APPENDIX Q
National and State Objectives

This appendix will be used to help determine how the proposed project will further the state's community development objectives identified in the 5-year Consolidated Plan. Commerce may use this appendix to prioritize proposed projects in light of available funding.

National Objective:

The Montana CDBG program requires projects to meet the benefit to low- and moderate- income (LMI) national objective. Proposed housing projects meet this national objective by providing new or improving existing permanent residential structures which will be occupied by LMI households. Proposed housing projects that do not meet the LMI national objective will not be funded.

State Objective:

The goals of the HUD programs administered by the State of Montana are to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for the state's low- and moderate-income residents. The State of Montana strives to accomplish these goals by maximizing and effectively utilizing all available funding resources to conduct housing and community development activities that will serve the economically disadvantaged residents of the state. By addressing need and creating opportunity at the individual and neighborhood levels, the State of Montana aims to improve the quality of life for all residents of the state. HUD's Community and Development Programs help to develop viable communities by funding a number of potential activities within the umbrella of the following three goals:

- *Providing decent housing* by obtaining appropriate housing for homeless persons and assisting those at risk of homelessness; preserving the affordable housing stock; increasing the availability of permanent affordable housing, without discrimination; increasing the supply of supportive housing for persons with special needs; and providing affordable housing near job opportunities.

- *Providing suitable living environments* by improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods; improving access to quality facilities, infrastructure, and services; reducing the isolation of income groups within communities through de-concentration of low-income housing; revitalizing deteriorating neighborhoods; restoring and preserving properties of special historic architectural or aesthetic value; and conserving energy resources.

- *Expanding economic opportunities* by creating and retaining jobs; establishing, stabilizing, and expanding small businesses; providing public employment services; encouraging the employment of low-income persons in projects funded under this Plan; providing reasonable mortgage financing rates without discrimination; providing access to capital and credit for development activities that promote long-term economic and social viability of the community; and reducing generational poverty of those living in publicly assisted housing by providing empowerment and self-sufficiency opportunities.

The State of Montana works to integrate efforts in these three areas into broader community development of public and community facilities, economic development, and housing strategies that recognize the limitations in traditional affordable housing initiatives, and look to identify and capitalize on

opportunities to innovate. The State of Montana seeks to identify projects that satisfy criteria developed to help communities improve access to affordable housing and transportation while protecting the environment, and will leverage emerging data and tools that measure the true cost of commuting to residents of affordable housing.

The following list presents the objectives and outcomes of the 2020-2024 Montana Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development. There may be a need to direct and refine such resources by use of project selection criteria, which may be updated annually, based upon year-to-year need and local circumstances. The objectives and intended outcomes the state will pursue over the next five years are as follows:

1. *Support existing Montana communities:*
    a. Target funding toward existing communities to increase their capacity to respond to health, safety, economic, and other needs resulting from COVID-19; strengthen community revitalization efforts; improve the efficiency of public works investments; and safeguard rural landscapes and natural resources;
    b. Encourage appropriate and comprehensive planning, market studies, preliminary architectural reports, flood prevention plans, and other studies or plans that address health, safety, economic, and other concerns resulting from COVID-19 as well as support the sustainability of local communities, affordable housing, public works investments, vital employment centers, and the environment;
    c. Enhance the unique and resilient characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban;
    d. Encourage the rehabilitation of existing rental and owner-occupied homes, particularly for those with special needs and the elderly; and
    e. Encourage the development and rehabilitation of community facilities and services located within walkable neighborhoods and/or served by public transportation systems, particularly for those with special needs and the elderly.

2. *Invest in vital public infrastructure:*
    a. Provide funding preference for infrastructure projects that address the impacts of COVID-19 and health and safety concerns;
    b. Encourage appropriate and comprehensive pre-development planning activities for public infrastructure, including asset management, needs analysis, preliminary engineering and/or architectural reports, and other studies or plans;
    c. Provide funding opportunities to improve the safety and efficiency of public infrastructure, promote healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods, and safeguard the environment; and
    d. Provide funding opportunities to serve eligible Montanans, particularly special needs and elderly populations, with safe, efficient public infrastructure.

3. *Enhance Montana's economic competitiveness:*
    a. Provide funding preference for economic development and revitalization projects that address the impacts of COVID-19;
    b. Provide reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets;
    c. Support comprehensive planning for downtown revitalization, business development, and other studies or plans to attract and retain talent in Montana communities;
    d. Provide job opportunities to eligible Montanans to strengthen communities within the state;

e. Encourage activities that support and strengthen new and existing businesses, particularly those located within traditional downtown business centers comprising a mix of businesses, housing, and services;
f. Encourage mixed-use development that contributes to broader revitalization efforts in Montana communities; and
g. Seek opportunities to achieve multiple economic development goals, such as removing barriers to collaboration, leveraging multiple funding sources, and increasing energy efficiency, through a single investment.

4. *Promote equitable, affordable housing in Montana:*
   a. Provide funding preference for affordable housing projects that address the impacts of COVID-19;
   b. Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation;
   c. Encourage housing activities that incorporate energy-efficient design to help advance solar deployment and other onsite renewable energy installations in affordable housing that is aligned with the Federal Renewable Energy Target;
   d. Encourage activities to acquire and/or construct new affordable housing for homeownership or rental in areas where existing investment in infrastructure, facilities, and services leverages multiple economic, environmental, and community objectives;
   e. Encourage appropriate and comprehensive planning, market studies, preliminary architectural reports, and other studies or plans in support of the efficient construction of affordable housing; and
   f. Encourage financial mechanisms that increase homeownership opportunities and provide rental assistance to eligible Montanans, particularly those with special needs and the elderly.

5. *Reduce homelessness in Montana:*
   a. Provide funding preference for projects that address the shelter and housing needs of Montanans impacted by COVID-19;
   b. Encourage activities that address the housing needs of homeless Montanans and/or those at risk of homelessness;
   c. Encourage activities that increase the level of assistance programs to homeless Montanans and/or those at risk of homelessness, with the goal of achieving stable and sustainable housing; and
   d. Encourage the development and rehabilitation of non-rental facilities for the shelter of temporarily homeless Montanans.