



Dear Residents,

Thank you for sharing your feedback on the Mullan BUILD Project. Your comments and concerns have been reviewed directly by the BUILD leadership team which is inclusive of City of Missoula and Missoula County representatives. As a resident of Mary Jane Boulevard, it's valuable for us to hear your concerns and experiences.

As you know, the final design for Mary Jane Boulevard between Melrose Place and Camden Street recommends removing parking from the east side of the street to make room for a protected bikeway. The primary goals of the BUILD Project are to improve safety, relieve traffic congestion, provide access to land for economic development, and support options for all modes of travel. These goals were articulated in the BUILD Grant application and broadly supported in the subsequent Sxwtpqyen (Mullan) Area Master Plan.

We heard feedback from residents along Mary Jane Boulevard and their concerns about the loss of parking. We understand the value of on-street parking, and generally support and encourage on-street parking in our designs. However, we also have to make hard choices about the best use of public resources – in this case, allocation of space in a public right-of-way.

### **Background**

The final design of Mary Jane Boulevard reflects the input we received from the year-long public process for the Mullan BUILD Project and the Sxwtpqyen Area Master Plan, which was adopted by both the City Council and County Commissioners in December 2020.

<https://www.engagemissoula.com/mullan-area-master-plan>

The Master Plan lays out a vision for development that includes higher densities and mixed uses that allow more trips for jobs, services, schools, parks and recreation to be contained within the neighborhood, rather than longer trips to other parts of Missoula. This means there will be more potential for biking, walking, and other modes in the future than exists currently. The Master Plan calls for a variety of streets, trails, and bikeways that will help support this vision for development, and the BUILD Project is taking steps to implement those recommendations. Excerpts from the Master Plan are inserted below.

CREATE SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND INTERESTING STREETS FOR ALL (p. 94):

*The ability to bike and walk safely in the Mullan Area is a clear priority to Missoula residents, business owners, and stakeholders. Envisioned as a walkable urban place, streets in the Mullan Area should prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists, along with accommodating transit and motorists.*

*The plan for the Mullan Area can help the City and County in reaching Missoula MPO's ambitious mode share goals of reducing the number of driving trips. With walking and biking as safe and comfortable means for getting around, many trips within the Mullan Area can be made without driving. A robust shared-use path and trail network is proposed within the Mullan Area with connections to Missoula's well used shared-use path network, a critical component of regional mobility. Expanded transit service is also proposed to tie the Mullan Area to the rest of the Missoula Region, including Downtown.*

#### DESIGNING FOR BICYCLISTS (p. 102):

*Missoula has a strong local bike culture for both recreation and commuting. The City has a robust network of shared-use paths and on-street bike facilities that are well used year-round, and the network is growing. To continue to support the network growth and ability to travel around Missoula safely on two-wheels, an on-street and off-street bicycle network has been included in the plan for the Mullan Area. It is also important to address safety for riders of all-abilities and continue filling in gaps in the existing bicycle and trail network. Riding a bicycle or crossing a street should not require bravery. Separated, buffered bike facilities, improved intersections, secure bicycle parking, and ADA compliant sidewalks are all ways to address these common concerns.*

#### **Mary Jane Boulevard – Melrose Place to Camden Street**

While the preferred design for bikes on Mary Jane Boulevard is Separated Bicycle Lanes (or Cycle Tracks), the existing section of Mary Jane Boulevard would require significant cost and reconstruction to accommodate this design. The design team concluded that buffered bicycle lanes are the safest, most cost-effective option. Buffered bike lanes will provide continuity with the separated bike lanes in the new portions of Mary Jane to the north and south of the existing street.

In considering this option, the design team weighed the benefits of buffered bike lanes against the benefits of on-street parking. The existing street is not wide enough to install bike lanes and maintain parking on both sides of the street. The team observed that on-street parking utilization on Mary Jane Boulevard is very low both during the day and in the evenings. The adjacent land use is primarily residential and additional development that might increase parking demand is unlikely. Additionally, residents on the east side of Mary Jane have alley access with driveways and garages, and the single commercial business has off-street parking as required by zoning code.





*Images of the proposed design for Mary Jane Boulevard, above*

We appreciate your input and concerns as a resident and take all feedback very seriously. The BUILD team is currently completing the final construction plans. However, additional feedback is always welcome. When reviewing input, we have to consider the needs of both current and future residents, businesses, and other users of the public right-of-way. Changes that are deemed feasible and reasonable will be included in this phase of the project or in future improvements. For example, comments received during the open house regarding crosswalk safety at Mary Jane Boulevard and Chelsea Drive have influenced a design update to include a marked crosswalk at this location.

The City of Missoula will be chip sealing Mary Jane Boulevard during the 2021 construction season, however, the parking and bike lane changes will not occur until 2022 or 2023, after other portions of the BUILD project are complete.

### **Additional Information**

If you or any neighbors would like to revisit the open house, specifically the conversation about Mary Jane Boulevard, the PDF for the Breakout Session is linked below.

[Breakout Session A - Design Features](#)

In addition, recordings for all of the open house sessions are located at [this link](#). The Breakout Session A recording includes Mary Jane Boulevard information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Keene', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeremy Keene, Director  
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