support of that option. The entire Upper Westside of Helena South of Euclid Ave has only one developed park, Cunningham Park, which is over 1.5 miles away from the proposed subdivision. The next closest developed park with a playground or multi-use courts of any kind is Barney Park, which is over 2 miles away and across Euclid Ave.

Kessler School's playground facilities are not accessible to persons with mobility constraints and are not available to the public during school days or sports practices, which take place on most weekday evenings during the school year.

**Developed parkland along the street with an accessible playground, sports fields, and/or multi-use courts would allow persons in the neighborhood who are not able to recreate freely to get out and do so. This would add value and variety to the park facilities offered on the Westside.**

The proposed parkland dedication of steep land with trails will only be usable to those persons already able to get out and easily recreate on Mount Helena. The westside of Helena is experiencing infill and growth to many previously empty lots along the Hauser corridor. As more people come to the neighborhood, the need for accessible playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities is growing. ***Steep mountain trails are not accessible.*** And during the winter months when those trails become icy, packed snow they are able to be used by even fewer people. Therefore, in the spirit of providing usable parkland to as wide of a range of persons as possible, particularly the aging and less mobile members of our community, I would ask that you please recommend suitable parkland be set aside for a developed, accessible park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Perry  
2636 Woodward Ave  
Helena, MT

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Edward Santos <ed@mt.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 6:58 AM  
**To:** Douglas Smith  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Sussex proposed West Side Woods subdivision parks

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Director Smith,

My name is Ed Santos and I live at 2530 Flowerree st close to the proposed West Side Woods subdivision.

I believe this subdivision can be a good addition to Helena provided it is well planned keeping community and connectivity in mind. Currently planned, this subdivision does neither with the only parkland proposed being steep grades and trails that only benefit healthy able-body individuals. Children, elderly, and handicap people will get no public area to play or enjoy outside spaces. I would like to see your recommendations to the City Planning Department and Commissioners be;

- A playground is recommended central to the subdivision
- Some type of court, basketball, pickle ball, etc.
- small field
- No cash in leu! (Cash In Leu does nothing to make Helena a better place to live, nor will it benefit the west side).

The only way Helena becomes a better place to live is through people insisting that the right thing gets done. A park that benefits all people on the west side is the right thing.

Regards,  
Ed Santos



**From:** [Save Helena Westside](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#); [hkahler@helena.mt](mailto:hkahler@helena.mt)  
**Subject:** Comment to Park Board members from Save Helena Westside for 1/4/ meeting - please share asap  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:03:27 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

## Members of the Consolidated Parks Board:

Save Helena Westside is comprised of hundreds of area residents who are affected by the proposed Westwood Woods subdivision. SHW is urging the parks board to consider the first option listed in the memo submitted to the Parks Board by Director Doug Smith in his December 20th memo. Specifically, this option is:

“Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [Legrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision”

SHW supports this option because of the extreme lack of developed park and sports facilities in the area.

SHW is urging the board to reject the recommendation made by the Helena Parks and Recreation Department, which is to accept all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19, for several reasons including:

This option will not provide any additional park or sports facilities for the area residents. Most of the land on Lots 6, 12, 16 and 19 is steep and rocky, and not suitable for general recreational activities.

The city will be burdened with all future maintenance of these 13+ acres, including weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal of adjacent city sidewalks.

The potential trails that are referred to by the Helena Parks/Rec dept would not serve the greater needs of all area residents, especially the area children and those of lesser physical capabilities.

The potential trails do not significantly increase connectivity to the trails above Legrande Cannon.

There is no specified budget, design specifications, or timeframes for construction of these potential trails.

The Kessler School playground is not a suitable replacement for developed parks and sports fields for several reasons, including that these grounds are not available to the public during school hours, and that they do not offer proper access for handicapped persons.

Spring Meadow Park is a longer distance away, with a required walk across Hwy 12, which is too dangerous for younger children. Also, Spring Meadow lacks any developed playgrounds, sports facilities or courts.

One additional consideration is the fact that several right of way abandonments within the proposed Westside Woods subdivision property have provided the developer with an

additional 4+ acres to use for development. Some of these right of way areas could be used to properly connect the existing area streets to the Legrande Cannon walking trail. However, the current plans for the subdivision provide less connectivity to Legrande Cannon than previously enjoyed by area residents.

Thank you for considering the needs of area residents when making your recommendation for the parkland dedication of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

--Directors of Save Helena Westside

**From:** [Liz Ulrich](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:05:43 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Consolidated Parks Board Members,

**To promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

The park land dedication currently proposed by the developers of the Westside Woods subdivision doesn't meet the goals identified in the Consolidated Parks Board mission statement. In fact, it does the opposite, rather than developing parks, recreation, trails, and open space, it takes them away. As many in the Helena area are consumed with quickly increasing housing, your job is: **to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

My first choice would be to not have this area developed at all, let's keep open spaces open! In addition, I hope the Consolidated Parks Board uses the option of "cash in lieu" sparingly in their decisions, this is an easy-out for developers that will earn millions of dollars from these subdivisions. But, understanding that development is going to happen whether I like it or not, I recommend the Consolidated Parks Board consider Option #1: reject park land dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.

I appreciate your time and commitment to the Helena area. Parks, trails, and open spaces are what make Helena and Lewis & Clark County an amazing place to live.

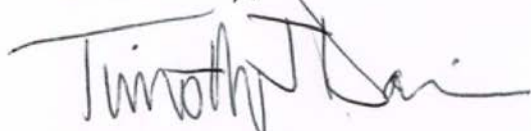
Thank you,  
Liz Ulrich  
406-690-4734  
2530 Knight Street  
Helena, MT 59601

To whom it may concern:

As the owner of American Storage West at 905 Park Lane on Helena's westside, I wanted to clearly state that we are willing to sell or grant an easement across our property to facilitate an access to the Westside Woods subdivision.

I can be reached at the contacts below if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Timothy J Davis

931 N. Last Chance Gulch  
Helena Mt 59601

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:30 AM

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**From:** LesLee Brinton <59935mt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:04 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We support the comments presented by Save Helena Westside with regard to giving land to the city for the park. Part of what they want to "gift" to the City is badly in need of fire mitigation and is so incredibly steep that no one can use the land anyway. *They* need to clean up the land they own, not fob it off on Helena taxpayers!

While initially positive toward Sussex, I have been increasingly concerned by their tactics in trying to force through a huge development that has incredibly inadequate access roads and puts the safety of westside residents in danger from daily traffic congestion and difficulty getting emergency services into and out of the area. This proposed "gift" to the city park is another reason I do not trust these folks.

Please help save Mt. Helena's park and protect the safety of Helena residents.

Sincerely,  
LesLee and David Brinton  
2543 Overlook Blvd  
Helena



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes
- No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Cory

Last Name

Chenoweth

Email

cory.chenoweth@gmail.com

Street Address

2630 Knight

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

14064596075

Date

2/3/2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Good morning. I am writing to voice my concerns about the safety impacts on the proposed westside woods subdivision.

-I live at 2630 Knight St., which is a narrow, winding, residential road. If this plan is passed as proposed, my concern is that Knight St. and Overlook Blvd (also narrow and winding) will be the major feeder streets into the subdivision. These two streets have sight restrictions, they don't allow for two full lanes of traffic when there is on street parking (or snowbanks) and are intended to be quiet residential streets, not the main connector streets for a major subdivision. These streets are already oversubscribed with traffic and cannot handle and additional 1000-2000 vehicle trips/day. Ask: Asking for a Western Access road to alleviate traffic and safety concerns on these narrow, winding roads that aren't suited to be a major connector thoroughfare.

-I have two young children who attend Kessler school. I have major safety concerns about the lack of sidewalks, lack of school zone signage, and the volume of new traffic that will be zipping through the route that so many students walk to and from school every day. Ask: at the VERY VERY least, I ask that a condition of approval be to include sidewalks up granite all the way to Hauser blvd. This will allow young students not to have to walk on the street in the dark during the winter when they can't tromp through the deep snow.

-After the fire scare this summer, I also have concerns about fire evacuation. It's my understanding that this subdivision was denied the first time due to extended street/block lengths and the safety concerns that go along with that. Instead of addressing the safety concerns, the developer found a loophole to shorten the city street and continue on with private roads. This does little to address the root safety concerns, and likely makes safety a bigger issue by creating these private roads without a plan to maintain them.

Thank you for your time, and please make sure that if this subdivision moves forward, that we aren't jeopardizing the safety of current and future residents of the area.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Cory Chenoweth <cory.chenoweth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Thank you for taking the time to consider comments regarding the upcoming meeting regarding the Westside Woods subdivision.

My biggest questions concerns about this project are as follows:

1. Much of the proposed park land is on a steep (over 20%) slope. I don't believe these areas are of public benefit. Additionally, it looks to me like the areas "donated" are the undesirable, unbuildable, and storm drainage areas. Really the only part of the proposal that is beneficial to the public is the small partition that LeGrande already goes through.
2. This plan was already denied once, and I can't find any substantial changes/improvements the developer has made, which is unfortunate.
3. I have also have concerns with access (multiple cul de sacs), mobility accommodations.

Overall this "park land" looks to be the undesirable portion of land that isn't suitable for building and, if accepted, the parks department will be responsible for weed control, and fire mitigation for portions of land that aren't of desirable use for the public. I'd like to see a designated park land that is flat and can be used for sports (soccer, lacrosse, football, etc) fields, an area for pond hockey, as well as a traditional playground with a jungle gym/swings/slide.

Please, once again, vote against this terrible proposal as it places a burden on city parks to maintain these areas with very little return on investment, as the proposed land is steep, rocky, overgrown and undesirable.

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 7:48 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Objection to WW "parkland" designation

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Re: Westside Woods subdivision parkland dedication

Parks Board Members,

Thank you for committing your time and expertise to improving access for all to parks and open spaces.

We submit these comments with various perspectives.

- We have moved to Helena from hometowns that experienced radical, exponential growth.
- We are low income landlords of a single family home that is directly adjacent to the proposed Westside Woods. This home has twice been my primary residence.
- I was a daily bike commuter from the proposed Westside Woods eastern boundary to the State Capital for years. I was an active hiker of the upper Westside and taught our kids how to ride bikes on the low traffic, dirt road portion of Hauser Blvd. and adjacent subdivision land.
- My family has attempted to re-zone and develop property at a highway and overpass for over 3 decades in Oregon. I know, very personally, the delays, costs and frustrations of codes and laws as well as "the rules;" the latter being the invisible and unethical realities of politics and money.
- We have evacuated 2 times in 3 years from active forest fires; the most recent starting from a lightning strike across the street from our home. The 8 acres of charred land and trees are less than 70 feet from our driveway.
- I am a staunch noxious weed hater and diligently identify and "killer" of noxious and invasive weeds, having taught my three oldest children including a 7 year old to pull baby tumbleweeds. We have purchased expensive native grass seed and actively plant and water those to combat invasive and noxious weeds.

### **STORM WATER DRAINAGE PONDS ARE NOT PARKLAND; Lot 6 and Lot 19 are not parkland**

Helena has many beautiful parks which are enjoyed by a large minority, if not by a majority of residents and tourists. These parks have grass, playgrounds and wide graveled or paved accessible pathways.

Other Helena city owned storm water drainage ponds are NOT classified as parkland, **thus it would be unfair, illogical and UNETHICAL to consider ANY portion of a storm water drainage pond as “parkland.”**

Since many humans cannot equitably and safely use storm water drainage ponds for recreation, classifying such lands as “parkland” opens the City to litigation.

Can children roll down the grass of a storm water drainage pond? My kids do not miss an opportunity to roll down the hills at the capital but is it safe for children to roll down the hills of a storm drainage pond? Can children ice skate on storm water drainage ponds? Can local organizations host an Easter Egg hunt in storm drainage ponds?

Can wheelchair users enjoy and navigate the incline of a storm water drainage pond? If not, then storm drainage ponds ARE NOT PARKLAND.

Lot 6 and lot 19 are NOT PARKLAND.

### **INCREASE TAX BASE, INCREASE PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUE BY EXTENDING LOTS 4-11**

Lots 4-11 are premium lots. They are the furthest lots from the high density from apartment complexes as well as the noisy highway. They are the highest elevation and will have the best view.

The City and the developer can maximize the tax base and profits by extending the southern boundaries of these lots all the way to the furthest edge of Lot 12. This would eliminate the eastern half of the “parkland” donation of Lot 12 that the developer is offering to the City.

Aside from the small section of the LeGrande Cannon Trail that is on Lot 12, the remainder of Lot 12 is steep, rocky, UN-USEABLE LAND FOR THE PUBLIC and thus, for the City.

If I was going to buy a premium lot, I would welcome the opportunity to have a larger lot which increases my flexibility to build to suit. This would also allow me to create whatever privacy options I need and desire between my premium lot and a popular recreation trail.

Extending each of those lots, will provide additional square footage for private owners to improve their privacy from a frequently used hiking trail.

I encourage the Parks Board and the City to consider and recommend extending the southern facing boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to reduce the liability of the City, to increase the tax base of the City and to increase the profits of the developer. A win, win, win.

Increasing the tax base instead of increasing maintenance costs for the City will benefit every single human being in Lewis & Clark County.

## **FIRE SAFETY AND WEED MITIGATION: LOT 12 IS NOT PARKLAND**

Private property owners are better equipped and better motivated to maintain land, reduce forest fire risk and mitigate weeds.

Expanding private property boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will improve fire safety and weed mitigation.

- During fires and evacuations, emergency authorities ask residents to **leave water hoses hooked up and ready for fire fighters to use**. Private ownership will naturally provide for more water and hoses locally sourced at each of those lots in the event of a fire.
- Improved privacy. With an extended lot length, each private owner will be able to ensure their desired level of privacy between their private home and 700+ acres of public, open land.
- As individuals or as a small collective, the future property owners can request assistance to mitigate noxious and invasive weeds. With expanded property lines, private water and hoses will have better success than occasional maintenance from a publically hired crew.

## **NARROW EASTERN SECTION OF STEEP, ROCKY, WEEDY “Lot 12 parkland” IS LUDICROUS**

Mount Helena City Park is 620 acres of amazing parkland available to everyone. The Prickly Pear Land Trust owns the land directly south of LeGrande Cannon Trail and is fully connected from LeGrande Cannon Trail to Mount Helena City Park.

There is NO VALUE for the people by adding the narrow eastern half of Lot 12 which is the downhill, steep, rocky, weedy land north of LeGrande Cannon Trail when everyone is going to access the hundreds acres of fully open land, fully park land that is 5 feet to the south.

Strapping the City of Helena with the maintenance of this measly and pointless skinny stretch of land between an established hiking trail and private land owners is LUDICROUS.

What value does the narrow strip of dangerously steep and overgrown land in Lot 12 provide to the people as “parkland?”

None.

Steep, rocky and weedy land is not “parkland.”

## **WHERE IS THE WW ART TRAIL WALK?**

The developer's ill guided and expensive marketing stunt to endear citizens to the use of the open land of the property with the large beautiful "RSVP" signs alerted the entire County to the controversy, safety concerns and shenanigans surrounding Westside Woods.

The very chic Westside Woods website, <https://westside-woods.com/>, clearly presents Westside Woods as an "Art Trail Community." The website presents Westside Woods as bringing a wonderful, expansive "art trail walk" to the western edge of Helena. The website makes NO mention that the taxpayers will be paying to BUILD and MAINTAIN these trails.

However, the subdivisions application is asking the current and future City of Helena tax payers to build and maintain over half of the "Art Trail Communities' " trails—the most difficult, most steep, most EXPENSIVE half of these trails.

The website and PowerPoint present the walking trails as a gift from Westside Woods to citizens. There is no distinction that the trails will actually be paid for by tax payers: <https://westside-woods.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/JAN-24-City-Commission-Meeting-WW-PRESENTATION-.pdf>

Offloading the most expensive trail sections to the City of Helena is unfair.

If the City of Helena, Parks Board, Prickly Pear Land Trust and Westside Woods come to a secure agreement that the western half of Lot 12 and agree that a wiggly trail in the northwest corner of the subdivision adds value to the public, than I am not opposed to the western half of Lot 12 being designed "parkland."

However, this requires an ironclad, detailed and truly cooperative agreement between the City of Helena, Prickly Pear and the Westside Woods BEFORE tax free "parkland" status is deemed for the western half of Lot 12.

Sincerely,  
Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd  
Helena 59601

Sent from my iPhone

## April Sparks

---

**From:** Adam Eckhart <adam.eckhart22@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 27, 2023 2:35 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision Comments

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

A couple of comments/concerns regarding the proposed Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision are as follows in bulleted format. My wife and I have 2 kids and live on the west side of the proposed subdivision. Our property is adjacent to the walking trail/32 multi-family units.

- We specifically chose the location to build our home for privacy reasons as we do not have immediate neighbors and our backyard is secluded. The proposed location of the walking trail is directly on the property line which would allow public access to look directly down into our backyard and house. This area is currently very private for us and we enjoy having the privacy for our children to play in the yard.
- The location of the trail directly next to our property is of concern for the public to create a noise issue at late hours of the night, trash to be left, dogs off leash (even if you make it against the rules people will have dogs off leash) to come into our yard and poop, mean dogs to come into our yard and attack our children/dogs. Our HOA does not allow for a fence as it would obstruct the natural passage of wild animals. We have wild animals on our property daily.
- We would propose that the trail be re-routed in the subdivision and not directly on the property line as we wish to retain our privacy and the isolation of the public from our children playing in our own yard. If the trail cannot be relocated we propose that the trail be installed to city standards (as the area will be annexed) with trash receptacles, dog poop bag stations, benches, have a time restrictions, have a dog leash restrictions, have an irrigated hedge planted along the trail where the trail borders property boundaries, irrigate said hedge off the subdivision water system so it grows, maintenance of the trail and landscaping.
- We also have concerns regarding the multi-family units. This appears like there will be apartments which would retain a lot more people than single family dwelling housing. Again we specifically chose the area to build our home because of the population density being single family dwellings. Adding multi-family dwellings typically lowers property values as the properties do not get properly maintained and have a constant revolving door of tenants. We would propose that the entire subdivision be single family dwellings as the large increase in population density would become a major strain on the existing infrastructure. The lots on the west side of the proposed subdivision are typically in the neighborhood of an acre in size, the proposed plan is 100 lots plus multi-family housing which is more than double the area's current population density. Development is not the issue, the issue is jamming as much as possible into a small area that does not flow with the existing population/housing.
- We have construction concerns as well as the topography of the site is directly up-hill from our home. What construction practices will be implemented to ensure that there are no rocks and/or construction debris sent rolling down the hill directly into our backyard where our family will be recreating? Who will be on-site to ensure that said construction practices are being followed? If the construction practices are not followed and debris ends up in our yard and worst case scenario hits one of our family members what action is going to be taken?

Shannon & Adam Eckhart



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

RIKI

Last Name

Emerson

Email

rjemerson618@gmail.com

Street Address

4988 SMALLWOOD CT

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

14064599028

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>



Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to voice my concerns about the impact of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision on pedestrian safety and the potential safety threats in the event of an emergency or evacuation. I grew up in a home located at 913 Granite and attended Kessler Elementary School. My parents still reside in that home and now my children attend Kessler. My children frequently walk to their grandparents' home after school when I am working and unable to pick them up. However, I am constantly worried about their safety on Granite due to the lack of sidewalks and the speed at which vehicles travel. Granite is extremely congested and children are not always easily visible amongst the traffic. When I do pick them up I park in the nearby neighborhood and walk to the school yard to get them because I am too worried about them navigating the area due to the high volume of vehicles. Doubling the amount of traffic on the road has the potential for serious, even fatal, safety issues. It is imperative that sidewalks are put in place before the development of the proposed subdivision. Additionally, the threat of wildfire is very real. We saw that last year with the fire on Mt Helena. The ability for personnel to respond to a fire and safely evacuate the neighborhood would be virtually impossible as it is currently proposed. Adding an access on the westside of the proposed subdivision would improve accessibility and traffic flow. I agree with the conditions and considerations proposed by Save Helena Westside in their February 2nd comment letter and ask that you consider all of the concerns brought forward by the community. Thank you for your time!

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

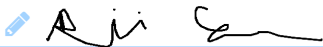
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aji" followed by a flourish.

# Helena Public Schools – Facilities Office

---

**Todd J. Verrill**

Director of Facilities

1201 Boulder Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 324-1734  
[tverrill@helenaschools.org](mailto:tverrill@helenaschools.org)

**Helena City Commission**

City County Building, Room 323  
316 N. Park  
Helena, MT 59623  
(406) 447-8410  
[mayorandcommission@helenamt.gov](mailto:mayorandcommission@helenamt.gov)

7 November 2022

**Dear Helena City Commission,**

Representatives of Helena Public Schools and Sussex Construction, Inc. met at Kessler Elementary School on 26 October 2022. The principal topic of discussion was Sussex's Westside Woods subdivision and the school district's desire to incorporate certain safety features into the overall development plan in the vicinity of Kessler Elementary School. In general, the school district supports measures that improve the safety and walkability of the Kessler Elementary School neighborhood.

The school district believes, at a minimum, the following will enhance the safety of our students, parents, and staff, and walkability in the area:

- Granite Ave. improvements including gutters, curbs, sidewalks, and others required by the City Code of Helena and/or recommended by the city engineer
- Traffic calming measures on Granite Ave. to include pedestrian crosswalks
- An improved pedestrian walkway to the west of Granite Ave. between Knight St. and Hauser Blvd. (currently an unimproved social trail/alley)
- Radar speed signs and flashing pedestrian crossing signs where appropriate

We also discussed additional improvements to the streets in the vicinity of the school that Sussex and the city may undertake as part of a development agreement. We mentioned a desire to address road upgrades to Knight St. and Silverette St. that will improve the pick-up and drop-off of Kessler Elementary students. There is consensus that reducing school vehicular traffic on Granite Ave. is a desirable end state. Finally, the school district supports continued dialogue with Sussex and the City of Helena in order to find the best possible solutions in support of Kessler Elementary School. The point of contact for this correspondence is the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Todd J. Verrill

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Jessie Herbert <jbherbert127@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 11:34 AM  
**To:** planning@lccountymt.org; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Comment for Parks Board regarding Westside Woods Subdivision proposal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I would like to share a comment and concern about a parkland dedication for the Westside Woods proposed subdivision. I reside at 2522 Woodward.

I am opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is not suitable for all mobilities. Certain lots within the subdivision (6, 16, 19, and some of lot 12) is very steep, rocky, and not suitable for general city park activities, and would not be accessible for residents with mobility problems, and would place an unnecessary burden on the City for fire mitigation and snow removal.

Thank you for accepting my comment. If needed, I can be reached for further comments or questions at 406-207-1010.

Jessie Herbert-Meny

--

I'm a lifelong learner, are you?

City	Helena
Date	1/3/2022
Which project do you have a question or comment about?	Option 1
Email	jbherbert127@gmail.com
First Name	Jessie
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?	Option_1
If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?	Option_2
Is your question or comment about a specific project?	Option 1
Last Name	Herbert-Meny
Phone	406-207-1010
Public Question or Comment	Option_2
Question/Comment	I am a resident of the westside neighborhoods above Kessler School, and I am very concerned about the Westside Woods subdivision and the traffic and safety impacts that this will have in the neighborhood. I don't believe that adequate traffic studies have been completed by the applicant, and the traffic on Granite and Hauser are already unsafe many times during the day. Any adequate proposal needs to include additional access to Hwy12/Euclid Avenue so we do not increase traffic congestion in our school zones.
State	MT
Street Address	2522 Woodward
Zip Code	59601



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Anna R

Last Name

Howell

Email

hflatlanders@reagan.com

Street Address

7520, Clausen Rd

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601-9629

Phone

4064390892

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I'm writing to voice my concerns about the impact of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision on pedestrian safety. My grandchildren go to Kessler and im often the person picking up and dropping off. I have serious concerns that the city is going to allow that many more cars on the road with no immediate improvements for child safety? Please do not allow this development to go through as it has been proposed. We deserve better.  
Anna Howell.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



---



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Jack

Last Name

Howell

Email

Jackermacker406@gmail.com

Street Address

7520 Clausen rd

City

HELENA

State

MT

Zip Code

59602

Phone

4069169678

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

2 February 2023

Save Helena Westside (SHW) supports development that prioritizes public health and safety. As currently proposed, the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision will have significant negative impacts to public health and safety. This letter is meant to propose conditions and considerations to address those negative impacts. It is the policy of the City of Helena to "avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed." Therefore, SHW believes the following infrastructure upgrades are needed as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. Construction of a road connecting the subdivision to existing roads to the west. – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane, per City Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) to accomplish the following:

- o Provide additional emergency access in the event of local emergencies or evacuation. (See attached United States Forest Service fire models for how quickly this neighborhood might have to evacuate under typical fire season conditions.)
- o Turn one of the long dead-end streets (Livezey Ct) into a through street.
- o Offer an alternative road for construction traffic to use throughout the course of the project to avoid school routes.
- o Reduce daily traffic impact at peak times around Kessler School and on surrounding neighborhood streets.

The private landowner of American Storage LLC, Tim Davis, has provided a signed letter of intent to the City to sell or grant an easement to allow for the construction of such a connection to the existing Park Lane. (See January 28, 2023, email correspondence from SHW).

2. Improve local roads to "Complete Street" standards as detailed in the staff reports for the previous application (see the January 12, 2022 Annexation Staff Report and November 9, 2021 Subdivision Staff Report) – In conjunction with #1 above, Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Park Dr and Flowerree to the west of Granite, should be upgraded to include sidewalks for safety of pedestrians.

This recommendation is in alignment with the conclusions of January 3, 2023, Kessler School Walkability Audit (see the attached report).

In addition to the need for the above stated conditions of annexation, SHW is also concerned about the safety impacts of the long block lengths and dead-end streets within the subdivision. On April 25, 2022, local wildfire expert, Pat McKelvey, spoke to the City Commission during public comment regarding the concerns he had about wildfire and evacuation safety with the WSW proposal. Mr. McKelvey urged the Commission that when the WSW proposal comes before them again, to consider the risks in fire and evacuation. We would ask the City Staff do that very thing now, when weighing out your recommendations and conditions.

We believe that without including the conditions listed above and addressing the safety concerns relating to long block length and dead-end streets, the WSW proposal does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads and sidewalks, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities. Jack Howell

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

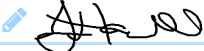
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "H. W.", is positioned above a horizontal blue line that spans the width of the page.

**I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary School**  
Helena, Montana  
Conducted: 03 January 2023, 11:00am-12:30pm  
Published: 11 January 2023

**Attendees:** Greg Wirth (NMTAC member), Abigail McClane (Kessler Parents Council and Parent), Ron Bartsch (Sussex Construction), Bekka Cantrell (Sussex Construction), Derek Davis (Sussex Construction), John Andrew (Helena Citizen’s Council Representative), Todd Verrill (Helena Schools), Craig Puchat (Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks), Patrick Marron (Neighbor, St Andrews parent), Cory Chenoweth (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Riley Thatcher (Principal at Kessler), Sarah Perry (Save Helena Westside, Neighbor, Kessler parent), Amy Geiger (St. Peter’s Health Injury Prevention), Charles Alvarez (Ability MT), Anna Jayne Pentecost (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Sarah Sandau (Lewis and Clark Public Health and walk audit Facilitator), Patricia Bik (Helena Citizen’s Council), Mark Young (City of Helena), Kevin Rechhoff (NMTAC member)

**Background:** On the November Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) meeting, Save Helena Westside group requested a walk audit and a recommendation from NMTAC on the routes to Kessler Elementary. On the December NMTAC meeting, the request was made again to NMTAC, and NMTAC agreed to host a walk audit around Kessler Elementary. NMTAC requested that Lewis and Clark Public Health assist in coordinating an Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk Audit (I2 Walk Audit) at and around Kessler Elementary. Concerns were regarding accessibility and safety.

In this area of town, there are numerous houses, schools (Kessler Elementary, St. Andrew, Pick up for C.R. Anderson), access to trails, and connectivity to downtown. The route considered was all originally located in the County but is now mostly public right-of-way in the City limits.

**Route:** The group started at the Kessler parking lot on the east side of the building at 11:00am. They walked south on Silverette Street to Hauser Boulevard (1.5 blocks), then west on Hauser to Granite Avenue (1 block), and finally North on Granite to Knight Street (2 blocks). (See Figure 1 below for map of the route)

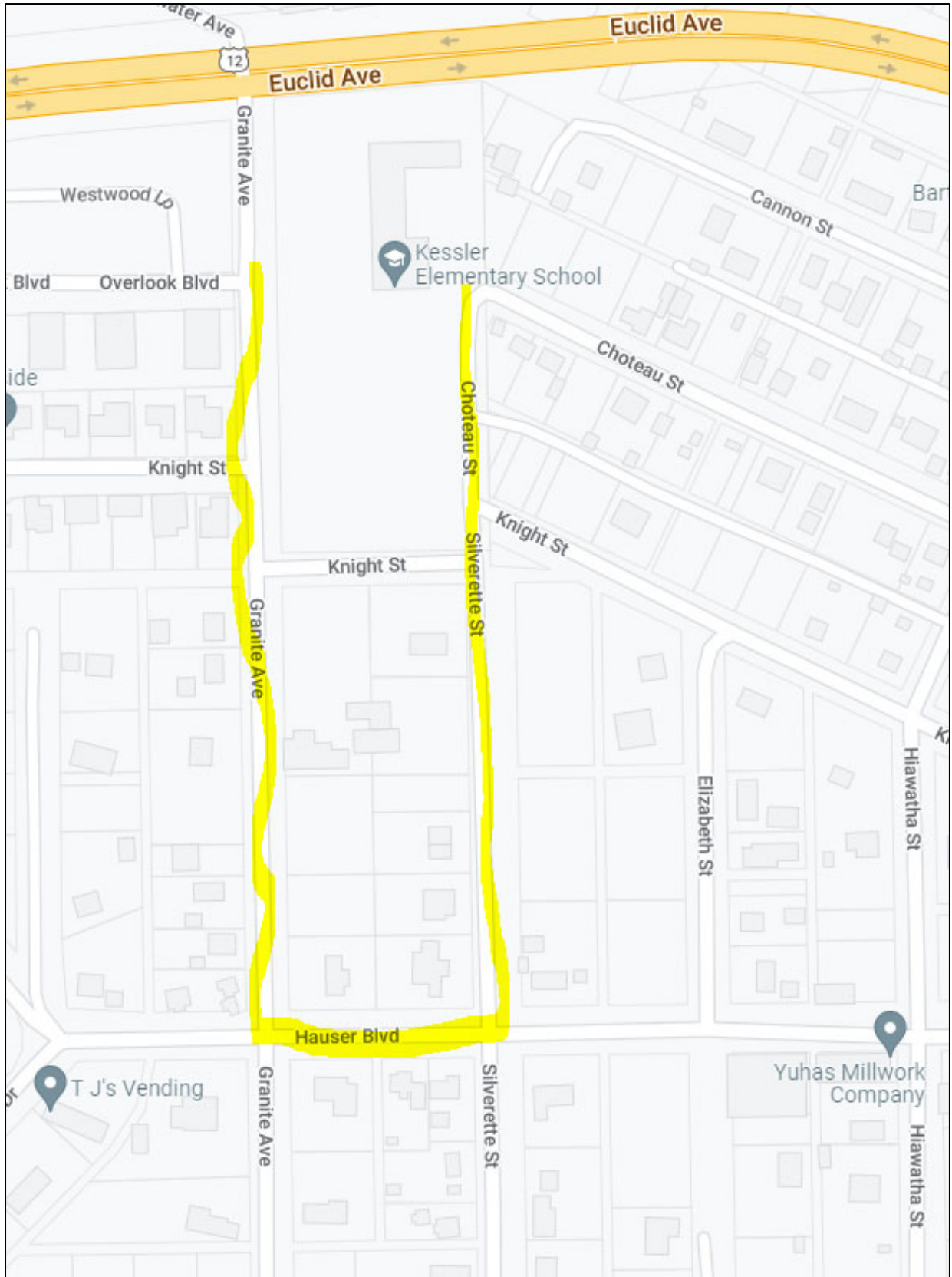


Figure 1

**Observations, questions, and ideas from the I2 Walk Audit are as follows:**

**Stop #1:** Intersection of Choteau Street and Knight Street. At the first stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the first leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Paved street, wide road, stop sign, setback of fence to the school, good shoulder, parking on one side, bike racks.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalks, or lighting make it difficult and unsafe to walk. No speed limit signs or school zone signage visible. No shade or trees. Drop off gets scary with parents trying to cut the line and zip around.

*Ideas:* Add speed limit signage, more school signage, sidewalks, lighting, possibly speedbumps.

**Stop #2:** Intersection of Silverette Street and Hauser Blvd. At the second stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the second leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop signs, access to trails, visibility, speed signage, visible driveways, pretty views, close to St. Andrews.

*Needs Improvement:* Busy and quick moving street. No sidewalks, boulevard, crosswalks, or lighting. Since it is not paved, it turns into an icy/mucky mess.

*Ideas:* Add sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming, paving of the street, and street lighting.

**Stop #3:** Intersection of Hauser Blvd and Granite Ave. At the third stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the third leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop sign for Hauser traffic, speed limit signage, visibility, good views, grassy areas, less ice/better surface, setback in the driveways, bus stop for multimodal transportation, wide street.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, crosswalks, or lighting. No benches or areas of respite. High speedy going down Granite Ave with no traffic control. No safe route to the bus stop nor safe area to wait. House encroachments on City roads. Heavy traffic volume.

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more often. Perform a traffic study focused on traffic calming/slowing. Add sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, speed limit feedback signage.

**Stop #4:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, east of Granite. At the fourth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the fourth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, school signage, sidewalks, crosswalk, paved road, trees, open,

*Needs Improvement:* Connection of sidewalks, more bulb outs, high-speed going down Granite Ave,

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more regularly. Traffic calming/slowing study (maybe speedbumps). Roundabout potentially or more bulb outs.

**Stop #5:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, west of Granite. At the fifth stop the team did not assess a score or. Comments on the fifth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalk, paved road

*Needs Improvement:* Boulevard vegetation block view from entering Granite. Drivers must pull into crosswalk to see oncoming traffic on Granite.

*Ideas:* Trim existing deciduous trees and remove existing evergreen trees in boulevard for better visibility.

**Summary suggestions:**

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. Increase school and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Avenue
4. Add lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette Street
6. Speed study for Granite Avenue
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often

**Next Steps:**

This summary account will be provided to all participants in addition to NMTAC. This will be discussed at the next NMTAC meeting on Tuesday, February 8th at 5:15pm via zoom. NMTAC will then decide on whether to make a recommendation to the City of Helena Commission.

Community members can always make requests to the City on their own through the My Helena App. Or, they can fill out a “Traffic Calming Application Form.” They can email Mark Young, City Transportation Engineer at [myoung@helenamt.gov](mailto:myoung@helenamt.gov) if they have questions on those avenues.

## Appendix A

### Emailed Feedback / Public comments on the Kessler I2 Walk Audit

**From:** John Andrew <[j53andrew@gmail.com](mailto:j53andrew@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 10:16:54 AM MST

**To:** Sarah Sandau <[SSANDAU@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ssandau@lccountymt.gov)>, Wilbur Rehmann <[wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)>, Greg Wirth <[GregWirth@hotmail.com](mailto:GregWirth@hotmail.com)>

**Cc:** Diana Hammer <[diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com](mailto:diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com)>, [patriciabikhcc@gmail.com](mailto:patriciabikhcc@gmail.com), [jrandrew211@gmail.com](mailto:jrandrew211@gmail.com)

**Subject: Re: Walk Audit Report**

Hi Sarah,

I thought your summation of the walk audit was straight forward and succinct so I don't have much to add. I went back Sunday afternoon to check out the Kessler Parking lot without vehicles and people although I'm sure that is not the main focus of the walk audit. Although NMTAC probably would like to recommend connectivity all the way around Kessler School I found myself more concerned about the approach from Choteau and Silverette Streets to the school parking lot which has the most traffic along with buses and no sidewalks entering into the main landing point for students. With the lack of funding I would like to recommend that NMTAC particularly highlight those streets into Kessler School. Thanks for all considerations to this matter.

Best,

John E. Andrew

HCC - District 1



**From:** Ashley Bryson <[ashleya816@hotmail.com](mailto:ashleya816@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** January 10, 2023 at 12:51:51 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** Walkability audit

Dear NMTAC and support staff,

I just wanted to say thank you for the walkability audit recently completed around Kessler school. I live in the area and have two children that attend Kessler school. They both walk to school every day along with a group of children from our neighborhood. Unfortunately, we have many stories about “near misses” and unsafe conditions they have experienced on their way to and from school. The neighborhood around the school has been expanding with many new multi-family homes over the last couple years, bringing with it more traffic and more potentially dangerous conditions for the many children who walk and bike to school daily. There are plans for quite a bit of continued growth. I love this neighborhood, and I want to see it continue to be a great place to raise children, recreate, walk our pets, and enjoy the nearby trail access. I would greatly appreciate any formal recommendations you may be able to make to improve the safety of this neighborhood as it currently stands and as it continues to expand.

Thank you,  
Ashley Bryson  
Resident at 2549 Knight Street

**From:** judy ludwig <[ludwigjudy@gmail.com](mailto:ludwigjudy@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 3:59:00 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit

Chairman Wilbur Raymann

Thanks to you and all of your crew for the walk audit around Kessler Elementary. I appreciate all the work that went into it, especially during the cold.

I hope you encourage improvements for walkability, especially through sidewalks, in this area.

As you probably are aware, the times just before and after school is in session create quite a hazard for the little ones walking to and from Kessler with people dropping off and picking up students. The city is doing a much better job of plowing and sanding on Granite during the winter, but there are still many hazardous conditions. I have noticed that when the snow has been heavy kids are forced to walk more in the middle of the road, with two way traffic trying to dodge them and other cars. Shoulders remain icy and uneven, kids goof around with each other, and slips on the road scoria happen. Sidewalks on Granite and other nearby neighborhood arteries would help insure safer passage for kids and all pedestrians.

Thanks again for all of your efforts, they are appreciated.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

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**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:50 AM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Helena Westside development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC,

First, I wanted to thank you for taking the time to perform a walking assessment around Kessler school. We really appreciate you taking your time to see our concerns. Our family is a very active family walking, running, and riding bikes all over the west side of Helena and appreciate all you have done to help with this in our city.

I hope that after the walking assessment you can see our concerns with the lack of safe non motorized space there currently is on our main roadways. With the current proposed development and this mass increase in cars this could become very unsafe. Right now there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass and have someone walking on the road on Granite St. Every morning I have to stop in the dark as another car is coming down the hill so a kindergartner can safely walk on the street to school.

Also the Granite St intersection onto Euclid is already unsafe in the mornings and after school but even worse when trying to cross Euclid to reach the centennial trail by foot or bike during 8am or 5pm traffic. Trying to cross five lanes of traffic with children is terrifying and will only become more dangerous with increase in traffic.

Our family would like to safely continue our active lifestyles. This is why we chose to live on the west side. We are not against the development but just want to make sure the development is completed safely and correctly for the neighborhood. I appreciate all the time you have taken to look over all the information.

Thank you  
Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St.

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

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**From:** Colleen <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:18 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We have been residents at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and appreciate NMTAC doing a walkability audit of our neighborhood. Over the past few years we have contacted the city numerous times due to our concerns with speeding traffic. It seems to fall on deaf ears.

We are asking that the results of the audit and any recommendations that NMTAC has shared with the City Commission. The proposed west side Woods subdivision will have a very negative impact on the safety of our neighborhood unless identified issues from the audit are addressed prior to approval of the subdivision.

Our children attended Kessler school in the 90s and our grandchildren are now there, and there has been no improvement in the walk ability to and from school in all these years, in fact now with all the increased traffic it is even more of a danger.

Thank you for what you do to improve non motorized transportation in Helena.

Dan and Colleen Nichols

Sent from my iPad

## Mark Young

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**From:** Eve Byron <evebyron@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Helena Westside walkability

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon.

Thank you for taking the time to tour our little neighborhood to discuss its "walkability."

I live on the corner of Hauser and Granite, and walk the neighborhood often. A couple items stand out in my mind regarding the safety of pedestrians and bikers:

1. The Granite and Hauser intersection would best be served by a roundabout. Traffic flies up and down Granite, but a four-way stop sign at the intersection would make it difficult for drivers in the winter. I envision those traveling downhill wouldn't be able to stop and those traveling uphill might not be able to get started when icy. A roundabout would keep traffic moving. The school would need to move the bus stop from Granite to Hauser, but that's not too difficult. The bus parks on Hauser most mornings when it's arriving at the stops early.
2. If a light is installed at the intersection, I request that it be focused downward in order to maintain the Dark Skies ambiance.
3. Sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks, but only on one side of the road please. This is especially important all along Hauser to the intersection with Henderson. The traffic in the morning is dreadful, and students are having to walk in the streets not just to Kessler but also to CR Anderson and St. Andrews. It's particularly dangerous during the winter, when it's dark in the morning.
4. I have witnessed numerous accidents at Hauser and Joselyn. A stop sign might work well there.
5. It is impossible to cross Highway 12 at certain hours. An overpass would be a great safety investment.
6. While it was outside of your walking tour, Park Avenue has a blind hill, where I always walk on one side of the road so traffic behind me knows I'm there, then switch to the opposite side of the road when I get close to the top of the hill so I can avoid any oncoming traffic. I don't have a solution for this mess, other than to lower the top of the hill to increase the sight-distance.

Thank you again for your interest in our part of the community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 406/422-6601.

Eve Byron

## Mark Young

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**From:** Melanie Symons <msymons321@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:30 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com <jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** NMTAC Kessler School Walkability Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur and Mark

I have been following NMTAC's Kessler School Walkability Audit and have reviewed the final report. Please accept my sincere thanks for conducting this audit in such a timely manner and for taking into consideration the neighborhood's immediate concerns and hopefully the impact of Westside Woods on the area.

I am writing to encourage NMTAC to share the Kessler school audit and related concerns and recommendations to the Helena City Commission. I understand and agree with most of John E Andrew's thoughts regarding the Choteau and Silverette area. However, the traffic on the westside of the school is frankly unmanageable at the start and end of the school day. Sidewalks on at least one side of Granite extending from Knight to Hauser or beyond would improve the safety of school children and our neighborhood.

I am aware of the financial constraints the city faces and appreciate Commissioner Logan's recent editorial regarding the many and varied needs of our community. I am also aware that City's policy is to not annex land until there is sufficient infrastructure to support it. I encourage NMTAC to remind the city that a sound infrastructure, including paved streets and sidewalks should be a condition of approval for the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the safety of Helena's citizens.

*Melanie Symons*

[Msymons321@msn.com](mailto:Msymons321@msn.com)

(406) 431-0720

## Mark Young

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**From:** Peter Larsen <pete.h.larsen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:47 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Non-motorized travel advisory council and Westside Woods development

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioner Rehmann and Mr. Young-

Thank you for taking the time to perform a walk audit around Kessler School. I am writing to encourage you to make a formal recommendation for *significant* traffic safety improvements around Kessler and in the adjoining neighborhoods. We have one daughter who attends school there now and another who will be attending Kessler in the not-too-distant future. My family lives near the intersection of Woodward and Granite. In short, my concerns, which are shared by a significant number of families, include the:

1. Lack of sidewalks running all the way up Granite to Woodward as well as some of the other lateral (East-West) streets
2. Insufficient or non-existent street-lighting along Granite
3. High rate of speed that people drive up and down Granite
4. Misleading traffic estimates collected near the school

As you probably saw, there are no sidewalks that extend all the way up Granite to Woodward and there are only a few streetlights. My daughter used to walk to school with her classmates, but we started to drive her because it is extremely dangerous for them to walk on Granite during the months of the year when the sun comes up late/goes down early. We are also concerned about speeding, especially for traffic coming down the hill. I have personally witnessed some kids that had to jump down into the ditch along Granite when a downhill driver narrowly missed hitting them.

Finally, I was very concerned when I read about the traffic estimates that were collected recently because I believe that these estimates are misleading. I believe the numbers that have been collected significantly under-counted the actual traffic already occurring. I read that one measurement of vehicle traffic was taken during a time of road construction on or near Granite and another measurement was taken when school was not even in session. I can tell you that there is significant congestion on Granite starting at about 7:45am and then again at about 2:45pm. In fact, you cannot find a spot to park within a few blocks if you arrive to the school after about 3pm. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to take a picture and share it with you.

Thank you for all that you are doing to ensure that our community is safe and accessible to other forms of transportation (e.g., walking, biking).

Kind regards,

Peter Larsen

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Shawn Whyte <ShawnWhyte@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:54 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting - Kessler walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello to both of you,

I am a longtime Helena west side resident who raised 3 children through Kessler, CRA, and CHS. I would like to thank all the people who participated in the walking assessment around Kessler school. I support all the recommendations that were listed in the report and would like to put emphasis on sidewalks and traffic measures that could help kids cross Hauser as the walk from the neighborhoods south of Hauser to get to Kessler on the north side of Hauser. I hope the City of Helena, the Helena School District, and Sussex Construction are all in alignment and support of protecting the youngest members of our community as the go to and from school every day.

In addition to the suggestions gathered, I would like to request that the NMTAC review the traffic study conducted and attached to the Sussex subdivision proposal. In that subdivision request, there is not access from the new neighborhood directly to highway 12. The property owned by Sussex does have frontage along highway 12, but it will be costly to do the dirt work, grading, and construction of an access point. I do not think the cost of the work should be a factor in determining what the appropriate course of action should be. Please review all the data in the subdivision request and join the west side neighbors in emphasizing the need to pull that traffic off Granite and away from the school by allowing drivers to exit the neighborhood directly to highway 12 using a new feeder road.

Like many others, I am not against the new subdivision, but I do request that the developer be held to a standard that protects children and non-motorized use of our streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Shawn Whyte

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Janice Long <janicelong2525@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:03 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Kessler School

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur & Mark:

I would like to thank you for the walk audit for Kessler School- this is such a critical thing to address in keeping our children safe.

I would like to make a formal recommendation request for your help to make the 12 recommendations for improvement around the Kessler School area!!

Thank you so very much for your help in keeping our children safe!!

Sincerely

Janice Long



## Mark Young

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**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:16 PM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit Kessler Elementary

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mark Young  
City Transportation Engineer

Dear Mr. Young:

I understand that the NMTAC is presenting information about the walkability audit near Kessler Elementary School.

The results seem pretty dismal for walkability in the neighborhood, which I feel impacts most directly the young children attending that school and their ability to walk safely to and from Kessler.

I am hoping to see curbed sidewalks, improved visibility at corners, some additional controls at Granite and Euclid, and maybe some speed signs indicating what speed your car is traveling (not opposed to speed bumps either).

The City has really improved their snowplowing and graveling on Granite over the last several years, but kids trudging up and down that street still have to migrate towards the middle of the road during heavier snowstorms, which is a real hazard for the little guys.

Thanks for helping out with safety and walkability of the streets for not only the kids, but for the large number of recreational walkers and hikers using the streets.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

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**From:** David Ulrich <ulrich406@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:27 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Area Walk Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I recently read the Walk Audit report that was done for the Kessler School area. I greatly appreciate the time and focus that has been brought up for the School, Neighborhood and people using the area for walking and getting around.

I know that a lot of areas in Helena have issues and am glad that this area is becoming part of the focus to hopefully make updates/changes as needed. It's also great to see that this is happening while the Westside Woods subdivision proposals are happening because that area will be bringing twice as much or more traffic to this area and become more hazardous to the community walking around the school and neighborhood.

Any input you have in improving the safety for the area is greatly appreciated, and hopefully the input will be heard in conjunction with the Westside Woods Subdivision Application process too.

Thank you again for the effort in keeping the safety of kids, school district employees, parents and families addressed through any processes that affect the area.

David Ulrich  
2530 Knight St  
Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:44 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** joycefranzen@yahoo.com; lowell.chandler@gmail.com; kevin.rechkoff@gmail.com; szerwo@gmail.com; Sarah Sandau; andy.shirtliff@gmail.com; GregWirth@hotmail.com; joelebert54@gmail.com; lucasalanwallace@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Walk audit support  
**Attachments:** I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary 1.3.23.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Happy 2023 Chairman Rehmann and Engineer Young and members of NMTAC,

Please see the attached and know that we fully support all of the recommendations from recent walk audit conducted by NMTAC.

Professionally I have worked with healthy communities and walkability in Montana for 15 years. Several communities across MT have made life changing improvements and reaped the benefits.

Sincerely,

Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd.

Parents of 4 kids who love to walk and ride around town and have utilized Kessler as a playground many times

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

---

**From:** THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 5:59 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net  
**Cc:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walk Audit/ Westside

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

NMTAC Members,

We were very pleased to hear about the Walking Audit around Kessler School this past week. We have watched the upper westside grow over the 30+ years we have lived here. It has been a concern, with this growth, that the infrastructure has not kept up in many circumstances. An important start was seen by your group of the basic safety needs for students at Kessler and all pedestrians. Connecting sidewalks, on at the least one side of Granite street plus speed checked due to high volume of traffic on Granite and surrounding roads. Thank you for taking time to do the walking assessment. Our children safely walked to Kessler School growing up and we can see the small children now struggling to walk a few blocks to their school. We see first hand living on the corner of Granite and Flowerree Street. We have seen many houses built north of our home over the years. We are definitely not against growth or access to all the westside has to offer. We strongly believe it would not benefit the area with a large development and growth without the infrastructure concerns being met first hand. As they say, let's not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your time and seeing the many concerns we have for the area.

Mark and Theresa Maleski  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt.

## Mark Young

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**From:** Carolyn Truscott <lv4jsus@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:14 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study and Recommendations

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a concerned resident who lives on Silverette, I would like to thank you for making the walkability study happen.

As I read the results, I would like to add these recommendations:

Summary suggestions:

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Thank you.

