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1. Briefly highlight relevant socioeconomic data about your community (income, demographics, employment, growth patterns and trends, etc.)

Victor, Idaho is located in the southern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem of the Rocky Mountains. Victor neighbors Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks as well as 88,000 acres of National Forest System lands. Victor, situated in Teton Valley, is rich in natural resources and recreational amenities such as world-class fishing, hiking, biking and skiing. Victor’s high quality of life has made it a superb place to live, and has attracted a new demographic of residents to the city.

In the past 10 years, Victor’s economy has experienced a dramatic shift from agriculture to a real estate and recreation economy. This shift, and the growth resulting from it, has created land-use changes that threaten the area’s ecological integrity and its rural character.

For the past three years, Victor has been Idaho’s 1st or 2nd fastest growing city with an annual growth rate of 11-12%. The U.S. Census estimates Victor’s 2006 population at 1,255, compared to 292 people in 1990. Census data also reports that the average age of Victor residents is 31 years old. The 2006 median household income in Victor was \$50,744. Given that the median home price was \$300,000, only 38% of households can afford the median home price.

The city government has grappled with growth pressures within and just outside of the city. An overwhelmed and overburdened city and county government, as well as a basic lack of financial and human resources, has created less than ideal growth patterns representing more of an octopus of rural sprawl than the compact community the city desires.

2. Briefly describe key community assets

Victor’s two most significant assets are the social fabric of the community and its surrounding public lands. City residents include many old timers, some of whom are still in agriculture; young entrepreneurs who own many of Victor’s restaurants and retail stores; renowned artists and athletes, two breweries and several organic farmers. Even though Victor’s population is increasing dramatically, the small town character still exists. Homestead families founded the city in the late 1800’s. Many Victor residents are the direct descendants of these families and add a tremendous sense of history and community. Victor’s citizens are invested in their town, are involved in community planning, and regularly attend the city’s meetings and workshops. A tremendous opportunity exists to combine the interests of old timers and new comers alike to forge a new Heart and Soul of Victor.

Another of Victor’s community assets is the progressive mindedness of its citizenry and the realization by local decision makers that growth needs to be managed to ensure it is an asset to the community and not a threat. To do this, the city recognizes that a thorough and thoughtful approach needs to be incorporated using a variety of tools.

Victor’s proximity to first-rate outdoor recreational opportunities is another asset. Many people are drawn to the city because of the easy access to an abundance of outdoor opportunities. The valley has an extensive system of trails and pathways thanks to the dedicated work of Teton Valley Trails and Pathways (TVTAP) and the City Council who continuously work to preserve this asset.

3. What are the most significant planning opportunities and challenges?

In the past three years residents have participated in the Community Action Plan, the creation of Victor’s current Comprehensive Plan and the EPA Technical Assistance Grant. Victor’s citizens understand that growth is here and are committed to making it work for our community. We believe, just as the Orton Family does, that any time there is active community involvement in a project the chance of commitment and success greatly improves. An example of residents commitment to creating and maintaining Victor’s heart and soul mission was shown at a recent town meeting where nearly 70 people discussed some of the challenges and opportunities presented by our town’s current growth

patterns. It was exciting to see so many people demonstrate an interest in local politics. Here is an example of what we want to work on:

Opportunities and Challenges

- Places exist in our town to improve community interaction
- Concern over changes to small-town character
- Concern over lack of available Affordable housing
- Safety concerns related to traffic (particularly for and children and elderly)
- Opportunity for additional local and regional cooperation
- the pedestrian environment/width of State Highway 33/Main Street (the hwy that runs through the middle of downtown)
- Development paying for itself/impact fees
- Increased retail opportunities

Along with Victor residents, many public and private organizations have expressed interest in helping to implement the heart and soul of Victor. Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), VARD, TVTAP, and the EPA have all expressed their commitment to this process. Our neighboring town Driggs (8 miles to the north) and Teton County (the county in which both of these towns are located) are engaging in a tremendous amount of planning work right now which has inspired Victor residents to get involved in their own town.

