CAMBRIDGE SYSTEMATICS

TranPlan 21

2007 Amendment – Summary Report

final

report

prepared for

Montana Department of Transportation

prepared by

Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

February 2008

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date

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1.0 Introduction

In order to comply with the planning provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and the Final Rule on statewide and metropolitan planning and programming published in the Federal Register on February 14, 2007 and effective March 16, 2007, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) conducted a limited amendment of the State's long-range transportation plan (*TranPlan 21*). Considering many of the current *TranPlan 21* policy statements already meet SAFETEA-LU requirements, the limited amendment of the plan, including some revised and new policy statement goals and actions, were prepared. This report presents the tools and processes used to support long-range transportation planning in Montana and the specific amendments to the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21*, including the following:

- **Section 2.0** describes the various tools and processes developed by MDT that are currently used to support long-range transportation planning in Montana. The tools presented in this section were developed in support of transportation analysis for asset management and preservation, public and stakeholder involvement, economic and performance evaluations of transportation corridors and systems, and system impact analysis, Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP), among many others. These tools are referenced throughout this report in support of each relevant *TranPlan 21* amendment.
- **Section 3.0** presents a summary of MDT's ongoing public involvement process and as well as public involvement activities implemented specifically to support *TranPlan 21* and other long-range planning activities. A brief summary of supporting outreach processes, including MDT's Biennial Stakeholder Survey that was implemented in 2007, is also presented.
- **Section 4.0** presents background material and the policy and action statement amendments related to the SAFETEA-LU requirement to maintain and promote Consistency with Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans. Amendments to the policy statements were developed in consideration of existing MDT, as well as statewide, regional, and local economic development and land use planning efforts to meet this requirement.
- **Section 5.0** describes the New Consultations requirement in SAFETEA-LU and the policy statement amendments that were developed across multiple emphasis areas (Economic Development, Roadway System Performance, etc.) contained in *TranPlan 21*. MDT conducted new consultations as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. The resulting policy statements were developed in consideration of existing MDT efforts and information obtained through this new consultations effort.

- **Section 6.0** presents the SAFETEA-LU requirement for Environmental Mitigation, including a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities that have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by *TranPlan 21*. A summary of policy statements for inclusion as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* to meet these Federal requirements are presented.
- **Section 7.0** summarizes MDT's activities to meet the SAFETEA-LU requirement for Capital, Operations, and Management Strategies, Investments, Procedures, and Other Measures. This section considers state plan emphasis and associated amendments in *TranPlan 21* to more efficiently manage and operate the existing transportation system.
- **Section 8.0** provides a summary of Transportation System Security and the policy statements and actions defined by MDT to meet this SAFETEA-LU requirement. Security has been separated from Traveler Safety in this amendment and a description of the priorities, goals, or projects requirement; Federal guidance; and policy statements that support security is presented.
- **Section 9.0** provides a description of the ongoing Visualization Techniques used by MDT to support long-range transportation planning, including this amendment of *TranPlan 21*, across the State. Summaries of MDT's experience using visualization techniques in support of the 2002 Update of *TranPlan 21,* other planning and programming efforts in Montana, and this amendment are presented.
- **Section 10.0** summarizes the amendment for Traveler Safety element of *TranPlan 21* and the SAFETEA-LU requirement for the development of a specific Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This section describes MDT's recent and ongoing comprehensive highway safety planning experience, and how this material was used to developed consistent policy statements and actions within the Traveler Safety element of this amendment to *TranPlan 21*.
- **Section 11.0** presents a detailed evaluation and Review of the State's Metropolitan Planning Organizations' (MPO) plans and how they comply with SAFETEA-LU requirements. An overview of the current MPO regional transportation plans and planned updates or actions, a summary of key changes in SAFETEA-LU requirements, and for the benefit of the MPOs as they move forward with bringing their transportation planning process into compliance with SAFETEA-LU, a summary of recommended MDT guidance for MPOs to attain compliance are presented in this section.

The material summarized in this report were prepared and presented in several formats for this project. Separate and detailed technical memoranda representing the information provided in Sections 4.0 through 11.0 were prepared to support this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. These topic reports, including significant background material regarding Federal requirements, current and ongoing MDT activities, and supporting analytical tools and processes, were

prepared and used to guide the recommendations for policy statement goals and action amendments. The material summarized in Section 2.0 regarding MDT tools and processes were presented in each topic report.

In addition, the policy statement goals and actions amended in each topic report were incorporated into each of the *TranPlan 21* policy statement reports. MDT made these amended draft topic reports available to the public and stakeholders for review and comment before finalization. The status and disposition of the policy goals and actions included in the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* for Access Management, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Economic Development, Land Use Planning, Public Transportation, Roadway System Performance, and Traveler Safety after this amendment are shown in the Tables 1.1 through 1.7.

Table 1.1 Status of Access Management Policy Goals and Actions

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals & Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Improve corridor-level access management to preserve the highway system	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to emphasize interagency coordination and use of corridor plans. Actions A.1-A.3 retained.
Action A.4. Communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.	Revised, ongoing	Revised Action A.4 to emphasize interagency coordination.

Table 1.2 Status and Disposition of Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy Goals and Actions

TranPlan 21(2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals & Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal A. Actions A.1-A.5 retained
Action A.6. Develop an updated bicycle and pedestrian use baseline.	Not retained	Action completed.
Action A.6. Encourage the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian projects in the vicinity of kindergarten through grade 8 schools through the Safe Routes to School Program.	New	Added to encourage use of infrastructure improvements, educational encouragement, and enforcement programs to increase awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety.
POLICY GOAL B. Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for differences in current and future use.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal B. Action B.1-B.3, B.5-B.6 retained.
Action B.4. Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montana through incorporation in existing projects	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to incorporate the Safe Routes to School Program.

Table 1.3 Status and Disposition of Economic Development Policy Goals and Actions

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana's export-oriented ("basic") industries to access regional, national, and international markets.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal A. Actions A.1-A.6 retained.
POLICY GOAL B. Monitor and address capacity needs arising from Montana's economic growth trends.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal B.
Action B.1. Specify strategic economic development transportation linkages based on emerging travel demands and findings from the Highway Reconfiguration Study.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text revised to specify MDT tools and programs.
Action B.2. Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to encourage interagency coordination.
Action B.3. Consider economic development in the evaluation for prioritizing and scoping highway reconstruction projects.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text revised to specify MDT tools and programs.
POLICY GOAL C. Support state and local economic development initiatives to maximize new economic opportunities.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal C. Actions C.4 and C.6 retained.
Action C.1. Continue to support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA), Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs), and the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC).	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect current MDT actions.
Action C.2. Investigate establishing an economic opportunities program to help fund roadway projects that support business attraction and retention efforts.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect current status.
Action C.3. Coordinate with and provide support to local economic development initiatives.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect current MDT actions.
Action C.5. Provide state-level leadership to evaluate whether there are possibilities for reducing the cost and increasing the frequency and reliability for out-of-state air travel.	Action completed, revised	Previous action completed with the *Montana Air Service Opportunities and Challenges* Study, revised to consider recommendations in the study.

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL D. Support the tourism industry through promoting access to recreational, historical, cultural, and scenic destinations.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal D. Actions D.1-D.2 retained.
Action D.3. Coordinate with Federal agencies, tribal governments, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text revised to reflect current MDT actions.
POLICY GOAL E. Develop MDT's organizational capacity to support economic development.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal E. Action E.1-E.6 retained.
Action E.7. Designate an MDT point of contact for the Economic Development Community that will receive information from and disseminate information to other agencies.	New	Establishes MDT contact for MDT Economic Development issues.

Table 1.4 Status and Disposition of Land Use Planning and Transportation Policy Goals and Actions

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions *Amended in 2007*
POLICY GOAL A. Provide technical support and leadership to encourage local jurisdictions to support transportation corridor preservation and management through their land use planning and development permitting authority.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal A. Actions A.1, A.3, and A.4 retained.
Action A.2. Work with local jurisdictions in the early identification of urban and rural corridors under development pressure.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to emphasize interagency coordination.
Action A.5. Provide support and respond to requests for review and information from local agencies in a timely manner while encouraging them to reciprocate.	New	Added encourage development of interagency coordination.
POLICY GOAL B. Consistently apply MDT's Systems Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal B. Actions B.1 and B.3 retained.
Action B.2. Explore and develop tools to equitably distribute improvement costs on developing corridors regardless of sequencing of the developments.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to reflect status of the System Impact Action Process.

Table 1.5 Status and Disposition of Public Transportation Policy Goals and Actions

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Promote and support increased use of public transportation systems.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal A. Action A.6 retained.
Action A.1. Support local promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to encourage interagency coordination.
Action A.2. Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to encourage interagency coordination.
Action A.3. Transfer Urban Highway funds to transit at the request of local governments.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect change in STP funds.
Action A.4. Coordinate state planning and urban area and transit system development planning and management.	Retained, ongoing.	Supporting text updated to encourage interagency coordination.
Action A.5. Continue to assist communities to establish transit systems to meet future travel demands.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect implementation of the consolidated transit service model.
POLICY GOAL B. Preserve existing intercity public transportation service and encourage/facilitate the development of new services.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal B. Actions B.3-B.5 retained.
Action B.1. Promote the use, and communicate the availability, of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect implementation of the consolidated transit service model.
Action B.2. Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE.	Retained, ongoing	Completed through legislation (SB160) passed in the 2007 session effective 10/01/07. This legislation allows TransADE funds to be used as match for FTA funds. TransADE funds can be used to match intercity funding.
POLICY GOAL C. Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and the disabled – through facilitating interagency funding consolidation.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect implementation of the consolidated transit service model. Action C.2 retained.
Action C.1. Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding coordination.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect implementation of the consolidated transit service model.

TranPlan 21 (2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
Action C.3. Work with the Public Service Commission to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision (especially Medicaid transportation).	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect completion of action via HB 273.
POLICY GOAL D. Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal D. Actions D.1 and D.2 retained.
Action D.3. Support the implementation of rural ridesharing.	Revised, ongoing	Supporting text revised to reflect implementation of the consolidated transit service model.

Table 1.6 Status and Disposition of Roadway System Performance Policy Goals and Actions

*TranPlan 21 (*2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Establish explicit Priorities for roadway improvements.	Retained, ongoing.	Retained as Policy Goal A. Actions A.1, A.3 and A.4 retained.
Action A.2. Provide and disseminate transportation system performance information.	Implemented, retained as ongoing action	Supporting text updated to reflect current environment.
Action A.5. Investigate the potential use of advanced mitigation opportunities such as applying already committed MDT mitigation funds and Federal matching funds for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.	New	Investigates alternative mitigation opportunities.
POLICY GOAL B. Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana within available resources.	Retained, ongoing	Policy goal restated to reflect current environment. Actions B.1-B.5 retained.
Action B.6. Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.	Revised, ongoing	Supporting text revised to provide implementation guidance.
Action B.7. Continue to use the corridor planning process to consult with resource agencies in identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures.	New	Added to support continuation of interagency coordination.
POLICY GOAL C. Improve the productivity of the roadway system.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal C. Actions C.1, C.3, and C.4 retained.
Action C.2. Identify and deploy cost-effective Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) applications to improve safety and system productivity.	Retained, ongoing	Supporting text updated to reflect current environment.

*TranPlan 21 (*2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
Action C.5. Promote efficient system management and operations, and emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system by implementing strategies that manage travel demand, enhance mobility, and extend the service life of the system.	New	Encourages maximum utilization of the existing transportation system.
Action C.6. Utilize P3 to establish objectives and performance levels for preserving the condition of the existing system and addressing growing congestion.	New	Added to specify MDT tools and programs for use in project assessment.
Action C.7. Conduct pre-NEPA/MEPA corridor studies to analyze the improvement needs, at various levels, including low-cost, corridor management and operations strategies along with consideration of available funding.	New	Added to specify MDT tools and programs for use in project assessment.
Action C.8. MDT will continue to use and refine the Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT) to support ongoing planning and policy analysis including the benefits and costs of alternative investments to the state transportation system.	New	Added to specify MDT tools and programs for use in project assessment.

Table 1.7 Status and Disposition of Travel Safety Policy Goals and Actions

*TranPlan 21 (*2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
POLICY GOAL A. Reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes on Montana's roadways.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal A. Actions A.1 – A.4, A.6 – A.8 retained.
Action A.5. Implement the Traffic Records Strategic Plan which will improve the collection and reporting needs to address traveler safety issues.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to incorporate the traffic records strategic plan updated in 2007.
Action A.9. Annually review traffic crash data to identify emerging trends and director safety efforts.	New	Added to incorporate elements of the CHSP.
Action A.10. Use tools in the CHSP (Traffic Records Database and Emergency Medical Services Delivery System) to support transportation safety analysis and enhancement.	New	Added to incorporate elements of the CHSP.

*TranPlan 21 (*2002 Update) Policy Goals and Actions	Status	Disposition in *TranPlan 21* Policy Goals and Actions Amended in 2007
Action A.11. Establish a comprehensive and strategic safety business process that aligns MDT's major safety planning functions.	New	Increase efficiency within the department in delivery of various safety programs.
POLICY GOAL B. Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety.	Retained, ongoing	Retained as Policy Goal B. Actions B.2 and B.3 retained.
Action B.1. Use the established Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) and high-level statewide inter-agency coordination and partnering process to measure transportation system safety performance, identify and prioritize safety strategies, and provide actions for integration with statewide transportation planning.	Revised, ongoing	Revised to reflect completion of the *Montana Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan.*
POLICY GOAL C. Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to promote transportation system security.	New	Facilitate a coordinated inter-agency approach to ensuring transportation system security.
Action C.1. Continue to participate in agency coordination with the MT DES and Department of Homeland Security to ensure a coordinated, effective, and efficient response to transportation security issues.	New	Facilitate a coordinated inter-agency approach to ensuring transportation system security.
Action C.2. Continue to support transportation security within the policy statements, goals, and actions for economic development, traveler safety, access managements, roadway system performance, and public transportation.	New	Facilitate a coordinated inter-agency approach to ensuring transportation system security.
Action C.3. Coordinate with the MT DES to actively maintain and implement a coordinated transportation security plan for responding to and recovering from emergency and disaster situations.	New	Facilitate a coordinated inter-agency approach to ensuring transportation system security.

2.0 MDT Tools and Processes

Several analytical tools and processes have already been developed by MDT, and are consistently used by the agency to support long-range transportation planning in Montana. The majority (if not all) of these tools are under constant refinement by MDT to help meet both ongoing needs and new challenges in transportation planning, programming, project delivery and financing, and public and stakeholder outreach.

The tools and processes presented in this section include the following:

- Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP)
- Consolidated transit planning process;
- Corridor planning process;
- Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT);
- Performance Planning Process (P^3); and
- System Impact Action Process (SIAP).

While MDT has developed and deployed other tools used to support long-range planning, these tools represent a diverse set of procedures that have allowed MDT to consistently achieve the prescribed SAFETEA-LU requirements for transportation planning. Many of these tools have been and will continue to be used to support multiple policy statements and topics presented both in the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* and in this limited amendment.

Brief summaries of each tool are presented in this section. Summaries include a description of the tool and how the tool was and will be used to support different elements of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. References to the specific tools also are provided in each section of this report.

2.1 COMPREHENSIVE HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

MDT completed the ***Montana Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP)*** in September 2006. The CHSP was designed to address the State's highway safety needs and reduce the number and severity of crashes and their consequences. It was developed by MDT in collaboration with other Federal, state, local agencies, tribal governments and other safety stakeholders working through a multi-agency CHSP committee. The CHSP was developed in accordance with the requirements established in SAFETEA-LU.

MDT designed and implemented the consultation and participation process to support the CHSP. The process was comprehensive and meets many of the SAFETEA-LU requirements for new consultations. Stakeholder participants in

this process included Federal, state, and local agencies and representatives include the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Motor Carrier Services, and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); the Montana Highway Patrol, Montana Motor Vehicle Division, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Department of Justice, Montana Department of Public Heath and Human Services, and Office of the Court Administrator; the state's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (Yellowstone County Board of Planning, Great Falls Planning Board, and Missoula Consolidated Planning Board); and the Blackfeet, Confederated Salish and Kootenai, Crow, Chippewa Cree, Little Shell, Fort Peck Tribes, and other safety stakeholders.

MDT's vision for the CHSP established a unifying focus for the planning effort to ensure that "All highway users in Montana arrive safely to their destinations." The goals for this vision include reducing Montana statewide fatality rates from 2.05 per 100 million VMT in 2004, to 1.79 per 100M VMT by 2008 and 1.0 per 100M by 2015. In addition, by reducing the fatality rate to 1.0 per 100M VMT by 2015, Montana's incapacitating injuries will fall from 1,700 in 2005 to 950 by 2015.

2.2 CONSOLIDATED TRANSIT PLANNING PROCESS

In Montana, public transportation services in rural areas and cities with populations under 50,000 are provided by 33 urban and rural transit systems, and public transportation services provided by health and human service organizations. Population trends suggest that the State's overall population growth will remain moderate in scale and uneven between the State's regions. Relatively high growth is expected in and around most of the State's larger cities and in the high-amenity areas in the western part of the State. Low-to-negative population growth has been the prevailing pattern in the eastern part of the State. It is also projected that the aged population will grow faster than that in the U.S. as a whole. These factors are examples of economic development, human environment, and community development factors that are contributing to the growing importance of public transportation in Montana.

The State of Montana received a substantial increase in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Funds in SAFETEA-LU. Section 5311 funds can be used for planning, capital, operating, and administration assistance in nonurbanized areas with populations of less than 50,000. The State of Montana does not provide matching funds for Federal transit funds. However, local transit providers can use Federal Health and Human Services funds that are already being spent in their communities to match the FTA funds. In light of these conditions, MDT requires that, wherever possible, Section 5311 applicants not only coordinate, but also develop a consolidated service model. This effort to consolidate services is unique to Montana. Various other states (e.g., New Mexico and Arizona) are trying to develop similar programs to consolidate rural transit services. Methods for consolidation include contracts or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) at a local level. Developing

consolidated services allow transit operators to aggregate and leverage their funding to create more efficient and effective transit systems, increasing accessibility to public transportation throughout Montana.

While this process was used to support the SAFETEA-LU requirement for Consistency with Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans, it has been used by MDT to support long-range public transportation planning and the development of policy statement policies, goals, and actions associated with transit.

2.3 CORRIDOR PLANNING PROCESS

MDT's corridor planning process plays an important part in engaging resource agencies early in the transportation planning process. The corridor planning process helps identify environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, and/or potential mitigation measures prior to the formal National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process. It also provides an opportunity to compare existing plans and maps of natural and historic resources at a corridor level in an effort to ensure coordination of activities and address areas of inconsistencies. MDT currently conducts and plans to continue using these corridor-level studies to analyze the need for improvements, including cost-effective/low-cost corridor management strategies, such as TDM, incident and access management strategies, spot/safety improvements and intersection improvement strategies.

This process is used by MDT to support long-range transportation, and was used to address several elements of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, including the following:

- **Consistency with Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans (Section 4.0) –** MDT established this process for a variety of reasons, including to help define guidelines for developing corridor-level strategies that address reconstruction needs. With this recommendation, MDT has initiated corridor-level studies on high-volume or environmentally-sensitive facilities to analyze the need for improvements, including cost-effective/low-cost corridor management strategies, such as TDM, incident and access management strategies, and intersection improvement strategies. This process can also be used to address broader issues, such as economic and land use planning and socioeconomic conditions, and can do so at broader geographic scale.
- **New Consultations (Section 5.0) –** An important goal of this process was developed to help achieve early consensus amongst Montana's resource agencies about project improvements provided through the use of this process. The corridor planning process can be used to address broader issues than traditional environmental analysis, such as land use planning and socioeconomic conditions.

- **Environmental Mitigation (Section 6.0) –** This process was primarily developed as a tool to inform the NEPA/MEPA process to screen and eliminate alternatives to be studied, and to define the purpose and needs statements used during NEPA/MEPA. It was also designed to reduce the cost of the environmental process; speed project delivery; and provide early involvement of environmental interests, regulatory agencies, and the public. MDT uses this process to complement the NEPA/MEPA process, and to ensure that decisions are made at the appropriate level, to consider low-cost alternatives, and to identify available funding.
- **Capital, Operations and Management Strategies, Investments, Procedures, and Other Measures (Section 7.0) –** This process also can be used to address reconstruction needs and the analysis of low-cost corridor management strategies, such as TDM, incident and access management strategies, and intersection improvement strategies.

MDT uses this process to support public outreach for corridor planning, and provides MDT with a process and series of outreach tools that can be used to meet the SAFETEA-LU requirements for using visualization techniques (Section 9.0) for state planning. MDT will continue to use and apply this corridor planning process to support *TranPlan 21* and state- and corridor-specific planning efforts across the State.

2.4 HIGHWAY ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TOOL (HEAT)

The Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT) was developed by MDT to assess the transportation system and cost effectiveness potential of highway capacity expansion improvements of various types across the State. HEAT provides a rigorous analysis capability to evaluate, measure, and compare the effectiveness of corridor capacity, management, and operations enhancements and strategies. Performance for user benefits related to safety (improved crash rates), environmental (reduced emissions), and transportation (reduced delay and improved mobility), among others, are built into HEAT to assess the aggregate economic benefits and benefit/costs of corridor improvements.

HEAT is used by MDT to address several elements of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, including the following:

- **Consistency with Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans (Section 4.0) –** HEAT, because its performance and economic analysis models are linked to both statewide economic (Regional Economics Model, Inc. (REMI)) and passenger and freight travel demand models, is being used by MDT to assess the future transportation corridor impacts relative to economic growth. Management and operational strategies using HEAT and some aspects of the P^3 are being used by MDT to assess economic impacts of management, operational, and capacity improvements to the State's transportation system. For instance, a strategy to improve travel delays and

system reliability for a corridor can be evaluated with capital improvement projects or operational strategies. HEAT can be applied to determine the economic and transportation impacts and potential benefits of these strategies, and can be used to compare their relative cost effectiveness regarding other strategies within the same corridor or in other corridors.

- **Environmental Mitigation (Section 6.0) –** HEAT can be used to assess a variety of performance indicators and user benefits for corridor and system planning, including those related to environmental (reduced air emissions). In addition, MDT can use HEAT to support corridor evaluations and to inform the NEPA/MEPA process, to screen and eliminate alternatives to be studied, and to define the purpose and needs statements used during NEPA/MEPA.
- **Capital, Operations and Management Strategies, Investments, Procedures, and Other Measures (Section 7.0) –** HEAT's capabilities to evaluate, measure, and compare the effectiveness of corridor capacity, management, and operations enhancements and strategies are being used by MDT to support operations and system management and preservation. Performance or user-benefits system operations from HEAT, used in conjunction with the system programming and preservation elements of MDT's P^3 (described later in this section), are used to support transportation system preservation for the state transportation system.
- **Visualization Techniques (Section 9.0) –** HEAT, because it is geographic information system (GIS)-based, offers a wide variety of visualization techniques and displays that can be used by MDT to support analysis conducted for *TranPlan 21* and various corridor studies. Graphic displays of transportation- and economic-oriented performance indicators can be produced and distributed by web site and provide MDT with a wealth of graphical information that can be displayed through both statewide and corridor-specific public involvement purposes.

MDT continues to refine and use HEAT to support ongoing transportation planning and policy analysis as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* and other state- and corridor-planning initiatives.

2.5 PERFORMANCE PLANNING PROCESS (P^3)

MDT uses computer-based management systems through P^3 that assist in summarizing and managing the condition of the transportation system, and evaluating the impacts of various investment options. These systems are used in managing highway pavements, roadway congestion, bridge conditions, and safety; and are supported by an annual data collection program. For example, ride quality, rutting, delay time, traffic volume, pavement cracking, bridge deck condition, and crashes are just a few of the many technical and operational characteristics tracked annually by these systems. These management systems currently are used to track the actual performance of the highway system after

investments are implemented. This feedback loop has increased the predictive capability of the management systems, and of MDT's overall accountability and management of their transportation system.

P³ allows MDT to assess how well it is meeting the goals developed in *TranPlan 21.* This asset management-based approach to programming helps MDT determine the appropriate investment mix between types of work (reconstruction, rehabilitation, and preservation) to optimize system service life, safety, and mobility. In support of P³, performance measures were developed and are used to track closely with *TranPlan 21* goals, and then it is used to provide an annual assessment of how well those goals are achieved. For instance, MDT has an objective to maintain and improve congestion levels through improving system operations within urban areas. This includes funding intersection improvements and signal synchronization projects, and directing funding towards pavement preservation projects. These types of actions together result in a much better managed system. MDT uses a congestion index (travel delay measures) to track congestion levels. The congestion index measures travel delay against the established performance targets by highway classification, and uses this measure to determine performance over time and to evaluate system operations improvement strategies.

For this amendment, P³ was and will continue to be used to support the Environmental Mitigation (Section 6.0); Capital, Operations and Management Strategies, Investments, Procedures, and Other Measures (Section 7.0); and Visualization Techniques (Section 9.0). Regarding visualization, the P³ brochure and displays of performance measures, developed and distributed by MDT, use visualization to illustrate the relationship between *TranPlan 21*; Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP); and programming, funding, and project delivery and performance. This brochure also includes a chart that shows how performance measures fit into the decision-making process.

MDT is currently using P³ to support current planning and programming, and will continue to be refined and used by MDT to support transportation planning, policy, and the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21.*

2.6 SYSTEM IMPACT ACTION PROCESS (SIAP)

MDT's System Impact Action Process (SIAP) provides a coordinated review of projects initiated outside of the agency that may significantly and permanently impact the transportation system as part of the developmental review process. This review process allows MDT to coordinate consistently with local land use agencies, private developers, and/or other governmental agencies, when considering requests for access to the transportation system. The *Guide to the System Impact Process*, August 2006, includes general criteria for System Impact Action project determination and an overview of the SIAP. Goals of the SIAP include the following:

- Provide an avenue for private developers to request access to and from the state highway system;
- Facilitate a timely review of the developers request amongst a varied group of MDT technical offices;
- Identify reasonable accommodation of the developer's project needs;
- Preserve the safety, operational efficiency, and integrity of Montana's transportation system;
- Protect taxpayer investments by recovering costs from developers for their project's impacts to the transportation system; and
- Ensure MDT permitting does not precede an environmental process (NEPA/MEPA).

Upon determination that an access request may have a significant impact on the transportation system, the development plan is entered into the SIAP, which is handled through the MDT Headquarters. Nonsignificant development requests revert back to the appropriate district office for review and permitting. Review processes that are handled through the SIAP review process are also coordinated with other state, Federal, and local agencies before permits are issued.

As of spring 2007, over 450 development projects have been entered into the SIAP review, and its use is increasing. Previous versions of *TranPlan 21*, including the 2002 update, contain policy goals and actions to ensure that private development equitably contributes to the maintenance and appropriate improvements to the State's transportation system.

2.7 20-YEAR FORECASTS

States are required by SAFETEA-LU to develop their long-range transportation plans with a minimum 20-year forecast period. The 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* included vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) and economic forecasts to year 2025. As part of this limited amendment, selected forecast data in *TranPlan 21* were extended to year 2030. The remaining forecasts will be revised with the next full update of *TranPlan 21*.

3.0 Public Involvement Process

MDT completed the last update of *TranPlan 21* in early 2003. The 2005 SAFETEA-LU and corresponding Federal regulations, which were released in February of 2007, include new Federal planning requirements that require a limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. Public involvement is and continues to be an integral element of MDT's ongoing statewide planning process, including the updates or amendments to *TranPlan 21*.

The limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* requires the involvement of Montana residents, business owners, Federal and state agencies, local government officials, tribal officials, key transportation system users, and the general public. This involvement will ensure the policy goals and actions in the resulting document accurately address Montana's transportation needs within available resources. Table 3.1 summarizes the specific mechanisms and purposes for public involvement implemented in March 2007 to support this amendment.

Table 3.1 Extent of Public Involvement

When	Purpose	Mechanisms
Ongoing – Before, during, and after the *TranPlan 21 2007 Amendment* process	Provide information on the plan amendment, collect data and feedback, and communicate other opportunities for input	• Biennial stakeholder and telephone surveys • E-mail address and web site • Toll-free phone number • Press release • Newsletter • Newsline articles
Stage I – After preliminary definition and identification of issues and requirements	Inform the public of the amendment process, obtain input on identifying and refining issues and concerns specific to meeting SAFETEA-LU requirements, and build support for the planning effort and its implementation	• Newsletter inserts and/or targeted mail-in surveys • Tribal government outreach • Meetings with resource agencies and local government representatives
Stage II – Developing alternatives for policy goals, actions, and alternatives, but before drafting plan amendment	Obtain input on alternative policy goals and actions	• Newsletter inserts and/or targeted mail-in survey • Tribal government outreach • Meetings with resource agencies and local government representatives

When	Purpose	Mechanisms
Stage III – After drafting plan amendment, but before finalizing and adopting	Provide opportunity to comment on the draft amendment, and meet Federal public review requirements	• Disseminate draft plan to public libraries • Provide summary to public on request • MDT web site & e-mail • Toll-free telephone number • Newspaper ads & press releases

Source: Montana Department of Transportation, March 2007.

3.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Notifications about the amendment process and opportunities to participate were made available through the World Wide Web, the MDT newsline, mailing lists, newspaper ads, and a toll-free telephone number. Sample newsline notifications are available in Appendix A. In addition to notifications of major steps and opportunities to comment via these means, a public opinion survey was made available on the web site. The short survey released in June 2007 asked about the perception of transportation problems and prioritization of policy topics. The survey is also available in Appendix A. The revised draft plan was made available to the public via the MDT web site and public libraries. Comments were received via e-mail, postal mail, and a toll-free number.

3.2 AGENCY OUTREACH AND CONSULTATION

As part of the limited amendment process, outreach and consultations were conducted with Federal, regional, state, Tribal, and local resource agencies. In April 2007, agencies were notified of the limited amendment to the long-range transportation plan and provided with an opportunity to participate in the consultations process. Representatives from participating agencies were interviewed in April and May 2007 and the findings incorporated into proposed amendments. Technical memoranda documenting the proposed amendments were then distributed to agencies in July 2007 for their review and comment.

Contacted agencies and representatives included in the consultations process are listed below. Letters accompanying each step of the consultations process can be found in Appendix A. Additional details on the outreach and consultations process can be found in Sections 4.0, 5.0, and 6.0.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Representatives

- Andrew Finch, Great Falls City Planning Board;
- Mike Kress, Missoula Office of Planning and Grants;

- Benjamin Rangel, Great Falls City Planning Board; and
- Scott Walker, Yellowstone County Board of Planning.

Montana Resource Agency Representatives

- Mark Baumler, Montana Historical Society;
- Jeff Ryan, Montana Department of Environmental Quality;
- T.O. Smith, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; and
- Mike Sullivan, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

Federal Resource Agency Representatives

- Mike Addy, Bureau of Indian Affairs;
- Jim Beaver, Bureau of Land Management;
- Fred Bower, U.S. Forest Service;
- Gary Danczyk, National Park Service, Glacier National Park;
- Bill Gray, Bureau of Reclamation;
- Craig Haynes, Bureau of Land Management;
- Katry Harris, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation;
- Steve Iobst, National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park;
- Scott Jackson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Clayton Jordan, Bureau of Reclamation;
- Steve Potts, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and
- Todd N. Tillinger, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Tribal Agency Representatives

- Lewis Yellowrobe, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes;
- Don White, Blackfeet Indian Nation;
- Pete Lamere, Rocky Boy's Reservation;
- John Healy, Fort Belknap Community Council;
- Henri Headdress, Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation; and
- Oliver Hill, Crow Reservation.

In addition to the agency outreach and consultations listed above, MDT met with the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) Transportation Group and the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) to discuss plan amendments

and further coordination between the groups. Key items from this meeting are included in Section 4.0.

3.3 STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SURVEYS

Through MDT's process to manage a continuing *TranPlan 21* public and stakeholder involvement process, the agency periodically seeks input from resource agencies (local, state, and Federal); Native American Tribes; and other interests through the biennial *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*. This survey includes separate categories for city and county officials so MDT can identify issues and concerns of each group. In addition to asking for opinions on a variety of transportation system issues, including the statewide planning process, the survey includes an open-ended opportunity for each recipient to comment on issues of concern to them. MDT provides the survey results, including the comments, to MDT administrators, the Transportation Commission, and other transportation decision-makers.

In addition to the *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*, MDT also conducts a statewide *TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Telephone Survey*. The survey is designed to examine the public's perceptions of the current transportation system, views on possible actions to improve the transportation system, and opinions on MDT's quality of customer service provided.

The latest stakeholder and public involvement surveys were conducted in the spring of 2007, and included a variety of questions related to long-range transportation planning in Montana. An additional set of questions specific to this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* were built into the survey design. These additions considered adding more potential responses, addressing the use of transportation technologies, identifying and prioritizing methods to improve or maintain a secure transportation system, gauging the level stakeholder and public continued interest in MDT providing these types of survey tools and other outreach methods in support of planning, and identifying the best methods used to solicit public sand stakeholder input, among others.

The following revisions to existing questions were made to both the *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey* and the *TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey*:

- T5. Add:
  - k. Lack of alternative routes for major roadways
  - l. Adequate incident management
  - m. Lack of roadway connectivity
  - n. Roadway pavement condition
  - o. Impacts to environment (wildlife, natural & historic resources, etc)

- T6. Revise:
  - k. Using new and innovative technologies to make roadways more efficient (electronic message signs, web site and radio updates, remote weather information systems, coordinated signal systems)
- S6. Add:
  - h. Maintain/Preserve roadway pavement condition

The following questions were added to both the *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey* and the *TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey*:

- 1. What is the most important or would provide the most transportation system security benefit from the following list? Prioritize these areas in importance (5 = the lowest priority, and 1 = the most important).
  - a. Availability of alternative routes
  - b. Good communication/coordination with other agencies
  - c. Good communication with the public using available advanced technologies
  - d. Good Emergency Response Plans
  - e. Connectivity of roadways
  - f. Other – specify
- 2. List the following in order of most important/critical to transportation system security (1 = most important, and 7 = least important).
  - a. Interstate Highways
  - b. Other major highways
  - c. Border crossings
  - d. Airports
  - e. Transit facilities
  - f. Other – specify
- 3. It is important to MDT to obtain customer input when developing our policy plan and guiding our project planning and implementations processes. Put the following tools in order of usefulness to you (1 = most useful, and 6 = not useful)
  - Toll-free call in number
  - E-mail and web site
  - Print and broadcast media
  - Public meetings in your community
  - Surveys

  - Special Mailings (brochures, newsletters, postcards, etc)
  - Other – Specify.
- What tool works best to help you understand plans and projects being proposed by MDT? List the following in the order of what helps you the most (1 = the most helpful, and 6 = least helpful).
  - a. Web site
  - b. Maps
  - c. Pictures/graphics
  - d. Brochures
  - e. Newsletters
  - e. Advanced technology tools such as computer simulation software displays
  - f. Other – specify

The following revisions were made to the existing question in the *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*:

- Part III – Service, 12. For each of the stakeholder groups, adjust the wording of this question accordingly (for example, for tribal governments the question should read: "What grade would you give MDT on its processes for consulting with *tribal governments*?").
  - Environmental group – Consultation with *resource agencies*
  - Local governments – Consultation with *local government officials*
  - Economic development group – Consultation with E*conomic Development groups*
  - Etc.

The following question was added to the *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*:

- 13. What grade would you give MDT on coordinating its plans with other agency transportation plans, land use, economic development, and environmental resource plans?

A detailed analysis and summary of the survey process and results was posted and available on the MDT web site in late 2007. Survey findings were used to identify policies and action items for revision.

4.0 Consistency of *TranPlan 21* with Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans

SAFETEA-LU requires state long-range transportation plans to promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns. This section presents SAFETEA-LU requirements, elements of the *TranPlan 21* 2002 Update that emphasized economic analysis and coordination, a summary of selected regional growth plans from across the state, and a summary of revisions to *TranPlan 21* made as part of the 2007 limited amendment to meet the Federal requirements. The revisions were developed in consideration of existing MDT, as well as statewide, regional, and local economic development and land use planning efforts.

4.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU revises the previous planning factor, requiring state and MPOs to promote consistency between transportation improvements and planned growth and economic development patterns. Specifically, these requirements are as follows:

- **23 CFR Section 450.206(a) –** Each state shall carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- **23 CFR Section 450.206(b) –** Consideration of the planning factors in Paragraph a of this section shall be reflected, as appropriate, in the statewide transportation planning process. The degree of consideration and analysis of the factors should be based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **23 CFR Section 450.208(a) –** In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, each state shall, at a minimum: 2) Coordinate planning carried out under this subpart with statewide trade and economic development planning activities and related multistate planning efforts.

4.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MDT ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

The 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* included policy goals and actions demonstrating MDT efforts to support economic development and land use planning efforts in Montana. The development of specific policy statements to better address state and local economic development and land use coordination was a specific emphasis area of 2002 update of *TranPlan*. The goals were developed through a process involving input from and issues raised by the public, stakeholders, industry representatives, and technical analysis. Generally, these goals are found in the Roadway System Performance, Economic Development, and Access Management and Land Use Planning elements. However, the Public Transportation and Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning elements also support transportation facilities and services to promote and allow for the implementation of economic development and land use planning policies. These goals and actions, by element, are presented below.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana;
- **Action B.1 –** Establish criteria (goals and guidelines) to determine when to add capacity as part of reconstruction projects;
- **Action B.2 –** Establish and prototype a process and guidelines for developing corridor–level strategies that address reconstruction needs;
- **Action B.4 –** Inform local planning and development officials of the State's desire to preserve key transportation corridors, encourage and assist local jurisdictions to address right-of-way preservation in local land use plans, access management programs, and support MDT objectives for these local transportation corridors; and
- **Action B.6 –** Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.

Economic Development

Policy goals from the Economic Development element of the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* are shown below. Actions associated with these policy goals are not presented here, but demonstrate MDT's ongoing compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

- **Policy Goal A –** Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana's export-oriented ("basic") industries to access regional, national, and international markets;
- **Policy Goal B –** Monitor and address capacity needs arising from Montana's economic growth trends;

- **Policy Goal C –** Support state and local economic development initiatives to maximize new economic opportunities;
- **Policy Goal D –** Support the tourism industry through promoting access to recreational, historical, cultural, and scenic destinations; and
- **Policy Goal E –** Develop MDT's organizational capacity to support economic development.

Access Management

- **Policy Goal A –** Improve corridor-level access management to preserve the highway system; and
- **Action A.4 –** Communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.

Land Use Planning

Policy goals from the Land Use Planning element of the *TranPlan 21* 2002 update are shown below. Actions associated with these policy goals are not presented here, but demonstrate MDT's ongoing compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

- **Policy Goal A –** Provide technical support and leadership to encourage local jurisdictions to support transportation corridor preservation and management through their land use planning and development permitting authority; and
- **Policy Goal B –** Consistently apply MDT's Systems Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system.

Public Transportation

Public transportation services in urban and rural areas are often developed in coordination with and in support of land use and economic development planning. Policy goals and actions reflecting this from the *TranPlan 21* 2002 update are presented below.

- **Policy Goal A –** Promote and support increase use of public transportation systems;
- **Action A.2 –** Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs;
- **Action A.3 –** Continue to provide state-level funding support for transit by providing a fixed amount of funding for rural transit systems "off the top" of Surface Transportation Program funds, and transfer Urban Highway funds to transit at the request of local governments;
- **Action A.4 –** Coordinate state planning, urban area and transit system development planning, and management;

- **Action A.5 –** Assist communities to establish transit systems to meet future travel demands;
- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve existing intercity public transportation service and encourage/facilitate the development of new services;
- **Action B.1 –** Promote the use and communicate the availability of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service;
- **Action B.2 –** Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE;
- **Action B.3 –** Work to improve intermodal passenger facilities;
- **Action B.4 –** Coordinate with Amtrak, the Congressional delegation, and others to facilitate increased use of rail and preserve existing service levels;
- **Policy Goal C –** Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through interagency coordination;
- **Action C.1 –** Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding coordination;
- **Action C.2 –** Use TransADE funding as a medium for improved coordination;
- **Action C.3 –** Work with the Public Service Commission to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision (especially Medicaid transportation);
- **Policy Goal D –** Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana;
- **Action D.2 –** Work with other state agencies to develop a transportation demand management program for state government; and
- **Action D.3 –** Support the implementation of rural ridesharing.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

In response to increasing public interest in bicycle and pedestrian planning, MDT has increased its focus on planning and project development to specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs. Many of these efforts have been undertaken jointly with other agencies. Policy goals and actions reflecting this from the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* are presented below.

- **Policy Goal A –** Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes;
- **Action A.1 –** Continue the MDT Bicycle and Pedestrian program;
- **Action A.2 –** Work with the Department of Commerce to maintain bicycle-related tourist guides and information;
- **Action A.3 –** Assist other units of government to provide transportation facilities that encourage or consider use by bicyclists and pedestrians;

- **Policy Goal B –** Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for differences in current and future use;
- **Action B.1 –** Identify the most significant bicycle routes designated through MPO and urban area plans and selected rural "touring routes" with the greatest demand or potential demand as the basis for planning and system improvement decisions;
- **Action B.2 –** Establish a consistent planning approach and design guidelines for incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into highway improvement projects;
- **Action B.3 –** Consider further bicycle and pedestrian improvements based upon proven use or expected future use; and
- **Action B.4 –** Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montana through incorporation in existing projects.

Traveler Safety

- **Policy Goal A –** Reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes on Montana's roadways; and
- **Policy Goal B –** Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety.

Other MDT Actions

Currently, MDT coordinates its transportation planning efforts with economic development and land use planning at the state, regional, and local levels. At all levels, MDT coordinates with these other agencies to develop future growth projections and to provide technical support for the transportation element of plans and studies. Financial support and travel demand modeling services are also provided through MDT for urban area transportation plans that guide transportation improvements and spending based on future anticipated growth and needs. MDT historically participates in local transportation committees, and conducts a biennial stakeholder survey that includes local governments, representatives from public and private groups affected by commercial and passenger transportation, and economic development interests. Some of these efforts, such as the SIAP, are directly referenced in *TranPlan 21*. Other actions, especially those occurring at the corridor or project level, may not be explicitly included in *TranPlan 21*, but are built into the MDT planning and design process.

As a result of MDT's economic emphasis documented in the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21*, MDT developed additional tools to support the coordination of state, regional, and land use coordination and analysis of economic and land use development decisions that impact the state transportation system. These tools and processes, presented above in Section 2.0, include MDT's Corridor Planning Process, HEAT, and SIAP that specifically were designed to assess economic and land use impacts.

MDT's efforts to coordinate with local economic development agencies and to consolidate rural transit services in support of economic development are presented below.

Coordination with Economic Development

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is an association of economic development professionals, consisting of members/employees of the private and public sectors. The MEDA promotes and fosters economic development activities in the State of Montana. MDT has established an ongoing cooperative relationship with MEDA and its primary state partner, the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC), to facilitate interagency involvement through conferences, mailings, and regular communication. As part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, MDT met with the MEDA Transportation Group and MDOC to discuss plan amendments and further coordination between the groups. The meeting provided MDT with an opportunity to share information with and solicit ideas from local and state agencies. Key items from this meeting included the following:

- Continue regular meeting of the MEDA/MDOC/MDT working group to share information and offer forums for new ideas;
- Explore opportunities to use other economic development or local government groups, such as the Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDC), as a channel for regional economic- and land use-oriented outreach activities;
- Provide resources to and work with local officials through meetings and workshops to increase knowledge of transportation system needs and requirements using portfolios of current and expected future transportation system characteristics, impacts, and statistics;
- Provide training, analysis tools, or technical support to help local governments meet these requirements;
- Solicit local governments for and consider and evaluate their suggestions for research topics, corridor plans, and other areas of joint interest; and
- Work with local governments and other agencies to develop a plan for and jointly maintain rest stops and other traveler facilities in the State of Montana.

MDT has also joined efforts with other economic development agencies across the State at the corridor level. In northeastern Montana, for the *U.S. 2/MT 16 Transportation Regional Economic Development (TRED) Study*, the Great Northern Development Corporation was contracted to aid MDT as a local agent by participating in an expert panel that reviewed the study, identifying and briefing people with local and industry-specific expertise, and assisting with local public involvement activities. This and other joint efforts arose from MDT's recognition that growth in many rural parts of the State is industrially driven and thus,

appropriate consideration of economic, employment, and trade patterns should be represented in the transportation planning process.

Public Transportation and Consolidated Service Model

In Montana, public transportation services in rural areas and cities with populations under 50,000 are served by 33 urban and rural transit systems provided by health and human service organizations. Population trends suggest that the State's overall population growth will remain moderate in scale and uneven between the State's regions. Relatively high growth is expected in and around most of the State's larger cities and in the high amenity areas in the western part of the State. Low-to-negative population growth has been the prevailing pattern in the eastern part of the State. It is also projected that the aged population will grow faster than that in the U.S. as a whole. These factors are examples of economic development, human environment, and community development factors that are contributing to the growing importance of public transportation in Montana.

The State of Montana received a substantial increase in the FTA Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Funds in SAFETEA-LU. Section 5311 funds can be used for planning, capital, operating, and administration assistance in nonurbanized areas with populations of less than 50,000. The State of Montana does not provide matching funds for Federal transit funds. However, local transit providers can use Federal Health and Human Services funds that are already being spent in their communities to match the FTA funds. In light of these conditions, MDT requires that, wherever possible, Section 5311 applicants not only coordinate, but also develop a consolidated service model. This effort to consolidate services is unique to Montana. Various other states (e.g., New Mexico and Arizona) are trying to develop similar programs to consolidate rural transit services. Methods for consolidation include contracts or MOUs at a local level. Developing consolidated services allow transit operators to aggregate and leverage their funding to create more efficient and effective transit systems, increasing accessibility to public transportation throughout Montana.

4.3 REVIEW OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GROWTH PLANS

SAFETEA-LU requires that the statewide transportation planning processes promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns. A review of local and regional growth plans was conducted to assess the level of consideration given to these factors in existing planning processes.

MDT staff responsible for implementing elements of *TranPlan 21* and associated tools (HEAT, Corridor Planning Process) related to economic development and land use provided detailed land use and socioeconomic information for all regions of the State. Based on this information, regions of the State were selected

to provide a representative diversity of land use and development trends across the State. The selected regions highlight the variability of economic and population trends and different levels of local planning for planned growth and economic development in Montana. Policies were also selected to reflect differences between urban and rural planning processes. The following policies were included in this review:

- The City of Bozeman and Gallatin County, which represents a high-growth urban area in western Montana. The *Bozeman 2020 Community Plan*, *Gallatin County Growth Policy*, and *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Gallatin and Park Counties for the Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D Area* were included in this review.
- Ravalli County, which represents a high-amenity, high-growth area in western Montana. The *Ravalli County Growth Policy* was included in this review.
- Great Falls and Billings, which represent moderately-paced growth, metropolitan areas. The *Great Falls Growth Policy* and *Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2003 Growth Policy Plan* were included in this review.
- The Bear Paw Economic Development District includes Blaine, Chouteau, Hill, Liberty, and Phillips Counties, as well as the Fort Belknap and Rocky Boy's Indian Reservations. This region is representative of the pattern of slow and negative growth seen in much of eastern and northeastern Montana. The *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* for this region was included in this review.

As shown in Table 4.1, the local and regional growth policies reviewed vary in the detail and direction associated with transportation and economic and land use growth. Of the policies reviewed, only those of Great Falls and Bozeman include discussions about the relationship between transportation and land use, and only Great Falls incorporates this relationship into the goals and actions of the plan's growth policy. Although one of the guiding principles in the Bozeman policy is related to this topic, the linkage is not reflected in the resulting goals and actions. The two CEDS plans reviewed include very little discussion about transportation that is limited to accessibility as a strength or weakness. The rural or fringe area policies generally include less detail about the transportation system and weaker connections between transportation and land use than those documented for urban policies.

Table 4.1 Review of Local and Regional Growth Policies

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/Policies/Objectives/Actions
Bear Paw Economic Development District	*Bearpaw Development Corporation of Northern Montana Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, 2006 Update	Perceived threats to the economy of the district: • Public transportation; • Lack of transportation infrastructure or infrastructure maintenance; and • Transportation costs.	Strategic Direction – To ensure access to affordable, accessible, and convenient transportation for low-income individuals.	• Goal III – Maintain and enhance the physical infrastructure of the district. – Item 19: Bear Paw staff will continue to provide project planning assistance and program administration of the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) for eight 8) of its member governments... • Goal VI – Continually provide economic development planning services to District members. – Item 7: Bear Paw staff will facilitate the development and updating of a Transit Coordination Plan (TCP) for the Liberty County Council on Ageing, which is Liberty County's only provider of public transportation service….
Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D	*Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Gallatin and Park Counties*, spring 2006	• Description of existing transportation system. • Access to transportation routes included as an area strength.	N/A	N/A
Gallatin County	*Gallatin County Growth Policy*, April 2003	• Public Services – Roadway Maintenance.	N/A	• Mobility and Circulation Goal 1 – Provide a Safe and Efficient Transportation System.
Ravalli County	*Ravalli County Growth Policy*, amended August 2004	• Public Facilities and Services: – Roads and Bridges classification and maintenance; – Financial contribution; – Ravalli County TAC; – Five-year long-range plan; and, – Transit service providers. • Transportation included as a potential factor impacting natural resources.	N/A	N/A

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/Policies/Objectives/Actions
Yellowstone County/City of Billings	*Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2003 Growth Policy Plan*, 2003	• Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • Existing Transportation Plan and 1995 BikeNet Plan referenced. • Discussion of TSM Management Strategies. • Discussion on Rural Transportation and Air Quality.	N/A	The following goals and associated objectives relate to the transportation system: • Safe traffic speeds consistent with the surrounding uses; • Safe and efficient traffic circulation around and through the City; • Lack of adequate traffic control; • Visually appealing rights-of-way that serve the needs of all users; • A safe and efficient transportation system characterized by convenient connections and steady traffic flow; • City streets and county roads maintained at safe standards; • Rational consideration of all city neighborhoods and county town sites when allocating transportation improvement funds; • Reduced traffic congestion in Billings; • Well maintained network of safe and interconnected sidewalks; • Increased circulation connections for improved traffic flow; and • Improve quality of County subdivision roads.
Bozeman	*Bozeman 2020 Community Plan*, October 2001	• Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • In depth discussion on the linkages between transportation and land use. • Existing Transportation Plan referenced. • Discussion of TDM Strategies. • Assessment of future capacity and demand.	Guiding Principle – This community plan is designed to realize interrelated goals for land use, housing, transportation, air quality, and other areas.	• Goal 10.8.1 Transportation System – Maintain and enhance the functionality to the transportation system. • Goal 10.8.2 – Ensure that a variety of travel options exist which allow safe, logical, and balanced transportation choices. • Goal 10.8.3 – Encourage transportation options that reduce resource consumption, increase social interaction, support safe neighborhoods, and increase the ability of the existing transportation facilities to accommodate a growing city. • 10.8.4 Pathways – Establish and maintain an integrated system of transportation and recreational pathways, including bicycle and pedestrian trails, neighborhood parks, green belts, and open space.