Carolyn Truscott

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:53 PM  
**To:** Wilbur Rehman; Franzen Joice; Chandler Lowell; Rechkoff Kevin; szerwo James; Wirth Greg; Wallace Lucas; Ebert Joel; Shirtliff Andy; Sarah Sandau; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Comment for Jan 10th meeting  
**Attachments:** NMTAC Letter Jan 10\_from SHW.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC members,

Please see the attached letter with public comment from the five Save Helena Westside directors regarding the recent Kessler walkability audit and our recommendations.

We appreciate your time and consideration,  
SHW Directors

We are grateful to the Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) and to Lewis and Clark County Public Health for conducting a Walk Audit at Kessler. Reading through the Walk Audit report, there is agreement for the need to improve the area streets to provide safe routes for schools and pedestrians in general.

The current proposal for the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision would result in significant increase in traffic volumes on those very same streets and the current traffic infrastructure is not sufficient to safely service the subdivision as proposed. After full buildout of WSW, Granite is projected to have traffic 3 to 4.9 times the current load<sup>1</sup>. Quiet county roads like Hauser, Park, Stuart, and Flowerree will see traffic volumes increase as much as 10 times their current load<sup>2</sup>.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to avoid annexation of undeveloped land until a plan is in place for adequate infrastructure to serve the new development. Therefore, Save Helena Westside (SHW) again would like NMTAC to consider recommending to City Staff and the City Commission regarding the following infrastructure upgrades as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Direct the majority of new subdivision traffic away from existing streets via a connection to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane and Le Grande Cannon. This will reduce traffic impact around Kessler and on Granite and Hauser, as well as will improve non-motorized access for bikers and others to Fort Harrison and the 10 Mile and Scratch Gravel trail systems.
2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards to accommodate new traffic on existing streets east of the WSW subdivision.** – In conjunction with #1 above, sidewalks and streetlights should be installed on Granite from Kessler school up to Flowerree street, on Hauser from Joslyn to the WSW subdivision, on Stuart and Flowerree from Granite to the WSW subdivision, and on the Hauser/Park Dr corridor leading to the WSW subdivision to encourage safe non-motorized transportation.
3. **Upgrade and add crosswalks, including lights.** – In conjunction with #1 and #2 above, lighted crosswalks, and safety signals should be installed around Kessler school to improve pedestrian safety.

Please note that the current application for the proposed WSW subdivision does not include any additional “complete street” upgrades to area streets beyond what is directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision boundaries, nor does it include any upgrades for pedestrian safety around Kessler School.

SHW and area residents support development that prioritizes public safety. As seen with the project to build sidewalks on Knight St East of CR Anderson, it can take years to secure funding and City support to add sidewalks to existing school routes. Neighborhoods east of Kessler that were annexed into the City in the past few years have not undergone any improvements to pedestrian safety. There is no guarantee of *any* upgrades if the can is kicked down the road. Therefore, it is best to proactively address safety needs up front, as conditions of annexation, prior to the WSW subdivision adding thousands of additional vehicle trips per day.

Thank you for your ongoing advocacy for safety of non-motorized travel within our Helena neighborhoods.

SHW Directors

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<sup>1</sup> WSW TIS reports 584 VPD on Granite currently and 1,726 VPD at full buildout (3.0 times current load). City of Helena Staff Report for Pre-Zone of WSW, however, states that with the proposed zoning, “there is a potential for 2,869 new trips.” The WSW TIS predicts 80% of the new traffic will use Granite, which would result in 2,879 VPD on Granite at full buildout (4.9 times current load).

<sup>2</sup> Flowerree St west of Granite, with 4 homes currently, will be a straight cut-through route to 45 new residences.

## Mark Young

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**From:** Sarah Perry <sarah.3.perry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:59 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; Wilbur Rehmann  
**Subject:** Comments to be sent to the NMTAC for Jan 10th

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the NMTAC,

Thank you for requesting and facilitating the Kessler Walk Audit, with the help of Sarah Sandau! It meant a great deal to area residents and Kessler families to have members of the community take the time to walk our streets, experience what it is like to be a pedestrian, and brainstorm recommended improvements. I support the recommended changes in the report.

In listening to the recordings from a handful of your 2022 meetings, it has been encouraging to hear your council going to great lengths to do what you can to make safety of non-motorized travel around our community a priority. That has been particularly apparent anytime the NMTAC was discussing routes to schools. I know now more than ever that the NMTAC has A LOT of potential projects and recommendations for improvement around town and really, every school in Helena needs pedestrian improvements. I am not trying to say those other projects are ANY less important.

However, the situation around Kessler is unique. The walk audit identified numerous and severe deficiencies. The average scores at each stop were 2.5 or less. For comparison, at the Broadwater school audit, the average scores ranged from 5 to 8.

Even more unique in this case is the fact that the city is being asked to annex nearly 60 acres of NEW land with a major subdivision that will put additional traffic impact on existing streets, ALL of which are proposed to be on routes to school that DO NOT have sidewalks. I am not aware of any other school in the City of Helena that is facing a similar situation.

With annexation on the table, this project and associated recommendations need to be a priority TODAY. As Chairman Rehmann told you all during orientation in the Feb 2022 NMTAC meeting, [Resolution 19549](#), which established the NMTAC, states that one of the duties of the NMTAC is, "advocating for non-motorized facilities in new public and private development projects". Weighing in with your recommendations on how to reduce negative impacts of the proposed subdivision on non-motorized facilities is absolutely in your purview!

In addition to the impact Westside Woods would have on safe walking routes to Kessler and St Andrews School as well as CR and Hawthorne bus routes, the subdivision will also add considerable traffic to existing county roads. Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart are quiet roads with only a handful homes on them. Most of those streets are fairly flat streets for that reason are used by many of the elderly and young children in the neighborhood for recreation and walking. The streets have almost no traffic on them currently and feel safe even without sidewalks. However, the traffic on those streets will change drastically as hundreds of new residents use them as cut through streets to access a major subdivision.

With the previous submission of this subdivision to the City, all blocks of Flowerree, Hauser, and Park Dr west of Granite were recommended city staff to be annexed into the city and upgraded to complete street



standards. And the developer agreed to all those conditions of annexation with their last submission. However, with the new proposal, the developer has not proposed any such upgrades and there is no guarantee new city staff will make the same recommendations. Please, encourage the city to recommend upgrades to Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart to ensure area residents can continue to safely use those roads for non-motorized travel.

My concerns with the proposed development are all safety related. With the right conditions of annexation for safety, I would happily go to the City Commission and advocate FOR the WSW development.

Your recommendation to the City to require the necessary upgrades as conditions of annexation will be in line with the City's own Growth Policy and is a way to ensure the neighborhood and the NMTAC are not having to fight for decades to come to retrofit existing neighborhoods with much needed sidewalks. Let's make sure this is done right from the start!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Perry

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne Pentecost <ajpentecost3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:13 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road, trying to fight for a simple sidewalk, like Mark has been fighting for with CR Anderson. Yes Kessler has a horrible layout and it needs to be fixed but that is not possible right now. These recommendations might be. We can't make everyone happy. It will not be perfect. However we can at least use our voices to advocate for those that can't. Please, at least try and ask.

Anna Jayne Pentecost  
Mother and Certified Emergency Room RN

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Matthew Pentecost <mgpentecost@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:21 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC recommendations

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

Matt Pentecost

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne <sweetjane33@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:24 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,  
I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

*Annie Howell*

## Mark Young

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**From:** Matt Johnson <mattjohnson311@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:13 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

As a resident of Helena Westside with children starting school at Kessler next year, I want to thank you for conducting the walkability audit. I encourage you to please make formal recommendations to the commission for their review of the Westside Woods development proposal.

After your walk, I'm sure you'll agree, the estimated traffic volume associated with the development will significantly exacerbate conditions that are already unsafe and substandard for kids walking to school, as well as general pedestrian traffic. This area was poorly developed and lacks basic infrastructure for conveying pedestrians.

In addition, Park Drive, Stuart, Floweree, and Hauser to the west of the area walked are designated to convey new subdivision traffic. These streets are dirt and lack infrastructure to accommodate those traffic loads. Significantly unsafe conditions will be created when that vehicle traffic volume is added to current and future pedestrian traffic. These streets and sidewalks need to be developed if this subdivision comes forth.

As a rapidly growing community, we cannot approve projects that will worsen conditions for pedestrian traffic. On the contrary, modern transportation planning encourages providing dedicated routes and safe conditions for pedestrians, to offset our past bias towards vehicular modes of transportation.

We need to take every opportunity to modernize our mistakes of the past for the sake of our future generations.

Thank you for considering the broader picture and considering this opportunity to improve our community.

Best regards,  
Matt Johnson  
2690 Park Dr, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Orpha Smigaj <opiernc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:31 AM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Audit Kessler School area

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



**Orpha Smigaj** <[opiernc@gmail.com](mailto:opiernc@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Young

Thank you for completing the Walk Audit for Kessler School. Kessler is a wonderful school for our neighborhood with many safety concerns for children and parents who attend this school. I appreciate all of the work that is being done to make this neighborhood school safer for our children. I have lived on the corner of Hauser and Silverette for over 30 years. I have witnessed many near miss collisions with children and cars on these streets. Our neighborhood would be made a safer one with installation of paved roads, lighting, signage, sidewalks and crosswalks. With the proposed westside subdivision these issues are going to worsen tenfold. Before and after school pickup and drop off is currently a nightmare and it is only going to get worse with a huge influx of houses in this proposed subdivision. The crosswalk zone on Granite is a very short distance to Highway 12. Cars are backed up; kids dart out in the street and people speed through this area coming off of Highway 12 onto Granite and the crosswalk. There is no more room for more cars, more kids in this area. I am not against development in this area. I am against how big the subdivision is going to be, there are way too many houses proposed for this subdivision. It is going to flood this already congested neighborhood area and school.

Thank you again for the walk audit, I believe the recommendations would greatly improve the safety of our neighborhood and school.

Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Lu Driessen <ldriessen929@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:08 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Public comment NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

Thank you for conducting an audit of the walkability of the area around Kessler School.

Reading the report emphasizes the safety concerns we see, as active members of the neighborhood. Use of the area has increased, as development has grown. We expect that to continue.

Please utilize the audit to establish priorities for improvement and set forth a concrete plan, with an established timeline, to address deficiencies identified.

Helena is looking to create a safe, more walkable community. Given this area is directly adjacent to a well attended school, we ask for expediency in addressing the identified concerns.

Thank you,

Lu Driessen

Scott Harris

2600 Hauser Blvd, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

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**From:** Jim Lund <pjameslund@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:29 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** recent NMTAC Audit walk and report

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your attention to assess the pedestrian situation for the area around Kessler Elementary School. The roads audited are extremely busy during school pick-up and drop off. The lack of sidewalks on several of the main roads, particularly during busy times, is a danger to those that are walking. I am not surprised that in the audit many of the intersections scored just 2.5/10.

There is foot and bicycle traffic that often comes through Granite for walkers, runners, and cyclists that are accessing the numerous trail systems just to the north (Centennial trail, Spring Meadow Lake, Ten-Mile Creek Park). I live in this neighborhood and bike or jog commute to Fort Harrison via Granite to the trail system most days year around. Thank you for your efforts to make this area safe for cyclists and pedestrians.

With warm regards,

Jim Lund  
2610 Knight St  
406-422-8844



**From:** [Matt Johnson](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Parks Board public comment for Jan 3, 2023 public meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 4:51:50 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Helena Planning Department and Parks Board,  
I'm writing to provide public comment regarding the Westside Woods subdivision proposal, specific to park land and open space requirements.

My wife and I and our two young children reside at 2690 Park Dr, immediately adjacent to the proposed development. We have a long term vested interest in this project.

The current proposal for parkland and open space dedication is unacceptable for the numerous reasons already discussed. Those lots are generally unusable and are proposed to maximize the developable area since they are steep and not conducive to development. They will also translate to a maintenance liability for City of Helena taxpayers.

In general, my wife and I are in agreement with the position of Save Helena Westside (SHW):

"SHW believes the option that is in the best interest of the area residents is the for the parkland dedication to include only the Legrande Cannon walking trail portion of Lot 12, in addition to providing land suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park facility that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities."

It also shouldn't be ignored that there is a substantial existing trail network through this area that has been used by area residents for several decades. Everyday we observe numerous neighbors use the network, some to access Legrande Cannon and some stay in the area itself. The recent stunt by the development team to close the network unless their petition was signed is concerning as to whether trails are a priority, as claimed in their marketing materials, and it's unclear if trails will actually be constructed and by whom.

The current proposed trail system is vague in the current application, it appears on some exhibits but not on most. It's unclear whether trails through the subdivision will be required. The current proposed trails also substantially deviate from the existing network, and won't provide access to Legrande Cannon and other recently acquired trails with a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed by area residents for several decades.

We would like to see proposed trails follow the existing trail network to maximum practical extent as a condition of approval, and include a natural vegetation buffer that will provide a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed over the past several decades.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and consider preservation of the existing trail network as a requirement, in addition to the position of SHW.

Best,

Matt and Jen Johnson  
2690 Park Drive

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dick Josephson <dickj3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:11 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Distinguished Parks Board Members:

We would like to request that you defer your decision regarding this newest application until such time as the density of this development is reconciled. As you may be aware it is at the root of much concern about traffic flow, safety, and infrastructure. Considerable challenge is underway at this time and will be addressed in the coming months.

Should the developer be required to reduce the number of households, reconfiguration would likely provide areas that are much more conducive to parkland use than are lots 6, 16, 19, and 12. These areas appear to be marginally useful at best.

While they may comply with the percentage of acreage requirements, do they comply with the spirit and intent of the requirements for parkland set asides? Perhaps this deficiency is attributable as well to the density proposed by the developer.

We are appreciative of your efforts to assure that our Helena community overall, and each neighborhood within it advance in a way that is beneficial to us all while still allowing the developer a successful outcome. A delay in your deliberations will provide the opportunity for Westside Woods to be welcomed into our Westside.

Debora Speyer  
Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Richard

Last Name

Josephson

Email

dickj3@gmail.com

Street Address

2550 Mayrowan Court

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

650 243 7816

Date

February 03, 2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

This is a copy of the letter that I submitted to you on 10/17/22 pertaining to the first application. I believe that it remains applicable to this newest application-the concerns have yet to be mitigated. Once again your consideration of the situation will be very much appreciated by those of us in Helena's Westside community and beyond.

Many thanks to April for her call this morning in response to my recent inquiry to Mark Young.

The request is to learn how the agencies review process is structured in order to understand how to proactively provide input for consideration. The concern is, that to do so reactively once the reviews are complete, creates a much more cumbersome condition for reconsidering the conclusions of the reviews.

My focus as a resident proximate to the proposed subdivision is for the adverse impact that it's density will have on the quality of life for our existing neighborhood. In other words, not the many details to assess for what occurs on the 60 acres development, but how the addition of 179 new households will be off-site consequential to all of the existing households by the traffic that will be imposed upon our residential streets.

I would like to encourage that the Community Development Department facilitate one or several interactive workshops where a collaborative effort among the developer, the neighborhood group, Save Helena Westside, and the city professionals seeks a density solution that enables a plan that works for all involved.

If I understand correctly, the developer's traffic study has been shown to be errant by an independent peer review. As such it may not be a viable basis for the developer's application per City of Helena requirements.

It is my hope that the City Community Development Department will exhibit the same desire to protect our existing segment of the Helena Community as to the appeal of the proposed expansion of it.

I firmly believe a solution can be found where a benefit for some does not have to be at the expense of others.

I look forward to your initiatives in bringing all parties successfully together.

Your leadership will be very much appreciated by the very many members of our community who are very concerned about the density of this proposed subdivision.

Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court  
650 243 7816

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



**From:** [Ish K.](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Parkland at Helena West Side  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:54:21 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

We support the parkland dedication that includes the small portion of Lot 12 that contains a short section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail, with the balance of the required land dedication being from areas suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park within the subdivision.

And we are opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is steep and/or otherwise not suitable for sports fields or a proper city park that could be used by persons of all ages and abilities, including persons requiring handicapped access. This includes Lots 6, 16, 19, and the balance of Lot 12 that does not contain the Legrande Cannon walking trail. These lots consist mostly of very steep grades, with water drainage and water holding areas, and steep, rocky areas around the outer boundaries of the proposed subdivision. They are not suitable for general city park activities. And they certainly would not be accessible by residents with any significant mobility problems.

These lots would also place a perpetual burden on the City for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal on adjacent sidewalks.

Please consider sharing your comments with the Parks Board members via email over this New Year's weekend. This will allow them to consider your concerns during the public meeting on Wednesday. Also, please consider joining the zoom meeting to show public interest and, if desired, offer comments at that time as well.



## April Sparks

---

**From:** Angie Lee <angielee396@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 30, 2023 4:38 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision Comments

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I'd like to comment on the development mentioned above.

The plans look like it should be a nice development when it is finally finished, but....

From what I see, there will be 96 single family lots and 4 multi family lots for a total of 172 living units. If there is an average of 2 vehicles per living unit, that adds up to 344 new vehicles coming and going every day. It doesn't appear there will be any new through streets created so it looks like all of this traffic will be on Granite to Hauser Blvd or Granite to Overlook to Hauser. This permanent increase in traffic is pretty large and concerns me.

There will also be a huge amount of construction traffic on these paths for the next several years which will include big trucks and large equipment running long hours and breaking our streets down.

At the end of the day, we will be left to deal with the dust, the dirt tracked on the streets, the materials that get blown around in the wind, the new potholes, the increase in traffic in our quiet neighborhood and all the other negatives that come with construction.

If the new subdivision is done well it will be an attribute to Helena but I hope something can be done to preserve our quality of life while it is being built.

Thank you,  
Angie Lee



## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 28, 2023 7:51 PM  
**To:** Christopher Brink; Rebecca Dockter; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Letter of intent to sell or grant easement for road  
**Attachments:** AmericanStorageWestLetterToCity.jpeg; USFS\_Fire\_Models\_Westside.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Director Brink, Attorney Dockter, and Engineer Young,

Save Helena Westside (SHW) has been working for some time to try and propose solutions and conditions to minimize the negative impacts of the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision on the public safety and general welfare of existing and future neighborhood residents as well as Kessler School children and their families. One of those solutions is to provide an additional access to the subdivision from existing roads to the West. **Please see the attached letter from Tim Davis, the property owner of American West Storage, who has committed to selling the land needed or granting an easement to make western access possible.**

Additional access to the proposed WSW neighborhood is needed for adequate emergency access and evacuation, and to improve connectivity with surrounding properties. For that reason, SHW believes the conditions set forth in City of Helena Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) have been met and ask that the City require a condition that a Western access be provided to connect the proposed dead-end Livezey Ct to the existing Park Lane to the west.

Due to lack of connectivity from the proposed subdivision to the surrounding area, we have concerns about the impact the proposed subdivision would have on the safety of children using area school routes and existing congestion on Granite Ave and Hauser Blvd, emergency response particularly during school hours, or a large-scale evacuation in the event of an emergency like a fast-moving forest fire.

Granite Ave and Hauser Blvd are both routes to school used by area children walking to Kessler and St Andrews or walking to bus stops for CR Anderson and Hawthorne schools. In its currently proposed form, essentially **every single new vehicle trip generated by the subdivision, including construction traffic for years to come, will be driving along school routes.**

United States Forest Service (USFS) fire models run in December of 2022 show that under conditions typical during fire season, a fire could start several miles away from the proposed subdivision and "the City of Helena Police Department would have **less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.**" (See attached letter from USFS with fire models).

The City's Growth Policy Objective 25 is to, "Avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed." And Objective 20 is to, "Maintain public health and public safety as high priorities, providing necessary services and addressing potential hazards within and adjacent to City limits."

We believe that without additional access to the West, the City does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities. The attached letter from the landowner of American Storage West allows for such a road to be built to city standards.

Thank you for your consideration,  
SHW Directors

---

This email has been scanned for spam and viruses by Proofpoint Essentials. Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Janice & Tracy

Last Name

Long

Email

Tjsslong@yahoo.com

Street Address

2525 Hauser Blvd

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

Date

1/30/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

Please consider the developer to develop a City Park!! Do not let him donate a gulley or undeveloped property as Parkland. There is lots of undeveloped land that he could donate that is not usable property for a park. Make him create a HOA to collect funds to have maintenance done on trails and parks.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature



---



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Judy

Last Name

Ludwig

Email

Judy3017@msn.com

Street Address

592 Granite

City

Helena

State

Mt

Zip Code

59601

Phone

9708467641

Date

2/1/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of park land in this proposed subdivision. lots.

I am concerned about the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, is written on a horizontal blue line.

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 8:52 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods parkland

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Park Board and Planning Commission Members

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of land being offered as a fulfillment of new development open/park spaces. I'm concerned for two primary reasons:

The building of lot 12 will, at best, negatively impact the Legrande Canyon walking trail. I am a retired homeowner in the neighborhood and I have physical limitations with my mobility; I use the section of this trail heading west from Silverette frequently during the non-snowy days because the gentle slope and wide path are accessible for persons with mobility issues like myself and enjoyable for many others. This trail is a gem used by all varieties of neighborhood residents, and is the result of many people working very hard to enhance the outdoor experience for a wide variety of uses. I hope it will not be diminished for a few lots.

My other concern is the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

I hope you take these issues seriously as they impact those of us who call this neighborhood home.

Regards,

Judy Ludwig  
592 Granite Avenue



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Terry

Last Name

MacLaurin

Email

terrymaclaurin@gmail.com

Street Address

2424 HAUSER BLVD

City

HELENA

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064653816

Date

2/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Dear Staff:

I am concerned about the negative impacts the subdivision will have on public health and safety. My main concerns are as follows:

1. Need for a western access road to the existing Park Lane for emergency access, evacuation, and connectivity, as well as directing construction and day to day traffic away from school routes.
2. Need to add sidewalks to existing streets.
3. Need to consider fire and evacuation concerns relating to long block lengths and dead-end streets.

I agree wholeheartedly with the issues presented in the February 2, 2023 letter submitted by the Save Helena Westside Directors.

Thank you for your consideration,

Terry MacLaurin

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

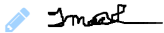
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods subdivision land use  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:03 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:27 AM  
To: County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
Subject: Westside Woods subdivision land use

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Parks Board Members,

Hello, we are residents of the west side of town. We have concerns about the proposed land use for the steeper portions of the Westside Woods subdivision. Many of the residents here are worried about access to park land dedications for all to be able to access. These areas are not suitable for the activities that are proposed. Please consider the lots are mostly steep, rocky and have water drainage holding areas. How will this impact the area in the long run. I am very much in favor of development of the area if it is done with knowledge of the future access for all ages and abilities.

Mark and Theresa Maleki  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt 59601

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 8:51 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I was told you will be reviewing the Westside Woods development tomorrow for parks land. Please consider accepting Lot 12 that gives access to laGrande hiking area but do not accept any other land that is too steep or not usable for athletic fields or is accessible to all people no matter their disability. Helena lacks athletic fields for all sports and this should be a priority for accepting any parks lands for development. Developments should not be donating unusable land to the city parks department that the city then has to maintain.

Thank you for considering these thoughts when looking at the current proposal.

Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St  
Helena MT 59601

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Colin McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 9:56:13 AM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board Member,

I am a resident of Le Grande Cannon Blvd and I have concerns about several options in the current proposal for the Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision (all but the first option). I regularly use the Le Grande Cannon Trail (at least 2-3 times per week) year round, as do hundreds of others in the area with varying needs. I am concerned with any options that do not include maintaining this historic trail for public use, and providing additional open space to a very crowded redevelopment plan by the developer. Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. The trail access needs to be maintained - it is one of the few flat trails on Mount Helena truly accessible to multiple needs groups. My rationale follows:

During the previous application process for this subdivision, the Parks Board recommended that a small portion of Lot 12 that contains a section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail be accepted as parkland dedication, with the remaining land requirement being fulfilled by the developer by paying cash in lieu of the remaining land balance. The Parks Board rejected all options that included the steep land areas that were not suitable for general park use, including the majority of Lot 12 (except the small portion containing Legrande Cannon walking trail). They also rejected consideration of the steep, unusable lots 6, 16, and 19. They voiced their concerns with these steep areas not being of value to all residents, as well as concerns that the city would be responsible for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and other maintenance of these steep areas. These were good decisions and I supported them.

The Parks Board also discussed whether they could recommend that the developer provide land that is suitable for use as a developed park area, but were advised by the (now former) Community Development Director Sharon Haugen that the board was not allowed to consider any options not submitted by the developer, so this option was not considered previously. However, during the current application process, the Helena Director of Parks and Recreation (Doug Smith) has indicated that the Parks Board can consider recommending that land suitable for a developed park be dedicated to the city to fulfill the parkland dedication requirement.

Also discussed during the previous application for this subdivision was the fact that a short section of the Le Grande Cannon trail was actually built on the subdivision property (within the proposed Lot 12) instead of within the established right of way. This prompted the developer to recommend including all of Lot 12 as the parkland dedication property. But the Parks Board rejected this option due to the fact that Lot 12 mostly consists of very steep terrain and is unsuitable for park use. In the end, the Parks Board's recommendation to the City Commission included only the section of Lot 12 that contained the Le Grande Cannon

trail, with the balance of the land requirement being fulfilled by cash in lieu of land.

Also during the previous application process, there were some discussions of having the Kessler School grounds available for park use, as well as some mention of Spring Meadow park facilities being nearby. However, Kessler grounds are not accessible for persons with mobility limitations and Spring Meadow does not include a developed park or sports field. There has been enough high-density residential development in this area already such that significant additional open space is necessary to accommodate additional high-density residential development - especially when development plans will remove the easily accessible open space used by many existing residents.

Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. I understand the developer wants to maximize his ROI with development of the most desirable land, but in my opinion the City needs to set a precedent with developers to show they consider the long-term needs of the community over the short-term capital concerns of developers. There are plenty of developers that would have much better plans for developing this property than the current, as they continue to blunder through now their second irresponsible and publicly adverse application. Please make decisions that will allow the west side to be more than dense residential development with nowhere for our small kids to play.

Thank you for your service to our community, as well as time and consideration.

Colin McCoy

**From:** [Terri McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Parkland Dedication (public comment)  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 12:36:11 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Parks Board Members  
Re: Westside Parkland Dedication  
From: Helena homeowner

I write to encourage you to keep Helena's neighborhood trails and parks accessible for all as currently undeveloped areas are being considered for future growth in housing, roads and other amenities. As I understand it, the Board is considering a land dedication for a neighborhood park on the west side that includes a portion of the Le Grande Cannon walking trail as well as other surrounding areas, some of which should not be considered suitable to meet planning requirements for subdivisions and/or other construction projects.

I've seen the map, and while I support a parkland **dedication that includes the land that crosses/contains the Le Grande Cannon walking trail (some of lot 12)**, I ask the Board to reject entirely parkland dedications on lots 6, 16, 19 and the remainder of lot 12. You all are the experts, and I hope it goes without saying, but this land is clearly not suitable for a proper city park due to its terrain. In fact, I cringe to think about what would have to happen to the land to make these areas suitable to house one of our cherished neighborhood parks—let alone make it accessible for young, old, able-bodied and non-able bodied citizens.

There has to be a better way. It seems to me like this parkland proposal is trying to meet some city requirements I'm not aware of as cheaply as possible without any concern for the folks who actually live, recreate and pay taxes here.

Terri McCoy  
3240 Le Grande Cannon Blvd  
Helena MT 59601



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Abigail

Last Name

McLane

Email

abigailmclane@gmail.com

Street Address

2024 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064611608

Date

01/24/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

This comment is in regards to the upcoming discussion before the Parks Board regarding the Westside Woods Parkland Dedication. As an avid trail runner, my family partially chose to live near to the Mount Helena trail system for access to the mountain and we love all of the trail access afforded to us. However, as a parent of young children I can tell you that what we miss about where we live is that there are no developed city parks available to our children other than Kessler Elementary. Kessler is great, but our children already spend three recesses a day playing at school. With the potential for a development in the area, it is a significant opportunity to finally add a developed City park, maintained by the City and implemented by the Developer, to our neighborhood. Especially with the potential addition of many multi-family housing units, where there is no backyard available, the likelihood that there will be children searching for a place to play is very high! Additionally, this will benefit all of the children on the west side who have no park. We have many trails in the Helena area and in this neighborhood, but not much in the way of developed park area. Please require a developed park as part of the development of this area.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature







## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Abigail

Last Name

McLane

Email

abigailmclane@gmail.com

Street Address

2024 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064611608

Date

02/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

As the Community Development Department reviews the Westside Woods Subdivision application, I encourage the staff to consider this an opportunity to require the Developer to add to their proposal the critical pieces that will help this neighborhood be safe for all those in and around it. Specifically, including safety features like sidewalks both in the neighborhood itself as they develop it, but also for the surrounding streets which will become a part of Helena City limits and will be impacted by the increased traffic from this subdivision. Currently streets such as Granite and Hauser, which will become thoroughfare streets with high traffic from the subdivision, do NOT have sidewalks yet are some of the main methods of neighborhood children to travel to Kessler Elementary school. This is an opportunity to have the Developer remediate their impact on the neighborhood by bringing up the streets they are impacting to align with City Code for sidewalks and boulevards.

Additionally, there will be significant traffic added to Granite street as it is the major access point to the neighborhood. This street is also the main drop off point for Kessler Elementary school and is significantly congested at pickup and drop off times. There is a need for a western access road to the existing Park Lane, which should be required as part of this subdivision to allow for better emergency access, evacuation, and connectivity, as well as directing day to day traffic away from school routes.

Safety in general and anything that can be done to improve safety for pedestrians but also for emergency access should be considered and required as part of this development work.

Thank you

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 Abigail N.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Colleen

Last Name

Nichols

Email

soultree@bresnan.net

Street Address

913 Granite

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064311972

Date

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

As a resident who has lived south of Kessler school for 33 years, I am requesting that the parks board recommend that the WSW subdivision developers be required to dedicate land suitable for an ADA compliant park. I am also asking the parks board to require that trails within the subdivision be built to city standards and that the future WSWHO a contribute dues for the ongoing maintenance of those trails.  
The developer has consistently stated that these trails would be open to the Helena residents , and I am hoping that that will indeed be a reality. The Kessler school playground and park area is not ADA accessible so it is imperative that a subdivision of this density have areas where families can recreate.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Dan & Colleen Nichols <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 5:54 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in regard to the park land dedication for the Westside Woods subdivision. I have resided at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and am in support of the parkland dedication that includes a small portion of LeGrande "boulevard" walking trail. However I am adamantly opposed to the city accepting any other land that is steep or not usable for a city park or sports field that could be used by all people regardless of age or mobility issues.

I am a senior citizen who regularly walks in our neighborhood and deal daily with the steep grades throughout our area. The areas that the developer is proposing for parkland are steep, rocky and would certainly not be accessible for to anyone with a mobility issue. These areas are also going to be difficult for the city to maintain. The developer states that he wants a subdivision that is accessible and people friendly, he should certainly consider an appropriate park or sports field. The area that is south of Kessler school is already quite busy and could not support the density of the proposed large subdivision.

Please consider my comments when you make a decision that will impact our neighborhood forever.

Thank you,

Colleen Nichols



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Lou

Last Name

Pelletier

Email

cheflouray07@gmail.com

Street Address

2650 Park Drive

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064497032

Date

02/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I fear for the safety of all the little kids walking in the neighborhood already!! Lots of critters up here too that need to be protected from potential additional traffic

Upload Additional Questions or Comments


If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 Lou Pelletier

---

**From:** [Sarah Perry](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Jan 4th discussion of parkland dedication  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:30:29 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks Board,

I am writing as a resident of Helena's Westside with comments regarding your January 4th, 2023 agenda item to discuss the proposed parkland dedication for the Westside Woods Subdivision.

I would ask that you please recommend the option from the memo stating, "**Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [LeGrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.**"

That very option was discussed in the August 25, 2021 Parks Board meeting with the previous application of this subdivision. Former City Parks Director Kristi Ponozzo recommended this option of a developed park/playground citing Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2019; #76-3-621 // Parkland Dedication Requirement. Per #76-3-609, #4, which states:

The governing body, in consultation with the subdivider and the planning board or park board that has jurisdiction, **may determine suitable locations for parks and playgrounds** and, giving due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider, may determine whether the park dedication must be a land donation, cash donation, or a combination of both.

Director Ponozzo mentioned the LeGrande Cannon Trail portion of Lot 12 would be approximately .9 acres of parkland dedication. The remainder would be 2.8 acres to meet the 3.33 acre parkland dedication requirement.

I am in support of that option. The entire Upper Westside of Helena South of Euclid Ave has only one developed park, Cunningham Park, which is over 1.5 miles away from the proposed subdivision. The next closest developed park with a playground or multi-use courts of any kind is Barney Park, which is over 2 miles away and across Euclid Ave.

Kessler School's playground facilities are not accessible to persons with mobility constraints and are not available to the public during school days or sports practices, which take place on most weekday evenings during the school year.

**Developed parkland along the street with an accessible playground, sports fields, and/or multi-use courts would allow persons in the neighborhood who are not able to recreate freely to get out and do so. This would add value and variety to the park facilities offered on the Westside.**



The proposed parkland dedication of steep land with trails will only be usable to those persons already able to get out and easily recreate on Mount Helena. The westside of Helena is experiencing infill and growth to many previously empty lots along the Hauser corridor. As more people come to the neighborhood, the need for accessible playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities is growing. ***Steep mountain trails are not accessible.*** And during the winter months when those trails become icy, packed snow they are able to be used by even fewer people. Therefore, in the spirit of providing usable parkland to as wide of a range of persons as possible, particularly the aging and less mobile members of our community, I would ask that you please recommend suitable parkland be set aside for a developed, accessible park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Perry  
2636 Woodward Ave  
Helena, MT



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Sarah

Last Name

Perry

Email

sarah.3.perry@gmail.com

Street Address

2636 Woodward Ave

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

13194322112

Date

3 Feb 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Westside Woods is unique in that it is not just a proposed subdivision but also, land that needs to be annexed first. I support the position of Save Helena Westside (see attached letter) that the existing and proposed infrastructure is NOT ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT ANNEXATION.

My youngest two kids currently walk a half mile to and from Kessler School, primarily on Granite Ave, which has NO STREETLIGHT and NO SIDEWALKS. My oldest walks those same streets to catch the bus to CR middle school even earlier in the morning. My kids and their neighborhood friends routinely have to jump into the ditch to get out of the way of vehicles. And with snow and ice during the winter, that is often times not possible and they are stuck hugging the side of the road, hoping the cars see them and move over. For much of the year, it is dark until almost 8 AM, which means they are walking on the snowy, slick road IN THE DARK, with no way to safely get out of traffic.

According to the TIS, Westside Woods is projected to more than triple the traffic on Granite Ave (from 600 to over 1800). And if any of those single-family homes end up being duplexes instead of single-family, which would be perfectly allowable under the zoning, then traffic impact could be even more. Using the city's staff report from the pre-zone, based on what would be allowable by zoning, the traffic on Granite Ave could be as much as 4.9 TIMES current volume. I realize the true impact will likely fall somewhere in the middle of those two estimates. But either way, the current infrastructure with NO SIDEWALKS or streetlights on existing school routes is simply NOT ADEQUATE to support more traffic.

For that reason, I support the previous staff recommendations that the length of Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Flowerree, and Park Dr west of Granite be improved to complete street standards. Due to the hundreds of additional vehicles projected to be traveling East on Hauser, I also recommend that Hauser from Granite to Joslyn be improved to complete street standards as safety of pedestrians walking on that stretch of street will also be drastically impacted by the subdivision traffic.

With the first last summer on Mount Helena and the recent Marshall, CO fire just over a year ago, we all say just how imperative it is that this subdivision have another public right of way access street to the West. Whether it is people needing to evacuate or the inevitable onlookers who come from elsewhere to see the action, the roads will be jammed with people and additional access is needed for safety of emergency response and evacuation. According to City Code, you CAN require such access when need is demonstrated for those exact reasons.

I am not against the subdivision, but I AM AGAINST the plans as proposed as they will have HUGE impacts on the safety of our neighborhood on both a daily basis and in the event of an emergency. PLEASE uphold City Code and the Growth Policy objectives and ask for the changes above so that we can keep families in Helena safe. We are counting on you!

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

2Feb2023 SHW Comment Letter to City Staff.pdf

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Edward

Last Name

Santos

Email

ed@mt.net

Street Address

2530 Flowerree st

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-431-7289

Date

1/24/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

To: Parks Board: The West Side Woods subdivision currently has no parks planned. For a development of this size it should have a park with a playground and some type of court (basketball, Pickleball, etc). Currently the developer is planning to spend money developing a trail system that encircles the development. From a marketing stand point this is a good idea, however the area already has miles and miles of trails that are accessible by the neighborhood. What the West side is lacking are parks. The trails in this subdivision do not add value to the surrounding neighborhood and only benefits The developer via marketing to sell houses and able bodied people. A park would benefit all including children, young families, older people, and people with disabilities. I do not support the city taking on more trail maintenance in this subdivision but I do support a park with courts.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ed J", is written on a horizontal blue line.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Edward

Last Name

Santos

Email

ed@mt.net

Street Address

2530 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-431-7289

Date

1/31/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Comment to the Parks Board

The Westside Woods Subdivision that is currently being reviewed by the city needs to have a park with a playground, courts such as pickleball and open field. A park will allow people of all ages and abilities be able to enjoy the outdoors whereas the steep terrain of the Westside Woods trails would benefit only able-bodied people.

Sussex construction currently has in their plans to pay for the construction of a trail system that loops around their proposed subdivision. I am not against the trail system, however the only trails that are needed is to connect Park Lane and the proposed addition of Flowerree street to La Grande and the grater Helena City trail system. These trails would be in keeping with connectivity goals that NMTAC and the city of Helena. Any additional trails would be redundant and not a smart use of tax payer money to maintain. Please note that from the builder's perspective these trails serve not the community but play a major part of their marketing strategy to sell homes for more money.

I am requesting that the Parks Board serve the community and recommend a dedicated park in the Westside Woods Subdivision.

Thank You  
Ed Santos

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

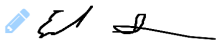
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Edward Santos <ed@mt.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 6:58 AM  
**To:** Douglas Smith  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Sussex proposed West Side Woods subdivision parks

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Director Smith,

My name is Ed Santos and I live at 2530 Flowerree st close to the proposed West Side Woods subdivision.

I believe this subdivision can be a good addition to Helena provided it is well planned keeping community and connectivity in mind. Currently planned, this subdivision does neither with the only parkland proposed being steep grades and trails that only benefit healthy able-body individuals. Children, elderly, and handicap people will get no public area to play or enjoy outside spaces. I would like to see your recommendations to the City Planning Department and Commissioners be;

- A playground is recommended central to the subdivision
- Some type of court, basketball, pickle ball, etc.
- small field
- No cash in leu! (Cash In Leu does nothing to make Helena a better place to live, nor will it benefit the west side).

The only way Helena becomes a better place to live is through people insisting that the right thing gets done. A park that benefits all people on the west side is the right thing.

Regards,  
Ed Santos

**From:** [Save Helena Westside](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#); [hkahler@helena.mt](mailto:hkahler@helena.mt)  
**Subject:** Comment to Park Board members from Save Helena Westside for 1/4/ meeting - please share asap  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:03:27 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

## Members of the Consolidated Parks Board:

Save Helena Westside is comprised of hundreds of area residents who are affected by the proposed Westwood Woods subdivision. SHW is urging the parks board to consider the first option listed in the memo submitted to the Parks Board by Director Doug Smith in his December 20th memo. Specifically, this option is:

“Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [Legrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision”

SHW supports this option because of the extreme lack of developed park and sports facilities in the area.

SHW is urging the board to reject the recommendation made by the Helena Parks and Recreation Department, which is to accept all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19, for several reasons including:

This option will not provide any additional park or sports facilities for the area residents. Most of the land on Lots 6, 12, 16 and 19 is steep and rocky, and not suitable for general recreational activities.

The city will be burdened with all future maintenance of these 13+ acres, including weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal of adjacent city sidewalks.

The potential trails that are referred to by the Helena Parks/Rec dept would not serve the greater needs of all area residents, especially the area children and those of lesser physical capabilities.

The potential trails do not significantly increase connectivity to the trails above Legrande Cannon.

There is no specified budget, design specifications, or timeframes for construction of these potential trails.

The Kessler School playground is not a suitable replacement for developed parks and sports fields for several reasons, including that these grounds are not available to the public during school hours, and that they do not offer proper access for handicapped persons.

Spring Meadow Park is a longer distance away, with a required walk across Hwy 12, which is too dangerous for younger children. Also, Spring Meadow lacks any developed playgrounds, sports facilities or courts.

One additional consideration is the fact that several right of way abandonments within the proposed Westside Woods subdivision property have provided the developer with an

additional 4+ acres to use for development. Some of these right of way areas could be used to properly connect the existing area streets to the Legrande Cannon walking trail. However, the current plans for the subdivision provide less connectivity to Legrande Cannon than previously enjoyed by area residents.

Thank you for considering the needs of area residents when making your recommendation for the parkland dedication of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

--Directors of Save Helena Westside



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Last Name

Email

savehelenawestside@gmail.com

Street Address

2615 Knight Street

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-224-4850

Date

January 30, 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Below is an updated public comment from Save Helena Westside (SHW) regarding the proposed Westside Woods Phased Subdivision. Our comment is regarding the park land dedication being considered by the City-County Consolidated Parks Board at the upcoming meeting this Wed, Feb 1st:  
Since this issue was discussed at the January 4th meeting, Save Helena Westside has engaged in further conversations with the developer as well as city engineering staff. As a result, we are voicing our SUPPORT for the original proposal submitted by the developer and recommended by Parks Director Smith, with the addition of three conditions. Specifically, SHW supports accepting all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19 (13+ acres) as parkland dedication for the proposed WSW subdivision, with the following three additional conditions:

1. That Lot 16 be made suitable for building a developed park during construction of Phase 1, with final approval for Phase 2 of the subdivision being contingent upon the Lot 16 area being filled and graded to city park standards. If Lot 16 cannot be improved during this period, an alternate area suitable for general park use should be designated.
2. That all trails be built to city standards as the developer has stated in their subdivision application.
3. That the future Westside Woods Home Owners Association (HOA) for the proposed new subdivision contribute an appropriate portion of the HOA dues for the City's ongoing maintenance of the trails and open lands.

This recommendation of support is based on a few developments since the January 4th meeting when this issue was first considered by the Parks Board. The first is that the results of a recent survey conducted among the area residents indicates an overwhelming preference to have a developed park in the area. Also, the developer's staff have indicated that Lot 16 could be transformed into a general use park area, and city engineering staff have indicated that this approach seems feasible. The survey results have been uploaded with this comment.  
Thank you for considering the interests of the west side area residents in the matter of park land dedication.  
--Save Helena Westside board of directors

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

SHW\_Parks\_Survey\_Results\_forParksBoard\_Jan2023.pdf

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Save Helena

Last Name

Westside

Email

savehelenawestside@gmail.com

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

Date

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Please see the attached letter with Save Helena Westside (SHW) Comments regarding the general review of the Westside Woods Subdivision.

We are also including attachments with the Kessler Walkability Audit Report and USFS fire models, which are referenced in our letter.

Sincerely,  
SHW Directors

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

I2\_Walk\_Audit\_at\_Kessler\_Elem\_1.11.23.pdf

USFS\_Fire\_Models\_Westside.pdf

2Feb2023 SHW Comment Letter to City Staff.pdf

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 HW

**I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary School**  
Helena, Montana  
Conducted: 03 January 2023, 11:00am-12:30pm  
Published: 11 January 2023

**Attendees:** Greg Wirth (NMTAC member), Abigail McClane (Kessler Parents Council and Parent), Ron Bartsch (Sussex Construction), Bekka Cantrell (Sussex Construction), Derek Davis (Sussex Construction), John Andrew (Helena Citizen’s Council Representative), Todd Verrill (Helena Schools), Craig Puchat (Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks), Patrick Marron (Neighbor, St Andrews parent), Cory Chenoweth (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Riley Thatcher (Principal at Kessler), Sarah Perry (Save Helena Westside, Neighbor, Kessler parent), Amy Geiger (St. Peter’s Health Injury Prevention), Charles Alvarez (Ability MT), Anna Jayne Pentecost (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Sarah Sandau (Lewis and Clark Public Health and walk audit Facilitator), Patricia Bik (Helena Citizen’s Council), Mark Young (City of Helena), Kevin Rechhoff (NMTAC member)

**Background:** On the November Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) meeting, Save Helena Westside group requested a walk audit and a recommendation from NMTAC on the routes to Kessler Elementary. On the December NMTAC meeting, the request was made again to NMTAC, and NMTAC agreed to host a walk audit around Kessler Elementary. NMTAC requested that Lewis and Clark Public Health assist in coordinating an Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk Audit (I2 Walk Audit) at and around Kessler Elementary. Concerns were regarding accessibility and safety.

In this area of town, there are numerous houses, schools (Kessler Elementary, St. Andrew, Pick up for C.R. Anderson), access to trails, and connectivity to downtown. The route considered was all originally located in the County but is now mostly public right-of-way in the City limits.

**Route:** The group started at the Kessler parking lot on the east side of the building at 11:00am. They walked south on Silverette Street to Hauser Boulevard (1.5 blocks), then west on Hauser to Granite Avenue (1 block), and finally North on Granite to Knight Street (2 blocks). (See Figure 1 below for map of the route)



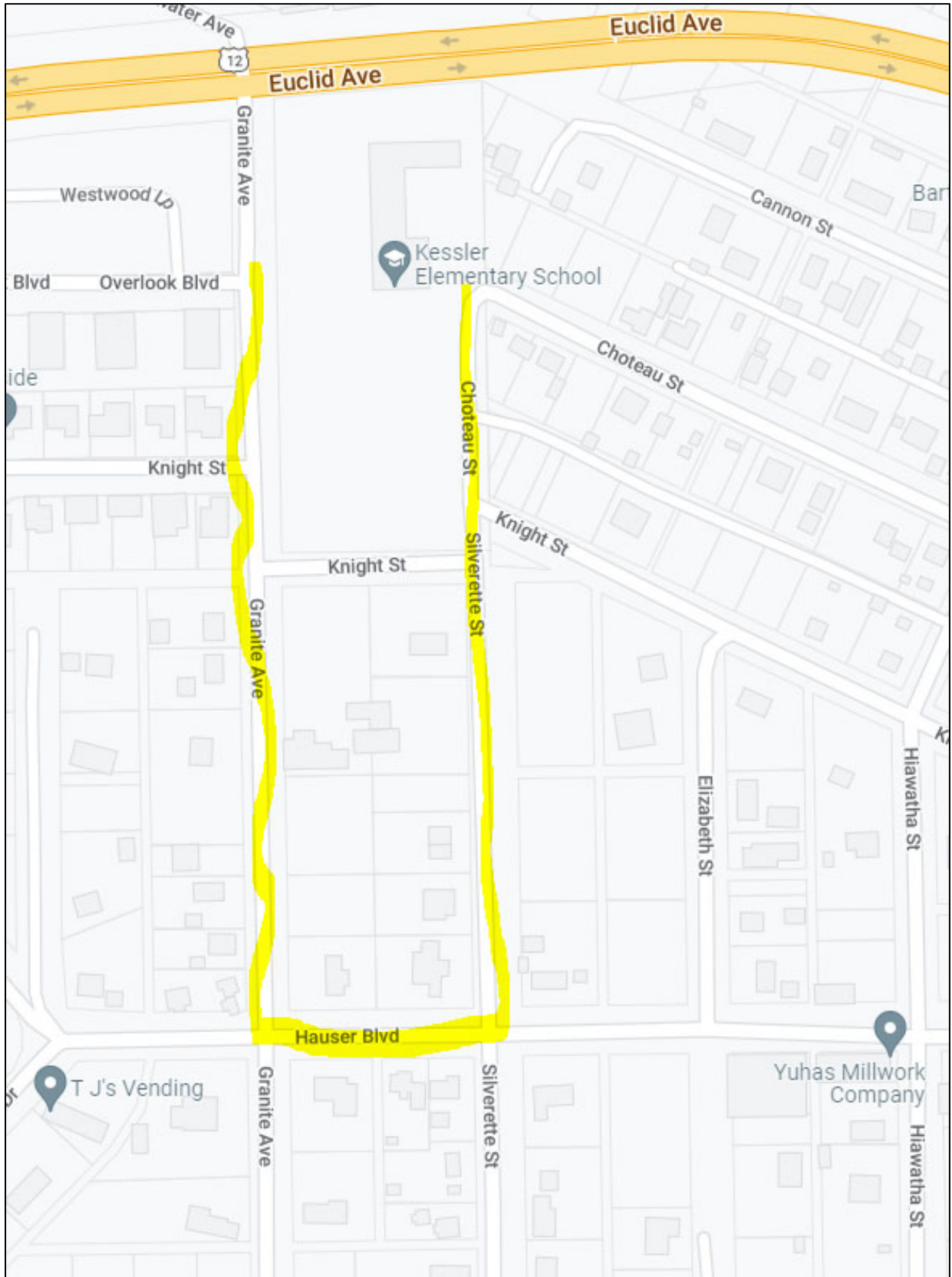


Figure 1

**Observations, questions, and ideas from the I2 Walk Audit are as follows:**

**Stop #1:** Intersection of Choteau Street and Knight Street. At the first stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the first leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Paved street, wide road, stop sign, setback of fence to the school, good shoulder, parking on one side, bike racks.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalks, or lighting make it difficult and unsafe to walk. No speed limit signs or school zone signage visible. No shade or trees. Drop off gets scary with parents trying to cut the line and zip around.

*Ideas:* Add speed limit signage, more school signage, sidewalks, lighting, possibly speedbumps.

**Stop #2:** Intersection of Silverette Street and Hauser Blvd. At the second stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the second leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop signs, access to trails, visibility, speed signage, visible driveways, pretty views, close to St. Andrews.

*Needs Improvement:* Busy and quick moving street. No sidewalks, boulevard, crosswalks, or lighting. Since it is not paved, it turns into an icy/mucky mess.

*Ideas:* Add sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming, paving of the street, and street lighting.

