

## Agency Activity Report

**To:** Board of Directors

**From:** Jordan Hess, CEO & General Manager

**Date:** December 18, 2025

The following is a summary of staff activities between November 16 and December 15, 2025:

### **CEO & General Manager**

#### **Community-Facing & Partnership-Driven Activities**

- Served on a panel discussion of local sustainability efforts at the University of Montana
- Represented Mountain Line in Missoula Infrastructure Coalition meeting.
- Represented Mountain Line on Missoula Downtown Association and Missoula Midtown Association board of directors.
- Met with Smart Growth America, Transportation for America, the Community Transportation Association of America, and the Bus Coalition; provided feedback on legislative priorities.
- Participated in American Public Transportation Association's winter legislative meeting.
  - Met with staff from Senator Daines' office; provided updates on agency capital projects and provided agency's priorities for the transportation bill reauthorization.
- Participated in introductory interview for a [Municipal Investment Fund](#) grant awarded to the City of Missoula and Clearwater Credit Union; preparing for broader agency involvement in 2026.
- Participated in two media interviews regarding the Marshall Mountain Line shuttle pilot.

#### **Internal Activities**

- Arrived at negotiated settlement for video retention policies; motion to dismiss pending in district court.
- Supported board's effort to hire a consultant to build organizational capacity.
  - Continued to plan internal strategic planning effort.
- Initiated internal policy and procedure review.
- Supported staff in the activities listed below.

### **Administrative & Financial Services**

#### **Human Resources**

- Recruitment – Director of Operations – The candidate accepted the offer and will start in February 2026.
  - Cancelled January operator training class.

- Recruiting will start in January 2026 for March training class.
- Not actively hiring for the remainder of 2025.
- Succession Planning – Focusing on dispatch and road supervisors.
  - Potentially developing lead road supervisor role.
  - Coordinating with department managers to ensure redundancy, concise standard operating procedures and comprehensive, department-level succession plan for strengthening continuity across the agency.
- Completing end-of-year personnel file audits in preparation for upcoming triennial audit.
- Developing comprehensive resource library with training materials, reference documents and standardized tools for supporting all departments.
- Launching mandatory training program in 2026 that includes EEOC, harassment prevention, de-escalation processes, communication and customer service.
  - Additional topics: team building, confidentiality, FMLA, leave, workers' compensation and conflict resolution.
- Collaborating with IT team in transitioning all human resources files to Microsoft Teams that will improve accessibility, compliance and standardized documentation.
- HR currently supports approximately 70 operators in building capacity for managing workers' compensation and FMLA tracking.
- Scheduled arbitration for an outstanding grievance on May 1, 2026.
- Next labor and management committee meeting is scheduled for January 2026.
- Social Committee has planned engagement activities to strengthen workplace culture and support morale.
- End of Year Turnover Rates – Overall operator and maintenance shop turnover posted lower than industry average numbers.
  - Operator turnover rate – 22% (below 30% industry average)
  - Maintenance turnover rate – 28% (including retirements and promotions)
  - Non-represented staff – 17%
- Implemented a new system for tracking grievances that includes status, deadlines and required follow-up.
- Continuing routine employee relations activities – benefits, employee assistance referrals, conflicts, policy guidance, corrective action support, leave management and confidential matters.
- Tracking inbound calls requiring immediate action that add to the daily workload.

## Finance

- Accounts Payable – Processed 94 payments totaling \$792,465 paid to 78 vendors.
- Payroll – Processed 2 payrolls, health insurance and benefits for all staff.
  - Processed holiday bonus for all staff.
- Grants – Closed out fully drawn awards: MT-2024-019 MOAB A&E, MT-2025-008 CMAQ and MT-2023-002 RAISE.
  - Created FY26 schedule of expenditures of federal awards.
  - Submitted new facility scope change to the Federal Transportation Administration.

- Collaborated with operations on FFY27 coordination plan for 5310 funds.
- Requested first half of Missoula County financial administration funds.
- Accounts Receivable
  - Requested reimbursement for labor hours and parts from five work orders through warranty billing.
  - Registered for commercial clean vehicle and alternative fuel vehicle refueling property credits.
- Training – Recertified FTA access control entry system user manager, budget communications and no tax on overtime implementation.
- Annual Audit – Continued working with CPA firm to complete the FY25 annual audit.

## Operations

### Maintenance

- Boosted fleet modernization by disposing of ten diesel buses.
- Reorganizing and cleaning the parts room to align inventory with current operational needs.
- Preparing for charger infrastructure training that supports safe electric bus operations.
- Put new supervisor van into service.
  - Retrofitting former supervisor van for continued use to maximize asset utilization.

