



MONTANA
Department of
Transportation

Our Mission is to Plan, Build, Operate, and Maintain a Safe and Resilient Transportation System to Move Montana Forward.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ANNUAL PLAN

FY2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

At Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), we recognize that our purpose begins and ends with people. Our mission and values drive us to provide Montana with transportation systems that are carefully designed, built and maintained to serve communities and strengthen local economies. With a focus on organizational excellence, service clarity, and accountability, MDT program areas will set the gold standard for a highly effective, innovative, and people-centric department of transportation.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Director's Office leads the agency in delivering its mission and upholding core values across all levels of the organization. The Office provides strategic leadership, oversees organizational priorities, and ensures alignment of every initiative with MDT's mission. By ensuring consistent communication, operational excellence, and accountability, the Director's Office represents the state in legislative and regulatory matters and serves as the central hub for agency leadership, policy guidance, legal services, stakeholder collaboration and responsive public service – ensuring MDT meets the needs of Montana's people and communities effectively.

GENERAL OPERATIONS PROGRAM

The General Operations Program administers motor fuel taxes, and provides administrative support services for the department, including accounting and budgeting, civil rights and equal opportunity, human resources and occupational safety, accounting and procurement services, appropriations management, information technology, and compliance review.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY PROGRAM

The Project Development and Delivery Program is responsible for the lifecycle of construction projects – from initial planning in the long-range work plan through final construction. Its responsibilities include project design, right-of-way acquisition, environmental compliance, contract bidding and awards, and construction contract administration. The program ensures quality through documentation, inspection, and testing of highway projects, it also delivers traffic improvements and educational initiatives to enhance public safety and welfare.

ASSET STRATEGY, OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The Asset Strategy, Operations and Maintenance Program ensures the functionality and safety of Montana's roadway network, overseeing over 25,000 lane miles through activities such as snow and ice control, pavement preservation, signage, vegetation management, and traveler information. It also leads disaster response coordination, manages infrastructure inventory, long-range building projects, land mobile radio communications, and quality control. The program includes Motor Carrier Services (MCS), which regulates commercial motor carrier operations through safety enforcement, dyed fuel oversight, credentialing, fleet registration, permitting, and compliance with state and federal safety standards.

STATEWIDE PLANNING AND MODAL OPERATIONS PROGRAM

The Statewide Planning and Modal Operations Program guides Montana's multimodal transportation strategy through planning, infrastructure oversight, and operational support. The program manages statewide transportation planning, administers behavioral safety programs and initiatives, and coordination with developers and agencies. It includes Aeronautics Program that supports airport and airway infrastructure, aviation safety, and aerial search and rescue; administers funding for airport improvements; and serves as a liaison with federal and commercial aviation partners. It also operates 14 state-owned airports, including the commercial service airport near West Yellowstone.

OUR FOCUS

In 2025-2026, MDT is committed to enhancing safety, elevating customer experience, improving efficiency & effectiveness, and fostering organizational excellence while recognizing and celebrating our successes.

Safety remains a foundational priority, with initiatives spanning employee well-being, behavioral safety messaging, and infrastructure improvements. The agency is also streamlining project development and permitting processes, advancing bridge and other transportation asset performance, and expanding innovative contracting methods. MDT is striving to deliver a more customer-centric and proactive agency culture. The department is committed to improving transparency and accessibility in its decision-making processes, ensuring that Montanans across all regions feel informed and included. This includes a strong emphasis on community engagement, timely and relevant communication and project-level excellence. MDT's initiatives reflect a broader commitment to delivering a resilient, forward-looking transportation system that meets Montana's evolving needs.





Strategic Outcome

#1

Advance culture of safety by reducing transportation-related risks through proactive infrastructure improvements, education, and operational excellence.

To advance a culture of safety and operational resilience, MDT is committed to a comprehensive strategy that safeguards employees, enhances public safety, and strengthens infrastructure readiness.

- Sustain and reinforce a culture of safety through continuous messaging, training, and leadership engagement across all programs and districts.
- Refine and focus the behavioral safety strategy to align with MDT's values and core safety programs such as Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan and Vision Zero.
- Design, construct, operate, and maintain infrastructure projects with a strong emphasis on safety outcomes.
- Implement & expand a Just-in-Time training programs to ensure staff receive timely, role-specific safety training.
- Deploy a public alert system to notify citizens of safety-related incidents and emergencies in real time.

