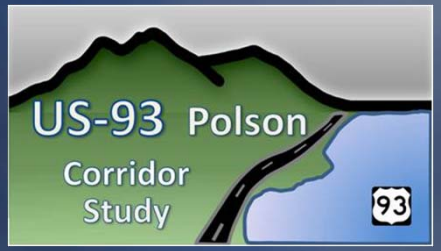
# US 93 Polson Corridor Study

## Informational Meeting No. 3

***June 29, 2011***


# Welcome and Introductions

- Introduction of dignitaries
- Stakeholders
- Technical Oversight Committee (TOC)

# Purpose of this Evening's Meeting

- Progress since last informational meeting
  - Screen process
  - Operational analysis
  - Draft report and corridor study findings
- Next steps
- Questions

# A Corridor Planning Study Is:

- A pre-NEPA/MEPA process
- An effort that involves early communication with interested parties to help identify needs, constraints and opportunities for a corridor – and help determine if there are implementable improvement options – given available resources and local support

# A Corridor Planning Study Is Not:

- A NEPA/MEPA study or environmental study
- A preliminary or final design report
- A construction or maintenance project
- A right-of-way acquisition project

# Screening Process: Alternate Routes Analyzed

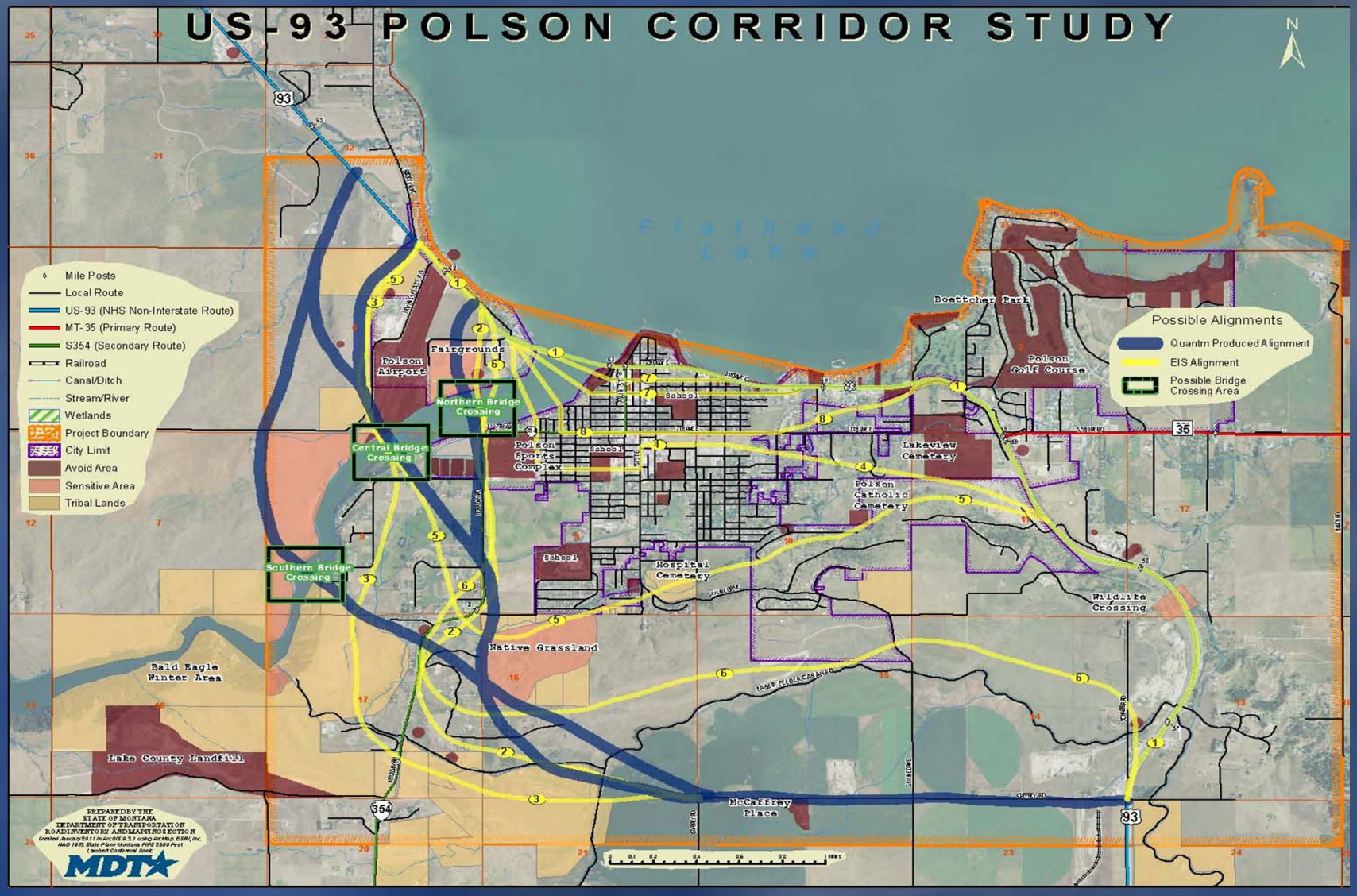
- Three trend areas identified via Quantm
  - Southern bridge crossing
  - Central bridge crossing
  - Northern bridge crossing

