



**Billings Technical Advisory Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes—FEBRUARY 19, 2019**

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

Members Present:

Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator; Wyeth Friday, Director, Planning & Community Services; Debi Meling, City Engineer; PW Engineering; Erin Claunch, City Traffic Engineer, PW Engineering; Tim Miller, Director, YC Public Works Dept.; Debra Hagel, Transit Planner, MET; Kurtis Schnieber, MDT

Others Present: Mike Taylor, MDT; Clark Snyder, RiverStone Health; Yuri Mereszczak, Kittelson & Associates; Wende Wilber, Kittelson & Associates; Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates

Conference Call: Kenn Winegar, MDT 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 December 6, 2018

Motion

Tim Miller made a motion and it was seconded by Debi Meling to approve the minutes of December as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business: There was no Old Business.

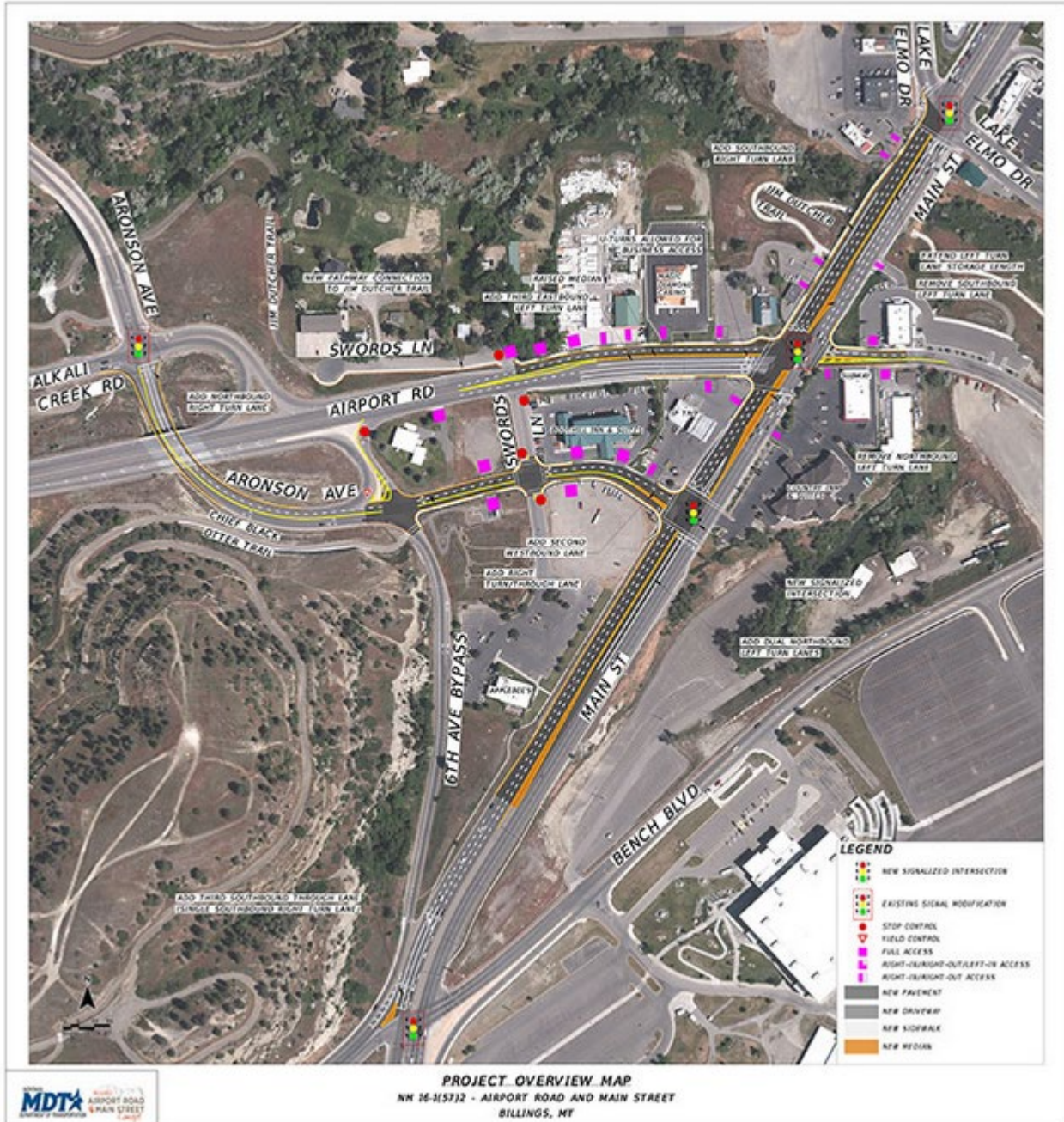
4. New Business:

4a Presentation/Discussion. Roadway Design Plan. Main Street/Airport Road Intersection Project Concept. Yuri Mereszczak, Kittelson and Associates, presenting.

Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, introduced Yuri Mereszczak, Consultant Project Manager; Kittelson & Associates, who opened with a brief introduction and presentation. A presentation will follow at the Policy Coordination Meeting at noon. The Montana Department of Transportation will have an Open House Public Meeting from 5 to 7 PM at the Billings Public Library in the Community Room, 510 North Broadway, Billings, MT.

STUDY AREA

The Airport Road and Main Street intersection is located two miles northeast of downtown Billings, just north of Metra Park. The intersection's location is a critical junction for commuter, regional, and freight trips along the Airport Road and Main Street corridors.



