

MHPG Application

February 2020



**PLACER SCHOOL
MASOLO RANCH
WINSTON, MONTANA**

MHPG Application Section I.

1. **Applicant:** Robert and GayAnn Masolo

2. **Property Owner (if different from applicant):** _____

3. **Authorized Representative of Applicant:** GayAnn Masolo Title: Rancher

Address: 20 Buck Drive City: Townsend Zip Code: 59644

Phone: 406-266-4261 E-mail: gayannm@hotmail.com

4. **Primary Contact:** Fiscal Sponsor Brian Obert, Title: Executive Director

Montana Business Assistance Connection

Address: 225 Cruse St #D City: Helena, MT Zip Code: 59601

Phone: 406-447-1510 E-mail: bobert@mbac.biz

5. **Project Type:** Please select one type under the appropriate eligible project type

- Historic Site: Infrastructure Maintenance Building Code Issue
 Security Climate Control Fire Protection

Our project is a complete historic site restoration which touches on all the eligible project types.

- Historical Society: Infrastructure Maintenance Building Code Issue
 Security Climate Control Fire Protection

- History Museum: Infrastructure Maintenance Building Code Issue
 Security Climate Control Fire Protection

<p>5. Grant Funding Request Information</p> <p>Amount Requested: \$ <u>59,650</u></p> <p>Total Amount of Leverage: \$ <u>25,000</u></p> <p>Total Project Cost: \$ <u>84,650</u></p>			<p>6. Project Address:</p> <p>Physical Address: LF Baum Rd</p> <p>City: Winston, MT</p>	
<p>7. Funding Sources</p>				
Source	Type of Funds	Amount	Status of Commitment	Rates and Terms (if applicable)
MT Historic Preservation Grant	Grant	\$59,650	pending	
Owners	Cash	\$10,000	In-hand	
Donors	Donation	\$25,000	In-hand	

8. Brief Description of current project and proposed solution or activity to be completed

a. Background and project (please provide narrative response):

The Placer School is one-room stone schoolhouse in the community of Winston, set in a pristine drainage on the north edge of the Elkhorn Mountains. It is a historic building that holds outstanding architectural and historic values to the local community and the state. Identified through Montana Preservation Alliance's statewide schoolhouse survey, and featured in the definitive book *Visions and Voices: Montana's One Room Schoolhouses*, it is one of the most architecturally outstanding rural schoolhouses in our state.

The school has been part of the landscape of this working cattle ranch for decades, and was actively used from ca. 1900 until 1945. Since that time it has stood vacant, and by the early 2000s with a portion of the roof missing, it was rapidly deteriorating. Working with the Montana Preservation Alliance and an expert team including a historic architect, traditional mason, and restoration carpenters, we successfully stabilized the failing stone foundation and gable end stonework on school. The MPA also worked with the Broadwater County High School, teaching the students to build all the windows to replace the old ones that could not be salvaged. The Masolo Ranch is committed to completing restoration of the schoolhouse so that it can be used as a local venue for educational programs, and to benefit our local economy as an event venue, overnight lodgings, and for block management hunting and agritourism.

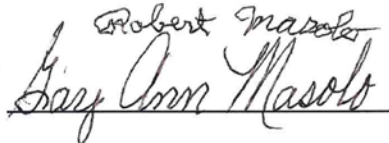
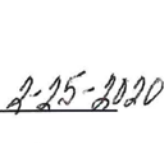
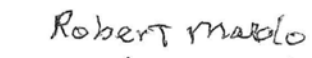
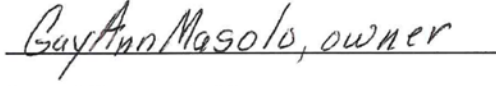
b. Description of proposed solution (please provide narrative response):

The Placer School Exterior Restoration project will preserve the building and make it functional once again, through two phases: 2020 Phase 1 Exterior Envelope: Through a combination of skilled carpentry and training projects we will put a new roof on, complete masonry repointing, install rebuilt windows, and close in the building from the weather. Following the exterior restoration, we request MHPG funds to complete the 2021 Phase 2 Interior Restoration: rebuild missing doors, restore interior wood trim, plasterwork on walls and ceilings, reinforce floor joists, repair and relay the wood floor.

When our restoration project is completed, it will once again be actively used for educational programs by local schools and preservation trainers, and as an active rental space for events, tourism, overnight VRBO and in connection with the block management hunting program already allowed on the property.

9. Certification to Submit:


The undersigned authorized representative hereby certifies that (a) the information set forth in this application is correct to the best of his/her knowledge; (b) s/he has received, read, and understood these guidelines and agrees to comply with all requirements; (c) the elected officials of the local government have formally authorized the submittal of this application, as applicable; (d) s/he has the authority to act on behalf of the applicant in submitting this application, and (e) agrees to comply with all applicable state or federal laws and statutes associated with carrying out the project.

		 
Signature	Date	Printed Name and Title

We have included this additional certification from our fiscal sponsors at MBAC:

9. Certification to Submit:

The undersigned authorized representative hereby certifies that (a) the information set forth in this application is correct to the best of his/her knowledge; (b) s/he has received, read, and understood these guidelines and agrees to comply with all requirements; (c) the elected officials of the local government have formally authorized the submittal of this application, as applicable; (d) s/he has the authority to act on behalf of the applicant in submitting this application, and (e) agrees to comply with all applicable state or federal laws and statutes associated with carrying out the project.

		<u>Brian K. Obert Executive Director</u>
Signature	Date	Printed Name and Title

MHPG Application Section II.

Applicants are required to provide narrative responses to each of the statutory criteria, unless otherwise specifically permitted.

STATUTORY CRITERIA - A

up to 150 in Possible Points

The degree to which a project supports economic stimulus or economic activity, including job creation and work creation for Montana contractors and service workers.

