

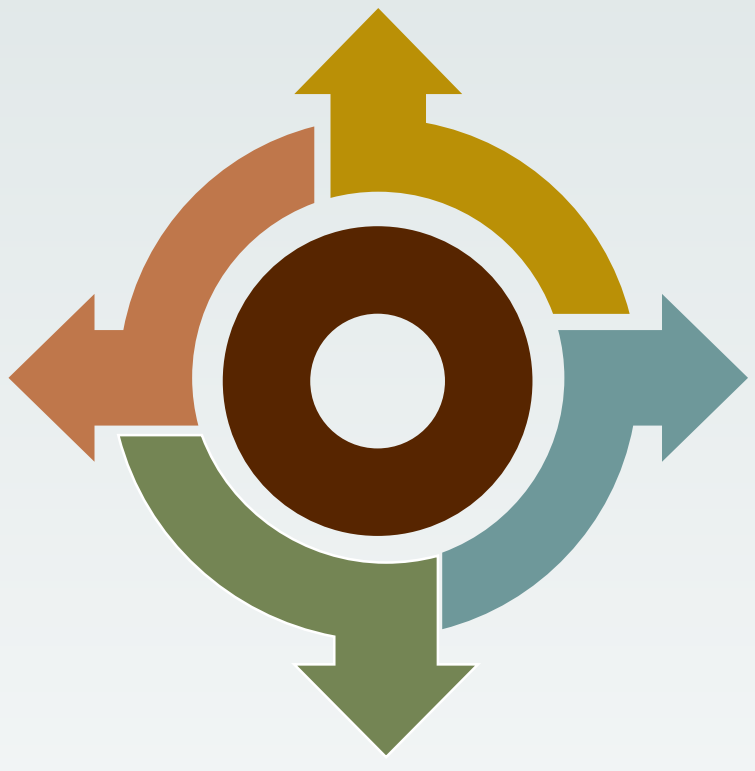
# **BELL CROSSING**

## ROUNDAABOUT

# **Welcome**



**MONTANA**  
Department of Transportation



# BELL CROSSING ROUNDAABOUT



## Project Timeline

- 2019:** Ravalli County and MDT identify Bell Crossing as intersection of concern.
- 2019-2022:** MDT conducts studies to review traffic volumes, traffic speeds, current travel patterns, and future growth.
- 2022:** MDT analyzes multiple intersection options and determine the roundabout is the safest solution.
- 2023:** MDT nominates design project for funding. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approves funding request.
- Summer 2024:** Multiple open houses to discuss project with residents and businesses.
- Fall 2024:** Contracting and design team selected; project moves toward final design.
- Fall-Winter 2024:** MDT right-of-way team works with landowners and prepares the project for construction.
- Fall 2025:** Project construction begins.
- Fall 2026:** Project completion.



# BELL CROSSING ROUNDAABOUT



## Why a Roundabout?

**A roundabout is a safer alternative to traditional stop signs or a signalized intersection at Bell Crossing. The two-lane roundabout will:**



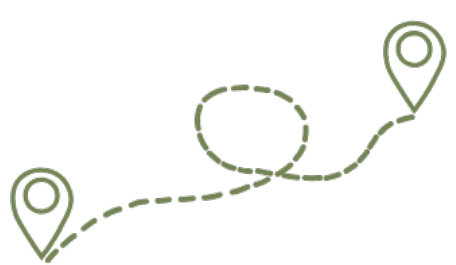
Eliminate head-on or T-Bone collisions.



Slow drivers through the project area. Roundabouts are designed for drivers to navigate the intersection at speeds between 15 - 25 mph.



Provide safer access to properties along the corridor.



Operate well during highest traffic times and with future projected traffic volumes.



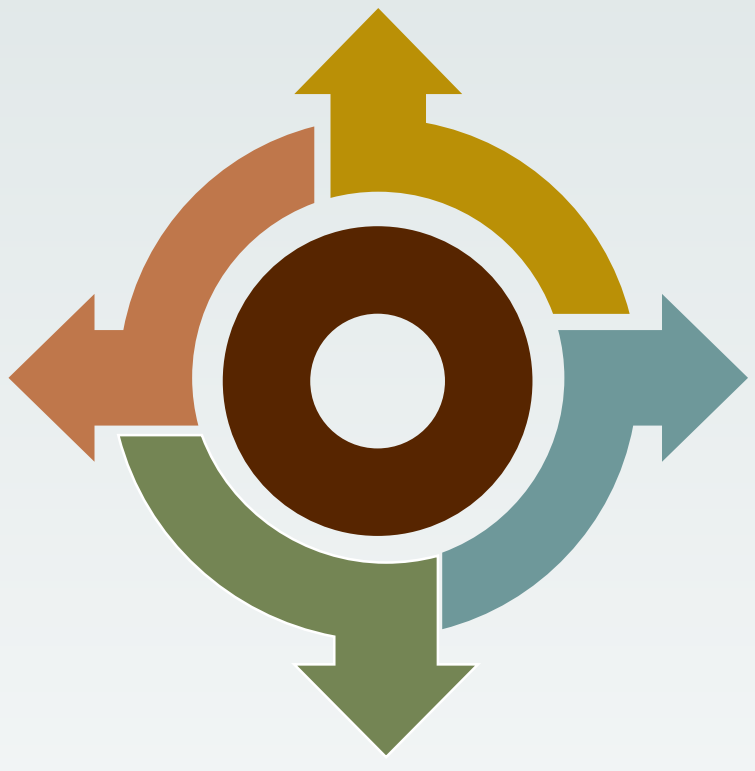
Allow for continuous movement of large loads and emergency services.



