



Montana Tourism Development Grant Program

Scope of Work

Total Project Budget: \$1.25 Million

Community Name	Montana Dinosaur Trail
Project Name	Montana Dinosaur Trail Communities/Facilities Improvement, Promotion, Coordination
Lead Organization	Foundation for Montana History
L.O. Primary Point of Contact Name	Sara Smith
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Project Overview Statement

Provide a concise, high-level summary of what the community intends to accomplish over the first two years.

In Years 1 and 2 of the Montana Dinosaur Trail's MTDGP Scope of Work we will lay the groundwork for achieving our goals of increasing visitation to and awareness of the Trail, its Facilities and Communities while improving the Visitor Experiences provided by the Trail and Communities. We will also begin the process of improving and strengthening coordination and cooperation among Trail Partners as we implement the Grant's Scope of Work and set the stage for the Trail's 25th Anniversary Celebration in 2030.

Years 1 and 2

Project goals are the main achievements that the community is ultimately set to achieve, which can be broken down into more specific Budget Lines. By doing so, project team members and stakeholders will have a better understanding of what the scope of work will cover.

Goal: the high-level, overarching purpose of a project

Budget Line: specific, measurable steps to achieve the goal

1. Identify the overarching project goal
2. Identify individual Budget Lines that will be completed to achieve that goal
3. Provide a brief and concise description of the Budget Line including the expectations and all activities that are within the scope of the Budget Line
4. Provide the expected timeline to complete this Budget Line
5. Repeat by adding additional lines for additional goals and Budget Lines until all goals are fully outlined

Budget: \$1,250,000

Timeline: March 2026-June 2028

**Task 1: Revitalizing
the Trail's Branding**

Budget Line	Description	Date Range
New Logo and visual Brand elements	We will work with our Tourism Region Partners' and their Ad Agency (currently Windfall) – to refresh the Trail's Brand and Marketing Elements. The Grant's \$12,000 will be focused on creating effective visual brand elements, messages and other essential marketing tools to successfully promote the Trail as a visitor destination. Our Goal is to triple our annual Trail visitation increases (1.7% currently to 5%) and increase awareness 15%-25% annually following Project Completion. In 2025 our Tourism Region Partners invested \$28,000 in a very successful digital-social media-print advertising campaign using refreshed 20th Anniversary Trail Brand Elements which created/reached 4.2 million impressions/readers and resulted in a 96% increase in Trail Website users, a 280% increase in Website Event Calendar use. According to the Regions' Ad Agency – Windfall – this refreshed 20th Anniversary brand element campaign was successful in moving those reached further along the decision-making "funnel" toward actual Trail/Montana visits. Our New Logo and visual brand elements will work to build on the 20th Anniversary Campaign success and move interested travelers into Montana visitors.	Year 1
Refreshed website	We will work with our Tourism Region Partners and their website contractors to invest \$20,000 in Grant Funds into updating/refreshing the Trail's Website – www.mtdinotrail.org – and incorporating the new brand elements created for the Trail. The Central Montana Tourism Region and their digital contractor – Tempest Technologies - hosts and maintains our website which they created on behalf of the Trail with a Tourism Grant from the Montana Commerce Department in 2017. Only basic maintenance/hosting and text updating have	Year 1

