

MISSOULA HAS 5TH AND 7TH MOST NEEDED ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



Photo by Jamar Penny on Unsplash

[Peter Christian](#) | Published: January 18, 2023

Missoula, MT ([KGVO-AM News](#)) - According to TRIP (a national transportation research nonprofit), two highway projects near Missoula have been rated as the 5th and 7th roadways most in need of improvement in the state.

At a press conference in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, Mack Long, Director of the [Montana Department of Transportation](#), referenced a new report entitled 'Keep Montana Moving Forward', prepared by three state and national agencies.

Montana is the 4th Largest State and is Gaining Population Rapidly

"This report 'Keep Montana Moving Forward' looks at the progress and challenges the state has achieved and faces in providing a 21st-century transportation system and is based on information that we received from a survey from the Montana Department of Transportation and also the Federal Highway Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Director Long.

Long named several of the most urgently needed highway improvement projects, two of which are near Missoula.

Long Named two Segments of I-90 near Missoula as most Needing Repair

"Improvements along U.S. 191 from Four Corners to Beaver Creek; adding capacity on portions of Interstate 90

in the Billings area; improving pavement and bridges on Interstate 90 from St. Regis to Missoula and improving pavements, in interchanges on portions of Interstate 15 from Great Falls to Sweetgrass, as well as adding capacity on Interstate 90 in the Bozeman area, and also doing additional work on the Billings bypass."

The list also included necessary improvements from the Idaho border to St. Regis on Interstate 90.

TRIP's Director of Policy and Research Rocky Moretti said there are numerous Montana highway projects that are waiting for funds to begin work.

"The TRIP report also includes a list of the state's top 20 transportation challenges," said Moretti. "These are our needed transportation improvements. In many cases, the projects are ongoing and in other cases, they're being planned. There's really a mix of projects that are funded or still need additional funding. These include a number of critical improvements including addressing the state's number of bridges that are restricted to lighter weight vehicles."

MDOT Director Long added some important facts about the challenges Montana faces in meeting the challenges of highway transportation.

"We are unique as a state," added Long. "We're the fourth largest state in the nation. We have thousands of miles of road that cover a very vast area. Montana, as you said is seeing a lot of growth. We're seeing the growth mainly in the western part of the state, but all parts of the state are important and, and are seeing an influx of people."

The Report states that many Montana Roads and Bridges Face Much Needed Repairs

The TRIP reports state that 'despite additional state and federal transportation investment, some segments of Montana's transportation system are deteriorated, lack some desirable roadway safety features or do not have the level of reliability needed to fully support economic development, particularly on routes that are relied upon by the state's growing energy extraction industry or its tourism industry.'

[Click here to read the entire report](#) and listen to the press conference.