

POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES –JULY 19, 2016

APPROVED BY A MOTION AUGUST 23, 2016



Members Present: Commissioner Bill Kennedy, Board of County Commissioners; Darell Tunncliff, President, City/County Planning Board; Gary Neville, MDT District Office.

Staff Present: Commissioner Jim Reno; Candi Millar, Director, Planning & Community Services Department; Scott Walker, Transportation Planner, Planning & Community Services Department; Wyeth Friday, Planning Division Manager; Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner; Vern Heisler, Deputy Public Works Director; Mike Black, Yellowstone County, Public Works Department; Stefan Streeter, MDT District Office.

Conference Call Participants: None

Others Present: DJ Clark, Sanderson Stewart; Becky Bey, KLJ Engineering; Mike Ferguson, Billings Gazette; Oscar Heinrich, Ed Gulick, Kristi Drake, Amber Sundsted, Chris Cook, Lyle Gabrian

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Kennedy called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m., Board of County Commissioners Board Room, Yellowstone County Courthouse

Commissioner Kennedy called the meeting to order in the Board of County Commissioners Board Room, welcomed everyone in attendance, and led the pledge to the American Flag.

2. Communication from the Audience

Commissioner Kennedy asked for communication from the audience. There was none.

3. Minutes of May 17, 2016- Councilman Tunncliff made a motion and Gary Neville seconded the motion to approve the May 17, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business:

a. Motion/Approval West End Multi-Modal Modeling Study. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator Presenting.

INTRODUCTION

Scott introduced this item to the PCC. Scott thanked the Project Oversight Committee and the Consulting team on the completion of this study. DJ Clark of Sanderson Stewart provided a brief presentation on the study. This feasibility study looked at present and future land use development (20 years) in the west end of Billings that lies west of 44th Street West, and from Rimrock Road to Neibauer. The development of the area has brought about an increase in traffic volumes that directly impacts safety, traffic operations and access. Also, as more rooftops are constructed in this area, demand for

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pedestrian and bicycle facilities to support multi-modal transportation options are rapidly increasing. The intent of this study is to provide the City of Billings, Yellowstone County and MDT with a tool for planning short and long term improvement projects to meet the demands of a vibrant and growing region of the community. Short term projects are estimated out to 10-years. TAC, City Council, BOCC all recommend approval of the study.

Discussion

Commissioner Kennedy asked about the time estimated for short-term projects, DJ stated that he used a 10-year period. Commissioner Kennedy asked that if this is a plan that all jurisdictions can use in future development review to ensure that we don't have another Lockwood where the jurisdictions have to go back and fix problems that could have been addressed during construction. Member Tunncliff states that if we don't do consistent planning and construction it cost considerable more money later and a burden to subsequent owners and community.

MOTION

Darryl Tunncliff made a motion and it was seconded by Gary Neville to approve the West End Multi-Modal Modeling Study as presented by staff. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

b. Motion/Approval Rims to Valley Bike/Ped Feasibility Study. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator Presenting.

INTRODUCTION

Scott Walker introduced this item. Scott Walker thanked the Consulting Team and Project Oversight Committee on their work developing this plan. The Rims to Valley Feasibility Study evaluates alternatives for the development of separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities from Highway 3 atop the Rimrocks to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities below (Rimrock Road, etc.) between North 27th Street and Zimmerman Trail. This plan included an on-site tour of the location of the consulting team, staff and oversight committee. Extensive public outreach was included in this study that included on-site neighborhood meetings with adjacent property owners. The study shows 4 trail options to move bike/peds from Highway 3 to Rimrock Road from 27th Street to Zimmerman Trail. TAC, Planning Board, City Council and the BOCC all recommend approval of this study.

Discussion

There was no discussion.

MOTION

Gary Neville made a motion and it was seconded by Darrel Tunncliff to approve the Rims to Valley Bike/Ped Feasibility Study as presented by staff. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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c. Update/Discussion – 5th Avenue North Corridor Feasibility Study. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator Presenting.



INTRODUCTION

Scott Walker updated the PCC members on the 5th Street Corridor Study. This feasibility study was approved as part of the 2015 UPWP. The UPWP was reviewed by TAC, City Council, BOCC, and Planning Board with a recommendation that the PCC adopt the 2015 UPWP. The 2015 UPWP was adopted by the PCC on September 15, 2015. The project was kicked off and a Request for Proposals was advertised in early 2016. KLJ Engineering was the selected consultant. Staff prepared the Consultant Agreement and forwarded to the City Council for the Mayor’s signature. At the council meeting, concerns were raised by the Billings Industrial Revitalization District regarding the study. Concerns included the impact to rail service to property owners and that some property owners do not want the study completed. Due to these comments and concerns, the City Council denied the approval of the Consulting Agreement.

Discussion

Darrell Tunnickliff asked for some history and clarification, has this ever happened? Commissioner Kennedy states that he is aware that the BIRD has concerns about taking up rail for a pathway. This project has been out there for many years. Scott Walker acknowledges several plans that identify this corridor as an alternative route for over 25 years and listed the plans that identify this corridor as a Gateway into Billings. Scott Walker stated that an initial feasibility study would be complete early on and if there was no alternatives or negative feedback, the feasibility study would be terminated or work around them. Concerns were raised that this plan would recommend the removal of existing rail. This is only a feasibility study to identify property ownership, right-of-way, and the feasibility of using this corridor as a non-traditional transportation route in the future. Darrell Tunnickliff, Planning Board President, stated that during the process of identifying this plan and the angst of property owners, why was there a disconnect? Where do we go from here? Do we try to address the concerns? Commissioner Kennedy, we do have a city/county meeting scheduled, this may be a good place to discuss and invite the Planning Board. Scott Walker, this is an anomaly in the history of UPWP. Gary Neville, we are spending federal planning dollars, PCC approves spending of these dollars, City Council approves payment? Scott Walker replied yes because of structure on how the federal dollars flow into the community, the City Council acts as the fiscal agent.. Gary Neville, what is the percentage of City funds in this project? Scott Walker \$0, all federal. Bill Kennedy, for people commenting on this, the comments need to go to the City Council, PCC has approved completing this feasibility study. PCC is not taking any action on this, it is up to the City Council.

d. Election of Chairman – Every year the PCC rotates chair, this year it is the City’s turn to chair the meeting. Motion by Darrell Tunnickliff to appoint Larry Brewster as chair, seconded by Gary Neville. Passes unanimously.

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5. **New Business:** There is no new business.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** - None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Approved by a motion on August 23, 2016.

