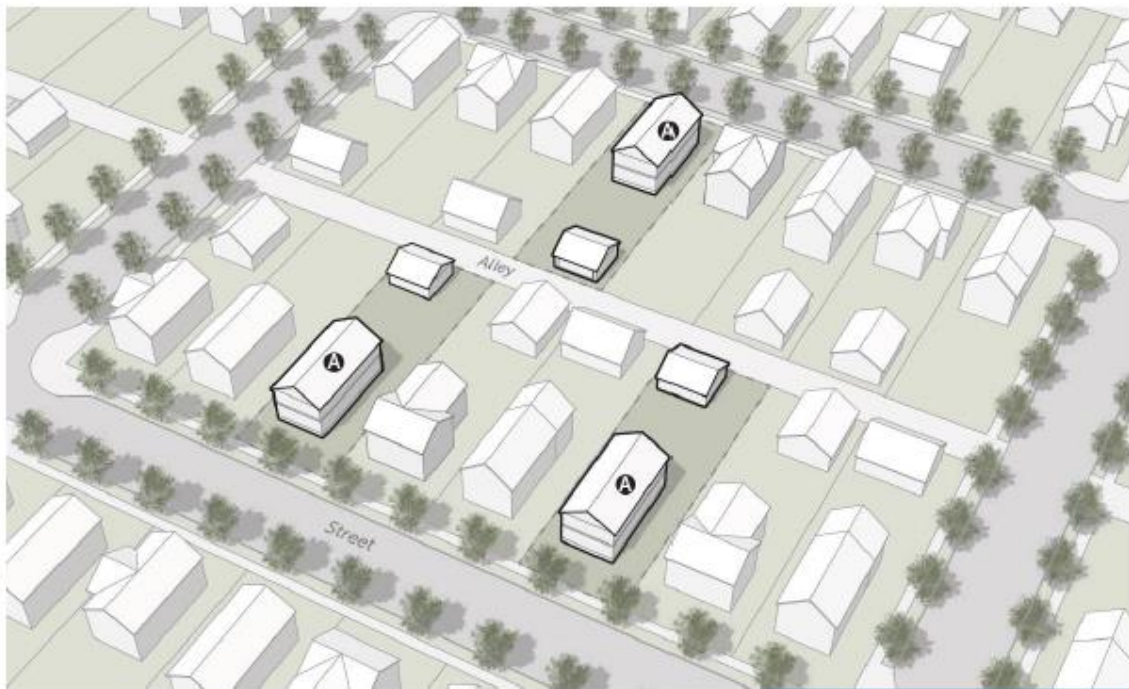




Town of Jackson

Wyoming

Alternative Answers to Policy Issues: Districts 3-6



CODE STUDIO

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Alternative Solutions to Policy Issues
Town Districts 3 – 6: “Neighborhoods and Corridors”

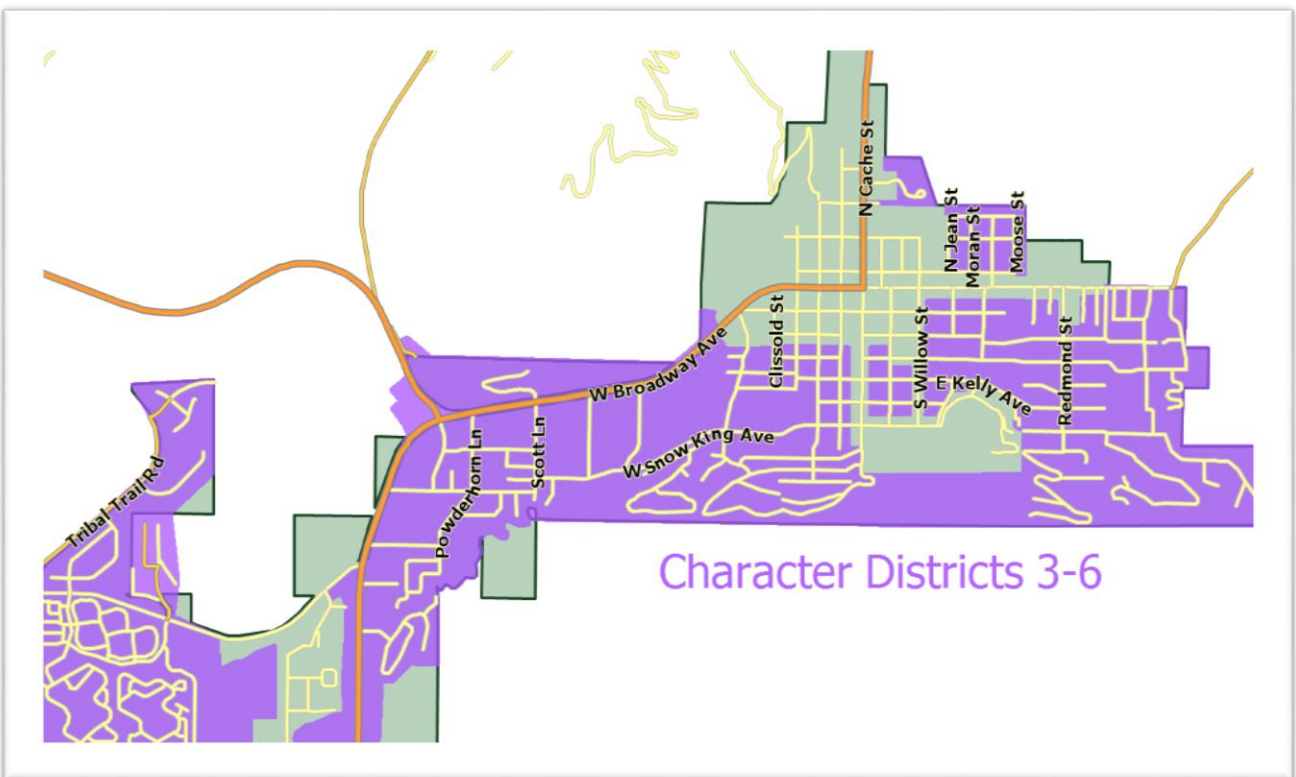
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I. INTRODUCTION

