



From tailings to trail—story on page 7

NEWSLINE

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MDT Delivers!

With the passing of September 30th and the end of federal fiscal year 2002, we have the opportunity to reflect on MDT's accomplishments of the last 12 months – specifically – Program Delivery.

When the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) was enacted in 1998, Montana received an average annual increase of \$100 million for its highway program. At the time, a number of constituent groups raised questions about MDT's ability to deliver a construction program at the elevated funding levels. If MDT didn't deliver, Montana risked losing a portion of the federal funds. Each year since 1998 we've been keeping score and the verdict is in – MDT delivers.

To answer the initial questions and concerns over MDT's ability to deliver a construction program at the levels guaranteed through TEA-21, MDT staff met with the Montana Contractors' Association and developed a quarterly program status report. The report provides program managers and contractors a tool for monitoring the program progress and also anticipates the target for the upcoming year. At the end of each year, the actual numbers are checked against the targeted program level to determine if process changes are necessary.

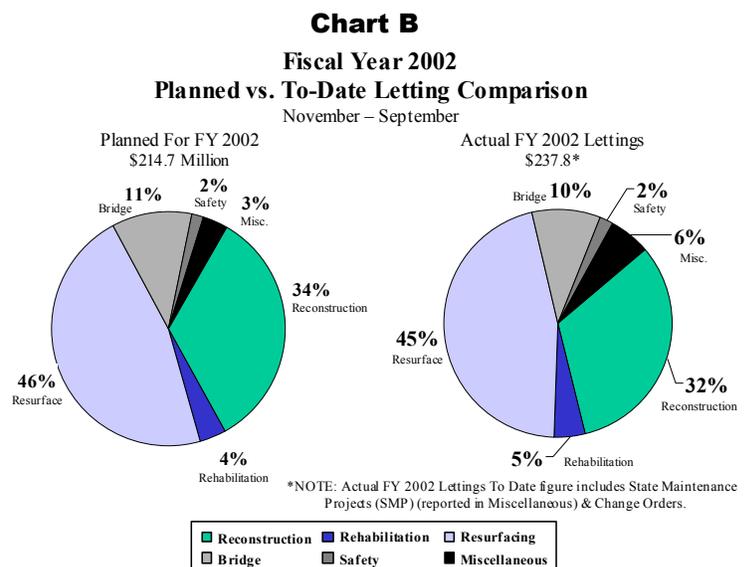
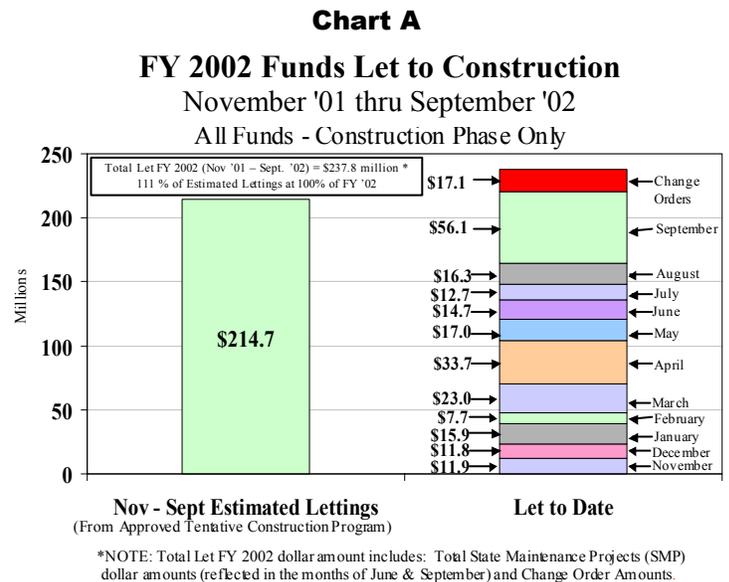
FY 2002's program is the most successful in achieving the targeted program delivery since MDT implemented the reporting system. At the beginning of FY '02, MDT estimated that \$214.7 million would be let for highway construction projects. Chart A provides a comparison of the \$214.7 million target and the actual dollars let to contract for projects by month. As shown, MDT exceeded the target by \$23.1 million and achieved an overall construction program of \$237.8 million. Deserving special note is the September letting which totaled \$56.1 million, the largest amount MDT has ever let in a single bid letting!

