

For immediate release: April 20, 2012



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HUD RELEASES NEW POVERELLO CENTER FUNDING

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) this week provided environmental clearance to release grant funds for the proposed relocation of the Poverello Center to 1106 – 1112 West Broadway.

The grant will provide \$285,000 for the approximately \$4 million project and will allow the Poverello Center board to close on the property when the funds arrive in the coming week.

In 2009, the Poverello Center 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. HUD's release of funds follows a comprehensive process of public comment and community discussion, beginning in June 2011 with a community discussion led by the National Coalition Building Institute that included multiple public meetings and opportunities for comment on potential Poverello sites. In February 2012, the City completed a HUD-required evaluation of the environmental impact of the proposed move and provided a public comment period on that evaluation. In March, the City completed further evaluation of the proposed move in light of the comments received, then requested that HUD release the Poverello Center's funding.

"The City appreciates the participation of so many Missoulians in this discussion," said Mike Barton, Director of the Missoula Office of Planning and Grants. "The City believes the public discussion led to the selection of an appropriate site for the Poverello Center. We sometimes forget that some of our fellow Americans are desperate to meet the most basic human needs: food and shelter. We look forward to continuing to work with this community and the Poverello to ensure that, as a community, we meet those needs for our people."

The total cost of the project won't be set until the design is final. Poverello Center board members and executive director Eran Fowler Pehan will begin designing the building and programs with community participation after closing on the property. A capital campaign to raise funds will also begin this spring.

Additional contact:

Eran Fowler Pehan, Poverello Center Executive Director

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Available Friday until 4 p.m.

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