

Appendix C: Public Involvement

Newsletter # 1
August 2001

YOU CAN HELP KEEP I-15 MOVING

Before anything "concrete" can be done to fix traffic problems along I-15, there's a lot of work that has to be done first. One key to moving quickly is getting your ideas now.

Making changes to the interstate means taking a good look at everything that deserves a look before any decisions are made.

The study that's underway will result in recommendations about what's needed and how that can best be done. It will be an objective, open look at the issues, with a heavy reliance on public input. It will be completed within two years, and includes a formal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).



Hearing early-on from people who use this stretch of road is one of the best ways to identify what really needs to be done.

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

This much we know: more people, more traffic and changing growth patterns have led to congestion and safety problems. I-15 has become a barrier to traffic, including emergency services (fire and ambulance, for instance), pedestrians and bicyclists. These problems will likely worsen if something isn't done.

Of course, we don't pretend to know the whole story. Not yet, anyway. So the first step in this process is "scoping" to define what needs to be looked at in more detail.

What do you think deserves a closer look?

1 An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process includes:

1 We Are Here Scoping - a public process to define the issues that need to be studied.

2 Data Collection - collecting traffic, environmental and land use data on what will be involved in any new designs.

3 Alternatives Development - identifying the full range of alternatives, then reducing the list to those alternatives which appear reasonable. An analysis of a no-build (do nothing) alternative is also required.

4 Analysis of Alternatives - transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives are studied in detail.

5 Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) - the need for the project, description of the alternatives, and an analysis of impacts that would likely result from each.

6 Public & Agency Review - an opportunity for public and agency feedback on the Draft EIS.

7 Final EIS Document - documents a preferred alternative and provides response to comments that were made on the Draft EIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Numerous opportunities for public involvement are planned for residents, business people and interest groups to become involved in shaping the future of the I-15 corridor. The public involvement program will include the following:

- ◆ **Public Workshops.** The first public workshop is planned for September 11, 2001.
- ◆ The first meeting of the **Advisory Committee** is on September 12, 2001. This will be a diverse group of local people who will convey a wide-range of community interests and ideas to the project team.
- ◆ **Project Newsletters** will keep you up to date on the I-15 project. **Return the attached form if you would like to remain on the I-15 EIS mailing list.**
- ◆ **Meetings** with neighborhood groups, business organizations, and interest groups.
- ◆ **I-15 Project Hotline.** Voice your opinion, ask questions, and request information. You can even call for a presentation to your organization at **406-458-4789**.
- ◆ Check out the project Web Site at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and fill out a **Feedback Form** with your ideas for the future of I-15.

FIRST PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Please join us! This is your opportunity to meet one-on-one with project team members, give your comments or concerns and ask questions.

DATE: September 11, 2001

LOCATION:

Best Western, Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena

TIME: 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

A brief formal presentation will be made at 6:00 pm followed by an opportunity for public comment.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillingier at 406-458-9065 for any special accommodations.



Ed Larson, Project Manager
Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001



www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

PROJECT SCHEDULE



	2 0 0 1												2 0 0 2					2 0 0 3							
	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	
1. Scoping & Data Collection	[Bar]																								
2. Transportation Analysis		[Bar]																							
3. Alternatives Development/ Analysis				[Bar]											[Bar]										
4. EIS													[Bar]									[Bar]			
Draft EIS													[Bar]									[Bar]			
Final EIS																					[Bar]				
Record Of Decision																								[Dot]	
5. Public Workshops				[Dot]			[Dot]			[Dot]									[Dot]		[Dot]				

For further information contact Ed Larson, Project Manager, MDT, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001 or call 406-444-9191 or email el Larson@state.mt.us.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE I-15 NEWSLETTERS?

The Montana Department of Transportation will be sending out more **I-15 EIS** project information in the future. If you would like to continue to receive these mailings, please **fill out and return** this pre-stamped form by **November 1, 2001** or your name and address will be removed from the project mailing list to reduce project costs.

Name: _____
Address: _____
P.O. Box: _____
City, State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE!

Project information is also available on the Project Web Site at:
www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

Public Workshop # 1
September 11, 2001



**Public Scoping Meeting
September 11, 2001 – 5 to 8 p.m.
Best Western Colonial Hotel**

Format:

This meeting is an open house format with a presentation at 6 p.m. There will be a question/answer session following. You can sign up at the front table to speak after the presentation, or you can fill out a comment card, also located at the front table, to have your comment/question read aloud by the presenter. The open house displays will remain available for viewing after the presentation.

Intent of Meeting:

To present preliminary project information and to receive your ideas and suggestions, and to answer questions from the public about issues and concerns along the I-15 project study area.

Room Organization:

The room is organized with eight stations. These are:

STATION ONE: PROJECT INTRODUCTION

- Purpose of Meeting
- Project History
- Study Area
- Schedule

STATION TWO: PROJECT PURPOSE

- Purpose and Need
- Roadway and Structural Deficiencies

STATION THREE: TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

- Land Use and Zoning
- Estimated Land Use Growth Alternatives
- Traffic Volumes

STATION FOUR: POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES

- Scoping Questions
 - Scoping Comment Sheets
- (Please give us your input on these questions.)**

STATION FIVE: POTENTIAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Engineering Feasibility
- Operation and Safety
- Environmental / Community Impacts

(over)

STATION SIX: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

- EIS Process
- Contents of an EIS

STATION SEVEN: PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

- Opportunities for Involvement

STATION EIGHT: COMMENTS

- Display of Comments Received
- Comment Sheets
- Comment Box

Commenting Opportunities:

Your opportunities for providing input are:

- Ask questions or provide comments to project personnel (with name tags).
- Fill out a comment sheet and put it in the comment box.
- Fill out a comment sheet and mail or fax it in later (see comment sheets for address and phone number).
- Visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com, and fill out a feedback form.
- Call the project hotline at **(406) 458-4789**.
- Voice your comment at the question/answer session following the presentation.

Project Contacts:

Ed Larson, MDT
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620

I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Fold here

Return Address:

Place
stamp
here

**I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59601**

Fold here



EIS Process Overview

- A. The National Environmental Policy Act Purpose: (attached).
- B. The Federal Highway Administration Regulation, 23 CFR 771.
 - 1. Purpose: “This regulation prescribes the policies and procedures of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)... for implementing [NEPA]... This regulation sets forth all FHWA.... requirements under NEPA for the processing of highway... projects.”
 - 2. Three Classes of Action.
 - a) Class I: Environmental Impact Statements.
 - b) Class II: Categorical Exclusions.
 - c) Class III: Environmental Assessments.
- C. Functions of an EIS.
 - 1. Identification of the purpose and need for the proposed action.
 - 2. Consideration of reasonable alternatives.
 - 3. Identification of the environmental social and economic impacts of the alternatives under consideration.
 - 4. Identification of opportunities to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.
 - 5. Public disclosure of the information prepared for the project.
 - 6. Presentation of all pertinent information to decision makers.
 - 7. Documentation of the decisions made, including mitigation commitments.
- D. Steps in the EIS Process (attached).
- E. The I-15 Corridor EIS Table of Contents (attached).
- F. Comments and Questions.

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Share your ideas and suggestions and help identify the issues that need to be studied during this important "scoping" meeting.

Tuesday, September 11th

Best Western Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena
Executive Room, 5 - 8 pm

Please plan to attend. We need to hear from you.

The following is the schedule for the meeting:

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Open House

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Presentation and Public Forum

- Study Purpose and EIS Process
- Schedule
- Format for Public Input
- Questions/Comments

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Open House

Information that will be available:

- Purpose and need for improvements.
- Process and schedule for project.
- Transportation information.
- Community and environmental issues.
- Opportunity to talk with project team and give us your ideas.

For more information:

- Go to www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
-or-
- Call the Project Hotline at 406-458-4789

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 (or the TDD number for the hearing impaired at 406-444-7696) for any special accommodations.

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Public Opinion Survey
November 2001

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR

Montana City to Lincoln Road

I-15 Corridor EIS
P.O. Box 150
2905 N. Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Resident,

We would like your opinions as options are explored for the Interstate 15 (I-15) corridor between the Montana City and Lincoln Road interchanges. We are enclosing a questionnaire to obtain your opinions. Your household was randomly selected to participate in this survey. Only a small number of households have been selected so it is especially important for a member of your household to respond.

In order to obtain a representative and random sample, we have devised a simple method for you to choose which household member should complete the survey. **Please have the adult who most recently had a birthday complete this survey. The year of birth plays no role in the selection.** Your responses to this survey will be completely anonymous and results will be reported in group form only. When you complete the survey, please return it using the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

Carter & Burgess, Inc., an independent transportation planning firm, has been hired to study options for this section of I-15. National Research Center, Inc. is helping gather opinions and preferences from residents through this survey. Your participation is very important to us and to everyone who would be affected by any transportation projects that might be undertaken. The anonymous results will be shared with the project advisory committee and the local media.

If you have questions about the survey, feel free to e-mail Erin Caldwell at erin@n-r-c.com or phone her toll-free at 877-467-2462.

If you would like more information about the I-15 Corridor EIS study, please call the project hotline at 458-4789 or visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

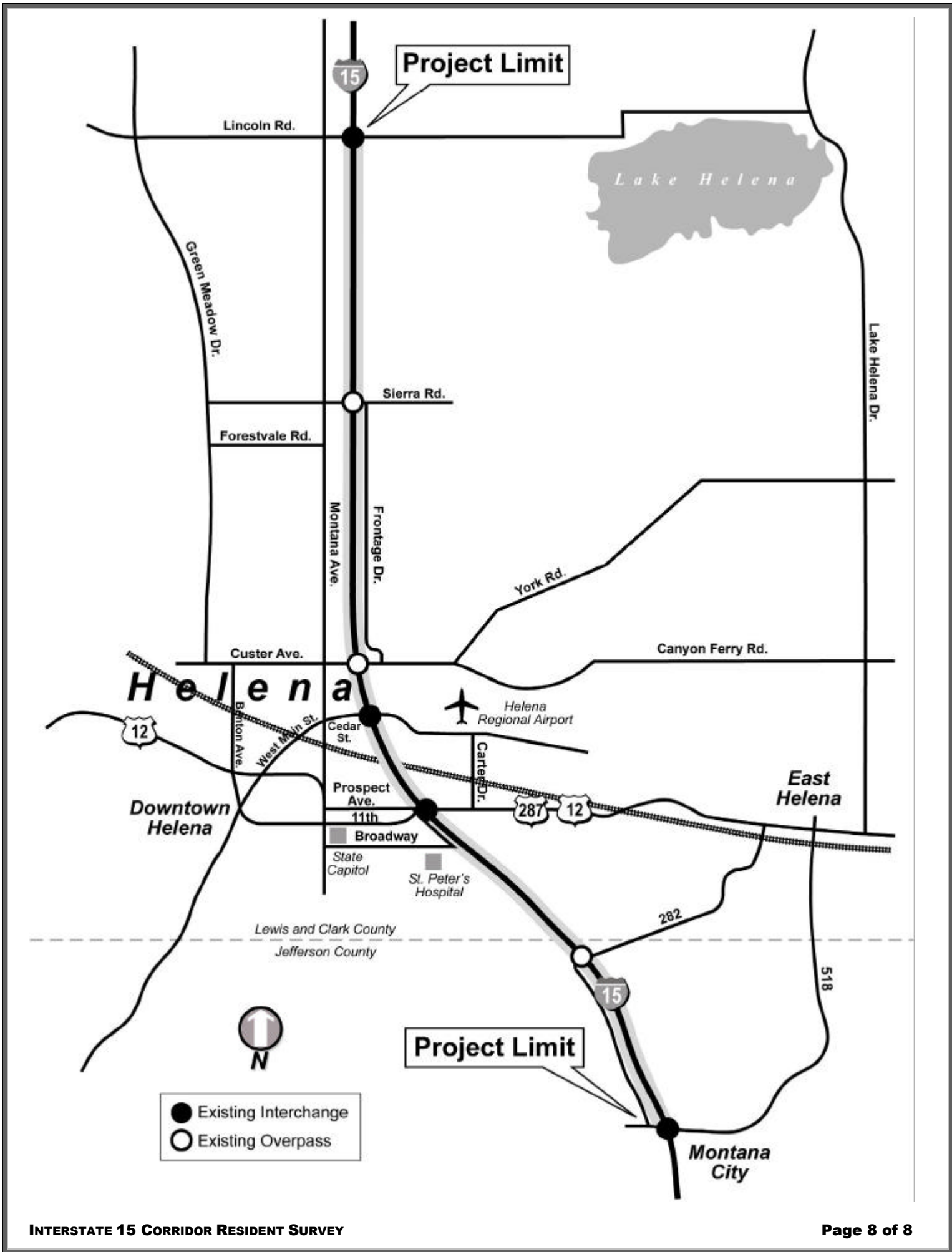
Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,



Kenneth M. (Kim) Gambrill, AICP
Project Manager

Si usted le gustaría completar esta encuesta en español por favor llame a Marilyn Kuntemeyer. Llamada gratis: 877-820-5240 y hay que pedir conexión a Marilyn Kuntemeyer, extensión 5283. Llamada directa a larga distancia: 303-820-5283 (conexión directa al teléfono de Marilyn Kuntemeyer).



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR



Montana City to Lincoln Road

PUBLIC SURVEY

The Montana Department of Transportation has hired the firm of Carter & Burgess, Inc. to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will evaluate the need for possible transportation improvements on I-15 from the Montana City Interchange to the Lincoln Road Interchange. Results from this survey will be used to help complete this important study. A map of the I-15 Corridor is provided on the back of the survey, if you would like to refer to it while completing these questions. Your responses are confidential, and will be reported in group form only. Thank you very much for your participation. The completed questionnaire can be returned in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

For each question, please circle the number that most closely represents your opinion.

- | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>no
problem</u> | <u>minor
problem</u> | <u>major
problem</u> | <u>don't
know</u> |
| 1. How much of a problem, if at all, is congestion on I-15?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

IF YOU THINK THERE IS NO CONGESTION PROBLEM ON I-15, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION #3.

2. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, congestion on I-15 is in each stretch and direction listed below, and when you think the problems occur.

	How Serious Is the Problem, If At All? (Please circle one only)				When Does the Problem Occur? (Check all that apply)		
	no problem	minor problem	major problem	don't know	between 7 and 9 am	between 4 and 6 pm	other times
a. Northbound between Montana City Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Northbound between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Northbound between Cedar Interchange and Lincoln Road Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Southbound between Lincoln Road Interchange and Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Southbound between Cedar Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Southbound between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Montana City Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How much of a problem, if at all, do you feel it is to get on and off I-15 at the existing interchanges?..... 1 2 3 4

no problem minor problem major problem don't know

IF YOU THINK IT IS NO PROBLEM TO GET ON AND OFF I-15 AT THE EXISTING INTERCHANGES, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION #5.

4. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, it is to get on and off I-15 at the existing interchanges, why there is a problem, and when you think the problems occur.

	How Serious Is the Problem? (Please circle one only)				What Is the Problem? (Please check all that apply)					When Does the Problem Occur? (Check all that apply)		
	no problem	minor problem	major problem	don't know	congestion getting on I-15	congestion getting off I-15	safety getting on I-15	safety getting off I-15	other problem*	between 7 and 9 am	between 4 and 6 pm	other times
a. Montana City Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Lincoln Road Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* What other problems are there in getting on and off I-15 at the existing interchanges? _____

5. How much of a problem, if at all, do you feel it is that there are no additional interchanges on I-15 between Montana City and Lincoln Road? 1 2 3 4

no problem minor problem major problem don't know

IF YOU THINK IT IS NO PROBLEM THAT THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL INTERCHANGES, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION #7.

6. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, you feel it is that there are no additional interchanges at the locations listed below, and why there is a problem.

	How Serious, If At All, Is the Problem of No Interchange in These Locations? (Please circle one only)				What Is the Problem? (Please check all that apply)					
	no problem	minor problem	major problem	don't know	access to work	access to schools	access to medical care	access to businesses and shopping	access to other community facilities	other problem*
a. Between Montana City Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Between Cedar Interchange and Lincoln Road Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* What other problems are there in not having additional interchanges? _____

7. Improved transportation access is one of many factors that can affect the type, pace and location of future development. Do you think that a new interchange or other access at the locations listed below would make your quality of life better or worse? Do you think the quality of life of other regional residents would get better or worse?

	Would your personal quality of life get better or worse if a new interchange were created at each of the locations listed (Please circle one only)					Would the quality of life of other regional residents get better or worse if a new interchange were created at each of the locations listed (Please circle one only)				
	much better	a little better	no change	a little worse	much worse	much better	a little better	no change	a little worse	much worse
a. Between Montana City Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c. Between Cedar Interchange and Lincoln Road Interchange	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

8. How much of a problem, if at all, do you feel it is to cross under or over I-15 on existing east/west roads? 1 2 3 4

no problem minor problem major problem don't know

IF YOU THINK IT IS NO PROBLEM TO GET ACROSS I-15 ON EXISTING EAST/WEST ROADS, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION #10.

9. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, it is to cross under or over I-15 on existing east/west roads, why there is a problem, and when you think the problems occur.

	How Serious, If At All, Is the Problem? (Please circle one only)				What Is the Problem? (Please check all that apply)					When Does the Problem Occur? (Check all that apply)		
	no problem	minor problem	major problem	don't know	traffic congestion	traffic safety	difficult for bicyclists	difficult for pedestrians	other problem*	between 7 and 9 am	between 4 and 6 pm	other times
a. Montana City Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. County Road 282 (between Montana City Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange)	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Boulder Avenue (between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Interchange)	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Cedar Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Custer Avenue	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Sierra Road	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Lincoln Road Interchange	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* What other problems are there in crossing over or under I-15? _____

10. How much of a problem, if at all, do you feel it is that there are no additional crossings to get from one side of I-15 to the other between Montana City and Lincoln Road? 1 2 3 4

no problem
minor problem
major problem
don't know

IF YOU THINK IT IS NO PROBLEM THAT THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL CROSSINGS, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION #12.

11. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, it is to get across I-15 at the locations listed below, and why there is a problem.

	How Serious, If At All, Is the Problem of No Crossing in These Locations? (Please circle one only)				What Is the Problem? (Please check all that apply)						
	no problem	minor problem	major problem	don't know	access to work	access to schools	access to medical care	access for bicyclists	access for pedestrians	access to businesses and shopping	access to other community facilities
a. Between Montana City Interchange and County Road 282	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Between County Road 282 and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange)	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Street	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Between Cedar Street and Custer Ave.	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Between Custer Avenue and Sierra Rd.	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Between Sierra Road and Lincoln Road	1	2	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. There are several possible changes to I-15 between Montana City and Lincoln Road that may be considered to improve transportation along the corridor. To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following options?

	<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Making no improvements along the I-15 Corridor	1	2	3	4	5
b. Making only minor improvements along the I-15 Corridor	1	2	3	4	5
c. Including a new overpass/underpass north of Cedar	1	2	3	4	5
d. Including a new overpass/underpass south of Capitol	1	2	3	4	5
e. Including a new interchange north of Cedar	1	2	3	4	5
f. Including a new interchange south of Capitol	1	2	3	4	5
g. Including carpool lanes	1	2	3	4	5
h. Including improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians	1	2	3	4	5
i. Including improvements for bus service	1	2	3	4	5

13. Please rate your agreement with each of the statements below. Circle the number that most closely represents your opinion.

	<u>strongly agree</u>	<u>somewhat agree</u>	<u>somewhat disagree</u>	<u>strongly disagree</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. I would ride a bike more often if more bike paths, lanes and bike racks were built	1	2	3	4	5
b. I would walk more often if more sidewalks, walking paths, crosswalks and benches were built	1	2	3	4	5
c. I would take the bus for some trips if a convenient bus service was provided	1	2	3	4	5

14. About how often do you use I-15 from Montana City to Lincoln Road for each of the following types of trips?

	<u>3 or more round trips per day</u>	<u>5 to 20 round trips per week</u>	<u>2 to 4 round trips per week</u>	<u>1 to 4 round trips per month</u>	<u>less than one round trip per month</u>
a. Commuting to and from work	1	2	3	4	5
b. Other types of work trips	1	2	3	4	5
c. To shop or run errands	1	2	3	4	5
d. For recreation	1	2	3	4	5
e. To get to and from school (or to take children to and from school)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other kinds of trips	1	2	3	4	5

15. About how often do you cross I-15 between Montana City and Lincoln Road for each of the following types of trips?

	<u>3 or more round trips per day</u>	<u>5 to 20 round trips per week</u>	<u>2 to 4 round trips per week</u>	<u>1 to 4 round trips per month</u>	<u>less than one round trip per month</u>
a. Commuting to and from work	1	2	3	4	5
b. Other types of work trips	1	2	3	4	5
c. To shop or run errands	1	2	3	4	5
d. For recreation	1	2	3	4	5
e. To get to and from school (or to take children to and from school)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other kinds of trips	1	2	3	4	5

16. Before taking this survey, had you heard of the new study being implemented for I-15 between Montana City and Lincoln Road?

- no → go to question #17
- yes → **16a. How had you heard of it? (Please check all that apply.)**
 - newspaper articles
 - Council or Commission meeting
 - public/community meetings
 - committee meetings
 - Jefferson County website
 - other _____
 - television
 - radio
 - "word of mouth" from friends or family
 - don't remember
 - Lewis and Clark County website

17. How would you like to be informed about matters related to the study of the I-15 Corridor? (Please check all that apply.)

- through a newsletter
- ads in the newspaper
- other _____
- newspaper articles
- public community meetings
- a website dedicated to the project
- television or radio public service announcements

18. How, if at all, would you like to be involved in providing additional feedback about the study as it progresses? (Please check all that apply.)

- wouldn't like to be involved
- attending public meetings
- writing letters
- other _____
- providing feedback on a website devoted to I-15 issues
- calling a hot line with my comments
- e-mailing my comments to project designers

19. What concerns, if any, do you have about the implementation of transportation projects on I-15? (Please check all that apply.)

- none
- it will bring more growth or development
- it will have adverse impacts on environment
- it won't be what's really needed
- other _____
- it will disrupt traffic during construction
- it will change the character of our community
- it will take too long
- the decisions about the I-15 Corridor have already been made

20. Please give us any other comments you would like to about the I-15 Corridor or about the study of possible improvements to the Corridor.

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Our last questions are to ensure a valid sample of survey responses. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

21. In what area of the region do you currently live?

- City of Helena
- North of Custer Avenue and West of I-15
- East Helena
- Other Lewis and Clark County Area
- Montana City Area
- Other Jefferson County Area

22. How long have you lived in this location?

_____ years _____ months

23. What is your zip code? _____

24. How close to I-15 do you live?

- less than a half mile
- within a half mile to one mile
- within one to two miles
- within two to five miles
- more than five miles away

27. Are you currently employed?

- no → go to question #28
- yes → **Do you work in . . .**
 - Downtown Helena/West Helena
 - Capitol/State Government Area
 - Hospital Area
 - Airport/Montana Department of Transportation Area
 - North of Custer Avenue
 - Montana City
 - East Helena
 - Elsewhere in Lewis and Clark County
 - Elsewhere in Jefferson County

28. Where do you shop regularly? (Check all that apply.)

- Downtown Helena/West Helena
- Capitol Hill Mall Area
- North Helena Area
- East Helena
- Elsewhere in Lewis and Clark County
- Montana City Area
- Elsewhere in Jefferson County

29. Which of the following best describes your age?

- 18 – 24 years old
- 25 – 34 years old
- 35 – 44 years old
- 45 – 54 years old
- 55 – 64 years old
- 65 years or older

30. Your gender:

- male
- female

26. Do you rent or own your residence?

- rent
- own

31. What was your household's total annual income in 2000? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)

- less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

Thank you for completing the survey. Please return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope to:
National Research Center, Inc.
1503 Spruce Street, Boulder, CO 80302
If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Erin Caldwell via e-mail: erin@n-r-c.com or phone toll-free 1-877-467-2462.

If you would like more information about the I-15 Corridor EIS study, please call the project hotline at 458-4789 or visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

I-15 Corridor Public Opinion Survey



Summary of Key Results

Carter = Burgess



NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER



I-15 Corridor Public Opinion Survey S u m m a r y o f K e y R e s u l t s

What is the survey?

In October 2001, the I-15 Corridor study team conducted a public opinion survey in the Helena region. The purpose of the survey was to provide additional background information on transportation issues in the corridor between Lincoln Road and Montana City and to provide some initial information about transportation improvements that people would like to see investigated further in the study. The results of the survey were tabulated in December.

Key results of the survey relating to problems in the corridor, perceptions about improvements, use of the corridor for various types of travel and awareness of the study are summarized here. This information is being presented at the Public Workshop on January 29, 2002.

Who participated in the survey?