**Stop #3:** Intersection of Hauser Blvd and Granite Ave. At the third stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the third leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop sign for Hauser traffic, speed limit signage, visibility, good views, grassy areas, less ice/better surface, setback in the driveways, bus stop for multimodal transportation, wide street.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, crosswalks, or lighting. No benches or areas of respite. High speedy going down Granite Ave with no traffic control. No safe route to the bus stop nor safe area to wait. House encroachments on City roads. Heavy traffic volume.

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more often. Perform a traffic study focused on traffic calming/slowing. Add sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, speed limit feedback signage.

**Stop #4:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, east of Granite. At the fourth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the fourth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, school signage, sidewalks, crosswalk, paved road, trees, open,

*Needs Improvement:* Connection of sidewalks, more bulb outs, high-speed going down Granite Ave,

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more regularly. Traffic calming/slowing study (maybe speedbumps). Roundabout potentially or more bulb outs.

**Stop #5:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, west of Granite. At the fifth stop the team did not assess a score or. Comments on the fifth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalk, paved road

*Needs Improvement:* Boulevard vegetation block view from entering Granite. Drivers must pull into crosswalk to see oncoming traffic on Granite.

*Ideas:* Trim existing deciduous trees and remove existing evergreen trees in boulevard for better visibility.

**Summary suggestions:**

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. Increase school and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Avenue
4. Add lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette Street
6. Speed study for Granite Avenue
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often

**Next Steps:**

This summary account will be provided to all participants in addition to NMTAC. This will be discussed at the next NMTAC meeting on Tuesday, February 8th at 5:15pm via zoom. NMTAC will then decide on whether to make a recommendation to the City of Helena Commission.

Community members can always make requests to the City on their own through the My Helena App. Or, they can fill out a “Traffic Calming Application Form.” They can email Mark Young, City Transportation Engineer at [myoung@helenamt.gov](mailto:myoung@helenamt.gov) if they have questions on those avenues.

## Appendix A

### Emailed Feedback / Public comments on the Kessler I2 Walk Audit

**From:** John Andrew <[j53andrew@gmail.com](mailto:j53andrew@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 10:16:54 AM MST

**To:** Sarah Sandau <[SSANDAU@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ssandau@lccountymt.gov)>, Wilbur Rehmann <[wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)>, Greg Wirth <[GregWirth@hotmail.com](mailto:GregWirth@hotmail.com)>

**Cc:** Diana Hammer <[diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com](mailto:diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com)>, [patriciabikhcc@gmail.com](mailto:patriciabikhcc@gmail.com), [jrandrew211@gmail.com](mailto:jrandrew211@gmail.com)

**Subject: Re: Walk Audit Report**

Hi Sarah,

I thought your summation of the walk audit was straight forward and succinct so I don't have much to add. I went back Sunday afternoon to check out the Kessler Parking lot without vehicles and people although I'm sure that is not the main focus of the walk audit. Although NMTAC probably would like to recommend connectivity all the way around Kessler School I found myself more concerned about the approach from Choteau and Silverette Streets to the school parking lot which has the most traffic along with buses and no sidewalks entering into the main landing point for students. With the lack of funding I would like to recommend that NMTAC particularly highlight those streets into Kessler School. Thanks for all considerations to this matter.

Best,

John E. Andrew

HCC - District 1

**From:** Ashley Bryson <[ashleya816@hotmail.com](mailto:ashleya816@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** January 10, 2023 at 12:51:51 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** Walkability audit

Dear NMTAC and support staff,

I just wanted to say thank you for the walkability audit recently completed around Kessler school. I live in the area and have two children that attend Kessler school. They both walk to school every day along with a group of children from our neighborhood. Unfortunately, we have many stories about “near misses” and unsafe conditions they have experienced on their way to and from school. The neighborhood around the school has been expanding with many new multi-family homes over the last couple years, bringing with it more traffic and more potentially dangerous conditions for the many children who walk and bike to school daily. There are plans for quite a bit of continued growth. I love this neighborhood, and I want to see it continue to be a great place to raise children, recreate, walk our pets, and enjoy the nearby trail access. I would greatly appreciate any formal recommendations you may be able to make to improve the safety of this neighborhood as it currently stands and as it continues to expand.

Thank you,  
Ashley Bryson  
Resident at 2549 Knight Street

**From:** judy ludwig <[ludwigjudy@gmail.com](mailto:ludwigjudy@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 3:59:00 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit

Chairman Wilbur Raymann

Thanks to you and all of your crew for the walk audit around Kessler Elementary. I appreciate all the work that went into it, especially during the cold.

I hope you encourage improvements for walkability, especially through sidewalks, in this area.

As you probably are aware, the times just before and after school is in session create quite a hazard for the little ones walking to and from Kessler with people dropping off and picking up students. The city is doing a much better job of plowing and sanding on Granite during the winter, but there are still many hazardous conditions. I have noticed that when the snow has been heavy kids are forced to walk more in the middle of the road, with two way traffic trying to dodge them and other cars. Shoulders remain icy and uneven, kids goof around with each other, and slips on the road scoria happen. Sidewalks on Granite and other nearby neighborhood arteries would help insure safer passage for kids and all pedestrians.

Thanks again for all of your efforts, they are appreciated.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

---

**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:50 AM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Helena Westside development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC,

First, I wanted to thank you for taking the time to perform a walking assessment around Kessler school. We really appreciate you taking your time to see our concerns. Our family is a very active family walking, running, and riding bikes all over the west side of Helena and appreciate all you have done to help with this in our city.

I hope that after the walking assessment you can see our concerns with the lack of safe non motorized space there currently is on our main roadways. With the current proposed development and this mass increase in cars this could become very unsafe. Right now there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass and have someone walking on the road on Granite St. Every morning I have to stop in the dark as another car is coming down the hill so a kindergartner can safely walk on the street to school.

Also the Granite St intersection onto Euclid is already unsafe in the mornings and after school but even worse when trying to cross Euclid to reach the centennial trail by foot or bike during 8am or 5pm traffic. Trying to cross five lanes of traffic with children is terrifying and will only become more dangerous with increase in traffic.

Our family would like to safely continue our active lifestyles. This is why we chose to live on the west side. We are not against the development but just want to make sure the development is completed safely and correctly for the neighborhood. I appreciate all the time you have taken to look over all the information.

Thank you  
Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St.

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

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**From:** Colleen <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:18 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We have been residents at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and appreciate NMTAC doing a walkability audit of our neighborhood. Over the past few years we have contacted the city numerous times due to our concerns with speeding traffic. It seems to fall on deaf ears.

We are asking that the results of the audit and any recommendations that NMTAC has shared with the City Commission. The proposed west side Woods subdivision will have a very negative impact on the safety of our neighborhood unless identified issues from the audit are addressed prior to approval of the subdivision.

Our children attended Kessler school in the 90s and our grandchildren are now there, and there has been no improvement in the walk ability to and from school in all these years, in fact now with all the increased traffic it is even more of a danger.

Thank you for what you do to improve non motorized transportation in Helena.

Dan and Colleen Nichols

Sent from my iPad

## Mark Young

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**From:** Eve Byron <evebyron@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Helena Westside walkability

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon.

Thank you for taking the time to tour our little neighborhood to discuss its "walkability."

I live on the corner of Hauser and Granite, and walk the neighborhood often. A couple items stand out in my mind regarding the safety of pedestrians and bikers:

1. The Granite and Hauser intersection would best be served by a roundabout. Traffic flies up and down Granite, but a four-way stop sign at the intersection would make it difficult for drivers in the winter. I envision those traveling downhill wouldn't be able to stop and those traveling uphill might not be able to get started when icy. A roundabout would keep traffic moving. The school would need to move the bus stop from Granite to Hauser, but that's not too difficult. The bus parks on Hauser most mornings when it's arriving at the stops early.
2. If a light is installed at the intersection, I request that it be focused downward in order to maintain the Dark Skies ambiance.
3. Sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks, but only on one side of the road please. This is especially important all along Hauser to the intersection with Henderson. The traffic in the morning is dreadful, and students are having to walk in the streets not just to Kessler but also to CR Anderson and St. Andrews. It's particularly dangerous during the winter, when it's dark in the morning.
4. I have witnessed numerous accidents at Hauser and Joselyn. A stop sign might work well there.
5. It is impossible to cross Highway 12 at certain hours. An overpass would be a great safety investment.
6. While it was outside of your walking tour, Park Avenue has a blind hill, where I always walk on one side of the road so traffic behind me knows I'm there, then switch to the opposite side of the road when I get close to the top of the hill so I can avoid any oncoming traffic. I don't have a solution for this mess, other than to lower the top of the hill to increase the sight-distance.

Thank you again for your interest in our part of the community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 406/422-6601.

Eve Byron



## Mark Young

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**From:** Melanie Symons <msymons321@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:30 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com <jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** NMTAC Kessler School Walkability Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur and Mark

I have been following NMTAC's Kessler School Walkability Audit and have reviewed the final report. Please accept my sincere thanks for conducting this audit in such a timely manner and for taking into consideration the neighborhood's immediate concerns and hopefully the impact of Westside Woods on the area.

I am writing to encourage NMTAC to share the Kessler school audit and related concerns and recommendations to the Helena City Commission. I understand and agree with most of John E Andrew's thoughts regarding the Choteau and Silverette area. However, the traffic on the westside of the school is frankly unmanageable at the start and end of the school day. Sidewalks on at least one side of Granite extending from Knight to Hauser or beyond would improve the safety of school children and our neighborhood.

I am aware of the financial constraints the city faces and appreciate Commissioner Logan's recent editorial regarding the many and varied needs of our community. I am also aware that City's policy is to not annex land until there is sufficient infrastructure to support it. I encourage NMTAC to remind the city that a sound infrastructure, including paved streets and sidewalks should be a condition of approval for the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the safety of Helena's citizens.

*Melanie Symons*

[Msymons321@msn.com](mailto:Msymons321@msn.com)

(406) 431-0720

## Mark Young

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**From:** Peter Larsen <pete.h.larsen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:47 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Non-motorized travel advisory council and Westside Woods development

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioner Rehmann and Mr. Young-

Thank you for taking the time to perform a walk audit around Kessler School. I am writing to encourage you to make a formal recommendation for *significant* traffic safety improvements around Kessler and in the adjoining neighborhoods. We have one daughter who attends school there now and another who will be attending Kessler in the not-too-distant future. My family lives near the intersection of Woodward and Granite. In short, my concerns, which are shared by a significant number of families, include the:

1. Lack of sidewalks running all the way up Granite to Woodward as well as some of the other lateral (East-West) streets
2. Insufficient or non-existent street-lighting along Granite
3. High rate of speed that people drive up and down Granite
4. Misleading traffic estimates collected near the school

As you probably saw, there are no sidewalks that extend all the way up Granite to Woodward and there are only a few streetlights. My daughter used to walk to school with her classmates, but we started to drive her because it is extremely dangerous for them to walk on Granite during the months of the year when the sun comes up late/goes down early. We are also concerned about speeding, especially for traffic coming down the hill. I have personally witnessed some kids that had to jump down into the ditch along Granite when a downhill driver narrowly missed hitting them.

Finally, I was very concerned when I read about the traffic estimates that were collected recently because I believe that these estimates are misleading. I believe the numbers that have been collected significantly under-counted the actual traffic already occurring. I read that one measurement of vehicle traffic was taken during a time of road construction on or near Granite and another measurement was taken when school was not even in session. I can tell you that there is significant congestion on Granite starting at about 7:45am and then again at about 2:45pm. In fact, you cannot find a spot to park within a few blocks if you arrive to the school after about 3pm. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to take a picture and share it with you.

Thank you for all that you are doing to ensure that our community is safe and accessible to other forms of transportation (e.g., walking, biking).

Kind regards,

Peter Larsen

## Mark Young

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**From:** Shawn Whyte <ShawnWhyte@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:54 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting - Kessler walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello to both of you,

I am a longtime Helena west side resident who raised 3 children through Kessler, CRA, and CHS. I would like to thank all the people who participated in the walking assessment around Kessler school. I support all the recommendations that were listed in the report and would like to put emphasis on sidewalks and traffic measures that could help kids cross Hauser as the walk from the neighborhoods south of Hauser to get to Kessler on the north side of Hauser. I hope the City of Helena, the Helena School District, and Sussex Construction are all in alignment and support of protecting the youngest members of our community as the go to and from school every day.

In addition to the suggestions gathered, I would like to request that the NMTAC review the traffic study conducted and attached to the Sussex subdivision proposal. In that subdivision request, there is not access from the new neighborhood directly to highway 12. The property owned by Sussex does have frontage along highway 12, but it will be costly to do the dirt work, grading, and construction of an access point. I do not think the cost of the work should be a factor in determining what the appropriate course of action should be. Please review all the data in the subdivision request and join the west side neighbors in emphasizing the need to pull that traffic off Granite and away from the school by allowing drivers to exit the neighborhood directly to highway 12 using a new feeder road.

Like many others, I am not against the new subdivision, but I do request that the developer be held to a standard that protects children and non-motorized use of our streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Shawn Whyte

## Mark Young

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**From:** Janice Long <janicelong2525@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:03 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Kessler School

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur & Mark:

I would like to thank you for the walk audit for Kessler School- this is such a critical thing to address in keeping our children safe.

I would like to make a formal recommendation request for your help to make the 12 recommendations for improvement around the Kessler School area!!

Thank you so very much for your help in keeping our children safe!!

Sincerely

Janice Long

## Mark Young

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**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:16 PM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit Kessler Elementary

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mark Young  
City Transportation Engineer

Dear Mr. Young:

I understand that the NMTAC is presenting information about the walkability audit near Kessler Elementary School.

The results seem pretty dismal for walkability in the neighborhood, which I feel impacts most directly the young children attending that school and their ability to walk safely to and from Kessler.

I am hoping to see curbed sidewalks, improved visibility at corners, some additional controls at Granite and Euclid, and maybe some speed signs indicating what speed your car is traveling (not opposed to speed bumps either).

The City has really improved their snowplowing and graveling on Granite over the last several years, but kids trudging up and down that street still have to migrate towards the middle of the road during heavier snowstorms, which is a real hazard for the little guys.

Thanks for helping out with safety and walkability of the streets for not only the kids, but for the large number of recreational walkers and hikers using the streets.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

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**From:** David Ulrich <ulrich406@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:27 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Area Walk Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I recently read the Walk Audit report that was done for the Kessler School area. I greatly appreciate the time and focus that has been brought up for the School, Neighborhood and people using the area for walking and getting around.

I know that a lot of areas in Helena have issues and am glad that this area is becoming part of the focus to hopefully make updates/changes as needed. It's also great to see that this is happening while the Westside Woods subdivision proposals are happening because that area will be bringing twice as much or more traffic to this area and become more hazardous to the community walking around the school and neighborhood.

Any input you have in improving the safety for the area is greatly appreciated, and hopefully the input will be heard in conjunction with the Westside Woods Subdivision Application process too.

Thank you again for the effort in keeping the safety of kids, school district employees, parents and families addressed through any processes that affect the area.

David Ulrich  
2530 Knight St  
Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:44 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** joicefranzen@yahoo.com; lowell.chandler@gmail.com; kevin.rechkoff@gmail.com; szerwo@gmail.com; Sarah Sandau; andy.shirtliff@gmail.com; GregWirth@hotmail.com; joelebert54@gmail.com; lucasalanwallace@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Walk audit support  
**Attachments:** I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary 1.3.23.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Happy 2023 Chairman Rehmann and Engineer Young and members of NMTAC,

Please see the attached and know that we fully support all of the recommendations from recent walk audit conducted by NMTAC.

Professionally I have worked with healthy communities and walkability in Montana for 15 years. Several communities across MT have made life changing improvements and reaped the benefits.

Sincerely,

Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd.

Parents of 4 kids who love to walk and ride around town and have utilized Kessler as a playground many times

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

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**From:** THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 5:59 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net  
**Cc:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walk Audit/ Westside

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

NMTAC Members,

We were very pleased to hear about the Walking Audit around Kessler School this past week. We have watched the upper westside grow over the 30+ years we have lived here. It has been a concern, with this growth, that the infrastructure has not kept up in many circumstances. An important start was seen by your group of the basic safety needs for students at Kessler and all pedestrians. Connecting sidewalks, on at the least one side of Granite street plus speed checked due to high volume of traffic on Granite and surrounding roads. Thank you for taking time to do the walking assessment. Our children safely walked to Kessler School growing up and we can see the small children now struggling to walk a few blocks to their school. We see first hand living on the corner of Granite and Flowerree Street. We have seen many houses built north of our home over the years. We are definitely not against growth or access to all the westside has to offer. We strongly believe it would not benefit the area with a large development and growth without the infrastructure concerns being met first hand. As they say, let's not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your time and seeing the many concerns we have for the area.

Mark and Theresa Maleski  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt.



## Mark Young

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**From:** Carolyn Truscott <lv4jsus@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:14 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study and Recommendations

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a concerned resident who lives on Silverette, I would like to thank you for making the walkability study happen.

As I read the results, I would like to add these recommendations:

Summary suggestions:

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Thank you.

Carolyn Truscott

## Mark Young

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**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:53 PM  
**To:** Wilbur Rehman; Franzen Joice; Chandler Lowell; Rechkoff Kevin; szerwo James; Wirth Greg; Wallace Lucas; Ebert Joel; Shirtliff Andy; Sarah Sandau; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Comment for Jan 10th meeting  
**Attachments:** NMTAC Letter Jan 10\_from SHW.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC members,

Please see the attached letter with public comment from the five Save Helena Westside directors regarding the recent Kessler walkability audit and our recommendations.

We appreciate your time and consideration,  
SHW Directors

We are grateful to the Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) and to Lewis and Clark County Public Health for conducting a Walk Audit at Kessler. Reading through the Walk Audit report, there is agreement for the need to improve the area streets to provide safe routes for schools and pedestrians in general.

The current proposal for the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision would result in significant increase in traffic volumes on those very same streets and the current traffic infrastructure is not sufficient to safely service the subdivision as proposed. After full buildout of WSW, Granite is projected to have traffic 3 to 4.9 times the current load<sup>1</sup>. Quiet county roads like Hauser, Park, Stuart, and Flowerree will see traffic volumes increase as much as 10 times their current load<sup>2</sup>.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to avoid annexation of undeveloped land until a plan is in place for adequate infrastructure to serve the new development. Therefore, Save Helena Westside (SHW) again would like NMTAC to consider recommending to City Staff and the City Commission regarding the following infrastructure upgrades as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Direct the majority of new subdivision traffic away from existing streets via a connection to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane and Le Grande Cannon. This will reduce traffic impact around Kessler and on Granite and Hauser, as well as will improve non-motorized access for bikers and others to Fort Harrison and the 10 Mile and Scratch Gravel trail systems.
2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards to accommodate new traffic on existing streets east of the WSW subdivision.** – In conjunction with #1 above, sidewalks and streetlights should be installed on Granite from Kessler school up to Flowerree street, on Hauser from Joslyn to the WSW subdivision, on Stuart and Flowerree from Granite to the WSW subdivision, and on the Hauser/Park Dr corridor leading to the WSW subdivision to encourage safe non-motorized transportation.
3. **Upgrade and add crosswalks, including lights.** – In conjunction with #1 and #2 above, lighted crosswalks, and safety signals should be installed around Kessler school to improve pedestrian safety.

Please note that the current application for the proposed WSW subdivision does not include any additional “complete street” upgrades to area streets beyond what is directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision boundaries, nor does it include any upgrades for pedestrian safety around Kessler School.

SHW and area residents support development that prioritizes public safety. As seen with the project to build sidewalks on Knight St East of CR Anderson, it can take years to secure funding and City support to add sidewalks to existing school routes. Neighborhoods east of Kessler that were annexed into the City in the past few years have not undergone any improvements to pedestrian safety. There is no guarantee of *any* upgrades if the can is kicked down the road. Therefore, it is best to proactively address safety needs up front, as conditions of annexation, prior to the WSW subdivision adding thousands of additional vehicle trips per day.

Thank you for your ongoing advocacy for safety of non-motorized travel within our Helena neighborhoods.

SHW Directors

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<sup>1</sup> WSW TIS reports 584 VPD on Granite currently and 1,726 VPD at full buildout (3.0 times current load). City of Helena Staff Report for Pre-Zone of WSW, however, states that with the proposed zoning, “there is a potential for 2,869 new trips.” The WSW TIS predicts 80% of the new traffic will use Granite, which would result in 2,879 VPD on Granite at full buildout (4.9 times current load).

<sup>2</sup> Flowerree St west of Granite, with 4 homes currently, will be a straight cut-through route to 45 new residences.

## Mark Young

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**From:** Sarah Perry <sarah.3.perry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:59 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; Wilbur Rehmann  
**Subject:** Comments to be sent to the NMTAC for Jan 10th

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the NMTAC,

Thank you for requesting and facilitating the Kessler Walk Audit, with the help of Sarah Sandau! It meant a great deal to area residents and Kessler families to have members of the community take the time to walk our streets, experience what it is like to be a pedestrian, and brainstorm recommended improvements. I support the recommended changes in the report.

In listening to the recordings from a handful of your 2022 meetings, it has been encouraging to hear your council going to great lengths to do what you can to make safety of non-motorized travel around our community a priority. That has been particularly apparent anytime the NMTAC was discussing routes to schools. I know now more than ever that the NMTAC has A LOT of potential projects and recommendations for improvement around town and really, every school in Helena needs pedestrian improvements. I am not trying to say those other projects are ANY less important.

However, the situation around Kessler is unique. The walk audit identified numerous and severe deficiencies. The average scores at each stop were 2.5 or less. For comparison, at the Broadwater school audit, the average scores ranged from 5 to 8.

Even more unique in this case is the fact that the city is being asked to annex nearly 60 acres of NEW land with a major subdivision that will put additional traffic impact on existing streets, ALL of which are proposed to be on routes to school that DO NOT have sidewalks. I am not aware of any other school in the City of Helena that is facing a similar situation.

With annexation on the table, this project and associated recommendations need to be a priority TODAY. As Chairman Rehmann told you all during orientation in the Feb 2022 NMTAC meeting, [Resolution 19549](#), which established the NMTAC, states that one of the duties of the NMTAC is, "advocating for non-motorized facilities in new public and private development projects". Weighing in with your recommendations on how to reduce negative impacts of the proposed subdivision on non-motorized facilities is absolutely in your purview!

In addition to the impact Westside Woods would have on safe walking routes to Kessler and St Andrews School as well as CR and Hawthorne bus routes, the subdivision will also add considerable traffic to existing county roads. Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart are quiet roads with only a handful homes on them. Most of those streets are fairly flat streets for that reason are used by many of the elderly and young children in the neighborhood for recreation and walking. The streets have almost no traffic on them currently and feel safe even without sidewalks. However, the traffic on those streets will change drastically as hundreds of new residents use them as cut through streets to access a major subdivision.

With the previous submission of this subdivision to the City, all blocks of Flowerree, Hauser, and Park Dr west of Granite were recommended city staff to be annexed into the city and upgraded to complete street

standards. And the developer agreed to all those conditions of annexation with their last submission. However, with the new proposal, the developer has not proposed any such upgrades and there is no guarantee new city staff will make the same recommendations. Please, encourage the city to recommend upgrades to Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart to ensure area residents can continue to safely use those roads for non-motorized travel.

My concerns with the proposed development are all safety related. With the right conditions of annexation for safety, I would happily go to the City Commission and advocate FOR the WSW development.

Your recommendation to the City to require the necessary upgrades as conditions of annexation will be in line with the City's own Growth Policy and is a way to ensure the neighborhood and the NMTAC are not having to fight for decades to come to retrofit existing neighborhoods with much needed sidewalks. Let's make sure this is done right from the start!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Perry

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne Pentecost <ajpentecost3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:13 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road, trying to fight for a simple sidewalk, like Mark has been fighting for with CR Anderson. Yes Kessler has a horrible layout and it needs to be fixed but that is not possible right now. These recommendations might be. We can't make everyone happy. It will not be perfect. However we can at least use our voices to advocate for those that can't. Please, at least try and ask.

Anna Jayne Pentecost  
Mother and Certified Emergency Room RN

## Mark Young

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**From:** Matthew Pentecost <mgpentecost@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:21 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC recommendations

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

Matt Pentecost

## Mark Young

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**From:** Anna Jayne <sweetjane33@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:24 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,  
I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

*Annie Howell*



## Mark Young

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**From:** Matt Johnson <mattjohnson311@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:13 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

As a resident of Helena Westside with children starting school at Kessler next year, I want to thank you for conducting the walkability audit. I encourage you to please make formal recommendations to the commission for their review of the Westside Woods development proposal.

After your walk, I'm sure you'll agree, the estimated traffic volume associated with the development will significantly exacerbate conditions that are already unsafe and substandard for kids walking to school, as well as general pedestrian traffic. This area was poorly developed and lacks basic infrastructure for conveying pedestrians.

In addition, Park Drive, Stuart, Floweree, and Hauser to the west of the area walked are designated to convey new subdivision traffic. These streets are dirt and lack infrastructure to accommodate those traffic loads. Significantly unsafe conditions will be created when that vehicle traffic volume is added to current and future pedestrian traffic. These streets and sidewalks need to be developed if this subdivision comes forth.

As a rapidly growing community, we cannot approve projects that will worsen conditions for pedestrian traffic. On the contrary, modern transportation planning encourages providing dedicated routes and safe conditions for pedestrians, to offset our past bias towards vehicular modes of transportation.

We need to take every opportunity to modernize our mistakes of the past for the sake of our future generations.

Thank you for considering the broader picture and considering this opportunity to improve our community.

Best regards,  
Matt Johnson  
2690 Park Dr, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

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**From:** Orpha Smigaj <opiernc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:31 AM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Audit Kessler School area

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



**Orpha Smigaj** <[opiernc@gmail.com](mailto:opiernc@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Young

Thank you for completing the Walk Audit for Kessler School. Kessler is a wonderful school for our neighborhood with many safety concerns for children and parents who attend this school. I appreciate all of the work that is being done to make this neighborhood school safer for our children. I have lived on the corner of Hauser and Silverette for over 30 years. I have witnessed many near miss collisions with children and cars on these streets. Our neighborhood would be made a safer one with installation of paved roads, lighting, signage, sidewalks and crosswalks. With the proposed westside subdivision these issues are going to worsen tenfold. Before and after school pickup and drop off is currently a nightmare and it is only going to get worse with a huge influx of houses in this proposed subdivision. The crosswalk zone on Granite is a very short distance to Highway 12. Cars are backed up; kids dart out in the street and people speed through this area coming off of Highway 12 onto Granite and the crosswalk. There is no more room for more cars, more kids in this area. I am not against development in this area. I am against how big the subdivision is going to be, there are way too many houses proposed for this subdivision. It is going to flood this already congested neighborhood area and school.

Thank you again for the walk audit, I believe the recommendations would greatly improve the safety of our neighborhood and school.

Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Lu Driessen <ldriessen929@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:08 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Public comment NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

Thank you for conducting an audit of the walkability of the area around Kessler School.

Reading the report emphasizes the safety concerns we see, as active members of the neighborhood. Use of the area has increased, as development has grown. We expect that to continue.

Please utilize the audit to establish priorities for improvement and set forth a concrete plan, with an established timeline, to address deficiencies identified.

Helena is looking to create a safe, more walkable community. Given this area is directly adjacent to a well attended school, we ask for expediency in addressing the identified concerns.

Thank you,

Lu Driessen

Scott Harris

2600 Hauser Blvd, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Jim Lund <pjameslund@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:29 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** recent NMTAC Audit walk and report

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your attention to assess the pedestrian situation for the area around Kessler Elementary School. The roads audited are extremely busy during school pick-up and drop off. The lack of sidewalks on several of the main roads, particularly during busy times, is a danger to those that are walking. I am not surprised that in the audit many of the intersections scored just 2.5/10.

There is foot and bicycle traffic that often comes through Granite for walkers, runners, and cyclists that are accessing the numerous trail systems just to the north (Centennial trail, Spring Meadow Lake, Ten-Mile Creek Park). I live in this neighborhood and bike or jog commute to Fort Harrison via Granite to the trail system most days year around. Thank you for your efforts to make this area safe for cyclists and pedestrians.

With warm regards,

Jim Lund  
2610 Knight St  
406-422-8844

From: **Kaiser, Michael -FS** <[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 12:28 PM  
Subject: RE: [External Email]Maps  
To: Sarah Perry <[sarah.3.perry@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.3.perry@gmail.com)>

Sarah,

Here are the results from running some fire behavior modeling for the fuel types found in the south Helena area:

Fuel Model Used – Timber Litter 8 (Long Needle Conifer) and Grass 2 (Low load dry climate grass)

Fuel Moisture – 1 hour (grasses) @ 4%, 10 hour (small sticks) @ 6%, 100 hour (small branches) @ 8%

Slope – I used the average of 35%, some areas are much steeper and some areas are less steep. The steeper the slope the quicker the fire moves.

Winds – 40 mph winds at 20 feet high, which would be about 20 mph at eye level.  
(Winds we experience often in Helena)

The Grass 2 fuel model showed a rate of spread of 176.8 chains per hour. This equates to 2.21 miles/hour. This is about the distance to Ten Mile Creek Estates from the western edge of the Upper West Side of Helena. It also shows a flame length of 10 feet. At this flame length, ground resources and heavy equipment are ineffective and are not able to do direct suppression.

The Timber Litter 8 fuel model showed a rate of spread of 36.4 chains per hour. This equates to about .5 miles/hour. It shows a flame length of 8 feet, which ground resources are ineffective and it is right on the line of whether heavy equipment would be effective or not. Considering most of the timbered areas are steeper than 35%, I would say that heavy equipment would also be ineffective.

Spotting distances are shown to be up to 1 mile for both fuel types. That is significant spotting distance and makes fire suppression very difficult.

These parameters used are typical fire season weather observations experienced multiple times throughout the summer. Due to not be able to do direct ground suppression on these potential fires, aerial resources would be heavily relied upon and indirect tactics would be employed. As we know, aerial resources are unreliable and ineffective when wind speeds hit 40+ mph.

This shows that under the conditions above that the City of Helena Police Department would have less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.

**Michael Kaiser**  
**Fire Management Officer**  
**Forest Service**

**Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, Helena Ranger District**

**p: 406-495-3931**  
**[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)**

2880 Skyway Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

**Caring for the land and serving people**



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Orpha

Last Name

Smigaj

Email

opiernc@gmail.com

Street Address

2326 Hauser Blvd Helena, MT 59

City

Helena

State

Montana

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064653513

Date

02/03/23

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to you today to address my concerns about the Westside Wood Subdivision. My main concerns are:

1. The Subdivision is going to increase traffic patterns through the already congested Granite Street by Kessler School. The traffic patterns there are already overwhelmed during drop off and pick up times at the school. I am concerned children and adults are going to be hit by vehicles in this congested area. If the subdivision is approved with the number of houses and duplexes, they want to put it is going to make this extremely unsafe.
2. No sidewalks or lighting in the area makes it extremely unsafe as well. Right now, it is a huge concern. I am afraid if this subdivision is approved it is going to make an already unsafe area even more dangerous.
3. Fire risk is a huge concern of mine. I am worried without another street to exit from this subdivision it is going to make it extremely difficult for the people in these neighborhoods to escape from a wildland fire. There are not sufficient escape routes planned for this neighborhood and the results will be devastating if there is not an extra street exit planned for this area. There are numerous cul de sacs planned for this subdivision making this a nightmare situation for everyone involved, people, firefighters, ambulance, police, etc. to access and escape this are in the event of a wildland fire.
4. Sewer and water availability to this neighborhood and the surrounding neighborhood is also another concern of mine. Our current system can barely keep up for the demand for water and sewer in our area. My home is in phase 3 of the city's plan to establish water and sewer in my neighborhood. The city has told us they are still another three years away for these services to be established and that there is a concern for the city to handle the water and sewer demands of our area. This new subdivision is going to add another 160 plus homes to an already overwhelmed system. I am concerned this neighborhood is going to increase the demand for water and sewer in an already overwhelmed system.

Thank you for listening to our concerns, we appreciate all of your hard work.  
Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj  
2326 Hauser Blvd  
Helena, MT 59601

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

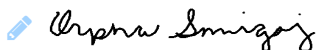
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature







## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Craig

Last Name

Spencer

Email

craig.spencer@augie.edu

Street Address

170 Driftwood Drive

City

Bigfork

State

MT

Zip Code

59911

Phone

6059515339

Date

February 3, 2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to voice my opposition to certain aspects of the Westside Woods subdivision as proposed. I am especially concerned about increased traffic congestion on Granite Avenue, for two reasons:

1. Safety of school children attending Kessler school. I am a grandparent of 3 Kessler students. When dropping off/picking up kids, I have found Granite Avenue by Kessler school to be very congested with cars/kids/families already. If this large subdivision is added above Kessler school, I am concerned about the safety of the school children given the increased traffic and congestion around the school at peak hours. This concern would be greatly alleviated if a second exit point was created for the new subdivision onto Highway 12, to the west of Granite Avenue, along with the addition of more sidewalks.

2. Safety in the event of a forest fire evacuation. In a similar way, I am concerned about having only one exit point from this area in the event of a forest fire evacuation. I am a scientist and have studied fire behavior in NW Montana for many years. I have seen wildfires move very quickly through habitat and terrain similar to the steep hillside, ponderosa pine forest on Mt Helena that borders the existing and proposed subdivision. I was in Polebridge, Montana in September of 1988 when the evacuation order was given as large Red Bench fire bore down on us. It was chaos for a short time, even though not that many people/vehicles were involved. If a similar fire were to threaten Mt Helena and this subdivision, I can envision chaos and safety issues at the single exit point on Granite Avenue by Kessler school with hundreds of residents trying to flee, at the same time as firefighters with large vehicles were trying to enter.

I urge the powers at be to require that a second exit point be created onto Highway 12. My safety concerns would be alleviated with a second exit along with the addition of more sidewalks. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

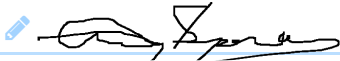
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Melanie

Last Name

Symons

Email

msymons321@msn.com

Street Address

2679 Knight St

City

Helena

State

State

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064310720

Date

February 3, 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I support the comments provided by Save Helena Westside on February 2, 2023. In particular I am very supportive of efforts to provide and encourage the use of a westside access. I live on the corner of Knight and Hauser and will see significant increase in the traffic at my intersection. I have lived here 7 years and know of one 2-car accident at my intersection in that time. A car landed in my front yard just a few hours after my grandsons had been riding scooters on the sidewalks adjoining the intersection. At last count, there were 24 children living on Knight between Hauser and Granite. They spend a lot of time outdoors riding bikes, skating, throwing balls, etc. It would be beneficial to the neighborhood and in the best interest of the public health and safety to redirect as much traffic as possible either south on Hauser or west to Park Lane. Thank you for your consideration.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



**From:** [Liz Ulrich](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:05:43 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Consolidated Parks Board Members,

**To promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

The park land dedication currently proposed by the developers of the Westside Woods subdivision doesn't meet the goals identified in the Consolidated Parks Board mission statement. In fact, it does the opposite, rather than developing parks, recreation, trails, and open space, it takes them away. As many in the Helena area are consumed with quickly increasing housing, your job is: **to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

My first choice would be to not have this area developed at all, let's keep open spaces open! In addition, I hope the Consolidated Parks Board uses the option of "cash in lieu" sparingly in their decisions, this is an easy-out for developers that will earn millions of dollars from these subdivisions. But, understanding that development is going to happen whether I like it or not, I recommend the Consolidated Parks Board consider Option #1: reject park land dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.

I appreciate your time and commitment to the Helena area. Parks, trails, and open spaces are what make Helena and Lewis & Clark County an amazing place to live.

Thank you,  
Liz Ulrich  
406-690-4734  
2530 Knight Street  
Helena, MT 59601

From: **Kaiser, Michael -FS** <[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 12:28 PM  
Subject: RE: [External Email]Maps  
To: Sarah Perry <[sarah.3.perry@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.3.perry@gmail.com)>

Sarah,

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(Winds we experience often in Helena)

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This shows that under the conditions above that the City of Helena Police Department would have less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.

**Michael Kaiser**  
**Fire Management Officer**  
**Forest Service**

**Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, Helena Ranger District**

**p: 406-495-3931**  
**[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)**

2880 Skyway Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

**Caring for the land and serving people**



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Shawn

Last Name

Whyte

Email

Street Address

2030 Switchgrass Court

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-459-0795

Date

1/24/2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

It would be great for the city to evaluate the land that is being targeted for open space and/or park land in large subdivisions. Currently, the Westside Woods proposal has a significant amount of land being identified as park land that is steep and will be very hard for the city to maintain. It is not usable land and seems more like dumping a problem onto the city to make them clean it up with taxpayer money.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AM', is written on a light blue horizontal line. A small blue pencil icon is positioned to the left of the signature.

# STAFF REPORT

## Westside Woods Major Phased Subdivision

### *Annexation*

*Case# ANXP-2209-002*

Christopher J. Brink, AICP  
*Director*

Community Development Department  
316 North Park Avenue, Room 445  
Helena, Montana 59623





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## Section 1 - Project Overview

The applicant, Sussex Development, has requested annexation into the City of Helena and preliminary plat review. The property described as “the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312” is a 58.85-acre site approximately 600 feet west of the intersection of Granite Avenue and Hauser Boulevard.

Pre-zoning of the subject properties, to R-2 and R-3, was approved by 1<sup>st</sup> pass of an ordinance of the City Commission on January 24, 2022. Final pass of the pre-zone ordinance was TABLED on April 25, 2022 and will need to be moved from the table and acted on. The City Commission will then hear the 2<sup>nd</sup> pass of the pre-zone ordinance approximately 30 calendar days following action on the Intent to Annex and Preliminary Plat.

The proposal calls for the annexation of the entire 58.85 acres, the creation of a total of 100 lots, comprised of 92 lots intended for single family development, 4 lots intended for multifamily construction with 80 condominium units, and 4 open space lots. This will be developed over 4 phases according to the schedule set by the developer with phase 4 intending to be final platted in late 2029.

The proposed parkland dedication of approximately 13.410 acres is scheduled to be dedicated in smaller tracts in each of the 4 anticipated phases.

The applicant is also the owner of 100% of the land within the annexation area and as such this process will not require an election of the City. (*See Mont. Code Ann. § 7-2-4601*)

Annexation action relative to the petition to annex the subject tracts will result in adjacent and nearby private parcels and associated rights-of-way in becoming wholly surrounded by the City of Helena. It is not the intention for the action on the subject annexation petition to impact (annexation) any of the properties that may now be surrounded by the City.

## Section 2 - Staff Recommendation

City staff recommends the project be annexed into the City and the conditions of annexation in this report be implemented prior to final annexation and final plat approval. Formally, the recommendation is to:

Approve a Resolution of Intention to Annex property described as “the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312 and adjacent rights of way onto the City of Helena, Montana and establish conditions for annexation.

## Section 3 - General Information

Application Date:	September 16, 2022
Meeting Dates:	City Commission – March 13, 2023
Applicant:	Sussex Development, Inc. 3060 Cabernet Drive #4 Helena, MT 59601
Property Owner:	Sussex Development, Inc. 3060 Cabernet Drive #4 Helena, MT 59601
Representative:	Jeremy Fadness WWC Engineering 1275 Maple Drive, Suite F Helena, MT 59601
Legal Description:	The SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312
General location:	600 feet west of the intersection of Granite Avenue and Hauser Boulevard in Lewis and Clark County, Montana.
Present Land Use:	Vacant
Adjacent Land Uses:	North: Residential East: Residential West: Residential South: City of Helena Open Space
Adjacent zoning:	North: R3 & R2 (Residential) East: Urban Residential Mixed Use (County), Upper West Side #9 (County) South: Rural Residential Mixed Use (County), City Open Lands West: Urban Residential Mixed Use (County)

Current zoning: Pre-Zoned R-2 and R-3 (Ordinance 1<sup>st</sup> Pass 1/24/2022)  
(Ordinance Final Pass TABLED 4/25/2022; will be considered for final pass approximately 30 calendar days post Annexation and Preliminary Plat action)  
Urban Residential Mixed Use (County)

Tract/Property Size: Approximately 58.85 total acres.

2019 Growth Policy  
Land Use Designation: Urban – Includes predominantly moderate to high density residential uses; may include public uses such as schools, churches, and open lands such as parks; and occasional commercial uses that serve the immediate area or are relatively small and low density. Within the County, it includes areas closer to the City; areas with few development constraints; areas that may be currently developed or could be redeveloped at higher densities; and may include a variety of uses including commercial and light industry.

Within Urban  
Standards Boundary: Yes

## Section 4 - Public Comment

As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, there have been over 50 comments received regarding the proposed subdivision and annexation. Staff began receiving comments prior to an official application being submitted and/or deemed complete. Comments received prior to staff application review and the determination of a sufficient application, have been kept as part of the overall case record and file but are not attached here, as there was no official, sufficient application upon which to comment at the time. All public comments received after the application had been deemed sufficient and in general review are attached. Any comments received during and after the hearing conducted by the Consolidated Planning Board will be attached.



## Section 5 – Annexation Analysis

The area of the Westside Major Phased Subdivision is within the Urban Standards Boundary, which is identified in the 2019 Growth Policy as locations where the city can potentially and more easily provide essential services like water and wastewater infrastructure and as areas ideal for growth and annexation. This subject property will utilize city water and wastewater services for future development.

The route of annexation will be via Hauser Boulevard, Park Drive, and Flowerree Street for all phases. This property is only adjacent to city limits on the north side and there is no legal or physical access. The route of annexation must be built to City standards. In accordance with State law, all adjacent rights of way that are not currently annexed into the City will be annexed when the property is annexed. These include Hauser Boulevard and Park Drive. This ensures that all Phases will have access to a public right of way that is fully improved in accordance with the City Engineering Standards. Together, the above right of way sections represent the route of annexation for this subdivision. As such, it is important for these roadways to be improved to city standards for vehicles, pedestrians, and emergency services to be able to access this development.

The applicant has submitted a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) as part of the preliminary platting process that shows approximately 1,407 new vehicle trips per day from this development at full buildout. There is potential for upwards of 2,800 new vehicle trips per day based on allowed uses for the R-2 and R-3 zone districts. It is estimated by the submitted TIS that over 80% of these new trips will end up at the Granite Avenue and State Highway 12 intersection. The intersection is currently not signalized, and it is not likely that a traffic signal will become warranted due to the construction of the Westside Woods development.

As requested by the City of Helena, a study was performed at the intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue to determine if this intersection meets signalization warrants now or in the future. The study was based on traffic data collected in September 2022 by ATS and information from the traffic impact study. The analysis concluded that based on the traffic data collected for this project, traffic signal warrants are not currently met at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Granite Street.

There are several other issues relating to increased traffic on the transportation network that serves the westside of the City. The roadways directly adjacent to the subdivision site are not built to City Engineering Standards and without facilities for pedestrians or stormwater conveyance. Roads that are constructed to city standards provide several functions. One is to convey pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles in a safe and efficient manner. Another is to convey stormwater to various stormwater facilities throughout the city, prevent flooding of private property and environmental degradation. City staff is recommending the following annexation conditions to mitigate these issues:

- *The entire Park Drive / Hauser Boulevard corridor (north/south) must be annexed into the city and built to City Engineering Standards for a local road.*

Requiring Park Drive and Hauser Boulevard to be improved to City standards achieves several goals that will benefit the west side and its residents. Boulevard sidewalks separating pedestrians from vehicles, will reduce the likelihood of conflicts improving safety and efficiency of transportation for residents of all ages. A paved roadway will provide emergency services

more reliable access in the case of emergency. Improving the right of way surface with paving, curbs and gutters will also aid in storm water drainage and water quality.

- *Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue (east/west) must be annexed into the city and built to City Engineering Standards for a local road.*

This section of roadway is a key link from this new neighborhood to the city at large. Hauser Boulevard between Granite Avenue and Park Drive provides the most direct and efficient route of ingress and egress from the new subdivision in addition to serving as a potential route of access to Kessler School for students. With the estimated addition of at least 70 new students to the area, this link, and its improvements become even more important. The Traffic Impact Study submitted with the preliminary plat application assumes that 80% of new traffic generated from this proposed development will utilize this route to access Hwy 12. The major collector classification is in line with the 2014 Greater Helena Area Long Range Transportation Plan.

- *Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street must be improved to City Engineering Standards for a Major Collector. (Matching the existing asphalt section of Granite Avenue north of Knight Street and include boulevard sidewalks on both sides of the roadway).*

The 2014 Greater Helena Area Long Range Transportation Plan Update identifies this section of Granite Avenue as a Major Collector. Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street is an important link in the transportation network for the immediate area. Currently the roadway is paved but has no pedestrian facilities. This link becomes more important with the influx of new residents and increased non-motorized travel to access area amenities.

- *Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue must be annexed into the City and built to City Engineering Standards for a local road.*

Flowerree Street will continue on the subject property to provide access to approximately 50 residential units. Flowerree Street currently is an unimproved county road. By improving Flowerree Street to city standards, safe and reliable access is ensured for emergency services and residents. This route would potentially serve as another vehicle and pedestrian route to access Kessler School for students and parents.

- *Park Drive and Woodward Avenue must be connected, and the intersection constructed to City Engineering Standards for complete streets.*

This intersection will complete and connect two City of Helena rights of way and as such needs to be built to City Engineering Standards complete with ADA ramps, curb & gutter, sidewalks, and an approved surface. Connectivity in this location provides access for westside residents to better access area trails and open space and offer more transportation alternatives and avenues. Ideally having more transportation options will spread out trips and ease congestion.

- *The applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks on Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Flowerree Street.*

Flowerree Street could serve the subject property as a means of primary access to upwards of 50 residences. In order to properly serve those future residences with safe and reliable access to their properties, complete streets need to be implemented. This ROW could also serve as a

means of access to Kessler School for area children. Constructing Granite Avenue with complete streets features to this point will provide that access and allow all westside residents safe access to area amenities and their properties.

The property, if annexed, would be served by City of Helena Police, Fire and Solid Waste services. Both Helena Police and Fire services indicated their ability to serve the property and any subsequent development and that their response times would vary based on call volume and call priority.

This property, once developed, will add wastewater collector system loads decreasing the available capacity of the treatment system. Per the City Engineering Standard 3.4.1 once a wastewater main reaches 75% capacity it must be upgraded by the developer. Wastewater mains that are at or exceed 75% capacity have a greater likelihood of backing up causing impacts to downstream users. For the city to protect the integrity of the overall wastewater system mains must be upsized once they reach that 75% capacity threshold. City Public Works staff analysis concluded that threshold is likely to be met.

Development on site will also add users to the water system, reducing the city's overall capacity. This project lies in the Malben High, Malben Low, and Valley pressure zones which has approximately 1.3 mil to 1.4 mil gallons of available finished water storage. Due to its size and potential impacts on the water distribution system there may be a possibility that additional storage facilities will be required to serve the proposed development extension.

## Section 6 - Growth Policy Analysis

The 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy identifies this general area of the City of Helena ("West End") as being best suited for an urban style of development. According to the Growth Policy, Chapter 3, *"Individual West end properties have suffered from aging or failing septic systems; elevated levels of nitrates in well-water test samples; lack of storm drainage, poorly constructed streets, and limited opportunities for pedestrian access."* The proposed development provides opportunities to address issues that have affected the west side relative to water quality and transportation infrastructure. The Future Land Use Map identifies this same general area as Mixed Use, Suburban, and Urban. Urban is the designation for the property being considered for development.

The growth policy defines "Urban" as *"...moderate to high-density residential uses and may include public uses such as schools, churches, and open lands and occasional commercial uses that serve the immediate area or are relatively small and low-intensity."*

The overriding theme of the 2019 Growth Policy Update is for the City of Helena to grow around urban centers which promote compact development in areas and clearly defined locations to be identified with neighborhood plans. These urban centers are meant to be complimentary and supportive of existing neighborhoods and in some cases multiple existing neighborhoods. As such these centers are more appropriately located along major transportation routes with good ingress and egress options for all users.

The subject property is not ideally suited for the most dense and intense set of uses or users and would be most appropriately utilized as a residential neighborhood. The R-2 and R-3 zone district designations and with the subject property's proximity to existing City limits and existing

infrastructure, Growth Policy goals relating to the provision of quality housing and its proximity to city services are being met. Building housing closer to city services could help reduce sprawl in the Helena Valley and lessen development pressures on wildlife habitats and open space.

This project and its components will be built to city standards for water, wastewater, and transportation, providing quality infrastructure and ensuring the provision of services to residents of the west side. Currently there are very few safe options for pedestrians to access area amenities. With the improvement of the road network to complete streets standards access and safety for all modes of travel will greatly increase.

## Section 7 - Staff Recommendation

City staff recommends the project be annexed into the City and the conditions of annexation in this report be implemented prior to final annexation and final plat approval. Formally, the recommendation is to:

Approve a Resolution of Intention to Annex property described as “the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 23, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M., Lewis and Clark County, Montana. Together with a tract of land being Portion A, located in Block 307 of the Bellview Addition as shown on the Amended Plat filed under Document # 3310725. Excepting therefrom COS filed under Document # 462306 -T, and Deed of Highway Right of Way recorded in Book 241 of Deeds, Page 177 and Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 9 of Highland Park in Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, P.M.M, in Lewis and Clark County Montana as shown on the Retracement filed under Document # 3339312 and adjacent rights of way onto the City of Helena, Montana and establish conditions for annexation.

### **Annexation Conditions:**

Infrastructure: The property owner must install all infrastructure improvements required by the City of Helena, to City standards, or enter into a development agreement acceptable to the City that defines responsibility for installation or deferment of the improvements including, but not limited to,

1. With Phase 1 of project development, the entire length of Hauser Boulevard from Granite Avenue to the Overlook Subdivision must be annexed into the city and constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks.
2. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to major collector standards on Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street.
3. With Phase 1 of project development, the applicant shall coordinate with the City to install traffic calming mitigation measures at the intersection of Hauser Boulevard and Granite Avenue, such as a compact roundabout.
4. With Phase 3 of project development, Park Drive from Woodward Avenue to Hauser Boulevard must be annexed into the city and constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks.
5. With Phase 3 of project development, Park Drive and Woodward Avenue must be connected, and the intersection constructed to City Engineering Standards for complete streets.

