

POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL VIDEO CONFERENCE-April 21, 2020
MEETING TIME: 12:00 p.m.
316 N 26 ST, ROOM 3101
Billings, Montana 59101
(3RD FLOOR, STILLWATER BUILDING)



1. Call to Order/Pledge to the American Flag: PCC Chairman

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – As required (A 3-minute maximum per person.) Any member of the public may be heard on any subject that is not on the agenda. The Policy Coordinating Committee will not take any action on Non-Agenda items at this time, but could choose to add an item to the next meeting’s agenda for discussion. Public comment will be taken only during the Public Comment periods as indicated on the agenda and during the Public Hearings, if any are scheduled, under the Regular agenda. Comments may be sent to Board via email before 10:00 AM on Tuesday, April 21, 2020. All emails received prior to this time will be read into the record for the public hearing.

The Public may call in during specific Public Comment periods at (406) 237-6196. All callers will be in a queued system and are asked to remain on hold and be patient. Calls will be taken in the order in which they are received. Callers will be restricted to 3 minutes of testimony as is customary. **Live coverage can be viewed in two locations:**
<https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260/?ref=bookmarks>
<https://stream.lifesizecloud.com/extension/1855568/5f08f516-9d35-4310-b33e-7acde97f4647>
 - a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and requests to add items to future agendas.**

 - b. **Comments on items on the Non-public and Public agenda items.**

3. Approval of the minutes of: February 18, 2020

4. **Old Business:**
 - a. Project Update: Build Grant Letter of Support. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, presenting.

 - b. Project Update: 5th Avenue North Study. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, presenting.

 - c. Project Update. Bike/Scooter Share Study. Elyse Monat, Alternative Modes Coordinator, presenting.

 - d. Project Update. Inner Belt Loop Study. Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner, presenting.

 - e. Project Update. 29/30th One Way-Two Way Conversion. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, presenting.

 - f. Project Update. Downtown Traffic Study-Public Participation. Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner, presenting.

5. New Business

6. Other Business

7. Future Agenda Items

8. Adjournment

PCC Virtual Video Conferencing

Meeting Date: 04/21/2020

Information

Subject

Approval of the minutes of: February 18, 2020

Attachments

PCC_2020_02_18_DRAFT

POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES –FEBRUARY 18, 2020

DRAFT-TO BE APPROVED BY A MOTION AT THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

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 President Woody Woods, Yellowstone County Planning Board

Staff Present: Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, Planning & Community Services Department; Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner; Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner

Others Present: John Ostlund, Yellowstone County Commissioner; Don Jones, Yellowstone County Commissioner. Conference call: Kenn Winegar from MDT Planning

1. Call to Order: Chairman Bill Cole called the meeting to order at 12:01 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 September 17, 2019 (The October-December 2019 meetings were canceled due to a lack of agenda items. Corrections: p. 4 last line Taylor has an extra “L” and p. 5 should be through, not though.

Motion

Commissioner Pitman made a motion and it was seconded by Planning Board President Woody Woods to approve the minutes of September 17, 2019 as amended. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business

4a. Public Comment: There is no public comment on this agenda item.

4b. Motion. Wayfinding Signage Plan. Alta Planning & Design,. Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner, presenting.

BACKGROUND

Lora provided a brief overview of the Wayfinding Plan including the review by the Technical Advisory Committee, Planning Board, Board of County Commissioners, and City Council.

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Policy Coordinating Committee approve the Wayfinding Plan as presented by staff.

Discussion

Chairman Bill Cole called for discussion from the Committee. Chairman Cole said discussion at City Council was positive, but there were questions about cost. Staff/the consultant clarified that this plan did not commit any funding toward wayfinding.

Commissioners added a signature page that said they were not obligated to implement signage; they did not want to commit to having to do it.

The Plan was well received at the Planning Board. Staff also gave a presentation to the Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District and Pedestrian Safety District members appreciated this presentation.

Chairman Cole commented that there is no signage at Swords Rimrock Park east of the airport for the Yellowstone Kelly interpretative sight. Lora will talk with Mark Jarvis to figure out the best way to get that sign put in. Cole offered to help in any way he could.

Motion

Woody moved and Commissioner Pitman seconded the motion to approve the Wayfinding Plan as presented by staff. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

5. New Business: There is no New Business

5a. Public Comment: There was no Public Comment.

6. Other Business

6a. Project Updates: Transportation Planning Coordinator Scott Walker gave the following project updates.

Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study.

This is a visioning study of how we want the road to look and feel. Scott likened it to the Shiloh Road corridor. Next public meeting is March 5 in the library. Will have final draft ready on Thursday for review. Planning Board presentation will be scheduled after the public meeting on March 5. Planning Board is trying to be more proactive about getting

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involved in these studies. Ward 2 positon on the Planning Board will be filled soon by Heidi Jensen.

The Rimrock Task Force continues to be concerned about traffic down Zimmerman Trail. Cole thinks that it is important this be addressed in very specific terms. Cole said neighborhood deserves a written response to their concerns. Scott said this will be addressed at the meeting.

