



COMMUNITY AND AGENCY PARTICIPATION PLAN (CAPP)

TONGUE RIVER ROAD (S-332) – Corridor Planning Study



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Helena, Montana



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ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CAPP	Community and Agency Participation Plan
MDT	Montana Department of Transportation
MEPA	Montana Environmental Policy Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
RP	Reference Post
RPA	Robert Peccia and Associates
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION PLAN (CSIP)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with Custer and Rosebud Counties, has initiated a process to develop a Corridor Planning Study of Secondary Route 332 (S-332) from reference post (RP) 0.00 (MT-59 intersection) extending 50.4 miles southwest to RP 50.4 (S-447 intersection). Referred to as the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study*, the study will identify financially feasible improvement options to address safety and geometrical concerns within the transportation corridor based on needs presented by the community, the study partners, and resource agencies. The *Study* will examine geometric characteristics, crash history, and existing and projected operational characteristics of the S-332 corridor. Existing and projected physical constraints, land uses, and environmental resources will also be analyzed.

The *Study* will include a comprehensive package of short- and long-term recommendations intended to address the transportation needs of the highway over the planning horizon (year 2032). These recommendations will assist the study partners in targeting the most critical needs and allocation of resources. The *Study* is expected to be completed by the end of November 2012.

MDT has established the corridor planning process in order to investigate improvement options for the corridor via a Pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) / Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) study, as provided for in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). If improvement options are forwarded into project development, the corridor planning process will provide information into the NEPA / MEPA process, help advance viable improvement options into NEPA / MEPA, and provide the opportunity for partner involvement at all stages.

An initial step in the corridor planning study process is to develop a *Community and Agency Participation Plan (CAPP)* that provides for and identifies community, stakeholder, and other interested parties involvement activities needed to communicate information about existing and future corridor needs. The purpose of the *CAPP* is to establish a process that provides opportunities for interested parties to participate in all phases of the corridor study process. This is accomplished by providing complete information, timely notices, opportunities to make comments, and ensuring full access to key decisions.

1.1. CORRIDOR STUDY PROCESS

The purpose for a corridor study is to analyze existing data to determine current and future deficiencies and needs within the corridor, and identify potential environmental issues and mitigation opportunities. The *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* is a pre-NEPA / MEPA study that allows flexibility in examining improvement options for the roadway system should any project be advanced forward. Community, stakeholder, and interested party involvement is an important component in any successful corridor planning study process. For this study, a number of involvement strategies are proposed with the goal being to reach the most people possible and to elicit meaningful participation. These opportunities will:

- Educate on the critical elements included in the Pre-NEPA/MEPA Corridor Study planning process for the S-332 corridor between Miles City and Ashland;
- Increase ability to provide input and ask questions throughout the corridor planning study; and

- Present findings and recommendations.

1.2. STUDY AREA

The termini of the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* has been established by the MDT as beginning at RP 0.00 (intersection of S-332 and MT-59) and ending at RP 50.4 (intersection of S-332 and S-447). The study area generally includes a 0.5 mile buffer on each side of S-332. The corridor width is to be limited to approximately 100 yards beyond the existing right-of-way to reasonably capture potential areas where curve modification and/or roadway realignment may be identified. The study area boundary is shown in **Figure 1**.

1.3. GOALS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH EFFORT

The goal of the study partners and the Consultant is to have ongoing involvement throughout the corridor planning study process. Education and outreach are an essential part of fulfilling the study partners' responsibility to successfully inform interested parties about the corridor study process. All study partners seek to encourage involvement and meaningful participation.

