

**From:** [Rosemary Thurston](#)  
**To:** [Jenny Baker](#)  
**Subject:** Letter to Planning Board and City Council re Flynn Field  
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Missoula City County Planning Board  
Missoula City Council  
435 Ryman  
Missoula, MT 59802

Dear Planners and City Council Members:

This is my second letter to you regarding the rezoning of the Flynn Field of 57 acres to B2-1. I attended the Planning Meeting on September 3rd, and saw the adjusted planning presented by WGM. We were told by Nick that they had decreased the density by 50%. . . . how many people were supposed to be squashed into the first proposal??? I am guessing that the entire south end was originally supposed to be apartments similar to Brooklyn West and Tollefson, both of which are mostly occupied by buildings and parking with very little green space that you can find at the Mullan Reserve Apartments, a thoughtfully planned complex with green space and recreation. Those two complexes, built in the last 2.5 years, have 501 apartments squeezed into the a space about 125% the size of the Mullan Reserve which only has 200 units. As I said in my first letter, there are an additional 350 living units on the east and north side of Hellgate Meadows. It is my understanding that there are also about 200 low income rental units to be built near the Missoula County Detention Center. Put the apartments some place else, distant from this area; we already have our share.

The map that has been presented for the north 8.5 acres would be OK, but there is not much green space, or room for cars to park for those that won't fit in the garage or visitors, especially section 5. The zoning code stipulates that new building should mitigate cars spilling over into adjacent neighborhoods. That occurs on a regular basis from the apartments on Mullan spilling out onto O'Leary street. That traffic also uses O'Leary and Connery as main streets to exit the area as Mullan and Reserve are so crowded already and difficult to merge onto. And there are only two ways to get to, or east of Reserve where there are traffic control - traffic lights - England and Union Pacific - a continuation of O'Leary.

Are they affordable for the "lost middle," as Nick states? I don't think someone earning \$44,000 / year (I was told that was the median income for Missoula) can afford a \$300,000 home, the stated value of most of the homes being built.

**Growth Plans** in relation to **Livability** state:

**"Missoula should continue to consider the long-term consequences of unharnessed growth."** - I consider the density of the B2-1 Zoning to be **unharnessed growth**. At 43 units per acre as the zoning allows, there could potentially be 2472 living units, with 1.5 cars per unit - 3708 cars, and around 5,000 to 6,000 people. If it is developed at the same rate as the north end, with 10 units / acre, that would be 568 units for the whole area and possibly 850 new cars. Even that growth is a lot with 1 to 4 units/buildings at 2 stories. **We already have 871 living units in the 3 square blocks east of the field on Mullan and south of O'Leary. That averages 290 living units per square block.** With the 501 units, added in the last 2.5 years, plus the 332 to the west, and 276 to the east and north of Hellgate Meadows, I would say we have enough of large living complexes of that density now. And . . . not enough green space which helps the quality of living or Livability as the Growth Plan explains. That totals out to 1147 large building living units already in a very small area. And each of those individual buildings are smaller with 18 plus units - similar to proposed apartments.

Not mitigating traffic flow as part of the planning does not consider the long-term consequences of unharnessed growth. Mullan Road is a death waiting to happen with a steady stream of traffic morning and evening. And the poor people trying to turn left onto Mullan with no method of traffic control and no plans (except federal funding ) in the future. Flynn Lane has traffic lined up past the school daily, morning and evening, and if you have a problem, there is no place to go, as it is a narrow 2 lane road with no place to pull over except the ditch or the trail on the side of the road. It makes me wonder if some of the money used for TIF should be used instead to update the infrastructure in our community for our needs now and for the future, so development can occur in a PLANNED way instead of just creating more conflict / **congestion**. That is where **Safety** is impacted, not just in terms of **accidents**, but **road rage** as well. You are supposed to: **"Facilitate adequate provisions for transportation, . . . "**

**"Secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers;"** - It is my understanding that fire trucks have difficulty getting to locations in the Hellgate Meadows area as well as the areas north of Expressway because of the narrow streets. A fire personnel confirmed that for me. When I spoke to the Fire Chief, he was politically correct saying the streets met the city's requirements. He also said that the streets were only supposed to allow one side parking, but that it wasn't enforced. I do see some yellow curbing, but in very limited areas. Most residential streets allow parking on both sides. Health and fire emergencies require the ability to get there quickly by the shortest route.

