

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners



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# WDCA25-0008 (Small Housing and Infill Development)

December 16, 2025

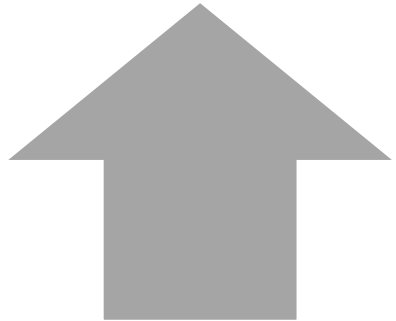
# Background



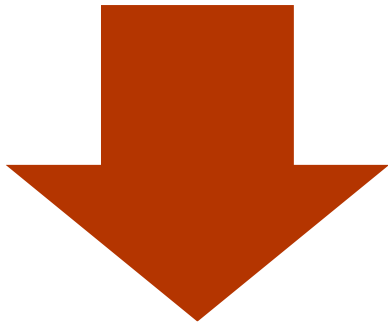
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- Housing supply trends not following household trends
  - Need for larger variety of housing types, particularly smaller units

## 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

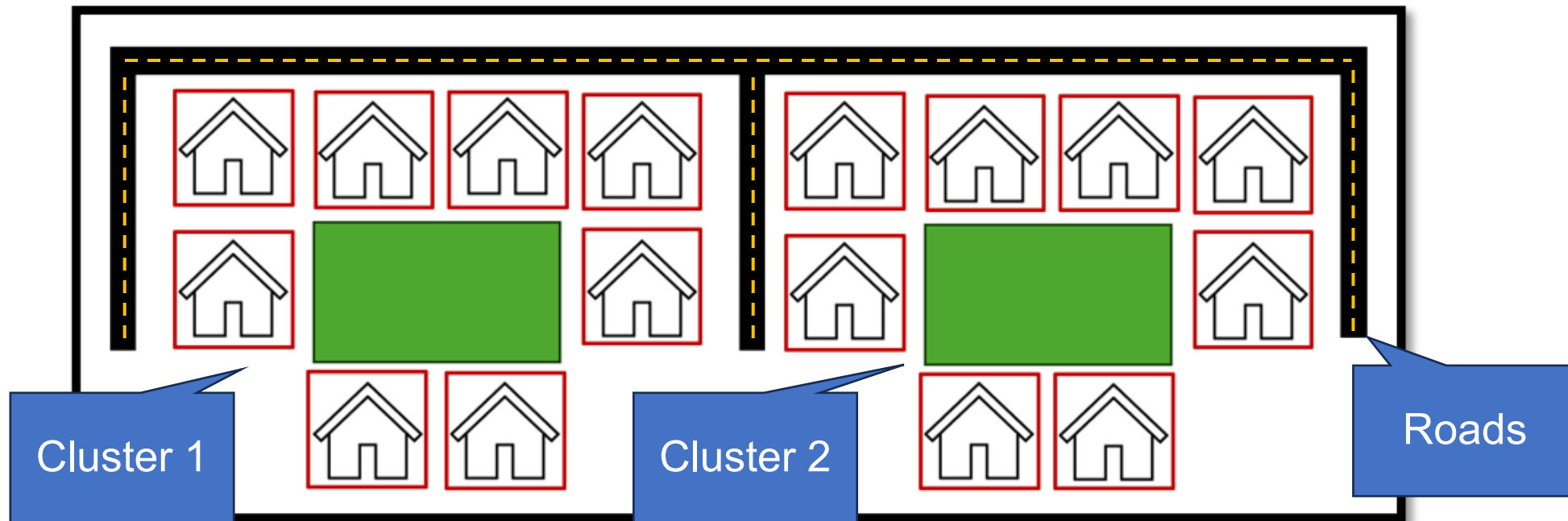


- Refinements to multi-family minor and cottage court definitions
- Modifications to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be **80%** of the size of the main dwelling unit (previously 50%)
  - Maintaining overall maximum size of 1,200 or 1,500, depending on zoning district (no change)
  - Change intended 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 4<sup>th</sup>, 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:** Introduce and conduct first reading of ordinance