Key Measures

- Reduction in worker safety incident rate.
- Engagement metrics with CHSP and Vision Zero initiatives.
- Number and dollar value of safety-focused projects completed.
- Confirmation of program implementations (Y/N)
- System Implementation has been completed (Y/N)



Strategic Outcome


#2

Optimize resource use and streamline project delivery to ensure timely, cost-effective transportation solutions that meet Montana's evolving needs.


Streamline operations, modernize infrastructure management, and optimize resource allocation across the agency. Improve permitting, project delivery, asset tracking, and fiscal oversight to ensure that public resources are used wisely to deliver high-impact transportation solutions.


- Improve the efficiency of project execution by refining the development and delivery processes, identify improvement opportunities, and increase the percentage of Tentative Construction Plan (TCP) projects that are successfully let on schedule.
- Improve transparency, consistency, and coordination in the permitting process through education and streamlined workflows.
- Advance the performance and reliability of Montana's bridge infrastructure by implementing a data-driven improvement plan that

	<p>targets condition-based prioritization and long-term asset sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the planning, coordination, and delivery of innovative contracting to ensure timely execution and maximize project impact. • Streamline the procurement process for transit vehicles to reduce delivery times and improve service readiness. • Enhance system efficiency by reducing reliance on outdated systems and processes. • Ensure traffic signs and culverts are maintained at or above acceptable levels through maintenance and performance tracking. 	
	<p>Key Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of TCP projects let on time. • % of permits issues on time. • Reduction in the number of bridges classified in lower condition categories. • % of innovative contracts (IC) projects delivered on schedule. • Vehicles delivered within 5 days. • % decrease in legacy systems or outdated processes. • Achieve and maintain Maintenance Quality Assurance (MQA) score of A- or better.

<div>  <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#3</p> </div>	<p>Drive exceptional customer experience through responsive services, clear communication, and accessible transportation systems.</p>	
	<p>Build trust, transparency, and responsiveness with both public and internal stakeholders by enhancing communication channels, streamlining service delivery, and ensuring every interaction with MDT is clear, timely, and meaningful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen project-level community engagement by resolving issues proactively and holding regular public meetings. • Deliver timely, branded MDT messages through social media to improve public awareness and engagement. • Foster a culture of responsiveness by conducting proactive outreach efforts with internal and external stakeholders and customers. • Pilot digital content displays at MDT rest areas to enhance traveler information and engagement. • Update permitting system to make it easier for customers to identify locations, navigate environmental requirements, and complete applications with greater clarity and confidence. 	

	Key Measures	• 10 community meetings are held per month.
		• 25 media touch points per month.
		• At minimum, 10 outreach efforts are conducted per month.
		• Pilot completed by September of 2025.
		• System updates will be fully implemented by November 2025.

 Strategic Outcome #4	Foster a high-performing, innovative, and inclusive workforce that exemplifies accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.	
	<p>Focus on building a high-performing, resilient, and future-ready MDT. Foster culture of continuous learning and accountability by strengthening leadership, clarifying roles, streamlining decision-making, and investing in staff development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a continuous learning and development program to build targeted internal capabilities and support professional growth. • Improve agency's operational effectiveness by aligning and improving business operations. • Lead the development, alignment, and communication of clear policy positions to strengthen MDT's internal and external impact. • Create and improve structured career ladders to support staff growth, retention, and internal mobility. • Provide regular training on hiring practices, performance management, and discipline-handling to ensure consistent and effective personnel practices. 	
	Key Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum development completed. • Implement MDT realignment plan. • 4 policy positions developed a month. • Career Ladder developed and implemented. • 2 training courses are conducted per month.

<div>  <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#5</p> </div>	Foster a culture of recognition by highlighting individual and team achievements.	
	<p>Cultivate positive, high-performing culture by recognizing and honoring the contributions of MDT employees. Reinforce shared values, elevate morale, and create a sense of belonging across the agency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a culture of appreciation by recognizing individual and team contributions through weekly shout-outs across programs and districts. Foster transparency and connection by hosting townhalls every other month to celebrate milestones, share updates, and recognize achievements. Showcase MDT’s excellence by submitting high-impact projects for national recognition through programs like AASHTO and Partnering Awards. Establish a formal recognition program to consistently acknowledge employee achievements and reinforce a culture of excellence. 	
	Key Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 shout-outs per week. One townhall held every other month. Three award submissions annually. Program finalized and implemented.