

Amsterdam/Churchill Town Core

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The Town Core of Amsterdam/Churchill should continue to serve as the community center and be the residential, religious, service, social, and cultural center of the surrounding area. This goal will be implemented using the following policies:

- 3.1 Land Use Map**
- 3.2 Phased Expansion of the Town Core**
- 3.3 Residential Neighborhoods**
- 3.4 Commercial Neighborhoods**
- 3.5 Connections**
- 3.6 Recommended Speed Controls**
- 3.7 Community Entrances**
- 3.8 Local Water Quality District**
- 3.9 Agricultural Uses and Land**

Policy 3.1 Land Use Map

Adopt a land use map designating a core growth area around the existing Town Core. Generally, the boundaries of this area are shown on the Town Core map attached to this plan. New development in the Amsterdam/Churchill area will be focused within this core to allow for natural extension of the existing townsite. Additionally, areas for expansion of Phase II of the Town Core will be designated.

To preserve the rural character, the agricultural resources, and small town nature of the area, and to reduce conflict between new residential development and existing agricultural operations in the area, the majority of new growth will be focused into the Town Core where existing growth is already located rather than throughout rural Amsterdam/Churchill.

As the core develops over time, a phased growth process, as depicted on the attached map, will allow for annexations into the core. Policy XX details criteria

for allowing development of Phase II parcels.

The map on page __ shows the potential growth areas within Phase I of the Town Core; following are descriptions of each of those areas.

Category A: Existing subdivision and COS development. Much of the Town Core has already been developed in subdivisions over the past 40 years. Most of these subdivisions are residential in nature and have their own covenants. The majority of existing development consists of single-family homes, with a small number of multi-family dwellings existing throughout the Town Core. Additionally, the retirement home, related housing units, three churches, Manhattan Christian School, and Amsterdam School are located in the heart of town.

There are places within these areas of existing development that could allow future redevelopment. Development standards written for this area will reflect the generally single-family nature of the existing developed area, with options available for some multi-family units, such as mother-in-law apartments and housing around the retirement home.

Category B: Mixed Use and Commercial Development. There are a small number of commercial operations in existence in the Town Core, generally clustered around major intersections. These include the Churchill Branch of the Manhattan Bank, Churchill Equipment, Danhof Chevrolet, the Amsterdam Store, and other small commercial operations. Areas of future commercial will be designated along the north side of Amsterdam Road between Camp Creek and Churchill Road. Additional areas of potential future mixed use and commercial development will be designated west of the Amsterdam Road/Camp Creek Road intersection. Design standards will be adopted requiring parking lots and access roads to be located along the rear of any new development in this section to prevent strip commercial. Additionally, a canal runs through this property, and any development shall work with the canal company to mitigate any adverse impacts.

Category C: Ecton Ranch. The Ecton Ranch is a 348-acre property between Amsterdam and Churchill. The property currently has an approved preliminary plat for the Amsterdam Village project, a large mixed-use project designed to provide commercial development in the northeastern corner of the property south and west of the Churchill Bank, grading to residential development with substantial open space (approximately 50% of the development) on the remainder of the property. Steep slopes leading down to Camp Creek form the western edge of the property. While this property does have an approved preliminary plat, the planning process has identified several transportation connections (detailed in Policy __) that should be made on this property if development plans change in the future. Additionally, the future land use map designates this property as “planned unit development”, to reflect both the existing approval and the community’s desire for a development providing creative, mixed-use development near the Churchill Bank and the intersection of Amsterdam Road and Churchill Road, and substantial open space and park space with residential development on the remainder of the property. Should the currently-approved

development plans change, the development standards and this plan will encourage a similar style of development as currently approved for the Amsterdam Village project.

Category D. This property is located east of the Churchill North subdivision and north of the Manhattan Christian School. This parcel is suitable for a large-lot development pattern (1/2-acre parcels) similar to Churchill North, with options for limited multi-family. The Valley Ditch is located in the northwest portion of the property and new development shall mitigate any impacts on the ditch. As described in Policy XX, Kunje Road should be extended along the northern and eastern boundaries of this property to provide a route around the outside of the Town Core for both emergency service vehicles and general traffic. This road extension will take pressure off interior subdivision roads of Churchill North and this parcel, as well as provide access to Phase 2 properties.

