



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Monday, June 30, 2025 - 10:00 AM
City Council Chambers, Elks Civic Building - 107 S. Cascade Ave.

Public participation for this meeting will be in person in the City Council Chambers. The meeting can be [viewed online via livestream](#) and video recordings of the meetings can be viewed on our [YouTube page](#).

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1) DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A) Update to Chapter 7 of Title 11 - Land Use Regulations Specific to Density Standards in the B-1 Zone District and Front-Yard Garage Setbacks in Residential Zone Districts (15 minutes)
Staff: Community Development Director Jace Hochwalt
- B) Acceptance of Grant Award Funds for Wildfire Mitigation and Forest Health Initiatives from Colorado State Forest Service. (15 minutes)
Staff: Community Development Specialist Christopher Ottinger, Parks Superintendent Dan Payne, Emergency Manager Paul Eller

2) GENERAL CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

3) STAFF COMMENTS



CITY OF MONTROSE
Planning Services

MEMO

TO: Honorable Mayor, City Council
FROM: Jace Hochwalt, Community Development Director
DATE: June 30, 2025
RE: Update to Chapter 7 of Title 11 - Land Use Regulations specific to density standards in the B-1 zone district and front-yard garage setbacks in residential zone districts.

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A: Redlined Section 11-7-7
- Exhibit B: Downtown Zoning Map

City Council Consideration:

The consideration of legislative code amendments to Section 11-7-7 of the Land Development Regulations of the City of Montrose. Two code amendments are being proposed, both specific to Section 11-7-7 – District Standards. The first amendment is specific to residential density in the B-1 (Central Business District) zone district, to accommodate higher density in the downtown area. The second amendment is specific to the reduction of front yard setback standards for garages within the R-3 (Medium Density District), R-3A (Medium-High Density District), and R-4 (High Density District) zones.

Project Background and Proposed Code Amendments:

In May 2023, the City of Montrose completed a comprehensive code consolidation effort that unified all land use regulations into a single, streamlined area, now referred to as Title 11 of the Montrose Municipal Code. This effort was followed by a significant code update focused primarily on housing-related provisions, alongside modernizations and clarifications to various code chapters to improve consistency and usability, which was completed in December of 2024.

With this major update now implemented, City staff have been applying the revised code to ongoing development projects. Through this application, staff have identified two areas where further amendments are needed to better align the code with the Comprehensive Plan and goals for housing flexibility and diversity. The two proposed code amendments are outlined below.

Code Amendment #1: Elimination of Density Standards within the B-1 (Central Business District) Zone

The Central Business District of Montrose encompasses a compact area generally bounded by

Rio Grande Avenue (west), Mesa Avenue (east), N. 2nd Street (north), and S. 2nd Street (south). The majority of this four-block by six-block area is zoned B-1, with a few exceptions (better visualized in Exhibit B).

Under the current code (Section 11-7-7), residential uses within the B-1 district are required to comply with the density standards of the R-3A district, though they are exempt from dimensional standards. Upon review, staff has determined that this density requirement is overly restrictive for the unique lot sizes in the downtown core. There are several B-1 zoned parcels under 2,000 square feet, and a majority of parcels are under 6,300 square feet. Applying R-3A density limits to these smaller lots restricts development to only one or two residential units per parcel, which limits infill potential.

To address this, staff proposes eliminating the requirement for residential uses in the B-1 district to conform to R-3A density standards. This change would promote greater residential flexibility in the downtown core and help support a more vibrant, mixed-use environment consistent with the City's revitalization goals.

Code Amendment #2: Adjustment of Front Yard Setback for Garages in the R-3, R-3A, and R-4 Districts

Under the previous code, front yard setbacks in the R-3, R-3A, and R-4 zoning districts were set at 15 feet. This often led to functional issues, such as vehicles encroaching onto sidewalks and rights-of-way when parked in driveways. To address this, the December 2024 code update increased front setbacks for garages in these districts to 25 feet, while retaining the 15-foot requirement for the livable area of homes.

