

LIVABILITY FOR MONTANA TRANSPORTATION

FHWA/MT-12-001/8210

Final Report

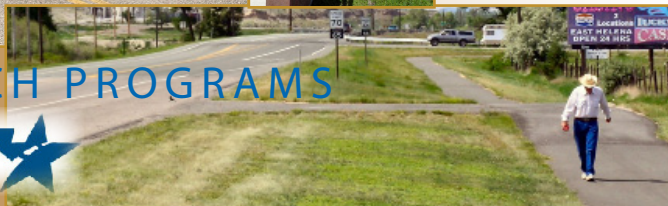
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March 2012

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RESEARCH PROGRAMS

MDT★

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Livability for Montana Transportation

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16. Abstract The concept of livability is not new to Montana or the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). Helping build great places in great environments has long been embedded in the department's mission, and even the state constitution. In light of the current national dialogue on livability, the challenge facing MDT is to more formally define livability for Montana and its communities and understand how livability relates to Montana's transportation needs. The purpose of this study is to determine what livability means for Montana and the role of transportation. To achieve the goal of the study, the research team: (1) scanned existing demographic data and literature; (2) conducted interviews of peer states; (3) conducted a qualitative analysis on Montana TranPlan 21 public comments; (4) conducted a public survey of Montana communities and a local elected leader survey; and (5) interviewed Montana partner agencies and key MDT staff. The study finds that Montana has some unique characteristics that may have a bearing on measures of its livability. For example, sixty-two percent of Montanans live in areas where the population density is 800 people per square mile or higher, but those areas account for only 0.1 percent of the land area. Along with its unique character, the surveys conducted for this study indicate that Montana is also a good place to live. Survey respondents endorsed the belief that MDT projects add value to their quality of life. There were some consistent themes identified through the various tasks of this study. One size does not fit all, and any definition of livability should have some flexibility and scalability based on local needs and a community vision. Well maintained road system, safety, public transportation systems, bike and pedestrian facilities, and winter maintenance are important features of livability for Montana communities. Based on research and outreach, the research team proposes the following definition for livability in Montana as it relates to transportation: "Provide a transportation system that emphasizes a safe, maintained road network; allows for multimodal transportation opportunities; and considers local community values." – This report and related materials can be found at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/planning/benchmarks.shtml			
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AHEC	Montana Area Health Education Center
BTU	British Thermal Unit
CEIC	Census and Economic Information Center
CNT	Center For Neighborhood Technology
CSKT	Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
CTEP	Community Transportation Enhancement Program
CTOD	Center For Transit-Oriented Development
DOT	Department of Transportation
DPHHS	Department of Public Health and Human Services
EAS	Essential Air Service
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FWP	Fish, Wildlife and Parks
HUD	U.S. Department Of Housing And Urban Development
MDT	Montana Department Of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NAPA	Montana Nutrition And Physical Activity
NCMT	North-Central Montana Transit
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRIS	Natural Resource Information System
RITA	Research And Innovative Technology Administration
SOAR	Safe On All Roads
SRTS	Safe Routes To School
STOL	Short Take-Off and Landing
TE	Transit Enhancement
TIGER	Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TUNE UP	Total Urban Neighborhood Enhancement – Unified Program
USDOT	U.S. Department Of Transportation
VMT	Vehicle-Miles Traveled
VTPI	Victoria Transport Policy Institute
WASACT	Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team
WSDOT	Washington State Department Of Transportation
WTI	Western Transportation Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Montana Livability Definition

The goal of this research project was to determine what livability means for Montana as it relates to transportation. Based on research and outreach the following definition is provided for consideration by MDT: *“Provide a transportation system that emphasizes a safe, maintained road network; allows for multimodal transportation opportunities; and considers local community values.”*

This definition was based on the analysis of literature, demographic factors, interviews with officials in Montana and other states, public comments on the 2007 and 2009 Montana TranPlan 21 state transportation plan, and surveys with citizens and stakeholders in the state. Drawing on these efforts, the following summary offers an expanded definition of livability elements that are a priority for Montana and its residents.

For Montanans, the most important elements of a livable community, although not necessarily transportation related, are friendly neighbors, rural character, availability of outdoor activities, access to high quality education and health care, abundance of natural scenic beauty, and availability of entertainment and cultural activities. However, transportation aspects that Montanan’s perceive bring value to a community include:

- **Primarily**
 - A safe and well-maintained road network
 - Infrastructure and services that match local community values and needs
- **Secondarily**
 - Multi-modal alternatives to automobile travel—access to transit, rail, and air services
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Access to nearby cities and towns for employment, health care services, and recreational activities through personal vehicles, transit, intercity bus or other options
 - Local enhancements that connect residents to the people and activities of their neighborhoods and communities
 - Context-sensitive transportation planning that promotes the character of the community
 - Preservation of the natural resources, scenic views, and rural sense of place that are valued by all Montanans
 - Road surfaces that are well maintained in all weather conditions
 - Transportation Infrastructure that improves local economies

Research Findings

The following sections provide a summary of the results from each of the tasks of this study. The tasks accomplished in this research study included a review of literature, an analysis of Montana demographics, a synthesis of TranPlan 21 comments, a public survey, a survey of elected leaders, interviews with stakeholders, interviews with other state DOTs, and meetings with MDT staff. For tasks where appropriate, several elements were selected as high, medium, and

sometime low priority based on the ranking data developed during the task. The exact number in each prioritization category was based on breakpoints in the data. The summary is concluded by describing how the various results were compiled and used to develop the definition on the previous page.

Literature Review

Upon reviewing national and local literature, it is clear that there is no single universally accepted definition of livability. Some national, state, and local organizations are attempting to define livability, because of its policy importance. For example, livability has already been used as a metric in deciding allocation of federal funds.

Montana has a foundation to build on; the literature identified many existing programs, policies and projects that improve livability. It is important to note that livability can be a broad term encompassing almost every aspect of a community; this definition goes well beyond the transportation system and could include the local economy, the surrounding environment, community values, and land development. When investigating how transportation impacts livability, the focus should only be on items truly relevant to transportation. Livability needs, issues, and solutions vary across community types; one size does not fit all.

Nonetheless, several universal livability themes related to transportation were found in the national literature:

- Transportation systems should include all modes (air, automobile, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and other local modes).
- Land use and transportation clearly influence each other. Transportation plans and projects should result in a transportation system that integrates with and supports local land use plans, affordable housing projects, and similar efforts that encourage a livable community structure.
- Transportation systems in dense and developing areas should be highly connected. Cul-de-sacs and streets designed around specific land development limit connectivity. A well-designed grid system promotes connectivity.
- Transportation projects should incorporate local values in the planning/design process. Such values may include aesthetically pleasing transportation corridors and pedestrian safety.
- Safety and capacity for the automobile mode should not be ignored.
- Transportation systems should seek to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gases.
- Transportation systems should provide access to jobs, education, health care, and services.
- Transportation projects should be coordinated with other projects to leverage funding and accomplish livability goals.

Unique Montana Considerations

Researchers identified demographic factors for Montana that will have a critical influence on livability goals as they relate to transportation systems. Because of these unique aspects, national or other state definitions of livability may not be applicable to the state, or may need considerable modification.

- Eighty-two percent of the land area has a population density of less than one person per square mile, while 62 percent of Montanans live in population densities of 800 or more people per square mile (Figure ES-1).
- Nearly two-thirds of Montana's 56 counties experienced population declines over the last decade.
- Projections indicate that by 2030 around 25.8 percent of Montanans will be over 65; this will be the third highest proportion of elderly residents of any state in the nation.
- Roads in Montana are in good condition compared to surrounding states.
- Montana has nine counties with no working physicians. Five of these nine counties have no public transportation and six of these counties have no hospitals.
- Montanans drive more than the national average as evidenced by higher reported vehicle-miles traveled (11,176 per year vs. 9,779 nationally), transportation expenses (\$843 per year vs. \$718 nationally), and transportation petroleum energy used (126 million BTUs per year vs. 94 million BTUs nationally).
- Montanans have shorter (in time) commutes to work than the rest of the nation, with an average of 17.9 minutes, compared to the national average of 25.5 minutes.
- Montana has a higher proportion of people who walk to work (5.5 percent) than the national average (2.8 percent).
- Montana has more transit and ground transportation establishments per capita (108 per million people) than the national average (60 per million people). Yet it has a smaller percentage of commuters who use public transportation (1.1 percent) than the national average (5.0 percent).

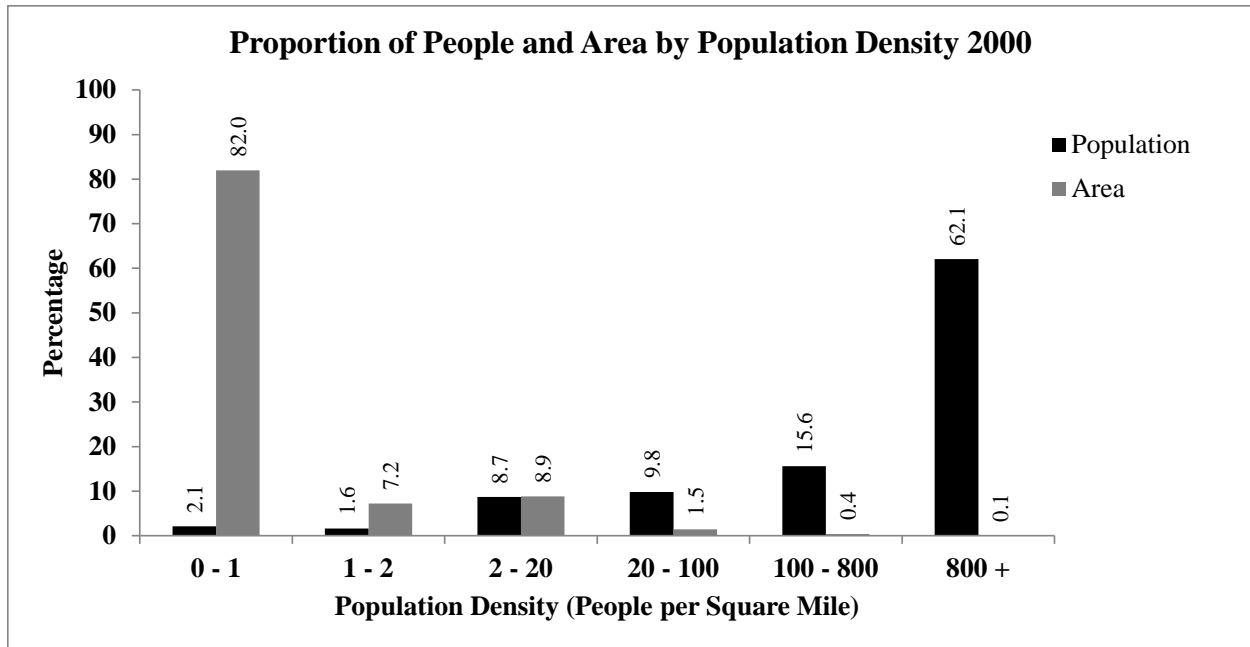


Figure ES-1: Proportion of Population and Area by Population Density Category.

TranPlan 21 Review of Comments

The Montana Department of Transportation developed a statewide transportation plan, originally adopted in 1995 called TranPlan 21 (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/tranplan21.shtml>). This plan is used to develop and implement policies with input from the public, stakeholders, and others. TranPlan 21 is updated regularly with input from the public and other stakeholders through telephone surveys on perceptions of the transportation system in Montana; the two most recent surveys were completed in 2009 and 2007. The survey includes questions about public and stakeholder perceptions of goals and priorities for transportation that can be drawn from to help assess what Montanan’s value for transportation in their communities:

- Are there any other transportation-related issues you think need to be addressed by the Montana Department of Transportation?
- Do you have any other suggestions for ways MDT can improve the function of Montana’s roadways?

Qualitative analysis was used to categorize the comments to the public survey and the stakeholder survey. The more common themes are summarized in Figure ES-2 below. Maintaining and improving road conditions was the most commented on by both stakeholder respondents and the public.

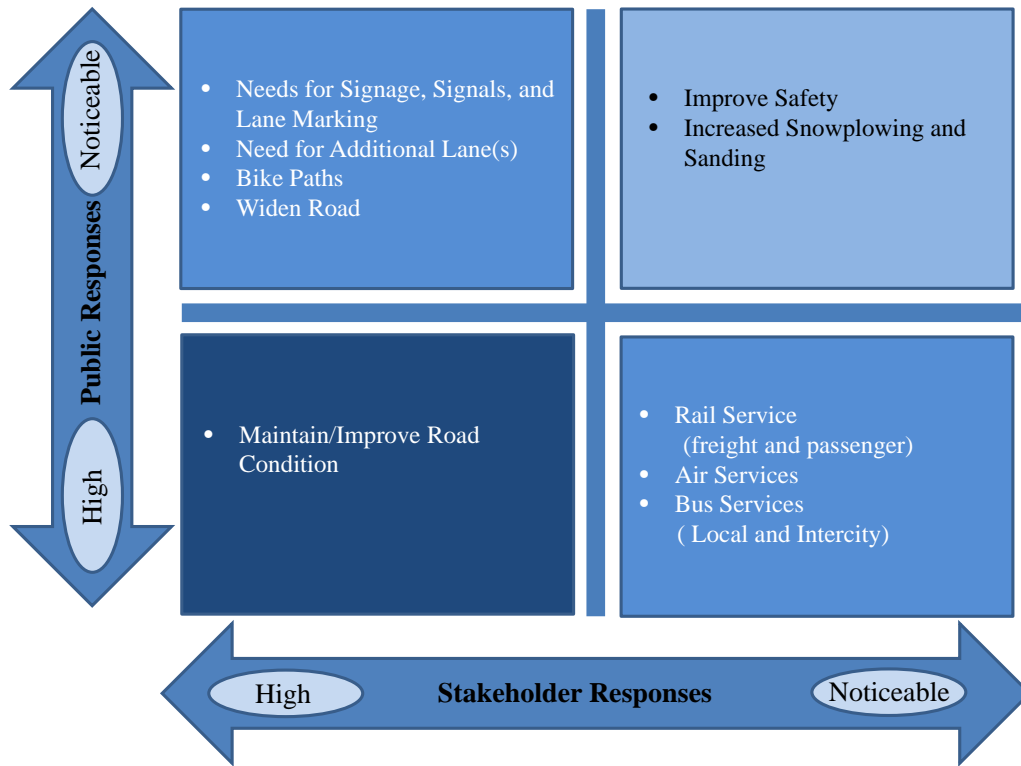


Figure ES-2: Summary of TranPlan 21 Comments.

Public Survey and Elected Leader Survey

Researchers conducted a telephone survey with 542 Montana citizens regarding their feelings toward livability. Care was taken to not mention livability directly during the survey, but refer to “quality of life” or “making a community a good place to live.” An elected leader online survey, patterned after the public survey, was conducted with 24 Montana mayors, 37 county commissioners, and seven other local officials.

Generally, Montana citizens and local leaders felt their community was a good place to live (Figure ES-3). On a scale of one to five (with five being “excellent”), 82% of the public and 85% of the elected surveys ranked their communities with either a four or a five.

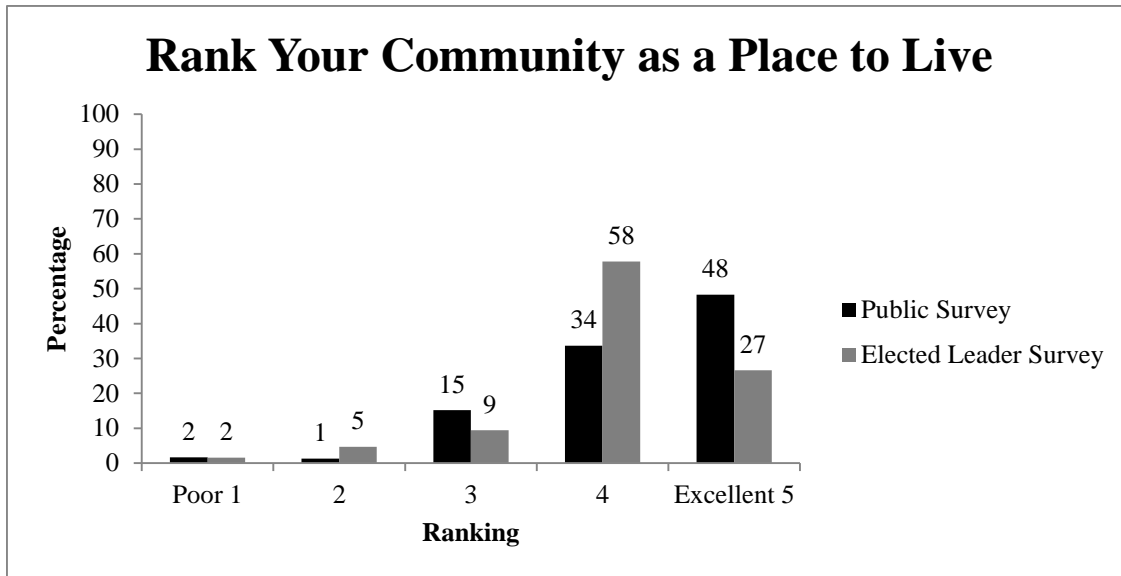


Figure ES-3: Survey Response to Community Livability.

The survey also asked respondents “what makes your community a good place to live?” Responses indicated that the most important factors that impact the livability of a community are not directly related to transportation (Figure ES-4). The most frequent responses included nice people, low population, outdoor activities, and a good education system.

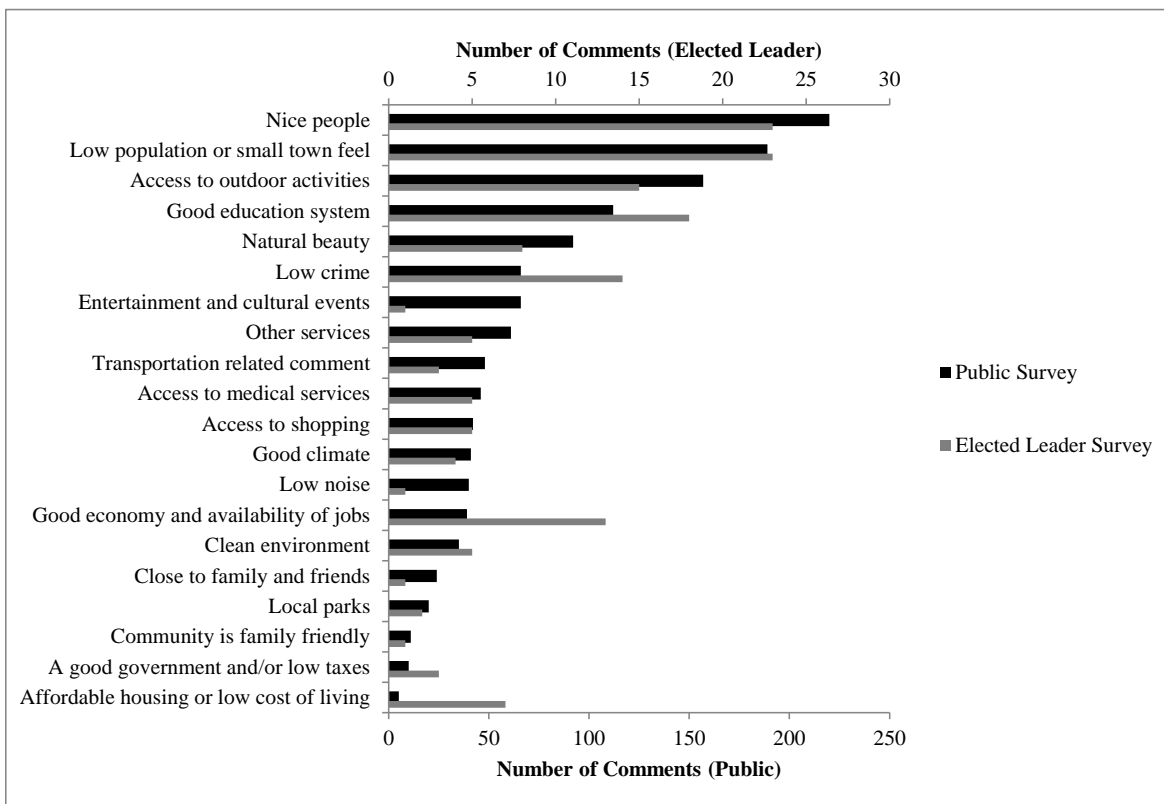


Figure ES-4: What Makes your Community a Good Place to Live.

Comments specifically related to transportation are listed and ranked in Figure ES-5. Within this category, respondents most frequently mentioned constructing and maintaining good roads, followed by access to air travel and public transit by bus.

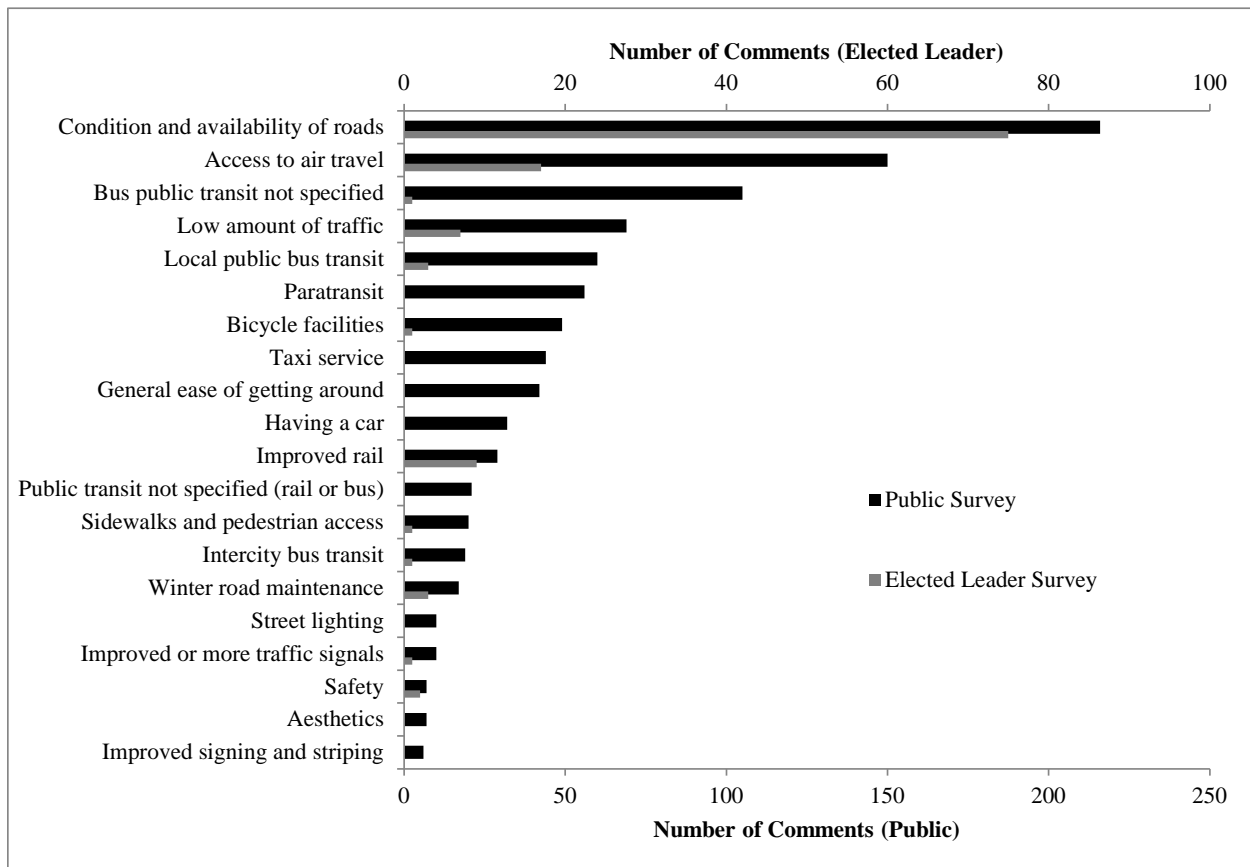


Figure ES-5: A Good Place to Live from a Transportation Perspective

The major transportation themes identified from the public survey and elected leader survey responses are displayed in a different format in Figure ES-6. The purpose of this figure is to illustrate the differences and commonalities in responses between members of the public and elected leaders. For example, both elected leaders and the general public gave a high priority to good road conditions, but the public assigned a high priority to air travel and bus transit, while elected officials assigned a medium rating to both of these themes.

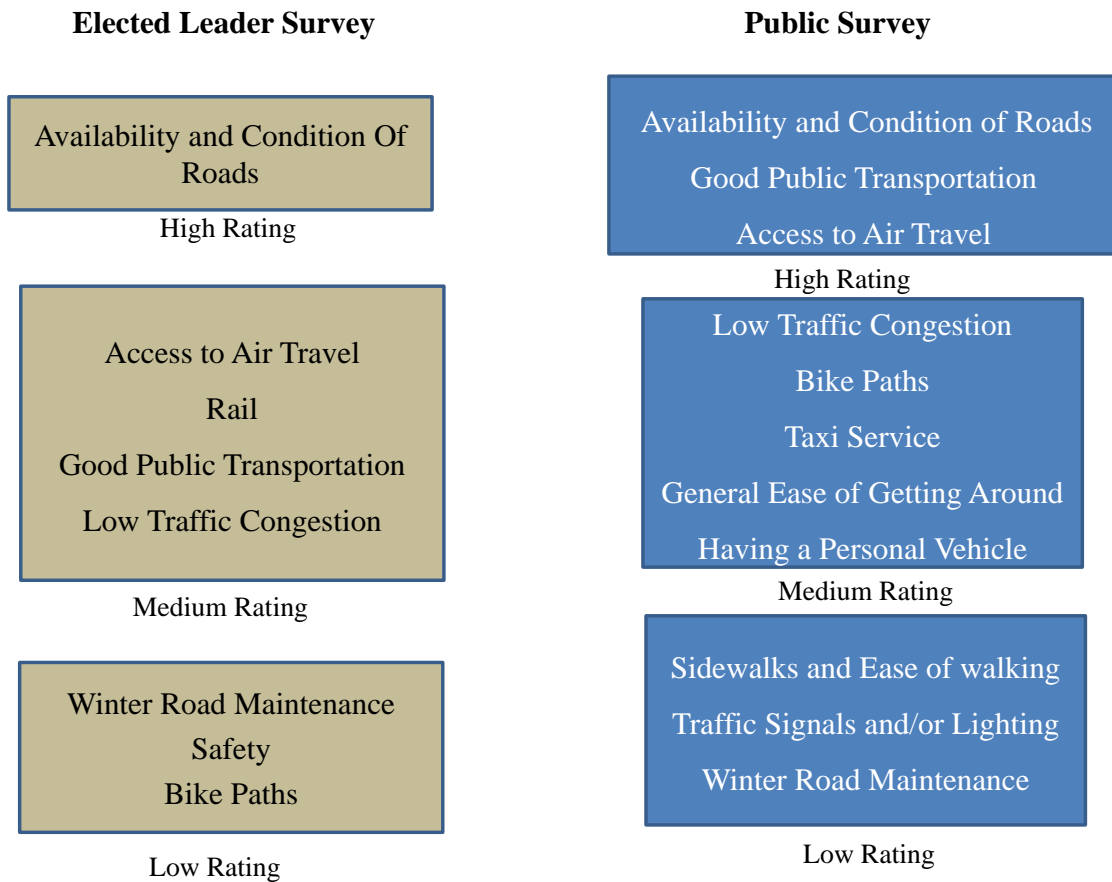


Figure ES-6: Major Livability Themes Identified from Surveys.

Stakeholder Interviews

Researchers randomly selected forty-six organizations from stakeholder lists provided by MDT and attempted to set up phone interviews. This resulted in 22 conversations with stakeholder organizations spread geographically across the state. These organizations also represent a mix of local government agencies, transit providers, resource agencies, Native American reservations, and health and human service organizations. Respondents identified several projects that improve livability. The general livability themes identified by these stakeholder groups are summarized in Table ES-1. Some of the common livability priorities cited by stakeholder organizations included tailoring livability to community needs (or “one size does not fit all”); access to work, school, and health care; transit systems; and safety. This is a small sample of stakeholders, most of whom had a focused interest. Therefore, the main themes identified in this task may not represent the views of Montanans in general.

Table ES-1: Summary of Livability Themes from Stakeholder Outreach.

Community Livability Priorities	Description
One size does not fit all communities	Revitalizing downtown may be a priority in one community, while transporting food to markets, essential air service or wildlife crossings may be more important to other communities.
Maintenance and Access	Access may refer to maintenance of existing infrastructure, winter emergency transportation or maintaining travelable roads and bridges (through spring 2011 floods for example). It can also refer to transit to connect people to work, school, and medical service.
Transit systems in urban and rural areas	Intercity bus access to medical services, jobs and education is important. Creating reliable, timely transit systems is important both within communities and between them.
Safety	This may refer to public awareness of at-grade rail crossing safety or managing downtown truck traffic. It could include basic needs such as clean drinking water, cars with current safety features such as airbags or seatbelt use.
Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure	Concepts that consider the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists are important. These may include construction of sidewalks that meet the ADA requirements or building more bikeways.
Economic viability/ability to earn a living	Transportation systems can directly affect and benefit a community's economy.

Other State Departments of Transportation

Project team members interviewed officials from planning offices within the state departments of transportation of Colorado, Idaho, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wyoming to determine what actions and ideas about livability are underway in those states. None of the states have a formal definition of livability, but some are working on the task. Most respondents felt livability was just a new label given to tasks their state DOTs were already planning and performing. Project examples with livability ideals are plentiful, but calling them “livability projects” may not be warranted without a consensus on the definition. In regard to the next transportation bill, all states expressed concern that the bill may authorize new funding categories targeted at livability, as well as additional requirements on existing funding intended to promote livability progress.

None of the states interviewed have developed metrics dealing specifically with livability progress. However, respondents identified important livability issues, as shown in Figure ES-7. Responses for rural and urban areas are listed separately to show the differences in priorities.

Nonetheless, a couple issues were listed as top priorities for both rural and urban areas, including well-maintained roadways and transit service.

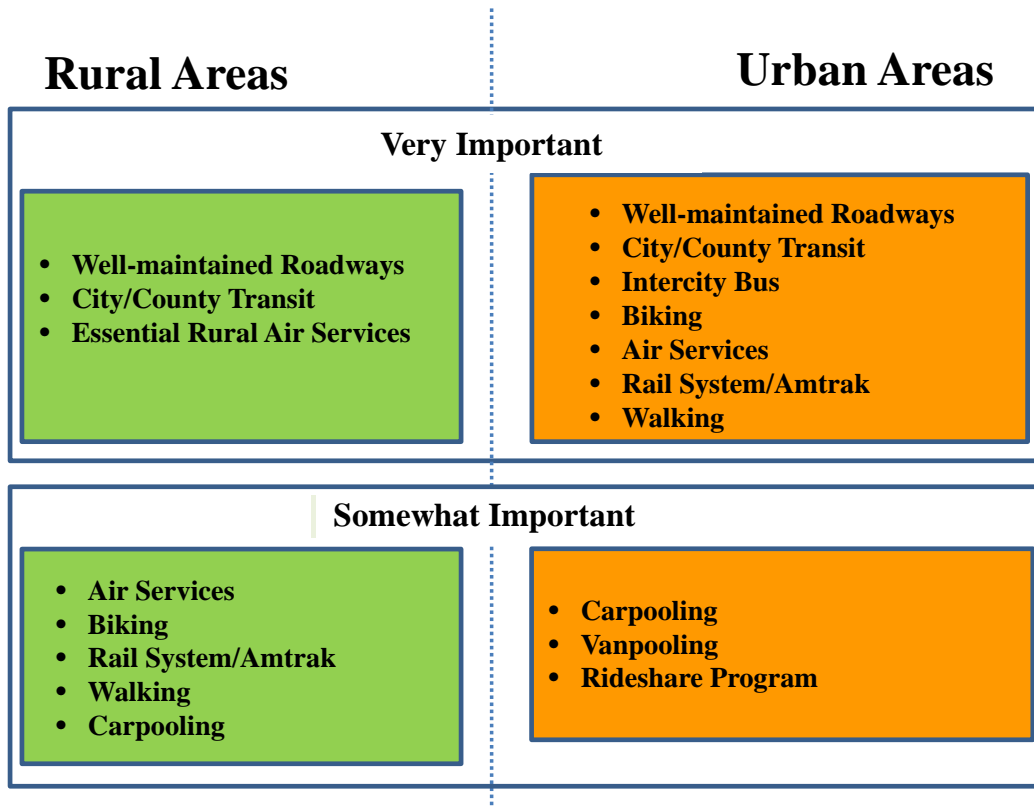


Figure ES-7: Livability Priorities Among the Other States.

MDT Outreach Findings

The research team conducted outreach meetings with twelve different groups (bureaus, divisions, and districts) within the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). MDT staff identified numerous current internal programs and projects that have had a positive impact on livability, as well as numerous current and potential partner organizations for advancing livability in the future. For example, MDT has had a context-sensitive solutions policy in place since 2003. However, many staff members had concerns about making efforts as a department to implement a national definition of livability. The general concern was that programmatically incorporating livability into either the federal funding program or the MDT decision making process could lead to decisions and focuses that could actually decrease livability overall. For example, significant improvements to aesthetics of transportation systems could reduce the funds available for construction and maintenance resulting in a poor road system.

The 14 major livability themes identified by MDT staff are shown in Figure ES-8. Staff members gave the highest priority to issues related to community vision, safety, and access.



Figure ES-8: MDT Staff Identification of Elements of Livability

Conclusion

A traceability matrix was developed to display and compare the results from the various sources collected for this project (Table ES-2). The research team identified 19 livability themes related to transportation across all the tasks. For the matrix, researchers then prioritized the themes as “mentioned often or ranked as a high priority,” “mentioned,” or “not mentioned.” The one high priority concept across all tasks was a well-maintained road system. Other concepts mentioned often in two or more tasks were flexible/scalable transportation, suitability to local needs, and vision, safety, and local transit.

Table ES-2: Traceability Matrix of Livability Themes.

Concept	TranPlan21	Other States	MDT	Public	Elected Leader	Stakeholder
Well Maintained Road System	●	●	●	●	●	●
Local Transit	○	●	○	●	○	●
Safety	○	●	●	○	○	●
Bicycle Facilities	○	○	○	○	○	●
Air Service	○	○		●	○	○
Pedestrian Facilities and Ease of Walking Access		○	○	○	○	●
Not One Size, but Flexible and Scalable		●	●			●
Local Needs / Vision Should Lead		●	●			○
Economic Viability from Transportation Infrastructure			○		○	●
Intercity Transit	○	○	○	○		○
Winter Maintenance	○		○	○	○	○
Passenger Rail	○	○		○	○	
Congestion	○		○	○	○	
Landscaping and Aesthetics			○	○		○
Access to Highways			○	○		○
Freight Rail	○				○	○
Traffic Noise			○	○		
Taxi Service				○		
Parking			○			

- Mentioned Often and or Ranked High
- Mentioned

It is important to emphasize that a single, specific definition of livability will not apply to every community in the state, due to the differences in population size, population growth, and community values. Local needs and local vision should drive what is important for an individual community.

Further, the transportation system can have an impact on the livability of a community, but it is only one of many elements that make a community livable. Across all of the tasks, the results of this research identified the quality of the street and highway network as the aspect of the transportation system with the most impact on livability. Numerous other aspects were also identified as having an impact on livability. These common themes were compiled and analyzed, and form the basis of the definition provided at the beginning of this executive summary, as well as the following definition:

“Provide a transportation system that emphasizes a safe, maintained road network; allows for multimodal transportation opportunities; and considers local community values.”

1. INTRODUCTION

Discussions of “livability” as a concept central to transportation planning and urban and rural development have been gaining prominence nationally. One action that has increased general discussion of livability is the creation at a national level of the interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This initiative has identified six principles of livability: (1) provide transportation choices; (2) promote equitable, affordable housing; (3) enhance economic competitiveness; (4) support existing communities; (5) coordinate policies and leverage investment; and (6) value communities and neighborhoods (US HUD, USDOT and US EPA, 2009).

Much of the national discussion on livability has revolved around light rail, transit-oriented design, high-density housing, and other elements with a distinctly urban focus. Despite pressure by some groups to include rural issues in the livability discussion, it is the urban issues that get more attention. In a blog post titled “Livability Works for Rural Communities,” Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood provided a few examples of success stories of rural livability (USDOT, 2010a). Two of the examples involved trolley systems, which are not a typical solution for rural areas with low population densities. One example was from Dubuque, Iowa, a city with a population over 50,000, which places it in a category defined as an urbanized/metropolitan area in federal transportation planning regulations and by the U.S. Census.

Many previous efforts and initiatives have had goals similar to the objectives of the livability concept. Context-sensitive solutions, new urbanism, sustainable transportation, transit-oriented design, complete streets, and walkable communities are types of initiatives that have been promoted to achieve some of the same goals underlying the push for livable communities. Livability principles were being promoted as far back as 1929 by New York-based social planner Clarence Perry, who introduced “neighborhood units” as a part of the 1929 Regional Plan of New York. His plan featured a walkable community with centrally located public amenities within a half-mile radius (Hoch et al., 2000). Some state departments of transportation have made efforts to explicitly incorporate livability into their programs. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has developed a policy statement on livability. The policy sets the broad departmental goal that “[t]ransportation plans and actions will support and encourage partnering with local communities to achieve our mutual interests in promoting livable communities” (WSDOT 2010). The policy also states that transportation projects will foster multimodal options (public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, road, rail, and ferry), be sensitive to community values, and coordinate funding to encourage livability.

The concept of livability is not new to Montana or the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). Helping build great places in great environments has long been embedded in the departmental mission, and even the state constitution. In light of the current national dialogue on livability, the challenge facing MDT is to more formally define livability for Montana and its communities and understand how livability relates to Montana’s transportation needs. A livability definition for Montana can help MDT determine if livability needs are being considered within the current transportation planning process. To help with this challenge, the Western Transportation Institute (WTI) conducted a study for MDT to investigate livability in the Montana context. The purpose of this study is to understand what livability means for rural

areas and the role transportation can play in improving livability in those communities. The objectives for this research project are as follows:

Objective 1: Identify and understand Federal agency programs and practices related to or supporting livability.

Objective 2: Ascertain what peer states are doing to address livability.

Objective 3: Identify and understand Montana community-level definitions of livability. The definitions may vary according to the diversity of communities across Montana from urban to rural to extremely rural.

Objective 4: Identify practices and policies MDT and other state agencies have in place that address livability as identified in Objective 3.

Objective 5: Determine potential opportunities for MDT to address livability.

To achieve the study objectives, nine research tasks were undertaken. The report is generally organized around these tasks:

- Task 1 included project management tasks.
- Task 2 included a scan of existing data and literature for livability. This had two components:
 - A review of national literature and statewide and local plans for livability (Chapter 2), and
 - A summary of Montana demographic data that may relate to livability issues (Chapter 3).
- Task 3 was to contact peer states to ascertain what they are doing to address livability (Chapter 7).
- Task 4 was to conduct a qualitative analysis on Montana TranPlan 21 public comments to gain insight on how Montanans feel about livability as it relates to transportation. (Chapter 4)
- Task 5 was to conduct a public survey of Montana communities for a livability definition and what it means to them (Chapter 5).
- Task 6 included stakeholder outreach with two components:
 - Phone interviews with Montana partner agencies to identify opportunities and Montana definitions of livability (Chapter 6), and
 - A survey of local elected leaders (Chapter 5).
- Task 7 was to complete internal interviews with key MDT divisions/bureaus with regard to livability in the rural context (Chapter 8).
- Task 8 was to develop an interim report that summarized results of Tasks 2 through 4. This report was finalized in April 2011. Much of the information in the interim report is included in this document.
- Task 9 was to develop this final project report.

Chapters 2 through 8 summarize the tasks as described above and are similarly organized with an introduction, a methodology, results, and a summary of findings. For each task several elements were selected as high, medium, and sometime low priority based on the ranking data developed during the task. The exact number in each prioritization category was based on breakpoints in the data. A summary of all the findings is included in Chapter 9. Also included in Chapter 9 is a proposed definition for livability in Montana.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature was reviewed in order to (1) provide examples of livability definitions currently in use, (2) identify current policies related to livability, (3) identify specific examples of projects and programs promoting livability objectives, and (4) identify any metrics used to measure the success of livability goals related to a specific project or region/state. This chapter discusses what was found during this review.

2.1. Definition

Livability is a broad term whose meaning is difficult to capture with a single, catch-all definition. Definitions of livability as it pertains to transportation may share a set of central ideas that vary depending on the setting (e.g., rural vs. urban) and the focus (e.g., transportation, housing). A simple definition of livability might refer to the “environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents” (VTPI, 2010).

Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez endorsed the following definition: “Livability is about tying the quality and location of transportation facilities to broader opportunities such as access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safe streets. This includes addressing safety and capacity issues on all roads through better planning and design, maximizing and expanding new technologies such as ITS and the use of quiet pavements, using Travel Demand Management approaches to system planning and operations, etc.” (USDOT FHWA, 2010).

Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood provided the following definition: “Livable communities are mixed-use neighborhoods with highly connected streets promoting mobility for all users, whether they are children walking or biking to school or commuters riding transit or driving motor vehicles. Benefits include improved traffic flow, shorter trip lengths, safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists, lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduced dependence on fossil fuels, increased trip-chaining, and independence for those who prefer not to or are unable to drive. In addition, investing in a ‘complete street’ concept stimulates private-sector economic activity by increasing the viability of street-level retail small businesses and professional services, creating housing opportunities, and extending the usefulness of school and transit facilities” (LaHood, 2009).

AARP defines a livable community as “one that has affordable and appropriate housing, supportive community features and services, and adequate mobility options, which together facilitate personal independence and the engagement of residents in civic and social life” (Kochera et al., 2005).

A more regional definition of livability was created by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). According to WSDOT, livable communities “provide and promote civic engagement and a sense of place through safe, sustainable choices for a variety of elements that include housing, transportation, education, cultural diversity, and enrichment, and recreation” (WSDOT, 2010).

HUD, USDOT and EPA defined six livability principles in their Partnership on Sustainable Communities Position Statement (US HUD, USDOT, US EPA, 2009):

- **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
- **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
- **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
- **Support existing communities.** Target federal funding toward existing communities—through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
- **Coordinate policies and leverage investment.** Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
- **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

Many other documents provide aspects or goals of livability. The Victoria Transport Policy Institute (VTPI) has identified the following characteristics as important to livability: perception of public safety, attractive streetscapes, community character, friendliness, community cohesion, walkability, accessibility, clean air, recreation, affordability, and quality of transportation options for elderly and special needs citizens (VTPI, 2010).

A universal, specific definition of livability is not practical due to the vast variations between communities. One potential theme of livability relates to the benefits of creating compact neighborhoods, but compactness is relative across the urban and rural scale. Communities can vary greatly in population, socioeconomic status and ideals. Different types of communities may need a different definition of what livability means for them. There are numerous ways to categorize a community by size. Using a coarse categorization of a population of 50,000 as the break point to distinguish between urban and rural, a National Cooperative Highway Research Program report (Twadell and Emerine, 2007) investigated livability issues focusing on only rural communities. Even with that narrow focus, the report found that different types of rural communities had unique challenges relating to livability according to their classification as exurban, destination, or production communities. Clearly, different types of communities can have a different definition of what makes them livable.

