

COMMENT SUMMARY REPORT

South Avenue Bridge

*Filtered to show only Open events

ID Date Type Status	Title Summary Notes	Topics	Person Participants	Phone Number Email Address
20542 9/22/2015 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from Bob Schweitzer 9/22/2015</u> Thanks for getting this web site up and running. Bob Schweitzer		Bob Schweitzer	
20564 9/25/2015 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from Bob Carter 9/25/2015</u> Other than the bridge is not generally supported by the local area residents, my primary concern is the road size between the proposed bridge and Humble Road. There is no adequate space for pedestrians or bikes along with the increased vehicular traffic. This is compounded by the near proximity of an elementary school. In my humble opinion, this major safety concern needs to be addressed prior to any new bridge construction, not as an afterthought if and when additional funding becomes available. Thank you,		Bob Carter	
20684 10/5/2015 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from markd@bresnan.net 10/5/2015</u> I am fully in favor of the construction of the bridge on the South Avenue. Rather than remove the one-lane bridge, I would prefer to see the North Ave. Bridge be converted to a pedestrian footbridge similar to the Van Buren Street footbridge downtown. I think this could potentially become a destination area of Missoula for walking and recreating. Especially with slight trail additions joining the walking path to the MaClay Flats and Blue Mountain areas. I could imagine where this could ultimately allow for contiguous trails from Missoula downtown all the way into the Bitterroot.		Mark Dvarishkis	markd@bresnan.net
20716 10/9/2015 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from stevenson_0754@msn.com 10/9/2015</u> The replacement of the Maclay bridge on South Avenue could be a structure that gives the Target Range neighborhood a distinction from other neighborhoods in Missoula. The concern is the bridge will be similar to the Kona bridge. When crossing Kona bridge whether in a car or on a bicycle there is no view directly to the river.		Elizabeth Stevenson	stevenson_0754@msn.com



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Having spent my life in Missoula and the Target Range area, there has always been a pleasure when crossing the Maclay bridge. For those few moments one can see the natural world around the bridge. Birds, fish jumping, mammals using the rivers edge all for a few brief moments allows a person to be immersed in the wonder and beauty of the Bitterroot River corridor.

The lack of safe walking or bike paths has always been a concern for my family. My children weren't safe along River Pines if walking or riding their bikes to school. The same people that would say they loved the slower traffic created by the one lane bridge would speed by at too close a distance and in some cases even berate the children because they were using that roadway.

I look forward to adding a beautiful and artful structure that safely accommodates all travel types through the Target Range neighborhood. In the 60s riding a horse through the neighborhood and across the bridge was safe. Of course the neighborhood has added many homes and cars since then.

The river corridor in Target Range is often used for community running races and bicycle rides. I am proud to share with the community of Missoula. There should be parking access at the South Avenue site to allow field trips for the area school children to use this area for education. Both the grade school and the high school on South Avenue are very near this site.

I would be pleased to see the local people of Missoula using the bridge access for launching their water craft, swimming and picnicing during those very hot afternoons in July and August. The people that try to take advantage of the river when the temperature soar are often ticketed or towed from the neighborhood close to Maclay bridge. The same people being towed are often those that can least afford the extra expense. That is why they are choosing an inexpensive way to cool off. Not everyone can afford Splash Montana or air conditioning.

I look forward to Target Range being more connected to the city of Missoula and all of it's residence. There must be a number of bridge designs to choose from that would add to the pride of the neighborhood. The connection of the trail system from Missoula Valley to the West as well as to the South with the design of the new South Avenue could be a benefit to everyone calling Missoula Valley home.

