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Executive Summary

The City of Miles City was established in 1887 under the Montana Constitution and continues to provide public services to the residents of Miles City. The City has sponsored RSVP since July 1999. City of Miles City RSVP currently covers Custer, Rosebud Counties and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. RSVP of Miles City has 4 years of successful experience providing programs and services centered on impact-based programming.

RSVP supports Custer, Rosebud Counties and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation with 230 volunteers serving at 49 non-profits such as the Forsyth & Custer County Food Banks where volunteers distribute food to 6,900 clients, 4,100 households (925 households with children) and an average of 142 individuals per month over the age of 56. Miles City Soup Kitchen volunteers provide a noon meal 5 days a week to an average of 60 individuals per day (12-15 of those individuals are veterans.) Veterans and Military families are served by RSVP volunteer drivers providing transportation to medical appointments. In addition Veterans and military families are served at all locations RSVP volunteers are placed.

An estimated 59 volunteers will serve. Some of their activities will include: volunteers recruiting volunteers, promoting food collection, distributing food, food drives, increasing awareness of food pantries. The primary focus are of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, 59 volunteers will have been recruiting and there will be increased food security in Fallon and Carter Counties. The CNCS federal investment of \$20,684 will be supplemented by \$2,553 non-federal resources.

The quality of life of residents of Fallon and Carter Counties in Montana will be greatly improved by the efforts of the newly recruited RSVP volunteers.

The mission of the City of Miles City RSVP is to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities to those 55 years of age and over.

Strengthening Communities

Our proposed area is comprised of Fallon and Carter Counties in Southeastern Montana. This area is nearly the size of the state of Connecticut, at 4,962 square miles. Both counties are considered frontier. Fallon County is 1,620.77 square miles with a population of 1.8 persons per square mile; however, there are 34 livestock (cattle/sheep) per square mile.

Carter County, 3,340.75 square miles, is even less populated with 0.3 persons per square mile. In Carter County there are 32 livestock (cattle/sheep) per square mile.

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The most recent data is from the U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts 2010. Below is a list a statistics for both counties in our proposed area:

Carter County has a population of 1,777. 24.7% of the 1,777 are age 65 or older. 3.9% are younger than 5 years; and 16.8 are younger than 18. Race is not diverse with 98.3% of the population white, 0.1% black, 1.0% Native American Indian, 0.1% Asian, .6% Hispanic or Latino, 0.5% report two or more races. There are 126 veterans living in Carter County. The median household income is \$35,121 and the median value of a home is \$69,400. 13.4% of the population is below the poverty level. 13.1% of the over 25 years of age have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Ekalaka, the only incorporated town in Carter County is the county seat. Ekalaka was named after a Sioux girl, Ijkalaka, who was the wife of David Harrison Russell, a scout. Ekalaka was created by Russell on the edge of his ranch. A man named Carter bogged down in mud the spring of 1885, opened a salon and is credited with saying, "Anyplace is a good place to open a saloon." The site became, and still is, a trade center for cattle ranches and shepherders. The population of Ekalaka is 332. The crime rate in Carter County is low. In 2004 the Sherriff's Office reported no murders, rapes, robberies, assaults, burglaries, or auto thefts. There were 6 thefts reported.

There are 4 unincorporated towns in Carter County: Alzada, Boyes, Capital, and Hammond. None of these towns have a gas station, and the main business is the US Post Office.

Fallon County has a population of 3,024. Of those 3,024 individuals 1,741 live in Baker and 162 live in Plevna. Both are incorporated towns within the county with active Senior Centers. Statistics are: 17.5% of the county population are age 65 or older. 7.7% are younger than 5 years; and 23.7 are younger than 18. Race is not diverse with 97.2% of the population white, 0.1% black, 0.6% Native American Indian, 0.6% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, 1.5% Hispanic or Latino, 1.4% report two or more races. There are 200 veterans living in Fallon County. The median household income is \$49,573 and the median value of a home is \$89,200. 8.7% of the population is below the poverty level. 15.9% of the over 25 years of age have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Baker is the county seat of Fallon County. Baker was built along the transcontinental rail line of the Milwaukee Road where the railroad created a lake to supply water to its steam locomotives. Following the railroad came homesteads, businesses, schools, and churches, and in 1912 the discovery of oil and natural gas deposits. In 1913 the residents in the area successfully elected to split from Custer County to form Fallon County. Later that year Fallon split to form Carter County to the south.

