



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 28, 2020 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am

Virtual Conference Format

Live Coverage was available here: <https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260/> Recording is also available on Facebook page.

DRAFT

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; Rose Cook, County.

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator.

Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**
none
- b. **Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –**
Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, received a call from someone named Hank. Hank wanted more trails around 56th and Grand/Central. Elyse looked and the areas Hank asked about are in the County. While there are trails for this area in the Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan, there is no identified source of funding for trails in the County. Elyse emailed to let Hank know.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of June 23, 2020: Rose Cook, BPAC member, motioned to approve the minutes, Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Vice Chair, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

BPAC Annual presentation to the Governing Bodies Recap:

Kristi Drake, BPAC member, said she thought Mayor Cole appreciated the addition of data. The presentation to the commissioners had trouble with sound. BPAC members liked hearing feedback from Planning Board that neighbors dusted off bikes to ride during the pandemic.

Ed suggested adding for next year how the built environment relates to public safety.

New Business:

City of Billings Public Safety Mill Levy: Assistant City Administrator, Kevin Iffland, gave a presentation on public safety in Billings and what the mill levy would mean for Billings. With more expenses and no revenue coming in, the City had to spend more reserves in 2019. There are also

capital issues that need to be addressed like new fire stations. Prior to COVID, the City was trying to add to resources, but does not have space to add 30-40 police officers. The cost of the mill levy to a median valued home would be \$4.75/month additional to what homeowners are currently paying.

Anna wondered if there was an opportunity to hold a virtual meeting for question and answer time. Kevin responded that they are looking at meetings in the parks and putting recordings on Community 7. Anna would like to have one at Pioneer Park and let the Pioneer Park task force know about it.

Ed shared that the design of infrastructure also has a public safety component to it. Police have been stretched, streets are designed for too high of speeds, and design of infrastructure is part of public safety as well. Fire stations locations affect response time, and as Billings expands out there are fewer taxpayers to support each fire station. The City has taken some steps to reverse that, but still put more investment into low-density areas rather than high-density areas. Kevin responded that was one of the components of public safety. Before COVID, they wanted to bring in courts, code enforcement, etc. into the mill levy.

5th Ave. Corridor:

Elyse shared progress so far on the feasibility study. The project area runs along the 5th Ave. Corridor between 6th and 4th Aves. between Division and Main Streets. Sanderson Stewart, the consultant, held three different focus groups: public safety, homelessness, and related issues, active transportation, and the Founders District (property/business owners toward the west end of the corridor). Kristi, Anna, and Elyse all attended the active transportation group. Anna shared that some of the topics discussed included making the corridor into green space, making it safe, and having proper lighting.

The virtual public meeting is coming up.

Ed: The railroad was not previously in favor of allowing a trail alongside. Has anything changed? Elyse shared that there might be an opportunity to do what is possible along the corridor and add in some diversions to go around businesses that still remain.

Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study:

Bike and scooter share is when you can rent a bike or scooter by the minute or hour. There are several different types-docked where the device locks to a dock, dockless where the device is “smart” and can be unlocked via cell phone and can be left almost anywhere, and hybrid where the device is smart but might have to be locked to something. The consultant, Alta, is helping to determine which version might work in Billings, if any.

Alta performed an equity analysis as well as a bike/scooter share demand analysis. Elyse shared these with the group.

Ed shared that Billings started thinking about this study because a scooter share company approached it before it was ready. Billings wanted to be prepared and avoid issues that have appeared in other cities such as devices blocking sidewalks.

Other Business:

Downtown Traffic Study:

Anna shared that Lisa from DOWL spoke to Pioneer park task force and had great response from it.

Anna congratulated Liana on the Big Sky State Games.

Billings TrailNet is doing its virtual Ales for Trails to raise the funding it normally would during Ales for Trails.

Kids in Motion is collaborating with Parks and Rec to put on a cycling camp week of August 10.

Future Agenda Items:

Ed and other stakeholders are working to Bring Jeff Speck to Billings in April 2021. In the meantime, they want to educate groups. Ed has put together a presentation with background research on the benefits of two-way streets, which he can give next meeting.

Kristi moved to adjourn, Scott seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:36 p.m.