

POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES –SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

APPROVED BY A MOTION FEBRUARY 18, 2020

Members Present: Chairman Bill Cole, Mayor, City of Billings; Denis Pitman, Vice Chairman, Board of County Commissioners; Rod Nelson, Director, MDT District Office; Planning Board Vice President Woody Woods, Yellowstone County Planning Board

Staff Present: Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, Planning & Community Services Department; Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner; Elyse Monat, Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Mike Black, Yellowstone County Public Works Department

Others Present: Conference call: Wade Salyards, MDT; Taylor Brown, Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.; Mike Mcnelly, Yellowstone County

1. Call to Order: Chairman Bill Cole called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., Board of County Commissioners Board Room, 316 N 26 St, Room 310, Stillwater Building, and welcomed everyone in attendance.

2. Communication from the Audience: There was no communication from the audience regarding agenda items or future agenda items.

3. Minutes of August 20, 2019

A correction was requested for a typographical error on page one and it was noted by the Planning Clerk.

Motion

Commissioner Pitman made a motion and it was seconded by Planning Board Vice President Woody Woods to approve the minutes of August 20, 2019 as corrected. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business: There is no Old Business.

5. New Business:

5a. Presentaiton/Discussion. Exposition Drive and 1st Avenue N intersection project, Andy Daleiden, Principal Engineer, Kittelson & Associates, Inc. Transportation Engineering / Planning

Andy Daleiden is the project consultant. He gave a brief introduction and said this presentation is to update PCC on the status of this project.

Objectives:

- Facilitate an open, honest, and transparent decision-making process
- Improve traffic operations at the intersection and the pedestrian and bicycle environment
- Improve pavement and area drainage

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Schedule: Project Started Winter of 2019

Fall of 2019: Evaluate Tier 2 alternatives, PAC Meeting #3 and Open House; Provide feedback on Tier 2 alternatives and confirm final alternative. 2020 Design Phase; Construction Programming

Key Operational Deficiencies: 1st AveN/Exposition Drive-end of westbound queue; and 6th Ave N/Expositiion Drive-end of northbound queue



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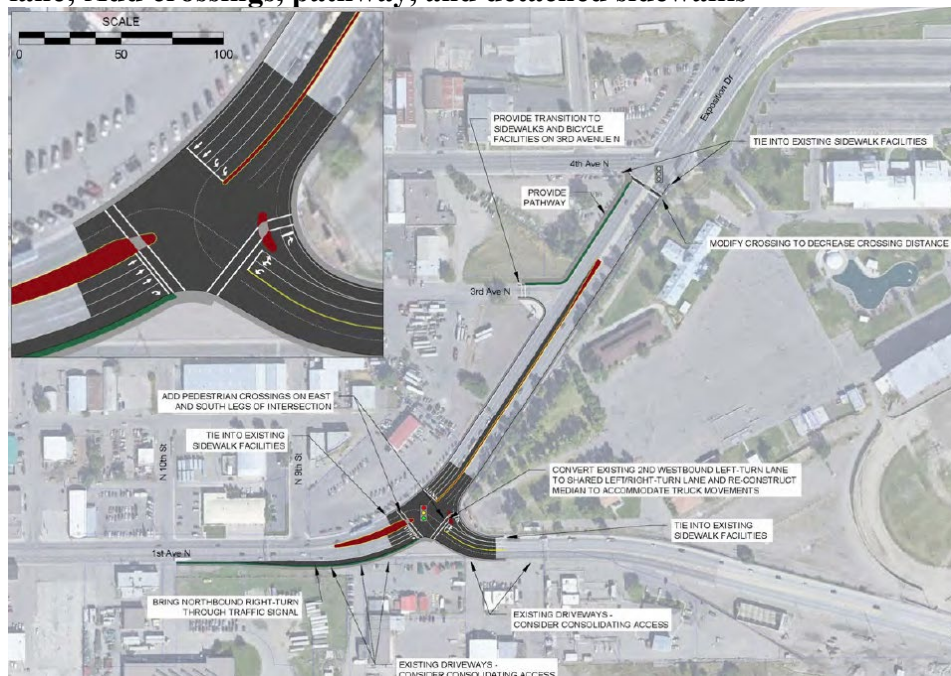
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Existing and future Year 2014 Conditions:

