

# Infrastructure Investment for Economic Development & Jobs In Montana

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## **Problem:**

Montana cities, towns, counties, tribal governments and schools are struggling to maintain their aging and inadequate infrastructure. The needs far exceed the funding tools available.

- Dilapidated infrastructure gives the appearance of dying communities rather than thriving and vibrant places to invest in new business.
- Deferred maintenance leads to a “day of reckoning” which will cost taxpayers much more.
- Congestion and poor access impacts the transport cost of goods and negatively impacts the trucking industry.
- Congestion is clogging the streets of our economic centers, hurting existing businesses and discouraging investment in new business.
- Sewer, water and power infrastructure necessary for new or expanding industry does not exist in many rural communities, limiting the potential for new business expansion.
- Current funding tools for local transportation infrastructure are limited to property tax based assessments.
- Need for infrastructure far exceeds funding available and funding tools are limited.
- Local funds are often not available to provide match for federal funding programs.
- Private investment is discouraged by unpredictable climate of public sector investment.

## **Solution:**

Invest now in infrastructure to provide for our future economic vitality. Create **new sources and tools for direct funding** for transportation and education infrastructure at the local level. The private sector will respond with business investment creating economic growth and new jobs.

## **Strategies & Tactics:**

### **Improve Community Economic Development**

- Invest in infrastructure that directly benefits business expansion and education.
- Develop diversified funding tools for local governments to apply towards local infrastructure.
- Provide revenue streams to local governments that can support community development bonds.
- Provide opportunities for local match revenue to capture available federal funding.
- Provide tools that derive project funding in proportion to user benefit.
- Preserve existing Tax Increment Financing tools that are currently in place.

### **Provide a Stable and Predictable Environment for Business Investment**

- Incentivize business investment by reducing business startup costs for infrastructure.
- Separate “one-time project” infrastructure funding from the general state budgeting process.
- Fund the Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP), permanently.

### **Provide a High Quality Workforce Specific to Industry Needs.**

- Fund Higher Education infrastructure, especially the Colleges of Technology for jobs training.
- Provide a regular funding source for K-12 School Maintenance and Upgrades for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education.

For more information and concrete examples contact me directly or go to: [www.wgmgroup.com](http://www.wgmgroup.com)

## **Examples & Case Studies:**

Old Sawmill District Redevelopment – Missoula [www.oldsawmilldistrict.com](http://www.oldsawmilldistrict.com)

Shilo Road Interchange - Billings

North 19th Avenue Interchange - Bozeman

Rivers Edge Trail Project – Great Falls [www.thetrail.org](http://www.thetrail.org)

Downtown Streetscaping Project – Bozeman

Airport Interchange – Missoula

Downtown Streetscaping Project - Stevensville

Riverfront Trail - Missoula

Centennial Trail - Helena

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