



CITY OF IDAHO SPRINGS
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NOTICE AND AGENDA
Regular Meeting & Work Session to follow regular meeting
Idaho Springs Planning Commission
1711 Miner Street, City Hall
Wednesday, December 11, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
6:00 PM

- ❖ Call to Order
- ❖ Roll Call
- ❖ Agenda Approval
- ❖ Approval of Minutes from August 7, 2024
- ❖ Conflict of Interest
- ❖ Public Comment (on non-agenda items)
- ❖ Staff Update
 - A. Status of current grants and projects
 - B. Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Authority update
- ❖ New Business
 - A. Update to City of Idaho Springs Three-Mile Area Plan – Review and Motion to Adopt
- ❖ Adjournment

PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
Immediately following the completion of the scheduled Regular Meeting

- ❖ Idaho Springs Housing Policy Analysis Document Draft – Review and Discussion
- ❖ Housing Codes Update - Discussion

IN-PERSON AND REMOTE MEETING PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
INSTRUCTIONS

The Public is able to view and hear this meeting remotely at the following address on the City's website:
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/idahosprings/city-council-live>

To provide public comment remotely please use the link below
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89171912558?pwd=cTNDRO8rL0NhQzdVcG4wZl05clY5dz09>

For in-person Unscheduled Public Comment, please sign-in at the entrance to the Council Chambers.

Each individual that is providing public comment is limited to three (3) minutes.



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
August 7, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cindy Olson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present were Chair Cindy Olson, Vice Chair Ursula Cruzalegui (entered chambers at 6:02 pm), Chuck Howard and Alternate Caitie Maxwell. Jefferson Lich. Kent Slaymaker was absent. Commissioner Maxwell served as regular member for this meeting. Staff present were Community Development Planner Dylan Graves, Deputy City Clerk Wonder Martell and Assistant City Attorney Nick Klein.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Cindy Olson advised the commission that the agenda needed to be modified to show (A) CUP for Construction Trailer at 100 E. Idaho Springs Road as being a public hearing. Commissioner Maxwell moved to approve the modified agenda. Commissioner Howard seconded followed by an all in favor voice vote. Motion carries

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Maxwell moved to approve the minutes from June 5th, 2024. Commissioner Howard seconded. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote, motion carries.

CONFLICT OF INTERST

There was no conflict.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Olson asked the audience if there was any public comment regarding anything not on the agenda, and there was none in person nor virtually.

STAFF UPDATE

Community Development Planner Dylan Graves went over his staff report with the commission mentioning that Jon Cain had left and gone to be Town Administrator of Nederland, and that Council formally formed a new board, The Historic Sites and Facilities Board, and that the city is actively looking for individuals to fill those seats.

NEW BUSINESS

A.) PH - Chair Olson opened the Public Hearing for A Conditional Use Permit for Construction Office Trailer at 100 E. Idaho Springs Road at 6:15 pm.

Community Development Planner Mr. Graves went over his report with the commission mentioning the 5 required criteria.

Applicant Ken Morrison with Kraemer North America was sworn in by the Deputy City Clerk and provided testimony. There was no comment, virtual or in person for this topic.

Commission deliberation: Commissioner Harmon asked if this use is going to overlap with the AVA use next year. Mr. Graves advised that this piece of property is quite large and there will be no overlap in the uses.

Chair Olson closed the public hearing at 6:32 pm. Commissioner Howard moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit for a Construction Office Trailer for Kraemer North America located at 100 E. Idaho Springs road with the following 4 conditions:

1. Approval of the CUP will expire upon the sooner of: (1) Notice from Kraemer that the permit is no longer needed; or (2) December 31, 2028.
2. The provided portable toilet shall be serviced regularly and provide adequate sanitation for users of the site, as determined by the City. City personnel may access the site at all reasonable times to evaluate compliance with this condition.
3. Public Access across the North side of the property along the existing paved path shall be maintained and not blocked.
4. The City Council may revoke this CUP at any time in accordance with the ISMC.

Commissioner Cruzalegui seconded, second was followed by an all in favor roll call vote. Motion carries, CUP approved.

(B) Commissioner Howard made the recommendation to City Council of an Ordinance amending section 21-15 of the Idaho Springs Municipal Code to eliminate occupancy limits based on familial relationships as required by new state law (HB 24-1007). Commissioner Maxwell seconded followed by an all in favor roll call vote. Motion carries.

(C) PH - Chair Olson opened the public hearing at 6:47 pm for a Minor Subdivision of Cabins Property at 3303 Highway 103 to create Five Lots.

Mr. Graves went over his staff report with the commission. Mr. Graves advised the commission that this is zoned C3 and there is no request or plan to change the zoning or the uses of these properties.

Applicant Rachael Betz. Ms. Betz wanted to make note that Blackstone Rivers Ranch and the Cabins are 2 different entities and that the main reason for this request is estate planning and getting adequate insurance coverage for the properties. There was no public comment in person nor virtual for this topic.

Chair Olson closed the public hearing at 7:02pm.

Vice Chair Cruzalegui moved to approve the Monir Subdivision of Cabins Property at 3303 Highway 103, Commissioner Maxwell seconded followed by an all in favor roll call vote. Motion carries.

(D) Ordinance review Extended Stay Hotel and Motel Code Language. Mr. Graves went over his staff report with the commission. The commission discussed whether or not a Microwave could be considered an adequate cooking method and agreed that a "fixed cook top" would be a more adequate cooking method, other than just a microwave and at the minimum, there should be a "fixed" cook top appliance. Chair Olson expressed concern of the proposed time frame that this ordinance gives current lodging facilities to become compliant with this ordinance.

Commissioner Maxwell moved to approve the Extended Stay Hotel and Motel Language with the directed amendment to section (D)(5)(a) as directed to staff. Commissioner Howard seconded followed by an all in favor roll call vote. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 7:41 pm.



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Community Development Planner Communication

Meeting Date: November 25, 2024
To: Planning Commission Members
From: Dylan Graves, Community Development Planner
RE: Monthly Report, Grant Updates, Housing Authority Update, etc.
Action Requested: None

Update on Grants:

- Reconnecting Communities Pedestrian Bridge Planning Grant

The City submitted a planning grant application for the federal Reconnecting Communities grant program for planning and design of improvements at the Exit 240 Interchange, including a pedestrian bridge connecting the north and south sides of the City across I-70. This will involve the pedestrian bridge, connecting the Clear Creek Trail to the south to the Rec Center on the north. It will also include planning and design of pedestrian-oriented improvements to Highway 103, including things like sidewalks, traffic calming measures, etc., for the portion of Highway 103 from the Exit 240 Interchange to the Idaho Springs Cemetery.

We should find out whether we were awarded this grant in early January.

- Idaho Springs Skatepark / Ball Fields Park Grant

The City and the Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District (CCMRD) was awarded a \$1.25 Million grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program for improvements at the Shelly/Quinn Ball Fields Park. The project will include a skatepark, a playground, relocation of the stage to the western ball field, new soccer/multi-use field space, and infrastructure and utility improvements. The City's match is approximately \$1.6 million. Design is under way on the skatepark, playground, and other site improvements. Construction is anticipated to start next year.

- Mobility Hub RAISE Planning & Construction Grants

The City was awarded a \$2.4 million planning grant to start design work on the downtown mobility hub project and associated improvements to Miner Street and the Exit 240 area, including: mobility hub optimized for public transportation; three-story parking structure behind Tommyknocker Brewing; roundabout at 13th Avenue and Idaho Street; Miner Street utility and street improvements; and associated work. The funding is through the federal government's RAISE program. The grant funding is not yet finalized, as some paperwork still needs to be executed by the federal government, but the City is confident that we will have finalized the contract very soon. The City has accepted a bid from HDR to do the planning and design work.

In addition to the planning grant, the City is in the process of applying for the RAISE capital/construction grant that would fund the construction of the project in consultation with ~\$6.3 million in CDOT funds and matching funds from the City's parking program. The construction grant application is due at the end of January. Recipients of the planning grant (such as Idaho Springs) are prioritized in the construction/capital grant process, so odds are good of success. Based on planning/design and grant funding timelines, it is likely that construction cannot commence until early 2026, at the earliest. Community meetings to allow for discussion and discourse on the planning and design will be scheduled once the planning grant funding is finalized and design begins.

Other Projects:

- Clear Creek Schools Foundation Early Childhood Education Project: Environmental Review Complete

The Clear Creek Schools Foundation has a grant from HUD for ~1.6 million dollars to construct an Early Childhood Education Center at the new Carlson Elementary School building, at 420 CO 103. This will contain approximately 11,000 square feet of space for early childhood education and childcare, from infants to pre-school ages. As part of the HUD award, the department requires the grant awardee to undertake an Environmental Review to determine any environmental impacts of the development, in accordance with National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements. This is required to be completed before the grant awardee can use any of the awarded funds. This process is required to be carried out by a Responsible Entity, which is a local jurisdiction in which the project is taking place. Because the project is within the City of Idaho Springs, the Clear Creek Schools Foundation requested that the City undertake this review.

The process is now complete and public notice of the Foundation's request to release HUD funding will be posted on December 5 in accordance with Public Notice requirements. This gives the public a chance to review the documentation and make comments, if applicable. If no comments are received, we will send the completed documentation and the notice of funding release to HUD for final review and acceptance. The project is intended to break ground in the Spring, assuming all goes well. Permitting will go through the State's permitting authority, similar to how the school rehabilitation was handled. The Foundation's intent is to have build-out complete and programming in place some time during the 2025-2026 school year.

- Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Authority (MJHA)

The City has been working with Clear Creek County, Georgetown, Empire, and Silver Plume on an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to create a Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Authority (MJHA) that will be established to effect the planning, financing, acquisition, construction, reconstruction or repair, maintenance, management, and operation of housing projects or programs pursuant to a multijurisdictional plan to provide: (a) dwelling accommodations at rental prices or purchase prices within the means of families of low or moderate income; and (b) affordable housing projects or programs for employees of employers located within the jurisdiction of the authority.

On November 25, City Council passed a resolution signing on to the MJHA and committing funding towards the MJHA's maintenance and operations. All other governmental entities (with the exception of Georgetown) are also on board.



TO: Idaho Springs Planning Commission
CC: City Administrator Andrew Marsh
FROM: Dylan Graves, Community Development Planner
SUBJECT: City of Idaho Springs Three-Mile Plan
ATTACHMENTS: Three Mile Area Plan Document and Map
MEETING DATE: December 11, 2024 Regular Meeting

The scope of this item is to hopefully recommend adoption of an updated City of Idaho Springs Three-Mile Area Plan, last substantially updated in 2008.

BACKGROUND

A three-mile plan is a long-range planning opportunity for municipalities to consider and project where annexation of new land may be feasible, how they will provide service in newly annexed areas, and how adequate levels of service will be maintained throughout the rest of the municipality. While a three-mile plan is advisory only, much like a comprehensive plan, having a plan in place ensures that the municipality will annex land only when it is consistent with pre-existing plans for the surrounding area. The City of Idaho Springs Three-Mile Area Plan was adopted in 2008 and provides direction concerning land use issues and infrastructure needs for lands within three miles of the current boundaries of the City. The plan identifies issues that should be addressed prior to any parcel of land being annexed into the City but neither proposes nor requires the annexation of any lands near the City. Annexation of any land into Idaho Springs remains an individual landowner decision.

A three-mile plan is required to be updated regularly according to Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) 31-12-105 (1) (e), as amended. Per the CRS, the plan is supposed to be updated annually. The CRS further states, "Prior to completion of any annexation within the three-mile area, the municipality shall have in place a plan for that area that generally describes the proposed location, character, and extent of streets, subways, bridges, waterways, waterfronts, parkways, playgrounds, squares, parks, aviation fields, other public ways, grounds, open spaces, public utilities, and terminals for water, light, sanitation, transportation, and power to be provided by the municipality and the proposed land uses for the area." As the City has not adopted an updated plan since 2008, there is a need to adopt this plan as soon as practicable to maintain compliance with CRS standards.