After adoption of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan, the Town (and County) began the necessary process of updating its Land Development Regulations (LDRs) to better implement the new policy direction provided in the Comprehensive Plan. The Town is updating its LDRs through multiple targeted updates rather than through one update of the entire Town. The first zoning update, Character District 2: Town Commercial Core, was adopted in November, 2016.

The next step (this step) is to update four of the remaining five Character Districts that will encompass the rest of Town (District 1: Town Square will be updated last). The following four Character Zones will be updated in the current process (indicated in purple in the map below):

- Character District 3: Town Residential Core
- Character District 4: Midtown
- Character District 5: West Jackson (*excluding Business Park (BP) zone*)
- Character District 6: Town Periphery



In general terms, the primary goals of the current zoning update are to 1) meet our workforce housing goals consistent with Housing Action Plan; 2) manage growth responsibly; 3) protect community character; and 4) encourage appropriate redevelopment:

Below is a list of Comprehensive Planning policies that best guide and define these general goals:

- ‘To preserve community character **residential and commercial development potential will be limited to the amount allowed and planned for since 1994**’ (*Policy 3.1.a*);
- ‘Provide **predictability** in land use decisions’ (*Policy 3.3.c*);
- ‘Emphasize a **variety of housing types**, including deed-restricted housing’ (*Policy 4.1.b*);
- ‘Promote **compatible infill and redevelopment** that fits Jackson’s neighborhoods’ (*Policy 4.1.c*);
- ‘Promote a **balanced mix of nonresidential uses**’ (*Policy 4.2.b*);
- ‘Create **vibrant walkable mixed use** Subareas’ (*Policy 4.2.c*);
- ‘**House at least 65% of the workforce locally**’ (*Policy 5.1.a*);
- ‘**Preserve existing workforce housing stock**’ (*Policy 5.3.b*);
- ‘**Avoid regulatory barriers** to the provision of **workforce housing**’ (*Policy 5.4.b*).

The public participation part of this update formally began in May, 2017, with public workshops and an online survey for the public to identify acceptable (and unacceptable) locations for additional residential density, new sidewalks, new road connections, and areas where reinvestment would be desirable. This input is synthesized in the *Jackson/Teton County Community Engagement Summary: Zoning*, which is available at www.engage2017.jacksontetonplan.com.

Based on these materials, the Town Council held a meeting on June 27, 2017 and reached consensus to answer 8 Policy Questions posed by staff that would provide initial direction for a first draft of updated LDRS for Districts 3 - 6. Those 8 policy questions are:

Policy Question 1: What portion of the additional 1,800 dwelling units should be transferred from the Rural areas of the County into Town? [These units would be in addition to what is allowed by current zoning.]

Policy Question 2: What type of residential density is preferred? Where should residential density be located?

Policy Question 3: How should residential buildout potential be calculated and monitored?

Policy Question 4: How much of the additional density should be tied to requirements of incentives for workforce and/or deed-restricted housing?

Policy Question 5: Should the amount of commercial development potential in Town be reduced? If so, how?

Policy Question 6: What types of development should be subject to architectural design standards?

Policy Question 7: What type of pedestrian improvements, if any, should be required for new development?

Policy Question 8: Should the Town strive to increase connectivity for all modes of travel by trying to encourage or require that all blocks be more similar in size to those downtown?

To assist the Town Council in providing direction on these policy questions, Code Studio, working in conjunction with Town staff prepared this document, *Alternative Solutions to Policy Question: Character District 3 - 6*. It provides the following information for each Policy Question:

Current Requirements: A summary of the provisions in the County and Town’s current requirements relevant to the Policy Question, for both full-time and seasonal employees;

Key Issues. The key considerations or concerns about the provisions relevant to the Policy Question, along with concerns or issues that might occur if other alternatives are pursued; and

Alternative Answers. An outline of two to four alternative policy approaches for consideration in providing direction on the Policy Question.

