COUNTY
OF
RAVALLI

STATE
OF
MONTANA
The Bitterroot Valley
Hamilton, Montana 59840

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840
406-375-6500

December 12, 2008

Shane Stack, P.E., Engineering & Design Manager
Montana Department of Transportation, District One
Post Office Box 7039
Missoula, Montana 59807-7039

Dear Mr. Stack -

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners for Ravalli County I ask for your review of the speed limit on that section of State Secondary Route 269 between Big Corral Road and Fairgrounds Road east of the Town of Hamilton. The 50 miles-per-hour speed limit on this section appears to me to be too high to safely accommodate turning movements at Tammany Lane, Hamilton Airport Road and Fairgrounds Road. All of these intersections have compromised sight distance. Tammany Lane is functionally classified as a Minor Collector and has an ADT of 1399 (October 2006). The Hamilton Airport Road is classified as a Major Local Access roadway with an ADT of 536 (June 2006). Fairgrounds Road is classified as a Major Collector with an ADT of 3383 (May 2006). I believe there have been a number of incidents recorded at the Fairgrounds Road intersection - likely a number of these involve traffic stopped on SR269 north-bound awaiting a left turn onto Fairgrounds - higher speed traffic from the rear coming over a vertical curve to the south, with no chance of recovery on the east side of the highway (abrupt and deep ravine just off the shoulder). Additionally, the speed limit approaching Fairgrounds Road from the north would also appears to be higher than it might reasonably be – it may be helpful to extend the speed reduction further to the north from its current location. Tammany Lane has seen significant traffic increases due to the construction of a large fitness center approximately ½ mile east of the state highway. Fairgrounds Road, Tammany Lane and Hamilton Airport Road intersect SR269 in a manner than provides little opportunity to access the highway and obtain pace speed before being overtaken by traffic already in flow, creating potentially problematic situations.

The Board of County Commissioners would welcome the completion of a traffic study for this section of highway. We will ask the County Road Supervisor to assist you with this effort as you may find to be beneficial. At the time the study is complete and presented to the Transportation Commission we would appreciate the opportunity for the County Road Supervisor to attend the commission meeting to answer any questions that may arise.

I very much appreciate your consideration of this matter. Thank you.

Yours respectfully,

Carlotta Grandstaff

Carlotta Grandstaff, Chairman

cc - David H. Ohnstad, County Road Supervisor