

Montana Emergency Rental Assistance

Objective: The Montana Emergency Rental Assistance program supports Montanans who have experienced financial hardships directly, indirectly or during the COVID-19 pandemic and are at risk of housing

Goal: Provide housing stability to 550 households per month by paying past due and future rent, utilities internet service, late fees, unpaid security deposit, and rental application fees.

Goal: Utilize 75% of ERA Traunch 1

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
Effectively manage the MERA program by: (1) Engaging stakeholders early and often; (2) Simplifying the application and award determination process; (3) Providing a dedicated, full-time workforce to review applications; (4) Leveraging available technology; and (5) Responsibly obligating funding to maximize Montana's benefit options.	MERA Program Manager MERA Team MERA Program Supervisors Executive Director	(1) # of households who receive MERA housing stability per month. (2) % of ERA 2 funds obiligated in Traunche 1.

Homeowners Assistance Fund

Objective: Mitigate financial hardships associated with the coronavirus pandemic by providing funds to prevent homeowner mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy

Goal: Prevent 120 home losses from property tax lien foreclosure.

Goal: Prevent 200 home losses.

Goal: Prevent 60 home losses from HOA fees or liens.

Goal: Prevent 100 homeowners from loss of utilities.

Goal: Support 80 homeowners with three months Internet assistance.

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
Effectively manage the HAF program by: (1) Maintaining an open application portal for households with eligible incomes; (2) Increasing media buy and marketing efforts in counties with higher concentrations of homeowners with incomes at or below 100% of median income; (3) Engaging local partners serving Socially Disadvantaged Homeowners in direct client outreach.	Homeownership Assistance Fund Program Supervisor Homeownership Assistance Fund Team Executive Director	(1) # of approved applications for home losses from property tax lien foreclosure; (2) # of approved applications for home losses; (3) # of approved applications for home losses from HOA fees or liens; (4) # of approved application for homeowners from loss of utilities; (5) # of approved applications for homeowners with three months of internet assistance

Objective: Increase bed tax revenue in rural areas		
Tourism Program		
Goal: Disperse visitation pressure from highly impacted tourism areas to lesser traveled areas of the state with measurable changes in visitation numbers and increased revenue earnings as an indication of tourism activity.		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Resiliency Plan</p> <p>(2) Brand MT is working in partnership with regional tourism organizations in Montana to develop regional resiliency plans for each region that would ensure the long-term success of each region's visitor economy. Brand MT is working with Coraggio Group, a consulting firm with significant experience in the tourism industry that will work with the state and each region in developing these resiliency plans. This assessment is designed to measure sixteen dimensions of destination and organizational resilience to provide greater context into region and organization's challenges and opportunities, and the results will be used as an input for both the region-specific destination resiliency plans and for strategic investment in sustainability or development.</p>	<p>Division Administrator Coraggio Tourism Program</p>	<p>(1) 6 plans + 1 state aggregate plan complete ECY 2023</p> <p>(2) Application and full subscription of \$1.4 million in federal dollars and transfer of \$1 million bed tax grant dollars to support implementation of actionable short-, mid- and long-term items for sustainability or development depending on plan priorities.</p> <p>(3) Designate/hire position to lead implementation and manage sustainability/ development with partners.</p>
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Reform tourism grant and other development investments to support rural and tribal tourism product gap development</p> <p>(2) The existing tourism grant and other development investments award funds annually to projects that develop and enhance tourism and recreation products that have the potential to increase out-of-area visitation, expenditures in a community, and lend to overnight stays. This change would prioritize the funding of projects that are tied to regional resiliency plans and identified as an opportunity for development through an asset gap analysis.</p>	<p>Tourism Program</p>	<p>By 3rd quarter FY24, \$1 million of bed tax added to \$1.4 million of dedicated federal dollars to deploy grants that fill asset gaps as identified within resiliency plans.</p>
Marketing Program		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Pivot marketing plans for dispersal</p> <p>(2) Through data-driven marketing strategies, we promote the authentic character of Montana, reaching and impacting target audiences efficiently with measurable success. Historically this work has been evaluated on and held accountable to return on investment and overall growth in bed tax revenues to the state as a whole. This has included promoting areas between the parks and focusing on niche activities in eastern MT with great success. However, in order to start creating some equilibrium between high density and low-density tourism destinations, we are transforming our strategy. This will switch the focus away from ROI and overall revenues, and more on development of lesser traveled areas. This transformation occurs by prioritizing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rural and tribal areas and activities -Bif peak times of year -New audiences including business travelers and in-state residents 	<p>Marketing Program</p>	<p>(1) Minimum 70% of advertising spend focused specifically on dispersal tactics with remainder focused on competitive awareness. Increase bed tax revenue annually by minimum 2% over 2019 in all regions by end FY24.</p> <p>Establish office as strategic leader and create alignment in prioritizing rural with partners through outreach and signature events like Governor's Conference on Tourism.</p> <p>(2) Increase bed tax revenue annually by minimum 2% over 2019 in all regions by end FY24. (3) Establish office as strategic leader and create alignment in prioritizing rural with partners through outreach and signature events like Governor's Conference on Tourism.</p>
Made in MT Program		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Support the development of rural Made in Montana (MIM) businesses and agritourism to connect visitor with this product</p> <p>(2) MIM entrepreneurs build businesses, and businesses build jobs. A Made in Montana product might be the result of 1 or 2 jobs created in rural Montana. One or two new jobs in Bainville is very important. The same is true for a value-added agriculture product bearing the Grown in Montana logo. Kracklin Kamut and Lentil Crunchers are two value added products that bring in revenue to farmers and are found on regional grocery shelves. The Grown in Montana logo signifies a superior product and signifies more than country of origin labels. Agritourism is an option to that adds revenue to traditional agriculture. Includes value added products at a farm store, to overnight stays. Agritourism exists in every tourism region</p>	<p>Made in MT Program</p>	<p>Increase the total number of active Made in Montana members (Made in MT, Grown in MT, and Native American Made in MT) by 5% annually.</p>
Film Office		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Support development of film productions, commercials, production facilities and crew to capitalize on the rapid infusion of revenue into small towns.</p> <p>(2) The film office utilizes advertising, social media, public relations, events and festivals, grants, and technical assistance strategies to attract productions around the world (feature films, commercials, documentaries, television programs, still shoots, and other media projects) into the state for economic development. A successful production leads to ancillary promotion of Montana as a tourism destination for the populations across the globe that view our state's landscapes, towns, and character in the finished pieces. A single production can infuse a small community with hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars in a short amount of time through the hiring of crew, talent, and trades, who then fill hotel rooms for the duration of production and enjoy recreation in the area as well.</p>	<p>Film Office</p>	<p>(1) Support filmmakers in business development, startup plans and finance commitments with industry lenders and production companies for current and future projects by funding a minimum of 23% of total fund requests submitted to Big Sky Film Grant by FY25.</p> <p>(2) Maintain 20-30 name-brand, lifestyle-driven commercial ad productions/commercials @ \$25,000-200,000/production for FY24 and FY25</p> <p>(3) Promote the MEDIA Act tax incentive program to the industry and receive 15 applications for certification each year of the biennium</p>