Alternative Solutions to Policy Questions: Districts 3 - 6, is being made available for public review in mid-October, 2017. The schedule for the review, analysis, and direction on a preferred alternative will be as follows. All materials are available at the Engage 2017 project webpage:

<https://www.engage2017.jacksontetonplan.com/townzoning>

The alternatives will be reviewed on the following schedule:

- **Release of Districts 3 – 6 Alternatives:** October 20
- **Public Review:** October 20 – November 8
 - Review of release documents
 - Online Survey
 - Questions? Email a question at <https://www.engage2017.jacksontetonplan.com/townzoning>
 - Attend “neighborhood” office hours to talk about alternatives. Staff will organize meetings with neighborhood groups and interested citizens in their neighborhoods. Times and locations have not been determined at this time. Four or five meetings are expected. Please check <https://www.engage2017.jacksontetonplan.com/townzoning> for updated information.
- **Public Comment Events:**
 - Community Discussion Public Comment Event
 - (Spanish): November 6, 6:00 – 8:00 pm, TBD
 - (English): November 8, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Snow King Grandview Lodge
 - Public Comment Published: November 13
- **Public Hearings:** November 14 – December 20
 - Planning Commission: November 14, 6:00 pm, Town Hall
 - If needed, continue to November 15-16, 6:00 pm, Town Hall
 - Town Council: November 29, 6:00 pm, Town Hall
 - If needed, continue to November 30/December 1, Town Hall
 - Draft of final policy direction: December 1
 - Final policy confirmation: Council: December 11, 6:00 pm, Town Hall

II. ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO POLICY QUESTIONS

Policy Question 1:

What portion of the additional 1,800 dwelling units should be transferred from the Rural areas of the County into Town?

[These units would be in addition to what is allowed by current zoning.]

A. Current Requirements

There is no regulatory requirement to transfer the approximately 1,800 residential units from the County to the Town. There is, however, strong direction in the Comprehensive Plan that the units should be transferred from Rural areas in the County to the Town as a ‘Complete Neighborhood’ to meet important community growth management goals (see below).

B. Key Issues

65% Local Workforce Goal

In order to meet the Comprehensive Plan’s goal to house 65% of the local workforce in Teton County, staff analyses indicate that all of the 1,800 units need to be located in the Town (with approximately another 500 units being located in Complete Neighborhoods in the County).

60/40 Complete Neighborhoods/Rural Goal

In order to meet the Comprehensive Plan’s goal that 60% of all new development be located in Complete Neighborhoods and 40% be located in Rural areas, staff analyses indicate that all of the 1,800 units need to be located in the Town (with approximately another 500 units being located in Complete Neighborhoods in the County).

Impact on Existing Neighborhood Character

If done appropriately, the addition of the 1,800 units would provide substantial community benefits by not only creating additional housing for local workers but by reducing commuting distances (with associated reductions in air pollution and traffic on highways) and enabling Jackson to remain a “community first and resort second” where local workers can live and participate in their community. However, the additional density could also impact existing neighborhoods by potentially increasing traffic, parking demand, population density, and the scale of residential structures. The key is to determine whether these potential impacts would be outweighed by the benefits.

What if the 1,800 Units Are Not Located in the Town

If all or most of the 1,800 units are not located in Town, then the community (both Town and County) will be faced with a number of options, none of which is easy. The first would be to

discuss the possibility of locating the units in Northern South Park on currently undeveloped land. This would likely be a controversial discussion. Another option would be to discuss the possibility of locating the units in Complete Neighborhoods in the County (e.g., Teton Village, Hog Island, etc.). This would likely be even more controversial than Northern South Park. Another option, assuming that the units are not located in either of these two alternate locations, would be to amend the Comprehensive Plan to either delete or greatly reduce the 65% workforce and 60/40 development goals because they no longer represent the community’s will.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 1.A:

Prioritize the addition of all 1,800 units to Town (*closest to Status Quo*)

This alternative would prioritize the addition of all 1,800 residential units over other possible outcomes, including any possible negative impacts. The exact type (e.g., townhouses, apartments, etc.) and location of the additional units would be determined at later stages of this update process. Public input would also help determine whether other criteria, such as design standards, deed-restrictions, etc., should be included as factors in locating the density.

Alternative 1.B:

Add less than 1,800 units in order to balance housing goals with other desired goals

This alternative offers the flexibility to add less than the full 1,800 units but more than no units. For example, based on one’s evaluation of the key issues above and other considerations, a citizen may determine that 1,200 units (or 750 or 500) best balances the community’s interests and goals. This option would be attractive to someone who feels that adding the full 1,800 units would negatively impact the community’s character in ways that cannot be adequately mitigated.

Alternative 1.C:

Add none of the 1,800 units to Town

This alternative might be selected by someone who feels that the Town and valley already have enough residential development and/or too many people. This option implies that whatever benefits that would be gained by adding all or some of the 1,800 units would be outweighed by the negative impacts to the values they care most about, such as Jackson’s small town feel, protecting wildlife habitat, etc.