*Quantm is a corridor and route planning tool successfully used on other MDT studies for route alignment.*

- Four EIS alignments also analyzed in Quantm (EIS 2, 3, 5 and 6)

- Four EIS alignments examined – not in Quantm (EIS 1, 4, 7 and 8)

# Alternate Route Options



# Screening Criteria Rating Factors

| *Numerical Value = 0* | *Numerical Value = 0.5* | *Numerical Value = 1.0* |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | ◐ | ● |
| Low Impact<br><br>Best Able to Meet Need & Objectives | Medium Impact<br><br>Moderately Able to Meet Need & Objectives | High Impact<br><br>Least Able to Meet Need & Objectives |

# Point System for Screening Criteria

- **TOC members queried regarding which criteria they felt were the most and least important to the constituents they represented**

***Note: Lower scores correspond to higher importance***

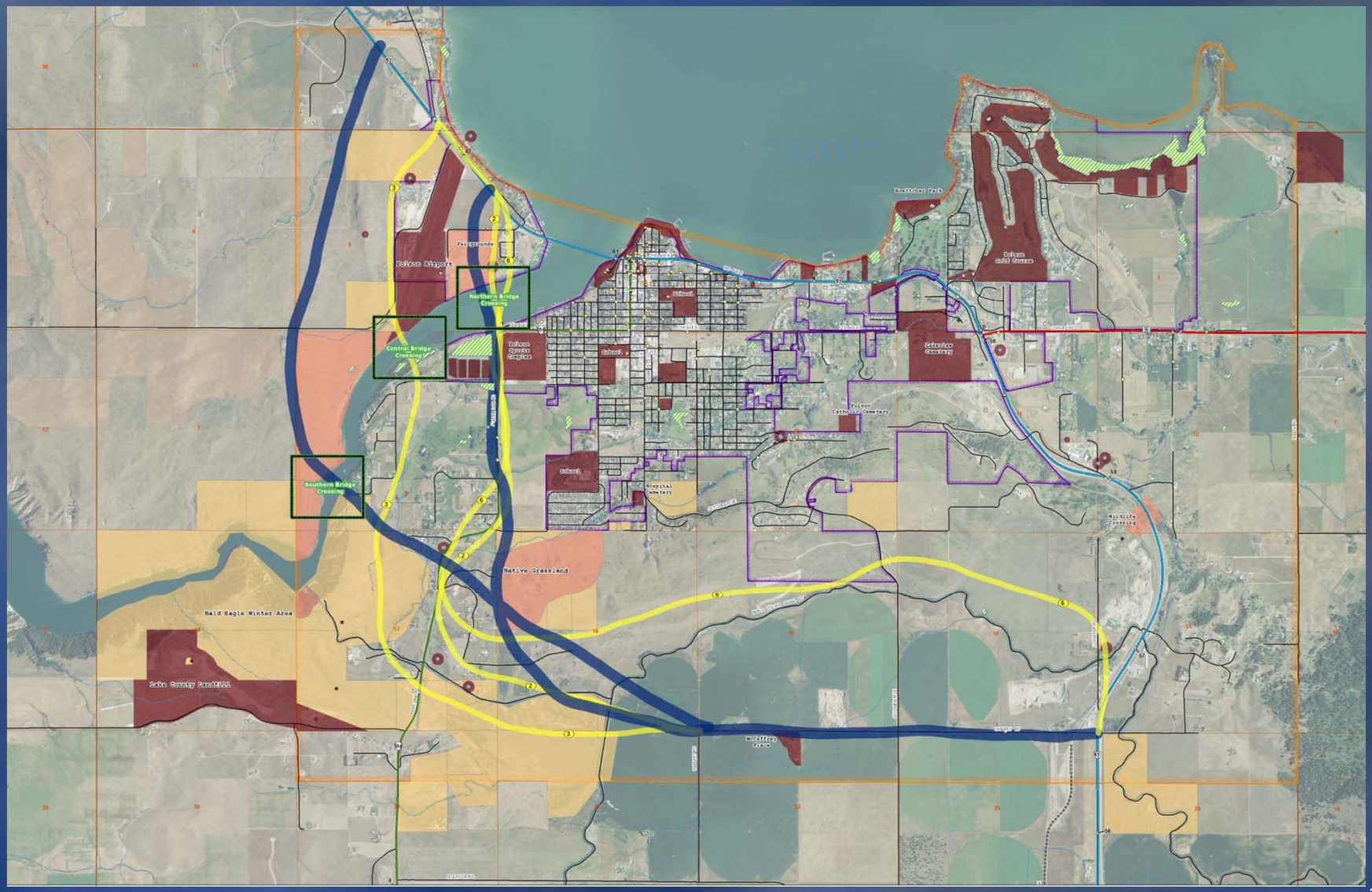
| Corresponding Level of Importance | Highest Possible Points given to Objectives | Corresponding Points for each of the Rating Factors | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ○ | ◐ | ● |
| Highest Importance | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 1.0 |
| High Importance | 5.0 | 0.0 | 2.5 | 5.0 |
| Moderate Importance | 8.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 |
| Low Importance | 10.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |

# Screening Results – Using 18 Criteria

| Corridor Need & Objectives Screening Criteria (highest possible rating value) | EIS Alignments | | | | | | | | QUANTM Alignments | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | South Bridge | Central Bridge | North Bridge |
| Connectivity to community parks and recreation (8) | 0.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 4.0 |
| **Truck traffic** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Length of grades greater than 4 percent (8) | 8.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 0.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| **Other** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Overall planning level cost (10) | 0.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 |
| Ability of utilities to be incorporated into bridge location and design (10) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 |
| Community preference (1) | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 |
| Maintenance cost (10) | 0.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 5.0 |
| **Screen Result** | **57** | **38.5** | **42** | **68.5** | **50.5** | **41.5** | **62.5** | **63** | **45.5** | **51.5** | **37.5** |

- **Five alignment options scored lowest / best:**
  - **North bridge crossing (score of 37.5)**
  - **EIS Alignment 2 (score 38.5)**
  - **EIS Alignment 6 (score 41.5)**
  - **EIS Alignment 3 (score 42)**
  - **South bridge crossing (score 45.5)**

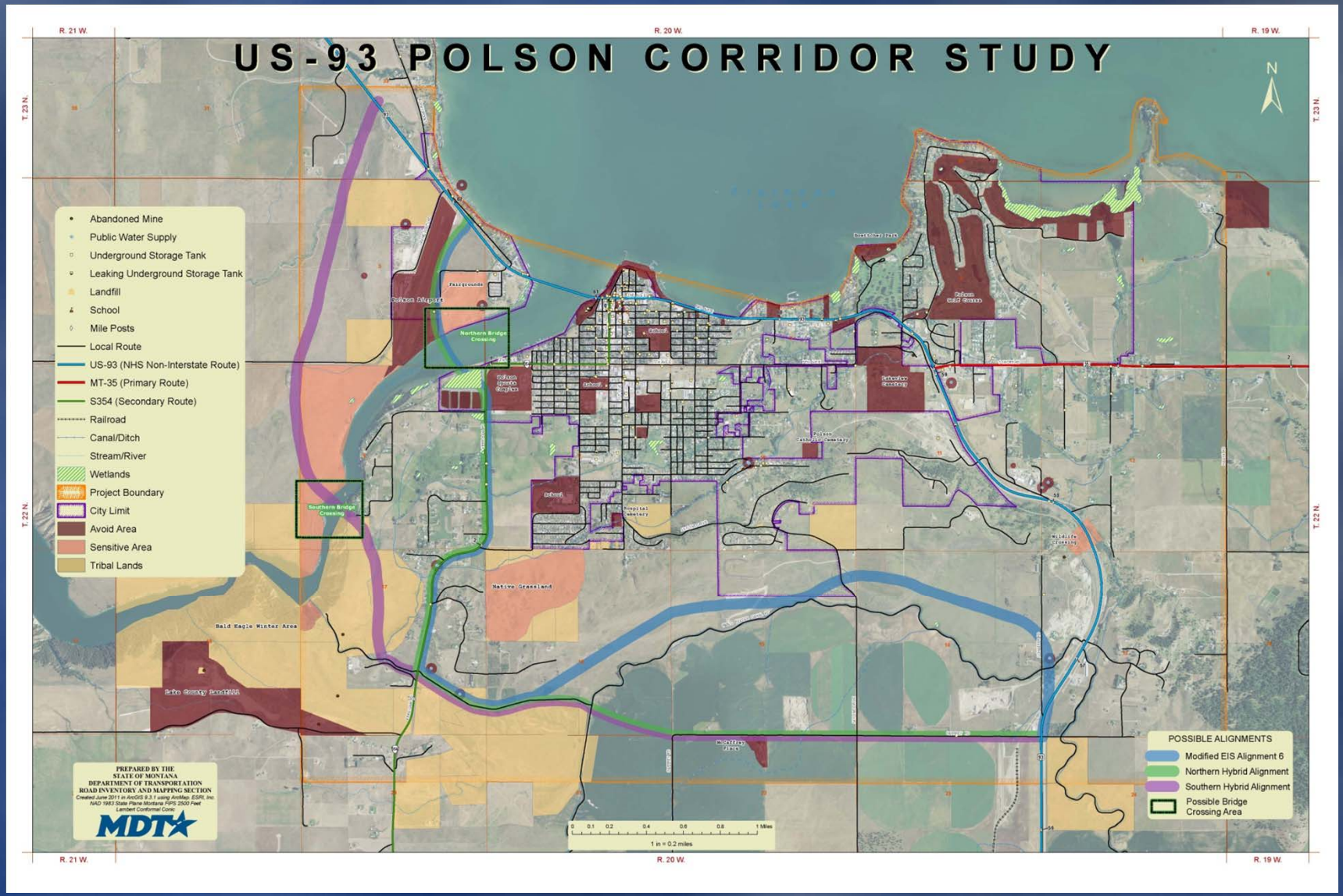
# Remaining Five Alignments



# Hybrid Alignments Developed

- Slight modifications made to the alignments
- Southern + EIS Alignment 3 = “southern bridge crossing hybrid alignment”
- Northern + EIS Alignment 2 = “northern bridge crossing hybrid alignment”
- EIS Alignment 6 modified slightly to the south of Ponderilla Hills
- Alignments are planning level “swaths”

# Hybrid Alignments



# Operational Analysis & Cost Comparison

1. Shift in Thru-Truck Traffic
2. Intersection Level of Service
3. Travel Time
4. Cost Comparison

| | Southern Bridge Crossing Hybrid | Northern Bridge Crossing Hybrid | EIS Alignment 6 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Shift in Thru-Truck Traffic | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Intersection LOS Point System Results | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Travel Time | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Cost Comparison | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| **Total** | **5** | **5** | **6** |

✓All rank similarly

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

- What are the trade-offs?
- Is an alternate route even necessary?
- Key issues to consider:
  - Truck Traffic
  - Congestion
  - Livability
  - Safety
  - Economics
  - Wildlife/Natural Habitat

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Truck Traffic

- Elevated traffic during the summer,
- Traffic elevates to approximately 130% of AADT in summer,
- Alternate route may pull 165 thru-trucks during summer months, and
- Local truck traffic will continue to utilize whichever roadways are necessary for their purposes.

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Congestion

- US 93 traffic not an issue except during the summer.

- Congestion consists of three components:
  - Roadway segment congestion
  - Intersection congestion (LOS)
  - Travel time

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Congestion

- **Roadway segment congestion:**
  - **US 93 can carry year 2010 and year 2030 traffic volumes,**
  - **US 93 will exceed capacity for year 2030 peak summer traffic volumes, and**
  - **An alternate route could pull 6,000 vehicles (9,000 during peak summer traffic).**

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Congestion

- **Intersection congestion (LOS):**
  - **With no alternate route, four of the nine study intersections fall below LOS standard(s) by the year 2030, and**
  - **With an alternate route, three of the nine study intersections fall below LOS standard(s) by the year 2030.**

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Congestion

- **Travel time:**
  - **Alternate route could be 2 to 3 minutes faster, and**
  - **Travel time will be longest during the peak summer travel period.**

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Livability

- Strong desire for non-motorized improvements,
- Bicycle lanes on US 93 require expansion to the roadway prism,
- Potential for non-motorized connections with rural lands (with an alternate route), and
- Noise impacts may be reduced on the existing US 93 and increased around the alternate route.

