



# APPENDIX 1: PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

*Public Meeting #1 Summary*

*Public Meeting #2 Summary*

*Public Survey Responses*

*Letter from the City of Whitefish*



**PUBLIC  
MEETING #1  
SUMMARY**



# MEETING SUMMARY

## *Informational Public Open House #1*

### Meeting Overview

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MDT hosted an informational meeting in March 2020 to provide information to interested parties about the scope of the project, share existing conditions data, collect feedback, and answer questions. The meeting was formatted as an open house which enabled attendees to view exhibits, talk with project representatives, and submit comments.

### MEETING DETAILS

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**Location:** City Council Chambers, Whitefish City Hall  
418 E 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Whitefish, MT

**Date:** March 5, 2020

**Time:** 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

### OUTREACH AND PUBLIC NOTICE

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Public notice was provided in multiple formats before the open house meeting. The meeting was announced in the local newspaper, on the radio, television, and social media outlets. Electronic invitations and flyers were sent to project contacts for distribution. Personal invites were also issued to key stakeholders, elected officials, and state legislators. Electronic notice was posted to both the project website and the City of Whitefish’s website.

### ATTENDEES

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Approximately 120 members of the public signed in at the open house meeting. Sign-in sheets are attached to these notes. Additional people attended each meeting but did not sign in. The following project representatives participated in the meetings:

- |                   |                                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Jacquelyn Smith | District Preconstruction Engineer | MDT Missoula District |
| • James Freyholtz | District Traffic Engineer         | MDT Missoula District |
| • Vicki Crnich    | Transportation Planner            | MDT                   |
| • Craig Workman   | Public Works Director             | City of Whitefish     |
| • Hilary Lindh    | Long Range Planner                | City of Whitefish     |
| • Karin Hilding   | Project Engineer                  | City of Whitefish     |
| • Dave Taylor     | Planning Director                 | City of Whitefish     |
| • Scott Randall   | Project Manager                   | RPA                   |
| • Kerry Pedersen  | Transportation Planner            | RPA                   |
| • Sarah Nicolai   | Transportation Planner            | RPA                   |

# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

## HIGHWAY STUDY

- |                        |                            |                          |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Brandon Theis        | Project Staff              | RPA                      |
| • Bill Bell            | Project Staff              | RPA                      |
| • Courtenay Sprunger   | Public Involvement Manager | Big Sky Public Relations |
| • Niusha Hadziomerovic | Administrative Assistant   | Big Sky Public Relations |

## MEETING Materials

A series of stations displayed exhibits with charts, maps, and facts about the project. Attendees also received a copy of the project newsletter with additional information and a link to the project website. Materials used at the meeting are summarized below. Copies of meeting materials are attached at the end of these notes.

### WELCOME & INTRODUCTION STATION

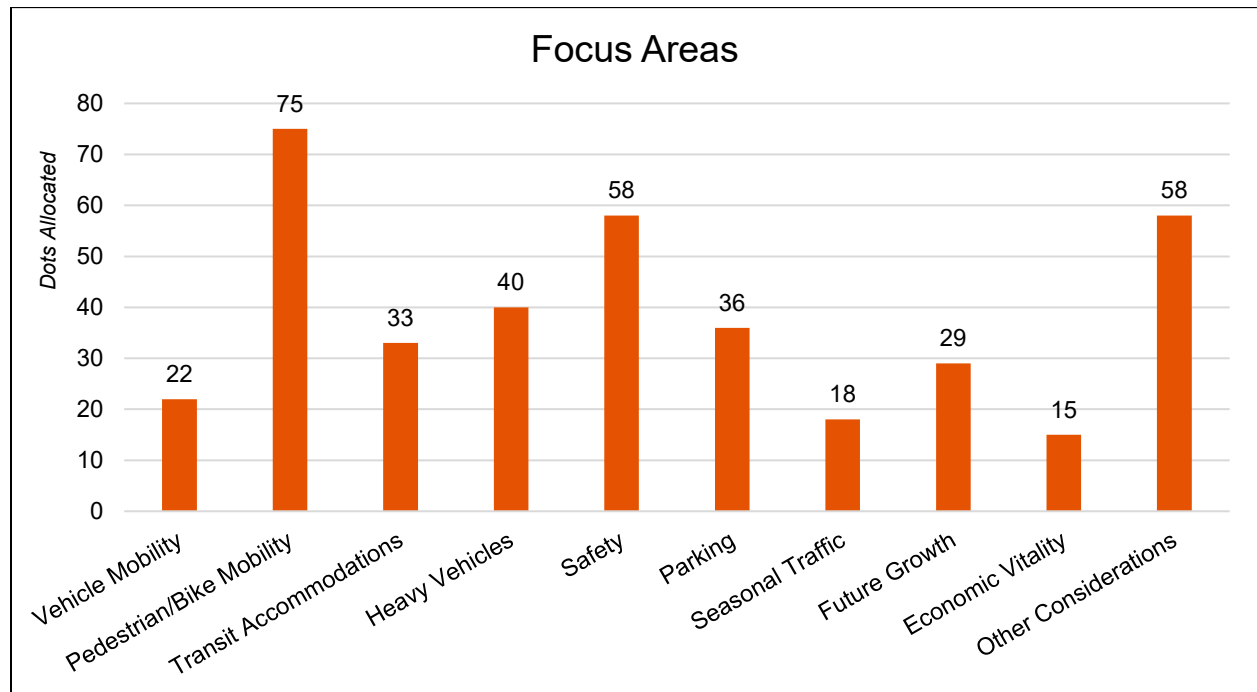
- At the check-in station, exhibits displayed MDT's guiding mission and Vision Zero.
- Contact and website information explained how to "stay in the know."

### BACKGROUND STATION

- A map illustrated the project area.
- Exhibits outlined past planning efforts and recommendations.

### FOCUS AREAS STATION

- Participants were given 4 dot stickers and asked to attach them to the display boards which represented the focus areas most important to them. A total of 96 participants attached 384 total dots to the boards as follows:

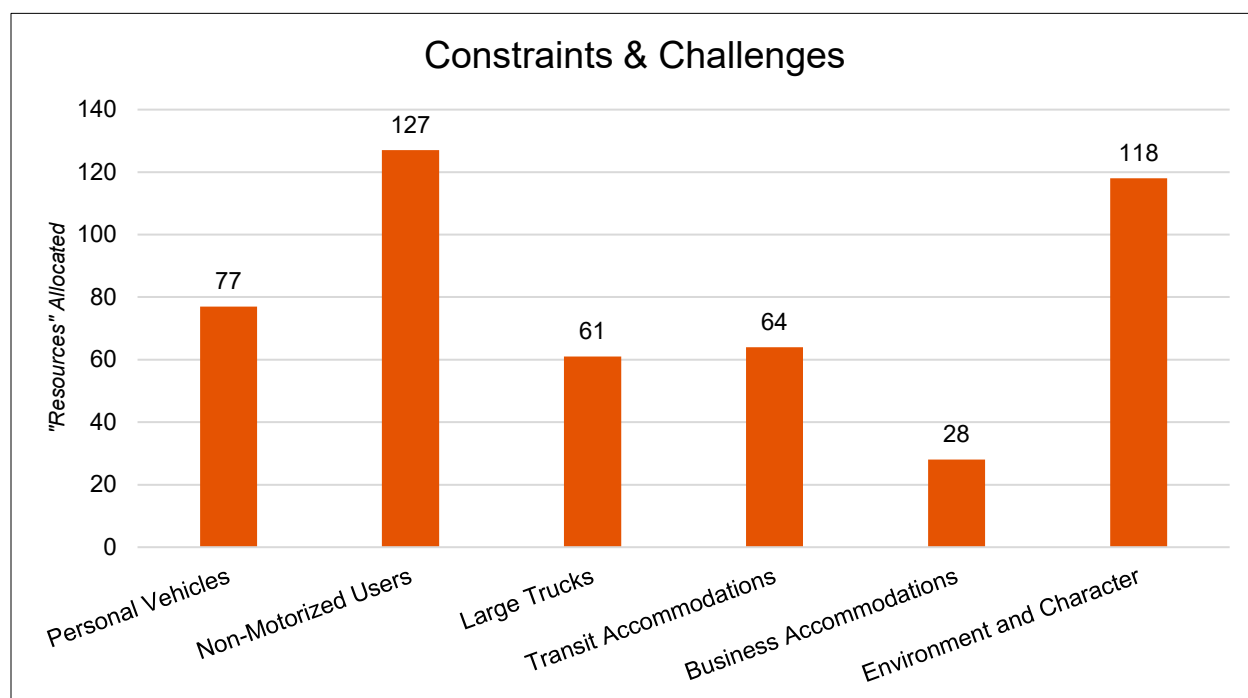


# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

## HIGHWAY STUDY

### CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES STATION

- Exhibits displayed constraints and challenges that may limit potential improvement opportunities.
- Participants were given 5 beads and asked to allocate their limited “resources” to improve Highway 93. A total of 95 participants allocated 475 resource beads to the jars. An additional 31 comments were submitted in the “Other Considerations” Jar.



### VISIONING STATION

- Participants were asked to attach sticky notes in response to the following question: “What is your vision for the Highway 93 corridor?”
- A total of 54 sticky note comments were provided. Copies of the comment boards are attached.

### NEXT STEPS STATION

- Exhibits explained the project development process and outlined the project schedule.

## Summary of Public Comments

**Table 1** summarizes comments provided by attendees at the open house. Comments were collected through conversations with individuals, written comments offered at the resource allocation station, and notes posted to the visioning boards. The table summarizes comments received and does not reflect recommendations made as part of the project. Topics are listed alphabetically and may reflect multiple individual comments.

# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

## HIGHWAY STUDY

**Table 1: Summary of Public Comments**

Topic	Comment Summary
<b>Alternate Routes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bypass route is desired to reduce traffic volumes and trucks in Downtown Whitefish.</li> <li>• Karrow Avenue, Farm to Market Road, Stella Lane, and Blanchard Lake Road were suggested as alternate routes to divert trucks traveling north/south away from the Downtown area.</li> <li>• Extension of the Kalispell Bypass was suggested to tie into local alternate routes.</li> <li>• A bypass route should be located a sufficient distance out of town to accommodate future growth.</li> <li>• Alternative routes should accommodate all modes, including bicyclists and pedestrians.</li> <li>• Local residents, who live along the corridors that were suggested as potential alternative routes, do not favor bypass traffic directed through their neighborhoods. Traffic on the suggested routes is already too high.</li> <li>• A new river crossing on 7<sup>th</sup> Street between Baker Avenue and Spokane Avenue is desired by some. Others would prefer to maintain the residential character on 7<sup>th</sup> Street and construct a new river crossing at 10<sup>th</sup> Street or encourage use of 13<sup>th</sup> Street instead.</li> </ul>
<b>General Character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway 93 should better fit into the character of the community.</li> <li>• The beauty, charm, and aesthetics of the Downtown Whitefish corridor is valued.</li> <li>• Demolishing older homes to make room for infrastructure improvements is not favored.</li> </ul>
<b>Intersection Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some feel a roundabout is needed at Baker Avenue/W 13<sup>th</sup> Street. People drive too slow, and a roundabout would keep traffic flowing. Others voiced opposition to roundabouts in the project area.</li> <li>• Downtown traffic signal timing needs to be revisited, especially at Baker Avenue/2<sup>nd</sup> Street and at Spokane Avenue/2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Some cycle lengths are too short and don't allow enough vehicles through. Pedestrian crossings delay vehicle turning movements. Traffic backs up as a result. Signal timing should be variable based on time of day and season.</li> <li>• Left turns should be prohibited on Highway 93 between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets to optimize through traffic flow.</li> <li>• An additional traffic signal is needed on Spokane Avenue (possibly at 5<sup>th</sup> Street) to prioritize east-west traffic and pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>• Roundabouts are desired on Central Avenue at E 1<sup>st</sup> Street and E 4<sup>th</sup> Street to enable drivers to turn around</li> </ul>
<b>Lane Configuration and Roadway Width</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heading north on Highway 93, a lane drops immediately after 13<sup>th</sup> Street, which can be confusing for tourists and young drivers. Better signage is needed to warn of the lane drop.</li> <li>• Longer turn bays are needed to accommodate turning vehicles. Sometimes through traffic backs up and blocks access to turn bays.</li> <li>• Shoulders are needed on all roads, especially Edgewood Place and Armory Road.</li> <li>• Residents do not want additional lanes in front of their houses.</li> <li>• Maintaining two-way traffic on Baker Avenue is desired.</li> <li>• Some individuals expressed desire for wider streets and increased vehicular capacity. Others noted widening Highway 93 will lead to induced demand and increasing congestion.</li> <li>• One-way travel was suggested for Spokane Avenue (northbound) and Baker Avenue (southbound)</li> </ul>
<b>Lighting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting needs to be provided at Veterans Memorial Bridge on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.</li> <li>• Project lighting should follow International Dark Sky Association recommendations to minimize blue light emissions and shield fixtures.</li> </ul>

# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

## HIGHWAY STUDY

Topic	Comment Summary
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting out of a parked vehicle is difficult on Spokane Avenue due to the high traffic volumes.</li> <li>Additional parking is needed.</li> <li>An existing bank parking lot on Spokane Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street could be expanded further south for public parking.</li> <li>Parking lots should be developed out of town to encourage people to walk, bike, or use a scooter to access Downtown. Trolley or shuttle service from an off-site parking garage was also suggested.</li> <li>Underground parking lots should be considered.</li> <li>Downtown businesses and organizations should enable public parking in private lots.</li> <li>A low-cost parking lot should be designated for Downtown employees.</li> </ul>
<b>Pavement Condition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pavement is deteriorated on Spokane at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. Heavy truck traffic has created rutting and potholes. Storm drainage is also a concern.</li> </ul>
<b>Pedestrians &amp; Bicyclists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In general, safe pedestrian, bicycle, and route to school accommodations are important to the community.</li> <li>A crosswalk with flashing lights is needed at the Baker Avenue crossing south of 5<sup>th</sup> Street (near Baker Park).</li> <li>Crosswalks are needed on Highway 93 at Obrien Avenue and Lupfer Avenue.</li> <li>A pedestrian bridge is desired between Baker and Spokane Avenues at 7<sup>th</sup> Street.</li> <li>Due to the long cycle length, pedestrians don't wait for a walk signal at Highway 93/2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Instead, they make risky crossing decisions in front of vehicles turning right from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street onto Highway 93.</li> <li>Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are needed at crosswalks to alert motorists of pedestrians, especially along Baker Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.</li> <li>A "pedestrian scramble" is needed at Spokane Avenue/2<sup>nd</sup> Street; on E 1<sup>st</sup> St at Spokane, Baker, and Central; and at other downtown intersections to stop all vehicular traffic and allow pedestrians to cross in all directions at the same time.</li> <li>Children walking to school should be a top priority. Sidewalks need to be provided in all directions from the schools, and protected east-west crossings should be provided on Highway 93.</li> <li>A pedestrian walking mall closed to vehicular traffic was suggested on Central Avenue and on other Downtown corridors.</li> <li>Safe bike lanes and/or other biking accommodations are needed.</li> <li>Shared use paths should extend from new housing developments to the hospital.</li> <li>A multi-modal entrance to Downtown is desired.</li> <li>Some believe pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations should be the first priority, while others feel non-motorized facilities should be secondary to vehicular mobility.</li> </ul>
<b>Previous Planning Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A lot of planning work has already been done in the Whitefish Downtown area, including the <i>Downtown Master Plan</i> and <i>Connect Whitefish Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan</i>. Past recommendations need to be incorporated and implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>Road Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ice builds up at the intersection of Baker Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street.</li> <li>Public service announcements would be beneficial to encourage drivers to be alert and slow down when roads are congested.</li> </ul>
<b>Speed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A single, consistent speed limit is needed along Baker Avenue.</li> <li>Traffic on Blanchard Lake Road travels too fast.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is interest in alternatives to carbon fuels.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourists stand in the middle of Highway 93 and take photos, causing safety concerns and impeding traffic flow.</li> <li>Some individuals would like to deter tourist-related traffic congestion. Others recognize tourists support the local economy.</li> </ul>

# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

## HIGHWAY STUDY

Topic	Comment Summary
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional transit is needed. Year-round, fixed-route, county-wide service could reduce Downtown congestion and teen drivers. Teens need access to Columbia Falls and Kalispell. Routes should serve both visitors and residents. Individuals with disabilities would also benefit.</li><li>• Safe, sheltered bus stops are desired.</li><li>• Free or low-cost park-and-ride parking lots are needed to encourage people to use transit services.</li><li>• Transit service to and from the airport is desired.</li><li>• A train from Downtown Whitefish to Glacier National Park is desired.</li></ul>
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Old growth green ash trees line the project area on Spokane Avenue. Some are in good health, while others are in decline and are nearing the end of their life span.</li><li>• The City of Whitefish Urban Forestry program is currently in the process of replacing green ash trees throughout town to preemptively protect against anticipated impacts from emerald ash borer. When a project is constructed, it would be desirable to replace the ash trees on the east side of Spokane Avenue with new species.</li><li>• Old growth maple trees and younger trees on Baker Avenue still have remaining life and should be protected.</li><li>• Overhead tree canopy is desired along Spokane Avenue and Baker Avenue to provide shade and beauty.</li></ul>
Trucks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High truck volumes are difficult to accommodate in the Downtown area.</li><li>• Light poles, street furniture, and other obstructions make sharp, 90-degree turn movements difficult for trucks within the constrained travel way.</li><li>• Truck movements are often in conflict with pedestrian crossings. An alternate truck route is desired away from areas heavily used by pedestrians.</li><li>• Baker Avenue was suggested as a truck route.</li><li>• Despite challenges, trucks need to be accommodated because they deliver goods to the Downtown and Mountain areas.</li></ul>
Whitefish River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Culverts do not provide safe passage for kayakers. Bridge crossings are desired.</li></ul>

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Displays
2. Visioning





DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH  
HIGHWAY STUDY

# MDT & VISION ZERO

## MDT'S MISSION

*MDT's guiding mission is to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality, and sensitivity to the environment.*



## VISION ZERO

zero deaths · zero serious injuries

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MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

