



BOZEMAN COST OF LIVING 6% ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE

Bozeman, Montana, May 12, 2008 – Prospera Business Network released today its Bozeman cost of living report for the first quarter of 2008. According to the report (based on the ACCRA Cost of Living Index), the after tax cost of living for a professional/managerial household in the city of Bozeman registered at 6 percent above the national average. The other two Montana cities in the study, Missoula and Kalispell, both ranked above the national average at 4.1 percent and 1.4 percent respectively. Bozeman's composite score of 6 percent above the national average compares to the previous quarter's score of 7.1 percent above the national average.

The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* composite score is based on components including housing, utilities, grocery, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods. While Bozeman's composite score is above the national average, two component costs (transportation and grocery items) have been below the national average for the last few years.

Bozeman's above average cost of living continues to be driven up by the cost of housing component. For the first quarter of 2008, Bozeman's cost of housing was 19.9 percent above the national average. In the previous quarter, Bozeman's housing cost was 21.9 percent above the national average. Bozeman's first quarter 2008 housing cost is comparable to Minneapolis, MN (17.7 percent above the average) and Bend, OR (17.5 percent above the average). Bozeman continues to have the highest cost of housing (and overall cost of living) in Montana. The other two Montana cities in the study, Missoula and Kalispell, recorded housing costs at 3.3 percent below and 1 percent above the national average, respectively.

The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures, for professional and managerial households in the top income quintile. It is based on more than 50,000 prices covering almost 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by participating urban areas. The *Index* is compiled and published quarterly by C2ER, The Council for Community and Economic Research. Prospera Business Network collects and reports data for the city of Bozeman each quarter.

ABOUT THE C2ER, THE COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

C2ER, the Council for Community and Economic Research, is a membership organization created in 1961 to promote excellence in community and economic research by working to improve data availability, enhance data quality, and foster learning about regional economic analytic methods. C2ER produces the *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* to provide a useful and reasonably accurate measure to compare cost of living differences among urban areas. Items on which the *Index* is based have been carefully chosen to reflect the different categories of consumer expenditures. Weights assigned to relative costs are based on government survey data on expenditure patterns for mid-management households. All items are priced in each place at a specified time and according to standardized specifications. The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* is the most reliable source of city-to-city comparisons of a key consumer costs available anywhere. To learn more about C2ER, the Council for Community and Economic Research, and the *ACCRA Cost of Living Index*, visit: www.c2er.org