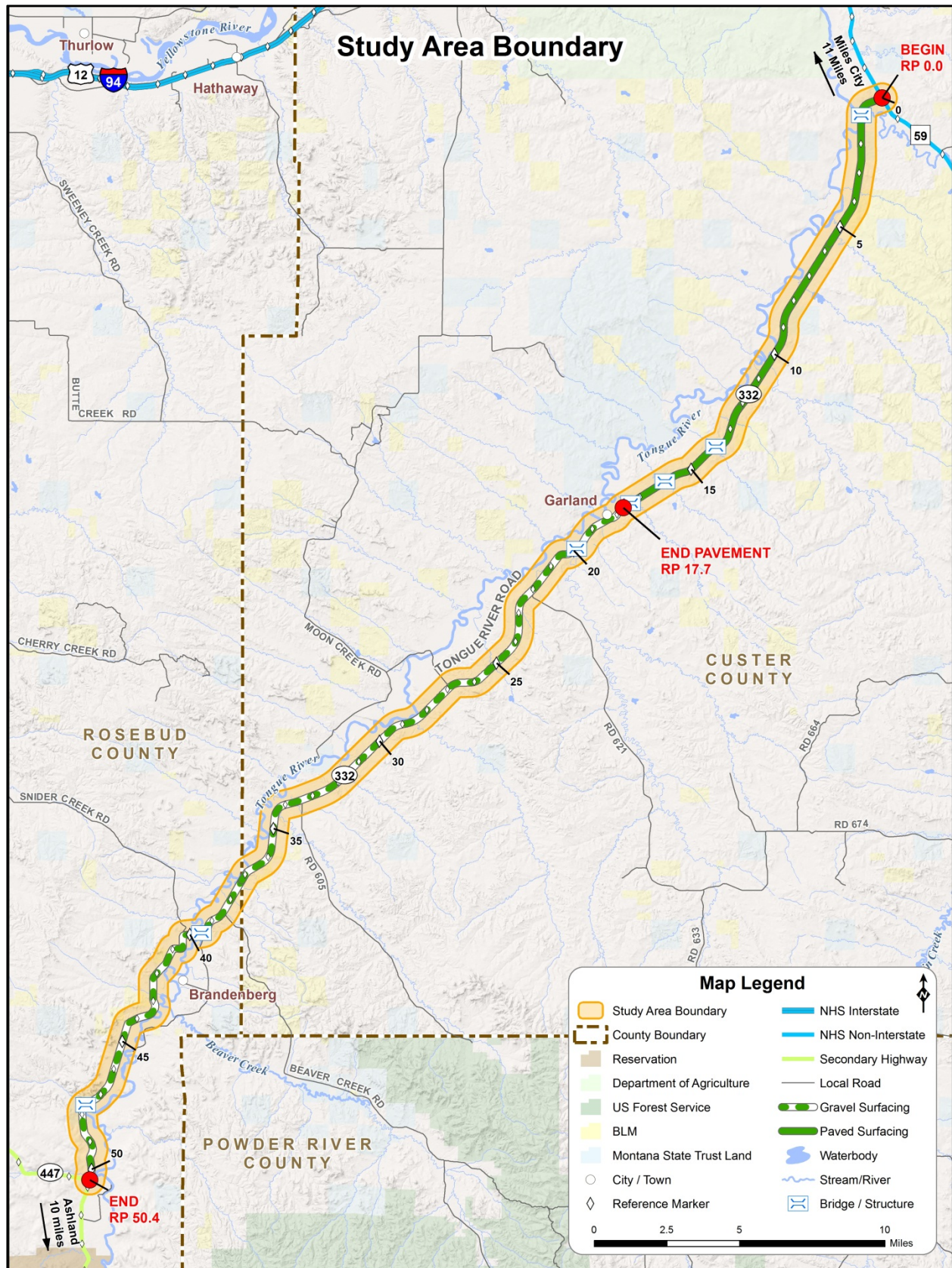


FIGURE 1: STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

2.0 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

The CAPP describes the information and input opportunities that will be provided as part of the development of the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study*. This plan encourages active participation in identifying and commenting on corridor issues at every stage of the planning process. Participants in this community and stakeholder involvement process include:

- The general community – residents of Custer and Rosebud Counties, the Cities of Ashland and Miles City, and adjacent unincorporated areas affected by the planning efforts;
- Landowners and business owners affected within the study area boundary;
- Resource agencies; and
- Stakeholders and other interested parties.

