



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES



Tuesday, January 22, 2019 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am
1st Floor Conference Room, Miller Building
2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101

DRAFT

Call to order: Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:33 a.m.

Members present: Zach Hassler, County; Liana Susott, County; Jane Van Dyk, City; Kristi Drake, City; Rose Cook, City

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner

Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**
None
- b. **Comments on items on the non-public agenda items –** None
- c. **Online Comments received about bicycle and pedestrian issues –** No online comments were received.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of January 22, 2019: Rose Cook, BPAC Member, motioned to approve the minutes, Jane Van Dyk, BPAC member, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Visit from Traffic Engineer:

Presentation. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) – Erin Claunch, City Traffic Engineer, gave a presentation on the CIP. He shared that Public Works (PW) is responsible for everything in the public Right of Way.

PW does three types of street projects outside of construction. The first is the paver program, which is pavement rehabilitation. For this type of project, PW mills out the top two inches of existing street and replaces it to extend the life of the road. In the second type of project, chip seal, they spray down asphalt binder and sprinkle rocks on top. The third type of project is a dig-out. Dig-outs are more of spot treatment where something under the pavement is causing issues so they have to address what is underneath the pavement first in order to fix the long-term problem.

Paver Program Projects

- 32nd St. W (from Grand Ave. to south of Central Ave.) will get an overlay. If there is enough money, PW will extend the overlay down to Monad Rd. They will restripe the bike lanes on 32nd St. W.

- King Ave W (from BBWA Canal to 31st St. W)
- 20th St. W (from King Ave. W. to Monad Rd.). With new pavement, PW reanalyzes the road. Currently, there are bike lanes on Overland Ave. but the bike lanes end at King Ave. W. There is a gap in the bike network between Overland Ave. and Sacagawea Park. The Bikeway and Trail Master Plan also identifies this route as having bike lanes. As a result, PW will be adding bike lanes.

Chip Seal Projects. These projects will start with dig-outs this year and get chip-seal next year.

- 14th St. West (by Lewis and Clark Middle School), Jackson St. (State Ave. to King Ave. E), South Side Triangle, Billings hospital campuses area, Governors Blvd. (Babcock to Wicks), and Lake Elmo Dr. (Main St. to Lake Elmo State Park)

MDT Projects

- South Frontage Road (Mullowney Lane to Wise Lane).
- Blue Creek Road (1-90 Interchange to Hillcrest) will get mill and overlay

Intersection Projects - New signals will use GRIDSMAART detection cameras to detect motorized traffic as well as people biking. Previous signals were not good at detecting bikes on the road.

- 24th St. W and Central Ave.-PW will be adding a southbound right turn lane and replacing the signal. PW may not construct this project for another year.
- Monad Rd. and Daniel St. will get a new signal this summer.
- Grand Ave. and Virginia Ln. will get a new signal.
- 20th St. W at Monad Road- PW is completely redoing whole intersection. They may build an S-curve with a signal or roundabout. Construction will not be this year; construction will likely be spring or summer 2020.
- With the new signals, the City could pay extra to get counting capabilities. The manufacturer is very close to being able to differentiate between bikes and cars so Billings could eventually use these for bike counts.

2019 Road projects – rebuilding county roads to an urban standard

- 32nd St. W (from King Ave. to Gable Rd.)
- Hallowell Ln. (State Ave. to King Ave. E) is currently in design.

Other Misc. Projects

- MDT is redoing 27th St. The project may last a couple of years, but construction will likely begin this summer.
- The Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District is building sidewalks along the length of Becraft Ln.

Transportation Studies –

- The Downtown Traffic Study is looking at alternatives for downtown streets. There have been many ideas throughout the years to change downtown traffic flow, but PW did not want to look at projects in a vacuum so this study looked at many of them together. The study is 80% done and they are fine-tuning the results. One of the possibilities is converting 2nd and 3rd Aves. N to two-way streets.
- Schools –School boundaries were shifted a couple of years ago. Walking/biking routes to school are now different from before. Students may not need a current crosswalk, but may need treatments in another area.

