CORRECTING THE PROBLEM

The Dern Road and Springcreek Road intersection along Highway 2 West is one of the most dangerous in the Flathead Valley. Between 2003 and 2014, there were 48 crashes at the Dern/Springcreek intersection, including one fatality. This pattern must stop. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is committed to creating a solution to eliminate serious injuries or deaths at this intersection.

Twelve different options for improving this intersection have been studied and a roundabout was determined to be the safest traffic configuration among them. This will include flattening the existing slope to create a level roadway. Design plans are to relocate the intersection approximately 120 feet northwest of its current position, so that the intersection cuts into the hillside, providing a reasonably level, flatter intersection for the roundabout to be built upon.

For more information regarding Dern/Springcreek research and studies, visit: www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/dernspring.

STAY IN THE KNOW

EMAIL UPDATES
Contact Katie at katie@bigskypublicrelations.com to subscribe.

SMS TEXTING UPDATES
Text DERN to 41411.

PROJECT HOTLINE
406-207-4484 during business hours.

WEBSITE


LEARN MORE ABOUT VISION ZERO AT
www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided on request. Persons who need an alternative format should contact the Human Resources and Occupational Safety Division, Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620. Telephone 406-444-9229. Those using a TTY may call 1(800)335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.
A ROUNDABOUT IS THE SAFEST, MOST COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION

When navigating roundabouts, drivers slow to 15 - 20 mph and travel in the same direction, significantly reducing the likelihood and severity of a crash. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that on average, roundabouts reduce fatalities by 90 percent, serious injury crashes by 75 percent, and all kinds of crashes by 37 percent.

In addition, based on 50 years of traffic data assessed and a thorough analysis of projected growth, a roundabout will efficiently handle traffic volumes for the next 20 years without additional investment.

Alternatives such as a traffic signal or four-way stop serve as a device to assign right-of-way to traffic; they aren’t effective in reducing crashes. At the Dern/Springcreek intersection, the points of conflict will be reduced from 32, as it sits now, to just 8 once the roundabout is installed.

To learn more about roundabouts, visit: bit.ly/MTRoundabouts.

Budget & Cost Estimate: The Dern and Springcreek project is estimated to cost $3.9 million.

THIS INVESTMENT WILL PROVIDE:

- A new roundabout at the Dern and Springcreek Road intersection
- A flattened hillside and slope on Highway 2
- Pedestrian crossings to the roundabout with signage alerting drivers of pedestrians
- Visibility improvements
- Better commute times and a safer roadway

The preliminary estimate at this time is $3.9 million to construct the roundabout and improve the grade of the roadway at the Dern/Springcreek intersection, the vast majority of which will be funded using federal safety improvement dollars. This means the project does not take from the state budget.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

When will this project start?
Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in the spring of 2021.

Can trucks and large vehicles actually use this roundabout safely and with ease?
Yes! Roundabout design has improved significantly over the last decade. Interestingly, the size of the roundabout is not nearly as important as elements such as how the curbs and apron in the roundabout are designed. To this end, the Montana Department of Transportation is partnering with members of the local trucking community on the Dern/Springcreek intersection to ensure the design best accommodates needs of large loads. The apron, which is the raised area at the center of the roundabout, will be mountable, allowing trucks to traverse over the middle area to complete their turns. The apron will have a gradual slope and low height in order to ensure low-clearance vehicles don’t get hung up in the roundabout. The single-lane roundabout will be 140’ in diameter, with a 19’ wide circulating road width and mountable 13’ wide inner mountable truck apron giving large vehicles like trucks and trailers, ample space to maneuver and curbs in key spots that are relatively gradual, making it easier for trucks to use the apron when needed.

The hills coming into the Dern/Springcreek intersection are really steep. Isn’t it dangerous to put a roundabout there due to the current grade?
No. A primary goal of this project will be to flatten the slope on Highway 2 where the roundabout will be placed. The intersection will be relocated approximately 120 feet northwest of its current position, so that the intersection cuts into the hillside, providing a reasonably level, flatter intersection for the roundabout to be built upon.

How will traffic be handled? Should I expect long delays?
Commute times on Highway 2 West will be slowed minimally, if at all.