

CITY HALL  
115 W. 1<sup>ST</sup> ST.  
PUB. WORKS: 628-4796  
WATER OFC.: 628-7431  
COURT: 628-1964  
FAX 628-2241

# City Of Laurel

P.O. Box 10  
Laurel, Montana 59044



Planning Department

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## INTRODUCTION

On April 8, 2026 Engineering West and Forrest Mandeville Consulting submitted a preliminary plat application on behalf of Thomas L. Altman for the Lazy JX Subdivision. The proposed subdivision would create 1 new lot and allow for proposed residential development on the parcel. The property is located Southeast of the City of Laurel and north of River Road in Yellowstone County. The property is undeveloped and is not zoned. The lot is proposed to be developed with two single-family residences. Because this parcel is currently under an agriculture covenant any change in the use of land other than agriculture purposes subjects the parcel to review and approval following procedures established for review of subdivision pursuant to section 76-3-207(2)(B), MCA. The property is not served by a public water and sewer system and therefore must be approved by the Montana DEQ. The preliminary plat must be considered by the Laurel – Yellowstone/City-County Planning Board, with the decision being made by the Yellowstone County Commission.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Laurel - Yellowstone Planning Board recommends that the Yellowstone County Commissioners grant conditional approval of the preliminary plat of Lazy JX Subdivision and adopt the Findings of Fact as presented in the staff report.

## PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. To provide for the installation of private utilities, prior to final plat approval the applicant will coordinate with private utility providers for any needed easements and show them on the final plat as requested by the private utility companies.
2. Addressing for the lot after final plat approval shall conform to Yellowstone County addressing procedures.
3. Minor changes may be made in the SIA final documents, as requested by the Planning, Legal or Public Works Departments to clarify the documents and bring them into the standard acceptable format. All references to the Local Governing Body in the SIA are to be Yellowstone County.
4. The final plat shall comply with all requirements of the Laurel-Yellowstone/City-County Subdivision Regulations, the changes recommended by the various City and County Departments, and the laws and Administrative Rules of the State of Montana.
5. The subdivision will need Montana DEQ approval for water and wastewater and solid waste disposal.

6. A 30-foot public road dedication shall be made for River Road.
7. Waiver of Right to Protest for creation of Special Improvements Districts shall be required for final plat.
8. A Yellowstone County Weed Management Plan shall be submitted and approved for final plat.
9. The approval shall be valid for 3 calendar years from the date of preliminary plat approval.

**VARIANCES REQUESTED**

N/A. None Requested.

**PROCEEDURAL HISTORY**

- On February 5, 2026, a pre-application meeting was held to discuss the proposal.
- The preliminary plat application was submitted April 8, 2026.
- Element and Sufficiency Review completed April 24, 2026.
- Subdivision Preliminary Plat presented to Laurel – Yellowstone /City-County Planning Board May 20, 2026.
- The preliminary plat review timeline expires on June 12, 2026.

**PLAT INFORMATION**

General Location:	The proposed subdivision is located on River Road
Legal Description:	Parcel 1 COS 3896 Section 24, Township 2 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M.
Engineer and Surveyor:	Engineering West/ Jeremy Eaton
Existing Zoning:	None
Existing Land Use:	Agricultural
Proposed Land Use:	Residential
Gross and Net Area:	7.01 Acres Gross
Proposed Number of Lots:	1 lot
Lot Size Max/Min:	6.93 acres net after River Road dedication
Parkland Requirements:	N/A Exempt to Parkland Dedication.

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## Attachments

Findings of Fact  
Proposed Plat  
Draft SIA  
Title Report  
DEQ Submittals  
Preliminary Plat Application

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### FINDINGS OF FACT

The Laurel – Yellowstone Planning Board recommends the following Findings of Fact for the preliminary plat of Lazy JX Subdivision. These findings are based on the preliminary plat application and supplemental documents and addresses the review criteria required by the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (76-3-608 M.C.A.) and the Laurel – Yellowstone Subdivision Regulations.

#### **A. Primary Review Criteria 76-3-608 MCA.**

##### 1. Effect on Agriculture and Agricultural Water Users Facilities

- a. The parent tract consists of approximately 7.01 acres and is used for agricultural production of dryland hay- pasture.
- b. The tract entered an agriculture covenant on October 22, 2024 with Yellowstone County Commissioners.
- c. There are no water rights for this tract of land.
- d. Irrigation systems will not be altered by this subdivision. Irrigation ditches are on the perimeter of this subdivision and are for the benefit of other properties.
- e. The property is in an area that is experiencing suburban residential development. The property directly east of this property has a single-family home and Commercial Landscaping Company. Properties further east consist of residential subdivisions and irrigated agriculture lands located between River Road and the Yellowstone River.

