

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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WASTEWATER TREATMENT

E-2011-0005

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Legislative Environmental Policy Office
PO Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1704

Subject: 5th/6th/Arthur/Maurice Safety, Intersection, and Circulation Improvement Project
SID 548

This is notification that the proposed subject project meets the criteria for classification as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) under the provisions of ARM 18.2.237 and ARM 18.2.261(1) (Sections 75-1-103 and 75-1-201 MCA) of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). Copies of the concept plan sheet and project location map are attached.

This proposed project constructs bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements and reconfigures certain traffic flow patterns on segments of South 5th Street East, South 6th Street East, Madison Street, Arthur Avenue and Maurice Avenue, including intersections. The project includes widening to add one northbound lane on the east side of Madison Street between South 5th Street East and the Madison Street bridge; curb, gutter, and sidewalk; bike lanes; intersection bulbouts; milling and new asphalt surfacing; storm drain modifications; replacement of the traffic signal at South 6th Street East and Arthur Avenue; a new traffic signal at South 5th Street East and Arthur Avenue; and lane assignment reconfiguration to introduce northbound traffic on Arthur Avenue and Madison Street between S. 6th Street East and the Madison Street bridge. The presently traveled way will be used during much of the construction and will then become part of the roadway prism. The existing Madison Street bridge over the Clark Fork River will remain unchanged. The project will include minor utility relocation. The project will not add capacity to the existing roadway facility.

The proposed project is located within Section 22, Township 13 North, Range 19 West, in Missoula County and the Missoula city limits. US Hwy 12, part of the Primary Highway System, is currently classified as a principal arterial. At its intersection with South 6th Street East, US Hwy 12 is classified as a minor arterial on the Urban Highway System.

The project need is an opportunity to facilitate an appropriate balance between motorized and non-motorized facilities in the urban-University interface that is the project setting. Current project area conditions suggest an increased chance of conflict due to the large number of pedestrians and cyclists in a relatively high-volume, high-speed motorized corridor. The improvements proposed in this project will result in re-routing more heavily used circulation

patterns from the University area, and improving crossings, ultimately reducing opportunity for conflicts, enhancing the overall safety of the project area for all users.

The purpose of this project is to address basic safety issues associated with a high volume of pedestrians, bicycles and motor vehicles entering the University of Montana campus and passing through on US Hwy 12, as interim improvements until a long-term solution can be approved and funded. The project would reconfigure the existing roadway to improve pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety, while maintaining a functional level of service (LOS), a measure of effectiveness with respect to traffic delay and queuing, for normal and University special events traffic. It is anticipated that this project will result in a more direct route for US Hwy 12, removing traffic from City streets bordering the University and increasing overall safety. The project will enhance circulation patterns while maintaining current access to adjacent buildings, businesses and amenities.

A previous Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for MDT in 2006, resulting in the selection of the No Action Alternative, due to lack of funding and public support. In February 2004, a traffic analysis was completed by CDM in support of this original 5th/6th/Arthur EA, addressing 75 recorded crashes in the three-year study period. This analysis found that the accident rate and severity index on the existing roadway in the project area, collected for a three-year period from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2002, (8.62 and 1.48, respectively) are higher than the statewide averages (by 40% and 18%, respectively). Existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities both contribute to these elevated statistics. There is little marked access for pedestrian crossings in the existing condition. Further, the motorized traffic configuration makes it difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to determine a motorist's path when trying to avoid vehicles.

In April 2009, WGM Group performed manual traffic counts in support of the current project, as part of the MDT System Impact Process. These counts have been incorporated into the Final Traffic Report, May 2010, with the purpose of presenting traffic volumes, operational analysis and crash analysis in evaluation of proposed intersection, safety and circulation improvements in the project area. WGM Group also obtained MDT crash information for the 6.5-year period following the EA analysis, when approximately 90 more crashes were recorded, including four pedestrian and bicycle crashes (~4% of all reported crashes), not counting numerous unreported crashes that the University has stated are not reported due to low levels of property damage. Crash trends have been discerned for the 6.5-year period following the EA, including yield failures, poor channelization and lack of focus on pedestrian and bicycle crossings; the proposed project improvements seek to improve project area safety and reduce crashes by incorporating better delineation of bike lanes and pedestrian crossings to improve intersection control and reducing congestion at unsignalized intersections via circulation improvements to promote safer driving.

The entire area south of the Madison Street bridge in between the north and southbound travel lanes, north of South 5th Street East, is dedicated Highway Commission right-of-way. This area is currently green space commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park. For the purposes of this Categorical Exclusion, this area is going to be treated as vegetated right-of-way, not a park, in terms of descriptions of impacts and proposed mitigation.

