



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES



Tuesday, July 24, 2018 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am
1st Floor Conference Room, Miller Building
2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101

- Call to order:** Kristi Drake, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:35.
- Members present:** Amber Sundsted, City Council; DJ Clark, County; Jane Van Dyk, City Council; Ed Gulick, Chair
- Others present:** Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner; Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner

Public Comment Period:

a. Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –

BPAC members requested to add the following items to future agendas:

Kristi Drake, BPAC member, asked if the group would want a BPAC Facebook Page as a way to engage the public. Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner, suggested another option could be an increased BPAC presence on the Planning Facebook page.

Kristi commented that the bike lane on Lewis Ave. was refreshed. Kristi wants a letter or thank you card sent to the Public Works Department to say thank you for restriping. Lora suggested sending it via daily city email to City Council and ‘Cc Vern Heisler, Deputy Public Works Director, or Dave Mumford, Public Works Director, and Bill Kemp, Street-Traffic Superintendent. Kristi asked Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, to write a letter on behalf of BPAC to the Street and Traffic Division. Jane Van Dyk, BPAC Member, suggested making the letter broader than just saying thank you for restriping Lewis Ave., and say thank you in general but especially on Lewis Ave.

Bike Walk Montana has been trying to get a 3 foot passing bill for a while. Kristi asked if the City of Billings could pass an ordinance on 3 foot passing in the City of Billings. Ed suggested that first BPAC could work to inform legislators to try to get it to pass in the state. It was requested that the 3 ft. passing rule and creating a strategy to make it happen be added to the next agenda.

The downtown transportation plan will be getting started soon. Council direction is to provide for pedestrian safety. Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, will keep everyone in the loop during the process. Ed requested that staff let the Engineering Division know that advisory committees are interested in providing input.

b. Comments on items on the non-public agenda items – None

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of: May 22, 2018 and June 26, 2018: Amber motioned to approve the May minutes and Kristi seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Kristi motioned to approve the June minutes, Jane seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Motion. Support of Utility Bill funding – Kristi made a presentation about the history of trail system, the marathon loop, and the need for funding. Building the Highway 3 trail would create 16 miles of continuous trail so Billings TrailNet prioritized it. Billings TrailNet commissioned Sanderson Stewart to do the preliminary engineering. Currently, the estimated cost is \$3.5 million. This summer there will be a pedestrian underpass constructed under Zimmerman Trail. The beginnings of a trail will also be constructed. Billings TrailNet wants to extend the trail to Zimmerman Place. If they can get the money to build it now it will not have to be retrofitted. Billings TrailNet with the help of volunteers is building a soft surface trail between Zimmerman Park and start of hard surface trail. There will also be new restrooms at Zimmerman Park. Phillips 66 will donate the restrooms and some money for benches along the entire trail.

Billings TrailNet has been working with the City on getting \$2-3 added to Utility Bill for a Trail Fund to be held at the City of Billings. The fee could sunset at 10 years or later and the first project to be completed would be Skyline Trail. A governing body would look at the next priority. The Chamber of Commerce took a survey of their membership and 83% said that City Council should support the Utility Bill funding. Amber Sundsted, BPAC Member, will get a survey out to the Association of Realtors' membership to survey support.

Getting donors is hard without any funding to start, so funding from the Utility Bill could be used to provide a local match for a grant like the BUILD Grant, pay for trail construction over several years, or get fundraising started. Lora shared that BUILD grant also looks for creative projects and the Marathon loop is creative.

Kristi asked BPAC to help build Skyline Trail and to help with Utility Bill Funding. She asked BPAC to write a letter of support, contact City Council members, donate to the project, volunteer to build phase one, and support Ales for Trails. Kristi suggested the following talking points: you appreciate trails, your story about the trails, you support a way to build trails, and you ask that the trails connect.

Jane would like trees and landscaping near benches. Amber asked if the trail would be positioned closer to the road or the rims. She has seen drivers use the area near the guardrail as a passing lane or pull into it when trying to get to the scenic portion of the Rims. Kristi said there would be barriers and Lora said there would be more formalized parking and a designated entrance and exit.

Ed suggested researching local funding in other communities to see that Billings isn't doing anything too different. Jane thinks she remembers funding in Butte and Bozeman. Lora said Missoula is using Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and probably allocates more construction dollars. Amber will poll her counterparts about this.

Billings TrailNet will present this letter on September 17th. The timeline would be to get the letter to Kristi right around September 17th. BPAC can work on draft and present the letter during next meeting.

Amber motioned and Jane seconded to write a letter of support for Utility Bill funding. The motion passed with four votes, Kristi abstained from vote. The letter will encourage it to be an opt out for those that cannot afford to pay.

Kristi asked for updated trail counts. This can be done with a camera and the Traffic Technician can count from the video. DJ suggested using locations from 2011 to show growth. There are also counts from previous studies.

Annual BPAC Presentation to Governing Bodies - Ed presented to City Council on July 2. The presentation was in the Council packet before so they had a chance to review it ahead of time. For next year it would be helpful to have information on who is using the trails. Ed will send Elyse an email to let her know when he wants to be on the County Commissioners agenda. He will plan for a Tuesday in late August and hopefully Zach, Liana, DJ can join.

Project Re:Code Meeting with Consultant- Last meeting Nicole and Dave presented on process for Re:Code. Ed and a community member met with the consultant. They started talking about bike parking but went to issues of City form and creating places that are more walkable and bikeable. Right now the consultant is still in the community conversation phase.

BUILD Grant – The City decided not to apply for BUILD grant this year.

Bike Racks and Funding – Elyse presented the idea of applying for a tourism grant to help fund bike parking. Kristi wants to apply for tourism funding for the Skyline Trail. Elyse will research more to see if it would count against Billings to have two applications from the same locale. This topic will be on the agenda again during August meeting. Elyse could start working on the grant.

New Business:

Other Business:

- **Next BPAC meeting – August 28, 2018**

Future Agenda Items:

- **Letter of support for Utility Bill Trail Funding**
- **More complete discussion on bike parking**
- **Facebook page**
- **3 foot passing law**
- **Bike Racks and Tourism grant**
- **Park Master Plan**-waiting for clarification from Kristi Drake, BPAC member.

Adjournment at 1:03.