



April 18, 2025

Hamilton City Council
223 S 2nd Street
Hamilton, MT 59840

Dear Members of the Hamilton City Council,

My name is Barbara Liss, and I'm the Director of Explore the ARTS, a local nonprofit dedicated to increasing access to creative experiences for youth and families here in the Bitterroot Valley. I'm writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Bitterroot Discovery Children's Museum and its mission to bring hands-on, imaginative learning opportunities to our community. We have supported and participated in many of the activities the Children's Museum board has created in the community and seen the participation and enjoyment from community members.

At Explore the ARTS, we see every day how powerful the arts can be in a child's development. Creativity helps kids express their feelings, build problem-solving skills, and grow confidence in their own abilities. The Bitterroot Discovery Children's Museum shares that same belief—one that centers on nurturing curiosity and encouraging kids to try new things, make mistakes, and learn in a way that feels joyful.

We've had the pleasure of partnering with BDCM on projects like the SmART Room the Children's Museum installed at Explore the ARTS, and we've seen firsthand how impactful their work is. Families connect with each other, kids light up with new ideas, and the whole community benefits from having a place that values play, imagination, and learning for all.

In a rural area like ours, access to high-quality, consistent educational enrichment can be limited. That's why BDCM's work is so important. Their approach to hands-on learning supports school readiness, strengthens family relationships, and fosters a growth mindset that serves kids for the rest of their lives.

Anita Wotkyns and the Children's Museum board have been working diligently towards the goal of a permanent space for BDCM. This would be a major step forward—not just for the museum, but for Hamilton as a whole. It would help create a strong foundation for lifelong learning, community connection, and creative growth. I strongly encourage the City Council to support their efforts and consider the long-term benefits of investing in spaces that support children, families, and the future of our town.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Liss".

Barbara Liss, Director, Explore the ARTS
www.explorethearts.art
701 Main Hamilton, MT

406-381-2488