

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners



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SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WDCA25-0008 (Small Housing and Infill Development)

January 13, 2026

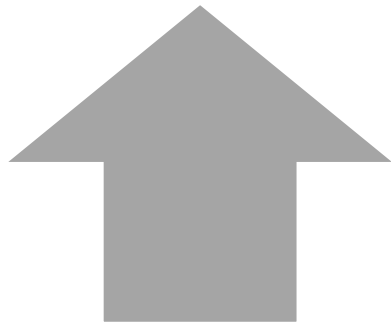
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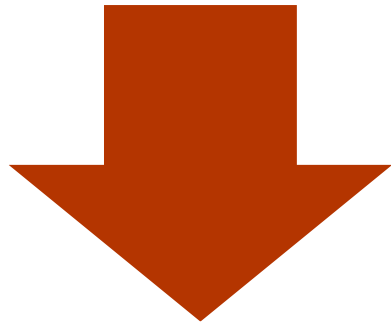
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- Housing supply trends not following household trends
 - Need for larger variety of housing types, particularly smaller units

Trends 1970-2022



**MDS median new
home size: 1,266 sf
to 2,231 sf**



**US mean
household size:
3.14 to 2.50 people**

**66% of
households in
Washoe County
are 1 or 2 person
households**

Articles 302, 304, 306

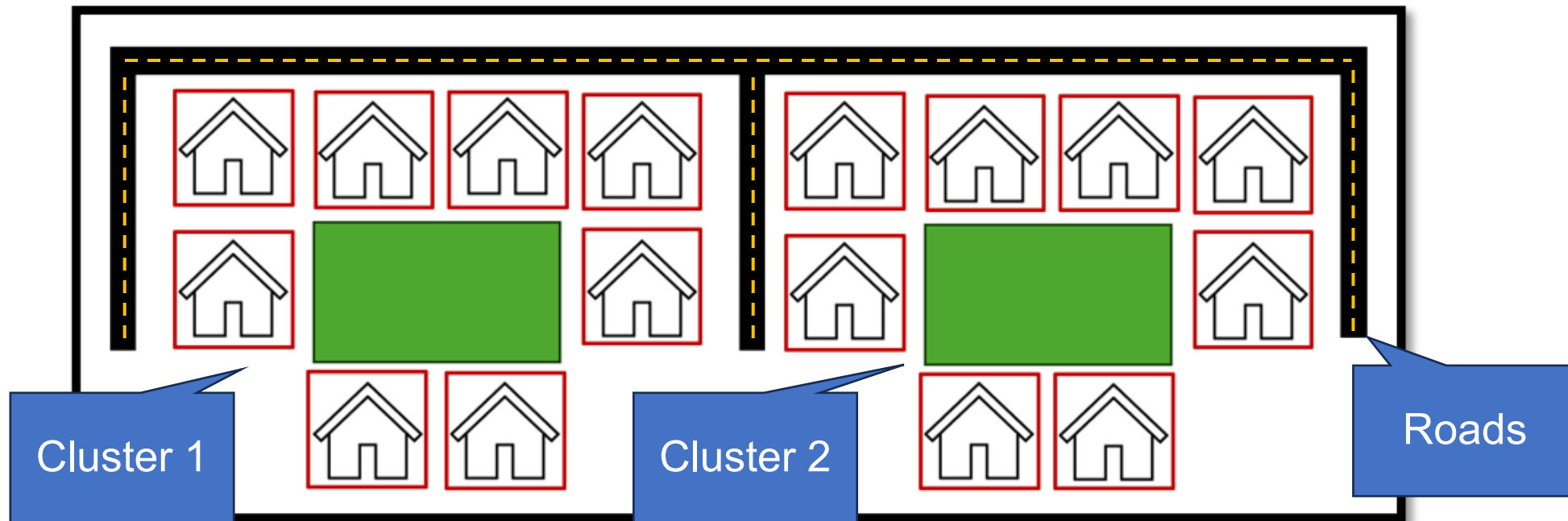


- Refinements to multi-family minor and cottage court definitions
- Modifications to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be **80%** of the size of the main dwelling unit (previously 50%)
 - Maintaining overall maximum size of 1,200 or 1,500, depending on zoning district (no change)
 - Change intended to support ADUs on parcels with smaller main homes

