

Montana Transportation Commission

**June 23, 2022 Meeting
Montana Transportation
3751 Wynne Avenue
Butte, Montana**

IN ATTENDANCE

Loren Frazier, Transportation Commission Chair (District 3)
Tammi Fisher, Transportation Commissioner (District 1)
Shane Sanders, Transportation Commissioner (District 2)
Noel Sansaver, Transportation Commissioner (District 4)
Scott Aspenlieder, Transportation Commissioner (District 5)
Malcolm “Mack” Long, Director, MDT
Julie Brown, Deputy Director, MDT
Dwane Kailey, Chief Operations Officer, MDT
Lori Ryan, Commission Secretary
Dustin Rouse, Chief Engineer, MDT
Jake Goettle, MDT
Val Wilson, MDT
Tom Martin, MDT
Bob Vosen, MDT
Bill Fogarty, MDT
Jim Wingerter, MDT
Ryan Dahlke, MDT
Brian Hasselback, FHWA
Barbara Gillispie, McAllister, MT
Troutdale Area Homeowners Association, McAllister

Please note: Minutes are available for review on the commission’s website at https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/trans_comm/meetings.aspx. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request. For additional information, please contact transportation secretary Lori Ryan at (406) 444-7200, lryan@mt.gov or visit the commission’s website at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/trans_comm/meetings.aspx. For the hearing impaired, the TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592 or call the Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request.

OPENING – Commissioner Loran Frazier

Commissioner Frazier called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Sansaver gave the Invocation. Commissioner Frazier asked for introductions.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the Commission Meetings of April 5, 2022, April 26, 2022, May 10, 2022, and May 24, 2022 were presented for approval.

Commissioner Fisher moved to approve the minutes for the Commission Meetings of April 5, 2022, April 26, 2022, May 10, 2022, and May 24, 2022. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 1: Local Construction Project on State Highway System – University of Montana Campus, Missoula

Tom Martin presented the Local Construction Project on State Highway System – University of Montana Campus, Missoula to the Commission. Under MCA 60-2-110 “Setting priorities and selecting projects,” the commission shall establish priorities

and select and designate segments for construction and reconstruction on the national highway system, the primary highway system, the secondary highway system, the urban highway system, and state highways. This statute exists to ensure the safety of our system, protect transportation investments, and encourage coordination on public and private infrastructure improvement projects that impact MDT routes.

University of Montana Campus Lighting - Missoula

The University of Montana is proposing modifications to Arthur Avenue (U-8121) in Missoula to improve safety and reduce potential conflicts between vehicles and non-motorized traffic near their campus. Proposed improvements include lighting upgrades and the installation of rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB's) along the Arthur Avenue corridor between Beckwith Avenue and South 6th Street.

The University of Montana will provide 100 percent of project funding and will be required to complete the City of Missoula's design review and approval process (to ensure that all work complies with applicable local, state, and federal design standards). When complete, the University of Montana will assume all maintenance and operational responsibilities associated with the proposed improvements.

Summary: The University of Montana is proposing modifications to the Urban Highway System to improve safety and reduce potential conflicts between vehicles and non-motorized traffic near their campus in Missoula. Proposed improvements include lighting upgrades and the installation of rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB's) along the Arthur Avenue corridor between Beckwith Avenue and South 6th Street.

Staff recommends the Commission approve these modifications to Arthur Avenue (U-8121) - pending completion of the City of Missoula's design review and approval process.

Commissioner Fisher moved to approve the Local Construction Project on State Highway System – University of Montana Campus, Missoula. Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 2: Local Construction Projects on State Highway System – South Frontage Warehouse Development, Billings

Tom Martin presented the Local Construction Projects on State Highway System – South Frontage Warehouse Development, Billings to the Commission. Under MCA 60-2-110 “Setting priorities and selecting projects,” the commission shall establish priorities and select and designate segments for construction and reconstruction on the national highway system, the primary highway system, the secondary highway system, the urban highway system, and state highways. This statute exists to ensure the safety of our system, protect transportation investments, and encourage coordination on public and private infrastructure improvement projects that impact MDT routes.

South Frontage Warehouse Development – Billings

The South Frontage Warehouse Development is proposing modifications to South Frontage Road (X-56395) in Billings to address traffic generated by their new

facility. Proposed improvements include the construction of a new approach and installation of an eastbound right-turn lane on South Frontage Road.

MDT headquarters and Billings District staff have reviewed and concur with the recommended improvements. The South Frontage Warehouse Development will provide 100 percent of project funding and will be required to complete MDT's design review and approval process (to ensure that all work complies with MDT design standards). When complete, MDT will assume all maintenance and operational responsibilities associated with the proposed improvements.

Summary: The South Frontage Warehouse Development is proposing modifications to a state highway to address traffic generated by their new facility. Proposed improvements include the construction of a new approach and installation of an eastbound right-turn lane on South Frontage Road (X-56395) in Billings.

Staff recommends the Commission approve these modifications to South Frontage Road - pending concurrence of MDT's Chief Engineer.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Local Construction Projects on State Highway System – South Frontage Warehouse Development, Billings. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. Commissioner Aspenlieder recused himself. Commissioners Frazier, Sansaver, Fisher and Sanders voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Interstate Maintenance Program Additions to IM Program (17 New Projects)

Tom Martin presented the Interstate Maintenance Program – Additions to IM Program (17 New Projects) to the Commission. The Interstate Maintenance (IM) Program finances highway projects to rehabilitate, restore, resurface, and reconstruct routes on the Interstate System. Montana's Transportation Commission allocates IM funds to MDT Districts based on system performance.

At this time, MDT is proposing to add 17 new projects to the IM program – three in District 1, five in District 2, two in District 3, two in District 4, and five in District 5. The projects on the attached list (Attachment A) meet the criteria set forth for IM-funded projects. If approved, it would be MDT's intention to let these projects individually.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$137,238,538 (\$125,216,442 federal + \$12,022,096 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Interstate Maintenance (IM) Program.

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add 17 new projects to the Interstate Program. The proposed projects are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$137,238,538 (\$125,216,442 federal + \$12,022,096 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Interstate Maintenance (IM) Program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these IM projects to the highway program.

Commissioner Fisher asked what the safety project in District One was for. Is it for cable going down the highway or something else? Dustin Rouse said the I90 VMS from St. Regis to Idaho is installation of message boards and the VMS is for the large boards so we can let the traveling public know the changing road conditions in that corridor. Commissioner Fisher asked if that be Let separately from the reconstruction. Dustin Rouse said yes. Dwane Kailey said they are looking at putting in a variable speed limit message board in that corridor because as you come off the pass we can have different weather conditions so we want to be able to have our first variable speed zone area there. Commissioner Sansaver asked what was meant by variable speeds. Dwane Kailey said it was electronic. Director Long said other states are starting to use this and it is weather dependent. That way if it's snowy or icy and the speeds should be 35 mph, we can start right at the top of the pass saying "speed reduced due to weather" right on the variable message boards and the public will see it all the way down. The speed limit signs will all be electronic and they will all say 35m ph. That will be a visual reminder to people. You can say "please slow down due "due to weather" because the aluminum signs don't mean a thing. We have learned from other states that this is an excellent safety way to give people a visual. If you've traveled in other states they have electronic speed limit signs. When it's bad weather our Transportation Management Center in Helena can get on the computer and set those speed limits. Then when it's sunny and clear roads they can move it back up to 70 mph.

Commissioner Fisher asked about the enforcement. If that sign says 35 mph and the metal post says 70 mph, is enforcement at 35 mph or at 70 mph. Director Long said they will take the metal posts out. Dwayne Kailey said the message board will be the governing rule. Director Long said that way there is no confusion. We are trying to do this all the way along that corridor because it has a lot of weather events that can happen at any time. Commissioner Sanders asked if other states had seen good compliance. Director Long said they do if it's enforced. It's like anything else, it's back to enforcement. The Highway Patrol is also excited about this because they have the same issue. When it just says "safe", well what is safe? Now when it says 35 mph, the Highway Patrol can enforce 35 mph and there's no question. That is what is good about our Traffic Management Center, we completely communicate with the Highway Patrol, Motor Carriers Service and even the Sheriff's office in those counties so everyone knows that if the weather is bad, we are going to do this and send it out.

Commissioner Fisher moved to approve the Interstate Maintenance Program – Additions to IM Program (17 New Prrojects). Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. All Commissiones voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: National Highway System Program Additions to NH (15 New Projects)

Tom Martin presented the National Highway System Program – Additions to NH (15 New Projects) to the Commission. The National Highway System (NH) Program finances highway projects to rehabilitate, restore, resurface, and reconstruct Non-Interstate routes on the National Highway System. Montana's Transportation Commission allocates NH funds to MDT Districts based on system performance.

At this time, MDT is proposing to add 15 new projects to the NH program – two in District 1, eight in District 2, three in District 3, one in District 4, and one in District 5. The projects on the attached list (Attachment A) meet the criteria set forth for

NH-funded projects. If approved, it would be MDT's intention to let these projects individually.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$31,704,682 (\$27,449,914 federal + \$4,254,768 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the National Highway System (NH) Program.

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add 15 new projects (listed on Attachment A) to the National Highway System Program. The proposed projects are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$31,704,682 (\$27,449,914 federal + \$4,254,768 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the National Highway System (NH) Program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these NH projects to the highway program.

Commissioner Fisher asked if any of the reconstruction projects were slated to be built by the design build process versus low bid. Dustin Rouse said there are no reconstructs. I anticipate these would all be design-bid-build. Commissioner Fisher said for the other lists that have reconstructs, are those going be design-build or does it vary? Have you identified any of the reconstructs as design-build? Jake Goettle said certainly for the ones in the reconstruct category we will look at that. It makes sense for us to go through that process and bring that to the Commission and let you know. Commissioner Fisher said you haven't preliminarily identified any that you think would be good for that type of bid versus the other? I'd heard that the Reserve Street Reconstruct might be design-build. Jake Goettle said Reserve Street is definitely one that we are looking at for design-build.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the National Highway System Program – Additions to NH (15 New Projects). Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Primary System Program Additions to STPP (16 New Projects)

Tom Martin presented the Primary System Program – Additions to STPP (16 New Projects) to the Commission. The Surface Transportation Program – Primary (STPP) finances highway projects to rehabilitate, restore, resurface, and reconstruct routes on the state's Primary Highway System. Montana's Transportation Commission allocates STPP funds to MDT Districts based on system performance.

At this time, MDT is proposing to add 16 new projects to the STPP program – three in District 1, six in District 2, three in District 3, three in District 4 and one in District 5. The projects on the attached list (Attachment A) meet the criteria set forth for STPP-funded projects. If approved, it would be MDT's intention to let these projects individually.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$77,869,396 (\$67,419,323 federal + \$10,450,073 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Surface Transportation Program – Primary (STPP).

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add 16 new projects (listed on Attachment A) to the Primary System Program. The proposed projects are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$77,869,396 (\$67,419,323 federal + \$10,450,073 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Surface Transportation Program – Primary (STPP).

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these STPP projects to the highway program.

Commissioner Frazier asked if Reserve Drive or any of the other projects that are going to go through design-build, they will go through the process and then be brought to us, correct. Dustin Rouse said yes.

Commissioner Sansaver said I see project costs are going up, I assume we have a benchmark for each year, are we seeing that? Tom Martin said yes. Dustin Rouse said we are adjusting our projects as we move forward. As we've discussed before, last year when we developed projects the TCP was a snapshot in time, however, as these projects are nominated and come before the Commission, we are adjusting all the time. We are tacking trends and in discussion with MCA and AGC on what we're seeing as far as construction costs. So we are constantly adjusting. We are seeing increases around 20% as we progress through this year.

