



GORE HILL to EMERSON JUNCTION Corridor Planning Study



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Corridor Planning Study Highlights

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and in coordination with the Great Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), has developed a corridor planning study of Interstate 15 (I-15) in the Great Falls Area. The purpose of the study is to determine potential improvement options to address safety and operations within the transportation corridor based on identified needs.

The study area includes I-15 through Great Falls. The area begins southwest of the Gore Hill Interchange (I-15, Exit 277), near Reference Post (RP) 277, and ends northwest of Emerson Junction (Exit 282), near RP 284. The study area also includes I-315 and 10th Avenue South, west of the Missouri River (RP 95).

The corridor planning study was developed through a collaborative process with MDT, Great Falls MPO, and FHWA that involved focused outreach to the public, key stakeholders, and resource agencies. An evaluation of known and publically available information was conducted. Activities completed for development of the study include the following:

- Research and analysis of existing roadway conditions
- Research and synthesis of known environmental resources and applicable regulations in the study area
- Identification of corridor issues and areas of concern
- Consultation and coordination with local officials, stakeholders, resource agencies, and public
- Identification of corridor needs and objectives
- Development of corridor improvement options with consideration of costs, available funding, feasibility, public input, and known resource constraints
- Documentation of potential funding mechanisms for improvement options

The draft *I-15 Gore Hill to Emerson Junction Corridor Planning Study* will be made available for review and comment on May 22, 2015. Copies can be accessed via the study website at www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/i15. The deadline for receiving comments is June 21, 2015.



INFORMATIONAL MEETING #2

Please Join Us!

Great Falls:

Thursday, May 28, 2015
6:00 PM
Gibson Room
Great Falls Civic Center
2 Park Drive South

Purpose:

Informational Meeting #2 is being conducted to present the various improvement options developed for the corridor and to gather community feedback on the draft corridor planning study report.



Corridor Needs and Objectives

Based on the analysis of existing and future conditions of the study area, the following need and objectives were established. They were used in the development of improvement options.

Need 1: Improve the Safety of the Corridor Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Reduce the frequency and severity of crashes.
- Improve roadway elements to meet current design criteria to address identified safety concerns.
- Reduce conflicts between vehicles of varying types and speeds.
- Address identified crash trends and clusters.

Need 2: Accommodate Existing and Future Capacity Demands Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Maintain level of service (LOS) standards for mainline segments and interchange ramps.
- Improve operations and maintain LOS standards for intersections.

Need 3: Provide for the Mobility of People and Freight Objectives (To the Extent Practicable)

- Provide for the movement and transfer of people and goods.
- Maintain the roadway for effective and prompt emergency response.

Other Considerations

- Environmental resource impacts of improvement options
- Local and regional planning efforts
- Funding availability
- Construction feasibility and impacts
- Security of the transportation system