Cottage Courts



- Increase maximum cottage size from 1,000 sf to 1,200 sf (to enable 3-bedroom units)
- Limit community accessory structures to 1 per 4 cottages
- Allow cottage court subdivisions (home ownership opportunity)



Small Lot Development Standards



- For subdivisions with sub-1,200 sf single family detached homes, single family attached homes, or middle housing types
- Alternate standards:
 - Reduced setbacks

Front Yard Setback (Living Space)	10 feet
Front Yard Setback (Garage)	20 feet
Rear Yard Setback	10 feet
Rear Yard Setback (garage accessed from alley)	5 feet
Side Yard Setback	5 feet

- Minimum lot size reduced by 50%
- Alternate road design when privately maintained

- Targeting areas built out prior to development code and which are composed primarily of **non-conforming development**
 - Verdi
 - Sun Valley
 - Wadsworth
 - Gerlach
- Alternate infill standards apply only to parcels under a certain size

Low Density Suburban	26,250 sf
Medium Density Suburban	9,000 sf
High Density Suburban	3,750 sf
General Commercial	21,780 sf
Neighborhood Commercial	21,780 sf

- Setback reductions
 - **Residential:** Front yard setback variation when the structure conforms with existing setbacks for the area
 - **Commercial:** Front yard setback 10 feet, side and rear yard setbacks 5 feet
- Conformance with existing design of area (building orientation and site design)
- Requirement for 1 off-street parking space per unit
- Parking to rear or side of structures for middle housing

Other Changes



- Updates to common open space development standards to reflect ability to request alternate setbacks or propose building envelopes
- Addition of definitions needed to support new code provisions

Planning Commission



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- Planning Commission on November 4th, 2025 voted 7-0 to recommend approval.
- Must make one (1) of the following findings (PC made **all four findings**):
 1. Consistency with Master Plan.
 2. Promotes the Purpose of the Development Code.
 3. Response to Changed Conditions.
 4. No Adverse Affects.

Recommendation



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Planning Commission recommendation: Hold a second reading and adopt WDCA25-0008

