AGENDA
HIGHWAY 93 SOUTH CORRIDOR PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE
January 4, 2021

The regular meeting of the Highway 93 South Corridor Plan Steering Committee will be held on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. via Webex.

To attend the Meeting and provide live comment via WebEx on your computer, tablet, or smartphone, go to the following web address and join the meeting 5 minutes prior to its scheduled start:

https://cityofwhitefish.webex.com/cityofwhitefish/j.php?MTID=mde4ad3b87b90137ac8d99e772dc1a031

Meeting Number: 146 728 3760
Password: 7tST8J9mhsy

• For the Audio Conference Call option: call one of the numbers below and enter the access code.
  • United States Toll call-in number: 1-408-418-9388
  • United States Toll Free: (From a land line phone) 1-844-992-4726
  Access code: 146 728 3760

We encourage individuals to provide written public comment to the Planning & Building Department hlindh@cityofwhitefish.org or deliver by 12:00 p.m. January 4, at City Hall in the Utility Drop Box. Written comments should include name and address, and be short, concise, and polite. All written comments received by 12:00 p.m. will be provided to the Committee members. At the end of "live" public comment, city staff will read the name and address of individuals providing written comments and their comments.

The agenda for the meeting will be:

A. Call to Order
B. Approval of Minutes from December 7, 2020 Meeting
C. Review Segment C Section of Draft Plan Chapter 6
D. Public Comment
E. New Committee Comment on Previously Discussed Chapter 6 Segments
F. Public Comment
G. Next Meeting
H. Adjournment
Principles for Civil Dialogue

- We provide a safe environment where individual perspectives are respected, heard and acknowledged.
- We are responsible for respectful and courteous dialogue and participation.
- We respect diverse opinions as a means to find solutions based on common ground.
- We encourage and value broad community participation.
- We encourage creative approaches to engage public participation.
- We value informed decision-making and take personal responsibility to educate and be educated.
- We believe that respectful public dialogue fosters healthy community relationships, understanding, and problem-solving.
- We acknowledge, consider and respect the natural tensions created by collaboration, change and transition.
- We follow the rules and guidelines established for each meeting.
In Attendance:
Committee Members: Mark Pascoli, June Hanson, Steve Kane, John Muhlfeld, Ryan Hennen, Scott Freudenberger (Justin Lawrence, Marilyn Nelson, Roger Sherman absent)
Rhonda Fitzgerald, Mayre Flowers, Jeff Raper and James Barnett also present

Staff: Dave Taylor, Hilary Lindh

A. Meeting called to order at 2:10 pm
B. Approved November 2, 2020 meeting minutes
C. Committee Review Draft Plan Chapter 6 (by Segment)

Segment A
Planner Lindh summarized Goals and Objectives for Segment A.
Transportation Goal 4 Objective 2 originally identified Baker Avenue as the alternative truck route by name, but this version was reworded to be more open-ended and did not name Baker since MDT is currently re-evaluating that with a study. Committee felt Baker Avenue should be named since it was identified in earlier adopted planning documents with a lot of public input.

Mark Pascoli suggested, and several committee members supported the idea of re-ordering the goals and objectives to better reflect their prioritization within categories. Replacing culverts with a bridge was important to the public and should be prioritized. Staff to look at reordering goals to reflect priorities.

Regarding Environment and Open Space Goal 10- Mark was concerned, and the committee agreed that requiring drought tolerant plants in commercial landscaping would limit business owners too much. Staff will rework the goal. Suggested language, “Review requirements for use of drought tolerant species in landscaping.”

Environment and Open Space Goal 9 – John Muhlfeld had a concern about promoting commercial uses along the river due to floodplain and Water Quality Ordinance setbacks. Staff to reword the goal so that it focuses on the public river walk space.

Segment A Public Comment
Mayre Flowers had concern about the way the information is summarized- it seems too broad/general without actions or priorities identified. Regarding drought tolerant landscaping, she was concerned about those plants changing the character of the town and suggested asking developers to come up with a water reduction plan as part of landscaping requirement so they can best determine what plants, type of irrigation system, etc. to use. She thought proposed transitional overlay zone or sub-district seems too amorphous; it needs more details about what that would be. She also suggested that anytime a map is presented with changes from the existing condition, the existing condition map should also be shown.

Rhonda Fitzgerald said for Land Use Goal 1 Objective 1 we need to add grassy boulevard; people want more green space. She mentioned LU Goal 2 Objective 1 transitional zone should be reworded as the
segment leads directly into a residential zone rather than just being adjacent to or surrounding the segment. Same in Implementation Actions.