In addition to expenditures on actual construction, highway program funds also go toward environmental review, design, right-of-way acquisition, utility moves, and support for transportation planning.

MDT also set an additional goal to let defined percentages of the \$214.7 million for specified types of work, referred to as the program mix. The work types tracked include major reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, bridge, safety, and miscellaneous roadway improvement activities. Chart B provides a comparison of the target program mix established at the beginning of the year and the actual mix accomplished.

This chart shows that in 2002, MDT delivered a mix of projects that was within 2% of the target goals for the major construction work. Since the planned mix is based on the needs of the

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highway system, delivering the target mix assures Montanans a high level of accountability in highway program expenditures.

Though there were some minor differences in the actual percentages from those targeted, MDT did in fact let more dollars in each category than was originally targeted as indicated in Table 1.

Overall, MDT exceeded the program delivery goals for FY 2002. Delivering this program and putting together a letting of the magnitude that took place in September is a testament to MDT staff's continued efforts toward providing the best transportation system possible for the citizens of Montana.

As reauthorization of TEA-21 moves forward in 2003, Montana's Congressional delegation can be assured that MDT will deliver any increase in Federal-aid funding they may obtain for the state.

If you have any questions about MDT's program delivery reporting or TEA-21 reauthorization, please contact Sandra Straehl, Chief – Program and Policy Analysis Bureau at 444-7692.

Table 1

<i>Work Type</i>	<i>Target %</i>	<i>Target \$</i>	<i>Actual %</i>	<i>Actual \$</i>
Reconstruction	34%	\$73.0	32%	\$76.1
Rehabilitation	4%	\$8.6	5%	\$11.9
Resurfacing	46%	\$98.8	45%	\$107.0
Bridge	11%	\$23.6	10%	\$23.8
Safety	2%	\$4.3	2%	\$4.7
Miscellaneous	3%	\$6.4	6%	\$14.3
Total	100%	\$214.7	100%	\$237.8



2002 TranPlan 21 Update On the Home Stretch

After more than a year of public input and technical analysis, the draft *2002 TranPlan 21 Update* is available for review at your local library or on the web, or you may request a hard copy by calling MDT's toll-free number.

TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan, was originally adopted in 1995 in response to new federal requirements in the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act. *TranPlan 21* established policies that guide MDT in the management of Montana's transportation system. Unlike MDT's annual *State Transportation Improvement Program*, or STIP, which includes lists of upcoming projects, *TranPlan 21* is not project-specific. However, because federal law requires that all federally funded transportation projects in the STIP must be consistent with policies in the plan, *TranPlan 21* is a very important part of the overall process.

Beginning with a telephone survey in June of 2001, MDT has involved thousands of Montana residents and transportation stakeholders in the update process. During the issue identification phase in late 2001, for example, MDT staff and the consultant team held meetings throughout

Montana to explain the update process and identify issues to address in the update.

MDT had already identified economic development as a focus for the update due to interest by Governor Martz and the legislature in exploring ways to improve MDT's support of efforts to enhance Montana's economy. However, MDT added several other issues, such as safety, to the update in response to public input.

Stage II of the public involvement process took place last summer when MDT distributed six draft policy papers for input through public and stakeholder meetings. The policy papers addressed the key update issues and suggested potential policy goals and actions that MDT could take to address these issues over *TranPlan 21's* 20-year planning horizon. MDT and the consultant team have taken the Stage II public and stakeholder input and, working with the update steering committee, have developed a draft update document that incorporates revisions based on the public input and additional technical analysis.