	taken place since the website's creation. Completion of this Project will move us toward our goal of increasing Trail Awareness 15%- 25% annually and tripling our annual Trail visitation increases (1.7% currently to 5%).	
Task 2: Establishing Dedicated Leadership & Marketing Resources		
Budget Line	Description	Date Range
Contracted Services – MT Dinosaur Trail Coordinator - Hire	Once informed of the Grant Award, we will post the Job Description and Invitation for Applications for a 4-6 Week Period (longer if needed). Prior to the Grant Award the Advisory Committee will have reviewed and approved the Coordinator Job Description which will include, but is not limited to, serving as the Grant's assistant project manager coordinating with FMH, overseeing day-to-day operations of the Grant and Trail promotions, and coordinating with Trail Partners on projects. The Carter County Museum has agreed to host the Trail Coordinator Position with supervision provided by the Advisory Committee. Grant Funds of \$31,370 are budgeted for this position in Year 1 which will be less than a full-year of employment.	Year 1
Contracted Services – MT Dinosaur Trail Coordinator – Full term	The Trail Coordinator continues to serve as the Grant's assistant project manager, overseer of day-to-day operations of the Grant and Trail promotions, planning future Trail projects, coordinating with Trail Partners, and reporting to the Steering Committee. Grant Funds of \$45,000 are budgeted for this position in Year 2.	Year 2
Contracted Services - New Videos for all 15 Trail Facilities	We will work with our Tourism Region Partners to identify and hire a contractor for the development of new videos for each of our Trail Facilities. These videos will be featured on the Trail's refreshed	Year 1

	website, Trail Facility and Tourism Region websites and available for use by all our Trail Partners and entities promoting the Trail. Both of the current contractors serving our Tourism Region Partners – Windfall and Tempest Technologies – offer video production services. The \$52,500 in Grant Funds will produce 14 videos for each of our current Trail Facilities. Southeast Montana Tourism has committed to providing \$3,750 to cover the video cost for our new facility in Roundup which will join the Trail Spring 2026. This activity is part of our Project’s effort to triple our annual Trail visitation increases (1.7% currently to 5%) and increase awareness 15%-25% annually upon completion.	
Marketing Budget Y1	The Trail Coordinator, working in conjunction with the Advisory Committee and the Trail’s Tourism Promotion Partners (Regions and State), will utilize these funds to promote the Trail, its Facilities, new displays and discoveries, events and Trail-related activities. \$11,656 in Grant Funds are budgeted for this work. These funds will create a partner-focused social media toolkit for use by Trail Facilities and Partners in promoting the Trail (\$4,244), and a social media budget for 2 million impressions geotargeted at Minneapolis, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Saskatchewan, and Alberta (\$7,412). This activity is part of our Project’s effort to triple our annual Trail visitation increases (1.7% currently to 5%) and increase awareness 15%-25% annually upon completion.	Year 1
Finisher T-shirt Orders Year 1	Trail Finisher T-shirts are one of the extra incentives provided to Trail Passport purchasers to visit all the Trail Facilities. Once they get their Passport stamped at all Trail Facilities, they can order their Finishers T-shirt. The \$750 in Grant Funds will purchase 48 T-shirts for Trail Finishers. The 5-year average for the number of annual Trail Finishers is 45 although the last 2 years (2024,	Year 1

	2025) have had 62 and 73 finishers, respectively. Our Finisher T-shirts are produced by Identity Screen Print and Embroidery, Black Eagle, MT. From 2016-2024, 65% of the 400+ Trail Finishers have been from outside Montana.	
Marketing Budget Y2	The Trail Coordinator, working in conjunction with the Advisory Committee and the Trail's tourism promotion partners (Regions and State), will use the Year 1 experience as a tool to identify the more effective promotional tools that fit the Trail's budget amount and utilize them to continue promoting the Trail, its facilities, new displays and discoveries, events and Trail-related activities. Current plans for the \$5000 in Grant Funds budgeted for this work will purchase social media advertising/buys (Facebook, Instagram ads and stories). This activity is part of the Project's effort to triple our annual Trail visitation increases (1.7% currently to 5%) and increase awareness 15%-25% annually.	Year 2
Finisher T-shirt Orders Year 2	The \$1,100 in Grant Funds will purchase 72 T-shirts for Passport-owning Trail Finishers. With the on-going Trail marketing provided by our Tourism Region Partners and implementation of the Trail Marketing activities described in this Grant Application, we anticipate growth in the number of Trail Finishers earning Finisher T-shirts during both the Grant Period and beyond.	Year 2
Task 3: Investing in Individual Trail Facilities & Local Community Tourism Infrastructure		
Budget Line	Description	Date Range

