

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Protect the views

1. Ensure that impacts from lighting (especially commercial lighting) are minimized. It is valuable to have night skies not impacted by lighting.
2. Would not allow any buildings over 3 or 4 stories tall. Keep signs for companies to a min. and height restrictions.
3. Secure conservation easements along state/federal right of ways. I don't want to see commercial strips along Hwy. 93 going up to Whitefish.
4. I do support growth in the county but I'm concerned about some of the bigger subdivisions that have such tiny lots. There is no room for people to have anything near their home & you should look around existing subdivisions like this.
5. Limit elevation building heights. Id building envelop on all new approved building lots.
6. Set up maximum houses & height requirements on condo's. Retaining walls being built on the lakes around the valley. (Fore example the new cond's & retaining wall in downtown Lakeside, block all views for the town behind it.)
7. Limit the building heights – taller in DT areas, no greater than 2 stories in rural areas. Ban billboards in rural areas – restrict to urban areas only. Enforce junk vehicles laws.
8. Limit construction heights or create development parks similar to Home Depot being built below the road to allow for mountain views to be maintained. Admittedly this is a former gravel pit, but the best part is that we can still see the mountains.
9. Recommend moratorium on all rural subdivisions until/unless developers can certify suitability and compliance with strictest guidelines, addressing design, aesthetics, neighbors and viewshed protection. Regulate signage, billboards. Restrict and retire current billboards.
10. Establish & follow growth policy protocol – periodic review & amendment, continue public input meetings.
11. No high rise buildings – minimum height on buildings & signage.
12. Continue to build out instead of building up.
13. Height restrictions of all buildings – keep as current maximum height.
14. Highway setbacks. Limiting building heights in dense areas. Develop & maintain scenic by-ways.

15. Scenic corridors (e.g. parkways) Areas of aesthetic criticality e.g. parks, city centers, etc.

Promote a diverse economy

1. Create friendly laws for businesses – less real estate & business taxes, non-impact clauses for employees, incentives.
2. Encourage agricultural producers to grow products used in biodiesel (and get the government on that wagon). This would help preserve rural areas, too.
3. Provide tax and training incentives to attract clean, high-paying businesses to the Flathead.
4. Change taxation methods. Sales tax – eliminate property & business tax. Utilize our renewable resources. Promote loser pays in lawsuits which are intended to prohibit the access to our renewable resources. Timber, mining, logging.
5. Provide a stable economy & better paying jobs for our children. Stable & steady growth as opposed to boom & bust cycles.
6. Maybe a sales tax would lower tax basis.
7. Maintain and encourage growth in the natural resource industries --- logging, sawmills. We must maintain where we have come from as we strive to move the valley forward.
8. Create an attractive business park environment that creates the ability to streamline business interaction between those businesses – warehousing, tech cross pollination, traffic (shipping)
9. Promote a diverse economy by having an incentive for clean business moving here. Clean business providing the wages needed to live here.
10. Create localized programs to offer guidance, funding sources & find locations for small businesses.
11. The pay has to get better for all because we can't live on minimum wage anymore. The employers have to come up with better wages. They say to keep good help, you pay them, but especially our govt. jobs who are now understaffed & underpaid. More people, more money.
12. Government controls on new energy resources. i.e. Thompson River coal generating plant. Liquor license controls. Wages in respect to cost of living.
13. Encourage Montana to become a more friendly business state. Recruit industry to Montana to create a balance between construction & service industry. Affordable housing must increase & be priced a

- rate at which the median wage earner could afford. Start a sales tax. Eliminate business personal property tax. Why should I pay a tax because I have expensive manufacturing equipment?
14. Ways to help recruit & expand existing businesses, working together for well paying jobs, develop cluster businesses.
 15. Communicate the benefits of locating a business in Flathead County. Chamber to communicate to industry groups.
 16. Provide logical land availability for business, a workable framework for developing both commercial & residential development.
 17. Search out clean light manufacturing businesses. Need anchor businesses.. We are too dependent upon service industries.
 18. Work with developers and others through “government process” to promote Kalispell & area on a nationwide scale, to let others know how wonderful this area of Montana is. Get them to bring new business here!

