



## 2.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

### 2.1 Overview of Public Involvement Process

The Butte-Silver Bow Transportation Plan has been prepared using information derived from both the collection and analysis of data and the solicitation of public input. Public participation was sought in a variety of ways including:

- General public meetings
- Presentations to civic organizations
- Presentations to local government boards and committees
- Ongoing communication with the public through the use of a Transportation Plan website

Copies of meeting notices, lists of attendees, detailed meeting summaries and copies of presentation slides are available upon request.

#### General Public Meetings

**Overview** – The Project Team conducted three general public meetings during the course of the planning process. The first was a Public Open House and Meeting held at the Belmont Senior Center on Mercury St. in Uptown Butte on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the community about the Transportation Plan and its significance, as well as to provide an opportunity for citizens to voice their concerns regarding transportation issues.

A list of potential transportation projects and programs was presented at a second public meeting that was held To Be Held. The public was invited to comment on the proposed list, help set priorities, and make additional suggestions. The third and final public meeting to present the final draft plan was held before the Butte Silver Bow Council of Commissioners on To Be Held

**Notice** – The meetings were advertised in the *Montana Standard* and the *Butte Weekly*. Local radio stations were provided with public service announcements to be read during their broadcasts of community activities. KXLF TV conducted an interview with project staff that was aired just prior to the first general meeting. Public meeting notices were also placed on the Transportation Plan Website at <http://www.hkminc.com/ButteTrans/>. The media was invited to attend and provided coverage through news articles in the days following the meetings.

**Format** – All of the public meetings utilized visual aids to help attendees identify critical issues. Displays included maps of the existing transportation network, aerial photos of the Butte area, traffic count information, and proposed projects. Participants were encouraged to view the displays and make both verbal and written comments. The first public meeting began with a slide show that outlined the overall transportation planning process. Then participants were asked to consider a series of questions to help spur discussion on transportation issues and opportunities.



The questions were:

- *As you commute to work each day, what do you encounter and/or observe about Butte's transportation systems? What are the areas of concern?*
- *What transportation obstacles do you encounter in your daily life?*
- *How do transportation systems and services relate to community economic development and growth?*

In soliciting comments, the participants were asked to address all aspects of transportation including public transit, pedestrian travel, traffic enforcement, transportation and commerce, and the road system. Comments and suggestions were recorded by the project team and are available upon request.

At the second public meeting, participants were asked to review suggested projects and priorities in an open house setting and then provide feedback to planning team. To Be Held

### **Civic Organization Meetings**

**Overview** – In addition to general public meetings, the project team made presentations and held discussions at meetings of local civic organizations. This enabled the team to reach a larger number of people directly in order to learn about community transportation issues and concerns. Between August of 2004 and February of 2005, the team met with the Butte Exchange Club, the Kiwanis Sunshine Club, the Silver Bow Kiwanis Club, and the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce.

**Notice** – The project team worked with the program chair for each of the civic organizations to request time on their agenda. Members were notified of the upcoming presentation at their meetings and/or through mailed agendas.

**Format** – Maps and other display materials were made available to attendees prior to the beginning of each meeting to help provide a context for our presentation and spur discussion. The formal part of each presentation began with a short slide show summarizing the planning process and our findings to date. Participants were then provided with an opportunity to share their ideas, issues and concerns regarding transportation in Butte-Silver Bow in the same manner as the first general public meeting. Comments and suggestions were recorded by the project team and are available upon request.

### **Presentations to Local Government Board and Committee**

**Overview** – The project team made presentations to the Butte-Silver Bow Planning Board at three critical points in the planning process. The first of these was on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004 when the project team presented an overview of the transportation planning process and solicited comments and suggestions from Board members and their staff. On To Be Held the project team presented its list of suggested projects to the Planning Board for review and comment in advance of the second general public meeting. The draft plan was presented to the Planning Board on To Be Held.

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004 the project team made a presentation to the Butte Transportation Coordinating Committee (BTCC), providing those in attendance with our findings to date regarding socio-economic data, traffic counts and accident data.