Category E. This area is located west of the Amsteram Road/Camp Creek Road intersection. A development pattern similar to that of Category C (the Ecton Ranch) is considered appropriate, and any future zoning will reflect this pattern. Specifically, commercial and mixed-use development is appropriate for the area immediately contiguous to the intersection. Development standards similar to those described in Category B will be written to encourage a pattern of commercial development that adds to the small-town feel of the area and provides for safe and efficient access to Amsterdam Road. Future residential development, interspersed with abundant open space, is appropriate farther away from this intersection. Care will need to be taken to avoid any potential flood plain issues with Camp Creek.

Category F. This area lies adjacent to Camp Creek behind the existing HR Vandykens subdivision #2 and below the bluffs bordering the Ecton Ranch property. There is limited access to Camp Creek Road. This property is appropriate for low-density development providing a buffer to Camp Creek. As with property described in Category E, care will need to be taken to avoid the flood plain of Camp Creek.

Category G. This area lies between Godfrey Canyon Estates and developed Churchill to the north and provides an important opportunity to connect these two areas. A draw lies between the two properties in this area, and any road connections will need to be designed to provide safe access across. Policy ___ provides more detail on any connections provided by development in this area. Currently, there is an existing business on this property; development standards written for this area will grandfather this business, as well as provide opportunities for expansion that is compatible with the existing residential areas around it. New residential development shall be compatible with the Godfrey Canyon Estates development immediately to the south, with 8,000-10,000 square-foot lots considered appropriate.

Policy 3.2. Phased Expansion of the Town Core

As the area designated as the Town Core builds out over time, other immediately adjacent parcels, identified on the Future Land Use Map as "Phase II", have been designated for potential Town Core development. Before these parcels become annexed, the following criteria shall be met.

3.2.1 Contiguous to existing development. Phase II property may be annexed into the Town Core if it is contiguous to existing, platted development.

3.2.2 Capacity of community services. Phase II property may be annexed to the Town Core if approved by service providers and there are adequate public facilities to service the development. Adequate public facilities include:

- Capacity of the Churchill Sewer District to annex new property. The District's system will be considered adequate to service the annexed property if there is verified sufficient capacity to accommodate expected and ultimate peak flows from the proposed development, or if the capacity is expected to be provided within a designated timeframe to service the proposed development. This information shall be demonstrated prior to annexation of any Phase II property into the Town Core.
- Capacity of the Amsterdam School to serve the expected increase in students caused by an annexation. The number of anticipated students shall be calculated using the most recent statistics for Gallatin County used by either the Amsterdam School, the School Superintendent's office, or the most recent data provided by the US Census Bureau.
- Availability of water. It is the policy of this community plan to require major subdivisions within the Town Core to provide a community water system, rather than individual wells.
- Connection to a road network with the capacity, or designed to have the capacity, to handle the proposed increase in traffic. Interior subdivision roads alone shall not be considered adequate road connections for Phase II property; any annexations shall be required to connect to collector roads with adequate right-of-way and capacity to carry the increased traffic.
- Fire and emergency service capacity. See Policy __ for a description of policies applicable to adequate fire and emergency service capacity.

If there are not adequate public facilities to service the new development allowed by the annexation, the annexation (and subsequent amendment to zoning) shall not be allowed until those deficiencies are addressed.

3.2.3 Access to a collector road. Phase II property may be annexed if it is served by a collector road. Property only served by an interior subdivision road must obtain access by a road meeting collector standards prior to any annexation.

Policy 3.3. Residential Neighborhoods

The Amsterdam/Churchill community and Gallatin County will use development standards to protect the character of its existing residential neighborhoods. Additionally, Amsterdam/Churchill and Gallatin County will promote safe, walkable neighborhoods by requiring sidewalks, curb and gutter, and street lighting in new residential developments.