Minimize traffic

1. Identify areas of current density (cities & towns) & identify a grid of east-west & north-south connector roads that are one to two miles apart. These roads and/or right of ways should be preserved in adequate width to allow for increasing volume of traffic & pedestrian/bike traffic also and landscape boulevards or landscape medians. This major grid of connectors should be identified early on before density allowances are calculated (zoning). Where the collectors intersect. These intersections should accommodate some commercial – retail & civic or church, things that require more traffic should be located on these corners. Smaller interior neighborhood streets will connect to these larger streets & housing & some office & mixed use along with parks, churches & buffer uses – low impact businesses can be located within a neighborhood. Encouraging mixed use in neighborhoods will help to reduce traffic because people will be encouraged to work at or near home & be able to fulfill their basic needs closer to home rather than having to drive a long way to town.
2. I believe the traffic issue should have been addressed quite some years ago. We have anticipated growth patterns but the roadways & infrastructure is & has been lacking. If we do not make a concerted effort to proactive with our roadways, our growth will be more painful than any of us can imagine.

3. I would change traffic by changing the route if the traffic in town. There are so many large trucks (commercial) going downtown.
4. Bypass! Keep major traffic out of neighborhoods!
5. Establish traffic lights & turn lanes prior to development approval. i.e. Costco, Hutton Plaza, new high school, Lodge at Whitefish Lake.
6. A second bypass around center of the town (Kalispell) to the east seems as though current bypass will mostly affect the west side of Kalispell.
7. 93 – bypass ASAP
8. Create & build bypass.
9. In conjunction with bypass highway, solve the problem on Reserve and other arterials that feed into the bypass. Multi-lane Reserve and fix major intersections.
10. Overpasses instead of traffic lights on highways or merge lanes to exit or enter highways – less accidents.
11. Most of Main Street has no left turns – make it all – no left turns from center to courthouse.
12. Put turning lanes/signals in commercial areas. E.g. signals for turning off 93 to Costco – Target – Blue Cow etc. instead of making one car turn at a time when light turns yellow or red.
13. Accelerate building bypass. Widen & reconstruct Hwy. 35 from Swan Hwy. to Kalispell. Widen & reconstruct Reserve from Farm to Market to Hwy. 2. Reconstruct Farm to Market as a bypass around Whitefish to Hwy. 93. Widen Hwy. 2 Kalispell to Marion.
14. I believe there should be bypass on both the east & west side of Kalispell to allow easier access North & South. To go with that, we should have more East – West crossings of the county in Kalispell & on the North side & South side connecting the bypasses.
15. First control it ... the lights are dangerous & timed incorrectly including the warning lights. Establish & encourage corridors that make sense. Recognize the growth outside cities and build infrastructure to handle it – it isn't safe.
16. We're behind the curve for east – west traffic. Hwy. 35 is bumper to bumper & it's only going to get worse. We have to encourage dept. of transportation to address issue.
17. Do more traffic studies to implement turn lights to move traffic. In Great Falls, you can cover more area in less time due to flow of traffic. Turn light for ex. 93 & Meridian. Left turn to KJHS. Also 3rd Ave. E. N & S direction. You can sit there for up to 3 lights to go east or West.

18. You can't do this. The increase will happen. You must plan an infrastructure that can handle the increase.
19. Create roads plan that looks at existing thoroughfares and suggests new route that promotes safety and easy flow of traffic. Next get funding plan to make it happen.
20. Establish corridors for "through traffic" which bypasses arterials that are "service oriented". Acquire 'right of way' now in order to conserve funding. Construct proper arterials now with government bonds to serve future development. i.e. Reserve, Whitefish Stage, Evergreen thru to Hwy. 93.
21. More turn lanes, passing lanes Hwy. 93 north & south
22. Suggest instead we "manage" traffic. With current growth rate, traffic will increase. In addition to minimization, it needs to be managed better than currently as existing traffic management is very poor.
23. Get the bypass done.
24. There really is no public transportation. Some sort of public transportation would cut down on traffic. Some sort of a carpool regulation.
25. Proceed with truck bypass in Kalispell. Attempt to assist this project.
26. I would minimize/improve traffic by instituting a local option gas tax. The proceeds would allow the county to fund projects to improve roads, bridges, traffic flow and maintain existing roads etc.
27. Widen Hwy. 93 to Whitefish. Truck bypass. More traffic lights, roundabouts i.e. Reserve, Farm to Market, Whitefish Stage Roads.
28. Bike paths, public transport, density transfers, urban clustering, ag. incentives, good roads. Be realistic & build roads even before they are needed!
29. Traffic studies need to be conducted throughout the city/county. How any is funded – don't know, but need to upgrade roads throughout city/county.
30. Develop a stronger & longer vision in designing roads for the future. Good example of a "failure": Willow Glen. Homes should not have been allowed to build so close to a potential bypass.
31. I would move forward with east and west bypass roads and put a Hwy. 93 connection north of the Stillwater River to alleviate Reserve St. traffic congestion.
32. Build planned bypass and Conrad connections. Zone those areas for only businesses likely to be used by travelers. They want food, gas, bathrooms, place to sleep. They don't want wheelbarrows, flowers, boats, clothing, cars, etc. Putting these types of businesses near the

