



## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County  
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 1, 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 same Facebook page link.

DRAFT

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

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

**Others present:** Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Erin Claunch, City Traffic Engineer.

### 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 –**  
None.

**Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of October 27, 2020:** Kristi Drake, BPAC member, motioned to approve the minutes, Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Vice-Chair, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### New Business:

#### Bicycle Boulevard Design and Routing:

Erin Claunch, Traffic Engineer with the City of Billings Public Works Engineering Division, presented on the bicycle boulevard design. The design is not finalized yet, they are going to do further traffic studies to determine needed levels of traffic calming. The tentative name for the project is the Lyman Ave. bike boulevard.

The idea of building bike boulevards came up in 2017 Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan as part of the short-term project list.

The Lyman Ave Bike Boulevard should be complete by this time next year.

“Bike boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycle and pedestrian travel priority.” Default speed limits on local roads are 25 mph. A lot of intersections on local streets are uncontrolled which can be stressful for people biking and driving so the goal is to manage those through speed and volume management and intersection enhancement. Billings-specific wayfinding signage will also be incorporated.

The first section is between Arvin Rd. and 21<sup>st</sup> St. W along Lyman Ave. Lyman Ave. dead ends, so while using only stop signs to stop cross traffic is not ideal, doing so in this section may be ok as there is not much opportunity for cut-through traffic.

The next section is down 21<sup>st</sup> St. W along the east side of St. Francis middle school. 21<sup>st</sup> St. W is gravel road south of Colton. It is not in the project budget to pave it. Kristi asked if Billings TrailNet would be able to pay to pave that said Erin said he will look into it.

There is an existing bridge that drops down into Rose Park and a trail will take users to Ave. D. There will be a couple of stop signs added to stop through traffic on Ave. D. There is an existing stop light at 19<sup>th</sup> St. W and they want to add some sort of enhanced crossing at 17<sup>th</sup> St. W. The bicycle boulevard will connect to West Park Promenade and the new apartment complex located there. They are planning to add some sort of an enhanced crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> St. W and the bicycle boulevard will connect to bike lanes on 13<sup>th</sup> St. W.

The section between 12<sup>th</sup> St. W and Virginia Ave. are critical to the success of the project as traffic calming is needed in that section. The Engineering Division is doing traffic counts to determine if diverters will work. It is too long a stretch to only put stop signs. Traffic circles will be more expensive and planters and little tree can become trash collectors if there is no commitment from the neighborhood to help with upkeep.

Anna pointed out that there is a lot of traffic for school at Senior and Daylis stadium during school hours and on the weekends. Anna offered to help reach out to task force or neighborhoods so to help get input from the neighborhood on traffic calming options.

Right now, the bicycle boulevard is planned to go up to the Pioneer Park parking lot at the Zimmerman Center. There are two options going through the park-the concrete trail or the paved asphalt trail. There are pluses and minuses to both of the routes. The 6 ft. concrete trail (northern alignment) is pretty tight for biking and it passes through a congested area of the park. The asphalt path (southern alignment) is wider, but less smooth and there is a gate at the entrance of 3<sup>rd</sup> St. W. The Parks Department would be amenable to putting a removal bollard to allow people biking to pass through in place of the existing fence. East of the park, the southern alignment would go along Ave. C to 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. N and pass by McKinley Elementary, but would also pass through some a street that is owned by Billings Clinic so they could shut down the road at any time if agreements are not put into place. There is an existing signal at N 27<sup>th</sup> St. to cross and stop signs already exist along the route to North Park. The northern alignment would go along Ave. E to 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. N to N 22 St. to North Park. There might need to be an enhanced crossing added at N. 30<sup>th</sup> St. and 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. N, but the route is more centered between the medical campuses.

Anna liked 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. route – 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. N has a lot of congestion through Billings Clinic area. There could also be a bottle neck situation with McKinley Elementary. There are lots of people speeding through to get to work at the hospital.

Ed mentioned the long wait across N. 30<sup>th</sup> at 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. Ed suggested moving the bicycle boulevard up to Ave. E further west, maybe somewhere on 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Aves. W.

Kristi thought it would be beneficial for kids from North Park Area to be able to ride by McKinley on the bicycle boulevard.

Ed thought that northern alignment could work if the bridge and sidewalk were improved.

Next steps are traffic studies east of Pioneer Park and west of Pioneer Park and looking for a preferred alternative. Erin will either coordinate with Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, or bring the design back to BPAC.

**Suggestions to City Engineering on sidewalk, enhanced crossing, and accessible ramps:**

Even though the suggestions may be too late for inclusion in this year's Capital Improvement Plan projects, BPAC wanted to suggest ideas for sidewalk, enhanced crossing, and accessible ramps.

Previous suggestions included:

Crosswalks at:

- Poly Dr. and 21<sup>st</sup> St. W
- 21<sup>st</sup> St. W and Colton
- Rimrock Rd. near MSUB
- N. 27<sup>th</sup> St.
- Grand Ave
- Cameron Park and Beth

Missing Sidewalk:

- Around 5<sup>th</sup> and Rimrock

Elyse will send list to BPAC to see if there are any other ideas.

**Complete Streets Progress Report:**

Postponed until next time

**Old Business:**

**Utility Bill Funding**

Committee for Safe Routes to School and trails funding is meeting Thursday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December. They are getting testimonials from kids and PTAs to share with the public. Kristi asked Anna for information about kids who have been hit.

Letter of support-Kristi sent out suggestions for letter from BPAC. Group discussed adding in more information about trails. Elyse will ask if it should be one page, otherwise it will be two pages.

This item will not come to City Council until February or March so that attorney general has time to give an opinion on it.

**Future agenda items:**

Complete Streets Progress report

Check in on utility bill funding

27<sup>th</sup> St. overpass – bike ped ideas around overpass – Kristi mentioned landscape designers are coming together to figure out how to make a potential overpass better. Elyse will figure out how to get this on the agenda

Information from YRPA

**Other business:**

Ed will write notes of congratulations notes to Debi Meling and CM Joy on behalf of BPAC.

27<sup>th</sup> St. RR crossing meeting tonight at 4:30 pm with MDT

Kristi moved to adjourn, Liana Susott, BPAC member, seconded. **Meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.**