Presentation. Downtown Traffic Study – The City has heard from downtown businesses that they want as many two-way streets as possible. The purpose of the study was not to determine the exact alternatives; it was more to determine what was possible in terms of two-way conversions and road diets. The impact of adding bike lanes vs. sharrows will be on parking rather than the movement of motorized traffic, so this can be decided later. Eventually, the plan is to take this information out to public and businesses and see what they want in downtown street configurations.

Comments on the Downtown Traffic Study from BPAC members –

Jane asked about constructing bike lanes close to curb to avoid the door zone. Erin said that is something to determine in the next phase of the project and he said that it does not affect the travel lane. The flow of the traffic will stay the same with either bike lane location.

Jane asked about the effect of Lyft and Uber; she has heard that cities will need more drop-off/pick-up space. Erin said that this does not affect the determination of whether or not two-way conversions and road diets can function.

Rose asked if two-way conversions would work better or worse than the current one ways. Erin shared that it can work on 2nd and 3rd Aves. N and all north/south streets, but some additional left turn lanes may be needed that affect parking. Some additional signals may also be needed.

There is also the potential to take a lane away on Montana Ave and on 6th Ave. N between Main St. and N. 13th St. In addition, N. 13th St. could accommodate bike lanes.

Would taking away a lane slow down traffic? Erin said probably, but if a turn lane is added, some people might try to race around into the turn lane.

When would BPAC best be able to maximize influence on projects? The City redesigned and rebuilt Orchard Lane and there was concerns about losing parking to bike lanes. The center turn-lane was more what would be taking away the parking than the bike lanes, but the perception was that the bike lanes were what was taking away the parking. This could have been a good time to have BPAC speak up about the bike lanes. The 30% design phase presentation to Council is a good place to give support or share ideas. 30% design review is for PW's big projects. Erin also suggested sharing letters of support.

To keep up with the process of projects, BPAC members can look on PW page on the City website. There is some information on the Facebook page, but it is more construction related.

The 30% design review would be on Council memo. Elyse can keep track of when these designs come before Council.

Bicycle Boulevards – The Bikeway and Trail Master Plan listed bike boulevards. Erin does not know specifically when the City will build them.

Discussion Update. Regular visits from City Traffic Engineer –

Erin is open to coming in as requested with topical information. This time of year (February/March) is good to talk about the CIP. The meetings would likely be project sensitive.

Maybe there could be one in the fall for lessons learned or maybe mid-summer. Elyse and Erin will be in communication about when there are projects that will be coming before 30% review. Elyse will email Erin once a quarter to check in and see if he has anything to share with BPAC.

Old Business:

Discussion Update. Report-out on meeting with City Administrator – Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, Kristi Drake, BPAC Vice-Chair, Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator, and Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, met with Administrator Kukulski. They asked about having BPAC members appointed by HBD and Billings TrailNet. Administrator Kukulski was not ready to give a conclusive answer.

Kristi maintains her stance that Billings TrailNet has to have a seat at the table.

Jane thinks that it would make a lot of sense to add Billings TrailNet. Jane moved to add Billings TrailNet to the membership as a designated position in an additional seat that would be appointed by Billings TrailNet. Liana seconded.

Liana Susott, BPAC Member, Kristi, and Jane voted in favor of the motion.

Rose abstained.

Ed and Zach voted in opposition.

The motion carried.

Next steps is to draft language for the by-laws. Jane and Kristi will draft the language by email.

Discussion Update. Bike Parking Update and Grant – Elyse showed the prototype bike parking to the group. BPAC members gave suggestions on how to make the font more legible, but overall they approved of the concept.

New Business

Discussion Update. BPAC Facebook Profiles – Tabled

Other Business: None.

Future Agenda Items:

Meeting adjourned.