

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

CITY OF SIDNEY

GRANT WRITING + ADMINISTRATION

SIDNEY, MONTANA
FEBRUARY 18, 2026



sensible design
for sensible
people.

February 18, 2026

Jessica Chamberlin, City Clerk/Treasurer
City of Sidney, Montana
clerktreasurer@cityofsidneymt.com

RE: Request for Qualifications | On-Call MSA Professional Services

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of our architecture and design firm, I am proud to submit this booklet containing our qualifications for completing On-Call MSA Professional Services for Grant Writing + Administration as described and requested by the City of Sidney RFQ. Our firm offers a full scope of grant consultant services, including identification of funding opportunities, grant application preparation, project administration and reporting, compliance tracking, and coordination with funding agencies.

SDI Architects + Design is a full-service commercial architectural firm located in Miles City, Montana. We have provided services to Eastern Montana for over 45 years with a team consisting of folks who grew up here, live here, and feel tremendous responsibility to build better communities here. We are proud to have completed a variety of projects in the Sidney area throughout the years, including the recent Sidney City Hall Renovation. In working with our neighboring communities throughout our region, we see and understand the profound value that grant writing and administration holds in enabling the pursuit of meaningful public projects.

In 2026, our team is excited to expand our services to include grant writing and administration services. Kelsey Merritt, our firm's funding specialist, has worked diligently over the last two years to become an established grant consultant. **With successful funding awards from state programs such as the Montana Historic Preservation Grant, Montana Main Street, Community Development Block Grant Planning Grant, Opportunities in Rural Economies Loan Participation Program, and State Small Business Credit Initiative, Kelsey has received over \$1.9 million in just two years for public and private entities.**

Taking great care to follow guidelines, Kelsey prides herself on her due diligence to evaluate community needs and opportunities through public engagement, thorough research, and detail-oriented administration. She takes her work seriously because she understands the importance of grant funding for our region's projects. As a member of the American Grant Writers' Association, she has completed her Certified Grant Writer® coursework and is scheduled to complete her exam by end of month. Though not a requirement to pursue grant funding in the state of Montana, Kelsey chose to undertake this additional certification because of the profound need for diligent grant services she sees across rural Eastern Montana.

We appreciate and look forward to the opportunity to assist our neighboring community in completing grant writing and administration services.

If you have any questions about our qualifications, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,


Brandon Janshen, AIA

hello!



SDI Architects + Design has been providing architectural and design services to Eastern Montana communities for over 45 years. We take tremendous pride in assisting and supporting our neighboring communities; we grew up here, we live here, we play here, and it is our pleasure to build better communities here.

As clients of SDI, we believe that you know best what you want and need from your project. We consider it our personal responsibility to provide a design that interprets your needs within the parameters of the built environment and realities of construction. Our team supports and utilizes sensible design techniques in both new buildings and the retrofit of existing buildings, believing that a well-built structure of durable materials and systems correlates to efficient operating costs, affordable maintenance, and building longevity.

Our Principal Architect, Brandon Janshen, began the transition from employee to owner in 2016, after having worked for the firm for 7 years—first as a part-time intern and later as a licensed architect. As both an Architect/Interior Designer and husband/wife duo, Brandon and Jenna are a hometown couple committed to growing and continuing to serve our devoted clients for decades to come.

Legal Name:

SDI Architects + Design

Address:

909 Main Street
Miles City, MT 59301

Phone Number:

406.234.0777



BRANDON JANSHEN

principal architect | owner

Brandon has over 15 years of experience using his skillset to take conceptual design ideas and converting them into realities through careful planning, meticulous organization, and thorough communication. He serves as the liaison between clients and the design team during each design phase, and works directly with both clients and contractors during the building process. In his leadership role, Brandon drafts all contracts and coordinates pay applications, RFIs/RFPs, field visits, site meetings, and close-out paperwork, providing thorough and consistent management on all projects at our firm.



KELSEY MERRITT

funding specialist | grant writing + administration

Kelsey utilizes her degrees in both written and visual communications to complete local grant writing + administration for both public and private entities, and helps manage and produce our firm's Preliminary Architectural Reports (PARs). She is a member of the American Grant Writers' Association (AGWA) and has been awarded over \$1.9 million dollars since 2023 through local grant writing efforts while actively pursuing her AGWA Certified Grant Writer® coursework and exam. Whether in verbal, written, or image format, she works diligently to provide a positive experience for our clients and their organizations.

on-call/msa approach

We understand that the timely delivery of project information on our part is critical to the success of a project. Our firm is proud to have various On-Call and Master Service Agreements (MSAs) with governmental entities across the region. Once an MSA is completed, our firm awaits notice of a project from your entity. If the project proceeds to kickoff, a project-specific Letter of Agreement is completed between Owner and SDI Architects + Design.

