

COMMISSIONER MEETINGS

All meetings take place in the Commissioners Conference Room (308)
located in the Ostlund Building @ 2825 3rd Ave N (3rd Floor)
and are open to the public unless otherwise noted

THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 19, 2026

9:45 Calendar

10:00 COMMISSIONERS DISCUSSION

PLEDGE

DEPARTMENTS

1. **Planning Department** - County Zone Change 734, generally located at 481 S 56th St. is a zone change request from Agriculture 10+ acres (A) to Public Educational Campus (P3)
2. **Mike Matthew** - YAM Discussion

COMMISSIONERS

1. MS4 Stormwater
2. Commissioner Board Reports

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON COUNTY BUSINESS

**Public comment is an opportunity for individuals to address the Board, however, the Board cannot engage in discussion or take action on items not properly noticed on the agenda.*

Meeting Date: 02/19/2026

Title: County Zone Change 734- 481 S 56th St. – from A to P3

Submitted For: Karen Husman

Submitted By: Karen Husman

TOPIC:

Planning Department - County Zone Change 734, generally located at 481 S 56th St. is a zone change request from Agriculture 10+ acres (A) to Public Educational Campus (P3)

BACKGROUND:

The request before the Board is a zone change from Agriculture, 10+ acre minimum (A), to Public Educational Campus (P3) for a portion of the subject property. Approximately 6.6 acres are proposed to be rezoned to the P3 zoning district, while the remainder of the property would retain its existing agricultural zoning designation. The purpose of the proposed zone change is to allow development of this portion of the site as an extension of the Rocky Vista University (RVU) campus, specifically for a veterinary training and education facility. The anticipated development would include classrooms, instructional laboratories, and other related academic and support uses customarily associated with an educational campus focused on veterinary medicine and animal sciences.

The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of active agricultural operations and low-density rural residential neighborhoods. Properties in the vicinity generally consist of large parcels used for farming, livestock, equestrian activities, and single-family residences on acreage. This rural setting establishes a development pattern with relatively low building intensity, open space, and uses that are compatible with agricultural and animal-related activities. Within this context, the proposed rezoning of 6.6 acres to the P3 district is considered appropriate, as the intended educational use directly relates to and complements the existing agricultural character of the area.

The proposed use is compatible with the existing veterinary clinic and equestrian riding and boarding facility currently operating on the property. All of these uses are centered on animal care, training, and education, creating a cohesive and complementary grouping of activities. While the veterinary clinic is permitted under the current agricultural zoning designation and would not be allowed as a stand-alone principal use within the P3 zoning district, it would remain on the property as an accessory and supportive use to the proposed educational campus. In this role, the clinic would enhance the instructional mission of the RVU facility by providing hands-on learning opportunities and practical training components for students, consistent with the goals of a veterinary education program.

The existing Agricultural (A) zoning district does not permit a college or university use, which necessitates the proposed zone change. The P3 Public Educational Campus zoning district is specifically intended to accommodate public or institutional educational facilities, including colleges, universities, and related instructional and support uses. Rezoning the subject acreage to P3 would provide an appropriate regulatory framework to allow the proposed development to occur in a manner that is consistent with county zoning standards, while also ensuring that future development is subject to site-specific review and applicable development regulations.

Surrounding properties are primarily zoned for agricultural use and are characterized by rural residential and agricultural activities. To the southeast, a General Commercial (C3) zoned property contains a commercial personal storage facility, which represents a more intensive use than what is proposed with the educational campus. In comparison, the P3 Educational Campus use is considered compatible with both the agricultural and limited commercial uses in the area, as it is institutional in nature, generally operates during defined hours, and does not generate the same level of noise, traffic, or activity typically

associated with more intensive commercial or industrial development.

Overall, the proposed P3 Educational Campus zoning is consistent with the existing zoning pattern and rural character of the surrounding area. The rezoning would allow for a logical and orderly extension of an established educational institution while maintaining compatibility with adjacent agricultural and rural residential uses. The proposed zone change supports educational opportunities, aligns with the existing and historic use of the property for animal-related activities, and provides a reasonable transition between surrounding agricultural lands and nearby commercial development.

APPLICATION DATA

OWNER: Rocky Vista University (RVU)

AGENT: Taylor Kasperick, Performance Eng.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: a portion of Parcels 2 & 3, COS 699

ADDRESS: 481 S 56th St.