Policy Question 2:

What type of residential density is preferred? Where should residential density be located?

A. Current Requirements

The types of residential units that are allowed in the Town are determined by zone district. For example, each zone district has a use table that specifies which type(s) of residential units (e.g., single-family, apartment, condominiums, ARUs, townhouse, etc.) are permitted. Only those residential types that are consistent with the purpose and character of the zone district are allowed. Thus, some zones may allow only single-family homes while others may allow all types of units. The number and density of units allowed on a property is controlled by a combination of other development standards, such as Floor Area ratio (FAR), parking, minimum lot size, and setbacks.

The location of residential units is determined by the official zoning map. So while the zone district tells us which types of residential units are allowed, the zoning map tells us where each zoning district is located and thus where those residential units can be built. A key factor in influencing where zone districts are located are transportation facilities, such as state highways and local roads.

B. Key Issues

Explanation of Visual Preference and Density Exercise

The alternatives to Policy Question #2 are presented in a different manner than for the other policy questions. Rather than presenting written alternatives to consider, staff is providing a “visual preference” exercise that asks the public to identify which types of residential development they would prefer to see constructed in Districts 3 - 6 to provide the additional 1,800 units (or whatever number of additional units they support).

In addition, the survey asks the public to show where in Town they would support locating the additional density and preferred residential types. For the locational exercise, we provide the reader with the Comprehensive Plan’s designated subareas for each Character District and a brief description of the intended future character of each subarea. Each subarea is also identified as “Transitional” (intended for redevelopment and potentially more density) or “Stable” (not intended for significant change to existing character). For example, a map will be provided of Subarea 3.2: Core Residential, with a brief description of its intended future character and its designation as “Transitional.” With this information, the public will be asked to show their level of support, if any, for adding different residential types to this subarea and explain why (or why not). A sample of the survey will be provided separately (see appendix).

A question about preferences for various parking policies will be asked for each subarea as well.

While this exercise can be done generally using the information in this document, it is much easier and more accurate to use the interactive on-line survey to document and submit your responses. Even so, participants may use the materials in this document to help formulate

their responses and submit those responses in a letter or another format that is convenient. If you choose to this, please consider reading the instructions for taking the survey provided with the on-line survey.

Stable Subareas

Because STABLE subareas are not identified in the Comprehensive Plan for additional density or major changes to allowed building types, the different housing types are not provided for consideration. Instead, two questions are asked about what characteristics the public would like to maintain or improve in each subarea. These questions are also an opportunity for the public to provide input on the appropriateness of ARUs in Stable subareas as was allowed by a recent amendment to the LDRs.

Considerations in Completing the Visual Preference Survey

In completing the visual preference survey, the following issues may be worth considering:

- Existing neighborhood character: Consider the existing character of each subarea (is it of mixed/uniform density? Does it have older or newer structures?) and whether you believe redevelopment and change would be beneficial;
- Locational criteria for adding density: Consider what criteria you believe are necessary to make additional density work best. Is it proximity to transit stops, local services (e.g., grocery stores), jobs, major road corridors, or some other factors?
- Whether to cluster density or disperse density: Consider whether new density should be located close to existing residential density or should be dispersed throughout less dense neighborhoods.
- Scale of residential buildings: In order to provide additional density, consider that the choice is essentially between adding fewer, large-scale residential buildings (e.g., apartment or mixed-use buildings) or more, smaller-scale buildings (tri-plexes, townhomes). Which do you prefer?
- Building form vs density: In evaluating the different types of residential buildings, it is helpful to consider whether it is the size and scale of the building (i.e., it's form) or the number of units inside the building (density) that matters most. For example, one 2,000 sf building could have 4 units but still be significantly smaller in scale than a 3,000 sf single family home. The key is to weigh both factors as one considers what types of residential development are appropriate in various location in Town.
- Architecture: How does the way a building look affect your opinion of that type of density? Is it a deciding factor? Do you prefer architecture to be modern, alpine, traditional western, craftsman, or something else? Should Jackson have a general consistent style or is eclectic better? What is your preference on style for roofs (e.g., flat, gabled) or materials (log, stone, metal panel, corrugated, siding (wood/synthetic), etc.
- Site design: Consider whether certain site design elements might impact your view of additional density. For example, how important is green space, parking design, outdoor space (common and private), storage space, privacy, landscaping, etc. Should buffers of some type be required between larger multi-family buildings and adjacent properties?

Policy Question 3:

How should residential buildout potential be calculated and monitored?

A. Current Requirements

In the Comprehensive Plan, buildout for residential units and commercial floor area are calculated by estimating the development potential of existing zoning (see Appendix B in the Comprehensive Plan). This method relies on the use of a variety of assumptions regarding future development outcomes, as discussed in more detail below.

The one exception to this buildout methodology is found in Sec. 7.8 of the LDRs that provides a floor area bonus for ‘workforce housing.’ Residential units built using this floor area bonus are counted as the units are built, not by the total possible number of units that could be built on all properties that can use the bonus. Units built under the workforce FAR bonus, however, will not change the community’s overall buildout because the units will be subtracted from the buildout total on an annual basis.

