



# Russell Street / South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

## Environmental Impact Statement Public Comments

### Comments Received from Door-to-Door Survey

Business

The manager is concerned about his sign and how it will be replaced, his access, and he hates roundabouts.

Business

The manager is anxious to have the road improved and wants lanes added.

Business

We spoke with one of the owners and she is very unhappy with the Broadway Project and she did not seem too excited about the Russell Project.

Business

We spoke with the Manager and she seemed indifferent about the project.

Business

The owners were familiar with the project and have added onto their facility recently, and they are most concerned about access.

Business

We spoke to the owner and he is very excited about the proposed improvements.

Business

We spoke with the manager and she said that traffic is terrible and unsafe. People are using the Medians to sneak into traffic, when making a left-turn. During rush-hour, especially on Friday afternoons, you can't even begin to get out of their parking lot.

Business

We spoke with the owner. The 4-lane bridge is 10 years over due. He was using the center-lane to wait for a left-turn and hit a bicyclist. There is a wreck every week outside his window. The roundabout idea is a waste of valuable property.

Business

We spoke with the manager. The merging of traffic lanes causes lots of problems.

Business

We spoke to the owner. He would like to see the project, sooner rather than later. He would also like to see Russell extended to the Interstate. There is no room south of Mount for Bicyclists.



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#### Business

The owner was not available. The employees we spoke to think that widening Russell is a good idea.

#### Business

We spoke with the manager. He has a few questions about the intersection at Mount and how access would be affected. He does not want roundabouts.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. He is supportive of the project and feels that any initial or construction troubles will be worth it.

#### Resident

His only comment is that he is not sure about roundabouts.

#### Manager

We spoke with the manager. She is concerned about the amount of right-of-way that is going to be needed.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. He is excited about the project, but says that traffic is moving better now than it ever has – he thinks the City has finally got the signals timed right.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. She is concerned about losing her parking. She also thinks it is a shame to be losing family owned businesses that have been located in the corridor for a long time.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. He said that he lost track of the project and he was surprised to hear it was still happening. He is anti-roundabout.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. She is concerned about ROW and would like to maintain her access.

#### Business

He is concerned about how runoff from the bridge is being handled. Gas additive (ethanol) is harder on fish.



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#### Business

We spoke with the owner. She cannot afford to lose traffic during construction or due to a change in access. People cannot get across the street due to the high traffic volumes.

#### Apartments

We spoke with the property manager and he is concerned about noise impacts to property.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. She is concerned about property and is waiting to make any improvements to her business depending on what happens with the project.

#### Business

Need longer left turn lane westbound to southbound. Whole project is just stupid. All you need is four lanes to the bridge. Roundabouts are stupid.

#### Business

We spoke with the manager. He would like to maintain the parking in the front of the building and would like to know more about the specific ROW impacts.

#### Business

We spoke with the owner. He said it's too busy for traffic circles.

#### Resident

Renter. They won't be in the house long.

#### Resident

Renters. She said it's not going to affect her.

#### Resident

Concerned about community cohesiveness – does not want things “chopped up.”

#### Resident

Why a roundabout? A child was hit at the intersection last week.

#### Resident

Rents from son who owns the house across the street.

#### Resident

She is legally blind and owns the house. She may have to move anyway because of traffic; she is scared for her dogs and granddaughter.



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Resident

Owens the property and is concerned about impacts.

Resident

Does not care about yard, make it safer!! The corridor really needs pedestrian safety.

Resident

We spoke with the renter and he wanted to know what our “position” on the project was and we had to explain that we do not have a position, we are hired by the City to complete the Environmental Impact Statement.

Resident

Something needs to be done – stop talking about it!

Resident

A roundabout is the dumbest idea ever!! Drivers in Missoula are very rude. Don't want to lose a house for an experiment.

Resident

Renting. Would like to buy the house but is concerned about the project.

Resident

Just want an answer as to what is happening with the project. Will home owners bear any cost?

Resident

They thought this project was dropped. They were told by someone at the City that there was no funding & no plans.

Resident

Just bought home last summer, knows of pending project, and understands potential impacts.

Resident

Traffic in Missoula is horrendous! Has lived in current house for 30 years and is willing to give up house for progress. Roundabouts are crazy!

Business

Talked to manager who had no questions.



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Business

They transport their own clients. Lots of transport across Russell Street – too hard to cross.