- bypass will encourage locals to shop there instead of the business districts. The bypasses should be zoned for restaurants, truck stops, hotels, motels, campgrounds. Only businesses providing services to travelers.
33. We cannot minimize traffic so much as facilitate appropriate traffic flows. We need to look at main corridors for channeling traffic into the future, then protect those corridors, with sufficient width for berms/sidewalks/bike trails to make it work long time. There are clearly definable travel corridors that can be preserved from development for appropriate development.
 34. Build more roadways – bypass.
 35. Minimizing traffic is impossible – more people move here – more cars – people won't leave the cars at the border.

Maintain the identity of rural communities

1. Rural S/B 5 ac. min. Flathead County should continue to be a “Montana community”, not tract cruising around every corner.
2. I am truly not sure how to fix this because I know our community needs to grow, but we also need to keep the integrity of small areas that our children can appreciate also. Maybe smaller subdivisions, larger lots.
3. Limit the splitting of land. Make parcels remain large.
4. Promote the community council concept and how it may fit with the planning process.
5. Maintain the identity of rural communities by keeping subdivisions etc. in areas that do not interfere with these areas. The rural areas are a large part of the “flavor” of our valley. Always keep in mind the originality of each individual community whether it be by lakes, rivers or (illegible).
6. Maintaining the identity of rural communities is important, but growing the community to maximize its resources to better the county as a whole.
7. I think that any time a subdivision or development is approved, it should be required to have a certain % dedicated to trees, parks, etc. Empire Estates is an example of what not to do. Try and keep the natural beauty.
8. Resist the temptation to fall back to the “5 acre weed patch.” 5 ac. parcels don't provide open space. Generally speaking, density is good, it preserved more open space for a longer period.

- Neighborhood plans need to include significant density bonus for open space set aside. Also encourage plans that incorporate creativity and style.
9. I believe if these are maintained then aspects of traffic, diversity & managing environment will fall into place. The country as a whole is becoming homogenized. Attempting to create a balance between urban “box” strip mall & small town feel. Part of our hands are tied by the fact of major federal/state lands here & poor small business incentive structure. Traffic will always be an issue. It is the nature of our society. It is unique here that so many people commute to “play” (water sports, golf, hunt, ski) in addition to work/shop.
 10. Having lived in Europe & traveling in other continents the biggest thing to promote both of the above ideals seems to be a “central commons”. The old style of concentric rings of use (park, public, residential) encourages community in the sense of knowing & interacting with your neighbors. As land is sliced up, the common areas need to be central not as road buffers (long narrow & useless) & some retail/services area needs to be allocated for the livability of the sprawl.
 11. Set density standard throughout county. Significantly direct growth into existing cities. Discourage unorganized densities which are now occurring across the county haphazardly. Define rural communities, describe key elements of each rural community. Set general standards that new developments in these rural communities must adhere to receive project approvals.
 12. Limit development potential surrounding rural communities by zoning surrounding lands. Help rural communities with grant writing in order to obtain money to upkeep/revitalize the downtowns of rural communities.
 13. Do not tinker with neighborhood plans that are developed by involved locals!!
 14. Predefine areas or perimeters to try to concentrate commercial activity in specific areas – hopefully preserve some open space surrounding incorporated cities.
 15. Correlate the issues of the rural areas specific to their areas. Give these “NP” groups the outlines to the templates identified by the county to submit the needs of the “NP” areas with credibility. Credibility of the outlining areas & their people & businesses are really an issue. Bedroom communities like Marion, Fortine, Coram have very strong feelings about the “NP” & Growth Policy. Those of

us in Marion – look forward to our development of the “NP” & hope to utilize your expertise to create this very effective & necessary plan.