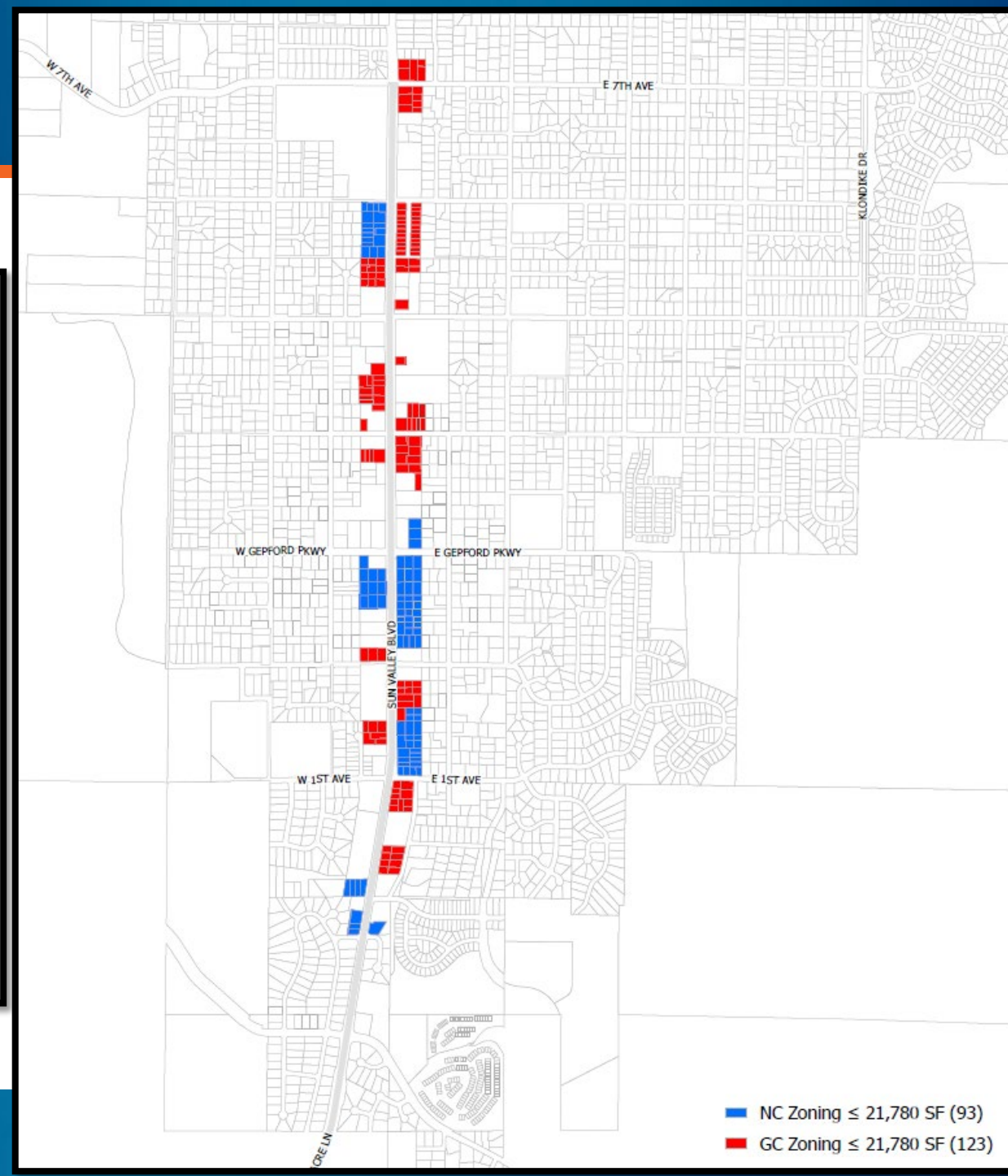
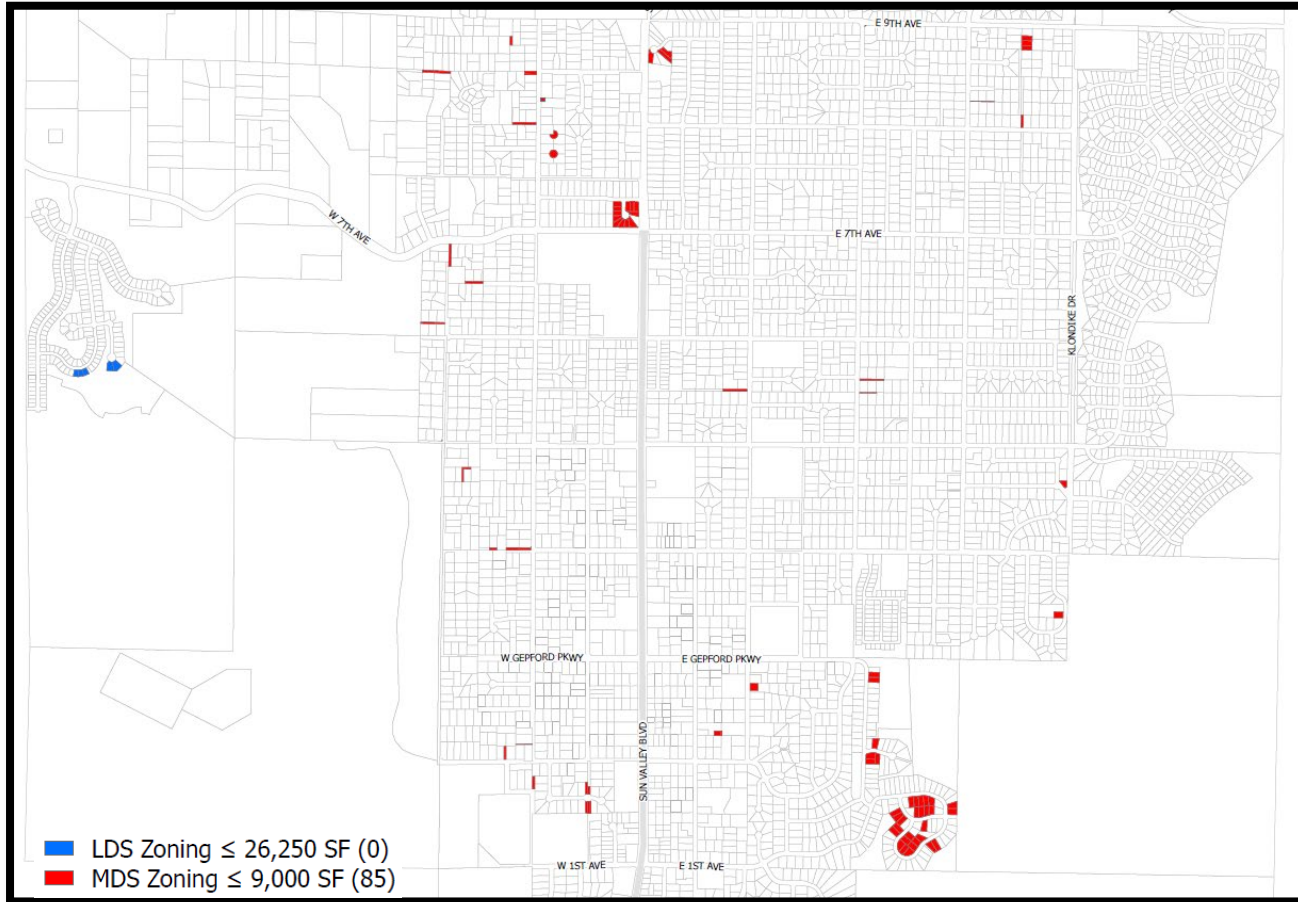
Thank you

