

ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS

Fairview – West (Phase I)

FINAL



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ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

APE	Area of Potential Effect
DTM	Digital Terrain Model
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Funds
MDT	Montana Department of Transportation
MEPA	Montana Environmental Policy Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
PTW	Presently Travelled Way
RP	Reference Post
RPZ	Runway Protection Zone
USC	United States Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Section 4(f)	Section 4(f) of the 1966 Department of Transportation Act

ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has initiated early project development activities for the Fairview-West project. The project, designated as STPP 201-2(14)64, CN 8650000, is intended to reconstruct approximately 6 miles of Montana Highway 201 (MT 201) west of the Town of Fairview in Richland County. The segment of MT 201 proposed for reconstruction extends from the junction of MT 201 and Montana Highway 200 (MT 200) in Fairview to Reference Post (RP) 63.6 located about 6 miles west of the community.

The initial phase of the Fairview-West project involves the identification and analysis of potential new alignments for the eastern portion of the project corridor between MT 200 in Fairview and RM 67.4 on MT 201 (just west of the Fairview Airport). The alternative alignment analysis has been completed outside of the formal NEPA/MEPA process, and is intended to inform the decision of the best feasible alignment to increase safety and re-route trucks from the existing road facility as it enters Fairview.

Relevant GIS information generated during the development of the Environmental Scan report served as primary inputs into the Quantm computer software used by MDT to help identify potential new road alignments. The Quantm software process is defined in Section 2.0, and enables design standards, terrain, geological and hydrological data, environmental areas, property ownership, and cost information to be simultaneously considered to generate a range of road alignment alternatives. The “top three” most viable options for road realignment were then analyzed further to identify a preferred routing for the eastern section of MT 201 to address the needs of both MDT and project stakeholders.

The study area and adjoining lands are shown in **Figure 1**. The figure also depicts the study area boundary for the Fairview Corridor Planning Study. As the figure shows, the alternative alignment analysis study area overlaps a portion of the area for the Fairview Corridor Planning Study currently being conducted by others in collaboration with MDT.

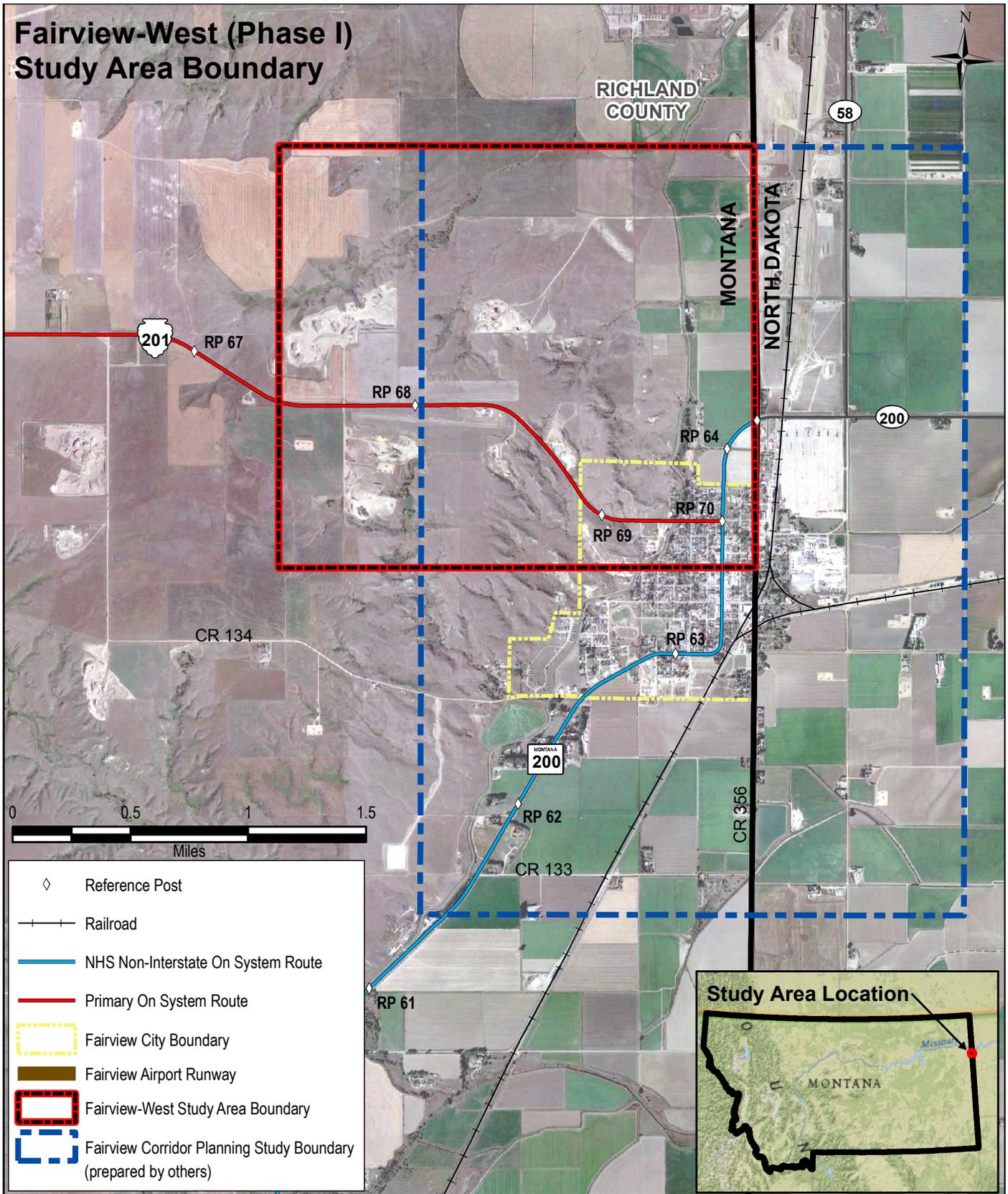


Figure 1: Alternative Alignment Analysis Study Area Boundary

1.2. QUANTM

The Trimble Quantm Alignment Planning System (i.e. Quantm) is a planning tool that uses route optimization software to generate multiple cost-based alignments that balance social, environmental, and terrain constraints and scenarios within a single analysis for a specific corridor. The system allows for users to input necessary constraints into the proprietary software which restricts the corridor and allows Quantm to determine a series of alignments that meet the design constraints.

After Quantm calculates the alignments, additional analysis can be performed within Quantm to reduce impacts, mitigate at isolated locations or further develop the alignments chosen into a preliminary design. The task is an iterative process of refinement. To begin the Quantm process, all data including linear features, special zones, geometric standards, structure sizes, and the Digital Terrain Model (DTM) was synthesized into a GIS format. Start and end points were determined, and then the Quantm system generated multiple potential alignments as presented herein. For this analysis, the starting point was located at approximately RP 67.4 (just west of the Fairview Airport) and the ending point was just east of the Montana-North Dakota State line at the intersection of MT 200.

1.2.1. Quantm Constraints

Quantm utilizes two basic parameters to initially develop alignments within a specific corridor. These parameters include geometric standards and cost estimates. The following describes the inputs for these parameters.

1.2.1.1. GEOMETRIC STANDARDS

Geometric standards are necessary to define basic features such as roadway width, cut and fill slope ratios, maximum vertical road grades, design speeds and horizontal road curvature. The MDT *Road Design Manual* specifies general design principles and controls which determine the overall operational characteristics of the roadway and enhance the aesthetic appearance of the roadway. The geometric design criteria for MT 201 are based on the current MDT design criteria for a Non-National Highway System (NHS) Rural Minor Arterial. A Rural Minor Arterial road system links communities and provides service to corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those predominantly served by rural collector or local systems. **Table 1** lists the current design standards for Rural Minor Arterials according to MDT design criteria. These standards were used as input for the Quantm model for basic design control features.

Table 1: Geometric Standards

Design Element		Design Criteria			
Design Controls	Design Forecast Year (Geometrics)		20 Years		
	Design Speed ⁽ⁱ⁾	Level	60 mph		
		Rolling	55 mph		
		Mountainous	45 mph		
Level of Service ⁽ⁱ⁾		Level/Rolling: B Mountainous: C			
Roadway Elements	Travel Lane Width ⁽ⁱ⁾		12'		
	Shoulder Width ⁽ⁱ⁾		Varies		
	Cross Slope	Travel Lane ⁽ⁱ⁾	2%		
		Shoulder	2%		
	Median Width		Varies		
Earth Cut Sections	Ditch	Inslope	6:1 (width: 10')		
		Width	10' Min.		
		Slope	20:1 towards back slope		
	Back Slope; Cut Depth at Slope Stake	0' - 5'	5:1		
		5' - 10'	Level/Rolling: 4:1; Mountainous: 3:1		
		10' - 15'	Level/Rolling: 3:1; Mountainous: 2:1		
		15' - 20'	Level/Rolling: 2:1; Mountainous: 1.5:1		
> 20'	1.5:1				
Earth Fill Slopes	Fill Height at Slope Stake	0' - 10'	6:1		
		10' - 20'	4:1		
		20' - 30'	3:1		
		> 30'	2:1		
Alignment Elements	DESIGN SPEED		45 mph	55 mph	60 mph
	Stopping Sight Distance ⁽ⁱ⁾		360'	495'	570'
	Passing Sight Distance		1625'	1885'	2135'
	Minimum Radius (e=8.0%) ⁽ⁱ⁾		590'	960'	1200'
	Superelevation Rate ⁽ⁱ⁾		e _{max} = 8.0%		
	Vertical Curvature (K-value) ⁽ⁱ⁾	Crest	61	114	151
		Sag	79	115	136
	Maximum Grade ⁽ⁱ⁾	Level	3%		
		Rolling	4%		
		Mountainous	7%		
Minimum Vertical Clearance ⁽ⁱ⁾		17.0'			

⁽ⁱ⁾ Controlling design criteria (see Section 8.8 of the MDT Road Design Manual).

Source: Montana Department of Transportation, Road Design Manual, Chapter 12, Figure 12-4, "Geometric Design Criteria for Rural Minor Arterials (Non-NHS – Primary)", 2008

The design speed for a Rural Minor Arterial roadway ranges between 45 mph and 60 mph depending on terrain. MDT's *Road Design Manual* contains the following definitions for each terrain type:

- Level Terrain – The available stopping sight distances are generally long or can be made to be so without construction difficulty or major expense.
- Rolling Terrain – The natural slopes consistently fall below and rise above the roadway and occasional steep slopes offer some restriction to horizontal and vertical alignment.

