

## **Appendix A**

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# **Public and Agency Involvement Materials**



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Comment #1

MDT Response #1

Old Highway 312 Corridor Study  
Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

1a

As a daily user of 312. It is very difficult to see eastbound traffic (motorcycles) crossing the bridge at 312 & Nahvis when you are in a small or midsize car. This bridge railing blocks the view until you are poking into Hwy 312.

I don't know if elevating the approach is in the plans but it should help as the Nahvis approach is a grade

1b

Also the approach at Fairy Rd and 312 is treacherous to travel north on Fairy if you are east on 312. In the winter the ice and grade has made me take evasive action on a couple of occasions to avoid rear-end collisions.

1a

Thank you for your comment. Option 8 would involve minor rehabilitation of the Yellowstone River Bridge, including replacement of the existing barrier rail.

1b

Thank you for your comment. The study recommends continued observation of safety performance, traffic operations, and adjacent development for intersections within the corridor. Targeted improvements could be used to address issues like the ones you mention.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: John Bedford  
Address: 5927 Schwab Plaza  
Shepherd MT 59079  
Email: jbedford@yahoo.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.



Comment #2

MDT Response #2

Old Highway 312 Corridor Study  
Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

2

I live in Ballantine and I enjoy riding my bike. Expanding the shoulder on the 312 corridor would allow me to ride my bike on 312. ~~also~~ A striped bike lane would be beneficial. If there are rumble strips on the shoulder we couldn't ride our bike on the shoulder.

I support alternate modes of transportation. The sidewalks are a great need. These improvements would make our community a better place to live and safer.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Liana Susott  
Address: P.O. Box 43  
Worden, MT 59089  
Email: ~~liana@bigskygames.com~~ liana@bigskygames.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.



2

Thank you for your comment. Option 2.a involves shoulder widening within the corridor and Option 6 includes construction of sidewalks in Huntley and at an existing road/rail crossing in Worden to improve safety and accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians. If shoulder widening is forwarded from this study, MDT will consider appropriate rumble strip placement to maximize safety for all users.

Comment #3

MDT Response #3

Old Highway 312 Corridor Study  
Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

In the survey I have looked at the intersection of "Y" of the road from Huntley & Hwy 312. It would require a left turn lane for the best grain & cattle trucks. There is not very much room for 2-3 trucks to wait in line to turn & the sight or vision here is limited. I suggest looking at Road 2 intersection with better visual clearance & more room for a longer left turn lane. In reality the road to the "Y" could end at 2nd Street. I would think a safer entrance & exit could be developed the best pricing ground.

3

3

Thank you for your comment.

Option 3.b identifies realignment of the intersection Northern Avenue intersection with Highway 312 to improve sight distance and accommodate passenger vehicle and large vehicle turning movements.

If this option is forwarded from the study, MDT could consider realigning to a T-intersection at the existing N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue intersection as illustrated in Figure 11.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Sydney Gabel  
Address: 5054 N 4th Rd  
Huntley, MT 59037  
Email: Sydney.Gabel@gmail.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.



Comment #4

MDT Response #4



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT  
BILLINGS REGULATORY OFFICE  
2602 FIRST AVENUE NORTH, ROOM 309  
POST OFFICE BOX 2256  
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59103-2256

May 12, 2016

RECEIVED  
MAY 17 2016  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

4

Regulatory Branch  
Montana State Program  
Corps No. **NWO-2016-01031-MTB**

Subject: Old Highway 312 Planning Study

Mr. Tom Kahle  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Mr. Kahle:

Reference is made to your request for comments regarding the Old Highway 312 Planning Study located on Montana Old Highway 312 between highway 312 and US 87 to the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange in Yellowstone County, Montana.

Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army permits are required for the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Isolated waters and wetlands, as well as man-made channels and ditches, may be waters of the United States, which must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

It is unclear from the information provided what jurisdictional waters, if any, will be impacted. If your final design prescribes the placement of fill material in any of the jurisdictional areas described above, please submit an application form prior to doing any work. The application can be found at <http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/Missions/RegulatoryProgram/Montana.aspx>. We will determine the type, if any, of permit required.

Work in an aquatic site should be shown on a map identifying the Quarter Section, Township, Range and County, Latitude and Longitude, Decimal Degrees (datum NAD 83), and the dimensions of work in each aquatic site. Include a delineation of special aquatic sites such as wetlands or pool and riffle complexes that will be impacted. Any loss of an aquatic site may require mitigation. Mitigation requirements will be determined during the Department of the Army permitting review.

If you have any questions, please call me at (406) 657-5910, and reference File No. **NWO-2016-01031-MTB**.

Sincerely,  
**SMITH.BRIAN.R.**  
1085310085  
Brian R. Smith  
Project Manager

Digitally signed by SMITH.BRIAN.R.1085310085  
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=DoD,  
ou=PR, email=USA,  
cn=SMITH.BRIAN.R.1085310085  
Date: 2016.05.12 10:58:38 -0600

4

Thank you for your comment. If a project is forwarded from this study, MDT will coordinate with resource agencies to minimize environmental impacts to the extent practicable and secure all necessary permits.



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Public and Agency Involvement Plan

June 2015



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## 1.0 Introduction

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has identified a need for a corridor study on Old Highway 312 (Highway 312) outside of Billings. Highway 312 connects the communities of Huntley, Shepherd, and Worden with Billings. The area has experienced substantial growth in recent years, and the influx of commuters on the system has increased traffic and congestion.

The purpose of the study is to develop a comprehensive, long-range plan for managing the corridor and determining what, if anything, can be done to improve the corridor based on needs, public and agency input, and financial feasibility.

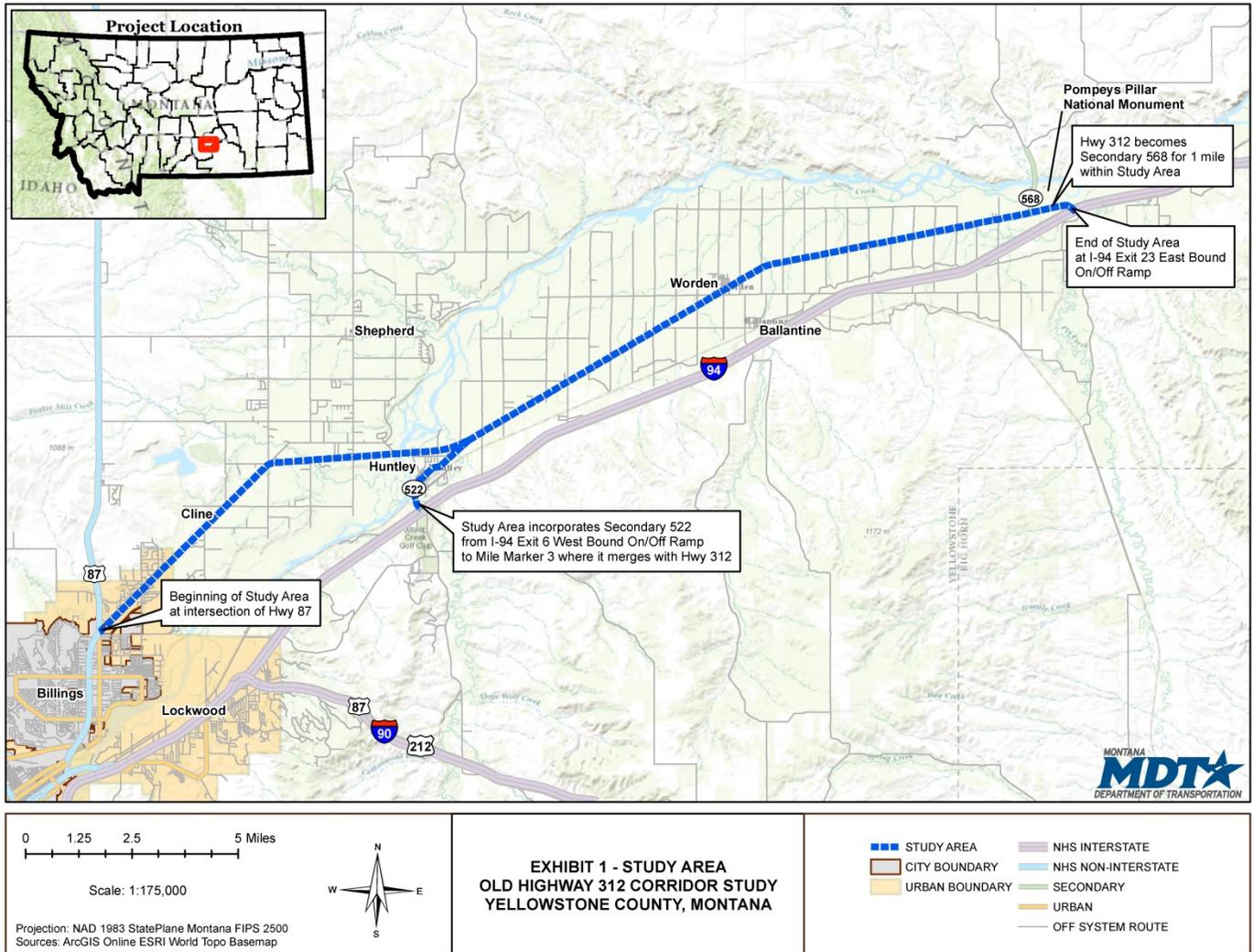
### 1.1 Study Area

The Highway 312 corridor is located in south central Montana in Yellowstone County. The study area extends from its western terminus at the intersection of Highway 312/US Highway 87 to its eastern terminus at the I-94 Interchange near the Pompeys Pillar National Monument. Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 approximately one mile before the Pompeys Pillar Interchange. The study area also includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange west bound on/off ramp, a distance of approximately 3 miles. The study area includes a 200-foot buffer from centerline along both sides of the roadway (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor. Figure 1 illustrates the study area.

### 1.2 Goal of Public and Agency Involvement Plan

The primary goal of this plan is to provide opportunities for members of the public, stakeholders, and resource agency representatives to learn about the process, review information about the corridor study, and provide input throughout the planning effort. In support of this goal, the following sections identify procedures that will guide the public and agency involvement effort.

Figure 1 Study Area



## 2.0 Study Contacts

Contact information for MDT and the consultant will be provided in all published materials.

### **Stefan Streeter, MDT District Administrator**

Montana Department of Transportation  
Billings District Office  
424 Morey Street  
PO Box 20437  
Billings, MT 59104-0437  
406.252.4138  
[sstreeter@mt.gov](mailto:sstreeter@mt.gov)

### **Tom Kahle, MDT Project Manager**

Montana Department of Transportation  
Statewide and Urban Planning  
2960 Prospect Avenue  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001  
406.444.9211  
[tkahle@mt.gov](mailto:tkahle@mt.gov)

### **Sarah Nicolai, Consultant Project Manager**

DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
406.324.7412  
[snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com)

## 3.0 Media Coordination

Announcements will be developed by DOWL and advertised by MDT at least three weeks before informational meetings. Advertisements will announce the meeting location, time, and date; the format and purpose of the meetings; and the locations where documents may be reviewed. The *Billings Gazette*, *Huntleyproject.net*, and the *Last Best News* may carry display advertisements.

MDT may also issue press releases to local radio and television stations announcing informational meetings. Specific media outlets will be identified during the course of the study as appropriate.

## 4.0 Study Website

DOWL will develop content for a website to be hosted by MDT at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/Hwy312/>. The website will provide a description of the planning effort, public involvement opportunities, study contacts, links to available documents, and an anticipated study schedule.

## 5.0 Document Availability

### 5.1 Newsletters and Meeting Materials

DOWL will develop two newsletters for the study. The first newsletter will be issued at the time of the first informational meeting and will introduce the study and describe its purpose, illustrate the study area and study components, and describe key findings from the existing and projected conditions report. The second newsletter will be distributed at the time of the second informational meeting and will present potential improvement options and potential impacts and mitigation strategies. DOWL will also develop meeting materials for each informational meeting, including agendas, static exhibits, and other presentation materials. Print copies of newsletters and meeting materials will be available at each of the two informational meetings hosted for this study. MDT will publish electronic versions of newsletters and meeting materials on the study website following the meetings (at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/Hwy312/>). Print and/or electronic copies of newsletters will also be distributed to the study mailing list.

### 5.2 Reports

MDT will publish electronic versions of reports on the study website. Print copies of the draft corridor study report will be available at the MDT Rail, Transit, and Planning Division Office (2960 Prospect Avenue; Helena, MT). Print copies of the report may also be made available at the following locations.

- MDT Billings District Office (424 Morey Street; Billings, MT 59104-0437)
- City of Billings/Yellowstone County Planning & Community Services (2825 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue N, 4th Floor, Billings, MT 59101)

## 6.0 Coordination and Meetings

### 6.1 Advisory Committee

The study advisory committee (AC) will be composed of representatives from MDT, the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and FHWA. AC members will be asked to provide feedback on all study documents; prioritize study needs and objectives; guide responses to public input; and assess study progress. AC meetings will generally be scheduled monthly for the duration of the study period. AC members will discuss study progress, analysis methodologies, and any issues or concerns that arise during the study. The AC will also review study documentation before publication.

### 6.2 Informational Meetings

Two informational meetings will be held during the course of the study. The first informational meeting will be held part-way through the planning process after the consultant has evaluated environmental, social, and land use conditions and conducted crash and traffic analyses within the study area. During the first meeting, the consultant will introduce the study, present findings from the existing and projected conditions report, and discuss issues and concerns in the study area.

The purpose of the second meeting will be to discuss the needs and objectives for the study area and present the range of potential improvement options. Members of the public will be asked to provide feedback on potential improvement options.

Comments will be considered throughout the planning process. A public and agency comment period will occur following publication of the draft study report. All comments will be considered before the report is finalized.

### 6.3 Resource Agency Coordination

MDT will host a single resource agency meeting at the MDT offices in Helena, with conference call arrangements at the MDT Billings District Office and via a conference call line, as appropriate. The purpose of the meeting will be to present findings from the draft environmental scan report and existing and projected conditions report. Resource agency representatives will be asked to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the documents and identify initial avoidance areas, mitigation needs, and opportunities.

### 6.4 Stakeholders

In advance of each informational meeting, DOWL will coordinate with interested stakeholders to assist in determining existing and projected conditions as well as needs and issues within the study corridor. DOWL will identify stakeholders based on feedback from AC members. Potential stakeholders include BNSF, National Park Service, and business owners along the Highway 312 corridor. Stakeholders will be asked to provide insight on needs and opportunities within in the study area, and comment on study reports.

## 7.0 Public, Agency, and Stakeholder Comments

Public, resource agency, and stakeholder comments are welcome throughout the planning process. Written comments may be submitted by mail to Sarah Nicolai, DOWL, 1300 Cedar Street, Helena, MT 59601; by email to [snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com); or online at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/Hwy312/>.

## 8.0 Accessibility

The State of Montana attempts to provide accessible information and services to all individuals. MDT will employ the following measures for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.

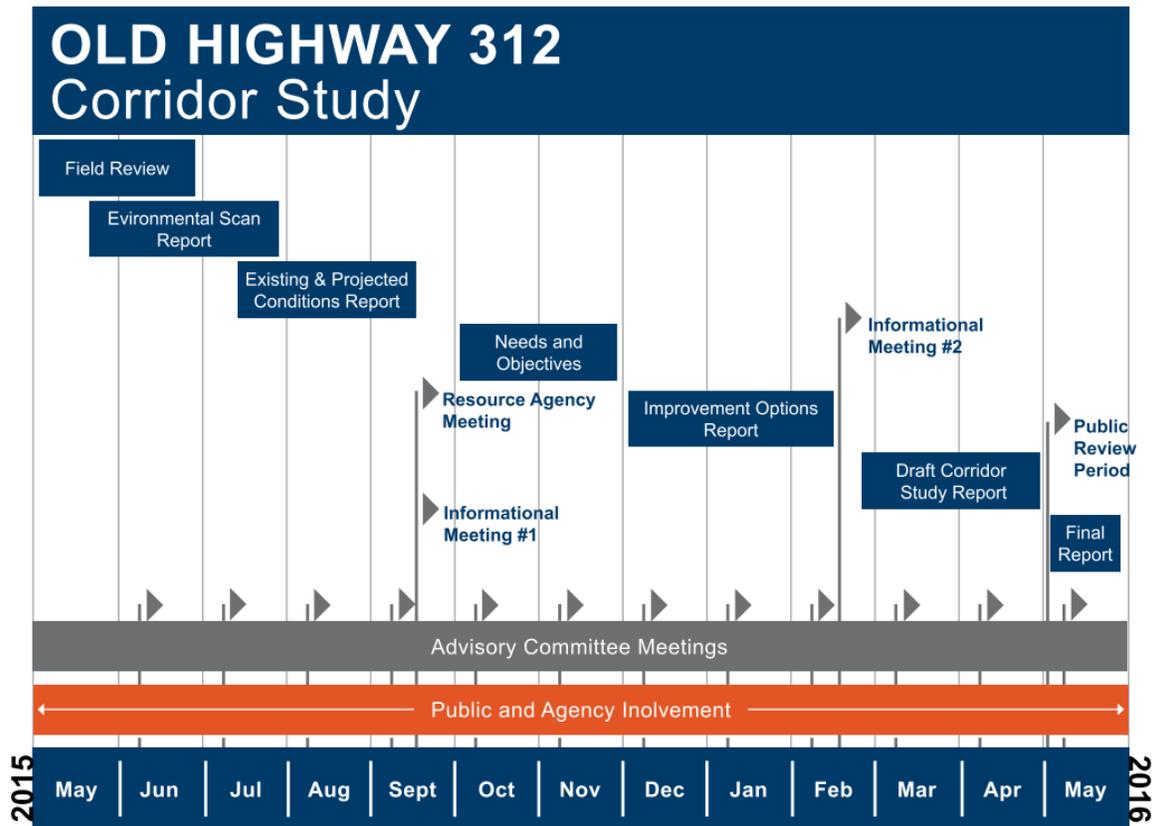
- MDT will host informational meetings in locations that are accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- MDT and the consultant will confer with the leaders of the communities and representative organizations about how best to involve traditionally underserved populations.

MDT and the consultant will communicate effectively at the informational meetings by avoiding technical jargon and exercising appropriate conduct and judgment. Alternative accessible formats of study materials will be provided upon request.

## 9.0 Study Schedule

The Old Highway 312 Corridor Study began in May 2015 and is expected to be completed by the end of May 2016. Figure 2 illustrates the anticipated study schedule.

Figure 2 Anticipated Study Schedule



## Office Locations

### ALASKA

Anchorage  
Juneau  
Fairbanks  
Ketchikan  
Kodiak  
Palmer

### ARIZONA

Tempe  
Tucson

### COLORADO

Golden  
Gunnison  
Montrose

### MONTANA

Billings  
Bozeman  
Butte  
Great Falls  
Helena  
Miles City

### NORTH DAKOTA

Dickinson

### OREGON

Bend

### WASHINGTON

Redmond

### WYOMING

Gillette  
Lander  
Laramie  
Sheridan

## MEETING MINUTES

<b>Date:</b>	October 14, 2015	<b>Start Time:</b> 6:00 p.m.	<b>End Time:</b> 8:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Huntley Project High School 1477 Ash Street, Worden, MT 59088		<b>Attendees:</b>
<b>Project:</b>	Old Highway 312 Corridor Study		Noted within the minutes and on the attached sign-in sheets.
<b>Project Number:</b>	DOWL: 4638.11557.01		
<b>Subject:</b>	Informational Meeting #1		

### Introduction

An informational meeting for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study was held on Wednesday, October 14, 2015, at the Huntley Project High School at 1477 Ash Street in Worden, Montana. The meeting was attended by the following advisory committee representatives.

Tom Kahle	MDT – Multimodal Planning
Gary Neville	MDT – Billings District
Scott Walker	City of Billings
Nik Griffith	DOWL
Sarah Nicolai	DOWL
Will Trimbath	DOWL

Twenty-nine (29) members of the public signed the sign-in sheets. Additionally, two members of the public arrived late or left early and did not sign in.

### Media Coordination and Newsletter

The informational meeting was advertised in the *Billings Gazette* on October 4th and 11th and the *Yellowstone County News* on October 2nd and 9<sup>th</sup>. A press release was sent to media outlets on October 6<sup>th</sup>, and the Montana.gov e-calendar was updated with the meeting date. The study newsletter was published to the study website at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents> and e-mailed to the study mailing list. Copies of the newsletter were also provided at the meeting.

### Presentation

DOWL representatives Sarah Nicolai and Will Trimbath presented the corridor study planning process, emphasizing public involvement as a major component. Ms. Nicolai summarized existing and projected transportation conditions within the study area and the study schedule. Mr. Trimbath discussed environmental and cultural resources which may present constraints and opportunities in the planning process. A copy of the presentation is appended to this memorandum.

## **Discussion Period**

A discussion period was held following the presentation to allow members of the public to provide input or request clarification about the study. Ms. Nicolai responded to public questions and comments. Topics are summarized below. Figure 1 illustrates specific locations where issues and concerns were identified during and immediately after the meeting.

### **Figure 1      Areas of Concern - Informational Meeting #1**

#### *Pompeys Pillar Interchange*

The public perceives that the interchange at Pompeys Pillar connecting Highway 312 to I-94 is poorly signed and potentially unsafe. Drivers unfamiliar with the interchanges may be unsure of which ramp connects to the interstate, potentially leading to driving the wrong way down an access ramp.

#### *Roundup Signage*

An attendee requested improved signage near the intersection of Highway 312 and US 87 to indicate the route to Roundup. It was noted that passenger vehicles and commercial trucks often become lost because they miss the turnoff.

### *Funding Sources*

An attendee asked about potential funding sources for any proposed projects. Ms. Nicolai explained that funding is limited because Highway 312 is an off-system route. Later in the planning process, the study will identify potential funding sources for improvement options including safety and bridge funds.

### *Highway 312 Intersections*

Attendees noted concerns at multiple intersections along Highway 312 throughout the study corridor involving sight distance, congestion, lack of turn bays, and perceived safety issues. The following specific intersections were noted.

- Highway 312 and Northern Avenue (Huntley)
- Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue/Secondary 522 (Huntley)
- Highway 312 and unpaved road (Huntley)
- Highway 312 and 16<sup>th</sup> Road (Worden)
- Highway 312 and 15<sup>th</sup> Road (Worden)
- Highway 312 and McIntyre Drive (west of the Shepherd Road turnoff)
- Highway 312 and N. 4<sup>th</sup> Road (at the Miller-Coors facility east of Huntley)

### *Visibility*

In addition to sight distance issues noted at specific intersections, an attendee noted that dust from the adjacent gravel road to the south limits visibility on Highway 312 from Worden to Huntley. Visibility is also limited at the Yellowstone River Bridge immediately west of Huntley due to the height of bridge barriers.

### *School-related Traffic Issues*

Multiple attendees mentioned that during the school year (specifically at the beginning and end of school days) intersections near Huntley Project Schools in Worden are congested and potentially unsafe due to drivers ignoring posted signs and operating vehicles at high speeds.

### *Roadway Width and Geometry*

Multiple attendees commented on narrow road widths at the following locations in the study area:

- near the Custer Coulee railroad crossing at N. 4<sup>th</sup> Road,
- along Secondary 522, and
- on Highway 312 from Worden to Pompeys Pillar.

During harvest season, narrow road width is especially noticeable due to beet trucks travelling the corridor. Attendees mentioned that in multiple places, turn bays would improve access and safety. An attendee also requested consideration of improvements at the S-curve on Secondary 522 in Huntley.

### *Relocations and Eminent Domain*

An attendee asked if there would be a need to relocate homes as there are many residences less than 200 feet from Highway 312 within the study corridor. Ms. Nicolai explained the next step in the study would be to identify a potential range of improvements within the study corridor, and that MDT had not yet determined if there is a need to widen the roadway. MDT

would address potential needs for right-of-way acquisition as part of any future projects in the corridor.

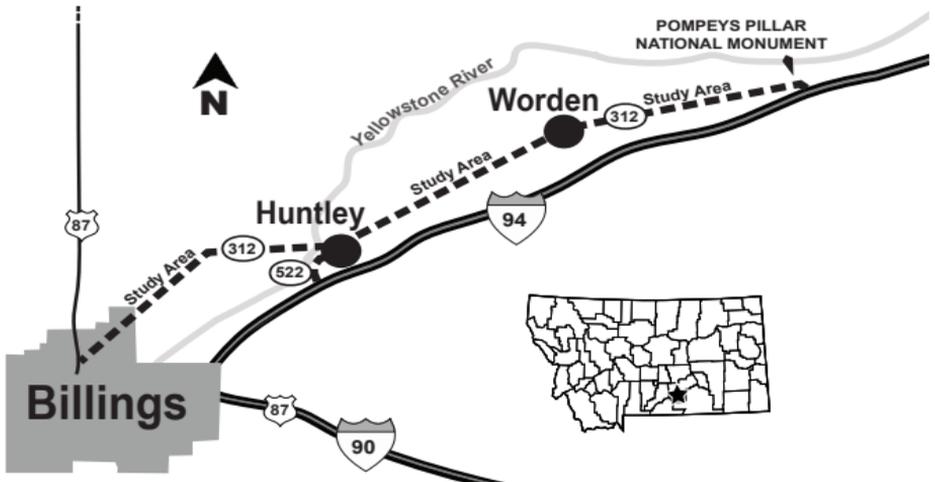
### **Written Comments**

Twenty-one (21) written comments were received and addressed topics including the need for wider shoulders and turn bays, improvements at the Highway 312 intersections with Secondary 522 and 15<sup>th</sup> Road, rutting and drainage issues, safety, the need for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, high vehicular speeds and volumes, and truck/agricultural traffic. Copies of written comments are included at the end of the memorandum.

## To Discuss Old Highway 312 Corridor Planning Study

The Montana Department of Transportation is conducting an informational meeting to discuss the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study, a pre-environmental study of approximately 26 miles of Highway 312 from U.S. Highway 87 through Huntley and Worden to where it becomes Secondary 568 near the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and including a portion of Secondary 522.

The meeting will be held in Worden on Wednesday, Oct. 14, at the Huntley Project School (1477 Ash Street). A presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by an informal discussion. The study team will explain the planning study process, present information and gather public feedback on issues and concerns within the study area.



This meeting is open to the public and attendance is encouraged. MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any department service, program or activity. For reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact Sarah Nicolai at (406) 324-7412 at least two days prior to the meeting.

Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request by contacting the Office of Civil Rights, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-9229; fax (406) 444-7243, or e-mail to [aflesch@mt.gov](mailto:aflesch@mt.gov). Those using a TTY may call (800) 335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.

Comments may be submitted in writing at the meeting; by mail to Sarah Nicolai, DOWL, 1300 Cedar Street, Helena, MT 59601; by email to [snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com); or online at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>

Please indicate comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.







# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #1

October, 14, 2015



Name	Organization/Title	Address	City, State, Zip	Email
Will Trimbath	DOWL	922 HAUSER BLVD	HELENA, MT 59601	wtrimbath@dowl.com
Steve Nixon		7704 Hwy 312	Billings, MT	NIXON SANDT@HOTMAIL.COM
Warren & Carol Holmes		237 Hwy 312	Huntley, MT	w.holmes@nemont.net
Carole Zahler		1508 Clark Ave	Warden, MT 59088	Czahler@huntley.k12.mt.us
Erroy Balch		2056 - N 4th Rd	Huntley, MT 59037	
Gary Karst		1657 East I Rd	Ballantyne, mt 59006	
Pam Murrill		1685 Robson Ln	Huntley, MT 59037	pmurrill@msn.com
Don Murrill		1685 Robson Ln	Huntley, mt. 59037	" " " "
Laura Lee Anderson		3048 Hwy 312	Billings, MT 59105	landerson@180com.net
Dan Vogel		2112 S 13th	Ballantyne, mt 59006	
Nick Ritz		5147 McIntyre Dr	Billings, mt 59105	CarolynRitz41@yahoo.com
Will Suralski		778 West G Road	Huntly, MT 59037	wsuralski@nemont.net
Ron Reed		2602 N 18th Rd	Warden, MT	bigred@tctwest.net
Jack Toogood		P.O. Box 44	Warden, mt	





# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #1

October, 14, 2015



Name	Organization/Title	Address	City, State, Zip	Email
Sydney Gabel	Billings City Council	2057 N 4th Rd	Huntley MT 59037	Sydney.gabel@gmail.com
John P. Homan		726 Aquarius Pl	Billings MT 59105	DP.Homan7@aol.com
Joy Eshleman	Warden Fire & EMS	2337 N. 12th Rd	Warden, MT 59088	John2Joy@Nemont.net
GARY NEVILLE	MDT - BILLINGS ENG. SERV ENG		BILLINGS, MT	gneville@mt.gov
Ed Weidinger		2007 S 13th Rd	Ballantine MT 59006	
JAN Coffman - Gene Bohlen	Box 8	5650 Yellowstone Trail	Huntley MT	
Scott Walker	c/c PLNG.		Billings	
Judy Killen	Yellowstone County News	PO BOX 130	Huntley MT 59037	info@yellowstonecountynews.com
Amy Wilson		7444 US Highway 312	Billings MT 59105	willeewilson@gmail.com
Don Hofer		3345 DUBER LAKE	Billings MT 59105	hofer@Billingsford.com



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

## STUDY DESCRIPTION

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has identified a need for a corridor study on Old Highway 312 (Highway 312) outside of Billings.

The goal of the study is to assess current and projected conditions in the Highway 312 corridor and identify options to address corridor needs. The study will analyze transportation and environmental conditions within the corridor and attempt to minimize the cost of improvement options while considering and avoiding areas of environmental and public concern. The study process will document existing and projected conditions; analyze potential impacts; identify constraints and mitigations; gather public, resource agency, and stakeholder input; and provide recommendations for improvements.

This study is a planning-level evaluation of the study area. It is not a design, maintenance, or construction project. Depending on need and funding availability, improvement options may be forwarded from this study and developed into projects at a later date.

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### PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING!

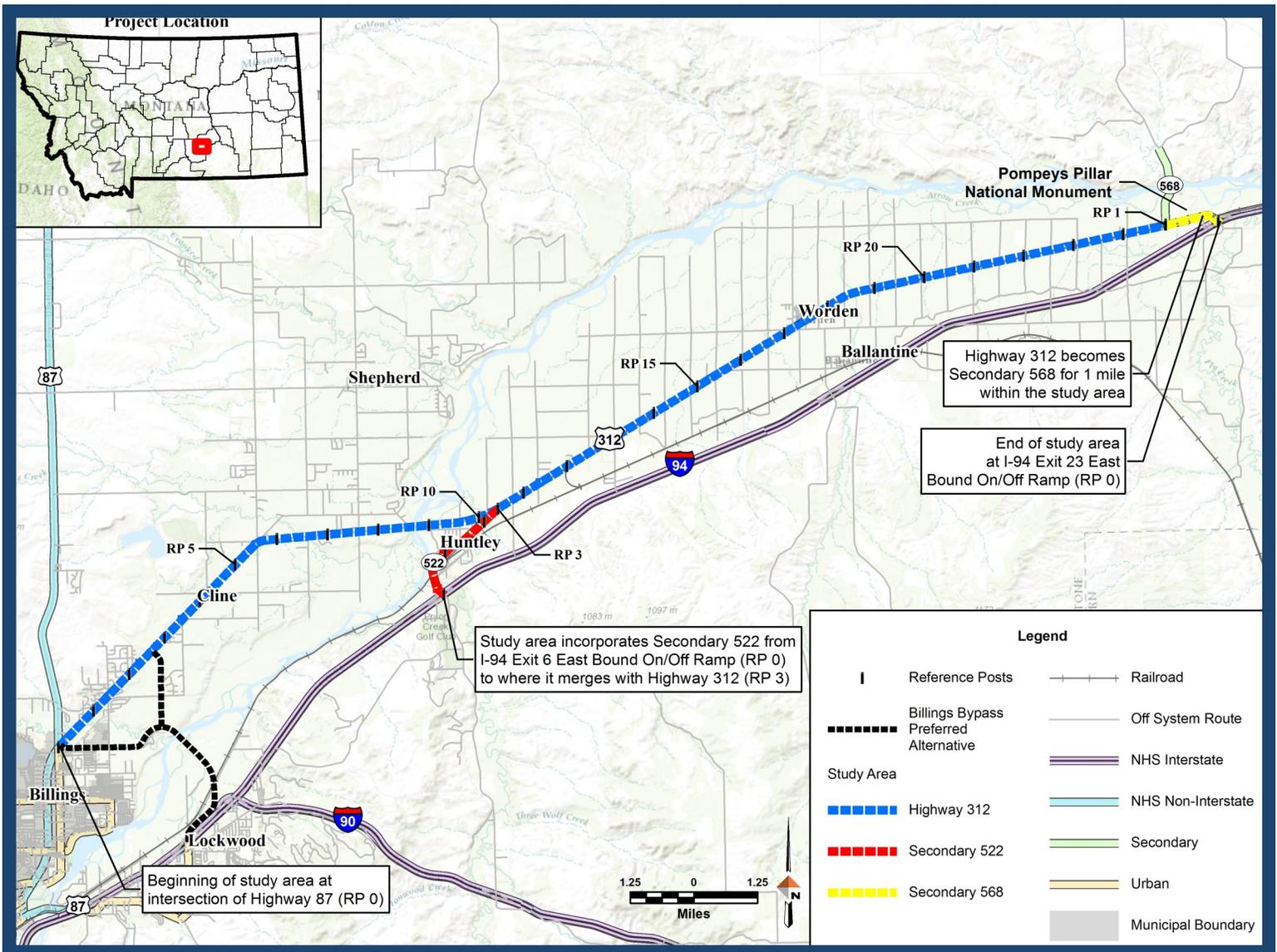
Wednesday,  
October 14, 2015,  
at 6:00 p.m.  
Huntley School  
1477 Ash Street  
Worden, MT



## STUDY AREA

Highway 312 is located in southcentral Montana in Yellowstone County and connects the communities of Huntley, Shepherd, and Worden with Billings. The study area includes Highway 312, starting at its intersection with US 87 (but not including the intersection) and traveling approximately 26 miles northeast through the communities of Huntley and Worden. Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 approximately one mile before the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and the study area continues to and includes the interchange. The study area also includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange west bound on/off ramp, a distance of approximately 3 miles.