Stage III of the public involvement process provides you and other Montanans with one last opportunity to provide MDT with input before the plan is adopted.

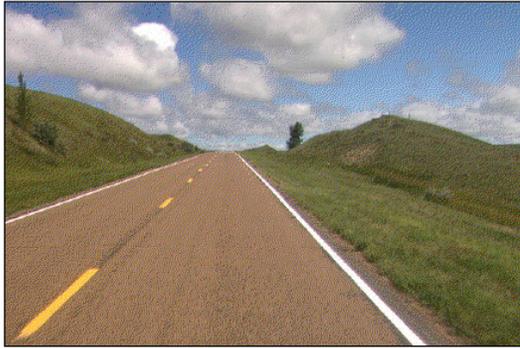


TRANPLAN 21 UPDATE 2002

To request or view a copy of the draft *2002 TranPlan 21 Update*:

- Visit MDT's website at www.mdt.state.mt.us
- Call 1(800)714-7296 or for TTY, call 444-7696 or 1(800)335-7592
- E-mail us at tranplan21@state.mt.us
- Visit your local Montana library

MDT will accept comments through January 22, 2003.



Secondary 251
North of Poplar

Pavement Preservation: “The right fix at the right time”

Residents of Montana’s largest cities should see more pavement preservation projects on their local streets and roads thanks to a new MDT program designed to help local governments apply the “right fix at the right time.”

Pavement preservation is the use of cost-effective treatments such as crack sealing, chip sealing, and thin overlays to extend the life of a highway and delay expensive reconstruction projects. MDT has had a Pavement Management System (PvMS) and aggressive pavement preservation program for many years for Montana’s major highways. However, until recently, pavement preservation projects on city and county roads and streets were largely the responsibility of local governments that often did not have the tools or funding necessary to implement these projects.

This began to change after MDT took over maintenance of over 2,600 miles of paved Secondary Highways from Montana’s counties. These highways are now included in MDT’s PvMS so they can be evaluated from a statewide perspective in assessing pavement condition and determining the most cost-effective treatments. MDT uses 35% of Secondary Highway Program funds to address the needs identified by the PvMS.

Another example of MDT’s efforts to expand the use of pavement preservation is the new Urban Highway Pavement Preserva-

tion Program. This program helps local agencies apply cost-effective treatments to the Urban Highway System to preserve the system and delay the need for expensive reconstruction. Eligible projects include crack seals, thin lift overlays, seal and covers, fog seals and other preventative maintenance treatments consistent with MDT and Federal Highway Administration guidelines.

To participate in the new program, local governments had to have a PvMS that included all Urban Highways in their area. Because many local governments did not have an active PvMS, staff from MDT’s Pavement Management and Urban Planning Sections worked with the Local Technical Assistance Program at Montana State University-Bozeman to provide local governments with training and guidance in basic pavement management concepts.

Feedback from participants has been very positive. In fact, several local staff people have noted that in addition to leveraging additional federal and state funding for their communities, the new pavement management systems have provided them with an invaluable tool to analyze their future needs and provide local taxpayers with more cost-effective services.

To date, 13 of Montana’s 15 urban areas have participated in this program, and the Montana Transportation Commission has approved 26 projects. MDT will develop the projects, award the bids, and administer the construction contracts.

For additional information on this program or other urban planning initiatives, please contact Zia Kazimi at 444-3445 or e-mail zkazimi@state.mt.us.

Highway Reconfiguration Study Progresses

The Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study continues to advance with the help of the project steering committee and input from local economic development experts and industry representatives.

Governor Martz requested the study following discussions with local officials and residents across Montana about the importance of expanded highways in supporting and improving the state and local economies. Due to the special nature of the study topic, MDT has hired a consultant team that includes Cambridge Systematics and Economic Development Research Group, two firms with national and international experience in transportation and economic development issues.

The consultant team, working with a committee of representatives from local governments, businesses and organiza-



What is Highway Reconfiguration?

