

For immediate release: Feb. 16, 2012



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CITY SOLICITS COMMENTS REGARDING POVERELLO CENTER RELOCATION

Environmental Impact Comment Period Initiated

The City of Missoula invites public comment regarding its analysis of environmental impacts that might stem from the Poverello Center, Inc.'s relocation to the Trail's End property on West Broadway. The City has completed assessment of the environmental impacts of that relocation and found none that would prevent the move. The City will accept comment regarding that environmental analysis until noon on March 19.

“The Poverello Center provides critical services to the Missoulians most in need, feeding the hungry and sheltering those who lack the physical safety and shelter from the elements that a home provides,” Mayor John Engen said. “This process is an important next step in the Poverello Center’s effort to better serve those in need.”

In 2009, the Poverello Center, Inc., of Missoula received an Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Special Project grant to expand and/or relocate the homeless shelter and soup kitchen it has operated in an old boarding house at 535 Ryman St. in downtown Missoula since 1981. EDI grants are administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). When HUD provides funding for projects such as this, it requires that local government ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The City has done so by preparing the Environmental Review Record, released today (see <http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/index.aspx?NID=1111>), which resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact.

The prospective relocation of the Poverello Center went through an extensive public process last summer and fall, with extensive consideration of alternative locations, including remaining in the current location. This process resulted in the Poverello Center board’s determination that the Trail’s End site (1106 – 1112 West Broadway) best meets the needs of both Missoula’s homeless and the broader community. The City considered public concerns generated in that process as part of its

ERR. However, HUD regulations require, and the City desires, an additional opportunity for the public to provide written comments regarding the City's ERR and Finding of No Significant Impacts. All comments received by noon on March 19 will be considered by the City of Missoula before authorizing submission of a request to HUD for release of the EDI grant funds. Comments should be submitted by e-mail to povcomments@co.missoula.mt.us, or by mail to Office of Planning & Grants, Attn: Poverello Comments, 435 Ryman St., Missoula, MT 59802. Thereafter, HUD offers its own 15-day opportunity to object to the City's certification, as detailed in the attachment to this news release.

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