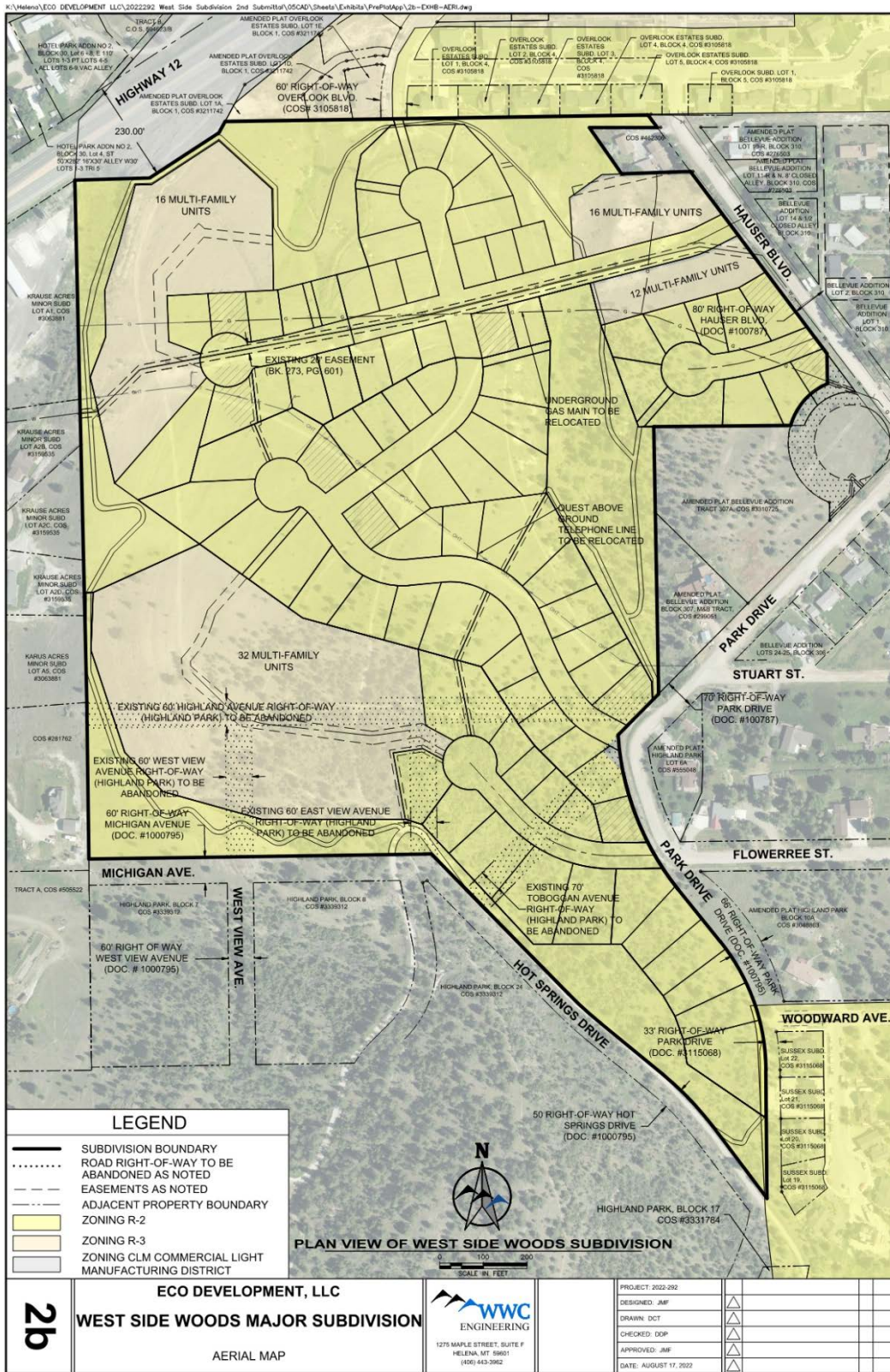
6. With Phase 4 of project development, the applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to minor collector standards on Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Hauser Boulevard.
7. With Phase 4 of project development, Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue must be annexed into the city and built to City Engineering Standards for a local road including curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks.
8. During each phase of project development, the applicant must submit an update to their Traffic Impact Study, including signal warrant analysis and supporting documentation during buildout prior to final annexation of each phase of development. New counts must be conducted during midweek while school is in session. Updated TIS should also clarify vehicle crash types and identify any safety mitigation strategies.
9. Review of New Construction: The property owner must submit plans for review by the City of Helena for compliance with City infrastructure, zoning, and other Code requirements, provide proof of compliance with all building and fire codes for all new construction or remodels subsequent to the adoption of this resolution and prior to annexation of the property, and pay all fees for such reviews in the same manner and on the same basis as do owners of properties already in the City.
10. Taxes and Assessments: Taxes and assessments must be paid and current at the time of filing the Resolution of Annexation.
11. Notice of Special Districts: The property owner must waive the right to notification and protest and consent to the alteration of boundaries of Urban Forest Maintenance District and Landfill Monitoring District in order to include the Property prior to annexation pursuant to 7- 11-1023, MCA.
12. Final Plat: The final plat of each phase of the Westside Major Phased Subdivision must be submitted to the City Commission for approval prior to annexation.
13. Completion of Conditions: These annexation conditions must be completed prior to the end of the period during which the preliminary plat approval is in force including any agreement extending the preliminary plat approval period. If the conditions are not completed within that time frame, the City is under no obligation to annex the property and may discontinue any City services to the property, including water and sewer service.





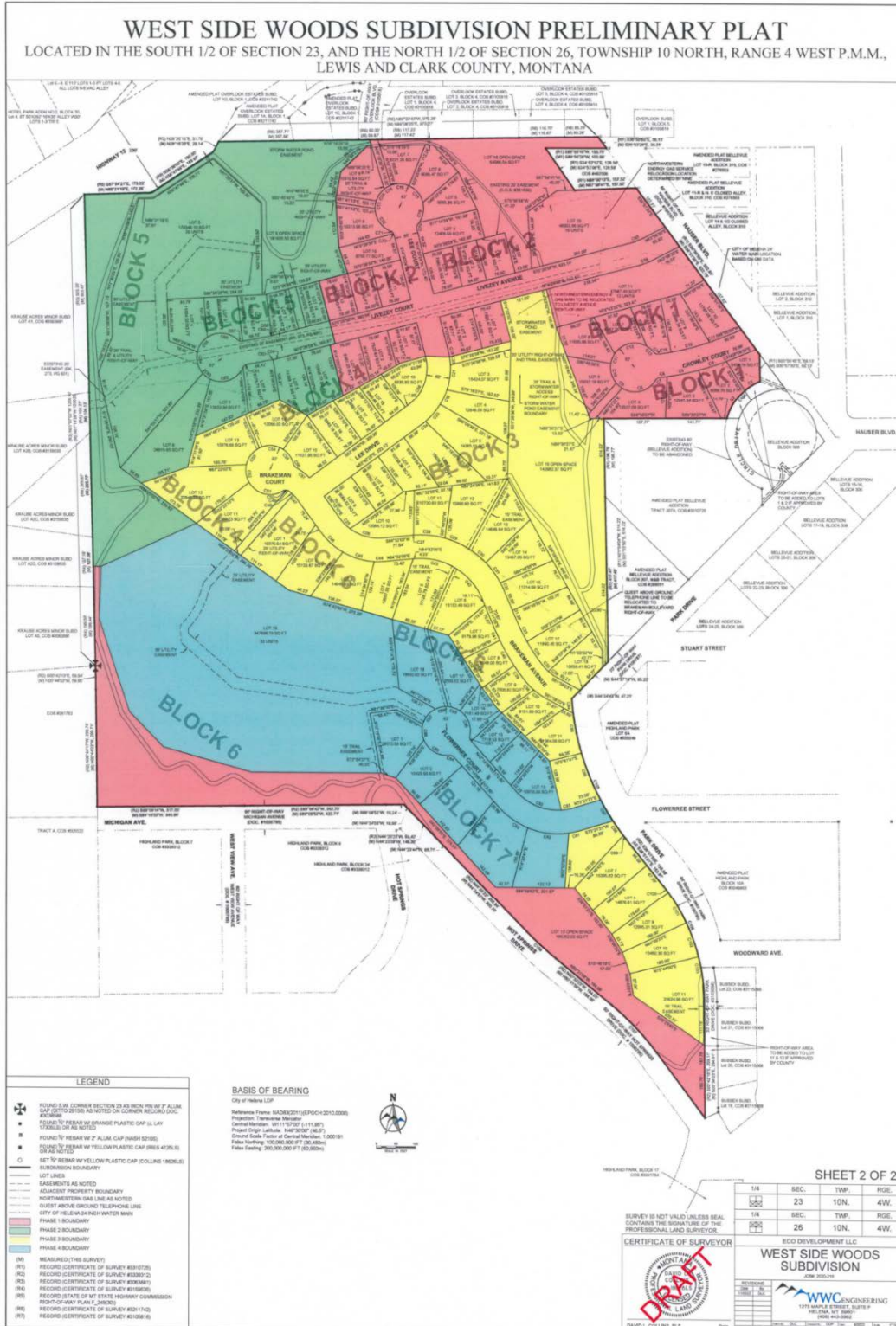


Vicinity Map





Preliminary Plat





## Appendix B – Comments

**Internal/City Department  
General Review Comments**

Jamie Clark

1. Water – Cross Town Connector Main - The existing City of Helena 24-inch diameter steel water main crossing the proposed subdivision, known as the cross-town connector, must be kept at its current burial configuration, and kept so that it is no shallower than 6.5 feet below ground surface (BGS) and no deeper than 7.5 feet BGS and its current alignment must be maintained. No additional fill shall be placed on top of its current alignment that will put it greater than 7.5 feet BGS. No cut shall occur on top of its current alignment that will put it less than 6.5 feet BGS. Its future accessibility for maintenance, repair and replacement must be ensured in perpetuity without undue impacts to private property/residences, water, sewer and/or transportation infrastructure.

2. Water – Cross Town Connector Main - The City makes no claims or assertions as to the condition or overall integrity of the Cross Town Connector main and any damage or adverse impacts to this main or its appurtenances as a result of the proposed development shall be the sole responsibility of the developer.

3. Water – Hauser Boulevard 10 Inch Water Main - The existing ten-inch water main proposed for multiple connections to the proposed subdivision located on Hauser Boulevard is approximately 123 years in age and currently has no known connections. The City makes no claims or assertions as to the condition or overall integrity of this main. The developer shall connect to this main at their own risk and shall mitigate, repair, replace and remedy any damage and/or impact(s) to this water main and any associated infrastructure and residences/private property as a result of their development of the subdivision, disturbance and/or installation of connection(s) to this main. This includes having City personnel tap and or install connections to this main.

4. Sanitary Sewer – Downstream Sanitary Sewer Capacity - The wastewater capacity analysis presented in the development PER does not use a minimum Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.013$  as required by the City of Helena Engineering Standards Section 3.4.1. When the reviewer ran the capacity analysis using the submitted numbers from the PER and the Manning coefficient as per City standards, it was found that 74-75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity post development.

For the proposed subdivision Phase I design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 74 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 28 mains at 50-60%, and 46 at 61-75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase II design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 74 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 25 mains at 50-60%, 48 at 61-75% capacity, and 1 main at over 75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase III design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50%

capacity, with 23 mains at 50-60%, 39 at 61-75% capacity, and 13 mains at over 75% capacity.

For the proposed subdivision Phase IV design flows presented in the PER (which could be low, due to flows measured during the COVID pandemic) and using a Manning coefficient of  $n = 0.13$  as per City Design Standards, it was found that 75 downstream sewer mains exceeded 50% capacity, with 20 mains at 50-60%, 38 at 61-75% capacity, and 17 mains at over 75% capacity.

A figure showing the impacted downstream sanitary sewer mains believed to be exceeding 50% capacity as per preliminary calculations for each of the proposed subdivision phases has been included.

The wastewater capacity analysis in the PER bases its flow assumptions on sewer flow readings taken during the COVID pandemic, when the schools and businesses were closed and much of the non-residential uses within the City were not contributing to wastewater flows. The flow numbers presented are not indicative of typical flows. The final design should be engineered/based on up to date and non-pandemic sanitary sewer flows. Calculations based on information presented in the PER for the proposed subdivision indicate that significant downstream impacts to the sanitary sewer collection system are likely to be expected because of the proposed subdivision.

The developer of the proposed subdivision will need to demonstrate and ensure that adequate downstream sanitary sewer collection system capacity exists within the existing City of Helena sanitary sewer system, upsize existing downstream sewer segments impacted by the proposed development as per City of Helena Engineering Standards Section 3.4.1 and/or mitigate potential impacts to the existing City of Helena Sanitary Sewer Collection System.

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Jamie Clark

4. Water - Water Storage in the Malben High/Low/ Valley pressure zones will need to be analyzed as part of the infrastructure design of this subdivision. Finished water storage may be required to be constructed for a development of this size.

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PUBLIC  
WORKS

## General

## Findings of Fact:

1. The parcel of land under review is proposing a four-phase 59 acre development consisting of 92 single-family residential lots, 3 multifamily lots with 80 condo units and 5 open space lots.
2. The main access for the subdivision is off existing Hauser Boulevard which is currently a dirt road. Hauser Boulevard is classified as a Major collector. It is a thru street and funnels to Granite Street which is also a Major Collector.
3. The proposed subdivision is bordered by Highway 12, several residential areas and City of Helena Open Space.
4. Trash – The solid waste pickup sites are shown in the Preliminary Engineering Report. There are trash pickups on private streets, City Solid Waste will not pickup trash on private streets.
5. A project of this magnitude and including steep cut and fill slopes, and steep building sites seems to warrant a geotechnical report or slope stability analysis, and this was not found in the submittal.
6. There is an emergency access road proposed to provide ingress and egress, this road must be developed and maintained throughout the building of the subdivision.

## Recommended Conditions:

## General:

1. Any new infrastructure must comply with Helena City Code and be reviewed by The Engineering Division. Review will be based on the MPWSS and the 2013 City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards.
2. All development should adhere to and follow guidance of The City of Helena's Master Plans regarding sanitary sewer, water, storm water, and streets.
3. Engineered designs, plans and specifications for water, sewer, and storm drainage to serve the development requires further approval by Public Works Department prior to any construction of any facilities intended for City ownership.

## Water

## Findings of Fact:

1. There is a 24" steel water main on the north side of the proposed development. The steel main is the Cross-Town Connector that supplies water from Ten Mile water treatment plant to the residents of Helena. No connections will be allowed to this main.
2. There is a 10-inch water main located to the east of the development running north west down Hauser Boulevard. The main was installed in 1898 and is made of cast iron the approximate length is 890 feet, the condition is unknown.
3. Water pressures as within the proposed subdivision are excessively high as presented in the PER. Pressure reducing systems are typically required for any areas that exceed 120 psi system pressures.

## Recommended Conditions:

## Water:

1. The Cross-Town Connector shall not have cover exceeding 6.5 feet. This is to ensure when the main needs to be replaced or maintained it can be done safely within right of way.
2. Water main will need to be extended through the entire subdivision at full build out. Every lot must have physical access adjacent to a water main.
3. Please modify the existing proposed water distribution system to keep system pressures between 30 and 120 psi.

## Sewer

## Findings of Fact:

1. There is an 8-inch sewer main adjacent to the proposed project site located in Hauser Boulevard to the east of the proposed development. This sewer main dumps into the sewer main going north down Granite Street.
2. There is an 8-inch sewer main adjacent to the proposed project site located in Hauser Boulevard to the north of the proposed development.

This sewer main flows east and dumps into the Granite Street sewer main and flows north.

3. The Granite Street sewer main continues north across Euclid Avenue and continues to flow around Spring Meadow Lake, across agricultural land and then down Brady Street. The Design Report for the proposed subdivision has flow meter data from the sewer main in Brady Street. The report cites the highest flow they monitored occurred in manhole 531-6 (on Brady Street) and was 492.45 gallons per minute. The design report states that the data was taken in the fall of 2020.

4. Wastewater Capacity Analysis – The wastewater capacity analysis in the PER bases its flow assumptions on sewer flow readings taken during the COVID pandemic, when the schools and businesses were closed and much of the non-residential uses within the City were not contributing to wastewater flows. This reviewer believes that these flow numbers are not indicative of typical flows.

#### Recommended Conditions:

##### Sewer:

1. Sewer main will need to be extended through the entire subdivision at full build out. Every lot must have physical access adjacent to a sewer main.
2. The final design should be engineered/based on up to date and non-pandemic sanitary sewer flows.
3. Sewer Design Report should adhere to City of Helena Engineering Standards for Sewer Main Design section 3.4.1-3.4.5 when determining capacity.

##### Storm

#### Findings of Fact:

1. There are ephemeral drainage channels that run through the subject property. The proposed development plans to provide two storm water detention ponds for storm water runoff control and water quality treatment within these existing drainage channels. No perennial streams are located within the subject property.
2. Two storm water detention ponds will control runoff rates to or below the pre-existing (historic) rates for storms up to the 100-year event and convey those discharges in a storm pipe to the Overlook Estates storm water detention pond.
3. The storm pipe conveying discharges from the storm water detention ponds to the Overlook Estates Detention Pond is located off the West Side Subdivision property and through existing utility easements and right-of-way in the Overlook Estates Subdivision.
4. Storm water drainage basin SWS A is 26.5 acres, planned for development, and routed to storm water pond A.
5. Storm water drainage basin SWS B1 and B2 is 267.7 acres, planned for development, and routed to storm water pond B.

#### Recommended Conditions:

##### Storm:

The West Side Subdivision's Preliminary Engineering Report, Section 4.0 Storm Drainage shows preliminary plan layout and routing of the storm water system which appears to generally be able to conform to the City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards, however, additional storm water design modifications are necessary for final design which will cause alterations to the layout and configurations of the storm water facilities in order to conform to the City of Helena Engineering and Design Standards.

General comments on the Preliminary Engineering Report, Section 4.0 Storm Drainage to be incorporated into the final design are as follows:

1. Show storm drainage easement on the drainage report exhibits and make all drainage easement accessible from right-of-way.
2. Utilize the Montana Post Construction Storm Water BMP Design Guidance Manual for the design of the storm water ponds, their outlet structures and to calculate the water quality treatment volume.
3. The maximum allowable road grade for maintenance for access to the storm water ponds is 10%.

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Lou Antonick

West side Woods Major Subdivision

Phase 1 proposed site plan

Four-Phase 59-acre development with 92 single family residential lots, 3 multifamily lots (80 condo units) and 5 open space lots.

1. Site plan, infrastructure and Building review must comply with 2012 International Fire Code (IFC) and any associated standards listed as adopted by the City Commission in 06-2014
2. Full Building Review will be completed by the Helena Fire Department – Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau (HFD-FPIB) using all applicable chapters of the 2012 IFC at the time of permit submittal.
3. Fire Department Access per 2012 (IFC) Chapter 5 – Fire Service Features. This chapter contains the requirements for fire service access and fire protection water supply that enables the Helena Fire Department to respond to an emergency at this subdivision.
4. Section 501.4 Timing of Installation. When fire apparatus access roads or a water supply for fire protection is required to be installed, such protection shall be installed and made serviceable prior to and during the time of construction except when approved alternative methods of protection are provided. Temporary street signs shall be installed at each street intersection when construction of new roadways allows passage by vehicles in accordance with Section 505.2.
5. Marked access roads and fire protection water supply must be in place before any large amount of combustible building materials is placed on site and before any construction is initiated. Buildings under construction are vulnerable to fire and other types of construction incidents, such as injuries. Access roads and water for fire protection are essential for fire-fighting purposes. Temporary street signs are also valuable to emergency responders because the streets in new developments will most likely not be familiar to them nor be on their maps.
6. A fire apparatus access road is defined in the 2012 IFC as a road that provides fire apparatus access from a fire station to a facility, building or portion thereof. This is a general term inclusive of all other terms such as fire lane, public street, private street, parking lot lane and access roadway
7. Fire Apparatus Access Roads:
  - 503.1 Where required. Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided and maintained in accordance with Sections 503.1.1 through 503.1.3.
  - 503.1.1 Buildings and facilities. Approved fire apparatus access roads shall be provided for every facility, building or portion of a building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction. The fire apparatus access road shall comply with the requirements of this section and shall extend to within 150 feet (45 720 mm) of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building or facility.  
Exception: The fire code official is authorized to increase the dimension of 150 feet (45 720 mm) where:
    1. The building is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, 903.3.1.2 or 903.3.1.3.
    2. Fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an approved alternative means of fire protection is provided.
    3. There are not more than two Group R-3 or Group U

occupancies.

503.1.2 Additional access. The fire code official is authorized to require more than one fire apparatus access road based on the potential for impairment of a single road by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors that could limit access.

? Additional access roads may be required by the fire code official based on his or her knowledge of traffic patterns, local weather conditions, terrain or the anticipated magnitude of a potential incident

8. Fire Apparatus Access Road Specifications.

503.2.1 Dimensions. Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6096 mm), exclusive of shoulders, except for approved security gates in accordance with Section 503.6, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches (4115 mm)

503.2.3 Surface. Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capabilities. This includes the emergency access road which includes continuous snow plowing in the winter months.

503.2.4 Turning radius. The required turning radius of a fire apparatus access road shall be determined by the fire code official. For the City of Helena, this radius is determined using the largest truck. If you need this information, I can send in a separate email.

503.2.5 Dead ends. Dead-end fire apparatus access roads in excess of 150 feet (45 720 mm) in length shall be provided with an approved area for turning around fire apparatus. See the City of Helena Engineering Standards for the dimensions and requirements.

503.2.6 Bridges and elevated surfaces. Where a bridge or an elevated surface is part of a fire apparatus access road, the bridge shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with AASHTO HB-17. Bridges and elevated surfaces shall be designed for a live load sufficient to carry the imposed loads of fire apparatus. Vehicle load limits shall be posted at both entrances to bridges when required by the fire code official. Where elevated surfaces designed for emergency vehicle use are adjacent to surfaces which are not designed for such use, approved barriers, approved signs or both shall be installed and maintained when required by the fire code official.

503.2.7 Grade. The grade of the fire apparatus access road shall be within the limits established by the fire code official based on the fire department's apparatus. The grade can not exceed 10% per City of Helena Engineering Standards.

503.2.8 Angles of approach and departure. The angles of approach and departure for fire apparatus access roads shall be within the limits established by the fire code official based on the fire department's apparatus.

503.3 Marking. Where required by the fire code official, approved signs or other approved notices or markings that include the words NO PARKING—FIRE LANE shall be provided for fire apparatus access roads to identify such roads or prohibit the obstruction thereof. The means by which fire lanes are designated shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition at all times and be replaced or repaired when necessary to provide adequate visibility. These must be posted in every Cul-de-sac, they must be visible and there must be enough posted to clearly identify no parking anywhere in the cul-de-sac.

503.4 Obstruction of fire apparatus access roads. Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum widths and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 shall be maintained at all times.

9. Fire protection water supply installed per City of Helena



Engineering Standards and the following sections in the 2012 IFC and including Appendix C.

507.5.1 Where required. Where a portion of the facility or building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction is more than 400 feet (122 m) from a hydrant on a fire apparatus access road, as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the facility or building, on-site fire h

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Lou Antonick

FIRE

hydrants and mains shall be provided where required by the fire code official.

Exceptions:

1. For Group R-3 and Group U occupancies, the distance requirement shall be 600 feet (183 m).

2. For buildings equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2, the distance requirement shall be 600 feet (183 m).

507.5.2 Inspection, testing and maintenance. Fire hydrant systems shall be subject to periodic tests as required by the fire code official. Fire hydrant systems shall be maintained in an operative condition at all times and shall be repaired where defective. Additions, repairs, alterations and servicing shall comply with approved standards.

507.5.4 Obstruction. Unobstructed access to fire hydrants shall be maintained at all times. The fire department shall not be deterred or hindered from gaining immediate access to fire protection equipment or fire hydrants.

507.5.5 Clear space around hydrants.

A 3-foot (914 mm) clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of fire hydrants, except as otherwise required or approved.

507.5.6 Physical protection.

Where fire hydrants are subject to impact by a motor vehicle, guard posts or other approved means shall comply with Section 312.

10. Each applicable section of 2012 IFC, Chapter 33 – Fire Safety during construction and Demolition must be in place at all times. This outlines general fire safety precautions for all structures and occupancies during construction and demolish operations. These requirements maintain fire protection, limit fire spread and establish the appropriate operations of equipment and promote a prompt response to fire and emergencies.

11. A phased approach for this development will require a new review when each phase is submitted. As a phase is completed every requirement must be in place to ensure safe and effective fire and emergency response.

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Doug Smith

PARKS

Proposed Parks Board Recommendation: Motion to approve proposed parkland and platted open space, Lots 6,12,16,19 – Totaling 13.4095 acres, with the condition that forest fuels and noxious weed treatments are completed before dedication and/or funded by applicant.

The City-County Parks Board determined that further discussion is needed so Westside Woods topic was tabled by the board. The discussion will take place Wednesday, February 1st at the next meeting City-County Parks Board meeting.

1/12/2023 10:35:10 AM

Mark Young

TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEMS

1. All new road section asphalt widths must comply with Engineering Standards.
2. Revise Traffic Impact Study (TIS) to clarify types of vehicle crashes and if any serious injury or fatality crashed occurred, describe any safety mitigation strategies.
3. Revise TIS to clearly justify right-turn reductions per MUTCD guidance and associated mitigations.
4. Provide Signal Warrant documentation/worksheets to support the Signal Warrant Analysis narrative given in the TIS.
5. The applicant must submit an update to their Traffic Impact Study, including signal warrant analysis during buildout prior to final annexation of each phase. New counts must be conducted during midweek while school is in session. (Each Phase)
6. The entire length of Hauser Boulevard from (Granite Avenue to the Overlook Subdivision) must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 1)
7. The applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to major collector standards on Granite Avenue from Hauser Boulevard to Knight Street. (Phase 1)
8. The applicant must construct curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks to minor collector standards on Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Hauser Boulevard. (Phase 4)
9. The length of Park Drive from Brakeman to Hauser must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 3)
10. The length of Park Drive from Woodward to Brakeman must be constructed to local road standards including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 4)
11. Park Drive and Woodward Avenue must be connected and the intersection constructed to City Engineering Standards for complete streets. (Phase 4)
12. Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue must be annexed into the city and built to City Engineering standards for a local road including curb, gutter and boulevard sidewalks. (Phase 4)
13. The applicant must eliminate the dead ends on Flowerree Court, Brakeman Court and Livesey Court. The City recommends connecting Flowerree to Lee Drive and Brakeman Avenue to Livesey Avenue.
14. If the 33' of vacated Park Drive south of Woodward Avenue is not going to be added to the proposed subdivision, work with the Parks Department to dedicate it as parkland. (Phase 4)

1/24/2023 5:12:28 PM

Mark Young

TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEMS

15. The applicant shall coordinate with the City to install a traffic calming mitigation measure at the intersection of Hauser Boulevard and Granite Avenue, such as a compact roundabout.
16. The applicant shall coordinate with the City on a new wider cul-de-sac design for implementation on Lee Court.

1/25/2023 10:35:36 AM

January 24, 2023

**TO:** Mark Young, PE  
City of Helena

**FROM:** Andrew L. Bratlien, PE

**SUBJECT:** West Side Woods Traffic Impact Study Review

This memorandum documents the comments associated with the review of the West Side Woods Subdivision Traffic Impact Study (TIS) report, dated December 2022.

### **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The West Side Woods Subdivision, referenced herein as the “Project”, is located south of Euclid Ave and west of Hauser Blvd and Park Dr in Helena, Montana. The Project proposes a total of 92 new single-family detached dwelling units and 80 multifamily dwelling units to be constructed in four phases on a currently-undeveloped site. Site access will be provided via new roadway and sidewalk connections to the existing street network. A complete project description is provided in the TIS report.

### **NONMOTORIZED CONNECTIVITY**

The TIS report recommends street widening with no sidewalks on Hauser Blvd from Park Dr to Granite Ave and on Park Dr from the project frontage to Hauser Blvd. The TIS report indicates the following:

*Pedestrian connectivity will be provided via internal sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads. The sidewalks will connect to sidewalk improvements proposed on Hauser Boulevard. Pedestrians will then be able to utilize the sidewalks on Knight Street and Overlook Boulevard to connect to Granite Avenue at Kessler School.*

The report does not describe nonmotorized travel distance from the project to/from Kessler School. The proposed connection via Knight Street would increase pedestrian and bicycle travel distance from the south portion of the project to Kessler School by over 500 feet relative to the shortest path via local streets Flowerree Street (from Park Dr to Granite Ave), Park Drive (from project frontage to Hauser Blvd), Hauser Boulevard (from Park Dr to Granite Ave), and Granite Avenue (Flowerree St to Knight St). Given the difference in travel distance, Project-generated nonmotorized trips are likely to utilize these streets, which do not currently provide safe and accessible nonmotorized facilities.

The TIS recommendations would result in the City annexation of several sections of Project-impacted public streets with pedestrian safety deficiencies. City Code of Helena (CCH) 12-4-2 states that “public rights of way that are dedicated to the City must be designed according to the standards and requirements of the City.”

It is recommended that the Project provide safe and accessible sidewalks along the following routes which are anticipated to be utilized by Project-generated pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to and from Kessler School:

- Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
- Park Drive from project frontage to Hauser Boulevard
- Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
- Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Knight Street

## VEHICLE CRASH DATA

The report provides a summary of five-year crash history data but does not specify crash severity. It is recommended that the report document any serious injury or fatal crashes which occurred in the study area within the five-year crash history analysis period. If serious injury or fatality crashes occurred, the report should describe possible safety mitigation strategies.

## SIGNAL WARRANT ANALYSIS

The TIS report describes a signal warrant analysis for the intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue. The following Comments relate to the signal warrant analysis:

- **General.** Warrant analysis cites *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) guidance for reducing minor approach right-turn volume on approaches with one through/left-turn lane plus a right-turn lane. This review acknowledges that sufficient pavement width exists to support a shared through/left-turn lane plus a right-turn lane on the northbound Granite Avenue approach at Euclid Avenue. However, the approach is currently striped as a single left/through/right-turn lane. A right-turn volume reduction is not appropriate, per MUTCD guidance, unless Granite Avenue is proposed to be rechannelized to provide a shared through/left plus exclusive right-turn lane.
- **Warrant 1 – Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates an MUTCD minimum minor approach volume threshold of 70 vehicles per hour (vph) for Warrant 1 Condition B (70% volume level). The correct minimum threshold for a one-lane minor approach is 53 vph.
- **Warrant 1 – Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report does not clearly indicate the 2029 With-Project eighth highest-hour minor approach volume. It is recommended that the report describe the methods and assumptions used to develop the eight highest-hour volume forecasts. The report should also document the eight highest hour volumes for major and minor approaches. Future volume forecasts may assume daily peaking factors remain consistent with traffic counts provided in the TIS report.

An independent warrant analysis indicated that 2029 With-Project volumes will include an eighth-highest hour minor approach volume of 50 vehicles per hour on Granite Avenue, which is 3 vph lower than the minimum Warrant 1 Condition B (70% volume level) threshold of 53 vph. The analysis indicated that the intersection is anticipated to satisfy Warrant 1 Condition B for 6 hours during a typical weekday. This independent analysis indicated that the intersection will be near to satisfying eight-hour signal warrants by the 2029 analysis horizon.

- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates an MUTCD minimum minor approach fourth-highest-hourly volume threshold of 80 vph. The correct minimum threshold for a one-lane minor approach, with 70% volume adjustment applied, is 60 vph.

- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates a fourth-highest-hour minor approach volume of 69 vph. It is recommended that the report describe the methods and assumptions used to develop the four highest-hour volume forecasts. The report should also document the four highest hour volumes for major and minor approaches
- **Warrant 2 – Four-Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report indicates that the intersection will satisfy Warrant 2 if right-turn volume reductions are not applied. Right-turn volume reductions are not appropriate for a shared left/through/right-turn lane, per MUTCD guidance. The report should clearly indicate that Warrant 2 is satisfied in the 2029 With-Project condition.

An independent warrant analysis indicated 2029 With-Project fourth-highest volumes of 971 vph on the major approaches and 75 vph on the minor approach, indicating that Warrant 2 is satisfied.

- **Warrant 3 – Peak Hour Vehicular Volume.** The report cites 2022 peak-hour traffic volumes of 1,100 vph on the major approaches and 59 vph on the minor approach. It is recommended that the warrant analysis focus on 2029 With Project traffic volumes. It is further recommended that the Warrant 3 analysis consider volume peaking on the minor approach, which occur during off-peak periods on Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12).

An independent warrant analysis indicated 2029 With-Project peak-hour volumes of 838 vph on the major approaches and 176 vph on the northbound Granite Avenue approach, where peak hour was defined based on the highest hourly volume on the minor approach. The independent analysis concluded that Warrant 3 is satisfied.

- **Warrant 8 – Roadway Network.** The report indicates that Warrants 1, 2, and 3 are not satisfied. However, Warrants 2 and 3 appear to be satisfied, as indicated above. Per the Greater Helena Area LRTP, Euclid Avenue is a Principal Arterial and Granite Avenue is a Major Collector. Warrant 8 is satisfied.

Traffic volumes and signal warrant analysis worksheets associated with the independent warrant analysis are provided in Attachments 1 and 2.

## **CROSSWALK EVALUATION**

The TIS crosswalk analysis was based on 2021 and 2022 traffic and pedestrian volumes. It is recommended that the analysis consider 2029 With Project vehicle and pedestrian volumes.

The crosswalk evaluation does not provide guidance or analysis of potential pedestrian crossing treatments. However, the TIS recommendations indicate that a pedestrian-actuated flashing crosswalk sign is proposed at the Overlook Blvd/Granite Ave crosswalk.

It is recommended that the crosswalk evaluation be expanded to justify the selection and location of the proposed pedestrian crossing treatment. Given the proximity of Euclid Avenue 250 feet to the north of the Overlook Blvd/Granite Ave crosswalk, it may be desirable to coordinate with Kessler School to relocate the pedestrian crossing to eliminate the possibility of vehicle queues stacking to Euclid Avenue during periods of peak pedestrian demand.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are provided for consideration:

- It is recommended that the Project provide safe and accessible sidewalks along the following routes which are anticipated to be utilized by Project-generated pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to and from Kessler School:
  - Flowerree Street from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
  - Park Drive from project frontage to Hauser Boulevard
  - Hauser Boulevard from Park Drive to Granite Avenue
  - Granite Avenue from Flowerree Street to Knight Street
- The intersection of Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue is anticipated to satisfy MUTCD traffic signal Warrants 2, 3, and 8 in the 2029 With Project condition, assuming full Project buildout. Traffic volumes at Euclid Avenue (Hwy 12) and Granite Avenue should be monitored and signal warrants reevaluated with each phase of the proposed four-phase development.
- The crosswalk evaluation be expanded to justify the selection and location of the proposed pedestrian crossing treatment, with consideration for 2029 With Project vehicle and pedestrian volumes. Relocation of the pedestrian crossing may be desirable.

Attachment 1. Euclid Avenue & Granite Avenue Traffic Volume Development

Attachment 2. Euclid Avenue & Granite Avenue Signal Warrant Analysis

Euclid & Granite 3-day 12-hour counts, start 9/26/2017

Aggregate Day	NBR	NBT	NBL	Rolling Hr	Rank	Time	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	Rolling Hr	Rank
7:00 AM	14	0	0	0	98	7:00 AM		65	0	0	2	67	7	814
7:15 AM	23	0	3	3	121	7:15 AM		68	0	4	100	5	881	13
7:30 AM	17	0	3	3	140	7:30 AM		80	1	4	116	3	910	11
7:45 AM	32	0	5	136	2	7:45 AM		113	4	6	152	17	874	14
8:00 AM	31	1	6	108	4	8:00 AM		78	11	14	92	13	750	24
8:15 AM	32	0	7	80	10	8:15 AM		69	15	17	97	8	705	33
8:30 AM	19	1	2	48	14	8:30 AM	1	78	2	2	79	6	657	37
8:45 AM	10	0	0	33	32	8:45 AM	0	80	3	6	74	5	632	39
9:00 AM	6	0	3	30	30	9:00 AM	1	67	1	0	87	7	609	41
9:15 AM	7	0	0	29	40	9:15 AM	0	60	0	4	82	12	629	40
9:30 AM	5	0	2	26	45	9:30 AM	0	60	3	4	67	9	634	38
9:45 AM	5	0	1	27	43	9:45 AM	1	71	1	2	61	9	684	36
10:00 AM	7	0	1	29	40	10:00 AM	0	67	0	3	105	8	728	29
10:15 AM	5	0	0	28	42	10:15 AM	1	61	1	9	87	4	712	32
10:30 AM	8	0	0	32	34	10:30 AM	1	97	1	8	74	12	724	30
10:45 AM	7	0	1	32	34	10:45 AM	0	91	5	5	86	2	719	31
11:00 AM	6	0	0	31	36	11:00 AM	0	87	0	6	72	2	703	34
11:15 AM	8	0	1	30	38	11:15 AM	101	3	4	63	4	738	25	4
11:30 AM	7	0	0	27	43	11:30 AM	98	1	7	79	3	761	23	2
11:45 AM	6	0	1	31	36	11:45 AM	94	2	3	72	2	781	20	2
12:00 PM	5	0	0	34	29	12:00 PM	94	1	12	89	4	819	17	1
12:15 PM	6	0	1	37	23	12:15 PM	0	97	1	9	86	5	777	21
12:30 PM	10	0	1	38	18	12:30 PM	1	81	0	6	116	4	766	22
12:45 PM	8	0	2	37	23	12:45 PM	0	94	0	7	95	15	733	26
1:00 PM	7	0	1	38	18	1:00 PM	57	0	12	84	7	703	34	3
1:15 PM	6	0	2	37	23	1:15 PM	76	0	11	90	10	731	28	1
1:30 PM	9	0	1	34	29	1:30 PM	84	1	7	80	3	732	27	2
1:45 PM	10	0	2	37	23	1:45 PM	83	0	9	81	8	797	19	1
2:00 PM	6	0	1	34	29	2:00 PM	95	3	13	69	8	850	15	1
2:15 PM	4	0	1	33	32	2:15 PM	90	4	14	72	8	922	9	1
2:30 PM	10	0	2	87	130	2:30 PM	130	5	9	80	16	941	6	6
2:45 PM	9	0	0	92	8	2:45 PM	106	10	18	94	6	934	7	7
3:00 PM	5	0	1	96	6	3:00 PM	2	114	11	18	107	8	915	10
3:15 PM	45	1	15	95	7	3:15 PM	0	93	3	12	97	2	933	8
3:30 PM	15	0	2	44	16	3:30 PM	0	124	1	17	90	1	1001	5
3:45 PM	11	0	1	36	28	3:45 PM	1	108	1	17	82	6	1093	2
4:00 PM	4	0	2	37	23	4:00 PM	0	150	2	13	110	3	1108	1
4:15 PM	6	1	1	47	15	4:15 PM	1	126	0	16	125	7	1047	3
4:30 PM	8	1	1	51	11	4:30 PM	0	180	4	23	116	2	1004	4
4:45 PM	10	0	2	50	12	4:45 PM	0	126	2	14	85	3	884	12
5:00 PM	13	1	2	50	12	5:00 PM	1	97	0	14	100	5	847	16
5:15 PM	10	0	2	43	17	5:15 PM	2	105	1	22	98	4		
5:30 PM	8	0	1	38	18	5:30 PM	0	94	0	27	82	2		
5:45 PM	9	1	2	38	18	5:45 PM	1	88	2	20	79	3		
6:00 PM	9	0	1	38	18	6:00 PM								
6:15 PM	5	0	2	38	18	6:15 PM								
6:30 PM	8	0	2	38	18	6:30 PM								
6:45 PM	10	0	2	38	18	6:45 PM								

US12 & Henderson Helena West: 9/22/22 AM: 9/28/22 PM

Time	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	Rolling Hr	Rank
7:00 AM			65	0	2	67	7	814
7:15 AM			68	0	4	100	5	881
7:30 AM			80	1	4	116	3	910
7:45 AM			113	4	6	152	17	874
8:00 AM			78	11	14	92	13	750
8:15 AM			69	15	17	97	8	705
8:30 AM	1		78	2	2	79	6	657
8:45 AM	0		80	3	6	74	5	632
9:00 AM	1		67	1	0	87	7	609
9:15 AM	0		60	0	4	82	12	629
9:30 AM	0		60	3	4	67	9	634
9:45 AM	1		71	1	2	61	9	684
10:00 AM	0		67	0	3	105	8	728
10:15 AM	1		61	1	9	87	4	712
10:30 AM	1		97	1	8	74	12	724
10:45 AM	0		91	5	5	86	2	719
11:00 AM	0		87	0	6	72	2	703
11:15 AM	101	3	4	63	4	738	25	4
11:30 AM	98	1	7	79	3	761	23	2
11:45 AM	94	2	3	72	2	781	20	2
12:00 PM	94	1	12	89	4	819	17	1
12:15 PM	0		97	1	9	86	5	777
12:30 PM	1		81	0	6	116	4	766
12:45 PM	0		94	0	7	95	15	733
1:00 PM	57	0	12	84	7	703	34	3
1:15 PM	76	0	11	90	10	731	28	1
1:30 PM	84	1	7	80	3	732	27	2
1:45 PM	83	0	9	81	8	797	19	1
2:00 PM	95	3	13	69	8	850	15	1
2:15 PM	90	4	14	72	8	922	9	1
2:30 PM	130	5	9	80	16	941	6	6
2:45 PM	106	10	18	94	6	934	7	7
3:00 PM	2	114	11	18	107	8	915	10
3:15 PM	0	93	3	12	97	2	933	8
3:30 PM	0	124	1	17	90	1	1001	5
3:45 PM	1	108	1	17	82	6	1093	2
4:00 PM	0	150	2	13	110	3	1108	1
4:15 PM	1	126	0	16	125	7	1047	3
4:30 PM	0	180	4	23	116	2	1004	4
4:45 PM	0	126	2	14	85	3	884	12
5:00 PM	1	97	0	14	100	5	847	16
5:15 PM	2	105	1	22	98	4		
5:30 PM	0	94	0	27	82	2		
5:45 PM	1	88	2	20	79	3		

Ranked Minor, With Overlapping Hours

Rank	Time	Minor
1	7:30 AM	140
2	7:45 AM	136
3	7:15 AM	121
4	8:00 AM	108
5	7:00 AM	98
6	3:00 PM	96
7	3:15 PM	95
8	2:45 PM	92
9	2:30 PM	87
10	8:15 AM	80
11	4:30 PM	51
12	4:45 PM	50
13	5:00 PM	50
14	8:30 AM	48
15	4:15 PM	47
16	3:30 PM	44
17	5:15 PM	43
18	12:30 PM	38
19	1:00 PM	38
20	5:30 PM	38
21	5:45 PM	38
22	6:00 PM	38
23	12:15 PM	37
24	12:45 PM	37
25	1:15 PM	37
26	1:45 PM	37
27	4:00 PM	37
28	3:45 PM	36
29	12:00 PM	34
30	1:30 PM	34
31	2:00 PM	34

Non-Overlapping Hours (Top 8 Minor)

Rank	Time	Minor	Major
1	8:00 AM	108	750
2	7:00 AM	98	814
3	3:00 PM	96	915
4	5:00 PM	50	847
5	1:00 PM	38	703
6	4:00 PM	37	1108
7	12:00 PM	34	819
8	2:00 PM	34	850

AM  
PM



Euclid Ave & Granite Ave Traffic Signal Warrant Volume Development

	Major	Minor
AM Project Trips	20	58
PM Project Trips	62	38

Volume Factors as % of AM Peak H

Time	Major	Minor
7:00 AM	100%	91%
8:00 AM	92%	100%

2022

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	750	108
7:00 AM	814	98
3:00 PM	915	96
5:00 PM	847	50
1:00 PM	703	38
4:00 PM	1108	37
12:00 PM	819	34
2:00 PM	850	34

2029 Without Project

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	818	118
7:00 AM	888	107
3:00 PM	998	105
5:00 PM	924	55
1:00 PM	767	41
4:00 PM	1209	40
12:00 PM	894	37
2:00 PM	927	37

Volume Factors as % of PM Peak H

Time	Major	Minor
12:00 PM	74%	35%
1:00 PM	63%	40%
2:00 PM	77%	35%
3:00 PM	83%	100%
4:00 PM	100%	39%
5:00 PM	76%	52%

Euclid Ave Growth Factor 1.091

Project Trips

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	20	58
7:00 AM	18	53
3:00 PM	51	38
5:00 PM	47	20
1:00 PM	39	15
4:00 PM	62	15
12:00 PM	46	13
2:00 PM	48	13

2029 With Project

Time	Major	Minor
8:00 AM	838	176
7:00 AM	906	160
3:00 PM	1049	143
5:00 PM	971	75
1:00 PM	806	56
4:00 PM	1271	55
12:00 PM	940	50
2:00 PM	975	50

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

City/Town: **Helena, MT**  
 County:   
 Division:   
 Data Date: **2029 with Prj**  
 Major Route: **Euclid Ave (US 12)**  
 Minor Route: **Granite Ave**

Analysis Performed By: **Transportation Solutions**  
 Date Analysis Performed: **1/5/2023**  
 Project Number if Applicable: **222071:02**  
 Weather Conditions:   
 Appr. Lanes: **2**      Critical Approach Speed (mph): **55**  
 Appr. Lanes: **1**

### Volume Level Criteria

1. Is the critical speed of major street traffic > 70 km/h (40 mph) ?  Yes    No
  2. Is the intersection in a built-up area or isolated community of <10,000 population?  Yes    No
- If Question 1 or 2 above is answered "Yes", then use "70%" volume level  70%    100%

### WARRANT 1 - EIGHT-HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

Warrant 1 is satisfied if Condition A or Condition B is "100%" satisfied. Satisfied:    Yes    No

Warrant is also satisfied if both Condition A and Condition B are "80%" satisfied, given adequate trials of other remedial measures have been tried.