- Mountainous Terrain – Longitudinal and traverse changes in elevation are abrupt and extensive grading is frequently needed to obtain acceptable alignments.

Based on these definitions, the 55 mph design speed for rolling terrain was used.

1.2.1.2. COST PARAMETERS

An important premise of the Quantm software is the ability to use local relevant cost information for basic road construction features. Road template costs, earthwork costs, bridge costs, etc., can all be inserted into the program and form the basis of the cost component analysis for the generated alignments. For this exercise, a handful of cost assumptions were utilized as defined below and summarized in **Table 2**.

- Global – These are the base costs for the entire corridor and include user inputs for pavement thickness, earth movement with haul cost, dump and borrow costs, fill costs, and cut costs.
- Bridge – Bridge costs and abutment slope can be added for many types of bridges.
- Area – This parameter allows the user to input area costs based on roadway footprint, fill slope, or cut slope with an additional margin to allow for a buffer outside these parameters.

Table 2: Cost Parameters

Parameter	Values Utilized
Global	Pavement (Template Section) cost: \$92/sq. ft. Earth movement costs: \$0.50/cy/mi for haul and \$3.50/cy for dump Fill cost: \$2/cy Cut cost: \$1.50/cy
Bridge	\$150/sf for cost of bridge
Right-of-Way	Agricultural land: \$3,500/acre Commercial land: \$15,000/acre Residential land: \$1.50/sq. ft. (land only) plus \$200,000 per parcel for total acquisition if a house is affected Gravel pit: additional cost of \$0.50/sq. ft. (assumes \$1.00/cy @ thickness of 13.5 ft)

Source: MDT Quantm Output MSEXCEL data files (provided 06/19/2015 and 07/07/2015)

1.2.1.3. QUANTM CONSTRAINT INPUTS

Defining the geometric and cost parameters are the first step in determining potential alignment alternatives in Quantm. It is also necessary to identify any constraints that may restrict the corridor to allow Quantm to analyze the alignments. The constraints were identified in consultation with MDT staff and are commonly referred to as avoid areas (**Table 3**) and special zones (**Table 4**). Avoid areas are locations such as developed parks, city water tanks, active oil and gas wells, etc. that should be avoided due to the difficult nature and potentially high cost of relocation, as well as public perception of such impacts. The Quantm model will not allow alignments to enter into these areas, which may result in increased length and cost. Special zones are defined as an area or location that may have a special condition attached to it such as a cost, limitation or sensitive feature. Refer to **Table 3** and **Table 4** for avoid area and special zone area descriptions defined for this analysis.

Table 3: Avoid Areas

Avoid Area Location	Description
Airport and Runway Protection Zones [RPZ's]	Runway Protection Zones (RPZs) exist at the east and west ends of the runway of Runway 8/26 at the Fairview Airport. The function of RPZs is to enhance the protection of people and property on the ground. The size of RPZ areas is dictated by the type of aircraft using the runway. In the case of the Fairview Airport, the trapezoidal RPZ areas begin 200 feet from each end of the runway and extend for 1,000 feet along the runway's centerline. The RPZ areas are longitudinally centered on the runway and range from 250 feet to 450 feet in width. Airport owners typically strive to control RPZ's through the acquisition of property encompassed by the RPZ area and by clearing RPZ areas of incompatible objects and activities. The boundary of the RPZ's, and Runway 8/26, were identified as Total Avoid Areas by tracing around each feature.
Active Oil Wells	Four oil wells have been documented within the study area boundary. The location of the four oil wells and associated pads within the study area boundary were modelled as Total Avoid Areas by placing a reasonable buffer around each pad location.
City Water Tank	The Town of Fairview relies on two wells as domestic water sources and has installed a distribution system to serve all developed areas within the town limits except for a few blocks south of town. Water for the municipal system is stored in two tanks, the largest having a capacity of 300,000 gallons. One of the storage tanks is located south of MT 201 near RP 69. The location of the water storage tank within the study area boundary was modelled as a Total Avoid Area with a reasonable buffer placed around the tank location.
Fairview Pool & Sharbano Park	Sharbano Park, a publically-owned park and recreation site, represents a Section 4(f) resource. The Fairview Pool is located in the northern part of Sharbano Park. Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) were used to fund the Fairview Pool. The locations of Sharbano Park and the Fairview Pool were modelled as a Total Avoid Area by tracing around each feature.

Source: June 2, 2015 memorandum presenting "Total Avoid Areas" from Jeff Key, RPA to James Frank, MDT.

Table 4: Special Zones

Special Zone Location	Description
Existing Gravel Pit Development Boundaries	<p>Open cut (i.e gravel) permits are permits required for the mining and processing of materials specified in the Opencut Mining Act (i.e. sand, gravel, soil, bentonite, clay, scoria, and peat). Eight open cut permits were identified within the study area boundary. Three permits are for lands in the southwestern portion of the boundary and the remainder are for sites north of MT 201.</p> <p>The locations of visible gravel pits were denoted by tracing around each feature and assigning a higher cost of impact for the area contained within the resultant boundary, over and above normal right-of-way costs for land.</p>
Historical Site ID 24RL0376	<p>Site ID 24RL0376 is a Historic Residence with NHRP consensus determination of eligibility. As such, if a project is forwarded, a cultural resource survey of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project as specified in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act would need to be conducted. Section 106 outlines a process to identify historic properties that could be affected by the undertaking, assess the effects of the project and investigate methods to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on previously recorded and newly discovered historic or archaeological resources. Special protections to these cultural resources are afforded protection under Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act. The location of NHRP Site ID 24RL0376 was assigned a higher cost of impact, over and above normal right-of-way costs for acquisition of a residence.</p>
Residences directly west of the State border at the intersection with MT 200	<p>There are two residences/farm complexes located just west of the Montana/North Dakota state boundary that are in the likely influence area of the Quantm modelling alignments. Although these are not avoid areas, special recognition of the costs to impact these were made. The locations of the two residences/farm complexes just west of the Montana/North Dakota state boundary were assigned a higher cost of impact, over and above normal right-of-way costs for acquisition of a residence.</p>

Source: June 2, 2015 memorandum presenting "Total Avoid Areas" from Jeff Key, RPA to James Frank, MDT.

1.2.2. Other Data Used Within Quantm

In addition to the specific resource information already described, other information was gathered from publically available data sources, in various tabular and graphical formats, and utilized to support the modelling effort that included the following:

- Land Ownership
- Land Management
- Land Use
- Oil and Gas Development
- Fairview Airport
- Geologic Resources
- Prime and Important Farmland
- Surface Water Resources
- Irrigation Features
- Groundwater Resources
- Wetlands
- Floodplains (EO 11988) and Floodways
- Hazardous Materials
- Wildlife and Habitat
- Wildlife Resources
- Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species
- Montana Animal Species of Concern
- Vegetation
- Threatened and Endangered Plants
- Plant Species of Concern
- 4(f) Resources
- 6(f) Properties

2.0 ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS

Three alternative alignments were identified as a result of the Quantm analysis to explore for further consideration. The three alignments are represented as wide “swaths” to allow for future minor shifting of the design centerline if a project is forwarded. The swaths have been defined by offsetting the Quantm centerline alignments 200 feet on each side, for a total swath width of 400 feet. This will allow for flexibility of the centerline if any of the three alignments have to be modified.

The “top three” Quantm alignments are based on numerous factors, but most heavily they are based on estimated costs. Hundreds of alignments were initially derived, but the top three developed have been selected as being most reasonable given expected costs and terrain considerations. The top three alignments under consideration are depicted in **Figure 2**, and are generally defined as follows:

- Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01): this is the Quantm generated alignment located closest to Fairview and the existing PTW. Of the three Quantm generated alignments, it comes closest to the residential property directly west of the intersection of MT 201 / MT 200. It is 2.06 miles in length, and would realize a bridge crossing over the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Ditch of approximately 80 feet.
- Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03): this alignment is located just north of the Red alignment (and south of the Blue Alignment). It is 2.16 miles in length, and would realize a bridge crossing over the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Ditch of approximately 79 feet.
- Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07): this alignment is the farthest north of the three alignments. It is the longest alignment at 2.18 miles in length, and also exhibits the longest bridge crossing length of 89 feet due to the skew over the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Ditch.

The alternative alignments shown in **Figure 2** are based on the Quantm analysis and do not reflect the array of possible intersection configurations at the far eastern connection point of MT 201 with MT 200 (at the Montana / North Dakota border). MT 201 is the “minor” approach based on traffic volume and functional classification, and MT 200 is considered the “major” approach. Several considerations should be evaluated if and when project design activities commence on a new alignment. For example, the minor approach (MT 201) should intersect the major approach (MT 200) close to a 90-degree angle, and avoid entering on the high side of a super-elevated curve. A modern roundabout intersection could also be considered.

The metrics evaluated as part of this alternative alignment analysis include the following:

- Alignment Length (Road and Bridge)
- Estimated Cost
- Estimated Right-of-Way Impacts
- Estimated Wetland Impacts
- Estimated Farmland Impacts
- Estimated 4(f) Property Impacts

For the impact analysis shown on the following pages, various metrics have been developed, with some based on an “area”. For those, the area was calculated based on the MDT provided theoretical construction limits. Achieving the various geometric standards relative to vertical road grades and horizontal road curvature influence how and where the roadway prism “touches down” to the existing land. Touch down points are also referred to as construction limits, which defines the area of impact on both sides of the roadway.