2.2. Related Policies and Programs

In recent years federal and state agencies have developed programs and policies that either specifically mention livability, or include ideas and issues that may relate to livability as it has been defined nationally. The policies and programs may or may not be appropriate for improving livability in Montana. This section provides a summary of plans and programs at the national level, in other states, and within Montana that may have a link to livability.

2.2.1. National and Other State Policies and Programs

The HUD, USDOT, and EPA partnership has identified many programs to support livability. These programs are outlined in Figure 1.

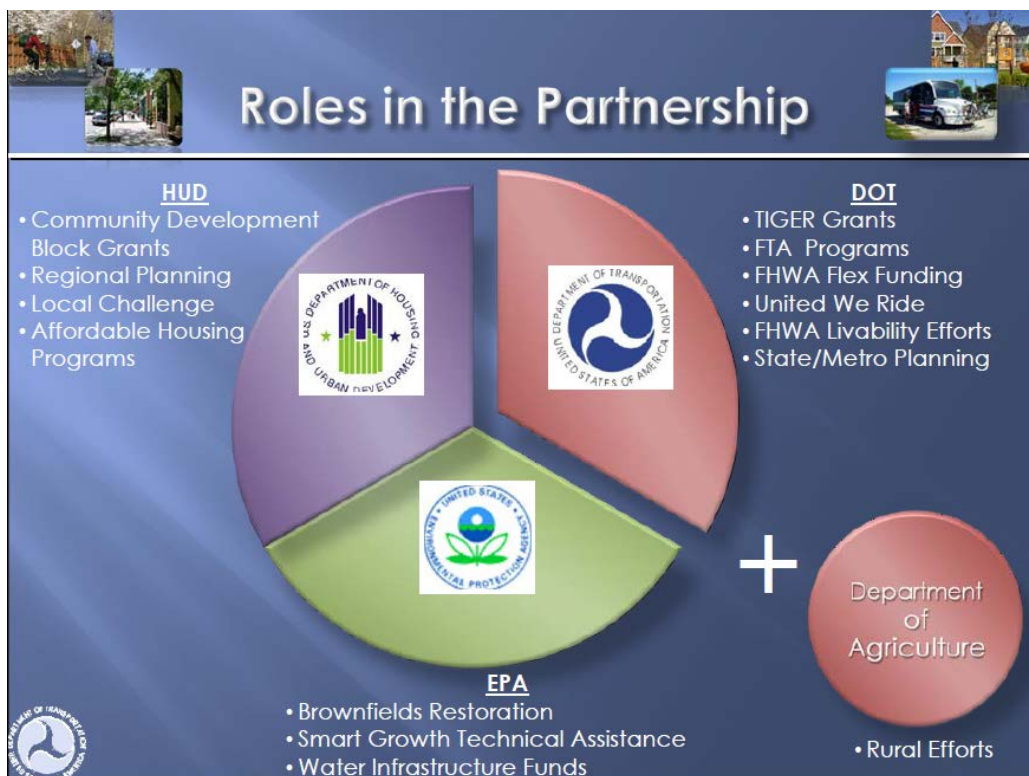


Figure 1: Livability Roles (Source: Mattice, 2010)

The two phases of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER-I and TIGER-II) grants program provided funding for transportation projects. The project selection criteria for TIGER-I included five desired long-range outcomes, aside from creating jobs and stimulating the economy. One of these outcomes was increasing livability by “improving the quality of living and working environments and the experience for people in communities across the United States” (Office of the Federal Register, 2009a). In detailing how the livability benefit of a TIGER-I project will be evaluated, the Federal Register states that livability is inherently difficult to measure. The proposals were qualitatively evaluated on how the project increased mobility through more convenient transportation options, improved transportation choice through modal connectivity and reduced congestion, improved accessibility for transit-dependent populations (e.g., disadvantaged populations, non-drivers, senior citizens, and persons with

disabilities), and resulted from a coordinated transportation and land use planning process. The TIGER-I projects also had a sustainability criterion, which might be considered closely related to livability. To be considered sustainable a project had to improve energy efficiency (reduce greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on foreign oil) and protect the environment (e.g., protect wetlands, not impact endangered species or improve wildlife habitat connectivity). The second phase, TIGER-II, had similar project selection criteria, but it also stipulated that the project would be evaluated on how it furthers the six livability principles from the USDOT-HUD-EPA partnership agreement (Office of the Federal Register, 2010).

Montana has been awarded two TIGER-I grants. The first, for \$12 million, went to the Lake County Transportation Connectivity Project to upgrade city and county streets to help provide safe routes between and within communities for pedestrians and cyclists traveling to school and work along 30 miles of US Highway 93. The second was \$3.5 million for the City of Whitefish to improve US Highway 93/2nd Street, including a new traffic signal system, additional turn lanes, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements and upgraded water and sewer lines (USDOT, 2010b). MDT applied for but did not receive any Tiger-II grants.

Investigating where the TIGER-II funds were awarded may indicate the magnitude and nature of livability priorities nationally. Defining urban areas as those with populations greater than 50,000, TIGER-II grants were awarded as follows:

- For capital grants
 - 17 states received grants worth \$137,375, 265 for rural areas, and
 - 16 states received grants worth \$419,202,326 for urban areas; and
- For planning grants
 - 11 states received grants worth \$1,279,850 for rural areas, and
 - 20 states received grants worth \$8,073,079 for urban areas.

Twenty-five percent of the funds going to rural areas are relatively consistent with the population split nationally, in which about 20 percent of the population lives in rural areas. However, based on the type of project funded (Figure 2 and Figure 3), clear variations are observed in the rural versus urban programs.

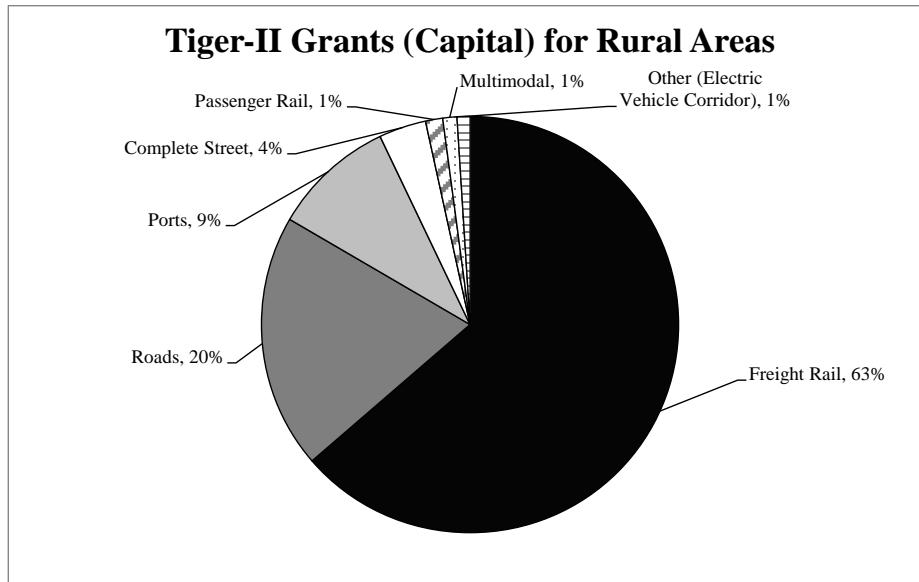


Figure 2: TIGER-II Funding Awarded by Project Type in Rural Areas
 (Data Source: USDOT, 2010c)

A majority, over two-thirds, of the TIGER-II funding for rural areas went to freight projects (rail and port). Road reconstruction and improvement projects accounted for 20 percent of the funding. The remaining project types accounted for less than 10 percent of the funding. This is in contrast to the funding split for urban areas.

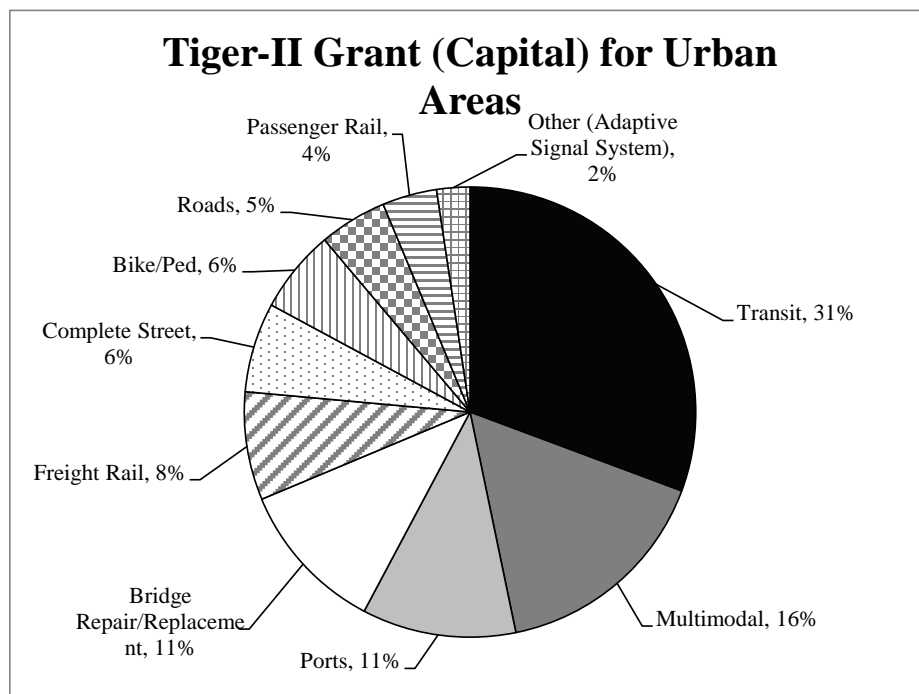


Figure 3: TIGER-II Funding Awarded by Project Type in Urban Areas
 (Data Source: USDOT, 2010c)

The USDOT's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has identified several livability policies and provisions that form a part of its current programs, research, and technical assistance (USDOT FTA, 2010). First, FTA encourages transit-oriented development (TOD), defined as "compact, mixed-use development near transit facilities with high-quality walking environments" (USDOT FTA, 2010). TOD is intended to provide housing options where individuals can walk, bike, and take transit for most of their travel needs. Transit enhancement (TE) funding is available for improving transit facilities through landscaping, public art, bicycle access and storage, historic preservation, and similar improvements. FTA policy on bicycle and pedestrian improvements is largely based on its policy statement by the Office of the Federal Register (2009b), which provides flexibility for FTA funding use for improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities, primarily in relation to how they connect to transit facilities. The Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas (FTA 5311) program is intended to provide access to employment, health care, education, and other human services in rural areas. The last livability provision discussed by FTA is its "art in transit" initiative, which allows for improved aesthetics for transit facilities.

Recently FTA offered three funding opportunities for projects that specifically address livability issues. In December 2009, it announced two grant opportunities using category 5309 discretionary funding to support livability initiatives—Bus and Bus Facilities grants and Urban Circulator Systems grants. Both included livability benefits as evaluation criteria for grant proposals. The livability evaluation criteria were nearly identical to the livability criteria in the TIGER-I grants. In May of 2010 a funding announcement went out for Alternatives Analysis from 5339 funds. The livability evaluation criteria for this grant simply stated that priority be given to projects advancing the six livability outcomes in the USDOT-HUD-EPA partnership. The Missoula Urban Transportation District received a grant to improve its transfer facility. It is worth noting that although public transit funding may not specifically mention livability, it could be argued it is all livability-related (at least according to national definitions) since the funding goes to improve public transit, which provides more transportation choices.

HUD manages several programs to fund affordable housing. Some reports indicate that, while housing costs in affordable housing developments are low, transportation costs can be much higher than average (Transportation for America, 2010a). HUD is working to incorporate transportation cost metrics into affordable housing projects. Additionally, HUD has offered Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants aimed at improving regional planning efforts that "integrate housing and transportation decisions, and increase state, regional, and local capacity to incorporate livability, sustainability, and social equity values into land use plans and zoning" (US HUD, 2010).

Montana did not receive any sustainable communities grants, but two communities in HUD's Region 8 (Montana, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming) did. South Dakota's Thunder Valley CDC/Oglala Sioux Tribe Consortium received nearly \$1 million to develop a plan for sustainable communities within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Utah also received a grant for sustainable communities for Salt Lake County for \$5 million to develop a regional housing plan.

An EPA program relating to livability is the Brownfields Program, which works to "prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse" contaminated sites or sites perceived to be contaminated (US EPA, 2010). The intent of this program is to encourage redevelopment of contaminated properties that have fallen into disuse. By studying the site and determining the

extent of environmental damage and the cost of cleaning up the contamination, the risk can be removed and redevelopment of the property can move forward.

Other national policy and program efforts are mainly related to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide guidance and support for livability. Two examples are the International City/County Management Association (Mishkovsky et al., 2010) and the Transportation for America organization (Transportation for America, 2010b).

Few states have implemented formal livability policies. Chapter 7 provides a summary of how six of the states surveyed are addressing livability in state programs. WSDOT is one of the few state DOTs with an official policy on livable communities. Its policy states WSDOT will make efforts to foster livable communities both in rural and urban settings by promoting multimodal transportation options with “a good mix of public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, with adequate roadways, rail, and ferries” (WSDOT, 2010). Coordinating access to funding and developing collaborative transportation actions with community-specific values are ideals also included in the policy.

2.2.2. Montana Policies and Programs

There are several state and local plans and programs in Montana that may relate to livability, at least as it is currently being defined on the national scale. MDT, other state agency and local plans are discussed briefly here. Because one of the underlying themes of the national livability definition includes coordinating across agencies and leveraging funding, awareness of livability-related projects at all levels is important.

MDT’s statewide transportation plan is called TranPlan 21. TranPlan 21 has six key policies, most of which have aspects that could be related to livability ideals: Access Management and Land Use Planning, Bicycle and Pedestrian Access, Economic Development, Public Transportation, Roadway System Performance, and Traveler Safety (Cambridge Systematics, 2008).

Context sensitive solutions (CSS) is a process for incorporating local community values into transportation projects. MDT formally adopted a CSS policy in 2003 stating that “there is an increased demand for us to preserve and enhance the natural environment as well as the livability of communities” (MDT, 2003). The policy encourages involving local governments and citizens throughout the design process, balancing all needs particularly those of the local community, and not being afraid to think “out of the box” to find solutions that meet these needs.

MDT has a number of other programs and policies that could be considered to improve livability such as essential air service and corridor planning studies.

Montana also has a Climate Change Action Plan, which makes 13 policy recommendations in the land use and transportation area (Montana Governor’s Climate Change Advisory Committee, 2007). Many of these recommendations relate to improving vehicle fuel efficiency and emission reduction. One of these recommendations, the growth and development bundle, includes elements that are included in the national discussion of livability. This bundle of recommendations includes:

- Infill, densification, and brownfield redevelopment;
- Mixed-use and transit-oriented development;
- Smart growth planning, modeling, and tools;

- Targeted open space protection;
- Expanding transit infrastructure and service; and
- Expanding transportation choices.

The 2006–2010 Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity (NAPA) State Plan to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases is another statewide plan that may relate to livability. The plan was funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Half of adult Montana residents are overweight or obese. In order to increase physical activity among Montanans, the plan recommends “[e]ncouraging developments with a more traditional neighborhood design, such as streets connected in a more grid-like style with sidewalks/bike lanes and trees and stores [to] make walking and biking an easier, safer, more convenient, and more enjoyable choice” (Montana NAPA, 2006).

Montana’s larger cities have thoroughly developed transportation and/or land use plans. Bozeman (City of Bozeman, 2009; Robert Peccia and Associates, 2007), Missoula (Wilbur Smith Associates, 2008) and Billings (Cambridge Systematics, 2010) are examples of cities with transportation plans that may address livability through transportation goals related to land use, housing and economic development, bike and pedestrian transportation, and railroad planning.

The City of Great Falls is currently developing a Downtown Revitalization Plan. The plan aims to improve downtown livability, character, accessibility, and vitality by “bringing people, events, and business back into the downtown area and positioning it as the city center for commerce, entertainment, and culture” (KRTV News, 2010).

2.3. Livability Project Examples

This section provides specific project or local policy examples typically associated with livability as defined in the national discussion. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but is intended to provide examples of various types of initiatives at the local or project level that could be related to livability.

2.3.1. Incorporating Local Vision in Projects

An example project where CSS was used is the reconstruction of State Route 69 in Boulder, Montana, population 1,300. Route 69 includes Main Street in Boulder. The project incorporated landscaping, colored concrete, period lighting, and ADA and pedestrian improvements.

2.3.2. Local Land Use Planning

Using scenario planning and holding more than 200 workshops with over 20,000 Utah residents, the Envision Utah project allowed members of the public to express what was important to them in terms of livability. Changing development strategies to reduce sprawl and preserve rural landscapes was one way this process ensured the citizens of Utah planned the future of their communities in a way that aligned with their livability values (Toth, 2010).

As defined nationally, land use planning is important to creating livable communities. Land use planning is not a transportation activity, but this example is included because transportation and land use planning are often interrelated.

2.3.3. Intercity Bus to Connect Rural Communities

Frontier and rural communities in north central Montana needed reliable public transportation within small towns and from small towns to regional hubs to allow residents to pursue employment, educational opportunities, medical needs, and recreational and other activities. Access to transportation services is a key to sustaining the livelihood and enhancing the quality of life in smaller communities in this region. In August 2009, with the help of MDT through the FTA 5311 fund, the North Central Montana Transit (NCMT) system initiated a transit service for communities in the region that connects Havre, the largest city, with a population of 9,656, to Harlem, Chinook and the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Blaine County, and to Box Elder and Laredo in Rocky Boy's Reservation. In addition, NCMT provides service from all of these communities to Great Falls, Montana, 114 miles from Havre. Great Falls is the only major urban center in the area, with larger medical, educational, and commercial facilities (Kack, 2010).

2.3.4. Local Transit Service

An example of a local transit service that can improve livability for a community is the Valley County Transit service, which offers service in and around Glasgow, Montana. The service was opened to the general public in 1980 and is funded by Valley County, FTA, donations, fares and private funding. The service is available daily and provides 24-hour service on holidays and by reservation year round. The buses are ADA accessible and medical trips to larger communities like Billings and Williston, North Dakota, are made every few weeks. In 2010, Valley County Transit gave nearly 64,000 rides and averaged 175 rides per day (Valley County Transit, 2010).

2.3.5. Corridor Planning Studies

A corridor planning study was implemented on a segment of US Highway 567 also known as Pipe Creek Road north of Libby, Montana. The Libby North Corridor Planning Study was advanced as a pre-NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) planning study due to the complex environmental concerns within the corridor. During the development of the study, MDT performed in-depth coordination with the local government and resource agencies. The effort also included extensive input from the community. This input was used to develop viable improvement options. The study's recommendations resulted in roadway improvements that are consistent with the community's desire for the low volume roadway. Recommendations included improvements to blind corners and providing a consistent roadway surface width, while maintaining the roadways rural character. The pre-NEPA planning study recommendations limited the project impacts which allowed the project to move forward under a Categorical Exclusion instead of an Environmental Impact Statement. Some of the planning study recommendations are moving into project development and are planned for construction in the 2012-2013 fiscal year, with design of a second phase currently underway.

2.3.6. Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federally funded transportation program aimed at making it safer and more convenient for K-8 students of all abilities to walk and bike to school. Montana's SRTS program is a competitively awarded program administered by MDT. Eligible applicants for SRTS infrastructure funding include local and tribal governments and school districts.

Eligible applicants for non-infrastructure funding include state, tribal, local, and regional government agencies, and school districts, private schools, and nonprofit organizations.

Non-infrastructure activities educate students and encourage them to walk and bike to school. Programs such as mileage clubs, walking, school buses, and bike trains, as well as incentive programs encourage kids to choose active transportation as their way to school. Infrastructure projects focus on increasing safety by constructing crosswalks, sidewalks, pathways, and bike racks. Frontier communities such as Shelby, Scobey, Sidney, Lewistown, Arlee, Ronan, and Plevna have obtained funding for these efforts.

2.4. Measuring Livability Progress

Only a few metrics were found in the literature to measure livability from a transportation-related perspective. WSDOT has posed the following question as a way to measure the effectiveness of its state's livability policies: "What is the degree to which local governments are achieving the vision in their comprehensive plans, specifically the effect of allocation of land use and their achievement of density goals?" (WSDOT, 2010). WSDOT will survey twice a year to determine how satisfied the public is with the implementation of community-based designs.

The Housing plus Transportation Affordability Index was developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development (CTOD). The index measures affordability not just of housing but of housing plus transportation costs. A typical housing affordability map would show locations in an area where housing costs are below 30 percent of the area's median income. The index developed adds an estimated transportation cost based on the location (e.g., distance from the city center) and access to transit, but uses 45 percent of the median income as the threshold. The index has information from most urban areas around the country, including three Montana urban areas: Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula. The index incorporates information on housing and transportation costs, automobiles per household, vehicle-miles traveled, transit ridership, and commute times among other things (CNT, 2010).

Vemuri and Costanza (2006) developed a model predicting life satisfaction using two United Nations indices. One index, called "ecosystems services product," is a measure of natural land cover. The other is the human development index, which is a combined measure of life expectancy, literacy, and standard of living. These indices explained 72 percent of the variability in reported life satisfaction for 56 countries. Though the model does not include transportation infrastructure, it shows how quality of life could be estimated and tracked using some measurable data.

2.5. Summary of Findings

From reviewing the literature one could make several conclusions. There is no single universally accepted definition of livability. Some national, state, and local organizations are attempting to define livability. There are some examples of livability being a metric in deciding allocation of federal funds. There are many programs, policies, and projects in Montana that could be considered to improve livability. Montana is not starting from square one; there is a foundation to build on and a number of partnering opportunities. Although there are some metrics used to attempt to measure livability, there are not clear agreed upon measures.

With no universal definition of livability, there are some common themes among the various definitions. Livability can be a broad term encompassing almost every aspect of a community; this definition goes well beyond the transportation system and could include the local economy, the surrounding environment, community values, and land development. Livability needs, issues, and solutions vary across community types; one size does not fit all. Lastly, there are several themes in the national discussion of livability related to transportation:

- Transportation systems should include all modes (air, automobile, public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian).
- Land use and transportation clearly influence each other. Transportation plans and projects should result in a transportation system that integrates with and supports local land use plans, affordable housing projects, and similar efforts that encourage a livable community structure.
- Transportation systems should be highly connected. Cul-de-sacs and streets designed around specific land developments limit connectivity. A well-designed grid system promotes connectivity.
- Transportation projects should incorporate local values in the planning/design process. Such values may include aesthetically pleasing transportation corridors and pedestrian safety.
- Safety and capacity for the automobile mode should not be ignored.
- Transportation systems should seek to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gases.
- Transportation systems should provide access to jobs, education, health care, and services.
- Transportation projects should be coordinated with other projects to leverage funding and accomplish livability goals.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Understanding the unique character of Montana will help identify livability needs for the state. This chapter includes general demographic and infrastructure data to help quantify the potential measures of livability of Montana, particularly as they relate to transportation. When possible and pertinent, the same statistics are shown for the neighboring states (North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Idaho) and the nation for comparison.

The first section, general population and essential services, includes general population trends, geography, and access to health care facilities. The transportation infrastructure section includes information about Montana's roads, airports, freight, safety, vehicle registration data, commuting information, and transportation energy information. The last section, alternative modes of transportation, includes public transportation and air and rail service information for the state of Montana.

3.1. General Population and Essential Services

Population statistics such as projections, age distribution, and total population comprise the first section of demographic information analyzed. Also in this section are data on hospital and physician availability.

3.1.1. Population

According to 2009 estimates, Montana population totaled 974,989. Between 2000 and 2009, Montana population increased by 7.9 percent. This is comparable to the national population growth rate of 8.8 percent (Figure 4). According to the U.S. Census, Montana population is projected to be around 1,044,898 by 2030 (U.S. Census, 2010).

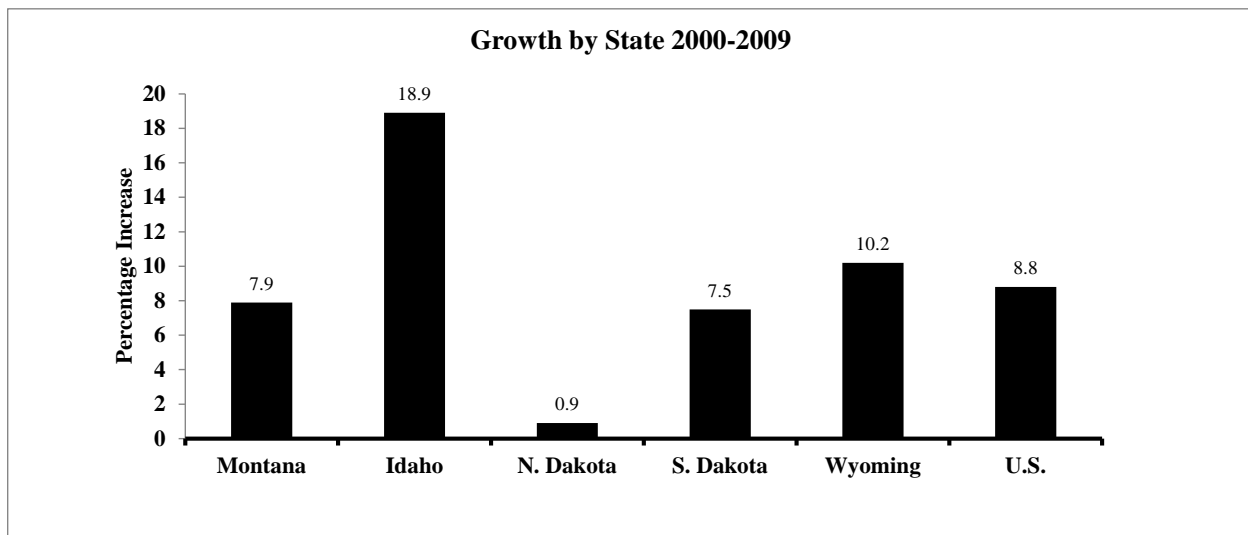


Figure 4: Percent Growth from 2000 to 2009 (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

Although statewide population growth was positive, census estimates show 34 of Montana's 56 counties had negative growth from 2000 to 2009 (Figure 5).

Population Change 2000 to 2009

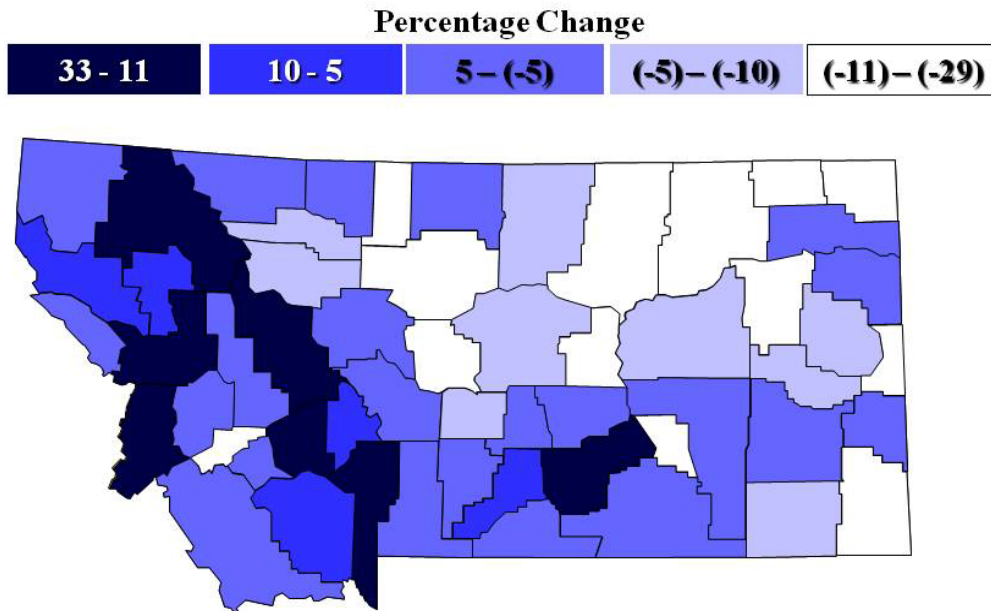


Figure 5: Montana County Population Growth Rate (Data Source: CEIC, 2010)

This general growth trend is expected to continue for Montana with the population of the western mountain region increasing while the eastern region’s population decreases (Figure 6).

Population Change 2000 to 2030

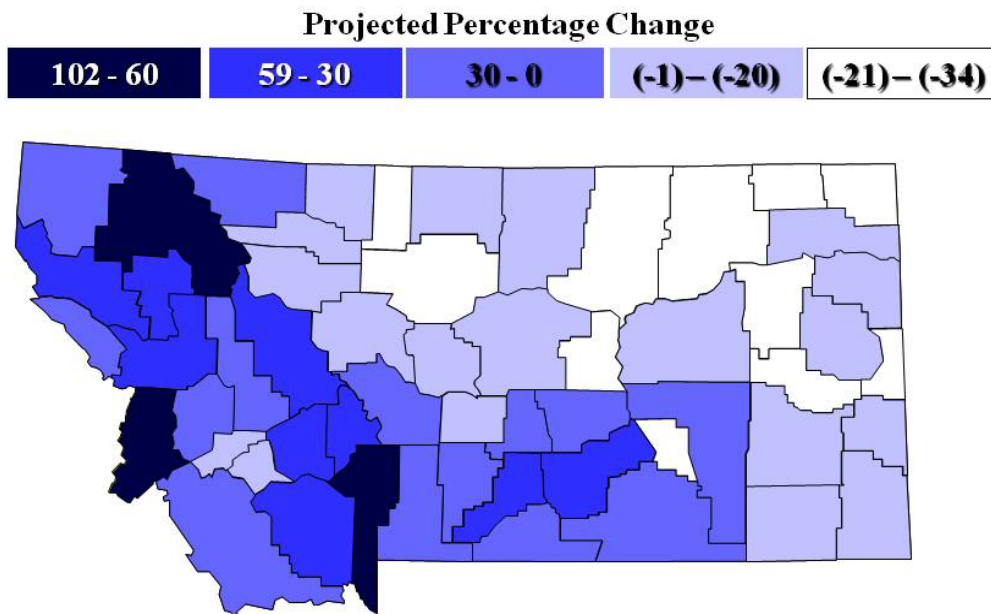


Figure 6: Montana County Population Growth Projections (Data Source: CEIC, 2010)

In 2010, Montana’s population was 50 percent male and 50 percent female with a median age of 39 years. Children under 18 years of age accounted for 22.5 percent of the population and 14.6 percent of the population was over age 65 (Figure 7).

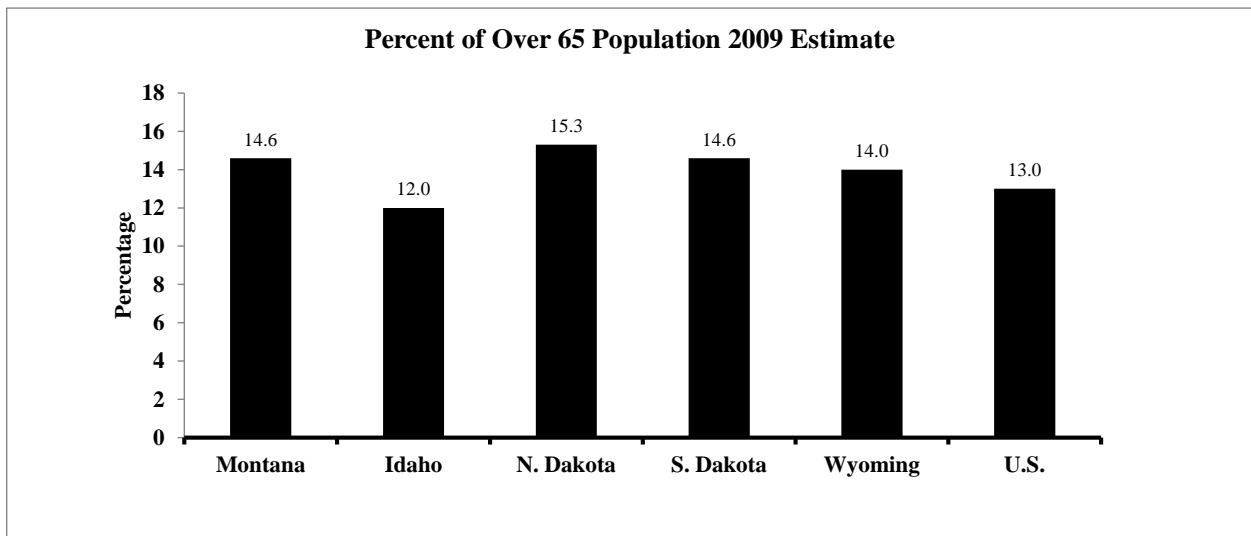


Figure 7: Population Over 65 Years of Age (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

Montana is also aging. By 2030, the share of the population 65 and older is projected to be 25.8 percent (Figure 8), the third highest percentage in the nation after Wyoming and New Mexico.

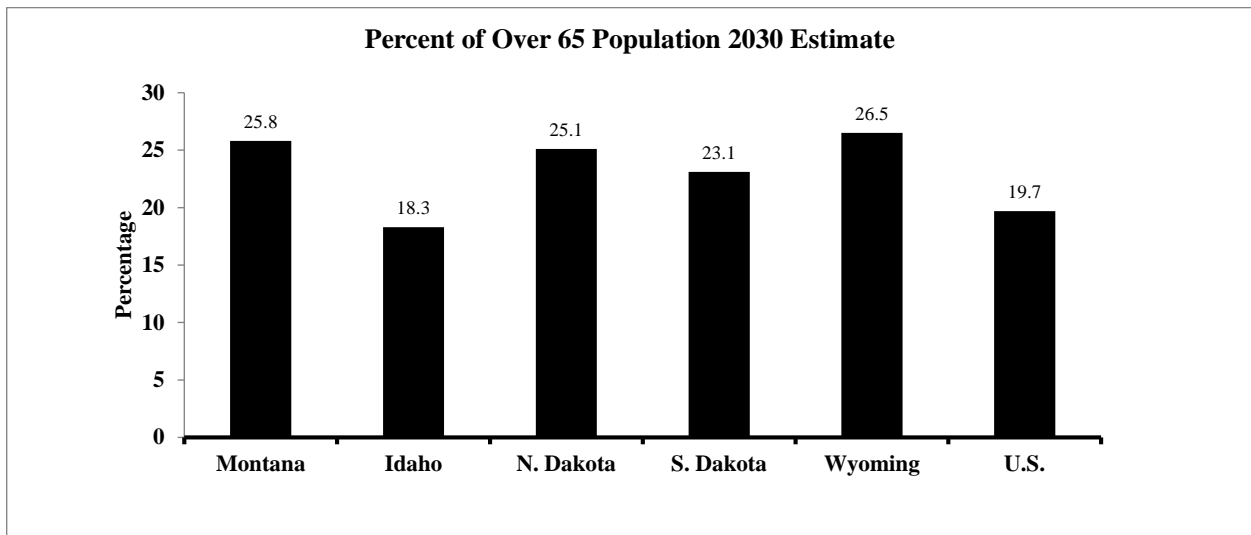


Figure 8: Projected Population Over 65 Years of Age (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

3.1.2. Population Density

Statewide population density in Montana is estimated to be 6.7 people per square mile in 2009, similar to neighboring states but much lower than the national average of 86.8 people per square mile (Figure 9).

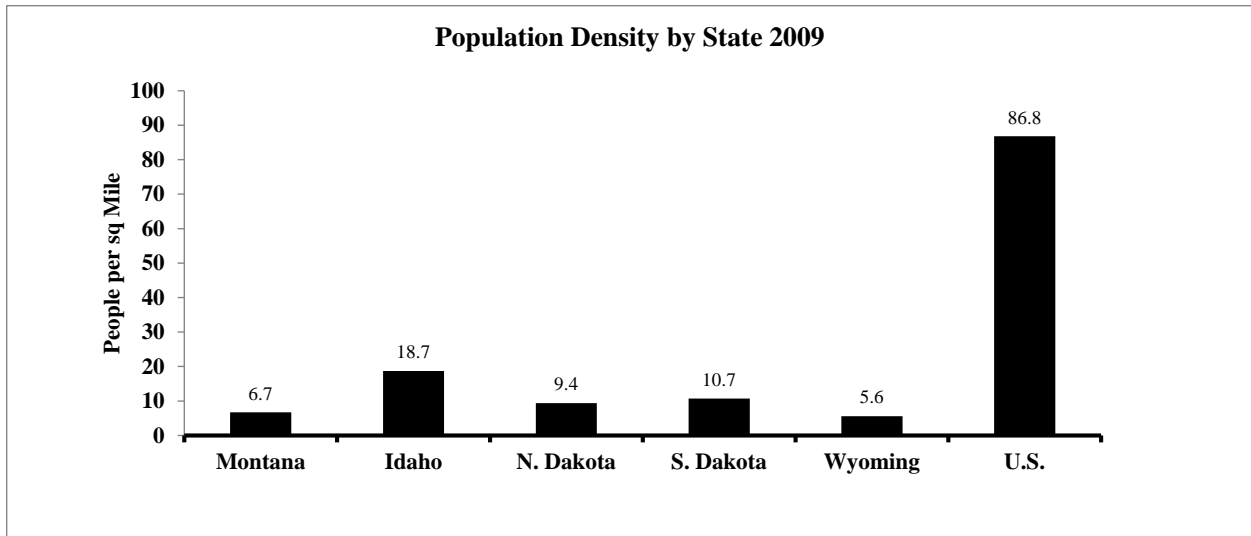


Figure 9: Population Density (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

Population density is not uniform across Montana; 23 of 56 counties (41 percent) had 2.0 or fewer people per square mile and 22 of 56 counties (39 percent) had between 2.1 and 6.0 people per square mile. Six of 56 counties (11 percent) had between 6.1 and 20.0 people per square mile, and only five of 56 counties (9 percent) had more than 20.1 people per square mile (Figure 10).

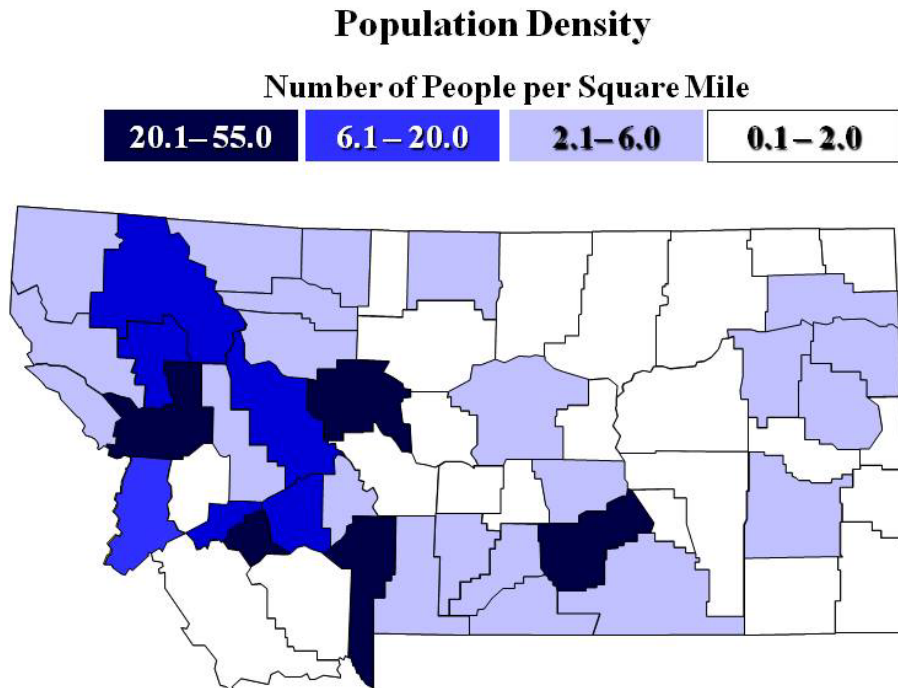


Figure 10: Population Density (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

Using a higher resolution than the county level provides further insight into the wide range of community types in Montana. Figure 11 shows population densities at the census block level.

Montana Population Density -- 2000

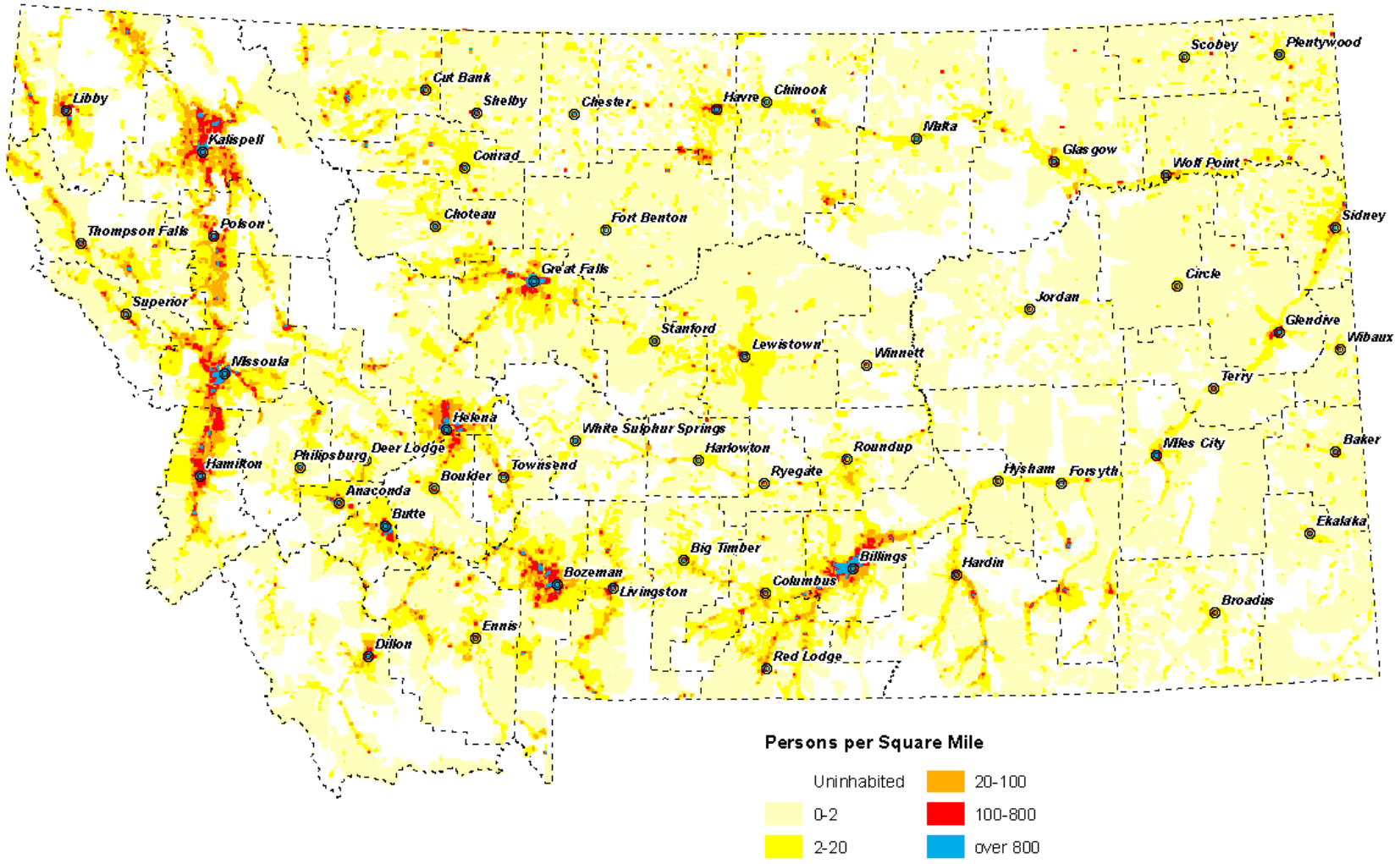


Figure 11: Population Density at the Census Block Level (Source: MT NRIS, 2000)

Figure 12 categorizes the spatial population density data from the map in Figure 11. For the census block level, 62 percent of Montanans live in densities of 800 people per square mile or higher, which accounts for 0.1 percent of the land area. In contrast, 82 percent of the land area in Montana has a population density of less than one person per square mile.

