

# CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

*“Serving Billings, Broadview and Yellowstone County”*

**Board Attendance Roster:** Please note: “E” stands for excused absence, “A” stands for un-excused absence, “1” stands for present. **BYLAWS, YELLOWSTONE COUNTY BOARD OF PLANNING, (Amended. May 25, 2004) Section 4. Absences and Removal A.** Each member shall inform the Planning Director at least one day before the meeting of his/her inability to attend a Board or Committee meeting. Such an absence shall be considered an excused absence. If any Board member accrues three (3) or more consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings, notice of which has been given at his/her usual place of work or residence, or by announcement at a meeting attended by him/her, the President may call such absences to the attention of the Board which may then recommend to the appointing authority that such member be asked to resign and that another person be appointed to serve out the unexpired term. Schedule: (\*\* denotes a Wednesday meeting)

	Position	01/08/2019	01/22/2019	02/12/2019	02/26/2019	03/12/2019	03/26/2019	04/09/2019	04/23/2019	05/14/2019	** 05/29/2019	06/11/2019	06/25/2019	07/09/2019	07/23/2019	08/13/2019	08/27/2019	09/10/2019	09/29/2019	10/08/2019	10/22/2019	11/12/2019	11/26/2019	12/10/2019
<b>Dave Goodridge</b>	Mayor/Billings Ward I	E	1	1	1	E	E	E	E	E	-	-	E											
Matt Macrow	Mayor/Billings Ward II	1	1	1	1	1	E	1	E	1	-	-	1											
<b>Eric Wallace</b>	Mayor/Billings Ward III	1	1	1	E	E	E	1	1	1	-	-	E											
<b>Darell Tunnickliff</b>	Mayor/Billings Ward IV	1	1	1	E	1	1	E	1	1	-	-	1											
<b>Jon Thompson</b>	Mayor/Billings Ward V	1	E	1	E	1	1	1	1	E	-	-	1											
<b>Troy Boucher</b>	YC District 1	1	E	E	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	E											
<b>Dennis Cook</b>	YC District 2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	E	E	-	-	1											
<b>Vacant</b>	YC District 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Vacant</b>	YC District 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Woody Woods</b>	YC District 5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	E	1	-	-	E											
<b>Vacant</b>	YC District 6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Jarett Hillius</b>	YC District 7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	E	1	-	-	1											
<b>Jerry Williams</b>	Y County Cons. District	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	R											
<b>Scott Reiter</b>	<b>Ex-Officio SD2</b>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	-	A											

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**June 25, 2019**

*Approved by a motion on July 23, 2019*

### **Call the Meeting to Order**

President Tunnicliff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 in the Miller Building 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, 2825 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Billings, Montana.

### **Introduction of Planning Board Members and Planning Department Staff**

President Tunnicliff called for introductions of the members of the Planning Board and staff.

**Attending Planning staff members:** Wyeth Friday, Director, Planning & Community Services Department; Monica Plecker, Planning Division Manager; Planner II, Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk

**In Attendance:** Ed Gulick, Chairman, BPAC, Kristy Drake; BPAC; Steve Zier, Consultant, SBURA

**Approval of the June 25, 2019 Agenda – A motion was made by Board member Cook and seconded by Board member Thompson to approve the June 25, 2019 Agenda as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

**Approval of Minutes: May 14, 2019.** (The May 29, 2019 and June 11, 2019 meetings were canceled). **A motion was made by Board member Macrow and seconded by Board member Hillius to approve the minutes of May 14, 2019 as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

**Public Comment:** President Tunnicliff asked if there was anyone wishing to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting. He stated any member of the public might be heard on any subject that is not on the agenda; the Planning Board will not take any action on these items at this time, but could choose to add an item to the next meeting agenda for discussion. There were no public comments.

**Disclosure of Outside (Ex Parte) Communication– Board Members and Planning Staff.** The Ex Parte Communication Binder is available at the Sign-In and Agenda station. There were no declarations of ex parte communications or conflicts of interest.