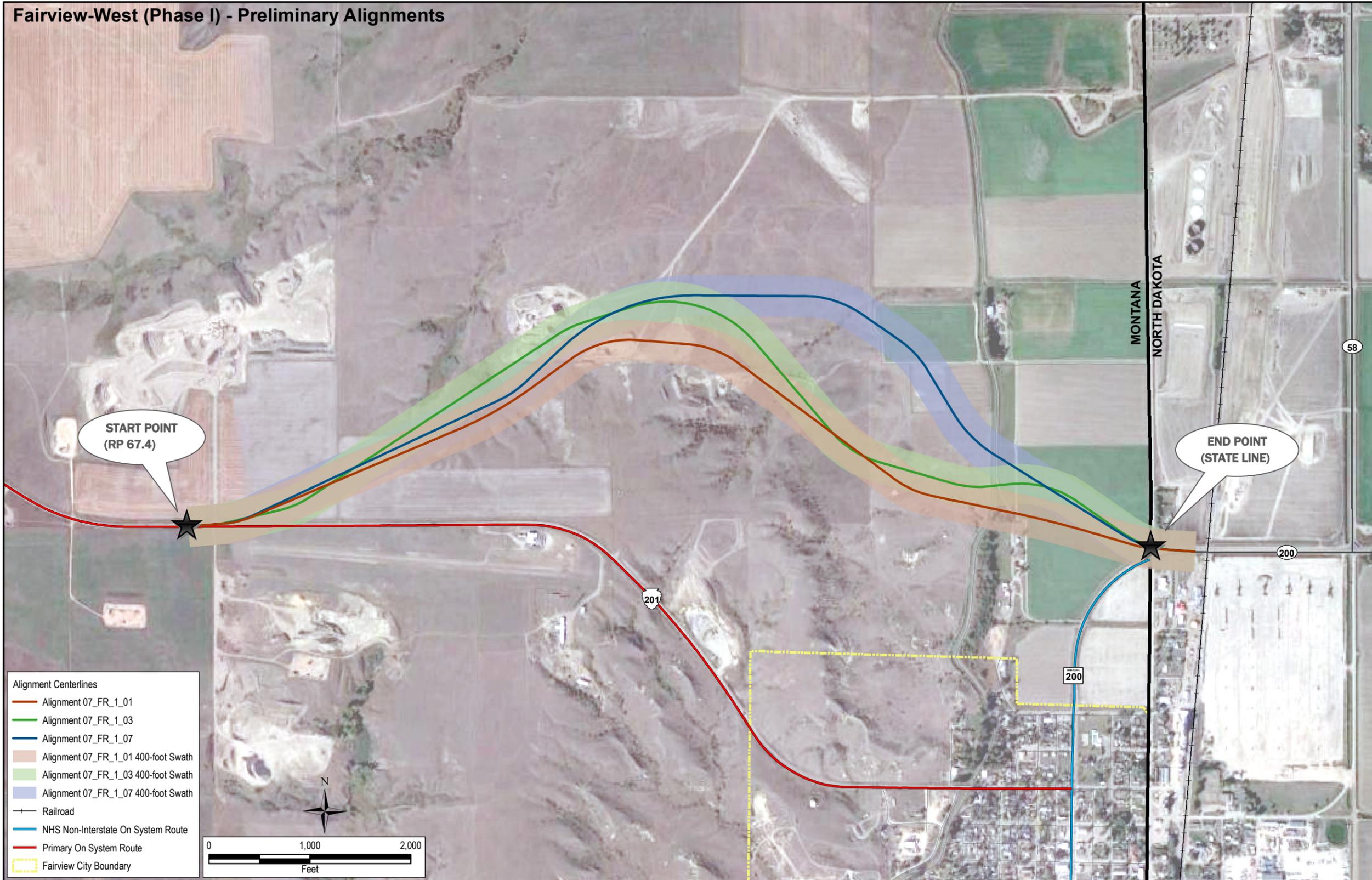


Figure 2: Top Three Quantm Generated Alternative Alignment Corridors

2.1. LENGTH

Roadway and bridge lengths are a simple metric that influences both travel time and future maintenance concerns. Maintaining a longer length of roadway is less desirable than maintaining a shorter length. In addition, somewhat related to bridge length is the degree of skew of bridges. Skewed bridges are generally less desirable than non-skewed bridges due to complexity of design and construction. For the three alignments generated by Quantm, road and bridge lengths are as noted in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Alignment Lengths

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Roadway Length (feet)	10,820	11,321	11,411
Bridge Length (feet)	80	79	89
Total Length (feet)	10,900	11,400	11,500

2.2. ESTIMATED COSTS

High level planning cost estimates were prepared for each of the three potential alignments as generated in Quantm. The planning level costs were primarily for construction costs (i.e. they do not include detailed right-of-way costs, project development costs, utility relocation costs, inflation, etc.). To develop the planning level cost estimates, line item costs were generated in Quantm as defined in **Table 2**. The results of the planning level costs estimates are shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Alignment Costs

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Cut	\$471,000	\$358,000	\$244,000
Borrow	\$0	\$7,550	\$163,000
Fill	\$424,000	\$344,000	\$361,000
Dump	\$185,000	\$92,000	\$87,800
Road Template	\$2,250,000	\$2,340,000	\$2,360,000
Mass Haul	\$48,000	\$32,100	\$39,600
Bridge	\$386,000	\$380,000	\$426,000
Cadastral	\$25,000	\$21,300	\$22,400
Total Estimated Construction Cost ⁽¹⁾	\$3,790,000	\$3,580,000	\$3,710,000

⁽¹⁾ The estimated construction cost generated within Quantm does not include adjustments for traffic control, mobilization, contingencies, construction engineering (CE), inflation, or indirect costs (IDCs). Adjustments for these have been made in Section 4.0 of this report, however, as a means to compare the alternatives to the cost of reconstructing on the presently travelled way (i.e. on the existing alignment). Refer to Section 4.0 for more information.

2.3. ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION AREA IMPACTS

The amount of area needed for alignment construction to provide a new route is a function of both current land use and terrain. Touch down points, also referred to as construction limits, define the area of impact on both sides of the roadway. The area bound within the construction limits, for this comparison purpose, is referred to as the total new construction area that may be required for each alignment. It is likely that this area would be slightly more after design is advanced. The number of parcels impacted is also of importance and is referenced in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Construction Area Impacts

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Number of Parcels Impacted (each)	12 (MT)	11 (MT)	11 (MT)
Area of Construction Impact (acres)	34.02	32.62	31.10

2.4. ESTIMATED WETLAND IMPACTS

Wetland impacts are governed by Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. When a project is forwarded, additional design for avoidance and minimization will be completed, which may serve to reduce impacts to wetlands. Wetlands were not formally delineated for this analysis. Rather, as previously stated in **Table 4**, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapping database was accessed. Wetland impacts should be avoided or minimized to the greatest extent practicable. **Table 8** shows the NWI wetland impacts for each of the top three alignments generated by Quantm.

Table 8: Wetland Impacts

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Area of Wetlands Crossing (sq ft)	2,360.02	8,471.47	1,261.78
Area of Wetlands Crossing (acres)	0.054	0.195	0.029

2.5. ESTIMATED FARMLAND IMPACTS

The Farmland Policy Protection Act (FPPA) (7 U.S.C. 4201 et. seq.) requires special consideration be given to soils considered as prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide or local importance by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Prime farmland soils are those that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, and forage; the area must also be available for these uses. Prime farmland can be either non-irrigated or lands that would be considered prime if irrigated. Farmland of statewide importance is land, in addition to prime and unique farmlands, that is of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops.

A query of area impacts to farmland of state importance and prime farmland if irrigated was made for each of the top three Quantm generated alignments within the construction limits. **Table 9** shows the farmland area impacts for both categories of farmland.

Table 9: Farmland Impacts

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Farmland of Statewide Importance (acres)	4.29	3.59	4.45
Prime Farmland if Irrigated (acres)	7.09	9.46	13.20

2.6. ESTIMATED 4(F) PROPERTY IMPACTS

The number of potential 4(f) property impacts was consistent for all three alignments; that is, all three alignment must cross the historic irrigation system known as the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project (Site ID 24RL0204) as defined in the previously prepared Environmental Scan. However the length and skew of the crossing is measurable in terms of total area of impact. A longer bridge, or a bridge on a heavy skew, may impact more gross area of this resource by virtue of how it crosses the facility and touches down to the ground when compared to a simple bridge under no skew. **Table 10** shows the total area of impact of each alignment crossing over the historic irrigation ditch.

Table 10: 4(f) Property Impacts

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Area of Historic Ditch Crossing (sq ft)	11095.22	8096.90	9825.77
Area of Historic Ditch Crossing (acres)	0.255	0.186	0.226

3.0 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Three alignments were carried forward for a comparison impact analysis. These were generated by Quantm and are shown in **Figure 2**. Several measurable comparison criteria were identified and were as follows:

- Total Length
- Total Estimated Cost
- Area of Construction Impact
- Area of Wetland Crossing Impact
- Farmland of Statewide Importance Impact
- Prime Farmland if Irrigated Impact
- Area of Historic Ditch Crossing Impact

All alignment impacts are estimates and stated in general terms. This allows for minor shifts in the selected alignment during final design to further lessen impacts on any features or properties. **Table 11** presents an impact summary based on data from the Quantm model and associated GIS analysis. Also presented in **Table 11** is a simple assignment of points based on the resulting ranking of criteria. For example for the “Total Length” criterion, the Red alignment is the shortest so it is give a ranking of 1, followed by the Green alignment (2) and then followed by the Blue alignment (3 due to it being the longest). Collectively, the point summary for the various criteria may help establish a preferred alternative when taken to the public with the lowest point total indicating the least impact for the new corridor.

Table 11: Impact Summary

Criteria	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
	[POINT RANKING]	[POINT RANKING]	[POINT RANKING]
Total Length (feet)	10,900 [1]	11,400 [2]	11,500 [3]
Total Estimated Cost	\$3,790,000 [3]	\$3,580,000 [1]	\$3,710,000 [2]
Area of Construction Impact (acres)	34.02 [3]	32.62 [2]	31.10 [1]
Area of Wetland Crossing (acres)	0.054 [2]	0.195 [3]	0.029 [1]
Farmland of Statewide Importance Impact (acres)	4.29 [2]	3.59 [1]	4.45 [3]
Prime Farmland if Irrigated Impact (acres)	7.09 [1]	9.46 [2]	13.20 [3]
Area of Historic Ditch Crossing Impact (acres)	0.255 [3]	0.186 [1]	0.226 [2]

The cursory point assignments resulted in the following rankings:

- Red alignment 15 points
- Green alignment 12 points
- Blue alignment 15 points

This summary indicates the Green alignment may be the least impactful and most feasible to develop.

4.0 OVERALL PROJECT COST COMPARISON

As previously noted, Quantm provides estimated costs for construction only (with a very basic right-of-way impact cost included). Adjustments in Quantm are not made for other project incidentals such as traffic control, mobilization, contingencies, construction engineering (CE), inflation, or indirect costs (IDCs). It is desirable to factor these extra costs into the cost portrayal of the top three Quantm alignments as a means to compare the overall cost of a new alignment against that cost for reconstructing on the existing road (PTW) as it enters Fairview. **Table 12** has been developed to compare the cost of reconstructing on the PTW against the top three alignments generated by Quantm.

The cost comparison contained in **Table 12** assumes a possible intersection configuration of a modern roundabout at the far eastern connection point of MT 201 with MT 200 (at the Montana / North Dakota border). A value of \$1.5 Million has been added as a line item for each of the three new alignments as per direction received from the MDT Traffic and Safety Bureau. For reconstruction on the existing alignment as it enters Fairview, no major intersection improvements are contemplated beyond simple widening.