All practicable means to avoid or minimize adverse social, economic and environmental impacts from the proposed project have been adopted. Potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures are summarized in the following tables. Table 1 includes expected permanent impacts. Table 2 includes expected temporary impacts associated with construction activities. The subsequent sections provide additional information related to social, economic and environmental resources that may potentially be impacted by implementation of the proposed project. Potential direct and indirect impacts described in each subsection include expected permanent impacts of the facility. Temporary impacts due to construction of the facility are discussed in a separate subsection.

Table 1: Summary of Potential Permanent Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Resource	Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation
Historical/ Cultural Resources	No impact.	None.
Parks, Recreation Properties	No impact.	None.
Section 6(f) Properties	No impact.	None.
Farmland	No impact. Entirely located in an urban residential setting.	None.
Social	Improved safety for the traveling public.	None.
Environmental Justice	No impact.	None.
Traffic	Redistribution of traffic patterns will increase traffic at some locations, while reducing it at others. While specific locations may experience delays, on a network-wide basis, improved traffic conditions will result from the project.	No mitigation is proposed beyond designed/ permitted changes in traffic patterns and lane usage during special events at the University.
Economic	No impact.	None.
Land Use	Project supports University long-term strategic planning to convert some residential area to institutional use.	None.
Right-of-Way	No right-of-way acquisition is anticipated. Loss of approximately 0.25 ac of vegetation in the Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park. Potential removal of street trees in other project right-of-way.	Project specifications will require that Contractor be responsible for sod, seed and irrigation of areas disturbed during construction, and planting of new trees as appropriate to replace removed trees.

Resource	Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation
Utilities	<p>Relocation of a few power poles and/or utility lines is anticipated in advance of the project.</p> <p>Additional storm drainage inlets will be added at intersection bulb-outs and connected to the existing storm drain system.</p>	<p>City of Missoula policy regarding utilities occupying public right-of-way is that the conflicting utilities are to be relocated in advance of the project at the utility's expense.</p>
Wild and Scenic Rivers	No impact.	None.
Air Quality	Positive impacts due to recirculation proposing more efficient traffic flow with less waiting, fuel usage and emissions at intersections.	None.
Noise	No impacts requiring quantified changes in noise volumes.	None.
Water Resources/ Water Quality	<p>Project is adjacent to the Clark Fork River and near a Mountain Water Company public water supply well.</p> <p>The Missoula aquifer, designated by the EPA as a Sole Source Aquifer, underlies the project.</p> <p>The project adds inlets to the City of Missoula storm drainage system.</p>	<p>Disallow any storage containers greater than 25 gallons of fuel, solvents, or other hazardous materials at the project site, specifically in the 100'-radius isolation zone of the public water supply well.</p> <p>Allow refueling only in a designated containment area.</p> <p>Require special provisions for immediate spill containment.</p>
Wetlands	No impacts.	None.
Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Resources	<p>Temporary soil surface disturbances would create potential for invasion of undesirable weed species.</p> <p>Minimal loss of vegetation (primarily characterized as mowed grass and a few trees and shrubs) in areas of existing right-of-way. Removal and/or trimming of existing vegetation behind the guardrail on the southbound bridge exit to improve sight distance.</p> <p>Negligible to minor permanent impacts to vegetation/habitat, wildlife, and fisheries/aquatic resources.</p> <p>Bald eagles and bull trout are only Threatened and Endangered species known in project area; no impacts, though, due to other suitable habitat and urban setting of project.</p>	<p>To reduce the spread and establishment of noxious weeds and re-establish permanent vegetation, disturbed areas within right-of-way or easements will be seeded with desirable plant species. Revegetation will be conducted in accordance with project specifications.</p> <p>Contractor will adhere to applicable conditions including the Section 402/MPDES Permit.</p> <p>Contractor will develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and adhere to BMPs for erosion and sediment control.</p>

Resource	Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation
Floodplains	While the FEMA-designated floodplains for the Clark Fork River and Rattlesnake Creek are in close proximity to the project, no project activities will impact these floodplains.	None.
Railroads	No impact.	None.
Pedestrian/ADA/Bicycle Facilities	Positive impacts to pedestrian/ADA/bicycle accessibility.	None.
Hazardous Materials	No impact.	None.
Visual Resources	No adverse impact.	None
Cumulative Impacts	MDT, City, University and Mountain Water Company projects that may be completed in the same timeframe as this project would provide positive cumulative effects on safety.	None.