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/Policies/Objectives/Actions
Great Falls	*Great Falls Growth Policy: A Greater Great Falls – Plan on It!*, adopted June 2005	• Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • Discussion of the linkages between transportation and land use. • Existing Transportation Plan referenced. • TSM & TDM Strategies. • Discussion of freight and safety issues.	The residents of the Great Falls area desire a safe, efficient transportation system that includes all types of motorized and nonmotorized transportation modes and facilities.	The following goals are intended to reflect the community "vision": • Provide a safe, efficient, accessible, and cost-effective transportation system that offers viable choices for moving people and goods throughout the community; • Make transit and nonmotorized modes of transportation viable alternatives to the private automobile for travel in and around the community; and • Provide an open public involvement process in the development of the transportation system and in the implementation of transportation improvements to assure that community standards and values, such as aesthetics and neighborhood protection, are incorporated.

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., June 2007.

As part of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, MDT met with representatives from MEDA and the MDOC to discuss interagency coordination. As part of this discussion, it was proposed that MDT assemble a toolkit of analysis techniques applicable to regional and local planning, and provide support for local governments about transportation requirements in the land development process. To further facilitate consistency in the incorporation of transportation in long-range land use and economic development planning, when resources permit, MDT will provide guidance on land use and transportation linkages; and work with local and regional agencies to incorporate this relationship into goals, policies, and actions.

4.4 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

Existing MDT actions and components of 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. The following amendments were made to better reflect changes in existing conditions since the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21*, and to strengthen MDT compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

Roadway System Performance

The following policy goal in the Roadway System Performance element was amended to reflect current and future funding constraints:

- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana within available resources.

In addition, the supporting text for the following action item was modified to include the following:

- **Action B.6 –** Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.

  MDT will use this toolkit to guide incorporation of Context Sensitive Design elements into projects, as appropriate.

Economic Development

The following actions and/or supporting text were revised to include:

- **Action B.1 –** Specify strategic economic development transportation linkages based on emerging travel demands and findings in the Highway Reconfiguration Study.

  Until resources allow for specification of strategic transportation linkages for economic development, Montana's designated National Highway System is the core of this program.

- **Action B.2 –** Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network to prepare for the future of transportation need in Montana.

This action encourages the continued communication and coordination with leaders of growth industries and local governments. MDT will continue to participate in and support interagency working groups similar to that with MEDA and the MDOC, and use them as a continuous and cooperative forum for early identification of transportation system needs throughout the State.

- **Action B.3 –** Consider economic development in the evaluation for prioritizing and scoping highway reconstruction projects.

  MDT will use the Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT) to analyze relative economic benefits. Currently, when reconstruction projects are designed, they are designated as either "reconstruction" or "reconstruction with capacity." This and other models will also consider the economic efficiency of a well maintained strategic network. Projects designated as "reconstruction with capacity" should be able to demonstrate either a user cost savings or travel time reliability savings.

- **Action C.1 –** Continue to support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA), Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs), and the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC).

  The action item has been expanded to include not only the Governor's Office of Economic Development, but also MEDA, CRDCs, and MDOC.

- **Action C.2 –** Investigate establishing an economic opportunities program to help fund roadway projects that support business attraction and retention efforts.

  The supporting text was expanded to reflect current conditions. Additional information on programs in other states was also included.

- **Action C.3 –** Continue to coordinate with and provide support to local economic development initiatives.

  MDT will work to develop a "toolkit" of MDT processes for new development to local governments. The toolkit will include information on access management, site distance, and congestion processes and analysis tools for traffic studies. In conjunction, MDT will continue to provide transportation planning expertise and support in local economic development initiatives. Upon request, MDT will also work with local governments to provide workshops or training sessions on available transportation tools.

- **Action C.5 –** Consider the findings in the *Montana Air Service Opportunities and Challenges* in addressing the cost, frequency, and reliability for out-of-state air travel.

  This action and supporting text were updated to reflect completion and encourage consideration of elements contained in the *Montana Air Service Opportunities and Challenges* in February 2007.

Access Management

Access Management Action A.4 was revised to read:

- **Action A.4 –** Continue to use existing and seek out new interagency channels to communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.

  This action and supporting text revision addresses the need to continue to educate and provide support to regional and local planning agencies to encourage the incorporation of transportation planning policies and actions into their planning processes, and to ensure their consistency with statewide transportation plans. MDT will work with local governments to incorporate access management strategies into their transportation plans and permitting processes, preserving accessibility and mobility along arterial corridors.

Land Use Planning

The supporting text of the following action was amended to note the value of local jurisdiction input when identifying study areas for the corridor planning process:

- **Action A.2 –** Work with local jurisdictions in the early identification of urban and rural corridors under development pressure.

  MDT will also consider local jurisdiction input when selecting areas for study through the corridor planning process.

The supporting text of the following Land Use Planning action was revised to reflect development and inclusion of an environmental checklist into the System Impact Action Process:

- **Action B.2 –** Explore and develop tools to equitably distribute improvement costs on developing corridors, regardless of sequencing of the developments.

  Development and inclusion of an environmental checklist into the System Impact Action Process is a step in this direction.

Public Transportation

The following revisions to Public Transportation actions were made to reflect changes in policies and programs:

- **Action A.3 –** Transfer Urban Highway funds to transit at the request of local governments.

  This action has been updated to reflect current conditions. It is no longer necessary to provide STP funds on a regular basis due to the significant increase in FTA funding. However, urban areas with population of 5,000 or greater receive an annual allocation of STP-Urban funds and may choose to use it for transit improvements. MDT no longer uses Surface Transportation Program funds to provide a mechanism for making flexible funding available

to rural transit systems. This is in response to the 239% growth in rural general public transit funds made available in SAFETEA-LU. However, MDT continues to transfer Urban Highway funds to transit at the request of local governments.

- **Action A.5 –** Continue to assist communities to establish consolidated transit systems to meet future travel demands.

  In an effort to assist communities in leveraging available funding to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of their transit systems, MDT requires applicants for transit funding to submit consolidated transit plans. This encourages agencies to access and use Federal health and human services match funds and provides enhanced service quality for areas previously covered by overlapping providers. All providers must submit consolidated plans.

- **Action B.1 –** Promote the use of, and communicate the availability of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service.

  The text accommodating this action was revised to encourage local coordination and increased regional coordination of intercity and rural transit. Specifically, the text addresses leveraging existing interagency forums with economic development agencies, to develop such services.

- **Action B.2 –** Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE.

  A revision to this action has not been included at this time but should be considered to reflect recent legislation (SB160) allowing transit funds for use as Federal match. SB 160 provided for TransADE funds as an allowable source of matching funds for Federal Transit Administration funds. TransADE funds can now be used to match Federal funding available for intercity services.

- **Policy Goal C –** Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through facilitating interagency funding consolidation.

  MDT has increased its efforts on this policy goal from encouraging interagency coordination to requiring the development of interagency consolidated plans. These plans consolidate interagency funds to better leverage overlapping resources to improve service to the transportation disadvantaged.

- **Action C.1 –** Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding consolidation.

  Consolidation of local funds, rather than coordination, through contract agreements or MOUs/Memorandums of Agreement (MOA), allows local operating agencies to leverage available resources. Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs) provide local guidance for transit planning and although MDT does not have direct authority over TACs, these committees play an important role in developing cost-effective transit systems.

- **Action C.3 –** Continue to work with the Public Service Commission to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision (especially Medicaid transportation).

  The initial intent of this action item was achieved with the passing of HB 273 by the 2005 legislature, which removed barriers to entry. The intent of this revised action item is to ensure that similar or new obstacles do not arise.

- **Action D.3 –** Support the implementation of rural ridesharing.

  This action has not been revised. However, the accommodating text was amended to include the continued promotion of consolidated transit services and use of interagency forums to develop rural ridesharing programs.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

MDT has recently devoted resources to support the Safe Routes to School Program that is designed to encourage and enable more children to safely walk and bike to school, and to better address statewide bicycle and pedestrian programming for Kindergarten through Grade 8 children. The following revisions to Bicycle and Pedestrian actions were made to incorporate elements of the Safe Routes to School Program, and to reflect changes in MDT policies:

- **Action A.6 –** Encourage the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian safety efforts in the vicinity of K-8 schools through the Safe Routes to School Program.

  The Safe Routes to School Program supports infrastructure and behavioral projects that encourage bicycle and pedestrian projects in the vicinity of schools. The intent of this action is to encourage use of not only infrastructure improvements, but educational, encouragement, and enforcement programs in schools and communities to increase awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety.

- **Action B.4 –** Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montana through incorporation in existing projects.

  The language following Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Action B.4 should be amended to reflect changes since the implementation of the Safe Routes to School Program. Specifically, as a result of implementing the selected Safe Routes to School Projects, MDT has increased its coordination with local communities. MDT also encourages coordination with CTEP bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts.

5.0 New Consultations

SAFETEA-LU requires states to consider the concerns of Federal, state, and tribal agencies in the transportation planning process. In the development of statewide long-range transportation plans, the State's level of interagency involvement should include consultation with regional agencies, and Federal, state, and tribal planning agencies. To meet this requirement, MDT conducted New Consultations as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. SAFETEA-LU requirements and elements of the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* that highlight interagency efforts are presented in this section. An overview of other MDT efforts and a summary of the New Consultations process and review of other agency plans, which was conducted for the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, are also presented. The resulting policy statements presented below were developed in consideration of existing MDT efforts and information obtained through this New Consultations effort.

5.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU revises the previous planning factor, requiring state and MPOs to develop long-range transportation plans in consultation with other agencies. The following definitions are included in the 23 CFR 450.104:

- **Consideration** means that one or more parties takes into account the opinions, action, and relevant information from other parties in making a decision or determining a course of action;
- **Cooperation** means that the parties involved in carrying out the transportation planning and programming processes work together to achieve a common goal or objective; and
- **Coordination** means the cooperative development of plans, programs, and schedules among agencies and entities with legal standing and adjustment of such plans, programs, and schedules to achieve general consistency, as appropriate.

The definition of "consultation" provided in the 23 CFR Section 450.104 does not apply to the new requirement in SAFETEA-LU regarding "consultation" performed by the states in comparing the long-range transportation plan to state and tribal conservation plans, maps, or inventories of natural or historic resources. This is defined by the 23 CFR Section 450.214(i) as provided below.

SAFETEA-LU expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring interagency consultations in the transportation planning process, which previously considered nonmetropolitan consultations. The following sections of the 23 CFR pertain to interagency consideration, cooperation, and consultation:

- **23 CFR Section 450.208(a) –** In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, each state shall, at a minimum: 3) consider the concerns of Federal land management agencies that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the state; 4) consider the concerns of local elected and appointed officials with responsibilities for transportation in nonmetropolitan areas; 5) consider the concerns of Indian tribal governments that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the state; and 6) consider related planning activities being conducted outside of metropolitan planning areas and between states;
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(f) –** Within each metropolitan area of the state, the long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed in cooperation with the affected MPOs.
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(g) –** For nonmetropolitan areas, the long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed in consultation with affected nonmetropolitan officials with responsibility for transportation using the state's consultation process(es) established under Section 450.210(b).
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(h) –** For each area of the state under the jurisdiction of an Indian Tribal government, the long-range transportation plan shall be developed in consultation with the Tribal government and the Secretary of the Interior consistent with § 450.210(c).
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(i) –** The long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed, as appropriate, in consultation with state, tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. This consultation shall involve comparison of transportation plans to state and tribal conservation plans or maps, if available, and comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

5.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MDT ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

Policy goals and actions in the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* direct MDT towards working and coordinating with other Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies in the plan's development. These goals and actions, by element, are presented below.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal A –** Establish explicit priorities for roadway improvements.
  - First priority – Preservation of Montana's Existing Highway System,
  - Second priority – Capacity Expansion and Mobility Improvements, and
  - Third priority – Other Improvements;

- **Action A.2 –** Provide and disseminate transportation system performance information;
- **Action A.4 –** Assist local jurisdictions to improve their pavement management practices and to support their use of pavement management systems;
- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve Mobility for people and industry in Montana;
- **Action B.4 –** Inform local planning and development officials of the State's desire to preserve key transportation corridors, encourage and assist local jurisdictions to address right-of-way preservation in local land use plans, access management programs, and to support MDT objectives for these transportation corridors;
- **Policy Goal C –** Improve the productivity of the roadway system; and
- **Action C.3 –** Encourage the MPO areas to include enhanced traffic control and management systems in their long-range plans.

Economic Development

- **Policy Goal A –** Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana's export-oriented ("basic") industries to access regional, national, and international markets;
- **Action A.6 –** Provide technical support to Montana communities and airport operators to preserve the Federal Essential Air Service Program in cooperation with the Governor's Task Force;
- **Policy Goal B –** Monitor and address capacity needs arising from Montana's economic growth trends;
- **Action B.2 –** Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network;
- **Policy Goal C –** Support state and local economic development initiatives to maximize new economic opportunities;
- **Action C.1 –** Support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity;
- **Action C.2 –** Establish an economic opportunities to help fund roadway projects that support business attraction and retention efforts;
- **Action C.3 –** Coordinate with and provide support to local economic development initiatives;
- **Policy Goal D –** Support the tourism industry through promoting access to recreational, historic, cultural, and scenic destinations;
- **Action D.3 –** Coordinate with Federal agencies, tribal governments, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces;

- **Policy Goal E –** Develop MDT's organizational capacity to support economic development; and
- **Action E.5 –** Provide technical support and information so that economic development needs are considered in MPO planning, MDT corridor planning, and project development.

Land Use Planning

- **Policy Goal A –** Provide technical support and leadership to encourage local jurisdictions to support transportation corridor preservation and management through their land use planning and development permitting authority;
- **Action A.1 –** Work with local jurisdictions to create a "toolkit" of actions that they can take to support corridor preservation through their development review and land use planning authority;
- **Action A.2 –** Work with local jurisdictions in the early identification of urban and rural corridors under development pressure;
- **Action A.3 –** Continue to support local government transportation planning activities and ensure new urban areas have transportation plans to guide system development;
- **Action A.4 –** Maintain MDT's capability to provide land-use driven travel demand forecasting for MPOs;
- **Policy Goal B –** Consistently apply MDT's System Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system;
- **Action B.1 –** Provide technical support to local governments in developing funding partnerships to accelerate project development; and
- **Action B.3 –** Provide training and support on application of access management and SIAP to local governments and MDT staff;

Traveler Safety

- **Policy Goal B –** Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety;
- **Action B.1 –** Establish and maintain high-level statewide interagency coordination to improve traveler safety and develop an agenda for action; and
- **Action B.2 –** Provide leadership and support to implement the results of Action B.1.

Public Transportation

- **Policy Goal A –** Promote and support increased use of public transportation systems;

- **Action A.1 –** Support local promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities;
- **Action A.2 –** Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs;
- **Action A.4 –** Coordinate state planning, urban area and transit system development planning and management;
- **Action A.5 –** Assist communities to establish transit systems to meet future travel demands;
- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve existing intercity public transportation service, and encourage/facilitate the development of new services;
- **Action B.1 –** Promote the use and communicate the availability of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service;
- **Action B.2 –** Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE;
- **Action B.3 –** Work to improve intermodal passenger facilities;
- **Policy Goal C –** Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through interagency coordination;
- **Action C.1 –** Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding coordination;
- **Policy Goal D –** Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana;
- **Action D.1 –** Continue to work with MPOs and urban areas to include demand-side strategies in their plans; and
- **Action D.2 –** Work with other state agencies to develop a transportation demand management program for state government.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

- **Policy Goal A –** Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes;
- **Action A.2 –** Work with MDOC to maintain bicycle-related tourist guides and information;
- **Action A.3 –** Assist other units of government to provide transportation facilities that encourage or consider use by bicycles and pedestrians;
- **Policy Goal B –** Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for differences in current and future use; and
- **Action B.1 –** Identify the most significant bicycle routes designated through MPO and urban area plans and selected rural "touring routes" with the

greatest demand or potential demand as the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.

Other MDT Actions

In addition to the Corridor Planning Process presented in Section 2.0, MDT has designed and implemented a variety of other tools and committees to support New Consultations, including the Biennial Stakeholder Survey and the MEDA Working Group. MDT also uses existing processes with both the MPOs and nonmetropolitan local officials in the planning process. Each is presented below.

Biennial Stakeholder Survey

In addition to this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, MDT manages a continuing *TranPlan 21* public and stakeholder involvement process that periodically seeks input from resource agencies (local, state and Federal), Native American Tribes, and other interests through the biennial *TranPlan 21 Stakeholder Survey*. This survey includes separate survey categories for city and county officials, so MDT can identify issues and concerns of each group. In addition to asking for opinions on a variety of transportation system issues, including the statewide planning process, the survey includes an open-ended opportunity for each recipient to comment on issues of concern to them. MDT provides the survey results, including the comments, to MDT administrators, the transportation commission, and other transportation decision-makers.

MEDA Working Group

MEDA is an association of economic development professionals, consisting of members and employees of the private and public sectors. MEDA promotes and fosters economic development activities in the State of Montana. MDT has established an ongoing cooperative relationship with MEDA and its primary state partner, MDOC, to facilitate interagency involvement through conferences, meetings, mailings, and regular communication. As part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, MDT met with the MEDA Transportation Group and MDOC to discuss plan amendments and further coordination between the groups. This working group provides MDT with an opportunity to share information with and solicit ideas from local and state agencies. Key items from this meeting included the following:

- Continue regular meeting of the MEDA/MDOC/MDT Working Group to share information and offer forums for new ideas;
- Explore opportunities to use other economic development or local government groups, such as the CRDCs, as a channel for regional economic-and land use-oriented outreach activities;
- Provide resources to and work with local officials through meetings and workshops to increase knowledge of transportation system needs and

requirements using portfolios of current and expected future transportation system characteristics, impacts, and statistics;

- Provide training, analysis tools, or technical support to help local governments meet these requirements;
- Solicit local governments for and consider and evaluate their suggestions for research topics, corridor plans, and other areas of joint interest; and
- Work with local governments and other agencies to develop a plan for and jointly maintain rest stops and other traveler facilities in the State of Montana.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

As part of this limited amendment, a review of existing MPO long-range transportation plans was conducted for compliance with SAFETEA-LU MPO requirements. The detailed information for this review is presented later in Section 11.0. The following plans for the three MPOs in Montana were reviewed:

- *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*,
- *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, and
- *Missoula 2004 Transportation Plan*.

In addition, MPO representatives have been informed of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, and were provided with the opportunity to cooperate in the limited amendment process. MPOs participated in initial discussions of the limited amendment's purpose, participated in detailed discussions with MDT about their current and expected future long-range transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) processes, and reviewed and commented on the draft reports and associated material being produced as part of this planning process.

Nonmetropolitan Local Officials

MDT has a documented, formal process for consultation with nonmetropolitan local officials on transportation planning and programming issues, as required by Section 135 of 23 U.S.C. and 23 CFR Section 450.214(h). Although the process is separate from MDT's statewide public involvement process, the two processes complement and support each other. Montana's process is designed around three key goals:

1. **Inclusive –** The process provides Montana's local elected and appointed officials with multiple opportunities to participate in MDT planning and programming processes;
2. **Flexible –** Rather than a rigid one-size-fits-all approach, the process takes advantage of Montana's small population and accessible government by encouraging direct communication and customized issue-specific processes; and

3. **Cost-effective –** The process takes advantage of technology and is coordinated with existing processes, wherever possible, to ensure a cost-effective service to Montana's citizens.

5.3 NEW CONSULTATIONS

SAFETEA-LU requires that the statewide transportation plan be developed in consultation with state, tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. As part of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, a New Consultation process consisting of outreach interviews to land management agencies, including tribal governments and a review of available plans, was conducted. This New Consultation process adds to and builds upon the ongoing corridor planning consultations implemented by MDT.

Summary of Agency Interviews

Interviews were conducted with representatives from Federal and state resource agencies. The representatives were provided with information about the *TranPlan 21*, and engaged in discussions about existing and expected future interagency efforts, as well as appropriate plans, maps, or other resources to include during the review process. MDT has initiated numerous corridor studies throughout the State of Montana. During the development of these studies, MDT has coordinated with resource agencies. The feedback we are receiving indicates that the resource agencies consider this coordination beneficial. Various agencies have indicated that early consultation and coordination may have large benefits as projects move from the corridor planning stage into the environmental process. This consultation and coordination allow resource agencies to bring forward areas of concern, thus allowing for consideration during the environmental process.

Federal Agencies

U.S. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) – In response to MDT's outreach efforts, ACHP responded with a letter indicating that meeting attendance or provision of formal comments is not expected at this time in support of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21.* ACHP retains the right to become involved in the review in the future; if it is determined that involvement is warranted.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Historically, interagency actions between MDT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) occur primarily at the project level. USACE indicated that MDT's submission of preliminary documents for review, which allows the USACE to provide comment prior to submittal of a permit application and enables MDT to take these comments under consideration during the design process, was valuable to both parties. When resources

permit, USACE will continue to review such submittals and respond in a meaningful way to the MDT.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Montana Rural Development Office – MDT did not receive a response to outreach efforts made to the U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of this limited amendment.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – MDT and the BIA are subject to the same transportation planning regulations provided under the 23 CFR. Although divisions of the BIA are not required to produce transportation plans, they provide support to tribal governments in the development of long-range transportation plans and financially-constrained TIPs. Formal interagency actions between the BIA and MDT include the following:

- MDT maintenance of state facilities between reservation boundaries, established by a Letter of Acknowledgment provided to the BIA.
- MOAs established for CTEP projects on a project-by-project basis.
- Section 132 Transfers, which allow MDT to transfer money to BIA to build roads. Section 638 Transfers, which allow the BIA to do the work for tribes, and upon completion, the tribes can assume a portion or entire program and enter into self determination agreements/contracts to do the work.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Interaction between MDT and the BLM generally occurs during the project-level permitting process. MDT will submit a 710 Letter informing the BLM field office about projects that may require permits due to right-of-way, special mitigations, or critical river area concerns. Upon receipt, the BLM will comment and, if needed, work with MDT to minimize concerns and obtain the necessary permits and authorizations to proceed. Formal, policy-level agreements between the agencies do not exist at this time. Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are produced by BLM field offices. RMPs analyze actions taken in an environmental impact statement (EIS), and outline management of surface and subsurface lands. The BLM is in the process of updating RMPs in the State of Montana.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) – The State of Montana includes two BOR regions: the Great Plains Region and Upper Columbia Region. If a project involves BOR facilities, MDT will contact the BOR to conduct an engineering review and approve designs, which may involve special use permits. If it is determined that a project affects operations and maintenance activities, the BOR will direct MDT to work with local irrigation districts handling those activities.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and Yellowstone National Park – Formal agreements do not exist between Yellowstone National Park and MDT, but it is expected that the highway patrol, county, and park work together on an ongoing basis. Examples of current efforts are roadway maintenance on the Beartooth Highway and Highway 191. Another example is E-Blast,

an information sharing program providing weekly road updates illustrating delays and closures in the Yellowstone National Park region.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Glacier National Park (GLAC) – MDT and GLAC are currently engaged in several joint efforts. The 511 system is the first Cooperative Agreement partnership between MDT and GLAC. Through this agreement, Glacier National Park road information is added to MT-511, allowing visitors to obtain roadway information from a single source. A Transit Cooperative Agreement also is in negotiation between MDT, Glacier National Park, and Flathead County. This agreement would allow GLAC transit buses to be used by other agencies during the off-season.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Under NEPA and Section 309, the EPA has the authority to comment on MDT projects. Project-level interaction between the agencies begins with publication of a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register for an EIS. MDT often notifies the EPA of upcoming projects prior to publication of the NOI. The EPA provides comments during the scoping and EIS or Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – A representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been dedicated exclusively to MDT and works with MDT to identify impacts and associated mitigation measures. In addition to this project-level impacts assessment, the agencies have joined together in mapping efforts addressing heritage programs and connectivity. Other joint planning efforts, such as the Swan Valley Grizzly Bear Conservation, tend to be site specific. MDT participates in the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) and Interagency Review Team (IRT) efforts.

U.S. Forest Service – The U.S. Forest Service 2005 planning rule, moving from project-level to policy-level planning, has not yet been implemented due to legal challenges. As a result, programmatic forest plans have not been updated to the policy-level format. The Forest Service expressed the desire to coordinate with MDT on a strategic, programmatic basis to address the following items:

- Loss of open space,
- Recreation and tourism,
- Wildlife habitat connectivity,
- Aquatic species connectivity, and
- Invasive species spreading due to transportation.

