

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

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March 27, 2024

Sean Amundson
406 Engineering
1201 S. 6th St. W., #102
Missoula, MT 59801

Dear Sean:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2nd Sufficiency Review for the proposed Aspire Subdivision. This letter supplements our 1st Sufficiency Review comments from October 12, 2023.

We observe that comments from 1st Sufficiency Review were not contained in the 2nd Sufficiency packet we had access to. We would encourage inclusion of all comments on the subdivision for effective evaluation of subdivision impacts. This would benefit the development team and reviewers alike.

The application indicates that Aspire Subdivision traffic will impact county facilities to the north (Waterside Drive) and south (Sommers Street). The subdivision's Traffic Impact Study (TIS) concludes that most trips will occur to the south. Sommers Street is therefore proposed to be improved from the subdivision to Highway 200. We appreciate the detail of the proposed improvements, including specific lane widths, curbs, and sidewalks. We assume you have interacted with County Public Works considering the county will be maintaining these facilities. Presumably the 5' wide sidewalks along Sommers Street will be grade-separated. You may also want to explore the possibility of boulevards to enhance pedestrian safety.

The TIS describes levels of service at the Sommers Street/Highway 200 intersection. Even without the added Aspire Subdivision traffic, this appears to be a key East Missoula intersection with an anticipated increase in wait times to turn onto Highway 200 from Sommers Street. We encourage you to monitor developments related to the Highway 200 corridor study, as improvements to this intersection will benefit this subdivision and the East Missoula community as a whole.

Non-motorized facilities will play a significant role north of the subdivision. We encourage collaboration with County Public Works for making effective Waterside Drive non-motorized connections. Our understanding is that conversations continue on the possibility of riverfront

trail connections to the north. Considering the available amenities, including sanctioned river access, we appreciate the goal of connecting residents to the north.

Park infrastructure will be key in serving this subdivision, and includes facilities currently administered by Missoula County. We appreciate the development team's interaction with both County Parks, Trails and Open Lands and City Parks and Recreation regarding these facilities.

We reiterate our 1st Sufficiency comments on the value of riparian area protections, and consideration of the riparian area and buffer setbacks that would be required of county development projects. Proposed riparian area protections and buffers appear to be indicative of the existing vegetation adjacent to the river. Agriculture likely played a key role in this narrow vegetation band; with cessation of this use, we would recommend considering the benefits of a wider riparian protection area. This could enhance riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Thank you for considering our input; please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Worley

Tim Worley, Senior Planner

cc: Dave DeGrandpre, AICP (CDPI)