



Public Guide to Missoula Regional Transportation Planning

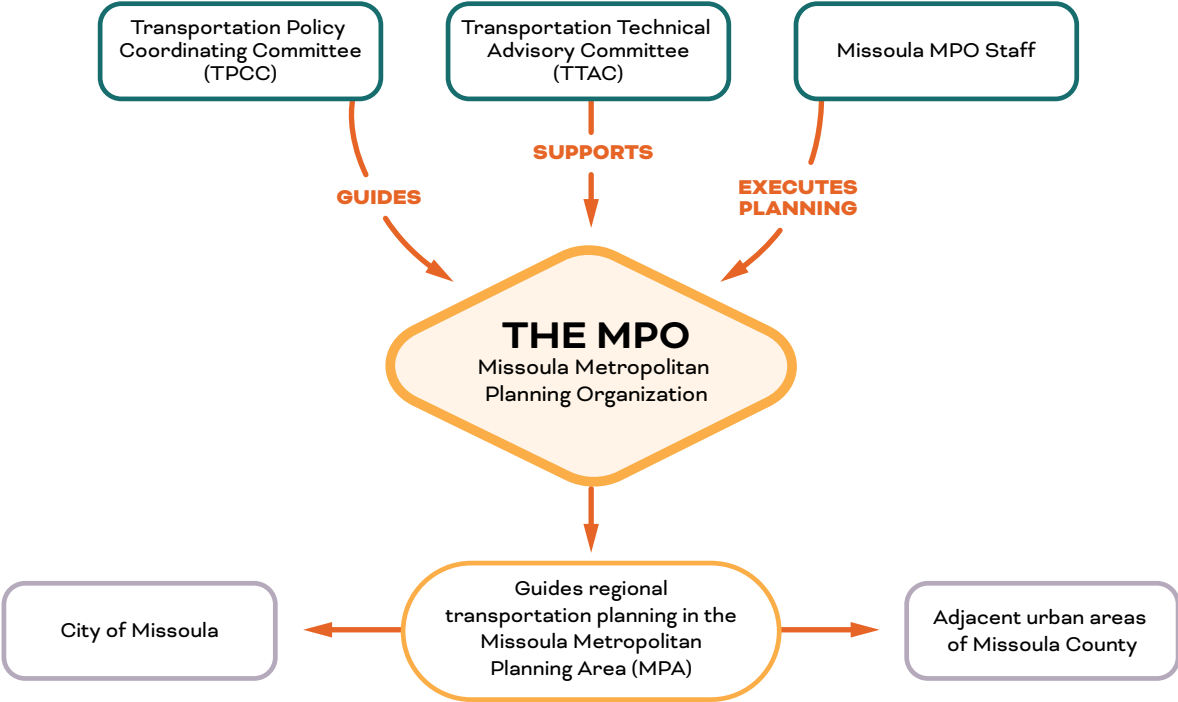


March 2026

About the Missoula MPO

What's the MPO?

The Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) guides regional transportation planning in the Missoula Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), which includes the City of Missoula and adjacent urban areas of Missoula County.



What Does the Missoula MPO Do?



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
 Develops and carries out a 20 to 30-year long-range transportation plan that guides investments in improving how people move around Missoula.



FACILITATES COLLABORATION
 Partners with other organizations in our region to plan for future growth and balance the diverse ways people travel in and around Missoula.