Financing the work is one of our greatest challenges. Before Victor can apply for Federal funding, more visioning and planning still needs to be conducted. Well thought out, functional plans that are supported by citizens, local businesses, and homeowners are necessary to attract the federal funding necessary to implement this vision.

4. Given the scope of this RFP project and its particular emphasis on community heart and soul planning, why are you interested in participating and why at this time?

Until recently, Victor's approach toward community planning has operated somewhat in a vacuum, mainly because of lack of resources, but also because of a cultural environment that viewed community planning as mandatory by the state, not as an exercise to strengthen, unite, and empower the community. The growing cultural diversity in the city and the changing community views toward more progressive planning has enabled candidates whose platforms have been based on responsible growth and embracing social diversity to be elected in the city and county. This past November, Victor residents elected two city councilmen who are focused on smart growth and have the charisma and drive to motivate citizens and fellow council people to take action. They were elected with a record voter turnout.

In the last two years, Victor updated its comprehensive plan to incorporate smart growth policies. Victor residents created the vision statement "We the people of Victor are proud to be a community that we call home. We will achieve our vision through a healthy economy, strong businesses, vital and cohesive neighborhoods, and extensive recreational and cultural opportunities. We will preserve our City's friendly, hometown atmosphere and celebrate the diversity of its people."

Victor has the exciting opportunity to grow with this vision in mind, emphasizing the community's heart and soul. Additionally, in 2006 the city was awarded the EPA Smart Growth Technical Assistant grant that focused on downtown design. The town has the support of local businesses, homeowners and developers.

The biggest challenge Victor faces, and why we are so interested in working with the Orton Family Foundation at this time, is continuing to make the steps to move our vision forward. To ensure that Victor is a place we want to live, work, and play for years to come, we need guidance. This grant will leverage past work and would come at a crucial to give us the resources to collectively design and implement our vision of Victor.

5. Describe your Project Concept, keeping in mind the five required elements from Section III above. What are your short and long-term goals for this project? What outcomes do you want and how will you define success? What barriers do you anticipate and how will you overcome them? If you have ideas about how your community will engage citizens and stakeholders or what tools, techniques or processes you are interested in using, please describe.

The project we propose is an Envision Victor program that looks beyond the mandated 5-10 year comprehensive planning process to 20 years and beyond - planning our community for the next

generation. We don't want to simply discuss where certain land uses will be or what we'd like our buildings look like, but what our social fabric will encompass and how we will create opportunities to grow a more diverse and ecologically, socially and economically sustainable community.

Faced with dramatic population growth, residents and business owners want a say in what Victor is going to look like in 50 years. To do this, and to incorporate essential element number one, we have to engage citizens that typically don't participate in the community planning process. We are looking to create a tangible project that everyone can take ownership of, which is why we are choosing to model our project after the successful work of Envision Utah and the Cascade Agenda in Washington. These projects have successfully engaged their citizens by marketing the goals specifically to the intended audience and branding the overall concept. Some of the communication tools we will use to do this are conventional such as: local newspapers, community meetings, public forums, radio and informal get-togethers. Others are more modern such as: our new website and blog, visual analysis, growth modeling and 3D visualization. We will create an educational campaign to engage all our citizens in making decisions about our towns' future. Understanding that people learn through multiple intelligences, Victor will use tools such as the "Comparative impact analysis" and "visual preference survey" (<http://urban-advantage.com/>) to reach a broader spectrum of the community. Collaboration between the town and citizens will be essential in narrowing our broad visions into a realistic heart and soul plan.

To incorporate element number two, we will look to our local land trust association for guidance. Our land trust has hosted a Stories from the Land event where local residents meet to talk about some of Teton Valley's landscapes. Through a non-profit partnership, we would like to use this model in our Envision Victor program by hosting a forum that can promote storytelling among our diverse citizenry. We want to hear and share the stories of the old Victor railroad and blinding snowstorms of the past, and we also want to hear why young families - or the athlete, artist or businessman - have chosen Victor today.

