



DISCOVER  
*Kalispell*  
CHAMBER

# GROWTH SUMMIT

APRIL 5, 2022



PRESENTED BY:



**GLACIER  
BANK**





# VENTUREBOLDLY

7:30- 8:00AM	CHECK IN AND NETWORKING
8:00 - 8:15AM	WELCOME REMARKS
8:15 - 9:00AM	GROWTH AND MOMENTUM ACROSS THE FLATHEAD - Cities & County
9:00 - 10:00AM	KALISPELL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT - 2022
10:00 -10:15AM	BREAK
10:15 - 11:00AM	GROWTH & PUBLIC SAFETY - THE INTERSECTION
11:00 - 12:00PM	2021 UPDATE - ATTAINABLE HOUSING
12:00 - 12:30PM	BREAK FOR BUFFET LUNCH
12:30 - 1:15PM	KEYNOTE: MAKING A LIVABLE FLATHEAD - The Importance of Manufacturing Growth

## LORRAINE CLARNO

PRESIDENT & CEO | DISCOVER KALISPELL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Welcome! We are so grateful that you are here today and at our table. The information we learn this morning will serve as the foundation of many more discussions and critical conversations to be continued. Today is meant to unite us as a community to make the most of our opportunities while solving the challenges that come with them. We have spent a year working on workforce, housing, and childcare as a result of our Summit in 2021. We have made great strides but there is so much more to do. I am confident the right people are in the room to guide us in next steps and towards community solutions. I look forward to our next action steps and successes.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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Community. Innovation. Reliability.

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# GROWTH & MOMENTUM ACROSS THE FLATHEAD

## **DANA SMITH**

WHITEFISH CITY MANAGER

Dana Smith is a Certified Public Accountant and was appointed Whitefish City Manager in December 2019. Before taking the position, she served as the City's Assistant City Manager and Finance Director. Dana has over 10 years of experience in local government with 3 of those years auditing cities, towns, and counties in Montana. Dana studied at the University of Montana and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration with a focus in Accounting in 2009 and a Master of Accountancy Degree in 2010.

## **DOUG RUSSELL**

KALISPELL CITY MANAGER

Doug Russell is the City Manager for Kalispell, MT. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Montana State University, Doug moved to Denver, Colorado, and worked for the Department of Environmental Health for the City and County of Denver while continuing his graduate education. After receiving a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Colorado at Denver, Doug began his career in local government management, working for communities in Wyoming, Kansas, South Dakota, and now his current position in Montana. While in South Dakota, Doug served as an instructor for "Management and Leadership" through Black Hills State University. Doug is recognized as a Certified Manager (ICMA-CM) by the International City/County Management Association, a Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) by the Government Finance Officers Association, is accredited in public relations (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Senior Executives in State and Local Government program. Additionally, Doug serves on the Board for the Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority, the Board for the Montana League of Cities and Towns, and the Committee on Economic Development and Capital Planning for the Government Finance Officers Association.

## **SUSAN NICOSIA**

COLUMBIA FALLS CITY MANAGER

City Manager Susan M. Nicosia, CPA, MPA was appointed in June 2011. Susan Nicosia previously served Columbia Falls as the Finance Director/City Clerk, Mayor and Council member. Mrs. Nicosia has over 30 years serving local governments in different capacities, including external auditor, internal auditor, finance director, elected official, and consultant. Susan holds a Bachelor of Science Business Administration degree and a Masters of Public Administration Degree and is a Certified Public Accountant. With the Columbia Falls commission-manager form of government, the City Manager is the day-to-day manager of City business and activities.

## **PETE MELNICK**

FLATHEAD COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

In June 2021, Pete Melnick joined Flathead County from the United States Coast Guard after retiring after 25 years of active duty. Pete was a Coast Guard helicopter pilot also serving in various leadership assignments in the United States Coast Guard and in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In addition to various military and civilian training opportunities, Pete earned a Bachelor's of Science in Government from the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT, a MLA from Spring Hill College in Mobile, AL, and a MBA from George Mason University in Fairfax County, VA.



# A VIBRANT 18-HOUR DOWNTOWN - KBID VISION 2022

## KISA DAVISON

IRON STAR CONSTRUCTION, KBID BOARD CHAIR



Kisa Davison is a wife, mother of four, and serial entrepreneur. She owns Iron Star Construction, four brick-and-mortar locations of Straight Blast Gym, Davison Development Co. (a property development and holding company), Adventure Combat Enterprises (a fight promotion company), and is the director of the 501(c)3 non-profit organization, the Gorilla Booster Club. She is the chair of the Kalispell Business Improvement District and is actively involved in the growth and development of Kalispell. Kisa is a black belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and co-creator of Growing Gorillas, a kids martial arts curriculum. She coaches adults and kids in Jiu Jitsu and recently retired from 17 years as a yoga teacher. She was awarded the Best Yoga Instructor in the Flathead Valley each year from 2015 -2020. Her hobbies include playing golf, hunting, writing, travel, and chasing her two Shepards, Hank and Saby.