Participants receiving the survey were selected through a standard process used in surveys to obtain a random sampling. The demographic characteristics of the sample were compared to those of the study region as reflected in the 2000 Census (see map on next page). 4,000 households selected were from the following zip codes: 59601, 59602, 59634, 59635, 59639 and 59644. These are the zip codes for Clancy, East Helena, Helena and Townsend.

What was the response to the survey?

Of the 4,000 households selected and sent surveys, 3,442 actually received the survey (the others were returned as 'undeliverable'). Of these, 1,411 completed the survey - a response rate of 41%. This is considered an excellent response. In general, the response rates obtained on resident surveys typically ranges between 25% and 40%.

With this high response rate, there is a 95% confidence level in the results. In other words, the results of the survey reflect how we believe 95% of the people in the region would respond to the questions - with a plus or minus 3% range of accuracy.

Who conducted the survey?

The survey was prepared and conducted by National Research Center, Inc. (NRC), one of the leading strategic planning and survey research teams in the Rocky Mountain region, focusing on the information needs of the public sector. NRC is a part of the I-15 Corridor study team. Carter & Burgess, Inc. is the project manager for the I-15 Helena Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study.

How will the survey information be used?

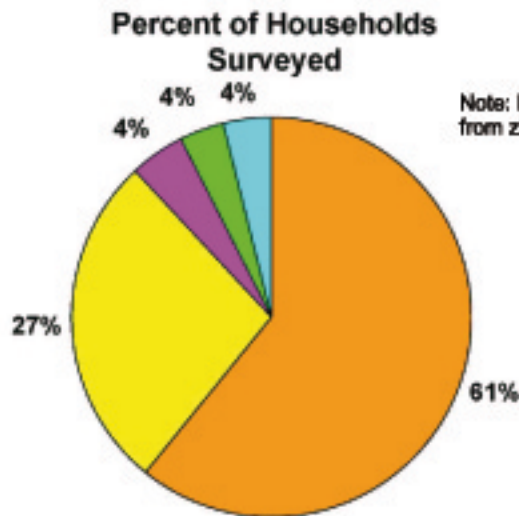
The information gathered from this survey, long with other travel information gathered during the project to-date, will be used by the I-15 Corridor study team as input to the definition of transportation improvement alternatives that will be studied. The actual definition of the transportation alternatives will occur during the Public Involvement process for the study. The alternatives and their potential impacts will be fully analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The demographic questions were used to compare the demographic profile of the survey respondents to that of the entire population in the study area. This information was used to determine that all populations were represented in the survey results.

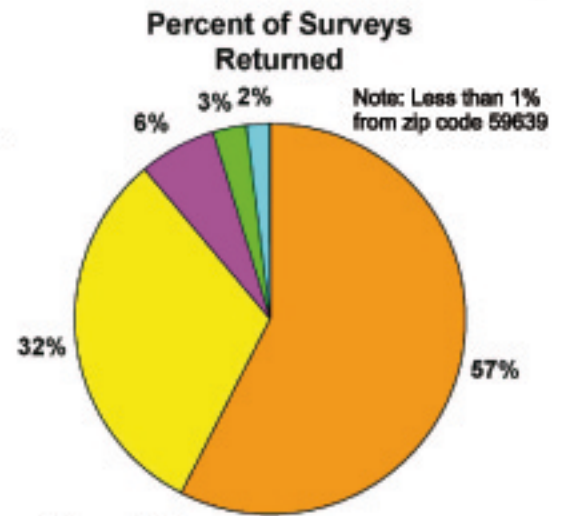
Where the survey results available for review?

Full copies of the I-15 Corridor Public Opinion Survey results are available on the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and at the Lewis and Clark County Library (120 S. Last Chance Gulch in Helena), Boulder Community Library (202 E. Main in Boulder), Montana State Library (1515 E. 6th Avenue in Helena) and the Broadwater Community School Library (201 N. Spruce in Townsend).

Survey Return Rate by Zip Code

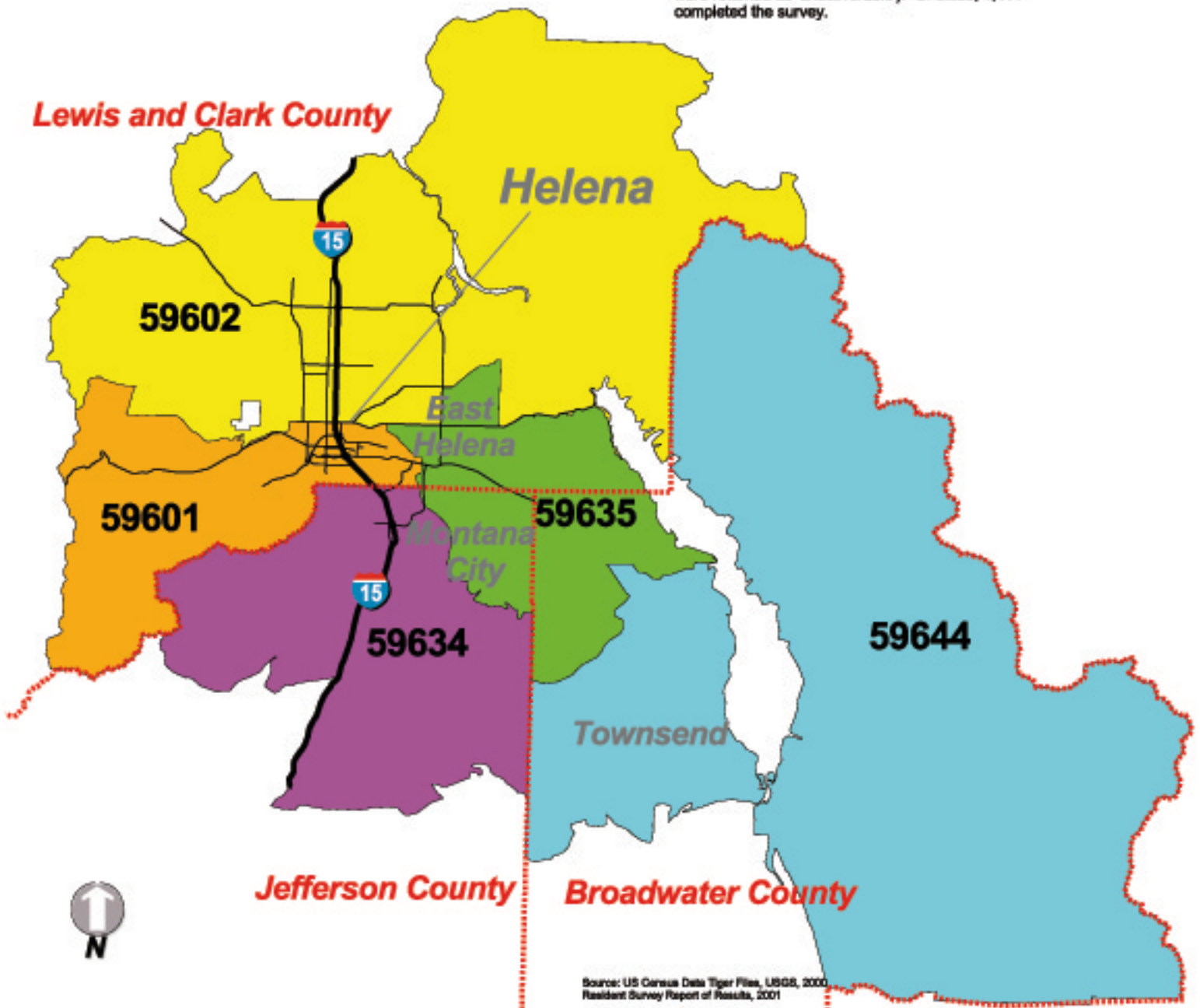


Note: Less than 1% from zip code 59639

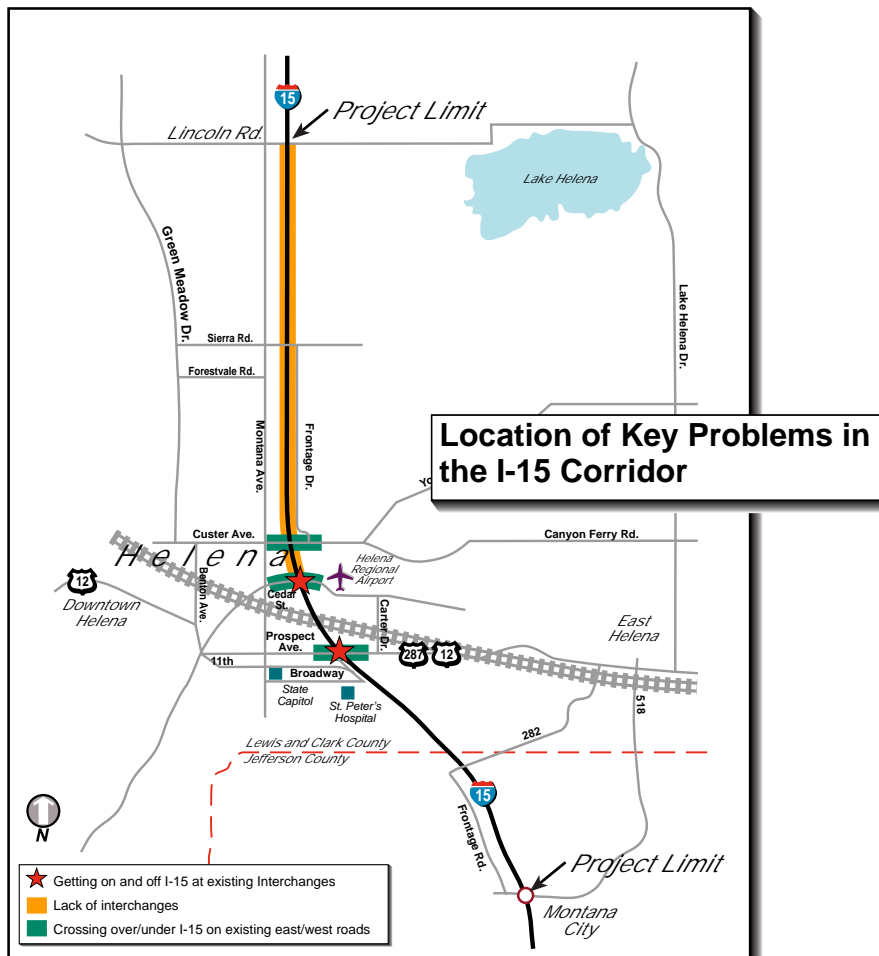
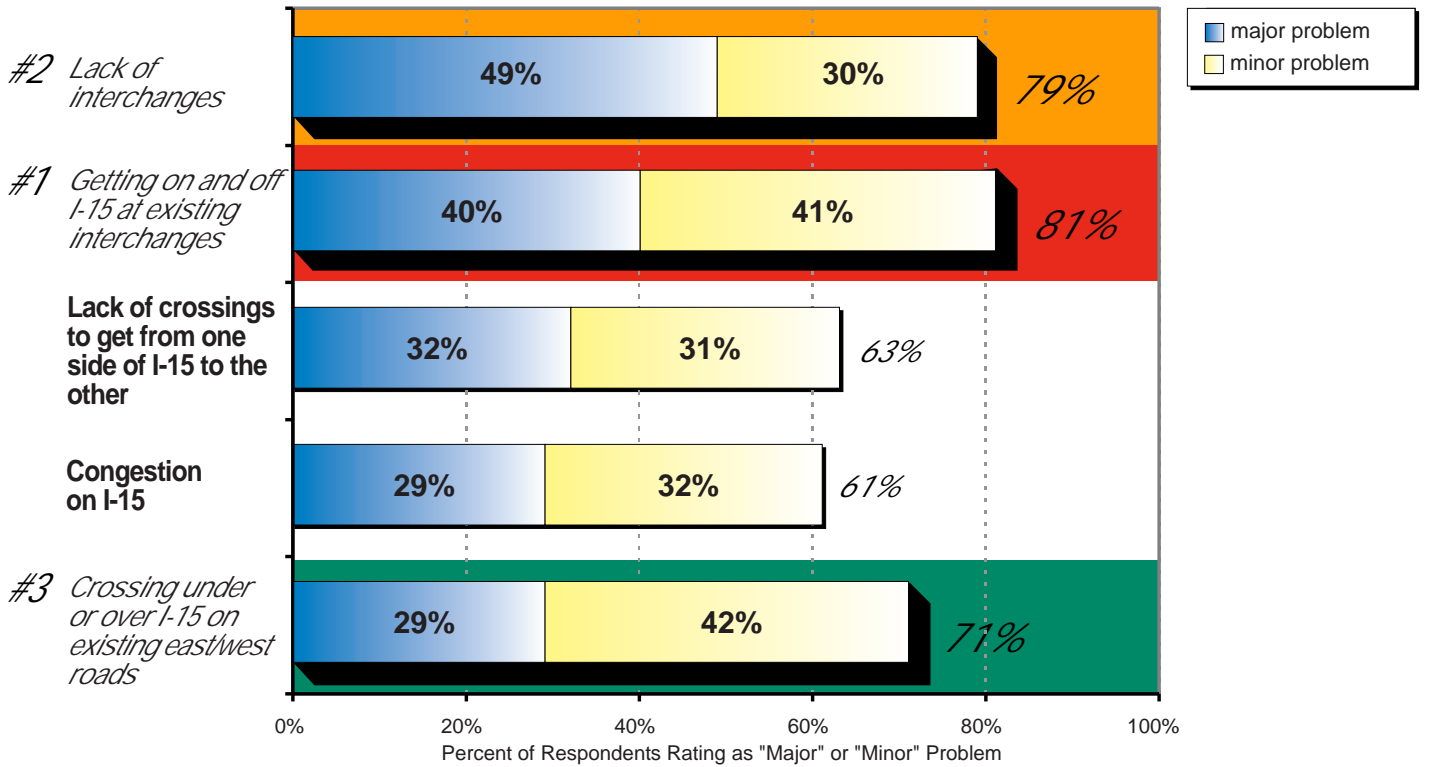


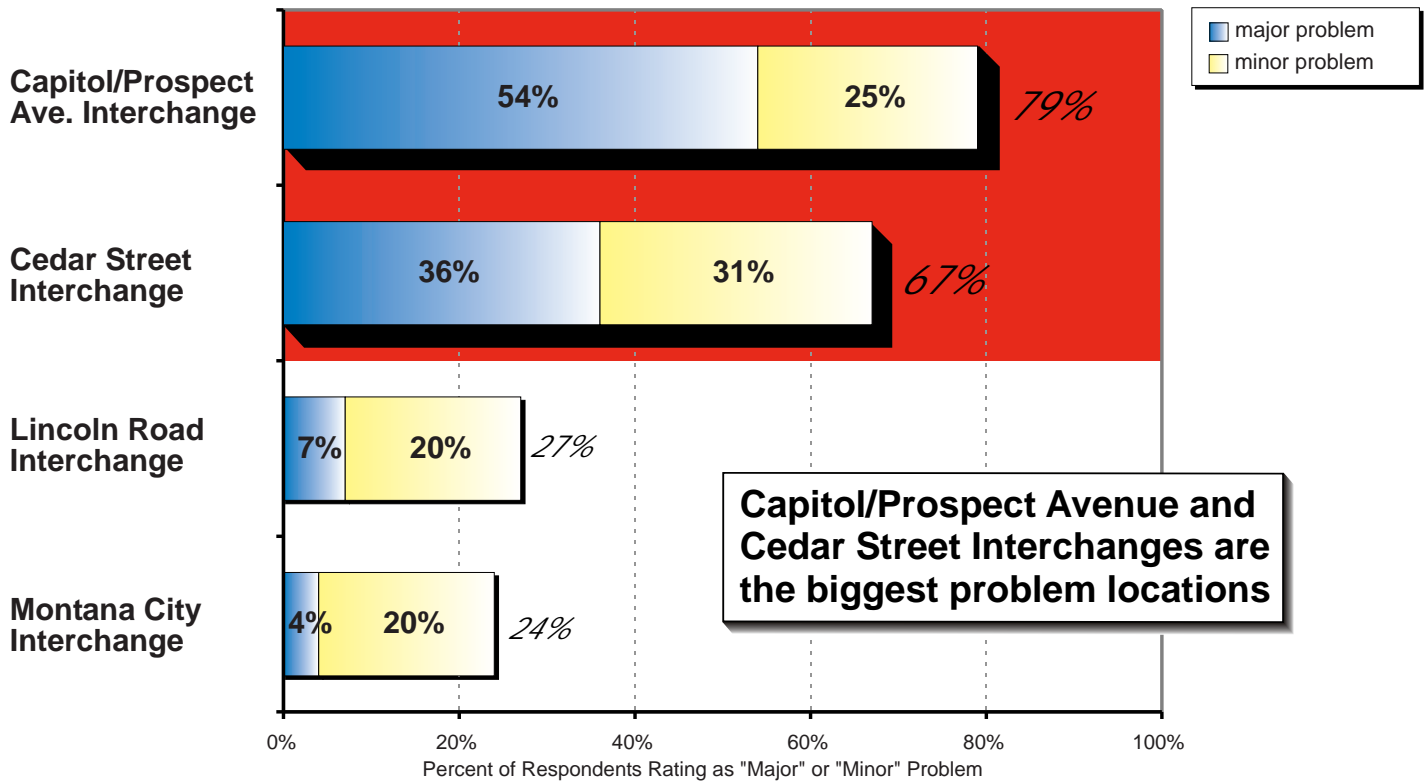
Note: Less than 1% from zip code 59639

Note: The percent of households surveyed also represents the percent of population in each zip code. Of the 4,000 households selected and sent surveys, 3,442 received the survey (the others were returned as 'undeliverable'). Of these, 1,411 completed the survey.



What are the Key Problems in the I-15 Corridor?





Why is it a Problem to Get On and Off I-15 at Existing Interchanges?

	Congestion getting on I-15	Congestion getting off I-15	Safety getting on I-15	Safety getting off I-15	Other
Montana City Interchange	56%	57%	42%	35%	11%
Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	56%	74%	63%	68%	11%
Cedar Street Interchange	61%	73%	46%	39%	7%
Lincoln Road Interchange	36%	41%	34%	59%	21%

*Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer

The biggest problems at the Capitol/Prospect Avenue Interchange are congestion and safety

The problem at the Cedar Street Interchange is congestion

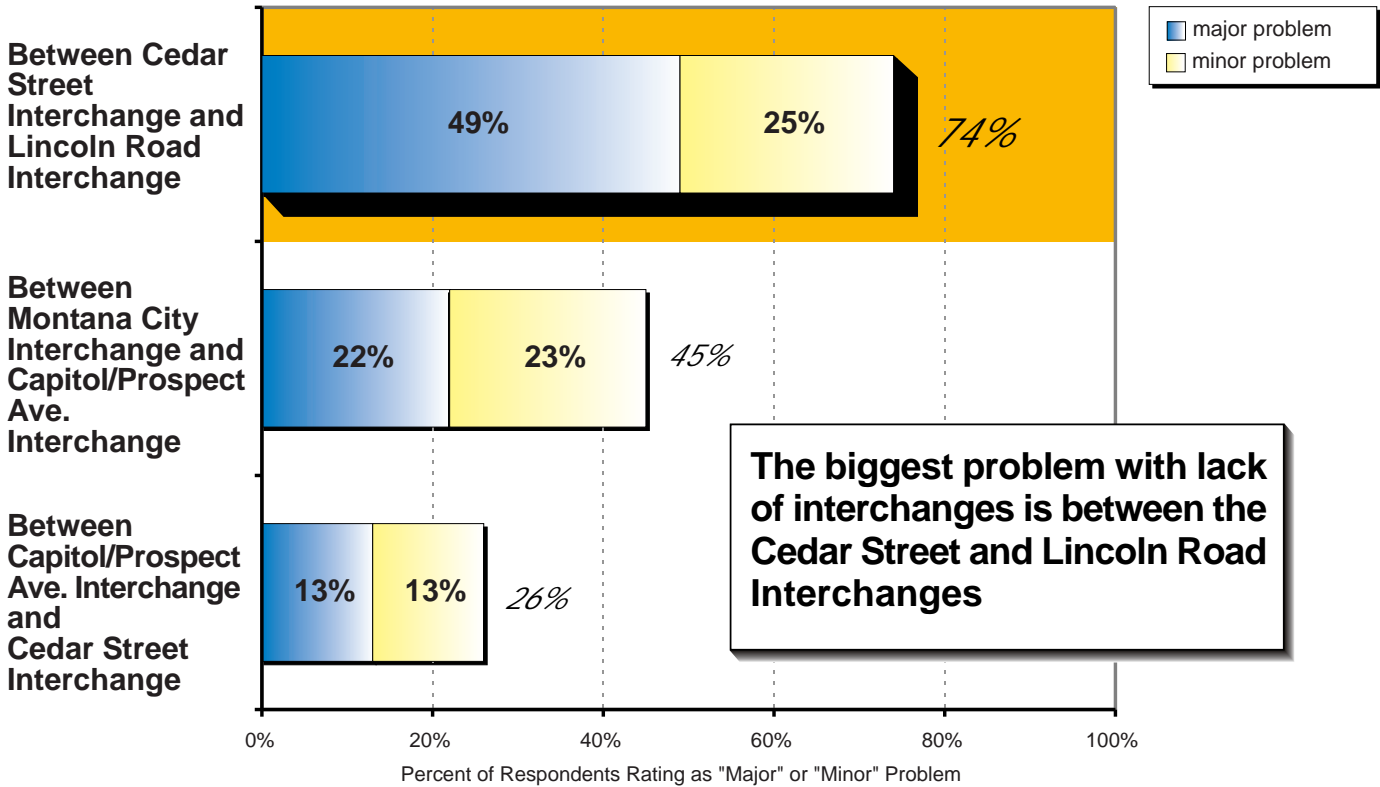
When is it a Problem to Get On and Off I-15 at Existing Interchanges?

	Between 7 and 9 am	Between 4 and 6 pm	Other
Montana City Interchange	79%	77%	23%
Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	88%	88%	47%
Cedar Street Interchange	82%	87%	39%
Lincoln Road Interchange	76%	81%	51%

*Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer

The biggest problems occur during rush hour

Lack of Additional Interchanges as a Problem

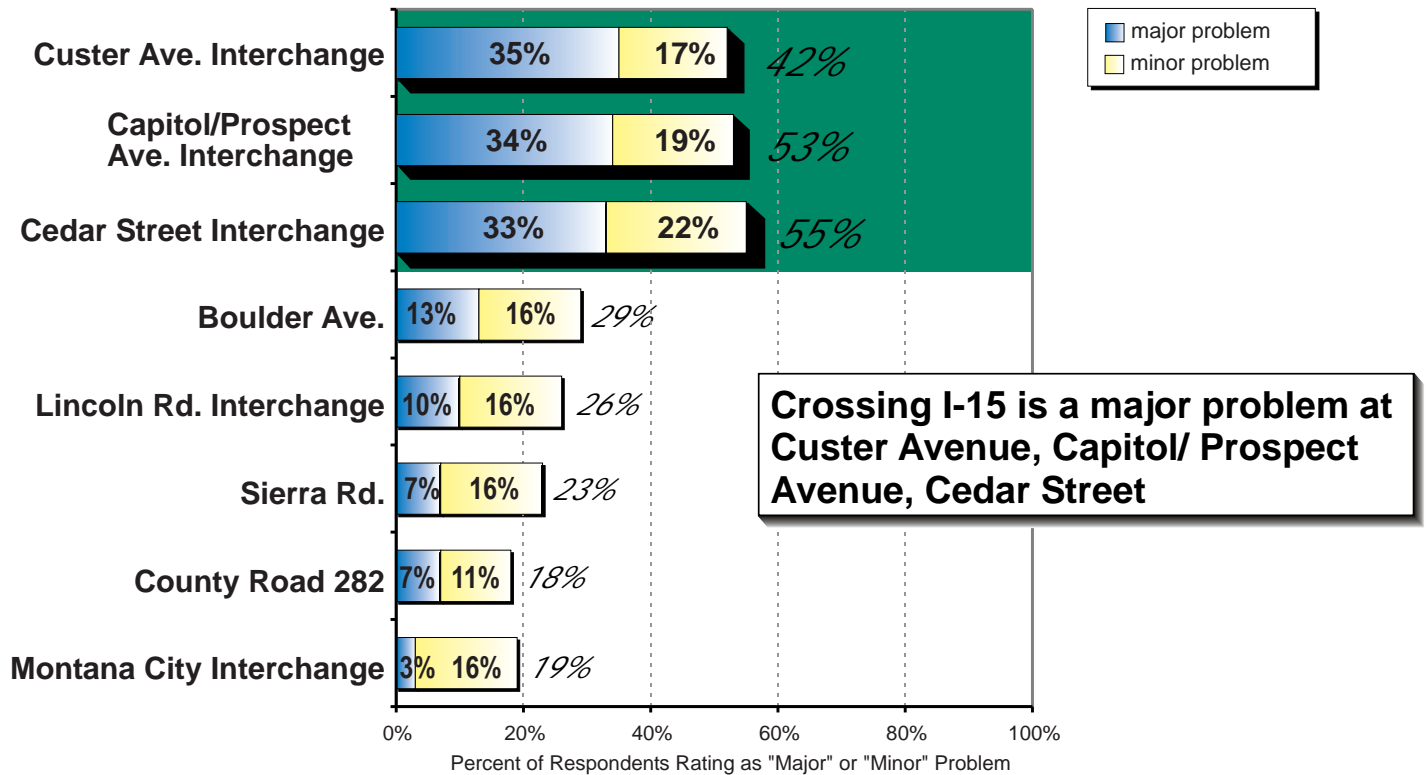


When is the Lack of Interchanges a Problem?