**"It is important that growth should be fiscally and environmentally sustainable and community character maintained while accommodating the needs of an expanding and diverse population. Residents value their existing residential neighborhoods and desire to preserve the integrity of neighborhoods from encroachment of incompatible development."** - If we could limit apartments to 2 story, 4 to 6 unit apartments, to be interspersed with the residential units, not a whole complex down the center and side, as they already are in Hellgate Meadows, it would be acceptable. None of these exist in Pleasant View currently, it is more dense in the projected area than there. I think we would all be a lot happier with a plan like that. It more closely maintains the character of the community we already have in Hellgate Meadows and Pleasant View.

**"Existing and new residential areas should be safe, walkable, and aesthetically pleasing, with clean air and water and access to natural areas. Development processes should be fair and should balance property rights with health, safety and wellness concerns."** - The first sentence here, talks about safe, pleasing and clean. A residential area like Hellgate Meadows with a few small 2 story apartment units would provide a community who are mostly owners who are responsible for their property and decrease, among other things, the possibility of drug use and crime that goes with it. You are aware that there was a heroin bust in the Brooklyn West Apartments recently. Drug users have a need for money to buy drugs, and that leads to crime in the community. But you already know that. Clean air is important and with 10 units per acre and the possibility of 850 more cars; what does that do to the clean air?? Cars lined up and idling certainly adds to the pollution. The majority of people in Missoula aren't ready to relinquish their car and take the bus. I already spoke about potential crime with increased density of 16 unit, 3 story apartments. A number of those together is the equal of a big apartment complex. The 330 Tollefson Apartments, by the traffic round about, are not aesthetically pleasing, all jammed into a small area with buildings, parking and very little green area.

Property rights of the existing property owners - We are all fearful that if the developer's plan goes through, that our property values will decrease, our ability to see the mountains will be taken away with increased height of buildings and a lack of green space. Quality of life goes away as well as property values. That's two strikes against us as current tax payers. People are already talking about selling their homes.

You can pretty much summarize it with this goal:

**Goal L4: Missoula will make thoughtful decisions about land use planning that support the needs and values of residents in regards to neighborhoods and community character, parks, trails, and natural resources.**

In the growth plan, the **Assets and Values of Missoula** were listed in this order. Please keep them mind as you plan for the future of a very large neighborhood of Missoula.  
The comments to the right are my thoughts.

**"The list below is not comprehensive, but encapsulates the highest ranking assets. This list identifies the features of the community which should be enhanced and preserved as a part of this process.**

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Natural Areas and outdoor Recreation</b>                         | - Green Spaces, view of the mountains |
| <b>2. Community Involvement.</b>                                       | - We are trying to let you know       |
| <b>3. Sense of Place</b>   | - We love where we are, don't ruin it |
| <b>4. Bikeable, walkable, good Bike &amp; Pedestrian trail systems</b> |                                       |
| <b>5. Family-Friendly-oriented</b>                                     | - not a lot of apartments             |
| <b>6. Parks &amp; Recreation"</b>                                      | - Green Spaces                        |

These are other considerations from the growth plan:

- **Promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;**
- **Prevent overcrowding of land and undue concentrations of population;**
- **Provide open space for travel, light, air, and recreation;**
- **Stabilize and conserve the value of buildings and land;**

Please follow your growth plan as listed above. I could write more, but that pretty much summarizes it. I do have one more thought - the B2-1 Zoning is Business. We don't need business here. Connery business area still has 6 vacant lots plus part of one building that has been empty for the last 2 + years. We have business very close to us readily accessible very easily. I am thinking the business part of this was intended for large apartments. Again, we don't need that. We have our share already.

Thank you for taking the time to read and listen to my concerns and that of others in our community.

Sincerely,

Doug and Rosemary Thurston