B. Key Issues

Complexity of Buildout Calculations

Estimating a community’s buildout is inherently difficult because it requires the use of numerous complex assumptions. It also requires making predictions about future market conditions which cannot be done with great certainty. Therefore, at best, buildout estimates provide an educated guess that produces a range of future development outcomes. And so caution should be used in applying buildout projections to planning decisions. That said, the Comprehensive Plan does commit the community to limiting residential buildout in the Town and County to our estimated buildout consistent with Policy 3.1.a (see also Appendix B in Comprehensive Plan).

Workforce Housing Action Plan

The Housing Action Plan, which is part of the Comprehensive Plan, states that the community should increase the supply of workforce housing by reducing regulatory barriers (Policy 5.A). A barrier can come in many forms, including buildout requirements or methodologies. For example, if buildout is calculated based on zoning potential, then this would likely preclude the use of workforce housing incentive tools that rely on providing density bonuses over a large area with the knowledge that not all properties will use the incentive. This type of “over-zoning” can be an important strategy to stimulate the market to build housing within a targeted area while also providing the community the ability to monitor the use of the bonus and to end the bonus when it is no longer needed or when the buildout limit is reached.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 3.A:

Calculate buildout by zoning potential

This buildout method involves calculating the maximum buildout of every property at 100% of development potential based on existing zoning (e.g., FAR primarily). Once the maximum potential of each property in Town is calculated, all of them are added together to get a total Town buildout. This was the method designed by the Buildout Taskforce that was created to develop and calculate a community buildout for the recent Comprehensive Plan adoption process. This taskforce concluded that the best way to calculate buildout is to assume that every property will develop to 100% of its allowed development potential. This is not as simple as it may sound. For example, where Town zones allow both residential and commercial development the Task Force had to make difficult assumptions about the relative split of future residential vs commercial development (e.g., 30% nonresidential – 70% residential) in each zone. Reasonable people can disagree with these percentages with the result being that small changes to these assumptions can lead to significant changes in the final buildout numbers. In the end, this method provides a “worst case scenario” and so provides a high-end estimate on Town and community-wide buildout.

The disadvantage of this method is that it makes it difficult to use development incentives based on FAR increases or additional floor area because any pre-determined increase would automatically increase overall buildout potential. For example, this would preclude the option of using a specific FAR bonus (30% bonus above base FAR) to encourage deed-restricted housing. In addition, the ‘upzone’ of even a single property to allow additional workforce housing would cause the buildout to be exceeded and so would need to be balanced with an equal ‘downzone’ of another property or simply denied as not consistent with the community’s buildout goals.

Another way to calculate buildout using existing zoning potential is to assume that properties, as a whole, will develop to less than 100% of zoning potential. Experience tells us that most properties do not maximize their development potential but tend to develop at the level that makes most sense for their budget and needs. If this is the case, then one could create a buildout number that assumes properties develop to 80% (or 90% or 70%) of their maximum potential, thereby reducing the number in Appendix B by the same amount.

Alternative 3.B:

Calculate buildout on an ‘as-built’ basis

This method involves counting the number of residential units as they are built and subtracting them from a total buildout limit. This method has the advantage of allowing FAR-based incentives that provide incentive for workforce housing. With this method, we are less concerned with how much floor area is theoretically allowed in the Town and concerned more with tracking how many units are actually being built and then making decisions based on actual impacts rather than projected impacts. This method, however, relies on the public having confidence that a future Council will have the

Alternative Solutions to Policy Issues
Town Districts 3 – 6: “Neighborhoods and Corridors”

political will to slow or deny approval of residential units as we approach the buildout limit.

Policy Question 4:

How much of the additional density should be tied to requirements or incentives for workforce and/or deed-restricted housing?

A. Current Requirements

The current requirement in Div. 7.4 requires that 20% of all new housing be deed-restricted, affordable housing. This required affordable housing is designed to target equally workers of low, moderate, and middle income levels.

B. Key Issues

Update to Housing Mitigation Requirements (Engage 2017)

The Town and County are currently in the process of updating their housing mitigation requirements (see Engage 2017 for Housing Mitigation) and so the mitigation rates for new residential will likely be modified as part of that process. In addition, employee housing mitigation rates for nonresidential development will also be updated as part of that process. It is likely that the Mitigation update will have an initial recommendation for proposed new mitigation rates by the November 8 public workshop on District 3 – 6. Therefore, some people may want to wait until the new housing mitigation rates are proposed before they feel comfortable answering Policy Question #4.

Purpose of Additional Housing Units

It is important to ask ourselves “for what purpose should additional housing units be added to Town?” Based on the Comprehensive Plan, staff concludes that the primary purpose is to provide workforce housing to meet our housing goals. The goal is not to provide additional second or vacation homes because these homes are contrary to meeting our 65% workforce housing goal and are inconsistent with other important community character goals. Thus, one perspective would be that all or most of the additional units should be deed-restricted for the workforce. Staff notes too that workforce housing does not necessarily need to be deed-restricted to serve as workforce housing. For example, existing free market apartments, both new and old, often provide housing to our local workforce even though there are no limits on rent. This is due to their modest size, lacks of amenities, and lack of individual ownership options.