Establish MT Dinosaur Trail Tourism Ambassador Program	\$26,000 in Grant funds will allow us to create a custom Montana Dinosaur Trail Tourism Ambassador Certificate Program through the Learn Tourism non-profit academy - https://learntourism.org/. This virtual, on-demand program would include training modules that empower front-of-house staff to create positive visitor experiences. In Year 1, funds would include a \$3000 startup fee, \$5,000 annual hosting fee, and \$18,000 for six modules: 1) The Montana Dinosaur Trail; 2) Why Tourism Matters To Our Community – Vibrancy/Economics; 3) Creating Great Visitor Experiences – Customer Service/Engagement; 4) Understanding/Anticipating the Needs of Visitors; 5) Cultural Competency – Understanding International Visitors; 6) Handling Difficult Questions – Overcoming Misconceptions. In subsequent years of the Grant community-specific modules will be added to the certificate program educating users about specific destinations, their attractions, facility improvements completed by the Grant and other local information. Trail Facility Staff and community members will be required to complete all the courses to earn a Certificate. Members of the Montana Dinosaur Trail will also have access to 140 other business skill courses in Learn Tourism’s catalog as a benefit for signing on with this training program.	Year 1
Investing in Individual Facilities – Great Plains Dinosaur Museum (Malta, MT)	\$20,000 in Grant Funds will enable the Museum to address some immediate infrastructure needs: 1) install a fixed-access ladder to their building’s exterior roof HVAC system to better accommodate necessary maintenance and repairs at a cost of \$6500 (per verbal estimate provided by AB Welding & Fabrication of Malta to construct and install ladder system, roof platform 10.2025); 2) make necessary repairs, repainting	Year 1

	and resealing of three exterior fiberglass dinosaur statues that are prominent features in the landscaping around the Museum building at cost of \$3500 (per very rough estimate of auto detailer and board member); 3) purchase and install a secure storage container for the Museum's fossil collection and exhibit materials - this will be used during proposed construction project and for long term storage needs at a cost of \$8800 for a new 40ft.-container delivered (per phone estimate from TCB Transport LLC in Geyser, MT.) plus \$1200 for site leveling and gravel (rough estimate.) These projects will maintain the Museum's street-appeal to visitors traveling on US Hwy 2, provide storage space and protection for the Museum's collections, and improve the ability to keep the building operating as it should for an excellent visitor experience. Any additional costs beyond our estimates will be covered by GPDM.	
Investing in Individual Facilities – Old Trail Museum (Choteau, MT)	Grant funds will help the Old Trail Museum rebuild its aged and worn boardwalk that connects the Museum ground's exhibit buildings along with creating new Museum signage. The boardwalk provides ADA accessibility to all Museum buildings and is in desperate need of renovation. The new larger sign will better identify the museum property for visitors. OTM has vendor quotes of \$13,024 for these improvements (Boardwalk - Grand Teton Contracting and Signage - Badger Track Customs, both of Choteau, MT). The Museum has secured \$3,000 for the project. Grant funds will cover the remaining \$10,024.	Year 1
Investing in Individual Facilities – Phillips County Museum (Malta, MT)	The \$30,200 in Grant funds will replace the outdated security systems in the Phillips County Museum's main building and its Robinson House exhibit. Both systems are too old to be consistently serviced. The new system will modernize the Museum's safeguards and exhibit	Year 1