CURRENT ZONING: Agricultural (A)

EXISTING LAND USE: Equestrian facility, White Aspen Ranch

PROPOSED USE: University veterinary branch of RVU

SIZE OF PARCEL: approximately 6.6 acres of two parcels of land totaling 20.1 acres

STAKEHOLDERS

Planning staff provided public notice of the application in accordance with zoning regulations, including notification to surrounding property owners, publication of a legal advertisement, and posting of the subject property. As of the date of this report, no written correspondence has been received from surrounding property owners regarding the proposed zone change.

The applicant held a pre-application neighborhood meeting on December 22, 2025, at the subject property 481 S 56th St West. One member of the public attended the meeting, Emily Brester, who is the ranch manager for RVU. No other members of the surrounding neighborhood notification area attended.

ALTERNATIVES

The Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners may:

- Approve and adopt the findings of the eleven review criteria for Zone Change 734; or,
- Deny and adopt different findings of the eleven review criteria for Zone Change 734; or,
- Delay action on the zone change request for up to 30 days; or,
- Allow the applicant to withdraw the zone change request. The applicant has not requested the Commission consider withdrawal of the application.

FISCAL EFFECTS

Approval or denial of the proposed zone change will have no fiscal effects on the Planning Division budget.

CONCURRENT APPLICATIONS

None.

APPLICABLE ZONING HISTORY

See attached chart.

SURROUNDING LAND USE & ZONING

NORTH:

Zoning: Agriculture 10 acres and over (A)

Land Use: Agriculture

SOUTH:

Zoning: Agriculture 10 acres and over (A)

Land Use: Agriculture

EAST:

Zoning: Agriculture 10 acres and over (A) & General Commercial (C3)

Land Use: Agriculture & commercial personal storage

WEST:

Zoning: Agriculture 10 acres and over (A)

Land Use: Agriculture

SUMMARY

Prior to making a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners, the Zoning Commission shall consider the findings of the 11 review criteria:

1. Is the new zoning designed in accordance with the Growth Policy?

The proposed zoning does comply with the following goals of the County Growth Policy:

- Predictable land use decisions that are consistent with neighborhood character and preferred land use patterns and neighborhood plans
- New developments that are sensitive to and compatible with the character of adjacent development
- Promoting excellence in education and safe, healthy school facilities

This portion of the county contains a mix of agricultural operations and low-density residential neighborhoods. Approximately 6.6 acres of the property are proposed to be rezoned to the Public Educational Campus (P3) zoning district. The proposed zone change would allow the subject parcel to develop as a Rocky Vista University (RVU) extension for a veterinary training and education facility, including classrooms and related instructional uses. Integration of the educational facility within the existing equine operation is not considered a new or infill development, but rather a redevelopment of an existing property.

The proposed use is compatible with the existing veterinary clinic and equestrian riding and boarding facility currently operating on the property, as all uses are related to animal care, training, and education. While the veterinary clinic is allowed under the current agricultural zoning district and would not be permitted as a stand-alone use within the P3 zoning district, it would remain as an accessory and supportive use to the proposed educational campus. The existing agricultural zoning district does not permit a college or university use, which necessitates the proposed zone change. The new facility allows for educational opportunities which promote excellence in education throughout the community.

Surrounding properties are primarily zoned for agricultural use and are characterized by rural residential and agricultural activities. While the area does not have a neighborhood plan, the proposed P3 Educational Campus is compatible with the existing zoning pattern and rural character of the surrounding area. The subject property is surrounded by a mix of agricultural operations and large-lot, low-density rural residential uses, as well as a General Commercial (C3) property to the southeast that contains a commercial personal storage facility.

2. Is the new zoning designed to secure from fire and other danger?

The subject property is currently served by the Billings Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA). The property will have access from South 56th Street, a collector street. There should be adequate ingress and egress to the property for emergency vehicles. The property is currently served by private wells. The existing and proposed zoning requires building separations, setbacks, and height limits that should provide security from fire or other public safety emergencies.

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

Transportation: Development under the proposed zoning designation may result in a slight, intermittent increase in traffic on South 56th Street. Any traffic impacts would be evaluated further at the time of development review.

Water and Sewer: The property is currently served by a private well and septic system. Development of the property would require any necessary improvements to accommodate the proposed facility and would be required to meet all applicable state and local standards. The proposed use is compatible with existing infrastructure and is expected to place minimal demand on County resources.