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Safety

- Average vehicle crash rate(s) in the rural areas slightly higher than average statewide “rural” crash rate,
- Average vehicle crash rate(s) in the urban areas much less than average statewide “urban” crash rate, and
- Numerous access points have an effect on crashes.

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Economics

- Concerns expressed about economic impact to businesses,
- Downtown business community has expressed concern about any removal of traffic from US 93, and
- Economic impacts would be addressed in a formal environmental document should an alternate route be considered.

# Alternate Route versus Improved US 93 (Facts & Data)

## Wildlife/Natural Habitat

- Concern over an alternate route cutting off connectivity of habitat types,
- Potential to push wildlife away from their historical habitat, and
- Keeping US 93 along the current alignment will have the least amount of environmental impact.

# Current / Future AADT
## (Facts & Data)

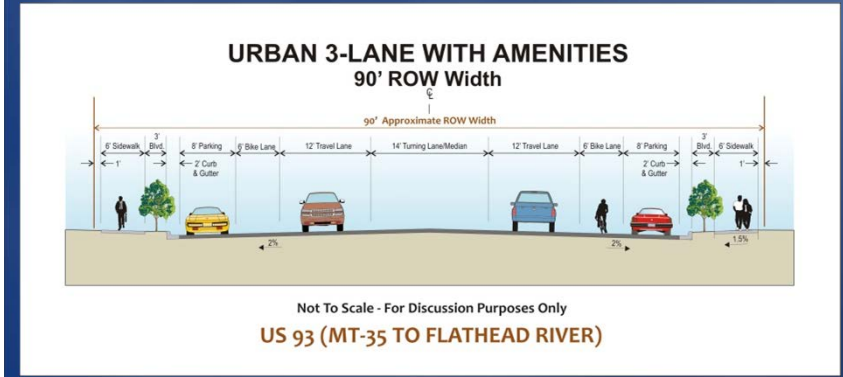
- Current  AADT volumes range between 9,900 vpd to 12,600 vpd
- Future year 2030 AADT volumes may range between 12,300 vpd to 15,600 vpd
- Polson realizes elevated traffic volumes during the summer months.

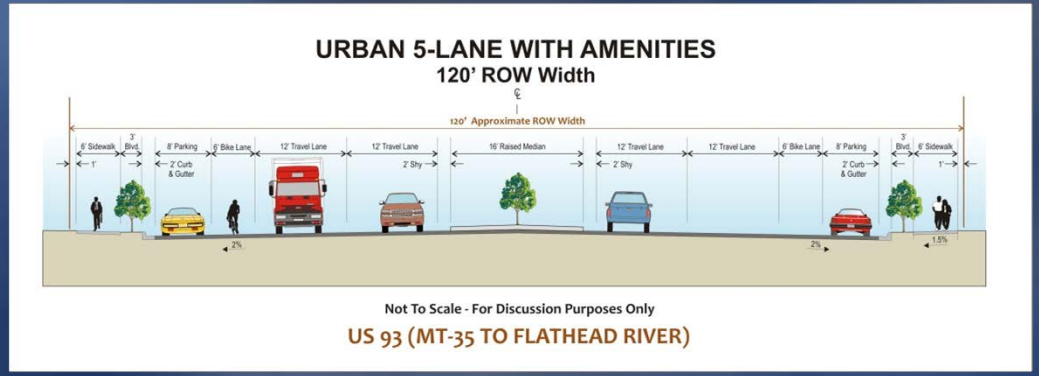
# Current / Future AADT - Seasonal
## (Facts & Data)

- Four month "Percent Average Day is of Yearly Average" is 130%
- With four-month seasonal influence adjustment, future year 2030 AADT volumes may range between 16,000 vpd to 20,400 vpd
- What is the lane configuration to carry future year 2030 seasonal traffic?