	Access to work	Access to school	Access to medical care	Access to business and shopping	Access to other community facilities	Other
Between Montana City Interchange and Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange	70%	27%	72%	39%	42%	17%
Between Capitol/Prospect Ave. Interchange and Cedar Street Interchange	62%	30%	39%	67%	50%	16%
Between Cedar Street Interchange and Lincoln Road Interchange	64%	43%	32%	73%	58%	26%

*Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer

The lack of interchanges is a problem for getting to work, business and shopping



Why is it a Problem to Cross I-15 on Existing East/West Roads?

	traffic congestion	traffic safety	difficult for bicycles	difficult for pedestrians	other problem
Montana City Interchange	65%	61%	37%	36%	8%
County Road 282	56%	60%	50%	50%	15%
Capitol/Prospect Ave.	85%	66%	62%	63%	9%
Boulder Ave.	52%	58%	46%	50%	22%
Cedar Interchange	90%	71%	61%	61%	9%
Custer Ave.	81%	76%	68%	67%	18%
Sierra Rd.	58%	65%	56%	57%	15%
Lincoln Road Interchange	46%	77%	52%	52%	18%

*Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer

Traffic congestion is the biggest problem crossing I-15 on existing roads

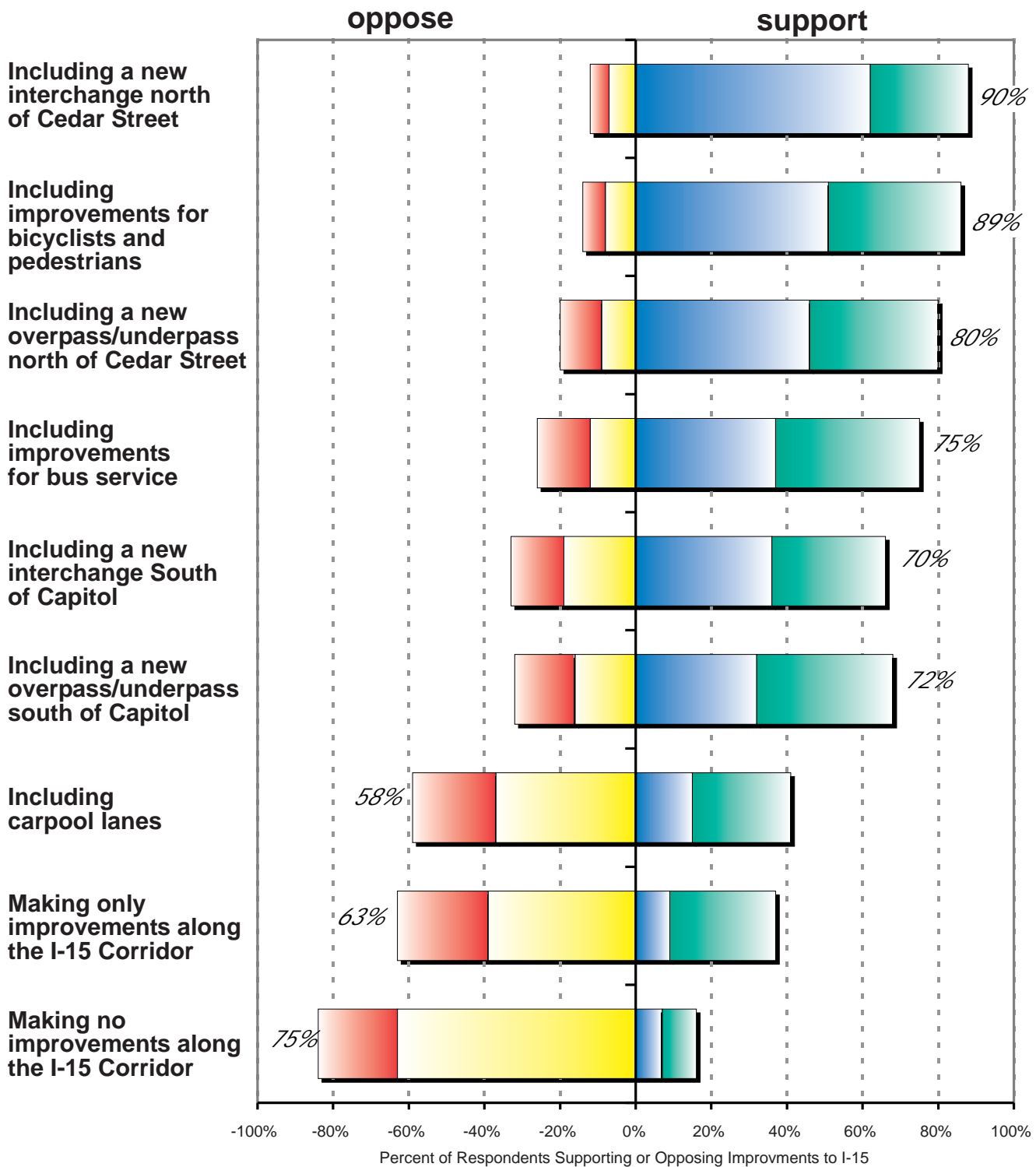
When is it a Problem to Cross Over or Under I-15 on Existing East/West Roads?

	between 7 and 9 am	between 4 and 6 pm	other times
Montana City Interchange	86%	82%	30%
County Road 282	89%	82%	31%
Capitol/Prospect Ave.	95%	95%	52%
Boulder Ave.	80%	83%	54%
Cedar Interchange	92%	95%	53%
Custer Ave.	91%	93%	59%
Sierra Rd.	84%	76%	51%
Lincoln Road Interchange	89%	87%	60%

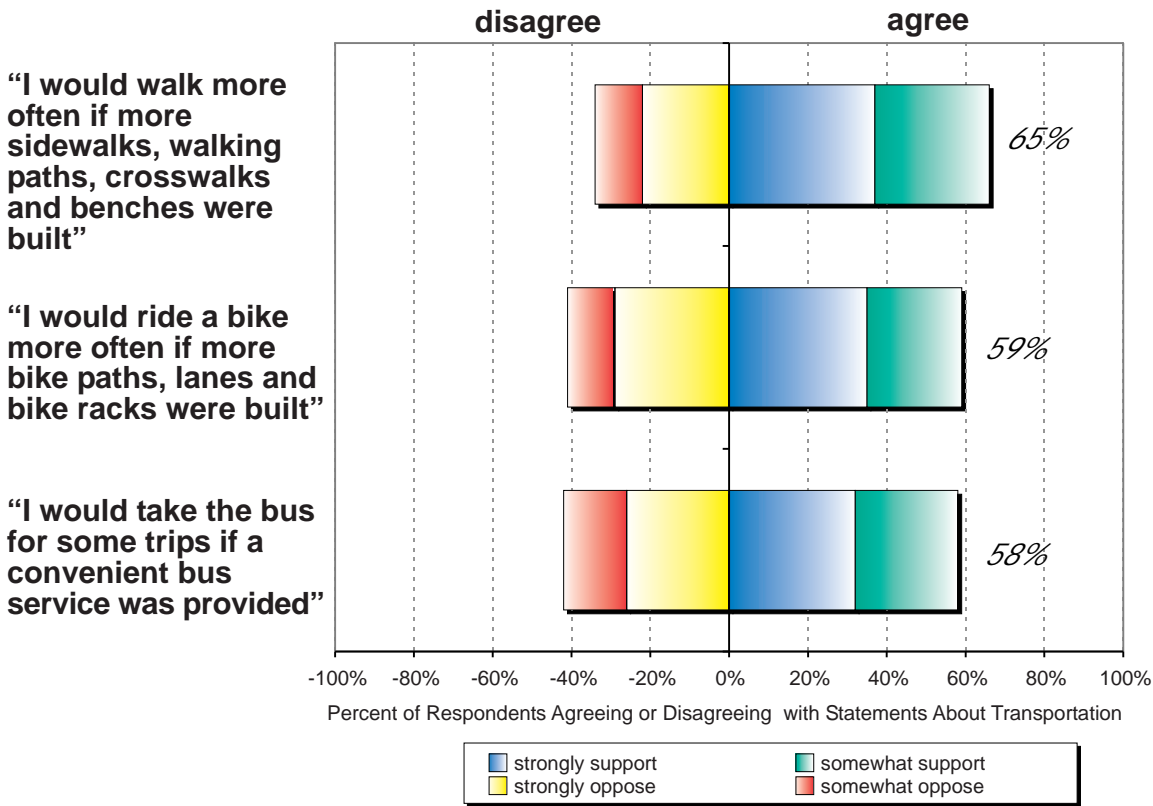
*Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer

Crossing I-15 on existing roads is the most difficult during rush hour

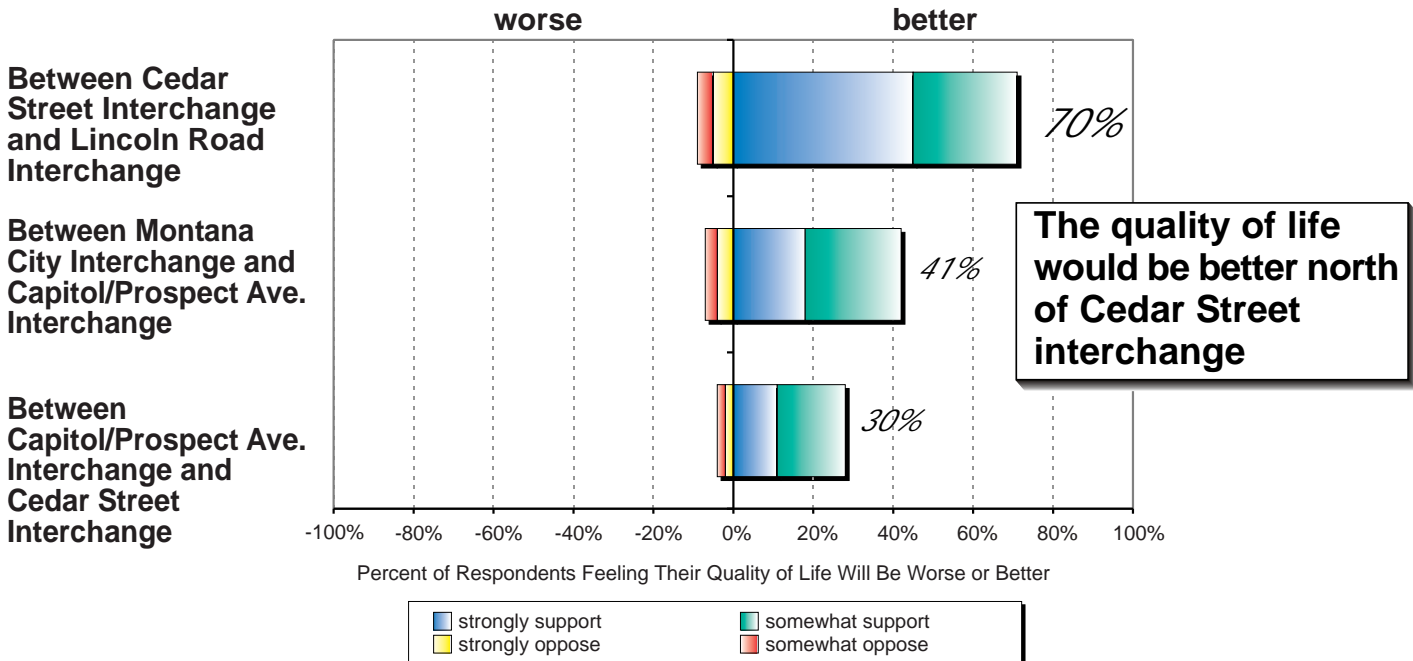
Support or Opposition to Transportation Improvements on the I-15 Corridor



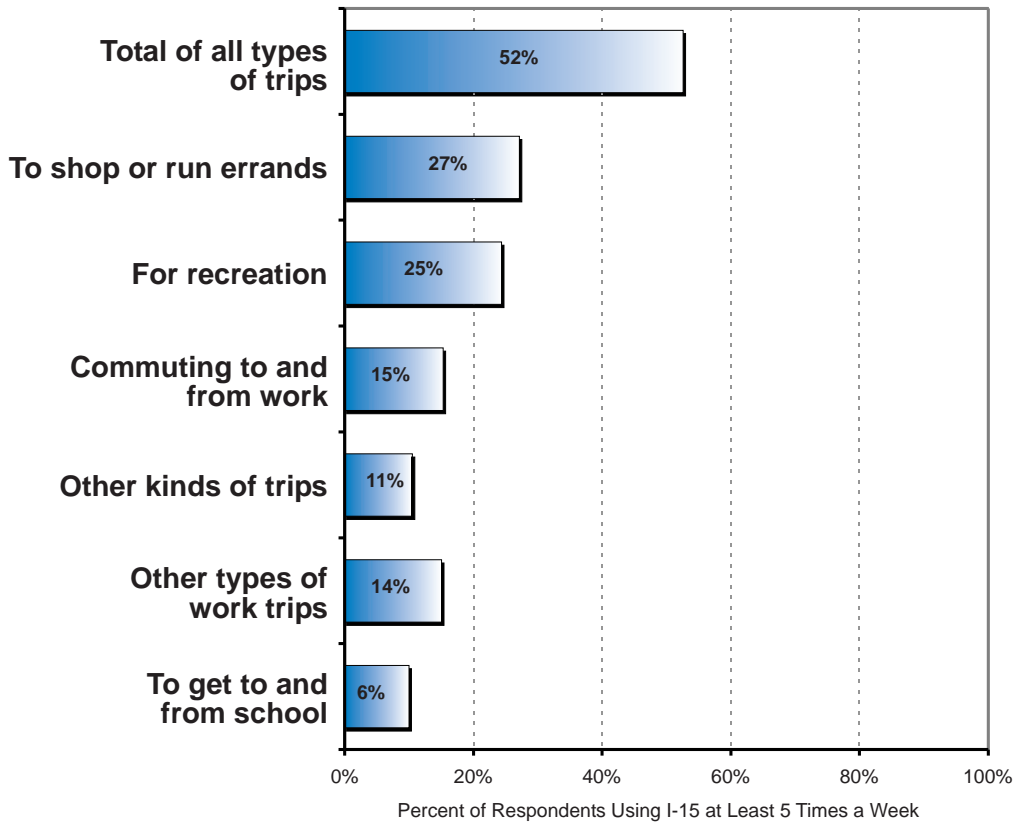
Agreement or Disagreement with Statements about Transportation Improvements



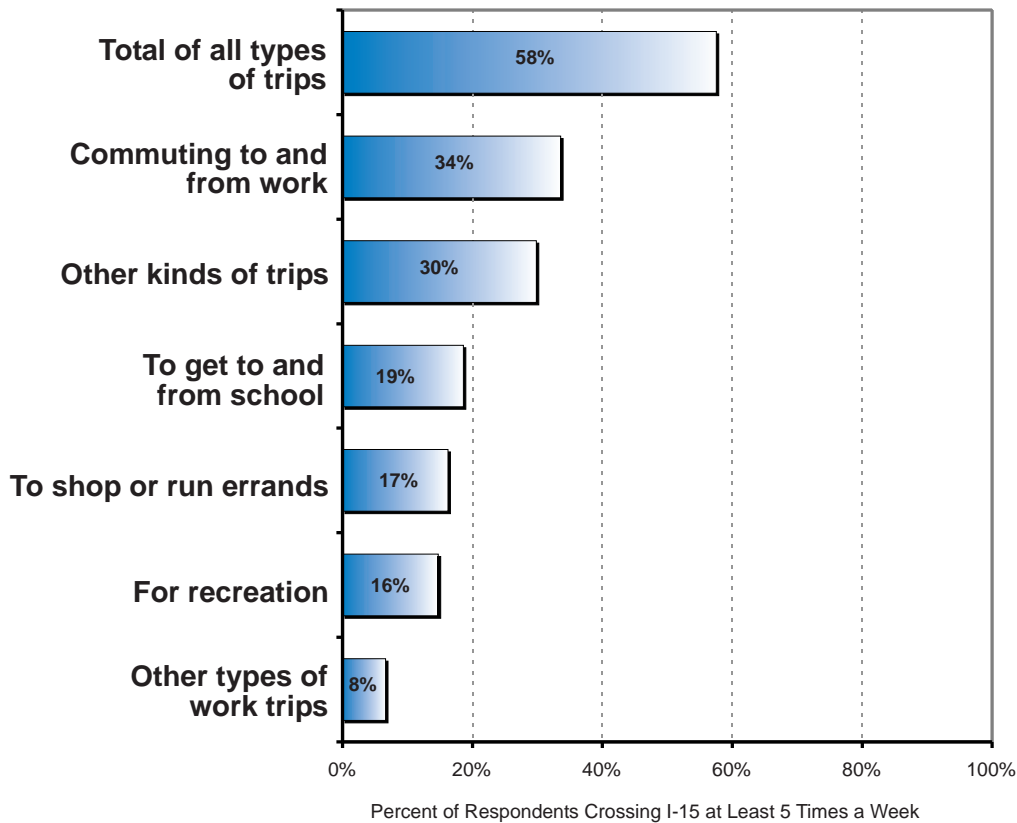
Ratings of Potential Personal Quality of Life Changes

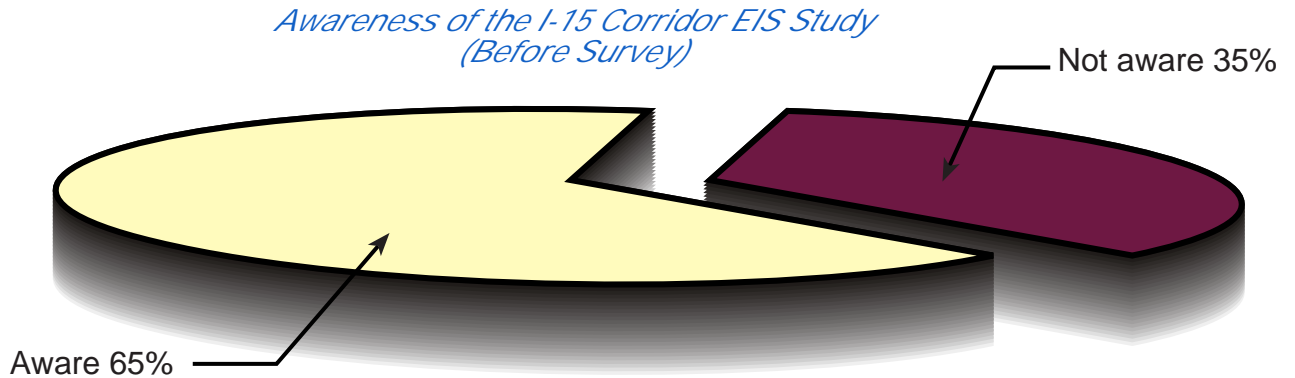


Use of I-15 for Various Types of Trips



Frequency of Crossing I-15 for Various Types of Trips





How had the Respondent Heard of the I-15 Corridor Study?

	Percent of Respondents Who Had Heard of the EIS
Newspaper Articles	80%
Television	41%
Word of Mouth	41%
Radio	30%
Public/community meetings	7%
Council or Commission meetings	6%
Committee Meetings	3%
Lewis and Clark County website	1%
Jefferson County website	0%
Don't remember	5%
Other	7%

**Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer*

Newspapers provide the greatest source of study information

How Would the Respondent like to be Informed of the I-15 Corridor Study?

	Percent of Respondents Who Had Heard of the EIS
Newspaper Articles	65%
Television or radio public service announcements	52%
Through a newspaper	36%
Ads in the Paper	28%
A website related to the subject	23%
Public community meetings	14%
Other	3%

**Percents may add to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer*

People prefer to get study information through print and electronic media

Newsletter # 2
January 2002

ATTEND THE SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: JANUARY 29

Please join us! This is your opportunity to meet one-on-one with project team members, ask questions, and share your comments or concerns. This workshop will run from 4:30pm to 7:30pm and will feature exhibits and interactive stations such as:

- ◆ Project Background and History
- ◆ Traffic and Roadway Information
- ◆ Interactive Project Web Site
- ◆ Advisory Committee Updates
- ◆ Project Purpose and Need
- ◆ Community Environmental Issues
- ◆ Public Involvement Opportunities
- ◆ Goals and Evaluation Criteria

A **FORMAL PRESENTATION** will be held at **5:30 pm** to inform you about the project and activities completed thus far. The presentation will also cover where we are in the EIS process and how you can participate!

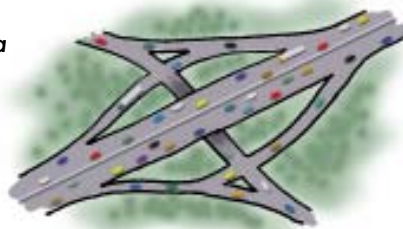


The more we hear from you, the better understanding we will have of how the community wants to improve travel along the I-15 corridor.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEIGHBORS SAYING?

We have received **over 100 comments** about various aspects of the project. The following represents comments received so far:

- ◆ "Do not put an underpass at **Broadway**. This is a residential street."
- ◆ "**Forestvale** interchange needs to be built."
- ◆ "**Capitol** interchange is dangerous and needs to be fixed."
- ◆ "**I-15 is a barrier** to east-west travel in Helena. Need better access to the east side of the valley."
- ◆ "A good **frontage road** is needed between Broadway and Montana City."
- ◆ "On/off ramps at **Custer** are a good idea."
- ◆ "There is a lack of **good pedestrian and bicycle facilities** in Helena, especially over I-15. This should be addressed with the study."



Capitol Interchange

These are just a few of the comments received. You are encouraged to contact us with any comment, concern or question that you may have.

What do YOU think should be done?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process includes:

1 Scoping – a public process to define the issues that need to be studied.

2 Data Collection – collecting traffic, environmental and land use data on what will be involved in any new designs.

3 We Are Here Alternatives/Evaluation Criteria Development – identifying the full range of alternatives, then reducing the list to those alternatives which appear most reasonable. An analysis of a no-build (do nothing) alternative is also required.

4 Analysis of Alternatives – transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives are studied in detail.

5 Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) – the need for the project, description of the alternatives, and an analysis of impacts that would likely result from each.

6 Public & Agency Review – an opportunity for public and agency feedback on the Draft EIS.

7 Final EIS Document – documents a preferred alternative and provides responses to comments that were made on the Draft EIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).



I-15 Corridor Study
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INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR

Montana City to Lincoln Road

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

I-15 Corridor EIS Public Workshop

DATE: Tuesday, January 29, 2002

TIME: 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm

FORMAL PRESENTATION AT 5:30 PM

LOCATION: West Coast Colonial Hotel
Executive Room
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena

What Deserves a Closer Look?

* In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 for any special accommodations.

PROJECT UPDATE: WE'RE MAKING PROGRESS

The I-15 Corridor Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is well underway. Since the first newsletter, much has happened:

- ◆ 70 people attended the first **PUBLIC WORKSHOP** on September 11, 2001.
- ◆ Three **ADVISORY COMMITTEE** meetings have been held.
- ◆ A **PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY** was mailed to 4,000 residents.
- ◆ **TRAFFIC SURVEYS** have been completed and are being analyzed for trends.
- ◆ **EVALUATION CRITERIA** are being developed to screen future alternatives.
- ◆ The **PROJECT WEB SITE** at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com has been updated with meeting summaries, articles, and other important project information.

SUMMARY FROM PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

The first public workshop (September 11th) was a scoping meeting to obtain your thoughts about issues within the I-15 corridor and the initial data collected. The following information was presented and displayed:

- ◆ Project Introduction
- ◆ Transportation Information
- ◆ Process and Schedule for the Project
- ◆ Purpose and Need for Improvements
- ◆ Opportunity to Comment
- ◆ Environmental Process Information

If you were unable to attend the first workshop, most of the information presented on September 11th will again be on display at the upcoming workshop for your review and comment.