### Operations

- A new dispatcher completed NTI training during the first week of December.
- Participated in charge management vendor interviews and selection.
- Completed 2026 vacation pick for operators and January-March 2026 operator run pick.
- The customer service function will move to base during the duration of the transfer center remodel.
  - The customer service representative will spend a portion of the day at the transfer center assisting passengers.
- Drafting FY2027 Community Coordination Grant request.
- Participated in November labor management committee meeting.
- All 5 trainees obtained their CDL licenses and are learning the routes.
  - One driver is scheduled to solo on December 15.
- Conducted full operations department staff meeting and monthly meetings with road and dispatching supervisors.
- Transitioned routing to winter contingency based on a Missoula police department emergency travel only announcement during the recent snowstorm (the season's first).

## Communications

### Events and Sponsorship

- Holidays on Higgins – Reached 400+ people at stationary “parade” event downtown.
- Outreach with Missoula in Motion at Senior Center

## Marketing

- Working on social media cuts of Marshall Mountain video
- Developing “How Missoula Rolls” video series
- Roxy advertisement playing in theater through 2025

## Outreach

- Updating marketing materials for Missoula Montana Airport
- New print map distribution to community partners in progress
- Signage prepared for TC renovation closures

## Press & Media

- Local journalist working on Marshall Mountain Line profile
- Freelance reporter for *Grist* working on electrification story

## Other Communications

- Beginning 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary planning (internal and external efforts)
- New website contractor to begin in December/January

# Capital Projects, Planning, and Technology

## Projects and Procurement

- New Facility – Reviewing timeline.
  - Exploring microgrid study grant.
  - Coordinating with Missoula Electric Cooperative for Bonneville interconnection study and transformers.
- Transfer Center Renovation – Held owner/architect/contractor meeting on December 11, 2025.
  - Contractor will mobilize on January 5, 2026, and start demolition.
- Charge Management – Selected vendor for software. See Staff Report.
  - Received 11 proposals and conducted 2 rounds of interviews.
- Organizational Capacity Consultant – Coordinating with board to determine scope of work, process and timeline.
  - Drafted solicitation packet and contract.
- FAAC Simulator – Updates installed at the training center.
  - Simulator will be installed in early 2026.
- HVAC System for Shop – Proceeding with engineering contract based on maintenance staff request for improved air exchange.
- Communications website maintenance contract signing is pending.
- Scoping projects under workforce development and 5339a funding.

## Planning

- Bus Stop Improvement Plan – Targeting adoption in March 2026.

- Presented plan draft, maps and tables of prioritized stop locations at December planning committee meeting.
- Released operator survey.
- Round 2 of stop design permitting includes developing alternative locations based on city requirements, law enforcement input and neighborhood feedback.
- Testing Route 10 on-time performance.
- National Transit Database Reporting – Submitted first round of clarifications.
- Automated Passenger Count Certification and Swiftly Implementation – Submitted certification package.
- Scheduled vendor training for mid-December.
- Stop Relocations – Coordinating with the Missoula Metropolitan Organization to relocate the stop in midtown near the Trailhead River Sports and First Security Bank and ensure operations with dedicated gate for a controlled transit and service vehicles lane.
  - Preparing Dearborn stop relocation.
- Preparing for service implementation, including 2026 run cutting that launches in July 2026.
- Updating Clever Devices database and making other system improvements.
- District Management – See 5.1 Petitions for Removal
- Coordinating with MPO on Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program air quality reporting.
- Collaborating with finance director and operations supervisor in developing the community coordination plan for submitting to the Montana Department of Transportation in early 2026.

## IT

- Teams Channel Migration – Almost all departments and teams are fully operational in the new Teams workflow.
  - Continuing to make end stage adjustments.
- Land-Mobile Radio System – Received verbal acceptance from the city's communications and wastewater departments regarding using Waterworks Hill and Mount Sentinel sites.
  - Coordinating memorandum of agreement with city attorney.
  - Collaborating with Redtail Communications to determine the final equipment list
  - Coordinating with operations, maintenance and safety departments regarding talk group architecture and procedural changes.
- Paratransit Laptop Deployment – Laptops have been set up with docks and a rollout has been scheduled.
- Cybersecurity Policy & User Training – Finalized phishing and training campaigns have been deployed.
  - Planning data gathering and review.
- Intelligent Transportation System – Discussing whether to renew with current vendor, Clever Devices, or retain new ITS vendor.
- Video Recording – Working with vendor to expand bus footage storage capacity and access control upgrades.
- Bus Work – 6 open tickets with Clever Devices

- Reviewing quotes for safety vision hard- and software.
- Troubleshooting digital signage server communication issues.
- Infrastructure – Discussing future IT design
  - Gathering information with vendors regarding lower costs and improved service.
- Troubleshooting Teams issues with Microsoft.
- 45 internal tickets submitted in last month.