



## Mill Creek Highway Rural Reconstruction

# Public Open House **SUMMARY**

**Tuesday, Nov. 18**

5 to 7 p.m.  
Smelter City Senior Citizens' Center  
115 E. Pennsylvania Avenue  
Anaconda

## Project Overview

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and HDR hosted an open house to share information about the upcoming reconstruction of the Mill Creek Highway (State Highway 569), from just past mile marker 6 to mile marker 11.

The nearly five-mile project will include widening the roadway and shoulders and straightening curves to enhance safety. Currently in the design phase, the project will be delivered as a design-build through MDT's Alternative Contracting program (UPN 10473000).

## Key Takeaways

- Construction is expected to start in 2027.
- The roadway will include two 12-foot-wide lanes and 1-foot shoulders.
- Centerline rumble strips and guardrails will be installed where needed. All existing pullouts will remain.
- The S Curve area will be realigned to the west to improve roadway geometry, meaning straighter curves, better sightlines and a smoother driving experience.
- Carved trees near the S Curve area and aspen trees near mile marker 6.5 are outside construction limits and will not be affected.

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For updates and more information, contact Lisa Gray,  
HDR Public Involvement at 406-208-0551 or email, [lisa.gray@hdrinc.com](mailto:lisa.gray@hdrinc.com).



Learn more at the project website. Scan the code or visit:  
[mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolvemillcreek](http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolvemillcreek)

## Attendance

 **40**  
(approx.)

## Meeting Notifications



**Postcards:** ~3500 mailed



**News ads:**  
**Anaconda Leader**

- November 14
- November 17



### Social media posts

- November 14
- November 17



### Press release:

- November 10



### Radio ads:

KAAR-FM, KMBR-FM,  
KMTZ-FM, KXTL-AM/FM

- Nov. 12–17

## Display Boards Included



- Welcome
- Project Overview
- Vision Zero
- Project Details (including Roadway and Hydraulics)
- Project Details (including Right of Way and Environmental)
- Project Details (including Construction and Traffic Control)
- What is Design-Build
- Project Phases and Funding
- Comments Welcome
- Thank you and Contact Information
- Project Route Map (Feel free to write your comments on the map)



**MONTANA**  
Department of Transportation

# Public Feedback Summary

## Public Suggestions

### Q&A

#### Construction Schedule

- **When will construction begin?**

Construction is expected to start in 2027.

- **How many construction seasons?**

The final schedule is not yet determined, but multiple seasons are likely.

#### Project Scope and Features

- **Where does the project end?**

The project will extend from just past mile marker 6 to mile marker 11.

- **Will shoulders be added?**

Yes. The roadway will include 1-foot shoulders on each side.

- **Will rumble strips be included?**

Yes. Centerline rumble strips are expected.

- **Will guardrails be installed?**

Yes. Guardrails will be added where needed.

- **Will pullouts at the divide remain?**

Yes. All existing pullouts will remain.

- **Will the curved section shift?**

Yes. The S Curve area will be realigned to the west to improve roadway geometry, meaning straighter curves, improved sightlines, and a smoother driving experience.

#### Right of Way and Property Impacts

- **Are there private property impacts?**

Yes, impacts are expected near the S Curve area. Details will be shared as design progresses.

- **Will right of way acquisition be required in the curved section?**

Yes. Work in the S Curve area will require right of way acquisition.

#### Environmental and Cultural Considerations

- **Will trees with carvings near curves be removed?**

No. These trees are outside the construction limits and will remain.

- **Will aspen trees near mile marker 6.5 be removed?**

No. These trees are outside the construction limits and will not be affected.

#### Funding and Budget

- **What happens if the project doesn't cost the full \$19 million? Will MDT have to return the funds?**

Funding changes will follow MDT and federal guidelines. If project costs are lower than expected, MDT and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County may ask the Federal Highway Administration to approve additional work, as long as it fits within the original grant plan.

- **Access to Hunting Sites**

Maintain access to hunting sites leading into the Mount Haggin canyons. These access points extend only 40–50 yards from the road. When the main road is constructed, it should allow pull-off access without creating drop-offs. Approximately five to six access locations are expected.

- **Spring Crossing at Mile Marker 6.5 and 8.1**

A spring at mile marker 6.5 crosses the highway west to east and will be enclosed in a pipe. A pullout with a developed water source, similar to McDonald Pass, was suggested, noting its historic use by motorists to fill radiators. While this feature is not currently included in the project scope, it may be considered if funding allows.

- **Beaver Crossing at Mile Marker 8.7**

A beaver crossing location was identified at mile marker 8.7. A wildlife crossing at or near this location was suggested to address beaver and other wildlife activity. While wildlife crossings are not part of the current project scope, this idea may be considered if additional funding becomes available.

- **Interpretive Sign at Mile Marker 9.5**

Participants recommended installing an interpretive sign about the Continental Divide near mile marker 9.5, at the existing pullout close to the divide.

## Next Steps

- Incorporate public feedback into design.
- Continue environmental and right of way reviews.
- Share updates via the website and email list.
- Prepare updates to the draft design plan.

*Thank you to everyone who attended and shared feedback. Your input helps shape the project.*