## CATHERINE POTTER

Daniel Cloud, LLC / KBID Board Member



Catherine Potter, member of KBID, moved to Montana in 2020. She holds a degree in architecture and urban planning, as well as a certificate in public art. She is the owner of several properties in the downtown core, including 5 6th Avenue West, the former home of the historic Kalispell Malting and Brewing Company. In 2021, Catherine sponsored the exhibition Limnal Lacrimosa, created by contemporary artist Mary Mattingly, on at that site. She has plans to continue investing in Kalispell and finding new ways to serve the community.

## GABE MARIMAN

Bias Brewing / KBID Board Member



Gabe Mariman is a Co-owner/GM of Bias Brewing in Kalispell. He has spent 20 years manufacturing medical devices and energy storage systems and recently has turned his passion of craft beer and manufacturing into a business. In his free time he enjoys raising his young family, volunteering, hunting, hiking, skiing, and running. He is also chairing the Kalispell Chamber's Child Care Action Team Initiatives. He serves on both the Kalispell Downtown Association board and the KBID.



# GROWTH & PUBLIC SAFETY - THE INTERSECT

## DOUG OVERMAN, Chief of Police

CITY OF KALISPELL



Doug Overman is the Chief of Police for the KalisPELL Police Department with 43 sworn and 10 support staff serving 27,000+. Chief Overman was born and raised in Seeley Lake, Montana. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from the University of Montana in 1995. Chief Overman joined the KalisPELL PD 22 years ago, serving as a patrolman, SRO, Detective, Patrol Sergeant, Major Crime Team Assistant Leader and Crisis Negotiator. In 2019 he was promoted to Chief of Police. Prior to joining the KalisPELL Police Department, Chief Overman spent five years working with the Department of Corrections and six years as a Wildland Firefighter for the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. He currently serves on the Governor's Board of Crime Control. He joined the board of Braveheart Ministries after seeing the impact Chaplains have on our communities during times of crisis. He previously served on the board for the Center for Restorative Youth Justice. He is the past President of the Montana Association of Chiefs of Police. Chief Overman earned the Making a Difference award in 2004, The Exceptional Service Medal in 2007 and 2015, the Meritorious Service Medal in 2015, the Montana Police Officer of the Year in 2006 and the 2021 Montana Association of Chiefs of Police Administrator of the Year Award. He and his wife, Lynette (a teacher at KalisPELL Middle School), have two sons and a daughter.

## WAYNE DUBOIS, Under-Sheriff

FLATHEAD COUNTY



Wayne Dubois is a law enforcement administrator with more than 25 years of law enforcement experience and active SWAT team member for 23 years. During his career, Wayne has worked as a patrol officer, detective, street crimes unit, as well as over 10 years as a supervisor of both patrol squads and street crimes units. Currently Wayne is the Under-sheriff at the Flathead County (MT) Sheriff's Office (2019 to present) and SWAT Commander for the Northwest Montana Regional SWAT Team (2019 to present). Wayne has responded to, supervised, or been in command of hundreds of SWAT operations, including high-risk warrant service, barricaded suspects, armed suicidal subjects, and hostage situations. Prior to law enforcement, Wayne served 4 years on active duty as a ground surveillance systems operator in the U.S. Army, including deployment to Southwest Asia for 6 months during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. Wayne is the recipient of the Award for Valor, Unit Citation for Valor, and was also named SWAT Officer of the Year and Police Officer of the Year by the Benton County Sheriff's Office (WA). Wayne serves as a Western Region Director for the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) and instructs in the NTOA's Command Cadre. He is a certified force science analyst, and instructor in multiple disciplines, and has had two published articles on SWAT procedures and operations in a national publication, "The Tactical Edge." Wayne holds a M.A. in Executive Leadership from Liberty University.

## CHRIS KRAGER, Executive Director

SAMARITAN HOUSE



Chris Krager is Executive Director of the Samaritan House, a homeless shelter and transitional living program in KalisPELL for the last 20 years. During this time Chris has worked to provide solutions to the complex issue of homelessness in the Flathead Valley. Fixing rural and frontier homelessness is his passion and addressing this difficult scenario has led him to serve on other nonprofit Boards. Chris currently serves on the board for the Montana Continuum of Care for Homelessness helping to guide and refine the process in which Montana helps its neighbors without homes. Chris will root for the underdog every time. Chris has two grown children and Leroy, a German Shepherd that loves kale. Other interests include Montana and its music while working as a musician for Mike Murray, Rob Quist and other artists.





