

### **3-PLUS for RUSSELL Street**

#### *Description of a better transportation and community plan*

The 3-PLUS for RUSSELL proposal will provide a transportation corridor which is safer and more convenient for all users, less costly than a 5-lane system, and which will blend with the diverse commercial and residential districts along the corridor, and will not destroy a single home or business. 3-PLUS for RUSSELL is neither a “no-build” proposal (leaving things as they are) nor a 5-lane alternative (similar to Reserve Street) as the State of Montana is proposing. It is a carefully designed system that will make Russell Street one of the safest, most versatile, free-flowing and durable transportation corridors in Montana. Here is a brief description of the 3-PLUS proposal. More information is available by emailing [bikewalk@bikewalkmissoula.org](mailto:bikewalk@bikewalkmissoula.org).

#### *Why 3-PLUS?*

We call this proposal 3-PLUS because much of the corridor would be converted to 3 auto travel lanes, combined with bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and green boulevards. In addition, several sections would employ four lanes to better serve commercial and redevelopment areas. One short segment would continue to have two auto travel lanes plus bike lanes and sidewalks (between 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> streets), as a way of calming traffic in the heart of the corridor and preserving the Rose Park and Franklin-to-the-Fort neighborhoods.

#### *From north to south ...*

We'll start where Russell Street crosses the Clark Fork River and head south. 3-PLUS will stick with the original concept for the new Russell Street bridge, for which Senator Max Baucus secured federal funding. We envision four auto travel lanes, combined with comfortable bike lanes and stroll-worthy sidewalks (especially with the new Homeword housing developments slated for construction near the foot of the bridge). The bridge will allow underpasses for walking and biking trails along the Clark Fork River.

Traveling south, Russell Street will continue to have four travel lanes, plus comfortable bike lanes, sidewalks and boulevards, all the way to Wyoming Street, the new site for Missoula's Sustainable Business Center (SBC). Two lanes will peel off to serve traffic to the SBC and adjacent neighborhoods (including the Intermountain site) to the west and the new mill site re-development to the east. By strategically narrowing the roadway, we will be able to accommodate a single-lane roundabout at Wyoming Street, allowing the full-time, free-flow of auto, bicycle, transit and pedestrian traffic.

South of Wyoming Street, Russell St. will become a 3-lane thoroughfare, with two travel lanes, a center turn lane, and continued bike lanes, sidewalks and boulevards. This configuration will make a more user-friendly urban corridor and an excellent setting for projects like the SBC. It will also eliminate the possibility of destroying important streetscapes like the adobe facade fronting the Fireweed Court development. Finally, the new configuration will shorten, enhance, and reduce the cost of the tunnel proposed for the Milwaukee Road trail just north of Dakota Street.

The important Russell Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street intersection will be served by a roundabout intersection connecting two 3-lane streets, allowing for a continuous and safe flow of auto, truck, transit, bicycle and people traffic to local businesses like the Good Food Store. The other major benefit of this design will be a smaller footprint than a huge 5-lane/3-lane signalized intersection that would have a major impact on adjacent properties and be difficult for people (especially seniors and disabled persons) to cross on foot. The 3-lane roundabout intersection will provide the right scale and openness for the north-bound gateway to one of Missoula's newest and potentially most vibrant urban districts, and the south-bound gateway to historic Missoula neighborhoods.

Heading further south, Russell Street would continue to have 3-lanes plus bike lanes, sidewalks and boulevards, with a compact single lane roundabout at 5<sup>th</sup> Street for ease of access and turning at this important neighborhood intersection. This configuration will ensure that no buildings (including those designated as 4[f] or "historic preservation" structures) will be demolished to make way for the new Russell Street corridor.

From 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> streets, Russell Street will narrow to two travel lanes along with slightly narrower bike lanes and sidewalks. To maintain the 3-PLUS commitment to respecting the current right-of-way, preserving the adjacent neighborhoods, and calming traffic, there will be no boulevards on this four block section and no left turns will be allowed. There will be another free-flowing single lane roundabout at the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and Knowles streets to allow for turns and for turnaround traffic.

South of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Russell Street will resume its 3-lane configuration with bike lanes and sidewalks to the railroad crossing. (The slightly narrower 3-lane configuration would again make for a safer, less-costly tunnel for the Bitterroot Branch trail as it passes under Russell Street.) Between the railroad crossing and the 14<sup>th</sup>/Mount street intersection, the green boulevards would resume.

### *Questions and more information*

We welcome your feedback. If you have comments, ideas or questions, please email [bikewalk@bikewalkmissoula.org](mailto:bikewalk@bikewalkmissoula.org) or call (406) 543-6696. Thank you for taking the time to think about and contribute to the future of the Russell Street corridor.