I presented a draft, red-lined Three-Mile Area Plan at the Planning Commission meet on October 2, 2024, to solicit feedback from the Planning Commission. I took the feedback and made edits for clarity and to correct several typos in the report and issues with the proposed map. I believe that this Three-Mile Plan document is now ready for adoption, pending any additional comments or concerns from the Planning Commission that should be addressed before making a motion to adopt.

Since the last official updates, there have been substantial changes to infrastructure and utility availability in the City. There is better water availability to the south and the west of the City as compared to when the last Three-Mile Area Plan was adopted. Several parcels were also annexed during this time. Key parcels include:

- I-70 Right-of-Way and Stanley Road Right-of-Way up to the Stanley Mine parcel.
- Idaho Springs Cemetery
- Argo parcels at the northern end of the Virginia Canyon Mountain Park (VCMP) City Parcel

These have expanded the City's boundaries to the west, north, and south, leading to new opportunities for annexation in the future. As such, the need for an updated Three-Mile Area Plan is evident.

NEXT STEPS

If the Planning Commission recommends adoption of the Three-Mile Area Plan, the next step would be scheduling the review with the City Council. This could be done at the first meeting in January. Approval would be via resolution.

In future years, I believe that we should review the plan annually to determine if it needs to be updated. If new infrastructure has created new opportunities for annexation, or if any parcels have been annexed in that year, then the Plan would be updated to reflect these changes. Otherwise, I would expect any changes to be minor.

PROPOSED MOTION

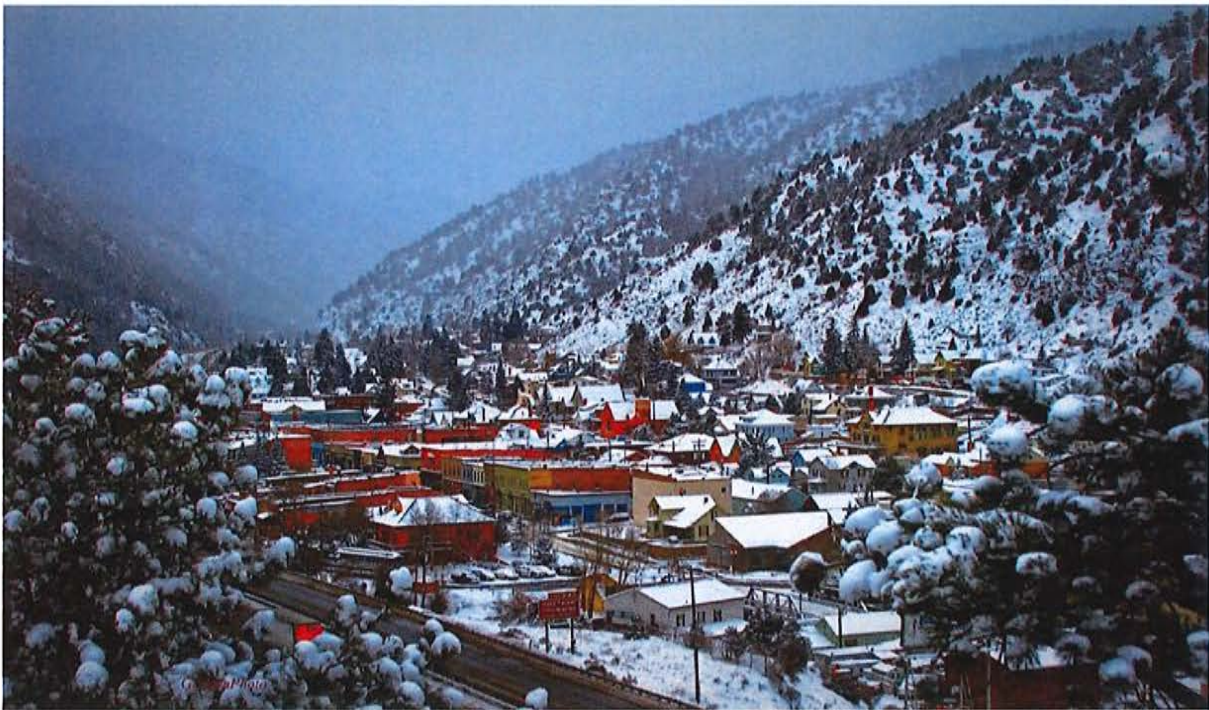
Motion to recommend that the Idaho Springs City Council adopt the updated Idaho Springs Three-Mile Area Plan, as contained in the regular meeting packet.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Proposed Three Mile Area Plan with updated map**

November 13, 2024

City of Idaho Springs, Colorado



Draft – Revision of Three Mile Area Plan

October 2, 2024

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Introduction

In 1987, the state legislature made changes to annexation law limiting municipal annexations to no more than three miles beyond the current municipal boundary in any given year. Further, municipalities in Colorado are required to prepare and adopt a three-mile plan prior to annexing property into their territorial boundaries per Colorado Revised Statute (CRS) 31-12-105 et. seq. The three-mile plan is a long-range plan that outlines where municipalities may annex property and describes how they will ensure the adequate provision of services within the newly annexed territory and the remainder of the existing municipality.

The City of Idaho Springs Three Mile Area Plan provides direction concerning land use issues and infrastructure needs for lands within three miles of the current boundaries of the City. The plan identifies issues that should be addressed prior to any parcel of land being annexed but does not propose the annexation of any lands near the City. Annexation of any land into Idaho Springs remains an individual landowner decision.

The City of Idaho Springs is required to evaluate annexation opportunities through careful consideration of both the current and future interests and needs of the community. The Idaho Springs Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2017, has identified a desire to annex lands in an orderly manner that balances both the short- and long-term fiscal needs of the community. The Comprehensive Plan states that the City should develop, update, and implement an annexation policy. Annexation proposals should also balance business, residential and industrial land use to the greatest extent possible with parks and open space to help maintain a balanced, healthy community. Analysis of the long-term costs and benefits of any annexation is another goal of the City's Comprehensive Plan, with support for annexation of developments that provide a net long-term benefit to the community. Successful annexation applications to the City should focus on how any particular annexation will meet the goals of the Idaho Springs community as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Annexation is a discretionary act available to the City of Idaho Springs; the submittal of an annexation petition is no guarantee that the subject property will be annexed into the community.

The City of Idaho Springs wishes to continue to work with Clear Creek, Gilpin and Jefferson Counties as appropriate to ensure that there is a smooth transition of land uses in the Idaho Springs area. This plan was developed using a visual survey of the area, mapping information from the Clear Creek, Gilpin and Jefferson County Planning & GIS Departments, public meetings in Idaho Springs and review by the Idaho Springs Planning Commission and City Council. No land in unincorporated areas is specifically designated for annexation in this plan. The analysis that follows will only identify areas that may be considered desirable for future uses, can be served by current services and facilities, are existing residential subdivisions, are needed to provide open space for the community, or will be logical for the expansion of the Idaho Springs urban area. Much of the land within three miles of the corporate boundaries of the City is unsuitable for annexation due to distance, topography and the potential costs to provide

services to widely scattered homes and businesses. Subject to little exception, no land, regardless of suitability, can be annexed into City Limits without the consent of the property owner(s) in question.

Thanks are due to the Planning Commission, City Council, and staff of the City of Idaho Springs for their thorough review of this document.

Methodology

Criteria to be considered when determining which lands near Idaho Springs might be desirable for annexation include:

- Areas which will broaden the range of housing types and home ownership opportunities in the City,
- Areas that have enough buildable land so that desired City land uses can be accommodated,
- Areas that are, or can easily be, served by utilities with no negative physical or economic impact on the community,
- Areas that help strengthen the economy of Idaho Springs,
- Areas that promote infill development, and
- Areas that share a community of interest with Idaho Springs.

Study Area

This plan will address the land within a three-mile area of the City of Idaho Springs by **Section** of land. A section of land is one mile square (640 acres). The complete system used to identify a particular parcel of land begins with identification of the Township (36 square miles), proceeds to the Range (east or west from the Principal Meridian) within that Township, and moves into each section of land found within that Township. Land can further be identified by portions of half-sections and quarter sections. The section – township – range method of identifying land areas is common across the United States.

The location of each of the Sections within the Three Mile area is identified on the Three Mile Area Plan Map (page 5). The one-square-mile sections of land have been combined into 6 larger Areas for the purposes of this plan to make the discussion more manageable. The general character of each of these six Areas is described and classified according to the following categories:

- Description
- Land Use
- Community Services
- Transportation
- Utility Provisions
- Open Space, Parks, and Recreation
- Summary

The six (6) Areas included within the City of Idaho Springs Three Mile Area Plan are generally eligible for annexation to Idaho Springs under the provisions of the Colorado Revised Statutes. Inclusion in this plan does not assume properties will be annexed into the City or guarantee a successful annexation should it be requested by property owners.

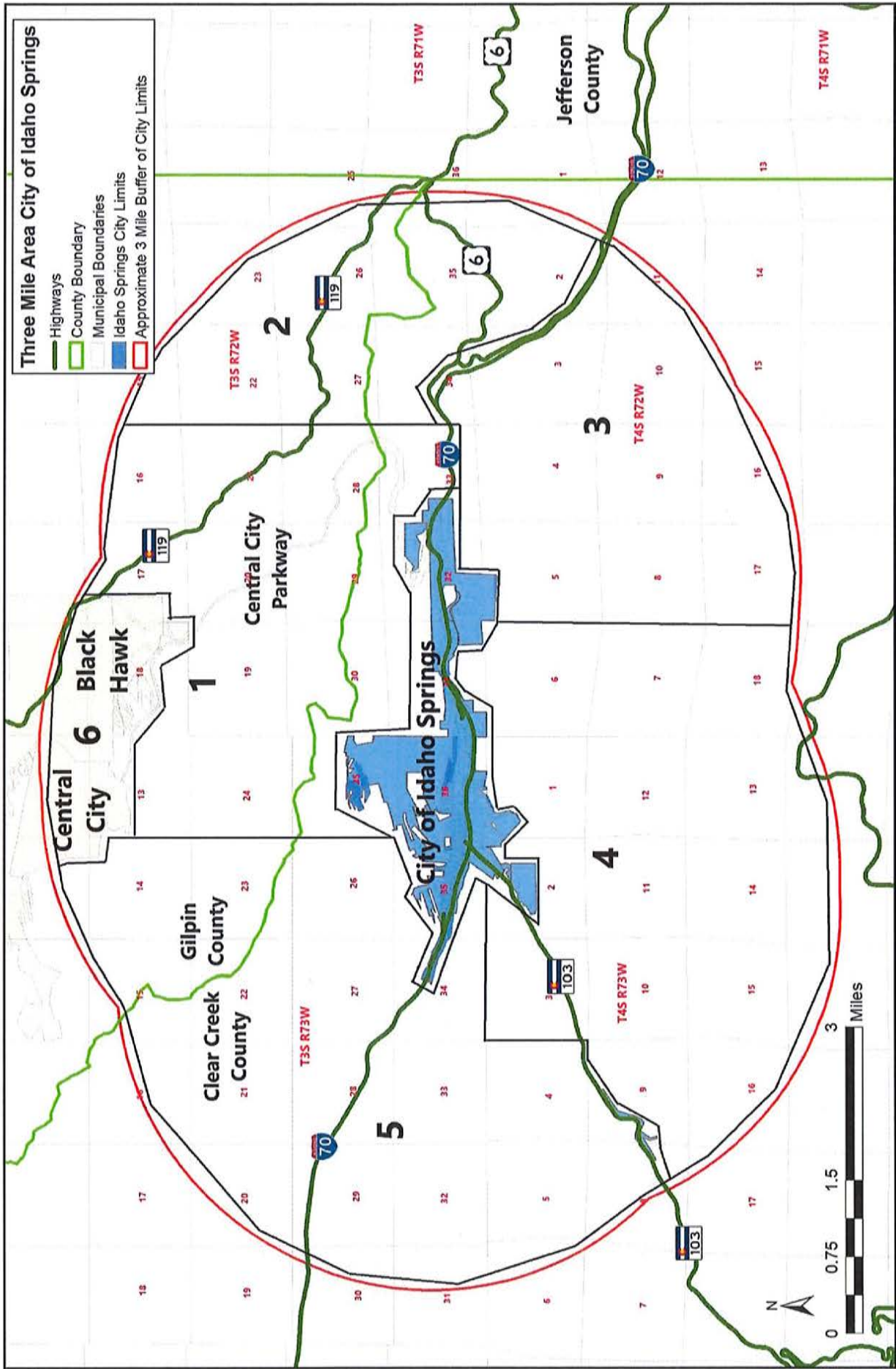
Study area boundaries for Area #6 are limited in scope due to the proximity to the incorporated municipal limits of Central City and Black Hawk. The division of the lands within three miles of the corporate limits of Idaho Springs into these six (6) Areas was based on the professional judgment of the City of Idaho Springs staff, building upon previous versions of the Three Mile Area Plan. Area boundaries were developed using topography and the general nature of the land as a guide.

