



Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan

Gallatin County, Montana

U.S. Dept. of Transportation
TIGER6-FY14
Rural Planning
Grant Application

Rural Planning Application	
Total Project Cost	\$454,071
Local Match	\$ 60,000
Requested TIGER6 Funding	\$394,071

***Submitted April 23, 2014
by Gallatin County, Montana
311 West Main Street, Rm 304
Bozeman, MT 59715
District MT-001***

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APPLICATION AT A GLANCE

Proposal Title:	Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan		
Area Location of Project:	Gallatin County, MT		
Geospatial Information:	Section 31, Township 6 South, Range 4 East, P.M. 45° 16' 7.61" N 111° 17' 4.75" W		
Area Demographics:	Population (2010)	2,308	
	Area Median Income (AMI)	\$58,369	
	Median Housing Value	\$380,000	
	Average Home Price	\$738,000	
Cost of Living Index:	139		
Congressional:	Congressional District 1		
Project Classification:	Rural Planning Grant		
Funding Request:	\$454,071		

PROJECT AREA MAP

Section 31, Township 6 South, Range 4 East, P.M.
Big Sky, Montana



I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This TIGER6-FY14 Planning Grant will fund activities associated with master planning of a multimodal transportation program in Big Sky, Montana, that addresses connectivity issues, emphasizes pedestrian mobility and safety, provides access to land for affordable workforce housing, and ultimately provides a catalyst for a strong local economy.

Big Sky is an unincorporated community located within the Gallatin Canyon that boasts a nationally recognized ski area. The area is a destination resort and therefore has a highly variable population. According to a Capital Improvements Policy (CIP) study done by TischlerBise in 2011, it is estimated that Big Sky has 3,514 housing units with a year round population of 2,308 persons and peak population of 7,782 persons. (Peak population figures are undoubtedly higher when day-trip visitors are added.)

The development consists of two major housing areas: the Mountain Village located at the base of the ski hill and the Meadow Village located above the confluence of the South and Middle Forks of the West Fork of the Gallatin River.



The Big Sky Transportation District (dba Skyline) provides public transportation services within the Big Sky community as well as between Big Sky and the greater Bozeman area, which is approximately 50 miles to the north. This service allows greater access to jobs within Big Sky, and makes a critical connection between affordable housing and jobs. TishlerBise, in their 2011 study, estimated 199 businesses in Big Sky that employ 3,561 persons.

Like many resort communities, Big Sky struggles to provide workforce housing for permanent employees. Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) estimates in a 2013 study that because of the high cost of housing, 1,500 workers – nearly 70 percent of the workforce in Big Sky – commute from Bozeman. Some employees commute from even more distant communities, leading to one-way commute distances of 80 or 90 miles. Given these distances, public transportation is vital to ensuring that employees have an affordable way to commute to the jobs that exist in Big Sky. But without the opportunity to buy or rent housing, the workforce is denied a sense of ownership and investment within the community and is not participating in civic and community activities. This has a negative impact on the quality of life and fabric of the community.

Given the growth in Big Sky (10.3 percent during the past ten years) and ten-year growth projections for Gallatin County and Big Sky of 49.2 percent, the time has come for a comprehensive multimodal transportation study, upgrades to pedestrian mobility and safety, and laying the groundwork for development of workforce housing.

Specifically, the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan will:

- Create a Big Sky multimodal Transportation Development Plan so residents, commuters and visitors can connect seamlessly with Big Sky residential, retail, schools, recreation and employment;
- Expand a well-designed, connected trails and walkway network, mitigating safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing a high-speed, high-traffic roadway;
- Provide access to land for affordable workforce housing by developing plans for an access road and gateway bridge and in so doing, improve emergency services access and provide secondary ingress and egress for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians accessing the 44-acre park, businesses, the Big Sky wastewater treatment plant, search and rescue operations, and the Northwestern Energy electric substation.

The project represents the culmination of extensive public involvement and coordination among numerous organizations and agencies. As an unincorporated community with no seat of government, Big Sky is made up of a collection of associations, nonprofit/civic organizations, and government districts. Partners in this project include the Big Sky Transportation District (dba Skyline), Big Sky Community Corporation, Big Sky Water and Sewer District, Big Sky Resort Association (dba Big Sky Chamber of Commerce) and Gallatin County.

The Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan is split into two and possibly three phases for financial and future land acquisition reasons. In the event of an award of TIGER planning funds, the anticipated timeline and costs of Phase I would be as follows:

A. Comprehensive Intermodal Transportation Development Plan

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Intermodal Transportation Plan			
	RFP Issued for Planning Svcs	Oct-Nov 2014	
	Planning Project Proceeds	Jan 2015	
	Planning Process Completed	Oct 2015	
	Plan Accepted/Adopted	Dec 2015	\$120,000
	Contract Administration		8,736
			\$128,736

B. Pedestrian Trail & Tunnel

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Pedestrian Trail & Tunnel			
	RFP Issued	Oct 2014	
	Survey and Design	Jan 2015	
	Stakeholders Meeting	Mar 2015	
	Permitting	Mar-Aug 2015	\$162,075
	Misc/Administration		
	Contract Administration		11,799
	Program Management		9,725
			\$183,599

C. Access Road & Gateway Bridge

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Access Rd & Gateway Bridge			
	RFP Issued	Oct 2014	
	Survey and Design	Jan 2015	
	Engineering Assessment	Feb 2015	
	Environmental Analysis	Mar-Apr 2015	
	Permitting	Apr-May2015	\$120,000
	Misc/Administration		
	Contract Administration		8,736
	Public Review Process	May 2015	13,000
			\$141,736

The impact of a TIGER Planning Grant is significant and will provide lasting, long-term benefits to a small unincorporated community that has seen the negative effects of becoming a secondary housing destination, and the impact of commuters, tourists and overall population growth on the area’s transportation infrastructure. With a TIGER Planning Grant, Big Sky will be able to kick start Phase I master planning to create a multimodal Transportation Development Plan (TDP), expand its pedestrian/bicycle trail system that connects the community, and lay the groundwork for an affordable workforce housing initiative.

TIGER6-FY14 Planning Grant funds requested: \$454,071



Background

Big Sky is located midway between West Yellowstone and Bozeman on US 191, just 15 miles from the northwestern border of Yellowstone National Park. The 228.3 square-mile unincorporated community straddles two counties – Gallatin and Madison – in the southwestern part of Montana. The residential and business district sits in Gallatin County. Residents and visitors are attracted to its stunning views and access to world-class outdoor recreation. As a resort- and tourism-oriented economy, its primary industries are retail and accommodation and food services.

The community had two large ski resorts: Big Sky Ski Resort and Moonlight Basin Ski Resort. In 2013, Moonlight Basin was purchased in foreclosure and merged with Big Sky Resort. The combined terrain of the two resorts allows them to boast “The Biggest Skiing in America.” Part of the community is located in the Gallatin Canyon, along the Gallatin River, a favorite for white water rafters and kayakers. The river is a blue ribbon trout stream that attracts fly-fishers from around the world. Hiking trails and camping sites thread throughout the landscape and into neighboring national forests.

In addition to the outdoor activities mentioned above, Big Sky offers a variety of recreation venues that attract regional, national and international visitors. The Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, located on US 191, is the home to the Big Sky Community Chorus, the Big Sky Community Theatre and Big Sky Broadway, a children’s musical theater company. During the summer, the Arts Council of Big Sky presents weekly free music concerts with musicians from across the nation, as well as a four-day classical music festival. The community also hosts the PBR (Professional Bull Rider) rodeo and a weekly Farmers’ Market in the summer.



A 44-acre community park features ball fields, tennis courts, climbing boulders, a skate board complex, and areas for biking and cross country skiing. The park is administered by the nonprofit Big Sky Community Corporation, which also oversees 15 miles of public trails, other smaller public parks, and the Historic Crail Ranch Homestead.

The area is served by three schools, a chapel that serves a number of religious denominations, a community library, 42 restaurants, and a myriad of local businesses ranging from clothing and gift shops, food markets and outdoor sporting stores to three small medical clinics, a dentist, and a pharmacy. The Big Sky Fire Department provides advanced life support emergency medical services, while sheriff services are provided by Gallatin County. Bozeman Deaconess Hospital

will open a small hospital in 2015, but until then the hospital in Bozeman is the closest full-service medical facility.