Table 2: Summary of Potential Temporary Construction Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Resource	Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation
Historical / Cultural Resources	Previously unknown historical or cultural materials may be unearthed during construction.	Project specifications require the Contractor to immediately stop work and notify the Project Manager of the find. The Project Manager is required to stake the area to remain undisturbed until the significance of the site has been determined and appropriate measures are carried out.
Traffic	Minor, short-term temporary inconveniences to the traveling public including occasional increased travel times, detours, and temporary closures.	A traffic control plan will be developed in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
Economic	No adverse impacts.	None.
Utilities	Temporary, short-term interruption to utility services may result from conflicts with existing utilities including overhead power lines and buried gas, water, telephone and fiber optic lines.	City of Missoula policy regarding utilities occupying public right-of-way is that the conflicting utilities are to be relocated in advance of the project at the utility's expense.
Social	Short-term commute detours for students and faculty may occur if construction is performed while school is in session.	Effort may be made to schedule construction during school breaks; otherwise, traffic control planning will ensure safe re-routing for all modes of transportation.
Air Quality	Minor, short-term, localized adverse air quality impacts due to fugitive dust emissions from earth moving operations and combustion emissions from construction equipment.	Project specifications require that the Contractor comply with applicable State and Federal air quality rules. The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above, and incorporate dust control into the contract

Resource	Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation
		documents to minimize impacts.
Noise	Construction activities may cause minor, short-term, localized adverse noise impacts due to construction equipment.	Project specifications require compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and requirements contained in the contract regarding noise pollution.
Water Resources and Water Quality	Potential for short-term adverse impact on water quality due to erosion and sediment.	The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above. Contractor will adhere to applicable conditions including SWPPP and Section 402/MPDES Permit.
Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Resources	Potential for short-term adverse impact on vegetation due to erosion, sedimentation and weed infestation in disturbed areas. Temporary habitat and vegetation loss. Temporary displacement of wildlife, migratory birds, and aquatic species from human-related disturbance. Wildlife mortality; for individuals with limited mobility and/or those that could be occupying their burrows or nests at the time of construction. No impacts to any threatened or endangered species.	The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above.
Hazardous Materials	Previously unknown hazardous materials may be encountered during construction.	Project specifications require any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during implementation of the Preferred Alternative to be handled and disposed in accordance with applicable local, State, and Federal regulations.
Visual Resources	Construction activities may cause minor, short-term, localized adverse visual impacts due to construction.	The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above.

1. Historical/Cultural Resources

A cultural resources survey of the project area was conducted in June 2002. Thirty new properties were recorded in the project area. The properties are located in the area immediately adjacent to the existing University Area Historic District (24MO827) and were evaluated as being either contributing or non-contributing to the district.

Impacts:

The project will have "No Effect" to the University Area Historic District (24MO827) and no effect to the cultural resources/historic properties at 609, 615, 625, 629, 645 and 659 South 6th Street East and 659 South 5th Street East.

Mitigation: In the unlikely event that archeological or historical artifacts are encountered during construction, project specifications require the Contractor to immediately stop work and notify the Project Manager of the find. The Project Manager is required to stake the area to remain undisturbed until the significance of the site has been determined and appropriate measures are carried out.

2. Parks and Recreation

No parks have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed project. Impacts to the Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park are discussed in the Right-of-Way section, #10 below.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

3. Section 6(f)

No Section 6(f) properties have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

4. Farmland

The 1981 Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (Title 7 United States Code, Chapter 73, Sections 4201-4209) requires that the effects of proposed projects be examined before acquisition of farmland. Given that the entire project is located in an urban area, there is no farmland on or adjacent to the project.

Impacts: The proposed project is not located on or near farmland.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

5. Social Impacts

The project area is generally urban in nature and includes residences and University property.

Impacts: The proposed project is expected to result in a positive impact of improved safety for the travelling public. There may initially be some minor confusion about how to navigate the new routes, but this will alleviate with experience and proper signage design. No other impacts are expected with respect to social conditions, social interaction or community cohesion. The proposed project would not change the population growth or demographic trends projected for the project area. The improvements would not disrupt or separate developments in the project area.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

6. Environmental Justice

Title VI of the US Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (USC 2000(d)) and Executive Order (EO) 12898 require that no minority, or, by extension, low-income person shall be disproportionately adversely impacted by any project receiving federal funds (note: no federal funds are being used for this project). For transportation projects, this means that no particular minority or low-income person may be disproportionately isolated, displaced, or otherwise subjected to adverse effects. Potential impacts are assessed in terms of property acquisitions or relocations, changes in access to employment areas, and other changes in low-income and minority communities/neighborhoods. Those other changes could include changes in the physical environment such as increases in noise levels, air pollution levels, and the presence or introduction of hazardous materials.