Commissioner Sansaver said we've noticed that we're very close with our estimates to what the contractor are actually bidding. So the reason I asked about the 20% increase, how are we matching those numbers up so closely? Did we have a good talk with the Contractor's Association or should we have more contractors bidding? Tom Martin said this year has been a bit of an anomaly because inflation has been pretty significant, as we progress through the year you are presented with our Engineer's Estimate at that time. The Engineer's Estimate does not go back to the TCP. So we are adjusting our Engineer's Estimate as we progress through the year as well. So we're recognizing those inflationary trends and we're looking at the past bids we received and at different quantities and different bid items and tracking those. So we're doing our best to stay ahead of it and make sure that it's in line with what the contractors are paying for those materials. So we are adjusting our Engineer's Estimate up based on what we're seeing this year. That is what you're seeing.

Commissioner Sansaver said so these are not fixed numbers, they will move as we go through the year according to material prices. Tom Martin said the number you are seeing today for these new projects coming on line that you're approving, we are tracking trends and at times we will have to increase that based on what we see for the construction portion. What you are looking at and what you're approving is actually all phases. It includes design, right of way, and everything it takes to deliver those projects and construction. When we're talking about just bid awards, then we're adjusting our Engineer's Estimate based on what we're seeing with the trends and the bid items we've seen throughout the year. That's why we get closer and closer as we progress through the year because we see the trends and adjust for that.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Primary System Program – Additions to STPP (16 New Projects). Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Elected Officials / Public Comment

Troutdale Area Homeowners Association, McAllister

They preferred to wait for Agenda Item 13 to make any comments.

Agenda Item 6: Secondary Roads Program Additions to STPS (16 New Projects)

Tom Martin presented the Secondary Roads Program – Additions to STPS (16 New Projects) to the Commission. The Surface Transportation Program – Secondary (STPS) finances highway projects on the state-designated Secondary Highway System. Secondary Roads are those routes that have been selected by the Montana Transportation Commission to be placed on the Secondary Highway System.

Secondary Roads Program funding is distributed by formula and is utilized to resurface, rehabilitate and reconstruct roadways and bridges on the Secondary System. Capital construction priorities are established by the Counties and pavement preservation projects are selected by MDT (per the guidance in MCA 60-3-206).

At this time, MDT is proposing to add 16 new projects to the STPS program – one in District 1, two in District 2, ten in District 3 and three in District 4. The projects on the attached list (Attachment A) meet the criteria set forth for STPS-funded projects. If approved, it would be MDT's intention to let these projects individually.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$29,870,897 (\$25,862,223 federal + \$4,008,674 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Secondary Roads (STPS) Program.

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add 16 new projects (listed on Attachment A) to the Secondary Roads Program. The proposed projects are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$29,870,897 (\$25,862,223 federal + \$4,008,674 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Secondary Roads (STPS) Program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these STPS projects to the highway program.

Commissioner Fisher asked about the pulverization project – are we taking the road back to gravel. Tom Martin said yes. We actually pulverize the plant mix and then use that as base or blend it into the gravel. Commissioner Fisher asked if there was not enough traffic in Plevna. Tom Martin said it does not mean the finished surface is gravel, it is part of the process. We will pulverize and use that as base and then overlay it or use it as part of the pavement so the finished surface will be much improved. Commissioner Frazier said for your information the first pulverization project was done on Hwy 200 from Clearwater Junction to Helmville approximately 30 years ago and we are still driving on it.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Secondary Roads Program – Additions to STPS (16 New Projects). Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 7: Bridge Program Projects
Additions to Bridge Program (3 New Projects)**

Tom Martin presented the Bridge Program Projects, Additions to Bridge Program (3 New Projects) to the Commission. MDT’s Bridge Bureau reviews bridge conditions statewide and provides recommendations for construction projects to be added to the Bridge Program. At this time, the Bridge Bureau recommends adding three (3) new projects to the Bridge Program.

Project information is shown on Attachment A. If approved, it would be MDT’s intention to let these projects individually. The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$46.5 million (\$40.3M federal + \$6.2M state match).

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add three (3) new projects to the Bridge Program.

The breakdown of project costs (by program) is listed below:

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Surface Transportation Bridge (STPB) Program | \$21,657,297 |
| National Highway Performance Bridge (NHPB) Program | <u>\$24,887,127</u> |
| | \$46,544,424 |

The proposed projects are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process - as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the Bridge Program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these projects to the Bridge Program.

Commissioner Aspenlieder asked how many of the projects include timber bridges. Dustin Rouse said I believe the first structure is concrete, Spanish Creek is concrete, and the ones in the Lewistown area for the most part are timber. I will verify that for you. The ones labeled DAR structures, those are on the Department of Defense route so we are in partnership with them to reconstruct those bridges. Commissioner Frazier asked if one of the structures was the 35 mph bridge that we drove across. Bill Fogerty said it was not. That bridge is not in the program.

Commissioner Aspenlieder moved to approve the Bridge Program Projects, Additions to Bridge Program (3 New Projects). Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 8: Urban Pavement Preservation Program
Additions to UPP Program (1 New Project)**

Tom Martin presented the Urban Pavement Preservation Program, Additions to UPP Program (1 New Project) to the Commission. The Urban Pavement Preservation (UPP) program provides funding for pavement preservation work on urban routes throughout the state. MDT Districts work with local governments to advance

nominations that align with system needs (as identified by local pavement management systems).

At this time, the Billings District is requesting Commission approval for an Urban Pavement Preservation project in Laurel. The project (shown on Attachment A) meets the criteria set forth for a UPP-funded project.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$1,871,492 (\$1,620,338 federal + \$251,154 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Urban Pavement Preservation (UPP) program.

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add a new project (listed on Attachment A) to the Urban Pavement Preservation Program. The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (P3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, roadway system performance and traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of this project to the program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$1,871,492 (\$1,620,338 federal + \$251,154 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Urban Pavement Preservation (UPP) program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of this UPP project to the highway program.

Commissioner Aspenlieder asked where the project was in Laurel and what prompted this addition. Rod Nelson said he would get the information to him. Commissioner Aspenlieder asked if the city of Laurel was participating at all in this project. Rob Nelson said he was not aware of the city of Laurel participating in any way.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Urban Pavement Preservation Program, Additions to UPP Program (1 New Project). Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 9: Highway Safety Improvement Program Additions to HSIP Program (14 New Projects)

Tom Martin presented the Highway Safety Improvement Program – Additions to HSIP (14 New Projects) to the Commission. The Highway Safety Improvement (HSIP) Program makes federal funding available to states to assist with the implementation of a data-driven and strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads. In Montana, the primary focus of the HSIP program involves identifying locations with crash trends (where feasible countermeasures exist) and prioritizing work according to benefit/cost ratios.

At this time, MDT is proposing to add 14 new projects to the HSIP program – four in District 1, five in District 2, three in District 3 and two in District 5. The projects on the attached list (Attachment A) meet the criteria set forth for HSIP-funded projects. If approved, it would be MDT's intention to let these projects individually.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$14,386,764 (\$12,948,088 federal + \$1,438,676 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Summary: MDT is requesting Commission approval to add 14 projects (listed on Attachment A) to the Highway Safety Improvement Program. The proposed projects

are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Performance Programming (Px3) Process – as well as the policy direction established in TranPlanMT. Specifically, traveler safety will be enhanced with the addition of these projects to the HSIP program.

The estimated total cost for all project phases is \$14,386,764 (\$12,948,088 federal + \$1,438,676 state match) – with the entirety of the federal funding originating from the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the addition of these HSIP projects to the highway program.

Commissioner Sansaver asked about the criteria for safety highway improvements. Dustin Rouse said for projects to be qualified to be included in the HSIP Program, they have to meet benefit to cost. We scan the entire state looking for crash trends and if there are locations where on a systemic basis we can install centerline rumble strips or shoulder rumble strips that would address road departure type crashes. If there is a specific intersection where we're seeing a crash trend that we can address, we look at the cost of constructing those improvements based on our anticipated redesign of that intersection and we compare that to the safety benefit we'd see with the crash reduction. It has to meet a certain threshold but they also use the higher benefit to cost, the higher they rate. Obviously that means there are more crashes we can address so those tend to rise to the top. Our safety folks develop a pretty comprehensive list. Then we work with the District Administrators and their staff to visit all these sites and narrow that down to what can be funded in a given year.

Commissioner Sansaver said in the case of rumble strips, would that be part of a safety project. Are on ramps or additional off ramps to increase the safety of getting on or off a road or highway? Some of these are \$1.4 million and I'm having trouble thinking that would be rumble strips. Dustin Rouse said if you're referring to intersection improvements, an intersection improvement can be, but if the estimate is around one million, typically it is likely they are looking at a left-turn lane because we're adding width up to a mile of highway. In order to do that it will run about \$1.5 million. It could end up they do a different solution, maybe a roundabout or right-turn lanes. We will continue to look at other things but with that dollar amount it is usually a left-turn lane.

Commissioner Sanders said when you look at the benefit to cost, signage is very high. Can we infer then that signage is very effective? Dustin Rouse said signage is very inexpensive. So compared to the benefit we see, it is a very effective treatment. When you see that we are looking at increase delineations, if there are curves we can put in higher visibility delineation which is fairly inexpensive but it makes drivers aware of what's coming and see the road better. Letting the public know there are wildlife crossings in the area is another thing we look at. Intersection ahead type signs can be installed. On tight curves we can install the chevrons to let people know a curve is coming up so they can adjust. These are fairly inexpensive and we have to meet a certain criteria to install those. We do see crash reductions with these too.

Commissioner Sansaver asked if these safety projects coincided with the speed studies. If you are adding a left-turn lane would you then adjust the speed study for that left turn lane? Dustin Rouse said typically no. Speed studies are typically initiated by public comments and public input to their local county commissioners. We are doing an independent look state-wide at crash sites. They are two different things and they are going to take two different tracks. When we reconstruct an area, we will observe the location after that reconstruction to determine if it is necessary to adjust the speeds through that area based on the new configuration. Commissioner Sansaver said that Commissioner Fisher last fall had a project down by Hamilton where they were adding turn-in lanes to the highway and the speed study showed we needed to reduce the speeds in that area. So would a safety highway project be the on-ramp or

turn lane? Wouldn't that coincide with the speed study? Dustin Rouse said it certainly can and there are locations where we can end up doing both. In the Hamilton area we are currently studying that and looking at a lot of different options to improve the safety through that corridor. But it's coincidental to the speed study. We can also initiate a speed study request. Commissioner Fisher asked if that was the East Side Highway outside of Stevensville where we were reducing entrances to the highway to increase safety. Dustin Rouse said yes.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Highway Safety Improvement Program – Additions to HSIP (14 New Projects). Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 10: Speed Limit Recommendation Mullan Road (S263) – Frenchtown

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Mullan Road (S263) in Frenchtown to the Commission. Missoula County requested a speed study be performed on Mullan Road from the intersection with Pulp Mill Road to the Railroad crossing near the elementary school in Frenchtown because of development occurring between milepost 13 and milepost 14.