Despite the relatively small year-round resident population of 2,308, Big Sky's population soars to nearly four times that number due to its year-round tourism economy and the fact that nearly 70 percent of its homes are occupied as vacation residences. Furthermore, building starts have skyrocketed in the past ten months and the carry capacity of the US 191 and SH 64 corridor has been stretched to capacity by heavy construction truck traffic. While traffic levels have fallen off from the peak years of 2006 and 2007, traffic has increased significantly as the economy has rebounded. Given the rate of commercial and residential construction in Big Sky, traffic will soon exceed previous peak levels.

Progress

In 2011, the Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky Advisory Committee retained economic and planning consultants TischlerBise to produce a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky Planning and Zoning District. The study, in part, addressed Big Sky's current and future transportation and affordable housing challenges.

After convening three "idea exchanges" in 2013, a citizens committee consisting of 63 Big Sky residents adopted six livability principals established by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities that act as a foundation for interagency coordination:

1. Provide more transportation choices. Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing. 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.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness. Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
4. Support existing communities. Through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling, increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment. Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase accountability and effectiveness to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods. Enhance the unique characteristics of Big Sky by investing in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods.

The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, acting as project manager for the citizens group, requested funds from the Big Sky Resort Area Tax District for funds to develop an affordable workforce housing plan. The Resort Tax Board of Directors granted \$80,000 in funds and contracted with the Chamber to retain Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) in October 2013. EPS's primary task is to prepare an affordable workforce housing plan for the community.

Although the workforce housing initiative has been on the community's radar for only a few years, the concept of constructing an additional access road and bridge has been discussed for more than two decades. As a matter of fact, the Big Sky Water and Sewer District commissioned preliminary engineering plans for the bridge in 2004 in conjunction with construction plans for the Meadow Village Water Reclamation Facility. Financial resources precluded the bridge project from moving forward.

Benefits/Need

With approximately 31,250 vehicle trips per day, US 191 is classified as a "principal arterial" by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). SH 64, which provides access to Big Sky from US 191, is classified as a "major collector."

Due to environmental factors, US 191 will likely never grow from the current two-lane rural highway design. No additional lanes or capacity improvements are possible given the topography of the area and the limited space to construct these types of improvements. This is an issue, as traffic congestion was challenging in 2006 and 2007 when traffic peaked. Moreover, it is expected that traffic will increase 30 percent or more to surpass previous peak records.

Therefore, it is important to plan for and invest in multimodal transportation options that will maximize the safe and efficient movement of people while minimizing the use of the roadway and environmental impact. A TIGER6-FY14 Planning Grant would fund a much needed Transportation Development Plan (TDP).

Unfortunately, because of high property values in Big Sky, nearly 70 percent of its workforce must commute upwards of two hours a day, which adds to the load on an already overburdened transportation system.

To address this, Big Sky has begun the planning process of providing for workforce housing with the goal of incorporating the Federal Livability Principles such as housing connected to employment centers (costing no more than 30 percent of household income), walkable neighborhoods and transit options. In 2013 it contracted with Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) to put together a framework for workforce housing, including creation of a land trust. Property currently owned by the Big Sky Water and Sewer District has been identified as a feasible location for such a development, although the property would need to be master planned and rezoned. The immediate challenge is access. By providing funding for planning, design and permitting of an access road and gateway bridge to this property (and affording a second ingress/egress for existing housing, the 44-acre park, water treatment plant, Big Sky Search and Rescue operations, and power substation), Big Sky can take a big step forward to providing

workforce housing options to a portion of the 1,500 individuals who commute to the community for full-time employment.

A secondary benefit of developing plans for an access road and gateway bridge is safety. Providing emergency response and fire protection in Big Sky is always a priority. The Big Sky Fire Department is a full service combination department comprised of ten career personnel and 20 volunteer firefighters, paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs). The Department provides advanced life support (ALS) medical and transport services, fire suppression for structures and wild land, hazardous materials response, building and development plan review and inspections, and fire prevention. The Fire Department's response rate covers approximately 52 square miles.

The Department responds to approximately 500 calls per year. EMS calls account for two-thirds of calls. Improved emergency access for fire and medical services can be achieved by providing a secondary ingress and egress. Currently, only one privately-owned driveway provides ingress/egress to a residential area, 44-acre park, wastewater treatment plant, search and rescue operations, and the power substation.

