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Tourism Projects in Bannack, Bozeman, Great Falls, Hardin, Malta and Terry Awarded \$300,000 in Facility Improvement Grants

(HELENA) – The Montana Department of Commerce has awarded a total of \$300,000 from the Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) for tourism-related facility improvement projects in six Montana communities.

“The 2010 TIIP grant funds are re-investing Montana’s tourism tax dollars into the improvement of key tourism facilities. These upgrades will draw visitors in and keep them here longer – spending money in Montana’s main street businesses,” said Dore Schwinden, Director of the Montana Department of Commerce. These projects also benefit our cities and towns by restoring buildings that are important to the community and its residents.”

Governor Brian Schweitzer and Director Schwinden approved the TIIP grant funding for the seven tourism-related projects following recommendations from Department of Commerce staff and the state’s Tourism Advisory Council. The seven TIIP grant recipients were selected from 33 applications requesting just under \$2 million from the Commerce Department program.

“This year’s TIIP grant investment is leveraging \$2.3 million from other state, private and national funding sources to create and support local construction jobs, supply and service industry jobs as well as strengthening Montana’s visitor appeal,” said Schwinden.

The 2010 TIIP Grant Awards include:

1. \$24,000 - Evelyn Cameron Heritage Inc, Terry, for Evelyn Cameron Cultural Center (Rialto Theater building) Initial Main Floor Renovation. Total Project Cost: \$36,000
2. \$60,933 – Phillips County Historical Society, Malta, for historical restoration of the H.G. Robinson House. Total Project Cost: \$95,900
3. \$40,000 – Big Horn County Historical Society, Hardin, for building expansion and renovation at the Big Horn County Museum. Total Project Cost: \$2.2 million
4. \$65,000 - Bannack Association & Historic Lodge No. 3-7-77 of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons, Bannack State Park, for construction of a multi-use Group Shelter. Total Project Cost: \$121,000
5. \$20,000 - Prairie County Museum, Terry, for preservation and improvements to the buildings housing the Prairie County Museum and Evelyn Cameron Gallery. Total Project Cost: \$30,400
6. \$40,000 – Great Falls Community Ice Foundation, Great Falls, for insulation and radiant heat at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Total Project Cost: \$60,000
7. \$50,067 - Emerson Arts and Cultural Center, Bozeman, for Crawford Theater roof replacement. Total Project Cost: \$97,700

Since 1995, TIIP grants have provided \$3.644 million in tourism facility use tax funds to 82 projects in 45 Montana communities. These TIIP-assisted projects represent a total investment of \$42.8 million in public and private funds into Montana’s tourism-related infrastructure.

TIIP grants funds are provided by a 4% state tourism facility use tax which is assessed on the lodging price of all accommodations across Montana, including campgrounds. The grants are awarded through a competitive process and require a \$1 match for every \$2 provided by grant funds.

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