SDI Architects + Design prides itself in meeting project deadlines in all phases of grant writing + administration. We understand the value of grant funds for our eastern Montana communities and know our timeliness in project services is vital to the success of your grant applications and administration.

capacity + current workload

We are actively seeking opportunities to fill our schedule with grant writing and administration projects. Whether through federal and state programs, or private foundation applications, Kelsey prioritizes preparedness for upcoming grant cycles. We are confident she can manage additional clients and responsibilities for future funding opportunities.

At this time, Kelsey is actively underway on a Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) for the Miles City Public Library on behalf of Custer County. This PAR, funded by the successful award of Kelsey's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Grant, will be completed by August 2026. In addition to this project, Kelsey is providing grant administration services for the CDBG Planning Grant listed above, as well as a Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG), Montana Main Street Program Grant, Opportunities in Rural Economies Loan Participation Program (ORE LPP), and a State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Loan.



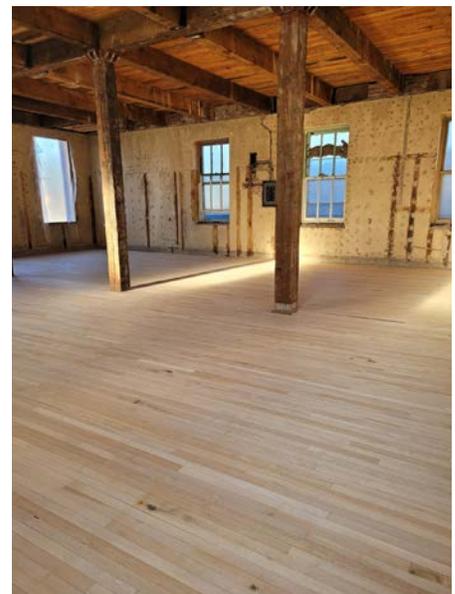
Montana Historic Preservation Grant

miles city, montana

\$150,000

2025

Submitted in February of 2024, Kelsey received a successful award of \$150,000 for the Mountain States Telephone Building from the Montana Historic Preservation Grant in May 2025. In the Spring 2025 legislation session, the project was initially removed for funding, but through diligent conversations with regional legislators and legislative committees, the project was awarded funding. This substantial application was supported by Kelsey's diligent research, careful attention to detail, and determination to see the project through award. The grant administration will be completed by Spring 2027 following project completion.



Micky Zurcher, Montana Department of Commerce, Project Manager
406.841.2863 | micky.zurcher@mt.gov



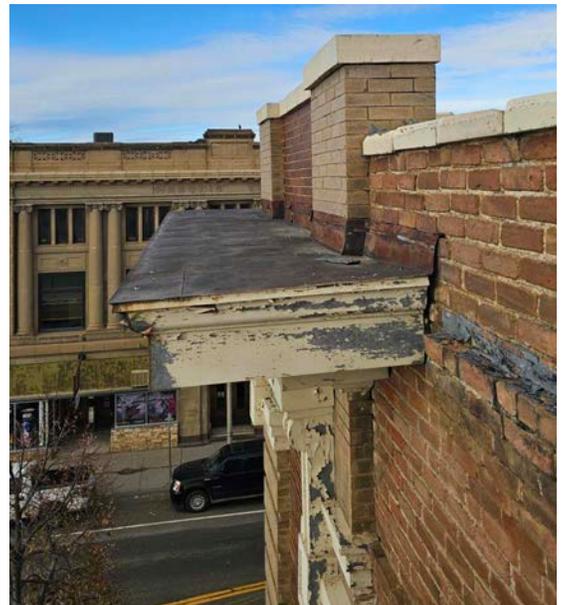
Montana Main Street

miles city, montana

\$100,000 | \$82,124

2024 | 2026

In 2024, Kelsey submitted a successful Montana Main Street Adaptive Reuse application, resulting in a \$100,000 grant for the exterior renovations of the Mountain States Telephone Building in Miles City. In 2026, a Montana Main Street Program grant was awarded to the project for \$82,124 to address the building's historic pressed-metal cornice, original cast-iron canopy over the main entrance, and the building's steel fire escape. Kelsey has led grant administration for both projects in collaboration with our firm's principal, Brandon Janshen.