Methods of notifying interested parties of the planning process, upcoming meetings, and other information are detailed in this document. Interested parties will be kept informed of all aspects of the plan and study, and their input will be sought throughout the process. The community and interested parties shall provide input to Custer and Rosebud Counties, MDT and the Consultant via the methods detailed herein.

2.1. STUDY CONTACTS

Contact information for Custer and Rosebud Counties, MDT and the Consultant will be provided. Telephone numbers and email addresses of study contacts will be published in all information that is released. This information is provided below.

- **Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) – Glendive District Office**
503 North River Avenue (PO Box 890), Glendive, MT 59330-0890
Contact: **Shane Mintz – District Administrator**
(406) 345-8200
smintz@mt.gov
- **Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) – Statewide and Urban Planning**
2960 Prospect Avenue (PO Box 201001), Helena, MT 59620-1001
Contact: **Tom Kahle – MDT Project Manager**
(406) 444-9211
tkahle@mt.gov
- **Rosebud County – Rosebud County**
2975 Old Highway 10, Forsyth, MT 59327
Contact: **Wayne Buck – Road Department Manager**
(406) 346-2261
dbuck@rosebudcountymt.com
- **Custer County**
104 Sprandale Lane, Miles City, MT 59301
Contact: **John Hamilton – Landowner / County Representative**
(406) 234-5357
cedarhillsranch@rangeweb.net

- **Robert Peccia and Associates (RPA)** – Consultant
825 Custer Avenue (PO Box 5653), Helena, MT 59604
Contact: **Jeff Key, P.E.** – *RPA Project Manager*
 (406) 447-5000
 jeff.key@rpa-hln.com

2.2. PUBLICATIONS

Meeting announcements will be developed jointly by RPA and MDT, and advertised by MDT at least three weeks prior to informational meetings. The ads will announce the meeting location, time, and date, the format and purpose of the meeting, and the locations where documents may be reviewed (if applicable). The following print newspaper will carry the display ads:

- Forsyth Independent Press – print
- Miles City Star – print and online: www.milescitystar.com
- Powder River Examiner – print and online: <http://powderriveronline.com>

In addition, newsletters will be made available one month prior to each formal informational meeting. The newsletters will describe work in progress, results achieved, preliminary recommendations, and other related topics. Each newsletter will be delivered to Custer and Rosebud Counties, MDT, and select stakeholders for their use in distribution and posting to their individual internet sites. In addition, a newsletter will be mailed to each property owner within the study area boundary, assuming a valid mailing address is available.

2.3. RADIO AND TELEVISION

Meetings may also be announced on local radio and/or television stations. Input from the Planning Team will identify the most popular radio and television stations on which announcements will be made.

2.4. CONTACT LIST

A contact list will be produced that will include individuals, businesses, or groups identified by Custer and Rosebud Counties and MDT. The intent of developing the contact list is to identify those individuals and groups to actively seek out and engage in all phases of the study process. Individuals who attend informational meetings will also be added to the mailing list. The groups or businesses (at a minimum) listed below will be included in the initial list, providing that addresses and/or emails are obtainable from each respective group for these purposes.

- Bill McChesney (House District 40)
- Eric Moore (Senate District 20)
- Montana State Highway Patrol
- Landowners in the Corridor
- Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline Company
- Janice Spear (Northern Cheyenne Tribe)
- George Luther (Arch Coal Consultant)

2.5. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

In general, all study deliverables and working draft technical memorandums will be available in hard copy format at the MDT Statewide and Urban Planning Section office (2960 Prospect Avenue). It is also anticipated that hard copy materials may also be made available at the following locations:

- Custer County Courthouse (1010 Main Street, Miles City, MT 59301)
- Rosebud County Courthouse (1200 Main Street, Forsyth, MT 59327)
- MDT Glendive District Office (503 North River Avenue, Glendive, MT 59330)
- MDT Miles City Area Office (217 North 4th Street, Mile City, MT 59301)
- St. Labre Indian School (1000 Tongue River Road, Ashland, MT 59003)

Approved electronic copies of study deliverables will be posted on the study website at the address shown below within seven days of receiving approval.

