



# NEWSLINE

Montana Department of Transportation  
mdt.mt.gov



December 2020

## Keeping Good Roads Good in 2020 and Beyond

As 2020 comes to a close, MDT looks back on another year. This was an unprecedented year—to say the least—but MDT takes great pride in knowing that the department continued to do the most with the resources available to be good stewards of Montana’s statewide transportation infrastructure. This special section includes:

- Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) Method Update (Missoula and Billings districts)
- Engineering a Better Interchange: Broadus Interchange—Miles City (Glendive District)
- Collaboration & Overcoming Challenges: North of Kiowa—North (Great Falls District)
- Growing to Fit Future Needs: Rouse Avenue—Main to Oak (Butte District)
- New Tools & Resources for the Traveling Public

**Special Section continued on Pages 3-5...**

*(Pictured below, from left to right: Completed Broadus Interchange in Miles City, Mont.; Work on the Clark Fork River Bridge near Trout Creek, Mont.; November construction on the Yellowstone River Bridge segment of Billings Bypass Project in Billings, Mont.)*



## MDT’s Rail-Highway Safety Program (Section 130)

Montana has nearly 3,300 miles of rail track, and 3,000 roadway/railroad crossings across the state. Railroad crossings are classified either as public or private, and Montana has 1,367 public crossings. Of those public crossings, 493 have some type of active warning devices such as gates and lights, with the remaining having passive warning devices consisting of signing only. Although only about a third of public crossings have active warning devices, these crossings generally have higher traffic and account for approximately 80% of the traffic at public crossings. Montana averages over ten collisions at public railroad crossings each year, including approximately three injury collisions and almost two fatal incidents annually (based on a ten-year average).

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) manages the Rail-Highway Safety Program—also known as the Section 130 Program. MDT is allocated \$3 million of federal funds annually under this program which is 90% federally funded and 10% state or locally funded. These funds are available for public railroad crossings on the local or a state highway system. MDT currently pays the 10% match regardless of roadway ownership, so there is no match requirement from local governmental entities when a project is identified on their routes.

*Continued in the Safety Section on Page 8...*



## Federal Surface Transportation Program Status

As calendar year 2020 comes to a close, MDT has received full funding for FY 2021 and is on track to deliver all planned projects and programs, even amidst the uncertainty caused by global events. A full one-year extension of the FAST act through September 2021 was passed by congress and signed by President Trump in September. While this extension does provide some stability, there continues to be uncertainty about the timeline on the passage of a multi-year transportation re-authorization. Additionally, a COVID-19 relief package was signed by the President that will benefit Montana with additional funding for highways, continued CARES Act funding for transit, and additional funding for aviation and passenger rail service (Amtrak). COVID-19 funds will need to be obligated by September 30, 2024, and forthcoming guidance will help determine how to put dollars to the best use to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 in Montana. MDT continues to support Montana’s congressional delegation in its efforts to protect and represent rural state transportation needs and continued funding for transportation.

## NEWSLINE SUBSCRIPTION UPDATES

**Did you know?** The Newsline is available by both mail (print) and email (electronically).

Please contact Lauren Eichenfels, Newsline Editor, to add or update your subscription preferences.

➤ By email: [leichenfels@mt.gov](mailto:leichenfels@mt.gov)

➤ By phone: 444-7614

***\*Please leave a voicemail with your name, phone number, and best time of day to reach you to update your subscription preferences or information.***

## New MCS Division Administrator

**B**rad Marten is MDT's new Motor Carrier Services (MCS) Division Administrator. Brad was born and raised in Montana, graduating from Power High School, attending MSU Bozeman, and graduating from U of M with a Bachelor Degree in Business Management, then earning a Master's from George Mason in Transportation, Planning, Operations and Logistics. He has 21 years working with MCS and has served Montana in many capacities from the military to search and rescue.



*Brad Marten, MDT MCS Division Administrator*

Contact Brad at 444-7312 or [bmarten@mt.gov](mailto:bmarten@mt.gov).

## New Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

**K**aren Grosulak-McCord is MDT's new Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. She will serve as the contact for bicycle and pedestrian safety information, assist with design standards for bicycle/pedestrian facilities, supply signs for cycling events, provide bicycle touring information, and coordinate training of MDT and local staff in bicycle and pedestrian facility design. Hailing from Oregon, Karen joins the department with a background in geography, travel and tourism, and communications/marketing in public education.



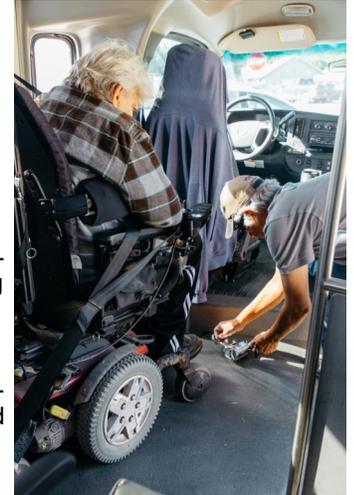
*Karen Grosulak-McCord, MDT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator*

Contact Karen at [kgrosulakmccord@mt.gov](mailto:kgrosulakmccord@mt.gov) or 444-9273.

## Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly (TransADE)

**W**hen the 2021 Legislative Session commences in January, many new bills will be introduced. Along with these new bills, existing programs across the state will be scrutinized to determine their effectiveness and whether they should continue or their funding be re-allocated to other needed services.

One such program is TransADE. During the 2001 Legislative Session, a new bill was introduced that brought state funding for the first time to transit in Montana. This bill, once signed into law, became known as Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly, or TransADE. MDT was designated as the steward of these funds to ensure they were equitably spread among Montana communities to assist in supporting transportation to the disabled and elderly citizens of our state. The TransADE program has been a great success over the years by providing Montana communities that serve the elderly and disabled additional funds to meet unmet needs.



### ***Did you know?***

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020, 25% of all rides provided were to the elderly and disabled. Out of 3,667,064 total rides, Montana transit operators provided over 907,000 rides to elderly and disabled citizens to meet medical, nutritional and employment needs. ***(Picture above right shows a passenger being assisted in boarding CSKT Transit in northwestern Montana)***

The bill has evolved over the past 20 years with different program requirements as well as different funding sources. However, one thing that has not changed is the importance of this program to the disabled and elderly citizens of Montana. Transit systems in Montana need this state funding to maximize their federal funds. By maximizing these federal dollars, transit systems can provide additional rides to the disabled and elderly citizens and assist them in getting to essential lifeline services.

Transportation is one of the biggest challenges for the aging population. Programs like TransADE provide much-needed support to the aging communities and allows them to continue to be active well into their retirement years. If you have any questions or need additional information related to the TransADE Program, please contact David Jacobs at [dajacobs@mt.gov](mailto:dajacobs@mt.gov).

## New Grants Bureau Chief

**D**avid Jacobs was recently named the Grants Bureau Chief for MDT. David graduated from Montana State University, and began his career with MDT in 1998. He has held several positions, most recently the Transit Section Supervisor, before accepting the Grants Bureau Chief position in the Rail, Transit & Planning Division.