There are not any anticipated adverse effects on agriculture or agricultural water users facilities.

##### 2. Effect on Local Services

- a. The parcels being created will be served by the County Sheriff, County Roads, Laurel Fire Department, and on-site water and wastewater facilities.
- b. The Laurel Fire Department has given their acceptance of the subdivision.
- c. The extension of public utilities, phone, power, gas, etc. will be extended to lot by the developer.
- d. The parcels are located in a developing portion of Yellowstone County. Montana DEQ will need to approve the water, wastewater and storm water for the subdivision and there will be minimal impacts with respect to, streets, emergency services, schools, or mail delivery.

- e. The subdivision is exempt to the provision of park land as it is the first minor subdivision from a tract of record.
- f. River Road will be the access point for the 1 lot subdivision.
- g. A road dedication of 30 feet is requested to allow for the existing Yellowstone County River Road.

The effect on local services is minimal.

3. Effect on the Natural Environment

- a. The lots being created will be developed with two-family residence structures. The property has floodplain and River frontage.
- b. The property surrounding the parcel being created is be used for suburban residential, agriculture or commercial purposes.

The effect on the Natural Environment is minimal.

4. Effect on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

- a. There are no known endangered or threatened species on the property.
- b. The new lot being created are to be developed with two houses.
- c. The property is frequented by deer, upland game birds, and geese. A Sage Grouse consult may be required as the project requires review or approval by DEQ.
- d. The SIA includes provisions related to the presence of wildlife on the property and the associated cautions related to potential for damage to landscaping.

This subdivision should have a minimal effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat.

5. Effect on the Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

- a. A portion of the property is floodplain.
- b. The water and waste water systems on the property will have to be approved by MDEQ.
- c. The property is located in the Laurel Rural Fire District and is served by the Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department.

The effect on the public health, safety and welfare is insignificant.

**B. Was an Environmental Assessment Required?**

First Minor Subdivisions are exempt to the requirements of preparing an Environmental Assessment. 76-3-609(2)(d)(i) M.C.A.

**C. Does the subdivision conform to the City of Laurel/Yellowstone County Growth Policy?**

- a. **Preservation of prime agricultural lands.** The residential lot being created is relatively small and is not irrigated prime agricultural land.
- b. **Housing relationship to Economy.** Different types of housing attracts various types of buyers and tenants. Different types of housing are important especially when trying to attract and retain a well-balanced workforce.
- c. **Land Use Plan relationship to Housing.** Housing should be connected to jobs, schools, parks and services and should meeting needs of people and families.

**D. Does the subdivision conform to the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act and to local subdivision regulations?**

The proposed subdivision is in conformance with the Laurel – Yellowstone/ City- County Subdivision Regulations. The developer and the local government have complied with the subdivision review and approval processes prescribed in the local regulations and the MSPA.

**E. Does the proposed subdivision conform to all requirements of the zoning in effect?**

The subject property is not part of an established zoning district and is not zoned.

**F. Does the proposed plat provide easements for the location and installation of any utilities?**

The necessary public and private easements exist.

**G. Does the proposed plat provide legal and physical access to each parcel within the subdivision and the notation of that access on the plat?**

The lot in the subdivision has lot frontage to Yellowstone County's River Road.

## CONCLUSIONS OF FINDINGS OF FACT

- The preliminary plat of Lazy JX Subdivision does not create any adverse impacts that warrant denial of the subdivision.
- The proposed subdivision conforms to several goals and objectives of the Laurel – Yellowstone City-County Growth Policy.
- The proposed subdivision complies with state and local subdivision regulations.
- Montana DEQ approval for the subdivision will be required prior to final plat.
- Any potential adverse impacts of the subdivision can be adequately mitigated by the imposition of conditions of approval.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Laurel-Yellowstone/ City-County Planning Board met on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and hereby recommends to the Yellowstone County Commissioners that they grant conditional approval of the preliminary plat of Lazy JX Subdivision and adopt the Findings of Fact presented in this report.

The conditions of approval are as follows.

1. To provide for the installation of private utilities, prior to final plat approval the applicant will coordinate with private utility providers for any needed easements and show them on the final plat as requested by the private utility companies.
2. Addressing for the lot after final plat approval shall conform to Yellowstone County addressing procedures.
3. Minor changes may be made in the SIA final documents, as requested by the Planning, Legal or Public Works Departments to clarify the documents and bring them into the standard acceptable format. All references to the Local Governing Body in the SIA are to be Yellowstone County.
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Richard Kloze, Laurel-Yellowstone/ City County Planning Board Chair