## STUDY AREA



## EXISTING AND PROJECTED TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS

Findings presented in the table below are drawn from the draft existing and projected conditions report. Additional information is provided at the study website (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312>).

Key Findings	
<b>Bridges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five bridges in the study area are candidates for rehabilitation/repair.</li> </ul>
<b>Bicycle/ Pedestrian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apart from a crosswalk at Barkemeyer Park in Huntley, there are no dedicated bicycle or pedestrian facilities along Highway 312, Secondary 522, or Secondary 568 within the study area.</li> </ul>
<b>Drainage/ Pavement Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient drainage occurs along Secondary 522 and specifically at the Secondary 522 intersection with Nahmis Road near Barkemeyer Park.</li> <li>Rutting occurs in the wheel paths of Highway 312, Secondary 522, and Secondary 568.</li> <li>Transverse cracking occurs consistently along the entire corridor.</li> <li>The ride index for Secondary 568 and 522 is considered fair.</li> </ul>
<b>Geometrics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four of 13 horizontal curve locations do not meet current MDT design criteria.</li> <li>Eleven of 37 vertical curve locations do not meet current MDT design criteria.</li> <li>Foreslopes and backslopes in the two-lane portions of the corridor do not meet current MDT design criteria.</li> <li>Mature trees, unprotected bridge rails, culvert ends, and parallel irrigation ditches occur within the clear zone.</li> <li>Guardrail within the corridor is generally not compliant with current MDT design criteria.</li> <li>Several areas lack slope protection and have inadequate clear zone distance.</li> </ul>
<b>Crash History</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas identified with high potential for crash reduction for both total crashes and severe crashes occur near RP 4, 6, 9, 12, and 15 along Highway 312, RP 0.5 along Secondary 568, and RP 0, 1, and 2 along Secondary 522.</li> <li>Multiple abnormal crash pattern types occur within the corridor.</li> </ul>
<b>Traffic Volumes and Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Segments 2 and 3 currently operate at LOS D in 2015, and are projected to operate at LOS D or LOS E by 2035 (after construction of the Billings Bypass project).</li> <li>Intersections 1 (Highway 312 and Dover Road), 2 (Highway 312 and Hoskins Road), and 3 (Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road) are projected to operate at LOS D by 2035 (after construction of the Billings Bypass project).</li> </ul>



## STUDY CONTACTS

**Stefan Streeter**  
MDT Billings District  
Administrator  
406-252-4138  
sstreeter@mt.gov

**Tom Kahle**  
MDT Project Manager  
406-444-9211  
tkahle@mt.gov

**Sarah Nicolai**  
DOWL Project Manager  
406-324-7412  
snicolai@dowl.com

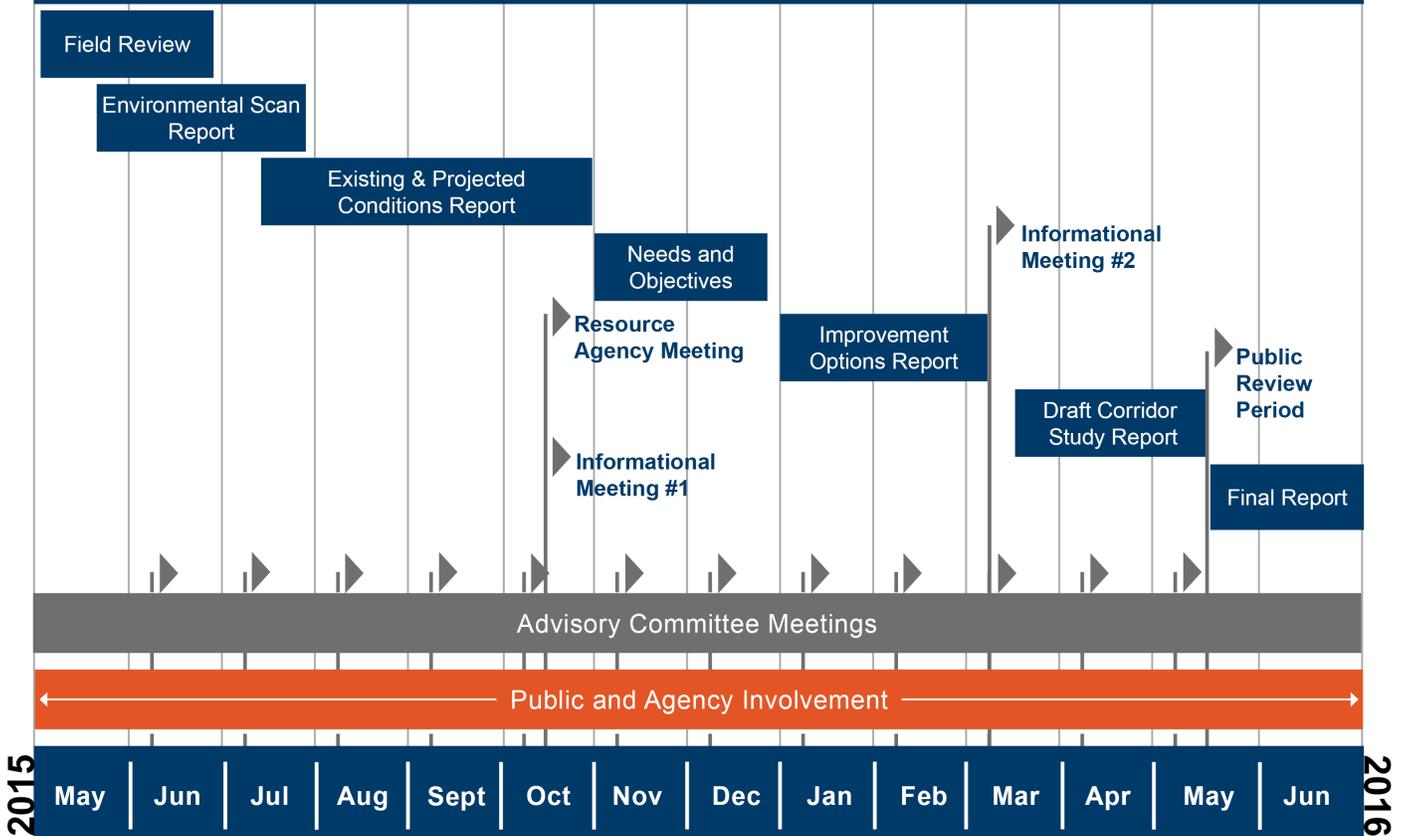
## INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

An informational/public input meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 14, 2015**, at the Huntley School, 1477 Ash Street, in Worden, MT. We encourage you to attend and provide feedback about issues and concerns in the corridor.

Please visit the study website (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312>) for more information on upcoming involvement opportunities.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any service, program, or activity of the department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provide upon request. For more information, please call Sarah Nicolai at (406) 324-7412 or Montana Relay at 711.

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study





# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Informational Meeting #1

October 14, 2015



# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS



# Title VI Considerations



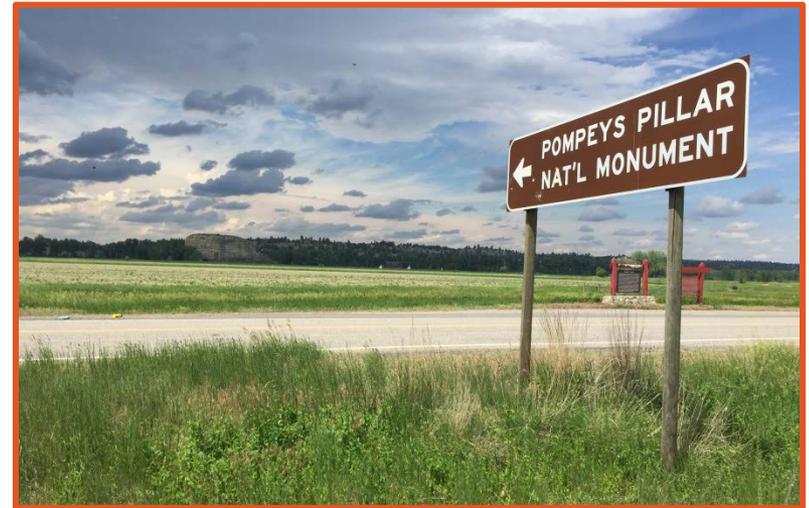
This meeting is held pursuant to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which ensures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination on the basis of a protected status under any MDT program or activity.

# Meeting Format

## Presentation

- Overview of planning study process
- Key findings from draft existing and projected conditions report
  - Transportation Conditions
  - Environmental Conditions

## Discussion Period



# What is a Planning Study?



A planning study is conducted before design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for an individual project.

# Background & Goal of Study

- Increasing traffic and congestion along the corridor
- Study will identify options to address needs



# Planning Study Overview

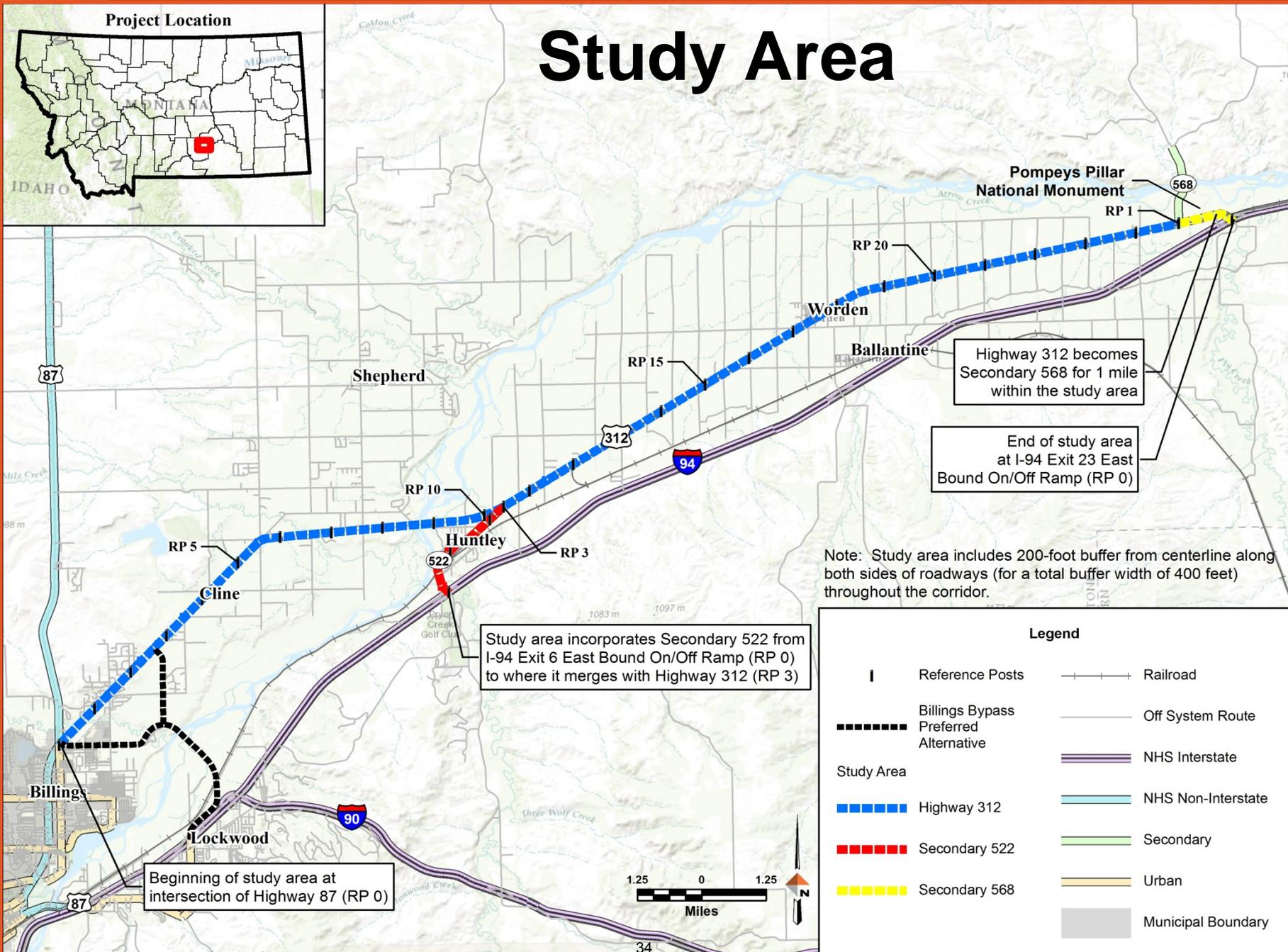
- Existing and Projected Conditions
- **Informational Meeting #1**
- Resource Agency Meeting
- Needs and Objectives
- Improvement Options
- Informational Meeting #2
- Draft Study Report
- Public/Agency Review Period
- Final Study Report



**Project Location**



# Study Area



Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 for 1 mile within the study area

End of study area at I-94 Exit 23 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0)

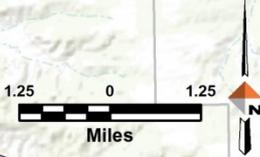
Study area incorporates Secondary 522 from I-94 Exit 6 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0) to where it merges with Highway 312 (RP 3)

Beginning of study area at intersection of Highway 87 (RP 0)

Note: Study area includes 200-foot buffer from centerline along both sides of roadways (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor.

**Legend**

- Reference Posts
- Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative
- Study Area Highway 312
- Study Area Secondary 522
- Study Area Secondary 568
- Railroad
- Off System Route
- NHS Interstate
- NHS Non-Interstate
- Secondary
- Urban
- Municipal Boundary



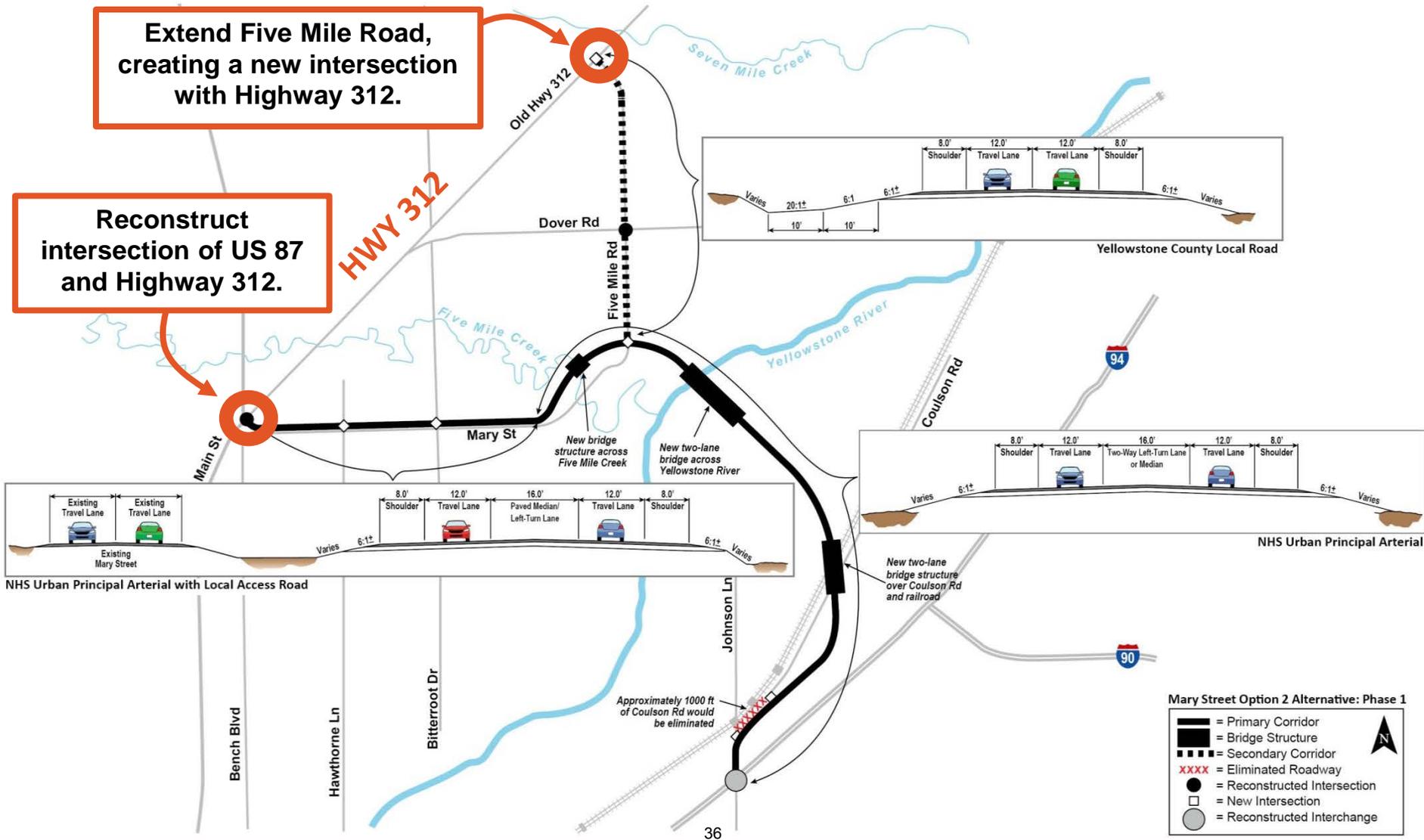
# Current and Future Projects

Route	Project	Date
Highway 312	Arrow Creek - NE of Hardin	2003
	Safety Improvement – Old US 312	2003
	D5 – Scour Protection	2003
	<b>2001–Safety Improvement–W of Huntley</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
	NE of Billings – NE	2003
	<b>2012 Scour Mitigation</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
	<b>Fly Creek – Pompey’s Pillar</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
Secondary 522	Huntley Interchange – East	2004
	Pryor Ck – 1 M S Huntley/MT 11-1	2011
	<b>RR Xing – FAS 522 – Huntley</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
Secondary 568	BNRR – 2 KM W Pompey’s Pillar	2003
	Pompey’s Pillar Intch – West	2003

# Billings Bypass Project

Extend Five Mile Road, creating a new intersection with Highway 312.

Reconstruct intersection of US 87 and Highway 312.



Mary Street Option 2 Alternative: Phase 1



# TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

# Roadway Overview

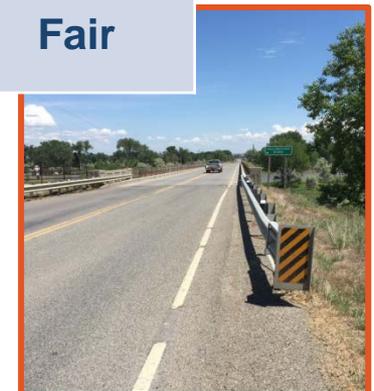
- Classification
  - Highway 312: minor arterial
  - Secondary 522: major collector
  - Secondary 568: major collector
- Primarily 2-lane and 4-lane sections; intermittent 5-lane and 3-lane sections with turn bays
- Right-of-way widths vary from 60 feet to 260 feet away from the centerline



# Structures

Route	Location	Feature Crossed	Year Built (Recon)	Structure Condition
Highway 312	5M SW HUNTLEY	SEVEN MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	2M W OF HUNTLEY	TWELVE MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	HUNTLEY	YELLOWSTONE RIVER	1949	Fair
	2M E OF HUNTLEY	CUSTER COULEE	1928 (1939)	Fair
Secondary 522	1M S HUNTLEY	HUNTLEY CANAL	1967	Fair

5 of 12 structures are candidates for repair or replacement  
(fair condition)



# Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- No dedicated facilities in study area
- Shoulder width varies from 0 to 8 feet
- Study area is part of the Lewis & Clark Trail bicycle route/arterial bike route
- Pedestrian crossing located at Barkemeyer Park
  - Does not meet current MDT standards



# Drainage Conditions

- Rural drainage is generally sufficient
  - Graded slopes direct drainage towards constructed convergences or natural drainage patterns
  - Highway runoff is directed to adjoining shoulders
- Standing water noted at Barkemeyer Park

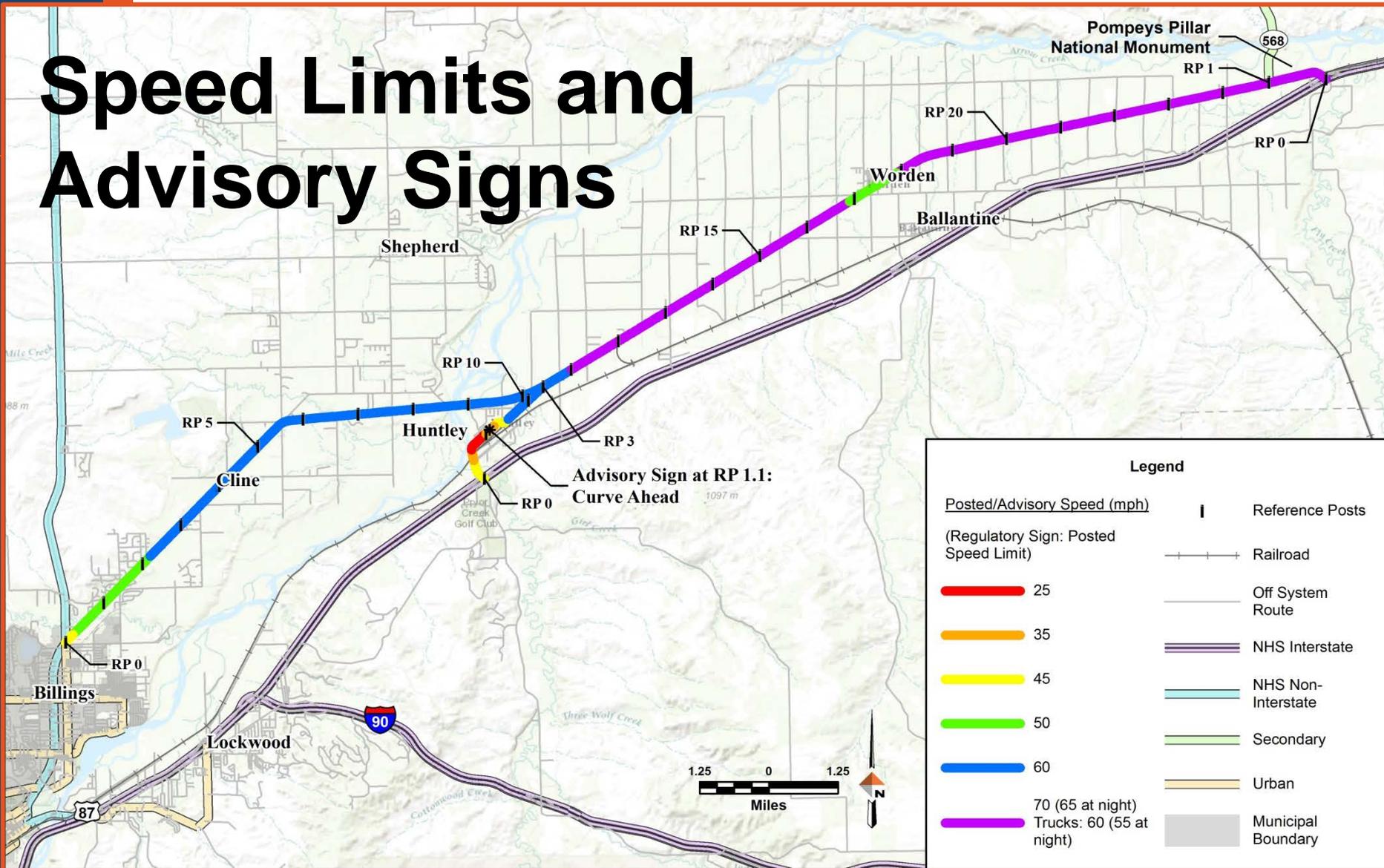


# Pavement Conditions

- Rutting observed throughout corridor
  - Generally worse within the 2-lane sections, compared to the 3 and 5-lane sections
- Fair ride index ratings for Secondary 568 and 522
- Transverse cracking
  - Generally 75-200 foot intervals

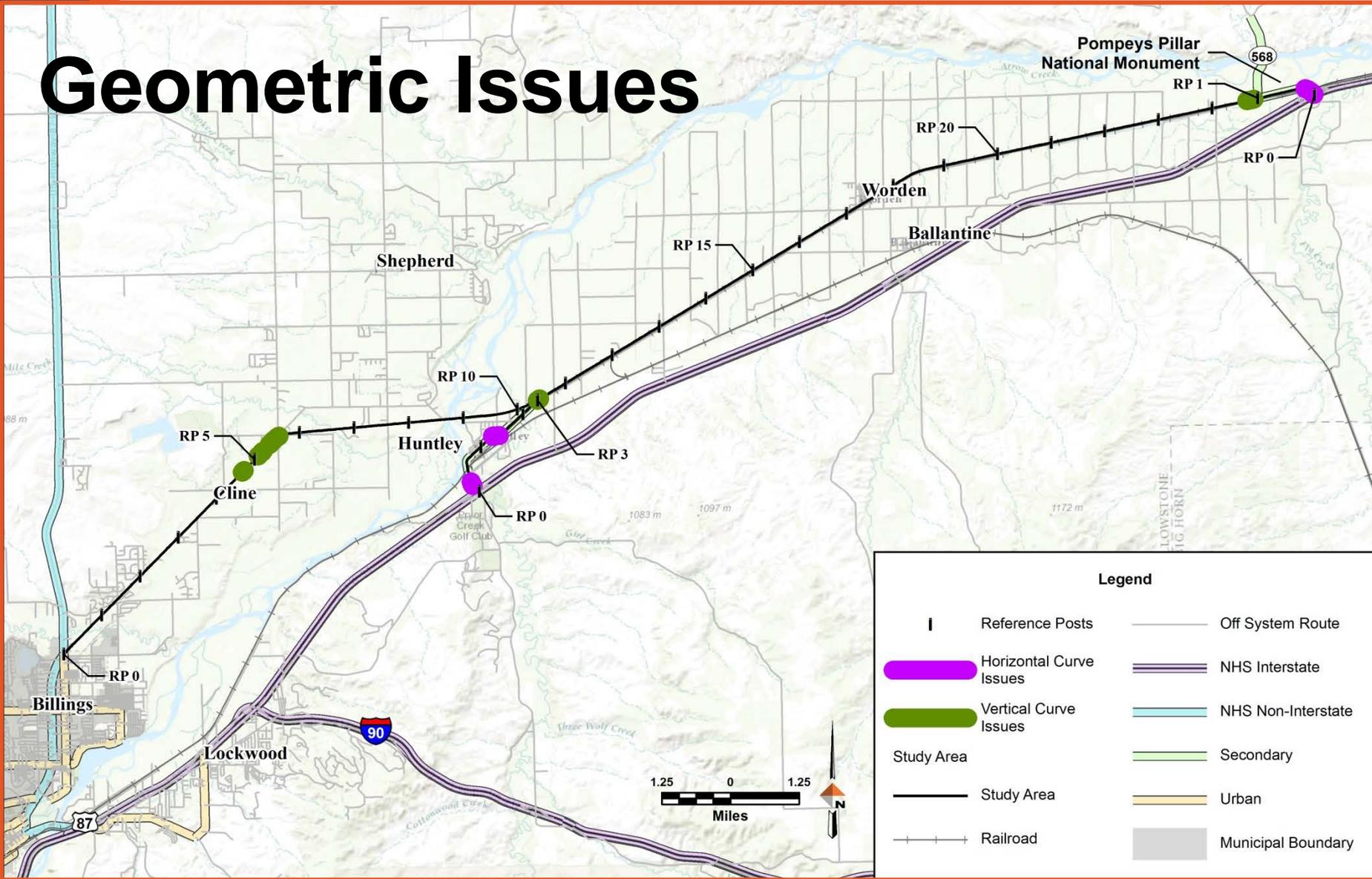


# Speed Limits and Advisory Signs



- 45-50 mph near Billings, transitioning to 60 mph through Huntley; 70 mph east to Pompeys Pillar (with 50 mph at Worden); 25-45 mph on S522

# Geometric Issues

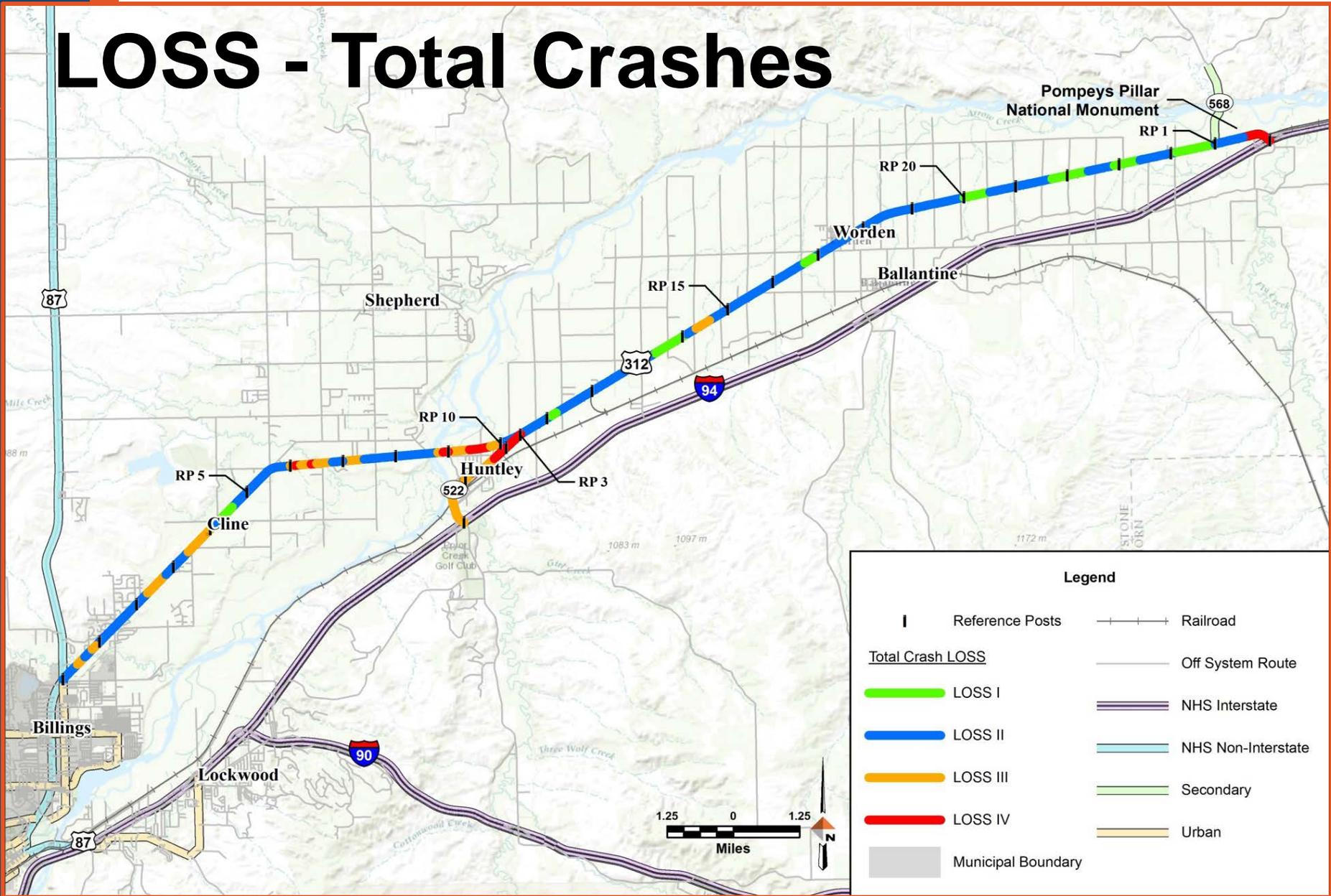


- 4 horizontal and 11 vertical curves do not meet current design criteria
- Obstructions in clear zones

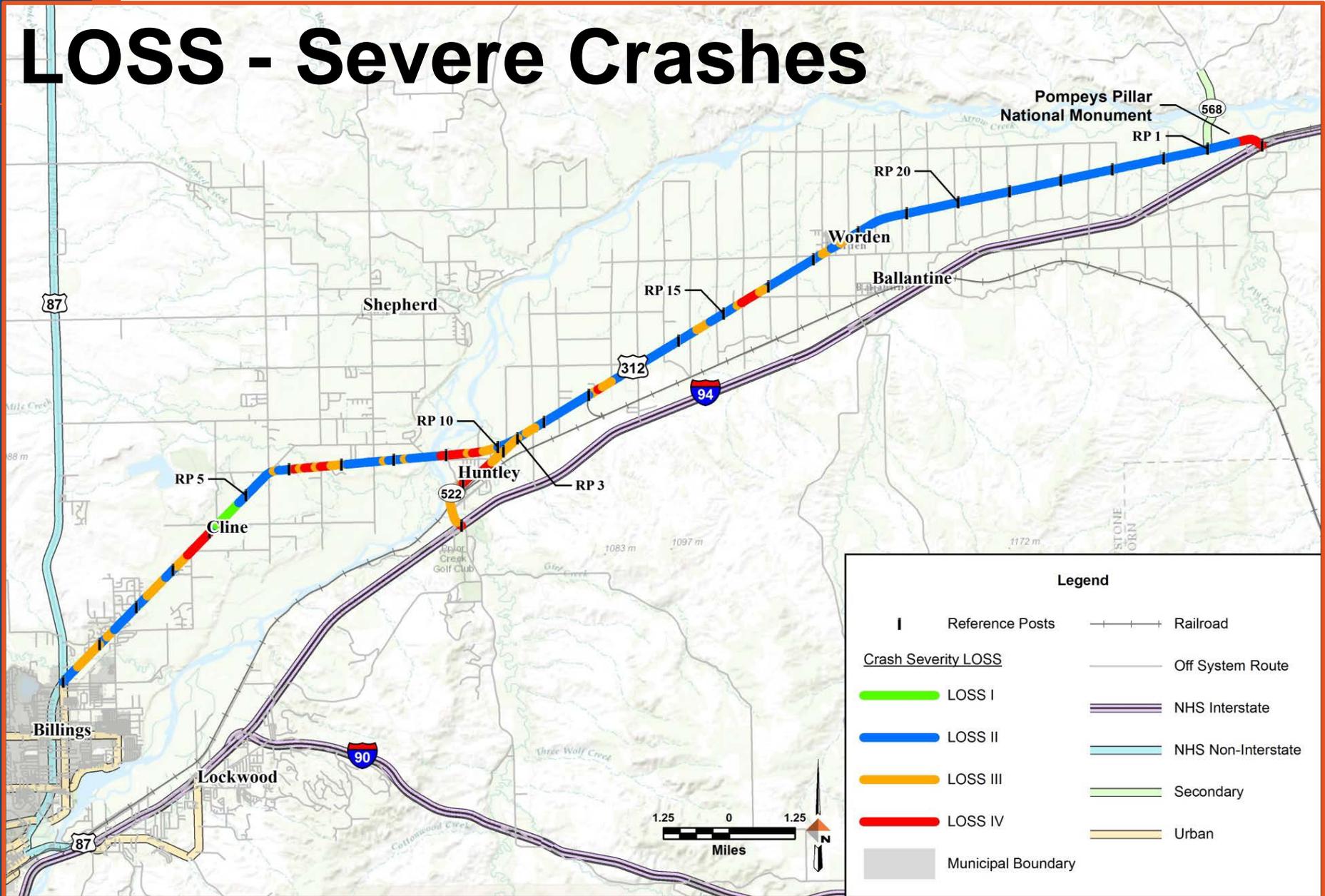
# Crash Analysis

- **Crash Analysis Period: 2005-2014**
  - 577 total crashes, 328 injuries, and 6 fatalities
  - Most were fixed object, rear-end, right angle, roll over, and wild animal crashes
- **Level of Service Safety (LOSS)**
  - MDT models normal expected crash occurrence and severity based on traffic volumes and roadway type
  - Deviations from anticipated safety performance indicate areas for improvement

