

Montana Conservation Voters - 2009 Missoula City Scorecard



Dear Missoula County Conservation Voters,

Who we elect matters!

City Council elections this fall are important to the Missoula conservation community. I encourage you to review your City Council members' conservation votes, and use this information to make an informed vote for City Council candidates this fall.

Montana Conservation Voters is the statewide non-partisan political voice of Montana's environmental and conservation communities. MCV is dedicated to educating and activating voters on key issues affecting our state's clean air, water, public health, wildlife, forests and open space.

MCV is a membership organization that shines a spotlight on the voting records and actions of elected officials – from city hall to Congress – on key environmental policies. MCV works to elect policy makers so that other groups can work more effectively on environmental policy.

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Missoula is a special place with vibrant neighborhoods, three great rivers, neighboring wilderness, and abundant recreational opportunities. It is the economic center of western Montana. Our city faces a gamut of troubles that threaten our quality of life.

Missoulians expect clean air, water and access to open space. City Council shapes policy affecting bike and pedestrian transportation, local food production, and the acquisition and management of parkland and open space. We need to promote renewable energy and reduce our fuel consumption for our families' economic security. We need to plan for growth in town and on our urban fringe, adequately funding the planning effort. All these needs are reflected in the past votes of our current City Council.

With your help, we will help elect strong leaders to local office who are committed to our shared conservation values.

The Missoula City Conservation Scorecard before you was assembled in consultation with conservation and environmental organization colleagues, reviewing votes affecting our city's clean air, water, and open spaces between January 2008 and March 2009. These ten votes by our twelve City Councilors make up our final scorecard.

In the coming weeks we will interview and endorse candidates for City Council based on their commitment to our conservation values and their qualification to serve. We invite members to help protect a vibrant Missoula by volunteering for an endorsement committee. Please contact our office at 542.1055 if you are interested.

Please use this Scorecard to decide who deserves your vote.

Thanks to all the conservationists in Missoula that make our city a better place to live, work and play, for their guidance in developing this scorecard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alex Taft'.

Alex Taft, Vice Chairman
Montana Conservation Voters Missoula Chapter

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		1. Equitable Transportation Revenue	2. Conserve Agricultural Land	3. Increase Parkland Dedication	4. Fund Open Space Management Plan	5. Support Green Tags	6. Adopt Urban Fringe Development Area (UFDA)	7. Reduce City Fuel Consumption	8. Support Peer Review of 3rd and Russel St EIS	9. Support Increased Planning Resources	10. Reconsider Support for Chickens Ordinance	Entire Council Score
Ward 1	Jason Wiener	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%
	Dave Strohmaier	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%
Ward 2	Pam Walzer	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	90%
	John Hendrickson	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	20%
Ward 3	Stacy Rye	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	90%
	Bob Jaffe	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	90%
Ward 4	Lyn Hellegaard	-	NP	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	22%
	John Wilkins	+	-	+	-	-	-	AB	-	+	-	33%
Ward 5	Renee Mitchell	NP	-	+	-	-	-	AB	-	-	AB	14%
	Dick Haines	-	-	-	NP	NP	-	-	+	-	-	13%
Ward 6	Ed Childers	+	-	+	+	+	+	AB	-	+	+	78%
	Marilyn Marler	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	90%

(+) indicates a vote with the Conservation Community NP stands for not present
 (-) indicates a vote against the Conservation Community AB stands for abstained, not included in score

1. Equitable Transportation Revenue, March 23, 2009

This resolution called for equitable distribution of federal and state transportation revenue to Missoula. Missoula residents make up 8.5% of the Montana population but only receive 2.6% of the federal funds for highway and transit improvements, representing less than a third of the resources the City ought to receive given its relative population to the state. Proponents included the Bike Walk Alliance for Missoula, Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation and Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation.

Conservation Community position: Support
Vote: 8/3, Renee Mitchell absent, resolution passed



2. Conserve Agricultural Land, May 13, 2009

This motion would have restored the integrity of an "Agricultural Parcel" within the Chickasaw Place subdivision, in an effort to mitigate the loss of irreplaceable agricultural soil in the face of continued population growth and development. The Chickasaw Place subdivision would have converted all 9.4 acres of prime farmland to residential uses. The Office of Planning & Grants recommended that the 3 best acres of farmland, all previously farmed, would be permanently protected in a design that encouraged food production. The motion failed, but final approval did include some farmland mitigation measures. The Community Food and Agriculture Coalition led the effort to mitigate the loss of prime farmland slated for development. Read more here: <http://missoulafac.org/content/index/90>.