Chris Bronczyk, Senior Planner / Kat Oakley,
Senior Planner Washoe County CSD – Planning
Division

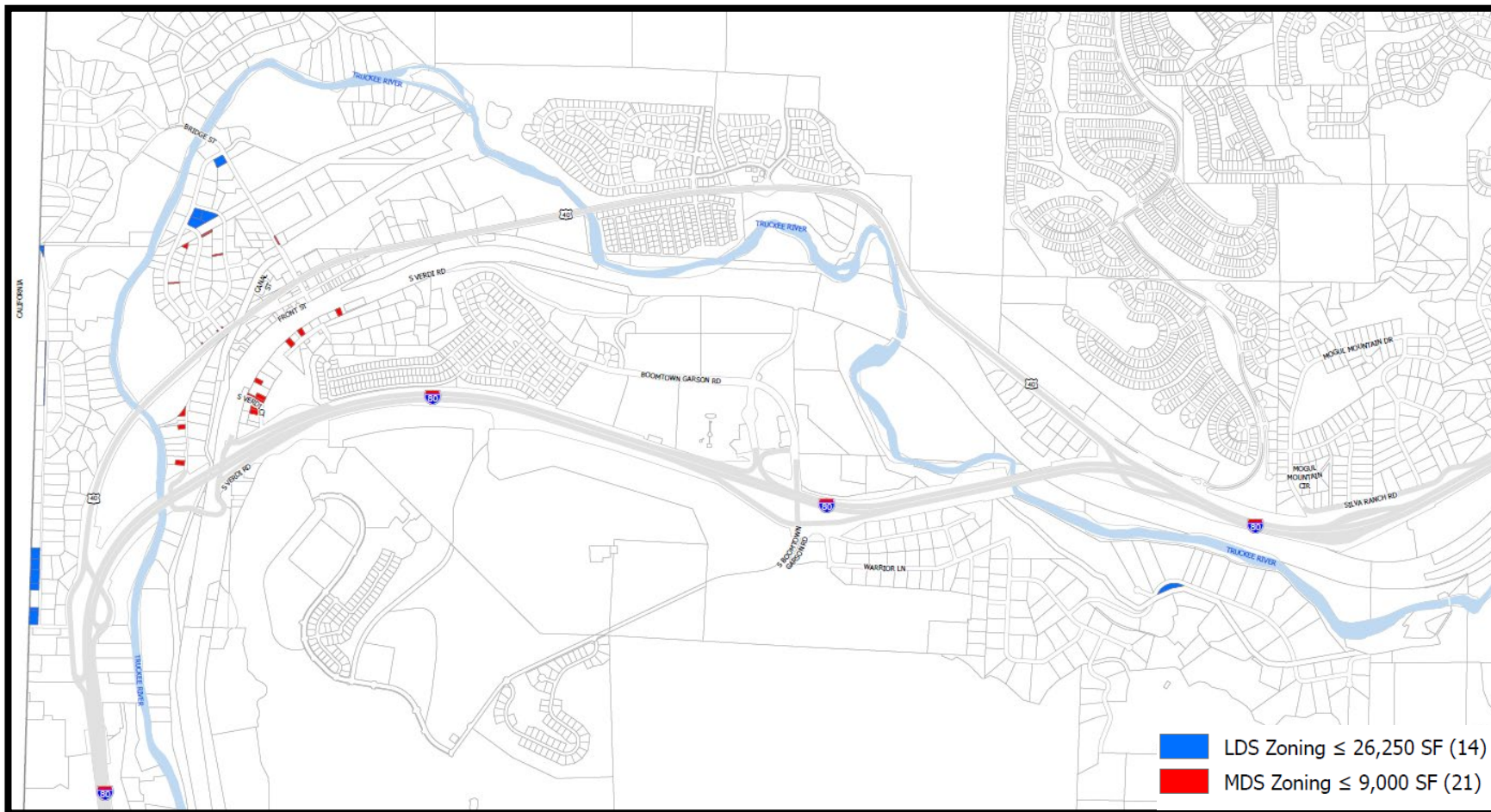
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Sun Valley