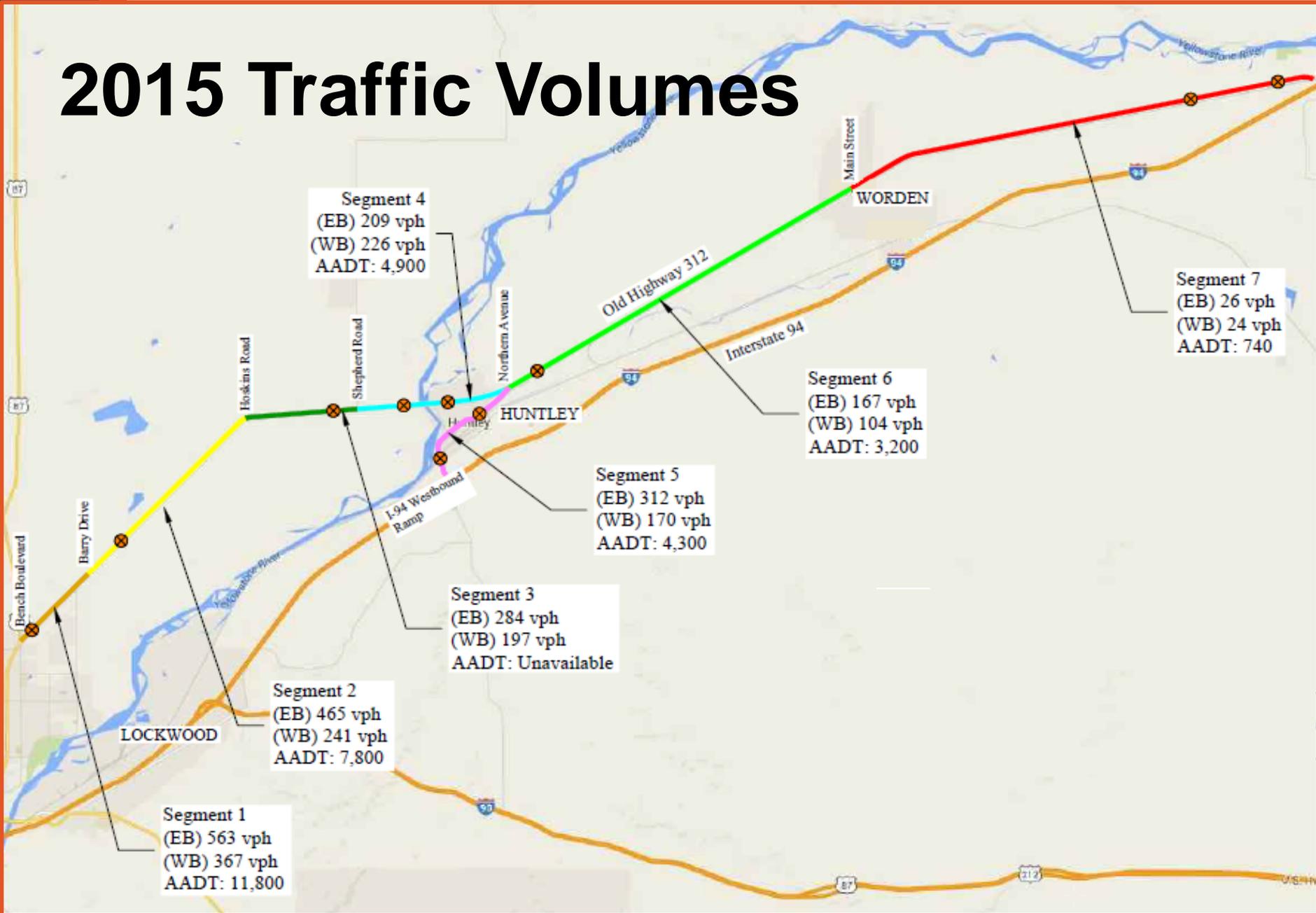
# LOSS - Total Crashes



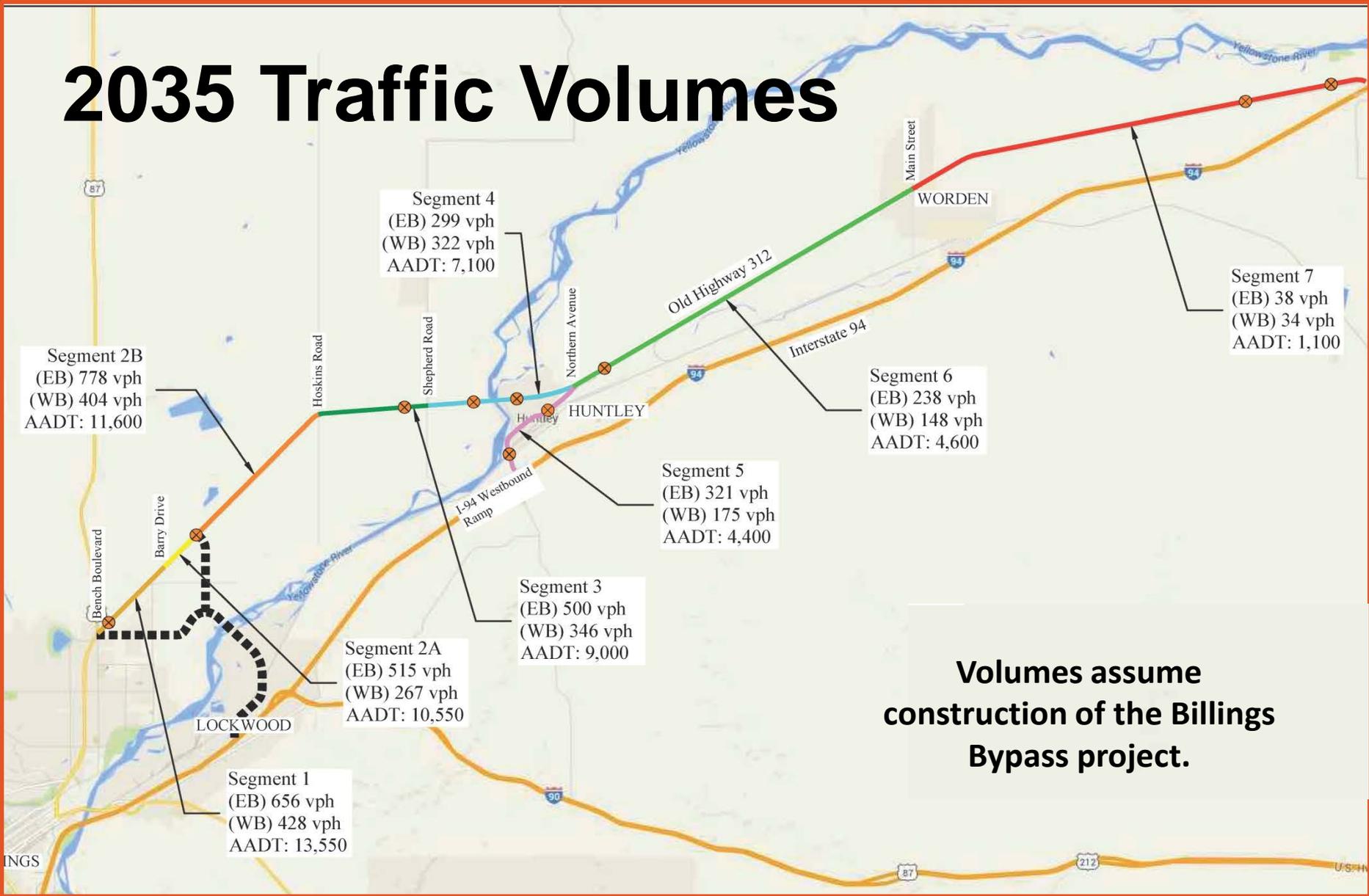
# LOSS - Severe Crashes



# 2015 Traffic Volumes



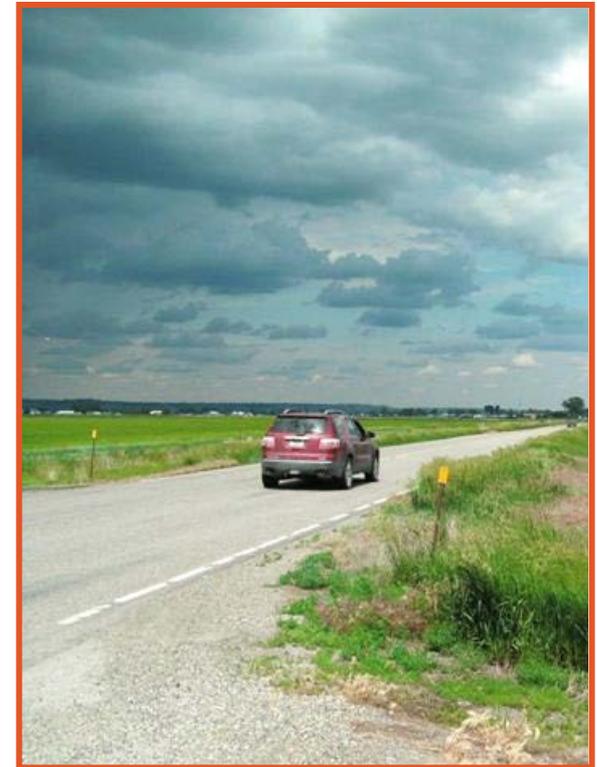
# 2035 Traffic Volumes



**Volumes assume construction of the Billings Bypass project.**

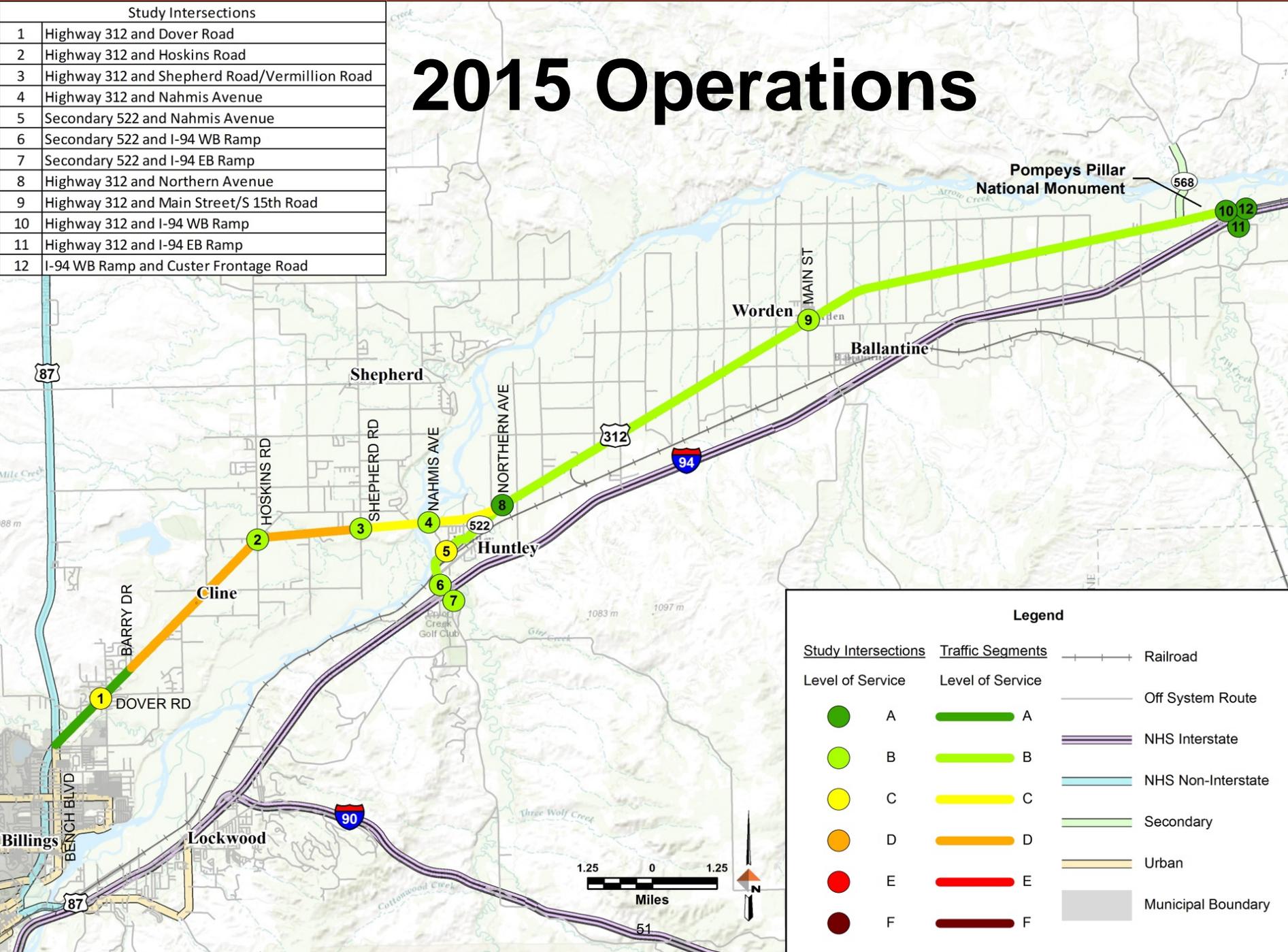
# Traffic Operations

Vehicular Level of Service	
<b>A</b>	Free flow conditions
<b>B</b>	Reasonably free flow; slight delays
<b>C</b>	Stable flow; maneuverability somewhat restricted
<b>D</b>	Approaching unstable flow
<b>E</b>	Unstable flow; at capacity; intolerable delays
<b>F</b>	Traffic volumes exceed capacity



# 2015 Operations

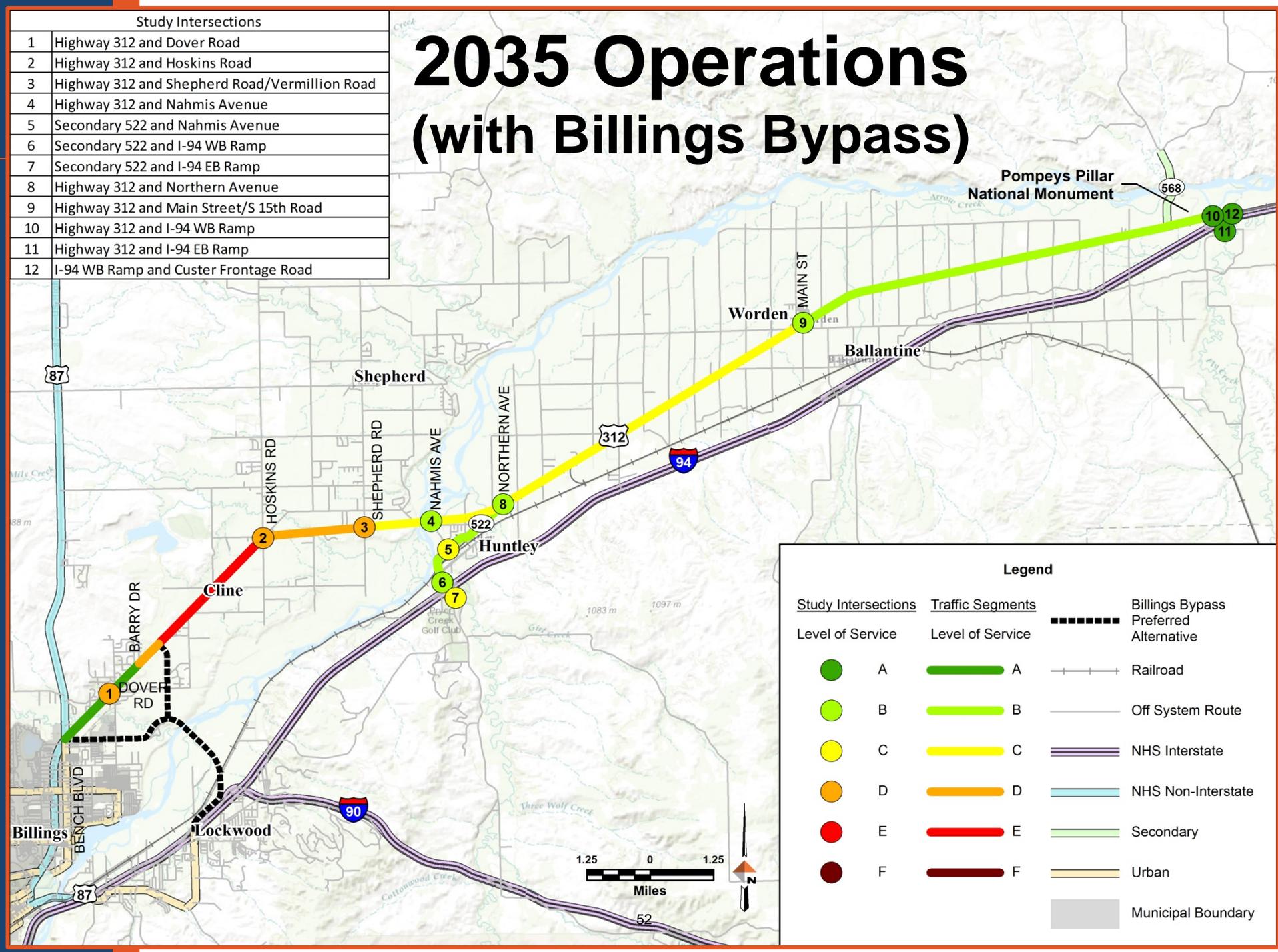
Study Intersections	
1	Highway 312 and Dover Road
2	Highway 312 and Hoskins Road
3	Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road
4	Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue
5	Secondary 522 and Nahmis Avenue
6	Secondary 522 and I-94 WB Ramp
7	Secondary 522 and I-94 EB Ramp
8	Highway 312 and Northern Avenue
9	Highway 312 and Main Street/S 15th Road
10	Highway 312 and I-94 WB Ramp
11	Highway 312 and I-94 EB Ramp
12	I-94 WB Ramp and Custer Frontage Road



Study Intersections		Traffic Segments		
Level of Service		Level of Service		
<span style="color: green;">●</span> A		<span style="color: green;">▬</span> A		Railroad
<span style="color: lightgreen;">●</span> B		<span style="color: lightgreen;">▬</span> B		Off System Route
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> C		<span style="color: yellow;">▬</span> C		NHS Interstate
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> D		<span style="color: orange;">▬</span> D		NHS Non-Interstate
<span style="color: red;">●</span> E		<span style="color: red;">▬</span> E		Secondary
<span style="color: darkred;">●</span> F		<span style="color: darkred;">▬</span> F		Urban
				Municipal Boundary

# 2035 Operations (with Billings Bypass)

Study Intersections	
1	Highway 312 and Dover Road
2	Highway 312 and Hoskins Road
3	Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road
4	Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue
5	Secondary 522 and Nahmis Avenue
6	Secondary 522 and I-94 WB Ramp
7	Secondary 522 and I-94 EB Ramp
8	Highway 312 and Northern Avenue
9	Highway 312 and Main Street/S 15th Road
10	Highway 312 and I-94 WB Ramp
11	Highway 312 and I-94 EB Ramp
12	I-94 WB Ramp and Custer Frontage Road



Study Intersections		Traffic Segments		Legend	
Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative	
<span style="color: green;">●</span> A	<span style="color: green;">█</span> A	<span style="color: lightgreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="border-top: 2px dashed black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Railroad
<span style="color: limegreen;">●</span> B	<span style="color: limegreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellowgreen;">█</span> D	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> E	<span style="border-top: 1px solid gray; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Off System Route
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> C	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="color: orangeyellow;">█</span> E	<span style="color: red;">█</span> F	<span style="border-top: 3px double purple; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	NHS Interstate
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> D	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> D	<span style="color: redorange;">█</span> F		<span style="border-top: 2px solid lightblue; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	NHS Non-Interstate
<span style="color: red;">●</span> E	<span style="color: red;">█</span> E			<span style="border-top: 2px solid lightgreen; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Secondary
<span style="color: darkred;">●</span> F	<span style="color: darkred;">█</span> F			<span style="border-top: 2px solid gray; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Urban
				<span style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Municipal Boundary



# ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

# Farmland

- Low percentage of farmland of state or local importance or prime farmland if irrigated within study area



# Surface Water/Wetlands

- Major surface waters:
  - Five Mile Creek
  - Seven Mile Creek
  - Pryor Creek
  - Arrow Creek
  - Yellowstone River
- 100-year FEMA-mapped floodplains cross the study area



# Irrigation

- **Huntley Irrigation Project**
  - Waters 30,000 acres of alfalfa, hay crops, sugar beets, silage, pasture, and small grains
- High importance to the area
- Abundance of water rights and agricultural land usage in the study area



# Hazardous Materials



- 55 closed underground storage tanks
- 9 active leaking underground tanks and 15 resolved underground tanks
- Two crude oil pipelines northeast of Billings, one between Huntley and Worden

# General Wildlife

- White-tailed and mule deer account for most recorded wildlife fatalities
- Four fisheries within area
  - Yellowstone River
  - Arrow Creek
  - Five Mile Creek
  - Twelve Mile Creek
- Bald eagle nests located on the Yellowstone River, but not within study area



# Species of Concern

- 12 Montana species of concern (SOC) occur in Yellowstone County
  - Greater Sage-Grouse
  - Great Blue Heron
  - Bobolink
  - Loggerhead Shrike
  - Pinyon Jay
  - Spiny Softshell
  - Snapping Turtle
  - Greater Short-horned Lizard
  - Sauger
  - Spotted Bat
  - Hoary Bat
  - Little Brown Myotis
- These species have potential to occur and breed in study area based on presence of suitable habitat



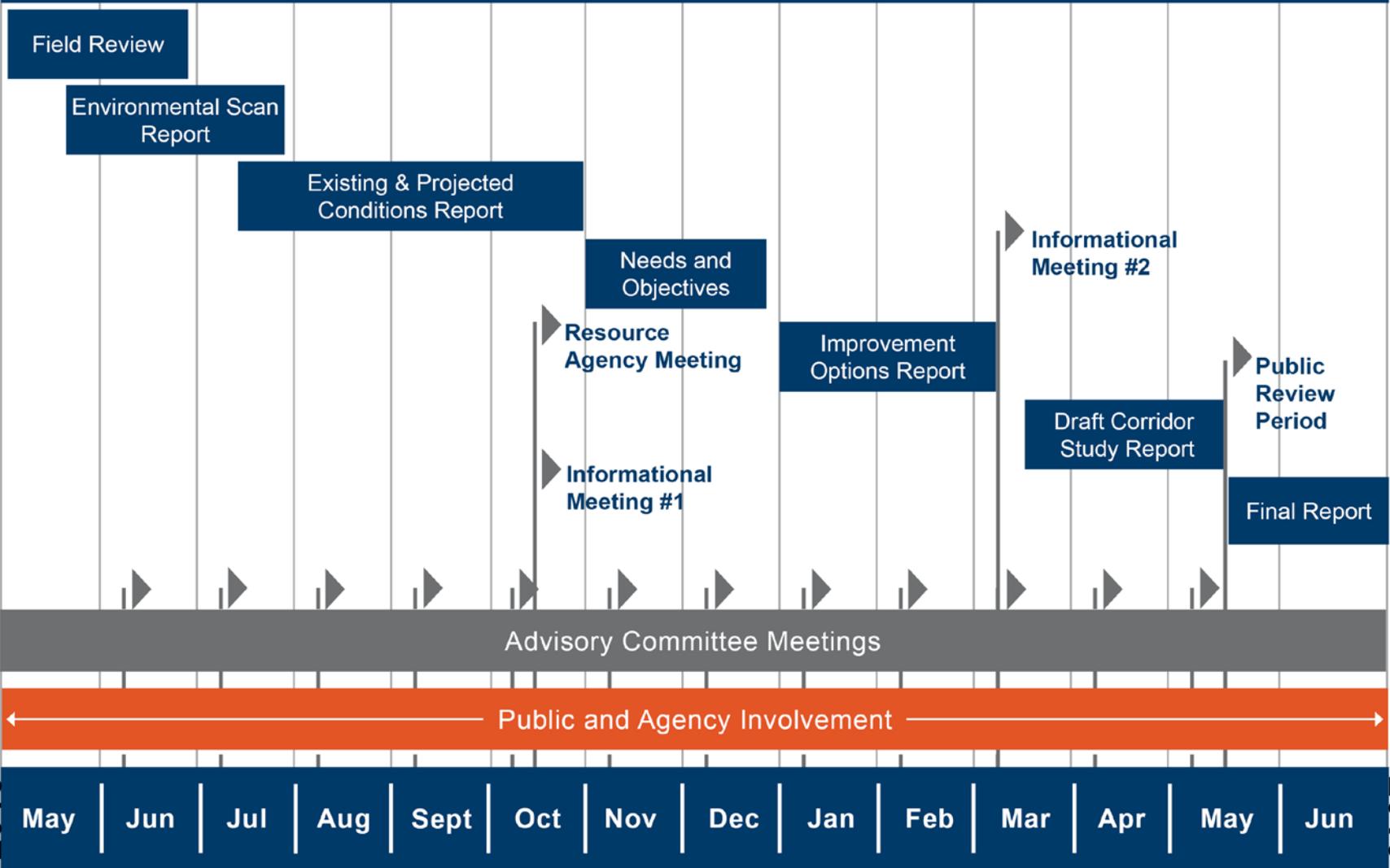
# Cultural/Archeological Resources

- Four potential Section 4(f) recreational resources
  - Lewis and Clark Trail
  - Pompey’s Pillar
  - BLM public land hunting access
  - Barkemeyer Park
- Eleven historic properties
- Unrecorded sites likely occur within the study area

Site	NHRP Eligibility
Huntley Irrigation Project	Eligible
BBWA System*	Eligible
Elevated Ditch	Eligible
BBWA Field Ditch	Eligible
Huntley Bridge	Eligible
Abandoned Billings & Central Montana Railway	Eligible
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway	Eligible
Pryor Creek Battlefield	Eligible
Pompeys Pillar	National Historic Landmark
Bundy Bridge	Eligible
Yellowstone Trail and Bridge	Eligible

Sites located within 0.15 mile of corridor.

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study



# Submit Comments

- **Leave a comment sheet with us tonight**
- **Website** (<http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>)
- **Mail/e-mail comments to:**
  - Sarah Nicolai
  - DOWL
  - 1300 Cedar Street
  - Helena, MT 59601
  - snicolai@dowl.com

# DISCUSSION PERIOD



## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Kathy or Chuck Aragon <jenaragon@bresnan.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:08 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Highway 312 Project Public Comment

Dear Ms Nicolai,

I would like to register public comment with you on the Highway 312 project. Thank you for your work. I have lived in Billings for many years and ride the roads with friends and family who enjoy being active and healthy. Unfortunately, Highway 312 is one we try to avoid because of the danger of collision between our bikes and cars traveling at high speeds. I would like to request a separated path for cyclists and pedestrians. This is especially important to those who live in the immediate area, but also to those of us who enjoy riding the roads for recreation, health, touring or visiting friends. My husband rode 312 a few years ago when my children had a school trip to Pompei's Pillar. Unfortunately, it was a frightful trip for him on his bike, and he has tried to avoid it since. A separated path would be a great step in the right direction to keep all travelers safe.

I hope that your meetings go well and I look forward to attending the next one in the spring.

Thank you again for your service to the Billings area communities.

Kathy Aragon  
[jenaragon@bresnan.net](mailto:jenaragon@bresnan.net)  
406 698-2992

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** John Burkhart <John.Burkhart@agroliquid.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 08, 2015 9:03 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Comments: Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Ms. Nicolai,

I will be out of town on the meeting date, so here are my written comments:

That is a very busy road with lots of truck traffic. In my opinion, the road should be widened with a shoulder and addition of center turn lanes at the intersections.

Commercial and private haulers take this route instead of the interstate to avoid the bottleneck at the Fairground intersection when heading up Highway 87. This is true for those heading east on Highway 3, also. Wait times are three traffic light series to get up to the Heights.

The proposed bypass at Johnson Lane may lessen some of this truck traffic, but that is at least 10 years away according to what I read. The bypass will not reduce local traffic on 312.

Please add me to the study mailing list - [john.burkhart@agroliquid.com](mailto:john.burkhart@agroliquid.com)

Best regards,

**John Burkhart | Site Operations**

Billings Montana Site Manager

O: 989-227-4410

C: 989-640-8157

F: 406-656-6676

Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizers

1270 S 24<sup>th</sup> Street West, Billings, MT 59102

[agroliquid.com](http://agroliquid.com) | 800-678-9029

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## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** William Cole <bcole@cofirm.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:09 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Highway 312 corridor study

Sarah:

I am a real estate attorney in Billings. I am also a former president of the Yellowstone County Planning Board and Chair-elect of the Billings Chamber of Commerce as well the head of the Chamber's Trails Committee, a coordinating group of about 40 individuals and community organizations devoted to the development, maintenance, and use of trails in our community.

Tourism brings approximately \$600 million dollars into our county each year, and quality of life is all-important when it comes to attracting and retaining employees for the 1300 members of the Billings Chamber of Commerce. As you develop the corridor study for Highway 312 I hope you will give careful consideration to the needs of non-motorized pedestrian and bicycle travelers. Trails in the Billings area are becoming more and more popular at all levels, not just with users but also with politicians, voters, and government officials at every level. They help us attract and keep travelers in our area longer, and they provide a tremendous amenity for our residents. The Highway 312 route is scenic, fairly flat, and largely undeveloped, a great combination for building a separated trail system!

Thank you for considering these comments.

Bill Cole

**William A. Cole**  
Cole Law Firm, PLLC  
3860 Avenue B, Suite C West  
Billings, MT 59106  
406-294-5700 (phone)  
406-294-5702 (fax)  
[bcole@cofirm.com](mailto:bcole@cofirm.com)

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Billings TrailNet <kristi@billingstrailnet.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:53 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Cc:** Kathy Aragon; Bruce Chessen; Heather Weenum; <events@billingstrailnet.org>; Jim Downs; Jeremy Kramer; Ryan Duffy; Afton Ball; Don Christensen; Patrick Parker; Leif Welhaven; Jeff Bollman; Steve Hudak; jameskeeling@gmail.com; jlefevre@crowleyfleck.com; Katrina MacLeod  
**Subject:** Submitting public comments regarding the Highway 312 Corridor study

Dear Sarah,

I am respectfully submitting my comments regarding the Highway 312 Corridor study here. Please include them in the public comments:

Safe travel between Billings and Pompey's Pillar by bike is important for our residents and visitors. In order to make this corridor safe for bicyclists and pedestrians and with motorized traffic increasing over time, this corridor needs a separated trail along Highway 312 connecting Billings Heights to Pompey's Pillar.

According to the study document from October 14, 2015 this study area is part of the Lewis & Clark Trail bicycle route/arterial bike route, yet there are no dedicated facilities in study area, the shoulder width varies from 0 to 8 feet, and the route does not meet current MDT standards. This is unacceptable for bicycle and pedestrian travel. Please make provisions for a separated path along Highway 312, dedicated to bicycling and walking, safe from high-speed vehicular traffic.

Thank you,

Kristi Drake  
Executive Director  
Billings TrailNet  
[kristi@billingstrailnet.org](mailto:kristi@billingstrailnet.org)  
Office: 406-281-1244  
Mobile: 406-690-8876



2822 Third Avenue North, Suite 206  
Billings, MT 59101

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Gmail <tim.erpelding@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 11:56 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Highway 312 corridor

Hello,

My name is Tim Erpelding, and I use the 312 corridor (billings to pompeys pillar) for biking and walking. With the large vehicles that also use this corridor, it can be quite dangerous in its current form. I am aware that you are considering a project to revamp this corridor. With the increase in both vehicle traffic as well as recreational use, there needs to be a separated trail along this route from the heights to pompeys pillar. This would not only put both motorists and runners and cyclists at peace of mind by increasing safety, but it would also further encourage a culture of health and activity in our community knowing there are dedicated safe paths to use. This is invaluable in an age where obesity is taking a toll on inactive Americans.