After reviewing the area, the study was extended to the intersection of Demer Street and Beckwith Street. A review of the spot speed samples shows that the prevailing speeds along Mullan Road are within ± 5 -mph of the 55-mph posted speed limit and between 5-mph and 10-mph above the 45-mph and 35-mph posted speed limits. Over 50-percent of drivers blatantly disregard the posted 25-mph speed limit. Elevated crash rates around the area of concern (milepost 13 to milepost 14) indicate the use of the 50th percentile speed would be recommended. The 50th percentile speed limit for this area was recorded around 51-mph. Engineering judgment does not indicate a 50-mph speed limit as reasonable and prudent for an area with approximately 43 access points per mile. Furthermore, the transitional speed limits of 45-mph and 35-mph are substantially shorter than what would be considered reasonable. Extending these speed limits to at least 1,600-feet is advisable.

Missoula County along with the West Valley Community Council in Frenchtown concur with MDT's recommendation. Their letter is attached.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

NO CHANGE the existing 35-mph speed zone.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning at the existing posted location (straight-line station 226+00) and continuing north to a point approximately 190-feet north of milepost 11 (straight-line station 242+00), an approximate distance of 1,600-feet.

A 55-mph speed limit beginning approximately 190-feet north of milepost 11 (straight-line station 242+00) and continuing north to a point approximately 300-feet south of milepost 13 (straight-line station 343+00), an approximate distance of 1.91-miles.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning approximate 300-feet south of milepost 13 (straight-line station 343+00) and continuing north to a point approximately 2,000-feet south of milepost 14 (straight-line station 381+00), an approximate distance of 3,400-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning approximately 2,000-feet south of milepost 14 (straight-line station 381+00) and continuing north to the existing 25-mph speed zone (straight-line station 404+50), an approximate distance of 2,350-feet.

NO CHANGE to the existing 25-mph speed zone.

Commissioner Fisher moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Mullan Road (S263). Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 11: Speed Limit Recommendation US 287 Cameron

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, US 287 Cameron to the Commission. Madison County submitted a request for a speed limit study on US 287 to determine if a reduction was warranted. There had been increasing traffic volumes and a recent fatality.

Both the 85th percentile speeds and the upper limit of the pace are above the statutory 70-mph speed limit throughout the study segment on average by 4-mph. There is a small reduction in the travel speeds in front of the post office and just north of the intersection with Bear Creek Loop placing the speed statistics at 72-mph and 73-mph. The enforcement data indicates that the Montana Highway Patrol does target those motorists exceeding the statutory 70-mph speed limit.

The Madison County Board of Commissioners concurs with MDT's recommendation of No Change. Their letter is attached. Representative Ken Walsh, HD 71, also had sent an email as well to be included in with public comments. It was in line with other comments.

MDT recommends NO CHANGE.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for US 287 Cameron. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 12: Speed Limit Recommendation Ennis North

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Ennis North to the Commission. Madison County requested MDT review the posted speed limits on US-287 north of Ennis and reduce the existing speed limit because of "additional development generating increased access demands within the 55-mph speed zone". The Madison Rural Fire Department also referenced "numerous safety concerns". MDT contracted with Robert Peccia and Associates (RPA) to complete the Ennis – North speed study between the intersection with MT-287 and milepost 53. This portion of US-287 is a minor arterial and is part of the primary highway system with a typical section comprised of two 12-foot travel lanes and varying shoulder widths between one to eight feet wide. The AADT was reported as 3,674 vehicles per day (vpd) in 2020. The AADT in the prior year (2019) was reported as 4,084-vpd. On average, traffic volumes along the corridor have been experienced a general decline since peaking at more than 6,000-vpd in 2007-2009. However, summer traffic can create volumes nearly double what is observed the rest of the year. Between the

intersection of MT-287 and approximately RP 51.0, the roadside development can be classified as suburban with commercial and industrial development. North of milepost 51 to the end of the study area, the corridor is primarily rural with a low density of minor farm field and private approaches.

Summary: Based on the high number of speeding citations, adjustments to the posted speed limits are not anticipated to have a positive effect on vehicle speeds. Prevailing speeds based on the 85th percentile speeds in the southbound direction are generally more than 5 mph higher than posted limits at the transition points. The existing 25-mph and 35-mph zones are currently less than the recommended 0.3-mile transition length and should be extended.

The Madison County Commissioners do not agree with the recommendations and request that study be revisited. The primary concern is “providing safer traffic conditions in the area of the Ennis Solid Waste Container Site.” They recommend extending the existing 45-mph speed limit “from Mountain View Road to well beyond the turn off for the container site”. Their letter is attached.

MDT further reviewed the recommendation from RPA and reviewed crash data for the past 10-years in both the 55-mph and 70-mph speed zones. There are crashes that occur along the roadway however no elevated crash rates were observed. Only one rear-end crash was observed to be related to the Ennis Solid Waste Container Site. The driver was distracted by horses in a field. The prevailing speeds are well above the county’s recommendation by about 20-mph. RPA recommended not changing the existing speed limits in this area because they are already 10-mph below the prevailing speeds and the limited contextual evidence to indicate the speed limit should be reduced. Prior research conducted by MDT shows that speeds set 10-mph below engineer recommendations do reduce overall crash rates but there is an observed increase in fatal and injury related crashes. MDT reviewed the area from Ennis north to milepost 53 in 2011 and from milepost 50 to milepost 65 in 2017. The speed statistics for the 2011 and 2017 studies show no statistical difference to the most recent study in the 55-mph and 70-mph speed zone. Furthermore, the crash rate has been approximately cut in half since 2011. However, due to the non-ideal shoulder widths MDT could consider reducing the 70-mph speed limit to 65-mph.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 25-mph speed limit beginning the intersection of US-287 and MT-287 (straight-line station 1601+76) and continuing north to Madison Foods (straight-line station 1620+50), an approximate distance 1,874-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning at Madison Foods (straight-line station 1620+50) and continuing north to a point 260-feet south of Mountain View Road (straight-line station 1636+00), an approximate distance 1,550-feet.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning 260-feet south of Mountain View Road (straight-line station 1636+00) and continuing north to the existing 45/55-mph transition (straight-line station 1660+00), an approximate distance 2,400-feet.

A 55-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 45/55-mph transition (straight-line station 1660+00) and continuing north to the existing 55/70-mph transition (straight-line station 1708+00), an approximate distance 4,800-feet.

A 65-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 55/70-mph transition (straight-line station 1708+00) and continuing north to milepost 53 (straight-line station 1810+00), an approximate distance of 1.93-miles

County Commissioner Eckhart from District 3, Madison County, said that presentation by staff was difficult to understand. I believe you have letters from all three Madison County Commissioners. Representative Walsh you have letters in front of you. The presentation was given very quickly. Our request going north out of Ennis is to keep the speed limit at 45 mph heading north past Recycle Way where our solid waste trucks pull in and out. It is definitely a safety issue. Then coming south to reduce that speed to 45 mph. In summary in clear words the current speed limit by Madison Foods going north should be extended at 45 mph until it passes Recycle Way where the county solid waste trucks are pulling in and out. It is a safety issue for sure and there are no turn outs or aprons, nothing. We are respectfully requesting that the speed limit in that area be reduced to 45 mph for county operations and for the safety for all the people pulling in and out of the solid waste facility.

Commissioner Sanders asked where it was changed from 55 mph to 65 mph, is that just before Recycle Way? Do we see increased mishaps particularly when you have an acceleration zone that has a lot of traffic going in and out of it? At a minimum can we extend that 55 mph a little bit further north so that it encompasses the turn-off there and people aren't accelerating just as you have the turn-in and turn-out? Right now the staff recommendation is to start that 65 mph zone just before that turn off. Dustin Rouse said our proposed 55 mph speed limit extends right up to Recycle Way and then we transition from 55 mph to 65 mph at that approach. His question is could we move that transition point further to the north to not have it occur at Recycle Way.

Commissioner Eckhart said they were holding to their request of staying at 45 mph past Recycle Way. Most of our trucks come out of Recycle Way and start accelerating north. Again we respectfully request holding at 45 mph until you get just north of Recycle Way. That is what Representative Walsh and all three County Commissioners are requesting for safety concerns. Commissioner Sansaver asked where the 55 mph speed zone started before Recycle Way. They are requesting the 55 mph be changed to 45 mph, so how far back from Recycle Way is that? Deputy Tim Gekonski, said about three quarters of a mile. If you are familiar with the area it bumps out just past the Rocky Mountain Supply Gas Station. Commissioner Frazier said it would be about Range View Road, correct? Dustin Rouse said correct.

Commissioner Sansaver said I know the speed zone studies showed there hasn't been any increased accidents in that proximity, but to the County Commissioner's request, what would be the problem for MDT to comply with 45 mph rather than 55 mph. Dustin Rouse said the concern MDT would have with installing the 45 mph speed zone through that location is just by posting it at 45 mph does not mean that the travelling public is going to travel at 45 mph. If that was the case, I would have no issue with it but the concern is those folks who are traveling in an area and through a section where the speed profile indicates very clearly that they feel comfortable at a higher rate of speed, that piece of metal isn't necessarily going to change that behavior. What we've seen when we've done that and posted speed zones lower than the Engineer's Recommendation is compliance by some folks but most people feel more comfortable traveling faster and they end up making dangerous maneuvers where they are passing folks who are trying to abide by the posted speed limit. We can potentially see additional crashes when we've done that. So that is the concern. We have the speed zone ending right near mile marker 50 and their request would extend it up to mile marker 51 a little less than a mile.

Commissioner Eckert said the enforcement of the lower speed is the responsibility of the police force and the county sheriff. Individual drivers always make up their own mind but without having a posted reduced speed, any attempt to reduce is futile. I state again the request that the speed be reduced to 45 mph and then we will work with law enforcement to enforce that 45 mph speed limit rather than leaving it up to the individual driver to define what is a safe speed in that area.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said procedurally to keep things on the rail and to keep things moving, can we have public comment at a public comment period and bring it back to the Commission for discussion. I think that will make this a lot smoother process with 10 to 15 of these speed requests on the docket. I would request that of the Commission. A Madison County homeowner said we have a large number of people gathered here for this Agenda Item and I would hope that we get some time and our deputy sheriff is also here to speak to that.

