Flathead Valley Economic Outlook
February 2015
Flathead Valley Economy

- 1,574 jobs added to Flathead Co. economy 2014
- 3% to 3.5% annual US GDP growth (US Chamber) 2015
- Lower energy costs
- Inflation in check
- Recovery of construction and real estate
Threats

• Weakening Canadian dollar
• Slowing in China and Europe
• International conflicts
• Healthcare confusion
• Interest rate rise
Flathead County Unemployment Rate and Labor Force, 2004-2014

Unemployment Rate

- 2004: 5.0%
- 2005: 4.1%
- 2006: 3.6%
- 2007: 3.8%
- 2008: 6.0%
- 2009: 10.4%
- 2010: 11.0%
- 2011: 10.1%
- 2012: 8.9%
- 2013: 7.9%
- 2014: 6.3%

Labor Force

- 2004: 38,000
- 2005: 39,000
- 2006: 40,000
- 2007: 41,000
- 2008: 42,000
- 2009: 43,000
- 2010: 44,000
- 2011: 45,000
- 2012: 46,000
- 2013: 47,000

*Preliminary Estimate
64th Legislative Session

• Business equipment tax reduction
• Responsible development of natural resources
• Diverse, affordable, sustainable energy production
• Transportation investment
Regional Trade Center

- Kalispell continues to grow as NW MT trade center adding 150,000 sq feet of retail - 2014
- Retail, healthcare, education, county government, finance
- Growth climate local, state, and federal legislators
- KRM is 2,965 employees.
- FVCC is expanding curriculum and connections
Spring Prairie Phase IV

- 263,454 Square Feet
- 14 Buildings on 28 Acres
Downtown Kalispell

- Now is the time to focus on central business district
- Bypass Complete 2016
- Support City on Core Plan, Rail Park
- Courthouse Couplet and Main Street
Manufacturing and Technology

- Continued growth in Wineries, Breweries and Distilleries, gun manufacturers, and more
- Fully develop Manufacturers Alliance
- Partner with High Tech Business Alliance
- Advance policy agenda
Infrastructure

• Fully fund highway and aviation bills
• Keep pushing airline service: Chicago, L.A, Portland
• Build capacity in sewer, water, and broadband
• Finish the Bypass
Trade and Tourism

• Help Kidsports complete complex
• HB 204  Revises laws relating to liability waivers and releases
• SB 244 Establish a Montana trade office in Calgary
• Innovative events and bolder marketing campaigns
Other Projects to look for 2015

• Spring Prairie
• The Rock
• Oncology Center
• Flathead Brewery
• Averill Hotel
• Toggery
• Rail Park
Core Area plan
Flathead Lake Brewery Company
Pubhouse