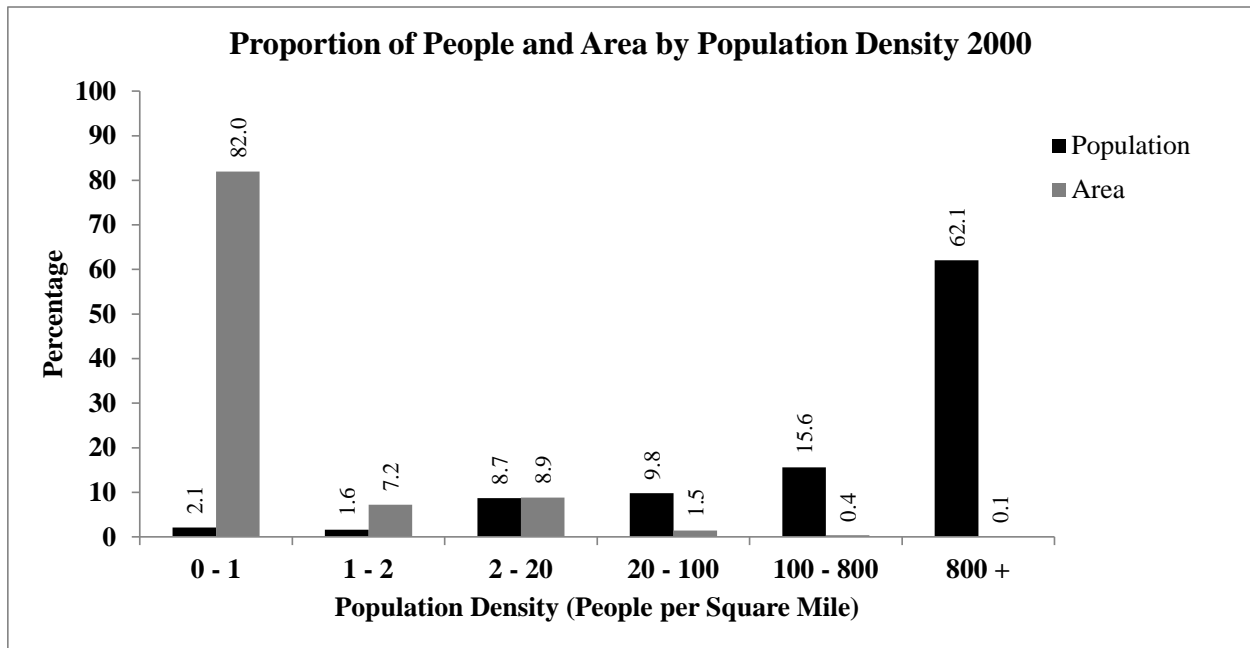


Figure 12: Proportion of Population and Area by Population Density Category (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2001).

City sizes vary considerably in Montana. The ten largest incorporated locations (Table 1) range in size from Billings, the most populous with 105,845 people, to Whitefish with 8,400 people. Most of the places in Table 1 are cities. The exceptions are Anaconda and Butte, each of which has a form of government that combines functions of the city and county. In these cases the incorporated area includes all or most of the county population living within the incorporated boundary of the combined city–county government. The county population figures are also shown in Table 1 to provide a sense of the population in the surrounding area.

Table 1: Top 10 Incorporated Place by Population (2009 Estimates)

City (County)	Population	Population of County
Billings (Yellowstone)	105,845	144,797
Missoula (Missoula)	68,876	108,623
Great Falls (Cascade)	59,366	82,178
Bozeman (Gallatin)	39,282	90,343
Butte–Silver Bow* (Silver Bow)	32,268	32,949
Helena (Lewis & Clark)	29,939	61,942
Kalispell (Flathead)	21,640	89,624
Havre (Hill)	9,656	16,632
Anaconda–Deer Lodge* (Dear Lodge)	8,792	8,792
Whitefish (Flathead)	8,400	89,624

Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010

*Consolidated City/County

The largest counties show a similar population disparity. Yellowstone County population is estimated to be 144,797, making it the largest in the state (Table 2). Lincoln County is ranked 10th, with 18,717 people. The least populated of Montana's 56 counties is Petroleum County, which has only 440 people.

Table 2: Top 10 Counties by Population (2009 Estimates)

Counties	Population
Yellowstone	144,797
Missoula	108,623
Gallatin	90,343
Flathead	89,624
Cascade	82,178
Lewis & Clark	61,942
Ravalli	40,431
Silver Bow	32,949
Lake	28,605
Lincoln	18,717

Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010

To further categorize Montana residents by size of community, populations were distributed among communities designated by categories defined by Montana Code Annotated as urbanized (>50,000), small urban (5,000–50,000), and rural (<5,000). Populations of communities in the first two categories are listed in Appendix A.

Montana has three urbanized areas: Billings, Missoula and Great Falls. These urbanized areas have populations greater than 50,000 (see Table 1).

Fourteen communities have a population of at least 5,000 people but fewer than 50,000. These communities are known as small urban areas. Note that by USDOT definitions these would be

considered rural communities since they are under 50,000. Bozeman is the most populated small urban area, with 39,282 people; Polson is the smallest, with 5,231 people.

There are 112 incorporated areas in Montana (towns, cities, or villages) categorized as rural areas (smaller than 5,000). Hamilton is the largest rural incorporated community, with 4,974 people, and Ismay is the smallest, with 25 residents. These rural incorporated areas combine with the unincorporated areas of the state to comprise 56 percent of the population.

The proportions of the population in Montana living in the three classifications described (urbanized areas, small urban areas, and rural areas) are shown in Figure 13. Twenty-four percent of Montanans live in urbanized areas, 20 percent in small urban areas, and 56 percent live in rural areas of under 5,000 in population.

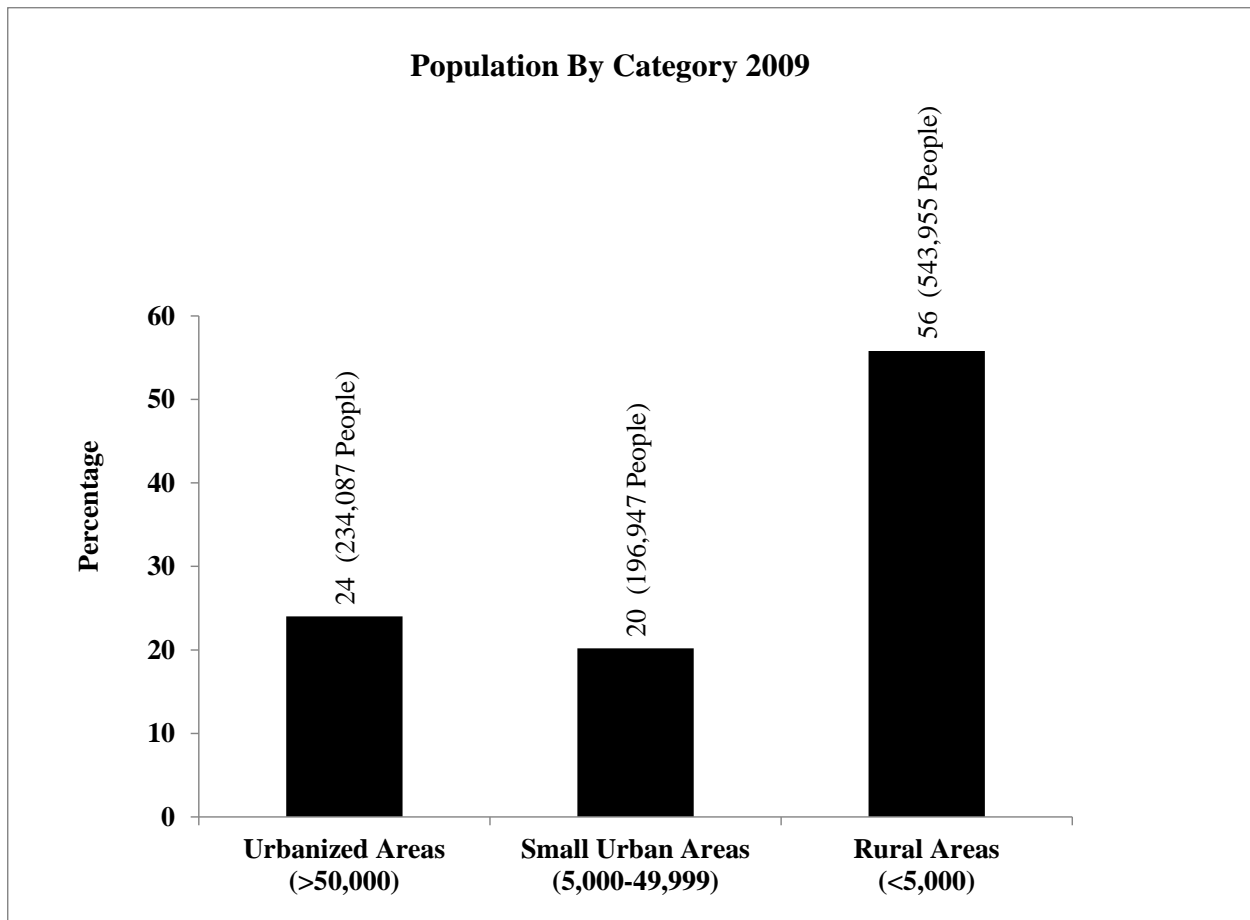


Figure 13: Population by Community Size (Data Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

3.1.3. Montana Health Care Facilities

Access to quality health care for Montana citizens could be considered a measure of livability. Furthermore, this could be related to transportation, particularly access to transit services. Local transit service may be important for providing access to nearby health care facilities. Intercity transit service may also be important since Montana’s rural nature means many residents need to travel long distances for health care services. The measure of a community’s health care is tied to

the number of physicians and health care facilities serving the community. Family medicine practitioners (primary care physicians) play an important role in a rural state like Montana. Montana ranks 35th nationally in the number of family medicine physicians per capita, with 87 per 100,000 people. The national average is 120 per 100,000 people (Montana AHEC, 2010). Montana has nine counties with no physicians in active practice (Table 3). Moreover, five of the nine counties do not have any local public transportation system. More than 20 percent of the population of these counties is currently 65 years or older.

Table 3: Elderly Population and Transit Access for Counties with No Physicians

Counties	Population Estimates 2009	65 or Older Population Estimates 2009	Public Transportation System	Hospital
Carter	1,202	248 (20.6%)	Yes	Yes
Garfield	1,173	212 (18.1%)	Yes	Yes
Golden Valley	1,057	226 (21.4%)	Yes	No
Judith Basin	2,051	429 (20.9%)	No	No
McCone	1,624	354 (21.8%)	No	Yes
Petroleum	440	94 (21.4%)	No	No
Powder River	1,664	356 (21.4%)	Yes	No
Treasure	612	139 (22.7%)	No	No
Wibaux	897	218 (24.3%)	No	No

Data Source: Montana AHEC, 2010.

Six of the nine counties listed in Table 3 do not have a hospital located within the county. Jefferson County, not listed in the table, has no hospital, but does have a physician. Some specialized medical needs can only be handled in larger hospitals. Access to these specialized services can require long travel distances for some rural communities in Montana. The American College of Surgeons (2010) categorizes hospitals according to their capabilities related to trauma care, with Level 1 being the highest level of care available. Although specific to trauma care, this categorization is used by the industry to provide a measure of general capabilities available at a hospital. There are no Level 1 trauma centers in Montana. Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula each have a Level 2 trauma center. Bozeman, Butte, and Kalispell have Level 3 trauma centers (Figure 14). The remaining 44 counties in Montana have some sort of hospital or clinic.

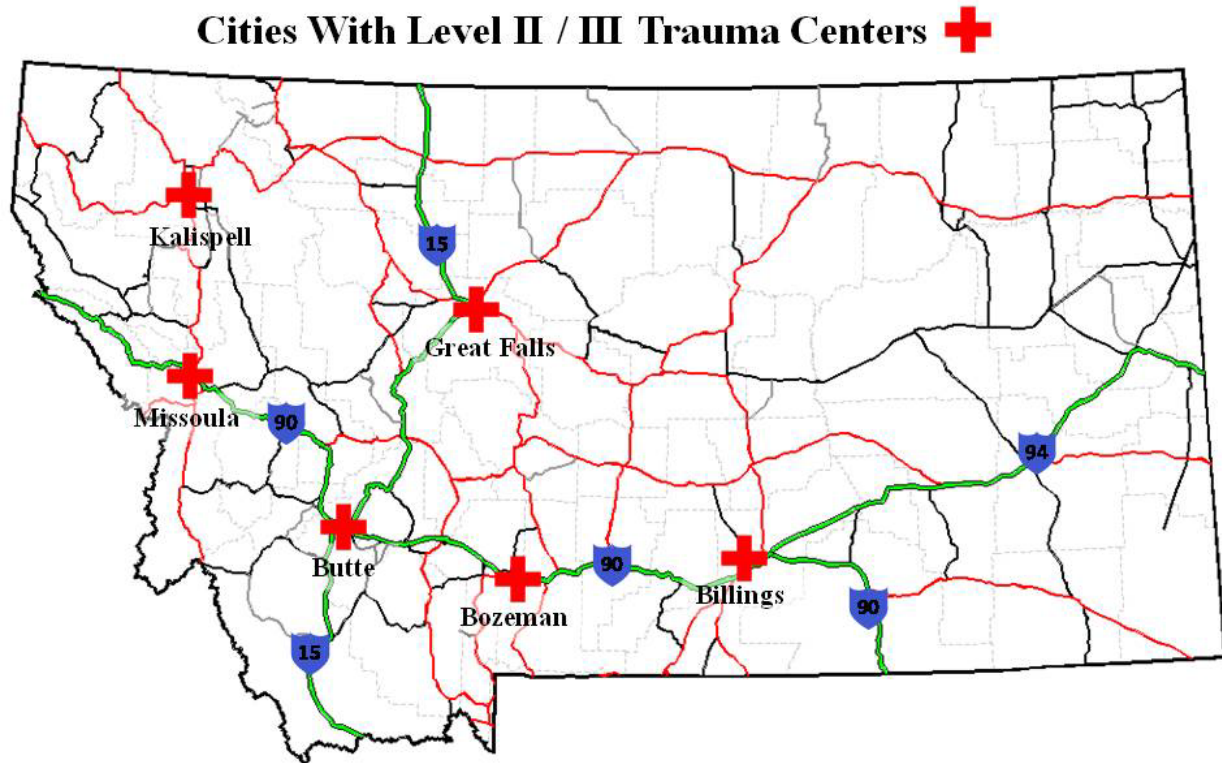


Figure 14: Major Medical Facilities (Data Source: American College of Surgeons, 2010)

3.2. Transportation Infrastructure

This section contains information about Montana's roads, airports, and freight infrastructure. Also considered within this section are infrastructure safety, vehicle registration data, commuting information, and transportation energy information.

3.2.1. Transportation Infrastructure of Montana

A majority of roads in Montana are rated in good or very good condition under Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reporting requirements. Compared to surrounding states, Montana has the lowest number of roads in mediocre or poor condition (Figure 15). Road condition is a measure of how smooth the pavement surface is using the international roughness index and present serviceability.

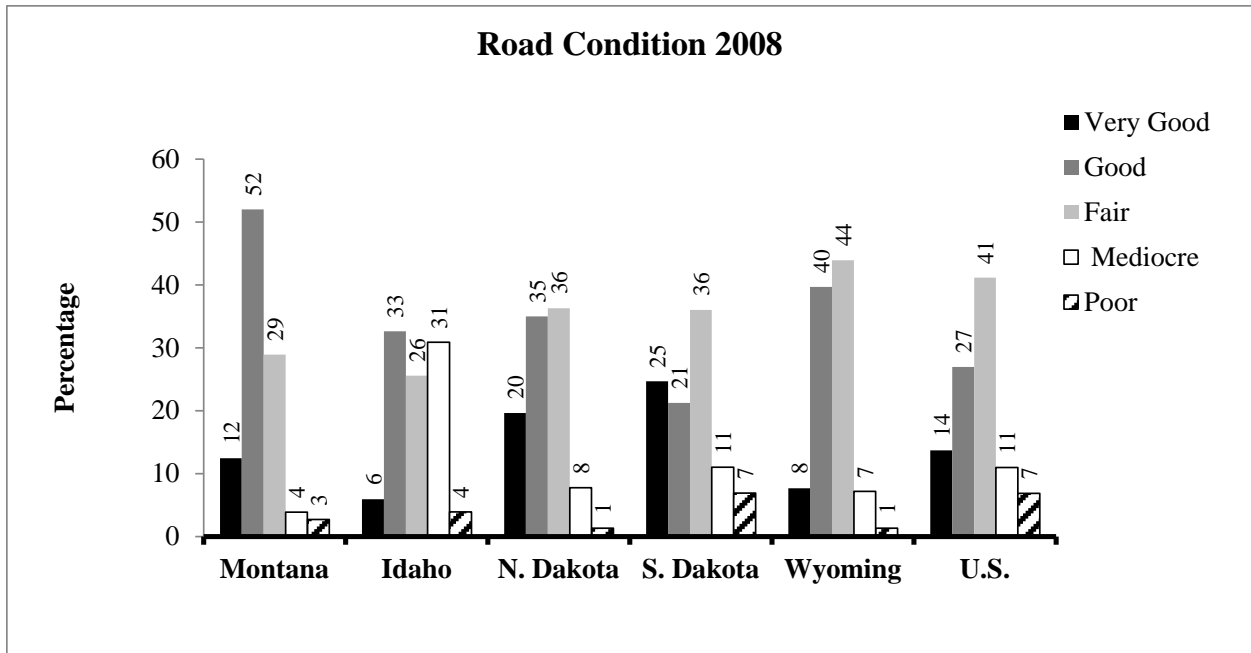


Figure 15: Road Condition Ratings by Percentage of Total Miles (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana has more public air transportation facilities (127) than Idaho (123), North Dakota (89), South Dakota (74), and Wyoming (41). Figure 16 below shows the totals and types of public use air transportation facilities for Montana and the surrounding states.

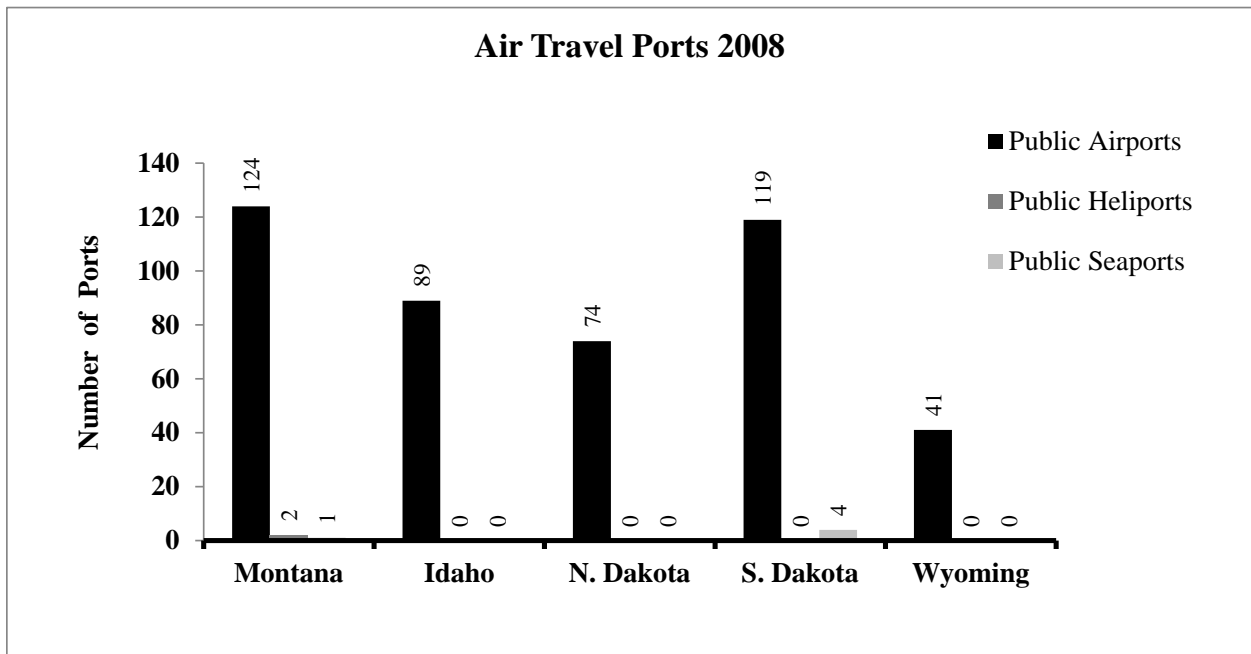


Figure 16: Air Travel Ports (Data Source: FAA, 2012)

Montana has the lowest number of freight shipments originating in the state in terms of dollar value compared to surrounding states, but it is third in tonnage and second in ton-miles (Figure 17).

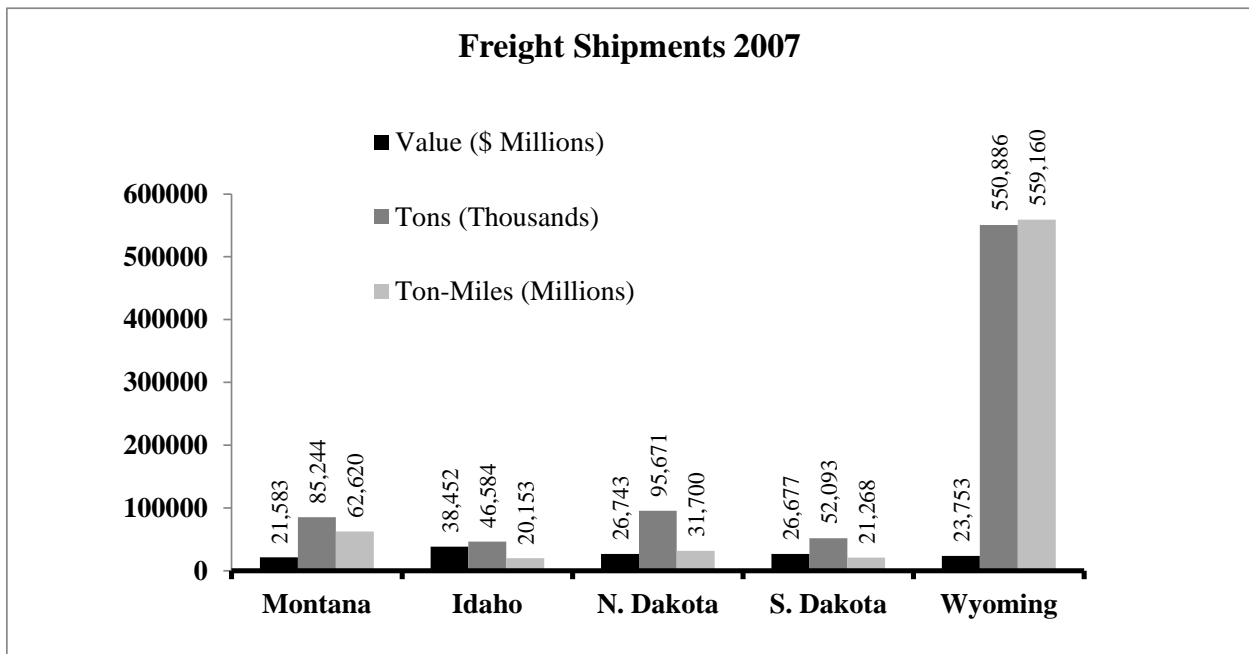


Figure 17: Annual Freight Shipments by State of Origination (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

3.2.2. Safety

In 2008, Montana had 229 traffic fatalities. Total fatality figures from Montana and other states are shown in Figure 18. These figures may provide a benchmark but due to variations in population and road mileage, they are not an adequate standard for comparing the safety of Montana’s roads with those of other states.

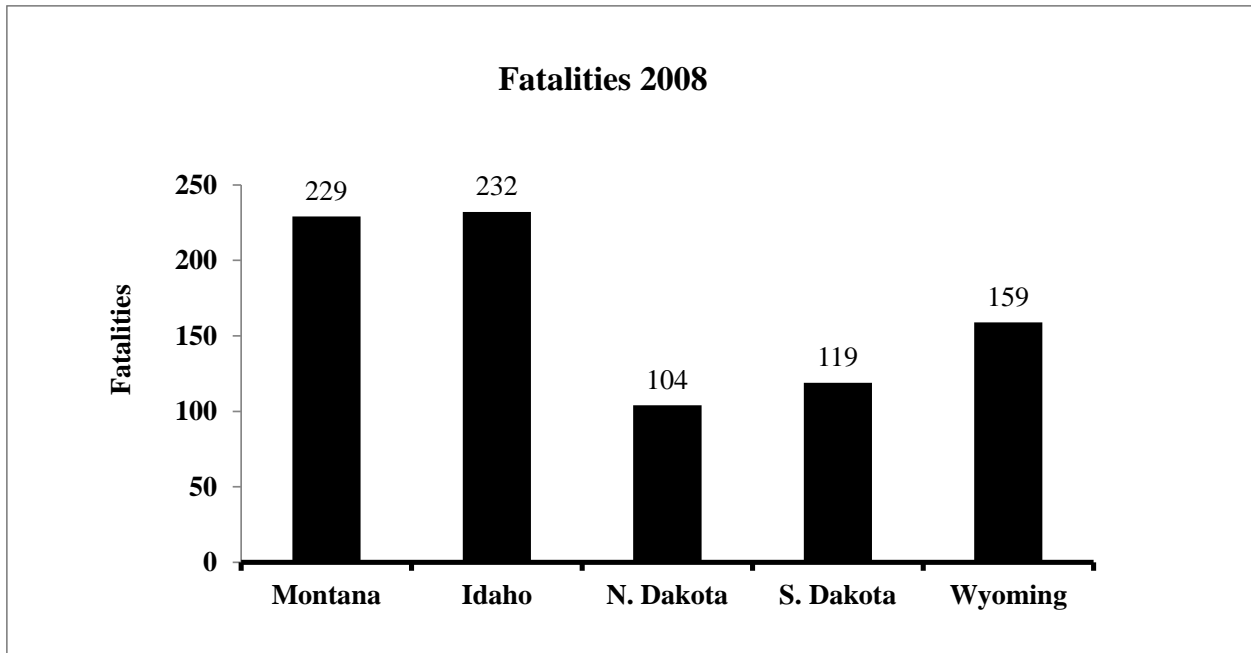


Figure 18: Total Road Fatalities (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

3.2.3. Mobility

Montana has more workers per capita than the national average but fewer than North Dakota, South Dakota, or Wyoming (Figure 19).

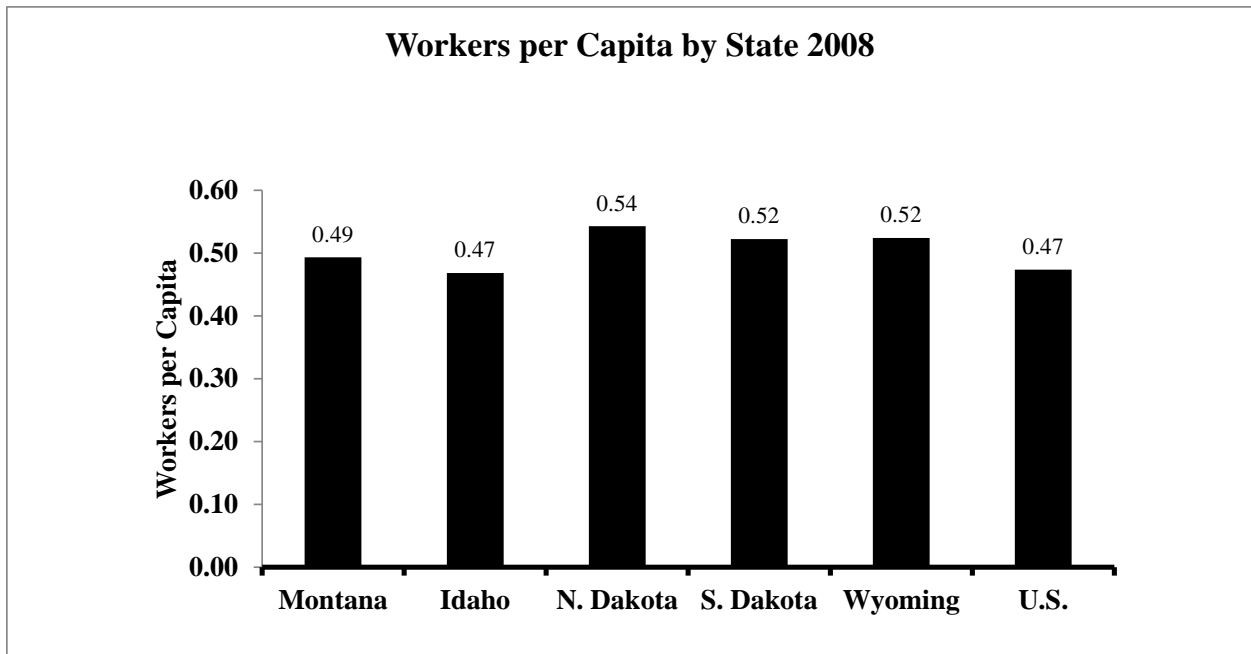


Figure 19: Workers per Capita (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana has the lowest percentage of people who report driving to work alone in a vehicle (72.8 percent) compared to surrounding states, and a slightly lower percentage than the national average (75.5 percent). Montana and the surrounding states all have a substantially smaller percentage of commuters using public transportation than the national average of five percent (Figure 20). In Montana, 11.4 percent of the people commute in a car, truck, or van pool, slightly higher than the national average (10.7 percent). Montana’s performance is higher than surrounding states and the nation as a whole for other transportation management strategies such as walking (5.5 percent) and working at home (6.5 percent). Nationally 2.8 percent walk to work and 4.1 percent report working from home.

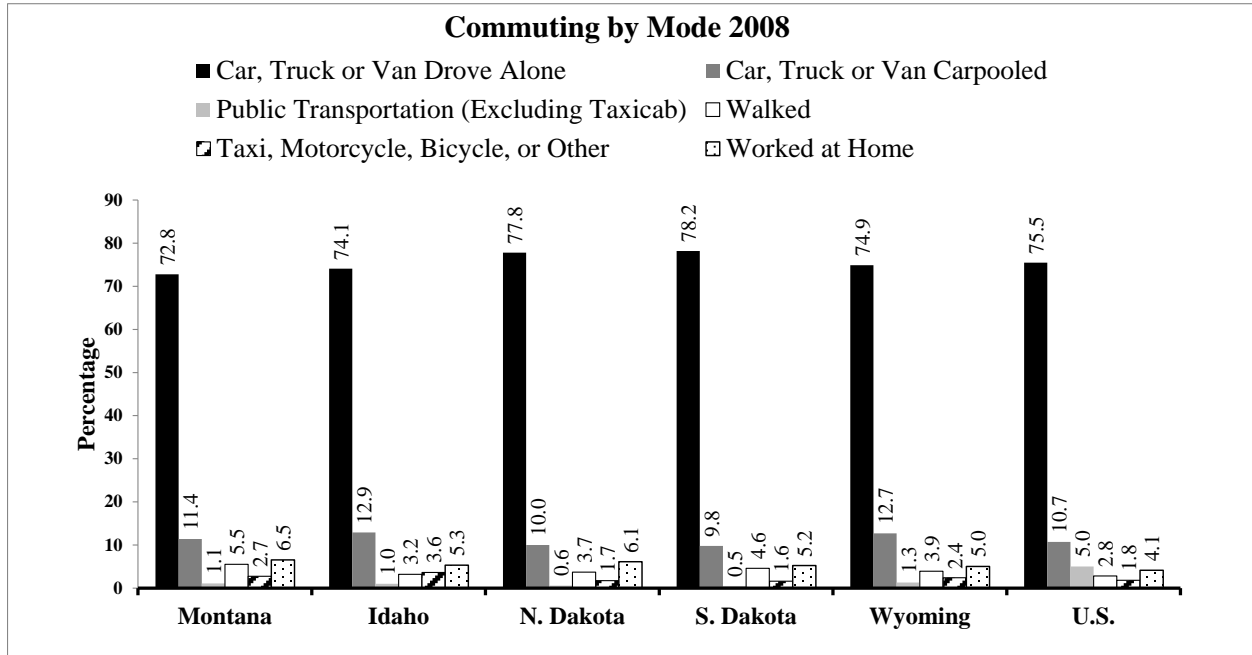


Figure 20: Commuting by Mode (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana and the surrounding states all have shorter average travel times to work than the national average by at least five minutes (Figure 21). Idaho’s commute time is five minutes less than the national average of 25.5 minutes, while Montana’s is 7.4 minutes less and North Dakota’s is nearly 10 minutes less.

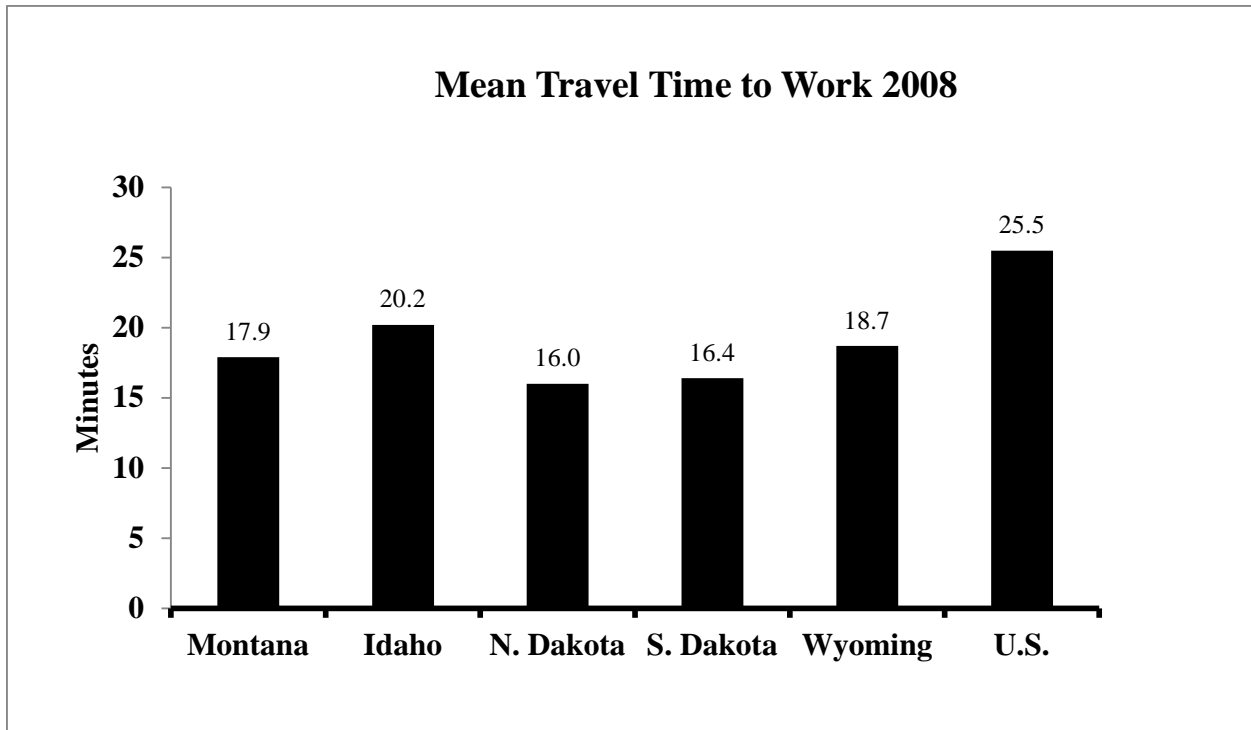


Figure 21: Mean Travel Time to Work (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana, with 1.05 registered vehicles per capita, has a vehicle ownership rate higher than the national average of 0.83 vehicles per person. Per capita vehicle ownership is even greater in North Dakota (1.14 vehicles), South Dakota (1.18 vehicles), and Wyoming (1.26 vehicles). Idaho has slightly more registered vehicles per capita than the nation, with 0.89 vehicles (Figure 22).

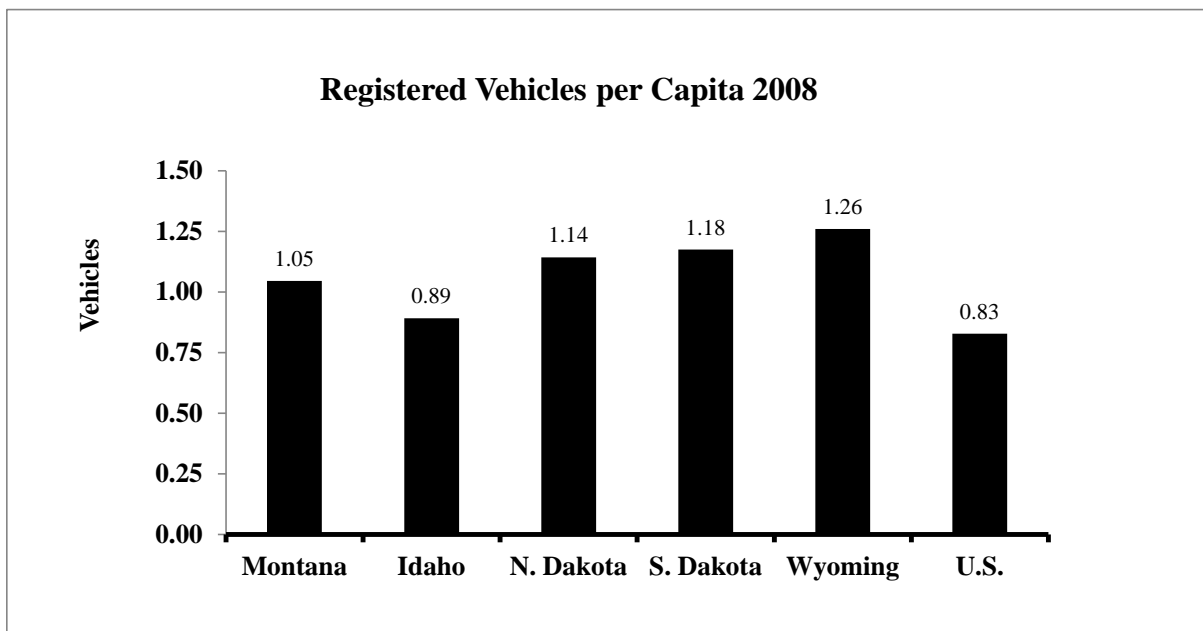


Figure 22: Registered Vehicles per Capita (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana has the most licensed drivers per capita (0.764 drivers) of all surrounding states, and substantially more than the national average (0.685 drivers) (Figure 23).

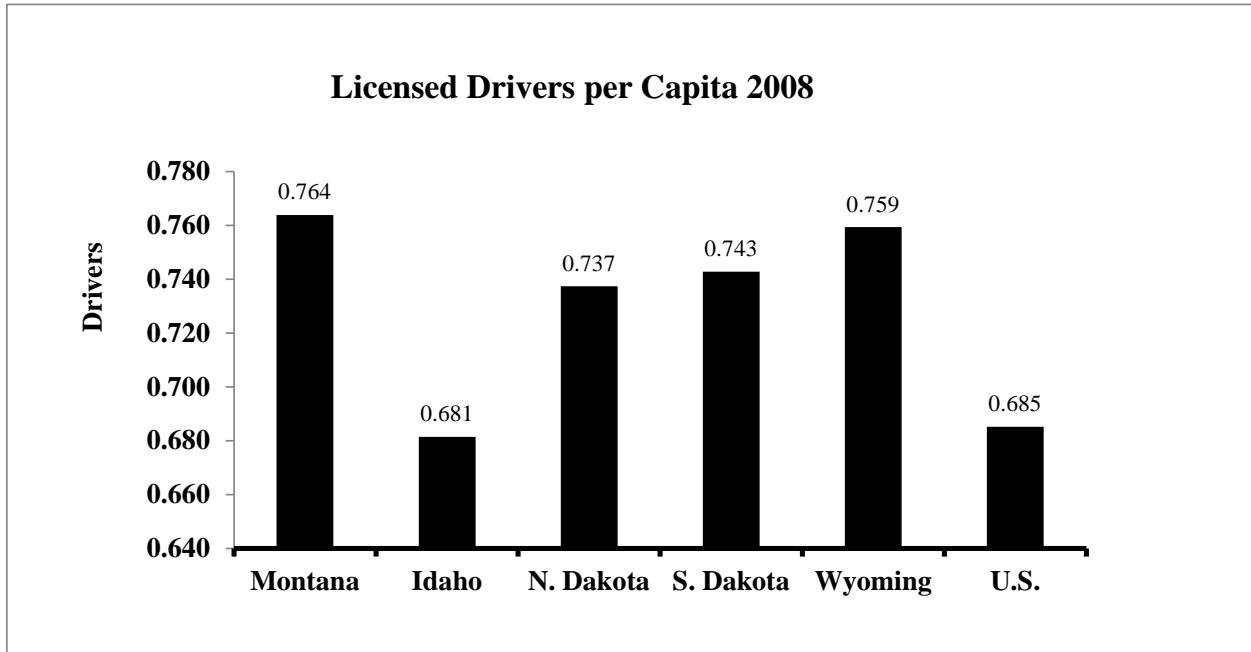


Figure 23: Licensed Drivers per Capita (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

In 2008, Montana reported a similar number of vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) per capita (11,176 miles) as all surrounding states except Wyoming (17,735). However, the national per capita VMT of 9,779 miles is less than each of these states (Figure 24).

