

County Zoning Commission

Meeting Date: 09/08/2025

SUBJECT: County Zone Change 730 - 406 Johnson Lane - RR3 to RMH

THROUGH: Karen Husman

PRESENTED BY: Makayla Paul, Planner

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Information

REQUEST

**County Zone Change 730 -- 406 Johnson Lane** - A zone change request from Rural Residential 3 (RR3) to Residential Manufactured Home (RMH), on S30, T01 N, R27 E, S2S2SE1/4 a 10 acre parcel of land. A pre-application neighborhood meeting was held on July 2, 2025, 5:00 p.m. at the Lockwood Fire Station. Tax ID: D06595

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division staff is recommending approval of the requested zone change and adoption of the findings of the eleven criteria of Zone Change 730.

APPLICATION DATA

OWNER: Christos & Tammi Vlahos

AGENT: Jeff Wollschlager, A-Line Drafting

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: S1/2S1/2SE1/4 (approximately 10 acres total) of S30, T01 N, R27 E

ADDRESS: 406 Johnson Lane

CURRENT ZONING: Rural Residential 3 (RR3) and General Commercial (C3) on the eastern 500 feet

EXISTING LAND USE: Residential and Commercial (Total property)

PROPOSED USE: Residential Manufactured Homes and Commercial (Total property)

SIZE OF PARCEL: Approximately 10 acres, rezoned area is the property's western 6 acres.

CONCURRENT APPLICATIONS

None

APPLICABLE ZONING HISTORY

See attachments.

SURROUNDING LAND USE & ZONING

NORTH: Zoning: RMH - Residential Manufactured Home & N4 - Large Lot Suburban Neighborhood Residential  
Land Use: Emerald View Mobile Home Park & single-family residential

SOUTH: Zoning: RR3 - Rural Residential 3  
Land Use: Single Family Residential

EAST: Zoning: C3 - General Commercial & Ag - Agriculture  
Land Use: 4 acres of the subject property includes a single-family dwelling & Commercial Distributor. Across Johnson Lane is agricultural use.

WEST: Zoning: RR3 (recently changed to N2 with zone change 729 on July 22nd, 2025)  
Land Use: Residential

BACKGROUND

The applicant has requested a zone change from Rural Residential 3 (RR3) to Residential Manufactured Home (RMH) for the western 6-acre portion of the subject property, legally described as S30, T01N, R27E, an unplatted parcel of land. The required pre-application neighborhood meeting was held on July 2, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Lockwood Fire Station. Seven notified property owners attended. The applicant presented an aerial image and site plan identifying property boundaries and the proposed zone change area (approximately 800--850 feet of the western portion of the parcel). An overview of the RMH zoning district, including permitted uses, site and structure standards, and design criteria, was provided. Neighborhood concerns included:

- Potential decrease in surrounding property values.
- Increased traffic impacts.
- Possible disruption to existing wildlife habitat.

The proposed zone change would allow the western 850+ feet (approximately 6 acres) of the property to be developed with manufactured homes. The applicant has indicated the intent is to provide affordable housing consistent with the existing

RMH development located to the north. The current RR-3 zoning district is intended for single-family residences, with or without small-scale agricultural uses such as stables, livestock, or personal-use crop production. The district establishes basic height and setback requirements and requires lot sizes ranging from 3 to 10 acres. The RMH zoning district permits manufactured homes. Approval of this request would provide an opportunity for additional residential development that aligns with the adjacent RMH neighborhood, and aligns with the Lockwood Growth Policy for predictable land use decisions and preferred land use patterns.

The 2016 Lockwood Growth Policy indicates this area of Johnson Lane to have the proposed future land use of "Residential 7-10du/ac." The proposed zone change allows for residential manufactured homes adjacent to the existing residential manufactured homes of Emerald View. The proposed zoning allows for 50% lot coverage and 3,000 sqft per principal building with a 15 feet separation between principal buildings. The future development on the property could yield approximately 7 dwelling units per acre with the assumption of 20% of the acreage being designated for the design of internal streets and accommodation for setbacks.

Traffic on Johnson Lane and Old Hardin Road is monitored by the Planning Division's Transportation Planning staff. The latest data shows approximately 4,250 vehicle trips per day on Johnson Lane, south of Old Hardin Road, based on a three-year rolling average. Old Hardin Road experiences significantly higher daily traffic. The completion of the new bridge at the north end of Johnson Lane over the Yellowstone River and the future connection to Highway 312 and Main Street are expected to increase traffic around the Johnson Lane interchange. A complete reconstruction of the interchange, proposed as a \$45 million federal, state, and local project, is scheduled for 2028 as part of the Long Range Transportation Plan for the metropolitan planning area of Yellowstone County. This section of Lockwood is anticipated to see increased traffic and demand for urban-level services over the next 10 years.

Planning staff has reviewed the application, the zoning history of the surrounding area, the Lockwood Growth Policy and transportation improvements planned for this area and is recommending approval of the zone change.

## SUMMARY

The Yellowstone County Zoning Commission, prior to any recommendation, shall consider the following:

### **1. Is the new zoning designed in accordance with the Yellowstone County 2008 Growth Policy?**

The proposed zoning does comply with the following goals of the 2016 Lockwood Growth Policy and Lockwood Community Plan:

- *Predictable land use decisions that are consistent with neighborhood character and preferred land use patterns identified in the Growth Policy (Page 34 LGP).* The proposed zoning would allow more housing that is compatible with the surrounding land uses and neighborhoods.
- *Affordable housing for all income levels throughout the City and the County. - 2008 Yellowstone County Growth Policy and Community Goals of the Lockwood Growth Policy*

The diversity of land uses in Lockwood is part of what has built its identity as an independent community in the County. There is adjacent development to the north that includes RMH development. The goal of the developer and the use of manufactured housing allows for affordable housing options within Yellowstone County.

