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MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

Official Newsletter

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COVID-19: Offices Closed to Public

MCPW closed their offices to the public in November, until further notice. Although the offices are closed, all departmental services have continued to stay up and running in this now 'COVID-normal' environment via online permitting and plan reviews, email and phone communications, and performing inspections in a safe manner utilizing face masks, social distancing, hand washing and hand sanitizer.

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OFFICE CLOSED

Due to health concerns associated with
Coronavirus, our offices are currently
CLOSED to the public until further notice.
We are very sorry for the inconvenience.

MISSOULA COUNTY RSID 901 LOLO SEWER TREATMENT PLANT

COVID-19 IMPACTS WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

WITH MORE PEOPLE WORKING AT HOME, IMPACTS ON WASTEWATER SYSTEMS CAN WEIGH HEAVILY.

Today's world calls for an abundance of disinfecting wipes, paper towels and napkins, but we still need to dispose of them correctly. Please DO NOT flush these items down your toilet. It costs a lot of money, time, and staff to make repairs to sewer and septic systems.

No wipes in the pipes

Using an alternative to toilet paper? Dispose of it in the trash! Your sewer system is not designed to handle:

- Wipes (even if labeled "flushable")
- Paper towels
- Napkins
- Facial tissues
- Sanitary napkins
- Diapers
- Rags
- Magazine paper
- Socks
- Literally anything else other than toilet paper, water and human waste



Lolo RSID 901 Plans for Expansion

The Lolo community is growing, and the existing infrastructure needs to expand with it. Water rights had been trimmed in the past, and the Water Court has restored them back to the community. A Water Rights Needs Assessment was done by HDR Engineering for the water system (<https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/public-works/public-works/lolo-water-sewer>), and population projection and growth models were done.

An update to the Service Area Map and Place of Use Map for the water district are planned. An application for a Change of Use to the DNRC is proposed for January 2021. This will allow the area that the Lolo Water System can serve to be expanded. The District has hired HDR Engineering and New Fields to assist with the application process. We are also accessing the existing water infrastructure to see where we can build in redundancy.

Water main breaks in recent years resulted in water service being shut off to 635 homes. A new loop addition along Farm Ln is planned for spring 2022, allowing for a better functioning system. If breaks occur, service will only need to be shut off to a minimal number of homes. Some of our oldest water lines are the original 1965 installed mains and will eventually need to be replaced. By creating this loop to our system, it will allow replacement without a service disruption. This 20-year system analysis will allow planning for growth and the best possible service to the public.

Wastewater treatment plant capacity and collection capacity are being reviewed. Our Discharge Permit renewal is under review by the Department of Environmental Quality. Once complete, we will have a better understanding of where and how we should plan for growth.

DIRECTOR'S HIGHLIGHTS

SHANE STACK, P.E.

Public Infrastructure

Construction

Shane Stack started as Director of Public Works on April 1, 2019, after nearly 23 years with the Montana Department of Transportation, most recently as the Missoula District Preconstruction Engineer. At MDT, he planned, implemented and oversaw several high-profile, multimillion-dollar engineering projects in the Missoula area.



In retrospect, 2020 has been quite a year. We are all aware of the challenges the world has faced, and will continue to face, for several more months. Even though challenging, 2020 has also given us a chance to think creatively and develop ways of doing business that might provide for more efficiency in the future. Public Works will continue taking advantage of online meeting platforms such as MS Teams, Zoom, and GoTo to reduce travel to meetings. When possible, working from home has also been successful and potentially reduces the office space necessary to provide service to the public.

I was pleased with the projects that were completed this past year by our road and bridge staff and our sewer and water staff. Amid the pandemic they were able to complete a majority of the planned work, with some minor follow-up this spring to finish up the fiscal year. The projects were all needed improvements whether it was new septic tanks at the Lewis and Clark system in Clinton, or water tank upgrades for the Sunset West system at the Wye, or any of the multiple road improvements across the county.

Our Building Department had an amazing year issuing more permits than the previous year, and maintaining the ability to complete inspections. I was impressed with their ability to think creatively and develop solutions in the midst of this historic pandemic.

The Surveyor's Office was able to still provide all the essential services to the public and other county departments throughout the pandemic.

The refuse site in Seeley was able to remain open throughout the pandemic and provide safe and reliable service to our Seeley area customers.

2020 was a year with many challenges, and I was happy to see the Missoula County Public Works team step up and provide a service to the public. Even more impressive was the fact that we were able to do the work safely without having a large scale outbreak of COVID within the department. We plan to continue the trend of providing services to the public and other departments with the safety of the public and staff as the number one goal. I would like to simply thank the Public Works team for focusing on being safe in 2020, while still being able to provide the services that the public and other departments rely on. Your public service is truly appreciated.

As always, wishing you the best.



'Without question...
we are here to
serve the
community...
we care about
our jobs and believe
in doing the best
work possible.'

FLAP helps fund transportation improvements on local roads that provides access to federal lands.

ROAD DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS FEDERAL FUNDING FOR UPGRADE ASSISTANCE

Missoula County Public Works is considering applying for two different federal funding sources for road and trail upgrades in Missoula County. The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) managed by Western Federal Lands (WFL) helps fund transportation improvements on local roads that provide access to federal lands. The county is working with federal land managers to develop and prioritize a list of projects. The county currently has a list of twenty potential projects with a total cost of around \$70 million. The goal is to have anywhere from one to four applications with each project having a total cost of less than \$5 million. The program will require a local match of 13.42% of the total project cost. With the recently passed local option gas tax, the county has additional funding to leverage towards roadway improvements like this. The applications will likely be due this winter/spring, with project construction happening in the next five years.

In addition to the FLAP funding, Public Works is collaborating with the County Parks, Trails and Open Lands (PTOL) staff to develop a list of potential projects to submit to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for Transportation Alternative (TA) funding. The TA program provides funding for infrastructure like shared use paths and sidewalks. The list is considerably shorter for TA projects, and the price of the projects are also lower. Even though the cost of the projects are lower for TA, the match will be more challenging to gather as the county doesn't have a dedicated funding source for non-motorized transportation. Like the FLAP program, the TA program will require up to 13.42% match from the county. PTOL and Public Works will work creatively to provide the necessary match for any TA project that is applied for. The TA applications will be due this spring with construction likely not happening for a few years.

If you have questions or suggested projects, feel free to share your thoughts by contacting Shane Stack (sstack@missoulacounty.us) or Erik Dickson (edickson@missoulacounty.us).



TA funding provides funding for infrastructure like shared use paths and sidewalks.