	protection along with allowing it to host traveling exhibits and loaned specimens which can attract more and new visitors. The Museum has price quotes from Interstate Alarm of Missoula, MT for both buildings.	
Investing in Individual Facilities – Fort Peck Interpretive Center (Fort Peck, MT)	Grant funds of \$8,500 will be used to complete two projects at the Fort Peck Interpretive Center. First, a <i>Triceratops</i> skull found near Fort Peck Dam in 1977 is currently being prepped for display at the Museum of the Rockies. When installed the display will feature the only real cretaceous dinosaur skull at the Museum. Due to weight and fragility, the skull requires a special floor display framework. At least one interpretive panel will be developed to explain the unique features of this skull. This \$5000 project includes \$3,000 for the floor display, \$1,000 for transportation/installation costs, and \$1,000 for interpretive signage. The second project will move an existing <i>Triceratops</i> cast display from behind railings to the Museum's main exhibit floor providing visitors a close-up look. It will complement a nearby hands-on Peck's Rex model. This project costs \$3,500 (\$2,500 for a floor display, \$1,000 for interpretive signage.) Both projects can attract more and new visitors and improve the visitor experience.	Year 1
MT Dinosaur Trail Tourism Ambassador Training Program Certificate hosting fee, open enrollment for training	The \$5,000 in Grant Funds pays the Learn Tourism hosting fee for the Trail's Tourism Ambassador Certificate Program and allows for open enrollment. Trail Facility staff and community members will be invited to complete the Training and receive their Tourism Ambassador Certificate. We will also work with Learn Tourism to promote the Trail's Training Program to Tour Operators which will help build more Trail interest in and outside of Montana. To maintain the Training Program after the Grant Period is over we would	Year 2

	implement a Training-use fee to help cover the hosting and update costs.	
Investing in Individual Facilities – Carter County Museum (Ekalaka, MT)	The \$236,900 in Grant funds will pay for 3-D printing of two dinosaur replica mounts whose original fossils were unearthed in Carter County but were taken out of the area to Museums in California and Australia. The Carter County Museum (CCM) is working with these museums to create the replicas for display at their museum in Ekalaka. The replicas to be created include “Thomas” the first, most complete, and geologically youngest, <i>T.rex</i> from Carter County, MT, which is displayed at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and “Horridus,” the World’s most complete <i>Triceratops</i>, which is displayed at Museums Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. Both dinosaur displays are leading visitor attractions at their institutions, bringing in hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Returning replicas of these significant fossil discoveries to their home in Carter County is both exciting and fulfills one of the missions of the Montana Dinosaur Trail and its Partnership – keeping Montana’s significant fossils in Montana for public viewing, education and research. Telling the story of these locally-sourced dinosaurs will enhance the visitor experience and attract both return and new visitors to CCM. Also included on this line are local funds from the Carter County Museum in the amount of \$303,932, which cover staff time in mounting other dinosaur fossils and replicas, as well as the purchase of the Nanotyrannus Jane replica from Research Casting International. Additional grant funds from the Institute for Museums and Library Services Museums for America Grant in the amount of \$250,000 cover the purchase of additional replica mounts that help tell the story of paleontology in America and Ekalaka, and Carter	Year 2

	County Museums' position as an epicenter (3 year grant, awarded Fall 2025).	
Investing in Individual Facilities – Depot Museum (Rudyard, MT)	The \$200,000 in Grant funds will complete the HiLine Community Center in Rudyard which is being constructed to benefit not only that community and the Depot Museum, but its neighbor Hill County HiLine communities. The Community Center will provide more display space for the Depot Museum and provide a facility offering year-round activities and events to attract resident and non-resident visitors. The Depot Museum sponsors have raised \$700,000 so far, including \$500,000 from a former Rudyard resident and \$200,000 in community donations. These funds have been used to construct the building. The \$200,000 Grant funds will help finish the building interior, purchase and install necessary operational equipment, landscaping and other necessary exterior features. 1. Raingutters, \$9,800, price quote; 2. Sidewalks, \$19,600 estimate; 3. Outdoor building signage, \$15,000 estimate; 4. Kitchen equipment and supplies (dishes, utensils, cooking equipment), \$5,000 estimate; 5. Memorial Wall (4x5 inch metal plaques) acknowledging all who contributed to the Community Center Project, \$5,000 estimate 6. A/V Equipment: Projection Screen, \$3,000 estimate 7. \$142,600 would be used for the cost of fill, gravel and asphalt for a Parking lot near the building, \$100,000 estimate and the remaining funds would go towards purchasing a standing Gryposaurus model estimated to cost \$100,000. The overall project is \$900,000. The Project sponsors are working with a small	Year 2

