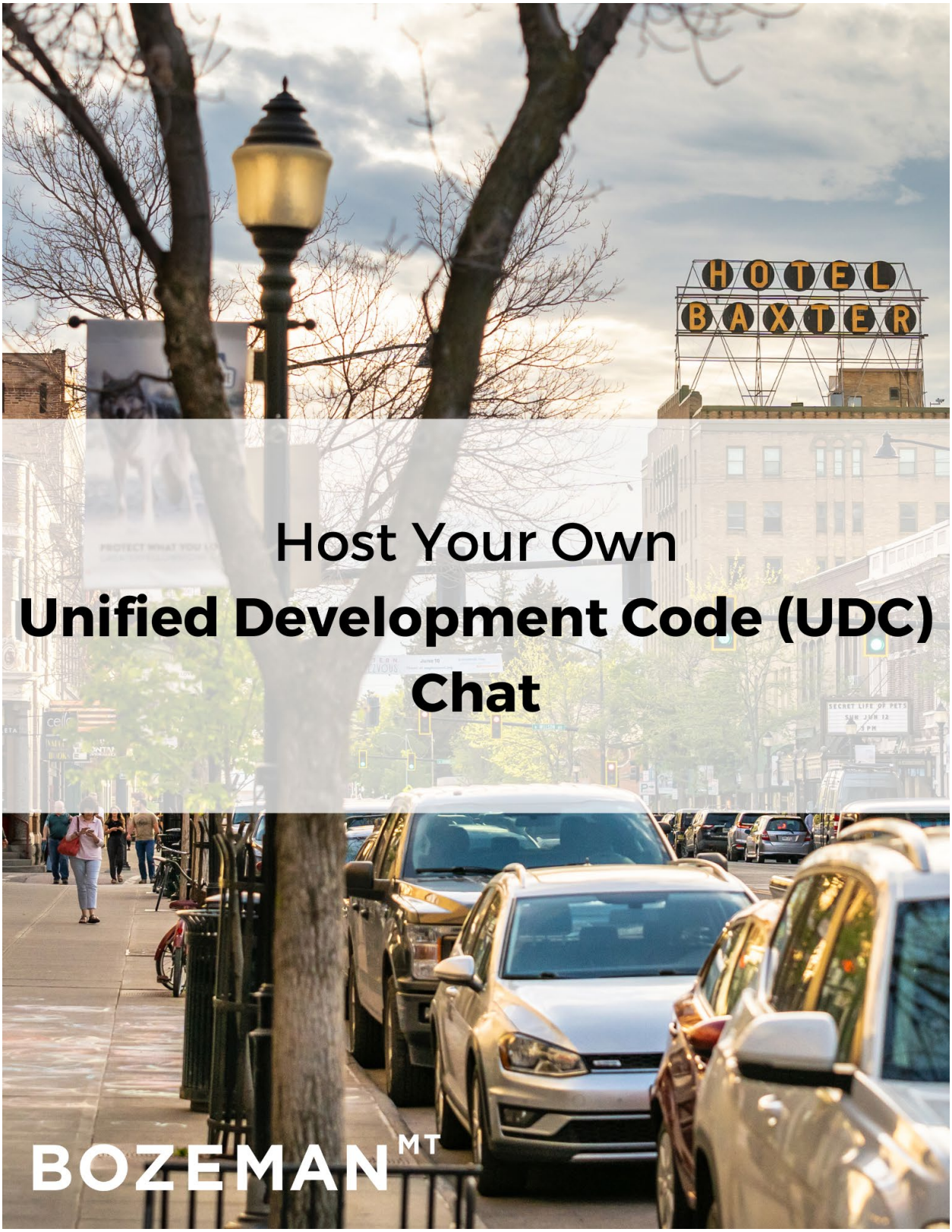


Host Your Own
Unified Development Code (UDC) Chat

BOZEMAN MT

GROWTH: zoning, density, buildings (height & transitions)

Introduction

The Unified Development Code (UDC) sets the rules around what kinds of development can occur in which areas of town, and what it all looks like. This includes things like where businesses are located, how tall buildings can be, what types of residences (single-household, apartments, duplexes, townhomes, etc.) can be built in which areas, and so much more.

This toolkit will help guide you and your group through a discussion on this large code document by focusing your conversation on popular topic areas and providing key questions you can all discuss and provide input on. **This toolkit is focused on growth.** That said, feel free to discuss topics that may not be listed here – we'll take all input.

Your input will be used along with everyone else's to help inform us of changes that can be made to the code. If you have participated at all in this project over the past 2 years, you'll have at least some basic background on this project, but don't worry if this is your first time participating. These are informal conversations, and you likely have thoughts on the existing buildings you see around town and what you want to see more or less of. That is the most important part.

Thanks for participating and sharing your thoughts on how Bozeman is developing. We appreciate your voice and look forward to all you have to share!

Planning Your Event

The first step you need to take before hosting a chat involves event logistics. See below for what we recommend.

Save the Date: Choose a date in April to have your chat. We recommend at least a 1- to 2-hour event. You can have it at any location/with any format that you like – maybe it's with your church group, over brunch, in your home, or in a meeting room with roundtables. You can decide what feels most comfortable to you.

