



# Missoula County Trails Bond Program

## Level II Application

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**Project Title: Marshall Mountain Park – Base Area Redevelopment (Trailhead Facilities)**

### Part A – Applicant’s Checklist

Use the application checklist to verify that **all required documents** are included in this application in the order listed below. All sections must be completed to meet minimum qualifications.

- ☒ Part A – Applicant’s Checklist
- ☒ Part B – Application Summary Form
- ☒ Part C – Project Details (narrative response to project questions)
- ☒ Part D – Project Budget Description and Forms (all forms must be completely filled out and signed)
- ☐ Part E – Acknowledgement of Open-Space land designation
- ☐ Part F – Attachments (identify each attachment in the table of contents cover page and list attachments in the following order)
  1. Evidence of property ownership/legal access (legal documentation)
  2. Documentation of opposition and responses (if applicable)
  3. Evidence of commitment from funding partners (cash match/in-kind match support letters)
  4. Photos of project area
  5. Site map(s), printed copy. Additional project location maps or GIS shape files will be accepted.
  6. Other relevant materials



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### Part B – Application Summary

#### Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: <b>Missoula County Lands, Culture &amp; Recreation</b>	
Address: <b>200 W Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802</b>	
Primary Contact: <b>Jackson Lee</b>	Title: <b>Marshall Mountain Park Manager</b>
Telephone: <b>406-258-4655</b>	Email: <b>jlee@missoulacounty.us</b>

#### Project Information

Project Title: <b>Marshall Mountain Park – Base Area Redevelopment (Trailhead Facilities)</b>	
Surface Type: <b>N/A</b>	Planning Region: <b>Missoula</b>
Project/Trailhead Location (Geocode, Lat/Long, etc): <b>46.919722887036656, -113.90637166388885</b>	
Bond Program Request: <b>\$176,581.00</b>	Bond Program Request as % of Total Project: <b>10%</b>
Secured Funding Total: <b>\$ 680,060.95</b>	Total Project Amount: <b>\$1,713,283.90</b>



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### Part C – Project Details (Scored out of 100 points)

Please respond to the following questions completely but as concisely as possible. If attachments apply to a question, please fully answer the question and include a reference to the attachment in Part F.

Point assignments will be used as a guide for project recommendations, and no minimum score is required for project approval.

#### C-1 Access and Connectivity – (25pts.)

1. *Describe the project goal, scope, and expected results. Be specific. Discuss the primary outcomes that project will provide, the intended route, and connections.*

**For the better part of 60 years, Marshall Mountain operated as a local ski hill characterized by affordability and convenience. The communities of East Missoula and Bonner-West Riverside, often on the periphery of public services and infrastructure, were minutes not miles away from a thriving gathering space providing year-round recreation opportunities and community connection.**

**Then at the end of the winter season in 2003, Marshall Mountain closed due to a lack of consistent snowfall exacerbated by a changing climate. While informal public access to the site steadily increased, with backcountry skiing and mountain biking emerging as prevailing activities, the underlying infrastructure of the site progressively declined.**

**The 480-acre property was purchased by Missoula County in March 2024, after an extensive public process that demonstrated how important the site is to the community. The focus is now on transitioning this iconic local ski hill into an accessible, inviting public mountain park.**

**Marshall Mountain is a high use, all season facility that lacks essential infrastructure. The overarching goal of this project is to align the infrastructure with the education and recreation needs, vision, and success we are experiencing at Missoula County's newest public park. Initial redevelopment of the site is focused on essential improvements outlined within the *Marshall Mountain Park Conceptual Master Plan*: (1) providing drinking water and shade, (2) constructing trailhead facilities and completing early phase trails, (3) addressing hazardous building materials associated with ski hill era infrastructure, (4) renovating the base area lawn, and (5) upgrading maintenance building(s) to support park operations.**

**This Trails Bond application coincides with a collaborative effort by Friends of Marshall Mountain and Missoula County to pursue Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) later this year. Trails Bond funding for trailhead facility development paired with the**



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LWCF effort will address all of the essential improvements outlined above and create a base area that is accessible and modern – elevating accessibility and equity of experience at Marshall Mountain.

