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Attention Ravalli County Commissioners
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Ravalli County Commissioners

MARY LAKES
74 ARBOR LN.
HAMILTON, MT.

I lived in Ravalli Co. for 36 years from 1982 - 2018. My family was raised here, I had a successful 20-year private practice in massage therapy, and still own a home in the county. I have many fond memories of life spent in this beautiful Bitterroot Mountain Valley. A year ago I retired and re-located to Port Townsend, WA. to be closer to my children and grand children.

A week ago I returned to Hamilton for a visit. I was first shocked

then deeply sad when I approached Hamilton with "Fresh Eyes". WHAT HAPPENED? The development along the highway is not necessarily new. When I lived here, like the proverbial frog in boiling water, I didn't see so clearly while it was happening but consistently voting for planning and zoning and against large development in the County (to no avail).

What I saw with "fresh eyes" was a BUTT UGLY Highway 93 (northern) Corridor - entering town. It looked like so many other run down towns I've driven through on road trips.

"WHAT HAPPENED" is a long-term lack of planning, the unwillingness of citizens and County leadership to plan for future generations, a lack of respect

or maybe even the lack of recognition of the natural beauty that HAD surrounded us.

My request to you is next time you approach Hamilton, come in with your own "fresh eyes" and see what you see. Do you feel good about what we've collectively put together or perhaps, as I recently did, recognize and own how we have spoiled our own nest?

Mary Lokey
11/4/19