Jason Strouf, Custer County Commissioner
406.874.3352 | j.strouf@co.custer.mt.us



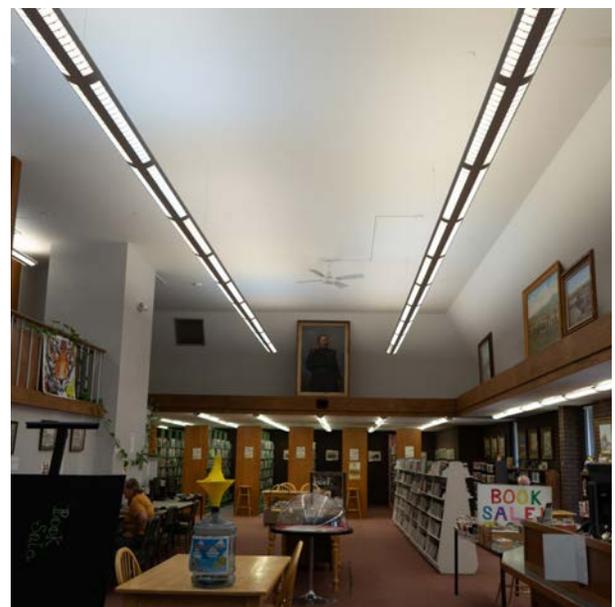
CDBG Planning Grant

miles city, montana

\$23,250

2025

Together with the Custer County Commissioners and the Miles City Public Library, Kelsey was successfully awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Grant for a Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR). This PAR effort will review existing conditions of the Miles City Public Library and consider future options for the facility. Awarded in December 2025, the PAR will be administered and produced by SDI Architects + Design and completed by August 2026.



Sarah Peterson, Miles City Public Library Director
406.234.1496 | mcpl1902@gmail.com



Connors Family Foundation

miles city, montana

\$45,000 | \$38,000 | \$100,000

2024 | 2025 | 2026

As the Director of the Miles City Downtown Art Walk, Kelsey has successfully been awarded over \$460,000 since 2024 to install public art in Miles City's downtown district. In building a meaningful relationship with the Connors Family Foundation, the public art initiative has installed 8 murals, 4 sculptures, and 15 pieces of functional furniture, with an additional 6 murals and 1 sculpture planned for the 2026 season. Through this program, Kelsey was named the Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce Individual of the Year in 2024 and a Montana Main Street "People on Main" in the program's 2025 Annual Report.



Shannon Galbreath, Executive Director
425.577.1733 | shannon@connorsfoundation.org



Montana Community Foundation

miles city, montana

\$185,658

2023-2026

Through the Montana Community Foundation's Community Investment Program (CIP) through the Northern Plains Connector, Kelsey has successfully been awarded \$185,658 in funding across 11 projects. Whether writing and administering the projects herself or providing grant consultation services for other entities, her efforts for this pro bono community work has directly benefited local parks, schools, museums, and even pigeon mitigation efforts. Her efforts have enabled the collaboration of community stakeholders and organizations, while providing important grant templates for future use.



Jennifer Peabody, Custer County Extension Community Vitality Agent
406.874.3370 | jennifer.peabody1@montana.edu



Loan Participation Programs

miles city, montana

\$524,000 | \$320,000

2025 | 2026

In 2025, Kelsey submitted a successful Opportunities in Rural Economies Loan Participation Program (ORE LPP) application on behalf of MSTB, LLC for the Mountain States Telephone Building in Miles City. This \$524,000 ORE LPP award led to subsequent conversations culminating in \$320,000 in State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) funds for MSTB, LLC. These combined loan programs allowed for the renovation project to pursue its second phase. The grant administration for these programs will continue throughout 2026 until project completion and closeout in Winter 2026/2027.



Olivia Kettenring, Montana Department of Commerce, Business Development Manager
406.841.2737 | olivia.kettenring@mt.gov



Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

miles city, montana

\$125,000

2024

In 2024, a successful application to the Miles City Downtown Urban Renewal Agency resulted in a \$125,000 award for the Mountain States Telephone Building. These funds were utilized in Phase 1 of renovation efforts to complete interior demolition, mitigation and abatement, and exterior window replacement. This initiated important local discussions concerning the possibilities of scaffolding grant applications and awards to result in vital revitalization efforts for the Miles City downtown district.