Maintain the shared-use path along the project's west side.



Reduce congestion and delay by eliminating the need to stop and wait at red lights.



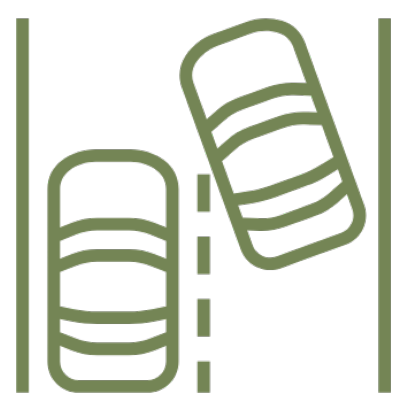
## What is a Traffic Study?

**A traffic study analyzes traffic patterns and conditions in a specific area, usually done by MDT or consultants.**

*Key aspects studied in a traffic study may include:*



**Traffic Volume:** Determining the number of vehicles passing through different sections of roadways during specific time periods.



**Traffic Flow:** Analyzing vehicle movements, including speed, acceleration, deceleration, and lane changes.



**Congestion:** Identifying congested areas and understanding the causes, such as bottlenecks or limited room on the roadway.

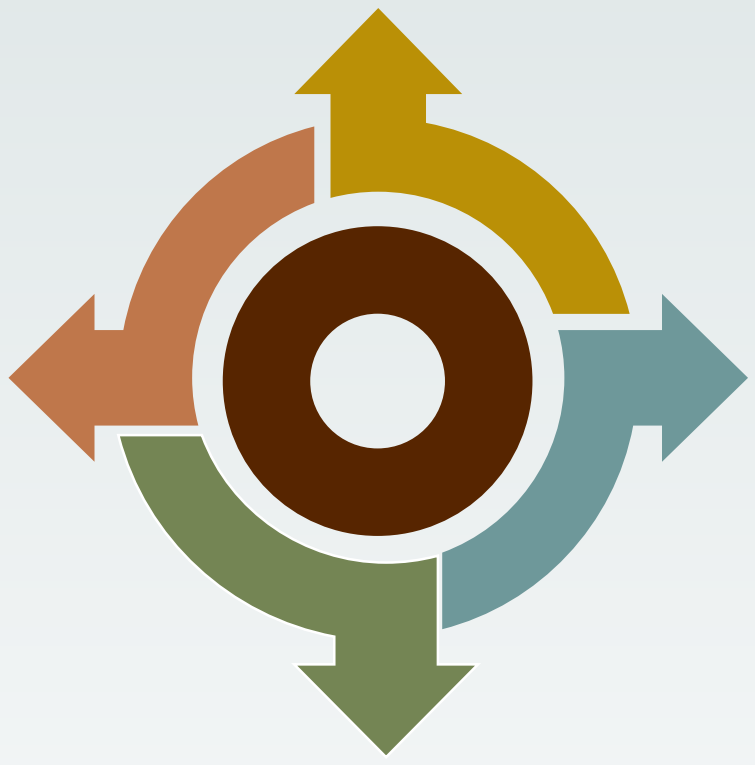


**Intersection Performance:** Assessing intersection efficiency and safety, including signal timing, turning movements, and pedestrian crossings.



**Safety:** Analyzing crash data to find high-risk areas and causes, then using this information to improve safety and reduce crashes.

Traffic study findings are used to develop strategies and recommendations for improving transportation systems, optimizing traffic flow, enhancing safety, and accommodating future growth and development in the area.



# BELL CROSSING ROUNDAABOUT



## Stay in the Know

Public participation is highly encouraged in all MDT projects.

Please get in touch with Becca MacLean at (406) 207-4484 or via email at [Becca@BigSkyPublicRelations.com](mailto:Becca@BigSkyPublicRelations.com) to sign up for project updates.