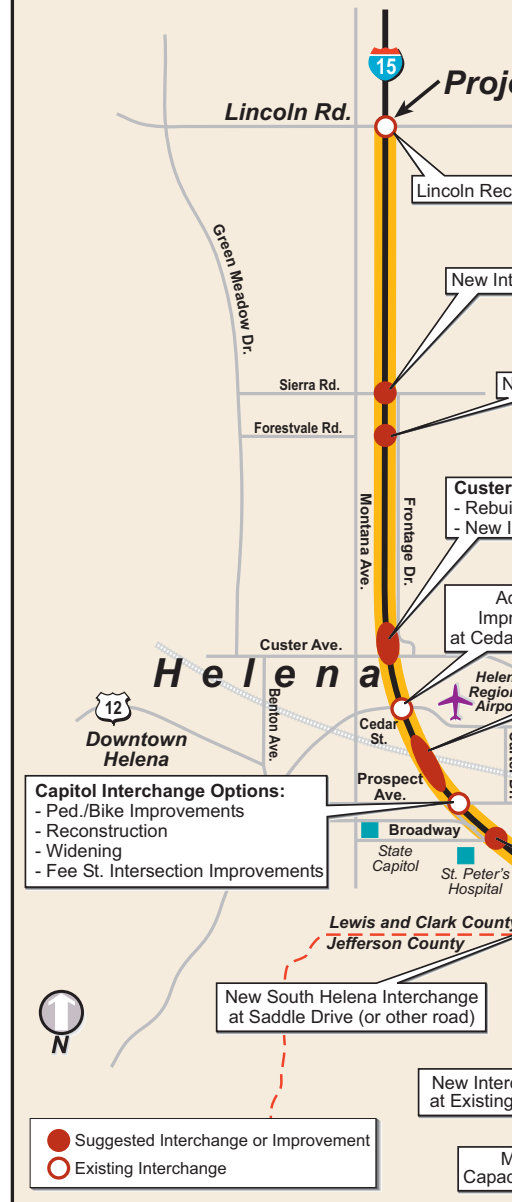
LOG ON TO THE PROJECT WEB SITE!!!

At www.I-15HelenaEIS.com you can:

- ◆ Read about the **history** of the project.
 - ◆ View the **project schedule**.
 - ◆ Learn about what's involved in an **EIS process**.
 - ◆ View summaries of recent **public involvement** activities and meetings.
 - ◆ Look at **project maps** and **newsletters**.
 - ◆ See what has been said about the project in **local newspapers**.
 - ◆ Send **comments** about the project using the **feedback form**.
- And much more...**



IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS



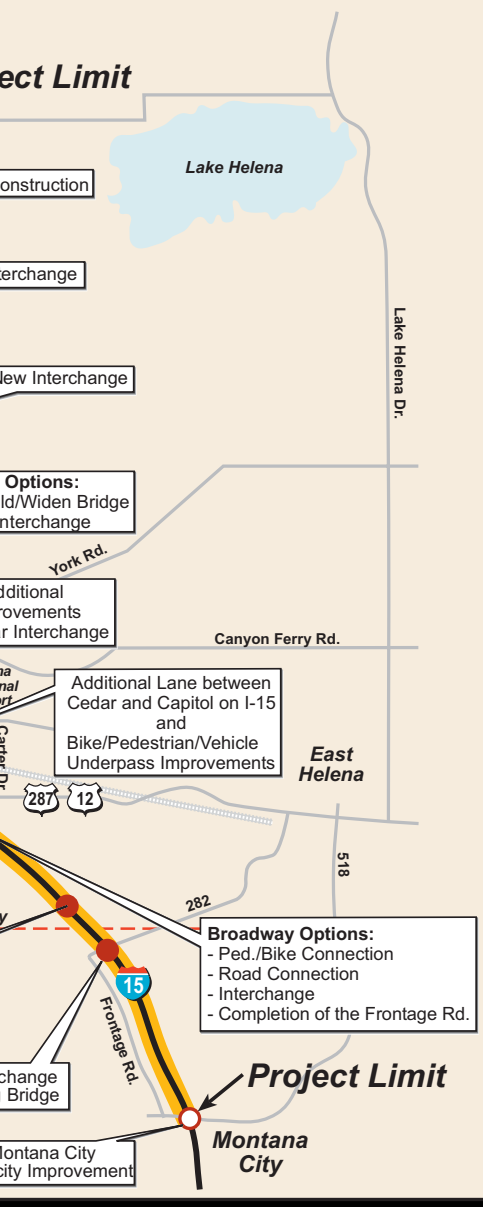
PROJECT CO

Ed Larson, Project Manager

Montana Department of Transportation
 PO Box 201001
 Helena, MT 59620
elarson@state.mt.us
 444-9191 phone
 444-6253 fax



SUGGESTED BY THE PUBLIC:



PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

The I-15 Corridor Project Team sent a Public Opinion Survey to 4,000 residents selected at random in Lewis and Clark and Jefferson Counties. **Final results will be presented at the public workshop on January 29, 2002.** The results will include information, such as:

- Identification and rating of the severity of problems on I-15 such as:
 - ◆ Congestion
 - ◆ Safety at interchanges
 - ◆ Getting on and off I-15
 - ◆ Ease of crossing I-15 on east/west roads
- Improvements that residents might support and use:
 - ◆ New overpasses/underpasses
 - ◆ Carpool lanes
 - ◆ Bus service
 - ◆ Improved pedestrian and bicycle access
 - ◆ New intersections
 - ◆ Minor improvements
 - ◆ No improvements



For those of you who participated, THANK YOU!

For those who did not receive a survey, you can review it on the project **Web site.**

I-15 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENVISIONS THE FUTURE

The Advisory Committee (AC) has met three times to assist project planners and engineers by giving input on the project process. During a **visioning session**, the AC identified regional qualities they wanted preserved, such as:

- ◆ Economic opportunity
- ◆ Sense of place
- ◆ Safe community
- ◆ Quality of life
- ◆ Cultural appeal
- ◆ Natural surroundings



Next, the AC began to identify **project goals** related to preserving the most important qualities of the region:

- ◆ Provide a safe transportation system
- ◆ Minimize impacts to environmental resources
- ◆ Minimize impacts to neighborhood and community resources
- ◆ Minimize the barrier effect of I-15 by improving the transportation network
- ◆ Provide a transportation system in line with local planning efforts
- ◆ Develop fiscally, practically, and politically implementable projects
- ◆ Improve mobility and efficiency for all modes of travel throughout the corridor

The AC is now establishing **evaluation criteria** used in the consideration of alternatives. Evaluation criteria must be quantifiable and specific to each goal.

Please see www.I-15HelenaEIS.com for AC members and meeting summaries.

CONTACTS

Kim Gambrell, Project Manager

Carter & Burgess, Inc
 216 16th Street Mall, Suite 1700
 Denver, CO 80202

gambrellkm@c-b.com
 (303) 820-4826 phone
 (303) 820-2401 fax



Public Workshop # 2
January 29, 2002

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR

Montana City to Lincoln Road

**PUBLIC
WORKSHOP # 2**

Tell us what you think will best address the transportation issues in the I-15 corridor.

Tuesday, January 29th

West Coast Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena
Executive Room, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Please plan to attend. We need to hear from you.

Meeting Schedule:

4:30 pm - 7:30 pm **Open House**

Attend Anytime at Your Convenience

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm **Presentation and Public Forum**

- Project Purpose and Need
- Public Input Opportunities
- Where We Are in the Process
- Progress Since the Last Workshop
- Questions/Comments

Information that will be available:

- Background Information
- Traffic and Accident Data
- Project Goals/Evaluation Criteria
- Corridor Issues of Concern
- Public Opinion Survey Results

For more information:

- Go to www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

—or—

- Call the Project Hotline at
406-458-4789

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 (or the TDD number for the hearing impaired at 406-444-7696) for any special accommodations.

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Meeting Schedule:

4:30 pm - 7:30 pm **Open House**

Attend Anytime at Your Convenience

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm **Presentation and Public Forum**

- Project Purpose and Need
- Public Input Opportunities
- Where We Are in the Process
- Progress Since the Last Workshop
- Questions/Comments

Information that will be available:

- Background Information
- Traffic and Accident Data
- Project Goals/Evaluation Criteria
- Corridor Issues of Concern
- Public Opinion Survey Results

For more information:

- Go to www.I-15HelenaEIS.com

-or-

- Call the Project Hotline at
406-458-4789

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 (or the TDD number for the hearing impaired at 406-444-7696) for any special accommodations.

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR

Montana City to Lincoln Road

**PUBLIC
WORKSHOP
2**

Tell us what you think will best address the transportation issues in the I-15 corridor.

Tuesday, January 29th

West Coast Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena
Executive Room, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

**Please plan to attend.
We need to hear from you.**

Meeting Schedule:

4:30 pm - 7:30 pm **Open House**

Attend Anytime at Your Convenience

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Presentation and Public Forum

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(or the TDD number for the hearing impaired at
406-444-7696) for any special accommodations.*

This meeting is an open house format with a formal presentation at 5:30 p.m. There will be a question/answer session following the presentation. If you would like to make a comment or if you have a question, please let the speaker know by raising your hand. Someone will pass you a microphone in turn. Please say and spell your name into the microphone before making a comment or asking a question. At 6:30 p.m. the question answer session will end and we will return to an open house format where you can speak one on one with the project staff. The open house displays will remain available for viewing until 7:30 p.m.

Intent of Meeting:

To present updated project information and to receive your ideas and suggestions, and to answer questions from the public about issues and concerns along the I-15 project study area.

Room Organization:

The room is organized with six stations. These are:

STATION ONE: SIGN-IN TABLE

- Please sign-in
- Project Handouts
- Comment Sheets

STATION TWO: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Purpose of Tonight's Workshop exhibit
- Project History exhibit
- Project Vicinity aerial photo
- Project Schedule graphic
- **Environmental Impact Statement**
- EIS Process graphic
- Contents of an EIS exhibit
- Community Resources graphic
- Bike and Pedestrian Facilities graphic

STATION THREE: PUBLIC/AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

- **Public Opinion Survey**
- Public Opinion Survey Results graphics (9)
- Public Opinion Survey handout
- Public/Agency Involvement Opportunities exhibit
- Comment Sheets available

STATION FOUR: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- Purpose & Need Statement graphic
- Project Goals graphics (7)
- Land Use Dot maps (3)
- Population Forecasts graphics (3)
- Existing Daily Traffic map
- 2025 Traffic Forecasts map
- Existing Level of Service map
- 2025 Level of Service map
- Level of Service Defined graphic
- Estimated Traffic Patterns maps
- Origination/Destination Survey Results maps
- Roadway & Structural Deficiencies graphic

- **Approach to Evaluation Criteria**
- Approach to Evaluation Criteria graphics (3)
- Evaluation Criteria handout
- Comment Sheets available

STATION FIVE: IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

- **What Deserves a Closer Look?**
- Improvement Options Suggested map
- Project Area aerials
- Map Handouts for drawing alternatives and issues available

STATION SIX: COMMENTS

- Display of Comments received
- Comment Sheets available
- Comment Box
- Project Website displayed

Commenting Opportunities:

You can give us your input in the following ways:

- ▶ Ask questions or provide comments to project personnel (with name tags).
- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and put it in the comment box.
- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and mail or fax it in later (see comment sheets for address and fax number).
- ▶ Visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com, and fill out a feedback form.
- ▶ Call the project hotline at **(406) 458-4789**.
- ▶ Voice your comment at the question/answer session following the presentation.

Project Contacts:

Ed Larson, MDT
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620
Fax: (406) 444-6253
Email: el Larson@state.mt.us

Gene Kaufman, FHWA
2880 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59602
Fax: (406) 449-5314
Email: gene.kaufman@fhwa.dot.gov



First Public Workshop Summary News Release

Overwhelmingly, citizens told I-15 designers at the first public workshop that their biggest concern about the project focuses on improving the functioning of existing interchanges and the need for improved access to downtown and developing areas.

“People were emphatic,” said Kim Gambrill, project manager for Carter & Burgess, the firm conducting the study.

Sixty-three people attended the project open house on September 11th, and those who didn’t attend were encouraged to still provide comments. Roughly 120 comments have been received according to Gambrill. They’ll be used to help set goals for the project in a “statement of purpose and need.” In addition, they will also help planners define and evaluate alternatives, and recommend alternatives.

The Capitol interchange drew many comments. “It’s fatally flawed,” said one attendee. “It’s dangerous and unsafe,” commented another. The primary access to downtown and the focus of travel in the area, is increasingly a problem, said many commentators.

Some think the problems can be fixed by design improvements to the interchange; others think more access to the interstate is the solution. “Reducing the amount of traffic at the interchange by providing other ways to access downtown will work,” they said. Others commented that reducing traffic congestion and providing additional access to the interstate would also improve east-west travel and better serve existing and future development in outlying areas. Some thought that this would help to get rid of the existing barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists. Some mentioned that they thought response times for ambulance and emergency services may also be improved.

Several locations for new interchanges were mentioned. “We’ll look at them all, as well as various improvements to the existing ones, Gambrill said.

Several issues were raised regarding the need for improvements to streets that would improve local access and increase safety. Montana Avenue north of Custer, in particular, received a lot of comment. Gambrill pointed out that the project is focussed on I-15 and the east-west connecting roads. “Some of these issues raised, while extremely valid, are outside the bounds of this project,” he said.

Connecting the frontage road south of Helena toward Montana City and adding a frontage road along the east side of I-15 was urged to provide better access from the south.

“Spare our neighborhoods,” was a common theme for many who voiced concern about any more traffic on residential streets and impacts to schools and churches.

Many also commented on what they see as a need for better facilities for bikes and pedestrians. “Link things up and establish pedestrian rights-of-way across the interstate,” they said. Some mentioned the need for an alternative to driving – mass transit.

Some commentators were particularly concerned about how much the project will cost, and how cost will be considered in recommendations. Concern about how long the project will take was also mentioned.

“The issues identified at this workshop are important in defining improvements that will ‘do the right thing’ for the community,” concludes Larry Gibson of Carter & Burgess. He adds that the next public workshop is planned for mid-January.



Forming the Advisory Committee

The primary purpose of the I-15 Corridor Advisory Committee (AC) is to provide input and advice to the Project Team preparing the I-15 Corridor (Montana City to Lincoln Road) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Advisory Committee's task is to develop recommendations for the Project Team (the Montana Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and their consultant, Carter & Burgess), by consensus where possible. Dissenting views will also be presented. The AC is not a voting body and is not meant to numerically mirror the community in the neighborhood of I-15. Rather it is meant to enrich the EIS process by having various interests represented and in a position to give input to the Team at critical points in the preparation of the EIS.

In creating this committee, the Project Team sought to convene a group that represents a broad cross-section of groups and individuals that might have a high level of interest in helping to identify existing problems and potential transportation solutions within the corridor. One key goal for forming this kind of advisory group is to have most interests represented while keeping the committee small enough to discuss issues effectively. To accomplish this, the I-15 Corridor Advisory Committee is limited to between 15 and 20 individuals. Another goal for the AC is to have members who can get input from the community and who will communicate the issues that are presented. This requires members who can and will speak competently and who have "constituencies" with whom they can discuss and develop issues.

The process of selecting the AC followed normal procedures for forming groups such as this. It began with a list of potential interests in the I-15 corridor. This list was initially developed by the Project Team and the committee facilitators (The Settlement Center). Names were found for each represented interest---usually from talking to people familiar with the identified groups and interests. In addition, these people frequently suggested other people and interests, allowing the list to expand. Contacts were made, telephone interviews were conducted and, eventually, a single representative for each group was identified. In some cases, identified groups declined the offer to participate.

The most effective Advisory Committee is one that, as a whole, has different initial opinions, has an openness to learn more and possibly reconsider those initial opinions, has a great interest in the transportation system within the project area, and has a willingness to commit to actively participate throughout the EIS process. Another key to success is to have a broad range of opinions represented without domination by a single point of view, special interest or geographical area. This balance is created through interviews with each prospective member and discussion of the process with them.

(continued on back)

The Committee that has been brought together for the I-15 Corridor EIS represents most of the groups contacted and is balanced in terms of scope of opinions and strength of opinions. It needs to be stressed that because the Advisory Committee gives advice, it is not intended to reflect the actual numbers of people that may or may not support any given position; rather it is intended to reflect the variety of opinions that exist. Representation of this variety of opinions will generate the most useful discussions and the broadest range of potential solutions to the transportation problems identified within the I-15 project corridor.

The individuals selected by the I-15 Corridor (Montana City to Lincoln Road) EIS Project Team to serve on the Advisory Committee are listed below:

Name	Group or Interest Represented
Derek Brown	Building Industry
Cathy Burwell	Helena Chamber of Commerce
Joe Calnan	North Jefferson County Business/Emergency Services
John Carter	Helena School District
Jim Cottrill	Airport Commission/Hometown Helena Pride
Joel Gerhart	Recreation/Bicycle
Bob Habeck	Neighborhood/Capital Area
Victor Kelly	West Valley Fire District Emergency Services (North Area)
Wayne Krieger	East Helena City Councilman
Ray Kuntz	Trucking Industry
Marga Lincoln	Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO)
Ellen Livers	St. Peter's Community Hospital
Tom Lythgoe	Jefferson County Commissioner
Bob Marks	Jefferson Local Development Corporation
Pete McHugh	Helena Valley Irrigation District/Agriculture
Ken Morrison	City of Helena
Mike Murray	Lewis & Clark County
Paul Reichert	Downtown Business Improvement District
Dick Thweat	Plan Helena

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Return Address:

Place
stamp
here

**I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59601**

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Project Goals

Screening Criteria

(Advisory Committee)



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 1

Minimize the barrier effect of I-15 by creating more transportation connections and improving the transportation network for all forms of east-west travel across I-15

Subgoals:

- ▶ **Improve east-west travel for cars and trucks and other modes of travel.**
- ▶ **Improve emergency access for fire police and ambulances, and access to medical**
- ▶ **Include bike and pedestrian facilities as a substantial part of projects**

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 1	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there an increased efficiency of east-west travel for all modes?		
1. Improved interchange operations	yes/no by interchange, why	LOS by interchange and crossing, why
2. Change in Interchange and crossing activity	increase or decrease by interchange and crossing	Traffic volumes
3. Increased through truck route options (not using residential routes)	yes/no , where	number / location
4. Increased number of east-west crossings and/or laneage	number	number / location
5. Reduced travel times between representative east-west origins and destinations	yes/no, most improved example	times for 12 pairs: east include N of Custer, E Helena, Jefferson Co.; west include N of Custer, Capitol area, downtown Helena, hospital area
6. Vehicle miles of travel (VMT) for non-I-15 roadways	increase / decrease	Change in overall VMT for non-I-15 roadways
7. Vehicle hours of travel (VHT) for non-I-15 roadways	increase / decrease	Change in overall VHT for non-I-15 roadways
8. Reduced representative emergency response times	yes/no, why	times for 9 pairs: west include hospital, downtown fire station, N fire station; east include N of Custer, E Helena, Jefferson Co.
9. Ease of use by pedestrian and bicycle modes	yes/no, description	Number and locations

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the issue of the barrier effect created by I-15 for east-west travel.



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 2

Improve mobility and efficiency between origination and destination points for all modes of travel.

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 2	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is travel time improved and are miles traveled reduced network-wide for all modes of travel?		
1. Vehicle miles of travel (VMT) by facility type	increase / decrease	Change in VMT by facility type
2. Vehicle hours of travel (VHT) by facility type	increase / decrease	Change in VHT by facility type
3. Cars	yes/no, by interchange	avg. delay by interchange
4. Trucks	yes/no	potential VMT reduction by truck for North-West truck trips
5. Emergency response	yes/no, most improved example	times for 12 pairs: off I-15 include hospital, N fire station, downtown fire station; on I-15 include N of Custer, N of Capitol, S of Capitol
6. Hospital access	yes/no, most improved example	Times from 6 locations: three east of I-15 and three west of I-15
2. Is pedestrian and bicycle network improved to provide more options and encourage use?	yes/no, location(s)	description of more direct pedestrian and bicycle movements
3. Are there additional I-15 access points and are they effective?	yes/no	# of new access points, total volume entering / exiting I-15
4. Are there opportunities for enhanced transportation demand management (TDM)?	yes/no (list)	Opportunities that are included; future options that exist

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the local use of I-15 and its interchanges and cross over/under roadways

2. Travel demand management strategies are designed to make the most efficient use of existing transportation facilities by reducing the actual "demand" placed on these facilities. Using strategies, which promote alternative modes, increase vehicle occupancy, reduce travel distances and ease peak hour congestion, TDM efforts can extend the useful life of transportation facilities and enhance mobility options.



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 3

Provide a transportation system that is responsive, complimentary and coordinated with all local planning efforts and that recognizes existing and planned infrastructure developments (e.g. growth plans and policies, water, sewer, government lands, parks, hospitals, schools, transportation)

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 3	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there compliance with specifics of plans and policies?		
1. Lewis & Clark County Growth Policy	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
2. Lewis & Clark County Special Zoning Districts	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
3. City of Helena / Lewis & Clark County Comp. Parks, Rec. and Open Space Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
4. Helena Area Wastewater Treatment Final Facility Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
5. City of Helena Growth Policy Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
6. Zoning Map for the City of Helena	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
7. Jefferson County Growth Policy Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
8. Helena Water Master Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
9. Stormwater Drain Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
10. Southeastside Infrastructure Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
11. Helena Transit Development Plan	General compliance (based on agency input) yes/no/other	specific areas of compliance or non-compliance (based on agency input)
2. Do improvements encourage growth in preferred growth areas where growth can be efficiently served by public services?	yes/no	describe how / how not
3. Is there recognition of existing and planned infrastructure improvements?	yes/no	list specific improvements
4. Is there maximum use of public property suitable for transportation projects?	yes/no	where used / how much

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the compatibility of the EIS alternatives with local and regional plans.



INTERSTATE 5 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 4

Provide a safe transportation system for all users in all modes of travel.

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 4	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there improvement of substandard designs at high accident or other critical locations?	yes/no	yes/no for each site
2. Are configurations that create undesirable conflicts at high accident locations improved?		
1. Vehicle to vehicle	yes/no	list improvements
2. Vehicle to pedestrian	yes/no	list improvements
3. Vehicle to other	yes/no	list improvements
3. Can construction meet modern design standards?	yes/no	specific areas where design standards not met

Notes: 1. This goal addresses overall safety of the transportation system in the I-15 corridor.



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 5

Minimize adverse impacts to environmental resources of the study area.

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 5	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there an enhancement to or detracton from the quality of the environmental resources?		
1. Wetlands	+/-	acres of permanent and temporary impact
2. Floodplain	+/-	acres of encroachment, impact to flood levels
3. Ecological/Wildlife Habitat	+/-	acres of habitat affected, effect on wildlife
4. Hazardous Materials	+/-	sites affected, type of sites, risk involved
5. Historical and Archeological Resources	+/-	sites affected, severity of impacts
6. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources	+/-	acres of impact, effect on recreational use
7. Threatened and Endangered Species	+/-	species affected, severity of impacts
8. Air Quality	+/-	change in ambient air pollution levels, relationship to federal / state standards
9. Prime or Unique Farmlands	+/-	acres affected, farmland conversion index
10. Water Quality	+/-	acres of new impervious surface created, changes in pollutant levels, relationship to federal/state standards

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the impacts of the project on the natural and historical environment
2. (+) = enhancement, (0) = neutral, (-) = detracton



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 6

Minimize adverse impacts to neighborhood, community and business resources of the study area.

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 6	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there an enhancement to or detractor from the quality of life in the neighborhoods, and support of neighborhood identity?		
1. Aesthetics	+/0/-	visual impacts, square feet of new structure walls
2. Is there an increase/decrease in traffic noise?	+/0/-	number of receivers affected, change in noise level within primary I-15 study corridor
3. Is there an increase/decrease in traffic speeds through neighborhoods	+/0/-	change of speed on residential streets where applicable, based on volume/speed/capacity graphs
4. Change in traffic volumes on residential streets	+/0/-	peak hour traffic volume on residential streets where applicable
5. Truck traffic on residential streets	+/0/-	change of peak hour trucks based on avg. truck percentage on residential streets where applicable
2. Is there an increase of connections between neighborhoods and community resources?		
1. Schools	yes/no	list of schools with improved access to/from or across I-15
2. Hospitals	yes/no	Does the hospital area have improved access to/from or across I-15
3. Parks and recreational facilities	yes/no	list of parks and recreational facilities near I-15 with improved access to/from or across I-15
3. Is there a beneficial or adverse effect on business accessibility for all modes of travel?	+/0/-	yes/no for downtown, US 12, north Montana commercial area, airport/ industrial area, Capital Hill Mall and other areas
4. Is there a need for additional right-of-way?	yes/no	# of acres by type, # of homes, # of businesses
5. Is there an effect on walkability and bikability?	beneficial or adverse	beneficial or adverse effect, where
6. Is there an effect on the connectivity of the local street network?	beneficial or adverse	beneficial or adverse effect, where
7. Is there an increased need for neighborhood traffic calming applications as a mitigation measure?	yes/no	yes/no

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the impacts of the project on neighborhoods, communities and businesses
2. (+) = enhancement, (0) = neutral, (-) = detractor
3. Changes from 12/11/01 underlined



INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

Screening Criteria

Project Goal 7

Develop implementable projects, fiscally and practically.

