



Frequently Asked Questions

Rest areas play an important role in the statewide transportation network by providing safe stopping opportunities along Montana's highways, contributing toward the goal of Vision Zero. Rest area activities such as walking, using a mobile device, sleeping, resting, and eating can aid in combating drowsy and distracted driving, potentially reducing crashes. Rest areas also offer safe places to stop during weather events and road closures, offer an enclosed area to walk dogs and support the tourism and trucking industries by offering hospitality to out-of-state motorists. Rest areas rank among the highest transportation need in MDT's bi-annual public survey.

1. Where will the new rest area be located?

The new facility will be located north of I 90 on the west side of US 287, just north of existing business development.



2. What safety features are included in the new rest area?

With public safety in mind, many safety features are being integrated into the design of the new rest area:

- Site, picnic structure, and building design eliminates blind spots
- Parking area, sidewalks, picnic areas, and building include safety lighting
- LED lighting covers 100% of pedestrian and parking areas
- Eight private restrooms lit by LED lights; battery back-ups will provide light in the event of power failure
- Large windows offer visibility and contribute to well-lit hallways
- Rest area location on west side of property at the highest point maximizes visibility, sight lines and security
- Security systems cover buildings and parking areas with surveillance-class media server for storage of video, ability to view/access video onsite, and error messaging to notify of system failure
- Displayed signs will note video surveillance

- License plate cameras with infrared illumination will capture data at rest area entrance and exit with illuminator at the entrance and exit of the rest area
- Rest area site is nearby planned future Public Safety Facility
- Site design enables local Sheriff and Montana Highway Patrol to view rest area from US 287 and conduct random drive-through patrol of site

MDT has not experienced noticeable crime activities at rest area facilities. The modern rest area designs implemented over the past 18 years include extensive electronic security devices as well as requirement for high visibility in and around the buildings.

3. Who uses rest areas?

Rest areas provide all travelers (auto, RV, truck, motorcycle, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.) a safe place to stop to rest.

4. Why was this site selected?

The site and facility proposed by Montana Rest Area JV Partners offered the best value rest area design and involved a selection process based on the qualifications of the team's project approach, identified site, architectural design, aesthetics, safety features, and cost.

5. How does this new rest area compare to the old one?

This rest area will be twice the size, increase parking, and offer many safety improvements over the former facility. Modern features will include environmental improvements and offer features popular with travelers, such as water bottle filling stations.

6. Who is working on this project?

The Montana Department of Transportation is working in partnership with a team lead by Montana Rest Area JV Partners. Coordination with Broadwater County, Gallatin County, and cities of Three Forks and Bozeman is ongoing.

7. Why haven't I heard anything about this project until now?

Part of the proposal process for this project involved identifying and securing a site for the new rest area. Because of the competitive nature of the project delivery process selection, project location information was not available until the selection was completed. Now that a team and site have been selected, public outreach and involvement activities have begun. Opportunities for public involvement are discussed further on the [Public Involvement page](#).

8. What opportunities will there be for public input?

Public input is encouraged and appreciated. Please reach out to the project team using the contact information provided with questions and comments.

A public open house and a virtual public meeting were hosted on July 20 and 21, 2021. Opportunities for public involvement are discussed further on the [Public Involvement page](#).

9. Has law enforcement been included in project discussions?

Yes. The team is in coordination with local, county, and state law enforcement to discuss safety functionality.

10. Why is this project being delivered in this format?

This project was selected for this project delivery process for a number of reasons including:

- This project poses many challenges; this delivery method engages the project teams to help identify solutions
- The project delivery process also offers expedited project delivery over traditional delivery, which will benefit future rest area users
- This project delivery process facilitates innovative design and cost savings to deliver quality projects for Montana taxpayers