Under Transportation Rhonda thought there should be a goal for speed reduction on Spokane. For Goal 4 Objective 2, she agreed that Baker Avenue should be identified as the alternate truck route through town. She noted that Objective 6 includes two different actions that should be separated out from each other. Extending 7th Street east should be relatively straightforward, while extending 7th Street west across the river with a new bridge will be a bigger undertaking.

Rhonda also agreed that removing culverts and replacing with a bridge should be given higher priority in list of goals. She thought we should add a goal for an underpass for the Baker Avenue bridge as it is widened. She agreed with removing the commercial aspect of public river walk, Goal 9 Objective 1. She suggested combining Objective 4 with Objective 3 in Goal 9 and agreed that Goal 10 needs to be reworked.

Segment B
Planner Lindh summarized Goals and Objectives for Segment B.
Land Use – Steve Kane agreed we should prioritize goals and objectives, maybe tally up public comments to determine priorities.
Planner Taylor explained how we organized Goals and Objectives to be similar to Issues and Opportunities in the previous chapter, and that that Implementation Items and Chapter 7 will be the place to prioritize the goals and show who is responsible for each implementation item.
Transportation – Steve Kane thought, and Mark Pascoli agreed we should request MDT reduce speed limit through Segment B. Mayor Muhlfeld said that should be analyzed by a traffic engineer and maybe a speed study done. Staff to check Abeline traffic report and public comments to see if reduced speed was a frequent comment. Scott Freudenberger noted that new traffic signals would also slow traffic.
Future Land Use map – committee members agreed with making future land use designation consistent with existing zoning and agreed the proposed map looked good and was logical. Discussion ensued about future alignment of Baker Avenue and whether it is in the right place or is there potential for it to be moved closer to commercial zoning along highway. Staff explained alignment is based on existing right-of-way the City already owns, existing development that the road would have to avoid, and topography. Mayor Muhlfeld asked about the Urban designation bordering the County’s SAG-5 zoning (5 acre lots). The committee reviewed the zoning appropriate for Urban and Suburban Residential land uses, the proposed map which retains the Suburban Residential designation on the west side of the corridor adjacent to the SAG-5 zoning. Steve, June, and Mark agreed the future land use along Baker Avenue should be consistent along its length, especially if Baker Avenue is identified as a truck route.

Segment B Public Comment
Mayre Flowers was concerned that an Urban land use designation would lead to dense multi-family apartments due to the Legacy Homes Program. Staff noted the zoning appropriate for Urban land uses are for single-family and two-family homes, not high-density multi-family. She was concerned about the Baker Avenue alignment shown, protection of wetlands, and the need to preserve open space. Mayor Muhlfield noted the city has much more stringent wetland standards and setbacks than the Feds or the County. She was concerned more development potential would be allowed before infrastructure was funded.
Rhonda Fitzgerald thought Land use Goal 1, Objective 3 is contrary to purpose of WB-2 - we should not list civic/cultural since that is part of the intent of the downtown WB-3 district and should remain there.
She said Transportation Goal 4 Objective 1 needed revision. She agreed a slower speed limit in segment would be good. She thought Goal 5 Objective 5 park and ride lots are not just limited to use by transit riders, could be bike riders and carpools, too- so we should separate out. She also thought Goal 6 Objective 2 should be first objective; Goal 7 Objective 2, landscaping setback should be a wider than 20-feet; Goal 8 should be revised; Baker Avenue should be aligned along the back of the commercial zoning; Implementation # 4. need more buffering in auto sales lots; reducing parking standards should be more definitive; # 5. should be stated strongly; # 6. setback should be greater than 20-feet.

D. Next Meeting – Staff will poll committee members and try to schedule meeting for week of December 14
E. Adjournment – 4:30 pm
6 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Given the vision for the corridor and considering the tools available to affect change over time, the following goals and objectives were developed by segment to provide a framework for reshaping the corridor over the next 10 to 20 years.

6.0 Segment A Goals & Objectives

**Land Use**

**Goal 1:** Establish a visual theme for segment to indicate the entrance to the downtown business core two blocks north and the transitional nature of the segment between highway commercial, surrounding residential, and downtown.

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of street trees and expand the urban canopy along Spokane Avenue.
- Continue to work with MDT to construct a cross-section of Spokane Avenue allowing for the retention of healthy mature trees, as well as planting new trees within the right-of-way.

**Objective 2:** Expand the use of pedestrian-scale lighting and wayfinding signage consistent with downtown and add amenities such as benches through Segment A.

