



**Billings Technical Advisory Committee
Virtual Video Conference Meeting 10:30 AM
DRAFT Meeting Minutes—JANUARY 21, 2021**

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 1st 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	X	Clark Snyder, Environmental Health RiverStone Health	
Katie Potts Urban Planning Section, MDT	X	Carol Strizich, Supervisor Urban Planning Section, MDT	
Parker Osterloh Urban Planning Section, MDT	X	Alan Woodmansey, Federal Highways	
Kurtis Schnieber, MDT	x	Ryan Hammon, FHWA	

Others Participating

Tammy Deines, Planning Clerk; Lora Mattox Transportation Planner; Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner. Alta Consultants Mack Drayich and Mike Sellinger.

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 Thursday, January 21, 2021. 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) 237-6165**. 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 January 7, 2021

Motion

Mike Black made a motion and it was seconded by Debi Meling to approve the minutes of January 7, 2021 as submitted. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business:

4a. Approval of the Agenda

Motion

It was moved and seconded to approve the January 21, 2021 meeting agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

4b. Motion/Recommendation. Billings Area Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study. Elyse Monat Active Transportation Planner, presenting.

Active Transportation Planner Elyse Monat opened this agenda item and introduced Alta Consultants Mack Drayich and Mike Sellinger. This study considered the possibility of a Bike and Scooter Share program in the Billings area.

Mack Drayich, Alta Consultant, opened a presentation to share the results of the study.

Definition: A network of shared bicycles/scooters available for short-term use, usually 15-45 minutes.

Benefits: Reduction of Emissions; Supplements transit system; contributes to equitable transportation systems; invites improved community health; contributes to “safety in numbers” effect for a bicyclists.

Planning Process: considered existing conditions and areas of demand in the Billings area. Obtained public input and collaborated with the Steering Committee.

Desired Outcomes: Enhance transit system; Contributed to more equitable transportation system; promote participation in active transportation; increase visibility and awareness of alternate modes; provide a new way for visitors to explore Billings;

Public Engagement: Virtual engagement through Billings Bike & Scooter Share Survey; directed interested citizens to an interactive map to indicated where they would like to have access to bike and scooter share. 259 survey responses and 62 pins on the interactive map. There was mixed support as far as interest through the survey. 53% interested in seeing bike/scooter share in Billings. Safety and lack of infrastructure are the two largest concerns.

Demand Analysis: Determine areas with the greatest need and where stations may be the most appropriate.

Equity Analysis Map-Household income, housing tenure, access to vehicles. Areas where the population will benefit the most.

Mike Sellinger, Alta Planning Associate, continued with the presentation.

Study Recommendations:

System Type: Hybrid Bike Share System- “smart bike” system. Stations called hubs consist of branded racks for parking bike share bikes.

Electric Assist Bikes: provide a wider geographic coverage; meets strong community preference for e-bikers; more comfortable for riders with mobility challenges

System Governance: Turnkey or Publicly Owned/Private Operated

Turnkey System Benefits: little staff capacity and capital investment; Faster timeline for implementation; mixed fleet options are typical

City Ownership: Offers high degree of control over system design, station siting, and pricing/payment policy; more opportunity for seamless integration with MET transit services.

Service Area & Station Locations:

Initial Service Area: Downtown and MSU-Billings to include 140-200 electric assist smart bikes spread between 17 stations of 5-15 bikes each.

Proposed expansion areas: residential areas south and west of downtown; South Park; Terry Park; Highland Park; Moss Mansion museum

Equity Program for Bike Share: Income based discounts; cash payment; alternative payment structures; eliminate hidden fees; targeted marketing

Costs & Revenue:

Costs: Launch; Capital: Operations

Revenue Sources: User fees; Advertising/Sponsorship; Public funding sources; Federal and State grant programs

Planned Review Schedule – Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study

TAC	1/21/21	Recommendation
Planning Board #1	1/26/21	Presentation/Public Hearing
Planning Board #2	2/9/21	Recommendation
City Council Work Session	2/16/21	Presentation
City Council	2/22/21	Consent agenda item
Commissioners Discussion	2/18/21	
Commissioners	2/23/21	Presentation and Recommendation
PCC	3/18/21	Presentation and Final Action

Discussion

Katie Potts, MDT, said they would provide comments to Scott Walker. MDT’s comments note increased use and share use path use and maintenance of paths during winter months with snow removal. She stressed the importance of ADA compliance to ensure there is adequate clear space with the bike share parking and stations.