- **Traffic Volumes, 43,00 daily vehicles** (3-6% trucks) Westbound right-turn (high volume); Southbound left-turn (high volume); Northbound through (high volume)
- **Traffic Operations, LOS C**-under capacity during AM and LOS E/F at capacity during PM/events
- **Pedestrian and bicycle network**-no marked crossing locations; gaps in the sidewalks, limited connectivity to trail system (Jim Dutcher Tail)

Tiered Approach:

- Started with a range of options (16). and selected 6 alternatives for Tier 1.
- **Tier 1 Evaluation:**
Evaluate 6 alternatives; Select 2 alternatives for Tier 2 evaluation.
- **Tier 2 Evaluation:**
 - **Alternative 1-No Build; Does not fix the problem, used to compare against alternatives**
 - **Alternative 2-(Low Impact) Modify West bound approach to westbound shared left/right turn lanes, Right-turn lane; Modify northbound right-turn lane; Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks**



Commi

ssioner Pitman asked about the possibility of landscaping the "triangle" area created with this option and clarification was provided to Mayor Cole on the existing curb walks. Woody Woods commented on the ques, and said often times automobilists stay in the second lane and then turn right creating a lot of potential

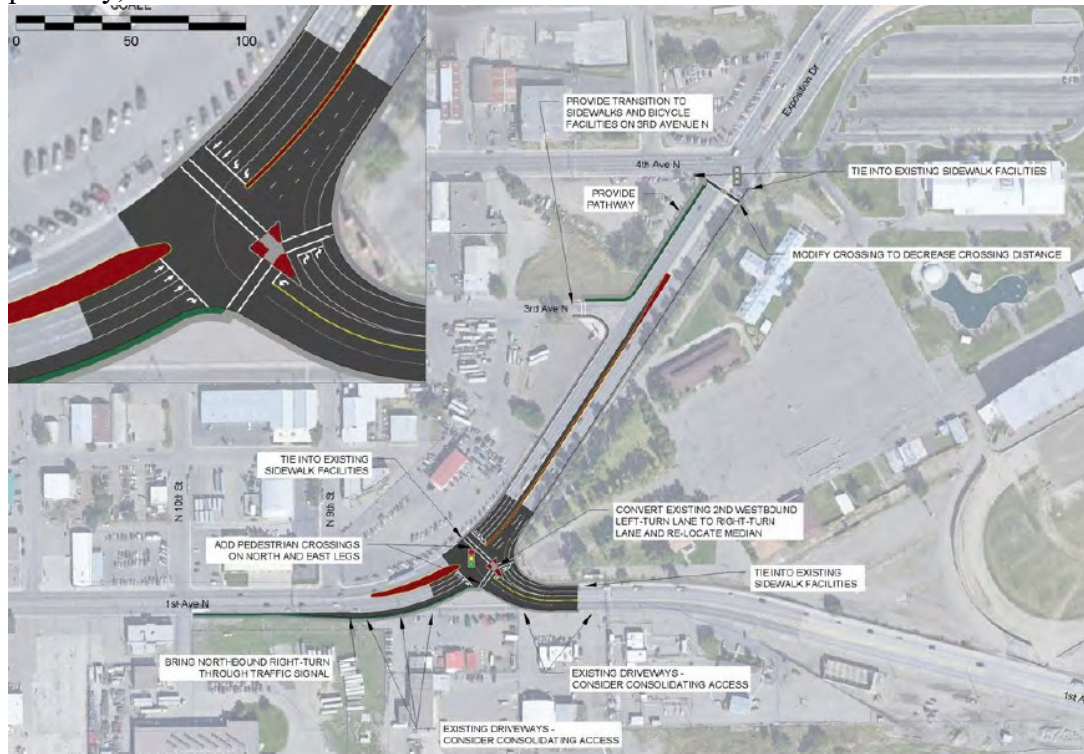
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for accidents. Mike Black commented if the 2nd lane is a right turn, further thought may be needed to que northbound truck traffic to use the outside right turn lanes.

