



NEWS ADVISORY

Jan. 10, 2025

For immediate release

City Wins \$59.5 Million Grant for Russell Street Project

City of Missoula leadership learned on Friday that the federal government awarded the City a \$59.5 million grant to complete the Russell Street Regional Connector project, work more than 30 years in the making.

The project will reconstruct Russell Street from Dakota Street (just north of Third Street) to Mount Avenue and West Broadway between Mullan Road and Cowper Street, making approximately 1.5 miles of complete street improvements and improved crossings of regional trails.

“This is great news for Missoula,” Mayor Andrea Davis said. “This federal investment means we can finally move forward on this transformative project for Missoula that has been decades in the making. Without the federal investment of this size, we would not be able to accomplish this important project to move people, cargo and services safely and effectively through our community.”

The Russell Street Regional Corridor Project was first identified and planned for in the 1996 Long-Range Transportation Plan as a City of Missoula and Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) priority for the region. Work started in earnest in the mid-2000s, with significant public involvement, traffic and safety analysis and coordination among the City, the MPO and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT).

“MDT is excited for the opportunity to continue working with the City and the MPO to move this project that is so critical to the community forward,” said MDT District Administrator Bob Vosen. “This is another great example of how teamwork can benefit all users of the regional transportation network. I thank the team from the MPO for putting together such a great application under a very tight deadline.”

The federal funding came from the Multimodal Program Discretionary Grants – Rural Funding, made possible by the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, and will fund 80 percent of the project. Additional federal and state contributions, including from the MPO and state gas tax, will bring the project to 100 percent-funded at \$74.4 million.

The City of Missoula appreciates greatly the commitment of those who worked on the Infrastructure bill and supported these once-in-a-generation transportation investments, including former Senator Jon Tester, and the Biden administration. The City has benefitted from its long collaborative relationships with its federal Congressional delegation and looks forward to continuing those relationships to bring greatly needed projects to Missoula.

Phase 1 of the project included corridor improvements from West Broadway to Dakota Street as well as reconstruction of the Russell Street Bridge and was completed in 2020.

“Big picture, this is a project 30 years in the making,” said Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager at the City. “This grant funding was essential to push it over the finish line and ensure we can complete the needed improvements. It serves to benefit all modes of transportation in a generational investment in Missoula infrastructure and is a lynchpin project for creating a safe, efficient and connected transportation network.”

For interviews, contact:

Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager, City of Missoula
(406) 552-6668; wilsona@ci.missoula.mt.us

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