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May 6, 2019

Mike Tooley
Director
Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Tammi Fisher
Transportation Commissioner, District 1
Montana Transportation Commission
1320 Trumble Creek Road
KalisPELL, MT 59901

Subject: Designation Change of West Reserve Drive, KalisPELL, to State Primary System

Dear Director Tooley and Commissioner Fisher:


On behalf of the 725 members of the KalisPELL Chamber, I'd like to indicate our strong support for a change of designation of West Reserve Drive from the State Urban System to the State Primary System. Due to traffic volumes and safety considerations, connectivity of this facility to three U.S. highways, and KalisPELL's rate of growth, Reserve Drive from U.S. 93 to U.S. 2 is well-deserving of inclusion in the state primary system.

This section of Reserve Drive carries 17,000 to 20,000 cars per day which is excessive for a safe and reasonable carrying capacity of a two-lane road. Indeed, KalisPELL was named by the U.S. Census Bureau at the third fastest growing micropolitan area in the United States for the last two years in a row. This means that there is likely to be an increase in traffic volumes for years into the future.

Additionally, Reserve Drive connects U.S. 93, U.S. 93 Alternative Route, and U.S. 2, making it reasonable for this segment to be rated at least at the state primary level, if not part of the national highway system. The section of land north of Reserve and in between U.S. 93 and Whitefish Stage Road is the site of KalisPELL's next phase of large commercial development and will be the site of the next elementary school. So, traffic volumes may increase even faster the 2% currently projected.

The KalisPELL Chamber encourages your most serious consideration of the KalisPELL Transportation Advisory Committee's request for a re-designation of Reserve Drive. It would be a beneficial decision for KalisPELL, the Flathead Valley, and the entire state of Montana.

With Warm Regards,


Joe Unterreiner, President and CEO
KalisPELL Chamber of Commerce

CC: Lynn Zanto, Rail, Transit, and Planning Administrator – MDT
Dwane Kailey P.E., Chief Engineer – MDT
Ed Toavs P.E., Missoula District Administrator - MDT