



Newsletter
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Billings Area I-90 Corridor Planning Study

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What is a Corridor Planning Study?

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in cooperation with the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is conducting a Corridor Planning Study along Interstate 90 (I-90) from the Laurel Interchange (RP 433.8) to the Pinehills Interchange (RP 455.85). Representatives from the above entities have been selected to form a planning team for the corridor study.

A Corridor Planning Study is a **planning-level assessment** of a study area occurring before project-level environmental compliance activities under the National and Montana Environmental Policy Acts (NEPA/MEPA). MDT developed a Corridor Planning Study process to provide a better link between early transportation planning and environmental compliance efforts. The Corridor Planning Study process involves

conducting a high-level evaluation of safety, operational, and geometric conditions and environmental resources within a specified corridor in order to identify needs and constraints. This process allows MDT to save time and money in subsequent project phases by facilitating early identification of constraints within a corridor through early coordination with members of the community, resource agencies, and other interested parties; screening of possible improvement options; and elimination of infeasible options. A Corridor Planning Study is a planning document that considers multiple improvement options throughout a corridor. This planning process is distinct from a NEPA/MEPA environmental compliance document and from design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction phases for an individual project.

Informational Meeting #1 Tuesday, September 13, 2011 at 6pm

Parmly Billings Library
3rd Floor Meeting Room
510 N. Broadway; Billings, MT

The purpose of the meeting is to explain the corridor planning study process, present information about existing and projected conditions in the corridor, and request community input regarding concerns, opportunities and constraints that may influence improvement options.

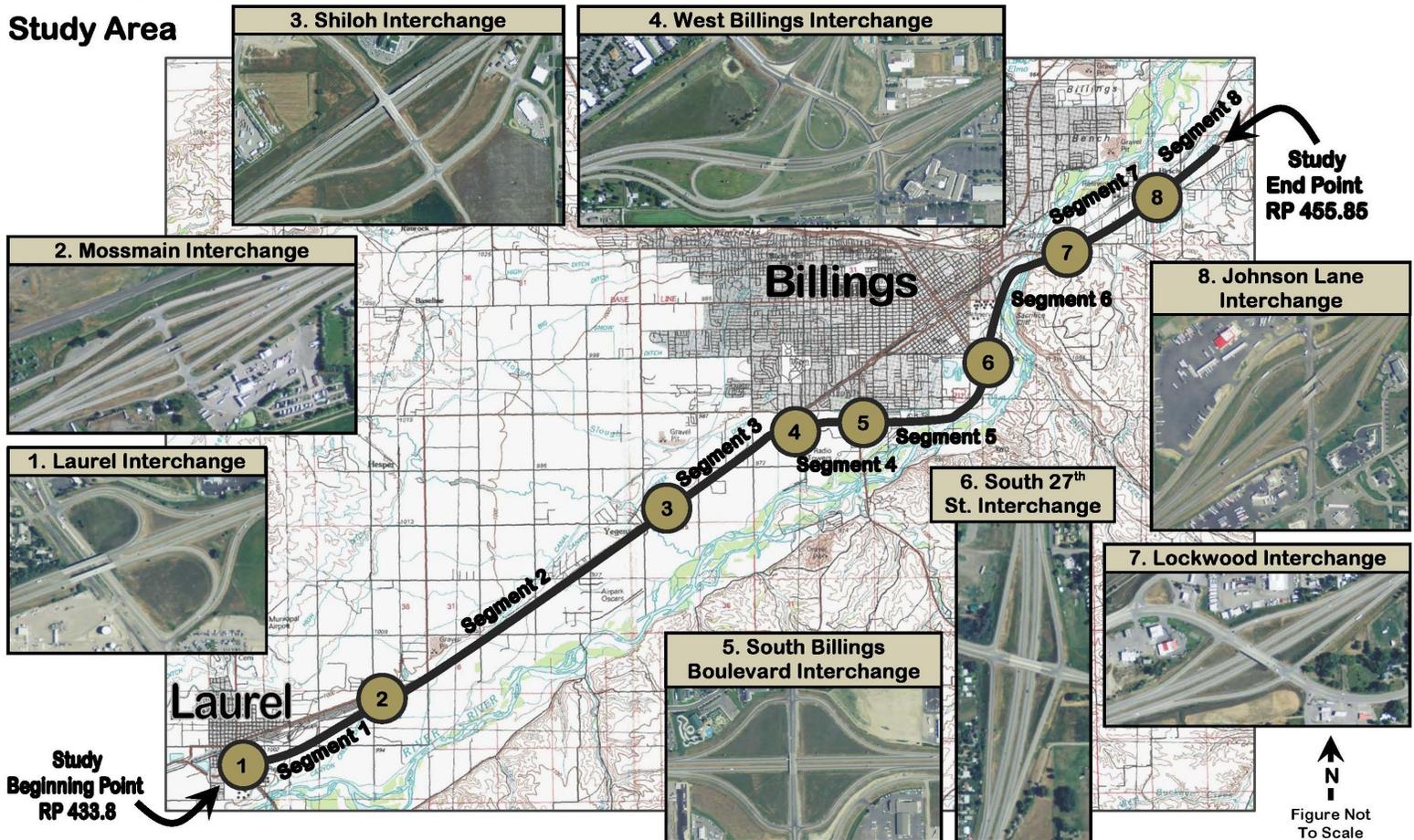
Community members are encouraged to attend.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Study Area

