



**BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
CITY OF BILLINGS AND
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA**



VIDEO CONFERENCE FORMAT

APRIL 27, 2021 MEETING TIME: 11:30 a.m.
Miller Building 1st Floor Conference Room
2825 3rd Avenue North
Billings, Montana 59101

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

****ATTENTION****

Due to the COVID-19 health concerns, this meeting will be held in a virtual videoconferencing environment. The Bicycle Pedestrian Committee members will attend the meeting via a remote location, using a virtual meeting method. The regular meeting rooms will be closed during the meeting. In order to honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know in Article II, sections 8 and 9, of the Montana Constitution, the City/County Planning Division is making every effort to meet the requirements of the open meeting laws.

Citizens are invited to:

- Review the Agenda Packet on the City's website at: <https://ci.billings.mt.us/117/Agendas-Minutes>
- View the meeting live online at Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260>

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 the meeting date. All emails received prior to this time will be read into the record for the public hearing. Comments may be submitted by:

- Mail: City/County Planning Division, 2825 3rd Ave N 4th Floor, Billings, MT 5910
• Email: bartleyr@billingsmt.gov
- Call in during the Public Comment periods as indicated on the agenda:
 - Citizens may call in during specific Public Comment periods at **406.237.6165**.
All callers will be placed 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 limited to 3 minutes of testimony as is customary. Future delivery methods may be explored as best practice is learned.

Please direct questions to Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner at monate@billingsmt.gov or 406-247-8637 Thank you!

1. **Call to Order: Chairman**
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD** – As required (minute maximum per person.) *Any member of the public may be heard on any subject that is not on the agenda. The Bicycle Pedestrian Committee will not take any action on these items at this time, but could choose to add an item to the next meeting's agenda for discussion.*
Attendees: Please sign in on the provided meeting attendance sheet.
 - a. Comments on items not on the agenda and requests to add items to future agendas.
 - b. Comments received by the Active Transportation Planner online, by phone, or by email.
3. **Approval of the minutes of March 23, 2021, and February 23, 2021.**
4. **New Business**
 - a. Presentation. Healthy By Design Healthy Connections snow shoveling effort. Melissa Henderson, Community Health Improvement Manager, presenting.

i. Public Comment.

b. Discussion Update. Methods by which members of the public can share bicycle and pedestrian-related concerns. BPAC members discussing.

i. Public Comment.

5. **Old Business**

a. Discussion Update. Debrief of Council Safe Routes to School/trails funding discussion. BPAC members discussing.

i. Public Comment.

b. Presentation. 27th St. crossing. Ed Gulick, BPAC Member, presenting.

i. Public Comment.

6. **Other Business**

7. **Future Agenda Items**

a. Annual Presentation to Governing Bodies.

8. **Adjournment**

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee

3.

Meeting Date: 04/27/2021

Subject

Approval of the minutes of March 23, 2021, and February 23, 2021.

Attachments

Draft March 2021 BPAC minutes

Draft February BPAC Minutes



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 23, 2021 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: Scott Barber, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:31 am

Members present: Anna O'Donnell, City; Ed Gulick, Planning Board.

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk.

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 –
A resident emailed Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, and Public Works about a crosswalk across Poly Drive near St. Francis School. The resident said there is no crosswalk between Poly Drive School and 17th St. W. Her kids would like to cross Poly after school, but she is hesitant to let them with no crosswalk.

Ed Gulick, BPAC member, asked if this should be passed onto the Safe Routes to School group in Billings. Elyse said she could pass it on.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of February 23, 2021: A quorum was not present, so BPAC was not able to approve the minutes February 2021 minutes.

Old Business:

I-90 Bridge letter

BPAC reviewed the draft of the I-90 bridge letter to Council. Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Vice-Chair, suggested adding a reference to the car pile up that happened on the bridge.

Letter of support for public funding for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Billings.

Without a quorum present, BPAC was not able to vote to approve this item. The members present noted that they did not want to miss the deadline to get this letter in ahead of the April 19 City Council meeting where the Public Works Department would be discussing potential funding sources for trails and Safe Routes to School. They wanted to look into how to get this letter out ahead of the

meeting and asked if they could call a special meeting. Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, said she would look into the options and advise BPAC on how they could proceed.