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<p>28033 8/5/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from mtsterbisrunner@gmail.com 8/5/2016</u> Has the "cumulative effects analysis" been done yet for this project? If it has, will it be a part of the presentation of the second public meeting? If it is not done, when is it scheduled to be done?</p>		<p>Sharon Sterbis</p>	<p>mtsterbisrunner@gmail.com</p>
<p>28051 8/9/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from don@stplawoffices.com 8/9/2016</u> I will not be present for the August 16, 2016 public meeting and wanted to comment on the proposed bridge design. However, I cannot find them on this site. In any event, I suggest taht efforts be made to make the new bridge as astheticly pleasing as possible such as railing similar to the Orange Street Bridge in Missoula. A pedestrian/bike path is a must. With regard to the removal of the existing Maclay Bridge, I suggest that the are is not suited for a developed fishing or similar access. There is just not enough room and parking is an ongoing struggle there. Additionally, there are other developed access points very close by at Maclay Flats and Kona Bridge. If necessary I believe a boat launch can be developed at Maclay Flats with little additional cost or effort.The public access at Maclay Bridge should be maintained by not further developed because of the limited space.</p>		<p>Don St. Peter</p>	<p>don@stplawoffices.com</p>
<p>28086 8/16/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from amfm64@msn.com 8/16/2016</u> I would like a formal answer as to how the new bridge will affect recreational floating on that section of the Bitterroot Rive. I also want a formal answer as to if, how and when the North Ave bridge will be dismantles. How will the use of the swimming area near the bridge be affected. I am amazed that the your formal historical analysis of the bridge area did not include recreational use in the past and future years. Houndreds of people use this area forrecreation all year long but especially the summer. I sure hope you will discuss this tonight and be able to answer my questions in public tonight. Sincerely, Andrea Merrill-Maker</p>		<p>Andrea Merrill-Maker</p>	<p>amfm64@msn.com</p>

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<p>28087 8/16/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from tomph@mckinstry.com 8/16/2016</u> Greetings. I recently purchased a lot in the River Pines Subdivision and we will build a house there soon. I am favor of the new bridge project but would like information on biking lanes and sidewalks that will be part of the new design. Can you send renderings, a description, or the preliminary plans so we can understand what is being considered? Ultimately we want our kids to be able to safely bike to Target Range and Big Sky schools in the future and the current bridge does not allow that. Unfortunately I cannot attend tonight's meeting due to prior engagements.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Tom</p>		<p>Tom Phillips</p>	<p>tomph@mckinstry.com</p>
<p>28089 8/16/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from suzannemt@hotmail.com 8/16/2016</u> I am very concerned and disappointed about the lack of a true environmental study. I can't believe a project that involves wetlands and bull trout habitat would try to go forward without an EIS. That seems totally irresponsible to me. I am also disappointed that Maclay Bridge needs to be taken out, if new bridge does go in. Not only is it important historically, but it is perfect for bikes and pedestrians. It is also an interesting and alluring aspect of the Missoula Marathon. The bike and ped options for the new bridge, though sounding good to some, will be full of debris and cracks just like Kona Bridge, and will force riders into the road anyway. I hope you will take these comments into serious considerations. Thank you for making a chance to comment available, as I can't make the meeting tonight.</p>		<p>Suzanne Schweitzer</p>	<p>suzannemt@hotmail.com</p>
<p>28096 8/17/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from chnelson2041@yahoo.com 8/17/2016</u> I beleive the site selection and bridge preliminary design is just right. Regarding the bridge, you asked for comments concerning pedestrian and bike travel on the new bridge. I believe the option where the bike and pedestrian lane is combined is the best option.</p>		<p>Harold Nelson</p>	<p>chnelson2041@yahoo.com</p>

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<p>28097 8/17/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from jnaway@sbcglobal.net 8/17/2016</u> After reviewing the bridge cross sections I would recommend the single 10' wide pedestrian single lane on the upstream side. The wider lane is easier to clean off and access with a power broom. My second alternative would use the be to not use any separation. Currently the Kona Bridge pedestrian walk way is hard to walk on because of the gravel build up on it from winter maintenance and the path is to narrow to get equipment on it to clean it.</p>		Jon Ekstrand	jnaway@sbcglobal.net
<p>28099 8/18/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from Jennifer Wells 8/18/2016</u> Dear County Commissioners and Other Interested County Officials,</p> <p>Thank you for accepting my comment on the South Avenue Bridge Project. I've been a member of the Target Range community for nearly ten years as an adult, and I grew up out on Big Flat Road as a kid. My concerns are many when it comes to the proposed South Avenue Bridge.</p> <p>First and foremost, my concern regarding the proposed South Avenue Bridge is the safety of the neighborhood, the community, and the general public. As you may recall, a second-grade child was struck and killed by a motor vehicle on South Avenue in 2010. This little girl was a classmate and friend of my daughter's, and she was also a student at Target Range Elementary. The speed of traffic flow leading toward the proposed South Avenue Bridge must be addressed as part of this project. South Avenue runs along a grade school, a middle school, a high school, a hospital, the new Parks & Rec sports complex, not to mention numerous homes, small hobby farms and peaceful residential streets. In other words, this area is a magnet for pedestrians. Additionally, we have multiple neighborhood children who cross South Avenue and continue on the path parallel to it while walking to and from school daily, many 4-H kids who walk their animals throughout the neighborhood (I see kids walking sheep up and down my street quite often), and residents on horseback touring our neighborhood and/or riding to and from the Equestrian Park. Many of us Target Rangers also enjoy walking, running, bicycling, roller blading, exercising our dogs, and simply visiting each other on the walking path that parallels most of South Avenue. This walking path should have a generous, landscaped buffer area between it and what will be a much more high-traffic South Avenue. There must also be crosswalks placed at every intersection of South Avenue and more roundabouts placed at the</p>		Jennifer Wells	

