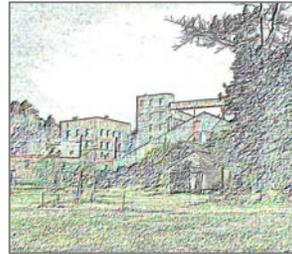


# ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805



## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION

April 2009



Montana Department of Transportation



FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

for

**Project Number: STPP 86-1(30)0**

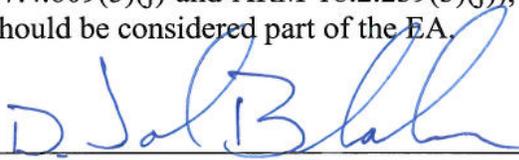
**Project Name: Rouse Avenue - Bozeman**  
**Control Number: 4805**

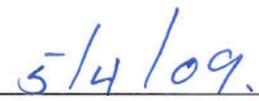
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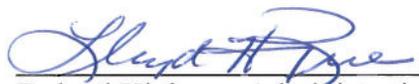
**Gallatin County, Montana**

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have determined that the Preferred Alternative, as described in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) dated July 2008, will have no significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the July 2008 EA, and information obtained during the public and agency coordination process. After independent evaluation of the EA, MDT and FHWA conclude that the EA adequately and accurately discusses the needs, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. The EA provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. MDT and FHWA take full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached July 2008 EA.

For purposes of compliance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) (ARM 17.4.609(3)(j) and ARM 18.2.239(3)(j)), this FONSI and conclusion that an EIS is not required should be considered part of the EA.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Montana Department of Transportation

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Highway Administration

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Project Abstract and Location:

The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road, in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic control at key intersections.



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- I Introduction**
- II Selection of the Preferred Alternative**
- III Summary of Impacts and Mitigation**
- IV NEPA/MEPA Coordination Process**
- V Clarifications to the EA**
- VI Response to Comments**

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Comments and Responses
- Appendix B: Hearing Transcript and Responses
- Appendix C: Media Outreach for EA and Public Hearing
- Appendix D: Environmental Assessment

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

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## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

## I - Introduction

This document summarizes the final coordination activities undertaken by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to complete the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA, which is attached as Appendix D, describes the potential social, economic, and environmental effects of reconstructing and widening Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Story Mill Road, in Bozeman.

This document affords MDT and FHWA the opportunity to:

- Present the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this project;
- Identify the alternative that has been selected for this project;
- Summarize the impacts of the selected alternative and the proposed mitigation;
- Summarize the efforts undertaken to coordinate with the public and agencies;
- Clarify/correct the text of the EA distributed in July 2008; and
- Respond to written and verbal comments received at the August 27, 2008 Public Hearing and those submitted during the comment period from August 4 through September 18, 2008.

## II - Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Based on the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman EA (Appendix D) and the public and agency comments and responses (Section VI), MDT and FHWA have selected the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is described in detail beginning on page 23 of the attached EA.

In summary, the Preferred Alternative includes:

- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to the East Gallatin River crossing northeast of Griffin Drive, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane except where the roadway passes under the Interstate 90 overpass
- Three-lane rural section from the East Gallatin River crossing to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane

[Note: Based on public comment during the review period on the EA, MDT will consider extension of the urban section out to Story Mill as the project proceeds, and if monies are available to implement that design.]

- On-street parking on east side of the street between Main and Mendenhall, on both sides of the street between Mendenhall and Lamme, and off-street parking north of Lamme
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to the East Gallatin River crossing, and a shared pedestrian/bicycle path on both sides from the river to Story Mill. As noted above, if the urban section is extended to Story Mill, the sidewalks would be extended in lieu of a shared path.
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall to Griffin Street, except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing where boulevards are eliminated to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

### III – Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Impact	Mitigation
<b>Land Use</b>	
<p>Consistency with Local Plans: The Selected Alternative is consistent with current zoning.</p>	<p>No mitigation necessary.</p>
<p>Parks &amp; Recreation/Section 6(f): No parks, recreational facilities or Section 6(f) lands would be impacted by the Selected Alternative.</p>	<p>No mitigation necessary.</p>
<b>Farmlands</b>	
<p>The Selected Alternative lies entirely within the urban built-up are of Bozeman, and no analysis of farmland impacts was necessary.</p>	<p>No mitigation necessary.</p>
<b>Social Conditions</b>	
<p>The Selected Alternative is expected to have no effect on population growth, demographic composition, or income levels. It is anticipated to improve travel and access.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>
<b>Right-of-Way/Easements/Relocations</b>	
<p>Acquisition of at least two residences would be required under the Preferred Alternative due to direct conflicts between the proposed construction limits and the existing structures. A number of utilities have been identified within this corridor that may be impacted by the new right-of-way limits.</p>	<p>All lands needed for right-of-way under the proposed action which are private ownership would be acquired in accordance with both the <i>Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act</i> of 1970 and the <i>Uniform Relocation Act Amendments</i> of 1987. Any utility relocation would be coordinated with the lines’ owners, and done prior to this proposed project’s construction.</p>
<b>Economic Conditions</b>	
<p>Improvements in this corridor would be expected to have a positive impact on economic conditions in Bozeman.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	
<p>The proposed right-of-way acquisitions do not appear to be either low-income or minority owned/occupied properties. Due to the limited number of acquisitions and the nature of these homes and businesses, both the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternatives would not create disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on the health or environment of minority and/or low-income populations.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Impact**

**Mitigation**

**Air Quality**

The Selected Alternative is located in an unclassifiable/attainment area of Montana for air quality under 40 CFR 81.327, as amended. As such, this project is not covered under the EPA’s Final Rule of September 15, 1997 on Air Quality Conformity.

No mitigation is required.

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

The Selected Alternative would improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the corridor from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road through the provision of bike lanes, ADA accessible sidewalks, and/or shared pedestrian/bicycle paths throughout the corridor.

No mitigation is required: however, due to concerns expressed during the comment period on the EA, MDT will consider different surfacing treatments during final design and will work with local bicycle groups regarding maintenance concerns.

**Noise**

Traffic noise impacts are anticipated at seven receptors under the No Build Alternative and at 13 receptors under the Preferred Alternative.

Traffic noise abatements measures were considered, including modification of the Preferred Alternative, traffic management measures, construction of noise barriers, and the use of quiet pavements. These mitigation measures are not practical or effective for the Rouse Avenue corridor.

**Water Quality**

The East Gallatin River is the discharge body for storm water and is currently on the DEQ’s TMDL 303(d) list of impaired or threatened waters. The increase in the total surface area of paved road related to widening and reconstruction will increase the rate and quantity of surface water runoff from the roadway.

Storm water systems design for the Preferred Alternative would use Best Management Practices to treat storm water before it enters the East Gallatin River. Impacts to Bozeman Creek will require further coordination with the appropriate regulating agencies. Permit/authorization conditions will be incorporated into the project design and construction as appropriate.

**Wetlands**

There are no wetlands within the project site.

No mitigation required.

**Floodplains**

MDT and the City of Bozeman are currently discussing design options for future water conveyance structures that would improve overall hydraulic function to reduce flood risk. The Preferred Alternative would have no detrimental impact on the flood risk for Bozeman Creek.

Existing hydraulic conditions would be maintained or improved throughout the corridor through the installation of new conveyance structures, and a floodplain development permit would be required.

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Waterbodies, Wildlife Resources, and Habitat</b>	
<p><b>Wildlife Resources</b> The Biological Resources Report identified several avian, mammal, and fish species in the corridor. There would be minimal impact to general wildlife in the area of study due to the proximity and availability of similar habitat type.</p>	Best Management Practices will be used to prevent direct impacts to nesting migratory birds as well as spawning fish, and may include timing restrictions on tree removal between May and August.
<p><b>Habitat</b> The project corridor is not critical for survival of the species present given the adjacency of other stream and river corridors, and similar habitat type.</p>	No mitigation is required.
<p><b>Species of Concern</b> No wildlife or plant species of concern exist within the study area.</p>	No mitigation is required.
<p><b>Noxious Weeds</b> Nine noxious weeds were observed within the project area.</p>	All construction activities will comply with Montana County Weed Control Act and Administrative Rules.

**Threatened/Endangered (T/E) Species**

No Threatened, Endangered, or Proposed plant or animal species exist within the study area. No mitigation is necessary.

**Hazardous Wastes**

Several LUST sites were identified within the study area. There is one active site within the corridor which had a well reading above water quality standards benzene. Construction activities on Oak Street, immediately north of the MDT property, yielded soil samples that contained chromium. A field engineer will be on-site and observe excavations adjacent to the sites of concern in case any contaminated soils are encountered. Petroleum resistant pipe materials would be utilized in areas where contamination is encountered, as recommended by the Montana DEQ.

**Cultural/Archaeological/Historic Resources**

Ten historic sites have been identified within the study area. Sites recommended as NRHP eligible have been avoided wherever possible. Where complete avoidance was not possible, the conceptual design was modified to minimize the potential impacts. No mitigation is required.

**Visual**

Visual impacts in the corridor include a wider roadway and the removal of some mature vegetation parallel to the roadway. The proposed project is anticipated to have an overall positive effect on the visual character of the corridor through the construction of landscaped boulevards through the residential portions; however, there will be a notable loss of large tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the existing roadway. MDT will coordinate with the City of Bozeman’s arborist and Bozeman Tree Board to develop potential mitigation strategies for impacts to trees within the corridor.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Impact**

**Mitigation**

**Construction Impacts**

Construction activities from the proposed Build Alternatives would cause temporary inconveniences to area residents and businesses. These would occasionally result in longer travel times, detours, temporary closures, and noise and dust due to the use of heavy machinery.

The project's contractor would be subject to all state and local laws to minimize construction noise by having mufflers on all equipment. Dust control would also be implemented by using either water, or another approved dust-suppressant. In general, BMP's would be used to minimize the effect of sedimentation and/or run-off during the roadway construction periods.

**Cumulative Impacts**

In addition to ongoing private development and re-development within the study area, there are approximately nine roadway projects within the general area. Based on the fact that Rouse Avenue is in a highly developed corridor and that the proposed project is not anticipated to induce new growth or development, the Selected Alternative is not anticipated to individually or cumulatively, when considered with the other projects, have any substantial cumulative impacts.

No mitigation is required.

**Indirect Impacts**

Indirect impacts from the Selected Alternative range from the loss of on-street parking to increased stormwater runoff from the increased pavement width.

Parking and stormwater type issues are addressed through design considerations outlined in the EA.

Other indirect impacts may be those related to a change in land use from improvements to this route. Since the project lies entirely within the city limits, the direction of future growth will be determined more by zoning and permitting by the City of Bozeman than by the widening of Rouse Avenue. Based on this information, the Selected Alternative will not induce significant land use changes or promote unplanned growth. There will be no significant effect on access to adjacent properties or present traffic patterns.

No mitigation is necessary.

## **IV - NEPA/MEPA Coordination Process**

The proposed project fully defined in the attached EA has been coordinated with the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), as well as guidelines provided by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A).

### **Availability of EA for Review and Comment**

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the EA for distribution in June/July 2008, and a Notice of Availability was distributed to area newspapers and radio stations as follows:

An individual mailer was also sent out to 104 people/businesses that either attended previous public meetings or expressed an interest in the project.

Copies of the EA were available for public review at the following locations:

- Bozeman Public Library (626 East Main Street),
- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
- MSU-Bozeman Renne Library (1 Centennial Mall)
- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse Avenue)
- MDT Helena Headquarters Office (2701 Prospect Ave).

Copies of the EA were also available upon request from MDT and the EA could be viewed on the MDT website at [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml).

The EA was mailed to all agencies contained on the Distribution List on pages 77 and 78 of the EA. The public review and comment period began on August 4, 2008 and ended on September 18, 2008.

Additional copies of the EA were mailed to private individuals upon their request.

### **Public Hearing**

A formal Public Hearing was held to present the Preferred Alternative and take comments on the EA. The Hearing was held on August 27, 2008 at the Bozeman Senior Center. Approximately 90 people attended the Public Hearing. A transcript of the Public Hearing and copy of the sign-in sheets are provided in Appendix B.



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

## Comments Received

Nineteen verbal comments were received at the Hearing, and 49 were submitted in writing during the comment period. Those comments and responses from MDT and FHWA are contained in Appendix A of this FONSI.

## Additional Coordination with City of Bozeman

While planning and engineering staff from the City of Bozeman have been involved throughout the project development process, and a copy of the EA was sent to the City, no formal comments were received from City officials. MDT and FHWA offered to make a presentation to the City Commission to provide an update on the status of the Rouse Avenue project and the NEPA/MEPA process before issuing this FONSI.

MDT and consultant staff made a presentation and answered questions from City Commissioners at a regular Commission meeting on January 12, 2009. Two Commissioners expressed concerns about the loss of parking in the corridor, and made suggestions on how the footprint might be reduced to allow for the inclusion of parking on one side of the roadway. MDT and consultant staff offered to discuss these concepts in greater detail with the concerned commissioner at a separate meeting. No further meetings were held and no modifications to the proposed design are anticipated.

## V – Edits/Corrections to the EA

Table 3.2 on page 40 of the EA, and Figure 3-3 on page 41 of the EA identified the parcel at 1227/1237 N. Rouse as an acquisition. At the time of the drafting of the EA, this site was under redevelopment but the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. The project team has been actively coordinating the design with Montana Avenue Partners, and there are no further property acquisitions required at this site.

Text in Section 3.8 on page 48 of the EA indicated that additional right-of-way would be required, or that the separated path would need to be constructed outside the right-of-way due to existing right-of-way constraints on the south side of Rouse Avenue. This is errant information, and the text should read as follows: “During the development of alternatives, attempts were made to accommodate both a pedestrian trail and separated bike paths along both sides of the route in the rural portion of the corridor. This could not be accomplished without substantial right-of-way acquisition in order to comply with the City’s current standards regarding a safe distance of separation between pedestrian and bicycle facilities and another roadway intersection. Construction of the path with adequate separation can be accomplished on the ~~north~~ **south** side of Rouse in the rural portion, but would need to be constructed outside the roadway right-of-way on the ~~south~~ **north** to provide adequate separation. MDT is committed to the inclusion of these facilities on both sides of the roadway, and will continue to work with the City of Bozeman to

determine how and when these pedestrian trails are constructed, and who will be responsible for their construction and maintenance.”

## **VI – Response to Comments**

The public review and comment period on the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman EA began on August 4, 2008 and ended on September 18, 2008. Forty-nine written comments were received during this period. Each of those comments and a response from the project team is included in Appendix A. The Public Hearing for the EA was held on August 27, 2008, during which 19 verbal comments were recorded. The transcript as well as responses to those comments are contained in Appendix B, along with copies of the sign-in sheets from the Hearing.



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

## Appendix A – Response to Comments

The following pages contain the comments made at the Public Hearing, as well as copies of the comment letters received (on the left side of the page), and the FHWA/MDT response (on the right side of the page). Comment letters are presented in date-order, and each is numbered sequentially. The response to each letter is identified with the number corresponding to the comment. Below is a log of the comments received during the comment period, and the page number where the comment and response can be found in this Section.

Comment Number	Name	Page Number
1	Stuart Jennings	A-3
2	Art & Mary Ann Nielsen	A-8
3	Joe Gilpin	A-9
4	Lisa Ballard	A-10
5	Gail and John Richardson	A-11
6	Peter Foley	A-12
7	Shane Matolyak	A-13
8	George Thompson	A-14
9	Don Jackson	A-15
10	Rachel Rockafellow	A-15
11	Jeffrey Krauss	A-16
12	Debbie Arkel, Bozeman Public Svcs. Dept.	A-20
13	Mary Ellerd	A-22
14	James D. Foley	A-23
15	Bob Nichol	A-25
16	Anne Trygstad	A-26
17	Scott Benowitz	A-28
18	Susan Ewing	A-29
19	Verna Whiteman	A-29
20	Deborah Goltz	A-30
21	Albert & Victoria Scharen	A-31
22	Hiller W. & Amy D. Higman	A-32
23	Don Jackson	A-34
24	Brian Stoppel	A-35
25	Dustin Workman	A-38
26	Gary Beardslee	A-40
27	Karen Filipovich	A-41
28	Margaret M. Davis	A-43
29	Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board	A-44
30	Charles R. Swart	A-45

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31	Krystina Prinzing Ward	A-46
32	Frank Margeau	A-47
33	Florence Groth	A-48
34	Chad A. Groth	A-49
35	Mary Ann Nielsen	A-50
36	Jim Nallick	A-51
37	Brandon Saltz	A-52
38	Mark Miller	A-53
39	Heather Jernberg	A-54
40	Gary Vodehnal	A-55
41	Ben Lloyd	A-56
42	Rob Pertzborn	A-57
43	Carolyn Hopper	A-58
44	Tim Stefan	A-59
45	Deborah McAfee	A-60
46	Robert Banis	A-61
47	Theresia Konrad	A-62
48	Secilia Marino	A-63
49	Coyote, Aspen & Micah Marino	A-64

Verbal testimony was also provided at the Public Hearing and is included in Appendix B. The following individuals provided testimony:

<b>Comment Letter</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Transcript Page Number</b>
A	Christopher Spegis	B-12
B	Hiller Higman	B-13
C	Ted Lange	B-13
D	Charles Swart	B-14
E	Andrew Epple	B-15
F	Robert Banis	B-15
G	Peter Rugheimer	B-16
H	Ralph Zimmer	B-16
I	Debra DeBode	B-17
J	Larry Brown	B-17
K	Brian Metsger	B-18
L	Bill Harston	B-18
M	Jena Caplette	B-18
N	Linda Locke	B-19
O	Kathie Callahan	B-19
P	Christopher Spegis	B-19
Q	Krystine Ward	B-20
R	Sharon Nelson	B-20
S	Tara (?)	B-21



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*The following comments were submitted in writing to MDT during the public comment period on the EA.*

**Comment 1**

Date: August 4, 2008  
To: Montana Dept. of Transportation  
From: Stuart Jennings  
Re: Rouse Avenue EA, July 2008

Thank you for preparing the EA for public consideration. Overall, I very much like the improvements suggested. I have several comments for your consideration:

**1-A**

The bridge across the East Gallatin River needs additional thought given to pedestrian/bike use and wildlife. The shared use path on the north side of the river from Story Mill to the East Gallatin crossing sounds good in concept, but no detail is provided of the western termination of this path. The intersection of Griffin and Rouse/Bridger is very pedestrian unfriendly. The north side of the road is very tight. Recent remodel of this intersection shows the lack of thought given to pedestrians. A sidewalk segment was constructed at the intersection and terminated without making a safe connection to any other pedestrian facilities. My concern is that the proposed project may do the same thing by building the shared use path, but not making a safe transition into a connecting bike/ped facility.

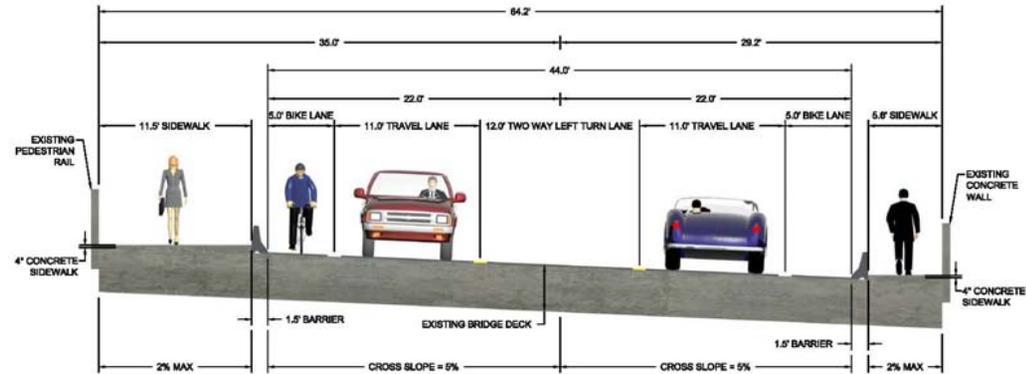
**1-B**

The south side of the road has similar problems. For example, the sidewalks from Main Street end at the East Gallatin bridge. The inference in the text is that it will be the developer's responsibility to build these facilities when the trailer court is redeveloped into residential housing. However, the Boys and Girls Club has already been developed and is a critical connection to the sidewalk system. I recommend that you consider continuing the sidewalk on the south side of the road as far as the Boys and Girls Club. If this is left as a gap in the sidewalk system it is highly unlikely that the developer of the trailer park will pay to make this critical connection (see yellow line, Figure 1

**Response 1**

**1-A**

Bridge rails will be modified to accommodate pedestrians on both sides of bridge.



**1-B**

Funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. If, however, additional funding becomes available, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared by this EA.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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**1-C** A second improvement to the Griffin/Rouse intersection could be made at the triangular shaped parcel on the NE corner (Fig 1). Again the sidewalk dead-ends into space without any connection. However, in this case I am guessing that the parcel is entirely inside the ROW. There is no developer poised to complete MDTs work. My recommendation is to look at the entire parcel as part of the road job. It might make a nice entryway green space, stormwater treatment pond, etc. rather than being left as an orphaned property given insufficient design attention.

**1-D** Wildlife mitigation should be contemplated for the eastern side of the bridge as this is a common wildlife crossing. Dead deer are not uncommon on the road between the Panda gas station and Boys/Girls club. There are a substantial number of whitetail deer living north of the proposed project and this is a wildlife corridor also for skunks, raccoons, and even occasional bears and mountain lions. Wild turkeys have also been seen a short distance north. The text of the report gives an unrealistically low importance to wildlife crossing. Getting wildlife under, over or around the project would be good for preventing both vehicle damage and wildlife mortality. I've stood hard on my brakes in this location multiple times for wildlife.

