



**Billings Technical Advisory Committee
Virtual Video Conference Meeting 10:30 AM
Approved Meeting Minutes—June 4, 2020**

1. Call the meeting to order:

Transportation Coordinator Scott Walker called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Due to the COVID-19 health concerns, the format of the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting will be held in a virtual videoconferencing environment. The normal hearing room on the 1 st Floor at 2825 3rd Ave North (Miller Building) will be closed during the meeting and no one will be attending this hearing in person.

Attendance

Committee Members			
Scott Walker, Transportation Coord., Chairman, T.A.C.	X	Wyeth Friday, Director, Planning and Community Services	X
Tim Miller, Director YC Public Works Dept.	--	Mike Black, Civil Engineer, YC Public Works Dept.	X
Debi Meling, City Engineer City of Billings Engineering	X	Erin Claunch, Traffic Engineer City of Billings Engineering	X
Rusty Logan, Manager, MET Transit		Clark Snyder, Environmental Health RiverStone Health	--
Katie Potts Urban Planning Section, MDT		Carol Strizich, Supervisor Urban Planning Section, MDT	--
Kenn Winegar, Urban Planning Section, MDT		Alan Woodmansey, Federal Highways	x
Kurtis Schnieber, MDT	x	Ryan Hammon, FHWA	

Others Participating

Monica Plecker, Planning Division Manager; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Lora Mattox Transportation Planner; DJ Clark, Sanderson Stewart

2. Public Comment:—

Public comment will be taken only during the Public Comment periods as indicated on the agenda. Comments may be sent to Board via email before 1:00 PM on Wednesday, April 29, 2020. All emails received prior to this time will be read into the record. The Public may call in during specific Public Comment periods at **(406) 247-8607**. 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:

<https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260/?ref=bookmarks>

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 May 14, 2020.

Motion

Director Wyeth Friday made a motion and it was seconded by Erin Claunch to approve the minutes of May 14, 2020 as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business:

There is no Old Business.

5. New Business:

5a. Motion/Recommendation. Inner Belt Loop Study. Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator, presenting.

Scott Walker introduced the agenda item. He commented the review process has been delayed due to COVID-19. He said he feels the executive summary and the plan itself are well written.

BACKGROUND (STAFF REPORT)

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT

The Planning Division is presenting to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) the Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study with the intent to have the TAC make a recommendation to the three local governing bodies: Yellowstone County Board of Planning, City Council and the Board of County Commissioners with the intent to forward a positive recommendation to the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC).

BACKGROUND

The Billings Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) through a competitive process hired Sanderson Stewart to develop a corridor planning study of the future Inner Belt Loop corridor in Billings and Yellowstone County. The extent of the study area is from the Skyway Drive/West Wicks Lane intersection on the northeast to the Montana Highway 3/Zimmerman Trail intersection on the south terminus of the connection.

The Inner Belt Loop project has been discussed for almost 30 years as a way to provide a much-needed connection between the Billings Heights and West End. Formal work on this project began in 2005 with a planning study to identify the feasibility of a connection through northwest Billings and identify a preferred route. This study include substantial public participation and was approved by the community. Design of the roadway was started in 2009 with construction of Skyway Drive completed in 2014. The City has allocated in the current CIP \$7 million toward construction of the road in 2022 with the remaining \$7 million needed to complete the road in 2024. In addition, the City of Billings applied for a BUILD Grant in May for the amount of approximately \$16.8 million to complete the construction of the Inner Belt Loop, Skyline Trail, and Stagecoach Trail. If awarded, the city will be able to save the additional \$7 million to complete the roadway that was anticipated to be needed in 2024. Staff anticipates hearing on the results of this grant late fall.

Through extensive outreach to property owners, city and county staff and officials, and other interested stakeholders, this yearlong study developed a vision for the corridor that considered design elements, land use and future traffic needs. The process to develop the vision included: technical analysis, landowner and agency meetings, projections of future development, visioning for traffic and land use and recommendations.