27th St. Crossing

There was a question brought up about whether or not it was appropriate for Ed to make a presentation about the 27th Street Crossing project as he is also running for City Council. Scott Barber, BPAC Chair, suggested discussing this during the next meeting when a quorum would hopefully be present to vote on whether Ed could give the presentation. The item was tabled for the April BPAC meeting.

New Business:

Snow removal issues in the City

BPAC members discussed the email that a resident sent last month saying that poor snow removal along sidewalks caused challenges for pedestrians. The resident suggested more proactive enforcement of City code requiring snow shoveling within 24 hours of a snow storm.

BPAC members discussed that there are things that can be done to improve winter walking conditions short of enforcement. A campaign might be helpful.

Scott suggested advertising Snow Buddies, the City's program to match volunteers to residents who are unable to shovel their sidewalks, more and trying to get businesses involved. As a business owner, he said he thought it would be nice to send his employees out in the morning in their branded gear to help advertise the business and do something good for the community. BPAC discussed sending out a direct mailer informing people of why they should clear walks and explaining that City code requires it be done within 24 hours.

Elyse mentioned that Healthy By Design is working on the same issue from a similar perspective. The group agreed they would like to have a Healthy By Design representative attend the next BPAC meeting to discuss how what their group is already working on.

Methods by which members of the public can share bicycle and pedestrian-related concerns

This item was tabled until the next meeting as the BPAC member who wanted to discuss it was not able to attend the meeting.

Future agenda items:

Letter urging City Council to come up with funding options for Safe Routes to School and trails

27th St. Crossing – implications to walkability.

Methods by which members of the public can share bicycle and pedestrian-related concerns

Annual presentation to the governing bodies including City Council, the County Commissioners, and Planning Board.

Other business:

Anna asked about the KIM events for the semester and Elyse shared that KIM would have bike repair events at Medicine Crow Middle School, Central Heights Elementary, Big Sky Elementary, Bench Elementary, and Orchard Elementary. The schools are selected by a steering committee with a focus on Title I schools where a high percentage of students receive free or reduced lunch.

Anna asked if BPAC would be able to meet in person again. Elyse said she would look into opportunities to do so.

Scott said he was going to send a summary of each BPAC meeting to City Council to help keep an open line of communication with Councilmembers. The summary would include a brief summary of the meeting, contact information for Scott, and a link to draft minutes.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at approximately 12:20 p.m.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 23, 2021 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am

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DRAFT

Call to order: Scott Barber, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 am

Members present: Anna O'Donnell, City; Liana Susott, County; Kristi Drake, City; Dorothy Dupree, County; Rose Cook, County; Ed Gulick, Planning Board.

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Robbin Bartley, Administrative Support.

Scott Barber, BPAC Chair, moved to add I-90 bridges to agenda. Rose Cook, BPAC member, seconded. Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Vice-Chair, asked if there would be time and who would give the update. Kristi Drake, BPAC member, said she could give an update. The motion passed unanimously.

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 –**
A resident emailed Mayor Cole to say that it is hard to walk around Billings during the winter. Snow shoveling is currently required within 24 hours of a snow event, but this code is not actively enforced. Enforcement is based on complaint. The City doesn't currently have the staff to enforce proactively. BPAC wanted to add this topic to the agenda next month. Kristi also wanted to talk about how people get in touch with the City to share concerns.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of January 26, 2021: Ed Gulick, BPAC member, motioned to approve the minutes. Kristi Drake, BPAC member, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study

Last meeting, Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, gave the presentation on the Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study. BPAC discussed sending a letter in support of bike/scooter share to City Council which is why it was put on the agenda for this month. The study is currently going through the review process and was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee, Planning

Board, City Council, and the County Commissioners. The study was approved by City Council by one vote. Approving the study does not commit the City to implementing bike/scooter share right now.

Kristi asked why BPAC waited until after the study went to City Council to send a letter about the bike/scooter share study. Elyse said that was not what BPAC had done in the past, but it was something they could look at doing in the future.

Ed asked if bike/scooter share implementation would have to be brought forward by Council Initiative. Elyse said she was not sure and would have to learn more to answer the question.