STUDY PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Airport Road and Main Street Concept Study is to identify the need, type, location, and feasibility of a transportation project at the Airport Road and Main Street intersection in the City of Billings, Montana. Key elements of the study include:

- Identifying the existing and future deficiencies
- Identifying a list of intersection alternatives
- Evaluating and screening the intersection alternatives
- Identifying a preferred alternative for the intersection.

Ongoing and Planned Projects -providing alternate routes throughout the area. The design team is considering the need to provide alternate routes throughout the area. The Study effort was initiated in April 2015, and completed with consideration for Phase 2 development in July 2016.

Phase 1 Concept Study (2016) MDT conducted a transportation study that identified a proposed project for design and construction. This has been an exhaustive evaluation process of 20 alternatives being narrowed to seven refined alternatives to the three recommended alternatives. The Signalized Southwest Quadrant alternative is being carried forward to the design phase based upon the analysis completed and public input received during Phase 1.

Phase 2 Design & Construction: (2019-2024) Additional traffic study; Environmental Studies, Development of construction plans; Right-of-way and utility impacts, and additional Public Involvement and Outreach. Improvements include lane modifications, roadway widening, median work, minor realignments and upgrades to curb, gutter, Americans with Disabilities Act facilities, pavement, lighting, pavement markings, signing and signalized intersections.

Project Schedule: Design completed 2021; ROW and utility negotiations (2022-2023); Construction 2024.

Signalized Southwest Quadrant Intersection

- Take advantage of additional capacity on Aronson Avenue
- Removal of north and south bound left turn.
- New signal at Aronson Street
- Bench Boulevard west bound on east leg as a through movement
- Will modify the truck route that will be routed through the Aronson Avenue route
- Added third east bound left turn off on Main to Airport Road
- Address south bound right turn lane to go west on Airport Road
- Extending north bound left turn storage lane to Lake Elmo
- New pedestrian crossings

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Benefits and Cost: Improved safety & mobility for all users; Reduced construction; Improved connections and crossings for pedestrians & bicyclists; \$8.3M Estimate Design + Construction Cost

Key Changes Since Concept Study:

- Addition of second westbound lane existing Metra Park to improve operational performance during Metra Park events; which provides additional pavement width between raised median & north curb
- Jim Dutcher Trail Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection: 8-ft wide continuous pathway to improve connection
- Continuity of three southbound through lanes at 6th Ave/Main Street-Proposed configuration.

Next Steps

- Public open house tonight! Billings Public Library Community Room (510 N Broadway)
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM (Business/Property Owners)
5:00 – 7:00 PM (General Public)
- Future public open houses & TAC/PCC updates
Fall 2019-as announced by MDT when set.
Summer 2020-as announced by MDT when set.
- Feedback from public and stakeholders welcome throughout design process
- Preliminary design & environmental evaluation
Scope of Work Approval – end of 2019

PUBLIC OUTREACH--PROJECT WEBSITE

A project website was developed and hosted by MDT throughout the duration of the project. The site is located on MDT's project page with an address of:

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/blgairportmain/pub-involve.shtml>

Discussion (Responses by Yuri Merezczak, Kittelson & Associates, Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates)

Erin Claunch: is the intent to rebuild the section of Aronson Road, as it may not be built for truck traffic?

Response: A geotechnical evaluation is taking the potential increase in truck traffic into consideration. The intersection with the bypass westbound will be treated as free movement and a ramp off of Airport Road will be yield controlled. The stop sign will be removed.

Debi Meling-levels of service at the intersection of Alkali and Aronson?

Response: The plan for increasing left turn storage and adding the north bound right turn lane. The thought is that with the changes it but will be "Level C" or better. With the improvements, there will be not as much conflicting north bound left traffic.

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Tim Miller- noted the access to the Metra upper lot is from Lake Elmo Drive. Will there be a designated left turn arrow at Lake Elmo?

Response: they studied the intersections and the intersections at Lake Elmo Drive and Main Street struggle. Scott Walker commented the tradeoff is taking away a south bound left by *Subway* but gaining two lanes out all the way up Airport Road.

Kurtis Schnieber, MDT commented on confusion with the outbound cut through and asked if there is an option with the bulb out to allow for U-turns?

Response: The bulb out was part of the options but the allowing U-turns conflicts with the right turn off of Lake Elmo Drive.

Wyeth Friday-questioned the number of proposed access points on the north side of Airport Road. Response: The plan addresses the access points for each existing business and defined the access as you head west.

Wyeth Friday asked if it is possible to eliminate one access point noted there are two access points depicted near Jim Dutcher Trail. He feels the elimination of unneeded access points will help to avoid potential vehicle conflicts.

Scott Walker noted the closeness of proximity of the depicted sidewalk adjacent to Boot Hill Inn. Mike Taylor commented the owners of Boothill Inn & Suites have contacted MDT with some concerns.

Mike Taylor-is the traffic data driving the project taken prior to the Bench Boulevard project?

Response: Part of the Bench Boulevard project was constructed but this section was in place. Additional counts were taken more recently. The Bypass project will be a benefit. There was a detailed evaluation of Lake Elmo and improvements there are significant.

Wyeth Friday-encouraged building boulevard sidewalks where there will be new or rebuilt sidewalks.

ADJOURNMENT: 11:23 a.m.

DRAFT: To be approved during the next scheduled meeting.