

# Memorandum

**REPORT TO:** Sustainability Board

**FROM:** Tom Rogers, Senior Planner  
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**SUBJECT:** Unified Development Code (UDC) Update Supplemental Engagement Phase 1 Report and Work Session

**MEETING DATE:** April 9, 2025

**AGENDA ITEM TYPE:** Plan/Report/Study

**RECOMMENDATION:** No action required

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** 1.2 Community Engagement: Broaden and deepen engagement of the community in city government, innovating methods for inviting input from the community and stakeholders.

**BACKGROUND:**

**General background**

The Unified Development Code (UDC) sets regulations around what kinds of development can occur in which areas. For the 2022-2023 Commission 2-year priority cycle, Bozeman City Commission named the UDC update as a key priority of the city. Thus began the UDC Update process, a project that kicked off in summer 2022 with the goals of:

- Implementing the vision and goals of other guiding City documents, such as the 2020 Community Plan, Climate Plan, and the Community Housing Action Plan.
- Making the Code more user-friendly.
- Updating the Code per changes in state law.

A variety of in-person and virtual engagement opportunities were held throughout 2022 and 2023, and in the summer of 2023, following feedback from the public and Commission, a draft code was released.

Many residents expressed concerns about the draft, with some wanting more time to review and give feedback. In October 2023, the Commission paused the process with the desire to pick back up in 2024. In September 2024, Commission began the restart of the project with a work session on how the project will resume, including what engagement might look like. On October 1, Commission approved the supplemental engagement plan.

Since then, staff have executed the supplementary engagement plan

through the following methods:

- Launched an online survey that ran from Nov. 22 through Jan. 8 and garnered 229 responses.
- Hosted an online webinar on 12/9 that had 76 attendees.
- Hosted five in-person open houses, one in each quadrant (NW, SW, SE, NE) of the City and one at MSU, which had at least 238 attendees total across all events (some attendees were not captured at sign-in).
- Hosted eight (8) meetings with groups including Local Food Systems partners, Better Bozeman Coalition, University Neighborhood Association, Jandt Neighborhood Association, Midtown Neighborhood Association, Cooper Park Neighborhood Association, Northeast Neighborhood Association, and Forward Montana.
- Used a variety of methods to communicate engagement opportunities including emails to key partners; Engage Bozeman newsletters and web updates; Bozeman.net banner, e-notifications and calendar updates; a message in the utility bill; a paid mailer to all who reside in the city; a press release to media outlets; a paid Facebook/Instagram social media ad; social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Nextdoor; and a paid ad in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle.

Engagement continued with four in-person workshops held in various parts of the city, two online workshops, a toolkit for residents to host their own chat about the UDC, and an online survey. The purpose of the engagement process is to deep dive into the key topics that were identified during part 1 of engagement. The dates, times, and topics each workshop covered are as follows.

1. Transportation & Environment: Feb. 24: 12 to 2 p.m. online.
2. Transportation & Environment: Feb. 26: 6 to 8 p.m. at Gallatin County Fairgrounds.
3. Growth, Housing, & Neighborhoods: March 3: 12 to 2 p.m. online.
4. Housing & Neighborhoods: March 5: 6 to 8 p.m. at Chief Joseph Middle School.
5. Growth & Neighborhoods: March 10: 6 to 8 p.m. at Sacajawea Middle School.
6. All topics (Transportation, Environment, Growth, Housing, Neighborhoods): March 12: 6 to 8 p.m. at Willson School.

Next steps involve discussions with the City's advisory boards and City Commission to determine the scope of potential revisions to the draft UDC. Advisory board meeting dates are as follows.

1. Historic Preservation Advisory Board: March 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Commission Room
2. Transportation Board: March 26 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Commission Room
3. Urban Parks and Forestry Board: March 27 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall

Commission Room

4. Economic Vitality Board: April 2 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Commission Room
5. Sustainability Board: April 9 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Commission Room

Following necessary time to write those revisions, city staff will release an updated draft for public review and comment. This will be followed by the formal hearing process, likely in the fall, for ultimate decision by the City Commission.

The full text of the draft Chapter 38 [ [External PDF](#) ] is as available online in the Engage Bozeman Project web site. The existing draft does not contain the recently adopted update to 38.380 Affordable Housing. Those provisions are already in effect and will be integrated with the next update to the draft UDC.

During the UDC update process, the Montana Legislature passed new enabling legislation that modifies development review processes and requires the City to demonstrate that its regulations support additional housing creation. These requirements as well as local priorities have shaped the draft text and the public outreach process.

The City Commission will receive an update on the completed Phase 2 Supplementary public engagement process on May 20th. A work session discussion of possible changes to the draft and direction from the Commission is scheduled for June 24th.

