



Transportation

We envision a safe, comprehensive transportation system that empowers people to choose active transportation, helping them to save money, breathe cleaner air, and reduce their carbon footprint, and that helps create a community that is resilient to economic volatility and growth.

Our community will design and deliver education and outreach programs that reinforce “multi-modal” as an efficient, affordable, and sustainable way to meet our transportation, and we’ll work to reducing vehicle miles traveled, expand access to affordable public transit, and help build sustainable infrastructure for a promising future.

Snapshot: Transportation is the second largest source of total US greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing those emissions will provide a wealth of environmental, health, and community benefits. This arena faces great challenges but maintains even greater hope. Transportation is multi-faceted and local planning efforts are intertwined with multiple State and Federal transportation agencies. While nearly a century of auto-centric development has influenced travel habits that are counter to sustainability, community leaders are excited by the possibilities of using education and outreach to shift cultural understanding of what it means to transport people and goods. Missoula is growing, and planning for a multi-modal, active, efficient, and accessible transportation system ensures that we hedges against the harmful effects of climate change, remains fiscally responsible, and maintains public health. We simply cannot afford to build and maintain a single occupant vehicle transportation system in these times.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Goal: Work with key community entities to establish a benchmark for vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in Missoula, set reduction goals for VMT, and launch a community wide education program to work towards those goals.

Action Steps:

- A. Work with the City of Missoula, Missoula in Motion (MiM), Bike Walk Alliance Missoula (BWAM), Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation (MIST), the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), University of Montana, Missoula Urban Transportation District/Mountain Line, and others to determine the current benchmark of total VMT in Missoula.
- B. Measure the greenhouse gas emissions associated with community VMT.
- C. Establish a target goal and year, as well as interim goals, for VMT reduction.
- D. Assist transportation planning entities with policies and strategies that will work towards the VMT reduction goal.
- E. Working with partners, develop and implement a public education campaign that explains the importance of reducing VMT, its relationship to climate change, and ways to utilize sustainable transportation. Ensure it is creative, fun and engaging.
- F. Partner with MiM, BWAM, Free Cycle, Adventure Cycling, myriad bike shops, University of Montana, etc. to increase ease of owning or renting bikes.
- G. Celebrate Active transportation. Help showcase key events that feature biking and walking options: Sunday streets, River City Roots and other downtown festivals, etc.

Metrics and Timetable:



- a. Success measured by and established benchmark for vehicle miles traveled in Missoula, both end and interim reduction goals set (in 2016), and a Climate Smart outreach program is initiated (2016-17).
- b. Greenhouse Gas savings measured (fall 2016).
- c. Goal established (2016).
- d. Engaged in policy discussions, education, outreach and celebration. Successful plans, products, and events tracked (2016 and ongoing).

2. Enhance expansive, accessible, and affordable public transit

Goal: Work to expand services and accessibility of fare free Mountain Line and University of Montana bus services.

Activities:

- A. Encourage Mountain Line to continue upgrades and increased capacity.
- B. Improve transit infrastructure to industry best practices, like pullouts, shelters at bus stops, and pedestrian crossings.
- C. Continue to build support with community Fare-Free partners to extend pilot beyond three years, making fare-free permanent.
- D. Advocate for additional late night bus service.
- E. Develop outreach specific to poor air quality time periods (wildfire smoke in summer, inversions in winter) to encourage bus use during these times.
- F. Continue to coordinate with Associated Students of University of Montana (ASUM) transportation to ensure optimal transit service city-wide.
- G. Advocate for public transportation support in state and federal legislation.
- H. Encourage a transition to electric buses, with identifiable renewable energy available or purchased (to fuel buses).

Metrics and Timetable:

- a. Mountain Line has long term plan (30 year Master Plan) in place; assist as needed
- b. Confirmed long-term support for fare free bus service.
- c. Air quality education developed (2016)

3. Develop safe, comprehensive transportation infrastructure

Goal: Working with Smart Growth efforts, encourage transit-oriented corridor development, with a focus on “looking inward” and other infrastructure and smart growth improvements. Note: The following suggested activities here are expanded upon in the **Smart Growth** bucket.

Activities:

- A. Support pedestrian-scale design that encourages non-motorized transportation and social interaction, especially in areas of the City that are now predominantly vehicular-oriented
- B. Conduct education and outreach to show how transit-oriented development
- C. Work with the City of Missoula to implement the transportation objectives of the Our Missoula growth plan
- D. Work with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to revise traffic model to include recent and projected demographic shifts, current traffic trends and climate action threats and impacts.



- E. Work to obtain designation of trails as transportation corridors, to provide access to funding and improved decision making.
- F. Develop design standards (such as a prescription street width) that promote the safety of bikers and pedestrians and decrease conflicts with motor vehicles.
- G. Fund maintenance and improvement of infrastructure in preparation for impacts from climate change (e.g. trucking hubs, roundabouts, street design, lane width considerations, Front-Main St. conversion)
- H. Create a non-motorized street in Missoula's downtown area.
- I. Support parking policy changes including creation of districts, address parking meters, disincentives for large box stores with increased impact fees, educate re downtown tax base study.

Metrics and Accountability:

See Smart Growth bucket

Additional Activities:

- Develop alternative fuel stations in the area, especially electric, and ensure some of these are in public spaces.
- Expand options to outlying areas (Bitterroot Rail, transit in four directions, aim to connect major towns)
- Expand bike-share and car-share programs.
- Implement no idling policy.
- Implement a 2% gas tax in Missoula County and use revenue for energy reduction and climate action projects.

A CLIMATE SMART WAY FORWARD:

At this juncture, sustainable transportation in the Missoula area has strong advocates, a great deal of technically skilled proponents, and a strong agenda. Bringing the climate piece into the transportation conversation can, if communicated well, bring additional support for the necessary planning and funding to make it all possible. We also need to build a strong coalition to enable stronger state and federal laws, rules, options and funding. Clearly, we look forward to linking the transportation and smart growth buckets.

Potential Partners: City of Missoula, Missoula in Motion, University of Montana, Missoula Urban Transportation District/Mountain Line, Bike Walk Alliance Missoula, Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation, Adventure Cycling, Free Cycles, Montana Department of Transportation, local and state elected officials, various bike shops and bike tourism businesses, and more (see also Smart Growth Bucket partners).



Developing Transportation strategies during Summit #2