The access road and gateway bridge will contribute to the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians through the area, reducing emissions, creating both short- and long-term jobs, and benefiting the sustainability and livability in the area.

Finally, as the population of residents and number of tourists visiting Big Sky has grown, so has the importance of preserving and improving the community's multi-use park and trails system. Trails and walkways in Big Sky not only fulfill local recreational and transportation needs (i.e. biking and walking to school and work), they also provide a large draw for tourism and a healthier economy.

In a continued effort to achieve the goals set forth in the Big Sky Trails Master Plan (as originally drafted in 2003, updated in January 2009, and submitted to Gallatin and Madison counties, a copy of which can be provided upon request), the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan seeks to begin work on the next critical interconnectivity "leg" in the Big Sky trails system: safe pedestrian access across busy SH 64, which would connect the Meadow Village neighborhood, Big Sky Post Office, and the 44-acre Big Sky Community Park to the Spur Road Trail via a pedestrian tunnel.

With TIGER's support, the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan can commit to developing a comprehensive intermodal Transportation Development Plan, support a walkable community, and lay the foundation for affordable workforce housing. In summary, benefits of the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan include:

- Creation of a long-range multimodal transportation plan that will connect residents, commuters and visitors seamlessly with Big Sky residential, retail, schools, recreation and employment opportunities;
- Expansion of a walkable loop through Big Sky, bringing housing, employment, shopping and recreation closer together;

- Access to property identified for affordable workforce housing development;
- Reduction of traffic congestion at the sole ingress/egress point, a privately-owned driveway connected to Little Coyote Road;
- Addition of a secondary access route to SH 64 for emergency service responders.

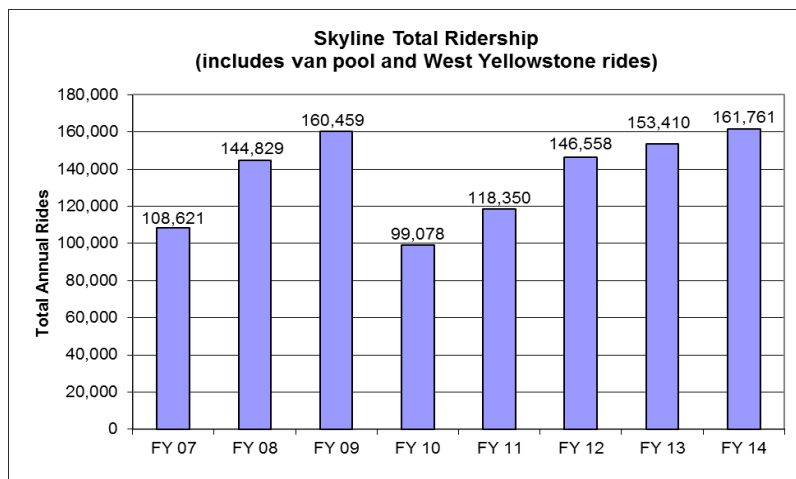
TIGER Planning Grant Request

Specifically, the award of this planning grant provides for:

- A comprehensive multimodal Transportation Development Plan/Coordination Plan that would focus on a larger area that is approximately 60 miles wide (Three Forks to Livingston) and 90 miles high (Bozeman to West Yellowstone). The study would look at Big Sky Transportation District’s (Skyline) fixed route and demand response services, coordination with Streamline (the Bozeman area transit service), and how to further incorporate carpooling and van pooling efforts to handle the significant increase in ridership that is forecast in the next five to ten years. Montana has a rideshare system currently in place (www.RideShareMT.com) and Skyline has a limited number of van pools (four) that could be expanded based upon the planning efforts.

Planning efforts would include tasks such as employer and employee surveys, demographics (growth) analysis, review of the Skyline system, coordination with other transit systems, and collaboration with housing, economic

development and tourism agencies and organizations. A strong emphasis will also be connecting the transit system with the non-motorized opportunities/facilities in the area.



- Engineering plans to align a pedestrian tunnel walkway from the Spur Road Trail across SH 64. The walkway will connect the asphalt trail on the south side of SH 64 through a pedestrian tunnel at the intersection of Little Coyote Road to the 44-acre Big Sky Community Park. With a combination of crosswalks, trails and bridges, this continuation of the pedestrian/bicycle corridor is in-line with projects previously completed and decreases safety concerns with increased traffic on SH 64 and Little Coyote Road.