Business

Spoke with the manager. She asked us to look at pedestrian crossing at the end of the strip mall. They are concerned about roundabouts.

Resident

Maybe a little roundabout, but not on Russell. Would love to attend public meeting.

Business

Does not care what they do—he is retiring. No roundabouts or semis. Send meeting notice for son.

Business

They have been in the same location for 30 years. Concerns: parking and flow of traffic.

Business

She is very aware of the process and will definitely attend the meeting.

Business

Spoke with the owner on the phone. He is concerned about losing his property. It currently has a business with 12 employees, two residential units, and another business rental. He feels that replacing this type of property could be very difficult.

Resident

Renter; owner lives in the Bitterroot.

Resident

Renter is not interested in mailings.

Business

Owner was not in; send notice.

Business

Knew that it was going to change; wants to keep access; too busy for meetings. He wants to be on the mailing list to receive any updates that are available.

Business

The developer is concerned about how long it is going to take to finish the EIS. There are a lot of exciting things happening in the corridor and they are waiting on the EIS.



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Business

They really want a bike/ped underpass. The board is really against a roundabout – hard to understand how congestion will be handled. 3 schools in the area. Bike lanes on Russell bridge?

Business.

Spoke with the owner. A roundabout is the wrong thing to do. Need to stop traffic so people can cross. Did not feel like anybody seemed to care. Wants the same access. Would like more stoplights between Russell and Reserve.

Business

Really don't like roundabouts – just going to cause chaos.

Business

Talked to the manager. Project sounds great! Russell desperately needs it.

Business

Spoke to the owner. No roundabouts!! Are the power lines buried? Look at rock and decorative concrete in the median.

Business

Spoke with the manager. Concerned about roundabouts for freight 2-3 times a week.

Business

Interested in project, no outstanding comments as yet.

Business

Send sheet of intersection design. What do they want to do roundabouts for? People avoid streets because of them. Who is responsible for maintenance of 3<sup>rd</sup>?

Business

She will have the owner call us because they have “issues.”

Business

Concerned that input did not show up in the previous phase of project. They have a ditch out front. Consider 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> as couplets to Reserve.

Resident

Renter. Sidewalk and lights are needed. Traffic is terrible



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Resident

Owens both units. Can't go left out of driveway going right is even a challenge.

Resident

Sooner rather than later!

Resident

Roundabouts are no good! No one in Missoula can drive them. Lots of older people. I have driven roundabouts – I hate them. Meetings are a waste of time. People hate side street roundabouts.

Resident

Rents but would like to buy. Would want 2-lane on 3rd. Need signals.

Resident

In house since 1985. Really happy with Malfunction Junction Project. Roundabout is a little questionable.

Resident

Walking is a danger! Worried about grandkids. 3<sup>rd</sup> & Reserve has a lot of accidents. Broadway diet is a mess! She stays as far away as possible. 3 lanes on 3<sup>rd</sup> is very sensible.

Resident

Preferred Alt. makes sense. Don't know much about roundabouts. University area traffic circles are terrible!

Business

Owner says roundabouts work great in some places, but they create big impacts. Maybe not the right solution here.

Business

Project has been so slow moving, it's having an impact on his ability to plan for his car lot and adjacent property. Get something done and quit wasting time and money.



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#### Written Comments from Public Information Meeting on October 26, 2006

- 1) Missoula Fire Dept would like to be involved in any issues regarding emergency response.
- 2) This project is a great opportunity to build in transit bus priority, exclusive lanes, “head of the line” privileges, bus bulb outs, etc.

Add on-street parallel parking on Russell north of 3<sup>rd</sup> on Russell to serve present and future businesses.

Please modify the Preliminary Preferred Alternative Russell south of 3<sup>rd</sup> to a beautiful 2 lane street that the Feds will approve.

Please see the letter from M.A.S.T (Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation) to Mayor Engen.

The project should not take houses for road space. The road should accommodate valuable historic housing stock.

- 3) To begin with: I am totally against any roundabouts on heavily traveled roads, such as are S. Russell & S3W. Absolutely stupid idea and a “cheap way out.”

Am also not enamored with any median—takes up too much room from existing community, & costs more. Those lights on Stephens are an abomination; & there still are no left turnouts.

Traffic lights control the traffic best!

- 4) My comment: Missoula has zero need for another Reserve street. This project is being shoved down our throats and does not meet this community’s needs as a community!