The Billings Area I-90 Corridor Planning Study Area includes approximately 22 miles of Interstate 90 (I-90) beginning at the Laurel Interchange (RP 433.8) and ending immediately west of the Pinehills Interchange (RP 455.85).

Study Area



Study Focus

I-90 is part of the National Highway System and serves as a primary means of moving people, goods, and services throughout the country. The system is characterized by controlled access, high traffic volumes, and long-distance trips. I-90 serves as the principal east-west route in the Billings area.

The Billings Area I-90 Corridor Planning Study will examine the geometric characteristics, crash history, and existing and projected operational characteristics of I-90 mainline segments and interchanges, as well as existing and projected physical constraints, land uses, and environmental resources within the corridor study area. The end result of the planning effort will be a comprehensive package of short-term and long-term recommendations intended to address the needs and objectives on the I-90 corridor over the planning horizon (2035). These recommendations will assist MDT in identifying potential projects based on needs, objectives, and funding availability.

What are the steps in a Corridor Planning Study?

The steps involved in MDT's Corridor Planning Study process include:

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1. ***Develop Corridor Study Work Plan***

The planning team will assess the complexity of issues within the corridor and the level of effort required to address the issues.

2. ***Develop Existing and Projected Conditions Report***

The report will assess the geometric characteristics, crash history, and existing and projected operational characteristics of I-90 Interstate segments and interchanges, as well as existing and projected physical constraints, land uses, and environmental resources within the corridor study area.

3. ***Identify Needs, Objectives, and Screening Criteria***

In consideration of comments submitted during community and resource agency involvement efforts, the planning team will identify needs and objectives for the corridor and a corresponding set of screening criteria that will be used to evaluate improvement options.

4. ***Identify and Analyze Improvement Options***

The planning team will identify a preliminary set of short-term and long-term improvement options, which will be evaluated based on their ability to meet the screening criteria and address the I-90 corridor needs and objectives.

5. ***Recommend Improvement Options***

The planning team will recommend improvement options to address the I-90 corridor needs and objectives. Potential impacts, mitigation opportunities, and estimated costs will be identified for each improvement option.

6. ***Prepare Draft Corridor Study Report***

The planning team will prepare a draft report documenting the corridor planning process, including community and agency input, key findings, recommendations, and next steps. The team will seek comments on the draft report from resource agencies, stakeholders, and members of the community.

7. ***Finalize Corridor Study Report***

The planning team will finalize the corridor study report, incorporating comments from community members, resource agencies, and other interested parties. Recommendations from the study will assist MDT in identifying potential projects based on needs, objectives, and funding availability.

**View the Draft Existing and Projected Conditions Report
on the study website at**

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/i90corridor>

Study Schedule



How can I stay involved in this study?

Community participation is an important part of this study. Your input regarding corridor issues, concerns, opportunities, and constraints will be considered during the study. To review additional information about the study and to submit comments electronically, visit the study website at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/i90corridor>

Contact Us

Gary Neville

MDT Billings District Engineer
406.657.0232
gneville@mt.gov

Sarah Nicolai

DOWL HKM Project Manager
406.442.0370
snicolai@dowlhkm.com

Tom Kahle

MDT Project Manager
406.444.9211
tkahle@mt.gov

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any department service, program or activity. For the hearing impaired, the TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or (800) 335-7592, or Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request.

