

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor Bullock Announces Economic Development Grants for Seven Innovative Business Projects in Montana**

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock and Montana Department of Commerce Director Meg O'Leary announced the award of \$128,026 for seven economic development and business planning projects in Bozeman, Libby, Missoula and Butte. The projects range from a market research report for a proposed micro-malting facility, a feasibility study of production capacity for a beef-based energy snack bar, and the development of a conceptual design for a new Welcome Center near Yellowstone National Park.

"Montana's economy depends on entrepreneurs who are willing to take risks in order to create job opportunities for themselves and other Montanans," said Governor Bullock. "Through these grants, we're able to help Montana business owners and communities strategically plan for future business success and continued economic growth."

The funds are being made available through the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund (BSTF). The BSTF Category II Planning Project grants are awarded to local Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs), tribal governments and local economic development agencies to assist in planning efforts to promote long-term stable economic growth in Montana.

"These funding programs are proven economic development tools that expand Montana's economy," said Director O'Leary. "All of these grant dollars go towards helping Montana businesses and communities invest wisely in their main streets and provide good-paying jobs for Montanans."

The projects awarded support several key objectives of the Governor's economic development plan for the state, called the [Main Street Montana Project](#), including increasing awareness of Made in Montana products, supporting and promoting the development of value-added agricultural processing facilities and supporting Montana's entrepreneurs and small businesses.

"Support from the State's Big Sky Trust Fund program is an important part of helping us meet our growing demand. Continuing to grow and produce our product is very important to us and part of our brand story," said Cooper Burchenal, owner of Omnivore, Inc.

The seven BSTF grant awards include:

- **Prospera Business Network**, located in Bozeman, received \$5,000 of BSTF funds to assist [Montana Maltings](#) with the completion of a market research report that will be included in their business plan.

Montana Maltings is proposing to start a micro-malthouse that produces fine specialty malts for brewers and distillers, organic food producers and gluten-free food producers.

- **Prospera Business Network**, located in Bozeman, received \$15,750 of BSTF funds to assist the [Greater Gardiner Chamber of Commerce](#) with the development of a conceptual design for a new Welcome Center located on Park Street, which borders Yellowstone National Park. The project is a critical component of the [Gardiner Gateway Project](#).
- **Bitterroot Economic Development District, Inc.**, located in Missoula, was awarded \$15,750 of BSTF funds to assist Omnivore, Inc. with the completion of a feasibility study to determine how they can best expand their production capacity for the [Omnibar](#), a savory, beef-based energy snack bar, which is rapidly gaining distribution across the United States.
- **Headwaters Resources, Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area, Inc.**, located in Butte, was awarded \$17,615 of BSTF funds to assist Electric Light Building, LLC in Anaconda, with the completion of a building survey and assessment for the restoration of a historic commercial building on Main Street. The owners of the building are interested in building out the first floor for a brew-pub and art gallery, and the second floor for office and residential use.
- **Kootenai River Development Council, Inc.**, located in Libby, received \$24,150 of BSTF funds to assist [Lincoln County Port Authority – Kootenai Industrial Park](#) with the completion of a rail Preliminary Engineering Report that will review the existing rail to determine if it meets specifications for Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) requirements and to suggest options for rail improvements.
- **Bitterroot Economic Development District, Inc.**, located in Missoula, was awarded \$26,250 of BSTF funds to assist Consumer Direct Grant Creek Campus, LLC with the completion of a design development for a new facility to grow their customized, independent health solutions business.
- **Headwaters RC&D Area, Inc.**, located in Butte, received \$23,511 of BSTF funds to assist [Butte-Silver Bow](#) with the completion of a feasibility study to determine the costs associated with the redesign of the building located at 40 East Broadway to fit the needs of Highlands College, which has been identified as a possible tenant.

For more information about the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund (BSTF) Program, contact Karyl Tobel, Assistant Division Administrator, Business Resources Division, at (406) 841-2753. Applications to the BSTF Program are accepted through [www.fundingmt.org](http://www.fundingmt.org).

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