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intersections of Clements and South, of Humble and South, and closer to the proposed bridge site. Additionally, a very slow residential speed of 25 miles per hour needs to be adopted and strictly enforced from the proposed bridge site to Community Medical Center. Such common sense traffic control options MUST be part of the scope of the South Avenue Bridge project. I am astounded that this is not being addressed as such!

Secondly, please, please, please do not make the proposed South Avenue Bridge anything akin to the Kona Ranch Bridge. The Kona Ranch Bridge is industrial and unsightly and allows for traffic to travel 20 to 30 miles per hour over the speed limit. It's horrible to try to navigate as a pedestrian. Please craft the South Avenue Bridge to be a beautifully aesthetic addition to our Target Range Community. Please give it classic arched styling and subtle lighting. Please include a large, separate and detached pedestrian walking path that is also wheelchair and motorized scooter accessible. There are many beautiful bridges in Missoula with pedestrian walking paths. Consider styling it like the U of M footbridge. I implore you to firebomb any ideas of anything along the lines of Kona Ranch Bridge.

Lastly, I wish to strongly express my opinion regarding the proposed removal of Maclay Bridge. Please don't destroy it! Maclay Bridge is a wonderful historic addition to both Missoula and our Target Range neighborhood. Please keep it as a non-motorized footbridge for pedestrians and bicyclists. Maclay Bridge is a destination unto itself for enjoying our beautiful river and community.

Sincerely,

Jennifer K. Wells
2011 Woodlawn Avenue
Missoula, Montana

28100
8/18/2016
Website
Comment
Open

Web Comment from scott.smith@bhhsmt.com 8/18/2016
I am in full support for the new bridge project

scott smith

scott.smith@bhhsmt.com



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ID Date Type Status	Title Summary Notes	Topics	Person Participants	Phone Number Email Address
<p>28109 8/19/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from edlovrien@msn.com 8/19/2016</u> I read in the paper that a group is threatening to sue over the construction of this bridge. My question is, what kind of self centered and self righteous person does it take to be against something that would help so many people. Revamping a one lane bridge would be crazy. South avenue is a logical choice to build a bridge over to the big flat. There is too much traffic for the existing bridge and if they built a new one, you know the road to it would be exactly like the road from reserve street west with bike lanes and everything else. The comments that "it would add more traffic" is nonsense. The traffic is already there. Do you think more will drive it just because it is there? They already drive it. Someone was asking about rafting under it. Do you really think it will be any different than any other bridge you encounter? If they can pull the dam out of bonner and not destroy the river, I think they are capable of building another bridge and doing a good job. People need to quit whining about "its my neighborhood, we don't want anyone else here". That ship sailed. They are already here. Deal with it and when the road and bridge are done, you too will enjoy it and see that it was a necessary thing.</p>		Ed Lovrien	edlovrien@msn.com
<p>28134 8/25/2016 Website Comment Open</p>	<p><u>Web Comment from Kristin Anderson 8/25/2016</u> To Whom It May Concern, Thank you for your work on the preferred South Avenue location of a bridge that has been recommended by two detailed environmental studies conducted by two separate teams of scientists under the review of the State and County. These studies indicate that a "fix" to the inadequate bridge would not solve existing safety problems. There are a number of safety concerns specifically related to the existing Maclay Bridge: vehicle crashes caused by the unsafe bridge alignments on both ends of the bridge; weaving traffic from South Avenue through multiple streets in Target Range in order to reach Maclay Bridge only to wind back around to a point opposite South Avenue; drowning deaths and injuries due to the scour hole created by the old bridge; delays in rescue response times to areas west of the bridge; and growth in vehicle numbers crossing the old bridge. The last traffic count for the old bridge was 2610 vehicles per day. The national safety standard for a single lane bridge is 100 vehicles per day. As you may know, on June 12, 2016 a 16 year old girl was injured recreating on Maclay Bridge. The emergency response that resulted caused the bridge to be closed in both directions. The risks that this</p>		Kristin Anderson	

