

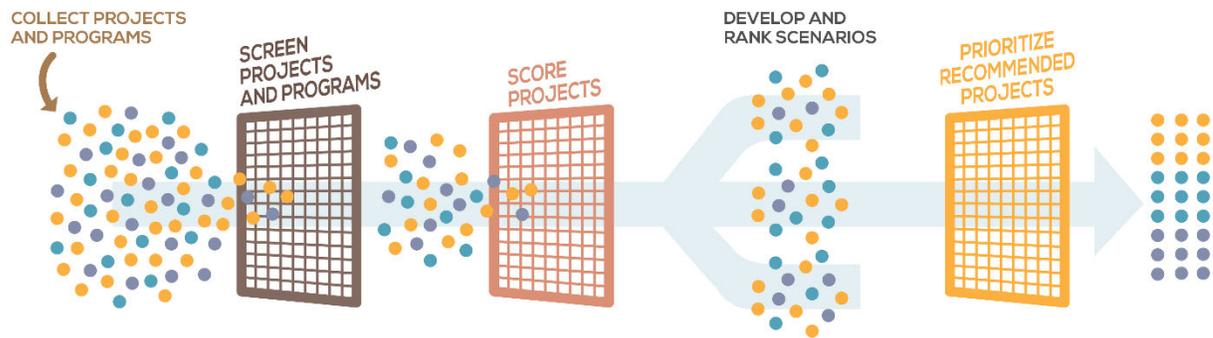
MISSOULA CONNECT: PROJECT EVALUATION APPROACH

RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK (8/5/2020)

This memo recommends a five-step evaluation framework to help screen, score, and prioritize projects for funding and implementation through Missoula Connect. The steps and the criteria associated with each are described in more detail below:

1. **Collection** – Gather potential project and program concepts, using recommendations from the 2016 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well as new input from committees and the public.
2. **Screening** – Filter concepts for LRTP eligibility.
3. **Scoring** – Use geographic criteria to score projects based on metrics that will help achieve Missoula Connect goals.
4. **Scenarios** – Use the regional travel demand model to test network performance.
5. **Prioritization** – Collaborate with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC), Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC), and Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) to prioritize high-scoring projects based on descriptive criteria to develop a recommended project list.

Figure 1 Evaluation Process



Step 1: Collect Projects & Programs

The project team will work with the project committees and the public to develop a comprehensive list of transportation projects and programmatic needs for the Missoula area. The list, which will include unbuilt recommended and illustrative projects from the previous LRTP, will be supplemented by a three-pronged Call for Projects:

Interactive Map

An [interactive map](#) illustrates existing in-progress, recommended, and illustrative projects and invites members of the public to identify locations where they would like to see new projects. People are required to provide a brief description of their project, including articulating how it helps to advance Missoula Connect goals. Participants are also able to submit comments on existing projects or those recommended by others.

Call for Projects Form

The public is also invited to submit project ideas through a simple [online form](#). This mobile-friendly tool asks people to provide a project type, location, and description; explain how the project meets Missoula Connect goals; and share their contact information.

Virtual Workshops

The purpose of workshops is to gather feedback on the draft evaluation framework and to identify new projects. Due to restrictions on public gatherings as a result of COVID-19, the workshops will occur virtually on Zoom. Members of the LRTP TAC and CAC have detailed knowledge of or ideas about projects that could address critical gaps, advance Missoula Connect goals and desired outcomes, and offer high potential for successful implementation.