As applicable to the proposed project, address the following in your response:

I. Describe how your project will have an economic impact in the following areas:

- job creation for Montana contractors, service workers, and other related jobs;

Short Term Impacts: 1 FTE/1 year

Job Creation Impact Placer School		
Description of Work	Cost	Workers Employed
P1 Structural: 2020		
Reinforce Masonry & workshop	\$ 6,000	1 mason, 1 preservationist
Window installation & trim	\$ 4,000	1 preservation carpenter
Roofing work	\$ 6,000	2 preservation carpenters
	\$ 16,000	
P2 Exterior Scope: 2021		
Restore Doors & Windows	\$ 3,000	1 preservation carpenter
Floor Repairs	\$ 12,750	2 carpenters
Interior wall/Chimney/Ceiling Repairs	\$ 11,000	1 carpenter
Painting	\$ 4,250	1 painter
Woodwork & Trim	\$ 4,000	2 preservation carpenters
Site Work: drainage, grading, etc	\$ 3,500	1 contractor
	\$40,500	
TOTAL JOB SUPPORTING COSTS	\$ 56,500	13 workers
Travel	\$ 1,300	
Building Materials:	\$ 19,100	3 suppliers
Contingency	\$ 7,750	
TOTAL BUDGET	\$84,650	skilled workers*
* 13 skilled workers averaging \$10,000 per worker \$56,500 = 1 FTEs for 1 year Plus support for 3 locally-sourced building material suppliers		

- Local economy

The active preservation of historic buildings is widely recognized as an activity that generates more impact to local and state economies than the dollars invested. While Montana has not had a study of the economic impacts of historic preservation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Brookings Institute have many publications on this topic. From Donovan Rypkema's *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*, to the Brookings Institute's study on *Economics and Historic*

Preservation, the cumulative results from all states and studies are consistent. In analyzing “The Economics of Preservation in Local or Regional Economies,” the Brookings Institute’s Randall Mason looked at the impacts that historic preservation activity have on the economy of a particular region. Reviewing a significant number of these studies that have been undertaken across the U.S., their answer to this question was “a resounding “yes”—historic preservation yields significant benefits to the economy.” (Mason E&HP, p. 7) The benefits flow from both the impact of job creation for skilled carpenters and restoration experts, to the multiplier effect from purchase of locally-sourced building materials. These activities generate incomes with a multiplier effect on local business, property values, and neighboring owners that also are often inspired to improve their properties. The results are generally powerful and long-lasting.

- *Increased tourism*

The Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation published a study on Resident Travel for Outdoor Recreation for 2013. The top activities they found for people who traveled for outdoor recreation were day hiking and watching wildlife, followed by scenic driving, camping, and hunting. The rise of vacation rental industry through VRBO and AirBnB makes these activities all the more available to tourists.

Our schoolhouse offers an authentic historical venue to visitors in a setting that is wonderfully positioned for pursuit of all of those activities. In addition, it is recorded that travelers with historical and cultural interests stay longer, spend more and are likely to return if they have had a good experience. This all builds a broader platform for the Southwestern Montana Tourism Country.

And finally, MBAC, the Broadwater County Development Corp and others are encouraging people with agricultural properties to open them for rental venues and events. We see such businesses as Summer Starr Ranch, Forest Service recreational rentals such as Eagle Guard Station and Hogback Mountain, as well as independent families such as the Masolo Ranch. By continuing to add schoolhouses, ranches and others to the local offerings, we will help to expand tourism in our county and region.

2. *Describe how your project relates to community goals and previous or concurrent planning efforts (downtown revitalization plan, growth policy, historic preservation plan, economic development strategy, etc.).*

Broadwater County Growth Plan (BCGP) 2004

Broadwater County has a population of just 5,834, and a growth plan from 2004. The economic potential of the Placer School and other event/lodging locations in the county would be seen as a boost to the currently limited venues and accommodations. Some of the growth plan’s expressed priorities included incentives to entice travelers to stay overnight, and that “travel and recreation offers real potential for economic development in Broadwater County. Canyon Ferry, the Missouri River, Elkhorns, and Big Belts offer excellent opportunities for furthering tourism and recreation.” (BCGP, p. 38)

Family owned businesses such as our Placer School project will also help contribute to meeting the following county-wide goals and objectives:

- GOAL 1. Increase the number of jobs in Broadwater County, particularly in basic economic sectors.

- GOAL 2. Increase the income and earnings in Broadwater County by expanding current businesses, starting up new businesses, and recruiting businesses to locate in Broadwater County.
- GOAL 3. Increase the amount of spending in Broadwater County by out-of-county travelers, tourists and recreationists, and by out-of-county people buying Broadwater County goods and services.
- GOAL 5. Broaden the property tax base of Broadwater County.
 - OBJECTIVE 1: Promote the start-up of new local businesses or the expansion of existing local businesses in the basic economic sectors.
 - OBJECTIVE 6: Promote the travel/tourism and recreation industry.
 - Policies: Promote Canyon Ferry Lake, Missouri River, the Elkhorns and Big Belt mountains as recreation features. Explore means to entice more travelers to spend nights in Broadwater County.
- GOAL 6: Encourage quality commercial recreation developments, but protect natural resources and rights of individuals.
 - Policies: Retain or promote public access to recreational and cultural areas such as forests, lakes, rivers, streams, and geologic, scenic and historical sites; Where possible, ensure that new development is designed to retain existing access to public land.
- ACTION ITEM 4. Broadwater County, City of Townsend and BCDC will continue to promote the travel and recreation industry.
 - Identify historical assets in Broadwater County and seek ways to capitalize on their potential for attracting travelers.

MT Business Assistance Connection Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2019-23)

MBAC has a long-standing commitment to rural communities and has “been partnering with organizations to promote historic preservation & revitalization of old buildings. There are projects in each community currently underway that will help increase business vitality and promote each community.” (p.28) MBAC’s letter to serve as a fiscal sponsor for our project reflects how our project also fits with many of the local economic development programs currently underway.

