



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am

Virtual Conference Format

Live Coverage was, and recording is, available here: <https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260/>

APPROVED BY A MOTION ON JULY 28, 2020

Call to order: Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 am

Members present: Kristi Drake, City; Anna O'Donnell, City; Liana Susott, County; Scott Barber, City.

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Robbin Bartley, Administrative Assistant; Rusty Logan, Transit Manager.

Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**
No calls were received for public comment.

- b. **Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –**
Kristi Drake, BPAC Member, received a question about adding pedestrian activated signals on the roundabouts on Shiloh Road. Public Works already has a project planned for this summer and is putting in as many of these signals as they can with available funding.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of May 26, 2020: Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Vice-Chair, motioned to approve the minutes, Scott Barber, BPAC member, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

BPAC Annual presentation to the Governing Bodies:

BPAC members reviewed the presentation and made the following suggestions:

Add a screen shot of comments/complaints spreadsheet.

Break up the slides on bike boulevards and add images.

Check with Engineering on what are the various components of the bike boulevard.

Need to explain what bike boulevard is.

For graph with trail counts from COVID, Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, will change axis to start at zero. She will also add in the June counts when available.

Get rid of slides 21, 23, 20, 21, 24, 26, 27.

Downtown traffic study:

Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, wants to present options and survey to Yellowstone Valley Citizen's Council. Elyse mentioned that there is a video available on the project website that he can use if he wants.

New Business:

MET Transit:

Rusty Logan, MET Transit Manager, gave a presentation about MET Transit. The MET transfer station downtown is LEED Platinum certified.

Funds for MET come from both local and federal sources. MET does not receive general funds from the City. They get enterprise funds instead.

MET offers fixed routes and paratransit routes. Paratransit is rebranding to MET+. Paratransit uses smaller buses and picks up people who cannot use fixed route service.

Ridership has been declining over the past few years, although there was an increase before COVID.

Riders can catch MET at most corners where it is safe.

All buses are ADA accessible. All fixed route vehicles are equipped with two bike racks, and will soon have three racks.

Schedules are available online. The Double Map app offers real-time bus tracking software.

MET received two competitive grants in 2018 and 2019 for a total of \$2.2 million in federal funding.

MET has made the following recent purchases/improvements in the last couple of years:

- Ordered eight buses.
- Added automatic voice announcements
- Added Automated traffic counters
- Location-based advertisements
- Free Wi-Fi is now available to passengers
- Implemented cloud based transit-planning software.

MET also completed a Complete Community Wide Transit Survey that reached 627 people.

MET is currently thinking about overhaul of system, including possible 15 minute service. MET is also working on several partnerships. Last year, they collaborated with the Associated Students of MSU-B to offer semester-long passes.

Anna: *question:* What does it entail to put bike on bus?

Answer: Squeeze handle on the rack to pull the rack down. You then place the bike on the rack and a spring-loaded hook holds the bike in place. There will be educational videos will go on the MET website soon about how to do it.

Anna: *question:* How do you get out the information about how to use the bus?

Answer: MET advertises through radio advertising and schedule information is available at various places like City Hall, RiverStone Health/Healthy By Design, and Billings Public Schools. MET is looking at way to improve advertising.

Anna thinks there is opportunity to share maps more. The Chamber or Downtown Billings Alliance could share maps more.

Scott Barber: *question:* Is there any type of App?

Answer: Double Map. Ultimate goal is to integrate fare app and map app at the same time.

Ed mentioned BPAC is considering ways to encourage active transportation for City employees. He noted that, between the hospitals, large banks, and institutions like the City, there is a lot of money spent constructing parking. Are there ways that MET can coordinate with them in which they provide annual operating system support in exchange for longer operating hours or more frequent bus service? Rusty said there were financial incentives about 5 years ago. They have decreased, but there is talk about bringing them back. St. Vincent is talking with MET again about a partnership.

Healthy By Design is well placed to convene partners, but Rusty should let BPAC know if they can help.

Other Business:

None

Future Agenda Items:

Downtown traffic study

Annual BPAC presentation – recap

Any updates from 5th Ave. corridor and/or bike/scooter share if any updates

Meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.