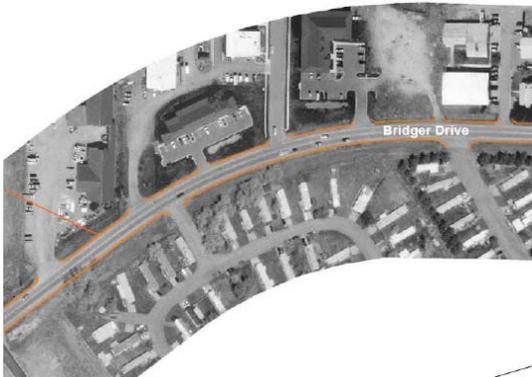
**1-C**

MDT can explore the potential to utilize this space for stormwater treatment or other beneficial uses as the design progresses.

**1-D**

The EA notes the wildlife use of the study area, but historic data does not suggest a high incidence of wildlife conflicts. There were no reported crashes involving animals in the project area over the period January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2007. MDT roadkill data contained five records (four white tail and one mule deer) over a four-year period, all occurring north of I-90. Due to the low crash history and grade constraints in this urbanized area, a new wildlife crossing structure is not feasible, but it is anticipated that driver visibility of approaching wildlife would be improved through the wider cross section of the overall roadway.

Figure 1 Intersection of Griffin and Bridger Drive shown in the EA.





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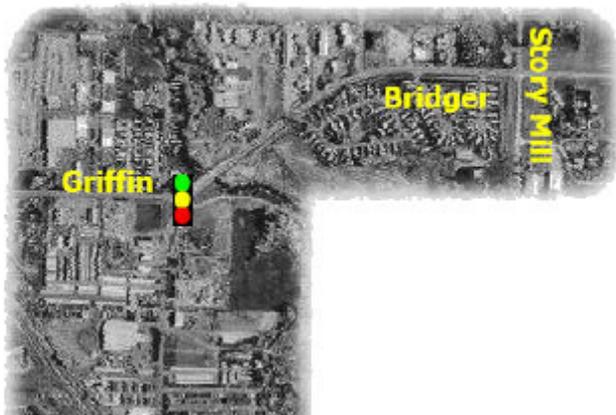
F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**1-E** The intersection of Birdie Drive and Bridger Drive is an intersection of a residential street with sidewalks with Bridger Drive, proposed for construction without sidewalks. Clearly the City was thinking about the residential character of the neighborhood to the north with sidewalks when the Bridger Creek Subdivision was laid out. It is unclear how the shared use path would integrate with Birdie Drive, but I am hopeful the sidewalk system would connect to the shared use path.

**1-F** The intersection of Story Mill and Bridger Drive is a high risk pedestrian crossing. My assumption was that a signal would be installed at this intersection as part of this project, but it appears not to be the case (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Story Mill Intersection

Figure 2-9  
Proposed Intersection Traffic Control



This intersection is a critical bike and pedestrian intersection since it is where the Main Street to the Mountains Trail intersects Bridger Canyon (Figure 3). I have crossed Bridger Drive hundreds of times on my bike and I've only had a vehicle stop once despite the clear signing that it is a pedestrian crossing. This intersection is made worse by the fact that the

**1-E**

Depending on location within the corridor, and whether the urban section is extended throughout the corridor, sidewalks or a shared-use path would be constructed along Rouse Avenue and tie into existing side-street sidewalks at the new right-of-way limits. The project would not construct additional connections or facilities beyond the new right-of-way limits.

**1-F**

A signal at the Story Mill/Bridger Drive intersection is currently programmed as part of the Story Mill development project; however, the signal will be installed concurrent with whichever project is completed first (the development project or the reconstruction of Rouse Avenue). Depending on the availability of funding for Rouse Avenue, the signal may be installed prior to completion of the

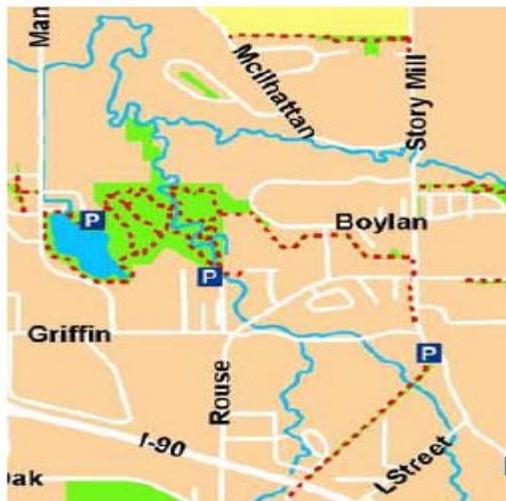
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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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speed increases from 35 MPH to 45 MPH a couple of hundred yards east of the intersection so motorists DO NOT want to stop for a pedestrian at a time where they've got their foot on the accelerator. A police car could write tickets all day long at this intersection. That suggests to me that the proposed alternative will have no effect on pedestrian/bike safety at this intersection. Presumably the new bike and ped shared use path will only increase use, thus it is critical to have a safe way across the street. A stoplight is my preferred alternative, especially considering all of the new development underway in the immediate vicinity since the 2005 data collection for the EA. I believe there are an additional 1100 housing units associated with the Story Mill development and several hundred at Legends. In the near future there will be many more cars and the level of service will be undersized. If you don't believe me go watch traffic speeds and the interaction of pedestrians and bikes with cars. The speeds are high and so is the bike/ped hazard. It would be tragic to implement this large project without fixing the existing safety problems. It is my understanding that the number of recent fatalities in Bozeman from fires is zero while 5 pedestrians or bicyclist have been killed by automobiles, not to mention the number of injuries. This is one of those intersections ripe for a fatality. Public safety should be a key consideration at this intersection.

Figure 3 Main Street to the Mountains trail crossing at Story Mill (from gvlt.org)





F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**1-G** The proposed acquisition of the property at 1227 N. Rouse must be a mistake (Figure 4). This redevelopment of the old steel yard is likely to be nominated for an award for beautification of an old eyesore. How is it possible this property is identified for acquisition? It is remarkable especially since it is across the street from the MDT facility and has been under careful reconstruction over the past several years including a redesign of the intersection to accommodate a turn lane.

Figure 4 Property to be acquired?



1227 / 1237 N. Rouse

**1-H** Section 3.13 Waterbodies, Wildlife and Habitat Resources (page 55)—The statement that no deer tracks could be found in the investigation corridor or that no other wildlife sign was found during the investigation caused me to contemplate the adequacy of the investigation. The area around the East Gallatin River bridge crossing is rich with wildlife. I would recommend rechecking these observations with snow on the ground. I live approximately one-half mile northeast of the bridge and routinely observe dozens of whitetail deer in the vicinity, especially in fall and winter.  
--end of comments--

**1-G**

At the time of the initial work on the EA, the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. MDT has been working with the developer of this site and has acquired the necessary right-of-way for this project. No additional right-of-way or acquisitions would be required from this site.

**1-H**

At the time of the biological resource surveys, no deer trails or other wildlife sign, with the exception of some migratory bird species, were observed in the project corridor. Use of the project area, especially the north end, by deer species, small mammals, migratory birds, and other wildlife species is known and documented in the EA. The project corridor is not critical for survival of the species present given the adjacency of other stream and river corridors, and similar habitat type.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Comment 2**

315 N. Church  
Bozeman, Mt.  
59715  
8/8/08

MDT-Tom Martin

Dear Mr. Martin:

We intend to attend the public hearing on Rouse Ave Aug. 27 at the Senior Center.

We are interested in Rouse Ave becoming a street with trees and a bike trail or walking trail. One could safely bike to the Bozeman Rec. area from the city.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Gail and May Ann Nielsen  
Art and Mart Ann Nielsen

MASTER FILE COPY

**Response 2**

The proposed project includes a boulevard sidewalk and bike lanes throughout the majority of the Rouse Avenue corridor from West Main Street to Story Mill Road. The boulevard is eliminated between Main and Mendenhall, and between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing due to right-of-way constraints, as well as in any portion to be constructed as a rural section.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 3**

**Response 3**

Greetings,

**3-A** I am one of the sub-consultants working on the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Update. Specifically, I am working on all aspects of non-motorized transportation within the plan. As part of the project team, and as a Bozeman resident, I would like to express support for the 'Preferred Alternative' outlined within the EA for Rouse Avenue. The Transportation Plan will be recommending continuous bike lanes and sidewalks over the length of the project extents. The Transportation Plan also calls for shared use paths beginning at Griffin Drive and heading to the north along Bridger Drive. We have identified widely recognized issues with shared-use paths in areas with a large amount of driveways or crossings (attached), and would not recommend them in the urban cross sections described in the EA.

**3-A**

See response to Comment 1-B.

**3-B** I would also like to pass along some verbal feedback I have received following the intersection improvements made to the Griffin Drive and Oak Street along Rouse Avenue. Cyclists are having a difficult time with chip seal policy in urban areas that MDT has been implementing in recent projects within Bozeman. After chip sealing, the loose aggregate collects in the shoulder/bike lane areas of the roadway making them extremely hard to navigate on a bicycle with narrower tires. Even with sweeping, the chip seal surfacing on the shoulder/bike lane does not compact and smooth over time the same way it does in the travel lane leaving an unpleasant rough surface. I would recommend a smooth asphalt surface for Rouse Avenue, or using a much finer aggregate in chip sealing operations followed by a robust sweeping of the shoulders following surfacing.

**3-B**

MDT will consider different surfacing treatments during final design and will work with local bicycle groups regarding maintenance concerns.

Thank you for your consideration,

-Joe Gilpin

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 4

### Response 4

4-A

As MDT considers improvements on Rouse Avenue, Streamline/Galavan, the public transportation provider in Bozeman, asks for design consideration of bus stops with connectivity to pedestrian facilities. We currently have a bus stop southbound at Cottonwood and Rouse, and we probably would have another stop if conditions were conducive. With existing services such as the Food Bank and upcoming development at Story Mill and other locations, we foresee increased service in this area of Bozeman (transit funding dependant).

4-A

The proposed improvements do not preclude the future installation of bus stops in the corridor. Sidewalks would be continuous throughout and provide the requested connectivity for pedestrians.

4-B

In the document, I believe it would be helpful to have a section about transit considerations. I see us needing stops at Cottonwood, near the Food Bank, and near the Boys and Girls Club. We also may need stops near Main or Mendenhall, half way between Mendenhall and Cottonwood, near Oak Street and at unknown locations related to the Story Mill development (these locations require more analysis).

4-B

It would not be appropriate for MDT to identify specific locations of bus stops in this environmental document, but the Department will work with local transit authorities to identify desirable locations during final design.

4-C

Please refer to the **draft** "Bus Stop Program Guidance for Planners and Developers" (still under review) attached to assist in this matter. Also, please don't hesitate to contact Lee Hazelbaker, Streamline Director (587-2434), or myself to help make Rouse Avenue a bus-friendly road.

4-C

MDT will coordinate with Streamline as the project progresses.

Thank you,

**Lisa Ballard, P.E.**  
**Streamline Coordinator**  
**Current Transportation Solutions, Inc.**  
10 Sweetgrass Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59718  
p 406.581.4601 f 651.331.4601  
lballard@currenttransportation.com



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 5**

**5-A**

As longtime residents of the Bozeman area just north of town, we use Rouse Ave. quite often to drive into downtown. While we agree that improvements in pedestrian/bicycle paths are needed, we feel that your preferred alternative does not do enough to preserve the area's mature trees. When we read that more than 125 mature trees would be sacrificed ("a notable loss of tree cover"), we were horrified. This should be avoided at any cost. Plus, Creekside Park must be maintained as is. There should be no diversion of Bozeman Creek (as into a pipe)!! For example, why not have a bicycle lane on one side and a sidewalk/walking path on the other. These do not need to be on both sides of the street in the residential area between Main and Tamarack that would be severely impacted with regards to mature vegetation. Plus, turning lanes in this specific area could be sacrificed as well. We feel strongly that Bozeman has lost too many mature trees due to construction/development already. It would be a disgrace to lose these trees. Replacement trees would take many years to grow; roadside residents would lose much of their mature tree cover. This is simply not acceptable or desirable. We suggest you revise your preferred alternative in order to do as little damage as possible to mature trees. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Gail and John Richardson  
5263 Cimmeron Drive  
Bozeman, MT 59715

**Response 5**

**5-A**

The City of Bozeman arborist will conduct an inventory of trees in the corridor and MDT will work with individual property owners and consider options to avoid healthy trees where feasible and appropriate.

**5-B**

There are no impacts to Creekside Park and the alternative including enclosure of Bozeman Creek in a pipe was eliminated due to extraordinary costs and lack of public and agency support.

**5-C**

City policy indicates that bike lanes and sidewalks must be installed on both sides for safety reasons. The center turn lane is included in this section to provide safe and efficient residential access without inhibiting traffic flow in the through lanes.

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### Comment 6

I have several questions/ comments:

- 6-A** 1) Is there a projected start date? When? How long will it take for that portion between Main Street and Peach Street?and When would any takings (if necessary) be taking place?
- 6-B** 2) How intrusive will the construction project be for local traffic? I own a fourplex apartment building in between Lamme and Peach, there is no alley access along this corridor. Will there be reasonably easy access for my tenants? How long will said project take?
- 6-C** 3) In terms of distance from building to edge of project, are we talking to actual building or to the front doorsteps? The only access to the second floor apartments is up the stairs from the front of the building.
- 6-D** 4) Where will North Rouse traffic be diverted during the project?
- 6-E** 5) We will be loosing a number of trees. Besides compensation will there be replacement vegetation since the portion of the road will not be a "boulevard".
- 6-F** 6) Will the location of the Bozeman Creek be moved at all? Will there be a new bridge over the Creek where it crosses from one side of the road to the other?

Thanks you,

Peter Foley

582-0687

### Response 6

#### 6-A

Construction of the project would not begin until 2012 at the earliest. Final design could begin as soon as the FONSI is approved, and Right-of-way negotiations would begin immediately following. It is currently assumed that right-of-way negotiations would take place in late 2010 into 2011.

#### 6-B

MDT is committed to maintaining reasonable access to residents and businesses throughout construction. Construction would likely take at least two seasons depending on construction sequencing and available funding.

#### 6-C

The distances represented in the EA are approximate and base on preliminary design. Final right-of-way requirements will be identified during the final design and right-of-way negotiations.

#### 6-D

Detours, construction phasing and sequencing have not yet been identified, but will be coordinated during final design.

#### 6-E

Compensation for property acquisition and loss of vegetation will occur during right-of-way negotiations.

#### 6-F

There will be no relocation of Bozeman Creek. The existing structure would be replaced with a structure with appropriate hydraulic capacity.



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 7**

I have reviewed the Rouse Ave. EA and am in support of the Preferred Alternative.

I regularly bicycle to work, year-round, using the portion of Rouse from Oak St. to Birdie Lane. During the summer months I often see 1 to 4 other riders who appear to be commuting along this segment as well as other riders using Rouse to access the recreational riding opportunities provided by Bridger Canyon. As noted in the EA, this portion of Rouse is currently poorly suited for bicycle travel due to the lack of a paved shoulder and the off-camber/sloping and often muddy condition of the non-paved shoulder. In the winter months, bicyclists are forced farther into the vehicular travel lanes due to accumulated snow and debris in the shoulder and along the edge of the pavement.

I believe it is important to construct bicycle lanes along Rouse to provide for safe travel opportunities for the growing number of bicyclists that can be expected to use this route into town (e.g. children and adults from the developments north Griffin Ave and the soon to be developed Story Mill Project).

Shane Matolyak

**Response 7**

Thank you for your comment. As noted in the EA, the proposed project includes bicycle lanes for the project length from Main Street to Story Mill.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 8

The Rouse street road work needs to include adequately sized bike lanes. Rouse is used as a north side Bozeman bike route, and is the only road providing direct access to the Bridger canyon bike routes. The road services the fairgrounds and variety of business and athletic facilities located along Rouse.

The expansion of the bike lanes on Rouse would then feed into the Oak Street and Griffin Street bike routes, also there is the Boys and Girls Club needing accessible and safe bike transportation along Rouse.

North 7<sup>th</sup> and North 19<sup>th</sup> do not have appropriate bike lanes, and consequently there is no incentive for bicyclists to ride to business located on those streets.

Thank you.  
George Thompson

[note revised e-mail address : george.thompson@montana.edu](mailto:george.thompson@montana.edu)

George Thompson, AIA  
Project Manager, Architect  
Facilities Planning, Design, Construction  
Plew Building.  
Montana State University  
Bozeman, Mt 59717  
desk-406-994-5265, cell 406-581-6000  
[george.thompson@montana.edu](mailto:george.thompson@montana.edu)  
LEED-Accredited Professional

### Response 8

Thank you for your comment. As noted in the EA, the proposed project includes bicycle lanes for the project length from Main Street to Story Mill.



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 9**

I am totally supportive of the preferred alternative.  
I live on Story Mill Road and travel Rouse Ave daily by both car and bike.  
It is particularly important to me that bike lanes be provided to allow a safe and energy efficient mode of transportation.  
Sincerely,  
Don Jackson  
1280 Story Mill RoAD  
bOZEMAN mt 59715

**Response 9**

Thank you for your comment.  
See response to Comment 8, above.

**Comment 10**

Thank you for your work on improving this heavily used roadway in Bozeman. As an avid bicyclist, thank you for addressing bicycle and pedestrian access on this road. Please be sure pedestrian and bicycle usage is included in the final decision for improvements.  
Sincerely,

Rachel Rockafellow,  
1202 S. Spruce Dr.  
Bozeman 59715

**Response 10**

Thank you for your comment, see response to Comment 2.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 11

August 27, 2008

To MDOT, the Bozeman Area TCC, and others interested.

We've been invited to comment on MDOT's "alternatives" and "preferred alternative" for Rouse. I didn't think any of them were very good.

Attached is a spreadsheet showing my "suggested" alternative. Note that the increased right of way south of Tamarack is due to sidewalks and bike lanes and tree width boulevards.

Also note that my alternative keeps parking, at 8', on the east side of Rouse from Lamme to Tamarack, although there would be no parking probably 50 to 60 feet back from each of the three intersections shown.

I could've described the highway from Lamme out to Story Mill, the way I first designed it, but it is described here from Story Mill inwards.

11-A

**From the section Story Mill south to the Interstate underpass, the highway should be a urban route, with all urban amenities including sidewalks and bike lanes and boulevards on both sides of the roadway. There is plenty of Right Of Way. Bicyclists will not want a bike ped path as they will not want to stop at every driveway and cross street; they will want to be "vehicles like any other". Pedestrians will want sidewalks to connect to the M trail and legends trails on the north and the Boys and Girls club on the south. There should be a planted median with turn lane cuts and street trees in the boulevards.**

11-B

Rouse, or Montana Highway 86, is a principal arterial and the main north south arterial in the eastern part of the city. It is not now, nor has it ever been a local street. The problems with improving the road are mainly due to right of way from Tamarack to Lamme.

11-C

### Response 11

11-A

See response to Comment 1-B regarding consideration of extension of the urban section.

11-B

See response to Comment 1-B with regard to the urban section. Bicyclists would be able to use the dedicated bike lane provided along Rouse Avenue, and pedestrians can use either the sidewalk or the shared path as appropriate. There are no current plans for a planed median, but the boulevards are planned to have some landscaping treatment in coordination with the City.

11-C

Comment noted.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**11-D** The current roadway works only for cars, not people, not pedestrians, not bike riders, not buses. The 2001 Transportation plan and the 2020 plan all require collectors and arterials to have multi modal infrastructure improvements. The current conditions are unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists and are out of compliance with the 2020 plan and past and current Transportation plans that have had full vetting in the public process. These improvements have been planned since the 2001 plan was adopted.

**11-D** The proposed improvements are consistent with the 2001 Transportation Plan and provide multimodal transportation improvements.

**11-E** For the section starting at Tamarack south to Peach, the attached road section shows tree size (5') boulevards on both sides of the roadway, to replace trees cut down, an 8' parking lane on the east side, bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides and minimum width travel lanes, *with no middle turn lane*.

**11-E** The minimum boulevard width is five feet. The City has requested boulevards for trees, pedestrian safety, and snow storage. The City of Bozeman standard width for a new arterial street is wider, but in an effort to minimize impacts they have agreed to use five-foot boulevards for the Rouse Avenue corridor.

**11-F** For the section starting Peach south to Lamme, the road section shows one tree size boulevard (4') on the west side of the roadway, to replace trees cut down, an 8' parking lane on the east side, bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides and minimum width travel lanes, *with no middle turn lane*.

Median treatments for roadways represent one of the most effective means to regulate access, but are also the most controversial. The safety benefits of median improvements have been the subject of numerous studies and syntheses. Studies of both particular corridors and comparative research on different types of median treatments indicate the significant safety benefits from access management techniques. A study of corridors in several cities in Iowa found that two-way left-turn lanes reduced crashes by as much as 70 percent, improved level of service by one full grade in some areas, and increased lane capacity by as much as 36 percent. [Iowa Department of Transportation, 1997, Access Management Research and Awareness Program: Phase II Report.]

**11-G** There may be a need for a pedestrian bridge over the creek on the west side.

Even if the middle turn lane were eliminated, much of the corridor would essentially be three lanes wide due to the need for turn lanes at several intersections. See graphic on the last page of this letter.

**11-H** At the intersections of Tamarack, Peach and Lamme, there is no parking, small boulevards for snow loading and pedestrian safety, sidewalks, bike lanes and 11' driving lanes with a 12' turn lane. Pedestrian crossings need to be well defined particularly at Lamme. I believe these are minimums for pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as continued functioning for a roadway.