“attractive nuisance” caused by a poor design from the outset and then damaged the natural flow of the river creating a scour hole/jumping site cannot be ignored.

With respect to accepting federal money for the new South Avenue Bridge, please do not ignore the cost to local taxpayers if we go with a “fix-it-up” option. Costs to fix up the old bridge would fall entirely on Missoula County taxpayers and it still would not even survive a 100 year flood event or fix the existing safety problems. A temporary fix would only delay the inevitable replacement of the old structure and pass up the opportunity to use our Federal Gas Tax Funds available to construct the preferred South Ave Bridge. The funds are not “free money.” They are collected from every motorist in the state of Montana, so it is appropriate some of those dollars be used in Missoula County.

With regards to removal of the existing Maclay Bridge, I believe in maintaining the existing public road right of way administered under the county approved neighborhood permit parking guidelines from June 1 to September 30. With a United States Forest Service boat launch at the Maclay Flats public recreation area located one mile upstream, and the Fish Wildlife and Parks Kelly Island public access one mile downstream, I believe additional public dollars focused on recreation should be used to support these sites that already have existing infrastructure for recreation.

Separate from the recreational issue, I suggest that once the bridge is removed, the plaque honoring Walter Brickell that is currently attached to the bridge be preserved and placed in memorial on the bank of the Bitterroot River at the site of the bridge. Walter was 16 when he died at the bridge. On the plaque it says, “Reach Out and Help.” I wish someone would have been able to prevent his death at the time. I see your work now, as you design a new and safer bridge, as a way of preventing other injuries and deaths. Indeed, please continue to “reach out and help” and prevent other tragedies.

Also, I would like to comment on how saddened I am the tremendous animosity that is being created by this drawn out process. It is unfortunate to see how divisive this is. I fully agree with opponents of the South Avenue location of the bridge who want a more detailed explanation about how safety and traffic concerns can be addressed at the preferred bridge site, and I would like to see that addressed in future meetings.

In summary, thank you for your work on the preferred location at the South Avenue location. I appreciate the complexity of this project and believe that once we can move past the bitter process, we can work toward having one of the healthiest neighborhoods in Missoula.

Kristin Anderson, MD, MPH

28138
8/28/2016
Website
Comment
Open

Web Comment from Lisa Walker 8/28/2016

Lisa Walker

I am writing as a concerned neighbor of the current Maclay Bridge and resident of the Target Range area on and off for the past 15 years. After attending the first and second meetings that HDR hosted at Big Sky High School, reading many of the comments posted on their website, as well as the documentation of the wranglings over this bridge for the past 20 years (see www.maclaybridge.com), I am now adding my two cents.

The presentation and displays at the various stations at the meeting Aug. 16 were very informative, and I have an even greater appreciation for the detailed work these engineers are doing, often in the face of disgruntled landowners who refuse them access to their properties to do a full analysis.

The options presented for bridge design seem like the best compromise, arrived at after much careful planning. I'm not crazy about having pylons in the river channel, but it must be necessary for the structural design, and at least they're oriented in the direction of river flow. I do like the more graceful curves of the arched girder and wall piers. I also feel it is critical that a pedestrian/cyclist lane be included in the design, and that it be physically separated from the roadway, so the shared use option is my choice.

My concerns revolve around the removal of the old bridge. I'm glad it will be completely removed, piers included, and the banks stabilized and restored. I am concerned that the proposed placement of bollards is at the current east end of the bridge. Leaving that short section of road open west of the intersection of North and Edward Aves. is just inviting more of the problems we currently deal with: illegal parking, parties and their accompanying noise, litter, etc. A better alternative would be to place those bollards at the west edge of the intersection, with a locked, gated access for the Northwestern Energy facility there. The excess roadway could be removed and revegetated, with a walking trail to the river. Bottom line, we do not need to create a new, unpoliced public access; Maclay Flat is just a mile upstream and Kelly Island a mile down. I would also suggest that the current restricted parking district remain, and be expanded to include the roadways along and adjacent to the new bridge. Additionally, while they are not in the scope of the bridge design, the safety concerns along South Avenue west of Humble do need to be addressed. Extending the current bike/ped path along South Ave, or widening the roadway to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists needs to be considered.