And certainly, when reviewing the 5 five-year goals guiding the MBAC District, the Placer School project strongly supports the third goal:

Goal 3: Promote the region’s assets, amenities, and physical location. Implement strategies to increase the region’s “live, work and play” appeal.

STATUTORY CRITERIA - B	up to 200 in Possible Points
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The degree to which the project activity can demonstrate the purpose and need. This includes the relevancy of whether the project activity provides features that establish or enhance security, climate control, or fire protection for museums or address infrastructure, maintenance, or building code issues for museums, historical societies, or historic sites.

As applicable to the proposed project, address the following in your response:

1. *Describe the current use and condition of the historic resource.*

The Placer School currently stands vacant, in a state of advanced disrepair and on the edge of endangerment. Since going out of service in 1945, the building stood in a remote pasture where the effects of decades of weather, along with visiting animals and birds, have taken a toll on the building. By 2012, the schoolhouse roof had fallen in, masonry mortar had eroded out and the windows were in pieces on the interior floor.

We began work with the Montana Preservation Alliance to bring the building back from the brink of collapse, and give new life to the structure. Their skilled craftspeople repointed the deteriorated gable end before it collapsed, and the foundational courses of stone. They also teamed with the Broadwater County High School shop class to build all new windows, following the pattern of the rotted wood sashes still on site. While this secured the building and prepared the windows to be reinstalled, much remains to be done.

The roof is now mostly gone, and the interior finishes have suffered as a result. The floor remains but has holes and rotting boards. The plaster on the walls is cracked and failing, while the plaster on the ceiling is completely gone. The trim work and interior doors are still intact and are in good condition.

- 2. Describe the deficiency the proposed project will address and how this has impacted the historic resource. Please also explain the duration of time the deficiency has existed.*

This condition has existed for decades, and the deficiencies are worsening with each passing year. The photographs reveal just how far gone the entire structure was prior to starting our work. The building had not much time left before the stone walls would have completely collapsed. Thank goodness for sturdy masonry walls that stood up to the test of time just long enough.

Our project will rescue this building from ruin and will place it back into a functional state. Please refer to the discussions of how we will address the deficiencies and the accompanying documentation that includes many images of how extensive the work is that needs to be completed.

The finished concept is for a rental property, like those managed by the Forest Service: sound and authentic, and appropriate to the period with no utilities, people bringing water and support services when holding events here.

- 3. Describe how the proposed project will address the identified deficiency.*

The full scope to restore the building envelope on the Placer School and then get the building back into service is ambitious: full restoration of roof, masonry, and in-kind replacement of historic doors and windows throughout the school which were completely missing or far too damaged to be salvaged.

In summer 2020, we will complete the masonry restoration through a wood roof and shingle training, which will allow us to reinstall the windows we have built, build new exterior doors and close up the building to keep the elements out. All are essential scopes to repair and preserve the building long-term. The final exterior touch will be to replace the steel panel fencing currently in place to keep the cattle out with period appropriate jack-leg wooden fencing.

All work will adhere with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation, as planned with our team of Dustin Kalanick (former MPA Staff Architect), Mary Webb (MPA Restoration Director) and Kirby Matthew (Retired USFS Region 1 Preservation Crew Leader). The Placer School has excellent stonework, and we have taken care to preserve the original elements of the building. Our partners at the Montana Preservation Alliance will supervise the work and ensure all scopes of work follow the Standards to complete the tasks.

The design of the project will have the added benefit to train volunteers through hands-on workshops with the shop class at Broadwater High School in Townsend, MT and/or others. The students will learn how to use a variety of tools safely, learn about the value of historic preservation, and be introduced to opportunities in the preservation trades through in-class construction. Our goal is to have as many local people as possible engaged in giving this building a future, and to have this building give opportunities to young people like it did when it was a school. The benefits reach throughout the community and beyond the students directly involved in the work.

- 4. Describe how receiving MHPG funding will enable proper completion of the proposed project and enable the long-term financial stability of the resource.*

Our project has garnered excitement and support in the community. From private donors and the Montana Land Reliance, to the Broadwater High School, County Commission and Community Foundation, this project has built a network of partners. The MPA is committed to seeing this through all the way with us, through training programs, private donations, and grant funding.

The MPA is also approaching the work as a pilot program for a full-fledged restoration program, and reaching out to additional partners to broaden collaboration with programs in the region. We value the education once offered here and the history the school represents. The potential to use the schoolhouse repairs as a training site for preservation professionals and young people is a nice extension of its original purpose.

- 5. Describe how the proposed project was selected and prioritized in relation to plans to preserve and maintain the historic resource.*

The Placer was nearing ruin when restoration work began in 2015, with stone on the gable ends so fragile you could see daylight between most of the stones. Our team literally rescued the school house from collapse, and have stabilized, cleaned, and fenced the building so that full restoration is now achievable. Had we not stepped in with this full-on restoration effort, one of Montana's best one-room schoolhouses would have disappeared forever.

Montana also suffers from declining populations and resources in rural areas. This is evident in the consolidation of schools in rural communities, and the movement of young people from the land. In schools this also has resulted in the disappearance of their shop and vocational programs, once so useful in a rural lifestyle. This combines with diminishing numbers of young adults taking up the building trades to create a significant labor and expertise issue in our regional construction industry. Historic preservation crews and contractors are particularly in need of engaged youth and young craftsmen to

learn from experienced craftsmen and pass that knowledge on to carry on valuable traditions. Our project aims to do just that through the educational aspects we plan for the schoolhouse.