Schools and Parks: The proposed use is not expected to affect primary or secondary school enrollment in the area, nor is it anticipated to increase demand for park or recreational facilities. The zone change is intended to accommodate an extension of the Rocky Vista University (RVU) campus and would positively support educational facilities within the college and university category.

Fire and Police: The subject property is served by the Billings Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA) and the Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department. Fire protection services would continue to be provided by BUFSA regardless of the proposed zone change. Fire suppression and access requirements would be evaluated at the time of development plan review. The Fire Department and Sheriff's Department were notified of the proposed zone change and provided no comments at the time this staff report was completed.

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

The proposed zone change is not expected to have a negative effect on the health, safety, or general welfare of the area. The rezoning would allow the subject parcel to develop as an extension of the Rocky Vista University (RVU) campus for a veterinary training and education facility, including classrooms and related instructional uses. The proposed use is compatible with the existing veterinary clinic and equestrian riding and boarding facility on the property, as all uses are related to animal care, training, and education. While the veterinary clinic would not be permitted as a stand-alone use within the P3 zoning district, it would remain associated with and supportive of the educational campus. The existing agricultural zoning does not permit a college or university use, necessitating the proposed zone change. The P3 zoning would provide a predictable and organized use of the property and promote the health and general welfare of the surrounding area.

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

The proposed zoning district establishes development standards related to minimum setbacks, maximum building height, and maximum lot coverage. These standards, as outlined in Table 27-500.1 of the zoning code, are intended to ensure orderly development while protecting the character of both the subject property and surrounding properties. Minimum setback requirements are established for front, side, and rear yards, with increased setbacks required where development faces or is adjacent to specified zoning districts. These setback provisions are designed to maintain adequate separation between structures, reduce potential land use conflicts, and ensure sufficient access to light, air, and open space for both the subject parcel and neighboring properties.

6. Will the new zoning affect motorized and non-motorized transportation?

Consistent with Criteria 3, the proposed zoning change itself will not directly increase traffic on adjacent county roads. While the zoning change alone does not generate traffic, future development of the property for university use may result in a modest increase in traffic on South 56th Street West, a principal arterial street. The extent of any traffic impacts would depend on student enrollment levels and class schedules and cannot be precisely determined at this time.

7. Will the new zoning be compatible with urban growth in the vicinity?

Consistent with Criteria 1, the surrounding area is primarily characterized by rural residential and agricultural development. The proposed zoning is compatible with surrounding land uses and with the existing veterinary clinic and equestrian riding and boarding facility currently operating on the property, as all uses are related to animal care, training, and education. While the veterinary clinic is allowed under the existing agricultural zoning and would not be permitted as a stand-alone use in the P3 zoning district, it would remain associated with and supportive of the educational campus. The current agricultural zoning does not permit a college or university use, necessitating the proposed zone change.

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

The subject property is located in an area characterized by a mix of low-density residential development, along with agricultural uses. Surrounding zoning includes primarily Agricultural districts, with Large Lot Suburban Neighborhood (N4) zoning to the northeast (the Granite Park Subdivision). The property is well-suited for the P3 zoning district and the proposed educational use due to its size, location, and

compatibility with existing land-use patterns in the area.

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

The proposed zoning would allow the subject parcel to develop as an extension of the RVU campus for a veterinary training and education facility, including classrooms and related instructional uses. The proposed use is compatible with surrounding development and with the existing veterinary clinic and equestrian riding and boarding facility on the property. As all uses are related to animal care, training, and education, the proposed zoning is not expected to negatively affect surrounding property values. Any future development will be required to comply with site development standards in the zoning code, including landscaping, building height, and setback requirements.

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

Consistent with Criteria 1 and 7, the subject property is suitable for the uses allowed in the P3 zoning district. The proposed zoning represents an appropriate use of land in this area of the County and is compatible with surrounding rural residential and agricultural development. The zoning would allow continued integration of animal-related education, training, and care uses already present on the site. The existing agricultural zoning does not permit a college or university use, which necessitates the proposed zone change.