**Goal 2:** Encourage commercial and mixed-use development appropriate to the scale and transitional nature of the segment.

**Objective 1:** Create new transitional zone, overlay zone, or sub-district within the Secondary Business district with development standards varying from the existing district.

Within Segment A along Spokane Avenue a mix of uses should be encouraged acknowledging the segment’s proximity to downtown, residential neighborhoods, and the river; as well as the smaller lot sizes; limited parking; and slower speed limits.
- Commercial uses requiring abundant parking and display area are not compatible with the small lot sizes and slower speed limits.
- Any changes to land use in the segment should not cause additional traffic congestion on Spokane Avenue.

**Goal 3:** Revise the sign district along Baker Avenue to be consistent with speed limits.

**Objective 1:** Review appropriateness of Resort Community Business or Old Town sign districts for use in Segment A (currently designated Highway Commercial).

**Transportation**

**Goal 4:** Improve capacity and decrease demand on Segment A while also improving aesthetics of the road right-of-way.

**Objective 1:** Continue work with MDT on Spokane and Baker Avenue improvements
to help mitigate and better accommodate increasing traffic volumes.

**Objective 2:** To reduce commercial truck traffic through the downtown core, work with MDT to identify and designate an alternative truck route through town for future improvements while mitigating potential impacts to existing uses along the route.

**Objective 3:** Combine highway access drives where feasible to improve traffic safety and flow.

**Objective 4:** Consider replacement of existing Cobra-style highway lighting with decorative highway lights like those on Highway 93 West.

**Objective 5:** Work with utility companies, MDT, and property owners to bury overhead utility lines (identify cost and funding source).

**Objective 6:** When traffic volumes warrant it and funding sources are identified, extend 7th Street east from Spokane Avenue to Kalispell Avenue and west across the Whitefish River between Spokane and Baker Avenues with a new bridge to improve east—west connectivity.

**Goal 5:** Promote bike and pedestrian facilities as valid and valued modes of transportation in equal standing with vehicle facilities.

**Objective 1:** Continue to work with MDT to construct improvements addressing the community’s desire for protected bike lanes, continuous pedestrian sidewalks, and more frequent and safer crossing opportunities.

**Goal 6:** Replace the Whitefish River culverts with a bridge designed to serve as a transition or entrance to downtown Whitefish.

**Goal 7:** Any new, widened, or replacement bridges will be designed to:
- Accommodate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Facilitate river access and views;
- Accommodate flower boxes/landscaping;
- Be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods; and
- Distinguish the bridges as transition features or entrances to downtown Whitefish on Spokane and Baker Avenues.

**Goal 8:** Connect fragmented sections of Whitefish River Trail within corridor.

**Objective 1:** Extend the existing sections of multi-use path across the river at Spokane Avenue, which will involve a stand-alone pedestrian/bike bridge or protected pedestrian/bike lanes on the vehicle bridge, and new path under the highway.

**Objective 2:** Investigate methods of connecting the sidewalk to the river trail near East 6th Street.

**Objective 3:** Install wayfinding signage to direct bike and pedestrian traffic between highway facilities and the Whitefish River Trail.

**Environment and Open Space**

**Goal 9:** Highlight the multiple values of and provide better public access to the river and increase public green space.

**Objective 1:** Develop the river trail for recreation, transportation, public access to open space, river and river habitat.

**Objective 2:** Investigate the opportunity for a commercial river walk - a linear public space with possible small, seasonal businesses.

**Objective 3:** Acquire riverfront property to develop as a public park, and/or obtain permanent easements from private landowners along the river for trails, public parks, and river access.
- Access west side of river from Baker Avenue;
- Access east side of river from Spokane; and
- Access southwest side of river downstream of Spokane Avenue.

**Objective 4:** Develop Canoe Park with signage, parking and other amenities to be more usable as a public space.

**Goal 10:** Require use of drought tolerant species for a significant proportion of commercial landscaping in Segment A to minimize need for irrigation and support the City’s water conservation ordinance.

**Objective 1:** Develop a drought tolerant planting guide as a reference for commercial property developers.

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Drought tolerant landscaping in front of a business on Highway 93 west of downtown.
Future Land Use Designations
Segment A
This corridor plan provides an opportunity to amend land use designations to be consistent with existing zoning. There is one area in Segment A where the zoning is inconsistent with the land use designation documented in the Growth Policy. Southwest of 10th Street and Baker Avenue the zoning is WB-1 Limited Business, but the underlying land use designation is Urban (residential). Since the business zoning is unlikely to change on this property, the land use designation should be changed to General Commercial as part of this plan.