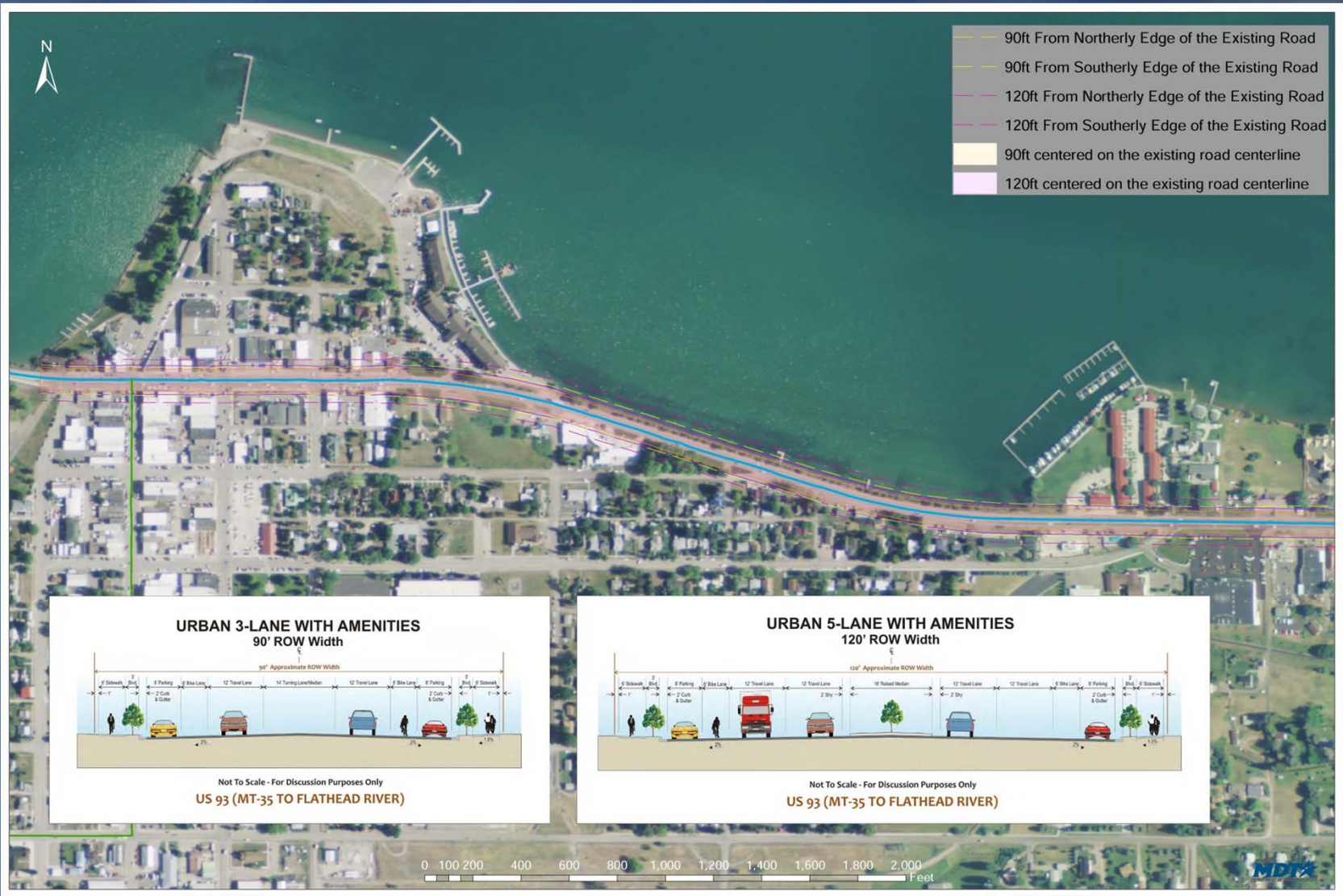
# Potential Geometry with Amenities

- Without an alternate route, improvements to the existing US 93 will be necessary
- Improvements to the existing US 93 will be documented in the Polson Area Transportation Plan (currently under development).