Three Mile Area Cooperation

This plan helps define the cooperative relationship between Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson counties and the City of Idaho Springs by formally identifying the referral area and outlining the issues that should be addressed the any applicants and the City before annexation and development of lands within the Three Mile Area.

Three Mile Area City of Idaho Springs

- Highways
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries
- Idaho Springs City Limits
- Approximate 3 Mile Buffer of City Limits



Area 1

Description:

Township: 3 South, Range: 72 West, Sections: 16 (partial), 17 (partial), 18 (partial), 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31 (partial), 32 (partial) & 33 (partial) **and** Township: 3 South, Range: 73 West, Sections: 13 (partial), 24 & 25 (partial)

This area lies between the Cities of Idaho Springs, Central City and Black Hawk. The area includes portions of both Gilpin and Clear Creek counties.

Land Use:

The lands in this area are currently zoned for single family residential (MR-1), preservation/conservation district (NR-PC) and mining (M-1) by Clear Creek County. That portion of the area that lies within Gilpin County is zoned resource residential (RR) or residential subdivision (RS), both of which allow one primary residential dwelling per unit, one accessory dwelling, and other accessory structures. The Gilpin County Master Plan shows this as a resource area suited for low density residential development (one unit per 20 acres).

Transportation:

Interstate 70, US Highways 40 & 6 and Colorado State Highway 119 provide primary access to the southern portion of this area. The Central City Parkway crosses the area beginning near the southeast corner and connects I-70 in Idaho Springs at Hidden Valley to Central City. A handful of drives and roads are located throughout the northern portion of this area. Virginia Canyon Road, located near the western edge of the area, provides another connection to this Area and Central City.

Utility Provisions:

Individual well and septic systems serve the residents of this area. The City's services extend to the Water Resource Recovery Facility (wastewater treatment plant) on East Idaho Springs Road and extend up Virginia Canyon Road to Two Brothers Road. There may be potential for extension of those services should an annexation be considered, since road and other infrastructure is available, but service lines would need to be extended.

Community Services:

This section lies within the Clear Creek Fire Authority and Gilpin and Clear Creek RE-1 school districts, and emergency medical services are provided by Clear Creek County. Some portions of the area (south of Central City and Blackhawk)

are not located within Fire Protection Districts and are served by Central City, Gilpin and Clear Creek Fire Authority Districts on an as-needed basis. Police protection is currently provided by the Gilpin and Clear Creek County Sheriffs and Idaho Springs Police Department. Fire protection and the school district boundaries would remain the same in the event of any annexation. Police protection, however, would be provided exclusively by the City of Idaho Springs upon any annexation. It is anticipated that mutual aid agreements for law enforcement would be maintained or established in these areas.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

The Clear Creek County Master Plan proposes Open Space and a natural conservation buffer along the northern boundary of the City of Idaho Springs. Much of this land is evergreen forest land or shrub and brush rangeland. Should the City develop to the point of annexation, every effort should be made to include as much of this area as open space as possible to preserve the rugged natural backdrop of these south-facing slopes. The Virginia Canyon Mountain Park (VCMP) serves as the northern City boundary in this area, and adjacent properties could be used to expand recreation and park space in this area over time.

The area also includes a portion of the historic hard rock mining district so the suitability of this area for open space, parks and trails would require careful assessment.

Summary:

There is some potential for annexation in Area 1. Except for those areas that abut the current city limits, the area would be difficult to serve with utilities and other community services. Opportunities for annexation may exist near the Central City Parkway, though with Central City has recently completed significant annexations in this area, including the developing Young Quarry and annexations abutting the current Idaho Springs city limit at Hidden Valley, they may be limited. Should development occur, every effort must be made to protect the historic landscape as identified in the 1041 Regulations as adopted by the City of Idaho Springs. Development in the vicinity of VCMP may be possible but would require the expansion of services in this area.

Area 2

Description:

Township: 3 South, Range: 72 West, Sections 14 (partial), 15 (partial), 22, 23 (partial), 25 (partial), 26, 27, 34 (partial), 35 & 36 (partial) and Township: 4 South, Range: 72 West, Sections: 1 (partial), 2 (partial), 3 (partial)

This area includes portions of Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties. It ends just west of the Jefferson County western boundary.

Land Use:

That portion of the area located within Gilpin County is zoned for forestry and is shown in the Gilpin County Master Plan as a resource area suited for low density residential (one unit per 20 acres) development.

The lands within Clear Creek County are zoned for planned development (PD), large tract single family residences (MR-LT), single family residences (MR-1) and mining (M-1). Along I-70 and generally across from Floyd Hill, a small parcel has been zoned for planned development (PD). Development in this area, other than the large gravel operation at the base of Floyd Hill, is limited. This area includes Clear Creek as it flows into Jefferson County at the eastern edge of the Three Mile Area Plan area. Residential single-family neighborhoods are located on the eastern edge of Area 2 at Floyd Hill.

Transportation:

U.S. Highways 40 and 6 and Interstate 70 serve this area. State Highway 119, Jefferson County Road 60 and various local roads and drives also provide access to the area. Interstate 70 narrows from 3 to 2 lanes in each direction as it extends westward into Clear Creek County at the top of Floyd Hill. CDOT is currently undertaking the I-70 Floyd Hill project to address congestion and safety concerns in the Floyd Hill area, including recreational improvements, better drive lanes, and a dedicated express lane through the corridor in this Area. Sections of Interstate 70 will be elevated through this area, and a frontage road will be added along Clear Creek between the base of Floyd Hill and Hidden Valley with the extension of U.S. Highways 40 and 6. These infrastructure changes will improve local traffic circulation and create more recreational access to Clear Creek.

Utility Provisions:

Individual well and septic systems serve the residents of this area.

Community Services:

This area lies within the Clear Creek, Evergreen, and Golden Gate Fire Districts and within the Gilpin and Clear Creek County RE-1 and Jefferson County School Districts. Emergency medical services are provided by Clear Creek County. Police protection is currently provided by the Gilpin, Clear Creek and Jefferson County Sheriffs and by the City of Idaho Springs. Fire protection and school district boundaries would remain the same in the event of any annexation. Police protection, however, would be provided by the City of Idaho Springs upon any annexation. It is anticipated that mutual aid agreements for law enforcement would be maintained or established in these areas.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

Much of the land in this area is shrub and brush rangeland. Clear Creek and North Clear Creek run through the area, and the Clear Creek County Master Plan proposes that the area north of US Highway 6 and south of the Gilpin County line be used for recreation. Should the City of Idaho Springs develop to the point of annexation in this area, this use should be considered. Substantial rafting use of Clear Creek is experienced in this Area. Hiking and mountain bike recreation has been developed at the top of Floyd Hill, at the very edge of this Area.

Summary:

There is low potential for the annexation of lands in Area 2 north of Highway U.S. Highway 6. This land has limited accessibility and would be difficult to serve with utilities and other community services. Large lot residential and open spaces seem to be the best and most appropriate uses for this area.

Between I-70 and U.S. 6, the potential for annexation of property increases. Substantial land areas exist at Floyd Hill north of I-70 for development of businesses, tourist and travel amenities, and residential development. The provision of utilities and infrastructure may be possible in this portion of Area 2.

Area 3

Description:

Township: 3 South, Range: 72 West, Sections: 32 (partial), 33 (partial), and 34 (partial), and Township: 4 South, Range: 72 West, Sections: 1 (partial), 2 (partial), 3 (partial), 4, 5 (partial), 8, 9, 10 (partial), 11 (partial), 12 (partial), 15 (partial), 16 (partial), and 17 (partial)

This area lies entirely within Clear Creek County and includes the Lower Beaver Brook watershed.

Land Use:

Lands within this area have been zoned by Clear Creek County to allow the following types of development: single family residential (MR-1), large tract single family residential (MR-LT), planned development (PD) and commercial (C-1). The commercial zone district is located at Floyd Hill. The remainder of the area is zoned for preservation/conservation (NR-PC).

The area contains the Floyd Hill, Saddleback and Hyland Hills residential subdivisions. The Clear Creek High School is located at Floyd Hill and some retail opportunities exist in the area, as well.

Transportation:

U.S. Highway 40 and Interstate 70 border this area to the north and east. There are no major thoroughfares within Area 3 and the area is served by local streets and Clear Creek County Roads 182 and 183. The divided interchanges at I-70 and Homestead Road and I-70 and County Road 65 constitute the only manner for residents, emergency services or others to access Floyd Hill, the High School and other lands. CDOT is currently undertaking the I-70 Floyd Hill project to address congestion and safety concerns in the Floyd Hill area, including recreational improvements, roundabouts on U.S. Highway 40, better drive lanes, and a dedicated express lane through the corridor in this Area. This may also improve access at the Floyd Hill exit for existing and future uses and developments.

Utility Provisions:

Individual well and septic systems serve the residents of this area. In the past, the provision of water and sewer services from the City of Idaho Springs was considered. To date, utility provisions have not extended to this area.

Community Services:

This area lies within the Clear Creek Fire Authority District and Clear County RE-1 school district, and emergency medical services are provided by Clear Creek County. Police protection is currently provided by the Clear Creek County Sheriff. Fire protection and the school district would remain the same in the event of annexation. Police protection, however, would be provided by the City of Idaho Springs upon any annexation. It is anticipated that mutual aid agreements for law enforcement would be maintained or established in this area.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

If annexed, park, recreation, open space and trails opportunities should be developed in accordance with the City of Idaho Springs Comprehensive Plan, as adopted. The Floyd Hill Open Space area is in the vicinity but there is limited additional recreational or trail opportunities in this Area.

Summary:

There is excellent potential for the annexation of lands in Area 3 in proximity to Interstate 70. This area includes the lower elevations at Floyd Hill and features adequate space for new commercial, business and residential development. Already developed large lot residential areas have a lower potential for annexation due to the difficulty of providing utility services in an efficient manner. Provision of utility services and access may be difficult given the constraints in this area, as no water or sewer services exist currently. Provision of these utilities would be necessary to feasibly annex lands in this area. The remainder of Area 3 is substantially developed in large lot rural subdivisions and could not be efficiently served by the Idaho Springs municipality.

Area 4

Description:

Township: 4 South, Range: 72 West, Section: 6, 7, 18 (partial), **and** Township: 4 South, Range: 73 West, Sections: 1 (partial), 2 (partial), 3 (partial), 9 (partial), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 (partial), 21 (partial), 22 (partial), 23 (partial), 24 (partial), and 25 (partial).

The entire area is located within the boundaries of Clear Creek County and contains the Upper Beaver Brook Reservoir. The area also contains the Homestead Hideaway, Pine Valley and Beaver Brook subdivisions. It also includes Echo Mountain Park ski and snowboarding facility. Nearly the entire area is part of the Roosevelt Arapahoe National Forest.

Land Use:

This area is currently zoned primarily for preservation/conservation (NR-PC), with much of the land owned by the U.S. Forest Service. The area also includes scattered zoning for single family residential development (MR-1), large tract single family residential development (MR-LT), planned development (PD) and mining (M-1). Residential development is concentrated on the eastern side of the area and along the Highway 103 corridor. Campgrounds and trails are found in the National Forest, interspersed through the area.