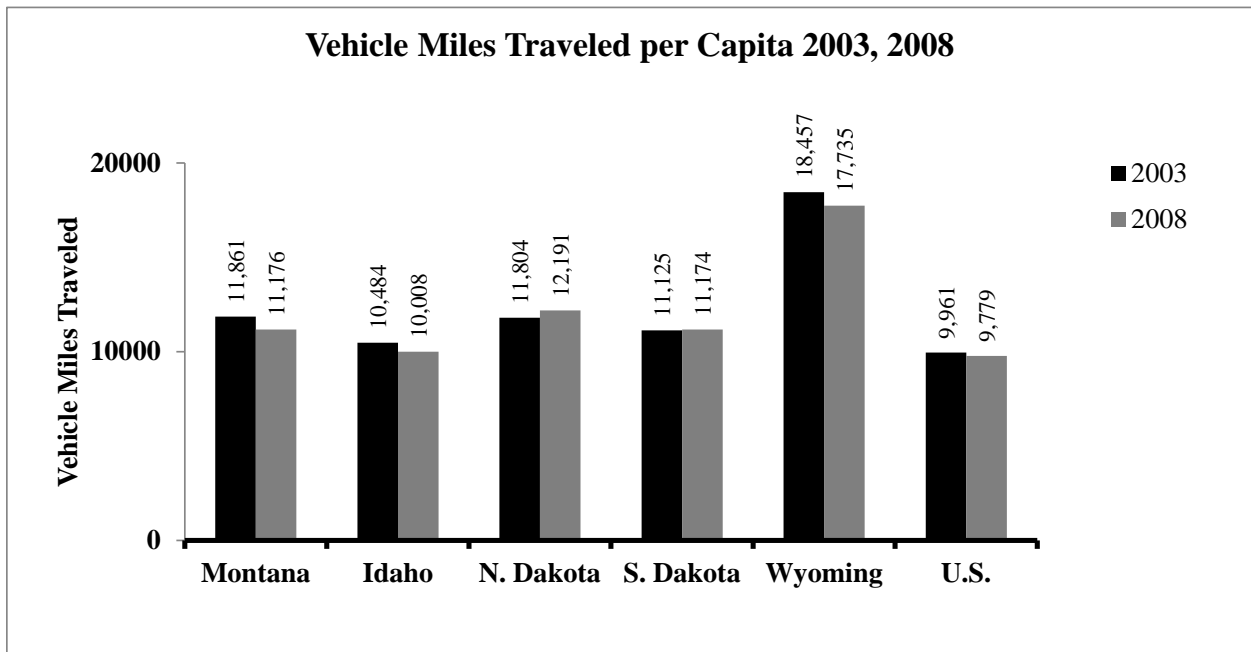


Figure 24: Vehicle-Miles Traveled (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

Montana has more transit systems per capita than the national average, and the most among surrounding states (Figure 25). This is the sum of all transportation establishments including public transit, urban transit centers, chartered buses, school buses, interurban buses, and taxi services. Not included are scenic tour buses, sightseeing buses or carpool services.

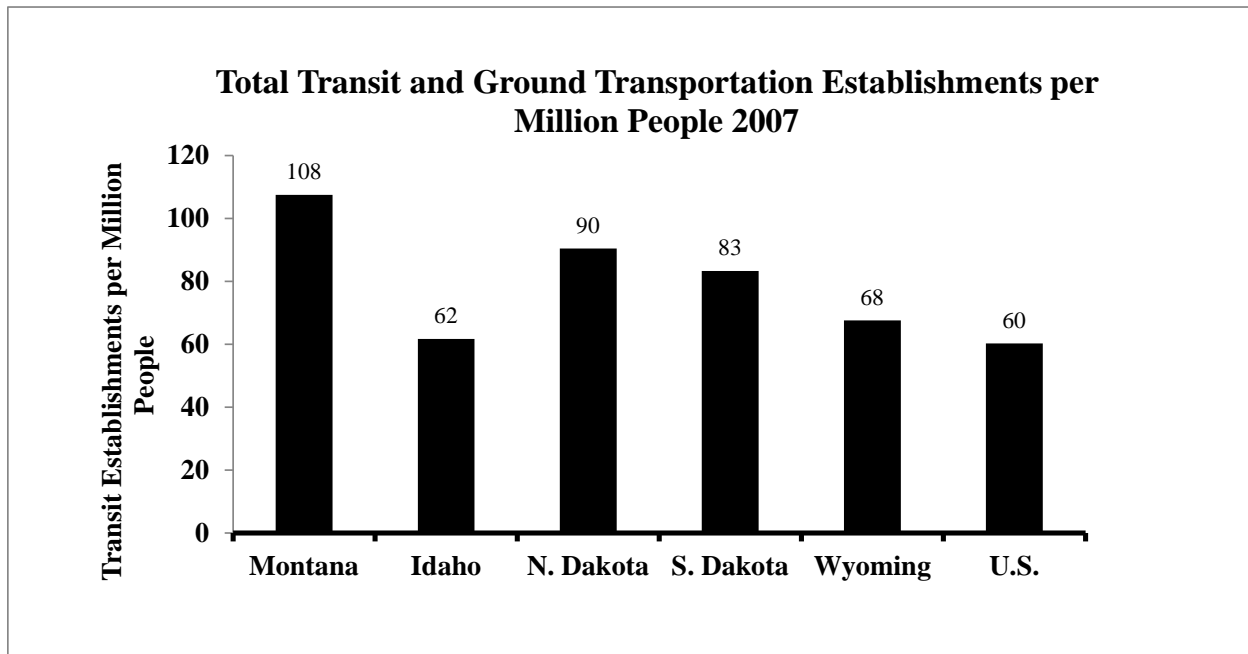


Figure 25: Transit Systems (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

State and local governments in Montana spend \$843 per person on transportation, a figure similar to what is spent in North Dakota and South Dakota. Idaho spends \$572 per person. The national average is \$718. Wyoming spends much more per capita on transportation than surrounding states or the national average. Spending on transit, however, is much lower per capita in Montana and surrounding states than the national average of \$156. Bicycle and pedestrian expenditures were not tracked by this data source (Figure 26).

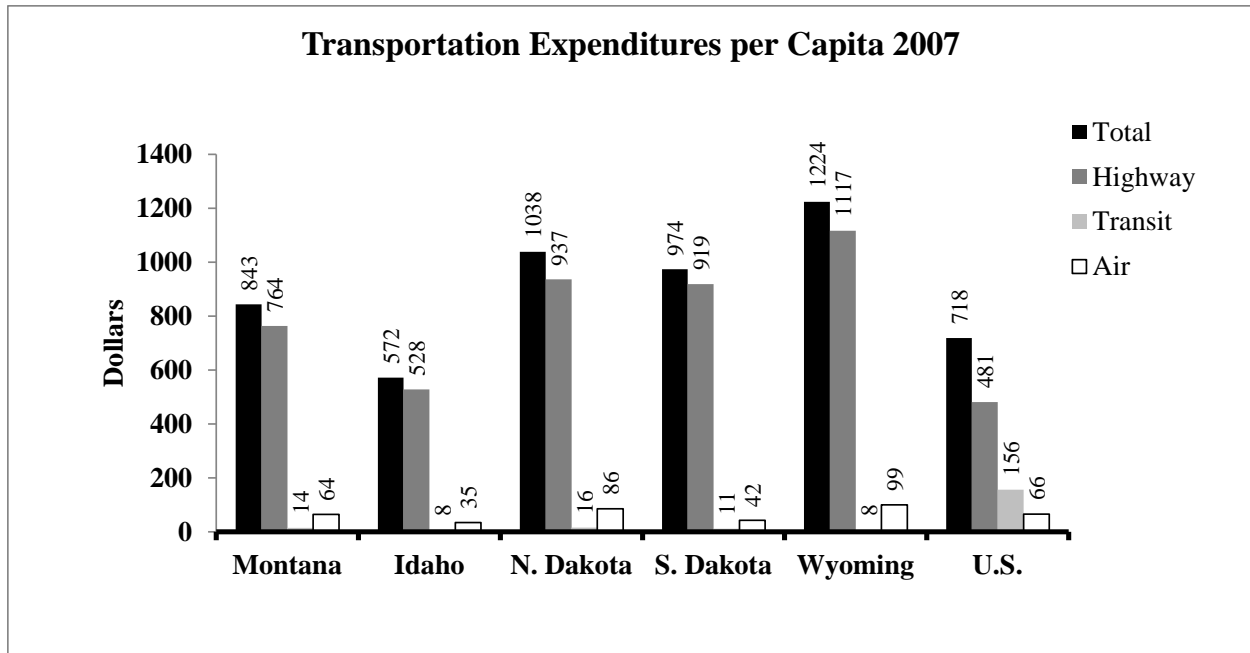


Figure 26: Annual Government Transportation Expenditures (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

3.2.4. Transportation Energy

Montana consumes more transportation energy per capita (134 million BTUs) than the national average (97 million BTUs). However, this is only about half as much as Wyoming (242 million BTUs). Idaho uses slightly less than the national average of transportation energy per capita (91.3 million BTUs) (Figure 27).

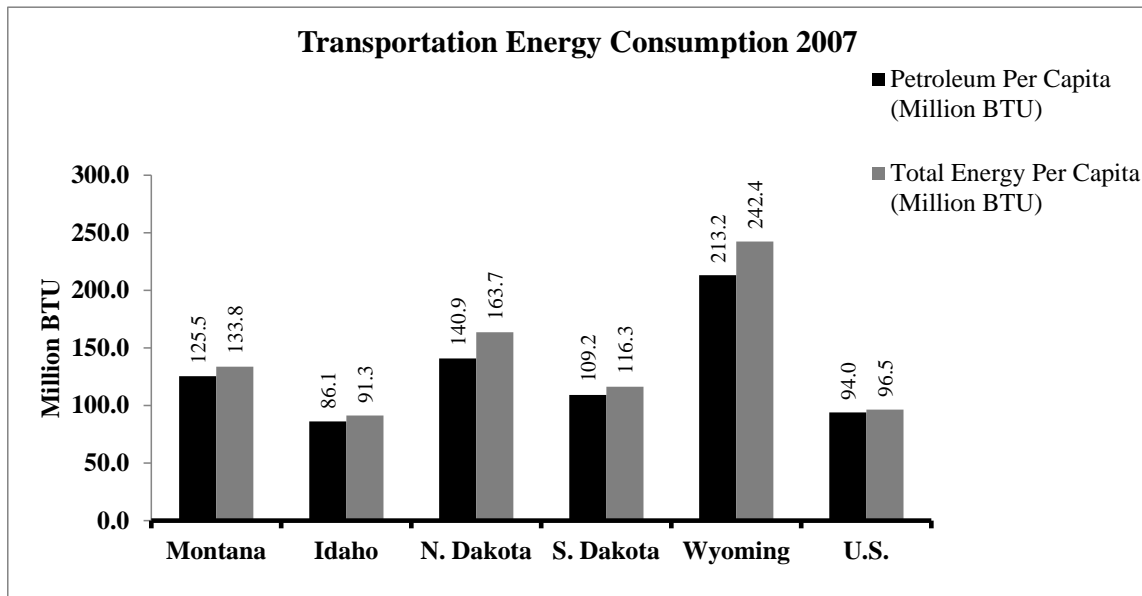


Figure 27: Transportation Energy Consumption (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

The number of alternatively fueled vehicles registered in Montana (3,869) is similar to what is reported in surrounding states (between 3,500 and 4,000 vehicles). Wyoming is the exception, with fewer than 2,700 vehicles. Most of these vehicles use ethanol (Figure 28).

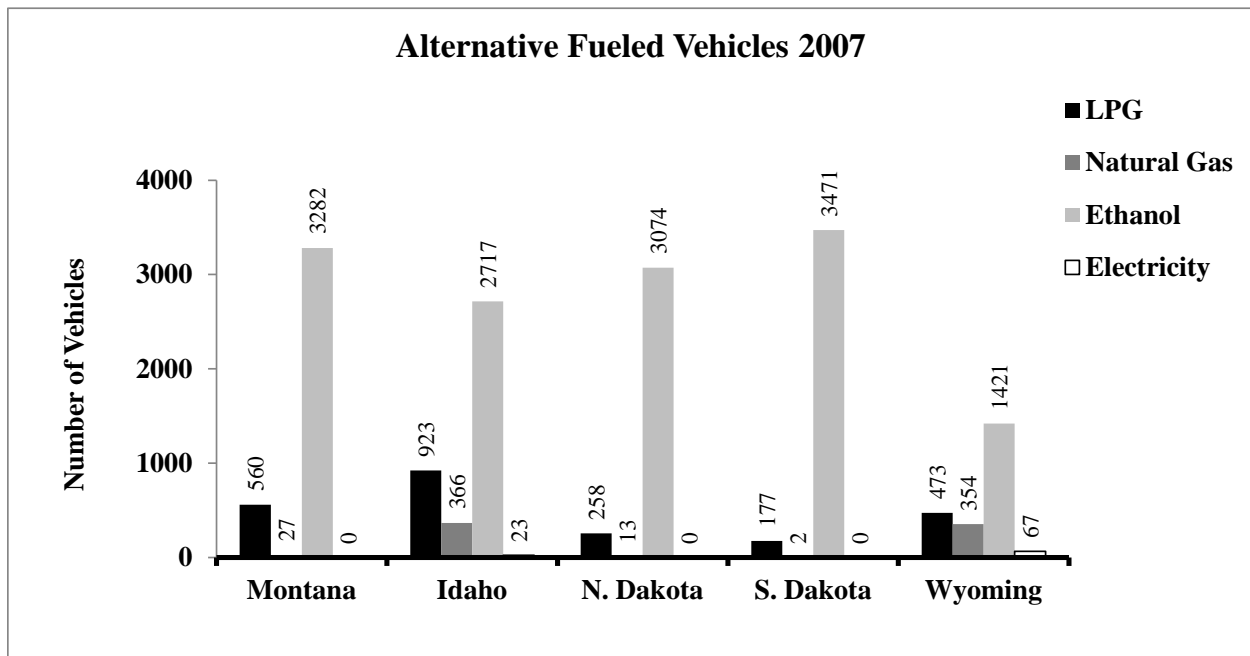


Figure 28: Alternative Fueled Vehicles (Data Source: USDOT RITA, 2009)

3.3. Alternate Modes of Transportation

This section describes public transportation data for the state of Montana. Air and rail service information is also discussed. Quality bicycle and pedestrian facility information could not be found.

3.3.1. Public Transportation

Typically the more populated areas in the state have the most public transportation options, but most counties offer some local bus transit service. Twelve counties report no form of local public transportation (Figure 29).

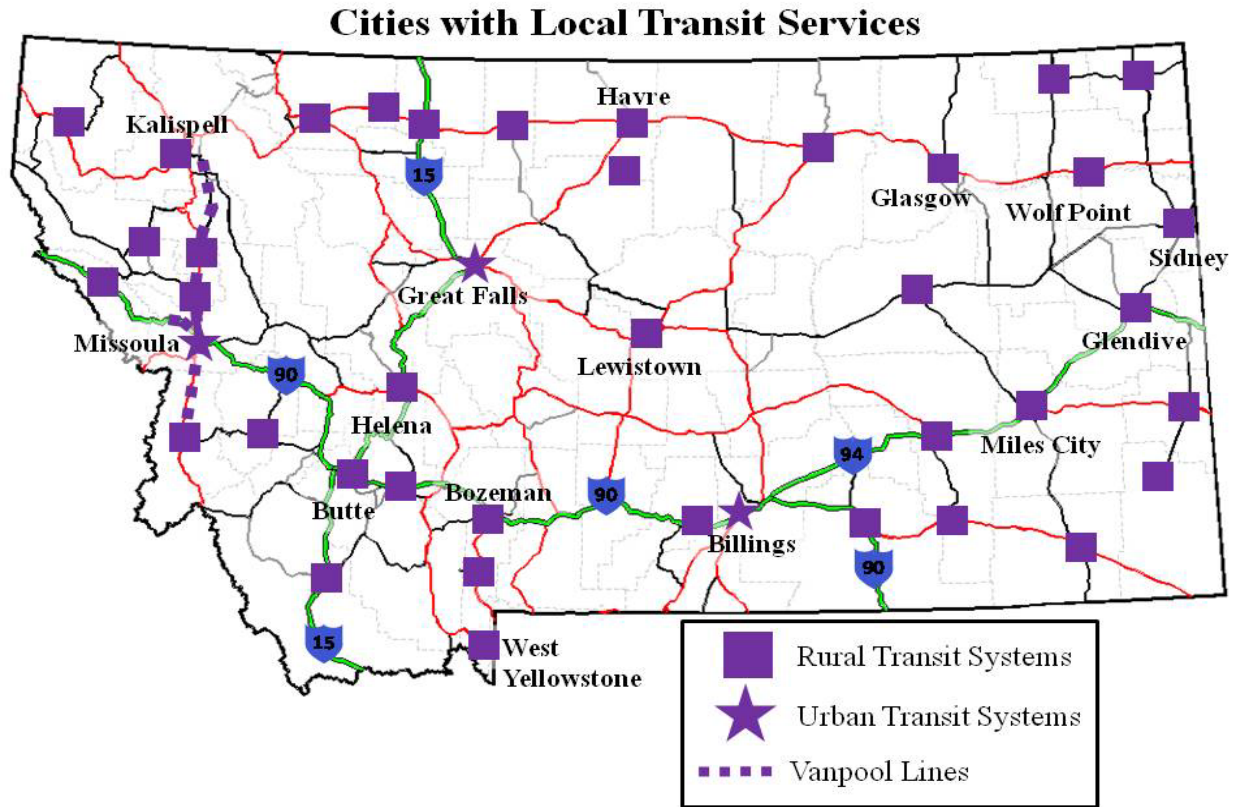


Figure 29: Local Public Transportation

While local transit services provide public transportation within communities, public transportation options between cities are mostly limited to intercity bus service. Montana has 34 cities/towns with an intercity bus stop. The total population of the cities/towns with an intercity bus stop is 436,799, which represents about 45 percent of the population (Appendix A). Intercity bus stops for the purpose of this report are defined as stops listed by the intercity bus providers (Greyhound, Rimrock Stages/Trailways, and Salt Lake City Express). Many more communities are connected to the intercity bus service through routes provided by a local transit service connecting to the nearest intercity bus stop. For example North Central Montana Transit, discussed previously, connects Havre and the surrounding communities to Great Falls. Intercity rail service (Amtrak) in the northern part of the state connects towns along the High Line (Figure 30). The central part of Montana is only sparsely served by intercity buses. Another intercity transit option is the essential air service described in the next section.

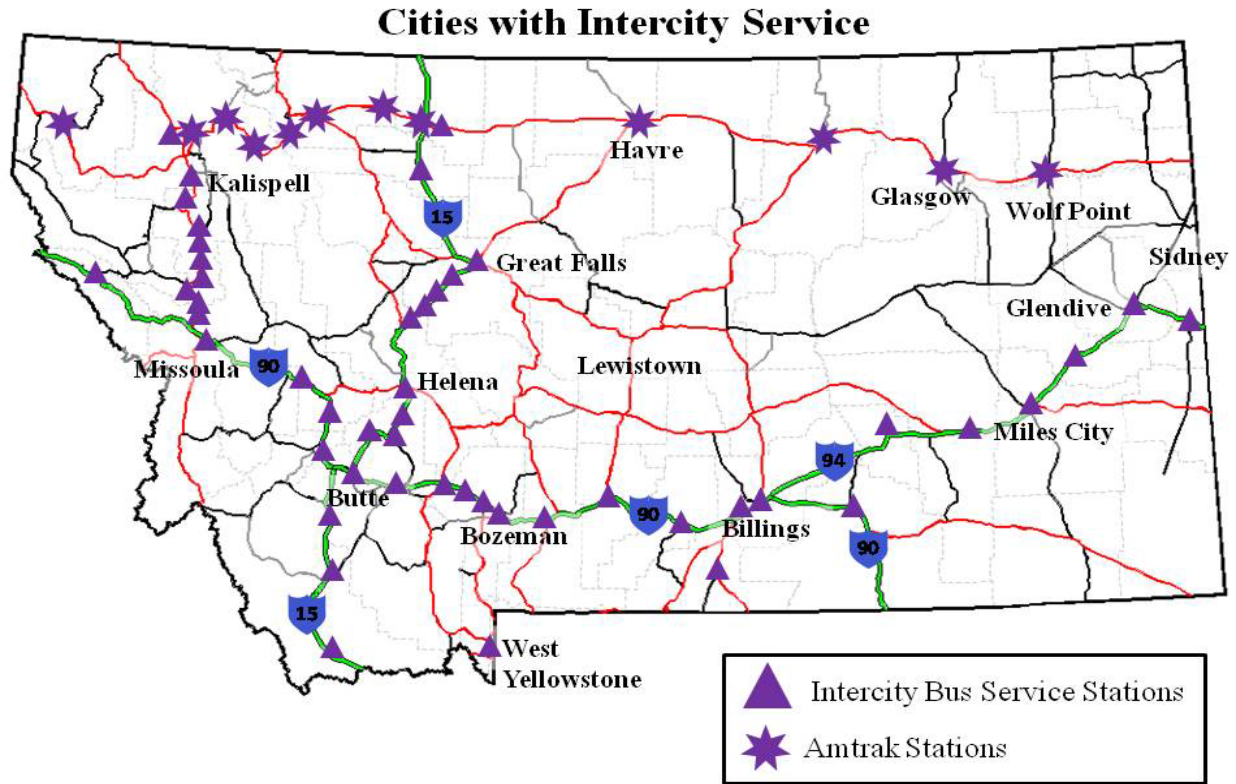


Figure 30: Intercity Bus and Rail Systems in Montana

3.3.2. Air Services

Montana has seven primary commercial service airports with 10,000 or more enplanements per year. These airports are located in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, and Missoula. In addition to these seven primary commercial service airports, Montana has eight communities—Havre, Glasgow, Wolf Point, Sidney, Glendive, Miles City, Lewistown, and West Yellowstone which are served by commercial air carriers through the USDOT Essential Air Service (EAS) program. The EAS program was established as part of the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 to ensure that communities that were served by certificated air carriers as of the date of deregulation could maintain a minimum level of scheduled air service with subsidy if necessary. West Yellowstone’s EAS service is only available however during the summer months. Montana has nine airports which currently have international customs services available; Butte, Bozeman, Del Bonita, Cut Bank, East Poplar, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, Scobey, and Sweetgrass. Montana also has a large number of private use airports located throughout the state. Since official records are not required for private use airports, the number can only be estimated currently at approximately 400. Figure 31 shows air service locations in Montana.

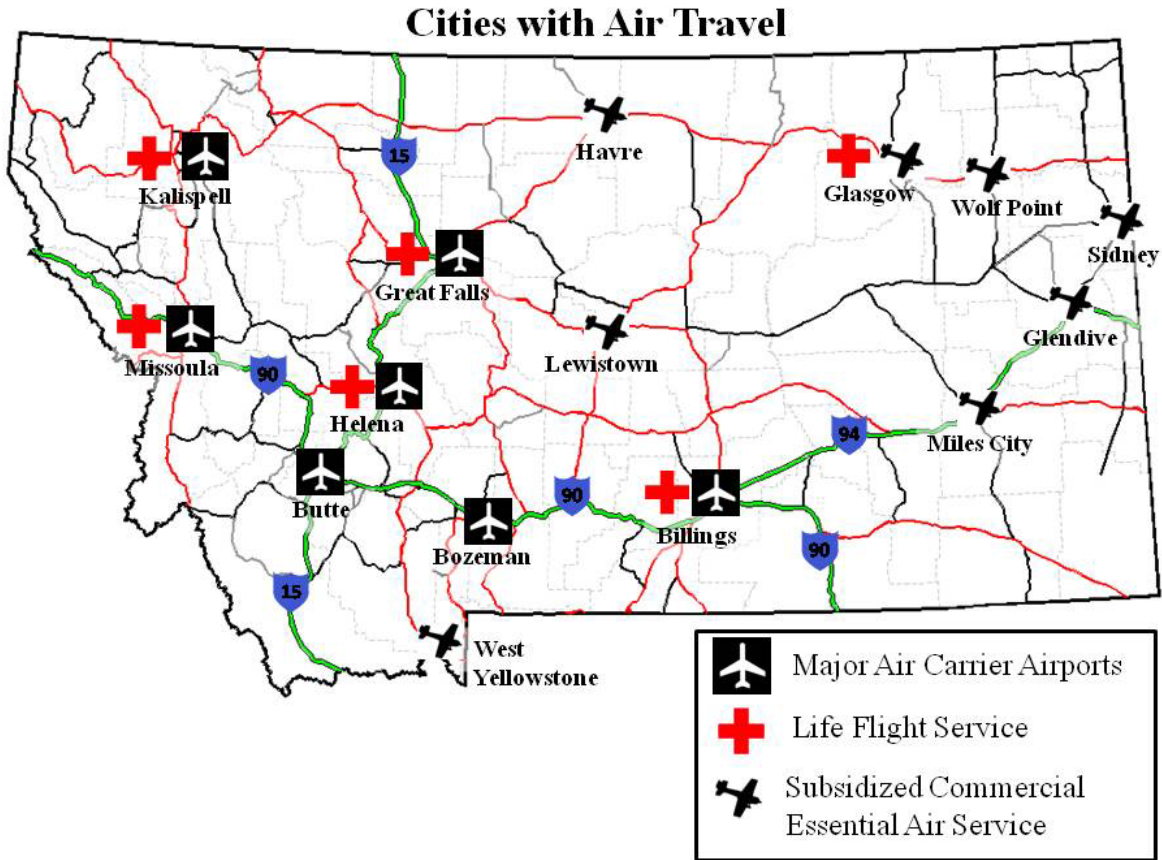


Figure 31: Air Travel (Data Source: USDOT Office of Aviation Analysis, 2010)

In addition to public use airports discussed above, Montana has hundreds of private airports and thousands of private airplanes. For those Montanans that use private aircraft for work and recreation travel, access to private airports can be very important to their quality of life.

3.4. Summary of Findings

Montana has some unique characteristics that may have a bearing on its measures of livability. There is a wide range of community types, both in size and growth rate. There are three urbanized areas, the largest of which is Billings, with 105,845 people. Small urban areas range in size from Bozeman, with 39,282 people, to Polson, which has 5,231 people. Rural areas include unincorporated areas and small incorporated communities ranging in size from Hamilton, with 4,974, to Ismay, which has just 25 residents. Over half of the state’s population lives in rural areas.

The range of community types can also be seen from a perspective of population density. Twenty-three of the 56 counties in Montana have two or fewer people per square mile. At the census block level, 82 percent of the land area has a population density of less than one person per square mile, while 62 percent of Montana residents live in population densities of 800 or more people per square mile.

From 2000 to 2009, 36 of Montana's 56 counties reported negative growth. At the extremes of population change, Treasure County lost 28.9 percent of its population while Gallatin County grew by 33.2 percent. Montana's population is aging. Projections indicate that by 2030 around 25.8 percent of Montanans will be over 65; this will be the third highest proportion of elderly residents of any state in the nation.

Some areas have limited access to health care. Montana has nine counties with no working physicians. Five of these nine counties have no public transportation and six of these counties have no hospitals.

Roads in Montana are in good condition compared to surrounding states. About 64.5 percent of the state's roads are categorized by FHWA reporting requirements as being in good or very good condition. Only 35.5 percent of the state's roads are deemed in fair, mediocre, or poor condition, which is better than surrounding states, where the range is from 45.4 percent for North Dakota to 60.3 percent for Idaho (the national average is 59.0 percent).

When comparing Montana and the four neighboring states for freight shipments originating from the state, Montana ranks fifth, third, and second in dollar value, tons, and ton-miles, respectively.

Typical of rural states, Montanans tend to drive more than the national average as evidenced by higher reported VMT (11,176 per year vs. 9,779 nationally), transportation expenses (\$843 per year vs. \$718 nationally), and transportation petroleum energy used (126 million BTUs per year vs. 94 million BTUs nationally).

Specific to work trips, Montanans have a shorter (in time) commute, with an average of 17.9 minutes, compared to the national average of 25.5 minutes. Also, Montana has a lower percentage of people who drive to work alone (72.8 percent) than surrounding states or the national average (75.5 percent). This could be due to higher proportions of Montanans who walk to work (5.5 percent) and work at home (6.5 percent) than the national average (2.8 percent walking and 4.1 percent working at home). The shorter work travel times coupled with higher VMT, transportation expenses, and energy use could be the result of lower congestion resulting in longer distances traveled to work at faster speeds and/or less work travel combined with more non-work travel.

Montana has more transit systems per capita (108) than surrounding states and more than the national average (60). Yet Montana (1.1 percent) and the surrounding states all have a smaller percentage of commuters who use public transportation than the national average (5.0 percent). Montana has 34 cities/towns with intercity bus service. The total population of the cities/towns served by intercity buses is 436,799, which is about 45 percent of the population.

4. TRANPLAN 21 COMMENTS

The Montana Department of Transportation developed a statewide transportation plan in 1995 called TranPlan 21. This plan is used to develop and implement policies with input from the public, stakeholders, and others. TranPlan 21 is updated regularly with input from the public and other stakeholders through surveys on perceptions of the transportation system in Montana (Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2009). The two most recent surveys, completed in 2009 and 2007, are summarized in this chapter. The sample size of the public survey was 1,011 in 2007 and 1,222 in 2009. The sample size of the stakeholder survey was 552 in 2007 and 417 in 2009. Responses to the TranPlan 21 surveys could provide insight into the perception of Montana citizens and stakeholders on the importance of livability.

4.1. Methodology

Much of the survey is composed of ordinal scale questions (e.g., rate your satisfaction with Montana’s transportation system from 1 to 10). Respondents were asked to prioritize ways to improve the transportation system, and were given 17 possible actions to choose from. “Supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service” and “maintain road pavement condition” were the top two highest average scores in 2009 and 2007. The top five ranked possible improvements for 2009 are shown in Table 4. The top ranked improvement related to rail service, and safe, well maintained roads, which clearly affect the quality of life in Montana.

Table 4: TranPlan 21 Responses to Possible Improvements, Top Five

Possible Action	Public Rank		Stakeholder Rank	
	2007	2009	2007	2009
Support efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service	2 nd	1 st	5 th	1 st
Maintain road pavement condition	1 st	2 nd	1 st	2 nd
Inform public about transportation issues	3 rd	3 rd	6 th	6 th
Improve condition of other roads (not interstate/highway)	5 th	4 th	4 th	4 th
Improve transportation safety	4 th	5 th	3 rd	5 th

The survey includes questions about public and stakeholder perceptions of goals and priorities for transportation that can be drawn from to help assess what Montanan’s value for transportation in their communities. The following open-ended question was asked on both the public and stakeholder surveys:

- Are there any other transportation-related issues you think need to be addressed by the Montana Department of Transportation?

Another question allowing an open-ended response was only asked on the public survey. This question was:

- Do you have any other suggestions for ways MDT can improve the function of Montana’s roadways?

The comments provided for these questions in 2007 and 2009 were reviewed and categorized by type to identify potential livability needs. The following is a summary of the types of comments received.

4.2. Results

Public responses to transportation-related issues are summarized in Table 5. These are ordered by frequency of responses in 2009. Caution should be used in considering the order since some categories could be combined (e.g., “safety and road design” and “wildlife vehicle collisions”), which would affect their ranking. The categories were created by research staff when attempting to group the responses given to the open-ended questions. Rail/bus/air service and improving/maintaining roadways were the most frequent categories. Other common types of comments related to adding lanes, winter maintenance, bicycle pathways, widening the roadway, and the need for signs, signals, or lane markings.

Table 5: TranPlan 21 Public Responses to Other Transportation-Related Issues

Comment Type	% by Type	
	2007	2009
Rail Service (freight and passenger)	12.8%	20.8%
Maintain/Improve Roadway Condition	10.7%	14.0%
Bus Service (local and intercity)	7.5%	6.3%
Need for Additional Lane(s)	5.3%	6.0%
Air Service	5.1%	5.7%
Increased Snowplowing and Sanding	3.2%	4.8%
Bike Paths	2.9%	3.9%
Public Transportation (not specified as bus or rail)	1.6%	3.6%
Need for Signage, Signals or Lane Marking	5.1%	3.3%
Widen Road	2.9%	3.3%
Cell Phone Hazard	0.5%	3.0%
Elderly and Disabled Transportation Access	2.4%	2.4%
More Rest Area Access	4.5%	2.1%
More Law Enforcement	3.2%	2.1%
Reduce Speed Limit	3.7%	1.8%
Safety of Road Design	2.4%	1.8%
Pedestrian Access	2.7%	1.5%
Wildlife Vehicle Collisions	1.3%	1.5%
Improve Planning	1.3%	1.5%
Traffic Congestion	1.1%	1.5%
Construction Timeliness	1.3%	1.2%
Bridge Repairs and Maintenance	1.1%	1.2%
Report Road Conditions Online	--	0.9%
Winter De-Icer Complaints	2.4%	0.6%
Garbage on Roadside	1.6%	0.6%
Alternative Energy Use	1.3%	0.6%
Construction Zone Safety	0.8%	0.6%
Taxi Service	0.8%	0.6%
Road to Bypass Downtowns	0.5%	0.6%
Emergency Call Box	--	0.6%
Carpool/Vanpool	--	0.6%
Fuel Price Too High	--	0.6%
Drunk Driving Hazard	2.1%	--
Educating Drivers	1.9%	--
Improve Land Use Coordination	1.1%	--
More Lighting	0.5%	--
Weed Control	0.5%	--
Improve Bus Stations	0.5%	--
Motorcycle Awareness	0.5%	--
All Other Comments with Frequency of 1	2.4%	0.9%
Total Responses	314	292

Note: Percentages represent the proportion of comments to open-ended questions that were categorized based on groupings created by research staff.

The stakeholder surveys conducted in 2007 and 2009 had the same open-ended question as the public surveys relating to other transportation-related issues. The types of comments were similar to the public survey and are summarized in Table 6. Similar to the public response to this question there were a high number of comments about maintaining in improving roads. Also of high response were widening roads, adding lanes, bike paths, and the need for signs, signals, or lane markings. Other common comment groupings related to rail, air, bus, winter maintenance, rest areas, and safety issues.

Table 6: TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Responses to Other Transportation-Related Issues

Comment Type	% by Type	
	2007	2009
Widen Road	17.3%	14.5%
Bike Paths	19.7%	14.0%
Maintain/Improve Roadway Condition	16.5%	13.5%
Need for Additional Lane(s)	19.7%	10.9%
Need for Signage, Signals and Lane Marking	10.2%	9.8%
More Law Enforcement	5.5%	4.7%
Increased Snowplowing and Sanding	4.7%	4.1%
Wildlife Vehicle Collisions	5.5%	3.6%
More Rest Area Access	3.1%	2.6%
Bus Service (local and intercity)	2.4%	2.1%
Public Transportation (not specified as bus or rail)	2.4%	2.1%
Rail Service (freight and passenger)	4.7%	1.6%
Improve Planning	--	1.6%
Bridge Repairs and Maintenance	1.6%	1.6%
Winter De-Icer Complaints	1.6%	1.6%
Reduce Speed Limit	5.5%	1.0%
Safety of Road Design	2.4%	1.0%
Pedestrian Access	1.6%	1.0%
Construction Timeliness	3.1%	1.0%
Educating Drivers	1.6%	1.0%
Don't Allow Bikes on Roadway	3.9%	--
More Rumble Strips	3.1%	--
More Lighting	2.4%	--
Drunk Driving Hazard	1.6%	--
Traffic Congestion	1.6%	--
All Other Comments with Frequency of 1	11.8%	6.7%
Total Responses	282	102

Note: Percentages represent the proportion of comments to open-ended questions that were categorized based on groupings created by research staff.

The second open-ended question on the public survey relating to ways to improve roadways received comment types shown in Table 7. Because this question is specific roadways, as opposed to the transportation system in general, it may not be warrant as much weight as the response to the question summarized in Table 5. It does corroborate the findings because many of the same themes are present such as maintaining and improving roads, bike paths, widening roads and safety issues.

Table 7: TranPlan 21 Public Responses to Suggestions to Improve Roadways

Comment Type	% by Type	
	2007	2009
Bike Paths	9.3%	14.4%
Need for Additional Lane(s)	14.0%	12.4%
Widen Road	6.0%	10.3%
Maintain/Improve Roadway Condition	19.3%	8.2%
Need for Signage, Signals and Lane Marking	2.0%	7.2%
Wildlife Vehicle Collisions	5.3%	6.2%
Use Roundabouts	--	6.2%
Public Transportation (not specified as bus or rail)	12.0%	5.2%
Don't Use Rumble Strips	--	4.1%
Reduce Speed Limit	1.3%	4.1%
Rail Service (freight and passenger)	20.7%	2.1%
Pedestrian Access	4.0%	2.1%
More Snowplowing and Sanding	--	2.1%
Bridge Repairs and Maintenance	2.7%	2.1%
More Lighting	--	2.1%
Educating Drivers	2.0%	2.1%
Air Service	12.7%	--
Elderly and Disabled Transportation Access	10.7%	--
More Rest Area Access	6.0%	--
Bus Service (local and intercity)	4.0%	--
Safety of Road Design	2.7%	--
Improve Planning	2.7%	--
Traffic Congestion	2.7%	--
Smart Growth	2.7%	--
Carpool/Vanpool	2.7%	--
Weed Control	2.0%	--
More Law Enforcement	1.3%	--
Beautification	1.3%	--
All Other Comments with Frequency of 1	6.0%	9.3%
Total Responses	151	186

Note: Percentages represent the proportion of comments to open-ended questions that were categorized based on groupings created by research staff.

4.3. Summary of Findings

Based on the frequency of comments, both the public and stakeholders felt maintaining or improving the condition of roads was a high priority (Figure 32). The most common themes seen in the public and stakeholder comments were:

- High occurrence by both public and stakeholders:
 - maintain or improve existing road conditions by creating smoother surfaces and removing potholes;
- High occurrence by either public or stakeholders:
 - improve alternative modes such as rail, bus or air travel, and bike;
 - improve roadways through additional lanes, wider roads (increased lane widths and shoulder widths), or more rest area access;
 - improve or add signals, signs or lane markings;
- Noticeable occurrence by both public and stakeholder:
 - improve safety; and
 - increase winter maintenance.

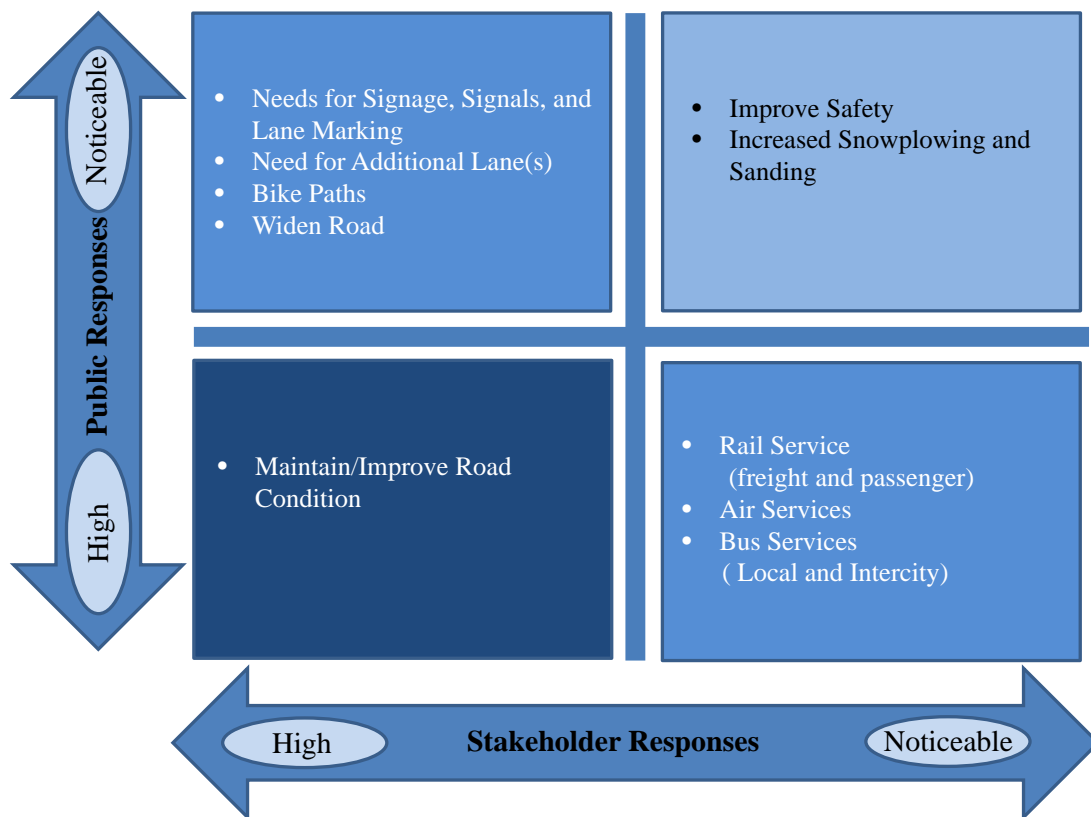


Figure 32: Summary of TranPlan 21 Comments

5. PUBLIC SURVEY AND ELECTED LEADER SURVEY

A telephone survey was conducted with Montana citizens regarding their feelings toward livability. The survey occurred between June and August 2011. Care was taken to not mention livability directly during the survey so respondents would not be confused or provide answers based on any preconceived notions of the livability term. Rather, questions referred to quality of life or making a community a good place to live. An online survey was conducted with Montana mayors and county commissioners in September and October 2011. The online survey of elected leaders was patterned after the public survey. The results of both efforts are summarized in this chapter.

5.1. Methodology for Public Survey

A survey script was developed for a telephone survey of Montanans (Appendix B). Random phone numbers were selected for the survey. The numbers used included cell phone numbers and an attempt was made to ensure rural residents were included. The target sample size was 500, which was achieved with 542 respondents.

Several demographic questions were asked in order to detect and remove any potential bias of the survey. In addition zip codes were collected in order to categorize the respondents as living in an urbanized, small urban or rural area (refer to Section 3.1.2 for definitions).

The gender split was 50/50 and representative of Montana residents. Residents living in small urban areas were slightly oversampled. These were 26 percent of the respondents, compared to 20 percent of Montana's population living in small urban areas (Figure 33). Urbanized and rural areas were under sampled. This difference is large enough to indicate sampling bias ($\chi^2=14.8$) so adjustment factors were created. The actual impact of correcting this bias was small.