EMAIL: [becca@bigskypublicrelations.com](mailto:becca@bigskypublicrelations.com)



CALL: 406-207-4484, Monday through Friday during business hours



TEXT: BellCross to 41411\*

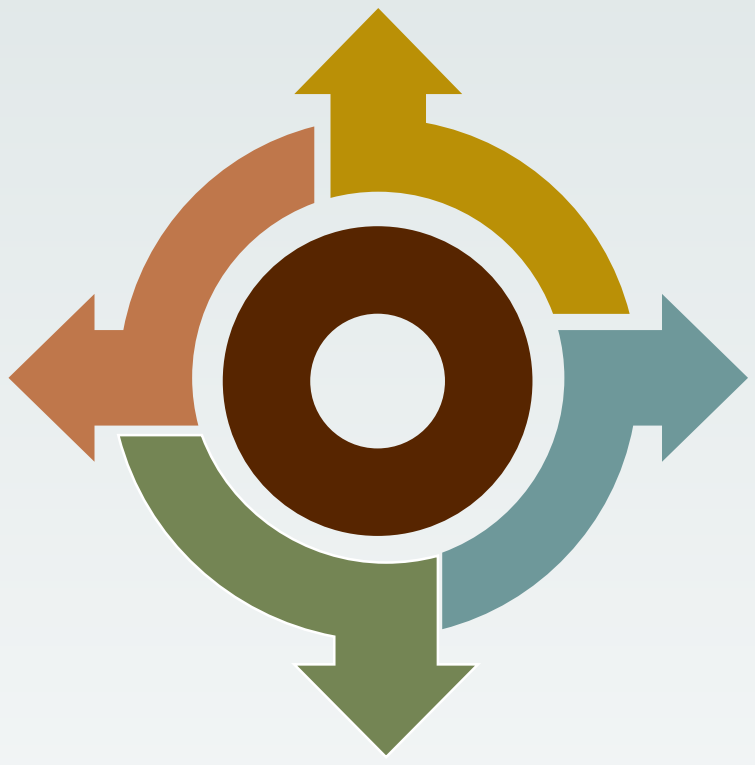


VISIT: <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/bellcrossing/>

\*The project team will also be providing text message updates. Anyone can register for these announcements. To sign up for text updates, text code BellCross to 41411. Message and data rates may apply. Message frequency may vary. Text STOP to cancel. Texting alerts are not managed by MDT and may have different privacy and security policies. For more information, see <https://smstc.us/t4>