Relationship Between High Deed-Restriction Requirements and Market Feasibility

For those who believe that all or most of the additional density should be deed-restricted, it should be acknowledged that this approach carries risk. The risk is that a high requirement for deed-restrictions may not be financially feasible for developers and so it might deter the development of deed-restricted units in the first place. Thus all should be aware of the

inherent tension between aggressive deed-restriction requirements and market feasibility. For some, the answer to this tension may be that because our community only needs workforce housing we will accept whatever small number of deed-restricted units a high requirement might create (i.e., it’s okay if only a small portion of the 1,800 units are actually built). Others may say that allowing a certain number of second homes to help pay for a greater number of deed-restricted units is worth the trade-off and so the deed-restriction should be set at the “sweet spot” that maximizes the market’s ability to provide the desired deed-restricted housing.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 4.A:

Require the same deed-restriction rate for 1,800 units as currently required by the LDRs for new housing (*status quo*)

This alternative would apply the same affordable housing mitigation rate to the additional 1,800 residential units (or whatever number of units that is desired) that applies to regular residential development. While the mitigation rate is currently 20%, the mitigation rate will likely be changed as part of the current Housing Mitigation LDR update. Thus, the actual mitigation rate attached to this answer will have to wait until the Housing Mitigation update process is complete.

Alternative 4.B:

Require workforce deed restriction for all additional units

This alternative states that all additional density should be deed-restricted in some way for the workforce. This response represents those who feel strongly that the only reason to transfer any of the additional units to Town is to provide permanently guaranteed workforce housing units and that all other types of housing should not be allowed.

Alternative 4.C:

The number of deed-restricted units should be based on meeting a specific community goal, such as the 65% local workforce housing goal

This alternative provides flexibility to create specific limits that are intended to achieve a specific goal, such as the 65% workforce housing goal. However, other community goals may be appropriate as well. Once the goal is selected, planning staff would likely need to calculate the percentage necessary to meet that goal. For example, in order to meet the 65% goal, the answer might be that 30% of the units should be deed-restricted while another 20% must be un-restricted rental apartments. The key for this option is to clearly identify what goal is intended to be met.

Policy Question 5:

Should the amount of commercial development potential in Town be reduced? If so, how?

A. Current Requirements

There are no specific requirements in the LDRs or policies in the Comprehensive Plan intended to reduce the total amount of commercial floor area in the Town. The current levels of commercial development are set by existing zoning – i.e., every property has a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) that establishes how much total commercial floor area is potentially possible on each property. Thus, the commercial buildout of the entire Town is the sum of the maximum floor areas of every property that allows commercial uses.

B. Key Issues

The Council Does Not Favor ‘Downzoning’ Commercial Properties

As part of the District 2 Downtown zoning update, the Council decided that it did not support “downzoning” commercial properties. This means that the existing commercial FARs cannot be reduced to achieve some community goal. This direction, however, does not prohibit strategies to incentivize residential development on commercial properties with the goal of ‘converting’ commercial properties to residential uses. This would have the practical result of reducing overall commercial buildout without negatively affecting property values.

Relationship Between Commercial Development and Employee Generation (and Housing)

New commercial development creates the demand for employees. If the local employment market is weak, then many if not all of these new jobs will be taken by workers already living in the community. However, where the job market is strong, as is typical in Jackson, new workers must be found (and housed) to fill the new positions. This causal relationship is the basis for the employee housing mitigations requirements in Div. 6.3 in the LDRs. The purpose of Question #5, however, is not to study the relationship between new development and employee generation – this is the task of the Housing Mitigation update – but to ask the community to consider whether it makes sense to reduce the amount of commercial development in Town to better achieve certain community goals, such as reduce the total demand for workers as a means of reducing housing demand.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 5.A.

We should keep commercial development potential at current levels (*status quo*)

This alternative supports maintaining commercial development potential at current levels and does not see a strong reason to create incentives to reduce overall commercial development in Town.

Alternative 5 B.

We should try to reduce commercial development potential, but not require reductions

This alternative supports identifying opportunities to reduce commercial development potential in Town. The goal for this alternative would be simple: make residential development equal to or more profitable than commercial development so that landowners will voluntarily construct residential units instead of more retail, service, office, etc. The additional residential could take the form of either pure multi-family projects or adding residential to mixed-use projects. This goal would be consistent with a recent trend where some commercial property owners have developed workforce housing projects instead of traditional commercial projects due to the strong market conditions for rental workforce housing (e.g., Westview Condos and Sagebrush Apartments).

Alternative 5 C.