It is no secret that this planned new bridge has created plenty of controversy; any change usually does. But it is past time to get this done, and I feel compromises can be reached to satisfy all parties.

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Thank you,

Lisa Walker

28169 9/5/2016 Website Comment Open	<p>Web Comment from mizoola@gmail.com 9/5/2016</p> <p>I have multiple comments, so this may take more than one submittal. First, the County has spent somewhere around one and one-half million dollars trying to avoid the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act through the use of a Categorical Exclusion. This end run is a waste of time and money. NEPA is intended to give decision makers and the public the full set of facts and alternatives to a proposed project using federal money or federal agencies using federal (taxpayer) money. I should not need to belabor the intent of NEPA to those charged with avoiding it in this project. Further the FHWA, Federal Highway Administration, is charged by NEPA to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Evaluate alternative courses of action and make their decisions based on the best overall public interest. When the County staff took the no project alternative and the rehabbing of the existing bridge off the table they were in direct violation of NEPA and FHWA directives.2. They must use public involvement and an interdisciplinary approach. The approach so far has already been challenged by residents. Also, the Montana Wildlife and Parks has already stated over three years ago that the confluence of O'Brien Creek and the River is "extremely important spawning tributary...one of the few streams in this portion of the Missoula Valley that flows year round...and will compromise the integrity of the lower O'Brien Creek stream corridor". Also, MWP stated the proposal will "impact a large reach of currently intact riparian vegetation along the Bitterroot River".3. Finally, NEPA and FHWA must include measures to mitigate adverse actions. A CE avoids this requirement. <p>As far as project and design issues, I have the following comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The local, County approved Neighborhood Plan is ignored.2. Off project impacts have not been acknowledged by the county and consultants, although numerous other sources have brought these impacts forward only to be ignored, stating that it is not part of the contract.3. There is little potential for significant development west of the river due to public ownership of most land and low density County zoning of the remaining public land.4. However, the project has the potential to induce additional traffic from other routes.5. The proposal now calls for four piers for the bridge and elevated	Dave Loomis MBA-Citizen	mizoola@gmail.com
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access, two of them directly in the river.

6. The bridge is proposed at 32 feet wide, not counting a separate 10 foot walkway, resulting in a total width of at least 42 feet, similar to the Kona Ranch bridge...which the consultants say this bridge will be different than Kona Ranch bridge...and this has already been challenged.

7. No recreational access to the river is proposed, contrary to the needs statement of the Mt. Wildlife and Parks. Also, the existing access to the river at Maclay bridge is not supported and proposed for further 'study'. The Bitterroot River is a significant recreational and fishing asset to the Missoula Valley and Montana.

8. The new 32 wide bridge will dump onto a small undersized South Avenue (apx. 16-18? feet wide) with NO proposal how to mitigate the speed and lack of sight distance on South Ave. on the steep upslope encountered going east. Similar issues on the west side of the new bridge access.

I look forward to responses to my comments. Sorry I was not able to make the last public meeting.

28435 10/20/2016 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from mtsterbisrunner@gmail.com 10/20/2016</u> In looking at the responses to comments from the second public meeting, I have a question about speed limits. According to your responses, the new bridge will have a speed limit of 35 mph. South Ave between Hanson and Humble currently has a speed limit of 25 mph and between Humble and Clements has a speed limit of 30 mph. Will these speed limits change?	Sharon Sterbis	mtsterbisrunner@gmail.com
28763 12/14/2016 Website Comment Open	<u>Web Comment from khfischer@gmail.com 12/14/2016</u> We would like the County to consider maintaining public access at the existing McLay Bridge location and include year-round parking opportunities for river recreation. In addition we request public access / parking be developed near the new bridge location. Many thanks for your work on this and we look forward to seeing this project completed.	Kit Fischer Hellgate Hunters and Anglers	khfischer@gmail.com