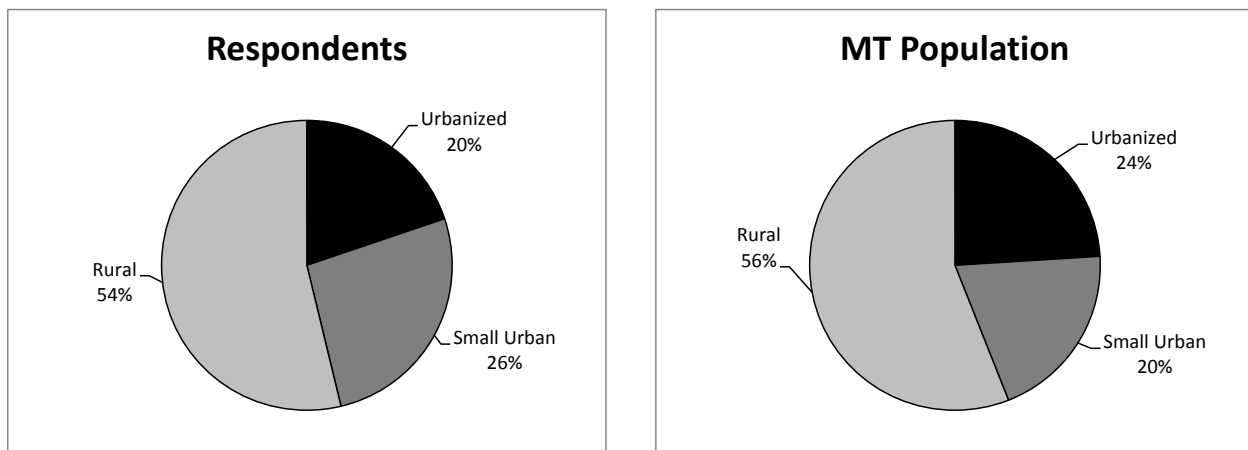


Figure 33: Public Survey Demographic by Urban/Rural

One potential problem with phone surveys is that more and more people do not have a landline phone in their home. With the random sample of phone numbers from the lists used we were able to obtain a cell phone response of 11 percent (Figure 34).

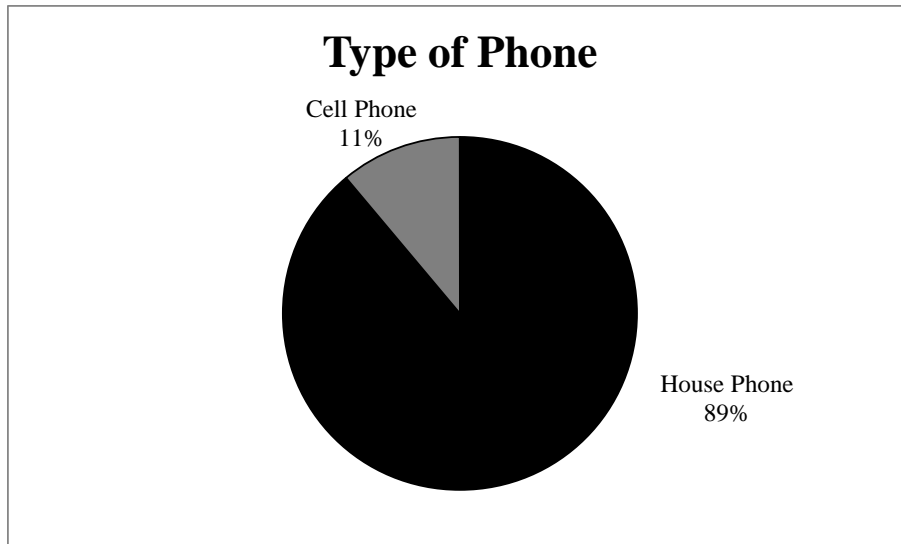


Figure 34: Cell Phone Respondents

5.2. Methodology for Elected Leaders Survey

The public survey script was converted to an online survey using the Survey Monkey web site. Screenshots of the survey are included in Appendix C. Elected leaders were asked essentially the same questions from the public survey, but were asked to provide answers they felt best reflected the views of their constituents and not necessarily their own views. The Local Government Center at Montana State University, Bozeman, maintains an email list of approximately 130 Montana mayors and 150 Montana county commissioners. This email list was utilized to ask elected leaders to complete the online survey. Responses were collected for 24 mayors, 37 county commissioners and seven others (Figure 35). The others included city council members and city/county staff.

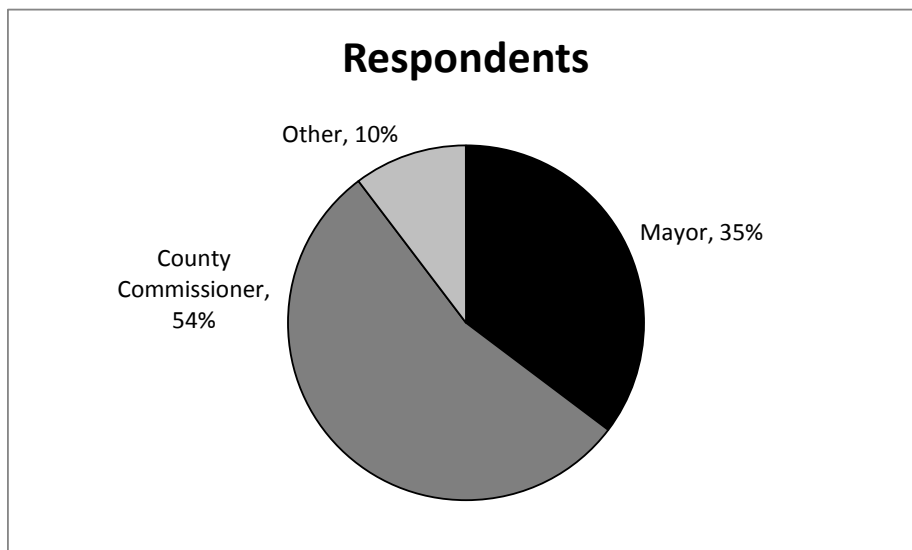


Figure 35: Elected Leader Respondents

The only demographic data collected was the urban/rural categories of the respondents, as was done in the public survey (Figure 36). There were few respondents from urbanized areas. There could be a sample bias in this survey, but the sample size limits the effectiveness of factor adjustments. Results are presented as unadjusted totals.

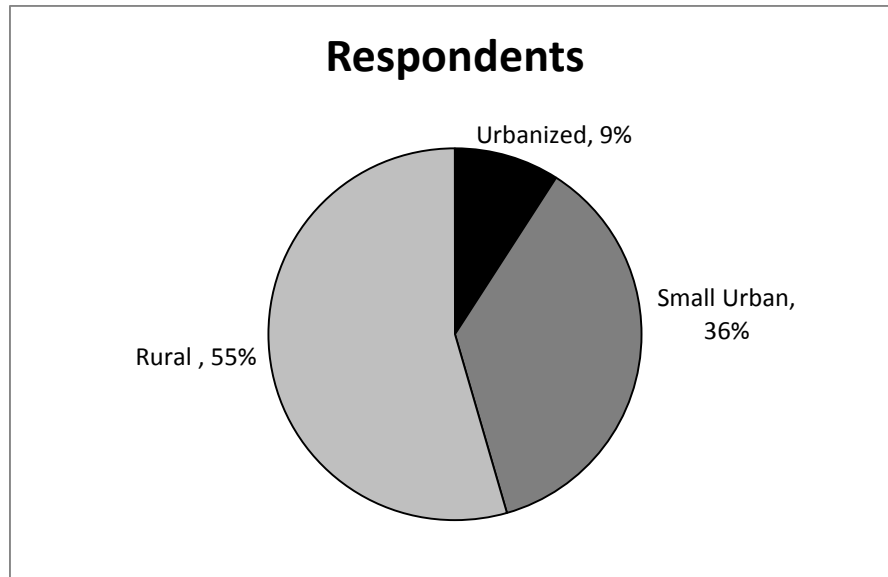


Figure 36: Urban/Rural Response from Elected Leaders

5.3. Results

The public generally felt their community was a good place to live. Elected leaders also were generally positive, but less positive than the public (Figure 37).

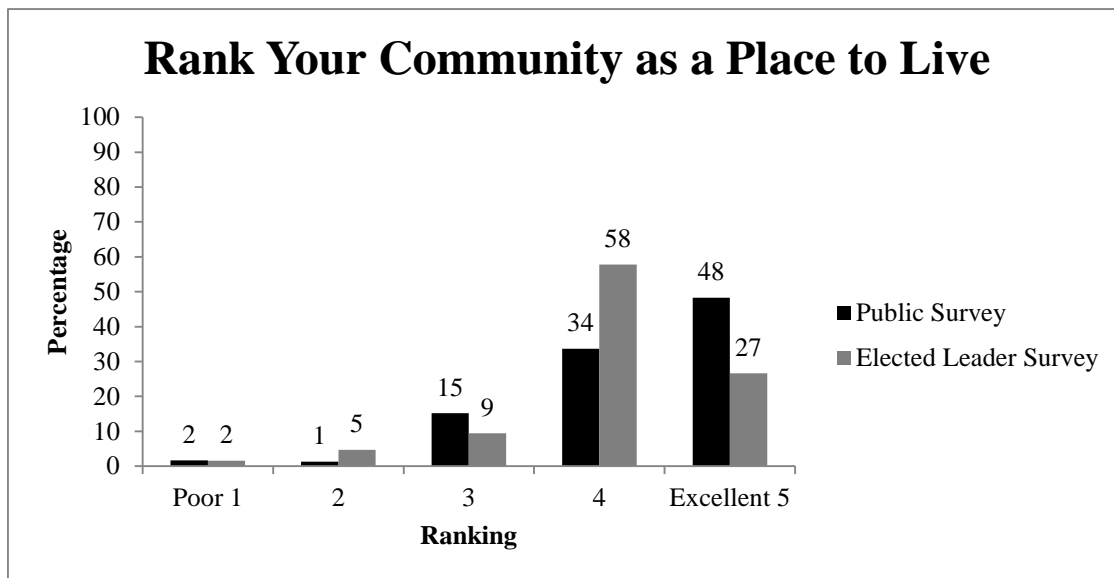


Figure 37: Survey Response to Community Livability

Before mentioning transportation, the public survey asked what was most important with regard to making their community a good place to live. Each respondent was allowed to provide up to three reasons in an open-ended response. The responses were categorized and the number of comments tallied (Figure 38).

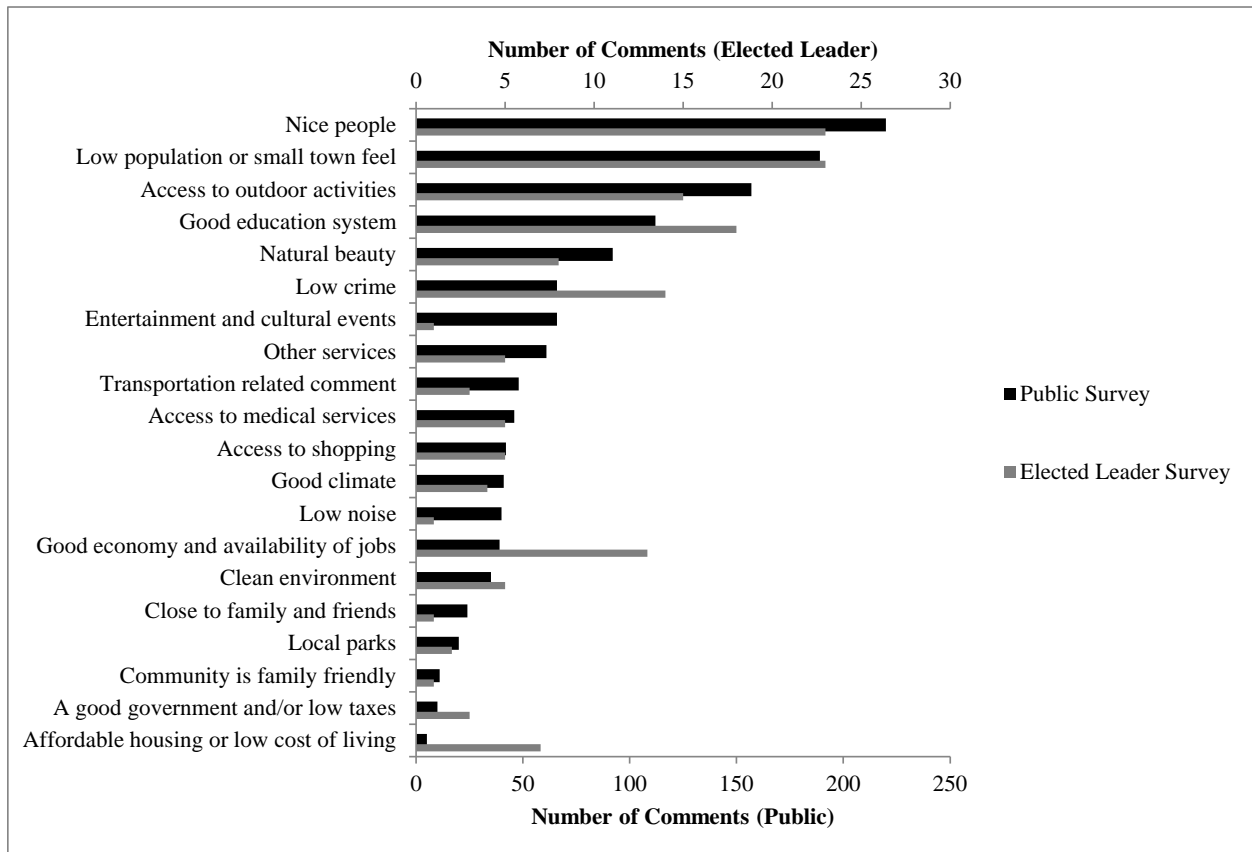


Figure 38: What Makes Your Community a Good Place to Live

The respondents were informed that the remainder of the questions related to transportation. They were then asked to provide three things that made their community a good place to live, but from a transportation perspective. These comments were categorized and are summarized in Figure 39.

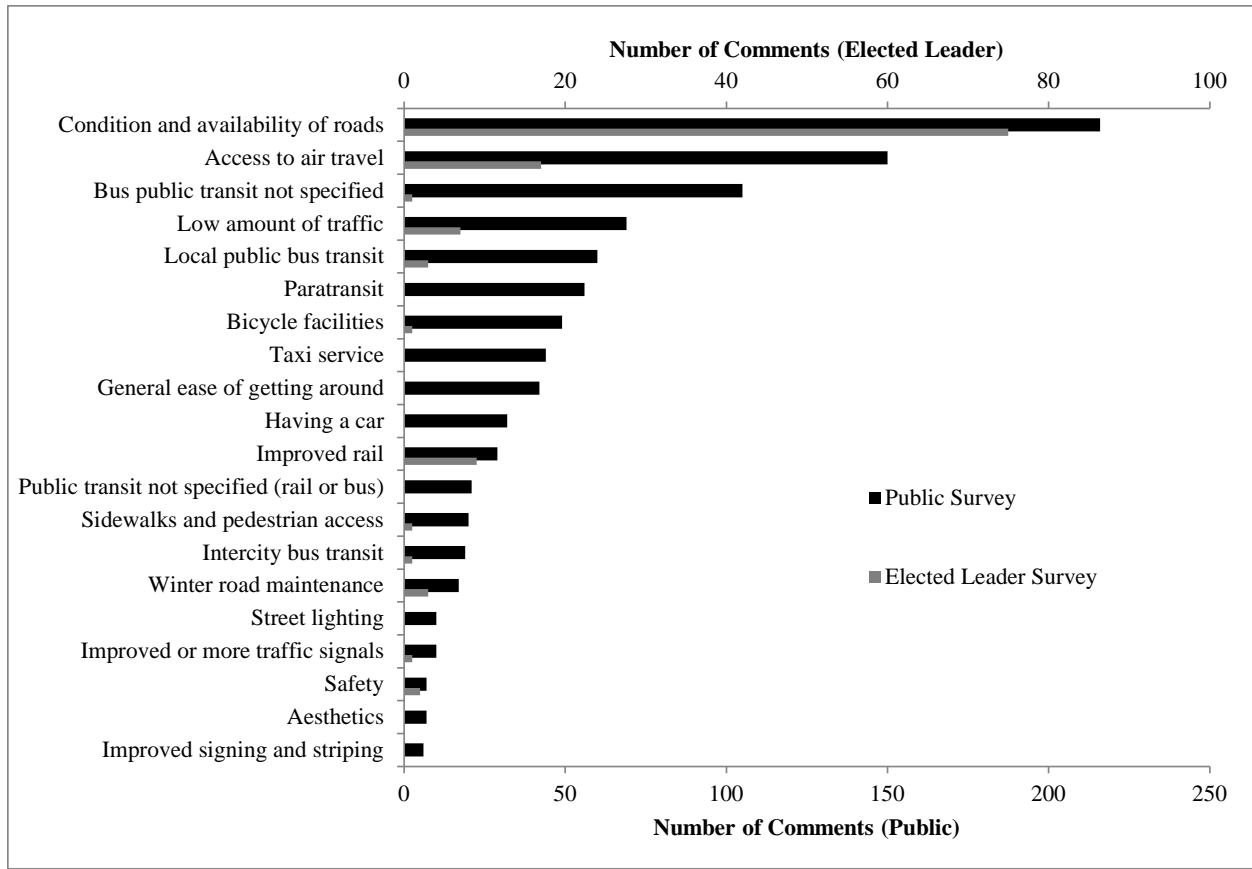


Figure 39: A Good Place to Live from Transportation Perspective

Toward the end of the survey, respondents were asked what one transportation improvement would improve the quality of life in their community. Some of the answers were general (e.g., reduce congestion), others referenced a specific construction project (e.g., rebuild Highway 2 from Brockton to Big Muddy). These were categorized by type and compiled (Figure 40).

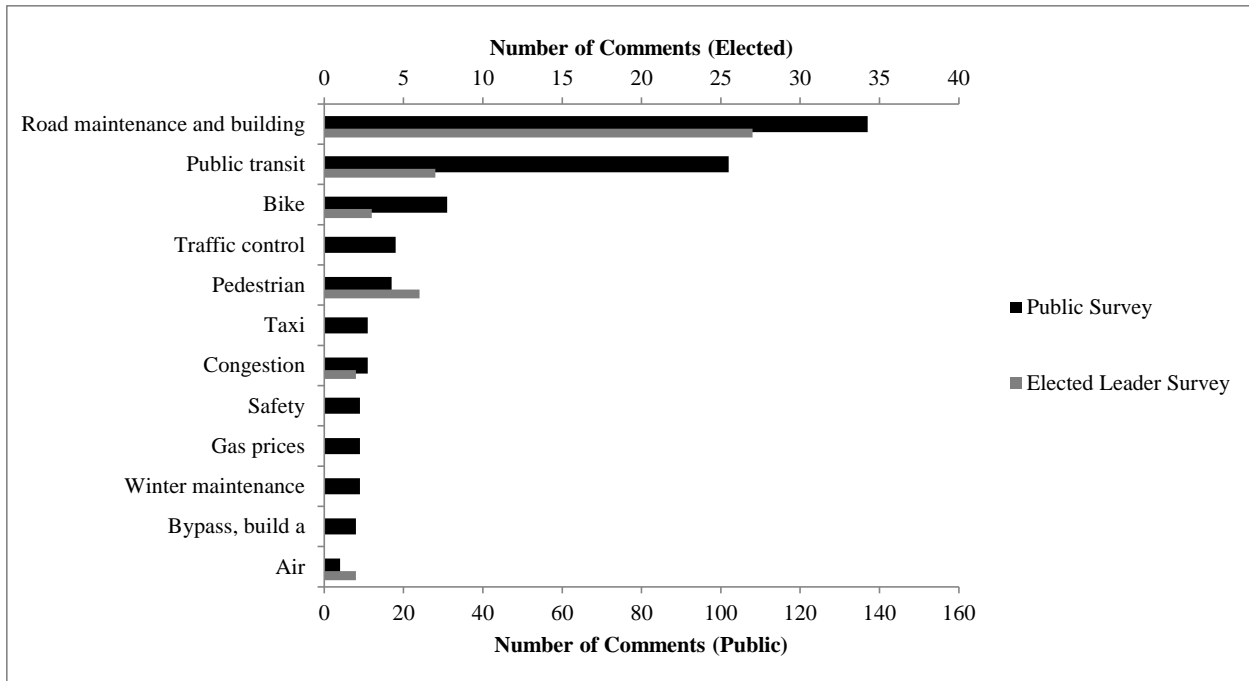


Figure 40: Single Transportation Improvement

The previous three figures were the results categorizing responses to open ended questions. The survey also contained a specified list of elements that the respondent could rank according to their importance to livability (Figure 41).

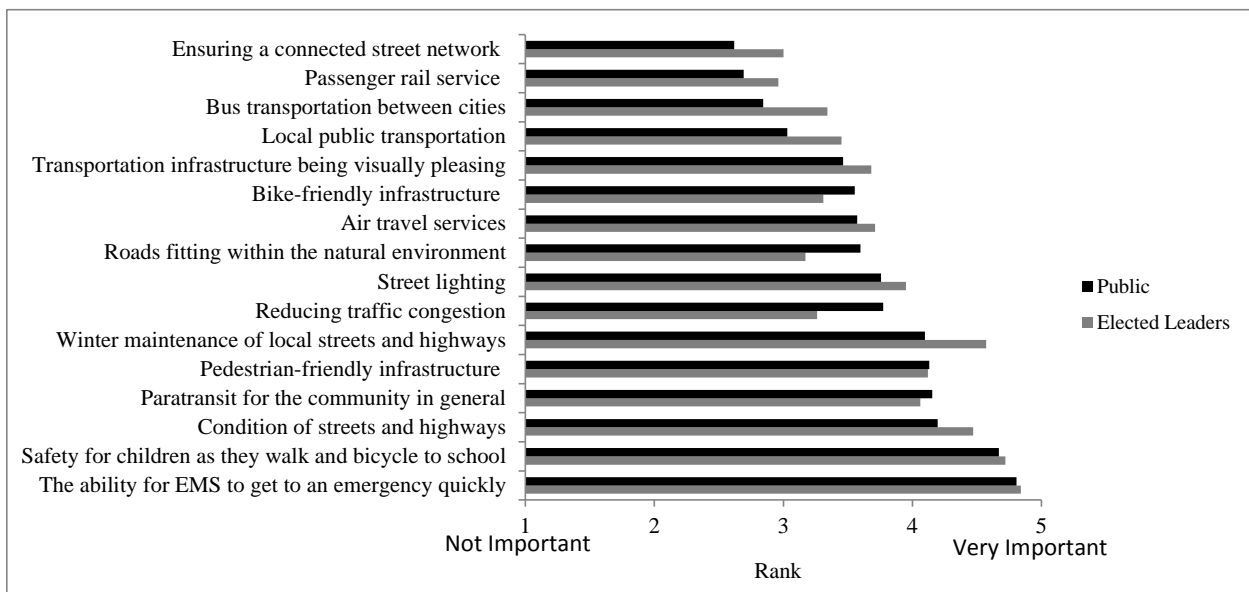


Figure 41: Importance to Livability

Respondents were asked to rank which mode of travel (biking, walking, auto or public transit) was most important to their community. The majority, 72 percent, said driving their personal car

was the most important mode. Walking (14 percent), biking (8 percent), and riding transit (7 percent) were also important (Figure 42). Respondents were also asked what mode they actually used; 92 percent said auto.

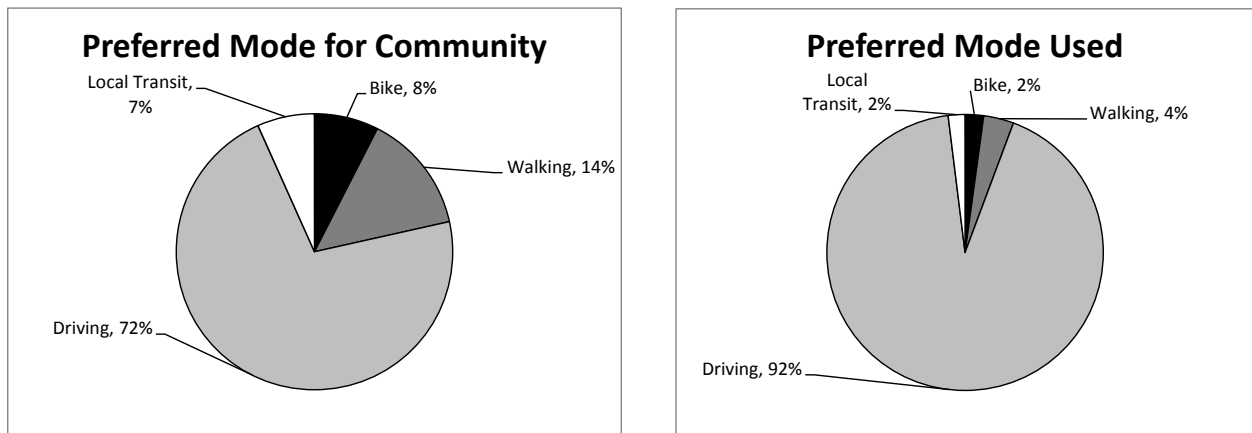


Figure 42: Public Response to Importance of Mode

Elected leaders were also asked what mode was most important to their community. They were not asked what mode they actually used since these respondents were answering on behalf of their constituents. Similarly, a majority ranked personal auto highest, with 67 percent (Figure 43). Of the alternative modes, elected leaders put a higher priority on walking.

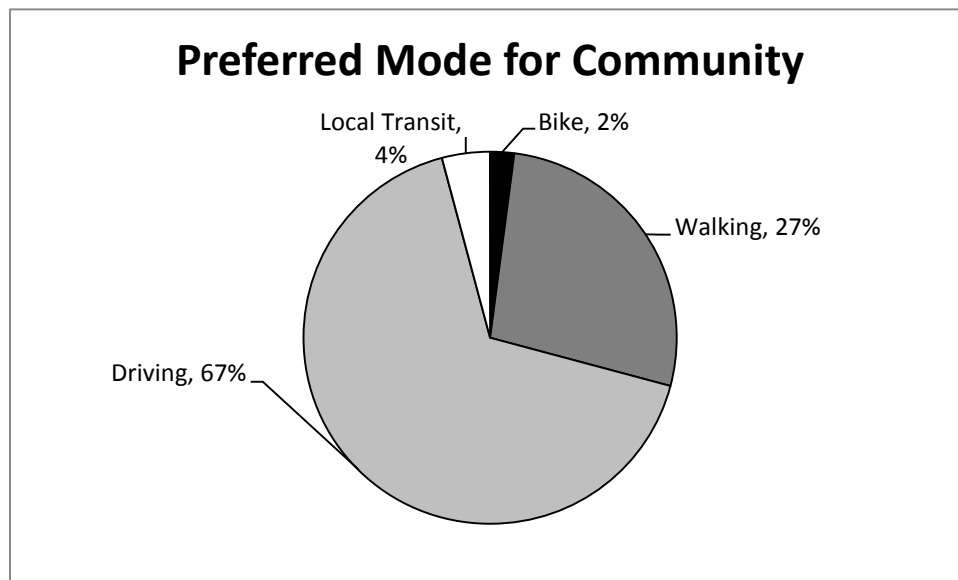


Figure 43: Elected Leader Response to Importance of Mode

5.3.1. Demographic Variations for Public Survey

The results above represent a random sample of all respondents. There are variations in how different demographic groups responded to questions. Respondents can be divided demographically by gender, urban/rural community, age, level of education, and what type of

phone they are answering (cell vs. landline). Variations are only reported if they are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

Respondents did not answer differently based on their level of education. Those answering cell phones differed from those answering landlines on only one question. Cell phone respondents ranked a connected street network higher than those who answered landline phones (3.3 vs. 2.5). This difference could not be explained by the research team.

Only one difference was found based on the respondents' age. The importance of paratransit for them personally received an average higher ranking for older individuals (Figure 44). There were no similar variations in answers to other questions, including one on the importance of paratransit to the community in general.

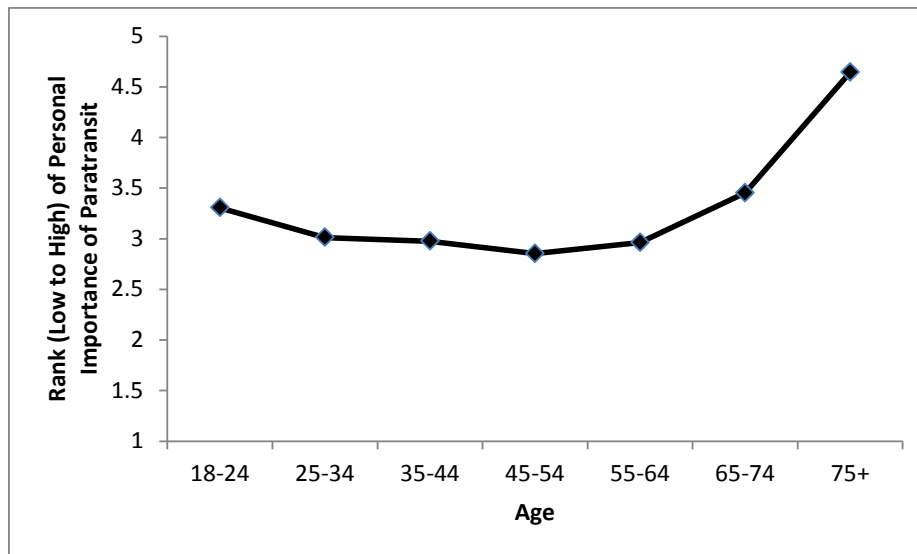


Figure 44: Variation in Answers by Age

Numerous variations were found based on the respondents' community size and the respondents' gender. These are detailed below.

A respondent's community size was categorized based on population as urbanized (>50,000), small urban (5,000–50,000) or rural (<5,000).

Size had no significant impact on the mode actually used, but there was a difference in the importance of the mode to their community. Urban residents in areas with a population of 50,000 or more were more likely to rank transit as the most important mode to their community when compared to rural residents (urbanized was ten percent, small urban was six percent, and rural was six percent).

Several of the questions requiring a one to five ranking received a different average score when comparing respondents from the three community size categories. Table 8 lists those questions with a statistical difference. For example, when asked to rank their community as a place, residents of urbanized communities gave, on average, a lower ranking (4.1) than residents of small urban and rural communities (4.3). Although there was a statistically significant difference among many of the rankings, the magnitude of the difference across size categories was less than 0.5, with the exception of access to air travel and access to local public transit.

Table 8: Average Rankings with Statistically Significant Difference by Community Size

	Urbanized	Small Urban	Rural
Air travel services	4.3	3.7	3.2
Local public transportation	3.8	3.1	2.7
Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure	4.4	4.3	3.9
Street lighting	4.1	3.8	3.6
Ensuring a connected street network	2.9	2.7	2.5
Bike-friendly infrastructure	3.8	3.7	3.4
Paratransit for the community in general	4.3	4.3	4.0
Winter maintenance of local streets and highways	3.8	4.2	4.2
Bus transportation between cities	3.1	3.0	2.7
Rank your community as a place to live	4.1	4.3	4.3

There were some statistical variations in how respondents ranked some questions based on their gender. There was no difference in how males or females ranked the quality of life in their community, or the mode used. When scoring the elements that impact livability, females rated several items higher: lighting, non-auto modes (i.e., paratransit, local transit, intercity bus, passenger rail, and bike), and road fitting into the natural environment. The magnitude of these variations was less than 0.5 on a five-point scale.

There are seven Native American reservations in Montana and each is unique in terms of geography, economy, and development. Still, it may be valuable to determine if this group as a whole responded differently to the survey. Those respondents living on Native American reservations were identified based on their zip code. Thirty respondents were identified as living within Native American reservations. These individuals were primarily in rural areas with some small urban and no urbanized areas (Figure 45).

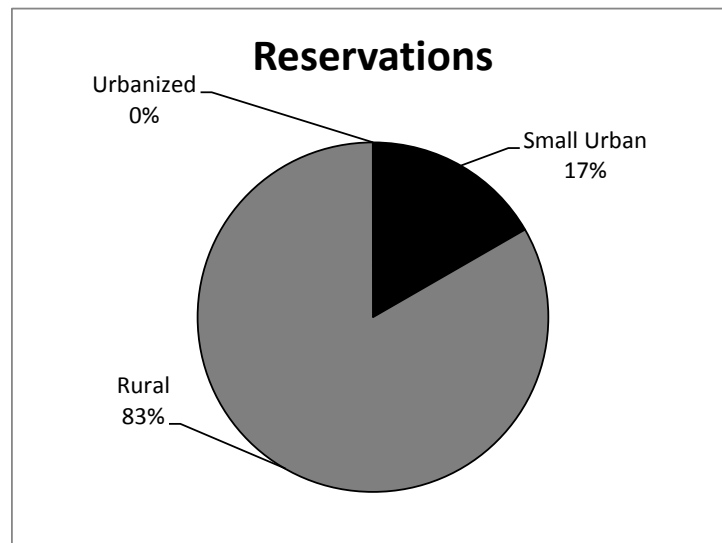


Figure 45: Native American Reservation Respondents by Size of Community

The average ranking residents of reservations gave for their community's quality of life was 4.2, which is not statistically different from the rest of Montana (ranking of 4.3). There was also no statistical difference in how they ranked the impact of a mode to their community's quality of life, nor the mode actually used. Of the rankings of the importance to livability (for a list of the items ranked see Figure 42 and Figure 46) the only statistical variations were a higher importance on passenger rail service (reservation resident value 3.5, Montana resident value 2.7) and a lower importance on air service (reservation resident value 3.0, Montana resident value 3.6). The difference in air service could be due to the fact that these respondents are more rural. As discussed above rural residents place a lower value on air service. This cannot be said for the importance of rail service as there is no rural/urban difference on the importance.

5.3.2. Demographic Variation for Elected Leader Survey

Because elected leaders were asked to respond according to what they thought their constituents felt, many of the demographic factors collected in the public survey were not collected in the elected leader survey. However, the community size was evaluated. The more urban the community, the higher importance they placed on access to air service, access to local transit, and reducing congestion.

5.3.3. Other Results

There were several open-ended questions asked in the surveys that did not directly impact the results of this study. After reviewing the comments, the research team decided that a summary such as one summarized in Figure 39 and Figure 40 would not be beneficial. However, comments regarding examples of good projects, potential policy barriers, and other issues that may have a bearing on livability could be useful. Those comments are included in Appendix D. In some cases they are grouped in broad categories.

5.4. Summary of Results

When asked about livability in general (i.e., not specific to transportation), transportation issues came up in the comments, but the main things the Montana public feels impact livability are friendly neighbors, low population densities, access to outdoor activities, access to good education and healthcare facilities, abundance of natural scenic beauty, and availability of entertainment and cultural activities (based on the rankings shown previously in Figure 38). With respect to transportation (refer to Figure 39 and Figure 40), the major themes that impact livability are shown in Figure 46. Ratings of these themes vary from elected leaders to public; however, these are important themes to make communities more livable from the transportation perspective. A well maintained road system was a high priority to both elected leaders and the public. Other priorities identified included good public transportation, access to air travel, rail, less traffic congestion, bike paths, taxi service, ease of getting around, and having a personal vehicle.

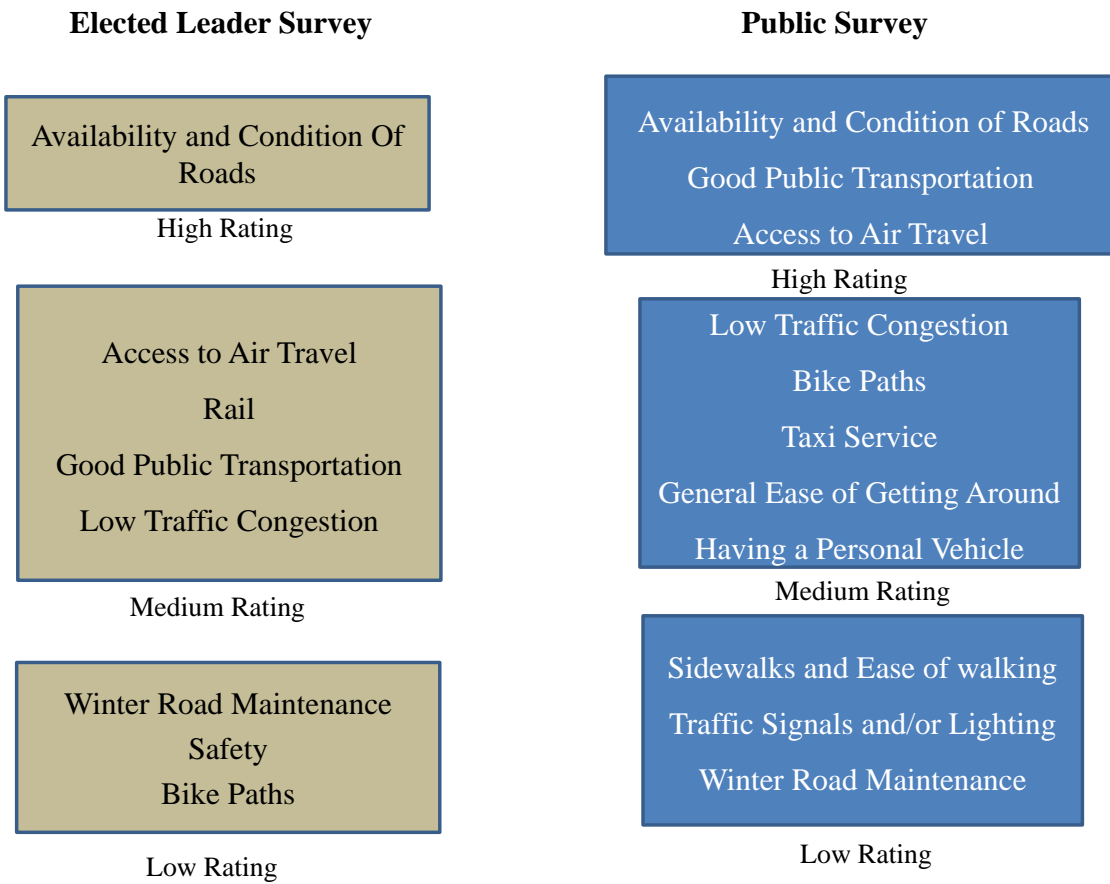


Figure 46: Major Livability Themes Identified from Surveys

6. STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Stakeholder input regarding livability initiatives around Montana was collected through phone discussions with personnel at state and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and tribal governments. These informal conversations were based on seven questions that covered topics such as livability definitions, outstanding policies or projects, how organizations coordinate with MDT to improve quality of life and the top three transportation priorities related to quality of life. Appendix E contains the seven questions. The goal of this outreach was to learn from a diverse set of stakeholders around Montana about policies, opportunities, activities, and reports relating to livability that are already complete or are in progress.

6.1. Methodology

WTI randomly selected organizations from stakeholder lists provided by MDT and communicated with the organizations by email and phone to set up a time for a half-hour phone conversation. Between July and November 2011, 46 organizations were contacted and 22 conversations were conducted for a response rate of 48 percent. One individual declined because they felt their work was not relevant enough to transportation. WTI spoke with the following stakeholders:

- Missoula City Planning Department
- Department of Agriculture (webmaster, Helena)
- Whitefish Parks and Recreation Department
- Billings City Planning Department
- Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Recreational Trails Program, Helena)
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (Resource Development Bureau, Helena)
- Department of Health and Human Services (Director, Helena)
- Office of Public Instruction (Traffic Education, Helena)
- Corporation for the Northern Rockies (non-profit organization, Livingston)
- High Plains Development and Port Authority (Great Falls)
- Bear Paw Development (non-profit organization, Havre)
- Department of Commerce (Community Development Division, Helena)
- Department of Agriculture (Growth through Agriculture Program, Helena)
- Clark Fork Valley Hospital (Plains)
- Great Falls Planning Department
- Bozeman Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee (Volunteer group)
- Lincoln County Planning Department (Libby)
- Sidney Airport Director
- Fort Belknap Indian Reservation Transit Manager
- Big Sky Transportation District Board Member
- Washington Corporation President (Missoula)
- Flathead Indian Reservation Land Use Planning (Pablo)

6.2. Results

Informal discussions with agencies and organizations have revealed how Montana organizations define livability; example policies, actions, and documents; coordination issues; and common livability themes. Key findings are detailed below.

6.2.1. Definition of Livability

Most of the agencies interviewed have not formally defined livability, although there are livability elements in some of their documents. For example, Billings recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy and is working on infill policy within transportation and growth plans. The Growth Plan's 2008 update addresses community health and transportation relationships (City of Billings 2008). There is a proposal within Fish, Wildlife and Parks to coordinate with health and transportation agencies to improve livability, but no formal action has been taken.

Missoula has a definition of livability in its draft Missoula Active Transportation Plan: "Livability—A livable community has a high environmental and social quality of life. Its infrastructure emphasizes human scale and sustainability with streetscapes that are attractive, safe, and suitable for all active transportation modes. Traffic safety, traffic noise and local air pollution, preservation of environmental and cultural resources, opportunities to interact with other citizens, and opportunities for recreation are all livability factors often affected by transportation policies and practices" (Missoula MPO 2011).

The City of Great Falls Downtown Master Plan defines livability for downtown Great Falls as follows: "Livability is the enrichment of the physical, social, and personal well-being of Downtown residents, employees, and visitors. A livable Downtown is welcoming to people of all ages and incomes and provides a friendly and safe environment that encourages social interaction" (City of Great Falls 2011). The City of Great Falls Downtown Master Plan won the Montana Association of Planners' professional achievement award.

The Flathead Reservation's Comprehensive Resource Plan (CSKT 1996) defines quality of life and quality of the environment goals, which planners view as directly related to livability.

6.2.2. Examples of Livability Policies, Actions and Documents

Organizations and agencies around Montana reported a variety of policies, actions, and documents that help make communities better places to live. A few of these are described below. Other examples are described in Appendix F. One activity is "Envision Missoula," an intensive public participation/visioning process that was based on Envision Utah (Toth, 2010). It resulted in a preferred scenario that directs choices on spending transportation funds toward a "focus inward" strategy where investments are centered in central Missoula. One result of this process was a shift in transportation funding to fund transit capital purchases (i.e., more buses) and an increase in the frequency of transit service.

The Sanders County transportation department and the Clark Fork Valley Hospital in Plains, Montana, created a cooperative to purchase a bus for medical transports between Plains and Missoula several years ago. As the only hospital in Sanders County, Clark Fork Valley has worked to provide bus transportation between Missoula and Plains for patients seeking medical care, and to provide local transit to the hospital for patients from the senior center, Hot Springs, Plains, etc.

The Department of Agriculture has been active in policy through advocating for better rail rates for farmers and ranchers. This has allowed rural farmers to get their goods to market and still be competitively priced.

Resort communities such as Whitefish and Big Sky use resort tax funds for projects that improve quality of life. In Whitefish, five percent of resort tax dollars are earmarked for parks and trails. The Big Sky Resort District collects a three percent resort tax, which funds many community programs including a local and intercity bus service, called Skyline.

The Total Urban Neighborhood Enhancement – Unified Program (TUNE UP) in Billings is a small-scale approach to cleaning up rundown buildings, vacant lots, and junk vehicles. In 2009, the City of Billings conducted a public survey to gauge satisfaction with city services. Major issues identified were rundown buildings, vacant lots or junk vehicle. Based on this feedback the City of Billings initiated the TUNE UP which involved neighborhood clean-ups. The program improves neighborhood appearance and cleans up streets and public right-of-ways.