We should allow the transfer of commercial development potential from one property to another

This alternative provides a flexible option where commercial development potential could be transferred from one property to another. This would likely involve the community identifying specific areas or key sites that are appropriate as “receiving areas” and possibly the same for “donor areas.” One goal would be to encourage the redevelopment of high priority sites, such as gateway properties or constrained sites, that may currently lack adequate FAR to stimulate redevelopment. Development on the receiving site would be subject to the same development standards that already exist on the property (i.e., no additional height or stories or reduced setbacks, etc., would be provided), with the exception that FAR would not be limited by a hard cap but by the maximum size of the building’s “box” as limited by the existing development standards, such as height, parking, LSR, setbacks, etc.

Policy Question 6:

What types of development should be subject to architectural design standards?

A. Current Requirements

Under the current LDRs, all commercial development and redevelopment are subject to the Town Design Guidelines and must be reviewed by the Design Review Committee (DRC). In addition, all multi-family developments (i.e., any building with three or more attached units) in the District 2 (DC, CR-1, CR-2, and OR Zone) must meet the Design Guidelines and undergo DRC review. All other development is not subject to design review, including single-family detached homes and ARUs which have never been subject to design review.

B. Key Issues

Should All Residential Development, Except Single-Family Homes, Undergo Design Review?

As part of the District 2: Commercial Core LDR update, the Council required design review for all multi-family residential development. This includes all types of residential housing except detached single-family homes and Accessory Residential Units (ARUs). Previously only commercial buildings were subject to design review. The intent was to recognize that larger residential buildings, especially apartment buildings, would benefit from the design principles in the Design Guidelines that address, among other things, building mass, street frontage, public space, pedestrian circulation, materials, and other important design goals.

In addition, if the community intends to build more workforce housing, which often requires higher densities and larger buildings to be feasible, then subjecting these projects to design review would likely increase the esthetic quality of the projects and better ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods. Policy Question #6 is thus asking whether the community should require design review of residential buildings in Districts 3 – 6 as we did in District 2 or perhaps in other ways more appropriate for Districts 3 – 6. Detached single-family homes are not currently subject to design review and staff proposes to keep it this way because single-family homes are personal, private residences, smaller in scale, and are usually excluded from design review in most communities. In addition, the current Design Guidelines were intended to apply to commercial and larger buildings, not single-family homes.

One drawback of additional design review is that it adds some time and cost to projects. This could be seen as a barrier to some types of development, such as workforce housing.

Need to Update Design Guidelines

The current Design Guidelines were crafted to apply to commercial development and larger scale projects. While many of the principles and best practices contained in the Guidelines can be reasonably applied to larger scale residential development (multi-family), the Guidelines

would benefit from a general update to include clearer standards and modifications to better address residential buildings. It may also be worth noting that residential buildings in Districts 3 – 6 will often be located in a very different context than those in District 2 (i.e., on larger and more irregularly-shaped lots). Thus, if the community responds that it would like to see more residential projects undergo design review in Districts 3 – 6, then it might be necessary for the Town to update its Design Guidelines accordingly. Such an update is not on the Town’s current work plan so it may take a while for this to be completed.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 6.A:

Apply Design Review only to commercial and multi-family buildings (2 or more attached units) in Districts 3 - 6

This alternative recommends that we apply the same design review rules to residential in District 3 – 6 that we currently do in District 2.

Alternative 6.B:

Apply Design Review to only commercial development in Districts 3 – 6 (closest to status Quo)

This alternative recommends that we not require design review for new multi-family residential buildings in Districts 3 – 6. This option might be for those who believe that design review is appropriate for multi-family buildings in our downtown commercial and visitor area but is not necessary or desirable in Districts 3 – 6.

Alternative 6.C:

Apply Design Review to commercial development and larger multi-family projects (e.g., 10 units or more) in Districts 3 - 6

This alternative is the same as 6.A except that it limits residential review only to projects above a certain size (e.g., 10 units or more or 10,000 sf). This option is for those who area less concerned about the potential impacts of smaller residential projects but do want to make sure that larger apartment/condo buildings receive full design review given their greater potential for visual and neighborhood impacts. Other limitations may be suggested as well under this option.

Policy Question 7:

What type of pedestrian improvements, if any, should be required for new development?

A. Current Requirements

The Town has not historically had clear thresholds for requiring sidewalks. In cases of large new developments and redevelopments new sidewalks have typically been required in commercial areas and denser residential areas. However, the town has not had, for example, a map or sidewalk plan that clearly shows where sidewalks are required to be built or intended to be built in the future. This changed partially with the Town’s adoption of the Community Streets Plan in 2015. This plan contains detailed sidewalk standards based on the character of the neighborhood. The standards require wider sidewalks of 6’ – 9’ of clear width where we traditionally required 4’ – 5’ wide sidewalks. However, because this plan was adopted by resolution (i.e., not ordinance) its standards are not required by law. Even so, the Planning and Town Public Works Departments have been implementing the Community Streets Plan standards as much as possible for new projects. Finally, new sidewalk requirements were adopted in the four new District 2 zones that closely match the sidewalk standards in the Community Streets Plan. In summary, the Town has a variety of sidewalk standards in different parts of town, with the most specific standards applying to the Downtown commercial area.