Table 12: Project Cost Comparison of New vs Existing Alignment

Criteria	Existing PTW (Between RM 67.4 and RM 69.5) ⁽ⁱ⁾	Red Alignment (07_FR_1_01)	Green Alignment (07_FR_1_03)	Blue Alignment (07_FR_1_07)
Total Construction Cost	\$2,051,949	\$3,790,000	\$3,580,000	\$3,710,000
Traffic Control (7% existing PTW / 4% new alignment)	\$143,636	\$151,600	\$143,200	\$148,400
Subtotal	\$2,195,585	\$3,941,600	\$3,723,200	\$3,858,400
Mobilization (10%)	\$219,559	\$394,160	\$372,320	\$385,840
Subtotal	\$2,415,144	\$4,335,760	\$4,095,520	\$4,244,240
Contingencies (10%)	\$241,514	\$433,576	\$409,552	\$424,424
Total CN	\$2,656,658	\$4,769,336	\$4,505,072	\$4,668,664
CE (10%)	\$265,666	\$476,934	\$450,507	\$466,866
Total CN+CE	\$2,922,324	\$5,246,270	\$4,955,579	\$5,135,530
Inflation (3.16% @ 5 years)	\$491,845	\$882,980	\$834,055	\$864,341
Subtotal	\$3,414,169	\$6,129,249	\$5,789,634	\$5,999,872
IDC (9.13%)	\$242,553	\$435,440	\$411,313	\$426,249
Subtotal (Costs w/Inflation & IDC)	\$3,656,722	\$6,564,689	\$6,200,947	\$6,426,121
Modern Roundabout Intersection ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	\$0	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Total Costs (w/Intersection)	\$3,656,722	\$8,064,689	\$7,700,947	\$7,926,121
Difference from Existing	0	(+) \$4,407,967	(+) \$4,044,225	(+) \$4,269,399

⁽ⁱ⁾ The "Total Construction Cost" for reconstructing on the existing PTW came from the project Preliminary Field Review Report dated August 15, 2014. The cost for the entire 5.9 project length was used to develop a cost per mile for construction (i.e. \$5,715,000 divided by 5.9 miles equals \$968,644 per mile). The resultant cost per mile was then multiplied by the 2.1 mile segment of interest to arrive at the estimated construction cost to stay on the PTW for the analysis area between RP 67.4 and RP 69.5 (i.e. \$968,644 per mile * 2.1 miles = \$2,034,152). In addition, estimated right-of-way costs for the existing PTW were programmed by MDT at \$50,000 for the entire 5.9 project length. Accordingly, the estimated right-of-way cost for the 2.1 mile segment of interest is \$17,797. When added to the \$2,034,152, the total estimated construction cost of reconstructing on the PTW is \$2,051,949. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ An estimate of a modern roundabout at the intersection of MT 201 / MT 200 for each of the three new alignments is \$1,500,000 (as per MDT Traffic and Safety Bureau). For reconstruction on the existing alignment as it enters Fairview, no major intersection improvements are contemplated beyond simple widening.

The overall project cost comparison suggests that reconstructing a new alignment between RP 67.4 and RP 69.5, north of the existing roadway, would result in additional costs when compared to reconstructing on the existing roadway.

The additional overall project costs when compared to reconstruction on the PTW realized are estimated to be as follows:

- Red alignment \$4,407,967
- Green alignment \$4,044,225
- Blue alignment \$4,269,399

5.0 CONCLUSION

This alternative alignment analysis is intended to provide a cursory comparison of the top three alignments generated by Quantm for a potential new route for MT 201 in the eastern part of the study area. Quantm generated the top three alignments based on costs and an associated constraint analysis that meets design standards, follows terrain, and avoids several resources that were previously defined. All of the top three alignments appear to be feasible for a new roadway. Based on a very simplistic ranking it appears the Green alignment would be the least impactful and may be the most feasible to pursue. If a new alignment is advanced, there should be flexibility in choosing a final alignment; the best

alignment may be a combination of those presented and should be refined during project development activities.

The top three Quantm generated alignments were reviewed and vetted with City of Fairview and Richland County elected officials, potentially affected landowners, and the general public at a public informational meeting on August 25, 2015 at the Fairview School Cafeteria. . Approximately 55 people attended the meeting, which consisted of an open house between 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM, and a formal presentation/question and answer session between 7:00 PM and 7:45 PM. **Appendix A** contains meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, and public comments received at the meeting and during the public comment period, which ended on September 16, 2015. A transcript of the meeting was also prepared and is located in **Appendix B**.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon 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 406-444-9229. Those using a TTY may call 1(800)335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.



APPENDIX A: PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES, SIGN-IN SHEETS AND COMMENTS

Fairview – West (Phase I)

FINAL Alternative Alignment Analysis

September 29, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Informational Meeting Number 1

DETAILS

Location: Fairview School, Cafeteria
713 South Western Avenue, Fairview, MT

Date: August 25th, 2015

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:00PM (Open House)
7:00 PM – 7:45 PM (Presentation/Question and Answer)

MEETING NOTIFICATION

A news release for the meeting was distributed to area media outlets on August 17th. Display ads announcing the meeting were printed in the *Sidney Herald* on August 9th and 23rd, and in the *Sidney Roundup* on August 5th and 19th. Project newsletters were mailed out to 64 different property owners within the Phase 1 area being examined for possible roadway realignment (i.e. the last two miles entering Fairview). Personal invitations to property owners upon which a new road alignment may traverse were made by telephone call (Loren Young, Roger Johnson, Robert Buxbaum, and Scott and Anita Buxbaum). Information about the meeting was posted to the study website at the following address: <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/fairviewwest/>

ATTENDANCE

There was a total attendance of approximately 55 people at the meeting. Fifty-one people signed the sign in sheet (see **Attachment 1**), while others were present who did not sign in. The following project team members attended the meeting:

- Shane Mintz (MDT Glendive District)
- James Frank (MDT Glendive District)
- Patty Patterson (MDT Glendive District)
- Wade Salyards (MDT Consultant Design)
- Jan Nessel (MDT Headquarters)
- Carol Lambert (Montana Transportation Commission - District 4)
- Jeff Key (RPA)
- Dan Norderud (RPA)
- Tom Cavanaugh (RPA)

Meeting minutes are intended to capture the general content of meeting discussions and to document comments made by attendees. Meeting minutes may include opinions provided by attendees; no guarantees are made as to the accuracy of these statements and no fact checking of specific statements is provided or implied from the publishing of final meeting minutes.

AGENDA

The informational meeting for the Fairview-West Reconstruction Project [STPP 201-2(14)64] was held on Tuesday, August 25, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to:

1. Inform interested parties about the potential reconstruction of approximately 6 miles of Montana Highway 201 (MT-201) west of the Town of Fairview in Richland County. This includes the potential realignment of approximately two miles of highway beginning near reference post 67.4 (just west of the Fairview Airport) and ending at the intersection with MT-200 at the Montana / North Dakota border,
2. Solicit input on MT-201's existing conditions, and
3. Understand roadway concerns within the area that may be relevant to this project's planning.

The meeting open house occurred between 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM, and the formal presentation/question and answer session took place between 7:00 PM and 7:45 PM.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING NUMBER 1

Jeff Key provided a 35-minute PowerPoint presentation which first discussed the overall 6 mile reconstruction project, but then focused on the potential realignment of MT 201 for the last two miles entering Fairview. After the presentation, attendees were asked to provide questions and/or comments; Mr. Key and Mr. Mintz provided answers and/or clarification as warranted. In addition, comment sheets were available for all members of the audience. Only one was filled out and submitted at the meeting (see **Attachment 2**). A summary of the comments and questions received during the meeting is presented below:

- Given the recent meeting on the MT-200 project, it may be easier from a funding standpoint to combine the two projects and look at an overall system that would route MT-201 south and west of Fairview (before getting to Fairview) and then to MT-200 east of Fairview, utilizing CR 134 for cost savings. This would alleviate the truck traffic coming through Fairview, but keep the existing MT-201 in place for local traffic coming from the west. (Scott Buxbaum)
 - *Not sure about feasibility, and we can take that to the project team members, but need to think hard about this. The movement of trucks from the MT-200 study identified the preferential movements of trucks being from south of Fairview to North Dakota (in a north-south movement) and from west of Fairview to North Dakota (in an east-west movement). The comment as stated may result in out-of-direction travel and doesn't address the predominant movement of trucks that are being realized in the field. (Jeff Key)*
- By 2020 and beyond, if the current slowdown in the area continues, there won't be a need for gravel heading to the oil fields and North Dakota. We are already seeing overall truck traffic diminishing over the last several months. (Scott Buxbaum)
 - *Appreciate this insight and this will help inform the discussion, but the project is not just about truck traffic. There are identified needs relative to sub-standard width, horizontal curvature and vertical grades that have to be addressed. (Jeff Key)*
- Agree the road needs to be rebuilt. (Scott Buxbaum)
- Concerned about how or why trucks would take an alternate route, and especially concerned that nothing would be done for the last two miles if an alternate route was in place. The two miles entering Fairview is the most dangerous stretch of MT-201, and the way it's been presented there

would be no improvements to the last two miles if an alternate route was developed. (Linda Simonson)

- *This is great observation and it is true what would happen to the existing MT-201 is a little vague at this point. To the first point, the only way trucks will want to use an alternate route is to either make it faster and more convenient than the alternative, or to physically prevent them from using the existing road. However severing a connection to the existing road can have potential issues with emergency response times, private land access, etc. We cannot physically prevent a truck from using a roadway unless there are clear restrictions for doing so (such as a deficient bridge loading). To your second point, what would happen to the old roadway if a new route is developed is yet-to-be-determined. In many cases the local jurisdiction is asked to take over the old roadway. This would have to be discussed further if an alternate alignment advances as feasible. (Jeff Key)*
- *A couple of other things. There can be a distinction between a “bypass” and a “truck reliever route”. For the latter, trucks have to physically turn off onto the new route. Physically, the old MT-201 could wrap into a new alignment with a “tee” intersection under stop control. However, we cannot have two State Primary MT-201’s in place; both cannot be a State Primary. Normally if a new alignment is developed, the existing route would be given to the local jurisdiction and they would take over all responsibilities (maintenance, etc.). That portion within the city limits would revert to the Town of Fairview, and that portion in the county would revert to Richland County. (Shane Mintz)*
- Live on MT-201 coming into town at the last house over the irrigation canal bridge. While the amount of truck traffic may be going down, am very concerned about the safety of children in this area. There are children that jump off the bridge into the canal, skateboard across the road, and I have seen numerous near misses between trucks and kids. These issues have been around for over 20 years. So again, extremely concerned about the safety of our children in this area along MT-201. (Karen Watts)
 - *This is important to all of us and reflects why we are here talking about the existing roadway and this project. No matter what happens with a road realignment, you will all have a safer facility with wider shoulders and better geometrics. MDT and the project partners take safety very seriously. (Jeff Key)*

After concluding the question/answer portion of the meeting at 7:45 PM, the attendees were invited to review the displays and ask any further questions. Mr. Nessel reminded the meeting attendees that the closure of the public comment period is September 16th. (Note: There were seven comments that were received after the August 25, 2015 informational meeting and the end of the public comment period on September 16, 2015. Those comments are included as **Attachment 3** to the public meeting minutes).



