



Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Information:

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Through the 1st Avenue North–Billings project, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) will reconstruct approximately two miles of 1st Avenue North, from Division Street to North 9th Street.

DESIGN

Why is this project separated into three segments?

1st Avenue North – Billings is a complex project. Due to funding constraints, the project has been split into three segments to accommodate phased construction.

- East Segment – From the railroad crossing between North 22nd Street and North 20th Street to North 9th Street, as well as a short portion of North 13th Street.
- Middle Segment – North Broadway to the railroad crossing between North 22nd Street and North 20th Street.
- West Segment – Division Street to North Broadway.

What improvements are planned for the project?

- New curbs and gutters.
- Stormwater improvements.
- New Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks.
- New on-street parking.
- New street lighting.
- Replacement of the North 13th Street traffic signal.
- Aesthetic improvements.

What aesthetic improvements are being considered?

- New upgraded decorative street lighting.
- Incorporating local artwork.
- Colored concrete.
- Traffic signal controller box wraps.
- Improved streetscape, including adding trees.

Will additional right-of-way be needed to complete this project?

Limited right-of-way acquisition is required for this project. It is anticipated that right-of-way will need to be acquired around the North 13th Street intersection for intersection upgrades, including the addition of right-turn lanes.

Throughout construction, there will be temporary impacts to various properties along the corridor. These will be communicated to the impacted landowners, and construction permits will be secured before any work occurs off the public right-of-way.

Will any changes occur to the speed limit?

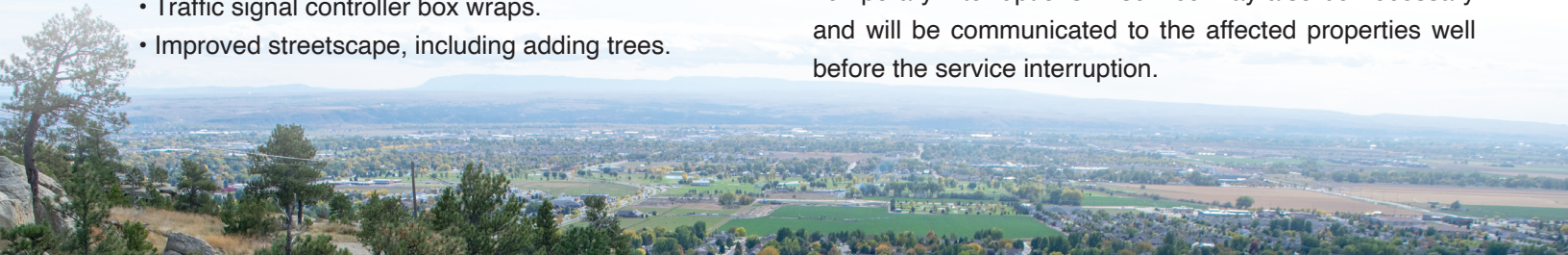
No changes to the posted speed limit are included with this project.

Are utilities going to be improved through this work?

Improvements to existing storm drainage are included in the project.

Upgrades to the various utilities along 1st Avenue North are the responsibility of the individual utility companies. They may be made in conjunction with this project at the discretion and cost of the utility. MDT is coordinating with local providers.

During construction, utilities may need to be relocated. Temporary interruptions in service may also be necessary and will be communicated to the affected properties well before the service interruption.





CONSTRUCTION

When will construction start? Why can't it start sooner?

Construction of the first segment (the east segment) from the railroad crossing between North 22nd Street and North 20th Street to North 9th Street, as well as a short portion of North 13th Street, will begin first, tentatively scheduled for 2027.

This schedule is subject to change due to factors such as design complications, funding availability, contractor availability, right-of-way acquisitions, and other unforeseen factors.

Construction dates for the project's middle and west segments have yet to be determined.

How long will construction take?

The duration of construction is still being determined. It is anticipated that construction will take place over multiple years. The project has been divided into three segments that will be completed in phases.

Doing so allows project elements to be completed sooner rather than waiting to acquire all funding needed to complete the entire corridor at once.



TRAFFIC IMPACTS

Will traffic be detoured off 1st Avenue North during construction?

The traffic plan for construction is still being determined. It is anticipated that traffic will remain on 1st Avenue North during construction. Construction will be phased to allow vehicular access on 1st Avenue North as much as possible. Temporary lane reductions in areas of active construction are likely.

Public notices and communications will be provided to ensure residents and businesses are made aware of the impacts on traffic during construction, and signage will be on-site.



CYCLISTS & PEDESTRIANS

What improvements are planned for bicyclists? Will there be a bike lane?

A bike lane is not planned for this project. 2nd Avenue North and 3rd Avenue North currently have bike lanes, and these routes provide an adjacent comfortable riding alternative to 1st Avenue North.

What improvements are planned for pedestrians?

Making 1st Avenue North a more welcoming, pedestrian-accessible area is a goal of this project.

- Sidewalks will be replaced.
- All crossings will be ADA-compliant.
- Additional crosswalk locations are proposed.
- Landscaping to enhance the walking experience.
- Bulb-outs at select intersections.

Bulb-outs are extensions of the sidewalk into the parking lane at corners or crosswalks. They provide additional room for pedestrians by reducing the distance to cross the roadway and increase pedestrian visibility, therefore enhancing safety features.



