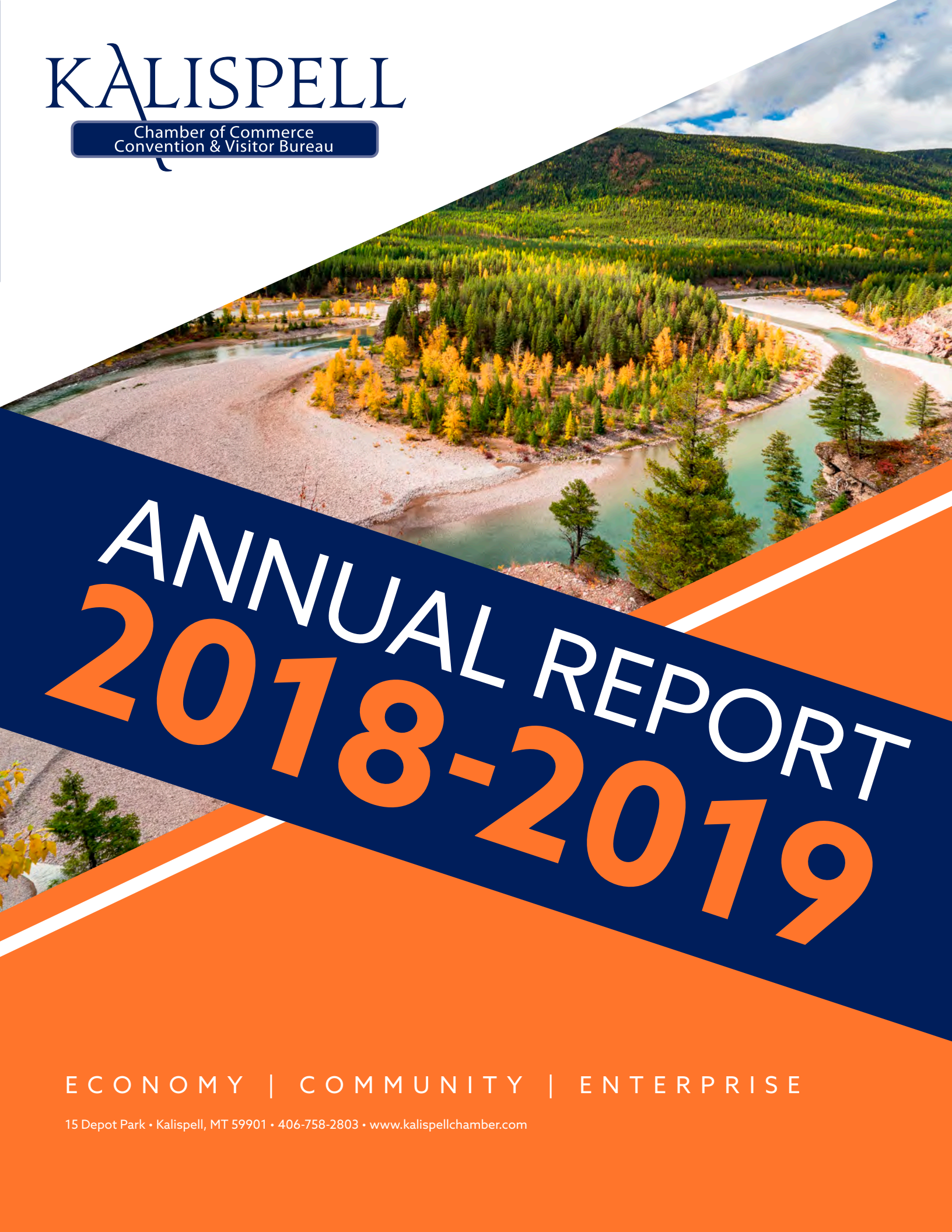


KALISPELL

Chamber of Commerce
Convention & Visitor Bureau



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

ECONOMY | COMMUNITY | ENTERPRISE

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2018 BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS



Kalispell awarded \$12.75M Federal BUILD Grant to widen southern-half of the Kalispell Bypass.

Expanded commercial air service through new daily-direct flights to Dallas, Los Angeles, and Chicago on American Airlines beginning June 2019.



KRMC's Digestive Health Institute and Montana Children's Medical Center along with numerous projects at Immanuel Lutheran Communities enhanced Kalispell's position as a top healthcare destination.



Awarded the designation as an Economic Opportunity Zone by Governor Bullock to bolster redevelopment projects.

The City of Kalispell and Flathead County Economic Development Authority successfully opened the Glacier Rail Park.

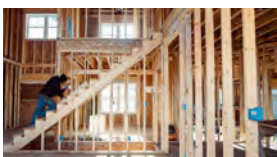


Became a mecca for microbreweries, wineries, distilleries, and cideries with the opening of six new establishments.

Continued to develop offerings for postsecondary students with an \$18M facility campaign at Flathead Valley Community College, including a new \$3M library.

Began classes at Kalispell Public School's newest Elementary, Jeannette Rankin Elementary, and continued facility work on all other public school facilities.

Kalispell area named the third-fastest growing micropolitan community in the nation for the second year in a row.