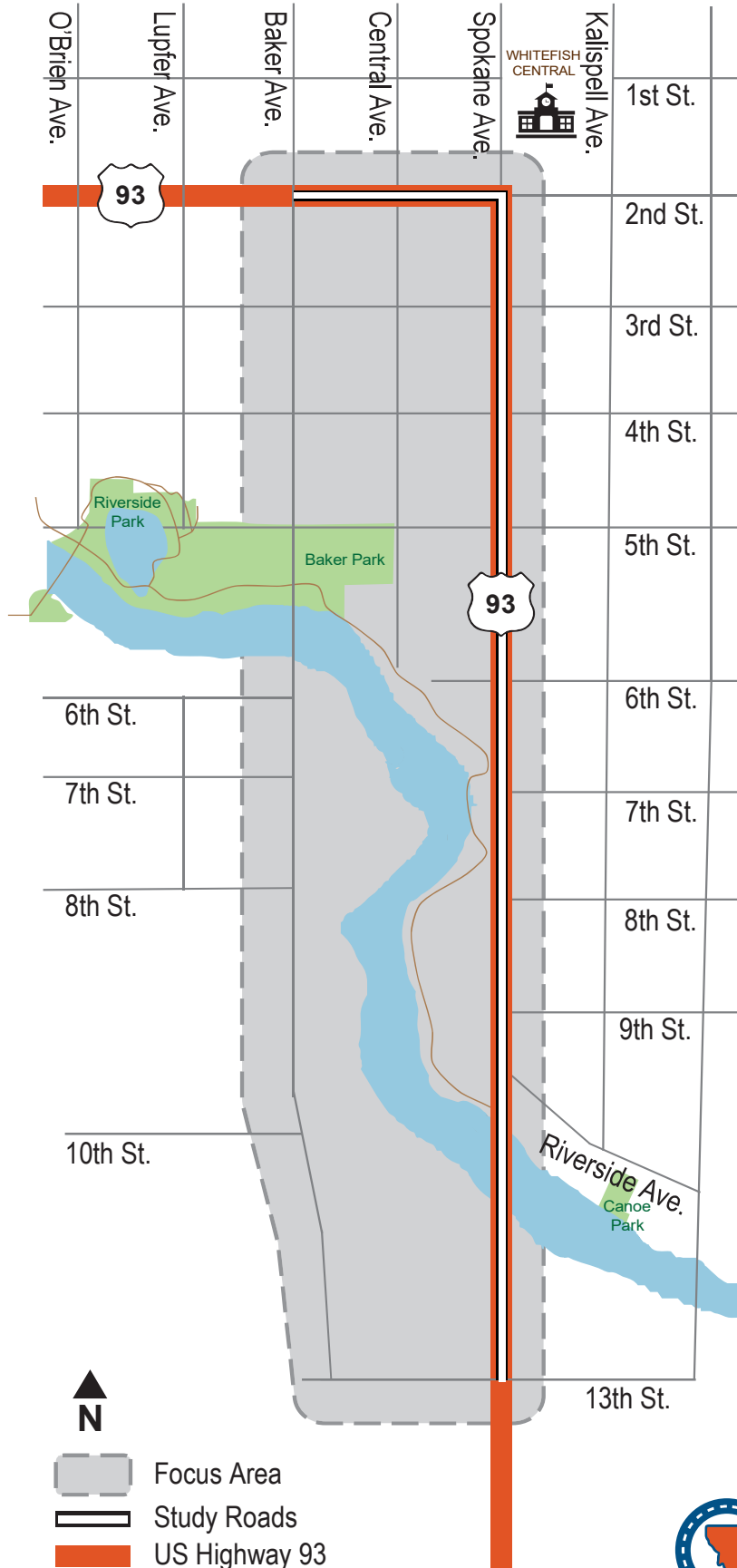
*“Through education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical response we’re **moving toward zero deaths and injuries** on Montana roadways.” —Mike Tooley, Director*

**LEARN MORE ABOUT VISION ZERO AT**

[www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero)



# PROJECT AREA





DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH  
HIGHWAY STUDY

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

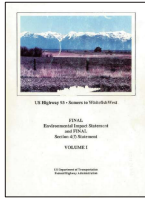
Over the past several years, various local planning documents have been prepared which discuss Downtown Whitefish. Each of these documents have explored design solutions for Highway 93 through different lenses (traffic, environment, bike and pedestrian, downtown businesses, etc.). *The Downtown Whitefish Highway Study aims to find ways to improve traffic flow and safety of the highway while considering past planning efforts.*



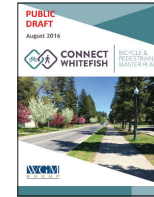
Downtown Whitefish  
Highway Study

The study will **consider past recommendations** and **identify the best solution** that addresses safety and operations for the next 20 years.

1 US Hwy 93 Somers to Whitefish West  
Environmental Impact Statement

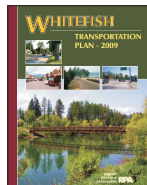
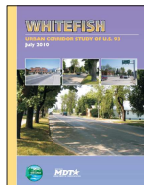


3 Connect Whitefish Bicycle  
& Pedestrian Master Plan

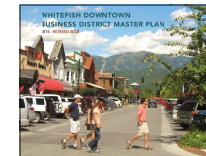


Whitefish Urban Corridor Study

Whitefish Transportation Plan



Whitefish Downtown Business District Master Plan



Hwy 93 South Corridor Plan



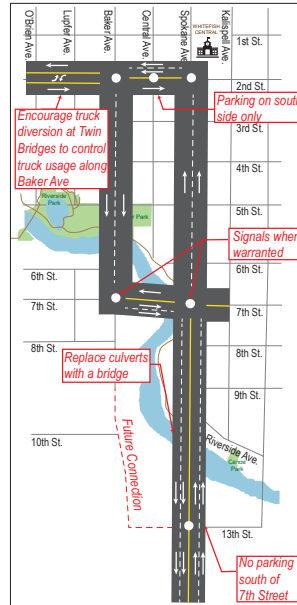


# PAST RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past several years, multiple design solutions have been proposed for Highway 93 through Downtown Whitefish. **More detailed evaluation of past recommendations is needed before a final decision can be made.** Through the current *Downtown Whitefish Highway Study*, project partners aim to analyze past design options and identify potential new ideas to ultimately arrive at a solution that will address safety and operational concerns for all users over the next 20 years.

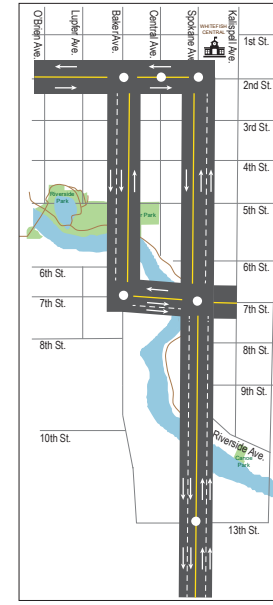
1

## Hwy 93 Somers to Whitefish West

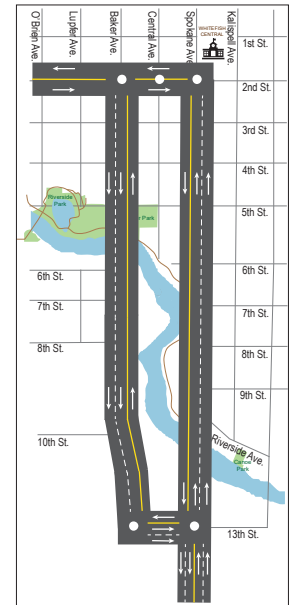


2

## Whitefish Urban Corridor Study



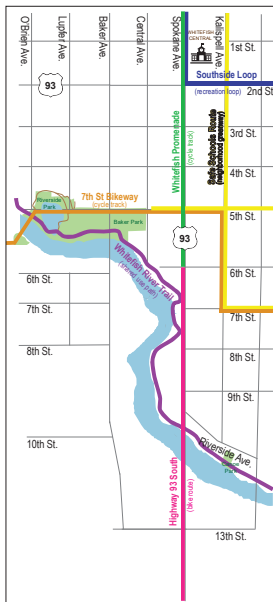
CONTRA-FLOW



MODIFIED ALTERNATIVE C

3

## Whitefish Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan



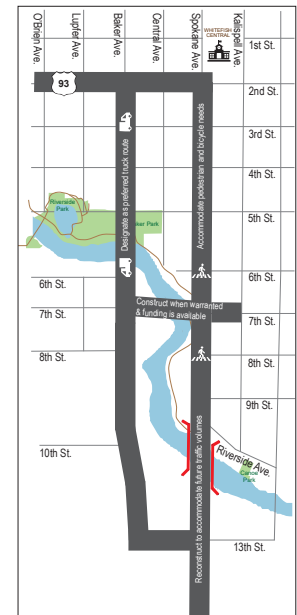
4

## Whitefish Downtown Business District Master Plan

- Does not support **Spokane Ave widening**, but does support Baker Ave improvements
- Desires a **cycle track along Spokane Ave** consistent with *Whitefish Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan*

5

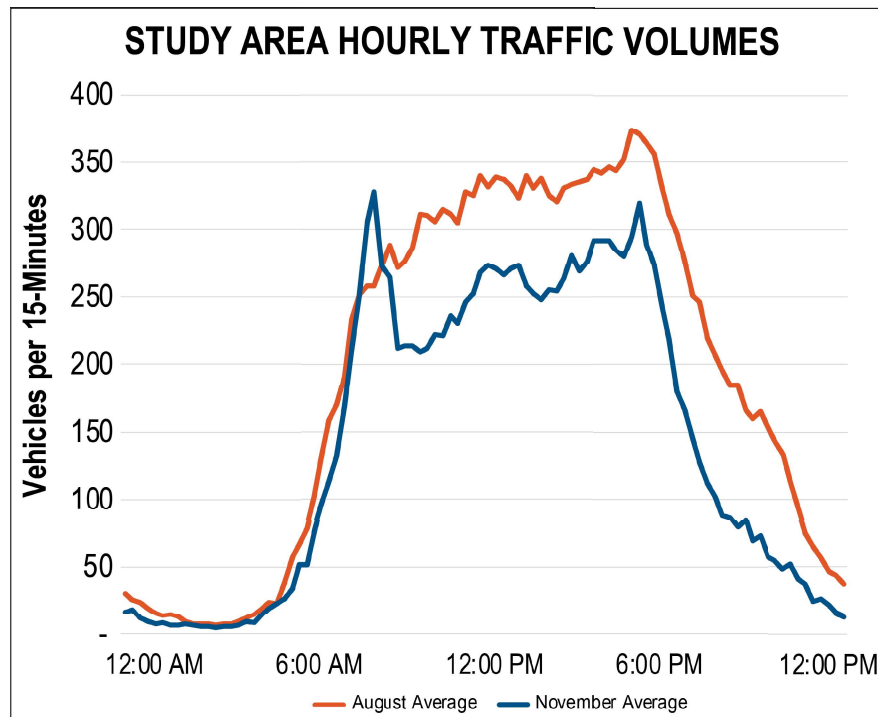
## Hwy 93 South Corridor Plan





## VEHICLE MOBILITY

Highway 93 is located in the center of the Whitefish community and serves as the primary travel route through the city for residents, visitors, and other through traffic. On an average day, Highway 93 experiences traffic volumes ranging from about **7,500 to 16,000 vehicles** through Downtown Whitefish. High traffic volumes can contribute to **congestion and travel delays** on the highway and local cross streets.



\*Study area includes traffic volumes along Highway 93 and Baker Avenue.



# 82%

of Whitefish's workforce  
**uses a vehicle** to  
commute to work.



## TRANSIT ACCOMODATIONS

Multiple providers offer public transportation options within Whitefish. Eagle Transit operates a **fixed-route service** and offers dial-a-ride **paratransit services** on an appointment basis for individuals with disabilities. Currently, Eagle Transit's **inter-city service** to Kalispell and Columbia Falls is limited. Recreational **shuttle services** to Whitefish Mountain Resort and Glacier National Park are also offered by other providers. Providing transit opportunities can help reduce vehicle congestion.



**EAGLE TRANSIT**



**SNOW BUS**



**GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD  
SHUTTLE**

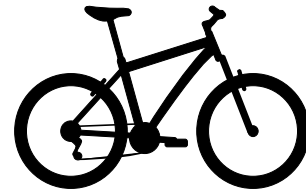


## PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE MOBILITY

There are many pedestrians and bicyclists in Downtown Whitefish, especially during warm-weather months. Downtown retail shops, dining, entertainment, and recreational amenities draw **thousands of walkers and bikers each day**. The crossing at 2nd Street and Central Avenue is particularly busy.



August	November
<b>8,471</b>	<b>1,135</b>
<i>pedestrians counted at the 2nd Street/Central Avenue intersection</i>	



August	November
<b>25 - 88</b>	<b>1 - 14</b>
<i>bicycles counted at the study intersections</i>	



**12%**  
of Whitefish's workforce  
**walks or bike** to work.  
This is about twice as high  
as the Montana average!



## HEAVY VEHICLES

Commercial trucks commonly travel through Downtown Whitefish using Highway 93. During busy times, large **trucks can block intersections** due to short distances between Downtown intersections. Trucks can also have difficulty navigating Downtown due to **lack of space to make wide turns**.



Spokane Ave

**3 - 5%**

Baker Ave

**1 - 2%**

*of the vehicle mix*



**THRU TRUCKS ARE  
DISCOURAGED ON  
BAKER AVENUE**

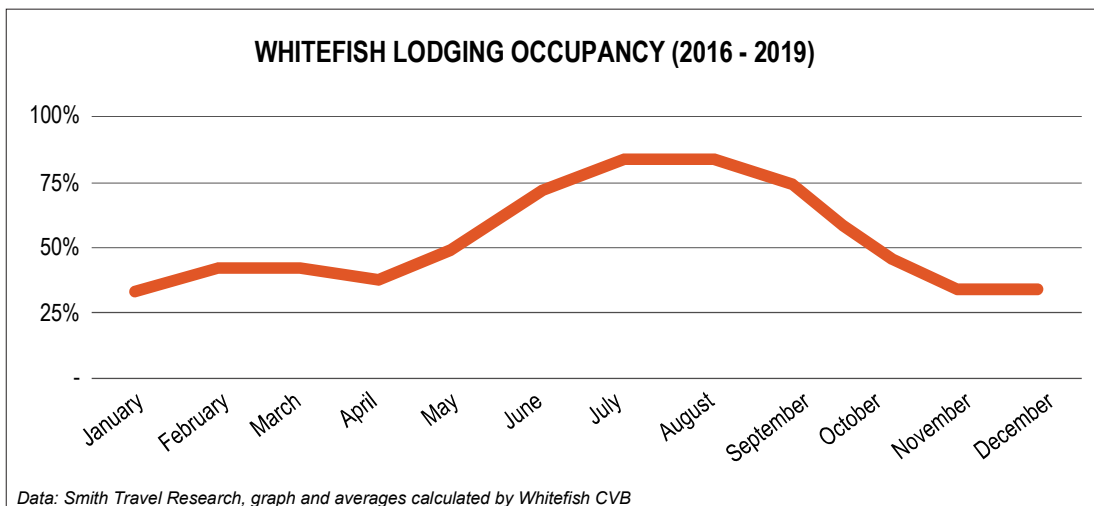






## ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Whitefish economy is based on diverse sectors including **tourism, outdoor recreation,** and **service industries.** In recent years, Whitefish has also seen strong growth in **real estate, construction,** and **healthcare.** However, summer tourism remains the strongest influence on the economy. A safe, efficient transportation system is critical to support Whitefish's thriving local economy.



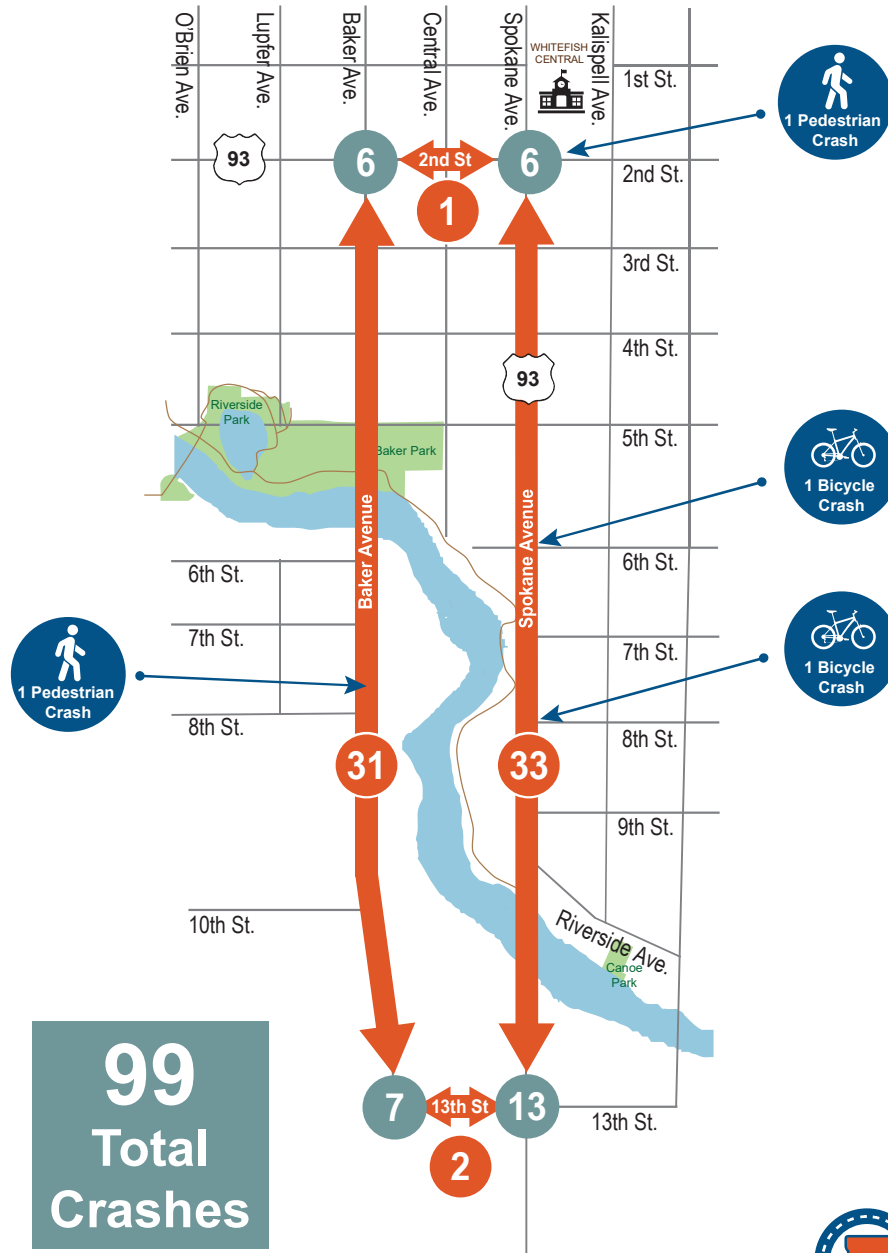
Source: Explore Whitefish



# FOCUS AREAS

## SAFETY

Safety is a primary focus area on all MDT projects. In support of **Vision Zero**, MDT is striving to **eliminate all deaths and injuries on Montana highways**. From 2014 to 2018, 99 crashes occurred on study roadways in Downtown Whitefish. Of these, **2 crashes caused serious injuries** and 16 crashes caused possible injuries.