PARKING & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Will on-street parking increase?

On-street parking will remain substantially the same. Parking may be reduced around major intersections to ensure adequate sight distances, space required for turning movements of large vehicles, and pedestrian crossing enhancements.

How will public transportation be impacted?

Independent of this project, Billings MET Transit has plans to move to a fixed stop system from the current flag stop system. ADA-accessible fixed stops will be added within the project site, including one bus shelter, the location of which has yet to be determined.



BUSINESS & PRIVATE ACCESS

How will access to my business be ensured during construction?

Business access is a top priority for the project, and MDT will coordinate with the construction team to ensure reasonable access to all businesses along 1st Avenue North is maintained.

I have questions about the impacts on my property. Who should I contact?

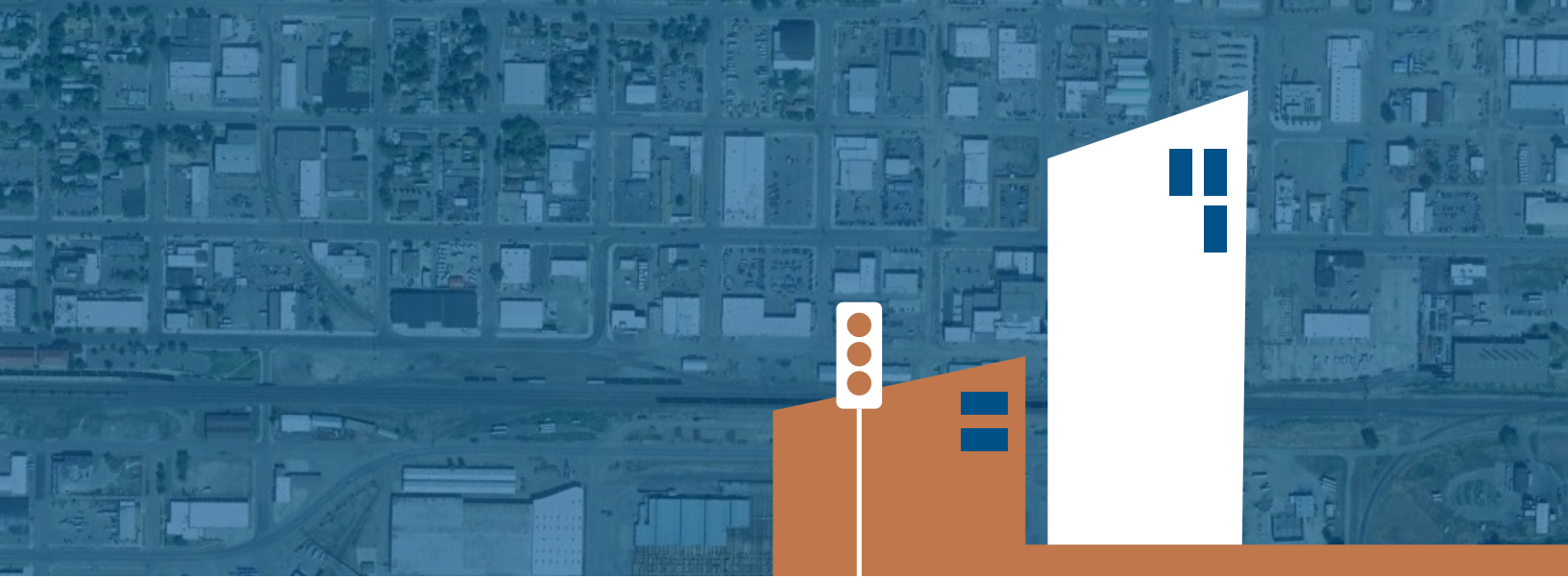
Sloane Stinson of Big Sky Public Relations is the project's point of contact. She will be able to connect you to the right project staff at Sanderson Stewart and/or MDT. Contact Sloane directly by emailing her at sloane@bigskypublicrelations.com or calling the project hotline at 406-207-4484 during business hours.



FUNDING

How much will these projects cost, and who is paying for them?

Final project cost estimates will be determined throughout the design phase. The projects will be mostly funded through the State of Montana's Federal Aid Program.



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Where can I learn more?

You can learn more about the 1st Avenue North – Billings project on the project webpage:
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/1stAveNorth/>.

Regular project updates will be shared throughout the design phase of the project. To subscribe for project email updates, email Sloane at sloane@bigskypublicrelations.com or call the project hotline at 406-207-4484 during business hours. Text message updates* are also available. Text 1STAVENORTH to 41411 to subscribe for updates.

*Message frequency may vary. Message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to cancel. Text alerts are not managed by MDT and may have different privacy and security policies. For more information, visit <https://smstc.us/t41411/>.

Are there any events planned for me to learn more about this project?

In May 2023, MDT hosted both an in-person and virtual open house. A recording of the virtual open house and a link to display boards presented at the in-person open house can be found on the project webpage:
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/1stAveNorth/public-involvement.aspx>

An additional open house is planned for early 2025. In the meantime, the project team will be tabling at various community events in Billings.

Sign up for project updates to get the latest news about the project by emailing Sloane at sloane@bigskypublicrelations.com.

Who do I contact with additional questions about this project?

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