Constructed over 587,000 square feet of commercial and institutional development valued at \$183M.

Tourism grew to support \$530M of non-resident spending in Flathead County.



2018 CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS

ADVANCED CAREER READINESS FOR GOOD-PAYING JOBS in manufacturing and trades through Manufacturing Day tours, training for area teachers and counselors, and career awareness programs for students.

LED THE SUPPORT EFFORT TO ADVOCATE FOR FEDERAL FUNDS TO WIDEN THE KALISPELL BYPASS by gathering signatures of over 500 businesses and individuals, rallying 15 community, tourism, and business organizations, and organizing a trip to Washington D.C. for 14 business and civic leaders.

OPENED THE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION CENTER as a physical and online resource for developers interested in investing in Kalispell.

INCREASED MEMBERSHIP OF FLATHEAD AREA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS to include over 300 career minded individuals ages 21-39 who are invested in making a difference in the community.

RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY AS A TOP 10 CHAMBER in two areas of membership achievement by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

SECURED 102 NEW MEMBERS to expand the scope of our business network and impact of our organization.

ORGANIZED THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MARKET LIVESTOCK SALE IN HISTORY, raising over \$550,000 for area students with agricultural interests.

HOSTED THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL ROUNDUP TRADESHOW for 40 international travel buyers to understand available recreation opportunities in Kalispell.

ATTRACTED OVER 8,600 PARTICIPANTS TO SIGNATURE TOURISM EVENTS for an economic impact measured at over \$5M.

Assisted with numerous meetings and conventions that **BOOKED OVER 2,000 KALISPELL HOTEL ROOMS**.

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE:

Beginning this year, we will embark on a multi-year workforce initiative in cooperation with our education and workforce development partners to ensure that local employers have a steady supply of talented, hard-working people to do the work of a modern economy so that Northwest Montana can compete and lead.

We have people without jobs – those who lack the skills or education to fill open positions. And, we have jobs without people – employers tell us positions are sitting vacant because they cannot find workers when and where they need them.

As the local Chamber of Commerce, we are at the center of this complex challenge. By working to strengthen the foundation of opportunity at K-12 schools and our community college, our plan is to create the most educated and productive workforce in Montana.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR THE KALISPELL CHAMBER IN 2019

PROMOTING AN ACTIVE AND VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

A vibrant, prosperous downtown is critical to the success of communities and workforce attraction.

- Extend the work of the Development Information Center to the next phase by informing developers, the public, and our members about outstanding investment opportunities available downtown including tax increment financing, new market tax credit, and opportunity zone incentives.
- Small Business Saturday will be expanded to more businesses, especially those downtown.
- Downtown and core area plans will be supported to promote the health and vibrancy of the central business district.

GROWING KALISPELL AS A REGIONAL TRADE CENTER

Regional trade center growth increases the number of jobs in high-wage, high-growth industry sectors such as health care, financial services, professional services, and manufacturing.

- Pro-growth land use policies will be advocated for the B3-zone, city and county growth policy, and new commercial areas.
- Utilize research to support expanding regional healthcare center: PUD overlay, H1 zone, defeat of poor tax policy, and provide high-quality health care for the people of Northwest Montana.

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE MOMENTUM

Modern, safe, and efficient infrastructure is integral to a growing economy. Roads, bridges, and airports connect us to new markets and visitors that move our economy forward.

- We led advocacy efforts to help secure \$12.75 million of Bypass funding in 2018. Now is the time to press harder for the completion of the full-build of this alternative route.
- Drive forward on the next generation of highway projects: Reserve Drive, Whitefish Stage, and Willow Glen.
- Support Glacier Park International Airport on its terminal

expansion plans that will create additional gates for new flights, including the new non-stop American Airlines service to DFW, LAX, and ORD.

ACCELERATING NON-RESIDENT TOURISM GROWTH

Non-resident tourism adds \$530M to the Flathead economy and introduces the area to visitors who become investors, business owners, retirees, and second home owners.

- Launch in-bound marketing campaign for new non-stop airline service to Dallas, Los Angeles, and Chicago.
- Extend success of signature events: Spartan Race and MT Indoor Soccer Tournament.
- Broaden "Bring it Home Campaign" to recruit meetings and conventions, building on the 3,000 rooms booked for 2019.
- Promote Kalispell as a distinct travel destination, not just a gateway to recreation, by promoting our culture, character and values to show what makes Kalispell interesting and unique.

STRENGTHENING MANUFACTURING & INNOVATION

Advanced manufacturing and the innovation sector are two of the fastest-growing and highest-paying sectors of the local economy and help power wage growth in the Flathead Valley.

- Charge forward on the effort to engage students, teachers, and counselors with careers available in manufacturing, trades, and technology.
- Strengthen manufacturers through direct support: Manufacturers Alliance, MFG Day, certificates of origin, scholarships, brewery/winery/distillery/cidery map, trade support, and the Flathead Timber Tour.
- Aggressively pursue a manufacturing agenda by working to reduce workers compensation rates, eliminate the business equipment tax, supporting trade, and promoting career awareness in manufacturing trades through MFG Day and the Making Montana Manufacturing and Technology Expo.

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