In this engineering and permitting stage, the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan is seeking funding for engineers to complete final surveying and design, coordinate encroachment permitting with Montana Department of Transportation, support easement negotiations between the Big Sky Community Corporation and private

land owners, complete all design and bid documents, coordinate the bid process, and selection of a cost competitive and qualified contractor to complete the work.

- Planning for a 1,066-foot access road and 165-foot-long bridge to connect SH 64 to a spur road off of Little Coyote Road opens the land to development possibilities for affordable workforce housing. The bridge also will connect parks and trails, relieve congestion at a sole ingress/egress intersection, and create access from SH 64 to the Big Sky water treatment facilities, Big Sky Search and Rescue operations, and the Northwestern Energy power substation. The bridge design that the Big Sky Water and Sewer District commissioned approximately 20 years ago is likely still sound; plans are to review the design to ensure it complies with current ASHTO codes and make any necessary changes. The design review, permitting and construction engineering would include multiple bid specifications.

The new access road and bridge will contribute to the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians through the area, reducing emissions, creating both short- and long-term jobs, and benefiting the sustainability and livability in the area.

Big Sky has long suffered the consequences of not having sufficient plans in place, and the boom and bust cycles have negatively impacted the middle class. This TIGER grant aims to eliminate the impact of the next boom as the community pulls itself out of the great recession. Having a plan that incorporates the designs, permits, environmental clearances and final engineering in place will allow the community to act quickly when funds are available.

II. PROJECT PARTIES

Project parties include the Big Sky Transportation District (dba Skyline), Big Sky Community Corporation, Big Sky Water and Sewer District, Big Sky Resort Association (dba Big Sky Chamber of Commerce), Big Sky Resort Area Tax District and Gallatin County.

Big Sky Transportation District was created in 1991 through a vote of the electorate within the District's boundaries, and is an "Urban Transportation District" as defined by Montana Code Annotated (MCA 7-14-201 through 7-14-246). The mission of the Big Sky Transportation District (dba Skyline) is to provide public transportation services within the Big Sky community, including service between Big Sky and Bozeman (approximately 50 miles to the north), with additional services as deemed beneficial to Big Sky and approved by the Big Sky Transportation District Board. While the District initially ran a local seasonal "skier shuttle" within Big Sky that was known as the "Snow Express", the District expanded services in FY 2007 to become a year-round public transit system.

When "Skyline" started in December of 2006, not only was additional service provided within Big Sky, but the District implemented services between Big Sky and the greater Bozeman area. These new services allowed greater access to jobs within Big Sky, and made a critical connection between affordable housing and jobs. Since its inception, Skyline has provided more than one million rides, both within Big Sky, and between Big Sky and Bozeman.

Big Sky Community Corporation promotes, acquires, preserves and maintains land, parks, trails and easements for use by the Big Sky community and the general public. The organization originated as part of the Big Sky Owner's Association, acquiring non-profit status in 1998, creating a separate board in 2008 and hiring a separate staff in 2010. Throughout this time period, the Big Sky Community Corporation has acquired and manages 83 acres of public park land and over 13 miles of public trails. Numerous recreational organizations and programs have formed under the its umbrella including: Big Sky Tennis Association, Camp Big Sky, Crail Ranch Conservators, Big Sky Softball League, Big Sky Disc Golf League, Natural Resource Council, Parks Committee and Trails Committee. Its programs operate primarily through a large volunteer base of over 200 people. The variety of recreational facilities and programs serve a multitude of demographics within the Big Sky community, as well as offering affordable recreation to many visitors in the area.

Big Sky Water and Sewer District 363 is a special purpose unit of government organized to regulate and operate water and sewer systems in Big Sky. It was created in 1993 and organized under Title 7, Chapter 13, Parts 22 and 23, MCA. The District's boundaries are located in both Madison and Gallatin counties. Its current wastewater system includes a mechanical treatment plant with a capacity of 600,000 gallons per day (current peak flows are approximately 300,000 to 400,000 gallons per day). The Big Sky Water and Sewer District's collection system includes several interceptors as well as a line to Spanish Peaks. 100 percent of treated wastewater is reclaimed through storage facilities throughout the District. Recent data shows the build out capacity of the wastewater system to be 9,704 "single family equivalents" (SFE's). Currently, 3,206 SFE's are occupied.