B. Key Issues

Purpose of Sidewalks

In considering where sidewalks should be located, it is important to consider the primary purposes of sidewalks and who they are intended to serve. This is especially true because the Town does not have unlimited resources to provide sidewalks on every street. In some people’s opinion, sidewalks should be designed primarily to safely connect residential areas to nearby commercial services (e.g., grocery stores), transit, and other important services. Others might say that sidewalks should seek to connect residential areas to each other and provide safe recreational opportunities (walking with strollers, dogs, elderly, etc.). Others may prioritize sidewalks to serve visitors’ needs or to create safe walkways in the winter when walking on icy roads with traffic is particularly unsafe. There are many different reasons people may favor or oppose sidewalks in certain locations in town and so it is important that people try to balance all of the factors important to them.

Character Impacts of Sidewalks

An important issue in considering whether sidewalks are necessary or desired in a certain area is the impact on neighborhood character. Some people may feel that sidewalks are fine in dense areas but not needed in low density areas where they can detract from the more informal character of their neighborhood. In such places, residents may feel safe walking in the street and so consider sidewalks ‘out of place’ and unnecessary maintenance responsibilities. Similarly, as a compromise, they may prefer to have a sidewalk on only one side of the street for the neighborhood’s needs. Thus, determining where sidewalks should be

located is not only about proper engineering and design, it is also about character and how one wants their neighborhood to look and feel.

Responsibility for Sidewalks

In most locations in Town, sidewalks are first constructed and paid for by the landowner when they develop or redevelop their property. The sidewalk is built to Town specifications and is usually located within the public Right-of-Way but there are cases where the sidewalk is partially or wholly located on the landowner’s private property. Once the sidewalk is built and inspected by the Town, the Town takes over all future maintenance of the sidewalk with the exception of snow removal. In other cases, the Town initiates comprehensive sidewalk improvements on key corridors at public expense (e.g., South Cache Street). No changes to these basic responsibilities are proposed as part of this LDR update but any comments will be considered.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 7.A:

Sidewalks should be required primarily to connect commercial services with surrounding residential areas

This alternative is intended for those who believe that sidewalks should be concentrated in high-use pedestrian areas created by commercial services, both for locals and visitors.

Alternative 7.B:

Sidewalks should be required for areas covered in Alternative 7.A and also between major residential neighborhoods

This alternative is intended for those who believe that sidewalks should serve not only our commercial areas but also allow residents to conveniently walk between and within major neighborhoods.

Alternative 7.C:

Additional sidewalks should not be required of private landowners but may be expanded by the Town using public funds where necessary

This alternative is in favor of maintaining but not expanding our current sidewalk network because they do not feel that private landowners should have the responsibility to construct new sidewalks. This option leaves open the possibility that the sidewalk network could be expanded by the Town through additional public investment.

Policy Question 8:

Should the Town strive to increase connectivity for all modes of travel by trying to encourage or require that all blocks be more similar in size to those downtown?

A. Current Requirements

The Town does not have any specific requirements that require street connectivity. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) standards require that street circulation be addressed as part of PUD project review but there are not specific standards or criteria to guide development. In addition, there are no connectivity requirements in the Town’s subdivision standards, which is where many communities include such standards.

B. Key Issues

Existing development patterns limit opportunities

Due to the relatively small number of vacant properties in Town and few opportunities where larger projects have space to integrate internal drives/roads, expanding the existing road network will be challenging. In addition, retro-fitting the existing network with roads or other types of connectivity (e.g., pathways) will be difficult because doing so is very dependent on landowner cooperation unless the Town wants to use Eminent Domain to force land acquisition which is not likely. Even with these challenges, there still may be some opportunities to find creative ways to increase street and pedestrian connections, especially in the west side of Town where the larger block patterns significantly contribute to traffic concentration and lack of safe pedestrian options.

C. Alternative Answers

Alternative 8.A:

We should incentivize connections as part of certain redevelopment and new projects.

This alternative prioritizes the use of voluntary incentives (e.g., height increases, flexible setbacks, etc.) to encourage landowners to include road and other types of connections into and through new developments. The goal is to identify win-win site designs where connections offer both private and public benefits. This option may include the use of some public money or resources to help fund these infrastructure improvements on private property.

Alternative 8.B:

We should require connections as part of certain redevelopment and new projects, likely as part of the subdivision process and/or development approval process.

This alternative supports mandatory standards and criteria that require certain new developments and redevelopments to provide road connections. This would usually be done at the landowner’s expense but perhaps public funds could be used as well. The traditional approach is to require such connections at the time the property is subdivided.

Alternative 8.C:

The street network in Town is essentially set and adding new connections would not provide significant benefit.

This alternative concludes that the current street network in Town is adequate and efforts to increase this networks are not worth the potential expense.

APPENDIX: DISTRICTS 3 – 6 AND TOWN PARKING SURVEY

[See separate document for sample of survey]