

CITY OF RED LODGE

MONTANA MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Submittal Addendum to the Affiliate Member Community Application

#1 --- What is your interest in becoming a Montana Main Street Affiliate Community?

The Red Lodge Main Street Partnership is highly motivated to become a Main Street Program member at the Affiliate Community level to permit us to access the resources and services of the program while learning how to successfully develop our own “Four Point Approach” to historic preservation and economic revitalization for the downtown area.

#2 --- What does your community intend to accomplish as an affiliate member of the Montana Main Street program?

We plan to move Red Lodge towards a more vibrant and economically sustainable community that can effectively strengthen and preserve both our core historic downtown commercial district as well as the areas adjacent to Main Street (see attached maps.)

Through a downtown and streetscape master planning effort, we expect to be able to greatly improve the benchmark of heightened business and citizen awareness and support for a historic and economically sustainable main street. We intend to increase the participation of businesses in a collaborative process, to retain unique businesses and expand the retail sector, to promote more events in the shoulder seasons and to restore vacant historical buildings so that they once again can provide economically.

Other benchmarks include enhanced pedestrian safety, walkability, accessibility, connectivity, improved streetscapes, green space architectural aesthetics and nurturing of our sense of place.

#3 --- Briefly list and describe any community downtown revitalization efforts and projects recently completed.

➤ **BRANDING AND LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Branding and Leadership Team, coordinated through the Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau, recently completed more than a year of intense efforts in developing a new Brand to help promote our Community. With continued implementation efforts, the newly created brand of Red Lodge ---

“Base Camp to the Beartooths” will soon become ubiquitous in the tourism marketing and promotion arena. The new brand will serve us well into the future by coalescing and lifting up the Community and helping it to be economically identifiable and sustainable. The new brand will be a valuable tool as we move forward as an Affiliate Community in the Main Street Program.

➤ BUILDING REUSE AND REVITALIZATION

Not too long ago an automobile dealership closed its doors, leaving a vacant blighted feel to the northern area of our historic downtown commercial district. Due in large part to the sense of place Red Lodge is well known for, it wasn't long before the building was redeveloped and renovated with businesses to include the famous Buses of Yellowstone Historic Preservation Trust, a petroleum/gasoline station and a metal working artistic design center. The Yellowstone Buses Trust chose Red Lodge as its home while it could have located in any of the other Yellowstone Park gateway communities.

At the southern end of the downtown area, reuse strategies have been developed for the Old Roosevelt School located on Broadway Avenue. One of the exciting options is reuse to include a performing arts center.

The continued development of historic buildings in the heart of the downtown area needs to continue with incentives and ideas provided through the Montana Main Street Program.

➤ ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Our newly formed Building Active Communities group is developing an Active Transportation Plan to promote safe walking and bicycling through programs and facilities that include, among other projects, the expansion of the trails system by connecting with newly installed sidewalks and a multi-used paved path at the north end of the downtown area.

➤ TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The water main and laterals to all buildings along Broadway Avenue in the core historic downtown area were completely rebuilt by the City in 2013. Highway modifications by the Montana Department of Transportation completed in 2015 resulted in the development of public space on the north end of town through the addition of sidewalks, a roundabout and a multi-use path. In the downtown core, curbs, intersections and parking were reconfigured.

#4 --- Please list the three most important revitalization goals that your community aims to achieve over the next two years with the Montana Main Street Program.

➤ ATTRACT MORE VISITORS THROUGH PROMOTION OF A COMMON VISION

We want to capitalize on our recently completed Community Branding efforts by implementing the new community brand through regional marketing efforts. In the past, our visual messaging efforts were an underfunded shoestring approach.

The new professionally designed sophisticated Red Lodge Brand will now emphasize the highest of quality promotional efforts. While still on a shoe string budget, the professionally designed initiative has a large cross sector of committed community leaders who are lifting the brand up from within the community, rather than from the outside. This same cross sector quickly organized to complete this application to become an Affiliate of the Main Street program.

➤ DEVELOP A DOWNTOWN RED LODGE ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

Partnered with leveraged grant funding available through the program, we want to develop a Main Street Master Plan to help retain and expand our existing businesses. We believe that our Main Street Program partnership is exceptionally well poised to succeed based upon our organizational approach. By coordinating our Main Street Partnership's efforts through the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, our other partnership groups will be able to hit the ground running and build community-wide support with many small successes as we plan for larger more comprehensive goals.

➤ DEVELOP HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN PRESERVATION PROJECT PROPOSALS

Our Main Street Partnership has already identified several opportunities within our historic commercial downtown district for preservation efforts. We believe that both the Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Credits programs are viable options in our Community. The wealth of knowledge and experience available through the Main Street Program and its existing member communities, as evidenced at the recent annual conference in Kalispell, will provide sound learning tools. In addition, pedestrian friendly design and streetscape project proposals will help to maintain and enhance the historic sense of place that defines Red Lodge.

#5 --- Please describe the level of interest in your community for this program. This should include an assessment of current/potential volunteer sources, as well as participation by local government, economic development organizations, downtown associations & chambers of commerce, cultural and historical organizations, small businesses, non-profits, etc. It is important to provide a detailed list of all interested community organizations. Statements/letters in support of the Main Street Affiliate Community application are strongly encouraged as part of this submittal.

