

SUMMARY of Road Safety Audit REPORT

Fort Belknap Indian Community Road Safety Audit – Montana Highway 66

Project Data

Date: April 16, 2007

Presentation of Preliminary findings to Tribal Council on April 19, 2007

RSA Team and Participants:

An independent RSA Team was used to review Montana Highway 66 within the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Mr. Jim Combs from the District Office of the Montana Department of Transportation was in attendance to provide owner information and background.

Dennis Trusty, PE, Director - Northern Plains Tribal Technical Assistance Program
Dave Johnson, Highway Engineer - Rocky Mountain Region of Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jim Combs, Traffic Engineer - Montana Department of Transportation
Wes Cochran, Transportation Planner - Fort Belknap Transportation Department
Stan Zander Jr., Technician - Fort Belknap Tribal Sanitation / Environmental Health
Alan Main, Patrol Officer - Fort Belknap Indian Community Law Enforcement

Background:

The RSA was conducted on Montana Highway 66 from the intersection of Montana Highway 2 to the Reservation Boundary. This section of Highway 66 is 40 miles in length with Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 1488 with a mix of traffic, including commercial vehicles. The Pedestrian / Bike Path serves between the Fort Belknap Agency (which is a small village with Tribal Administration offices, Tribal Health and BIA offices as well as individual homes) and a housing development to the east less than 1 mile away. Highway 66 was selected as an RSA site as a proactive approach to identify road safety issues that may lead to vehicular and pedestrian crashes. The RSA was conducted on April 16th with a team that was comprised of law enforcement, transportation, and other local officials.

RSA Process:

The RSA was performed by conducting field reviews using accepted RSA practices of driving the roads in both directions in the daytime and again at night. This review was conducted along portions of Montana Highway 66 within the reservation boundaries. In addition, the RSA team also examined crash history reports and statistics indicating number of crashes, type of crashes and when the

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crashes occurred. This data was reviewed and synthesized to identify safety issues that exist along Montana Highway 66.

RSA Stage: Existing Road

Major RSA Findings

Issue #1: Run off the road

Location: Montana Highway 66

Description of Safety Issue:

Over a 10 year period, 19 out of 43 crashes were the result of vehicles running off the road. Based on these statistics, the RSA Team performed a Crash Risk Assessment and concluded that this safety issue has a significant risk level.

Suggestion:

The RSA Team recommended that shoulder rumble strips be added along various stretches of Montana Highway 66. In addition, the RSA Team also recommended installing six-foot shoulders on the highway.

Issue #2: Pedestrian Crossings

Location: Montana Highway 66

Description of Safety Issue:

The RSA Team studied several pedestrian crossings that exist along Montana Highway 66. Based on the team's findings, pedestrian crossings received a Crash Risk Assessment of moderate risk level.

Suggestion:

The RSA team recommended that additional pedestrian studies be conducted along Montana Highway 66. In addition, the RSA team recommended that positive guidance measures should be provided for pedestrians.

Issue #3: Intersection Crashes

Location: Montana Highway 66

Description of Safety Issue:

Over a 10 year period, 7 out of 43 crashes were the result of vehicles crashing at intersections. Based on these statistics, the RSA Team performed a Crash Risk Assessment and concluded that this safety issue has a low risk level.

Suggestion:

The RSA Team recommended that additional signage be posted along public intersection approaches. This will enable drivers to become more aware of the intersection presence.

Issue #4: Domestic Animal Crashes

Location: Montana Highway 66

Description of Safety Issue:

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Over a 10 year period, 6 out of 43 crashes were the result of vehicles crashing into domestic animals. Based on these statistics, the RSA Team performed a Crash Risk Assessment and concluded that this safety issue has a low risk level.

Suggestion:

The RSA team recommended that additional fencing and cattle guards be installed along residential approaches. In addition, gates should be installed at residential access points that exist along Montana Highway 66.

Other RSA Findings

None.