**99**  
Total  
Crashes

Crashes reported from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2018





# FOCUS AREAS

## PARKING

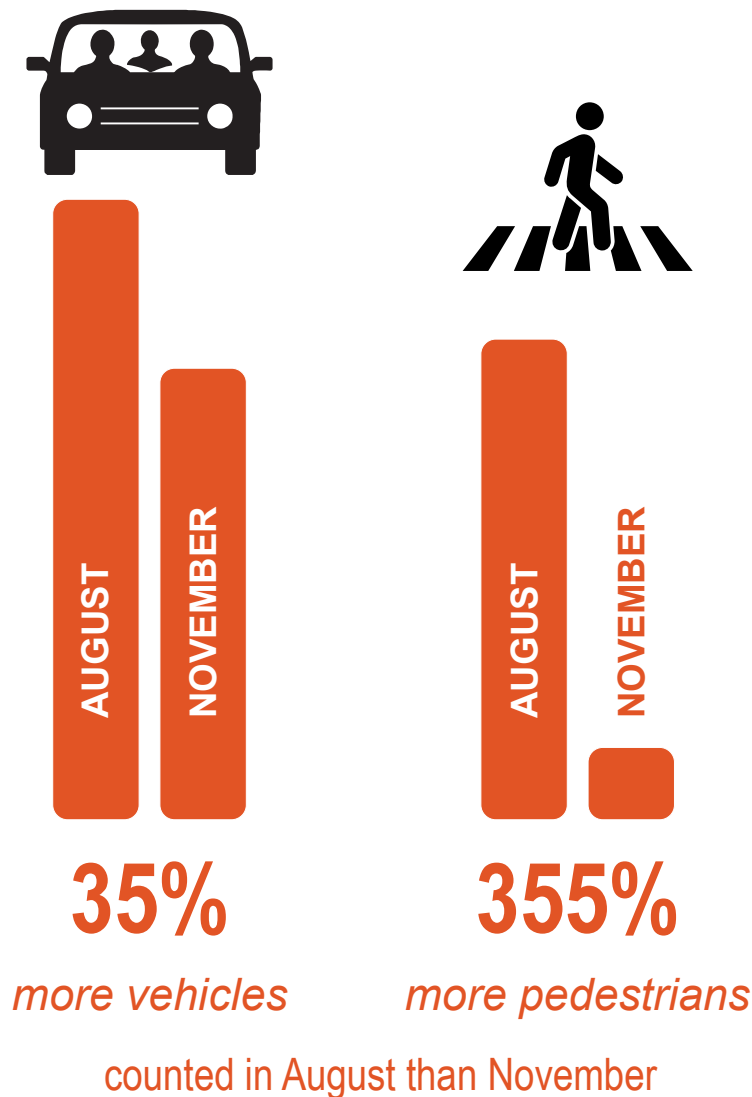
Downtown Whitefish offers **on-street parking options** within the study area on Spokane Avenue, 2nd Street, and Baker Avenue. **Small parking lots** and a **parking garage** also provide parking for access to local businesses and downtown services. Providing enough parking for employees and visitors is a common concern for downtown businesses.





## SEASONAL TRAFFIC

Downtown Whitefish experiences a **spike in vehicle and pedestrian volumes during summer months**. Tourists and other part-time visitors are drawn to downtown shopping, dining, services, events, and recreational amenities. It is challenging to accommodate seasonal fluctuations in traffic with the current highway configuration.





## FUTURE GROWTH

Traffic volumes in Downtown Whitefish are anticipated to increase as the community continues to grow. The **population** of Whitefish has steadily grown over the past decade. The increasing population, combined with strong growth in the tourism industry, has resulted in increasing **traffic volumes** in Whitefish which are expected to continue growing in the future.



11%

*overall increase in  
Whitefish's population*



12%

*overall increase in  
traffic in Whitefish*





## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Downtown Whitefish owes its **character** to important natural resources and pedestrian-friendly recreational, commercial, and residential developments. The **Whitefish River** runs through the middle of Downtown Whitefish, with **pedestrian/ bicycle trails, open spaces, and parks** along the waterfront. **Mountain and river views** enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Downtown area. Paved driveways and local roadways intersect study corridors to provide **access to adjacent uses**.





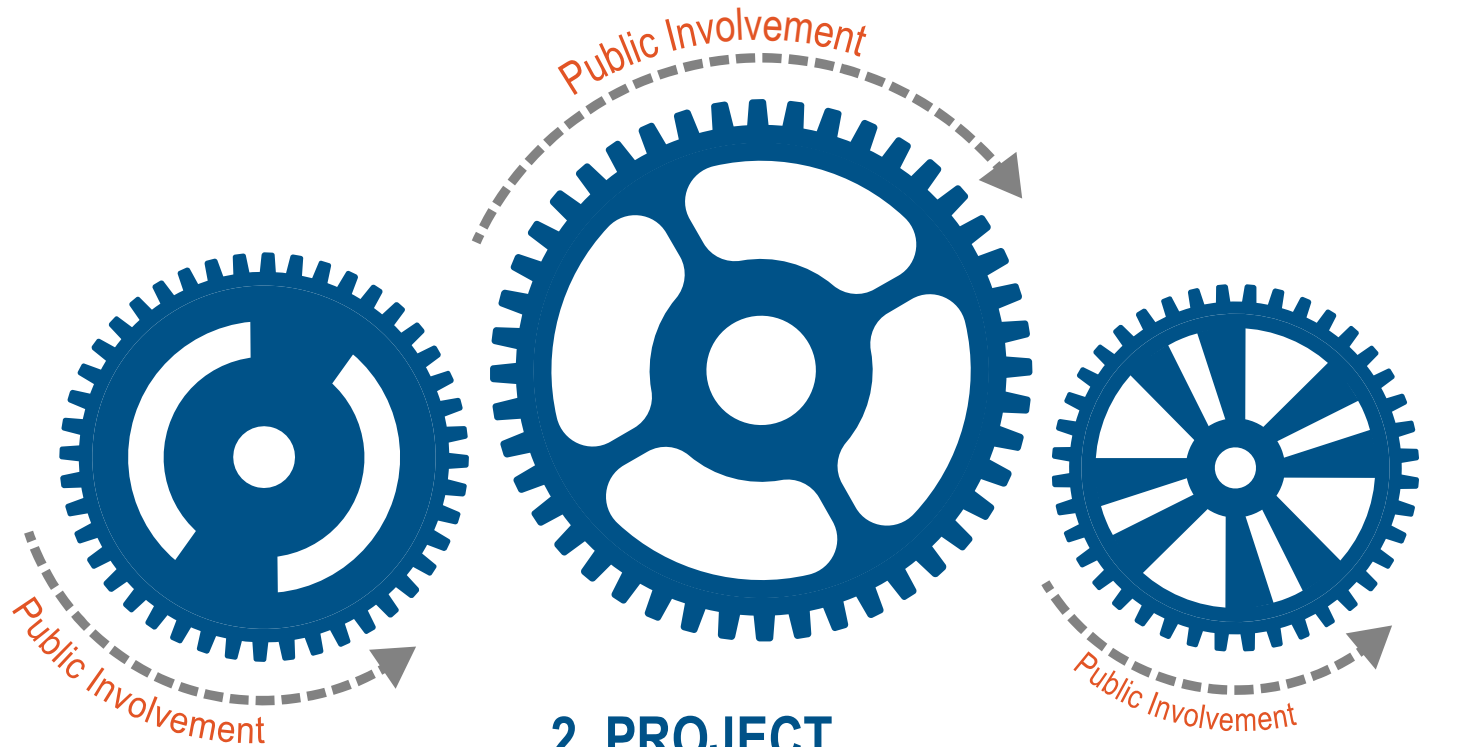
# CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES





DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH  
HIGHWAY STUDY

# MDT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



## 1. PLANNING



## 2. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- Nomination
- **Feasibility/Survey Phase**
- Design
- Right-of-Way Acquisition

## 3. CONSTRUCTION



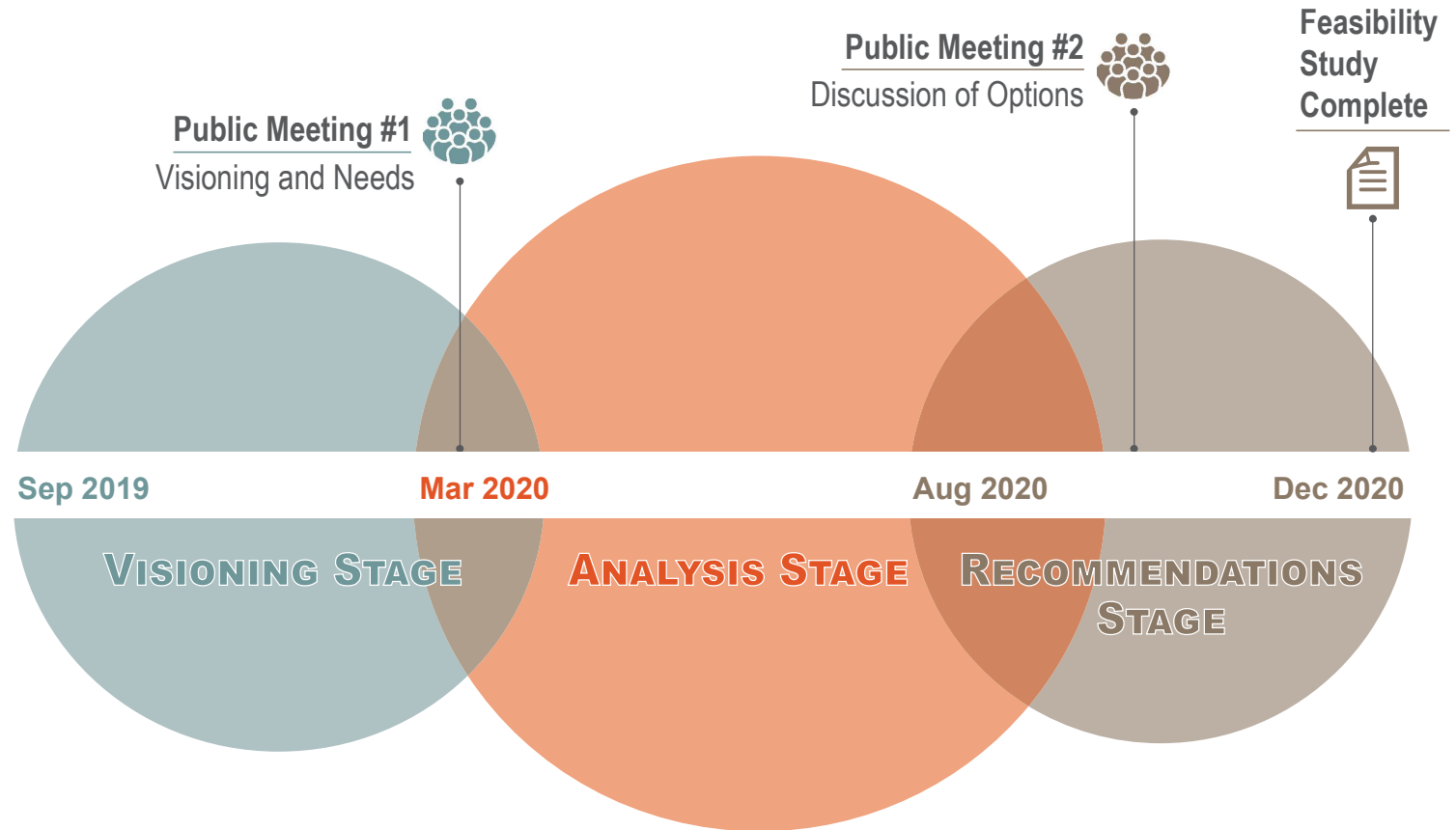




DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH  
HIGHWAY STUDY

# PROJECT SCHEDULE

The *Downtown Whitefish Highway Study* is currently scheduled for **completion by the end of 2020**. A final design and construction schedule will be determined following completion of the study.





DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH  
HIGHWAY STUDY

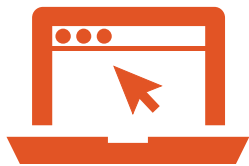
# STAY IN THE KNOW!



CALL  
**COURTENAY SPRUNGER**  
**AT 406-261-7665**  
WITH A COMMENT OR QUESTION



EMAIL  
**Courtenay@BigSkyPublicRelations.com**  
TO SUBMIT A COMMENT OR TO SIGN UP  
FOR PERIODIC **PROJECT UPDATES**



VISIT  
**[www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/DowntownWhitefish/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/DowntownWhitefish/)**

# WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE <sup>Highway 93</sup> CORRIDOR?

"SCRAMBLE"  
ALL-WAY PED  
CROSSING AT  
2nd + SPOKANE  
YEAR DANCE DROPS  
INTEGRATION FOR  
WALKERS

YEAR ROUND  
BUSES!  
Have a real public  
transit system  
that works for  
locals, not just  
tourists!

Keep the  
corridor  
Beautiful!

CREATE A ~~TRANSPORTATION~~  
TRANSPORTATION CENTER AROUND  
OR AS THE DEPARTURE AND LOT  
FOR OUT OF TOWNERS OR VISITORS  
PACKING WITH SHIRTLESS INTO CORRAL  
WINTERISH

Keep any bypass  
considerations far  
enough out of  
town to avoid  
issues to be  
repealed as WHF  
grows

Need a  
bypass

Integrated  
Public Transport  
system in the  
entire county

Need to  
accommodate  
PEDESTRIANS

Bypass!!  
Be ready for when  
federal funds  
Available

Follow ~~down~~  
Downtown  
Main Street  
Rebuild sidewalks

Agree with  
Stella, large  
bypass option  
PLANNED 20 years ago  
starting south on 93 by Stella  
Linn Ave going NW to meet  
93 by W Fish Hills north of  
town

MAKE THE  
CHILDREN THE  
PRIORITY...  
Kids first for safety.

A bypass  
should have been  
implemented 15  
years ago when the  
road was there. Do  
it now. Many trucks  
use Bluebird the old  
now, jake brakes, or

USE BLANCHARD  
LAKE RD  
AS BYPASS

To provide more  
parking along Spokane  
expand the bank lot on  
Spokane at 4th south  
to add close parking.

Bypass Big  
trucks around  
town.  
Remove culverts  
and replace with  
a bridge.

Public safety  
announcements  
during busy  
season telling  
drivers to stay  
alert and slow down

We need a bypass  
so all of the traffic  
doesn't come thru the  
downtown. Especially  
big trucks...

Stop tearing  
down all the  
old homes  
Return to  
charming and  
aesthetically  
appealing  
architecture

Have a  
bus schedule  
with regular  
stops for teens  
to get to crails  
or Kalispell

93 Bypass -

A semi-  
truck  
Bypass  
is needed

WIDENING 93  
WILL ONLY LEAD  
TO INCREASED  
DEMAND - TRAFFIC  
BAD IN A FEW  
SHORT YEARS

We need to  
accommodate  
trucks because  
most are  
servicing the  
downtown  
mountain  
area

Test BYPASS  
for those that  
want to get  
around Whitefish  
is  
Jalen to  
Market

# WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE <sup>Highway 93</sup> CORRIDOR?

Move traffic safely  
Find a new route for large trucks!  
More pedestrian/bike lanes  
Keep trees!!

Reduce congestion, give bike-ped friendly side land.

Have the corridor keep the feel of traveling through a cute small town ♡

Route the trucks away from Spokane & keep Spokane Avenue for the community w/ trees, sidewalks, bike lanes & no trucks on Spokane

BEAUTY & SAFETY  
Down town  
By-pass for Trucks on River or Fair & Market

Get rid of the W.F. River Culverts and replace them with a new bridge between downtown to the river!  
Save for Boones & Weir!

Have 93 to Kootenai River to Moscow, W.F. River & Teton Bypass.

By Pass is Necessary.

Multi-modal - safe + pleasant for ped/bike - active streetscape - lots of green trees/shade

Bus Stops

By Pass is Foot Traffic Friendly

Bicycle By Pass overpass

Just say "No" to left turns

Multi-modal entrance to town -  
Red X @ Traffic Signals  
Scramble

By-pass downtown eventually!  
Use Baker Ave. more for trucks

USE SIDE ALLEYS, PARK TO MET TO BYPASS, WRITE UP FOR VEHICLES NOT NEEDING ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN

Visitors parking their cars; getting around town by ped, bike, public transit.

ROUTE TRUCKS ~~DOWN~~ KAREW DR. ELSEWHERE  
CONSIDER MODAL PRIORITY EXAM CARDS, FUELS.

By Pass The trucks!

- 1) Large trucks out of downtown
- 2) Flash turn lane lights + stop lights
- 3) Specific parking lot @ the coast for downtown employees
- 4) More parking

NOCARS Foot Traffic ONLY

Extend Baker Ave to Spokane instead of 7th St bridge

"All Ways" red. crossing @ E. 2nd St → Spokane, Baker & Central

BUILD FOR PEDESTRIANS FIRST, THEN FOR TRAFFIC FLOW

Remove culverts on river, build a bridge

No left turn ban Hwy 93 Down town

Toward 93  
down town

These are roads. Manage for vehicles first - business/personal - bikes/peds second.



**PUBLIC  
MEETING #2  
SUMMARY**



## DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH HIGHWAY STUDY

# OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK OVERVIEW

On Wednesday, September 22, 2021, MDT hosted a final open house for the Downtown Whitefish Highway Study. At the event, the study team shared the preferred concept for the US Highway 93 corridor.

The Whitefish community, especially downtown, has experienced significant population growth in recent decades, which has increased traffic to levels that US Highway 93 and the downtown corridor were not originally built to accommodate. Highway 93 runs through the center of the Whitefish community and serves as the primary travel route through the city for residents, visitors, and other traffic. When backups occur on the highway, the effects translate into delays and congestion on local cross streets, ultimately making it more difficult to travel through town.

The open house was well attended, and a tremendous amount of feedback was collected, both at the event itself and via other channels in response to the event promotion. Below is an overview of attendance and the feedback. Overall, respondents are very critical of MDT's study, and there is minimal support for the preferred option.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the open house was strong, and many who could not attend submitted feedback via email or the comment form on the MDT website.