- www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/tongueriver

The following Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-required statement will be included on all published materials:

“Custer and Rosebud Counties, MDT, and RPA attempt to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program, or activity associated with this study. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information, call (406) 447-5000 or TTY (800) 335-7592, or call Montana Relay at 711. Accommodation requests must be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled activity and / or meeting.”

3.0 MEETINGS

3.1.1. Planning Team Meetings

Planning Team meetings will be scheduled every three weeks for the duration of the ten-month study period for a total of 14 Planning Team meetings. Individual groups included in the meetings will be Custer and Rosebud Counties, MDT, the Consultant, and others as needed. The meetings are intended to track progress and address study development issues and questions. The meetings are considered an important aspect for the exchange of information and ideas during the development of the *Study*. Throughout the meetings, the issues, problems, and possible solutions will be identified and discussed.

3.1.2. Informational Meetings

Two formal informational meetings will be held throughout the study. The first informational meeting will be held early on in the study process and will serve to introduce the study and relevant features and process. This meeting will also serve to receive information from interested parties about the study area. The second informational meeting will occur after the draft *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* has been completed. The purpose of this meeting will be to present the types of recommended improvements, and to receive feedback. Comments and concerns will be recorded at all meetings.

3.1.3. Resource Agency Meeting / Involvement

Concurrent to the first formal community meeting, a meeting will be scheduled and held with Resource Agencies. The meeting will be organized by MDT and facilitated by RPA with assistance from the study partners as necessary. The purpose of the meeting will be to present findings from the Draft Existing and Projected Conditions Report, and to discuss natural resources occurring within the study area. Resource Agencies will be asked to identify initial avoidance areas, mitigation needs, and opportunities.

3.2. CONSIDERATION FOR TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

It is recognized that additional efforts must be made to involve traditionally underserved segments of the population in the community process for the study, including the disabled, minorities, and low-income residents. Including these groups leads to planning that reflects the needs of everyone. The steps listed below will help with these efforts.

- **Plan Meeting Locations Carefully** – Informational meetings will be held in locations that are accessible and compliant with the ADA. If a targeted population is located in a certain geographic part of a City or County, then the meeting location should be in that area for convenience.
- **Seek Help from Community Leaders and Organizations** – To facilitate involvement of traditionally underserved populations, community leaders and organizations that represent these groups will be consulted about how to most effectively reach their members.
- **Be Sensitive to Diverse Audiences** – At informational meetings, study partner staff and the Consultant will attempt to communicate as effectively as possible. Technical jargon will be avoided and appropriate dress and conduct will be adhered to.

3.3. STUDY SCHEDULE

Adherence to the study schedule is important to stay on track and to keep all participating parties engaged. The study schedule for the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* is shown in **Figure 2**. It is RPA's intent to adhere to this schedule.