SCAN FOR MORE  
INFORMATION

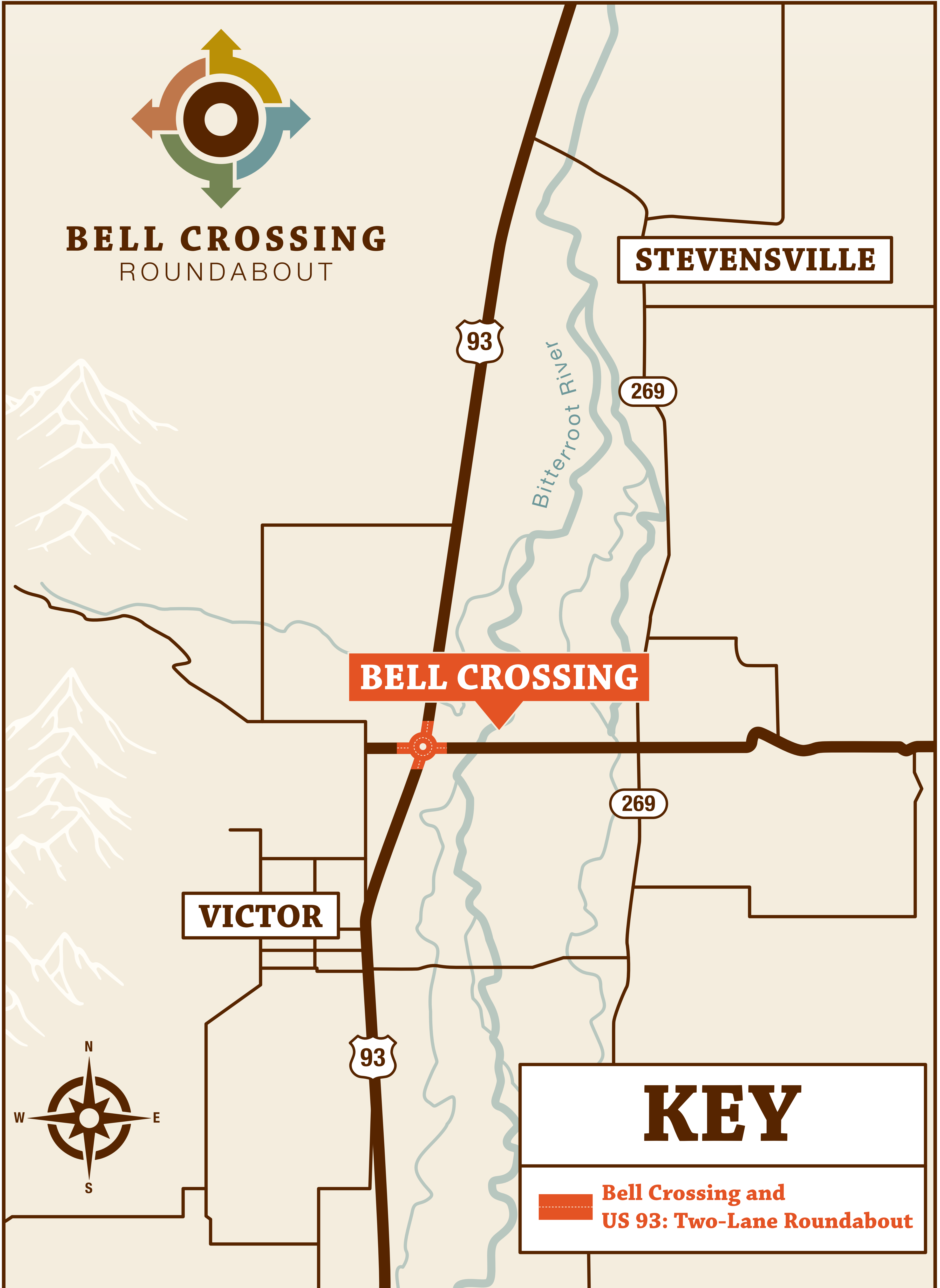


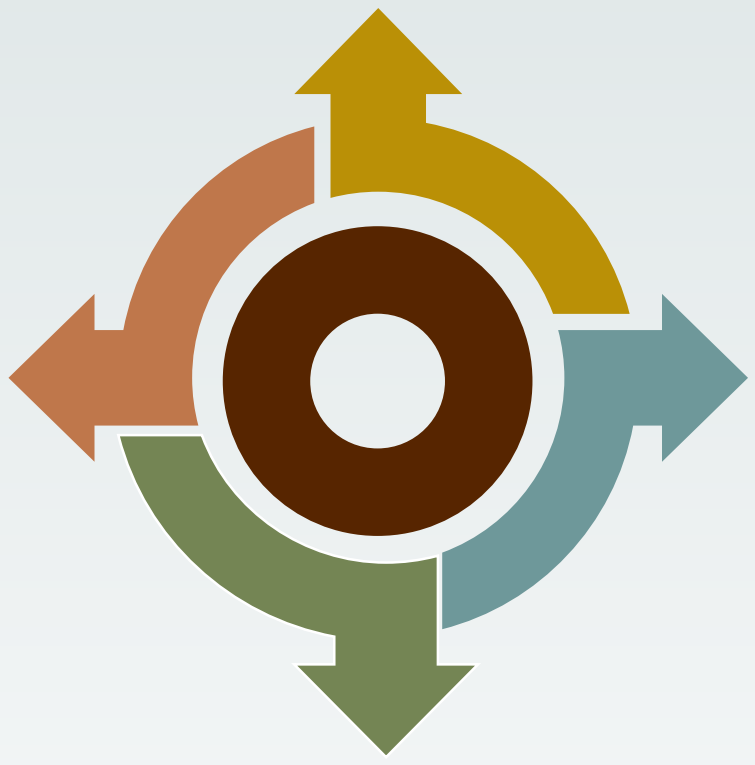


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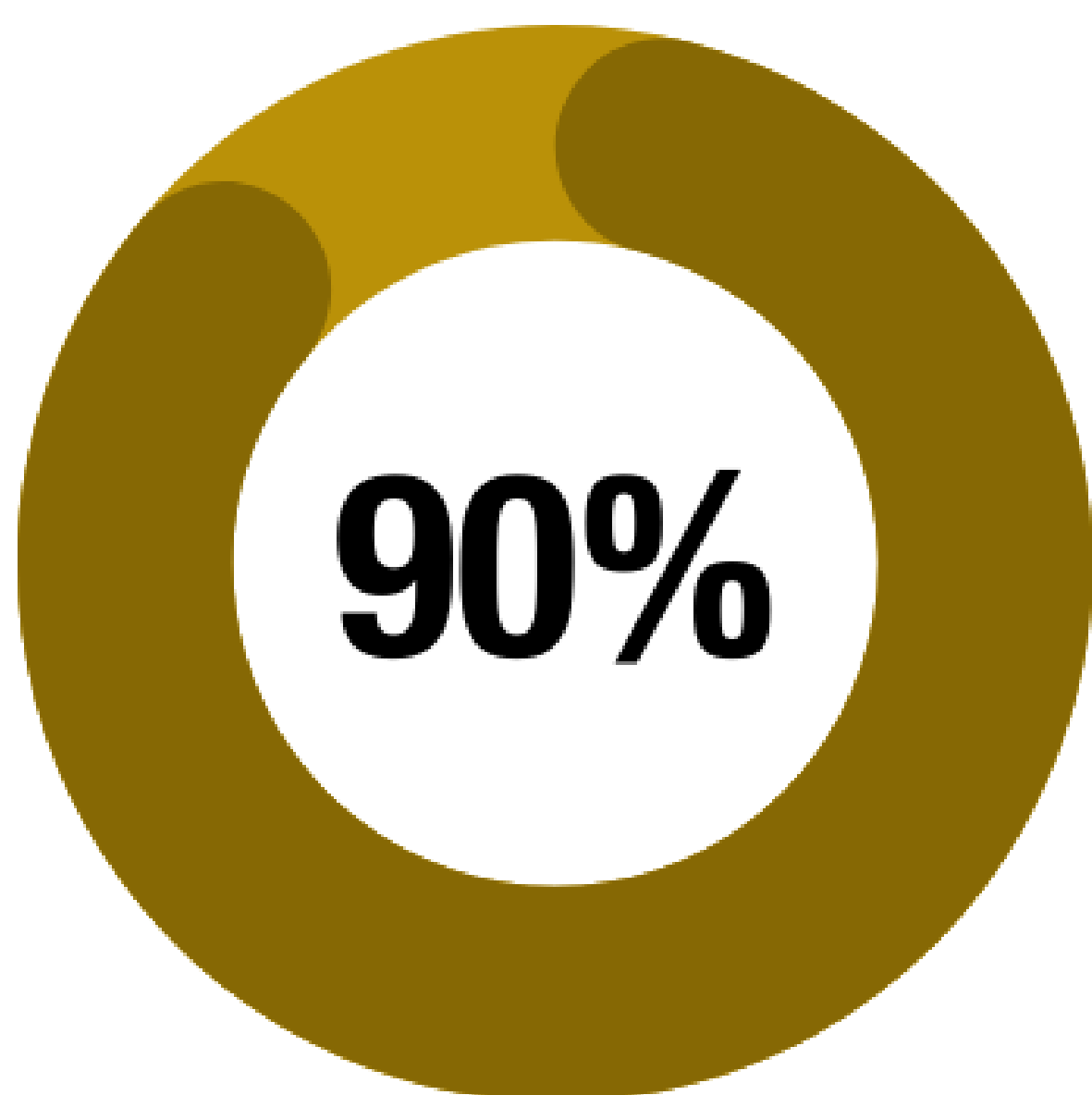
# Roundabout Statistics

**Roundabouts reduce fatal crashes by about 90%, injury crashes by 75%, and overall crashes by 37%.**

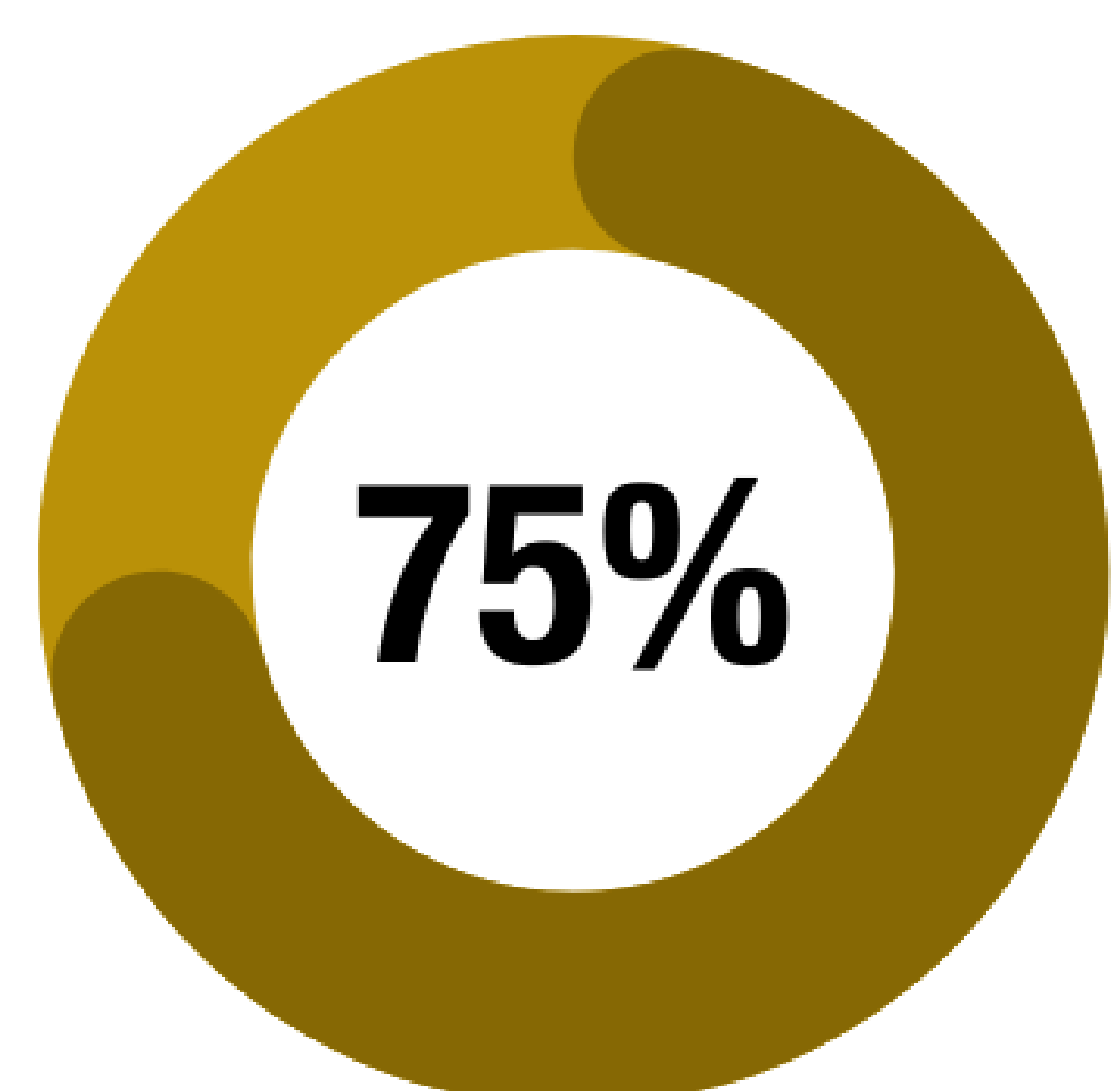
This largely happens because you can't run a roundabout like you can run a red light. When approaching a roundabout, drivers are forced to slow down due to signs and traffic slowing roadway navigation, prior to circulating around the roundabout, nearly eliminating the opportunity for a T-Bone collision.

