



# DRAFT

## BILLINGS AREA



## BIKEWAY + TRAILS

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### MASTER PLAN UPDATE



WINTER 2017

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





*The Billings Area has a well established system of trails. This Plan seeks to build upon these assets and develop new on-street bikeway connections.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan establishes both a long-term vision and defined, achievable short-term actions to improve mobility and recreation opportunities in the Billings Area. This plan has undergone a robust public process and builds upon multiple past and current planning efforts. The plan is organized into the following chapters:

- 1 Chapter 1: Vision, Goals, and Objectives**  
Establishes the plan's vision and goals which provide detail and basis for many of the recommendations.
- 2 Chapter 2: Existing Conditions**  
Reviews existing conditions in Billings as of 2016, in terms of infrastructure and the existing planning/policy context
- 3 Chapter 3: Needs Assessment**  
Provides detailed analysis of public needs, preferences and the potential benefits of meeting those needs
- 4 Chapter 4: Recommendations**  
Provides the policy, program and engineering recommendations needed to achieve the proposed network and the vision and goals outlined in Chapter 1.
- 5 Chapter 5: Implementation**  
Provides greater detail on implementation including cost estimates and project prioritization



Significant emphasis was placed in the plan on evaluating and identifying roadways within the study area for compatibility with various types of on-street facilities. This emphasis reflects the fact that the on-street bikeway network is less developed than trail network and has significant importance in accommodating transportation based bicycling trips. This plan seeks to maximize opportunities to efficiently implement bike-ways and trails through leveraging existing roadway maintenance, future private development and other capital projects.

With respect to projects within the city limits, adoption by the Billings City Council acknowledges that this plan's policies and facility recommendations are being committed to with the full support of the City of Billings's Engineering Division, Parks, Recreation & Public Lands Department, and the Billings MPO.

The following items are of importance to MPO, MDT and City staff and elected officials:

- Bikeway and trail facilities will be considered at all levels of government and through all related policies, processes and standards that encourage and enhance walking, bicycling, and other trail-related activities in the Billings area.
- As is done now by the City-County Planning Division and City Engineering Division, a subset of the Plan's recommended projects will be included annually with the City's Capital Improvement Project process.
- Implementation strategies and recommendations in this plan will be used when designing and identifying funding for new transportation projects.
- This plan recommends a network of 'Bicycle Boulevards' which utilize and improve local streets as comfortable alternatives to collector and arterial roadways. Bicycle boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycle and pedestrian travel priority. Bicycle boulevards use wayfinding signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage additional through trips by motor vehicles.
- This plan recommends on-street bike lanes on many of Billings's collector and arterial roadways. If implemented, some of these bike lanes would require some degree of on-street parking loss or travel lane narrowing/removal. Some projects, including some of the bike-lane segments, are classified as 'long-range visionary' projects to be explored if a major reconstruction is advanced where no simple solution exists today.
- Available federal funding has decreased in recent years. This plan supports a greater local funding commitment and recommends creation of a 'bikeway and trail account' with funds to aid implementation of programs and projects.
- Additional funding will be required to meet long-term capital operations and maintenance for both on-street bikeways and trails recommended for development in this plan.
- To address installation of on-site improvements and off-site mitigation measures, the plan recommends that new private development projects finance and install bikeway and trail facilities as appropriate.
- This plan provides a framework to provide bicycle parking with new commercial development and as infill and retrofits to downtown public spaces and for existing commercial areas. Funding will need to be identified to support implementation of bike parking in public facilities and spaces.
- Install wayfinding signage along all bicycle boulevards and trails to assist with wayfinding and to increase awareness of bicyclists and other trail users. Capital and O/M funding increase will be needed.



## Implementing the Plan

Implementing the facility recommendations within the Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan will require an improved program framework within the City of Billings.



**Priority Projects** – Short-term projects that serve important north-south and east-west corridors have been matched to planned resurfacing and capital projects. Some of these projects have been identified in the Appendix and will be included in the 5-year Capital Improvement Program. Other projects are also likely to be implemented, but will require additional funding to be completed. The short-term projects focus on facilities that will be widely used and serve key connections, such as safe routes to schools.



**Annual Focus** – The City of Billings will review opportunities to fund projects annually, with a focus on cost effective projects that fill key network linkages.



**Include Active Transportation with Other Planned Projects** – The City of Billings should evaluate other capital road construction projects and roadway resurfacing projects to determine appropriate Active Transportation facilities in accordance with the Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan.



**Maintenance Expansion** – The City of Billings currently conducts significant maintenance activities annually.



**Roadway Restriping** – The City focuses on vehicle center line, lane line and lane stenciling and marked crosswalks first and tries to refresh as much striping every year as possible. Additional resources will be required as the roadway and bikeway network grows.



**Street Sweeping** – The City currently sweeps arterial and collector roadways between one and two times per month during the summer and tries to sweep residential streets three times per year.



**Snow Plowing/Removal** – The City currently plows arterial and collector roadways. Bike lanes on arterial roadways are plowed. Many Collector roadways are cleared by pulling snow to the middle of the street with the bike lanes being plowed on the outside. Trails within the street right-of-way are cleared within 36 hours of the storm ending.



### Short Term Project List

The City of Billings Engineering Division has identified the following projects as likely candidates for short-term implementation and integration into the 5-year CIP. Note: These projects must be considered for

inclusion in the 2019 CIP and future CIPs with limited exceptions. The location of the projects are displayed in the Short Term Project Map.

Project Name	Project Notes
6th Ave N Shared use Path	From Expo to 13th
Khyl Lane - Shared use Path	Connecting the street to the Kiwanis Trail
Howard / Terry Bicycle Boulevard	Striping and signage
Lyman/ Ave D / Ave C/ 9th and 24th / Arvin Bicycle Boulevards	Striping and signage
19th St W - Miles to Monad Bike Lanes	Add striping
15th St W - Miles to Ave D Bike Lanes	Through overlay project
BBWA Canal - 6th Ave N to Shiloh Rd	Start the process, full project will take longer than 5 years
Annandale / St Andrews - Bike Lanes	Add striping
Wicks Lane - Gleneagles to Kiwanis - Shared use Path	Add shared use path to south side of the street
Central Ave - 32nd to Shiloh - Shared use Path	With road project
Monad Rd - 32nd to 29th - Bike Lanes	Through overlay project

### SHORT TERM PROJECT MAP

