

MONTANA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State Historic
Preservation Office

MONTANA SHPO GRANT PROGRAM

2025 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND FORM

Application Instructions

Thank you for investing in your historic property, and for your interest in applying to the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Grant. Detailed instructions on how to prepare and submit application materials are provided below.

Before preparing your application, visit <https://mhs.mt.gov/shpo/grants>. Carefully review the complete application GUIDELINES to ensure that property, proposed work, and applying entity are eligible for the Montana SHPO Grant and download the application FORM.

INTRODUCTION

Applicants must submit the application form and supporting materials by uploading documents to the Montana Cultural Resource Database portal by 11:59 PM on the due date. SHPO will not accept hardcopy applications, emailed applications, materials submitted outside of SHPO's Cultural Resource Database.

Architectural Standards

A SHPO grant project must meet the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties](#) (Standards). The Standards provide a framework through which projects can achieve preservation goals while retaining historic design, character, and materials as much as possible.

To determine how well an applicant's proposed work meets the Standards, **SHPO relies on an application's clarity, drawings (if available), photos of existing conditions, and any historic photos used to guide restorative work.** The Standards apply to both interior and exterior work. We review the entire building project against the Standards, even work not paid for with SHPO Grant funds.

Because funded projects will be subject to a multi-year preservation easement that SHPO will monitor,

applicants must describe planned work to the greatest extent possible. This includes any adjacent or related new construction on the property. If work conducted within the easement period does not adhere to the Standards, SHPO may recapture granted funds.

SHPO applies the Standards in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility of work. SHPO bases its decision to award a grant on whether the overall project meets the Standards. SHPO grant-funded projects must be consistent with the historic character of the property and, where applicable, the greater historic district in which it is located. SHPO Grant funds may not be used for new construction, nor can monies expended for new construction be used as match toward the SHPO Grant.

The Standards and Windows

SHPO grants do not fund window replacement solely to improve a building's thermal efficiency. The SHPO Grant does support work that repairs and thermally upgrades historic windows. However, preservation projects often involve window replacement when historic units are missing or beyond feasible repair. SHPO strongly recommends that applicants review the "Windows" section on the Department of the Interior's [Planning Successful Rehabilitation Projects](#) page. Window-related photos and drawings submitted to SHPO should meet the specifications described in [Documentation Requirements for Proposed Window](#)

[Replacement](#). Window replacements without a basis for replacement and/or without adequate specifications are not eligible for funding.

Exceptions

Applicants who have previously submitted a [Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit](#) application to SHPO or have a final tax credit application draft to submit to SHPO by February 10, 2025, need only complete page 1 of the SHPO Grant application. SHPO's review will be based on the content of page 1 and the applicant's tax credit application.

Applicants who have previously completed the **Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) checklist** for the same scope of work described in their SHPO Grant application need not duplicate that process. These applicants should attach their MEPA checklist with their application materials. All other applicants will complete the MEPA process in collaboration with SHPO when SHPO has identified their application for a grant award. MEPA will be completed prior to SHPO and the grantee executing a grant contract.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR TO COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

PAGE 1: SUMMARY

Property Name, Street Address, City/State/Zip:

Provide the historic and/or common name of the property on which the proposed grant-funded project will take place. Also provide the physical address of that property (not a P.O. Box or other mailing address).

Request Amount, Matching Funds, and Total Project Cost:

Please list the total cost of the project for which you seek funding, the amount of SHPO Grant funding you're requesting, and the total amount of cash and in-kind match. The request amount plus the matching funds amount should equal the total project cost.

Check Boxes that Apply:

This checklist helps the applicant and SHPO ensure that the application is complete.

- **Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) individually or as contributing to a district:** Check this box if your property is listed in the NRHP. Properties that contribute to NRHP-listed historic districts are listed properties. [SHPO's National Register Map](#) provides links to individually listed properties and historic districts statewide. Most nominations can also be found on the [National Park Service website](#). If you need help determining your property's NRHP status, submit your property name and address in an email to SHPOGrant@mt.gov.
- **Property is not listed in the National Register; the owner consents to their property being listed:** Check this box if your property is not listed.
- **Ownership status:** Check whichever one of the three boxes applies to your situation and attach letter(s) as separate PDFs if applicable.
- **Letters of support are attached:** Three letters of support are optional but are a way of demonstrating broad support for projects with community benefit.
- **The owner(s)/applicant are aware of SHPO Grant stipulations that include:** Check this box after carefully reading the Program Announcement.
- **Applicant will provide complete Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) documentation prior to SHPO awarding a grant:** Checking this box is required.
- **A copy of the fiscal sponsor's board resolution to sponsor this application is attached (if applicable):** Only check this box if it applies to your situation.
- **All application materials and supporting documents submitted through [SHPO's Cultural Resource Database](#).** See the Submittals section above for details.