## Percentages Reduced

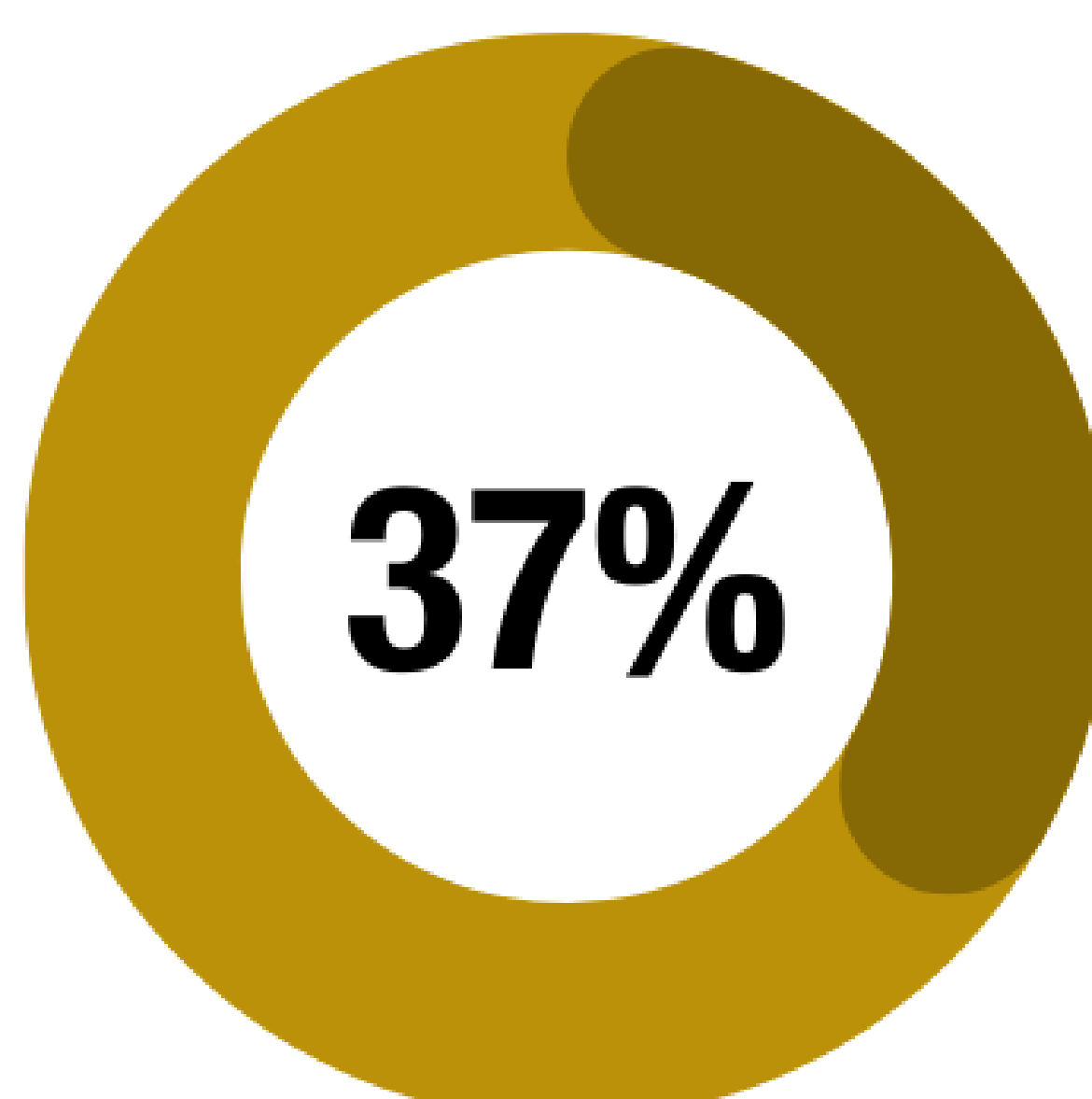
Fatal Crashes



Injury Crashes



Overall Crashes





# BELL CROSSING ROUNDAABOUT



## Data Collection at Bell Crossing

MDT conducted a traffic study at the Bell Crossing and US Highway 93 intersection near Victor. The results of this study show that a roundabout is the safest design to limit severe crashes and fatalities.

