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Issue **TWO**

Newsletter ● Issue 2 ● February 2011

Polson Area Transportation Plan

Public Meeting #2

Thursday, February 24, 2011
6:00 P.M.
High School Auditorium
1712 2nd Street West, Polson

Your input is greatly appreciated!

We hope to see you there!

PolsonAreaTransportationPlan

Plan Update

A community-wide planning process!

The technical oversight committee, consisting of the City of Polson, Lake County, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), have been evaluating the community's transportation system and identifying transportation infrastructure needs within the community.

In the summer and fall of 2010, data collection of existing transportation conditions within the planning area was conducted. The transportation conditions that were analyzed consisted of intersection level of service, comprehensive safety statistics, crash trends, socioeconomic conditions and land-use forecasts.

The Transportation Plan will be responsive to land use within the planning area. The main variables in land use and planning forecasts are population and employment, which contribute to travel origins and destinations for trips that use the transportation system.

The population growth forecast for the City of Polson, and the larger study area, is based on an assumption of an average annual growth rate of 1.4%. Growth trends suggest, but do not dictate, this future growth scenario.

Growth out to the year 2030 suggests 20 to 30 household units per year, and 20 to 40 jobs per year. The population growth would be located throughout the planning area with consideration to available and potential infrastructure, platted (but undeveloped) lots, vacant land, city and county policies, and the opinions of local experts.

plan contacts

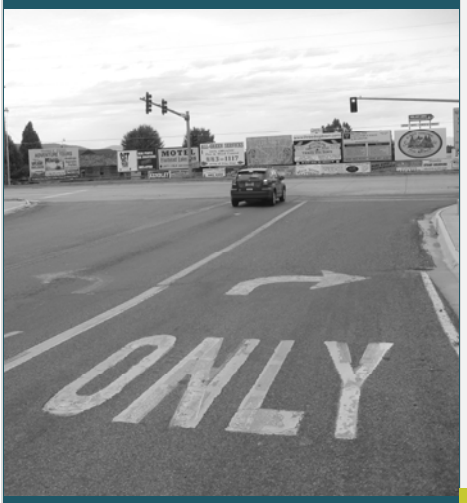
Todd Crossett
City of Polson
406.883.8207
PolsonManager@centurytel.net

Bill Barron
Lake County
406.883.7204
Lake Commissioners@lakemt.gov

Joe Hovenkotter
CSKT
406.542.1300
JHovenkotter@cskt.org

Sheila Ludlow
MDT
406.444.9193
SLudlow@mt.gov

Jeff Key, P.E.
CDM
406.441.1400
KeyJA@cdm.com



Intersection Level of Service

Roadway systems are ultimately controlled by the function of major intersections within a developed area. Intersection failure directly reduces the number of vehicles that can be accommodated during peak hours which have the highest demand and roadway capacity needs. Intersection improvements can be a very cost-effective means of increasing a corridor's traffic capacity.

Level of Service (LOS) for an intersection is a qualitative measure developed to quantify driver perception for such elements as travel time, number of stops, total amount of stopped delay, and impediments caused by other vehicles. The LOS scale is based on the ability of an intersection to accommodate the amount of traffic using it and the full range of operating conditions. The scale ranges from "A" which indicates little, if any, vehicle delay, to "F" which indicates substantial vehicle delay and traffic congestion.

In order to calculate LOS, 16 intersections were counted during the spring and fall of 2010. Each intersection was counted between 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., to ensure the intersection's peak hour volumes were represented. The following 16 intersections and associated LOS (AM Peak/PM Peak) were examined:

1. US 93 & South Shore Road (MT 35) – LOS B/C
2. US 93 & 4th Avenue East – LOS C/B
3. US 93 & 1st Street East – LOS C/D
4. US 93 & Main Street – LOS A/A
5. South Shore Road (MT 35) & Heritage Lane – LOS A/C
6. US 93 & Rocky Point Road – LOS C/C
7. US 94 & Irvine Flats Road – LOS B/C
8. US 93 & Caffrey Road – LOS C/C
9. 4th Avenue East & 1st Street East – LOS B/B
10. 4th Avenue East & 2nd Street East – LOS B/B
11. 7th Avenue & Main Street – LOS A/A
12. 7th Avenue West & 2nd Street West – LOS C/C
13. 7th Avenue East & 7th Street East – LOS A/A
14. Skyline Drive & Caffrey Road – LOS B/B
15. Kerr Dam Road & Grenier Lane – LOS A/A
16. Kerr Dam Road & Back Road – LOS A/A

It was determined that the intersections are functioning adequately, since operating at LOS C or better. It was noted the intersection of US 93 & 1st Street East operates at LOS D during the PM peak hour. This may be associated with road construction taking place at the time of data collection, but will be further examined in the planning process.

planwebsite...