Adequate trial(s) of other remedial measures tried:  Yes    No

*List Remedial Measures Tried (Required for 80% Combination of A & B)*

#### Condition A - Minimum Vehicular Volume & Condition B - Interruption of Continuous Traffic

**100% Satisfied:**    Yes    No

**(Used if neither Condition A or B is satisfied) 80% Satisfied:**    Yes    No

		(volumes in veh/hr)		Minimum Requirements				Eight Highest Hours							
								8 AM	7 AM	3 PM	5 PM	1 PM	4 PM	12 PM	2 PM
		Approach Lanes		1	2 or more										
		Volume Level		100%	70%	100%	70%								
<b>W - 1A</b>	<b>100%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		500	350	600	<b>420</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		150	<b>105</b>	200	140	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1B</b>	<b>100%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		750	525	900	<b>630</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		75	<b>53</b>	100	70	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1A</b>	<b>80%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		400	280	480	<b>336</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		120	<b>84</b>	160	112	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50
<b>W - 1B</b>	<b>80%</b>	Both Approaches on Major Street		600	420	720	<b>504</b>	838	906	1,049	971	806	1,271	940	975
		Highest Approach on Minor Street		60	<b>42</b>	80	56	176	160	143	75	56	55	50	50

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

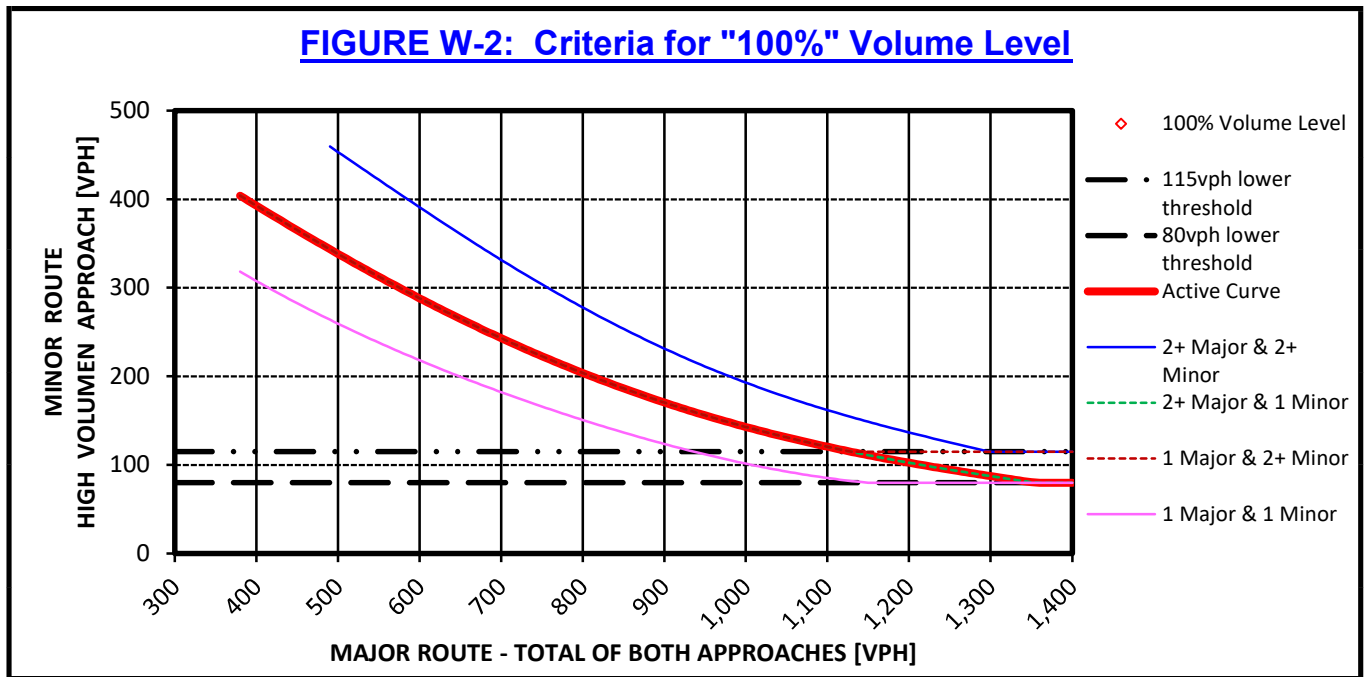
## WARRANT 2 - FOUR-HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

Satisfied:  Yes  No

*If all four points lie above the appropriate line, then this warrant is satisfied.*

	Four Highest Hours			
	8 AM	7 AM	3 PM	5 PM
(Volumes in veh/hr)				
SUM of Both Approaches on Major Street	838	906	1,049	971
Highest Minor Street Approach	176	160	143	75

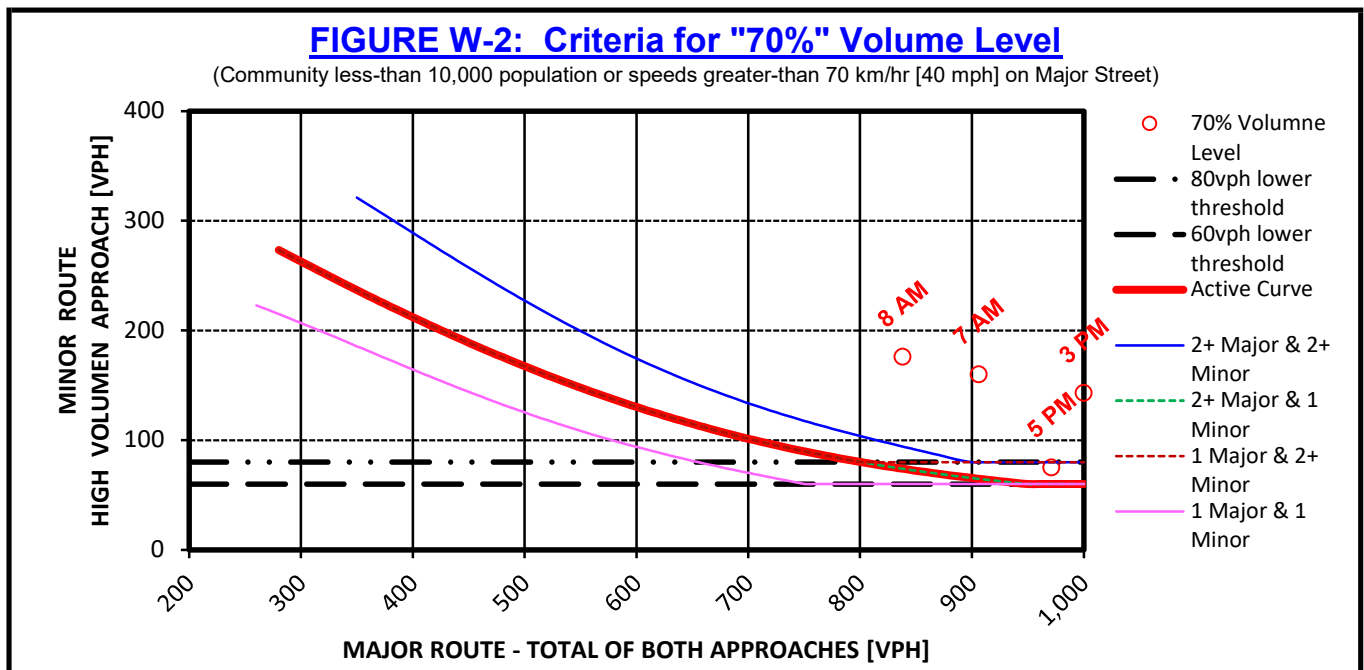
**FIGURE W-2: Criteria for "100%" Volume Level**



*\* Note: 115 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 80 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.*

**FIGURE W-2: Criteria for "70%" Volume Level**

(Community less-than 10,000 population or speeds greater-than 70 km/hr [40 mph] on Major Street)



*\* Note: 80 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 60 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.*

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

## WARRANT 3 - PEAK HOUR VEHICULAR VOLUME

This signal warrant shall be applied only in unusual cases, such as office complexes, manufacturing plants, industrial complexes, or high-occupancy vehicle facilities that attract or discharge large numbers of vehicles over a short time period.

Applicable:  Yes  No  
 Satisfied:  Yes  No

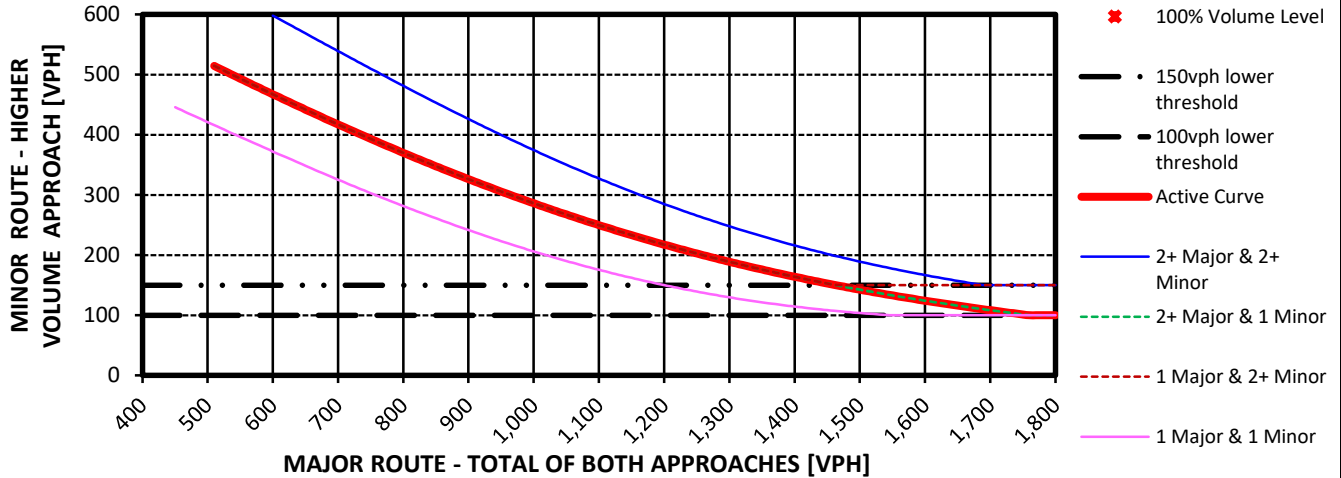
Signalization shall be considered if a point lies above the appropriate line or the Delay criteria is met.

Unusual case(s) justifying this Warrant:

School vicinity

Peak Hour Data		
Peak Hour	Major Route	Minor Route
8 AM	838	176

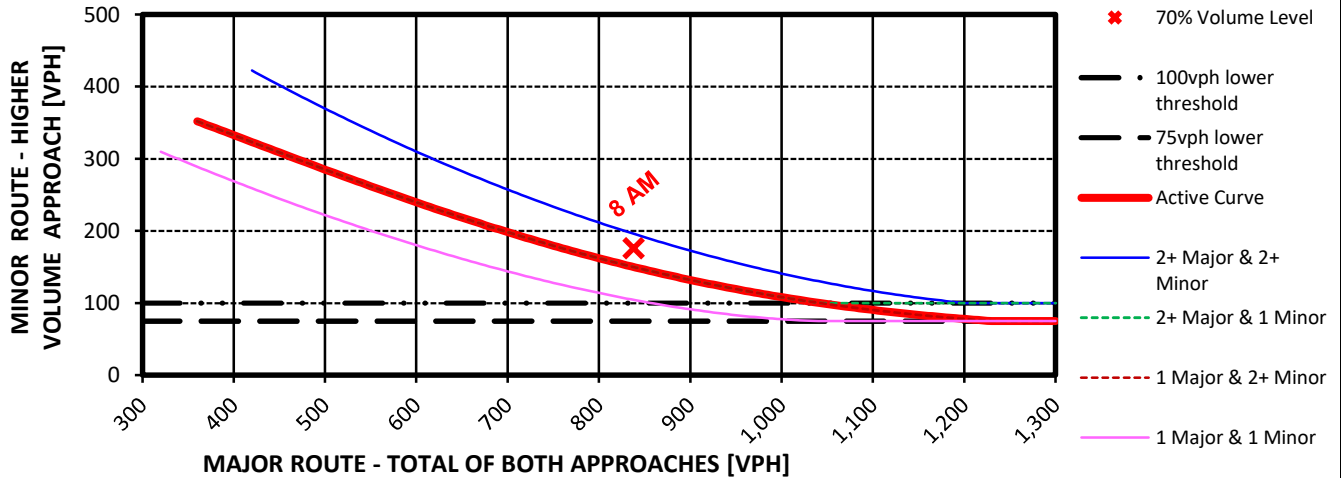
FIGURE W-3: Criteria for "100%" Volume Level



\* Note: 150 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 100 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.

FIGURE W-3: Criteria for "70%" Volume Level

(Community less-than 10,000 population or speeds greater-than 70 km/hr [40 mph] on Major Street)



\* Note: 100 vph applies as the lower threshold volume for a minor route approach with two or more lanes and 75 vph applies as the lower threshold volume threshold for a minor route approach with one lane.

DELAY CRITERIA	1. Delay on Minor Approach (vehicle-hours)				2. Volume on Minor Approach (veh/hr)				3. Total Entering Volume (veh/hr)					
	Approaches		Lanes		Approaches		Lanes		Number of Approaches		Volume Criteria			
	Approaches	1	2	Approaches	1	2	3	4	No. of Approaches	3	4	Volume Criteria	650	800
	Delay Criteria:	4.0	5.0	Volume Criteria	100	150	4 or more		Volume Criteria	650	800	Volume :	1,023	
Delay:	0.9		Volume :	176		Fullfilled?	X	Yes		NO	Fullfilled?	X	Yes	NO
Fullfilled?		Yes	X	NO	Fullfilled?	X	Yes		NO	Fullfilled?	X	Yes		NO

# TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANTS

## WARRANT 7 - CRASH EXPERIENCE

Satisfied:  Yes  No

This warrant is intended for application where the severity and frequency of crashes are the principal reasons to consider the installation of a traffic control signal. The need for a traffic control signal shall be considered if an engineering study finds that criteria 1, 2, and 3 are met.

Criteria			Fulfilled?	
			Yes	No
1. Adequate trial of alternatives with satisfactory observance and enforcement has failed to reduce the crash frequency as shown below:				
				X
2. <b>How many crashes within the past 12 months?</b> For this criteria to be met, five or more reported crashes, of types susceptible to correction by the installation of a traffic control signal, must have occurred.		1		X
3. If Warrant 1A or Warrant 1B are 80 percent satisfied of the current values or if Warrant 4, 4-hour or peak, is met at the 80 percent values.		Met?		
		Yes	No	
Warrant 1, Condition A, Minimum Vehicular Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X	
Warrant 1, Condition B, Interruption of Continuous Traffic (80 percent satisfied):			X	
Warrant 4, Four-Hour Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X	X
Warrant 4, Peak Hour Volume (80 percent satisfied):			X	

## WARRANT 8 - ROADWAY NETWORK

Satisfied:  Yes  No

This warrant is used to encourage the concentration and organization of traffic flow on a roadway network. This warrant is satisfied if one of the following 2 criteria is met and both routes meet at least one of the characteristics of a Major Route below.

Criteria			Met?		Fulfilled?	
			Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Both of the criteria to the right are required in order to be met.	a. Please enter the total existing, or immediately projected, entering traffic volume during the peak hour of a typical weekday. Requires a minimum of 1,000 vehicles to be met.	Volume 1,326	X		X	
	b. Based on an engineering study, does the 5 year projected traffic volumes, for this location, meet one or more of Warrants 1, 2, or 3 during an average weekday? *		x			
2. Enter the total existing, or immediately projected, entering volume for each of any 5 hours of a non-normal business day. (Saturday or Sunday). 1,000 vph for each hour required.			← Hour			X
			← Volume			

\* Supporting data required for verification of the projected 5 year traffic Warrants.

A major route, as used in this signal warrant, shall have at least one of the following characteristics:			Met?		Fulfilled?	
Characteristics of Major Routes			Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Is it a part of the street or highway system that serves as the principal roadway network for through traffic flow?	Major Route		x		X	
	* Minor Route			X		
2. Does it include rural or suburban highways outside, entering, or traversing a city?	Major Route		x			
	* Minor Route			X		
3. Does it appear as a major route on an official plan, such as a major street plan in an urban area traffic and transportation study?	Major Route		x			
	* Minor Route		x			

\* This is a minor route, but for the purposes of this Warrant, shall be considered as the other major route.

**Note:** Supporting data shall be required to verify the routes meet one of the characteristics of a major route.

## TRAFFIC SIGNAL WARRANT SUMMARY

City/Town: Helena, MT  
 County: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Division: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Data Date: 2029 with Prj

Analysis Performed By: Transportation Solutions  
 Date Analysis Performed: 1/5/2023  
 Project Number if Applicable: 222071:02  
 Weather Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Route: Euclid Ave (US 12)  
 Minor Route: Granite Ave

Appr. Lanes: 2      Critical Approach Speed (mph): 55  
 Appr. Lanes: 1

**Warrant #1: Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume**

**SATISFIED**  
 Yes     No

1A - Minimum Vehicular Volume:       Yes     No       Yes     No  
 1B - Interruption of Continuous Traffic:       Yes     No       Yes     No

*Any Remedial Measures Tried and their Outcome.*

**Warrant #2: Four-Hour Vehicular Volume**

Yes     No

**Warrant #3: Peak Hour**

Yes     No

*The Unusual Case(s) that Justifies the use of this Warrant.*

School vicinity

**Warrant #4: Pedestrian Volume**

Yes     No

**Warrant #5: School Crossing**

Yes     No

*Any Remedial Measures Implemented to improve the Safety of the Students.*

**Warrant #6: Coordinated Signal System**

Yes     No

**Warrant #7: Crash Experience**

Yes     No

*Other Alternatives that have failed to reduce crashes.*

**Warrant #8: Roadway Network**

Yes     No

**Warrant #9: Intersection Near a Grade Crossing**

Yes     No

**CONCLUSIONS**

Warrants Satisfied: 

	2	3				8	
--	---	---	--	--	--	---	--

Remarks: Eight-hour warrant thresholds are satisfied for 6 hours  
Granite Avenue is classified a Major Collector per GHALRTP  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**External Agency  
General Review Comments**

## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** April Sparks  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2023 8:09 AM  
**To:** Christopher Brink  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

FYI



### April Sparks

Administrative Assistant III, Community Development Department  
(406) 447-8490 | [apsparks@helenamt.gov](mailto:apsparks@helenamt.gov) | [helenamt.gov](http://helenamt.gov)  
316 N. Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623



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**From:** Cotton, Brittany <[bcotton@mt.gov](mailto:bcotton@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2023 3:45 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment <[citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

MDT's Comments are the same as they were on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022:

MDT facilities do not appear to be directly accessed by the Westside Woods Major Subdivision. Please contact the Butte Maintenance Chief, Jim Pesanti (494-9628) if it is determined modifications to MDT's system are required to accommodate the proposed development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment again,  
Brittany Cotton  
Montana Department of Transportation  
SIAP Transportation Planner  
406.444.6126

---

**From:** Wosoba, LeRoy <[lwosoba@mt.gov](mailto:lwosoba@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 2:20 PM  
**To:** Cotton, Brittany <[bcotton@mt.gov](mailto:bcotton@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

Brittany,  
Looks like you were the last to work on this development, it's getting further along in the process. I'd like you to continue tracking and handling this development review. As they aren't directly access our roadway our comments/involvement will likely be limited.

Thanks,  
LeRoy



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**From:** Tierney, Michael <[mtierney@mt.gov](mailto:mtierney@mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 1:29 PM  
**To:** Wosoba, LeRoy <[lwosoba@mt.gov](mailto:lwosoba@mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

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**From:** Christopher Brink <[CBRINK@helenamt.gov](mailto:CBRINK@helenamt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2022 1:11 PM  
**To:** Peggy Benkelman <[PBENKELMAN@helenamt.gov](mailto:PBENKELMAN@helenamt.gov)>; [rweltz@helenaschools.org](mailto:rweltz@helenaschools.org); Greg McNally <[GMCNALLY@lccountymt.gov](mailto:GMCNALLY@lccountymt.gov)>; English, Leata <[LEnglish@mt.gov](mailto:LEnglish@mt.gov)>; FWP General <[fwpgen@mt.gov](mailto:fwpgen@mt.gov)>; Tierney, Michael <[mtierney@mt.gov](mailto:mtierney@mt.gov)>; [jskinner@mt.gov](mailto:jskinner@mt.gov); Roger Baltz <[rbaltz@lccountymt.gov](mailto:rbaltz@lccountymt.gov)>; Dutton, Leo <[ldutton@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ldutton@lccountymt.gov)>; [sanderson@lccountymt.gov](mailto:sanderson@lccountymt.gov); [jchambers@lccountymt.gov](mailto:jchambers@lccountymt.gov); Jeff Wadekamper <[jwadekamper@helenairport.com](mailto:jwadekamper@helenairport.com)>; Brian Obert <[bobert@mbac.biz](mailto:bobert@mbac.biz)>  
**Cc:** Michael Alvarez <[MALVAREZ@helenamt.gov](mailto:MALVAREZ@helenamt.gov)>; Ellie Ray <[ERAY@helenamt.gov](mailto:ERAY@helenamt.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation General Review - External

City of Helena Development Collaborators;

The City of Helena Planning Staff has been reviewing applications for Annexation and Major Subdivision review for Westside Woods. The development team for the project has completed their application sufficiency review and their proposed project has now moved on to the general subdivision review stage. Please review the posted application materials and if warranted, please provide comments by the specified deadline either directly to me or via our department email address ([citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov)).

Comments should be provided no later than January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 by the COB.

Planning Staff will assemble appropriate city staff members to review both internal and external agency comments the week of January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Attached is a copy of the primary preliminary plat application and the preliminary plat. The complete application materials and resubmittals can be found here - <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects> [[helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov)]

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions/comments.

Thank you!

Chris



**Christopher J. Brink, AICP**

Director, Community Development Department

(406) 447-8445 | [cbrink@helenamt.gov](mailto:cbrink@helenamt.gov) | [helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov) [[helenamt.gov](https://www.helenamt.gov)]

316 N. Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623

[\[facebook.com\]](https://www.facebook.com) [\[twitter.com\]](https://twitter.com)

## Christopher Brink

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**From:** Maes, Stephanie <smaes@mt.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 11:19 AM  
**To:** Derek - Sussex Construction  
**Cc:** Sharon Haugen; David Knoepke; Michael McConnell; Ron Bartsch; Mark Young; Fogarty, William; Wingerter, Jim; Brelin, Stanton; Kilts, Kristina; Moeller, Zach  
**Subject:** RE: Approach to Highway 12

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Derek,

MDT and City of Helena staff met to discuss your email below and the request for direct access to Euclid Ave/US 12/N-8 to serve the West Side Subdivision. MDT had previously reviewed an approach request to US 12 in this vicinity, and we stand by our earlier decision to deny the request for an access in this area. This decision is based on our review of the Traffic Impact Study, which provided no compelling need for an additional approach to US 12, the limited sight distance, drainage issues and potential safety implications.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this email, please let me know.

Thank you,  
Stephanie

---

**From:** Derek - Sussex Construction <Derek@sussexconstruction.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 14, 2021 3:43 PM  
**To:** Maes, Stephanie <smaes@mt.gov>  
**Cc:** shaugen@helenamt.gov; DKNOEPKE@helenamt.gov; Michael McConnell <MMCCONNELL@helenamt.gov>; Ron - Sussex Construction <rbartsch@sussexconstruction.com>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Approach to Highway 12

Hi Stephanie,

Thank you for taking the time to speak over the phone yesterday. As discussed, we are looking into an approach to the proposed West Side Subdivision. It is a little farther West than the original approach that we requested this Summer. We understand the MDOT will have an internal meeting and discuss this proposed approach. Once a decision is reached, we will be notified.

I have cc'd City of Helena Staff on this email. If you are able to let us know if MDOT would consider an approach at this location that would be great.

Requested Approach (In Blue):



Expected Trips Per Day (Generated By Subdivision) \*\*Note – Trip Counts may be up to twice as much if the subdivision traffic is analyzed based on maximizing Zoning :

**Table 2. West Side Subdivision Expected Trip Generation by Phase**

Land Use	ITE Code	Quantity	Rate	Weekday Trip Ends	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
					Rate	Trips	Rate	Trips
<b>Phase 1 - 2021</b>								
Single-Family	210	28	9.44	264	0.74	21	0.99	28
Condominium	220	28	7.32	205	0.46	13	0.56	16
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>469</b>		<b>34</b>		<b>44</b>
<b>Phase 2 - 2023</b>								
Single-Family	210	13	9.44	123	0.74	10	0.99	13
Condominium	220	16	7.32	117	0.46	7	0.56	9
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>709</b>		<b>51</b>		<b>66</b>
<b>Phase 3 - 2025</b>								
Single-Family	210	42	9.44	396	0.74	31	0.99	42
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>1,105</b>		<b>82</b>		<b>108</b>
<b>Phase 4 - 2027</b>								
Single-Family	210	11	9.44	104	0.74	8	0.99	11
Condominium	220	32	7.32	234	0.46	15	0.56	18
<b>Total at Full Build-out</b>				<b>1,443</b>		<b>105</b>		<b>137</b>

Thank you,

Derek Davis – Project Manager



## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** Dan Karlin  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 15, 2023 10:51 AM  
**To:** Christopher Brink  
**Cc:** Jenny Chambers; Kevin Horne; Christian Lehnert  
**Subject:** City of Helena Subdivision Request for Comments

Director Brink,  
Lewis and Clark County Public Works has completed a team review of the Westside Woods and Craftsman Village Subdivisions based on the information you provided to Director Chambers and offer the following comments.

**For Westside Woods:**

We believe it would be best if the applicant paves the sections of Hauser Blvd. and Floweree Street in accordance with City of Helena standards and annex them to eliminate County equipment from being present and necessary in an area surrounded by the City. If annexation is not feasible, we would request the applicant pave the sections of Hauser Blvd. and Floweree Street be paved in accordance with the City of Helena standards to eliminate the need for graders in the area. Stormwater management has historically been problematic and a close look at the stormwater management plan by City staff is recommended. We also note that a noxious weed control plan is required for soil disturbances within the County. The plan should be submitted to the office of the Noxious Weed Coordinator for approval prior to any soil disturbance.

**Craftsman Village:**

The information submitted indicates annexation to the City. Additional traffic will utilize 282, which will have an impact on MDT, the City of East Helena, and the County as Runkle Parkway is extended to the west to, and adjacent to the Padbury properties. We also note that a noxious weed control plan is required for soil disturbances within the County. The plan should be submitted to the office of the Noxious Weed Coordinator for approval prior to any soil disturbance.

Thanks,

Daniel Karlin, PE  
County Engineer  
Lewis and Clark County Public Works  
3402 Cooney Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
Office: (406) 447-8034  
Fax: (406) 447-8368  
[dkarlin@lccountymt.gov](mailto:dkarlin@lccountymt.gov)





MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 3 Headquarters  
1400 S 19th Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

8-3-2021

Michael McConnell  
Community Development Department  
316 N. Park Ave, Room 402  
Helena, MT. 59623

Dear Mr. McConnell,

Thank you for the opportunity to remain engaged as the city continues to move ahead with the Westside Major Phased Development. With our stewardship responsibilities for fish, wildlife and recreation resources, FWP appreciates being able to provide information that can inform your decisions.

Just as we have seen use increase at our state parks and fishing access sites, we understand there is an appetite for outdoor recreation opportunities—and, specifically trails. The commitment of the developer for additional trails connected to the popular existing Mt. Helena trail system is consistent with FWP's mission to enable public access to recreational opportunities.

FWP has reviewed the final Environmental Assessment dated June 25, 2021. Regarding the resources and habitat found at the location of this proposed subdivision, we note that elk and mule deer use the surrounding area for winter range. We suggest the developer retain where possible the native sagebrush/grassland vegetative communities due to their importance for wildlife habitat.

The EA suggests the narrow seasonal drainages will provide corridors and security for big game. While true in a limited sense, research has shown that to fully provide these benefits corridors typically need to be a minimum of one mile in width for elk and one-half mile in width for other ungulates.

FWP has responded to conflicts with black bears in the vicinity, and grizzly bears are expanding their occupied habitat and have been documented in the greater area. To reduce the likelihood of attracting wild carnivores into the subdivision, and to reduce the incidence of human-wildlife conflicts, FWP recommends effective bear-resistant procedures for storing and disposing of trash.

We have included some additional reference material that might be of value to your office and the developer as you consider the future phases for this subdivision; please see attached.

Anticipating there will be future interest in developments in the general vicinity of Mt. Helena City Park, FWP would welcome the opportunity to visit with your office about long-term planning to meet the recreation, wildlife, and development interests in this area.

Sincerely,

Marina Yoshioka  
Regional Supervisor, Region 3

## **Additional Reference Material**

### **General**

FWP's working document *Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development in Montana*, is a resource for developers and planning offices to consult. We reference page numbers in the document that might be applicable to the Westside Major Phased Development.

### **Water Bodies**

The draft EA indicated that there are ephemeral drainage channels on the subject property, see pp. 7–10 & C26–C29 (FWP 2012) for recommendations for subdivisions around water bodies.

### **Wildlife Species**

The greater area including the West Side Subdivision supports a number of species that are classified as Montana SOC. These are species that may have a state rank of S1, S2, or S3 (status ranks range from S1 (greatest concern), to rank 5 (least concern), and these species may be further classified under the state's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS; FWP 2005), in which case they have been identified because they are in greatest need of conservation. Vegetated buffers between nesting sites and development or power lines for avian SOC should be maintained (pp. 18–20 & C82–C124, FWP 2012).

FWP recommends that the developer consider the design recommendations referenced in FWP's Subdivision Recommendations (2012), specifically the winter range and shrub/grassland sections (discussed in more detail below).

FWP has documented elk less than one mile from the property during winter aerial surveys. We expect that some big game species may inhabit the property regularly or on occasion (mule deer) and may cross the property (mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and elk), given its proximity and continuity with both the City's Mount Helena park land and US Forest Service land adjoining City property.

### **Big Game Winter Range**

The property is within elk and mule deer winter range. Winter range information may be found on the FWP website here:

<https://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/caps/#::~text=The%20Crucial%20Areas%20Planning%20System,program%20and%20For%20policy%20questions> or here <http://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/caps/> (instructions at the end of this document indicate how to get the big game winter range layer to display).

Winter range is critically important to ungulates. Elk were located within 1 mile during winter surveys and may occur on adjoining properties or on the subject property--More thorough reconnaissance would be necessary to make this determination. In some areas, elk do not utilize their winter range now, due to the loss of winter range habitat to development and the ongoing human disturbance associated with development. While in other developed/developing areas, elk continue to arrive in winter, leading to conflict.

FWP's Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development recommends linkage widths are a minimum of one (1) mile for elk and one-half (½) mile for other species; for white-tailed deer, mule deer, and moose, linkage should be along riparian corridors where present (FWP 2012). Facilitating



wildlife movement around the development occurring in the area by maintaining linkage (undeveloped habitat) will hopefully curb the number of human-wildlife conflicts. However, as we have observed within the city limits of Helena, mule deer will likely also be residents of the subdivision, and as observed in other nearby areas, for example Three-Mile Creek, Scratchgravel Hills, and the North Hills, elk may occasionally be found around homes and consume standing crops, haystacks, and other private property. Mule deer should be expected to occur on the property at any time of year.

### **Human-Wildlife Conflicts**

FWP recommends that wildlife conflicts be recognized in this planning phase.

#### *Mule Deer & Elk*

Future residents should expect to have mule deer, elk, and other wildlife, within or in the vicinity of the subdivision. Native plants are more tolerant of foraging by wildlife, and the county extension office may provide information on how to landscape with native species.

#### *Bears & Mountain Lions*

Where there are mule deer, there will likely be mountain lions, as observed across the urban-wildland interface around the Helena Valley and areas north and south of Helena. FWP has responded to conflicts with black bear in the vicinity. Grizzly bears are expanding their occupied habitat and were documented in the greater area. Either species of bear may on occasion move through the area. Future residents should expect that carnivores will be in the vicinity of the subdivision and may on occasion be within the subdivision. To reduce the likelihood of attracting wild carnivores into the subdivision, and to reduce the incidence of human-wildlife conflicts, FWP recommends an effective bear-resistant procedure for storing and disposal of trash (pp. 13 & C54–C61, FWP 2012).

### **Hunting**

This parcel is located in deer/elk hunting district (HD) 335. There are resident mule deer and elk in the immediate vicinity, and hunting occurs in the immediate vicinity. Public hunting is expected to occur nearby due to the presence of huntable populations of game species, depending on public access or private property owners' interest (pp. 12–13 & C47–C53, FWP 2012).

### **Vegetation**

The draft EA states that there are grass, shrubs, and pine trees on the property. FWP considers sagebrush an important shrub habitat. *Native grassland and native shrub habitat types are considered a Tier 1 ecosystem, or ecosystem in greatest need of conservation, in Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (MCFWCS 2005). The fragmentation and loss of native grassland and native shrub habitat patches should be minimized. Habitat patches important to wildlife and wildlife connectivity should be maintained and the loss of large habitat patches should be minimized. Native grassland and shrubland bird populations, especially Species of Concern, should be maintained. The spread of invasive, non-native plant species should be reduced.* Please refer to Section E of the Subdivision Recommendations for recommended design standards; they apply here, because the native grassland/shrub habitat patch is larger than 25 acres and would provide reasonable measures to mitigate impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (pp. 14–17 & C5, FWP 2012). *[FWP] has long recognized the importance of sagebrush/grassland vegetative communities as wildlife habitat. Efforts to manipulate these communities concern FWP because of the potential implications to wildlife; please also refer to the*



bulletin referenced below. The area included in this proposal likely includes a host of bird species, and may include Species of Concern, that utilize the native sagebrush and the native grassland as breeding and nesting grounds—More thorough reconnaissance would be necessary to make this determination. FWP recommends that the sagebrush be left standing wherever possible, as it increases diversity and water retention and reduces erosion, in addition to providing important habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

### **Public Land**

The proposed development is adjacent to City of Helena property, which adjoins the Mount Helena City open space, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation land, US Forest Service Land, and Bureau of Land Management Land.

### **Reference Materials**

- *Fish and Wildlife Recommendations for Subdivision Development in Montana*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/living-with-wildlife/subdivision-recommendations>
- Natural Heritage Program SOC Reports  
<http://mtnhp.org>
- *Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy - Full Strategy*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/wildlife-management/state-wildlife-action-plan>
- *Sagebrush Bulletin*  
[https://eplanning.blm.gov/public\\_projects/lup/36511/45862/49563/Western%20Watersheds/Montana%20Sage%20Brush%20Review.pdf](https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/lup/36511/45862/49563/Western%20Watersheds/Montana%20Sage%20Brush%20Review.pdf)
- *A Landowner's Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences:*  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/binaries/content/assets/fwp/conservation/land-owner-wildlife-resources/mt-fence-guide-second-edition.pdf>
- *The Role of Fish and Wildlife Evidence in Local Land Use Regulation:*  
[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2233554](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2233554)
- *Living with Wildlife* brochures are available at FWP offices and online:  
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/wildlife-management/living-with-wildlife>

### **Prior Contact/Comment on this Subdivision**

A map of the proposed subdivision and a letter dated 8/26/20 requesting review was received from WWC Engineering. FWP replied with a letter dated 9/8/2020 requesting more information and indicating that we would review a draft EA once prepared.



**Community Development and Planning**  
**Lewis and Clark County**

316 N. Park Ave. Room 230 Helena, MT 59623  
Phone: 406-447-8374 Fax: 406-447-8398  
e-mail: [planning@lccountymt.gov](mailto:planning@lccountymt.gov)



Date: January 13, 2023

To: Christopher Brink, AICP, Director, City of Helena Community Development

From: Greg McNally, Director, Lewis and Clark County Community Development and Planning

**Re: Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation**

Mr. Brink,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Westside Woods Preliminary Plat/Annexation project. The Lewis and Clark County Community Development and Planning staff have the following comments regarding the proposed project:

- 1) The Board of County Commissioners have conditionally approved the abandonment and discontinuance of the unconstructed right-of-ways for Highland Park, West View Avenue, East View Avenue and Toboggan Avenue, all located in Highland Park. The conditions to abandon and discontinue these right-of-ways have not been fully met and should be met prior to final plat approval of this project.
- 2) The Board of County Commissioners have conditionally approved the abandonment and discontinuance of the right-of-way for Circle Place located in the Bellvue Addition. The conditions to abandon and discontinue this right-of-way has not been fully met and should be met prior to final plat approval of this project.
- 3) According to the 2020 Tri-County Regional Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), the subject property is identified as having a moderate local hazard rank. The Local Hazard map in the CWPP is useful in understanding the scope of the wildfire hazard risk under extreme conditions. It represents the wildfire hazard risk in a worst-case scenario. The CWPP includes discussions of strategies and tactics to reduce wildfire risk.
- 4) Prior to any soil disturbance, a weed management plan should be submitted for approval by the County Weed District and the subject property should be certified as weed-free.
- 5) Stormwater management should be considered to avoid stormwater run-off in excess of current volumes and to control soil erosion.
- 6) Additional traffic is likely to occur on nearby roads outside the City Limits of Helena creating greater need for dust management on gravel roads and overall maintenance on all roads. Consider the impacts to off-site roads outside the City Limits of Helena and a proportional share contribution for future improvements.

- 7) The subject property is not located within a floodplain.
- 8) Existing development may encroach into the right-of-way for Hauser Boulevard adjacent to this project.
- 9) Dedicated parkland should include space(s) for off-street parking to discourage on-street parking by park users. Facilities within dedicated parkland should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If you have any questions about the comments we have provided, please feel free to contact me for further discussion.

Sincerely,

  
Greg McNally, Director

# **General Public Comments**

Save Helena Westside (SHW) supports development that prioritizes public health and safety. As currently proposed, the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision will have significant negative impacts to public health and safety. This letter is meant to propose conditions and considerations to address those negative impacts.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to “avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed.” Therefore, SHW believes the following infrastructure upgrades are needed as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Construction of a road connecting the subdivision to existing roads to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane, per City Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) to accomplish the following:
  - Provide additional emergency access in the event of local emergencies or evacuation. (See attached United States Forest Service fire models for how quickly this neighborhood might have to evacuate under typical fire season conditions.)
  - Turn one of the long dead-end streets (Livezey Ct) into a through street.
  - Offer an alternative road for construction traffic to use throughout the course of the project to avoid school routes.
  - Reduce daily traffic impact at peak times around Kessler School and on surrounding neighborhood streets.

The private landowner of American Storage LLC, Tim Davis, has provided a signed letter of intent to the City to sell or grant an easement to allow for the construction of such a connection to the existing Park Lane. (See January 28, 2023, email correspondence from SHW).

2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards as detailed in the staff reports for the previous application (see the January 12, 2022 Annexation Staff Report and November 9, 2021 Subdivision Staff Report)** – In conjunction with #1 above, Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Park Dr and Flowerree to the west of Granite, should be upgraded to include sidewalks for safety of pedestrians.

This recommendation is in alignment with the conclusions of January 3, 2023, Kessler School Walkability Audit (see the attached report).

In addition to the need for the above stated conditions of annexation, SHW is also concerned about the safety impacts of the long block lengths and dead-end streets within the subdivision. On April 25, 2022, local wildfire expert, Pat McKelvey, spoke to the City Commission during public comment regarding the concerns he had about wildfire and evacuation safety with the WSW proposal. Mr. McKelvey urged the Commission that when the WSW proposal comes before them again, to consider the risks in fire and evacuation. We would ask the City Staff do that very thing now, when weighing out your recommendations and conditions.

We believe that without including the conditions listed above and addressing the safety concerns relating to long block length and dead-end streets, the WSW proposal does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads and sidewalks, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities.

-SHW Directors

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:30 AM

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**From:** LesLee Brinton <59935mt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:04 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We support the comments presented by Save Helena Westside with regard to giving land to the city for the park. Part of what they want to "gift" to the City is badly in need of fire mitigation and is so incredibly steep that no one can use the land anyway. *They* need to clean up the land they own, not fob it off on Helena taxpayers!

While initially positive toward Sussex, I have been increasingly concerned by their tactics in trying to force through a huge development that has incredibly inadequate access roads and puts the safety of westside residents in danger from daily traffic congestion and difficulty getting emergency services into and out of the area. This proposed "gift" to the city park is another reason I do not trust these folks.

Please help save Mt. Helena's park and protect the safety of Helena residents.

Sincerely,  
LesLee and David Brinton  
2543 Overlook Blvd  
Helena

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Cory Chenoweth <cory.chenoweth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Thank you for taking the time to consider comments regarding the upcoming meeting regarding the Westside Woods subdivision.

My biggest questions concerns about this project are as follows:

1. Much of the proposed park land is on a steep (over 20%) slope. I don't believe these areas are of public benefit. Additionally, it looks to me like the areas "donated" are the undesirable, unbuildable, and storm drainage areas. Really the only part of the proposal that is beneficial to the public is the small partition that LeGrande already goes through.
2. This plan was already denied once, and I can't find any substantial changes/improvements the developer has made, which is unfortunate.
3. I have also have concerns with access (multiple cul de sacs), mobility accommodations.

Overall this "park land" looks to be the undesirable portion of land that isn't suitable for building and, if accepted, the parks department will be responsible for weed control, and fire mitigation for portions of land that aren't of desirable use for the public. I'd like to see a designated park land that is flat and can be used for sports (soccer, lacrosse, football, etc) fields, an area for pond hockey, as well as a traditional playground with a jungle gym/swings/slide.

Please, once again, vote against this terrible proposal as it places a burden on city parks to maintain these areas with very little return on investment, as the proposed land is steep, rocky, overgrown and undesirable.

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 7:48 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Objection to WW "parkland" designation

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Re: Westside Woods subdivision parkland dedication

Parks Board Members,

Thank you for committing your time and expertise to improving access for all to parks and open spaces.

We submit these comments with various perspectives.

- We have moved to Helena from hometowns that experienced radical, exponential growth.
- We are low income landlords of a single family home that is directly adjacent to the proposed Westside Woods. This home has twice been my primary residence.
- I was a daily bike commuter from the proposed Westside Woods eastern boundary to the State Capital for years. I was an active hiker of the upper Westside and taught our kids how to ride bikes on the low traffic, dirt road portion of Hauser Blvd. and adjacent subdivision land.
- My family has attempted to re-zone and develop property at a highway and overpass for over 3 decades in Oregon. I know, very personally, the delays, costs and frustrations of codes and laws as well as "the rules;" the latter being the invisible and unethical realities of politics and money.
- We have evacuated 2 times in 3 years from active forest fires; the most recent starting from a lightning strike across the street from our home. The 8 acres of charred land and trees are less than 70 feet from our driveway.
- I am a staunch noxious weed hater and diligently identify and "killer" of noxious and invasive weeds, having taught my three oldest children including a 7 year old to pull baby tumbleweeds. We have purchased expensive native grass seed and actively plant and water those to combat invasive and noxious weeds.

### **STORM WATER DRAINAGE PONDS ARE NOT PARKLAND; Lot 6 and Lot 19 are not parkland**

Helena has many beautiful parks which are enjoyed by a large minority, if not by a majority of residents and tourists. These parks have grass, playgrounds and wide graveled or paved accessible pathways.



Other Helena city owned storm water drainage ponds are NOT classified as parkland, **thus it would be unfair, illogical and UNETHICAL to consider ANY portion of a storm water drainage pond as “parkland.”**

Since many humans cannot equitably and safely use storm water drainage ponds for recreation, classifying such lands as “parkland” opens the City to litigation.

Can children roll down the grass of a storm water drainage pond? My kids do not miss an opportunity to roll down the hills at the capital but is it safe for children to roll down the hills of a storm drainage pond? Can children ice skate on storm water drainage ponds? Can local organizations host an Easter Egg hunt in storm drainage ponds?

Can wheelchair users enjoy and navigate the incline of a storm water drainage pond? If not, then storm drainage ponds ARE NOT PARKLAND.

Lot 6 and lot 19 are NOT PARKLAND.

### **INCREASE TAX BASE, INCREASE PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUE BY EXTENDING LOTS 4-11**

Lots 4-11 are premium lots. They are the furthest lots from the high density from apartment complexes as well as the noisy highway. They are the highest elevation and will have the best view.

The City and the developer can maximize the tax base and profits by extending the southern boundaries of these lots all the way to the furthest edge of Lot 12. This would eliminate the eastern half of the “parkland” donation of Lot 12 that the developer is offering to the City.

Aside from the small section of the LeGrande Cannon Trail that is on Lot 12, the remainder of Lot 12 is steep, rocky, UN-USEABLE LAND FOR THE PUBLIC and thus, for the City.

If I was going to buy a premium lot, I would welcome the opportunity to have a larger lot which increases my flexibility to build to suit. This would also allow me to create whatever privacy options I need and desire between my premium lot and a popular recreation trail.

Extending each of those lots, will provide additional square footage for private owners to improve their privacy from a frequently used hiking trail.

I encourage the Parks Board and the City to consider and recommend extending the southern facing boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to reduce the liability of the City, to increase the tax base of the City and to increase the profits of the developer. A win, win, win.

Increasing the tax base instead of increasing maintenance costs for the City will benefit every single human being in Lewis & Clark County.

## **FIRE SAFETY AND WEED MITIGATION: LOT 12 IS NOT PARKLAND**

Private property owners are better equipped and better motivated to maintain land, reduce forest fire risk and mitigate weeds.

Expanding private property boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will improve fire safety and weed mitigation.

- During fires and evacuations, emergency authorities ask residents to **leave water hoses hooked up and ready for fire fighters to use**. Private ownership will naturally provide for more water and hoses locally sourced at each of those lots in the event of a fire.
- Improved privacy. With an extended lot length, each private owner will be able to ensure their desired level of privacy between their private home and 700+ acres of public, open land.
- As individuals or as a small collective, the future property owners can request assistance to mitigate noxious and invasive weeds. With expanded property lines, private water and hoses will have better success than occasional maintenance from a publically hired crew.

## **NARROW EASTERN SECTION OF STEEP, ROCKY, WEEDY “Lot 12 parkland” IS LUDICROUS**

Mount Helena City Park is 620 acres of amazing parkland available to everyone. The Prickly Pear Land Trust owns the land directly south of LeGrande Cannon Trail and is fully connected from LeGrande Cannon Trail to Mount Helena City Park.

There is NO VALUE for the people by adding the narrow eastern half of Lot 12 which is the downhill, steep, rocky, weedy land north of LeGrande Cannon Trail when everyone is going to access the hundreds acres of fully open land, fully park land that is 5 feet to the south.

Strapping the City of Helena with the maintenance of this measly and pointless skinny stretch of land between an established hiking trail and private land owners is LUDICROUS.

What value does the narrow strip of dangerously steep and overgrown land in Lot 12 provide to the people as “parkland?”

None.

Steep, rocky and weedy land is not “parkland.”

## **WHERE IS THE WW ART TRAIL WALK?**

The developer's ill guided and expensive marketing stunt to endear citizens to the use of the open land of the property with the large beautiful "RSVP" signs alerted the entire County to the controversy, safety concerns and shenanigans surrounding Westside Woods.

The very chic Westside Woods website, <https://westside-woods.com/>, clearly presents Westside Woods as an "Art Trail Community." The website presents Westside Woods as bringing a wonderful, expansive "art trail walk" to the western edge of Helena. The website makes NO mention that the taxpayers will be paying to BUILD and MAINTAIN these trails.

However, the subdivisions application is asking the current and future City of Helena tax payers to build and maintain over half of the "Art Trail Communities' " trails—the most difficult, most steep, most EXPENSIVE half of these trails.

The website and PowerPoint present the walking trails as a gift from Westside Woods to citizens. There is no distinction that the trails will actually be paid for by tax payers: <https://westside-woods.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/JAN-24-City-Commission-Meeting-WW-PRESENTATION-.pdf>

Offloading the most expensive trail sections to the City of Helena is unfair.

If the City of Helena, Parks Board, Prickly Pear Land Trust and Westside Woods come to a secure agreement that the western half of Lot 12 and agree that a wiggly trail in the northwest corner of the subdivision adds value to the public, than I am not opposed to the western half of Lot 12 being designed "parkland."

However, this requires an ironclad, detailed and truly cooperative agreement between the City of Helena, Prickly Pear and the Westside Woods BEFORE tax free "parkland" status is deemed for the western half of Lot 12.

Sincerely,  
Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd  
Helena 59601

Sent from my iPhone

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Jessie Herbert <jbherbert127@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 11:34 AM  
**To:** planning@lccountymt.org; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Comment for Parks Board regarding Westside Woods Subdivision proposal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I would like to share a comment and concern about a parkland dedication for the Westside Woods proposed subdivision. I reside at 2522 Woodward.

I am opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is not suitable for all mobilities. Certain lots within the subdivision (6, 16, 19, and some of lot 12) is very steep, rocky, and not suitable for general city park activities, and would not be accessible for residents with mobility problems, and would place an unnecessary burden on the City for fire mitigation and snow removal.

Thank you for accepting my comment. If needed, I can be reached for further comments or questions at 406-207-1010.

Jessie Herbert-Meny

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I'm a lifelong learner, are you?

**From:** [Matt Johnson](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Parks Board public comment for Jan 3, 2023 public meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 4:51:50 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Helena Planning Department and Parks Board,  
I'm writing to provide public comment regarding the Westside Woods subdivision proposal, specific to park land and open space requirements.

My wife and I and our two young children reside at 2690 Park Dr, immediately adjacent to the proposed development. We have a long term vested interest in this project.

The current proposal for parkland and open space dedication is unacceptable for the numerous reasons already discussed. Those lots are generally unusable and are proposed to maximize the developable area since they are steep and not conducive to development. They will also translate to a maintenance liability for City of Helena taxpayers.

In general, my wife and I are in agreement with the position of Save Helena Westside (SHW):

"SHW believes the option that is in the best interest of the area residents is the for the parkland dedication to include only the Legrande Cannon walking trail portion of Lot 12, in addition to providing land suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park facility that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities."

It also shouldn't be ignored that there is a substantial existing trail network through this area that has been used by area residents for several decades. Everyday we observe numerous neighbors use the network, some to access Legrande Cannon and some stay in the area itself. The recent stunt by the development team to close the network unless their petition was signed is concerning as to whether trails are a priority, as claimed in their marketing materials, and it's unclear if trails will actually be constructed and by whom.

The current proposed trail system is vague in the current application, it appears on some exhibits but not on most. It's unclear whether trails through the subdivision will be required. The current proposed trails also substantially deviate from the existing network, and won't provide access to Legrande Cannon and other recently acquired trails with a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed by area residents for several decades.

We would like to see proposed trails follow the existing trail network to maximum practical extent as a condition of approval, and include a natural vegetation buffer that will provide a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed over the past several decades.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and consider preservation of the existing trail network as a requirement, in addition to the position of SHW.

Best,

Matt and Jen Johnson  
2690 Park Drive

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dick Josephson <dickj3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:11 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Distinguished Parks Board Members:

We would like to request that you defer your decision regarding this newest application until such time as the density of this development is reconciled. As you may be aware it is at the root of much concern about traffic flow, safety, and infrastructure. Considerable challenge is underway at this time and will be addressed in the coming months.

Should the developer be required to reduce the number of households, reconfiguration would likely provide areas that are much more conducive to parkland use than are lots 6, 16, 19, and 12. These areas appear to be marginally useful at best.

While they may comply with the percentage of acreage requirements, do they comply with the spirit and intent of the requirements for parkland set asides? Perhaps this deficiency is attributable as well to the density proposed by the developer.

We are appreciative of your efforts to assure that our Helena community overall, and each neighborhood within it advance in a way that is beneficial to us all while still allowing the developer a successful outcome. A delay in your deliberations will provide the opportunity for Westside Woods to be welcomed into our Westside.

Debora Speyer  
Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court

**From:** [Ish K.](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Parkland at Helena West Side  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:54:21 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

We support the parkland dedication that includes the small portion of Lot 12 that contains a short section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail, with the balance of the required land dedication being from areas suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park within the subdivision.

And we are opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is steep and/or otherwise not suitable for sports fields or a proper city park that could be used by persons of all ages and abilities, including persons requiring handicapped access. This includes Lots 6, 16, 19, and the balance of Lot 12 that does not contain the Legrande Cannon walking trail. These lots consist mostly of very steep grades, with water drainage and water holding areas, and steep, rocky areas around the outer boundaries of the proposed subdivision. They are not suitable for general city park activities. And they certainly would not be accessible by residents with any significant mobility problems.

These lots would also place a perpetual burden on the City for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal on adjacent sidewalks.

Please consider sharing your comments with the Parks Board members via email over this New Year's weekend. This will allow them to consider your concerns during the public meeting on Wednesday. Also, please consider joining the zoom meeting to show public interest and, if desired, offer comments at that time as well.





## Heather Kahler

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**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 8:52 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods parkland

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Park Board and Planning Commission Members

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of land being offered as a fulfillment of new development open/park spaces. I'm concerned for two primary reasons:

The building of lot 12 will, at best, negatively impact the Legrande Canyon walking trail. I am a retired homeowner in the neighborhood and I have physical limitations with my mobility; I use the section of this trail heading west from Silverette frequently during the non-snowy days because the gentle slope and wide path are accessible for persons with mobility issues like myself and enjoyable for many others. This trail is a gem used by all varieties of neighborhood residents, and is the result of many people working very hard to enhance the outdoor experience for a wide variety of uses. I hope it will not be diminished for a few lots.

My other concern is the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

I hope you take these issues seriously as they impact those of us who call this neighborhood home.