Several projects that incorporate non-motorized use were mentioned by stakeholders:

- An interactive trails map for the Helena area was developed by the Helena Livability Group, a group of organizations and citizens that was coordinated by Fish, Wildlife and Parks (<http://helenamontanamaps.org/trails/>).
- Pedestrian/bicycle pathways along US Highway 93 North connect Ronan to Polson, following the east shore of Flathead Lake and connecting to Turtle Lake. In Pablo, pedestrian and bicycle planning work has resulted in a pedestrian overpass over US Highway 93 North, sidewalk networks and a non-motorized pathway connecting Pablo to a new housing community, the Maggie Ashley Trailer Courts, north of Pablo.
- Missoula's North Higgins downtown streetscape was recently completed. This project included curb extensions, raised cycle tracks, street lighting, trees, and countdown pedestrian crossings.
- Using a non-profit economic development organization to administer community transportation enhancement program (CTEP) funds is a good model for small Montana communities. Bear Paw Development serves rural communities in Hill, Blaine, Chouteau, Liberty and Phillips counties and the Rocky Boy's and Fort Belknap Indian Reservations. Bear Paw has a specialist to administer CTEP funds for local governments, helping them to access funds, prioritize projects, and hire engineers and contractors. This process helped small communities reduce CTEP project implementation times from about seven years to two years.

Connecting people to health care services, jobs, and education was another common theme from the stakeholder interviews. According to the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), in 2005 Governor Brian Schweitzer requested that DPHHS assign a transportation coordinator after hearing that Montana residents' top concern is transportation. Since that time, the DPHHS transportation coordinator has become a full-time position. MDT regularly communicates with this individual including collaboration on specific projects and efforts. This included a number of "transportation summits" led jointly by MDT and DPHHS where local transit providers and other agencies could discuss opportunities for collaboration and coordination with the goal of providing more services with existing resources. A good example of intercity transit that connects people to jobs, education and health care is the North Central

Montana Transit system. NCMT is a critical piece of local transportation infrastructure that connects Fort Belknap, Harlem, Chinook, Havre, Laredo, Box Elder, and Great Falls.

The Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (WASACT) meets several times a year to discuss how to fund work to improve the quality of life in communities around Montana. In 1982, a group of professionals from federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations that finance, regulate or provide technical assistance for community water and wastewater systems started coordinating their efforts. One focus of this effort was to identify opportunities to replace aging and/or leaking water and sewer lines when road work occurs, resulting in cost sharing between agencies and efficiencies during construction. Several other states have asked Montana for a template to duplicate the WASACT concept of addressing statewide infrastructure funding as a collaborative effort.

6.2.3. Coordination Among Agencies and Organizations

Stakeholders were asked about coordination with MDT and other agencies on projects that may relate to livability. Responses show that there are varying levels of coordination among state agencies and organizations, depending on project type. For example, DPHHS and MDT worked together with the seven Montana Indian reservations to create the Safe On All Roads (SOAR) plans. SOAR plans address issues specific to each of the state's seven reservations. According to DPHHS, the SOAR collaborative work has decreased drinking and driving and increased seatbelt use on Montana's reservations. Another example is the state trails advisory committee, which meets twice a year and has representatives from Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), MDT's bicycle/pedestrian coordinator, FHWA, U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. This group is beginning to discuss livability initiatives.

Stakeholders were also asked specifically about opportunities with MDT. Stakeholders had many positive comments about what MDT does well in Montana. For example, MDT does good work with building rural roads and maintaining highways, and does a good job with limited resources on maintaining Montana's road network. MDT has many great people working hard to improve transportation at the district and other levels across the state.

Generally stakeholders felt MDT is also responsive to community concerns. One example is MDT's work developing the Transportation Design Committee for US Highway 93 North so that local, state, and federal staff can meet regularly to address cultural, environmental, and safety concerns. MDT was willing to develop a new cultural approach that Flathead Reservation planners called "The People's Way." This approach was sensitive to the culture of the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes as US Highway 93 North was designed. In addition, MDT has been good at keeping Flathead tribes in the loop on statewide transportation planning.

Stakeholders also reported that in recent years MDT has done a good job with community outreach on construction/ reconstruction projects. For example, when US Highway 2 was reconstructed near Havre, MDT conducted significant community involvement initiatives regarding the highway design and streetscape, and provided communications to travelers about delays.

One MPO reported that MDT has provided careful and conscientious reviews to ensure federal compliance is met. MDT is supportive of the travel demand models that include an estimation of multiple modes of travel.

Regarding railroads, MDT communicates well with the public and is a responsive and easy organization to work with. Other positive comments included:

- MDT is doing excellent work with its media campaigns on seatbelt use and drinking and driving.
- It is good to see MDT embracing livability concepts more. MDT's annual surveys are good.
- MDT does a good job managing the CTEP program. MDT does a good job allocating funds for CTEP at the state level, then allowing local communities to prioritize how those funds are spent at a local level. This ensures funds go to rural communities as well as the larger ones.
- MDT advertises appropriately its funding opportunities. MDT has quick contracting for state projects on reservations.
- MDT is a great resource for helping to get transit grant money and using funds efficiently. For example, it found a van in Helena that Big Sky is in the process of buying for a vanpool.

Stakeholders had ideas about opportunities that could improve statewide coordination among agencies, organizations and other stakeholders to make Montana communities better places to live. Some opportunities that could make Montana communities better places to live include:

- MDT could join the WASACT group. This could make it easier for agencies to see what MDT projects are planned and could result in cost share opportunities. For example, replacing water/sewer lines when road work occurs is a good opportunity for cost sharing. An alternative to joining WASACT would be to provide WASACT with a list of projects two-years out, so if a funding agency finances a project in the same location, both agencies may be able to make the project better or cheaper by working together from the beginning.
- There could be better coordination among state agencies on land use planning; One stakeholder was not sure who to contact at MDT for land use planning issues such as how to assess traffic impacts of new growth on a community.
- Municipalities can get mixed messages from different MDT departments on livability issues. For example, the Montana transportation and land use toolbox (<http://mdt.mt.gov/research/toolkit/>) encourages planners to employ livability principles such as complete streets, but some MDT sections are not supportive of complete streets policies. There is an opportunity for better communication among MDT departments on livability-related issues.
- MDT could improve its outreach and encouragement for livability-related projects in both rural and urban areas.
- Agencies such as DPHHS and MDT could explore how to share resources such as vehicles.
- MDT should consider how to slow down drivers rather than expanding roadways.
- MDT could do more to prevent wildlife–vehicle collisions with technologies to alert drivers of the presence of animals and with wildlife crossings.

6.2.4. Summary of Results

Some communities are thinking about what livability means as it relates to transportation. Specific definitions found were from two of the states MPOs. The Flathead Reservation defined goals for both the quality of life and quality of the environment, both of which relate directly to livability. Considering the theme identified that one size does not fit all, caution should be used in adopting these definitions statewide.

These interviews identified many good transportation project examples that improve livability. Existing and potential partnering opportunities were also identified.

Based on these interviews, some themes have been identified for quality of life priorities specific to transportation in Montana. Major themes are summarized in Table 9. Individual responses are shown in Appendix F. This is a small sample of stakeholders, most of whom had a focused interest. The main themes identified in this task may not represent the views of Montanans in general.

Table 9: Summary of Livability Themes from Stakeholder Outreach

Community Livability Priorities	Description
One size does not fit all communities	Revitalizing downtown may be a priority in one community, while transporting food to markets, essential air service or wildlife crossings may be more important to other communities.
Access to work, school and medical service	Access may refer to maintenance of existing infrastructure, winter emergency transportation or maintaining travelable roads and bridges (through spring 2011 floods for example). It can also refer to transit to connect people to work, school, and medical service.
Transit systems in urban and rural areas	Intercity bus access to medical services, jobs, and education is important. Creating reliable, timely transit systems is important both within communities and between them.
Human health and safety	This may refer to public awareness of railroad safety or managing downtown truck traffic. It could include basic needs such as clean drinking water, cars with current safety features such as airbags or seatbelt use.
Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure	“Complete streets” concepts that consider the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists are important. These may include construction of sidewalks that meet the ADA requirements or building more bikeways.
Economic viability/ability to earn a living	Transportation systems can directly affect and benefit a community’s economy.

7. INTERVIEWS WITH OTHER STATES

This chapter covers interviews with selected DOT officials from other states conducted to determine what actions and programs related to livability are underway in those states. These interviews occurred from September to December of 2010. Officials from planning offices within the departments of transportation of Colorado, Idaho, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming responded to a survey developed by the research team. States that have not responded include Arizona, Utah, and Washington. Ten livability-related questions were asked covering livability definitions, rural vs. urban livability, actions and projects, and expectations for the future.

7.1. Results

Livability Definition: None of the states responding to the survey have a formal definition of livability, but some are working on the task. Idaho, North Dakota, and South Dakota have made no attempts to define livability as it pertains to their DOTs. Colorado, Oklahoma, and Wyoming have all begun processes aimed at defining livability. At this point Oklahoma is generally following the FHWA definition.

Washington State did not respond to this survey, but as noted in Chapter 2 it defines livable communities as providing and promoting “civic engagement and sense of place though safe, sustainable choices for a variety of elements that include housing, transportation, education, cultural diversity and enrichment, and recreation” (WSDOT, 2010).

Livability—a New Concept or Just a New Label: When asked if they felt livability was a new and different concept to their DOTs or just a new label for many things their DOTs already do, Oklahoma and Idaho officials said it was a new and different concept. Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming officials all said livability was just a new label given to tasks their state DOTs were already planning and performing (Table 10).

Table 10: How States Are Defining Livability

State	Formal Definition	New Concept	New Label
Colorado	In Progress		✓
Idaho		✓	
North Dakota			✓
Oklahoma	In Progress	✓	
South Dakota			✓
Wyoming	In Progress		✓

Documents Concerning Livability: Livability-specific documents have not been developed in the responding states. Colorado has a study currently underway on integrating land use and transportation planning. Several states indicated they have incorporated (or plan to incorporate) livability into various planning documents.

All states except North Dakota indicated livability will be incorporated, either explicitly or implicitly, in their next statewide transportation plan update. Livability was explicitly identified in Wyoming’s 2010 Long Range Transportation Plan as an emerging issue among stakeholders it surveyed. North Dakota said it has taken no actions with regard to livability and transportation.

Wyoming officials mentioned they continue to work with local communities to incorporate livability principles into local transportation plans.

Actions Concerning Livability: Colorado is improving transportation infrastructure by implementing transportation calming devices, real-time traveler information, and a “GreenLITES” pilot project concerned with sustainability of transportation project design. Oklahoma has improved transportation infrastructure through the “development of ports of entry” that employ technology-based commercial motor vehicle weight and credential screening techniques. Wyoming uses CSS to improve transportation infrastructure. Encouraging community development is happening in Colorado through participation in the “Sustainable Main Street Initiative,” and in Wyoming by using “planning grants from Transit, Highway, and Safe Routes to School” for community development. Some states indicated they generally promote alternative transportation through their transit division and their bicycle/pedestrian coordinator. Colorado mentioned its “Climate Change Workshop” as a livability action. Wyoming mentioned the WYOLINK program, which is a “public safety communications system designed to coordinate and integrate communications between state, local, and federal public safety agencies.”

Project Examples with Livability Connections: Examples of projects that may relate to improving livability were provided by Colorado, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. Colorado cited its Sustainable Main Streets Initiative and the development of a sustainability committee by the Colorado Transportation and Environmental Resource Council. Oklahoma described the “Tulsa I-244 Arkansas River Multimodal Bridge Replacement Project,” which will include facilities for passenger rail, commuter rail, and a bicycle/pedestrian path. Wyoming cited examples of projects from the city of Cheyenne, WYOLINK, and a program called “Building the Wyoming We Want.”

State DOT Role: Respondents were asked to list livability activities in which they would like to see their agency take the lead, participate, or not be involved. Many states either did not respond to this question or were noncommittal (e.g., will consider on a case-by-case basis). South Dakota indicated it should lead rural connectivity efforts. Wyoming stated it would participate in collaborative efforts but it should not lead direct local land use planning efforts.

Transportation Needs and Relevance to Livability: When asked about the most important transportation needs, DOT officials responded similarly even though the question was open ended (i.e., there was not a list of answers to choose from). Needs cited included funding, safety, preservation of the transportation system, improved access and mobility, improving multimodal options, and freight movement. States were asked to rank their top transportation needs according to their relevance to livability. States ranked all of these needs as either very important or somewhat important to livability (Table 11). This shows the difficulty of pinning down a definition of livability as all top transportation needs were perceived to be related to livability.

Table 11: Transportation Needs

Most Common Transportation Needs	Relevance to Livability (No. of Ratings)		
	Very Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Not Relevant
Adequate Funding	4		
Preservation of the Transportation System	2	1	
Safety	4	1	
Access/Mobility/Connectivity	5		
Multimodal Transportation Options and/or Transit	3		

Rating Livability Issues: When given specific transportation topics to be rated based on their importance to livability, states answered similarly. The two choices found to be uniformly important for both urban and rural areas were well-maintained roadways and local transit services. Table 12 shows the rankings.

Table 12: Importance of Transportation Choices

Transportation Choice	Urban Areas			Rural Areas		
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Well-maintained Roadways	4	1		4	1	
City/County Transit	4	1		3	2	
Air Services	3	2		1	4	
Essential Rural Air Services		2		3	2	
Biking	3	2		2	3	
Rail System/Amtrak	4		1	1	3	1
Intercity Bus	3	2		2	2	
Walking	3	2		1	3	1
Carpooling		4	1		3	2
Vanpooling		3	2		2	3
Rideshare Program		3	2		2	3
Water Transportation	1		4		1	4

Metrics to Measure Livability Progress: Metrics to determine how well livability is being addressed by the state DOTs were hard to find. The only state that claimed to have any form of metrics was Oklahoma, which cited its tracking of transit services via the National Transit Database and tracking of crashes and highway safety improvements by the Traffic Engineering Division and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Expectations of Future Livability Legislation: When asked what expectations their DOTs have for the next federal transportation authorization bill, most states wanted funding and flexibility. Colorado stressed support for developing multimodal transportation options and desired an increase in transit funding. Oklahoma wanted federal legislation to allow states to “take the lead” in determining how best to address livability. Wyoming stressed flexibility was critical to ensuring connectivity of its rural communities. With only two metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), both with populations under 100,000, Wyoming wanted the flexibility to determine what livability was for those two “unique centers.” Wyoming officials also said, “The

bill needs to recognize that Wyoming’s definition of livability includes the desire for access to wide open spaces and recreational opportunities that can only be maintained by vehicle travel.”

Other Livability Concerns: When given the opportunity to voice other concerns with livability in rural areas, Colorado officials said livability was a difficult concept because the state is approximately 80 percent rural and 20 percent of its population lives in rural areas. North Dakota’s concerns were: “Will the incorporation of livability into the transportation planning process result in another unfunded mandate? Will livability be defined allowing some degree of flexibility (New York vs. North Dakota—concern about one size fits all) in its application to transportation planning?” Wyoming also stressed the impossibility of a “one-size-fits-all” policy across or even within states.

7.2. Summary of Findings

Some states have begun efforts to define what livability means to them; however no state has a formal definition and there are concerns over what it means for rural areas. Some states have begun incorporating livability ideas into their long-range transportation plans, but a clear way to do so seems elusive. Project examples with livability ideals are plentiful but calling them “livability projects” may not be warranted. Concerning the next transportation bill, all states expressed the concern that funding and flexibility with funding are crucial to livability progress. No metrics dealing solely with livability progress have been developed. Important livability issues identified by the states are shown in Figure 47. The highlighted themes are common themes identified as “Very Important” and “Somewhat Important” for rural and urban areas.

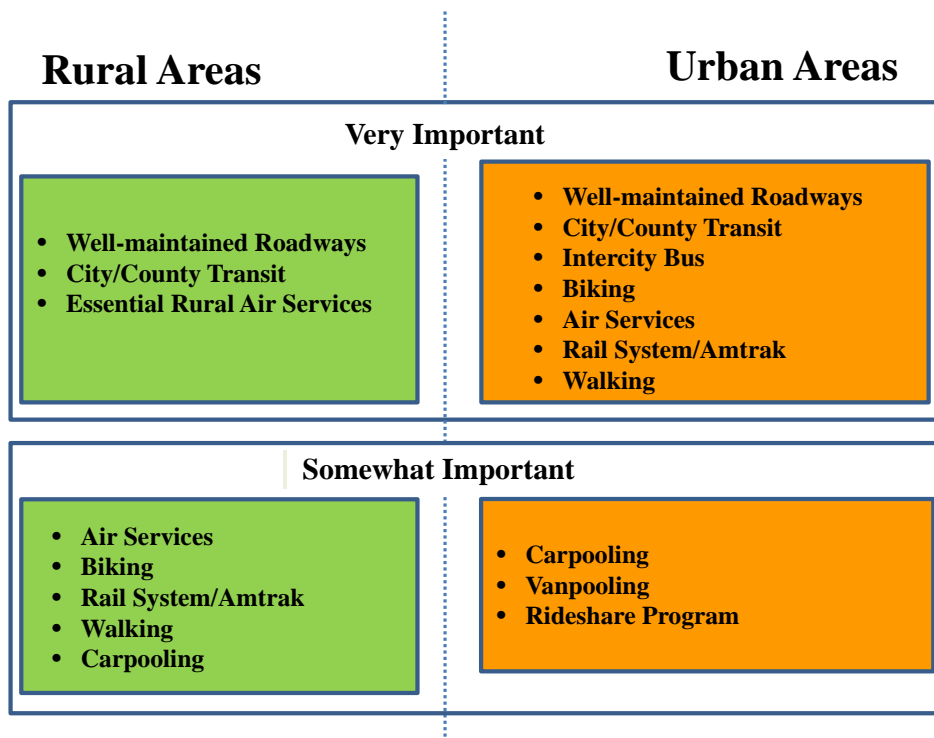


Figure 47: Livability Priorities Among the Other States

8. MDT INTERVIEWS

As its mission statement suggests, MDT is primarily concerned with serving the public.

“MDT’s 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.” (MDT, 2004)

When setting policy and direction, MDT tries hard to put the needs and desires of the public above the opinions and desires of MDT staff members. An example is that the research team for this project was continually reminded by MDT staff that the public survey was of primary importance to this project. Still, MDT staff work daily on improving the transportation system and have insightful knowledge as to what is important. With this in mind, the research team undertook the task of interviewing MDT staff members.

8.1. Methodology

Outreach meetings were conducted with different groups within MDT. The meetings included the following MDT bureaus, divisions, and districts:

- Planning division on May 9, 2011,
- Missoula and Great Falls districts on June 20, 2011,
- Highways and Safety on June 28, 2011,
- Aeronautics and Motor Carrier Services on June 28, 2011,
- Construction and Maintenance on June 28, 2011, and
- Billings, Butte and Glendive districts on July 7, 2011.

Most of the meetings were face-to-face. The meetings with the district offices were conducted online utilizing GoToMeeting® and automatically updated web pages with summary notes to simulate a face-to-face meeting. These meetings lasted one to one and a half hours. During the meeting a short presentation was provided by WTI that introduced the research project, provided some examples of how others have defined livability, and summarized public comments to the TranPlan21 survey regarding transportation needs for Montana. This presentation lasted less than ten minutes. The remainder of the meeting focused on discussing the following questions:

- Describe what you think are the transportation elements of livable communities in Montana.
- Considering the last question, describe programs and efforts by MDT to implement these elements.
- Thinking about transportation needs, what are the risks and opportunities for livability?
- In what ways do we coordinate with other state and federal agencies on these issues?
- In terms of transportation, give us any final thoughts about what livability means.

Answers to these questions were summarized on a flip chart paper and displayed around the room. After the discussion of all questions ended, the list that was developed during discussion of the first question (livability elements) was revisited to see if there was anything that should be added. Then attendees were asked to identify the elements they felt were most important for Montana.

8.2. Results

This section provides a list of essentially all comments that were made, although not listed verbatim. Similar comments were combined into themes. Each of the themes discussed are included in the lists below. A list was developed for each discussion question.

Transportation elements of livable communities in Montana could provide some framework for a definition of livability in Montana. The answers to the first discussion question were separated into those that were ranked of high importance by the participants, and/or were repeated in several different meetings. The important themes of livability elements that arose from these meetings were:

- One size does not fit all communities.
 - Local needs/vision should drive any incorporation of livability principles into transportation projects.
 - Transportation facility design should be flexible and scalable.
- Safety for all modes is important.
- Access is important.
- Efficient vehicle movement should be considered when incorporating alternative modes.
- Incorporate community values in design of transportation facilities.

Many other elements of livability were mentioned during these meetings. They include:

- Congestion mitigation,
- Landscaping and aesthetics,
- Adequate close parking,
- Urban transit,
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities,
- Walking paths creating healthy communities,
- Traffic noise,
- Safety in rest areas with no cellular phone service,
- Intercity transit,
- Ease of pedestrian access,
- Plowing snow and keeping roads open in the winter,
- Connectivity of the road system, and
- Transit-oriented development.
- Highway connectivity between towns, particularly towns with shrinking populations. As rural schools are closed and combined and other services diminish, good auto access between rural communities becomes more important.
- Economic viability of local communities. Several specific transportation examples arose:
 - Impacts of airports,
 - Impacts of truck traffic,
 - Parking near businesses, and
 - The Custer Avenue Interchange Project in Helena is providing access and mobility, which encourages land development.

The second discussion question helped identify important MDT programs that have positive livability impacts. Some programs and efforts within MDT that were seen as implementing elements of livability include:

- The aviation loan grant program that allows local needs to drive investments in airport infrastructure,
- The rail and transit program,
- The community transportation enhancement program (CTEP),
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),
- Quarterly meeting conducted by MDT with metropolitan planning organizations, counties, and reservations to identify adjacent efforts,
- Stakeholder and landowner meetings on specific projects,
- Feasibility and corridor studies,
- Context-sensitive solutions/design,
- TranPlan 21 surveys and implementing results, and
- The public involvement process.

Often specific transportation project examples are used when attempting to describe what livability means (refer to Chapter 2). The third question was intended to capture a list of specific projects that were good examples of livability. Those identified were:

- The Seeley Lake locally controlled airport;
- The routing, scheduling, and timing of oversized loads;
- Boulder Main Street and Havre Main Street as examples of community values, incorporating aesthetics, pedestrian movement, and parking;
- Canyon Ferry Road;
- Numerous existing bike and pedestrian facilities;
- Sun River bridge FWP access inclusion;
- Several projects that have incorporated powder-coated signal poles and stamped concrete; and
- Parking and corridor studies—the study for Red Lodge being one good example.

Several risks and opportunities relating to livability were identified.

- Special interests and the loudest voices may not represent the true desires of the community as a whole. Incorporating livability into transportation projects may provide leverage for these interests to drive project design away from true community desires.
- Livability needs may pull limited financial resources away from construction needs. The general fear is that funds spent on livability elements in transportation will reduce the efficiency and safety of the transportation system.
- Livability needs may make projects unaffordable. One example is the project titled “Big Fork North and South,” which became too expensive to build after several livability elements were added to the project.
- Media coverage can create a problem that may be more perceived than real. An example is the mega-loads controversy.
- Government-led change can lead to a feeling of Big Brother.
- Implementing livability in a programmatic way may result in losing focus on local needs. For example, urban templates being applied in rural areas may not be appropriate.

- There may not be enough maintenance funding for livability components included in projects.
- A long period of time from project inception to construction can create a “moving target” as far as livability elements being incorporated, as staff may change and local goals/vision may change during the planning and design of the project.
- Livability may provide an opportunity for local communities to take ownership of the shape and form of their community.

Important examples of existing and potential cooperation with other agencies were identified:

- Federal Highway Administration,
- Federal Aviation Administration,
- American Association of Airport Executives,
- City and county governments,
- Department of Environmental Quality,
- Army Corp of Engineers,
- Department of Health and Human Services,
- Downtown business districts,
- Chambers of commerce,
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials,
- Fish, Wildlife and Parks,
- Soil Conservation Service,
- Metropolitan planning organizations,
- Technical advisory committees,
- Policy coordination committees,
- Department of Natural Resources,
- Local bike groups,
- Office of Public Instruction, and
- Tribes.

8.3. Summary of Results

Numerous elements defining livability were mentioned by MDT staff. Based on their rankings and the frequency of their being mentioned across meetings, some factors stood out (Figure 48). Community vision, safety, and access were identified as the most important elements for livability, followed by mobility, bike and pedestrian facilities, and flexibility/scalability.

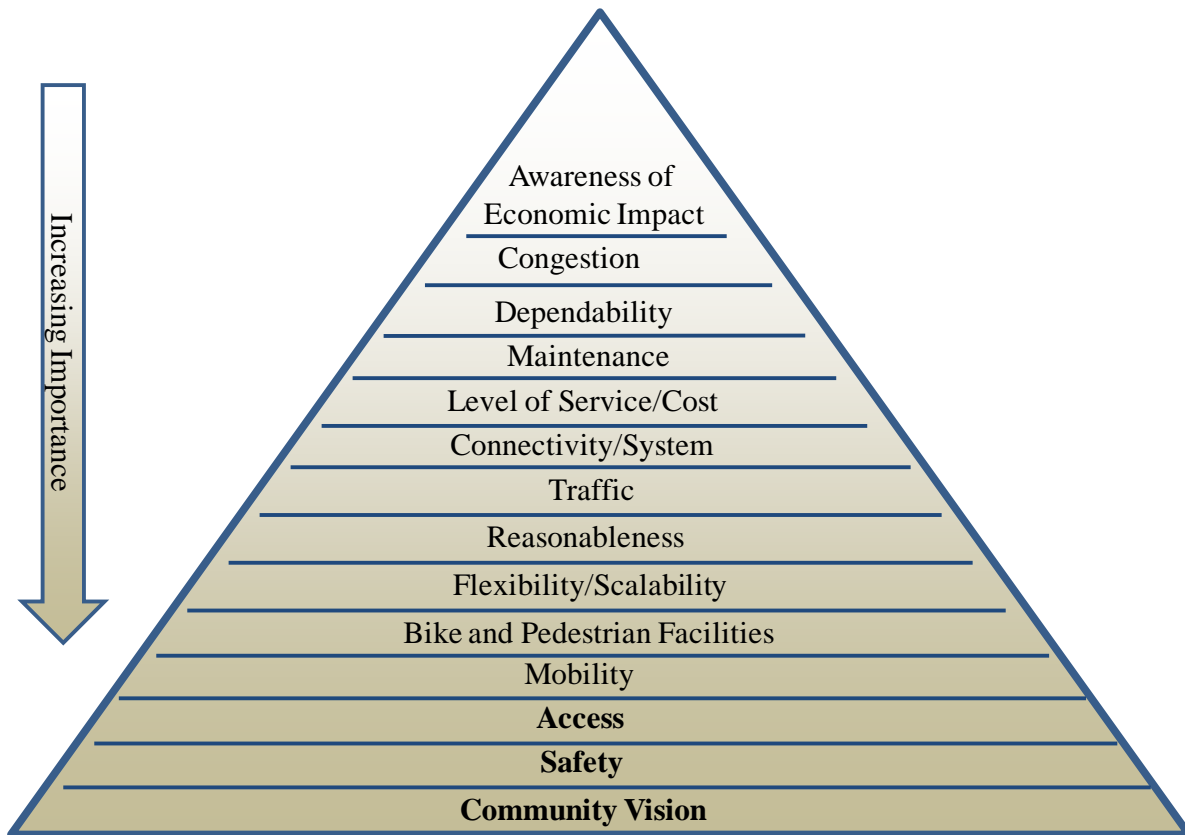


Figure 48: MDT Staff Identification of Elements of Livability

MDT staff identified numerous internal programs and projects that have had a positive impact on livability. Some concerns and risks regarding the department's efforts at improving livability were noted (Figure 49). The general fear was that programmatically incorporating livability, as it is currently nationally defined, into either the federal funding program or the MDT decision making process could lead to decisions and focuses that could actually decrease livability overall. For instance, focusing on urban needs could impact livability projects in rural areas.



Figure 49: Risks Identified by MDT Staff

Making significant improvements in livability to Montana’s communities will take the efforts of many agencies and partners. MDT staff identified numerous partners with a stake in improving livability (Figure 50). Local governments, FHWA, FWP, and resource agencies were mentioned most frequently.

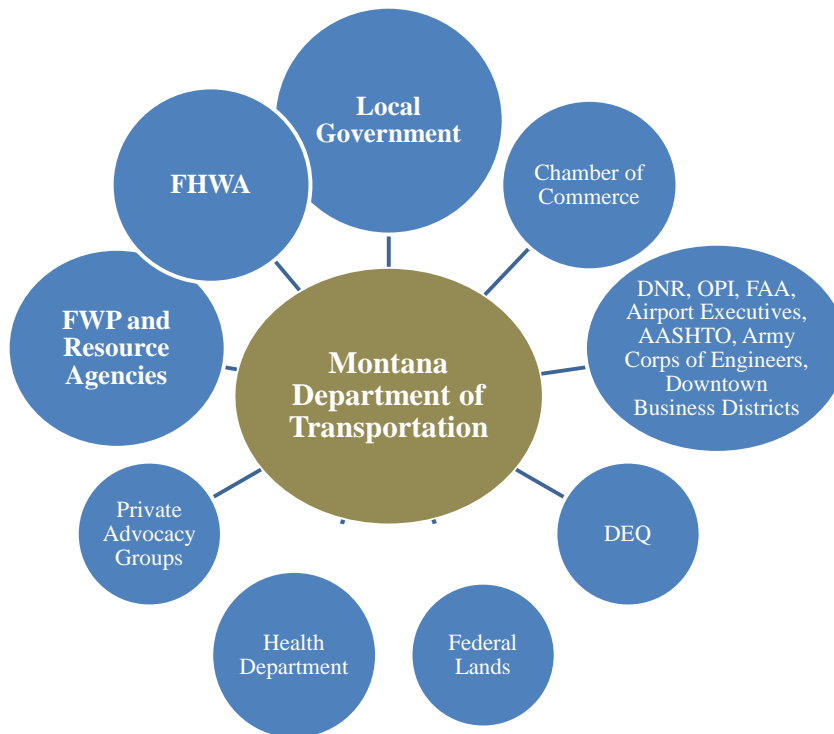


Figure 50: Livability Partners

9. CONCLUSIONS

Montana has some unique characteristics that may have a bearing on measures of its livability. There is a wide range of community types, both in size and growth rate. Montana ranks higher in some demographic areas that could create challenges such as a higher proportion of aging population. If good roads, short commute times, and alternative mode use are used as metrics, Montana communities are on average very livable. The following examples of the unique demographics of Montana should be considered in any discussion of its measures of livability:

- Sixty-two percent of Montanans live in areas where the population density is 800 people per square mile or higher, but those areas account for only 0.1 percent of the land area.
- Eighty-two percent of the land area in Montana has a population density of under one person per mile.
- From 2000 to 2009, 36 of Montana's 56 counties reported negative growth.
- Montana's population is aging. Projections indicate that by 2030 around 25.8 percent of Montanans will be over 65; this will be the third highest proportion of elderly residents of any state in the nation.
- Roads in Montana are in good condition compared to surrounding states.
- In general, Montanans drive more miles (11,176 VMT per year vs. 9,779 nationally), have shorter work commute times (17.9 minutes vs. 25.5 nationally,) and are more likely to take an alternative mode to work (72.8 percent drive alone vs. 75.5 percent nationally).

Along with its unique character, the surveys conducted for this study indicate that Montana is also a good place to live. Survey respondents endorsed the belief that MDT projects add value to their quality of life and that MDT's performance serves Montanans well.

Through a review of literature, analysis of demographic data, review of TranPlan21 survey information, interviews with other states, a public survey, stakeholder outreach, interviews of elected leaders, and interviews of MDT staff, this report provides supporting information for defining what livability, in relation to transportation, could mean for Montana. The detailed findings of each individual task are included within each chapter of this report. In reviewing these findings the reader will see some common themes from the findings of each task and some themes that only appear in one or a few of the task results. The results from each task were considered together in an attempt to preserve the important themes identified from individual tasks, but highlighting common themes throughout.

Table 13 provides a summary of the major themes identified through the various tasks of this project. There are commonalities across the different data sources. Keeping a well-maintained roadway system was a high priority found in the results of every task. Safety was also a high priority theme across most tasks. Other states, MDT staff, and stakeholders felt strongly that livability improvements should be flexible and that local needs and priorities should drive any attempts to increase livability. The other three sources (TranPlan 21 comments, public survey, and elected leader survey) might have shown agreement with this statement but opinions regarding programmatic definitions were not sought through those efforts. Rather those surveys focused on finding out what is important to the respondents' community.

Table 13: Summary of Findings

Concept	TranPlan21	Other States	MDT	Public	Elected Leader	Stakeholder
Well Maintained Road System	●	●	●	●	●	●
Local Transit	○	●	○	●	○	●
Safety	○	●	●	○	○	●
Bicycle Facilities	○	○	○	○	○	●
Air Service	○	○		●	○	○
Pedestrian Facilities and Ease of Walking Access		○	○	○	○	●
Not One Size, but Flexible and Scalable		●	●			●
Local Needs / Vision Should Lead		●	●			○
Economic Viability from Transportation Infrastructure			○		○	●
Intercity Transit	○	○	○	○		○
Winter Maintenance	○		○	○	○	○
Passenger Rail	○	○		○	○	
Congestion	○		○	○	○	
Landscaping and Aesthetics			○	○		○
Access to Highways			○	○		○
Freight Rail	○				○	○
Traffic Noise			○	○		
Taxi Service				○		
Parking			○			

●- Mentioned Often and or Ranked High

○- Mentioned

9.1. A Montana Definition of Livability

Based on the findings from all sources collected for this project, an expanded definition for livability in Montana as it relates to transportation is provided below.

For Montanans, the most important elements of a livable community, although not necessarily transportation related, are friendly neighbors, rural character, availability of outdoor activities, access to high quality education and health care, abundance of natural scenic beauty, and availability of entertainment and cultural activities. However, transportation aspects that Montanans perceive bring value to a community include:

- **Primarily**
 - A safe and well-maintained road network
 - Infrastructure and services that match local community values and needs
- **Secondarily**
 - Multi-modal alternatives to automobile travel—access to transit, rail, and air services
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Access to nearby cities and towns for employment, health care services, and recreational activities through personal vehicles, transit, intercity bus or other options
 - Local enhancements that connect residents to the people and activities of their neighborhoods and communities
 - Context-sensitive transportation planning that promotes the character of the community
 - Preservation of the natural resources, scenic views, and rural sense of place that are valued by all Montanans
 - Road surfaces that are well maintained in all weather conditions
 - Transportation Infrastructure that improves local economies

This broad definition may be summarized by the following statement:

“Provide a transportation system that emphasizes a safe, maintained road network; allows for multimodal transportation opportunities; and considers local community values.”

9.2. Metrics

How livable are Montana communities with respect to transportation? More importantly, can this be measured in order to track progress? Livability is difficult to measure directly. Based on the definition offered above, metrics are suggested in Table 14 for some of the major elements of the definition for tracking MDT impact on livability on a statewide level.

Table 14: Potential Livability Metrics for Montana

Definition Element	Related Measure	Data Sources	Current Value
Local Community Values	Overall satisfaction with transportation system from TranPlan 21 public telephone survey	Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2009	Overall Satisfaction 6.6*
Quality of Highways and Streets	Satisfaction with Interstate Highways, Other Highways and City Streets; Road Condition Ratings: Percent Good or Very Good	Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2009; USDOT RITA, 2009 (data from 2008)	Interstate Satisfaction 7.15* Highway Satisfaction 6.49* City Street Satisfaction 5.11* Good Road Condition 64%
Safety	Number of Fatalities; Number of Incapacitating Injuries	MDT, 2010 (data for 2009)	Fatalities: 221 Including Injuries: 1,110

* Rankings are on a scale from one to ten

The tables provide some examples of potential metrics for measuring MDT impact on livability. Others could be envisioned for the various aspects of livability as defined. There are currently 108 transit systems in Montana and 1.1 percent of commuters use public transit to get to work (USDOT, RITA 2009). The portion of commuters who walk to work in Montana is 5.5 percent (USDOT, RITA 2009).

These metrics are statewide numbers. Metrics could also be developed for the community level such as a measure of connectivity of roads, transit ridership, miles of bike lanes, etc.

9.3. Future Work and Implementation

The research team recommends that MDT adopt the definition provided for livability as it relates to transportation. MDT could consider an annual livability report card for Montana that would include the metrics identified above and highlights of projects that impact livability in the state. Several specific projects have been identified in this report (refer to Section 2.2, 2.3, 6.2 and 8.2). MDT should also create a performance measurement index of livability for each project. This initiative would help MDT to prioritize its projects to fulfill Montana's unique needs. In addition, this work should be published as soon as possible in order to allow the results to be used by those considering national policy decisions relating to transportation and livability. Finally, MDT should consider a second phase to this project that would involve collaborating with regional partners to define livability for the rural, intermountain West.

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11. APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Select raw data summarized in Chapter 3 is provided in this appendix. Montana's incorporated communities are listed in Table 15 and Table 16. Communities with city transit are listed in Table 17.

Table 15: Urbanized Areas (2009 Estimates)

No.	City	Population
1	Billings	105,845
2	Missoula	68,876
3	Great Falls	59,366

Table 16: Urban Areas (2009 Estimates)

No.	City	Population
1	Bozeman city	39,282
2	Butte-Silver Bow county	32,268
3	Helena city	29,939
4	Kalispell city	21,640
5	Havre city	9,656
6	Anaconda-Deer Lodge county	8,792
7	Whitefish city	8,400
8	Belgrade city	8,192
9	Miles City city	8,123
10	Livingston city	7,380
11	Laurel city	6,750
12	Lewistown city	5,933
13	Columbia Falls city	5,361
14	Polson city	5,231

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates - Released June 10, 2010

Table 17: City/Town with Intercity Bus Services

No.	City/Town	2009 Population Estimate
1	Billings	105,845
2	Missoula	68,876
3	Great Falls	59,366
4	Bozeman	39,282
5	Butte-Silver Bow	32,268
6	Helena	29,939
7	Kalispell	21,640
8	Whitefish	8,400
9	Belgrade	8,192
10	Miles City	8,123
11	Livingston	7,380
12	Laurel	6,750
13	Polson	5,231
14	Glendive	4,628
15	Dillon	4,226
16	Hardin	3,532
17	Shelby	3,523
18	Deer Lodge	3,517
19	Conrad	2,488
20	Columbus	2,039
21	Ronan	1,999
22	Three Forks	1,970
23	Forsyth	1,865
24	Pablo	1,781
25	Big Timber	1,740
26	Manhattan	1,677
27	West Yellowstone	1,502
28	Boulder	1,475
29	Lakeside	1,415
30	Whitehall	1,191
31	St. Ignatius	807
32	Ulm	798
33	Wolf Creek	794
34	Cascade	770
35	Bridger	736
36	Terry	567
37	Arlee	501
38	Wibaux	480
39	Jefferson City	409
40	Craig	338
41	Drummond	322
42	Evaro	300
43	Basin	233
44	Hysham	233
45	Lima	231
46	St. Regis	220
47	Melrose	175
48	Ravalli	67
49	Warm Springs	25
Total Population w/service		449,866

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (SUB-EST2009-04-30); Release Date: June 2010

12. APPENDIX B: PUBLIC SURVEY SCRIPT

The following text is the survey script that was used for the public telephone survey portion of this project.

Hello my name is _____ and I'm calling from Montana State University Billings. We are conducting a survey interested in your ideas about what enhances the quality of life for you in your community. Your telephone number was randomly selected by a computer and all answers to this poll will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary. In order to interview the right person, I need to speak to the member of your household who is at home and 18 years old or older. Would that be you? (IF NO, WAIT FOR PERSON TO GET ON THE PHONE.....IF BUSY, BE SURE TO WRITE DOWN TIME & DATE TO CALL BACK)

Are you currently a resident of Montana?

- Yes
- No

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, in general, how would you rank your community as a good place to live?

- 1, Poor
- 2, Below Average
- 3, Average
- 4, Above Average
- 5, Excellent
- Don't Know
- No Response

Please list the three most important features of your community that make it a good place to live.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The remaining questions relate to how transportation in all its forms can affect the quality of life for people in your community.

What are the three most important features specific to transportation that make your community a good place to live?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is the condition of streets and highways in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is local public transportation in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is bus transportation between cities in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is safety for children as they walk and bicycle to school in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is passenger rail service for residents of your community in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is air travel services for residents in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is the ability for fire trucks, police, and ambulances to get to an emergency quickly in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, for you personally, how important is local transit service with access for persons with disabilities or the elderly in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is local transit service with access for persons with disabilities or the elderly for the community in general?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is transportation-related infrastructure being visually pleasing; for example, median strips, bridges, or landscaping in making your community a better place in which to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is bike-friendly infrastructure such as bike lanes or paths in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is pedestrian-friendly infrastructure such as sidewalks and pedestrian crossings in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is winter maintenance of local streets and highways in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is street lighting in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is improving how major roads fit within the natural environment in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is reducing traffic congestion in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is ensuring a connected street network by limiting dead ends and cul-de-sacs in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is access to recreation opportunities such as parks, trails, and public spaces in making your community a good place to live?

- 1, Not Important
- 2, Somewhat Important
- 3, Neither Unimportant or Important
- 4, Important
- 5, Very Important
- Don't Know
- No Response

Rank the importance of these options in your community from least important to most important.

- Bike
- Sidewalks and Other Walking
- Auto Access
- Local Buses and Taxis

What is your preferred method or mode of transportation for getting to work or to get health care?

- Bike
- Walking
- Driving
- Local Buses and Taxis

What single thing with respect to transportation would most enhance your community and make it a better place to live?

Can you identify an example of a transportation project or program that impacts the quality of life of your community?

The next several questions are for statistical purpose only.

What town do you most often identify as where you live (if any)?

What is your zipcode?

How old are you?

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 8 years, grade school
- 12 years, high school graduate
- 13-14 years, associate degree or some college
- 16 years, college graduate
- 17-20 years, post graduate
- No response

How many people currently live or stay in this residence?

Am I speaking to you on a house phone or cell phone?

House

Cell

No Response

What is your gender (DO NOT ASK)?