Highway reconfiguration in the context of this study is any significant change in highway design that increases capacity. These design changes could include wider shoulders, additional travel lanes, or passing lanes.

tions, has developed profiles of Montana’s major industries that include valuable input from local economic development experts and industry leaders. These Montana-specific profiles will ensure the study focuses on economic factors of most importance to Montana’s economy. The consultant team has also researched various models to aid in determining future statewide economic impacts and for MDT to use to analyze economic impacts of projects and corridor improvements.

The study is scheduled for completion in August of 2003.

For more information on the Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study, contact Sue Sillick at 444-7693 or Dick Turner at 444-7289; or go to www.mdt.state.mt.us/research/reconfigtdy on the Internet.

Transit Tales



Led by Governor Judy Martz, parents and children look both ways before crossing the street as they walk from the Governor's residence to Smith School.



Students and parents arrive at Central School in Helena on Walk to School Day.

Montana Parents & Kids Join in Walk to School Day

On October 2, Montanans joined kids and parents from around the world to celebrate International Walk to School Day. Parents, teachers, children, community leaders, and volunteers all across Montana took to the streets to participate in this annual event and to promote the following goals:

- encourage physical activity
- teach safe walking skills to children
- promote awareness of how walkable a community is and where improvements can be made
- express concern for the environment
- reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and speed near schools
- share time with community leaders, parents, and children

Last year nearly three million children in 21 countries took part in the annual trek, which originated in the United Kingdom in 1994.

Walk to School Day events teach kids and parents to think of walking as an active, safe, and healthy means of transportation. However, increasing physical activity among children, teaching safe walking skills, easing traffic, and improving the environment around schools cannot be achieved in one day. One goal of Walk to School Day is to kick off long-term programs designed to bring about permanent changes.

Safety Studies Near Completion

Montana's 57th Legislature passed two resolutions dealing with highway safety issues. Following is a brief summary of the status of these two studies:

Traffic Code

Senate Joint Resolution 6 called for the study and revision of Montana's traffic code to provide clarity and uniformity.

Under the leadership of MDT Director Dave Galt, a panel was formed in December 2001 to study existing traffic laws, identify areas of ambiguity, compare current traffic laws to the Uniform Vehicle Code, and prepare legislation for the 58th Legislature.

The panel, which included representatives from the legislature, motor carriers, law enforcement, Justice Court, education, MDT's Motor Vehicle Division, local government, and citizens, worked diligently with a number of subcommittee conferences. The members offered a variety of viewpoints and worked to reach a consensus that would best serve the citizens of Montana.

Revisions and updates to the traffic regulations in Title 61, Chapter 8, of the Montana Code Annotated (MCA) will be presented to the Legislature in the form of five bills:

- Part 1 General Provisions
- Part 2 Traffic Control Devices

- Part 3 Vehicle Operating Requirements
- Part 5 Pedestrian Traffic
- Part 6 Bicycle Traffic

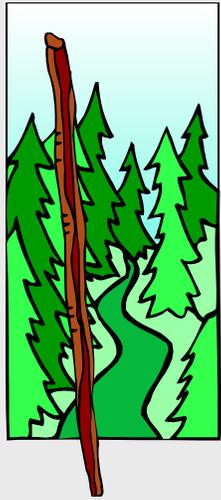
The panel also suggested that MCA, Title 61, Chapter 8, Part 7, Enforcement—Penalties, be reviewed under the direction of the Justice Department. This study would include a comparative analysis of fines in other northwest states for consideration by the 59th Legislature.

Bicycle Safety

House Joint Resolution 37 called for a study of bicycle safety that encompasses the planning, design, and construction of Montana's highways; programs or requirements for driver education, training or licensing; and safety equipment and clothing for cyclists.

Robert Peccia & Associates is conducting the study with technical support from an advisory panel that includes legislators, bicycle advocates, local government, local and state law enforcement, driver education, and the Motor Carriers Association.