Thanks for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Erpelding

John J. Russell  
Michael P. Heringer  
Guy W. Rogers  
Scott G. Gratton  
Kelly J.C. Gallinger  
Jeffrey T. McAllister  
Jon A. Wilson  
Seth M. Cunningham  
Shane A. MacIntyre  
Adam M. Shaw  
Christine M. Cole  
Brett C. Jensen

Retired  
Rockwood Brown  
John Walker Ross  
Margy Bonner

# BROWN LAW FIRM, PC

269 W. Front Street | Suite A | Missoula, Montana 59802

Phone: 406.830.3248 | Fax: 406.830.3745

Scott G. Gratton  
[sg4413@aol.com](mailto:sg4413@aol.com)  
Missoula Office 406.830-3744

11/12/2015

Sarah Nicolai  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

## **RE: Public Comment on Bikeway to Pompey's Pillar**

Dear Ms. Nicolai:

I am writing this letter in support of considering a bike path between Billings Heights and Pompey's Pillar and further to express concern over safety of this reasonable alternative transportation along the corridor between these two areas. Although I currently reside in Missoula, I have ridden bicycles in Billings since 1987 when I moved there from Helena and still ride in the area when I work from our Billings office.

The corridor in question is certainly a safety concern due to the lack of a reasonable shoulder along Hwy 312 connecting Billings to Pompey's Pillar which would be a fantastic ride if there was a safe way to do it. I have had many instances of almost being hit and run off the road on this ride because of a lack of any sort of shoulder or bike riding trail. The lack of a shoulder on Hwy 312 makes it very difficult to ride because there is simply not enough room on the side of the road with the large number of semis, large farm vehicles, and local pickup trucks that make the area difficult, and unsafe, to bike. I would strongly support a bike trail between the two areas and would request that the Montana Department of Highways consider putting in a dedicated bike lane with appropriate markings and warnings if it is not going to consider or implement a plan with a bike path.

In short, I am an advocate for bicycle safety and, after riding roughly 4,000 to 5,000 miles a year in Montana, want to see protection for bicyclists all over the state, but particularly on this stretch of road.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

  
SCOTT G. GRATTON

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Ed Gulick <egulick@highplainsarchitects.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 3:10 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Highway 312 Corridor Study

Dear Ms. Nicolai,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Highway 312 Corridor Study. I am a bicyclist who does not own a car. While I do not regularly travel in the vicinity of Highway 312 because I live close to downtown, I have ridden on more than one occasion along the highway, most recently to Pompey's Pillar.

Given the high speeds and high volume of the motorized traffic, this corridor really needs to have a separated trail. While a wider shoulder would be a modest improvement over much of the existing conditions, it will still not provide a safe, accessible way for the public to travel. Our highway corridors need to accommodate the needs of the whole public, not just those with vehicles. 35% of the public is either too young or otherwise unable to safely operate a motorized vehicle, and they need to be accommodated as well.

An increasing segment of the population is interested in the health and economic benefits of bicycling, but what holds many back is that our streets and roads are not safe for bicycling. Public infrastructure needs to be designed to serve all of the public. Please include a separated trail for pedestrian and bicycle transit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

### **ED GULICK**

3015 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Billings, MT 59101

406-698-2747

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Daniel Hillman <dhillman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:42 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Route 312

Sarah

I am writing to encourage your team to take bike safety into account in your redesign of this stretch of highway. I commute on bike about 4 months a year and ride a fair amount as I participate in triathlons. I have ridden this route a couple times when I wanted a flat route but as pretty as it is there is virtually no shoulder. You are forced to rely on the awareness of drivers. I live in the heights and have been yelled at twice by drivers to get off the road and on the sidewalk where I belong, while I was riding in the bike painted areas. In high speed traffic you really need a separate space to make cycling safe and this is an Awesome stretch to bike on.

--

Daniel Hillman  
[dhillman@gmail.com](mailto:dhillman@gmail.com)

Doug James  
1570 Westridge Circle  
Billings, Montana 59102-7949

October 21, 2015

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWHL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, Montana 59601

Re: *Highway 312 Corridor Planning Study*

Dear Ms. Nicolai:

I understand that DOWHL is working on a Planning Study and taking comments for the Montana Department of Transportation's proposed upgrade of the Highway 312 Corridor from Billings to Pompey's Pillar. I am writing to provide you with my comments for this proposal. I hope that you and MDT will take the following into consideration:

1. **A Segregated Multi-Use Trail.** Highway 312 desperately needs a segregated-separated multi-use trail for pedestrians and bicycles. This would be a tremendous amenity for Billings, Pompeys Pillar, and all of Montana. I have no doubt that a safe, separated trail would see significant use. My wife and I are avid bikers. However, we limit our biking to separated bike trails. We simply are not comfortable biking in traffic.

A few years ago MDT rebuilt Shiloh Road in Billings from Zoo Drive to Rimrock Road. The final design included a segregated multi-use trail. We use that trail often. I am always amazed at how many people we run into that we know. I am also amazed at the number of elderly and handicapped people using the trail. The trails are not just for bicyclists.

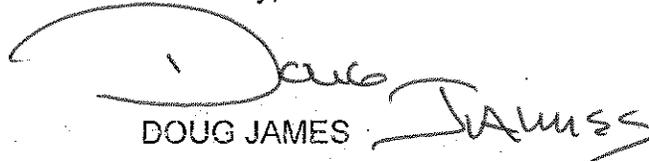
2. **Safety.** A segregated trail would also provide additional safety for the Highway 312 corridor. This past summer, we took our grandchildren to Pompeys Pillar for the day. As we drove Highway 312, we encountered a number of bicyclists. While we are always happy to see people biking in Montana, bikes and cars simply do not mix well on a busy rural highway. Having a segregated multi-use trail is a critical safety need.

3. **An Important Amenity:** Multi-use trails are an important amenity for our community. We spend a significant amount of time and significant resources trying to recruit young professionals (physicians, attorneys, and engineers) to the Billings area.

Ofentimes we are competing against other communities such as Denver, Boise, Portland, and Spokane. When we are trying to recruit these professionals, amenities like multi-use trails make a difference. When these professionals look at where they want to live and raise their children something like a segregated multi-use trail from Billings to Pompeys Pillar could really help this community stand out.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope you will recommend a segregated multi-use trail for the entire length of the Highway 312 Planning Study.

Sincerely,



DOUG JAMES

4820-1098-3721, v. 1

DOUG JAMES  
1570 WESTRIDGE CIRCLE  
BILLINGS, MT 59102

BILLINGS MT 59102  
22 OCT 2015 PM 4:11



02 1P  
0003151586 OCT 22 2015  
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 59101

RECEIVED  
OCT 26 2015  
DOWHL  
HELENA

SARAH NICOLAI  
DOWHL  
1300 CEDAR STREET  
HELENA, MONTANA 59601

5960130900

**Nicolai, Sarah**

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**From:** Jared M. Le Fevre <jlefevre@crowleyfleck.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 11:27 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Comments in support of bike travel between Billings and Pompey's Pillar

Dear Ms. Nicolai,

I understand that comment is being accepted concerning bike travel between Billings and Pompey's Pillar. Safe travel between Billings and Pompey's Pillar by bike is important for our residents and visitors. In order to make this corridor safe for bicyclists and pedestrians and with motorized traffic increasing over time, this corridor needs a separated trail along Highway 312 connecting Billings Heights to Pompey's Pillar.

It would be a wonderful addition to this area for residents and visitors if there were provisions made for a separated path along Highway 312, dedicated to bicycling and walking, safe from high-speed vehicular traffic.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,  
Jared Le Fevre

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## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Andrew MacLeod <macleoddrew@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 29, 2015 4:50 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Highway 312 Corridor from Billings to Pompey's Pillar - Planning Study

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Sarah,

I heard from TrailNet in Billings the request to share our experiences on traveling and cycling along Highway 312 from Billings to Pompey's Pillar. While I have ridden from Huntley Project to Pompey's and beyond I believe it would be extremely risky to ride out of Billings on 312. I won't do it. Too much traffic traveling too fast and narrow inconsistent shoulders. I would hope a separate bike/ped path would be considered in any renovation of that stretch of highway.

Once you are at Huntley the traffic is quiet enough for an experienced rider to navigate--unfortunately there are still no shoulders. What a lovely place for a separate bike/ped lane.

Such a path would surely add to Property Values, Recreation Opportunities and Bike/Ped Commuting options from that growing edge of town.

Thanks for considering my comments

--

Drew MacLeod

## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Virginia Mermel <ginnymermel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2015 4:13 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** HW 312 Corridor Commentary

Dear Ms. Nicolai,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Highway 312 Corridor Study. I believe traffic calming measures as well as a separate bike/pedestrian trail would greatly enhance the safety and usability of the Highway 312 corridor.

Periodically, I travel Highway 312 between Billings and Huntley Project Schools as part of my job. These trips typically take place mid morning and early afternoon.

When making the trip, I am always struck by how far over the speed limit most of the other drivers are traveling. I happened to make this trip yesterday while it was raining, which made the fact most drivers were speeding and passing other cars even more problematic. The existing road is a setup for tragic accidents. I would like to see traffic calming measures to force drivers to pay more attention to the speed limit.

Additionally, I believe a separate bike/pedestrian pathway should be installed along the HW 312 corridor to ensure that members of the public who wish to use the road way for non-motorized recreation could do so safely. Public infrastructure should accommodate all reasonable modes of conveyance by the public.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my suggestions.

Virginia L Mermel, PhD, CNS  
3611 Flagstone Dr, Billings 59102

406-661-2642

## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Patrick Parker | Beartooth Design Co. <parker@beartoothdesign.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:20 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Billings to Pompey's Pillar

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Ms. Nicolai, this email is in support of a separated trail along the Highway 312 corridor for pedestrians and especially bicyclists. This is a well-traveled vehicular route and speeding has been an issue for years. Currently, I don't feel safe on my bike on that road and I think a separation/borrow pit barrier between a bike path and the road is crucial. Additionally, this is an opportunity to truly expand the bicycle-friendly momentum we are gaining in Yellowstone County. As a landscape architect, I know the values of homes in the area would increase as recreational opportunities expand out their back door. Plus, with Pompey's Pillar as the destination, the trail would certainly attract tourists that wish to be active. This is ultimately an obvious safety issue but the other factors are quite compelling. I urge you and your team to realize the potential of a separated trail with your final recommendation to MDT with your planning study. Thanks for your time.

PATRICK PARKER ASLA|CLARB | PRINCIPAL|OWNER  
BEARTOOTH DESIGN CO. | 2724 SHILOH ROAD | BILLINGS, MT | OFFICE 406.655.9575 | CELL 406.690.9575



## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Cecil Pegram <cpeggram@koa.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:28 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Cc:** jenaragon@bresnan.net  
**Subject:** Highway 312 Corridor

10/20/2015

Hello Sarah,

Thank you for taking input on the planning study for 312. I would encourage consideration be made to allow for safe access by for bicyclists and pedestrians.

I live in the Heights and like to ride east toward Pompey's and back. I would never ride on 312 except in the areas where there is no others choice. The traffic is travelling at a high rate of speed and is not accustom to accommodating non-motorized traffic.

Two years ago I was a host for a physician traveling by bicycle from the East Coast to the West. I ask how his trip had been thus far and other that 312 it had been pleasant. He said the 312 stretch coming into Billings was the most frightening of his journey since he had left New York.

Once again thank you for taking input on this important matter. One last thought, if there are accommodations made for cyclist PLEASE don't cover the lane with rumble strips. Having a bike lane or a shoulder with rumble strips is like not having one at all.

Sincerely,

Cecil Pegram

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Jeffrey Rentz <jeffrentz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2015 11:52 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Hlghway 312 improvements

Dear Ms Nicolai,

I am an avid cyclist and a trauma surgeon in Billings. I feel unsafe cycling along Hwy 312 due to the high-speed traffic and narrow roads. Drivers are rarely safe to yield the lane because of oncoming traffic.

Improvements in traffic flow are essential to that area. I have taken care of a number of individuals injured in motor vehicle crashes and motorcycle accidents along that corridor. The traffic has steadily increased over the last 5-10 years to the point that it is unsafe to travel along that route.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jeff Rentz

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Liana Susott <liana@bigskygames.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 4:28 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah; Kathy Aragon  
**Subject:** Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Hi Sarah,

I live in Ballantine and run and bike around the Huntley Project Area. I try to stay away from Highway 312 because it is unsafe. Throughout the community in Worden and Ballantine there are very few sidewalks and there are no trails. Children and adults ride their bikes, walk and run on the narrow highway and side roads. The roads are especially busy during harvest with tractors, grain/beet trucks on the road. It is very unsafe. A separated trail along Highway 312 would fill a need in the community.

Thank you for your time.

Liana Susott

--

Liana Susott  
Sports Director

Big Sky State Games  
Box 7136  
Billings, MT 59103  
406-254-7426

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Calley Thompson <calleythompson22@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2015 12:15 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Road to Pompeys Pillar

Hi Sarah I understand you are on the committee to help with re- build of this road. I am an avid cyclist as are my husband and kids- we are forever looking for safe places to get out and be active as a family. I hear there is a possibility of getting a separate bike trail alongside this road and can't express how great that would be for Billings bikers. If there is anything you can do or we can do to help push this that would be wonderful.

Thank you for your help and support.

-Calley-

# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #1

October, 14, 2015

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

the road need to be wider with shoulders  
for emergency purposes  
the intersection at Huntley needs to be squared  
up for easier movement (RPIO)

Intersection of Road 15 and the highway - needs to  
be addressed.

Turn lanes are needed -

Fed road needs to be constructed for heavier  
traffic - rutting and drainage - lack of →

To receive further study information, please provide your  
name and address:

Name: Jack Toogood

Address: Box 64

Warden mt 59088

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave your comments with staff at the  
meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old  
Highway 312 Corridor Study.

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** MDT <mdturley@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:38 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah

as a result of this I made a comment (below)

I was asked to send this to your E-mail

This is an important time to have your voice heard! MDT is completing a planning study and taking comments on the update of old Highway 312 Corridor from Billings to Pompey's Pillar.

The planning study is completed before design, ROW acquisition, and construction for an individual project.

Please submit your public comments for the record to the Engineer leading the informational meetings- Sarah Nicolai (DOWL) at the address or email below. In order to make this corridor safe for bicyclists and pedestrians and with motorized traffic increasing over time this corridor needs a separated trail along Highway 312 connecting Billings Heights to Pompey's Pillar. If you are able, please personalize your message to include your experience in walking or cycling along that highway. Thank you for your interest in being a voice for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.

Mail/e-mail comments to:

Sarah Nicolai

DOWL

1300 Cedar Street Helena, MT 59601

[snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com)

My comment is:

I seldom even ride my motorcycle on that road... and shoulder is way too narrow for bicycles... it would actually be safer to ride bike on the Interstate to Pompey's, and I'm not doing that. A separate trail is the only solution.

--

take care,

MDTurley

Billings, MT

406-698-8718

<http://mdturley.smugmug.com/>

<http://ridewithgps.com/users/135336/activities>

## Nicolai, Sarah

---

**From:** Roger Williams <rogerswilliams41@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2015 3:50 PM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** Old Hwy 312 Corridor Study

There are many safety issues for motorists on Hwy 312, which I assume will be addressed in this process.

I know that we, the recreational cycling community in Billings, is small, but in my view there is an opportunity here to increase tourism to Billings, and between Billings and Pompey's Pillar, if the highway improvement included a separated, two-way cycle-pedestrian path. In fact, Billings could become more of a destination for serious cyclists. A separated path would also make non-motorized travel between the various communities along the route safer and more inviting for local residents.

--

Roger Williams  
2512 Irving Pl.  
Billings, MT 59102-1925  
406-248-6352  
406-861-2220

## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Sent:** Monday, November 09, 2015 8:28 AM  
**To:** Nicolai, Sarah  
**Subject:** FW: Old Highway 312 Corridor Planning Study

**From:** Candi Zahller [<mailto:czahller@huntley.k12.mt.us>]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 09, 2015 6:44 AM  
**To:** Streeter, Stefan  
**Subject:** Old Highway 312 Corridor Planning Study

Hello Stefan,

I would like to be on the list of staying informed on the study of HWY 312.

Two of the main issues on HWY 312 that need to be looked at are: The Y intersection going into Huntley from Worden and the Road going into Huntley by the Yellowstone bridge on HWY 312, cars coming from Huntley going to Shepherd or Billings cannot see at the angle of that intersection.

Thanks,  
Candi Zahller  
Huntley Project Schools



**Office Locations**

**ALASKA**

- Anchorage
- Juneau
- Fairbanks
- Ketchikan
- Kodiak
- Palmer

**ARIZONA**

- Tempe
- Tucson

**COLORADO**

- Golden
- Gunnison
- Montrose

**MONTANA**

- Billings
- Bozeman
- Butte
- Great Falls
- Helena
- Miles City

**NORTH DAKOTA**

- Dickinson

**OREGON**

- Bend

**WASHINGTON**

- Redmond

**WYOMING**

- Gillette
- Lander
- Laramie
- Sheridan

**MEETING MINUTES**

<b>Date:</b>	October 15, 2015	<b>Start Time:</b> 2:00 p.m.	<b>End Time:</b> 3:00 p.m.
<b>Meeting called by:</b>	MDT Rail, Transit and Planning Division		<b>Attendees:</b>
<b>Project:</b>	Old Highway 312 Corridor Study		Noted within the minutes.
<b>Project Number:</b>	DOWL: 4638.11557.01		
<b>Subject:</b>	Resource Agency Meeting		

**Introduction**

A resource agency meeting for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study was held on Thursday, October 15, 2015, at the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Rail, Transit and Planning Division office, with remote participation via telephone. The meeting was attended by the following individuals.

Tom Kahle	MDT – Multimodal Planning
Susan Lenard	MDT – Environmental Services Bureau
Gary Neville	MDT – MDT Billings District
David Lefevre	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Mike McGrath	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike Black	Yellowstone County Public Works
Nik Griffith	DOWL
Sarah Nicolai	DOWL
Will Trimbath	DOWL

**Existing and Projected Corridor Conditions**

DOWL representatives Sarah Nicolai and Will Trimbath presented the corridor study planning process, emphasizing public and agency involvement as a major component. Ms. Nicolai summarized existing and projected transportation conditions within the study area and the study schedule. Mr. Trimbath discussed environmental and cultural resources which may present constraints and opportunities in the planning process.

Mike McGrath of the US Fish and Wildlife Service provided the following comments that should be considered in the study moving forward.

- Bald Eagles
  - Several bald eagle nests are located to the east near the I-94 interchange, although they are outside the study area buffer zone. The environmental scan report should note that staging areas and borrow sites associated with future projects would need to avoid these areas.
- Sage Grouse
  - The state of Montana released a document in August 2015 that discussed the sage grouse and should be highlighted in the scan. Any future projects would need to be compliant with the state sage grouse plan.
- Whooping Cranes
  - One observation was recorded in 2010 near the study area. For any future projects, any overhead utilities should be buried or marked to minimize whooping crane impacts.
- Great Blue Herons
  - In 2011, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks identified an old rookery near the Huntley interchange. Any future projects would need to confirm if the rookery is active.

David Lefevre noted that Pompeys Pillar National Monument experiences high visitation in the summer. He noted any future project in the vicinity should facilitate public access to the monument and adjacent public lands. He also noted that grain trucks frequently use pullouts near the site to turn around. Maintaining these areas would be desirable. Lastly, Mr. Lefevre noted that the United States Bureau of Land Management would support bicycle//pedestrian paths or trails between Pompeys Pillar and the City of Billings in association with a future improvement project.

Susan Lenard, Mike Black, Gary Neville, and Tom Kahle confirmed that there were no additional comments from Yellowstone County or MDT.

One written comment was received from the US Army Corps of Engineers and is included at the end of these minutes.

September 25, 2015

To: Resource Agency Distribution  
Subject: Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Yellowstone County, has initiated a corridor planning study to explore the potential need for improvements along Old Highway 312 (Highway 312). The study area includes Highway 312, starting at its intersection with US 87 (but not including the intersection) and traveling approximately 26 miles northeast through the communities of Huntley and Worden. Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 approximately one mile before the Pompeys Pillar I-94 Interchange, and the study area continues to and includes the interchange. The study area also includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 through the community of Huntley, to the I-94 Interchange west bound on/off ramp, a distance of approximately 3 miles. The study area includes a 200-foot buffer on both sides of these roadways (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor.

MDT invites you to attend a resource agency meeting to discuss environmental conditions in the study area, and identify any issues or concerns regarding environmental resources that may be affected by potential future improvement options.

When: **Thursday, October 15, 2015, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Where: **MDT Planning Division** or **MDT Billings District**  
Conference Room A Conference Room  
2960 Prospect Avenue 424 Morey Street  
Helena, MT 59601 Billings, MT 59104

GoTo Meeting  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/184885925>  
Dial +1 (872) 240-3212  
Access Code: 184-885-925  
Audio PIN: Shown after joining the meeting  
Meeting ID: 184-885-925

Please review the draft environmental scan report in advance of the meeting. An electronic version of this document (with attachments) is provided on the enclosed CD. If you are unable to attend the resource agency meeting, please forward these files to an appropriate agency designee.

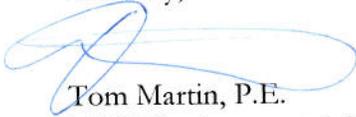
Please provide written comments on the enclosed report by **October 30, 2015**, to Tom Kahle at the address indicated on the letterhead. Additional information about the study is available at the study website (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>).

Please contact Sarah Nicolai, Consultant Project Manager, by **October 8, 2015**, to confirm your participation in the resource agency meeting.

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
406.324.7412  
[snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com)

Thank you in advance for your agency's input.

Sincerely,



Tom Martin, P.E.  
MDT Environmental Services Bureau Chief

Enclosure

Resource Agency Distribution:

Todd Tillinger, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
David Lafever, U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
Julie DalSoglio, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
David Fronczak, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Mike McGrath, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Renee Lemon, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Megan O'Reily, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Michael Ruggles, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Jim Darling, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Jon Kenning, MT Department of Environmental Quality  
Robert Ray, MT Department of Environmental Quality  
Scott Walker, City of Billings  
Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County Commission  
Mike Black, Yellowstone County Public Works  
Tim Miller, Yellowstone County Public Works  
Brent Esplin, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Jim Sparks, U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
Mark Baumler, State Historic Preservation Office

Copies (without enclosure):

Tom Kahle, MDT  
Heidy Bruner, MDT  
Doug Lieb, MDT  
File



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Resource Agency Meeting  
October 15, 2015



# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS



# Title VI Considerations



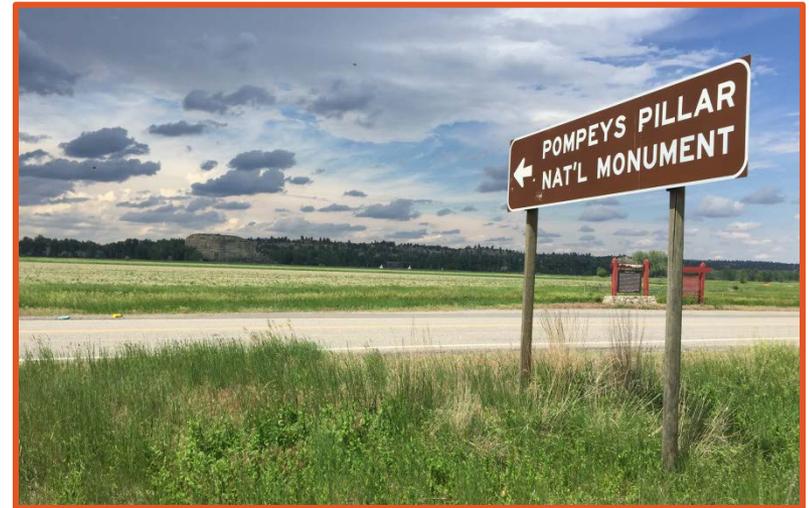
This meeting is held pursuant to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which ensures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination on the basis of a protected status under any MDT program or activity.

# Meeting Format

## Presentation

- Overview of planning study process
- Key findings from draft existing and projected conditions report
  - Transportation Conditions
  - Environmental Conditions

## Discussion Period



# What is a Planning Study?



A planning study is conducted before design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for an individual project.

# Background & Goal of Study

- Increasing traffic and congestion along the corridor
- Study will identify options to address needs



# Planning Study Overview

- Existing and Projected Conditions
- Informational Meeting #1
- **Resource Agency Meeting**
- Needs and Objectives
- Improvement Options
- Informational Meeting #2
- Draft Study Report
- Public/Agency Review Period
- Final Study Report

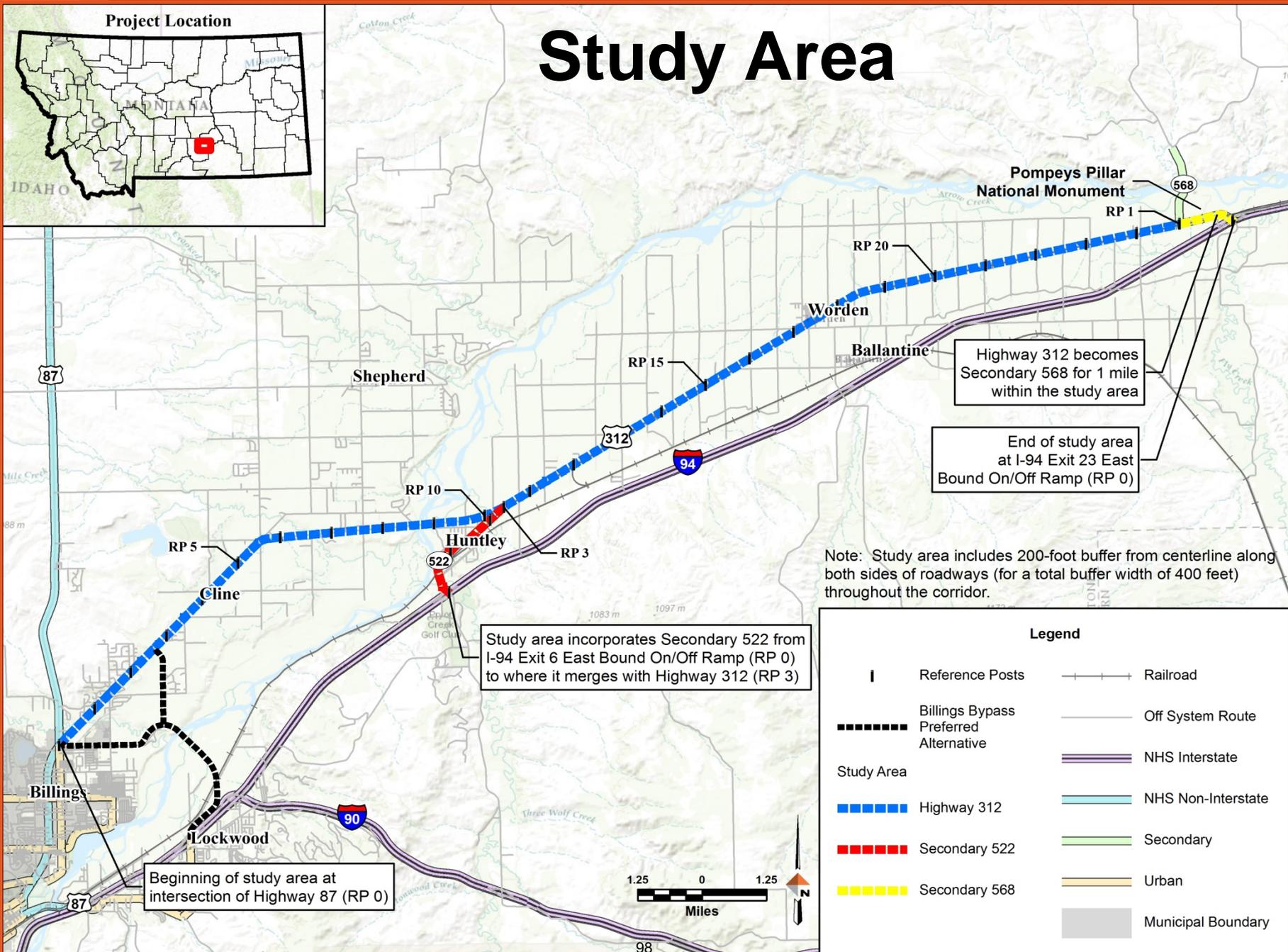


We Are Here

**Project Location**



# Study Area



Pompeys Pillar National Monument

RP 1

RP 20

Worden

Ballantine

Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 for 1 mile within the study area

End of study area at I-94 Exit 23 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0)

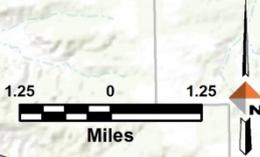
Study area incorporates Secondary 522 from I-94 Exit 6 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0) to where it merges with Highway 312 (RP 3)

Beginning of study area at intersection of Highway 87 (RP 0)

Note: Study area includes 200-foot buffer from centerline along both sides of roadways (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor.

**Legend**

- Reference Posts
- Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative
- Study Area Highway 312
- Study Area Secondary 522
- Study Area Secondary 568
- Railroad
- Off System Route
- NHS Interstate
- NHS Non-Interstate
- Secondary
- Urban
- Municipal Boundary



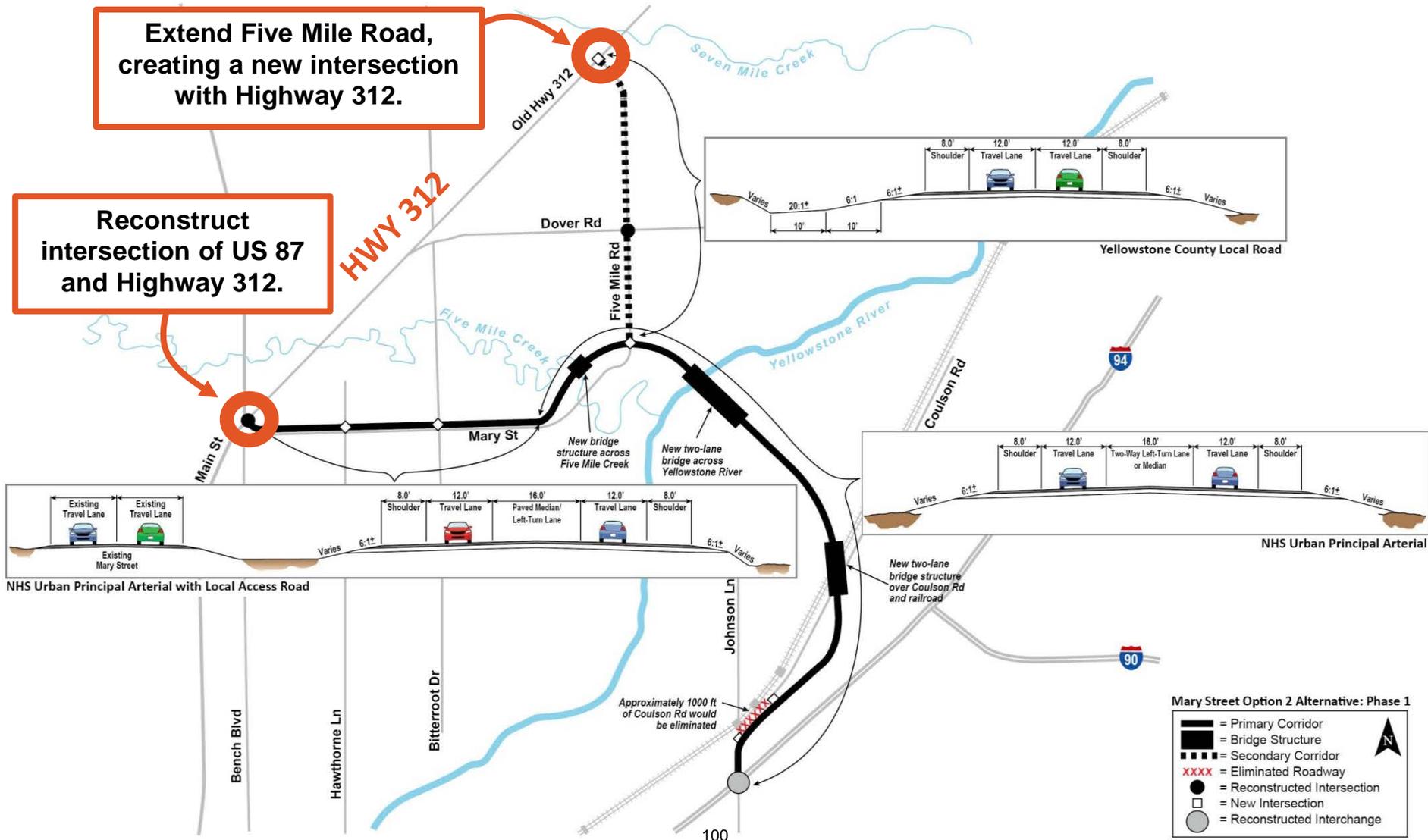
# Current and Future Projects

Route	Project	Date
Highway 312	Arrow Creek - NE of Hardin	2003
	Safety Improvement – Old US 312	2003
	D5 – Scour Protection	2003
	<b>2001–Safety Improvement–W of Huntley</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
	NE of Billings – NE	2003
	<b>2012 Scour Mitigation</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
	<b>Fly Creek – Pompey’s Pillar</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
Secondary 522	Huntley Interchange – East	2004
	Pryor Ck – 1 M S Huntley/MT 11-1	2011
	<b>RR Xing – FAS 522 – Huntley</b>	<b>(Active)</b>
Secondary 568	BNRR – 2 KM W Pompey’s Pillar	2003
	Pompey’s Pillar Intch – West	2003

# Billings Bypass Project

Extend Five Mile Road, creating a new intersection with Highway 312.

Reconstruct intersection of US 87 and Highway 312.





# TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

# Roadway Overview

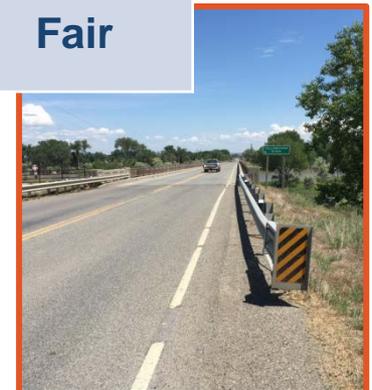
- Classification
  - Highway 312: minor arterial
  - Secondary 522: major collector
  - Secondary 568: major collector
- Primarily 2-lane and 4-lane sections; intermittent 5-lane and 3-lane sections with turn bays
- Right-of-way widths vary from 60 feet to 260 feet away from the centerline



# Structures

Route	Location	Feature Crossed	Year Built (Recon)	Structure Condition
Highway 312	5M SW HUNTLEY	SEVEN MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	2M W OF HUNTLEY	TWELVE MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	HUNTLEY	YELLOWSTONE RIVER	1949	Fair
	2M E OF HUNTLEY	CUSTER COULEE	1928 (1939)	Fair
Secondary 522	1M S HUNTLEY	HUNTLEY CANAL	1967	Fair

5 of 12 structures are candidates for repair or replacement  
(fair condition)



# Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- No dedicated facilities in study area
- Shoulder width varies from 0 to 8 feet
- Study area is part of the Lewis & Clark Trail bicycle route/arterial bike route
- Pedestrian crossing located at Barkemeyer Park
  - Does not meet current MDT standards



# Drainage Conditions

- Rural drainage is generally sufficient
  - Graded slopes direct drainage towards constructed convergences or natural drainage patterns
  - Highway runoff is directed to adjoining shoulders
- Standing water noted at Barkemeyer Park

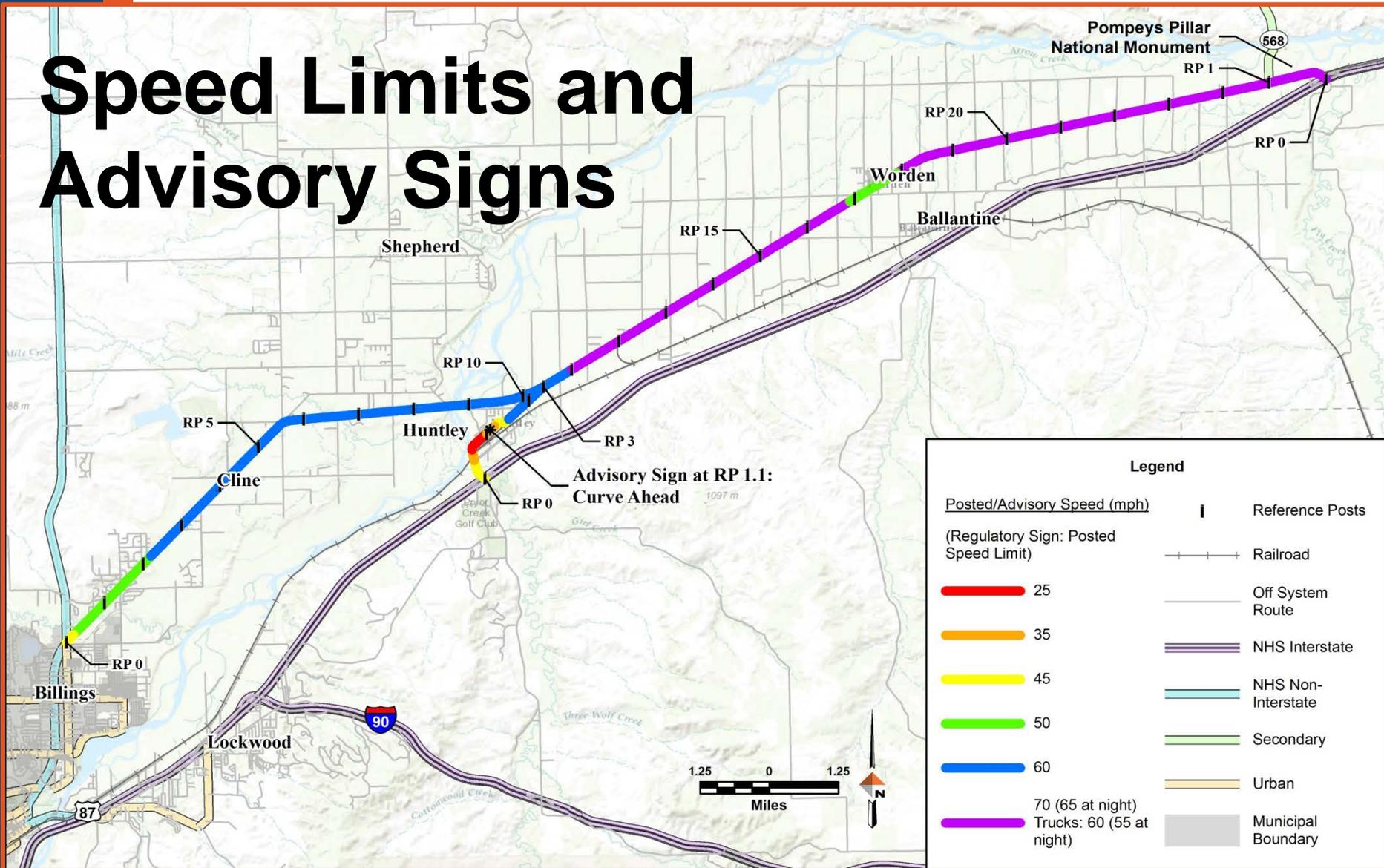


# Pavement Conditions

- Rutting observed throughout corridor
  - Generally worse within the 2-lane sections, compared to the 3 and 5-lane sections
- Fair ride index ratings for Secondary 568 and 522
- Transverse cracking
  - Generally 75-200 foot intervals

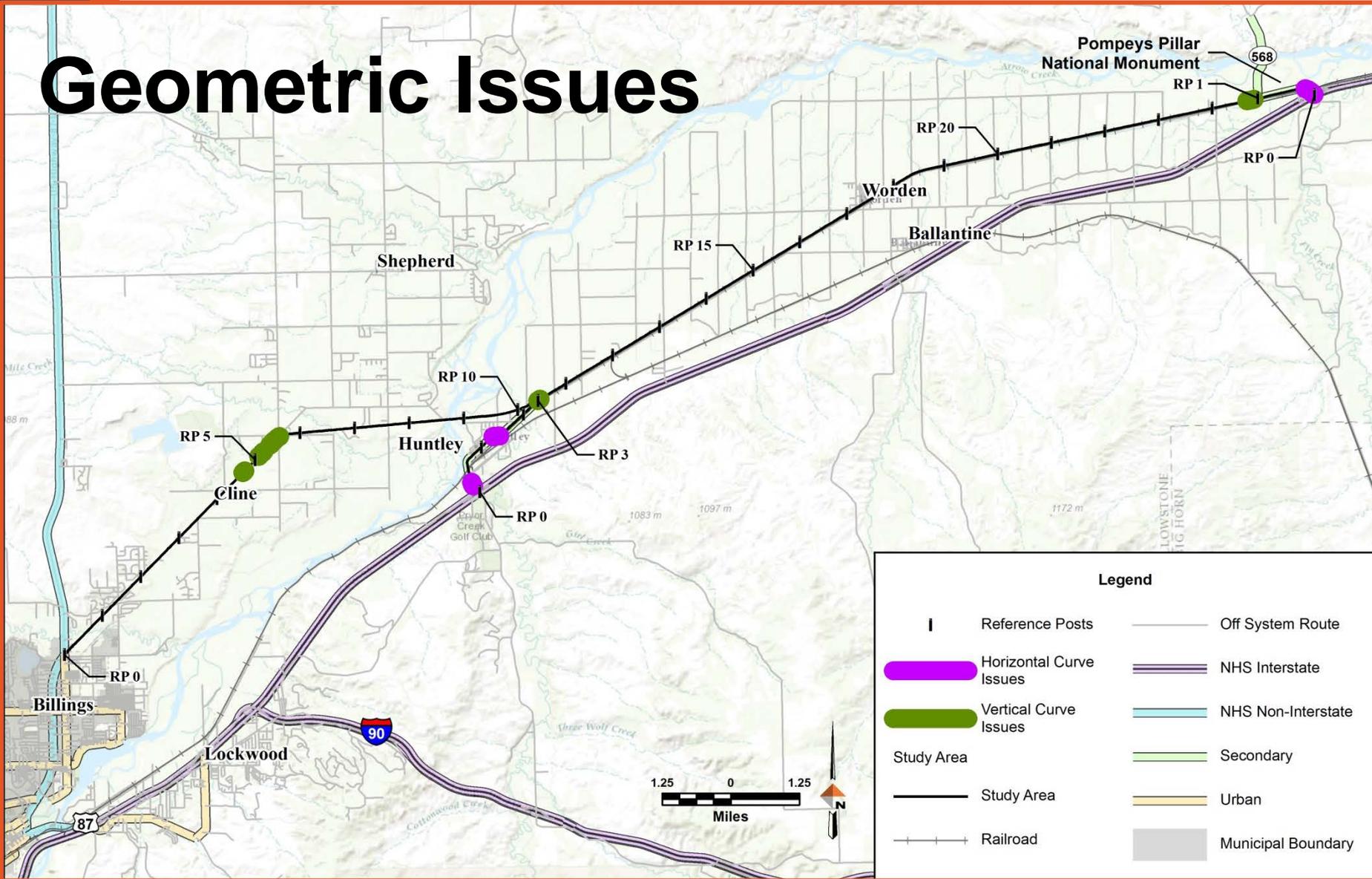


# Speed Limits and Advisory Signs



- 45-50 mph near Billings, transitioning to 60 mph through Huntley; 70 mph east to Pompeys Pillar (with 50 mph at Worden); 25-45 mph on S522

# Geometric Issues

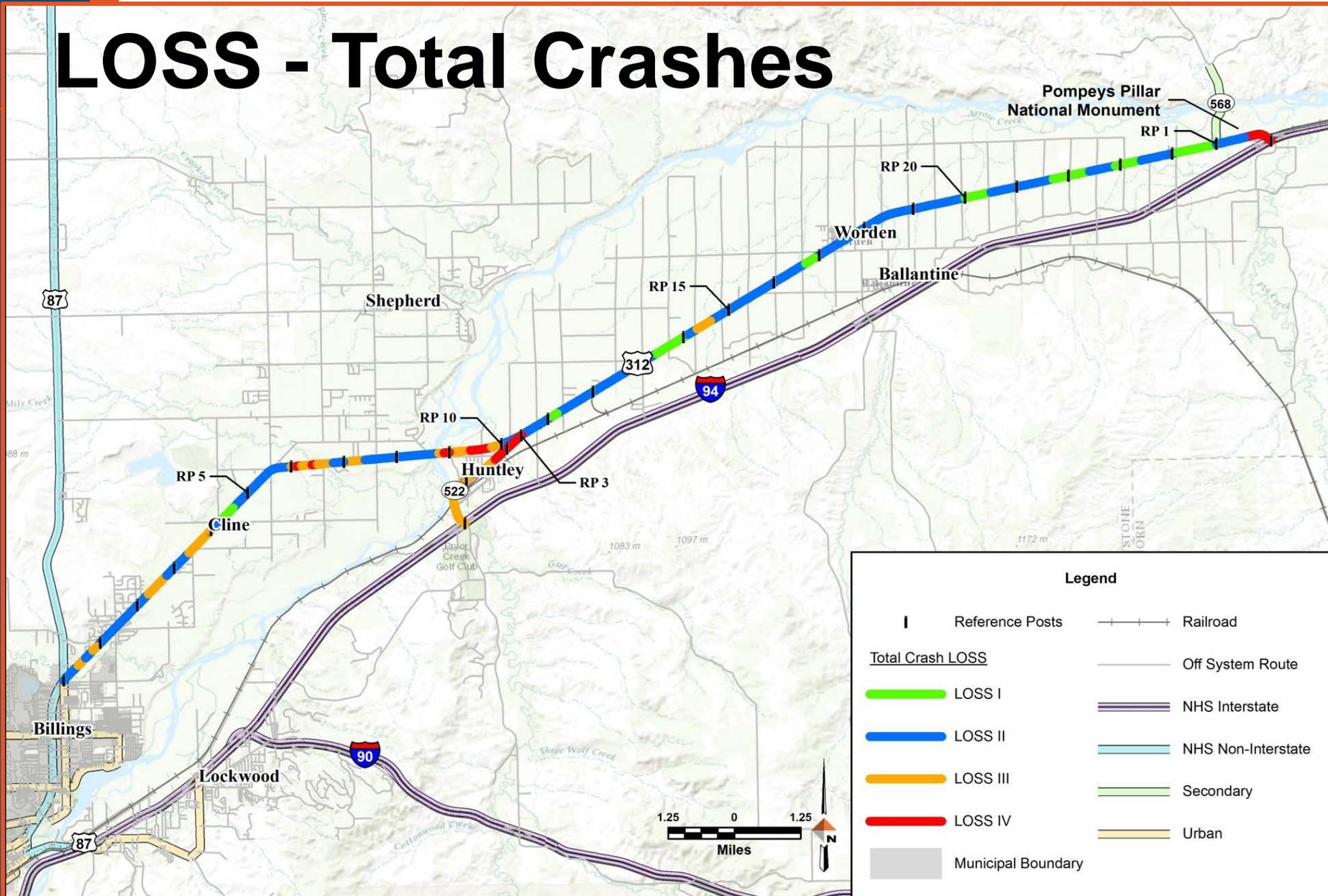


- 4 horizontal and 11 vertical curves do not meet current design criteria
- Obstructions in clear zones

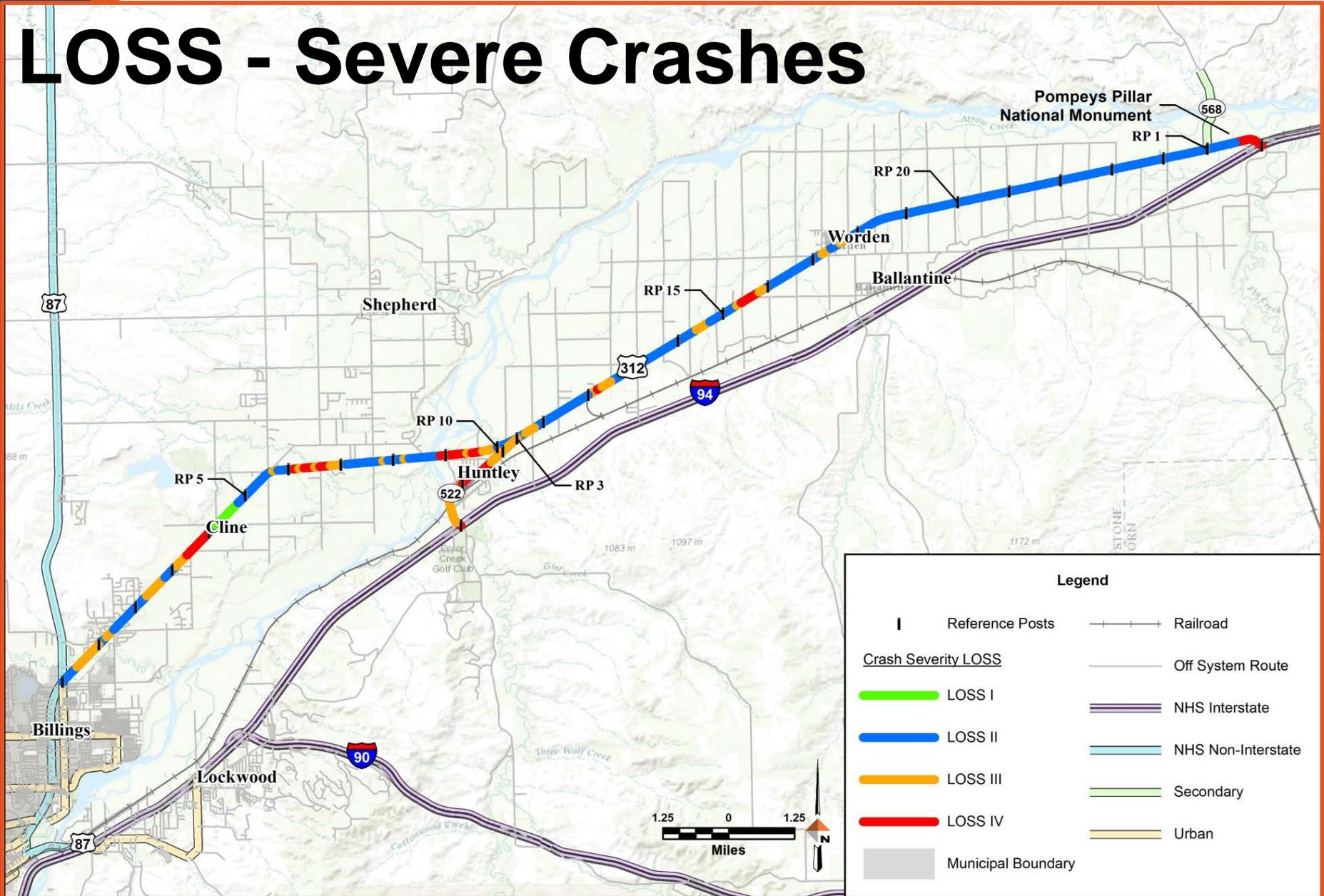
# Crash Analysis

- **Crash Analysis Period: 2005-2014**
  - 577 total crashes, 328 injuries, and 6 fatalities
  - Most were fixed object, rear-end, right angle, roll over, and wild animal crashes
- **Level of Service Safety (LOSS)**
  - MDT models normal expected crash occurrence and severity based on traffic volumes and roadway type
  - Deviations from anticipated safety performance indicate areas for improvement

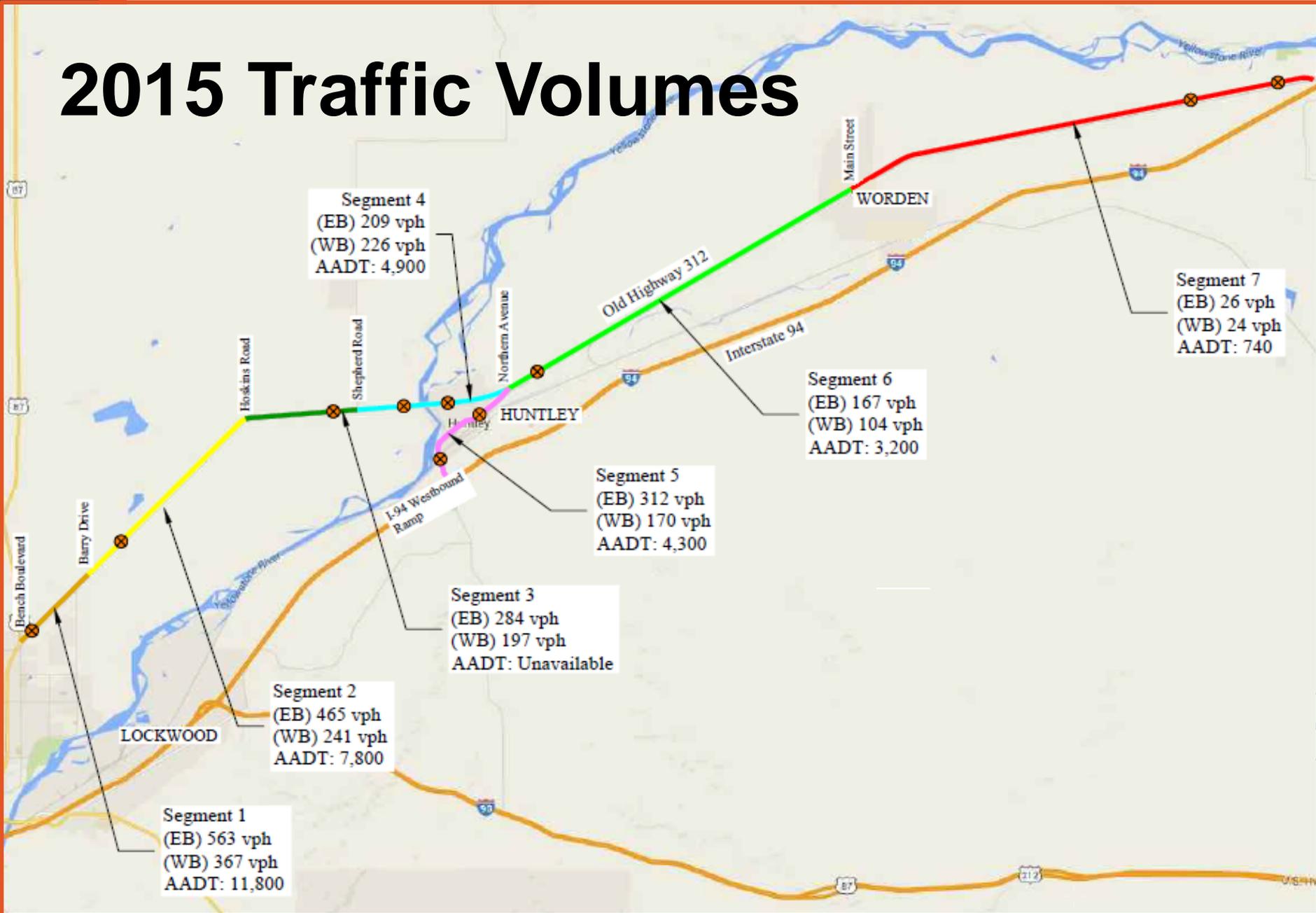
# LOSS - Total Crashes



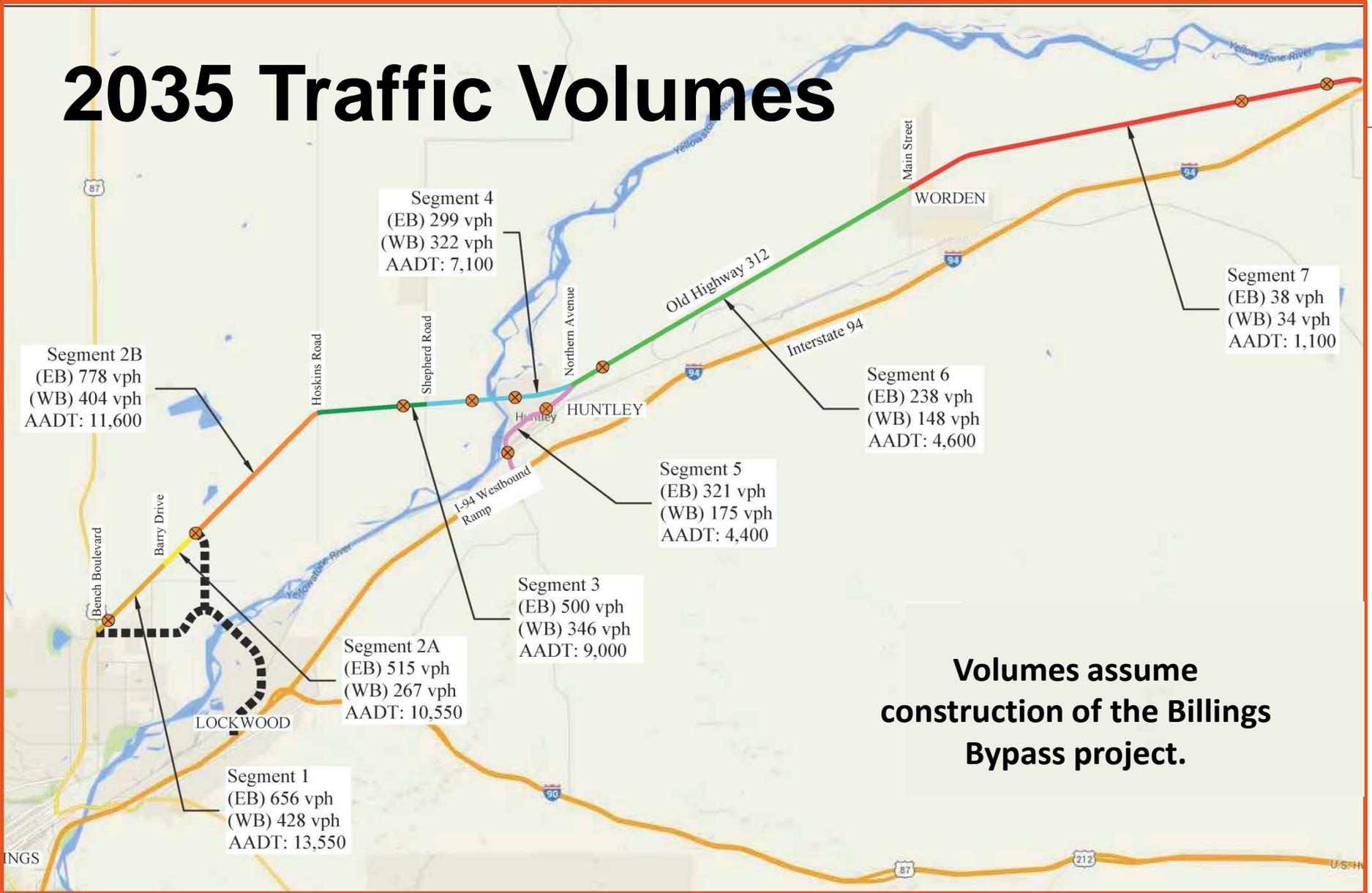
# LOSS - Severe Crashes



# 2015 Traffic Volumes



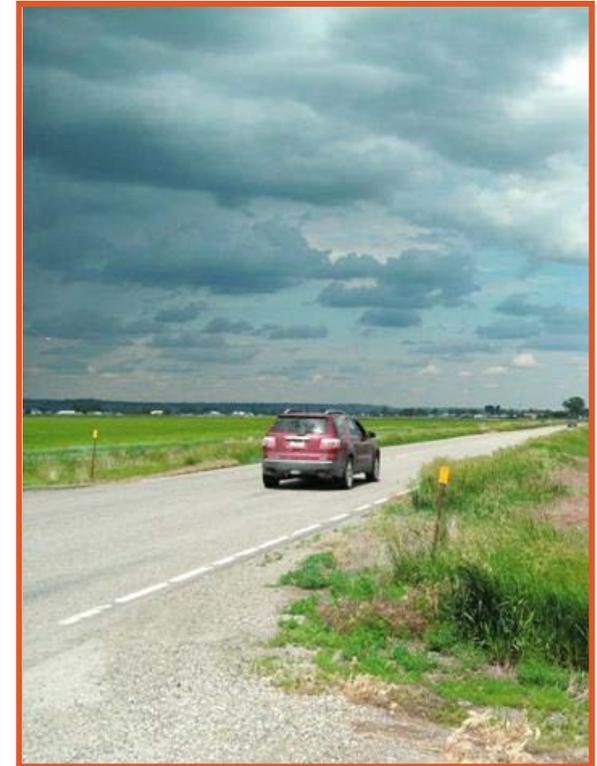
# 2035 Traffic Volumes



**Volumes assume construction of the Billings Bypass project.**

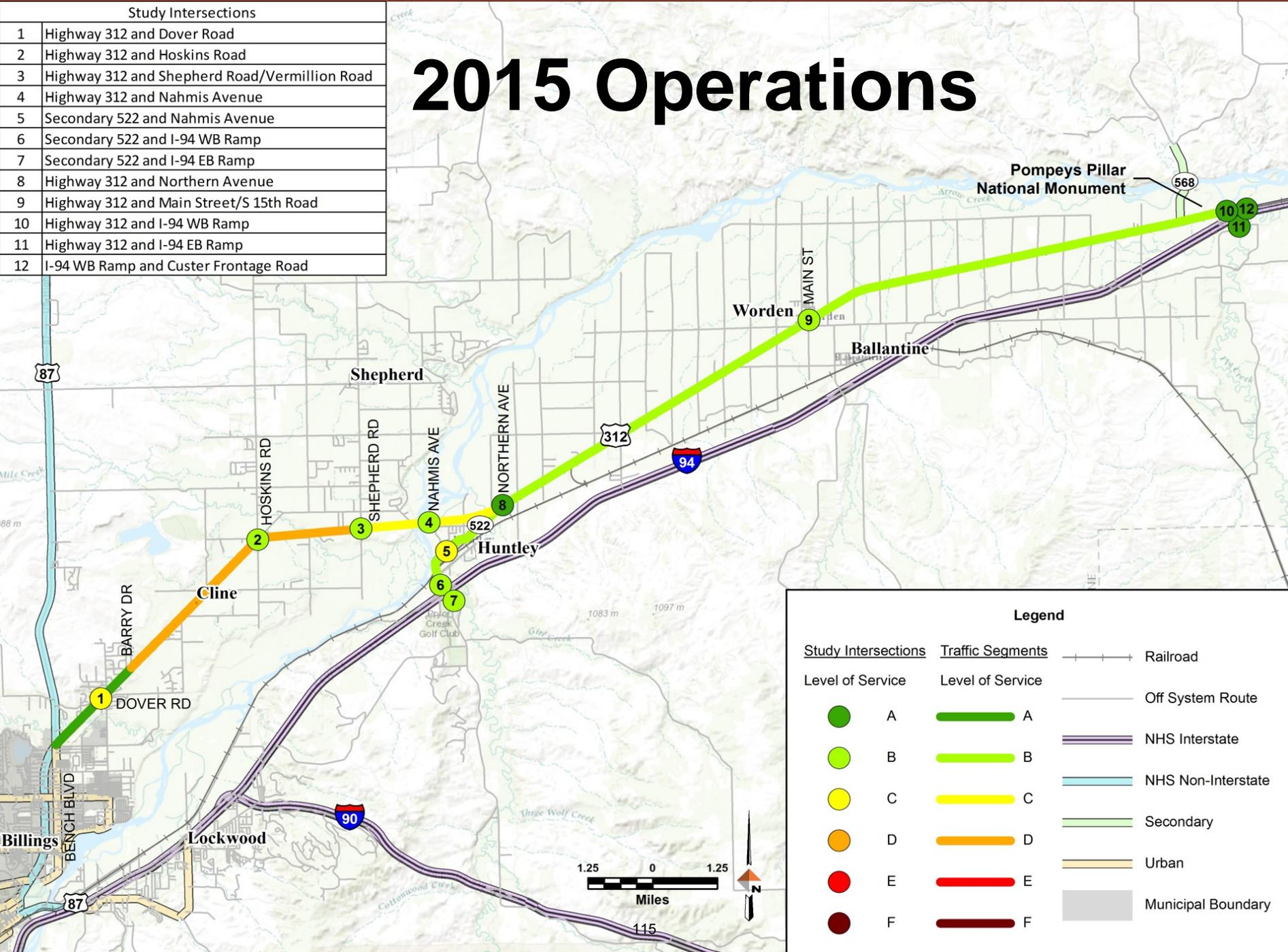
# Traffic Operations

Vehicular Level of Service	
<b>A</b>	Free flow conditions
<b>B</b>	Reasonably free flow; slight delays
<b>C</b>	Stable flow; maneuverability somewhat restricted
<b>D</b>	Approaching unstable flow
<b>E</b>	Unstable flow; at capacity; intolerable delays
<b>F</b>	Traffic volumes exceed capacity



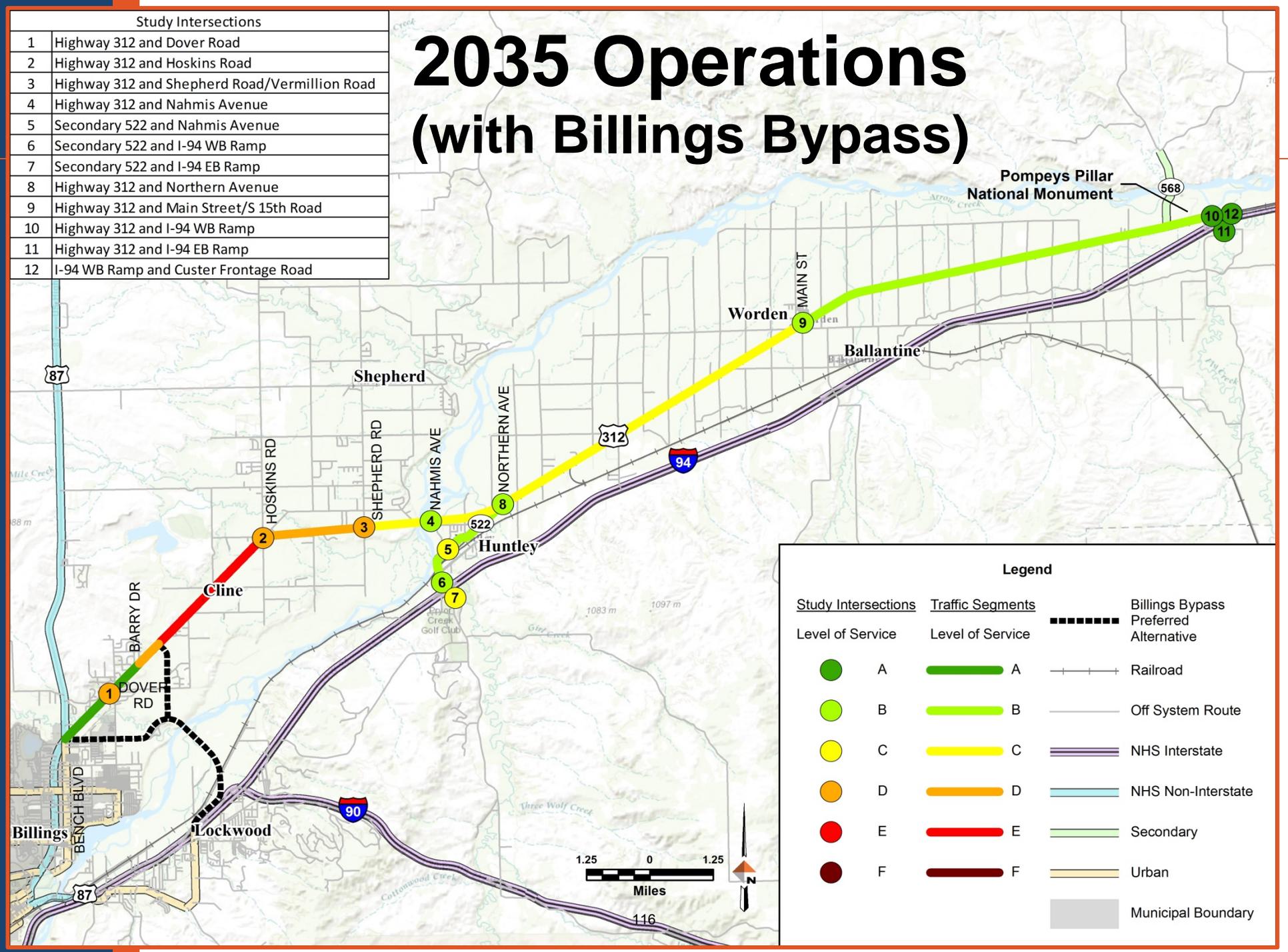
# 2015 Operations

Study Intersections	
1	Highway 312 and Dover Road
2	Highway 312 and Hoskins Road
3	Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road
4	Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue
5	Secondary 522 and Nahmis Avenue
6	Secondary 522 and I-94 WB Ramp
7	Secondary 522 and I-94 EB Ramp
8	Highway 312 and Northern Avenue
9	Highway 312 and Main Street/S 15th Road
10	Highway 312 and I-94 WB Ramp
11	Highway 312 and I-94 EB Ramp
12	I-94 WB Ramp and Custer Frontage Road