Contact David at [dajacobs@mt.gov](mailto:dajacobs@mt.gov) or 444-9192.



*David Jacobs, MDT Grants Bureau Chief*

# CM/GC Method Update from MDT

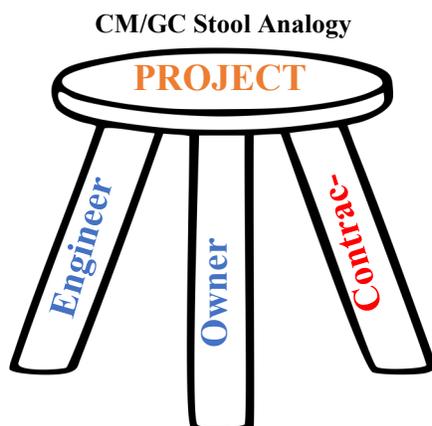
In 2017, MDT received conditional legislative approval to use the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) method for the delivery of transportation projects. At this time, MDT has successfully completed one pilot project and has three additional projects in various stages of development for delivery with this new method. While MDT utilizes a variety of tools to deliver the highway program, this added alternative contracting method has proven to be a valuable means for successfully constructing robust solutions on complex projects. The CM/GC method is founded on collaboration and depends on an expanded project team, which provides an exciting opportunity for engineers and contractors to work together and bring additional perspective to these projects.

Describing this alternative contracting method in a bit more detail, CM/GC is defined as follows:

The CM/GC project delivery method allows an Owner to engage a Construction Manager during the design process to provide constructability input. During the design phase, the Construction Manager provides feedback regarding construction practices, potential risks, pricing, and scheduling to help design a more robust project. After design is complete, and both the Owner and Construction Manager can agree on a price, a contract for construction services is enacted, and the Construction Manager becomes the General Contractor.

As one might guess, teamwork is an integral part of successful CM/GC projects. In fact, the CM/GC concept is often illustrated as a three-legged stool, where the Owner, Engineer, and Contractor each play a fundamental role in supporting project goals and completion.

MDT has developed a formal project delivery selection process to identify if CM/GC delivery (or another method like Design-Build or Design-Bid-Build) is suitable and advantageous for a specific project. Through this guided process, MDT identified the Clark Fork River Bridge – 1 Mile Northwest of Trout Creek as the agency's first CM/GC project. This project was intended to rehabilitate the large Highway 200 bridge over the Clark Fork River near the community of Trout Creek. MDT, in partnership with general contractor Kiewit Infrastructure Company and design consulting firm HDR, Inc., recently completed construction of this project in the fall of 2020. There were numerous aspects of this project that made it an excellent candidate for CM/GC delivery, including the challenges associated with maintaining traffic across the bridge throughout construction and the potential to use innovative construction techniques and materials to address the issues with this structure.



Primary work on this 1,000+ foot-long structure included a full-depth deck replacement, which was further complicated by the limited availability of an efficient detour in the area, and the high number of vehicles that use this portion of Highway 200. The expanded project team worked collaboratively through the preconstruction phase to develop a highly functional and cost-effective project plan. Ultimately, the existing bridge deck was replaced using innovative, full-width concrete panels installed under a full-closure scenario. Kiewit designed and fabricated a specialized cart for panel placement specific to this structure intended to minimize construction loads on the bridge. The bridge was closed to the travelling public on June 1 and opened to single lane traffic on July 10. Single lane

traffic opened three days prior to the anticipated bridge opening date. In general, construction went extremely well, and the construction team demonstrated a tremendous level of efficiency and safety. Check out the following video related to the Trout Creek bridge project for more information on the construction approach and MDT's Bridge Management Program.

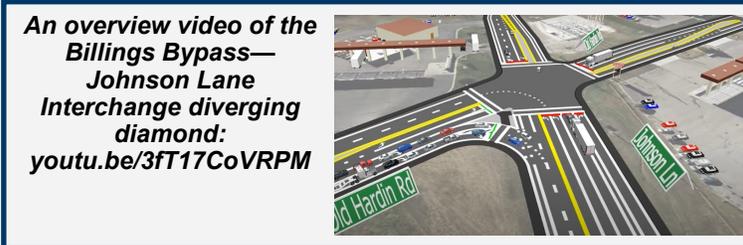


MDT has identified Salmon Lake as the Department's second CM/GC project. This project includes reconstruction of Highway 83 adjacent to the lake. It will be challenging from a traffic control perspective and include numerous geotechnical structures to address slope stability issues. Kiewit Infrastructure Company has been selected to provide preconstruction services on this project with HDR, Inc. acting as the Engineer of Record. The project team is currently in the early phases of design and intends to develop 30% plans by the end of 2020. Construction is scheduled to start in 2022.

Billings Bypass – Johnson Lane Interchange was formally selected for CM/GC delivery as MDT's third pilot project.



Planned work includes construction of Montana's first diverging diamond interchange at the intersection of Johnson Lane and Interstate 90 as a part of the larger Billings Bypass project. Granite Construction Company, in joint venture with LHC, Incorporated (GC/LHC), has been selected to provide preconstruction services with DOWL Consulting providing design engineering services. Design development is in full swing with the project team currently working towards 60% plans. In support of and accordance with the Montana Partnering Field Guide developed in conjunction by MDT and the Montana Contractor's Association, the project team is also actively participating in formal partnering as part of the preconstruction phase of this project. Construction of the new Johnson Lane Interchange is currently scheduled for 2022.



For the department's fourth pilot project, MDT has selected a multiple bridge replacement project to systematically address 11 aging timber structures on State Primary Route 57 near Lewistown. The project (MT-200 Bridges – Lewistown Area) is in the planning stage, and MDT is now in the process of procuring services for design engineering (Design Consultant) and construction management (Contractor). The preconstruction process will be initiated at the time all collaborating entities have been identified.

Cont. on next page...

## **CM/GC Method Update (Cont. from page 3)**

Thus far, CM/GC has proven to be a viable and valuable tool for delivering improvements to Montana's transportation system. This unique delivery method has allowed the Department to develop comprehensive and well-engineered project plans to address some of MDT's most challenging construction work. MDT expects to successfully deliver the allowed four CM/GC pilot projects and seek full authority to use the Construction Manager/General Contractor delivery method on applicable future projects.

Are you interested in learning more about the newest tool in MDT's alternative contracting toolbox? More information is available on MDT's Alternative Contracting webpage: [mdt.mt.gov/business/contracting/alternative.shtml](https://mdt.mt.gov/business/contracting/alternative.shtml). Also, feel free to reach out to Alternative Contracting Section Supervisor, John Pavsek (444-6213, [jpavsek@mt.gov](mailto:jpavsek@mt.gov)), for CM/GC questions and comments.