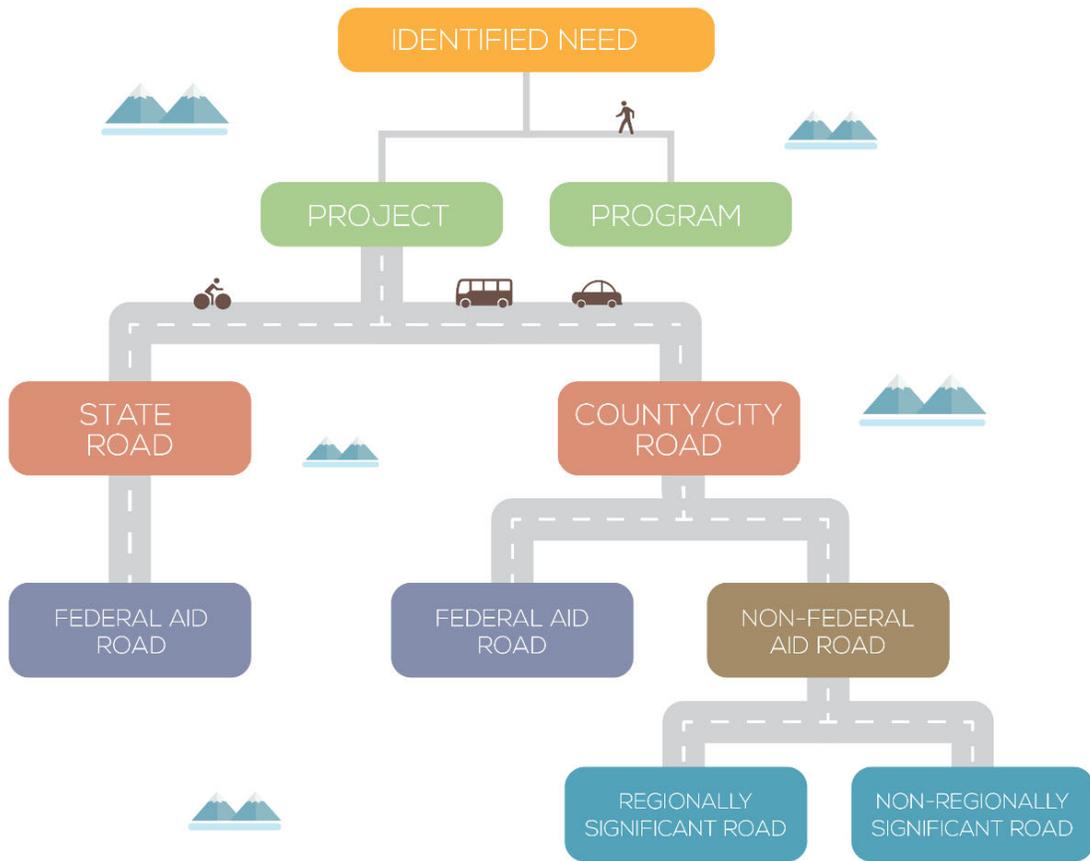
Step 2: Screen Projects & Programs

Once the collection phase is complete, the project team will develop a master list of suggested projects. This list will be screened to ensure that projects are eligible for the LRTP prioritization process. Proposed screening criteria are as follows:

- a. **Is the concept a project or a program?** Submissions classified as Transportation Options will be considered programs. Projects continue through the process, and programmatic needs are included in a separate section of the LRTP.
- b. **Is the project on a State road or County road?** Projects located on State or County roads continue through the process. A list of non-regionally significant projects identified on local roads will be compiled for scoring separately and then prioritized through the City's framework for CIP development.
- c. **Is the project on a Federal Aid Road?** Only projects on Federal Aid Roads are eligible for funding through the MPO and will continue through the process.
- d. **Is the project on a regionally significant road?** Select Non-Federal Aid Roads or off-road paths may be regionally significant or may be classified as Federal Aid Roads in the future. Projects that are deemed regionally significant will continue through the process.

The flow of the screening process is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Screening Process



Step 3: Score Projects

With a screened list of projects, the Missoula Connect team will use geographic criteria to score the remaining projects. A focus on geographic criteria at this stage makes it possible to evaluate many projects quickly, adjusting weighting of goals or criteria as needed to match the community’s values, needs, and technical priorities.

For consistency with the previous LRTP, all projects, regardless of mode, will be scored with the same criteria. This approach recognizes that roadway projects can incorporate complete street elements that benefit all modes while non-motorized projects can contribute to overall system performance and safety. The revised scoring criteria—based on the draft Missoula Connect goals—are described in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Revised Project Scoring Criteria

Goal	Desired Outcomes	Geographic Criteria
<p>Improve safety and promote health to enhance quality of life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries ▪ Improve safety for people walking and biking ▪ Enhance active transportation and transit linkages to lower-income neighborhoods ▪ Increase physical activity and human connections by making walking and biking convenient modes of travel ▪ Improve access to recreational facilities and trails to support healthy lifestyles 	<p>Crash Reduction (all modes):</p> <p>1 point – Project is located within ¼ mile of a high crash frequency corridor or intersection</p> <p>2 points – Project is located at a high crash frequency corridor or intersection</p>
		<p>Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety:</p> <p>1 point – Project will improve bicycle/pedestrian safety within ¼ mile of a high crash frequency/high level of stress corridor or intersection</p> <p>2 points – Project will improve bicycle/pedestrian safety and is located at a high crash frequency/high level of stress corridor or intersection</p>
		<p>Economic Equity:</p> <p>1 point – Project is located in an Invest Health neighborhood or a high LMI (low to moderate income) census tract</p>
		<p>Access to Recreational and Active Facilities:</p> <p>1 point – Project provides multimodal access within ½ mile of a public recreation facility, park, playground, or trail</p> <p>2 points – Project directly connects to or expands multimodal access to a public recreation facility, park, playground, or trail</p>