State Agencies

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – The DEQ is considered a cooperating agency under Federal legislation, and will provide comment on MDT projects. Conceptual plans and designs for MDT projects are provided to the DEQ for review. After review, the DEQ provides comments and, if needed, guidance to obtain permits.

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks – At this time, MDT and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks interact at the project level. There is a national policy shift for fish and wildlife managers to manage comprehensively in order to prevent additional listings of species under the endangered species act. Comprehensive strategies have been prepared and approved for all 50 states that identify species and habitats in critical need of conservation in order to curb their decline and prevent listing. A potential interagency action arising from this effort considers the use of MDT project mitigation dollars by Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for matching Federal money.

Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) – Interaction between MDT and DNRC occurs primarily if a need for easements arises at the project level. DNRC also has the ability to assist in nontrust lands.

Montana Historical Society – The Historic Roads and Bridges Agreement between MDT and the Montana Historical Society was developed in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. This agreement encourages rehabilitation rather than rebuilding of certain historic structures. Other potential areas of interagency efforts include rest areas and roadway signage.

Plan Review

Federal, state, regional, and tribal agency long-range and regional transportation plans were reviewed as part of the New Consultations process for the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. The plans were identified by agency representatives during the interview process. The depth with which transportation is addressed in each plan varies by agency. Some agencies, such as the DEQ or the DNRC, include transportation-related actions. Others, such as the BLM, are limited in discussion of transportation issues. During this review of other agency plans, MDT found passages in which the level of involvement differed from the level initially committed. This could be resolved by ensuring that MDT be considered a reviewing agency during the development of a plan and notified of plans prior to their finalization. As shown below, the agency plans and documents were reviewed as part of the New Consultations process for the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*.

Federal Agency Plans and Documents

U.S. BLM

- *U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Land Use Planning Handbook*, March 2005; and
- *Record of Decision and Dillon Resource Management Plan*, February 2006.

U.S. EPA:

- *Draft Measures to Reduce Environmental Impact of Highway Projects.*

U.S. Forest Service:

- *Draft Roles and Responsibilities for Highway Project Coordination*;
- *Draft Implications and Opportunities of SAFETEA-LU Section 6001: Integrated Transportation and Conservation Planning*; and
- *Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and United States Department of Transportation Federal Highways Administration Regarding the Appropriate and Transfer of National Forest System Lands for Highway Purposes*, August 1998.

Glacier National Park:

- *Glacier National Park Commercial Services Plan*, January 2005;
- *Glacier National Park General Management Plan*, July 1999; and
- *Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) – Visitor Information Products Outside the Park* (Draft).

Yellowstone National Park:

- *Yellowstone National Park Parkwide Road Improvement Plan Environmental Assessment*, February 1992.

State Agency Plans and Documents

Montana DEQ:

- *Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan Public Review Draft,* April 2007.

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks:

- *Strategic Plans Fiscal Year 2008-2009*;
- *Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2005*; and
- *Implementation Planning Process for Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2005-2011*.

Montana DNRC:

- *Real Estate Management Programmatic Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement*, July 2005; and
- *Memorandum of Understanding between Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)*, January 1997.

Montana Historical Society:

- *Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2003-2007*; and
- *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Montana Department of Transportation, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and*

the Montana State Historic Preservation Office Regarding Historic Roads and Bridges Affected by Montana Department of Transportation Undertakings in Montana.

Tribal Long-Range Transportation Plans

MOUs are established between MDT and each of the Tribal governments. These MOUs allow construction of MDT projects on their reservations. In addition, the following long-range transportation plans were reviewed:

- *Blackfeet Indian Nation Transportation Planning Study*, March 2006;
- *Chippewa-Cree Tribes of the Rocky Boy's Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006;
- *Crow Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006;
- *Northern Cheyenne Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report, February 2006*; and
- *Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation Long Range Transportation Plan Final Report*, February 2006.

5.4 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

One of the major findings of the New Consultations was the need for continuous interagency involvement throughout the planning process. Existing MDT actions and components of *TranPlan 21* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU interagency consideration requirements. The following amendments were made to encourage continuation of the interagency involvement process.

Roadway System Performance

The following actions were added:

- **Action A.5 –** Investigate the potential use of advanced mitigation opportunities such as applying already committed MDT mitigation funds as Federal matching funds for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

  This action involves MDT investigation of alternative mitigation opportunities. One such example is the possibility of applying funds spent by MDT for mitigation efforts as Federal matching funds.

- **Action B.7 –** Continue to use the corridor planning process to consult with resource agencies in identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures.

  This action involves continued implementation of the corridor planning process which has proved effective as a form of consultation with resource agencies in the pre-NEPA/MEPA process identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures. Discussions

with resource agencies demonstrated that the corridor-level, rather than the policy or project level, is most appropriate for environmental mitigation discussions and analysis. The corridor planning process currently in place provides a way for resource agencies to assist in the scoping process for projects to advance from corridor studies to the NEPA/MEPA process.

The supporting text for the following actions was revised to include the following:

- **Action A.2 –** Provide and disseminate transportation system performance information.

  MDT maintains a GIS database of roadway systems information and, upon request, will provide data and support to the efforts of other agencies. Shared data provided to MDT directly or through NRIS provides a means for consideration of other agency issues through the planning process. In turn, MDT provision of its resources supports and reciprocates these efforts. MDT will continue to make this data available to other agencies for their consideration.

- **Action C.2 –** Identify and deploy cost-effective ITS applications to improve safety and system productivity.

  MDT and Glacier National Park are currently working together to maintain a comprehensive 511-service for travelers. When appropriate, MDT will continue to seek and pursue opportunities to work with other agencies to further ITS applications.

Economic Development

The following actions or supporting text were revised to read:

- **Action B.2 –** Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network.

  This action can be accomplished through dialogue with leaders of growth industries to determine their needs and obtain input on strategies to address them. The action also includes working with local entities to identify deficiencies in the strategic transportation system. These efforts would be further supported through technical analysis to forecast travel demand on the network. The deficiencies could be addressed through construction, advocacy, or policy changes. The action would be coordinated with local economic development organizations, MPOs, and local jurisdictions.

- **Action C.1 –** Continue to support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor's Office of Economic Development, MEDA, CRDCs, and MDOC.

  The supporting text was expanded to include, not only the Governor's Office of Economic Development, but also MEDA, CRDCs, and the DOC.

- **Action D.3 –** Coordinate with Federal agencies, tribal governments, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces.

This action involves continued coordination with the appropriate Federal, state, tribal, and other agencies that develop and manage resources in Montana. The activities of these agencies can affect travel throughout Montana, and sometime generate special transportation needs. Coordinated actions include efforts to promote tourism with the National Park Service, Montana Historic Preservation Office, and MEDA through activities, such as expanded Transit 511 service, historic roadway and bridges signage, and rest area improvements. Continuation and expansion of coordinated efforts, resources permitting, will allow MDT to coordinate its planning and investment decisions with such activities.

- **Action E.7 –** Designate an MDT point of contact for the Economic Development community that will receive and disseminate information from or to other agencies.

  This action would designate a position or point of contact within MDT to receive information from and disseminate information to other agencies involved with economic development initiatives. The point of contact would ensure that interagency resources reach the appropriate divisions within MDT.

Access Management

The following policy goal supporting text and action were revised:

- **Policy Goal A –** Improve corridor-level access management to preserve the highway system.

  The primary purpose of this policy is to maintain the functional integrity and safety of the highway system through access management and corridor preservation. The tools available for access management are the acquisition of access rights, the consistent application of approach standards, the establishment of limited access facilities, the issuance of approach permits, and coordination with local jurisdictions. The consideration of access management issues in corridor plans and local transportation plans also serve as important tools in meeting this policy goal.

- **Action A.4 –** Continue to use existing and seem out new interagency channels to communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.

  This action and supporting text revision addresses the need to continue to educate and provide support to regional and local planning agencies to encourage the incorporation of transportation planning policies and actions into their planning processes and to ensure their consistency with statewide transportation plans. MDT will work with local governments to incorporate access management strategies into their transportation plans and permitting processes, preserving accessibility and mobility along arterial corridor.

The following actions were added:

Land Use Planning

- **Action A.5 –** Provide support and respond to requests for review and information from local agencies in a timely manner, while encouraging them to reciprocate.

  The intent of this action is for MDT to assist local agencies in their efforts and respond to their requests in a timely manner, encouraging development of interagency coordination when possible.

Traveler Safety

- **Action B.1 –** Use the established Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) and high-level statewide inter-agency coordination and partnering process to measure transportation system safety performance, identify and prioritize safety strategies, and provide actions for integration with statewide transportation planning.

  In addition to use of the Interagency Coordinating Council, MDT will continue joint efforts with the National Park Service at Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, and efforts undertaken with the Montana Historic Preservation Office to provide and maintain facilities and real-time information to travelers throughout the State.

The supporting text for the following actions was revised to include:

Public Transportation

- **Action A.1 –** Support local promotional/education programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.

  This action includes MDT coordination with and support of local efforts to publicize the availability of public transportation and encourages its use.

- **Action A.2 –** Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.

  When applicable, MDT will coordinate with local entities to ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.

- **Action A.4 –** Coordinate state planning, and urban area and transit system development planning and management.

  Where applicable, efforts should also be made to coordinate with local transit systems planning and management.

6.0 Environmental Mitigation

SAFETEA-LU requires that state long-range transportation plans include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan. This section presents SAFETEA-LU requirements; elements of *TranPlan 21* which are already geared towards establishing policy-level environmental mitigation measures; and a summary of recommended policy statements for inclusion as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* to meet the Federal requirements.

6.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU revises the previous planning factor, requiring states and MPOs to develop long-range transportation plans in consultation with other agencies. The following definitions are included in the 23 CFR 450.104:

- **Consultation** means that one or more parties confer with other identified parties in accordance with an established process and, prior to taking action(s), considers the views of the other parties and periodically informs them about action(s) taken. This definition does not apply to the ''consultation'' performed by the states and the MPOs in comparing the long-range statewide transportation plan and the metropolitan transportation plan, respectively, to state and tribal conservation plans or maps or inventories of natural or historic resources (See Section 450.214(i) and Section 450.322(g)(1) and (g)(2).).
- **Environmental mitigation activities** means strategies, policies, programs, actions, and activities that, over time, will serve to avoid, minimize, or compensate for (by replacing or providing substitute resources) the impacts to or disruption of elements of the human and natural environment associated with the implementation of a long-range statewide transportation plan or metropolitan transportation plan. The human and natural environment includes, for example, neighborhoods and communities, homes and businesses, cultural resources, parks and recreation areas, wetlands and water sources, forested and other natural areas, agricultural areas, endangered and threatened species, and the ambient air. The environmental mitigation strategies and activities are intended to be regional in scope, and may not necessarily address potential project-level impacts.

The following section of the 23 CFR addresses environmental mitigation in the statewide long-range transportation plan:

- **23 CFR Section 450.214(j) –** A long-range statewide transportation plan shall include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the long-range statewide transportation plan. The discussion may focus on policies, programs, or strategies, rather than at the project level. The discussion shall be developed in consultation with Federal, state, and tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies. The state may establish reasonable timeframes for performing this consultation.

6.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MDT ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

TranPlan 21 includes policy goals and actions that relate to processes promoting discussion and early identification of environmental impacts and mitigation activities. These goals and actions, by element, are presented below.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana; and
- **Action B.6 –** Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.

Land Use Planning

All actions associated with the land use planning policy goals presented below also pertain to environmental mitigation, but are not listed individually.

- **Policy Goal B –** Consistently apply MDT's Systems Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system.

Other MDT Actions

TranPlan 21 includes many goals and actions about the corridor planning process and the SIAP (refer to Section 2.0). One advantage to MDT's corridor planning process is the early elimination of alternatives prior to entering the NEPA/ MEPA process, reducing the cost, and speeding the delivery of the environmental planning process. In the Great Falls South Arterial Corridor Study, the Quantum software package, which allows for faster run-times and graphical displays of alternatives, is being applied by MDT to provide an understanding of environmental constraints, issues, and screening of environmentally-sensitive corridor alignments. The SIAP provides a coordinated review for projects initiated outside of MDT, which may substantially impact the state transportation

system. Through its use of the corridor planning process and the SIAP in conjunction with available tools such as HEAT, MDT meets the SAFETEA-LU requirement regarding environmental mitigation.

6.3 NEW CONSULTATIONS

While conducting New Consultations, agencies were asked to provide feedback on the existing MDT environmental mitigation process and given a chance to provide input or suggestions on additional policy-level measures for inclusion in *TranPlan 21*. MDT asked representatives from the following Federal agencies to provide input about environmental mitigation:

- USACE;
- U.S. Department of the Interior, BIA;
- U.S. Department of the Interior, BLM;
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR);
- U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park;
- U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, GLAC;
- U.S. EPA;
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and
- U.S. Forest Service.

MDT also asked representatives from the following state agencies to provide input about environmental mitigation:

- Montana DEQ;
- Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks;
- Montana DNRC; and
- Montana Historical Society.

MDT also contacted and asked representatives from the seven tribal governments for input about environmental mitigation:

1. Blackfeet Nation;
2. Crow Nation;
3. Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes;
4. Ft. Belknap Reservation;
5. Fort Peck Reservation;

6. Northern Cheyenne Reservation; and
7. Rocky Boys Reservation.

In general, the above agency representatives reported that existing processes for environmental impact identification and mitigation work well in Montana. Due to the scope and nature of MDT projects, resource agencies agreed that a case-by-case review of project impacts and identification of appropriate mitigation measures are most appropriate, either at the corridor- or project-specific levels, rather than at the policy level traditionally assessed in long-range transportation planning. Permitting and review agencies consistently noted that early notification of projects on the horizon as well as early involvement with MDT in the planning process has proved beneficial. For example, permitting agencies, such as USACE, expressed interest in participating in the project scoping process, if resources allowed. In all cases, when possible, submission of plans for comment prior to the permit application stage allowed for a smoother permitting process. However, such review can only occur as agency resources allow.

The possibility of using MDT project-specific mitigation resources for the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Federal match dollars did arise. Such an effort would contribute to environmental mitigation. More details are needed before pursuing such an effort, but MDT and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks will work together to find out more about the potential for this collaboration.

Representatives of the MEDA and MDOC were also asked about environmental mitigation measures during the MEDA/MDOC/MDT Working Group sessions, held annually by MDT (May 18, 2007). It was found that local government knowledge and concerns about environmental mitigations differed from agencies at the state and Federal level. Local economic development and land use agencies were interested in using MDT as a resource for more information about the transportation planning process and requirement for new development. MDT will work with these groups to provide resources and support through a toolkit (profile of transportation issues and statistics by specific region), working sessions, or workshops. In an effort to use existing relationships to obtain local knowledge, MDT has also asked that local agencies participate and help MDT identify potential research, corridor planning, or other foreseeable areas of transportation system need or potential joint involvement.

6.4 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

Existing MDT actions and components of *TranPlan 21* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. MDT actions that most strongly support this environmental mitigation planning factor, such as the corridor planning process, HEAT, and SIAP, were captured in the *TranPlan 21*. It was determined through discussion with resource agencies that the corridor level, rather than the policy or project level, is most appropriate for environmental mitigation discussions

and analysis. The corridor planning process currently in place provides a way for resource agencies to assist in the scoping process for projects to advance from corridor studies to the NEPA/MEPA process. To this end, the following action should be added to the Roadway System Performance element:

- Action B.7 – Continue to use the corridor planning process to consult with resource agencies in identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures.

  This action involves continued implementation of the corridor planning process which has proved effective as a form of consultation with resource agencies in the pre-NEPA/MEPA process identification of environmental sensitivities, avoidance areas, or potential mitigation measures. Discussions with resource agencies demonstrated that the corridor-level, rather than the policy or project level, is most appropriate for environmental mitigation discussions and analysis. The corridor planning process currently in place provides a way for resource agencies to assist in the scoping process for projects to advance from corridor studies to the NEPA/MEPA process.

7.0 Capital, Operations and Management Strategies, Investments, Procedures, and Other Measures

SAFETEA-LU requires state long-range transportation plans to emphasize the efficient management and operations of the existing transportation system. This section presents a summary of these provisions in SAFETEA-LU, along with other Federal policies and guidance; describes the extent to which the MDT *TranPlan 21* and other efforts address these requirements; and presents policy statements that were incorporated into the amended *TranPlan 21*.

7.1 SAFETEA-LU Requirements and Other Federal Policies

SAFETEA-LU Requirements

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU requires state long-range transportation plans to facilitate the efficient management and operation of the existing system. Specifically, these requirements include the following:

- **23 CFR Section 450.206(a) –** 7) Promote efficient system management and operation; and 8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(b) –** The long-range statewide transportation plan should include capital, operations and management strategies, investments, procedures, and other measures to ensure the preservation and most efficient use of the existing transportation system. The long-range plan may consider projects and strategies that address areas or corridors, where current or projected congestion threatens the efficient functioning of key elements of the state's transportation system.

To further clarify, **23 CFR Section 450.104** defines ***Operational and Management*** strategies to mean actions and strategies aimed at improving the performance of existing and planned transportation facilities to relieve congestion, and maximizing the safety and mobility of people and goods.

National Strategy to Reduce Congestion

In addition to the SAFETEA-LU legislation, on May 16, 2006, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation announced a national initiative to address congestion related to highway, freight, and aviation. The intent of the "National Strategy to Reduce Congestion on America's Transportation Network" is to provide a blueprint for officials to tackle congestion. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is encouraging state DOTs and MPOs to demonstrate new congestion relief strategies, and deploy operational technologies and practices that help manage or reduce congestion. An overview of this national congestion initiative can be found at http://www.fightgridlocknow.gov.

Federal Highway Administration Guidance

In response to SAFETEA-LU and the new national policy on congestion, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is in the process of developing a guidebook to assist state DOTs in implementing management and operations strategies designed to reduce congestion and to improve current Congestion Management System (CMS) planning practice. Although the guidebook is still in the early stages of development, the emphasis is to develop a process to reduce congestion that is objectives driven and performance based. This would be a process that identifies and describes a congestion problem, develops objectives and performance measures for reducing congestion, identifies and evaluates improvement strategies, and then monitors the performance of those strategies over time and evaluates their effectiveness. The guidebook also will provide descriptions of analytical tools available to evaluate the effectiveness of various operational strategies on congestion. The FHWA also is developing a guidebook on management and operations for MPOs, and a guidebook on the Congestion Management Process (CMP) for Transportation Management Areas (TMA).

FHWA Pavement Preservation Technical Summary

The FHWA recently assessed the MDT pavement preservation program, policy, and procedures. The goal of the assessment was to identify strategic opportunities for each DOT to maximize its pavement preservation benefits, including longer-lasting, smoother, and safer pavements. The FHWA is anticipating the submittal of their report to MDT by May 2007.

7.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MDT ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

Management and preservation of the existing transportation system was a key focus of the latest *TranPlan 21* update. *TranPlan 21* includes policies that address access management, pavement management, asset management, ITS, TDM, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, and transit. For example, the following is a list of some of the policies and actions in *TranPlan 21* that illustrates management

and preservation of the existing system, and addresses congestion relief related to roadway system performance, access management, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, and public transportation.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal A –** Establish explicit priorities for roadway improvements. These priorities are preservation, capacity expansion, and other improvements.
- **Action B.3 –** Establish and implement proactive corridor preservation in corridors forecast to have capacity constraints over the next 20 years.
- **Action B.6 –** Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.
- **Action C.2 –** Identify and deploy cost-effective ITS applications to improve safety and system productivity.
- **Action C.3 –** Encourage the MPOs to include enhanced traffic control and management systems in their long-range plans.
- **Action C.4 –** Strengthen MDT's traffic operations capability to reduce delay and improve travel times through better traffic management.

Access Management

- **Action A.3 –** Establish an Access Management Plan that identifies and helps preserve priority corridors.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

- **Policy Goal A –** Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes; and
- **Policy Goal B –** Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for urban, rural, and regional differences in current and future use.

Public Transportation

- **Policy Goal A –** Promote and support increased use of public transportation systems; and
- **Policy Goal D –** Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana.

These policy goals and actions are currently a focus of *TranPlan 21*, and will continue to be a focus of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*.

Other MDT Actions and Plans

SAFETEA-LU places emphasis on management and operations strategies that address congestion in the development of a state's long-range transportation

plan. MDT, through *TranPlan 21*, P³, HEAT, and the Corridor Planning Process (Section 2.0), currently does an excellent job of identifying, recommending, and evaluating the effectiveness of management and operations strategies. *TranPlan 21*'s approach to congestion management is multimodal, involving transit, bicycle and pedestrian use, access management, land use planning, ITS, and TDM. MDT will continue to use this approach to amend its long-range transportation plan.

Furthermore, the MDT planning process currently does an excellent job of addressing the goal of the FHWA guidebook initiative, which is to encourage state DOTs to develop a planning process that is objectives driven and performance based. For example, the MDT planning process establishes goals and objectives to address congestion through management and operations strategies, and then develops performance measures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies.

7.3 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

Existing MDT actions and components of *TranPlan 21* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. The following amendments were made to better reflect changes in existing conditions since the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* and to strengthen MDT compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

Roadway System Performance

- **Action C.5 –** Promote efficient system management and operations, and emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system by implementing strategies that manage travel demand, enhance mobility, and extend the service life of the system.

  This action encourages maximum utilization of Montana's existing transportation system. Traffic volumes and congestion on existing facilities are projected to increase. Strategies promoting preservation and efficient use of the transportation system are alternatives to construction of new infrastructure to meet this increased demand. Constraints, such as right-of-way, environmental impacts, community concerns, and funding limitations, can inhibit the construction of new infrastructure. Implementation of travel demand management and system preservation strategies can increase capacity without the same opposition and limitations. In its planning and programming process, MDT will consider such means in its planning and programming process as viable options to effectively and efficiently develop its transportation system to meet future demand.

- **Action C.6 –** Utilize P³ to establish objectives and performance levels for preserving the condition of the existing system and addressing growing congestion.

MDT has developed a computer-based management system, the Performance Programming Process (P^3), that is used to assess alternative investments and strategies to ensure highway investments contribute to system performance goals. P^3 uses output from MDT's pavement, bridge, and congestion management systems. P^3 allocates resources to systems, districts, and types of work to ensure all parts meet or exceed performance goals. This action incorporates use of P^3 into the planning process, ensuring that valuable information is made available during the assessment of alternative investments. It also provides that P^3 will be used to address additional asset classes as supported by management system data.

- **Action C.7 –** Conduct pre-NEPA/MEPA corridor studies on facilities at capacity to analyze the improvement needs, at various levels, including low-cost, corridor management and operations strategies, along with consideration of available funding.

  MDT has established a corridor–level planning process to study the need for reconstruction or other cost-effective/low-cost strategies, such as TDM, incident management, access management, and intersection improvements. This action allows for early involvement of regulatory agencies and environmental interests, as well as saves time and money.

- **Action C.8 –** MDT will continue to use and refine the HEAT to support ongoing planning and policy analysis, including the benefits and costs of alternative investments to the state transportation system.

  HEAT was developed by MDT to assess the impact of future transportation investments on economic growth. HEAT can also be used to evaluate operational strategies, as well as capacity improvements, including strategies to reduce travel delay and improve system reliability. This action is intended to encourage the continued consideration of the linkage between economic growth and the transportation system.

8.0 Transportation System Security

SAFETEA-LU requires state long-range transportation plans to include a security element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, or projects set forth in various transit and other plan documentation. This section presents SAFETEA-LU requirements and Federal guidance, a summary of integrated security and planning activities being conducted by the State of Montana, and a summary of amendments incorporated as part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*.

8.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The security and safety planning provisions from previous Federal requirements were decoupled in SAFETEA-LU with each receiving more emphasis in the state long-range transportation planning process. The following are specific SAFETEA-LU language for this requirement:

- **23 CFR Section 450.206(a) –** Each state shall carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users; and
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(e) –** The long-range statewide transportation plan should include a security element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, or projects set forth in other transit safety and security planning and review processes, plans, and programs, as appropriate.

The FHWA understands that states are at different stages of addressing and adopting security elements in their planning processes. As with all long-range transportation plan elements and because the states very often have unique security priorities, the FHWA expects that each state will develop very different security elements to meet this requirement. Therefore, the FHWA has stressed the importance of documenting actions, such as initiating dialogue with stakeholders through New Consultations, and designing and developing plans that meet this SAFETEA-LU requirement.

8.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MONTANA AGENCY ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

TranPlan 21 currently includes policy statements, goals, and actions demonstrating MDT efforts to support economic development, traveler safety, access management, land use planning, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, roadway system performance, and public transportation. Many of the policy goals and actions MDT developed for these other elements are important to transportation system security. These goals, many of which relate directly to interagency consultations, system efficiency, accessibility, reliability, mobility, and preservation, are presented below by each relevant element. While not individually listed below, many of the actions that support the highlighted goals are important and relevant to transportation security in Montana.

Economic Development

- **Policy Goal A –** Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana's export-oriented ("basic") industries to access regional, national, and international markets.

  The movement of people, trucks, and goods across the Montana-Canadian border and Montana's borders with Idaho, Wyoming, and the Dakotas are relevant to not only Montana's economy, safety, and roadway system performance, but also to its transportation system security. For example, ensuring the operational efficiency and security of the international border crossings with Canada will help MDT meet the State's long-term transportation system security needs for major facilities in both rural and urban areas across the State.

Traveler Safety

- **Policy Goal B –** Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety.

