

Upper and Lower Rattlesnake Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 15, 2017
Time: 1:00pm
Location: MDT headquarters, 2100 W. Broadway, Missoula, MT

Meeting with Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) – May 15, 2017

Topic - Design of the Van Buren Street/I-90 interchange reconstruction project

Attendees -

MDT: Shane Stack (in Missoula), Bill Squires and Ivan Ulberg (via Skype from Helena)
City Council: Heidi West and Bryan von Lossberg
Committee: Bob Giordano, Emily Jensen, Eric Edlund, Tom Javins, Fred Rice, Tom Carlson (note-taker)

Note – to begin the meeting MDT provided attendees with copies of latest design plans.

- 1) Concern for long radius curves causing speed of vehicles using roundabout to access I-90 entrance ramps. Increased speed could occur at cross-walk locations creating a safety risk for pedestrians and bicyclists.

MDT –

- The design radius of curves is the minimum needed to accommodate all vehicles.
- The design speeds are theoretical maximum and not typical as Van Buren Street traffic in roundabout will slow vehicles accessing I-90.
- 15mph advisory speed signs for vehicles will be posted.
- Design allows for adequate sight distance and for traffic to yield to bikes and peds. at crosswalks.
- *Note -After the meeting Shane Stack e-mailed a design for a crosswalk warning sign that includes both peds. and bikes and indicated that this design had been approved for use with this project. The e-mail is posted on the neighborhood transportation committee website.*

- 2) Concern for double exit to eastbound I-90 from the roundabout creating an increased risk for bikes and peds. at the crosswalks for the shared use path.

MDT –

- Double exit from roundabout necessary to separate Van Buren and I-90 traffic and to accommodate volume of traffic coming north on Van Buren Street from East Broadway.
- Crosswalks are placed to maximize sight distance for drivers given grade and other site limitations.

- Raised crosswalks not in design but there will be button activated flashing beacons at the crosswalks.
 - Options for more flashers or a below grade tunnel for bikes and peds. could be considered if problems occur, though MDT does not typically monitor projects after completion due to lack of staff and funding.
 - Pedestrian, bicyclist, and vehicle data was collected ??? years ago to inform the design modeling.
- 3) Concerns for northbound Van Buren Street pedestrian and bicycle travel such as: a) Narrower 8' wide shared use path (compared to 12' wide path for southbound travel), b) bicyclists on Van Buren Street must merge left from curb lane bike path across right lane traffic to left vehicle lane to enter roundabout while traveling uphill (a hazard that currently does not exist).
- MDT –
- 8'wide path necessary because of design constraints from existing railroad bridge and retaining wall.
 - Bicyclists legally allowed to use shared path and crosswalks (MT code 61-8-608).
 - Shared use path will have a curb cut to allow bicyclists to access shared use path from Van Buren Street bike lane.
- 4) Other business –
- The committee and city council members expressed appreciation for the MDT design team considering changes to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel.
 - The final design approval is expected by May 23, 2017.
 - An opportunity may exist for the committee to monitor pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns after construction.
 - Follow-up – Continue dialogue with committee
- 5) Public comment on non agenda items
- none

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