Staff has observed that the 25-foot front setback requirement for garages in the R-3, R-3A, and R-4 districts may be overly restrictive, particularly in areas where compact and efficient site design is critical. This concern has also been echoed by developers, who have expressed that the requirement creates design challenges and limits flexibility in medium- and high-density developments. In response, staff recommends reducing the garage setback from 25 feet to 20 feet. This adjustment would still help prevent vehicle encroachments into sidewalks and rights-of-way, while supporting more adaptable site planning and improved housing affordability.

Both proposed code amendments support the City's efforts to promote housing diversity, flexibility, and affordability. By eliminating overly restrictive density standards in the downtown core and reducing garage setback requirements in medium- and high-density residential zones, these updates allow for a wider variety of housing types and more adaptable site designs.

These amendments are also supported by the Housing Needs Assessment, which recommends removing regulatory barriers to housing development—particularly for middle-density and multi-family projects. Additionally, they align with key goals in Chapter 7 of the Montrose Comprehensive Plan, including:

- Goal HN-1: Housing Variety – Encourage a variety of housing types, tenure, and densities to meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Goal HN-2: Affordable Housing – Increase access to affordable housing options.

Recommendation:

Staff finds that the proposed code amendments are in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and would further support housing flexibility and diversity in the Montrose area. Staff therefore recommends approval of the amendments to Section 11-7-7 of the Montrose Municipal Code as proposed.

AREAS WHERE REVISIONS ARE PROPOSED ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW

Sec. 11-7-7. District standards.

(A) Tabulated requirements for principal uses by right are as follows (all dimensions in feet or square feet unless otherwise noted):

District	Use ^{2 3}	Maximum Density	Minimum Lot Size ⁴	Minimum Setbacks				Maximum Building Height
				Front	Rear	Side	Corner Lot	
RL	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	TBD - see footnote #4	⁵	25	20	10	20	35
R-1	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	1 dwelling unit/acre	1 acre	25	20	10	20	35
R-1A	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	2 dwelling units/acre	½ acre	25	20	10	20	35
R-1B	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	3 dwelling units/acre	⅓ acre	25	20	10	20	35
R-2	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	5.8 dwelling units/acre	7,500	25	20	5	20	35
	Duplex	7.75 dwelling units/acre	11,250	25	20	5	20	35
R-3	Single-household detached	7 dwelling units/acre	6,250	15	20	5	15	35
	Duplex	9.3 dwelling units/acre	9,375	15	20	5	15	35
	Single-household attached	9.3 dwelling units/acre	4,700/dwelling unit	15	20; 5 w/ rear-loaded garage	10 to bldg. lot line	15	35
	Triplex or Fourplex	9.3 dwelling units/acre	4,700/dwelling unit	15	20; 10 w/alley	15 to bldg. lot line	20	35
	Multi-household	15 dwelling units/acre	2,900/dwelling unit	15	20	10	15	40
R-3A	Single-household detached	8.7 dwelling units/acre	5,000	15	20	5	15	35

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(Supp. No. 11, Update 2)

	Duplex	9.3 dwelling units/acre	9375	15	20	5	15	35
	Single-household attached	15 dwelling units/acre	2,900/dwelling unit	15	20; 5 w/ rear-loaded garage	10 to bldg. lot line	15	35
	Triplex or Fourplex	15 dwelling units/acre	2,900/dwelling unit	15	20; 10 w/alley	15 to bldg. lot line	20	35
	Multi-household	15 dwelling units/acre	2,900/dwelling unit	15	20	10	15	40
R-4	Single-household detached	17.4 dwelling units/acre	2,500	15	20; 5 w/ rear-loaded garage	5	10	35
	Duplex	17.4 dwelling units/acre	5,000	15	20	5	15	35
	Single-household attached	18.9 dwelling units/acre	2,300/dwelling unit	15	20; 5 w/ rear-loaded garage	10 to bldg. lot line	15	35
	Triplex or Fourplex	18.9 dwelling units/acre	2,300/dwelling unit	15	20; 10 w/alley	15 to bldg. lot line	20	35
	Multi-household	24 dwelling units/acre	1,815/dwelling unit	15	20	10	15	40
R-5	Single-household detached	3.6 dwelling units/acre	12,000	25	20	5	20	35
	Duplex	7.2 dwelling units/acre	12,000	25	20	5	20	35
	Manufactured Home	3.6 dwelling units/acre	12,000	25	20	10	20	35
R-6	Single-household detached	5.8 dwelling units/acre	7,500	25	20	5	15	35
	Duplex	9.3 dwelling units/acre	9,375	15	20	5	15	35
	Single-household attached	9.3 dwelling units/acre	4,700/dwelling unit	25	20; 5 w/ rear-loaded garage	10 to bldg. lot line	20	35
	Triplex or Fourplex	9.3 dwelling units/acre	4,700/dwelling unit	15	20; 10 w/alley	15 to bldg. lot line	20	35
	Multi-household	15 dwelling units/acre	2,900/dwelling unit	15	20	10	15	40

