

Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG) – Program Discussion



Section F Long Range Planning
Interim Budget Committee
June 15, 2022



MHPG Success

2023 Biennium: 26 projects awarded for \$5,449,350.

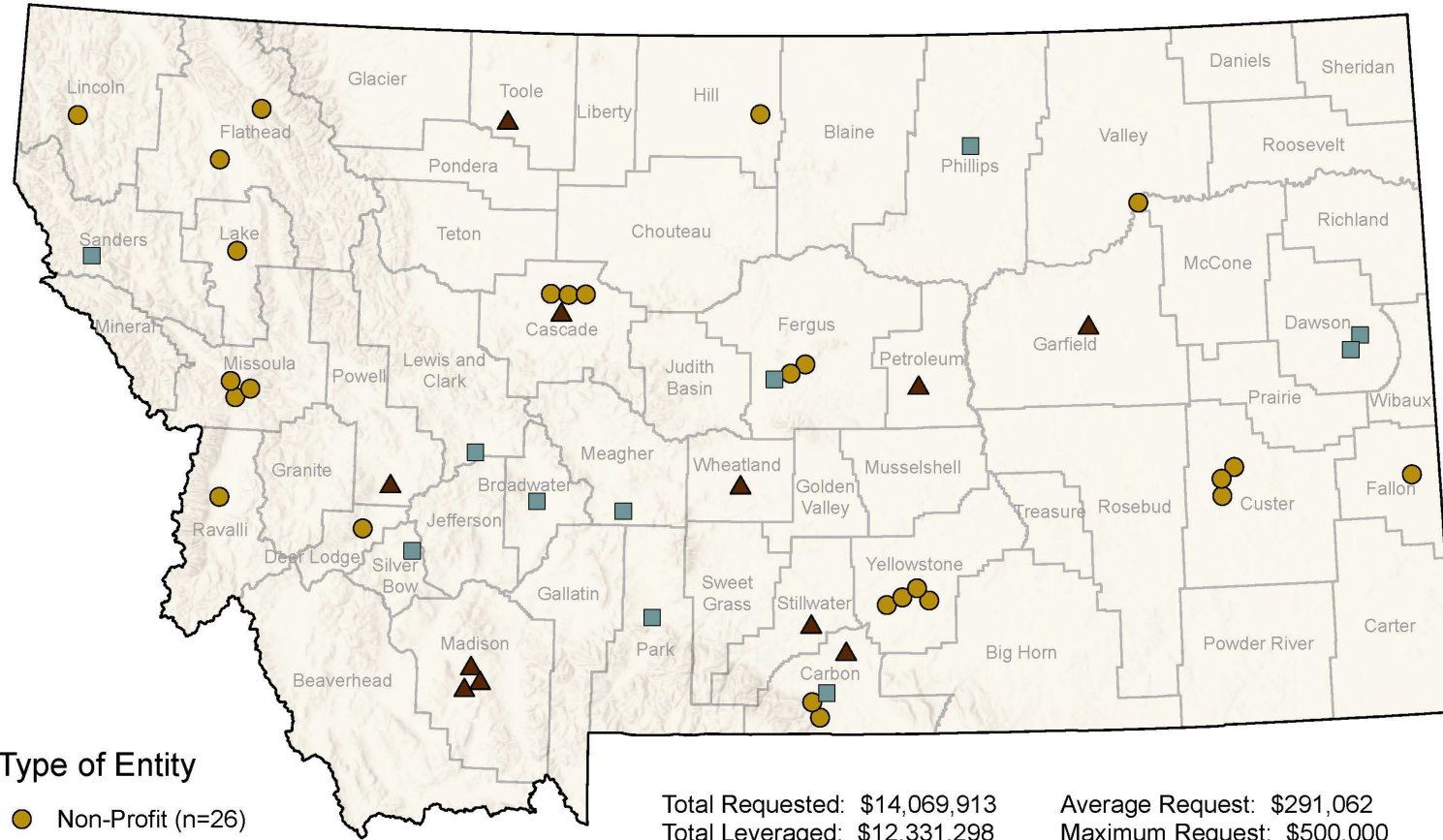


"MHPG Program is the lifeblood of projects like ours and historic preservation in Montana"
- John and Karen Thorson



Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG)

Applications Received - 2025 Biennium



Type of Entity

- Non-Profit (n=26)
- For-Profit (n=11)
- ▲ Government Entity (n=11)

Total Requested: \$14,069,913
Total Leveraged: \$12,331,298

Average Request: \$291,062
Maximum Request: \$500,000
Minimum Request: \$5,600

Source: Community MT Division, Montana Department of Commerce

Map produced on 6/2/2022 by Montana Department of Commerce, 301 S. Park Ave., Helena, MT 59620 ceic.mt.gov

FY22/Requests/MHPGbyEntityType.pdf - DR



MHPG Outlook

- Commerce outreach:
 - 4 webinars / workshops for potential applicants
 - 56 technical assistance conversations
- General trends for this cycle:
 - More competitive projects, but fewer applications
 - Larger grant requests due to the 15-month timeline between application and award



Match Requirement

- MHPG Guidelines incorporated the match requirement from HB 12 in 2021 (as SB 338 in 2019 did not include one):
 - 20% match of the total project cost for government entities
 - 20% match of the total grant request for other entities
- Request legislative intent clarification regarding match requirements (i.e., match requirement for all projects or last cycle).
- The match requirement has been a barrier for non-profit applicants with limited resources.
 - Potential solution: reduce the match for non-profit applicants.



Eligible Applicants

- Person, association, or representative of a governing unit (22-3-1305(1), MCA)
- Points of discussion from the 2021 legislative session:
 - Should governing units include state agencies?
 - Should associations include for-profits?



Eligible Applicants (State Agencies)

- MHPG Guidelines define “governing units” as:
 - Incorporated cities or towns, counties, consolidated governments, tribal governments, or representatives of a governing unit such as a library or school district
- State agencies are not expressly included.
 - One state agency application was funded in the last cycle.
 - Request legislative intent clarification regarding state agencies eligibility.
- Commerce believes the program could function successfully either way.



Eligible Applicants (For-profits)

- MHPG Guidelines define “association” as:
 - For-profit or non-profit
 - Association is not defined in statute, so Commerce used statutory references (22-3-1305 and 22-3-1306, MCA) along with the general definition of association
- Commerce recommends for-profits remain eligible applicants.
 - For-profits play an important role in historic preservation
 - For-profits increase the economic impact of the program
 - Potential solution: institute other ways to ensure for-profits are not unduly enriched (e.g., statutory criteria, recapture provision)



Reduced Awards

- Would the legislature be open to reduced awards?
 - The benefits:
 - Spread the funds to more applicants across the state
 - Fund the immediate needs for projects with multiple components
- Commerce would not reduce awards in a way that creates funding gaps for projects.