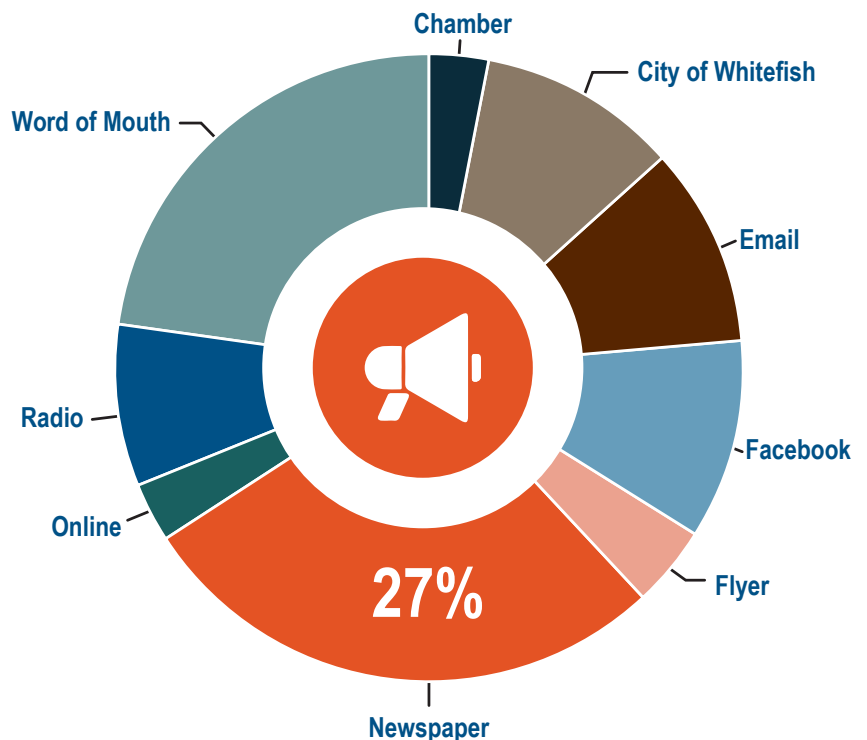
**112 VISITORS SIGNED THE CHECK-IN SHEET**

**29** Signed up to receive project update texts

**84** Signed up to receive project update emails

### HOW ATTENDEES LEARNED ABOUT THE OPEN HOUSE

The newspaper, followed by word of mouth, were the primary channels attendees learned about the open house.

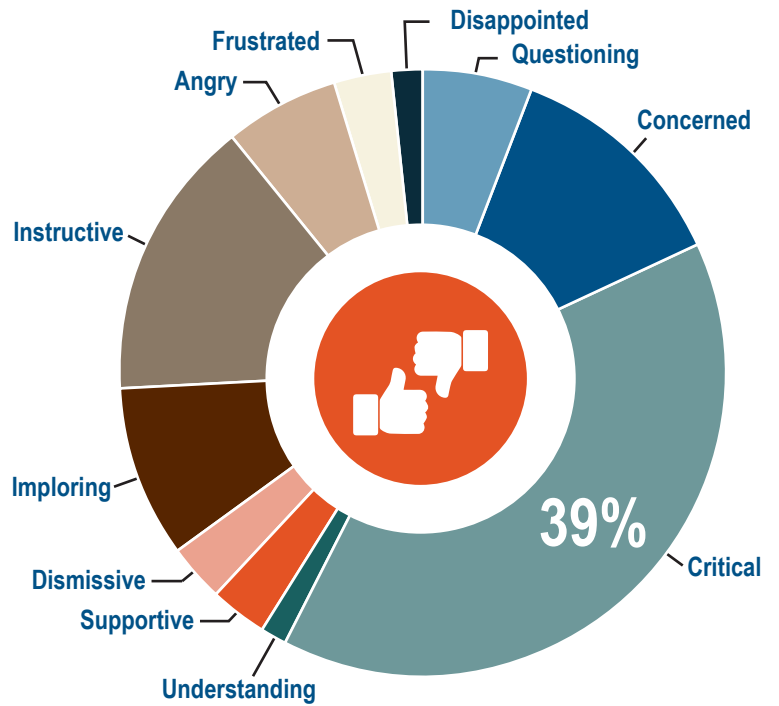


# FEEDBACK

Sixty-seven people provided written feedback through email, the comment form on MDT's website, or the comment cards provided at the open house.

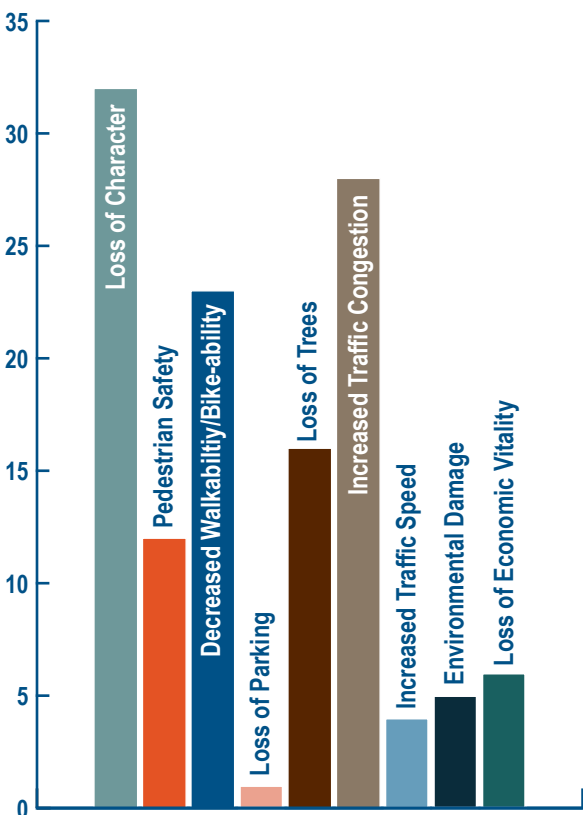
## FEEDBACK TONE

Though subjective, the feedback does reflect certain tones. Unsurprisingly, the primary tone is critical, followed by instructive and concerned.



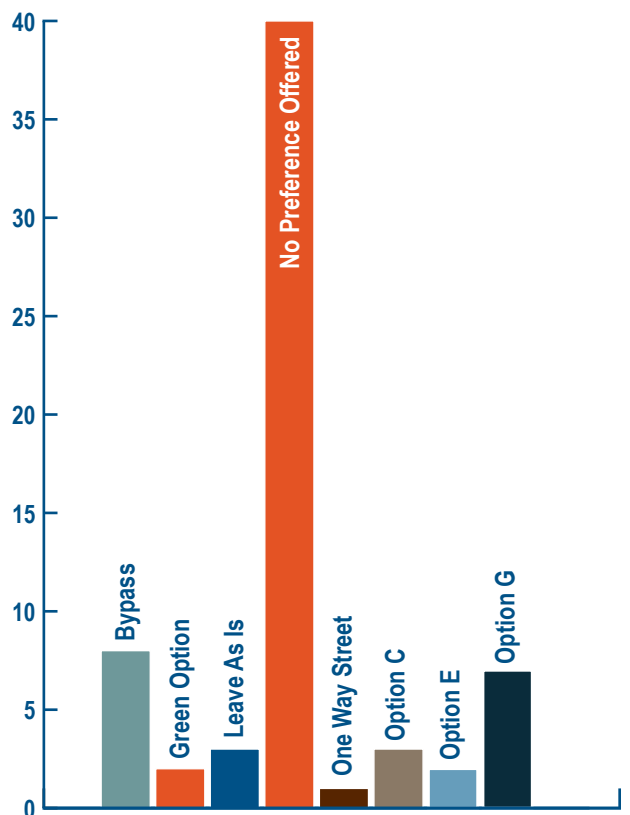
# PRIMARY CONCERNS WITH THE PROJECT

Within the feedback, certain concerns are mentioned more often than others. The concern mentioned most is the loss of character of Whitefish, followed by increased traffic congestion and decreased walkability/bike-ability.



# RESPONDENTS PREFERRED OPTION

Most of the respondents do not indicate a preferred option or offer an alternative. Of those that did, the most popular was a bypass, followed by option G.



# SUMMARY

Respondents were very critical of the study and MDT's preferred option. The prevailing view is that proceeding with this option would lead to a loss of Whitefish's unique character, increased traffic congestion in the downtown corridor, and a decrease in the city's walkability and bike-ability. These are the top three concerns, in order of the number of mentions.

Of the total respondents, 61% did not offer an opinion of which option presented was their preferred option or suggest an alternative plan. The idea with the most support was to build a bypass, followed by option G. Three respondents felt that the downtown should be left as is, and only three people expressed support for MDT's preferred option, option C.







# DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

HIGHWAY STUDY

# OPEN HOUSE

## WELCOME



**VISION ZERO**  
zero deaths · zero serious injuries

MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

# QUESTIONS OR IDEAS ?

CONTACT US



## EMAIL

[amy@bigskypublicrelations.com](mailto:amy@bigskypublicrelations.com)



## STUDY HOTLINE

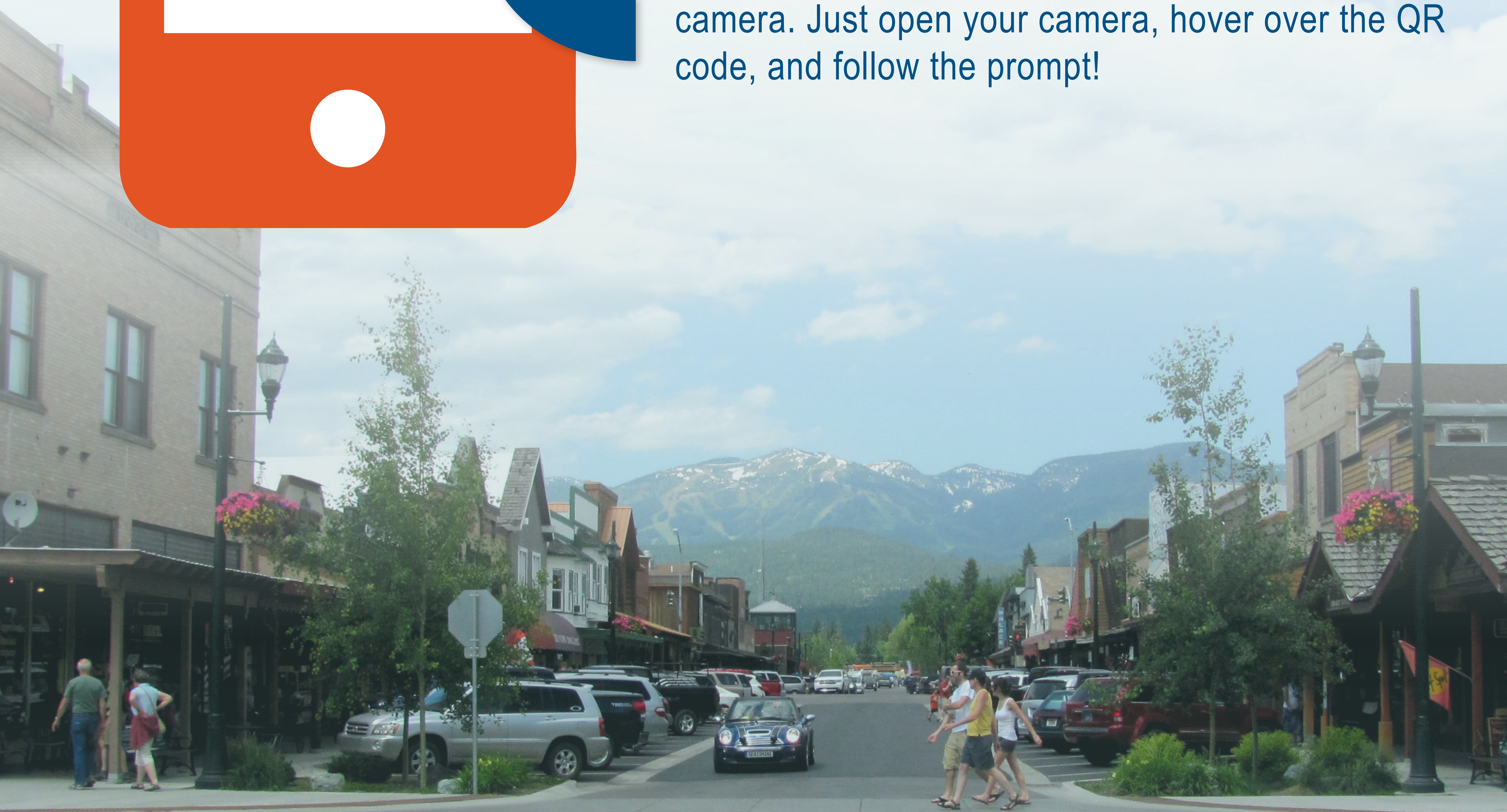
406-207-4484, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 5 PM



## VISIT

[mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/downtownwhitefish/](http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/downtownwhitefish/)

**OR** scan the QR code by using your smartphone camera. Just open your camera, hover over the QR code, and follow the prompt!



# STUDY APPROACH

## DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH

*To demonstrate existing and future traffic and safety performance.*

## CONSIDER FEEDBACK

*Gather input from the public and stakeholders.*

## OBJECTIVE:

Identify a solution to improve traffic flow and safety of US 93 that aligns with local planning desires for a network supporting multiple uses.

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

*Preferred alternative must support the purpose and need of the NHS.*

## FEASIBILITY

*The preferred alternative should be feasible to implement based on cost, environmental impacts, and funding.*



**DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH**  
HIGHWAY STUDY

# STUDY TIMELINE

**JULY 2018**

City of Whitefish Approaches MDT About Study of Highway 93

**OCTOBER 2019**

Kickoff Meeting with Steering Committee

**MARCH 2020**

Open House to Learn Public's Vision and Needs

**APRIL 2020**

COVID-19 Pandemic Causes Delays in Study Process

**JULY 2020**

Identify Alternatives and Screening Criteria

**OCTOBER 2020**

Initial Screening Process and Results

**MARCH 2021**

Revised Screening and Concept Analysis

**JUNE 2021**

Final Results and Concept Analysis

**JULY 2021**

Preferred Concept Identified

**SEPTEMBER 2021**

Open House to Gather Greater Community's Feedback



# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the entire study process, a steering committee has been involved through periodic meetings with the study team. The steering committee was formed to provide local guidance to the team and give input on each member's industry experience in the Whitefish community. The steering committee reviewed and commented on each step of the study.

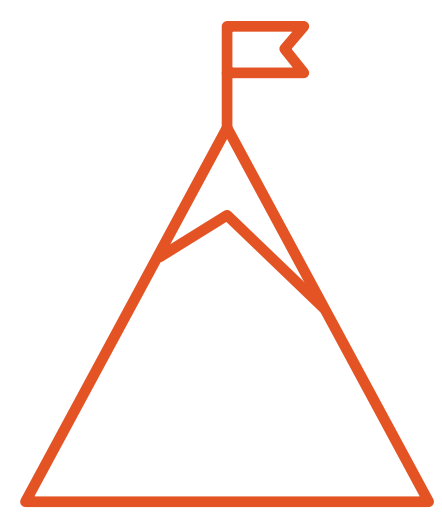
## THE DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH HIGHWAY STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE HAD REPRESENTATION FROM:



**TRANSPORTATION  
CONSULTANTS**



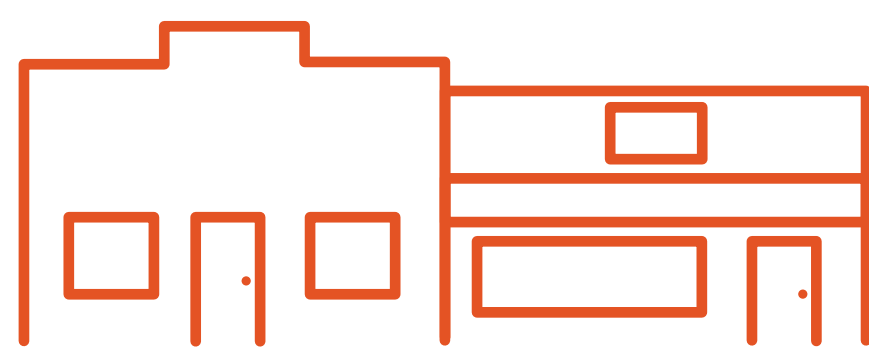
**THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION**



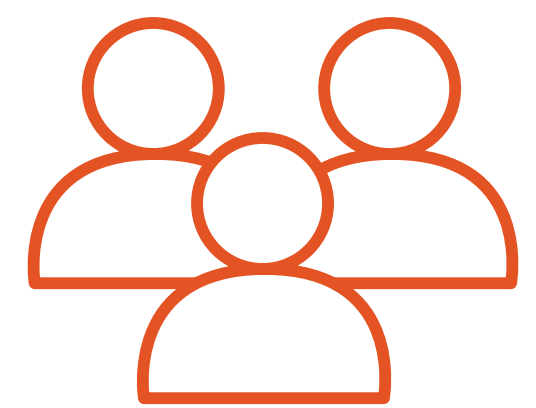
**CITY LEADERSHIP**



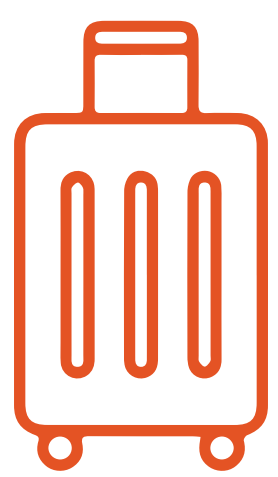
**BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN  
USERS**



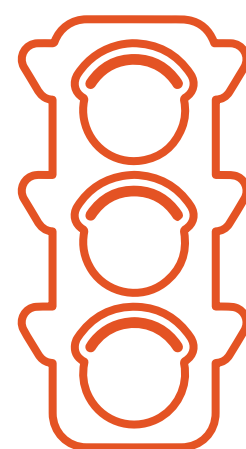
**DOWNTOWN CULTURE AND  
SMALL BUSINESS**