Business Development

Objective: Aid in the development of good paying jobs and generate long-term, stable economic growth in Montana

Goal: Business MT will provide funding opportunities and assistance to Montana businesses and economic development organizations

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) Increase visibility and provide excellent customer service to businesses through updated outreach efforts including staffing and website re-design (2) Provide financial assistance to Montana businesses by administering timely funding opportunities (3) Continue to develop public and private partnerships and provide funding assistance for economic development organizations	Business Development	(1) Showcase outreach efforts, surveys, funding opportunities increased by 100% (2) Fund up to available Big Sky Trust Development Investment earnings to businesses that meet the eligibility requirements. Record fundee outcomes and statistics on how many businesses received assistance and how many jobs were created (3) Grant up to \$30,000 per phase on a yearly basis for technology based Montana companies working with a federal agency on Small Business Innovation Research or Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) projects. Review and document quarterly reports for grantee project outcomes. (4) Administer loans to create or retain jobs for wood product industry business. Administer loans to a certified microbusiness development corporations for the purpose of making microbusiness loans. Review and document quarterly reports for loanee satisfactory performance (5) Fund certified regional development coporations to support regional approach to economic development. Review and document quarterly reports from CRDCs for state compliance and satisfactory development services

SBDC

Objective: Support new and existing businesses and promote economic growth in Montana

Goal: Montana Small Business Development Center network will provide counseling and trainings for entrepreneurs and small business owners

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) Provide financial technical assistance (2) One-on-one counseling (3) Trainings to include business planning, business management, strategic planning, financial analysis, and loan packaging	SBDC Centers	Record client outcomes and statistics on how many businesses and entrepreneurs received trainings, assistance, and capital to start/grow/expand

Indian Country Economic Development

Objective: Provide financial and educational resources to Native American businesses and tribal governments to advance economic prosperity on Indian reservations

Goal: Office of Indian Country Economic Development will provide business assistance and funding opportunities to Native American businesses and tribal governments