We do not want a four-lane highway bisecting the city of Missoula. The solution is not to build greater capacity as it creates more traffic. The solution to a livable community is to keep the community together, not divided.



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- 5) Regardless of ultimate design, at least two interim projects seem imperative
  - a. S 3<sup>rd</sup> W westbound lane at Russell dire need for a right turn lane there. Cantilever pedestrian access further over the ditch to get space for an extra lane. Make all right lanes right turn only at that intersection. Goal: avoid long lines of idling cars.
  - b. Traffic signal or roundabout temporarily at Catlin & 3<sup>rd</sup> now it is congested and unsafe.

I like the preferred alternative so far—maybe with roundabout not light at Wyoming. Could the 4-lane section of Russell go only between Broadway & Third? What about pedestrian-activated crossings where nec. Or desirable?

- 6) I live on 5<sup>th</sup> St and would like to see improvements to 3<sup>rd</sup> St that would encourage travel on 3<sup>rd</sup> St rather than 5<sup>th</sup> St. (I am of course not certain how this could be accomplished.)

I appreciate the inclusion of bike lanes in all of these plans—particularly making it possible to cross Russell where the current bike path dead ends (which is now almost impossible.)

Finally, what education efforts would be put in place for teaching people about roundabouts? I've driven on them a lot in Europe, but I can imagine it will be difficult (or maybe not?) for people to adapt here.

- 7) I can live with the Preferred Alternatives but living on Darlene Drive, I need to know the specifics so that I can plan on how to address the problem of getting into our circle. "With left turn access" off of Third.

There are only 17 homes, but we need our issue responded to. Thank you.

- 8) I like the preliminary Preferred Alternative.
- 9) Very informative presentation.
- 10) The preferred alternative will drastically reduce the "quality of life" for residents (in the area.) Noise, speed, increased traffic on side streets, litter, crime!!!!

I live 3 blocks from Russell on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> & California and have one of the nicest locations with a lovely calming circle.

I will put my house up for sale before the decision is announced if you will give me forewarning so I can get what is worth today!!



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11) TIME=MONEY Always has, always will.

The time it has taken to complete this pre-development work alarms me greatly. I know this process is mandated and I know it must be completed in conformance of the requirements. That is a given. The process has not been managed by consultants and engineers, though, and as a result, the ultimate construction costs are going up and reaching a level beyond what the community can afford. My greatest fear is that process is going to make construction impossible due to cost.

I would like to know that the City is planning a strategy for guaranteeing that a feasible plan for financing this project is in place once we get to the end of the pre-development phase. The state and Feds are not going to do that for us. The city has to start that now.

12) Please include MAST letter sent to Mayor Engen on 10/25/06 as my comments. Those comments include 4-lane from Broadway to second, single lane roundabouts, 2 lanes from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Mount w/ street side sidewalks, bike lanes & narrow travel lanes.

This project could either define Missoula as a unique community that prioritizes people & community or a project that defines Missoula as anywhere USA. Please listen to the people—we don't want 5 lanes w/ boulevard sidewalks/bike lanes, all the way through. We want something different.

13) Thanks for good presentation! I think that we need to address this as soon as possible, particularly the bridge. Is it structurally sound now? There is a lot of movement with trucks & heavy traffic. I don't think we can wait another 10 years, maybe not even 2 years, especially with more dense residential development. Traffic is bad now & will only get worse, and force more alternative traffic patterns. Hopefully there is a master plan for all modes of transportation all over town. Can you dust off the old one & see what's still relevant, then make that part of orientation in next public meeting? Thanks again for your efforts.



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14) I support all the Roundabouts and keeping raised medians “solid” (less left turns) with pedestrian refuges as much as possible as outlined in the Preferred Alternative. I support providing a safe (from criminal activity), well-illuminated grade-separated Bitterroot Branch trail crossing free of blind-spots (i.e. places for muggers to hide). I support a bikeped trail crossing for the Milwaukee Rd trail (with similar personal safety considerations applied to its design.) I differ from the preferred alternative in that Russell St from the bridge all the way to Mount should be a multimodal thoroughfare with one travel lane each way, medians with pedestrian and left turn safety/refuge areas; wide bike lanes, bus stops and parking to enhance business opportunities.

15) Is my house slated to be bulldozed?



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### Written and Emailed Comments Received

The ASUM Senate - an elected student government body - voted 17 yes and 3 no on the following resolution on Russell. Please enter this into public comment.