Commissioner Frazier said we are aware of that and we are going to be taking public comment on this and also for the next couple of Agenda Items. For the sake of order, after the staff presentation I usually call for question and discussion from the Commission and then ask for public comment and then we bring it back to the Commission for resolution. Right now we have had some interjection of comments but having heard the comments I look to the Commission for any discussion and then I'd entertain a motion.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said from a procedural standpoint when we in fact lower a speed limit like this, does the Commission have follow-up authority if we find that lowering the speed limit does not improve the situation, does the Commission have any authority to restore the speed limit and increase it back to what the analysis shows? Val Wilson, MDT Chief Counsel, said the answer is no. For a basic review the Legislature sets the speed limit, they delegate that authority to the Commission that based upon speed studies the Commission can lower the speed limit. Likewise they delegate authority to the local government and the County Commissioners in the local area and they can lower theirs without a speed study down to 35 mph. But once the Commission changes a speed limit, then it has no authority to go back in and adjust that without approval from the local government, Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Frazier said if the Commission approves an "interim" speed limit then the Commission can go back and look at it, correct? Val Wilson said that is allowed.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said in this area has there been any analysis, particularly around Recycle Way, based on crash data to adding turn lanes or a center turn lane. Do the statistics or the crash data provide any indication that we could fix this problem with some geometric adjustments as opposed to a speed zone? Dustin Rouse said I'm not aware that this has risen to a location where we identified a crash trend. I'm not aware of this coming up as a crash cluster location that we would address with safety funds. Commissioner Aspenlieder asked if the Butte Administrator had any input. Bill Fogerty said I'm not aware of any clusters down there or anything that flags HSIP funds. I do know that we issued the Press Release for the pavement preservation project we have and we did receive public comment that there is a perceived need for a center two-way left-turn lane out in the same area. So the district is aware of it.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said I have a big problem with arbitrarily setting speed limits without it being supported by data. I don't doubt there is concern locally regarding that but I also don't have any data provided by the local jurisdiction or entity that would support what they are suggesting either. My biggest concern is that once we lower these speed limits, they are set and we have no ability to come back and adjust it. Our role here as a Commission is also to keep in mind the traveling public and not just the locals and we have to find a balance between those two responsibilities. If we lower the speed limit and cause more crashes because of the disparity in speeds between vehicles and driver action, we have no ability to adjust that. From what I understand, it is very hard to get the local jurisdiction and the local counties to agree to increase it regardless of what the data says once it's been lowered. I don't have any information that shows me that what's being requested by the local county is justified. Therefore I have a hard time arbitrarily setting those speed limits based on gut or feel when the data and the statistics just do not support it. If we wanted to take a couple of cracks at setting an interim speed limit with a sunset of

how long that interim speed limit would need to be set for us to study it and analyze it, that would be a good thing to do as a Commission so we'd have some data that's real as opposed to national studies and some of the other things we refer to. As Chairman Frazier said we could study this for two years and see what the data pattern shows and whether this improves the situation or not. Maybe that would help us as we analyze these across the state. But going in and setting a hard and fast speed limit, I'm going to be opposed.

Commissioner Eckert said we would fully support an interim speed limit. I believe I heard setting an interim limit of 45 mph for two years in order to provide MDT the opportunity to evaluate that area. I'm sure the Madison County Commissioners would support that idea as a test for two years to provide time to study it.

Dwayne Kailey said under the law the local government does have the ability to go out and perform their own speed study. In line with Commissioner Aspenlieder's comments, absent any real data to consider veering from MDT's recommendation which was done by a consultant and not internal staff, if they want to veer from that, they have the authority to do their own speed study, present that to us to review, and then we would present that to the Commission for your review and approval. Just thinking about staff resources and going back multiple times on these speed studies and absent any data they do that the authority to do the speed study themselves.

Val Wilson said in reviewing the Commission's authority a temporary special reduced limit would remain in effect pending another traffic and engineering study on the route. So it can't be for two years with a sunset, it has to be based upon going out and restudying it again.

Commissioner Sanders said I appreciate Commissioner Aspenlieder's input as well as the folks from Madison County. My concern about the interim is that I see us potentially dedicating all of our time to doing speed studies and we already spend a lot of time at it. I'm concerned that if we try to do some interim thing, we've had speed studies and we have a backlog already and I'm concerned about that. I do think that it is valid if Madison County wishes to do their own speed study and present that to us and get some data that supports what they're requesting then I think that would be valid.

Dustin Rouse stated that in regard to locating the 55 mph sign at milepost 51, our staff will go out and look at the site and make sure we locate it in a site with visibility but it will be in proximity to milepost 51.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Ennis North and extend the 55 mph to include Recycle Way roughly MP 51. Commissioner Sansaver seconded the motion. Commissioners Sansaver, Fisher, and Sanders voted aye. Commissioners Aspenlieder and Frazier voted nay.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 13: Speed Limit Recommendation US 287 (P-13) – McAllister

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, US 287 (P-13), McAllister to the Commission. Madison County requested a speed study be performed on US-287 between milepost 54 and milepost 56 on the behalf of the residents around the community of McAllister.

The study area was expanded from milepost 53 to the reduce speed ahead sign north of milepost 56. The public's main concerns are the perceived hazards the existing

speed limit creates when residents, school buses, and recreationists attempt to enter the highway.

Summary: A review of the spot speed samples shows that the prevailing speeds are consistently at and above the posted speed limits. Based on the 85th percentile and upper limit of the pace speeds are for the most part within ± 2 -mph of the 70-mph speed limit and 5-mph to 10-mph above the 55-mph and 45-mph posted speed limits. A slight drop in speeds was observed between Jordan Lane and Rainbow Road which may indicate an area of elevated turning movements. However, even the 50th percentile speeds were still observed around 65-mph. After accounting for roadway context: traffic volumes, access points, lane and shoulder widths, and crash rates. The less than desirable shoulder width indicated the use of the rounded down 85th percentile speed. Lengthening the existing 45-mph and 55-mph speed zones was also recommended because they did not match the national recommended length.

The Madison County Commissioners does not agree with MDT's recommendation and requests that the study "be revisited as a result of our review and citizen input." Madison County Commissioners do not believe the area of McAllister is primarily rural with agricultural development and state that this may have been true 10 years ago. "McAllister is now a community of residences and businesses with a population that rivals/exceeds other communities in Madison County such as Ennis, Alder, Virginia City, Sheridan, and Twin Bridges" which have speed limits around 25-mph and 35-mph. Their comments further describe the area referencing Norris Hill, 18 encroachments over a 1.5-mile distance, and McAllister being the first community that experiences fast moving truck/automobile traffic that is required to slow down for safety before entering Ennis.

The county recommends the following speed zones:

From the North, maintain your recommendation to reduce the speed limit from 70 to 55 just north of N. Meadow Creek Rd.

Further reduce the speed limit (as recommended at the Post Office area) to 45-mph. Continue this 45-mph zone south to Jordan Lane (Clute's Landing).

Increase the speed limit to 55-mph for a distance of approximately 250-feet south of Jordan Lane.

Increase the speed going south to match the current 70-mph limit.

Their letter as well as letters from community members are attached.

MDT after reviewing the comments from the county and local residents would like the Transportation Commission to be aware of a few facts. Based on satellite imagery the community of McAllister has not noticeably changed over the past ten years. Madison County has seen a 12-percent increase in population from 2010 to 2020. The community of McAllister has a population of 278 people as of 2020. The communities of Ennis (917), Sheridan (757), and Twin Bridges (432) are all at least 50-percent larger than McAllister with multiple businesses on street parking and designated turn lanes in some cases. Alder (109) and Virginia City (219) are comparable in size but are still not comparable because of roadway geometry and overall development on the state highway. When comparing the county's recommendation to the existing prevailing speeds there is an approximate speed differential of 15-mph south of Jordan Lane, 25-mph between Jordan Lane and milepost 55, and 18-mph between milepost 55 and the existing 45-mph speed limit. Based on existing speeds the recommendation by the county, on average 98-percent of current drivers would be exceeding the speed limit. This equates to only 40 of the approximate 2,286 vehicles observed traveling at or below 45-mph. The county's recommendation is also about 10-mph to 25-mph below MDT's recommendation

depending on the location. Prior research shows that speed limit reductions of 10-mph reduce overall crash rates but increase fatal and injury crashes.

This area was last reviewed in 2017 and there has been a decrease in the prevailing speeds around milepost 55 by 2-mph to 4-mph. No other changes in the speed profile were observed. However, an approximately 22-percent reduction in the overall crash rate was observed. MDT does recognize that there is a slight dip in the speed profile around milepost 55, limited shoulder width, and an issue with speeding.

Therefore, we would be open to working with the community so they can install a speed feedback sign and continuing the reduced speed limit of 65-mph farther north as described in the Butte District Speed Studies – Ennis North agenda item.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 65-mph speed limit beginning at milepost 53 (straight-line station 1810+00) and continuing north to approximately 250-feet north of Rainbow Point Road (straight-line station 1913+00), a distance of about 1.95-miles.

A 55-mph speed limit beginning approximately 250-feet north of Rainbow Point Road (straight-line station 1913+00) and continuing north to approximately 47-meters (154-feet) south of the south post office approach (straight-line station 14+28), a distance of about 2,580-feet.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning approximately 47-meters (154-feet) south of the south post office approach (straight-line station 14+28) and continuing north to approximately 84-meters (276-feet) north of Meadow Creek Road (straight-line station 19+16), a distance of about 488-meters (1,601-feet).

A 55-mph speed limit beginning approximately 84-meters (276-feet) north of Meadow Creek Road (straight-line station 19+16) and continuing north to approximately 2,875-feet north of Meadow Creek Road (straight-line station 18+70), a distance of about 2,600-feet.

Begin the statutory 70-mph speed limit at approximately 2,875-feet north of Meadow Creek Road (straight-line station 18+70).

Deputy Tim Gekonski, Madison County, I'm a deputy with Madison County and a resident of Troutdale and McAllister. My home is Coachman Lane and US 287. The biggest thing I want to bring to the table is within the area of Troutdale between Jordan Lane and Rainbow Point. The school bus makes two stops on the highway and then turns on and off the highway twice at those four roads into the subdivision. The second thing, I understand the speed studies and the facts and the 85th percentile and that sort of thing, but the biggest thing in working the road what it doesn't show is the number of near misses that are viewed and the number of cars going at a higher rate of speed that are passing illegally to get around somebody making a right or left-hand turn there. Where I live I see more near misses while I'm cutting my grass than when I'm working. It is just a matter of time before something happens there.

Barbara said the recommendations by staff does not take into consideration all of the area ... (inaudible) ... we just found out that we're also going to be (...inaudible...) in the area across from the north (...inaudible...) We have a room full of homeowners who want to talk to this issue. I sent information to all of the Commissioners that indicates where we live. We also sent a letter from our County Commissioners who are familiar with our situation and our request and they unanimously approved our request. We also have pictures of populations in many of the other communities who have safe speed limits. We have a population of 150 houses in one mile and there has to be more than 250 people who live in that area. We estimate that our population is around 300. There is a whole new subdivision that

wasn't there just a few months ago and all of the recreationalists coming and going off Jordan Lane in the summer time. They have boats and campers and they are all making left-hand turns and people are coming at you at 70 mph. Our commissioners know our community and they have unanimously approved this. This is a safety issue. The travel time is cut by on half of one minute if you changed the speed limit from 70 mph to 45 mph. I don't think that is too big an "ask" for the safety of our residents.

Commissioner Sanders asked Deputy Gekonski if the issue was that people weren't complying with the speed zone as established right now. MDT studies in the past have shown that when you further reduce that speed limit, the chance for speed differentials are much higher and the chances for mishaps including fatalities are greatly increased. So even though intuitively it seems like dropping the speed limit would help here, without enforcement it actually makes it more dangerous. That is why we're struggling. We fully appreciate the Madison County Commissioners input and the folks that are gathered but our concern and what we have to look at is the speed differential and the fact that we could actually increase the risk factor on this highway by reducing the speed limit. Again kind of counter-intuitive. Can you speak to the enforcement issue because speed zones don't mean a thing? Speed signs don't mean anything without enforcement. What is law enforcement doing right now to enforce the current speed zones that our data shows are not being complied with as is?

Deputy Tim Gekonski said I won't speak on behalf of the full office. I understand what you're saying but the one point I want to bring up is what is not viewed on your traffic study because somebody is not sitting there watching. We're not going to pull somebody over for going three miles an hour over the speed limit because we'd be running around in circles all day. Where we see more of an issue is with everyone traveling at that speed, where somebody is making a right-hand or left-hand turn off the highway, people are passing on the left-hand side in a no passing zone or passing on the right-hand side and going off the roadway. That is more of a hazard that I see in that area with the number of people and the number of turns going on versus the speed. Yes, somebody can get rear-ended but if you're pulling out onto the highway to make a left-hand turn and a car is coming towards you to turn right into the same intersection, a normal driver knows that if that car is turning right then they can turn left because the car behind the one turning right is not legally allowed to pass. But that is what we're seeing more and more and more of as the traffic increase through McAllister. So it's not somebody getting rear-ended as they are turning, it is somebody taking the opportunity to pass in a no passing zone that has a greater level of serious injury or fatality.