Impacts: The residential part of the project area is not a low-income or minority neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on minorities or low-income populations.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

7. Traffic

Traffic-specific elements of the project include widening to add one northbound lane on the east side of Madison Street between South 5th St. East and the Madison Street bridge; replacement of the traffic signal at South 6th St. East and Arthur Avenue; a new traffic signal at South 5th St. East and Arthur Avenue; elimination of one lane of South 6th St. East between Arthur Avenue and Maurice Avenue; elimination of one northbound lane of Madison Street between South 5th St. East and the Madison Street bridge; lane assignment reconfiguration to introduce northbound traffic on Arthur Avenue and Madison Street between South 6th St. East and the Madison Street bridge; and lane assignment reconfiguration to introduce southbound traffic on Maurice Avenue between South 5th St. East and South 6th St. East.

Impacts: Redistribution of traffic patterns will increase traffic at some locations, while reducing it at others. The eastbound South 6th St. East approach to Arthur Avenue is expected to see an increase in delay and an associated reduction in LOS. Throughout the remainder of the project area, delay experienced on each movement under the proposed reconfiguration is expected to be the same as or better than the existing condition, with significant improvements (i.e. reduced delay experienced projected on the westbound South 5th St. East approaches to both Maurice Avenue and Arthur Avenue. The southbound Arthur Avenue through movement will also experience a significant reduction in delay, as will the northbound Maurice Avenue approach at 6th Street which serves mostly bus traffic. The newly introduced movements northbound on Arthur Avenue and southbound on Maurice Avenue are projected to operate at acceptable levels of delay.

When special events are held at the Adams Center and Washington Grizzly Stadium, the LOS on South 6th Street East will be restored to existing levels by temporarily prohibiting parking on the north side of South 6th Street East and opening the street to two lanes of traffic. Conversely, parking and lane usage can be similarly prohibited to restore existing LOS to traffic exiting special events as well.

Mitigation: No mitigation is proposed, outside of special events accommodation as described above, because the Measure of Effectiveness (MOE) analysis shows that on a network-wide basis, (as opposed to the intersection- or movement-specific LOS measure) the overall project area network will experience improved traffic conditions as a result of the reconfiguration and modified traffic control.

8. Economic Impacts

The project area is an urban residential University-area neighborhood and does not contain commercial businesses, industrial development or agricultural operations. University facilities including the Adams Center and Washington Grizzly Stadium rely on adequate access from the streets in the project to support their events, providing economic benefit to the University and City of Missoula.

Impacts: Circulation improvements due to the project would promote access to the events held on campus. In addition, the local and regional economies may experience some minor, short-term beneficial effects due to construction activities.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

9. Land Use

Land in the vicinity of the proposed project is located entirely in an urban residential and university setting. This proposed reconstruction project will change traffic patterns but will not increase traffic volumes in the area and will not directly or indirectly impact land. University long-term strategic planning suggests that the residential area within the project boundaries will ultimately be considered as an area for campus expansion and a change from residential to University institutional use.

Impacts: The improved traffic circulation resulting from this project will serve this long-term University goal.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

10. Right-of-Way

The existing right-of-way widths are 80 feet total, with all roads centered within the right-of-way to ± 1 ft. All existing roads within the right-of-way measure ~45 ft from back of curb to back of curb. Further, the entire area south of the Madison Street bridge in between the north and southbound travel lanes, north of South 5th Street East, is right-of-way. This area is currently green space commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park. The entire park is owned by the Highway Commission and recorded as right-of-way for US Hwy 12, with maintenance completed by the City of Missoula under a maintenance agreement with MDT.

Impacts: No new right-of-way is anticipated for the project corridor. Temporary construction easements may be necessary during construction. No residential or business relocations are expected to be associated with this project. About 0.25 acres of Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park will be required for use as roadway, curb, and gutter. This acreage will not impact the memorial, which is located far from construction in the

center of the 0.25 acre right-of-way, but will require the removal of some sod and flower beds. The project provides the beneficial impact of improved bicycle and pedestrian access.

Mitigation: No direct acreage substitution is proposed as mitigation for the Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park; however, project specifications require re-vegetation of areas disturbed during construction and replacement of removed trees as part of the improvements.

11. Utilities

A number of utilities are located in close proximity to the project, including aerial power, telephone and television lines and buried natural gas, water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer lines.