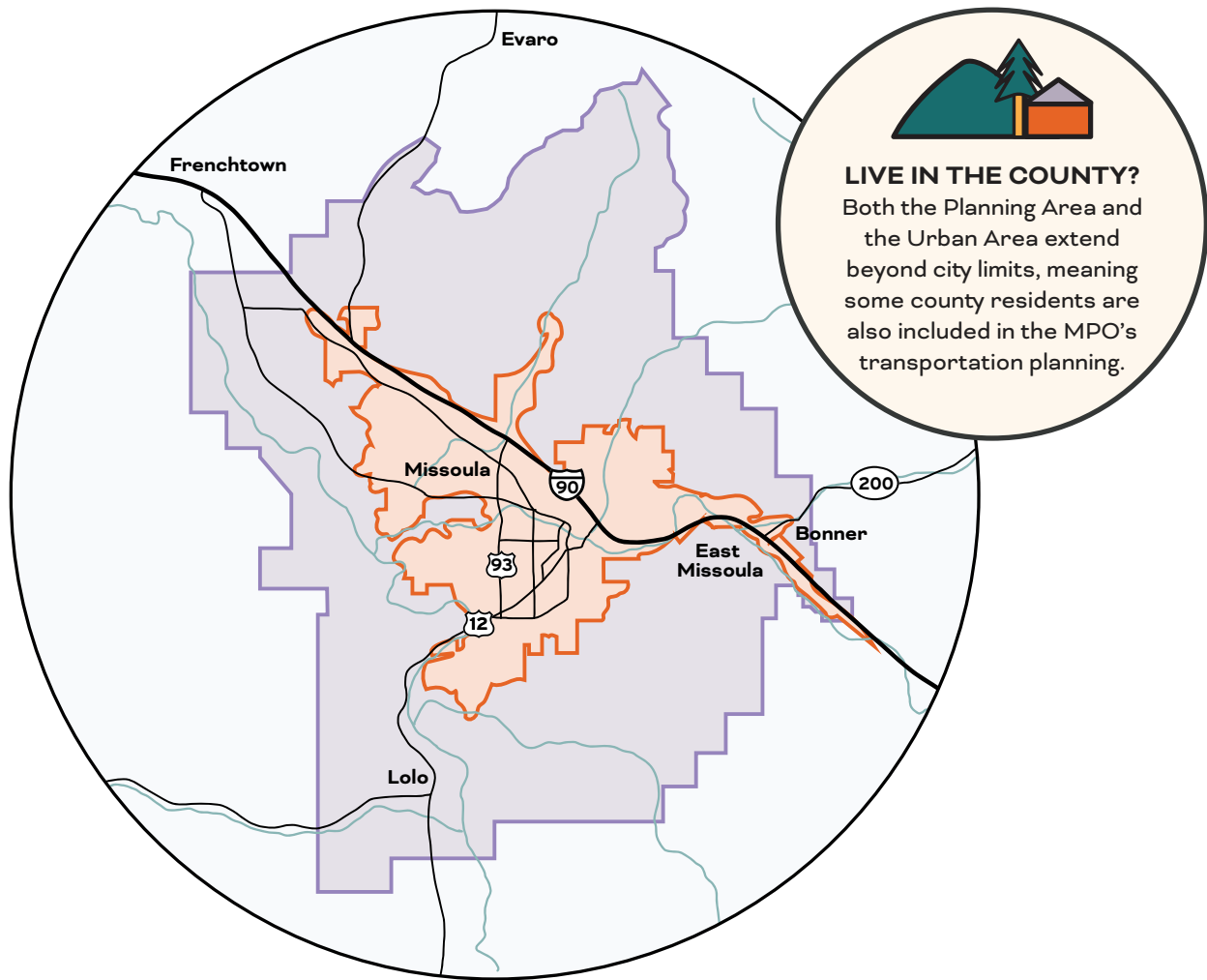
HELPS NAVIGATE FUNDING
 Works with the City, County, Mountain Line, and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to program federal funding to support regional transportation needs and implement the long range plan.



COLLECTS DATA
 Monitors and evaluates the transportation system to understand how it works today, and find ways to make streets and travel safer and easier to navigate in the future.

What Areas Does the MPO Serve?

From Turah to Lolo to the Wye, the Missoula MPO planning area stretches 263 square miles and is home to more than 100,000 residents. It includes a thriving downtown, distinctive neighborhoods, the University of Montana, and a mix of both urban and rural communities with unique transportation needs.



THE MPO URBAN AREA

The MPO Planning Area represents Missoula's projected growth boundary for the next 20 years.



THE MPO PLANNING AREA

Within the Planning Area is the Urban Area, a federally designated boundary based on census data. The MPO can use certain federal funds for infrastructure and services inside this Urban Area.



Want to see if you're covered by the MPO?

To see the interactive map of the MPO's coverage area, visit: MissoulaMPO.com/Participate

Regional Transportation Planning at Work

Why Regional Transportation Planning Matters

Regional transportation planning helps your community grow safely, efficiently, and in ways that reflect your needs. The Missoula MPO works with public agencies, neighborhoods, and residents to decide which improvements matter most and how to fund them through public investment. Highway 200 is an example of how your voice guides decisions and drives meaningful change.

CASE STUDY

East Missoula Highway 200 Corridor Plan



It Starts with Your Needs

People often wonder why some streets or corridors rise to the top of the priority list. In most cases, it's because the community tells us where the greatest needs are. Along Highway 200, you told us safety was your biggest concern. You told us the railroad tunnel and I-90 underpass felt too narrow and stressful, especially if you walk or bike. Many of you suggested widening it or building a separate tunnel for people not using cars. Sha-Ron river access was another concern, especially during floating season, when it's hard to park, traffic gets backed up, and crossing the highway can be dangerous. You wanted continuous bike lanes, sidewalks, or shared-use paths so people could travel safely between Van Buren–Broadway, East Missoula, Sha-Ron, and the Bonner trail network. And you said you were frustrated with how long improvements take and were eager to see real changes.

Your feedback became the foundation for the [East Missoula Highway 200 Corridor Plan](#).

It Takes Collaboration

Your input doesn't get collected and set aside. It guides the entire planning process. Highway 200 has long been identified as a top regional priority in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. In 2019, the MPO worked with WGM to create a corridor plan reflecting technical analysis and your daily experiences.

Regional Transportation Planning at Work



New parking area for Sha-Ron river access from Highway 200 between East Missoula and Bonner.

The project brought residents, local businesses, commuters, recreational users, and public agencies together. You shared what you value, what you fear, and what you want the corridor to become.

A corridor plan looks at how a roadway connects people and places and how transportation choices and land use influence one another. For Highway 200, the plan helped clarify the community's vision, and turned individual concerns into shared goals.