Transportation:

This area is served primarily by county and local access roads such as Beaver Brook Canyon Road, Hidden Wilderness Road, Jeep Trail and Little Bear Creek Road.

Colorado Highway 103 crosses the southwest corner of the area. Primary access in this area is from I-70 and Colorado Highway 103. Local streets include Soda Creek and Little Bear Creek Roads.

Utility Provisions:

Most of the homes along Colorado Highway 103 between the City limits and the City's Water Treatment Plant are connected to the City's water and sewer mains and the Clear Creek Sanitation District's sewer main. Individual well and septic systems serve the other residents of this area. A small portion of the area along Soda Creek Road is connected to existing water and sewer lines.

Community Services:

This section lies within the Clear Creek Fire Authority and Clear Creek RE-1 school districts, and emergency medical services are provided by Clear Creek County. Police protection is currently provided by the Clear Creek County Sheriff. Fire protection and the school district would remain the same in the event of

annexation.

Police protection, however, would be provided by the City of Idaho Springs upon any annexation. It is anticipated that mutual aid agreements for law enforcement would be maintained or established in this area.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area contains substantial national forest land that provides recreational opportunities along Highway 103. If annexed, additional park, recreation, open space and trails opportunities should be developed in accordance with the City of Idaho Springs Comprehensive Plan, as adopted. The Barbour Fork trails exist in this area currently, and there is potential for park development in this area along Soda Creek or Little Bear Road.

Summary:

The proximity of this area to the City of Idaho Springs along the Highway 103 corridor and the Chicago Creek Annexation Area enhances the potential for annexation. However, as this area is almost entirely contained within a national forest, and includes a significant number of mining claims, the provision of utility and community services could be difficult. The area surrounding the existing Chicago Creek annexed areas could be suitable for annexation as there is existing water and sewer access in this area and there would be potential for contiguity with existing City parcels.

Area 5

Description:

Township: 3 South, Range: 73 West, Sections: 14 (partial), 15 (partial), 16 (partial), 20 (partial), 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 (partial), 31 (partial), 32, 33, 34 & 35 (partial) and Township: 4 South, Range: 73 West, Sections: 4, 5, 6 (partial), 8 (partial) & 9 (partial). This area includes lands in Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties.

Land Use:

Clear Creek County zoning in this area includes: mining (M-1 & M-2), preservation/conservation (NR-PC), planned development (PD), single family residential (MR-1), large lot single family residential (MR-5) and large tract single family residential (MR-LT) development. The area also includes a buffer (B) zone to protect wildlife, natural resources, scenic views and open space.

The lands contained within Gilpin County are considered as forest land and have been targeted for low density (1 single family unit per 20 acres) residential development by the County.

Residential development is found along Fall River Road and along Colorado 103 headed south towards the summit of Mt. Blue Sky and Echo Park.

Transportation:

This area is accessed by Colorado Highway 103 and Interstate 70. Travel within the area utilizes a local road network that includes the Two Brothers, Stanley and Bellevue Mountain Roads.

Utility Provisions:

Individual well and septic systems serve the majority of the residents of this area. Limited properties are served by the City utility system in cooperation with the Chicago Creek Sanitation District along Highway 103.

Community Services:

This section lies primarily within the Clear Creek Fire Authority and Clear Creek County RE-1 school districts, and emergency medical services are provided by Clear Creek County. Police protection is currently provided by the Clear Creek County Sheriff but would be provided by the City of Idaho Springs upon any annexation.

It is anticipated that mutual aid agreements for law enforcement would be maintained or established in this area.

Areas in Gilpin County are currently served by the Central City Fire Department, Gilpin County Ambulance Services, Gilpin County RE-1 School District, and the Gilpin County Sheriff.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

If annexed, park, recreation, open space and trails opportunities should be developed in accordance with the City of Idaho Springs Comprehensive Plan, as adopted. Along I-70 and Stanley Road, there may be opportunities for additional Clear Creek access in the CDOT I-70 Right-of-Way.

Summary:

Much of this area has low potential for annexation. Much of the area north of Interstate 70 is included in Clear Creek County's historical mining district and lands west along I-70 would be difficult to serve with utilities. The potential for annexation does exist along Colorado 103 where utility lines are already in place. Additionally, the City has annexed approximately ½-mile of Right-of-Way to the west of the Exit 239 interchange along Stanley Road. The private land adjacent to Stanley Road has reasonable annexation potential. A water main currently exists in this area, but a sewer main would need to be added.

Area 6

Description:

Township: 3 South, Range: 73 West, Sections: 11 (partial), 12 (partial), 13 (partial), and 14 (partial); and Township: 3 South, Range: 72 West, Sections: 7 (partial), 8 (partial), 17 (partial), and 18 (partial).

Land Use:

This area is nearly all part of the incorporated cities of Central City and Black Hawk, with essentially no annexation potential. Zoning includes resource district (RCE) for residential and mining uses, low density residential, medium density residential, high density residential, gaming districts, and commercial zoning. Recreation zoning is also permitted in these municipalities.

Transportation:

This area is accessed by Highway 119, the Central City Parkway, or Virginia Canyon Road.

Utility Provisions:

Central City and Black Hawk provide utility services to properties in their city boundaries.

Community Services:

The Central City Fire Department and the Black Hawk Fire Department provide services to this area. The Gilpin Ambulance Authority provides EMS services. The Gilpin County RE-1 school district serves the area. Central City and Black Hawk each provide police services in their respective areas.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

Maryland Mountain Trails in the City of Black Hawk provide recreational opportunities to the area. National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands are found in the area.

Summary:

The opportunity for annexation in this area is very low, as nearly all land in the area is already annexed into Central City or the City of Black Hawk.



TO: Planning Commission
CC: City Administrator Andrew Marsh
FROM: Dylan Graves, Community Development Planner
SUBJECT: Housing Code Amendments / IHOP Housing Policy Analysis Work Session
MEETING DATE: December 11, 2024

The scope of this work session item is to continue discussions on creating updated regulations and standards to encourage the development of housing in the City of Idaho Springs, especially affordable and/or workforce housing. Members of both the Planning Commission and City Council have mentioned a desire to start working on both regulatory programs and incentive programs to address housing availability and affordability issues. Additionally, the City received an Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies (IHOP) grant in 2022/2023 to assess existing housing strategies in the City and recommend changes that could help improve the strategies available to property owners to construct affordable and workforce housing.

This work session item will build upon the October discussion we had, providing additional details, and discuss the IHOP recommendations, which are currently in draft form but are nearing finalization. This *Idaho Springs Housing Policy Analysis* reviews the City's codes and regulations related to housing to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses. It also recommends potential policy and regulatory changes that could be adopted to improve the housing situation in the City – both by allowing for more housing to be built and by requiring housing that is built to be attainable to the local workforce and community. Additionally, it ranks the effectiveness and benefits of each recommendation against the cost to implement the recommendation to assess the cost/benefit ratio of each proposed change.

Additionally, at the November 12, 2024, Joint Planning Commission – City Council work session, we discussed the idea that there are some properties in town that do not fall neatly into a housing category. There are likely several properties that currently allow long-term residences of units that do not meet the definition of a hotel/motel lodging unit, nor do they meet the definition of a residential dwelling unit. As such, they cannot be neatly regulated by any of the City's existing regulations. At the joint work session, it was determined that as part of our review of housing policies and regulations, we would attempt to address this “other” type of housing.

The goal of the work session would be to come to a consensus about what proposed recommendations we would like to start working on immediately; which we would like to work on eventually, but are lower priorities; and which, if any, do not appear to be feasible or desirable right now. From there, City Staff will begin researching the recommendations and bring back the research to Planning Commission at an upcoming work session so that we can start working on code updates for early 2025.

IHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Housing Policy Analysis report identified the following items that the City should address to balance the preservation of the city's character through its existing housing stock and the need for new housing and additional density to support the local economy. Additional priorities include ensuring the safety and habitability of housing in the community and allowing a variety of housing forms that can best meet community needs. These include:

- Preservation of housing character
- Increase in housing supply
- Maintenance of housing quality
- Allowance for diverse housing forms

The recommendations identified that the biggest housing gaps in Idaho Springs are housing for seniors and workforce housing – both seasonal and year-round. It also recommended changes that the City could make to help bridge those gaps.

Recommendations for improvement include:

- Removal of minimum square footage requirements for ADUs and expanded allowance for ADUs in all zoning districts
- Prioritization of community-serving development in review process
- Reduction in the approval level for all community-serving development
- Relaxation of dimensional standards for community-serving housing
- Allowance for character-preserving density for community-serving housing

- Rezoning of certain areas to allow multifamily housing development
- Adoption of mandatory inclusionary housing regulations
- Conduct a comparative parking study to determine if the City’s parking minimums should be reduced/eliminated
- Waive parking requirements for community-serving housing in specific zone districts (specifically HD)
- Prioritize affordable/workforce housing on publicly owned land

Additional recommended strategies:

- Reduce development fees for community-serving housing
- Codification of community priorities for planned developments and annexations
- Establishment of a rental registry and inspection program
- Establishment of local housing fund

ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **EXPANDED ALLOWANCES FOR ADUS AND REDUCTION IN ADU STANDARDS**

The report recommends removing the minimum square footage requirements for ADUs, allowing for the construction of “tiny home” style ADUs. It may be cheaper to construct a smaller ADU on a property and may be more able to comply with setbacks and open space requirements. The second recommendation is to relax development standards for ADUs. For example, this could include allowing ADUs to be situated in a setback or reducing the open space requirements for a lot to allow for ADU development. It could also include relaxing parking requirements, which currently are 2 spaces for a primary residence and an additional 1 space for an ADU.

It also recommends incentivizing ADUs through the waiver of fees and by expediting the review process. Currently, a property owner would need to pay building permit fees and may also be required to pay for water and sewer tap fees, which can cost thousands of dollars. Another way to incentivize ADUs that other communities have done is to create standard, approved ADU plans that are free to members of the public and are pre-reviewed against Building Code requirements. This would save the property owner time and money that would otherwise be spent developing a set of ADU plans. Some other communities are providing subsidies to property owners willing to build ADUs, as well.

- **PRIORITIZATION OF COMMUNITY-SERVING DEVELOPMENT IN REVIEW PROCESS**

The report recommends that when staff is reviewing a project that meets criteria for workforce or affordable housing, staff will prioritize review and approval of these developments. This would save developers money and time by reducing the amount of time the project is under review, allowing developers to start construction more quickly.

Staff is unsure how beneficial this would be, as the processes are already relatively streamlined. The City might consider eliminating the need for two public meetings, if allowed by state statute. For example, currently if someone wants to build community-serving housing, they will need, at least, a Final Development Plan (FDP). The FDP requires a community meeting, review and public hearing with Planning Commission, then review and action by City Council. If state statute allows, the City could reduce the review requirements as much as possible to help streamline the review for community-serving housing projects.

- **RELAXATION OF DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY-SERVING HOUSING**

The report discussed two ways to relax dimensional standards. First, the City has required square footage minimums based on the zoning district where construction is proposed. This does not lend itself to the construction of more affordable housing in the City. Requiring a single-family home to be a minimum of 850-1,200 square feet increases the base cost to develop on the limited number of vacant lots that currently exist in the City. Eliminating or reducing the minimums would allow developers and property owners more flexibility to develop within the City by increasing the potential densities that could be built in on parcels zoned for multifamily development and increasing the potential to develop single family housing on irregular or small lots.

It is recommended that the City relax standards for community-serving housing development – perhaps by allowing these types of developments to have smaller lot sizes, by allowing more density, or by reconsidering parking requirements on-site.

- **ALLOWANCE FOR CHARACTER-PRESERVING DENSITY FOR COMMUNITY-SERVING HOUSING**

The report recommends increasing density in existing single-family zoning districts, specifically R-1 and R-2 districts that currently only allow single-family homes (R-1) or single-family or duplex development (R-2). The recommendation would be to allow duplexes, triplexes, or four-plexes in either of these zone districts as long as at least one (1) of the dwelling units developed was deed restricted for affordable, workforce housing. As opposed to higher-density multifamily housing, which would change the character of the districts, duplexes, triplexes, and four-plexes can maintain similar design characteristics to the traditional single-family housing that we see around Idaho Springs.

