

### **Missoula County Open Lands Bond Funding Procedure**

Please note that this is simply an outline of the procedures for requesting bond funding from Missoula County. More specific requirements may be necessary on any given project. Applicants are encouraged to meet with Open Lands staff as early as possible to discuss options, opportunities and the goals of the program. (Note that this outline refers only to projects applying for funding from the County's portion of the Open Space Bond. For information about applying for funding from the City's portion, please contact the City of Missoula's Open Space Program at 552-6267.)

1. Applicant meets with Open Lands staff to informally review proposal. The Level I application form is discussed. OLC members may attend this meeting to observe the initial process.
2. If appropriate, the applicant submits a Level I application to Open Lands staff.
3. Staff reviews application for completeness, assesses resource values and amount of funding requested.
4. Staff visits site of Level I application if staff is not familiar with the property.
5. Once determined to be complete and in compliance with the bond resolution and interlocal agreement, the Level I application is forwarded to the Missoula County Open Lands Citizen Advisory Committee (OLC). The application may be forwarded by mail or email. The committee takes no action on a Level I application other than to ask questions of staff and to schedule a meeting on the Level II application.
6. If the Level I application is complete and meets the goals of the program, staff requests a Level II application.
7. Staff reviews the Level II application and initiates research on the proposal, including resource values, funding, and related issues.
8. The Level II application is presented by the applicant to the OLC in a formal public meeting. The applicant and his/her representative generally provide a presentation to the OLC and members of the public. The proposal is opened to discussion and questions from the OLC, staff, public and press. Staff schedules a site visit for OLC members.
9. Site visit occurs with OLC, staff, applicant, press and members of the public who might wish to attend.
10. Second public meeting is scheduled by OLC. Applicant must be present for question/answer/discussion. OLC concludes discussion, and votes on project. Staff drafts a letter on OLC's behalf to the Commissioners outlining the OLC decision and rationale. OLC Chair signs the letter.
11. Staff schedules public hearing on project with the Board of County Commissioners.
12. Commissioners, staff, and applicant may visit site.
13. Staff prepares a "qualifying resolution" for Commissioner review and approval for projects led by County staff. Resolution is reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer prior to Commissioner action. Note: This step affirms that the project meets the purposes of the bond and qualifies it for further consideration. This does not constitute final approval of the project.

14. Staff prepares an approval resolution for the Commissioners to consider. Commissioners conduct a public hearing on the proposal. Applicant, staff and OLC give reports. Question/answer/discussion is concluded and Commissioners vote on proposal. If approved, Commissioners sign approval resolution. Staff sends copy of resolution to applicant.
15. If approved, staff submits claim for open space bond funding equal to the amount approved by the Commissioners. Checks are generally payable to the applicant or his/her representative.

General:

- A. All OLC meetings are open to the public and agendas and meeting materials are posted online one week prior to the meeting. Public hearings conducted by the Commissioners are subject to all statutory requirements regarding advertising, conduct of the meeting, etc.
- B. The qualifying resolution can be adopted by the Commissioners any time after the Level I application is submitted.
- C. Open Lands staff routinely notifies the Commissioners of all pending Level I and Level II applications, including location, acreages, resources on site, concerns regarding the project, etc.
- D. Open Lands involvement in the process includes typical administrative support as well as professional review of all projects. Staff attempts to resolve or provide unbiased information on all controversies that may be present in an application.
- E. Meeting minutes of the OLC are posted on the Missoula County web site.
- F. Membership on the OLC is by commissioner appointment, giving significant value to the geographic region of the member's home, the relationship of the member to the farming, ranching, timber and wildlife communities, and willingness to spend significant time in the field with rural residents as well as in formal OLC and staff meetings.
- G. Assuming no outstanding issues, from submittal of a Level I application to Commissioner action on a Level II application, the time frame for acceptance, review and approval/denial is generally 60-90 days. Variation within the review period is generally the responsibility of the applicant who may wish additional time to secure other funding, etc.

*For further information, please contact the Open Lands Manager at 406-258-4869, or visit with staff in the office – call for location.*