

PRESS RELEASE – August 14, 2013

Missoula County 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 in Missoula. The County has completed assessment of the environmental impacts of that relocation and found none that would prevent the move. The County will accept comments regarding that environmental analysis through close of business August 29, 2013.

In 2013, the Poverello Center, Inc., of Missoula received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the State of Montana Department of Commerce to relocate the homeless shelter and soup kitchen it has operated in an old boarding house at 535 Ryman St. in downtown Missoula since 1981. CDBG grants are part of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program. 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). Missoula County has done so by preparing the Environmental Assessment, released today (see <ftp://www.co.missoula.mt.us/opgftp/Grants/Brownfields/EAPoverelloCenter081313.pdf>), which resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact.

The Poverello Center relocation was reviewed by the City of Missoula in 2012, as a result of a 2009 Economic Development Initiative grant administered by HUD, with the same finding. The prospective relocation of the Poverello Center also went through an extensive public process in the summer and fall of 2011, 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 environmental review, and additionally as part of the HUD-mandated review process in February, 2012.

As a result of the State's CDBG grant from the Montana Department of Commerce, HUD regulations require, and the County welcomes, an additional opportunity for the public to provide written comments regarding the County's Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impacts. All comments received by close of business on August 29, 2013 will be considered by Missoula County before submission of a request to the Montana Department of Commerce for release of the CDBG grant funds. Comments should be submitted by e-mail to povcomments@co.missoula.mt.us, or by mail to Department of Grants and Community Programs, Attn: Poverello Comments, 200 West Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802. Thereafter, Montana Department of Commerce offers its own 15-day opportunity to object to the County's certification, as detailed in the attachment to this news release.