



# State Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

The Missoula Organization of REALTORS® advocates for REALTORS® and consumers. Our members would like to know your thoughts on priority REALTOR® issues. We thank you for being specific in your responses.

## ISSUES

Home prices in Missoula County have increased rapidly since the end of the economic downturn and incomes have not kept up. The median sales price of a home in 2019 was \$315,000, making it challenging for many Missoulian's to buy a home. The rapidly increasing price is due in part to a shortage of housing, particularly in more attainable price ranges. As a state legislator, you will evaluate policies that will impact housing and economic development in Missoula County.

Thank you Fellow Sellers. I have been in real estate for over 50 years and may be the original flipper. I have bought and run over 50 apartments, renovated 30 homes, received an historic preservation award in Missoula, built and designed new homes, built and ran a B & B here in Montana, been through subdivision twice and have knowledge of IT's' issues.

### Housing Development

State law broadly outlines the process by which local governments must review subdivisions of land. Subdivision is the primary vehicle for creating lots to be developed into homes for sale. Subdivision review policies attempt to balance communities' housing needs with protecting the environment, agriculture, wildlife habitat, public safety, and other interests. **What changes to Subdivision law do you support to encourage needed development of housing while balancing other community values?**

I SUPPORT HUMANS....I have already had my own Senate Bill 298 which was passed a few years back. I changed the WILDLANDS issue re: gallons per minute. Gee, when you left the city, it used to be called "rural". Now its called 'Wildlands" I have alot to tell you. It is to stop building. Commissioners wanted 1,000 gpm to build a house in rural Missoula County. This is the kind of thing I fight.

Republicans support clean, fresh air, love flora, fauna and environments...,who said they didn't? I support health, public safety, sanitation, water, wells, distance from waterways.

I support property rights and land owners ability to sell or leave a legacy to their heirs.

I fight Agenda 2021, 2030, "ICLEI" (Missoula is an ICLEI listed town. This is where their plans come from. Basically IN-BUILDING like Russia...no cars, keep all land open. Folks...it didn't work in Russia.

The biggest driver of cost to subdivisions is the holding cost as the time is strung out to go from office to office for review. I would pass a law to streamline this.

I would pass a law that FWP had little say in denial of a subdivision only suggestions.

Regulatory reform may be one strategy for promoting housing affordability through state law. **Are there non-regulatory strategies that the legislature should pursue, so please enumerate? If strategies require funding, where should it come from?**  
Give tax incentives to developers like the movie industry and other industries

### Tax Law

State Law provides for tax increment financing (TIF) and urban renewal districts. TIF is used within urban renewal districts to combat blight and promote economic development. However, critics of TIF say that these urban renewal districts can be in place for many years, and TIF diverts property tax revenue away from schools and county governments. Supporters respond that TIF grows the property tax base and creates jobs, and that once the urban renewal districts sunset, the taxing jurisdictions have significantly more revenue than they would have otherwise had. **What changes to TIF statues would you recommend responding citizen complaints and improve the program?**

I believe TIF is a win-win. I can think of several areas here that would benefit.

It would create jobs for demolition, engineering, architecture, builders, profit and non-profit new businesses, parks, bank loans, taxes would go up, values would go up.

One idea would be perhaps to shorten the term from 15 to 10 years long.

Property taxes are the primary revenue generator used to fund local government services. Recently increased mil levies multiplied by increasing property value assessments have left many homeowners asking for relief. **What are your thoughts on the current taxation structure for local government? What changes, if any, would you propose/support?**

Assessments have left this hemisphere; people can't live here any more. But most of all; landlords now are forced to raise their rents. It is time to reverse what is going on!

When the university kids have to live in tents in the winter time...they won't be coming.

The town will die. The (m)ayors projects must stop. It's all about roads, police, plowing, fire, schools; thats first.

### Economic Development

While the unemployment rate in Montana has been quite low for several years prior to the COVID pandemic, growth in wages has remained relatively stagnant compared to increases in housing costs. **As a state legislator, how would you propose to help grow and attract good paying jobs in Montana and specifically Missoula County?**

Attract industry here. We are on a trucking thoroughfare, east to west. Tax incentives.

Our number 2 industry IS tourism....keep it up! Yellowstone series is helping!

**Fair Housing**

The National Association of REALTORS include sexual orientation and gender identity anti-discrimination language in their code of ethics. Montana does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and /or gender identity. **As a state legislator would you support legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and /or gender identity?**

Of course.

If you'd like me to come and speak to your group I'd be happy to.

Thank You for this opportunity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Niki Sardot".

Niki Sardot for Senate 46