Our project will adhere to SOI Standards for Rehabilitation as we bring functionality to the building, while also restoring its beauty. Having consulted an expert mason and window restoration specialist, we are guided by a historic architect and physical evidence in our plans:

Exterior

1. Repair tops of masonry walls
2. Reframe damaged roof and re-shingle roof
3. Replace wood windows
4. Restore doors/hardware
5. Install jackleg fencing

Interior

Based on research and observations, improvements will include:

1. Reinforce foundation
2. Repair and relay wood floor
3. Restore interior wall and ceiling finishes
4. Create kitchen space

STATUTORY CRITERIA - C

up to 150 in Possible Points

The degree to which timing of the project can be completed without delay, including access to matching funds and approval of permits, if needed.

As applicable to the proposed project, address the following in your response:

- 1. Describe the organization's capacity and ability to complete the proposed project in a timely manner.*

We are applying as private owners, with MBAC as our fiscal sponsor and the MPA as our partners. This three-way partnership gives us great capacity: The MBAC is highly experienced with economic projects and grants management, and their fiscal sponsorship also speaks to the economic importance of this endeavor. The MPA has the specialized expertise for accurately restoring the schoolhouse, from the stonework to the roof and wood restoration to the plasterwork and interior finishing. And as rancher/owners we work on the ground and perform ongoing stewardship and round up the resources to complete our project in a timely way.

- 2. Describe the status and availability of all matching funds needed to complete the proposed project.*

We have committed \$25,000 to move forward and complete the Phase 1 masonry and roof repairs needed to put a good roof on, close in and protect the building. The MPA holds these funds in a restricted account to be released for the first phase of this project as we work to complete the critical roof repairs and install the windows in the summer season of 2020. These funds are secured already, and will match our MHPG funds to fully complete structural stabilization of the schoolhouse in 2021-22.

- Describe how receipt of MHPG funding will enable the ability to leverage additional funding such as grants, loans, and Historic Tax Credits.

MHPG funds will be matched with private funds, and will provide important match as we pursue grants for the building from the MT History Foundation, National Trust for Historic Preservation, the local community foundations and private donors.

The structural work will involve professional contractors at current wage scales. Costs in our budget were derived from hourly projections by professional restoration consultants, professional bid estimates, costs of recent similar improvements, and 2020 square footage cost projections.

Our budget was carefully crafted through a preservation plan created by the MPA, and their licensed staff architect with structural engineering to design the roof repairs. This budget was run past comparable properties and numbers verified. We are ready to move forward with the exterior work in 2020, which will set the stage for work to move forward quickly in 2021.

	MHPG Funds	Cash Match	Total
Labor	\$40,500	\$16,000	\$56,500
Materials	\$10,700	\$8,400	\$19,100
Other	\$8450	\$600	\$9,050
Total	\$59,650	\$25,000	\$84,650

Please see detailed budget breakout following the required project budget table.

For Phase 2 repairs, MHPG funding will be matched with cash and private donations, along with in-kind donations from two building supply companies (pending).

- Describe any potential timeline considerations that are related to permits, environmental considerations or related activities to complete the proposed project.

We have planned a construction schedule broken into two phases, which allow us to proceed with Phase 1 supported with funds in hand in summer 2020. We will then be prepared to fully complete Phase 2 and the project in 2022 with MHPG funding. Once proper procurement is completed, we are prepared to carry the project to completion within two years, directly upon being awarded the funding requested.

STATUTORY CRITERIA - D	up to 250 in Possible Points
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The degree to which the project activity contributes historic or heritage value related to the state of Montana.

As applicable to the proposed project, address the following in your response:

- Describe the historical context and significance of the historic resource associated with the proposed project including:*
 - Heritage value related to the state of Montana;*

Montana is a state that is lucky to have an abundance of rural schoolhouses that tell the story of our rural heritage. At last report some fifty of these schools were still operating – the highest number in any U.S. state – and at least another hundred and fifty sit silent across the State.

Montana’s schools served as the center of community and learning for Montana’s children and their families, and at one time, almost every river and creek drainage housed schools that reflected the topography of the landscape, density of agricultural and mining settlement, and presence of families with children. Thus the schools came to populate the social, cultural and geographical landscape of our state in ways that directly manifested the economic vitality of rural communities and the history of people on the land.

The Placer School is a significant and unique example of a one-room schoolhouse, and one of Montana’s outstanding examples of folk architecture. It has been featured in the book “Visions and Voices: Montana’s One Room Schoolhouses,” and in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s article “Small Wonders: Montana’s Schoolhouses.”

For these reasons, the Placer School is eminently eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on the state level under Criterion C, as an outstanding example of rural schoolhouse architecture and for its representation of skilled stone construction methods.

- *the value of the resource to the local community; and*

Broadwater County is a rural community based around agriculture and some limited mining in the Elkhorn Mountains. The town of Winston had its origins as a mining camp in the mid 1860s, when the Northern Pacific Railroad came through the valley in 1883. It joined with railroad sidings at Townsend, Claisol and East Helena as a stopping place on the approach to the Territorial Capitol of Helena.

The history of the Placer School is still being documented. We know it was built ca. 1900 using local field stone by a skilled craftsman. The building served the children of several families through the 20th century, generally with classes of 10 or so students throughout that era. The school operated on a summer school schedule, from early spring through late fall, to avoid traveling to school during the snowy winter months. Many students walked, and the teacher boarded with a local family. There was a single teacher, a long tenure was held by Mrs. West. The Placer School closed ca. 1945 when it consolidated with the Claisol School. After that time, the building stood vacant.

- *any relevant designations or listings.*

With every year that passes, as more schools are lost and the legacy diminishes, the significance of this building increases. The Placer School is eminently eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on the local level under Criterion A for its associations with early education in Winston and Broadwater County, and on the state level under Criterion C, as an outstanding example of rural schoolhouse architecture and for its representation of skilled stone construction methods.

2. *Describe how the proposed project will sustain the character defining features and integrity of the historic resource.*

The Placer School is a wonderful folk-designed building, with a set of character defining features that will be restored through our project. It is a single-story, vernacular-style one-room schoolhouse constructed of fieldstone. It stands in a remote creek drainage, facing to the east. The building has a

gable roof covered with wood shingles, and a rectangular plan that includes a classic central entrance, cloak rooms to each side, and a short hallway that opens into one classroom.