Marshall Mountain is surrounded by the Lolo National Forest on all sides. The United States Forest Service (USFS) land directly to the south of the Marshall Mountain area is designated as concentrated public use, the same category as Blue Mountain Recreation Area and the Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, while much of the other USFS land to the southeast and southwest is managed for big game winter range or old growth forest in some capacity. Backcountry skiers, equestrian users, and hunters utilize Marshall Mountain as a passthrough for access to the Lolo NF.

The full potential of the trail system at Marshall Mountain lies in the possibility of connecting the site into a larger regional network across the Lolo NF and beyond. Long-term regional connections identified within the Master Plan include connections to the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area, the summit of Marshall Mountain, and a Marshall Mountain Ridge Traverse (south towards HWY 200). Conversations are ongoing with the USFS, other nearby land managers, and Marshall Mountain site partners about these potential trail system extensions.

Trailhead facility development at Marshall Mountain is a precursor to cross-boundary trail system expansion. Marshall Mountain is uniquely positioned to act as a launching off point for all-season recreation opportunities within the greater Marshall Canyon area. Base area redevelopment will increase the park's carrying capacity – responding to user demand, accommodating continued trail system expansion, and creating a regional hub for sustainable recreation.

- 2. Describe the intended or anticipated group of users for this trail project. Provide an estimate of the number of trail users per year along with an explanation for how this figure was calculated. Data from other similar facilities and use-cases can be referenced to estimate use projections.*

The Marshall Mountain Park trail system is robust and growing, with 12.6 miles of legacy multi-use, purpose-built, and single-track trails. Marshall Mountain is a hub for people-powered recreation. Trail users are predominately Missoula County residents utilizing the site for mountain biking, hiking, and trail running. Thousands of hours of outdoor education and youth recreation programming happen up at Marshall Mountain each year. Forest school, youth sports teams, and year-round City Parks & Recreation outdoor camps call Marshall Mountain home, and the trail system is essential infrastructure for their program activities.

Construction of 3 new trails is underway and focused on expanding multi-use opportunity and beginner, adaptive friendly mountain bike options. The new multi-



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use, uphill-bike only trail (3 miles) and base area connection (0.5 miles) are open for public use. The beginner, adaptive friendly downhill mountain biking trail (1.6 miles) will be completed by this June. Missoula Adaptive Recreation and Sports (MARS) board members are testing these new trails for compliance with outdoor adaptive guidelines. MARS now intends to run adaptive recreation programming at Marshall Mountain and remains engaged around accessibility considerations for base area redevelopment.

The trajectory of the trail system reflects the prevailing community goal of Marshall Mountain: to be a high-use, all-season, all-access public outdoor recreation and education area.

Based on a 2023 visitor use study completed by City of Missoula staff and the University of Montana Wilderness and Recreation Management (WARM) Research Lab, Marshall Mountain Park saw an average of 75 users per day – totaling to over 27,000 users annually. Peak use coincided with the height of trail season in May 2023 with an average of 150 users per day.

With the site now under public ownership and management, and beginner, adaptive friendly trail construction underway, we anticipate these use rates are already on the rise and will continue to grow considerably. In 2025-2026, WARM will complete another visitor use study at Marshall Mountain.

Site management and development will mirror the use trends we are seeing, which demonstrate this park is a high-use area that should be managed for concentrated recreation opportunities.