Subgoals:

- ▶ *Where possible, consider multiple improvements at the same time.*
- ▶ *To the extent practicable, seek to maximize potential project funding through existing and new*

Evaluation Criteria for Goal 7	Evaluation Measure	
	Preliminary Screening	Final Screening
1. Is there maximum use of connections to existing or planned roadways and rights-of-way?	yes/no	list the connections
2. Are the requirements for federal funding met?	yes/no (input from MDT/FHWA)	funds available/needed by type, requirements met
3. Is there public support?		
1. Public at large	yes/no (input from groups)	yes/no (input from groups)
2. Neighborhood associations	yes/no (input from groups)	yes/no (input from groups)
3. City and County Commissions	yes/no (input from groups)	yes/no (input from groups)
4. How many potential funding sources are there?	number	number, potential for funding
5. What is the capital cost range?	high/med/low	conceptual capital cost estimate
6. What is the operational cost range?	high/med/low	operation cost estimate by year
7. What are the construction phasing impacts?	high/med/low	list phasing requirements

Notes: 1. This goal addresses the reasonableness and feasibility of the EIS alternatives



Newsletter # 3
May 2002

**I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601**



A Montana Department of Transportation Project Newsletter
◆ **Hotline: (406) 458-4789** ◆ **www.I-15HelenaEIS.com** ◆

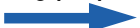
PRELIMINARY I-15 ALTERNATIVES DESCRIBED INSIDE

Important Project Milestone Reached

Four transportation improvement alternatives that address the major transportation needs in the I-15 corridor have been identified. These alternatives will be further evaluated and refined by the I-15 Project Team with the assistance of the project Advisory Committee and input from the public through upcoming public involvement activities (see back page).

The four alternatives were defined based upon an engineering analysis of current and anticipated future transportation problems along the corridor, public comments received during two public workshops, project web site and hotline comments, individual meetings and presentations, and the recently completed public opinion survey. Together, this information helped guide the Project Team to understand what should be considered to improve current and future travel in the I-15 corridor.

The Project Team and the Advisory Committee categorized an initial list of more than 30 possible improvements into major (stand-alone) improvement options and supporting project elements. The major improvement options were evaluated individually and in combinations using the project purpose and need, locally developed goals and preliminary evaluation criteria (available on the project web site at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com).

This evaluation resulted in the four transportation improvement alternatives described in this newsletter. Supporting project elements may be added to supplement these alternatives to enhance their effectiveness. For details look inside. 

Look for Upcoming Project Information and Learn More about the Alternatives

It is extremely important that everyone understands the alternatives and how they address the travel issues in the corridor. In the upcoming days and weeks, look for these opportunities to learn more about the alternatives, to comment on them, and to provide input for their evaluation:

- **Newspaper articles, television and radio interviews** describing the alternatives and schedule of upcoming project activities.
- Update of the **Project Web Site** (www.I-15HelenaEIS.com) including descriptions of the alternatives and public comment feedback forms.
- **Presentations** to groups and organizations.
- **Inserts** in local newspapers with response forms that can be mailed back to the Project Team.
- Third **Public Workshop** providing opportunity to learn about the alternatives and speak directly to the Project Team about them (see below).
- **Project Hotline** at 458-4789 for answers to questions about the project.

Over the next four weeks, the transportation improvement alternatives will be further evaluated to identify the alternatives that will be analyzed in the project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The identification of the alternatives for inclusion in the EIS will occur in early June, following the next public workshop on June 5th. So keep an eye out! There will be a lot of project information coming your way.

Next Public Workshop

Date: Wednesday, June 5, 2002
Time: 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm
Location: West Coast Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena

Come to the public workshop!

The workshop will provide an opportunity to learn more about the I-15 corridor transportation improvement alternatives, and to comment on them and their evaluation directly to members of the Project Team. You will also be able to review and comment on other project information including project goals, purpose and need, and evaluation criteria.

*ADA compliance, call Annell Fillingier for special accommodations (406) 458-9065.



Attendees at second Public Workshop

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process includes:

1 Scoping – a public process to define the issues that need to be studied.

2 Data Collection – collecting traffic, environmental and land use data on what will be involved in any new designs.

3 Alternatives/ Evaluation Criteria Development – identifying the full range of alternatives, then reducing the list to those alternatives which appear most reasonable. An analysis of a no-action (do nothing) alternative is also required.

4 Analysis of Alternatives – transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives are studied in detail.

5 Preparation of a Draft EIS – the need for the project, description of the alternatives, and an analysis of impacts that would likely result from each.

6 Public & Agency Review – an opportunity for public and agency feedback on the Draft EIS.

7 Final EIS – documents a preferred alternative and provides responses to comments that were made on the Draft EIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).

We Are Here

FLASH!

The Web Site Has Been Updated

Take a look at our **Web Site!** We have recently updated it with new information and graphics. Information from the last public workshop is now posted. **Most importantly, there is a new page with information describing the transportation improvement alternatives.** As always, this is an easy way for you to give us your ideas and thoughts by using the public comment feedback form.

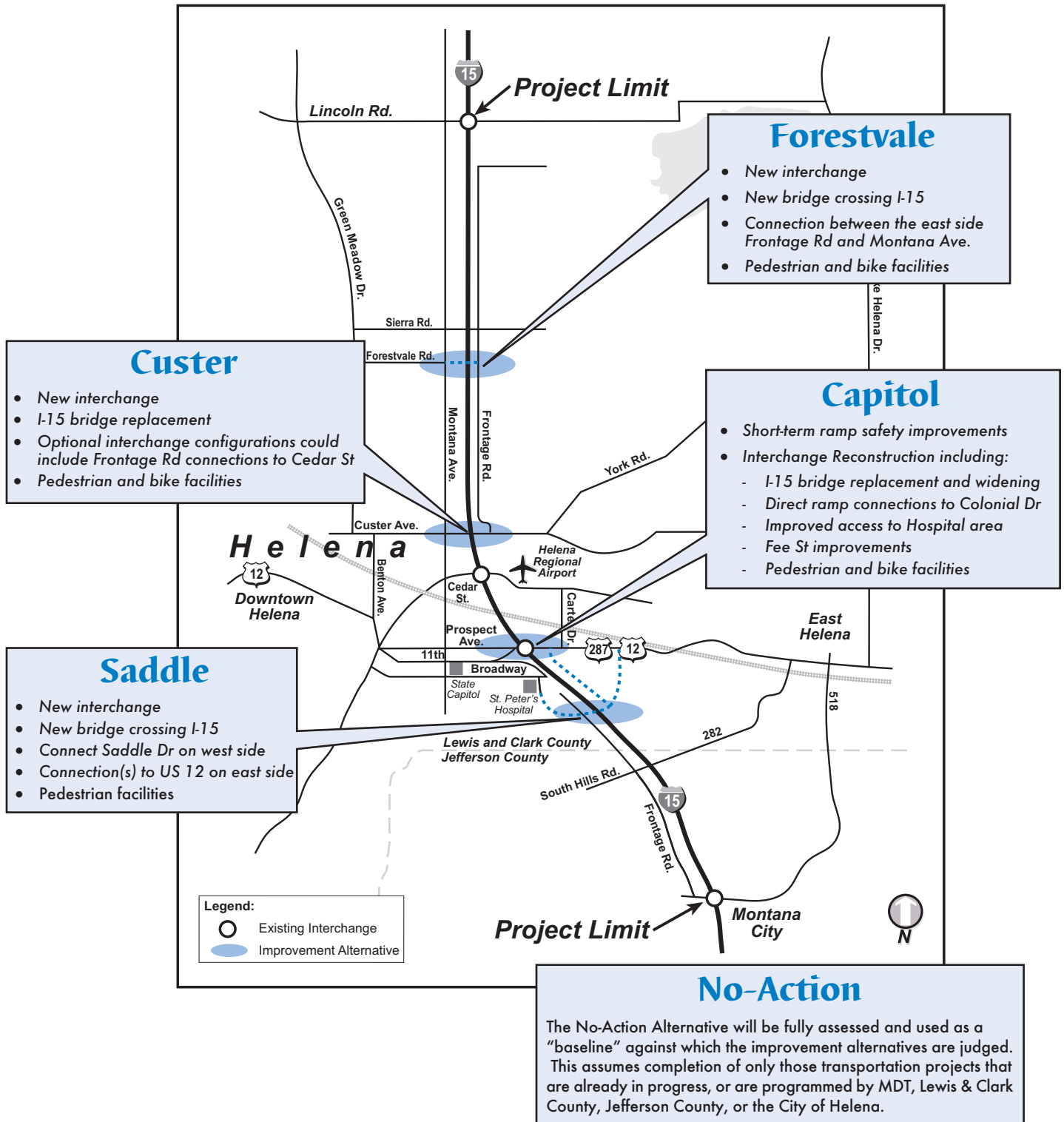
What do YOU think should be done?

Let us know on our Web Site: www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
or call the Project Information Hotline at 458-4789.



PRELIMINARY I-15 ALTERNATIVES

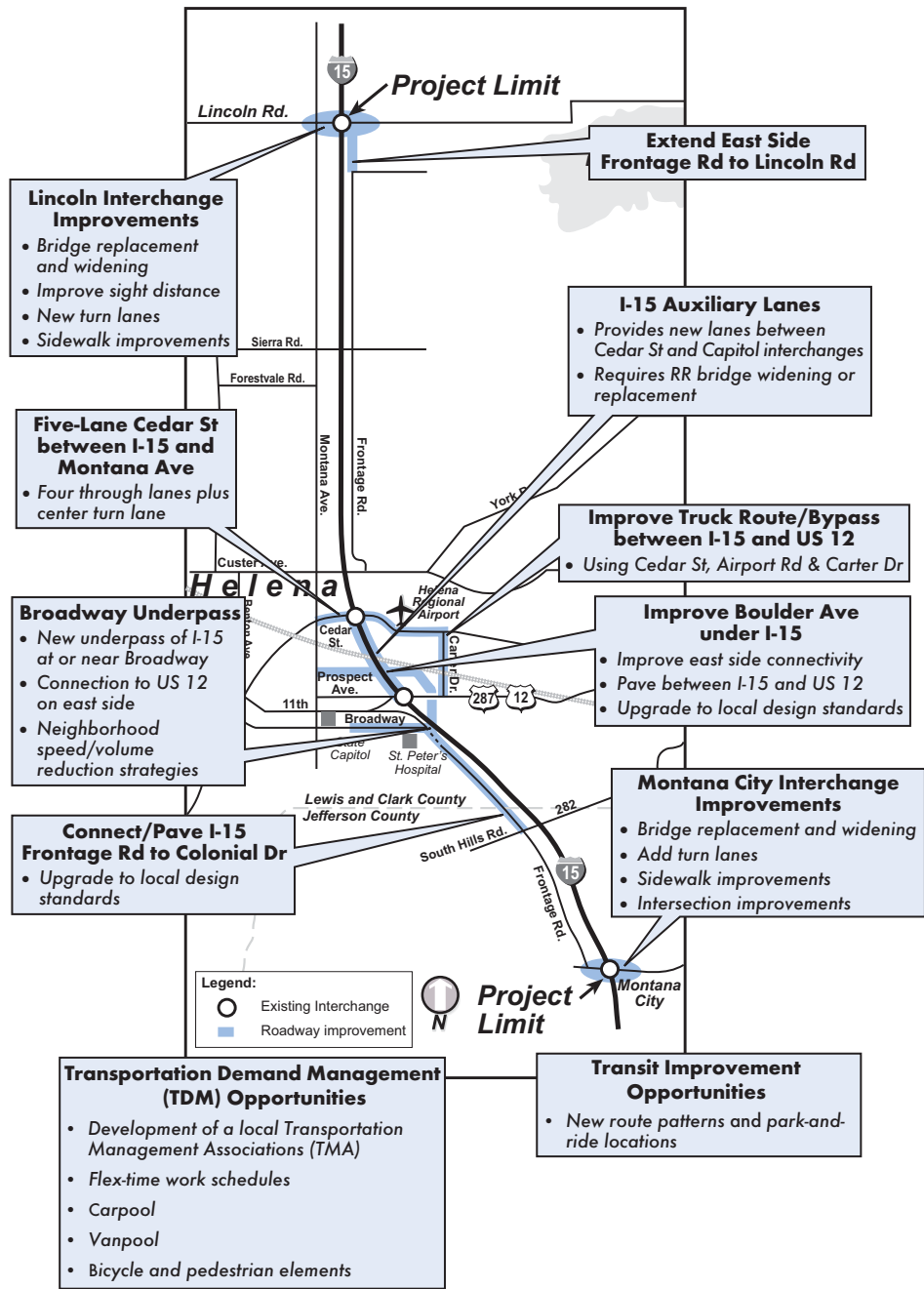
These new or improved interchanges represent the major transportation alternatives under consideration for the I-15 corridor. A No-Action alternative will also be evaluated to serve as a point of comparison for all options under consideration. Specific alternatives which prove to be most effective may be packaged to better address the goals and objectives of this study.



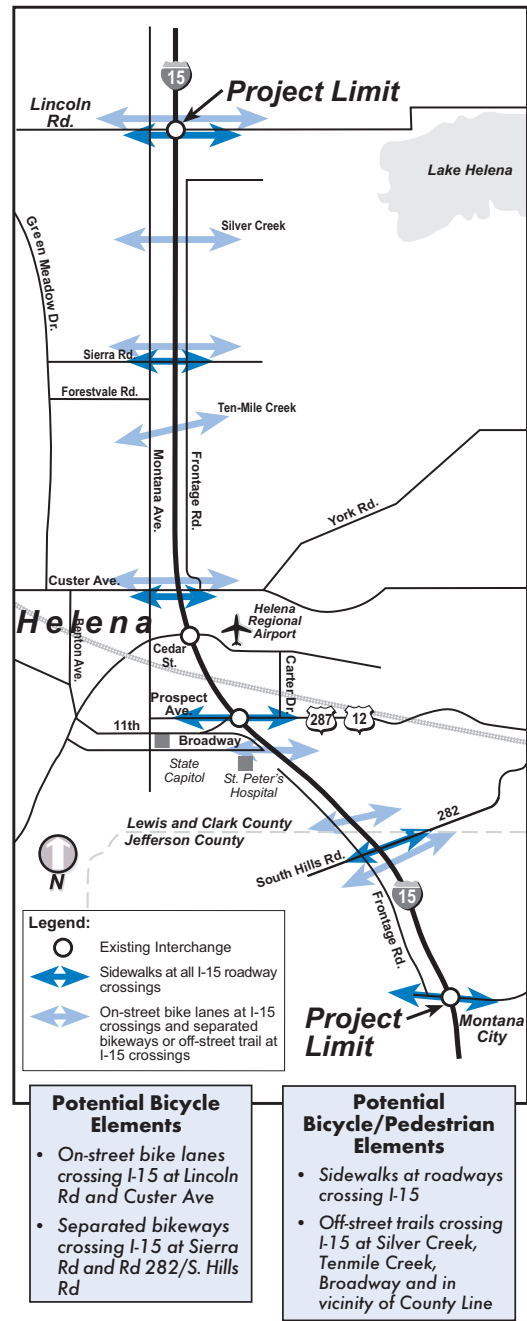
Preliminary Supporting Project Elements:

These supplemental elements related to safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and alternative means of transportation, may be added to enhance the effectiveness of major transportation alternatives.

Roadway Elements



Bicycle/Pedestrian Elements

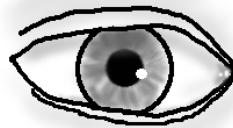


Newspaper Insert
May 15, 2002

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR

Montana City to Lincoln Road

KEEP AN EYE OUT!!



Coming May 15th,
an insert will be placed in
this paper updating the public
on the status of the current
I-15 Corridor
Environmental Impact Statement.

Information included:

- Description of four preliminary transportation improvement alternatives
- Description of the no-action alternative
- Public meeting announcement
- Brief project questionnaire that can be returned to the project staff



Project Web Site: www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
Project Hotline: 458-4789

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

KEEP AN EYE OUT!!



Coming May 15th,
an insert will be placed in
this paper updating the public
on the status of the current
I-15 Corridor Environmental Impact Statement.

Information included:

- Description of four preliminary transportation improvement alternatives
- Description of the no-action alternative
- Public meeting announcement
- Brief project questionnaire that can be returned to the project staff



Project Web Site: www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
Project Hotline: 458-4789

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR
Montana City to Lincoln Road

KEEP AN EYE OUT!!



Coming May 15th,
an insert will be placed in
this paper updating the public
on the status of the current
**I-15 Corridor
Environmental
Impact Statement.**

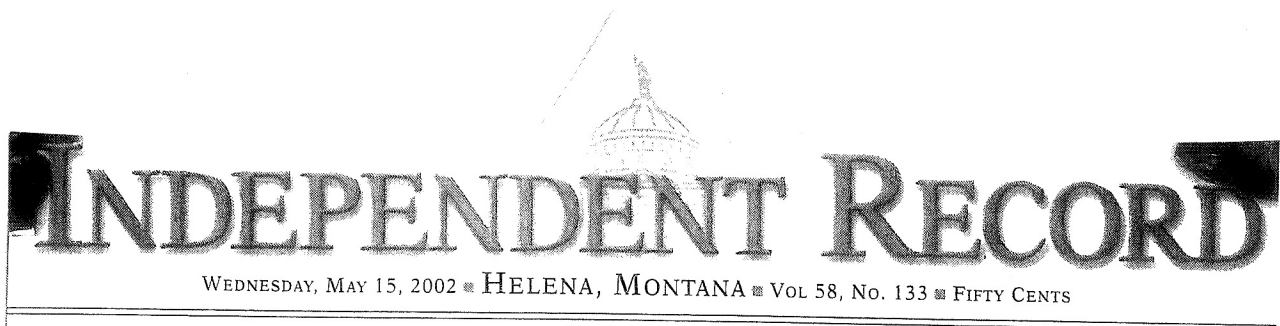
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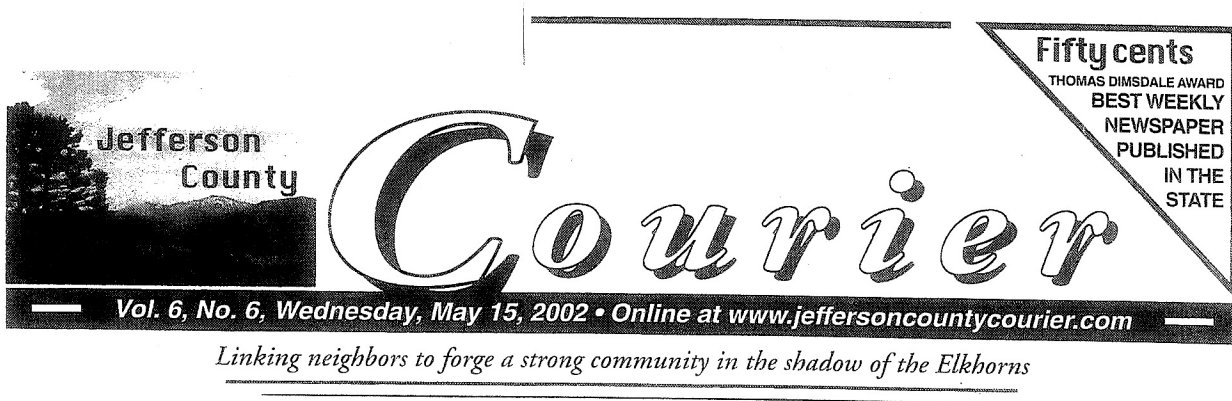


Project Web Site: www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
Project Hotline: 458-4789

The following newspaper insert was located in the newspaper editions listed below:



INDEPENDENT RECORD
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2002 • HELENA, MONTANA • Vol 58, No. 133 • FIFTY CENTS



Jefferson County Courier
Fifty cents
THOMAS DIMSDALE AWARD
BEST WEEKLY
NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHED
IN THE
STATE

Vol. 6, No. 6, Wednesday, May 15, 2002 • Online at www.jeffersoncountycourier.com

Linking neighbors to forge a strong community in the shadow of the Elkhorns

The Official Newspaper of Jefferson County

THE BOULDER 50 cents

MONITOR

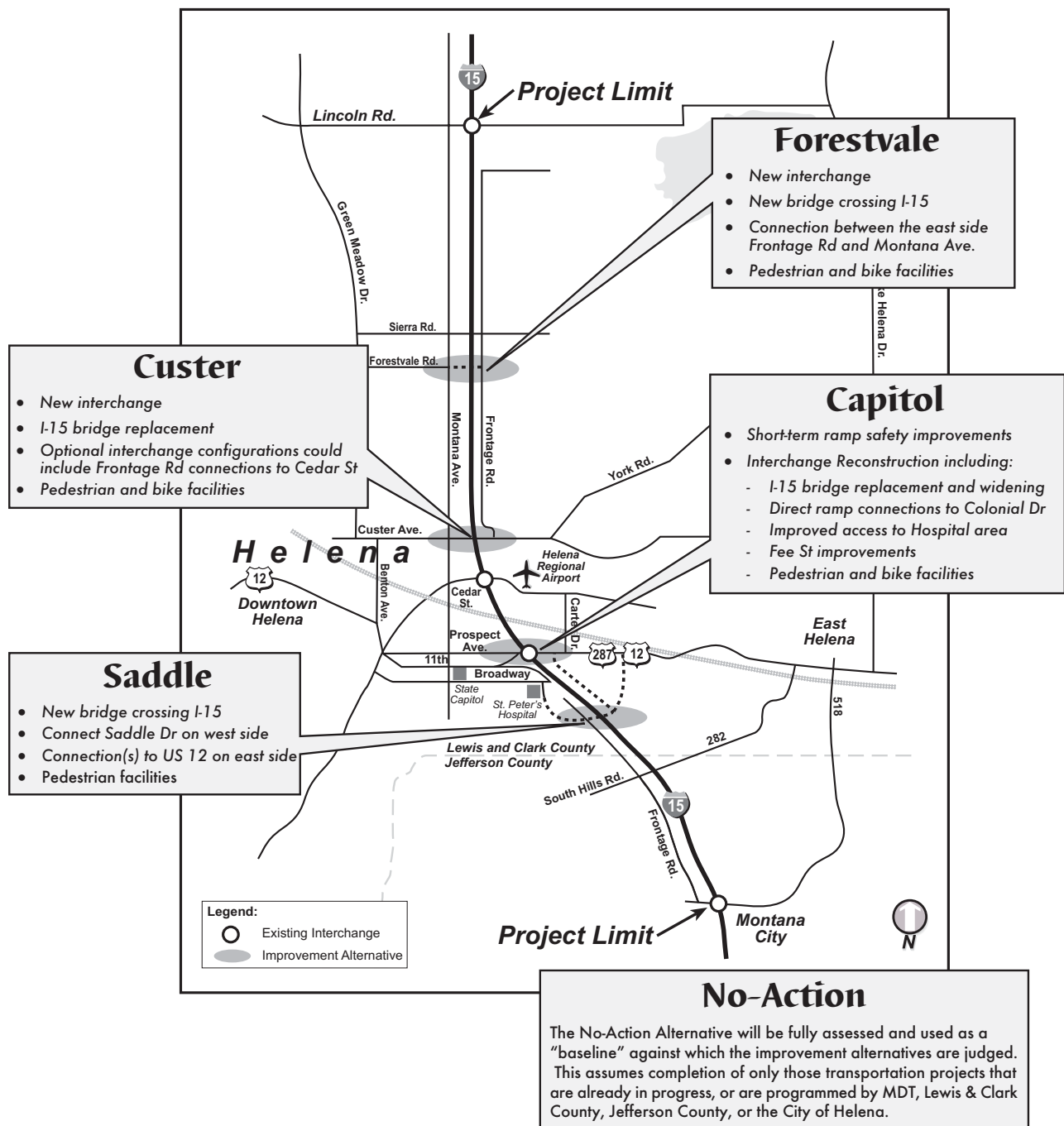
Volume 101 - No. 28 USPS 061-680 Wednesday, May 15, 2002
104 West Centennial • P. O. Box 66 • Boulder, Montana 59632

Serving Jefferson County for over 100 years

PRELIMINARY I-15 ALTERNATIVES

Four preliminary transportation improvement alternatives that address the major transportation needs in the I-15 corridor have been identified. These alternatives were defined based upon analysis of current and projected travel demand and population growth in the area, and comments received from the public. The Project Team and the project Advisory Committee determined these alternatives to best accommodate the project goals and local preferences for transportation improvements, and anticipated community and environmental effects.

This insert is intended to widely inform the public of these alternatives and to indicate various methods for the public to learn more about them. Also, this insert contains a short questionnaire that you may fill-out and mail to the Project Team with your comments about the alternatives and your understanding of them.



HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALTERNATIVES

NEXT PUBLIC WORKSHOP

The third project Public Workshop will provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the preliminary alternatives and to comment on them directly to Project Team members. Public comments will be used in the further refinement and evaluation of these alternatives.