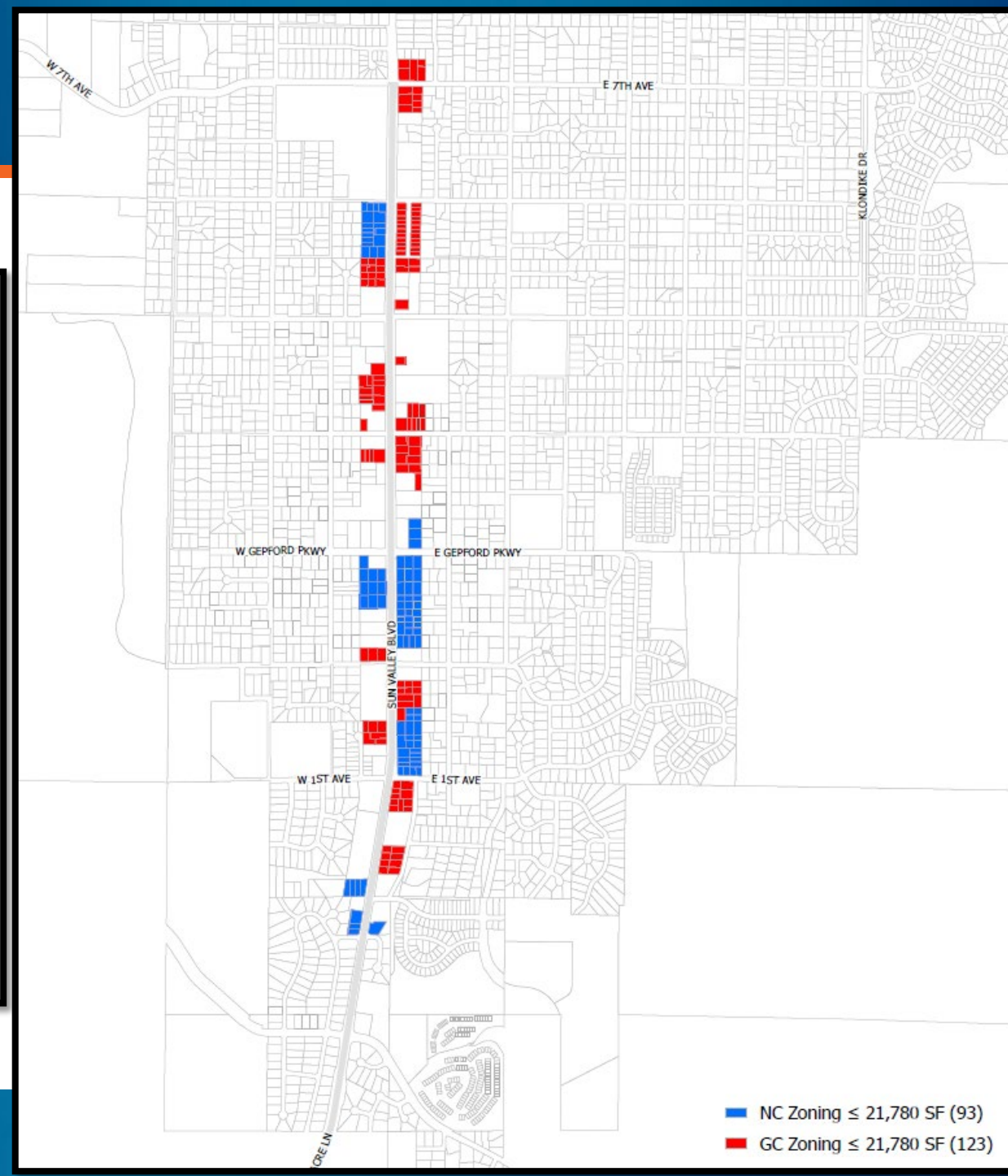