- **Alternative 3-(Low Impact) Single Westbound Left-Turn Lane and Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes.** Modify west bound approach: Left-turn Lane, Dual right-turn lanes; Modify northbound right-turn Lane; Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks



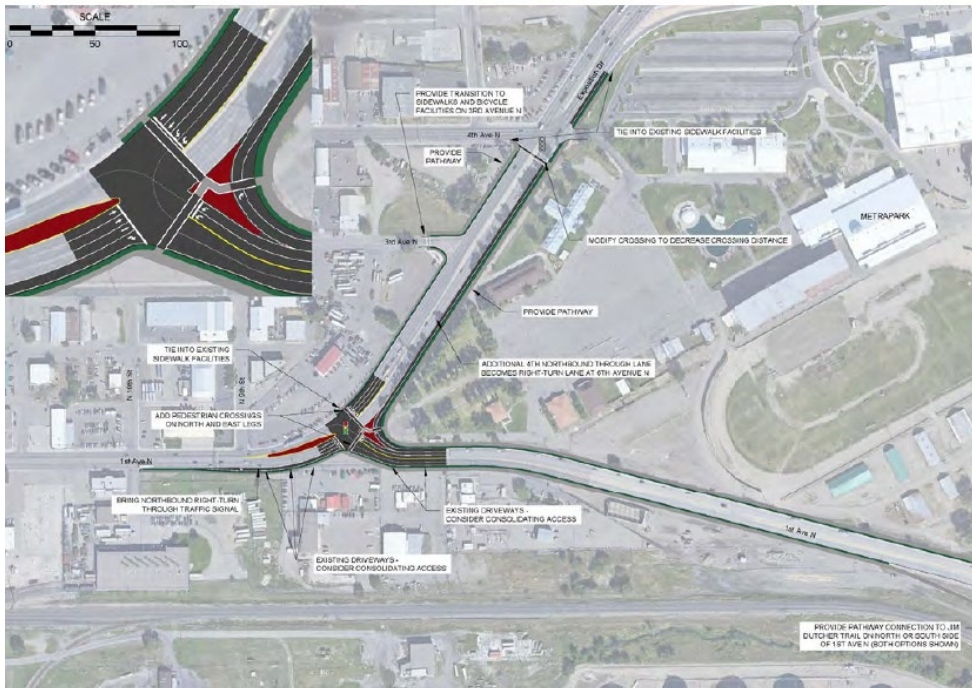
Commissioner Pitman asked if this alternative will cut off access to the businesses in this area. Mr. Daleiden said this is being explored. He explained that in an ideal situation, a move would be made to consolidate access points. They are starting to engage the business owners, and they will be meeting with Taylor Brown today.

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Alternative 4-Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane. Modify westbound approach; Add 4th northbound through Lane to Bench Boulevard; Modify northbound right-turn Lane; Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks.