**11-F** See above discussion on middle turn lanes.

**11-G** The proposed bridge structure will accommodate sidewalks on both sides of Rouse Avenue over Bozeman Creek.

**11-H** The intersections will be designed to accommodate the projected traffic demands and may include more lanes for turning movements than the comment would suggest.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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**11-I** The entire highway is a principle arterial which serves the city shops and the new city hall, as well as the Boys and Girls Club at the north end and the Hawthorne elementary school at the south end. Safe pedestrian and bicycle routes are a must. However, it also serves significant large truck traffic and will continue to do so. I do not accept moving bicycles to "other streets" like Church, any more than I support moving big trucks to Wallace. This highway, arterial, is the main north south transportation route in eastern Bozeman.

**11-J** Finally, a word about lighting. The city has a dark skies ordinance. Intersections should be well lighted, but any additional lights must be full cutoff and no trespass east/west in the section Tamarack to Lamme. Also, there needs to be full public review

**11-K** of any lighting plan and I think we must avoid the picket fence of lights such as was installed on south 19th.

**11-L** The speed limit should be 25 Main to Bond with 15 around Hawthorne school.

I apologize that I couldn't be there, my family required me and we had plans for many weeks for this night.



Jeffrey Krauss

599-5836  
508 Park Place  
Bozeman

**11-I** The proposed improvements are intended to provide multimodal improvements within the Rouse Avenue corridor as the principle arterial in this part of the city.

**11-J** Lighting installed as part of this project would be in compliance with the dark skies ordinance. The only additional lighting proposed along Rouse Avenue with this project would be at the newly signalized intersections of Mendenhall, Peach, Tamarack, Oak, and Griffin. All overhead street lighting would include cutoff lenses to address light pollution (or spillover) onto adjacent parcels.

**11-K** MDT will work with the City to develop a lighting plan which will be subject to the same public scrutiny typically afforded for such a plan under the dark skies ordinance.

**11-L** Speed limits are established by the Transportation Commission. They will take recommendations based on a speed study at the request of the local jurisdiction. If through this EA process, the City of Bozeman requests a speed study for the vicinity around Hawthorne School, MDT will conduct the study and make a recommendation for any adjustments in the posted speed limit based on the observed travel behaviors of 85 percent of the travelers.



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

*This graphic illustrates the limits of the turn lanes and tapers required to improve intersection level of service. As illustrated, the majority of the residential portion of Rouse Avenue within the project limits would be three lanes, with or without the inclusion of a dedicated center turn lane.*

(Attachment to Jeffrey Krauss letter).

Krauss' "Suggested Alternative"						travel lanes	median & turn lane	Total ROW	
<b>Intersections:</b>									
Three lane (turn lanes)									
Lamme	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
Peach	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
South of Tamarack	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
North of Tamarack	10	10	4	0	0	10	24	12	70
<b>Road profiles:</b>									
Lamme to Peach	10	4	4	8	0	10	22	0	58
Peach to Tamarack	10	10	4	8	0	10	22	0	64
Tamarack to UnderPass	12	12	4	8	0	10	24	0	70
Underpass	12	9	4	0	0	10	24	0	59
north of UP > story mill	12	12	4	0	0	10	24	12	74

lamme to peach 4' boulevard west side only  
east side parking Tamarack to Oak in this stretch

\* 2' east, 4' west (all the way Tamarack south to Lamme)

Approximately  
280' with no  
turn lane

Approximately  
620' with no  
turn lane



Northbound  
left turn lane  
to Tamarack

Southbound  
left turn lane  
to Peach

Northbound  
left turn lane  
to Peach

Southbound  
left turn lane  
to Lamme

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 12

Following are comments submitted on the Rouse Avenue E.A. from the City of Bozeman Public Services (Works) Department. The Bozeman City Commission has not taken any formal action regarding commenting on the E.A., so these are only our Department's views.

**12-A** The Preferred Alternative proposes a 3-lane rural section from the River crossing to Story Mill Road. This section of street is within Bozeman City limits and is an urban area. We would prefer this arterial be developed as an urban section, complete with curb and gutter and sidewalk. The properties that have recently developed northeast of Story Mill Road have developed with curb and gutter and it makes sense that the street leading up to those improvements continue at an urban standard.

**12-B** The E.A. refers to a 10 foot separated path on the south side of the street from the River crossing to Story Mill, that will be "developed by others". The City has reviewed and preliminarily approved a new development on the south side of Rouse Avenue, but the developer was not conditioned to provide the pathway because this MDT project was being planned, and it was assumed those improvements would be completed with this project. Thus, there are no "others" to do this path.

**12-C** The E.A. proposes a separated pathway on the north side only in this section. The 2001 Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan does not support separated pathways on only one side of a facility (6.5, para. 3), nor do our City Engineer and I. There is ample literature showing this is not safe. Rather than installing a shared use pathway on the north, we suggest a 6- to 8-foot concrete sidewalk be installed instead.

### Response 12

**12-A** As noted in response to Comment 1-B, funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. Based on public comment, and the strong preference stated by City Staff, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared under the EA. MDT will work with the City of Bozeman if the project proceeds through final design, and collectively determine whether an urban section would better suit the on-the-ground conditions and is within cost constraints nearer the time of actual implementation.

**12-B** The approval states, "The planned pedestrian/bicycle facility along Bridger Drive will be provided either by the state during rebuilding of Rouse/Bridger or during Phase 5, whichever comes first." (pgs. 34-35, *The Story Mill Neighborhood Planned Unit Development Findings of Fact and Order #Z-07159*) As such, if the MDT roadway project precedes the Story Mill development project, MDT will construct the trail (or curb-and-gutter if within cost constraints). If the Story Mill project moves forward before the roadway improvements, the developers will construct the trail on the south side and MDT will construct the trail on the north side.

**12-C** The intent, as stated in the EA, was to include separated pathways on both sides, but allow for staged construction as the adjacent parcels developed. Further refinement of the preliminary design provides adequate space for construction of the trail on the south. Construction of the trail would occur as outlined above in 12-B.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**12-D** We disagree with the proposal to eliminate all on-street parking north of Lamme Street. The 2001 Transportation Plan does indicate no parking should be permitted on arterial streets, but in this instance, parking should be considered in the residential section from Lamme Street north to Tamarack. The section from Lamme to Peach is zoned and developed entirely residential. Most properties have no alley access and many have no driveways. Removing parking from the street and replacing it with parking lots, which would be difficult in many conditions (snow, ice, below zero, extreme heat) for the elderly, infirm and those with young children), is of serious concern to us. Consideration should be given to eliminating the center turn lane in this section as there are no cross streets between Lamme and Peach, and adding parking.

**12-D** Approximately 22 homes would lose on-street parking. Only two (2) of those homes would have no alley access and no ability to accommodate parking on the existing lot. MDT will negotiate with each individual landowner during the right-of-way negotiation process to identify reasonable compensation for the loss of property value attributable to the lost parking.

Elimination of the center turn lane is not prudent due to the existence of over 35 access points in this area. See response to Comment 11-E, above.

**12-E** One other comment just for thought – you could pick up a few feet in the first block (Rouse to Mendenhall) by reducing the width of the existing sidewalk. Arterial sidewalks are only required to be 6-foot wide, and these walks are 10-foot wide, which appears to be the area that was left between the street surface and property line.

**12-E** This recommendation is in conflict with the request of the local property/business owner who is concerned about impacts to the operation of his business. (See response to Comment 24).

*Debbie Arkell  
Director of Public Services  
City of Bozeman, Montana  
(406) 582-2315  
darkell@bozeman.net*

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Comment 13

Response 13

Sept 7, 2008  
RECEIVED  
SEP 08 2008  
ENVIRONMENTAL

Dear Mr. Martin

13-A

Please count me among those who oppose the widening of North Rouse in Bozeman. It seems that a much more effective and much less intrusive solution would be to re-route Highway 86 from North Seventh to Griffin Drive & turn straight on to Bridger Drive. This would require an overpass or underpass on Griffin Drive at the tracks, but it would leave Rouse as the neighborhood street it now is and the way most of us in the area would like it to remain.

13-B

Griffin Drive & turn straight on to Bridger Drive. This would require an overpass or underpass on Griffin Drive at the tracks, but it would leave Rouse as the neighborhood street it now is and the way most of us in the area would like it to remain.

13-C

would require an overpass or underpass on Griffin Drive at the tracks, but it would leave Rouse as the neighborhood street it now is and the way most of us in the area would like it to remain.

Sincerely  
Mary Elford  
2206 Bridger Drive  
Bozeman, MT  
59715

13-A

Rouse Avenue is a state primary route. North 7<sup>th</sup> is an urban principal arterial south of I-90 and an urban minor arterial north of I-90. Griffin is an urban minor arterial, and Oak is an urban collector. The Montana Department of Transportation cannot defer the responsibility to address the transportation issue in this portion of the community by suggesting local routes be improved instead of the state routes.

13-B

Improvements in the North 7<sup>th</sup> and Griffin corridors would not leave funding available to provide the needed pedestrian and bicycle facilities as outlined in local planning documents and as supported by the public through this process.

13-C

Grade separation (overpass or underpass) of the railroad would be prohibitively expensive compared to the proposed project, and would involve much more substantive right-of-way in that portion of the corridor.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 14**

**Response 14**

**14-A**

I own property at 424 N. rouse which is located between Lamme and Peach Street at a point where Bozeman Creek crosses under N. Rouse. As I review the Environmental Assessment, the portion between Lamme and Peach Streets is the most sensitive portion of the plans to expand the road as a result of the Creek and the number of houses with minimal frontage on small lots with many having no parking except for on-street parking. It seems to me that your plan of eliminating on-street parking will have a drastic impact on those living on that portion of the road. I do not believe condemning some of the houses to provide for community parking lots is practical alternative to mitigating the affect of the elimination of the on-street parking now available..

**14-A**

See response to Comment 12-D.

**14-B**

**14-B**

The EA did not propose to condemn properties to provide for parking. The EA suggested that there may be homes that, during right-of-way negotiations with individual property owners, may be purchased.

**14-C**

My question is why is a two way turn lane required for this portion of N. Rouse. There are no cross streets between Lamme and Peach and the only use of the turn lanes will be to provide access to those homes who have driveways. I am guessing that only half of the homes on that portion of the road have individual driveways but I am sure you have the actual count. By eliminating the middle turn lane, on site parking could be maintained and the condemnation costs associated with the devaluation of property resulting in the loss of parking would be substantially lower.

**14-C**

See response to Comment 12-D.

**14-D**

**14-D**

Elimination of the center turn lane would provide only enough room for on-street parking on one side.

Assuming you were to eliminate the middle turn lane as you approach the two crossroads (Lamme and Peach) (100 feet?) you could then widen the road to provide for the middle turn lane to and at that point eliminate the on street parking. Since you are already planning on condemning two houses at the Peach intersection this plan would have less impact on those living close to the two intersections.

I would think that since the need for the middle turn lane is minimal for this portion of the road and the need for on-street parking is vital for those living on Rouse that the equities would favor the approach outlined above.

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

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It appears that in reading the Environmental Assessment that your department has a certain amount of flexibility in your final plan based on your adding the boulevard for Hawthorne School which I feel is appropriate.

I would appreciate it if you would give the above proposal some consideration. It seems that the equities would favor keeping the on-street parking for the residents of Rouse and eliminating the turn lane which for the most part is not needed until you near the two intersections.

Thank You.

James D. Foley  
Spokes Foley PLC  
239 South Union Street  
PO Box 986  
Burlington VT 05402  
Telephone 802-862-6451  
Fax 802-863-2859



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CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 15

Bob Nichol  
1615 S. Black #108  
Bozeman MT 59715  
<nicholbock@bresnan.net>

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MASTER FILE  
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Tom Martin  
MDT  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620

Response 15

Dear Mr. Martin:

I was interested to learn of the MDT plans for the "improvement" of North Rouse in Bozeman. It is a "residential" neighborhood (quite apart from whatever the existing zoning might be), and, after the rapidly disappearing trailer courts in the region, the last low income residential community in Bozeman. Were North Rouse more economically upscale I have no doubt that MDT would find alternative options to solve the traffic problems identified in the Bozeman Transportation Plan.

The MDT proposals expand the "sacrifice" designation that the Bozeman City Commission has applied to the Northeast Neighborhood. I suspect that the impact of the plans, if they proceed, will provide rich legal avenues for the impacted residents to pursue. Be advised that they will have many allies in the larger Bozeman community.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Nichol

According to MLS listings for Bozeman as of October 2008, there were 16 homes listed in the Bozeman area, and 80 in the greater Bozeman area in the same price range as those impacted within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

See also Section 3.6 "Environmental Justice" in the EA regarding the review of impacts from this proposed project on low income residents.

Comment 16

Anne Trygstad  
7890 Bridger Canyon  
Bozeman, Montana 59715  
September 7, 2008

MASTER FILE  
COPY

Montana Department of Transportation:

Please read Majorie Smith's comments regarding North Rouse in Bozeman. They are enclosed.

In addition, I would like to ask: Why are you routing all the traffic onto Main Street? Drivers headed for 11<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, Yellowstone Park or anywhere but Main Street should go around to North 7<sup>th</sup> and on from there. You are creating a traffic mess by sending so much traffic down North Rouse.

Sincerely yours,  
Anne Trygstad

Response 16

Rouse Avenue is a principal arterial and intended to carry local as well as regional traffic. The proposed improvements merely improve traffic flow on an already congested roadway providing local residential and commercial access, as well as regional travel to and from downtown Bozeman and Bridger Canyon. There is no intent to encourage or induce additional traffic to travel down North Rouse to Main Street.



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

(Attachment to Anne Trygstad letter)

# Bozeman issues that need attention, too

With the major political conventions adjourned, it's tempting to focus on national politics — and important to do so.

But there are local issues that also require our attention, and we need to take action on them during the same period in which we'll be making our voting decisions. These are transportation proposals that will affect the day-to-day lives of many of us.

First there is the Montana Transportation Department's plan for "improvements" to North Rouse ("improvements" is probably not the word some neighborhood residents would choose).

Then there is the update of the Greater Bozeman Transportation Plan.

The MDT and its contract planners have evolved impressively since they first unveiled their grandiose dreams to aghast residents at a meeting of NENA (Northeast Neighborhood Association) in May 2006.

Two years ago MDT imagined a North Rouse that resembled Main Street/Huffine Lane — five traffic lanes, sidewalks, parking lanes — a huge swath of pavement. To make room for it, they would have had to tear down the Bozeman Hotel.

This year they returned with plans for three minimum-width lanes of traffic and a new emphasis on bike lanes and pedestrians. They no longer call for covering up Bozeman Creek where it edges the road. Only two houses



MARJORIE SMITH

Chronicle  
columnist

are slated for demolition (at the Rouse-Peach intersection) although many others will be affected with sidewalks bumping up against their walls. They'd

eliminate on-street parking for several blocks and provide neighborhood parking lots at random places — wherever people let the MDT buy them out.

They also plan boulevard strips between the roadway and the sidewalks — not because grass is attractive but because they need a place to pile salty snowplow residue.

They promise they'll buy affected properties at market rates. But what happens to the market value of a property that's slated to lose its front yard to pavement? One man discovered he's doomed to a sort of homeowner's purgatory. There's no point in improving a building tagged for demolition yet no one would buy it now. But the planners don't expect the project to begin for at least four years.

Then there are the trees. The planners estimate about 125 will be sacrificed — some of them among the largest trees in town — shading some of the small-

est houses. Those trees and the creek make Rouse an appealing neighborhood street.

You can see where the highway planners are coming from. It's their job to keep people moving — and they still think of motor vehicles as the main mover. The bicyclists and pedestrians have a place in their plans but their justification for the huge project is to keep cars moving quickly. Highway planners hate bottlenecks — and yet the MDT planners resolutely ignore the one true bottleneck: the railroad crossing.

What if — instead of destroying homes and trees — the MDT left North Rouse alone and re-routed State Highway 86? What if it continued directly west from Bridger Canyon Road on Griffin to North Seventh? Build a railroad overpass or underpass on Griffin where there's a lot more space to acquire right-of-way. Give all those rushing folks from Bridger Canyon and the new subdivisions around Story Mill Road the choice of a quick, efficient way to a major arterial (and the nearby interstate ramps). Folks who live in Bozeman because they like its slower pace could continue to meander down Rouse and take their chances on getting stuck at the train crossing.

Which brings us to the Greater Bozeman Transportation Plan. At the discussion I attended, the proposed Oak-Highland link was a major bone of contention. Some oppose it because

it will damage Bozeman's best wetlands (although some of us can't help chuckling at the idea of an elevated roadway swooping past the penthouses in the Village Downtown). Others believe it's so expensive it will never be built, yet other solutions to traffic pressure in northeast Bozeman will not be considered. Finally, many object to the expense of building a bypass that would run right beside another bypass that's already paid for — Interstate 90.

One planner cautioned us obstreperous NENA folk: "Remember, the Oak-Highland link doesn't just affect you. People to the west of you need a route to the hospital with as few traffic lights as possible."

Well, duh! Everybody west of North Seventh already has a stoplight-free route to the hospital. It's called Interstate 90.

Comments on the environmental impact of the North Rouse plan are due Sept. 18 and may be submitted by mail to Tom Martin, MDT, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, 59620; or online at [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publicinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publicinvolve/eis_ea.shtml).

Information on the Bozeman transportation plan is available at <http://www.rpa-hln.com/bozeman/bozemantransplan.htm>.

Remember — they want to know what we think.

Marjorie Smith is a Bozeman writer and editor and former member of the U.S. Foreign Service. She can be reached at [yokoi@mcn.net](mailto:yokoi@mcn.net).

9/5

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

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**Comment 17**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rouse Ave EA.

**17-A** I believe the EA is deficient in that no alternative was considered that just addresses upgrading the intersections so they at least meet a C LOS, plus adding pedestrian & bike lanes. The need for center turn lanes the entire length of Rouse is overkill, which will negatively effect the character of the street corridor.

**17-B** By improving only the intersections and adding a bike lane/pedestrian lane, I think the LOS will be sufficient for the planning period. It will cost less to implement and will not require as much ROW as the preferred alternative.

**17-C** If you cannot/will not add this additional alternative to the EA, then I support the no action alternative.

Scott Benowitz  
4691 Shandalyn Lane  
Bozeman, MT 59718  
406/585-7101

**Response 17**

**17-A** Intersection modifications alone would not provide sufficient improvements in overall corridor operations. The center turn lanes are included to provide substantial safety and operational benefits by segregating the turning vehicles from the through traffic in the corridor. See also response to Comment 11-E.

**17-B** There are numerous driveways and access points onto Rouse Avenue between the intersections that benefit from the two-way left turn lane. Without the two-way left turn lane, the level of service would degrade and the probability of accidents would increase. (See also response to Comment 11-E above.)

**17-C** Comment noted regarding the preference for the no action alternative.



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**Comment 18**

The idea of rerouting Highway 86 -- continuing it west from Bridger Canyon road onto Griffin and N. Seventh -- seems very worthwhile to investigate.  
The proposed revisions of North Rouse would totally destroy the neighborhood feel of that street and remove yet more semi-affordable housing from the rolls. To say nothing of the personal impact on the people living on that street. And the trees.  
Thank you, Susan Ewing

**Comment 19**

Hello Mr. James and all other personnel regarding the Rouse Ave EA,  
My comments as specific to Section 3 of the Preferred Alternative: Having lived in Bozeman all of my life and at the Rouse & Lamme location multiple times during that time, I would not normally like the idea of decreasing park and natural areas. However, since I live right across from the park and open creek area; I can say that the number of people that will DAILY be impacted by taking all of the needed land access from the east side of the portion of the road, will be many many more than the very few people who use the park and even very very fewer people who use the creek. Each day all of us that LIVE in this area, will be affected by smaller yards, to no yards, traffic practically in our living room, just so a little used park can be kept and the cost of covering a creek properly can be avoided. I don't know the exact number of people living in these homes, but it far exceeds the daily or yearly use of the park. If a developer can 'buy out' the requirement to put in a park, what is that saying about a city's commitment to parks.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns. I hope that the lifestyle of those of us living on this section of the street, will be given a bit more weight than the little used park and the cost of dealing properly with the creek.

Verna Whiteman (property owner)  
401 E. Lamme, Unit A  
Bozeman MT 59715

**Response 18**

See response to Comment 13-A and 13-B with regard to re-routing traffic off of Rouse Avenue.

See response to Comment 15 regarding affordable housing concerns.

**Response 19**

The park is protected by Section 4(f) of the United States Transportation Act. Under this regulation, no project using federal funds can impact a park unless there is no feasible alternative. In this case, a shift to the east was determined to be a feasible alternative and has been forwarded as part of the Preferred Alternative.

The Federal Highway Administration is given some discretion in the application of this protection, but the impacts to other resources that would occur because of the avoidance of the park must reach extraordinary proportions.

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Comment 20

Response 20

Sirs —  
Sept 7 08  
For all the reasons stated  
in Margorie Smith's article  
I would like to comment on the  
North Rouse improvements or  
proposals:  
negative effect on: property,  
- neighborhood parking, trees, snowplow residue  
- respect for Bozeman's slower pace  
why not reroute Hwy 86  
to Griffin & N. 7th  
avoid the true bottleneck.. The  
RR crossing.  
Hope MDT listens to  
many of Bozeman residents  
Sincerely  
Deborah Goltz  
 Ms. Deborah Goltz  
4556 Bannock Dr  
Bozeman, MT 59715

See response to Comment 16 regarding Margorie Smith's article.

See response to Comment 12-D regarding parking.

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

See response to Comment 13-A&B, and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue in the community and proposals to re-route traffic onto Griffin and North 7<sup>th</sup>.