Consideration of how the deed restrictions would operate on newly constructed units would be a key element to discuss if this is something we pursued.

Another option to increase density in residential areas without changing the residential character of the neighborhoods would be to establish standards for co-living or shared amenity housing. These types of developments can still have the look and feel of a single-family residence but allow for multiple unrelated parties to easily share a single residence by providing additional levels of privacy in a shared-living situation. Whereas in a normal roommate situation where multiple parties are sharing a single-family home and thus are sharing everything except private bedroom spaces, co-living or shared amenity developments can be a formalized way of allowing rental units that share certain amenities (such as a kitchen). A unit may have a private bedroom and en-suite bathroom and perhaps even some additional living space but would not have an individual kitchen.

- REZONING OF CERTAIN AREAS TO ALLOW MULTIFAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Comprehensive Plan identifies several parts of the City that are appropriate for high-density multifamily housing. The report recommends rezoning these properties to something that allows higher densities to help spur development in these areas. Several of these areas are already zoned R-3 or R-M and could already accommodate higher densities but some areas are not given that zoning designation, either because there is existing low-density single-family development in those areas or because there has historically been limited infrastructure (such as along East Idaho Springs Road). Proactively rezoning these areas to increase the feasibility of future redevelopment at higher densities would be a way to plan for future growth. Where properties are owned by private property owners the City should get their buy-in before a rezoning is considered.

A benefit of this program is that it does not immediately increase densities in the City but provides opportunities for long-term redevelopment as appropriate. Whereas some strategies could increase densities immediately and change character quickly, this strategy is long-term in scope and would see incremental changes over time as additional housing demand is realized.

- ADOPTION OF MANDATORY INCLUSIONARY HOUSING REGULATIONS

The report recommends that the City create a mandatory inclusionary housing program that requires developers to build affordable and/or workforce housing as part of a larger market-rate development.

The City has already implemented basic regulations in Section 21-77 of the ISMC. Sec. 21-77 states:

To ensure that residential development provides a range of housing opportunities for all identifiable economic segments of the population, including households of low-and moderate-income, as part of any residential project the City may require a certain percentage of affordable units be set aside, or establish fees in lieu thereof. The requirements will be set by the City Council and implemented as part of the development impact fee schedule.

The ISMC allows the City to require a certain percentage of units to be set aside but does not establish any set parameters or standards for the requirement. To date, this has not been used. Establishing set standards for when a project would be eligible, the percentage of units that would be required, and other elements would allow the City to start implementing inclusionary housing policies to bring more affordable and workforce housing into the City as part of larger development.

Colorado requires inclusionary housing policies to include alternatives to developing affordable housing on-site. Idaho Springs should select alternatives that support other housing strategies and policy priorities, such as allowing developers to donate development-ready lots to the municipality or making a fee-in-lieu contribution that feeds into a dedicated housing fund. We could also incorporate additional programs – such as reduction in permitting costs/process or relaxation of standards – to ensure that this type of development can occur.

- CONDUCT A COMPARATIVE PARKING STUDY TO DETERMINE IF THE CITY'S PARKING MINIMUMS SHOULD BE REDUCED/ELIMINATED

The report recommends that the City conduct a comparative parking study analyzing existing parking minimums to determine whether said minimums should be reduced for certain land uses or in some cases, even eliminated. Studies in other communities have shown that affordable or workforce housing projects tend to generate less demand for parking than market-rate or luxury housing developments. These studies have largely occurred in urban areas with more access to public transportation options. Studies in mountain communities or communities without large-scale public transportation are less robust. If parking minimums were reduced for affordable/workforce housing projects, this could make these types of projects more desirable by reducing the total cost of development and by allowing for additional housing units where parking would otherwise be necessary.

- WAIVE PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNITY-SERVING HOUSING IN SPECIFIC ZONE DISTRICTS (SPECIFICALLY HD)

The report recommends that in the Historic District zone district, no residential parking minimums are required. Currently, the City's Parking Fee-in-Lieu program requires that residential development pay \$2,500 / space if not building off street parking. The report recommends that community-serving residential developments – such as deed restricted residential units – be exempt from the City's parking requirements if they are built in the Historic District; the thought being that there is substantial parking in the vicinity of the Historic District to accommodate residential parking already in this area, so why require a fee-in-lieu.

This would require a change to the City's fee-in-lieu program to create an exemption for affordable/workforce housing developments within the program. The fee-in-lieu program is already being reviewed, so this could be added into the review with relative ease.

- PRIORITIZE AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE HOUSING ON PUBLICLY OWNED LAND

The City has already begun working on this. The City has retained an architecture firm – EVStudio – to prepare an analysis of potential build-out of City owned parcels throughout the city. This includes a 50+ unit affordable senior housing project; a mid-density apartment complex on Riverside Dr; and a duplex or triplex development on the west side of the city. The analysis recommends that the City pass an ordinance clarifying that affordable housing is a priority for City-owned properties but does not recommend anything beyond this. Since we are already prioritizing housing on the parcels that the City owns, there may not be much work needed on this item.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

At the November 25 joint work session, it was established that there is a “third” category of housing in Idaho Springs that is not an extended stay lodging space but is also not a dwelling unit according to the definition of a dwelling unit in Chapter 21 of the ISMC, which states:

Dwelling unit. One (1) or more rooms and a single kitchen and at least one (1) bathroom, designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate quarters for the exclusive use for living, cooking and sanitary purposes, located in a single-family, two-family or multi-family dwelling or mixed-use building. "Dwelling unit" does not include extended stay hotels.

Existing properties in the City largely were originally built as hotels or motels but were converted to long-term residences some time in the past, though Staff is unsure if existing properties went through any official approval from the City. They do not meet the definitions included in the recently approved extended stay lodging ordinance, so are not subject to this new regulation.

The closest definition in the ISMC that could be used to define the space is a “Dwelling, Efficiency Unit”:

Dwelling, Efficiency unit: A dwelling unit containing not more than one (1) room or enclosed floor space arranged for living, eating, and sleeping purposes not including bathrooms, water closets, laundry rooms, pantries, foyers, hallways, and other accessory floor spaces. An efficiency unit is also known as a studio-type dwelling unit.

Generally, these spaces contain one room that is used for living, sleeping, and eating, though they do not contain a full kitchen, nor do they generally contain a kitchen sink. They also contain en-suite bathrooms. The efficiency unit definition likely works.

However, the ISMC currently does not allow an dwelling, efficiency unit in any zoning district, according to the use table in Sec. 21-74 of the ISMC.

Request for Direction: Does the Planning Commission believe that these spaces could be considered “Dwelling, Efficiency Units”? Does the Planning Commission believe that these spaces should be permitted in any specific zoning district in the City? What additional standards would the Planning Commission like to see if these sorts of spaces were permitted?

WRAP UP / ANALYSIS

Ultimately, increasing the overall housing supply – whether affordable or market rate – is a key priority identified in the report to give current and future residents more opportunities and choices within the community. Although market rate housing does not directly impact residents in need of low-income or affordable housing, market rate housing could allow middle-income or higher-income residents to upgrade into new homes, allowing their existing homes to either be redeveloped or reoccupied by someone of a lower income.

There are a lot of different recommendations in the Housing Policy Analysis document, ranging from incentive programs encouraging new units to be built to regulatory programs requiring the construction of community-serving units. Ranking the recommended actions on a priority scale would allow Staff and the Planning Commission to start working on top priorities first where the biggest impacts can be achieved.

Request for Direction: How would the Planning Commission rank the recommended action items in order of priority? Are there any additional items that the analysis appears to be missing?

Staff will plan to create a spreadsheet document to rank the choices and hopes that the ranking can be an outcome of the December 11 work session. Future work sessions would dig deeper into the items to start working on amendments to the ISMC to integrate those prioritized items.

Idaho Springs Housing Policy Analysis

Purpose of this Analysis

In 2023, Idaho Springs engaged Cappelli Consulting to identify ways to update its land use policies to better meet its housing needs. This project is part of a larger regional analysis of housing policies funded through an Innovative Housing Opportunity Program grant awarded by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). To complete this project, the consultants analyzed the strengths and areas for improvement in the County's existing policies and suggested new policies for adoption that would support specific housing goals. Housing policies aligned with DOLA's Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies are signaled with a call-out box. The team conducted similar analyses and reports for Clear Creek County, Empire, Silver Plume, and Georgetown. Key findings from each jurisdiction's reports are summarized in the Clear Path Home Regional Policy Analysis.

Local Housing Goals

Background

Idaho Springs, nestled in the mountains flanking Clear Creek, is the largest municipality in Clear Creek County. The community is anchored by its historic downtown along Miner Street. Preserving the historic downtown is key to the city's economic future as it is a major tourist attraction. While the downtown designation as a historic site complicates development opportunities, it creates a distinctive character that is echoed in the city's historic and vintage housing stock.

Tourism is the predominant economic driver for Idaho Springs, resulting in a large subset of the workforce coming to the community seasonally for hospitality and outdoor recreation jobs. As the housing market has gotten more expensive, the incomes from these jobs haven't kept pace, and housing options for seasonal workers are severely limited.

Creating more housing is challenging in a geographically constrained area like a front-range valley. Limited developable land constrains most new housing opportunities to infill parcels (2018 Housing Needs Assessment Update, page 6). Most of the city's housing stock is over 40 years old (*Envision Idaho Springs*, page 37). The lack of recent development has increased demand for existing housing, which has driven up prices, contributing to the mismatch between wages and rents or mortgages (*Envision Idaho Springs*, Page 39).

Additional Challenges

- The combination of housing prices and needed maintenance push the cost of a home purchase out of reach for would-be local buyers.
- Irregular lot sizes make it challenging to design broadly applicable regulations.
- The topography of the city limits suitable sites for new development.
- Much of Idaho Springs and the surrounding area is considered an EPA Superfund site due to the heavy metals in the many waste rock piles from past mining activities. While the EPA has done extensive

remediation to protect surface water sources, moving or disturbing the waste rock piles requires EPA input, which can delay development and increase costs.

Target Demographics

The biggest housing gaps in Idaho Springs are **housing for seniors** and **workforce housing** - both seasonal and year-round (2018 Housing Needs Assessment Update, page 2).

Many elder residents are on fixed incomes and require supportive housing that provides services like medical care and household assistance. Clear Creek County has few supportive housing options (2018 Housing Needs Assessment Update, page 9). This is a matter of some urgency, as demographic trends indicate Idaho Springs' population is older than the average age in the Denver Metro Statistical Area.

Workforce housing needs range from co-living housing forms that balance personal space with shared eating and common areas to rental housing and starter homes that provide residents new to the workforce an opportunity to gain a foothold in the community.

Housing Policy Priorities

As the consultant team reviewed planning documents and talked with city staff, key themes that emerged included the importance of balancing the **preservation of the city's character** through its existing housing stock and the **need for new housing** and additional density to support the local economy. Additional priorities include ensuring the **safety and habitability of housing** in the community and **allowing a variety of housing forms** that can best meet community needs.

Preserve Housing Character

Preserving the historic downtown and other historic buildings is key to the city's economic future since it is a major attraction for tourists. One of Idaho Springs' best assets is its historic downtown along Miner Street. This area is registered as a national historic site, and any development therein requires a certificate of appropriateness (CoA) issued by the Historic Preservation Review Committee (*Envision Idaho Springs*, Page 22). Additionally, the historic designation makes the downtown eligible for Historic Preservation Tax Credits, which are intended to help rehabilitate historic, owner-occupied commercial properties (Idaho Springs *Downtown Master Plan*, Page 6).

Increase Housing Supply

Because there has been so little recent development, there is significant pent-up demand for housing that results in increased housing prices, and many people being left out of the housing market in the community entirely. Enacting strategies to add more units can slow the rampant escalation of housing costs and be targeted to serve specific income levels that the market is not addressing.