Impacts: The project is expected to have some conflicts with utilities, including aerial power pole relocation, but attempts will be made to avoid and minimize them by modifying the alignment, where appropriate. All power pole and/or line relocations will be completed in advance of the project. Construction of new intersection bulbouts will require the addition of storm drain inlets that will be connected to the existing municipal storm drain system.

Mitigation: City of Missoula policy regarding utilities occupying public right-of-way is that the conflicting utilities are to be relocated in advance of the project at the utility's expense.

12. Wild and Scenic Rivers

No wild or scenic rivers exist in the project area.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

13. Air Quality

The Missoula Metropolitan planning area is an air quality non-attainment (Particulate Matter PM-10) and maintenance (Carbon Monoxide) area. Missoula's *2008 Long Range Transportation Plan* (December 2008), demonstrates conformity with SAFETEA-LU legislation by performing air quality transportation planning every four years; this project was incorporated into that air quality conformity analysis. As a project that is classified as a Safety project in Table 2 of 40CFR93.126, incorporated in state law via ARM 17.8, Subchapter 13, it is exempt from conformity requirements. There will be short-term air quality impacts due to construction activity over the duration of the project, but once construction is complete, there will be no long-term adverse impacts.

Impacts: No permanent negative impacts. Ultimately, this project is anticipated to improve local air quality because it proposes more efficient traffic flow with less waiting and fuel usage at intersections and a shorter, more direct traffic route.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

14. Noise

No noise studies have been completed or are required to quantify increases or decreases in location-specific noise levels. It is anticipated that re-distribution of traffic circulation may result in minor locational increases or decreases in ambient noise.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No permanent mitigation is required or proposed. Contractor will be required to act in accordance with City of Missoula Noise Control ordinances during construction.

15. Water Resources and Water Quality

The project is adjacent to the Clark Fork River, and runoff in the project area tends to discharge overland to the Clark Fork River. A Mountain Water Company public water supply well is present on the east side of the Madison Street bridge couplet. The project is located within Missoula's Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) boundary and will result in several modifications to the City of Missoula's storm drainage system, with inlets to the piped system added as needed at bulb-outs.

Impacts: The Missoula aquifer is a highly transmissive gravel aquifer and is designated by the EPA as a Sole Source Aquifer, affording it special consideration. Given the proximity of the River and water supply well to the project, any fuel or solvent spills, or other hazardous material accidents could adversely impact water quality. Stormwater runoff will enter the City of Missoula system at new locations in the MS4 boundary due to this project.

Mitigation: Project specifications require temporary water pollution control measures with respect to containment and fuel/solvent/hazardous material storage to minimize potential effects of construction activities. Mitigation of water quality impacts caused by stormwater runoff and erosion would be achieved through engineering controls such as grading, revegetation, and the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The City of Missoula's Small MS4 General Permit will need to be reviewed to address additional inlet points to the system.

16. Wetlands

There are no wetlands in the project corridor.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation required or proposed.

17. Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Resources

Due to the urban nature of the project location, there is very little, if any, natural habitat in the project area. Wildlife typically found in the project area includes the eastern fox squirrel, mule and white-tailed deer, and common birds that are adapted to urban areas. Fish and other aquatic species are not found in the project area, but do inhabit the Clark Fork River, which is adjacent to the project.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) maintains an extensive Species of Concern database on plant and animal species of concern to multiple state and federal agencies. This database includes Montana State Species of Concern, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Threatened & Endangered Species, US Forest Service (USFS) Sensitive Species and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Special Status Species. A March 26, 2010 search of the MNHP database reported 17 species of concern, using a search area of Section 22, Township 13N and Range 19W and a one-mile buffer around this section. The report notes that the search results are based on basic locational information and should be a screening tool only. In many cases, the records are historic and therefore do not necessarily indicate the species currently has the potential to occur in the project area given site limitations, in this case the fact that the project is set in an urban setting.

The 14 animal species listed in the March 2010 MNHP report (enclosed) include the Harlequin Duck (Sensitive), Flammulated Owl (Sensitive), Grasshopper Sparrow (State Listing), Westslope Cutthroat Trout (Sensitive), Bull Trout (Threatened), Fringed Myotis (Sensitive), Gray Wolf (Sensitive), Fisher (Sensitive), Wolverine (Sensitive), Canada Lynx (Threatened), Western Skink (State Listing) and three unspecified invertebrates (State Listing). The three plant species listed in the March 2010 MNHP report include the Ring Lichen (State Listing), Obscure Evening-Primrose (Sensitive) and Missoula Phlox (Sensitive).

