



Montana Historic Preservation Grant Program

Project Administration Manual

August 2025



Chapter 1

Start-up Requirements and Contracting

I. Overview

This chapter offers background information on the Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG) Program and summarizes important steps each grantee must take to complete start-up requirements and contract with the Montana Department of Commerce.

MHPG grantees can incur eligible project costs once awards are made through the legislative process and the bill authorizing funds for specific MHPG projects becomes law. However, eligible project costs can only be reimbursed by Commerce once MHPG grantees meet start-up requirements and other conditions identified through the legislative process and execute a contract with Commerce.

If any of the following conditions are not met, costs incurred by the grantee will be the sole responsibility of the grantee: start-up requirements; other legislative or Commerce requirements; execute a contract; comply with the terms and conditions of the contract; or incurs costs that are ineligible for the MHPG Program.



MHPG Project Timeline

Award	Start-Up	Contract	Procurement*	Construction	Request for Funds	Project Close-Out
<p>Effective date of the award: May 2027</p> <p>Grantees can begin incurring costs for reimbursement</p>	<p>Complete Start-Up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •W9 + EFT •Budget •Implementation on Schedule •Match Documentation •Proof of Insurance (Workers' Compensation, Liability, and Property) •Management Plan •Signatory Form •Completed Signer Information •Grant Assistance agreement (<i>if applicable</i>) 	<p>Execute a Contract with Commerce</p> <p>Once this is in place, grantees can begin submitting request(s) for reimbursement</p>	<p>Procurement Services (Architect, Contractor):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Follow Appropriate Procurement process: •Small purchase •Limited Solicitation •Formal Solicitation •Sole Source •Select Firm •Execute Contract 	<p>Begin Construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Undertake project activities •Receive invoices •<i>State prevailing wage rates may apply to your project</i> 	<p>Submit Request(s) for Reimbursement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Request for Funds form •Progress Report Form •Uniform Invoice Tracking Spreadsheet •Applicable Invoices <p>Commerce will send request funds within 7-10 business days</p>	<p>Architect, engineer, or contractor issues Certificate of Substantial Completion</p> <p>Within 60 days, grantee submits the Project Completion Report to Commerce</p> <p>Within 30 days, Commerce send Notice of Project Completion signifying official closeout of the grant</p> <p>Grantees must retain project records for 5 years from closeout date</p>

II. Start-up Requirements

MHPG grantees must complete the following start-up requirements to contract with Commerce.

Project Budget

The project budget submitted in the grantee's application must be updated to reflect current conditions at the time of contract execution. The project budget must be revised to reflect the actual amount in the construction bid or related construction costs documentation. For information on the process to follow to amend the project budget after the contract has been executed, see Chapter 2.

Project Implementation Schedule

The project implementation schedule submitted in the grantee's application must be updated to reflect current conditions at the time of contract execution. The final implementation schedule for the MHPG contract should identify all key tasks. Additionally, it should define when each task must be accomplished to complete the overall project. All MHPG project activities must be completed as identified in the grantee's implementation schedule and the executed contract with Commerce. Commerce, in its sole discretion, may grant an extension to this deadline. Commerce will consider if the project is near completion and the grantee can demonstrate a good faith effort to complete the project on time and within the original budget. For more information on the process to follow to amend the project implementation schedule after the contract has been executed, see Chapter 2.

Demonstrated Firm Commitment of Other Funding Sources

The MHPG grantee must provide adequate documentation of the firm commitment of all non-MHPG funds for the project, identified in the preliminary project budget submitted in

the grantee's application. A description of acceptable documentation of non-MHPG funding sources is included as Exhibit 1-A.

If the MHPG grantee changes one of its sources of funding after executing a contract with Commerce or if additional funding is required, the grantee should notify Commerce immediately. Commerce, at its sole discretion, may suspend distribution of MHPG funds until there is firm commitment of funds to complete the project.

Management Plan

MHPG grantees must prepare and submit a signed management plan. A sample management plan is included as Exhibit 1-B. The management plan establishes how the grantee will allocate responsibility for complying with the MHPG grant and other state requirements, including but not limited to the proper financial management of MHPG funds, review of contracts and requests for funds, compliance with labor standards, and completion of environmental review. MHPG grantees are encouraged to use the sample management plan as a guide. The sample should be adjusted to reflect the responsibilities of individuals supporting the completion of project activities.

In the management plan, the grantee must designate a grant administrator. A grant administrator may be an existing or new employee, a hired consultant through the applicable procurement process, or a special purpose agency (such as an economic development corporation). If the grantee works with any other entity to manage the MHPG grant, the grantee must execute a grant assistance agreement establishing the responsibilities and duties between the two entities. A sample agreement is included as Exhibit 1-C. All executed contracts or agreements, including those for engineering services or grant services, to be paid for in whole or in part by MHPG funds must be submitted to Commerce. Additionally, MHPG may request a copy of any contract related to project activities.