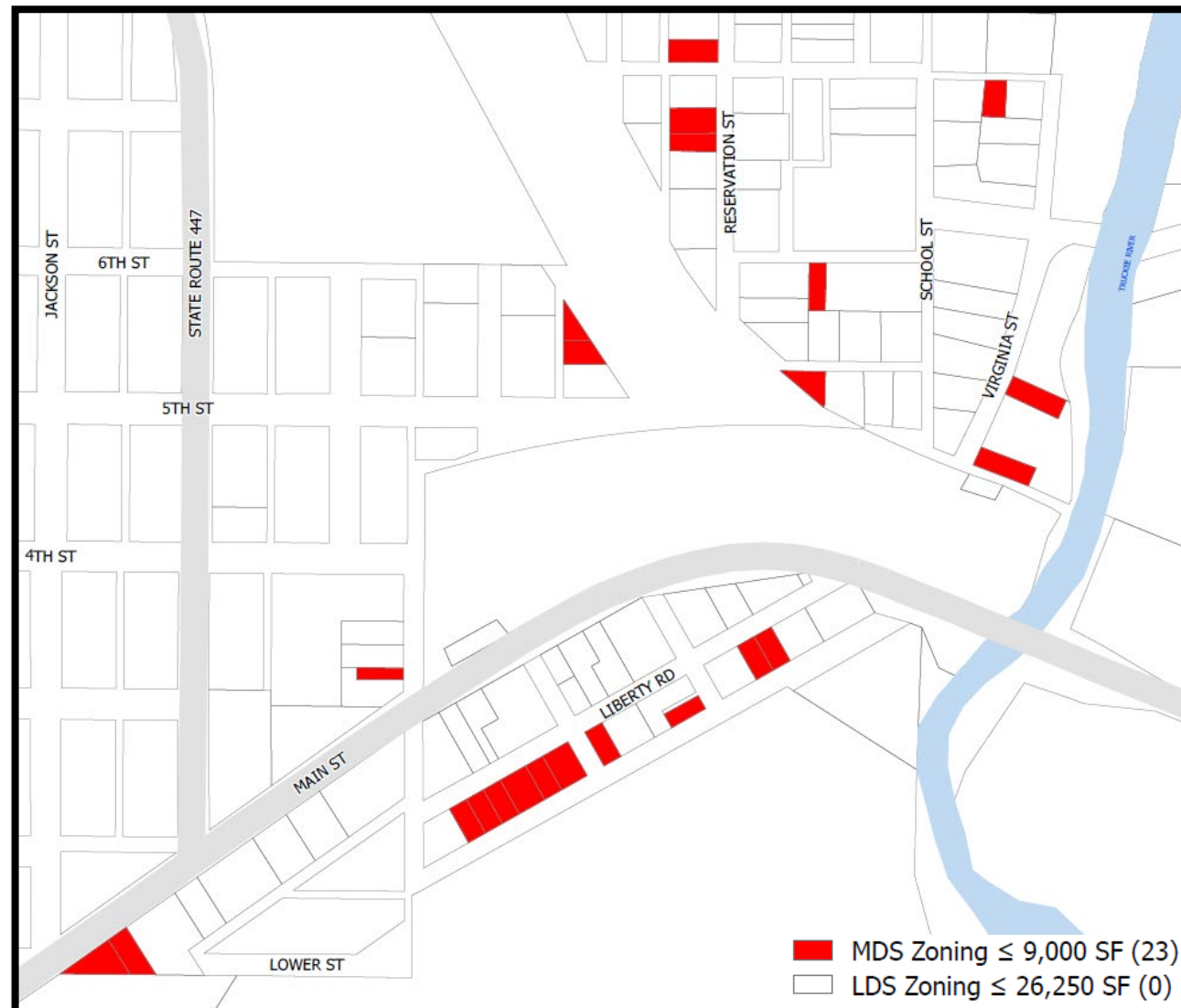
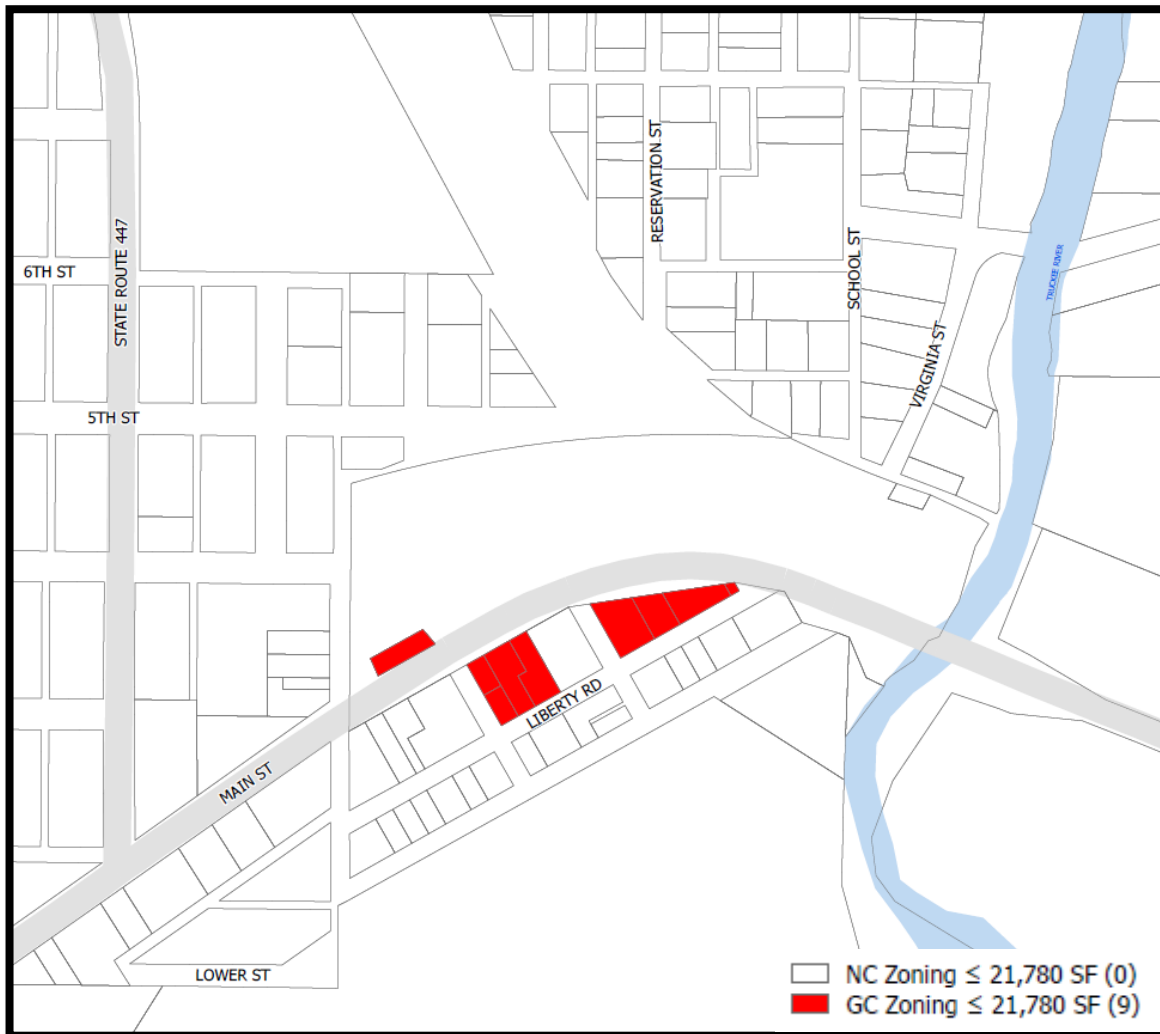
Verdi



Wadsworth



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Gerlach