The consultant is preparing a draft report to be distributed to the advisory panel for review and comment before it is finalized. The final report should be completed in the next few weeks.



Montana State Trails Conference

Mark Your Calendars! The Montana State Trails Conference – “Trails and Greenways: Crossing the Great Divide” – is set for April 3-5, 2003, at the Ramada Copper King in Butte. This conference will cover the following topics:

- * Trail Coalitions
- * User Conflict
- * Water Trails Challenges
- * Funds for Trails
- * Liability Exposure and Insurance Programs
- * GPS/GIS Mapping and Management
- * Private vs. Public
- * Volunteer Program Management
- * Lewis and Clark Trail
- * Lewis and Clark Bicentennial
- * Information and Education
 - Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Ethics Program
 - Montana Wilderness Association Backcountry Ski Education Program
 - OHV Snowmobile Education Program
- * and MORE . . .

Trails enthusiasts will enjoy the sessions which cover both motorized and nonmotorized trails. Subjects include hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, OHV, snowmobiling, horse-back riding, and ATVs. If you have questions about the conference or would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact Carol Strizich at 444-9273 or Bob Walker at 444-4585.

New Management for MR TMA & MTA

Congratulations to Lyn Hellegaard and Judee Harrison, the new co-directors of the Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MR TMA). MR TMA is a nonprofit, locally administered association that works with businesses, local government officials, and residents to provide demand-driven solutions to transportation needs in the Missoula and Ravalli County area.

Lyn Hellegaard is MR TMA’s new Director of Community Affairs. Lyn came to MR TMA after a 20-year career in the financial field. In her new position, she is responsible for all activities associated with public relations and marketing. Her administrative duties include fiscal and contract oversight and grant writing.



Lyn Hellegaard

Lyn has also assumed the coordinator responsibilities for the Montana Transit Association (MTA). Thanks to Lyn’s previous work with MTA, membership has increased by 38%, and the association is more financially secure than ever.



Judee Harrison

Judee Harrison is MR TMA's new Director of Mobility Services. Her previous experience includes 15 years with Long Machinery, a Missoula heavy equipment dealership. Her new responsibilities cover job costing, equipment inventory and acquisition, and coordination of transportation services. In addition, she is also in charge of all customer service activities related to the *I ride vanpool*, carpools, and Community Needs Van Service programs; driver training and safety programs; and equipment/vehicle procurement.

During Judee’s tenure with MR TMA, the vanpool has expanded to six vans serving the Bitterroot Valley, one van serving the Alberton area, and one serving Mission Valley commuters. A new route from the east is scheduled to begin soon. A new service for seniors and adults with disabilities operates within the Missoula area four days a week.

Rehabilitation Project on Track



Tamping machine lifting, tamping, and leveling west of Westby

Agricultural shippers in northeast Montana will continue to have access to two major railroads thanks to a track rehabilitation project funded in part by MDT. The 28-mile-long project on the Whitetail Line is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2003.

The Whitetail Line is owned by CP Railway and operated by the Dakota, Missouri Valley and Western (DMVW) Railroad. The line provides a direct connection to the CP main line at Flaxton, North Dakota, and provides area shippers an alternative to Burlington Northern Santa

Fe service on the Bainville to Scobey branch line. Virtually all shipments on the line are outbound wheat and barley destined for national and international markets.

Funding for the project, which is Phase II of a larger effort to improve this important rail line, comes from the Local Rail Freight Assistance Program, a federal program administered by MDT and funded with repaid loan funds from previous Montana projects.

For more information, please contact Tom Steyaert at 444-7646.



Secondary 209, South of Big Fork

Secondary Highway Program Changes Successful

In 1999, Montana's 56th Legislature made major changes to Montana's Secondary Highway Program that benefited Montana counties, residents, and businesses. The legislation called for the transfer of maintenance

of all paved Secondary Highways from counties to MDT and changed the process for selecting Secondary construction projects.

The legislation was the result of a cooperative effort between MDT and the Montana Association of Counties (MACO) to address longstanding issues with the maintenance and improvement of these important farm-to-market highways.