Sarah Garland and I'm a resident of Troutdale Homeowners Association. I'm a Geotechnical Civil Engineer. I've been in this area for many years and I've seen considerable growth. All I have to say is that what Tim described about being able to turn on 287 is a huge concern. For me I understand it is more of a reaction time. I see that as people are driving the speed limit at 75 mph and they see people turning, it isn't necessarily that they are going to slow down, they are just going to go around it. We've seen it consistently over and over and over. I think it is because they don't have the reaction time to slow down and pay attention because they are going so fast. I think, as a mother and an engineer, I see that as the biggest concern in this area. I see the growth consistently becoming larger. We have a huge number of RVs and different types of campers that are constantly on this road and when you get that going with the momentum, the reaction time to be able to slow down for a resident or slow down for anything in this residential area is more difficult. Obviously you have your studies and I understand speed studies, but as Cluth Landing becomes more and more of a recreational site, I don't know if you guys consider the fact that there are campers and RVs full time down there as well as boat launching and all of the different people who have that type of vehicle within the Troutdale Association. So, yes if you look at the numbers, I understand that just a downright speed decrease

could be a concern for more fatalities but I also see an inevitable accident in our forecast if you don't make the choice to get our speeds decreased and have a safer driving environment on 287. One thing I think is essential is if we do this to have a solar sign that shows people's speed and to let them know how that speed is being registered. That would be something we would entertain even as the Troutdale Group to provide just because we believe it is so essential in the long-term that we go ahead and decrease this speed before we have more of an accident.

Barbara said we are not here to tell you individually how many times we have almost been in an accident, we are here to request the same amount of safety that is being provided for the community of Alder which has a population of 100 and they have speed limit of 35 mph. What would happen there if you raised it to 70 mph? Virginia City has a population of 100-125 and the speed limit is 25 mph. What would happen if you raised that to 70 mph? Norris has a population of 30-50 people and a speed limit of 35 mph. Harrison has a population of 100 and a speed limit of 45 mph on the outskirts, 35 mph in town. What would happen if you put the speed limit through Harrison at 70 mph? We are just asking for the same amount of safety that is provided for the other folks who live in our county.

Gary Lawrence said I live in Troutdale. I've lived there for 12 years. I would share one thing with you that I actually saw last fall. Every morning I would see the school bus trying to get out on 287. One morning I waited to see how long it took for the bus to get out onto 287. After six and a half minutes I finally gave up and left for my appointment. That is no way to treat those kids that might be late for school that might get hit by a truck. This is just common sense. So what if it takes two or three more minutes to get to Bozeman or five minutes to go to Helena, look at the lives that we're endangering by not having a realistic speed limit in this area. We are a growing little community and every other town around here as a low speed zone and we want one from you.

Commissioner Sansaver said I believe what they are asking for is not a commitment for us to reduce the speed limits, they are asking us to revisit the speed study in that area. What is the probability of us revisiting the speed study? Is this something that is fixed in? Did we just do the speed study or did we do it two years ago or five years ago? I can understand and appreciate what these community members are saying as well as I understand and appreciate what our staff says about the speed signs being reduced from 70 mph down to 55 mph. Does that increase or decrease the possibility of an accident? I would think we could handle this situation by revisiting that speed study with input from the local commissioners from this county. Is that something we are capable of doing?

Dustin Rouse said your request is to initiate a new speed study? I know the report came out in May 2022 so it's a fairly recent study. As far as the time they were actually on the ground David could speak to that. David Hireth said we got the request in 2021 and we went out and collected the data at the end of summer of 2021. Over the winter we went through the data and reviewed crashes and other information in the report and the report was then completed in May and sent out to the locals for comment. Previously we had reviewed the area in 2017 so there was about four years between the reports. Dustin Rouse said we will do what is asked of us by the Commission, however, as Dave indicated this is a fairly recent study and it's fairly similar to the previous study we did four years prior. We can do what is requested but this is fairly recent. If Madison County does not agree with the Engineering Study we completed, they are allowed to hire their own Engineering Firm and complete a speed study as well.

Barb said it comes down to whether you believe the statistics or do you believe those of us who live there and live with this every day and we're asking you for the same modicum of safety that is provided to other communities.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said we are lowering the speed limit slightly in what you're proposing, and if I understand it right you are proposing to put a digital feedback sign up as well in the Troutdale area, is that accurate? Dustin Rouse said we are proposing to put up a speed feedback sign in the location of the post office. Commissioner Aspenlieder said if we lower it, albeit not to the level the community would like, and then commit to reviewing the speed limit again in 24 month after the changes with the digital feedback sign, is that something that is satisfactory if there's a commitment to revisit it again and if we're seeing any improvement statistically.

Barbara from Troutdale Homeowners Association said I want to answer your question about deaths. So far there has been two not to mention all of the moose and other critters that we here in Montana honor and care for and all of those people who hit them in our little area because they cross there because of our creek. You know what? Those people in those cars had children and what happens to those drivers? I'm sorry but I sit here and after living here 16 years, listening to you wanting to do study after study after study, when all we're asking is such a small change. Our statistics are very, very clear and many people have worked many hours to let you know that we're not fooling around with this. We know it! We live it! We believe it! So please Commissioners, hear us today.

Commissioner Sanders asked if we could hard schedule a speed study or does it need to que up? His recommendation and potential solution was to do another speed study 24 months from now, is that possible or does it go to the end of the que and when it gets back up then it gets back up? Dustin Rouse said they could schedule it 24 months out. The speed feedback sign's location is around milepost 55.

Commissioner Sanders said in deference to our Engineers and also in deference to the community input, I think we can come to a sweet spot. I think there is a compromise point that might work that keeps us within a reasonable speed differential from our speed study and it also acknowledges that when we did the speed study we saw a slight drop in speeds between Jordon Lane and Rainbow Road because of elevated turning movements. To the deputy, I highly advocate that you guys take what we're going to do here and enforce it because without it, the fatalities and mishaps actually may increase. Enforcement is absolutely critical to this.

Commissioner Sansaver asked where the 55 mph speed zone started. Dustin Rouse said the 65 mph speed zone would now extend all the way to Ennis. We feel that would be appropriate.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for US 287 (P-13) – McAllister with the requested change of extending the 55 mph south of Jordon Lane beyond Troutdale 1 & 2. Commissioners Sansaver seconded the motion. Commissioners Frazier, Sanders, Fisher and Sansaver voted aye. Commissioner Aspenlieder voted nay.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 14: Speed Limit Recommendation Ennis West

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Ennis West to the Commission. Madison County requested MDT review the posted speed limits on MT-287 west of Ennis. There was a desire to lower the existing speed limit because of additional development. Neither local officials nor the community "find the existing speed limit configuration fitting for the environment in which it encompasses". The speed study began at the intersection of US-287 and MT-287 and continued to milepost 6. MDT contracted with Robert Peccia and Associates (RPA) to complete this speed study.

Summary: Prevailing speeds are mostly within ± 5 mph of posted speeds in both directions. The vehicles observed have a tendency to wait longer when accelerating into the higher speed zones while being slower to decelerate when entering the transitions. Crash and citation data showed limited safety or compliance concerns related to vehicle speeds.

After careful review, it is recommended that the speed transitions into Ennis from the west be generally shifted further west and south to better match the roadside environment. The roadside environment varies from rural to mixed development suburban. Furthermore, it is recommended that the 50-mph zone be removed. MDT agrees with the proposed changes by RPA.

The Madison County Board of Commissioners concurs with MDT's recommendation. Their letter is attached.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 25-mph speed limit beginning the intersection of MT-287 and US-287 (straight line station 1084+00) and continuing west to about 250-feet west of Otis Avenue (straight-line station 1076+00), an approximate distance 800-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning about 250-feet west of Otis Avenue (straight-line station 1076+00) and continuing west to just south of West Ennis Street (straight-line station 1061+00), an approximate distance 1,500-feet.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning just south of West Ennis Street (straight-line station 1061+00) and continuing west to the City Limits (straight-line station 1033+00), an approximate distance 2,800-feet.

A 60-mph speed limit beginning at the City Limits (straight-line station 1033+00) and continuing west to the existing 60/70-mph transition (straight-line station 970+00), an approximate distance of 6,300-feet.

NO CHANGE to the existing 70-mph speed limit

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Ennis West. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 15: Speed Limit Recommendation Virginia City

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Virginia City to the Commission. Madison County requested MDT review the posted speed limits on MT-287 through the communities of Virginia City and Nevada City.

The requested speed study began at the top of the Virginia City hill to the east at milepost 10 and terminated west of Nevada City at milepost 17. There was a concern about traffic coming down the hill and entering Virginia City above the posted 25-mph speed limit because of the numerous pedestrians during the summer. MDT contracted with Robert Peccia and Associates (RPA) to complete this speed study.

Summary: In general, prevailing speeds are within 5-mph of the posted 70-mph speed limit. However, there are noticeable variations in the speed profile through the towns of Virginia City and Nevada City. A 55-mph speed zone is not supported outside of

the more urbanized areas, but transitions from 70-mph to 45-mph are no longer deemed appropriate. Implementation of a 55-mph speed zone may help vehicles transition into the 45-mph speed zone especially coming down the Virginia City hill. The existing 35-mph zone to the east of Virginia City is short and does not meet the recommended minimum length. There are no step-down transitions from 45-mph to 25-mph entering Nevada City. A 35-mph step-down transition is recommended. Furthermore, the proposed transitional 55-mph zone is recommended to have a minimum length of 0.5-0.6 mile. This speed zone would terminate on a curve that has an advisory speed of 55-mph; therefore, it is recommended to extend the 55-mph zone through the curve and then begin the 70-mph speed zone.

The Madison County Board of Commissioners concurs with our recommendation. This does include the removal of a seasonal 25/35-mph speed limit through town. The 25-mph speed limit will be maintained year-round within the main section of Virginia City. The 35-mph speed limit will be maintained outside the main section of Virginia City year-round. Their letter is attached.

MDT recommends the following Speed Limits:

A 55-mph speed limit beginning at the top of the hill (straight-line station 510+00) and continuing west to the City Limits (straight-line station 387+00), an approximate distance 2.33-miles.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning at the City Limits (straight-line station 387+00) and continuing west to a point about 850-feet west of South Warren Street (straight-line station 357+50), an approximate distance 2,950-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning about 850-feet west of South Warren Street (straight-line station 357+50) and continuing west to a point 50-feet east of Cover Street (straight-line station 341+00), an approximate distance 1,650-feet.

A 25-mph speed limit beginning 50-feet east of Cover Street (straight-line station 341+00) and continuing west to a point 125-feet west of West Cover Street (straight-line station 301+50), an approximate distance 3,950-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning about 125-feet west of West Cover Street (straight-line station 301+50) and continuing west a point 300-feet east of Placer Loop Road (straight-line station 285+00), an approximate distance 1,650-feet.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning 300-feet east of Placer Loop Road (East) (straight-line station 285+00) and continuing west to a point about 1,500-feet west of Placer Loop Road (West) (straight-line station 263+50), an approximate distance 2,150-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning about 1500-feet west of Placer Loop Road (West) (straight-line station 263+50) and continuing west a point 375-feet east of Brewery Street (straight-line station 247+50), an approximate distance 1,600-feet.