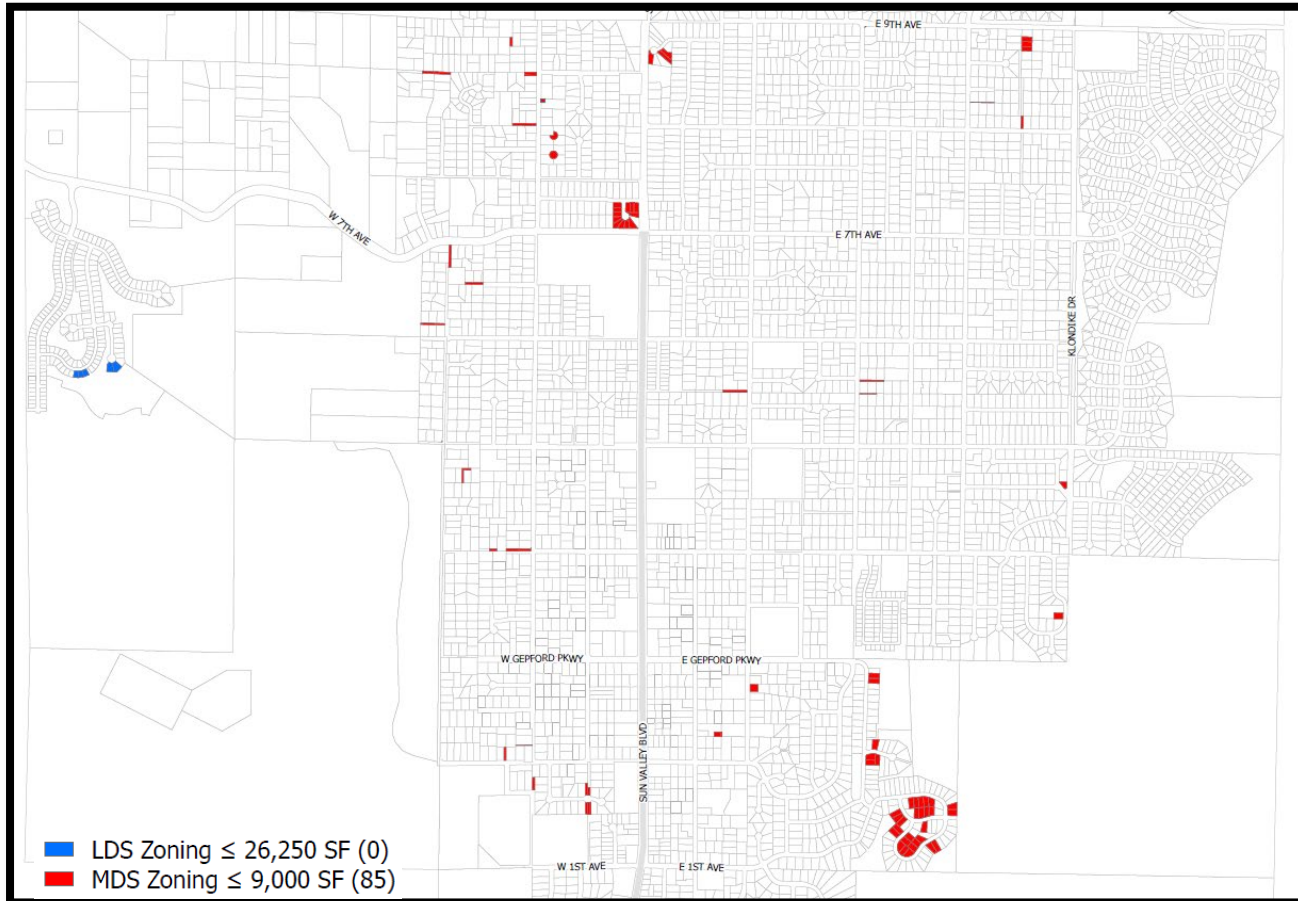
# Thank you