The data collection, which started in 2019 and incorporated five years of crash data from June 15, 2015, through June 15, 2020, was a thorough process.

The report examined the Bitterroot Valley's future growth, and it was determined that the roundabout will successfully handle community growth and increased traffic through the design year 2045. A signal, on the other hand, would operate less successfully by 2045 based on the same growth rate.

*During the time of the study:*



There were six total crashes reported.



Half of the crashes (three) were T-bone collisions. Of these T-bone collisions, two resulted in serious injuries.



None of the crashes involved impaired drivers.

After this original data collection, from June 16, 2020 to March 31, 2024, there have been eight additional intersection crashes at Bell Crossing, seven were T-bone crashes, one was a fatality.





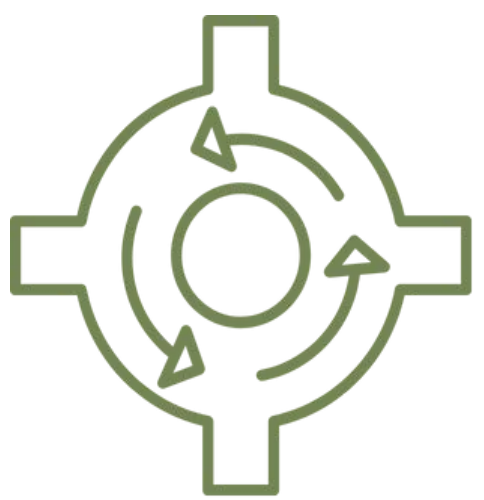
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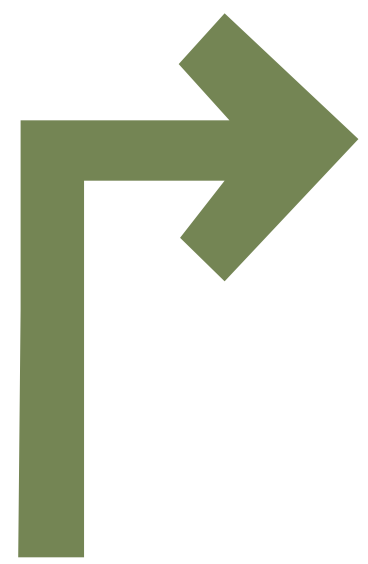
## How to navigate a two-lane roundabout



As you approach a two-lane roundabout, slow down.



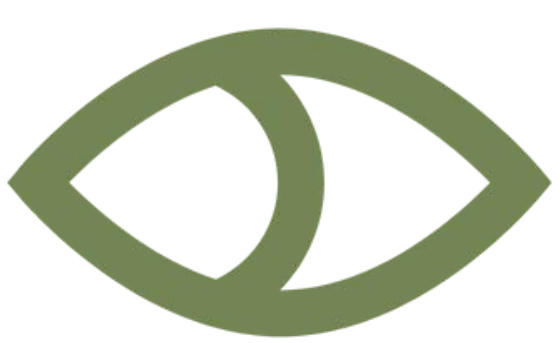
Choose the lane you need to travel in based on the exit you need to take.



If you plan to travel straight or turn right, use the right approach lane.



If you plan to travel straight or turn left, use the left approach lane.