A 25-mph speed limit beginning about 375-feet east of Brewery Street (straight-line station 247+50) and continuing west to a point 100-feet west of Wood (straight-line station 232+50), an approximate distance 1,500-feet.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning about 100-feet west of Wood (straight-line station 232+50) and continuing west a point 125-feet east of the Dump (straight-line station 216+50), an approximate distance 1,600-feet.

A 45-mph speed limit beginning about 125-feet east of the Dump (straight-line station 216+50) and continuing west to a point about 1525-feet west of the Dump (straight-line station 200+00), an approximate distance 1,650-feet.

A 55-mph speed limit beginning about 1525-feet west of the Dump (straight-line station 200+00) and continuing west to a point about 850-feet west of East Warren Street (straight-line station 158+50), an approximate distance 4,150-feet.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Virginia City. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 16: Speed Limit Recommendation MT 2 (P-29) – Butte

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, MT 2 (P-29) – Butte to the Commission. Butte-Silver Bow City-County submitted a request for a speed limit study on MT-2 from Harrison Avenue to the county limits at about milepost 75 due to a concern about speeds and amount of recreational bicycling in the area. The study was extended one mile into Jefferson County. An existing speed limit of 60-mph was approved in 2016.

Summary: The speed profile shows that there are three different areas within the study: Mountainous, flat and rolling, and a transitional area. The mountainous area runs from milepost 74 to approximately milepost 78 with prevailing speeds based upon the 85th percentile speed of 56-mph. The transitional section runs from approximately milepost 78 to approximately milepost 80 with prevailing speeds based upon the 85th percentile speeds of 63-mph. The rolling segment of the speed study has prevailing speeds above the posed 60-mph speed limit by about 4-mph. Although the prevailing speeds indicate appropriately set speed limits except in the mountainous terrain, roadway context indicates these speeds are elevated above what should be considered reasonable and prudent. Both the mountainous and transitional areas have increased crash rates with a majority of the crashes being associated with the curves. There was one bicyclist fatality recorded in the transitional area. Based upon the elevated crash rates and a bicyclist fatality it is advisable to introduce a 50-mph special speed zone within the mountainous segment and a 55-mph special speed zone in the transitional segment.

The City-County of Butte-Silver concurs with MDT's recommendation. Their email is attached. No comments were received from Jefferson County for the one-mile segment within their jurisdiction.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 55-mph speed limit beginning milepost 74 (straight-line station 74.00) and continuing west to a point 0.07-miles east of milepost 75 (straight-line station 74.95), an approximate distance of 0.95-miles.

A 50-mph speed limit beginning 0.07-miles east of milepost 75 (straight-line station 74.95) and continuing west to a point 0.02 of a mile east of milepost 78 (straight-line station 78.05), an approximate distance of 3.1-miles.

A 55-mph speed limit beginning 0.02-miles east of milepost 78 (straight-line station 78.05) and continuing west to a point 0.11-miles west of the

intersection with Continental Drive (straight-line station 80.40), an approximate distance of 2.35-miles.

A 60-mph speed limit beginning 0.11-miles west of the intersection with Continental Drive (straight-line station 80.40) and continuing west to the intersection with Harrison Avenue (straight-line station 83.50), an approximate distance of 3.1-miles.

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for MT 2 (P-29) – Butte. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 17: Speed Limit Recommendation
East Helena Main Street (X-25024/U5830)
East Helena**

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, East Helena Main Street (X-25024/U5830) – East Helena to the Commission. The City of East Helena requested a speed study to investigate the possibility of extending the existing 25-mph speed zone farther east. There was concern from the public about children crossing the road near the 25/35-mph speed limit transition. The study began at Prickly Pear Avenue and continued to the intersection with US 12.

Summary: Prevailing speeds along East Main Street, based on the 85th percentile speeds, are about five-mph above the posted 25-mph and 35-mph speed limits. Prevailing speeds do match with the 45-mph speed limit. Although the prevailing speeds indicate the speed limits are primarily set below the appropriate speed, roadway context indicates these speeds are appropriate or slightly elevated. The pedestrian activity in the suburban 35-mph and 45-mph segments indicate that the closest 50th and rounded down 85th percentile speed should be used when setting the speed limit. In both instances a 40-mph speed limit would be recommended. The 25-mph speed zone terminates 100-feet east of the Kalispell Avenue crosswalk which is utilized by school age children according to the community. Based on this fact it may be reasonable to further extend the 25-mph speed zone east. The 35-mph speed zone is only 900-feet long and is shorter than national recommendations for a transitional speed zone. Instituting a consistent 35-mph east of Kalispell Avenue and moving the 25/35-mph transition 100-feet farther east would be advisable.

Comments were received from Lewis and Clark County and the City of East Helena. Lewis and Clark County did not have any comments. MDT has interpreted their position of no comment as concurrence. The City of East Helena council approved at the March 15th meeting asking for the 25mph-speed limit to be extended to Oak Avenue. This would create a uniform 25-mph speed limit on Main Street within the East Helena City limits and fit with MCA 61-8-303. Both correspondences are attached.

MDT did not originally advise extending the 25-mph speed limit to Oak Avenue. The speed statistics and contextual aspects of the road did not support a major reduction in the speed limit. However, engineering judgment indicated that the 25/35-mph transition was too close to the crosswalk and the 35-mph transitional speed zone length was inadequate. Providing an adequate 35-mph transitional speed zone and a more appropriate speed limit transition point produced an appropriate but illogical proposed 2,000-foot 40-mph speed zone nearing the US 12 intersection. Further extension of the 25-mph speed limit is acceptable by MCA 61-8-303. Moving the 25/35-mph transition another 900-feet to Oak may aid drivers in slowing down

before the crosswalk at Kalispell Avenue. MDT can support East Helena's recommendation.

MDT recommends the following speed zones:

A 25-mph speed zone beginning at the intersection with Wylie Drive or the western city limits (straight-line station -27+30) and continuing to Oak Avenue or the eastern city limits (straight-line station 46+50), an approximate distance of 1.4-miles.

A 35-mph speed limit beginning at Oak Avenue or the eastern city limits (straight-line station 46+50) and continuing east to the intersection with US 12 (straight-line station 76+30), an approximate distance of 2,980-feet.

Commissioner Frazier stated that East Helena is growing and this seems appropriate.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for East Helena Main Street (X-25024/U5830) – East Helena. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed.

Agenda Item 18: Speed Limit Recommendation York Road (S-280) – Helena

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, York Road (S-280) – Helena to the Commission. Upon receiving correspondence from concerned local residents, MDT initiated a review of the speed limit on York Road after discussions with Lewis and Clark. The county agreed with conducting the study and the limits were set from the intersection with Canyon Ferry Road to milepost five.

Summary: The speed profile shows that the prevailing speeds along York Road on average match with the set speed limits. The average 85th percentile speeds and upper limits of the pace are for the most part within ± 2 -mph of the 60-mph posted speed limit. There are some areas where prevailing speeds are closer to 65-mph. The MUTCD states that the speed limit should be set within five-mph of the 85th percentile speed. However, it also allows the options to consider crashes and shoulder conditions. There is an elevated crash rate along York Road within the study area and primarily no shoulder. A 55-mph speed limit accounts for the elevated crash rates and lack of shoulder. Although there are areas where the speed limit could be increased to 60-mph maintaining a consistent speed limit helps drivers know what to expect and it is not recommended to raise the speed limit when entering a roundabout.

Helena City officials generally agree with MDT's recommendation and defers to the county for the majority of the study. "The recommended change to the posted speed is a good idea for the reasons cited along with the increase in development along York Road." They did want MDT to be aware of school age children crossing York Road around Tizer Drive and the concerns that have been voiced by parents. The city further alluded to the dangers of allowing children to cross a three-lane segment of York Road near a corner with no warning for the driver. A pedestrian path also follows York Road from Tizer Road to Herrin Road. Their email is attached.

Lewis and Clark County Officials originally had no comments until the issue of school aged children crossing York Road was brought up. A preliminary review indicated that the school aged children should be being transported across York Road by bus to and from Warren Elementary. The county after further discussion replied with "no concerns from staff." Their email is attached.

MDT was not previously aware of school aged children crossing York Road. When the subdivision on the north side of York Road was developed Tizer Drive was constructed as an emergency access road. A gate and fence were installed to discourage use by pedestrians and vehicles. As an emergency access point no pedestrian facilities were developed. Warren Elementary school's policy was to bus the students across York Road further reducing the need for pedestrian facilities at the intersection. Field inspection by MDT did reveal the fence has been damaged to allow pedestrian access to Tizer Drive.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 55-mph speed limit beginning at the intersection with Canyon Ferry Road (straight-line station 0+00) and continuing east to a point 835-feet east of the intersection with Lake Helena Drive (straight-line station 292+00), an approximate distance of 5.53-miles.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for York Road (S-280) – Helena. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 19: Speed Limit Recommendation US 212 (N-23) – Broadus

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, US 212 (N-23) – Broadus to the Commission. Powder River County submitted a request for a speed limit study to review the speed limits northwest and southeast entering Broadus. The primary concern is the truck traffic entering town. Their request resulted in an in-depth review of all the speed limits from milepost 74 to approximately milepost 81.5.

Summary: This portion of US 212 was last improved in 2004. Typical sections are comprised of two 12-foot travel lanes (one in each direction) with varying shoulder widths. Within the town of Broadus shoulder widths are approximately 9-foot with some pedestrian facilities. Outside of Broadus shoulder widths reduce to 6-foot. Average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes from 2020 on US 212 range from almost 2000 vehicles north of Broadus to an estimated 2900 vehicles south of Broadus. Within the developed area of Broadus AADT was recorded at approximately 3400 vehicles. The roadside environment to the north and south of Broadus is primarily rural and open. This begins to transition into a more urban environment around the bottom of the hill to the north of Broadus and just south of Airport Road south of Broadus. Within the main area of Broadus, development is a mixture of businesses and residential homes.

The speed profile shows that the prevailing speeds for all traffic along US 212 are for the most part above the posted speed limit. The 85th percentile speeds and upper limits of the pace are on average five-mph above the posted speed limits. Exceptions are at the speed limit transition points and around the Powder River Bridge. Although the prevailing speeds and the contextual evidence indicate appropriately set speed limits the existing special speed zones lengths are for the most part less than national recommendations. Increasing the length of the existing special speed zones to fit more with national recommendations is advisable.

The Powder River Commissioners agreed with a portion of our recommendations but recommend alterations at four locations. To the south and east of Broadus they propose a 50-mph or 55-mph speed zone extending southeast of the weigh scale because of the congestion created as well as the livestock yards and development of a

bulk propane plant in the area. They recommend extending the 30-mph speed zone farther south to more line up with the beginning of town and help boaters comply with the boat inspection station. The County Commissioners also recommend maintaining the existing 25-mph speed limit and northern 30-mph speed limit as currently posted. Their letter is attached.

Based on the comments received from the Powder River Commissioners, MDT's interpretation of their recommendation is as follows:

A 50-mph speed limit beginning approximately 30-meters (98-feet) west of MP 78 (straight-line station 331+00) and continuing east to the existing 40/50-mph speed limit transition, approximately 50-meters (164-feet) west of Rifle Range Road (straight-line station 339+10), an approximate distance of 810-meters (2,657-feet).