Fallon County's vision it to retain existing residents, provide amenities that improve quality of life,

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promote sustainable growth, diversify the local economy to minimize impacts during economic downturns and mitigate impacts of rapid growth.

Recruitment and Development

As this is a new grant, RSVP is in unique position to recruit volunteers for the proposed service area. RSVP will implement a recruitment plan utilizing the most productive methods to reach potential volunteers. Race is not diverse in Carter County (98.3% white) or Fallon County (98.3% white) however efforts will be made to recruit those few non-white members of the community, disabled, and economically disadvantaged. Those volunteer recruiting efforts will be made at the Baker/Fallon County Health Fair, Ekalaka/Carter County Health Fair, Fallon and Carter County Fairs. Volunteers will be recruited through the Montana Best Times, a statewide newspaper published specifically for the over 55 population and through the website rsvpmilescity.org. RSVP's plan for recruitment of volunteers in Fallon and Carter Counties is to recruit a few volunteers that will in turn recruit additional volunteers. The age group 55 and older are baby boomers, many of them were active military during the Vietnam Era. Ideally, those recruited first will be veterans and/or members of military families. When a new volunteer is recruited the orientation will be executed. An in-depth yet informal and personal volunteer interview will be completed to assure an appropriate placement and to develop rapport with the volunteer, and to explain RSVP procedures. Interview questions concern topics such as what new skills the volunteers would like to develop, what current skills they would like to share with workstations, leadership skills and potential organizations they might like to be involved with, how they see volunteering as an enhancement to their lives, and what their goal is for service to their community. Follow-up will be provided through visits and phone calls by the program director. Volunteers may be visited at their workstation or through chance meetings. A Volunteer Packet has been developed and will be presented to all new volunteers. This packet includes policies, insurance information, RSVP contact information, facts about RSVP and Senior Corps, a list of current workstations, and a volunteer timesheet. RSVP Notes, a bi-monthly newsletter is mailed to all volunteers. Volunteers will be encouraged to stop by or call the office to visit anytime.

Volunteer Workstations: RSVP will develop a workstation application, which will include the criteria that prospective RSVP workstations must meet. This application will be used to ensure the workstation understands RSVP's federal requirements, such as the organization must be non-profit, not discriminate against people based on age, nationality, or religion, sexual orientation; and must be handicap accessible or willing to make reasonable accommodations for a disabled person within to volunteer with that organization. Once it has been determined that prospective workstations meet the

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initial criteria, they are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with RSVP. The basic provisions of our MOU are RSVP will: recruit, interview, enroll RSVP volunteers, and refer volunteers to the workstation, instruct RSVP volunteers in proper use of monthly reports, program procedures, provide orientation to workstation staff prior to placement of volunteers and at other times, as the need arises; specify, either by written information or verbally, that RSVP volunteers are participants of RSVP publicity -- radio, TV, print, or verbal presentations; furnish accident, personal liability and excess automobile insurance coverage as required by program policies -- insurance is secondary and is not primary insurance; periodically monitor volunteer activities at workstations to assess and/or discuss needs of volunteers and workstation.

The MOU notes that workstations responsibilities are: implement orientation, in-service or special training of volunteers; interview and make final decision on assignment of volunteers; furnish volunteers with materials required for assignment; provide adequate safety measures for volunteers; collect and validate appropriate volunteer reports for submission to RSVP office on a monthly basis; investigate and report any accidents and injuries involving RSVP volunteers immediately to the RSVP office. All reports will be submitted in writing. Additional provisions in the MOU deal with: separation from volunteer service, exclusion of religious and political activities; non-displacement of employees; accessibility and reasonable accommodation; prohibition of discrimination; and supply statistical data on volunteer impact. RSVP will provide training to workstation supervisors so that volunteer job assignments are structured to attract and retain the best candidate. Workstation supervisors are responsible for the workstation orientation and training. Before workstation staff develops a new volunteer job, they meet with RSVP so that the work will be structured to the needs of the potential volunteer as well as the needs of the work site. RSVP constantly trains workstation supervisors so that volunteer job assignments are structured to attract the best candidate and reminded that it is important that workstations have a friendly and engaging atmosphere where volunteers feel they are valued. All workstation staff is presented with a packet including information such as care and handling of RSVP volunteers, workstation handbook, policies, guidelines for workstations and new volunteer jobs, workstation job description form, RSVP facts, volunteer time sheets, volunteer application forms, and contact information. Supervisors will be encouraged to contact the director if they have any questions whatsoever.