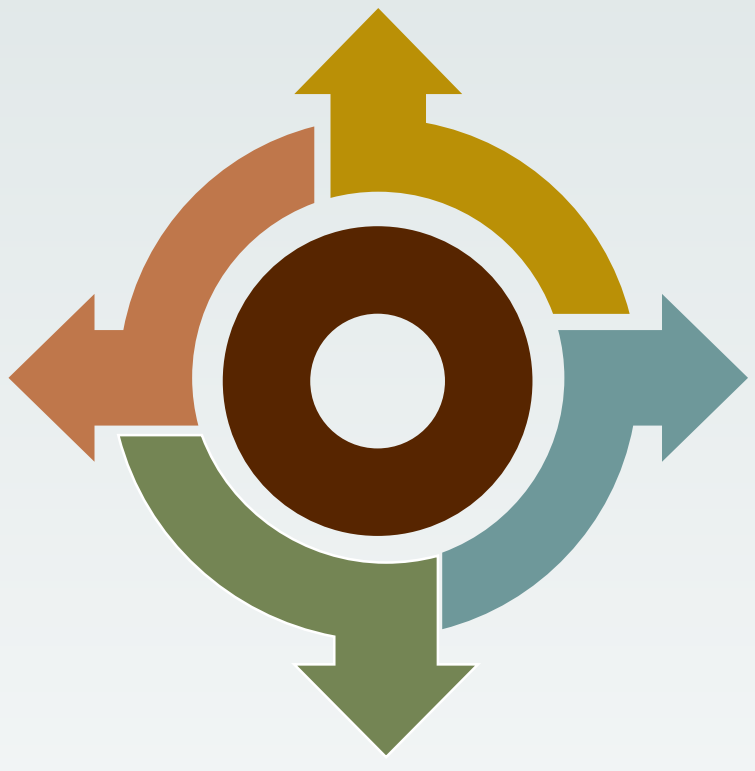


Then, look left and yield to drivers already inside the roundabout. Never change lanes once inside the roundabout.



Turn your blinker on as you exit the roundabout.





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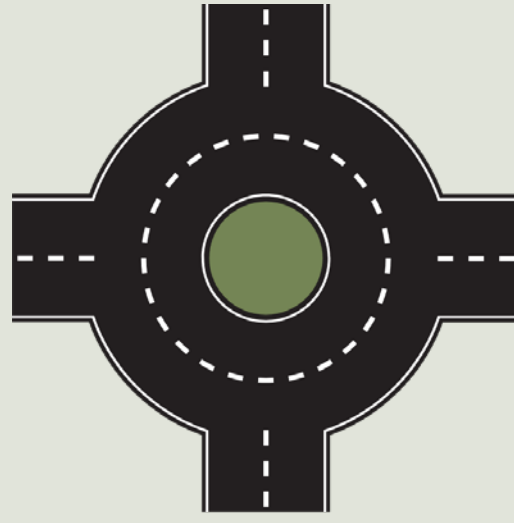
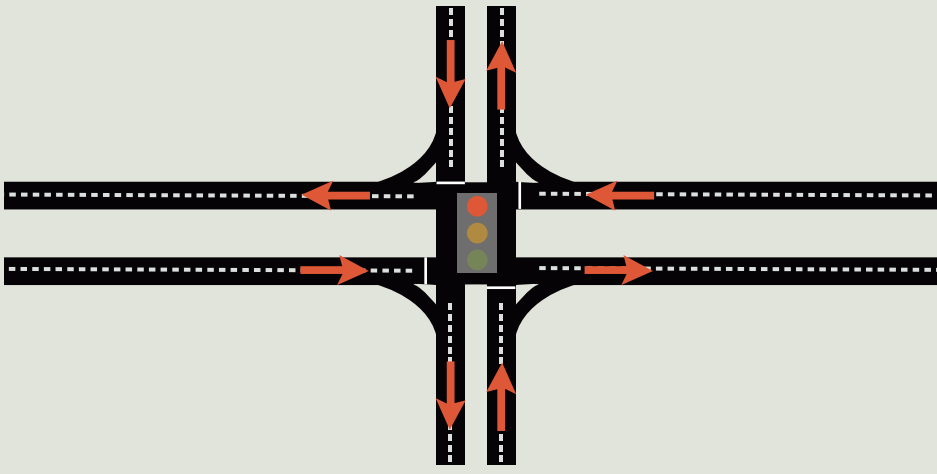
## Other Considered Solutions

When MDT reviews an intersection to determine if an upgrade is necessary (signal, roundabout, or other), a “signal warrant analysis” is conducted. This analysis uses nationally accepted data that considers traffic volumes and crash history.

Based on this information both the traffic signal and the roundabout alternatives were initially advanced for further consideration. However, **from a safety standpoint, the history of several high-speed, T-bone crashes makes the roundabout alternative the safest choice.**

When lives are on the line, we must select the safest reasonable alternative.

**When comparing traffic lights to roundabouts, there are several negatives to traffic lights, which roundabouts tend to address more effectively.**

 <b>Function</b>	 <b>Roundabout</b>	 <b>Traffic Light</b>
Minimizes Stops and Delays	✓	✗
Pedestrian Friendly	✓	✗
Minimizes Traffic Backup	✓	✗
Minimizes High Severity Crashes	✓	✗
Minimizes Long-Term Costs	✓	✗
Minimizes Environmental Impact	✓	✗



MDT is committed to Vision Zero – the goal of zero deaths and zero serious injuries on Montana’s roadways.

Our approach to improving safety on our roadways focuses on key elements of traffic safety – **also known as the four “Es”:**

**1**

**EDUCATION**

through public information and traffic safety outreach campaigns.

**2**

**ENFORCEMENT**

of Montana’s traffic laws through the presence of law enforcement.

**3**

**ENGINEERING**

of Montana’s roadways to ensure best practices are implemented and maintained with safety as the priority.

**4**

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE**

to support emergency services so they are adequately funded and equipped to respond to crashes.



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