The Arthur Avenue Biological Resources Report (BRR) was also prepared for MDT prior to MDT's issuance of an Environmental Assessment and Nationwide Section 4(f) Evaluation in 2006. This BRR identified seven species of concern that occur in the search area (a one-mile radius surrounding a point location identified in the project area), including the Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Bull Trout, Fringed Myotis, Lynx, Spotted Slug, Missoula mountainsnail, and Obscure evening-primrose. Further, the BRR addressed the bald eagle because it is known to be seen near the project location.

Impacts: The proposed project will result in the loss of a small area of Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park (discussed in detail in #10 – Right-of-Way) and the loss of a few shrubs on the northeast corner of the intersection of South 6th Street East and Arthur Avenue. The minor loss of vegetation will have a corresponding negligible loss of habitat for wildlife.

The only species of concern that will require special effort to avoid impact are the Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Bull Trout. A 100-foot buffer zone is recommended for Bull Trout and will be maintained to the extent possible during the project duration, along with the use of erosion control BMPs and SWPPP measures throughout the project limits to avoid sediment discharge to the Clark Fork River.

There will be no impacts to the other identified species of concern because 1) none of those species are known to exist in the project area, 2) no suitable habitat for these species exists in the project area and 3) more suitable habitat for species of concern (e.g. mature trees overlooking the river) exists in other locations along the Clark Fork River riparian corridor near the project site that would make the choice of the project site as habitat unlikely.

Mitigation: No mitigation with respect to replacing lost area in the Highway Commission right-of-way commonly known as Jeanette Rankin Park is proposed. However, project specifications require re-vegetation of areas disturbed during construction to restore green space in the project area. No mitigation is required or proposed for wildlife resources. Aquatic resources will be protected through project specifications requiring adherence to any required Section 402/MPDES Permit and/or SWPPP.

18. Floodplains

There are no delineated floodplains within the project limits. A floodplain permit will not be required for this proposed project.

Impacts: Potential flood impacts within the project area will be unchanged or maintained with the proposed project.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

19. Railroads

No railroad right of way is located within the project area.

Impacts: The project will require no railroad involvement.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

20. Pedestrian/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Bicycle Facilities

The project area is highly traveled by pedestrian and bicycle users due to its proximity to the University. Existing pedestrian facilities limit crosswalk opportunities and existing bicycle lanes include a high-speed/high-volume crossing south of the Madison Street bridge where two lanes of traffic are crossed. Inclusion of project elements such as pedestrian crosswalks, bulb-out intersection designs for traffic calming and improved pedestrian safety, separated and shared bicycle lanes, enhanced pavement markings, and curb ramps meeting ADA requirements at all intersections serve pedestrian and bicyclist interests. The proposed project seeks a balance between ADA-accessible pedestrian facilities and bicyclist safety, and accommodation of motor vehicle traffic on US Hwy 12, with improvements for all groups planned.

Impacts: Positive impacts include enhanced accessibility to non-motorized travelers.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

21. Hazardous Materials

Based upon a records search of the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) database, no hazardous materials or underground storage tanks are within the vicinity of the proposed project.

Impacts: No impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required or proposed.

22. Visual Resources

Visual impacts of the proposed project were determined by comparing conceptual design plans and the existing visual character features with field visits.

Impacts: The proposed project would convert some land to paved roadway. Impacts to the visual quality of the proposed project area are expected to be negligible.

Mitigation: To reduce the spread and establishment of noxious weeds and to re-establish permanent vegetation, disturbed areas within Highway Commission right-of-way or easements will be seeded with desirable plant species, as soon as practicable as recommended and deemed feasible. Re-vegetation will be conducted according to applicable laws.

23. Construction

The Contractor would determine construction methods after development of the final construction plans. In general, road construction could likely involve excavation and grading, utility relocations, and removal and placement of pavement and concrete. Sequencing of construction elements and the overall timeframe of construction have not been determined and would be based upon minimization of construction impacts, funding constraints, and coordination between the City and University.

Impacts: Temporary construction impacts fall into multiple categories, as follows:

- **Traffic Impacts:** Construction activities would cause minor, short-term temporary inconveniences to the traveling public including occasional increased travel times, detours, and temporary closures. Traffic will be maintained during project construction through the use of appropriate signing, flagging, lane closures, etc. Short duration closures of South 5th Street East, South 6th Street East, Arthur Avenue and Maurice Avenue, if required, will be scheduled during low traffic periods. Access for emergency services and to private property will be provided.
- **Utilities Impacts:** A number of utilities are located in close proximity to the project, including aerial power, telephone and television lines and buried natural gas, water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer lines. The project is expected to have some conflicts with above-ground utilities, with all utility relocations completed before the project begins. Temporary, short-term interruption to utility services may result.
- **Economic Impacts:** The proposed project is expected to have minor, short-term beneficial effects on the local and regional economies due to construction activities.
- **Social Impacts:** If construction is conducted during the University school session, University of Montana students and faculty may encounter detours in their vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian commutes.