## **Engineering a Better Interchange: Broadus Interchange – Miles City**

**M**DT's Broadus Interchange Project represents a community-driven solution to reduce traffic congestion, while improving operation and safety of the existing I-94 interchange. Construction began in spring 2019 and was completed in November 2020. Eastbound and westbound bridges crossing South Haynes Avenue were demolished and reconstructed to increase capacity and bring them up to current design standards, and two roundabouts were constructed at the ramp termini. The south roundabout is the first five-legged roundabout constructed by MDT to perpetuate the Steel Street intersection with Haynes Ave—a design solution that prioritized safety while minimizing impacts to area business owners. Roundabouts are proven to effectively reduce traffic congestion and improve safety, making them part of MDT's engineering emphasis of the Vision Zero goal: zero deaths and zero serious injuries on Montana roadways.

In September, a horse statue commissioned by the City from local sculptor Erin Thormodsgard was installed at the center of the roundabout, standing as a fitting symbol of the importance of this project and the growing community the new interchange will serve for years to come. For more information on this project, visit [mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/broadus/](https://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/broadus/).



*Completed Broadus Interchange roundabout in Miles City, Mont.*

## **Collaboration & Overcoming Challenges: North of Kiowa - North**

**M**DT's North of Kiowa - North Project is a full reconstruct with new alignment along the US-89 corridor north of Kiowa and bordering the east side of Glacier National Park. Construction was entirely within the borders of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and required close coordination with tribal inspectors to ensure no cultural-sensitive areas were inadvertently disturbed.

This location presented a number of unprecedented challenges from the start in November 2018. The biggest came after completion of the large 2:1 cut slopes, when layers of glacial till created instability and slides. Mitigating the slope failure took months of research and collaboration between the contractor, Blackfeet Tribe, and MDT to identify the best procedure. Weather presented another challenge. An elevation of 5,600 feet brought extended and unexpected winter weather (i.e. four feet of overnight snowfall in September 2019) and winds up to 90 mph, severely limiting the typical season for construction operations.

Despite the unforeseen forces of nature, slopes were stabilized and the project was able to reach about 90% completion by the end of 2020. Rumble strips and a seal and cover will be completed by the end of summer in 2021. For questions regarding this project, contact the Engineering Project Manager Joe Grosswiler at 873-8624 or [jgrosswiler@mt.gov](mailto:jgrosswiler@mt.gov).

*Pictured at right, from top to bottom: Slope failure presented issues early on in the North of Kiowa—North Project; Successful mitigation of the slope failure after months of collaboration and research*



## Growing to Fit Future Needs: Rouse Avenue – Main to Oak

**M**DT’s Rouse Avenue – Main to Oak Project marked important reconstruction of Bozeman’s busy and vital thoroughfare of Rouse Avenue. After years of rapid growth in the Gallatin Valley – and with more anticipated – the infrastructure of Rouse Avenue needed several upgrades to accommodate the growing community. This project was designed to widen almost a mile of Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Oak Street, while including vehicle turn lanes and increased lane capacity, bicycle travel lanes, and sidewalk and utility upgrades. These elements of reconstruction will increase street capacity, creating better, safer traffic flow and access to Bozeman’s vibrant downtown corridor for motorists and non-motorized travelers.

Road work was substantially completed in November 2020, and Rouse Avenue reopened to two-way travel from Main Street to Oak Street. Several weeks of finishing work remain, such as landscaping and sidewalks, that will be completed in spring 2021. For more information on this project, visit [mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/rouseoakmain/](http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/rouseoakmain/).



Construction in 2020 on Rouse Avenue in Bozeman, Mont.

## NEW Tools & Resources for the Traveling Public

### NEW Montana Bridge Load Posting Program

**B**ridge load posting is a matter of public safety and will help MDT safeguard vital transportation infrastructure. Based on recent safety-based bridge engineering evaluations, new vehicle types, and updated mandates from FHWA, new load postings will indicate the maximum amount of weight that can legally cross a bridge for different vehicle types. A posted bridge is safe to use, but the weight of certain vehicles must be limited accordingly to prevent overload and damage, maintain integrity of the bridge, and safeguard bridge longevity.

Visit [mdt.mt.gov/business/contracting/bridge/loadrating/load-posting-program.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/business/contracting/bridge/loadrating/load-posting-program.shtml) to learn more about this program and to access the Load Post Map and program brochures.



### MDT’s Active Projects Map

Access to statewide project information at your fingertips

[mdt.mt.gov/projects](http://mdt.mt.gov/projects)

Scan the QR code below using your mobile device to access the mobile-friendly map:



Helena Maintenance crew at work in Montana City, Mont.



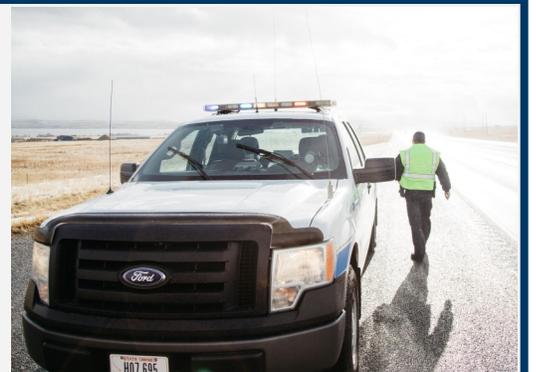
**VISION ZERO**  
zero deaths - zero serious injuries  
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



### NEW Automated Routing System (ARS) from MCS

**M**DT’s MCS Division will be launching a new Automated Routing System (ARS) in early 2021. This system will allow MDT staff and external customers the ability to enter size, weight and dimensions, along with a “to and from” destination point. The ARS will interface with MDT’s traveler information page and Structure Management System generating routes that avoid weight restricted bridges, roads, structure clearance conflicts, and construction zones. The system will eventually have the ability to notify the carrier and driver when the truck goes off route.

For more information, contact Eric Belford at 444-6139 or [ebelford@mt.gov](mailto:ebelford@mt.gov).





# Fans Don't Let Fans Drink and Drive—Drive Sober and Buckle Up for the Super Bowl



**S**uper Bowl Sunday (February 7, 2021) is what all fans have been waiting for since the start of football season. While we don't know the teams playing yet, the excitement is rising and many will gather to watch the game with family and friends. If your celebration involves alcohol, remember even one drink can impair your judgement. Make sure your pre-game plans include arranging for sober transportation.

As part of the statewide, year-round effort to curb impaired driving, MDT supports law enforcement with grants to increase patrols as part of the Strategic Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP). The Montana Highway Patrol and local law enforcement will be out with additional patrols on Montana's roads looking for impaired drivers and to encourage all drivers to buckle up and to drive sober as they celebrate the game. (See call out box of dates to remember to the right)

You can do your part for a safe weekend. Plan ahead. Be honest with yourself. You know whether you'll be drinking. If you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home.

Here are some tips as you make game day plans for yourself and your loved ones:

- Plan a safe ride home before the celebration – designate a sober driver and give that person your keys.
- Expect your friends and family to have a sober driver and let them know it.
- Provide safe transportation for your party guests—as well as non-alcoholic beverages.
- Call 9-1-1 to report an impaired driver.
- The best defense against a drunk driver is wearing a seatbelt – everyone, every trip, every time; there is no good excuse not to.