  MDT developed Montana's Comprehensive Transportation Safety Plan through an extensive partnering process with Federal, state, and regional agency stakeholders. To a large extent, these partners also helped MDT prepare the traveler safety goals and actions of *TranPlan 21*, and will continue to form the policy goals, actions, and implementation strategies set forth in the State's Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) and long-range transportation plan. Many of these partners are also involved with transportation system security in Montana. MDT also has an established partnership with the Federal and state agencies responsible for Homeland Security in Montana. Building upon these strong agency relationships, MDT will

continue to provide leadership and coordination that can be used to link the traveler safety and transportation system security planning in Montana.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal B –** Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana; and
- **Policy Goal C –** Improve the productivity of the roadway system.

As presented above for economic development, roadway system performance (preservation, operations, mobility, and productivity) can be directly linked to some aspect of transportation system security. In particular, ensuring the operational efficiency and security at the Montana-Canadian border also relates to the mobile, accessible, reliable, and productive performance of the transportation system.

Other Montana Agency Actions

MDT has dedicated staff whose responsibilities include coordinating the Department's planning processes with ongoing security planning efforts performed by Federal and state agencies. These agencies include the Montana Department of Military Affairs (Disaster and Emergency Services Division and Montana Homeland Security), the FHWA, and the Federal Office of Homeland Security. Through this liaison, MDT has been participating in task forces related to plan development, implementation, and coordination of statewide security activities related to disaster and emergency service plans, hazardous cargo movements and mitigation plans and assessments, and homeland security and all hazards emergency management planning. Example efforts are summarized below.

Montana Disaster and Emergency Service Planning Process

The Montana Department of Military Affairs, Disaster, and Emergency Services Division (MT DES) is the lead agency responsible for coordinating comprehensive emergency management in Montana, and coordinating efforts of the Department of Homeland Security. The MT DES' vision guides Montana to build disaster-resistant communities through customer service; integration of the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery); quantifiable risk analysis; and leverage of mitigation through successful response and recovery. The goals of the MT DES include the following:

1. Ensure that a Comprehensive Emergency Management program exists in Montana to save lives and property, including improving planning and training at the local, tribal, and state government levels for all hazard emergencies; assisting local governments with response to emergencies and disasters; and interfacing with the Federal government to provide technical and financial assistance to the state, local, and tribal communities.

2. Reduce human suffering and enhance the recovery of communities after disaster strikes, including assisting communities in recovery from disasters by coordinating volunteer, state, and Federal resources; and encouraging implementation of appropriate mitigation measures at the local level to prevent or reduce impacts of future disasters.
3. Provide quality customer service in all our activities, including responding to all inquiries in a timely and professional manner, and taking advantage of technology to provide services and information to citizens and local government.

For 2009, the MT DES will implement the following additional goal:

1. Coordinate Homeland Security efforts in the State with cities, counties, tribes, state and Federal agencies, private businesses, and volunteer organizations.

MDT has and will continue to participate in the ongoing preparation of the Montana Disaster and Emergency Plan managed by the MT DES. This Plan contains several independent reports or plans (referred to as volumes) that are under ongoing development and revision. MDT participated in the development of the Transportation Plan volume; and has provided support in areas, such as public information, damage assessment, and individual assistance (shelter needs). The following are a few examples of MDT's ongoing participation and leadership in this planning process:

- **Hazardous Materials Response Plan –** This Plan's purpose is to provide an effective and coordinated emergency response for incidents involving the release or potential release of hazardous materials in Montana. MDT's support responsibilities include the general maintenance and preservation of the state-maintained highway system; provide the necessary manpower and resources to perform traffic control, flagging, and signing; and provide statewide communications, equipment, and material, as necessary.
- **Transportation Plan –** MDT helped prepare the Emergency Operations and Disaster Transportation Plan, and uses it to identify and implement procedures to effectively respond to and recover from emergencies (disaster or incident) that occur on the Montana transportation system. Personal safety and minimizing disruption to maintenance and continued operation of the transportation infrastructure in emergency situations are key themes within the plan. The plan addresses MDT emergency planning, response, procedures, and responsibilities, including such things as preservation of vital records and data recovery, coordination within the agency, hazard-specific responses, personal safety, and training programs. MDT collaborated with participants from various Federal, state, and local agencies, including direct involvement with the MT DES to help prepare this Plan.
- **Montana Multihazard Mitigation Plan and Statewide Hazard Assessment –** This Plan, developed in October 2004 by the MT DES, included an assessment of needs, development of information profiles, and development of a mitigation

plan for hazard assessments and vulnerabilities on Montana's transportation system. Analysis was conducted and plans were developed for terrorism and violence; fires and other hazardous material incidents; and natural disasters (earthquakes, weather). MDT was part of the planning and coordination efforts that put this plan together.

Homeland Security and All Hazards Emergency Management

The Montana Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) commissioned the *Homeland Security and All Hazards Emergency Management Plan* in June 2004. This Plan provided the LFC with an update of security preparedness in Montana. A fiscal analysis of how various programs related to homeland security funding have impacted all hazards management in the State. The key decision points considered in this Plan included the following:

- What has changed in Montana since September 11, 2001?
- How are new Federally-funded programs for homeland security being applied in Montana?
- Will state expenditures increase due to the impacts of homeland security initiatives at the Federal, state, and local levels?
- Is Montana prepared for an anthrax, bioterrorism, or naturally occurring disease outbreak in a rural community?
- How would weapons of mass destruction threat be managed in an urban center?

The analysis contained in the Plan included a description, analysis, and assessment of Montana's all hazards emergency management system; an inventory of homeland security and emergency management funding available in Montana; an illustration of the relationship between Federal and state agencies in managing this system; and an analysis of fiscal issues and decision points. MDT, as it has continued to do so with other emergency and security initiatives in the State, was an active participant with the MT DES and LFC in this planning process.

Public Transportation in Montana

In Montana, public transportation in rural areas and cities with populations under 50,000 are served by various urban and rural transit systems provided by health and human service organizations. There has been a growing reliance on public transportation in Montana due to a variety of population growth, economic development, human environment, and community development factors. With this growing importance, specific security efforts, while limited, have been implemented for rural public transportation systems to include considerations for on-board passenger and driver security, and plans for using public transportation (and rail) to move people in disaster situations (in coordination with the MT DES and MDT). In addition, one of the largest urban transit operators in the

State, Mountain Line in Missoula, has developed a system security program plan, while others are potentially developing similar plans.

8.3 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

As highlighted earlier, many of MDT's existing actions and components of *TranPlan 21* support transportation security within the overall context of how security can impact economic development, traveler safety, access management, roadway system performance, and public transportation. In addition, MDT is an active participant in statewide security efforts through the MT DES. The intent of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* is to reflect MDT's ongoing efforts with transportation security through the inclusion of policy goals and actions that:

- Continue to promote agency coordination with the MT DES and Department of Homeland Security for purposes of long-range transportation planning and state transportation improvement programming;
- Continue to address transportation security within the existing policy statements, goals, and actions for economic development, traveler safety, access management, roadway system performance, and public transportation; and
- Use both the ongoing consultations and policy initiatives to design a transportation security policy statement, goals, and actions that provide MDT with a stand-alone security element of *TranPlan 21*.

One of the major findings of the new consultations conducted as part of the limited amendment process was the need for continuous interagency involvement throughout the planning process. As documented in Section 5.0, a set of revised policy goals and actions were integrated into *TranPlan 21* to emphasize the need for such efforts including the continuation and promotion of MDT coordination with Federal and state security agencies. The revised policy goals and actions identified for the Economic Development, Traveler Safety, Access Management, Roadway Safety Performance, and Public Transportation elements will be used by MDT to guide its new consultations process for future updates to *TranPlan 21*. As part of this consultation process, MDT's continuing participation and partnering with the MT DES, Department of Homeland Security, and other state agencies will continue to be used to promote interagency coordination regarding Montana's security, and in particular, transportation system security. These revised policy goals and actions are presented in Section 5.0 of this report.

In addition to the amendments made regarding new consultations, a new transportations security policy statement is presented in the Traveler Safety element.

Traveler Safety

- **Policy Goal C –** Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to promote transportation system security;

- **Action C.1 –** Continue to participate in agency coordination with the MT DES and Department of Homeland Security to ensure a coordinated, effective, and efficient response to transportation security issues;
- **Action C.2 –** Continue to support transportation security within the policy statements, goals, and actions for economic development, traveler safety, access management, roadway system performance, and public transportation; and
- **Action C.3 –** Coordinate with the MT DES to actively maintain and implement a coordinated transportation security plan for responding to and recovering from emergency and disaster situations.

The design and ultimate implementation of the above policy goals and actions will be dependent on MDT's continuing efforts to coordinate with other state agencies, such as the MT DES, in addressing transportation system security as part of the long-range planning process.

9.0 Visualization Techniques

SAFETEA-LU requires states to use visualization techniques in the process of developing long-range transportation plans and state transportation improvement programs. This section presents SAFETEA-LU requirements for visualization, MDT's experience using visualization techniques in support of the *TranPlan 21* and other planning and programming efforts in Montana; and an introduction to how visualization techniques were used to support this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*.

9.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The SAFETEA-LU rule includes the following new definition and requirement for visualization techniques:

- **23 CFR Section 450.104 Definitions –** Visualization techniques means methods used by states and MPOs in the development of transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders in a clear and easily accessible format, such as maps, pictures, and/or displays, to promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation plans and programs.
- **23 CFR Section 450.210(a)(1) –** The State's public involvement process at a minimum shall: (v) To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies; (vi) To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate, to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information.

The emphasis in the legislation is on strengthening public participation by making Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and STIP information more accessible electronically and easier to understand. While many states have extensive experience in using visualization techniques for specific projects, fewer states have experience in using visualization and electronic methods (such as the World Wide Web) to convey information about transportation plans and programs. A variety of visualization techniques that state DOTs can consider using range from simple illustrations and charts to sophisticated simulation tools. Options for conveying this information electronically may include the web, specific project web sites, and newsletters, among others. The statute is not prescriptive in the types of visualization that should be used, and states could select those techniques and electronic methods that are effective for their purposes. For example, the use of flow charts to explain the planning process is a simple and effective application of visualization. Appropriate tools according to SAFETEA-LU requirements may include the following:

- Artist renderings,
- Computer-modeled images,
- Computer simulation,
- Drawings,
- Flowcharts,
- Charts/graphs,
- Interactive GIS systems,
- Maps,
- Models,
- Photo manipulation,
- Scenario planning tools,
- Simulated photos,
- Sketches,
- Videos, and
- Visual preference surveys.

Visualization techniques include on-line information; maps; links to documents of draft and final plans, reports, corridor studies; and web-based lists of projects in a STIP. Further information about visualization, including noteworthy practices, can be found at the FHWA web site (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/vip/index.htm).

9.2 MDT'S USE OF VISUALIZATION IN ONGOING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

MDT uses a variety of visualization techniques in their public involvement process to help illustrate and explain concepts and information related to statewide planning, corridor planning, and programming. MDT uses visualization tools, such as maps, graphs, charts, drawings, pictures, flow charts, and other data, to support a variety of public and stakeholder outreach activities, plans, and projects. This information is largely conveyed using the electronic methods, including the MDT web site, specific links to statewide plan and corridor project web sites, as well as hard copy and electronic presentation material. Many of MDT's planning documents can be found on the MDT web site http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/brochures.shtml) for brochures, publications, and study reports.

MDT Databases, Web Sites, and Other Visualization Techniques

MDT supports the following statewide planning and programming efforts using the following visualization techniques, with outputs of many of these techniques available to stakeholders and the public using electronic methods:

- **GIS database –** Through its Road Inventory and Mapping Section, Traffic Data Collection Section and Information Systems Division, MDT maintains and operates a GIS database that contains a variety of statewide transportation, economic, and behavioral data used to support plans and programs and the public involvement processes associated with these studies. The comprehensive roadway network layer can be combined with other available information, such as travel demand data, to produce GIS-based maps (electronic and hard copy). MDT generates and uses these GIS-based maps for statewide plans, such as the 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* and corridor studies conducted across the State. Upon request, MDT generates and provides this information to various project sponsors, stakeholders, and/or the public. For example, upon request, tentative construction maps, display boards to support corridor projects, displays to show construction projects on a corridor (most common request), displays to address environmental information and issues, among many others have been produced by MDT for use as visualization techniques for planning or other specific planning efforts. Over 90 percent of the requests MDT responds to are for a project sponsor or the general public.
- **Transportation Information System (TIS) Photo Log and Image Viewer –** MDT has developed and maintains two separate tools representing Montana's roadway network. The TIS Photo Log is used by MDT to provide and display general infrastructure-related data for the statewide roadway network, including system, roadway length, width, pavement type, last reconstruction date, among other characteristics. MDT has provided these photo logs in support of public involvement meetings for specific corridor studies, legal disputes, and safety system assessments. MDT has also developed a visualization tool called the Image Viewer. This tool provides images of the on-system highway network in 10-meter increments. While the TIS Photo Log and Image Viewer are separate tools, MDT will be working towards integrating them into a common, separate tool for ongoing visualization use and data application.
- **State Road Map –** Through its GIS, MDT distributes the State Highway Map that is the most widely used visualization product produced by the agency with over 1,000,000 maps produced annually.
- **Traffic Data for Bicycles Map –** MDT produces and distributes a statewide on-system bicycle map for use by the general public; and includes traffic volumes, road grades, shoulder widths, and rumbles strip locations.
- **Traffic Flow Map –** MDT produces a traffic flow map for all statewide rural on-system roadways distributed through the Internet that includes daily

traffic volumes for all statewide roadways. The traffic volumes entered into this map are static and updated once a year, and used to provide annual traffic data.

- **Interactive Sources –** MDT maintains web site links to other public agency web sites related to transportation systems for public and stakeholder access. For example, MDT provides a web site link to the MPO and other community plans.
- **Before and After Maps –** MDT prepared and presented before and after maps to the public that graphically show the results of improvements undertaken by the Department. For example, before and after pictures showing improvements made to rest stops (as part of MDT's ongoing efforts to restore and renovate rest stops across the State) have been shown to the public to identify the potential benefits of these improvements to other locations.
- **Biennial Survey –** As described later in this report (under *TranPlan 21* below), MDT has conducted and distributed biennial public involvement and stakeholder surveys to obtain public input and feedback on a variety of transportation issues and attitudes. This survey is also being used currently to support this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21* to identify potential ways in which to improve MDT's process for communicating plans and programs to the public. MDT will use the results of survey to design a process to better meet the visualization needs of ongoing and future public involvement methods.
- **MDT Web Site –** The MDT web site is a visualization tool that can be accessed and used by stakeholders and the general public to obtain standard maps of traffic flows and other related characteristics upon request.

Public Involvement in Support of Statewide Planning and Programming

MDT publishes a public involvement brochure that is used to explain the periodic and ongoing public involvement process in its statewide transportation planning and programming processes. This brochure uses pictures, maps, and charts to help explain planning and programming within the public involvement process. MDT has specifically designed this process for statewide planning and programming in support of periodic updates to *TranPlan 21* and the STIP. Outside of this process, but using some of the same processes and visualization techniques, MDT develops separate and unique public involvement processes for individual corridor plans.

This process includes routine MDT staff contact with Montana's stakeholders and the general public. Stakeholders consider transportation planners, engineers, and decision-makers at the local (city/town), regional (county/MPO), and state levels; interest groups at each level, such as bicycle and pedestrian, economic development, environmental, freight, and public transportation agency

partners; community leaders; and tribal governments. Specific examples of how MDT's public involvement process supports *TranPlan 21* and the STIP are presented below.

TranPlan 21

The 2002 update of *TranPlan 21* considered several focus areas, including Economic Development, Access Management, Roadway System Performance, Travel Safety, Public Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, and Land Use Planning. This Plan, and its predecessor in 1995, was developed in large part using an extensive public involvement process involving a variety of visualization techniques to obtain input and feedback from stakeholder groups and the general public. This public participation process, implemented to support *TranPlan 21*, is now being used by MDT on an ongoing basis to support statewide and corridor transportation planning initiatives.

TranPlan 21 included supporting public involvement objectives, such as development and implementation of:

- A customer-driven plan;
- Inclusive techniques;
- Structured process designed to obtain feedback early on in the Plan development process, prior to major plan decisions, and to help refine and finalize the plan elements;
- Opportunities for under-represented groups to participate; and
- Opportunities for ongoing communication by elected officials, MPOs, tribal governments, other stakeholders, and the public.

The objectives of this plan were carried out in three stages, including the following:

- **Stage I –** MDT conducted the first stage of public involvement after the preliminary definition and identification of issues and trends before developing the policy goals, actions, and alternatives. This stage was implemented to inform the public of the *TranPlan 21* update process, obtain input identifying and refining issues and concerns, and build plan support. Newsletters, targeted telephone, mail-out and e-mail surveys, open houses and stakeholder forums, tribal government meetings, and local government association meetings, among other techniques were implemented by MDT as part of this stage.
- **Stage II –** This stage was implemented after the alternatives for policy goals, actions, and plan alternatives were prepared, but prior to the preparation of the draft *TranPlan 21* documents. This stage was implemented to obtain feedback about alternative policy goals and actions. Similar techniques as implemented in Stage I were used, including newsletters, targeted e-mail and mail-out surveys, open houses, focus groups, and tribal and local government meetings.

- **Stage III –** This stage of the public involvement process was implemented after the release of the draft *TranPlan 21* documents, but prior to finalizing the report. This was the last opportunity provided to stakeholders and the public to provide input and feedback on the draft plan before finalization. Draft plan material was disseminated to public libraries for stakeholder and public review and comment. Summaries of the plan were also available upon request through the U.S. mail and e-mail.

The techniques implemented in all three stages, and in particular those in Stage I, were designed by MDT to use some combination of in-person meetings and electronic information to provide stakeholders and the public alike with the opportunity to obtain feedback and provide input in the *TranPlan 21* planning process. The Stage I public participation techniques in the *TranPlan 21* update relevant to meeting SAFETEA-LU requirements included the following:

- ***TranPlan 21* Online Community –** This online database of stakeholders and interested individuals was established by MDT as a link to the MDT web site. Stakeholder input was solicited and obtained through this technique at key decision points in the planning process. This tool was used to form the basis of the stakeholder database used to support *TranPlan 21*. It has continued to grow since its initial development, and is currently being used to support a variety of statewide transportation planning activities in Montana.
- **Public Opinion Surveys –** These surveys were implemented to support the 1995 *TranPlan 21*, and MDT continues to refine and use them on a biennial basis to support statewide transportation planning in Montana. For this Amendment, MDT added a series of questions about *TranPlan 21* and Montana's long-range transportation planning process.

Various other techniques that were applied in Stage I included newsletters and targeted surveys that stakeholders were able to access and submit input either electronically or by mail. In addition, MDT's presentations to government associations, MPOs, tribal governments, and stakeholder organizations, as well as the focus groups and open houses implemented by MDT, included a wide variety of visualization techniques that are still being used by MDT to support long-range transportation planning.

Ongoing Long-Range Transportation Planning

In addition to the specific techniques developed and applied to support the latest *TranPlan 21*, MDT uses a variety of visualization techniques to support ongoing planning efforts. These planning efforts include:

- Annual meetings to discuss implementation status to determine high-priority actions.
- Annual reports of the status of *TranPlan 21*'s policy goals, actions, information, and successes.
- Biennial telephone and stakeholder surveys.

- Ongoing public involvement elements, such as newsletters, toll-free information and comment lines, focus and advisory groups, press releases and advertisements, procedures to provide input to the STIP, special mailings, local and tribal government involvement processes, and transportation workshops and conferences. MDT releases four regular newsletters: an aeronautics newsletter, *Montana and the Sky*; the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Newsletter; the Rail, Transit, and Planning Division newsletter, *Newsline*; and research newsletters.

Each of these planning efforts is supported, as appropriate, by visuals, such as photographs, artist renderings, charts, and graphs. These are used to describe or explain MDT activities that are underway. The MDT web site is a communication tool used to provide a variety of on-line communication to the public to support long-range planning (including *TranPlan 21*), such as postings of current and past newsletters, division publications, a variety of maps, press releases, traffic counts, and final *TranPlan 21* documents and policy statements. MDT also posts the program delivery status reports, the final STIP, and information on various projects and studies on its web site for public access. MDT used presentation techniques, such as PowerPoint and video along with display boards, pictures, and maps, to help the public more easily understand planning and programming. Figure 9.1 shows a map used by MDT to support the access management element of *TranPlan 21*, and Figure 9.2 shows a photo used to illustrate roadway conditions.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is MDT's statewide, annual work plan of multimodal projects. Produced annually, the STIP lists most major multimodal transportation projects that are funded by Federal and state programs for a three-year period.

As with *TranPlan 21* and ongoing long-range transportation planning efforts, MDT's development of the STIP is largely dependent on stakeholder and public input. MDT uses similar processes and visual techniques and the electronic distribution of material for input and feedback to support the public involvement process for the STIP, as described above for *TranPlan 21*. For example, the MDT web site can be used by stakeholders and the public to access the STIP and to understand the project delivery status. The STIP includes tables and charts depicting sources and allocation of funding for that period. In addition, the locations of projects included in the STIP are shown on individual maps for each district.

Figure 9.1 *2002 TranPlan 21 Update* Map Showing Access-Controlled Corridors

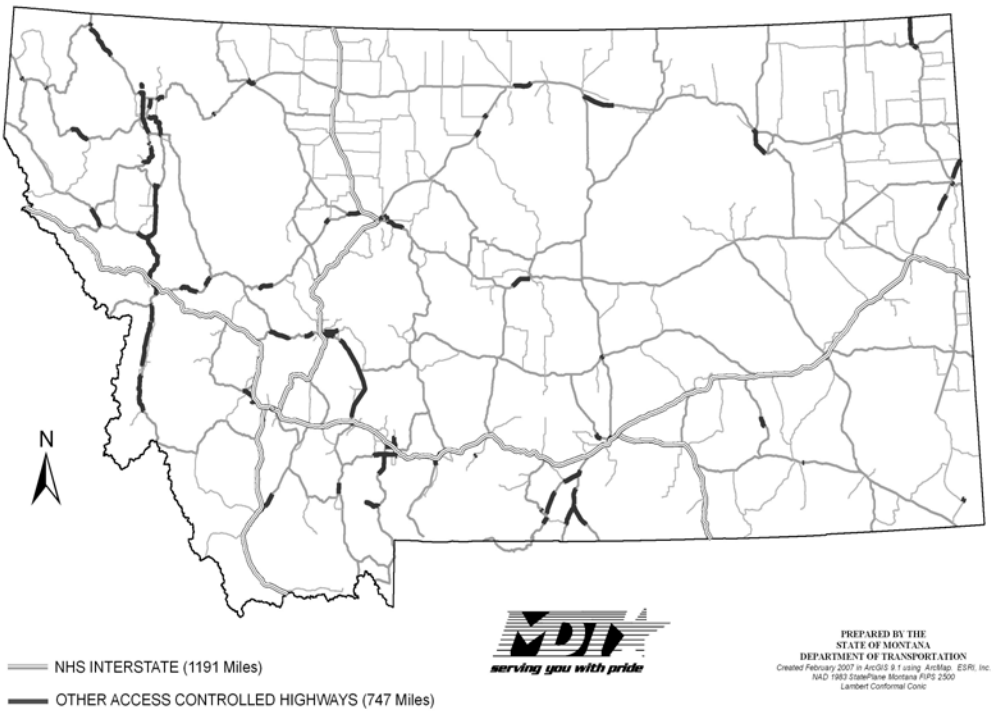

Figure 9.2 Example of Photo used to Support the Public Involvement Process

Additional tools, such as periodic press releases describing both the completion and status of the draft and final STIP and toll-free telephone numbers, are used by MDT to solicit input from those interested in the development of the STIP. For example, the draft STIP is provided, either on the MDT web site or in consultations with local agency staff for public review and comment. MDT carefully considers these comments and incorporates them into the decision-making process, and provides maps of the STIP's project locations along with the schedule of the improvement.

Corridor Planning Process and Studies

TranPlan 21 recommends MDT establish and prototype a process and guidelines for developing corridor-level strategies to address reconstruction needs. With this recommendation, MDT plans to conduct corridor-level studies on facilities at capacity to analyze the need for improvements. This process is used to inform the NEPA/MEPA process, and help eliminate alternatives to be studied and define the purpose and needs statements used during NEPA/MEPA. The corridor planning process is anticipated to reduce the cost of the environmental process, speed project delivery, and provide early involvement of environmental interests, regulatory agencies, and the public. The corridor plans also address broader issues than traditional environmental analysis, such as land use planning and socioeconomic conditions. The corridor planning process complements the NEPA/MEPA process and ensures decisions are made at the appropriate level, considers low-cost alternatives, and available funding. MDT will continue to use this corridor planning process to support *TranPlan 21* and other state- and corridor-specific planning efforts.

Visual displays and information regarding each corridor study can be found on the MDT web site. MDT produces and distributes a variety of maps to describe the corridor studies, including maps showing the highway corridor and the communities along the corridor. Also, MDT maps and displays key data, such as traffic data, crash data, environmental, and affected wildlife, among a variety of other visual information in support of each corridor study. Figure 9.3 shows the location of the MDT's Montana Highway 78 Corridor Study. MDT has implemented a public involvement process for this corridor study that has included a variety of methods. Two newsletters were produced and distributed to stakeholders and the public in June and September of 2006. These newsletters included the following information:

1. **June 2006 newsletter –** MDT described the MT 78 Corridor Study process, area, and purpose. Additional information about how corridor studies are conducted; and detailed information about the scoping process, development of corridor goals, issues and deficiencies, identification and evaluation of potential improvement options, and selection of feasible and recommended options were included in this newsletter. Information about how stakeholders and the public could participate in this corridor study through e-mail, mail, and other means were also presented.