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 21**

Tom Martin  
MDT Po Box 201001  
Helena MT 59620

Dear Tom

**Response 21**

**21-A** Please leave Rouse Ave just the way it is. We travel this route when coming into town from Jackson Creek Rd and there has never been a lot of traffic except when a train comes through. We have often thought if anything is done to that stretch of road, it should be turned into a park and the stream utilized to it's fullest. Bozeman could use another park. Indeed many towns and cities have had the foresight to use their streams for linear parks..the more famous perhaps is Rock Creek Park in Washington DC stretching up into the Maryland counties..going past the National Zoo.

**21-A** The No-Build Alternative has been forwarded as a viable option if the Preferred Alternative proves unworkable for any reason.

There are no current or projected plans on the part of MDT or the City of Bozeman to turn this major arterial transportation route into a linear park.

**21-B** So use some creativity instead of just the old cutting a swath and building a wide road that really isn't necessary. Maybe you haven't heard, but with the price of fuel at all time highs and people moving to smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles, traffic may actually be reduced and require less road space.

**21-B** Direction at the federal transportation level has indicated that it is too early to speculate on the long-term effect of higher gas prices on travel. While overall vehicle miles of travel have gone down in recent months, the peak hour travel continues to remain high locally and nationally.

Sincerely,

Albert and Victoria Scharen  
4765 Aspen Lane  
Boze,man MT 59715

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 22

September 15, 2008

From: Hiller and Amy Higman  
404 N. Rouse  
Bozeman, MT 59715

To: MDT and HKM Engineering

North Rouse.  
Families, a neighborhood, a community, and finally--a street.

Four years ago we bought our first home on North Rouse in Bozeman. At the time it was the only affordable property in the city. While it was on a busy state highway, we liked our location, which put us within walking distance of downtown, the library, the school our children will attend and our church.

However, we have learned over the last year that the new proposed highway project will consume our front yard, causing significant impact to our lives and those of our neighbors and, of course, the value of our home investments.

22-A

The current proposed plan, to widen North Rouse to three lanes, will bring the highway within 7 feet of our front door. In addition to the obvious noise and pollution problems this plan would create, it would also leave us with no on-street parking, nor adequate parking on our property, for that matter. As homeowners, we are placed in a state of limbo, since it would be difficult if not impossible to sell our home in light of the impending road project.

Therefore, we are writing to ask the MDT (Montana Department of Transportation) and HKM Engineering to rethink the North Rouse plan. Below are some of our points for consideration.

### Response 22

22-A

Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. This process is projected to take approximately one year from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. Right-of-way negotiations would begin once the final design is complete. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted to discuss the necessary right-of-way acquisition and to establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well. If during the next year or two, you find that you are interested in selling your home but are unable due to the pending roadway improvements, you may be able to pursue an early, or "hardship" acquisition.



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22-B

**SAFETY:** Currently North Rouse exists as a community. Drivers slow down for bikers, pedestrians and even the occasional dog. A wider road would encourage higher speeds, making it more dangerous for everyone, including the drivers.

In the small corridor from Main Street to Peach, three lanes of traffic are unnecessary. We believe two lanes will suffice and will actually assist in the slowing of traffic in what is still largely a residential area.

Furthermore, by narrowing the traffic from three to two lanes as it comes into a school zone, you will naturally control speed. This small change alone could save up to 8 feet of land for homes in this area, giving equity and resale values a fighting chance. The loss of parking, as the current plan has none, is disastrous for us, given it will barely leave room enough for one vehicle in our driveway. Our visitors (including elderly parents) will park some unknown distance away and be left to navigate a busy highway on foot.

22-C

**NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT:** As we mentioned earlier, this section of Bozeman is one of the few remaining "affordable" neighborhoods. Recent redistricting of the schools kept the children of our neighborhood in easy walking distance of Hawthorne School, which was one of our reasons for choosing this location. Now, that walk has become much more hazardous and our school plans may change altogether, since a road built to the current plan will make our neighborhood nearly unlivable. Any incentive we as homeowners may have to improve our properties has disappeared and, with construction planned for 2012, selling does not seem to be an economically viable option for the next several years. We are truly in residential limbo.

So we are asking you to please consider the plight of our family and that of our neighbors and to reconsider some aspects of the plan to keep this section of Bozeman a community neighborhood of affordable housing rather than a strip of run down rentals to view on your way into town.

Sincerely,  
Hiller W. Higman  
Amy D. Higman

22-B

A three-lane roadway is a proven design to improve safety in a corridor like Rouse Avenue. It is important to recognize that the widened corridor includes bike lanes, sidewalks, boulevards, curb and gutter, and travel lanes that are actually narrower than the existing lanes. It is not anticipated that this would result in higher travel speeds.

See also responses to Comments 11-E and 17 regarding operations of a two-lane roadway.

22-C

See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding the parking issue.

22-D

See response to Comment 15 regarding affordable housing.

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

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**Comment 23**

Dear MT DOT,

I wrote previously and said I completely supported the project, as I drive or bike the route on a daily basis.

I would like to amend my previous support. I only support the project from the intersection of Peach Street north to Story Mill Road. I do not support any widening of the street and buying additional right of way from Main Street to Peach Street. To do so would impact too many people's residences and affect the neighborhood and school negatively and increase the speeding problem in that area.

Sincerely,  
Don Jackson  
1280 Story Mill Road  
Bozeman MT 59715

**Response 23**

Comment noted. (See also Comment 9).



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F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 24**

**BOZEMAN MULTI-LEVEL SHOPPING  
COMPLEX OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
(Bozeman Hotel)**

P.O. Box 131 Bozeman, Montana 59718  
406-539-4908 • Fax 406-522-7533 • Email bstoppelms@msn.com

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September 15, 2008

Tom Martin, MDT  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena MT 59620

I am the manager of the Bozeman Hotel at 321 E. Main, Bozeman, Montana. The Bozeman Hotel is a commercial office complex with a mixture of offices, restaurants and bars. The association board would like to request clarification concerning the future plans concerning Rouse Avenue, supply information and suggestions that, hopefully, will be useful in planning a better Rouse Avenue.

**Clarification**

**24-A**

The most recent information that we have received on the recommended street plan shows minimal impact from Main Street to Mendenhall, however, there have been newspaper articles that stated the sidewalks along Rouse may be reduced to only 5 ft. wide. What are the plans for this sidewalk?

**Information**

The maximum pedestrian use of the sidewalk along the Bozeman Hotel is from 11 p.m. To 3 a.m. The restaurants and bars in our building that are currently open at that time are the following with their corresponding fire occupancy limits. All foot traffic from the businesses use the Rouse Avenue sidewalk except for one back door to the Pour House

<u>Business</u>	<u>Fire Limit</u>
317 Club	90
Pour House	175
Tarantino's Pizza	48
Zebra	219
Colonel Blacks	117
	649
Sobys	50 (currently not open in evening but new owners have plans to open late)
	699

In addition, our lobby is available and can be occupied by dozens more.

We believe that on a busy weekend evening there may be upwards to 1,000 people using the Rouse Avenue sidewalk. At 2 a.m., by state law, the bars close and there can be this number of people exiting the building all at the same time. An average weekend evening can have 300 or more pedestrians leaving at one time. With the new state laws with regard to smoking, this sidewalk is an additional gathering area for smokers and other groups and may already have dozens of people. These numbers of pedestrians is not just a once or twice a year occurrence but may happen frequently or even weekly.

**Response 24**

**24-A**

The EA proposes to maintain the existing sidewalk widths from Main to Mendenhall. There would be no impact to the sidewalks adjacent to the Bozeman Hotel, nor to the Bozeman Hotel property itself.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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Even at current sidewalk size there are many times that Rouse Avenue becomes a walkway due to the volume of pedestrian traffic. There are, of course, many cars using Rouse at the same time to travel home. The Bozeman Hotel Board is very concerned about this safety problem.

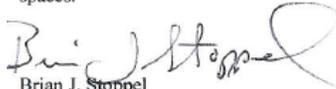
I have attached a copy of the Bozeman Downtown Partnership preliminary design for a future sidewalk, lighting improvement SID that call for additional trash cans, trees and lights on this section of sidewalk. Our Board is strongly supportive of the Downtown Partnership plans as those improvements are also needed to handle the volume of people using this sidewalk. The proposed improvements are necessary but they will take space and therefore reduce the pedestrian area.

### Suggestions

At minimum, we believe it is extremely important that the Bozeman Hotel sidewalk along Rouse Avenue not be reduced in size with the Rouse Avenue improvements.

24-B

Our suggestion is to take a serious look at eliminating the parking that is proposed along the east side of Rouse and incorporate that area into wider sidewalks along Rouse from the alley to Main Street. Our Board hates the idea of losing any parking near the Bozeman Hotel but, due to the safety concerns listed above, we believe the increase in safety far outweighs the minor benefit from those few parking spaces.



Brian J. Stoppel  
Chairman  
Bozeman Multi-Level Shopping Complex Owners Association

24-B

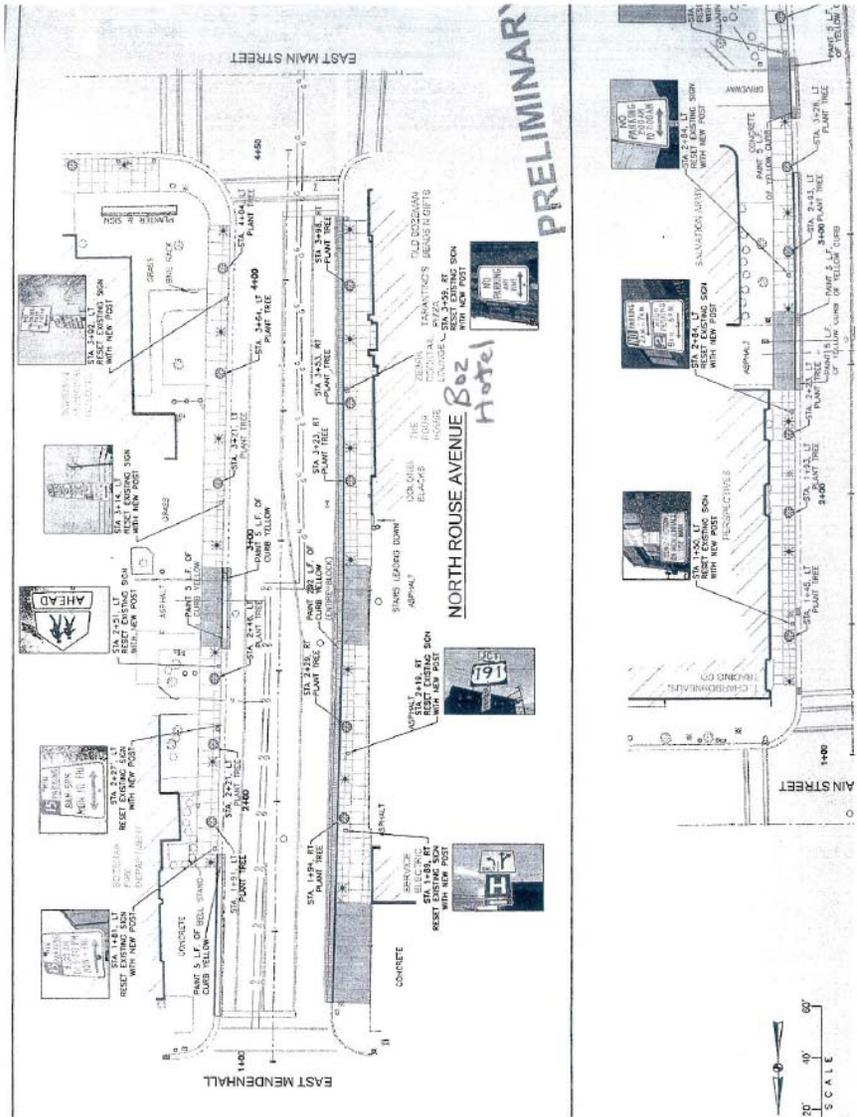
The preferred alternative was intended to preserve as much on-street parking as possible throughout the corridor. The right-of-way in this area allows for the inclusion of both parking and a safe sidewalk width.

R O U S E A V E N U E - B O Z E M A N



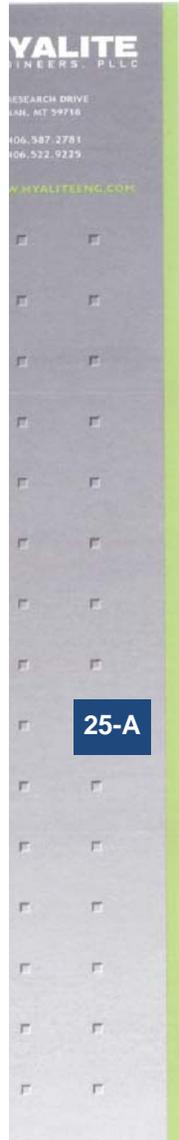
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F I N D I N G S O F S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T



(Attachment to Brian J. Stoppel letter)

Comment 25



September 16, 2008

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MDT Environmental Services
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Attn: Tom Martin

RE: Comments on the "Rouse Ave. Environmental Assessment & Section 4(f) Evaluation, July 2008"

Dear Mr. Martin,

The purpose of this letter is to respond to comments made in the "Rouse Environmental Assessment & Section 4(f) Evaluation" (Rouse EA) concerning properties on the southern side of Bridger Drive. Currently Hyalite Engineers is working on infrastructure design for the Story Mill Neighborhood (SMN) that borders Bridger Drive to the south. There is an inconsistency between the "Story Mill Neighborhood Major Subdivision Findings of Fact and Order" (City of Bozeman FOF #P-07032) and the Rouse EA documents regarding the shared use pedestrian/bicycle path planned for the southern side of Bridger Drive. We would like to provide comment regarding the following sections:

- Rouse EA Chapter 2, Section 2.3: "... a shared pedestrian/bicycle path would be constructed on the north [of Bridger Drive] from the river crossing to Story Mill [Road], but the path on the south would be provided by others concurrent with development of those parcels."

Comment: The City of Bozeman Preliminary Plat Approval for the SMN states in their Findings of Fact "Typically street improvements are not required until a phase of development is adjacent to that street. Phase 5 is located along Bridger Drive. Therefore, if MDT has not yet installed the boulevard trail the development shall per MDT specifications and consistent with any completed design process." Per FOF #P-07032 Section V.F. Paragraph 11.

Basically, this FOF states that the party that completes their project adjacent to the SMN first is responsible for the pedestrian/bicycle path for this section of road. The proposed fifth phase of the SMN currently borders Bridger Drive. If the MDT improvements are not completed at the time Phase 5 of the SMN commences construction, the developer will install the path. This is stated in the Findings of Fact so that in the case SMN never gets developed, the path will still be constructed by MDT.

- Rouse EA Chapter 3, Section 3.8: "Neither MDT nor any governmental agency can construct on the south side [of Bridger Drive] without additional right-of-way or compensation to adjacent property owners... Construction of the path with adequate separation can be accomplished on the north side of Rouse in the rural portion, but would need to be constructed outside the roadway right-of-way on the south to provide adequate separation."

Response 25

25-A

Comment noted and agreed.



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CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Letter to MDT Environmental Services**

**RE: Comments on the "Rouse Ave. Environmental Assessment  
& Section 4(f) Evaluation, July 2008"**

**September 16, 2008**

**Page 2 of 2**

25-B

Comment: The preferred alternative as presented in the Rouse EA shows the shared use pedestrian/bicycle path as being up to ten feet wide on the southern side of Bridger Drive. This would allow for at least 22 feet of separation from edge of pavement to the path. The presence of adequate separation was verbally confirmed by Lewis Baeth, PE and Phill Odegard, PE with HKM Engineering. It is our understanding that the path can be constructed and used safely within the Bridger Drive right-of-way based on the proposed Bridger Drive alignment.

25-B

See response to Comment 12-B and 12-C regarding pedestrian facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity or provide comment on this project. We look forward to coordinating with MDT and HKM on the improvements to Rouse Ave. and Bridger Drive. If you or any of the Rouse Ave. project team has any questions regarding the SMN please do not hesitate to contact me at [dworkman@hyaliteeng.com](mailto:dworkman@hyaliteeng.com) or (406) 587-2781.

Sincerely,

Dustin Workman, PE, LEED AP  
Project Manager

Cc: File - 081406

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 26

N. Rouse Planners,

The backbone of my comments is centered on the impacts on families on the east side of N. Rouse between Lamme St. and the bridge to the north. These people do not have to be impacted as severely as planned.

**26-A** Their lives and homes have a great value. A VERY GREAT VALUE. Do not forget this. Find ways to lessen the impacts on these folks.

Consider strongly these following options.

**26-B** Drop the center turn lane along this stretch. They'll cope. We'll all cope.

**26-C** Drop the bicycle lane. (I am the mountain bike coordinator for the Gallatin Valley Bicycle Club) Tell the City of Bozeman that this is one place in town that bicyclists could ride on the sidewalk. Make the sidewalk a foot or two wider.

**26-D** PUT the Gosh Darn Creek in a TUBE. Most of the people who make the anti tube comments do not live on that section of Rouse. Their comments should not carry any weight. Tubing Bozeman Creek along N. Rouse for a block is not an ecological disaster. I had to wade into that portion of the creek once to retrieve my dead cat. I was not impressed by the trench ecology. I do not believe it is essential to the fish population to retain sunlight along there. Get over it. The space occupied by the creek could accommodate much of the plan!

Imagine your relatives struggling to make house payments, living along the east side of N. Rouse. Give them a break! Ease up on the land grab.

Greg Beardslee  
221 N. Church Ave.  
Bozeman, MT 59715

### Response 26

**26-A** MDT and FHWA recognize the value of both the residents and business owners within this corridor, and the importance of the route as a major transportation corridor in and through the community. The NEPA/MEPA process requires that a balanced and objective analysis of all impacts be considered, and it is for this reason that the design has minimized travel lane widths, boulevard and sidewalk widths, and moved forward with a three-lane section rather than a five-lane section as initially proposed.

**26-B** See response to Comment 11-E.

**26-C** Part of the Purpose and Need is to “enhance bike and pedestrian travel within the Rouse Avenue corridor.” The bicycle lane is included in response to local planning documents and with the expressed support of the City of Bozeman, the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board (see Comment 29), and the Gallatin Valley Land Trust. It is not safe for either bicyclists or pedestrians to share a five to seven foot wide sidewalk.

**26-D** During the NEPA/MEPA project development process, several resource agencies were consulted regarding potential impacts to Bozeman Creek. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks expressed serious concerns about piping such an extensive length of the creek. Several local residents also expressed their concern for piping the creek. Given the level of public concern, the substantial permitting and regulatory hurdles to overcome, and the substantial costs associated with piping the creek, the decision was made to shift the alignment to the east to avoid impacts to this resource.



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 27**

Dear Mr. Martin:

I live in North Bozeman and have read the draft environmental statement. The main problem with the preferred alternative is that it does not take particularly good account of the facts on the ground as Rouse currently exists between Tamarack and Main St. It is currently a busy city street, lined by small businesses, houses, an elementary school and fire station. The neighborhood to the east and west are connected by school district, neighborhood association and general day to day travel. This neighborhood should be viewed as one piece and particular care should be taken to avoid splitting it in two. Alternative B and its alternatives (with the exception of the "no build") will do enough damage to the neighborhood that a new alternative should be developed.

The proposed alternative, while better than the initial proposal (as I understand it, a five lane highway which looks like Alternative C), still has deficiencies that need to be addressed. Actually, all the alternatives, including the "no build" alternative don't really offer a lot of hope for the neighborhood and no alternative addresses the fact that the biggest bottleneck on the street is the railroad crossing.

Here are some thoughts on some further modifications that might actually help the traffic situation and would not be so likely to split the neighborhood in two and wouldn't fundamentally change the character of the existing street.

**27-B** - Griffin and Oak are both large streets designed to carry traffic and are primarily industrial in nature. There is no reason that those couldn't be looked at for further development as a way to take some of the projected traffic increase off of Rouse.

**27-C** - Why three lanes all the way to Main? It just doesn't make much sense. This needs to be a slow street because of the number of houses and children associated with the section between Tamarack and Main. You could continue to post it slow, but an all three lane option is going to

**Response 27**

**27-A** See response to Comment 13-C regarding the railroad crossing.

**27-B** See responses to Comments 13-A&B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue.

**27-C** See response to Comment 11-B regarding the benefits of a center turn lane.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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send the message that this is a faster road. How about keeping two lanes from Oak to Main, with turn lanes at the signals? It's pretty close to being there right now and the turn lanes and signals help where they are right now.

27-D

-Peach and Rouse is a hazard. It's unfortunate, but it does appear that making that a feasible signaled turn may require that the houses go. If there is no way to make this a safe turn without removal of the houses, do the eminent domain sooner than later. I do think that Peach needs a signal. It gets really clogged at rush hour, and can be difficult at other times as well. It might be nice to have some additional parking here, but other options to consider with that small sliver of space are a little more riparian area next to the river as a buffer and encouragement of commercial space on that corner.

27-E

- Bike lanes/ sidewalks: I am a big fan of both and sure see the use of them. However, it is a really tight corridor, particularly between Tamarack and Main. If you are trying to prioritize because of space, I'd say maintain and expand the sidewalks between Tamarack and Main and then do the whole bike lane/ sidewalks as planned going North from there. Between Tamarack and Main, there is the alternative of using Wallace, Church or Montana or Bozeman for biking purposes. Those are the streets I usually use. Below Tamarack, there is a bottleneck on parallel streets that can be safely used for biking, so bike lanes would be very useful there. I'd say that front yards are an important value too, so if it eliminating bike lanes gives you an extra 10 feet and that really gives people more yard, then it seems to make sense to do it. I do think the third lane should be eliminated from consideration (with the exception of intersection turn lanes) in this section first.