Plans are a Needed Tool for Implementation

A plan is a tool the MPO uses to seek funding, apply for grants, coordinate with state and federal partners, and move projects toward construction. Because the Highway 200 Corridor Plan reflects broad community support, it gives the MPO and other agencies a strong foundation to pursue the improvements you asked for.

This is why regional transportation planning matters. Whether you attend a meeting, fill out a survey, or simply share your daily experiences, you help shape the transportation system that will serve Missoula for years to come.

How to Get Involved

Engaging with the MPO is an easy way to stay informed about transportation projects and policies that affect you, your neighborhood, and the Missoula community. Your input helps shape decisions that improve safety, access, and mobility across Missoula. Stay involved to ensure your voice is heard early and when it matters most.

1. Stay Updated

Sign up for updates → MissoulaMPO.com

We'll email you when we're working on transportation plans and projects in your area—and when we need your input.



You can also follow these sites for City and County transportation projects:

Engage Missoula → EngageMissoula.com

Missoula County Voice → MissoulaCountyVoice.com

2. Share Your Ideas on Transportation Plans

When the MPO is updating major plans like the Long-Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, or studying specific corridors, we come to you for input. **Here's how you can participate:**



OPEN HOUSES

Drop in to see project displays and talk with the MPO staff.



COMMENT PERIODS

Review draft plans and tell us what you think.



MOBILITY AUDITS

Roll, walk, and move through specific areas to help us identify problems.



SURVEYS

Share your experience and priorities from your phone, computer, or where you're at.



PUBLIC HEARINGS

Speak directly to decision-makers.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Find us tabling at farmers markets, festivals, and neighborhood gatherings.

3. Connect at Neighborhood Meetings

Meet the MPO staff in your neighborhood.

The MPO Staff regularly attends:

- City of Missoula [Neighborhood Council meetings](#)
- Missoula County [Community Council meetings](#)
- Other City and County neighborhood and community planning meetings

Check meeting schedules and ask us questions about transportation projects in your area.



Want the MPO Staff to come to your meeting?

Invite the MPO staff to present at your community organization or neighborhood group meeting. Contact us at **MissoulaMPO.com** to schedule.

4. Attend a Committee Meeting

Follow the community conversation by attending, listening, and providing public comment on transportation decisions.



Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) Meetings

The TPCC is the elected body that makes final decisions on the MPO plans and funding. All meetings are open to the public, and there's time for public comment at each meeting.

5. Stay Connected

You shared your feedback. Now what? After public input is collected, MPO staff review and use it to shape plans, priorities, and project decisions. Changes may happen right away or over time as plans are refined and updated.



To see how your input was considered and how plans evolve, stay connected with the MPO using the links above in 1. Stay Updated.



Our Commitment to You

Your voice matters in transportation decisions. We created public engagement principles to guide our work and remind us what's most important. Here's what you can expect when you participate in the MPO planning:

We Make Engagement Accessible

Everyone in the Missoula area deserves a chance to shape transportation decisions — no matter where you live, how you get around, what language you speak, or whether you can attend meetings in person. We offer multiple ways to participate, from online surveys to in-person events, so you can engage in the way that works best for you.

We Consider Your Input

We ask for your ideas when they matter most in the planning process. Your daily experience — like knowing which intersection feels dangerous or where a sidewalk is missing — is valuable data that shapes our plans and helps us build a better transportation system for everyone.

We Build Lasting Relationships

Transportation needs evolve, so we stay connected with neighborhoods, community organizations, and residents through ongoing dialogue—not just one-time engagement efforts.

We're Transparent and Accountable

You have a right to know how transportation decisions are made and how your tax dollars are spent. We share our plans publicly, explain how we use community input, and make our decision-making process clear. If we can't implement a suggestion, we'll tell you why.

We Connect Engagement to Community Goals

Every time we ask for your input, it's connected to real goals: making streets safer, expanding transportation choices, protecting the environment, strengthening neighborhoods, and maintaining what we've already built. Your participation helps us achieve these goals in ways that work for your community.

We Keep Learning

We regularly review how well our engagement efforts are working and look for better ways to connect with the community. If you have ideas about how we can do better, we want to hear them.



We Want to Hear From You

We want to hear from everyone, especially people whose voices haven't always been included in transportation planning.

We come to you

We partner with community based organizations that represent a wide range of community members and interests who help us meet you where you're comfortable — your neighborhood, local park, or school.

We experience streets together

We support and partner on mobility audits—walking and rolling through streets as a group to identify problems. These happen at key moments in project design when your firsthand experience can have the biggest impact on creating safe and accessible corridors and areas.

We communicate in the way that works for you

We attempt to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program, or activity. For further information, call (406) 552-6674. Free interpretation (spoken languages and ASL), translation, and accessible formats are available for public meetings and materials. Let us know what you need at least 48 hours before the meeting.

We show up throughout the region

We attend meetings in every part of the Missoula MPO area so you don't have to travel far to participate. Find us at neighborhood council and community council meetings.

We offer multiple ways to participate

Share your thoughts through online surveys, neighborhood meetings, open houses, or by working with community partners.

We provide accessible materials

Our website and planning documents are designed to work with assistive technologies like screen readers, and images include descriptive alt text. If you encounter any barriers to accessing our content, please let us know so we can fix them.