Implementation Activities
1. Develop new transitional zone, overlay, or sub-district within Secondary Business district for Segment A to account for character differences due to proximity to downtown and residential neighborhoods, smaller lot sizes, lack of parking, and slower speed limits.
2. Revise sign district along Baker Avenue in Segment A.
3. Acquire or obtain permanent easement for property from landowners along river for trails, public parks, and river access in Segment A.
6.1 Segment B Goals & Objectives

**Land Use**

**Goal 1:** Encourage land uses in the corridor to improve aesthetics and attract more pedestrian activity.

**Objective 1:** Restructure the Segment B commercial corridor and diversify its character.
- Encourage dense uses around key intersections and less dense uses in areas between those intersections. Higher density uses will have a denser street network, be pedestrian friendly, have mixed uses (commercial with multi-family) and be more active. Lower density uses include offices, light commercial, housing, civic/public and cultural facilities, entertainment, open space and recreation, as well as parks further from the highway.
- Encourage multiple uses on large lots such that smaller commercial buildings could be added to the large parking lots of existing commercial developments fronting the highway (without creating new lots) and review shared parking standards.
- Break up large undeveloped lots with through streets to create smaller blocks as development proceeds.

**Objective 2:** Improve the visual character of the built environment in Segment B.
- Expand the urban tree canopy in the boulevard.
- Add a Highway 93 landscaping setback to the WB-2 zoning district in Segment B.
- Create landscaping with visual interest by minimizing the expanse of two-dimensional lawn grass and increasing the use of tall bunch grasses, shrubs of varied color and shape, and trees with varied heights (for example, see photos on page 71).
- Remove landscaping exemption for new automotive sales lots or modifications to existing lots and allow use of planter boxes;
- Encourage existing development to come into compliance with newly adopted standards for building orientation toward the street, parking to the rear or side of structures, and framing intersections with buildings, landscaping, or plazas.
- Review Whitefish parking standards relative to national standards and potentially reduce parking requirements for some commercial uses.
- Step building rooflines back from highway where needed to minimize obstruction of mountain views.

**Objective 3:** Encourage development of residential and mixed uses in pockets where appropriate, as well as entertainment, recreation, dining, local services, and cultural and educational uses.

**Objective 4:** Encourage more open space/park space in new project developments.

**Objective 5:** Incentivize infill development and updating or improving older structures; explore reestablishing the City’s business façade improvement program.

**Objective 6:** Develop cohesive theme and moniker for Segment B as the Whitefish Gateway Corridor that signifies entry to the City (pedestrian scale lighting, banners, plantings, wayfinding signs, etc.).

**Objective 7:** Improve commercial signage in Segment B.
- Revise the sign district along Baker Avenue north of 13th Street to be consistent with speed limits.
- Encourage owners to replace grandfathered single-post monument signs.

**Goal 2:** Improve compatibility of adjacent land uses in Segment B.

**Objective 1:** Better buffer low density

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Northbound traffic lines up at the JP Road signal on Highway 93 in Segment B.
residential zones from adjacent commercial; encourage denser residential and/or offices in commercial transition areas and along new arterial roads such as Columbia or Baker Avenue, as they are extended.

**Goal 3:** Encourage development and businesses in Segment B to help diversify the economy of Whitefish, provide higher wages and salaries, and support existing and new housing and employment.

**Objective 1:** Make it easier for starter businesses and light assembly/manufacturing to locate in the corridor by:
- Fostering development of suitable, affordable lease spaces for the types of starter businesses permitted in the WB-2;
- Improving architectural standards for multi-tenant commercial buildings to avoid development of new linear strip malls;
- Developing outdoor storage standards for light assembly and manufacturing to ensure compatibility with surrounding businesses;
- Developing business incubator and business assistance center; and
- Considering development incentives and tools to support business development (technical assistance, financial assistance, tax incentives).

**Objective 2:** Promote addition of amenities in the corridor such as public spaces that encourage gathering, coffee shops and lunch spots for employees and residents.

**Transportation**

**Goal 4:** Improve traffic flow and safety through Segment B while also improving aesthetics of the road right-of-way.

**Objective 1:** Add an intermittent, raised median to the highway, landscape with native and drought resistant shrubs and ground cover.

**Objective 2:** Combine highway access drives where feasible to improve traffic safety and flow while minimizing potential impacts to businesses.

**Objective 3:** Facilitate construction of intersection improvements at 13th Street on Highway 93 South and Baker Avenue, including installation of a second southbound lane on the north side of the Spokane Avenue - 13th Street intersection to better store queued southbound vehicles.