27-F

I appreciate the hard work and effort DOT has put into trying to find an alternative that might work for North Rouse. I realize it is difficult because you are trying to find a way to ensure smooth flow of traffic as well as provide a safer experience. I see some elements of Alternative B that are workable, but particular care should be taken to develop a new alternative for the section between Tamarack and Main.

Sincerely,

Karen Filipovich  
426 N. Grand  
Bozeman, MT 59715

27-D

MDT does not intend to use eminent domain to acquire any residences within the Rouse Avenue corridor, and would do so only after exhausting all other reasonable negotiation opportunities. Acquisitions are anticipated to begin during right-of-way negotiations which would begin in 2010 at the earliest.

Parking is one option, and MDT will explore others as the opportunity arises.

27-E

See response to Comment 1-B regarding the inclusion of bike lanes along Rouse Avenue.

27-F

See response to Comment 11-E regarding the center turn lane.

27-G

The Preferred Alternative is the result of several years of planning and design which included public and agency involvement, and it is considered the best alternative to satisfy the stated Purpose and Need while minimizing impacts to the surrounding community.



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 28**

RECEIVED  
SEP 11 2008  
ENVIRONMENTAL

Mr. Tom Martin  
MDT  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620

September 9, 2008

**Response 28**

Dear Mr. Martin:

I wish to express my concerns about the planned improvements to North Rouse in Bozeman. Improvements can not describe what the Montana Transportation Department has planned for North Rouse Avenue. Destroying about 125 trees, forcing home owners to sell as the street will be close to their door steps, taking away on street parking for residents who do not have a driveway is a hard sell to use the word "improvements".

**28-A**

**28-A**

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

Our family drives on North Rouse often, as we live 12 miles east of Bozeman, and since I became aware of the planned improvements, I have driven slower and realize how sterile North Rouse will become once the planned improvements are completed. As the newspaper articles state, the work will not begin until 1212. Public hearings are required by law with any major project that affects so many property owners. Property owners feel helpless as their protests do not seem to matter in the big picture. Are bicycle lanes more important than the home owners rights? I question how many people will ever walk along Rouse Avenue to warrant sidewalks, with boulevard strips to maintain space for snow removal.

**28-B**

**28-B**

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue.

An alternate plan, as proposed by Marjorie Smith's article on September 5<sup>th</sup> in the Bozeman Chronicle, suggests re-routing Highway 86 from Bridger Canyon Road onto Griffin Drive to North Seventh. Was this idea considered? People would not be forced to move, trees would not be chopped down, millions of dollars could be saved by moving Highway 86 to the end of North Rouse. Closer to the railroad tracks, improvements have been made on the west side of No. Rouse, with new businesses opened, along with landscaping enhancements that did not exist before the renovations to the old buildings. No matter how wide North Rouse might be widened, there will still be traffic stops due to trains passing through on a daily basis. How about restricting truck traffic on North Rouse? The corner of Peach Street and N. Rouse is a very difficult place for cars to turn left or right onto No. Rouse. That area would be much safer with a traffic light. I never travel down Peach St. when leaving Bozeman and prefer to use the safer location of Tamarack with a traffic light. The new lights on Oak and Griffin have made traveling much safer for anyone turning left onto Rouse or Bridger Drive. The only time I can recall of a traffic jam on No. Rouse, and continuing on Bridger Drive were the several \$10 skiing days at Bridger Ski Hill!

The current proposed plan for changing North Rouse in Bozeman is difficult to accept. Surely this plan can be revised with greater concerns for property owners rights, cutting down of beautiful trees and a greater effort to save millions of dollars. Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,

*Margaret M. Davis*  
Margaret M. Davis

406-586-1562  
P.O. Box 4350  
Bozeman, Mt 59772

As a state route, MDT and the City of Bozeman cannot restrict truck traffic on Rouse Avenue.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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### Comment 29



THE CITY OF BOZEMAN  
20 E. OLIVE ~ P.O. BOX 1230  
BOZEMAN, MONTANA 59771-1230

BOZEMAN AREA BICYCLE ADVISORY BOARD  
PHONE: (406) 582-2250 ~ FAX: (406) 582-2263  
E-MAIL: [bikeboard@bozeman.net](mailto:bikeboard@bozeman.net)

#### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** DARRYL L. JAMES, ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER, HKM ENGINEERING  
JEFF EBERT, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR, MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION

**FROM:** BOZEMAN AREA BICYCLE ADVISORY BOARD

**RE:** ROUSE AVENUE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

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Below are comments from the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board (BABAB) regarding the Rouse Avenue Environmental Assessment.

29-A

The Bike Board unanimously supports the "Preferred Alternative," which includes bike lanes throughout the corridor, along with the following amendments. We recommend a full urban section for the entire length of the project. We feel that a separated shared-use path on only one side of the road (as suggested) is a dangerous situation for cyclists (given the number of crossings in this section) and, therefore, recommend a sidewalk (6') to be built on both sides of the roadway. We understand that additional right-of-way may need to be secured for this option but would highly recommend exploring this opportunity to provide the safest, most consistent facility. Where parking may exist, we recommend a 6' bike lane to allow for adequate room for cyclists to dodge open car doors without having to swerve too far into the travel lane.

29-B

The recently completed "Hawthorne Safe Routes to School Improvement Plan" should also be implemented in accordance with this project. Many "Engineering Next Steps" have been identified to make this area safer for students (pages 31-35).

29-C

Finally, we would like to encourage the preservation of as many existing trees as possible. We recognize there will be losses with this project, but would hope to retain as many large growth trees as possible to retain the current natural setting. This may include the elimination of turn lanes (while keeping bike lanes and sidewalks) or acquiring additional property to be turned into off-street parking in order to reduce the street width by eliminating on-street parking.

Thank you for helping to create a safe environment for our cyclist and pedestrian citizenry. We are proud to live in such a progressive community!

### Response 29

29-A

See response to Comment 1-B regarding the limits of the urban section.

29-B

The project team has reviewed the Safe Routes to Schools plan and did not find any conflicts with the proposed improvements along Rouse Avenue.

29-C

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.  
See response to Comment 12-D regarding the center turn lane.  
See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding on-street parking.



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Comment 30**

CHARLES R. SWART, SURVEYOR  
324 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE  
BOZEMAN, MONTANA 49715  
406-586-2623

15 August 2008

Editor  
BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE  
Bozeman, Montana

The proposed major changes to the design and construction of Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Griffin Avenue are covered in detail in a publication "Rouse Avenue – Bozeman – Environmental Assessment". If you are concerned about the future of our city I recommend that you call 406-444-7228 and ask the very courteous young lady for a free copy of the document. A public hearing on this matter will be held at the Bozeman Senior Center at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, 27 August 2008. Please attend if you are able.

Briefly, here are a few of the items covered in this book. Five options are discussed, from a "no build" option to the most radical, which mandates the demolition of the Bozeman Hotel for the installation of a five lane road! The following are from the "recommended" option. No through traffic lanes would be added, but only sidewalks, boulevards, bicycle lanes, and a center left turn lane.

**30-A**

As you head north past Lamme Street on Rouse Avenue, one of the first things you see is the massive 48 inch diameter cottonwood on the east side of the street. Under the recommended option, this magnificent tree, along with every other tree within 15 to 30 feet outside of the existing right of way line (more than 125 trees, according to page 62) from Lamme Street to Griffin Drive, would be destroyed.

**30-B**

All on-street parking would be eliminated along this route, including resident parking (pages 27-30). Seventy-eight property ownerships would be "affected" (page 39). The increased right of way width, particularly along the single family residential area south of Peach Street, would result in the destruction of the two homes at the southeast corner of Rouse Avenue and Peach Street, as well as additional buy-outs because of proximity of the right-of-way line to the front doors (pages 39 and 40). Page 39 also tells us that some of these lots might be used for parking lots to compensate for the loss of on-street parking!

The construction as proposed would result in a social and scenic train wreck such as we have not seen for some time.

Charles R. Swart

**Response 30**

**30-A**

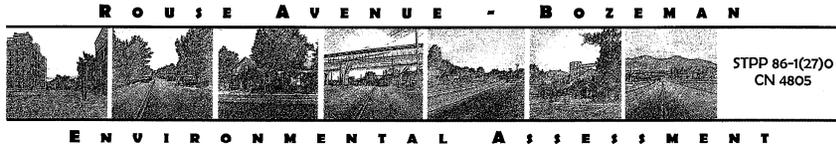
See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

**30-B**

See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding on-street parking.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Comment 31



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Response 31

We Invite Your Comments:

How will lights on Peach in conjunction with Tamarack light affect the "break off" streets like 5<sup>TH</sup> Street between Peach & Tamarack being mostly light industrial mixed with some residential traffic flow?  
"Legs"

The proposed improvements in the Preferred Alternative would improve traffic flow not only along Rouse Avenue, but improve access to Rouse Avenue at the signalized intersections.

It is not anticipated that new signals would induce new trips or substantially alter existing travel patterns.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: *Kristina Pinzing Ward*

Address: *815 5<sup>TH</sup> Ave, North  
(Sunset Mobile Home Park resident)*

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 32



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

*Funding for this project comes from gas taxes as I understand. We heard so much about Bille lanes - paths. Do the bicycles or riders contribute any funds toward this or any other roadway projects*

Response 32

The federal transportation funding bill (SAFETEA-LU [Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users]) requires that transportation improvements consider opportunities to improvements for all modes of travel, which includes single occupant vehicles, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Frank Manceau

Address: 41551v Arthur Dr  
Bozeman mt 59718

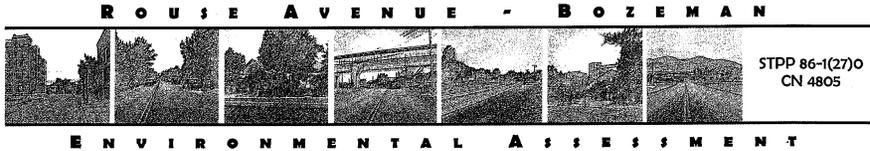
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

*I am a Volunteer on the Ballantyne - Bozeman City traffic/pedestrian safety committee - a county member*

Comment 33



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Response 33

We Invite Your Comments:

*I would like to suggest that North Rouse be made into a one-way street from Tamarack going South and a street light at Patch & Rouse would take care of a lot of problems. Then, you could make North Wallacy a "one-way" from Main to Tamarack. This would leave the remainder of Rouse from Tamarack <sup>North</sup> open for 2 way. Or as one suggestion by Maxjorie Smith - use West Griffin as the arterial, taking a lot of traffic off Rouse.*

While a one-way couplet may provide additional capacity and is an appropriate solution in certain circumstances, the trend in urban traffic engineering is suggesting that couplets are less than desirable in densely developed residential areas. An increasing number of communities are less satisfied with the one-way couplets than with standard two-way streets, and are pursuing conversion back to two-way streets. These conversion projects result in improved safety, a reduction in traffic intrusion into neighborhoods, and slower travel speeds – all of which have been concerns and desires expressed by public participants in the development of the Rouse Avenue project. Based on the potential for increased travel speeds through residential areas along Rouse, the increased potential for neighborhood cut-through traffic between Rouse and Wallace, the increase in out-of-direction travel for local residential and business access, and the potential for confusion for visitor and recreational travelers utilizing this regional corridor, a one-way conversion has not been pursued in the Rouse Avenue corridor.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Florence Groth  
 Address: 701 S. Willson  
 e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
 HKM Engineering  
 PO Box 1009  
 Helena, MT 59624-1009

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue, as well as Griffin.



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 34



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

*Why couldn't the bike lanes be incorporated into the sidewalks rather than the streets. It seems like there would be less traffic contact and it makes better sense than having a person on a bike competing with a 2 ton vehicle. The sidewalks could be made wider, striped to indicate a bike lane and the street width made narrower. A bike-pedestrian accident would be less damaging than a bike-auto or truck accident.*

Response 34

The American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and Bozeman City Code state that "designated use of sidewalks (as a signed shared facility) for bicycle travel is unsatisfactory. It is important to recognize that the development of extremely wide sidewalks does not necessarily add to the safety of sidewalk bicycle travel. . . . Sidewalk bikeways should be considered only under certain limited circumstances, such as: A) to provide bikeway continuity along high-speed or heavily traveled roadways having inadequate space for bicyclists, and uninterrupted by driveways and intersections for long distances. B) On long narrow bridges . . ." Additionally, a shared facility is not considered satisfactory because "sidewalks are typically designed for pedestrian speeds and maneuverability and are not safe for higher speed bicycle use. At intersections, motorists are often not looking for bicyclists (who are traveling at higher speeds than pedestrians) entering the crosswalk area, particularly when motorists are making a turn." (Source: AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities)

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: CHAD A GROTH  
Address: 327 N Rouse (OUR RENTAL)  
701 S WILLSON (MAIL ADD.)  
BOZEMAN, MT 59715-5240

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Comment 35

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

35-A

I truly believe that DOT is making a huge mistake tearing up Rouse Ave in Bozeman. It runs parallel to N. 7th Street which is already wide and able to handle the traffic.

Bridge Drive could go straight to 7th avoiding Rouse thereby saving the trees and hardships in our neighborhood.

35-B

The city of Bozeman should make a combination bicycle-bidwalk along Rouse - it would please everyone!!  
Thanks for your consideration

Response 35

35-A

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue and North 7<sup>th</sup>.

35-B

See response to Comment 34, above, regarding bike/pedestrian facility safety.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Mary Ann Nielsen

Address: 315 N. Church  
Bozeman, MT. 59715

e-mail: amnielsen315@gmail.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to:

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Also: ARTHUR R. NIELSEN  
315 N. Church  
Bozeman, MT. 59715



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 36



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

*THE PROJECT LOOKS GOOD TO ME;*

*I AM IN FAVOR OF THE BIKE LANES AND ELIMINATING ON-STREET  
PARKING FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE PROJECT. ROUSE RECEIVES  
A LOT OF BICYCLE TRAFFIC.*

Response 36

36-A

*I SUGGEST PLANNING THE PROJECT SO THAT THE FULL WIDTH SECTION  
CAN BE COMPLETED UNDER THE I-90 OVERPASS IN THE FUTURE  
WHEN THE OVERPASS BRIDGE IS REPLACED AT THE END OF ITS  
USEFUL LIFE.*

36-A

The only element eliminated under the new Interstate structure would be the center turn lane. All other amenities would be maintained.

36-B

*THE AASHTO GREEN BOOK FOR BICYCLES HAS A DETAIL SHOWING  
HOW BIKE LANES CAN BE MADE TO CROSS RR TRACKS THAT ARE  
ON A SKEW. THIS MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THIS PROJECT.*

36-B

The design details for the bike crossing of the railroad will be considered during final design.



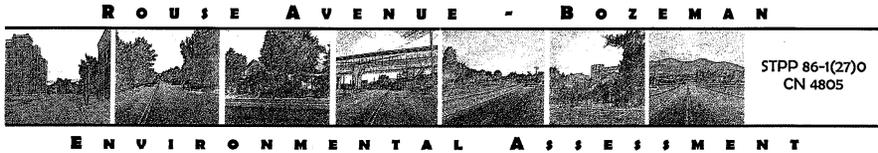
To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Jim Nallick  
Address: 1410 Cherry Dr.  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
e-mail: jim@nallick.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :  
Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Comment 37



Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

As an owner of a business on Rouse Ave, my concerns and interests differ from those of homeowners. For example, I think more traffic is better. But I am also glad that sidewalks and bike lanes will appear, especially as a lot of kids patronize my business (Tuckermans West at 708 N Rouse). I am concerned that my customers will have a hard time reaching us. And I will be very sorry to lose the two beautiful trees that front my property on Rouse. They significantly enhance the curb appeal of our location. I wonder if there is any way to estimate the impact this project will have on my commercial property.

37-A

37-B

Response 37

37-A

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

37-B

Impacts to individual properties will be identified during final design, and compensation discussed during the right-of-way negotiations.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Brandon Saltz
Address: 711 N Grand Ave
Bozeman MT 59715
e-mail: bsaltz@tuckermanswest.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to:

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 38



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

Now that the ball is rolling, lets keep it going. As a home owner on Rouse, I have been in limbo on what will happen to our street. For the past 5 yrs we heard this + that. Now that there is a plan in place, lets keep it moving along. We need closure. It is very frustrating owning property with a HUGE question mark over it. I have recently tried to SELL my house, yet w/ this project looming over the property, no one will touch it. Be considerate to the property owners, get us out of limbo + keep this project moving quickly + thoughtfully.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Mark Miller  
Address: 2916 Langohr Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
e-mail: Miller.stone.design@hotmail.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :  
Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

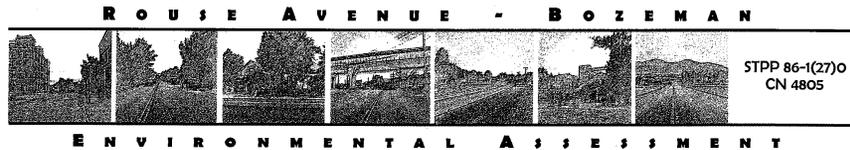
Response 38

The NEPA/MEPA process requires that state and federal agencies take a hard look at the potential impacts from these types of projects. Rouse Avenue is a very constrained corridor, and the project team has taken a substantial amount of time to develop a Preferred Alternative that provides substantive safety and capacity improvements while minimizing impacts to the surrounding community.

We currently anticipate that the project will move into final design in 2009, and right-of-way acquisition could begin as early as 2010. See response to Comment 22 regarding the potential for earlier discussions for right-of-way acquisition.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Comment 39**



**Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008**

**We Invite Your Comments:**

**39-A**

It is critical to continue the sidewalk onto the Boys & Girls Club property, to provide a safe pedestrian link for the children; we prefer it all the way to Story Mill

**39-B**

Can the MDOT add a left turn arrow on Main, onto Rouse, where they put new <sup>traffic</sup> lights last year?

**39-C**

Please ~~make~~ choose <sup>street</sup> lights that are like the ones on Main ST, attractive and not the huge overhead lights. Main ST lights look great, as do the crosswalks.

**39-D**

MDOT left alot of gravel on sidewalks @ new traffic lights @ Griffin & Rouse. It still isn't cleaned up. How can we be certain they will clean up after this project?

**39-E**

A continuous bike path from Main to Story Mill is very important as is a separate sidewalk for pedestrians. Thankyou-  
To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Heather Jernberg

Address: 1013 BOYLEN RD  
BOZEMAN 59715

e-mail heather@borcasgroup.us

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James <sup>Facilitator</sup>  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

**Response 39**

**39-A**

See response to Comment 1-B regarding the extension of the sidewalk beyond Griffin.

**39-B**

Work on Main Street would be outside the scope of this proposed project.

**39-C**

See response to Comment 11J with regard to street lighting.

**39-D**

The construction contractor has removed excess gravel as a part of a punch list of items to obtain project approval from the City of Bozeman and MDT.

**39-E**

The dedicated bicycle lane is planned as part of this project from Main Street to Story Mill.



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 40

R O U S E A V E N U E - B O Z E M A N



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

- 40-A Most important to me: - complete sidewalks and bike lanes along entire corridor. Turn lanes at critical intersections. Boulevard strip with street trees are also very important to the walkability and livability of this corridor.
- 40-B I would like to have a 10 ft bike/ped path on the east side of Rouse from Oak to Story Mill with extension to the "M" in future improvements.
- 40-C Why not hang the sidewalk over Bozeman Creek (Boardwalk) to allow more right-of-way on tight spots in the corridor adjacent to Bozeman Creek.
- 40-D Help tie a bike/ped trail from Oak to the Story Mill Trail by using the Interstate Right of Way?
- 40-E Would like a separate bridge for the shared use path over the East Gallatin.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Gary Vodchmal  
Address: 614 South 7th  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
e-mail: gary@gvlt.org

P.O. Box 7021  
Boz. MT 59711

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to:  
Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 40

- 40-A See response to Comment 1-B regarding the extension of the sidewalk beyond Griffin.
- 40-B The project would include either a separated bike/pedestrian path as originally proposed, or an urban section with a bike lane, curb/gutter, boulevard, and sidewalk. Right-of-way constraints and costs would make it unreasonable to include both in this corridor.
- 40-C Cantilevering over the creek would essentially enclose the creek. Piping the creek is less costly, and was still determined to be too expensive and result in too severe of an impact from the perspective of the resource agencies.
- 40-D Any trail improvements outside the right-of-way necessary for the proposed improvements along Rouse Avenue would have to be conducted under a separate project.
- 40-E Bicyclists and pedestrians can safely use the East Gallatin bridge crossing as outlined in response to Comment 1-A.

Comment 41



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

41-A

I have serious concerns regarding the final width of the sidewalk in front of 109 N. Rouse. My understanding of the EA is that it will be reduced by 50%. This proposed condition degrades pedestrian safety by placing moving vehicles too close to pedestrians.

41-B

This condition will also create a snow removal issue as plows routinely place significant amounts of snow onto the existing sidewalk. (i.e. There will not be a place for snow storage)

(I own the property at 109 N. Rouse)

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Ben Lloyd

Address: 109 N. Rouse, #1  
Bozeman, MT 59715

e-mail: ben@commaq.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 41

41-A

The sidewalk is narrowed from the existing conditions in this portion of the corridor to accommodate a turn lane onto Mendenhall. Vehicles in this lane will be traveling relatively slowly as they are preparing to make a turning movement.

41-B

Snow plowing practices in this area will have to be modified.



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 42



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

Response 42

42-A

DO NOT OVERDO IT. POWER IS UNIQUE  
AND CAN REASONABLY CARRY <sup>W/IT</sup> SO  
MUCH TRAFFIC. FIND THAT MULTIPUR  
AND EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES (OAK LOOP?  
N. 7<sup>TH</sup>) TO FINISH THE JOB.