MDT encourages drivers to drive sober, buckle up and avoid unsafe behaviors this weekend and every day of the year, and to make Vision Zero their goal. For more information, please visit [mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/](http://mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/) or contact Janet Kenny at 444-7417 or [jakenny@mt.gov](mailto:jakenny@mt.gov).

## Montana Traffic Safety Dates to Remember

⇒ **December 16, 2020 – January 1, 2021**

Holiday Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over – Law Enforcement Mobilization

**Note:** A total 497 overtime hours were worked during the FFY 2019 Winter Mobilization by 15 law enforcement agencies participating in the STEP program. 1,062 citations and warnings were issued during this mobilization. For more information, contact Chad Newman, [chnewman@mt.gov](mailto:chnewman@mt.gov) or 444-0856.

⇒ **February 7, 2021**

Super Bowl LV—Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk

⇒ **March 17, 2021**

St. Patrick's Day—Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving

## 2020 in Review: Montana's CPS Program

**T**he Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program is fundamental in minimizing deaths and injuries to children on Montana's roads. Over 300 certified CPS technicians and instructors are available throughout the state at checkup events, permanent inspection stations, and via appointments – in person and virtually – to ensure children are in the correct car seat, seats are properly installed and used, and seats are registered with manufacturer to ensure caregivers receive important safety updates.

The COVID-19 pandemic created numerous challenges in 2020, and the number of in-person CPS events held is lower than previous years. However, the Montana CPS team remains committed to assisting caregivers, and the program has continued to operate by consulting with state and local health authorities and following practices to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19 suggested by the National Child Passenger Safety Board.

Communities throughout the state, from Hamilton to Plentywood, hosted CPS events during the summer months leading into National CPS week which NHTSA sponsored from September 20-26, 2020. Dedicated CPS technicians worked to help keep children safe on our roads. In addition to checking seats, technicians were able to provide families in need with new car seats. Along with seats provided by numerous traffic safety partners including Toyota, AAA and many other local resources, the Montana Department of Transportation was able to provide over 500 seats to technicians statewide through the NHTSA grant.

To find a CPS technician and inspection station, go to [cert.safekids.org/](http://cert.safekids.org/) or [nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#installation-help-inspection](http://nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#installation-help-inspection). If you are interested in becoming a certified CSP technician, visit [cert.safekids.org/become-tech](http://cert.safekids.org/become-tech).

For more information, contact Erin Root at 444-0809, or [eroot@mt.gov](mailto:eroot@mt.gov).



CPS technicians participated in a training and public check up event in Billings, Mont. in August.

# Every Student Deserves a Safe Ride to School

As the 2020-2021 school year continues, school bus safety should be top of mind for all Montanans. According to the American School Bus Council, students are approximately 70 times more likely to get to school safely when taking a school bus than when traveling by car. The risks of taking the bus are still real; however, as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that 126 occupants were killed in school transportation vehicles between 2008 and 2017 (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/school-buses>). Motorists in Montana can reduce the risk of school bus-related crashes by being aware of and following all school bus laws.

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 61-9-402 dictates that cars in either lane of traffic, including on highways, must stop at least 30 feet from a school bus that has its amber or red lights activated. Oncoming traffic separated by a raised median is not required to stop. Some school buses include stop-arms, which are stop-sign shaped “arms” that flash and extend from the bus while children are boarding, exiting, approaching, or moving away from the bus. Paired with the bus’s flashing amber-to-red lights, these arms play a crucial role in alerting motorists to the bus driver’s intent to stop and load/unload students, but it is ultimately dependent on motorists to keep children safe.

This winter, you can do your part to ensure Montana’s students get the safe and comfortable ride to school they deserve.

- Stay alert and focused behind the wheel – mobile devices, passengers, and fatigue can take your eyes off the road.
- Use proper vehicle lights when weather or time of day limit visibility, especially in the mornings and evenings.
- Keep your vehicle in good repair with tires and brakes that allow safe stopping.
- Be extra mindful near schools, bus stops, and all intersections during school hours.
- Never pass a school bus when its amber or red lights are flashing.

Learn more about MDT’s goal of Vision Zero and what you can do to be safe on our roadways at [mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/people/](http://mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/people/).



### Safe Driving Around School Buses

You should allow a *minimum* of 30 feet between your vehicle and a school bus making a passenger stop. But what might 30 feet look like?

- 2 Car Lengths
- 2.5 Snow Plows
- 3 Bison Lengths
- 22.5 Road Cones

## Transit and Highway Traffic Safety Grant Applications Due March 1, 2021

Applications will only be accepted through the Montana Grant and Loans web-based system: [funding.mt.gov/index.do](http://funding.mt.gov/index.do)

Register in the system and apply when the opportunity becomes available on January 1, 2021.

For information regarding:  
**Transit grants**, contact Eric Romero at 444-7645 or [eromero@mt.gov](mailto:eromero@mt.gov).

**Highway Traffic Safety grants**, contact Kevin Dusko at 444-7411 or [kedusko@mt.gov](mailto:kedusko@mt.gov).

## Grant Applications for Recreational Trails Program Due February 1, 2021

**Recreational Trails Program:** The RTP is a federally funded grant program with about \$1.5 million awarded annually to construct or maintain motorized and non-motorized trails or trail-related facilities, purchase trail equipment, and development trail education or ethics programs

Applications for the Recreational Trails Program opened on November 2, 2020 and are due by 1 p.m. on February 1, 2021. They can be submitted online: [funding.mt.gov/index.do](http://funding.mt.gov/index.do).

# Preparing Your Teen Driver

Is your teen getting ready to drive? They likely have been dreaming about this milestone for months, signifying a rite of passage to adulthood and independence. But is your teen ready? Here are some things to consider when preparing your teen to drive.

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for teens 15 to 18 years old in the United States. Here in Montana, there have been 292 teen fatalities over the last ten years. Of those, 54% were unrestrained. Additionally, teens account for over 4,500 crashes each year on Montana roadways.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is conducted by Montana's Office of Public Instruction every other year. This survey provides an update of teen driving behaviors as self-reported by students in Montana schools. During 2019, no statistical changes occurred from 2017. However, there are still students who never or rarely wear a seat belt, some use alcohol or ride with a driver who has, and a significant number of teens are on their phone while driving. See the graph below.

## 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results Montana – 10-year Trend Analysis Report

Percentage of students who:

Injury and Violence	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	10-year Trend	Change from 2017-2019
Rarely or never wore a seat belt when riding in a car	13.1	11.2	10.1	9.5	7.8	7.5	Decreased	No change
Rarely or never wore a seat belt when driving a car			11.4	8.2	8.7	7.3	Decreased	No change
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days	28.8	26.1	24.5	23.0	19.8	19.1	Decreased	No change
Drove when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days			12.6	10.9	7.6	7.1	Decreased	No change
Texted or e-mailed while driving a car during the past 30 days			55.8	54.6	54.2	53.3	No change	No change
Used the Internet or Apps on their cell phone while driving						45.9		

\*To view the full YRBS, see [Youth Risk Behavior: opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey](http://Youth Risk Behavior: opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey)

Considering the risks, driving is a big responsibility. Make sure your teen feels empowered to enforce rules for all passengers in the car:

- Always buckle up
- Use no alcohol or drugs
- Slow down
- Hang up the phone

Teens should follow these rules, not only as drivers but as passengers. Communicate with your teen about how dangerous driving can be because of, not only their behavior, but the behaviors of other drivers. Driving is a privilege. Teens should respect the privilege and be aware of the dangers and consequences of risky behavior.