Several recommendations were formed as an outcome from this study and include:

- Formalized intergovernmental agreement between the City and County to develop a coordinated approach to land use and development within the City or the County along the corridor.
- Development tools such as neighborhood planning; continued review and update to the Limits of Annexation Map; identify design standards within project ReCode for appropriate zoning; and develop a plan for utility expansion, primarily water and sewer.
- Design considerations such as recommending that the current Right-of-Way width of 90 feet be expanded to 100 feet to provide flexibility in building setbacks, multi-use facilities, drainage, lighting, boulevard sidewalk and raised center median for access control.
- The study also identified options for roadway phasing if the city is not successful in the BUILD grant and local funding is split between years 2022 and 2024.
- Water and sewer infrastructure tools that will support development along the Inner Belt Loop that could include private property owner agreements, reimbursement agreements, and Special Improvement or Rural Improvement Districts.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The contract for the Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study with Sanderson Stewart was budgeted at \$100,000. The majority of the funding is through the Billings Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Federal PL (planning) funds. PL funds for this project required a 40% local match, which was provided through the Planning Division's FY19 and FY20 Budget utilizing its County-Wide Planning Mill Levy revenues.

Although the study does not provide exact costs associated with corridor design elements, beyond the roadway and pathway elements that are already designed, or the expansion of services such as water and sewer, the study does provide general information on what costs to expect with development of the roadway.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is requesting that the TAC forward a recommendation of approval of the Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study to the Yellowstone County Board of Planning, Billings City Council and the Yellowstone Board of County Commissioners with the intent to forward a positive recommendation to the PCC.

Scott Walker introduced DJ Clark, Sanderson Stewart, who is the project manager. Mr. Clack acknowledged. Lauren Waterton, Sanderson Stewart, co-project manager, and thanked the members of the Project Oversight Committee, as they were instrumental in developing this study and document.

Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study

PROJECT WEBSITE:
<http://sandersonstewart.com/projects/innerbeltloop/>

Key Benefits: Alternate travel route; Relief of congestion; Access to future growth area

Project Timeline: Concept first proposed 30 years ago; Initial planning study in 2006; 90% design in 2010; Phase 1 construction 2014; Phase 2 funding (\$7M) 2022; Phase 3 funding (\$7M) 2024

Purpose Statement: To develop a comprehensive vision for the Inner Belt Loop corridor that is based on stakeholder input, land use context, thoughtful planning and sound technical analysis.

Goals and Objectives: Maintain consistency with existing plans; engage all relevant stakeholders; consider all transportation modes; Establish connection between roadway design and land development standards.

Inner Belt Loop Study Review Schedule: Two Public Meetings have been held.

Review Body	Date	Materials Due	Notes/Result
Technical Advisory Committee	Thursday, June 4 10:30 a.m.	Memo by 6/1	Recommendation to Governing Bodies
Planning Board with Presentation and PH	Tuesday, June 9	Memo by 6/1 Notice PH on 5/22 & 6/5	Presentation, Public Hearing
Planning Board MTG/Action	Tuesday, June 9	Memo by 6/15	Action
City Council Work Session	Monday, June 15 (scheduled)	Memo by 6/8	Presentation
City Council Meeting	Monday, 6/22	Memo by 6/4	Recommendation to PCC
Board of Commissioners Discussion	Monday, 6/29	Week before	Presentation
Board of Commissioners	Tuesday, 6/30 or 7/7	Memo by week before	Recommendation to PCC
Policy Coordinating Committee	Tuesday, 7/21	Memo by 7/13	Final Action

Study Recommendations

▪ **Intergovernmental Coordination**

- ✓ *City vs. County design/development standards*
- ✓ *Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)*

RECOMMENDATION

Develop an IGA between the City and County that establishes unified development standards and defines the roles of the two jurisdictions for the development review process.

▪ **Design Considerations**

- ✓ *Future roadway and intersection planning*
- ✓ *Right-of-way needs/acquisition*
- ✓ *Access management*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluate cost/benefit of increased right-of-way width and initiate acquisition process.

Develop an access management policy for the corridor that allows for limited flexibility during parcel development review.

▪ **Construction Phasing**

- ✓ *Option 1 – site work and permitting for full alignment*
- ✓ *Option 2 – full completion of approximately ½ of the roadway*
- ✓ *Option 3 – link funding and schedule of construction with pending development*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a phasing strategy that considers pending development and potential for economic benefit to the City along with highest-best use for Phase 2 improvements.