42-A

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the transportation role of Rouse Avenue and the use of North 7<sup>th</sup> and Griffin as alternate routes.

42-B

> WHAT HAPPENS IF OAK LOOP IS PAULT?  
> ROUSE CANT DO "IT" ALL... WHAT  
OTHER ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE? IT  
IS ODD TO NOT LOOK AT/SEE THE  
BIG PICTURE.  
-> LOOK CURBS, BIKE LANES, SIDEWALKS.  
-> THIS IS TRICKY ... THANKS FOR  
CAREFUL & HONEST SOUND AND  
OBJECTIVE SOLUTIONS.

42-B

Rouse Avenue is just one major arterial in the urban network and needs to operate as efficiently as possible in order to minimize the load on other lesser facilities. The Bozeman Area Transportation Plan process is the tool used to analyze the "big picture" and is the impetus for this proposed project. Other roadway improvements are necessary to satisfy the overall network efficiency needs.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name:

BOB PERKINS

Address:

518 N. TRACY  
BOZEMAN

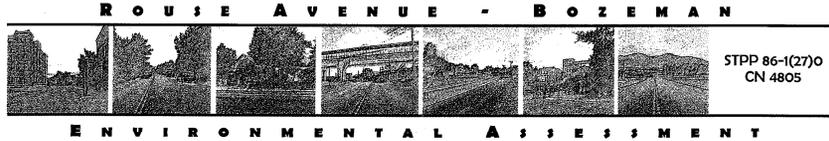
e-mail

PERKINS@TAKIN.COM

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Comment 43



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

43-A

I prefer the "preferred plan",  
 I would like to see the  
 MDT do a better job of addressing  
 the issue of yellow signs  
 that indicate a pedestrian  
 crossing. at Story Mill

43-B

vehicles regularly drive  
 through the intersection when  
 pedestrians are there. It's a  
 mistake to eliminate the "STOP"  
 for pedestrians in crosswalk.  
 add "STOP" back in or put a  
 traffic officer at every one. - other  
 states have the words - please bring  
 them back

Response 43

43-A

During final design, MDT will consider opportunities for the installation of pedestrian crossing signs where appropriate.

43-B

A traffic signal is currently planned for the intersection at Story Mill. See response to Comment 1-F regarding the timing of installation of that signal.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Carolyn Hyper

Address: 3120 Augusta Dr  
Bozeman MT 59715

e-mail

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009



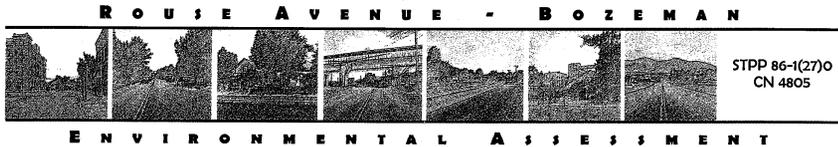
STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

Comment 44

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Response 44

From the graphic obtained from Stefan Associates (below), it is not clear what impacts the proposed improvements at the Fair Grounds would have on Rouse Avenue. MDT will continue to coordinate with the County as the project progresses.



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

I am involved with the Fairgrounds preparing their master plan. It has been approved by the county commissioners. It will impact Rouse. Email me for a copy.

Tim



To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

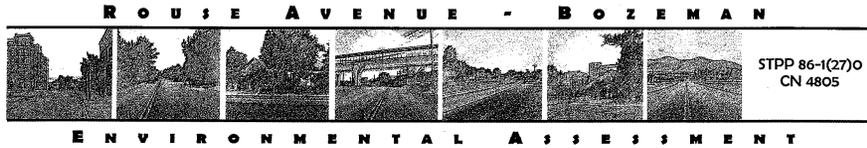
Name: Tim Stefan  
Address: 13895 Kelly Canyon Rd  
59115  
e-mail: tastefan@aol.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Comment 45



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Response 45

We Invite Your Comments:

45-A Please include a left-turn lane for northbound traffic (only) at Lone Mountain Gymnastics (just north of Oak)! It backs up badly at 4:5, + 6 pm on school days.

45-B If there is any way to get bus stops out of the traffic lanes, please do it.

45-C Please don't over-sign the road (like Durston, 11th to 19th) - so many signs are distracting (and ugly).

45-A

The additional lane requested would not fit within the constraints in this area. There is also an operational concern with the close proximity of the Birch intersection and the railroad crossing. The preferable traffic movement would be to turn left on Oak and then right into the parking lot at the gymnastics center.

45-B

It is generally safer to have the buses stop in the travel lane. If they pull out of the traffic flow, they have to re-enter which is difficult and often dangerous during the periods of peak traffic flow.

45-C

A detailed signing plan will be developed in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) during final design.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Debrah McAtee

Address:

e-mail: dcm@mcatee.office.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

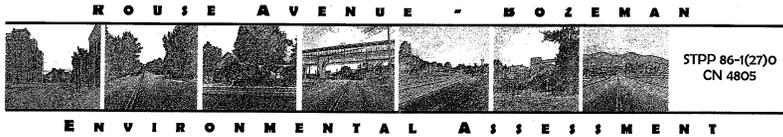
Darryl L. James  
HKM Engineering  
PO Box 1009  
Helena, MT 59624-1009



STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

**Comment 46**

**F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T**



**Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008**

**Response 46**

**We Invite Your Comments:**

**46-A**

*I read your plan downloaded from the internet; I get the idea of plan A, B C & D which have been scrutinized & analyzed to determine the best plan. Good job - someone put a lot of work & thought into that process. What I can't say is the fact that you want to propose "none of the above" alternate plan that doesn't even have a letter - "E"? It lacks a lot like plan B' including sidewalks, boulevards etc from Bond to Griffin. None of the other plans A B C or D had sidewalks from Bond to Griffin. Sounds to me like you throw the B's out with the Bathwater. Did the "proposed alternative" go through the same scrutiny & analysis as A B C & D? Who works sidewalks & boulevards through an industrial area? PS. You don't indicate any congestion at the RR crossing - why not? That is not only the smallest part of the school but they put a park in it for long*

**46-A**

Alternatives A, B, C and D were fully developed to address the stated purpose and need. The impacts from those alternatives were analyzed, and in an attempt to further minimize impacts, the design of Alternative B was modified. The Preferred Alternative did undergo the same level of scrutiny as the other build alternatives.

**46-B**

*To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:*

**46-B**

Sidewalks and boulevards were included in the section from Bond to Griffin based largely on input from City staff and public comment. See also the response to Comment 1-B.

**46-C**

*Name: Robert Bailey  
Address: 1602 N. Rouse  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
e-mail: mntalw@montana.com*

**46-C**

See responses to Comments 13-C and 36 regarding the railroad crossing constraints.

**46-D**

A construction staging and sequencing plan will be developed during final design to ensure that Rouse Avenue is still accessible during construction. Once the project is complete, the route will be much safer for all modes of travel.

**46-D**

*\* Hopefully, this project will be better co-ordinated & managed than the N-Rouse paving project 2 years ago. The road before repaving was safer for pedestrians & bicycles than after the paving project - you added pullouts for vesps, but took away pathways.*

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

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**Comment 47**

RECEIVED  
SEP 19 2008  
ENVIRONMENTAL



Dear Mr. Tom Martin,

I have been driving Rouse Street my whole life and do not want to see the creek disturbed or the trees destroyed. We do not need your improvements. Go north or east to make your main arteries, leave Rouse alone. Make more linier trails for walking to work and recreation and schools and more bike/skate paths for folks, and really think about what we need in the future with global warming and all you must not cut the trees and let the car rule everything. What about all the birds that use those trees and the shade and habitat they create in the riparian area? You can't sacrifice that for cars.

Marjorie Smith had good ideas in her editorial Sept 5 in the Bozeman Chronicle. Think greener, think people power, pedal power. Think underpass or move that dam train tracks.

Yours Truly,

Theresia Konrad

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Theresia Konrad".

**Response 47**

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue in Bozeman.

The proposed improvements are intended to improve travel for all modes within the Rouse Avenue corridor, so would include the requested linear trail for pedestrian and bicycle commuters and recreationists.

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

An underpass was considered but determined to be unreasonably expensive. The EA did not consider moving the train tracks, which would also be prohibitively expensive and result in much more of an impact to the community than the impacts in the Rouse Avenue Corridor.



STPP 86-1(27)O  
CN 4805

F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

Comment 48

RECEIVED  
SEP 19 2008  
ENVIRONMENTAL

MASTER FILE  
COPY

Response 48

TO:  
Tom Martin  
17 Sept. 2008

48-A

The plans you have for Rouse Street in Bozeman do not address Bozeman's future needs in a post carbon economy. Seriously. We must not waste money on infrastructure that does not consider our commitment to our children, and their children. Plans must reflect the needs of an extremely local economy, a fifty-year projection of what our needs will be.

48-A

The plans are reflective of the anticipated growth in the Bozeman area, and are intended to consider the transportation demands of all users over the next 20+ years. Projections beyond 50 years are highly speculative and would likely result in unnecessary expenditures.

48-B

Both Rouse and Griffin are my access to Bridger Canyon, where in 1986 I purchase land and built a home and raised my three kids and various livestock and crops. These two roads are vital to my access. They need over or/and under passes, a frequent bus system, and a safe bike path that is FAR from trucks and cars. A trail/road for horses FAR from cars would be excellent.

48-B

Rouse Avenue is a major arterial and does provide critical access to and from Bridger Canyon and downtown Bozeman. It is not clear from the comment where "over/and under passes" should have been considered, but these types of structures are very costly and require large construction footprints that would result in more impacts than the Preferred Alternative.

See response to Comment 40 regarding improvements outside the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Thank you for your time,  
Secilia Marino  
1714 B west Beall  
Bozeman, MT 59715

**Comment 49**

RECEIVED  
SEP 19 2008  
ENVIRONMENTAL

MASTER FILE  
COPY

**Response 49**

Dear Tom Martin or the MDT

We have driven this road our whole lives. I am 31; my brother and sister are 21 and 18.

Our parents raised us on 80 acres in the Bridger Mountains and we do not want to see the trees cut or the creek harmed on Rouse Street. Your EIS must address the real future needs of the Bozeman community. We must be ready for the post carbon future, for a strong local economy where we produce most of what we need, use, eat, and enjoy.

Sincerely,  
Coyote Marino, Aspen Marino, Micah Marino



See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

See response to Comment 26 regarding impacts to Bozeman Creek.

See response to Comment 16 regarding the intent of the project to address existing and projected traffic demand.





## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

## Appendix B – Hearing Transcript and Responses

Verbal testimony was also provided at the Public Hearing and is included in this Appendix. The following individuals provided testimony:

Comment Letter	Name	Transcript Page Number
A	Christopher Spegis	B-12
B	Hiller Higman	B-13
C	Ted Lange	B-13
D	Charles Swart	B-14
E	Andrew Epple	B-15
F	Robert Banis	B-15
G	Peter Rugheimer	B-16
H	Ralph Zimmer	B-16
I	Debra DeBode	B-17
J	Larry Brown	B-17
K	Brian Metsger	B-18
L	Bill Harston	B-18
M	Jena Caplette	B-18
N	Linda Locke	B-19
O	Kathie Callahan	B-19
P	Christopher Spegis	B-19
Q	Krystine Ward	B-20
R	Sharon Nelson	B-20
S	Tara (?)	B-21

A copy of the sign-in sheets from the Hearing follows the transcript.

**TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**CN 4805  
ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
8/27/08  
Bozeman Senior Center  
Bozeman, MT**

**NOTE:** This is a partial transcript. The introduction and presentation portions were excluded.

**QUESTION/CLARIFICATION PERIOD:**

Q: (Sam Haraldson) I'm not representing anyone. I'm just curious on the perception where the shared use path is that is not going in with the Rouse Reconstruction, with the development that goes in there will there be any chance that they could deny that path?

A: (Darryl James) As of right now it's part of an approved plat. The condition of that plat is just as I said – if this develops before Rouse Avenue develops, then the developer would construct the shared use path. If the roadway improvements come before the development then it will be constructed as part of the improvements. So right now, as part of their approval, they can't back out of that.

Q: (Peter Rugheimer) I live on Story Mill Road. Two questions with respect to the shared use pathway – can you just give us an overview of what's being shared there, is it pedestrian and bikes and baby strollers and that kind of thing. Then secondly, is that just a pathway on the east side of the road? Would there be a mirror image of that on the other side of the road on the north side?

A: (Darryl James) The west and north sides would be constructed as part of this project because there is available right-of-way there. The challenge on the east and south sides is that we would be acquiring additional right-of-way. That's why we pushed it off and said as a condition of approval for the development, let's do that as it develops. That way it can be put in where it makes sense and we're not putting some other constraint in there for the development of those parts. The shared use path is for pedestrians and bicyclists.

A: (Phil Odegard) The width for a shared use pathway is typically 8-10 feet. We are showing 10 feet right now. The idea is that it can be used by bicyclists and pedestrians. There is also going to be along here, for commuter traffic for bicycles, there will be a bike lane on the roadway. This will be separated as far as is practicable from that main line roadway. On the south and east sides you actually have 70 feet of right-of-way on that part of the roadway, so we can get pretty good separation from the roadway on that side. On the north and west sides the right-of-way is a lot tighter – we only have 30 feet.



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

So to fit that in, there is going to have to be a little bit of right-of-way acquisition through some of those parcels and it will be closer to the road. We've tried to maximize the separation between the two because we understand that the closer that is to the main line, it could cause confusion with the drivers and also cause some hesitation for people to use it, so we are trying to keep those as far apart as possible.

- A: (Jon Henderson) I'm the Chairperson of the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board. I've attended several of your public meetings for the Rouse Project and I've got to tell you that you are doing great work. From our perspective you've done a very good job of trying to safely accommodate the cyclists and we're very pleased with your efforts, so I commend you for that. This road is complimentary as well as you know we're doing a major update for the Transportation Plan here in the valley and a lot of the concepts that we're going forward with for non-motorized travel are really complimented well here with this project. So just a couple of points of observation and alternative recommendations – we absolutely support a complete bike lane from Mendenhall to Story Mill. We feel that is an absolute need given the nature of the roadway. It's a principle arterial and we really want to make sure that on-street travel is going to be safe and it's going to be maintained. My question is could we possibly entertain continuing the urban section all the way to Story Mill? As cyclists and from the point of view of the Board, there are a lot of safety concerns with the bike path in this area of town especially with the type of crossings and especially on one side of the road. So we are going to propose, and we will be providing some formal comments to that fact, that we would prefer that it be a continuous urban street section with six foot sidewalks, bike lanes, curb and gutter the entire way out as opposed to a shared use path.
- Com: (Darryl James) Just to be clear again, right now we want to address specific questions and clarifications on the EA. I want to get stuff like that addressed in our formal hearing, so we can respond to it formally in the FONSI because those are great comments and we don't want to miss those. So if you've got questions or clarifications on the EA, that is what we are doing now. Then we will take your formal comments and other ideas afterwards.
- Q: (Kathy Beardslee) On the shared use path, in the winter who is responsible for maintaining it?
- A: (Darryl James) Mainly the Department of Transportation would be responsible for maintaining it. I don't know if there is an agreement with the City, but it would be maintained by either the City or the MDT.
- Q: (Kathy Beardslee) And that means snow removal?
- A: (Darryl James) It does.

- Q: (Tim Kearns) I have an interest in the property in that general area. Am I correct in understanding that the curb and gutter and sidewalk section, those are not beyond the bridge?
- A: (Darryl James) That's correct.
- Q: (Tim Kearns) The City of Bozeman of course requires any new developments in that area to install sidewalks as well as the Master Plans that are approved by the City of Bozeman requires that same condition and the Girls and Boys Club, of course, know this is a high traffic area for kids. Does the State have no interest in extending that sidewalk to Story Mill? Do you not have the right-of-way?
- A: (Darryl James) What was the determination on the rural sections and why we ended at Griffin? We initially ended that urban section at Oak and then carried it out to the creek crossing and Griffin. Were you in on that discussion?
- A: (Phil Odegard) Originally the urban section was anticipated to go out to Oak Street. After we went through the process called "Alignment and Grade" it was determined that should actually extend out to the bridge crossing. Based on the character and cost and other things, it was determined that we could go to a mixed use trail on the east side of that bridge to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists... (inaudible) ... and carry that sidewalk all the way to Story Mill. So the decision was made to end that sidewalk section at the East Fork and go with a mixed use trail offset from the roadway beyond that.
- A: (Darryl James) The short answer is it was based on land uses and cost.
- Q: (Tim Kearns) Do you have right-of-way to accommodate that?
- A: (Darryl James) That wasn't the issue – it was adjacent land uses and cost.
- Q: (Mary Ann Nielson) My question is about trees – will you be cutting any down and will you be planting any?
- A: (Darryl James) The projection is somewhere around the order of 100 plus trees would be cut down and those could be from small shrubs and trees along the existing alignment to some fairly bigger trees. Trees would be replanted in the boulevards.
- A: (Phil Odegard) We understand that trees are a big issue; they always are in an urban corridor. Right now with the Preferred Alternative, a lot of the mature trees end up in the boulevard. The City of Bozeman has volunteered the use of their Arborists as part of the next phase. They are going to go through and do a tree survey and a tree inventory and determine the health of the existing trees. As we get into the final design, we can talk to the property owners more on a one-on-one basis and there will be some opportunities as part of the right-of-way negotiations process to maybe meander the sidewalk, if you



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

would like to preserve that tree, and allow the sidewalk to encroach further into the property; we can do something like that. Other alternatives would be to use an alternate sidewalk surfacing material to protect the roots so that when we do put the sidewalks through, we don't kill the trees. The Department and the City are very sensitive to this issue, and we are going to have that as part of the next process and try and preserve as many as possible. The one thing we do need to make sure of though is that those trees are healthy; the arborists will help do that. We don't want to perpetuate a potential safety problem with a dead or decaying tree that is going to blow over and possibly injure a person or property.

- A: (Darryl James) As always, cost is a consideration as well.
- Q: (Robert Banis) I own property at 1602 North Rouse. I downloaded your study and read it – A B C D, the plan B with the roundabout, and you analyzed and scrutinized all four of those plans, I can see that. All four of those plans end the sidewalk at Bond and it continues a bike and pedestrian path from Bond to Griffin. Since I live in that area I can tell you that riding a bicycle or walking there is patently dangerous right now. It is a very poor situation and I strongly support a pedestrian and bicycle path. But I'm wondering all of a sudden in the Preferred Alternative, which is none of the above – it's not A B C or D – where the sidewalk and the Boulevard came since it's running through basically an industrial area, and your intersections were all marked out with the exception of the biggest bottleneck in the whole route which is the intersection of I-90, the railroad track, and North Rouse. I'd like to know where the sidewalk came from continuing and what will you do about that bottleneck – the worst place on the whole road.
- A: (Darryl James) They are carrying the bike lanes and sidewalk underneath the structure. Again the initial intent was to stop the sidewalks at Bond but through public involvement and public input, especially with the City, it was determined it would make sense, based on existing and projected land uses, to go on ahead and carry that out to the creek also.
- Q: (Robert Banis) What will you do about that big bottleneck? That is a dangerous place to go to. I've ridden my bicycle through there every day to work and it's not any fun.
- A: (Darryl James) As far as the railroad crossing, the new crossing, and the street with the bike lanes and with the new surfacing, it will be designed to accommodate bicycles. The overpass structure is also scheduled for reconstruction, the distance between bridge piers (or columns) will be increased and not present such a constraint or bottleneck in that area.
- A: (Phil Odegard) A lot of the constraint with the railroad and the backups were due in part because the intersection at Oak and Rouse was near capacity or over capacity. With this project we will interconnect the railroad signal with the street signal so they'll be able to coordinate with the green time and the red time when trains are crossing. So that should enhance the operation of both those intersections and improve that.

- Q: (Suzanne Berbet) I live at 808 North Rouse. I live just south of the Tamarack and Rouse intersection, on the east side. I live in Zone 4 which is on the map over here, and you guys have eliminated the on-street parking. I live in a block that doesn't have any off-street parking and that is too narrow for off-street parking. What do you suggest happens if you eliminate the parking? I obviously have more than one car and I'm not sure where I'd park.
- A: (Darryl James) We recognize that as a major issue. In the Environmental Assessment we talked about three different options that could be used to address that kind of a problem. One is to compensate the landowner by either installing a driveway and a parking pad on your parcel. If you don't have room for that, there will be residential acquisitions in the corridor. The Department of Transportation will look at the availability of those types of parcels and putting in basically an off-street parking lot and reserving that for exclusive use of residences that don't have the ability to put parking on their lot. So potentially some compensation, installation of a driveway or parking pad on your lot, the possibility of off-street parking somewhere in close proximity for your exclusive use – those are the three options that we are offering.
- Q: (Suzanne Berbet) What's considered to be proximity?
- A: (Darryl James) That is based on the availability of those lots. We're not going to tear down a house to put in a parking lot but if an adjacent resident or somebody two or three doors down is acquired, and again this is part of right-of-way negotiation process, and what that compensation would be like and whether it is an acceptable solution. I can't tell you what those specifics would look like or what would remedy your loss of parking. As we get further along in the design process we will get into that.
- Q: (Hiller Higman) I didn't understand from Lamme to Bozeman Creek, is there parking on the road or not? Is that going to be eliminated?
- A: (Darryl James) From Lamme to Bozeman Creek we are not going to have parking from there north. Again that is something we can look at when we get down to a more refined design and there could be some parking accommodated, but right now in comparing the alternatives, just to make everything equal, there is no parking.
- Q: (Hiller Higman) I missed the part about 10 feet ... (inaudible) ... How do they determine how they negotiate it or not?
- A: (Darryl James) You determine that during right-of-way negotiations. The Department of Transportation will talk with you about the right-of-way that is required and through that process we will discuss whether you want to pull out .... (inaudible) ... and whether they will agree to that.