3. *Describe how the project improves the overall Level of Service for Trails, as identified in the 2012 [Parks and Trails Master Plan \(p 52\)](#) for each of the following objectives as applicable:*
  - a. *Connectivity within communities:*
  - b. *Connectivity to nearby or adjacent public lands:*
  - c. *Connectivity with other communities:*
  - d. *Access and connectivity to an existing trail network:*
  - e. *Access and connectivity to natural and community resources:*

This project improves the overall Level of Service for Trails – especially within the communities of East Missoula and Bonner-West Riverside area. These communities are highlighted within the 2012 Parks and Trails Master Plan and the top facility needed (per master plan surveying) is natural surface hiking and biking trails. Parks and trails have been shown to contribute to increased physical activity especially in rural areas and within populations at greatest risk of inactivity, including people with



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low incomes and the elderly. East Missoula and Bonner-West Riverside reflect these demographic and socioeconomic conditions. Reviving this iconic ski hill provides a developed recreation space with a low transportation burden and affordable, year-round recreation offerings.

The priorities and goals of Marshall Mountain redevelopment reflect community interest and act as an extension to the Level of Services for Trails objectives outlined within the 2012 Missoula County Parks and Trails Master Plan. Marshall Mountain is an outdoor recreation space that affords Missoula County residents and visitors a unique all-season experience, connectivity to surrounding public lands, and preservation of an iconic community space.

4. *Describe any historic, cultural, and scenic resources found in the project area. How will this project enhance these resources?*

Marshall Mountain sits in the heart of Séliš-Qlispé aboriginal territories, an important part of their homelands for thousands of years. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT) Tribal Council and Cultural Committee are collaborating with Missoula County on site improvements. Their initial input is reflected within the Marshall Mountain Park Conceptual Master Plan and Missoula County is committed to working closely with CSKT – particularly in these initial years of park redevelopment.

As part of the Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternative (ABCA) process, Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) archaeologist deemed Marshall Mountain eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) designation under Criterion A: association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

It is the position of DEQ that what makes the site significant under Criterion A, and what conveys the setting and feeling of the area is the landscape and slopes of the area itself where the recreation activity took place, not any given structure. Therefore, destruction of the main lodge, or any of the existing structures, would not have an adverse effect on the NRHP eligibility of the site.

Though none of the structures at the site contribute to its NRHP eligibility, Missoula County recognizes the iconic attributes of these structures. A priority is to retain or replicate notable site elements to preserve the character of Marshall Mountain where feasible. The history of Marshall Mountain as a ski area is something special to so many Missoula County residents. Base area redevelopment is an important step in aligning the park infrastructure with current community need, while being good stewards of the legacy of the mountain. This project will include opportunity for



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recognition of the rich history of Marshall Mountain – incorporating design and interpretive elements that maintain site character and tell the community story.

### C-2 Project Readiness – (15 pts.)

1. *Discuss the ownership and legal access to the proposed project site. Detail any third-party rights, easements, or other encumbrances that exist. Provide supporting documentation proving ownership, legal access or permission. Provide a site map in Part F.*

**Marshall Mountain Park is owned and operated by Missoula County in partnership with the City of Missoula.**

2. *What planning work related to design, engineering, and scoping have been completed to date? What remains?*

**During the Marshall Mountain Park Conceptual Master Plan process (plan finalized by the City and County in 2023), SE Group provided design, engineering, and scoping services associated with trailhead facility development. These services were preliminary and included Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costs, design standards, and sighting recommendations for base area redevelopment activities.**

**Marshall Mountain Park staff have since updated ROM costs to reflect inflationary cost increases and verified estimates with our counterparts at the City of Missoula Parks and Recreation Department. Estimate verification was finalized in February 2025.**

**No further engineering work remains for the trailhead facility improvements.**

**Restroom facility and all other trailhead amenities included in project scope (kiosks, signage, drinking fountain, and bike rack) are prefabricated units. Recommendations for sighting of these improvements are outlined within the *Master Plan*. Final sighting will be determined through consultation with City of Missoula Parks and Recreation Department's landscape architect. Installation will be primarily completed by outside contractors.**

3. *What is the expected timeline for initiating and completing the project?*

**The trailhead facility portion of the project is expected to go out for bid in Winter 2025-26, with construction slated to begin early summer 2026. The project timeline is structured this way to account for an opportunity to utilize Trails Bond funding, and other Marshall Mountain Park capital funding already raised, as match on a 2025 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) application. In order for these local funds to be recognized as match for this federal funding source, project implementation activities**



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must align with execution of the LWCF grant agreement (anticipated Spring 2026).