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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### 7. OLD BUSINESS

#### **7a. Motion. Letter of Support. 2019 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, (BUILD), Grant. Wyeth Friday, Director, Planning & Community Services Department**

Director Friday opened this agenda item with a presentation. The received a memo in their packets for this agenda item. This is a Federal grant opportunity focused on transportation projects. The application deadline is July 15, 2019. SFR Consulting Group Inc. was retained by the City to complete the Grant Feasibility and Application process. This grant will be vetted in August and awarded during December 2019.

#### **Motion**

**Board member Thompson made a motion and Board member Macrow seconded the motion to forward a letter of support for the 2019 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, (BUILD) Grant.**

#### **Discussion**

President Tunnick called for questions and discussion from the members of the Board. Board member Thompson asked if a draft letter was provided to the Board and if Wyeth was able to capture some of the costs that have gone into the other segments. Wyeth explained that the expenses could not be claimed as matching funds but they were able to describe the work that has been done with recent projects. Board member Thompson stressed the importance of the Community’s ongoing support of these projects. Board member Hillius asked if this is a competitive grant and how the awards are given. Wyeth commented there are several elements to the application. The cost analysis for each segment is included and it is possible to award funding for a portion of the Marathon Loop projects. Transportation Coordinator Scott Walker said the “story told” in the application must be compelling to encourage a reviewer to consider the composite application.

**The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

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## YELLOWSTONE COUNTY BOARD OF PLANNING

CITY-COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION  
2825 3<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE NORTH, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101  
PHONE: (406)247-8676 FAX: (406) 657-8327



June 25, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for the 2019 BUILD Discretionary Grant: Northwest Billings  
Connector/Marathon Loop, Billings Montana

Secretary Chao:

I am writing this letter to express the Yellowstone County Board of Planning's support for the City of Billings Montana Northwest Billings Connector/Marathon Loop request for 2019 DOT BUILD Discretionary grant to construct the final components of the Northwest Billings Connector/Marathon Loop project. The Planning Board is an integral part of the Billings Metropolitan Planning Organization, representing the City and County in reviewing and recommending transportation planning and project programming for Billings and the surrounding areas to our elected officials.

The Planning Board has reviewed and approved multiple studies that identify this program of projects, including the Rims to Valley Bike/Ped Feasibility Study for the Stage Coach Trail, and the Zoo Montana to Riverfront Park Trail Feasibility Study and the Yellowstone Riverfront Trail Feasibility Study for the trail segments completing the Marathon Loop in south and west Billings. The Planning Board also approved the 2017 Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan Update to improve mobility and recreation opportunities in the Billings community.

The Northwest Billings Connector/Marathon Loop is a multimodal system of roadway and separated non-motorized parkways intended to provide the following benefits:

- Provide vehicle and non-motorized alternatives to the congested artery of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue/3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue that provides the primary connectivity between areas of Billings and Billings Heights.
- Provides separate facilities to reduce conflicts between motorized and non-motorized modes within the compressed artery that connects Billing and Billings Heights. Present conflicts are

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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observed in vehicle-pedestrian and/or vehicle-bicycle crashes that result in injuries, including fatalities.

- Enhanced active transportation and recreation-based economic opportunities associated with the Marathon Loop, which when complete will provide a unique full marathon circuit showcasing the vistas of Billings.

Construction of the Northwest Billings Connector/Marathon Loop will move our community forward in developing a safe and accessible transportation system, construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails, and provide safe transportation choices for Billings’ residents, businesses and visitors. The completion of the Northwest Billings Connector/Marathon Loop will greatly benefit our community and the Planning Board is in full support.

Sincerely,



Darell Tunnicliff, President  
Yellowstone County Board of Planning

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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### NEW BUSINESS

**8a. Presentation. Discussion. Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, (BPAC), Annual Update. Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner. Ed Gulick, BPAC, presenting.** Mr. Gulick, Chairman, BPAC, thanked the Board for this opportunity. He said BPAC has been in existence for about twelve years. This Committee gives presentations to the Planning Board and the governing bodies on an annual basis.

### BILLINGS AREA BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

**MEMBERSHIP: Chair: Ed Gulick** (Planning Board); **Vice Chair: Kristi Drake** (City); **DJ Clark** (County); **Zach Hassler** (County); **Amber Sundsted** (City); **Liana Susott**(County); **Jane Van Dyk** (City)

#### PRIMARY TASKS:

- Identify barriers to safely walking or bicycling throughout Billings and portion of Yellowstone County in the MPO area
- Recommend solutions to City and County planning and public works staff and governing bodies based on public input and transportation industry standards.

#### BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ENSURE:

##### 1) Health

- Physical activity –“Active Transportation”  
25 minutes per day/6 days per week moderate-intensity aerobic activity (i.e. brisk walking) recommended every week Center for Disease Control
- Low levels of physical activity have contributed to obesity—66% of adults are obese or overweight in Yellowstone County 2016-2017 Yellowstone County Community Health Needs Assessment

##### 2) Safety

- Billings residents will not engage in Active Transportation if they do not feel safe
- Predictable environment where bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers know what to expect from each other (turning, stopping)

##### 3) Quality of Life

- Children –can they safely walk or ride to school and to after-school activities? On the other hand, do parents need to drive them?
- Aging population increasingly wants to live in walkable, bikeable, interactive neighborhoods so they can age in place
- Millennial Generation in particular attracted to places that foster a healthy lifestyle and connection to place
- Connect neighborhoods to Rims and river—unique assets

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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### 4) Economic Vitality

- Quality of life is key economic driver
- Need access to trails from downtown hotels
- Encourage visitors to stay longer, recreate here

### SUMMARY OF BIKING & WALKING ISSUES THAT BPAC SEES

1. There is broad support for trails and bikeways for recreation and active transportation from the general public, health community, and business community.
2. There are significant opportunities for world-class trails as well as better biking connections within the city and county.
3. Federal transportation funding dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure has decreased significantly in the past 4 years.
4. If our community wants to continue progress in trails and bikeways, it will need to either reprioritize some existing transportation funding and/or create new sources of funding

### THE COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

- Estimate that approximately \$1 million / year is needed to fill federal funding gap
- New trails cost approx. \$350,000/mile to build
- Additionally, funding is needed to maintain infrastructure already in place

### 2017-2018 BPAC ACTIVITIES

- BPAC spearheaded getting \$4,500 in seed money for 50 new bike racks from the following:** Billings Association of Realtors; Billings TrailNet; Billings Parks and Recreation; CTA Architects and Engineers; Downtown Billings Alliance; Sanderson Stewart

### Discussion

President Tunnicliff thanked Mr. Gulick for his presentation and the Committee for their efforts to provide routes for school aged children. Board member Thompson spoke to the need for interconnectivity with the trails and parks. Ed Gulick stated the committee is advocating for a local funding source, as general funds for improvements are not available until a street is built or upgraded. President Tunnicliff commented on the trail usage by the general population and the overall benefit to the community.

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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### **8b. Motion. South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Plan. Wyeth Friday, Director, Planning & Community Services**

Director Friday introduced Steve Zier, Consultant, SBURA. He stated the City launched this effort to amend the Urban Renewal Plan. The South Billings Urban Renewal District was created in 2008. Per advisement of the Bond Council, this amendment is brought forward to address projects like the South Billings Recreation Center, the Law Enforcement Evidence Facility, and any other major projects the City might consider funding within the District. He stressed the importance of the flexibility of the plan containing language that allows the community to consider different kinds of projects over the life of the district. The amendment process will include notification of all property owners within the district. The Planning Board will consider the proposed amendment for Growth Policy conformance, and City Council will hold a public hearing. There are 35 projects called out in the current plan; sixteen projects have been completed; and 20 projects have been completed overall. The total investment to date in the district is \$22.8 million. Future projects and programs may include parks and recreational amenities; public safety; railroad infrastructure, walking paths and trails; Transportation Corridor improvements; and school and community services.

