

Glenda Wiles

From: Bitterroot Valley <bitterrootvalley@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2014 5:38 PM
To: Allen Rose; Bielski Kristi; Boulanger Scott; Jeff Burrows; Greg Chilcott; Corn George; Suzy Foss; General Information Hamilton; Guisinger Jamie; Iman J R; Lyons Howard; Milner Kesley; Mitchell Al; Michelle Al; Terry Nelson; Petrusaitis Joe; Pogachar Rod; Ron Stoltz; Chris Taggart; Kevin Waller; West Jenny; Glenda Wiles
Subject: Large Box Stores

To: Hamilton City Council Members

The Bitterroot is a wonderful place to live and raise a family. With the logging industry gone, there is not much left for jobs unless a person is highly educated and can work at places like GSK or the Hospital, etc.

I was actually raised in the Bitterroot Valley. I have watched it grow. Growth is okay to an extent. But, I often question growth. Why does Ravalli County need umpteen casinos and bars to throw money away in? Is there really a need for all these restaurants? The answer is no. There are not enough people in the Bitterroot that will actually shop in Ravalli County. The majority of "our people" are being forced to do their business in Missoula.

When folks from Ravalli County and beyond Lost Trail are in Missoula, they will rent a room for the night, eat 3 to 4 meals in Missoula, go to Costco, shop at Wal-Mart, go to the mall, take in a movie at the theater, etc. If Ravalli County had a Wal-Mart and a Costco, the Bitterroot would flourish. There would be (#1) more jobs, (#2) more tourist, and (#3) folks from Wisdom, Jackson, Salmon, Gibbonsville, etc. Those folks would be renting a room in Hamilton, shopping in Darby as they came through. They would be purchasing 3 to 4 meals in Ravalli County, taking in a movie at the Pharaohplex, Bowling, visiting a local tavern or visiting with family or friends. Those folks would be shopping downtown because of the uniqueness of downtown. They would purchase fuel locally, buy their feed for their cattle, do their bulk shopping before they head back over the hill... bulk shopping will be the last thing they do, due to the fact that they will not want their ice cream to melt on the way back going over Lost Trail. Perhaps some of those individuals will even stop at Lost Trail Hot Springs and take a dip in the pool.

When folks come from over Lost Trail right now, they are on a mission... "MISSOULA". They are not able to purchase everything they need here in Hamilton. I am not for large growth, but Ravalli County needs jobs. I am not for subdivisions either... but 2 large stores such as Costco and Wal-Mart will build our economy. Honestly, I would never go to Kmart or Wal-Mart to buy myself a new pair of shoes or boots? My choice would be (#1) Fords. If Fords did not have what I was looking for, I would go to Bob Wards or shop on line. My point being, folks will still shop at the local mom & pop stores. We know what we need and where to get it. Another point is MEAT. Have you ever seen the meat department at Wal-Mart? Perhaps some would go to Wal-Mart for meat... not me... I am faithful to Hamilton Market Place, (IGA) and People's Market in Darby. They have the best quality meat and the best prices in the Ravalli County.

My point here is "employing the folks within Ravalli County" and stop sending our locals and others to Missoula to do their shopping. Missoula is crazy and driving during the winter to do your Holiday shopping is not safe a majority of the time. Ravalli County is actually forcing the locals to shop, dine, and spend their money in Missoula. Everyone has good points in regards to growth and development... I wonder how many jobs would be created for the actual building of a Wal-Mart and (or) a Costco... probably a lot of jobs and they would be purchasing their building materials locally, (I would hope).

Personally, I am seeing a lot of "greediness" coming from the "Hamilton City Council". I am not saying businesses in particular. Ravalli County needs to find a way to make this valley flourish again. If you all want to rule out large box stores then begin to put your money where your mouth is and figure out a way to bring back the logging industry. Ravalli County is not going to survive on tourism... our people come first, and our people need jobs!

I am the administrator of the "Employ the Bitterroot Page" on Facebook. I am disabled; I am not looking for a job. I am one of the "MANY" disabled and or elderly in Ravalli County that can not afford to shop downtown. But, my concern is for "The People within Ravalli County" that need jobs, (my kids, my grandkids, your kids, your grandkids, your friends' kids and grandkids, etc.) I created the Employ the Bitterroot Page to help potential employees find tips on jobs and for folks who might be looking for someone to do some yard work or do some cleaning and maybe babysitting. I have over 8,000

followers on that page. I encourage all of you to go in and view the comments in regards to what people are saying and what people want. Change is okay. Growth is okay. But, once we lost the logging industry, Ravalli County died.

If your main concerns are "water and sewer", stop all the subdivisions! (Especially the one at Skalkaho, where all the Elk and Deer feed year after year after year.) It's all common since.

I highly recommend not attempting to stop large box stores within Ravalli County. You will simply be forcing and sending a major part of local business to Missoula.

Kind Regards,

April Olechnicki
Hamilton, MT

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Bitterroot Valley: <https://www.facebook.com/ravalli.root.7>

Employ The Bitterroot: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/275908455815025/>

Questions for Ravalli County:

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