### C-3 Project Design (10 pts.)

1. *Describe the surface type, length, width, trail amenities, and lifespan of project construction materials.*

Trailhead facilities at Marshall Mountain will consist of 2, 3-panel kiosks (with associated signage), bear-proof trash receptacles, bike rack(s), a drinking fountain in close proximity to the main trailhead, and an ADA compliant double vault restroom.

2. *Describe any design considerations being made to enhance accessibility for disabled or people reliant upon a mobility device to access trail facilities?*

Trailhead facilities will be designed in accordance with US Access Board **Outdoor Developed Area Guidelines**. Consultation with Summit Independent Living on sighting of amenities is part of the implementation plan.

3. *Discuss any major site modifications or structures included in the design such as excavation, relocation of utilities, bridges, retaining walls, etc. and why they are needed.*

No major site modifications are anticipated as part of the trailhead facility portion of the base area redevelopment project. Other redevelopment elements – outside of the Trails Bond scope – will require significant construction activity. An environmental analysis is being developed as part of the LWCF application – trailhead facility impacts will be evaluated and a mitigation strategy developed if applicable.

4. *Will this project address safety issues? If yes, how so?*

Yes – trailhead facility development will provide park users a landing place for current park information (including trail condition updates), emergency response protocols, and a map of the trail system. Establishing formal trailheads with expand the availability of trash receptacles reducing the chance of human-bear conflict.

5. *Describe surrounding natural resources at the site, including predominant vegetation and wildlife species, habitat areas, water and other natural resources. Discuss impacts to these resources as a result of this project and describe how they will be protected.*

The majority of the Marshall Mountain property is forested, and due to the unique history of each parcel, as well as a high diversity of slope, aspect, and elevation, forest conditions on the site are highly variable.

The property contains an approximately 1.3-mile section of Marshall Creek, which is a tributary of the Clark Fork River. Marshall Creek has been identified as providing core habitat for Westslope Cutthroat Trout, a sensitive species, as it contains a genetically pure and isolated population.





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A focus of this project is redeveloping the base area in a way that reduces impacts to the surrounding landscape and stream corridor. Placement of trailhead facilities will be finalized with these considerations in mind and promote responsible recreation through incorporating waste management features (e.g., trash receptacles, restroom facilities, and educational signage) that address long-term maintenance and management goals associated with concentrating impacts and reducing waste.

6. *Is this project part of a larger conservation easement acquisition project? If so, describe the conservation values and public benefits/value of the land, easement or water resource.*

**No.**

#### **C-4 Project Support (20-pts.)**

1. *Summarize your organization's history of involvement with this project.*

The property was purchased by Missoula County in March 2024, after an extensive public process that demonstrated how important the site is to the community. Missoula County has committed staff resources to operation of Marshall Mountain, with two full-time staff managing maintenance and operations, collaborating with park partners on capital campaign efforts, and improving accessibility and site safety for public recreation.

2. *Discuss any efforts to obtain public input, disseminate public information, develop partnerships, and garner community support specifically related to this project. For regional trails, the process needs to include notification and/or involvement of residents from adjacent communities.*

Community engagement and contribution made Marshall Mountain iconic, ensuring public ownership, and providing the driving force behind moving the mountain forward.

During the park visioning process, culminating in the *Marshall Mountain Park Conceptual Master Plan*, over 2,000 Missoula County residents responded to online surveys and visioning sessions. The multi-year planning process also included community open houses, extensive City/County government collaboration, and targeted outreach via a focus group representing outdoor recreation, equity and inclusion, and community health and education interests locally.

There is now a robust network of Marshall Mountain stakeholders and project partners turning concept into reality.