# Potential Right-of-Way Implications



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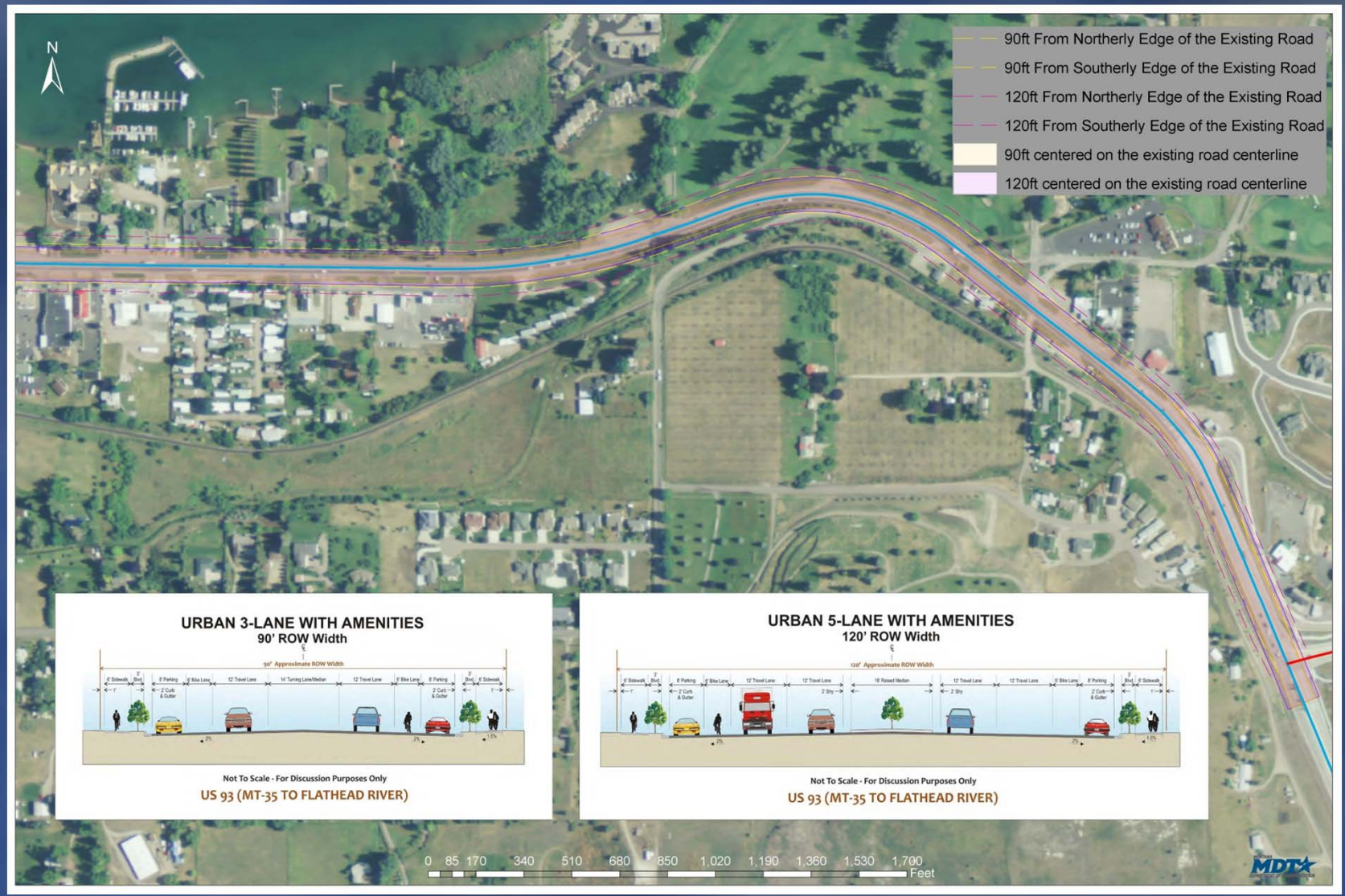
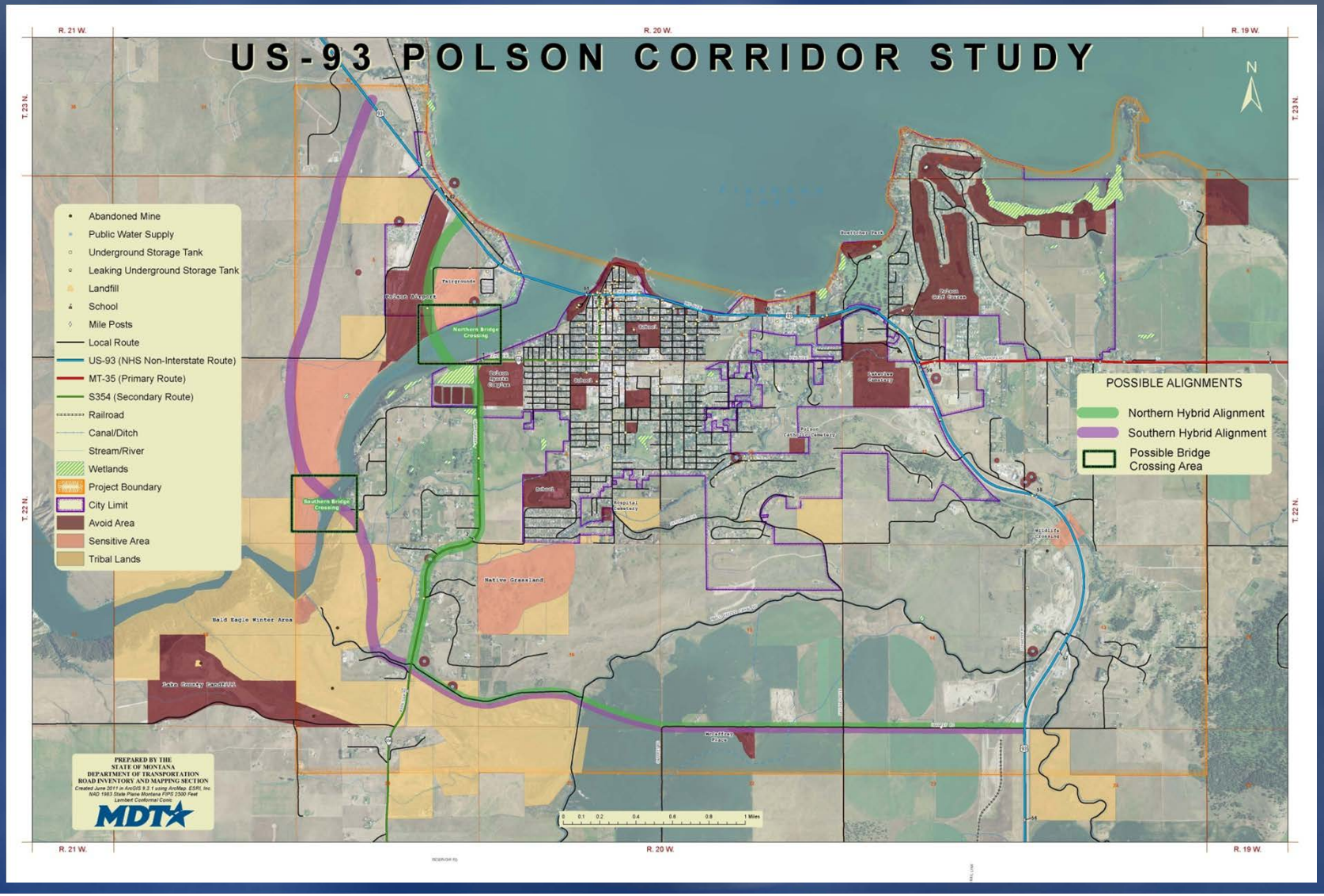