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

[cbronczyk@washoecounty.gov](mailto:cbronczyk@washoecounty.gov) /  
[koakley@washoecounty.gov](mailto:koakley@washoecounty.gov)  
775-328-3612 / 775-328-3628

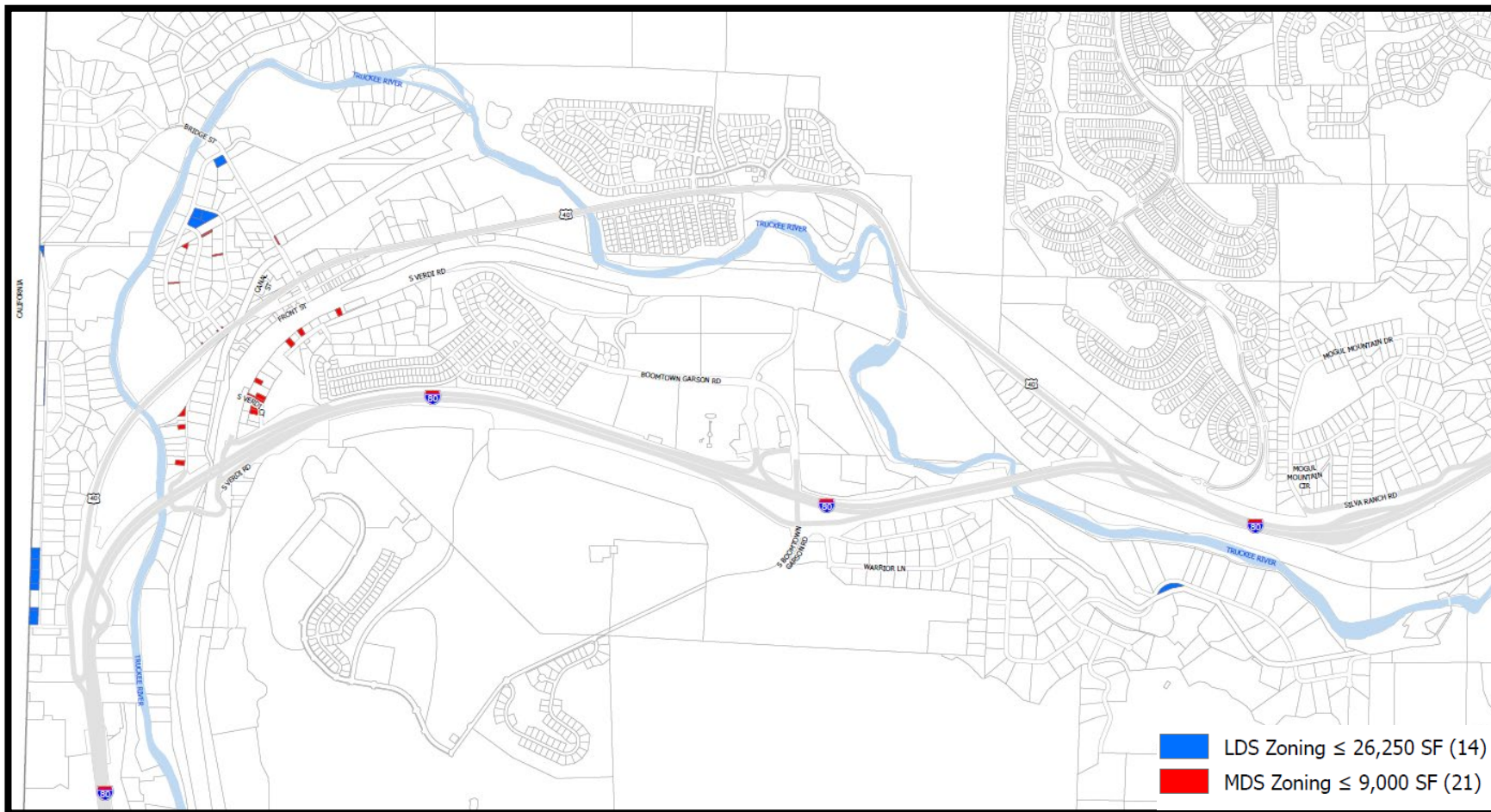


# Sun Valley





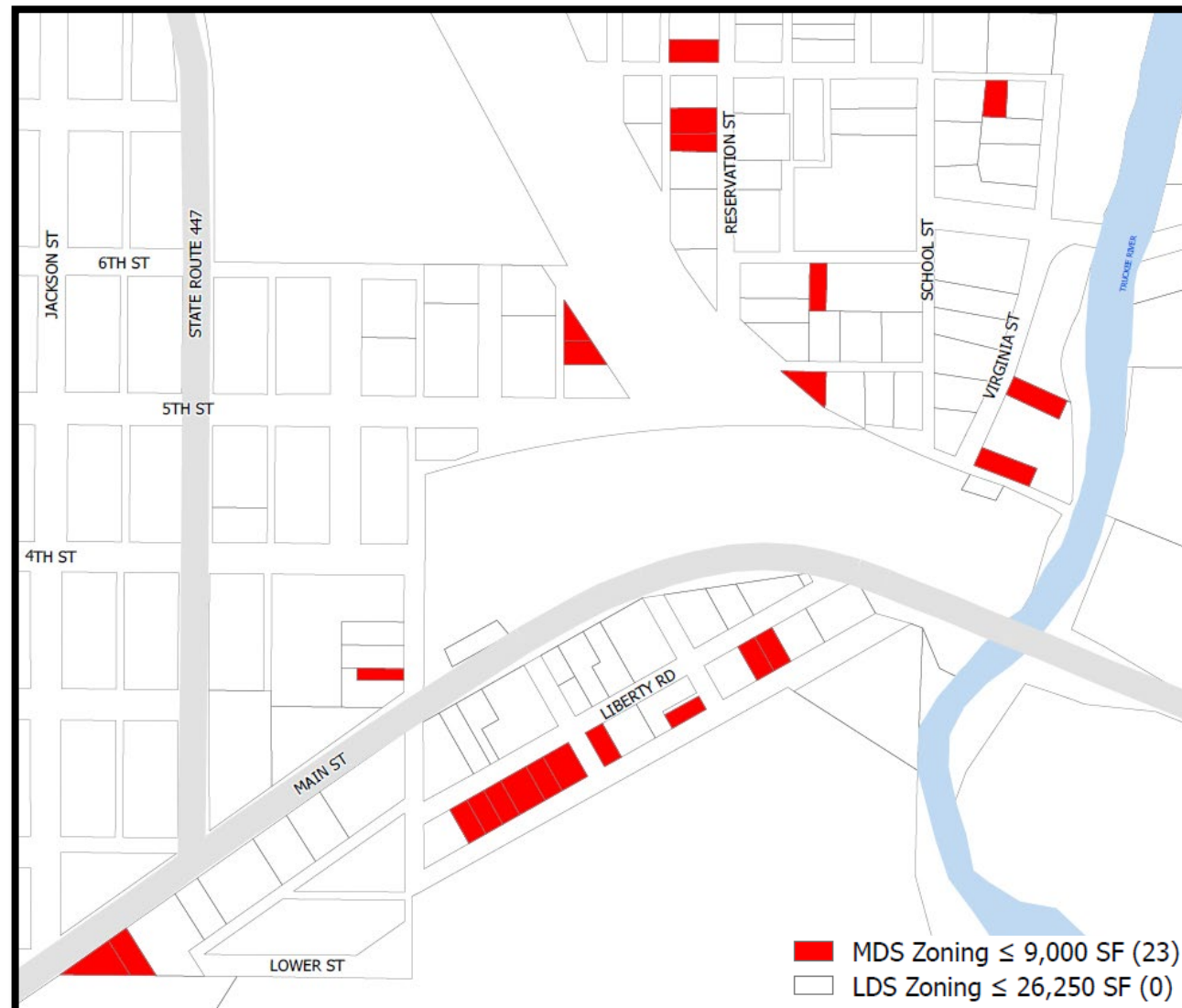