Date: Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Time: 4:30pm to 7:30pm
Open House Format
(show up anytime)

Location: West Coast Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive in Helena



Attendees at second I-15 Workshop

Information that will be displayed:

- General Project Information
- Development of Alternatives
- Analysis of Alternatives
- Detail of Preliminary Alternatives
- Supporting Project Elements
- Public Comments

Other Public Information Opportunities

It is extremely important that everyone understands the preliminary alternatives and how they address the travel issues in the I-15 corridor. In the upcoming days and weeks, look for these other opportunities to learn more about the alternatives, to comment on them, and to provide input to their evaluation:

- **Newspaper articles, television and radio interviews** describing the alternatives and the schedule of upcoming project activities.
- Update of the **Project Web Site** (www.I-15HelenaEIS.com) including descriptions of the alternatives and public comment feedback forms.
- **Presentations** to groups and organizations.
- **Project Hotline** at 458-4789 for answers to questions about the project.

YOUR COMMENTS

Please take a few minutes to fill-in the information on your awareness and understanding of the preliminary alternatives. Simply check the boxes (and write any additional comments on the back), fold and fasten together, and mail back to us. Your comments are important and will be used in the further refinement and evaluation of these alternatives.

Question #1: How well do you understand the four preliminary alternatives under consideration for the I-15 corridor? (check one box)

- Understand Well Understand a Little Don't Understand Don't Know Anything about the Study

Question #2: How well do you think the preliminary alternatives address the transportation issues in the I-15 corridor? (check one box)

- Address Issues Well Address Issues a Little Don't Address Issues Don't Know if they Address Issues

Question #3: Which preliminary alternative location do you think best addresses the transportation issues in the I-15 corridor? (you may check more than one box)

- Northern Alternatives (Forestvale or Custer) Central Alternative (Capitol) Southern Alternative (Saddle)

Question #4: Are other improvements needed in the I-15 corridor? (check all that you think are needed)

- Lincoln Interchange Improvements
 Frontage Road East of I-15 extended North to Lincoln Avenue
 Additional I-15 Lanes between Capitol and Cedar Street Interchanges
 Widen Cedar Street to 5-Lanes between I-15 and N. Montana Avenue
 Improve Boulder Avenue under I-15
 Broadway Underpass
 Montana City Interchange Improvements
 Improve Truck Route/Bypass between I-15 and US 12
 Transit Routes and Park-and-Ride Locations
 Sidewalks and Bicycle Lanes/Bikeways at I-15 Crossings
 Connect/Pave the Frontage Road West of I-15 to Colonial Drive
 Carpools/Vanpools and Flex-time Work Schedules
 Other: _____

tear or cut

Question #5: How valuable to you is this newspaper insert in learning more about the I-15 Corridor project?
(check one box)

*Very
Helpful*

*Somewhat
Helpful*

*Of Little
Value*

*Not Worth the Time
or Expense*

Question #6: Do you have additional comments, questions, or concerns about the I-15 corridor study that you want to share with the Project Team?

Thanks!

To comment further, visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com or call the **project hotline at 458-4789**.

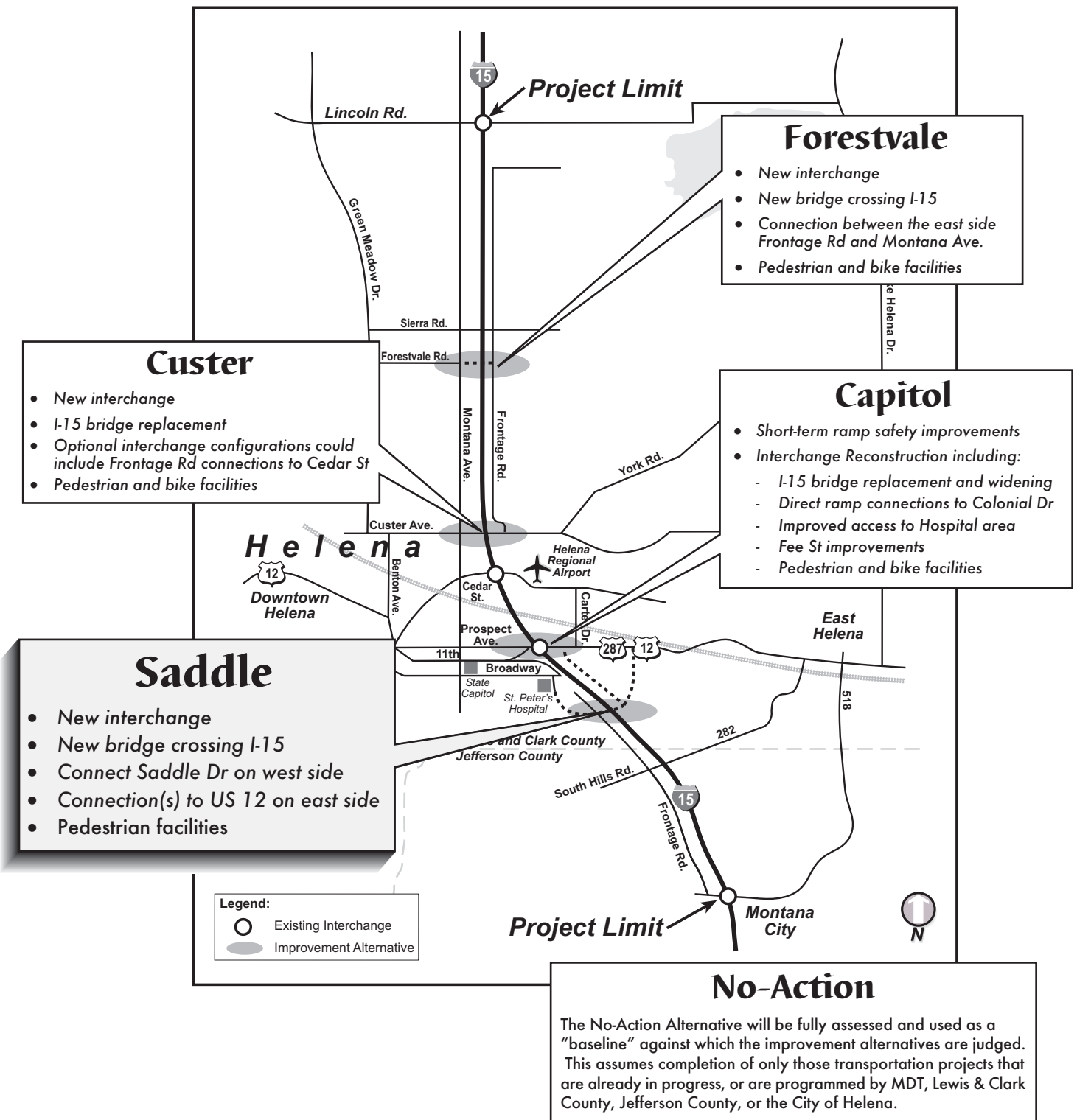
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fold here

Return Address _____

Add me to the project mailing list.

Place
Stamp
Here

**I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601**



CORRECTION: *The May 15 newspaper insert identifying the four I-15 preliminary transportation improvement alternatives should have described the Saddle alternative as a New Interchange. Please consider this correction in your completion of the mail-back questionnaire.*

Public Workshop #3
June 5, 2002

Welcome! Tonight's meeting is an open house format. There will be no formal presentation given, however, there are a number of project representatives on hand to explain the displays and answer questions. Please see the information below on commenting opportunities.

Intent of Meeting: To present updated project information on the alternatives, to receive your comments about these alternatives, and to answer questions about any other issues and concerns along the I-15 Corridor.

Room Organization: The room is organized with nine stations. These are:

STATION ONE: SIGN-IN TABLE

STATION TWO: PROJECT INFORMATION on the history of the project, updated project schedule, the Environmental Impact Statement process and potential environmental issues.

STATION THREE: DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES including the purpose and need for the project, goals of the project and the public opinion survey results.

STATION FOUR: FORESTVALE INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVE

STATION FIVE: CUSTER INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVE

STATION SIX: CAPITOL INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVE

STATION SEVEN: SADDLE INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVE

STATION EIGHT: SUPPORTING ELEMENTS including bike and pedestrian improvements.

STATION NINE: COMMENTS

Commenting Opportunities: There are many ways for you to share your thoughts, concerns or ideas with the I-15 Corridor Project Team, including:

- ▶ Ask questions or provide comments to Project Team members (we will all be wearing name tags).
- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and put it in the comment box at Station Nine.
- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and mail or fax it in later (see comment sheet for address and fax number).
- ▶ Visit the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com, and fill out a feedback form.
- ▶ Call the project hotline at **458-4789**.
- ▶ Or, contact one of the Project Team members listed below:

Ed Larson, MDT
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620
Phone: (406) 444-9191
Fax: (406) 444-6253
Email: elarson@state.mt.us

Gene Kaufman, FHWA
2880 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59602
Phone: (406) 449-5302, x237
Fax: (406) 449-5314
Email: gene.kaufman@fhwa.dot.gov

Kim Gambrill, Carter & Burgess
216 16th Street Mall, Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: (303) 820-4826
Fax: (303) 820-2401
Email: gambrillkm@c-b.com



News Release Summarizing Public Workshop #1

Overwhelmingly, citizens told I-15 designers at the first public workshop that their biggest concern about the project focuses on improving the functioning of existing interchanges and the need for improved access to downtown and developing areas.

“People were emphatic,” said Kim Gambrill, project manager for Carter & Burgess, the firm conducting the study.

Sixty-three people attended the project open house on September 11th, and those who didn’t attend were encouraged to still provide comments. Roughly 120 comments have been received according to Gambrill. They will be used to help set goals for the project in a “statement of purpose and need.” In addition, they will also help planners define, evaluate and recommend alternatives.

The Capitol interchange drew many comments. “It’s fatally flawed,” said one attendee. “It’s dangerous and unsafe,” commented another. The primary access to downtown and the focus of travel in the area is increasingly a problem, said many commentors.

Some think the problems can be fixed by design improvements to the interchange; others think more access to the interstate is the solution. “Reducing the amount of traffic at the interchange by providing other ways to access downtown will work,” they said. Others commented that reducing traffic congestion and providing additional access to the interstate would also improve east-west travel and better serve existing and future development in outlying areas. Some thought that this would help to get rid of the existing barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists. Some mentioned that they thought response times for ambulance and emergency services may also be improved.

Several locations for new interchanges were mentioned. “We’ll look at them all, as well as various improvements to the existing ones,” Gambrill said.

Several issues were raised regarding the need for improvements to streets that would improve local access and increase safety. Montana Avenue north of Custer, in particular, received a high number of comments. Gambrill pointed out that the project is focused on I-15 and the east-west connecting roads. “Some of these issues raised, while extremely valid, are outside the bounds of this project,” he said.

Connecting the frontage road south of Helena toward Montana City and adding a frontage road along the east side of I-15 was urged to provide better access from the south.

“Spare our neighborhoods,” was a common theme for many, who voiced concern about any more traffic on residential streets and impacts to schools and churches.

(over)

Many also commented on what they see as a need for better facilities for bikes and pedestrians. "Link things up and establish pedestrian rights-of-way across the interstate," they said. Some mentioned the need for an alternative to driving, i.e. mass transit.

Some commentors were particularly concerned about how much the project will cost, and how cost will be considered in recommendations. Concern about how long the project will take was also mentioned.

"The issues identified at this workshop are important in defining improvements that will 'do the right thing' for the community," concludes Larry Gibson of Carter & Burgess. He adds that the next public workshop is planned for mid-January.

Summary of Public Workshop #2

The Second Public Workshop for the I-15 Corridor Project was held January 29, 2002, at the West Coast Colonial Hotel in Helena, MT. One Hundred and Twenty Six (126) people signed in for the meeting. The workshop was an open house with a formal presentation given at 5:30 p.m. Comments at the meeting were received from the public in the following ways: 1) personal comments given to project staff which were recorded on 5 x 8 cards and immediately displayed for public viewing, 2) written comments dropped in a comment box located at the sign-in table, and/or 3) testimony provided and recorded during the question and answer period following the formal presentation.

The information that was presented in graphic stations around the room included background information on the project, a summary of the public opinion survey that was conducted, information on project development, a list of improvement options that have already been suggested, and a station with project maps for the public to draw more possible alternative suggestions.

There were over 150 comments received at the workshop. The most common comments received were the following: references to the suggested Broadway underpass, the problems with the Capitol Interchange, suggestions for an interchange at Custer Ave., suggestions for other northern area interchanges including Forestvale, and suggestions for southern area interchanges.

Kim Gambrill of Carter & Burgess gave the formal presentation. After welcoming everyone to the meeting and introducing the project staff, he gave a brief history of the I-15 project. He described the study area of the current project and then gave a project update to explain the current phase in the study process. The presentation was concluded with a description of the upcoming steps of the project, and then a question/answer session.

This was a very successful workshop in helping the project team identify the alternatives that are being presented tonight at Workshop #3.

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PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59601**

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Newsletter #4
November 2002

I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601



A Montana Department of Transportation Project Newsletter
◆ **Hotline: (406) 458-4789** ◆ **www.I-15HelenaEIS.com** ◆

I-15 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR DEIS

Public Plays Key Role in Alternatives Definition

Based on information gathered over the past 12 months, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has identified three alternatives for detailed evaluation in the I-15 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS):

- **South Helena, Capitol & Custer**
- **South Helena, Capitol & Forestvale**
- **No-Action**

The I-15 alternatives include two build alternatives that would provide needed improvements at the heavily congested Capitol interchange, a new southern interchange (South Helena) located approximately one and a half miles south of US 12, and a new northern interchange located at either Custer Avenue or Forestvale Road.

The No-Action Alternative is required in the EIS process. It will be fully assessed and used as a baseline against which the impacts of the build alternatives will be analyzed. Basically, it is a 'what if things continue as is' alternative and includes only the existing system of roadways, any improvements already scheduled, and normal maintenance activities.

Public comments submitted on the preliminary I-15 alternatives indicated that more than one interchange would be needed to resolve existing and future transportation related issues in the corridor. Based on this, the Advisory Committee and the Project Team identified several multi-interchange alternatives for consideration by MDT. Further analysis completed this past summer resulted in the definition of the three I-15 Alternatives that will be considered in the DEIS.

What's Next? Upcoming Project Activities

The Project Team spent valuable time this summer more clearly defining the I-15 Alternatives to be evaluated in the DEIS. This effort was essential to ensure that the alternatives best meet the purpose and need for the project.

The next steps in the project schedule include:

- DEIS available for public review – February 2003
- Public Hearing on the DEIS – February 2003
- Final EIS – June 2003

The recommendation of a Preferred Alternative will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be completed next summer.

A final Record of Decision (ROD) for the project will be completed in September 2003.

Website Updated!



Welcome to Helena I-15 Corridor EIS Project Website

Click to enter site



The project website continues to be updated with current project information. Check it out at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com. You can view the latest information on where we are in the process of completing the EIS and the alternatives that will be analyzed in the document. Also, you are strongly encouraged to go to the Feedback Form and submit comments, questions or concerns about the project and the alternatives that have been chosen. It is a quick and easy way to make your voice heard about this high-profile project!!

What do YOU think should be done?

Let us know on our Website: www.I-15HelenaEIS.com
or call the Project Information Hotline at 458-4789.



Public comment has been important in the definition of the alternatives.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process includes:

1 Scoping – a public process to define the issues that need to be studied.

2 Data Collection – collecting traffic, environmental and land use data on what will be involved in any new designs.

3 Alternatives/ Evaluation Criteria Development – identifying the full range of alternatives, then reducing the list to those alternatives which appear most reasonable. An analysis of a no-action (do nothing) alternative is also required.

4 Analysis of Alternatives – transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives are studied in detail.

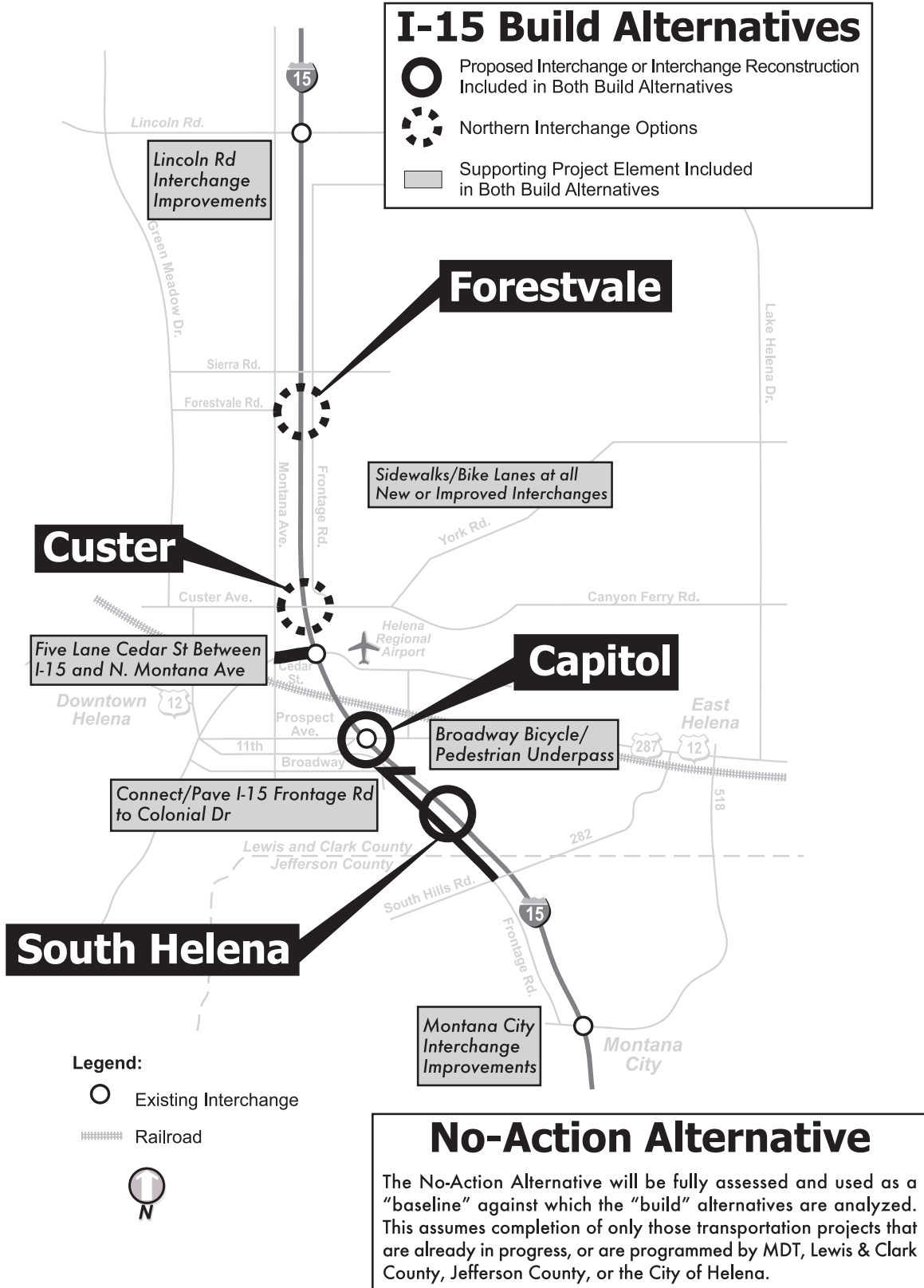
5 Preparation of a Draft EIS – the need for the project, description of the alternatives, and an analysis of impacts that would likely result from each.

6 Public & Agency Review – an opportunity for public and agency feedback on the Draft EIS.

7 Preparation of a Final EIS – documents a preferred alternative and provides responses to comments that were made on the Draft EIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).

We Are Here

I-15 DEIS ALTERNATIVES

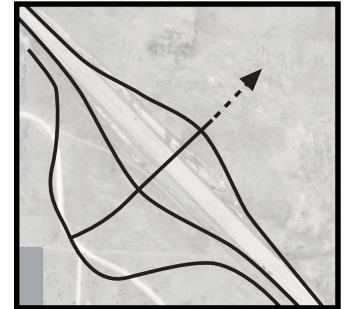


I-15 Build Alternative Improvements

Each of the I-15 build alternatives includes a new interchange at South Helena and reconstruction of the existing Capitol interchange. Both build alternatives also include a new northern interchange at either Custer Avenue or Forestvale Road. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements will be included in both alternatives at all new or reconstructed interchanges. The following describes the interchange configurations that will be evaluated in the DEIS.

South Helena

The new South Helena interchange would be a diamond interchange connecting to the west-side Frontage Road (rather than Saddle Drive as previously shown) and providing for future access to US 12 on the east side of I-15. Pedestrian facilities would be provided to cross I-15. This interchange would serve the fast growing residential areas to the south of Helena and those in Northern Jefferson County.



South Helena

Capitol

The reconstruction of the Capitol interchange would include six travel lanes plus turning lanes and pedestrian/bicycle facilities for crossing I-15. A new connection passing under US 12/Prospect Avenue and connecting from westbound US 12 and southbound I-15 to Colonial Drive would provide direct access to the hospital area and potentially eliminate existing rush hour congestion. This interchange would serve the downtown Helena, hospital, and state capitol areas.



Capitol

Custer

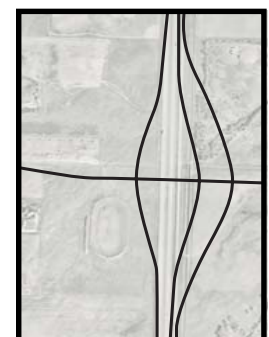
A new northern interchange at Custer would be a diamond interchange with the addition of a loop ramp for westbound traffic to access southbound I-15. Auxiliary lanes along I-15 between the Capitol and Custer interchanges would separate slower, exiting and entering traffic from faster, through-traffic on I-15. Custer would also be widened to five lanes from N. Montana Ave. to Washington St. In addition, pedestrian/bicycle facilities would be provided to cross I-15. This new interchange would support existing and future residential, commercial and industrial development in the central area of Helena.



Custer

Forestvale

A new northern interchange at Forestvale would be a diamond interchange connecting to N. Montana Avenue on the west, and the existing Frontage Road on the east, similar to the previously proposed interchange at this location. Auxiliary lanes would be provided on I-15 between the Capitol and Forestvale interchanges, and pedestrian/bicycle facilities would be provided to cross I-15. This alternative would support existing and future residential and commercial development in the North Valley.



Forestvale

Each of the build alternatives also include five supporting project elements that enhance their effectiveness in addressing transportation and transportation - related needs in the I-15 corridor. These project elements were identified and recommended during the project public involvement process. They include:

- Montana City interchange improvements
- Connecting /paving the west-side Frontage Road to Colonial Drive
- Widening of Cedar Street to five lanes between I-15 and N. Montana Avenue
- An underpass for pedestrian/bicycle use at Broadway
- Lincoln Road interchange improvements

The build alternatives in conjunction with the supporting elements allow the opportunity to implement various transportation demand management (TDM) and transit improvement opportunities, including carpools and vanpools, flex-time work schedules, expanded transit service and park-and-ride facilities.

Newsletter #5
February 2003

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Completed and Available!

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-15 Corridor is now ready for review and comment. The DEIS identifies two Build Alternatives and a No-Action Alternative, and evaluates their possible social, economic and environmental impacts. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies to review the DEIS and **provide input to assist FHWA and MDT in the identification of a Preferred Alternative.**

Viewing Locations

Copies of the DEIS will be available for public review beginning on **February 14th** during normal office hours at the following locations:

- ◆ **Montana Department of Transportation**, Environmental Services, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Room 111, Helena, MT 59601, 406-444-7228.
- ◆ **Federal Highway Administration**, Montana Division Office, 2880 Skyway Drive, Helena, MT 59602, 406-449-5302.
- ◆ **Jefferson County, Clerk & Recorder's Office**, Jefferson County Courthouse, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-4020.
- ◆ **Lewis & Clark County**, City and County Transportation Office, City and County Building, Room 404, 316 North Park, Helena, MT, 59601, 406-447-8457.
- ◆ **East Helena City Hall**, City Clerk's Office, 7 E. Main St., East Helena, MT 59635, 406-227-5321.
- ◆ **Lewis & Clark County Library**, 120 S. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601, 406-447-1690.
- ◆ **Boulder Community Library**, 202 South Main, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-3241.
- ◆ **Broadwater Community Library**, 201 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, 406-266-5060.
- ◆ **Clancy Library**, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5254.
- ◆ **Montana City Store**, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.

The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and at **Carter & Burgess, Inc.**, 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, 303-820-4894.

How to Comment on the DEIS!

A 45-calendar-day public review period will begin on February 14, 2003 and conclude on March 31, 2003. Written comments on the DEIS should be addressed to **Mr. Mark Studt, P.E., Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601.** To be considered, MDT must receive comments by **March 31, 2003.** Oral or written comments may also be presented at the Public Hearing (see the back of this newsletter for more information). To request copies of the DEIS or for additional information, you may call Mark Studt at (406) 444-9191.

