How do I stay involved in this project?

Public participation is an important part of the project development process. You will be informed of any upcoming meetings, and you are welcome to attend the final meeting, submit comments, and review project reports.

Information about the *Sidney Truck Route Study* is available on the project website located at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/sidneytruckroute/

Next Steps:

Over the next several weeks, the project team will be refining the alignment options discussed at this second public meeting. We will attempt to identify an optimal alignment as well as a plan for phased implementation. If we can successfully identify a long-range plan for a truck route, it may be possible to break out short segments that can be constructed in the nearer term as funding becomes available. We will have to demonstrate that these short segments have logical termini and independent utility whether any other improvements are made.

We will hold a third public meeting this summer to review the findings of the study, and provide a draft study report for public comment.

For other information, please feel free to contact either:

Montana Department of Transportation
Ray Mengel
503 North River Avenue
PO Box 890
Glendive, Montana 59330-0890

(406) 345-8200
rmengel@mt.gov

DOWL HKM
Jamie Jespersen
7 West 6th Avenue, Suite 3W
PO Box 1009
Helena, Montana 59624-1009

(406) 442-0370 (x-604)
jjespersen@hkminc.com

Please refer to the *Sidney Truck Route Study* in your correspondence.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any department service, program or activity. For the hearing impaired, the TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or **(800) 335-7592**, or Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request.

City of Sidney
Richland County

Montana Department of Transportation
serving you with pride

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Sidney Truck Route Study

Public Information Meeting
March 12, 2009

Project Team:

Montana Department of Transportation:

Ray Mengel
Gary Lundman
Jean Riley
Brian Andersen
Jim Frank
Carol Strizich
Larry Sickerson

Federal Highway Administration:
Jeff Patten

Gallatin Public Affairs:
Darryl James

DOWL HKM:
Jamie Jespersen

Status of the Truck Route Study:

The City of Sidney has requested that the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) conduct a study to examine potential benefits and optimal routes for a truck route around Sidney. The notion of a truck route has been a topic of discussion in Sidney for several decades, and the recent expansion of oil exploration in the region has heightened the local sense of need for this type of facility.

The project team conducted a Public Information Meeting in May 2008 and two stakeholder meetings were held in August and December 2008. An Agency Coordination Meeting was also held in December 2008 to gather information from regulatory agencies with jurisdiction in the study area.

An *Environmental Scan* report was prepared to document the existing environmental constraints within the study area. The report provides an overview and mapping of natural and physical constraints such as wetlands, floodplains, and waterbodies, and community constraints such as residential and commercial developments, parks, wellheads, and irrigation facilities. A *Traffic and Safety Technical Memorandum* was also developed to document the analysis of existing traffic patterns and crash trends. Along with continuing public and agency coordination, both of these reports will play a substantive role in the screening of alignment options and the selection of a preferred corridor.

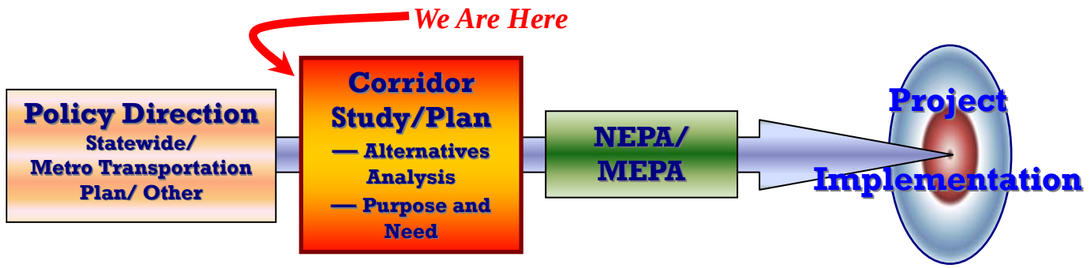
Purpose of Tonight's Meeting:

The project team will provide an update on the progress of the study, a summary of Stakeholder Committee input, and the results of our preliminary analysis and modeling efforts. We will be requesting public feedback on the conceptual corridors and preliminary alignment options identified to date, and would like to reach consensus on a narrowed range of alignment options to be analyzed in greater detail during the remainder of the study.

Your input will be critical in helping us identify any other opportunities or constraints that have not surfaced to date, and in gauging public and political support for the remaining options.