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Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 2/10, measure failed

3. Increase Parkland Dedication, March 9, 2009

This resolution amended City Subdivision Regulations to close a loophole in parkland dedication requirements and increased parkland for multi-family development in new subdivisions. Providing adequate and useable green space for multi-family projects improves the quality of life for residents, decreases pressure on our existing parks and open space, and adds to the area available for rainwater infiltration. Additionally, the newly adopted regulations allow the parkland dedication to be used for community garden space.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 9/3, measure passed



4. Fund Open Space Management Plan, February 9, 2009

This measure approved and authorized the Mayor to sign an agreement with Ecosystem Research Group to prepare a plan for managing Missoula's open space lands. This represents the City's effort to secure professional and scientific expertise in preparing a plan for managing and preserving the integrity and inherent value of Missoula's open space.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 7/4, Dick Haines was absent, measure passed

5. Support Green Tags, February 9, 2009

This measure allows Missoula to sponsor renewable energy certificates to raise money for conservation projects and create incentives for renewable energy development in the City. The Greenhouse Gas and Energy Conservation Team proposed a partnership with Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) to sell renewable energy certificates or green tags. In exchange, BEF allows the City to keep 10 percent of the revenue to invest in municipal renewable energy development. The City's approval of this proposal is a significant step toward reducing the inherently higher cost of developing a cleaner energy future for Missoula.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 9/2, Dick Haines was absent, measure passed

6. Adopt Urban Fringe Development Area (UFDA) Project, November 24, 2008

This resolution included the Urban Fringe Development Area (UFDA) in the 2005 Missoula County Growth Policy. This resolution helps guides growth over the next 10+ years toward the urban core that already provides City services. This project reflects an abundance of community input resulting in a plan that guides future growth and helps avoid sprawl. A monthly roundtable of groups that discuss issues such as this met and submitted a letter to the Missoula City Council supporting the adoption of the resolution.

Groups who supported the resolution include:

Clark Fork Coalition; Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, Five Valleys Audubon Society, Garden City Harvest, GlobalWarmingSolution.org, Home Resource, HomeWORD, Montana Conservation Voters Missoula Chapter, Missoula Insititute for Sustainable Transportation, Missoula Urban Demonstration Project, Montana Audubon, North-Missoula Community Development Corporation, Sierra Club Montana, and Wildlands CPR.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 7/5, measure passed



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7. Reduce City Fuel Consumption, November 3, 2008

This measure supported reduction of fuel consumption and energy use by the City of by 10 percent below 2007 levels by January 1, 2011. As fuel and energy costs rise and concerns over global climate change mount, the City must do what it can to reduce fuel and energy consumption. This is an effort to reduce the burden on the City's budget, conserve resources and protect the environment.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 8/1, 3 abstentions, measure passed

8. Support Peer Review of 3rd Street and Russell Street EIS, October 6, 2008

This measure called for a second look at the 3rd and Russell Street reconstruction Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The peer review, supported by the Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation, was to ensure thorough public participation and that the "preferred reconstruction design alternative" reflected the community's support for all forms of transportation, preserved neighborhood design, and followed a "complete streets" concept.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 7/5, measure passed

9. Support Increased Planning Resources, September 22, 2008

This resolution established fees for the Office of Planning and Grants to review and process land use applications. Maintaining adequate funding for the Office of Planning and Grants ensures the City of Missoula has resources to support the community's request for a professional approach to planning for growth and requiring responsible and functional development of Missoula.

Conservation Community Position: Support

Vote: 8/4, measure passed

10. Reconsider Support for Chicken Ordinance, January 7, 2008

The motion would have reconsidered the chicken ordinance, which supports local food production and allowed City residents to have backyard chickens. Conservationists and local food advocates supported the original chicken ordinance, so this resolution would have potentially reversed that earlier victory. Currently 85-90% of Missoula's food comes from elsewhere, relying on fossil fuel dependent transportation. So, as residents become increasingly concerned with climate change, food safety, and rising oil prices, they gravitate toward greater self-reliance. The Community Food and Agriculture Coalition supported the urban chicken ordinance.

Conservation Community Position: Oppose motion to reconsider

Vote: 4/7, 1 abstention, motion failed



Support Montana Conservation Voters

The Montana Conservation Voters Board of Directors has set an ambitious fundraising goal this year, to launch our group on solid financial footing for the next decade. Be part of our growing grassroots movement, working to protect Montana for future generations. If you are not a member, join us. If you are, we thank you and ask you to please consider an additional gift to support our work. Give online at www.mtvoters.org/contribute.