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) Provide technical assistance through counseling, trainings, administering funding opportunities and assisting with STEDC meetings (2) Educate and invest in Tribal Tourism by administering grant funds and advertising how to visit and recreate in tribal regions	OICED Team	(1) Record client outcomes and statistics on how many businesses and entrepreneurs received trainings and assistance (2) Enter into Native American Collateral Support loan agreements up to \$175,000 (3) Grant up to \$500,000 for Indian Equity Fund and Indian Country Economic Development activities (4) Facilitate Commission meetings. Disseminate Commission meeting information to tribes and public (5) Grant up to \$120,000 for Tribal Tourism grants (6) Maintain and distribute "Montana: Explore Indian Country" guidebook and track inventory and downloads for utilization/effectiveness

Community MT

Objective: Focus resources on transformational projects that foster vibrant and sustainable communities across Montana

Goal: Increase proactive assistance to communities

Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
<p>(1) Help participating communities identify the highest priority needs for community development</p> <p>(2) Provide outreach and training to help communities develop and implement plans to address their highest priority need</p> <p>(3) Provide outreach and training to help communities complete construction projects within original timelines and budgets</p>	<p>Community MT Team</p>	<p>(1) Engage 75% of communities that request planning assistance in this initial prioritization</p> <p>(2) 75% of planning grant applications received staff assistance prior to submission</p> <p>(3) 50% of funded plans are at least partially implemented within one year (e.g., PER turns into construction application, community meets implementation schedule in a growth policy)</p> <p>(4) 50% of funded construction projects are completed within the original timelines and budgets</p>

Affordable Rental Development Programs		
Objective: Maximize supply of new and rehabilitated affordable rental homes through efficient use of federal and state resources		
Goal: Deploy new Multifamily Loan Program (MFLP) using currently available Bond Indenture and Project Based Section 8 Reserves		
Goal: Factor the leveraged ratio of other resources in competitive grant and application review and ranking process		
Goal: Incentivize financing methods to increase the efficiency of the Housing Credit program, such as twinned 4% / 9% project designs		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) MFLP launched with new website content & GovDelivery notification released July 2022; (2) Assess all application guidelines and Qualified Allocation Plan for leverage ratio criteria as part of application review & ranking process; (3) Provide robust on-boarding and education for newly appointed Board members, including on 4% / 9% twinned projects	Multifamily Program Manager Multifamily Development Team Community Housing Program Supervisor Community Housing Team Operations Manager Executive Director	(1) # units awarded 4% and 9% Housing Credits; (2) # CDBG, HOME and HTF assisted units and total project units; (3) Leverage ratio of other sources in CDBG, Housing Credit, HOME and HTF investments.
Affordable Homeownership Programs		
Objective: Provide increased opportunities for low- and moderate-income Montanans to obtain and retain affordable homeownership		
Goal: Collaborate with financial partners and advisors to maximize bond proceeds and lock-in competitive interest rates for first-time homebuyer programs		
Goal: Assess options under federal regulations to increase IRS and HOME purchase provide limits		
Goal: Pursue conventional financing opportunities in partnership with participating lenders		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) Continuously assess options for funding of down payment assistance programs within Bond Indenture / Issue structure; (2) Research options / availability of real home purchase price data; (3) Continue collaborating with GSE Consultant to better position Montana Housing for future conventional financing opportunities	Homeownership Program Manager Homeownership Team Community Housing Program Supervisor Community Housing Team Operations Manager Executive Director	(1) # of total primary and secondary loans funded; (2) % of homebuyers utilizing down payment assistance; (3) # of communities participating in CDBG housing stabilization program; (4) average servicing cost per loan
Rental Assistance Programs		
Objective: Maximize use of federal rental assistance programs to service extremely low- and very low-income Montanans		
Goal: Increase training and coordination with field agency partners		
Goal: Pursue maximum flexibility for HUD Fair Market Rents / Voucher Payment Standards within parameters of federal regulations		
Goal: Release Request for Proposals (RFP) for project-basing Housing Choice Vouchers and other to-be-identified RFPs for improved servicing deliver for HCV participants and landlords		
Goal: Expand rental assistance special programs as federal opportunities arise, in partnership with the Department of Public Health & Human Services, Montana Continuum of Care and other partners		
Strategy / Initiative	Who?	Measure
(1) Field Agency scope of work review and collaboration meeting scheduled November 2022; (2) 120% Fair Market Rent waiver request submitted to HUD in September 2022; (3) Release RFP for project basing vouchers by September 2024; (4) Continue monthly Interdepartmental Housing Integration Project (IHIP) calls with DPHHS, Montana Continuum of Care & Montana HealthCare Foundation	Rental Assistance Programs Manager Housing Choice Voucher Program Supervisor Site Specific & Special Population Program Supervisor Rental Assistance Team Operations Manager Executive Director	(1) # of open and leased Housing Choice Vouchers; (2) Deploy baseline and on-going surveys to Housing Choice Voucher participants and landlords; (3) Utilization and growth of special program vouchers