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- Q: (Christopher Spegis) I would like a little bit of clarification as to how it was determined to stop the urban cross section at the bridge rather than at eastern edge of the Boys and Girls Club which is obviously very urban?
- A: (Darryl James) Again it was based on cost, existing and projected land uses. We're getting repeated questions; we'll respond to that in detail in the FONSI. That is the answer we gave before. We can't provide everything for everybody – there are physical constraints, there are cost constraints. There will be a response in the FONSI to that question.
- Q: (Peter Uka) I live on Story Mill Road. I have three questions – the stream, the roadway crosses Bozeman Creek twice and Bozeman Creek floods the roadway right above both stream crossings. So I want to know what the plan is for flooding. The second question is the speed limits and traffic light timing. Will those be lights that are linked together so if you're driving the speed limit, you can make it all the way to Main Street without stopping for lights? The third question is street lighting and dark skies – that has to make sense with current regulations.
- A: (Darryl James) The three crossings we've got – Bozeman Creek crossing and then the East Fork and the crossing on Peach Street, all of those during the final design would be designed to the appropriate flow capacity. We've not done that at this level. We do about a 30% design to get it through the Environmental Assessment, so we've not done detailed hydraulic analysis. I think a fair amount has been done on these just because of the importance ... the whole corridor is in a flood plain. How much has been done on that?
- A: (Phil Odegard) We have developed a Hec-Raz level to model Bozeman Creek. Per the current design it will match what the flooding limits are now. We are looking at the possibility of removing a private bridge; if we can remove that private bridge that will reduce the 100 year flood zone through that segment. We need, as part of this process, to get approval for this project ... we can't make it worse than it is now. So we are confident with the modeling that's been done, it will be the same or better than it is now.
- A: (Darryl James) I don't know of a project that we work on that speed limits don't come up. The Montana Department of Transportation does not set speed limits. The Legislature sets the speed limit. The Transportation Commission has a process to look at speed limits. Signal timing . . . Obviously the intent of Rouse Avenue is to carry traffic as efficiently as possible so we will look at signal timing to make sure that constant flow can make it through the corridor without stopping for lights – that is the intent of an arterial like this. Lighting – I'm not sure about the street lighting.
- A: (Phil Odegard) Right now we do not have continuous street lighting with the improvements. There will be street lights at the intersections that are signalized but right now street lights aren't part of the project. You also mentioned dark skies – any street

lights that are installed at intersections will not come out ... (inaudible) ... so we are not illuminating the night sky. We are trying to minimize that; we will try and minimize the throw of light onto adjacent residents as well so we are just lighting the pedestrian and vehicle areas of the intersections.

Q: (Debra DeBode) I live on North Montana Avenue at approximately Peach. I'm wondering if you have a general timeframe for start and finish of the project and I'm wondering about detours and disruption during the project.

A: (Darryl James) It depends. Project costs have been escalating over the last couple of years. Federal transportation dollars are more and more limited. Federal gas tax receipts are down, so most of the Department's current projects have been pushed out several years. The earliest projected start date for this project is somewhere around 2012 or longer. So the very earliest is somewhere around 2012 and it's probably going to be pushed out even further than that. Construction phasing and sequencing are all kind of final design type issues. Obviously with a route like this we are going to try and maintain traffic as much as possible through the corridor. The Department of Transportation is committed to maintaining business and residential access throughout construction. We've not taken those details through this Environmental Assessment phase; they will be addressed through final design. At some of our very first public meetings on this project we heard quite a bit about the utility work in this corridor. So it's several years out and the MDT is committed to maintaining business and residential access as much as possible.

Q: (Krystina Ward) I live just up the street. I travel Peach and Rouse frequently after work and for banking needs up on Main Street. I'm wondering about the lighting going in on Peach, is it going to be on both sides of Rouse, both on Peach's side and opposite that? When the traffic signal goes in, is there going to be both on Rouse on the Peach side and opposite that?

A: (Darryl James) Yes, the idea is to reconfigure the Peach intersection so that it actually winds up better and that whole intersection would be signalized.

Q: (Krystina Ward) Because now that is a four-way and people coming off the Ellis area from that side, people coming down Peach and then people on Rouse ... trying to figure out who has the right-of-way is a little bit messy.

A: (Darryl James) That is what we want to do, try and correct that intersection both for realignment and signalization.

Q: (Christopher Spegis) You said that the project has been pushed out to 2012, a few years ago when Rouse was repaved after the sewer project went in back in 2005, we were talking about the day when anything is done we need to have something done immediately to make this route safe for bicycles. When we heard it was going to be 2010, we said we could wait for that. Now it's 2012. What is the Department planning



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to do for bicycle safety until this project gets going? It's extremely dangerous out there right now and the further it gets pushed out, the more chance there is for impacts for the bicycling community.

- A: (Darryl James) Understood. That's one of the main purposes of this project, to provide an adequate facility for bicycles, but the funding is just not here. There is no way the Department could do something even in the interim because of funding and because of the wasted dollars in providing an interim improvement and then tearing it up in five or ten years. So it really does come down to funding constraints.
- Q: (Christopher Spegis) It was just done and then it was repaved.
- A: (Darryl James) But it would have been torn up. So it is a waste of taxpayer dollars to put in an interim improvement and then know that you're going to rip it up later.
- Q: (Jerry Morrison) 1520 North Rouse at the intersection of Bond and Rouse. With the preferred plan, how much more additional right-of-way are you going to take on each side of the street?
- A: (Darryl James) It's going to vary throughout the corridor.
- Q: (Jerry Morrison) Ok, at that particular area, the intersection of Rouse and Bond.
- A: (Darryl James) I'm not sure I can answer that question with any degree of specificity. We've got some plans here and you can talk to Tony.
- Q: (Jerry Morrison) What we're seeing on the photographs, is that very close to scale?
- A: (Darryl James) It's a rough representation. Again Tony will have some more detailed plans and you can sit down with him and look at those. But again these are preliminary plans, they are not final, they are not detailed, but it will give you some estimation.
- Q: (Suzy Berbet) We talked about the right-of-way ... with construction to be set in 2012, when will the right-of-way negotiations start with the homeowners?
- A: (Darryl James) Typically the next phase is to move into Final Design and then once those plans are set, we start the right-of-way negotiation process. That can take somewhere around a year or more and then you move into construction after that. So if we were to start this in 2012, probably somewhere in the 2010-2011 period we would start right-of-way negotiations. Again it is likely this project will be pushed out even further.
- Q: (Suzy Berbet) Ok, then my next question of concern is if you are a homeowner on Rouse and are considering selling your house in the next few years, who's going to buy our house if they don't know what's going to happen to this street? What can we do as

homeowners? We can't really protect ourselves, we are kind of stuck with these houses until this construction starts because we don't know.

- A: (Darryl James) Well not the construction...this Environmental Assessment lays out fairly well what you're looking at regarding acquisition and distance from back of sidewalk. So this is kind of planning tool for you, the City, and the Department of Transportation over the next several years. That's the intent of this process – public disclosure. So this is a pretty good estimate of what's coming. But that final right-of-way acquisition figure won't be finalized, depending on project funding, for another two years. But this is a good guide.
- Q: (Suzy Berbet) Then I'm going to give you a specific example. In Zone Four you have a 64-foot area and in order to go up to my front porch, it would be 75 feet. So I essentially have 11 feet between your proposed roadway without parking and then 11 feet to my front porch. So if I don't have parking right there, and you had said it is within five feet of your front porch to have a right-of-way negotiation, can I say that essentially my house ... I would negotiate to essentially have to sell my house because I don't have any parking?
- A: (Darryl James) I wasn't saying that the ones that are in complete conflict, or the ones that are 0-5 would be complete acquisitions and nothing else. If you have right-of-way acquired and it changes the usability of that parcel then that is something you would negotiate with MDT's Right-of-Way Bureau. I can't say that it is within this category or this category and is or isn't a take, it's entirely up to the right-of-way negotiation process. I think there are some brochures that explain that process and how it works. If you've got more detailed questions, don't hesitate to ask MDT staff afterwards.
- Q: (Michael Shafer) I live at 540 North Rouse. I'm the second house off the southeast corner which you said there are only two houses being eliminated. I assume it is the corner house, what's the other house? Mine?
- A: (Darryl James) Yes it is yours. The two homes there in the southeast quadrant.
- Q: (Ralph Zimmer) Please do not jump to the conclusion that I'm implying anything over critical, but in the first part of this evening it was twice stated that you met with both bike and ped groups. Would you please identify the ped groups that you met with?
- A: (Darryl James) I don't remember who even established the list ... the City helped us identify groups to speak with. Does anyone remember the specific groups we talked with?
- A: (Phil Odegard) We can look those up for you Dr. Zimmer.
- Q: (Catherine Schneider) I'm a bicyclist and an automobile driver on Rouse. One question as an automobile driver, can you synchronize the lights please along the route? Where



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are the rumble strips? Will there be rumble strips? Is it possible to separate those between the bike path and the automobile traffic? I'm assuming that 16 year olds can ride their bikes on the sidewalks, is there anything that can be done for adults that want to ride bikes but are terrified to ride in traffic? Is it a possibility to have traffic signals for automobiles, pedestrians, and bicyclists? And why the use of ... what's the difference between concrete and asphalt? Just the sidewalks I've noticed around town look like they need a lot of maintenance, and I wonder if it would be cheaper or better in the long run to do pavement or asphalt sidewalks?

- A: (Phil Odegard) That was a lot of questions. Rumble strips – in the urban section MDT is not going to install rumble strips. So we will not have rumble strips within the limits of these improvements. At the signalized intersections, you can set up detection for bicyclists. With the signal practice now, MDT is pretty much going to video detection, they can set up video detection zones for bikes to recognize bicycle traffic at those intersections. As far as allowing adults to ride on the sidewalks, that's something that this project can't address – that kind of code; that's beyond the realm of what we're doing as far as this design. Asphalt versus concrete – a lot of that is based on maintenance and cost. Typically for sidewalks in urban areas, they are predominately cement, concrete, and pavement and they typically have a longer life than asphalt or plant mix. So that is why we're going with concrete sidewalks; that is the standard practice.
- Q: (Julie Maxwell) The block on Rouse between Peach and Cottonwood, the only change as I understand it is there would be no on-street parking?
- A: (Darryl James) Correct.
- Q: (Julie Maxwell) Nothing else would be changed?
- A: (Darryl James) Well there's going to be a change in the roadway, so you will have a center turn lane. So it will have two lanes; one lane in each direction and a center turn lane. You'll have a bike lane on each side, curb and gutter, a boulevard, and then the sidewalk.
- Q: (Julie Maxwell) But it will keep the same curb and the same boulevard?
- A: (Darryl James) As the proposed? From the first cross section with bike lanes, curb and gutter, sidewalk, boulevards, the only thing that would be taken out in that section is the on-street parking.
- Q: (Julie Maxwell) Right. So curbs would stay the same?
- A: (Darryl James) Not as existing, no. It's going to be wider than existing.
- Q: (Julie Maxwell) So you are taking part of the boulevard?

A: (Darryl James) Yes.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) How much?

A: (Darryl James) If you've got a specific residence, we can look at the distance from your residence, but I can't give you a distance that we're taking, I don't have that information.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

**(Darryl James)** We are going to move into the formal Hearing portion of this evening. Keep in mind that we've got a couple of critical decisions to make. One, does the proposed project, this Preferred Alternative, does it meet Purpose and Need? Are the Alternatives fairly considered? Did we look at all these Alternatives equally and fairly and does it accurately represent the public involvement and public input that we had? Are the impacts significant? If we do have substantive impacts or significant impacts we have to look at whether can we actually mitigate those impacts. Those are what we're considering as we move forward and your input helps guide some of this decision. Again to restate – if through this process we determine that the impacts are significant and they can't be mitigated, we have to move into an Environmental Impact Statement. If the impacts are not significant or we can mitigate some of those impacts, the Federal Highway Administration and Montana Department of Transportation will sign a Finding of No Significant Impact and the project would move forward into final design and right-of-way acquisition and construction.

At this point we want to take formal comments. We won't respond to those this evening but they'll be transcribed and included in a FONSI if we move that direction, with a formal response issued by the Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

**(Paul Grant)** If you raise your hands and will bring you the microphone to you and we'll make sure everybody gets their comment in. Please be considerate of others as far as the length of your comment so everybody gets an opportunity to talk.

Com: **(Christopher Spegis)** I have several comments. I certainly appreciate the proposed Preferred Alternative. The urban cross section, I believe, should be carried further than A the proposed crossing with the Creek to include the Boys and Girls Club as it is now established and obviously the benefits would be great for the children peddling their bicycles to the Boys and Girls Club.

Regarding the current structure of the road – a few years ago the roadway was torn up and reconstructed narrower than it previously was before the new sewers went in which made it extremely dangerous for bicyclists in that area when the sewer construction took place north of Oak. I would like to see the Department do something to mitigate the problem that is there right now until they begin construction in what appears to be later than 2012. Thank you.



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Res: Funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. Based on public comment, and the strong preference stated by City Staff, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared under the EA. MDT will work with the City of Bozeman if the project proceeds through final design, and collectively determine whether an urban section would better suit the on-the-ground conditions and is within cost constraints nearer the time of actual implementation.

MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: **(Hiller Higman)** 404 North Rouse. We are obviously going to lose a lot of front yard and I just want you guys to keep in mind in the final decision all the families that live in that section through there. It looks like you've done that, and while we're not happy with the decision, we appreciate it. I'm an avid cyclist and spend a lot of time outdoors and never rode along the Creek before and now I do. Thank you.

Res: MDT and FHWA recognize the value of both the residents and business owners within this corridor, and the importance of the route as a major transportation corridor in and through the community. The NEPA/MEPA process requires that a balanced and objective analysis of all impacts be considered, and it is for this reason that the preliminary design includes minimized travel lane widths, narrowed boulevard and sidewalk widths, and the decision to move forward with a three-lane section rather than a five-lane section as initially proposed.

Com: **(Ted Lange, Gallatin Valley Land Trust Community Trails Program)** We strongly support the bicycle pedestrian facilities proposed throughout the project. One comment is the transition from sidewalk to shared use path, and further consideration about where that transition should occur. As it is well known the end trail head is a huge drop off for people all year around especially during the dry season when there are a lot of bicyclists. If there was trail out to the end you'd have a lot of people bicycling the paved trail; you'd have a lot of people bicycling out there. Gallatin Valley Land Trust is about to open to the public, hopefully next month, another equally fun trail right across the street from the Fish Technology Center, and the Drinking Horse Mountain Trail will probably be an equally big draw to create even more bicycle/pedestrian interest in going out there. So it is our hope that the shared use path is on one or both sides out to the end of the Fish Technology Center. The question is how far should the shared use path come back on

Rouse? Certainly one could make an argument that it should go to Oak on the east side, so you'd have a connection from the Fairgrounds over to the east side of Oak out to the Fish Technology Center, or perhaps it should go to Creekman and that would work. But I think there should be some more consideration about how far that shared use path should extend in the bigger picture context to get people out to the end and the new Drinking Horse Mountain Tail. Thank you.

**Res:** See response to Comment "A" regarding the extension of the sidewalks to Story Mill. Extension of a shared use path beyond the established project limits would need to be addressed under a separate project. While the suggestion to extend a shared use path to connect to other planned or existing trails further outside the project limits may have merit, it was not raised during early project scoping, so MDT and FHWA did not establish that aspect in the purpose and need for the proposed improvements and the impacts from such a facility were not explored under the current EA.

**Com:** (Charles Swart) I've been in Bozeman since 1959. I sent a letter to the editor of the Chronicle which they published yesterday; some of you may have seen it. I appreciated it but they did leave out some of the citations I had. I had given the phone number of 444-7228 from which you could order one of these Environmental Assessment books; they have a very pleasant young lady when you call and she'll get it out over night. There are five options which are discussed and I would want to stay with the recommended. As you head north along the street of Rouse Avenue one of the first things you see is the massive 48-inch diameter Cottonwood on the east side of the street. Under this option this tree, along with every other tree within 15-30 feet outside of the existing right-of-way, that's about 125 trees, will be destroyed. There won't be a tree left that you can see. It will be like driving to Belgrade on I-90. All on-street parking would be eliminated along the route including resident parking; that's shown on pages 27-30 in the book. That's all on-street parking. Seventy-eight property ownerships will be affected; that's on page 39. The increase of the right-of-way width would affect, of course, the two houses southeast of Peach and Rouse and additionally there would be more buy-outs because of the proximity to the front steps; that's shown on pages 39-40 in the book. They tell us that if you don't have parking, you can walk down and park your car in some of the lots they are going to buy, and that's reassuring. I close in saying that the construction as proposed will result in a social and city train wreck.

**Res:** There appear to be three major concerns in this comment: loss of trees, loss of on-street parking, and loss of homes. The following responses take these issues in that order.

In coordination with MDT, the City of Bozeman arborist will conduct an inventory of trees in the corridor and MDT will work with individual property owners and consider options to avoid healthy trees where feasible and appropriate. This may include leaving existing trees that fall within the "boulevard" area, and appear healthy and able to withstand construction activities, or may include designing the sidewalk to meander



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farther into a private parcel if the landowner desires protection of the mature vegetation over the loss of additional right-of-way.

Approximately 22 homes would lose on-street parking. Only two (2) of those homes would have no alley access and no ability to accommodate parking on the existing lot. MDT will negotiate with each individual landowner during the right-of-way negotiation process to identify reasonable compensation for the loss of property value attributable to the lost parking.

Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. Right-of-way negotiations would establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way and would begin once the final design is complete and the necessary right-of-way acquisition is identified. The right-of-way negotiation process is projected to take place approximately two years from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well.

Com: (Andrew Epple) 1725 Hillside Lane. I'm speaking as a private citizen. I just wanted to encourage you to continue the full urban section standard all the way out to the end of the project to Story Mill Road. Since the project was originally scoped, certainly the area was more rural at that time, but since then it has become much more urbanized with significant plans for further urbanization especially with the Story Mill development and it's 1,200 plus new residences and commercial development right along that corridor. So I think it is much more appropriate to consider a full urban standard with six foot sidewalks, boulevard, curb and gutter, and bike lanes, rather than the rural section out there to Story Mill. Thank you.

Res: See response to Comment "A."

Com: (Robert Banis) I've owned property on North Rouse since 1980 and travel that route many times. It is my observation and opinion that the recent paving project two years ago which included moving mail boxes and pull outs for the postal service, that the final result of that ended up in a less safe roadway than we had prior to that. The area on the outside of the roadway seems like it was broader, more accessible, and easier to use for pedestrians and bicyclists, and the new pavement is less so and more dangerous. And I would encourage the Department of Transportation to look at that and find some remediation and some correction on one side or the other side of the street because it is going to be a long time before this new project fixes that. All it would take, hopefully,

would be a strip of asphalt three or four feet wide. Because right now it is more dangerous than it was before the previous project.

Res: MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: **(Peter Rugheimer)** I live on Story Mill Road. I agree with Andy Epple that a more formal sidewalk with a boulevard should be continued all the way to Story Mill Road. It would seem funny to have the shared pathway, which is not quite as formal as a boulevard and sidewalk, on the main corridor yet when you go off that into the subdivisions and there are three of them that lie to the north of the road, Bridger Creek Golf Course, Legends, and Creekwood, and all those subdivisions have curb and gutter, sidewalks, and boulevard. So it would seem not to match. I know that was one of your decision criteria for not connecting it all the way to Story Mill Road, but I think it should be reconsidered because right off the main route there is curb and gutter in those subdivisions and you know for sure that new 1,200 unit one that Andy mentioned will have sidewalks, boulevard, and that kind of thing. So the shared use pathway really doesn't make sense and that urban section should go all the way to Story Mill Road.

Res: See response to Comment "A."

Com: **(Ralph Zimmer)** I Chair the Bozeman Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee, which is the official body established jointly by the City, the County, and the School District, to provide input on pedestrian matters. To the best of my recollection we were never asked to meet with you folks and you never asked to meet with us. In part that is a condemnation of us; we should have been more aggressive. But I do want it identified that there has been no contact with our group. In spite of that, I do intend to take this to our next Committee meeting, and we will discuss it and I would expect that we will be providing input by the deadline. Based upon what I know of the Committee and its past actions, I would speculate that it too would probably be urging the continuation of the urban section to the limit of the project.

Res: As a matter of record, the Pedestrian Traffic Safety Committee was requested and attended a project meeting specifically dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle issues and concerns held on June 20, 2006 at the Bozeman City Hall. In addition to MDT, FHWA and consultant staff, attendees included:

Doug McSpadden – *Safe Trails*

Jason Delmue – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*



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Ted Lange – *Gallatin Valley Land Trust*

David Baumbauer – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*

Ed Sondeno – *Bozeman Public Schools*

Jon Henderson – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*

David Kunkle – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*

Connie Garrett – *Northeast Neighborhood Association*

Taylor Lonsdale – *Bozeman Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee*

Com: **(Debra DeBode)** 527 North Montana Avenue. I do think from earlier versions I've heard about what you're planning to do, that this embodies some really nice changes for the community, but I do feel for the people who will lose property, and everyone does. I also am very concerned about the urban forest that we now have especially in the area between approximately Lamie and Peach, maybe up to Cottonwood. So I just wonder if the boulevard, while nice, does take out five feet on each side of the road. I know you eliminated part of it because of the Creek, but I just wonder if having the original urban forest might not be preferable in that stretch to adding the boulevard, while obviously nice and pretty, there is just not space there and I wonder if that might alleviate some of the concerns of the homeowners as well and save some trees.

