

Comments on the Bonner/Milltown Vision Statement received via email as of 5pm on 11-13-17

1.

I live within the Bonner-Milltown planning project area and have taken some time to review the vision document. I find the document to not be a vision of future state but rather a statement of the current status of the community. Each vision statement begins with "is" and gives no desired direction for the future. While I've read several vision documents from other cities I see a combination for both vision and desired status beyond that of the current state. I assume that this means the committee sees no need or desire for change. I too would like to see some things stay the same but I feel that outside development pressure and a growing Missoula community is going to inevitably put pressure on the Bonner-Milltown area. There should be a vision that addresses zoning so we don't become the location that developers put storage units and apartments generating revenue for the developers that the community will never see. I would also like to see a vision that emphasizes and address issues with our access to the river and public land. There should be a future desired vision for the use of the river and access to the river. Nothing is mentioned about Marshall Mountain which should be a critical area of focus so that it remains an area that everyone in the community can continue to use. Thanks for taking time to hear my comments. I'm happy to elaborate on anything mentioned, feel free to contact me with questions. If you have recommendations of how community members can be involved as this process please let me know.

Thanks,
Eric

Eric Tangedahl

2.

Please verify the connection of the Zepeda complex to public water treatment. If the complex provides a separate treatment facility, I withdraw the third paragraph of my comment. I would be pleased to discuss this question with a Missoula planner- telephone: 258-6509.

Future uses of the Bonner- Milltown area must preserve residents' domestic water rights and private wells.

Commercial establishments, subdivision and apartment complexes must properly provide for water delivery and sewage treatment from their own pockets.

The Zepeda apartment complex on the west side of East Missoula demonstrates a cautionary tale for Milltown- Bonner, namely, the unfair use of residential fees and taxes supporting private investment and development. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJ-ZgREH15o> These units produce a huge burden of black and grey water.

We must remember, large water treatment projects do not reduce the burden, but only move the effluvia downstream and may actually increase the environmental burden by encouraging unwise development.

Thank you, Marianne Vigeland- stakeholder Bonner-Milltown.

3.

I have read the draft that is on line. What I don't understand is, the Vision Statement. What is it's purpose? As I read it, it shows me nothing for the future, only what is already in place. The other thing I question is the Milltown State Park. Is it open yet?

Thank you,

Joanna Cameron

4.

Gary Matson, 13 November 2017

Beginning comment: I agree with some elements of the vision as described. However, some elements are incorrect and others are currently missing. It is my personal hope that the missing elements can come about in the future, perhaps as a result of a broadly supported community plan.

Vision: "Bonner, Milltown and West Riverside share a common vision of a complete, independent community that benefits from its proximity to the City of Missoula, but provides for basic needs locally."

Comment: I'm struggling with the idea that we're an "independent community." I believe that "community" implies social cohesiveness and mutual interests. Whereas at one time nearly every local family had an association with the "Bonner Mill," that commonality has gone away. I would be interested in knowing how many persons employed at the mill site today live in Bonner/Milltown and suspect they are a minority among employed persons. Can another center of commonality substitute for the "old" Bonner Mill? I think that question is unanswerable right now and may depend upon the nature of growth and development in the next 10-20 years.

I would re-write this part of the vision as follows:

Original version:

Bonner/Milltown is an independent, complete community.

Bonner, Milltown and West Riverside share a common vision of a complete, independent community that benefits from its proximity to the City of Missoula, but provides for basic needs locally. The growing community benefits from amenities such as quality schools, a community center designed for all ages, well-maintained public space and modern infrastructure. Bonner/Milltown also provides an economy that includes jobs as well as local shops and services.

Edited version:

Bonner/Milltown is a semi-independent neighborhood of Missoula

Residents of Bonner/Milltown depend almost solely upon Missoula for social, cultural, and economic services. Many object to the more liberal social/political climate of Missoula and want to physically isolate themselves from that association as well as to remain free of an additional city tax burden. Residents' desire for separateness and independence is more of a unifying factor than any commonly shared community interest. Residents enjoy excellent emergency and infrastructure services provided by the County and Missoula Rural Fire District. The growing tax base at the Bonner Mill site and Harris Thermal properties provide the County with more than ample resources to provide needed services.

Vision: "Bonner/Milltown also provides an economy that includes jobs as well as local shops and services."

Comment: This is a good part of a vision, but currently I know of no local shop that provides citizens with services. Before Town Pump, there was a local gas station that also did mechanical work; there was a local grocery store. Town Pump put both out of business. In an idealized small community situation, residents would see each other as they visited local small businesses and services. Other than the River City Grill, this kind of area does not exist in Bonner/Milltown. A community plan should include a commercial area with shops and services.

Vision: "...the community is a place for all ages and household types including youth, families, singles, couples and elders, where people can live an entire, rich life."

Comment: Bonner/Milltown currently lacks an ample supply of housing that is attractive enough to encourage new residents to stay long term. Instead of only being "affordable" all of our housing should be attractive and offer pleasing neighborhoods. There are increasingly limited land parcels suitable for housing developments. Where these might have occurred, things that offer zero contribution to the community are being built. For example, storage units are an example of the type of development that is occurring and only mines a community's space and resources while offering nothing in return. A community plan could limit the gobbling up of valuable community space by financial interests that contribute nothing but property tax dollars.

Vision: "Providing for a variety of households increases the types of people who live in the community and makes it possible for residents to stay longer when they don't have to move out when life changes, which improves community cohesion and longevity."

Comment: Past community visions have included housing for senior persons and a local medical facility. Currently, most seniors move to Missoula when they become less mobile and in greater need for services. A community plan should address this shortcoming to better enable the vision.

Gary Matson

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