The school was illuminated by eight, double-hung wood sash windows, set symmetrically in the stone walls: three on each side (north and south) of the building and two placed to either side of the entrance on the east. The window openings are spanned by segmental arches of stone, and have wood sills. The front door was a wood panel design, and also incorporated a transom above that allowed light into the entryway.

On the interior, the wood floor was built of fir, walls and ceiling are lathe-and-plaster. A set of slate blackboards span the west end of the room, and across the entire upper wall, there are still tracings of lovely decorative stencil work. There is an interior corbelled brick chimney that rises above the forward roofline, which once served a heating stove (no longer extant).

There are no apparent alterations to this building. Rather, it was simply left in a state of abandonment when it went out of service. We intend to restore the schoolhouse top to bottom. Exterior restoration will replace damaged or missing windows and doors, and the roof. On the interior we will restore the plasterwork, wood trim, doors and flooring. All will be replaced in-kind with extra care given to the quality of craftsmanship in restoration of the plaster and the artistry of the stencil work.

3. Describe how the proposed project will help promote and interpret the heritage value of the historic resource.

Our project takes one of Montana's most beautifully-crafted historic schools and restores it to sound and useful condition. It promotes the value of schoolhouses across Montana and celebrates these buildings as an important heritage resource that our state cannot afford to lose.

Restoration of the Placer School saves this building and puts it back in service. But maybe more importantly, it symbolizes how we value the beautiful handcrafted buildings built by small communities and the craftsmanship of those who joined together in the founding of our agricultural regions. By returning the schoolhouse to use, we will honor this history and will allow people an immersive experience of life in times gone by.

Though these buildings are cherished, rural schoolhouses are disappearing from the landscape. Once a sign of hope for the future, these schoolhouses are now fast-fading as the bustling communities they once served have declined or moved away. This has been clearly documented by the Montana Preservation Alliance's ongoing Big Sky Schoolhouse survey, which consistently has found only between 10-15% of historic rural schoolhouses still remaining in the 24 counties visited to date.

We will offer historical information at the schoolhouse to all who visit and once listed on the National Register, we will obtain interpretive signage from the Montana Historical Society to share the story of this wonderful property with the public.

The degree to which the applicant demonstrates successful track record or experience of the organization directing the project or similarly related projects.

As applicable to the proposed project, address the following in your response:

- 1. Describe the organizational capacity and experience with similar projects of all project partners. Please identify the entity that will administer the grant.*

We are grateful to the Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC) for agreeing to serve as the fiscal sponsor for our project, and they will administer our MHPG grant. They are highly experienced with grant administration and a great resource for business development in our region. Created with the expressed purpose of improving the economy and livability of Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, and Meagher counties, MBAC helps businesses start up, improve, expand, relocate or transition to new ownership.

Their ultimate goal is to improve the standard of living for all citizens by enhancing the area business climate, diversifying the local economy, expanding the tax base, and enhancing local employment opportunities. Since their inception in 1999, they have leveraged private and public capital resources and professional business development assistance to directly create and retain hundreds of area jobs and inject millions of dollars of capital into the regional economy.

We are also joined by the Montana Preservation Alliance, founded in 1987 to save and protect Montana's historic places. They have worked at the grassroots level for over three decades, leading restoration projects on over 50 buildings throughout Montana. Staffed by preservation specialists including a restoration trades person, and with four historic architects on their board, they are a guiding force and skilled partner in this work. They play an important role throughout our region, completing restoration projects, and leading workshops and trainings for agencies including the Glacier and Yellowstone Parks, the U.S. Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Montana Heritage Commission, Montana State Parks, as well as local organizations and private owners.

- 2. Describe your organization's most recent project, specifically identifying*
 - o any significant barriers or impediments and how your organization overcame them;*
 - o any project delays;*
 - o any changes to the budget.*

We have worked diligently for four years to preserve the schoolhouse, and have not encountered any significant setbacks. Most recently, we worked with the Montana Land Reliance to preserve the valley where the schoolhouse stands, and placed the property under a conservation easement in December 2019. This will protect the viewshed and the surroundings in perpetuity. While funds are always a challenge to raise, we have been very creative in enlisting support of our community and donations of time and materials from local businesses and organizations.

- 3. If available, please provide a copy of your organization's most recent audit. Please discuss if there were any unresolved audit issues.*

n/a

The degree to which the project has ongoing economic benefit to the state as a result of project completion.

- 1. Describe the ongoing economic impact of the proposed project to the local or regional area as a result of project completion.*

The schoolhouse is located in the agricultural community surrounding Winston, northwest Broadwater County. This local area bases the economy around agriculture and increasingly, around summer and fall tourism. Ranching families diversify their income in a number of ways, especially by drawing visitors to experience the natural amenities of Canyon Ferry Lake and the Elkhorn Mountains.

The Placer School is located in a quiet drainage near Winston on the southern edge of the Elkhorns. We have placed the ranch property into a conservation easement to protect and preserve the landscape as a setting conducive to tourism, event rental, hunting values. Our ranch also participates in block management for hunting, which will strengthen the appeal of our school to those coming to the region.

As noted in the MBAC regional economic development strategic plan, a venue such as our schoolhouse will offer an authentic Montana experience, something that adventurous travelers look for. A restored schoolhouse will have value related to these drivers of the local economy through its ability to generate rental income, welcome hunters, and host educational gatherings.

The Department of Transportation counts over 5 million annual vehicles passing through Winston on highway 12. This offers tremendous potential to cultivate more for local people driving through and more for the visiting tourist. The ongoing impact of our schoolhouse going into service, joined by others in Broadwater County who are pursuing similar family-owned enterprises will be healthy and strengthening to our economy.

