

## 15-Minute Self-Training in the Essence of Form-Based Code

Go to [Missoula's Mullan Area Form-Based Code](#). See the dozen pages recommended below and these comments. FBC strengths are **purple**. Public comment by Chris Stockwell, 110521

**Division 2: Regulating Plans, Page 10: Neighborhood Unit Plan.** You will see the word 'transect' on page 10. Understanding this word is the key to understanding form-based code (FBC). Form-based code transects are zones. Form-based planners conceive each transect considering the context of the transects that surround it. This is the key idea that distinguishes form-based code from traditional code. Traditional code only considers the 'use' context of zones. Transects consider broader context for themselves and neighboring transects. This is the **essence** of the power of FBC. Broader context make transects clearer than traditional zones. More **clarity** means FBC transects are smaller and more **flexible** for meeting needs of the community--planners, developers, and future owners. The rural, suburban, and urban zones in the Helena Valley Planning Area (HVPA) could be transects.

**Page 11: Figure 2-1: Neighborhood Unit Plan.** The Mullan Area Units have **significant similarities** to potential HVPA Units. The Mullen Area is next to an urban area. It includes a watercourse, ag lands, open spaces, airport noise limited EADA zone, existing and projected roads, and existing and potential community centers. One difference is the HVPA includes 244,000 acres per the Helena Valley Growth Policy update 2015. The Mullan Area includes 1800 acres per Mullan Area Master Plan

**Page 15: Figure 2-3: Example Regulating Plan.** In the map, note how **flexibly** transects are intermeshed with each other and existing development.

**Page 17:** For more **flexibility**, Section 2.5 contains a Special Requirements Plan to provide even more detailed regulation for specific transects or sites.

**Division 3: Transect Standards, Pages 22-60. Pages 22-23** provide a taste of Division 3. Pictures, diagrams, and tables **clarify** the placemaking intended helping to **ensure the result**. Page 22-45 illustrates all Mullan Area transect standards with diagrams and photos of buildings. illustrations make transect code **easier to understand**. Looking through form-based code is like looking through a hometown photo album. **Transects can include attainable housing, enable revitalization, and more flexible business opportunity**. Transect zones also regulate uses. See pages 58-59. Planners can make additional transect types as needed.

**Division 4: General Development Standards, pages 61-74. Browse this division to understand the breadth of the standards.** To understand FBC more fully, look at a subsection more closely.

**Division 5: Lot and Building Standards, pages 75-99.** For an example of these standards, **see p. 82-83 for shopfront standards** Form-based code does not usually regulate building decoration. Developers can decorate the forms given in **the context of surrounding neighborhoods**.

**Division 6: Thoroughfare Standards, pages 101-118. See page 107.** Thoroughfares include auto, bicycle, micro mobility, and walking. This is one of the ways form-based code directs **environmentally responsible development**.

**Division 7: Developmental Review, pages 119-131.** Browse if a subsection interests you.

Note: Using Form-Based Code will require a consultant experienced with Montana, public input, and FBC. The consultant who did the Mullen Area FBC might be an excellent choice.

**C. Open Space Requirements**

1. Each Master Site Plan must dedicate Land area as Open Space land. Parkland (or Open Space) dedication must be based on the net lotted area of the Master Site Plan. Each Master Site Plan shall dedicate to the Approval Authority's jurisdiction, for the purposes of Open Space, land or cash equal to the greater of the following:
  - a. Eleven (11) percent of the area of the Master Site Plan proposed to be subdivided into lots; or
  - b. 0.02 acres per dwelling unit in the Master Site Plan's proposed development program.
    - i. The land area dedication or its cash equivalent is not required in excess of ten dwelling units per acre.

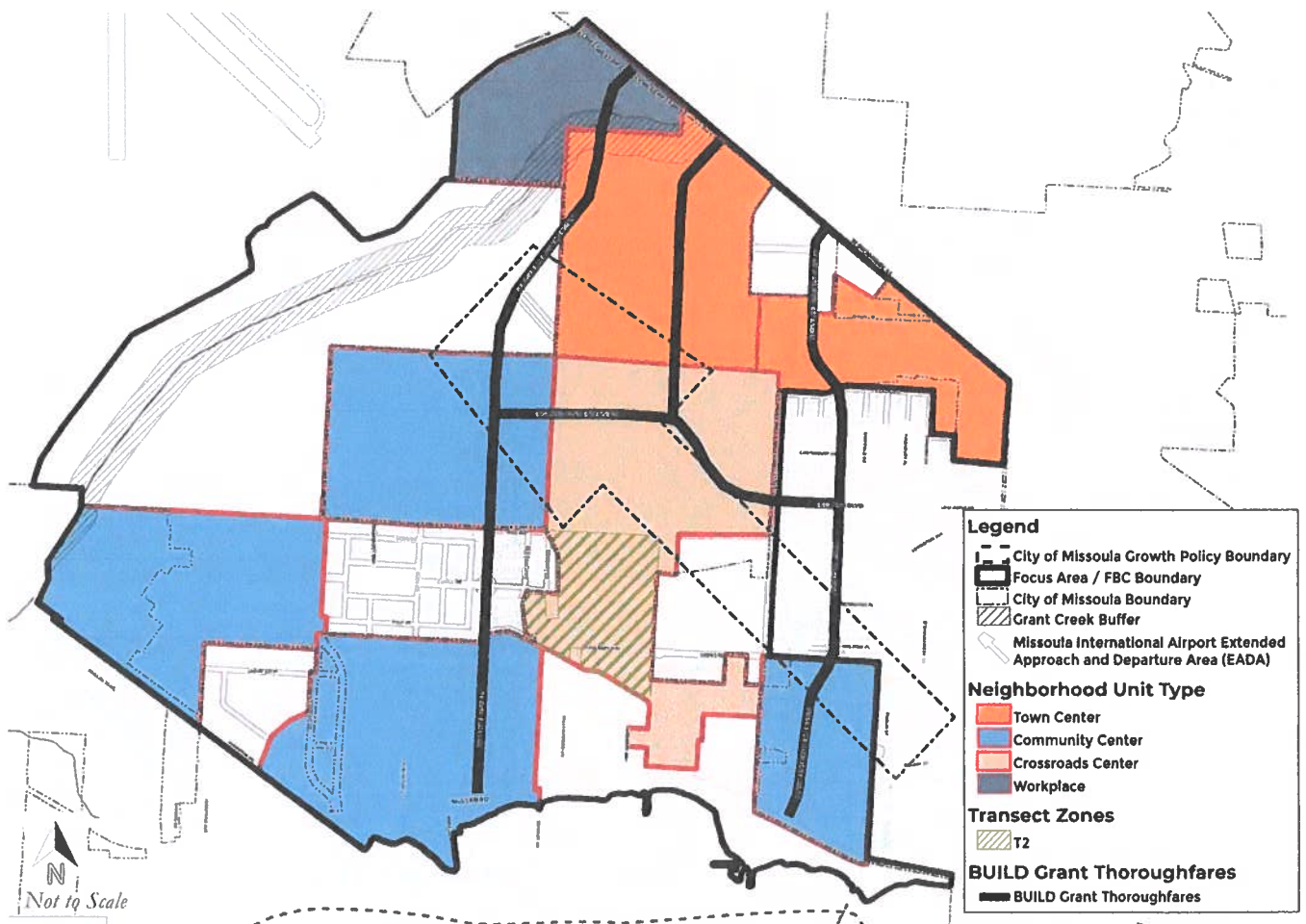


Figure 2-1: Official Neighborhood Unit Plan - Regulatory map for the FBC.