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The City of Missoula is an equal partner at Marshall Mountain, facilitating thousands of hours of outdoor education and youth recreation programming each year and contributing half of the annual operating budget. Their outdoor education service area goes beyond Missoula city limits, with registration for programs such as Forest School and Derailleurs (youth mountain biking) open to all Missoula County residents. The City offers scholarships to reduce financial barriers, and the programs provide parents with much needed childcare after school on weekdays, and during the summer months.

During the acquisition process, a group of engaged citizens formed a non-profit advocacy and fundraising arm called Friends of Marshall Mountain (FoMM). They raised a significant amount of private funding during acquisition, and their fundraising efforts continue today with a focus on securing local match for immediate and essential improvements outlined within the Master Plan.

People powered recreation defines Marshall Mountain. Two other main partner organizations are involved at the ground level, ensuring the park evolves in a way that reflects its legacy, elevates outdoor accessibility, and maintains year-round opportunity.

Missoula Mountain Bike Coalition is an operations partner responsible for constructing and maintaining the trail system. 3 new trails are being constructed with a focus on expanding multi-use opportunity and beginner, adaptive friendly mountain bike trails.

Montana Backcountry Alliance is a consistent voice for the winter recreation community at Marshall Mountain, guiding public operations and advocating for buildout of planned winter infrastructure (e.g., learn to ski area, vegetation management on the traditional runs, and warming huts or shelters).

This project is the catalyst for developing a more accessible base area at Marshall Mountain, including meeting spaces with basic services that will provide Missoula County and primary project partners opportunity to develop new partnerships and reduce physical site barriers to community engagement and involvement.

3. *Is this project identified in any planning documents, from site specific plans at the smallest scale to regional or statewide plans at the largest scale? If so, name each plan and discuss how your project aligns with any related elements.*

**Yes – this project aligns with the *Marshall Mountain Park Conceptual Master Plan* as described throughout the application.**



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4. *Discuss any objections or opposition to this project. Include any letters, petitions, news articles, or other documents evidencing opposition. What has been done to address concerns and how has the opposition responded?*

**No direct objections or oppositions to this project have been received. This project is developed in accordance with the findings/recommendations of the Master Plan and in close consultation with Friends of Marshall Mountain and the City of Missoula. Marshall Mountain staff are also providing operation and project updates to local community councils.**

#### **C-5 Project Match (20 pts.)**

1. *What percentage of the project cost has been secured versus how much remains? What are your plans for raising additional funds? Attach documentation for all match funding secured to date in Part F. What is your contingency plan in case pending funding requests are not granted? If this project is part of a larger multi-phased project, all of the match shown in this application must be dedicated to this phase.*

**40% of the total project cost is secured. The project budget consists of, Friends of Marshall Mountain (FoMM) private fundraising, Marshall Mountain planning expenditures, remaining Open Space Bond funding associated with acquisition, and a Montana Trail Stewardship Program award. The Trails Bond funding request will shore up the remaining local match needed for the 2025 LWCF application. LWCF is a 1:1 match program so, if awarded, the impact of the Trails Bond funding will be doubled.**

**Marshall Mountain staff and FoMM continued to pursue additional funding in the event pending and upcoming grant requests are not granted. Contingency plans are in place to deliver the Base Area Redevelopment project in a phased approach if the overall funding benchmark is not attained by end of 2025. Trailhead facility development will be prioritized if a phased approach is necessary.**

#### **C-6 Maintenance (10 pts.)**

1. *Describe the long-term maintenance plan for the trail facility.*

**Trailhead facilities will be owned, maintained and operated by Missoula County. The City of Missoula and Missoula County contribute equally to the annual operating budget and an interlocal agreement is in place.**



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### Part D – Project Budget

1. Provide an estimated general line-item project budget (accounting table or similar format) and, a brief explanation of each line item. The budget shall track the project from design development through construction to maintenance.

2.