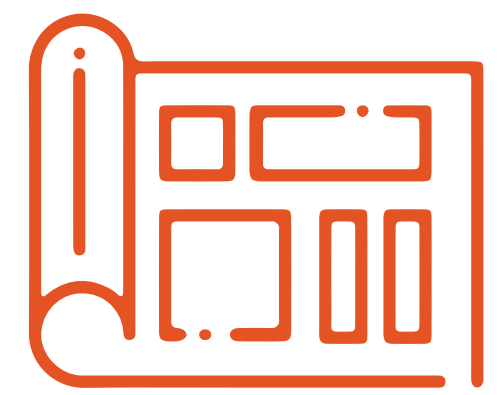
**GREATER WHITEFISH  
COMMUNITY**



**VISITORS AND  
HOSPITALITY**



**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING**



**TRANSPORTATION  
DESIGN**

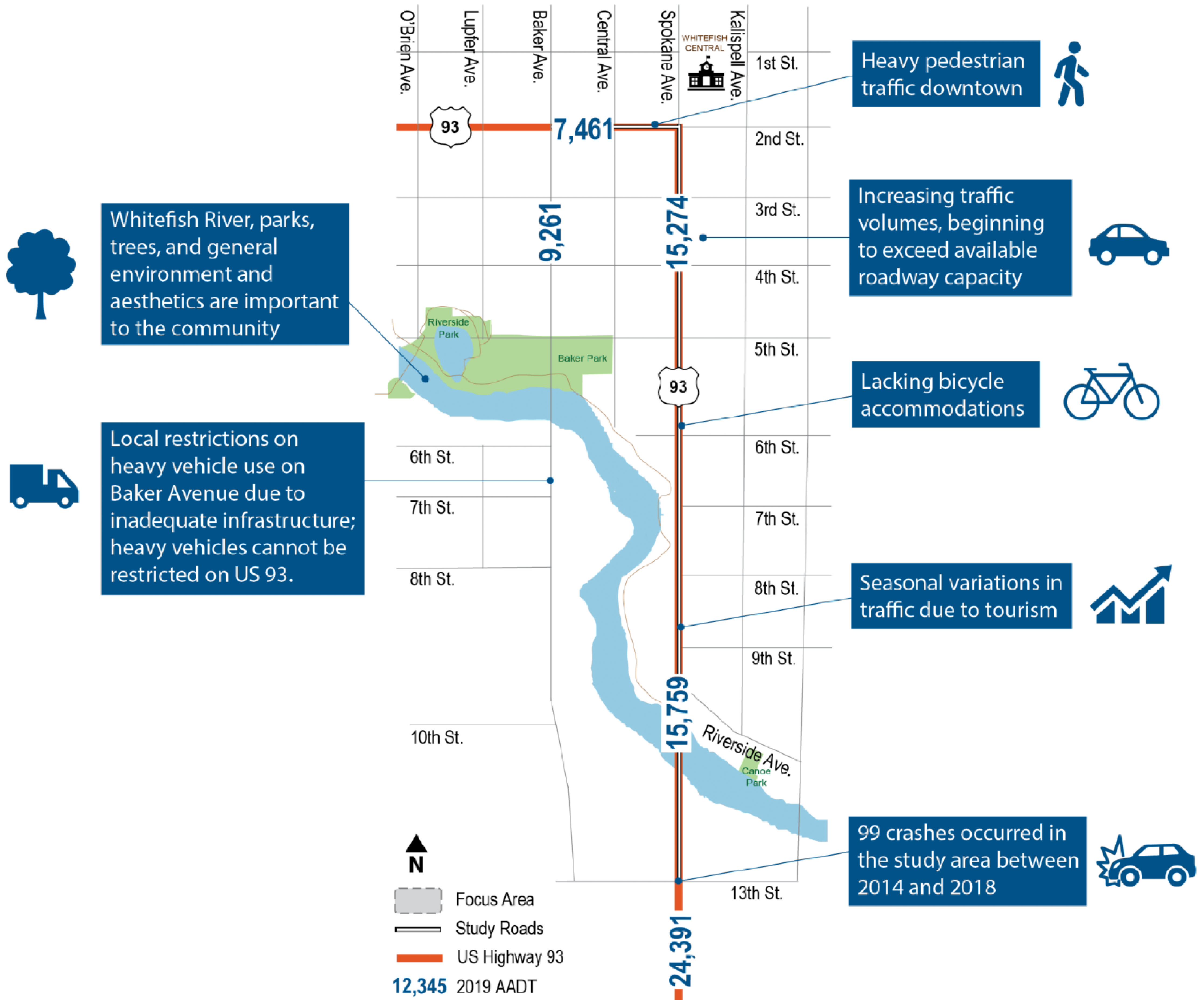


**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL**



# FEEDBACK & GUIDANCE RECEIVED











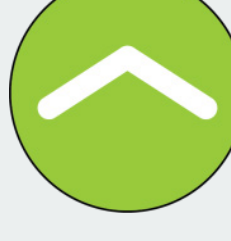

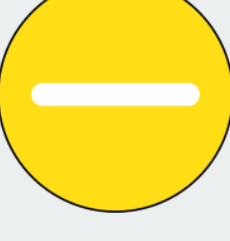


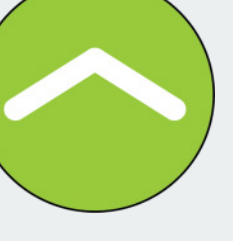




















From the first open house and through the additional steering committee and industry leader conversations, MDT and RPA considered many community needs.



**DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH**

HIGHWAY STUDY

# SCORING PROCESS / SCREENING CRITERIA

Level II Screening Criteria	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
 <b>Operations</b>							
 <b>Safety</b>							
 <b>Implementation</b>							
 <b>Multimodal Accommodations</b>	Does not meet purpose & need of NHS			Does not meet purpose & need of NHS	Does not meet purpose & need of NHS	Does not meet purpose & need of NHS	
 <b>Environment &amp; Character</b>							
 <b>Economic Vitality</b>							

↑  
**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

## CRITERIA DETAILS

 <b>Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intersection Performance</li> <li>• Travel Time</li> <li>• Total Network Delay</li> <li>• Large Truck Accommodations</li> </ul>
 <b>Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle Conflicts</li> <li>• Pedestrian Exposure</li> <li>• Bicycle Exposure</li> </ul>
 <b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Cost</li> <li>• Ongoing Maintenance</li> <li>• Funding Availability</li> </ul>
 <b>Multimodal Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian Comfort Level</li> <li>• Bicycle Comfort Level</li> <li>• Multimodal Connectivity</li> </ul>
 <b>Environment &amp; Character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Environment</li> <li>• Built Environment</li> <li>• Context Sensitivity</li> <li>• Vehicle Emissions &amp; Fuel Consumption</li> </ul>
 <b>Economic Vitality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Access and Parking</li> <li>• Impacts to Adjacent Land Use</li> <li>• Economic Impacts During Construction</li> </ul>



**DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH**

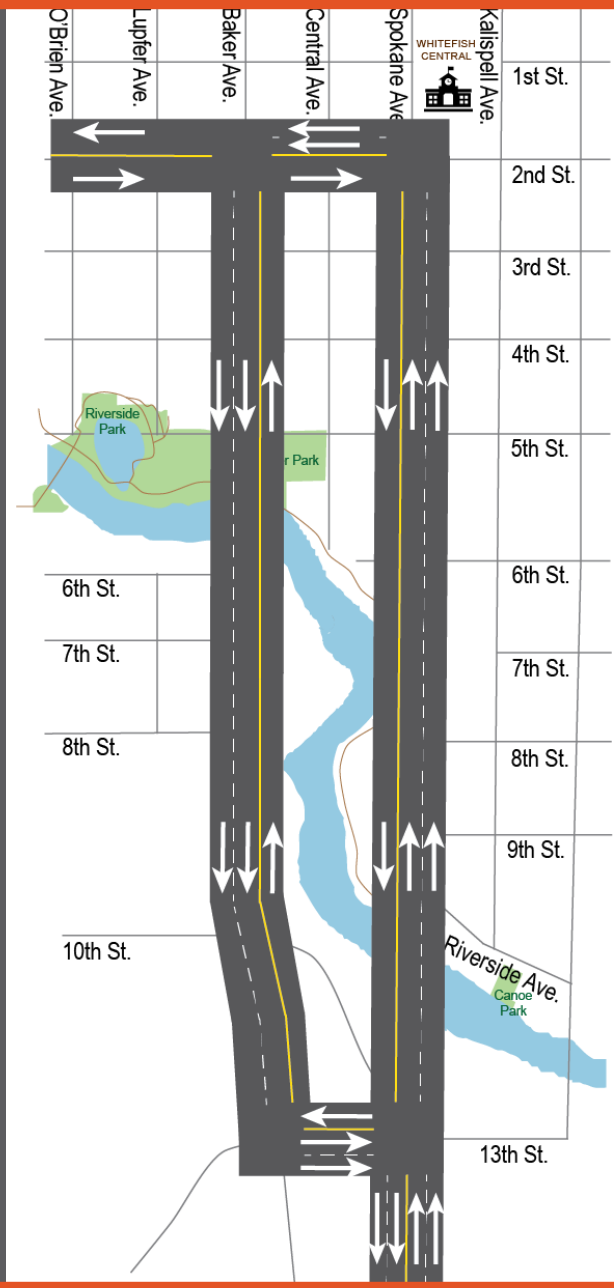
HIGHWAY STUDY

# IDENTIFIED CONCEPTS

Advanced for additional consideration.

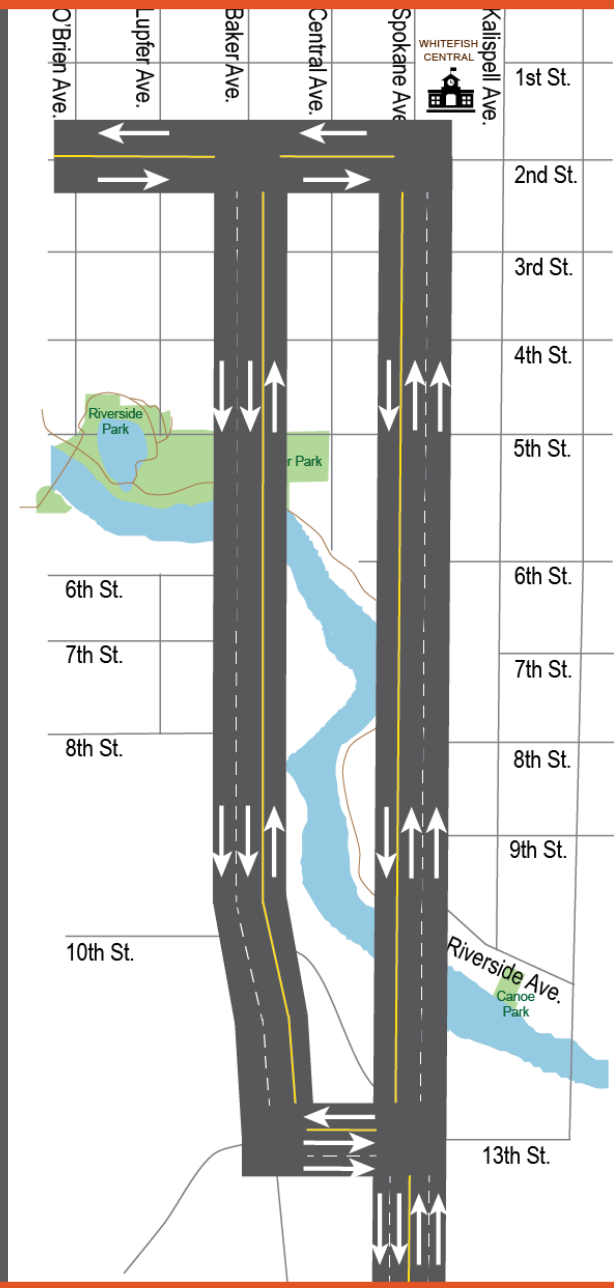
## Concept B Alternative C (Offset)

- Good traffic operations; better truck accommodations
- Balances needs of all modes
- Reasonable capital costs & maintenance needs – eligible for federal funds
- More impactful to Downtown businesses & traffic disruption



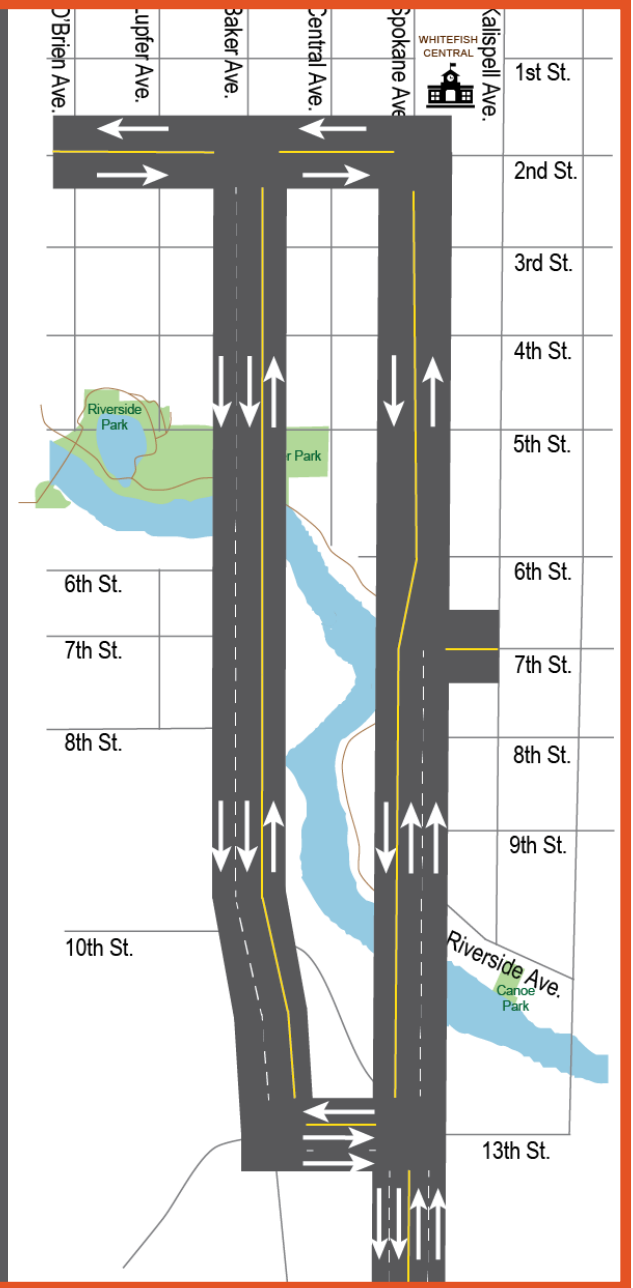
## Concept C Modified Alt C (Offset)

- Good traffic operations
- Balances needs of all modes
- Reasonable capital costs & maintenance needs – eligible for federal funds
- Less impactful to Whitefish community



## Concept G 2-Lane / 3-Lane Hybrid

- Fair traffic operations
- Balances needs of all modes
- Reasonable capital costs & maintenance needs – less likely to be prioritized for federal funds
- Least impactful to Whitefish community & environment

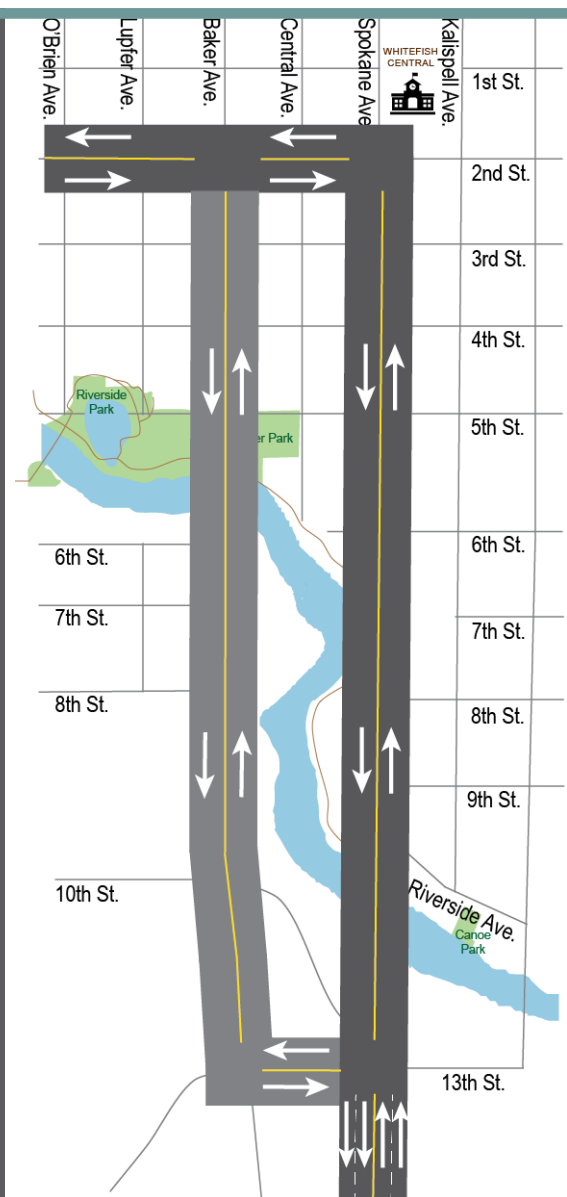


Do not meet the purpose and need of the NHS.

