



BitterRoot Economic Development District, Inc

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December 29, 2011

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th Street
Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

JAN 05 2012
Ravalli County Commissioners

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Dear Ravalli County Commissioners:

The Bitterroot Economic Development Districts, Inc (BREDD) bylaws require the County Commissions for Ravalli County, Mineral County, and Missoula County to each appoint one Director to the Board. Our board currently has a vacant seat for representation from the Ravalli County Commissioners, due to the resignation of Greg Chilcott.

The seat can either be held by a Commissioner, or by an appointee selected by the Commission. To assist in this regard, it would be helpful to provide us with an appointee by January 13th, 2012, so that we may convene a current board by that time.

Sound economic development relies on the strength of a sound plan, both at the local and regional level. Regional planning does not replace local efforts, but rather strives to support each County's local efforts, and incorporate those efforts into a broader, *more regional* strategy. BREDD maintains the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Missoula, Mineral, and Ravalli Counties. The CEDS meets both state and federal guidelines for economic development strategies. Maintaining the CEDS, and submitting annual updates and reports, are required in order to remain eligible for critical state and federal funding programs. Examples of some projects in Ravalli County that were made possible through maintenance of a current CEDS were the extension of water and sewer lines to Glaxo Smith Kline, construction of the Ravalli Entrepreneurship Center, and installation of a lift station in Hamilton. Eligibility for all of these projects made it possible to secure funding from EDA, in excess of \$2.5 million. An additional amount of other funds were leveraged by this assistance.

In addition to maintaining the CEDS, BREDD also hosts regional meetings and workshops that assist with economic development efforts in the region. As examples, in the recent months we hosted a broadband planning workshop and a sustainable manufacturing workshop; these events provide support for and, and draw on valuable information from, our partners from throughout the three-county region. As a multi-county planning entity, BREDD is uniquely poised to connect resources throughout the region.

BREDD is about to embark on researching and writing a new five year CEDS for the region. If the

Ravalli County Commission chooses to appoint a member to the BREDD Board of Directors, BREDD will be able to include Ravalli County in the new CEDS, incorporating the goals of your county into the strategy. This will allow for ongoing regional collaboration and support, and will ensure Ravalli County remains eligible for future EDA funding.

BREDD looks forward to continuing our valuable and successful partnership. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. As I have offered to Greg Chilcott and Julie Foster, I am more than happy to come down and meet with the commission. I can be reached at 406-258-3435 or mallen@bredd.org.

Sincerely,



Marcy Allen
Executive Director
BREDD, Inc

CC:
BREDD Board of Directors
BitterRoot RC and D
Julie Foster, ED RCEDA
John Rogers, EDA