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	Manufactured Home	5.8 dwelling units/acre	7,500	25	20	5	20	35
	Tiny Home	5.8 dwelling units/acre	7,500	15	20	5	15	35
MHR	Manufactured Homes except MH Parks ⁶	14.5 dwelling units/acre	3,000	5	10	10	10	35
	Dwelling, Single Household Detached	14 dwelling units/acre	3,125	5	10	10	10	35
	Tiny Home except Tiny Home Communities ⁷	14.5 dwelling units/acre	3,000	5	10	10	10	35
OR	All Non-Residential		6,250	15	15	5	15	35
p ⁸	All Non-Residential		N/A	15	N/A	N/A	15	N/A
B-1	No Req.		No Req., except for fueling stations	No Req.	No Req.	No Req.	No Req.	No Req.
B-2	All Non-Residential		N/A	15	N/A	N/A	15	N/A
B-2A	All Non-Residential		N/A	25	N/A	N/A	25	35
B-3	All Non-Residential		N/A	25	N/A	N/A	25	35
B-4	All Non-Residential		N/A	25	N/A	N/A	25	35
I-1	All Non-Residential		½ acre	25	N/A	N/A	25	N/A
I-2	All Non-Residential		½ acre	25	N/A	N/A	25	N/A

² Residential uses in the OR, P, B-2, B-2A, B-3, B-4, I-1 and I-2 zone districts shall comply with the applicable dimensional requirements as set out for the R-3A zone. Residential uses in the B-1 District shall comply with the density standards in the R-3A zone, but are not required to comply with the density or dimensional standards.

³ Commercial and institutional uses in the RL, R-1, R-1A, R-1B, R-2, R-3, R-3A, R-4, R-5, R-6 and MHR zone districts shall comply with the applicable dimensional requirements as set out for the "OR" zone.

⁴ Applies per lot; not per primary dwelling unit. Where specified as square footage per dwelling unit for multiple unit dwelling types does not imply a minimum dwelling unit size; there is no minimum dwelling unit size.

⁵ A minimum lot size shall be determined as a condition of initial zoning of property as "RL." Such lot size shall be designed to limit overall residential units per acre to no more than allowed by Montrose County in comparable areas in the County where sewer is available, and to implement the City Comprehensive Plan as feasible while remaining economically competitive with allowed County densities.

⁶ Dimensional requirements for manufactured home parks are controlled by Chapter 11-13-5 of this Title.