The maintenance takeover was not an easy task. MDT and MACO officials had to first agree on a definition of paved highways. MDT then worked with each of Montana's 56 counties to develop maintenance agreements for over 2,600 miles of paved Secondary Highways. After ordering the necessary equipment including 92 trucks, MDT began taking over maintenance on July 1, 2000, and completed the takeover before January 1, 2001.

Based on feedback from county commissioners and the public, the change in maintenance responsibility has already resulted in improvements to these important highways. The change has also freed local resources for improvements to other county roads.

The 1999 legislation also changed the Secondary Highway project selection process from a county-level to district-level process. The revised process allows all counties in each transportation district to select projects in cooperation with MDT based on previously agreed-upon criteria. This needs-based process has resulted in a more regional approach to Secondary Highway planning and has allowed MDT to increase the funding obligation levels for Secondary Highway construction projects. Since the new process started, the counties and MDT have cooperatively selected more than 40 projects worth over \$120 million for development over the next five years.

The success of these changes is the result of a cooperative effort between MDT and local officials. Watch for news about other cooperative efforts in future editions of *Newsline*.

For more information, contact Gary Larson at 444-6110.



Winter Travel—Advice from Montana's Snowplow Drivers

Montana keeps highways open throughout the winter, but travelers face tough conditions at times. Montana's snowplow drivers

offer this advice:

Visibility

See and be seen. Keep your headlights and taillights clean, especially in stormy weather. Keep windows clean and make sure defrosters work well. If snow has built up on your vehicle overnight or after a break from driving, clear it away so it doesn't blow off and obscure your windows.

Common Sense

Leave plenty of room between your vehicle and those around you. Drive defensively. Don't assume the other vehicle can or will stop at intersections. Test the road. Don't wait until you have to stop to test your traction. Watch for a safe place and then test your brakes. If road conditions seem to have changed, look for a safe place and test braking again.

Patience

Give yourself extra time to travel in winter. Being in a hurry in a storm or on icy roads is sure to get you in trouble. Passing when you can't see ahead and driving too fast for road conditions cause serious accidents in Montana each year.

Finally, leave the cruise control off for winter driving. It can accelerate your vehicle just as you hit a patch of ice or a slippery bridge deck.

Always be prepared with road and weather information before you set out on your way. Call 1(800)226-ROAD (7623) from the U.S. or Canada for current Montana road and weather conditions.

More Resources for Winter Drivers:

- * Motorists may also dial 511, the national traveler information number, for local travel conditions. Instructions are on the yellow insert in this issue of *Newsline*.
- * The latest edition of *Montana's Take-Along Winter Survival Handbook* is available free of charge. If you would like a copy, call MDT at 444-6200, or TTY 444-7696. You may also view the handbook electronically at www.state.mt.us/travinfo/winter_frame.html.
- * Check road and weather information on the Internet at www.mdt.state.mt.us/travinfo.

CTEP Project Spotlight

(Community Transportation Enhancement Program)



New Sidewalks For Camp Kiwanis

by Craig Erickson, Bear Paw Development

Camp Kiwanis, located approximately 20 miles south of Havre in Hill County's Beaver Creek Park, is the home of the annual Muscular Dystrophy Association Summer Camp. Approximately 50 children from around Montana attend the summer camp each year. Half of these campers are mobile with the use of manual or electric wheelchairs and the other half with the aid of leg braces or assistance devices.

The Camp Kiwanis Sidewalk Project, sponsored by Hill County, resulted in the construction of 1,005 feet of a concrete wheel-chair accessible trail at Camp Kiwanis. The project engi-

neering consultant was Milk River Engineering Inc. of Havre, and the contractor was Lapke Construction, LLC, of Simms.

Construction of this trail has created a safer environment and will allow greater freedom of movement for these campers and other special-needs users of Camp Kiwanis.