Idaho Springs is already working to increase the housing supply with projects like the **Riverbend Residences**. In the pages below, we will consider how Idaho Springs policies and regulations support opportunities for new, community-serving housing and what other strategies can be applied to better serve this goal.

Maintain Housing Quality

Just 3% of the city's housing units were built after 2000, despite the Front Range experiencing a population boom over the same period. Meanwhile, the remaining housing stock is aging and in need of repairs. Forty-four percent of dwelling units were built before 1939, and one-third were built between 1960 and 1979 (*Envision Idaho Springs*, page 37). Because wages have not kept pace with housing costs, prospective homebuyers miss out on homeownership due to the high maintenance needs of older homes (*Envision Idaho Springs*, Page 37). This includes mobile homes, one of the few naturally occurring forms of affordable housing in the area, which tend to be over 40 years old (*Envision Idaho Springs*, Page 37).

Allow Diverse Housing Forms

Preserving and increasing the diversity of housing types is key to solving Idaho Springs' housing shortage. Detached and attached single-family homes make up almost 70% of the city's housing stock, with multifamily development making up only 25%. Mobile homes, one of the few forms of unsubsidized affordable housing in the city, only comprise about 5% (2018 Housing Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study Update, Page 38). The key to attracting and retaining the workforce and accommodating the city's aging population is diversifying these categories within themselves and adding new housing forms. Dormitory-style housing is needed for seasonal workers, and young families leaving the city need condos or apartments with more than 2 bedrooms, as single-family home prices remain out of reach for many.

Policy Context

Based on the described challenges and locally defined housing priorities, the consulting team reviewed existing policies and regulations in Idaho Springs, looking for ways to better support the housing outcomes the city is trying to achieve. Recommendations are grouped under two categories: 1) enhancements to existing policies and 2) suggestions for new policies, programs, and regulations to adopt.

However, before addressing specific recommendations, the city must first address the foundational disconnect between the city's Land Development Regulations and *Envision Idaho Springs 2017* (EIS), the city's comprehensive plan.

The Idaho Springs Land Development Regulations (LDR) have 14 distinct underlying zone districts; 5 are residential, and 3 are commercial. The allowed uses and dimensional standards for each district demonstrate different priorities for each zone district; however, there is no description in the LDR clarifying the intent for each district.

The city has tasked the consulting team with crafting recommendations for policy and regulatory changes that can support the housing priorities defined above. This task is complicated by the lack of clarity on the purpose of each district. Developers may also find this challenging when pursuing a conditional use permit or waivers as there is no guidance clarifying the goals of each zone district to direct the types of exceptions that may be appropriate. In contrast, EIS details land use categories with clear descriptions of the intent for each, but it is unclear how these land use categories relate to development within the city.

Standard practice is for a comprehensive plan to include a future land use map, and it is most commonly depicted in the existing zoning designations. This creates clarity for decision-making bodies when determining if an application conforms with the comprehensive plan. As EIS proposed new land use categories, the city should undertake a citywide legislative rezoning initiative to bring the LDR in alignment with the EIS. This will allow new development to conform with plan guidance. This will also improve the City's outlook for providing more locally affordable housing because the land use categories in the EIS better align with the stated community housing policy priorities of increasing the housing supply and allowing diverse housing forms than the LDR currently does.

We recommend that Idaho Spring legislatively rezone the city to reflect the land use categories adopted in EIS.

Existing strategies supporting housing goals

Accessory Dwelling Units Allowed By-Right

Qualifying Strategy 10) Authorizing accessory dwelling units as a use-by-right on parcels in single-family zoning districts that meet the safety and infrastructure capacity considerations of local governments
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are permitted in the Residential Estate, Residential One, Residential Two, and Residential Three zone districts as an Accessory Use by-right (Idaho Springs LDR, Table 21-50-1). The ADUs must have 50% or less of the principal structure's floor area and must have more than 200 square feet of floor area.

Two factors limit the scalability of this housing supply strategy: 1) ADUs are costly to build, and 2) not all parcels in Idaho Springs have dimensional standards that support the addition of an ADU -. However, this tool is still an important one for Idaho Springs as it balances the community priorities of increasing the housing supply, diversifying housing forms, and preserving the community character derived from the existing housing stock.

Recommendations for Improvement

Remove minimum square footage requirements for ADUs

Qualifying Strategy 12) Allowing the development of small square footage residential unit sizes
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

Idaho Springs should remove the minimum square footage for ADUs and mirror Clear Creek County in enforcing size minimums only via building regulations, allowing tiny home ADUs to open more opportunities for ADUs on irregularly sized and shaped lots.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Low/Moderate	Low
Idaho Springs already included ADUs in its LDR.	Extremely small ADUs may not be worth the effort for most homeowners. However, due to the simplicity of implementing this recommendation, it is worth the effort even if only a few homeowners pursue the opportunity created.	Legislatively altering the regulations governing ADU size and setbacks would not require significant municipal resources.

Incentivize community-serving ADUs

We recommend Idaho Springs adopt the recommendation from EIS to incentivize ADUs through development fee waivers and expedited permitting processes (page 43). However, we suggest these incentives should be offered in exchange for requirements that the ADU be used for a family member or rented at a price point that addresses an unmet community need.¹

In addition to implementing EIS guidance to incentivize ADUs through fee waivers and expedited review, Idaho Springs could also follow the model used by the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative, which has partnered with their local Habitat for Humanity affiliate to develop standardized building forms pre-approved for use as ADUs.² The program also provides direct financial support to homeowners to help develop the accessory units. This program increases the housing supply overall, generates housing options at affordable price points, and supports residents in creating an additional income stream that can offset financial pressure from rising property taxes and provide the extra income needed to address needed repairs.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
High	Moderate/High	High
This recommendation requires program development to determine what income levels should be focused on, coordination with an outside partner to develop acceptable ADU designs that can be pre-approved by the city, and a source of funding -- potentially through a local	This program builds on the ADU allowances already in place in Idaho Springs and supports residents in overcoming the cost barrier to building this needed housing supply. Three key groups supported by this program are multigenerational households, homeowners who will benefit	This is a high-cost program with the primary expense being the direct financial support to homeowners. The city can potentially take smaller steps, such as providing pre-approved designs to residents who are interested in building an ADU. However, the

¹ Based on the 2018 Housing Needs Assessment Update, we would encourage the city to require incentivized ADU units to serve 60% of AMI or below, however, market conditions have changed significantly since the HNA was conducted and the city should reexamine what income threshold for rental housing is most needed in the community today.

² [West Denver Single Family Plus \(WDSF+\) ADU Pilot](#)

housing fund. The city will also need to develop an ongoing compliance plan.	from an additional income stream, and low-income renters who will have access to housing in an established neighborhood.	program's impact is tied to the completeness of the approach.
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Expand where ADUs are allowed

The city should implement the recommendation from the Downtown Master Plan (Page 59) to allow ADUs in the Commercial-One and Commercial-Two districts along Colorado Boulevard, where there is already a sense of neighborhood.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Moderate	Low
Idaho Springs already included ADUs in its LDR.	This recommendation is only applicable to a small subset of parcels.	Legislatively altering the regulations governing ADU size and setbacks would not require significant municipal resources.

Housing Goals Supported

- Preserve Housing Character
- Increase Housing Supply
- Maintain Housing Quality
- Allow Diverse Housing Forms

Expedited Development Review

Qualifying Strategy 3) The creation of an expedited development review process for affordable housing aimed at households the annual income of which is at or below one hundred twenty percent of the area median income of households of that size in the county in which the housing is located
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

Idaho Springs has a clearly outlined development review process for development applications, including annexations, Certificates of Appropriateness, conditional use permits, planned developments, rezonings, and final development plans. While rezonings, conditional use permits, and planned developments all require two hearings, only the hearing by the city council (the decision-making body in these applications) must have a published notification in the newspaper, the timing of which can range between 14-30 days before the hearing. This prevents any misalignment in the publication timing from creating an additional delay in the application process.

Additionally, final development plans require community engagement at the beginning of the design process, and there is no requirement for publication in the newspaper before the final hearing (when this step is required).

For all review processes except annexations, the procedures in Idaho Springs are set up to achieve the development review timeline goals set by the state to comply with participation in Proposition 123.³ However, success depends on each stage of the review process operating at maximum efficiency.

Recommendations for Improvement

Reduce the approval level for all community-serving development

Create opportunities to streamline the development review process for proposals meeting affordability requirements by reducing the approval level for community-serving developments under 10 units. For example, a process for a community-serving development proposal would have a decision by the Planning Commission instead of a review by the Planning Commission and a decision by the City Council. Additionally, all community-serving final development plans that meet all other development and design standards should be eligible for administrative approval.

Prioritize community-serving development in review process

Idaho Springs should codify a priority processing order. Applications that meet a specific affordability threshold will be processed first by staff and have priority standing on Planning Commission and City Council agendas.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Moderate	Low
Both recommendations can be achieved through text amendments to the LDR.	In addition to reducing application times and therefore holding costs for community-serving projects, these recommendations will support the city in complying with the requirements of Prop 123 which will provide access to affordable housing funding.	Legislative changes are a low-cost strategy.

Housing Goals Supported

- Increase Housing Supply

³ Proposition 123, enacted by Colorado in 2023, requires jurisdictions to process development applications for affordable housing within 90 days, in addition to other requirements. This is an optional program and participating jurisdictions are eligible for additional funding to support housing efforts in their communities.

Flexible Development Standards

Idaho Springs requires moderately large residential lots throughout most of the city and caps the maximum height for buildings at 35 feet. However, as of 2017, the city allows more flexible dimensional standards throughout the East End, which were recommended in the *East End Action Plan, Envision Idaho Springs*, and codified in the East End Overlay District (EEOD) (Chapter 26 of the LDR).

The East End Overlay District allows smaller lot sizes, reduced setback requirements, and additional building height than zone districts not covered by the overlay. The increased height limits of up to 57 feet and reduced minimum lot size of 2,000 square feet in the EEOD allow for greater density and more housing development. These changes are not uniform throughout the overlay. Instead, the changes to lot size and site coverage requirements are primarily available for parcels in the underlying R-2 district, while properties eligible to build to 57 feet have been determined based on a sun-access study (*East End Action Plan*, page 36).

Recommendations for Improvement

In this section, we recommend more flexibility in the dimensional standards, allowed uses, and design standards, which can

- Reduce costs for affordable development -- creating community-serving housing and enabling a complete economy
- Create higher yield, if these changes are allowed for market-rate development -- making development opportunities more appealing and attracting more outside investment
- Support sustainable development -- maximizing infrastructure investments, promoting walkability, and preserving open spaces.

Relax dimensional standards for community-serving housing

Qualifying Strategy 12) Allowing the development of small square footage residential unit sizes
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

The dimensional standards in the residential zone districts constrain housing opportunities by requiring moderately large to very large lots. We recommend allowing smaller lot sizes and widths in most residential zone districts, either through rezoning to Mixed Residential Density, Multifamily, Mixed Use, and Transitional Mixed-Use districts or through applying similar standards as those used in the EEOD.

West End, Northside, Sunnyside, and East End character areas should all allow 2,500 square-foot minimum lot sizes, 25-foot minimum widths, and a 40% requirement for open space on the lot. To prevent this change from incentivizing scrapes and rebuilds, it should only apply to development that will meet a defined community housing need.

Allowing smaller homes continues the historical development pattern described in EIS (page 36).

Complexity	Impact	Cost
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Low/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
<p>This strategy can be accomplished with an incentive policy to offer alternative dimensional standards for projects that commit to affordability targets. The city should undertake a stakeholder process to determine the appropriate definitions and thresholds for community-serving housing. This process should consider how this complements other strategies to meet community housing needs. Monitoring compliance will require additional city capacity.</p>	<p>To maximize the impact of this strategy, the city should work with developers who specialize in affordable home ownership to identify sites that would benefit from redevelopment.</p>	<p>The primary cost for this strategy will be determining what type of community housing should be targeted with this tool and if that should include price caps. The city may need to commission a new housing needs assessment to help define these targets.</p>

Allow character-preserving density for community-serving housing

Qualifying Strategy 5) The establishment of a density bonus program to increase the construction of units that meet critical housing needs in the local community
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

As mentioned above, EIS highlights the city’s history of integrated housing forms with “Small multifamily structures were integrated into neighborhoods of large and small single-family homes providing neighborhoods which comprised a variety of household sizes and incomes.” (page 36). Small multifamily developments can integrate into neighborhoods in structures that complement and, in some cases, are indistinguishable from single-family residences.

