

Grant Creek Neighborhood Council General Meeting March 11, 2025
7 to 9:15 p.m. Grant Creek Inn

- The meeting began with an unscheduled discussion of unauthorized long-term camping and abandonment of campers/trailers at the Snowbowl parking lot north of the Town Pump at the mouth of Grant Creek.

The same topic had been a key item of discussion during the general meeting two years before.

During the afternoon, Ward 2 City Councilors Sierra Farmer and Mirtha Becerra met with the chief of police and city attorney. Becerra was unable to attend the evening meeting. Bert Lindler asked Sierra Farmer to share what the two of them had learned.

Farmer said that a policeman had been assigned to help the landowner with trespass issues, but that otherwise, the landowner needed to address the concerns. The city has an easement for a small parking area at the north end of the lot for trailhead parking, but the landowners still retains responsibility, she said, comparing the situation to someone letting someone else camp on their property.

A petition was circulated expressing many of the attendees' concerns about the ongoing situation.

[Friday after the general meeting, Kevin Davis organized a meeting at which he invited the landowner, the police, and residents who have helped during past clean ups to meet at the Snowbowl parking lot. A day or two later the abandoned camper was gone (although some trash remained). Another week or so later, the motor home with blacked out windows was gone].

- Roy Regel moved to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2023 general meeting. Gary Swartz seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.
- Ryan Guelff, transportation engineer in the city's Department of Public Works and Mobility, discussed the plans for construction of a roundabout at Expo Parkway and Grant Creek Road. There will also be extensive improvements along Expo Parkway, which will become a city collector street, and also along Grant Creek Road north to Stonebridge. This area of Grant Creek Road has had 10 times as many accidents as might be expected for the amount of traffic it carries. Expo Parkway will be restriped as a complete street. Parking will no longer be allowed on the south side. The sidewalk on the north side of Expo Parkway will be completed. Grant Creek Road will have lighting to Stonebridge and pedestrian cross walks at Stonebridge and Expo Parkway. From the I-90 interchange north to the Town Pump, the three lanes of northbound traffic will be reduced to a single lane. This proposed change caused several persons to express concern that there needed to be at least two lanes northbound, if not three. The cost of the project will be shared between the city and the developer of Grant Creek Village based on the proportion of traffic projected to come from the permitted apartments. The project design is being completed. Although right-of-way needs to be purchased, construction could begin as early as 2026.

- Charlie Menefee, associate planner in the city's Transportation Planning Department, discussed the Reserve Street Safety Action Plan (<https://www.engagemissoula.com/reserve-street-safety-action-plan>). Reserve Street has seen three fatalities and more than 60 serious injury accidents since 2019, more than Missoula's other roadways. Among the concerns identified during the first round of public engagement were:
 - Vehicle speeds feel high
 - Turns at unsignalized intersections are difficult
 - Lighting feels inadequate at certain locations
 - Bike lanes are narrow and unprotected
 - Business accesses have conflicts between vehicles and people walking or biking
 - Most people avoid Reserve Street when walking or biking
 - Intersections and areas with driveways and businesses are congested
 - Future growth will exacerbate existing concerns
 - Local access is competing with regional through traffic.

Some of the suggestions to resolve these concerns include:

- Reduce posted speed limit and implement traffic calming
- Install a protected bike lane or separated pathways, pedestrian islands and pedestrian signals
- Optimize signal timing, add/lengthen turn lanes, and reconfigure intersections to improve traffic flow
- Add traffic signals or roundabouts and limit business access points
- Improve pavement markings, signage and lights.

Public comment continues to be collected through early April during the second round of public engagement.

Rich Lasko of the Friends of Grant Creek Wildlife Risk Reduction Task Force and Nate Scully, the county's wildfire mitigation specialist, discussed opportunities for Grant Creek residents to take advantage of grants to reduce the wildfire hazards on their properties. Contact Nate (nscully@missoulacounty.us) to have wildfire hazards evaluated on your property or to learn whether you can benefit from grants paying half the cost of reducing wildfire hazard on small properties. Colorado Gulch has organized neighbors with the benefits of reducing wildfire risk throughout the entire neighborhood while making the project more attractive to contractors who will be mobilizing for work at many homes rather than a single home. Meanwhile, Tim Hunt (timmerhunt@gmail.com) is organizing requests for the Missoula County chipper to chip trees and limbs that Grant Creek homeowners have cut themselves.

- Gretchen Watkins of the Clark Fork Coalition described the nonprofit's efforts to work with Grant Creek neighbors and businesses to help the creek, the natural life in and along the creek,

and residents benefiting from a healthy creek. A Grant Creek Watershed Restoration Plan has been prepared analyzing the different needs and opportunities along sections of Grant Creek

(https://deq.mt.gov/files/Water/WPB/Nonpoint/Publications/WRPs/GrantCreek_WRP_CFC2025.pdf)

A map showing the sustainable, at risk, and not sustainable sections is included below. Work is beginning on projects south of Broadway this summer (<https://missoulacurrent.com/grant-creek-restoration-8/>) with additional projects being planned for coming years.

- A brochure describing the invasive Roman snail found along Grant Creek near Snowbowl Road was available. The brochure, which requests residents to contact Russ Hartzell (Russ.Hartzell2@mt.gov) if they find Roman snails, is included in the minutes below.