**Objective 4:** Optimize timing and spacing of signals at half- or quarter-mile spacing along the corridor when traffic signal warrants are met at those locations. In the future this may involve moving the signal at Commerce Street north to Greenwood Drive.

**Objective 5:** As corridor development proceeds, ensure extension of Columbia Avenue south to Greenwood Avenue; Whitefish Avenue south to Shiloh Avenue; and Baker Avenue south to JP Road. Include east-west connectors such as extending Greenwood Drive east across Whitefish River (construct new bridge) to Monegan Road to develop more of a grid system as development occurs.

**Objective 6:** Replace existing cobra-style lighting with (dark sky compliant) decorative highway lighting such as the lighting installed along Highway 93 West.

**Objective 7:** Work with utility companies, MDT, and corridor property owners to investigate and consider burying overhead utility lines (identify approximate cost and funding source).

**Objective 8:** Require new development and encourage existing users to connect adjacent parking lots so moving from one to another does not involve re-entering the highway.

**Objective 9:** Request MDT redesign the entrance to and exit from North Valley Hospital on Highway 93 South as part of any future highway improvement project.

**Objective 10:** Better delineate driving lanes, whether with more frequent maintenance of lane striping, or with permanent delineation tools such as recessed reflectors.

**Objective 11:** Acquire easements and/or right-of-way for and explore feasibility of future roundabout at the intersection of Highway 40 and Highway 93.

**Objective 12:** Work with MDT to collect seasonal traffic data specific for the Whitefish area to establish more accurate knowledge of average and peak traffic volumes throughout the year.

**Goal 5:** Improve opportunities and experiences for bicycling, walking and using transit for transportation in Segment B.

**Objective 1:** Continue implementation of Connect Whitefish Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan recommendations for bike and pedestrian facilities.

**Objective 2:** Add protected bike lanes, safer and more frequent pedestrian crossing opportunities (including possible mid-block crossings and safe stopping spaces halfway across within the raised median), and amenities including pedestrian-scale lighting.

**Objective 3:** Increase use of shade trees in the boulevard and the extent of the urban canopy.

**Objective 4:** Ensure safe and comfortable pedestrian access to a mix of uses near each other so people can access buildings from the sidewalk or park once and walk to multiple destinations. This includes connected parking lots or access roads, pedestrian-scale lighting, and landscaping buffers between sidewalks.
and roadways.

Objective 5: Facilitate development of transit hub/park & ride lot/bus shelters/more frequent transit service.

Objective 6: Identify locations and provide bike locking stations in concert with transit infrastructure.

Objective 7: Extend and connect existing sections of Whitefish River Trail to each other and to highway bike lanes and sidewalks as described in the Connect Whitefish Master Plan; provide wayfinding for people to connect between highway and trails.

Objective 8: Add a bike/pedestrian path or convert a portion of West 10th Street between Baker Avenue and Spokane Avenue to a bike/pedestrian facility with connection to the future Spokane Avenue bridge underpass.

Environment and Open Space

Goal 6: Increase opportunities for public access to natural areas and green space in Segment B.

Objective 1: Improve access and pedestrian-scale wayfinding to Whitefish River as described in the Connect Whitefish Master Plan.

Objective 2: Consider acquisition of open space to preserve or develop into usable public park space (and identify potential funding sources).

Objective 3: Encourage development of landscaping corridors perpendicular to the highway connecting it to the Whitefish River with green space.

Goal 7: Improve environment of the road right-of-way in Segment B.

Objective 1: Encourage additional Adopt-a-Highway litter pick-up efforts (April – October); involve businesses, organizations, and families.

Objective 2: Incentivize tree retention for properties prior to submittal of a development permit application.
- Revise landscaping standards to better incentivize retention of healthy, mature trees.

Goal 8: Require use of drought resistant species for a significant proportion of commercial landscaping in Segment B to minimize need for irrigation and support the City’s water conservation ordinance.

Objective 1: Develop a drought resistant planting guide for commercial properties.

Climate Action Goals

Many of the goals indicated for all three segments of the corridor are categorized as either Land Use or Transportation goals. While not specifically identified as environmental goals, most have the added benefit of reducing environmental impacts and helping the City achieve its Climate Action Plan goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Land Use goals related to mixed or multiple uses in close proximity to each other, shared and connected parking lots, smaller blocks and an expanded street network all act to improve walkability and the ability of people to reduce vehicle trips and of developers to make more efficient use of resources. Transportation goals related to improving traffic flow and the experience and opportunities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users would also result in improved fuel efficiency, reduced vehicle trips, and a reduction in associated greenhouse gases.
Future Land Use
Designations Segment B

Several factors were considered to determine future land use designations for the corridor planning area. They include consistency between zoning, existing uses, and land use designations in the Growth Policy; existing and future streets and infrastructure such as water and sewer services; planning best practices for buffering and transitioning between different uses, densities, lot sizes and structure types; and adjacent land uses such as commercial, urban, and suburban relative to each other. Inconsistencies between zoning and future land uses are shown on the map below. The zoning districts applicable to each future land use designation according to the Growth Policy are listed on the next page.