Retaining Volunteers: To maintain a personally satisfying volunteer experience, RSVP relies on staff visits to work sites, conversations with supervisors, annual program reviews, and most of all, informal reports from volunteers. RSVP will consult with the workstation supervisor to insure the

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work is structured to allow personal growth and satisfaction. Should a volunteer become unhappy at their current workstation efforts will be made to solve the problem by meeting with the volunteer and the workstation supervisor. If the problem cannot be solved the volunteer will be reassigned to a workstation more suitable to their skills and life experiences. City of Miles City RSVP strives to ensure their volunteers and workstation supervisors are satisfied with their assignments and volunteers. Annually a Volunteer Satisfaction Survey is mailed to all volunteers, and a Workstation Satisfaction Survey is mailed to all workstation supervisors.

A copy of all volunteer job descriptions and a current MOU for each workstation is securely kept in the RSVP office. The MOU can be altered when necessary to accommodate unusual characteristics or changes in circumstances.

Recognizing volunteers: RSVP will plan and arrange for a formal recognition of volunteers service to the community in the form of a Holiday Event and a Volunteer Appreciation /Senior Corps Week event. Volunteers will be recognized individually with personal thank you notes, through the local media with high publicity whenever and wherever possible. Sympathy cards are sent to all volunteers losing a family member. Birthdays are listed in bi-monthly RSVP Notes newsletter.

Program Management

RSVP will determine community needs through formal and informal meetings with community-based organizations, political leadership, and faith-based organizations. In addition, the Advisory Council, elected officials and staff from city and county agencies, and RSVP staff will provide links and leadership to participating organizations. Using this information volunteer workstations will be developed to address community needs and provide a meaningful experience for volunteers and workstations. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) and Volunteer Job Descriptions will be signed by workstation supervisor and updated every 3 years, or more often if needed. Annual evaluations and assessments of workstations, volunteers and RSVP staff will be conducted to assist with program planning. During orientation, volunteers will be informed that if the workstation they are assigned to is not meeting their expectations they need to contact the RSVP office. Upon doing so, arrangements will be made to place them at a more suitable workstation. It is this programs goal to recruit 59 active volunteers, age 55 or older, serving 5,000 hours by the third year of this grant. Year one goal is to recruit 20 active volunteers serving 1,500 hours.

RSVP staff will monitor the effectiveness of the workstations by meeting informally with volunteers and workstation supervisors. Staff will visit each workstation at least once a year, with phone conversations at least monthly. Workstations will be surveyed annually and the results printed

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in the newsletter. A file will kept for each work plan. The file will contains a copy of the work plan, list of work stations, copies of completed surveys and other documentation of performance, e-mails/correspondence relating to performance, and end of year summary of hours/volunteers for each workstation printed from Volunteer Reporter. Workstations in Focus Areas are contacted either in person, or by e-mail to obtained needed documentation. Work plan files are reviewed quarterly to assure performance measures are being met. All documentation is kept in the work plan file. City of Miles City RSVP has met or exceed performance measures in all work plans, including but not limited to the Focus Area of Healthy Futures, since 2009. This documentation assures all goals and objectives are met and that the results are a high quality project. An annual evaluation of the program will be completed with the results published in the RSVP newsletter. The Advisory Council Program Development Committee will conduct an annual assessment of the project accomplishments and the impact our programs are having on the community. A major piece of ensuring a high-quality volunteer experience is the structure and content of the work assignment. When volunteers join RSVP, they are interviewed to identify their unique sets of skills, interests, and experience. This information is entered into RSVP's Volunteer Reporter software and volunteers are matched with work opportunities consistent with their skills and interests, and the needs of the community. Volunteer opportunities are listed in the bi-monthly newsletter and in Montana Best Times, a monthly supplement to the Miles City Star newspaper. Contact is kept with the volunteers to assure that they feel their volunteer assignment is rewarding and fulfilling and to assure them of their importance to RSVP.

Volunteer Reporter software/database is used to manage information and data. Program reports are available for all aspects of the program. Visits to workstations and volunteers, both in person and by telephone, are documented in Volunteer Reporter. Reports are printed monthly to determine if the project is on target with goals and impacts. Workstations are contacted periodically to obtain their reporting information.

Electronic reminders ensure all agreements with workstations are kept current. A personal visit to the workstation is made when the MOU becomes due.

RSVP has been a program of the City of Miles City since 2009 and will continue to use the system in place for all city programs to manage project resources for accountability and effective use of resources. The director will oversee resources within the program including financial resources, in-kind contributions, equipment, supplies, and personnel management. She is assisted by the Human Resource/Payroll Clerk, Grants Manager, City and Deputy City Clerk and the City Treasurer. RSVP

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has the tools necessary to develop community awareness and response to identified needs in Fallon & Carter County.