Invite Your Guests: This can be anyone you choose – friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, your book club – whoever you think would be interested in the conversation. Consider asking those you invite to bring their spouses, friends, and anyone else to broaden the group even further. Once you've determined the guest list, make sure your invite includes the following:

- **What:** a short description of the UDC and the purpose of the conversation. Example:
    - *I'm hosting a Unified Development Code (UDC) Chat and would love you to join! During this conversation, we'll talk about how Bozeman is developing. We'll have the chance to share these thoughts with the City as they look to update and improve the code, which could change what ends up getting built around us. I think you have an important perspective on this so please join me if you can!*
- **When:** Date and Time
- **Where:** Physical location or link to virtual meeting room
- **Why:** Visit engage.bozeman.net/udc if you want to learn more about this project.

Event Size: A group of 5-10 people is recommended to ensure everyone has a chance to speak and feel heard. If you want to go larger, consider breaking out into smaller groups/roundtables.

Register the Event: This step is critical! Let us know that you're having an event so we can follow up with reminders and make sure we're gathering your input. It's a short form. Visit: https://engage.bozeman.net/udc/surveys/chatregistration.

Setting Up the Chat

1. Welcome and thank everyone for attending.
2. Ask for quick introductions if the group is unfamiliar with each other.
3. Share the ground rules for the conversation, including:
    a. *Allow everyone to finish speaking – don't interrupt.*
    b. *Be respectful of differing opinions – there is no right or wrong way to think about these topics.*
    c. *Share it anyway – you don't have to know how to fix issues you identify. It's enough to identify them.*
4. Ask everyone to agree to the ground rules.
5. Take notes as the host or assign a notetaker. This is a critical step in ensuring feedback gets captured. The notetaker should act as a researcher, accurately capturing what ideas, insights, and reflections get shared.
6. Present the topic areas and guide conversation around them. As a facilitator, your role is important in helping people feel comfortable to share their opinions. Note the following tips for facilitation:
    a. **Address Behavior**: If people aren't being respectful of the ground rules, don't hesitate to remind them.
    b. **Encourage:** You may need to bring out certain voices if they aren't saying a lot. For example, you can say, "Thanks for sharing that perspective. Tom, what do you think about that?"
    c. **Keep Time:** If there seems to be a lull in conversation, feel free to move people on to the next topic as needed. You can also allow silence if people seem to be thinking about a question. Be mindful of when the event needs to wrap up (For example: "We only have 5 more minutes left, so let's hear from two more people.").
    d. **Summarize:** Especially towards the end, be sure to synthesize what you heard into some main points. You can say, "Before we end, I'd like to summarize what I heard in this conversation. A lot of people feel… Does that sound fair?"
    e. **Keep It Open-Ended:** As you facilitate, focus on drawing out information from others. For example, it's better to say, "What thoughts do you all have about tall buildings around town?" rather than "I think the City should avoid building tall buildings. Do you agree?" The first question invites discussion that may lead to multiple nuanced opinions; the second can stifle conversation into a yes or a no. As a facilitator, you can and should share your own thoughts, but avoid doing it as part of a lead-up to discussion.

Topic Area

Through our outreach to the public, we have found that some topics are consistently identified as important as people think about the code and development in Bozeman. We have created a conversation starter kit for each of these topics. You are welcome to host a conversation on more than one topic. There may be multiple – you can focus on one, a few, or all, depending on how much time you have and how robust the discussion is.

Growth - zoning, density, buildings (height & transitions)

- Primary related sections of existing and current draft for reference:

  Existing regulations: 38.310 Permitted Uses, 38.320 Form and Intensity standards;

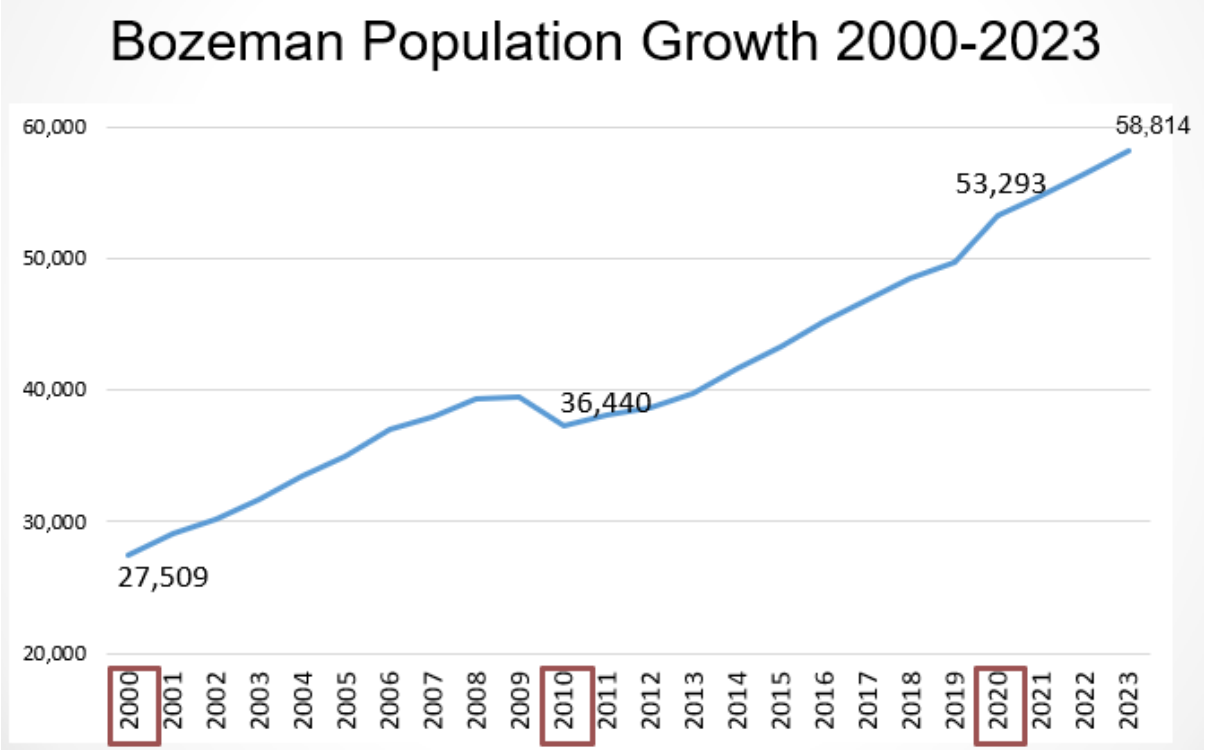
  October 2024 draft text:: 38.210 Residential Districts; 38.260.070 Transitions; 38.300 Allowed Uses; (Degree of modification existing to proposed: Districts substantial, Uses Moderate but subject to further change, Transitions substantial, Definitions small)

