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For Immediate Release:

Gallatin County And The Big Sky Chamber To Present Preferred Housing Plan

Everyone is Invited to a Community Discussion about the Planning Grant for Big Sky Housing

Big Sky, Montana | September 29, 2015 – The Montana Department of Commerce, Gallatin County and the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce will host a presentation for the Big Sky community highlighting the proposed community housing plan. The presentation will be held on Thursday, October 22, 2015 at 4 PM at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center (WMPAC), located at Big Sky's Ophir School Campus on Highway 191.

This event is open to the general public. The presentation will showcase the current conceptual housing plan, discuss the analysis of costs and funding streams, and offer the public an opportunity to ask questions, give opinions, and discuss the proposed plan.

Gallatin County, the County Commissioners, and the Big Sky Chamber joined forces to seek federal funds for alternative housing from the Montana Department of Commerce in 2014. They recognize that Big Sky is a unique and special resort destination that has a strong demand for this type of project. Affordable housing will help Big Sky build a sustainable community and increase economic development in the area.

Developing affordable housing is a complex process that takes time to complete and must include the proper steps to ensure it is done accurately and respectfully. When done correctly, the outcome is a balanced housing market that will create community housing for locals who are employed full time, year round in Big Sky. The housing will not be available to investors and it will only be offered to individuals and families who meet certain requirements. The location of the housing is currently under negotiation and will be officially disclosed when finalized.

At this point, Gallatin County sponsored the Big Sky Chamber to apply for a Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) for community housing. This CDBG Planning Grant is a competitive grant process administered by the Montana Department of Commerce. The current grant pays for planning by funding a Housing Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR).

The current "housing team" includes architectural firm, Comma Q, the designated housing authority, Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), and the engineering firms of Stahly Engineering and Morrison-Maierle

Engineering. This team has worked hard on the PAR to create a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the Big Sky housing situation. It addresses feasibility, site options, costs, and architectural designs.

Part of the PAR includes the development of the Workforce Demonstration Housing Project (WDHP). The WDHP addresses how the proposed housing model works, looks, and fits in to the built environment. It is a process that is frequently used in multi-phase projects. The goal of this process is to create a demo housing project that can be improved upon and replicated, as needed, to meet Big Sky's future housing demands.

By completing these necessary first steps toward affordable housing, Big Sky will be eligible to submit for a second CDBG grant during the next cycle to obtain federal funds from the Department of Commerce. This set of funds will be used to actually build the proposed housing. This is a similar process that has been successful in other communities like West Yellowstone and Livingston.

For more information on the planning process or the upcoming preferred housing presentation, please contact the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce at 406-995-3000 or visit the Big Sky Chamber's Housing Development Information page (<http://bigskychamber.com/news/housing/>).

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About the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce

The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit association of more than 400 members at the local, state, and national level. The Chamber supports the community by operating the Big Sky and Greater Yellowstone Welcome Center conveniently located off of U.S. Highway 191, 43 miles south of Bozeman and just 50 miles north of the Yellowstone National Park west gate. For more information, visit www.bigskychamber.com.