11. Will the new zoning be as compatible as possible with adjacent zoning in the City of Billings?

The subject property is not located near the City of Billings limits; therefore, compatibility with adjacent City zoning is not applicable.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

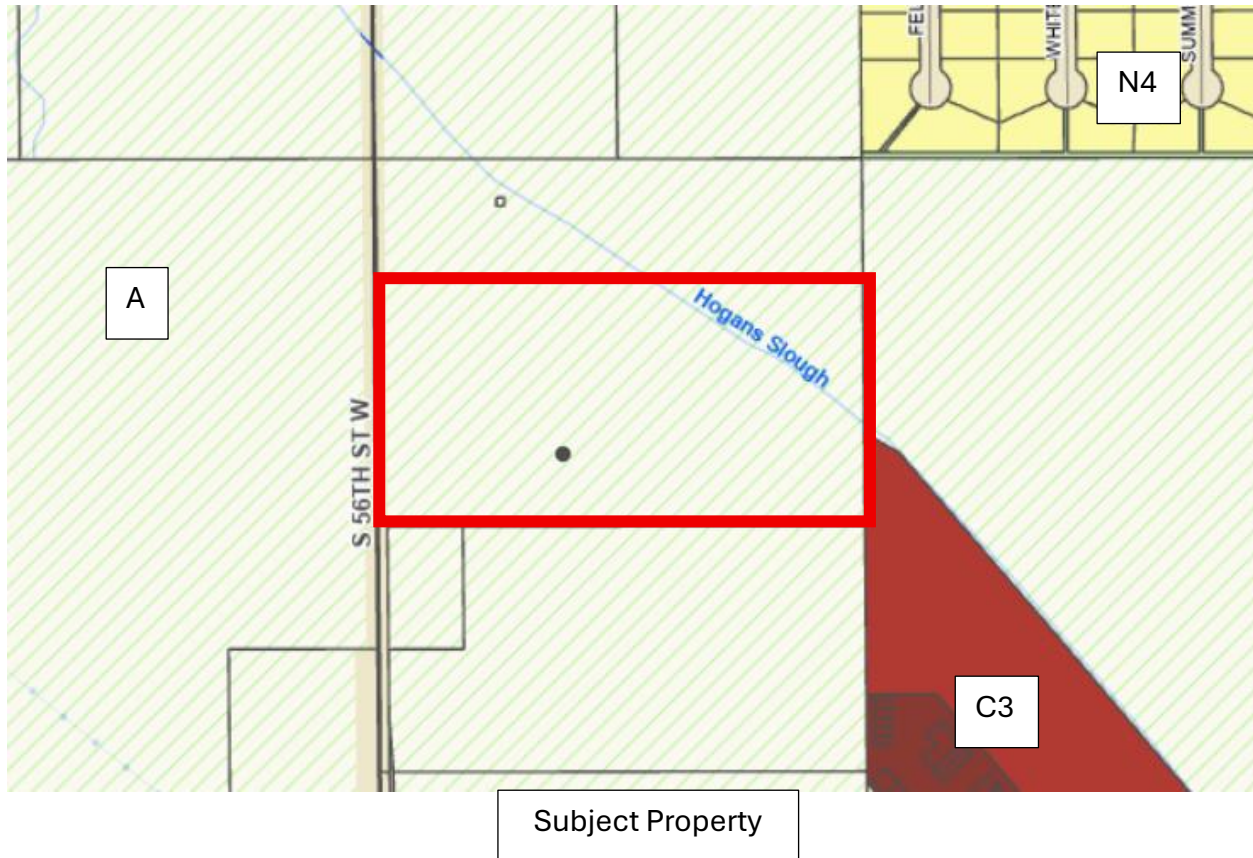
The Zoning Commission is recommending approval and adoption of the findings of the 11 review criteria for Zone Change 734.