Project Evaluation Approach | Recommended Framework (8/5/20)

Missoula Connect Long-Range Transportation Plan

Goal	Desired Outcomes	Geographic Criteria
<p>Advance sustainability and community resilience to protect natural resources and address climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve climate resilience and advance toward carbon neutrality ▪ Reduce transportation-related air emissions ▪ Minimize sediment, nutrients, and litter entering surface water ▪ Expand the urban canopy and green stormwater infrastructure ▪ Protect and enhance natural, cultural, historic resources, including agricultural lands ▪ Create adaptable and resilient infrastructure to respond to changing needs 	<p>Climate Change: 1 point – Project will reduce VMT, SOV trips, or carbon emissions</p>
		<p>Natural Preservation: 1 point – Project is outside a floodplain, protected wetland, or critical species habitat area</p>
		<p>Historic and Cultural Resources: 1 point – Project enhances multimodal access to a site(s) listed on the National Register of Historic Places</p>
		<p>Agricultural Preservation: 1 point – Project is outside land designated for agricultural preservation</p>
		<p>Emergency Response: 1 point – Project is located on an evacuation corridor or provides a second route for areas with 1-way emergency access</p>
<p>Expand mobility choices to improve efficiency and accessibility for people and goods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build complete streets and increase access to multimodal options ▪ Increase street, trail/greenway, and sidewalk network connectivity for all ages and abilities ▪ Optimize the efficiency and accessibility of the transportation system ▪ Reduce person hours of delay for people driving and improve freight movement ▪ Improve access to high-quality and high-frequency transit stops and routes to advance local plans 	<p>Modal Density: 1 point – Project increases network density for one out of three non-auto modes (sidewalk, bike/trail, transit network) 2 points – Project increases network density for two or more non-auto modes (sidewalk, bike/trail, transit network)</p>
		<p>Network Connectivity: 1 point – Project increases the link-node ratio¹</p>
		<p>Freight: 1 point – Project is located on a designated truck route or is located within ½ mile of an industrial or manufacturing center</p>

¹ See <https://www.cnu.org/our-projects/street-networks/street-networks-101>

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Missoula Connect Long-Range Transportation Plan

Goal	Desired Outcomes	Geographic Criteria
		<p>Transit Access:</p> <p>1 point – Project closes a gap, removes a barrier, or improves transit operations within ½ mile of a Mountain Line or UDASH stop</p> <p>2 point – Project closes a gap, removes a barrier, or improves transit operations within ½ mile of an existing Bolt! Route stop or future high-frequency stop identified in Mountain Line’s Strategic Plan</p>
<p>Connect and strengthen communities to create a more equitable region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase affordability and reduce overall household transportation costs ▪ Develop an integrated mobility system that connects destinations with sustainable travel options to create complete neighborhoods ▪ Integrate land use and transportation planning to support infill development and responsible growth, and to create complete neighborhoods ▪ Improve access to schools, jobs, parks, essential services, affordable and senior housing, and basic life needs ▪ Engage with and invest in historically disadvantaged areas and in neighborhoods that have been adversely impacted by transportation decisions 	<p>Equity:</p> <p>1 point – Project improves multimodal access within a high threshold census tract in the Equity Index</p> <hr/> <p>Access to Essential Services:</p> <p>1 point – Project improves multimodal access within ½ mile of an essential service, school, childcare facility, hospital, or health/social service provider</p> <p>2 points – Project directly connects to or expands multimodal access to an essential service, school, childcare facility, hospital, or health/social service provider</p> <hr/> <p>Sustainable Growth:</p> <p>1 point – Project is located within one or more Tier 3 Composite Suitability hexagons in Our Missoula Development Guide</p> <p>2 points – Project is located within one or more Tier 4 Composite Suitability hexagons in Our Missoula Development Guide</p> <hr/> <p>Access to Affordable or Senior Housing:</p> <p>1 point – Project is within ½ mile of existing or planned affordable or senior housing units</p> <p>2 points– Project provides direct access to existing or planned affordable or senior housing units</p>

Project Evaluation Approach | Recommended Framework (8/5/20)