Many of the existing neighborhoods in the Amsterdam/Churchill core have existing covenants. Development standards will be adopted reflecting the protections of those existing covenants. Additionally, those development standards will protect community values by prohibiting bars, strip clubs, and casinos.

3.3.1 Adopt development standards identifying residential areas within the Town Core.

The development standards designed to implement the Community Plan will designate land use categories that separate commercial areas of higher intensity from existing and future residential areas in order to mitigate potential land use conflicts caused by potentially incompatible uses.

3.3.2 Allow residential uses and limited live/work uses, such as home occupations and home-based businesses, within delineated residential area.

Within those areas designated as residential, commercial uses will be confined to low-impact live/work units such and home occupations and home-based businesses. Generally, those uses will be defined as uses whose primary use is residential in nature, with business uses being conducted by the resident and a small number of employees on site.

3.3.3 Encourage safe, walkable neighborhoods and improve neighborhood functionality and design by requiring sidewalks, curb and gutter, and street lighting (or the “green” equivalent) in certain new residential developments.

In order to improve the pedestrian experience and improve neighborhood design in the residential neighborhoods of Amsterdam/Churchill, major subdivisions within the core shall be required to provide sidewalks. Interior subdivision roads shall provide a sidewalk on at least one side of the road; arterial and connector streets shall provide sidewalks on both sides of the road. Additionally, curb and gutter, shall also be required in all development where the average lot size is smaller than one acre. Developments may also choose to provide a “greener” equivalent to this requirement, provided the performance of the infrastructure is of the same quality as standard curb and gutter. New residential development may be required to join the existing lighting district currently in existence. All lighting should meet the lighting standards described in

Policy XXX.

3.3.4 Establish basic design standards for new buildings within the Town Core.

In order to ensure that the design features that make current neighborhoods within the Town Core attractive for residents continues as the area develops, development standards adopted for the Town Core will ensure new neighborhoods have basic height limitations and setback requirements similar to those currently in existence. Additionally, the development standards adopted for the Town Core will ensure new neighborhoods are of the same quality as existing neighborhoods by requiring new structures to have permanent foundations and meet basic roof pitch requirements.

Policy 3.4 Commercial Areas

Designate commercial areas within the core.

Many Amsterdam/Churchill residents work in local businesses. The Amsterdam/Churchill community recognizes that compatible commercial businesses can add to the convenience of the community by providing jobs and services in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. The Amsterdam/Churchill community will adopt a future land use map designating commercial districts within the community corresponding with the land use categories of Policy 3.1. Additionally, the following standards will be adopted:

3.4.1 Allow for a variety of commercial uses.

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3.4.2 Require lighting standards for new commercial uses.

Visibility of the night sky is an important element of rural Amsterdam/Churchill. The Amsterdam/Churchill community and Gallatin County will adopt development standards ensuring that additional commercial development will meet lighting standards designed to preserve visibility of the night sky. Those standards include requiring shielded and downward-facing lighting that does not expose neighboring properties or adjacent roadways to unshielded lighting.

3.4.3 Require landscaping for new commercial development and construction.

Landscaping for commercial uses is an important element of retaining an attractive community. Development standards will be adopted requiring any new commercial construction (excepting

agricultural construction) to plant new landscaping adjacent to roadways and neighboring properties.

3.4.4 Require commercial solid waste areas to be screened.

Development standards will be adopted requiring commercial solid waste areas to be screened from public roads and adjacent properties either by fencing, landscaping, or the commercial building itself.

3.4.5 Require road mitigation of high-traffic uses.

Many commercial uses generate as much as or more traffic than new subdivision. The development standards adopted to implement this plan will require high-traffic uses to mitigate impact on access roads. Mitigation measures could include improving road standards, paving, or stop signs or other traffic control measures.

3.4.6 Site Design.

The development standards and land use map will require the use of frontage roads in the rear of properties connecting structures and properties, deep lots, landscaped buffers, and other site planning tactics along the primary access road to ensure that strip development is discouraged. Additionally, the development standards will encourage parking lots and other impervious surfaces to be placed along the rear or side of structures.