The proposed zoning supports this goal by aligning the zoning designation with the existing residential development on the property to the north. It ensures compatibility with surrounding zoning and reflects the established development pattern in the area.

### **2. Is the new zoning designed to secure from fire and other dangers?**

The subject property is currently served by the Lockwood Fire Department with mutual aid from the Billings Fire Department. The property has an existing residential approach from Johnson Lane, a principal arterial street. Any new commercial development will have access to Johnson Lane. Any new development will be required coordinate with Yellowstone County Public Works regarding any required improvements to the approach associated with any new development. Additionally, when four or more spaces are created for lease or rent of mobile homes, these undergo design review through the Yellowstone County Subdivision Regulations and starting October 1, 2025 will be processed using the Buildings for Lease or Rent Regulations. If new lots are created the property will undergo subdivision and be subject to subdivision regulations. The property is served by the Lockwood Water District. There is an existing fire hydrant across the street at 425 Johnson Lane. The fire department may require additional fire suppression with any new development of the property.

### **3. Will the new zoning facilitate the provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements?**

**Transportation:** Development under the new zoning may increase traffic on Johnson Lane, a principal arterial street. The level of traffic increase will be dependent on the type of new use or uses proposed. Should the property be subdivided,

the need for a traffic impact study would be triggered at 300 trips per day or 50 or more peak-hour trips. Johnson Lane carries approximately 4,250 vehicle trips per day south of Old Hardin Road.

**Water and Sewerage:** The property is within the Lockwood Water and Sewer District. Water and Sewer needs will be evaluated at the time of development.

**Schools and Parks:** The proposed zoning may have an impact on the local schools as new student population will be determined depending on the residential family types once the development is completed. The proposed zoning should not significantly impact parks.

**Fire and Police:** The subject property is serviced by the Lockwood Fire Department and the Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department. Both departments did not provide comments regarding the zone change impacts.

#### **4. Will the new zoning promote health and general welfare?**

The new zoning will allow new development in an area identified 9 years ago to have 7-10 dwelling units per acre and be adjacent to the future Lockwood Town Center area that will include commercial and mixed uses and a variety of housing choices for existing and new Lockwood residents. The potential for new development will require to submit a zoning compliance permit application. Site design and associated impacts are required to follow Building Code, Zoning Regulations, Lockwood Water and Sewer District requirements and DEQ Stormwater requirements. The proposed zoning is intended to provide residential housing, the intent is to promote health and general welfare. It supports development consistent with surrounding neighborhoods and does not introduce any new impacts that would affect public health or safety.

#### **5. Will the new zoning provide adequate light and air?**

The proposed zoning entails specific regulations concerning minimum setbacks, maximum building heights, separation between building requirements, and maximum lot coverage. These stipulations are designed to ensure sufficient light and air access to both the subject property and neighboring properties.

#### **6. Will the new zoning effect motorized and non-motorized transportation?**

The proposed zoning itself will not generate more traffic. Any new development on the property may generate additional traffic on Johnson Lane. The impact of the new traffic will be evaluated at the time of development. Johnson Lane is slated to have pedestrian facilities as part of the Long Range Transportation Plan for the planning area. Any new development may require contributions to the development of pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian traffic in the area is limited due to no pedestrian facilities. The Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District is working to get sidewalks in Lockwood, it would be beneficial for the development and the Lockwood community to include sidewalks along Johnson Lane. The requirement for sidewalk on this property adjacent to Johnson Lane would not be triggered unless this property undergoes a future subdivision.

#### **7. Will the new zoning be compatible with urban growth in the vicinity of cities or towns?**

The proposed zoning is compatible with any nearby urban development. The proposed zoning and development is consistent with residential lots in the area at this time. The proposed zoning supports this by aligning the zoning designation with the existing residential development on the property to the north. It ensures compatibility with surrounding zoning and reflects the established development pattern in the area.

#### **8. Does the new zoning consider the character of the district and the suitability of the property for particular uses?**

The surrounding area is primarily made up of agriculture and similar residential zones, and the RMH zoning aligns with existing development patterns at this time. The subject property is in an area that is a mix of commercial and residential uses. The property is suitable for residential uses and the site development will be in character with the adjacent uses specifically to the north. The subject property is in an area that is a mix of low-density residential and agricultural uses on the adjacent properties. The portion of the subject property requested for rezoning has been identified in the 2016 Lockwood Growth Policy with the designation of 7 -10 dwelling units per acre. The proposed zoning aligns with the density designation within the growth policy due to the proximity of public water and sewer.

#### **9. Will the new zoning conserve the value of buildings?**

The proposed zoning will help conserve the value of buildings by aligning the zoning with the adjacent residential development and ensuring compliance with applicable zoning standards. The new zoning will allow the development of new residential uses adjacent to RMH zoned property. The proposed development will conserve the value of existing structures and adjacent properties through compatible land uses.

#### **10. Will the new zoning encourage the most appropriate use of land in Yellowstone County?**

The proposed zoning encourages the most appropriate use of land by aligning the zoning with existing residential development. It ensures the property complies with zoning standards and supports the continued residential character of the area, consistent with current nearby land uses and planning goals. The property is suitable for uses allowed in the RMH zoning district.

#### **11. Will the new zoning, as nearly as possible, be compatible with the zoning of nearby cities and towns?**

The proposed zoning is not close to the City of Billings and is consistent with the existing pattern of development in the area and will fit the current residential uses.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval based on the proposed findings of the eleven criteria of Zone Change 730.

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**Attachments**

- Zoning Map & Site Photos
  - Application & Applicant Letter
  - Site Plan
  - Zoning History
  - Neighborhood Meeting Info.
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