Public Hearing on the DEIS

A Public Hearing will be held to receive comments on the three alternatives presented in the DEIS. Members of the public are invited to review project information, talk with members of the Project Team, and offer their written or oral comments on the project alternatives. The DEIS Public Hearing will be held:

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

West Coast Colonial Hotel**

2301 Colonial Drive, Helena

Open House: 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

A transcriber will be available to record oral and written comments during the entire Open House.

Formal Presentation Begins at 5:30 p.m.

***In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act,
call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 for any special accommodations.*



I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
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A Montana Department of Transportation Project Newsletter
◆ Hotline: (406) 458-4789 ◆ www.I-15HelenaEIS.com ◆

Newspaper Release
DEIS Completion and Availability
February 2003

INTERSTATE 15 CORRIDOR**Draft Environmental Impact Statement
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**Tuesday, March 11, 2003
West Coast Colonial Hotel**
2301 Colonial Drive, Helena
Open House: 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

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*Independent
Record
Feb. 14, 2003*



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- ♦ **Clancy Library**, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5254.
- ♦ **Montana City Store**, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.

The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and at Carter & Burgess, Inc., 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, 303-820-4894.

How to Comment on the DEIS!

A 45-calendar-day public review period will begin on February 14, 2003 and conclude on March 31, 2003. Written comments on the DEIS should be addressed to **Mr. Mark Studt, P.E., Project Manager**, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601. To be considered, MDT must receive comments by **March 31, 2003**. Oral or written comments may also be presented at the Public Hearing (see the back of this newsletter for more information). To request copies of the DEIS or for additional information, you may call Mark Studt at (406) 444-9191.

Public Hearing on the DEIS

A Public Hearing will be held to receive comments on the three alternatives presented in the DEIS. Members of the public are invited to review project information, talk with members of the Project Team, and offer their written or oral comments on the project alternatives. The DEIS Public Hearing will be held:

Tuesday, March 11, 2003
West Coast Colonial Hotel**
2301 Colonial Drive, Helena
Open House: 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

A transcriber will be available to record oral and written comments during the entire Open House.

Formal Presentation Begins at 5:30 p.m.

***In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillinger at 406-458-9065 for any special accommodations.*

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Completed and Available!

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-15 Corridor is now ready for review and comment. The DEIS identifies two Build Alternatives and a No-Action Alternative, and evaluates their possible social, economic and environmental impacts. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies to review the DEIS and provide input to assist FHWA and MDT in the identification of a Preferred Alternative.

Viewing Locations

- Copies of the DEIS will be available for public review beginning on February 18th during normal office hours at the following locations:
- Montana Department of Transportation, Environmental Services, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Room 111, Helena, MT 59601, 406-444-7728.
- Federal Highway Administration, Montana Division Office, 2880 Skyway Drive, Helena, MT 59602, 406-449-5302.
- Jefferson County, Clerk & Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse, Boulder, MT 59626, 406-225-4020.
- Lewis & Clark County, City and County Transportation Office, City and County Building, Room 404, 316 North Park, Helena, MT, 59601, 406-447-8457.
- East Helena City Hall, City Clerk's Office, 7 E. Main St., East Helena, MT 59635, 406-227-5721.
- Lewis & Clark County Library, 120 S. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601, 406-447-7490.
- Boulder Community Library, 202 South Main, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-3241.
- Broadwater Community Library, 281 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, 406-266-5060.
- Glancy Library, 6 North Main, Glancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5254.
- Montana City Store, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.

The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.I-15HelenaDEIS.com and at Carter & Burgess, Inc., 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, 303-620-4894.

How to Comment on the DEIS!

A 45-calendar-day public review period will begin on February 18, 2003 and conclude on March 31, 2003. Written comments on the DEIS should be addressed to Mr. Mark Stull, P.E., Project Manager, MDT, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601. To be considered, MDT must receive comments by March 31, 2003. Oral or written comments may also be presented at the Public Hearing (see the back of this newsletter for more information). To request copies of the DEIS or for additional information, you may call Mark Stull at (406) 444-9191.

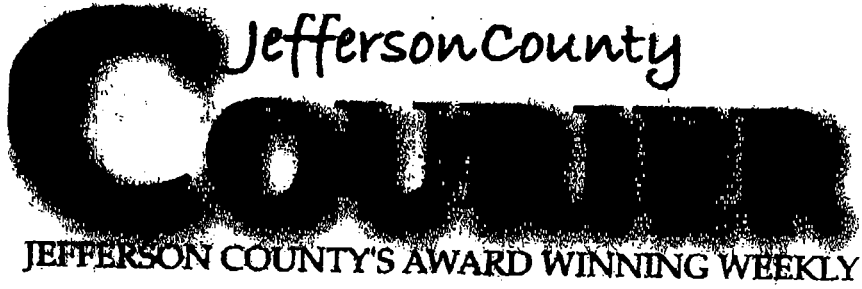
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February 12, 2003 50 Cents

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Completed and Available!

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Viewing Locations

Copies of the DEIS will be available for public review beginning on February 14th during normal office hours at the following locations:

- Montana Department of Transportation, Environmental Services, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Room 215, Helena, MT 59601, 406-444-7228.
- Federal Highway Administration, Montana Division Office, 2880 Skyway Drive, Helena, MT 59602, 406-449-5382.
- Jefferson County's Clerk & Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-4020.
- Lewis & Clark County, City and County Transportation Office, City and County Building, Room 404, 314 North Park, Helena, MT, 59601, 406-447-8457.
- East Helena City Hall, City Clerk's Office, 7 E. Main St., East Helena, MT 59635, 406-227-5321.
- Lewis & Clark County Library, 120 S. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601, 406-447-1690.
- Boulder Community Library, 202 South Main, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-2244.
- Broadwater Community Library, 201 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, 406-266-5060.
- Clancy Library, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5154.
- Montana City Square, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.

The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.f-15HelenaEIS.com and at Cartor & Burgess, Inc., 707 17th Street, Suite 2100, Denver, CO 80202, 303-820-4894.

How to Comment on the DEIS!

A 45-calendar-day public review period will begin on February 14, 2003 and conclude on March 31, 2003. Written comments on the DEIS should be addressed to Mr. Mark Staudt, P.E., Project Manager, MDT, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601. To be considered, MDT must receive comments by March 31, 2003. Oral or written comments may also be presented at the Public Hearing (see the back of this newsletter for more information). To request copies of the DEIS or for additional information, you may call Mark Staudt at (406) 444-9191.

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- ♦ Broadwater Community Library, 201 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, 406-266-5060.
- ♦ Clancy Library, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5254.
- ♦ Montana City Store, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.

The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and at Carter & Burgess, Inc., 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, 303-820-4894.

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...d from 2C
 ...the other side. They
 ...be medium-rare.
 ...e the scallops to a
 ...o keep warm.
 ...the pancetta into
 ...small pieces and saute
 ...remaining butter in
 ...allop pan until crispy.

...milk
 ...espoons chopped
 ...sh herbs (parsley,
 ...ives, tarragon, as avail-
 ...le)
 ...ch baby beets (red,
 ...ld and-or Chioggia,
 ...e note)
 ...ch baby turnips
 ...er salt

To make the polenta:
 Place the polenta in a pot large enough to hold it and the milk easily. In a separate pot, bring the milk to a boil. Slowly add about 1/3 of the milk to the polenta, stirring constantly over medium heat. Once the milk is absorbed, add more milk slowly, stirring constantly to work out any lumps. Continue until all the milk is

oven until knife tip enters easily, about 35 minutes. When cool enough to handle, gently peel outer skin. This can be done with a kitchen towel. Split each vegetable in half lengthwise.

To prepare mushrooms and goat cheese:
 Lightly oil the mushrooms and season with salt and pepper. Grill the mushrooms until done, about 5 minutes per side. Alterna-

and golden brown. With the same cutter cut out 8 mushroom circles from the center of each mushroom. Warm up the mushrooms on the grill or in the oven. Warm up the beets and turnips in a saute pan with a minimal amount of oil or butter.


To assemble the Napoleons:
 Place a small spoonful of the goat cheese in the center of each of 4 plates. Place one

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Dental Update



Dr. Melton, D.D.S.
Instructive Dentistry, Laser Dentistry, Implants, Orthodontics & TMD
OF SPACE AND TIME
 Teeth normally stay in place until pushed out by permanent teeth take their places. Unfortunately, children lost baby teeth too early, because they are accidentally pulled out or lost to decay. When this happens, a space maintainer may be used to prevent future dental

INTERSTATE CORRIDOR
 Montana City to Missoula

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Review Period Extended!

The deadline to receive comments has been extended to
APRIL 7, 2003

Viewing Locations

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- Montana Department of Transportation, Room 111, (406-444-7228)
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How to Comment on the DEIS!

The public review period will conclude on April 7, 2003. Written comments on the DEIS should be addressed to Mr. Mark Studt, P.E., Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601. To be considered, MDT must receive comments by the April 7th, 2003 deadline.

BOULDER MONITOR

Wednesday, March 19, 2003 - Page 3



**Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Review Period Extended!**

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COURIER Wednesday, March 19, 2003 Page 3



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How to Comment on the DEIS

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Newsletter #6
March 2003

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I-15 CORRIDOR DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

PUBLIC HEARING DATE: MARCH 11



DEIS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-15 Corridor is now ready for review and comment. The DEIS identifies two Build Alternatives and a No-Action Alternative, and evaluates their potential social, economic and environmental impacts. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies to review the DEIS and **provide their comments on the alternatives to assist FHWA and MDT in the identification of a Preferred Alternative.**

Each of the build Alternatives includes a new South Helena interchange and reconstruction of the existing Capitol interchange. Alternative 1 also includes a new interchange at Custer Avenue while Alternative 2 includes a new interchange at Forestvale Road. In addition, several common supporting elements that enhance the effectiveness of the alternatives in addressing transportation and related needs in the I-15 corridor are identified. Comment on these is also encouraged.

The alternatives can be viewed in detail in Chapter 2 of the DEIS available at any of the viewing locations, on the project website , and at the Public Hearing to be held on March 11, 2003.

VIEWING LOCATIONS

Copies of the DEIS are available for public review during normal office hours at the following locations:

- ♦ **Montana Department of Transportation**, Environmental Services, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Room 111, Helena, MT 59601, (406) 444-7228.
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- ♦ **Broadwater Community Library**, 201 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, (406) 266-5060.
- ♦ **Clancy Library**, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, (406) 933-5254.
- ♦ **Montana City Store**, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, (406) 442-6625.

The DEIS on computer disc can be requested by calling Mark Studt, MDT Project Manager, at (406) 444-9191. The DEIS is also available for review on the project website at www.I-15HelenaEIS.com and at **Carter & Burgess, Inc.**, 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, (303) 820-4894.

Log on to www.I-15HelenaEIS.com to Review the DEIS!

The project website continues to be updated with current information. You can view the entire DEIS online!

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE ALTERNATIVES

The official public review period began on February 21, 2003 and will conclude on April 7, 2003. Written comments on the alternatives evaluated in the DEIS should be addressed to **Mark Studt, P.E., Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601.** To be considered, MDT must receive comments by **April 7, 2003.** Oral or written comments may also be presented at the Public Hearing. To request copies of the DEIS or for additional information, call Mark Studt at (406) 444-9191.

This public comment period is another important opportunity for the traveling public who use the I-15 corridor to provide their thoughts about the types of transportation improvements they feel should occur in their community. A large response is anticipated.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DEIS

A Public Hearing will be held to receive comments on the three alternatives presented in the DEIS. The public is invited to review project information, talk with members of the Project Team, and offer their written or oral comments on the project alternatives. The DEIS Public Hearing will be held:

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

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Open House: 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

A transcriber will be available to record oral comments and receive written comments during the entire Public Hearing.

Formal Presentation begins at 5:30 p.m.

***In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call Annell Fillinger at (406) 458-9065 for any special accommodations.*

For more information about the Public Hearing, please contact:

- ◆ **Mark Studt** at (406) 444-9191
- ◆ **Kim Gambrill** at (1-877) 820-5240
- ◆ **Jason Giard** at (406) 454-5897
- ◆ **Mick Johnson** at (406) 454-5887
- ◆ **Jean Riley** at (406) 444-9456

For the hearing impaired, the TTY telephone number is (406) 444-7696 or (1-800) 335-7592.

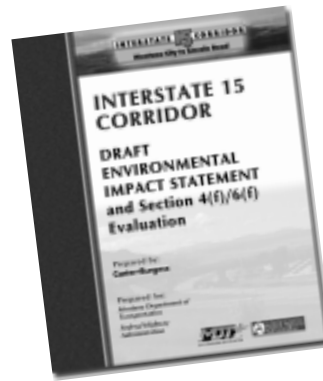


Attend the Public Hearing and Comment on the Project Alternatives

How To CONTACT Us:

All written comments on the Alternatives being evaluated in the DEIS should be sent by April 7th to:

Mark Studt, P.E.
Project Manager
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, MT 59601



The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process includes:

1 Scoping - a public process to define the issues that need to be studied.

2 Data Collection - collecting traffic, environmental and land use data on what will be involved in any new designs.

3 Alternatives/ Evaluation Criteria Development - identifying the full range of alternatives, then reducing the list to those alternatives which appear most reasonable. An analysis of a no-action (do nothing) alternative is also required.

4 Analysis of Alternatives - transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives are studied in detail.

5 Preparation of a Draft EIS - the need for the project, description of the alternatives, and an analysis of impacts that would likely result from each.

6 Public & Agency Review - an opportunity for public and agency feedback on the Draft EIS.

7 Final EIS - documents a preferred alternative and provides responses to comments that were made on the Draft EIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).

We Are Here

Public Workshop #4/Public Hearing
March 11, 2003

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****Policy Statement No. ANM-01-115-11; Certification of Strengthened Flight Deck Doors on Transport Category Airplanes**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of final policy; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the availability of final policy concerning certification of strengthened flightdeck doors.

DATES: Send your comments on or before March 12, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Address your comments to the individual identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Gardlin, Federal Aviation Administration, Transport Airplane Directorate, Transport Standards Staff, Airframe/Cabin Safety Branch, ANM-115, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2136; fax (425) 227-1320; e-mail: jeff.gardlin@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Comments Invited**

The final policy is available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.faa.gov/certification/aircraft/anminfo/finalpaper.cfm>. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can obtain a copy of the policy statement by contacting the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

The FAA invites your comments on this final policy. We will accept your comments, data, views, or arguments by letter, fax, or e-mail. Send your comments to the person indicated in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Mark your comments, "Comments to Policy Statement No. ANM-01-115-11."

Use the following format when preparing your comments:

- Organize your comments issue-by-issue.
- For each issue, state what specific change you are requesting to the final policy.
- Include justification, reasons, or data for each change you are requesting.

We also welcome comments in support of the final policy.

We will consider all communications received on or before the closing date for comments. We may change the final policy because of the comments received.

Background

The final policy provides all transport airplane programs an acceptable method of compliance with 14 CFR part 25 for intrusion resistance and ballistic protection of flightdeck doors. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section has also been updated.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 21, 2003.

Vi L. Lipski,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 03-3273 Filed 2-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Highway Administration****Draft Environmental Impact Statement; Lewis & Clark and Jefferson Counties, MT.**

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the FHWA, in cooperation with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for proposed transportation improvements along the I-15 Corridor in Helena, Lewis & Clark and Jefferson Counties, Montana. The Draft EIS identifies Build Alternatives with supporting elements and the No-Action Alternative, and their associated social, economic and environmental impacts. Interested citizens are invited to review the Draft EIS and submit comments. Copies of the Draft EIS may be obtained by telephoning or writing the contact person listed below under Addresses. Public reading copies of the Draft EIS are available at the locations listed under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: A 45-calendar-day public review period will begin on February 14, 2003 and conclude on March 31, 2003.

Written comments on the alternatives and impacts to be considered must be received by MDT by March 31, 2003. A public hearing to receive oral comments on the Draft EIS will be held at the West Coast Colonial Hotel, 2301 Colonial Drive, Helena, Montana, on March 11, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the Draft EIS should be addressed to Mr. Mark Studt, P.E., Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601. Please see **SUPPLEMENTARY**

INFORMATION section for a listing of the available documents and formats in which they may be obtained. Copies of the Draft EIS are also available for public inspection and review. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for locations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request copies of the Draft EIS or for additional information, contact Mr. Carl James, Transportation Specialist, FHWA Montana Division, 2880 Skyway Drive, Helena, MT, 59602, Telephone: (406) 449-5302, extension 238; or Mr. Mark Studt, Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59601, Telephone: (406) 444-9191.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Public Hearing will be held March 11, 2003, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the West Coast Colonial Hotel (address listed above).

Copies of the Draft EIS are available in hard copy format for public inspection at:

- Montana Department of Transportation, Environmental Services, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Room 111, Helena, MT 59601, 406-444-7228.
- Jefferson County, Clerk & Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-4020.
- Lewis & Clark County, City and County Transportation Office, City and County Building, Room 404, 316 North Park, Helena, MT 59601, 406-447-8457.
- East Helena City Hall, City Clerk's Office, 7 E. Main St., East Helena, MT 59635, 406-227-5321.
- Lewis & Clark County Library, 120 S. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601, 406-447-1690.
- Boulder Community Library, 202 South Main, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-225-3241.
- Broadwater Community Library, 201 North Spruce, Townsend, MT 59644, 406-266-5060.
- Clancy Library, 6 North Main, Clancy, MT 59634, 406-933-5254.
- Montana City Store, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Montana City, MT 59634, 406-442-6625.
- Carter & Burgess, Inc., 707 17th Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202, 303-820-4894.

Background

This Draft EIS provides a detailed evaluation of the proposed transportation improvements along I-15 between the Montana City interchange and the Lincoln Road interchange. The study area lies within Helena, Lewis & Clark and Jefferson Counties, MT. The study area extends approximately 19 kilometers (12 miles) from the Montana

City interchange in the south (RP 187) to the Lincoln Road interchange in the north (RP 200). This Draft EIS includes an examination of the purpose and need, alternatives under consideration, travel demand, affected environment, environmental consequences, and mitigation measures as a result of the improvements under consideration. Two build alternatives with five supporting elements and a No-Action Alternative are presented in the Draft EIS and are under consideration by FHWA and MDT.

The FHWA, MDT, and other local agencies invite interested individuals, organizations, and Federal, State, and local agencies to comment on the evaluated alternatives and associated social, economic, or environmental impacts related to the alternatives.

Issued on: February 4, 2003.

Dale W. Paulson,

Program Development Engineer, Montana Division, Federal Highway Administration, Helena, Montana.

[FR Doc. 03-3132 Filed 2-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements; Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval. The nature of the information collection is described as well as its expected burden. The **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was published on November 5, 2002. No comments were received.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before March 12, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rodney McFadden, Maritime Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-2647; FAX 202-493-2180, or e-mail:

rodney.mcfadden@marad.dot.gov.

Copies of this collection can also be obtained from that office.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Maritime Administration (MARAD).

Title: Information to Determine Seamen's Reemployment Rights.

OMB Control Number: 2133-0526.

Type of Request: Extension of currently approved collection.

Affected Public: U.S. merchant seamen who have completed designated national service during a time of maritime mobilization need and are seeking reemployment with a prior employer.

Form(s): None.

Abstract: MARAD is requesting approval of this collection in an effort to implement provisions of the Maritime Security Act of 1996. These provisions grant reemployment rights and other benefits to certain merchant seamen serving aboard vessels used by the United States during times of national emergencies. The Maritime Security Act of 1996 establishes the procedures for obtaining the necessary MARAD certification for reemployment rights and other benefits.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 50 hours.

Addresses: Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention MARAD Desk Officer.

Comments are Invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

A comment to OMB is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication.

Issued in Washington, DC on February 4, 2003.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 03-3123 Filed 2-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Ex Parte No. 638]

Procedures To Expedite Resolution of Rail Rate Challenges To Be Considered Under the Stand-Alone Cost Methodology

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public hearing.

SUMMARY: The Surface Transportation Board (Board) will hold a public hearing on Thursday, February 27, 2003, at its offices in Washington, DC, to provide interested persons an opportunity to express their views on the subject of expediting resolution of rail rate challenges to be considered under the Board's Stand-Alone Cost (SAC) methodology. Persons wishing to speak at the hearing should notify the Board in writing.

DATES: The public hearing will take place on Thursday, February 27, 2003. Any person wishing to speak at the hearing should file with the Board a written notice of intent to participate, and should indicate a requested time allotment, as soon as possible but no later than February 19, 2003. Each speaker should also file with the Board his/her written testimony by February 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: An original and 10 copies of all notices of intent to participate and testimony should refer to STB Ex Parte No. 638, and should be sent to: Surface Transportation Board, Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 638, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Jamie P. Rennert, (202) 565-1566. [Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) (Hearing Impaired): (800) 877-8339.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Board will hold a public hearing to provide a forum for the expression of views by rail shippers, railroads, and other interested persons, on expediting resolution of rail rate challenges to be considered under the SAC methodology.

Issues. This public hearing follows the Board's review of comments filed in response to the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) served in this docket on September 4, 2002. In the NPRM, the Board asked for suggestions on ways to streamline resolution of SAC cases, and the Board itself identified several possible measures. These measures included a mandatory pre-filing, non-binding mediation process; discovery standards tailored to the

Welcome! Tonight's meeting is an open house format. There will be a short presentation given at 5:30 p.m. There are also a number of project representatives on hand to explain the displays and answer questions. Please see the information below on commenting opportunities.

Intent of Meeting: To present the alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement document, to receive your comments about these alternatives, and to discuss with you any other issues and concerns along the I-15 Corridor.

Room Organization: The room is organized with six stations. These are:

STATION ONE: SIGN-IN TABLE where handouts are located and the purpose of tonight's hearing.

STATION TWO: PROJECT INFORMATION on the project schedule, the Environmental Impact Statement process, the purpose and need of the project, and the project goals.

STATION THREE: ALTERNATIVES including the No-action alternative and maps of the two build alternatives.

STATION FOUR: ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES including summaries of environmental impacts and mitigation for these impacts.

STATION FIVE: RIGHT-OF-WAY PROCESS for the purchase of additional land by MDT. A right-of-way specialist will be on hand.

STATION SIX: COMMENTS about the alternatives are encouraged in order to help choose a preferred alternative for analysis in the Final EIS.

Commenting Opportunities: There are many ways for you to share your thoughts, concerns or ideas with the I-15 Corridor Project Team, and to have your comments officially recorded as part of the Public Hearing record, including:

- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and put it in the comment box at Station Six.
- ▶ Fill out a comment sheet and mail or fax it in later (see comment sheet for address and fax number).
- ▶ Give your comment verbally by speaking into the microphone following the presentation.
- ▶ Give your comment verbally by speaking to the transcriber at any time during the hearing.