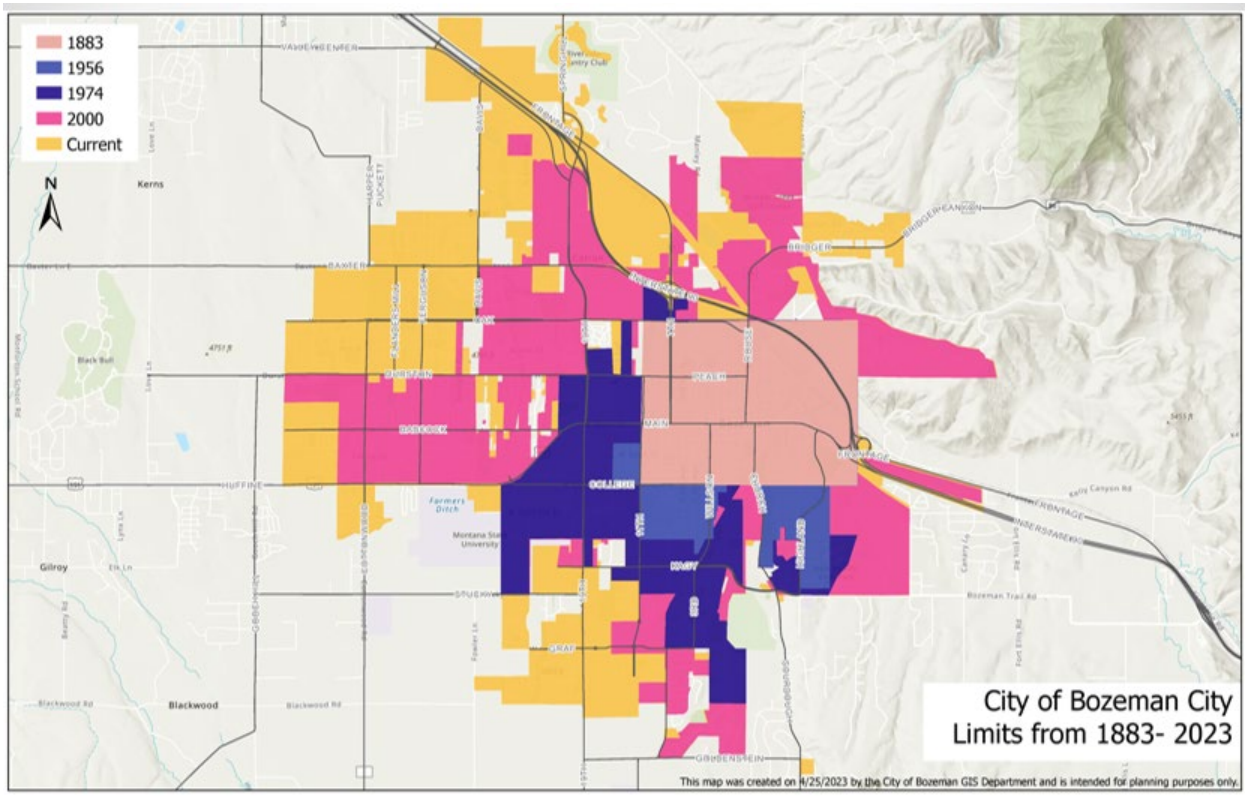
- Related facility plans: Bozeman Community Plan 2020, Downtown Bozeman Improvement Plan, N 7th and other urban renewal plans.

Graphics in this conversation kit are from workshops held in February and March on this same topic.

Bozeman has grown in both people and area for a long time. On average, 2,500-2,700 new people move to Bozeman per year. This represents approximately 1,000 new homes. The choices of development standards affect how much land is used, how the community is experienced, and housing and job availability for existing and future community members.