2. **September 2006 newsletter –** Similar information presented in June 2006 describing the corridor study was presented in this newsletter. Detailed information was presented about the preliminary improvement options identified by MDT, its consultants, and stakeholder and public participants. In support of this newsletter, MDT provided detailed aerial photos of the corridor that also depicted potential geographical, roadway design, and other issues associated with various alternative options.

Two separate rounds of public meetings were also held to support the MT 78 Corridor Study with more planned as the study progressed. The first public meetings included scoping sessions in locations along the MT 78 corridor. Stakeholder and public input considered a variety of design issues, such as traffic speeds and traffic flows, sight distance hazards, and steep slopes, among others. The second round of public meetings considered obtaining input from stakeholders about the goals and objectives of the study. Input was also obtained about MDT's preliminary set of potential improvement options for the corridor. Visual displays of information (display boards and PowerPoint presentations) were used in both rounds of public meetings.

MDT provided a direct link from its homepage to the MT 78 Corridor Study web site for stakeholder and public access. The newsletters are posted on this web site, including a variety of other information, such as the project schedule, an overview of the public involvement process, and suggestions in which other stakeholders and the public could participate in the process, among other items. In addition, MDT provided an electronic comment/request form linked directly to the web site for ease of stakeholder input. MDT also has developed and used a variety of analytical tools to support the technical analysis, public meetings, and newsletters. Electronic and hard copy maps were produced by MDT describing the corridor and the potential improvement options for implementation in the corridor. In particular, the QUANTM software was applied in this study to help define potential corridors in the study area that addressed a variety of environmental, engineering, cost, and community issues and concerns. Through QUANTM's geographic interface, information can be displayed to assess environmental constraints, corridor alignment constraints and issues, and other transportation planning performance indicators for transportation corridor planning. This powerful tool was used to produce a variety of corridor maps of alternative options that addressed these issues, and was used by MDT to present these corridor options to the stakeholders and public. The resulting analysis generated by QUANTM will be continued to be used by MDT to present information to the stakeholders and public, and equally be effective in helping to identify the most feasible alternative option for the corridor.

MDT also plans to use the graphic and visualization capabilities of HEAT and P^3 to provide stakeholders and the public with information for corridor studies, as well as in support of *TranPlan 21*. Information regarding both HEAT and P^3 are presented above in Section 2.0.

Figure 9.3 Montana 78 Corridor Study Location

Tentative Construction Plan

The Tentative Construction Plan is MDT's five-year plan that identifies the allocation of funds by category and MDT district. Prepared annually, this plan is fiscally constrained and covers the allocation of funds that are allocated to the five MDT districts by program category. MDT uses various charts and graphs in this document to show progress and status, and to compare funding to actual expenditures.

Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan

In support of the development of the Montana's CHSP, MDT provides ongoing public involvement using various techniques, such as newsletters, web site, and opportunities for public comment via the Internet, telephone, or in writing. The newsletters, accessible through the MDT web site, contain maps, pictures, and graphs to illustrate findings and information (http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/newsletters/newsline.shtml). For example, the December 2006 newsletter summarized MDT's Comprehensive Strategic Highway Safety Plan, and utilized a graph to compare the Montana fatality rate to the U.S. fatality rate.

9.3 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

The public involvement processes and techniques, presented above and developed and implemented by MDT, continue to be used by the agency to strengthen stakeholder and public participation for statewide and corridor transportation planning in Montana. The techniques developed by MDT have evolved over time to be more effective and comprehensive, and have helped MDT provide electronic-based and graphically-oriented visualizations and detail about specific projects to convey to the participating stakeholders and public. MDT has found that these visualization techniques have provided stakeholders and the public with an effective means to interpret and understand complex technical or spatial information and project results. These techniques, as they have evolved over time, have been used by MDT to convey existing conditions, interpret data, provide a common understanding of project goals and improvement options, and facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of impacts and benefits of existing versus proposed plans.

The SAFETEA-LU planning regulations require the use of visualization techniques in the public involvement process to help describe the proposed long-range transportation plan and supporting studies. The specific techniques are not prescribed other than examples that include maps, pictures, and/or displays. MDT currently makes extensive use of visualization to support both long-range planning and programming in their public involvement process. It is not envisioned that MDT needs to do anything extraordinarily different to meet this requirement in this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*. However, MDT will need to continue to follow the development of new and innovative visualization techniques, as they are used by other states and developed by the FHWA and the Transportation Research Board (TRB). Based on these developments and where applicable, MDT will continue to explore the use of new visualization techniques and innovative interactive tools to conduct statewide planning, programming, and public involvement. Whenever necessary, MDT will update its official public involvement processes to incorporate these tools and techniques.

10.0 Traveler Safety

SAFETEA-LU requires state long-range transportation plans to include policies that help improve transportation system safety, and develop a transportation safety element that is consistent with a state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). This section presents a description of the new planning regulations published in February 2007, work recently completed by MDT as part of *TranPlan 21* and the recently completed Montana CHSP, and actions for MDT compliance with the new planning regulations.

10.1 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS

The security and safety planning provisions from previous Federal requirements were decoupled in SAFETEA-LU, with each receiving more emphasis in the state long-range transportation planning process. The specific SAFETEA-LU language for this requirement follows.

- **23 CFR Section 450.206(a) –** Each state shall carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users; and
- **23 CFR Section 450.214(d) –** The long-range statewide transportation plan should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan required by 23 U.S.C. 148.

The MPO long-range plans also must address increasing the safety of the transportation system as part of their plan, and their process should be consistent with the state SHSP. For a state to receive highway safety improvement funds under 23 U.S.C. 148, the state is required to develop an SHSP in consultation with various other state safety agencies. The SHSP must include engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency services elements. The plan is required to identify and analyze highway safety problems, and develop strategies to reduce the problems. The SHSP must be approved by the governor of the state or a responsible state agency. The State of Montana has developed and approved an SHSP that meets the requirements. The Montana plan is called the Montana CHSP.

10.2 *TRANPLAN 21* AND OTHER MDT ACTIONS

TranPlan 21

Policy goals and actions in the *TranPlan 21* Traveler Safety element include the following:

- **Policy Goal A –** Reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes on Montana's roadways;
- **Action A.1 –** Review and strengthen the procedures for identifying and defining safety deficiencies and needs at the project planning and development levels by establishing a "reconstruction with safety" improvements category;
- **Action A.2 –** Conduct a highway safety management self-assessment and implement the recommendations;
- **Action A.3 –** Implement the 1999 Access Management Project recommendations for approach permits as priority and the other components of the recommended program;
- **Action A.4 –** Consider results of the 2002 Montana Bicycle Safety Study in addressing bicycle safety issues;
- **Action A.5 –** Conduct an assessment of the Safety Management System information collection and reporting needs to improve efforts to address traveler safety issues;
- **Action A.6 –** Address safety requirements, including both driver fatigue and personal safety, in updates to the Rest Area Plan;
- **Action A.7 –** Conduct a study of pedestrian safety conditions and needs;
- **Action A.8 –** Continue to monitor and evaluate animal and vehicle crash mitigation research methods and projects in Montana;
- **Policy Goal B –** Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety;
- **Action B.1 –** Establish and maintain high-level statewide interagency coordination to improve traveler safety and develop an agenda for action;
- **Action B.2 –** Provide leadership and support to implement the results of Action B.1; and
- **Action B.3 –** Continue providing ongoing leadership in air traveler safety.

Montana Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP)

MDT completed the Montana CHSP in September 2006. The CHSP was designed to address the State's highway safety needs, and reduce the number and severity of crashes and their consequences. It was developed by MDT in

collaboration with other Federal, state, local agencies; tribal governments; and other safety stakeholders working through a multiagency CHSP committee. The CHSP was developed in accordance with the requirements established in SAFETEA-LU.

MDT designed and implemented the consultation and participation process to support the CHSP. The process was comprehensive and meets many of the SAFETEA-LU requirements for New Consultations. Stakeholder participants in this process included Federal, state, and local agencies and representatives, including the FHWA, Federal Motor Carrier Services, and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); the Montana Highway Patrol, Montana Motor Vehicle Division, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Department of Justice, Montana Department of Public Heath and Human Services, and Office of the Court Administrator; the State's MPOs (Yellowstone County Board of Planning, Great Falls Planning Board, and Missoula Consolidated Planning Board); the Blackfeet, Confederated Salish and Kootenai, Crow, Chippewa Cree, Little Shell, and Fort Peck Tribes; and other safety stakeholders.

MDT's vision for the CHSP established a unifying focus for the planning effort to ensure that "all highway users in Montana arrive safely to their destinations." The goals for this vision include reducing Montana statewide fatality rates from 2.05 per 100 million VMT in 2004, to 1.79 per 100 million VMT by 2008, and 1.0 per 100 million VMT by 2015. In addition, by reducing the fatality rate to 1.0 per 100 million VMT by 2015, Montana's incapacitating injuries will fall from 1,700 in 2005 to 950 by 2015. The following summarizes MDT's CHSP emphasis areas and associated strategies designed to meet this intended vision and goals.

Emphasis Area #1. Safety Belt Use CHSP Strategies

1. Enact a primary safety belt law;
2. Conduct targeted education/enforcement in low belt use locations; and
3. Implement a safety belt use incentive programs.

Emphasis Area #2. Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driving CHSP Strategies

1. Establish stronger penalties for Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) test refusal;
2. Monitor Driving Under the Influence (DUI) offenders; and
3. Add notice onto Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) license for any incidence of failed drug/alcohol/DUI test.

Emphasis Area #3. Native Americans CHSP Strategies

1. Establish systems/policies to support data sharing among tribal, state, and local entities;
2. Encourage cross-deputization of law enforcement among tribal, state, and local entities;

3. Adopt uniform traffic codes incorporating Montana statutes;
4. Provide post credits for tribal and BIA officers; and
5. Develop comprehensive safety plans for each reservation, incorporating or being led by DUI task force.

Emphasis Area #4. Single-Vehicle Run-Off-The-Road (ROR) Crashes CHSP Strategies

1. Establish a comprehensive, multiagency policy in high-incidence locations; and
2. Conduct targeted public awareness campaigns regarding single-vehicle ROR crashes in Montana.

Emphasis Area #5. Traffic Records Management CHSP Strategies

1. Implement the action plan in traffic records strategic plan;
2. Facilitate electronic data capture;
3. Establish a data warehouse; and
4. Encourage tribal data sharing.

Emphasis Area #6. Young Drivers CHSP Strategies

1. Reintroduce traffic safety education in elementary and junior high schools;
2. Enact a primary safety belt law;
3. Provide affordable/accessible drivers education in all schools; and
4. Develop a role and strategy for law enforcement in graduated driver's license.

Emphasis Area #7. High-Crash Corridors/High-Crash Locations CHSP Strategies

1. Review guidelines for pavement and shoulder widths/review side slopes;
2. Develop guidelines six-inch pavement markings/longer-lasting pavement markings;
3. Conduct road safety audits;
4. Implement ITS technologies; and
5. Conduct proactive safety efforts.

Emphasis Area #8. Truck Crashes CHSP Strategies

1. Conduct a Motor Carrier Industry Training Survey;
2. Facilitate Inspector Certification;

3. Facilitate Compliance Review and Safety Audit Certification; and
4. Provide training for new commercial carriers.

Emphasis Area #9. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Delivery CHSP Strategies

1. Develop and implement an EMS system plan;
2. Ensure qualified EMS personnel are available in sufficient numbers throughout the State;
3. Enhance capabilities for medical response to disaster;
4. Enhance EMS education system;
5. Facilitate EMS communications;
6. Conduct EMS public education and information programs;
7. Conduct injury prevention awareness efforts;
8. Provide enhanced trauma system and facilities; and
9. Establish an EMS information system.

MDT also identified emphasis areas to be developed in the future, including Emphasis Area #10, Urban Area Crashes; Emphasis Area #11, Motorcycle Crashes; and Emphasis Area #12, Older Driver Crashes.

10.3 *TRANPLAN 21* AMENDMENTS

The Traveler Safety policy statement goals and actions in *TranPlan 21* were carried forward and used as the basis for forming the initial outline of the State's CHSP. Through significant stakeholder outreach and planning (including the formation of and consultation with a multiagency CHSP committee), MDT developed the detailed objectives, vision, and emphasis areas identified for implementation of the State's CHSP. Many of the actions have been or are in the process of being implemented by MDT as part of the CHSP planning process, which is ongoing and compliant with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

As part of this limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, new actions were added to incorporate the priorities, goals, vision, and actions contained in the Montana CHSP. The revised and new policy statements are intended to supplement the language presented in the previous *TranPlan 21,* while mirroring the emphasis areas and actions defined in the Montana CHSP.

The following actions and supporting text were revised:

- **Action A.5 –** Conduct an assessment of the Safety Management System information collection and reporting needs to improve efforts to address traveler safety issues.

This action should be oriented towards implementing the traffic records strategic plan that was completed during 2005 and updated in 2007. It is intended to ensure that MDT has the information to evaluate crashes, identify hazards, develop applicable countermeasures, and evaluate performance in improving safety. MDT staff has identified a number of limitations with the current Safety Management System, and other safety related databases. The intent of this action is to implement improvements required to ensure that MDT funds are effectively used to accomplish safety policy objectives. A steering committee, from all departments and agencies involved with traveler safety, will continue to direct and champion this effort to ensure successful development and implementation.

- **Action B.1 -** Use the established Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) interagency coordination and partnering process to measure transportation system safety performance, identify and prioritize safety strategies, and provide actions for integration with statewide transportation planning.

  This action encompasses MDT's ongoing efforts to coordinate safety planning with agencies across Montana, including local, regional, tribal, and state. The establishment of specific and quantifiable performance measures will be essential to identifying and prioritizing safety improvement strategies and projects on the State's transportation system. MDT's formation of the standing multiagency CHSP committee (used to guide the CHSP planning process) is being used to identify and address safety issues at all levels of jurisdiction. This committee represents a wide array of safety agency representatives. The strategies and projects prioritized through this collaborative process will be coordinated with MDT's corridor planning efforts and other business processes such as corridor safety audits and MCS activities. The CHSP, primarily the implementation and development of strategies and projects, will evolve over the next several years and will be coordinated and consistent with the next full update of *TranPlan 21*.

The following new actions were added to the Traveler Safety Element:

Action A.9 – Annually review traffic crash data to identify emerging trends and director safety efforts. The CHSP requires that data regarding performance for each emphasis area be tracked and reported annually. This data will be used to identify emerging trends and director safety elements. In addition, the annual element of the CHSP provides descriptions of programs and countermeasures currently underway and provides information on new strategies undertaken in the CHSP, taking into account such trends and efforts.

Action A.10 – Use tools in the CHSP (Traffic Records Database and Emergency Medical Services Delivery System) to support transportation safety analysis and enhancement. Data, trends, tools, and processes in the CHSP are the most recent and comprehensive look at safety in Montana to date and the basis for this policy paper. Where applicable, tools developed as

part of the CHSP should be used to support transportation safety analysis and enhancement throughout the State.

- **Action A.11 –** Establish a comprehensive and strategic safety business process that aligns MDT's major safety planning functions.

  This action would reduce duplication of efforts and increase efficiency within the department in delivering and managing four major transportations safety programs which include the Highway Safety Improvement Program, the Comprehensive Highways Safety Plan, the Motor Carriers Safety Plan, and the Highway Safety Plan.

11.0 Review of MPO Plans

As part of the limited amendment of *TranPlan 21*, a review of the MPO regional transportation plans (RTP) for SAFETEA-LU compliance was conducted. This section presents an overview of the current MPO regional transportation plans and planned updates or actions, a summary of key changes in SAFETEA-LU requirements, and a summary of recommended guidance for MPOs to attain compliance.

11.1 OVERVIEW OF MONTANA MPOS

In Montana, MDT has developed a policy-level, long-range transportation plan (*TranPlan 21*) for the State that is used to identify issues and actions to move forward in the planning process. The RTPs developed by the State's MPOs are more traditional, project-oriented documents. Presently, there are three MPOs in Montana:

1. Yellowstone County Board of Planning,
2. Great Falls Planning Board, and
3. Missoula Consolidated Planning Board.

Billings

The Yellowstone County Board of Planning is the designated MPO for the Billings Urban Area. Located in southeastern Montana, the Billings region is experiencing moderately-paced growth compared to other regions such as Missoula. The regional transportation planning process is coordinated with the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and MDT through two transportation committees: the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC). An update to the Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan was conducted in 2005, and an amendment was recently completed in 2007. The *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* and *Billings Urban Area 2005-2009* TIP were included in this review.

Great Falls

The Great Falls Planning Board serves as the MPO for the Great Falls region. Transportation planning in the region is overseen by the MPO and its standing TAC and PCC. The *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* and the *Great Falls 2006-2010 TIP* were included in this review. As the same agency responsible for both the comprehensive growth policy (land use) and the regional transportation plan, the Great Falls Planning Board was able to incorporate elements from the comprehensive growth policy plan directly into the transportation plan to guide the plan's objectives and goals. A slower growth area, when compared to the

other MPOs in Montana, the regional transportation plan policy focuses on infrastructure improvements tailored to its needs and growth patterns.

Missoula

Located in western Montana, the Missoula region has experienced an explosive level of population growth for the past 5 to 10 years, which is projected to continue into the future. The Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, the MPO for the region, has received additional Federal fund apportionments from MDT for transportation improvements due to the high level of recent and expected future population growth. As in other regions, Missoula's transportation planning process includes a Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) and a Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC). The last regional transportation plan update occurred in 2004. The Missoula MPO is in the process of initiating its 2008 Long-Range Transportation Plan Update process, which will incorporate elements to meet SAFETEA-LU requirements. The *Missoula 2004 Transportation Plan* and the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP* were included in this review.

11.2 SAFETEA-LU REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents a summary of the key changes and requirements in metropolitan planning provisions from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to SAFETEA-LU, based on the *Interim Guide for Implementing Key SAFETEA-LU Provisions on Planning, Environment, and Air Quality for Joint FHWA/FTA Authorities*, released in September 2005 by the FHWA; and the *Federal Register on Statewide Transportation Planning; Metropolitan Transportation Planning; Final Rule* (23 CFR), released February 14, 2007, with a March 16, 2007 effective date.

The 23 CFR Section 450.338 addresses the phase-in of these new requirements. Metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, adopted and approved prior to July 1, 2007, may be developed using the TEA-21 requirements or provisions. For plans and TIPs adopted or approved on and after July 1, 2007, the new provisions will be in effect, regardless of when the metropolitan plan or TIP was developed.

Metropolitan Plan Cycles

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU revised the required update cycle for metropolitan transportation plans from at least every "three years" to "four years" in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every five years in attainment areas.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following revised requirement:

- **23 CFR Section 450.322(c) –** The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every four years in air quality nonattainment areas, and at least every five years in attainments areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends, and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon.

To align the MPO adoption of the transportation plan in nonattainment and maintenance areas and conformity determinations, the date of the FHWA/FTA conformity determination on the transportation plan is to be used as the basis for tracking update cycles in nonattainment and maintenance areas.

Compliance and Recommendations

Billings and Great Falls are designated as Carbon Monoxide (CO) limited maintenance areas, and Missoula is designated as a nonattainment area for CO and Particulate Matter (PM_{10}). As a result, for all of the Montana MPOs, a plan update is required every four years after the plan's certification. The *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* and *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan Update* include language requiring a plan update at least every three years. The *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* does not include language specifying a required update cycle. However, the most recent Billings plan update preceding the 2005 administrative plan update was in 2000. Table 11.1 presents a summary of the MPOs' compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.1 Montana MPO Compliance With Metropolitan Plan Development Cycles

MPO	Existing Action	Compliance
Billings	2005 Update of 2000 RTP	No
Great Falls	3-year Update Cycle	Yes
Missoula	3-year Update Cycle	Yes

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendation 1 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, include language requiring a plan update every four years;
- **Recommendations 2 and 3 –** With the next amendment to or update of both the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan*, revise the required update cycle language from every three years to every four years.

Transportation Improvement Program Cycles and Scope

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU revised the update cycle for metropolitan TIPs from at least every "two years" to "four years," and from covering at least "three years" to "four years" of projects and strategies.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following revised requirement:

- **23 CFR Section 450.324(a) –** The MPO, in cooperation with the state(s) and any affected public transportation operator(s), shall develop a TIP for the metropolitan planning area. The TIP shall cover a period of no less than four years, be updated at least every four years, and be approved by the MPO and Governor.

The four-year frequency cycle and the four-year scope requirements go hand-in-hand, and must be implemented together for any metropolitan TIP adopted after July 1, 2007.

Compliance and Recommendations

The *Great Falls 2006-2010 TIP* includes language specifying that an update must occur at least every two years. Neither the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP* nor the *Billings Urban Area 2005-2009 TIP* includes language stating an update cycle. However, both programs are updated every one to two years. Table 11.2 shows a summary of the Montana MPOs compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.2 Montana MPO Compliance With TIP Development Cycles

MPO	Existing Action	Compliance
Billings	• Update at least every 2 years • Covers a 5-year period	Yes
Great Falls	• Update at least every 2 years • Covers a 5-year period	Yes
Missoula	• Annual Update • Covers a 5-year period	Yes

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 4 and 5 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *Billings Urban Area TIP* and the *Missoula TIP*, include language requiring a program update at least every four years and covering a scope of at least four years; and

- **Recommendation 6 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *Great Falls TIP*, revise required program update language from every two years to every four years and covering a scope of at least four years.

Metropolitan Plans – Environmental Mitigation

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU includes a new requirement that metropolitan transportation plans must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities to be developed in consultation with Federal, state and tribal wildlife; land management; and regulatory agencies.

The 23 CFR Section 450.104 includes the following definitions:

- **Environmental mitigation activities** means strategies, policies, programs, actions, and activities that, over time, will serve to avoid, minimize, or compensate for (by replacing or providing substitute resources) the impacts to or disruption of elements of the human and natural environment includes, for example, neighborhoods and communities, homes, and businesses, cultural resources, parks and recreation areas, wetlands and water sources, forested and other natural areas, agricultural areas, endangered and threatened species, and the ambient air. The environmental mitigation strategies and activities are intended to be regional in scope, and may not necessarily address potential project-level impacts.
- **Federal land management agency** means units of the Federal government currently responsible for the administration of public lands (e.g., U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service).
- **Indian Tribal government** means a duly formed governing body for an Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian Tribe, pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, Public Law 103-454.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following new requirement:

- **23 CFR Section 450.322(f) –** The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum include: 7) A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the metropolitan transportation plan. The discussion may focus on policies, programs, or strategies rather than at the project level. The discussion shall be developed in consultation with Federal, state, and tribal land managements, wildlife, and regulatory

agencies. The MPO may establish reasonable timeframes for performing this consultation.

The environmental mitigation requirement must be in place prior to MPO and state adoption and approval of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions. The existing language in the final rule provides flexibility to the MPOs regarding the content and level of detail of this discussion, based on available information and the level of interest within their respective areas.

Compliance and Recommendations

A discussion of potential environmental mitigation measures, developed in consultation with appropriate tribal, land management, and regulatory agencies, should be added to the existing transportation plans. The discussion could include a comprehensive list of entities consulted, outreach methods, and a set of potential mitigation measures associated with various project types and/or environmental impacts. Table 11.3 shows the Montana MPOs current compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.3 Montana MPO Compliance With Environmental Mitigation

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	No

Billings – The *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* includes a project goal to "*provide mitigation of impacts caused by the transportation system in adjacent land uses*." Supporting this goal, the plan also includes a guiding principle, which ensures that "*the transportation system is sensitive to and mitigates impacts to the environment, especially in the areas of air quality and noise*." Air quality is also one of the criteria considered in the project identification Priority Program. A general discussion regarding environmental mitigation strategies is not included, nor is there any indication that land and resource management agencies were consulted in development of the plan.

Great Falls – The Great Falls transportation plan includes policies, strategies, and actions supporting goals designed to "*assure that community standards and values, such as aesthetics and neighborhood protection*" are considered in system development. Examples of these policies are "*protect physical elements that contribute to individual identity of neighborhoods*" and "*protecting and enhancing the area's air quality,*" and protecting water quality through drainage practices. In addition, the plan recommends street standards follow context-sensitive design principles and solutions, which "*preserves and may even enhance environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area*." A general discussion regarding environmental mitigation strategies is not included, nor is there any

indication that land and resource management agencies were consulted in development of the plan.