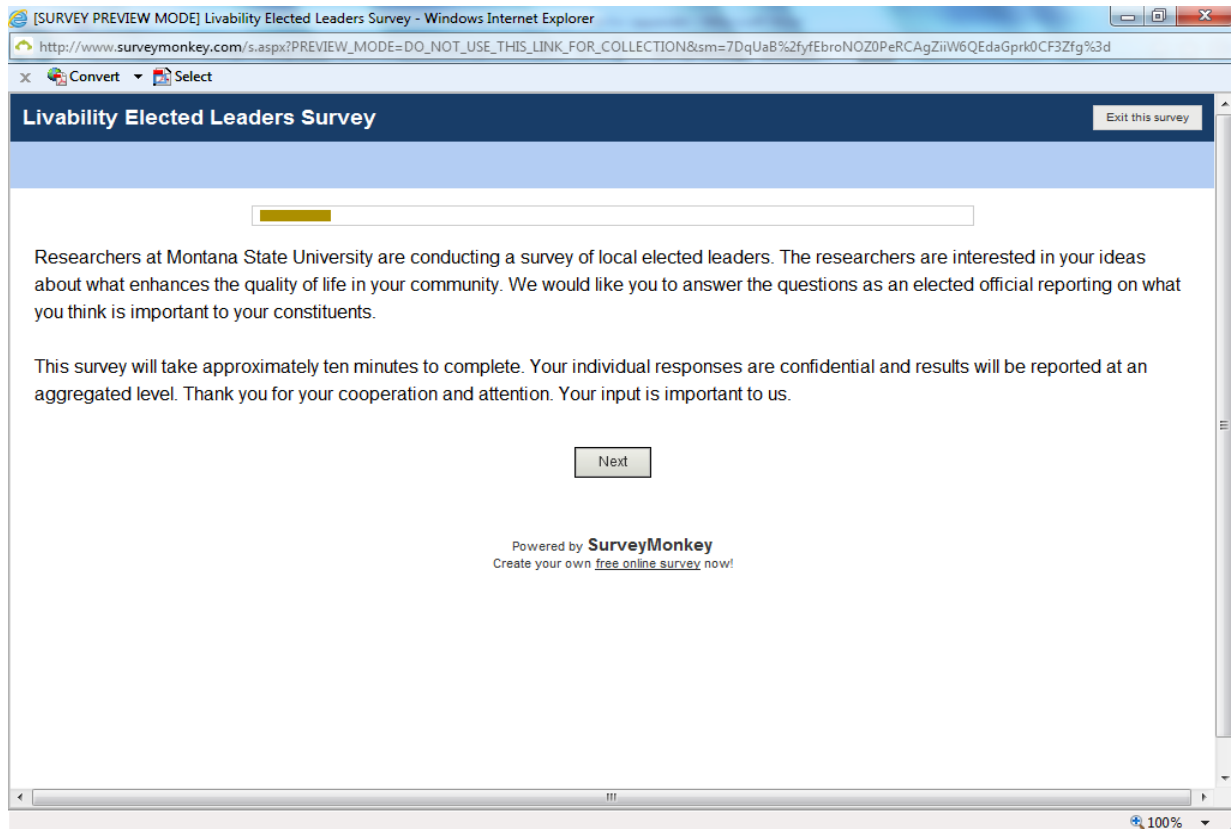
Male

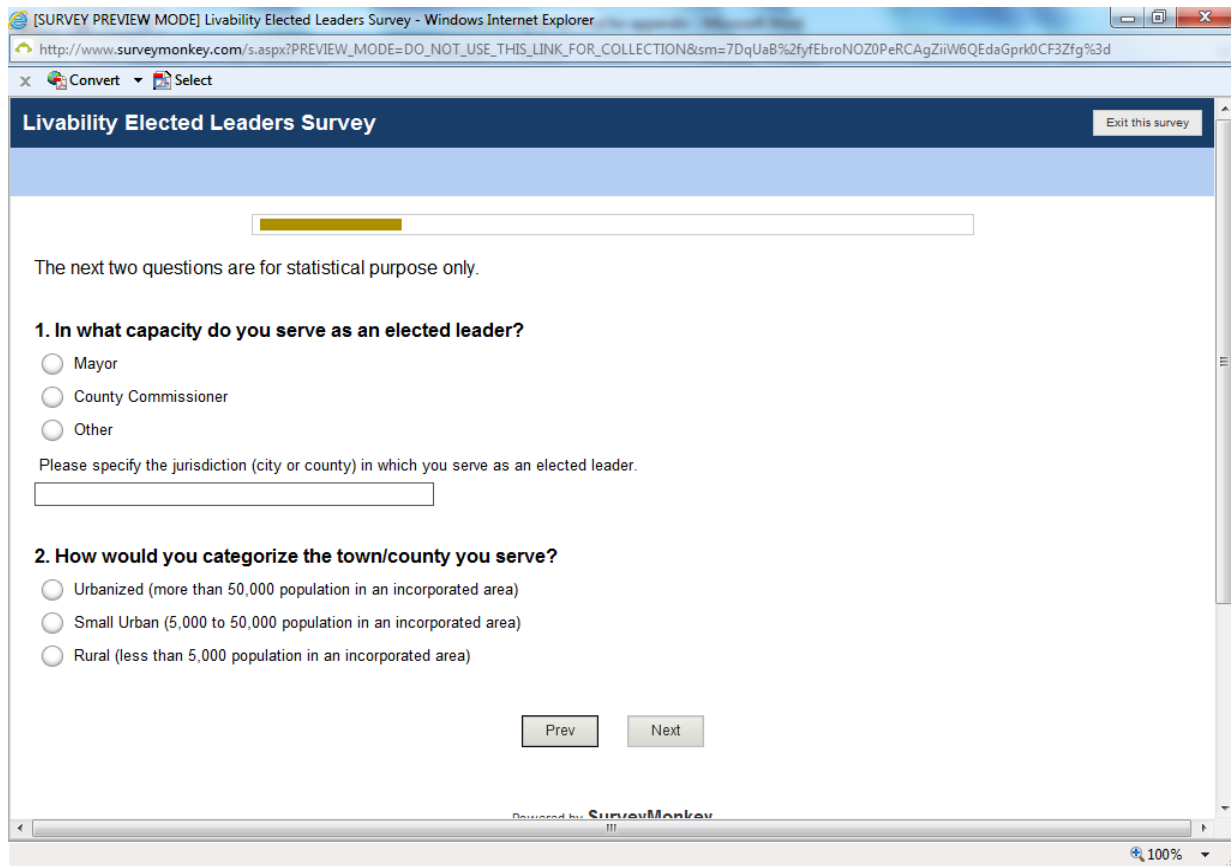
Female

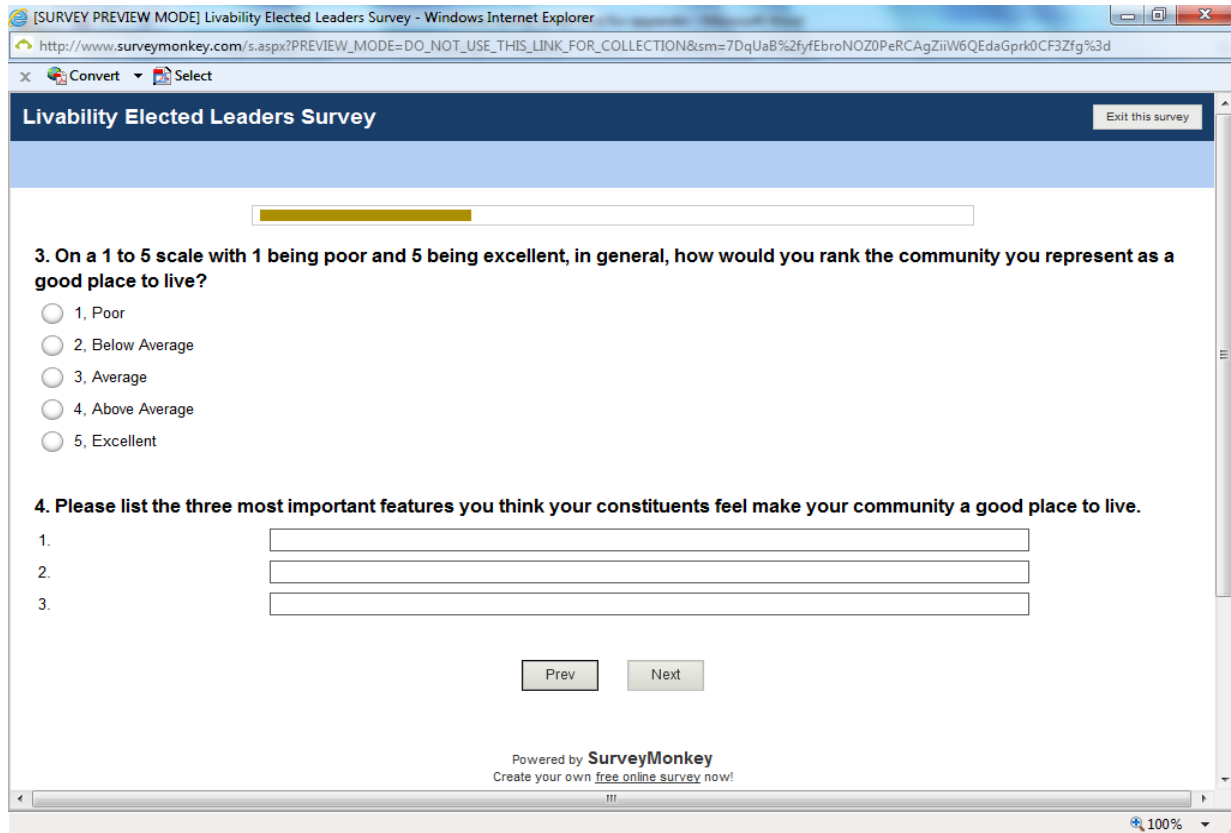
Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

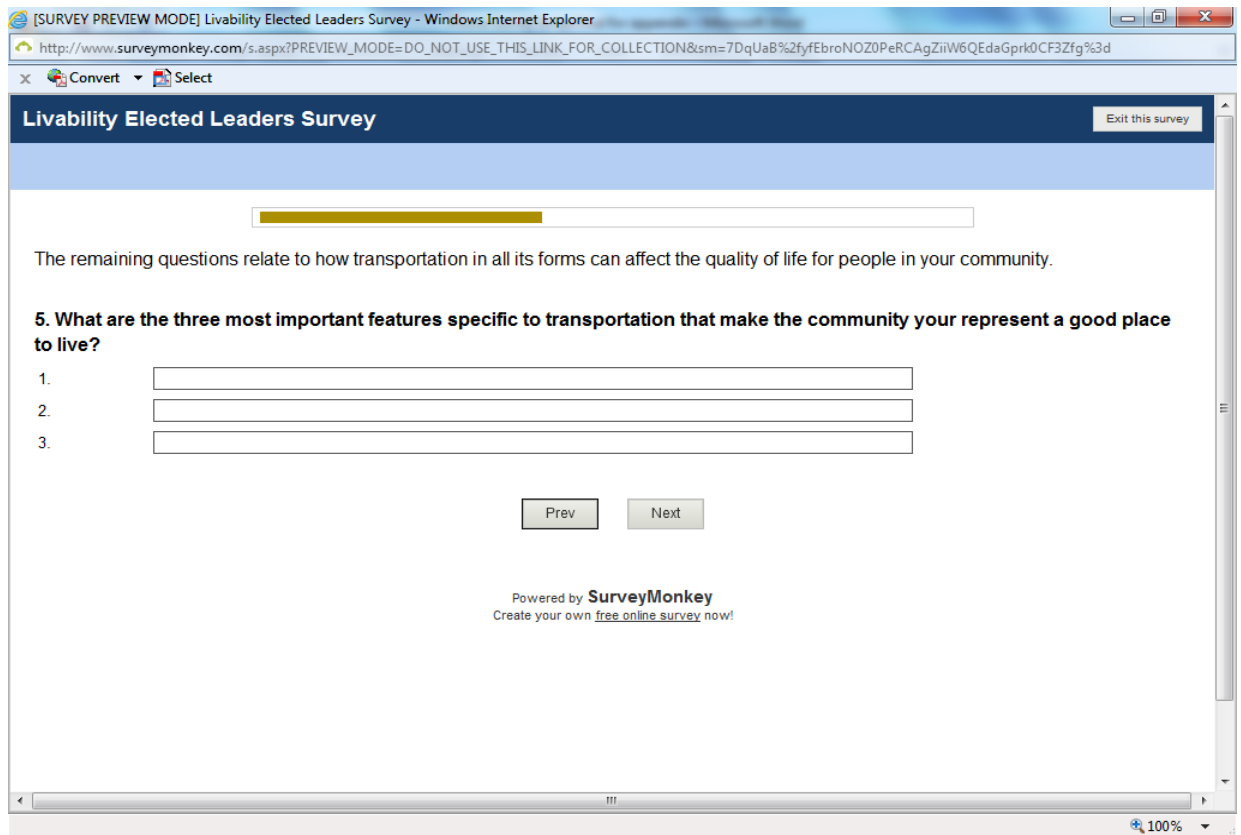
That was the last question. Thank you for taking time to complete the survey. Have a good night.

13. APPENDIX C: ELECTED LEADER SURVEY









[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] Livability Elected Leaders Survey - Windows Internet Explorer
 http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=7DqUaB%2fyfEbroNOZ0PeRCAGZiiW6QEdaGprk0CF3Zfg%3d

Livability Elected Leaders Survey Exit this survey

6. On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important are the following factors to your constituents in making your community a good place to live?

	1. Not Important	2. Somewhat Important	3. Neither Unimportant or Important	4. Important	5. Very Important	N/A
The ability for fire trucks, police, and ambulances to get to an emergency quickly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety for children as they walk and bicycle to school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local transit service with access for persons with disabilities or the elderly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Passenger rail service for residents of your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation-related infrastructure being visually pleasing; for example, median strips, bridges, or landscaping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air travel services for residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bus transportation between cities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The condition of streets and highways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local public transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Powered by **SurveyMonkey**
 Create your own free online survey now!

100%

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] Livability Elected Leaders Survey - Windows Internet Explorer
 http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=7DqUaB%2fyfEbroNOZ0PeRCAGZiiW6QEdaGprk0CF3Zfg%3d

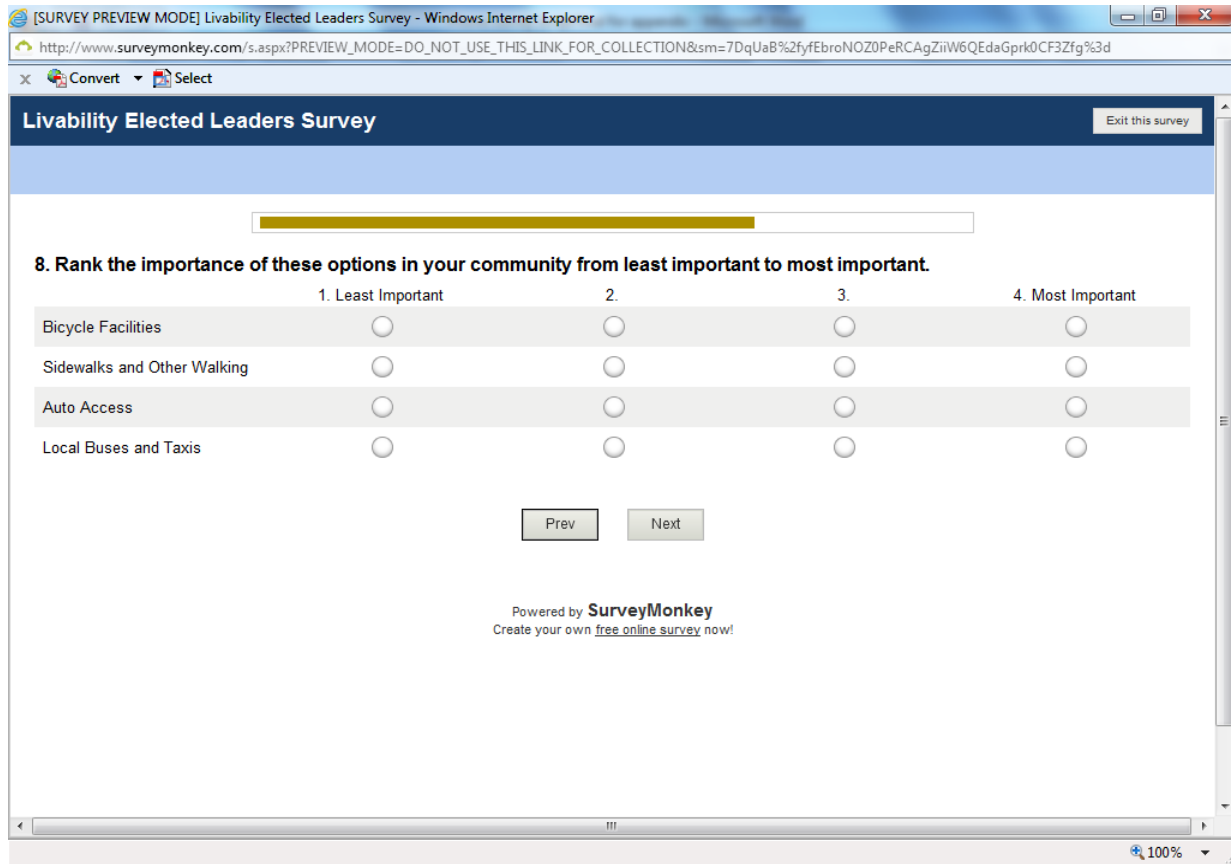
Livability Elected Leaders Survey Exit this survey

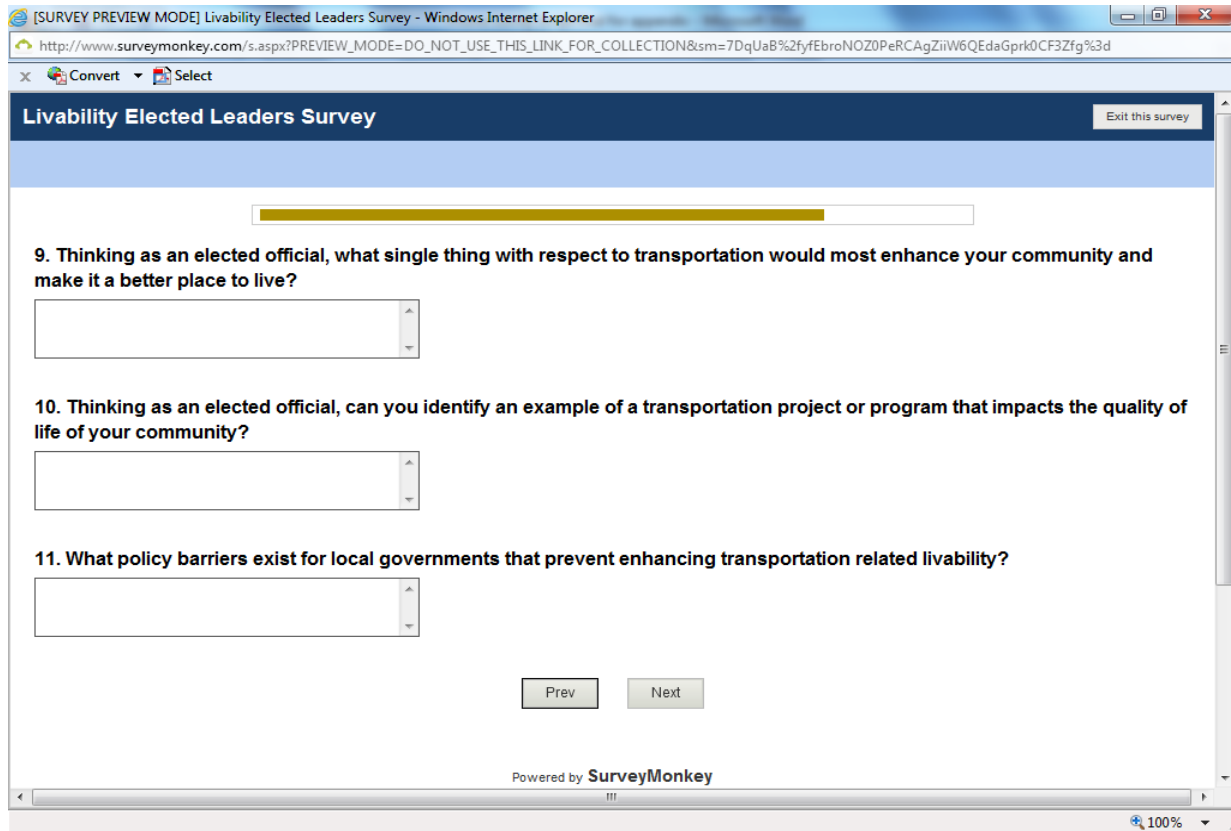
7. On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important are the following factors to your constituents in making your community a good place to live?

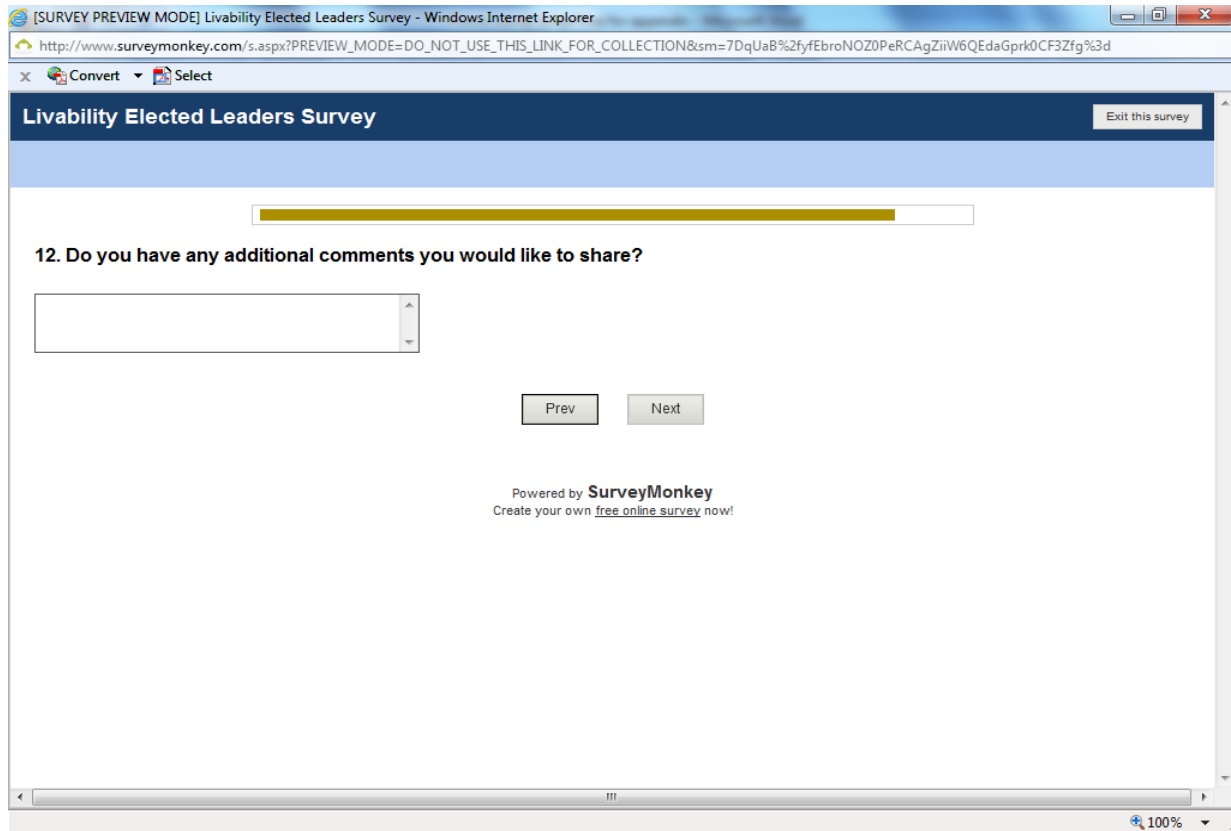
	1. Not Important	2. Somewhat Important	3. Neither Unimportant or Important	4. Important	5. Very Important	N/A
Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure such as sidewalks and pedestrian crossings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving how major roads fit within the natural environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to recreation opportunities such as parks, trails, and public spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike-friendly infrastructure such as bike lanes or paths	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street lighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Winter maintenance of local streets and highways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing traffic congestion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring a connected street network by limiting dead ends and cul-de-sacs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

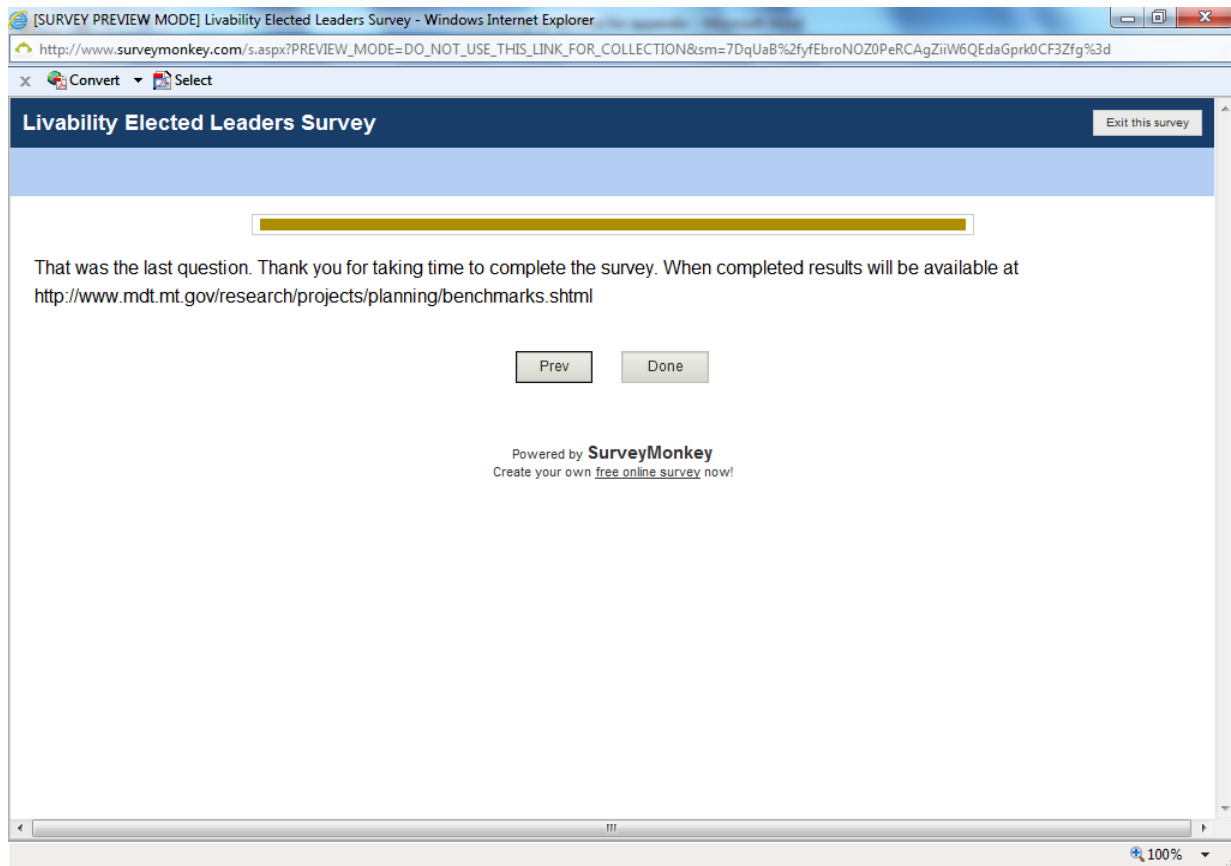
Powered by **SurveyMonkey**
 Create your own [free online survey](#) now!

100%









14. APPENDIX D: ADDITIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

There are additional survey results included here as they may be of interest, but did not have a direct impact on the final findings of this project (i.e., a Montana definition of livability). The raw comments are listed below each question. In some cases they have been categorized by type of comment for convenience. Non-answers such as “none I can think of” are not included.

14.1. Public Survey Open Ended Comments

What single thing with respect to transportation would most enhance your community and make it a better place to live?

- Category: Air
 - Air travel.
 - More air flights.
 - Air travel with better access to different places.
 - Not enough airlines coming in
- Category: Bike
 - Good bike lanes
 - Could use bike path for kids
 - More alternative trails for biking and walking
 - bike paths & hiking paths; bike lanes because of the heavy bike traffic
 - Eureka doesn't have anything for bikes- riders of bicycles have to ride on the roads- there isn't enough room on the should of the road to allow pedestrian and bike access with the traffic- This area could really use bike paths and bike lanes
 - Make more bike lanes to connect to other communities
 - A good network of bike paths and bike lanes is needed
 - Bike paths
 - more bike lanes
 - More bike trails.
 - Bike paths
 - More access for bicycles and pedestrians.
 - Biking path system
 - More bike paths and lanes.....make our town bike friendly! Need more public transportation...focus on green transportation, like walking, bikes, etc.
 - bike lanes & routes & access
 - Safer bike routes
 - Improve bike lanes and paths
 - Bike lanes/paths
 - More bike paths.....better sidewalks for my wheelchair
 - More bike paths and more of the county roads paved
 - More bike trails and paths
 - More bike paths and bike lanes
 - Don't know,,,, more bike trails would be nice
 - More bike paths and lanes
 - More walking paths and bike trails

- Bike trails
- More bike paths and safer walking. Also more lighting.
- bike lane
- a bicycle path
- Safe bike pathways that separate from the streets; feels that bike lanes are very dangerous to person on the bike and person driving
- something for Bike traffic
- Category: Bypass
 - Having a second highway for the truckers
 - Need a truck route for the large oil trucks
 - By-pass connector from US Highway 93 to interstate 90. Infrastructure to reduce congestion.
 - An alternative route around town.
 - A truck route for trucks to travel.....oil trucks are all over and lots of accidents, they need their own routes. Also more affordable air services and more buses for the elderly between cities.
 - By-pass routes for the oil trucks around town
 - A By pass around Missoula
 - Re routing Truck Route, so it's not going down the middle of town; extended bike path
- Category: Reduce Congestion
 - To have the roadways laid out better to ease the congestion
 - Less traffic
 - Lessen the number of cars
 - For the major routes that go across town do a better job in keeping the traffic moving
 - moving traffic better
 - congestion elimination
 - less traffic
 - Less traffic
 - more streets that are less congested
 - less congestion
 - Least amount of traffic congestion
- Category: Lower Fuel Cost
 - Cheaper fuel, maybe a taxi service
 - Cheaper gas prices
 - lower gas prices
 - Cheaper fuel.
 - Cheaper gas
 - Lower gas prices
 - Cheaper gas.
 - lower gs prices
 - cheaper fuel
- Category: Lighting
 - Better lighting at nite for night driving.

- There should be better lighting in the evenings making it easier to see roads etc.
- More traffic lights
- Category: Pedestrian
 - Sidewalks
 - Would be nice if everything was in walking distance
 - More sidewalks are needed in the community
 - add more sideways; bus services
 - Sidewalks
 - More walking paths
 - more sideways & fix the roads
 - Better city streets and sidewalks.
 - Sidewalks and bike paths.....need more lighting
 - Sidewalks
 - Re-visit pedestrian laws, they should not always have the right-of-way, and it creates a lot of problems for traffic.
 - More sidewalks, people get off the phone and pay attention to their driving
 - Need more sidewalks for the kids to walk to school
 - More maintenance and upkeep of the sidewalks
 - the sidewalks
 - street and sidewalk maintaince
 - more sidewalks and biking
- Category Public Transit
 - Passenger train services, or bicycle paths
 - Local bus service and taxi service
 - If we had a bus or train that we wouldn't have to go so far to access
 - Better bus service
 - A new highway thru town, bus service
 - Local bus transportation, fix the roads
 - Better Bus Service
 - City bus services need to run longer hours. Maybe a 24 hour bus-service.
 - Transportation for elderly for shopping purposes.
 - The availability of public transportation
 - Bus services
 - More public transportation between cities.
 - Some bus service would be good.
 - Bus access
 - more city bus services- more frequent stops
 - Better bus service for the community
 - Wider access to public transportation
 - Improved bus service and rail service would be great.
 - More types of transportation, especially for the elderly and handicapped
 - better bus service for the elderly
 - Train would be nice but bus would be very good.
 - Bus routes running later

- Train service would be great.
- More access to bus transportation
- More city buses or buses for people to get to work.
- Better public transportation.
- Bus service between towns
- good bus service; passenger trains stopping
- More available bus service to Missoula and back to Arlee
- More bus access.
- more bus service
- Rail would be great if it were possible.
- Bus system- public transportation system
- Bus service
- more bus service
- Like to see more car pooling for the outer lying areas into town
- More stable bus route
- Expanded bus routes and bike paths.
- Have passenger rail service
- Passenger trains going through town would be great!
- More buses for the handicapped and elderly
- Having Van access for wheelchair patients and elderly people
- Need more bus access
- Passenger rail service for our community.
- Bus service for the community
- Better free bus system.
- trolley cars; rail service
- A regular bus service .
- public transportation
- Better intercity bus service.
- bus service
- Bus service
- More buses to allow out of town travel.
- Commuter rail or rail system.
- City buses.
- More public transportation such as buses. Railway would be great.
- More buses.
- elderly & disability persons to have access to public transportation
- Longer hours scheduled for buses.
- Bus service needs to be improved....bus only goes one direction and need some to go either direction
- Hi-speed rail.
- Bus service
- More buses or taxi's.
- Need more buses and more taxis
- More bus services between cities

- Expanding bus services
- Senior citizens buses to get to another destination
- More buses to run from Bonner to Libby
- Better bus service so people can get around easier,finish the construction
- More buses on major arteries
- Rail services
- Smaller buses more frequently
- Bus service in our town.
- Working on more bus services
- Some sort of bus service.
- Bus service where we could park at its location and ride into the destination town like Missoula for instance.
- Public transportation.
- More frequent bus transportation
- Better public bus schedule, with more areas served. Some type of public rail system.
- more local bus routes
- bus
- trains
- Buses city to city. Also trains city to city
- street car
- buses
- having the bus run longer in the evenings till 8 pm
- Making it easier for handicapped and elder to get around
- van or bus for the Seniors and handicap
- bus service
- public transportation of some type
- bus service
- Better bus transportation from city to city.
- Better bus service
- Better public transportation
- regular bus service to Billings and Great Falls
- city bus, taxi, special transportation.
- community bus going to and from Missoula-commute
- bus
- Bus service
- Bus system or Taxi service
- A Passenger train would be a benefit
- more bus service
- Category: Rail Crossings
 - The overpass over the railroad tracks
 - another viadict over the train tracks
 - More railroad crossings
- Category: Better Roads
 - Road conditions

- better local street maintenance like pot holes, road repair
- Redoing of the streets
- Street maintenance
- Better roads
- Better maintenance on our side streets.
- Fix the highway
- Better road system
- The streets need to be better maintained during the winter time
- Better road conditions
- More passing lanes on Hwy. 12, more exits in Helena
- Maintenance of the streets
- Street maintenance
- good quality street and road
- filling in pot holes in the community
- repairing potholes
- Better road maintenance.
- More through streets which would be better for cars.
- Better infrastructure for some of our streets. Less changing from 2 lane streets to 4 lane streets and back again.
- better road maintenance
- repair streets
- Road improvement
- better infrastructures- more lanes so there less congestion of traffic; better access off the interstate
- Having better roads to travel on...
- Maintenance on roadways (pot-holes especially)
- Road repair
- better streets
- Road maintenance
- more access for autos
- In town repair of streets and maintenance
- Road maintenance
- Better roads.
- better upkeep on road maintenance
- Better maintained roads, potholes fixed etc.
- Good road maintenance.
- Making the roads better
- More dedicated routes thru town, such as from Zimmerman Trail across the rims and across the river, 4 lanes such as an interstate.
- better streets & more parking
- better timely maintenance of streets
- Less potholes in our streets.
- Street repair.
- A better job of maintaining the roads in our community,

- Better maintained roads
- Completing the road construction now going on in Butte.
- Need to fix the streets
- Better roads.
- More money for maintenance of highways
- Having good road maintenance would be helpful as we are lacking in this respect.
- Street maintenance.
- paving road- Nixon Golf Road of Manhattan MT
- filling in pot holes
- Keep up the maintenance on the streets, mainly potholes
- maintaining the local streets- streets aren't clearly marked & pot holes need to be fixed
- The widening of some of the roads in our area.
- Better road maintenance.
- Better surfacing of streets
- New Roads. (the repairs are the problem)
- Rebuild streets, putting in curbs, storm drain system, sidewalks etc.
- Fixing the potholes in the streets
- road maintenance
- paving the dirt roads
- Better roads
- fixing pot holes & fixing the streets
- Better roads
- improved roads within the community
- Better road maintenance.
- street & road maintenance
- Better upkeep of the roads, maintain potholes.
- Improve roads, and maintain them.
- Better streets.
- Fix Hwy. 200there is an ess curve that constantly buckles and washes out (Mile marker 6 Or 7) Repair them so they last instead of patching them all the time.
- Fix and repair the potholes, maintaining road structure,
- Better maintenance of the roads we travel.....poor condition because of the oil truck traffic
- Widening skyline Dr, which is good.
- Better roads.
- Need some street repair on the local level
- Better roads
- Better maintenance of streets
- Fix the streets.
- Do a better job on roads, repairing potholes, streets are not built the way they should be to begin with.
- Need street repair
- Maintenance of roads

- Road improvements.
- Improvements to roads and sidewalks
- Widening the major arteries would be great.
- Better roads
- Better streets
- Better roads and road maintenance
- Paved roads
- Better streets, and maintenance
- Repair the potholes on the streets
- Road maintenance
- More car lanes on the main street
- Paving some of our dirt roads.
- Some of the older paved roads should be widened.
- Better roads, county and state.
- Rural roads need to be better maintained, many of the roads are cracked and in poor repair. Some roads need to be replaced instead of just patched.
- Wider streets and hiways in the community
- Continue to improve the roads.....refinish Lake Elmo Dr., Rimrock road
- Road and street maintenance
- Nothing I can think of.....could make some more through streets
- Highway 236 needs to be resurfaced.
- Widen Highway between Great Falls and Billings
- Street repairs
- Just fill the potholes in.
- Improved roads
- Better road Quality
- Road maintenance and repair
- Better repair of residential streets
- Hwy 89 North of Choteau needs to be widened.
- More 4 lane highways near the town...2 lanes are very dangerous...too much traffic
- Fixing the town roads better
- widening roads
- good highways, and sidewalks
- The streets need repair, pot holes, and striping
- The street ;lights co- ordinated to keep traffic moving
- better maintaince of hwys 2 & 16
- Widen the highway
- more road repair out of town
- streets, roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes
- fixing the streets
- more paved roads
- streets
- better maintained roads

- Being able to repair local streets. Makes for better driving, walking biking, snow removal.
- more 4 lane roads
- good streets
- Good local roads
- paved roads
- US Highway North 93
- Fix the pot here
- paving the back roads
- maintaining the roads
- The pot holes need to be filled in
- Streets and alley ways should be clean and in repair /
- Better access off the interstate to the rural communities.
- More exits off the interstate.
- Category: Safety
 - safe highways
 - Limiting cell phone use while driving
 - too much drinking and driving
 - safer intersections & roads
 - Keeping the speed down coming into town from both directions
 - less drunk drivers
 - I would like to see Hwy speed limit reduced, to save fuel and make it safer. I would like and anti-texting law, I would like drivers age for licesing to be raised to 16, Training class for older people.
 - dealing with roads 60 - 70 mph with cross streets in Helena has been the reason for accidents
 - Signs like Children Pllaying, Elderly living area etc.
- Category: Taxi
 - In town Taxi service
 - More taxi service
 - Taxi's would be good.
 - Would help if there were more taxis in town. /
 - taxi service
 - taxi access
 - taxi service
 - taxi service
 - taxis, van for elderly or taxi.
 - taxi cab , or bus service for businesses in town instead of going out of town. Maybe a shuttle bus for in town
 - More taxis
- Category: Traffic Control
 - More round-about
 - Street light on Highway 12
 - More yield signs need to be placed

- stop light
- Timed traffic lights that don't impede traffic.
- Signal lights need to be timed
- Less traffic stop lights would make it a better place.
- Striping needs to be improved
- Traffic light timing, a re-education for people of Billings to understand how important the flow of traffic and traffic laws are
- More yield signs in certain areas,
- Traffic lights need to work better
- Seasonal signage for the heavier traffic and more traffic control
- Better coordination of stop lights. More use of left turns, especially on lights. Signage on lights for lanes
- Intelligent traffic engineers for the city. Construction and timing in Helena is very poor. Also they use traffic circles and they are too small for the roads they are being used on.
- syncranizing the traffic lights
- left hand turns on the center lane (left hand lane)
- Traffic light at Big Fork Harvest Food on highway 35 North of Big Fork
- More stop lights and street lighting.
- Category: Train Whistle
 - Hold the noise down on the whistles of the trains
 - Better control of the train whistles in this town. They drive you batty.
- Category: Winter Maintenance
 - Better Maintenance of roads during winter months
 - snow removal better
 - Snow removal
 - Better winter maintenance & widening the road from Bridger to Laurel
 - Better maintenance in the winter time
 - Better winter maintenance on the Streets and highways
 - Better winter maintainance of residential streets
 - more plowing of the main streets in the winter
 - winter maintance
- Category: Other
 - Some alternate routes would be good.
 - Bridge maintenance needs work on the Interstate going west of Billings
 - Fixing bridges over river-ways.
 - Better planning for subdivisions and new routes etc,...plan further ahead
 - Getting people to take better care of their autos for better gas mileage.
 - turning off on an angle at a 90, it should be more like a 30 degree so it's easy on people in the winter roads
 - Have everything we need - most people farm
 - carriage rides
 - Need gravel on the roads

- Bridge to be maintained- right off of Cear exit to fish creek exit- if the bridge becomes unsafe then the residents will have to drive an additional 8 miles to their trips to Missoula
- Less transportation capability
- Organize so the names of the streets so they're easier to find.....put numbers on them instead of names
- Emission laws
- More of a plan when constructing roads and hiways.
- Mow the weeds on the empty lots
- Use of consultants in traffic and transportation design projects.
- Eliminate the round-abouts on US Highway 93 North bi-pass. Would rather see a clover leaf.
- Incorporating city ordinance throughout the entire city limits and enforcing them.
- Have the exit and access to our community widened.
- Cameras in the apmt. complexes would be a good thing to see people coming and going
- More ATV Trails
- Get rid of bikers on the roads, they should have to pay insurance and license on their vehicles.
- people who don't drive fast on the highway
- driving
- good judges
- Court House office to drive people Holy Rosary.
- no parking downtown
- electric automobile
- Get rid of round about and install regular traffic devices
- Funding
- Courteous driving
- Access in and out of the Heights.
- an automovile

Can you identify an example of a transportation project or program that impacts the quality of life of your community?