- 2. Describe the ongoing economic impact of the proposed project to Montana as a result of project completion.*

The same values described above also will have potential impact to the state of Montana, by contributing to our statewide efforts to build our tourism industry. For example, the schoolhouse was featured on the cover of the national publication, Preservation Magazine. Its visual appeal and protected location will enable it to serve as a potential site for film and promotion of Montana and its outdoor recreational values. The restored schoolhouse will have value related to these drivers of the local economy through its ability to generate rental income, welcome hunters, and host educational gatherings.

Additionally, outdoor recreation is an important and growing sector of the Montana economy. Our schoolhouse is in excellent position to add to the tourism appeal of the state, and to integrate values to both historic and cultural tourists, as well as outdoor recreationists. This all bolsters the Montana tourism brand, which emphasizes getting people out into unspoiled landscapes of our state.

And finally, diversified operations has always been part of successful ranching operations in Montana. Adding this dimension to our ranch, and others who do so as well, strengthens the agricultural industry and adds income to our business plans, which all results in stronger economic returns to the state and to the state tax rolls.

3. *Describe if this project will enable future phases and detail how such subsequent work will provide an economic benefit as a result of project completion.*

We launched our project in 2016 and the phases we outline now are intended to bring our project to full completion by the summer of 2022. We will proceed in summer 2020, to complete the exterior phase of the work, finally closing the building envelope to protect it from all outside elements. MHPG funds will fund the second and final phase, which will complete the restoration of the schoolhouse and make it functional. At that time, we will place it into service and reap the economic benefits of active use.

4. *Please describe your long-term vision for the historic resource and explain how this project fits into organizational plans (strategic, interpretive, business, outreach, etc.).*

The Placer School has been taken in hand jointly by the Masolo Ranch and MPA to stabilize it and restore it back to use. Our joint goals are to have the historic Placer School fully restored and inhabitable within three years, have the building open to the public for school field trips, educational workshops, etc. Teaching people through hands-on restoration work is a way for our restoration project to give more to the community, involve more people with the school, and to further the cause of historic preservation.

The Masolo Ranch is a Hereford and AQHA quarter horse ranching operation near Winston, MT. We practice land stewardship through grazing and weed control, and recently placed the ranch under a conservation easement to preserve native ranges, which supports one of the state's greatest elk herds. Preserving the Placer School is an extension of this good stewardship of our heritage.

The benefits of completing this project now are numerous. It will preserve a building that is highly significant on a local and statewide level, and it provide a new venue for economic vitality – through educational trainings, staged events and facility rental. Winston is tiny, and any amount of income generation will contribute to the overall vitality of the town and Broadwater County.

5. *Will this project decrease your operating costs, and, if applicable, how will those savings be reinvested?*

We currently do not incur costs for operations since the schoolhouse is not currently in use. Once the building is placed into service, revenues will support our VRBO business and will support the longterm preservation of the building.

Project Budget

Please see following pages for cost breakout.

BUDGET for: <u>Placer School</u>		Date: Feb 26, 2020	
(Project Title)			
	SOURCE: MHPG	SOURCE: Match (Owner contributions and private donations)	TOTAL
Professional Consultant Activities		by owners	
Permitting		by owners	
Construction Costs	\$40,500	\$16,000	\$56,500
Building Materials	\$10,700	\$8,400	\$19,100
Other (travel, 15% contingency)	\$8,450	\$600	\$9,050
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	\$59,650	\$25,000	\$84,650

Placer School Restoration - February 2020

Tasks	Costs
Phase I (Summer 2020)	
Labor	
masonry for top of walls	\$3,000
roof Structure	\$4,000
installing new roof	\$2,000
repointing workshop (1 week)	\$3,000
windows (jamb rebuilding/restoration, installing completed windows)	\$4,000
Materials & Equipment	
masonry supplies	\$1,000
roof structure supplies	\$2,000
rustic tin roof	\$3,500
window jambs (lumber, finishes)	\$1,000
scaffolding rental	\$800
gas for generator	\$100
Travel	
15 trips Helena > Winston (65 miles, round trip)	\$600
SUBTOTAL:	\$25,000

Phase II (2021)	
Labor	
rebuilding doors and jambs	\$3,000
structural supports for flooring and interior wall (strip footing,)	\$6,000
floor framing	\$2,500
installing flooring and finish	\$4,250
shoring up interior wall, chimney	\$2,000
ceiling structure repairs	\$2,000
plaster repairs (walls)	\$5,000
lathe and plaster (ceiling)	\$4,000
paint and stencilling	\$4,250
trim (repairing, and replacing where needed)	\$2,000
wainscotting repairs	\$2,000
installing fencing around building	\$1,000
grading around building	\$2,500

Materials

door supplies (lumber, finishes)	\$800
concrete	\$1,000
floor framing and flooring	\$4,000
floor finish	\$250
ceiling supplies (lumber, paint, lath, fasteners)	\$2,000
plaster supplies	\$800
trim	\$800
scaffolding rental	\$800
gas for generator	\$250

Travel, etc.

