



# **MONTANA**

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### Annual Plan FY2026

#### **FY 2026**

**Mission:** Effectively and efficiently deliver programs and resources through technical assistance, funding/investments, training/consulting, promotion, research, reporting, and outreach to provide affordable housing, create sustainable business and economic growth to enhance community vitality to benefit the citizens of Montana.

The Montana Department of Commerce works with statewide and local partners, private industry and small businesses to enhance and sustain economic prosperity in Montana. Commerce works to improve the state's economy through business creation, expansion, retention and diversification of the state's economic base; provides direct technical assistance, grants and loans for Montana's entrepreneurs, businesses and their employees; strengthens the economy through the promotion of tourism development, promoting and protecting historic sites, and marketing Montana as a travel and filmmaking destination; promotes access to new markets, both foreign and domestic, for Montana goods and services; provides financing for homeownership and rental assistance opportunities for Montana families; and develops and improves public infrastructure and housing for Montana citizens by providing grants and technical assistance to Montana communities and counties.

## **Business MT Division – Program 51**

Business MT's goal is to be the lead business development division for the State of Montana by supporting business growth and the prosperity of Montana communities. Our mission is to retain, expand and attract businesses that provide an economic impact for Montana communities through public/private partnerships, leveraged funding and support of economic opportunities for Montana businesses and entrepreneurs. The Business MT Division administers programs that provide technical assistance (finance, marketing, export, planning) and financial assistance (grants and loans) to Montana's businesses with specific emphasis on projects that have business development, growth of revenue and job creation opportunities.

## **Destination MT Division – Program 52**

The marketing, communications, film and tourism programs are all part of a versatile and cohesive Destination MT team that works to sustain and grow Montana’s economy. The programs develop and use communications, advertising, development and promotional campaigns to showcase Montana and create awareness about the state as a place to visit and do business. Through data-driven strategies and grant programs, the team aims to preserve and promote the genuine character of Montana and partners to achieve a sustainable economic future for all.

## **Community MT Division – Program 60**

The Community MT Division helps Montana communities offer safe, efficient and quality public facilities, including streets, water and sewer services, schools, excellent health care facilities and social services, a vibrant economy and job opportunities. The Community MT Division has resources, including financial and technical assistance, to help your community attain its goals.

## **Montana Facility Finance Authority – Program 71**

The Montana Facility Finance Authority enhances Montana communities through access to cost-effective capital financing and development services. MFFA is a self-supported enterprise fund.

## **Housing MT Division – Program 74**

The Housing MT Division strengthens our vibrant communities by supporting access to safe, affordable and sustainable homes for Montanans whose housing needs are not met by the market. Our professional and courteous staff work to create a variety of housing opportunities for Montanans by partnering with local organizations across the state and leveraging federal housing funds available to Montana. Housing staff can assist with buying a home, down payment assistance, mortgage servicing, reverse annuity mortgages, rental housing assistance and multifamily rental development.

## **Board Of Horse Racing – Program 75**

The Montana Board of Horse Racing ensures the integrity of the state's horse racing industry, both live and simulcast, through customer-oriented regulation and monitoring of compliance with MBOHR laws and rules.

## **Montana Heritage Commission – Program 80**

The Montana Heritage Preservation and Development Commission preserves and promotes Montana's Territorial Capitol history and resources through quality visitor experiences and preservation of state-owned buildings and artifacts.

## Director's Office, Centralized Services – Program 81

The Commerce Director's Office provides centralized finance, budget, communications, marketing, legal, research, IT and HR services and resources for the Department Divisions and attached boards.





## Strategic Outcome

# #1



### CONTINUE TO CREATE MORE HIGH-PAYING JOBS

Provide technical assistance and training for entrepreneurs, existing Montana small businesses and local partners.

Provide financial resources for economic development activities.


Recruit businesses to relocate or expand to Montana.

Provide access to low-cost capital for community projects through bond issuance.