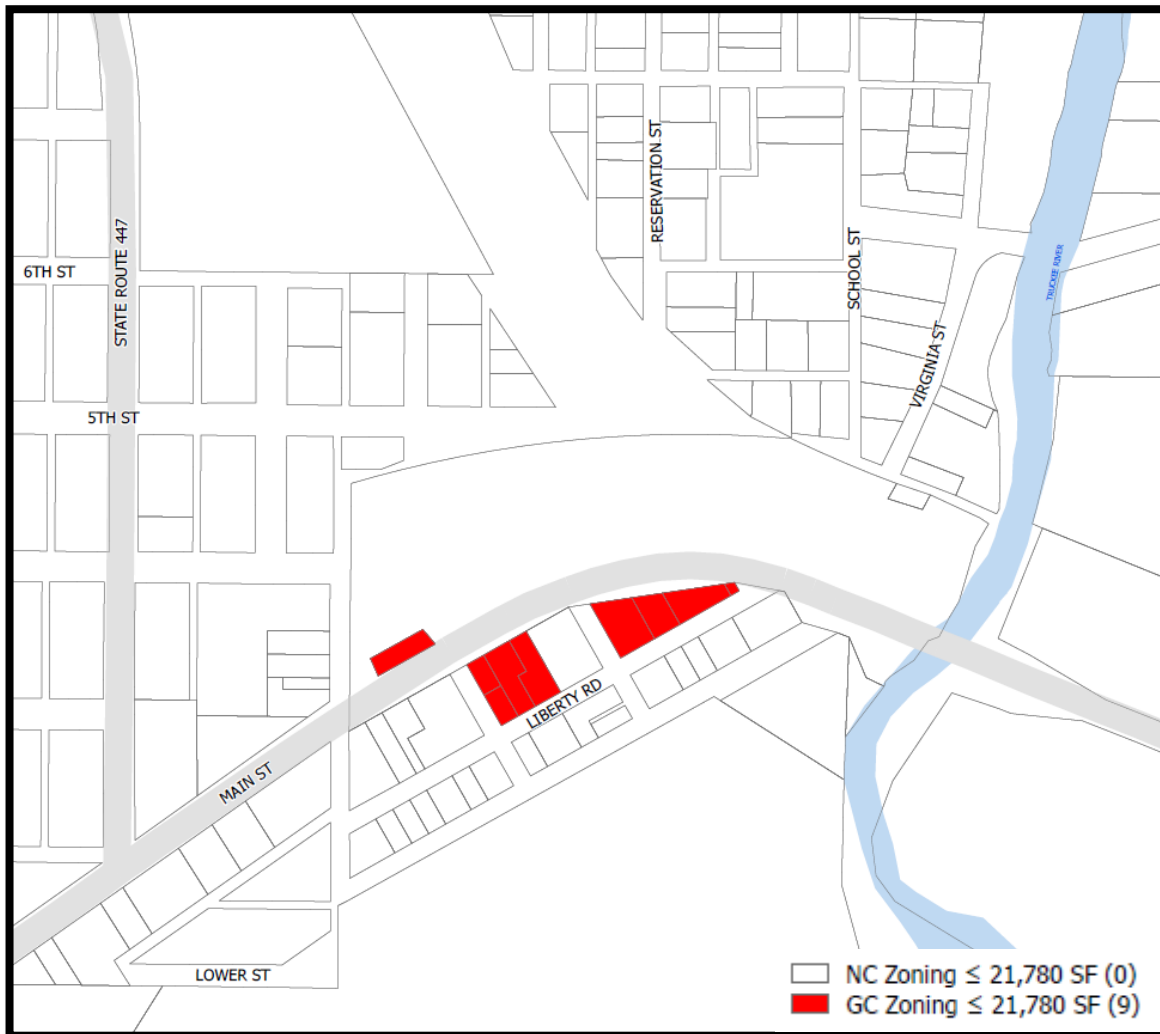
# Verdi



# Wadsworth



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# Gerlach

