

# Maclay Bridge Planning Study



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## Study Description

Missoula County, in partnership with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is conducting a planning study of the Maclay Bridge over the Bitterroot River west of the City of Missoula to determine the potential needs of the bridge and connecting roadways within the area.

The purpose of the study is to identify feasible recommendations to address existing and projected safety, geometric and environmental concerns based on needs presented by the community, study partners, resource agencies, and other interested parties.

The study will include a comprehensive package of short- and long-term recommendations intended to address the transportation needs over the planning horizon. These recommendations will assist the study partners in targeting the most critical needs and allocating resources appropriately.

The Maclay Bridge is a one-lane bridge that crosses the Bitterroot River approximately 2.75 miles west of Reserve Street via North Avenue.

## What is a Planning Study?

A *Planning Study* is a planning-level assessment of the study area that occurs prior to any project-level environmental compliance activities under the National and Montana Environmental Policy Acts (NEPA / MEPA).

Planning studies include early communication with interested parties to help identify needs, constraints, and opportunities for the areas of interest and to help determine if there are implementable recommendations given potential needs and available resources.

The *Planning Study* is developed strictly as a planning tool and not a design or construction project. The study is designed to help facilitate a smooth and efficient transition from transportation planning to future environmental reviews should a project be developed.

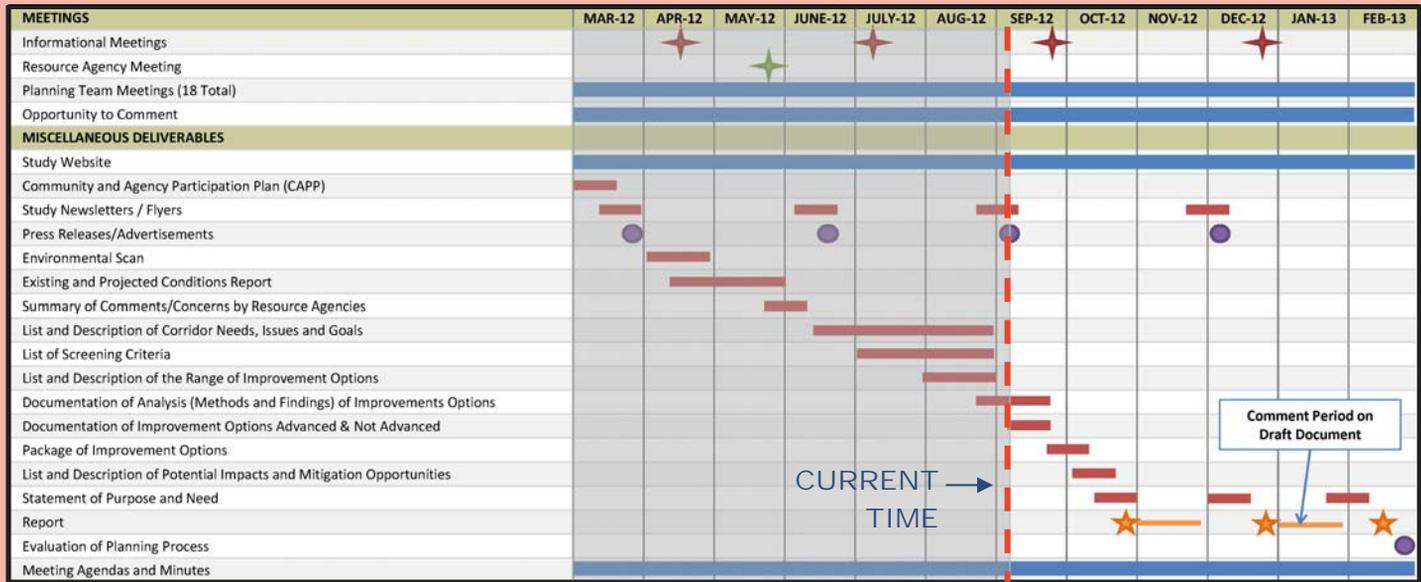
## INFORMATIONAL MEETING #3 of 4 Please Join Us!

THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2012  
6:00 PM  
BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL  
(MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM)  
3100 SOUTH AVENUE WEST  
MISSOULA, MT

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

We hope to see you there!

**Study Schedule** The Maclay Bridge Planning Study began in March 2012 and is expected to be completed by the end of February 2013.



## 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 are 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.

### Need Number 1:

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

#### 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.

### Need Number 2:

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

#### 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.

### Need Number 3:

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

#### 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.

### 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.

### 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.*

## Options Under Consideration

There are four categories associated with the improvement options. Category number 1 includes options that will improve safety and operations on the existing bridge. Category number 2 includes options to rehabilitate the existing bridge. Category number 3 includes options to build a new bridge at various locations. Category number 4 includes the do nothing option.

Option Title	
<b>Option 1: Improve Safety and Operations on the Existing Bridge</b>	
Enhance Traffic Operations and Safety on and near the Existing Structure	
Maintain Current Usage and Add Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities	
Implement Additional Restrictions on Use	
Close Bridge to Vehicles and Retain Use for Non-Motorized Travel Modes	
Retain Bridge and Provide a New Bridge Elsewhere	
New One-Lane Bridge at a New Location & Retain Existing Bridge for Non-Motorized Uses	
New One-Lane Bridge at a New Location & Retain Existing Bridge for One-Way Travel	
Close Bridge and Remove Structure	
<b>Option 2: Rehabilitate the Existing Bridge</b>	
Minor Rehabilitation	
Major Rehabilitation	
<b>Option 3: Build New Bridge</b>	
Connecting to North Avenue	
<i>Build on Existing Alignment</i>	
<i>Build Near Existing Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North 1</li> <li>• North 2</li> </ul>

Option Title	
<b>At a New Location</b>	
<i>Build Bridge on Northern Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West</li> <li>• Spurgin Road</li> </ul>
<i>Build Bridge on Mount Avenue Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mount 1</li> <li>• Mount 2</li> </ul>
<i>Build Bridge on Edward Avenue Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edward 1</li> <li>• Edward 2</li> </ul>
<i>Build Bridge on South Avenue Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South 1</li> <li>• South 2</li> </ul>
<i>Build Bridge on Sundown Road Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sundown 1</li> <li>• Sundown 2</li> </ul>
<i>Build Bridge on Southern Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humble Road – Blue Mountain Road</li> </ul>
<i>New Bridge at a New Location Not Identified in the 1994 EA</i>	
<b>Option 4: Do Nothing</b>	
Do Nothing	

## Options Under Consideration



## Maclay Bridge Planning Study

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### Community Involvement Opportunities

Community involvement is important to any successful planning study process. The purpose of community involvement is to ensure a proactive process that provides opportunities for the community to be involved in all phases of the planning study. The community is invited to attend community informational meetings and participate in ongoing study information review and input.

A study website ([www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/maclay](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/maclay)) provides online opportunities to comment on the *Maclay Bridge Planning Study* effort. Dates, times, and locations for all community outreach events will be announced prior to the events through local media and the study mailing list.

The study team will collect and consider all comments received to better understand the potential issues. Those with a specific interest in the study are encouraged to join the study mailing list. They can do so by submitting their name and contact information to Jeff Key at [jeff.key@rpa-hln.com](mailto:jeff.key@rpa-hln.com).

Missoula County and MDT attempt 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 or TTY (800) 335-7592, or call Montana Relay at 711. Accommodation requests must be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled activity and / or meeting.

STUDY NEWSLETTER—ISSUE TWO, SEPTEMBER 2012



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