In Segment B there are large tracts of land with zoning inconsistent with land use designated as Suburban Residential in the Growth Policy. They include the Great Northern Heights neighborhood on the west side of the highway and properties west of commercial highway uses between Park Knoll Road and Akers Lane. Land designated Suburban Residential is intended for lower density residential areas with one house per four-tenths of an acre to two and a half acres and appropriate zoning districts include Country Residential (WCR), Suburban Residential (WSR), and Estate Residential (WER). Great Northern Heights neighborhood is zoned Single-family Residential (WR-1) which is an urban-type density that allows one house per 10,000 square feet or about one-quarter acre. It also includes townhouses approved using the planned unit development process. To be consistent with this zoning, the neighborhood land use designation should be Urban, which is the appropriate future land use for WR-1 Single-family Residential zoning.

The residential zoning west of highway commercial uses between Park Knoll Road and Akers Lane is One-family Limited Residential (WLR) which allows a density of one house per 15,000 square feet or one-third acre. This is also not consistent with the Suburban Residential land use designation and should be modified to Urban land use. Between the two areas described above are largely undeveloped lots with Country Residential and Estate Residential zoning, consistent with the Suburban Residential land use designation. However, an extension of Baker Avenue south from 19th Street to JP Road has been envisioned as a tool to expand the road network in the corridor planning area and relieve congestion on Highway 93 for decades (2009 Transportation Plan, 1999 South Whitefish Transportation Planning Project). Conceptual layouts of Baker Avenue would bisect these parcels from north to south and would be classified as an arterial based on anticipated traffic volume and function. Because of the traffic volume and commercial uses permitted to the east, denser uses along the arterial are more...
appropriate than the low-density residential use intended for the Suburban Residential land use designation. Encouraging uses that transition from commercial to mixed uses with denser residential along the arterial, to lower density, large lot residential to the west will help reduce future land use conflicts and traffic noise impacts. For that reason, the land adjacent to either side of a conceptual Baker Avenue extension should also change to an Urban land use designation. The Urban designation includes an isolated remnant lot zoned for agriculture and the lot directly north of the Great Northern Heights single-family neighborhood. These changes are consistent with the future land use designations east of the highway. Areas zoned Country Residential west of the Baker extension remain Suburban Residential.

### Implementation Activities

1. Develop outdoor storage standards for light assembly and manufacturing;
2. Improve architectural review standards for multi-tenant commercial buildings;
3. Revise the Special Provisions for Lots to allow multiple commercial uses on the same lot in Segment B with an administrative conditional use permit and revise shared parking regulations for those multiple uses;
4. Revise landscaping and parking standards to require:
   - Variation in heights, masses, colors of species used while limiting use of turf or grass;
   - A proportion of landscaped area be planted with drought tolerant species;
   - Wider areas of landscaping on highway frontage with the inclusion of public amenities encouraged;
   - Landscaping for automotive sales lots;
   - Better buffering of low-density residential zones from adjacent commercial uses;
   - Potentially fewer parking spaces for some commercial uses subject to review of Whitefish and national parking standards; and
   - Connection of adjacent parking lots,
5. Incentivize tree retention for properties before a development permit application is received;
6. Add a Highway 93 South specific landscaping setback to the WB-2 zoning district in Segment B consistent with the existing 20-foot front yard setback; and
7. Revise the sign district along Baker Avenue north of 13th Street.

### Whitefish Growth Policy Applicable Zoning for Future Land Use Designations

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<tr>
<td>• WB-2 Secondary Business District</td>
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<td>• WR-3 Low Density Multi-family (6,000 square feet [sf] for detached 1-family; 2,400 sf for attached 1-family)</td>
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<td>• WI Industrial and Warehousing</td>
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<td>• WR-1 One-family Residential (10,000 sf)</td>
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<td>• WLR One-family Limited Residential (15,000 sf)</td>
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<td>• SAG-5 Suburban Agriculture (5 ac)</td>
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<td>• Zoning varies - public park facilities</td>
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<td>• Office and Professional Zoning District - Not Yet Created</td>
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Proposed Future Land Use Designations Segment B.
6.2 Segment C Goals & Objectives

**Land Use**

**Goal 1:** Support and encourage land uses in Segment C outside of Whitefish City limits to comply with the goals, policies, and statements in the 2012 Flathead County Growth Policy (see page 17 for a list of the relevant goals, policies, and statements).

