



## Development Services

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### KALISPELL TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Kalispell Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will meet on **Wednesday, June 23, 2021 starting at 2:00 p.m. in the MDT 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at 85 5<sup>th</sup> Ave EN in Kalispell.** A final agenda is provided below.

If you would like to join the meeting via Zoom, please follow this link  
<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/4067512030?pwd=ajVtRGk1MGZsVXZyOVVuL1dUTmt3UT09>.

The agenda for the meeting will be:

- A. Call to order and roll call**
- B. Approval of minutes of November 5, 2020 meeting**
- C. Comments from the Public**
- D. Old Business**
  - Move 2040 Transportation Plan Adoption (memo attached & link provided)  
<https://kalispellmove2040.com/resources/>
  - West Reserve Corridor Update
  - Kalispell Bypass Update from KLJ
- E. New Business**
- F. Set next meeting date**
- G. Adjournment**



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# Memorandum

**To:** Kalispell Urban Area Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)  
**From:** Wade Kline; Zach Chappell  
**RE:** Kalispell Area Transportation Plan Update  
**Date:** June 16th, 2021

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## Background

The City of Kalispell (City) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) with assistance from the Kalispell Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) – a public panel composed of private individuals, local government officials and staff, state and federal transportation agency personnel – are working towards updating the Greater Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (PLAN).

The City is the local authority facilitating the update of the Kalispell Area Transportation Plan and continues to collaborate with MDT and stakeholder groups through the development of the PLAN. The intent of the PLAN is to guide and facilitate planned improvements for the Kalispell Urban Area that incorporate current and future transportation network deficiencies for the community.

To date, KLJ (the City's PLAN consultant) has completed a full draft PLAN document. The draft PLAN document was made available for public comment in mid-May, and a final round of public engagement open houses was held at City Hall on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The objective of this memorandum is to inform the Urban Transportation Advisory Committee regarding progress and provide information generated as part of updating the PLAN. The draft PLAN is available at the following link:

<https://kalispellmove2040.com/resources/>

Wade Kline, KLJ Project Manager, will present on the PLAN's progress including additional information on the following:

## Public Engagement to Date

### Phase I

In the spring of 2020, the project team hosted a series of Listening Sessions to gather input on the existing transportation system. The Listening Sessions were held as public meetings which informed community members about the background data supporting the PLAN, collected their input on issues and needs, and guided them through exercises to prioritize goals and identify "big ideas".

Phase I of public engagement also included an online issues and needs survey which elicited nearly 150 responses from the public. The Listening Sessions were announced through both traditional and social media outlets.

## Phase II

Over the summer of 2020, the project team provided a progress report on the Move 2040 planning process to the Kalispell community. The team initiated a social media campaign through Instagram and Facebook to provide recent materials and information on the planning process. Project updates included results from Phase I of the public input process, as well as updated documentation on the existing and projected conditions driving the planning process.

## Phase III

The final round of public engagement included a series of open houses, which were held at City Hall on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The open houses included a presentation of the full draft PLAN by project manager Wade Kline, as well as a series of posters detailing the PLAN elements. The open house presentations were streamed live online for those unable to attend in person, and presentation slides and posters were made available for viewing and download on the project website. Over 45 individuals participated online and in person on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Phase III presented the public with an overview of the PLAN content and provided an opportunity for the community to comment on the PLAN in its final form.

A full description of the public engagement process can be found in Chapter 2 (p.9) of the PLAN document.

## Existing Conditions

A detailed existing conditions report was prepared for the PLAN. The report provides a baseline for identification of needs and development of recommendations. Key current and historical trends highlighted in the existing conditions report include:

- **Population:** Flathead County's population increased by over 20 percent from 2000 to 2010. This is due in large part to Kalispell's growth, with the City's population increasing by over 40 percent during this period. In contrast, the unincorporated areas of Flathead County increased by approximately 9 percent.
- **Travel to Work:** The predominant means of commuting to the workplace is the single-occupancy vehicle — nearly 83 percent of people drove alone in a personal automobile for commuting to work in 2017. The use of single-occupancy vehicles increased between 2010 and 2017 by five and a half percent.
- **Safety:** Between 2014 and 2018, there were 5,001 crashes reported in the study area. Nine of these crashes resulted in a fatality, with 123 crashes resulting in serious injury. During this five-year period, injury and non-injury crashes peaked in 2016 (1,077), and gradually decreased through 2018.