18 trips Helena > Winston	\$700
15% contingency	\$7,750

SUBTOTAL: \$59,650

**GRAND
TOTAL: \$84,650**

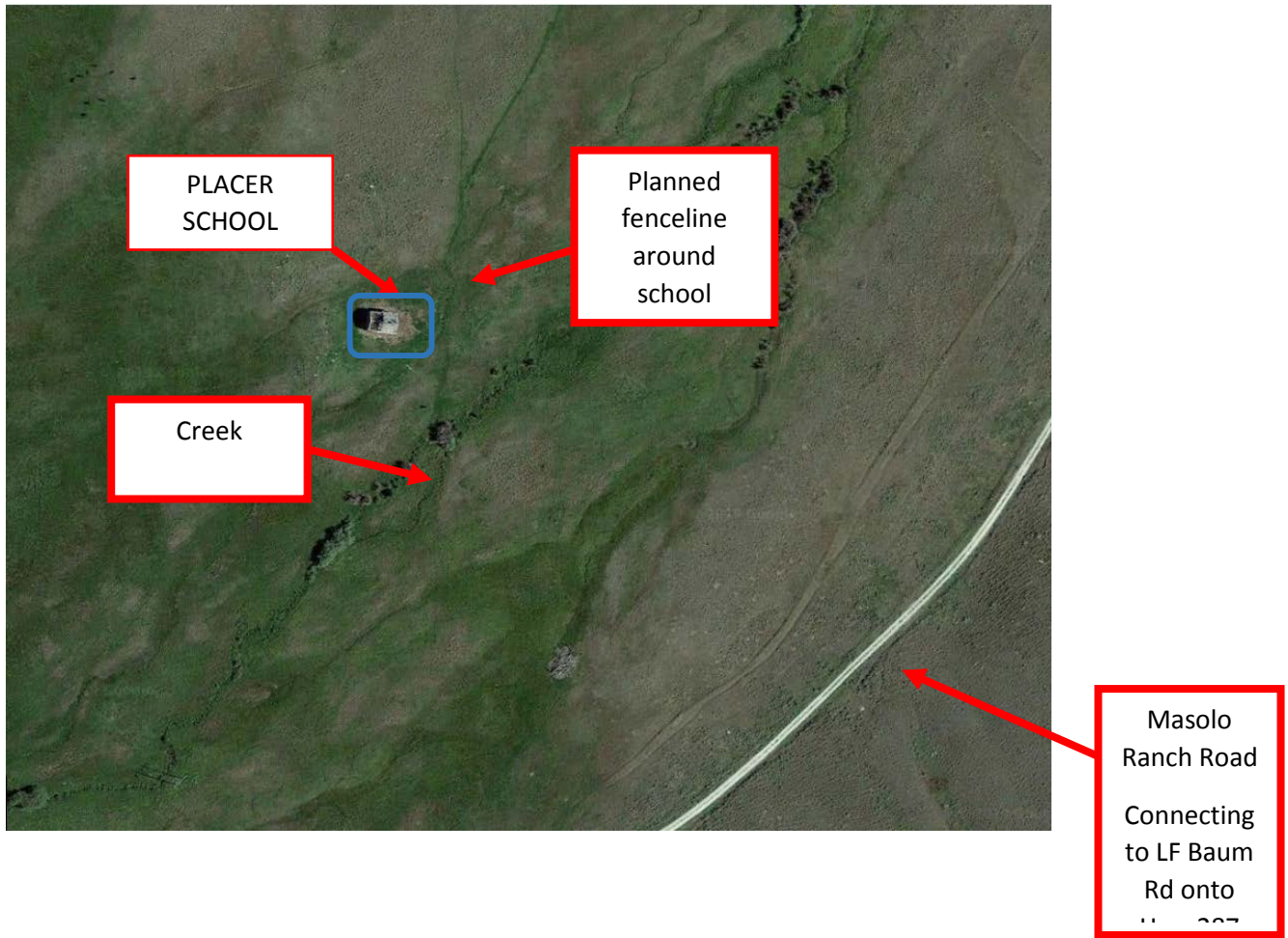
Implementation Schedule

TASK	MONTH / YEAR
Phase I: funding from owner and private donations	
Professional services for architectural drawings for permits	June 2020
Heavy masonry repairs	June 2020
Exterior carpentry/roof repairs	July 2020
Repointing workshop with MPA	August 2020
Phase II: funding from MHPG	
Contractor procurement	April 2021
Construction (floor and ceiling repairs, doors)	June – Sept 2021
Submit draft report and request first drawdown of funds	Oct 2021
Contractor procurement	April 2022
Construction (interior finishes: plaster, trim, wainscoting)	June – Sept 2022
Project closeout	Sept 2022
Submit final report and request final drawdown of funds	October 2022

Location Maps, Broadwater County:



Site Plan:



Environmental Overview

Montana Historic Preservation Grants are a state action subject to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). MEPA specifies three different levels of environmental review, based on the significance of the potential impacts. The levels are: (1) exempt or excluded from MEPA review; (2) environmental assessment (EA), and (3) environmental impact statement (EIS). The following outlines the environmental review process that must be completed by the applicant for each project proposed for MHPG funding.

For detailed information on MEPA, see *A Guide to the Montana Environmental Policy Act*, or *A Citizen's Guide to Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making*, at:

<http://leg.mt.gov/css/Publications/environmental/default.asp> or

<http://leg.mt.gov/css/services%20division/lepo/mepa/mepaforpublic.asp>

All necessary environmental review of the proposed project is recommended to be completed prior to submission of the application for grant funding. Any application received without documentation that the environmental review process has been completed, must complete the environmental review process and submit documentation to Commerce no later than May 1, 2020 or risk being determined incomplete by Commerce.

To document completion of the environmental review process the applicant must follow Appendix B on our website. Applicant must provide documentation of the completed environmental review process and include with all documentation of the public review process, including but not limited to, the public notice for and minutes of a public hearing at which the environmental review was discussed, the public comments received, and the final decision on the environmental determination made during a public meeting. In order to complete the environmental review process the applicant may need to complete Appendix B-1 and B-2.

Please refer to our website for Appendix B, B-1, and B-2 to document the environment review process, including the Environmental Review Form and the Environmental Review Checklist. <https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs-and-Boards/Montana-Historic-Preservation-Grant>

February 25, 2020

MHPG Grants Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S Park Ave
Helena, MT 59601



To whom it may concern

We are writing to thank you for considering our application to restore the historic Placer School on the property we own near Winston. We offer our gratitude and permission for the Montana Business Assistance Connection to serve as our fiscal sponsor for the project to stabilize and restore the Placer Schoolhouse. We were honored when the Placer School was featured in Visions and Voices: Montana's One Room Schoolhouses. And later in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Preservation Magazine, as one of Montana's most architecturally outstanding one-room schoolhouses.

