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State of Montana

# ANNUAL REPORT

KALISPELL CHAMBER 2023

VENTURE **BOLDLY**

FUTURE  
**READY**



**2023** DISCOVER KALISPELL CHAMBER

406.758.2800 | 15 DEPOT PARK, KALISPELL, MT 59901

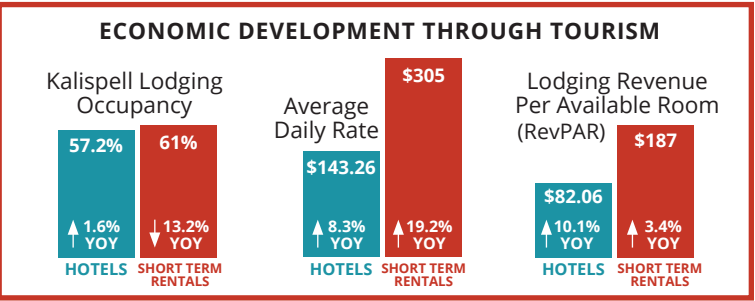
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DISCOVER  
*Kalispell*  
CHAMBER



# 2022 CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Advocacy & Government Affairs**  
**a.** Successfully partnered with the City of Kalispell to attain the \$25 million for the safety expansion and improvements on West Reserve.  
**b.** Supported housing tax credits to address our shortage of attainable workforce housing.  
**c.** Advocated heavily for Flathead County to implement C-PACE for our businesses.  
**d.** Supported both the broadband and childcare ARPA dollars and their expansion.  
**e.** Opposed the removal of the Lower Snake River dams which would damage our hydroelectric capacity in NW Montana.
2. **2022 Discover Kalispell Key Accomplishments & Performance**
  - Commissioned a Market Opportunity Report to explore options to build a tournament-quality facility that will generate direct spending for Kalispell and the valley and serve as a community asset providing sports and recreation opportunities for local user groups.
  - Launched the redesigned Discover Kalispell.com
  - Completed a community engagement study to gain input from resident sentiment on growth and community integrity.



**DISCOVER KALISPELL GROUP SALES ECONOMIC IMPACT**  
Total room nights booked: **1,483**  
EIC of groups: **\$354,060** (Conferences held in June, Sept & Oct 2022)  
Group Incentives Awarded: **\$19,400** | Groups Assisted: **77**  
*(additional complimentary services are provided to help maximize the economic benefit to Kalispell)*

**NON-RESIDENT SPENDING IN FLATHEAD COUNTY**  
**1,999,585** nonresident visitors in 2021  
Those visitors spent **\$685 million** in Flathead County  
**Where are visitors spending?**  
Restaurants & Bars • Retail • Outfitters & Guides • Accommodations

3. **Economic Development**  
**a.** Produced Kalispell's second Growth Summit to convene stakeholders across the valley to discuss development, transportation, housing, childcare, and public safety.  
**b.** Launched workforceflathead.com. A comprehensive website for educators, students, employers and job seekers.  
**c.** Launched a monthly Economic Dashboard for Flathead Valley.  
**d.** Launched 4 child care action teams resulting in identifying 500+ slots over the next 2 years, designed a PR campaign to increase early childhood education workforce and more.  
**e.** Advocated, with partners, for Federal infrastructure dollars to ensure the Flathead sees its fair-share for projects such as Reserve, Alternative 93, Biosolids plant in Evergreen and more.  
**f.** Rebooted the Manufacturing Alliance identifying over 100 manufacturers in the Valley and delivered on workforce housing solutions.  
**g.** Workforce Development remained a priority. In collaboration with partners at FVCC, the Daily Inter Lake, and Kalispell Job Service conducted two successful Job Fairs for job seekers and businesses in the Valley, conducted Lemonade Day for our young entrepreneurs, promoted Manufacturing Day and laid plans for the reboot of our Manufacturing Alliance 2.0.