16. I feel when we are working do one of these goals, we will go a long way to successfully accomplishing both goals. One way I feel we can strive to protect the beauty of our valley “the natural beauty” is maintaining open space by really identifying growth areas – have those areas be dense with green belt areas in between and then develop a 50 year growth plan which the leaders of Flathead County use consistently & base all growth decisions on. Also when growth is too rapid and standards are being sacrificed – call a moratorium so further growth is done the right way.

Protect access to and interaction with parks & recreation

1. Having lived in Europe & traveling in other continents the biggest thing to promote both of the above ideals seems to be a “central commons”. The old style of concentric rings of use (park, public, residential) encourages community in the sense of knowing & interacting with your neighbors. As land is sliced up, the common areas need to be central not as road buffers (long narrow & useless) & some retail/services area needs to be allocated for the livability of the sprawl.
2. Required to keep people & bring in new people in an area.
3. I would earmark the areas to be developed into nature areas in the future & existing today so that we can be sure that these exist and where they exist as we grow.
4. Identify access points. Provide policy that preserves that access or offers alternative access to same resource.
5. I believe this is very important reason why people live here. We need to provide buffer areas to these parks, make sure public always has access via roads, trails, etc.
6. Set aside spaces & locations just for our county population!
7. Build and fund access points to recreational areas in Flathead County. Develop more regional parks. Funding is key!!
8. Create linkages between existing/new parks & wetlands. Preserve lands that are marginal for development, but more suited for wildlife/floodplains/view sheds. Promote these recreation opportunities as an economical development engine.

9. Define the acceptable role that parks & recreation plays in the community. Set guidelines and limitations that will be necessary to accomplish this. Evaluate current system. Do master plan.

Properly manage and protect the natural and human environment

1. Help retain our natural assets for enjoyment by the public while encouraging higher densities, affordable housing & retaining community character as we grow.
2. How: enforce laws to keep our land clean & free of debris; low emission vehicles and keep a fund at hand to help our citizens with problems i.e. drugs, alcohol, mental, educational & nutritional.
3. Density depending on the area.
4. I don't know how to fix it.
5. Keep development to high traffic corridors, and at the same time eliminate the typical California style strip malls – (now are on Hwy. 2 in Evergreen) they are inherently ugly and a blight on the area. There must be a way to make stand alone businesses viable.
6. Remember! Noto bien! Flathead County is an unique county in America. It is required to be stewards of wilderness habitat and the survival of wildlife – especially the grizzly bear. Your emphasis is always on humans, but wildlife is under our care and they deserve to be a separate topic of emphasis in the growth policy plan.
7. Need to separate natural and human environments – two separate issues, should be dealt with differently. Don't need to add to the over-regulation of “natural” lands as it is already is.
8. Give some incentives for large landowners to keep open space & less development.
9. Provide options to stakeholders. Then develop plan based on stakeholder input. Since cities are part of county, include their planning departments and boards as equal input providers. (illegible) for adoption should include all planning groups. This is critical to reduce conflicts in growth management.
10. Preserve groundwater quality/rivers & lakes especially Flathead Lake. Identify & map aquifers.. Monitor runoff from developed property. Assist in removing at-risk septic systems in high water tables. Pave more well used gravel roads to preserve air quality i.e. dust control. E.g. Stillwater from 3 Mile to gravel pits.
11. Land use needs to change in rural areas to a minimum lot size of 2 ½ acres to 5 acres. Development (dense development) must be forced to