Dorothy Dupree, BPAC member, suggested putting forth suggestions as advisory committee more proactively.

Ed thought that downtown might need to be more bike friendly before bike/scooter share goes into place, but bike/scooter share could be rolled out hand-in-hand with new infrastructure.

The discussion at the last meeting was that BPAC would send a letter to Council saying they support the plan, but that more bicycle infrastructure needs to be implemented first. The letter should also state where the funding for the study came from.

Moving forward, BPAC wants to send a letter to the governing bodies before plans go for adoption. The group also suggested attending meetings via Zoom or in person to speak in favor of plans.

Dorothy moved to send a letter to City Council before March 18 about bike share. Ed seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

During public comment, Councilmember Penny Ronning called in and thanked BPAC members for their service. She suggested a public information officer would help with spreading information. She cautioned mentioning scooter share in the letter as it was not heavily recommended in the study and said emphasizing bike share would be better. She encouraged calling Council, not just emailing. Councilmembers get so many emails that calls are good. Council counts on the help of advisory members as council deals with so much.

New Business:

Complete Streets Progress Report

Elyse shared information from the 2020 Complete Streets Progress Report. There is no one design for a complete street, but they can include a variety of elements including sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, transit stops, median islands, safe crossings, curb extensions, etc. The idea is to build streets that make it safe for everyone to get to their everyday destinations.

The City of Billings policy was adopted in 2011 and updated in 2016.

Performance measures from the report included bicycle and pedestrian counts and crashes, sidewalk inventory, and a graph of the number of miles of trails and bike lanes added each year in Billings. Of note, fatal crashes involving pedestrians across the county reached record numbers across the country in 2018, as they did in Billings. Crashes involving bicyclists have decreased slightly even with more people bicycling. There are just under 50 miles of shared use paths in Billings. Funding has decreased due to changes in a federal program. Data shows that transit continues to be an essential service for students, people with disabilities, and seniors.

The Community Health Needs Assessment provides data from Yellowstone County every three years and shows that more people are overweight and fewer people are meeting physical activity

recommendations than 3 years ago. Active transportation can be a way to help improve these numbers.

Anna asked if there was data available to track the connection between obesity and mental health in Yellowstone County. Elyse directed her to the Yellowstone County Community Health Needs Assessment.

I90 Yellowstone River Project Billings

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is going to be rebuilding the I-90 bridge. Billings TrailNet began discussing this issue with MDT in 2013 and requested bike/ped be added onto the bridge. No bike/ped facilities are currently included. The bridge is designed and MDT is planning to build it starting this fall.

Kristi would like to have BPAC address this. Anna agrees that infrastructure needs to include everyone and agrees on sending a letter.

There was interest in having a rendering of what bike/ped facilities on the bridge would look like, but that might be hard to get as the City is not the client for the project.

MDT also said that they were planning to close the Jim Dutcher trail for two years during the bridge construction.

Pam Ellis called in during public comment and said that the Bypass was on the drawing board for twenty years. Pam donated a bench to Dover Park and asked them what they were going to do about the bridge coming through their park. That got the river group going and the reason there is bike/ped access at all on the bridge is because Yellowstone River Parks Association got it going. She said this is a 20-year plan that was funded by the federal government and that BPAC was late to the party. Councilmembers Ewalt and Neese were on the Heights task force all along. There were multiple public meetings. She said BPAC could go ahead with a letter, but with 20 years of planning they were too late.

BPAC members discussed that the bridge Ms. Ellis called in about was a different bridge than the one they were talking about.

Ed moved to create a letter to the City and County advising them to contact MDT and say that closing down the Jim Dutcher trail for two years is unacceptable and to investigate the opportunity to have a multiuse path option on the side of the interstate bridge. Dorothy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Future agenda items:

Presentation on 27th St. crossing

Sending a letter of recommendation to City Council to find bike/ped infrastructure.

Other business:

- HB420- Requires MDT to adopt rules defining and specifying standards for designated bicycle lanes and bicycle routes. Billings Public Works Director suggests referencing national standards such as AASHTO and NACTO instead.

Adjournment

Ed moved to adjourn, Kristi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.