**Notice** – Meetings of the Planning Board and the BTCC were open to the public. Notices were placed in the *Montana Standard*. E-mail notices were also sent to the Chamber of Commerce membership and to others who attended general public and organizational meetings, inviting them to attend the BTCC session.

**Format** – Maps and other displays were available for viewing by attendees. The project team presented slide shows depicting the overall planning process and summary findings. Following the slide shows, participants were encouraged to ask questions and comment on the information presented.

**Transportation Plan Website**

Persons interested in learning about the Transportation Plan were able to obtain up-to-date information on a website specifically developed to keep the public informed on the overall process. The site, located at <http://www.hkminc.com/ButteTrans/>, provided information on the project schedule, meeting results, project personnel contacts and findings, and included an on-line newsletter. The site also featured a feedback form for persons interested in sending in comments and suggestions via e-mail.

**2.2 Public Comment Summary**

Most of the public comments addressed operational issues including roadway maintenance, signage, safety concerns at intersections, and traffic enforcement. Participants noted the importance of road maintenance and design, from lighting and landscaping to overall community development efforts, and specifically to the revitalization of the historic central business district.

There were several comments about the Harrison Ave. Interchange, where traffic exiting I-90/I-15 going east creates a bottleneck on Harrison Ave. at the intersection of Dewey Blvd. Other noted trouble spots included the entrance to Butte High School at Wyoming and Silver Sts., and the intersection of Texas and Continental. There were also concerns raised with regard to how access for emergency vehicles (fire trucks and ambulances) was limited in the rural areas, particularly to the south of the urbanized area.

Participants noted the need for convenient routes to connect critical destinations such as the YMCA, the Airport, Montana Tech, Uptown Butte, and St. James Healthcare.

Conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic were noted where the Blacktail Creek Trail intersects Harrison Ave.. Comments were also received about the lack of available maps showing the location of the new trail system. Some of the participants noted that information about bus routes was not always clear and that the system was underutilized. Representatives of the Chamber of Commerce suggested that bus stops be placed at the Berkeley Pit Viewing Stand and at the Chamber’s Visitor Center on George St. to help make a stronger connection between the transit system and visitor services. The Chamber of Commerce Civic Improvement Committee has requested that they be invited to all public involvement functions related to proposed projects.

Comments received at the public meetings are illustrated in Figure 2.1. Public meeting summaries are presented in Appendix B.



## 2.3 Goals & Objectives

The 2005 Transportation Plan Update Goals and Objectives were developed through collection and analysis of data, public input, and revision of goals set during previous planning efforts. A preliminary set of Goals and Objectives was drawn from those first established in the 1996 Transportation Plan Update. They were then modified and updated according to public and local government input.

The Primary Goal of the 1996 Update was to:

*Develop a sound strategy for allocating scarce resources to produce a transportation system that is:*

1. *Efficient, Affordable and Sustainable*
2. *Friendly to Neighborhoods and Commerce*
3. *Attractive and Enjoyable*
4. *Accessible and Equitable*
5. *User-Friendly*
6. *Safe and Healthy*

Keeping this 1996 Primary Goal in mind, the following Goals and Objectives have been developed to guide the 2005 Butte-Silver Bow Transportation Plan Update:

### **Goal 1: Assist Economic and Community Development**

#### Objectives

- Identify transportation strategies that are reflective of community goals concerning economic and community development.
- Provide or enhance well-designed links between primary traffic generators.

### **Goal 2: Employ Good Design in Planning Transportation Infrastructure**

#### Objectives

- Identify transportation strategies that are reflective of the community's culture and sense of place in order to respect and enhance residential and business neighborhood cohesiveness, historic districts, and historic design elements.
- Employ design approaches that utilize aesthetic elements in order to enhance overall community appearance. These approaches include landscape design, creative use of lighting and materials, and curb design.
- Utilize handicap-accessible elements in the transportation design that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Goal 3: Promote Transportation Safety**

#### Objectives

- Provide or enhance transportation routes that enable quick response by emergency services providers.
- Design transportation routes and infrastructure to assure safe and efficient traffic flow by considering speed limits, lane configuration, intersection design, and directional signage.
- Improve areas that have a history of safety concerns.

