



**City of Missoula, Montana
City Council Committee Agenda Item**

Committee: Public Safety, Health and Operations
Item: Joint City-County Bear Smart Resolution
Date: September 22, 2022
Sponsor(s): Ginny Merriam
Prepared by: Jessica Miller
Ward(s) Affected:
 Ward 1 Ward 4
 Ward 2 Ward 5
 Ward 3 Ward 6
 All Wards N/A

Action Required:

Consider a resolution to establish a bear smart policy for Missoula.

Recommended Motion(s):

I move the City Council: adopt a resolution providing for a bear smart policy and directing staff to implement best practices and policies to protect residents and bears in the interest of public safety and preservation of bears in the Missoula Valley as wildlife living in natural conditions.

Timeline:

Committee discussion: September 28, 2022
Council action (or sets hearing): October 3, 2022
Public Hearing (if required): N/A
Final Consideration: N/A
Deadline: N/A

Background and Alternatives Explored:

The multi-agency Missoula Bear Smart Working Group presented its intent to work toward a Bear Smart Community Program for Missoula to the Missoula County Board of Commissioners, the Missoula mayor and several City Council representatives in a public meeting on Feb. 8, 2022. The authorities in attendance supported the work and told the Working Group to proceed.

The Bear Smart Community Program was designed by the British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy in partnership with the British Columbia Conservation Foundation and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities. It is a voluntary, preventive conservation measure that encourages communities, businesses and individuals to work together. Its goal is to address the root causes of human-bear conflicts, reducing the risks to human safety and private property, as well as the number of bears that must be killed or relocated each year.

Step 1 in the process to develop a Bear Smart Community program is prepare a bear hazard assessment. To create this assessment, members of the Missoula Bear Smart Working Group drew on existing science and data to analyze and present hazards in the Missoula Valley and the greater area. The Working Group presented the Hazard Assessment to the City Council on June

29 and later to the Missoula Board of County Commissioners and Missoula City-County Health Board.

Step 2 is to prepare a Management Plan, which is completed and which informs the Joint City-County Bear Smart Resolution and the work that will follow by the City and County.

The joint resolution is the next step, to be addressed in a joint City Council- Board of County Commissioners meeting on Oct. 3.

Financial Implications:

N/A

Links to external websites:

[Missoula Bears](#)