



Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program

Information & Grant Application

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program is to facilitate connecting buildings and businesses to fiber networks in Bozeman’s Downtown Urban Renewal District (URD). To this end, the Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program will provide a partial reimbursement of the costs incurred to complete the “last mile” fiber connections to downtown buildings according to the criteria established below.

As amended in 2015, the 1995 Downtown Urban Renewal Plan identifies the importance of enhancing telecommunications connectivity:

“Guiding Principle 1: Strengthen Downtown’s Economic Vitality

Implementation Action 9: Partner in community telecommunications networks as crucial infrastructure necessary for next generation connectivity and business development.” [Page 9]

Providing more affordable access to fiber networks supports the 2019 Downtown Improvement Plan’s objective to “Strengthen Downtown Businesses”. More specifically the Fiber Connectivity Grant Program will help retain existing businesses, allow for business expansion, and attract new business downtown.

The Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program specifically seeks to provide financial assistance for connecting a building’s communication room to an aerial or conduit fiber network.

Applicants are reminded that this grant program is discretionary in nature, subject to available funds and required approvals, and should not be considered an entitlement by the applicant. All grant criteria contained herein are guidelines for grant awards and successful applicants may receive any amount up to the maximum award. Should an application meet all grant criteria, a grant may or may not be awarded at the Downtown URD Board’s discretion due to funding limitations, competing applications, and/or competing priorities of the Downtown URD.

AUTHORITY:

Montana Urban Renewal Law (7-15-4206 (16) MCA) stipulates that "rehabilitation may include the restoration and renewal of a blighted area or portion thereof in accordance with an urban renewal plan by:

(a) carrying out plans for a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings or other improvements:

(c) installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other improvements necessary for carrying out in the area the urban renewal provisions of this part.”

Montana Urban Renewal Law (7-15-4288 MCA) outlines costs that may be paid by tax increment financing. The tax increments may be used by the municipality to pay the following costs of or incurred in connection with an urban renewal project:

(4) the acquisition, construction, and improvement of infrastructure and any public improvements authorized by parts 41 through 45 of chapter 12, parts 42 and 43 of chapter 13, and part 47 of chapter 14 and items of personal property to be used in connection with improvements for which the foregoing costs may be incurred.”

ADMINISTRATION:

The Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program will be administered by the Executive Director of the Downtown Bozeman Partnership located at 222 East Main Street #302, Bozeman MT 59715.

TIME FRAME:

The Downtown URD Board will review applications on an as-needed basis. Applicants are advised that the application review process may take up to 30 days from the date of submission.

ELIGIBILITY:

Projects seeking funding must meet the following criteria:

1. Grant applicants must be the owner of the property and/or building to which the fiber connection is being made. A tenant may serve as the applicant with a Letter of Acknowledgement from the property owner.
2. Projects must be located within the boundaries of the Downtown Bozeman URD.
3. Proposed construction must meet the program's minimum technical specifications.

FUNDING:

Grant funds will provide partial reimbursement for the costs associated with installing qualifying fiber connections. The grant funding amount will be for no more than 50% of qualifying costs not to exceed \$2,500.00.

Unless otherwise approved, only one grant will be awarded to any given property or building.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

Underground Facilities

1. All communications facilities constructed under this program shall be capable of supporting 1 gigabit per second bi-directional bandwidth.
2. Facilities constructed must be able to support a minimum of three service providers.
3. A minimum of three (3) 1¼" diameter Schedule 40 or HDPE SDR 11 conduits shall be installed from the building telecommunications entrance facility to the property line.
4. Conduits shall terminate at the property line in a 13" x 24" x 24" deep maintenance hole appropriately rated for the traffic load expected at its location. The MH shall be located within 6' of an existing City of Bozeman maintenance hole.
5. Maintenance holes shall be no closer than 6 feet from an existing utility pole.
6. When installed in public right of way conduits shall be buried a minimum of 30 inches below grade for open cut trenches and 42" below grade for bored construction. On private property, conduits shall be buried 24" below grade and shall slope down away from the building.
7. Conduit installation shall comply with all current City of Bozeman right of way occupancy and encroachment requirements (<https://www.bozeman.net/government/engineering>) and adopted codes including, but not limited to, the International Building Code (IBC), the National Electrical Code (NEC), and the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).
8. Conduit entry into building shall comply with Chapter 9, "Telecommunications Entrance Facilities and Termination" of the current version of the BICSI Telecommunications Distribution Methods Manual.