For more information, visit [nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving](http://nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving) or contact Sheila Cozzie at [scozzie@mt.gov](mailto:scozzie@mt.gov) or 444-7301.

# MDT's Rail-Highway Safety Program (Cont. from page 1)

Local governments and private citizens frequently ask about funding private crossings and quiet zones. Section 130 funds are ineligible for both purposes.

Annually, MDT conducts an inventory of approximately 1/3 of the public crossings across the state. This inventory, along with crash data, is utilized to identify locations for safety improvements. MDT also solicits railroads for projects to upgrade existing signal systems with newer technology. The railroad provides a cost share on these types of projects.



Railroad crossing in Livingston, Mont.

MDT has a 50/50 program allowing local governmental entities or railroads to request signalization of public grade crossings not yet identified for safety improvements under MDT's regular annual program. The governmental entity or railroad must be able to fund 50% of the project. Only four projects are allowed annually.

If a local governmental entity has a concern with a public crossing, they should contact MDT's Rail-Highway Safety Manager at 444-7247 or email [jalt-hof@mt.gov](mailto:jalt-hof@mt.gov) to discuss their concerns and availability of funding.



Railroad crossing in Avon, Mont.

## NHTSA Observes Inaugural National Pedestrian Safety Month

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) designated October 2020 as the first-ever National Pedestrian Safety Month, making pedestrian safety the focus of the month as part of its continuing efforts to improve safety for vulnerable road users.

"At some point in the day, we are all pedestrians – especially right now, when everyone wants to get outside for some fresh air," said NHTSA Deputy Administrator James Owens. "Everyone has a role to play in ensuring pedestrian safety. We must keep working to reduce pedestrian deaths from traffic crashes and this first-ever Pedestrian Safety Month will help save lives in communities across the country."

Read more in the September 29, 2020, press release from NHTSA: [nhtsa.gov/press-releases/national-pedestrian-safety-month-october](http://nhtsa.gov/press-releases/national-pedestrian-safety-month-october)

# Don't Be in the Dark About Non-Motorized Travel Safety!

Montana's winter season paired with daylight savings means longer dark conditions and limited visibility. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), over 30% of the nation's pedestrian fatalities occur between 6 P.M. and 8:59 P.M. from the months of September to February. Additionally, there has been a national increase in pedestrian traffic due to COVID-19, making driver and pedestrian vigilance even more important.

Pedestrians can reduce their risk of injury during dark hours by using a flashlight and making sure they are wearing reflective materials such as safety vests, reflective strips on jackets, backpacks, shoes, or even a reflective bracelet to alert drivers to their presence. This small precaution can be the difference between a driver knowing a pedestrian is there and not seeing them at all. In any season, pedestrians should stay alert at all times by avoiding distraction from electronic devices and being vigilant when walking near driveways and through parking lots. Drivers can do their part by recognizing that every intersection is a crosswalk, whether marked or not, and by slowing down and preparing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks well ahead of the crosswalk markings. Being extra watchful for walkers and mobility device users this winter will help keep Montanans safe on our roads and sidewalks.

MDT encourages everyone to stay safe as pedestrians throughout the year and to keep enjoying the benefits of non-motorized travel! Additional pedestrian safety resources can be found at [mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/bikeped/](http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/bikeped/), or by contacting MDT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at [mdtbikeped@mt.gov](mailto:mdtbikeped@mt.gov).



**Pedestrians: Carry a flashlight and wear reflective gear at night to make yourself more visible to motorists from greater distances.**

## Winter Travel Resources

Winter has arrived in Montana! Part of smart winter driving includes knowing weather and road conditions before venturing out on the highway. MDT has the tools to help you plan ahead for current weather conditions so you can reach your destination safely. MDT's Travel Information website and mobile app provide up-to-date information including road conditions and incidents, so you can judge conditions for yourself by viewing the many webcams MDT has in place around the state.

No matter your travel destination or mode of transportation, you can plan the best route to get you there with MDT's travel resources.

To access the MDT Traveler Information web page—including the interactive Travel Info map and information on downloading the MDT TravInfo mobile app—scan the QR Code on the right with your mobile device or visit [mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/](http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/). Travelers can also call 511 from anywhere in state.



## Don't Crowd the Plow!

While driving, be on the lookout for snowplows and give the operators room to work. Many plows are hit by private vehicles each winter. This can cause serious harm to travelers and their vehicles, plus the plow truck and plow operator are taken out of service immediately following the incident.

Drive safely this winter and keep these tips in mind:

- Don't pass a plow when the TowPlow is deployed. The operator will periodically rotate the TowPlow back in line with the truck to allow vehicles to pass.
- Be aware that, where there is one plow working, others may be nearby. The snow cloud created by one plow may obscure presence of additional plows in adjacent lanes.
- When approaching a snowplow from the rear, reduce speed immediately.
- When approaching an oncoming plow, don't crowd the centerline.
- Be patient. Plow operators know where they can pull over to let vehicles pass, but remember, the road in front of the plow is likely not as clear as the road behind it.

Find more plow safety information and winter driving tips at [mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/people/winterdriving.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/people/winterdriving.shtml).



# Submit Your Research Ideas: 2021 FFY Research Projects and 2022 FFY Solicitation

**M**DT is currently soliciting for research ideas for the 2022 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY). A “Stage 1: Research Idea” form is **due by March 31, 2021**. You can subscribe to the MDT Research Solicitation listserv (*see the second to last listserv form here: [mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/registration.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/registration.shtml)*) to receive notice of MDT’s annual solicitation for research ideas.

For FFY 2021, the following projects were moved forward to the Technical Panel stage:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Based Tool to Estimate Contract
- Effective Wildlife Fences through Better Functioning Barriers at Access Roads and Jump-Outs
- Exploration of UHPC Applications for Montana Bridges
- Feasibility of Non-Proprietary Ultra-High Performance Concrete (UHPC) for Use in Highway Bridges in Montana
- Safety Evaluation of Sinusoidal Centerline Rumble Strips

For more information on these projects and the solicitation process, please visit the MDT Research Solicitation web page at [mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/solicit.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/solicit.shtml), or contact Susan Sillick at [ssillick@mt.gov](mailto:ssillick@mt.gov) or 444-7693.