Because the schoolhouse was fragile, in the recent years the Montana Preservation Alliance partnered with us and raised \$80,000 to stabilize the stone foundation and stone end walls. Our Townsend high school shop class built new windows for the school, and last year we placed a conservation easement on the property to protect the land and the setting surrounding the school.

Now we are working to go the rest of the way. This summer, with our own investment and private donations, we will put a roof on the building, install the windows and close up building envelope. Next year, we plan to finish the interior, and return the building to a useful condition, so it can serve the community in an educational role, and be an economic asset for our community as we make it available for use by the public for events and rental.

Thank you for considering our application.
Sincerely,

Robert and GayAnn Masolo

20 Buck Road

Townsend, MT 59644



February 26, 2020

Montana Historic Preservation Grants Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Montana Historic Preservation Grants Program:

I am writing in support of a grant application to preserve the Placer School building in Broadwater County.

MBAC, also known as Gateway Economic Development District (GEDD), is the federally and state recognized economic development agency for Lewis & Clark, Broadwater, and Meagher counties.

Today, community identity, tourism and economic well-being are more closely tied than at any other time due to social media and a young generation of residents and tourists that are looking for "Authentic". In the corridor between Bozeman and Helena, Winston and the construction of historic stone buildings has become a known niche. The Placer School in conjunction with the Winston Stone House which sparked the distillery of the same name are examples of this niche.

MBAC is very supportive of the continued work that is proposed for the Placer School. This has become a very specific project that not only maintains a community icon, but the use of local school programs for building the windows and doors is a significant step to getting our youth ready and excited for trade careers. This outreach into the youth of the area enhances the Helena Wins project that is currently in place in the region. MBAC agrees to serve as the fiscal sponsor for this grant.

Thank you for considering this site. Broadwater County is seeing significant growth being tucked in-between the rapidly growing Gallatin and Lewis and Clark Counties. Significant structures like this school building could be lost for all time if not preserved.

Sincerely,

Anne Pichette
Community Development Specialist



MPA

MONTANA
PRESERVATION
ALLIANCE

February 28 2020

MHPG Grants Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave
Helena, MTT 59601

Dear Colleagues,

The MPA has worked with Bob and GayAnn Masolo to stabilize and restore the Placer Schoolhouse on property they own near Winston. The Placer School is a gem, its stonework, unspoiled setting and interior stenciling make it one of the most outstanding one-room schools in the state of Montana.

This was an ambitious project from the outset. Together we raised \$30,000 for masonry stabilization of the foundation and fragile stone gables ends, we also led a training and a schoolhouse restoration workshop there, and rebuilt the windows by teaching the Townsend high school shop class this traditional building skill. The Masolo's also have placed a conservation easement on the property to protect the integrity of the pristine rural valley surrounding the school.

The school is a poster child for schoolhouse restoration and was featured in Charlotte Caldwell's book *Visions & Voices*, as well as on the cover of the National Trust's *Preservation Magazine* in 2014.

This next phases will finally get a roof on the building, install the windows and restore the doors. And then complete the interior work so the building is returned to service. We intend to achieve this with additional trainings, and also have the research and oral interviews for a National Register nomination for the property underway. The goal is to return it to a useful condition, serving the community in an educational role, and making the building available to use by the public for events and rental.

I am also providing this letter as documentation that the funds for their match, in the amount of \$25,000, are secured and being held in a restricted account by the Montana Preservation Alliance, to be expended on the work this coming summer.

We hope you will join us in supporting this important project that will have benefits for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Chere Jiusto

Executive Director



Broadwater County Commissioners

Laura Obert ~ Mike Delger ~ Darrel Folkvord

515 Broadway ▪ Townsend Montana 59644 ▪ commissioners@co.broadwater.mt.us

January 6, 2020

MHPG Grants
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave
Helena, MT 59601

RE: Placer School grant support

Dear Grants Committee Members,

The Broadwater County Board of County Commissioner offer our support for Bob and GayAnn Masolo and their grant request for funds to complete the restoration of the Placer Schoolhouse near Winston. The Placer School was featured in the book, Visions and Voices: Montana's One-Room Schools by Charlotte Caldwell, and is one of the most outstanding one-room schools in the state of Montana. Its stone architecture is a legacy that the Masolo's and the Montana Preservation Alliance have worked hard in recent years to stabilize and preserve.

The Masolo's have been working to preserve the land along with the schoolhouse for many years. It's a special place and this past year, they also secured a conservation easement for the property, to ensure the setting surrounding the school will also be protected for future generations.

The project that is planned by the MPA and the Masolo's will get a roof on the building and replace the windows and doors. This is a project that benefits the entire community. MPA has led trainings at the school and rebuilt the windows with students of Townsend High School. This next phase of preserving the building will make it useful once more, and along the way they plan to provide new educational trainings at the site. The Masolo's have long been engaged in local activities with the county rodeo and the state legislature, their efforts to make the school sound so that history will be preserved is also very community minded.

Laura Obert
Commissioner, District 1
lobert@co.broadwater.mt.us
406.980.2050

Mike Delger
Commissioner, District 2
mikedelger@co.broadwater.mt.us
406.521.0834

Darrel Folkvord
Commissioner, District 3
dfolkvord@co.broadwater.mt.us
406.980.1213

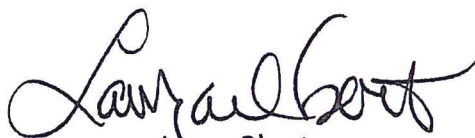
We hope you will join us in our support for the preservation of the Placer Schoolhouse, and provide the needed funding for the next phase of their project.

Sincerely,



Mike Delger, Chair

Broadwater County Board of County Commissioners



Laura Obert



Darrel Folkvord

Laura Obert
Commissioner, District 1
lobert@co.broadwater.mt.us
406.980.2050

Mike Delger
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