Sign-in Sheet

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
 Project ID: STPP 201-2(14)64 Control Number: UPN 8650000
 Meeting Date: Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2015
 Meeting Time: Open House: 6:00-7:00 p.m. — Presentation: 7:00 p.m.
 Location: Fairview School cafeteria, 713 South Western Ave., Fairview, Mont.

Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address and email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
101.	TOM CAVANAUGH	PO Box 5653, Helena, MT tom@rpa-hln.com	
102.	Jeff Key	PO Box 5653, Helena, MT jeff.key@rpa-hln.com	
103.	KEVIN HARTFELD	PO Box 1212 WATFORD CITY ND 58854	701-388-0235
104.	Bob Renee Sundheim	35194 Hwy 201 Fairview, MT 59221	406-747-5344
105.	St Lloyd Sullivan	1003 S. Pleasant and Fairview Mont.	406-742-5795
106.	Linda Smorson	33580 Hwy 201 Sidney MT 59270	406-788-3672
107.	Michael Sundheim	35774 Hwy 201 Fairview	406-480-2270
108.	Tim Nou	PO Box 118 Fairview MT thn322@yahoo.com 305 S Pleasant Ave	406-489-0558
109.	MARK NEU	Box 461 907 Dawson Ave Fairview MT 59221	406-742-5549
110.	Calvin Johnson	Hwy 201 user	

Please print!



Sign-in Sheet

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 Location: Fairview School cafeteria, 713 South Western Ave., Fairview, Mont.

Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address <i>and</i> email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
111.	Bonnie Inua	P.O. Box 383 Fairview, MT	
112.	Karen Watts	PO BOX 304 Fairview MT 405 1 st St. W	
113.	Donna Shannon	2552 S 82nd Fairview MT	
114.	Dell Shelwood	PO Box 296 Fairview MT	
115.	Pace Buxbaum	13483 Hwy 200	
116.	Alan Omoth	PO Box 4 317 W 6th Fairview	
117.	Kevin Dahl	422 West 10 th Fairview	
118.			
119.			
120.			

Please print!



Sign-in Sheet

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 Location: Fairview School cafeteria, 713 South Western Ave., Fairview, Mont.

Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address and email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
161.	Bruce Benson	723 S Central Ave	742-5446
162.	Arlene Reidle	Box 64 110 NE Ellery	742-8060
163.	Brenda Riedel	321 1 AVE	406 480-1551
164.	Butch RENDERS	PO Box 684 106 7 th ST	406 973-3405
165.	Chad Sundheim	35148 HWY 201	747-5197
166.	Jim Sundheim	35148 HWY 201	747-5197
167.	CAROL LAMBERT	DIST 4 Commissioner	436-2001
168.	Michael Francingues		504-715-2500
169.	Bob Bullen	13318 HWY 200 FAIRVIEW	406 742-5676
170.	Gordon Torgerson	914 12 th ST SW Sidney MT 58270	406-488-5312

Please print!



Sign-in Sheet

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
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 Location: Fairview School cafeteria, 713 South Western Ave., Fairview, Mont.

Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address and email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
171.	Beryl Badda	406-747-9049 1007 8 th St Fairview Mt 59221	
172.	Corm. Scarphott	PO Box 578, 325 W 1 st St Fairview	59221
173.	Derick Liny Diana Force	101 S. Ellery Ave Fairview P.O. Box 132 JorneeForce@hotmail.com	59221
174.	KEN Sharbond	101 N Dawson Ave. Fairview P.O. Box 23 sharbkg@midniveks.com	59221
175.	Scott Buxbaum	16041 34 th St NW Fairview, Mt. 59221	59221
176.	Billie Buxbaum	312 Interstate Ave. W Fairview, MT	59221
177.	Rev Buxba	312 Interstate Ave W Fairview Mt	59221
178.	Matthew Johnson	P.O. Box 115 Sidney	59270
179.	Box # Johnson	Fairview	59221
180.	Kirk Johnson	Sidney	59270

Please print!



Sign-in Sheet

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
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 Location: Fairview School cafeteria, 713 South Western Ave., Fairview, Mont.

Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address and email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
181.	Brian Buxbaum	13595 Cnty Rd 356 Fairview MT	406-747-5567
182.	James W. Hunter	13988 Cnty Rd 347	406-747-5850
183.	Rhonda H. Hunter	13988 Cnty Rd 347	406-747-5850
184.	Dan Young	13689 CR 352	406-747-5568
185.	Jessica Buxbaum	13483 Hwy 200	
186.	Loren H. Young	13705 CR 351 Fairview	406-480-5351
187.	Bryan Cummins	5 E. GTH ST P.O. Box 311 FAIRVIEW	3682 406-480-
188.	Leslie Tveit	13854 Highway 16 Fairview MT 59221	406 798-3621
189.	Brad Tveit	13805 Hwy 16 Fairview, MT 59221	406 480-5080

Please print!



Sign-in Sheet

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Please print!

	Name	Mailing Address (include physical address <i>and</i> email address)	Phone Number (MDT right-of-way use only)
190.	Laural Arnd	Law P O Box 411 Fairview, MT.	
191.	John R. Arnd	PO Box 411 502 W 6th St Fairview	406 742 5318
192.	Don Evruse	81383 59221	712 5665
193.			
194.			
195.			
196.			
197.			
198.			
199.			

Please print!



Comment Form

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
Project ID: Control Number: 8650000
Meeting date and time: August 25, 2015, 6 p.m.
Location: Fairview School cafeteria

You are invited to make your comments on this form and place it in the comment box located at the sign-in table or take it with you and mail to Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, MDT Glendive District office, PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 345-8250 or online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

The deadline for comments is **September 16, 2015**.

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Name and address (include physical address and email address):

BRYAN CUMMINGS - MAYOR
5 E. 6TH ST, - P.O. BOX 311
FAIRVIEW, MT 59221 406-480-3682

Comments: WE NEED A BYPASS - REGARDLESS OF THE ROUTE.

THANKS

Jeff Key

From: Nessel, Jan <jnesset@mt.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2015 7:10 AM
To: Mintz, Shane; Salyards, Wade; Frank, James; Patterson, Patty (MDT); Heidner, Steven; Jeff Key; Tom Cavanaugh; Dan Norderud
Subject: FW: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted

Comment on Fairview-West (UPN 8650)

-----Original Message-----

From: www@mdt.mt.gov [mailto:www@mdt.mt.gov]
Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2015 11:56 AM
To: MDT Comments - Project
Subject: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted

A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.

Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study
Submitted: 08/30/2015 11:55:53
Project/Study Commenting On: FairviewWest
Name: William (Butch) Renders
Email Address: butchr13@gmail.com
Other Details: 8650000

Comment or Question:

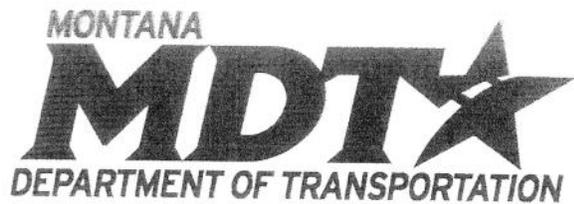
The beginning point could be moved west to allow for future growth and/or expansion of the Fairview airport and to allow for changes in the road way. Also allowing for the possibility of accidents going off the road so they don't interfere with the airport.

The straight line option seems to have been dismissed due to the percent of drop. Couldn't that be mitigated by doing the drop in stages and/or lengthening the distance of the decline, again by moving the beginning point farther west?

By a straight line I don't mean that it couldn't allow some movement in direction, but a straighter line also is shorter and maybe safer.

Thank you

Reference Number = prjcomment_89288330078125



Comment Form

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
 Project ID: Control Number: 8650000
 Meeting date and time: August 25, 2015, 6 p.m.
 Location: Fairview School cafeteria

You are invited to make your comments on this form and place it in the comment box located at the sign-in table or take it with you and mail to Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, MDT Glendive District office, PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 345-8250 or online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

The deadline for comments is September 16, 2015.

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Name and address (include physical address and email address):

Ken Sharbono 101 N Dawson Ave Fairview MT
 SharbKg@midrivers.com

Comments: I'am in favor of a new alignment to the north of Fairview heres why.

Currenty 201 ends right at Sharbono Park with many children trying to cross there going to the park to play and swim. With the heavy traffic on 200 & 201 it makes it very dangerous for them to cross. There are many vehicles, including trucks just running the 4 way stop. Check with the Fairview Police Dept they will tell you how many stop sign violations have been written.

I have lived at this location for 32 years. Kids swim in the Irrigation Canal using the bridge as a diving board, lax on the side of the road with there towels, ride skate boards down the roadway, cross 201 at the bridge with dirt bikes, 4 wheelers ect.

In the years I've been here I have seen 2 trucks

(over)

lose their brakes, go thru 201-200 intersection **Attachment 3** Past the Park
at 50 to 60 mph and crash into an elevator. If that would have happened
on the right day many people would have died.

Just for safety alone lets get this traffic coming in to
Hwy 200 at a safer location!

thank you

Jim Sharbone



Comment Form

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
 Project ID: Control Number: 8650000
 Meeting date and time: August 25, 2015, 6 p.m.
 Location: Fairview School cafeteria

You are invited to make your comments on this form and place it in the comment box located at the sign-in table or take it with you and mail to Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, MDT Glendive District office, PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 345-8250 or online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

The deadline for comments is **September 16, 2015**.

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Name and address (include physical address and email address):

Graycie Sharbono Po Box 23, Fairview, Mt. 59221
 101 N Dawson Ave
 sharbkg@midrivers.com

Comments: My recommendation is for using the alignment to the north.

Safety is my first issue - the crossing to the park at the intersection of 200 and 201. With the 2 lanes there are times when an individual crossing is not seen before one of the traffic lanes starts to move. This crossing is the one used to enter the park with the swimming pool, at the north end.