3.4.7 Adopt sign standards.

Development standards will be adopted providing standards for the size of new signs within the Town Core. All existing signs shall be grandfathered.

3.4.8 Prohibit casinos, bars, and sexually-oriented businesses.

Development standards will be adopted prohibiting casinos, bars, or sexually-oriented businesses within the Town Core.

Policy 3.5 Connections

Multiple points of access will be required to most developments. Additionally, safe, functional connections between neighborhoods, and within residential and commercial areas and public places, will be required for new development.

Benefits of safe, functional connections between neighborhoods via roads and sidewalks, paths, and trails include the following:

- Having multiple points of access to a neighborhood is important for provision of emergency services;
- Facilitating movement from one part of the community to another via local roads, sidewalks, paths, and trails can reduce congestion on arterial roads and major connectors. It also encourages walking and cycling;
- Connecting neighborhoods promotes a sense of community throughout town;
- Providing multiple connections, including sidewalks and paths, can facilitate safe movement of school children to either of the two schools in the community.

3.5.1 Require Connectivity as a Condition of Development Approval.

Commercial and residential developments must have safe, functional access for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists through the site. They must also be designed with enough right-of-way to have safe, functional connections with adjoining developments.

3.5.2 Commit to exploring ways to provide a new sidewalk along Churchill Road, Amsterdam Road, and Camp Creek Road, as well as trail and sidewalk options throughout the Town Core as needs are identified.

There are two schools and three churches within the heart of the Town Core. This policy commits the community of Amsterdam/Churchill and Gallatin County to exploring ways to provide a new sidewalk along Churchill Road, Amsterdam Road, and Camp Creek to increase pedestrian safety between these public buildings and residential neighborhoods.

Additionally, as the planning process proceeds, new connections and pedestrian needs may be identified. This policy commits the community and Gallatin County to explore opportunities to provide any future trail and/or other pedestrian connections that are identified.

3.5.3 Require a connection between Godfrey Canyon Estates and the rest of the Churchill Community to the north.

The Godfrey Canyon Estates subdivision is physically separated from the rest of the Churchill community to the north. The Windmill Acres subdivision was granted preliminary plat approval in January 2009 and provides a trail connection between Godfrey Canyon Estates and the rest of the Churchill community to the north. If development plans change in the future, a road connection should also be provided in order to better connect areas within the Town Core.

3.5.4 Commit to exploring opportunities for a “rails to trails” project along the old railroad right-of-way west of Camp Creek Road.

A “rails-to-trails” project along this old right-of-way could provide a designated pedestrian pathway along Camp Creek Road that serves both as a recreational trail and also as a way for students to get to the Amsterdam School. This policy commits the community of Amsterdam/Churchill to working with landowners along these roads to potentially designate them through the rails-to-trails program.

3.5.6 Require extension of Kunje Road to the east and south along the edge of the Town Core boundary.

Extending Kunje Road to the east and south along the edge of the Town Core boundary provides a road routing traffic around the Churchill Town Core for both general traffic and emergency service vehicles that does not use the interior subdivision roads of the Churchill North subdivision. Also, extension of Kunje Road allows appropriate access to Phase II property designated to the north and east of the Town Core boundary.

3.5.7 Require a connection between Churchill Road and Camp Creek Road across the Ecton Property.

As discussed in Policy 3.1, the Ecton property has an approved preliminary plat. If development plans change, however, this policy requires a connection to be designed with any future development that would connect Churchill Road to Camp Creek Road and provide an alternative east/west route.

3.5.8 Create connections, when and where possible, between Land Use Categories A, C, and G through to Churchill Road.

There is a general lack of connections between Godfrey Canyon Estates, the majority of the Churchill community to the north, and the Ecton Ranch. Because there are two approved preliminary plats for both the Ecton Ranch (Category C) and the Windmill Acres project (Category G), obtaining connections for all of these areas will only happen if development plans change. Should plans change for these two approved developments, new connections should be made between Category G and Category C, as well as south into Godfrey Canyon Estates to the south and Category A to the north.

