



Billings Technical Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes—August 4, 2016

1. Call the meeting to order: Scott Walker called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in the Miller Building first floor conference room, 2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, Montana.

Members Present:

Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator; Wyeth Friday, Interim Director, Planning & Community Services; Debi Meling, City Engineer, Public Works Engineering Division; Vern Heisler, Deputy Public Works Director; Terry Smith, City Traffic Engineer, Public Works-Engineering Division; Debra Hagel, MET Transit; Tim Miller, Yellowstone County Public Works Department; Gary Neville, MDT

Others Present: Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk

Conference Call: Katie Potts, MDT Project Manager, Statewide and Urban Planning; Kenn Winegar, Statewide & Urban Planning

2. Public Comment: Scott Walker opened the public comment portion of the meeting and asked if there was anyone wishing to make a comment at this time. There was no public comment.

3. Minutes of May 5, 2016

Scott Walker called for approval of the May 5, 2016 meeting minutes.

Motion

Terry Smith moved and Tim Miller seconded the motion to approve the May 5, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. New Business:

4a Motion/Recommendation. 2017 UPWP, Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator, presenting.

Introduction

Scott Walker opened this agenda item and said this information was presented to City Council last Monday, and it was generally well received. He continued with a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the 12 work elements in the MPO work program, the Funding Sources, and Funding Comparisons. The UPWP is updated annually and is current from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2107. All Work Elements must be related to transportation or transportation planning.

**Billings Technical Advisory Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes—August 4, 2016**



2016 Priorities

- Rimrocks to Valley Bike/Ped. Study
- West End Traffic Study
- Update the Complete Streets Benchmark Report
- 5th Avenue Corridor Study ***(Discussion Agenda Item 5a)*
- Update the Bike/Pedestrian Plan
- Growth Policy Update
- Community Transportation Safety Plan

2017 Priorities

- Update the 2014 Transportation Plan
- Travel Demand Census
- Billings MPO Traffic Model
- Update MPO's Public Participation Plan
- Finalize the Complete Streets Benchmark Report
- Downtown Traffic Flow Study
- County Growth Policy Update

Draft 2017 UPWP Review Schedule

- TAC August 4th
- Planning Board August 9th & 23rd
- County Commission August 22nd & 30th
- City Council September 6th & 12th
- PCC September 13th
- MDT, FHWA, FTA September 30th

Discussion

Per request of Debra Meling, Scott Walker explained the contingency line item. He noted several positions within the Planning Division that have not been filled locally. Wyeth Friday said the positions have not been approved through the City's hiring and budgeting process even though they are approved in the Work Program. Scott Walker stressed the importance of spending approved PL funds. Wyeth Friday expressed some frustration with the inability to use the funds locally even though the PL funds are approved and available to expend.

Katie Potts referred to page 48 and requested the header be updated in Table 4.

Motion

Terry Smith made a motion and Mike Black seconded the motion to move to approve the 2017 UPWP as presented by staff. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

5. Other Business

5a. Discussion. Update. 5th Ave North Corridor Feasibility Study, Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator, presenting.

Introduction

Scott Walker stated this is a feasibility study to determine if this corridor is feasible for alternative modes of transportation, and identify property ownership and project needs. City Council heard this item on their consent agenda and voted not to sign the presented consultant contract for this study. Several EBURD citizens voiced concern and submitted a petition against the study voicing concerns to City Council with the potential for eliminating the railroad.

Discussion

Debi Meling commented some of the dissent may have been a result of a project last year as several if the residents were unhappy with the implementation. Wyeth Friday said the property owners have a strong interest in keeping this area the same indefinitely and he finds it disheartening as there is a large contingency that would benefit from the study. Terry Smith voiced concern with potentially endangering state funding in the UPWP. Discussion followed by Committee members on City Council's role in the review process and it was pointed out that the Policy Coordinating Committee is the approving body in this process. Staff explained this project needs momentum or fail; and either City Council will have to sign the consultant contract or PCC will make the decision to stop the project. Wyeth Friday said staff will bring this issue forward to Planning Board and City Council and hopefully will have a recommendation forwarded to PCC for their next meeting. Terry Smith asked if this instance has occurred in other cities. Katie Potts said Missoula's PCC has amended a TIP that included a safety project but she has not seen this situation before. This instance sets a precedent as the project is stopping due to funding structure. In this case, the governor designated the City/County Planning Board as the MPO. The Planning Board and has City representation but doesn't have the authorization to approve project funding. The Policy Coordinating Committee makes final decisions on programs and projects. Vern Heisler stated there has been a lot of misinformation and fear about what the study document is going to do. Wyeth Friday spoke to the challenges of staff conveying points of decision.

5b Discussion. Downtown traffic Flow Study (Downtown Billings Partnership)

This is a downtown circulation study. Staff has not met with Lisa Harmon regarding a potential partnership. City Council has an initiative for a downtown pedestrian and traffic safety study.

Adjournment: 11:37 a.m.

DRAFT TO BE APPROVED BY A MOTION-OCTOBER 19, 2016