

Memorandum

REPORT TO: Transportation Board

FROM: Jeff Butts, MPO Manager

SUBJECT: Gallatin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Long Range Transportation Plan Update and Request for Input

MEETING DATE: March 25, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Plan/Report/Study

RECOMMENDATION: Participate in the Gallatin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update and request for input

STRATEGIC PLAN: 1.3 Public Agencies Collaboration: Foster successful collaboration with other public agencies and build on these successes.

BACKGROUND: The Gallatin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was established following the 2020 Census after the Bozeman urbanized area exceeded the 50,000 population threshold. Federal code conditions receipt of surface transportation funding on the designation of an MPO and the establishment of a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive performance-based multimodal transportation planning process.

The MPO provides a regional forum for transportation planning among the Cities of Bozeman and Belgrade, Gallatin County, Streamline, Montana State University, and state and federal transportation partners. The MPO is governed by the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC), which includes two representatives from the Bozeman City Commission.

Current Work

The MPO is preparing its first Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The LRTP will include a fiscally constrained project list informing the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). These programs direct Federal surface transportation funding.

The LRTP is being developed through a phased process that includes existing conditions analysis, transit planning, and evaluation of future alternatives. The project team has completed the Transit Strategic Plan and the Existing Conditions Report and is now entering the Alternatives Analysis phase. The Transit Strategic Plan, funded by the Urban Transportation District (UTD), identified potential enhanced transit connections linking the North 7th corridor near I-90, Downtown Bozeman, Montana State University, and

the West Main Street–West College Street activity center. The next phase will compare a future no-build condition with three investment approaches to help identify projects that best advance the LRTP goals.

The draft LRTP goals are provided below:

- Support Safe Travel Across All Modes
- Ensure a Well-Maintained Transportation System
- Expand Mobility Choices Throughout the Region
- Enhance Health, Quality of Life, and Preserve Regional Character
- Enhance Transportation and Land Use Planning Coordination
- Improve Transportation System Resilience

Requested Input

Staff will provide an overview of the MPO and the LRTP process and invite the Transportation Board to identify potential projects, regional considerations, including connectivity and system performance, and other priorities to inform LRTP development. Input at this stage will help ensure locally identified priorities are reflected as alternatives are developed and evaluated.

This item is presented for information and discussion. No formal action is requested.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES: None.

ALTERNATIVES: As suggested by the board.

FISCAL EFFECTS: None.

Report compiled on: March 5, 2026