The following existing Red Lodge community groups are all exceedingly interested and committed to coming together as our highly focused "Red Lodge Main Street Partnership" to ensure the success of the new Red Lodge Montana Main Street Program:

- Red Lodge Area Community Foundation
- Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau
- City of Red Lodge
- Red Lodge Merchants and Lodging Association
- Red Lodge Tourism Business Improvement District
- Red Lodge Proud and Beautiful

- Carbon County Historical Society
- Beartooth Resource and Development Council
- Individual Businesses (identified in accompanying support letters, and many others)

Each of the aforementioned existing groups is not only excited about the Main Street Program, but they are all more than ready and able to join together to do the ground work that will make the program both successful and sustainable for the long term. Letters of community-wide support are attached.

#6 --- Please describe the general condition of your downtown buildings and their historical/cultural significance. Are any listed on the National Register of Historic Places?

Buildings and General Condition

The following information was generated through the efforts of one of Red Lodge's long standing realtors whose expertise in our market is unparalleled. The following classifications are general terms relative to this market area. A building rated in "good" condition here could likely be considered "poor" in a larger more contemporary city. The buildings in the core downtown area, between 8th Street and 14th Street, are rated as follows:

- Very good – 25
- Good – 43
- Average – 19
- Poor – 15

While those rated as "poor" are mostly rented, there is a high probability they would not rent again very quickly if they were to become vacant. There are around 23 buildings with occupied upper levels and around 10 buildings with upper levels that are not currently occupied but could be under different circumstances.

The business profile for the core downtown area, between 8th Street and 14th Street, is as follows (some businesses offer a mix of profiles):

- Retail - 43
- Restaurants, Bars, Dining, Coffee Shops - 22
- Offices (Real Estate, Title Companies, Insurance, General Business) – 13
- Service (Salons, Veterinary, Bank, etc.). - 14
- Museum, Art Galleries, Theatre, etc. - 4
- Residential - 4
- Government - 1
- Hotel -1
- Fraternal Organization - 1

Historic and Cultural Significance

The Red Lodge Commercial Historic District, generally the designated downtown core area between 8th Street and 14th Street along Broadway Avenue, is listed on the National Historic Registry. See the map attached.

The secondary area includes the area north to Highway 78/3rd Street and south to Highway 308. See the map attached. Historic buildings in the designated secondary area include:

- Calvary Episcopal Church - 9 North Villard Avenue
- Red Lodge Brewing Co/Red Lodge Canning Co - 904 North Bonner Street
- Yodeler Motel - 601 S. Broadway Avenue
- Old Roosevelt School - 519 S. Broadway Avenue

#7 -- Briefly explain how your community would employ the Main Street Center Four Point Approach™ in your downtown revitalization efforts.

➤ ORGANIZATION

We have already begun to implement the Main Street Center Four Point approach through the coalescing of the Red Lodge Main Street Partnership. Rather than trying to create a new non-profit or a new group of interested parties, we instead have taken advantage of our existing business entities. The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) is best positioned to coordinate the existing groups and establish consensus within our community. The involvement of businesses that are not currently members of the existing groups is also desired.

➤ PROMOTION

The Red Lodge Branding and Leadership Team (BLT) recently unveiled a new marketing and promotions brand and logo package. The BLT now provides a complete ready to use promotions package to any Red Lodge business interesting in growing its customer base. The BLT's package will permit Red Lodge to tell the main street story to the region and to promote events that can increase off-season business.

➤ DESIGN

Compared to some Montana cities and towns, the Red Lodge main street is in fairly good physical shape that creates an inviting environment for its users. We desire to maintain historic architectural history through the appropriate design of storefronts, facades and implementing code; to create an interactive streetscape that promotes public space; and to maintain a sense of place through signage, street furniture and public art.

➤ ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

Work is underway to continue to strengthen our community's existing economic assets while continuing to diversify the economic base. The RLACF has been focused on the re-use of the Old Roosevelt School that would improve the balance of the commercial mix by converting unused space.

Of particular concern is the continuing decline in the retail sector as identified through resort tax collections. The retail sector has declined from 36.8% of total collections since establishment of the resort tax in 1998 to 23.7% of total collections in 2015.

Adequate sized meeting facilities for conventions and community activities is desired, along with affordable housing located in the downtown area. Through other RLACF initiatives, an affordable housing steering committee has recently organized with assets that will allow them to partner almost immediately once a main street plan has been developed for those vacant spaces. Old Roosevelt is also addressing the possibility of a multi-use space for performing arts and mid -sized convention space with break-out rooms.

A few key vacant parcels and buildings are candidates for a Tax Increment Finance District in which the difference in the amount of property tax generated before district designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after district designation is used for the benefit of the district. In addition, several of our buildings are candidates for redevelopment with Historic Preservation funding options.



The shading shown on this map is a graphic representation of the general area often referred to as our business area; and may be reflected differently as economic development patterns and opportunity change from time to time.



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