

I am a native Montanan and am currently a resident and homeowner in Great Falls. I have reviewed these proposed zoning changes and have submitted several public comments during this process. I have a few additional comments....

Globally there is growing pressure to increase our environmental awareness and regulations to prevent pollution. **Increasing industrial use, especially those industries with high environmental pollution track records, seems like a 19th century approach to 21st century future sustainable growth and environmental stewardship.**

There is considerable peer-reviewed scientific research that promotes successful smaller sustainable farms relying less on the large chemical industries and mega-animal production industries. According to the 2014 Cascade County Growth Policy, the "family farm" is Cascade County's predominate form of agricultural operation. A small slaughterhouse for local use and food distribution somewhere in the county is very appropriate. But we have a mandate to prevent water pollution and preserve our water resources, our rich and productive land, and clean air. A mega-sized arena with a smorgasbord of slaughterhouses, feedlots, rendering plants, large confined animal feeding operations and other heavy industries is not needed to support our local ranchers and their animal production.

This issue is a non-partisan community issue and has far-reaching effects on future generations. Allowing large slaughterhouses, feedlots and their related industries are a significant part of these new definitions and proposed zoning changes. Over the past few decades research studies indicate results of water and air pollution, land contamination, lower relative incomes, greater income inequality, a far less active "main street" with fewer stores, and declines in our community health and well-being. A 2006 study commissioned by the State of North Dakota Attorney General's Office reviewed 56 socioeconomic studies documenting the economic impacts of industrial agriculture in general on rural communities. The studies consistently found, in addition to adverse environmental effects, "detrimental effects of industrialized farming and animal production on many indicators of community quality of life, particularly those involving the social fabric of communities. The only kinds of economic development attracted to 'industrial agricultural communities' are other environmentally polluting and socially degrading industries". This North Dakota study concluded by stating "**This is not sustainable economic development; it is industrial economic exploitation.**"

We can say NO to these proposed zoning changes promoting mega-sized animal production and other heavy industries throughout our previously zoned Agriculture land and we can SAY “YES” TO SOMETHING BETTER!

We have an opportunity to create the kind of world we want with sustainable economic growth and without adverse environmental and social consequences. It is our collective responsibility as citizens and government officials to be well-informed before we make decisions. It is my hope that we will collectively choose the opportunity to “take the high road”, rather than succumb to the environmentally, socially, and ethically “low road” epitomized by large industrial animal feeding and slaughter operations as well as other polluting heavy industries. Numerous reasons to choose the “high road” include maintaining environmental quality, public health, economic sustainability, tourism and the social fabric of our communities in an ethical and sustainable manner for the most benevolent outcome for our community and the planet. We – you, me, republicans, democrats, farmers, ranchers, government employees, teachers, office workers – all of us from every walk of life - WE ARE RESPONSIBLE for the environmental, social and moral legacy we leave to today’s children and future generations in this magnificent “Last Best Place”.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn K. Craven', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Carolyn K. Craven
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