A 40-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 40/50-mph speed limit transition point, approximately 50-meters (164-feet) west of Rifle Range Road, (straight-line station 339+10) and continuing east to the existing 30/40-mph speed limit transition point, approximately 120-meters (394-feet) west of Jensen Avenue (straight-line station 349+00), an approximate distance of 990-meters (3,248-feet).

A 30-mph speed limit beginning at the existing location, approximately 120-meters (394-feet) west of Jensen Avenue, (straight-line station 349+00) and continuing east to the existing 25/30-mph speed limit transition, 20-meters (66-feet) east of the intersection with Wilbur Avenue (straight-line station 351+60), an approximate distance of 260-meters (853-feet).

A 25-mph speed limit beginning at the existing location, 20-meters (66-feet) east of the intersection with Wilbur Avenue, (straight-line station 351+60) and continuing east to approximately 30-meters (98-feet) west of the intersection with Cottonwood Road (straight-line station 354+90), an approximate distance of 330-meters (1,083-feet).

A 30-mph speed limit beginning approximately 30-meters (98-feet) west of Cottonwood Road (straight-line station 354+90) and continuing east to approximately 20-meters (66-feet) east of the intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 361+80), an approximate distance of 690-meters (2,264-feet).

A 40-mph speed limit beginning approximately 20-meters (66-feet) east of the intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 361+80) and continuing east to approximately 325-meters (1,066-feet) east of intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 12+10), an approximate distance of 305-meters (1,001-feet).

A 50-mph speed limit beginning approximately 325-meters (1,066-feet) east of intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 12+10) and continuing east to approximately 70-meters (230-feet) east of Rest Area and Weight Station Exit (straight-line station 29+20), an approximate distance of 1,710-meters (5,610-feet).

A majority of the speed limit changes were to lengthen the existing speed zones to more national standards. In the case of the 50-mph speed limit MDT recognizes the transition is in the middle of a hill and it may be more advisable to extend it to the top of the hill.

The weigh station and rest area are approximately at the top of the hill. After further review MDT also agrees that the developed section of Broadus begins at the

intersection of Airport Road. The existing 25-mph and 30-mph speed limit in the northern section of Broadus are 1,500-feet and 1,300-feet respectively. Speed zones are advised to be about 1,600-feet in length for speeds under 50-mph. The extension of the 25-mph speed zone was intended to locate the speed limit changes more appropriately around the stop-controlled intersection and cover the area where there are sidewalks present. A 1,600-foot proposed 30-mph transitional speed limit was then added between the proposed 25-mph and proposed 40-mph speed limits.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

A 50-mph speed limit beginning approximately 30-meters (98-feet) west of MP 78 (straight-line station 331+00) and continuing east to the existing 40/50-mph speed limit transition, approximately 50-meters (164-feet) west of Rifle Range Road (straight-line station 339+10), an approximate distance of 810-meters (2,657-feet).

A 40-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 40/50-mph speed limit transition point, approximately 50-meters (164-feet) west of Rifle Range Road, (straight-line station 339+10) and continuing east to approximately 60-meters (197-feet) west of Moorhead Road, Secondary 391, (straight-line station 344+10), an approximate distance of 500-meters (1,640-feet).

A 30-mph speed limit beginning approximately 60-meters (197-feet) west of Moorhead Road, Secondary 391, (straight-line station 344+10) and continuing east to approximately the existing 30/40-mph speed limit transition, approximately 120-meters (394-feet) west of Jensen Avenue (straight-line station 349+00), an approximate distance of 490-meters (1,608-feet).

A 25-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 30/40-mph speed limit transition point, approximately 120-meters (394-feet) west of Jensen Avenue (straight-line station 349+00) and continuing east to approximately 30-meters (98-feet) east of the intersection with Cottonwood Road (straight-line station 355+25), an approximate distance of 625-meters (2,051-feet).

A 30-mph speed limit beginning approximately 30-meters (98-feet) east of Cottonwood Road (straight-line station 355+25) and continuing east to approximately 20-meters (67-feet) east of the intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 361+80), an approximate distance of 655-meters (2,149-feet).

A 40-mph speed limit beginning approximately 20-meters (67-feet) east of the intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 361+80) and continuing east to approximately 515-meters (1,690-feet) east of intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 13+80), an approximate distance of 495-meters (1,624-feet).

A 50-mph speed limit beginning approximately 515-meters (1,690-feet) east of intersection with Neil Street and Airport Road (straight-line station 13+80) and continuing east to approximately 70-meters (230-feet) east of Rest Area and Weight Station Exit (straight-line station 29+20), an approximate distance of 1,540-meters (5,052-feet)

Commissioner Frazier said on the maps around milepost 81 on the last page, you have one that says county proposed speed zone and proposed speed zone which is our staff recommendation. I'm having a difficult time discerning any difference between the two. Are they in fact the same there? Dustin Rouse said they are. There were some slight differences between the county and our recommendation. Our recommendation is more in line with the difficult length of those zones but in general we concurred with the county and aligned with theirs other than some slight

modifications to meet national standards. The differences are on page one. Commissioner Frazier said that is where you're lengthening the 30 out to meet national standards. Dustin Rouse said yes.

Commissioner Sansaver asked if the county agreed with lengthening that out. Dustin Rouse said we believe they would be in favor our recommendation because they so closely match their recommendation other than the slight modifications. Shane Mintz said I visited with the County Commissioners after our final review of their requested changes and showed them what we came up with and they are on board with it. Commissioner Sansaver said I assumed the county was on board with the changes.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for US 212 (N-23) – Broadus. Commissioner Aspenlieder seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 20: Speed Limit Recommendation Montana 42 (P-42) – Glasgow

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Montana 42 (P-42) – Glasgow to the Commission. Valley County requested a speed study be performed on Montana 42 (MT-42) between the south double-curve approach to the Milk River Bridge and the 45-mph sign near Sullivan Park. The main concerns are within the 70-mph speed zone because of the Fort Peck Lake recreational traffic, the major intersections of Highway 24, River Drive, and the Glasgow Stock Yards, other approaches, curves, observed crashes, and high deer population. There was a desire to reduce the speed limit to 55-mph. After reviewing the area, the study was extended to encompass the area from the statutory 25-mph speed limit in Glasgow to just south of Lenz Road.

Summary: Prevailing speeds based on the 85th percentile and upper limit of the pace indicate the 35-mph and 45-mph speed zones are set low and a segment of the 70-mph speed zone is set high. However, roadway context indicates the 35-mph and 45-mph speed limits are appropriately set. Both are transitional speed limits and increasing the speed limit would be ill advised. The prevailing speeds indicate a 65-mph speed zone between the existing 45/70-mph transitions and south of the Milk River Bridge would be ideal. This does not consider the elevated crash rate which includes two fatal crashes from January 2018 through December 2020. When accounting for the crash rate it would be advisable to use the 50th percentile speed. This is on average 60-mph and 5-mph below the 85th percentile speed.

Valley County Commissioners concur with the 60-mph speed limit recommendation. Additionally, they recommend signage for truck traffic entering and leaving the stockyard. Glendive District personnel are reviewing this request. Their letter is attached.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

NO CHANGE to the 35-mph and 45-mph speed limit.

A 60-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 45/70-mph transition 200-feet south of Sullivan Park Road (straight-line station 60+00) and continuing south to a point about 1,500-feet north of Milepost 72 (straight-line station 196+00), an approximate distance of 2.58-miles.

Resume statutory 70-mph speed limit 1500-feet north of Milepost 72 heading South.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Montana 42 (P-42) – Glasgow. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 21: Speed Limit Recommendation Montana 23 (P-26) – Sidney

Dustin Rouse presented the Speed Limit Recommendation, Montana 23 (P-26) – Sidney to the Commission. MDT after communicating with Richland County initiated a speed study on Montana 23 (MT-23) between the intersection with Montana 16 (MT-16) and a point approximately one mile east of the intersection with Secondary 261 (S-261). The objective of the study was to determine if the existing 50-mph and 70-mph speed limits were appropriately set.

Summary: This segment of MT-23 was constructed in 1933 and last improved in 2015. The intersection of MT-23, MT-16, and MT-200 was reconstructed to a roundabout in 2019. MT-23 is classified as a minor arterial with typical sections comprised of primarily two 12-foot travel lanes and a varying shoulder. Shoulder widths vary from two-feet to eight feet wide. Auxiliary lanes are present near the intersection with MT-16 and east of the intersection with S-261. Average annual daily traffic volumes from 2020 range from 2,272 vehicles near the intersection with MT-16 to an estimated 2,252 at the end to the study. The AADT for commercial trucks was recorded at 286 vehicles or almost 13-percent of the traffic volumes. AADT has been relatively stable over the past five years apart from 2020. The roadside environment starts out rural with industrial land usage and minimal residential housing west of the railroad crossing. Once on the east side of the railroad tracks the land use is rural residential with some rural industrial usage. On the east side of the Yellowstone River the land use is relatively rural and open.

The speed profile indicates the existing speed limits are appropriately set. Prevailing speeds are on average set about 4-mph above the posted 50-mph speed limit and on average two-mph below the posted 70-mph speed limit. There were elevated crash rates and large segments of two-foot shoulders within the study area. This indicated it would be more appropriate to use the rounded down 85th percentile speed. There were also three intersections within the 70-mph speed zone creating dips in the prevailing speed. This is likely heavily influenced by commercial truck traffic accounting for approximately 13-percent of the traffic volumes.

The Richland Board of County Commissioners concur with MDT's recommendation but would like to see guardrail improvements. The Glendive District is currently discussing with the county how best to approach the situation. The letter from Richland County is attached.

MDT recommends the following speed limits:

NO CHANGE to the existing 50-mph speed limit.

A 65-mph speed limit beginning at the existing 50/70-mph transition point approximately 350-feet east of the intersection with CR-50 (straight-line station 44+00) and continuing east to about 100-feet east of milepost 3 at the bottom of the hill (straight-line station 155+00), an approximate distance of 2.1-miles.

Commissioner Sansaver said I will move to approve with the caveat that the Richland Board of County Commissioners continue to work with our staff in the Glendive

District on the guardrail improvements. I don't want that to appear to be part of my motion that we approve the guardrails. I want to approve the speed zone only.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Speed Limit Recommendation for Montana 23 (P-26) - Sidney. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 22: Certificates of Completion March & April 2022

Jake Goettle presented the Certificates of Completion for March & April 2022 to the Commission. We recommend approving the Certificates of Completion.

Commissioner Fisher moved to approve the Certificates of Completion for March & April 2022. Commissioner Aspenlieder seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 23: Project Awards June 9th Letting

Dustin Rouse presented the Project Awards, June 9th Letting to the Commission. We had three contracts in this letting.

Call No. 101. Yellowstone River 9 miles NE Miles City. Engineer's Estimate was \$3,233,791.00. We had five bidders on the contract. Wadsworth Brothers Construction, Inc. of Draper, UT was the low bidder at \$2,700,205.65. They were 16.5% under the Engineer's Estimate and showed no DBE participation.

Call No. 102. SF 199 Mary Jane Broadway Intersection. Engineer's Estimate was \$964,996.00. We had two bidders on the project, Knife River Corporation out of Missoula was the low bidder at \$1,214,132.04. They were 25.82% over the Engineer's Estimate and showed no DBE participation. Guideline for award is 15%, so they were outside the guideline for award.