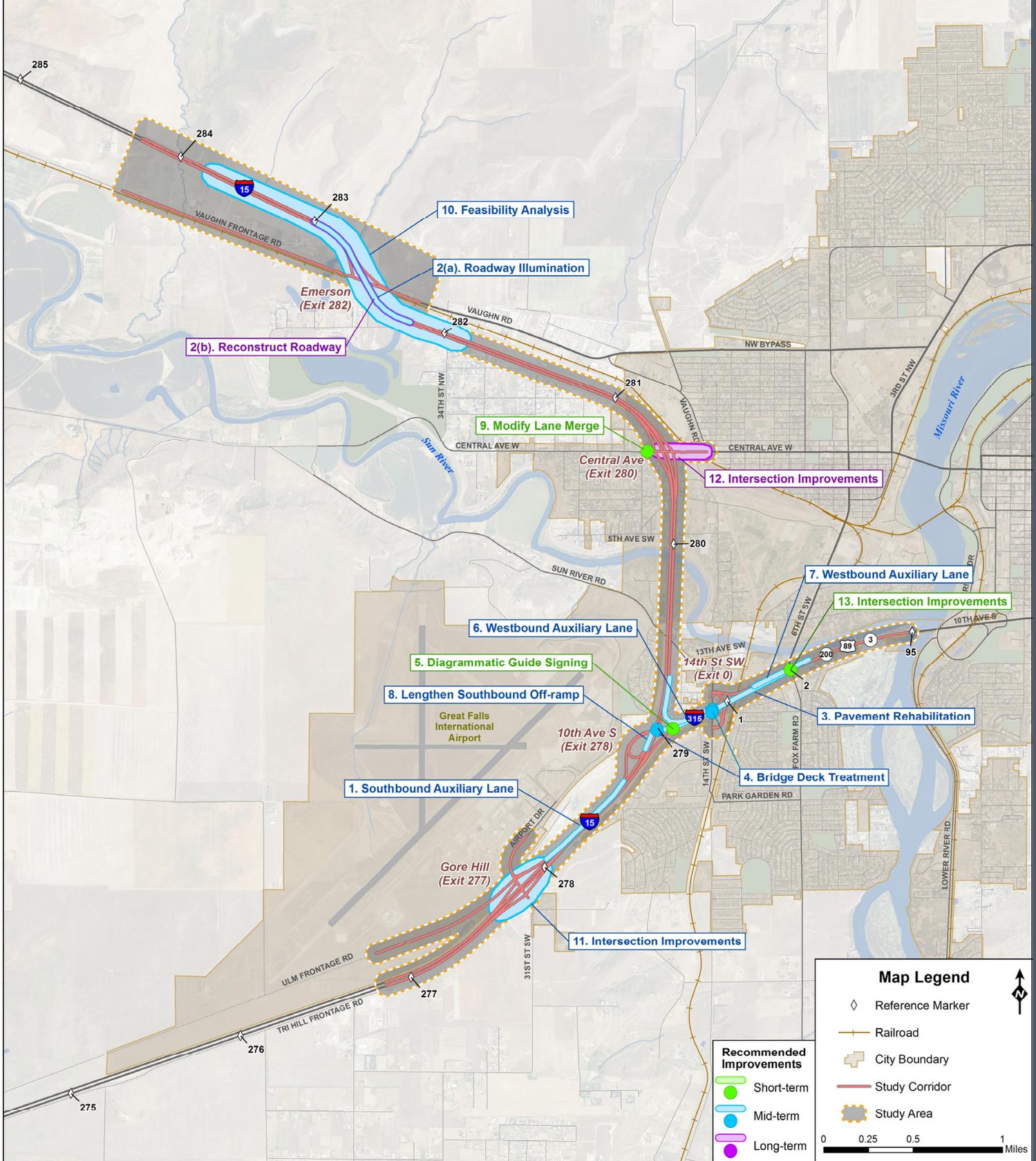
Improvement Options Summary

The following table is a summary of the potential improvement options, along with planning-level cost estimates. Implementation of any of the improvement options may require close coordination with resource agencies to identify areas of sensitivity.

| Improvement Option | Location | Description | Cost Estimate | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| INTERSTATE 15 | | | | |
| 1.0 | Southbound Auxiliary Lane | RP 278.1 to 278.5 | Construct auxiliary lane between Gore Hill and 10th Ave S interchanges in southbound direction. | \$1.9M |
| 2(a) | Roadway Illumination | RP 282.3 to 283.0 | Install additional illumination along the Interstate. | \$500k |
| 2(b) | Reconstruct Roadway | RP 282.3 to 283.0 | Reconstruct roadway and bridge structures to meet current design standards. | \$24.0M |
| INTERSTATE 315 | | | | |
| 3.0 | Pavement Rehabilitation | RP 0.0 to 1.4 | Resurface both directions of I-315. | \$1.0M |
| 4.0 | Bridge Deck Treatment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-15 Overpass (RP 0.01) • 14th St SW Overpass (EB) • 14th St SW Overpass (WB) | Rehabilitate bridge decks. | \$600k |
| 5.0 | Diagrammatic Guide Signing | 10th Ave S to 14th St SW | Install overhead diagrammatic guide signage for eastbound traffic. | \$200k |
| 6.0 | Westbound Auxiliary Lane | 14th St SW to I-15 | Reconstruct I-315 westbound and the I-15 on-ramp to provide an auxiliary travel lane. | \$2.0M |
| 7.0 | Westbound Auxiliary Lane | Fox Farm Rd to 14th St SW | Reconstruct I-315 westbound and the Fox Farm Road intersection to provide an auxiliary travel lane. | \$1.2M |
| INTERCHANGES | | | | |
| 8.0 | Lengthen Southbound Off-ramp | 10th Ave S Interchange | Lengthen southbound off-ramp. | \$260k |
| 9.0 | Modify Lane Merge | Central Ave west of Interchange | Modify signing and striping. | \$20k |
| 10.0 | Feasibility Analysis | Emerson Junction | Secure a local project sponsor to fund an operational analysis/feasibility study of the Emerson Junction Interchange. | \$250k |
| INTERSECTIONS | | | | |
| 11.0 | Intersection Improvements | Gore Hill Interchange | Install additional traffic control such as roundabouts or traffic signals. | \$5.2M to \$9.0M |
| 12.0 | Intersection Improvements | Central Ave Interchange | Install additional traffic control such as roundabouts or traffic signals. | \$8.1M to \$10.6M |
| 13.0 | Intersection Improvements | Fox Farm Intersection | Install dual eastbound left-turn lanes. | \$100k |



Improvement Options



Map Legend

- ◇ Reference Marker
- Railroad
- City Boundary
- Study Corridor
- ▭ Study Area

Recommended Improvements

- Short-term
- Mid-term
- Long-term

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



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Public Involvement Opportunities

An informational meeting is scheduled for 6:00 PM, Thursday, May 28, 2015, in the Gibson Room at the Great Falls Civic Center. The purpose of the meeting is to present the recommended improvement options and gather feedback on the draft corridor study report. Starting May 22, 2015, the draft report will be made available for review on the study website (www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/i15).

Comments may be submitted in writing at the informational meeting, online via the study website, or by mail to Corrina Collins, MDT Statewide and Urban Planning, Project Manager, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001. Please indicate that comments are for the *I-15 Gore Hill to Emerson Junction Corridor Planning Study*. MDT will collect and consider all comments to better understand the community's view of potential issues and concerns within the study area.

The deadline for receiving comments is June 21, 2015.

Next Steps

After the public comment period closes, comments will be reviewed, and the *I-15 Gore Hill to Emerson Junction Corridor Planning Study* will be finalized. The ability to implement improvement options for I-15 depends on the availability of existing and future federal, state, local, and private funding sources. At the current time, there is no funding to complete the improvement options contained in the study.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program, or activity associated with this study. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information, call (406) 447-5000, TTY (800) 335-7592, or Montana Relay at 711. Accommodation requests must be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled activity and / or meeting.