Applicant's Name, Signature and Date, Address, Email, Phone, City/State/Zip:

Please provide your name, your business or home address, and contact information. Sign and date the application in pen or via electronic signature.

PAGES 2-4: PHOTOS

Insert at least four (4) and up to six (6) photos. The first four (4) photos should show all four elevations (sides) of the building from the outside. Captions should indicate which elevation (north, south, east, or west) is shown in the photo.

Though not required, you may also submit up to two (2) historic photos of the property. If included, these photos should show the original features of the property, especially if those features will be part of your project. They may show the overall building from the outside or detailed aspects of the building's interior and/or exterior.

PAGE 5: SITE PLAN

Provide a drawing or aerial view of the subject property in its physical context. This plan should be roughly to scale. It may be hand-sketched or copied and pasted from an online source such as Google Maps or [Montana Cadastral](#). The subject property should be clearly marked on the map. See sample site plan on page 6 of these instructions.

PAGES 6-12: PROJECT DETAILS AND JUSTIFICATION

All the sections on pages 6-12 of the application address aspects of the proposed project that will help the review committee to score the application. Scores will be based on the criteria discussed on page 4 of the [SHPO Grant Guidelines](#). Please adhere to the character limits listed for each section.

Property's Historic Significance:

State whether the property is individually listed in the NRHP, listed as a contributing property to an NRHP-listed historic district, or is not listed in the NRHP. The National Park Service's [criteria for property evaluation](#) describes the significant associations that may apply to your property: (a) association with significant events or patterns of history, (b) association with significant persons, (c) significant achievements or representative examples of important architectural styles, trends, engineering, or architects, and d) potential to yield important information/archaeology. Note that most buildings are significant for their association with Criteria A and/or C.

Property Architectural Description:

Describe the property as it looks today to the best of your ability. Include a description of the setting, number of stories, structural components, cladding, finish materials, and features such as windows, porches, built-ins, etc. List dates of original construction and modifications, historic (made 50 or more years ago) or otherwise. This description must reflect the building's current condition, as depicted in the photos included in your application.

Project Summary:

Write a brief narrative that conveys the overall project goals, methods, and importance. This section does not require an exhaustive breakdown of project details. It should relate the basic project components, how those components will be achieved, and why the project will be important to both the property and the community.

Budget Table and Narrative:

Provide an overview of your proposed budget, including cost estimates based on verifiable, reasonable, and allowable costs. Place the amounts to be paid by the SHPO Grant, cash contributions (from personal and/or other loans/grants), and in-kind donations in the corresponding columns.

For the budget narrative, provide an explanation of the cost estimates in the budget table, and how you arrived at those estimates. Explain how you plan to fund the project with combination of SHPO Grant funds and other sources. Specify other sources of project income, and whether those other sources have been secured.

Project Timeline:

State when the SHPO Grant and match-funded work would begin; estimate completion dates of the project's key components; and when all SHPO Grant and matching cost-funded work would be complete. If the project extends beyond the grant period, please describe future phases to the best of your abilities.

Please describe your project timeline and all work that will be undertaken on the property, including each feature and space to be affected by work. Describe work planned beyond the SHPO Grant period that would be reviewed under a preservation easement. Begin by

describing site work, including the extent of any ground disturbing activity marked on a site plan. Follow this by describing existing exterior conditions and work, including new construction; and then describe existing interior conditions and work. Reference photo or drawing numbers that show the feature and depict proposed treatments. Describe processes such as masonry cleaning in the application narrative; do not attach specification books.

Project Feasibility:

Demonstrate your readiness and capacity to complete the project successfully within the given resources and timeframe while meeting all SHPO Grant requirements and guidelines. Justify that costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. Indicate whether professional labor will be employed to complete the project tasks. If the property is not listed in the NRHP, please include your plan and schedule for the listing process.

Project Urgency:

Please elaborate on how this project will address an urgent need or threat to the property AND to the surrounding community. What will become of the property if the project does not move forward? What factors threaten the community in which the property is placed and how will the project address those factors?

Project Sustainability:

Please elaborate on how the project, once complete, will have long-lasting beneficial effects on the property, and how the property owner intends to maintain the property into the future. Explain how the project will provide an ongoing economic benefit to the community.

PAGES 13-17: PHOTO KEYS

Sketch all floorplans that apply to your building and project (basement, first floor, second floor, third floor, and roof). You may also copy and paste a screenshot of the architectural plans, if available and applicable to the scope of your project. If your building does not have a second floor, third floor, or basement, you may leave that box blank. For all floorplans, include the property name, address, and a north arrow somewhere on the drawing.

The next section of the application (pages 18-24) asks for more detailed photos of features subject to proposed work. You will number and caption these photos. Please key all numbered photos to the photo keys on pages 13-17. Numbers may be handwritten onto the photo keys.