- city services. Our groundwater is being adversely affected due to septic systems as well as wells. This will also preserve views. This will also reduce cost of services by the county.
12. How – by creating a plan that will work on addressing each of the other issues. Views, traffic.
 13. I enjoy the ability to ski, boat, go to GNP, and enjoy the natural beauty but, I also spend a good portion of my shopping dollars outside of the valley. To be able to balance the natural beauty, and allow the businesses that people want is very important to me.
 14. Work to do planning that improves the use of land and to centralize all activities in areas designated. Fill in spaces rather than hodgepodge of development. Continually monitor growth and try to keep land use clean, etc.
 15. Keep parks and recreational areas for that use only. Keep state land and federal land there – not able to sell at all in future.
 16. Manage the land that is subdivided as well as stand land that is sold & subdivided. Continue to allow public access to public lands.
 17. Recycling available to communities for plastics, tin cans, pop cans, newspapers, hazardous materials. Keep natural bodies of water clear and clean. Businesses should not be able to destroy our waters and lands with chemicals and human waste. Limit mining and other natural resources from being destroyed. More garbage/recycling centers. Keep pollutions to a minimum. Car emissions should be at a minimum level to keep the air clean. Other ways to keep air clean.
 18. Provide guidelines that lay out expectations & priorities for how to utilize & take advantage of our resources. Provide for enforcement & monitoring of guidelines (How & how paid for) – user fees, taxes, impact fees, etc.
 19. Add language that will maintain open space – not just parks within the subdivisions, but open space for everyone’s benefit.
 20. Control growth of subdivisions. Lighting controls/restriction residential and commercial – no light pollution like on Hwy. 93 North. Education, elementary, secondary and continuing education – supported community. Controls of casinos/bars. Support “family” activities and protect areas for camping, hiking, x-country skiing as well as cultural opportunities – concerts, plays. Thank you for asking and listening to our community members.
 21. Projection into the future seems to me would be important to analyzing the possibilities of development. Worst case and what to avoid so we do not end up there. What are the factors in other areas

- that would drive our people to our community and what attitudes will they bring with them?
22. Zoning that creates a harmonious human environment. Social cooperation and zoning to preserve the natural environment. Rules about 93 development. No quonset huts or junkyards.
 23. Develop land use rules that maintain open spaces in certain areas and design other areas for density in housing. Other areas need to be zoned commercial. Make commercial areas deep – not just along hwy. corridors.
 24. Public input, use common sense, be firm yet create flexibility in plan.
 25. If one or both of these are not properly managed, the rest don't matter. The diverse economy is extremely important to us as well, but the environments have to be managed first. They are forever. Economies can change.
 26. Hmmmm ... Seems like all other 'topics' address this; this goal seems to be the vision ... you know what I mean ☺ . So, how I would do it – place stipulations on building size/height; focus on economy based around non-extraction, get smart with roads/promote public transportation. I need rural community thing explained to me; promote innovative ways to promote access to identified park/recreational areas. Have those identified areas be focal point. Private property rights – This is a whole beehive of issues. ☺ I did not tell you all anything you didn't already know! Thanks.
 27. Clear policies and tools that direct growth towards the cities like transfer development rights, develop standards, clear standards that trigger addition review in wildlife or other natural resource areas.

Preserve the rights of private property owners.

1. Property owners need to be aware of what their rights really are.
2. Private owners should have right to do anything they please on their own private property as long as it poses no threats & negative effects on neighbors.
3. Allow long term large property owners to have an avenue of help which will allow them to do with their property that large developers have. Help indigenous landowners get the sophistication to mine their property values. Keep family transfers a possibility.
4. Write a flexible & changeable growth policy to allow owners to sell their land & use it to maintain the best outcome.

5. As the population grows, property rights need to step back from community rights.
6. Most important to me is to preserve the rights of property owners. I guess that means that the government has less say and we have more say on our own property.
7. Recognize that landowners have the strongest say in what happens to the property they bought & paid for & continue to pay taxes on.
8. Every time you do something, something changes. Large property owners (view areas) can't be controlled by few. 40 acres +
9. Define where their rights be in. Is it surrounding their private property: views, access, noise? Once determined, prioritize through public hearings to clarify for the individual.
10. Control the cities' ability to annex property into "city limits" without providing services to property owners.
11. Important issue that should be addressed because some new subdivisions have very restrictive covenants & homeowner's boards that are on a "power trip" & are being offensive to property owners. Need some guidelines to protect private property owners while keeping our neighborhoods clean & safe.
12. Less regulation – actually works for diverse economy as well. Policy, laws, rules should be used as guidance or in extreme safety issues. The market can be relied on but will need guidance. Filter out public stupidity – be smart.
13. Protect private property rights. Allow flexibility to farm or timber and still be able to develop to highest and best use. Regulation is not the answer market base solutions are.

Miscellaneous

1. All planning issues – Create a very available forum for the public to be informed of developments (changes, ideas, etc.) in growth (policy and actual events). Not just the list, but something like a blog or website or a sub-section of the paper where there is information and discussion.