Attachments

Zoning Map & Site Photos

Zoning Exhibit

Attachments for Zone Change 734



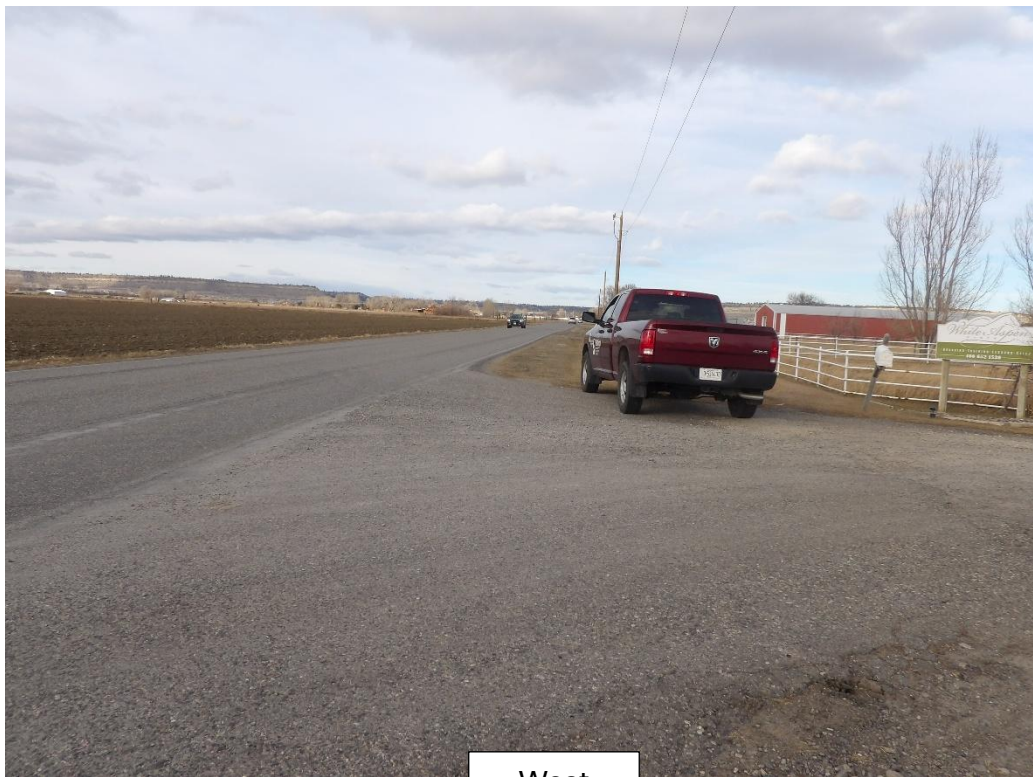
Attachments for Zone Change 734



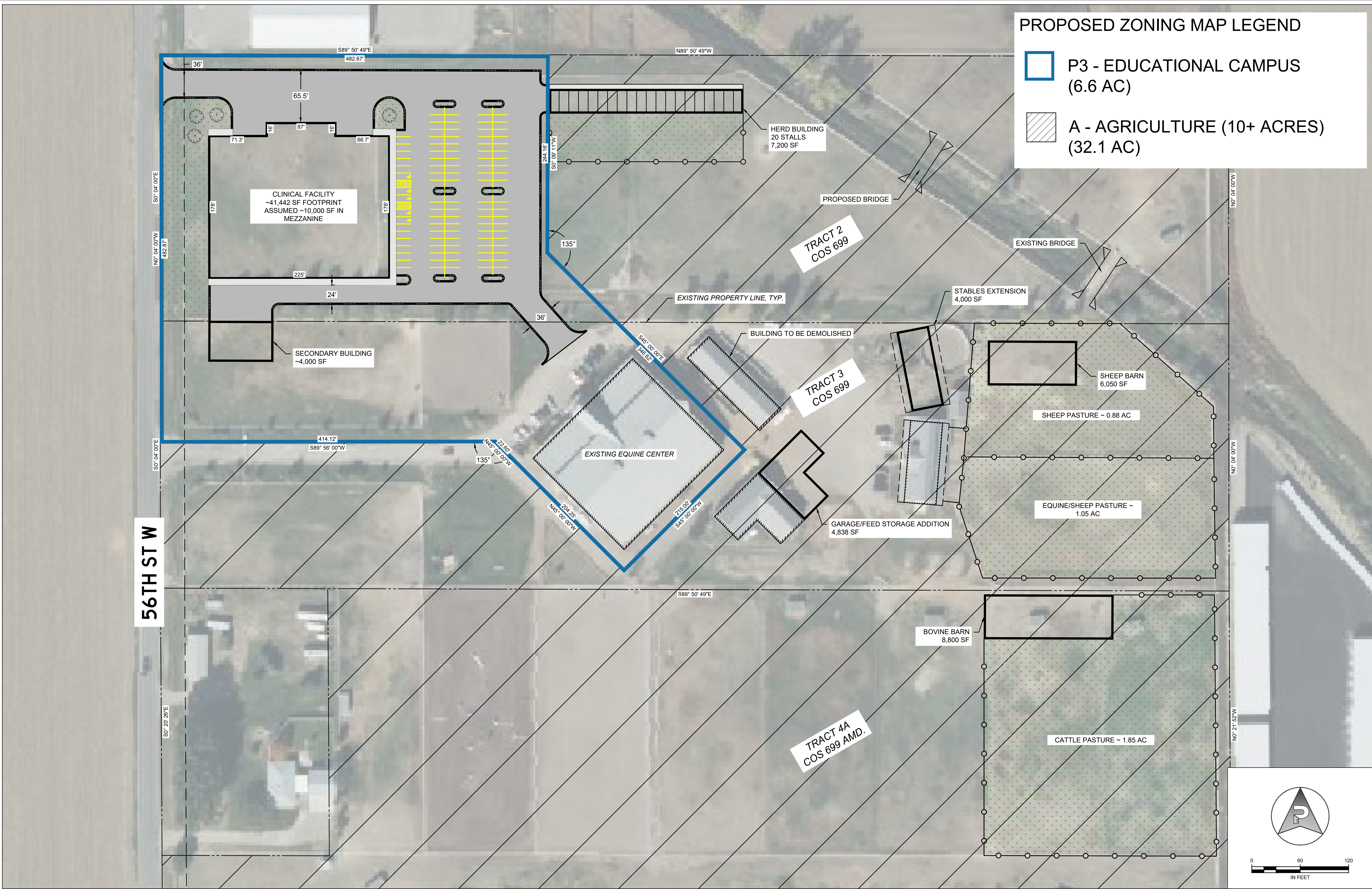
Attachments for Zone Change 734



East



West



PROPOSED ZONING MAP LEGEND

P3 - EDUCATIONAL CAMPUS
(6.6 AC)

A - AGRICULTURE (10+ ACRES)
(32.1 AC)

- PROPOSED BUILDINGS AS SHOWN
- CLINICAL BUILDING ~ 41,442 SF
 - SECONDARY CLINICAL BUILDING ~ 4,000 SF
 - HERD BUILDING/RUN-IN SHED ~ 7,200 SF
 - STABLES EXTENSION~ 4,000 SF
 - SHEEP BARN ~ 6,050 SF
 - BOVINE BARN~ 8,800 SF

ADDENDUM/REVISION	DATE	BY	CHECKED BY
#	#		#
#	#	#	#
#	#		#
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VERIFY SCALE!
THESE PRINTS MAY BE
REDUCED.
LINE BELOW MEASURES
ONE-INCH ON
ORIGINAL DRAWING.

MODIFY SCALE
ACCORDINGLY

ALH
DESIGNED BY

ALH
DRAWN BY

QUALITY