Tour Map and Mobile Application Map app is forthcoming for bikeways and trails. Mayor Cole asked if this app could be combined with the bus app. Scott pointed out the bus symbol that goes to the bus tracker app. Cole asked who fixes the app. Elyse will be able to make updates to locations, but consultants will have to make updates if there are issues with something not working. Will be able to add in updates to system as they come online.

Complete Streets Updating Complete Streets Progress Report. The document will have the progress of how we are doing as a community with updated data.

Cole asked how the policy has been working out. Before there was concern about higher cost. Scott said it has been perceived positively. Cost has been absorbed through Public Works as just a way that business is now done. Lora pointed out that Complete Streets is not just for biking, it is streetlights, turn lanes, etc., anything that makes the street safer. There is a presentation to Council at 30% design review where PW comes for feedback.

Downtown Traffic Study Under contract with DOWL. Want to make sure that everyone has input and is involved with this. There is some opportunity to change one-ways into two-ways. This process is public involvement heavy to give some guidance on how to move forward. Cole asked about the cost of those conversions. Low estimate was \$9 million, high is close to \$20 million. Some of it crosses MDT routes so it is important to work with MDT. Some mast arms for signals can be reconfigured. Some intersections can be \$250,000 or more to retrofit. There are some intersections that are low-hanging fruit that could be inexpensive to do.

5th Ave. Corridor Study RFP was advertised Friday. Will close March 6 at 5 pm. This is a feasibility study to see if it is possible to do the study. If it is, then will move on to the planning portion. Cole asked if property owners had been reached out to. Scott said property owners who were opposed are already aware and have been offered spots at the oversight committee.

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Future agenda items:

- BUILD grant and First and Expo
- Billings Bypass update and what we can see in the next 6 months or a year. This could go to the governing bodies.

ADJOURNMENT: 12:42 PM

DRAFT. To Be approved by a motion at the next scheduled meeting.

*Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner
For Tamara L. Deines, Planning Clerk*

PCC Virtual Video Conferencing

Meeting Date: 04/21/2020

Information

Subject

Project Update: Build Grant Letter of Support. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, presenting.

Attachments

Billings 2020 BUILD Support Letter Template_PCC

BILLINGS URBANIZED AREA POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE



PLANNING DIVISION

2825 3RD AVENUE NORTH, 4TH FLOOR

BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101

PHONE: (406) 247-8676 FAX: (406) 657-8327

April 14, 2020

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant: Northwest Billings Connector and Marathon Trail, Billings Montana

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing this letter to express our support for the City of Billings Montana Northwest Billings Connector and Marathon Trail request for 2020 DOT BUILD Discretionary grant funds. As the Policy Coordinating Committee, our purpose is to keep current transportation planning as an integral part of the comprehensive regional planning for the Billings Urbanized Area.

The Northwest Billings Connector and Marathon Trail project is a multimodal system of roadway and separated non-motorized parkways located in northwest Billings. The Northwest Connector is a future roadway link to/from the Billings Heights to Billings West End. The two non-motorized parkway segments, located at the terminus of the Northwest Connector, are vital connections to the citywide non-motorized system.

Our beautiful Rimrocks create a challenging obstacle to providing safe and connected routes for our community. The Connector will provide the motorized and non-motorized route for a safe connection between the Heights and West End, and the Stagecoach segment will provide the needed route from the top of the Rimrocks to the Valley below. The Skyline segment will feature stunning vistas of the Billings skyline and mountains in the distance. The project is intended to provide the following benefits:

- Vehicle and non-motorized alternatives to the congested artery of 6th Avenue N./4th Avenue N./3rd Avenue N. /1st Avenue N. that currently provides the primary connectivity between areas of Billings and Billings Heights.
- Increased connectivity that addresses the natural barrier created by the Rimrocks, a 600-foot sandstone cliff created by the shoreline of an ancient ocean.
- Separate facilities to reduce conflicts between motorized and non-motorized modes within the compressed artery that connects Billings and the Billings Heights. Present conflicts are observed in vehicle-pedestrian and/or vehicle-bicycle crashes that result in injuries, including fatalities.
- Dramatically improved access to primary residential and employment areas adjacent to the Billings International Airport.

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- Enhanced active transportation and recreation-based economic opportunities.

The City of Billings, non-profit Billings TrailNet, the Billings Chamber of Commerce, and Big Sky Economic Development have made substantial investments totaling more than thirteen million dollars into the Northwest Billings Connector and Marathon Trail over the course of several years. Partners funded planning studies, preliminary engineering, and construction of initial project phases. Funding from the 2020 BUILD Discretionary grant will complete the Northwest Billings Connector and connect existing sections of the Marathon Trail to create nearly 25 miles of continuous parkways.

Construction of the Northwest Billings Connector will greatly benefit residents and visitors to the Billings Urban Area and we are writing to express our support.

Please give this 2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant proposal your full attention, and if I can answer anything further, please let me know. I may be reached at 406-256-2701.

Sincerely,

Dennis Pitman
Chairperson and Yellowstone County Commissioner
Policy Coordinating Committee