Workers' Compensation Coverage, Property, and Liability Insurance

When applicable, MHPG grantees must maintain workers' compensation coverage, property, and liability insurance for the duration of the contract. For workers' compensation coverage, MHPG grantees must provide proof of workers' compensation coverage, an independent contractor's exemption, or documentation of corporate officer status. For liability insurance, MHPG grantees and their subcontractors must provide proof of liability insurance.

Other Forms

MHPG grantees must complete the signatory certification form, which designates the individuals that can sign requests for funds. The signature certification form is included as Exhibit 1-D.

MHPG grantees must complete a 204 Form, which the Montana Department of Administration requires to electronically transfer funds.

MHPG grantees must complete a W-9 unless one is already on file with Commerce. A W-9 is available on the Internal Revenue Service website: <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-9>.

III. MHPG Contract

The executed contract between the grantee and Commerce is the legal document that governs the administration of the grant. The contract will identify the following items:

- A. The maximum amount of MHPG funds awarded.
- B. The scope of work.
- C. A preliminary project budget for the use of MHPG funds and any other funds.
- D. The implementation schedule.
- E. Any special conditions placed on the grant by the Legislature or Commerce.

F. The general terms and conditions associated with the grant.

At the time the grantee is ready to execute a contract, the MHPG liaison will contact the grantee to confirm the grantee's authorized representatives for signatures. Commerce will prepare the contract. The contract will be transmitted to the grantee electronically for signatures. A copy of the final executed contract will be available electronically when all signatures have been obtained. Please contact Commerce staff if there are concerns or assistance needed with the execution of the contract or meeting start-up conditions. Further administrative guidance can be found in Chapter 2 of this manual.

Chapter 2

Project Management

I. Overview

This chapter provides information about the management of a MHPG project, including budget amendments, eligible expenses, eligible match, and requirements for requests for funds. Each grantee is required to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations throughout the project. This includes adherence to all applicable design standards, environmental mitigation requirements, and building codes.

II. Procurement Procedures

Procurement requirements differ depending on the grantee, service, and size of the contract. Title 7, Chapter 5, Parts [23](#) and [43](#), MCA govern the procurement of construction and purchasing contracts for local governmental MHPG grantees. Tribal governments are subject to their own tribal procurement laws. All other MHPG grantees are encouraged to follow the procurement processes outlined in Exhibit 2-A. All executed contracts or agreements for services to be paid for in whole or in part by MHPG funds must be submitted to Commerce.

III. Eligible Project and Matching Expenses

Expenses eligible for MHPG funding include, but are not limited to:

- Expenses that directly relate to preservation/construction activities that implement the scope of work identified in the MHPG contract.
- Professional services that directly relate to design activities that implement the scope of work identified in the MHPG contract.

- Repayment of interim financing directly related to project activities that implement the scope of work identified in the MHPG contract.
- Permitting costs or fees.
- Related grants, loans or investment that is related to preservation/construction activities.
- Legal costs and fees including bond counsel.
- Direct grant administration or planning expenses, up to a maximum 10% of the total MHPG budget for the project, including but not limited to planning documents, professional planning services, personnel costs, supplies, postage, travel, procurement related costs.

Expenses that are not eligible for MHPG funding include but are not limited to:

- Ongoing or monthly operational costs.
- Purchase of artifacts, historical objects or items that would be used as part of a historical exhibit or display.
- Costs related to refinancing, servicing, or interest on any existing debt.
- Any unauthorized costs incurred prior to the date identified in the award letter or passage of the legislative bill.
- Grantee staff costs.
- Costs related to marketing, advertising, or fundraising events for a history museum, historic site, or historical society.

Expenses eligible for MHPG grantees' matching project funds include but are not limited to:

- Match - The expenditure of any of the funds identified below on any eligible MHPG expense, see above, after the date identified in the award letter are eligible as MHPG matching funds:
 - general funds, cash, or private donations.



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- proceeds from the sale of obligation, revenue, special assessment or other bonds.
 - tax credits.
 - loan or grant funds from a local, state, or federal program other than MHPG.
- Previous Expenditures - The expenditure of any of the funds identified above prior to the date identified in the award letter is not eligible as MHPG matching funds, except when directly related to the preparation of architectural and engineering studies, reports, plans, or the grantee's MHPG grant application directly related to the MHPG project up to one year prior to the application deadline.