The program will be expected to raise 10% of the total budget locally. This amount will be raised in cash and in-kind contributions such as meals for volunteers, contracted services, and workstation and volunteer recognition. The RSVP Advisory Council will help determine new potential funding sources; engagement of RSVP volunteers, other Senior Corps programs, and staff in fundraising efforts; exploring new grant sources within the community that will enhance the programs goals.

Fallon and Carter County is a new program and therefore there will be NO disruption to current volunteers and no need to graduate workstations.

Organizational Capability

The City of Miles City was established in 1887 under the Montana Constitution and has been sponsoring the City of Miles City RSVP serving Custer, Rosebud Counties and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation since 2009. City of Miles City has managed other federal grants through the 126 years since they were established, and have a grants manager on staff.

The City's 88 employees provide police, fire and emergency services, water, and wastewater utilities, street maintenance, parks, airport operations, health and housing services, library, planning services, and other municipal regulator and administrative functions.

The City employees a full-time grants manager, city clerk, deputy clerk, human resources manager/payroll clerk. All of these employees provide assistance to the RSVP Director in developing, implementing internal policies and operating procedures to provide governance and manage risk, such as accounting, personnel management, and purchasing.

The grants manager offers assistance, as needed, in federal requirements. The City of Miles City has experience with federal grants.

The city clerk and deputy city clerk work closely with the RSVP director to ensure that all federal requirements are met, and in that all federal fiscal reports are completed in a timely manner. The City has established and maintains adequate accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for grant funds through accounting and internal controls that meet federal standards for financial management. RSVP staff follows the City of Miles City Procurement-Purchasing Policy & Procedures. Authorization to make purchases is upon the city council's acceptance of budgets; all department directors are authorized to make purchases required for their departments in accordance with this policy. The department director may designate other department staff to make the purchases for the department, however, the department director will acknowledge ALL department purchases

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through sign off or initialing off on each transaction.

Purchase order/claim vouchers are presented to the city accounting department with each invoice to be paid. The claim voucher is marked if the purchase should be paid for by federal or non-federal funds and the account number.

All income and expense is recorded on a spreadsheet before it is coded, copied, and given to the sponsor's financial staff for processing. When the sponsor returns documentation of payments or deposits to RSVP, they are attached to the copy of the actual bill or check. In this manner the status of all fund activity is readily available. When the sponsor closes out a month, the RSVP director receives a printout of all recorded entries and reconciles this official record against the internal and unofficial data. Discrepancies and errors are quickly rectified. All in-kind vouchers noted on a spreadsheet and original vouchers are kept on file in the RSVP office. In the most recent fiscal audit there were no exceptions.

Human resource support is provided by the sponsor. The human resources manager/payroll clerk provides input into RSVP policies regarding federal requirements in hiring, such as the recent adoption of the RSVP Employee Criminal History Check Policy. Changes to policy must be adopted by the City Council. There are eight members of the City Council representing four wards. Two members serve each ward and are elected to staggered four-year terms. The Mayor is elected at-large to a four-year term. RSVP staff and Advisory Council members attend City Council meetings. City council and city employees are very supportive of RSVP. Jerry Partridge, a city council member told the director that when the city was approached to take over sponsorship of RSVP he voted no because he did not see the value to the community, and because of problems with the previous sponsor and staff. Mr. Partridge stated he is very proud of the current RSVP program and feels it is very valuable to the community. The mayor recently participated in the Mayor's Day of Service, and has personally thanked the RSVP Director for all she does for the current service area.

RSVP Program Director Betty Vail has the principal responsibility for program management and administration. She is responsible for fiscal operations, orientation, and support to volunteer workstation and volunteers, as well as outreach and community networking. She has experience in providing services to disadvantaged families. In addition to being a member of the Miles City community for the past 15 years she has during those fifteen years, worked on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and in the cities of Forsyth and Miles City as a WoRC Case Manager. Program Director Betty Vail has experience in event planning with non-profit organizations including Relay for Life, Volunteer Fire Department, Cub Scouts, and Boy Scouts of America. In addition to these

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experiences she continues to show a great deal of enthusiasm in creating new programs, activities, and fundraising events to boost both the budget and the overall volunteer experience. The director participates in online training through the CNCS website, Senior Corps Virtual Conference, attends state training, and out-of-state trainings as funding allows. The director calls the state office for assistance as needed, meets with other eastern Montana directors to share ideas and coordinate plans for service projects, and is a member of several local organizations. One of these is Community CANS, a group of agencies that meet monthly from September through May to share information about their agencies programs, services they offer, and needs of their agency and or clients.