Note: With that we did include an Engineer's Estimate Analysis and we had a response from the contractor. If you recall we let this project in February 2022 and you rejected the bid in February, so we repackaged this project and changed a couple of things slightly. One item we changed was we bid the traffic control by the day, which is the first project we've done that on, so we're going to test that out and hope it goes better. We did see a slight reduction in their bid price and we did raise our Engineer's Estimate slightly from \$800,000 to \$964,000. This project does have fairly high risk due to the location and the traffic. It is a low productivity project so that's why we're seeing the higher bid prices. Then getting two bidders on this contract really indicates the true cost of doing this project at this time.

Call No. 103. Haskell Coulee – 8 miles south of Glendive. Engineer's Estimate was \$463,456.60. We had two bidders on the contract. Strata Corporation out of Grand Forks, ND was the low bidder at \$488,756.00. They were 5.46% over the Engineer's Estimate but within guidelines for award and showed no DBE participation.

MDT staff recommends award of Call Nos. 101-103.

Commissioner Sansaver asked if we had done any work with Wadsworth Brothers Construction Company. Jake Goettle said yes we have. They recently completed or getting close to completing the Yellowstone River Bridge in Billings. They were also awarded another bridge up in the Great Falls area several years ago. Commissioner Sansaver said they were 16% under the Engineer's Estimate and you don't feel like they left anything out? Jake Goettle said we're comfortable with it. We did reach out to them and they are comfortable with their bid and didn't have any issue with what they saw on the bid.

Commissioner Sansaver moved to approve the Project Awards – June 9th Letting. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 24: Discussion and Follow-up

Director Malcolm "Mack" Long

Flooding Updates

We've had flooding around many counties. Our people have responded extraordinarily and it's been amazing to watch both the partnerships of our maintenance people, our construction people, the county people and the contracting community. We've been able to come together and jump right on it. The maintenance people have worked exceptionally long hours of hard labor and done stuff that's just short of a miracle. Even last night our contractor community jumped in, Riverside Construction paved into the night and got S-89 going into Gardner and got that bridge paved which allows us to start putting guardrail in today. So that should be open before the end of the week.

In Red Lodge most of the traffic areas have been opened and mag chloride, we'll still need to look at permanent fixes but the traffic is open and the bridges are open. We're working on 419 in Roscoe, that's where we are concentrating as well as further up the pass before our gate where we had some washouts. We've engaged a contractor to help us start looking at how to get those open. Cook City still has one-way in and out through Wyoming. We are working with WDOT to get that upper part cleared and if we get the lower part cleared, we should be able to open up the Beartooth Pass this season and allow tourists through which will help the town of Red Lodge and help the town of Cook City. The town of Gardner also has the same issue with Yellowstone National Park. The main Park Ranger there is working to try and get that entrance open. We are putting their roads back and we're trying to get the tourist traffic through because that is the life blood of those communities.

Commissioner Sansaver said he was speaking to Mr. Kailey while on our way to supper, the general public needs to know how much federal help we're getting out of this. Is this a burden on our annual budget? Is there extra money coming in from the Feds? Where is the money coming from? My estimations were around \$50 million from what I saw but I'm not an Engineer. Mr. Kailey thought it might be \$30-35 million. What are we looking at? Dwane Kailey said the way it normally works is that we'll make most of the repairs either through our State Fund with Maintenance and through our Core Program Federal Aid funding. However, FHWA has done a great job of looking through the rules and regulations and there is an opportunity for us to apply for Quick Release ER Funding and we're allowed to fund up to 10% of what we're estimating for the total cost of the repairs. We have applied to FHWA to get those funds coming and we've heard that it is highly likely we'll get those and that's a total of about \$3 million. Our initial estimate at this point in time is about \$30 million for all the repairs. Until we sit down and start figuring out what some of the more permanent fixes are going to be in the town of Red Lodge, the plan will be to apply

the \$3 million first and foremost and get that used up and then we'll use the Core Funds or State Funds as appropriate and then we will be reimbursed subsequently by ER Funding either next year or the year after.

Commissioner Sansaver said then you'll be able to supplant that money a couple of years from now. Brian Hasselbeck, FHWA, said there is one complicating bureaucracy that gets thrown in this as well, FEMA has to assess our damage and decide what they will cover and what they will not cover. If FEMA will not cover it, FHWA in looking at the work we're performing currently believes that they could reimburse for certain but they have to let FEMA assess and decide what they would cover first and then FHWA covers the remainder. Does that throw us into dealing with two different entities? Yes but that is how the process works.

Commissioner Sansaver said from what I understand we have to allow our Legislators to put the news out first before we can, is that right? Dwane Kailey said the Legislature is not involved. There may be some higher level politicians that want to make the announcement but we're not fully aware of that.

Director Long said the other flooding issue we're watching currently is up in the Flathead area. There is quite a bit of rain and water up there. We don't have the same flooding issues yet and I'll defer to Bob Vosen, District Administrator. Bob Vosen said at this point there has been nothing compromised on our system. There are a lot of local roads having some issues and our Maintenance staff is keeping in touch with the county but as of this morning I'm not aware that we have any threat to our system with the exception of the Yaak Road, which is not in Flathead County. There are some concerns with the road connecting 508 that goes up to the Yaak.

Brian Hasselback said with the Quick Release Funds it is no surprise with federal bureaucracy that a number of procedural steps have to be met. There is a three-day notification to Congress that is required. Based on the conversations that my staff and I had yesterday, we don't anticipate any concerns or issues with MDT's request but there are some steps that have to be met in order to meet the requirements including a three-day notification.

Commissioner Frazier said I've been approached by three different design consulting firms who have offered their help wondering if there was anything they could do. I deferred them to Mr. Rouse. I wanted the Commission to be aware of that. I have been approached by several in the consulting community. I thanked them for offering their services but said MDT needed to assess what was out there and if there were any needs, they would be coming out. Director Long said it has been wonderful to see the consulting community, contractors, local communities, counties and maintenance all working together. It will be on-going and there is a chance some of the permanent fixes might be design build. So hopefully they will keep their enthusiasm long enough to be able to help us.

III.A

We're in the middle of the Discretionary Grant part of this. We have applied for four Grants so far. We have a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for three more involving the Bridge Investment Program so we are working on that. In addition the Discretionary Program opened it up to anyone especially looking at local governments and tribal governments. In Montana, we at MDT have supported six Discretionary Grant applications submitted by the local governments and one by a Tribal government. So we are putting the Grants out there. If it's available, we're going to look at it.

Going forward, we worked with Montana Contractor's Association at looking at adjusting the Letting schedule for it to be more consistent. Jake Goettle said we did adjust the Letting schedule slightly to about a three-week Letting schedule. Currently

we have two Lettings a month for three or four months early in the year and then we break it out to one Letting a month and then late in the year we do two Lettings a month for a couple of months. It creates a stressful time for us and a stressful time for our contractors trying to bid projects back-to-back that quickly. So we're trying to make it more consistent through the year and go to a three-week Letting schedule. We're not losing any Lettings throughout the year, so we're maintaining the same number of Lettings that we had in the past but just making it a more consistent schedule for everybody involved.

Pending Administrative Rules and Right of Way Occupancy

Both Commissioner Frazier and Aspenlieder have been contacted by Legislators concerning what we're doing with the right of way, opening the Interstate and the state right of way occupancy and our pending Administrative Rules. I'll let Val Wilson talk a little bit about that. Val Wilson said these Administrative Rules have created quite a buzz. Really what we're doing is implementing the Senate Bill that was codified into law under Section 60-4-601, MCA, which allows occupancy by what FHWA considers "alternative uses of right of way" which is not traditionally utilities. It also allows opening for occupancy in our Interstate right of way. Right now we're in the middle of public comment. We had a public hearing yesterday and we will be filing to extend the public comment period until July 15th. In the interim we will be continuing to collect comments. We will have an Interim Transportation Commission meeting where this will be on the Agenda. Then at least one more public hearing will be noticed for the July 15th date.

Yesterday we had our first public hearing on this and the alternative uses of the right of way that were represented included Mitsubishi (they are the ones promoting this hydrogen pipeline), telecommunications, and also the Petroleum Association. The big concerns were that they needed more than a 12-foot corridor of our right of way which is interesting because generally we use most of the rest of it. So we will be preparing "frequently asked questions" and we will publish that after approval of Director early next week.

It was interesting that they were also complaining about fair market value because it is straight out of the statute that they have to pay fair market value. It's really not our rule, it's a requirement by FHWA and it's also in the statute that we're trying to implement. Then there are some other concerns regarding that they would have no reimbursement on relocation. Commissioner Aspenlieder and I have had this discussion before, that utilities have an occupancy permit and we reimburse almost all of the relocation but "alternative use" doesn't fit into that nice box of being a utility. So relocation under the current law would be that they would have to relocate if we need to expand our roadways or our Interstate. That is all I know right now. It seems to be creating quite a controversy and has resulted in at least a few calls to our Chairman and Commissioner Aspenlieder.

Commissioner Aspenlieder said I think the feedback more directly and specifically and you all know Senator Vance as well as I do and he does not mince words, he says what's on his mind. He doesn't feel like the Department has even remotely appropriately consulted him on the legislative intent which is why he is still miffed about the way this has gone. He said he has had a call letting him know what the Department intends to do but there has been no dialogue about what his intent was and how the Department is trying to meet his intent. I don't doubt that we have reached out and talked to him and he said as much but I think there is a difference in what we think we have done versus what is expected. That is probably the biggest thing to rectify. Director Long said I have been communicating with him almost weekly and I will do my best but I don't know if I will meet the bar he has set for me but I'll try. Commissioner Aspenlieder said I think it is the difference in expectation and maybe that is a point for conversation. Director Long thanked him for allowing Senator Vance to also find different avenues so he does feel heard.

Chico Update

In our discussion with Park County, they do not have any interest in taking that segment of roadway over so that leaves it on-system with our speed study recommendation in effect. With that, I'll defer to Val Wilson on the Commission's authority regarding setting speed limit lower than 25 mph. Val Wilson said we can certainly talk about this but it would have to be noticed and have to be at the next meeting. Commissioner Frazier directed it to be put on the Agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 25: Project Change Orders
March & April 2022**

Jake Goettle presented the Project Change Orders for March & April 2022 to the Commission. They are informational only.

Agenda Item No. 26: Liquidated Damages

Jake Goettle presented the Liquidated Damages to the Commission. We have one liquidated damage and it is not being disputed. This is informational only.

Agenda Item No. 27: Letting Lists

Dustin Rouse presented the Letting Lists to the Commission. They are informational only. There were two Letting Lists handed out to you. One of the lists includes the Redistribution projects which have been inserted in the last October Letting and the November Letting. We have set those in the Status Report and are set in those Letting Lists for now. They could change depending on when we get the Redistribution and depending on what happens to finish out the year.

Commissioner Sanders said I would be remiss to not do a quick call-out to Bill and his staff for the great tour yesterday. When everything goes perfectly and you're right on schedule then you know somebody did a lot of work putting it together. It was a great tour and I really enjoyed the Butte portion of the Berkeley Pit and the incredible meal last night. Thank you Bill for your great coordination.

Next Commission Meetings

The next Commission Conference Calls were scheduled for July 26, 2022 and August 23, 2022. The next Commission Meeting was scheduled for August 25, 2022 in Helena.

Meeting Adjourned

Commissioner Loren Frazier, Chairman
Montana Transportation Commission

Malcolm "Mack" Long, Director
Montana Department of Transportation

Lori K. Ryan, Secretary
Montana Transportation Commission