IV. Requests for Funds

Requests for Funds Process

A request for funds is initiated by the grantee by submitting the following forms:

- Request for funds form (Exhibit 2-B)
- Uniform invoice tracking form (Exhibit 2-C)
- Progress report (Exhibit 2-D) or project completion report (Exhibit 2-E)
- Applicable invoices

Request for Funds Form:

Grantees initiate a request for funds by preparing and submitting the request for funds form, which is included as Exhibit 2-B. MHPG funds can only be disbursed for project-related, actual costs that have been incurred after the award letter and must provide adequate and sufficient documentation supporting each claim for expenses to be reimbursed.

Uniform Invoice Tracking Form:

Each request for funds must also be accompanied by the uniform invoice tracking form, which is included as Exhibit 2-C. The uniform invoice tracking form provides Commerce updated information on all cumulative invoices received and paid for on the project, broken out by all funding sources involved in the project.

Progress Report:

Each request for funds must also be accompanied by a progress report, which is included as Exhibit 2-D. The progress report provides Commerce with updated information on the project status and timeline. When submitting the final request for funds, the grantee must submit the project completion report instead, which is included as Exhibit 2-E.

Applicable Invoices:

Itemized invoices, for the contractor, subcontractors, consultants, and vendors or suppliers, typically constitute adequate and sufficient documentation for reimbursable expenses. The invoice should include:

- A description of work performed.
- The number of hours worked to accomplish each item.
- The amount being billed for each item.
- Work performed date(s) and work items completed.
- Beginning and ending billing period dates.
- A description of any other eligible expenses incurred during the billing period.
- The total amount being billed.

Lump-sum contracts typically do not provide adequate and sufficient documentation for MHPG projects, and they are generally not allowed for design and construction services. Cost plus contracts are not allowable on MHPG projects.

If budget modifications are found to be necessary while preparing a request for funds, Commerce should be notified of the modification prior to the request for funds being submitted.

Photographs

Project photographs are encouraged to be submitted to Commerce at the beginning of the project and at the completion of the project. Photos should evidence the improvements made during construction and the new or upgraded facilities.

V. Project Amendment

At some point during the project, MHPG grantees may need to modify the scope of work or budget as identified in the legislative report, budget, or implementation schedule for the project. The following process should be followed for such modifications.

Budget

Modifications to the budget of less than \$5,000 to any line item of the budget can be submitted as part of the grantee's request for funds, and Commerce approval of the request for funds will constitute approval of the modification.

For budget modifications of \$5,000 or more to any line item of the budget, or when the sum of budget modifications exceeds \$5,000, the MHPG grantee must provide a written justification to Commerce that clearly demonstrates the appropriateness and necessity of the modification. Commerce must agree in writing to any significant changes in the budget before such changes may be implemented by the grantee. If such changes are proposed, Commerce has 45 days to review and approve the changes requested.

Any budget modifications made during the project should be listed and tracked continuously on funding tracking spreadsheets throughout the project.

When bids are received for construction, the amount budgeted in the project budget may be reduced by an amount proportionate to the reduction in the amount required for construction. For example, if the overall savings were 20 percent, the amount to be provided by MHPG for construction activities would be reduced by 20 percent. Any savings would then be added to the contingency line-item amount. If there are any savings upon completion of the project, Commerce reserves the right to share proportionately in those savings with all funding sources.

Budgets will be approved with contingency amounts for completion of project activities. Contingency amounts are reserved for use of construction activities and will seldom be transferred to other line items or administrative costs. Please work closely with MHPG staff if your situation may require a transfer of contingency funds. The MHPG grantee may request to use the difference between the final actual project costs and the original grant award to fund additional work that further enhances the project. The MHPG grantee should submit a written request to use remaining MHPG funds for the additional work activities, including full rationale and cost details, for Commerce review and approval. The decision to allow additional work activities to be funded with remaining MHPG funds is strictly at the sole discretion of Commerce.

Implementation Schedule

The grantee may modify the implementation schedule as necessary to reflect the timeline being followed as the project moves forward, so long as the project's completion date as listed in the executed contract is met. The grantee should submit details regarding any changes to the schedule as part of the grantee's next request for funds, and Commerce approval of the request for funds will constitute approval of the modification.

If the grantee seeks to extend the completion date of its MHPG project beyond the termination date identified in the executed contract and implementation schedule, the grantee must contact Commerce as soon as possible to request an extension. Projects that encounter delays or are not completed by the contract termination date may be required to execute an amendment to their contract. Rationale for extending the contract beyond the termination date will be required.

