Honoring Our Legacy. Embracing Our Future.

This is a time of significant change for us. Our founding director, Mayre Flowers, has retired after 26 years of indefatigable commitment to the principles that have made Citizens strong – stewardship, open government, community, and active citizenship.

Transitions from long-term leadership such as Mayre’s can offer much uncertainty. I assure you that our work will remain strongly committed to empowering the citizens of the Flathead Valley to participate in and effectively advocate for sustainable solutions that will keep the Flathead ecologically and economically healthy.

I’m excited to lead Citizens for a Better Flathead. I am honored and grateful to be entrusted with the rich legacy you and Mayre have built. Citizens has become a go-to resource for the community on planning issues and respected as a well-informed and fierce advocate for the greater good of this community, for sustainable solutions, and for the world-class resources of this region.

We will continue to take on issues that would fundamentally change the character of the valley.

We will continue to empower people willing to take the lead on issues – big or small – and be there to guide and support them.

And we will continue to ensure that local government policies and decisions give meaningful consideration to the well-being of the whole community, the environment, and future generations.

I ask for your continued support as we move forward. I ask you to invest with our dedicated staff and board in our common future in this uncommon place. In return, you can still count on us to promote best practices and innovative tools, hold decision-makers accountable, keep you informed, and imagine the impossible.

It’s been said that all politics are local. While national politics may continue to vie more and more for our attention, Citizens brings it back home where you live, work, and play. Together, we have important work to do to achieve our shared goal of keeping the Flathead the “last best place.”

Thank you,

Richard Turbiak
Executive Director
Citizens Leads

Citizens provides effective leadership, expertise, and continuous advocacy in the local decision-making processes shaping the Flathead’s future and quality of life.

The City of Kalispell revised its growth policy in June 2017 and Citizens was there with you to assure it best aligned with your wishes as community members. On the horizon are updates to the Flathead County Growth Policy as well as the municipal growth policies of Columbia Falls and Whitefish. There are also neighborhood plans and development regulations ripe for review and updating.

We continue to champion new highway corridor standards to limit sprawl. We will work to collaborate with the three cities – Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls – and the county to establish comprehensive corridors plans to limit the current pattern of haphazard growth occurring along major highways between these cities and towns. Such standards are important tools for keeping our natural environment and communities ecologically and economically vibrant.

Citizens Empowers

Citizens equips you and decision-makers with the policy research and practical tools you need to advance long-term solutions to our valley’s significant challenges.

Citizens has a long and successful history of encouraging essential grassroots neighborhood leadership in our region. We are pleased to support the work of yet another newly formed neighborhood group called the West Glacier Community Preservation Association in their efforts to better organize in response to growing development pressures in the Glacier National Park western entrance corridor.

Further, we continue to collaborate as an advisor with some of the richest farmland in the valley.

Citizens attracts, retains, and grows community support for steering change through active community involvement. Our largest annual event, the valley-wide community Earth Day celebration, brings together almost 50 non-profit organizations and businesses to engage and educate our community about conservation issues and sustainable practices they can adopt in their everyday lives.

In an effort to maximize our effectiveness and engagement, over the next year, we will reach out to you directly. What do you see as priorities? How can we continue to grow our work? Our base of support? There is much to be done and we look forward to hearing from you.
Citizens Sustains

Citizens is moving forward. Together we have the creativity, resolve, and know-how to tackle our communities’ greatest challenges and enhance the places we love. We can and must find ways to balance and bridge our differences in order to maintain the unique quality of life in the Flathead Valley. Because of you, we can reach for excellence and grow the organization’s capacity needed to achieve bold visions and ambitious plans.

Your strong financial support is of course as always essential. None of what’s written on these pages is possible without it – and there’s a lot more we do between the lines. We are a community-supported non-profit who relies on your individual donations to make this work possible, not just for you, but for your grandchildren and their children. So please give today and invest in our shared future.

2017 Board of Directors
Dustin Leftridge, Chair
Wendy Coyne, Co-chair
Randy Kenyon, Secretary/Treasurer
Ethan Welder, Chair Emeritus
Gregg Davis
Mary Jo Gardner
Gil Jordan

Staff
A. Richard Turbiak, Executive Director
Allison Batch, Sustainability Programs Coordinator
Linda Jaquette, Donor/Development Assistant
Don Bauder, Volunteer Bookkeeper-Extraordinaire

In 2016: Where Our Support Came From

- Individuals: 31%
- Local Foundations: 6%
- Programs: 58%
- Events: 5%

How That Support Was Invested

- Programs: 85%
- Fundraising: 7%
- Administration: 8%
- Individuals: 5%