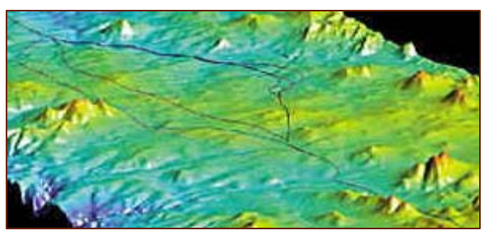
Project Development Process:

While these planning and environmental phases are being completed, Sidney area officials and MDT will be exploring funding options and identifying responsibilities for the ultimate costs of project design, construction, and maintenance of the facility. MDT, the City of Sidney, Richland County, and the Richland Economic Development Authority all recognize the challenge of funding the large but important undertaking of a new truck route. Each party must recognize that successful implementation of any new truck route will require a cooperative arrangement that includes not only state, local, and federal agency funding support, but also community support and the cooperation of local residents, business owners, and developers during right-of-way negotiations to ensure the project is viable.



This study process will result in the selection of a single or limited number of alignment options that would be further reviewed under a National and Montana Environmental Policy Act (NEPA/ MEPA) process if a project was forwarded. The NEPA/MEPA process would ensure that the proposed roadway design would minimize impacts to the surrounding built and natural environments. If a specific alignment is chosen, impacts would be analyzed and disclosed through the NEPA/MEPA process, and the project could move into final design and construction.

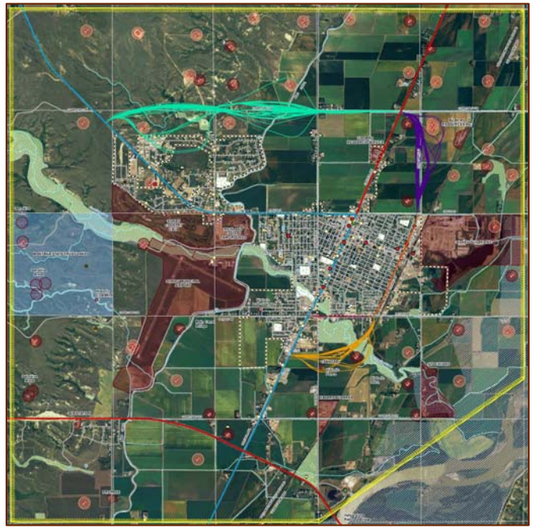
QUANTM:

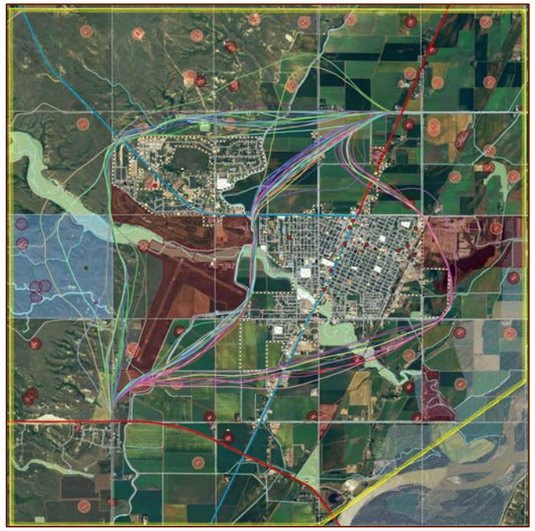


The Quantm software system was developed by the Australian government's scientific agency CSIRO over a period of ten years. It is the first technology and methodology (patent pending) to specifically address the complex task of route alignment selection. The technology provides essential support to project teams planning corridors and/or alignments for both road and rail projects. The system has been successfully applied on road and rail projects globally including the USA, Canada, France, Spain, Portugal, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Indonesia, and China. Alignment construction savings in excess of 20 percent have been independently documented while reducing social and environmental impacts from new construction. The Quantm system has been designed to provide a holistic approach to alignment analysis and selection that simultaneously considers environmental protection, cultural heritage, community values, terrain, geometric design standards, crossing of features, and minimization of construction costs. This approach has also demonstrated a considerable reduction in project planning time.

Sidney Truck Route Results:

Input from the public, stakeholders, agencies, and Quantm helped identify east, west, north, and central corridors.





Based on findings in the *Environmental Scan* document, *Traffic and Safety Tech Memorandum*, and stakeholder and agency input, the west and central corridors have been dropped from further consideration at this time. For the remaining north and east corridors, thousands of alignments were projected for each segment. The top 50 alignments for each segment based on cost are shown in the figure to the left.

From the top 50 alignments for each segment, the top five were explored in more detail through the Quantm program. Selection criteria of the top five were based on lowest cost and impacts, meeting design criteria, and constructability. These are shown in the figure to the right.