

# NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

## Maclay Bridge Planning Study

**FINAL**



Prepared for:  
**Montana Department of Transportation**  
Helena, Montana



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September 13, 2012



## 1.0 NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

Needs and objectives are derived based on a comprehensive review of existing data and input from resource agencies, stakeholders and the public and will be used to develop options. The following needs and objectives reflect the existing social, environmental, and engineering conditions described in the Existing and Projected Conditions Report and recognize the local and regional use of the bridge.

### 1.1. NEED NUMBER 1:

***Improve the safety and operation of the river crossing and connecting roadway network.***

The single-lane bridge on a two-way, two-lane roadway does not accommodate simultaneous travel in two directions. Several crash trends have been previously identified at the bridge or on roadways leading to the bridge. Trends relative to safety are caused by a variety of factors, including poor roadway alignment, inadequate sight distance, and illegally parked cars.

#### Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Improve sub-standard elements of facilities to meet current applicable design standards.
- Reduce delay and vehicle restriction for emergency responders under existing and future traffic demands.
- Manage travel speeds and provide adequate clear zones to improve operations.

### 1.2. NEED NUMBER 2:

***Provide a long-term river crossing and connecting roadway network that accommodates planned growth in the Maclay Bridge area.***

The Maclay Bridge is used by local and regional travelers including pedestrians, bicyclists, emergency response providers, and school buses. Depending on future growth characteristics as depicted in local adopted planning documents, the Maclay Bridge will realize increased passenger and vehicular traffic.

#### Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Accommodate existing and future capacity demands.
- Address non-motorized facilities consistent with local planning efforts.
- Provide connectivity to neighborhood residents, and regional users accessing recreational lands to the west of the Bitterroot River.

### 1.3. NEED NUMBER 3:

***Minimize adverse impacts from options to the environmental, cultural, scenic and recreational characteristics of the study area.***

The area around the Maclay Bridge provides access to residential, agricultural and recreational lands. Because of the location along the Bitterroot River, wildlife and aquatic connectivity are areas of concern. Improvements should be considered that provide both wildlife and aquatic connectivity. All improvements should be reviewed for their potential impact to the environmental, scenic, cultural, recreational and agricultural aspects of the corridor.

Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Minimize adverse impacts to the Bitterroot River from potential options.
- Minimize adverse impacts to the wildlife and aquatic organisms from potential options.
- Provide reasonable access to recreational sites in the study area (Kelly Island Fishing Access Site, Lolo National Forest, and Missoula County Parks).
- Avoid or otherwise minimize adverse impacts to historic, cultural, and archaeological resources that may result from implementation of options.

**1.4. NEED NUMBER 4:**

*Minimize adverse impacts from options to the neighborhood characteristics of the study area.*

Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Implement improvements with special sensitivity to area schools.
- Minimize impacts to existing residents and businesses in the area.
- Recognize the historic value of the Maclay Bridge to the community and the role it plays in local regional events.

**1.5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE)**

- Options should be sensitive to the availability of funding for recurring maintenance obligations or for the construction of new improvements.

*The subject of parking, vandalism, illegal activity, and enforcement, along with perpetuating access to recreational sites directly adjacent to the Maclay Bridge, are areas of concern generally outside the scope of this Maclay Bridge Planning Study. However, they are areas of concern that have been documented and commented on by members of the public.*