



MONTANA MAIN STREET

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

MONTANA MAIN STREET (MMS) PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

Grant Applications Due

November 15, 2024

Applicant Community: _____

Project Name: _____

Date Submitted: _____

I. Overview

The Montana Main Street (MMS) program is dedicated to bettering the economic, historic, and cultural vitality of Montana downtowns through community development, revitalization, and historic preservation. MMS will foster grassroots efforts through coordination and technical assistance, focused on a comprehensive approach to restoring healthy community commercial districts and preserving the historic structures that contribute to Montana's unique sense of place.

MMS grant program applications, grant application guidelines, and other relevant information and resources are available on the Department of Commerce (Commerce) website at <https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs-and-Boards/Montana-Main-Street-Program/>

All grants are dependent upon the availability of funding. The deadline for submitting grant applications for funding is **November 15, 2024**.

II. Award Amounts and Funds Criteria

Applicants must clearly document the need for the funds. Communities may not apply for funding while maintaining an active Montana Main Street grant-funded project unless the active grant is in the close-out process. Max awards are dependent on available funding and can change from year to year.

A minimum local match of 1:5 (\$1 of local match for every \$5 committed by the state) is required. While applicants are not required to document a secured match at the time of application, grantees must demonstrate firm commitment of funds from all other funding sources prior to contracting with Commerce. Up to 20% of the applicant match may be used for in-kind services or labor with appropriate documentation of value. In-kind labor contributions are considered an eligible match at a rate of \$20 per hour.

III. Application Submission

Grant applications are due to Commerce no later than **11:59 pm on November 15, 2024**. To apply for MMS grant funds, eligible applicants must complete the application and submit the supplemental materials via the [Montana Grant and Loan Portal](#). To submit your application through the Montana Grants and Loans Portal, use this [step-by-step guide](#).

Alternative accessible formats of the application will be provided upon request. Commerce does not discriminate based on disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities. Therefore, individuals who need the application in an alternative format, or need to submit the application by other means, should contact Community MT at (406) 841-2770. Please provide as much advance notice as possible for these requests.

IV. Eligible Applicants

An applicant must be an official member of the MMS program. Each member community may submit one application, directly forwarded by the Main Street partner organization, and certified by the applicable local government Chief Executive, Mayor, or City Manager. MMS communities must be up to date on quarterly reporting at the time of application submission.

Please connect with Commerce staff to discuss potential projects by emailing doccdd@mt.gov or calling 406-841-2770.

V. Choose the Type of Project (check only one)

Impact/Implementation (continue to section VI)

Planning Project (continue to section VII)

VI. Application Guidelines Impact Project

Impact and implementation projects are intended to support MMS communities' need for **implementation** dollars for projects to activate spaces for downtown revitalization. Emphasis will be placed on large and impactful projects, but funding may be awarded to a wide variety of community-prioritized projects. Preference will be given to projects linked to overall community revitalization efforts prioritized through planning or revitalization goals. Applicants should focus on projects involving real and immediate benefits and demonstrate a need for assistance.

A. Eligible Projects

Impact grant funds must be used for implementation projects in a Main Street Community. Except for some administrative activities, funds may only reimburse eligible expenses incurred after the Governor Award. The following include examples of activities eligible for Impact grant funds. Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Impact Projects Examples:

- Wayfinding signage in accordance with a previously completed wayfinding plan;
- Creation of a pocket park or pedestrian gathering spaces;
- Placemaking improvements in the downtown core;
- Façade improvements to historic buildings;
- Streetscape implementation;
- Aesthetic and safety improvements such as historic street or alleyway lighting;
- Parklets, pedlets, and other installations to activate additional spaces.

B. Ineligible Expenses

- Advertising (for specific businesses);
- Entertainment/events;
- Travel, lodging, food, and drink;
- Ongoing operations or general maintenance costs such as rent, utilities bills, personnel costs, and personal expenditures;
- Activities that do not deliver on the program objectives or related to the submitted proposal;

- Documents including reports, studies, and plans;
- Any otherwise eligible project costs incurred prior to the date of announcement of Governor Award letter.

VII. Application Guidelines Planning Project

The MMS Planning Grants are intended to support MMS communities' needs for **studies, plans, or reports as well as promotion and infrastructure (brick and mortar) improvements**. Emphasis will be placed on large and impactful projects, but funding may be awarded to a wide variety of community-prioritized projects. Preference will be given to projects linked to overall community revitalization efforts through planning or revitalization goals. Applicants should focus on projects involving real and immediate benefits and demonstrate a need for assistance.