	businesses - a beauty salon-to lease space within the building for their operations as a means for generating revenue to help cover the Center’s operating costs. Event usage fees would be used in this regard as well.	
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Task 4: Developing a Traveling Exhibit		
Budget Line	Description	Date Range
Begin developing a traveling exhibit	The \$400,000 in Grant funds will create a traveling exhibit sharing the history of vertebrate paleontology while showcasing the important contributions Montana and the Montana Dinosaur Trail Facilities have made to this science. The Exhibits' emphasis will include our Trail Facilities' mission of keeping Montana's fossil heritage within the state while making their fossils available for public education, exhibition, and scientific research. The Museum of the Rockies's expert Exhibit Team will design and fabricate the exhibit to fit a modular design of 500, 1500, and 2000 sq feet, making it marketable to a variety of venues and fill a niche that is currently under-represented in traveling exhibits. Grant Funds will cover the design and fabrication of this exhibit, estimated at approximately \$200/sq.ft. This exhibit will take multiple years to complete and should be ready for distribution in Year 5 of the Grant. Once complete, the exhibit components will be marketed to facilities and organizations outside Montana. The Trail Coordinator will be tasked with managing the Traveling Exhibit Program. Income generated from it will help support the Coordinator position. As it travels, the exhibit will increase viewers' knowledge of the contributions Montana-sourced dinosaurs have made to the field of paleontology and generate interest in visiting the Montana Dinosaur Trail and Montana.	Year 2
Task 5: Grant Administration		

Budget Line	Description	Date Range
Direct Grant Administration – Y1	The Foundation for Montana History (FMH) - https://www.mthistory.org/about - will provide all Grant Administration Services, receiving \$25,000 in Grant Funds for compensation in Year 1. They are one of the State's top organizations involved in preserving, enhancing, funding, and celebrating Montana's history (and pre-history). FHM's Sara Smith is the Primary Contact/Staff member for the Grant. She will work in coordination with the Commerce Department's Tourism Grant Staff, the Trail Steering Committee, Trail Coordinator and on behalf of the Trail Partners utilizing Grant Funds to fulfill all requirements of the MTDGP. She has been involved in the development of this application and has experience managing state grants, including submitting state reimbursement requests. The Foundation's CEO/President and Administrative Assistant will also provide support and oversight as needed throughout the life of the grant.	Year 1
Direct Grant Administration – Y2	The Foundation for Montana History - https://www.mthistory.org/about - will provide all Grant Administration Services, receiving \$100,000 in compensation in Year 2. Expectations and Activities are similar to Year 1.	Year 2
Steering Committee Travel Budget	\$4,000 in Grant Funds will be used to reimburse meeting and travel expense costs incurred by the Trail's Grant Administrator (FMH), Steering Committee, Trail Coordinator and project-related attendees/presenters during Years 1 & 2 of the Grant. The 10-member Steering Committee expects to meet – at a minimum - on a quarterly basis during the Grant Period using both on-line and in-person meetings as project activities require.	Year 1 & 2
Task 6: Measurement		

Budget Line	Description	Date Range
Professional Services – Tourism Outreach & Survey	\$5,000 in Grant Funds will be used to conduct MT Dinosaur Trail-related research using the tools and research services provided by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana. ITRR conducted a PaleoTourism and Museum Visitors Research Project in 2024-2025. Its results will be published in 2026. We will work with ITRR Staff to identify tools we can use to measure the impact of our Grant-related activities during and after the Grant Project is completed and build off the knowledge created by ITRR’s PaleoTourism Study.	Year 1