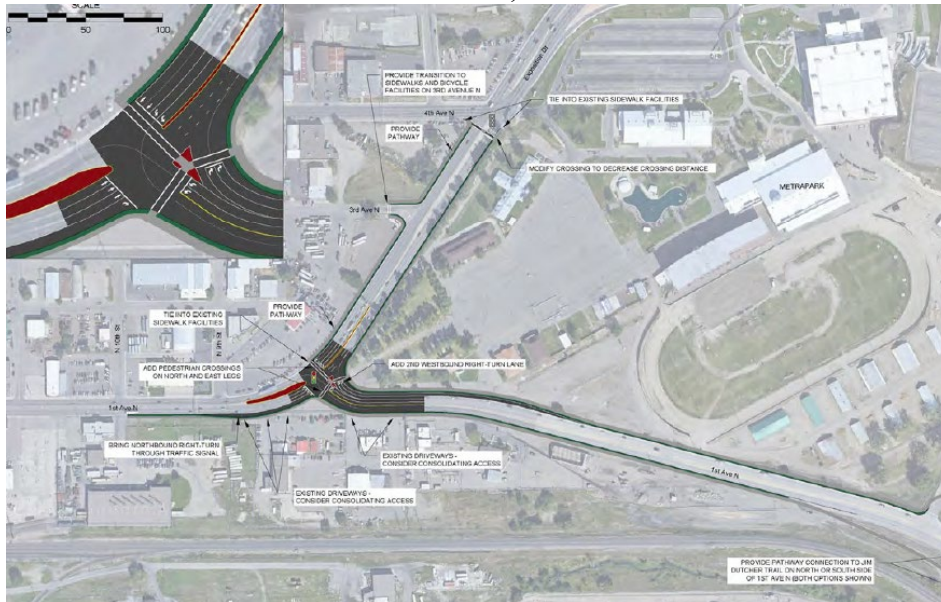
Mr. Daleiden said a traditional signal head will be installed if the site lines are not adequate, and an advanced signal head may be provided for the right turn movement. The crossing may be used infrequently but it is important to ensure notice. The pathway will be provided along east side of Exposition Drive and connect to 1st Ave N to Jim Dutcher Trail or facilitate connection on the south side. There are opportunities for separated pathways.

Alternative 5-Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes: Modify westbound approach with dual left turn lanes and dual right-turn Lane (signalized). Modify northbound right-turn Lane; Add crossings, pathway and detached sidewalks. Right turn lanes would be signalized. Woody Woods commented he likes the 2 lanes as it would provide ample room to accommodate trucks making the right turn movement.

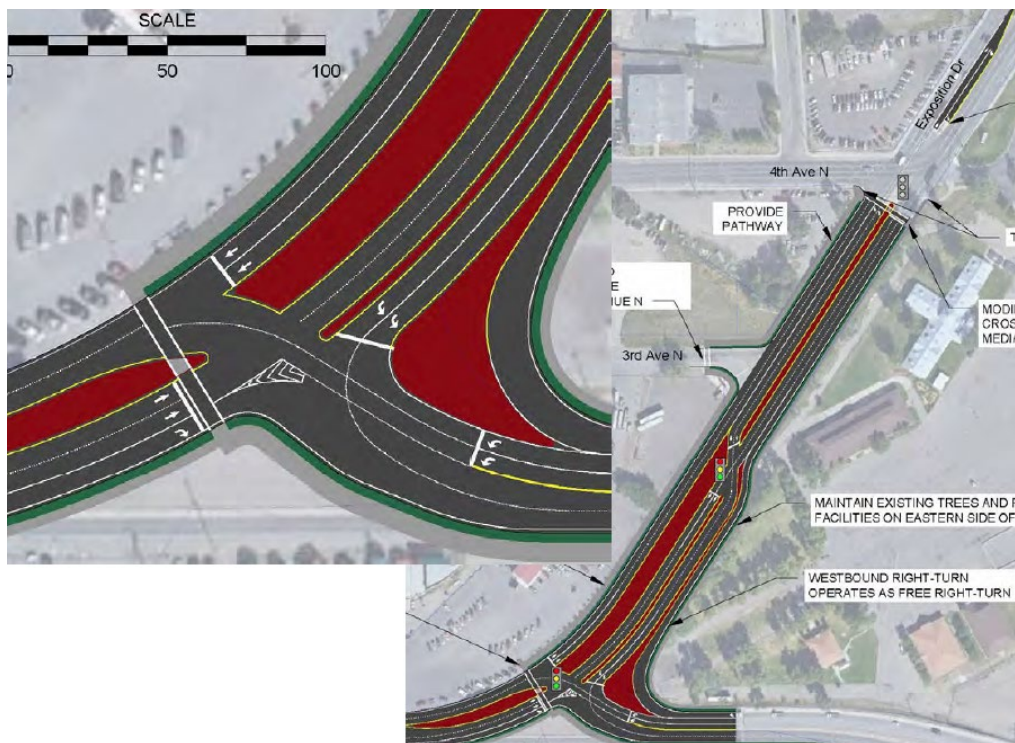
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Alternative 6: Partial displaced Left Turn Intersection. Modify intersection for southbound left-turn lanes; Add free westbound right-turn lane; Modify northbound right-turn lane; Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks. This plan would gain efficiency at the intersection as three movements can be accomplished at one time.