Missoula – Missoula's plan includes various policy goals and objectives related to environmental mitigations and protecting resources or minimizing impacts, such as goals to "*enhance natural and social environment*" and "*….maintain or improve air quality*," along with various objectives related to *mitigating noise impacts, protecting environmentally sensitive areas, protecting water quality, minimize community and neighborhood disruption, utilize context sensitive design concepts, promote energy conservation in transportation, and consider needs of those that are transportation disadvantaged or underserved.* In addition, the alternatives screening process used in developing the plan had environmental impacts as one of the evaluation criteria that projects were screened against. A general discussion regarding environmental mitigation strategies is not included, nor is there any indication that land and resource management agencies were consulted in development of the plan.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 7, 8, and 9 –** Amend or update the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan* to include discussion on potential environmental mitigation measures and interagency consultation regarding such measures. This discussion could include descriptions of potential environmental sensitivities, a set of potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted, and the outreach methods and timing. Suggested methods to achieve this include the following:
  - If environmentally-sensitive locations within the planning area are known, a general map illustrating the environmentally-sensitive areas, developed in consultation with land management agencies, could be included in the plan.
  - The recommended major project list could be reviewed for proximity to known environmentally-sensitive areas, and then flagged as "potential environmental mitigations needed".
  - An outreach process outlining potential mitigation measures; agencies consulted; when they are consulted; and outreach methods used could be included for anticipated environmental sensitivities (i.e., wetlands, noise, storm water, etc).

New Consultations

Key Change

MPOs must consult "as appropriate" with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in developing long-range transportation plans. This new legislation expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring

interagency consultations in the transportation planning process that previously considered nonmetropolitan consultations.

The 23 CFR Section 450.104 includes the following definition:

- The MPO shall consult, as appropriate, with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the transportation plan. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate: 1) Comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps, if available; or 2) Comparison to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following new language:

- **23 CFR Section 450.316(b) –** In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and official responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including state and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements); or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities.
- **23 CFR Section 450.316(c) –** When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- **23 CFR Section 450.316(d) –** When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- **23 CFR Section 450.316(e) –** MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under Section 450.314.

These requirements must be met prior to MPO and state adoption and approval of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions. The language "as appropriate" and "to the maximum extent practicable" allows the MPOs flexibility in structuring activities for complying with this provision, and determining those consulted at a scale that best fits its respective area.

Compliance and Recommendations

The conformity provision of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 requires cooperation between transportation and air quality planning in an effort to attain National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Regulations

require that urban areas not in attainment or under maintenance status for common criteria pollutant standards perform a conformity analysis demonstrating any transportation plan or revisions not affecting air quality. Billings and Great Falls are designated as CO limited maintenance areas, and Missoula is designated as a nonattainment area for CO and PM_{10}. As a result, each of the regional transportation plans currently include a well documented air quality conformity analysis developed in accordance with the EPA guidelines and in consultation with MDT, the Montana DEQ, the FHWA, the FTA, and each MPO.

It will be necessary for each MPO to develop and document improved methods to expand interagency and tribal consultation in the transportation planning process. One such approach is to incorporate policies or goals of other agencies including MDT into the MPO regional transportation plans, to the extent possible, through review and discussion. These efforts could be combined with consideration of environmental data, inclusion of other agency personnel in transportation committees, and provision of adequate time for interagency comment on the transportation planning process and required documents. Table 11.4 shows the MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.4 Montana MPO Compliance With New Consultations

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	No

Billings – In addition to the documented air quality conformity analysis and consultation, the Billings plan built key transportation goals from the 2005 Growth Policy. The plan includes a guiding principle calling for the transportation and land use decisions to be "*mutually supportive*." To meet the SAFETEA-LU consultations requirement, the Billings plan should include a discussion describing the consultations process with other state, local, and tribal agencies.

Great Falls – In addition to the documented air quality conformity analysis and consultation, visions and goals in the Great Falls transportation plan were developed from the transportation element of the City-County Growth Policy. Transportation elements in the Missouri River Corridor Master Plan were also incorporated into the plan. Policies included in the plan recognize that transportation planning "*should remain a cooperative, participatory effort among citizens and the local, state, and Federal governments*"; and emphasize the need to be "*consistent with the goals and policies of the Transportation Element and Growth Policy*." Therefore, the Great Falls plan demonstrates a certain level of effort consistent with the SAFETEA-LU consultation requirements that could be more apparent

through some of the example suggestions provided under the recommendations section below.

Missoula – In addition to the documented air quality conformity analysis and consultation, the Missoula Plan contains relevant policy goals and objectives related to consultations with other agencies and players, such as *formalize intergovernmental partnerships in development of the proposed system, facilitate increased communication between government agencies and officials, and incorporate recommendations from other plans into the transportation plan recommendations*. The public involvement process for development of the plan included a steering committee made up of local and state agency representatives, and a stakeholder group representative of various transportation interests, including economic, environmental, freight, nonmotorized, transit, and development. In addition, specific known plans or policy directions, such as the Missoula County Growth Plan and the Missoula Greenhouse Gas-Energy Efficiency Plan, were reviewed for consistency with the transportation plan. Therefore, the Missoula plan demonstrates a certain level of effort consistent with the SAFETEA-LU consultation requirements that could be more apparent through some of the example suggestions provided under the recommendations section below.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 10, 11, and 12 –** Amend or update the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan* to demonstrate an appropriate level of consultation activities with relevant land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation" in developing long-range transportation plans. Suggestions for this activity include conducting and incorporating a discussion of the following activities:
  - Identify the relevant land management and resource agencies at initiation of an update process to be consulted through the update, and include listing of agencies consulted within the final plan;
  - Obtain and review any available plans or maps from such agencies to identify and highlight within MPO plan relevant elements or opportunities that demonstrate consistency between plans; and
  - Distribute draft products from the planning process directly to agencies for review and comment.

Consistency of Transportation Plan with Planned Growth and Development Plans

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU added a new element to the previous planning factors related to the environment to "promot[ing] consistency between transportation

improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns."

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following new requirements:

- **23 CFR Section 450.306(a) –** The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

This new requirement must be in place prior to MPO and state adoption/ approval of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions. It should be noted that the language "promoting consistency" does imply flexibility for each MPO to determine the appropriate agencies for coordination within their area. Agencies may include local governments responsible for land use decisions, economic development organizations within the area (if any), and state economic development plans (if any).

Compliance and Recommendations

The travel demand modeling conducted for each of the MPO plans includes an element of coordination with individuals knowledgeable of growth and development in each area. Local agency staff participates in this process, ensuring that growth assumptions used in the travel demand modeling process are consistent with local growth plans. Table 11.5 summaries the MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.5 Montana MPO Compliance With Consistency with Planned Growth and Development Plans

MPO	Compliance
Billings	Yes
Great Falls	Yes
Missoula	Yes

Billings – Key transportation goals from the Growth Policy were incorporated into the Billings transportation plan. The plan includes guiding principles calling for the transportation and land use decisions to be "*mutually supportive*"; implementing land use patterns to support the transportation system; and support a transportation network that will connect, yet recognize the "*integrity of the*

neighborhoods." While the Billings Plan includes elements meeting this requirement, suggestions are provided below to strengthen existing elements.

Great Falls – In the Great Falls region, goals from the recently completed growth policy were incorporated into development of the regional transportation plan. Policies included in the plan recognize that transportation planning "*should remain a cooperative, participatory effort among citizens and the local, state, and Federal governments*"; and emphasize the need to be "*consistent with the goals and policies of the Transportation Element and Growth Policy*." The Land Use Advisory Committee, formed to determine the distribution of future housing and employment growth used in the transportation plan, included members from the Great Falls City-County Planning, Great Falls City Building Department, and Great Falls City-County Health Department.

Missoula – The Missoula plan includes relevant policy goals and objectives regarding consistency between plans, such as *integrate transportation planning and land use planning*, *formalize intergovernmental partnerships in development of the proposed system, facilitate increased communication between government agencies and officials, and incorporate recommendations from other plans into the transportation plan recommendations*. In addition, the section on employment and population projections indicates that concepts within do not replace city and county land use plans, but are based on the methods used by the city and county land use planning efforts, including the Missoula County Growth Policy. The alternatives screening process used in developing the plan had both land use impacts and economic development as evaluation criteria that projects were screened against.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include:

- **Recommendation 13 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, include a discussion strengthening the relationship between transportation improvements and local planned growth and economic development patterns. This could be achieved by adding goals or guiding principles that explicitly identify incorporation of growth policy goals or formation of interagency partnerships.

Transportation System Safety and Security

Key Change

MDT would like to see the MPOs address safety at the local level similar to the State's approach with the CHSP – with this in mind, MDT would like to encourage coordination and cooperation with safety stakeholders throughout the transportation planning process at the local level, as well as inclusion of safety priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects that are specific to each localities' needs or concerns, and can be based on or tied to those found in the CHSP.

The methods MPOs use to address transportation system security and safety are new requirements. SAFETEA-LU calls for the security of the transportation system to be a stand-alone planning factor, signaling an increase in importance from

prior legislation, in which security was coupled with safety in the same planning factor. The safety planning factor should address priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the statewide strategic highway safety plan. The security element should address emergency and disaster preparedness, as well as homeland security.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following requirements pertaining to both transportation system safety and security:

- **23 CFR Section 450.306(e) –** In carrying out the metropolitan planning process, MPOs, states, and public transportation operators may apply asset management principles and techniques in establishing planning goals, defining TIP priorities, and assessing transportation investment decisions, including transportation system safety, operations, preservation, and maintenance, as well as strategies and policies to support homeland security and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users.
- **23 CFR Section 450.306(h) –** The metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, as specified in 23 U.S.C. 148, and other transit safety and security planning and review processes, plans, and programs, as appropriate.
- **23 CFR Section 450.322(h) –** The metropolitan transportation plan should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects for the MPA contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan required under 23 U.S.C. 148, as well as (as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users.

The final planning rule includes the following new requirements pertaining to transportation system safety:

- **23 CFR Section 450.306(a) –** The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation or projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users

The final planning rule includes the following new requirements pertaining to transportation system security:

- **23 CFR Section 450.306(a) –** The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation or projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.

These requirements must be met prior to MPO and state adoption/approval of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions. The language "as appropriate" in the provision for incorporating priorities, goals and countermeasure from the strategic highway safety plan and emergency relief and disaster plans supporting homeland security allows the MPOs flexibility in doing so, recognizing that such plans may not exist in all areas or be relevant to activities within each respective MPO area.

Safety Compliance and Recommendations

A major component of SAFETEA-LU is the added attention to the safety of the transportation system. Previous (as well as current) metropolitan plans have not addressed this element, and should be updated to incorporate appropriate strategies and policies for emergency preparedness and security of motorized and nonmotorized users. MDT completed its CHSP compliant with 23 U.S.C. 148 in March 2006. This CHSP addresses safety from a statewide perspective, and can be used as a starting point for the MPOs as an input in the regional planning process. However, the plan is limited when addressing some urban safety issues, and should not preclude the MPOs from identifying and addressing safety issues in their areas. It is important for the MPOs to involve safety stakeholders in their plan development processes. Table 11.6 shows current MPOs compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.6 Montana MPO Compliance With Transportation System Safety

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	No

Billings – A project goals in the Billings Plan is to develop a "*safe, efficient, and effective*" transportation system, and a related 2003 Growth Policy goal is to "*reduce traffic accidents*." As part of the needs analysis, the plan includes an assessment of high-accident locations based on MDT records. Therefore, the Billings plan demonstrates a certain level of effort consistent with the SAFETEA-LU requirements. In addition to existing elements, discussion on the CHSP should also be included.

Great Falls – The objectives, strategies, and actions included in the Great Falls transportation plan, such as to review accident history and initiate pilot traffic calming programs support the goals to provide a "*safe, efficient, accessible, and cost-effective*" transportation system. The plan also includes a crash analysis in its projects determination. The Great Falls plan demonstrates a certain level of effort consistent with the SAFETEA-LU requirements. In addition to existing elements, discussion on the CHSP should also be included.

Missoula – The Missoula plan includes a goal and associated objectives specifically addressing transportations improvements that "*minimize the occurrence of and the potential for accidents that might result in the loss of health, life, and property*." Objectives supporting this goal promote actions that increase auto, bicycle, and pedestrian safety. In addition, safety is a factor that was considered in the plan alternatives analysis. The Missoula plan demonstrates a certain level of effort consistent with the SAFETEA-LU requirements. In addition to existing elements, discussion on the CHSP should also be included.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 14, 15, and 16 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan*, a section(s) assessing the state of transportation safety in each region; identifying critical facilities and transportation elements; and outlining the role of transportation operators, the MPO, and MDT in ensuring the safety of the transportation system. The section should also include discussion addressing the statewide CHSP, and how they are approaching safety in their transportation planning processes at the local level.

Security Compliance and Recommendations

As opposed to previous legislation, SAFETEA-LU requires security to be a standalone section, rather than being included with safety. Previous (as well as current) metropolitan plans have not addressed this element, and should be updated to incorporate appropriate strategies and policies for emergency preparedness and security of motorized and nonmotorized users. Table 11.7 shows current MPOs compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.7 Montana MPO Compliance With Transportation System Security

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	No

Billings – The Billings plan does not include discussion specifically addressing transportation system security.

Great Falls – The Great Falls plan does not include discussion specifically addressing transportation system security.

Missoula – The Missoula plan includes a security-related objective related to consideration of "*demand associated with catastrophic events*" under its safety-related goal. A specific security-related goal and objectives should be included in the plan.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 17, 18, and 19 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan*, include a security-related goal and a section(s) assessing the state of transportation security in each region; identifying critical facilities and transportation elements; and outlining the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the security of the transportation system.

Operational and Management Strategies

Key Change

Metropolitan transportation plans shall include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods. This is consistent with previous legislation from TEA-21 and is getting increased emphasis in SAFETEA-LU, including the specification of revised rules.

The 23 CFR Section 450.104 includes the following definition:

- **Operational and management strategies** mean actions and strategies aimed at improving the performance of existing and planned transportation facilities to relieve congestion, and maximizing the safety and mobility of people and goods.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following revised requirements:

- **23 CFR 450.306(a) –** The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 7) Promote efficient system management and operation;
- **23 CFR Section 450.322(f) –** The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum, include: 3) Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods; 5) Assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve the existing and projected future metropolitan transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity increases based on regional priorities and needs. The metropolitan transportation plan may consider projects and strategies that address areas or corridor where current or projected congestion threatens the efficient functioning of key elements of the metropolitan area's transportation system.

The requirement for the inclusion of operational and management strategies must be met prior to MPOs' adoption of transportation plans addressing SAFETEA-LU provisions.

Compliance and Recommendations

In addition to traditional short- and long-range improvements, the transportation plans for the Great Falls Planning Board, Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, and the Yellowstone County Board of Planning include Transportation System Management (TSM) and TDM strategies, effectively meeting the SAFETEA-LU requirement for operational and management strategies. Table 11.8 shows current MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.8 Montana MPO Compliance With Operational and Management Strategies

MPO	Compliance
Billings	Yes
Great Falls	Yes
Missoula	Yes

Billings – The Billings plan includes multiple goals and associated guiding principles that address this requirement. Examples of such goals are to "*maximize the functional integrity*"; "*identify deficiencies and needs*," including TSM; *and travel demand management (TDM) approaches*." The prioritization process used in plan project identification considers systems operations and the effectiveness of TSM approaches. Also included are TDM and TSM strategies for implementation.

Great Falls – The Great Falls plan includes a policy goal addressing development and maintenance of an "*efficient, accessible, and cost-effective transportation system*." Supporting objectives and policies supporting this goal include developing a list of prioritized projects addressing problems and deficiencies, identification of TMS and TDM strategies, and preservation of the existing system. Corridor volumes, capacities, and level of service were evaluated as part of the alternatives analysis included in the plan. An evaluation of TDM strategies and a list of those recommended for the area are also included.

Missoula – The Missoula plan meets this requirement through its inclusion of a policy goal and objectives addressing system operations and management. Objectives cover congestion management, system-based investment decisions, corridor preservation, and consideration of ITS and TDM strategies. The alternatives screening process used in the plan evaluated potential projects based on their conformity with policy goals, considering such operations and management items. The plan also includes recommended TDM actions as an alternative approach to congestion management.

No recommendations are necessary for MPOs to comply with this requirement.

Participation Plan

Key Change

MPOs must develop and utilize a "Participation Plan" that provides reasonable opportunities for interested parties to comment on the content of the metropolitan transportation plan and metropolitan TIP. The "Participation Plan" includes several elements not included in the "Public Involvement Plan" required in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and TEA-21. These consider both new and revised requirements. New requirements consider consultation with interested parties. Revised rules in this process consider the use of visualization techniques and making public information available in electronically accessible format and means (which were not widely available previously).

The final planning rule includes the following definition:

- **23 CFR Section 450.104 –** Visualization techniques means methods used by states and MPOs in the development of transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders in a clear and easily accessible format such as maps, pictures, and/or displays, to promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation plans and programs.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following new (23 CFR Section 450.316(a)(1)) and revised (23 CFR Section 450.316(a)(3), 23 CFR Section 450.322(i), and 23 CFR Section 450.322 (j)) requirements:

- **23 CFR Section 450.316(a)(1) –** The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and the TIP; (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.
- **23 CFR Section 450.316(a)(3) –** The minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.
- **23 CFR Section 450.322(i) –** The MPO shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of

transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the participation plan developed under 450.316(a).

- **23 CFR Section 450.322(j) –** The metropolitan transportation plan shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.

These requirements must be met prior to MPOs' adoption of transportation plans and the TIP. Interested parties, as outlined in the legislation, include "*citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportations, representatives of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties*."

Participation Plan Consultations Compliance and Recommendations

The consultation requirement of the documented participation plan is intended to afford parties, who participate in the metropolitan planning process, a specific opportunity to comment on the plan prior to its approval. MPOs have adequate flexibility to develop and implement a participation plan that provides an appropriate list of interested parties for their individual metropolitan area. Table 11.9 shows current MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.9 Montana MPO Compliance With Participation Plan Consultation

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	Yes

Billings – Historically, Billings has developed and implemented public outreach or participation plans in support of their RTPs. Upon its review, a summary of compliance with this participation planning process will be outlined in this section.

Great Falls – As with Billings, Great Falls has developed and implemented public outreach or participation plans in support of its RTPs. Upon its review, a summary of compliance with this participation planning process will be outlined in this section, including an assessment of the inclusion of resource and land management agencies.

Missoula – In Missoula, the Public Participation Plan is a stand-alone document, separate from the transportation plan, last updated in June 2006. The plan was

designed in accordance to SAFETEA-LU regulations, and will be used to support the upcoming RTP update currently ongoing and expected to be completed in 2008. The plan documents the public outreach guidelines, tools, and policies. Information regarding methods of information dissemination – to whom and how, special outreach efforts, and an annual review process are included in the plan. Also included is a list of interested parties, civic, advocacy, service, and other organizations to which information is distributed. As an add-on to the elements defined in the public participation plan, a random telephone survey administered as part of the ongoing RTP update will be used to meet the SAFETEA-LU public participation requirements.

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 20 and 21 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* and the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, develop associated public participation plans for each region. The plan can build on elements of the existing public involvement plan, but should also include a detailed list of interested parties and outreach tools used to contact them. With some flexibility by region, this list should include, at a minimum:
  - Citizens,
  - Affected public agencies,
  - Representatives of public transportation employees,
  - Freight shippers,
  - Providers of freight transportation services,
  - Private providers of transportation,
  - Representatives of users of public transportations,
  - Representatives of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, and
  - Representatives of the disabled.

Participation Plan Visualization Techniques Compliance and Recommendations

Visualization techniques, such as maps and pictures, are used in Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula to convey project and program information to the public. Discussion or text regarding employment of such techniques is included in the Missoula Public Participation Plan, but not Billings or Great Falls. Table 11.10 shows current MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.10 Montana MPO Compliance With Visualization Techniques

MPO	Compliance
Billings	No
Great Falls	No
Missoula	Yes

Billings – The MPO has provided maps of existing transportation facilities, current projects such as the Heritage Trail Plan and the Inner Belt Loop Plan, and an interactive GIS mapping tool on its web site. The MPO uses visualization techniques to convey project- and program-specific information. However, use of these methods is not explicitly documented in the existing public involvement plan.

Great Falls – Static traffic counts and count location maps are available to the public through the MPO web site. As with Billings, the MPO uses visualization techniques to convey project- and program-specific information. However, use of these methods is not explicitly documented in the existing public involvement plan.

Missoula – The Missoula Public Participation Plan, updated June 2006, includes visualization techniques in its set of public outreach tools and techniques. Visualization techniques will be employed to inform the public about updates and amendments to the Missoula Urban Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan, and Unified Planning Work Program. In addition, transportation information, such as planning boundaries, traffic counts, and existing facilities, are readily available on the MPO web site.

While the Missoula is currently in compliance with this requirement, the following recommendations are suggested for Billings and Great Falls:

- **Recommendations 22 and 23 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* and the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, develop associated public participation plans for each region. The plan can build on elements of the existing public involvement plan, but also include text regarding the use of visualization techniques as a public outreach tool. Additional discussion and suggestions specifying techniques employed for types of projects or programs could be included as well. For example, use of artist renderings, computer simulation displays, or interactive GIS tools, when relevant, for corridor studies.

Transportation Plan and TIP Publication Compliance and Recommendations

The most recent long-range transportation plans and TIPs for the Great Falls Planning Board, Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, and Yellowstone County Board of Planning are available on their respective web sites. In addi-

tion, notifications of publications, ongoing updates, and various visualization tools are also available via the World Wide Web, meeting this requirement. Table 11.11 shows current MPO compliance with this requirement.

Table 11.11 Montana MPO Compliance With Publication of Plans and TIPs

MPO	Compliance
Billings	Yes
Great Falls	Yes
Missoula	Yes

Billings – The *Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* and *Billings Urban Area 2005-2009 TIP* are available via the World Wide Web.

Great Falls – The *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* and the *Great Falls 2006-2010 TIP* are available via the World Wide Web.

Missoula – The Missoula 2004 Transportation Plan, the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP*, and the *Missoula Transportation Public Participation Plan* are available via the World Wide Web.

While the Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula are currently in compliance with this requirement, the following recommendations are suggested for Billings and Great Falls:

- **Recommendations 24 and 25 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* and the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan*, develop associated public participation plans for each region. The newly developed public participation plan should include elements cited previously. Upon completion, a minimum public commend period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes, and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU specifies that the development of the annual listing "shall be a cooperative effort of the state, transit operator, and MPO," and also shall include two new project types, "investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities" for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following revised requirement:

- **23 CFR Section 450.322(a) –** In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the state, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.

This revised requirement for an annual listing must be in place prior to adoption of transportation plans and programs addressing SAFETEA-LU.

Compliance and Recommendations

The Great Falls Planning Board develops an annual listing of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year. This annual listing is available, by reference, in the offices of the Great Falls Planning Board. A list of obligated projects, including pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, are included in the *Billings Urban Area 2006-2009 TIP* and the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP*. Table 11.12 shows the compliance of each MPO with this requirement.

Table 11.12 Montana MPO Compliance With Annual Listings of Obligated Projects

MPO	Compliance
Billings	Yes
Great Falls	Yes
Missoula	Yes

While the Billings and Missoula MPOs are currently in compliance with this requirement, the following recommendation is suggested:

- **Recommendation 26 –** The list of obligated projects in the Great Falls region should be checked to verify inclusion of investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities.

Financial Plan

Key Change

SAFETEA-LU builds on the fiscal constraint requirements first introduced in ISTEA and TEA-21. In addition to maintaining fiscal constraint, SAFETEA-LU requires that system-level operations and maintenance are included in cost and revenue estimates. In addition, after December 11, 2007, all revenue and cost

estimates are to be reflected in "year of expenditure" dollars rather than "constant dollars." For outer years included in the plan, aggregate cost ranges or cost bands can be shown in the plan, as long as it is reasonable to expect that future funding sources support these ranges.

Requirement

The final planning rule includes the following language outlining new requirements:

- **23 CFR Section 450.322(f)(10) –** The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum include a financial plan that demonstrates how the adopted transportation plan can be implemented.
  - (i) For the purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonable expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.
  - (iv) In developing the financial plan, the MPO shall take into account all projects and strategies proposed for funding under title 23 U.S.C., Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 or with other Federal funds; state assistance; local sources; and private participation. Starting December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates that support the metropolitan transportation plan must use an inflation rate(s) that reflect "year of expenditure dollars," based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, state(s) and public transportation operator(s).
  - (v) For the outer years of the metropolitan transportation plan (i.e., beyond the first 10 years), the financial plan may reflect aggregate cost ranges/cost bands, as long as future funding source(s) is reasonable expected to be available to support the projected cost ranges/cost bands.

  The final planning rule includes the following language to clarify fiscal constraint requirements from previous legislation:

  - (vii) For illustrative purposes, the financial plan may *bus is not required to) include additional projects that would be included in the adopted transportation plan if additional resources beyond those identified in the financial plan were to become available.
  - (viii) In cases that the FHWA and the FTA find a metropolitan transportation plan to be fiscally constrained and a revenue sources is subsequently removed or substantially reduced (i.e., by legislative or administrative actions), the FHWA and the FTA will not withdraw the original determination of fiscal constraint; however, in such cases, the FHWA and the FTA will not act on an updated or amended metropolitan transportation plan that does not reflect the changed revenue situation.

These revised requirements must be in place prior to adoption of transportation plans and programs addressing SAFETEA-LU.

Compliance and Recommendations

Traditionally, systemwide operations and maintenance were considered in the TIP, but not long-range plans. In addition, it is the desire of the FHWA and the FTA for revenue and cost estimates to be reflected in "year of expenditure dollars." In recognition of the time to convert metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs to reflect this requirement, a grace period is granted until December 11, 2007. The use of cost bands or ranges for the outer years of the plan is intended to give MPOs flexibility to broadly define future transportation issues without predisposing a NEPA decision, while defining future funding sources at the planning level. Fiscal constraint requirement remain in place. Table 11.13 shows current MPO compliance with these requirements.

