

## Questions for Missoula City Council Candidates

### Marilyn Marler, Ward 6

1. Are you a Democrat? **Yes.**
2. Are you seeking Missoula County Democrats' endorsement, why? **Yes, I am seeking the endorsement. Although the city council elections are non-partisan, I think that having the Democratic endorsement will help me communicate my values to the voters. I have always aligned myself with the Democratic party- the ideals are close to my own.**
3. Will you be seeking any other political party endorsement this election? No.
4. What have you done in the past to support or work for Democratic candidates, local, state, or national? **With very few exceptions, I vote for Democratic candidates, make campaign contributions as I am able, and have made phone calls and hosted yard signs. Most of my involvement has been for local and state elections. Additionally, I encourage young Democrats to participate in the process and strive to set a good example through serving in a leadership position myself.**
5. How much or little do you agree with the following statement? *Stewardship—acting now to maximize the well-being of future generations—is the primary responsibility of government and the lens through which policy making in areas as diverse as energy, transportation, education, health care, human rights and taxation should be focused.*

**I completely agree with this statement. Stewardship is more important than short term gains. Stewardship requires vision and leadership that puts today's decision in the context of a "big picture." I try to make decisions on a daily basis, in my role as a local politician and in my personal life, by considering the big picture and my impacts on future generations. This is a helpful framework for me, and helps keep the focus and energy away from political minutiae which can so easily dominate local politics.**

6. The Central Committee recently ratified the enclosed document, written by Missoula Democrats, that states our shared values. How will your work in local government reflect those values?

**As my voting record on city council reflects, I support conservation-minded development tools (planning and in-fill growth), I strongly support bike and pedestrian infrastructure, I strongly support protection and stewardship of our Open Space system, strengthening public transit, protecting local agricultural lands and efforts to educate and facilitate conservation of energy in government and private buildings. I will continue to support all of these ideals. Because I have 4 years experience on city council and 13 years professional experience working on conservation issues with various community groups, I believe I am especially qualified to make progress in these areas.**

7. With respect to the issues caucus document, which positions (if any) on local, national or international issues do you disagree with? Why?

**I disagree that the City of Missoula should be equally responsible for providing public transportation to rural areas as to urban areas. In that scenario, taxpayers in the dense areas subsidize those on the fringe areas, which is not fair. Subsidizing development in rural areas contributes to sprawl and increased consumption of fossil fuels. I do agree that we need to examine transportation issues at the county and state levels, but I would like to see Missoula develop closer to its urban core than continue to sprawl.**

8. What should government's role be in managing growth?

**Local government can influence and manage growth by acknowledging that it is going to happen, planning for it and investing in infrastructure that is compatible with our growth vision. I think the Urban Fringe Development Plan that was passed earlier this year by the city council is a powerful tool to help us guide future growth. Identifying buildable land and resources that need to be conserved (like agricultural land) helps us apply zoning, review subdivisions, and invest in roads and transportation. We need to maintain a vision of a vibrant Missoula and make active decisions to reach our goals of a sustainable and less consumptive community.**

9. What should local government do to facilitate Missoulian's consuming less energy? **City government is already doing several things in this area, but I will begin my answer with a broader context. We need to make changes to city operations as well as provide active outreach and education for local citizens. As a city, we need to identify our current usage and current needs, and identify what we can do without. We need to find ways to make public buildings more energy efficient (Jack Stucky in Public Works has been doing this on his own for years, with little fanfare. We should facilitate his ongoing work). City government needs to, and has begun to, make better energy efficient choices when purchasing vehicles. We now encourage staff to bike to nearby meetings when possible to set an example and save taxpayer money.**

**I need to acknowledge that there is a citizen based Greenhouse Gas and Energy Conservation Team which works with the Conservation Committee of Council to identify projects. This is a relatively new committee that I have been working with as the Conservation Chair, and they have begun to identify and enact some exciting projects. Additionally, the Office of Planning and Grants has hired an energy conservation grants writer to help fund energy efficiency upgrades for city operations, and to educate Missoulians about how to be more energy efficient and saving money by doing so. I am excited to continue working on these issues if I'm re-elected for another term.**

10. Discuss how you would balance expanding road capacity and adding transit or bike-ped options when making transportation policy. **Expanding road capacity for automobiles is unfortunately sometimes necessary as the community grows. However I think we need to first use education and incentives to get people out of their cars and using public transportation, walking or biking. Any road project needs to include upgrades for all modes of transportation, specifically safe facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. If we don't invest in bike-ped infrastructure, it will remain a challenge to get people out of their cars. I would like to add here that my husband and I share one vehicle between us, and do the vast majority of our commuting to work and errands with our bicycles. I believe that better education, law enforcement for cyclists and drivers, as well as physical infrastructure will continue to make Missoula less dependent on fossil fuels than it is today.**