Scott Walker said staff wished to glean information to avoid the pitfalls of improper bike parking with bike share programs. He said the bike scooter share and the mobility is focused on the community’s current situation and potential users. He pointed out the BUUILD grant will provide substantial

connections. He said that from a tourist point of view, he sees benefit of having stations downtown and visitors riding the bike trail system from the river to the rims. If marketed properly, this could significantly help to fund the program.

Mack Drzayich said he recently visited Billings and he feels the trails will be an asset for visitors, especially if there is a build out of the network. If the infrastructure exists, the bike-share system would be a benefit. Kurtis Schnieber concurred and said until good bike lanes are in place, the infrastructure might not be ready. Elyse Monat said the plan is posted on the City Website: <https://ci.billings.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/43662/Billings-Bike-Scooter-Share-Feasibility-Study-Draft>.

Rusty Logan said the transit system would be supportive of this type of system. He sees that this presentation is indicative of a natural expansion of the transit system itself. MET's installation of pad locations may potentially provide locations for bike share stations/locations.

Mack Drzayich, Alta, commented on legislation that may expand funds available for these types of systems. Erin Claunch stated the plan going forward is great in theory but ultimately funding will be the driving force.

Ryan Hammon asked if this was contemplated in the last Long Range Transportation Plan. Scott Walker said Scooter Shares inquired about interest about the time the 2018 Transportation Plan was done which triggered this study to be done. Wyeth Friday asked about the program size proposed by the study and noted that the key to bike sharing facility is the stations. Mike Sellinger suggested if there is a smaller funding source, 10 stations and 70 bikes could be done but there will not be as much ridership. The proposed number is needed to obtain 30% fare box recovery fees. Scott Walker asked if in other communities, companies have seeded program costs to get this started. Mike Sellinger said a similar study was conducted in Cedar Rapids, and a company, "You Ride", offered to front a program. He suggested forwarding an RFP to test the waters. He stated he feels the odds are not great without supplementing with public funding sources.

Mike Black said this program has a bit of "sticker shock". Scott Walker said the study identifies all aspects including the costs.

Wyeth Friday stressed the importance of this study providing a baseline for a roadmap for potential bike share companies. Rusty Logan asked how the consultants came to the figures for operational costs. Mike Sellinger said the numbers were derived from other operating systems and said they are able to provide further breakdown of the costs. Rusty said he is curious as to the personnel requirements that were vetted, as there are significant differences between a private company and a public entity that may already have some of the personnel and needs in place. Mike Sellinger concurred and said there may be significant savings in that case.

In response to question by Parker Osterloh, MDT, Mike Sellinger explained that there is GPS technology on the bike and there is a high recovery of missing bikes.

Question was asked regarding Table 7 and the notation of STIP/TIP funding of schedule of funding sources rather than listing the funding sources themselves. Mike Sellinger explained their idea is to get this into the STIP and schedule it into MDT's long-term budget. Katie Potts explained it would be assigned Federal funds if it were included in the STIP. Katie Potts stated she feels this is not accurately represented, as it should not be included in the plan as potential funding opportunities. Lora Mattox suggested pointing to the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan funding sources and working with Elyse Monat to reword the language in the plan. Mike Sellinger said the bill in congress would make Bike Share eligible

for CMAQ funding. Scott Walker asked about the potential for CMAQ funding to be considered as a funding source locally. Katie Potts stated this would have to be considered with research but local match would be needed.

Scott Walker announced the public comment phone number. Staff received no public comments.

Motion

Wyeth Friday made a motion and it was seconded by Mike Black to recommend adoption of the Billings Area Bike and Scooter Share Feasibility Study as presented by staff and include discussion and recommended additions that Alta staff will incorporate into the document.

Discussion

Scott Walker called for discussion. Mike Black voiced concern with the robustness of the funding piece, and said consideration should be given to funding sources and priorities. Scott Walker added this is a draft document and updates will be made to the plan to include today's discussion points. He will forward the updated version to the committee members along with other comments obtained from the governing bodies. Wyeth Friday pointed out the some of the comments forwarded during plan analysis and the public outreach were related to bicycling safety in the community. He stressed the importance of having safety improvements in place for users, and said he does not want to diminish the progress that has been made but more is needed.

The motion passes with a unanimous voice vote.

6. Other Business

6a. Updates. Discussion. MET Transit, Rusty Logan, Transit Manager
Rusty Logan said he has no further updates.

Future Agenda Items

There are no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT: 11:32 AM

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

--Tamara L. Deines, Planning Clerk