

5823 Prospect Drive

Missoula, MT 59808

July 22, 2020

Dave DeGrandpre

City of Missoula Development Services

Missoula City Council

435 Ryman St.

Missoula, MT 59802

Dear Mr. DeGrandpre and Members of the City Council:

We write concerning the proposed rezoning of the Quarry at 2920 Expo Parkway. We are among the 155 homeowner members and are directors of the Prospect Meadows Homeowners Association. The homes in our association adjoin those in the Prospect Homeowners Association, which borders the quarry proposed for rezoning at 2920 Expo Parkway. We believe that we can fairly state that a majority of our members have very legitimate concerns about this proposed rezoning and believe that it is ill-advised and not in compliance with the letter and spirit of the Missoula's Growth Plan.

We recognize that Missoula is growing and that some of that growth will be in Grant Creek. We support Missoula's 2015 Growth Plan that recommends "focusing inward" with most growth occurring where city services are already in place for new residents; yet, we believe that this proposal does not at all align with that strategy. Why spend taxpayer dollars extending city services to unserved areas on the outskirts of the city? The proposed rezoning and the housing development as envisioned by the developer would result in 1195 new dwelling units (3 times the current number in Grant Creek), 2390 additional residents (assuming an average of 2 people per unit), and 2500+ additional vehicles (parking spaces allocated in the developer's plan).

Because of the location and lack of city services, the new residents of the proposed development will not be able to:

- Take a city bus—the nearest bus stop is half-a-mile away.
- Walk to school—the nearest school is a couple of miles away with no safe bike or pedestrian route (riding a bicycle in the striped lane along Reserve Street is not child's play).
- Walk to a grocery or hardware store—the nearest stores are a couple of miles away.
- Walk to a city park—the nearest public park is in the Canyon Creek neighborhood a few miles away.

Instead, new residents and old alike will have no safe alternative but to drive. And for drivers, there's only one way in and one way out of Grant Creek—on Grant Creek Road under Interstate 90. This bottleneck has serious safety implications, not only for wildfire evacuations, which Grant Creek has experienced every few years of late, but also for day-to-day emergency response, which already does not meet the four-minute goal at the edge of the city limits in Grant Creek. A gas line emergency just

yesterday near on Old Grant Creek Road that blocked traffic for more than an hour is ample proof that situations such as this would only be exacerbated by more dwellings and vehicles in the Grant Creek area.

We appreciate the additional southbound through-lane and right-turn lane being added to Grant Creek Road at the I-90 interchange. We hope to see improvements to the long lines and two- to three-light change waits we've experienced over the years. However, Grant Creek residents sought this year's lane additions for a decade to solve existing problems. The additions will not provide the capacity that will be required when the proposed four-story apartment complex is fully built out. Because Grant Creek constrains development at the interchange, further fixes for Grant Creek Road at the I-90/Reserve Street interchange will be expensive and are unlikely to occur before the development is built out. If the City Council approves the rezoning, safety issues will be created for the new residents AND for the existing residents of Grant Creek—safety issues that will have no ready solution.

Concerning our neighbors who live closer to the quarry, we understand that the existing zoning of the quarry was approved 25 years ago after a public process that considered the character of the neighborhoods. A strip of single dwelling units was included at the northern end of the quarry to provide a transition from the single dwelling units in the Prospect neighborhood to the three-story apartments that were envisioned in the quarry. By contrast, the development under the proposed rezoning will be high density and include 4-story dwellings. We realize that the city's current zoning regulations (Title 20) don't permit strip zoning (where one parcel could have several strips, each with its own zoning). The existing zoning as interpreted by the city's Development Services office will allow 158 single dwelling units on the northern parcel of the two parcels in the quarry and 344 units (single, duplex or multi-dwelling residential building types, maximum height 35 feet) on the southern parcel.

Grant Creek now has 635 residential addresses; adding 502 units in the quarry would nearly double Grant Creek's population. We can support that. We cannot support rezoning the quarry to nearly TRIPLE the population when doing so will create safety concerns for all persons using lower Grant Creek Road near the I-90 interchange and for emergency ingress and egress.

We urge you to recognize these legitimate and serious issues and deny the requested rezoning that would allow 1,195 additional dwelling units, 2400 residents and 2500 vehicles in the quarry, an area that is not suitable for this size development, and which would lead to safety issues and taxpayer expense that could be better used elsewhere.

Sincerely,

Scott Nicolarsen, President
Melissa Bruns, Director
Peggy Walker, Director
Prospect Meadows Homeowners Association