

July 9, 2007

Many of you have contacted either HKM or the City with regard to the schedule for the Environmental Impact Statement. As many of you have noticed, the project is no longer on the original schedule, but please be assured that you have not missed any opportunity for comment on this proposed project.

In collaboration with the City, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), at the outset of our involvement in this project we outlined an aggressive schedule to complete the Draft Environmental Impact Statement within about a 12-month timeframe. Once we received all of the digital design files from the previous consultant, we realized that the design and the format of the drawings were not up to the standard that would be required for final project approval by MDT and FHWA. We also found some errant information in the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the previous consultant. These issues raised a pretty immediate alarm, and we informed the City that there would be delays. During subsequent project team discussions between the City, MDT, FHWA, and HKM Engineering, MDT outlined a new schedule that they felt would be more reasonable given the design issues and need to reassess some of the previous analysis. So rather than attempting to expedite this project on a hurried schedule, MDT has requested that we stick to a more standardized review process on the various internal and public drafts of the Environmental Impact Statement. The revised project schedule is attached to this e-mail.

Thank you for your continued interest and participation!

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