## Historic Airway Beacons Under New Ownership

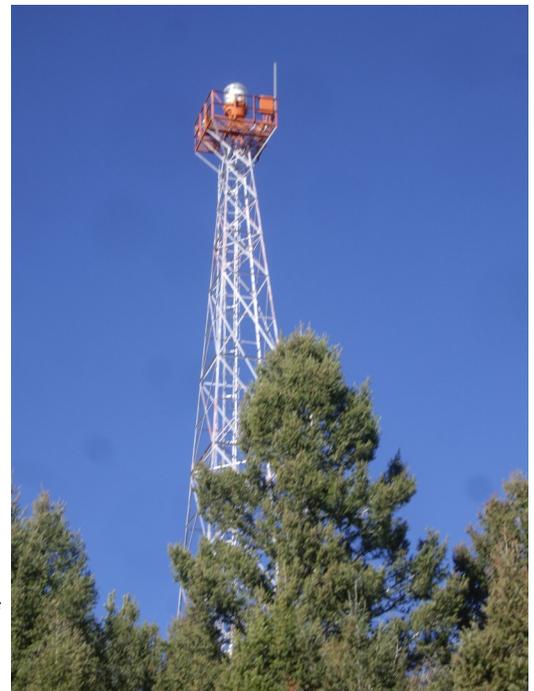
**F**or over eighty years, airplane pilots relied on a chain of lighted nighttime airway beacons to navigate their way across Montana’s big sky. At the system’s height in the early 1940s, 84 beacons marked airway routes across the state. The beacons were the remnants of a transcontinental air route system that had guided commercial and private pilots across the United States since 1935. Through the years, however, the number of beacons diminished because improved navigational technologies had rendered them obsolete. By the 1960s, the beacons, once the pride of the nation’s commercial aviation system, were no longer relevant. In 1972, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) abandoned the beacon system in Montana and turned the remnants over to the Montana Aeronautics Commission (now MDT’s Aeronautics Division) to operate and maintain. Although no longer needed by pilots, the beacons and towers were, and still are, a distinctive part of the state’s landscape. For this author, the beacons flashing from the mountaintops surrounding the Helena valley to the north, east, and west of Helena were somehow comforting to see.

By 2017, the Aeronautics Division still operated and maintained 17 airway beacons in western Montana. The obsolescence of the beacon system and shrinking state budgets contributed to MDT’s decision to decommission the beacon system. Director Mike Tooley formed a panel, the Airway Beacon Working Group (ABWG), to study the issue and make recommendations about the future of the beacon system. The ABWG solicited public comments and held three public information meetings in Billings, Missoula and Helena in the summer of 2017. Based on the results of the public meetings and comment, Director Tooley decided to shut down the system by December 31, 2021. The Aeronautics Division would continue to operate the MacDonald Pass, Spokane, and Strawberry Mountain beacons until that date. The remaining 14 beacons were shut down in the spring of 2018, and the search began for agencies and private citizens willing to adopt them.

MDT’s Communications Bureau agreed to assume responsibility of the St. Regis and Lookout Pass beacons. They currently hold essential communications equipment that monitor weather and road conditions on I-90. The Aeronautics Division, with the assistance of MDT’s Environmental Bureau and Legal Services, developed a plan to find new owners to adopt the towers and beacons. Four beacons, Hardy, Bonita, University Mountain, and Spokane, were adopted by local and state governments to function as radio towers for emergency services equipment. The Spokane beacon still shines east of Helena.

The Aeronautics Division didn’t traditionally own the properties on which the beacon towers stood. Instead, it maintained long term leases with private landowners to allow their presence. Fortunately, six landowners eagerly adopted the beacons standing on their land. Two of the new owners have kept their beacons lit, and they continue to mark the old historic airway routes. The non-profit Idaho Aviation Heritage organization now owns and operates six of the beacons, all of which they plan to keep lighted. The Monida Pass beacon was sold to the Idaho Aviation Heritage organization, dismantled, and moved to Blackfoot, Idaho, where it was re-erected. Only the Strawberry Mountain site in Gallatin County was demolished. But MDT took measures to mitigate the loss of the historic beacon. The Aeronautics Division salvaged the beacon and donated it to the Montana Historical Society. Eight of the 16 remaining beacons have been or are in the process of being listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

For decades, the nighttime airway beacons guided pilots across Montana. Now a new chapter has opened for them to serve as communications platforms and still stand tall as nostalgic monuments to an important period in Montana’s colorful aviation history.



*The Canyon Resort Airway Beacon in Beaverhead County, Mont.*

# Wood Tick's Cabin

By Jon Axline, MDT Historian

When we think of Carbon and Stillwater counties in southcentral Montana, we envision the spectacular Beartooth Highway, recreational opportunities, the pig races at the Bearcreek Saloon, the New Atlas Bar, and Red Lodge. The two counties have a rich history that continues to provide fodder for historians, including the author. What is not generally known is that south of the Yellowstone River, the counties were once part of the Crow Reservation. The second Fort Laramie Treaty established the reservation in 1868. Unfortunately, pressure from mining and ranching interests and the Northern Pacific Railway caused a series of land cessions that whittled down the vast reservation beginning in 1882. In 1875, the federal government relocated the original reservation agency, Fort Parker near today's I-90 Mission Interchange east of Livingston, to a site about five miles south of Absarokee in Stillwater County.

The Butcher Creek Agency is a significant archaeological site. It played an important role in the history of the Crow people until the agency closed in 1884. The agency represented the difficult transition for the tribe from the independent nomadic lives the Crow enjoyed for generations to reservation life and dependence on the government. While the agency has essentially disappeared from the landscape, its influence in the area resonates today and, until recently, there were a few physical remnants still standing associated with that difficult time in the tribe's history.

In 1994, MDT's cultural resource staff found one of those relics. While conducting an archaeological and historic survey for a proposed wetland about eleven miles west of Red Lodge, the department's archaeologist and historian found a primitive log cabin standing in a bend of Hogan Creek near the foot of the Beartooth Mountains. The cabin had clearly seen better days. Much of the chinking had fallen away from the mismatched logs. Somebody had pulled out a portion of the back wall to allow access to the interior for livestock, which was knee deep in manure. A piece of galvanized metal, wired to the shed roof, provided extra protection of sorts to the interior. What struck the author, however, was the crude construction of the cabin itself. The walls displayed a mixture of different sized logs (with tree limbs spliced in) that were square and saddle notched at the corners of the structure. The doorway was so low that you had to bend over to get in the structure. The foundation consisted, simply, of flat stones at the corners of the cabin. It's like it was built by somebody who didn't know how to build a cabin or who had never built one before. Unlike many historic cabins which faced the road, this one faced east toward the rising sun — it was oriented in the same direction as a tipi.

This cabin dated to sometime between 1887 and 1892 when this part of Carbon County was still part of the Crow Reservation. In 1892, the tribe ceded this area to the United States, which then opened it up for homesteading. The General Land Office records suggest the cabin once belonged to a Crow Indian man named Wood Tick (Eha Chersh). While the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty encouraged native peoples to take up farming, the Dawes Act of 1887 provided the means for them to "adopt the habits of civilized life." The government hoped to hasten the tribe's assimilation into the dominant American society by encouraging them to become farmers. Under the legislation, heads of households received 160 acres, seed, implements, and instructions on how to become a farmer. The applicant also had to build a permanent dwelling on the claim and make other improvements. The government held the allotment in trust for the allottee for twenty-five years after which he could sell the property if he wished.