#### **Process to Date and Next Steps:**

**SBURD Public Meeting:** May 30, 2019 (mailed notice to all property owners in the District)

**SBURA Meeting, June 4,** (Recommendation to City Council on language)

**Planning Board meeting, June 25** (Growth Policy Conformance)

**City Council Meetings** (mailed notice to all property owners in the District)

**Public Hearing and First Reading Ordinance July 8; 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance July 22**

#### **Motion**

**Board member Cook made a motion and Board member Macrow seconded the motion to execute a letter of support for the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Plan**

#### **Discussion**

President Tunnicliff called for questions and discussion from the members of the Board. Board member Macrow pointed a typographical error in the letter of support. A correction is needed to change the date from July 25, 2019 to **June 25, 2019**. In response to question by President Tunnicliff, Wyeth Friday said there are three advisory boards, and the Planning Board must be involved when a district is created or amended. He said the district could provide an update on an annual basis and he would coordinate with the SBURA District representative. President Tunnicliff concurred with this suggestion. He complemented Steve Zier and the District for the improvements that have been made. Steve Zier said they are targeting a City Council hearing for the South Billings Aquatic Recreation Center Plan in July or August. They have identified an

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

*“Serving Billings, Broadview and Yellowstone County”*

amount for a TIF bond of \$25 million from City Council. The funding plan is the next step to identify realistic funding goals.

**The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

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2825 3<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE NORTH, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101  
PHONE: (406)247-8676 FAX: (406) 657-8327



June 25, 2019

Mayor and City Council  
City of Billings, Montana

RE: Amendment to the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Plan for the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District

As President of the Yellowstone County Board of Planning, I am forwarding the Board's recommendation for the amendment of the Urban Renewal Plan for the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District. On June 25, 2019, the Planning Board reviewed the proposed amendments to the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Plan as to conformity with the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy. The Planning Board voted to forward a recommendation to City Council of approval of the amended Plan and its conformity with the Growth Policy.

This item was posted on the Planning Board agenda for its regular meeting held June 25, 2019. The Yellowstone County Board of Planning reviewed the amendments to the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Plan and found the changes conformed with the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy. Specifically, several Growth Policy Guidelines are addressed by the new projects topics proposed in the plan, and some examples are called out here by the Board:

**Parks & Recreational Amenities** – Construct and enhance public facilities that will increase the quality or quantity of parks and recreational activities within the District. This may include, but is not limited to, a recreation center, swimming pool, ice arena, indoor and outdoor park development, and other amenities.

***Place Making (Enhance, maintain, preserve, and improve existing public places)***

- *A multi-use community recreation facility is desirable*

***Essential Investments (relating public and private expenditures to public values)***

- *Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities (community gardens, dog parks, viewing areas), and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community*

**Public Safety** – Construction of Police or Fire facilities within the District, to include necessary furnishings for such facilities.

***Essential Investments (relating public and private expenditures to public values)***

- *Public health and safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents, businesses, and visitors*

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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**Walking Paths and Trails** – Construct sidewalks, trails and pathways throughout the District with landscaping to ensure the safety of children and all pedestrians, as well as provide access to neighborhoods and services.

***Essential Investments (relating public and private expenditures to public values)***

- *The safety of all users and the connectivity of the transportation system are important criteria to consider in roadway designs and transportation plans*

***Community Fabric (attractive, aesthetically pleasing, uniquely Billings)***

- *Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the livability of Billings*

**School and Community Services** – Assist in funding projects and programs in the District to enhance school playgrounds and athletic fields, health and wellness programs, access to community meeting and activity spaces, and other efforts that improve access to school and community services.

***Mobility and Access (transportation choices in places where goods and services are accessible to all)***

- *“Safe Routes to Schools” promotes physical health and reduces vehicle trips, earning parents more time and less costs for transportation*

The Board respectfully submits this recommendation to the City of Billings Mayor and City Council for consideration.

Respectfully Yours,



Darell Tunnicliff, President  
Yellowstone County Board of Planning

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## CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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### 9. OTHER BUSINESS

→ **Standing Item: Long Range Strategic Issues and an overview of future City and County issues and projects.**

FY2020 City Budget: Wyeth Friday reported the City Council approved the FY2020 budget. Based on projections for FY2021, there are some concerns. The issue is to consider funding sources for public safety and how to move forward with other general fund departments.

→ **Announcement:** The Tuesday, May 28, 2019 Planning Board meeting will be canceled due to a lack of agenda items. The next meeting will be held as legally announced and advertised on Tuesday, June 11, 2019.

→ **ADJOURNMENT: 7:23 P.M.**

**APPROVED BY A MOTION ON JULY 23, 2019**