Regards,

Judy Ludwig  
592 Granite Avenue

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods subdivision land use  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:03 AM

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:27 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
**Subject:** Westside Woods subdivision land use

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Parks Board Members,

Hello, we are residents of the west side of town. We have concerns about the proposed land use for the steeper portions of the Westside Woods subdivision. Many of the residents here are worried about access to park land dedications for all to be able to access. These areas are not suitable for the activities that are proposed. Please consider the lots are mostly steep, rocky and have water drainage holding areas. How will this impact the area in the long run. I am very much in favor of development of the area if it is done with knowledge of the future access for all ages and abilities.

Mark and Theresa Maleki  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt 59601

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 8:51 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I was told you will be reviewing the Westside Woods development tomorrow for parks land. Please consider accepting Lot 12 that gives access to laGrande hiking area but do not accept any other land that is too steep or not usable for athletic fields or is accessible to all people no matter their disability. Helena lacks athletic fields for all sports and this should be a priority for accepting any parks lands for development. Developments should not be donating unusable land to the city parks department that the city then has to maintain.

Thank you for considering these thoughts when looking at the current proposal.

Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St  
Helena MT 59601

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Colin McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 9:56:13 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board Member,

I am a resident of Le Grande Cannon Blvd and I have concerns about several options in the current proposal for the Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision (all but the first option). I regularly use the Le Grande Cannon Trail (at least 2-3 times per week) year round, as do hundreds of others in the area with varying needs. I am concerned with any options that do not include maintaining this historic trail for public use, and providing additional open space to a very crowded redevelopment plan by the developer. Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. The trail access needs to be maintained - it is one of the few flat trails on Mount Helena truly accessible to multiple needs groups. My rationale follows:

During the previous application process for this subdivision, the Parks Board recommended that a small portion of Lot 12 that contains a section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail be accepted as parkland dedication, with the remaining land requirement being fulfilled by the developer by paying cash in lieu of the remaining land balance. The Parks Board rejected all options that included the steep land areas that were not suitable for general park use, including the majority of Lot 12 (except the small portion containing Legrande Cannon walking trail). They also rejected consideration of the steep, unusable lots 6, 16, and 19. They voiced their concerns with these steep areas not being of value to all residents, as well as concerns that the city would be responsible for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and other maintenance of these steep areas. These were good decisions and I supported them.

The Parks Board also discussed whether they could recommend that the developer provide land that is suitable for use as a developed park area, but were advised by the (now former) Community Development Director Sharon Haugen that the board was not allowed to consider any options not submitted by the developer, so this option was not considered previously. However, during the current application process, the Helena Director of Parks and Recreation (Doug Smith) has indicated that the Parks Board can consider recommending that land suitable for a developed park be dedicated to the city to fulfill the parkland dedication requirement.

Also discussed during the previous application for this subdivision was the fact that a short section of the Le Grande Cannon trail was actually built on the subdivision property (within the proposed Lot 12) instead of within the established right of way. This prompted the developer to recommend including all of Lot 12 as the parkland dedication property. But the Parks Board rejected this option due to the fact that Lot 12 mostly consists of very steep terrain and is unsuitable for park use. In the end, the Parks Board's recommendation to the City Commission included only the section of Lot 12 that contained the Le Grande Cannon

trail, with the balance of the land requirement being fulfilled by cash in lieu of land.

Also during the previous application process, there were some discussions of having the Kessler School grounds available for park use, as well as some mention of Spring Meadow park facilities being nearby. However, Kessler grounds are not accessible for persons with mobility limitations and Spring Meadow does not include a developed park or sports field. There has been enough high-density residential development in this area already such that significant additional open space is necessary to accommodate additional high-density residential development - especially when development plans will remove the easily accessible open space used by many existing residents.

Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. I understand the developer wants to maximize his ROI with development of the most desirable land, but in my opinion the City needs to set a precedent with developers to show they consider the long-term needs of the community over the short-term capital concerns of developers. There are plenty of developers that would have much better plans for developing this property than the current, as they continue to blunder through now their second irresponsible and publicly adverse application. Please make decisions that will allow the west side to be more than dense residential development with nowhere for our small kids to play.

Thank you for your service to our community, as well as time and consideration.

Colin McCoy

**From:** [Terri McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Parkland Dedication (public comment)  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 12:36:11 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Parks Board Members  
Re: Westside Parkland Dedication  
From: Helena homeowner

I write to encourage you to keep Helena's neighborhood trails and parks accessible for all as currently undeveloped areas are being considered for future growth in housing, roads and other amenities. As I understand it, the Board is considering a land dedication for a neighborhood park on the west side that includes a portion of the Le Grande Cannon walking trail as well as other surrounding areas, some of which should not be considered suitable to meet planning requirements for subdivisions and/or other construction projects.

I've seen the map, and while I support a parkland **dedication that includes the land that crosses/contains the Le Grande Cannon walking trail (some of lot 12)**, I ask the Board to reject entirely parkland dedications on lots 6, 16, 19 and the remainder of lot 12. You all are the experts, and I hope it goes without saying, but this land is clearly not suitable for a proper city park due to its terrain. In fact, I cringe to think about what would have to happen to the land to make these areas suitable to house one of our cherished neighborhood parks—let alone make it accessible for young, old, able-bodied and non-able bodied citizens.

There has to be a better way. It seems to me like this parkland proposal is trying to meet some city requirements I'm not aware of as cheaply as possible without any concern for the folks who actually live, recreate and pay taxes here.

Terri McCoy  
3240 Le Grande Cannon Blvd  
Helena MT 59601

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dan & Colleen Nichols <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 5:54 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in regard to the park land dedication for the Westside Woods subdivision. I have resided at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and am in support of the parkland dedication that includes a small portion of LeGrande "boulevard" walking trail. However I am adamantly opposed to the city accepting any other land that is steep or not usable for a city park or sports field that could be used by all people regardless of age or mobility issues.

I am a senior citizen who regularly walks in our neighborhood and deal daily with the steep grades throughout our area. The areas that the developer is proposing for parkland are steep, rocky and would certainly not be accessible for to anyone with a mobility issue. These areas are also going to be difficult for the city to maintain. The developer states that he wants a subdivision that is accessible and people friendly, he should certainly consider an appropriate park or sports field. The area that is south of Kessler school is already quite busy and could not support the density of the proposed large subdivision.

Please consider my comments when you make a decision that will impact our neighborhood forever.

Thank you,

Colleen Nichols



**From:** [Sarah Perry](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Jan 4th discussion of parkland dedication  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:30:29 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks Board,

I am writing as a resident of Helena's Westside with comments regarding your January 4th, 2023 agenda item to discuss the proposed parkland dedication for the Westside Woods Subdivision.

I would ask that you please recommend the option from the memo stating, "**Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [LeGrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.**"

That very option was discussed in the August 25, 2021 Parks Board meeting with the previous application of this subdivision. Former City Parks Director Kristi Ponozzo recommended this option of a developed park/playground citing Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2019; #76-3-621 // Parkland Dedication Requirement. Per #76-3-609, #4, which states:

The governing body, in consultation with the subdivider and the planning board or park board that has jurisdiction, **may determine suitable locations for parks and playgrounds** and, giving due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider, may determine whether the park dedication must be a land donation, cash donation, or a combination of both.

Director Ponozzo mentioned the LeGrande Cannon Trail portion of Lot 12 would be approximately .9 acres of parkland dedication. The remainder would be 2.8 acres to meet the 3.33 acre parkland dedication requirement.

I am in support of that option. The entire Upper Westside of Helena South of Euclid Ave has only one developed park, Cunningham Park, which is over 1.5 miles away from the proposed subdivision. The next closest developed park with a playground or multi-use courts of any kind is Barney Park, which is over 2 miles away and across Euclid Ave.

Kessler School's playground facilities are not accessible to persons with mobility constraints and are not available to the public during school days or sports practices, which take place on most weekday evenings during the school year.

**Developed parkland along the street with an accessible playground, sports fields, and/or multi-use courts would allow persons in the neighborhood who are not able to recreate freely to get out and do so. This would add value and variety to the park facilities offered on the Westside.**

The proposed parkland dedication of steep land with trails will only be usable to those persons already able to get out and easily recreate on Mount Helena. The westside of Helena is experiencing infill and growth to many previously empty lots along the Hauser corridor. As more people come to the neighborhood, the need for accessible playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities is growing. ***Steep mountain trails are not accessible.*** And during the winter months when those trails become icy, packed snow they are able to be used by even fewer people. Therefore, in the spirit of providing usable parkland to as wide of a range of persons as possible, particularly the aging and less mobile members of our community, I would ask that you please recommend suitable parkland be set aside for a developed, accessible park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Perry  
2636 Woodward Ave  
Helena, MT

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Edward Santos <ed@mt.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 6:58 AM  
**To:** Douglas Smith  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Sussex proposed West Side Woods subdivision parks

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Director Smith,

My name is Ed Santos and I live at 2530 Flowerree st close to the proposed West Side Woods subdivision.

I believe this subdivision can be a good addition to Helena provided it is well planned keeping community and connectivity in mind. Currently planned, this subdivision does neither with the only parkland proposed being steep grades and trails that only benefit healthy able-body individuals. Children, elderly, and handicap people will get no public area to play or enjoy outside spaces. I would like to see your recommendations to the City Planning Department and Commissioners be;

- A playground is recommended central to the subdivision
- Some type of court, basketball, pickle ball, etc.
- small field
- No cash in leu! (Cash In Leu does nothing to make Helena a better place to live, nor will it benefit the west side).

The only way Helena becomes a better place to live is through people insisting that the right thing gets done. A park that benefits all people on the west side is the right thing.

Regards,  
Ed Santos

**From:** [Save Helena Westside](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail: hkahler@helena.mt](mailto:hkahler@helena.mt)  
**Subject:** Comment to Park Board members from Save Helena Westside for 1/4/ meeting - please share asap  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:03:27 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

## Members of the Consolidated Parks Board:

Save Helena Westside is comprised of hundreds of area residents who are affected by the proposed Westwood Woods subdivision. SHW is urging the parks board to consider the first option listed in the memo submitted to the Parks Board by Director Doug Smith in his December 20th memo. Specifically, this option is:

“Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [Legrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision”

SHW supports this option because of the extreme lack of developed park and sports facilities in the area.

SHW is urging the board to reject the recommendation made by the Helena Parks and Recreation Department, which is to accept all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19, for several reasons including:

This option will not provide any additional park or sports facilities for the area residents. Most of the land on Lots 6, 12, 16 and 19 is steep and rocky, and not suitable for general recreational activities.

The city will be burdened with all future maintenance of these 13+ acres, including weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal of adjacent city sidewalks.

The potential trails that are referred to by the Helena Parks/Rec dept would not serve the greater needs of all area residents, especially the area children and those of lesser physical capabilities.

The potential trails do not significantly increase connectivity to the trails above Legrande Cannon.

There is no specified budget, design specifications, or timeframes for construction of these potential trails.

The Kessler School playground is not a suitable replacement for developed parks and sports fields for several reasons, including that these grounds are not available to the public during school hours, and that they do not offer proper access for handicapped persons.

Spring Meadow Park is a longer distance away, with a required walk across Hwy 12, which is too dangerous for younger children. Also, Spring Meadow lacks any developed playgrounds, sports facilities or courts.

One additional consideration is the fact that several right of way abandonments within the proposed Westside Woods subdivision property have provided the developer with an

additional 4+ acres to use for development. Some of these right of way areas could be used to properly connect the existing area streets to the Legrande Cannon walking trail. However, the current plans for the subdivision provide less connectivity to Legrande Cannon than previously enjoyed by area residents.

Thank you for considering the needs of area residents when making your recommendation for the parkland dedication of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

--Directors of Save Helena Westside

**From:** [Liz Ulrich](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:05:43 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Consolidated Parks Board Members,

**To promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

The park land dedication currently proposed by the developers of the Westside Woods subdivision doesn't meet the goals identified in the Consolidated Parks Board mission statement. In fact, it does the opposite, rather than developing parks, recreation, trails, and open space, it takes them away. As many in the Helena area are consumed with quickly increasing housing, your job is: **to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

My first choice would be to not have this area developed at all, let's keep open spaces open! In addition, I hope the Consolidated Parks Board uses the option of "cash in lieu" sparingly in their decisions, this is an easy-out for developers that will earn millions of dollars from these subdivisions. But, understanding that development is going to happen whether I like it or not, I recommend the Consolidated Parks Board consider Option #1: reject park land dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.

I appreciate your time and commitment to the Helena area. Parks, trails, and open spaces are what make Helena and Lewis & Clark County an amazing place to live.

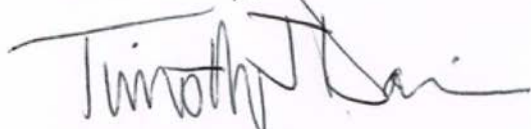
Thank you,  
Liz Ulrich  
406-690-4734  
2530 Knight Street  
Helena, MT 59601

To whom it may concern:

As the owner of American Storage West at 905 Park Lane on Helena's westside, I wanted to clearly state that we are willing to sell or grant an easement across our property to facilitate an access to the Westside Woods subdivision.

I can be reached at the contacts below if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Timothy J Davis

931 N. Last Chance Gulch  
Helena Mt 59601

**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:30 AM

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**From:** LesLee Brinton <59935mt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:04 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We support the comments presented by Save Helena Westside with regard to giving land to the city for the park. Part of what they want to "gift" to the City is badly in need of fire mitigation and is so incredibly steep that no one can use the land anyway. *They* need to clean up the land they own, not fob it off on Helena taxpayers!

While initially positive toward Sussex, I have been increasingly concerned by their tactics in trying to force through a huge development that has incredibly inadequate access roads and puts the safety of westside residents in danger from daily traffic congestion and difficulty getting emergency services into and out of the area. This proposed "gift" to the city park is another reason I do not trust these folks.

Please help save Mt. Helena's park and protect the safety of Helena residents.

Sincerely,  
LesLee and David Brinton  
2543 Overlook Blvd  
Helena





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Cory

Last Name

Chenoweth

Email

cory.chenoweth@gmail.com

Street Address

2630 Knight

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

14064596075

Date

2/3/2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Good morning. I am writing to voice my concerns about the safety impacts on the proposed westside woods subdivision.

-I live at 2630 Knight St., which is a narrow, winding, residential road. If this plan is passed as proposed, my concern is that Knight St. and Overlook Blvd (also narrow and winding) will be the major feeder streets into the subdivision. These two streets have sight restrictions, they don't allow for two full lanes of traffic when there is on street parking (or snowbanks) and are intended to be quiet residential streets, not the main connector streets for a major subdivision. These streets are already oversubscribed with traffic and cannot handle and additional 1000-2000 vehicle trips/day. Ask: Asking for a Western Access road to alleviate traffic and safety concerns on these narrow, winding roads that aren't suited to be a major connector thoroughfare.

-I have two young children who attend Kessler school. I have major safety concerns about the lack of sidewalks, lack of school zone signage, and the volume of new traffic that will be zipping through the route that so many students walk to and from school every day. Ask: at the VERY VERY least, I ask that a condition of approval be to include sidewalks up granite all the way to Hauser blvd. This will allow young students not to have to walk on the street in the dark during the winter when they can't tromp through the deep snow.

-After the fire scare this summer, I also have concerns about fire evacuation. It's my understanding that this subdivision was denied the first time due to extended street/block lengths and the safety concerns that go along with that. Instead of addressing the safety concerns, the developer found a loophole to shorten the city street and continue on with private roads. This does little to address the root safety concerns, and likely makes safety a bigger issue by creating these private roads without a plan to maintain them.

Thank you for your time, and please make sure that if this subdivision moves forward, that we aren't jeopardizing the safety of current and future residents of the area.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Cory Chenoweth <cory.chenoweth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Thank you for taking the time to consider comments regarding the upcoming meeting regarding the Westside Woods subdivision.

My biggest questions concerns about this project are as follows:

1. Much of the proposed park land is on a steep (over 20%) slope. I don't believe these areas are of public benefit. Additionally, it looks to me like the areas "donated" are the undesirable, unbuildable, and storm drainage areas. Really the only part of the proposal that is beneficial to the public is the small partition that LeGrande already goes through.
2. This plan was already denied once, and I can't find any substantial changes/improvements the developer has made, which is unfortunate.
3. I have also have concerns with access (multiple cul de sacs), mobility accommodations.

Overall this "park land" looks to be the undesirable portion of land that isn't suitable for building and, if accepted, the parks department will be responsible for weed control, and fire mitigation for portions of land that aren't of desirable use for the public. I'd like to see a designated park land that is flat and can be used for sports (soccer, lacrosse, football, etc) fields, an area for pond hockey, as well as a traditional playground with a jungle gym/swings/slide.

Please, once again, vote against this terrible proposal as it places a burden on city parks to maintain these areas with very little return on investment, as the proposed land is steep, rocky, overgrown and undesirable.

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 7:48 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Objection to WW "parkland" designation

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Re: Westside Woods subdivision parkland dedication

Parks Board Members,

Thank you for committing your time and expertise to improving access for all to parks and open spaces.

We submit these comments with various perspectives.

- We have moved to Helena from hometowns that experienced radical, exponential growth.
- We are low income landlords of a single family home that is directly adjacent to the proposed Westside Woods. This home has twice been my primary residence.
- I was a daily bike commuter from the proposed Westside Woods eastern boundary to the State Capital for years. I was an active hiker of the upper Westside and taught our kids how to ride bikes on the low traffic, dirt road portion of Hauser Blvd. and adjacent subdivision land.
- My family has attempted to re-zone and develop property at a highway and overpass for over 3 decades in Oregon. I know, very personally, the delays, costs and frustrations of codes and laws as well as "the rules;" the latter being the invisible and unethical realities of politics and money.
- We have evacuated 2 times in 3 years from active forest fires; the most recent starting from a lightning strike across the street from our home. The 8 acres of charred land and trees are less than 70 feet from our driveway.
- I am a staunch noxious weed hater and diligently identify and "killer" of noxious and invasive weeds, having taught my three oldest children including a 7 year old to pull baby tumbleweeds. We have purchased expensive native grass seed and actively plant and water those to combat invasive and noxious weeds.

### **STORM WATER DRAINAGE PONDS ARE NOT PARKLAND; Lot 6 and Lot 19 are not parkland**

Helena has many beautiful parks which are enjoyed by a large minority, if not by a majority of residents and tourists. These parks have grass, playgrounds and wide graveled or paved accessible pathways.

Other Helena city owned storm water drainage ponds are NOT classified as parkland, **thus it would be unfair, illogical and UNETHICAL to consider ANY portion of a storm water drainage pond as “parkland.”**

Since many humans cannot equitably and safely use storm water drainage ponds for recreation, classifying such lands as “parkland” opens the City to litigation.

Can children roll down the grass of a storm water drainage pond? My kids do not miss an opportunity to roll down the hills at the capital but is it safe for children to roll down the hills of a storm drainage pond? Can children ice skate on storm water drainage ponds? Can local organizations host an Easter Egg hunt in storm drainage ponds?

Can wheelchair users enjoy and navigate the incline of a storm water drainage pond? If not, then storm drainage ponds ARE NOT PARKLAND.

Lot 6 and lot 19 are NOT PARKLAND.

### **INCREASE TAX BASE, INCREASE PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUE BY EXTENDING LOTS 4-11**

Lots 4-11 are premium lots. They are the furthest lots from the high density from apartment complexes as well as the noisy highway. They are the highest elevation and will have the best view.

The City and the developer can maximize the tax base and profits by extending the southern boundaries of these lots all the way to the furthest edge of Lot 12. This would eliminate the eastern half of the “parkland” donation of Lot 12 that the developer is offering to the City.

Aside from the small section of the LeGrande Cannon Trail that is on Lot 12, the remainder of Lot 12 is steep, rocky, UN-USEABLE LAND FOR THE PUBLIC and thus, for the City.

If I was going to buy a premium lot, I would welcome the opportunity to have a larger lot which increases my flexibility to build to suit. This would also allow me to create whatever privacy options I need and desire between my premium lot and a popular recreation trail.

Extending each of those lots, will provide additional square footage for private owners to improve their privacy from a frequently used hiking trail.

I encourage the Parks Board and the City to consider and recommend extending the southern facing boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to reduce the liability of the City, to increase the tax base of the City and to increase the profits of the developer. A win, win, win.

Increasing the tax base instead of increasing maintenance costs for the City will benefit every single human being in Lewis & Clark County.

## **FIRE SAFETY AND WEED MITIGATION: LOT 12 IS NOT PARKLAND**

Private property owners are better equipped and better motivated to maintain land, reduce forest fire risk and mitigate weeds.

Expanding private property boundaries of lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will improve fire safety and weed mitigation.

- During fires and evacuations, emergency authorities ask residents to **leave water hoses hooked up and ready for fire fighters to use**. Private ownership will naturally provide for more water and hoses locally sourced at each of those lots in the event of a fire.
- Improved privacy. With an extended lot length, each private owner will be able to ensure their desired level of privacy between their private home and 700+ acres of public, open land.
- As individuals or as a small collective, the future property owners can request assistance to mitigate noxious and invasive weeds. With expanded property lines, private water and hoses will have better success than occasional maintenance from a publically hired crew.

## **NARROW EASTERN SECTION OF STEEP, ROCKY, WEEDY “Lot 12 parkland” IS LUDICROUS**

Mount Helena City Park is 620 acres of amazing parkland available to everyone. The Prickly Pear Land Trust owns the land directly south of LeGrande Cannon Trail and is fully connected from LeGrande Cannon Trail to Mount Helena City Park.

There is NO VALUE for the people by adding the narrow eastern half of Lot 12 which is the downhill, steep, rocky, weedy land north of LeGrande Cannon Trail when everyone is going to access the hundreds acres of fully open land, fully park land that is 5 feet to the south.

Strapping the City of Helena with the maintenance of this measly and pointless skinny stretch of land between an established hiking trail and private land owners is LUDICROUS.

What value does the narrow strip of dangerously steep and overgrown land in Lot 12 provide to the people as “parkland?”

None.

Steep, rocky and weedy land is not “parkland.”

## **WHERE IS THE WW ART TRAIL WALK?**

The developer's ill guided and expensive marketing stunt to endear citizens to the use of the open land of the property with the large beautiful "RSVP" signs alerted the entire County to the controversy, safety concerns and shenanigans surrounding Westside Woods.

The very chic Westside Woods website, <https://westside-woods.com/>, clearly presents Westside Woods as an "Art Trail Community." The website presents Westside Woods as bringing a wonderful, expansive "art trail walk" to the western edge of Helena. The website makes NO mention that the taxpayers will be paying to BUILD and MAINTAIN these trails.

However, the subdivisions application is asking the current and future City of Helena tax payers to build and maintain over half of the "Art Trail Communities' " trails—the most difficult, most steep, most EXPENSIVE half of these trails.

The website and PowerPoint present the walking trails as a gift from Westside Woods to citizens. There is no distinction that the trails will actually be paid for by tax payers: <https://westside-woods.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/JAN-24-City-Commission-Meeting-WW-PRESENTATION-.pdf>

Offloading the most expensive trail sections to the City of Helena is unfair.

If the City of Helena, Parks Board, Prickly Pear Land Trust and Westside Woods come to a secure agreement that the western half of Lot 12 and agree that a wiggly trail in the northwest corner of the subdivision adds value to the public, than I am not opposed to the western half of Lot 12 being designed "parkland."

However, this requires an ironclad, detailed and truly cooperative agreement between the City of Helena, Prickly Pear and the Westside Woods BEFORE tax free "parkland" status is deemed for the western half of Lot 12.

Sincerely,  
Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd  
Helena 59601

Sent from my iPhone

## April Sparks

---

**From:** Adam Eckhart <adam.eckhart22@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 27, 2023 2:35 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision Comments

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

A couple of comments/concerns regarding the proposed Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision are as follows in bulleted format. My wife and I have 2 kids and live on the west side of the proposed subdivision. Our property is adjacent to the walking trail/32 multi-family units.

- We specifically chose the location to build our home for privacy reasons as we do not have immediate neighbors and our backyard is secluded. The proposed location of the walking trail is directly on the property line which would allow public access to look directly down into our backyard and house. This area is currently very private for us and we enjoy having the privacy for our children to play in the yard.
- The location of the trail directly next to our property is of concern for the public to create a noise issue at late hours of the night, trash to be left, dogs off leash (even if you make it against the rules people will have dogs off leash) to come into our yard and poop, mean dogs to come into our yard and attack our children/dogs. Our HOA does not allow for a fence as it would obstruct the natural passage of wild animals. We have wild animals on our property daily.
- We would propose that the trail be re-routed in the subdivision and not directly on the property line as we wish to retain our privacy and the isolation of the public from our children playing in our own yard. If the trail cannot be relocated we propose that the trail be installed to city standards (as the area will be annexed) with trash receptacles, dog poop bag stations, benches, have a time restrictions, have a dog leash restrictions, have an irrigated hedge planted along the trail where the trail borders property boundaries, irrigate said hedge off the subdivision water system so it grows, maintenance of the trail and landscaping.
- We also have concerns regarding the multi-family units. This appears like there will be apartments which would retain a lot more people than single family dwelling housing. Again we specifically chose the area to build our home because of the population density being single family dwellings. Adding multi-family dwellings typically lowers property values as the properties do not get properly maintained and have a constant revolving door of tenants. We would propose that the entire subdivision be single family dwellings as the large increase in population density would become a major strain on the existing infrastructure. The lots on the west side of the proposed subdivision are typically in the neighborhood of an acre in size, the proposed plan is 100 lots plus multi-family housing which is more than double the area's current population density. Development is not the issue, the issue is jamming as much as possible into a small area that does not flow with the existing population/housing.
- We have construction concerns as well as the topography of the site is directly up-hill from our home. What construction practices will be implemented to ensure that there are no rocks and/or construction debris sent rolling down the hill directly into our backyard where our family will be recreating? Who will be on-site to ensure that said construction practices are being followed? If the construction practices are not followed and debris ends up in our yard and worst case scenario hits one of our family members what action is going to be taken?

Shannon & Adam Eckhart





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

RIKI

Last Name

Emerson

Email

rjemerson618@gmail.com

Street Address

4988 SMALLWOOD CT

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

14064599028

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to voice my concerns about the impact of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision on pedestrian safety and the potential safety threats in the event of an emergency or evacuation. I grew up in a home located at 913 Granite and attended Kessler Elementary School. My parents still reside in that home and now my children attend Kessler. My children frequently walk to their grandparents' home after school when I am working and unable to pick them up. However, I am constantly worried about their safety on Granite due to the lack of sidewalks and the speed at which vehicles travel. Granite is extremely congested and children are not always easily visible amongst the traffic. When I do pick them up I park in the nearby neighborhood and walk to the school yard to get them because I am too worried about them navigating the area due to the high volume of vehicles. Doubling the amount of traffic on the road has the potential for serious, even fatal, safety issues. It is imperative that sidewalks are put in place before the development of the proposed subdivision. Additionally, the threat of wildfire is very real. We saw that last year with the fire on Mt Helena. The ability for personnel to respond to a fire and safely evacuate the neighborhood would be virtually impossible as it is currently proposed. Adding an access on the westside of the proposed subdivision would improve accessibility and traffic flow. I agree with the conditions and considerations proposed by Save Helena Westside in their February 2nd comment letter and ask that you consider all of the concerns brought forward by the community. Thank you for your time!

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

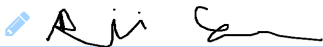
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aji" followed by a flourish.

# Helena Public Schools – Facilities Office

---

**Todd J. Verrill**

Director of Facilities

1201 Boulder Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 324-1734  
[tverrill@helenaschools.org](mailto:tverrill@helenaschools.org)

**Helena City Commission**

City County Building, Room 323  
316 N. Park  
Helena, MT 59623  
(406) 447-8410  
[mayorandcommission@helenamt.gov](mailto:mayorandcommission@helenamt.gov)

7 November 2022

**Dear Helena City Commission,**

Representatives of Helena Public Schools and Sussex Construction, Inc. met at Kessler Elementary School on 26 October 2022. The principal topic of discussion was Sussex's Westside Woods subdivision and the school district's desire to incorporate certain safety features into the overall development plan in the vicinity of Kessler Elementary School. In general, the school district supports measures that improve the safety and walkability of the Kessler Elementary School neighborhood.

The school district believes, at a minimum, the following will enhance the safety of our students, parents, and staff, and walkability in the area:

- Granite Ave. improvements including gutters, curbs, sidewalks, and others required by the City Code of Helena and/or recommended by the city engineer
- Traffic calming measures on Granite Ave. to include pedestrian crosswalks
- An improved pedestrian walkway to the west of Granite Ave. between Knight St. and Hauser Blvd. (currently an unimproved social trail/alley)
- Radar speed signs and flashing pedestrian crossing signs where appropriate

We also discussed additional improvements to the streets in the vicinity of the school that Sussex and the city may undertake as part of a development agreement. We mentioned a desire to address road upgrades to Knight St. and Silverette St. that will improve the pick-up and drop-off of Kessler Elementary students. There is consensus that reducing school vehicular traffic on Granite Ave. is a desirable end state. Finally, the school district supports continued dialogue with Sussex and the City of Helena in order to find the best possible solutions in support of Kessler Elementary School. The point of contact for this correspondence is the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Todd J. Verrill

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Jessie Herbert <jbherbert127@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 11:34 AM  
**To:** planning@lccountymt.org; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Comment for Parks Board regarding Westside Woods Subdivision proposal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I would like to share a comment and concern about a parkland dedication for the Westside Woods proposed subdivision. I reside at 2522 Woodward.

I am opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is not suitable for all mobilities. Certain lots within the subdivision (6, 16, 19, and some of lot 12) is very steep, rocky, and not suitable for general city park activities, and would not be accessible for residents with mobility problems, and would place an unnecessary burden on the City for fire mitigation and snow removal.

Thank you for accepting my comment. If needed, I can be reached for further comments or questions at 406-207-1010.

Jessie Herbert-Meny

--

I'm a lifelong learner, are you?

City	Helena
Date	1/3/2022
Which project do you have a question or comment about?	Option 1
Email	jbherbert127@gmail.com
First Name	Jessie
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?	Option_1
If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?	Option_2
Is your question or comment about a specific project?	Option 1
Last Name	Herbert-Meny
Phone	406-207-1010
Public Question or Comment	Option_2
Question/Comment	I am a resident of the westside neighborhoods above Kessler School, and I am very concerned about the Westside Woods subdivision and the traffic and safety impacts that this will have in the neighborhood. I don't believe that adequate traffic studies have been completed by the applicant, and the traffic on Granite and Hauser are already unsafe many times during the day. Any adequate proposal needs to include additional access to Hwy12/Euclid Avenue so we do not increase traffic congestion in our school zones.
State	MT
Street Address	2522 Woodward
Zip Code	59601



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Anna R

Last Name

Howell

Email

hflatlanders@reagan.com

Street Address

7520, Clausen Rd

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601-9629

Phone

4064390892

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I'm writing to voice my concerns about the impact of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision on pedestrian safety. My grandchildren go to Kessler and im often the person picking up and dropping off. I have serious concerns that the city is going to allow that many more cars on the road with no immediate improvements for child safety? Please do not allow this development to go through as it has been proposed. We deserve better.  
Anna Howell.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



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## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Jack

Last Name

Howell

Email

Jackermacker406@gmail.com

Street Address

7520 Clausen rd

City

HELENA

State

MT

Zip Code

59602

Phone

4069169678

Date

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

2 February 2023

Save Helena Westside (SHW) supports development that prioritizes public health and safety. As currently proposed, the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision will have significant negative impacts to public health and safety. This letter is meant to propose conditions and considerations to address those negative impacts. It is the policy of the City of Helena to "avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed." Therefore, SHW believes the following infrastructure upgrades are needed as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. Construction of a road connecting the subdivision to existing roads to the west. – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane, per City Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) to accomplish the following:

- o Provide additional emergency access in the event of local emergencies or evacuation. (See attached United States Forest Service fire models for how quickly this neighborhood might have to evacuate under typical fire season conditions.)
- o Turn one of the long dead-end streets (Livezey Ct) into a through street.
- o Offer an alternative road for construction traffic to use throughout the course of the project to avoid school routes.
- o Reduce daily traffic impact at peak times around Kessler School and on surrounding neighborhood streets.

The private landowner of American Storage LLC, Tim Davis, has provided a signed letter of intent to the City to sell or grant an easement to allow for the construction of such a connection to the existing Park Lane. (See January 28, 2023, email correspondence from SHW).

2. Improve local roads to "Complete Street" standards as detailed in the staff reports for the previous application (see the January 12, 2022 Annexation Staff Report and November 9, 2021 Subdivision Staff Report) – In conjunction with #1 above, Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Park Dr and Flowerree to the west of Granite, should be upgraded to include sidewalks for safety of pedestrians.

This recommendation is in alignment with the conclusions of January 3, 2023, Kessler School Walkability Audit (see the attached report).

In addition to the need for the above stated conditions of annexation, SHW is also concerned about the safety impacts of the long block lengths and dead-end streets within the subdivision. On April 25, 2022, local wildfire expert, Pat McKelvey, spoke to the City Commission during public comment regarding the concerns he had about wildfire and evacuation safety with the WSW proposal. Mr. McKelvey urged the Commission that when the WSW proposal comes before them again, to consider the risks in fire and evacuation. We would ask the City Staff do that very thing now, when weighing out your recommendations and conditions.

We believe that without including the conditions listed above and addressing the safety concerns relating to long block length and dead-end streets, the WSW proposal does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads and sidewalks, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities. Jack Howell

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

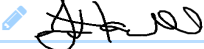
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature

 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "H. W.", is written on a light blue horizontal line. A small blue pencil icon is positioned to the left of the signature.

**I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary School**  
Helena, Montana  
Conducted: 03 January 2023, 11:00am-12:30pm  
Published: 11 January 2023

**Attendees:** Greg Wirth (NMTAC member), Abigail McClane (Kessler Parents Council and Parent), Ron Bartsch (Sussex Construction), Bekka Cantrell (Sussex Construction), Derek Davis (Sussex Construction), John Andrew (Helena Citizen’s Council Representative), Todd Verrill (Helena Schools), Craig Puchat (Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks), Patrick Marron (Neighbor, St Andrews parent), Cory Chenoweth (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Riley Thatcher (Principal at Kessler), Sarah Perry (Save Helena Westside, Neighbor, Kessler parent), Amy Geiger (St. Peter’s Health Injury Prevention), Charles Alvarez (Ability MT), Anna Jayne Pentecost (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Sarah Sandau (Lewis and Clark Public Health and walk audit Facilitator), Patricia Bik (Helena Citizen’s Council), Mark Young (City of Helena), Kevin Rechhoff (NMTAC member)

**Background:** On the November Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) meeting, Save Helena Westside group requested a walk audit and a recommendation from NMTAC on the routes to Kessler Elementary. On the December NMTAC meeting, the request was made again to NMTAC, and NMTAC agreed to host a walk audit around Kessler Elementary. NMTAC requested that Lewis and Clark Public Health assist in coordinating an Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk Audit (I2 Walk Audit) at and around Kessler Elementary. Concerns were regarding accessibility and safety.

In this area of town, there are numerous houses, schools (Kessler Elementary, St. Andrew, Pick up for C.R. Anderson), access to trails, and connectivity to downtown. The route considered was all originally located in the County but is now mostly public right-of-way in the City limits.

**Route:** The group started at the Kessler parking lot on the east side of the building at 11:00am. They walked south on Silverette Street to Hauser Boulevard (1.5 blocks), then west on Hauser to Granite Avenue (1 block), and finally North on Granite to Knight Street (2 blocks). (See Figure 1 below for map of the route)

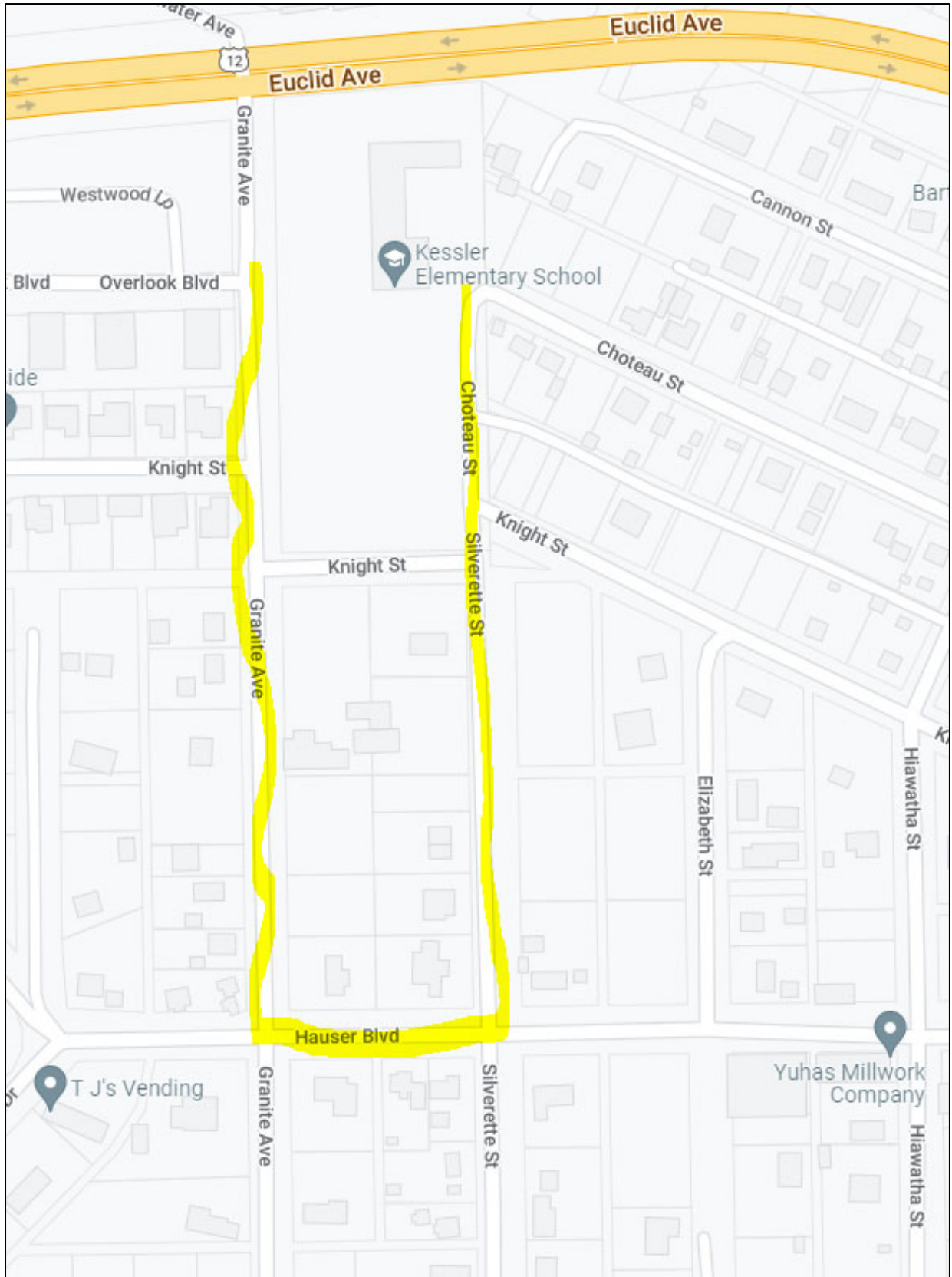


Figure 1

**Observations, questions, and ideas from the I2 Walk Audit are as follows:**

**Stop #1:** Intersection of Choteau Street and Knight Street. At the first stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the first leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Paved street, wide road, stop sign, setback of fence to the school, good shoulder, parking on one side, bike racks.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalks, or lighting make it difficult and unsafe to walk. No speed limit signs or school zone signage visible. No shade or trees. Drop off gets scary with parents trying to cut the line and zip around.

*Ideas:* Add speed limit signage, more school signage, sidewalks, lighting, possibly speedbumps.

**Stop #2:** Intersection of Silverette Street and Hauser Blvd. At the second stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the second leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop signs, access to trails, visibility, speed signage, visible driveways, pretty views, close to St. Andrews.

*Needs Improvement:* Busy and quick moving street. No sidewalks, boulevard, crosswalks, or lighting. Since it is not paved, it turns into an icy/mucky mess.

*Ideas:* Add sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming, paving of the street, and street lighting.

**Stop #3:** Intersection of Hauser Blvd and Granite Ave. At the third stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the third leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop sign for Hauser traffic, speed limit signage, visibility, good views, grassy areas, less ice/better surface, setback in the driveways, bus stop for multimodal transportation, wide street.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, crosswalks, or lighting. No benches or areas of respite. High speedy going down Granite Ave with no traffic control. No safe route to the bus stop nor safe area to wait. House encroachments on City roads. Heavy traffic volume.

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more often. Perform a traffic study focused on traffic calming/slowing. Add sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, speed limit feedback signage.

**Stop #4:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, east of Granite. At the fourth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the fourth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, school signage, sidewalks, crosswalk, paved road, trees, open,

*Needs Improvement:* Connection of sidewalks, more bulb outs, high-speed going down Granite Ave,

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more regularly. Traffic calming/slowing study (maybe speedbumps). Roundabout potentially or more bulb outs.

**Stop #5:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, west of Granite. At the fifth stop the team did not assess a score or. Comments on the fifth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalk, paved road

*Needs Improvement:* Boulevard vegetation block view from entering Granite. Drivers must pull into crosswalk to see oncoming traffic on Granite.

*Ideas:* Trim existing deciduous trees and remove existing evergreen trees in boulevard for better visibility.

**Summary suggestions:**

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. Increase school and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Avenue
4. Add lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette Street
6. Speed study for Granite Avenue
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often

**Next Steps:**

This summary account will be provided to all participants in addition to NMTAC. This will be discussed at the next NMTAC meeting on Tuesday, February 8th at 5:15pm via zoom. NMTAC will then decide on whether to make a recommendation to the City of Helena Commission.

Community members can always make requests to the City on their own through the My Helena App. Or, they can fill out a “Traffic Calming Application Form.” They can email Mark Young, City Transportation Engineer at [myoung@helenamt.gov](mailto:myoung@helenamt.gov) if they have questions on those avenues.

## Appendix A

### Emailed Feedback / Public comments on the Kessler I2 Walk Audit

**From:** John Andrew <[j53andrew@gmail.com](mailto:j53andrew@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 10:16:54 AM MST

**To:** Sarah Sandau <[SSANDAU@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ssandau@lccountymt.gov)>, Wilbur Rehmann <[wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)>, Greg Wirth <[GregWirth@hotmail.com](mailto:GregWirth@hotmail.com)>

**Cc:** Diana Hammer <[diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com](mailto:diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com)>, [patriciabikhcc@gmail.com](mailto:patriciabikhcc@gmail.com), [jrandrew211@gmail.com](mailto:jrandrew211@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Re: Walk Audit Report

Hi Sarah,

I thought your summation of the walk audit was straight forward and succinct so I don't have much to add. I went back Sunday afternoon to check out the Kessler Parking lot without vehicles and people although I'm sure that is not the main focus of the walk audit. Although NMTAC probably would like to recommend connectivity all the way around Kessler School I found myself more concerned about the approach from Choteau and Silverette Streets to the school parking lot which has the most traffic along with buses and no sidewalks entering into the main landing point for students. With the lack of funding I would like to recommend that NMTAC particularly highlight those streets into Kessler School. Thanks for all considerations to this matter.

Best,

John E. Andrew

HCC - District 1

**From:** Ashley Bryson <[ashleya816@hotmail.com](mailto:ashleya816@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** January 10, 2023 at 12:51:51 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** Walkability audit

Dear NMTAC and support staff,

I just wanted to say thank you for the walkability audit recently completed around Kessler school. I live in the area and have two children that attend Kessler school. They both walk to school every day along with a group of children from our neighborhood. Unfortunately, we have many stories about “near misses” and unsafe conditions they have experienced on their way to and from school. The neighborhood around the school has been expanding with many new multi-family homes over the last couple years, bringing with it more traffic and more potentially dangerous conditions for the many children who walk and bike to school daily. There are plans for quite a bit of continued growth. I love this neighborhood, and I want to see it continue to be a great place to raise children, recreate, walk our pets, and enjoy the nearby trail access. I would greatly appreciate any formal recommendations you may be able to make to improve the safety of this neighborhood as it currently stands and as it continues to expand.

Thank you,  
Ashley Bryson  
Resident at 2549 Knight Street

**From:** judy ludwig <[ludwigjudy@gmail.com](mailto:ludwigjudy@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 3:59:00 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit

Chairman Wilbur Raymann

Thanks to you and all of your crew for the walk audit around Kessler Elementary. I appreciate all the work that went into it, especially during the cold.

I hope you encourage improvements for walkability, especially through sidewalks, in this area.

As you probably are aware, the times just before and after school is in session create quite a hazard for the little ones walking to and from Kessler with people dropping off and picking up students. The city is doing a much better job of plowing and sanding on Granite during the winter, but there are still many hazardous conditions. I have noticed that when the snow has been heavy kids are forced to walk more in the middle of the road, with two way traffic trying to dodge them and other cars. Shoulders remain icy and uneven, kids goof around with each other, and slips on the road scoria happen. Sidewalks on Granite and other nearby neighborhood arteries would help insure safer passage for kids and all pedestrians.

Thanks again for all of your efforts, they are appreciated.

Judy Ludwig



## Mark Young

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**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:50 AM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Helena Westside development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC,

First, I wanted to thank you for taking the time to perform a walking assessment around Kessler school. We really appreciate you taking your time to see our concerns. Our family is a very active family walking, running, and riding bikes all over the west side of Helena and appreciate all you have done to help with this in our city.

I hope that after the walking assessment you can see our concerns with the lack of safe non motorized space there currently is on our main roadways. With the current proposed development and this mass increase in cars this could become very unsafe. Right now there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass and have someone walking on the road on Granite St. Every morning I have to stop in the dark as another car is coming down the hill so a kindergartner can safely walk on the street to school.

Also the Granite St intersection onto Euclid is already unsafe in the mornings and after school but even worse when trying to cross Euclid to reach the centennial trail by foot or bike during 8am or 5pm traffic. Trying to cross five lanes of traffic with children is terrifying and will only become more dangerous with increase in traffic.

Our family would like to safely continue our active lifestyles. This is why we chose to live on the west side. We are not against the development but just want to make sure the development is completed safely and correctly for the neighborhood. I appreciate all the time you have taken to look over all the information.

Thank you  
Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St.

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Colleen <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:18 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We have been residents at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and appreciate NMTAC doing a walkability audit of our neighborhood. Over the past few years we have contacted the city numerous times due to our concerns with speeding traffic. It seems to fall on deaf ears.

We are asking that the results of the audit and any recommendations that NMTAC has shared with the City Commission. The proposed west side Woods subdivision will have a very negative impact on the safety of our neighborhood unless identified issues from the audit are addressed prior to approval of the subdivision.

Our children attended Kessler school in the 90s and our grandchildren are now there, and there has been no improvement in the walk ability to and from school in all these years, in fact now with all the increased traffic it is even more of a danger.

Thank you for what you do to improve non motorized transportation in Helena.

Dan and Colleen Nichols

Sent from my iPad

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Eve Byron <evebyron@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Helena Westside walkability

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon.

Thank you for taking the time to tour our little neighborhood to discuss its "walkability."

I live on the corner of Hauser and Granite, and walk the neighborhood often. A couple items stand out in my mind regarding the safety of pedestrians and bikers:

1. The Granite and Hauser intersection would best be served by a roundabout. Traffic flies up and down Granite, but a four-way stop sign at the intersection would make it difficult for drivers in the winter. I envision those traveling downhill wouldn't be able to stop and those traveling uphill might not be able to get started when icy. A roundabout would keep traffic moving. The school would need to move the bus stop from Granite to Hauser, but that's not too difficult. The bus parks on Hauser most mornings when it's arriving at the stops early.
2. If a light is installed at the intersection, I request that it be focused downward in order to maintain the Dark Skies ambiance.
3. Sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks, but only on one side of the road please. This is especially important all along Hauser to the intersection with Henderson. The traffic in the morning is dreadful, and students are having to walk in the streets not just to Kessler but also to CR Anderson and St. Andrews. It's particularly dangerous during the winter, when it's dark in the morning.
4. I have witnessed numerous accidents at Hauser and Joselyn. A stop sign might work well there.
5. It is impossible to cross Highway 12 at certain hours. An overpass would be a great safety investment.
6. While it was outside of your walking tour, Park Avenue has a blind hill, where I always walk on one side of the road so traffic behind me knows I'm there, then switch to the opposite side of the road when I get close to the top of the hill so I can avoid any oncoming traffic. I don't have a solution for this mess, other than to lower the top of the hill to increase the sight-distance.

Thank you again for your interest in our part of the community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 406/422-6601.

Eve Byron

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Melanie Symons <msymons321@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:30 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com <jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** NMTAC Kessler School Walkability Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur and Mark

I have been following NMTAC's Kessler School Walkability Audit and have reviewed the final report. Please accept my sincere thanks for conducting this audit in such a timely manner and for taking into consideration the neighborhood's immediate concerns and hopefully the impact of Westside Woods on the area.

I am writing to encourage NMTAC to share the Kessler school audit and related concerns and recommendations to the Helena City Commission. I understand and agree with most of John E Andrew's thoughts regarding the Choteau and Silverette area. However, the traffic on the westside of the school is frankly unmanageable at the start and end of the school day. Sidewalks on at least one side of Granite extending from Knight to Hauser or beyond would improve the safety of school children and our neighborhood.

I am aware of the financial constraints the city faces and appreciate Commissioner Logan's recent editorial regarding the many and varied needs of our community. I am also aware that City's policy is to not annex land until there is sufficient infrastructure to support it. I encourage NMTAC to remind the city that a sound infrastructure, including paved streets and sidewalks should be a condition of approval for the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the safety of Helena's citizens.