We recommend allowing triplexes and four-plexes in all residential zone districts as a permitted use for developments that meet the following criteria:

1. Meets the dimensional standards of the zone district
2. Can accommodate required parking on-site
3. Units are restricted to price points that serve community needs⁴

This approach is used in Aspen, and it can create attainable rental or for-sale housing opportunities.

The city should also add a use type for co-living housing forms, allowing individuals to rent a private bedroom and bathroom in a larger unit that shares cooking and common space. These housing forms have been used in student housing for decades and are rising in popularity for the broader population as household sizes are

⁴ Requiring price caps is essential to preventing this strategy from motivating scrapes and rebuilds into luxury housing.

decreasing and people are seeking ways to lower housing costs. Co-living occurs informally through roommate situations, but by formalizing a co-living use type, the city can allow rental units that are not required to have individual kitchens. This use should be allowed in all areas that permit multifamily dwellings.⁵

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low/Moderate	High	Low/Moderate
This strategy can be accomplished with an incentive policy to offer alternative use standards for projects that commit to affordability targets. The city should undertake a stakeholder process to determine the appropriate definitions and thresholds for community-serving housing. This process should consider how this complements other strategies to meet community housing needs. Monitoring compliance will require additional city capacity.	<p>Creating opportunities for small-scale multifamily development in all residential neighborhoods will increase the housing capacity of the city without disrupting the housing form that residents are familiar with in single-family areas.</p> <p>Allowing co-living units is a solution that can meet the housing needs of residents new to the community, seniors, and low- to moderate-income residents.</p>	<p>The primary cost for this strategy will be determining what type of community housing should be targeted with this tool, and if that should include price caps. The city may need to commission a new housing needs assessment to help define these targets.</p> <p>Crafting the text amendments to allow co-living fall into the low-cost category.</p>

Rezone identified areas to allow multifamily development

Envision Idaho Springs identifies several parts of the city that were appropriate for high-density multifamily development but noted that many of these areas would need infrastructure. The city should re-examine the feasibility of these areas for multifamily development and proactively rezone the sites that are still appropriate to a district that supports more intense development.

The city should factor in the existing uses in areas considered for rezoning; by increasing development potential, there will be motivation to redevelop for a higher yield, which may motivate the demolition of existing structures. We crafted this strategy as a market-based approach to address the constraint on housing supply, but it can be restricted to price-capped developments. This will likely result in a slower incorporation of multifamily development, which will not increase the city's housing stock as quickly, but it will also mitigate redevelopment pressure.⁶

This recommendation can be accomplished in the context of the existing zone districts or by adopting the land use categories from EIS.

⁵ Co-living differs from a boarding house in that it can consist of fewer than 5 persons and it does not require onsite staff.
⁶ If allowed exclusively for priced capped development, the city may need to support developers in finding funds to offset infrastructure costs.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Moderate	Low
Legislatively rezoning parts of the city to allow for more density would require relatively little complexity, as much of the work to identify appropriate areas for densification has already been done.	This recommendation would increase development potential in the city, however, the needed investments in sanitary, transportation, and water infrastructure may result in development proceeding slowly.	Legislatively rezoning the city would not be an expensive process.

Housing Goals Supported

- Increase Housing Supply
- Allow Diverse Housing Forms

Inclusionary Housing Policy

Qualifying Strategy 15) An inclusionary zoning ordinance (per CRS 29-20-104(1))
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

An inclusionary housing policy is recommended in the EIS (page 39) and the Downtown Master Plan (page 38). It appears the city has embraced this recommendation as the Land Development Regulations reference an inclusionary housing policy, but it is unclear what the parameters of the policy are. The LDR refers to the development impact fee schedule, but it is unclear where to find that information.

Recommendation for Improvement

Adopt mandatory inclusionary housing

Idaho Springs should create a more predictable development environment by ensuring the inclusionary housing policy is not discretionary. Many elements of this policy should be codified, including:

- What scale of development is required to comply?
- What percentage of the development is subject to income restrictions?
- What income level should units be restricted to?
- How long will units need to remain income-restricted?
- What alternative methods of compliance are available to developers? (as is required by state statute)

While not required by the state, some communities commission a feasibility study to help answer these questions and to ensure the level of affordability required is not so high that developers choose to build elsewhere.

The city will also need a plan to manage compliance and ensure units within the development continue to be rented or sold at the regulated price point.

As mentioned above, Colorado requires inclusionary housing policies to include alternatives to developing affordable housing on-site. Idaho Springs should select alternatives that support other housing strategies and policy priorities, such as allowing developers to donate development-ready lots to the municipality or making a fee-in-lieu contribution that feeds into a dedicated housing fund.

If the above steps have already been taken, the consulting team recommends improving clarity for developers by including a more in-depth description of the inclusionary requirements in the LDR.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
High	High	Moderate
Idaho Springs has yet to determine the details of its inclusionary housing policy, which may entail a feasibility study, research on inclusionary policies in peer communities, and stakeholder outreach. It will also add complexity to the development process for properties subject to the ordinance.	An inclusionary housing policy can boost affordable housing development in the city by increasing revenue and directly obligating developers to build units available to certain AMI ranges.	Initial costs will include developing the parameters of the program. Ongoing staff time will be needed to monitor compliance and manage the fee-in-lieu, land, or other alternative mitigation.

Housing Goals Supported

- Increase Housing Supply

Parking

Idaho Springs relies on tourists, most of whom arrive by car via I-70, for much of its economic activity. Additionally, a dearth of transit options forces residents to rely on cars for transportation. These factors result in a high demand for parking in the city -- which limits development potential by reducing the land area available for building on a particular lot and by adding costs.

The city has taken several steps to address the need for parking in the community. Idaho Springs allows multifamily developments, civic institutions, entertainment venues, and retail uses are eligible to share parking facilities, reducing the total amount of off-street parking needed for a mixed-use project (LDR, Sec. 21-128).

Additionally, the city has established a Parking Enterprise Fund, enabling a fee-in-lieu option for developers seeking to change or add uses in the downtown historic core (LDR, Sec. 21-134). Formerly, the LDR required the addition of physical parking spaces for additional or new uses and the historic downtown had no available

land to site the required parking. This limited redevelopment in the historic downtown core, precluding residential uses above retail among other things. The new fee-in-lieu option, established in 2023, will open up more housing choices in the most walkable portion of Idaho Springs and allow businesses in the area to respond to changing consumer needs.

Recommendations for Improvement

Conduct a comparative parking study

The consultant team recommends conducting a comparative parking analysis to see how traffic and circulation function based on the minimum parking required in peer communities. This approach was used by the Town of Basalt, which led to a modest reduction in required parking for select uses. Affordable housing developments often have lower parking needs in urban areas; a peer community analysis should focus on the need for parking in affordable developments in mountain communities.⁷ Reductions in parking requirements can lower development costs between \$10,000-\$60,000 per parking space, a cost savings large enough to be the difference between a project being feasible or not penciling out.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Low/Moderate	Low
Commissioning a parking study and revising the parking requirements legislatively would involve little complexity.	Based on the existing parking challenges, Idaho Springs will likely be unable to make dramatic changes to existing parking requirements. However, considering the limits that parking places on development in Idaho Springs, an updated parking study could significantly affect near-term development, potentially making a difference for affordable developments with slim margins.	A comparative parking study and legislative revision of the parking requirements would involve minimal costs.

Waive parking requirements for community-serving housing in HD

Qualifying Strategy 13) Lessened minimum parking requirements for new affordable housing developments
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

⁷ [Parking & Affordable Housing 2020/2021](#)

Both EIS (page 23) and the Downtown Master Plan (page 46) identified the stymying effect of parking requirements on adding housing options to the downtown core. The fee-in-lieu option creates a pathway to housing uses, but the expense may still impede any housing that is affordable to the community.

The city has previously discussed options to waive parking requirements for income-restricted housing in the downtown core. While we acknowledge parking is a critical need for Idaho Springs, we support this idea and encourage the city to waive or reduce the parking requirement for projects that are income-restricted to price points most needed in the community.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Moderate	Low	Moderate
Allowing waivers for development that meets community housing priorities is a fairly simple legislative process. The most complexity in this recommendation is in defining affordability thresholds and ensuring compliance.	While this recommendation only applies to a subset of properties within the city, creating opportunities for community members at all income levels to live in the heart of the city will contribute to the vibrant, connected community of downtown -- creating a richer, more authentic experience for locals and tourists alike.	Setting the appropriate affordability threshold for the waiver may require an extensive stakeholder and public engagement process, which will consume some municipal resources.

Housing Goals Supported

- Increase Housing Supply
- Allow Diverse Housing Forms

Publicly Owned Land

Qualifying Strategy #1) The use of vacant publicly owned real property within the local government for the development of affordable housing.
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

Idaho Springs has identified city-owned parcels and is conducting a feasibility analysis to understand where development potential might be.

There is no formal guidance in the LDR for how the city should prioritize the use or disposition of city-owned properties.

Recommendation for Improvement

Prioritize affordable housing on publicly owned land

We recommend Idaho Springs draft language in the municipal code clarifying affordable housing as a priority use for its properties. This statement of intent can guide priorities when the city is contemplating the disposition of land or when leasing city-owned properties.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Low	Low
This recommendation can be accomplished with an ordinance from the city council.	This policy is only applicable when the city has land it is seeking to lease, sell, or donate. The impact of the policy would increase if the city pursues a land banking opportunity.	Staff time associated with preparing an ordinance.

Housing Goals Supported

- Increase Housing Supply

Short-Term Rental License

Idaho Springs limits the number of short-term rentals (STRs) permitted within the municipality, and STRs must be licensed, with a maximum of 15 licenses available at one time. Available licenses are noticed, and residents may apply on a first-come, first-serve basis. If there are more applications than available licenses, the recipient is chosen through a lottery.

A residence must be the applicant's primary residence to be eligible for a license. Before a license being awarded to an applicant, the unit will be inspected.

These stringent policies prevent the local housing stock from being purchased by investors for the sole purpose of generating income as an STR, a significant problem in other mountain communities.

Recommendation for Improvement

None.

Housing Goals Supported

- Preserving existing housing

Additional strategies to support housing goals

Fee Waivers

Qualifying Strategy 2) The creation of a program to subsidize or otherwise reduce local development review or fees, including but not limited to building permit fees, planning waivers, and water and sewer tap fees, for affordable housing development.

Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

Reduce development fees for community-serving housing

Envision Idaho Springs (page 43), Downtown Master Plan (page 38), and East End Action Plan (Priority Area 5.1) all recommend fee reductions for residential development. However, these recommendations have not been translated into the LDR.