For further information contact one of the Project Team members listed below:

Mark Studt, MDT
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620
Phone: (406) 444-9191
Fax: (406) 444-6253
Email: mstudt@state.mt.us

Gene Kaufman, FHWA
2880 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59602
Phone: (406) 449-5302, x237
Fax: (406) 449-5314
Email: gene.kaufman@fhwa.dot.gov

Kim Gambrill, Carter & Burgess
216 16th Street Mall, Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: (303) 820-4826
Fax: (303) 820-2401
Email: gambrillkm@c-b.com

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Return Address:

Place
stamp
here

**I-15 Corridor Study
PMB 150
2905 N. Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59601**

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**MINUTES
I-15 CORRIDOR (MONTANA CITY TO LINCOLN ROAD) EIS
PUBLIC HEARING**

Wednesday, March 11, 2003

4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Red Lion Colonial Hotel

Helena, MT

The Public Hearing for the I-15 Corridor Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was held March 11, 2003, at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena, MT. One hundred and twenty-three (123) people attended the public hearing (sign in sheets attached). The public hearing was an open house format from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a formal presentation given at 5:30 p.m. Comments were received from the public in the following ways: 1) written comments dropped in a comment box located at the comment table, 2) spoken comments given during the formal presentation (full transcript attached), and 3) oral testimony presented to the transcriber following the formal presentation. Project staff was available throughout the evening to answer questions and talk with attendees regarding the I-15 corridor project and the proposed alternatives presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Project staff present:

Kim Gambrill, Project Manager, Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Larry Gibson, Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Amy Wiedeman, Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Dave Woolfall, Carter & Burgess Inc.
Craig Gaskill, Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Troy Halouska, Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Mark Studt, Project Manager, Montana Department of Transportation
Mick Johnson, Montana Department of Transportation
Jason Giard, Montana Department of Transportation
Jerilee Weibel, Montana Department of Transportation, Great Falls
Leslie Tribelhorn, Montana Department of Transportation
Carl James, Federal Highway Administration
Gene Kaufman, Federal Highway Administration

The following handouts were available to the public at the sign-in table (attached):

- 1) Meeting agenda and explanation of room organization
- 2) Fifth and sixth project newsletters
- 3) Comment sheets

Six (6) stations were set up to explain the project and for public viewing of project information, as follows:

- 1) Sign-in table
 - a. Sign-in sheets
 - b. Newsletters 5 and 6
 - c. Comment Sheets
 - d. Public Hearing Explanation
 - i. Welcome
 - ii. Intent of meeting
 - iii. Room organization
 - iv. Commenting opportunities
 - v. Contact information
 - vi. Web site address
 - vii. Hotline number
- 2) Project Information
 - a. Purpose of Tonight's Meeting snow cards
 - b. Project Schedule graphic
 - c. EIS Process graphic
 - d. Purpose & Need Statement graphic
 - e. Goals graphic
- 3) Alternatives
 - a. No-Action Alternative Narrative graphic
 - b. Alternative 1 large map graphic
 - c. Alternative 2 large map graphic
 - d. No-Action Alternative Traffic Volume graphic
 - e. Alternative 1 Traffic Volume graphic
 - f. Alternative 2 Traffic Volume graphic
 - g. Traffic Volumes Comparison graphic
- 4) Environmental Issues
 - a. Summary of Impacts small banner
 - b. Summary of Impacts tables
 - c. Summary of Mitigation small banner
 - d. Summary of Mitigation tables
- 5) Right-of-Way Process
 - a. ROW Process snow cards
 - b. ROW brochures

- 6) Comments
 - a. What We've Heard graphic
 - b. Next Steps graphic
 - c. Public and Agency Involvement snow cards
 - d. Comment Sheets available
 - e. Comment Box

- 7) Alternatives (duplicate)
 - a. No-Action Alternative Narrative graphic (duplicate)
 - b. Alternative 1 large map graphic (duplicate)
 - c. Alternative 2 large map graphic (duplicate)

Graphics available to reference for public questions;

Lincoln Road Interchange
Forestvale Interchange
Cedar/Custer Interchange
Capitol Interchange
South Helena Interchange
Montana City Interchange

TRANSCRIPT OF FORMAL PRESENTATION

Kim Gambrill: We want to go ahead and get started on the formal presentation and the opportunity for you to offer your comments and recommendations on the official record.

First, I want to thank all of you for coming tonight to the I-15 Corridor Draft Environmental Statement Public Hearing. Tonight's public hearing is the fourth in a series of public meetings designed to inform the public, share information about this Environmental Impact Statement process with you, and solicit your thoughts and recommendations for the improvements that you would like to see made along the corridor.

We have recently published the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-15 corridor and what we will be doing in the next ten-to-fifteen minutes is talking briefly about this document, some of the information that is contained within it, and asking for your thoughts on what should be done to improve the I-15 corridor.

Before I continue with that part of the presentation, I would like to introduce a few people: my name is Kim Gambrill, I'm with the consulting firm Carter and Burgess in Denver. Our company has been hired to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement for this project. Larry Gibson is our Public Involvement Task Manager. He will be walking around with a microphone for those of you who would like to make comments tonight in that fashion. Also from Carter and Burgess

is Craig Gaskill and Dave Woolfall, the Project Engineers who have been most instrumental in developing the traffic information and the alternatives that are analyzed in the DEIS. Troy Halouska and Amy Wiedeman are back at the registration table; they are Environmental Planners with Carter and Burgess and have been working with us throughout this project. Anell Fillinger, AM Tech Services here in Helena, will be recording the meeting tonight, and for those who would prefer to not to speak before the entire group but would like to make verbal testimony on the project, you may go up to Anell after the presentation and have your comments recorded there. We have some representatives from the Department of Transportation. Mick Johnson and Jason Giard from MDT's Great Falls District. Lesly Tribelhorn is here from the MDT Butte District. Mark Studt is MDT's Project Manager for the I-15 Corridor Study. Jerilee Weibel is here and will be able to answer any questions you may have on the Right-of-Way Acquisition Program or Relocation Assistance Program. From the Federal Highway Administration, Carl James, the Transportation Specialist who has been working with us from day one.

Tonight's proceedings are being tape recorded as part of the official record of the DEIS process. The draft EIS was made available for public review on February 14 and was placed in ten different locations around the area. The entire document is also available on our web site. The official public review period started the following week on February 21 when the official Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register by the Environmental Protection Agency. That date began a 45-day public comment and review period, which ends on April 7th.

There are a number of ways for you to comment on the project. Tonight you can speak to the group and to those of us on the project team following my opening remarks. You may also speak with Anell individually after the formal presentation, or you can fill in a comment form which hopefully all of you received when you came in, and leave that with one of us or in one of the comment boxes at the back table. You may also send in written comments at any time between now and April 7th. You can do that on one of the comment sheets and mail it to the project public post office box or you can send your comments directly to Mark Studt at the address shown on the Newsletter. Again, the deadline for those written comments is April 7th.

Before asking for your comments on the project and on the alternatives, I want to briefly discuss a few important points. Within the Draft EIS, Chapter 1 discusses the Purpose and Need – why do we think improvements are necessary along this corridor. Purpose and Need is posted on the wall over here, it is found in the Executive Summary of the document and also in Chapter 1. I would like to read this:

“The purpose of the I-15 Corridor EIS project is to identify and evaluate potential transportation improvements that will accommodate anticipated traffic volumes safely and efficiently, while also facilitating the movement of east-west traffic crossing the interstate. The EIS addresses safety and operating efficiencies at the existing I-15 interchanges and east-west roadways crossing I-15 and studies the need for additional interchanges and

crossings. The roadways crossing I-15 were studied to the extent necessary to ensure their ability to collect and distribute anticipated traffic to, from and across I-15.”

The main focus of the study is on the I-15 corridor study itself, from Montana City to Lincoln Road. Within the corridor we developed more than 30 potential transportation improvements – things that met the purpose and need and would be beneficial in addressing those needs. We eventually narrowed these down to two combinations of improvements that are presented in the Alternatives graphics behind me and also in the back of the room. We posted duplicate graphics in the back of the room so that if you were sitting and writing your comments out, you wouldn’t have to wander back and forth. You could look at them back there while making your comments.

Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS fully describes the process we went through in looking at those alternatives, screening them, and then finding the final combinations that we wanted to present.

Both of the alternatives include a number of interchange improvements and some improvements that we call “supporting elements.” Together they make for very valuable improvements to the corridor. The DEIS presents three alternatives – two are what we call “build” alternatives. They are the combinations of improvements that we think are necessary. The third alternative presented in the DEIS is the “No-Action” Alternative or the “No-Build” Alternative. This is a description of what would be expected to happen in the corridor if none of these major improvements were made. This would be normal maintenance activities, emergency repairs and that sort of thing, and programmed projects that are already on the books to be done. We use that as a baseline for comparison so we can evaluate what the impacts of each of these two “build” alternatives would be.

The description of the baseline condition and the environmental conditions in the corridor are explained in Chapter 3 of the Draft EIS.

One of the major concerns with any project like this is private property and what it will take to do this project. No relocations are expected with this project, but if you have concerns Jerilee Weibel from MDT is here to assist you.

Some frequently asked questions that we received; one has to do with who makes the final decision on what will be done in the corridor. That decision is made by the Montana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. They will determine, sometime toward the middle to the end of April, what they believe the Preferred Alternative should be. They make that decision after very carefully reviewing and considering the information that is in the DEIS and the public comments and agency comments that we receive during this review period. Once that decision is made, we will begin preparing a Final EIS, which describes the Preferred Alternative and explains the justification for that decision. We think the FEIS will be completed by the end of June of this year. When that is completed, it will be placed out for a 30-

day public review period. Following that period, MDT and Federal Highways will make a final decision on whether anything needs to be changed or whether the recommended alternative in the Final EIS is the one they want to go with. That final decision gets documented in a Record of Decision (ROD) which we think will be signed in the middle of September.

Another question we get is “when can the construction of some of these improvements actually begin?” That is a delicate balancing decision that MDT will make based on the needs in the corridor – the highest priority needs, the availability of funding, how long it would take to develop the final plans for the different improvements – so it is not an easy decision. We can’t tell you today which will be first and which will be second. Those are decisions they will make with the Transportation Commission.

Another question we have gotten is, “what do we think the Preferred Alternative should be?” or “does MDT already know what they want to do and is the decision already made?” The answer to both of those is “no”. The decisions have not been made and we don’t know what the Preferred Alternative is going to turn out to be. We need to listen to the comments, we need to see what the public feels is needed, we need to see what the state and federal agencies with responsibilities to oversee these kinds of projects have to say, and then we need to very carefully weigh those comments with the information that is included in the Draft EIS before making that decision.

At this time, we will open it up to comments. Again, if you are comfortable speaking before a large group, Larry has the hand-held microphone and he will give the microphone to you to make your comment. We would like you to focus your comments on your opinions of what should be done, your opinions perhaps on what should not be done, some justification, and keep your comments between one and two minutes. Any more than two minutes, I will have to cut you off. Again if you are not comfortable speaking before the group and you want to talk with Annell Fillinger at the conclusion of everybody else’s remarks that is fine or use the comment sheet and leave your written comments with us. At this point, we will open it up and see who would like to make a comment about the Draft EIS alternatives.

TESTIMONY

Comment: (Robert Rule) My name is Robert Rule. I’m a developer here in Helena. First of all I would like to cover a few points. We live in a time of very unstable economic conditions. Our state government is in trouble, our city doesn’t appear to be in trouble but take a look at your tax bill, we’ve got to come up with all the differences we are short on to pay our homeowners taxes. While Forestvale would be a very nice project for the sake of people being able to get around who live out there, what will that do for our economy? The Forestvale area has already been reflected in the City of Helena Growth Plan to be industrial/ commercial. There is no other area in Helena that doesn’t have un-chopped up land. So the only logical sense is Custer

Avenue. I've been working on a project for the last eleven months and recommend Custer Avenue because it will allow economic growth. It is the only area left with that city classification with those size lots. Custer Avenue is on the verge of irreversible growth. It is the only place to grow. It will grow pretty equal to what we see on Reserve Street in Missoula almost overnight. We are living in a time right now where the economic condition of Helena is either going to have to go up or down. We are going to have to allow it to go one way or the other and when it does go up, Custer is the only logical area for growth. The tax base created from this series of developments can and will give the county and state revenues that will enable Forestvale to be put in at a much quicker pace. Furthermore a re-routing of the frontage road that will access onto Custer if we have a design that will line up with Washington Street allowing anybody living close to Washington Street the chance to come down the Frontage Road and get easy access without being required to re-enter on Montana Avenue.

Comment: (Jeff Wuerl) I live just off Sierra Drive. Basically I'm for the Forestvale alternative and all of the above. Just a little history here – some twenty years ago my mother was approached by the Highway Department about putting an exit on Sierra Road. They studied that for God knows how long. She couldn't sell her land; she couldn't do anything with it. Then they decided it would bring too much traffic by Rossiter School and pulled the plug. Well, that is twenty years ago. It would have cost God knows how much less. So instead of everybody sitting on their thumbs, do it, the money is there, you've got the land paid for for Forestvale, get it over with.

Comment: (Kathleen Gere) I live at 700 Red Letter Street. It is important to me that this Environmental Impact Statement addresses the problems that will be created for the three schools on California Street – Smith School, the First Lutheran Church School, and Three Dogs Pre-school. Years ago my children walked down California in the street because there were no sidewalks. Efforts to put sidewalks in there were not fruitful; sidewalks still are not there. I don't think any of the streets between Montana and California have sidewalks. My grandchildren live five houses up the street from me. I would like them to be able to walk to school but because of the problem that the interchange will put traffic on Broadway that is not possible. So it is important to me that the EIS recognizes the hardship and point out the need for mitigating traffic spots with something.

The other thing in looking at this – I feel that without some exchange given, there is nothing in it for me. It takes me twenty minutes to get to Capital High School from my house. If I lived in Montana City it would be faster. Unless you put in a Custer Exchange I don't see that I will have anything but negative impacts.

Comment: (Herbert George) I live at 2000 Broadway. I've heard rumors to the effect that Broadway is going to be made a one-way street or it is proposed. I received this (held up copy of the DEIS) through the mail just this afternoon and I haven't had an opportunity to study it. Is that being thought about or what about that? Will it be a one-way street? There has been real concern on Broadway, as you well know, about the increase of traffic in the Broadway neighborhood, and I noticed in the maps that Broadway is the only street that is up on the hill that is drawn into the study. Now there are other streets up there and it seems to me that it could be disbursed. If there is going to be traffic increase in that area, it could be dispersed over a wider area and some of the other streets could take a lot of the burden off Broadway.

Response: (Kim Gambrill). One of the initial alternatives options looked at was a one-way underpass at Broadway. That was screened out and it is not included in the alternative packages that are described in the EIS.

Comment: (Janice Frisch) I live on the west side. I think that as we are making changes to our city. The thing we need to think about the most is the safety and health of our citizens. That is who we are really here to take care of – the citizens. I don't know about you folks but when I see an ambulance sitting on an overpass, it makes me nervous. When I see someone trying to cross in those areas in the middle of winter at nighttime, it makes me nervous. When I see a kid trying to ride a bike over one of those, it is just terrifying. So it seems to me that Alternative One is the only one that starts to address some problems that we currently have. We shouldn't be focusing on causing more growth and making more problems when we haven't taken care of the infrastructure that we already have. We always want to jump ahead of ourselves so I'm supporting Alternative One or at least something that allows pedestrians in those two areas.

Comment: (Tiffany Sauer) My mailing address is Clancy but I live two miles north of Montana City. I was going to do written comments but I'm going to put it out right now. What is affectionately known in our neighborhood as "the back road", the increase of traffic on that road in the last three years is incredible. The speed of traffic in the last three years on that road is incredible. I don't believe a proposed 55-mph, two-lane paved road on that side of the interstate is a good idea. There are existing homes in our neighborhood with children and little kids, there is whole mess of them coming up and those are their yards – that road. Is it possible, and I know in looking at the paper with the proposed Peccia subdivision on the east side, why not pave a road on the east side of the interstate? A frontage road as close to the interstate is possible there. Has anybody thought about that? The only reason I'm bringing it up in this large group is for somebody to think about it. There are no homes on that side right now but there are a lot of nice homes that have been built over the last three years on the west side. There is a concern about this feeding more traffic into the California

neighborhood and the Broadway neighborhood. What if we went in on the east side with a 55-mph paved road and maintained a residential area on the west side and somehow hooked that up with whatever decent kind of Capital Exchange that will probably go in?

Comment: (Robert Dunlop) I live at 5820 North Montana Avenue. I am in favor of Forestvale Interchange. One gentleman spoke about his mother's dilemma and how she couldn't sell her property back in 1983. Actually all those people out in the valley were promised an interchange long before that. So I propose that you go ahead with Forestvale. Any of these other alternatives may or may not be alright, but if you choose them by the time you do the study for that actual interchange and then get the funding it could well be that some other group comes along such as Plan Helena and says that the current environmental impact statement is outdated and sets that project back again. So if you've got money for Forestvale and Forestvale is ready to go, let's do it and be done with and move on to the next project. Thank you.

Comment: (Jerry Sorensen) I'm the Assistant Fire Chief with West Valley Volunteer Fire Department. I'm here to advocate the interchange at Forestvale for the reason of public safety. The freeway cuts right through West Valley's fire district. The only way we can access the valley right now is to go through Custer or to Lincoln Road. If there is an exchange put in at Custer Avenue, it is going to increase the time it will take to respond to any emergency in the valley. Most of the firefighters work in town and live in the valley and there is already too much time taken to get out to the valley and Custer Avenue is only going to increase that amount of time. I agree with Mr. Rule, economic development is important but in my opinion public safety is more important. The alternative for travel in the valley is to put a turn-lane in around Montana Avenue. The other term for a turn lane is "a suicide lane" and it is called that for a reason. I firmly believe that putting in turn lanes is going to increase the speed and the perceived confidence of the people who travel that and we are going to be getting a lot more traffic accidents, we are going to be able to respond less attractively for medical responses and for the traffic accidents the turn lane is going to cause and for fires. Again I would really urge looking at Forestvale.

Comment: (Gary Burnham) I live on the east side of the valley. To me the most important thing here is to connect the west side of the interstate to the east side of the interstate because it kind of splits Helena in two. On the Forestvale alternative, I've never seen anybody address it and I see your alternative shows it in a "T", but the pictures in the paper showed Forestvale going east off the map. I just wondered if you would address the issue of where that would go and how it would connect the rest of the east side of the valley into York Road or Canyon Ferry Road if they did Forestvale? Or is it just planned to be a "T" into the Frontage Road and go nowhere? If you put

it on Custer, which I believe is a better option, you've already got the east side of the valley connected. Thank you.

Response: (Kim Gambrill) Just a quick response to that. The DEIS does not anticipate an extension for Forestvale to the east. So it does "T" when it reaches the Frontage Road.

Comment: (Gary Burnham) All the pictures in the paper this week showed it going past the Frontage Road and right off the map, so I thought I would ask.

Comment: (Bob Leach) I've lived in Helena since 1970 and when I first moved here I lived just off Sierra Road. My kids went to Rossiter School. I think the biggest problem we have is not the road or the highway, it is the poor planning by our County Commissioners and City Fathers who don't see the importance of having north-south traffic. When we have an east-west road, rather than take that road on through, they build a school on it. For example, the Four Georgians School on Custer where all of a sudden we have to slow down. I don't know about you but when they built that son-of-a-gun, I thought it was a clubhouse for the golf course. That is a stupid place for a school. And the land was given to them over on the north side but for some political reason or pressure from McHugh or somebody, they decided the kids in the trailer court shouldn't have to cross the street. Well, tough! They can cross the street. They could have put in an overpass for the kids to walk across if it was too dangerous. Poor planning. We have no north-south roads that connect and we have no east-west roads that connect. York Road is the stupidest cattle trail I have ever seen. If we don't start taking serious this idea of planned growth and make Forestvale go clear to Valley Drive or Wiley and right on to East Helena Drive if possible. If we don't start planning some roads that go on the other side of the road like the lady said, why doesn't Washington go right on up? That is poor planning. There is no planning in this crazy place. In 1975 I proposed a north bypass that would start on the other side of East Helena and come just the other side of Canyon Ferry Road and into town roughly where Target is now and go right on just north of the Fairgrounds, angle up and catch U.S. 12. I've never seen anybody laugh as hard as our County Commissioners did.

Comment: (Dewey Hahlbohm) I live about a mile from Shopko on the west side of Montana Avenue. I appreciate all the work you've done and the fact that you brought an impartial third party into this debate since it has been such an emotional issue here the community. I've lived in Montana since 1980, and I've lived in Helena since 1995. I'm amazed at how difficult it is to get anything discussed without raising hackles. A couple of things I wanted to say – we either need to develop Custer now or acknowledge that it will never be developed just because of the commercial land there. Folks have got the properties for sale and they want to get rid of them,

understandably. If Custer is done now, it will still provide us the opportunity to build Forestvale later. I think the retail development on Custer with the existing infrastructure just makes a lot of good sense to me. We've got arterials to feed it and there is a lot of developable land in that area that could still be constructed and I think there are a lot of folks who would want to see that happen, if there is an exchange put in there. It doesn't make sense to me to put an interchange at Forestvale now and rebuild the Custer overpass – in other words dismantle and rebuild the Custer overpass to accommodate the auxiliary lanes that are going to be built between Forestvale and Capital when we have the opportunity at the same time to make an interchange right there.

The other thing brought up by this gentlemen, I think the idea of a northwest bypass to accommodate Great Falls to Garrison Junction traffic has a lot of merit to it. I think potentially in the future Forestvale may be that opportunity to do that via Green Meadow or some other route. Let's not take away the opportunity for growth in the community.

CLOSING

Kim Gambrill: Let me wrap up by saying again, thank you very much for coming out, for sharing your thoughts with us, and for your attention and interest throughout the project. If you want to make an oral statement for the record, please see Annell Fillinger. If you want to fill in one of the comment sheets tonight, please do that and leave it with us. Again, you have until April 7th to submit written comments to either the post office address shown on the comment form or by sending your comments directly to Mark Studt at MDT. As you can see from the comments tonight, the community still has pretty strong opinions on both sides of the issue. The decision is not going to be an easy one but we hope to have a recommendation sometime in the next 45 days or so.

This concludes the formal part of the presentation. The project team will be here for another hour to answer any questions you might have. Thank you.

Comments given orally after the formal presentation

Comment: (Carol Lode) I live on Valley Speedway Road right next to where the Forestvale interchange would be. Regarding the article in the Independent Record today, I thoroughly agree with Anita Varone's comment, let's go ahead and put Forestvale in. The right-of-way has already been purchased, the money is there for it, and let the commercial businessmen put the money up for Custer. It has already been talked about by the businessmen and let them do it. We can do both.

Comment: (Kathy Macefield) We need to make sure we include bicycle and pedestrian amenities as part of the overall plan for any alternative – that they are not an after-thought. So that they are part of the project rather than thinking they can be accommodated with CTEP. That is not the way to go with that. They need to be part of the project.

Comment: (Fred Lode) I live out in the valley at 1406 Valley Speedway Road. My understanding is that all right-of-way has been purchased for Forestvale. No one knows how much money has been spent up to this point. The money is there for Forestvale and I feel it is pretty foolish to do Custer when the money is there for Forestvale. Five years ago the comments were that the businesses along Custer were willing to pay for the interchange and I feel to just put an interchange in just to help the businesses at Custer is not the right reason. I'm for the Forestvale interchange.

Comment: (Jim Nolan) I'm here in support of either Alternative One or Alternative Two because they both have the South Hills exchange and I think that is a great idea. I also think it is a great idea to pave that Frontage Road from Montana City to Colonial Drive because as more and more development takes places out there, the access to the hospital and all the services on the other end of Colonial Drive become more and more important.

Comment: (Robert Rule) One of the things I think is so important about the Custer Avenue interchange going in is it creates jobs. I've had to say goodbye to three of my four kids while they go out of town or out of state to find work. I think there are a lot of people like me who would just rather see the kids stay home. What the fireman said about access on the north was a very good point. If we create the jobs, we can create the tax base to be able to afford to make the changes much quicker. But right now what you are going to be dealing with ... if we work at trying to save what we have right now, we are going to be handing our problems of today to our kids.

Comment: (Mark Mackin) I live at 4286 Hart Lane in Helena. I've followed this through the mailings from MDT and news articles and talking with people. I find that the "do nothing" alternative isn't acceptable. We have obvious traffic bottlenecks and safety

problems and east west access issues that have to be addressed at some point in time. I strongly prefer the Custer alternative, however, I think the presentation of the alternatives has set up a false sense of choices because we are really talking about the order in which all these projects should be done and not whether we are going to do one or the other. Not doing the Custer improvements isn't realistic, however, not doing Forestvale is realistic at least at the present time. But it is likely that it is going to have to be built in the future too. At first, the Forestvale alternative seems much less expensive on its face in the way the alternatives have been presented, however, the higher cost improvements on Custer still must be built in the near future. So we won't be able to avoid the expense of the Custer alternative by choosing the Forestvale alternative. We will just avoid addressing the issues centered at the Custer alternative while they become more difficult and expensive to address. In effect, going with Forestvale means doing Forestvale and Custer and all the other projects more poorly because resources will be spread out among them.

Going with Forestvale at this time means spreading development piecemeal all over the valley and having inadequate infrastructure everywhere while congestion increases in the Custer and Montana vicinity and I think that would be very much to the detriment of a first-class development. Going with Custer means concentrating the public resources where the need is most urgent and growing. Forestvale can be delayed without serious problems but I'm pretty sure Custer cannot. The Custer alternative serves the designated development area chosen by the county in the recent Land Use Planning Review and Growth Policy. This is the area we have agreed to develop intensively and ought to develop and that is where public resources should be concentrated. It is also where other public resources are available to tie into so it is far less expensive in the aggregate.

There is also public acceptance for development in this area. Development in the Forestvale area at this time may repeat the earlier hostilities related to the Forestvale alternative and further delay much needed improvements. The total cost of either alternative is beyond the immediate budget for the district and this means the incremental one project every couple of years approach in any event. Current commercial development in the Custer, Montana, and Washington Avenue vicinity and the traffic it draws must be accommodated by the improvements outlined in the Custer Alternative. Even though it seems quite pricey, it will be less expensive to do it now instead of later.

Also there is a need for better emergency access off the interstate and that could be handled by a very low volume, emergency ramp only access – perhaps with electronically locking and unlocking gates which would allow emergency vehicles to get off and get back on but wouldn't be available for regular traffic. I think that is

one way of getting around the notion of needing Forestvale as an emergency exit – just build a specialty emergency exit at that location if it is really needed.

Written Comments Received

Written comments received at the Draft Environmental Impact Statement Public Hearing are attached.

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I-15 Corridor, Montana City to Lincoln Road
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