Scope of Work

If the grantee seeks to change any part of the scope of work of the project, as identified in the contract with Commerce, the grantee must first provide a written request with justification to Commerce that clearly demonstrates the appropriateness and necessity of the modification. Commerce, at its sole discretion, may grant a modification to the project scope of work that does not materially alter the ranking priority, intent, or circumstances under which the project was ranked and approved for funding.

VI. Accounting and Auditing Requirements

MHPG grantees must maintain all receipts and expenditures of MHPG grant funds in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and be in compliance with the auditing requirements, as applicable, including but not limited to, [Section 2-7-503, MCA](#) and [Section 20-9-213, MCA](#). MHPG tribal government grantees must maintain all receipts and expenditures of MHPG grant funds in accordance with the requirements provided for in [OMB Circular A-133](#).

VII. Records Creation and Retention

The grantee must create and maintain all records of project activities funded with MHPG grant funds, including but not limited to financial records, supporting documents, and

such other records as are required by law or other authority, for five years after either the completion of the contract or the conclusion of any claim, litigation, or exception relating to the project taken by the State of Montana or any third party, whichever is later. The grantee must provide Commerce, the Legislative Auditor, or their agents access to all project records upon request.

VIII. Ethics and Code of Conduct

Title 2, Chapter 2, Sections [7-3-4256](#), [7-3-4367](#), [7-5-2106](#), and [7-5-4109](#), MCA, govern the code of conduct and conflicts of interest by all local governmental entities, public employees, and persons under contract with Commerce including elected officials, district board members, and district employees. These laws must always be followed by local governments, public employees, and persons under contract with the State, regardless of their participation in the MHPG grant program.

IX. Public Notice and Participation

[Sections 8 and 9](#) of Article II of the Montana Constitution, and Title 2, Chapter 3, [Parts 1 and 2](#), and Title 7, MCA, require MHPG governmental grantees to hold regular and special public meetings, provide public notice of those meetings, and allow the public the opportunity to participate in the grantee's decision-making process. These laws must always be followed by MHPG governmental grantees, regardless of their participation in the MHPG grant program. Grantees should be prepared to provide information to Commerce about the public process for its MHPG project, including but not limited to a copy of public meeting agendas and any comments submitted by the public and responses provided during administration of the project. All press releases related to the MHPG project must be submitted to Commerce for review and approval prior to release.

X. Non-Discrimination Laws

MHPG grantees must fully comply with all applicable federal, state, or local non-discrimination laws, rules, and regulations, including the Montana Human Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in performing any project or portion thereof using MHPG funds. All subcontractors performing work on the project are subject to the same provision. The hiring of all persons to perform work on the project must be made on the basis of merit and qualifications, and the district shall not discriminate based upon the race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, vaccination status, or national origin of the persons performing the project.

XI. Prevailing Wage Requirements

Montana's Prevailing Wage Act ([Section 18-2-401, et seq., MCA](#)) applies to all public works contracts let by MHPG grantees (all construction contracts and non-construction contracts in excess of \$25,000). These laws must always be followed by MHPG local government and district grantees, regardless of their participation in the MHPG grant program. Grantees should be prepared to document the payment of prevailing wages in all applicable contracts related to the MHPG project.

Certain MHPG projects may not be considered "public works contracts." Therefore, Montana's Prevailing Wage Act would not apply.

XII. Project Monitoring

Recipients of MHPG funding are responsible for administering their MHPG projects in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws. Commerce will assist and

support grantees in successfully implementing their project activities from start-up through completion of the project in compliance with these requirements.

To accomplish these goals, in addition to reviewing information submitted with progress reports and requests for funds, Commerce may schedule a monitoring visit with each MHPG grantee. A monitoring visit usually involves a visit to the grantee's offices to review records, inspect project activities, and meet with the local officials. The MHPG staff liaison may contact the grant administrator concerning the timing and scope of the monitoring visit. After a monitoring visit, the MHPG liaison would provide written monitoring comments to the grantee. Commerce will advise the Grantee of any specific areas of concern and if necessary, provide the Grantee opportunity to take corrective actions to address Commerce's concerns.

XIII. Project Completion

Project completion means the MHPG project has been completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the MHPG contract.

Within 90 days of the date the certificate of substantial completion or similar document is issued by the project engineer/architect or other appropriate professional, the grantee must submit a final project completion report for approval by Commerce. The project completion report is included as Exhibit 2-E. The report provides Commerce with information on the total costs incurred for the project, the final completion date, and any significant problems encountered in carrying out the project. Please work closely with MHPG staff if delays occur. Within 30 days of approving the project completion report, Commerce will issue the notice of project completion. Once the notice of project completion is issued, the MHPG grant project is considered complete and the file is closed. No more requests for funds will be accepted on the project after the project is closed. The completion of the project will be reported to the Legislature the following session.