Todd Gillette, Miles City Downtown Urban Renewal Agency, Chair
269.921.3887 | j.gillette@sbcglobal.net



Brandon Janshen, AIA

principal architect

Brandon became a licensed architect in August 2014 and began the transition of ownership of SDI Architects + Design in January 2016. 15+ years ago, he joined the firm as a part-time intern before receiving his Master of Architecture degree at North Dakota State University. He is proud to be a small business owner in Miles City, serving the rural, hard-working communities of Eastern Montana.

Brandon focuses on taking conceptual design ideas and converting them into realities through careful planning, meticulous organization, and transparent communication. He serves as the liaison between the client and the design team throughout the course of the design development phases. During the entirety of the construction process, he works directly with the client, contractor, and consultants to ensure that consistent communication between all parties supports the expectations of all involved and maintains SDI Architect's 45+ years of high-quality standards.

In his leadership role, Brandon drafts all contracts and coordinates pay applications, RFIs/RFPs, field visits, site meetings, and close-out paperwork, providing thorough and consistent management on all projects at our firm. He looks forward to continuing the long-standing tradition of SDI Architects + Design providing reliable and knowledgeable architectural services in Eastern Montana for many years to come.

EDUCATION

- 2006. Associate of Arts + Science
Miles Community College
- 2010. Bachelor of Environmental Design
North Dakota State University
- 2011. Master of Architecture
North Dakota State University
(Minor in Landscape Architecture)

LICENSES

- Registered Architect since 2014
State of Montana, #ARC-LIC-8946
State of North Dakota, #2763

AFFILIATIONS

- American Institute of Architects
Montana Chapter AIA
Kiwanis Club of Miles City

SELECT EXPERIENCE

Powder River County Health Services Feasibility Study	Broadus, MT
Sidney City Hall Remodel	Sidney, MT
DNRC Eastern Land Office	Miles City, MT
Richland County Event Center Addition	Sidney, MT
Eastern Montana Veteran's Home Updates	Glendive, MT
Custer County Fire Hall & Additions	Miles City, MT
Montana Highway Patrol District 5 Headquarters	Glendive, MT
White Buffalo Clinic & Verne E. Gibbs Health Center	Poplar, MT
Independence Bank	Glasgow, MT
Roosevelt Co. Detention Center	Wolf Point, MT
Blackiron Grill & Rotisserie	Miles City, MT





Kelsey Merritt

funding specialist

grant writing + administration

Kelsey joins SDI Architects + Design with a diverse background in communications practices. With degrees in both Writing and Film & Photography, she returned to MSU to pursue her Masters of English. Moving back her hometown in 2022, she brought her talents and extensive experience with her as she began working at SDI.

Leading the effort on our Preliminary Architectural Reports (PARs), Kelsey has completed multiple reports supporting grant applications for a variety of public entities. As an established grant writer and administrator, Kelsey utilizes her background in written and visual communications to support regional communities in their continued development. Her help in managing and producing documents associated with interoffice operations and all phases of the design and construction process are integral to our firm's management. In addition to these efforts, she creates visual content vital to our design process with our 3D Matterport Capture services and 2D photography of projects.

Growing up on a farm outside of Miles City, Kelsey learned the value of clear and honest communication. Whether in verbal, written, or image format, she works diligently to provide a positive experience for our clients.

EDUCATION

- 2016. Bachelor of Arts - English Writing
Bachelor of Arts - Film + Photography
Montana State University
- 2019. Master of Arts - English
Montana State University

AFFILIATIONS

- American Grant Writers Association Member
- Miles City Downtown Art Walk Director
- Custer County Parks District Committee Chair
- Montana Main Street Community Leader
- Custer County 4-H Program
- Sacred Heart Elementary School

SELECT EXPERIENCE

MSTB Opportunites in Rural Economies LPP Application	Miles City, MT
Baker Theater PAR	Baker, MT
El Centro Motel PAR	Glendive, MT
O'Fallon Historical Museum PAR	Baker, MT
MSTB Montana Historic Preservation Grant Application	Miles City, MT
Fallon Medical Complex Masterplan	Baker, MT
EMCMHC PAR	Glendive, MT
Montana Community Foundation Grant Applications	Miles City, MT
Jordan Inn Renovations PAR	Glendive, MT
Sidney City Hall	Sidney, MT
Custer County Senior Center PAR	Miles City, MT
Richland County Event Center Addition	Sidney, MT

we look forward
to working
with you.