▪ **Planning of Infrastructure to Support Development**

- ✓ *Cost and feasibility analysis – water/sewer/EMS*
- ✓ *Funding mechanism alternatives*

RECOMMENDATION

Develop well-defined plans for the provision of public water and sewer infrastructure and additional emergency services coverage along the corridor, as well as for how those improvements will be funded.

Discussion

Scott Walker He commended DJ Clark and Sanderson Stewart staff for their work and commented on the benefits of having a study in place for the community and staff. He called for questions and comments from the Committee members.

Debi Meling asked DJ Clark to e-mail this presentation to the Committee members. Mike Black, YC Public Works, asked if this presentation has been brought to the BOCC. Scott Walker said that all of the governing bodies have seen the document. The two public meetings were well attended and most of the governing bodies were aware of these meetings. Through the presentation process, staff will review the study with the governing bodies to bring them up to date and move forward with recommendations to PCC. Director Friday concurred with Scott Walker's comments and said he likes the way the recommendations were presented. He said the corridor not only has a lot of attention due to this study but also currently with the application for BUILD grant. He is optimistic with the potential for City and County cooperation to act as a launch pad not only for this area but also for areas from both jurisdictions. Mike Black said his understanding is that a lot of this may come in as City development. Scott Walker said this is true in part, but this is a textbook example of working as a City and a County to ensure everybody is on the same page moving forward. Cooperation will be needed to make this work and this document will galvanize this. Wyeth Friday spoke regarding the cooperation and engagement of the property owners. The idea of communication of the long-term plan in this area and expectations will help put forth a vision for development. This is where City-County cooperation comes into play in avoiding conflicts and laying a good path. Kurtis Schnieber, MDT, asked about the status of the BUILD grant. Scott Walker stated staff completed and submitted the application and should hear the results this fall. Alan Woodmansey, FWHA, spoke about the public information piece of the process for this plan. Scott Walker announced the review schedule. Debi Meling asked when the document would be available. Scott Walker said it should be available today. Lora Mattox said she intends to e-mail a link to the full document along with the review schedule and TAC recommendations to the governing bodies today. In response to question by Debi Meling, DJ Clark said her comments have been incorporated along with others he intends to insert and complete today.

Public Comment: No public calls were received.

Motion

Mike Black made a motion and Wyeth Friday seconded the motion to forward a recommendation of approval of the Inner Belt Loop Study as presented by staff and forward a recommendation of approval to the Policy Coordinating Committee. Public Works will have an opportunity to review the document to ensure the comments are incorporated.

Discussion

Scott Walker called for discussion on the motion. Debi Meling said she is uncomfortable with recommending the document moving this forward without seeing how their comments were incorporated into the document as they may have changes. Scott Walker suggested this could be moved forward with the caveat that the City Public Works' comments are incorporated. Debi Meling stated she wants ensure they see the final document with the incorporated comments and updates as they may have some concerns. Scott Walker said this is a draft document and wording changes can be made as part of the course or formally as a part of the review process.

Wyeth Friday noted DJ Clark's statement that he is making the adjustments and that he will forward the final document to Public Works. Scott Walker called for a vote on the motion.

Member	Y/N	Member	Y/N
Scott Walker Transportation Coord. Chairman,	x	Wyeth Friday , Director, Planning and Community Services	x
Tim Miller , Director Yellowstone County Public Works	-	Mike Black , Civil Engineer Yellowstone County Public Works	x
Debi Meling , City Engineer City of Billings Engineering	x	Erin Claunch, Traffic Engineer City of Billings Engineering	x
Rusty Logan , MET Transit Manager		Clark Snyder , Environmental Health RiverStone Health	- -
Katie Potts Urban Planning Section, MDT	x	Carol Strizich , Supervisor Urban Planning Section, MDT	- -
Carol Strizich , Supervisor Urban Planning Section, MDT	- -	Kenn Winegar Urban Planning Section, MDT	- -
Kurtis Schnieber, MDT	x	Ryan Hammon, FHWA	

The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

There were no MET Transit updates.

There are no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

APPROVED BY A MOTION JULY 23, 2020