ASSURANCE
TJK
CHECKED BY

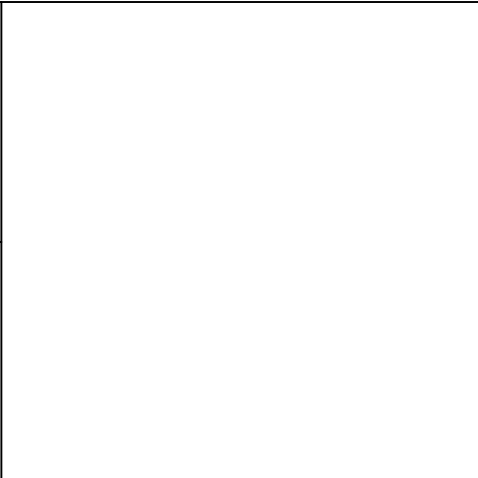
ZONING EXHIBIT

PERFORMANCE
ENGINEERING

3412 COLTON BLVD, STE 202 (406) 384-0080
BILLINGS, MT 59102 performance-ec.com

RVU - WHITE ASPEN RANCH

PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE EXHIBIT



PROJECT NUMBER
2025-095

SHEET NUMBER
1 OF 1

DRAWING NUMBER
EX. A

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B.O.C.C Thursday Discussion

2.

Meeting Date: 02/19/2026

Title: Mike Matthew - YAM Discussion

Submitted By: Erika Guy

TOPIC:

Mike Matthew - YAM Discussion

BACKGROUND:

NA

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discuss

B.O.C.C Thursday Discussion

1.

Meeting Date: 02/19/2026

Title: MS4 Stormwater

Submitted By: Erika Guy

TOPIC:

MS4 Stormwater

BACKGROUND:

NA

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discuss