- **Air Quality Impacts:** Construction activities may cause minor, short-term, localized adverse air quality impacts due to fugitive dust emissions from earth moving operations and combustion emissions from construction equipment.
- **Noise Impacts:** Construction activities may cause minor, short-term, localized adverse noise impacts due to construction equipment.
- **Water Resources and Water Quality Impacts:** Construction activities near surface waters have potential to have a short-term adverse impact on water quality due to potential for erosion and sediment. Construction activity will add inlets to the City of Missoula storm drainage system, requiring evaluation and potential modification of the Small MS4 permit.
- **Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Resources Impacts:** Construction activities facilitate increased potential for erosion, sedimentation and weed infestation in disturbed areas. Disturbed areas created during construction could create conditions that may create temporary habitat and vegetation loss for wildlife and migratory birds. Further, construction activities could result in individual wildlife mortality primarily to those species with limited mobility and/or those that could be occupying their burrows or nests at the time of construction (e.g., mice, voles, young birds/eggs, frogs, salamanders, snakes, badgers, ground squirrels). More mobile species, such as adult deer and most adult birds, would be able to avoid mortality by moving into adjacent habitat. Permanent displacement of populations or increased habitat fragmentation would be unlikely to result from this project. No effects to threatened and endangered species are expected.
- **Historical/Cultural Resources Impacts:** Previously unknown historical or cultural materials may be unearthed during construction.
- **Hazardous Materials Impacts:** Previously unknown hazardous materials may be encountered during construction.
- **Visual Resources Impacts:** Construction activities may cause minor, short-term, localized adverse visual impacts.

Mitigation: Mitigation for temporary construction impacts also falls into multiple categories, as follows:

- **Historical/Cultural Resources Mitigation:** In the unlikely event that archeological or historical artifacts are encountered during construction, project specifications require the Contractor to immediately stop work and notify the Project Manager of the find. The Project Manager is required to stake the area to remain undisturbed until the significance of the site has been determined and appropriate measures are carried out.

- **Traffic Mitigation:** A traffic control plan will be developed prior to construction. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) will be utilized to guide the application of the traffic control plan.
- **Economic Impacts Mitigation:** No mitigation required or proposed.
- **Social Impacts Mitigation:** Effort may be made to schedule construction when the University is not in session to minimize impacts. Should such scheduling not be feasible, traffic control planning will be conducted to facilitate safe re-routing for all modes of transportation.
- **Utilities Mitigation:** City of Missoula policy regarding utilities occupying public right-of-way is that the conflicting utilities are to be relocated in advance of the project at the utility's expense. Notification of service interruptions due to these relocations would be the responsibility of these utility line's owners.
- **Air Quality Mitigation:** Project specifications require that the Contractor comply with applicable state and local air quality rules, which may require use of dust suppression and emission control measures to minimize short-term impacts related to construction dust and equipment usage. The Contractor will be required to re-vegetate disturbed areas as described above.
- **Noise Mitigation:** Project specifications require compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and requirements contained in the contract regarding noise pollution, including City of Missoula Noise Control ordinances with respect to construction projects and working hours.
- **Water Resources and Water Quality Mitigation:** The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above. Project design and construction specifications require temporary water pollution control measures to minimize potential effects of construction activities, per the SWPPP. Mitigation of water quality impacts caused by stormwater runoff and erosion would be achieved through engineering controls such as grading, re-vegetation, and the use of Best Management Practices. The City of Missoula and its Contractor will adhere to applicable conditions including Section 402/MPDES Permit.
- **Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Resources Mitigation:** The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above.
- **Hazardous Materials Mitigation:** Project specifications require any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during implementation of the Preferred Alternative to be handled and disposed in accordance with applicable local, State, and Federal regulations.

- **Visual Resources Mitigation:** The Contractor will be required to revegetate disturbed areas as described above.