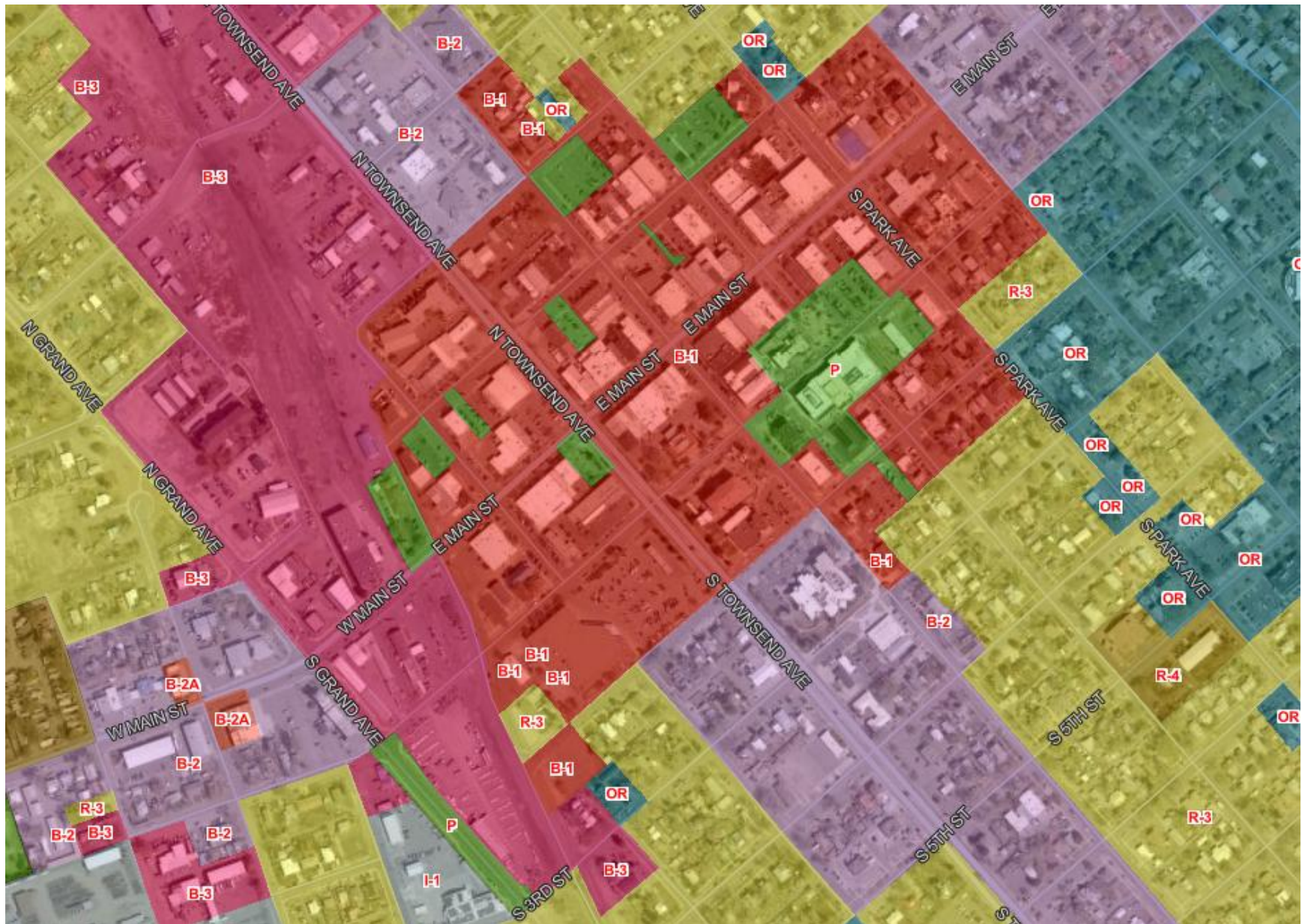
⁷ Dimensional requirements for tiny home communities are controlled by Chapter 11-13-12 of this Title.

⁸ City facilities are exempt from these standards.

(B) Additional Dimensional Requirements.

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- (1) Accessory use structures or buildings in residential districts may be located on those rear and side property lines which do not abut a street, if the structure is at least ten feet to the rear of the building line of the principal structure and does not occupy more than 30 percent of the rear yard area. In all other situations, accessory structure setbacks are the same as principal structure setbacks.
 - (2) In a block where a setback line has been established by existing structures 50 percent or more of the block, the average setback of the existing buildings may be used as the minimum setback.
 - (3) Garage doors which face an alley require a five-foot minimum setback.
 - (4) In zone districts where residential front setbacks are 15 feet or less, the garage setback shall be a minimum of ~~25~~20 feet.
 - (5) Accessory structures shall not be located in the front yard of a principal structure, except for minor and commonplace accessory structures such as public utility installations, mail boxes, lamp posts and structures of a like nature.
 - (6) Lot depth and width is determined through the subdivision process in Section 11-5-13(b)(3) of these regulations.
 - (7) Other permitted exceptions and encroachments into required setbacks and height limits are specified in Section 11-8-10 of this title.

