# MT 86 STRUCTURES

**What does this project involve?** Highway 86 still has wooden bridges in certain areas. Wooden structures this old cannot be expected to continue to bear progressively heavier loads, and replacements are needed to accommodate the Gallatin Valley's increasing traffic. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with engineering firm Morrison-Maierle, is addressing this need through the MT 86 Structures project. Three bridges over Cache Creek, Carrol Creek, and Flathead Creek will be replaced.

**When will construction occur?** MDT has set a target date for project plans to be completed by 2023. Beyond that point, funding will determine when this project may be constructed.


## STAY IN THE KNOW

**EMAIL:** Takami Clark at takami@bigskypublicrelations.com

**PROJECT HOTLINE:** (406) 207-4484, Mon – Fri, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**WEBSITE:** bitly.com/bridgerstructures

VISION ZERO
zero deaths · zero serious injuries
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Staff will explore the feasibility of replacing a bridge with a box culvert, a tunnel-like structure, or whether a new bridge will be needed. Interested in what factors they weigh between options?**

**LEARN MORE BELOW!**

# BRIDGE VS CULVERT

## WHAT IS IT?

A bridge carries a road over water and has supports underneath holding the structure up.

A culvert is similar to a tunnel or pipe and allows water to flow under the road. The dirt under and around the culvert supports the structure.

## SPANS

Bridges can span as little as 20 feet or more than 1000 feet. A bridge is typically the best option if the stream has a tendency to produce floods beyond what a culvert can carry before a roadway is overtopped with water.

Culverts can span as much as 30 feet and can be ideal for narrower streams that produce small flood events. The culvert must be able to carry an estimated volume of water under a roadway before water overtops the roadway.

## COST

Bridges typically cost more as their design and construction is more complex, requiring more time and manpower for construction.

Culverts are typically more economical as design and construction costs are not as significant. Less time and manpower are needed during construction.

## MAINTENANCE

Bridges have multiple parts and pieces that require more inspection and maintenance.

Culverts tend to be made up of much fewer parts and less inspection and maintenance is required.

## TRAFFIC IMPACTS

In order to build a new bridge, traffic detours are required. As this structure takes more time to build, the traveling public is affected for a longer duration.

Culverts are often constructed without a detour. Construction on these structures takes less time than a bridge, impacting drivers for a shorter time.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Bridges can provide more space under the roadway, making them beneficial for animal crossings. Bridges also allow for more natural stream function and better fish passage.

Culverts can also provide access for animals. Different designs for culverts are considered in order to provide fish passage or large animal passage.