**Goal 2:** Encourage Flathead County to enforce zoning and Highway Overlay design standards for commercial development in Segment C to improve the aesthetics and functionality of corridor.

**Objective 1:** Encourage or petition Flathead County to develop a zoning compliance permit for development in the Highway Overlay zone (and/or County-wide) as a tool to ensure new development adheres to County zoning standards.

**Objective 2:** Work with County to ensure development south of Highway 40 meets City and County objectives.

**Goal 3:** Limit future commercial development to properties currently zoned Secondary Business and Business Service District; discourage expansion of commercial zoning any further south along Highway 93.

**Objective 1:** Encourage, support, and ensure the County maintains the intent of the Business Service district to be developed as an island rather than a strip; retain agricultural zoning further south on Highway 93.

**Objective 2:** Oppose any expansion or parcel-by-parcel creep of either Secondary Business or Business Service zoning districts beyond current limits.

**Objective 3:** Strongly discourage commercial uses that generate large volumes of daily vehicle trips.

**Objective 4:** Maintain and protect the rural character and agricultural uses for lands zoned residential and agricultural.

**Goal 4:** Prioritize infill within City over commercial development in the County.

**Objective 1:** Within existing City limits allow higher density development, more intense uses, greater variety of uses, and uses generating more daily vehicle trips relative to uses permitted in County.

Current City policy adopted under other plans is to maintain the urban growth boundary at the Highway 40 intersection and not to extend services or annex property any further south. Should that policy change in the future to provide the City more oversight of development further south, the following goals and objectives would apply:

**Goal 5:** Ensure any properties that annex into the City in the future are developed in a manner consistent with the community’s vision for the gateway segment of the corridor.

**Objective 1:** Require a development agreement between the City Council and a petitioner as a condition of any new annexation requests for commercial highway frontage.

**Objective 2:** Create a new highway commercial transition zone to be applied to annexations in areas currently zoned Secondary Business, with traffic intensive uses moved from permitted to conditional uses to be consistent with the community’s vision for Segment C and current uses.
to better buffer adjacent residential properties from negative impacts.

**Objective 3:** Improve the visual character of the built environment by reviewing and improving architectural and development standards used for the south Whitefish gateway area.

**Goal 6:** Ensure City-planned upgrades to water and wastewater treatment plants accommodate future needs of the water and sewer service area, as required by the Department of Environmental Quality.

**Goal 7:** Bring non-conforming billboards into compliance with City and County sign regulations.

**Transportation**

**Goal 8:** Improve traffic safety through Segment C including potentially reducing speed and improving intersection safety.

**Objective 1:** Consider alternatives to signalized control of traffic, such as a roundabout, at the intersection of Highway 93 and Highway 40 to improve future level of service.

**Objective 2:** Follow up MDT’s Level of Service of Safety analyses to resolve any safety issues identified at intersections of Blanchard Lake Road with Highway 93 and Hospital Way and Emerald Drive with Highway 40.

**Objective 3:** Encourage MDT to consider addition of right turning/deceleration or acceleration lanes at intersections identified as needing such improvements.

**Objective 4:** Consider speed limit reductions north of Blanchard Lake Road and west of Whitefish Stage Road and petition Flathead County to request a speed study from MDT.

**Objective 5:** Support Flathead County’s efforts or work directly with MDT to consolidate highway accesses where feasible and require new development to share access with adjacent uses.

**Objective 6:** Require new development and encourage existing uses to connect adjacent parking lots so moving from one to another does not involve re-entering the highway.

**Objective 7:** With Flathead County, and as part of the Whitefish Transportation Plan update, work to further develop backage and frontage road concepts presented in the 2017 Flathead County Highway 93 South Whitefish Corridor Plan and Zoning Amendment to help relieve future vehicle conflicts on highway.

**Goal 9:** Improve opportunities and experiences for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users in Segment C.

