

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS

In the spring, an informational notice was sent to people on the Consolidated Plan mailing list inviting individuals, agencies, and organizations to participate in the preparation of the Montana Consolidated Plan Annual Action Plan for the year beginning April 1, 2007. Display advertisements were placed in major newspapers around the state asking for public comment, giving dates and locations of the upcoming public input meetings. Display advertisements for each of the individual meetings were placed in the local newspapers, and personal invitation letters were sent to local officials, public agencies, and interested citizens in each area. The meeting notices were also posted on the *Discovering Montana* E-Calendar at:

<http://app.mt.gov/cal/event>

Additionally, the information on the dates, times, and locations of the public meetings was posted on the "Current Events" section of the Consolidated Plan web page:

http://housing.mt.gov/Hous_CP_Apps.asp

Hardin, Great Falls, and Butte

In April and May 2006, three on-site community input meetings were held in Hardin, on April 10; Great Falls, April 24; and Butte, May 18.

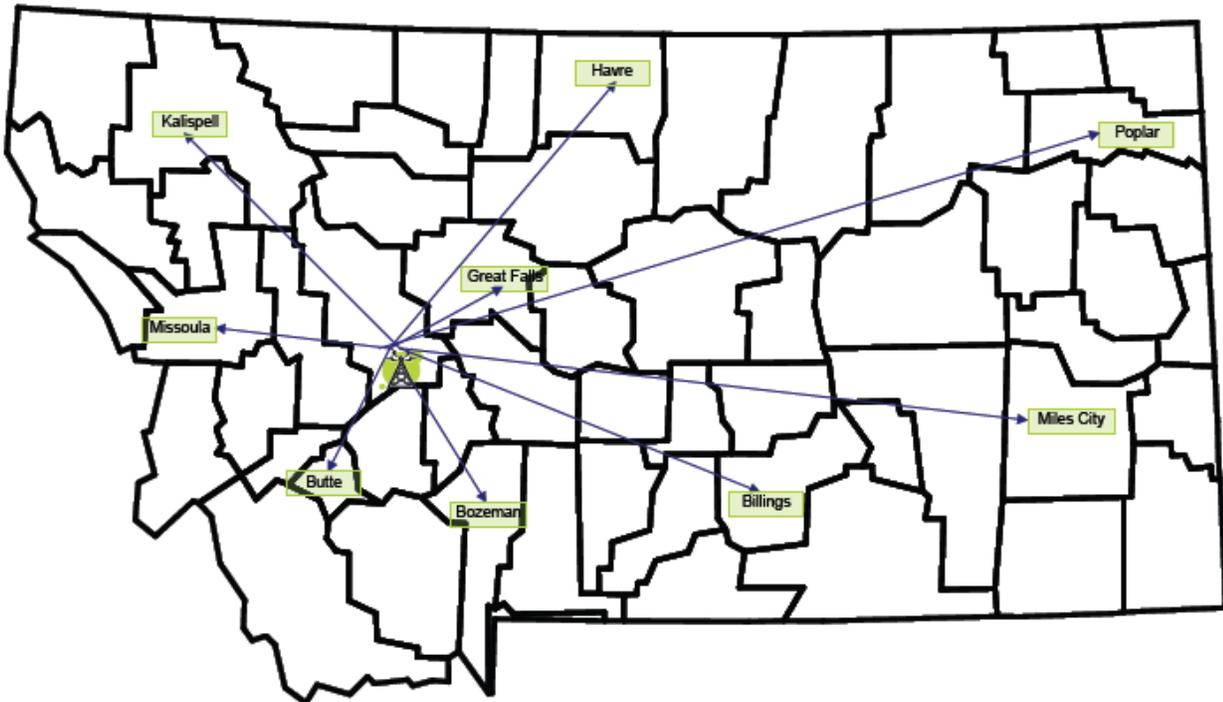
The meeting in Hardin was held in the early morning, 7:30 – 8:30 a.m., prior to the Montana Board of Housing's monthly meeting. A free, light continental breakfast was provided. The Great Falls meeting was held during the lunch break, 12:00 – 1:15 p.m., of the Montana HomeOwnership Network/Neighborhood Housing Services planning meeting and included a free lunch buffet. The Butte meeting was being held during the lunch break for the Montana Board of Housing's Tax Credit Workshop and also included a free lunch buffet. Representatives from HOME, CDBG, and the Montana Board of Housing were present at all the meetings to answer questions and respond to public comments.

Turnout at the public meetings was very good. In addition to MDOC and MBOH staff presenters and MBOH board members, 15 people signed in at Hardin. In Great Falls, 34 people, excluding MDOC and MBOH staff presenters, signed in. Fifty-three people, in addition to MDOC and MBOH staff presenters, signed in at the Butte meeting.

PUBLIC REVIEW MEETINGS

The draft Consolidated Plan Annual Action Plan for 04/01/2007 – 03/31/2008 was released to the public in late November 2006. A public comment period was originally open through December 22, 2006, but was extended through December 31, 2006. Notifications were sent to individuals and organizations on the Consolidated Plan mailing list. Display advertisements were placed in key newspapers announcing: the comment period, the website address for the documents, where to obtain hard copies of the document, where to send written comments, and the date and locations of the public review meeting, an interactive videoconference meeting held in Helena and broadcast to 8 locations around the state. The meeting notice was also posted on the *Discovering Montana* E-Calendar and the Consolidated Plan web page.

Videoconference Locations November 27, 2007



In order to maximize participation and minimize travel time and costs, the Consolidated Plan meeting was held immediately preceding a free joint housing application workshop. Representatives from various agencies presented overviews of their housing programs, requirements for application, and deadlines. Participating agencies included the MDOC's CDBG and HOME programs, MBOH, USDA Rural Development, and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (energy efficiency program).

MEETING SUMMARIES

Copies of the meeting summaries from the public input meetings are on file with the Montana Department of Commerce, Housing Division; 301 South Park Avenue; P.O. Box 200545; Helena, Montana 59820.

Public Comments

A variety of comments were received at the meetings, as well some written comments. In general, the questions were program-specific. Some questions were able to be answered on the spot by representatives from the individual programs. Other questions requiring a more in-depth response were referred to the appropriate program staff for follow-up.