Leverage existing Montana companies in advertisements which promote the state for travel and as a hub for outdoor gear manufacturing.

#### Key Measures

- Number of jobs supported. (Business MT)
- Number of businesses or clients assisted. (Business MT, MFFA)
- Leveraged funds. (Business MT, Community MT, MFFA)
- Number of outdoor gear, firearms and ammunition manufacturers supported and/or expanded. (Business MT, Destination MT)
- Number of ribbon cuttings and/or groundbreakings supported. (Business MT)

<b>Strategic Outcome</b>  <b>#2</b>  	<b>IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFICIENCY</b>	
	<p>Montanans telling Montana’s story – the people, places and stories used to promote Montana come from Montanans.</p> <p>Proactive outreach to stakeholders on Commerce programs, including a focus on high-needs and/or low-capacity communities.</p> <p>Shift tourism operations in Virginia City and Nevada City to local business entities to allow MHC staff to focus on preservation, curation, compliance and guest services.</p> <p>Update collateral for Commerce programs including printed materials, websites and more to ensure up-to-date information is available immediately for stakeholders.</p> <p>Improve stakeholder access to training by providing recorded online trainings for immediate access.</p> <p>Encourage staff growth and development through Aspiring Leaders program.</p>	
	<b>Key Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident sentiment towards consumer brand marketing. (Destination MT)</li> <li>• Increase in applications for Commerce programs. (Business MT, Destination MT, Community MT, MFFA, Housing MT)</li> <li>• Reduction in MHC staff hours devoted to direct tourism operations. (MHC)</li> <li>• Number of online trainings provided. (Business MT, Destination MT, Community MT, Housing MT)</li> <li>• Number of staff completing annual Aspiring Leaders program. (Director’s Office)</li> </ul>





**Strategic  
Outcome**

**#3**



**BRING THE STATE OF MONTANA'S  
TECHNOLOGY INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Deploy new asset management software for enhanced monitoring of multifamily rental portfolio.

Establish Master Servicer Data Transfer Workflow for Loan Purchases.

Increase utilization of grants and loans portal.


Encourage, direct and support the adoption of Montana's consumer brand for the enterprise.

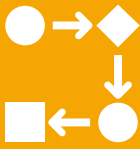
Replace aged IT software through competitive procurement, ensuring compliance and security of PII.

**Key  
Measures**

- Decrease number of manual processes and excel spreadsheets utilized for management of multifamily assets. (Housing MT)
- Reduce mortgage loan cycle time. (Housing MT)
- Number of programs using Commerce grants and loans portal. (Director's Office)
- Completion of RFP to replace aged software and roll-out of new platform. (Housing MT)



<b>Strategic Outcome</b>  <b>#4</b>  	<b>PROGRAMS ASSIST ALL AREAS OF THE STATE</b>	
	<p>Increase outreach to and communication with a broader range of stakeholders.</p> <p>Identify, engage and provide technical assistance to underserved communities and/or communities with special populations or limited capacity.</p>	
	<b>Key Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased attendance at Commerce-led training and/or informational meetings. (Business MT, Destination MT, Community MT, Housing MT)</li> <li>Increased applications from underserved communities or populations. (Business MT, Destination MT, Community MT, Housing MT)</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Outcome</b>  <b>#5</b>  	<b>REDUCE REGULATIONS IN STATE GOVERNMENT</b>	
	<p>Simplify processes and documentation requirements for applicants.</p> <p>Review Administrative Rules and update to provide ease of reading for stakeholders.</p> <p>Continue to look for policy changes to improve stakeholder experience.</p>	
	<b>Key</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfaction of program participants post-application. (Destination MT, Business MT, Community MT, MFFA, Housing MT)</li> </ul>
	<b>Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of ARMs updated. (Director's Office)</li> <li>Number of policy items to bring to 2027 session for consideration. (Director's Office)</li> </ul>