**Objective 1:** Work with Flathead County and

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**Potential Future Transitional Business District**

Should City annexation policies south of Highway 40 change, a potential transitional business zoning district could be applied to properties currently zoned B-4 County Secondary Business, if and when those properties are annexed into the City. The district would move high traffic uses currently permitted in B-4 to conditional uses, while encouraging commercial uses generating lower vehicle trips and destination centered to minimize congestion and maximize traffic safety. Such a transition zone might allow the following types of uses as uses by right:

- Building and contractor related companies and storage yards
- Churches
- Daycares
- Light assembly and light manufacturing
- Medical clinics
- Nurseries and landscape materials
- Professional offices and personal services
- Recreational facilities, private and commercial
- Recreational guides and outfitters
- Multi-family over ground floor commercial
- Veterinary hospitals
- Wholesale and warehousing

The following types of currently permitted uses could be conditional uses:

- Automotive, boat, and RV sales, rentals, parts, repair or service
- Automotive service stations, including convenience stores
- Bars/Lounges
- Boat and RV storage
- Hospitals, nursing, retirement homes or personal care facilities
- Hotels or motels
- Animal kennels
- Machinery and small equipment sales, rental, or repair
- Microbreweries or micro-distilleries
- Ministorage
- RV parks, campgrounds, or amusement parks
- Residential accessory apartments or caretaker units
- Restaurants

In addition, it is suggested buildings over 10,000 square feet require conditional use permits, and a 50 foot landscaped greenbelt be required along Highway 93 frontage, with 20 foot setbacks required on property fronts, sides, and rears abutting residential or agricultural properties.
MDT to develop a separated bike path along the Highway 93 right of way (identify funding source, develop a joint City/County operations and maintenance agreement with MDT).

**Objective 2:** Work with County, transit providers, and MDT to develop transit facilities (for example: transit hub, park & ride lot, bus stops) and more frequent transit service.

**Environment and Open Space**

**Goal 10:** Preserve forested and open spaces to help maintain the rural feel of the segment.

**Objective 1:** Consider acquisition of open space to preserve or use as public park space and identify potential funding sources; consider regulations for properties annexed into the City that require tree retention and more open space in new projects.

**Objective 2:** Encourage preservation of environmentally sensitive areas such as stormwater conveyances, wetlands, and steep slopes that contribute to the character of the segment.

**Objective 3:** Support the County in its efforts to enforce its landscaping, signage, and buffering requirements.

**Objective 4:** Maintain existing residential zoning in corridor.

**Goal 11:** Protect water quality.

**Objective 1:** Provide connection to City sewer where feasible if City policy changes to extend the urban growth boundary.

**Objective 2:** Ensure County enforces state stormwater management standards; apply City stormwater management standards in future annexations.

**Goal 12:** Minimize need for irrigation in corridor landscaping.

**Objective 1:** Encourage County to require use of drought tolerant species in landscaping; require same for properties that petition for annexation in future.

**Future Land Use Designations**

Changes to the future land use designations are consistent with and acknowledge existing zoning. The changes also reaffirm areas zoned for residential uses should remain residential, and emphasize those areas are not appropriate for commercial or business zoning. Where already zoned for Secondary Business, the land use designation changes from Rural Residential to a new Highway Transitional designation. Where zoned for Business Service the land use designation changes from Rural Residential.
Residential to Business Service Center. Where zoned residential (Suburban Agriculture), the land use designation is changed from Rural to Rural Residential. All other future land use designations remain unchanged from the 2007 Growth Policy.

Implementation Activities
1. Encourage or petition Flathead County to develop a zoning compliance permit as a tool to ensure new development adheres to County zoning standards.
2. Encourage Flathead County land use findings of approval for new development that comply with the goals, policies, and statements within its own Growth Policy.
3. Acquire land or obtain permanent easements for open space at Highway 40 intersection.
4. If City policy changes with regards to the urban growth boundary and annexation, create a highway transition zone with development standards for future annexations (increase setbacks and extent of landscaping; require tree retention along highway, use of earthen berms and other methods for screening; require drought resistant species in all landscaping; require shared highway access, connected adjacent parking lots, parking behind buildings, easements for future shared use path, bus stops, require natural materials or blending with natural environment, variety in rooflines, massing, etc.).
5. Amend City annexation policy to require development agreements for County zoned commercial property when zoning, use, or proposed uses are inconsistent with City zoning, Future Land Uses, or other policies.
6. As part of the Whitefish Transportation Plan update, further develop the concept for an alternative road network (backage roads parallel to highway with cross-connections).
7. Request County ask MDT to conduct speed study on Highway 93 between Blanchard Lake Road and Highway 40, and on Highway 40 between Whitefish Stage Road and Highway 93.
8. Work with County to develop a separated bike path along the highway (identify funding source, develop a joint City/County operations and maintenance agreement with MDT) and transit facilities.