

Memo

To: Montana State Library Commission

From: Jennie Stapp
State Librarian
Chair, Montana Land Information Advisory Council

From: Erin Fashoway
State GIS Coordinator

Date: October 13, 2020

Re: Montana Land Information Plan and Land Information Advisory Council Grant Cycle

According to Administrative Rule 10.102.9104,

“By November 1 of each fiscal year, the state library with advice from the land information plan subcommittee, shall develop a draft land information plan for the next fiscal year.”

The rule goes on to require,

“By December 15 of each fiscal year, the state library shall complete the land information plan and submit the plan to the state library commission for approval.”

The ability of the State Library to develop the FY22 Montana Land Information Plan with adequate time for both approval of the Montana Land Information Advisory Council and the Montana State Library Commission by December 15 is currently impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Additionally, approval of the Land Information Plan impacts the Montana Land Information Act Grant Cycle. Administrative Rule 10.102.9105 establishes that:

“(1) By January 15 of each fiscal year, the state library, with advice from the grant review subcommittee, shall develop the grant criteria for the fiscal year beginning on the following July 1...”.

Interested parties then have a month to submit grants, with an additional 2 weeks allowed for any incomplete grants to be completed:

“(2) Grant applications received by the state library before 5:00 p.m. on February 15 will be considered.

(3) Upon receipt, the state library will advise applicants of incomplete grant applications. Applications initially incomplete, but completed and received by March 1, will be evaluated for possible funding.”

The State Library then has until May 1 to prioritize grants and the Commission has until May 15 to finalize the priority order.

“(4) By May 1 of each fiscal year, the state library, based on grant criteria and with advice of the grant review subcommittee, shall identify grant applications that meet the grant criteria and warrant approval and shall rank them in priority order. Previously approved multiyear projects may be placed at the top of the priority list. The grant review subcommittee chair shall distribute the results to the council, consider additional comments, and report those comments to the state library if necessary.

(5) By May 15 of each fiscal year, the state library commission, with advice of the grant review subcommittee, shall finalize the priority order of the grants.”

As a result of disruptions to normal Land Information Plan development workflows caused largely by the COVID-19 crisis, staff requests that the Commission allow an exception to the dates listed in Administrative Rule to allow for up to two additional two weeks for Land Information Plan development. Pushing back Montana State Library Commission approval of the Land Information Plan approximately two weeks from (12/15 to 12/31) would necessitate pushing back the subsequently identified deadlines as well as this is already tight process to complete in a normal year. The table provided below summarizes the deadlines set in rule and the proposed adjustments for the upcoming Land Information Plan and MLIA Grant Cycle:

Action	ARM Deadline	Proposed adjusted date
MLIAC receives draft Land Info. Plan	November 1	November 16, 2020
MSL Commission Land Info. Plan Approval	December 15	December 31, 2020
Grant Criteria/Application Posted	January 15	February 1, 2021
Preliminary Grant Application Review Date (optional)	February 15	March 1, 2020
Final Grants Due Date	March 1	March 5, 2020
State Library Grant Prioritization	May 1	May 15, 2020
MSL Commission Final Grant Prioritization	May 15	May 31, 2020

The proposed adjusted schedule is intended to allow for the best possible Land Information Plan to be developed in the time available without pushing the grant cycle back so far that it

impacts the ability for grants to start on schedule at the beginning of FY22. Though the open period for receiving grants is not extended through this action (just shifted back by a couple of weeks), we hope that this action, if approved, might also be welcomed by potential grant applicants who would have a couple of more weeks to get things in order following the Christmas/New Year break before the grant criteria/application are posted.

We will continue to report to the Montana State Library Commission and the Montana Land Information Advisory Council on the status of achieving the proposed new timeline for the Land Information Plan development and the Montana Land Information Act Grant Program.