- Resurfacing roads
- Construction on US Highway 93 North
- bridge repair/improvement
- Round-about being constructed at college street and 11th. Also beautification projects are taking place at the college in Bozeman.
- Bike path down Lakner Lane
- Low-cost public transportation
- Summer construction
- Recently put in a lot of round-a-bouts , also new bike lanes.
- New round-abouts being placed
- Have an excellent program for transportation for elderly, vets

- Connection of Zimmerman trail with Wicks.
- Construction
- Redoing our main street right now which will be nice in future but is a mess now.
- Custer Ave. interchange that has been 20 years in the making and still is not done
- Would be nice if they paved the road going to the Tongue River Reservoir
- Sewer system that is being installed on Harrison St.
- Met-Bus Services
- There has been wasteful spending in callers opinion
- Overall appearances of interstates, keeping garbage picked up etc.
- Many street projects that were improvements- better design, bike lanes
- Widening highways and roads
- Streetwork
- Wheel Chair access would be important to me.
- Roundabouts for increasing traffic flow. They are hard to use.
- Road construction in general
- Organization in Missoula to commute in other ways outside of driving
- Albertsons drive has been shut down for 3 weeks, and has negatively impacted traffic
- Mercy flights is something that impacts the community
- Road construction.
- Direct access to Madison St. Bridge to help traffic in University area
- Bike paths
- Striping of the highway during inconvenient times
- replacing sideways- in planning
- Street repair
- hwy maintained
- Resurfacing out roads.
- The Madison Street Underpass (a bike-walk bridge under a car bridge)
- Trucks
- Overpass on interstate 29, installing an off-ramp
- We have no transportation for the disabled or elderly
- road construction
- Dust reduction maintenance on county roads
- bike trails
- There is a plan for making our bridges (which are bottlenecks) into 4 lanes but might be a few years away.
- Project at the University to reroute traffic to have easier access and smoother access as you come across the bridge.....smoother transition
- drivers ed
- Attempting to make traffic flow smoother on Reserve St. Dept. of Transportation is doing that now ./
- senior bus services
- Guard rails
- Bike and Walking trails.
- widening hwys

- We just got a new bridge across the Missouri, which is great. Also in process of widening roads.
- Road repair.
- rebuilding of the bridge across tongue river
- Putting up new traffic signals and new lanes on Mullen Rd. and Reserve sts.
- Public buses
- Maintenance of the Hwys.
- highway was rebuilt about 15 years
- Senior citizen transportation
- Railroad, making noise but also most essential
- adding freeway extension- shutting downs road
- Overpass at Custer avenue
- improvement of cannon fray road; props interchange at Custer
- aggressive driving
- Resurfacing the interstate
- better bridges
- The new bike path underpass by the college is a good thing
- adding roundabouts
- Having Center St. rebuilt to a 3 lane
- Bus services available for elderly.
- Stream line bus service
- Maintaining roads.
- The bus service
- rivers edge trail
- New bridge over the Clark Forks river.
- Great walking path by Mt. Tech in Butte
- Construction of roads.
- Local street resurfacing
- Highway repair from frost damage
- Road construction etc.
- Road maintenance of Highway 200
- The bike trails.
- Transit system
- Access of bus routes, not having as much access as we need
- road construction
- Lack of guard rails on Kings Hill
- new highway
- Russell street connector (waiting for it to happen)
- Harrison Ave reconstruction project.
- The adding of lanes on 10th Ave. So.
- Good hwy maintenance.
- keeping up with the sewer system so the roads don't cave in
- gravel pit
- The good job of road maintenance.

- The bus system.
- bridge
- Put in asphalt trail systems to either walk or ride on
- road work in the community- band aid on situations instead of fixing it
- Road maintenance
- filling in the potholes
- The by-pass that is going around Kalispell.
- There is a ess curve at the edge of the city that drives everyone nuts, especially big trucks.....put in parallel with the curbs, straighten out that curve
- Big fourlane hwy is going in between Havre & Chinook which will be very helpful.
- lack of bus routes
- Just finished widening of roads and putting in turnouts....changed street system to help move traffic better and put in well defined crosswalks. The highway going through town is a lot more pleasing
- Eagle transportation
- We have a major street that is now being worked on but will enhance when it is completed.
- They rebuilt a bridge in our community.
- New Project called "Skyline" which is partially under way now that will help a lot.
- ride to work- bus ride
- Animal crossing over the highway which is good for drivers
- The Hiway System.
- bike system
- The "Folk Festival" is a great thing in our community and great transportation was provided to get people to it..
- Construction of potholes- takes forever to get to Missoula
- Any project that creates jobs
- The Garden Club is very active in keeping everything attractive.
- Redoing the Airport which will help
- There will be an interchange on either Cedar or Custer which should be real beneficial in moving traffic.
- Putting a new exit onto the interstate and impacts the traffic
- Walking paths
- Have a snow bus for skiers
- new major high were just put in
- Plan for a new interstate interchange in Belgrade. This will affect the airport in Belgrade.
- Bus traffic impacts negatively
- round abouts at intersections
- Lincoln County transportation bus for the elderly and handicapped
- The street enhancements on the main streets
- Escalating the maintenance of or streets and hiways .
- Grants and fund raisers and also donations from people saved the swimming pool
- construction on hwys
- Big construction project in the city which will help later on

- keeping water off roads- drainage from flooding
- Churches in general
- Highway maintenance
- Bad streets with potholes
- Meals of Wheels.
- Got some buses from Glacier Nation Park in the winter and it really helped.
- adding street lights to community
- There was a roundabout in my area which has been very constructive.
- There are efforts to make bike and walking paths
- Committee working on getting funds to better our streets.
- The tribe is rerouting a road that goes right through town which will help
- Community youth programs
- Streamline bus system.
- fixing pot holes in the spring
- Mountain Line Bus Service.
- bus systems
- They are really working on the streets and roads.
- C t E P program
- Street repair
- working on busy intersections
- Airplanes.
- New intersection - widen the road & turning lanes
- flooding areas haven't yet been repaired
- Difficulty with transportation especially for sr. citizens
- Busing for seniors, handicapped .
- Have a recycling place.....
- Keeping the county roads up.
- Putting in a four lane
- Missoula in Motion
- "Bike, Walk, Bus week" . Also are blocking off some streets in the downtown area making it easier with less traffic.
- road improvements
- winter maintenance
- Changing the road from a four lane to a two lane was not a good idea.....Broadway St.
- Weigh station for trucks.
- repairing roads after flooding
- bike opportunities
- Amtrak.
- quality of streets- haven't been fixed in a long time
- Hiway construction.
- Drivers ed for High Schoolers, classes for Sr. citizens for driving
- sidewalk project
- Redoing the roads in a poor manner and have to do them again wasting the taxpayers money.

- The bike trails which are also walking trails.
- filling pot holes
- Have free bus service after the bars close so no one drinks and drives
- The tribal bus transportation....they pick everyone up with no discretion and very reasonably priced
- Kalispell bypass when finished
- reconstruction on hwy2
- Bike,Walk,Bus Week
- Traffic lights on Wicks.
- New street light, and resurfacing of streets.
- Lane avenue and hiway 287, poorly designed stop light.
- Rivers Edge Trails
- New media and education policy on driving under the influence . A stricter DUI law. Hwy patrol do a wonderful job and cover a lot of territory. Our 511 info line is wonderful.
- Trying to make 6th St. heading towards campus a better road.
- Installing traffic lights
- Working on a safer walk-way for getting students to school, also is Park Service Project to reduce congestion at the Roosevelt Archway.
- There is a round-a-bout being constructed near the college.
- City bus service
- Large project going to update about 5 different bridges in our community.
- Doing construction adding a four lane highway through town which will be positive for the whole county.
- Just finished re-doing our main street. Paving the rest of the streets would be high priority.
- Walking trail along the Yellowstone river
- New truck by-pass in Kalispell.
- Plans are for a new walkway/bike area.
- Bike lanes/paths
- Have none
- The construction going on Moore Lane has been needed for a long time...
- The By-pass, US Highway 93 North middle of town to outskirts of town.
- Putting in a new sewer system
- Located at Aronson Avenue street and sidewalks have been re-done, also new sewer systems was put in place.
- Round a bouts are good
- Maintenance of roads
- Shiloh road and the round-a-bouts are really a good thing, moves traffic faster
- Walking parks
- Subsidized flights into Miles City.
- Making highway 16 a four lane, caller would prefer not to see that.
- Harrison Ave is going into a major construction , more efficient, new curbs, gutters etc.
- Finished canyon ferry road

- They widened the sidewalks in downtown Whitefish.
- Only two north-south highways (US Highway 93 and highway 2), so north-south traffic is limited. Only one highway coming in from the south. Does not provide adequate access.
- Youth camps thru the church in summer.
- The Rimrock road project.
- Have major street tore up and will be for 2 years.....major impact
- A round-about was recently placed in the lower miller creek area, caller states that it is working well at regulating traffic.
- Condition of the roads
- RSVP program that volunteers to help the elderly and other things that need to be done.....nice senior center with a good cook
- Road maintenance, both negative and positive
- Starting to install round-a-bouts,
- The bench street project ...installing a bridge from the Heights
- Work in Butte, interstate 90 both lanes are torn up.
- A project to provide transportation to Billings for Dr. appts. and treatments for cancer etc.
- The construction zone located on highway 16, major inconvenience, but will be positive when finished. Will be taken down from a four lane to a three lane, which will effect the traffic regulation during the oil boom.
- I feel that the van service for the disabled is excellent. Could use more.
- Construction for entering town
- No stoplights in town for traffic, would like some in.
- by the University, they are changing a one-way traffic to a 2 way traffic
- Doing a lot of paving of the highways and painting the lines
- Harrison Ave. is all torn up and makes getting around very difficult.
- A segment of the US Highway 93 North bypass has been completed so people can bypass downtown area...
- County maintains the roads
- Widening of major arteries and will make a big difference
- Redid all the sidewalks all along main street and made the handicapped accessible
- Senior Citizens Groups.
- Doing a 14 mile stretch of repaving that goes through town.....a lot of traffic back-up
- Lowering the speed limits on the roads.
- Don't know what they are trying to accomplish in the Medians between Laurel and Billings
- mega-loads, caller is for this.
- Medical Helicopter service especially active at accidents or for the elderly.
- Local bus systems
- State rebuilding 1st and 2nd ave No.
- Route 28 outside of Plains Montana to Kalispell did a major rebuild and re-paving project that positively improved the road.
- Live Theatre Group.
- Not being allowed to drive

- Some resurfacing being done in our area.
- Finishing Airport road and Aronson Drive
- Roundabouts.
- Amtrak is a positive
- The round-a-bout that they are building on 11th and College.....I think they will have lots of problems with that
- Snow removal is the biggest (lack of it)
- Maintained highways are excellent.
- The widening of US Highway 93North.
- Redoing the bridges
- Street repairs
- Rivers edge trail positive
- Public works dept.
- Caller states that there is a mess on Moore Lane, poorly engineered.
- Policeman and fireman come to the apartment complex to teach the elderly about fraud, and the dangers, and made us aware of a lot of things.
- Riverfront trails system and and citywide bike system
- Finishing up dual-turn lane at Mullen and Reserve Lane.
- We have a couple of habitat homes that have benn built here.
- The oil industry and all the oil trucks are greatly impacting our community.
- Recently opened a gravel pit , it was remade commercial. Not enough local people to have an opinion.
- Reclamation off the main highway 212 that is a waste of money
- Just redid the hwy #1 (resurfaced) very nice now.
- The condition of the roads is terrible
- Main street has a high school right on main street, and causes a lot of traffic congestion and causes danger for pedestrians and driver.
- Repair of bridges
- Re-painted the curbs and lines with new paint, and caller states that it turned to dust and he breathed in this dust.
- Maintenance of the roads.....notify the public as to road closures and public awareness of ongoing projects
- Working to redo Harrison Ave.
- Bike/Walking Path under Main street in Billings was a great addition!
- Transportation for Senior citizens and disabled. Gives them some freedom.
- Main street completely re-done, terrific project!
- Expansion of rivers edge trail, caller likes this addition.
- They are replacing some of the bridges.
- road maintaince
- bus
- airport
- free bus transportation
- the bus system
- lack of bike trails

- the overpass project
- construction on main streets...sidewalks, handicap access on corners. Making a 3 lane hwy instead of 4 lane through town.
- Russell street...12 year at \$5 or 6 million dollars. Government regulations slow it down.
- big project of major street in town.
- we don't have any distance bus service....from Conrad to Great falls
- stop lights down town
- making a over pass over streets so there isn't so much congestion
- urban hwy and gas tax funds for local community
- Custer Ave crossing the interstate
- I can drive across Billings 80% with out stopping. raffic lights in Helena should be sincrinized.
- Widen the State Highway
- Proper road maintaince
- Highways
- A van that transports veterans to Missoulla and Helena
- A new stretch of highway out here
- aking biking very acessable with the bike pathes
- A new bridge coming into town
- buses going by the mall for people who cannot get around also for Doctor appointments
- senior transportation
- The round about/ and airway blvd
- Senior citizensCommunity
- Bridges for crossing the river in certain places
- bicycle paths are great
- The river through town, and could probably use another two bridges to get across town
- vans
- airport road/the bench connector
- highway project
- lack of sidewalks
- streets and highways
- airport, traffic control
- railroad
- price of gasoline
- good public bus system in the city
- The transportation system in our communitiy if very good but very inefficient
- The bench inter connect highway
- turning US Highway 93 North from two land to four lane
- Would like to see the bus system extended to more areas of the city
- In Butte rebuilding the sidewalks and streets
- US Highway 93 by-pass in Kalispell
- Custer Interchange gong in now.
- Taxi service for those unable to drive or get around on their own

- installation of a roundabout when the intersection was already controlled by the rules of the road.
- an underpass for people to go under to get to the park, baseball field, wal mart and the college
- sidewalks with wheelchair access
- Special transportation
- New bridges on interstate 90 in Bozeman
- community is putting and exit and entrance to highway close to Be;grade+
- viaducts repaired
- road construction with delays
- from 2 lane hwy to 4 lane hwy
- Gallavan
- motorcycle, horse, bicycle
- A type of transportation for citizens to use Traveling from / Seeley Lake to Missoula
- The new sidewalks in the Jackson St area. and the children will be able to walk to Orchard, Pondersa schools. It will also help the Riverside school.
- The new bridge that was completed 9th Street Bridge
- replacing a viaduct that is going to shut down a major artery
- New roundabout
- The Bench Connector.
- Bike path; re-routing trucks
- Bridge repairs
- Putting in stop lights in the high speed zones.,
- Bike bridge project
- senior bus
- Taxi services
- Road construction.
- Hauling Big Rigs down the highways

Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

- hwy 2, expanded road project- making it a 4 lane rather than 2 lane
- Spend a lot of time on transportation as I am a school bus driver
- Taxi services are highly costly. Would really like to see connecting passenger train services from Bozeman, cost is more effective than air travel.
- Roundabouts are unnecessary and negatively impact the community.
- Winter maintenance needs to be improved.
- Get the rail service in and local bus service
- Better roads, better upkeep, more maintenance
- Street maintenance needs to be improved during the winter months, especially on residential streets.
- Caller hopes that this survey doesn't lead to more spending in general- need to reduce spending at all levels of government
- More crosswalks need to be added to allow pedestrians to pass through.

- Can't understand what they are doing in the median on the Interstate near Billings.....Doesn't look to me like anything that is necessary
- Can't stress enough the quality of life here, people genuinely friendly, and I love Montana
- Caller would like to see better road maintenance in general especially on the county level
- Would like to see more of the state budget to go for streets and highways....repairing potholes etc.
- Road needs to be rebuilt between Eureka to Whitefish to Kalispell- needs new surface; caller feels that they are receiving lots of bicycling traffic in their area & it is very unsafe because there are not any bike trails or bike lanes- they are riding in the roads with the cars
- courthouse is messed up in Choteau- semi trucks have a hard time fitting; intersection is having accidents in front of Choteau courthouse. Four way stop needs warning signs or blinking lights because people can't see the 4 way stops until it's too late & they run the stop signs causing accidents
- Glad that we are doing this survey to keep people thinking.,
- Turn off to Water Plant road - the approach is too narrow- impossible to get in and out with trucks
- Don't like bikes taking up space that autos need....
- Plows need to be careful when plowing the streets, because they are currently plowing snow into driveways and blocking the drivers access to the driveway and house. It is very difficult for elderly individuals to keep up with clearing the ends of driveways.
- In need of stop signs around high school in Eureka; no stop signs at the intersection
- City as a whole doesn't seem to want to make Bozeman a safer place & just can't get anywhere when they call the city to complain
- Would like better road maintenance of snow plowing for the city
- Baker has great transportation options, many facilities are available.
- Bozeman is getting roundabouts- caller is concerned about the cost
- I wish more people would put more emphasis on foot-paths, pedestrian, horses, and bicycles instead of paving everything.
- I enjoy this town, the mountains are beautiful.
- I love our state of Montana and am thrilled to have lived here all of my life.
- Street lights need to be replaced, and more need to be added. More yield signs need to be added to slow the traffic. Up-keep of the roads and highways, and general maintenance needs to be improved .
- they did a nice job on Hwy 2 west last summer.
- Roads and washed out bridges need to be repaired and maintained.
- Guard rails need to be placed on Kings hill to prevent accidents.
- This community is being strangled by congestion. Its killing our economy,
- Blocked the access for fire trucks along the creek by putting in a guardrail....they don't have fire hydrants in town and that was their only access to the Hot springs which are open all winter.
- I'm glad to see you do this survey. We need more bike paths to keep us off busy roads.
- Curb & gutter work should be the number one in new subdivision- An actual road should be put in & since it is high traffic; no maintenance for the streets- so the residents aren't benefiting from the roads; Camper are being parked on Sargent Ave- people are living in

these & because of the heat & they are settling into the road; EVERY little road maintenance- there is a lot of traffic in Dawson county due to oil field; lots of heavy trucks are running on the roads which is ruining/ damaging the roads; Oil influences has brought more traffic to their area but their roads are not being fix- there is "a band aid" put on these streets instead of actually fixing them.

- a good place to live
- Thinks that the survey is geared towards bigger cities in MT, not the smaller towns
- Fishing in area is good.....
- Chinook is a nice place to retire; very nice place to live with accommodations; low crime rate; nice community to be in
- It would be nice to a railway for passenger service.
- V.A. provides an alarm system
- Caller feels there is a major lack of public transportation- either there isn't any bus service that comes to where she lives or it doesn't take her to the places she needs to go- she has issue with walking so it makes it difficult to have to change buses
- All governments need to work more efficiently.....save money!!!!
- Fix the roads.
- Build more roads.....from Great Falls to Kalispellright through the Bob Marshall wilderness
- Don;'t tell out of state people how good it is to live in our State.
- Baker is a good place to raise the children- they can play in the safety of the community, there are street lights, low traffic or cautious motorists
- Biggest irritant is the way contractors take so long for construction projects to get finished....impacts productivity for people going to work. It is ridiculous how much time is spent on one project!!
- Would like to see the results of this survey published.
- I try to avoid flying as much as possible.....infrastructure needs a lot of work but we don't have any money.
- More efforts in trying to get in a high speed rail service.
- The thing we need most in maintaining our streets, also better system of controlling traffiic when they are working on the roads and hiways.
- I would like to see an expanded passenger rail service. /
- No. We have an ideal community here.
- Caller feels that public transportation would be an important improvement to his community
- Have Schweitzer and some of the big wigs come here and see our hiways, they look like we still live in the 40's.
- This survey is terribly written. There is too much to interupt.
- I think the survey would be good if we could get transportation in the small towns. So many elderly move out of the small towns because of no transportation. A lot of them can't drive so it would be very beneficial to have bus transportation in our small communities.
- I think we should have a mandatory gasoline tax so we can put it into funding for public transportation and commuter rail system.
- I love my State.

- Kinsey Road needs more attention in the winter because it is a school bus route. Bus routes need priority.
- Streetcleaning should not be done during busy hours in daytime. Night cleaning would be much more suitable.
- there seems to be a lot of issues with county roads in the area; lacks funds for county roads- some have washed out or not enough gravel on them
- The streets by the Lake Hills golf course are poorly maintained and very narrow.
- Streets need to be better maintained, and pot holes need to be filled. The road that have been resurfaced have created more problems, caller states that the roads now have ruts and sharp breaks.
- Lights need to be timed. Corner of Lane and Highway 287 has a new stop light that is poorly designed and always remains red, this area was poorly designed, and accidents frequently occur.
- I think the Dept of Transportation does a wonderful job.
- These question hard to answer because we are at the end of the line before getting into the park.
- Unless the economy improves , there isn't much that can be done.
- Caller does not believe the questions of this survey were valid question that the DOT should be requesting.
- Bozeman has an excellent bike system through-out the community, also the new subdivisions and stores are mandated to be apart of the linear park system, caller likes these benefits and wants this to be apart of all communities.. Bozeman also has mandated the stores have a certain amount greenery present in all parking lots, which caller also finds is a positive attribute in this community.
- Stop lights should be on yellow blinker during the night instead of going from green to yellow to red. Traffic light on intersection of Rouse and Oak gives too much preference to the left turning lane, even when no cars are there, this delays much traffic and causes congestion.
- I love Montana, just wish the roads here were a little better.
- Side streets and sidewalks need major repair.
- General Hiway system in Montana both primary and secondary roads need a lot of work.
- This town needs to go to Boise, Ida. to see what they have done. Billings needs more turning lights.
- Caller states that the DOT is doing a good job considering the hard economical times.
- Callers states that his town is currently undergoing an oil boom right now, the oil traffic is making a big mess, secondary roads would be helpful.
- Eliminate round-abouts, they are not designed for large trucks, are very costly and end up being eliminated. We need more effective bi-passes and direct routes to speed transit. Light rail (passenger service rail systems) are not sustainable without government assistance. The state needs to work more closely with airports to provide more direct flights, lower air fares.
- Basically Billings is a good place. Placing trees, shrubs, etc in roundabouts is not good,, the height makes it more dangerous for being able to see.
- Life isn't perfect but it's what we make of our life that counts
- Can't think of a nicer place to live..wonderful scenery etc.

- Need to concentrate on developing new methods and fuels for individual transportation, work on getting off petroleum as quickly as possible.
- The biggest need is for transportation to Billings for the people who need cancer treatments, and for Dr. appts. etc.
- Great Falls is a wonderful place to be. The community is super.
- The city of Missoula has done a poor job on streets..They changed a four lane to a two lane on Broadway which was not good.
- Pleasure to be here where it's not so crowded and life is a slower pace.
- Lower the speed limit by the Airport.....have all the speed limits come up for reconsideration to lower them
- Worst Survey, does not fit into her rural living. Would like to see more bus services available.
- Kalispell is a very close and good city to shop int.
- More street lights coming in and that is a good thing.
- Good to be in Montana....we are in good financial shape compared to the rest of the country.
- Hope to keep Amtrak in the community. Also, caller states that they need more bus services available.
- Keep the rural areas in mind...their needs are also important
- No. Our hwy has need of updating or widening.
- Widen highways between Great Falls and Billings
- Billings is really accomodating to the elderly, and to the college students / and also young children.
- Would be great to have public transportation for the Reserve street corridor.
- I would like you to refrain people from making Montana general access and keeping it wild.
- The people that run the community are way behind the times, they need to be up for more changes.
- If Dept of Transportation is responsible for the installation of cable in the medium , it is ascenine.
- Appreciate you doing the survey.
- Great Falls need more Bike lanes similar to Missoula's Bike lanes.
- Should be important that there is less emphasis on cars....should be more walking, biking if it were safer. Lighting is also important.
- The sidewalks are wheel chair acceptable
- Helena could use more bike trails. Montana Avenue needs another lane to widen the street.
- don't move here.
- Sand should be used in the winter, so we don't get chips or broken windshield. Something less damaging.
- I have no questions about the Medical care in Helena
- Do not change the area
- Veterans have access to vans, elderly have a community center for meals also meals on wheels
- We wish they would come out and fix our roads... / sand coulee, county of Cascade

- we would love to have a train for transportation locally
- very grateful our city is easy to get around in
- Good highways are good
- people haven't seen the light in Libby and that is keeping Libby from growing.
- The DOT does a very good ob. The local community bus service is Federally funded. They are destroying our streets, mini vans would be better .A small buses would be better, but the big buses are here because of federal fumnding and that is our problem. More quiet vehicles from the severe noises from vehicles.
- Get Debt ceiling raised and move on
- 4 lane road from Kalipel to Whitefish, has no frontage. You have to cross traffic of 2 highway lanes to get across the 4 lane highway.
- More streets re done, and pot hole filled. DUI laws enforced more often.
- Why is it taking so long for the city to fix the streets? There are so many people out of work, maybe they could really help.
- It is very important for elderly & disability to have bus service; sideways for children to walk on for safety
- Need more bike paths, and facilities. Need bike lanes. Funding is low, need much more funding. Gas tax money is too low, gas taxes need to be raised.
- Living where I do it would be nice to have interpass Connector from Roundup road to I-90
- There are many questions are worded in ways that make it difficult to answer; many of the different services weren't offered in her community, but she would like to see them because she values them as a way to make the community a better place to live
- The method for de-icing roads needs to be stopped, it causes too much damage to the environment, and is ruining vehicle, would prefer the sanding method over the liquid. The liquid is not working well, and is dangerous for humans and the environment.
- Feels that resources are being mismanaged; there is a very individual approach to transpiration that have individual cars; caller wishes that there was transpiration infrastructure other than individual approach of using individual cars for transpiration to fall back on, there is no trains, subways, trans to use in MT; too much negative social stigma on public transportation in MT
- More rules pertaining to fireworks in county and city.
- Side streets are not maintained very well.

14.2. Elected Leader Survey Open Ended Comments

Thinking as an elected official, what single thing with respect to transportation would most enhance your community and make it a better place to live?

- Category: Air
 - Air service improvement. We have an excellent Airport, but can only book a flight locally to the nearest hub airport. Passengers must book flights with other airlines form that airport to continue to their destination.
 - A wee bit better air conexions
- Category: Bike
 - more biking trails

- more bike -hike trails
- smooth wide roads for vehicles and walkers, bikes, etc.lined with trees
- Category: Congestion
 - Roads that allow traffic movement and reduce idle time.
 - Making some of the intersections easier to navigate because of our growing traffic.
- Category: Pedestrian
 - Sidewalks
 - more connectivity of trails
 - replacement of aging streets with "complete streets" (curb, storm water, bike lanes, sidewalks and landscaping)
 - Replacing old sidewalks, installing new sidewalks and repaving, paving streets.
 - walking trails & bike paths
 - pedestrian bridge over the Missouri River
- Category: Public Transportation
 - Some type of public transportation
 - public transportation
 - having a form of community transportation to get elderly people to and from doctors and hospitals for those that do not have family members or friends to assist..
 - Passenger rail service.
 - A GOOD public transit system. The Passage of a Transportation District
 - Improved senior citizen transportation service to larger cities outside our county for shopping, medical, and other benefits or needs
 - CONTINUE AMTRAK SERVICE
- Category: Rail Crossings
 - uninterrupted access across the railroad
- Category: Road Construction and Maintenance
 - street maintenance and repair
 - Widen first and second streets to 4 lanes instead of 2
 - Provide good low maintenance bridges and road surfaces.
 - being able to maintain roads in a timely manner
 - 4 lane on highway 2
 - Reconstruction of Hwy 200 from Brockway to Jordan, Montana
 - Budget ability to better maintain county roads
 - Streets on east side of city are in great need of replacement.
 - Access to good roads and rail transportation and keeping them maintained.
 - paved streets
 - Improved highways
 - Resurfacing paving of 4 county roads
 - The one thing in my opinion that would benefit most of Eastern Montana would be having the Tongue River Road paved
 - repaving
 - being able to receive some grant monies for fixing and maintaining the streets in our town.
 - highway improvement on Highway 2 between Kalispell and Libby

- more gravel roads paved
- Better maintenance on municipal streets
- More resource for State and County road capital and maintenance
- improved roads within the community
- The ability to provide better maintenance on existing roads; possibly the ability to pave and maintain busy sections of our county roads. No money to do that at this time.
- Pave roads
- Better gravel roads
- New I-90 Belgrade Interchange
- improved county roads
- better connector roads with the city
- Paved streets
- Category: Miscellaneous
 - dollars to maintain and improve the streets and sidewalks
 - Giant Truck Stop and Service Station, Casino, and Hotel at the I-15 and Dutton interchange
 - We had our main street upgraded with new lights, sidewalks and proper drainage in 2007 it really spruced up the community image
 - FUNDING !!!!!
 - Less people whining about their transportation issues
 - Turn lanes we have buses

Thinking as an elected official, can you identify an example of a transportation project or program that impacts the quality of life of your community?

- Category: Road Improvement
 - Airport interchange project
 - CHANGING HWY 232 (WILDHORSE RD) TO A STATE PRIMARY RD AND UPGRADING IT
 - Completion of US Highway 93 project
 - Completion of road improvements on the Idaho end of Secondary Highway 324
 - CTEP
 - Good Secondaries
 - US Highway 93 reconstruction
 - Lavina had its main street upgraded in 2007 along with upgrading the park. This combined with the three historical registered buildings has made our community more attractive to travellers
 - People continue to complain about the dust and the gravel streets, as well as the lack of a storm drain system. Standing water is an issue in spring.
 - Rebuilding highway 2 from Brockton to Big Muddy
 - re-surfacing missile roads by USAF outside the town. The project has been a serious failure due to calcium chloride application. Entire community is very upset.
 - Secondary roads that need to be widened and upgraded. No inner city transportation.
 - Shiloh Road

- Sound barriers along the interstate like they have in Arizona and Nevada would really impact the community in a positive way
- The proposed west interchange
- The State of Montana did a huge reconstruction project on SS235 (Beaver Creek Road) which wanders through beautiful Beaver Creek Park. It is a good experience to drive through the park.
- tsep ctep
- Upgrade of the Diamond Valley Hiway and the continued upkeep of surrounding roads.
- Widening Haynes Ave., but with the increased traffic it may need to be widened more than it was.
- Category: Road Maintenance
 - Chip seal paved roads
 - Dirt streets
 - fixing our paved streets to be able to maintain them better
 - repaving existing highways/roads
- Category: Bridge Construction
 - bridges
 - Replacement, repair and maintenance of bridges along Cottonwood Creek in Deer Lodge.
 - Replacing a dangerous highway bridge and railroad overpass
- Category: Pedestrian and Bike Improvements
 - a master plan for a bicycle/walking path system for the entire community
 - Our 2 1/2 mile TIGER Grant for new road construction and connectivity of bike paths,
 - Recreation Trails Program.
 - Sidewalks through the CTEP program
 - trails program connecting various parts of the city with the county
 - Walking/Bike Path
 - Walking/bike paths that don't conflict with vehicle traffic so both can freely move
- Category: Safety and improvement
 - Area V - Provides for "Meals on Wheels" and Senior Bus.
 - Reducing the speed on a 4 lane major Highway to 55 mph
 - The planned traffic circle at the Junction of hwy 89 and hwy 2 should help ease the growing danger of a major accident.
- Category: Public Transit
 - bus
 - Buses
 - linx transportation system
 - not having bus service to our area
 - public transportation
 - streamline
 - Streamline
 - Transportation for the Elderly

- We have fairly good door to door service for those folks that are living with a disability.
- we have senior buses that are great and a bus system that is on call that works great for everyone
- Category: Air Service
 - Air service
- Category: Miscellaneous
 - access to new health clinic on 135 st. regis
 - rest stop

What policy barriers exist for local governments that prevent enhancing transportation related livability?

- Category: Coordination with DOT
 - communications with state dot
 - It took nine years to finally get the State to repair the bad sidewalks and drainage issues and then there was the design that was too vague and took six weeks longer to fix it right. We had to get Rehberg to get the State to listen to the council of the problems encountered.
 - jurisdictional barriers
 - Long approval process, and easement negotiations and purchases.
 - Regulations and red tape in the CTEP program and the length of time (5-7 yrs) from proposal of a project to the completion of it
 - Renewal of Secure Rural Schools is vital to continuing the current level of County Road maintenance. Work more with Forest Service to cooperatively improve roads to the Forest. Continue DOT off-road bridge program.
- Category: Financial Constraints
 - Don't understand policy barriers. We have no policies prohibiting some form of transportation for our elderly or disabled. Costs is the biggest obstacle and the Town cannot bear it alone.
 - finance structure
 - financial
 - fourteen thousand permits and bureaucracies that need to be tended to to do a simple project
 - Fund accounting
 - Funding for transportation projects.
 - Funding is the biggest obstacle.
 - having to have an engineer every time you turn around to help fix and maintain the streets. small towns do not have the money to be able to improve our streets
 - importance of transportation over other more perceived pressing economic issues in a down economy
 - It all boils down to lack of funds. We maintain over 1800 miles of county roads and this huge expense leaves no money for our "wish list."
 - lack of funding to keep up with upkeep of exsisting roads, and putting in new streets we need.
 - Limited finances for highway improvement

- Mainly funding is the only barrier.
- Miles City does not have a passenger train, however I don't feel it would be economically feasible
- money
- money
- money!
- None but money
- none, funding is the issue
- Not enough money
- not so much policy as lack of funding
- Rather than policy issues, ours is more a money issue, or lack thereof.
- Resources
- Resources/Funding ... The passage of a transportation district is very difficult.
- revenue
- the policy which most effects transportation is the monetary policy
- there is always a shortage of money to improve roads as we would like
- trail funding
- Category: Federal and State Requirement
 - Federal and State requirements for small local projects.
 - State regulation on highway construction requirements, local opinion related to change
 - Too much time is focused on alternative transportation that represents 2% of the population and environmental permitting for road projects is out of control.
- Category: Taxation Mechanism
 - Living in a sparsely populated area with small Taxable Value limits projects
 - State of Montana tax policies towards cities and towns. We are prevented from raising funds by taxing to support enhancement.
 - the ability to raise money through taxes and impact fees in amounts large enough to build and maintain roads and sidewalks
- Category: Miscellaneous
 - "EAS. Subsidizing airline service in Lewistown, Mt.
 - Burlington Northern RR is NOT accountable for any service to our community."
 - good?
 - I cannot think of one.
 - One does not come to mind
 - "TAKES AN ACT OF CONGRESS TO CHANGE
 - HWY 232 DESIGNATION"
 - The policy of who owns the sidewalks next to a State Highway.
 - There are no airline flights connecting to other cities within the State of Montana

Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

- Category: Better Roads

- The northeastern part of Montana desperately needs rest stops; better roads. The road between Harlem and Billings is more like a trail. There are patchy-type repairs occurring, but nothing that a citizen would get excited about.
- Category: Financial Feasibility / taxation
 - cheaper to hire a taxi than fund public buses.
 - People here complain about the streets, but are not willing to add to their taxes to fix them.
 - the ability to maintain infrastructure and keep taxes down
- Category: Financial Constrain
 - county needs more funds to improve county roads.
 - I just wished it were easier to fix the streets and sidewalks in our small town, without raising taxes.
 - increased funding is imperative to moving forward
 - We are still more rural than urban. In the urban areas usually unincorporated towns, amenities are always improving. Our rural gravel roads have been allowed to deteriorate beyond repair in some cases and the cost to bring them up to standard is overwhelming in this current fiscal condition.
 - We are a Reservation County. We maintain 100% of the infrastructure on 60% of the tax revenue. Legislature needs to let counties have 6 to 10 discretionary mills to help with infrastructure. Equipment and oil being the most important.
- Category: Road Maintenance
 - Hwy 200 is one of the best kept secrets in Montana. It is the shortest route through Montana, but the worst maintained.
 - the west interchange will impact the city of Laurel and with that said it is important that the city use all available efforts to insure that the impact is as positive for Laurel as can be.
- Category: Winter Maintenance
 - This area needs more attention paid to it because of the extreme winter weather conditions that exist unlike any other area.
 - We live in a small rural community that needs an affordable transportation system to allow travel to Billings for medical treatment and shopping, especially the elderly.
- Category: Communication with DOT
 - DOT needed to actually listen to the local people as this caused major overruns because we saw issues and they referred to us as "not being engineers" when we told them about the quicksand issues under the street and curbs too close together. Five curbs had to be jackhammered up and redone. The overcost was \$700,000 that could have been avoided.
 - "Local govs need to have ready assistance (without huge consultant \$) to navigate the maze of State law regulating districts etc..."
 - Thank you for your work."
- Category: Miscellaneous
 - Burlington Northern RR does not maintain the right of way through Moore. It is one gigantic weed patch!
 - Gallatin County residents drive to Belgrade to use our City Splash Park
 - "Great Falls is the very best in Montana to live , work

- and raise a family"
- How many surveys do I do in a day?
- I appreciate being asked to be part of your survey, but I do think Miles City will have a serious problem on So. Haynes Ave. very soon
- Overall with times the way they are the area is doing fairly well.
- Thanks for the opportunity to comment
- the state just did a great job of working with us to put in some truck storage lanes to loading facilities, we can still use some turn lane on hwy 2
- This survey had some difficult questions that are hard to answer when you are just a small town.
- transportation is very important in our community!

15. APPENDIX E: QUESTIONS FROM PHONE INTERVIEWS

1. Has your organization or community defined livability? (If yes, please provide the definition.)

2. Has your organization or community developed any of the following livability documents? If yes, please provide documents or web link.
 - Position Statements , Memorandums of Agreement, Research Reports, Interagency Agreements, Transportation Plans, Other

3. Describe any actions your organization or community is taking to address livability in the following areas.
 - Updating Transportation Plans and Policies
 - Improving Transportation Infrastructure
 - Encouraging Community Development Programs
 - Promoting Alternative Transportation Services
 - Other Actions:

4. Provide any outstanding policies or projects in your organization or community specific to livability, which can serve as examples for others.

5. To what level do you work with or coordinate with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) or other state and Federal agencies on projects related to livability?

6. What is the MDT doing well and what are the opportunities for improvement with regard to making a community a good place to live?

7. Specific to transportation, what do you think are the top three priorities for quality of life in your community?

16. APPENDIX F: DETAILED STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Examples of documents, actions, policies containing livability principals (questions 2-3)

- Missoula's 2008 long range transportation plan contains livability principals. It is a 20-year plan with required four-year updates. <http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/transportation/lrtpu1.htm>
- Bozeman's Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee works with local agencies to promote safety for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. One way it has improved safety was to work to reduce speed limits on sections of Huffine Lane from 70 mph to 55 mph. In addition, it encouraged installation of a pedestrian-activated light and crosswalks on Main Street near Bozeman High School and worked to slow speeding motorists near elementary schools.
- The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation updates its transportation plan annually. The idea for a transit system came from public input to the transportation plan. Fort Belknap coordinates service with the North Central Montana Transit system between Fort Belknap and Great Falls. Fort Belknap worked to become recognized as an entity that is eligible to receive FTA 5310 funds (Elderly and Disabled Specialized Transit Program) and was able to purchase three buses with these funds several years ago.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture encourages community development by promoting access to local foods through distribution and transportation initiatives. One current study is looking at possibilities to make agricultural transportation cheaper by assessing how container shipments, which can be moved from semi-trailer to rail, may be used in Montana. "Montana's Direct Farm Market Supply Chains: Mapping their Progress" is an ongoing mapping project for food system infrastructure. This project is intended to demonstrate how to produce, process, and ship foods within the state in order to promote more in-state business.
- The Flathead Reservation's Memorandum of Agreement with MDT and FHWA for the US Highway 93 North project ensured the design met the livability needs of many small communities along the corridor (USDOT FHWA, MDT, and CSKT 2000).

Outstanding project examples (question 4)

- Madison County used a Community Development Block Grant for comprehensive mapping for the county. This project resulted in a product that maps wildlife, geology, and transportation hazards in Madison County. Contact Charity Fechter, Madison County planning director, for more details.
- Great Falls has a revolving fund to improve downtown rental and ownership properties through the city's planning and community development department (http://www.greatfallsmt.net/people_offices/plancomdev/cdbg/cdbg.php).
- The Great Falls River's Edge Trail is a valuable community asset that is said to attract businesses to the area.
- The Washington Corporation interfaces with communities along the rail line to raise awareness of safety issues and minimize public exposure to train traffic. One program it promotes is Montana Operation Lifesaver (MTOLI). It is a free public service education program intended to reduce fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights-of-way (<http://www.mtoli.org/>).

- In grain-producing areas, towns with small elevators handling 25 to 60 rail cars cannot be competitive when rail operators give discounts for large shipments. The U.S. Department of Agriculture facilitated a rail transportation competition group that was formed to keep small communities from losing their grain elevators. Though this group was disbanded in 2009, members have testified before the Surface Transportation Board and still meet informally.

Top three priorities for quality of life in a community specific to transportation (question 7).
Sorted by Categories

Category: Access/maintenance

- Affordable access to work and medical services.
- Access to work and school (ability to take a bus if needed).
- Access to health care.
- Access to medical care (rural location with elderly population).
- Winter emergency transportation.
- Continue to enhance safety of major arterials and collectors (backbone of transportation system).
- Maintaining travelable roads and bridges (through spring 2011 floods for example).
- Continue to fund ongoing maintenance of existing infrastructure per priority lists.
- Maintaining/improving roads.
- Maintenance of existing infrastructure before building new infrastructure.
- Maintaining roads so Sidney people can get to services outside of city (including winter maintenance).

Category: Safety

- Railroad safety with regard to both the public and railroad workers. Educating the public and raising awareness that “anytime is train time.”
- Safety of Montana’s extensive network of public roads.
- Safety on roadways and bridges; pedestrians and bicyclists need to be at least two to three feet away from motor vehicles.
- Manage downtown truck traffic through towns where highway runs through downtown.
- Ensure people are safe (such as safe cars for children, seatbelts).
- Human health and safety (basic needs must be met such as clean drinking water).

Category: Transit

- Transit system—the North Central Montana Transit system enhances the quality of life for its users.

- Consistency of transit service (people won't use the service if it is not consistently on time).
- Providing a safe way to get around through transit (in Big Sky and the Gallatin Canyon between Big Sky and Bozeman, to reduce cars on the road and reduce drunk driving).
- Public transit and school transit.
- Grow the transit system in Missoula area to create a more reasonable travel choice for more people.
- Fund public transit on a sustainable basis. Currently, tribes have to supplement transit with other funds.
- Public transportation is important, especially for aging population.
- Creating alternative transportation service, such as transit, to provide people access to services in nearby communities.
- Encouraging people to reduce amount of driving and not always looking at widening roadways to solve problems.
- Multi-modal infrastructure and services.

Category: Pedestrian/Bicycle

- Community Transportation Enhancement Program – Non- motorized projects would not be completed if not for CTEP. CTEP funds provide for walking trails and other non-motorized infrastructure.
- Accessibility – a complete and connected system with mode choices that are safe (for example, neighborhoods without sidewalks have been annexed into city, leaving gaps in network). A statewide policy could help address this.
- More bicycle/pedestrian-friendly connections can remove vehicles from streets and create safer streets. Develop and maintain alternative transportation routes.
- Connectivity – connecting neighborhoods to increase options for bicycle/pedestrian travel.
- Increase the number of multi-modal corridors in state.
- Complete streets concepts.
- Need for sidewalks.
- Expansion of public facilities like the Great Falls River Trail system, biking/hiking paths that promote physical activity, get people outdoors, and provide scenic views.
- Promote courtesy and patience for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians (increase awareness for all roadway users).
- Provide increased funding for inter-connected bicycle/pedestrian paths to connect communities on reservations.

- Way finding for visitors who are not familiar with Great Falls to direct them to the city's highlights such as the River Trail, Charlie Russell museum, etc.
- Ensuring transportation infrastructures are designed and built considering the needs of all users (complete streets concepts, ADA needs, pedestrian crossings, etc.).

Category: Food transport/processing

- Transporting produce to market.
- Processing food from small towns in the state rather than shipping from out of state.
- Affordable and reliable access to markets for food producers. Montana is isolated. We need good roads and rail with affordable access. One example is rail access to facilitate export of wheat to Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Another example is access for local producers to get food to in-state markets.
- Affordable and reliable access to nutritious foods for consumers.

Category: Other

- Transportation system can directly affect and benefit economics of a community. For example, Lewistown has created a trail system that brings people in from out of town who spend money in the community.
- Revitalizing downtowns.
- Economic self-sufficiency for Montana families.
- Ability to earn a living.
- Jobs.
- Keeping Sidney airport funded and maintained.
- Wildlife crossings.

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