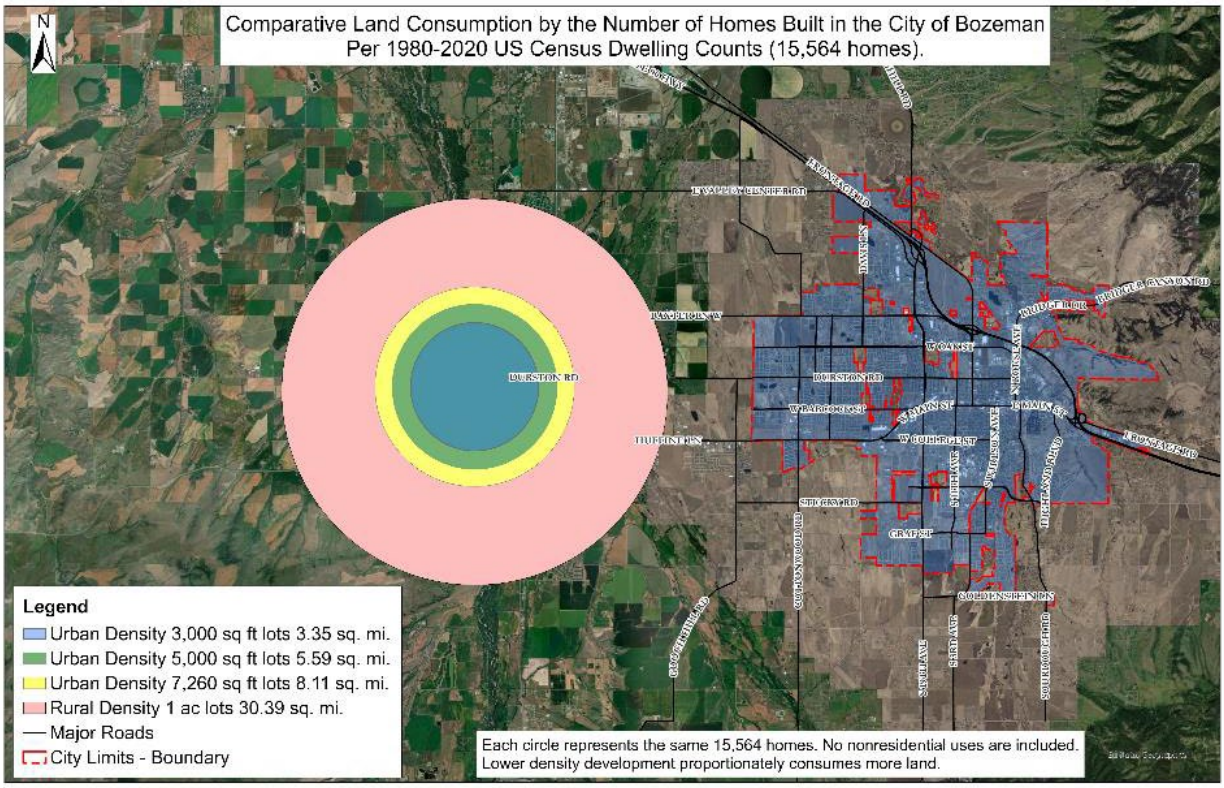
The UDC does not set standards or processes for annexing new land. It does set standards for constructing new homes and employment. All city regulations must be developed and implemented within the legal structure set by state law. State laws for land development regulations have seen substantial change in the last few years.



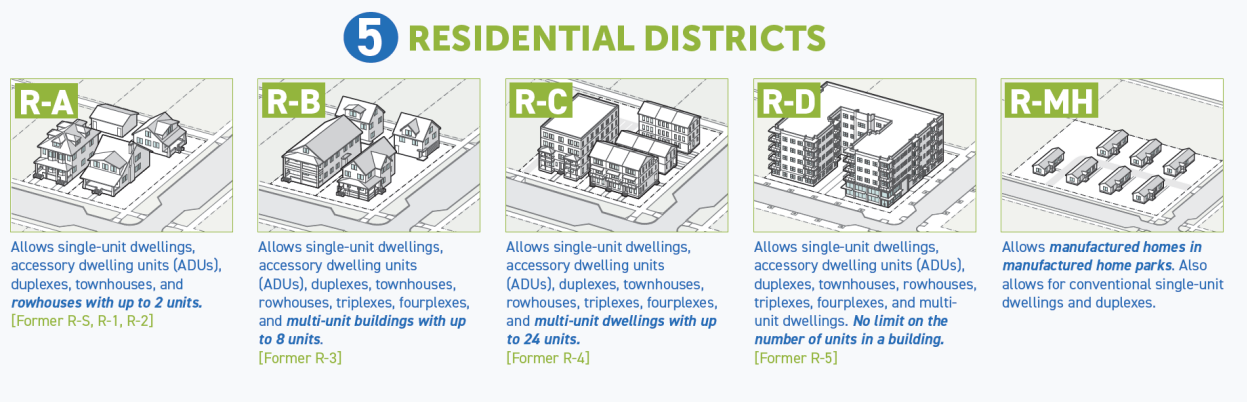


As shown below, how much land is used for each new home strongly affects how much the city grows outwards. The city strives to balance outward growth with

(re)development in existing city areas to best use existing infrastructure, reduce ongoing cost of operations, maintain services, and reduce impacts on agriculture and habitat..



