



## PROJECT FACTS

### **Project Description**

The project involves the development of a bypass route north of Billings connecting I-90 to MT Highway 3. The proposed bypass would also connect with Highway 312 and US 87 and would function as part of the Camino-Real International Trade Corridor connecting Mexico to Canada.

### **Project Funding**

This project is being conducted by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) using federal funding sources. Projects using federal monies must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process ensures a well thought out decision-making process. This includes consideration of all reasonable alternatives, avoiding or reducing adverse impacts, preparation of an appropriate environmental document, coordination with local, state and federal agencies, and meaningful involvement of the community and stakeholders.

### **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

It is anticipated that the implementation of a bypass route north of Billings may have significant impacts. Therefore, an EIS is being prepared to assess the potential social, environmental, and economic impacts of the bypass route alternatives and to document the decision-making process.

### **Study Area**

The study area for the EIS includes the area east of MT Highway 3, west of the I-90/94 corridor, and an area extending approximately five miles north of the Billings City limits (see map on reverse). These boundaries represent the geographic limits within which potential alignments of the bypass are feasible.

The southern boundary represents the alignment south of which there are constructability issues due to topography and development density. The northern boundary represents the alignment north of which it is not likely that commercial trucks and other regional traffic would use the bypass because this route would be longer than existing alternate routes. In addition, north of this alignment, the cost of a longer route would outweigh the benefits.

### **Project Schedule**

EIS Complete: End of 2008  
Design / Right-of-way acquisition: 2009-2010  
Construction Year: 2011- 2015

## PROJECT HISTORY

The Camino-Real International trade corridor, which connects the border towns of El Paso, Texas and Sweetgrass, Montana, runs directly through downtown Billings via 27<sup>th</sup> Street. As roadway capacity became an issue along the Billings section of the trade corridor, Yellowstone County applied for a Federal grant to study options for improving conditions. The feasibility study was authorized by a September 28, 1999 Funding Agreement between the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Billings City – Yellowstone County Planning Board. The *Billings North By-Pass Feasibility Study* was completed by HKM Engineering in 2001. The feasibility study used a 5-mile wide corridor north of Billings as the area within which to assess the economic and engineering feasibility of a bypass. The study concluded that a bypass was feasible and recommended continued project development including a location study and preparation of an appropriate environmental document.

## BYPASS RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FEASIBILITY STUDY

<b>Bypass Elements</b>	<b>4-Lane Facility</b>	<b>2-Lane Facility</b>
Travel Lanes	12 ft wide	12 ft wide
Median	~ 36 ft wide (varies)	none
Shoulder Width	10 ft: outside 4 ft: inside	8 ft: outside
Right-of-Way	225 ft (minimum)	160 ft (minimum)
Access Control	Full Access Control: Access only at grade-separated interchanges and at selected intersecting roadways.	Limited Access Control: Access limited to at-grade intersections and approaches

Note: A frontage road could be needed in some areas and would require an additional 130 ft of right-of-way.

## EIS SCHEDULE

Tasks	2006												2007												2008											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Scoping and Data Collection																																				
Alternatives Development and Evaluation																																				
Documentation, Recommendations, and Approval Process																																				
Public Involvement (Public Meetings and Hearings)																																				

## EIS STUDY AREA MAP