*Jacob Durst (shown seated in the wagon) and Wood Tick (believed to be seated next to Durst in the wagon)*

Wood Tick made the attempt to become a farmer, but it is unclear how dedicated he was to the prospect. Little is known about him. Born about 1831, Wood Tick was a Chippewa Cree man who married into the Crow tribe. He was sixty years old when the census first counted him in 1892. His wife, Kills Across the Water (Minaka Malapis), was born around 1840. They had at least one son, Bull Dog, who was born around 1859. All three family members had enjoyed the traditional Crow lifestyle before the creation of the reservation. The US Indian census rolls lists Wood Tick and his family as living in the Pryor area from 1891 until 1903. His descendants live there still.

It is unclear how Wood Tick lost his allotment. One version suggests he sold it to his neighbor Jacob Durst. Another informant has indicated that he lost the property in a card game with Durst in 1895. Regardless, Wood Tick and his family moved to the reservation, where he died in 1898. The tiny cabin was still standing a century later, but a new property owner, not realizing its significance, burned it down in the early twenty-first century.

While at first this may seem like just an interesting story, it represents a great tragedy in the history of the Crow people — their loss of independence, confinement to the reservation, and dependence on the federal government for many of the necessities of life. Regrettably, many of the individual stories are gone and not known, and it's difficult to measure the impact on the Indian people. Finding physical remnants from that time, however, is both exciting and more than a little melancholy, and the loss of sites like Wood Tick's cabin compounds the heartbreak.



*Wood Tick's Cabin*

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided on request. Persons who need an alternative format should contact the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620. Telephone 406-444-5416 or Montana Relay Service at 711.

**MDT Wants Your Comments On New Projects**

To receive a list of highway projects MDT plans to present to the Transportation Commission, visit [mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/planning/proposed\\_proj.pdf](http://mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/planning/proposed_proj.pdf), [mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/stip.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/stip.shtml) or call 800-714-7296. You can mail comments on proposed projects to MDT Project Analysis Manager, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001 or e-mail them to: [mdtnewprojects@mt.gov](mailto:mdtnewprojects@mt.gov).

**Inside This Issue**

**Special Section: Keeping Good Roads Good in 2020 and Beyond** ..... **1,3-5**

MDT's Rail-Highway Safety Program .....1,8

Federal Surface Transportation Program Status .....1

New MCS Division Administrator .....2

New Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator .....2

TransADE Assistance for the Disabled & Elderly.....2

New Grants Bureau Chief.....2

Vision Zero: Super Bowl Safety Message.....6

Traffic Safety Dates to Remember.....6

2020 CPS Recap .....6

School Bus Safety .....7

2021 Transit & Highway Traffic Safety Grant Deadlines .....7

2021 Recreational Trail Program Grant Deadline .....7

Teen Driver Safety.....8

October First National Pedestrian Safety Month.....8

Submit Your Research Ideas .....10

Historic Airway Beacons Under New Ownership .....10

Wood Tick's Cabin.....11

**INSERT—Local Assistance Brochure**

**Contact Information**

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

**Newsline Editor-Lauren Eichenfels ([leichenfels@mt.gov](mailto:leichenfels@mt.gov))** ..... **444-7614**

Administrator .....444-3445

Bicyclist/Pedestrian-Karen Grosulak-McCord ([kgrosulakmccord@mt.gov](mailto:kgrosulakmccord@mt.gov)).....444-9273

Environmental-Tom Martin ([tomartin@mt.gov](mailto:tomartin@mt.gov)).....444-0879

Grants & Transit-David Jacobs ([dajacobs@mt.gov](mailto:dajacobs@mt.gov)) ....444-9192

Highway Traffic Safety-Janet Kenny ([jakenny@mt.gov](mailto:jakenny@mt.gov))444-7417

Map Orders-[mdt.mt.gov/publications/maps.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/publications/maps.shtml).....444-6119

Multimodal Programs-Carol Strizich ([cstrizich@mt.gov](mailto:cstrizich@mt.gov)).....444-9240

Projects-Paul Johnson ([paujohnson@mt.gov](mailto:paujohnson@mt.gov)) ..... 444-7259

Multimodal Planning & Communications-Sheila Ludlow ([sludlow@mt.gov](mailto:sludlow@mt.gov)).....444-9193

Road Data & Mapping-Brian Andersen ([brandersen@mt.gov](mailto:brandersen@mt.gov)) .....444-6111

Secondary Roads-Andy White ([awhite@mt.gov](mailto:awhite@mt.gov)).....444-9194

Statewide & Urban Planning-Katie Potts ([kpotts@mt.gov](mailto:kpotts@mt.gov)) .....444-9238

Traffic Data-Becky Duke ([bduke@mt.gov](mailto:bduke@mt.gov)) .....444-6122

This document printed at state expense. Information on the cost of publication may be obtained by contacting the Department of Administration.

MDT's mission is to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality, and sensitivity to the environment. Newsline is a quarterly publication of the Rail, Transit, and Planning Division, Montana Department of Transportation.

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
zero deaths • zero serious injuries

**VISION ZERO**



Return Service Requested

Helena, Montana 59620-1001

PO Box 201001

2701 Prospect Avenue

**Montana Department of Transportation  
Rail, Transit & Planning Division**

Permit No. 89  
Helena, MT

**PAID**

U.S. Postage

Pre Sort Standard

# Transportation Assistance for Montana Communities - 2020

Montana's local governments face numerous challenges in improving and maintaining their transportation infrastructure and services. Transportation needs outpace available funding at all levels. MDT administers many funding and planning programs that help local governments address their local transportation needs. Following are some MDT-administered programs that support local projects:

## ***Planning and Technical Assistance***

**Systems Impact Analysis Process (SIAP)** - MDT's SIAP ensures a coordinated review of major developments and local projects initiated outside of MDT that may significantly and permanently impact the state transportation system. MDT coordinates development reviews with Montana's local governments to ensure their concerns are addressed and provides technical assistance to local governments interested in developing local processes similar to SIAP. For more information, phone 444-9416.

**Multimodal Transportation Plans** - Outside of Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula, there are no federal or state requirements for transportation plans. MDT provides financial and technical support for transportation planning in other Montana communities, including some of our fastest growing cities. These cooperative planning efforts are usually managed by the local planning offices to ensure consistency with other planning efforts. The plans help identify deficiencies, needs, and funding to ensure an efficient, safe, and modern transportation system. For more information, phone 444-9238.

**Travel Demand Forecasting** - MDT develops and maintains state-of-the-art computer models in Montana's larger communities to forecast future travel demand and analyze alternative transportation improvements to accommodate existing and future demand. MDT works with cities, counties, and other government agencies in the development of these models, which help inform decisions about future transportation network needs. For more information, phone 444-9193.