The city should ensure easy access to the most recent Idaho Springs fee schedule so developers can easily incorporate those costs into their financial model. Currently, the LDR references

- Deposits for costs to cover staff time
- Development impact fees for the additional city capacity needed for parks, fire, recreation, etc.
- Inclusionary housing requires the onsite development of affordable units or a fee-in-lieu
- Public improvements to ensure facilities and utility systems are equipped to meet additional demand

In addition to creating fee predictability, Idaho Springs should offer standard fee reductions for projects serving a community housing need. By making this a standard policy instead of discretionary, the city is signaling to developers a priority for community-serving development and a commitment to creating a consistent development environment for these projects. The town of Carbondale approaches this by exempting developments from certain fees at a rate related to the affordability level of the project:

Affordability Level	Fee Exemption Amount
80% AMI	100%
100% AMI	80%
120% AMI	60%

Idaho Springs should identify which fees are appropriate for reduction or waiver and consider a sliding scale fee exemption amount based on local housing priorities.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/High

<p>This recommendation will require research into which fees can be reduced or waived without damaging the city's budget, a determination of what affordability levels should be eligible for fee reductions, and ongoing compliance that the affordability commitments are being upheld.</p>	<p>This recommendation works most efficiently if incorporated into a suite of strategies that encourage affordable development. If the city establishes a mandatory inclusionary policy, strategies like fee reductions and expedited development can serve as incentives to exceed the minimum inclusionary regulations.</p>	<p>This program will reduce the revenue the city is currently receiving for permits. The amount will depend on the number of development applications and the level of fee reduction. If the city establishes a local housing fund, those resources may be used to backfill money lost through fee waivers.</p>
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Housing Goals Targeted

- Increase Housing Supply

Community Benefits Ordinance

Codify community priorities for planned developments and annexations

In planned developments (PDs) and annexations, the city offers significant flexibility and benefits to the developer. In the former, applicants can negotiate zoning standards to create areas that serve a unique purpose or create a distinctive character. In the latter, by incorporating into the city and paying city taxes, those developments will be covered by municipal services. Like many places, Idaho Springs has discretionary policies regarding planned developments and annexations.

In exchange for the benefits available through PDs and annexations, the city could establish an expectation that applicants will incorporate desired community-serving housing and other local priorities by including a Community Benefit Ordinance in the LDR. This language should be more specific than the current requirement for annexations, stipulating a narrative that outlines the "impact on community needs [and] the city's economy" (LDR Sec. 21-103.D.A.5).

Developers bringing forth these applications will incorporate affordability into their development plans, knowing that it is required for approval.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
Low	Moderate	Low
<p>This recommendation can be done through a legislative change, but the city should research peer community policies and incorporate</p>	<p>The impact of this recommendation is variable based on the number of PD and annexation applications that come forward. We</p>	<p>Legislative changes are a low-cost strategy.</p>

stakeholder feedback into the language of the Community Benefits Ordinance.	conservatively anticipate this recommendation to result in a moderate impact.	
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Housing Goals Targeted

- Increase Housing Supply

Rental Registry & Inspection Program

Establish a rental registry and inspection program

Maintaining the quality of the older housing stock is one of the housing priorities for Idaho Springs. One way to proactively address the quality of local housing is by requiring rental housing to be registered and inspected. Idaho Springs already licenses and inspects properties used for short-term rentals; by creating a parallel process for year-round and seasonal rentals, the County would create an opportunity to monitor the condition of housing stock and regulate existing health and safety standards.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
High	Low	Moderate
In other jurisdictions, this type of program involves establishing what elements will be part of the inspection process, determining the frequency and appropriate amount of inspections, and establishing a licensure fee to cover administrative and inspection costs. Boulder and Denver conduct inspections for a random subset of units to lessen inspection costs. There are advantages to implementing this program regionally, but jurisdictions would need to agree on fee levels and key inspection standards.	By implementing this program, the city will better understand the condition of its housing stock and will be able to require property owners to invest in needed repairs and maintenance to earn income from the property.	Costs for this program stem from the administrative capacity required and the cost of inspections. In other communities, the licensure fee is set to cover these expenses. Rental property owners will have the new fee to pay and may also have deferred maintenance or capital improvements to catch up on to continue renting their unit(s).

Housing Goals Targeted

- Maintain Housing Quality

Local Housing Fund

Establish a local housing fund

Establishing a housing fund would enable Idaho Springs to support local housing efforts in a variety of ways. Some of the recommendations on the preceding pages would benefit from or require a local funding source (ADU incentives, fee reductions), and many more policies and programs become possible with dedicated housing dollars, including those summarized below:

- **Infrastructure cost sharing** - For developments meeting community goals, the housing fund could defray the cost of needed infrastructure investments.

Qualifying Strategy 7) With respect to infrastructure, the creation of a dedicated funding source to subsidize infrastructure costs and associated fees related to publicly owned water, sanitary sewer, storm sewers, and roadway infrastructure
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

- **Land banking** - The city could purchase parcels well suited to meet future housing needs. This can also be done with funds from Proposition 123, or the two sources could be combined.

Qualifying Strategy 14) The creation of a land donation, land acquisition, or land banking program
Department Of Local Affairs Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies

- **Project subsidy** - Funds could go directly into developments that met a defined community need. This tool can also open the door to a right of first refusal for projects that have benefited from local subsidy.
- **Home repair programs** - Financial support to help homeowners and landlords preserve and maintain the existing housing stock.
- **Down payment assistance** - Grants or low-cost loans to help locals better compete in the for-sale housing market.
- **Deed restrictions** - The purchase of restrictive covenants on existing properties to ensure owner-occupancy or to secure housing stock to serve specific income levels.

Sources for a housing fund commonly include development fees-in-lieu, short-term rental tax, lodging tax, property tax, and/or a sales tax. Idaho Springs has a precedent for this type of use dedicated fund, most recently seen through the city's Parking Enterprise Fund, created to address the infeasible parking requirements for developments in the historic downtown core.

As the city is currently participating in the development of a regional multijurisdictional housing authority, there is an opportunity for a housing fund to be created and held at the regional level. However, the city may also benefit from dedicating additional local resources to city-specific needs that may be outside of the commonly shared regional goals.

Complexity	Impact	Cost
High	High	High

<p>Dependent on the source(s) selected, this recommendation may require a city-wide vote.</p>	<p>This recommendation allows the city to invest in projects that address local priorities. Local housing funds can be used to leverage other resources from the state or can be used to address challenges that state funds do not support.</p>	<p>The cost for this strategy is high, but if an initial approach focuses exclusively on fees-in-lieu the costs to the city would be minimal. The impact of the fund is directly tied to the level of funds collected.</p>
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Housing Goals Targeted

- Preserve housing character
- Increase housing supply
- Maintain housing quality
- Allow diverse housing forms

Strategy Adoption

Strategy Summary

<p>Improvements to existing strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remove minimum square footage requirements for ADUs ● Incentivize community-serving ADUs ● Expand where ADUs are allowed ● Reduce the approval level for community-serving development ● Prioritize community-serving development in review process ● Relax dimensional standards for community-serving housing ● Allow character-preserving density for community-serving housing ● Rezone identified areas to allow multifamily development ● Adopt mandatory inclusionary housing ● Conduct a comparative parking study ● Waive parking requirements for community-serving housing in HD ● Prioritize affordable housing on city-owned land <p>Additional recommended strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce development fees for community-serving housing ● Codify community priorities for PDs and annexations ● Establish rental registry and inspection program ● Establish a local housing fund
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The consulting team selected the housing policies and programs recommended above based on their relevance to the community priorities of preserving the local housing character, increasing the housing supply, maintaining housing quality, and allowing diverse housing forms. Many of the recommendations build on or encourage the adoption of recommendations from previous planning efforts.

When considering the implementation of these recommendations, staff and elected officials should think about how the strategies can complement each other to serve different resident groups in the community. For example:

Strategy	Potential residents served
ADU incentives	Workforce rental housing serving 60-80% AMI Senior able to age in place (homeowner) Family able to house an aging parent (homeowner)
Character preserving density	Small family first-time homeownership opportunity 80-120% AMI Workforce rental housing serving 60-80% AMI
Co-living	Workforce rental housing serving 60-80% AMI New-to-town, management level 80-120% AMI Senior interested in downsizing
Rental registry	All renters in the community

By adopting the recommended additional strategies, Idaho Springs would also be incorporating 3 additional Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies, which may better position it to receive State grant funding in the future.

Local Impact of Adopting Strategies

As Idaho Springs refocuses its housing policies, changes are inevitable. In the paragraphs below, we outline some of the ways the policy recommendations above may affect the city.

Economic Effects

Additional housing development for senior citizens and local workers can boost the local economy, which currently operates 30% below its potential, according to city staff. Local businesses would be able to hire more workers, leading to longer opening hours and revenue. By increasing the share of year-round residents, Idaho Springs can diversify its economy by becoming less dependent on tourism and I-70 traffic. As the regional economy shifts away from mining and natural resource extraction, and as the tourism sector continues to grow, diversification will insulate Idaho Springs from potential economic downturns and changes in the future.

As outlined in several planning documents, allowing residential uses above commercial activities would diversify activities in the Historic District and activate the area economically and socially during non-business hours.

Environmental Effects

Idaho Springs' mining history poses a major environmental challenge. Waste rock from past mining contains heavy metals, which contaminated the city's surface water before an extensive EPA-sponsored cleanup. However, the pollution was not fully remediated, and mining-related pollution in the soil and water continues to

be a concern. Environmental contamination can add costs to development that involve disturbing soil below a certain depth or in a certain area. As Idaho Springs grows in population, disturbing contaminated soil or encroaching on unremediated parts of the local environment will become more likely.

Water Resources

The state of Idaho Springs' water, sewer, and transportation poses an environmental challenge, especially if the city's population increases. The Administration will likely need to secure additional water rights if the population grows and will need to expand the capacity of the existing wastewater system.

At present, debris from unpaved roads infiltrates the sewer system, leading to additional wear and tear. Should Idaho Springs add residents, traffic and therefore, debris-laden runoff from unpaved roads will increase, leading to even faster degradation of the existing infrastructure. Therefore, improvements to roads and other transportation infrastructure are necessary to protect the city's water and sewer capacities.

Air Quality

Currently, local air quality suffers from the large number of people commuting to Idaho Springs to work. Increasing housing options closer to work would reduce the number of people commuting to the city. However, the bigger traffic volume along I-70, from which much of the local air pollution comes, will likely be unaffected. These policies will be unlikely to change the air quality significantly.

Other Environmental Effects

Increasing Idaho Springs' housing options would prevent housing from spilling into the surrounding unincorporated areas, which would reduce wildlife habitat, raising the likelihood of dangerous wildlife encounters. Further, dispersed housing in the rural areas exposes residents to wildfires.

Social Effects

Providing housing options for seniors and local workers will lead to greater community cohesion by increasing the number of people who not only work in Idaho Springs but reside there as well. Full-time, year-round residents will be able to get involved in local civic life, sending their children to local schools and involving themselves in free-time activities. An aging population, like that of Idaho Springs, requires service and care workers who currently cannot afford a place to live in the city. Providing this economic segment with housing options would allow Idaho Springs seniors to remain active and involved in the community.

The policies above would also prevent economic displacement among Idaho Springs residents. Ensuring people could spend their entire lives in the community would lead to more continuity.

Regional Impact of Adopting Strategies

Increasing the share and diversity of full-time residents in Idaho Springs would have regional effects.

Existing Agreements

Idaho Springs already has agreements with Clear Creek County and other surrounding municipalities concerning local affordable housing resources. Presently, the Clear Creek Housing Authority, which also works with neighboring counties, administers housing choice vouchers, tenant legal services, and weatherization and energy efficiency programs. Interviews with Clear Creek County and municipal staff have shown a high level of regional housing and economic coordination, reflective of commuting patterns by residents. Locals often live in one municipality and commute to another for work or errands. Therefore, implementing policies in coordination with these municipalities builds on strong regional connections.

At the time of writing, Clear Creek County and several of the largest municipalities within it, including Idaho Springs, were in the process of creating a multijurisdictional housing authority, which would draw and administer funds for affordable housing and coordinate housing policies between the county and municipalities.

Regional Economy

Increasing housing within Idaho Springs would affect the economies of neighboring municipalities and Clear Creek County. Because of the interconnectedness of the local economies, increasing the population in Idaho Springs would lead to increased economic activity beyond the municipality. This activity would translate into greater public and private revenue, allowing the area to improve municipal services to support residents.

Environmental Effects

As housing in Clear Creek County's municipalities becomes increasingly scarce and expensive, more and more residents are seeking housing in unincorporated parts of the County. By increasing its affordable housing stock, Idaho Springs is preventing local wildlife habitat loss through deforestation for housing and offering residents alternatives to living in rural areas with high wildfire risks. Additionally, by providing new housing, Idaho Springs is reducing demand for energy-efficient older homes and leaving more money in homeowners' pockets to repair and upgrade those homes.