## Concept A Existing Configuration (Reconstructed)

- Failing traffic operations
- Does not improve safety
- Reasonable capital costs & maintenance needs

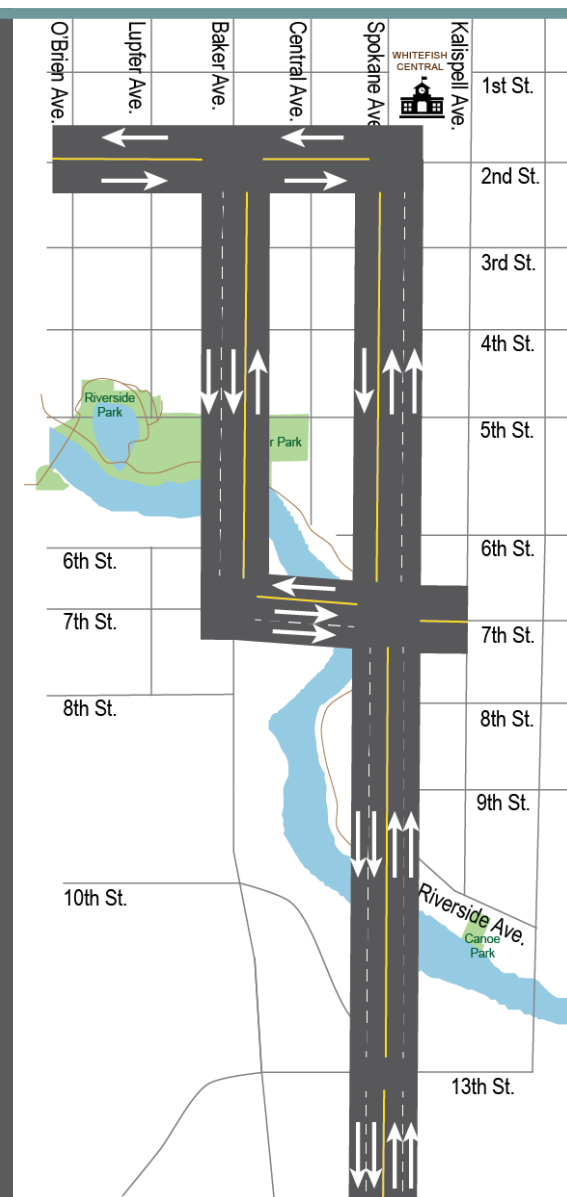
**DOES NOT MEET**  
Purpose & Need of the NHS



## Concept D Contra-Flow Configuration

- Best traffic operations
- Slightly improves bicycle and pedestrian accommodations
- 7<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge infeasible due to cost

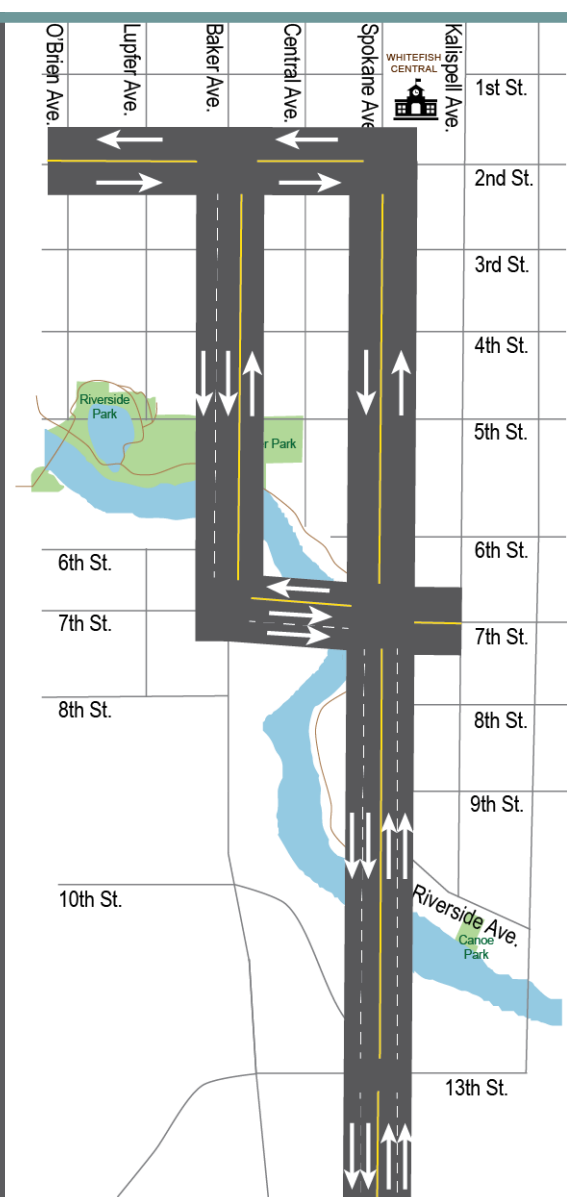
**DOES NOT MEET**  
Purpose & Need of the NHS



## Concept E 2018 MP Configuration – Contra-Flow

- Good traffic operations
- Slightly improves bicycle and pedestrian accommodations
- 7<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge infeasible due to cost

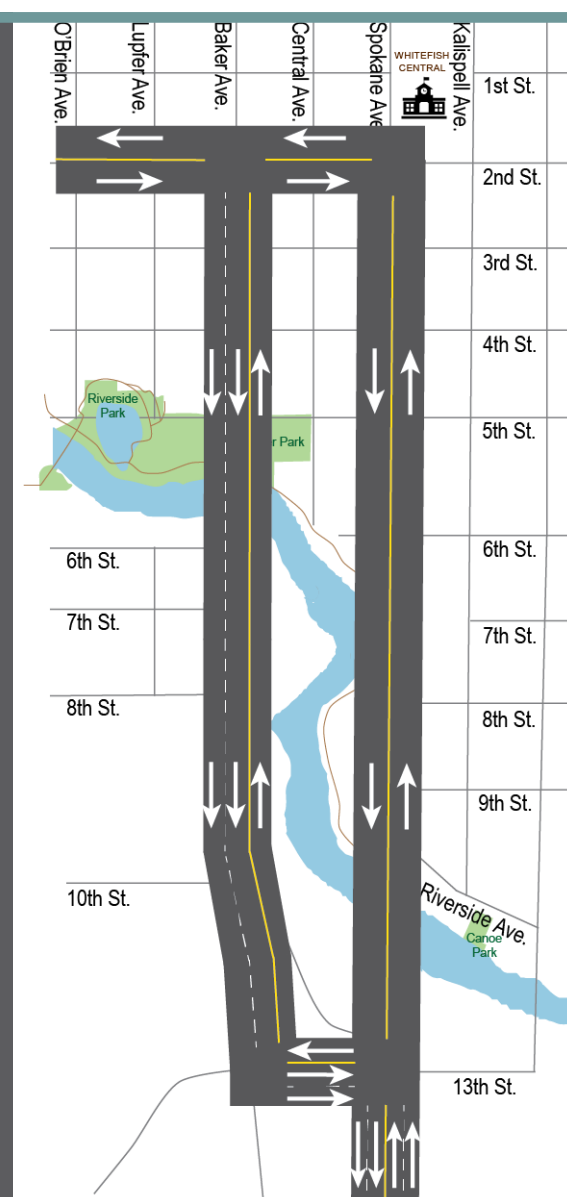
**DOES NOT MEET**  
Purpose & Need of the NHS



## Concept F 2018 MP Configuration – Modified Alt C (Offset)

- Fair traffic operations
- Improves bicycle and pedestrian accommodations
- Does not meet operational needs of NHS – unlikely to be funded with federal funds

**DOES NOT MEET**  
Purpose & Need of the NHS



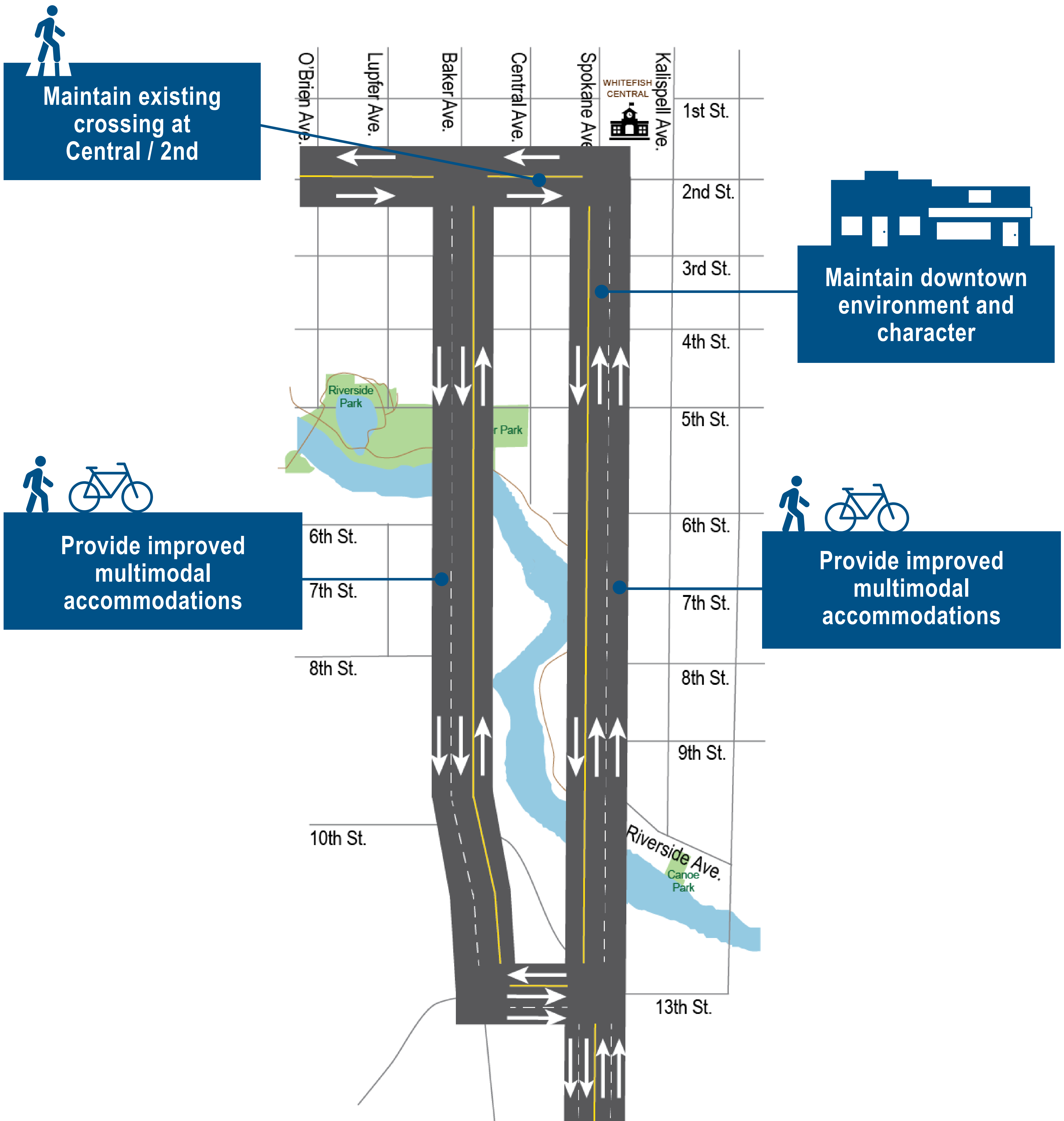
**DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH**

HIGHWAY STUDY

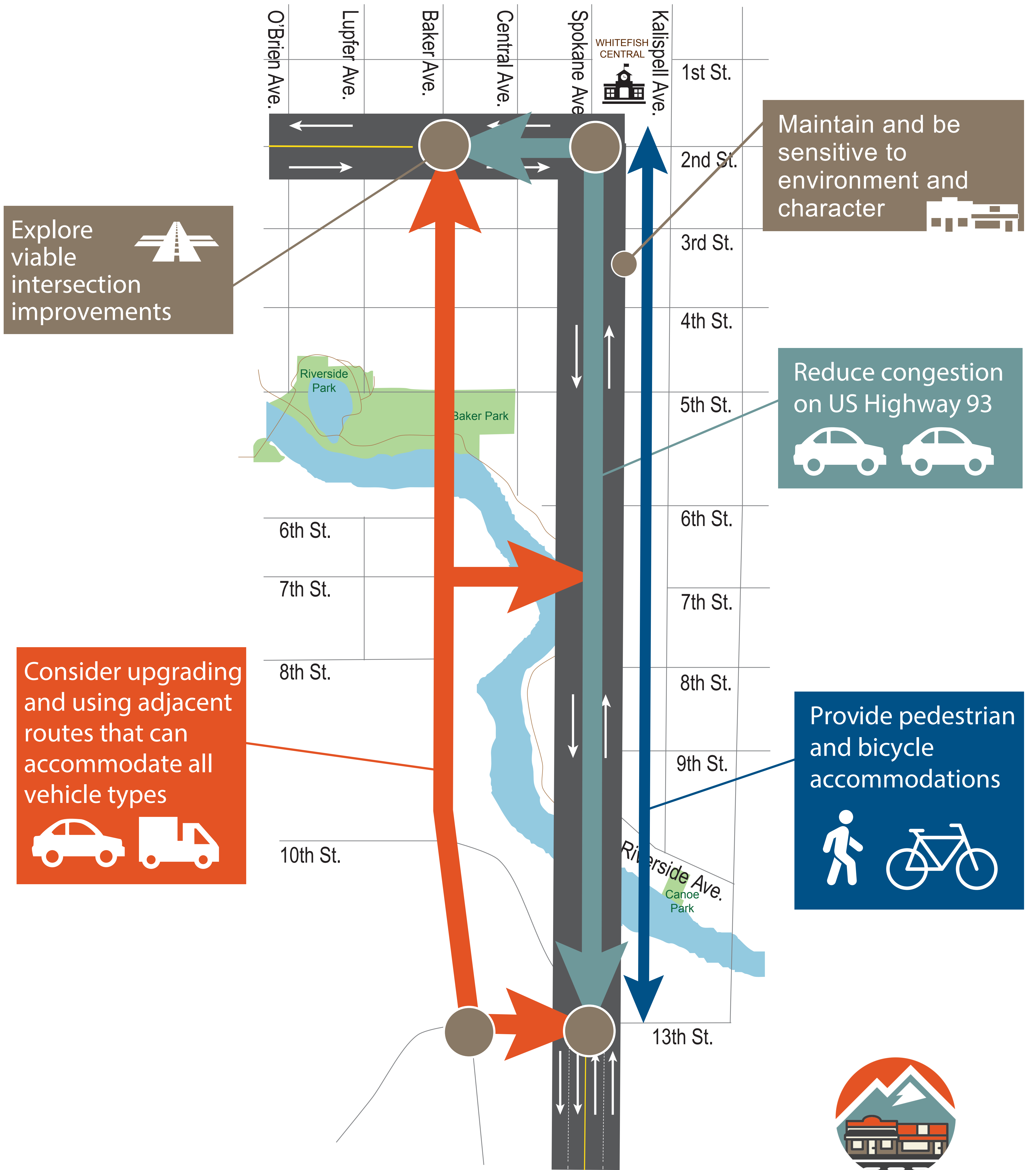


# PREFERRED CONCEPT CONCEPT C

**CONCEPT C** is identified as the preferred concept because it best meets the operational and safety needs of the National Highway System and is considered feasible to implement. The concept also provides the ability to accommodate multimodal users and minimize environmental and economic impacts to the community.



# IDENTIFIED NEEDS FOR DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH

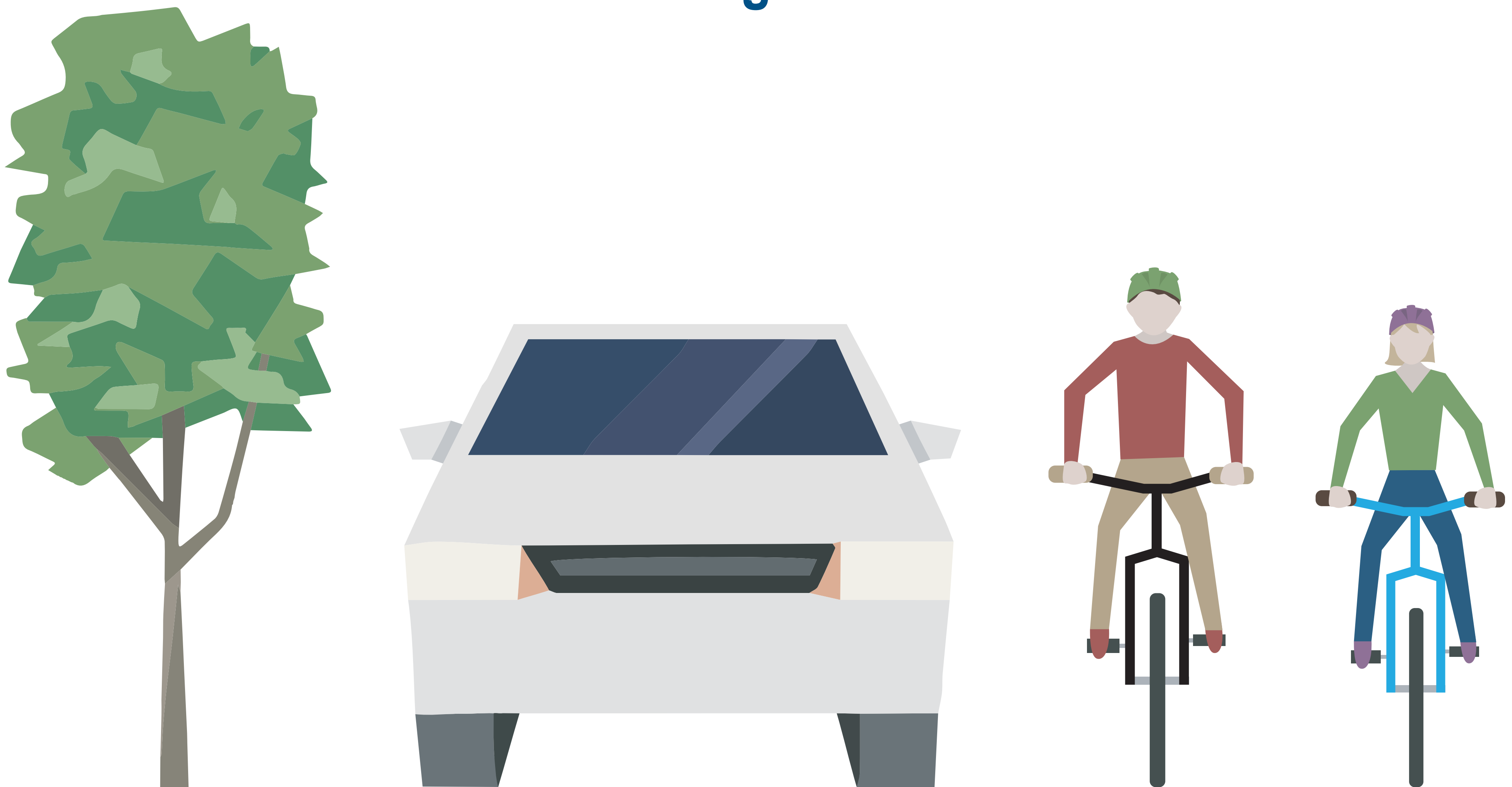


# NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

When working with limited space, there's only so much room for design features.

Let us know which design features YOU would add to each section of roadway by interacting with our virtual and physical displays.

These models are scaled representations of each of the studied downtown roads, which you can add scaled design features to.