The current draft UDC from October 2024 proposes to reconfigure residential districts to five from eight. This grouping of districts responds to directives from state law, local land use policy, and public comment received so far in this UDC update.



ZONING DISTRICT CONVERSION GUIDE: RESIDENTIAL

Note: Revised standards apply to new applications only

EXISTING DISTRICTS

		R-S Residential Suburban	R-1 Residential Low Density	R-2 Residential Moderate Density	R-3 Residential Medium Density	R-4 Residential High Density	R-5 Residential Mixed-Use High Density
LOT AREA	Single-household lot min:	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	3,000 sf
	Add lot area for ADU:	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	none
	Duplex lot area per unit:	-	-	2,500 sf	2,500 sf	2,500 sf	2,500 sf
	3-4 household lot area per unit:	-	-	-	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	none
	Apartments lot area per unit:	-	-	-	3,000 sf limited	3,000 first + 1,200 sf each	none
	Townhouse/Rowhouse lot min:	-	-	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	none
	Lot area max:	-	-	-	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	2.5 acres
LOT WIDTH	Lot width min:	50'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 35'	35' / 25'
	Duplex lot width min:	-	-	60' / 50'	60' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'
	3-4 household lot width min:	-	-	-	60'	60'	none
	Apartment lot width min:	-	-	-	-	none	none
	Townhouse lot width min:	-	-	30'	Width of interior unit	Width of interior unit	Width of interior unit
HEIGHT	Low-pitch roof height max:	8'	28'	30'	36'	40'	50'
	High-pitch roof height max:	42'	40'	40'	46'	50'	60'
SETBACK	Front setback min:	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'
	Garage setback min:	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
	Rear setback min:	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
	Side setback min:	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'
DENSITY	Units per acre min:	2	5	5	5	8	8
	Building coverage max:	25%	40%	40%	40%	50%	-
	FAR max:	0.45	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.50	-

NEW DISTRICTS

		R-A Residential-A	R-B Residential-B	R-C Residential-C	R-D Residential-D
LOT AREA	Lot area min/max:	none	none	none	none
LOT WIDTH	Townhouse lot width min:	15'	15'	15'	15'
	All other lot width min:	25'	25'	25'	25'
HEIGHT	Overall height max:	3 stories (25' wall plate)	3 stories (25' wall plate)	4 stories	5 stories
	Ground story height min/max:	9' / 15'	9' / 15'	9' / 15'	9'/15' resi. 12'/15' non-resi.
	Upper story height max:	15'	15'	15'	15'
SETBACK	Front setback min/max:	10' / none	10' / none	10' / 15'	10' / 15'
	Garage setback min:	20'	20'	20'	-
	Rear setback min:	10'	10'	10'	10'
	Side & Alley setback min:	5'	5'	5'	5'
	Townhouse common wall:	0'	0'	0'	0'
DENSITY	Units per acre min:	10	12	18	24
	Building coverage max:	40%	40%	60%	100%
MASSING	Dwelling units per bldg. max:	2	8	24	none
	Building size max:	5,000 sf	10,000 sf	none	none
	Building width max:	80'	120'	150'	250'
	Frontage primary/side streets min:	-	-	60% / 30%	80% / 40%

March 2025

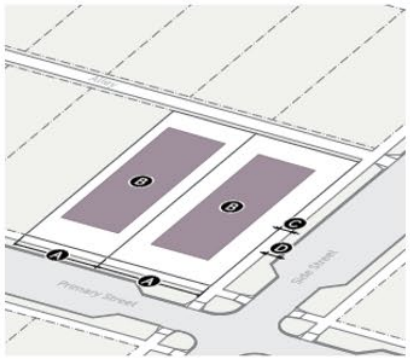
The orange chart on the preceding page helps show how Bozeman's existing residential districts would transition to the proposed combined districts. Each district contains a variety of standards addressing a wide range of issues. All standards must be met and the interplay between different standards means that it is unlikely for buildings to maximize the allowed dimensions on a site. Standards may vary by district but need to be consistent within each district.

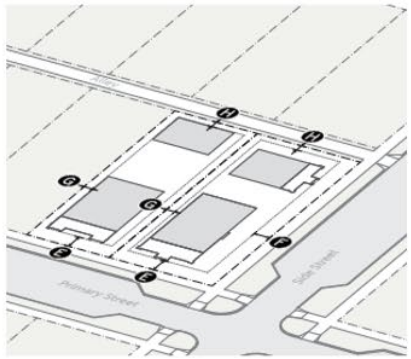
The graphic on the next page is an excerpt from the proposed UDC draft, which shows an example of the layout and type of proposed standards for the districts (R-A in this example). Each zoning district has a similar layout but numeric standards do vary by district. Where there is a section number in the numbered and blue shaded row it means that additional information to apply how to understand that standard is available in the listed section within the UDC draft.

Both charts are turned sideways to allow them to be larger for easier reading. If you are hosting your event in-person, we suggest printing several copies of these images for participants.