PAGES 18-24+: FEATURE PHOTOS

Photos included in this section will provide a more detailed picture of the proposed scope of work, and to assist you in presenting existing historic features that will be retained/rehabilitated; historic features that are missing and that will be restored as part of the project; and non-historic features that will be retained but remain untouched. Photos must be well-lit, color, and measure at least 4 x 6 inches. Digital images must have sufficient resolution to see the feature details clearly.

Each photo must be numbered, the date of the feature's construction noted (if known), and the page number of any related architectural or conceptual drawings noted (if available).

Describe the feature in its current condition, noting materials, location on/in building, and any deterioration. Next, describe the proposed work to the feature and how its appearance will be affected.

HOW TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

Properly formatted digital application materials are accepted via the Montana SHPO portal. Applications include a complete application form and supporting documentation (e.g., letters of support and architectural drawings). Applicants may submit up to three (3) LETTERS OF SUPPORT addressed to Montana SHPO Grant Program. Letters are optional but encouraged. These should indicate that someone beyond the property owner supports the project and should be from those not directly benefitting from the project.

Applicants must submit the application and all supporting materials through SHPO's Cultural Resource Database by 11:59 PM on the due date. SHPO will not accept hardcopy applications, emailed applications, materials submitted outside of SHPO's Cultural Resource Database.

Prepare Files: Naming Requirements

All application documents must be titled according to the following naming convention:

SHPO Grant *[project name]* *[document description]*

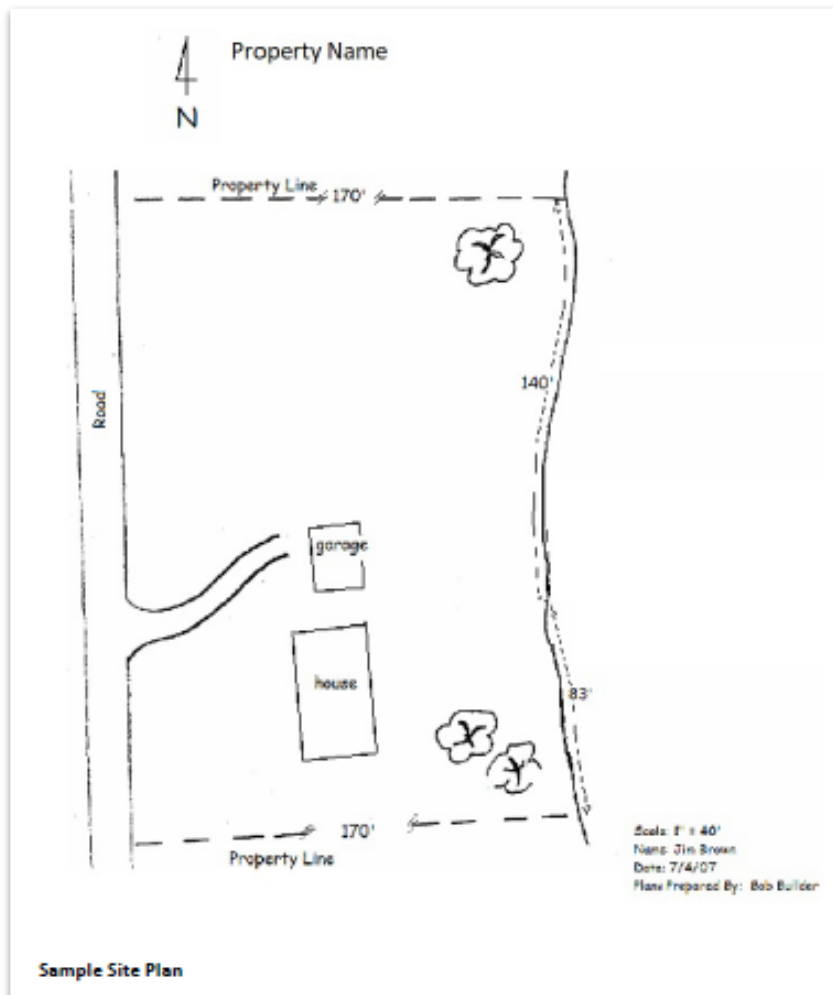
For example:

- SHPO Grant_FMMack Mercantile_Application
- SHPO Grant_FMMack Mercantile_LetterofSupport1
- SHPO Grant_FMMack Mercantile_LetterofSupport2
- SHPO Grant_FMMack Mercantile_Drawings

Upload Files

1. Create a [State of Montana file transfer account](#) or use your existing account.
2. Go to <https://mhs.mt.gov/Shpo/grants> and click “Submit application” or go to <https://svc.mt.gov/adsams/>, click “Submit Data to SHPO”, and sign in.
3. Choose “SHPO Grant Application” from the dropdown menu.
4. Select or drag and drop files from your computer into the upload container and click submit. Do not navigate away from the page until the message “submission complete” displays. (See page 5 of instructions for file naming requirements)
5. If you wish to confirm receipt of your application, please email SHPOGrant@mt.gov. You are not required to confirm receipt to apply.

Sample Site Plan



Sample Photo Key