4. **Promoting a Vibrant Kalispell**  
**a.** Launched the VentureBOLDLY Podcast with outstanding download results.  
**5.** Actively participated in the Kalispell Downtown Association and Kalispell Business Improvement District and Developers group.  
**6.** Took lead on the grand opening of the Parkline Trail celebration.  
**7.** Promoted Small Business Season and served as the Neighborhood Champion for Small Business Saturday.  
**8.** Added 111 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 712 members.  
**9.** With appreciation to our sponsors and members, we had a financially successful 118th annual meeting where we recognized Jane Karas with the Flathead Legacy Award, Mann Mortgage – Large Business of the Year, Bias Brewing – Small/Medium Business of the Year, Immanuel Lutheran Communities – Non-Profit of the Year, Doug Shanks – Business Person of the Year, Adam Cebulla – Rising Star of the Year, Tony Brockman – Community Spirit of the Year, Micah Hill – Educator of the Year.

# 2022 BUSINESS & COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

1. March 24, 2022 – Kalispell pushed Bozeman out of the Number 1 spot as the fastest growing Micropolitan city in the US.
2. Investor group, MT Hotel Dev Partners, has moved forward with plans for ownership of a major downtown parking garage with retail on the bottom and housing on top. Plans for The Charles Hotel are in process with submittal to the City coming soon.
3. Greenway Development Group cut the ribbon on the Meridian Apartments in Kalispell- a 180 unit development. They cleared the site and unveiled plans for the Parkline Towers; located at the old Ford Dealership location above the entrance to Evergreen and on the Park Line Trail. The planned completion date is 2024 with 224 units.
4. Wachholz College Center opens its doors.
5. Pioneer Baseball's newest team, Glacier Range Riders - The Kelly family hosted Opening Day June 14, 2022. Facilities and Club House continued expansion and are set to be completed for the 2023 season.

6. With the rise in interest rates, we have seen a cooling of the market in Kalispell and the Flathead. Realtors and mortgage lenders continued to see sales, but more days on market, lower selling prices, and higher levels of inventory – a welcomed cool-off by buyers.
7. Glacier Park International Airport experienced a 1% increase in enplanements over 2021 and the highest number ever. Due to lack of crews and high jet fuel prices, we lost two carriers in 2022. The terminal expansion broke ground and Phase 1 is to be completed in 2023. The cost for Phase 2 has increased substantially so grants are being written and there may be adjustments to deal with these increases.



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

FOR THE DISCOVER KALISPELL CHAMBER IN 2023

### CATALYST FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

#### Advocacy – Voice of Business

- We will drive 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 stake-holder partners to support an environment that encourages investment and measured risk, economic opportunity, and free enterprise
- Prioritize infrastructure, attainable housing, accessible and affordable childcare, liquor license reform, tort reform, public safety, mental & behavioral health, workforce and transformational education in the Flathead

### ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Workforce and Attainable Housing, Childcare Action Plan Implementation
- Manufacturing Alliance
- Innovation and entrepreneurship – Explore a start-up incubator
- 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 through the heart of the city
- Leadership Flathead – Developing future leaders for government and non-profit leadership

### CONVENER OF BUSINESS LEADERS & INFLUENCERS

#### Growth Initiatives

- Growth Summit 2023 – Tackling community issues head on
- Contribute to & support our stakeholders – MWED, KDA, KBID
- Childcare Action Steering Council launch
- Public Safety in the Flathead

#### Relationship Building & Connections

- UNWINDS
- Coffee Connects
- Business Matters! Luncheons
- Leadership Flathead
- Coaching for Your Success

### CHAMPION FOR THE KALISPELL & FLATHEAD COMMUNITY

- Discover Kalispell:** Increase visitor spending in shoulder seasons to provide a robust year-round business climate for the local travel industry.
- Promote Kalispell through targeted marketing and promotions as a fall, winter and spring travel destination for leisure, business and group travel.
  - Attract and maintain destination events such as Montana Spartan Race and, new for 2023, Kalispell Highlander Adventure.
  - Build on growing interest through the Discover Kalispell funded indoor sports facility Market Opportunity Report to develop a best-in-class facility which serves local sports user groups and generates significant economic vitality through sports tourism.
  - Serve as a community steward, to help offset peak-period tourism impacts including educating visitors and pointing them to guided adventures for responsible recreation.
  - Fund community development projects through the Discover Kalispell Event and Community Asset Grant program.
  - Use the valuable input obtained in the Discover Kalispell Community Engagement Study on Growth to develop and refine operational strategies and initiatives.