

# Memo

To: Joe Kolman, EQC  
From: Alice Stanley, Resource Development Bureau  
Date: February 14, 2008  
RE: Planning Grant Availability to Communities for Infrastructure Development

I know of 6 grant programs and 1 loan program available to Montana communities that can be used to plan community infrastructure projects that result in water protection or development (that is, wastewater treatment or municipal drinking water projects). In each case, the planning grant programs were not originally designed to pay for growth planning, however some can be used for this purpose. These programs, for the most part were designed to assist communities with engineering design of a specific project that would produce a better application for a larger project grant. The information in this memo is only a summary. Each program has different eligibility and match requirements.

### *Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program (RRGL) Planning Grants*

This program's intent is to financially assist public entities in the planning and development of renewable resource grant applications for projects that measurably conserve, develop, manage, or protect Montana's renewable resources. Grants are also issued for the purposes of conducting feasibility assessments, alternatives analysis, or community growth planning. \$400,000 is available for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for planning grants in amounts up to \$15,000. 31 grants were awarded with no funds remaining as of September 2007. This program is funded primarily with interest earnings from the Resource Indemnity Trust fund.

Responsible Agency: DNRC Resource Development Bureau

Contact: Pam Smith, 406-444-6687

Relevant Example: The town of Manhattan received \$15,000 to develop a capitol improvements plan that addresses drinking water source, water rights, transmission & distribution, and wastewater treatment for the addition of 7 new subdivisions.

### *Reclamation Development Grant Program (RDGP) Planning Grants*

This program's intent is to financially assist public entities to procure consulting and engineering services needed for the planning and design of natural resource projects potentially funded by the RDG program. Eligible RDG projects must repair damage from mineral extraction or hazardous material contamination, or to meet a crucial state need. RDG planning grants are also issued for the purposes of feasibility studies, alternatives analysis, and baseline studies for environmental impacts assessment. \$800,000 is available for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for grants in amounts up to \$50,000. This program is funded primarily with interest earnings from the Resource Indemnity Trust fund and from the oil and gas production tax.

Responsible Agency: DNRC Resource Development Bureau

Contact: Greg Mills, 406-444-6687

Relevant Example: Lewis and Clark County received \$50,000 to map the Helena Valley's sole source aquifer for groundwater vulnerability to contamination.

***Treasure State Endowment Program Preliminary Engineering Plan Grants***

This program's intent is to financially assist communities who want to apply for project grants to construct or improve public facility projects. Eligible activities for one of these planning grants are preparation of plans, studies, analyses or research required to complete a preliminary engineering report. \$600,000 is available for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for planning grants in amounts up to \$15,000. All money has been awarded as of September 2007. This program is funded primarily with interest earnings from the Resource Indemnity Trust fund.

Responsible Agency: Montana Department of Commerce TSEP program

Contact: Jim Edgcomb 841-2785

***Clean Water Act Section 319 Non Point Source Grants***

These grants fund projects that address potential non point source (NPS) impacts to water quality. Groundwater restoration 319 grants can be used to complete a Source Water Protection Plans for a public water supply from groundwater if the source is susceptible to contamination. \$1.5 million per year is available with no grant amount cap. This program is funded by the US EPA.

Responsible Agency: Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Contact: Rob Rung 444-6756

***Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Planning Grants***

This program provides planning grants for housing and neighborhood renewal and public facility categories. Grants can be used for the initial planning necessary to get a project under way; conducting other community planning activities such as preparing or updating a comprehensive plan or growth policy; or preparing a neighborhood redevelopment plan, a housing study, preliminary engineering or architectural report, capital improvement plan, or similar planning processes needed to help a community address critical needs. \$200,000 is available for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for grants in amounts up to \$15,000.

Source of funds: US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development

Responsible Agency: Department of Commerce, Business Resources Division

Contact: Gus Byrom, 841-2777

***Board of Investments (BOI) INTERCAP Loans***

The INTERCAP program offers interim funding in the form of low cost loans to Montana local governments for capital improvements. Communities can receive loans for \$5,000 and up for the purposes of planning water and wastewater projects or for grant writing. This program is funded with proceeds from bonds issued by the BOI.

Responsible Agency: Montana Board of Investments

Contact: Louise Welsh, 444-0891

***Rural Development Technical Assistance & Predevelopment Grants***

These grants are available to governmental entities and nonprofit corporations to develop engineering plans to improve water and wastewater systems, solid waste disposal and storm drainage in rural areas. Predevelopment grants can be awarded up to \$10,000.

Funding source is the USDA.

Responsible Agency: USDA Rural Development/Rural Utilities Service

Contact: Steve Troendle, 585-2520