# 2035 Operations (with Billings Bypass)

Study Intersections	
1	Highway 312 and Dover Road
2	Highway 312 and Hoskins Road
3	Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road
4	Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue
5	Secondary 522 and Nahmis Avenue
6	Secondary 522 and I-94 WB Ramp
7	Secondary 522 and I-94 EB Ramp
8	Highway 312 and Northern Avenue
9	Highway 312 and Main Street/S 15th Road
10	Highway 312 and I-94 WB Ramp
11	Highway 312 and I-94 EB Ramp
12	I-94 WB Ramp and Custer Frontage Road



Study Intersections		Traffic Segments		Legend	
Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative	
<span style="color: green;">●</span> A	<span style="color: green;">█</span> A	<span style="color: lightgreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="border-top: 1px dashed black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Railroad
<span style="color: limegreen;">●</span> B	<span style="color: limegreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellowgreen;">█</span> D	<span style="color: red;">█</span> E	<span style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Off System Route
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> C	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> E	<span style="color: darkred;">█</span> F	<span style="border-top: 3px double black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	NHS Interstate
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> D	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> D	<span style="color: lightblue;">█</span> F		<span style="border-top: 1px solid lightblue; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	NHS Non-Interstate
<span style="color: red;">●</span> E	<span style="color: red;">█</span> E	<span style="color: lightgreen;">█</span> F		<span style="border-top: 1px solid lightgreen; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Secondary
<span style="color: darkred;">●</span> F	<span style="color: darkred;">█</span> F	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> F		<span style="border-top: 1px solid yellow; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Urban
				<span style="border: 1px solid gray; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Municipal Boundary



# ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

# Farmland

- Low percentage of farmland of state or local importance or prime farmland if irrigated within study area



# Surface Water/Wetlands

- Major surface waters:
  - Five Mile Creek
  - Seven Mile Creek
  - Pryor Creek
  - Arrow Creek
  - Yellowstone River
- 100-year FEMA-mapped floodplains cross the study area



# Irrigation

- **Huntley Irrigation Project**
  - Waters 30,000 acres of alfalfa, hay crops, sugar beets, silage, pasture, and small grains
- High importance to the area
- Abundance of water rights and agricultural land usage in the study area



# Hazardous Materials



- 55 closed underground storage tanks
- 9 active leaking underground tanks and 15 resolved underground tanks
- Two crude oil pipelines northeast of Billings, one between Huntley and Worden

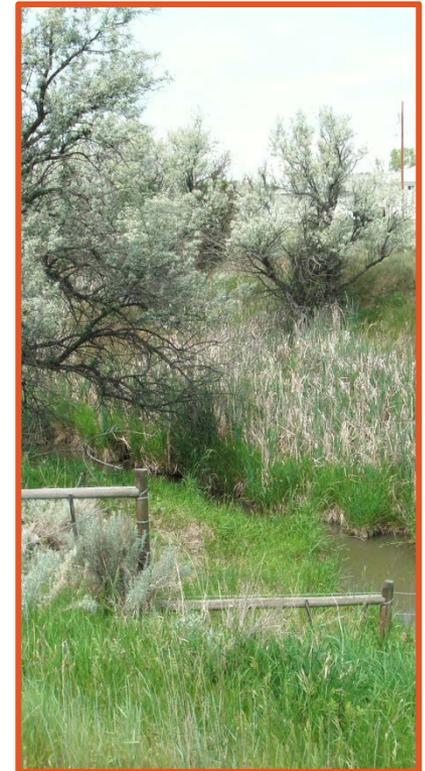
# General Wildlife

- White-tailed and mule deer account for most recorded wildlife fatalities
- Four fisheries within area
  - Yellowstone River
  - Arrow Creek
  - Five Mile Creek
  - Twelve Mile Creek
- Bald eagle nests located on the Yellowstone River, but not within study area



# Species of Concern

- 12 Montana species of concern (SOC) occur in Yellowstone County
  - Greater Sage-Grouse
  - Great Blue Heron
  - Bobolink
  - Loggerhead Shrike
  - Pinyon Jay
  - Spiny Softshell
  - Snapping Turtle
  - Greater Short-horned Lizard
  - Sauger
  - Spotted Bat
  - Hoary Bat
  - Little Brown Myotis
- These species have potential to occur and breed in study area based on presence of suitable habitat



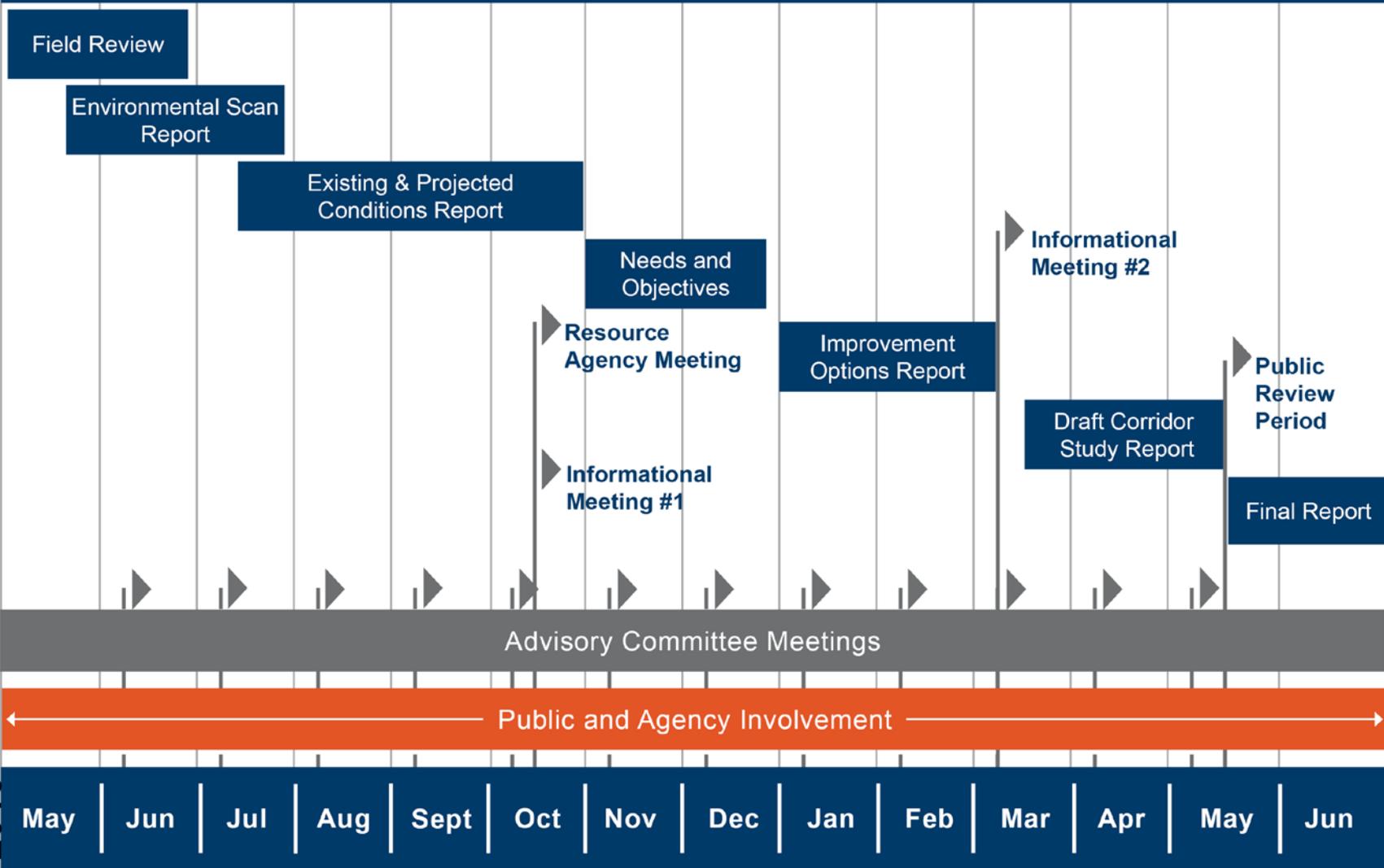
# Cultural/Archeological Resources

- Four potential Section 4(f) recreational resources
  - Lewis and Clark Trail
  - Pompey’s Pillar
  - BLM public land hunting access
  - Barkemeyer Park
- Eleven historic properties
- Unrecorded sites likely occur within the study area

Site	NHRP Eligibility
Huntley Irrigation Project	Eligible
BBWA System*	Eligible
Elevated Ditch	Eligible
BBWA Field Ditch	Eligible
Huntley Bridge	Eligible
Abandoned Billings & Central Montana Railway	Eligible
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway	Eligible
Pryor Creek Battlefield	Eligible
Pompeys Pillar	National Historic Landmark
Bundy Bridge	Eligible
Yellowstone Trail and Bridge	Eligible

Sites located within 0.15 mile of corridor.

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study



# DISCUSSION PERIOD





REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT  
HELENA REGULATORY OFFICE  
10 WEST 15TH STREET, SUITE 2200  
HELENA, MONTANA 59626-9705

December 24, 2015

Regulatory Branch  
Montana State Program  
Corps No. **NWO-2015-01842-MTH**

Subject: Montana Department of Transportation Study, Several Waterways,  
Development Plan Submittal

Montana Department of Transportation  
Attn: Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Ms. Nicolai:

We have reviewed the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study (Study) received by the Corps of Engineer's Helena Regulatory office on October 6, 2015. The Study covers an approximately 26 mile corridor stretching from US 87 extending through the communities of Huntley and Worden in Yellowstone County, Montana.

The mission of the US Corps of Engineers (Corps) Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. In particular, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, we work to protect the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the Nation's aquatic resources. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the potential benefits and detriments that may occur as a result of the proposal. In all cases as applicant must avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources to the greatest extent practicable.

Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army (DA) permits are required for the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Isolated waters and wetlands, as well as man-made channels, may be waters of the United States in certain circumstances, which must be determined on a case-by-case basis. If no waters of the United States will be impacted by the project, no DA permit is required.

The Study indicates there are several waterways and wetlands that may be jurisdictional that may be impacted is construction or improvements of roadways occur. These areas would need to more assessed and analyzed through the Corps of Engineers permit review process, that would include a detailed Delineation Report, proposal for mitigation, alternatives analysis, and documentation that coordination with other agencies has been completed.

The Study does not include any discussion of coordination with the Crow Indian Tribe. The study area is within the ancestral territory of the Crow Tribe, therefore coordination with the Tribe is required by Section 106 of the Cultural Resources Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this proposal. If you have any questions, please contact me at the address above or call (406) 441-1363 and refer to Corps File No. 2015-01842-MTH.

Sincerely,

COLE.ROBERT  
H.1266139710

Digitally signed by  
COLE.ROBERT H.1266139710  
DN: c=US, ou=U.S. Government,  
ou=POD, ou=PA, ou=USA,  
cn=COLE.ROBERT H.1266139710  
Date: 2015.12.24 10:34:05 -0700

Project Manager



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Update

Billings Policy Coordinating Committee

April 19, 2016



# Background & Purpose of Study

- Increasing traffic and congestion along the corridor
- Study has identified options to address needs



# Planning Study Overview

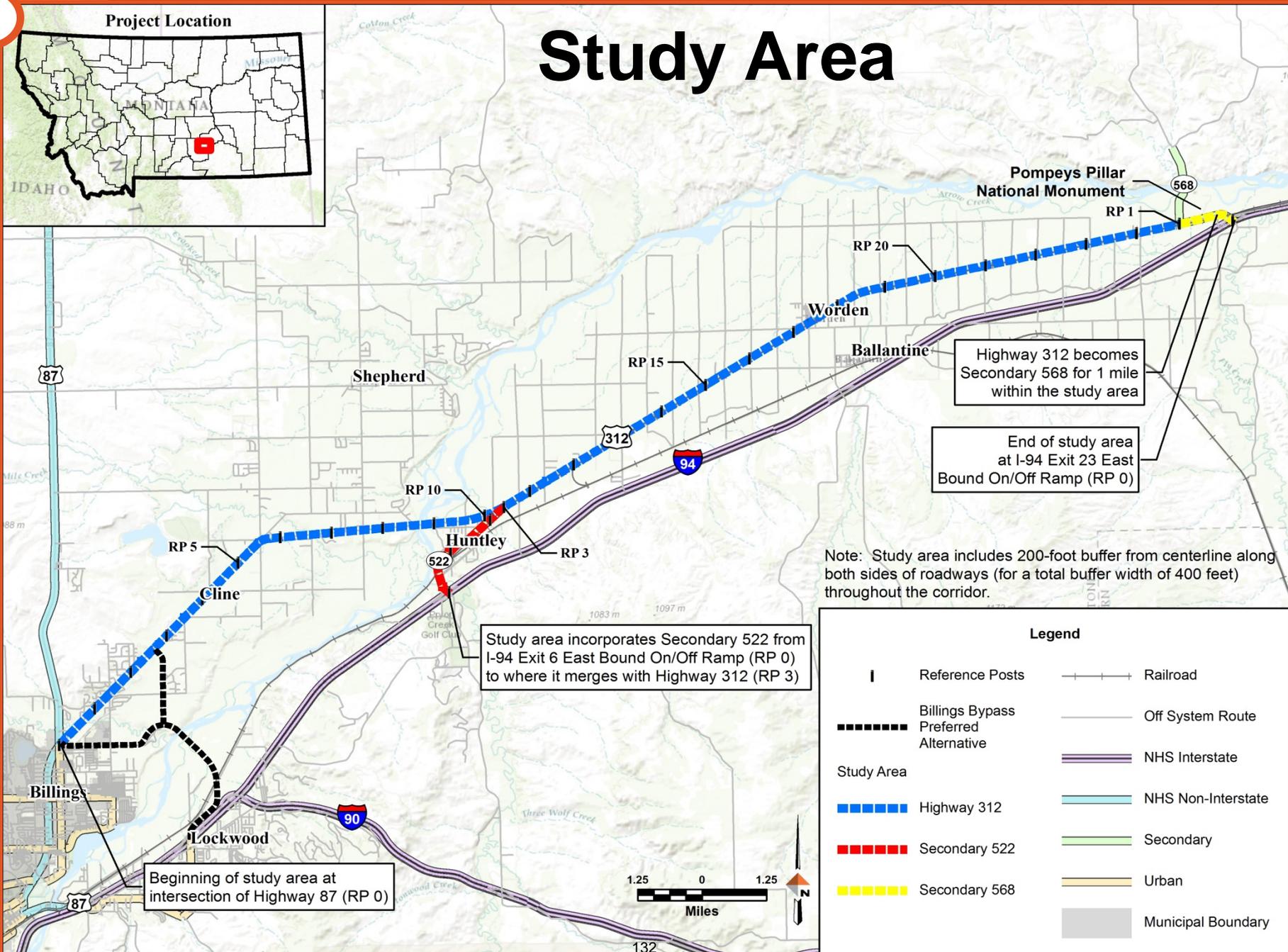
- Existing and Projected Conditions
- Informational Meeting #1
- Resource Agency Meeting
- Needs and Objectives
- Improvement Options
- **Draft Study Report**
- Informational Meeting #2
- Public/Agency Review Period
- Final Study Report

**We Are Here**

Project Location



# Study Area



Pompeys Pillar National Monument

RP 1

568

RP 20

Worden

Ballantine

Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 for 1 mile within the study area

End of study area at I-94 Exit 23 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0)

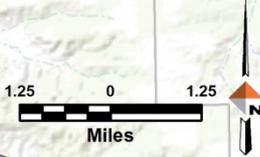
Study area incorporates Secondary 522 from I-94 Exit 6 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0) to where it merges with Highway 312 (RP 3)

Beginning of study area at intersection of Highway 87 (RP 0)

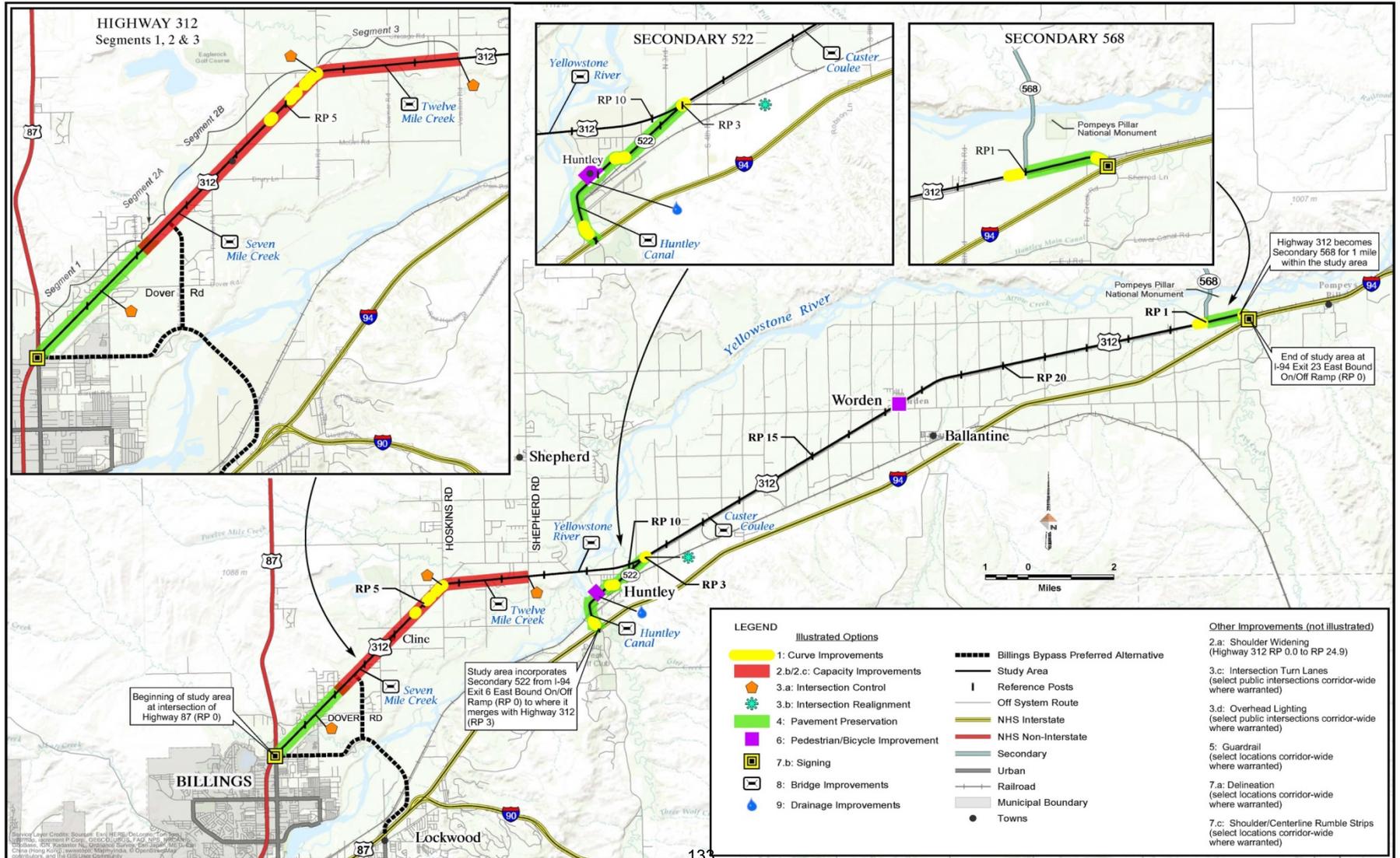
Note: Study area includes 200-foot buffer from centerline along both sides of roadways (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor.

**Legend**

	Reference Posts		Railroad
	Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative		Off System Route
	Study Area		NHS Interstate
	Highway 312		NHS Non-Interstate
	Secondary 522		Secondary
	Secondary 568		Urban
			Municipal Boundary



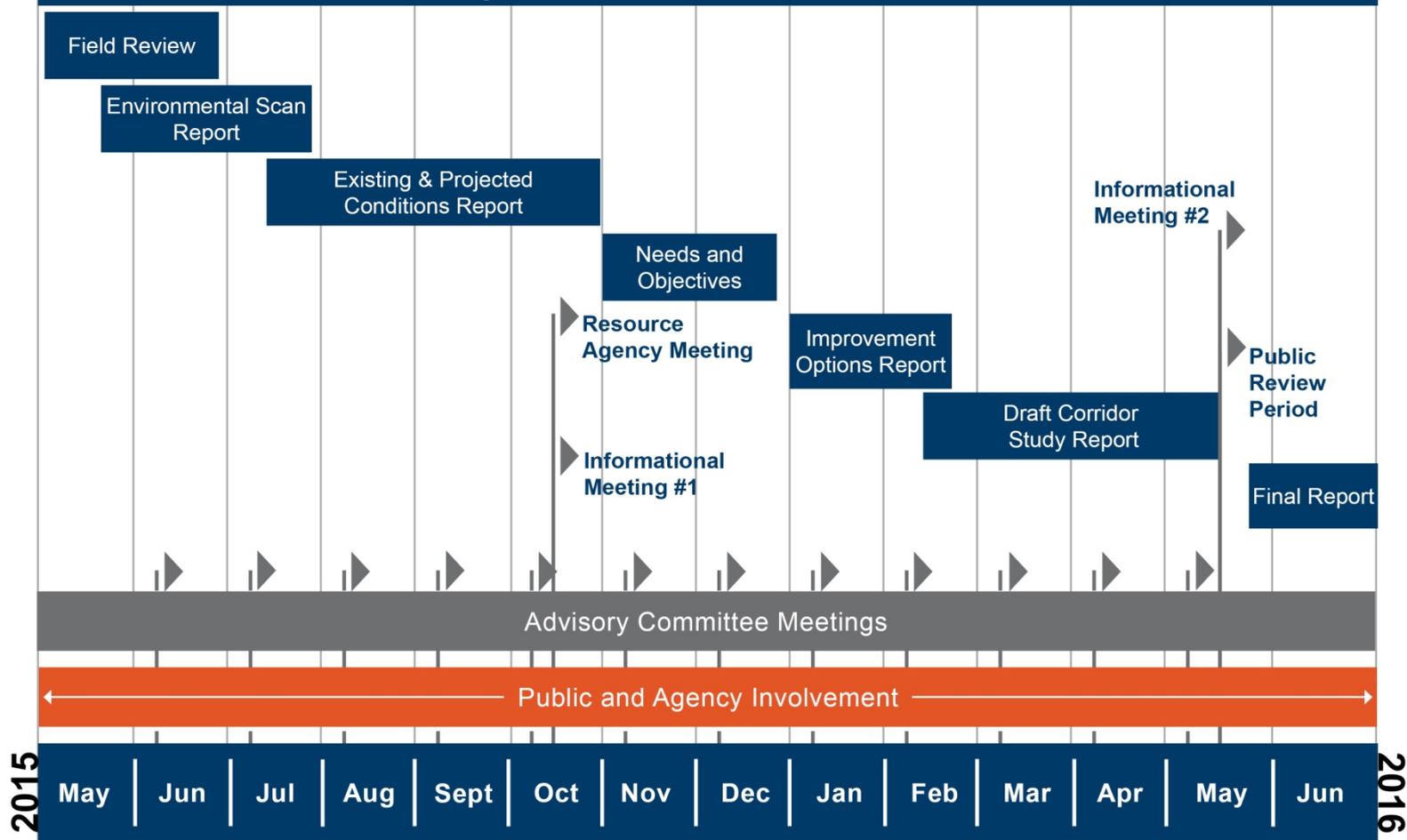
# Summary of Improvements



# Next Steps

- **Draft Study Available For Review Beginning May 2<sup>nd</sup>:** <http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>
- **Final Informational Meeting – Wednesday May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**  
Huntley Project School  
1477 Ash Street  
Worden, MT
- **Final study comments due May 31st**  
Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
snicolai@dowl.com

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study



## Office Locations

### ALASKA

Anchorage  
Juneau  
Fairbanks  
Ketchikan  
Kodiak  
Palmer

### ARIZONA

Tempe  
Tucson

### COLORADO

Golden  
Gunnison  
Montrose

### MONTANA

Billings  
Bozeman  
Butte  
Great Falls  
Helena  
Miles City

### NORTH DAKOTA

Dickinson

### OREGON

Bend

### WASHINGTON

Redmond

### WYOMING

Gillette  
Lander  
Laramie  
Sheridan

## MEETING MINUTES

<b>Date:</b>	May 11, 2016	<b>Start Time:</b> 6:00 p.m.	<b>End Time:</b> 8:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Huntley Project High School 1477 Ash Street, Worden, MT 59088		<b>Attendees:</b>
<b>Project:</b>	Old Highway 312 Corridor Study		Noted within the minutes and on the attached sign-in sheets.
<b>Project Number:</b>	DOWL: 4638.11557.01		
<b>Subject:</b>	Informational Meeting #2		

### Introduction

An informational meeting for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study was held on Wednesday, May 11, 2016, at the Huntley Project High School at 1477 Ash Street in Worden, Montana. The meeting was attended by the following advisory committee representatives.

Tom Kahle	MDT – Multimodal Planning
Gary Neville	MDT – Billings District
Stefan Streefer	MDT – Billings District
Scott Walker	City of Billings
Doug Enderson	DOWL
Nik Griffith	DOWL
Sarah Nicolai	DOWL

Eighteen (18) members of the public signed the sign-in sheets.

### Media Coordination and Newsletter

The informational meeting was advertised in the *Billings Gazette* on April 24 and May 8, 2016, and the *Yellowstone County News* on April 22 and May 6, 2016. A press release was sent to media outlets on April 26, 2016. The study newsletter was published to the study website at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents> and e-mailed to the study mailing list. Copies of the newsletter were also provided at the meeting.

### Presentation

DOWL representatives Sarah Nicolai and Doug Enderson provided an overview of the corridor study planning process, emphasizing public involvement as a major component. Ms. Nicolai focused on existing and projected transportation conditions within the study area, needs and objectives, and funding feasibility. Mr. Enderson discussed potential improvement options. A copy of the presentation is appended to this memorandum.

## **Discussion Period**

A discussion period was held following the presentation to allow members of the public to provide input or request clarification about the study. Ms. Nicolai, Mr. Enderson, and Stefan Streeter responded to public questions and comments. Topics are summarized below.

### *Economic Impacts*

Attendees mentioned improvements in the area would need to be coordinated with businesses in the area. This includes ensuring turn lanes, guardrail, and access points could accommodate large vehicles, equipment, and trailers without impeding traffic flow. It was also mentioned that seasonal traffic can affect traffic flows. Ms. Nicolai and Mr. Streeter explained that the study identifies recommendations for MDT to consider in the future. Mr. Enderson added that MDT strives to engage each business or resident affected by a project on a one-on-one basis and would do so if a project is forwarded from the study.

### *Intersection Improvement*

A member of the public expressed concerns that recommended intersection improvements in the corridor could negatively affect northbound traffic if they required a full stop and 90 degree left turn. Mr. Enderson explained there are recommendations for left-turn bays to be included in intersection improvements for such occasions and roundabouts may also be an option, as they allow for a safe decrease in speed and direction change without a complete stop.

### *Roundabouts*

Multiple questions about roundabouts were asked regarding construction and design standards, number of lanes, and advantages/disadvantages of using roundabouts. Mr. Enderson explained how the design of roundabouts allows for decreased speed on the approach and ease of direction change without a full stop. Roundabouts can vary in size/lane number depending on the amount of traffic involved, number of approaches, and size of vehicles utilizing the roadway. He added that roundabouts provide a higher level of safety as they require a decrease in speed upon approach and decrease the potential for right-angle collisions.

### *Guardrail*

In discussing the recommendations for guardrail improvements a local business owner expressed concern that new guardrail is too close to travel lanes and would make it impossible for him to enter or exit his property using large trucks. Another member of the public added that large pieces of equipment traveling the road during harvest have clearances wider than standard design criteria. Mr. Enderson and Ms. Nicolai acknowledged these concerns and reiterated that MDT would research and discuss construction of improvements with users if a project is forwarded from the study.

### *Funding and Classification*

Mr. Streeter explained to the attendees that funding for the corridor is difficult due to prioritization within the district and the classification of the roadway as an X-route. He added there are other options for funding that could be pursued should the needs within the corridor require the study to move into the project phase more rapidly.

## **Written Comments**

Four (4) written comments were received during the review period addressing topics including the need for wider shoulders and turn bays, visibility and grade issues at specific intersections (including Nahmis Avenue and Frey Road), roadway geometrics, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and permitting considerations. Copies of written comments are included at the end of the memorandum.



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016



Name	Organization/Title	Address	City, State, Zip	Email
Will + Sharon Suralski Sydney + Leey Gabel Scott Walker	c/c Plan	178 West G 2056 W 4th Rd	Huntley MT Huntley	wsuralski@nemont.net Sydney.Gabel@gmail.com
MACK DELCHAMP DENIS PITMAN	Andrey Giel Carney	2435 4th St 726 Aquarius Pl	WARDEN MT Billings MT	mdelcamp@vixins.cable.net DPitman7@aol.com
Gary + Linda Karst Virgil Middendorf GARY NEVILLE		1657 E.I Rd 1642 Natalie St. 5927 Schultz Pl	Ballantine MT Billings, MT 59105 Shepherd	garlink1@gmail.com virgilmiddendorf@gmail.com
John Bedford Liana Susott Judy Kilen Ron Reed	Yellowstone County News	2395 South 18th Rd → 2602 N 18 Rd	Ballantine, MT 59006 Warden mt 55088	liana@bigstygames.org bigredel@tetwest.net



## Nicolai, Sarah

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**From:** Nessel, Jan <jnesset@mt.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 26, 2016 8:05 AM  
**To:** Ryan, Lori  
**Cc:** Marosok, Lauren  
**Subject:** News Release (Old Highway 312 Corridor Study): MDT Schedules Final Informational Meeting for Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

April 26, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lori Ryan, MDT Public Information Officer, (406) 444-6821, [lryan@mt.gov](mailto:lryan@mt.gov)

Montana Department of Transportation Schedules Final Informational Meeting for Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Worden - The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in cooperation with the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and the Federal Highway Administration, is conducting a final informational meeting to discuss the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.

The study area includes Highway 312, starting at its intersection with U.S. Highway 87 (but not including the intersection) and traveling approximately 26 miles northeast through the communities of Huntley and Worden. Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 approximately one mile before the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and the study area continues to and includes the interchange. The study area also includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange westbound on/off ramp, a distance of approximately 3 miles.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 11, at the Huntley Project School (1477 Ash Street) in Worden. A presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by an informal discussion.

The Old Highway 312 Corridor Study is a pre-environmental study that allows for planning-level coordination with members of the public, stakeholders, environmental resource agencies, and other interested parties. The study identified potential improvement options, which will assist in facilitating a smooth and efficient transition from transportation planning to future project development/environmental review.

The purpose of the meeting is to explain the planning study process; present information about existing and projected conditions, needs and objectives, and improvement options; and solicit public comment on the draft study report. Beginning May 2, the draft corridor study report may be viewed at:

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents.shtml>

Public participation is a very important part of the process, and the public is encouraged to attend. Comments may be submitted at the meeting; by mail to Sarah Nicolai, DOWL, 1300 Cedar Street, Helena, MT 59601; by email to [snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com); or online at the link above.

Please indicate comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study and submit by May 31 to ensure your comments are considered before completion of the planning process.

Interested parties are encouraged to join the study mailing list by submitting their name and contact information to Sarah Nicolai at [snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com).

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any service, program or activity of the department. If you require reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, please call Sarah Nicolai at (406) 324-7412 at least two days before the meeting.

Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request by contacting the Office of Civil Rights, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-9229; fax (406) 444-7234; or email [aflesch@mt.gov](mailto:aflesch@mt.gov). For the hearing impaired, the TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592, or call Montana Relay at 711.

-----END-----

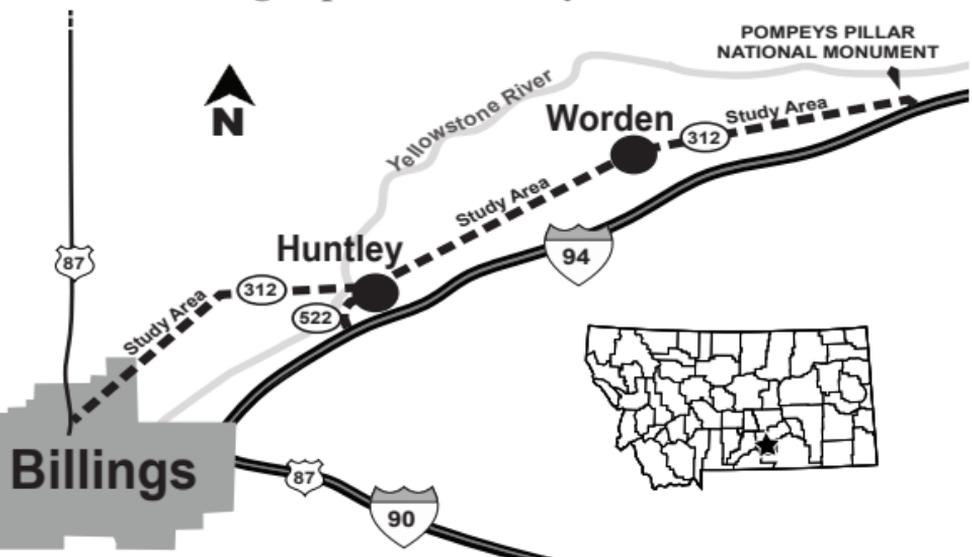
## Final Meeting to Discuss Old Highway 312 Corridor Planning Study

The Montana Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the City of Billings, Yellowstone County and the Federal Highway Administration, is conducting an informational meeting to discuss the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study, a pre-environmental study of approximately 26 miles of Highway 312 from U.S. Highway 87 through Huntley and Worden to where it becomes Secondary 568 near the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and including a portion of Secondary 522.