(Ord. No. 2677, § 1(exh. A), 12-17-2024)





City of Montrose
Office of the City Manager

TO: Honorable Mayor, City Council

FROM: Christopher Ottinger, Community Development Specialist
Paul Eller, Emergency Manager
Dan Payne, Parks Superintendent

DATE: June 30, 2025

SUBJECT: Seeking Approval to Accept the 2023 Creating Resilient Forests in Colorado (Congressionally Designated Spending) through the Colorado State Forest Service for the Cerise Park Wildfire Mitigation and Riparian Restoration Project/Buckhorn Lakes Wildfire Mitigation and Forest Health Improvement Project.

INTRODUCTION

City of Montrose Staff is seeking approval from City Council to accept the Creating Resilient Forests Grant. The purpose of this grant is to create and implement a Wildfire Mitigation and Forest and Riparian health plan for Areas of Cerise Park and Buckhorn Lakes Park.

BACKGROUND

The Parks and Emergency Management Departments of the City of Montrose prioritize reducing wildfire risk throughout the City. Through its partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), the City has identified key areas of concern for mitigation and forest health. First, along the river bottom

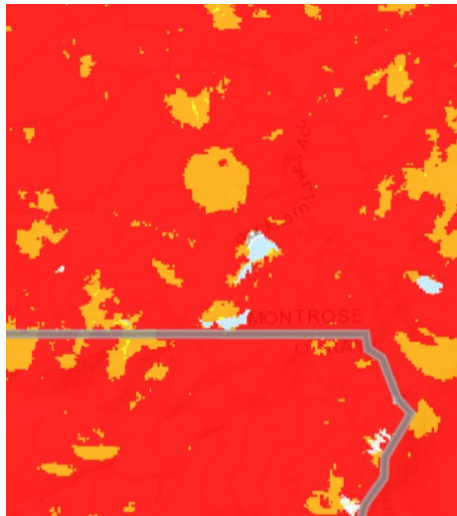


Figure 2. Buckhorn Lakes

through Cerise Park, identified as an extreme fire risk area on the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment (COWRA) fire intensity layer. Annual wildfire incidents underscore the urgency of this project.

Second, the mixed conifer wildfire risk on City-owned property near Buckhorn Lakes, also rated extreme on COWRA's fire intensity layer and critical for watershed protection. This area is included in the updated Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) generated by Montrose County.

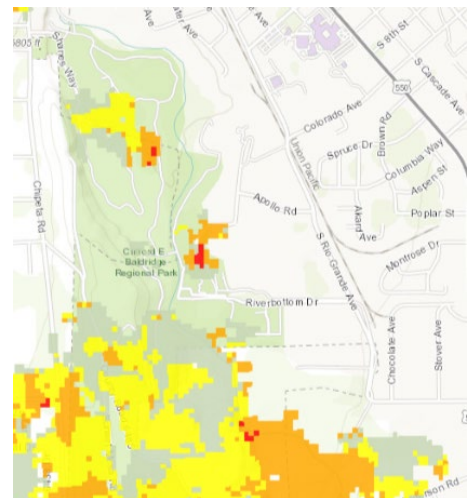


Figure 1. Cerise Park

CSFS has federal funds that can be directed toward these projects without competitive application and have offered to fund projects to reduce the wildfire risk and promote forest health in Montrose.

PROJECTS

The grant will first fund a management plan for Cerise Park, developed by the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) with a subcontracted consultant. Remaining funds will support initial implementation on approximately 82 acres, with costs estimated at \$2,000-\$3,500 per acre due to labor-intensive hand work and chemical treatments for invasive species like Russian olive and tamarisk. With limited Congressionally Designated Spending (CDS) funding, the second project will only be a Forest Stewardship Management Plan for the 600-acre Buckhorn Lakes site. This plan will enhance future funding opportunities, such as through the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) program and align with long-term City budgeting. These no-match-required CDS funds will catalyze both projects, encouraging additional support from partners like RiversEdge West, who have expressed interest in providing funding and technical expertise to sustain these efforts.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The total amount of funding being awarded is \$329,723. There is no match requirement to accept this grant award.

RECOMMENDATION

City Staff recommends approval by City Council to accept this grant award. The grant amount of \$329,723 will be utilized to plan and implement wildfire and forest health initiatives in key parks in Montrose.