**DOWNTOWN WHITEFISH**

HIGHWAY STUDY



# **PUBLIC SURVEY RESPONSES**

## Q1 What is the zip code where you spend most or all of the year?

Answered: 95 Skipped: 1

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	58103	4/15/2020 7:52 AM
2	59860	3/19/2020 1:28 PM
3	59937	3/12/2020 1:58 AM
4	59937	3/11/2020 3:24 PM
5	59937	3/11/2020 1:11 PM
6	59937	3/10/2020 8:27 AM
7	59937	3/9/2020 3:18 PM
8	59937	3/9/2020 2:23 PM
9	59901	3/9/2020 11:12 AM
10	59937	3/9/2020 9:55 AM
11	59937	3/9/2020 9:22 AM
12	59937	3/9/2020 8:53 AM
13	59937	3/9/2020 8:09 AM
14	59937	3/9/2020 7:07 AM
15	59937	3/8/2020 6:09 AM
16	59937	3/7/2020 1:40 PM
17	59937	3/7/2020 9:27 AM
18	59937	3/7/2020 8:43 AM
19	59937	3/7/2020 7:36 AM
20	59937	3/6/2020 5:56 PM
21	59937	3/6/2020 5:48 PM
22	59937	3/6/2020 5:36 PM
23	59937	3/6/2020 4:59 PM
24	59937	3/6/2020 4:05 PM
25	59937	3/6/2020 3:58 PM
26	59937	3/6/2020 3:40 PM
27	59937	3/6/2020 3:01 PM
28	59937	3/5/2020 8:39 PM
29	59937	3/5/2020 6:00 PM
30	59937	3/5/2020 3:11 PM
31	59937	3/5/2020 2:40 PM
32	59937	3/5/2020 1:17 PM
33	59937	3/5/2020 12:37 PM
34	59937	3/5/2020 9:56 AM
35	59937	3/5/2020 9:01 AM
36	59937	3/4/2020 9:15 PM
37	59937	3/4/2020 4:15 PM

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

38	59937	3/4/2020 1:46 PM
39	59937	3/4/2020 1:23 PM
40	59937	3/4/2020 1:07 PM
41	59937	3/4/2020 12:52 PM
42	59937	3/4/2020 11:51 AM
43	59937	3/4/2020 9:16 AM
44	59937	3/3/2020 2:46 PM
45	59901	3/3/2020 2:24 PM
46	59937	3/3/2020 10:48 AM
47	59937	3/2/2020 4:37 PM
48	59927	3/2/2020 2:47 PM
49	59901	3/2/2020 12:05 PM
50	59937	3/2/2020 10:21 AM
51	59937	3/2/2020 10:04 AM
52	59937	3/2/2020 8:20 AM
53	59937	3/1/2020 8:37 PM
54	59937	3/1/2020 3:42 PM
55	59937	3/1/2020 11:25 AM
56	59937	3/1/2020 10:49 AM
57	59937	2/29/2020 7:29 PM
58	59937	2/29/2020 5:43 PM
59	59937	2/29/2020 4:46 PM
60	59937	2/29/2020 3:30 PM
61	59937	2/29/2020 3:10 PM
62	59937	2/29/2020 11:33 AM
63	59937	2/29/2020 10:29 AM
64	59937	2/29/2020 9:23 AM
65	59937	2/29/2020 9:03 AM
66	59937	2/29/2020 8:36 AM
67	59937	2/29/2020 7:58 AM
68	59937	2/29/2020 7:01 AM
69	59937	2/28/2020 8:10 PM
70	59937	2/28/2020 6:37 PM
71	59937	2/28/2020 11:19 AM
72	59937	2/27/2020 7:17 PM
73	59937	2/27/2020 7:14 PM
74	59937	2/27/2020 5:10 PM
75	59937	2/27/2020 3:16 PM

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

76	59937	2/27/2020 2:40 PM
77	59937	2/27/2020 2:26 PM
78	59937	2/27/2020 2:21 PM
79	59937	2/27/2020 2:10 PM
80	59912	2/27/2020 2:02 PM
81	59937	2/26/2020 1:53 PM
82	59937	2/26/2020 12:43 PM
83	59937	2/26/2020 9:13 AM
84	59937	2/26/2020 7:10 AM
85	59937	2/25/2020 5:12 PM
86	59937	2/25/2020 3:47 PM
87	59937	2/25/2020 3:24 PM
88	59937	2/25/2020 3:09 PM
89	59937	2/25/2020 3:00 PM
90	59937	2/25/2020 2:25 PM
91	59937	2/25/2020 11:23 AM
92	59937	2/24/2020 6:29 PM
93	59937	2/24/2020 5:09 PM
94	59937	2/24/2020 4:54 PM
95	59937	2/24/2020 4:53 PM



Q2 If you live in more than one place during the year, what is your alternate zip code?

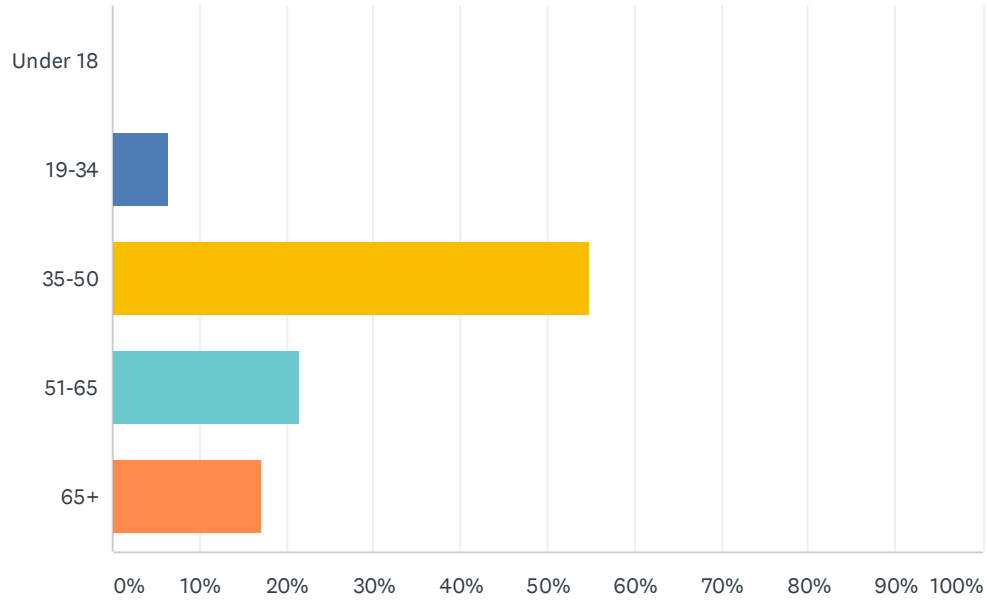
Answered: 34 Skipped: 62

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	NA	3/19/2020 1:28 PM
2	90266	3/12/2020 1:58 AM
3	no	3/10/2020 8:27 AM
4	None	3/7/2020 9:27 AM
5	N/A	3/7/2020 7:36 AM
6	T3C3E4	3/6/2020 5:48 PM
7	N/A	3/6/2020 5:36 PM
8	59937	3/5/2020 8:39 PM
9	59937	3/5/2020 6:00 PM
10	N/A	3/5/2020 1:17 PM
11	None	3/4/2020 9:15 PM
12	N/A	3/4/2020 1:46 PM
13	22039	3/4/2020 1:23 PM
14	59937	3/4/2020 9:16 AM
15	-	3/1/2020 11:25 AM
16	59937	2/29/2020 4:46 PM
17	59937	2/29/2020 3:10 PM
18	85132	2/29/2020 11:33 AM
19	77445	2/29/2020 10:29 AM
20	N//A	2/29/2020 9:23 AM
21	N/A	2/29/2020 9:03 AM
22	N/a	2/29/2020 7:01 AM
23	26726	2/28/2020 8:10 PM
24	n/a	2/28/2020 11:19 AM
25	Only 59937	2/27/2020 7:17 PM
26	n/a	2/26/2020 12:43 PM
27	NA	2/26/2020 9:13 AM
28	na	2/25/2020 5:12 PM
29	N/A	2/25/2020 3:47 PM
30	59928	2/25/2020 3:09 PM
31	59937	2/25/2020 3:00 PM
32	N/A	2/25/2020 2:25 PM
33	59937	2/24/2020 6:29 PM
34	n/a	2/24/2020 4:53 PM

### Q3 Please select your age group:

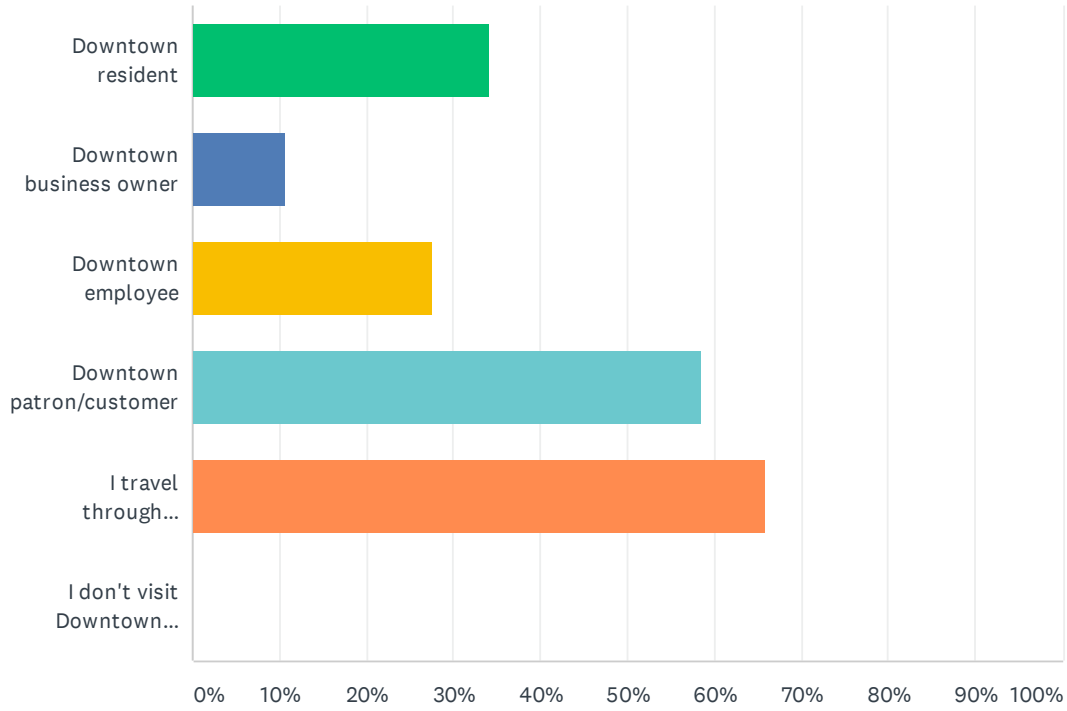
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
19-34	6.45%	6
35-50	54.84%	51
51-65	21.51%	20
65+	17.20%	16
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>93</b>

### Q4 How are you connected to Downtown Whitefish? Please choose all that apply.

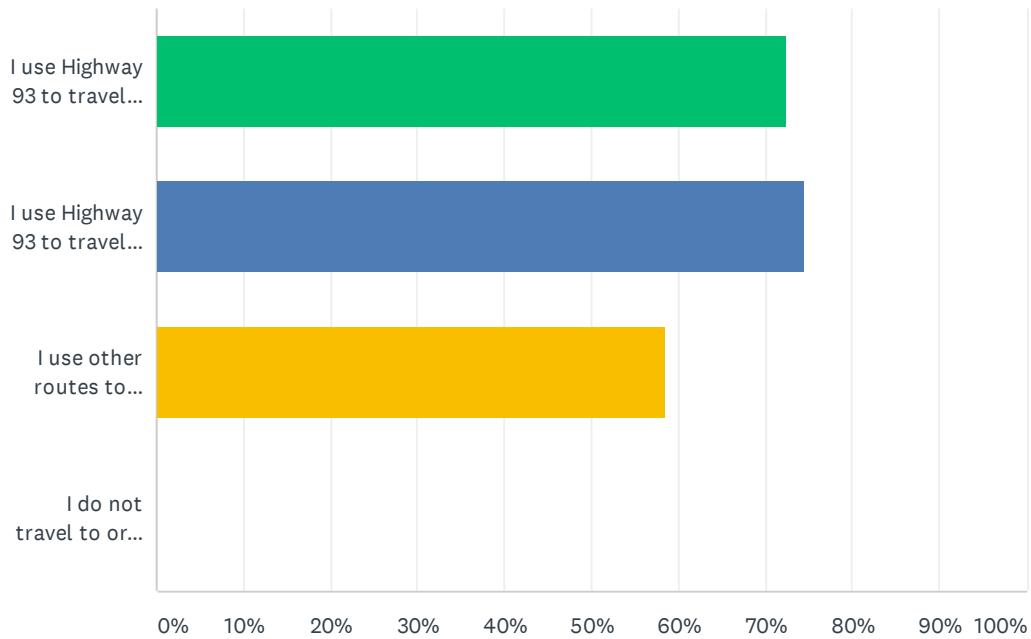
Answered: 94 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Downtown resident	34.04%	32
Downtown business owner	10.64%	10
Downtown employee	27.66%	26
Downtown patron/customer	58.51%	55
I travel through Downtown	65.96%	62
I don't visit Downtown Whitefish	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 94		

### Q5 Do you typically travel to or through Downtown Whitefish using Highway 93? Please choose all that apply.

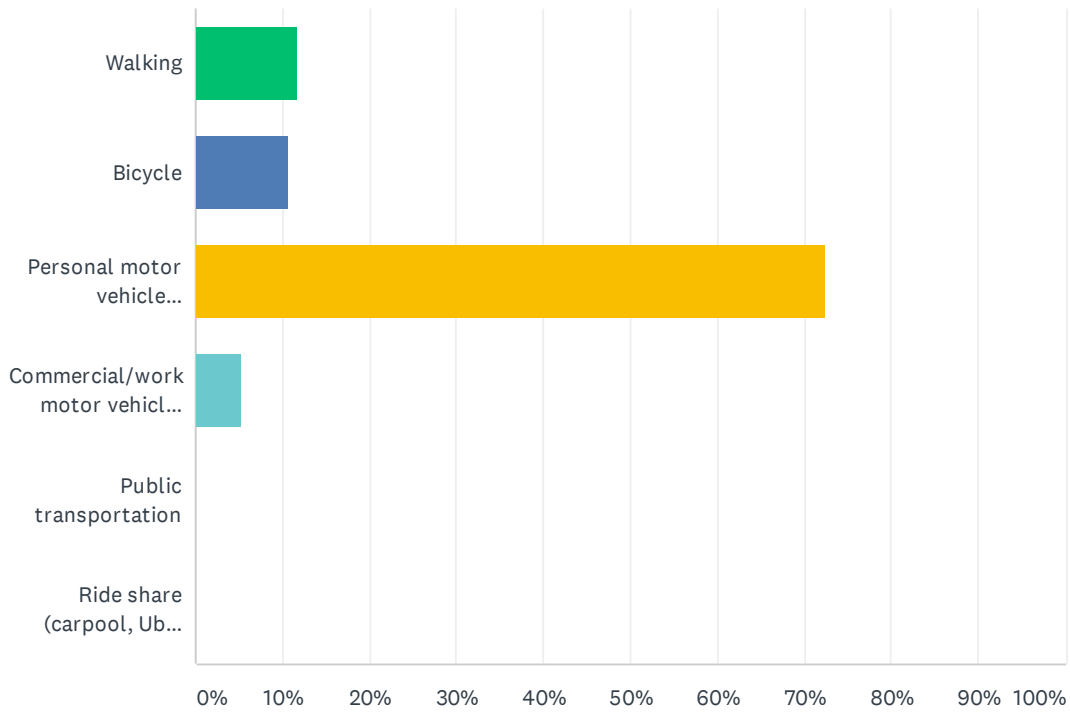
Answered: 94 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I use Highway 93 to travel to Downtown Whitefish.	72.34%	68
I use Highway 93 to travel through Downtown Whitefish on my way to other destinations.	74.47%	70
I use other routes to travel to or through Downtown Whitefish.	58.51%	55
I do not travel to or through Downtown Whitefish.	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 94		

## Q6 What type of transportation do you use most often when traveling to or through Downtown Whitefish?

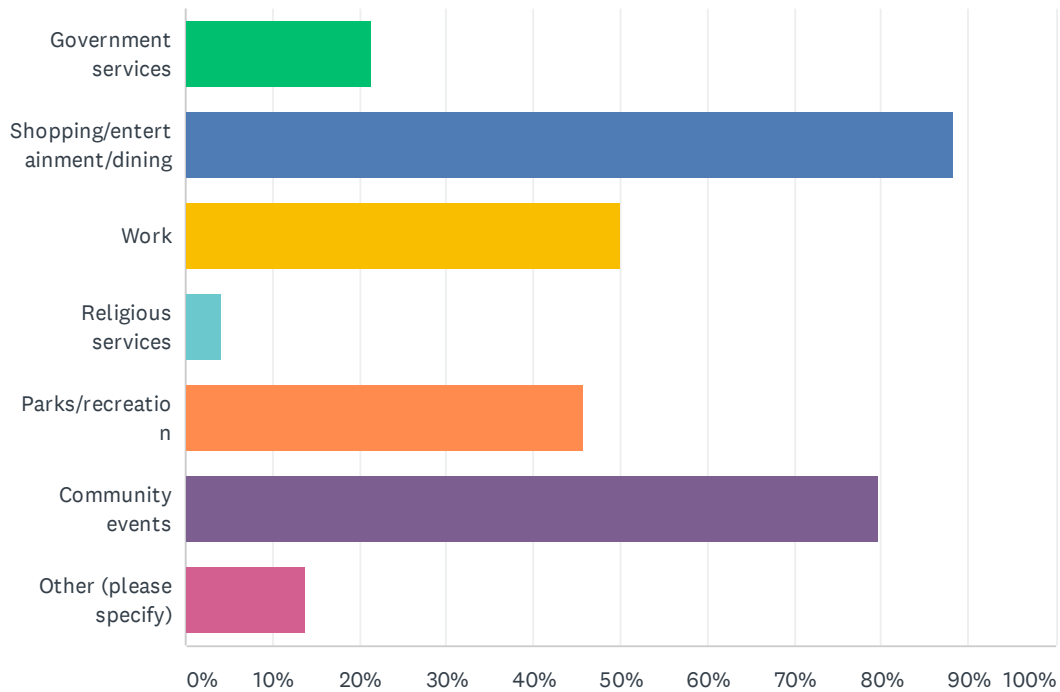
Answered: 94 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking	11.70%	11
Bicycle	10.64%	10
Personal motor vehicle (includes motorcycle and moped)	72.34%	68
Commercial/work motor vehicle (includes commercial trucks)	5.32%	5
Public transportation	0.00%	0
Ride share (carpool, Uber, Lyft)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>94</b>

## Q7 What are your most common reasons for visiting Downtown Whitefish? Please choose all that apply.

Answered: 94 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Government services	21.28%	20
Shopping/entertainment/dining	88.30%	83
Work	50.00%	47
Religious services	4.26%	4
Parks/recreation	45.74%	43
Community events	79.79%	75
Other (please specify)	13.83%	13
Total Respondents: 94		

