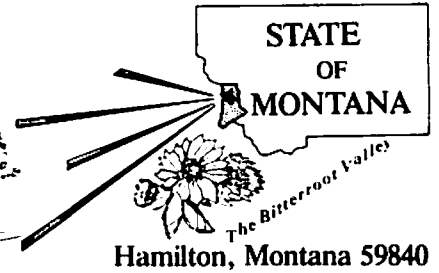
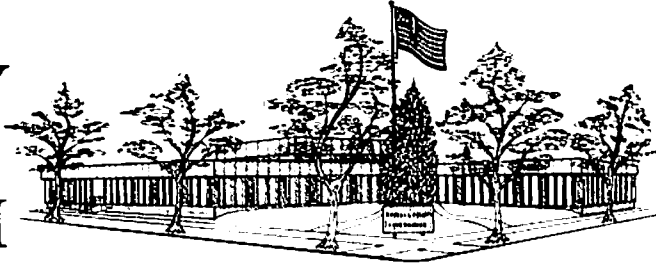


# COUNTY OF RAVALLI



Ravalli County Commissioners  
215 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A  
Hamilton, MT. 59840  
406-375-6500  
[commissioners@rc.mt.gov](mailto:commissioners@rc.mt.gov)

January 6, 2014

Nick Rich  
Montana Department of Commerce  
CDBG-ED Program Specialist  
301 North Park Ave.  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Mr. Rich,

As you know, the Ravalli County Board of Commissioners has mutually terminated their contract with Janet Cornish, principal of Community Development Services of Montana (CDS of MT), with respect to Ravalli County's Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) project.

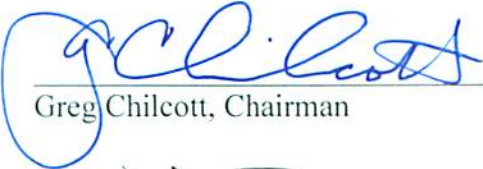
Ravalli County Economic Development Authority (RCEDA) has requested that the Big Sky Trust Fund, contract #MT-BSTF-2-13-38, allow their funds to be utilized only for the Preliminary Engineering Report scope of work.

RCEDA has assisted with three tax increment financing projects in Ravalli County. One of those, the North Stevensville Tax Increment Financing District, is in place and working well. The second is the Stevensville Airport Targeted Economic Development District which will be submitted to the Department of Revenue in the next few weeks. Ravalli County has considerable expertise with planning and zoning in their Planning and Legal Department. RCEDA has gained valuable experience working with Community Development Services of Montana on three projects. The Ravalli County Board of Commissioners are aware of the changes that the termination of the CDS of MT contract have caused and are willing to work together with RCEDA to accomplish our original project goal of establishing a Targeted Economic Development District in Ravalli County.

The negative impacts of the loss of timber jobs and the more recent loss of nearly the entire log home and construction industry have been occurring over the last 40 years. The TEDD is a significant, long term, economic development plan and finance strategy for our community. The Ravalli County Commissioners seek to develop local resources that will assist in expensive infrastructure projects and help to build a competitive local economy that provides good and diverse jobs for our citizens in the coming 40 years.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact our office at the above number. We await your response.

Sincerely,  
BOARD OF RAVALLI COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



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Greg Chilcott, Chairman



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Ron Stoltz, Member



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J.R. Iman, Member



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Suzy Foss, Member



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Jeff Burrows, Member

Enclosures:

1. Timeline Modification Explanation
2. Revised Implementation Schedule

## **ORIGINAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

Data gathering and analysis for proposed TIFD	8/2013 – 12/2013
Finding of Eligibility	9/2013 - 12/2013
Describe area proposed	
Prepare visuals with maps	
Written legal description	
Show evidence of deficient infrastructure	
Prepare proper zoning and annexation in accordance with TIFD Ordinance	01/2014 – 03/2014
Prepare a TIFD Ordinance	04/2014
Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Ordinance	04/2014 – 05/2014
Submit certified copy of the District containing the tax increment provision to be provisioned to the MT Dept of Revenue	06/2014 – 07/2014
Submit final draw down to MT DOC	08/2014

## **REQUESTED REVISED PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

Data gathering and analysis for proposed TEDD/TIFD	8/2013 – 12/2013
Finding of Eligibility	9/2013 - 10/2014
Describe area proposed	
Prepare visuals with maps	
Written legal description	
Show evidence of deficient infrastructure	
Prepare proper zoning in accordance with TEDD/TIFD Ordinance	11/2014 – 02/2015
Prepare a TIFD Ordinance	04/2015
Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Ordinance	05/2015
Submit certified copy of the District containing the tax increment provision to be provisioned to the MT Dept of Revenue	06/2015
Submit final draw down to MT DOC	06/2015

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## TIMELINE MODIFICATION EXPLANATION

To re-cap the Ravalli County Targeted Economic Development District (RC TEDD) began with a very productive meeting on September 12th. There are several steps in the process of creating the RC TEDD where the Ravalli County Planning Board has a role.

### Ravalli County Planning Board Items

- Place Growth Policy<sup>1</sup> on their agenda
- Hold a hearing on the Growth Policy
- Pass a Resolution recommending adoption of the Growth Policy
- Planning Board recommends County adopt Growth Policy
- Planning Board holds hearings on zoning for the District
- Planning Board passes a resolution recommending the zoning to the County Commissioners
- Planning Board receives the TEDD Plan and ultimately passes a resolution stating that the TEDD Development Plan is in conformance with the Growth Policy and zoned in accordance with the Growth Policy

It is important that the Planning Board be included in the project from the beginning. Terry Nelson, Ravalli County Planning Department Director provided a presentation on the RC TEDD to the Planning Board on October 2nd. During discussion it was found that the voters had enacted ballot language<sup>2</sup> in the 2010 election that said any county-initiated zoning must go to a vote of a majority of the electors.

Discussions on the ballot language with the Commissioners, the Deputy County Attorney, CDS of Montana, Ravalli County Planning Department, stakeholders, and others took place. There were ideas for a variety of work around strategies. The potential of legal action was weighed. It was determined that the best strategy was to clarify the ballot language while maintaining its intent. The intent was that the governing body not be able to zone land owners against their will. The current goal is to clarify the language in the November 2014 election. The specific language clarification has not been determined. The language will seek to accomplish that when land owners, which will include the County, desire to zone their own land they do not have to seek approval from a majority of the electors. It is our belief that this will be supported with appropriate pre-election outreach because the outcome will give greater control to the land owner. An additional clarification is the language that says "a majority of the qualified electors." There are about 29,000 voters in Ravalli County. If this language stood then 14,501 voters would have to vote for any zoning initiated by the County. The clarification to the language would be that a majority of those voting in the election would prevail.

The November 2014 election provides our community the time needed to do the proper outreach and to prepare documentation and planning that will be used in the RC TEDD. We do not feel that we can accomplish all that needs to be done by June of 2014. A special election is about \$50,000 and therefore is cost prohibitive. We cannot place this on a school election as all County voters are not notified; just those in the school's district. As demonstrated on the modified timeline work on the this project will continue. There is a lot of work to be done. Therefore we respectfully request that our timeline modification be approved.

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<sup>1</sup> Although a Growth Policy is not part of this project's scope of work the creation of a Growth Policy for the land in the proposed RC TEDD must be done.

<sup>2</sup> Ballot language has been uploaded