# ATTAINABLE HOUSING - PROGRESS

## **ZIAD ELSAHILI, President/CEO**

FORTIFY HOLDINGS



Ziad Elsayhili is the President of Fortify Holdings and brings his experience/background in both real estate and finance to the company. Ziad is intimately involved in all day-to-day operations and leads the organization in acquiring, financing, developing and managing clean and safe apartment communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. Ziad has led the acquisition and re-development of more than 4,000 apartment homes across five states, more than half of which are former hotels that have been converted to housing. Ziad has also led numerous public-private partnerships between Fortify Holdings, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Prior to stepping into the leadership role at Fortify Holdings, Ziad worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for six years, serving clients across multiple industries in both Assurance and Management Consulting services. Ziad studied at the University of Oregon where he received his Bachelor of Science in Accounting with an Economics minor. Ziad holds a CPA license in the state of Oregon.

## **NIKKI LINTZ, Regional Director**

ENTRUST PROPERTY SOLUTIONS



Nikki is a Montana native who joined Entrust Property Solutions in 2018 as Property Manager at The Highline Apartments. She has continued her education in real estate and development, and with her ability to understand the needs of residents and owners, she quickly rose into her role as Regional Director, where she now oversees all properties in Northwestern Montana's Flathead Valley region. Nikki works directly with owners, developers and contractors to see project through from planning, construction, lease up and staffing. Outside of her work at Entrust, Nikki serves on the Board of Directors for The Samaritan House and the newly founded Housing Whitefish nonprofit organizations. Nikki lives in Creston with her husband Jonathan, and children Aiden and Grace.



## **COURTENAY SPRUNGER, Co-Founder**

1000 DOORS



Courtenay is a fifth-generation Montanan and the CEO of Big Sky Public Relations. She is passionate about “progress projects,” and empowering organizations to connect effectively and drive change in their community. For 14 years, Courtenay has led a diverse client base ranging from economic development and transportation agencies to non-profits and consumer brands throughout Montana and the Pacific Northwest. Staying engaged with her neighbors while juggling the responsibilities of building and managing a growing business is no doubt a challenge but Courtenay loves doing it. She sits on the Kalispell Chamber's executive board and served as the board chair in 2021.

## **JAMES WILLIAMSON, Co-founder**

1000 DOORS



James Williamson brings a distinctive blend of appraisal, sales, and development to the real estate industry. In less than five years, James has developed and completed fifteen commercial projects across Montana and Idaho while simultaneously securing his license as a real estate broker and serving as a commercial appraiser. In addition to this work, James has been contracted by several of the Flathead Valley's financial institutions to complete a comprehensive assessment of their multi-family portfolios and the multi-family industry, affording him the unique opportunity to not only serve as a trusted real estate advisor for these organizations but to gain an unparalleled understanding of the area's housing inventory and pricing. Prior to entering the real estate industry James worked for AON Risk Solutions, managing the development of new insurance products and software systems. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Management from Black Hills State University and serves as board member for the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce.





## LUNCHEON KEYNOTE

### JOHN GHEKIERE, Vice President of Technology

ClassOne Technologies



John Ghekiere, Vice President of Technology at ClassOne Technology, is a 25 year veteran in semiconductor equipment manufacturing. Having grown up in Columbia Falls, Mr. Ghekiere has seen first hand the pace and scale of growth that continues to change the Flathead Valley. As chair of the Manufacturing Alliance 2.0, he sees our manufacturing sector as a key part in making a livable Flathead.

## VENTUREBOLDLY



Thank you for attending today and investing your time and resources into our community conversations. This is not the end - but just the beginning of necessary brainstorming and work to drive community solutions. We have so many wonderful assets, people, nature, and things to celebrate in our magical community. Never lose sight of our blessings. I hope you participate with us as we move through the year and delve more into these areas and make a difference.

**The Kalispell Chamber is the Voice of Business. We are the Catalyst for Business Growth, the Convener of Business Leaders and Influencers, and the Champions of the Kalispell Community.** We believe business is the foundation of a healthy community. If business is strong and growing, our schools, governmental agencies, and non-profits thrive with the resources provided.

If you are not a member and investing in our work, we encourage you to consider joining today. We are community engaged and servant-minded business and community leaders.

Visit [www.kalispellchamber.com](http://www.kalispellchamber.com) to learn more about our strategic initiatives and how to join or contact:

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