Full existing conditions documentation can be found in Chapter 3 (p.13) of the PLAN document.

## Growth Forecasts and Projected Conditions

Move 2040 has a planning horizon extending through 2040. The first step in the growth forecasting process was to establish growth assumptions for all current political jurisdictions within the planning area. The Move 2040 study area was divided into three (3) geographic subareas for development of 2040 growth projections to support Move 2040:



**Kalispell** – Reflects the current annexation boundary for the City of Kalispell, smoothed to match MDT TAZ boundaries which otherwise exceed the current annexation boundary.

**Evergreen** – Reflects the current census defined place (CDP) of Evergreen. This area extends beyond the current boundary of the Evergreen Water & Sewer District to include the current Evergreen Wastewater Service Area Boundary developed between the City of Kalispell and the Evergreen Water & Sewer District.

**Balance of the Study Area** – The remainder of the study area outside of the subareas defined as Kalispell or Evergreen, and within Flathead County.

### Household Growth

Total households within the study area are projected to grow by **2.4%**, or nearly **9,300** households. Household growth was projected specifically for each of the geographic subareas.

### Employment Growth

Employment growth was projected for each of the geographic subareas. Overall employment growth for the study area is projected at **1.9%**. Total employment growth is estimated to be nearly 11,700 over the planning horizon. Final growth rates were adjusted to reflect the evaluation of potential projected conditions related to each component of the study area.

### Travel Model Development

MDT provided a calibrated travel demand model for the year 2017 to replicate existing traffic conditions in the study area. Previously discussed employment and household projections were added to the travel demand model and modeled to the year 2040. This resulted in the 2040 Existing plus Committed (E+C) model for the study area. The 2040 E+C model output generated volumes, capacity, and the resulting volume to capacity ratios (V/C) and levels of service (LOS). The 2040 E+C model demonstrates future transportation conditions in the study area within the context of projected growth, excluding any new improvement beyond those committed through the MDT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the Kalispell Capital Improvement Program (CIP), or improvement planned by Flathead County.

Documentation of the growth forecasting and projected conditions processes can be found in Chapter 4 (p.79) and Chapter 5 (p.95) of the PLAN document, respectively.

## Alternatives Analysis

As part of Move 2040, 10 alternative scenarios (four with sub-alternatives) were evaluated to analyze the effects of one or more changes to the Kalispell transportation network. In total, 14 alternative models were run. The analysis was designed to assess the relative local and systemwide benefits of a range of potential improvements to corridors throughout the network. A brief description of each alternative is provided below:

- **Alternative 1:** Complete Highway 93A
- **Alternative 2:** Evaluates a three-lane section on Hwy 93/Main St from 7th St to West Center St.
- **Alternative 2A:** Combines the assumptions of Alternatives 1 and 2.
- **Alternative 3:** Evaluates connecting both 8th Ave WN and 3rd Ave WN between HWY 2/Idaho St and West Center St.

- **Alternative 3A:** Combines the assumptions of Alternatives 2 and 3.
- **Alternative 4:** Evaluates development of a three-lane roadway along the Willow Glen corridor from Highway 93 South to Conrad Road, then continuing along Conrad Road to Shady Lane, where it would continue until MT 35.
- **Alternative 5:** Evaluates a connection between LaSalle Rd/Hwy 2 and Conrad Rd.
- **Alternative 5A:** Combines the assumptions of Alternatives 4 and 5.
- **Alternative 6:** Assumes an extension of Whitefish Stage from Hwy 2/Idaho St to East Center St/Woodland Ave.
- **Alternative 6A:** Combines the assumptions of Alternatives 4 and 6.
- **Alternative 7:** Evaluates an improved three-lane corridor along Evergreen/Four Mile Dr from Whitefish Stage to Farm-to-Market Rd.
- **Alternative 8:** Evaluates an improved three-lane facility along the Rose Crossing corridor from Helena Flats to HWY 93.
- **Alternative 9:** Combines the assumptions of Alternatives 7 and 8.
- **Alternative 10:** Includes the corridor-level improvements determined to constitute a preferred build condition (6 separate improvements).

Each alternative was evaluated against the original outputs from the 2040 E+C model network, which forecast traffic conditions assuming only committed projects will be added beyond existing facilities. The benefits of each alternative were described using areawide metrics including vehicle miles traveled (VMT), vehicle hours traveled (VHT), and percent of congested roadway segments. Alternatives were also evaluated against corridor-level travel indicators such as change in annual daily traffic (ADT) and volume to capacity ratio (V/C).