**SB18-06/07 Resolution Regarding Reconfiguration of Russell and South Third Streets - passed 11/29/06 16Y, 3N on a roll call vote**

WHEREAS, many students walk, bike, or use public transit to get to campus;

WHEREAS, affordable housing is difficult for students to find in Missoula;

WHEREAS, a five-lane roadway on Russell Street would decrease pedestrian and bicycle safety, increase vehicle speeds, remove good housing stock from the core of Missoula, negatively affect neighborhood character, induce additional traffic and create a Reserve-style street in the core of Missoula;

WHEREAS, the supposed need for a five-lane roadway is justified based on straight-line traffic projections and does not take increased use of public transit and other alternative means of transportation into account;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM) do not support a five-lane option with 12.5-foot travel lane widths on Russell Street. ASUM will also oppose any plan that calls for removing an excessive number of houses.

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that ASUM will support a three-lane system with center turn lanes and single lane roundabouts on Russell Street and a two-lane system with single lane roundabouts on South Third Street. ASUM also supports bulb-outs at intersections, speed tables, pelican crossings and trail underpasses.

A representative from the ASUM Office of Transportation shall attend the Broadway Charette and encourage the City of Missoula and the consultants involved in the planning process to consider a roundabout system at the intersection of Broadway and Russell Streets as an efficient intersection system as well as an attractive gateway to the downtown area.

Authored by: Senator W. Jordan Hess

Endorsed by: Senator James Greer

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Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation (MAST)

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[missoulamast@yahoo.com](mailto:missoulamast@yahoo.com)

October 24, 2006

Mr. John Engen, Mayor  
City of Missoula  
435 Ryman Street  
Missoula, MT 59802-4297

RE: MAST position on Russell/3<sup>rd</sup> Corridor

Dear Mayor Engen,

All but one member of MAST will support a four-lane system from Broadway to 3<sup>rd</sup>. (That means only four lanes; no center or right turn lanes). All prefer a three-lane system with sidewalks and bike lanes, an underpass at the two main trail crossings, and single lane roundabouts at intersections along this corridor.

The street is now mostly two lanes with 10 ½ foot width each, or 22' wide. If the street is going to be a complete street, that would mean space for pedestrians, bicycles, moving cars and parked cars. Putting in center or right turn lanes would make the street excessively wide and intimidating to anyone wishing to cross it. For instance, a five lane street that seems to be built nowadays would be four 12' travel lanes, a 16' center turn lane, two 8' parking lanes and two 5' bike lanes, for a total of 90 feet, or four times the current width of Russell..

We all feel that the community and business pressure of this area lend itself to the four lane system in this section only. We are hopeful that engineers can be creative with the intersection at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Russell and will find some solution other than a double lane roundabout. It is important to build this roadway with the community in mind, instead of chasing straight-line growth/traffic projections twenty years into the future.

The same MAST members cannot support the preferred project from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Mount. Russell from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Mount is a very narrow street that needs a turning lane and bike and pedestrian facilities. MAST is concerned about the current preferred alternative as we feel a five-lane alternative will not only take out too much housing stock, but also will turn the core of Missoula into another Reserve Street corridor. It is shameful to remove good housing stock in a time when affordable housing is at a premium in Missoula. A five-lane roadway through the center of Missoula WILL turn it into a Reserve type facility, not a "Stephens" type facility. Russell is not Stephens. Stephens was a very wide street that needed to be retrofitted to try and calm the traffic by adding a middle island to control turning and beautify the area. MAST sees that area as a "dead zone" for bikes and pedestrians.

We see the solution for Russell from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Mount to be reduced lane width, curbside sidewalks and bike lanes, in an effort to save as much housing in this residential area as possible. This section will act as a traffic calming area. Bulb outs and speed tables should be used to slow traffic. Traffic will slow and will be encouraged to turn on Third to head to Reserve for through traffic. Russell will maintain a residential feel in this area and yet be improved to handle bikes and pedestrians safely. Having safe pedestrian movement in this section will then enhance



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transit, as all transit users are pedestrians as they access the transit system and must be able to cross the street safely. We do support the underpass for the trail system in this section also.

Sincerely,

MAST (Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation)

Ray Aten

Bob Giordano, Director of the Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation

page 2, MAST, 10/24/06

Jordan Hess, ASUM

Jim Sayer

Alex Taft

Nancy Wilson, Director of the ASUM transportation program