*Melanie Symons*

[msymons321@msn.com](mailto:msymons321@msn.com)

(406) 431-0720

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Peter Larsen <pete.h.larsen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:47 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Non-motorized travel advisory council and Westside Woods development

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioner Rehmann and Mr. Young-

Thank you for taking the time to perform a walk audit around Kessler School. I am writing to encourage you to make a formal recommendation for *significant* traffic safety improvements around Kessler and in the adjoining neighborhoods. We have one daughter who attends school there now and another who will be attending Kessler in the not-too-distant future. My family lives near the intersection of Woodward and Granite. In short, my concerns, which are shared by a significant number of families, include the:

1. Lack of sidewalks running all the way up Granite to Woodward as well as some of the other lateral (East-West) streets
2. Insufficient or non-existent street-lighting along Granite
3. High rate of speed that people drive up and down Granite
4. Misleading traffic estimates collected near the school

As you probably saw, there are no sidewalks that extend all the way up Granite to Woodward and there are only a few streetlights. My daughter used to walk to school with her classmates, but we started to drive her because it is extremely dangerous for them to walk on Granite during the months of the year when the sun comes up late/goes down early. We are also concerned about speeding, especially for traffic coming down the hill. I have personally witnessed some kids that had to jump down into the ditch along Granite when a downhill driver narrowly missed hitting them.

Finally, I was very concerned when I read about the traffic estimates that were collected recently because I believe that these estimates are misleading. I believe the numbers that have been collected significantly under-counted the actual traffic already occurring. I read that one measurement of vehicle traffic was taken during a time of road construction on or near Granite and another measurement was taken when school was not even in session. I can tell you that there is significant congestion on Granite starting at about 7:45am and then again at about 2:45pm. In fact, you cannot find a spot to park within a few blocks if you arrive to the school after about 3pm. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to take a picture and share it with you.

Thank you for all that you are doing to ensure that our community is safe and accessible to other forms of transportation (e.g., walking, biking).

Kind regards,

Peter Larsen

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Shawn Whyte <ShawnWhyte@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:54 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting - Kessler walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello to both of you,

I am a longtime Helena west side resident who raised 3 children through Kessler, CRA, and CHS. I would like to thank all the people who participated in the walking assessment around Kessler school. I support all the recommendations that were listed in the report and would like to put emphasis on sidewalks and traffic measures that could help kids cross Hauser as the walk from the neighborhoods south of Hauser to get to Kessler on the north side of Hauser. I hope the City of Helena, the Helena School District, and Sussex Construction are all in alignment and support of protecting the youngest members of our community as the go to and from school every day.

In addition to the suggestions gathered, I would like to request that the NMTAC review the traffic study conducted and attached to the Sussex subdivision proposal. In that subdivision request, there is not access from the new neighborhood directly to highway 12. The property owned by Sussex does have frontage along highway 12, but it will be costly to do the dirt work, grading, and construction of an access point. I do not think the cost of the work should be a factor in determining what the appropriate course of action should be. Please review all the data in the subdivision request and join the west side neighbors in emphasizing the need to pull that traffic off Granite and away from the school by allowing drivers to exit the neighborhood directly to highway 12 using a new feeder road.

Like many others, I am not against the new subdivision, but I do request that the developer be held to a standard that protects children and non-motorized use of our streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Shawn Whyte

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Janice Long <janicelong2525@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:03 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Kessler School

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur & Mark:

I would like to thank you for the walk audit for Kessler School- this is such a critical thing to address in keeping our children safe.

I would like to make a formal recommendation request for your help to make the 12 recommendations for improvement around the Kessler School area!!

Thank you so very much for your help in keeping our children safe!!

Sincerely

Janice Long

## Mark Young

---

**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:16 PM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit Kessler Elementary

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mark Young  
City Transportation Engineer

Dear Mr. Young:

I understand that the NMTAC is presenting information about the walkability audit near Kessler Elementary School.

The results seem pretty dismal for walkability in the neighborhood, which I feel impacts most directly the young children attending that school and their ability to walk safely to and from Kessler.

I am hoping to see curbed sidewalks, improved visibility at corners, some additional controls at Granite and Euclid, and maybe some speed signs indicating what speed your car is traveling (not opposed to speed bumps either).

The City has really improved their snowplowing and graveling on Granite over the last several years, but kids trudging up and down that street still have to migrate towards the middle of the road during heavier snowstorms, which is a real hazard for the little guys.

Thanks for helping out with safety and walkability of the streets for not only the kids, but for the large number of recreational walkers and hikers using the streets.

Judy Ludwig



## Mark Young

---

**From:** David Ulrich <ulrich406@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:27 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Area Walk Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I recently read the Walk Audit report that was done for the Kessler School area. I greatly appreciate the time and focus that has been brought up for the School, Neighborhood and people using the area for walking and getting around.

I know that a lot of areas in Helena have issues and am glad that this area is becoming part of the focus to hopefully make updates/changes as needed. It's also great to see that this is happening while the Westside Woods subdivision proposals are happening because that area will be bringing twice as much or more traffic to this area and become more hazardous to the community walking around the school and neighborhood.

Any input you have in improving the safety for the area is greatly appreciated, and hopefully the input will be heard in conjunction with the Westside Woods Subdivision Application process too.

Thank you again for the effort in keeping the safety of kids, school district employees, parents and families addressed through any processes that affect the area.

David Ulrich  
2530 Knight St  
Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:44 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** joycefranzen@yahoo.com; lowell.chandler@gmail.com; kevin.rechkoff@gmail.com; szerwo@gmail.com; Sarah Sandau; andy.shirtliff@gmail.com; GregWirth@hotmail.com; joelebert54@gmail.com; lucasalanwallace@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Walk audit support  
**Attachments:** I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary 1.3.23.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Happy 2023 Chairman Rehmann and Engineer Young and members of NMTAC,

Please see the attached and know that we fully support all of the recommendations from recent walk audit conducted by NMTAC.

Professionally I have worked with healthy communities and walkability in Montana for 15 years. Several communities across MT have made life changing improvements and reaped the benefits.

Sincerely,

Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd.

Parents of 4 kids who love to walk and ride around town and have utilized Kessler as a playground many times

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

---

**From:** THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 5:59 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net  
**Cc:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walk Audit/ Westside

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

NMTAC Members,

We were very pleased to hear about the Walking Audit around Kessler School this past week. We have watched the upper westside grow over the 30+ years we have lived here. It has been a concern, with this growth, that the infrastructure has not kept up in many circumstances. An important start was seen by your group of the basic safety needs for students at Kessler and all pedestrians. Connecting sidewalks, on at the least one side of Granite street plus speed checked due to high volume of traffic on Granite and surrounding roads. Thank you for taking time to do the walking assessment. Our children safely walked to Kessler School growing up and we can see the small children now struggling to walk a few blocks to their school. We see first hand living on the corner of Granite and Flowerree Street. We have seen many houses built north of our home over the years. We are definitely not against growth or access to all the westside has to offer. We strongly believe it would not benefit the area with a large development and growth without the infrastructure concerns being met first hand. As they say, let's not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your time and seeing the many concerns we have for the area.

Mark and Theresa Maleski  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt.

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Carolyn Truscott <lv4jsus@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:14 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study and Recommendations

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a concerned resident who lives on Silverette, I would like to thank you for making the walkability study happen.

As I read the results, I would like to add these recommendations:

Summary suggestions:

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Thank you.

Carolyn Truscott

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:53 PM  
**To:** Wilbur Rehman; Franzen Joice; Chandler Lowell; Rechkoff Kevin; szerwo James; Wirth Greg; Wallace Lucas; Ebert Joel; Shirtliff Andy; Sarah Sandau; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Comment for Jan 10th meeting  
**Attachments:** NMTAC Letter Jan 10\_from SHW.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC members,

Please see the attached letter with public comment from the five Save Helena Westside directors regarding the recent Kessler walkability audit and our recommendations.

We appreciate your time and consideration,  
SHW Directors

We are grateful to the Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) and to Lewis and Clark County Public Health for conducting a Walk Audit at Kessler. Reading through the Walk Audit report, there is agreement for the need to improve the area streets to provide safe routes for schools and pedestrians in general.

The current proposal for the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision would result in significant increase in traffic volumes on those very same streets and the current traffic infrastructure is not sufficient to safely service the subdivision as proposed. After full buildout of WSW, Granite is projected to have traffic 3 to 4.9 times the current load<sup>1</sup>. Quiet county roads like Hauser, Park, Stuart, and Flowerree will see traffic volumes increase as much as 10 times their current load<sup>2</sup>.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to avoid annexation of undeveloped land until a plan is in place for adequate infrastructure to serve the new development. Therefore, Save Helena Westside (SHW) again would like NMTAC to consider recommending to City Staff and the City Commission regarding the following infrastructure upgrades as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Direct the majority of new subdivision traffic away from existing streets via a connection to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane and Le Grande Cannon. This will reduce traffic impact around Kessler and on Granite and Hauser, as well as will improve non-motorized access for bikers and others to Fort Harrison and the 10 Mile and Scratch Gravel trail systems.
2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards to accommodate new traffic on existing streets east of the WSW subdivision.** – In conjunction with #1 above, sidewalks and streetlights should be installed on Granite from Kessler school up to Flowerree street, on Hauser from Joslyn to the WSW subdivision, on Stuart and Flowerree from Granite to the WSW subdivision, and on the Hauser/Park Dr corridor leading to the WSW subdivision to encourage safe non-motorized transportation.
3. **Upgrade and add crosswalks, including lights.** – In conjunction with #1 and #2 above, lighted crosswalks, and safety signals should be installed around Kessler school to improve pedestrian safety.

Please note that the current application for the proposed WSW subdivision does not include any additional “complete street” upgrades to area streets beyond what is directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision boundaries, nor does it include any upgrades for pedestrian safety around Kessler School.

SHW and area residents support development that prioritizes public safety. As seen with the project to build sidewalks on Knight St East of CR Anderson, it can take years to secure funding and City support to add sidewalks to existing school routes. Neighborhoods east of Kessler that were annexed into the City in the past few years have not undergone any improvements to pedestrian safety. There is no guarantee of *any* upgrades if the can is kicked down the road. Therefore, it is best to proactively address safety needs up front, as conditions of annexation, prior to the WSW subdivision adding thousands of additional vehicle trips per day.

Thank you for your ongoing advocacy for safety of non-motorized travel within our Helena neighborhoods.

SHW Directors

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<sup>1</sup> WSW TIS reports 584 VPD on Granite currently and 1,726 VPD at full buildout (3.0 times current load). City of Helena Staff Report for Pre-Zone of WSW, however, states that with the proposed zoning, “there is a potential for 2,869 new trips.” The WSW TIS predicts 80% of the new traffic will use Granite, which would result in 2,879 VPD on Granite at full buildout (4.9 times current load).

<sup>2</sup> Flowerree St west of Granite, with 4 homes currently, will be a straight cut-through route to 45 new residences.

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Sarah Perry <sarah.3.perry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:59 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; Wilbur Rehmann  
**Subject:** Comments to be sent to the NMTAC for Jan 10th

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the NMTAC,

Thank you for requesting and facilitating the Kessler Walk Audit, with the help of Sarah Sandau! It meant a great deal to area residents and Kessler families to have members of the community take the time to walk our streets, experience what it is like to be a pedestrian, and brainstorm recommended improvements. I support the recommended changes in the report.

In listening to the recordings from a handful of your 2022 meetings, it has been encouraging to hear your council going to great lengths to do what you can to make safety of non-motorized travel around our community a priority. That has been particularly apparent anytime the NMTAC was discussing routes to schools. I know now more than ever that the NMTAC has A LOT of potential projects and recommendations for improvement around town and really, every school in Helena needs pedestrian improvements. I am not trying to say those other projects are ANY less important.

However, the situation around Kessler is unique. The walk audit identified numerous and severe deficiencies. The average scores at each stop were 2.5 or less. For comparison, at the Broadwater school audit, the average scores ranged from 5 to 8.

Even more unique in this case is the fact that the city is being asked to annex nearly 60 acres of NEW land with a major subdivision that will put additional traffic impact on existing streets, ALL of which are proposed to be on routes to school that DO NOT have sidewalks. I am not aware of any other school in the City of Helena that is facing a similar situation.

With annexation on the table, this project and associated recommendations need to be a priority TODAY. As Chairman Rehmann told you all during orientation in the Feb 2022 NMTAC meeting, [Resolution 19549](#), which established the NMTAC, states that one of the duties of the NMTAC is, "advocating for non-motorized facilities in new public and private development projects". Weighing in with your recommendations on how to reduce negative impacts of the proposed subdivision on non-motorized facilities is absolutely in your purview!

In addition to the impact Westside Woods would have on safe walking routes to Kessler and St Andrews School as well as CR and Hawthorne bus routes, the subdivision will also add considerable traffic to existing county roads. Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart are quiet roads with only a handful homes on them. Most of those streets are fairly flat streets for that reason are used by many of the elderly and young children in the neighborhood for recreation and walking. The streets have almost no traffic on them currently and feel safe even without sidewalks. However, the traffic on those streets will change drastically as hundreds of new residents use them as cut through streets to access a major subdivision.

With the previous submission of this subdivision to the City, all blocks of Flowerree, Hauser, and Park Dr west of Granite were recommended city staff to be annexed into the city and upgraded to complete street

standards. And the developer agreed to all those conditions of annexation with their last submission. However, with the new proposal, the developer has not proposed any such upgrades and there is no guarantee new city staff will make the same recommendations. Please, encourage the city to recommend upgrades to Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart to ensure area residents can continue to safely use those roads for non-motorized travel.

My concerns with the proposed development are all safety related. With the right conditions of annexation for safety, I would happily go to the City Commission and advocate FOR the WSW development.

Your recommendation to the City to require the necessary upgrades as conditions of annexation will be in line with the City's own Growth Policy and is a way to ensure the neighborhood and the NMTAC are not having to fight for decades to come to retrofit existing neighborhoods with much needed sidewalks. Let's make sure this is done right from the start!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Perry



## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne Pentecost <ajpentecost3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:13 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road, trying to fight for a simple sidewalk, like Mark has been fighting for with CR Anderson. Yes Kessler has a horrible layout and it needs to be fixed but that is not possible right now. These recommendations might be. We can't make everyone happy. It will not be perfect. However we can at least use our voices to advocate for those that can't. Please, at least try and ask.

Anna Jayne Pentecost  
Mother and Certified Emergency Room RN

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Matthew Pentecost <mgpentecost@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:21 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC recommendations

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

Matt Pentecost

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne <sweetjane33@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:24 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,  
I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

*Annie Howell*

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Matt Johnson <mattjohnson311@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:13 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

As a resident of Helena Westside with children starting school at Kessler next year, I want to thank you for conducting the walkability audit. I encourage you to please make formal recommendations to the commission for their review of the Westside Woods development proposal.

After your walk, I'm sure you'll agree, the estimated traffic volume associated with the development will significantly exacerbate conditions that are already unsafe and substandard for kids walking to school, as well as general pedestrian traffic. This area was poorly developed and lacks basic infrastructure for conveying pedestrians.

In addition, Park Drive, Stuart, Floweree, and Hauser to the west of the area walked are designated to convey new subdivision traffic. These streets are dirt and lack infrastructure to accommodate those traffic loads. Significantly unsafe conditions will be created when that vehicle traffic volume is added to current and future pedestrian traffic. These streets and sidewalks need to be developed if this subdivision comes forth.

As a rapidly growing community, we cannot approve projects that will worsen conditions for pedestrian traffic. On the contrary, modern transportation planning encourages providing dedicated routes and safe conditions for pedestrians, to offset our past bias towards vehicular modes of transportation.

We need to take every opportunity to modernize our mistakes of the past for the sake of our future generations.

Thank you for considering the broader picture and considering this opportunity to improve our community.

Best regards,  
Matt Johnson  
2690 Park Dr, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Orpha Smigaj <opiernc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:31 AM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Audit Kessler School area

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



**Orpha Smigaj** <[opiernc@gmail.com](mailto:opiernc@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Young

Thank you for completing the Walk Audit for Kessler School. Kessler is a wonderful school for our neighborhood with many safety concerns for children and parents who attend this school. I appreciate all of the work that is being done to make this neighborhood school safer for our children. I have lived on the corner of Hauser and Silverette for over 30 years. I have witnessed many near miss collisions with children and cars on these streets. Our neighborhood would be made a safer one with installation of paved roads, lighting, signage, sidewalks and crosswalks. With the proposed westside subdivision these issues are going to worsen tenfold. Before and after school pickup and drop off is currently a nightmare and it is only going to get worse with a huge influx of houses in this proposed subdivision. The crosswalk zone on Granite is a very short distance to Highway 12. Cars are backed up; kids dart out in the street and people speed through this area coming off of Highway 12 onto Granite and the crosswalk. There is no more room for more cars, more kids in this area. I am not against development in this area. I am against how big the subdivision is going to be, there are way too many houses proposed for this subdivision. It is going to flood this already congested neighborhood area and school.

Thank you again for the walk audit, I believe the recommendations would greatly improve the safety of our neighborhood and school.

Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Lu Driessen <ldriessen929@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:08 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Public comment NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

Thank you for conducting an audit of the walkability of the area around Kessler School.

Reading the report emphasizes the safety concerns we see, as active members of the neighborhood. Use of the area has increased, as development has grown. We expect that to continue.

Please utilize the audit to establish priorities for improvement and set forth a concrete plan, with an established timeline, to address deficiencies identified.

Helena is looking to create a safe, more walkable community. Given this area is directly adjacent to a well attended school, we ask for expediency in addressing the identified concerns.

Thank you,

Lu Driessen

Scott Harris

2600 Hauser Blvd, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Jim Lund <pjameslund@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:29 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** recent NMTAC Audit walk and report

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your attention to assess the pedestrian situation for the area around Kessler Elementary School. The roads audited are extremely busy during school pick-up and drop off. The lack of sidewalks on several of the main roads, particularly during busy times, is a danger to those that are walking. I am not surprised that in the audit many of the intersections scored just 2.5/10.

There is foot and bicycle traffic that often comes through Granite for walkers, runners, and cyclists that are accessing the numerous trail systems just to the north (Centennial trail, Spring Meadow Lake, Ten-Mile Creek Park). I live in this neighborhood and bike or jog commute to Fort Harrison via Granite to the trail system most days year around. Thank you for your efforts to make this area safe for cyclists and pedestrians.

With warm regards,

Jim Lund  
2610 Knight St  
406-422-8844

**From:** [Matt Johnson](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Parks Board public comment for Jan 3, 2023 public meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 4:51:50 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Helena Planning Department and Parks Board,  
I'm writing to provide public comment regarding the Westside Woods subdivision proposal, specific to park land and open space requirements.

My wife and I and our two young children reside at 2690 Park Dr, immediately adjacent to the proposed development. We have a long term vested interest in this project.

The current proposal for parkland and open space dedication is unacceptable for the numerous reasons already discussed. Those lots are generally unusable and are proposed to maximize the developable area since they are steep and not conducive to development. They will also translate to a maintenance liability for City of Helena taxpayers.

In general, my wife and I are in agreement with the position of Save Helena Westside (SHW):

"SHW believes the option that is in the best interest of the area residents is the for the parkland dedication to include only the Legrande Cannon walking trail portion of Lot 12, in addition to providing land suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park facility that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities."

It also shouldn't be ignored that there is a substantial existing trail network through this area that has been used by area residents for several decades. Everyday we observe numerous neighbors use the network, some to access Legrande Cannon and some stay in the area itself. The recent stunt by the development team to close the network unless their petition was signed is concerning as to whether trails are a priority, as claimed in their marketing materials, and it's unclear if trails will actually be constructed and by whom.

The current proposed trail system is vague in the current application, it appears on some exhibits but not on most. It's unclear whether trails through the subdivision will be required. The current proposed trails also substantially deviate from the existing network, and won't provide access to Legrande Cannon and other recently acquired trails with a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed by area residents for several decades.

We would like to see proposed trails follow the existing trail network to maximum practical extent as a condition of approval, and include a natural vegetation buffer that will provide a similar natural experience that's been enjoyed over the past several decades.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and consider preservation of the existing trail network as a requirement, in addition to the position of SHW.

Best,



Matt and Jen Johnson  
2690 Park Drive

## Heather Kahler

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**From:** Dick Josephson <dickj3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:11 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Distinguished Parks Board Members:

We would like to request that you defer your decision regarding this newest application until such time as the density of this development is reconciled. As you may be aware it is at the root of much concern about traffic flow, safety, and infrastructure. Considerable challenge is underway at this time and will be addressed in the coming months.

Should the developer be required to reduce the number of households, reconfiguration would likely provide areas that are much more conducive to parkland use than are lots 6, 16, 19, and 12. These areas appear to be marginally useful at best.

While they may comply with the percentage of acreage requirements, do they comply with the spirit and intent of the requirements for parkland set asides? Perhaps this deficiency is attributable as well to the density proposed by the developer.

We are appreciative of your efforts to assure that our Helena community overall, and each neighborhood within it advance in a way that is beneficial to us all while still allowing the developer a successful outcome. A delay in your deliberations will provide the opportunity for Westside Woods to be welcomed into our Westside.

Debora Speyer  
Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Richard

Last Name

Josephson

Email

dickj3@gmail.com

Street Address

2550 Mayrowan Court

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

650 243 7816

Date

February 03, 2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

**Please be advised that your comments may be regarding an application not yet deemed complete or sufficient by City staff. Please revisit the project website for updated information periodically and provide additional comments in the future, where necessary.**

Find the list of current projects here: <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/community-development/current-projects>

Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

This is a copy of the letter that I submitted to you on 10/17/22 pertaining to the first application. I believe that it remains applicable to this newest application-the concerns have yet to be mitigated. Once again your consideration of the situation will be very much appreciated by those of us in Helena's Westside community and beyond.

Many thanks to April for her call this morning in response to my recent inquiry to Mark Young.

The request is to learn how the agencies review process is structured in order to understand how to proactively provide input for consideration. The concern is, that to do so reactively once the reviews are complete, creates a much more cumbersome condition for reconsidering the conclusions of the reviews.

My focus as a resident proximate to the proposed subdivision is for the adverse impact that it's density will have on the quality of life for our existing neighborhood. In other words, not the many details to assess for what occurs on the 60 acres development, but how the addition of 179 new households will be off-site consequential to all of the existing households by the traffic that will be imposed upon our residential streets.

I would like to encourage that the Community Development Department facilitate one or several interactive workshops where a collaborative effort among the developer, the neighborhood group, Save Helena Westside, and the city professionals seeks a density solution that enables a plan that works for all involved.

If I understand correctly, the developer's traffic study has been shown to be errant by an independent peer review. As such it may not be a viable basis for the developer's application per City of Helena requirements.

It is my hope that the City Community Development Department will exhibit the same desire to protect our existing segment of the Helena Community as to the appeal of the proposed expansion of it.

I firmly believe a solution can be found where a benefit for some does not have to be at the expense of others.

I look forward to your initiatives in bringing all parties successfully together.

Your leadership will be very much appreciated by the very many members of our community who are very concerned about the density of this proposed subdivision.

Richard Josephson  
2550 Mayrowan Court  
650 243 7816

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



**From:** [Ish K.](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Parkland at Helena West Side  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:54:21 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

We support the parkland dedication that includes the small portion of Lot 12 that contains a short section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail, with the balance of the required land dedication being from areas suitable for sports fields and/or a developed park within the subdivision.

And we are opposed to the City accepting any additional land that is steep and/or otherwise not suitable for sports fields or a proper city park that could be used by persons of all ages and abilities, including persons requiring handicapped access. This includes Lots 6, 16, 19, and the balance of Lot 12 that does not contain the Legrande Cannon walking trail. These lots consist mostly of very steep grades, with water drainage and water holding areas, and steep, rocky areas around the outer boundaries of the proposed subdivision. They are not suitable for general city park activities. And they certainly would not be accessible by residents with any significant mobility problems.

These lots would also place a perpetual burden on the City for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal on adjacent sidewalks.

Please consider sharing your comments with the Parks Board members via email over this New Year's weekend. This will allow them to consider your concerns during the public meeting on Wednesday. Also, please consider joining the zoom meeting to show public interest and, if desired, offer comments at that time as well.



## April Sparks

---

**From:** Angie Lee <angielee396@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 30, 2023 4:38 PM  
**To:** citycommunitydevelopment  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Phased Major Subdivision Comments

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I'd like to comment on the development mentioned above.

The plans look like it should be a nice development when it is finally finished, but....

From what I see, there will be 96 single family lots and 4 multi family lots for a total of 172 living units. If there is an average of 2 vehicles per living unit, that adds up to 344 new vehicles coming and going every day. It doesn't appear there will be any new through streets created so it looks like all of this traffic will be on Granite to Hauser Blvd or Granite to Overlook to Hauser. This permanent increase in traffic is pretty large and concerns me.

There will also be a huge amount of construction traffic on these paths for the next several years which will include big trucks and large equipment running long hours and breaking our streets down.

At the end of the day, we will be left to deal with the dust, the dirt tracked on the streets, the materials that get blown around in the wind, the new potholes, the increase in traffic in our quiet neighborhood and all the other negatives that come with construction.

If the new subdivision is done well it will be an attribute to Helena but I hope something can be done to preserve our quality of life while it is being built.

Thank you,  
Angie Lee

## Christopher Brink

---

**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 28, 2023 7:51 PM  
**To:** Christopher Brink; Rebecca Dockter; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Letter of intent to sell or grant easement for road  
**Attachments:** AmericanStorageWestLetterToCity.jpeg; USFS\_Fire\_Models\_Westside.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Director Brink, Attorney Dockter, and Engineer Young,

Save Helena Westside (SHW) has been working for some time to try and propose solutions and conditions to minimize the negative impacts of the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision on the public safety and general welfare of existing and future neighborhood residents as well as Kessler School children and their families. One of those solutions is to provide an additional access to the subdivision from existing roads to the West. **Please see the attached letter from Tim Davis, the property owner of American West Storage, who has committed to selling the land needed or granting an easement to make western access possible.**

Additional access to the proposed WSW neighborhood is needed for adequate emergency access and evacuation, and to improve connectivity with surrounding properties. For that reason, SHW believes the conditions set forth in City of Helena Code Section 12-4-2 D (2) have been met and ask that the City require a condition that a Western access be provided to connect the proposed dead-end Livezey Ct to the existing Park Lane to the west.

Due to lack of connectivity from the proposed subdivision to the surrounding area, we have concerns about the impact the proposed subdivision would have on the safety of children using area school routes and existing congestion on Granite Ave and Hauser Blvd, emergency response particularly during school hours, or a large-scale evacuation in the event of an emergency like a fast-moving forest fire.

Granite Ave and Hauser Blvd are both routes to school used by area children walking to Kessler and St Andrews or walking to bus stops for CR Anderson and Hawthorne schools. In its currently proposed form, essentially **every single new vehicle trip generated by the subdivision, including construction traffic for years to come, will be driving along school routes.**

United States Forest Service (USFS) fire models run in December of 2022 show that under conditions typical during fire season, a fire could start several miles away from the proposed subdivision and "the City of Helena Police Department would have **less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.**" (See attached letter from USFS with fire models).

The City's Growth Policy Objective 25 is to, "Avoid annexation of undeveloped land until all public facilities are adequate to serve the new development, or an infrastructure plan is in place to assure that such facilities will be provided when needed." And Objective 20 is to, "Maintain public health and public safety as high priorities, providing necessary services and addressing potential hazards within and adjacent to City limits."



We believe that without additional access to the West, the City does not meet the Growth Policy objectives to have adequate public facilities, namely roads, to serve the new WSW development and maintain public health and public safety as high priorities. The attached letter from the landowner of American Storage West allows for such a road to be built to city standards.

Thank you for your consideration,  
SHW Directors

---

This email has been scanned for spam and viruses by Proofpoint Essentials. Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Janice & Tracy

Last Name

Long

Email

Tjsslong@yahoo.com

Street Address

2525 Hauser Blvd

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

Date

1/30/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

Please consider the developer to develop a City Park!! Do not let him donate a gulley or undeveloped property as Parkland. There is lots of undeveloped land that he could donate that is not usable property for a park. Make him create a HOA to collect funds to have maintenance done on trails and parks.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature



---



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Judy

Last Name

Ludwig

Email

Judy3017@msn.com

Street Address

592 Granite

City

Helena

State

Mt

Zip Code

59601

Phone

9708467641

Date

2/1/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of park land in this proposed subdivision. lots.

I am concerned about the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, is written on a horizontal blue line.

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 8:52 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods parkland

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Park Board and Planning Commission Members

I'm writing to express my concerns over the type and location of land being offered as a fulfillment of new development open/park spaces. I'm concerned for two primary reasons:

The building of lot 12 will, at best, negatively impact the Legrande Canyon walking trail. I am a retired homeowner in the neighborhood and I have physical limitations with my mobility; I use the section of this trail heading west from Silverette frequently during the non-snowy days because the gentle slope and wide path are accessible for persons with mobility issues like myself and enjoyable for many others. This trail is a gem used by all varieties of neighborhood residents, and is the result of many people working very hard to enhance the outdoor experience for a wide variety of uses. I hope it will not be diminished for a few lots.

My other concern is the type of land being offered as an alternative for recreational use is basically unusable for animals without hooves. Kids will not have a level playground or area to run and play games. Currently kids are riding bikes, skateboards, and running into the streets with no real issue because of low traffic numbers. The substantial increase in traffic this development will cause creates the necessity for a large, safe place for these children to play, not a steep inaccessible incline. What is needed is a safe, level park with a playground in the middle of the development for the benefit of every one.

I hope you take these issues seriously as they impact those of us who call this neighborhood home.

Regards,

Judy Ludwig  
592 Granite Avenue



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Terry

Last Name

MacLaurin

Email

terrymaclaurin@gmail.com

Street Address

2424 HAUSER BLVD

City

HELENA

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064653816

Date

2/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Dear Staff:

I am concerned about the negative impacts the subdivision will have on public health and safety. My main concerns are as follows:

1. Need for a western access road to the existing Park Lane for emergency access, evacuation, and connectivity, as well as directing construction and day to day traffic away from school routes.
2. Need to add sidewalks to existing streets.
3. Need to consider fire and evacuation concerns relating to long block lengths and dead-end streets.

I agree wholeheartedly with the issues presented in the February 2, 2023 letter submitted by the Save Helena Westside Directors.

Thank you for your consideration,

Terry MacLaurin

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

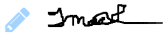
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





**From:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**To:** [April Sparks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Westside Woods subdivision land use  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2023 8:56:03 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:27 AM  
To: County\_Planning\_Mail <County\_Planning\_Mail@lccountymt.gov>  
Subject: Westside Woods subdivision land use

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Parks Board Members,

Hello, we are residents of the west side of town. We have concerns about the proposed land use for the steeper portions of the Westside Woods subdivision. Many of the residents here are worried about access to park land dedications for all to be able to access. These areas are not suitable for the activities that are proposed. Please consider the lots are mostly steep, rocky and have water drainage holding areas. How will this impact the area in the long run. I am very much in favor of development of the area if it is done with knowledge of the future access for all ages and abilities.

Mark and Theresa Maleki  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt 59601

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 8:51 AM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I was told you will be reviewing the Westside Woods development tomorrow for parks land. Please consider accepting Lot 12 that gives access to laGrande hiking area but do not accept any other land that is too steep or not usable for athletic fields or is accessible to all people no matter their disability. Helena lacks athletic fields for all sports and this should be a priority for accepting any parks lands for development. Developments should not be donating unusable land to the city parks department that the city then has to maintain.

Thank you for considering these thoughts when looking at the current proposal.

Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St  
Helena MT 59601

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Colin McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 9:56:13 AM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board Member,

I am a resident of Le Grande Cannon Blvd and I have concerns about several options in the current proposal for the Parkland Dedication to the Westside Woods Subdivision (all but the first option). I regularly use the Le Grande Cannon Trail (at least 2-3 times per week) year round, as do hundreds of others in the area with varying needs. I am concerned with any options that do not include maintaining this historic trail for public use, and providing additional open space to a very crowded redevelopment plan by the developer. Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. The trail access needs to be maintained - it is one of the few flat trails on Mount Helena truly accessible to multiple needs groups. My rationale follows:

During the previous application process for this subdivision, the Parks Board recommended that a small portion of Lot 12 that contains a section of the Legrande Cannon walking trail be accepted as parkland dedication, with the remaining land requirement being fulfilled by the developer by paying cash in lieu of the remaining land balance. The Parks Board rejected all options that included the steep land areas that were not suitable for general park use, including the majority of Lot 12 (except the small portion containing Legrande Cannon walking trail). They also rejected consideration of the steep, unusable lots 6, 16, and 19. They voiced their concerns with these steep areas not being of value to all residents, as well as concerns that the city would be responsible for ongoing weed control, fire mitigation, and other maintenance of these steep areas. These were good decisions and I supported them.

The Parks Board also discussed whether they could recommend that the developer provide land that is suitable for use as a developed park area, but were advised by the (now former) Community Development Director Sharon Haugen that the board was not allowed to consider any options not submitted by the developer, so this option was not considered previously. However, during the current application process, the Helena Director of Parks and Recreation (Doug Smith) has indicated that the Parks Board can consider recommending that land suitable for a developed park be dedicated to the city to fulfill the parkland dedication requirement.

Also discussed during the previous application for this subdivision was the fact that a short section of the Le Grande Cannon trail was actually built on the subdivision property (within the proposed Lot 12) instead of within the established right of way. This prompted the developer to recommend including all of Lot 12 as the parkland dedication property. But the Parks Board rejected this option due to the fact that Lot 12 mostly consists of very steep terrain and is unsuitable for park use. In the end, the Parks Board's recommendation to the City Commission included only the section of Lot 12 that contained the Le Grande Cannon

trail, with the balance of the land requirement being fulfilled by cash in lieu of land.

Also during the previous application process, there were some discussions of having the Kessler School grounds available for park use, as well as some mention of Spring Meadow park facilities being nearby. However, Kessler grounds are not accessible for persons with mobility limitations and Spring Meadow does not include a developed park or sports field. There has been enough high-density residential development in this area already such that significant additional open space is necessary to accommodate additional high-density residential development - especially when development plans will remove the easily accessible open space used by many existing residents.

Of the options listed, I support rejecting parkland dedication of all areas outside the existing used trail. The remainder should be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields and developed parks in the subdivision. I understand the developer wants to maximize his ROI with development of the most desirable land, but in my opinion the City needs to set a precedent with developers to show they consider the long-term needs of the community over the short-term capital concerns of developers. There are plenty of developers that would have much better plans for developing this property than the current, as they continue to blunder through now their second irresponsible and publicly adverse application. Please make decisions that will allow the west side to be more than dense residential development with nowhere for our small kids to play.

Thank you for your service to our community, as well as time and consideration.

Colin McCoy

**From:** [Terri McCoy](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Westside Parkland Dedication (public comment)  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 12:36:11 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Parks Board Members  
Re: Westside Parkland Dedication  
From: Helena homeowner

I write to encourage you to keep Helena's neighborhood trails and parks accessible for all as currently undeveloped areas are being considered for future growth in housing, roads and other amenities. As I understand it, the Board is considering a land dedication for a neighborhood park on the west side that includes a portion of the Le Grande Cannon walking trail as well as other surrounding areas, some of which should not be considered suitable to meet planning requirements for subdivisions and/or other construction projects.

I've seen the map, and while I support a parkland **dedication that includes the land that crosses/contains the Le Grande Cannon walking trail (some of lot 12)**, I ask the Board to reject entirely parkland dedications on lots 6, 16, 19 and the remainder of lot 12. You all are the experts, and I hope it goes without saying, but this land is clearly not suitable for a proper city park due to its terrain. In fact, I cringe to think about what would have to happen to the land to make these areas suitable to house one of our cherished neighborhood parks—let alone make it accessible for young, old, able-bodied and non-able bodied citizens.

There has to be a better way. It seems to me like this parkland proposal is trying to meet some city requirements I'm not aware of as cheaply as possible without any concern for the folks who actually live, recreate and pay taxes here.

Terri McCoy  
3240 Le Grande Cannon Blvd  
Helena MT 59601



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Abigail

Last Name

McLane

Email

abigailmclane@gmail.com

Street Address

2024 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064611608

Date

01/24/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

This comment is in regards to the upcoming discussion before the Parks Board regarding the Westside Woods Parkland Dedication. As an avid trail runner, my family partially chose to live near to the Mount Helena trail system for access to the mountain and we love all of the trail access afforded to us. However, as a parent of young children I can tell you that what we miss about where we live is that there are no developed city parks available to our children other than Kessler Elementary. Kessler is great, but our children already spend three recesses a day playing at school. With the potential for a development in the area, it is a significant opportunity to finally add a developed City park, maintained by the City and implemented by the Developer, to our neighborhood. Especially with the potential addition of many multi-family housing units, where there is no backyard available, the likelihood that there will be children searching for a place to play is very high! Additionally, this will benefit all of the children on the west side who have no park. We have many trails in the Helena area and in this neighborhood, but not much in the way of developed park area. Please require a developed park as part of the development of this area.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Abigail

Last Name

McLane

Email

abigailmclane@gmail.com

Street Address

2024 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064611608

Date

02/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

As the Community Development Department reviews the Westside Woods Subdivision application, I encourage the staff to consider this an opportunity to require the Developer to add to their proposal the critical pieces that will help this neighborhood be safe for all those in and around it. Specifically, including safety features like sidewalks both in the neighborhood itself as they develop it, but also for the surrounding streets which will become a part of Helena City limits and will be impacted by the increased traffic from this subdivision. Currently streets such as Granite and Hauser, which will become thoroughfare streets with high traffic from the subdivision, do NOT have sidewalks yet are some of the main methods of neighborhood children to travel to Kessler Elementary school. This is an opportunity to have the Developer remediate their impact on the neighborhood by bringing up the streets they are impacting to align with City Code for sidewalks and boulevards.

Additionally, there will be significant traffic added to Granite street as it is the major access point to the neighborhood. This street is also the main drop off point for Kessler Elementary school and is significantly congested at pickup and drop off times. There is a need for a western access road to the existing Park Lane, which should be required as part of this subdivision to allow for better emergency access, evacuation, and connectivity, as well as directing day to day traffic away from school routes.

Safety in general and anything that can be done to improve safety for pedestrians but also for emergency access should be considered and required as part of this development work.

Thank you

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 Abigail N.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Colleen

Last Name

Nichols

Email

soultree@bresnan.net

Street Address

913 Granite

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064311972

Date

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

As a resident who has lived south of Kessler school for 33 years, I am requesting that the parks board recommend that the WSW subdivision developers be required to dedicate land suitable for an ADA compliant park. I am also asking the parks board to require that trails within the subdivision be built to city standards and that the future WSWHO a contribute dues for the ongoing maintenance of those trails.  
The developer has consistently stated that these trails would be open to the Helena residents , and I am hoping that that will indeed be a reality. The Kessler school playground and park area is not ADA accessible so it is imperative that a subdivision of this density have areas where families can recreate.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



---

## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Dan & Colleen Nichols <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 2, 2023 5:54 PM  
**To:** County\_Planning\_Mail; Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Westside Woods Subdivision

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in regard to the park land dedication for the Westside Woods subdivision. I have resided at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and am in support of the parkland dedication that includes a small portion of LeGrande "boulevard" walking trail. However I am adamantly opposed to the city accepting any other land that is steep or not usable for a city park or sports field that could be used by all people regardless of age or mobility issues.

I am a senior citizen who regularly walks in our neighborhood and deal daily with the steep grades throughout our area. The areas that the developer is proposing for parkland are steep, rocky and would certainly not be accessible for to anyone with a mobility issue. These areas are also going to be difficult for the city to maintain. The developer states that he wants a subdivision that is accessible and people friendly, he should certainly consider an appropriate park or sports field. The area that is south of Kessler school is already quite busy and could not support the density of the proposed large subdivision.

Please consider my comments when you make a decision that will impact our neighborhood forever.

Thank you,

Colleen Nichols



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Lou

Last Name

Pelletier

Email

cheflouray07@gmail.com

Street Address

2650 Park Drive

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064497032

Date

02/03/2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

I fear for the safety of all the little kids walking in the neighborhood already!! Lots of critters up here too that need to be protected from potential additional traffic

Upload Additional Questions or Comments


If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature

 Lou Pelletier

---

**From:** [Sarah Perry](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Jan 4th discussion of parkland dedication  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 4:30:29 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks Board,

I am writing as a resident of Helena's Westside with comments regarding your January 4th, 2023 agenda item to discuss the proposed parkland dedication for the Westside Woods Subdivision.

I would ask that you please recommend the option from the memo stating, "**Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [LeGrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.**"

That very option was discussed in the August 25, 2021 Parks Board meeting with the previous application of this subdivision. Former City Parks Director Kristi Ponozzo recommended this option of a developed park/playground citing Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2019; #76-3-621 // Parkland Dedication Requirement. Per #76-3-609, #4, which states:

The governing body, in consultation with the subdivider and the planning board or park board that has jurisdiction, **may determine suitable locations for parks and playgrounds** and, giving due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider, may determine whether the park dedication must be a land donation, cash donation, or a combination of both.

Director Ponozzo mentioned the LeGrande Cannon Trail portion of Lot 12 would be approximately .9 acres of parkland dedication. The remainder would be 2.8 acres to meet the 3.33 acre parkland dedication requirement.

I am in support of that option. The entire Upper Westside of Helena South of Euclid Ave has only one developed park, Cunningham Park, which is over 1.5 miles away from the proposed subdivision. The next closest developed park with a playground or multi-use courts of any kind is Barney Park, which is over 2 miles away and across Euclid Ave.

Kessler School's playground facilities are not accessible to persons with mobility constraints and are not available to the public during school days or sports practices, which take place on most weekday evenings during the school year.

**Developed parkland along the street with an accessible playground, sports fields, and/or multi-use courts would allow persons in the neighborhood who are not able to recreate freely to get out and do so. This would add value and variety to the park facilities offered on the Westside.**

The proposed parkland dedication of steep land with trails will only be usable to those persons already able to get out and easily recreate on Mount Helena. The westside of Helena is experiencing infill and growth to many previously empty lots along the Hauser corridor. As more people come to the neighborhood, the need for accessible playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities is growing. ***Steep mountain trails are not accessible.*** And during the winter months when those trails become icy, packed snow they are able to be used by even fewer people. Therefore, in the spirit of providing usable parkland to as wide of a range of persons as possible, particularly the aging and less mobile members of our community, I would ask that you please recommend suitable parkland be set aside for a developed, accessible park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Perry  
2636 Woodward Ave  
Helena, MT





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Sarah

Last Name

Perry

Email

sarah.3.perry@gmail.com

Street Address

2636 Woodward Ave

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

13194322112

Date

3 Feb 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Westside Woods is unique in that it is not just a proposed subdivision but also, land that needs to be annexed first. I support the position of Save Helena Westside (see attached letter) that the existing and proposed infrastructure is NOT ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT ANNEXATION.

My youngest two kids currently walk a half mile to and from Kessler School, primarily on Granite Ave, which has NO STREETLIGHT and NO SIDEWALKS. My oldest walks those same streets to catch the bus to CR middle school even earlier in the morning. My kids and their neighborhood friends routinely have to jump into the ditch to get out of the way of vehicles. And with snow and ice during the winter, that is often times not possible and they are stuck hugging the side of the road, hoping the cars see them and move over. For much of the year, it is dark until almost 8 AM, which means they are walking on the snowy, slick road IN THE DARK, with no way to safely get out of traffic.

According to the TIS, Westside Woods is projected to more than triple the traffic on Granite Ave (from 600 to over 1800). And if any of those single-family homes end up being duplexes instead of single-family, which would be perfectly allowable under the zoning, then traffic impact could be even more. Using the city's staff report from the pre-zone, based on what would be allowable by zoning, the traffic on Granite Ave could be as much as 4.9 TIMES current volume. I realize the true impact will likely fall somewhere in the middle of those two estimates. But either way, the current infrastructure with NO SIDEWALKS or streetlights on existing school routes is simply NOT ADEQUATE to support more traffic.

For that reason, I support the previous staff recommendations that the length of Granite Ave, as well as all sections of Hauser, Flowerree, and Park Dr west of Granite be improved to complete street standards. Due to the hundreds of additional vehicles projected to be traveling East on Hauser, I also recommend that Hauser from Granite to Joslyn be improved to complete street standards as safety of pedestrians walking on that stretch of street will also be drastically impacted by the subdivision traffic.

With the first last summer on Mount Helena and the recent Marshall, CO fire just over a year ago, we all say just how imperative it is that this subdivision have another public right of way access street to the West. Whether it is people needing to evacuate or the inevitable onlookers who come from elsewhere to see the action, the roads will be jammed with people and additional access is needed for safety of emergency response and evacuation. According to City Code, you CAN require such access when need is demonstrated for those exact reasons.

I am not against the subdivision, but I AM AGAINST the plans as proposed as they will have HUGE impacts on the safety of our neighborhood on both a daily basis and in the event of an emergency. PLEASE uphold City Code and the Growth Policy objectives and ask for the changes above so that we can keep families in Helena safe. We are counting on you!

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

2Feb2023 SHW Comment Letter to City Staff.pdf

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Edward

Last Name

Santos

Email

ed@mt.net

Street Address

2530 Flowerree st

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-431-7289

Date

1/24/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

To: Parks Board: The West Side Woods subdivision currently has no parks planned. For a development of this size it should have a park with a playground and some type of court (basketball, Pickleball, etc). Currently the developer is planning to spend money developing a trail system that encircles the development. From a marketing stand point this is a good idea, however the area already has miles and miles of trails that are accessible by the neighborhood. What the West side is lacking are parks. The trails in this subdivision do not add value to the surrounding neighborhood and only benefits The developer via marketing to sell houses and able bodied people. A park would benefit all including children, young families, older people, and people with disabilities. I do not support the city taking on more trail maintenance in this subdivision but I do support a park with courts.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ed J', is written on a horizontal blue line.



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Edward

Last Name

Santos

Email

ed@mt.net

Street Address

2530 Flowerree St

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-431-7289

Date

1/31/23

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Comment to the Parks Board

The Westside Woods Subdivision that is currently being reviewed by the city needs to have a park with a playground, courts such as pickleball and open field. A park will allow people of all ages and abilities be able to enjoy the outdoors whereas the steep terrain of the Westside Woods trails would benefit only able-bodied people.

Sussex construction currently has in their plans to pay for the construction of a trail system that loops around their proposed subdivision. I am not against the trail system, however the only trails that are needed is to connect Park Lane and the proposed addition of Flowerree street to La Grande and the grater Helena City trail system. These trails would be in keeping with connectivity goals that NMTAC and the city of Helena. Any additional trails would be redundant and not a smart use of tax payer money to maintain. Please note that from the builder's perspective these trails serve not the community but play a major part of their marketing strategy to sell homes for more money.

I am requesting that the Parks Board serve the community and recommend a dedicated park in the Westside Woods Subdivision.

Thank You  
Ed Santos

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

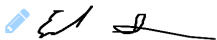
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



## Heather Kahler

---

**From:** Edward Santos <ed@mt.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 6:58 AM  
**To:** Douglas Smith  
**Cc:** Heather Kahler  
**Subject:** Sussex proposed West Side Woods subdivision parks

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Director Smith,

My name is Ed Santos and I live at 2530 Flowerree st close to the proposed West Side Woods subdivision.

I believe this subdivision can be a good addition to Helena provided it is well planned keeping community and connectivity in mind. Currently planned, this subdivision does neither with the only parkland proposed being steep grades and trails that only benefit healthy able-body individuals. Children, elderly, and handicap people will get no public area to play or enjoy outside spaces. I would like to see your recommendations to the City Planning Department and Commissioners be;

- A playground is recommended central to the subdivision
- Some type of court, basketball, pickle ball, etc.
- small field
- No cash in leu! (Cash In Leu does nothing to make Helena a better place to live, nor will it benefit the west side).

The only way Helena becomes a better place to live is through people insisting that the right thing gets done. A park that benefits all people on the west side is the right thing.

Regards,  
Ed Santos



**From:** [Save Helena Westside](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#); [hkahler@helena.mt](mailto:hkahler@helena.mt)  
**Subject:** Comment to Park Board members from Save Helena Westside for 1/4/ meeting - please share asap  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:03:27 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

## Members of the Consolidated Parks Board:

Save Helena Westside is comprised of hundreds of area residents who are affected by the proposed Westwood Woods subdivision. SHW is urging the parks board to consider the first option listed in the memo submitted to the Parks Board by Director Doug Smith in his December 20th memo. Specifically, this option is:

“Reject parkland dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail [Legrande Cannon trail within Lot 12]. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision”

SHW supports this option because of the extreme lack of developed park and sports facilities in the area.

SHW is urging the board to reject the recommendation made by the Helena Parks and Recreation Department, which is to accept all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19, for several reasons including:

This option will not provide any additional park or sports facilities for the area residents. Most of the land on Lots 6, 12, 16 and 19 is steep and rocky, and not suitable for general recreational activities.

The city will be burdened with all future maintenance of these 13+ acres, including weed control, fire mitigation, and snow removal of adjacent city sidewalks.

The potential trails that are referred to by the Helena Parks/Rec dept would not serve the greater needs of all area residents, especially the area children and those of lesser physical capabilities.

The potential trails do not significantly increase connectivity to the trails above Legrande Cannon.

There is no specified budget, design specifications, or timeframes for construction of these potential trails.

The Kessler School playground is not a suitable replacement for developed parks and sports fields for several reasons, including that these grounds are not available to the public during school hours, and that they do not offer proper access for handicapped persons.

Spring Meadow Park is a longer distance away, with a required walk across Hwy 12, which is too dangerous for younger children. Also, Spring Meadow lacks any developed playgrounds, sports facilities or courts.

One additional consideration is the fact that several right of way abandonments within the proposed Westside Woods subdivision property have provided the developer with an

additional 4+ acres to use for development. Some of these right of way areas could be used to properly connect the existing area streets to the Legrande Cannon walking trail. However, the current plans for the subdivision provide less connectivity to Legrande Cannon than previously enjoyed by area residents.