Because Big Sky is an unincorporated community and as such, has no seat of government, the Big Sky Resort Association (dba **Big Sky Chamber of Commerce**) takes responsibility for much of the primary infrastructure improvements and coordinating efforts among stakeholders. Created in 1994 as the Big Sky Resort Association, the Chamber is a nonprofit membership organization of nearly 400 businesses in and around the Big Sky area, including the Gallatin Valley, West Yellowstone, and regional areas of southwestern Montana. The Chamber strives to promote policies and practices that support the middle class and enrich the area's economy, while working to respect the character of the community. Most recently, it spearheaded efforts for new community wayfinding signage, highway lighting on SH 64, traffic lights on US 191 & SH 64, and burying underground utility lines. Currently, the Chamber is taking the lead on developing workforce housing and conducting primary research to support new entrepreneurs and business ownership.

Big Sky Resort Area Tax District is a locally sourced and controlled revenue source that is unique to the Big Sky area. These funds have been used to support more than a dozen nonprofits that do the work of Big Sky, fund on-going expenditures and subsidize the expenses of other entities (Big Sky Water and Sewer District 363 and Big Sky Fire Department) that have their own revenue sources to fund operating and capital expenses. Resort Tax collections have averaged approximately \$2.1 million per year over the past ten years. The District's 2014 FY budget is \$3.7 million; however funds have already been appropriated for the fiscal year.

Gallatin County has traditionally funded very limited capital improvement projects in Big Sky. Given the County's financial challenges, it is expected that the County will continue not to play a significant role in funding Big Sky's planning or capital needs. However, the County has agreed to act as the fiduciary agent in the event a TIGER grant is awarded to Big Sky.

Written support has been received from Gallatin County Board of Commissioners, U.S Senator Jon Tester, US Senator John Walsh, and Congressman Steve Daines. Letters can be accessed at <http://bigskychamber.com/tiger-grant>.

III. GRANT FUNDS AND SOURCES

Big Sky has been designated by the Montana Department of Commerce as an unincorporated “resort area” under MCA7-6-1532. This designation allows for collection of a resort and local option tax (referred to as the “resort tax”) to fund a variety of services. The fundamental idea behind resort taxes is to allow places with high numbers of visitors, but relatively few residents, to manage the wear and tear on local infrastructure without overburdening local citizens. Under Montana law, the maximum rate of the resort tax is 3 percent, and at least 5 percent of the revenue must offset property taxes.

On April 13, 1992, the general electorate of the Big Sky area created the Big Sky Resort Area and adopted a 3 percent Resort Tax to be charged on “luxury” items and services, or more appropriately, items and services that are not deemed necessities of life. The tax is collected by local businesses within the boundaries of the Resort Area. In 1998 the general electorate of the Big Sky Resort Area voted to create the Big Sky Resort Area District (BSRAD), which brought the administration of the resort tax from the county to the local Big Sky area. BSRAD is managed by a five-member elected Board of Directors.

Since its inception, the money raised from the tax has funded services and programs such as tourism development, infrastructure facilities, post office services, emergency services, public transportation systems, parks and trails, community library, and other services that provide for the public health, safety and welfare within the BSRAD. Recent expenditures for infrastructure include debt service payments for Big Sky Water and Sewer District 363 and installment payments for fire apparatus for the Big Sky Fire Department. Resort Tax collections have averaged approximately \$2.1 million annually over the past ten years.

The Big Sky Transportation District annual budget is approximately \$1.2 million, with roughly 54 percent of that amount coming from Federal Transit Administration funding that is administered by the Montana Department of Transportation. Additional sources of revenue include the Resort Tax (BSRAD), Yellowstone Club, Madison County, Big Sky Resort, Big Sky Owners Association and fare revenue. However, most of those funds are allocated for operations (running the system), with little money remaining to spend on planning. That said, the District appropriated **\$10,000** towards the Transportation Development Plan.

Other matching funds include **\$25,000** from the Big Sky Community Corporation for the pedestrian trail and tunnel, and **\$25,000** from the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce for an access road and gateway bridge project.

