



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Date: November 17, 2009 Time: 5:30-8 p.m.

Location: Whitefish City Hall

Address: 418 E. 2nd Street, Whitefish, MT

This public open house is planned to take questions and comments on the design and explain the right-of-way acquisition process. A brief presentation will begin at 6:00.

For additional information, please go to www.wgmgroup.com/projects/whitefish.html or contact:

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3021 Palmer
P.O. Box 16027
Missoula, MT 59808-6027



We are here.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) proposes to reconstruct and widen U.S. Highway 93 to provide improved safety and operations for the traveling public. The work will include a bridge replacement over the Whitefish River, clearing, grubbing, grading, gravel, storm drain, curb and gutter, plant mix surfacing, signing, striping, fencing, landscaping, retaining wall, guardrail, and other miscellaneous items. Extensive right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation will be required.

The existing two-lane highway, originally constructed in 1936, has experienced significant increases in traffic volumes due to growth and development within the Whitefish city limits and surrounding county. The existing facility lacks adequate stopping sight distance, shoulders, turn lanes, lighting, drainage, and bicycle/ pedestrian facilities. This has contributed to a higher than average accident rate and severity rate.

The proposed project was originally evaluated under the 1994 U.S. 93 Somers to Whitefish West Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). A Re-Evaluation of the FEIS pertaining to the Whitefish West segment was prepared in 2008.

The project is located in Flathead County on U.S. Highway 93 (P5 – NHS). It begins in Whitefish on Second Street ½ block west of Baker Avenue and ends approximately ½ mile west of Twin Bridges Road (Hwy 424) at milepost 133.00.

PROJECT STATUS

A “Plan-In-Hand” review of the preliminary design was completed in September 2009. The project is now proceeding with final design. The project will be split into three separate construction contracts to facilitate phased construction of the entire project. The anticipated project splits are as follows. Final design and right-of-way acquisition will proceed in this order.

- Segment 1 – Lupfer to Karrow
- Segment 2 – Karrow to West of Mountainside Drive
- Segment 3 – West of Mountainside Drive to Mile Post 133

In October 2009, MDT completed a Value Analysis of the project, which identified ways to reduce project costs. Over the next few months, we will be evaluating the recommendations to see if they are feasible to incorporate into the project.

Funding for the project remains uncertain. Phased construction and Value Analysis are intended to create smaller construction contracts, so that a portion of the project can be funded sooner.

WHAT'S NEXT

The next step in the process is right-of-way acquisition. This involves appraisals and negotiations with each landowner on the project, and will be focused on the first segment (Lupfer to Karrow). We anticipate right-of-way acquisition could begin in Spring 2010. A public open house is planned to take questions and comments on the design and explain the right-of-way acquisition process.



FIGURE 2: CURRENT PROPOSED ACTION