### **Sustainability Board Specific Background**

On August 9, 2023, the Board heard an overview and general summary presentation describing the code replacement project. A video recording [ [external video link](#) ] of the presentation is available for review. A link to the agenda [ [External Link](#) ] is also available. In addition, the associated cover memo is available for review at the same link. Memo attachments include summaries of work sessions held by the City Commission, a summary of Senate Bill 382 (Montana Land Use Planning Act), and the full text of the bill. This meeting provided a general overview and direction on the document to provide lead time prior to discussion and recommendation on the draft text. Many areas of the new Chapter 38 are outside of the scope of responsibilities of the Sustainability Board.

Participation in the update to the Unified Development Code was identified as part of the Board's work plan as discussed on March 9, 2022. Community Development staff met with the Sustainability Board to identify areas of interest, discuss alternatives for possible amendments, and get early input to shape future amendments on July 13, 2022, August 10, 2022, and December 14, 2022.

On August 9, 2023, the Board had a work session to review the draft and public review schedule preparatory to making a recommendation. October 11, 2023, the Board considered the draft UDC and opined and provided recommendation to the City Commission on specific areas of the code relating to the Sustainability Boards areas of relevance. A video recording and link to the packet [[external video link](#)] [[external packet link](#)] of the presentation are available for review.

Areas of relevance to the Sustainability Board are:

A. Facilitation of electric vehicle charging:

1. 38.800.060 Inclusion of electric vehicle charging as part of essential services allowed in all zoning districts,
2. 38.710.070.A.2 Add EV future charging to list of facilities for depiction on site plans.

B. Urban agriculture allowances:

1. 38.300.020 Add agricultural uses to allowed uses in individual zoning districts,
2. 38.320.110 Add standards to expand allowances for agriculture within the community.

C. Recycling and composting:

1. 38.710.070.A.2 Add recycling and composting facilities as items for depiction on site plans.

D. Support for density:

1. 38.210.020 consolidation of residential zoning districts,
2. 38.210.020 amendment of standards to remove minimum lot area requirements,
3. 38.210.020 increase minimum density requirements for residential districts, and
4. Table 38.530.040-4 reduce non-residential parking requirements.

E. Clarification of provisions for solar energy and district energy:

1. 38.800.060 Inclusion of shared solar and storage and district energy as an essential service.

F. Local service commercial - support for density also facilitates viable local services within walkable distance

1. 38.540.040.B allow an amount of commercial in mixed use districts to have no parking requirement.

G. Parking:

1. 38.540 simplify all parking provisions,
2. Table 38.530.040-4 simplify and reduce non-residential parking requirements,

3. 38.540.040.A set parking requirements in areas with common funding and management capability to zero, and
4. 38.540.070 Expand provisions for bicycle parking to include both short and long-term.

### **Purpose of meeting**

This presentation and discussion will review activities and findings from Phase I of the supplementary engagement and remind residents about what to anticipate as we complete phase 2 of the supplemental engagement, provide an overview of what we heard during these events, and show how those comments are being used to inform the key topics that will be covered in the upcoming engagement.

Secondly, as directed by the City Commission on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, engage in a discussion with the Board on relevant areas of the code and reaffirm the prior recommendations of specific code sections referenced above.

This presentation will review these activities and remind residents about what to anticipate as we enter phase 2 of the supplemental engagement, provide an overview of what we heard during these events, and show how those comments are being used to inform the key topics that will be covered in the upcoming engagement. During this time, Commissioners will be asked to review this material, ask questions, and provide guidance on future engagement activities and topics to ensure staff remain on course with expectations.

Two summary reports are attached to this memo. First is the Online Survey Results from the online questionnaire and secondly is a summary report from the in-person Open Houses. Full summaries of the Supplementary Engagement Workshops are not compiled at this time.

A related Affordable Housing Ordinance was recently adopted and became effective on March 14, 2025, see Ordinance 25-001.

Creating code requires balancing of many priorities. Code development is an ongoing process as new issues are identified, new Issue Plans are adopted, and community needs change. Code work occurring separate from this UDC replacement include:

- Revisions to water conservation standards,
- Revisions to wetland protection standards, and
- Updating of standards relating to parks and active transportation based on the Parks Recreation and Active Transportation Plan.
- The update to the Integrated Water Resource Plan.

**UNRESOLVED ISSUES:** None.

**ALTERNATIVES:** None.

**FISCAL EFFECTS:** None.

Attachments:

[UDC Survey Results.pdf](#)

[UDC Open House Report - CDB 2-3-2025.pdf](#)

Report compiled on: March 31, 2025