The preliminary visioning work that has been done over the past three years (Community Action Plan, Comp Plan, EPA technical assistance grant) gave us the goal of developing our downtown core to epitomize our Heart and Soul, and enables us to execute element number three, using a shared, values-based vision to guide growth. The citizens clearly stated that they wanted a liveable, walkable downtown community. Now the community is ready to get to work on making it a reality. We envision a strong emphasis on collaborative tools and have had initial contact with Geodata Services from Missoula, MT who can help integrate the application of geospatial technology into the project. They have significant experience helping communities such as ours quantify and visualize the towns' future. Residents want a variety of transportation options, a vibrant downtown, and growth from the inside out. Working with the Orton Foundation and using tools such as a Community Viz, residents will be able to see this alternative to status quo.

Recently, the Victor Planning & Zoning unanimously passed a Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) zoning overlay for a one square-mile block over downtown. The creation of this overlay was the first action of Victor's new Planning Director, Bill Knight, who took office this past fall. This shows steadfast support to develop actionable plans and implement priority activities, essential element number four. By developing the TND, Victor is working towards supporting goals laid out in the Comprehensive Plan and beginning to implement the vision of Victor. The city council is also reviewing proposals for a capital improvements plan. Public / Private partnerships like this have historically been key in encouraging developers to build, which in turn encourages businesses to move in and spurs economic growth. The town needs to make it easy for the private sector to do what is good for their bottom line as well as for the community as a whole.

Victor is dedicated to building accountability within their heart and soul plan and sharing the results with citizens and business owners, essential element number five. The most successful community plans need strong connections outside of the municipal governing bodies to ensure that over time, and through elections, the plan stays strong. Partnering organizations will insist on continuous communication, collaboration, education and policy decisions. By collaborating with local non-profits, we are ensuring that the vision of Victor will be kept alive for years to come.

Victor's short-term goals (to be completed within the next two years) include:

- Create a "Main Street advisory committee" made up of citizens and business owners to help establish the look and feel of downtown Victor

- Establish a transportation plan through downtown Victor that is equitable and incorporates many modes of transportation

- Establish a capital improvements plan

- Hire a GIS consulting firm to help with the visual aspects of the planning process

- Adopt design review guidelines and standards for downtown

Long-term goals and anticipated outcomes (to be completed within the 5 years) include:

- Examine downtown funding mechanisms such as urban renewal districts, tax increment financing and granting

- Implement our transportation and capital improvements plan to make Victor a vibrant, walkable community that is safe for both cars and humans

- Examine the adoption of impact fees to offset costs of rapid growth

- Create a museum/cultural center to share our town's local stories, art and culture

- Work with ITD to find state and federal funding to help implement the changes to Main Street incorporated in our transportation plan

Along with our many opportunities, there will be some challenges to overcome. Main St Victor is a State Highway controlled by ITD. A few residents are under the impression that nothing can be done to change the layout of the street since it is under ITD's control. This incorrect assumption will need to be dispelled to move forward with the vision. In reality, the redesign of State Highway 33 (Main St) is part of a regional transportation planning initiative supported by ITD and the State of Idaho. There are also some concerns by those in the minority that narrowing the streets in downtown Victor will increase traffic danger. The concepts of efficient street design that can accommodate the needs of all forms of transportation will need to be conveyed to residents through multiple lenses.

6. Does your town already have experience working with the proposed partner organizations? What will the partners bring to the project and how will project responsibilities and roles be assigned?

The town of Victor will work with TVTAP, ITD, the EPA, and VARD to ensure success on this project. Victor has worked productively with all of the stated organizations many times in the past. TVTAP has helped Victor develop a pathways master plan and will continue to give support and guidance in creating a walkable/rideable downtown. ITD will be instrumental in the final design of Main St/Hwy 33, which can develop into a model street that accommodates multi-modal transportation. The EPA has committed to supporting our follow through efforts on the plan they worked to create for us in 2006.