Any traffic entering 201 from any avenue is nearly impossible.

I would also like to address the noise created by trucks using their compression

Attachment 3

brakes coming down the hill into Fairview, All hours day and night. The exhaust fumes from the traffic has also increased. Both the issues have become concerns for the Fairview residents.

This amount of traffic should be traveling on a by pass or truck route not in residential areas.

Please consider these concerns when making your decision on the highway plans. Fairview residents deserve to get to go back to a more peaceful residential area

Jeff Key

From: Sundheim, Sterling <ssundheim@mt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 09, 2015 11:30 AM
To: Jeff Key
Cc: Sterling Sundheim
Subject: RE: News Release (UPN 8650): MDT Schedules an Open House and Informational Meeting to Discuss the Reconstruction and Potential Realignment of MT-201 North of Fairview in Richland County

Jeff:
I was not able to attend the public meeting. I am guessing there is a general plan for realignment and am wondering where exactly that proposed alignment lies. I just want to be assured it is not on our property. Our south property boundary lies along the south line of the NW1/4SW1/4 Sec 35, T25N, R59E and along the south line of the SENW and SWNE of said section 35.

Respectfully,
Sterling Sundheim
366-2361

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeff Key [mailto:Jeff.Key@RPA-HLN.COM]
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 2:56 PM
To: Sterling; Sundheim, Sterling
Cc: Salyards, Wade
Subject: FW: News Release (UPN 8650): MDT Schedules an Open House and Informational Meeting to Discuss the Reconstruction and Potential Realignment of MT-201 North of Fairview in Richland County

Hello Sterling - You had asked to be placed on our notification list for this study, so I wanted you to receive the press release announcing our upcoming informational meeting (see below).

Thanks, and let me know if you have any questions.....

Jeff

Jeff Key, PE | Project Manager
Robert Peccia & Associates Inc. | PO Box 5653 | Helena, MT 59604
406.447.5000 | 406.447.5036 (fax) | 406.438.2992 (cell) | Jeff.Key@rpa-hln.com <http://www.rpa-hln.com>

-----Original Message-----

From: Nessel, Jan [mailto:jnesset@mt.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2015 8:00 AM
To: Ryan, Lori <lryan@mt.gov>
Cc: Marosok, Lauren <lmarosok@mt.gov>
Subject: News Release (UPN 8650): MDT Schedules an Open House and Informational Meeting to Discuss the Reconstruction and Potential Realignment of MT-201 North of Fairview in Richland County

August 17, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lori Ryan, Public Information Officer, (406) 444-6821, email: lryan@mt.gov

MDT Schedules an Open House and Informational Meeting to Discuss the Reconstruction and Potential Realignment of MT-201 North of Fairview in Richland County

Fairview - The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is conducting an open house and informational meeting to discuss the reconstruction of approximately 6 miles of MT-201 west of Fairview in Richland County. The segment of MT-201 proposed for reconstruction extends from the junction of MT-201 and MT-200 in Fairview to reference post 63.6 located about 6 miles west of the community. This includes the potential realignment of approximately two miles of highway beginning near reference post 67.4 (just west of the Fairview Airport) and ending at the intersection with MT-200 at the Montana / North Dakota border.

The open house is Tuesday, Aug. 25, at the Fairview School cafeteria (713 South Western Ave.) and will run from 6 to 7 p.m. with a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. Project team members will be available during the open house and after the presentation to discuss the reconstruction and potential realignment of MT-201.

More information on the project is available at:

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/fairviewwest>

Community participation is a very important part of the process, and the public is encouraged to attend. Opinion, comments and concerns may also be submitted in writing at the meeting, by mail to Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, MDT, Glendive District office at PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890, or online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

Please note that your comments are for project UPN 8650000. Submit comments by September 16, 2015.

Proposed work includes reconstructing the existing roadway to current design standards to include a wider finished top width (including shoulders), plant mix surfacing, seal and cover (chip seal), rumble strips, upgraded pavement markings and signage, and intersection improvement at both County Road 359 and MT-200. The work also involves the identification and analysis of potential new alignments for the eastern portion of the project corridor between MT-200 in Fairview and reference post 67.4 on MT-201. The alternative alignment analysis is intended to inform the decision of the best alignment possible to increase safety and shift trucks from the existing road facility as it enters Fairview.

New right-of-way and utility relocations will be necessary. MDT's consultant will contact all potentially affected landowners prior to conducting survey work on their land to obtain written permission. MDT staff will contact landowners prior to construction regarding property acquisition and temporary construction permits.

The Department of Transportation will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this public meeting or need an alternative accessible format of this notice. If you require an accommodation, contact Jan Nessel at (406) 556-4707 no later than 12 p.m./noon on August 20, to advise us of the nature of the accommodation that you need. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. Persons who need an alternative format should contact the Office of Civil Rights, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-9229; fax (406) 444-7243, or e-mail to aflesch@mt.gov. Those using a TTY may call (800) 335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.



Comment Form

Project name: FAIRVIEW-WEST
 Project ID: Control Number: 8650000
 Meeting date and time: August 25, 2015, 6 p.m.
 Location: Fairview School cafeteria

You are invited to make your comments on this form and place it in the comment box located at the sign-in table or take it with you and mail to Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, MDT Glendive District office, PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 345-8250 or online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

The deadline for comments is September 16, 2015.

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Name and address (include physical address and email address):

Tim Noy
 305 South Pleasant Ave
 Fairview MT 59221
 thn322@yahoo.com

Comments:

This is a great idea - moving trucks out north of town. Safety has to be considered in all plans. If it stays in town, a run away truck camp should be considered. Best is to move to the north to reduce grade & risk. You have my full support.

Tim Noy ^{pm 12} 406-489-0558

September 15, 2015

District Administrator, Shane Mintz
503 N River Avenue
PO Box 890
Glendive, MT 59330-0890

Mr. Mindt,

I'm writing in regards to Highway 201 possible bypass around Fairview, Montana. I would like to see the highway left where it is and the money spent to give it shoulders and a good slope. This would assist any possible vehicle roll overs.

The shoulders should have been added years ago when the project was completed on the west end of Highway 201. I'd like to see the shoulders started on the west side of the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation canal bridge and extend to the intersection of Highway 201 and Highway 16. Guard rails could be added to the steep areas on the "Fairview Hill".

The money that would be spent buying land for the bypass and building it, could be better spent upgrading what we already have.

I don't feel state highways should be moved out of towns. I also think the Montana Department of Transportation should not be held responsible for poor parents and their inability to keep their children from playing on or near the road.

Please leave Highway 201 where it is and upgrade it with shoulders and a few guard rails.

Loren Young
Loren Young Inc.
Young Farms
13705 CR 351
Fairview, MT 59221

Jeff Key

From: Nessel, Jan <jnesset@mt.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 7:31 AM
To: Frank, James; Salyards, Wade; Patterson, Patty (MDT); Nessel, Jan; Jeff Key; Heidner, Steven; Mintz, Shane
Subject: FW: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted

Another comment re: Fairview-West

-----Original Message-----

From: www@mdt.mt.gov [mailto:www@mdt.mt.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 10:30 PM
To: MDT Comments - Project
Subject: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted

A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.

Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study
Submitted: 09/16/2015 22:30:02
Project/Study Commenting On: FairviewWest
Name: Dan Young
Email Address: youngnrch@gmail.com

Comment or Question:

As one of the landowners affected by the alternate route I am concerned about the money spent to redirect traffic when there will still be 6 miles of remaining treacherous roadway. I don't feel it is the MDT's responsibility to move the highway so children can skateboard down the hill and jump from the canal bridge. When we purchased our property we knew it bordered the highway as did anyone within city limits. I'm concerned that by not fixing the entire 12 miles that we will just be putting the motor vehicle accidents 6 miles farther from town. The number of accidents stated at the meeting were probably low, I know there has been numerous incidents not even reported because of fence I have gotten to fix. In closing I would commend the MDT on the 4 way stop at the park, although I was skeptical at first it has greatly improved the flow of traffic. I just feel we need to stretch the dollars we have over as many miles as we can.

Thank you for your consideration.
Dan Young

Reference Number = prjcomment_782196044921875



APPENDIX B: PUBLIC MEETING TRANSCRIPT

Fairview – West (Phase I)

FINAL Alternative Alignment Analysis

September 29, 2015

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

FAIRVIEW-WEST UPN 8650 August 25, 2015 Fairview School Cafeteria Fairview, MT

OPENING

Jan Nessel: I want to welcome you and thank you for attending tonight's meeting. My name is Jan Nessel and I'm the Public Involvement Coordinator for the Montana Department of Transportation. On behalf of MDT we appreciate you taking time out of your schedule to be here tonight. You are a very important aspect of the preconstruction process and we are interested in hearing your comments and suggestions regarding this project.

This is a public open house and informational meeting encompassing the project known as UPN 8650 Fairview-West. The Montana Department of Transportation is conducting this meeting to discuss a proposal to reconstruct approximately six miles of MT 201 West of Fairview in Richland County. The proposed highway reconstruction and its purpose will be presented at this meeting.

In a moment I'll introduce the consultant and staff from MDT but first I need to take care of a few housekeeping matters. If you haven't signed in please do so. This meeting is being recorded and if a transcript is needed we want to make sure that we have the correct spelling of your name and location. There are comment forms for those of you who wish to comment on the proposed project. You may write your comments on the comment sheet and leave it in the comment box or you can take it with you and either email, fax, or mail them in. If you prefer to submit comments on line, please use the address listed on the form. The comment deadline for this project is September 16th. There is also a Title VI pamphlet on the table that defines MDT's policy on nondiscrimination which you're welcome to take. If you have any questions about the policy, please see me after the meeting.

PRESENTATION – Jeff Key, Robert Peccia and Associates

My name is Jeff Key. Good evening everybody. I'm glad you all made it to this meeting. This is a difficult subject we're talking about tonight. There are a lot of emotions and a lot of opinions about Hwy 201. We have a lot of background about it. One of the messages I've left with a lot of you is "please keep an open mind; please think about this. MDT is sincerely looking for your input on the proposal."

