



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 26, 2022 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am

1st Floor Conference Room of 2825 3rd Ave. N

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: Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 11:30 am.

Members present: Kristi Drake, City; Joan Schey, County; Dave Coppock, Planning Board; Dorothy Dupree, County (attended virtually)

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner.

Public Comment Period:

a. Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas – BPAC members requested that Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, reach out to MDT to give a presentation about their ongoing/future projects

b. Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –

Margy Bonner, BPAC member, commented prior to the meeting via email that there is not a safe crossing at 46th St. W and Rimrock Rd. Elyse sent the comment onto Engineering who said that they would add it to an intersection signal priority study as a standard crosswalk would not be sufficient in this area. This will likely also come up in the Phase 2 Safe Routes to School study.

A resident was concerned about the traffic at Montana 18th St. N. Elyse passed the comment onto MDT as Montana Ave. is their jurisdiction.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of March 22, 2022: Kristi Drake, BPAC member, moved to approve the March 22, 2022 minutes as presented. Joan Schey, BPAC member, seconded. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

New Business:

Safe Routes to School Plan Update. Sara Schooley presenting.

Sara Schooley, a consultant from Toole Design presented the draft Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan Update.

Plan Goals

- Evaluate the current walking and biking conditions for students
- Identify barriers or issues that might discourage students from walking or biking
- Recommend policy or programmatic changes that would encourage more students to walk or bike to school
- Develop a list of prioritized projects that can be built to improve walking and biking conditions for students
- Create walking route maps for all 22 public elementary schools in Billings

Programmatic recommendations

- Build, define, and leverage partnerships
- Create a Billings SRTS toolkit
- Build an inclusive education campaign to encourage walking and biking to school
- Consider impacts on students walking and biking when creating and updating school policies

Proposed projects

- In the plan, each school has a project map with areas of concern and observed/reported safety concerns.
- There is an infrastructure toolkit that cross references each type of concern with types of infrastructure projects that could help address the concern
 - The infrastructure toolkit addresses what the infrastructure is, how Billings decides to install that type of infrastructure, about how much it costs, and how long it takes to install

Project Prioritization

- Projects were ranked based on traffic safety, feasibility, demand, and equity. These categories were chosen by the Project Oversight Committee.
- Data points were chosen to be ones that are collected on a regular basis so that the prioritization process can be easily repeated

School walking route maps

- The goal is to have them distributed at the beginning of the school year
- Routes were identified based on locations of sidewalks, crossing guard locations, speeds, etc.
- Each map has a back page with walking and biking tips

Appendices include:

- Plan and policy review
- School Summaries –
 - Includes best guess as to what infrastructure should be for each location
 - Information from crossing guards and principals
 - Information from webmaps
- Webmap summary

Questions:

Were there any surprises from the principals?

A: Principals are really the eyes and ears of the school. They talked about perceived safety issues among families such trash along the route to school and kids fighting with other kids, etc. The two dismissals also make it hard to have older kids walk younger kids home. The visual check policy can also be a barrier to letting kids walk home.

Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Chair, suggested reaching out to the task forces for help distributing the walking route maps to schools.

During public comment, Jenna Solomon commented that one of the Yellowstone County's SRTS committee's goals was to create a website with all information in one place.

Billings TrailNet efforts. Kristi Drake presenting.

Kristi gave a presentation about Billings TrailNet.

Billings TrailNet (BTN) is a non-profit that provides match for trail projects

They have contributed \$757,000 to trails

They have several committees including:

- Future projects committee
 - Audience: government agencies (MDT, City Engineering)
 - Goal: To ensure non-motorized transportation projects are prioritized with City improvements
 - Created a GIS map of future projects
- Advocacy
 - Audience: public and elected officials
 - Goal: Advocate for and support pursuit of dedicated public funding for trails
 - Develop and implement a plan dedicated to raising public support for trails
 - As part of trail marketing, they have created 7 reasons of how trails benefit the community

Billings TrailNet events include:

- Fundraisers
- Supporter fundraising events
- Membership events
- Trail clean ups

Fundraising is done through:

- Memberships
- Sponsorships
- Fundraisers
- Donations
- Endowment
- Donations for specific trails

Kristi shared how several groups are working together towards nonmotorized transportation including the BTN future projects committee, the advocacy committee, BPAC, Chamber Trails Committee, Parks and Trails Mill Levy effort, and City/County Planning.

Anna suggesting adding mental health to the list of trail benefits.

Dorothy Dupree, BPAC Vice-Chair, said that the connection with health needs to be made.

Jenna Solomon commented that the suicide prevention coalition might be a good connection for the mental health connection.

Commuter Challenge Survey. Dorothy Dupree presenting.

Dorothy created a short survey for use at the Commuter Challenge kickoff party.

BPAC suggested also having a table at the Active Life Festival, 406 racing events, etc.

They would also like to send this to the Planning Division's email list serve and maybe include it in the Public Works utility bill.

The group suggested adding a question at the end about one place that is the respondents' biggest concerns in regard to active transportation.

Dave Coppock, BPAC member, suggested adding the survey to run sign ups

Old Business:

BPAC work plan

BPAC will discuss the work plan next meeting. BPAC members should continue adding ideas to the spreadsheet for consideration.

Other Business:

BPAC members want City Council members at BPAC – Kristi said she has made personal invite before and that has been effective.

Future agenda items:

BPAC work plan

MDT presentation

Adjournment Dave moved to adjourn and Joan seconded. All voted in favor.