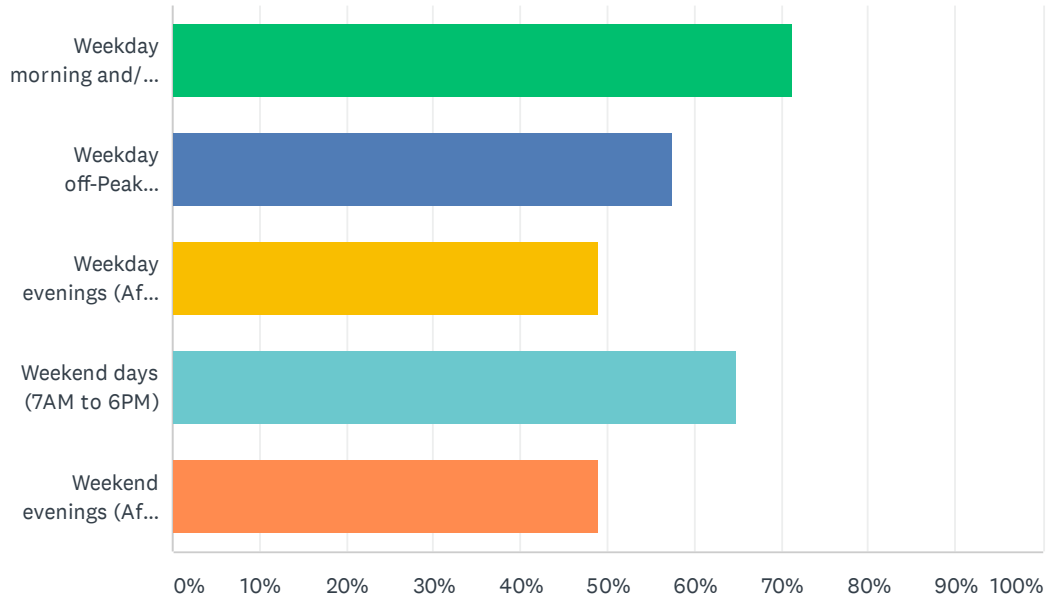
## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	school	3/11/2020 3:24 PM
2	Residence	3/9/2020 7:07 AM
3	Taking son to school	3/7/2020 9:27 AM
4	volunteer	3/7/2020 8:43 AM
5	Community Center	3/7/2020 7:36 AM
6	Restaurants	3/6/2020 3:58 PM
7	post office	3/5/2020 2:40 PM
8	Kids at School	3/5/2020 9:01 AM
9	Travel through	3/4/2020 1:46 PM
10	Grandkid activities and visiting family members	3/1/2020 3:42 PM
11	kids in schools	2/28/2020 11:19 AM
12	Restaurant, bar, meeting friends	2/27/2020 7:17 PM
13	Taking kids to school	2/26/2020 12:43 PM



## Q8 When do you typically travel on Highway 93 to or through Downtown Whitefish? Please choose all that apply.

Answered: 94 Skipped: 2

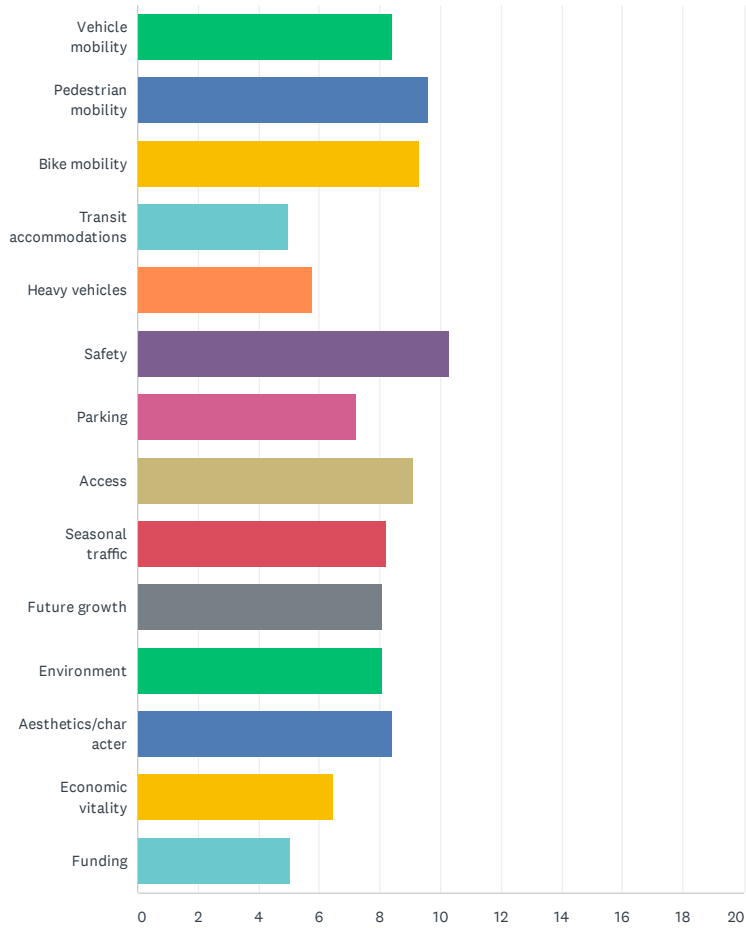


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Weekday morning and/or evening peak hours (7-9AM and 4-6PM)	71.28%	67
Weekday off-Peak daytime hours (9AM-4PM)	57.45%	54
Weekday evenings (After 6PM)	48.94%	46
Weekend days (7AM to 6PM)	64.89%	61
Weekend evenings (After 6PM)	48.94%	46
Total Respondents: 94		

# Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

Q9 In order of priority, which of the following are most important to you when considering improvements to Highway 93 through Whitefish?

Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Vehicle mobility	11.25% 9	8.75% 7	10.00% 8	12.50% 10	8.75% 7	5.00% 4	7.50% 6	5.00% 4	3.75% 3	3.75% 3	1.25% 1	6.25% 5	5.00% 4
Pedestrian mobility	9.20% 8	14.94% 13	16.09% 14	11.49% 10	9.20% 8	5.75% 5	5.75% 5	3.45% 3	5.75% 5	8.05% 7	3.45% 3	2.30% 2	1.15% 1
Bike mobility	14.29% 12	14.29% 12	10.71% 9	9.52% 8	5.95% 5	7.14% 6	3.57% 3	5.95% 5	5.95% 5	7.14% 6	4.76% 4	5.95% 5	3.57% 3
Transit accommodations	1.27% 1	1.27% 1	1.27% 1	3.80% 3	5.06% 4	7.59% 6	5.06% 4	8.86% 7	6.33% 5	6.33% 5	8.86% 7	6.33% 5	25.32% 20
Heavy vehicles	7.32% 6	4.88% 4	6.10% 5	0.00% 0	2.44% 2	2.44% 2	8.54% 7	13.41% 11	3.66% 3	3.66% 3	6.10% 5	6.10% 5	10.98% 9
Safety	22.62% 19	9.52% 8	11.90% 10	8.33% 7	13.10% 11	7.14% 6	7.14% 6	4.76% 4	3.57% 3	4.76% 4	3.57% 3	3.57% 3	0.00% 0
Parking	1.20% 1	8.43% 7	3.61% 3	8.43% 7	13.25% 11	12.05% 10	3.61% 3	6.02% 5	6.02% 5	4.82% 4	8.43% 7	8.43% 7	9.64% 8
Access	13.58% 11	6.17% 5	13.58% 11	6.17% 5	7.41% 6	6.17% 5	8.64% 7	11.11% 9	14.81% 12	4.94% 4	0.00% 0	2.47% 2	2.47% 2
Seasonal traffic	8.75% 7	2.50% 2	11.25% 9	12.50% 10	8.75% 7	6.25% 5	8.75% 7	7.50% 6	5.00% 4	8.75% 7	5.00% 4	6.25% 5	5.00% 4
Future growth	2.35% 2	10.59% 9	3.53% 3	9.41% 8	9.41% 8	11.76% 10	12.94% 11	5.88% 5	8.24% 7	9.41% 8	5.88% 5	8.24% 7	1.18% 1
Environment	5.00% 4	7.50% 6	8.75% 7	13.75% 11	8.75% 7	5.00% 4	8.75% 7	6.25% 5	7.50% 6	6.25% 5	8.75% 7	3.75% 3	5.00% 4
Aesthetics/character	12.79% 11	12.79% 11	8.14% 7	3.49% 3	6.98% 6	6.98% 6	5.81% 5	8.14% 7	3.49% 3	8.14% 7	5.81% 5	6.98% 6	6.98% 6
Economic vitality	1.25% 1	6.25% 5	5.00% 4	6.25% 5	5.00% 4	6.25% 5	7.50% 6	8.75% 7	10.00% 8	6.25% 5	12.50% 10	8.75% 7	6.25% 5
Funding	0.00% 0	1.28% 1	1.28% 1	3.85% 3	2.56% 2	8.97% 7	3.85% 3	3.85% 3	7.69% 6	14.10% 11	17.95% 14	15.38% 12	8.97% 7

## Q10 Are there any priorities we have missed?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 46

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

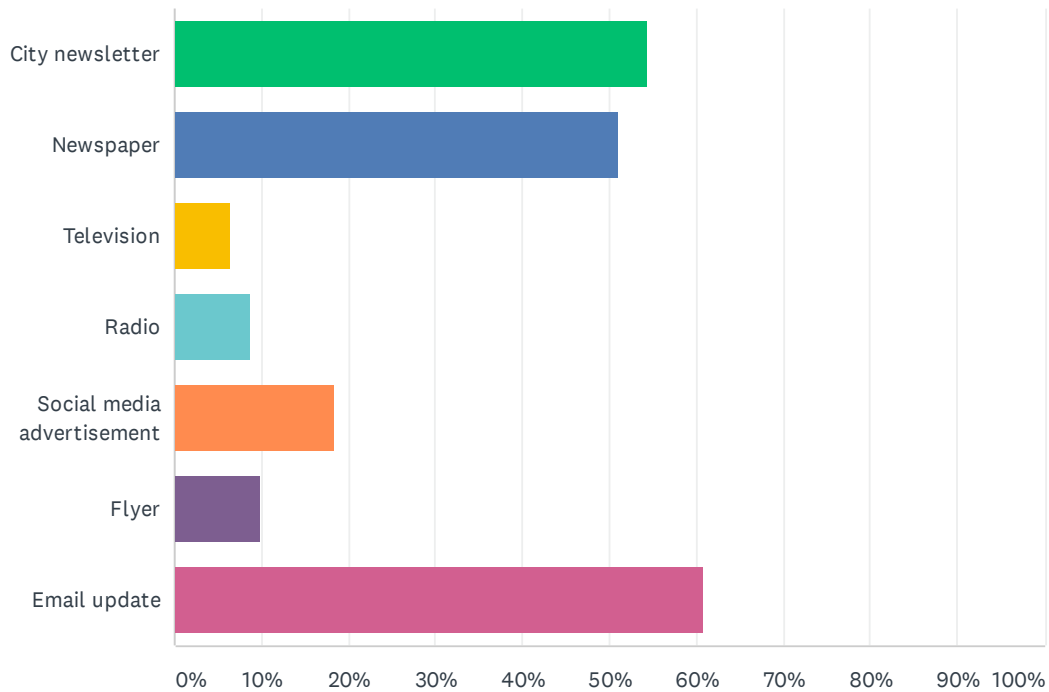
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Not prioritizing this project over others in NW Montana that don't have such a small area of effect.	3/19/2020 1:28 PM
2	Speed and noise	3/12/2020 1:58 AM
3	no	3/11/2020 3:24 PM
4	Create a bypass so the commuter traffic and heavy trucks stay out of town.	3/9/2020 3:18 PM
5	this is the best chance to get this right for the next 30+ years	3/9/2020 2:23 PM
6	Traffic- congestion, lights not times properly, too many stop lights, cross walks and lights give go at the same time cause accidents, visual safety- too many signs and lights for drivers, bikers and pedestrians - those are all distractions	3/9/2020 11:12 AM
7	Access to Whitefish North of viaduct; maintenance of said future improvements	3/9/2020 7:07 AM
8	Locals needs for services access - post office, city hall Library etc	3/7/2020 1:40 PM
9	Make the left hand turn signal longer when heading north on Baker turning left onto hwy 93. No matter how many people are waiting to turn it is only green for about 3-5 seconds	3/7/2020 9:27 AM
10	No	3/7/2020 7:36 AM
11	No	3/6/2020 5:56 PM
12	No	3/6/2020 5:48 PM
13	I don't think, but that was a confusing exercise.	3/6/2020 5:36 PM
14	no	3/6/2020 4:59 PM
15	Need turn lanes	3/6/2020 3:58 PM
16	Flow of traffic	3/5/2020 6:00 PM
17	Pedestrian accessibility and safety considering increased traffic, such as the lack of side walks on certain streets, eg Denver, one-sided sidewalk on Wisconsin, or the lack of traffic lights / push lights	3/5/2020 1:17 PM
18	No	3/5/2020 9:01 AM
19	Create Bypass to avoid downtown gridlock. Example: Karrow Ave - link Lund Ave to 18th St W. Downtown business association does not want a bypass, they want to keep tourism funneling to their economy. Also, sync the 3 traffic lights on East Second St at Spokane Ave, Central Ave, Baker Ave. All summer the traffic is backed up on Spokane Ave to make a left turn onto Second Ave. (PS-Have lived here for 19 years.)	3/4/2020 9:15 PM
20	inability to make left handed turns at intersections at busy unmarked or unlighted intersections	3/4/2020 4:15 PM
21	n/A	3/4/2020 1:46 PM
22	Walkability and bicycle safety	3/4/2020 9:16 AM
23	alternate route	3/2/2020 10:21 AM
24	Baker ave and 12 intersection backs up for miles	3/2/2020 8:20 AM
25	n/a	3/1/2020 8:37 PM
26	It is not clear what the above terms include so hard to answer. Would be nice to address traffic calming, protected bike lanes, a network of functional street alternatives, a bridge across the river, pedestrian friendly street crossings, on street parking	3/1/2020 3:42 PM
27	Safe Turning lanes for large vehicles	3/1/2020 11:25 AM
28	Truck Bypass is necessary- get big trucks out of Downtown.	3/1/2020 10:49 AM
29	Karrow designated and improved as a by pass	2/29/2020 4:46 PM
30	School zone safety	2/29/2020 3:10 PM

## Downtown Whitefish Highway Study Survey

31	No	2/29/2020 10:29 AM
32	I assumed that transit accommodations means public transportation? Busses?	2/29/2020 9:23 AM
33	We need bypass. Get the commuter traffic out of town	2/29/2020 8:36 AM
34	Preferences about the route a different 93 would take	2/29/2020 7:01 AM
35	Alternate Vehicle access across viaduct or RR yard	2/28/2020 8:10 PM
36	There need to be routes around downtown to avoid summer traffic for locals.	2/27/2020 7:17 PM
37	No	2/27/2020 7:14 PM
38	no	2/27/2020 3:16 PM
39	Traffic lights: left turn at spokane/blocked traffic due to other lights not timed right.	2/27/2020 2:10 PM
40	Definitions of the above would have been helpful	2/27/2020 2:02 PM
41	Specific safety for the many kids who walk and bike to and from school every day	2/26/2020 12:43 PM
42	lack of right turn lanes at Baker and 93. Causes hugh problems.	2/25/2020 5:12 PM
43	I hear constantly from friends, visitors, and community members that its ridiculous chip trucks and fully loaded logging trucks pass through the heart of our downtown. I am surprised there hasn't been a truck/pedestrian collision. We should seriously examine the idea of a truck bypass that most other MT communities have.	2/25/2020 3:47 PM
44	Thru town traffic must be bypassed	2/25/2020 3:24 PM
45	no	2/25/2020 3:09 PM
46	O	2/25/2020 3:00 PM
47	If there is any type of bypass option that will reroute heavy vehicles or vehicle just passing thru. Would be great to revisit that and any potential options.	2/25/2020 2:25 PM
48	no	2/24/2020 6:29 PM
49	There should be definitions for these priorities. Very vague.	2/24/2020 5:09 PM
50	not sure	2/24/2020 4:53 PM

## Q11 How you would like to stay updated about the project? Please choose all that apply.

Answered: 92 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
City newsletter	54.35%	50
Newspaper	51.09%	47
Television	6.52%	6
Radio	8.70%	8
Social media advertisement	18.48%	17
Flyer	9.78%	9
Email update	60.87%	56
Total Respondents: 92		



**LETTER FROM  
THE CITY OF  
WHITEFISH**





## City of Whitefish

418 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street | PO Box 158

Whitefish, MT 59937

(406) 863-2400 | Fax (406) 863-2419

November 1, 2021

Bob Vosen  
Montana Department of Transportation  
PO Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

Re: City of Whitefish Downtown Highway Study

Bob,

I am sending this letter to express the City's displeasure with the Downtown Whitefish Highway Study. Our council unanimously agrees with the "Feedback Overview" from the 9/22/2021 Open House, which clearly states, "Overall, respondents are very critical of MDT's study, and there is minimal support for the preferred option."

As you are aware, there were a series of meetings in 2018 that prompted MDT to proceed with this study of the last remaining section of the Whitefish Urban Project. Shane Stack and Craig Workman facilitated the meetings, and the attendees were referred to as the *Spokane Avenue Workgroup*. In just two short meetings, the group concluded that the City and the State had very similar interests with respect to the project. Unfortunately, I do not feel the process MDT has followed with the Downtown Whitefish Highway Study has been in keeping with the partnership and spirit that was promised three years ago. Steering committee meetings have been few and far between, public input from the local community has not been taken into consideration, and work products are vague and difficult to decipher.

Simply put, the City of Whitefish is not willing to accept Option C. We've worked hard to create an environment of livability in downtown Whitefish through the careful implementation of our Downtown Business District Master Plan. This has come through projects that promote active transportation and preserve the vibrant character of our town, and we are concerned about the collateral impacts Option C will have to these successful projects.

In conclusion, and on behalf of the city council and our community, we are firmly opposed to Option C. Alternative G, as presented in concept, is a reasonable alternative that we feel strikes a balance between the goals of the City and MDT. We look forward to working with MDT to further this concept and pursue a concept level design that is mutually beneficial to both parties.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Muhlfeld".

John M. Muhlfeld, Mayor

cc: Dana Smith, City Manager  
Craig Workman, Director of Public Works  
Whitefish City Council