# Draft Corridor Study Results and Findings

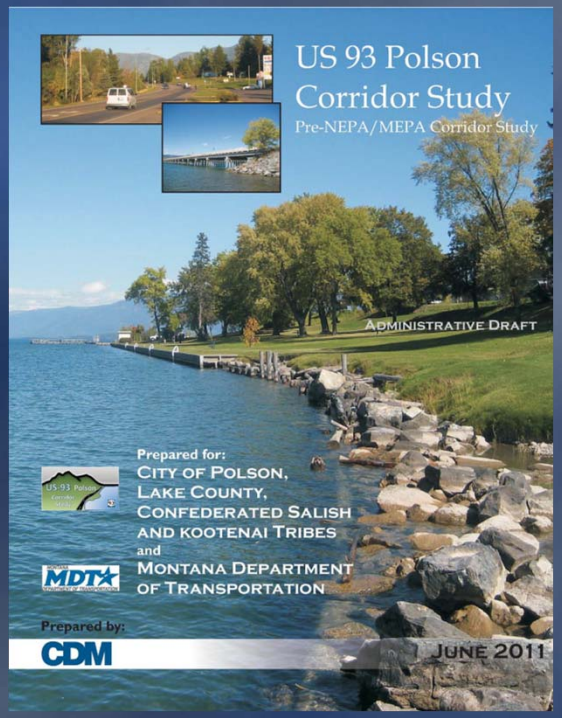
- Two new alignments (southern & northern) and existing alignment are recommendations of the study
- Modified EIS 6 was dropped from consideration due to community opposition
- Information from the study can inform the required Supplemental EIS should funding become available
- Study shows that major ROW implications exist in order to accommodate future traffic on existing alignment
- As a planning tool, the study can be used to influence local land use policy

# Potential Alignments Considered Feasible (along with existing US 93)



# Next Steps

- After the comment submittal date (July 8, 2011), the study team will respond to community comments and complete the US 93 Polson Corridor Study.



# How to Comment / Conclusion

- We want your comments about the corridor and the improvement options
  - Comment forms (at meeting)
  - By email (Jeff.Key@RPA-HLN.com or sludlow@mt.gov)
  - Regular mail:

Jeff Key, P.E. (CDM)

50 West 14th Street, 2nd Floor
Helena, Montana 59601

  - Online at:

www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/polsoncorridorstudy/