SEC. 38.210.020. - **R-A [RESIDENTIAL-A]**

A. Lot Standards

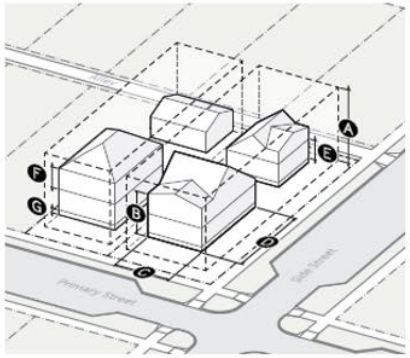




1. **Lot Size**	*Sec. 38.260.020*
Ⓐ Width (min)	
Townhouse	15'
All other structures	25'
2. **Density**	*Sec. 38.260.030*
Minimum density	10 du/a
3. **Coverage**	*Sec. 38.260.040*
Ⓑ Building coverage (max)	40%
Amenity space (min per unit)	
Up to 1 sleeping room	100 sf
2+ sleeping rooms	150 sf
Commercial open space (min)	n/a
4. **Streetscape**	*Sec. 38.260.050*
Ⓒ Sidewalk width (min)	5'
Ⓓ Boulevard strip width (min)	5'
Type	Landscape
Tree spacing (max)	35' avg. on center

5. **Setbacks**	*Sec. 38.260.060*
Ⓔ Primary street (min)	10'
Ⓕ Side street (min)	10'
Street-facing garage (min)	20'
Ⓖ Side (min)	
Townhouse - common wall	0'
Townhouse - exterior wall	5'
All other structures	5'
Rear (min)	10'
Ⓗ Alley (min)	5'
6. **Transitions**	*Sec. 38.260.070*
Building setback and height transitions	n/a
7. **Frontage**	*Sec. 38.260.080*
Build-to	n/a
8. **Parking Location**	*Sec. 38.260.090*
Primary street setback	Allowed
Side street setback	Allowed
Side setback	Allowed
Rear/alley setback	Allowed