By leveraging its CTEP funding with donations from the Havre Fire Department and Ronald McDonald House Charities of Montana, Hill County was able to complete this project for \$49,790. This project illustrates the full potential of CTEP when local organizations collaborate with a local government and MDT to develop projects that enhance the quality of life for Montanans.

Nature Park Trail Links Helena to Its Past

by Richard Knatterud, MDT CTEP Bureau

Nature Park is part of Helena's golden history. The Last Chance Gulch mines were played out by 1868. There were many who believed that there was still enough gold in the gravel north of town to make mining profitable. At this site, gold dredges turned the earth inside out to get at the precious metal. Mounted on a barge, the machinery consisted of a chain of buckets that dumped the gravel onto a maze of screens and sluices inside the dredge. The barge floated on a pond excavated by the dredge, which moved along as it chewed its way through the gravel. The Porter Brothers Company dredge mined this part of the Helena Valley for over two decades.

The electric-powered dredge recovered over two thousand ounces of gold within two months of installation in 1935. By 1946, it had recovered nearly 100,000 ounces of gold. The dredge earned its owners over \$2.5 million by the time it was removed in the 1950s. The dredge scarred the Helena Valley, leaving behind gravel piles covered with scrub brush that the city turned into a park in the early seventies.

Last summer, the city completed construction of a ten-foot wide by one-mile long, asphalt-surfaced pedestrian path through Nature Park. A dedication ceremony was held in June with the mayor, KTVH, and others in attendance. The CTEP-funded trail provides a connection to existing shared-use paths along McHugh Drive, Custer Avenue, and Benton Avenue. The project also includes benches, signing, a wooden safety railing, and safety



screening (adjacent to the golf course). Construction was in accordance with all Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Nature Park is located east of the Bill Roberts Golf Course. A big hook off the tee on the 6th hole and you've landed in Nature Park. You might as well stay there and enjoy the park, 'cause if that is where your ball landed . . . well, let's just say you ain't Tiger Woods. You can also view the path from the 9th tee. Not to worry here, a big old net will prevent your duck hook from decapitating an innocent bystander on the path. The path can be accessed at its northeast corner off of Cole Avenue or from the southwest corner off of Benton Avenue, south of the driving range.

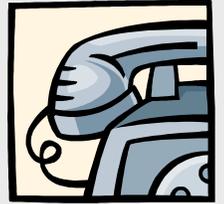
Robinett Construction was the contractor, Entranco was the designer, and the city of Helena was the sponsor. Gold Country Rails to Trails and the Open Space Bond Committee worked with the city to develop this project. The path looks great – congratulations to all on a job well done!

For more information on CTEP, call Thomas Martin at 444-0809 or e-mail tmartin@state.mt.us.

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Rail, Transit & Planning Division Telephone Numbers



Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 1(800)714-7296 (in Montana only), or (406)444-3423. The TTY number is (406)444-7696 or 1(800)335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon)	444-0410
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich)	444-9273
CTEP (Thomas Martin)	444-0809
Map Orders (James Colegrove)	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner)	444-7289
Projects (Gary Larson)	444-6110
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson)	444-6110
Road Data & Mapping (Zia Kazimi)	444-6111
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom)	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston)	444-4210
Urban Planning	444-3445
Newsline Editor (Dawn McCallum)	444-6115

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MDT's Mission

To serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.

Rail, Transit & Planning Division
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001
1(800)714-7296

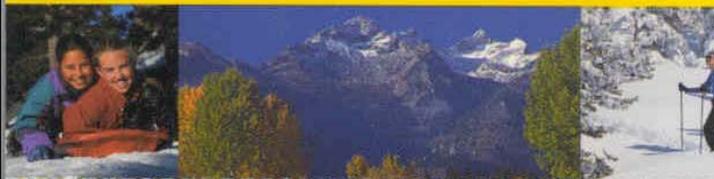
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- 24-hour voice response real time information
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- Weather forecast information
- Construction information
- Road closures and major delays
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