Missoula Connect Long-Range Transportation Plan

Goal	Desired Outcomes	Geographic Criteria
<p>Maintain assets and invest strategically to boost economic vitality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring existing infrastructure and transit assets into a state of good repair to support the regional economy, local industry, and goods movement ▪ Balance cost-effective, implementable projects with high-impact projects ▪ Plan for a transportation system that makes the best use of public financial resources ▪ Provide a network that targets growth inward to support existing centers and mixed use development ▪ Support access to businesses and commercial and industrial centers to enhance economic recovery and growth ▪ Explore more equitable and sustainable funding sources for transportation projects and programs 	<p>Facility Preservation:</p> <p>1 point – Project improves pavement, bridge, or transit facility with fair condition rating</p> <p>2 points – Project improves pavement, bridge, or transit facility with poor condition rating</p>
		<p>Revitalization:</p> <p>1 point – Project is located within an Urban Renewal District.</p>
		<p>Access to Employment:</p> <p>1 point – Improves access to key commercial and industrial employment centers for one mode</p> <p>2 points – Improves access to key commercial and industrial employment centers for two or more modes</p>

Step 4: Develop and Rank Scenarios

The project team will compile scenarios that combine projects based upon scoring results, geographic distribution, and project types. The scenarios will be structured in ways that maximize differences and help to illustrate the types of projects and programs that will move the needle on Missoula's goals.

The *Missoula Connect Scenario Approach Memo (8/5/20)* provides more information about the proposed approach to scenario planning. It is anticipated that there will be two land use scenarios and three or four transportation network scenarios. The scenarios will be fiscally constrained and will be evaluated across metrics that respond to the project's goals.

Scenarios will be tested within the regional travel demand model and select off-model tools to assess future network performance and other outcomes for 2050. Factors to consider include network congestion, person trips, multimodal levels of service, shift toward mode share goals, vehicle miles traveled, and air quality, among others.

Step 5: Prioritize Recommended Projects

With a preferred scenario, the project team will hold an internal working session and collaborate on a shared matrix to answer questions about each project. This work session will help to determine which projects are the highest priority given their need and potential return on investment for the community. Members of the TAC and other relevant stakeholders will be included in this work session, as appropriate. The results of the prioritization process will be an appendix to the final LRTP. The appendix will include a column for scoring rationale that also provides space for comments submitted as part of the public Call for Projects process. Potential prioritization questions include the following:

Goal 1: Improve safety and promote health to enhance quality of life

- i. Does the project include proven countermeasures to reduce driver fatalities and serious injury crashes?
- ii. Does the project include proven countermeasures to reduce bicycle or pedestrian fatalities and serious injury crashes?
- iii. Is the project likely to increase bicycle or walking mode share or support increased physical activity?
- iv. Does the project include placemaking elements like public art, street furniture, or new lighting?

Goal 2: Advance sustainability and community resilience to protect natural resources and address climate change

- i. Is the project likely to decrease single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) mode share?
- ii. Is the project likely to decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT)?
- iii. Would the project contribute to improved air quality outcomes?
- iv. Does the project help achieve the goal of carbon neutrality in the Missoula urban area? Does the project include adaptive or green infrastructure features such as street trees, native landscaping, or bioswales?

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Missoula Connect Long-Range Transportation Plan

- v. Does the project include adaptable or resilient elements to future-proof the investment for changing needs?
- vi. Does the project strengthen the transportation system to provide safe travel during a natural disaster?

Goal 3: Expand mobility choices to improve efficiency and accessibility for people and goods

- i. Does the project fill a network gap?
- ii. Does the project address existing deficiencies in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access or facilities?
- iii. Does the project reduce person hours of delay for people driving?
- iv. Does the project improve freight movement by improving truck route operations?

Goal 4: Connect and strengthen communities to create a more equitable region

- i. Does the project support the needs of a local social service organization?
- ii. Does the project have the potential to reduce household transportation costs by supporting non-automobile trips?
- iii. Does the project improve multimodal access in an outlying area with a need for more regional connectivity?
- iv. Does the project support infill development and help create more complete neighborhoods?
- v. Does the project expand connectivity to create more attractive neighborhoods for the development of affordable housing?
- vi. Does the project have stated support or previous engagement with historically disadvantaged areas that have been adversely impacted by transportation decisions?

Goal 5: Maintain assets and invest strategically to boost economic vitality

- i. Is the project in an advanced state of readiness (e.g., shovel ready, preliminary design)?
- ii. Will the project significantly increase roadway preservation costs?
- iii. Does the project have an identified public funding source or potential for a public-private partnership?
- iv. Does the project address a long-standing deferred maintenance issue?
- v. Does the project support efforts for revitalization of an area for local business or mixed-use development (e.g., consistent with Downtown Master Plan or supports community cores outside of Downtown)?
- vi. Does the project expand access and development potential for necessary industrial and commercial employment centers?