Tongue River Road (S-332) Corridor Planning Study



STUDY SCHEDULE

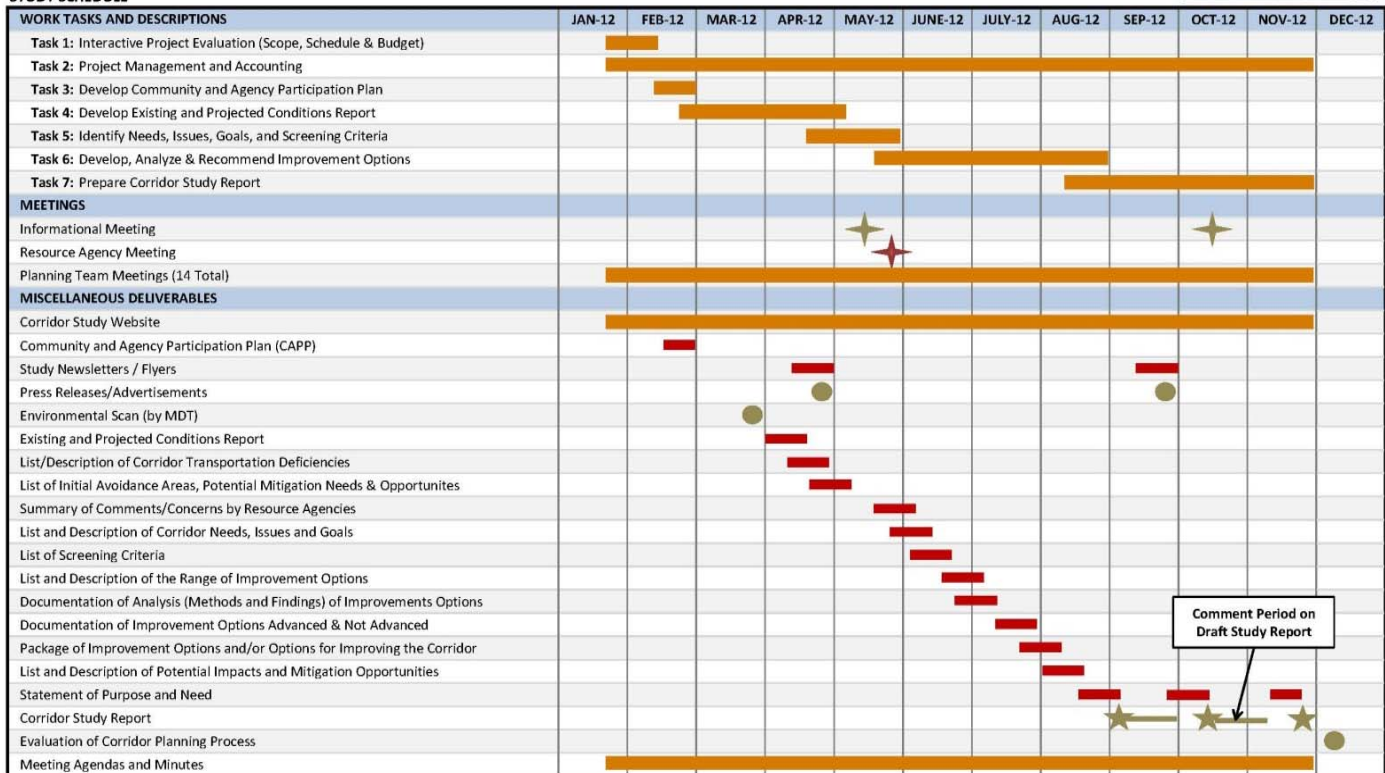


FIGURE 2: STUDY SCHEDULE

4.0 OVERALL STUDY COMMUNICATION

The CAPP establishes guidelines and procedures for encouraging participation. The following communication strategies and techniques may be used in their entirety (or partially) to distribute study information to interested parties and seek a higher level of engagement. The Consultant will utilize as many of these techniques as possible that best suit the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* development.

- All relevant deliverables and associated materials will be posted on the study website at the following address:
 - www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/tongueriver
- Public service announcements and interviews on radio and television may be conducted to explain the subject matter and promote participation.
- Articles and press releases for the newspaper or other widely circulated publications will be developed.
- Newsletters will be created and made available one month prior to each formal informational meeting.
- Informal presentations will be made at regional sites, open houses, round tables, or other community forums to receive input.
- Select mailings, as requested by interested parties, will be provided to individuals or groups that have expressed interest or made comments at meetings.

- Technical memorandums will be provided to the MDT for posting to the study's internet site, and will also be distributed to the Planning Team, to provide a better understanding of proposed corridor issues and recommendations and, in return, to provide the study entities with feedback and an opportunity for continual comment. Hard copies of all materials will be made available at the MDT Statewide and Urban Planning Section (2960 Prospect Avenue).
- Special presentations may be made, upon request, to community groups and organizations.
- Fact sheets may be used to explain corridor related issues.
- Special issues documents may be announced or reported at meetings and/or via email on relevant corridor issues.

Responses to questions and comments from interested parties concerning the participation process, working draft technical memorandums, the draft *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* documents, and other work products will be made via written response in an Appendix to the actual documents.