Policy 3.6 Recommended Speed Controls And Road Improvements

Churchill Road serves two purposes in the planning jurisdiction: first, it serves as the main street through the center of the Town Core, servicing three churches, a school, and several businesses, as well as the majority of residential development in the area; second, it serves as a State Highway providing access from Norris Road to the south through to Manhattan to the north. In an attempt to reconcile these two points, this policy recommends speed controls be applied to and maintained on the portion of Churchill Road within the Town Core.

The Montana Department of Transportation states that Churchill Road could accommodate between 6,000 and 8,000 trips per day and stay within an acceptable range for a two-lane arterial street. While this is a standard ADT for most arterial streets, it is unacceptable for a road that serves as the main street of the Churchill community. In order to ensure maximum traffic safety for the Town core, the following speed controls are recommended:

3.6.2 Pedestrian signs?

3.6.3 School zone in front of Manhattan Christian??

3.6.5 Rumble Strips?

3.6.6 Gateway Entry Treatment??

3.6.7 Realignment of the Amsterdam Road/Churchill Road/Kunje Road intersection.

Policy 3.7 Community Entrances

As the area grows, the entrances to the Town Core should continue to present the Amsterdam and Churchill communities as unique and welcoming.

3.7.1 Sign ordinance?

3.7.2 Design standards for commercial development to prevent a “strip commercial” look?

3.7.3 Confining commercial development to the northern edge of the Town Core and leaving residential development to the south??

Policy 3.8 Local Water Quality District

JOIN LOCAL WATER QUALITY DISTRICT?? WE NEED MORE DISCUSSION

Policy 3.9 Agricultural Uses and Land

The importance of agricultural land and lifestyle has been a clearly identified value by the residents of Amsterdam/Churchill. While the majority of agricultural lands will be located outside of the downtown core and will be protected by directing the majority of growth into the core, several aspects of agricultural use will still be protected within the core as the area grows.

3.9.1 Protect agricultural water user facilities by requiring new subdivision and commercial construction to contact applicable canal companies and mitigate any adverse impacts to canals and ditches.

Protect water conveyance facilities by requiring new subdivision and commercial construction to contact applicable water users and/or water conveyance facility's authorized representatives and mitigate any adverse impacts to the water conveyance facility.

The Amsterdam/Churchill community and Gallatin County will adopt zoning standards to:

- Require new development adjacent to a water conveyance facility to contact the appropriate water users and/or water conveyance facility's authorized representatives prior to approval;
- Require acknowledgment by the water users and/or water conveyance facility's authorized representatives that contact has been made, along with any comments or conditions they require to mitigate impacts;
- Prohibit channeling of stormwater or snowmelt runoff, water from dewatering practices, or other water originating from within the boundaries of the development into a water conveyance facility without express consent of the applicable water users and/or water conveyance facility's authorized representatives;
- Establish a water conveyance facility non-interference setback;
- Require agreement by applicable water users and/or water conveyance facility's authorized representatives prior to alteration of a canal or ditch;
- Require new subdivision to design development to minimize impacts to agriculture and water conveyance facilities.

3.9.2 Avoid conflicts between uses by requiring an open space buffer between existing agricultural operations and new residential subdivision.

Preserving agricultural operations and lands is one of the Guiding

Principles of this community plan. Increased residential development adjacent to existing agricultural operations can result in conflicts due to smells, noises, and hours of operation. To mitigate the immediate effects of potential land use incompatibility, zoning standards will be drafted requiring new residential development to provide an open space buffer next to existing agricultural operations.

3.9.3 Exempt agricultural practices and structures from future development standards.

3.9.4 Exempt family transfer exemptions from any future zoning regulations.

3.9.5 Recognize the right to farm and ranch in the Amsterdam/Churchill area.

Agricultural operations are abundant throughout rural Amsterdam/Churchill. This policy states that non-agricultural landowners accept and are aware that standard agricultural and farming practices can result in smoke, dust, animal odors, flies and machinery noise, and that standard agricultural practices feature the use of heavy equipment, burning, chemical sprays and the use of machinery early in the morning and sometimes late into the evening.