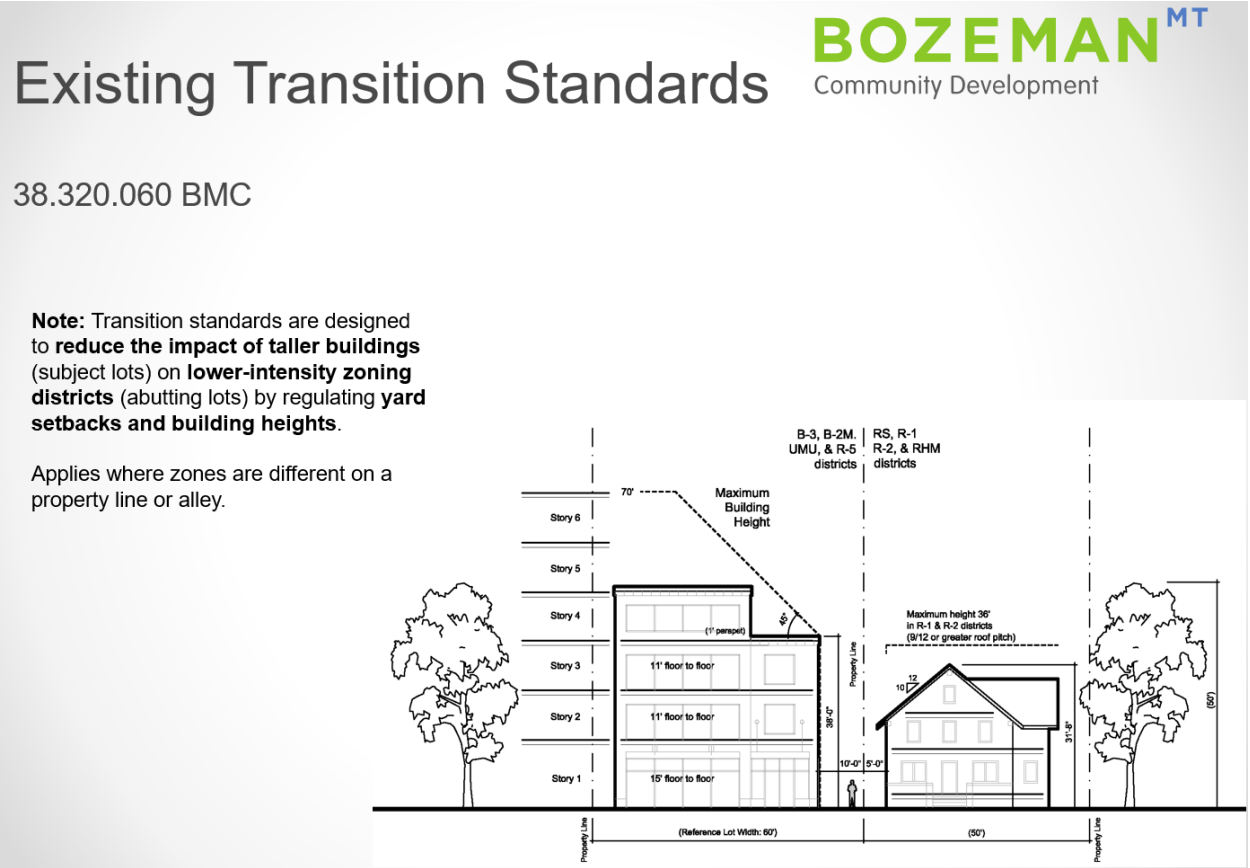
B. Building Standards



1. **Vertical Massing**	*Sec. 38.260.100*
Ⓐ Building height (max)	3 stories
Ⓑ Wall plate height (max)	25'
2. **Horizontal Massing**	*Sec. 38.260.110*
Dwelling units per building (max)	2
Building size (max)	5,000 SF
Ⓒ Building width: primary street (max)	80'
Ⓓ Building width: side street (max)	80'
3. **Activation**	*Sec. 38.260.120*
Active depth (min)	n/a
4. **Floor Height**	*Sec. 38.260.130*
Ⓔ Ground story height (min/max)	9'/15'
Ⓕ Upper story height (max)	15'
Ⓖ Ground floor elevation (min/max)	-2'/5'

	Primary St.	Side St.
5. **Windows**	*Sec. 38.260.140*	
Ⓗ Ground story (min)	20%	20%
Ⓘ Upper story (min)	15%	15%
Ⓙ Blank wall width (max)	10'	20'
6. **Entrances**	*Sec. 38.260.150*	
Ⓚ Street-facing entry spacing (max)	40'	60'
Entry feature	Required	n/a
Options	• Porch • Covered entry • Recessed entry	

Bozeman first adopted zoning district transition standards in 2018. The purpose is to lessen the degree of difference in height where two zoning *districts* meet at a property line. The difference is measured based on the allowed maximum height of building in each zoning district. A street, typical right of way width of 60 feet, is considered a sufficient separation so the existing zone transition does not apply across a street. The transition only applies a single standard for all circumstances which is a requirement to slope back the taller building as shown in the graphic below. For full information on the existing standard see Section 38.320.060 in the municipal code.



The proposed transition standards introduce a variety of different alternatives to address a range of site conditions. The proposal also includes landscaping as part of the transition requirement. For full information see Section 38.260.070 in the draft UDC, link provided above.

It's important to note that Montana state law prevents cities from applying different regulations to different properties within the same zoning district. For this reason, transition standards must apply based on *districts* rather than existing structures.

BOZEMAN MT
Community Development

Proposed Transition Standards

38.260.070 BMC

Note: Transition standards are designed to **reduce the impact of taller buildings** (subject lots) on **lower-intensity zoning districts** (abutting lots) by regulating **yard setbacks and building heights**. The graphics on the next slide illustrate these standards in **four different scenarios**.

•**Residential stories** are typically **9 feet high**, **excluding floor thickness**.

•**Commercial stories** are typically **12 feet high**, **excluding floor thickness**.

•**Floor thickness adds 2 feet per story** to the total building height.

REQUIRED DISTRICT TRANSITION

SUBJECT LOT		ABUTTING LOT: R-A	R-B	R-C	R-D	R-MH	B-1	B-2	B-2M	B-3	B-3C	REMU RES	REMU MX	NEHMU RES	NEHMU MX	B-P	M-1	M-2	PLI
R-A		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
R-B		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
R-C		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
R-D		1a	1a	--	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
R-MH		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
B-1		1a	1a	2b	2a	2a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	2a	--	--	--	--	--
B-2		1b	1b	2a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
B-2M		1b	1b	1a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
B-3		1b	1b	1a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
B-3C		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
REMU	RES	1a	1a	--	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
	MX	1a	1a	2a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
NEHMU	RES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	MX	1a	1a	2a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
B-P		1b	1b	2a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
M-1		1b	1b	2a	2a	1a	--	--	--	--	--	2a	--	1a	--	--	--	--	--
M-2		1b	1b	2b	2b	1b	2b	2b	2b	2b	--	2b	2b	1b	2b	2b	--	--	--
PLI		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Key: 1a = Transition Type 1a required; 1b = Transition Type 1b required; 2a = Transition Type 2a required; 2b = Transition Type 1b required; -- = No transition required for subject lot

3. Standards.

a. Type 1a. Height stepback.

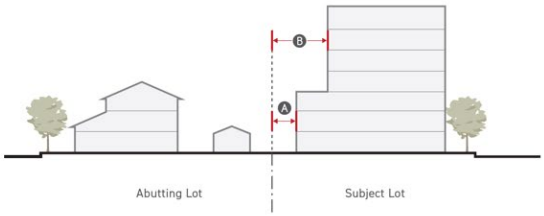


Table 38.260.070-2.

Type 1a Standards	No Alley	Alley
A Setback from lot line - up to 3rd story (min)	10'	5'
B Setback from lot line - above 3rd story (min)	22'	13'

b. Type 1b. Height stepback with landscaping.

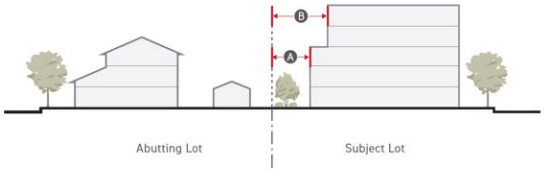


Table 38.260.070-3.