Aerial Facilities

1. All communications facilities constructed under this program shall be capable of supporting 1 gigabit per second bi-directional bandwidth.
2. Facilities constructed must be able to support a minimum of three service providers.
3. Aerial attachments to buildings shall comply with all current City of Bozeman codes including, but not limited to, the International Building Code (IBC), the National Electrical Code (NEC), and the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).
4. Aerial attachment to buildings shall comply with Chapter 9, "Telecommunications Entrance Facilities and Termination" of the current version of the BICSI Telecommunications Distribution Methods Manual.
5. All aerial attachments to utility poles shall be approved by pole owner prior to installation.
6. Aerial attachments shall be "slack span" construction with a minimum ¼" messenger strand and a maximum span of 100' or self-supporting fiber optic cables attached to a minimum ¼" messenger between pole spans.
7. Fiber optic cable installed by owner shall be a minimum 12-strand single mode cable or provide the ability to support all tenants in the building and support the ability to provide services from at least three separate service providers.
8. Utility poles installed by owner on owner's property shall comply with all current City of Bozeman codes including, but not limited to, the International Building Code (IBC), the National Electrical Code (NEC), and the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).

REVIEW PROCESS:

Applications will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Downtown Bozeman Partnership Executive Director and/or the Downtown URD Board. Upon request, applicants will have an opportunity to present the project to the URD Board and respond to any questions or concerns before a decision is made. Applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis for the duration of funding availability. In all cases, the decision of the Executive Director and/or Downtown URD Board is final.

Grant recipients will receive a Letter of Award and any conditions deemed necessary.

RELEASE OF FUNDS:

Applicants will receive grant funding as a reimbursement upon completion of all required work. To receive payment, the applicant must submit the provided Certificate of Grant Completion, documentation of work completed, and a copy of the invoice(s) from the construction contractor. Specific documentation requirements are outlined in the Certificate of Grant Completion.

Release of funds is subject to submission of this documentation to the Downtown Bozeman Partnership by the grant recipient. The project must be completed as originally presented in order to receive payment. At the discretion of the Downtown URD Board, projects may be subject to invoice payment verification.

DISCLAIMER:

Neither the Downtown Bozeman Partnership LLC, nor the Downtown Urban Renewal District Board, nor its affiliates shall be responsible for the planning, design, or construction of improvements to property that is owned by the applicant. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied by the description of, application for, award of or participation in the Downtown Fiber Connectivity Grant Program. The applicant is advised to consult with the City of Bozeman, licensed architects, engineers, or utility contractors before proceeding with final plans or construction.

DOWNTOWN FIBER CONNECTIVITY GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

1. Project Location

Address of Property: _____

Name of Building: _____

2. Applicant Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Are you the Owner or Tenant of the subject Property?

If tenant, please provide the name, phone, mailing address and e-mail address of property owner below and attach a signed copy of the Letter of Acknowledgement:

3. Project Information

Current status of site (check all that apply)

- Existing occupied building
- Existing vacant building
- Under redevelopment

4. Company name of fiber connection installation contractor:

5. Company name of the anticipated fiber internet service provider:

6. List of building tenants interested in fiber internet service:

7. Estimated cost of fiber connection construction:

8. Signatures

Applicant:

(Print Name)

(Signature)

*The Downtown Bozeman Partnership reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant to determine grant eligibility. **Applicants are required to submit a complete application and all supporting materials per the instructions in this packet. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.***

(For Official Use Only)

Date Approved:

Date Letter of Award Sent:

Date of Completion:

Date of Payment Request: