



2022

CHAMBER ANNUAL REPORT

DISCOVER
Kalispell
CHAMBER

VENTURE **BOLDLY**

2021 CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS

1. Advocacy & Government Affairs

a. Advocated during the 67th legislative session in Helena for Kalispell and the Flathead that resulted tax relief, legal reform and workers compensation for our business. **b.** Supported housing tax credits to address our shortage of attainable workforce housing. **c.** Opposed the Build Back Better federal legislation and provided significant influence regarding Montana's redistricting outcome.

2. Business Resiliency & Recovery

a. Delivered programming and resources to address business challenges through our FAYP, Thinking Thursday and Leadership Flathead activities. **b.** Built greater collaboration and partnership with the Kalispell Business Improvement District

3. Destination Promotion to Attract Visitors to Kalispell

a. Discover Kalispell's marketing plan continued to deliver increased visitations in the shoulder and winter seasons and focused on solutions to minimize peak period visitor impacts.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM

Lodging, Airport, GNP Visitations, Visitor Spending

Kalispell Hotels 2021

Avg OCC

56.5%

+32% vs 2020

+9% vs 2019

Kalispell Short Term
Rentals 2021 Jan-Nov

Avg OCC

65%

+21% vs 2020

+33% vs 2019

Glacier Park Intl.
Airport 2021

416,224

enplanements

+21% vs 2020

+33% vs 2019

Glacier National Park
2021 Jan-Nov

3,063,727

visitors

+83% vs 2020

+93% vs 2019

Visitor Credit Card Spending
2021 Jan-Sep

\$21 million

+17% vs 2020

+55% vs 2019

b. Safety first, recreate responsibly, and leave no trace messaging remained the priority.

4. Economic Development

a. Produced Kalispell's first Growth Summit to convene stakeholders across the valley to discuss development, transportation, housing, and child care. **b.** Concluded a 4-month child care initiative resulting in an action plan for 2022. **c.** Began coalition building to advocate for federal infrastructure dollars. **d.** Launched Discover Kalispell MT as an aspirational community brand at our successful November Annual Reception and Grand Event. Kalispell is the brand. Venture BOLDLY is our tagline. A vibrant mountain town that believes in boundless adventures, loving the earth and venturing boldly. Venture boldly encapsulates the spirit and ethos of Kalispell, where a wild and majestic landscape calls adventurous and spirited travelers and business owners to climb one more peak or embrace their biggest dreams. **e.** In collaboration with partners at FVCC and the Kalispell Job Service launched the first virtual Opportunity Fair, conducted 2 Lemonade Days for our young entrepreneurs.

5. Promoting a Vibrant Downtown Kalispell

a. Actively participated in the Kalispell Downtown Association and Kalispell Business Improvement District and Developers group. **b.** Promoted Small Business Season from November 27 through December 24th and served as the Neighborhood Champion for Small Business Saturday.

6. Added 118 new members over the past twelve months to expand our network and strengthen our organization resulting in the largest year-end we have achieved with 708 members.

7. With appreciation to our sponsors and members, we had a financially successful 117th annual meeting where we recognized Tom Esch with the Flathead Community Legacy Award (formerly Great Chief), Western Building Center - Large Business of the Year, Waters Edge Winery & Bistro - Small/Medium Business of the Year, Jerry Meerkatz - Business Person of the Year, Lizzy Sheeran - Rising Star of the Year, Noreen Cady - Community Spirit of the Year, Non-profit of the Year - Samaritan House.

2021 BUSINESS & COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

1

The 59901 zipcode (Kalispell) had the highest number of new business licenses in the state. Over 7,000 new businesses registered.

2

Investor group, MT Hotel Dev Partners, successfully entered into a public-private partnership to build The Charles. This will be only the second hotel on Main Street since 1912 when the Grand was opened. The project includes a 4-5 story parking garage, 83+ rooms, a bar and lounge, retail spaces, meeting space and a rooftop bar.

3

GL Solutions relocated from Bend, Oregon in April creating more than 40 new full-time positions in Kalispell.

4

Hayden Tanner closed on the former CHS Agronomy Center to complete the four rail park/parkline property parcel sales. They anticipate a mixed-use (residential, commercial), high density project.

5

Flathead Warming Center opened its doors on North Meridian Road. The center is a low barrier access shelter that will serve up to 40 residents per night during the winters. More than 100 volunteers keep the doors open.

6

Pioneer Baseball's newest team, Glacier Range Riders was announced. The Kelly family broke ground on the state of the art facility in the spring and will host Opening Day June 14, 2022.

7

Realtors and mortgage lenders continued to see increases in the number and size of real estate transactions in the Flathead Valley. Our market remains tight with very limited supply, both for sale and rent.

8

Glacier Park International Airport experienced a 16% increase in enplanements over 2019 and the highest number ever. Three new carriers were added resulting in four new destinations. The terminal expansion broke ground and is to be completed in 2023.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

FOR THE DISCOVER KALISPELL CHAMBER IN 2022

CATALYST FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Advocacy – Voice of Business

- We will enhance and implement a strategic pro-growth, pro-jobs agenda
- Work with our Flathead legislative delegation, the Governor, Montana West Economic Development, our members and other stakeholder partners to support an environment that encourages investment and measured risk, economic opportunity, and free enterprise
- Prioritize infrastructure, attainable housing, accessible and affordable child care, public safety, workforce and transformational education in the Flathead

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Workforce and Attainable Housing, Child care Action Plan Implementation
- Manufacturing Alliance 2.0
- Innovation and entrepreneurship – Work-based learning partnership expansion & coordination – Good Jobs Federal Grant collaboration
- Coalition building around infrastructure progress (Hwy 93)/Reserve in addition to other identified priorities
- Coordination of the Flathead Valley economic development ecosystems
- Partnerships with the Parkline Trail Committee, Kalispell Downtown Association, the City of Kalispell and others to promote 18-hour vibrancy and walkability throughout the heart of the city
- Leadership Flathead – Developing future leaders for government, business and non-profit leadership

CONVENER OF BUSINESS LEADERS & INFLUENCERS

Growth Initiatives

- Growth Summit 2022
- Contribute to & support our stakeholders
 - MWED, KDA, KBID
- Child care Action Council
- Public Safety in the Flathead

Relationship Building & Connections

- UNWINDS
- Coffee Connects
- Business Matters! Luncheons
- Leadership Flathead

CHAMPION FOR THE KALISPELL & FLATHEAD COMMUNITY

Discover Kalispell

- Thriving on Intention – Highly targeted marketing campaigns, meeting the needs of today's community and traveler, and assure that Kalispell is a welcoming destination for visitors of all identities & abilities.
- Community Stewardship – Shifting away from the traditional role of solely marketing the destination, grant funding to support local events & the development of community assets, promotion of local business & guided adventures.
- Stronger Together – Growing partnerships, developing cohesive resources for visitors to NW MT, advocacy for the hospitality & tourism industry.
- Recreate Responsibly – Respect and protect our land, water, wildlife & Native communities, make it better through volunteerism, donations, & advocacy for the outdoors, plan & prepare through education.

BOARD OFFICERS

Erica Wirtala, *Chair, Northwest Montana Association of Realtors*
Tagen Vine, *Vice-Chair, Flathead Valley Community College Foundation*
Ryan Bowman, *Secretary & Treasurer, MontanaSky Network*
Courtenay Sprunger, *Immediate Past-Chair, Big Sky Public Relations*
Lorraine Clarno, *President/CEO*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Moseley, *GL Solutions*
Brian Aegerter, *Applied Materials PPC Business Unit*
Dawn Hendrickson, *Homewood Suites by Hilton*
Fran Quiram, *Cushing Terrell*
James Williamson, *Sage Appraisal & Strategy*
Jason Cronk, *Immanuel Lutheran Communities*
Jeff Claridge, *LHC*
Jim Wright, *PROOF Research*
Linda Pistorese, *Flathead Valley Brokers*
Mark Blasdel, *Vista Linda*
Pete Akey, *Glacier Bank*
Ryan Bowman, *MontanaSky Networks*
Rob Ratkowski, *Glacier Park International Airport*
Shane Jackola, *Jackola Engineering & Architecture, PC*
Tamara Williams, *Insty-Prints*
Tia Robbin, *Flathead Electric Cooperative*
Tom Anderson, *Glacier Precast Concrete*

DISCOVER KALISPELL TEAM

Lorraine Clarno, *President/CEO*
Diane Medler, *Executive Director, Discover Kalispell*
Margit Baake, *Business Development Director*
Jenn Cronk, *Workforce & Special Initiatives Director*
Meche Ek, *Visitors Center Coordinator*
Dawn Jackson, *Group Sales Manager, Discover Kalispell*
Marisa Mikonis, *Marketing & Communications Coordinator, Discover Kalispell*
Pilar Ogier, *Operations and Events Director*
Kara Bauer, *Administrative Assistant*
Janet Schwalk, *Accountant*

EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS

Amy Dexter, *Flathead Area Young Professionals Chair*
Christy Cummings Dawson, *MWED/FCEDA President/CEO*
Doug Russell, *Kalispell City Manager*
Jane Karas, *Flathead Valley Community College President*
Micah Hill, *Kalispell Public Schools Superintendent*
Pete Melnick, *Flathead County Administrator*



**VENTURE
BOLDLY**

2022 **DISCOVER KALISPELL CHAMBER**
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