

**PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT**  
**510 Railway Street**  
**PO Box 158, Whitefish, MT 59937**  
**(406) 863-2410 Fax (406) 863-2409**



Flathead County Commissioners  
800 South Main  
Kalispell, MT 59912

December 14, 2015

**RE: Rural Whitefish Zoning District Amendments**

Flathead County Commissioners,

The City of Whitefish has several comments related to the zoning and boundaries of the proposed Rural Whitefish Zoning District. We appreciate your efforts to make the interim zoning permanent and apply zones that closely mirror the Whitefish zoning districts that used to be in place. For the most part, we are satisfied with what is being proposed, and we think the zoning district fairly closely matches the districts and uses that were previously in place. However, we do have some concerns regarding the areas on Karrow Avenue where the Interim Zoning is not being applied consistently and the County is proposing to rezone areas to a much higher density not in accordance or compliance with the previous zoning districts.

Our primary concern is the application of 2.5 acre and 5 acre zoning to some 350 acres around Lost Coon Lake and Karrow Avenue. Under Whitefish's jurisdiction, that area previously had 10 and 15 acre zoning. Density smaller than 10 acres/dwelling unit in that area is contrary to Whitefish's 2007 City County Growth Policy Future Land Use Map, which calls for a Rural Future Land Use with a 10 acre minimum. The City strongly objects to any changes in zoning inconsistent with our Growth Policy. That is a significant density change. Having septic systems on additional 2.5 acre lots in that area that has significant high groundwater will create water quality issues. Please consider that parceling that area up into 2.5 acre and 5 acre lots will effectively stymie any future large suburban density subdivision growth in that area. It is not far from city water and sewer facilities, which, if extended, would facilitate higher density growth. The Whitefish Growth Policy anticipated that area to remain large lot rural for both aesthetics and as a placeholder for sensible future growth as the city limits expand.

We object to Finding #4 of FZD 15-01, as we do not believe that changing the zoning of 350 acres of land mapped with high groundwater adjacent to city limits from 10 acre (or

15, as Whitefish had it zoned previously) to 5 and 2.5 acre facilitates the adequate provision of water or sewerage. That was nowhere addressed in your staff report.

We also object to Finding #7. The finding fails to specifically address any consideration to compatible urban growth, and does not properly justify how land designated "rural" densities in Whitefish's growth policy should be changed to densities that reflect a "rural residential" land use designation.

Finally, we object to Finding #10, as the proposed zoning around Karrow Avenue is not compatible with previous City of Whitefish zoning nor Growth Policy considerations for the area, and therefore proper consideration of the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities was not given.

Thank you for considering our comments. We hope that you will adopt the Rural Whitefish Zoning District, but amend your plan to make the Karrow Avenue area zoning compatible with what it was previously zoned.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Taylor".

Dave Taylor, AICP, Planning Director