### Overall LWCF Base Area Redevelopment & Early Phase Trails Project Budget

Item	LWCF	OSB Match	MMP Operating	FoMM Match	TB Match	MTB Match	Project Total
<b>Level I Priorities</b>	<b>\$856,641.95</b>	<b>\$134,693.00</b>	<b>\$27,750.00</b>	<b>\$477,617.95</b>	<b>\$176,581.00</b>	<b>\$40,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,713,283.90</b>
Site Demolition & Clearing, Restoration	\$60,000.00	\$30,000.00					\$90,000.00
Event lawn space and sprinkler system installation	\$107,352.00			\$107,352.00			\$214,704.00
Water Supply*	\$198,639.00	\$61,500.00		\$77,709.00			\$337,848.00
Lift Terminal Shade Shelter	\$38,287.30			\$81,712.70			\$120,000.00
Pit toilet @ base area (facility, earthwork, & install)					\$95,151.00		\$95,151.00
Trailhead facilities (kiosks, signage, drinking fountains, bike rack(s))					\$81,430.00		\$81,430.00
Picnic Shelter (w. Clocktower Replica)	\$165,504.25			\$84,495.75			\$250,000.00
Early Phase Trails (upper portion of base area loop, Hello Kitty extension)*	\$40,552.40	\$34,500.00		\$25,500.00		\$40,000.00	\$140,552.40
Removing &/or Relocating Aboveground Utilities, Adding Underground*	\$131,307.00	\$8,693.00					\$140,000.00
Maintenance Shed (renovation & addition)*	\$90,000.00						\$90,000.00
Marshall Mountain Park Master Plan (only costs incurred 3 years before application eligible)				\$75,848.50			\$75,848.50
Pre-Application Activities (EA, Engineering)			\$27,750.00				\$27,750.00
Grading/site modification for ADA access to trailhead and pavilion space	\$25,000.00			\$25,000.00			\$50,000.00
Additional match for indirect costs (FWP requirement for LWCF funding, 5% total project cost)				\$81,692.70			\$81,692.00

### Marshall Mountain Trail Expansion Specific Budget

Item	Unit Price	Quantity	Total
<b>Pit toilet @ base area (facility, earthwork, &amp; install)</b>		LS	<b>\$95,151.00</b>
<b>Trailhead amenities</b>			<b>\$52,000.00</b>
<b>3-Panel Kiosks</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>
<b>Trailhead Sign Package (design, fabrication, and install)</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>
<b>Bike Rack</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>
<b>Bear Saver (double trash receptacle)</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Drinking Fountain (purchase and install)</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>
	Subtotal		<b>\$147,151</b>
	Project Contingency (20%)		<b>\$29,430</b>
	<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>		<b>\$176,581</b>



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### Part E – Acknowledgment of Open-Space Land Designation

**N/A as a Missoula County property and considering encumbrances already on property.**

### Part F – Attachments

Use this as the table of contents cover page for the required application attachments. Attachments in this section are supporting documentation to the questions answered in Part F. To receive the full amount of points available for each question, sufficient supporting documentation must be attached. List all attachments in order, by name/title and by page number.

1. Evidence of property ownership/legal access (legal documentation)
2. Evidence of community support (letters of support)
3. Documentation of opposition and responses (if applicable)
4. Evidence of commitment from funding partners (cash match/in-kind match support letters)
5. Exhibits (renderings, photos, site maps, etc.)
6. GIS shapefile, if applicable
7. Other (clearly title: acquisition documentation, if applicable, or other supporting documents)

Acknowledge the minimum qualification components listed below. All components are required to meet minimum qualifications:

- ☒ All items listed in Part A - Application Checklist are included in the application.
- ☒ All questions are answered in Part C; all documents are attached for Part F.
- ☒ All budget forms are attached.
- ☒ Property Owner has reviewed the application and approves of the project.
- ☒ Funding match is provided.

Applicant certifies that all items are included in the application and that all information submitted is true to the best of their knowledge.

**Applicant Signature:**

**Date:** 4/10/25

**Property Owner Signature:** Same as Above