



2017

BOARD OFFICERS for Calendar Year 2017

Chairman
Mike Christman

Vice-Chairman
Dorothy Peterson

At-Large
Paul Clark

At-Large
President-Elect

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Cook
Steve Christman
Mark Henning
Greg Mertz
Mark Johnson
Bob L. Lawler
Michael
Blaine Pyle
Steve Pyle
Tom Rye
Michael
Christina Springer
James Taylor
Greg Taylor
Greg Taylor
Mike Wilson
Joe Wright

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

John Cook
Mark Taylor
John Taylor
Michael
Steve Powell

PROGRESS

Pauline Newberg
Pauline

Subarea Committee
Director Bureau

Subarea Chamber
President

Leadership Network
Headquarters Office



November 1, 2017

Mayor Mike Johnson and Members of City Council

Calispell City Hall

201 First National East

Calispell, Montana 59713

Subject: Comments for the Public Hearing on the Downtown Plan

Dear Mayor Johnson and Members of City Council:

On behalf of the 725 members of the Calispell Chamber/Convention and Visitor Bureau, we would like to offer some comments and overall support for the vision of the Draft Calispell Downtown Plan. We letter will supplement our letter of July 26, 2017 with more the Calispell Planning Board for their public hearing on the topic. We continue to believe that the City has a historic opportunity to further add to a vibrant downtown that includes new offerings for dining, entertainment, retail, commercial, and residential spaces. We look forward to supporting the City and enhancing the vision for investment, jobs, increased tourism, and health.

Parking. Our members consistently find parking an area of needed improvement for downtown. The Plan gives consideration to several alternatives (pages 12-20) for funding a parking structure. These ideas, as well as alternatives of structure car-to-ride, are worth pursuing.

Residential. Urban residential development should be given top priority. By increasing downtown residents, the City can help create the demand that will support retail, dining, entertainment, and service retail businesses. Housing demographics are residential products like townhomes, condominiums, and moderate development in city centers will grow in demand in the years ahead. These housing types are in demand for downsizing seniors and younger buyers who enjoy urban amenities. Other like Los Angeles, Portland, and Spokane are creating incentives to reward developers for building more residential units downtown as a strategy for creating vitality and building the backbone in city centers.

Historic Design Standards. An area of concern for our members are the potential new historic design standards and how they might be implemented (pages 26-28). Calispell has a significant stock of historic commercial structures, and is classified as a historic district. Nevertheless, overly cumbersome and restrictive historic design regulations have the potential to impede investment in an environment that is already fundamentally more challenging for all the reasons detailed in our July 26 letter.

Streamlining Approval Process. A recent Chamber functioner opinion, the executive director of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority, stated that the City of Denver's efforts in streamlining the construction approval process is a key factor in creating a development-friendly