24. Permits/Notifications/Authorizations

The following permits/authorizations may be required prior to any relevant disturbance:

- A Storm Water Discharge Permit will be required, which will include the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and submittal of a Notice of Intent to DEQ, to be completed by the Contractor. This permit authorization is typically obtained under an MPDES General Permit from DEQ's Permitting and Compliance Division.
- The Small MS4 MPDES General Permit for the City of Missoula may need to be addressed for any needed updates since inlets to the storm drain system will be added as part of the project.
- The Contractor will need to comply with applicable local, state and federal air quality rules for fugitive dust, paving and/or the State Conformity (air quality) process.

25. Public Involvement

Public involvement activities already conducted and intended to be conducted are briefly described below:

- MDT completed an Environmental Assessment and Nationwide Section 4(f) Evaluation in 2006. This process included several public meetings and open houses between 2003 and 2006. The no-build alternative was selected at that point due to public concerns with the preferred alternative and lack of funding.
- Following MDT's consideration of the project, the University of Montana carried a revised, scaled down version of the project forward due to their safety concerns about a no-action alternative. The University shared the revised project concept with the groups that had originally challenged the project in an unofficial public process, to build support for the project from local neighborhood councils and homeowner associations, as well as the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM), bike advocates and local state legislators.
- The Missoula City Council approved the project concept and created Special Improvements District (SID) 548 for design and construction funding at the November 9, 2009 Missoula City Council Meeting.
- During the final design process, public open houses will be held as part of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) process. The first of these meetings was held on December 7, 2010. Further, meetings with adjacent landowners and stakeholder meetings with bicycle/pedestrian interest groups will be held to assure good public understanding and consent for the project.
- Construction notifications and information during construction will be provided via construction meetings, signing, mailings, radio ads and newspaper articles as appropriate.

The public involvement plan may be adjusted as necessary.

26. Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are effects on the environment that result from the incremental effect of an action when added to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time. The following projects may be among those that emerge as the project construction date nears:

- *MDT Projects* – bridge rehabilitation project on Higgins Avenue.
- *City of Missoula Projects* – sidewalk replacement in University neighborhoods in and adjacent to the project area.
- *MDT/City of Missoula Joint Projects* – traffic signal upgrades to LED and signal optimization.
- *University Projects* – crosswalk improvement project.
- *Mountain Water Company* – potential water main replacement project.

Impacts: The above projects would have positive cumulative effects on safety for the travelling public.

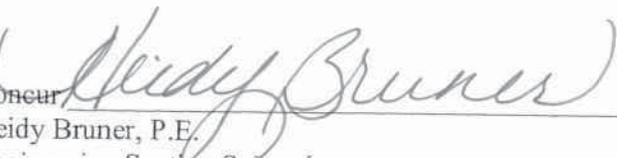
Mitigation: None required or proposed.

27. Conclusion

This action would neither individually nor cumulatively have any significant adverse social, economic, or environmental impacts in accordance with the provisions of ARM 18.2.237 and ARM 18.2.261(1) (Sections 75-1-103 and 75-1-201 MCA) of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The City of Missoula concludes that this project is properly classified as a Categorical Exclusion.


City of Missoula Public Works
R. Steven King, P.E.
Public Works Director

Date: 1-6-11


Concur: Heidi Bruner, P.E.
Engineering Section Supervisor
MDT Environmental Services Bureau, Montana Department of Transportation

Date: 3/25/11

Attachments

copies (with attachments):

Doug Moeller	District Administrator - Missoula
Paul R. Ferry, P.E.	Highway Engineer
Kent M. Barnes, P.E.	Bridge Engineer
Robert Stapley	Right-of-Way Bureau Chief
Walt Scott	Utilities Section Supervisor
David W. Jensen	Fiscal Programming Section Supervisor
Tom Martin	Environmental Services Bureau Chief
Susan Kilcrease	Environmental Services
Gregg Wood	City of Missoula
Jerry Ballas	University of Montana Planning and Construction
Mark Bancala, P.E.	WGM Group, Inc.

File SID 548

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5TH / 6TH / ARTHUR / MAURICE IMPROVEMENTS
 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN OVERVIEW
 MISSOULA, MONTANA

PROJECT: 08-0111-04P-00P
 CLIENT: MISSOULA CITY
 DESIGNER: WGM GROUP
 DATE: 12/2/10
 SCALE: 1" = 40'
 SHEET: 1 OF 11
 DECEMBER 2, 2010

PRELIMINARY



PROPOSED LEGEND

- CURB AND GUTTER
- CURB LAYDOWN
- COVE GUTTER
- ASPHALT PAVEMENT OVERLAY/RESURFACING
- NEW CONCRETE SIDEWALK
- LANDSCAPE AREA

NOTE: LANE DIMENSIONS MEASURED TO FACE OF CURB