MDT is considering the reconstruction of MT 201 for a total length of six miles basically from County Road 350 out to the west all the way to where it intersects with MT 200. That is the full

reconstruction project. Not much work has been done so far on what we're doing. We've not gone out and surveyed topography, we haven't started design and we haven't done a lot of our normal project development. A six-mile reconstruction project takes a lot of time to develop. It doesn't happen overnight; it takes, in some cases, years. One of the questions asked by you folks and by MDT is if we are going to reconstruct MT 201, let's make darn sure it's in the right place. To that end we are focusing on the area in the red box (referring to graphic), the area being examined for new alignment. One of the thoughts we wanted to explore further is whether it makes sense to have a new alignment for MT 201, whether it makes sense to the general public, to the affected landowners, and to the elected officials. It's not an easy discussion but if we're going to spend upwards of \$10 million on the road, we want to make sure it's in the right spot. I ask you again to keep an open mind about this. We are here is to get the flavor of what the folks feel about this proposal.

What we know about the existing roadway is that we have seen an influx of traffic over the last decade. I understand that it may be declining over the recent month in terms of truck traffic but nonetheless we have seen an influx of traffic. We've seen an increase in certain types of traffic and we are seeing some of that commercial activity continuing with gravel trucks, etc.

Many components of the existing highway do not meet current standards. If we go out and redo a highway or reconstruct a highway, we have to meet federal highway design standards. That means things like roadway width. The existing roadway does not have a shoulder. If we're going to build a new roadway, we'd be looking at putting a new four-foot or six-foot shoulder on the roadway. That is based on traffic volumes. We have some areas of vertical profile, the ups and downs of the roadway that don't meet standards. We have some grades that are actually steep as you come into town. If we were to redo the highway, we would try to meet standards. We have to keep that in mind because the existing roadway is deficient in many aspects and is in need of some work. I hope everybody can agree on that. I like to start by trying to find something everyone can agree on and by in large everyone I've talked to seems to agree something needs to be done to the roadway. So that's a starting point.

We also know there are some safety concerns on the roadway. We do have some defined crash trends with certain types of crashes. You can read the statistics but in a 10-year period there were 60 reported crashes. I say the word "reported" because not all crashes are reported. There were 60 reported crashes, one fatal crash, 28 injury crashes and 48 non-intersection related crashes. That's an interesting statistic for me because it says 48 of those crashes didn't have anything to do with an intersection, they were run off the road perhaps at the curves, perhaps wild animal collisions, etc. Then 22 crashes involved a commercial vehicle. When you look at all of these things, it really paints a picture of something going on with the roadway. I think it's time we look at that and see what we can do.

So what does "bringing it up to current standards" mean? It means at a minimum 12-foot travel lanes and 4-foot shoulders. We would probably design the roadway so that it could be expanded with wider shoulders in the future if traffic volumes dictated that. Right off the bat you probably wouldn't see wider than four-foot shoulders. We would improve the horizontal and vertical

profiles of the roadway. We would have new asphalt surfacing – chip seal, rumble strips, pavement markings and signing, delineation, and intersection improvements. There are a variety of county roads that intersect MT 201 and those roadways would be improved with reconstruction. Again, that is for the entire six miles.

What about this Phase I business? What about that red box? What about those maps we have in the back? Well again, if we're going to sink the money into this roadway, make sure it's in the right place. So we wanted to explore whether we could have the support of moving the roadway and whether it would be feasible to do so. Again there are lots of assumptions that have gone into place. Everything we've done has been based on publically available information through various sources. We've not gone out and surveyed all of the area. We learn things in the last hour about things that may be out there that didn't get captured. That's part of this fact finding.

We wanted to look to see, for the last two miles, if there is a better alignment for increasing safety and removing trucks. That was the fundamental question asked of us and really why we're here. That red box I showed you is replicated here on a topographic map. To get your bearings the red line is existing 201 as it winds down into Fairview. This boarder here is what we've called the Phase I boundary. This is the area where we looked at a possible alignment. I also want to point out that this blue dash line has some significance – there is a companion study going on right now that is looking at MT 200 and a potential realignment of that roadway. That study is getting into quite a bit more depth and detail than what we're charged with doing. We're charged with exposing you folks to this early on and seeing if there is merit to it. The other study is getting into a lot more detail. That study is looking at a possible realignment of Hwy 200 to the east. That is going on at the same time and we're trying to coordinate and collaborate as we go about this business.

Our Task - within that red box we've been tasked with doing an Environmental Scan which is a very broad first look at issues that we might see within that red box. Issues such as wetlands, the presence of farmland, cleanup sites, oil wells, etc. etc. All of that information we get from various data sources. Some of it comes from local documents that you have in Richland County or town of Fairview. Some of it comes from state data bases.

We prepare the environmental scan and we put that information into a software tool that we call "Quantum". Based on a purely technical exercise, Quantum will actually generate alignments for us. It doesn't factor in personal preference, histories, or things like that; it's a purely technical exercise. It is based on assumptions that we make. After the Quantum software analysis, we prepare a report and then we would like to engage the officials, elected officials and the residents. So that's where we're at right now.

Some of the things we found. All I wanted you to know about this schedule is that we would like, by the end of September, to have some initial idea of whether an alternative alignment would fly or not because it actually informs what we do for the next phase which is designing and working on the existing roadway. So one way or the other, we're going to start working on

MT 201 for the full six miles with or without an alternate alignment. So we would really like to get to some kind of resolution about whether an alternate alignment would work.

We've had a couple of project newsletters. Those were mailed to all the landowners within the red box with a few exceptions. There were some areas around Sharbono Park and the pool which we know for a fact that we're not going to get close to. So those residents didn't receive the newsletters. We sent them to residents along the existing highway within that red box and everybody to the north and a little bit to the south. We have a website that has a lot of information on it and I would encourage you to visit it. It's on MDT's website. Then we looked at some of the local planning documents. You do have some draft policies and plans and final plans and airport regulations, etc. There's a lot going on in the community and we've tried to pay attention to that as well.

What did the environmental scan find? What did we incorporate into the scan?

I'll touch on a couple of things. When the project does get into full force of survey and design, there's a lot more rigor that goes into it. There's a lot more environmental rigor. We would actually be tasked with doing the whole six miles and doing some very specific studies about wetlands and cultural resources and cleanup sites, etc. So this isn't the end product, it's just a very high level look. Basically we use that public information to see if there are things that could be affected by transportation related or modifications to the roadway improvements.

These are some of the things we looked at but not all of them. The ones highlighted are things I'd like to call attention to (referring to graphic). For example we know you have a variety of terrain and land forms and you do have some prime farmland especially over on the eastern part of that red study boundary. That has special significance when we develop a transportation project. If we use federal funds to develop a roadway project, we have to do an accountability assessment of prime farmland and there are special requirements we have to do if we take farmland out of production. That's not to say that we can't do that but there are some special regulations from the Farmland Policy Protection Act. We do develop roadway projects through farmlands but it does have some special significance. So we look at where prime farmland exists, if it's irrigated, along with other categories of farmland. You do have a variety of farmland areas again mainly to the east and little bit north of the Fairview Airport. We pay attention to that as we go about our business.

We also look at water resources and the presence of things like wetlands, bridges, you have a very robust irrigation canal, and the main canal. Certainly any type of alignment shift or realignment would have to go over that main canal so we pay attention to that as well. The wetland delineation is interesting because we're charged with minimizing and mitigating impacts of highway projects through wetlands. The wetland information that's available to us publicly is a very broad database. If a project ever developed we would actually get into a lot more details about where wetlands exist.

We also look at floodplains. The good news is that within our red box there are no delineated floodplains although there is the potential for periodic flooding based on storm events. That's a little different connotation but the good news is, according to FEMA and floodplain regulations, we don't have any delineated floodplains.

The oil and gas wells. We know there are a variety of those kinds of features. When we prepared the report, there were four oil wells within that border. Things change so rapidly here that I don't know if that is current or not. We have an injection well, dry hole gravel pits, and we have open cut permits throughout the study area boundary. Not all of them have been developed yet but certainly that has special significance. It's not that we can't develop a roadway through or adjacent to a gravel pit but typically the costs are a bit higher in doing so. So we have to be careful of that. When you go to the state database and look at aerial photos, the pinpricks on the database don't match up with where the gravel pit is and we have to be cognizant of that. So we try to use relevant aerial photos and tried to trace around the gravel pit and put that into our connotations. Likewise oil wells because we know there are pads associated with those wells. For our purposes we put a buffer around the oil wells of 100 feet. Whether or not that is adequate for the way those operate or not, that has to be determined.

We also have fish, wildlife, and vegetation that we pay attention to. Richland County has a variety of Threatened and Endangered Species. The majority of those area not contained within our study area, although there was a recorded observation of a Whopping Crane from the State database. I don't know if it was a wayward bird that lost its way or not but we have had a recording of an Endangered Species within the study area.

We also pay attention to cultural and archeological resources. Of course Sharbono Park and Fairview Pool have special significance. Those are areas we would not consider touching. We put special parameters on that.

We do have some historic properties. The main canal is actually registered as a Historic Feature. Then there is a residence at the existing intersection that is registered as historic. So we try to avoid those to the greatest extent we can.

We take those items and put them into the software and assign costs for various things and we see what the software spits out. That is what you're seeing today. Again it doesn't speak to personal preference. I can tell you the software spits out hundreds of alignments and we're just showing the top three from the lowest cost point of view. That's not to say there aren't variations or that there aren't potential other alignments. We're just showing the three lowest costs.

Quantum is intended to generate multiple cost base alignments and we input a whole bunch of data to do that. We put in things like the allowable grades according to federal standards, the allowable curvature, the road width, the back slope and fill slopes, the design speed. We also put in the cost of things like bridges, earthwork, pavement, assumed right-of-way costs based on fair market value. What is fair market value now? Those are things yet to come. For our purposes

we had to use something to factor that in. We also look at things like the houses, wetlands, gravel pits. If we potentially impact a house, that is a pretty substantial significant thing, so we assign a really high costs to all the house in hope that the software would re-route around the houses.

There are areas we avoid – airport and runway protection zones. Those are like a trapezoid at the ends of the runway at the Fairview Airport. That has special significance. Generally we don't develop features within the Airport Protection Zone. We are allowed to but there is also a height component to that as well. That can cause some issues if you're putting a roadway in and it's going to be significantly higher than the existing topography. Then you have to pay attention to that. We actually cordoned off the Runway Protection Zone because we didn't want to mess around with that.

Active oil wells – we put a buffer of 100 feet around those oil wells basically saying we don't want to blow through those wells but we can get close to them.

The city water tank, the Fairview Pool, and Sharbono Park are all off limits. Special zones are things we could potentially impact but they are going to cost a lot more so we put higher costs on those things. This is a graphic of the “avoid” areas.

