

KGEZ-Kalispell, MT

Flathead Valley Issues- January 2024

1. **Homeless.** The number of homeless people continues to increase.
2. **Affordable Housing.** Inventory of homes simply not available. People paying up to \$100,00 over asking price.
3. **Need for more funds to support Fire/EMT & Police.** Expanding City Limits increasing response times. Special Tax Levy Election scheduled for March 2024/
4. **Property Taxes.** Rising home values are pushing property taxes to levels that many can no longer afford.
5. **Increased Population.** Flathead County population estimated to be between 105,000 to as high as 130,000 residents, based on DMV new licenses issued.
6. **Drug Use/Crime.** Thefts and vandalism, usually associated with drug use continues.
7. **Childcare Facilities.** Additional State Funding in place. Need people to apply for the aid.
8. **Fentanyl.** Law enforcement agencies at every level tell us people are dying from black market fentanyl.
9. **Local Workforce.** The local workforce is shrinking. Businesses are running shorter hours and closing on certain days.
10. **Cost of Living.** Pressure from the population explosion is causing extreme price *increases on all consumer prices.*

KGEZ 20-20 News reaches out to provide coverage of local events with an eye on providing information and discussion of all these issues. The KGEZ Good Morning Show features interviews with local and regional officials each morning between 6:00 and 10:00. A minimum of 4-local interviews is scheduled each morning.