Billings – The *2005 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list. Projections should be adjusted to include systemwide operations and maintenance cost and revues in "year of expenditure" dollars. However, the financial plan included in the *2007 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, not reviewed for this study, does reflect year of expenditure dollars.

Great Falls – The *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list. Projections should be adjusted to include systemwide operations and maintenance cost and revues in year of expenditure dollars.

Missoula – The *2005 Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan* includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list. Projections should be adjusted to include systemwide operations and maintenance cost and revues in "year of expenditure" dollars.

Table 11.13 Montana MPO Compliance With Financial Plan

MPO	Compliance
Billings	Yes
Great Falls	No
Missoula	No

Recommendations for MPO compliance of this requirement include the following:

- **Recommendations 27 and 28 –** With the next amendment to or update of the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* and the *Missoula 2004 Urban Transportation Plan*, revise each financial plan to include systemwide operations and maintenance. Prior to December 11, 2007, update the financial plan to reflect year of expenditure dollars.

- **Recommendation 29 –** Verify that systemwide operations and maintenance were considered in the financial plan of the latest *2007 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*.

11.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The statutory implementation date for SAFETEA-LU compliance is July 1, 2007. On and after July 1, 2007, the FHWA and the FTA will take action on a new TIP developed in accordance to SAFETEA-LU provisions, even if the MPO has not yet adopted a new metropolitan transportation plan, as along as the underlying planning process is consistent with SAFETEA-LU requirements. While many elements of the existing regional transportation plans meet requirements, each MPO will need to conduct a plan amendment or update to reach full compliance, as shown in the sections above (see recommendations). For the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, the process is well-timed and in line with their regular update schedule (currently underway). However, for the Yellowstone County Board of Planning and the Great Falls Planning Board, a separate process will be needed. Any update or amendment to the MPO plans should also include language addressing compliance of TIP amendments. Tables 11.14, 11.15, and 11.16 summarize the SAFETEA-LU compliance of each of the three Montana MPOs.

Table 11.14 Yellowstone County Board of Planning SAFETEA-LU Compliance Review

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Metropolitan Plan Cycles	• Section 450.322(c) – The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every four years in air quality nonattainment areas and at least every five years in attainments areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall be updated at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every 5 years in attainment areas.	Not in compliance	• Most recent 2005 Update of 2000 RTP	• Include language requiring a plan update every 4 years
Transportation Improvement Program Cycles and Scope	• Section 450.324(a) – The MPO, in cooperation with the State(s) and any affected public transportation operator(s), shall develop a TIP for the metropolitan planning area. The TIP shall cover a period of no less than four years, be updated at least every four years, and be approved by the MPO and Governor….	Metropolitan TIPs shall be updated every 4 years and cover at least 4 years of projects and strategies.	In compliance	• 2-year update cycle covering a 5-year period	• Increase the required update cycle from 2 years to every 4 years • Increase the required scope from 5 years to 4 years
Environmental Mitigation	• Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum include: 7) A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the	Metropolitan transportation plans must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities to be developed in consultation with Federal, state and 5ribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.	Not in compliance	• Includes a project goal (and supporting guiding principle) addressing mitigation of impacts • Considers air quality as one of the criteria in the project identification Priority Program	• Include discussion on potential environmental mitigation measures and interagency consultation regarding such measures • Include descriptions of potential environmental sensitivities, a set of potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted and the outreach methods and timing.

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	metropolitan transportation plan….				For example: – If environmentally-sensitive locations within the planning area are known, include a map illustrating the environmentally-sensitive areas – Review the recommended major project list could be reviewed for proximity to known environmentally-sensitive areas and flag as "potential environmental mitigations needed" – Include an outreach process outlining potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted, when they are consulted, and outreach methods used could be included for anticipated environmental sensitivities
New Consultations	• Section 450.316(b) – In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and official responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including …) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. • Section 450.316(c) – When the MAP includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Indian Tribal	MPOs must consult "as appropriate" with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in developing long-range transportation plans. The new legislation expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring interagency consultations in the transportation planning process.	Not in compliance	• Develops air quality conformity analysis in accordance with EPA guidelines and in consultation with MDT, the Montana DEQ, the FHWA, the FTA, and each MPO • Builds key transportation goals from the 2005 Growth Policy • Includes a guiding principle calling for the transportation and land use decisions to be "*mutually supportive*"	• Conduct and incorporate a discussion of the following activities: – Identify the relevant land management and resource agencies at initiation of an update process to be consulted through the update, and include listing of agencies consulted within final plan – Obtain and review any available plans or maps from such agencies to identify and highlight within MPO plan relevant elements or opportunities that demonstrate

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	government(s) in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(d) – When the MAP includes Federal public lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(e) – MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d), of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under Section 450.314.				consistency between plans – Distribute draft products from the planning process directly to agencies for review and comment
Consistency with Planned Growth and Development Plans	• Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.	Metropolitan transportation plans must promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.	In compliance	• Incorporates key transportation goals from the Growth Policy • Includes guiding principles addressing the relationship between transportation and land use decisions	• Include a discussion strengthening the relationship between transportation improvements and local planned growth and economic development patterns

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Safety	• Section 450.306(h) – The metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan… • Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects for the MPA contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan…	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a safety planning factor addressing priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the statewide strategic highway safety plan. MDT would like to see the MPOs address safety at the local level similar to the State's approach with the CHSP – with this in mind, MDT would like to encourage coordination and cooperation with safety stakeholders throughout the transportation planning process at the local level, as well as inclusion of safety priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects that are specific to each localities needs or concerns and can be based on or tied to those found in the CHSP.	Not in compliance	• Incorporates of safety-related goals • Includes an assessment of high-accident locations based on MTD records in the needs analysis	• Assess the state of transportation safety in each region • Identify critical facilities and transportation elements • Outline the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the safety of the transportation system • Include discussion addressing the statewide CHSP
Security	• Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include…as well as (as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users. • Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation or projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 3) Increase the	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a stand-alone security planning factor addressing emergency and disaster preparedness, as well as homeland security.	Not in compliance		• Include a security objectives, strategies, and actions • Include a stand-alone section assessing the state of transportation security • Identify critical facilities and transportation elements • Outline the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the security of the transportation system

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.				
Operational and Management Strategies	• Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum, include: 3) Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods; 5) Assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve the existing and projected future metropolitan transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity increases based on regional priorities and needs….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.	In compliance	• Includes multiple goals and associated guiding principles that address this requirement • Considers systems operations and the effectiveness of TSM approaches in the prioritization process • Includes TDM and TSM strategies for implementation	
Participation Plan – Consultation	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for…. Section 450.322(i) – The MPO shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees… and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the	The participation plan shall provide parties who participate in the metropolitan planning process a specific opportunity to comment on the participation plan prior to its approval.	Not in compliance		• Develop public participation plan, building on elements of the existing public involvement plan • Include a detailed list of interested parties and outreach tools used to contact them

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	participation plan developed under 450.316(a).				
Participation Plan – Visualization Techniques	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and the TIP.	Required use of visualization techniques.	In compliance	• Provides maps of existing transportation facilities, current projects such as the Heritage Trail Plan and the Inner Belt Loop Plan • Provides an interactive GIS mapping tool on web site	• Include discussion on the use of visualization techniques as a public outreach tool in the public participation plan • Include suggestions specifying techniques employed for types of projects or programs
Participation Plan – Publication	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web; • Section 450.322(j) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.	Use the World Wide Web to make the transportation plan and TIP publicly available.	In compliance	• Provides the *Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan* via the World Wide Web • Provides the *Billings Urban Area 2005-2009 TIP* via the World Wide Web	• Upon completion of a public participation plan, a minimum public commend period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO • Provide copies of the approved participation plan to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and post on the World Wide Web
Annual List of Obligated Projects	• Section 450.322(a) – In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90	The development of the annual listing "shall be a cooperative effort of the state, transit operator, and	In compliance	• Includes a list of obligated projects, including pedestrian walkways and bicycle	

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.	MPO"; and also shall include two new project types: "investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities" for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year.		transportation facilities in the *Billings Urban Area 2006-2009 TIP*	
Financial Plan – Operations and Maintenance	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(i) – For the purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonable expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.	The financial plan shall include system-level operations and maintenance is included in cost and revenue estimates	In compliance	• The *2007 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, not reviewed for this study, includes systemwide operations and maintenance.	
Financial Plan – Year of Expenditure Dollars	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(iv) – In developing the financial plan, the MPO shall take into account all projects and strategies proposed for funding under…. Starting December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates that support the metropolitan transportation plan must use an inflation rate(s) that reflect "year of expenditure dollars," based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, State(s), and public transportation operator(s).	The financial plan shall include after December 11, 2007, all revenue and cost estimates are to be reflected in "year of expenditure" dollars rather than "constant dollars."	In compliance	• The *2007 Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan*, not reviewed for this study, reflects year of expenditure dollars.	

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Financial Plan – Projected Cost Ranges/Cost Bands (optional)	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(v) – For the outer years of the metropolitan transportation plan (i.e., beyond the first 10 years), the financial plan may reflect aggregate cost ranges/cost bands, as long as future funding source(s) is reasonable expected to be available to support the projected cost ranges/cost bands.	For outer years included in the plan, aggregate cost ranges or cost bands can be shown in the plan as long as it is reasonable to expect that future funding sources support these ranges.	n/a – optional		

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., April 2007.

Table 11.15 Great Falls Planning Board SAFETEA-LU Compliance Review

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Metropolitan Plan Cycles	• Section 450.322(c) – The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every four years in air quality nonattainment areas and at least every five years in attainments areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall be updated at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every 5 years in attainment areas.	In compliance	• 3-year update cycle	• Increase the required update cycle from 3 years to every 4 years
Transportation Improvement Program Cycles and Scope	• Section 450.324(a) – The MPO, in cooperation with the State(s) and any affected public transportation operator(s), shall develop a TIP for the metropolitan planning area. The TIP shall cover a period of no less than four years, be updated at least every four years, and be approved by the MPO and Governor….	Metropolitan TIPs shall be updated every 4 years and cover at least 4 years of projects and strategies.	In compliance	• 2-year update cycle covering a 5-year period	• Increase the required update cycle from 2 years to every 4 years • Decrease the required scope from 5 years to 4 years
Environmental Mitigation	Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum include: 7) A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the	Metropolitan transportation plans must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities to be developed in consultation with Federal, state, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.	Not in compliance	• Goals from growth policy incorporated into RTP • Land Use Advisory Committee	• Include discussion on potential environmental mitigation measures and interagency consultation regarding such measures. • Include descriptions of potential environmental sensitivities, a set of potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted and the outreach methods and timing. For example:

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	metropolitan transportation plan….				– If environmentally-sensitive locations within the planning area are known include a map illustrating the environmentally-sensitive areas. – Review the recommended major project list could be reviewed for proximity to known environmentally-sensitive areas and flag as "potential environmental mitigations needed." – Include an outreach process outlining potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted, when they are consulted, and outreach methods used could be included for anticipated environmental sensitivities.
New Consultations	• Section 450.316(b) – In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and official responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including …) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. • Section 450.316(c) – When the MAP includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in development of	MPOs must consult "as appropriate" with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in developing long-range transportation plans. The new legislation expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring interagency consultations in the transportation planning process.	Not in compliance	• Air quality conformity analysis developed in accordance with EPA guidelines and in consultation with MDT, the Montana DEQ, the FHWA, the FTA, and each MPO. • Visions and goals were developed from the transportation element of the City-County Growth Policy. • Transportation elements in the Missouri River Corridor Master Plan incorporated into the plan. • Policies emphasizing cooperation and participation in transportation planning and consistency with the Growth Policy.	• Conduct and incorporate a discussion of the following activities: – Identify the relevant land management and resource agencies at initiation of an update process to be consulted through the update and include listing of agencies consulted within final plan. – Obtain and review any available plans or maps from such agencies to identify and highlight within MPO plan relevant elements or opportunities that demonstrate consistency between plans.

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(d) – When the MAP includes Federal public lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(e) – MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d), of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under Section 450.314.				– Distribute draft products from the planning process directly to agencies for review and comment.
Consistency with Planned Growth and Development Plans	• Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.	Metropolitan transportation plans must promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.	In compliance	• Goals from growth policy incorporated into RTP • Land Use Advisory Committee	

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Safety	• Section 450.306(h) – The metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan… • Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects for the MPA contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan…	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a safety planning factor addressing priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the statewide strategic highway safety plan. MDT would like to see the MPOs address safety at the local level similar to the State's approach with the CHSP – with this in mind MDT would like to encourage coordination and cooperation with safety stakeholders throughout the transportation planning process at the local level, as well as inclusion of safety priorities, goals, countermeasures or projects that are specific to each localities needs or concerns and can be based on or tied to those found in the CHSP.	Not in compliance	• Objectives, strategies, and actions include accident history and traffic calming programs • Crash analysis used in project evaluation	• Assess the state of transportation safety in each region • Identifying critical facilities and transportation elements • Outlining the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the safety of the transportation system • Include discussion addressing the statewide CHSP
Security	• Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include…as well as (as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users. Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation or projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 3) Increase the	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a stand-alone security planning factor addressing emergency and disaster preparedness, as well as homeland security.	Not in compliance		• Include a security objectives, strategies, and actions • Include a stand-alone section assessing the state of transportation security • Identify critical facilities and transportation elements • Outline the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the security of the transportation system

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.				
Operational and Management Strategies	• Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum, include: 3) Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods; 5) Assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve the existing and projected future metropolitan transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity increases based on regional priorities and needs….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.	In compliance	• Goal, objectives, and policies that support: – Developing a list of prioritized projects addressing problems and deficiencies – Identifying TMS and TDM strategies – Preserving the existing system • Corridor volumes, capacities, and level of service were evaluated as part of the alternatives analysis • Evaluation of TDM strategies	
Participation Plan – Consultation	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for…. • Section 450.322(i) – The MPO shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees… and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the participation plan developed under 450.316(a).	The participation plan shall provide parties who participate in the metropolitan planning process a specific opportunity to comment on the participation plan prior to its approval.	Not in compliance		• Develop public participation plan, building on elements of the existing public involvement plan. • Include a detailed list of interested parties and outreach tools used to contact them

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Participation Plan – Visualization Techniques	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and the TIP.	Required use of visualization techniques.	In compliance	• Provides traffic counts and count location maps to the public via the MPO web site	• Include discussion on the use of visualization techniques as a public outreach tool in the public participation plan • Include suggestions specifying techniques employed for types of projects or programs
Participation Plan – Publication	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web. • Section 450.322(j) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.	Use the World Wide Web to make the transportation plan and TIP publicly available.	In compliance	• Provides the *2003 Great Falls Area Transportation Plan* via the World Wide Web • Provides the *Great Falls 2006-2010 TIP* via the World Wide Web.	• Upon completion of a public participation plan, a minimum public commend period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO • Provide copies of the approved participation plan to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and post on the World Wide Web.
Annual List of Obligated Projects	• Section 450.322(a) – In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s),	The development of the annual listing "shall be a cooperative effort of the State, transit operator, and MPO" and also shall include two new project types: "investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle	In Compliance	• Develops an annual listing of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year, which is available, by reference, in the	• Include CTEP projects in the next listing

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
	and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.	transportation facilities" for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year.		offices of the Great Falls Planning Board	
Financial Plan – Operations and Maintenance	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(i) – For the purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonable expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.	The financial plan shall include system-level operations and maintenance included in cost and revenue estimates	Not in compliance	• Includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list	• Revise financial plan to include systemwide operations and maintenance.
Financial Plan – Year of Expenditure Dollars	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(iv) – In developing the financial plan, the MPO shall take into account all projects and strategies proposed for funding under… Starting December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates that support the metropolitan transportation plan must use an inflation rate(s) that reflect "year of expenditure dollars," based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, State(s) and public transportation operator(s).	The financial plan shall include after December 11, 2007, all revenue and cost estimates are to be reflected in "year of expenditure" dollars rather than "constant dollars."	Not in compliance	• Includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list.	• Revise financial plan to reflect year of expenditure dollars prior to December 11, 2007.

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/ Improve Compliance
Financial Plan – Projected Cost Ranges/Cost Bands (optional)	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(v) – For the outer years of the metropolitan transportation plan (i.e., beyond the first 10 years), the financial plan may reflect aggregate cost ranges/cost bands, as long as future funding source(s) is reasonable expected to be available to support the projected cost ranges/cost bands.	For outer years included in the plan, aggregate cost ranges or cost bands can be shown in the plan as long as it is reasonable to expect that future funding sources support these ranges.	n/a – optional		• Show aggregate cost ranges or cost bands for outer years provided it is reasonable to expect that future funding sources support these ranges.

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., April 2007.

Table 11.16 Missoula Consolidated Planning Board SAFETEA-LU Compliance Review

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/Improve Compliance
Metropolitan Plan Cycles	• Section 450.322(c) – The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every four years in air quality nonattainment areas and at least every five years in attainments areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall be updated at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every 5 years in attainment areas.	In compliance	• 3-year update cycle	• Include language requiring a plan update every 4 years
Transportation Improvement Program Cycles and Scope	• Section 450.324(a) – The MPO, in cooperation with the State(s) and any affected public transportation operator(s), shall develop a TIP for the metropolitan planning area. The TIP shall cover a period of no less than four years, be updated at least every four years, and be approved by the MPO and Governor….	Metropolitan TIPs shall be updated every 4 years and cover at least 4 years of projects and strategies.	In compliance	• Annual update cycle covering a 5-year period	• Increase the required update cycle from 2 years to every 4 years • Increase the required scope from 5 years to 4 years
Environmental Mitigation	Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum include: 7) A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the	Metropolitan transportation plans must include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities to be developed in consultation with Federal, state, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.	Not in compliance	• Includes policy goals and objectives related to environmental mitigations and protecting resources or minimizing impacts • Includes environmental impacts as an evaluation criteria in the alternatives screening process	• Include discussion on potential environmental mitigation measures and interagency consultation regarding such measures • Include descriptions of potential environmental sensitivities, a set of potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted and the outreach methods and timing. For example:

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/Improve Compliance
	metropolitan transportation plan….				– If environmentally-sensitive locations within the planning area are known include a map illustrating the environmentally-sensitive areas – Review the recommended major project list could be reviewed for proximity to known environmentally-sensitive areas and flag as "potential environmental mitigations needed" – Include an outreach process outlining potential mitigation measures, agencies consulted, when they are consulted, and outreach methods used could be included for anticipated environmental sensitivities
New Consultations	• Section 450.316(b) – In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and official responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including …) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. • Section 450.316(c) – When the MAP includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in development of	MPOs must consult "as appropriate" with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in developing long-range transportation plans. The new legislation expands upon prior coordination requirements, requiring interagency consultations in the transportation planning process.	Not in compliance	• Develops air quality conformity analysis in accordance with EPA guidelines and in consultation with MDT, the Montana DEQ, the FHWA, the FTA, and each MPO • Contains policy goals and objectives related to consultations with other agencies • Includes a steering committee made up of local and state agency representatives and a stakeholder group representative of various transportation interests in the public involvement process • Reviews the *Missoula County Growth Plan* and the *Missoula Greenhouse Gas-Energy*	• Conduct and incorporate a discussion of the following activities: – Identify the relevant land management and resource agencies at initiation of an update process to be consulted thru the update and include listing of agencies consulted within final plan – Obtain and review any available plans or maps from such agencies to identify and highlight within MPO plan relevant elements or opportunities that demonstrate consistency between plans

New/Revised Requirements	New/Revised Legislation	Intent of Requirement	Current MPO Plan Condition	How MPO Plan Meets Requirement	Actions to Meet/Improve Compliance
	the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(d) – When the MAP includes Federal public lands, the MPO should appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. • Section 450.316(e) – MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d), of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under Section 450.314.			*Efficiency Plan* for consistency with the transportation plan	– Distribute draft products from the planning process directly to agencies for review and comment
Consistency with Planned Growth and Development Plans	• Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;	Metropolitan transportation plans must promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.	In compliance	• Includes relevant policy goals and objectives regarding consistency between plans • Bases employment and population projections on the methods used by the city and county land use planning efforts including the *Missoula County Growth Policy* • Includes land use impacts and economic development evaluation criteria in the alternatives screening process	• Include a discussion strengthening the relationship between transportation improvements and local planned growth and economic development patterns

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Safety	• Section 450.306(h) – The metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan… • Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects for the MPA contained in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan…	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a safety planning factor addressing priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects contained in the statewide strategic highway safety plan. MDT would like to see the MPOs address safety at the local level similar to the State's approach with the CHSP – with this in mind MDT would like to encourage coordination and cooperation with safety stakeholders throughout the transportation planning process at the local level as well as inclusion of safety priorities, goals, countermeasures or projects that are specific to each localities needs or concerns and can be based on or tied to those found in the CHSP.	Not in compliance	• Includes a goal and supporting objectives specifically addressing safety • Considers safety in the plan alternatives analysis	• Assess the state of transportation safety in each region • Identify critical facilities and transportation elements • Outlining the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the safety of the transportation system • Include discussion addressing the statewide CHSP
Security	• Section 450.322(h) – The metropolitan transportation plan should include…as well as (as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users. • Section 450.306(a) – The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation or projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 3) Increase the	Metropolitan transportation plans should include a stand-alone security planning factor addressing emergency and disaster preparedness as well as homeland security.	Not in compliance	• Includes a security-related objective	• Include a security objectives, strategies, and actions • Include a stand-alone section assessing the state of transportation security • Identify critical facilities and transportation elements • Outline the role of transportation operators, MPO, and MDT in ensuring the security of the transportation system

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	security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;				
Operational and Management Strategies	• Section 450.322(f) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum, include: 3) Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods; 5) Assessment of capital investment and other strategies to preserve the existing and projected future metropolitan transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity increases based on regional priorities and needs….	Metropolitan transportation plans shall include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.	In compliance	• Includes a policy goal and objectives addressing system operations and management • Evaluates potential projects based on their conformity with policy goals, considering such operations and management items as part of the alternatives screening process • Includes recommended TDM actions as an alternative approach to congestion management	
Participation Plan – Consultation	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for…. Section 450.322(i) – The MPO shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees… and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the	The participation plan shall provide parties who participate in the metropolitan planning process a specific opportunity to comment on the participation plan prior to its approval.	In compliance	• Designed June 2006 participation plan update in accordance to SAFETEA-LU regulations • Documents the public outreach guidelines, tools, and policies. Information regarding methods of information dissemination – to whom and how, special outreach efforts, and an annual review process • Includes a list of interested parties, civic, advocacy, service and other organizations to which information is distributed • Will administer random telephone survey as part of the ongoing RTP update	

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	participation plan developed under 450.316(a).				
Participation Plan – Visualization Techniques	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and the TIP.	Required use of visualization techniques.	In compliance	• Includes visualization techniques in its set of public outreach tools and techniques • Provides planning boundaries, traffic counts, and existing facilities on the web site	
Participation Plan – Publication	• Section 450.316(a)(1) – The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web; • Section 450.322(j) – The metropolitan transportation plan shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.	Use the World Wide Web to make the transportation plan and TIP publicly available.	In compliance	• Provides the *Missoula 2004 Transportation* Plan via the World Wide Web • Provides the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP* via the World Wide Web • Provides the *Missoula Transportation Public Participation Plan* via the World Wide Web	
Annual List of Obligated Projects	• Section 450.322(a) – In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90	The development of the annual listing "shall be a cooperative effort of the State, transit operator, and	In compliance	• Includes a list of obligated projects, including pedestrian walkways and bicycle	

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	calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.	MPO" and also shall include two new project types: "investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities" for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year.		transportation facilities in the *Missoula 2006-2010 TIP*	
Financial Plan – Operations and Maintenance	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(i) – For the purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonable expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.	The financial plan shall include system-level operations, and maintenance is included in cost and revenue estimates.	Not in compliance	• Includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list	• Revise financial plan to include systemwide operations and maintenance
Financial Plan – Year of Expenditure Dollars	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(iv) – In developing the financial plan, the MPO shall take into account all projects and strategies proposed for funding under… Starting December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates that support the metropolitan transportation plan must use an inflation rate(s) that reflect "year of expenditure dollars," based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, state(s), and public transportation operator(s).	The financial plan shall include after December 11, 2007, all revenue and cost estimates are to be reflected in "year of expenditure" dollars rather than "constant dollars."	Not in compliance	• Includes a fiscally-constrained financial plan and illustrative list	• Revise financial plan to reflect year of expenditure dollars prior to December 11, 2007

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Financial Plan – Projected Cost Ranges/Cost Bands (optional)	• Section 450.322(f)(10)(v) – For the outer years of the metropolitan transportation plan (i.e., beyond the first 10 years), the financial plan may reflect aggregate cost ranges/cost bands, as long as future funding source(s) is reasonable expected to be available to support the projected cost ranges/cost bands.	For outer years included in the plan, aggregate cost ranges or cost bands can be shown in the plan as long as it is reasonable to expect that future funding sources support these ranges.	n/a – optional		

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., April 2007.