Then what happens? We flipped the switch and got 100 different alignments, we sorted them and the three lowest cost alignments are what we are showing on the graphics back there (referring to display). Again, personal preference does not come this. We elected to show these three alignments in terms of blue, green, and red. Because this isn't an exact science and it is our first exposure to this, we actually showed a swath around that actual colored line (referring to graphic) 200 feet on each side of that line. It is a very large swath. The only reason we did that was (1) we don't know for certain how that roadway would look and (2) where it would be exactly so we wanted to have some flexibility. The graphic in the back shows what we call a “construction limit” which is where our roadway would actually touch down to the existing ground. That's a much narrower viewpoint on the order of 100 feet. The other distinction is that when you look at these three lines, you can mix and match and form and combine – if this proposal ends up being palatable to everybody involved. That means the general public, the affected landowners, and the elected officials. That is the fundamental purpose of this meeting is to expose all three of those entities to what we're talking about and see what the reaction is.

The bottom line is this is a purely technical analysis right now but I've already heard from many people that there's problems with some of these things so there would have to be some refinements done if this goes forward.

We looked at them from a length perspective, estimated costs, construction area impacts, wetlands, farmland, and 4F properties which has a special connotation when you use federal money. It speaks to recreational and historical and wildlife related properties. What we found was if we do a very, very simple analysis and take these three alignments and try to rank them... A good example is total length – the red alignment is 10,900 feet approximately two miles, the

green alignment is 11,400 which is 500 feet longer, the blue alignment is 11,500. We would strive to have the shortest alignment possible because the longer the alignment, the more it costs and the harder it is to maintain. So in this kind of scenario of the total length we could say the lowest length, the shortest length would be the best so we'd give that a number one. The green alignment would be the second shortest so we'd give that a number two. The blue alignment would then be the longest so we'd give that a number three. We can do that for all of these things. We can do it for total estimated cost. The green alignment would actually be the lowest cost alignment so that would get a number one. The red alignment would be the highest cost so that would get a three. So based on a very cursory look, it appears on the most simplest level that the green alignment would be the lowest point value and probably might be the better and easiest to implement. Again we've learned some things today that suggest that might not be the case and we may want to tweak that. But in a simple form we could go about ranking these three alignments in such a way.

I also mentioned these construction limits shown in these dashed lines (referring to graphic). For example, in the blue alignment you can see that those dashed lines get wide in areas of different topography and get narrower where the road follows the topography. That blue swath is much bigger than what the true impact of the roadway would probably be. Again these are purely technical. This shows different parcel boundaries (referring to graphic). This would have some fairly robust impacts on some of these parcels. Again that is a discussion we need to have with the landowners about how palatable this is or isn't. Certainly we can do some wagging and wiggling and refinement with this first look.

The construction costs was the number I was showing in the previous slides. That's only half the discussion because we also have to do some other things. We have to factor in inflation, utilities, and other things. What I'm choosing to do with this slide is I want you to realize the difference in staying on the existing roadway as it comes into Fairview for those last 2.1 miles versus going off the existing roadway. It is on the order of \$4 to \$4.4 million dollars extra. So that's the financial magnitude of a decision to go off alignment. That's an important talking point to see what's at stake about pursuing something like this. Again the top three alignments from the Quantum analysis showed some of this maneuvering around.

I've heard somethings over the last hour that I didn't know and the whole purpose of having this meeting is to learn things we don't know. We learned about coal mine shoots, old landfill, no way no how can you get that close to an oil well, so we've learned some things. So we have to take that back and factor that in. At the end of the day, what we're hoping to hear from the public is what you think of this. It's not just the general public, it's everybody. It's the elected officials and the landowners that would be directly affected.

There are a lot of uncertainties at this point in time. I don't know what would happen to the old roadway if something like this happened. Typically we would ask the local jurisdiction to take over that roadway and maintain that roadway. Do we sever the roadway? Do we create a new alignment and allow that existing roadway to continue to be used? We don't know the answers to those questions right now. We don't know what the intersection would look like at MT 200

and where our new connection would be. Those are all yet to be determined but again, before we go down that path, we want to know if this is even doable. Is it a hair-brained idea? I would ask that you think about that as you offer comments tonight or subsequently over the next three weeks. I've received a handful of comments verbally but we need you to write them down.

Not everybody is comfortable speaking in front of the whole group and that's why we've had this three-week period. Think about your experience if you're a landowner who will be directly affected. Think about what your future plans might be for your land and whether this might work for you. If you're the general public, think about your experience. If you're an elected officials, think about what it would mean. Would you be willing to take on that roadway?

We would like to finalize this Phase I by the end of the September so we could have some idea of what our direction is going to be as we contemplate the bigger project. We would begin the design activities of the bigger project shortly thereafter. Any kind of construction is years away. It would probably be the year 2020 at the earliest. My understanding is that we don't have all the money to go out and build this roadway but we want to make sure we get it ready in the que when money does come available. From all accounts that would be the year 2020 unless something changes.

That is my presentation. Again September 16th is when we're looking for comments. We ask that you go talk to your neighbors and the adjacent landowners and think very strongly about whether this makes sense for this community or not. I will open it up for comments right now.

QUESTION/ANSWER PERIOD:

Q: (Scott Buxbaum) I'm a landowner. It seems we just met on the 200 project here a month ago. It seems to me to push this thing through Montana for funding and everything, it would make more sense to combine those two projects and go around the south side of town with your bypass around the east side of Fairview utilizing County Road 134. It would be a cost savings on both projects plus it would alleviate the truck traffic through Fairview and we could still keep our road coming down for the landowners and homeowners that are west of Fairview.

A: (Jeff Key) I guess I don't have a good answer as to whether that is fully feasible or not. We heard your comment earlier and we'll think about it from a due diligence point of view. The only comment that I question, and I don't have the answer, is the movement of trucks through the community and where the preference for trucks are. I've been led to believe that the north/south preference is coming from south of Sidney and south of Fairview heading to North Dakota and the east/west movement is predominantly east/west off 201 heading to North Dakota. The proposal you speak about may have merit but I wonder if it is addressing the movement of those trucks. I've also heard that the trucks have kind of gone down a little bit over the last few months so that actually has to be part of that discussion. But the comment you made is noted and it is something we'll discuss as a team with the Department and others and see what shakes out of it.

Q: (Scott Buxbaum) By 2020 if this slowdown in the oil fields proceeds the way it is, by 2020 there won't be any need for gravel and that's the majority of the trucks that are coming down 201 right now. They are gravel trucks. Even if the oil field stays robust or comes back, by 2020 the way they're hauling gravel it will all be gone.

A: (Jeff Key) I appreciate that comment very much and it's a very valid comment. It may help inform the discussion about a new alignment but one thing we all understand is that we need to do something with the existing road anyway regardless of the truck traffic. We have improvements that need to be made. The business of an alternate alignment ties directly to truck traffic but the business of reconstruction of a roadway ties to more than truck traffic. It ties to substandard roads, crashes, and a lot of other things. I think it is worth noting as we get farther into this process about what we're going to do. It's a good observation.

Com: (Scott Buxbaum) I agree, this road does need to be rebuilt. It is a very bad road right now.

Q: (Linda Simonsen) I'm from 201 on the west end. One of the things that concerns me is what will make trucks take the alternative route? It concerns me that nothing would be done for those last two miles which are actually the most dangerous miles of that stretch of highway. It is my understanding that you would do no new construction if you made the realignment. It concerns me that we're leaving those last two miles alone if you do the realignment.

A: (Jeff Key) That is something that is a little vague at this point. You're first question is what would make trucks use an alternate route. Trucks use an alternate route if it is faster and more convenient for them to do so and/or if the alternative is prohibited. That means if you build an alternate route for trucks, you would have to sever the connection of the existing roadway somehow and that has serious implications. Emergency Service responders need that road. It affects a lot of different things but we cannot prevent trucks from using a roadway unless there is something like a substandard bridge or load restrictions or something to that effect. So to answer your first question, you need to make it more convenient and more desirable for the truckers or you need to prohibit trucks from using a certain route. Now if a new route went in place, what happens to the old route? That's yet to be determined. Normally we would see the local jurisdictions take control of that either the county or the town. Certainly I don't think you could obliterate the roadway because there is a lot of existing uses.

A: (Shane Minsk) I want to add a couple of things to what Jeff said in terms of a new connection. We've heard this language from North Dakota before that they define the difference between a bypass and the truck reliever route is with a truck reliever route you have to physically turn off of it. So the likelihood if we did one of these alignments would be something similar where the old road would come in and then T up and there'd be a stop sign there. As far as being able to force trucks down it, as part of a new

alignment we can't have two primary 201's, so both of these roads can't be a state primary. Normally we would look at the portion of the road within the city limits of Fairview and it would be turned over to the city of Fairview and it would be their responsibility to maintain, repair and that portion would become a Richland County road. Once they go off the state highway system I believe the rules change some in terms of what trucks can be prohibited. There are different rules for a state highway and the state of Montana's ability to prevent trucks on it.

Q: (Karen Watts) I live on Hwy 201 as you come into town; we're the last house as you go over the irrigation bridge. People have talked about the amount of truck traffic and how it's going down. I've lived there 21 years and been in town 33 years. I was hired as a teacher to come here so my concern is children. I witness children that love to jump off the bridge into the canal. I used to know the children and could call the parents and tell them about that. They love to take their skateboards down that road and they love to ride their blades and they love to take their little motorcycles and zip across from one side of the irrigation ditch to the other. I'm very concerned about their safety. In that time period, 21 years now, my husband witnessed a truck come to a complete stop on a three-year old who wondered out onto the road. Yes, you may say it is going down but just this summer there were kids swimming in the ditch right there as the trucks come in. Even back 21 years ago there was truck traffic and there were big trucks coming down that road. Now it's unbelievable. We smell their brakes and other stuff. That will go away yes, but again, my concern is for the safety of the children.

A: (Jeff Key) That is a factor in why we're even talking about the existing roadway as well. Regardless of whether we end up off alignment or on alignment, you will have a safer facility. That's the fundamental purpose of what we're doing with wider shoulders and an improved bridge. We take safety very seriously as well.

Written Comments:

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We need a bypass – regardless of the route. Thanks

CLOSING

(Jan Nettet) If there are no other comments or questions we will end. If anybody else wishes to say anything, this is the time to do it. Otherwise we will wrap up the question/comment period and resume with our open house. Feel free to mingle with the project team and learn more about the proposed project. As a reminder MDT is accepting comments on this proposed project until

September 16th. If after this meeting you have any comments that come to mind, please use the comment form. You can either mail it in, fax it in, or there's an address to submit your comments on line. Thank you for attending tonight's open house and informational meeting and have a good evening. Thank you for coming.