**Corridor Planning Studies** - MDT provides financial and technical support toward the development of prioritized and selected corridor planning studies. The goal of these studies is to better scope projects before moving into the project development process, achieve the lowest level environmental document while minimizing project delivery costs and time, and provide early opportunities for public and resource agency participation. For more information, phone 444-9238.

**Safety Planning** - This MDT program provides technical and financial assistance to local governments for the development of Community Transportation Safety Plans. Through a coordinated process, safety stakeholders and agencies identify the specific transportation safety issues in a community, develop strategies to address those issues, and determine the responsible agency/individual to monitor implementation of each strategy. Participating communities must demonstrate a commitment to implement and monitor progress. For more information, phone 444-7646.

## ***Information & Education***

**Research Programs** - MDT conducts research to discover, develop, and extend knowledge needed to operate, maintain, and improve Montana's multimodal transportation system. Interested parties can propose research topics by March 31st of each year through MDT's annual solicitation process. More information can be found at [mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/solicit.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/research/unique/solicit.shtml), or by phoning 444-7693.

**State Highway Traffic Safety Programs** - These programs provide funds to eligible applicants to promote the use of occupant restraints and prevent impaired driving. For more information, phone 444-7417 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/safetyprg.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/safetyprg.shtml)

**Bicyclist and Pedestrian** - MDT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator serves as MDT's liaison to internal and external bicycle and pedestrian interests. The coordinator provides input and technical support related to the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and plans. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is a clearinghouse for bicycle and pedestrian safety and educational resources. For more information, phone 444-9273.

## ***Data Collection and Management/GIS***

MDT collects and maintains information about Montana's transportation system. Available to government entities and the public, this information includes a comprehensive location inventory of roads in Montana, including basic physical attributes such as length, width, and surface type; traffic volume and classification data; and mapping and GIS services and products, including the official Montana State Highway map. For information, phone 444-6103.

## ***Additional Support***

Most federal-aid funding for projects and programs require non-federal matching funds. Although not required to do so, the state provides matching funds for most infrastructure projects on the state highway system. Additionally, in times of federal program growth, the state has passed the growth in federal program funding on to programs of importance to local governments through the State-level Urban and Secondary Highway Programs.

Programs that benefit local governments are the result of cooperative state and local efforts to distribute limited funding as fairly as possible. MDT continues its commitment to support local transportation planning and projects to ensure a safe and reliable transportation system for Montana communities. For more information, visit MDT's Rail, Transit and Planning Division website at [mdt.mt.gov/mdt/organization/railtran.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/mdt/organization/railtran.shtml).

## ***Infrastructure and Capital Assistance***

**Fuel Tax** - Counties and cities receive a portion of state fuel tax receipts based on statutory formulas for construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and repair of rural roads and city or town streets and alleys. For more information, phone 444-6103 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/business/fueltax/allocations.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/business/fueltax/allocations.shtml).

**Bridge and Road Safety & Accountability Program** - The 65<sup>th</sup> Montana Legislature passed a fuel tax increase that went into effect on July 1, 2017. A portion of the revenue generated by the increase is allocated to local governments for road construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of roads and bridges. Allocations are available March 1<sup>st</sup> each year. For more information, phone 444-9131.

**Surface Transportation Program-Urban** - Federal and state matching funds are allocated to Montana's urban areas (areas with a population greater than 5,000) for improvements to the Urban Highway System. Priorities are identified at the local level through established planning processes that include the public. Funds are primarily used for street reconstruction, rehabilitation, and traffic operation improvements. For more information, phone 444-9238.

**Surface Transportation Program-Secondary** - Federal funding with state and local matching funds is allocated based on a statutory formula for improvements on Montana's Secondary Highway System. Capital construction priorities are identified at the local level and coordinated with MDT. Eligible activities include reconstruction, rehabilitation, and pavement preservation improvements. For more information, phone 444-9194.

**Urban Highway Pavement Preservation** - Federal and state matching funds are provided for cost-effective treatments to Urban Highway System routes. These improvements preserve the system, delay roadway deterioration, and improve roadway condition without adding capacity. Priorities are identified through MDT district and local government consultation and are based on pavement management systems developed and maintained at the local level. For more information, phone 444-7259.

**Transportation Alternatives** - Federal funding with state and local matching funds are provided for transportation alternative projects. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas; lighting and safety-related infrastructure; projects to achieve ADA compliance; and environmental mitigation and wildlife connectivity. Projects are prioritized through a competitive process in accordance with federal eligibilities and requirements under MAP-21, 23 USC 213. For more information, phone 444-6118 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/mdt/ta\\_application.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/mdt/ta_application.shtml).

**Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)** - Federal funds are available with state matching funds for infrastructure projects that improve highway safety. These funds can be utilized for any public road projects such as signing, striping, guardrail installation, slope flattening, and

intersection improvements. Projects are prioritized through a competitive process utilizing a benefit-cost analysis. For more information, phone 444-9420 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/forms/hsip\\_application.pdf](http://mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/forms/hsip_application.pdf)

**Off-System Bridge Program** - Federal funding with State and Local matching funds are allocated for replacement and repair of locally maintained bridges. Construction priorities are identified at the local level and coordinated with MDT. Eligible activities include reconstruction and rehabilitation. For more information, phone 444-6260.

**Montana Air and Congestion Initiative (MACI)** - Federal funding with state and local matching funds through this unique MDT program supports strategies to proactively address air quality issues related to carbon monoxide and particulate matter. Projects in eligible air quality nonattainment or at-risk areas are prioritized and selected based on air quality benefits. Eligible projects include the purchase of street sweepers and flush trucks necessary to reduce particulate matter and the funding of intersection channelization and signal synchronization projects to reduce carbon monoxide emissions. For more information, phone 444-9238.

**EMS Grant Program** - State funds are available through a competitive process to volunteer emergency medical providers for acquiring or leasing ambulances or emergency response vehicles, training, communication equipment, and medical care equipment. For more information, phone 444-0856 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/business/grants\\_ems.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/business/grants_ems.shtml).

**Montana Essential Freight Rail Loan Program** - MDT administers a state program that provides loans for railroad improvements including construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of rail lines and related facilities. Eligible parties include railroad owners and operators and certain port authorities. For more information, phone 444-9193.

**Transit** - Federal funding programs administered by MDT support community transit systems with operating, capital, and planning. A locally developed coordination plan is required and must include public services as well as services for the disabled and elderly. Federal Health and Human Services funds may be used to match federal Transit funds. For more information, phone 444-9192 or visit [mdt.mt.gov/business/grants\\_transit.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/business/grants_transit.shtml).

**City Park Rest Areas** - State funds are provided to assist maintenance activities in communities with existing City Park Rest Area facilities. Proposals for assistance must directly benefit the traveling public. Expenditures must be reviewed and approved by MDT to be eligible for local government reimbursement. For more information, phone 444-7653.

**Ferry Boat Program** - Federal funds are available for Chouteau and Blaine Counties with some involvement with Fergus County for improvements to the ferries and facilities. For more information, phone 444-9194.