

Recommendations Proposals for PSAC:

- 1) Encourage state legislators to tackle many of the issues that are plaguing local governments in Montana:
 - Address property tax reform before considering ending the 2025 legislative session
 - Use all constitutional powers (e.g. Article V) and state influence (e.g. resolutions) to stop the inflationary policies of the federal government including an Audit of the Federal Reserve which would allow Congress and the American people to know the factors that influence Fed decision making on interest rates, bank reserve levels, and inflation
 - Criminal justice reform is needed so that our prisons and court systems are not a revolving door of violent criminals while our prisons are packed with individuals without any alleged violent crime (e.g., \$500k bail for "city contempt" and "accountability")
- 2) Separate city municipal budgets and allow separate levies in the same way the Library and City is organized
 - Additionally, these separate functions of the city (e.g. GFFR or GFPD) should propose several levy options that allow voters the opportunity to decide between different funding levels
 - If levies are proposed in the future, they should have to be reapproved by the community or it sunsets after X years
 - Levies must also come with clear promises and not just good intentions: If GFFR can not assure us of an improved ISO score or if GFPD is unable to assure us of reduced crime as a result of the levy passes, then they need to go back to the drawing board. Citizen's shouldn't just hear what the city wants to do, they need to hear what will be done and the exact effect the policy will have on the community (e.g., GFPD should not be asking for more money to hire more officers when they can't guarantee they will be able to hire those officers in the coming years, especially considering the hiring struggles ALL law enforcement agencies have across the state and nation.)
- 3) Retire the use of all TIF districts and institute new policies regarding requirements of these districts including proof and a guarantee of increased city revenue specifically in the general fund
 - Additionally, reevaluate the purpose and strategy of TIFs and if they are living up to the promises of the policy for ALL Great Falls residents, especially in the context of a stagnant population
- 4) To gather community feedback retool the neighborhood councils as field teams as opposed to another government body (e.g., instead of council meetings, they do "street meets" <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/8/26/street-meets>)

- Current budget constraints should limit the use of survey tools, especially for the added expense of consulting services - hiring external agencies will continue to build bad faith with some community members
- 5) GFFR specific recommendations:
 - Remove EMS and medical services from scope
 - Conduct regular surveys with community seeking community feedback - this must be targeted for appropriate sampling and analysis
 - This is consistent with the Capstone Research Project, and reaffirms the need for better data and analytics
 - Provide a cost-benefit analysis of an increase in insurance premiums which have more of a guarantee of coverage compared to property tax increase specifically for GFFR
 - Note: considerations must be made to account for increased property tax with the potential risk of GFFR not adequately improving its services to improve their ISO rating; this might be a challenging statistical question, but I suspect there is data to help incorporate this consideration into the cost comparisons
 - If additional levies are sought, the city should avoid "funding local" as a reason for an individual to pick an increase in property taxes over increased insurance premiums - living in a free society we are free to use more cost effective measures if they exist and that includes commercial insurance over city assurances
- 6) GFPD specific recommendations:
 - Similar to GFFR, use targeted community surveys to illicit community feedback and improve general data and analytics to answer various questions
 - Use data to start to answer why Great Falls is having a larger crime problem compared to other Montana cities - offering solutions of more funding to address an ill-defined problem is not a sustainable approach to city governance