Gallatin County has not traditionally funded planning or capital projects in Big Sky. And given its current finances, the County is unable to fund any piece of this planning proposal.

The current estimate to complete Phase I of the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan is \$454,071.

With \$60,000 committed, the project is still short \$394,071.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA

A. Primary Selection Criteria

i. State of Good Repair

The constraints of a limited transportation network are evident in this area. By investing in a comprehensive multimodal Transportation Development Plan/Coordination Plan that maximizes the efficient movement of people, individual vehicle use will decrease, which directly correlates to reduced miles traveled and decreased road maintenance costs.

This is also true of developing the next priority project of Big Sky's pedestrian/bicycle trail corridor. Encouraging residents and visitors to use the trail system keeps motorized vehicles off the roadways. This grant specifically addresses the most dangerous pedestrian highway crossing.

The construction of an access road and gateway bridge is a key component to providing an integral link between the primary travel corridor for Big Sky residents and visitors, SH 64, and the Meadow Village residential area. Future traffic within this study area is expected to increase by roughly 30 percent or more over the next 20 years, especially if neighboring property can be acquired for an affordable workforce housing project (Phase II). Construction of an access road and bridge providing access to SH 64 could divert 50 percent of the traffic from Little Coyote Road, providing a more direct route to current and future housing developments, the 44-acre park, Big Sky water treatment facilities, search and rescue operations, and the Northwestern Energy power substation

ii. Economic Competitiveness

In addition to the large number of tourists on the roads – many of which are coming from or going to Yellowstone National Park or enjoying the abundant year-round outdoor recreation opportunities in the area, approximately 1,500 individuals travel to and from Big Sky daily to commute to jobs. Nearly 70 percent of those employed in Big Sky cannot find affordable housing in the community, which stresses an already overburdened transportation infrastructure.

Creation of an intermodal Transportation Development Plan and creating access for an workforce housing project will have a direct and enormously positive economic impact on middle-class workers who are currently commuting into Big Sky for employment opportunities. The project opens up more land to productive use (affordable workforce housing) and will provide enhanced economic benefit to both commuters (who will not have to spend money on transportation costs) and to the Big Sky community, which will reap the benefits of new residents who are invested in the community in which they work. This plan will remove barriers for private investment and public-private partnerships.

The extension of the multi-use trails system not only fulfills local recreational and transportation needs (i.e. biking and walking to school and work), it also provides a large draw for tourism, which makes for a more vibrant economy.

The entire Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan guarantees economic mobility through enhanced multimodal connections of employment and services.

iii. Quality of Life

Communities with efficient intermodal transportation options have been tied to a host of individual and community benefits, including lower fuel costs and fewer greenhouse gas emissions due to decreased household auto travel, more efficient use of land, and reduced healthcare costs because of increased physical activity. The Transportation Development Plan will strive to create and maintain affordable and convenient transportation choices.

In a recent survey conducted by the Sonoran Institute, 66 percent of individuals surveyed would choose to live in a community – urban or rural – with walkable and bikeable options to work, schools, shopping, restaurants, recreation and other amenities. Residents in the Rocky Mountain West place a much higher priority (at 90 percent) on this than the national average. The expansion of the connected trail network in Big Sky epitomizes this quality of life criterion.

With access provided for a workforce housing development, long-term goals can be put into place to provide housing opportunities for upwards of 60 percent of those individuals now spending two-plus hours per day commuting into Big Sky for employment.

Indeed, the Big Sky Better Together Community Development plan engages all six of the livability principals established by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

iv. Environmental Sustainability

The intermodal Big Sky Transportation Development Plan, extended pedestrian/bike trail, and access road/bridge plan all will provide transportation options to reduce vehicle traffic, which will reduce dependence on fossil fuels, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and ultimately avoid long-term costs from future big-ticket infrastructure investments. Minimal effects, if any, are expected to plant and wildlife communities, wetlands or to water quality (an environmental analysis will be conducted as part of this planning effort).

v. Safety

- Fire suppression and providing timely emergency medical response in Big Sky are always of paramount concern. The Big Sky Fire Department responds to approximately 500 calls annually for these services, two thirds of which are EMS calls. Currently, only one ingress/egress provides access to a residential neighborhood, a 44-acre park, water treatment plant, search and rescue operations, and power substation. Improved

emergency access can be achieved by providing a secondary ingress and egress. Developing plans for an access road and gateway bridge connecting the sole ingress/egress point – the privately-owned community park spur road – with SH 64 will contribute to the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians through the area, providing an additional access option in the event of a natural disaster, accident or medical emergency.