A. Eligible Projects

Program and Planning grant funds must be used for bettering the economic, historic, and cultural vitality of local downtowns through community development, revitalization, and/or historic preservation. The grant may reimburse eligible expenses incurred after award. The following include of activities eligible for Program and Planning funds. Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Program and Planning Projects Examples:

- Long range planning: growth policy development/update; downtown master plans; capital improvements planning, strategic/organizational planning; board development training; Tax Increment Financing District creation;
- Assessments/Studies: preliminary architectural reports; architectural renderings; tourism assessment; business recruitment/retention plans; business plan development; historic preservation assessment/inventory; wayfinding studies & plans; market research; feasibility studies;
- Infrastructure/Brick and mortar: public signage; streetscape/public improvements; lighting; building façade improvement;
- Promotion: website development; branding; tourism promotional material; historical

B. Ineligible Expenses

- Advertising (for specific businesses);
- Entertainment/events;
- Travel, lodging, food, and drink;
- Non-project related salaries or administrative costs excluding postage, in-state mileage costs and copy and printing costs associated with the administration of eligible planning grant activities;

- Ongoing operations or general maintenance costs such as rent, utilities bills, personnel costs, and personal expenditures;
- Activities that do not deliver on the program objectives or related to the submitted proposal;
- Any otherwise eligible project costs incurred prior to the date of announcement of Governor Award letter.

VIII. Application (Address narrative sections below using a word document)

A. Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Chief Elected Official: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Primary Contact: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

B. Project Partners

Please list all project partners/contacts for the project and check if a support letter is attached. (If no support letter, please describe why as a separate narrative)

| Name | Organization | Support Letter |
|------|--------------|----------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

C. Project Overview

- Provide a brief description of the proposed project (250 words or less)
- Address of Project Location: _____

Note: If the project includes historic building rehabilitation or a façade improvement, then applicant is strongly encouraged to contact the State Historic Preservation Office for feedback and advice to maintain the historic integrity of the building. Link: <https://mhs.mt.gov/Shpo>.

D. Criteria Questions

- Project Need and Benefit:
 - a) What is the need for the proposed project in your community and how will it benefit the economic, historic, or cultural vitality of the downtown commercial district?
 - b) How was the project prioritized?
 - c) What are the anticipated outcomes of the proposed project--both immediate and long-term? (*Examples could include percentage increase in foot traffic, percentage increase in shopper spending, number of new jobs created, number of new businesses created or supported, amount of increased community engagement, enhanced visitor experience to name a few*).
 - d) Please describe how this project implements a community plan, vision, or community revitalization goal?
 - e) Please describe the local effort and support for the project to date? (Please include letters of support from the community and project partners).

- Project Readiness:
 - a) Describe how the applicant or subrecipient will implement the project.
 - b) Describe how you estimated the project cost. For example, are you requesting installation of a parklet? If so, did you get quotes/bids on the various components for installation. Projects with documentation of quotes/bids will be scored higher.
 - c) Briefly describe the availability of matching funds and an explanation of any funding gaps. If in-kind matches are provided, please include documentation of value as described in the application guidelines.
 - d) Is the applicant community current on submittal of MMS quarterly reports (please attach the last report)?

E. Project Budget

Please list all funding sources for the project, the amount committed, whether commitment is pending or firm and the source of the funds. Fund sources may include other grant sources, loans, or cash on hand from the organization or local government entity. If in-kind match is proposed, please include documentation.

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Grant Funds Requested: \$ _____ | | |
| Other Funding Sources <i>Organization</i> | Amount <i>1:5 Match</i> | Status/Source <i>Indicate "Pending" "Firm" "Grant/Loan" "In-Kind" or "Cash"</i> |
| | \$ | |
| | \$ | |
| | \$ | |
| TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST | \$ | |

F. Project Implementation Schedule

Please provide a brief timeline of when the project will begin and conclude, identifying key deliverables and general timeframes using the format below:

| Task | Deliverables | Month |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| COMPLETION DATE: | | |

G. Application Certification

The Chief Executive, Mayor, or City Manager of the applicant community must sign to certify that to the best of the official’s knowledge and belief, the information provided in the application and the attached documents is true and correct. Applicant must certify that the proposed project complies with all state, federal, and local laws, ordinances, and regulations, including any necessary environmental review and procurement requirements.

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Name (printed) | _____ |
| Title (printed) | _____ |
| Signature | _____ |
| Date | _____ |

APPENDIX A
Application Eligibility Screening Checklist
Please fill out this checklist.

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Are you a Montana Main Street community member? If you select no, you are not eligible. | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 2. When did your community become a member? | Year _____ |
| 3. Has your community previously received a Montana Main Street grant? | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 4. If yes to number 3, what year did your community receive the grant? | Year _____ N/A _____ |
| 5. Has your application been certified by the applicable local government Chief Executive, Mayor, or City Manager? | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 6. Is your community up to date with quarterly reporting? If you select no, you are not eligible. | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 7. Does your community currently have an active Montana Main Street grant? If yes, you are not eligible. | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 8. Did you contact the Montana Main Street program prior to applying? | Yes ___ No ___ |

If you have questions or need assistance preparing this form, please contact Commerce via email at DOCCDD@mt.gov or via phone at (406) 841-2770.