Res: As noted above in response to Comment "D," there will be flexibility in the design that may allow leaving existing trees that fall within the "boulevard" area, and appear healthy and able to withstand construction activities, or may include designing the sidewalk to meander farther into a private parcel if the landowner desires protection of the mature vegetation over the loss of additional right-of-way. These details will be negotiated with each individual property owner.

Com: **(Barry Brown)** My partner Scott Dehlendorf and I have the project at Oak and Rouse on the northwest corner and although we appreciate you acknowledging that you aren't going to tear down our building at the corner of Oak and Rouse, the fact is that it's in the publication and for a couple of weeks provided numerous conversations and consternation, surrounding the report. I guess we would appreciate it, as well as our tenants would appreciate it, since you were the firm that engineered our project, proof read, update, or refine your publication to reflect what's current as opposed what really isn't current. It was a long couple of weeks.

Res: At the time of the drafting of the EA, this site was under redevelopment but the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. The project team has been actively coordinating the design with Montana Avenue Partners and, as indicated in the FONSI section entitled "Edits/Corrections to the EA," there are no further property acquisitions required at this site.

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## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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Com: **(Brian Metsger)** 314 North Rouse. Besides buyouts I would like to see MDT negotiate with the City to look at alternatives besides buyouts such as flexibility within zoning for the current landowners so that if they have plans, whether it is to sell or improve the property, they have more than just accepting a buyout. Thank you.

Res: Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. This process is projected to take approximately one year from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. Right-of-way negotiations would begin once the final design is complete. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted to discuss the necessary right-of-way acquisition and to establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well. All decisions will be made in coordination with the individual property owners.

Com: **(Bill Harston)** 621 Bridger Drive. There are two businesses on North Rouse that have parking, one of them is no longer a problem because they've moved, but it is virtually impossible to back out of parking without backing into the flow of traffic. Have you taken that into consideration or is that just a problem with the businesses? You need to look at that because you cannot back out without going into the flow of traffic and if you widen the road, it's going to be worse. I'm talking about the bread store.

Res: There appears to be ample room at the bread store to maintain parking in front of the store, and not require backing into traffic, even with the proposed improvements. This concern will be kept in mind during final design to determine if modifications in parking or the alignment need to be made to ensure safe access to this business location.

Com: **(Jena Caplette)** Most of my comments I'm going to write in but I do really want to underline the people who have voiced current concern about bicycle safety on the road. My daughter is an adult with a disability and can only ride a bicycle and it terrifies me when she tells me she has ridden somewhere north on Rouse. We live on a dead-end cul-de-sac and it's really a deterrent to go anywhere on a bicycle when there is no safe way to go other than getting off of Rouse and finding another route. So I really appreciate the people who have asked for a more immediate solution.

Res: MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to



## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: **(Linda Locke)** 2405 West College, No. 13. When I first came to Bozeman one of the first places my kids and I stopped was at Creekside Park; I absolutely love the area. I feel that if you do widen Rouse then it will destroy the integrity of the neighborhood and the beauty of that area. When Bozeman was first being built, the wealthy built on the south side, the workers built in the north side over by the railroad tracks, and that is still the case and to destroy that neighborhood is going to be destroying a lot of places where people are able to buy houses and live.

(N)

Res: The project is intended to improve the integrity of the neighborhood by providing continuous bicycle and pedestrian facility connectivity where none exists today. Two homes are currently anticipated to be full acquisitions from the project, and another six homes would fall within five feet of the back of the proposed sidewalk. Many of the homes in the Rouse Avenue corridor are rental properties, and are likely to continue to remain as such regardless of the right-of-way encroachments.

Com: **(Kathie Callahan)** 702 Bridge Drive. I just wanted to comment that I appreciate the work that was done to protect the affordable housing that is currently on Rouse and I hope that whatever the final decisions are, the Preferred Alternatives looks pretty good, but I'd like to see that affordable housing stays a priority in Bozeman. This is a great neighborhood for a resource of that kind. It's a different kind of value; these may not be expensive homes but they are very valuable to Bozeman and to Bozeman's workforce and that you keep them livable and safe. Thank you.

(O)

Res: MDT will negotiate with each individual property owner during final design and right-of-way acquisition with the intent to minimize the number of residential acquisitions. With regard to the availability of affordable housing in the area, the EA notes the MLS listings for Bozeman as of October 2008, and the fact that there were 16 homes listed in the Bozeman area, and 80 in the greater Bozeman area in the same price range as those impacted within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Com: **(Christopher Spegis)** One comment I have is regarding the bike lanes that are established around town and the proposed bike lane, I myself find that if a bike lane is not properly maintained, i.e., swept of the gravel that the cars knock off the main roadway into the bike path, I have a tendency not to ride on that glass and gravel and what not, and ride closer into the street. So if there is any possible way that the Department of Highways could sweep the bike lanes, that would certainly make them much more usable. I also would hope that in the course of coming up with the funding for the overall project, that money be set aside for proper irrigation of trees in the boulevard strip and

(P)

that the planting of trees be part of the whole entire project and not be put off to some later date. I think that should be included as conditions warrant planting of trees.

Res: MDT will sweep the roadway surface including parking lanes and bike lanes. MDT could make accommodations in the new project to put PVC sleeves under the sidewalk to allow for residents to install sprinkler systems or hoses to water the boulevard and trees. MDT will include discussion of tree maintenance in an agreement with the City of Bozeman. According to Bozeman Ordinances, the city owns the boulevard trees but the residents are responsible to maintain them. The city collects a street tree maintenance tax from residents.

Com: **(Krystine Ward)** Will the mobile home park and the residences around it, and some of the streets breaking off of Rouse ... with traffic flow being what it is on some of those streets at rush hour between Seventh and Rouse, I just hope that people will realize that there is a school right across the street from us that it also serves more than the school, the bike path. There is a bike park there and ... (inaudible)... and I hope that people will remember there are stop signs on Fifth and to please be a little more observant when they travel with vehicles because that has not currently been paid much attention to. There are residents there, there are children there, please we ask the traffic be a little more mindful when they are coming off at rush hour ... (inaudible) ... whether it is congested or not, please just watch ... (inaudible) ...

Res: Your concerns for bicycle and pedestrian safety are noted, and it is anticipated that safety levels for all users of the Rouse Avenue corridor will be improved by this project.

Com: **(Sharon Nelson)** 314 North Rouse. Rouse Avenue proposals should also include a proposal for a new road from Highland to Oak. Without this spot there is no way to predict flow as Bozeman and the surrounding area increase. Without thinking of the additional street arterial, Rouse must take all of the flow. Because of this people will lose homes and the whole street will be devalued by high traffic, higher speed, and extreme width in an area which has some of the oldest homes in Bozeman. Both the State and the City must work together to allow this corridor to exist by adopting a plan where both streets take some of the traffic flow without ruining Rouse Avenue. Thank you.

Res: It was initially envisioned that five-lanes may be necessary to accommodate future demand in the Rouse Avenue corridor. After more detailed traffic analysis, and the exploration of intersection improvements, it was determined that three lanes would provide sufficient capacity for the planning horizon and minimize impacts in this corridor. Additional improvements beyond those discussed along Rouse Avenue are not deemed necessary to meet the stated purpose and need, and were not explored in the EA. Additional corridor improvements, extensions, or new construction should be explored through the Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Update process and would need to be evaluated under a future NEPA/MEPA process.



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Com: (Tara .....) I'm not with an entity. Reading this brochure "Questions and Answers About Buying Property from Montana Highways" it seems to me, and there may be other information on their website or in the document which I haven't had a chance to completely read through, that this Right-of-Way Bureau needs to have some infrastructure in place now for people to begin having discussion with this Right-of-Way Bureau, if for nothing else to make us feel a little better.

Res: Any member of the public is welcome to contact the Montana Department of Transportation at any time during the project development process. You may visit the Bozeman Area Office located at 907 North Rouse Avenue, or call the office at 556-4700 (TTY: 800.335.7592). No detailed right-of-way information is available at this time, and MDT anticipates it will be approximately two years from the completion of this FONSI before right-of-way negotiations will be completed.

## CLOSING

(Darryl James) Are there any other comments? Then we will close the Formal Hearing at this point. I want to remind you that there are several other opportunities to provide your comments in writing. There are comment sheets in the back. If you didn't sign in when you came in, please sign in when you leave. You can leave comments on the website; you can also go to this website and find the Environmental Assessment electronically. I do have additional copies of the Environmental Assessment if anyone wants one tonight, and you're more than welcome to those. You can also call Jeff Ebert and his phone number is up here; mail in your comments to that address. There are some post cards in the back that list the public viewing locations of the Environmental Assessment. Please have your comments to us on or before September 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you all for coming, we appreciate your interest in the project and your comments. Thank you.



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Bob Arnold	605 N ROUSE	581-0304	
Pam		581-1691	pam@SUEC.com
Don Woodland	379 Mandara Ln dr	586-1633	
Will Tangen	MDT - Helena	444-9251	
AMANDA RICHER	Chico		arichard@hycheinc.com
SAM HARVARDSON	509 S 20TH APT D	466/249-6841	samh@samh.net
DUSTINE WOODMAN	1111 BEECHER DR.	587-2781	dwoodman@hycheinc.com
Dan Elmore/HyLite Eng.	PA	"	delmor@hycheinc.com
Sharon Nelson	5100 Bozeman Trail Rd	581-8656	snelson@int.net
Isaiah Stoppel	2340 Bates & Cass. Rd	587-0566	bstoppel@fson.com
Eddie Steinhilber	410 E Stage St Bz	580-4186	eddie@incom.com
Maurice S. Oberbeck	1010 N. House	587-5506	
ED REISER	406 BOZENT PL	587-1782	
Robert Johnson	703 Sotaey	586-9152	
Frankl Munnear	4155 North Hill Dr	587-7769	



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T



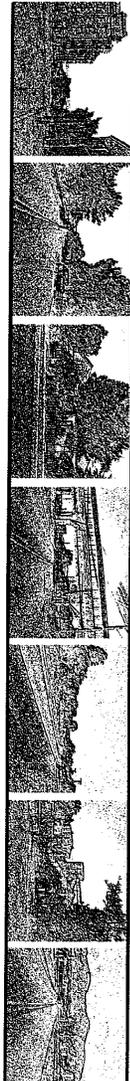
R O U S E A V E N U E - B O Z E M A N

E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Bill Harston	621 Bridger Dr	537-6280	
Jeff Parter / FHWA	585 Skopje way Helena		
Yeni Newton	214 N. Rouse	451-9634	
Milag Newton	214 N. Rouse		
Sarah Newton	214 N. Rouse		
Mary Joyce	422 Summit Highway	539-6041	
Bill Johnson	315 N. Rouse	586 5517	
Grand Place	2201 Rouse St	444-5446	MDT
Deb Kowbach	2701 Prospect	444-0461	MDT
Ben Uxod	109 N. Rouse #1	585-1112	ben@comway.com
Tommyette Baber	508 99 Williams	586-9678	
Chris Ward	3621 Williams great falls	761-0702	
Sue Stokola	208 Eng Dept	582-2280	
Josh Forehands	203 1431 59771		joshforehands@yahoo.com



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Son Shaker	2200 W. Dickson	406-690-8140	jenedelendorf@gsr.com
Flourence Groth	701 S. Willson	406 586-2677	
Chad & Debbie	327 W. Rose	406 586-2677	N/A
Andrew Apple	1725 Hillside Ln.	586 0932	bigskyapple@msn.com
Bill Dockins	3825 Valley Summit Dr. Ste 5	586-8616	
Team Perkins	534 N. Rose	586-9615	
Dorian Krista Melsner	1150 Brown Tiled	586 0336	bmetzger@earth.com
Brielle Espinoza	Po Box 4264, Bism	539-7210	gracey@prodigy.net
Rep. Brady Hysman	3247 Gardenbrook Ln Bism		
Gary Vothmund	614 South 7th	802 5935 579-5403	gary@salt.org
KEVIN PERZEBAN	518 N. TRAY	580.0422	PERZEBAN@msn.com
SUZANNE BEGET	808 N. ROUSE AVE	5201414	SUZANNEBEGET@gmail.com
Scott Dohendorf	1006 W. MAIN ST	522-7449	
BARRY BROWN	425 SUMNER ROUSE RD.	586-4461	
KATHY BEARDLEE	231 N. CHUCKLE CREEK	586-8357	kathyb@kille.com



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

11



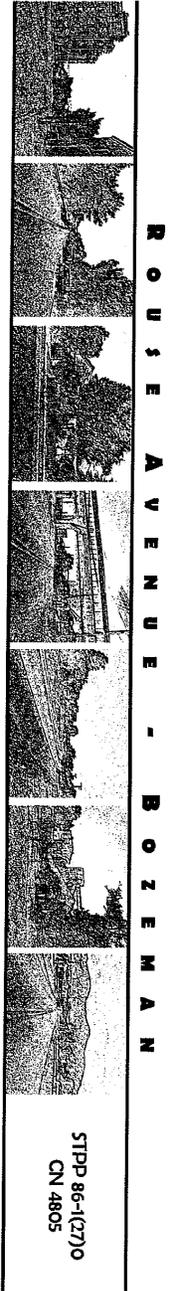
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

STPP 86-1(27)0  
CN 4805

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Catherine Schneider	908 S. Tracy	600-8628	catherine.schneider@bozeman.net
Dobson Mfite	2785 Rusty Nail Rd	587-5028	
Chris Savage	324 S. Grand	586-2623	
Michael Sweet	324 S. Grand	586-2623	
Matthew Jesspers	318 N Rouse Ave	522 0877	
Marcy Cloud Ammons	503 N. BOZEMAN AVE	600-0301	mcammons@gmail.com
PHIL EBERST	P.O. BOX 4264	539-7203	FERPINE@Bozeman.net
Robert Batis	1602 N. Rouse	587-0821	
Cardyn Hopper	3120 Augusta Dr	576 9775	
JAMES GONNOLLY	776 HEATHER AVE	539-4023	CONDOLY@HYDRITENS.COM
Jenna Goffe	415 E Apps St	424 586-5286	JENNA@CUMTUIA.COM
Carmen Mark Miller	322 N. Rouse	580-4193	MILLER@STURMDESIGN.COM
John Van Delinder	814 N. BOZEMAN	582-3218	van.delinder@bozeman.net
Kristina Prinzling Ward	815 S <sup>TH</sup> Ave North Lts 192	586-0630	



Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Jon Meek	810 North Rose	585 2237	jonjedc@gmail.com
HEATHER JENBERG	1013 BOYCAN RD 59715	584 2254	heather@boreasakorp.us
AAR NIELSEN	315 N. Church 59715	586-7005	
Verena Whiteman	401 E. Lanne #A	581-3290	vwhit@mail.com
Debra De Bader	527 N Montana Ave	586-7990	debra@blue@brennert
Hiller Higman	484 N Rouse Ave	587-8927	hiller@booftegerprises.com
TIA KEMERS	P.O. Box 93	57721	587-5450
Julie Maxwee	717 N. Bergman Ave	522-2222	
Diana Anthony	816 N 17th #16	599-2614	dianaanthony@Bozeman, MT
John Boney	722 N Rouse	5866328	
*2 Erik Jorg	324 N. Clark		
Michael Shaffer	540 N Rouse	570-1093	
Kate Larson	214 N. Rouse	219-3482	klarson@bozeman, mt
Stacy Berg	56705 Hoyle Rd Bozeman, MT 59714	388-6089	stacyberg@bozeman, mt
Mary Ann Parker	315 N. Church Baze	586-7005	



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T



E N V I R O N M E N T A L A S S E S S M E N T

R O U S E A V E N U E - B O Z E M A N

Public Hearing  
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
MARJORIE SMITH	122 N. Church	587-8947	yokoimc@mcn.net
Casey Schleker	1145 Meagher Ave	579-3216	Casey@bozemanbikekitchen.org
Fed Lange	Callahan Valley Land Trust 25 N. Wilson	587-8404	fed@gvt.org
Christopher Spayis	613 N. Tracy Ave	587-0237	mespayis3@earthlink.net
Alejo Canonjehani	525 North Rose	587-2712	
Mr. Tim Taving	411 Bond Street	587-3837	MSTSL@SweetHome.Net.
Edgar Rehnimer	1st story Mill Rd	585-2496	Rugheiners@yahoo.com
RICK HIXSON, CITY OF BOZEMAN	P.O. Box 1230	582-2280	rhixson@bozeman.net
Dan Center	615 N Montana		dancenter@gmail.com
JAN HENDERSON - GARDNER W.	411 S. 10th Ave.	522-7130	jhenderson@bozeman.net
Kathie Callahan	702 Bridger Dr. #72	585-8979	kkamatala@yahoo.com
Tim Stefan	1395 Kelly Canyon Rd	586-1142	tstefan@aol.com
Brandon Smith/TAKUMANO WEST	711 N Grand Ave	585-7012	bsmith@takumano-west.com
Linda Locke	2405 W College #13	539-6774	lockelinda@hotmail.com
Tara Martin			





## F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

**Appendix C – Media Outreach for EA and Public Hearing**



## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

### Rouse Avenue - Bozeman - Environmental Assessment

Beginning August 4, 2008, the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation will be available for public review and comment. The Preferred Alternative identified in the EA includes elements that best satisfy the need for the project while minimizing impacts. The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic control at key intersections.

**Review the EA at:**

- Bozeman Public Library (626 East Main Street)
- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
- Renne Library - MSU Bozeman (1 Centennial Mall)
- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse)
- MDT Butte District Office (3751 Wynne) - Butte
- MDT Headquarters, Environmental Services Office (2701 Prospect Ave.) - Helena
- Online at [www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml)
- Call MDT Environmental Services at (406) 444-7228 for a copy

**Comment Period:** August 4, 2008 to September 18, 2008

- Present oral or written comments at the public hearing
- Written comments to Tom Martin, MDT, PO Box 201001, 2701 Prospect Ave., Helena MT 59620
- Online at [www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml)

**For More Information:**

- Jeff Ebert, MDT, (406) 494-9600
- Tom Martin, MDT, (406) 444-7228

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any service, program, or activity of our department. For reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, call Paul Grant at (406) 444-9415 at least two days before the meeting. For the hearing impaired: TTY (406) 444-7696, (800) 335-7592, or Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of pertinent information provided on request.

**Wednesday, August 27, 2008**  
**6:00 p.m.: Open House**  
**6:30 p.m.: Informational Presentation followed by the Public Hearing**  
**Bozeman Senior Center, 807 North Tracy Avenue, Bozeman**

Notice of Availability published in Bozeman Chronicle - Sunday, August 3, and in the Belgrade News - Tuesday, August 5.



**Rouse Avenue – Bozeman – Environmental Assessment**

The Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation are now available for public review and comment. The Preferred Alternative identified in the EA includes elements that best satisfy the need for the project while minimizing impacts. The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center-turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic controls at key intersections.

**Review the EA at:**

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- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
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- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse Avenue)
- MDT Butte District Office (3751 Wynne) - Butte
- MDT Helena Headquarters Office (2701 Prospect Ave) - Helena
- Online at [www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml)
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**Wednesday, August 27, 2008      6:00 p.m.: Open House**  
**6:30 p.m.: Informal Presentation followed by the Public Hearing**  
**Bozeman Senior Center, 807 North Tracy Avenue, Bozeman**

Public Hearing Notice published in the Bozeman Chronicle - Sundays, August 10 and August 24,  
and in the Belgrade News - Fridays, August 15 and August 22.



F I N D I N G O F N O S I G N I F I C A N T I M P A C T

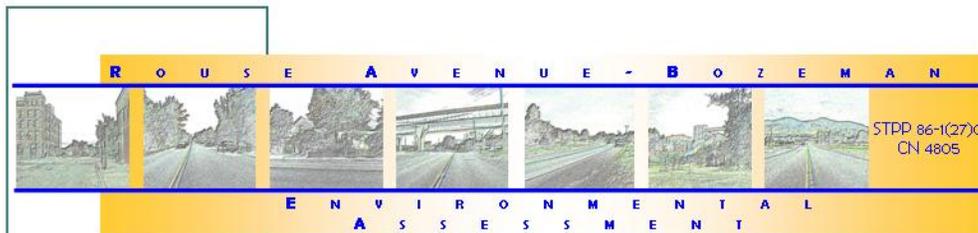
**Press Releases:**

Press Releases for Notice of Availability were sent to the Bozeman Chronicle and Belgrade News and other media outlets via e-mail on Tuesday, August 5 and distributed at the media outlet's discretion.

Press Releases for Notice of Hearing were sent to the Bozeman Chronicle and Belgrade News and other media outlets via e-mail on Monday, August 18 and distributed at the media outlet's discretion.

**Post Card Notification:**

Postcards were sent to approximately 100 individuals who had participated in previous meetings or otherwise requested to receive project mailings.



The Montana Department of Transportation is conducting a formal Public Hearing to take comment on the Environmental Assessment for the proposed Rouse Avenue—Bozeman project. To view the Environmental Assessment visit: [www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis\\_ea.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml). Comments and concerns may be presented at the Public Hearing; by mail to Tom Martin, MDT, 2701 Prospect Ave., PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001; or online at the above web address. **Public comments are due no later than September 18, 2008.**

**PLEASE JOIN US!**

**Public Hearing**  
**Wednesday August 27, 2007**  
**Bozeman Senior Center**  
**807 North Tracy Avenue**  
**Bozeman, MT**

**6:00 p.m. Open House**  
**6:30 p.m. Informal Presentation**  
**followed by the Public Hearing**

Montana Department of Transportation

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