The final meeting will be held in Worden on Wednesday, May 11, at the Huntley Project School (1477 Ash Street).

A presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by an informal discussion. The study team will explain the planning study process, present information and solicit public comment on the draft study report. Beginning May 2, the draft corridor study report may be viewed at:

[www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents.shtml)



This meeting is open to the public and attendance is encouraged. MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any department service, program or activity. If you require reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact Sarah Nicolai at (406) 324-7412 at least two days prior to the meeting.

Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request by contacting the Office of Civil Rights, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-9229; fax (406) 444-7243, or e-mail to [aflesch@mt.gov](mailto:aflesch@mt.gov). Those using a TTY may call (800) 335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.

Comments may be submitted in writing at the meeting; by mail to Sarah Nicolai, DOWL, 1300 Cedar Street, Helena, MT 59601; by email to [snicolai@dowl.com](mailto:snicolai@dowl.com); or online at:

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>

Please indicate comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study and submit comments by May 31, 2016.



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

## STUDY DESCRIPTION

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in cooperation with the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), conducted a corridor study to investigate potential improvements within the Highway 312 corridor. The purpose of the study was to develop a comprehensive long-range plan for managing the corridor and determining what, if anything, can be done to improve the corridor based on needs, public and agency input, and financial feasibility.

## NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

Needs and objectives were developed through a review of existing and projected conditions, input from members of the public and resource agencies, and coordination with the study advisory committee (AC).

**Need 1: Improve safety within the highway corridor for all roadway users.**

**Need 2: Accommodate existing and projected roadway demands and consider operations within the highway corridor.**

**Need 3: Preserve and maintain highway infrastructure.**

A full list of needs, objectives, and other considerations are included in the draft report posted to the study website at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312>.

## IN THIS ISSUE

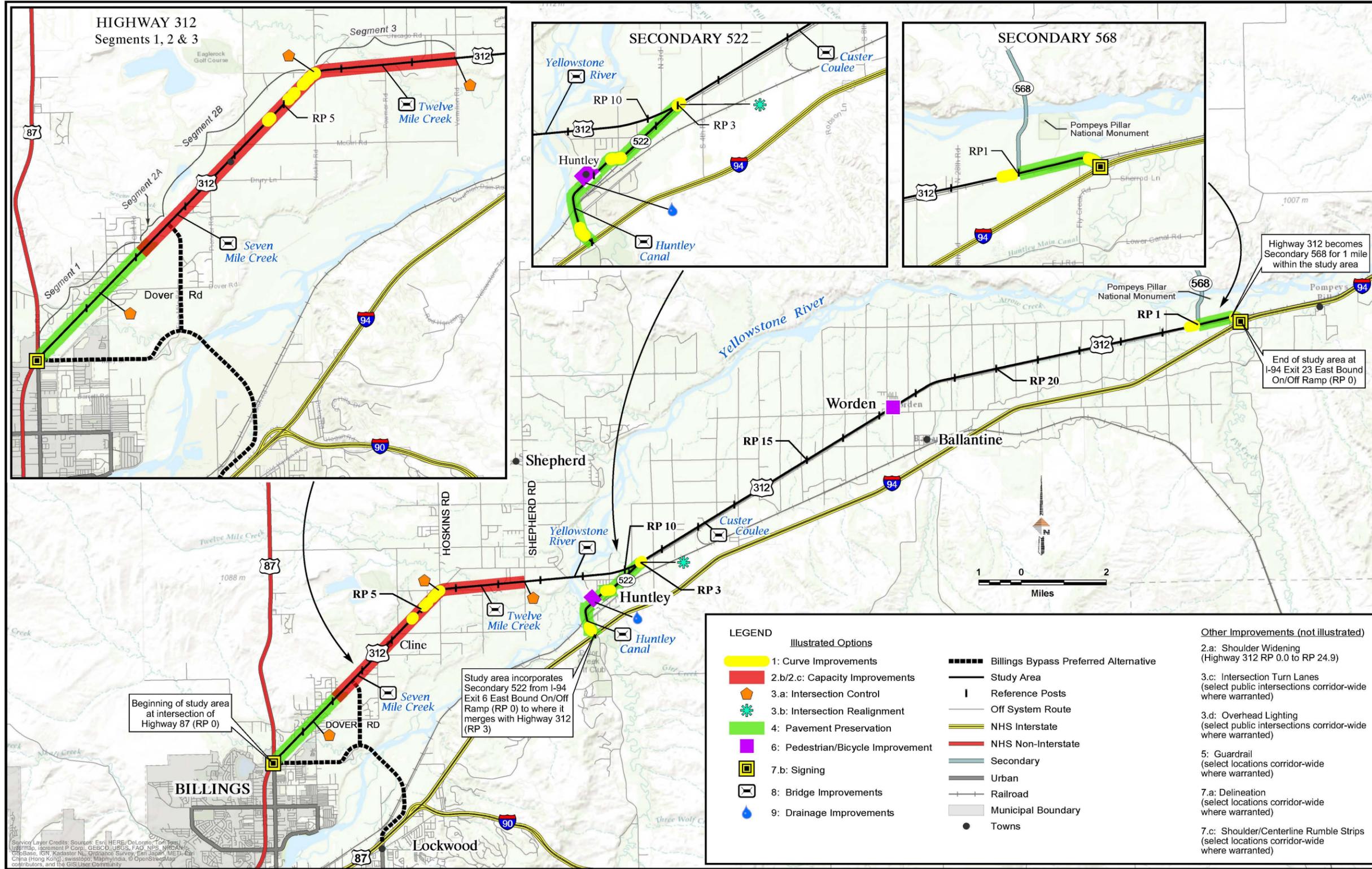
Study Description... 1  
 Needs and Objectives ..... 1  
 Study Area and Improvement Options ..... 2  
 Involvement Opportunities ..... 4  
 Study Schedule..... 4

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING!**

**Wednesday,  
 May 11, 2016,  
 at 6:00 p.m.**  
 Huntley Project School  
 1477 Ash Street  
 Worden, MT



# Study Area and Improvement Options



## Study Area

The study area includes Highway 312 starting at its intersection with US 87 and includes the one-mile stretch of Secondary 568 west of the Pompeys Pillar Interchange and Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange.

## Improvement Options

The study identified a range of options MDT could pursue within the study corridor.

Individual improvement options are concentrated on Highway 312 within segments 2 and 3, and on Secondary 522.

MDT could consider combining individual improvement options in these locations to develop future projects addressing multiple elements.

Funding availability, right-of-way acquisition, and other MDT Billings District priorities will factor into any future implementation decisions. At this time, funding is not available to implement any of the improvement options identified by this study.

## STUDY CONTACTS

**Stefan Streeter**  
MDT Billings District  
Administrator  
406-252-4138  
sstreeter@mt.gov

**Tom Kahle**  
MDT Project Manager  
406-444-9211  
tkahle@mt.gov

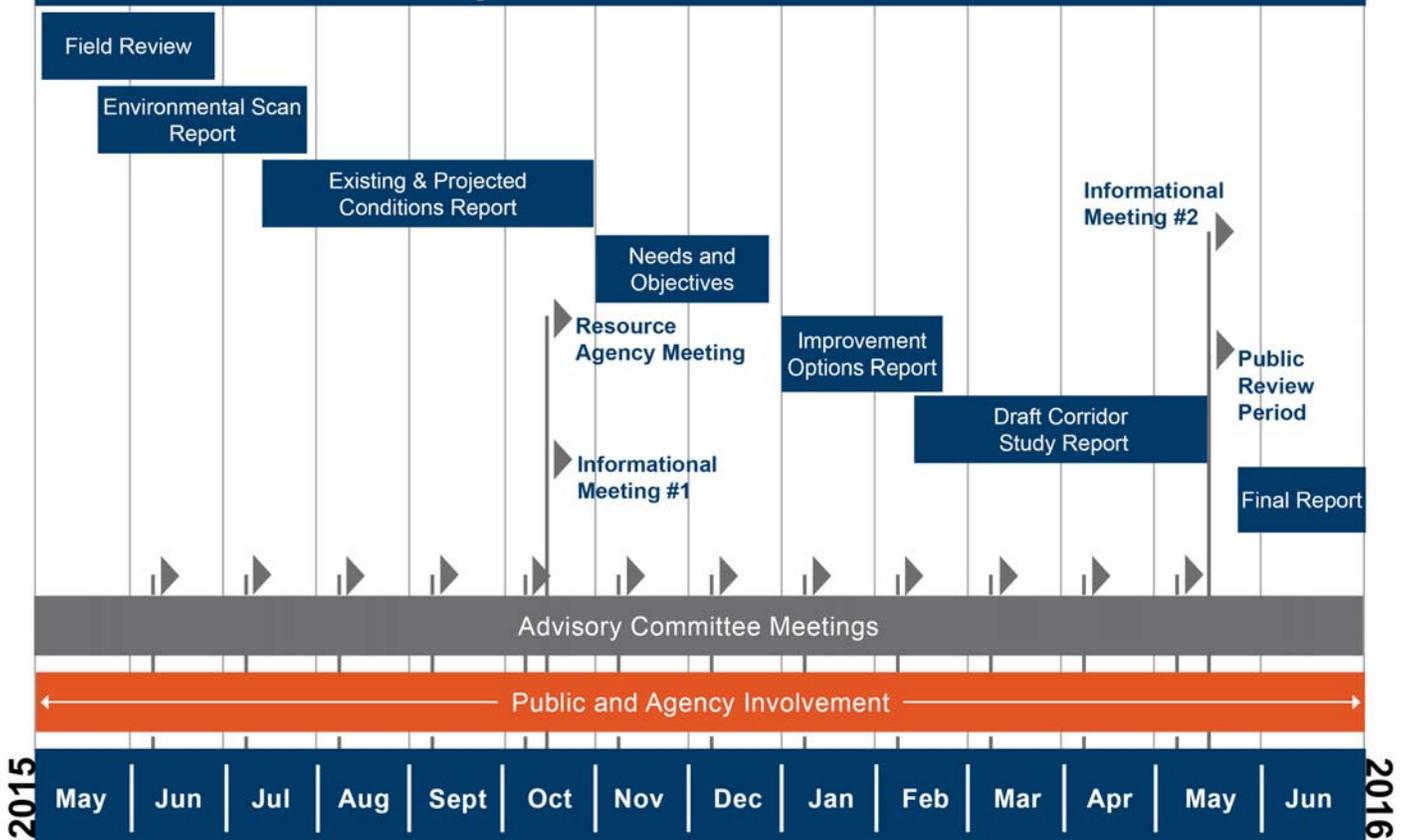
**Sarah Nicolai**  
DOWL Project Manager  
406-324-7412  
snicolai@dowl.com

## INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The final informational meeting is scheduled on **May 11, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.** at the Huntley Project School, 1477 Ash Street, in Worden, MT. We encourage you to attend and provide comments on the draft corridor study report. Beginning May 2, 2016, the draft report may be viewed at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/documents.shtml>.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any service, program, or activity of the department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provide upon request. For more information, please call Sarah Nicolai at (406) 324-7412 or Montana Relay at 711.

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study





# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study

Informational Meeting #2

May 11, 2016



# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS



# Title VI Considerations



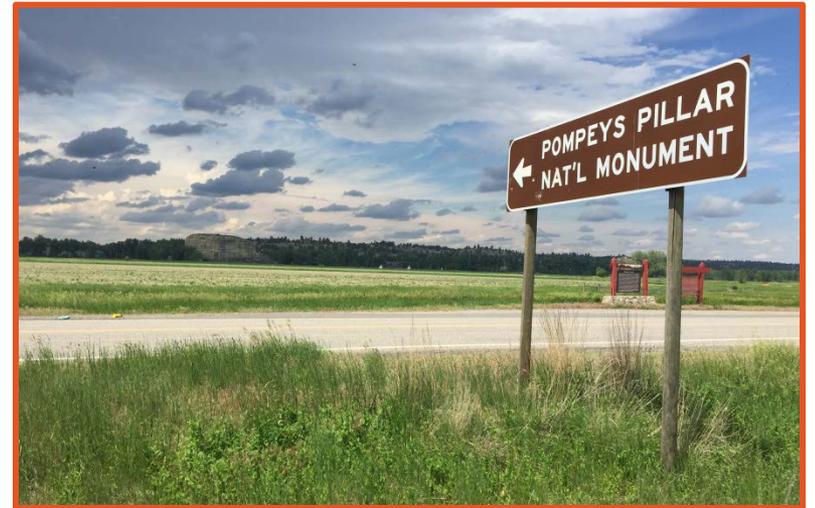
This meeting is held pursuant to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which ensures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination on the basis of a protected status under any MDT program or activity.

# Meeting Format

## Presentation

- Planning Study Process
- Existing and Projected Conditions
- Needs and Objectives
- Improvement Options
- Study Recommendations

## Discussion Period



# What is a Planning Study?



A planning study is conducted before design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for an individual project.

# Background & Purpose of Study

- Increasing traffic and congestion along the corridor
- Study has identified options to address needs



# Planning Study Overview

- Existing and Projected Conditions
- Informational Meeting #1
- Resource Agency Meeting
- Needs and Objectives
- Improvement Options
- Draft Study Report
- **Informational Meeting #2**
- **Public/Agency Review Period**
- Final Study Report

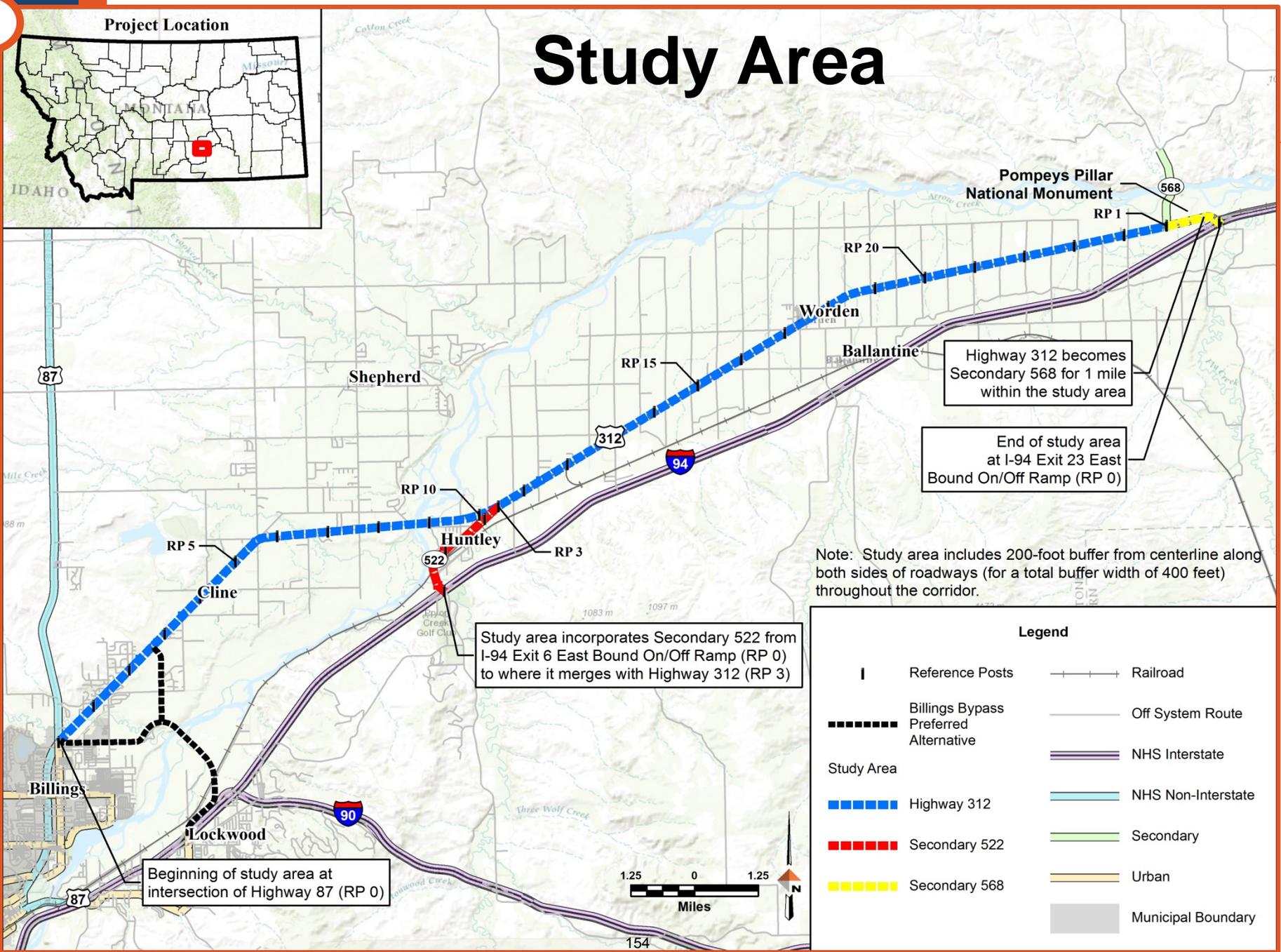


We Are Here

Project Location



# Study Area



Pompeys Pillar National Monument

RP 1

RP 20

Worden

Ballantine

Highway 312 becomes Secondary 568 for 1 mile within the study area

End of study area at I-94 Exit 23 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0)

Study area incorporates Secondary 522 from I-94 Exit 6 East Bound On/Off Ramp (RP 0) to where it merges with Highway 312 (RP 3)

Beginning of study area at intersection of Highway 87 (RP 0)

Note: Study area includes 200-foot buffer from centerline along both sides of roadways (for a total buffer width of 400 feet) throughout the corridor.

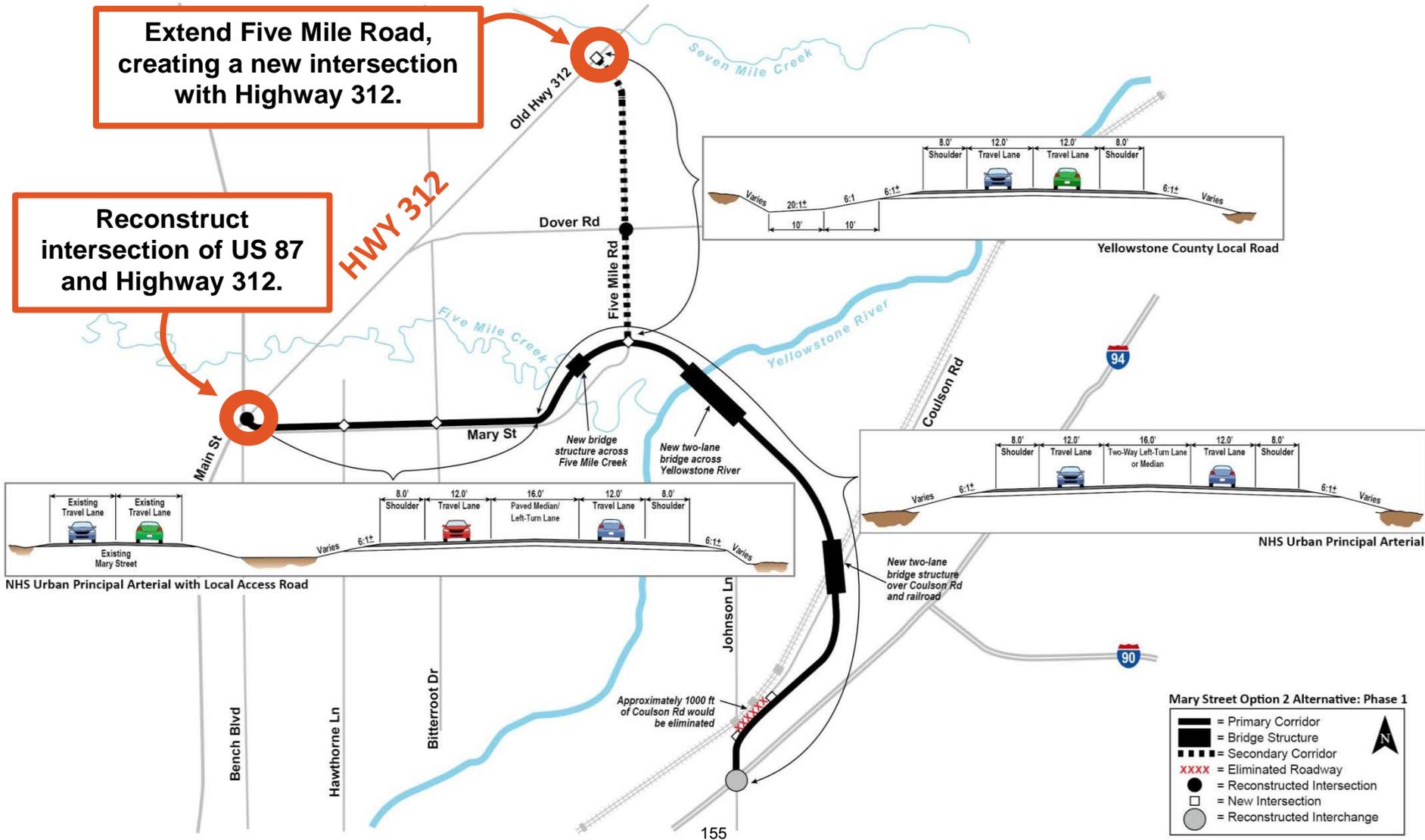
**Legend**

	Reference Posts		Railroad
	Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative		Off System Route
	Study Area Highway 312		NHS Interstate
	Secondary 522		NHS Non-Interstate
	Secondary 568		Secondary
			Urban
			Municipal Boundary

# Billings Bypass Project

Extend Five Mile Road, creating a new intersection with Highway 312.

Reconstruct intersection of US 87 and Highway 312.





# TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

# Roadway Overview

- **Classification**
  - Highway 312: minor arterial & major collector
  - Secondary 522: major collector
  - Secondary 568: major collector
- **Primarily 2-lane and 4-lane sections; intermittent 5-lane and 3-lane sections with turn bays**
- **Right-of-way widths vary from 60 feet to 260 feet away from the centerline**



# Structures

Route	Location	Feature Crossed	Year Built (Recon)	Structure Condition
Highway 312	5M SW HUNTLEY	SEVEN MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	2M W OF HUNTLEY	TWELVE MILE CREEK	1947	Fair
	HUNTLEY	YELLOWSTONE RIVER	1949	Fair
	2M E OF HUNTLEY	CUSTER COULEE	1928 (1939)	Fair
Secondary 522	1M S HUNTLEY	HUNTLEY CANAL	1967	Fair

5 of 12 structures are candidates for repair or replacement (fair condition)



# Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- Shoulder width varies from 0 to 8 feet
- Discontinuous sidewalk along Secondary 522 in Huntley
- Pedestrian crossing located at Barkemeyer Park
  - Does not meet current MDT design criteria



# Drainage Conditions

- Rural drainage is generally sufficient
  - Graded slopes direct drainage towards constructed convergences or natural drainage patterns
  - Highway runoff is directed to adjoining shoulders
- Standing water noted at Barkemeyer Park

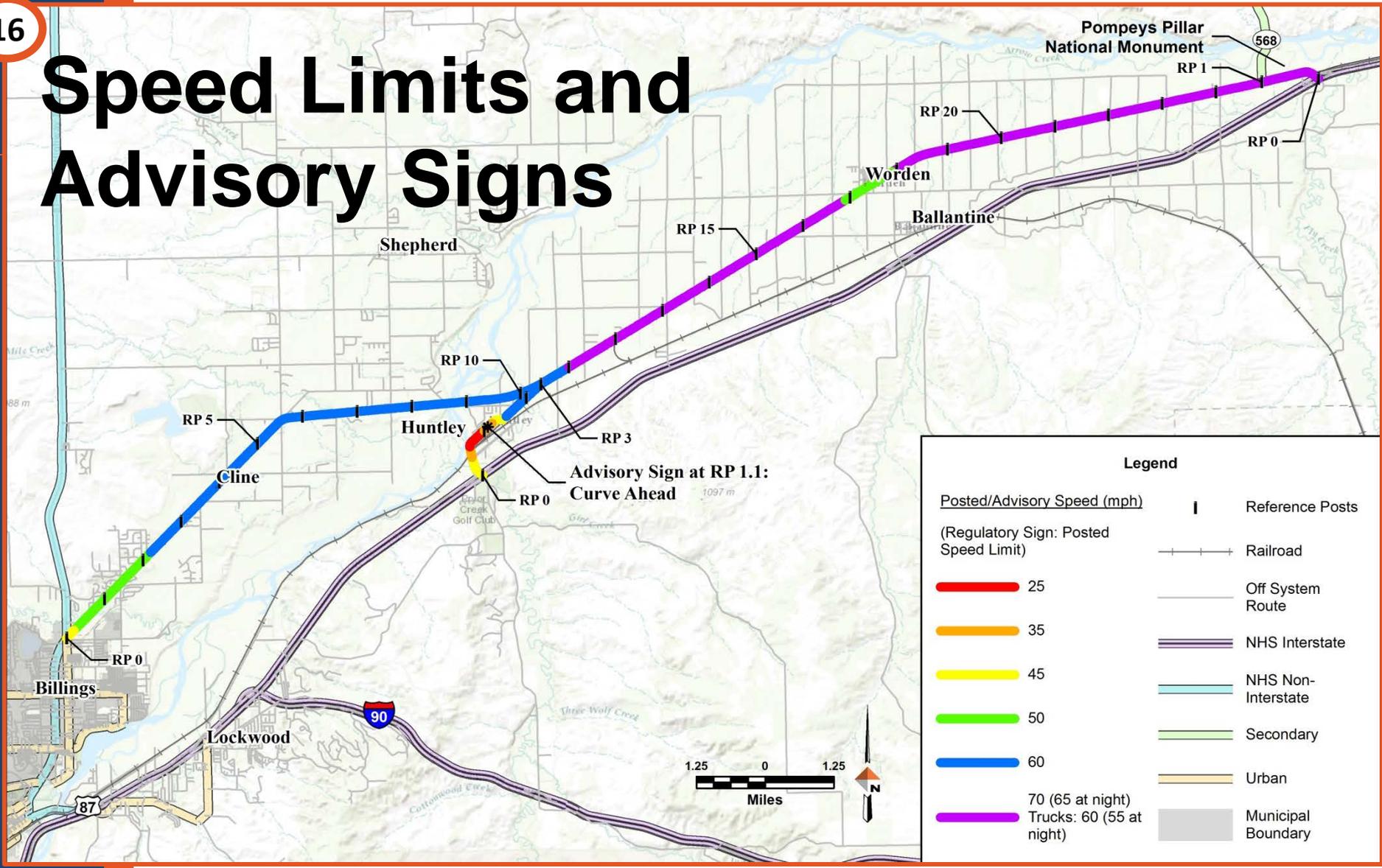


# Pavement Conditions

- Rutting observed throughout corridor
  - Generally worse within the 2-lane sections, compared to the 3 and 5-lane sections
- Fair ride index ratings for Secondary 568 and 522
- Transverse cracking
  - Generally 75-200 foot intervals

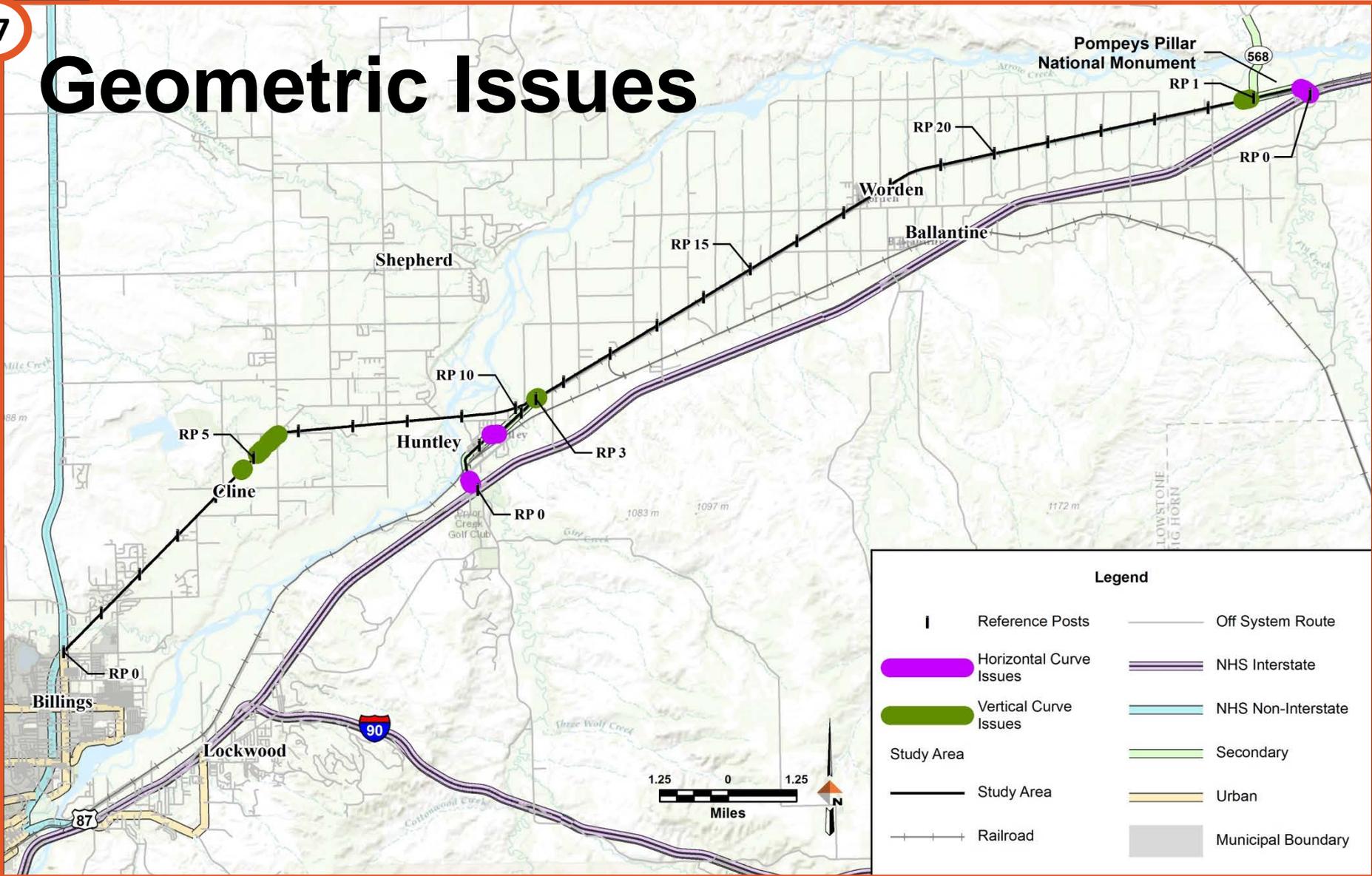


# Speed Limits and Advisory Signs



- 45-50 mph near Billings, transitioning to 60 mph through Huntley; 70 mph east to Pompeys Pillar (with 50 mph at Worden); 25-45 mph on S522

# Geometric Issues

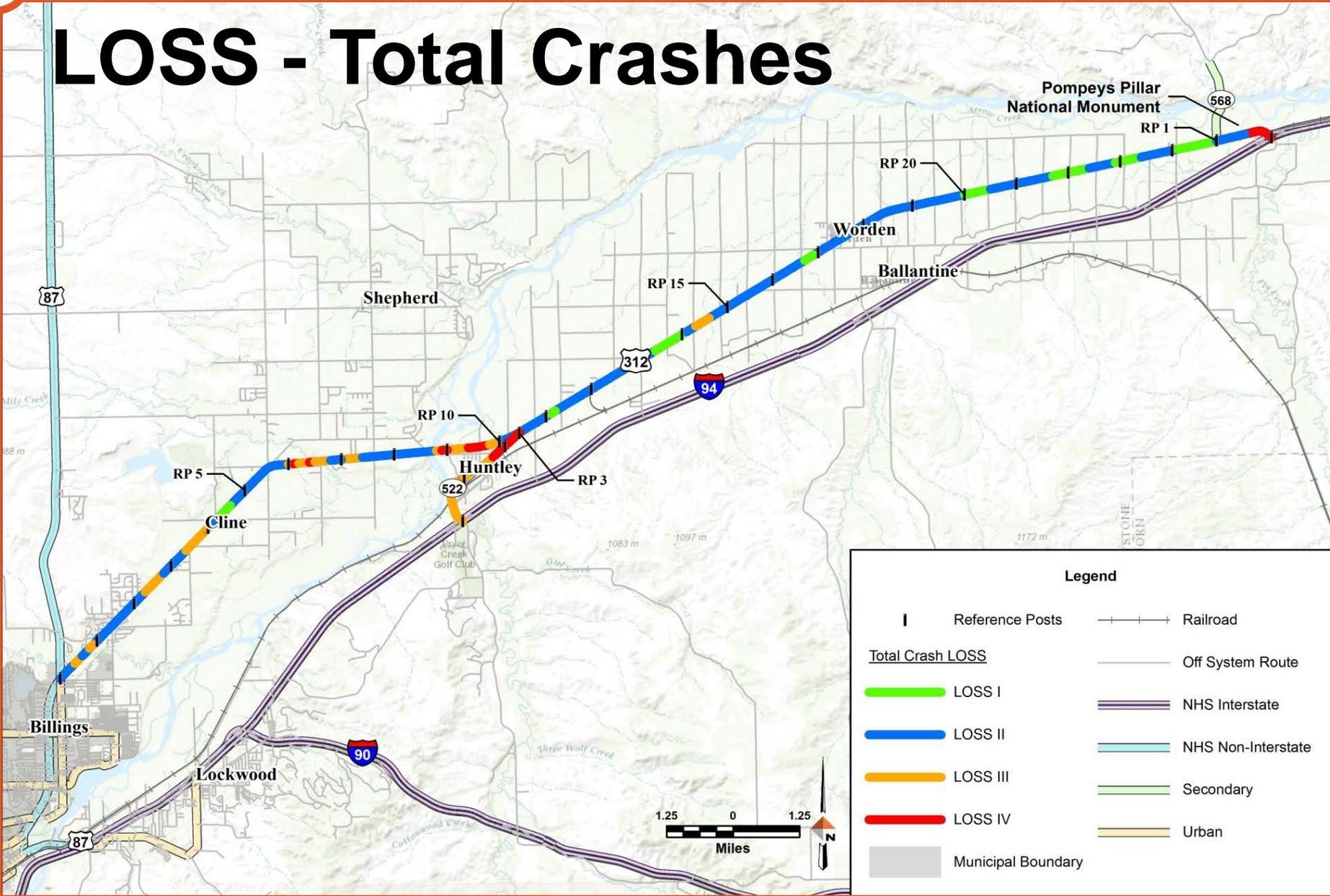


- 4 horizontal and 11 vertical curves do not meet current design criteria
- Obstructions in clear zones