www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/polsontransplan

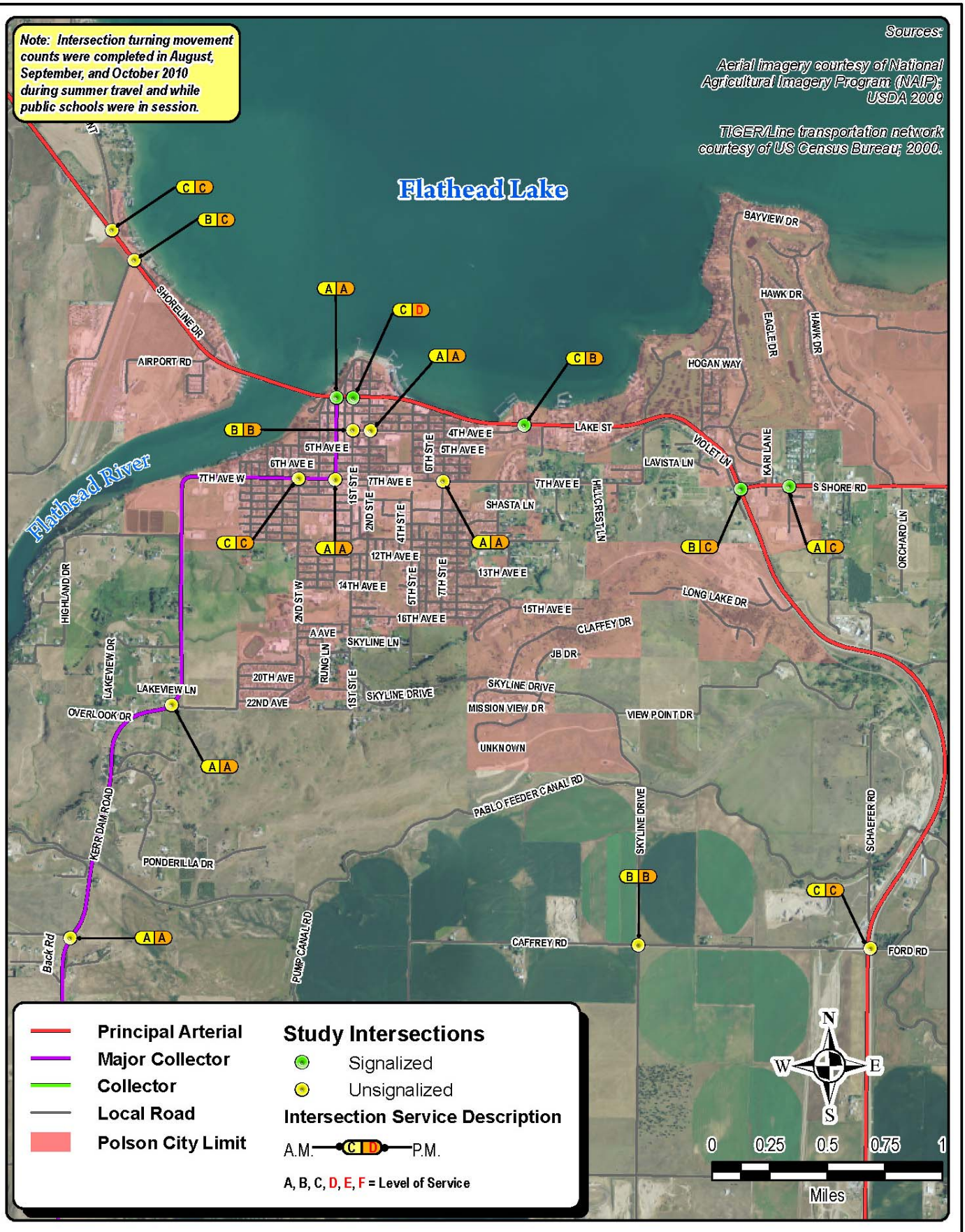


Figure 2-3
Intersection Level of Service
Polson Area Transportation Plan

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Public Outreach

Several public outreach opportunities have taken place since the last public meeting including a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce. Please check out the study website for more information. The public is encouraged to attend the 2nd Public Meeting on Thursday, February 24, 2011 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the High School Auditorium.

Comprehensive Safety Data

Crash data for 2005-2009 has been compared for Polson with all incorporated cities in Montana. The data did not take into account any crashes that may have occurred close to, yet outside, the Polson city limits which may have an impact on the greater community.

Comprehensive safety analysis not only identifies where crashes occur, but also addresses the behavior behind the crashes. The identification of behavioral trends in crashes is important to understand what types of mitigation should be emphasized in the Polson community.

Preliminary data for a 5-year period on public roadways in the city limits showed zero fatal crashes, 66 injury crashes, and 229 property damage only crashes. Other comprehensive safety data examined include drivers by ages, type of injury crashes, injuries by age, injuries by safety device used, injuries by impairment, first harmful event (what the crash was about), and driver contributing circumstances.

Fast Facts.....

(According to law enforcement crash reports from 2005 to 2009)

- The highest number of injuries happened to 25- to 34-year-olds.
- Early- and late-week crashes are more prevalent.
- Higher percentages of crashes occur during late-morning and late-afternoon hours.
- Drivers involved in crashes in Polson tend to be noted as being: inattentive; following too closely; failing to yield the right-of-way; driving too fast for conditions; impaired; and/or unable to properly back up their vehicle.

Work Completed To Date:

- ✓ Intersection Data Collection
- ✓ Land Use Forecast
- ✓ Intersection Level of Service
- ✓ Comprehensive Safety Data
- ✓ Crash Analysis

What is coming next?

TransCad is modeling software that will be utilized to model the transportation system based on forecasted growth scenarios while taking into consideration an alternate route for US 93.