Type 1b Standards	No Alley	Alley
A Setback from lot line - up to 3rd story (min)	14'	9'
Landscaping in setback (min per 50')	Required	Not required
Trees	2 large or 3 small	n/a
Shrubs	16	n/a
B Setback from lot line - above 3rd story (min)	22'	13'

c. Type 2a. Horizontal setback.

Table 38.260.070-4.

Type 2a Standards	No Alley	Alley
A Setback from lot line (min)	10'	5'

d. Type 2b. Horizontal setback with landscaping.

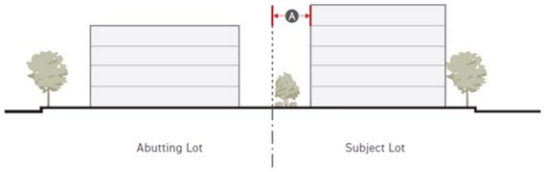


Table 38.260.070-5.

Type 2b Standards	No Alley	Alley
A Setback from lot line (min)	14'	9'
Landscaping in setback (min per 50')	Required	Not required
Trees	2 large or 3 small	n/a
Shrubs	16	n/a

Questions for discussion:

1) Bozeman's land use plan identifies a need for both outward expansion of the city and intensification in existing developed areas to meet housing and employment needs in the future. How should these needs be balanced?

2) Are you more concerned about the bulk and scale of a building or the number of homes in a building?

3) What characteristics of a tall building make it feel "too tall" versus acceptable?

4) In Phase 1 outreach, we heard that more intensive development was preferred near places of employment, schools, transit, and main roads. What does this mean to you? (i.e. types of uses, heights, etc.)

5) Do you know what zoning district you live in? Do you have any concerns with what's allowed there? Zoning Map link to the Community Development viewer. You can turn on the zoning map in color or as lines.

Wrapping Up

When your chat is over, be sure as the host or notetaker to complete our Post-Chat Survey so we can learn more about what was discussed during your event. This is where you will directly upload your notes. You must submit this survey by **April 30, 2025**, so we may include your feedback in our analysis of code changes.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this toolkit, the post-event survey, or how to run an event like this, don't hesitate to reach out to Emily Kiely below.

Emily Kiely, Community Engagement Coordinator

Office: 406-582-2274 | Cell: 406-595-6585

ekiely@Bozeman.net.

For more information on the UDC project and to keep up to date on how this project moves forward, please visit engage.bozeman.net/udc.

EXISTING DISTRICTS

		R-S Residential Suburban	R-1 Residential Low Density	R-2 Residential Moderate Density	R-3 Residential Medium Density	R-4 Residential High Density	R-5 Residential Mixed-Use High Density
LOT AREA	Single-household lot min:	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	3,000 sf
	Add lot area for ADU:	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	none
	Duplex lot area per unit:	-	-	2,500 sf	2,500 sf	2,500 sf	2,500 sf
	3-4 household lot area per unit:	-	-	-	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	none
	Apartments lot area per unit:	-	-	-	3,000 sf limited	3,000 first + 1,200 sf each	none
	Townhouse/Rowhouse lot min:	-	-	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	3,000 sf	none
	Lot area max:	-	-	-	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	2.5 acres
LOT WIDTH	Lot width min:	50'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 35'	35' / 25'
	Duplex lot width min:	-	-	60' / 50'	60' / 40'	50' / 40'	50' / 40'
	3-4 household lot width min:	-	-	-	60'	60'	none
	Apartment lot width min:	-	-	-	-	none	none
	Townhouse lot width min:	-	-	30'	Width of interior unit	Width of interior unit	Width of interior unit
HEIGHT	Low-pitch roof height max:	8'	28'	30'	36'	40'	50'
	High-pitch roof height max:	42'	40'	40'	46'	50'	60'
SETBACK	Front setback min:	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'
	Garage setback min:	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
	Rear setback min:	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
	Side setback min:	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'
DENSITY	Units per acre min:	2	5	5	5	8	8
	Building coverage max:	25%	40%	40%	40%	50%	-
	FAR max:	0.45	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.50	-

NEW DISTRICTS

		R-A Residential-A	R-B Residential-B	R-C Residential-C	R-D Residential-D
LOT AREA	Lot area min/max:	none	none	none	none
LOT WIDTH	Townhouse lot width min:	15'	15'	15'	15'
	All other lot width min:	25'	25'	25'	25'
HEIGHT	Overall height max:	3 stories (25' wall plate)	3 stories (25' wall plate)	4 stories	5 stories
	Ground story height min/max:	9' / 15'	9' / 15'	9' / 15'	9'/15' resi. 12'/15' non-resi.
	Upper story height max:	15'	15'	15'	15'
SETBACK	Front setback min/max:	10' / none	10' / none	10' / 15'	10' / 15'
	Garage setback min:	20'	20'	20'	-
	Rear setback min:	10'	10'	10'	10'
	Side & Alley setback min:	5'	5'	5'	5'
	Townhouse common wall:	0'	0'	0'	0'
DENSITY	Units per acre min:	10	12	18	24
	Building coverage max:	40%	40%	60%	100%
MASSING	Dwelling units per bldg. max:	2	8	24	none
	Building size max:	5,000 sf	10,000 sf	none	none
	Building width max:	80'	120'	150'	250'
	Frontage primary/side streets min:	-	-	60% / 30%	80% / 40%