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Mayor Cole voiced concern with the potential for head-on collisions if someone runs the red light. Mr. Daleiden said he can get the statistics but it is the experience of agencies who implemented this option to have had a reduction in crashes in the left turn movement and low head-on events. In terms of safety, performance conflicts are reduced. He continued with a clarification of traffic movements per request of Commissioner Pitman. Woody Woods observed that this alternative would take quite a bit of County property.

Evaluation Criteria Per Alternative: Safety Performance, Pedestrian Facility Quality; Bicycle Facility Quality; Bicycle Facility Quality; Traffic Operations 2040AM/PM Peak Hour Services; Traffic Operations Lifespan after 2040; Right-of-Way Impacts; and Design and Construction Cost Estimates

Andy Daleiden noted there is land ownership on the south side of the property. Discussion followed. This is traditionally an industrial area but it is also an entryway and could be used as an attractive highly landscaped entrance area. The consultants are developing a right-of-way map as a part of the project, and this information will be available for the next tier of the study. Mr. Daleiden said they are meeting with land owners and will be going door to door to contact those that do not have scheduled formal meetings. Commissioner Pitman said they are working with BSEDA on a grant to improve the corridor. He commented that “Option 4” is attractive to METRA Park. The removal of the fence would be a benefit to the METRA there are no historical monuments in the way. The intent to redesign the approach to allow for free flowing traffic in both directions.

Next steps:

- Select alternatives for Tier 2
- Refine concept designs for Tier 2
- Perform analysis for Tier 2
- Evaluate and select preferred alternative
- Continue outreach
- PAC meetings #2 & #3
- 1-on-1 meetings
- Public open house (December TBD)
- Agency updates

Project website -<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/expofirst/>

Discussion

Rod Nelson said this study will help to identify the project, and they will follow with identification of funding, depending on the alternative chosen after the study is completed. The Outer Bypass and Inner Belt Loop project will be included in the consideration for choosing an alternative. Woody Woods commented on the need for

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Lockwood residents to be able to connect to the Jim Dutcher Trail. Andy Daleiden provided clarification on levels of service at the intersection per request of Major Bill Cole. He said today drivers can experience four cycles before being serviced for a right turn. Over the next 30 years, the anticipation is not having to wait for the cycle. Mayor Cole suggestion addition of a key for level of services standards in the study.

Other Business

Planner Lora Mattox gave the following project updates.

Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study. This study considers access control, safety, storm water, land use. Primarily involves county properties, state uses, and about six private owners. Work completed to date: Traffic Data & Analysis; Property Owner meetings; Public Works Coordination; Misc. Stakeholder Meetings; Land Development; Feasibility Analysis; Project Oversight Committee Meetings.

Wayfinding Signage Plan (Alta Planning & Design) This is a signage plan to connect gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities; government entities; large retail. Deep Dive meetings. Updates will be provided to City Council

Tour Map and Mobile Application (Elyse Monat). Waiting for updates on this application. Mayor Cole asked if this application could be linked to the Met Transit App. as travelers may have interested in both. Staff noted the bus symbol is included in the app to point users to the Met Transit App,

ADJOURNMENT: 1:14 PM

Approved by a motion February 18, 2020