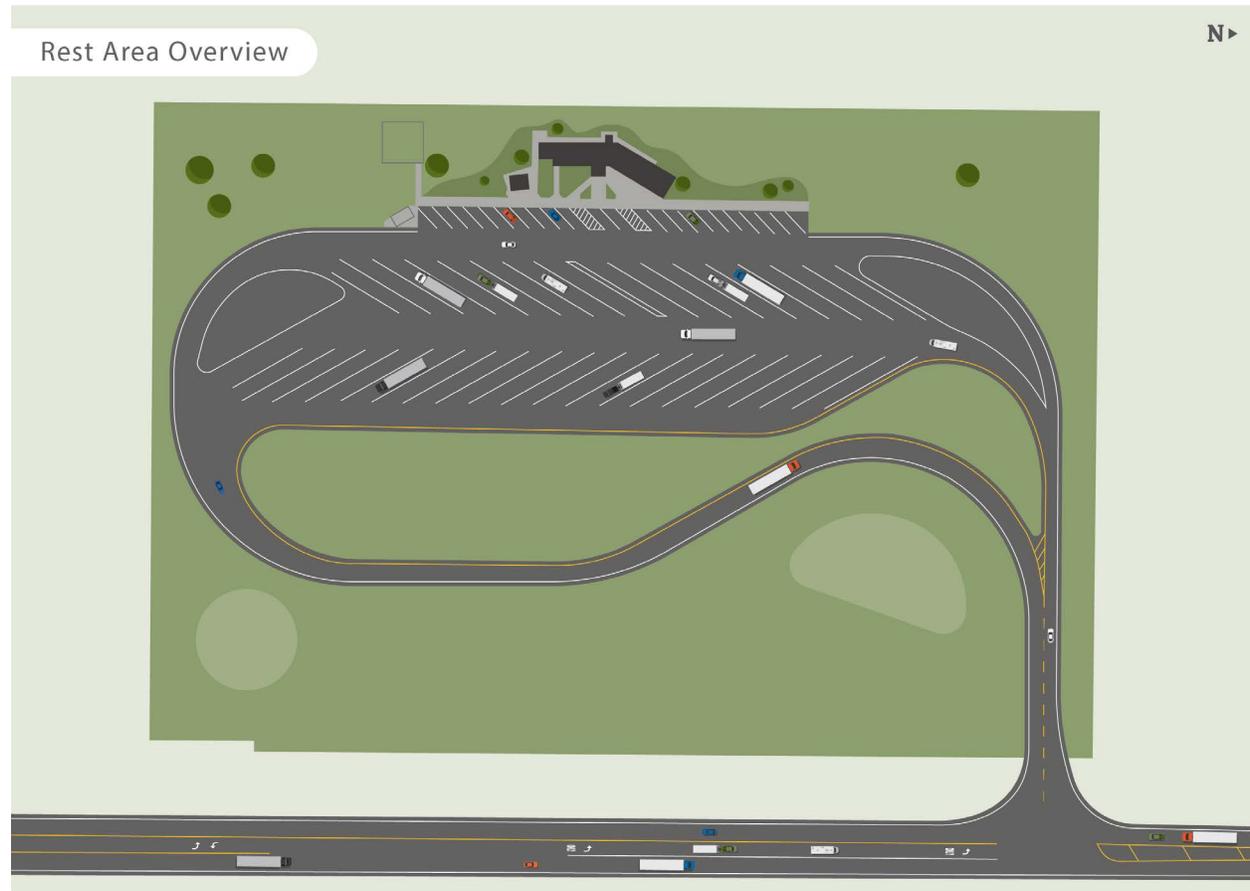
11. Will noise increase as a result of the rest area?

Noise analysis will be completed as a part of this project by Big Sky Acoustics. It is expected that noise levels resulting from rest area use will be similar to the noise resulting from the nearby highway and businesses.

12. Will the rest area cause traffic congestion?

The project will provide a north-bound left turn lane into the rest area. Designs are based on traffic analysis, with expected traffic volumes of approximately 70 vehicles during the peak hour entering/exiting the rest area drive approach.

A traffic analysis was prepared as part of the systems impact process. The resulting recommendation was to widen US 287 to provide the left turn lane for northbound traffic. This will be included with the rest area improvements.



13. What other features does the rest area offer?

- The rest area is intended to use reclaimed water for irrigation and restrooms, which will be less impactful to the environment
- All restrooms will have changing stations and toddler seating
- The drinking fountain will include a bottle filler
- Interpretive signs will offer visitors the opportunity to learn about the area
- Parking lot will include 22 passenger vehicle parking stalls and 35 truck/RV parking stalls
- A fenced pet area will be provided
- Maintenance will be provided by MDT
- The orientation of the roof will direct stormwater away from public areas
- An extended pergola roof will provide shade

