From: Mary Malerk
To: bcc@missoulacounty.us; Grp. City Council and City Web Site; Don Malerk
Subject: Safety
Date: Sunday, May 22, 2022 8:36:44 AM

Dear Mayor Engen, Missoula City Council Members, and Missoula County Commissioners,
Missoula is a wonderful place to live, work and recreate. We have a friendly, welcoming, and generous community.
Unfortunately, our good intentions to serve all residents has compromised the safety of our community at large. The flood gates of Missoula generosity have encouraged people to come here. People travel here and expect free services. They give nothing productive back in return.
Our community has been overwhelmed. The percentage of homeless to housed people needs to be adjusted so we can successfully support all and do so in a meaningful way.
Meeting our Missoula citizen's physical, mental health, education and housing needs are a huge task. Our community has no large corporations to support this. The salary base of employment here is minimal.
The increasing numbers of homeless/unhoused people make me feel unsafe due to the disruptive and unpredictable behavior I have witnessed while running on the trails, walking downtown, and working at my job. Tents in public places, people living in their cars or walking around with sleeping bags and belongings is common.
I reluctantly carry pepper spray. Not for mountain lions or bears. I do so in case I am attacked or violated. I should be able to live here freely, not in fear.
Police clear the doorways (and sidewalks of unsanitary refuse) of small downtown businesses so customers can enter and exit safely. Theft of property in these businesses keeps our Police Officers busy.
Homeless people travel to all parts of the community due to the free Mountain Line Bus system. I've heard stories of homeless people urinating and defecating on the bus, causing the driver to quit, saying, "I didn't sign up for this!" Is this how my tax paying dollars are being spent? Being abused by people who don't appreciate this opportunity?
Please help to rectify this growing community safety concern.
I am saddened and embarrassed by the poverty that YOU have permitted, inadvertently I imagine, here in Missoula.
I implore you to responsibly manage Missoula tax dollars for Missoula citizens. We need to work within our budget to provide services for Missoula residents.
To improve our system, maybe we need more hospitals to support people with mental health and drug issues? Then, we can assist people in becoming functioning and contributing to the greater community.
Make Missoula a truly fabulous place to live… for ALL of us!

Thank you,
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