Full documentation of the alternatives analysis process can be found in Chapter 6 (p.107) of the PLAN document.

## Project Development and Identification

The project development and identification process established recommendations in two categories: Transportation System Management (TSM) and Major Street Network (MSN).

The TSM recommendations reflect intersection-level improvements which respond to both safety and traffic operations-related issues at an isolated location, typically an intersection. TSM recommendations are developed based on a review of more localized existing and projected conditions.

The MSN recommendations reflect larger corridor-level improvements aimed at both improving existing corridors or upgrading corridors which are projected to require a higher standard related to safety and operations.

The recommendations development process involved the review and incorporation of project recommendations from previous plans, as well as an inventory of projects that have been completed. Project recommendations were evaluated against new safety data, 2040 travel demand model results, and other existing and future conditions data. A total of 41 TSM and 48 MSN recommendations were established.

Full details on the recommendation's identification process can be found in Chapter 7 (p.157) of the PLAN document.

## Project Prioritization

The Move 2040 goals were used as a foundation to develop an objective methodology for prioritizing the MSN and TSM recommendations. The methodology also reflects key priorities identified through the public engagement process and emphasized by the City.

Full details on the prioritization process and results are provided in Chapter 8 (p.171) of the PLAN document.

## Bike & Pedestrian Plan

Move 2040 provides a detailed analysis of existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities based on a core set of conditions, applying a weighted score to those facilities and connections that are most beneficial to public safety and the growing community. The analysis produced a list of ranked projects for each of four bicycle and pedestrian route categories: Shared-Use Paths, Sidewalks and Paths, On-Street Designated Bike Lanes, and On-Street Shared Bike Lanes.

Full details on the bicycle and pedestrian project prioritization methodology and results are provided in Chapter 9 (p.181) of the PLAN document.

## Policy Plan

The Policy Plan element of Move 2040 provides the City of Kalispell policy guidance to support development of the transportation system. The Policy Plan encompasses the priorities and policy direction established within other local plans, and leverages collaboration with stakeholders and agency partners to set forth a vision for mobility, accessibility, and connectivity. Key elements of the Policy Plan include:

- **Downtown-Highway 93 Main Street:** Discusses the redevelopment of Kalispell's downtown with a focus on the U.S. Highway 93/Main Street corridor.
- **Proposed Functional Class Map:** Presents and discusses Kalispell's proposed functional class map.
- **Typical Street Cross Sections:** Presents street cross section concepts for principal and minor arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads.
- **Access Management:** Provides an overview of access management and discusses best practices to operate an effective access management program.
- **Traffic Impact Study (TIS) Guidelines:** Discusses standards for the requirement, format, and content of a TIS.
- **Traffic Calming:** Presents a sample toolbox of traffic calming techniques, and discusses their appropriateness for different road types.
- **Overview of Roundabouts:** Presents an overview of best practices for roundabouts, including types of roundabouts, their warrants, and a comparison with other traffic control devices.

- **ITS:** Provides an overview of ITS and presents several solutions for consideration within the Kalispell area.

The full Policy Plan can be found in Chapter 11 (p.225) of the PLAN document.

## Pending Revisions

### Comments from MDT:

- Reduce technical jargon related to travel demand modeling (Chapter 3) and growth projections (Chapter 4).
- Further clarify language regarding the prioritization process for bicycle and pedestrian facilities (Chapter 9).
- Update statutory references related to funding programs (Chapter 10).
- Update references to “Future Functional Classification” to read “Proposed Functional Classification”. Provide language to reinforce that Proposed Functional Classification maps are for local planning purposes only (do not reflect the federally approved functional classification) (Chapter 11).

### Input from Phase III Open Houses:

- Consider bike lanes on 1st Avenue East and West – 11th Street to 4th Street.
- There are significant parking needs downtown; the LRTP should support a more detailed parking analysis study.
- The Grandview connection is critical for emergency management.
- Evaluate prioritization/ranking of remaining bypass elements to ensure they are near the top.
- Consider Sunnyview Lane and Grandview Drive (north-south segment) as Major Collector, versus Minor Arterial (especially considering Grandview connection); east-west segment of Grandview should remain Minor Arterial.

### Comments from the City:

- Final comments from the City are forthcoming.

A full final draft will be developed prior to the formal adoption and hearing process planned by the City which starts on August 2, 2021.