



July 1, 2019

Missoula City Council
435 Ryman Street
Missoula, MT 59802

Missoula Board of County Commissioners
200 West Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802

Re: Bluebird-North Hills Trailhead

Dear Missoula City Council and County Commissioners,

Homeword supports the Bluebird-North Hills acquisition because it will open a new trailhead to the North Hills for areas of Missoula underserved by the Conservation Lands system. The trailhead would provide access to trails and natural lands for the rapidly developing area west of Reserve Street and the North Reserve and Scott Street areas.

City and County plans for this greater North Reserve area anticipate significant residential and commercial growth. These plans envision significant investments in homes and improvements to the bike-pedestrian system linking residents to work, natural areas, and other destinations. Providing a trailhead in this area, with new public access to hundreds of acres of protected open space, will help balance land conservation with development and growth, and ensure that these developments provide good places to live, where people have a place to get exercise and connect with each other and the natural world.

Like safe and attainable housing, close access to natural areas and trails promote social equity and improve the lives of Missoula's workers, seniors, Veterans, and children. Public open spaces and trails are community assets available to all citizens regardless of race, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, marital or familial status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Public open spaces and trails reduce stress, improve mental and physical health, and provide places to build friendships and community.

We hope that you will support this acquisition, recognizing that investing in open space and trails in proximity to homes that are affordable will make a considerable difference in the long-term well-being of Missoula community members.

Sincerely,

Andrea Davis
Executive Director
Homeword