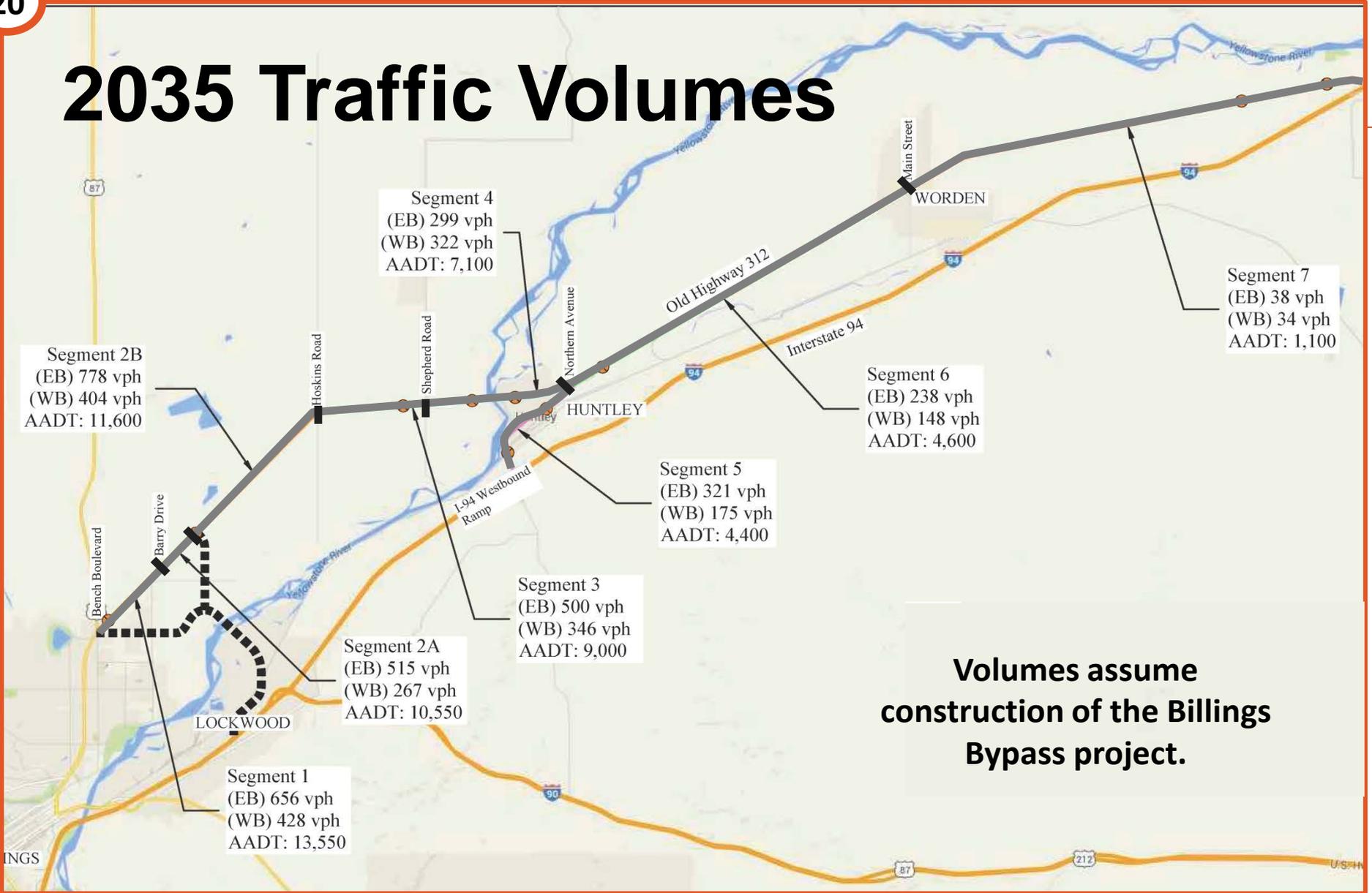
# Crash Analysis

- **Crash Analysis Period: 2005-2014**
  - 577 total crashes, 328 injuries, and 6 fatalities
  - Most were fixed object, rear-end, right angle, roll over, and wild animal crashes
- **Level of Service of Safety (LOSS): 2005-2014**
  - MDT models normal expected crash occurrence and severity based on traffic volumes and roadway type
  - Deviations from anticipated safety performance indicate areas for improvement

# LOSS - Total Crashes



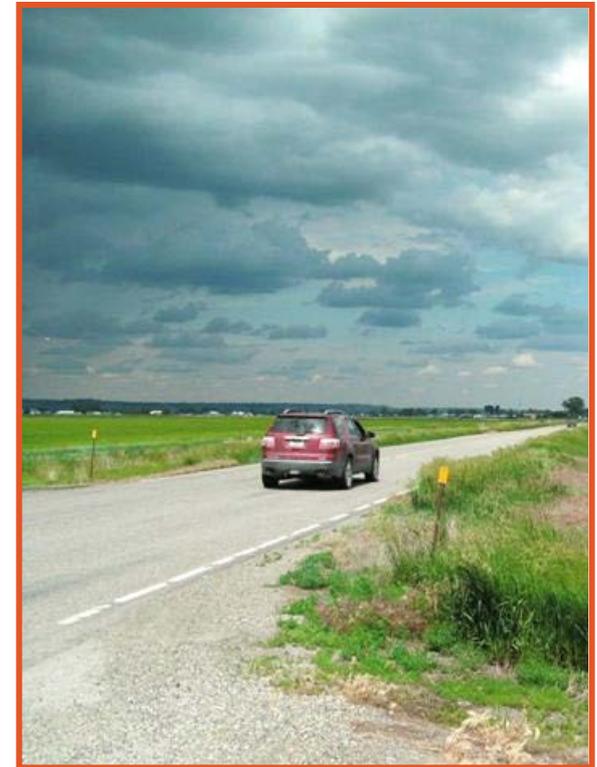
# 2035 Traffic Volumes



**Volumes assume construction of the Billings Bypass project.**

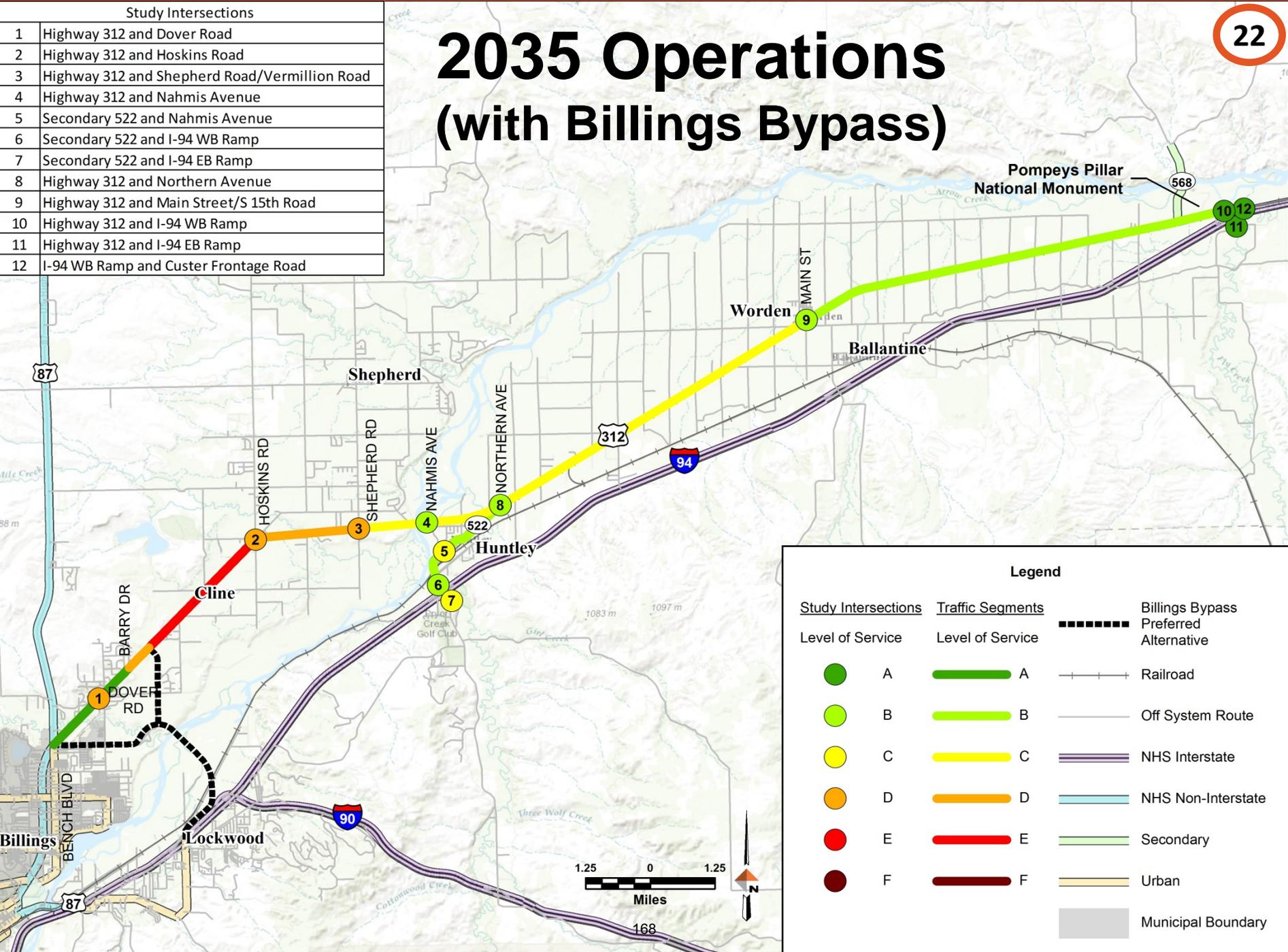
# Traffic Operations

Vehicular Level of Service	
<b>A</b>	Free flow conditions
<b>B</b>	Reasonably free flow; slight delays
<b>C</b>	Stable flow; maneuverability somewhat restricted
<b>D</b>	Approaching unstable flow
<b>E</b>	Unstable flow; at capacity; intolerable delays
<b>F</b>	Traffic volumes exceed capacity



# 2035 Operations (with Billings Bypass)

Study Intersections	
1	Highway 312 and Dover Road
2	Highway 312 and Hoskins Road
3	Highway 312 and Shepherd Road/Vermillion Road
4	Highway 312 and Nahmis Avenue
5	Secondary 522 and Nahmis Avenue
6	Secondary 522 and I-94 WB Ramp
7	Secondary 522 and I-94 EB Ramp
8	Highway 312 and Northern Avenue
9	Highway 312 and Main Street/S 15th Road
10	Highway 312 and I-94 WB Ramp
11	Highway 312 and I-94 EB Ramp
12	I-94 WB Ramp and Custer Frontage Road



Study Intersections		Traffic Segments		Legend	
Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Level of Service	Billings Bypass Preferred Alternative	
<span style="color: green;">●</span> A	<span style="color: green;">█</span> A	<span style="color: lightgreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="border-bottom: 2px dashed black;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black;">    </span> Railroad
<span style="color: limegreen;">●</span> B	<span style="color: limegreen;">█</span> B	<span style="color: yellowgreen;">█</span> D	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> E	<span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">    </span> Off System Route
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> C	<span style="color: yellow;">█</span> C	<span style="color: orangeyellow;">█</span> E	<span style="color: red;">█</span> F	<span style="border-bottom: 3px double black;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 3px double black;">    </span> NHS Interstate
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> D	<span style="color: orange;">█</span> D	<span style="color: redorange;">█</span> F		<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid lightblue;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid lightblue;">    </span> NHS Non-Interstate
<span style="color: red;">●</span> E	<span style="color: red;">█</span> E			<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid lightgreen;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid lightgreen;">    </span> Secondary
<span style="color: darkred;">●</span> F	<span style="color: darkred;">█</span> F			<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid tan;">    </span>	<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid tan;">    </span> Urban
				<span style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<span style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Municipal Boundary

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# NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

# Needs and Objectives

**Need 1: Improve safety within the highway corridor for all roadway users.**

**Objectives: To the extent practicable:**

- Improve the safety of roadway and structure elements by meeting current design criteria.
- Identify strategies to address locations with high potential for crash reduction and other known safety concerns.

# Needs and Objectives

**Need 2: Accommodate existing and projected roadway demands and consider operations within the highway corridor.**

**Objectives: To the extent practicable:**

- Meet desirable levels of service on roadway segments and at intersections through the 2035 planning horizon.
- Consider regional, local, and seasonal travel patterns.

# Needs and Objectives

## Need 3: Preserve and maintain highway infrastructure.

Objectives: To the extent practicable:

- Rehabilitate roadway surfacing and structures as needed to accommodate volume and mix of vehicles through the 2035 planning horizon.
- Address areas with inadequate drainage.

# Other Considerations

- Local planning efforts, planned projects, and potential future development in the study area.
- Proximity to railroad, utility, irrigation, and other features within the highway corridor.
- Potential adverse impacts to environmental resources that may result from improvement options.
- Funding eligibility and availability.
- Temporary construction impacts.
- Construction feasibility and physical constraints.

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# IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

# Curve Improvements

Option 1	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate <sup>1</sup>	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ROW/ Permitting
Curve Improvements	<u>Highway 312</u> 1.a: RP 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 1.b: RP 24.7, 24.8	1.a: \$1,960,000 to \$2,130,000 1.b: \$760,000 to \$820,000 1.c: \$570,000 to \$620,000	Mid-term to Long-term	Yes
	<u>Secondary 522</u> 1.c: RP 0.2 1.d: RP 1.3, 1.4 1.e: RP 3.0, 3.1	1.d: \$760,000 to \$820,000 1.e: \$760,000 to \$820,000		
	<u>Secondary 568</u> 1.f: RP 0.1	1.f: \$570,000 to \$620,000		

# Capacity Improvements

Option 2	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate <sup>1</sup>	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
2.a Shoulder Widening	Highway 312 Segments 2 and 3  Entire Highway 312 Corridor (RP 0.0 to 24.9)	Segment 2: \$440,000 to \$480,000 Segment 3: \$250,000 to \$280,000 Entire Corridor: \$3,140,000 to \$3,410,000	Mid-term to Long-term	Yes
2.b Three-lane Section	Segment 2: Highway 312 RP 2.1 to 5.6, including bridge replacement at Seven Mile Creek (RP 2.70)	Segment 2: \$3,200,000 to \$3,500,000 Segment 3: \$3,600,000 to \$3,900,000	Mid-term to Long-term	Yes
2.c Five-lane Section	Segment 3: Highway 312 RP 5.6 to 7.4, including bridge replacement at Twelve Mile Creek (RP 6.57)	Segment 2: \$7,000,000 to \$7,600,000 Segment 3: \$5,700,000 to \$6,100,000	Mid-term to Long-term	Yes

# Intersection Improvements

Option 3	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate <sup>1</sup>	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
3.a Intersection Control	Dover Road (Highway 312 RP 1.3) Hoskins Road (Highway 312 RP 5.6) Shepherd Rd (Highway 312 RP 7.6)	Traffic Signal: \$370,000 to \$400,000 per intersection Roundabout (1-Lane): \$1,200,000 to \$1,300,000 per intersection Roundabout (2-Lane): \$1,300,000 to \$1,500,000 per intersection	Mid-term to Long-term	Yes
3.b Intersection Realignment	Northern Ave (Highway 312 RP 10.4)	\$670,000 to \$770,000	Short-term to Mid-term	Yes

# Intersection Improvements

Option 3	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
3.c Intersection Turn Lanes	Select public intersections, potentially including:  McIntyre Dr, Northern Ave, N 7 <sup>th</sup> Rd, N 10 <sup>th</sup> Rd, N 12 <sup>th</sup> Rd, and N 15 <sup>th</sup> Rd.	\$540,000 to \$590,000 per intersection	Short-term to Mid-term	Yes
3.d Overhead Lighting	Select public intersections where warranted, potentially including:  Nahmis Ave, Northern Ave, and Custer Frontage Rd	\$220,000 to \$250,000 per intersection	Short-term to Mid-term	No

# Pavement Preservation

Option 4	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
<p>Pavement Preservation</p>	<p>Highway 312 (RP 0.0 to 2.3)</p>	<p>Highway 312: \$1,800,000 to \$2,000,000</p>	<p>Short-term to Long-term</p>	<p>No</p>
	<p>Secondary 568 (RP 0.0 to 1.0)</p>	<p>Secondary 568: \$470,000 to \$510,000</p>		
	<p>Secondary 522 (RP 0.0 to 3.0)</p>	<p>Secondary 522: \$1,400,000 to \$1,600,000</p>		

# Roadside Safety

Option 5	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
Guardrail	Select locations corridor-wide where warranted, including:  Highway 312 RP 10.5, 12.2, 13.2, 16.6, 18.8, 20.2, 21.5  Secondary 522 RP 0.2	\$20,000 per location	Short-term to Mid-term	No

# Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements

Option 6	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
Sidewalk/ ADA	Secondary 522 – Huntley Highway 312 – Worden	Secondary 522 – Huntley: \$200,000 to \$220,000 Highway 312 – Worden: \$290,000 to \$320,000	Mid-term to Long-term	No

# Traffic Control and Safety/Warning Features

Option 7	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
7.a Delineation	Select locations corridor-wide where warranted, including: Highway 312 RP 4.9, 7.2, 9.8, 17.5, 23.9, 24.0 Secondary 522 RP 0.1, 0.3, 0.4	\$60 per approach	Short-term to Mid-term	No
7.b Signing	US 87 (Highway 312 RP 0.0) Pompeys Pillar Intchg (RP S568 RP 0.0)	\$550 to \$3,500 per assembly	Short-term to Mid-term	No
7.c Shoulder/ Centerline Rumble Strips	Select locations corridor-wide where warranted, including LOSS III/IV areas: Highway 312 RP 4-15 Secondary 522 RP 0-2 Secondary 568 RP 0.5	Highway 312: \$77,500 to \$84,600 Secondary 568: \$7,100 to \$7,800 Secondary 522: \$14,200 to \$15,500	Short-term to Mid-term	No

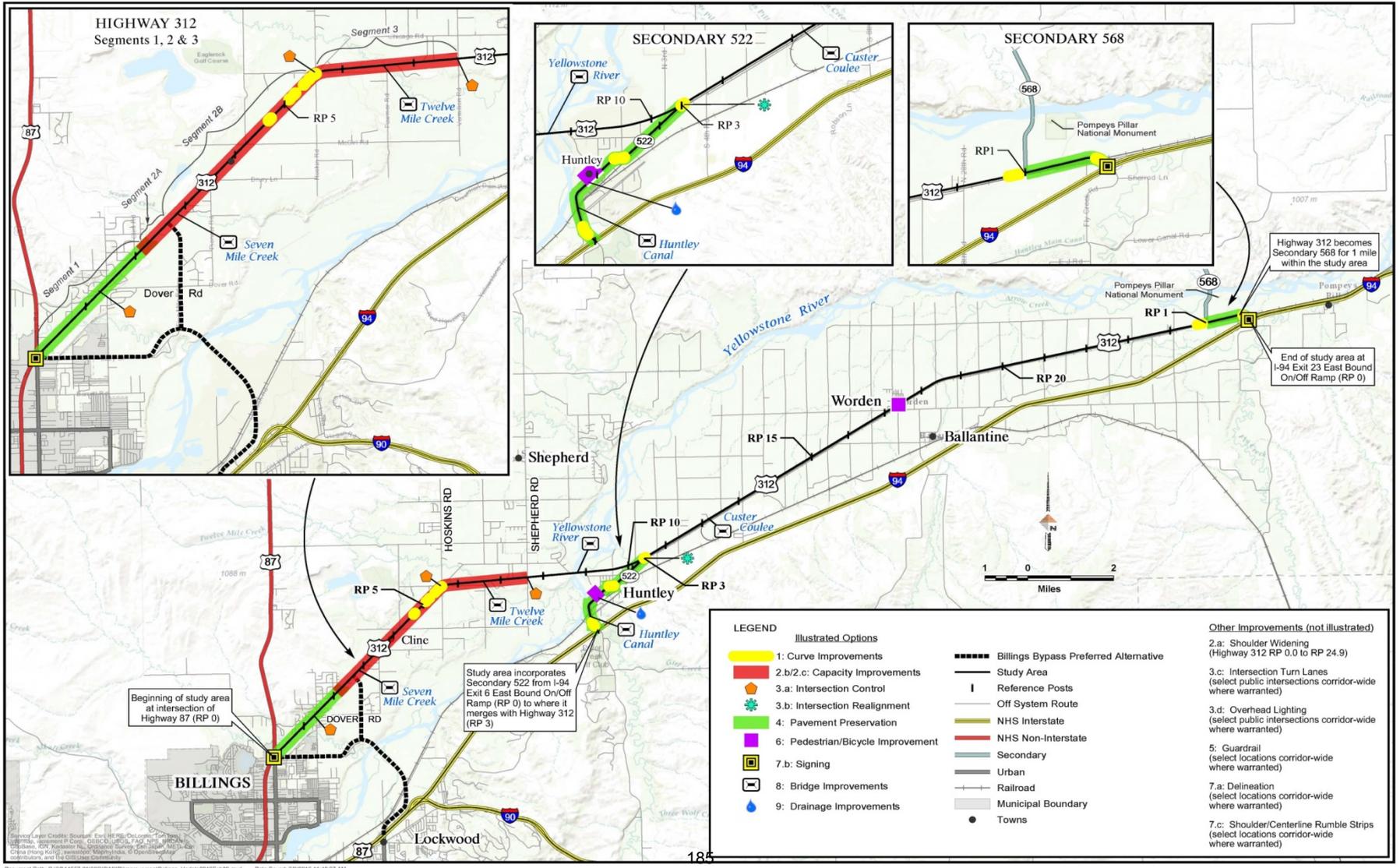
# Bridge Improvements

Option 8	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
<p>Bridge Improvements</p>	<p><u>Highway 312</u>                      Seven Mile Creek (RP 2.70)                      Twelve Mile Creek (RP 6.57)                      Yellowstone River (RP 8.78)                      Custer Coulee (RP 12.15)</p> <p><u>Secondary 522</u>                      Huntley Canal (RP 0.36)</p>	<p>Seven Mile Creek:                      \$60,000 to \$65,000</p> <p>Twelve Mile Creek:                      \$260,000 to \$290,000</p> <p>Yellowstone River:                      \$3,200,000 to \$3,400,000</p> <p>Custer Coulee:                      \$60,000 to \$70,000</p> <p>Huntley Canal:                      \$290,000 to \$310,000</p>	<p>Mid-term to Long-term</p>	<p>Yes</p>

# Drainage Improvements

Option 9	Potential Locations	Planning Cost Estimate	Potential Timeframe	Impacts/ ROW/ Permitting
Drainage Improvements	Barkemeyer Park (S522 RP 0.9)	\$1,000	Short-term to Mid-term	Yes

# Summary of Improvements



# Combined Options

## Segment 2

- Widen roadway to a **five-lane section**
- Widen **shoulders** and address side slopes
- Address vertical curve issues west of Hoskins Road,
- Replace the **Seven Mile Creek bridge**,
- Address **intersection control** at the Hwy 312/Hoskins Road intersection
- Provide **rumble strips** and **roadway lighting** at major approaches

## Segment 3

- Widen roadway to a **five-lane section**
- Widen **shoulders** and address side slopes
- Replace the **Twelve Mile Creek bridge**
- Address **intersection control** at Hwy 312/Hoskins Rd and Hwy 312/Shepherd Rd
- Provide **rumble strips** and **roadway lighting** at major approaches

## Secondary 522

- Address **pavement condition**
- Provide **sidewalks** in Huntley
- Address **horizontal and vertical curve** issues
- Widen **shoulders**
- Realign the **Northern Avenue intersection** with Highway 312

# Options Not Forwarded

## Increased Passing Zones

- Would require changes to roadway geometrics and reduction in access points.
- Not considered viable as a stand-alone alternative.

## Separated Shared Use Path

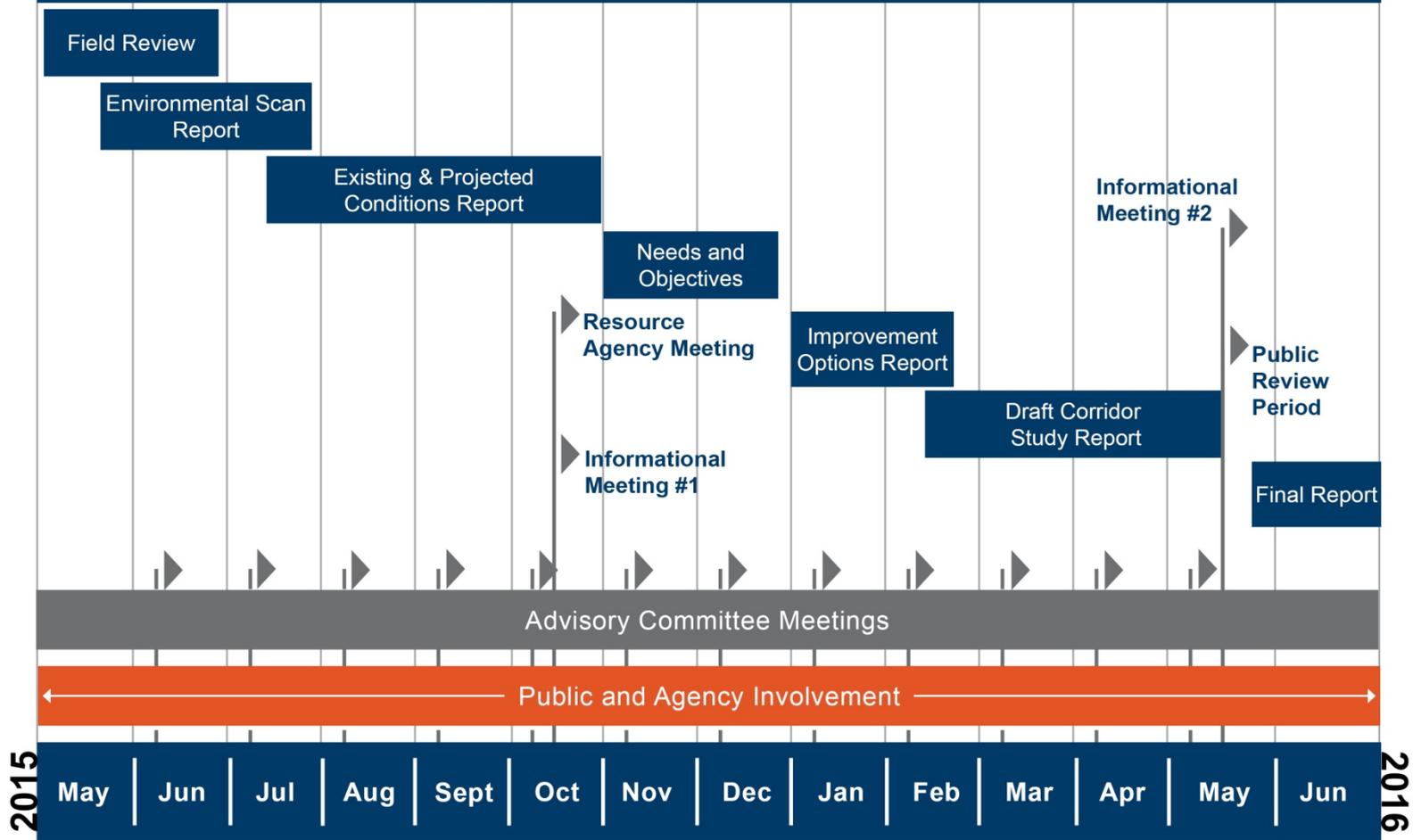
- Cost (~\$250,000 per mile)
- Potential resource impacts (mitigation and permitting)
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Long-term maintenance
- Could be pursued using public/private partnerships and funding.

# Conclusions and Next Steps

Funding availability, right-of-way acquisition, and other MDT Billings District priorities will factor into any future implementation decisions.

At this time, funding is not available to implement any of the improvement options identified by this study.

# OLD HIGHWAY 312 Corridor Study



# Submit Comments

- **Leave a comment sheet with us tonight**
- **Please submit comments by May 31, 2016**
- **Website** (<http://mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/hwy312/>)
- **Mail/e-mail comments to:**
  - Sarah Nicolai
  - DOWL
  - 1300 Cedar Street
  - Helena, MT 59601
  - snicolai@dowl.com

# DISCUSSION PERIOD



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

As a daily user of 312. It is very difficult to see eastbound traffic (motorcycles) crossing the bridge at 312 in Nahvis when you are in a small or midsize car. This bridge railing blocks the view until you are poking into Hwy 312.

I don't know if elevating the approach is in the plans but it should help as the Nahvis approach is a grade

Also the approach at Fairy Rd and 312 is treacherous to travel north on Fairy if you are east on 312 - In the winter the ice and grade have made me take evasive action on a couple of occasions to avoid rear-end collisions.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: John Bedford

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

5927 Schulz Place  
Shepherd MT 59079

Email: johnbedford@yahoo.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

I live in Ballantine and I enjoy riding my bike. Expanding the shoulder on the 312 corridor would allow me to ride my bike on 312. ~~There~~ A striped bike lane would be beneficial. If there are rumble strips on the shoulder we couldn't ride our bike on the shoulder.

I support alternate modes of transportation. The sidewalks are a great need. These improvements would make our community a better place to live and safer.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Liana Susott

Address: P.O. Box 43  
Worden, MT 59089

Email: ~~liana@bigskygames.com~~ liana@bigskygames.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.



# Old Highway 312 Corridor Study Informational Meeting #2

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

MDT invites you to provide feedback on the study:

In the survey I have looked at the intersection of "Y" of the road from Huntley & Hwy 312. It would require a left turn lane for the west, grain & cattle trucks. There is not very much room for 2-3 trucks to wait in line to turn & the sight or vision line is limited. I suggest looking at Road 2 intersection with better visual clearance & more room for a longer left turn lane. In reality the road to the "Y" could end at 2nd Street. I would think a safety entrance & exit could be developed the best pricing ground.

To receive further study information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Sydney Gabel  
Address: 5054 N 4th Rd  
Huntley, MT 59037  
Email: Sydney.Gabel@gmail.com

Please leave your comments with staff at the meeting or mail them to:

Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Please indicate your comments are for the Old Highway 312 Corridor Study.

Sydney Gabel  
2056 N. 4th Rd  
Huntley, MT 59037

BILLINGS MT 591  
20 MAY 2016 PM 1 T



Sarah Nicolai  
DOWL  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601

RECEIVED  
MAY 23 2016  
DOWL  
HELENA

5960190980



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT  
BILLINGS REGULATORY OFFICE  
2602 FIRST AVENUE NORTH, ROOM 309  
POST OFFICE BOX 2256  
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59103-2256

RECEIVED  
MAY 17 2016  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

May 12, 2016

Regulatory Branch  
Montana State Program  
Corps No. **NWO-2016-01031-MTB**

Subject: Old Highway 312 Planning Study

Mr. Tom Kahle  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Mr. Kahle:

Reference is made to your request for comments regarding the Old Highway 312 Planning Study located on Montana Old Highway 312 between highway 312 and US 87 to the Pompeys Pillar Interchange, and includes Secondary 522 from its intersection with Highway 312 to the I-94 Interchange in Yellowstone County, Montana.

Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army permits are required for the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Isolated waters and wetlands, as well as man-made channels and ditches, may be waters of the United States, which must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

It is unclear from the information provided what jurisdictional waters, if any, will be impacted. If your final design prescribes the placement of fill material in any of the jurisdictional areas described above, please submit an application form prior to doing any work. The application can be found at <http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/Missions/RegulatoryProgram/Montana.aspx>. We will determine the type, if any, of permit required.

Work in an aquatic site should be shown on a map identifying the Quarter Section, Township, Range and County, Latitude and Longitude, Decimal Degrees (datum NAD 83), and the dimensions of work in each aquatic site. Include a delineation of special aquatic sites such as wetlands or pool and riffle complexes that will be impacted. Any loss of an aquatic site may require mitigation. Mitigation requirements will be determined during the Department of the Army permitting review.

If you have any questions, please call me at (406) 657-5910, and reference File No. **NWO-2016-01031-MTB.**

Sincerely,  
**SMITH.BRIAN.R.**  
**1085310085**

Digitally signed by SMITH.BRIAN.R.1085310085  
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=DoD,  
ou=PKI, ou=USA,  
cn=SMITH.BRIAN.R.1085310085  
Date: 2016.05.12 10:58:38 -06'00'

Brian R. Smith  
Project Manager