Thank you for considering the needs of area residents when making your recommendation for the parkland dedication of the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

--Directors of Save Helena Westside



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Last Name

Save Helena Westside

Email

savehelenawestside@gmail.com

Street Address

2615 Knight Street

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-224-4850

Date

January 30, 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Below is an updated public comment from Save Helena Westside (SHW) regarding the proposed Westside Woods Phased Subdivision. Our comment is regarding the park land dedication being considered by the City-County Consolidated Parks Board at the upcoming meeting this Wed, Feb 1st:

Since this issue was discussed at the January 4th meeting, Save Helena Westside has engaged in further conversations with the developer as well as city engineering staff. As a result, we are voicing our SUPPORT for the original proposal submitted by the developer and recommended by Parks Director Smith, with the addition of three conditions. Specifically, SHW supports accepting all of Lots 6, 12, 16, and 19 (13+ acres) as parkland dedication for the proposed WSW subdivision, with the following three additional conditions:

1. That Lot 16 be made suitable for building a developed park during construction of Phase 1, with final approval for Phase 2 of the subdivision being contingent upon the Lot 16 area being filled and graded to city park standards. If Lot 16 cannot be improved during this period, an alternate area suitable for general park use should be designated.
2. That all trails be built to city standards as the developer has stated in their subdivision application.
3. That the future Westside Woods Home Owners Association (HOA) for the proposed new subdivision contribute an appropriate portion of the HOA dues for the City's ongoing maintenance of the trails and open lands.

This recommendation of support is based on a few developments since the January 4th meeting when this issue was first considered by the Parks Board. The first is that the results of a recent survey conducted among the area residents indicates an overwhelming preference to have a developed park in the area. Also, the developer's staff have indicated that Lot 16 could be transformed into a general use park area, and city engineering staff have indicated that this approach seems feasible. The survey results have been uploaded with this comment.

Thank you for considering the interests of the west side area residents in the matter of park land dedication.

--Save Helena Westside board of directors

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

SHW\_Parks\_Survey\_Results\_forParksBoard\_Jan2023.pdf

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Save Helena

Last Name

Westside

Email

savehelenawestside@gmail.com

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

Date

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

Please see the attached letter with Save Helena Westside (SHW) Comments regarding the general review of the Westside Woods Subdivision.

We are also including attachments with the Kessler Walkability Audit Report and USFS fire models, which are referenced in our letter.

Sincerely,  
SHW Directors

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

I2\_Walk\_Audit\_at\_Kessler\_Elem\_1.11.23.pdf

USFS\_Fire\_Models\_Westside.pdf

2Feb2023 SHW Comment Letter to City Staff.pdf


If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 HW

**I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary School**  
Helena, Montana  
Conducted: 03 January 2023, 11:00am-12:30pm  
Published: 11 January 2023

**Attendees:** Greg Wirth (NMTAC member), Abigail McClane (Kessler Parents Council and Parent), Ron Bartsch (Sussex Construction), Bekka Cantrell (Sussex Construction), Derek Davis (Sussex Construction), John Andrew (Helena Citizen’s Council Representative), Todd Verrill (Helena Schools), Craig Puchat (Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks), Patrick Marron (Neighbor, St Andrews parent), Cory Chenoweth (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Riley Thatcher (Principal at Kessler), Sarah Perry (Save Helena Westside, Neighbor, Kessler parent), Amy Geiger (St. Peter’s Health Injury Prevention), Charles Alvarez (Ability MT), Anna Jayne Pentecost (Neighbor, Kessler parent), Sarah Sandau (Lewis and Clark Public Health and walk audit Facilitator), Patricia Bik (Helena Citizen’s Council), Mark Young (City of Helena), Kevin Rechkoff (NMTAC member)

**Background:** On the November Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) meeting, Save Helena Westside group requested a walk audit and a recommendation from NMTAC on the routes to Kessler Elementary. On the December NMTAC meeting, the request was made again to NMTAC, and NMTAC agreed to host a walk audit around Kessler Elementary. NMTAC requested that Lewis and Clark Public Health assist in coordinating an Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk Audit (I2 Walk Audit) at and around Kessler Elementary. Concerns were regarding accessibility and safety.

In this area of town, there are numerous houses, schools (Kessler Elementary, St. Andrew, Pick up for C.R. Anderson), access to trails, and connectivity to downtown. The route considered was all originally located in the County but is now mostly public right-of-way in the City limits.

**Route:** The group started at the Kessler parking lot on the east side of the building at 11:00am. They walked south on Silverette Street to Hauser Boulevard (1.5 blocks), then west on Hauser to Granite Avenue (1 block), and finally North on Granite to Knight Street (2 blocks). (See Figure 1 below for map of the route)

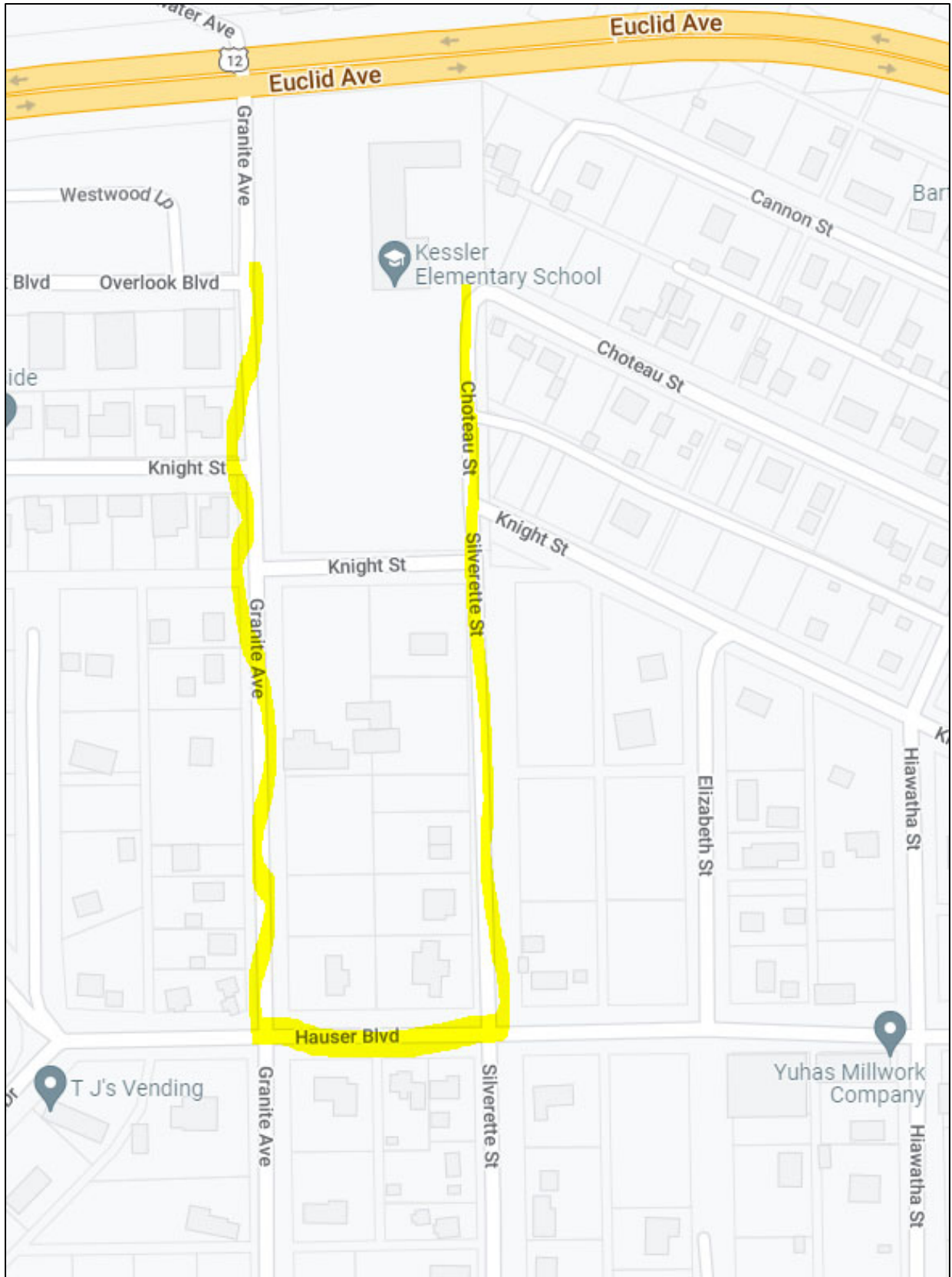


Figure 1



**Observations, questions, and ideas from the I2 Walk Audit are as follows:**

**Stop #1:** Intersection of Choteau Street and Knight Street. At the first stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the first leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Paved street, wide road, stop sign, setback of fence to the school, good shoulder, parking on one side, bike racks.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalks, or lighting make it difficult and unsafe to walk. No speed limit signs or school zone signage visible. No shade or trees. Drop off gets scary with parents trying to cut the line and zip around.

*Ideas:* Add speed limit signage, more school signage, sidewalks, lighting, possibly speedbumps.

**Stop #2:** Intersection of Silverette Street and Hauser Blvd. At the second stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the second leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop signs, access to trails, visibility, speed signage, visible driveways, pretty views, close to St. Andrews.

*Needs Improvement:* Busy and quick moving street. No sidewalks, boulevard, crosswalks, or lighting. Since it is not paved, it turns into an icy/mucky mess.

*Ideas:* Add sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming, paving of the street, and street lighting.

**Stop #3:** Intersection of Hauser Blvd and Granite Ave. At the third stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2. Comments on the third leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* Stop sign for Hauser traffic, speed limit signage, visibility, good views, grassy areas, less ice/better surface, setback in the driveways, bus stop for multimodal transportation, wide street.

*Needs Improvement:* No sidewalks, crosswalks, or lighting. No benches or areas of respite. High speedy going down Granite Ave with no traffic control. No safe route to the bus stop nor safe area to wait. House encroachments on City roads. Heavy traffic volume.

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more often. Perform a traffic study focused on traffic calming/slowing. Add sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, speed limit feedback signage.

**Stop #4:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, east of Granite. At the fourth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 2.5. Comments on the fourth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, school signage, sidewalks, crosswalk, paved road, trees, open,

*Needs Improvement:* Connection of sidewalks, more bulb outs, high-speed going down Granite Ave,

*Ideas:* Officers can enforce speed limit more regularly. Traffic calming/slowing study (maybe speedbumps). Roundabout potentially or more bulb outs.

**Stop #5:** Intersection of Granite Ave and Knight Street, west of Granite. At the fifth stop the team did not assess a score or. Comments on the fifth leg of the walk are as follows:

*Positive aspects:* ADA ramps, sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalk, paved road

*Needs Improvement:* Boulevard vegetation block view from entering Granite. Drivers must pull into crosswalk to see oncoming traffic on Granite.

*Ideas:* Trim existing deciduous trees and remove existing evergreen trees in boulevard for better visibility.

**Summary suggestions:**

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. Increase school and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Avenue
4. Add lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette Street
6. Speed study for Granite Avenue
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often

**Next Steps:**

This summary account will be provided to all participants in addition to NMTAC. This will be discussed at the next NMTAC meeting on Tuesday, February 8th at 5:15pm via zoom. NMTAC will then decide on whether to make a recommendation to the City of Helena Commission.

Community members can always make requests to the City on their own through the My Helena App. Or, they can fill out a “Traffic Calming Application Form.” They can email Mark Young, City Transportation Engineer at [myoung@helenamt.gov](mailto:myoung@helenamt.gov) if they have questions on those avenues.

## Appendix A

### Emailed Feedback / Public comments on the Kessler I2 Walk Audit

**From:** John Andrew <[j53andrew@gmail.com](mailto:j53andrew@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 10:16:54 AM MST

**To:** Sarah Sandau <[SSANDAU@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ssandau@lccountymt.gov)>, Wilbur Rehmann <[wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)>, Greg Wirth <[GregWirth@hotmail.com](mailto:GregWirth@hotmail.com)>

**Cc:** Diana Hammer <[diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com](mailto:diana.hammer.hcc@gmail.com)>, [patriciabikhcc@gmail.com](mailto:patriciabikhcc@gmail.com), [jrandrew211@gmail.com](mailto:jrandrew211@gmail.com)

**Subject: Re: Walk Audit Report**

Hi Sarah,

I thought your summation of the walk audit was straight forward and succinct so I don't have much to add. I went back Sunday afternoon to check out the Kessler Parking lot without vehicles and people although I'm sure that is not the main focus of the walk audit. Although NMTAC probably would like to recommend connectivity all the way around Kessler School I found myself more concerned about the approach from Choteau and Silverette Streets to the school parking lot which has the most traffic along with buses and no sidewalks entering into the main landing point for students. With the lack of funding I would like to recommend that NMTAC particularly highlight those streets into Kessler School. Thanks for all considerations to this matter.

Best,

John E. Andrew

HCC - District 1

**From:** Ashley Bryson <[ashleya816@hotmail.com](mailto:ashleya816@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** January 10, 2023 at 12:51:51 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** Walkability audit

Dear NMTAC and support staff,

I just wanted to say thank you for the walkability audit recently completed around Kessler school. I live in the area and have two children that attend Kessler school. They both walk to school every day along with a group of children from our neighborhood. Unfortunately, we have many stories about “near misses” and unsafe conditions they have experienced on their way to and from school. The neighborhood around the school has been expanding with many new multi-family homes over the last couple years, bringing with it more traffic and more potentially dangerous conditions for the many children who walk and bike to school daily. There are plans for quite a bit of continued growth. I love this neighborhood, and I want to see it continue to be a great place to raise children, recreate, walk our pets, and enjoy the nearby trail access. I would greatly appreciate any formal recommendations you may be able to make to improve the safety of this neighborhood as it currently stands and as it continues to expand.

Thank you,  
Ashley Bryson  
Resident at 2549 Knight Street

**From:** judy ludwig <[ludwigjudy@gmail.com](mailto:ludwigjudy@gmail.com)>

**Date:** January 9, 2023 at 3:59:00 PM MST

**To:** [wilbur@wt.net](mailto:wilbur@wt.net)

**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit

Chairman Wilbur Raymann

Thanks to you and all of your crew for the walk audit around Kessler Elementary. I appreciate all the work that went into it, especially during the cold.

I hope you encourage improvements for walkability, especially through sidewalks, in this area.

As you probably are aware, the times just before and after school is in session create quite a hazard for the little ones walking to and from Kessler with people dropping off and picking up students. The city is doing a much better job of plowing and sanding on Granite during the winter, but there are still many hazardous conditions. I have noticed that when the snow has been heavy kids are forced to walk more in the middle of the road, with two way traffic trying to dodge them and other cars. Shoulders remain icy and uneven, kids goof around with each other, and slips on the road scoria happen. Sidewalks on Granite and other nearby neighborhood arteries would help insure safer passage for kids and all pedestrians.

Thanks again for all of your efforts, they are appreciated.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

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**From:** hanna m <hthies@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:50 AM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Helena Westside development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC,

First, I wanted to thank you for taking the time to perform a walking assessment around Kessler school. We really appreciate you taking your time to see our concerns. Our family is a very active family walking, running, and riding bikes all over the west side of Helena and appreciate all you have done to help with this in our city.

I hope that after the walking assessment you can see our concerns with the lack of safe non motorized space there currently is on our main roadways. With the current proposed development and this mass increase in cars this could become very unsafe. Right now there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass and have someone walking on the road on Granite St. Every morning I have to stop in the dark as another car is coming down the hill so a kindergartner can safely walk on the street to school.

Also the Granite St intersection onto Euclid is already unsafe in the mornings and after school but even worse when trying to cross Euclid to reach the centennial trail by foot or bike during 8am or 5pm traffic. Trying to cross five lanes of traffic with children is terrifying and will only become more dangerous with increase in traffic.

Our family would like to safely continue our active lifestyles. This is why we chose to live on the west side. We are not against the development but just want to make sure the development is completed safely and correctly for the neighborhood. I appreciate all the time you have taken to look over all the information.

Thank you  
Hanna Marron  
2590 Knight St.

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

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**From:** Colleen <soultree@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:18 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We have been residents at 913 Granite for the past 33 years and appreciate NMTAC doing a walkability audit of our neighborhood. Over the past few years we have contacted the city numerous times due to our concerns with speeding traffic. It seems to fall on deaf ears.

We are asking that the results of the audit and any recommendations that NMTAC has shared with the City Commission. The proposed west side Woods subdivision will have a very negative impact on the safety of our neighborhood unless identified issues from the audit are addressed prior to approval of the subdivision.

Our children attended Kessler school in the 90s and our grandchildren are now there, and there has been no improvement in the walk ability to and from school in all these years, in fact now with all the increased traffic it is even more of a danger.

Thank you for what you do to improve non motorized transportation in Helena.

Dan and Colleen Nichols

Sent from my iPad

## Mark Young

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**From:** Eve Byron <evebyron@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Helena Westside walkability

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon.

Thank you for taking the time to tour our little neighborhood to discuss its "walkability."

I live on the corner of Hauser and Granite, and walk the neighborhood often. A couple items stand out in my mind regarding the safety of pedestrians and bikers:

1. The Granite and Hauser intersection would best be served by a roundabout. Traffic flies up and down Granite, but a four-way stop sign at the intersection would make it difficult for drivers in the winter. I envision those traveling downhill wouldn't be able to stop and those traveling uphill might not be able to get started when icy. A roundabout would keep traffic moving. The school would need to move the bus stop from Granite to Hauser, but that's not too difficult. The bus parks on Hauser most mornings when it's arriving at the stops early.
2. If a light is installed at the intersection, I request that it be focused downward in order to maintain the Dark Skies ambiance.
3. Sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks, but only on one side of the road please. This is especially important all along Hauser to the intersection with Henderson. The traffic in the morning is dreadful, and students are having to walk in the streets not just to Kessler but also to CR Anderson and St. Andrews. It's particularly dangerous during the winter, when it's dark in the morning.
4. I have witnessed numerous accidents at Hauser and Joselyn. A stop sign might work well there.
5. It is impossible to cross Highway 12 at certain hours. An overpass would be a great safety investment.
6. While it was outside of your walking tour, Park Avenue has a blind hill, where I always walk on one side of the road so traffic behind me knows I'm there, then switch to the opposite side of the road when I get close to the top of the hill so I can avoid any oncoming traffic. I don't have a solution for this mess, other than to lower the top of the hill to increase the sight-distance.

Thank you again for your interest in our part of the community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 406/422-6601.

Eve Byron

## Mark Young

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**From:** Melanie Symons <msymons321@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:30 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com <jeandrew.hcc@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** NMTAC Kessler School Walkability Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur and Mark

I have been following NMTAC's Kessler School Walkability Audit and have reviewed the final report. Please accept my sincere thanks for conducting this audit in such a timely manner and for taking into consideration the neighborhood's immediate concerns and hopefully the impact of Westside Woods on the area.

I am writing to encourage NMTAC to share the Kessler school audit and related concerns and recommendations to the Helena City Commission. I understand and agree with most of John E Andrew's thoughts regarding the Choteau and Silverette area. However, the traffic on the westside of the school is frankly unmanageable at the start and end of the school day. Sidewalks on at least one side of Granite extending from Knight to Hauser or beyond would improve the safety of school children and our neighborhood.

I am aware of the financial constraints the city faces and appreciate Commissioner Logan's recent editorial regarding the many and varied needs of our community. I am also aware that City's policy is to not annex land until there is sufficient infrastructure to support it. I encourage NMTAC to remind the city that a sound infrastructure, including paved streets and sidewalks should be a condition of approval for the proposed Westside Woods subdivision.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the safety of Helena's citizens.

*Melanie Symons*

[Msymons321@msn.com](mailto:Msymons321@msn.com)

(406) 431-0720



## Mark Young

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**From:** Peter Larsen <pete.h.larsen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:47 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Non-motorized travel advisory council and Westside Woods development

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioner Rehmann and Mr. Young-

Thank you for taking the time to perform a walk audit around Kessler School. I am writing to encourage you to make a formal recommendation for *significant* traffic safety improvements around Kessler and in the adjoining neighborhoods. We have one daughter who attends school there now and another who will be attending Kessler in the not-too-distant future. My family lives near the intersection of Woodward and Granite. In short, my concerns, which are shared by a significant number of families, include the:

1. Lack of sidewalks running all the way up Granite to Woodward as well as some of the other lateral (East-West) streets
2. Insufficient or non-existent street-lighting along Granite
3. High rate of speed that people drive up and down Granite
4. Misleading traffic estimates collected near the school

As you probably saw, there are no sidewalks that extend all the way up Granite to Woodward and there are only a few streetlights. My daughter used to walk to school with her classmates, but we started to drive her because it is extremely dangerous for them to walk on Granite during the months of the year when the sun comes up late/goes down early. We are also concerned about speeding, especially for traffic coming down the hill. I have personally witnessed some kids that had to jump down into the ditch along Granite when a downhill driver narrowly missed hitting them.

Finally, I was very concerned when I read about the traffic estimates that were collected recently because I believe that these estimates are misleading. I believe the numbers that have been collected significantly under-counted the actual traffic already occurring. I read that one measurement of vehicle traffic was taken during a time of road construction on or near Granite and another measurement was taken when school was not even in session. I can tell you that there is significant congestion on Granite starting at about 7:45am and then again at about 2:45pm. In fact, you cannot find a spot to park within a few blocks if you arrive to the school after about 3pm. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to take a picture and share it with you.

Thank you for all that you are doing to ensure that our community is safe and accessible to other forms of transportation (e.g., walking, biking).

Kind regards,

Peter Larsen

## Mark Young

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**From:** Shawn Whyte <ShawnWhyte@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 3:54 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting - Kessler walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello to both of you,

I am a longtime Helena west side resident who raised 3 children through Kessler, CRA, and CHS. I would like to thank all the people who participated in the walking assessment around Kessler school. I support all the recommendations that were listed in the report and would like to put emphasis on sidewalks and traffic measures that could help kids cross Hauser as the walk from the neighborhoods south of Hauser to get to Kessler on the north side of Hauser. I hope the City of Helena, the Helena School District, and Sussex Construction are all in alignment and support of protecting the youngest members of our community as the go to and from school every day.

In addition to the suggestions gathered, I would like to request that the NMTAC review the traffic study conducted and attached to the Sussex subdivision proposal. In that subdivision request, there is not access from the new neighborhood directly to highway 12. The property owned by Sussex does have frontage along highway 12, but it will be costly to do the dirt work, grading, and construction of an access point. I do not think the cost of the work should be a factor in determining what the appropriate course of action should be. Please review all the data in the subdivision request and join the west side neighbors in emphasizing the need to pull that traffic off Granite and away from the school by allowing drivers to exit the neighborhood directly to highway 12 using a new feeder road.

Like many others, I am not against the new subdivision, but I do request that the developer be held to a standard that protects children and non-motorized use of our streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Shawn Whyte

## Mark Young

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**From:** Janice Long <janicelong2525@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:03 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; wilbur@wt.net  
**Subject:** Kessler School

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Wilbur & Mark:

I would like to thank you for the walk audit for Kessler School- this is such a critical thing to address in keeping our children safe.

I would like to make a formal recommendation request for your help to make the 12 recommendations for improvement around the Kessler School area!!

Thank you so very much for your help in keeping our children safe!!

Sincerely

Janice Long

## Mark Young

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**From:** judy ludwig <ludwigjudy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:16 PM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC Walk Audit Kessler Elementary

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mark Young  
City Transportation Engineer

Dear Mr. Young:

I understand that the NMTAC is presenting information about the walkability audit near Kessler Elementary School.

The results seem pretty dismal for walkability in the neighborhood, which I feel impacts most directly the young children attending that school and their ability to walk safely to and from Kessler.

I am hoping to see curbed sidewalks, improved visibility at corners, some additional controls at Granite and Euclid, and maybe some speed signs indicating what speed your car is traveling (not opposed to speed bumps either).

The City has really improved their snowplowing and graveling on Granite over the last several years, but kids trudging up and down that street still have to migrate towards the middle of the road during heavier snowstorms, which is a real hazard for the little guys.

Thanks for helping out with safety and walkability of the streets for not only the kids, but for the large number of recreational walkers and hikers using the streets.

Judy Ludwig

## Mark Young

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**From:** David Ulrich <ulrich406@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:27 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Area Walk Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I recently read the Walk Audit report that was done for the Kessler School area. I greatly appreciate the time and focus that has been brought up for the School, Neighborhood and people using the area for walking and getting around.

I know that a lot of areas in Helena have issues and am glad that this area is becoming part of the focus to hopefully make updates/changes as needed. It's also great to see that this is happening while the Westside Woods subdivision proposals are happening because that area will be bringing twice as much or more traffic to this area and become more hazardous to the community walking around the school and neighborhood.

Any input you have in improving the safety for the area is greatly appreciated, and hopefully the input will be heard in conjunction with the Westside Woods Subdivision Application process too.

Thank you again for the effort in keeping the safety of kids, school district employees, parents and families addressed through any processes that affect the area.

David Ulrich  
2530 Knight St  
Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

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**From:** Chelsea Culpon <chelsearandf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 4:44 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Cc:** joicefranzen@yahoo.com; lowell.chandler@gmail.com; kevin.rechkoff@gmail.com; szerwo@gmail.com; Sarah Sandau; andy.shirtliff@gmail.com; GregWirth@hotmail.com; joelebert54@gmail.com; lucasalanwallace@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Walk audit support  
**Attachments:** I2 Walk Audit at Kessler Elementary 1.3.23.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Happy 2023 Chairman Rehmann and Engineer Young and members of NMTAC,

Please see the attached and know that we fully support all of the recommendations from recent walk audit conducted by NMTAC.

Professionally I have worked with healthy communities and walkability in Montana for 15 years. Several communities across MT have made life changing improvements and reaped the benefits.

Sincerely,

Chelsea & Chris Culpon  
2670 Hauser Blvd.

Parents of 4 kids who love to walk and ride around town and have utilized Kessler as a playground many times

Sent from my iPhone

## Mark Young

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**From:** THERESA MALESKI <Maleski4@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 5:59 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net  
**Cc:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walk Audit/ Westside

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

NMTAC Members,

We were very pleased to hear about the Walking Audit around Kessler School this past week. We have watched the upper westside grow over the 30+ years we have lived here. It has been a concern, with this growth, that the infrastructure has not kept up in many circumstances. An important start was seen by your group of the basic safety needs for students at Kessler and all pedestrians. Connecting sidewalks, on at the least one side of Granite street plus speed checked due to high volume of traffic on Granite and surrounding roads. Thank you for taking time to do the walking assessment. Our children safely walked to Kessler School growing up and we can see the small children now struggling to walk a few blocks to their school. We see first hand living on the corner of Granite and Flowerree Street. We have seen many houses built north of our home over the years. We are definitely not against growth or access to all the westside has to offer. We strongly believe it would not benefit the area with a large development and growth without the infrastructure concerns being met first hand. As they say, let's not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your time and seeing the many concerns we have for the area.

Mark and Theresa Maleski  
2520 Flowerree Street  
Helena, Mt.

## Mark Young

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**From:** Carolyn Truscott <lv4jsus@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:14 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study and Recommendations

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a concerned resident who lives on Silverette, I would like to thank you for making the walkability study happen.

As I read the results, I would like to add these recommendations:

Summary suggestions:

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Thank you.

Carolyn Truscott



## Mark Young

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**From:** Save Helena Westside <savehelenawestside@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 8:53 PM  
**To:** Wilbur Rehman; Franzen Joice; Chandler Lowell; Rechkoff Kevin; szerwo James; Wirth Greg; Wallace Lucas; Ebert Joel; Shirtliff Andy; Sarah Sandau; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Comment for Jan 10th meeting  
**Attachments:** NMTAC Letter Jan 10\_from SHW.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear NMTAC members,

Please see the attached letter with public comment from the five Save Helena Westside directors regarding the recent Kessler walkability audit and our recommendations.

We appreciate your time and consideration,  
SHW Directors

We are grateful to the Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council (NMTAC) and to Lewis and Clark County Public Health for conducting a Walk Audit at Kessler. Reading through the Walk Audit report, there is agreement for the need to improve the area streets to provide safe routes for schools and pedestrians in general.

The current proposal for the Westside Woods (WSW) subdivision would result in significant increase in traffic volumes on those very same streets and the current traffic infrastructure is not sufficient to safely service the subdivision as proposed. After full buildout of WSW, Granite is projected to have traffic 3 to 4.9 times the current load<sup>1</sup>. Quiet county roads like Hauser, Park, Stuart, and Flowerree will see traffic volumes increase as much as 10 times their current load<sup>2</sup>.

It is the policy of the City of Helena to avoid annexation of undeveloped land until a plan is in place for adequate infrastructure to serve the new development. Therefore, Save Helena Westside (SHW) again would like NMTAC to consider recommending to City Staff and the City Commission regarding the following infrastructure upgrades as conditions of annexation of the property for the proposed WSW subdivision:

1. **Direct the majority of new subdivision traffic away from existing streets via a connection to the west.** – A road should be built connecting the WSW subdivision to HWY 12 via Park Lane and Le Grande Cannon. This will reduce traffic impact around Kessler and on Granite and Hauser, as well as will improve non-motorized access for bikers and others to Fort Harrison and the 10 Mile and Scratch Gravel trail systems.
2. **Improve local roads to “Complete Street” standards to accommodate new traffic on existing streets east of the WSW subdivision.** – In conjunction with #1 above, sidewalks and streetlights should be installed on Granite from Kessler school up to Flowerree street, on Hauser from Joslyn to the WSW subdivision, on Stuart and Flowerree from Granite to the WSW subdivision, and on the Hauser/Park Dr corridor leading to the WSW subdivision to encourage safe non-motorized transportation.
3. **Upgrade and add crosswalks, including lights.** – In conjunction with #1 and #2 above, lighted crosswalks, and safety signals should be installed around Kessler school to improve pedestrian safety.

Please note that the current application for the proposed WSW subdivision does not include any additional “complete street” upgrades to area streets beyond what is directly adjacent to the proposed subdivision boundaries, nor does it include any upgrades for pedestrian safety around Kessler School.

SHW and area residents support development that prioritizes public safety. As seen with the project to build sidewalks on Knight St East of CR Anderson, it can take years to secure funding and City support to add sidewalks to existing school routes. Neighborhoods east of Kessler that were annexed into the City in the past few years have not undergone any improvements to pedestrian safety. There is no guarantee of *any* upgrades if the can is kicked down the road. Therefore, it is best to proactively address safety needs up front, as conditions of annexation, prior to the WSW subdivision adding thousands of additional vehicle trips per day.

Thank you for your ongoing advocacy for safety of non-motorized travel within our Helena neighborhoods.

SHW Directors

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<sup>1</sup> WSW TIS reports 584 VPD on Granite currently and 1,726 VPD at full buildout (3.0 times current load). City of Helena Staff Report for Pre-Zone of WSW, however, states that with the proposed zoning, “there is a potential for 2,869 new trips.” The WSW TIS predicts 80% of the new traffic will use Granite, which would result in 2,879 VPD on Granite at full buildout (4.9 times current load).

<sup>2</sup> Flowerree St west of Granite, with 4 homes currently, will be a straight cut-through route to 45 new residences.

## Mark Young

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**From:** Sarah Perry <sarah.3.perry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:59 PM  
**To:** Mark Young; Wilbur Rehmann  
**Subject:** Comments to be sent to the NMTAC for Jan 10th

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the NMTAC,

Thank you for requesting and facilitating the Kessler Walk Audit, with the help of Sarah Sandau! It meant a great deal to area residents and Kessler families to have members of the community take the time to walk our streets, experience what it is like to be a pedestrian, and brainstorm recommended improvements. I support the recommended changes in the report.

In listening to the recordings from a handful of your 2022 meetings, it has been encouraging to hear your council going to great lengths to do what you can to make safety of non-motorized travel around our community a priority. That has been particularly apparent anytime the NMTAC was discussing routes to schools. I know now more than ever that the NMTAC has A LOT of potential projects and recommendations for improvement around town and really, every school in Helena needs pedestrian improvements. I am not trying to say those other projects are ANY less important.

However, the situation around Kessler is unique. The walk audit identified numerous and severe deficiencies. The average scores at each stop were 2.5 or less. For comparison, at the Broadwater school audit, the average scores ranged from 5 to 8.

Even more unique in this case is the fact that the city is being asked to annex nearly 60 acres of NEW land with a major subdivision that will put additional traffic impact on existing streets, ALL of which are proposed to be on routes to school that DO NOT have sidewalks. I am not aware of any other school in the City of Helena that is facing a similar situation.

With annexation on the table, this project and associated recommendations need to be a priority TODAY. As Chairman Rehmann told you all during orientation in the Feb 2022 NMTAC meeting, [Resolution 19549](#), which established the NMTAC, states that one of the duties of the NMTAC is, "advocating for non-motorized facilities in new public and private development projects". Weighing in with your recommendations on how to reduce negative impacts of the proposed subdivision on non-motorized facilities is absolutely in your purview!

In addition to the impact Westside Woods would have on safe walking routes to Kessler and St Andrews School as well as CR and Hawthorne bus routes, the subdivision will also add considerable traffic to existing county roads. Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart are quiet roads with only a handful homes on them. Most of those streets are fairly flat streets for that reason are used by many of the elderly and young children in the neighborhood for recreation and walking. The streets have almost no traffic on them currently and feel safe even without sidewalks. However, the traffic on those streets will change drastically as hundreds of new residents use them as cut through streets to access a major subdivision.

With the previous submission of this subdivision to the City, all blocks of Flowerree, Hauser, and Park Dr west of Granite were recommended city staff to be annexed into the city and upgraded to complete street

standards. And the developer agreed to all those conditions of annexation with their last submission. However, with the new proposal, the developer has not proposed any such upgrades and there is no guarantee new city staff will make the same recommendations. Please, encourage the city to recommend upgrades to Flowerree, Hauser, Park, and Stuart to ensure area residents can continue to safely use those roads for non-motorized travel.

My concerns with the proposed development are all safety related. With the right conditions of annexation for safety, I would happily go to the City Commission and advocate FOR the WSW development.

Your recommendation to the City to require the necessary upgrades as conditions of annexation will be in line with the City's own Growth Policy and is a way to ensure the neighborhood and the NMTAC are not having to fight for decades to come to retrofit existing neighborhoods with much needed sidewalks. Let's make sure this is done right from the start!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Perry

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Anna Jayne Pentecost <ajpentecost3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:13 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Study

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of Helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road, trying to fight for a simple sidewalk, like Mark has been fighting for with CR Anderson. Yes Kessler has a horrible layout and it needs to be fixed but that is not possible right now. These recommendations might be. We can't make everyone happy. It will not be perfect. However we can at least use our voices to advocate for those that can't. Please, at least try and ask.

Anna Jayne Pentecost  
Mother and Certified Emergency Room RN

## Mark Young

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**From:** Matthew Pentecost <mgpentecost@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:21 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC recommendations

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

Matt Pentecost

## Mark Young

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**From:** Anna Jayne <sweetjane33@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2023 11:24 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,  
I'm writing to encourage NMTAC to make recommendations to the city of helena based on the walkability study.

Specifically

1. Continuous, connecting sidewalks
2. School and speed limit signage
3. Cutting down the evergreen trees in the boulevard on Granite Ave
4. Lighting on the streets
5. Paving Silverette St
6. Speed study for Granite Ave
7. Police monitoring/enforcing the speed limit more often.

Kessler Elementary is directly affected by these recommendations now and into the future. Please help us put in a solid foundation now and not 50 years down the road.

*Annie Howell*

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Matt Johnson <mattjohnson311@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:13 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Kessler Walk audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

As a resident of Helena Westside with children starting school at Kessler next year, I want to thank you for conducting the walkability audit. I encourage you to please make formal recommendations to the commission for their review of the Westside Woods development proposal.

After your walk, I'm sure you'll agree, the estimated traffic volume associated with the development will significantly exacerbate conditions that are already unsafe and substandard for kids walking to school, as well as general pedestrian traffic. This area was poorly developed and lacks basic infrastructure for conveying pedestrians.

In addition, Park Drive, Stuart, Floweree, and Hauser to the west of the area walked are designated to convey new subdivision traffic. These streets are dirt and lack infrastructure to accommodate those traffic loads. Significantly unsafe conditions will be created when that vehicle traffic volume is added to current and future pedestrian traffic. These streets and sidewalks need to be developed if this subdivision comes forth.

As a rapidly growing community, we cannot approve projects that will worsen conditions for pedestrian traffic. On the contrary, modern transportation planning encourages providing dedicated routes and safe conditions for pedestrians, to offset our past bias towards vehicular modes of transportation.

We need to take every opportunity to modernize our mistakes of the past for the sake of our future generations.

Thank you for considering the broader picture and considering this opportunity to improve our community.

Best regards,  
Matt Johnson  
2690 Park Dr, Helena, MT 59601



## Mark Young

---

**From:** Orpha Smigaj <opiernc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:31 AM  
**To:** Mark Young  
**Subject:** Walkability Audit Kessler School area

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



**Orpha Smigaj** <[opiernc@gmail.com](mailto:opiernc@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Young

Thank you for completing the Walk Audit for Kessler School. Kessler is a wonderful school for our neighborhood with many safety concerns for children and parents who attend this school. I appreciate all of the work that is being done to make this neighborhood school safer for our children. I have lived on the corner of Hauser and Silverette for over 30 years. I have witnessed many near miss collisions with children and cars on these streets. Our neighborhood would be made a safer one with installation of paved roads, lighting, signage, sidewalks and crosswalks. With the proposed westside subdivision these issues are going to worsen tenfold. Before and after school pickup and drop off is currently a nightmare and it is only going to get worse with a huge influx of houses in this proposed subdivision. The crosswalk zone on Granite is a very short distance to Highway 12. Cars are backed up; kids dart out in the street and people speed through this area coming off of Highway 12 onto Granite and the crosswalk. There is no more room for more cars, more kids in this area. I am not against development in this area. I am against how big the subdivision is going to be, there are way too many houses proposed for this subdivision. It is going to flood this already congested neighborhood area and school.

Thank you again for the walk audit, I believe the recommendations would greatly improve the safety of our neighborhood and school.

Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Lu Driessen <ldriessen929@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:08 AM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** Public comment NMTAC meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings,

Thank you for conducting an audit of the walkability of the area around Kessler School.

Reading the report emphasizes the safety concerns we see, as active members of the neighborhood. Use of the area has increased, as development has grown. We expect that to continue.

Please utilize the audit to establish priorities for improvement and set forth a concrete plan, with an established timeline, to address deficiencies identified.

Helena is looking to create a safe, more walkable community. Given this area is directly adjacent to a well attended school, we ask for expediency in addressing the identified concerns.

Thank you,

Lu Driessen

Scott Harris

2600 Hauser Blvd, Helena, MT 59601

## Mark Young

---

**From:** Jim Lund <pjameslund@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:29 PM  
**To:** wilbur@wt.net; Mark Young  
**Subject:** recent NMTAC Audit walk and report

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for your attention to assess the pedestrian situation for the area around Kessler Elementary School. The roads audited are extremely busy during school pick-up and drop off. The lack of sidewalks on several of the main roads, particularly during busy times, is a danger to those that are walking. I am not surprised that in the audit many of the intersections scored just 2.5/10.

There is foot and bicycle traffic that often comes through Granite for walkers, runners, and cyclists that are accessing the numerous trail systems just to the north (Centennial trail, Spring Meadow Lake, Ten-Mile Creek Park). I live in this neighborhood and bike or jog commute to Fort Harrison via Granite to the trail system most days year around. Thank you for your efforts to make this area safe for cyclists and pedestrians.

With warm regards,

Jim Lund  
2610 Knight St  
406-422-8844

From: **Kaiser, Michael -FS** <[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 12:28 PM  
Subject: RE: [External Email]Maps  
To: Sarah Perry <[sarah.3.perry@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.3.perry@gmail.com)>

Sarah,

Here are the results from running some fire behavior modeling for the fuel types found in the south Helena area:

Fuel Model Used – Timber Litter 8 (Long Needle Conifer) and Grass 2 (Low load dry climate grass)

Fuel Moisture – 1 hour (grasses) @ 4%, 10 hour (small sticks) @ 6%, 100 hour (small branches) @ 8%

Slope – I used the average of 35%, some areas are much steeper and some areas are less steep. The steeper the slope the quicker the fire moves.

Winds – 40 mph winds at 20 feet high, which would be about 20 mph at eye level.  
(Winds we experience often in Helena)

The Grass 2 fuel model showed a rate of spread of 176.8 chains per hour. This equates to 2.21 miles/hour. This is about the distance to Ten Mile Creek Estates from the western edge of the Upper West Side of Helena. It also shows a flame length of 10 feet. At this flame length, ground resources and heavy equipment are ineffective and are not able to do direct suppression.

The Timber Litter 8 fuel model showed a rate of spread of 36.4 chains per hour. This equates to about .5 miles/hour. It shows a flame length of 8 feet, which ground resources are ineffective and it is right on the line of whether heavy equipment would be effective or not. Considering most of the timbered areas are steeper than 35%, I would say that heavy equipment would also be ineffective.

Spotting distances are shown to be up to 1 mile for both fuel types. That is significant spotting distance and makes fire suppression very difficult.

These parameters used are typical fire season weather observations experienced multiple times throughout the summer. Due to not be able to do direct ground suppression on these potential fires, aerial resources would be heavily relied upon and indirect tactics would be employed. As we know, aerial resources are unreliable and ineffective when wind speeds hit 40+ mph.

This shows that under the conditions above that the City of Helena Police Department would have less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.

**Michael Kaiser**  
**Fire Management Officer**  
**Forest Service**

**Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, Helena Ranger District**

**p: 406-495-3931**  
**[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)**

2880 Skyway Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

**Caring for the land and serving people**



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Orpha

Last Name

Smigaj

Email

opiernc@gmail.com

Street Address

2326 Hauser Blvd Helena, MT 59

City

Helena

State

Montana

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064653513

Date

02/03/23

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question  
 Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to you today to address my concerns about the Westside Wood Subdivision. My main concerns are:

1. The Subdivision is going to increase traffic patterns through the already congested Granite Street by Kessler School. The traffic patterns there are already overwhelmed during drop off and pick up times at the school. I am concerned children and adults are going to be hit by vehicles in this congested area. If the subdivision is approved with the number of houses and duplexes, they want to put it is going to make this extremely unsafe.
2. No sidewalks or lighting in the area makes it extremely unsafe as well. Right now, it is a huge concern. I am afraid if this subdivision is approved it is going to make an already unsafe area even more dangerous.
3. Fire risk is a huge concern of mine. I am worried without another street to exit from this subdivision it is going to make it extremely difficult for the people in these neighborhoods to escape from a wildland fire. There are not sufficient escape routes planned for this neighborhood and the results will be devastating if there is not an extra street exit planned for this area. There are numerous cul de sacs planned for this subdivision making this a nightmare situation for everyone involved, people, firefighters, ambulance, police, etc. to access and escape this are in the event of a wildland fire.
4. Sewer and water availability to this neighborhood and the surrounding neighborhood is also another concern of mine. Our current system can barely keep up for the demand for water and sewer in our area. My home is in phase 3 of the city's plan to establish water and sewer in my neighborhood. The city has told us they are still another three years away for these services to be established and that there is a concern for the city to handle the water and sewer demands of our area. This new subdivision is going to add another 160 plus homes to an already overwhelmed system. I am concerned this neighborhood is going to increase the demand for water and sewer in an already overwhelmed system.

Thank you for listening to our concerns, we appreciate all of your hard work.  
Sincerely,  
Orpha Smigaj  
2326 Hauser Blvd  
Helena, MT 59601

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

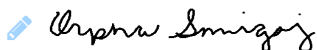
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email  
 Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Craig

Last Name

Spencer

Email

craig.spencer@augie.edu

Street Address

170 Driftwood Drive

City

Bigfork

State

MT

Zip Code

59911

Phone

6059515339

Date

February 3, 2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I am writing to voice my opposition to certain aspects of the Westside Woods subdivision as proposed. I am especially concerned about increased traffic congestion on Granite Avenue, for two reasons:

1. Safety of school children attending Kessler school. I am a grandparent of 3 Kessler students. When dropping off/picking up kids, I have found Granite Avenue by Kessler school to be very congested with cars/kids/families already. If this large subdivision is added above Kessler school, I am concerned about the safety of the school children given the increased traffic and congestion around the school at peak hours. This concern would be greatly alleviated if a second exit point was created for the new subdivision onto Highway 12, to the west of Granite Avenue, along with the addition of more sidewalks.

2. Safety in the event of a forest fire evacuation. In a similar way, I am concerned about having only one exit point from this area in the event of a forest fire evacuation. I am a scientist and have studied fire behavior in NW Montana for many years. I have seen wildfires move very quickly through habitat and terrain similar to the steep hillside, ponderosa pine forest on Mt Helena that borders the existing and proposed subdivision. I was in Polebridge, Montana in September of 1988 when the evacuation order was given as large Red Bench fire bore down on us. It was chaos for a short time, even though not that many people/vehicles were involved. If a similar fire were to threaten Mt Helena and this subdivision, I can envision chaos and safety issues at the single exit point on Granite Avenue by Kessler school with hundreds of residents trying to flee, at the same time as firefighters with large vehicles were trying to enter.

I urge the powers at be to require that a second exit point be created onto Highway 12. My safety concerns would be alleviated with a second exit along with the addition of more sidewalks. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

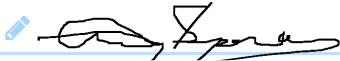
If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature





## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Melanie

Last Name

Symons

Email

msymons321@msn.com

Street Address

2679 Knight St

City

Helena

State

State

Zip Code

59601

Phone

4064310720

Date

February 3, 2023

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

I support the comments provided by Save Helena Westside on February 2, 2023. In particular I am very supportive of efforts to provide and encourage the use of a westside access. I live on the corner of Knight and Hauser and will see significant increase in the traffic at my intersection. I have lived here 7 years and know of one 2-car accident at my intersection in that time. A car landed in my front yard just a few hours after my grandsons had been riding scooters on the sidewalks adjoining the intersection. At last count, there were 24 children living on Knight between Hauser and Granite. They spend a lot of time outdoors riding bikes, skating, throwing balls, etc. It would be beneficial to the neighborhood and in the best interest of the public health and safety to redirect as much traffic as possible either south on Hauser or west to Park Lane. Thank you for your consideration.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments


If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature



**From:** [Liz Ulrich](#)  
**To:** [County Planning Mail](#)  
**Cc:** [Heather Kahler](#)  
**Subject:** Westside Woods subdivision  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 3, 2023 7:05:43 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Consolidated Parks Board Members,

**To promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

The park land dedication currently proposed by the developers of the Westside Woods subdivision doesn't meet the goals identified in the Consolidated Parks Board mission statement. In fact, it does the opposite, rather than developing parks, recreation, trails, and open space, it takes them away. As many in the Helena area are consumed with quickly increasing housing, your job is: **to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.**

My first choice would be to not have this area developed at all, let's keep open spaces open! In addition, I hope the Consolidated Parks Board uses the option of "cash in lieu" sparingly in their decisions, this is an easy-out for developers that will earn millions of dollars from these subdivisions. But, understanding that development is going to happen whether I like it or not, I recommend the Consolidated Parks Board consider Option #1: reject park land dedication of all areas outside just the existing used trail. Remainder would be alternative dedicated parks land for sports fields or developed park in the subdivision.

I appreciate your time and commitment to the Helena area. Parks, trails, and open spaces are what make Helena and Lewis & Clark County an amazing place to live.

Thank you,  
Liz Ulrich  
406-690-4734  
2530 Knight Street  
Helena, MT 59601

From: **Kaiser, Michael -FS** <[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 12:28 PM  
Subject: RE: [External Email]Maps  
To: Sarah Perry <[sarah.3.perry@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.3.perry@gmail.com)>

Sarah,

Here are the results from running some fire behavior modeling for the fuel types found in the south Helena area:

Fuel Model Used – Timber Litter 8 (Long Needle Conifer) and Grass 2 (Low load dry climate grass)

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Slope – I used the average of 35%, some areas are much steeper and some areas are less steep. The steeper the slope the quicker the fire moves.

Winds – 40 mph winds at 20 feet high, which would be about 20 mph at eye level.  
(Winds we experience often in Helena)

The Grass 2 fuel model showed a rate of spread of 176.8 chains per hour. This equates to 2.21 miles/hour. This is about the distance to Ten Mile Creek Estates from the western edge of the Upper West Side of Helena. It also shows a flame length of 10 feet. At this flame length, ground resources and heavy equipment are ineffective and are not able to do direct suppression.

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This shows that under the conditions above that the City of Helena Police Department would have less than 1 hour to fully evacuate the Upper West end of Helena from the time of a fire being reported while doing traffic control on Highway 12.

**Michael Kaiser**  
**Fire Management Officer**  
**Forest Service**

**Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, Helena Ranger District**

**p: 406-495-3931**  
**[michael.kaiser@usda.gov](mailto:michael.kaiser@usda.gov)**

2880 Skyway Drive  
Helena, MT 59602  
[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

**Caring for the land and serving people**



## Community Development Questions and Comments

Is your question or comment about a specific project?

- Yes  
 No

Which project do you have a question or comment about?

Westside Woods Phased Subdivision

First Name

Shawn

Last Name

Whyte

Email

Street Address

2030 Switchgrass Court

City

Helena

State

MT

Zip Code

59601

Phone

406-459-0795

Date

1/24/2023

This form is intended to help you either get answers or submit a comment about work done through the Community Development Department, including about a specific project being considered by City staff. Please select if you are asking a question or submitting a comment, and then, using the block below, submit your question or comment. A Community Development Department representative will contact you if appropriate. If your question or comment will not fit in the text box, please feel free to upload an additional document.

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Public Question or Comment

- Question
- Comment

Question/Comment

It would be great for the city to evaluate the land that is being targeted for open space and/or park land in large subdivisions. Currently, the Westside Woods proposal has a significant amount of land being identified as park land that is steep and will be very hard for the city to maintain. It is not usable land and seems more like dumping a problem onto the city to make them clean it up with taxpayer money.

Upload Additional Questions or Comments

If appropriate, someone may contact you. Would you like to be contacted by a City representative?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your preferred method of contact?

- Email
- Phone

Signature

 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AM', is written on a light blue horizontal line. A small blue pencil icon is positioned to the left of the signature.