The director is supervised by the City of Miles City Mayor, and supported by a very active RSVP Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council is currently at 13 members. Due to term limits new Advisory Members are recruited each year. These new members breathe new life into the organization. The by-laws allow for 9-15 members giving us the flexibility of not having to replace a resigning member until we find the right fit for our Advisory Council. By-laws created 2009 and are reviewed by the Governance Committee each fall. Committees are reorganized each year and meet on an as needed basis to provide support in Resource Development, Governance, Volunteer Support, and Program Development/Community Awareness/Days of Service.

To ensure that RSVP continually improves, RSVP staff is evaluated annually by either the Mayor, or his designee. Evaluations are reviewed with the staff and suggestions for improvement are appreciated, as it is our desire to have the best possible RSVP program.

RSVP Advisory Council completes a formal self-evaluation each year. This formal self-evaluation covers: Recruitment/Orientation of Advisory Council; Conduct/Behavior of Council Members; Roles and Responsibilities of Advisory Council; Advisory Council Operation; RSVP Partnerships; Project Impacts; and needs for additional training/information. Self-evaluation is a continuous process. Progress, practices and program activities are continually evaluated and improved as accomplishments and needs for improvement are identified. Presentations will continue to be made to local service organizations and efforts will be made to reach out to all organizations in Fallon and Carter Counties. The customer service focus of the program will be emphasized by ensuring all persons are treated respectfully and by promptly responding to their needs. RSVP staff will do their best to answer all questions, or to refer the customer to the appropriate agency.

Impact-based programming: RSVP staff, advisory council, and workstation supervisors are continually reminded of the importance of setting measurable goals, and the continued refinement of

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data collection tools. Impact programming is important to the current RSVP staff and every effort is made to understand the process and implement it effectively, and to pass the information on to the Advisory Council, workstation supervisors, and volunteers in order for all involved to meet the federal requirements and guidelines.

The past year City of Miles City RSVP has met or exceeded goals in the impact areas of our grant. Volunteer recruitment has continually increased, even though inactive volunteers have been notified of their need to remain active and if they do not comply they are terminated.

Adequate Facilities: The RSVP office is located in the VA Center. The 202 square foot office provides adequate office and workspace, access to a conference/training room, and auditorium/meeting room for events. The VA Center also houses the VA Community Living Center, VA Medical Clinic & Pharmacy, Custer County Food Bank, Miles City Soup Kitchen, and Custer Community Health Center, Montana Department of Military Affairs, VA Medical Transportation, Victory Insurance, Experiences Works, and Custer County Council on Aging Commodities. Moving to this centrally located building has increased our visibility and accessibility. Volunteers stop by more often because we are in the middle of a residential area, and because many volunteers serve at workstations within the building.

Equipment and Supplies: Equipment functions well and is replaced as needed by donations or purchasing. Supplies are ordered on an as needed basis, after comparing prices locally, and usually result in partial in-kind donation. Computers, printer, fax machine continue to perform well and a computer technician is available whenever needed.

City of Miles City is currently applying to increase volunteerism into Fallon and Carter County, Montana. April 2014 begins the sixth year of RSVP sponsorship by the City of Miles City, currently serving Custer, Rosebud Counties and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. The past five years, with seniors, have been very rewarding. Previously to this position the director worked as an elementary school secretary, high school athletic director, was on staff at a two-year college where she worked with the low-income population, among many other jobs. Moving up the ages (from Kindergarten students to seniors) I would have to say this position, with seniors, has been the most satisfying of all. The past 5 years have resulted in continued progress in every aspect of the RSVP program and we are ready to expand and offer our expertise to Fallon and Carter Counties.

Other

1) A budget of \$23,458 (including match) does not allow for wages for a full-time RSVP director. Therefore, we are proposing a 30% director.

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2) In addition, 59 volunteers will not need a full time director.

3) The budget line item Long Distance Travel indicates the dollars expected to be spent on a national conference, using the figures for the previous conference costs. Flights from Billings, MT are expensive, it is 300 miles round trip to Billings at .565 cents per mile, and often the flight leaves early in the morning, or returns late at night; therefore motel costs for nights in Billings are included.

4) The budget was validated at 5% match. This has been changed and the budget match is now at 10%.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A