

Project No. 30 - Yogo Mansion, LLC - The Waite House

Overview

The Waite House, located in Lewistown, MT, was built in 1909 by John D. Waite, a co-founder of the Central Montana Chamber of Commerce and a Montana territorial and state representative and senator. The home is one of seven structures that comprise the Silk Stocking Historic District, a nationally registered historical site. We are seeking the Montana Historic Preservation grant from the Department of Commerce to make an uninhabitable and non-functional historic structure significant within its community and state once again by being available to Montanans and visitors to enjoy. The building needs significant improvements including but not limited to: façade restoration, return to original building envelop, electrical rewiring, plumbing replacement, boiler system replacement, and interior renovations. Without the grant, the property is likely to continue to deteriorate and detract from the revitalization that Lewistown is currently attempting to make.

Importance & Impact

The Waite House project is imperative to the local Lewistown community and central Montana because of potential economic contributions and historical significance on various fronts.

Economically speaking, we estimate the project will bring an additional 2,000 overnight visitors to Lewistown, contributing to the community's vibrant tourism industry. As owners of the most prominent hotel and convention center in Lewistown and members of the local tourism business improvement district, we have intimate knowledge of the accommodations and events business in the community and have conservatively based our projections on years of operational data coupled with current trends for the Lewistown tourism industry. We know what the demand is and this new accommodation and event venue we plan to create will fill that demand. Additional visitors will increase economic activity by spending money on goods and services such as fuel, food & beverage, florists, event planners, sports outfitters and guide services, photographers, and many other relevant providers.

In addition to bringing more visitors to Lewistown, The Waite House project will create construction and ongoing jobs. During the restoration phase of the project, we estimate over 60 construction jobs will be created to address all the needed renovations. Once the property is restored and operational, we estimate at least 10 jobs would be created to manage, clean, and maintain the property on an ongoing basis to ensure the continual enjoyment of the property.

The historical significance of the project is significant both for the city of Lewistown and for Central Montana. Lewistown is a time capsule in many respects but has suffered from much deferred maintenance. Investment and restoration of a significant property such as the Waite House will help to spur other property investment along with increasing downtown property values.

Architecture

The hand cut sandstone, shingle style and colossal Doric columns are very unique to the property and have attracted admirers throughout the history of the home. Preserving the structure and its distinctive features for current and future generations to admire and enjoy is a major priority in our view.

Time Period

The Waite House was built during Lewistown's period of greatest prosperity. As a result, the fully restored and operational Waite House would be an ongoing representation of Lewistown's historic and ongoing prosperity, providing a bridge between older and younger generations of Lewistown citizens.

Nostalgic Pride

The historic structures from the city's period of greatest prosperity are source of nostalgic pride for many Lewistown and Central Montana natives. We believe it is critical to preserve this cultural heritage for current and future generations. Granting access to the public through various means will allow people to enjoy this property for the first time from the inside, as it has previously been a private residence and subsequently private apartments for residents only.

It is our desire to not only restore The Waite House for the public to enjoy, but also to preserve the property's heritage, which we feel is rich and meaningful for the Lewistown and central Montana communities alike. We plan to preserve this heritage through detailed historical information through the property's website, through family relics on display at the home with descriptions, including photographs, original property blueprints, and other historic items relevant to the home and family.

Updates

Since the grant application was submitted, we have fully restored the historical hand-cut sandstone cladding and chimneys on the home, ensuring its ongoing preservation and the historical accuracy of the home at a cost of over \$85,000.

Additionally, we have hired Dustin Kalanick, a highly experienced architect focused on historical preservation in the state of Montana. We believe having an architect of Dustin's caliber on our team greatly strengthens our ability to achieve our objectives of structural and cultural preservation.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to partnering to bring back to life a once great Montana heritage site.