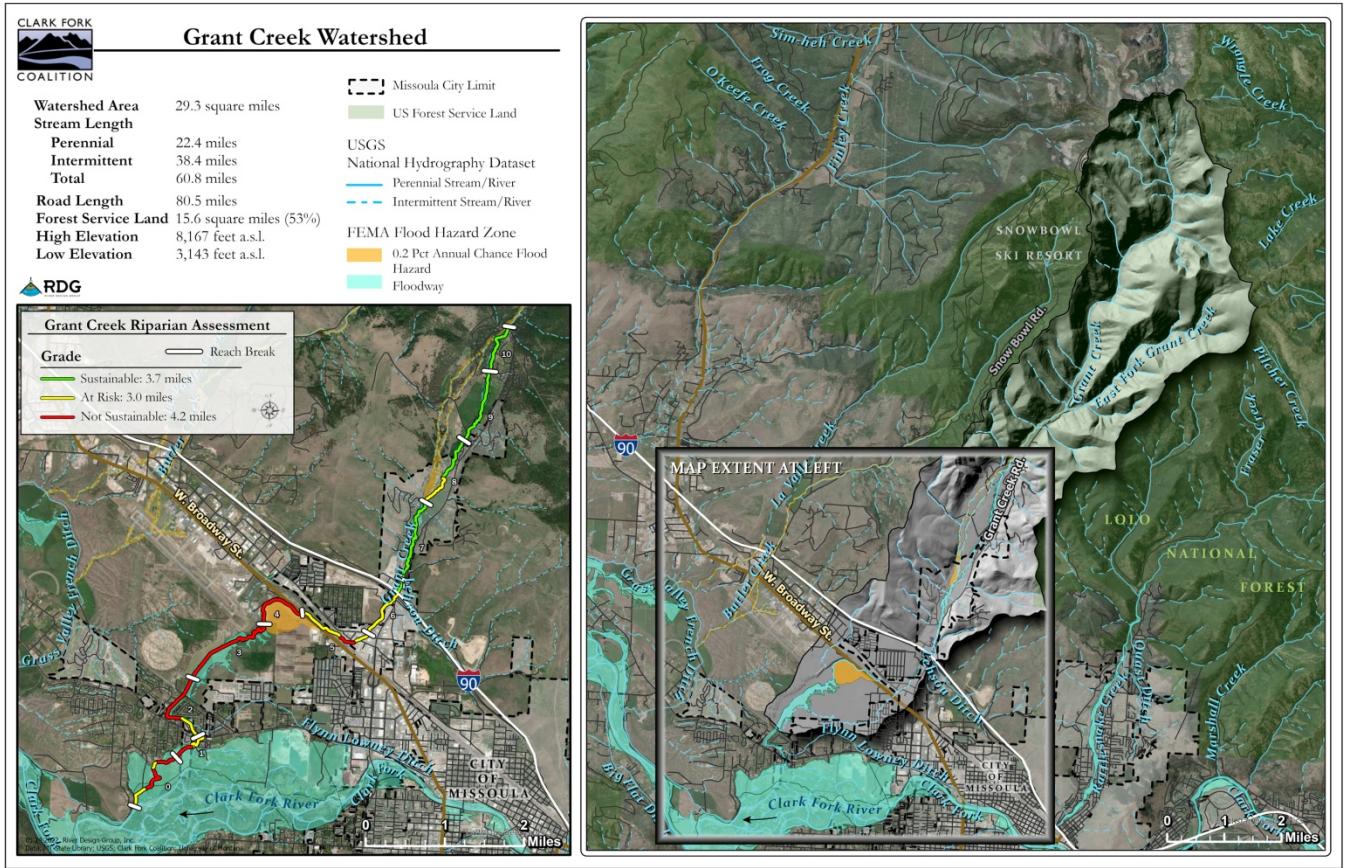
-Leadership Team elections

City Neighborhoods Specialist Kalina Pritchard ran the leadership team election. Four persons had offered to run for the leadership team: Craig Van Bockel (Gleneagle), Kevin Davis (Business Representative), and John Langstaff (area outside association), and Kim Birck (Grantland 1-10).

Kalina asked for additional nominations.

Hearing none, she asked whether there was a motion to approve the slate of four candidates. Gary Swartz moved to approve the slate. Roy Regel seconded. The leadership team slate was approved by unanimous voice vote.

- There was no public comment on nonagenda items and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



STOP THE SNAIL

Roman Snail *Helix pomatia*

WHAT TO LOOK FOR?



Roman snails are large land snails native to central and eastern Europe. As fully grown adults, they are much larger than any native snails. They are commonly used as escargot in cuisine and were likely intentionally or accidentally released from aquarium or food rearing captivity. Grant Creek is the only location where Roman snails have been reported in MT.

IMPACTS



Though impacts are localized, we do not want to see Roman snails spread into new areas. These are large snails that could potentially damage or contaminate gardens, yards, etc. Never transport animals to new areas or release aquarium pets into the wild.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Keep an eye out for Roman snails on your property or while adventuring, and report suspected Roman snail sightings to MISC Program Coordinator Russ Hartzell. If you are interested in participating in a Roman snail roundup this spring/summer, contact Russ to be added to the contact list.



Photos provided by: Kristi DuBois



If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Russ Hartzell at 406-324-0021 or Russ.Hartzell2@mt.gov