VARD will be the main partner to the town of Victor in this project. VARD is a local, citizen-based non-profit organization that advocates for smart, responsible development that promotes vibrant communities, preserves the landscapes we love and is cost-effective to taxpayers. VARD was the recipient of the 2006 Idaho Smart Growth awards for their work as a community advocate. In 2004 VARD was given an Honorable Mention for the Max Dalton award for open government. They were instrumental in creating the comprehensive plan and continue to attend Public Hearings and meetings to ensure that the community's vision is made a priority in development decisions. VARD also wrote the grant for EPA Smart Growth Technical Assistance on behalf of the cities of Driggs and Victor. VARD has worked extensively with grassroots organizations and the education of citizenry around complex land use issues. VARD will work with Victor in organizing and implementing community story telling, listening and visioning. VARD will also work closely with Victor to compile the information gathered from the community into a workable and useable document that can be readily implemented.

7. Describe the commitment of community leaders to the project. List key civic, governmental, or nonprofit organizations, as well as individuals, in your town that would or should be involved in the project.

Victor is ready for this challenge. We have a committed group of council people, government employees, non-profit organizations, businesses, residents, and developers all devoted to making Victor a place we want to live for years to come. Key contributors to this plan include the following groups and people:

Scott Fitzgerald, newly elected Town Councilor, Bill Knight, Victor Planning Director /Heart and Soul Project Manager and Cari Golden, Victor Planning Administrator. Kathy Rinaldi,

Development Director of VARD, will be working very closely on this project as well as Tim Adams, Executive Director of TVTAP. We also have the support of many Main Street business owners' and residents as shown through our support letters.

8. Has your community identified and demonstrated a prior commitment to protecting its unique assets such as natural and recreational resources or cultural and social places? Were those protection efforts successful? What key challenges did you face in protecting these assets?

Both old agricultural families and new conservation-minded residents have expressed an interest in open space protection, tourism, and community character. Victor, ID is one of earth's most beautiful treasures and Victor citizens are committed to preserving this beauty and history. Victor's Comprehensive Plan calls for the protection of Trail Creek Flood Plain and the wildlife winter range area to the southeast of Victor, as well as other natural features of the City of Victor. It continues to be a challenge to educate developers and residents on protecting the natural assets that we have.

Friends of the Teton River was formed in 2000 to protect the Teton River which runs down the center of our valley. They have had amazing success with water quality monitoring, trout re-population efforts, stream rehabilitation, and watershed education. They are an excellent example of this community's ability to protect its resources. One of the biggest challenges FTR faced was educating the community about the growing effects of development on this river. They continually overcome these challenges through school programs, watershed education announcements, scholarships, community dinners, and endless meetings with developers.

9. How have you tried to increase citizen participation in the past and what has been your success? Reflecting on your community's past experiences with broad-based planning efforts (if any), how much interest do you believe there is for engaging in future substantial planning efforts?

Victor has been extremely successful in increasing citizen participation in the past few years. Anytime the city of Victor and the County as a whole have undertaken broad-based planning efforts, the citizens have turned out in force. The November election saw biggest voter turnout ever recorded, electing two new vibrant leaders who ran on a campaign to stimulate smart growth in Victor. Residents have been overwhelmingly helpful in contributing to the Comprehensive Plan and providing insight for the EPA suggestions. The EPA Smart Growth team was astounded that between 10-15% of Victor residents attended their workshops. In recent years, concerned citizens who want to have a voice in creating change in our valley formed VARD and TVTAP. We expect nothing short of exceptional participation in this project.

10. What is your plan for a project coordinator?

Bill Knight, our planning director, is excited to take on the role of the project coordinator in conjunction with support from our main non-profit contributor, VARD. His goals as a planning director are to look at long-term growth and development of the city, key to the success of this plan. Bill will be dedicated to working with the Orton Family Foundation to ensure that project goals are met and the objectives set forth by this plan are carried through.

11. Are there any other key facts or circumstances that you would like for us to know?

Victor possesses an incredible opportunity to grow into a model western community. There are few, if any, places in the Rocky Mountain West that combine the historical values of our homestead families with the vibrancy and energy of the young outdoor enthusiasts. At the same time, we are early enough in our development cycle to grow in a sustainable, community oriented way. We have the political will and support of local non-profit partners to carry through on the goals we have been proud to describe above. The Orton Foundation and The Heart and Soul grant will give Victor not only the financial support it currently needs, but also the momentum that comes with showing that good ideas generate the support they need. This kind of realization will have an amazing effect on our community's Heart and Soul.