And expanding the connected trails and walkway network with a pedestrian tunnel under SH 64 will mitigate safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing this busy, high-speed highway.

Finally, creating a Transportation Development Plan with a goal of increasing shuttle service, vanpooling and carpooling options will enhance traveler safety by reducing vehicle traffic and transportation-related accidents and fatalities on US 191 and SH 64.

B. Secondary Selection Criteria

i. Innovation

This project concept was developed as a result of multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships leveraging innovative planning tools, especially in land use (identifying property for year-round workforce housing and creating a pedestrian master trail plan).

ii. Partnership

Jurisdictional and Stakeholder Collaboration

One of the greatest strengths of this planning project is that it brings together various organizations to create a positive result both for Big Sky and its citizens. The project has a history of coordination and collaboration with jurisdictional partners and stakeholders at multiple levels:

Community and regional partnerships include:

- Big Sky Transportation District (dba Skyline)
- Big Sky Community Corporation
- Big Sky Water and Sewer District
- Big Sky Resort Association (dba Big Sky Chamber of Commerce)
- Big Sky Resort Area Tax District
- Gallatin County Commissioners

State and federal bodies of support include:

- US Senator John Walsh
- US Senator Jon Tester
- Congressman Steve Daines

V. PROJECT READINESS

It is anticipated that in the event of an award of a TIGER6-FY14 Planning Grant, Phase I of the Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan could begin immediately. The planning timeline, along with costs, are as follows (information is repeated from pages 5-6):

A. Comprehensive Intermodal Transportation Development Plan

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Intermodal Transportation Plan			
	RFP Issued for Planning Svcs	Oct-Nov 2014	
	Planning Project Proceeds	Jan 2015	
	Planning Process Completed	Oct 2015	
	Plan Accepted/Adopted	Dec 2015	\$120,000
	Contract Administration		8,736
			\$128,736

B. Pedestrian Trail & Tunnel

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Pedestrian Trail & Tunnel			
	RFP Issued	Oct 2014	
	Survey and Design	Jan 2015	
	Stakeholders Meeting	Mar 2015	
	Permitting	Mar-Aug 2015	\$162,075
	Misc/Administration		
	Contract Administration		11,799
	Program Management		9,725
			\$183,599

C. Access Road & Gateway Bridge

Project	Activity	Timeline	Cost
Access Rd & Gateway Bridge			
	RFP Issued	Oct 2014	
	Survey and Design	Jan 2015	
	Engineering Assessment	Feb 2015	
	Environmental Analysis	Mar-Apr 2015	
	Permitting	Apr-May 2015	\$120,000
	Misc/Administration		
	Contract Administration		8,736
	Public Review Process	May 2015	13,000
			\$141,736

VI. FEDERAL WAGE RATE CERTIFICATION

Gallatin County, Montana, and all Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan partners certify that any work performed under TIGER Planning Grant funding will be required to comply with all applicable state and federal laws including but not limited to Subchapter IV of chapter 31 of Title 40 of the United States Code.

See <http://bigskychamber.com/tiger-grant> for certification letter from Gallatin County.

ADDENDUM/DOCUMENTATION

Big Sky, Montana map:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Big+Sky,+Mt/@45.2550769,-111.266115,12z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x53500e65fd372c35:0x95f8713baa8b2bca>

Montana Department of Transportation Traffic Data and Analysis:

https://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/datastats/traffic_atr.shtml

Capital Improvement Plan for Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky planning and Zoning District:

www.gallatin.mt.gov/public_documents/.../districts/BS_CIP.pdf

Big Sky Water and Sewer District

- Wastewater Facilities Plan Document
- Preliminary Bridge Plan Sheets

<http://www.bigskywatersewer.com/downloads.htm>

Big Sky Better Together Community Development Plan Letters of Support:

<http://bigskychamber.com/tiger-grant>

Federal Wage Rate Certification:

<http://bigskychamber.com/tiger-grant>