

CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

“Serving Billings, Broadview, and Yellowstone County”

Board Attendance Roster: Please note: “E” stands for excused absence, “A” stands for un-excused absence, “1” stands for present, “Z” stands for Zoom participation. **BYLAWS, YELLOWSTONE COUNTY BOARD OF PLANNING, (Amended. May 25, 2004) Section 4. Absences and Removal A.** Each member shall inform the Planning Director at least one day before the meeting of his/her inability to attend a Board or Committee meeting. Such an absence shall be considered an excused absence. If any Board member accrues three (3) or more consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings, notice of which has been given at his/her usual place of work or residence, or by announcement at a meeting attended by him/her, the President may call such absences to the attention of the Board which may then recommend to the appointing authority that such member be asked to resign and that another person be appointed to serve out the unexpired term. Schedule: (** denotes a Wednesday meeting)

	Position	01/11/2022	01/25/2022	02/08/2022	02/22/2022	03/08/2022	03/22/2022	04/12/2022	04/26/2022	05/10/2022	05/24/2022	06/14/2022	06/28/2022	07/12/2022	07/26/2022	08/09/2022	08/23/2022	09/13/2022	09/27/2022	10/27/2022	10/25/2022	11/08/2022	11/22/2022	12/13/2022
Teresa Larsen	Mayor/Billings Ward I	1	1	-	-	-	1	E	E	x	x	1	1	E	1	E	E	1	E	-	-	E		
Roger Gravgard	Mayor/Billings Ward II	1	1	-	-	-	1	1		x	x	1	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	-	-	1		
Dennie Stephenson	Mayor/Billings Ward III	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	x	x	E	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	1		
Vacant	Mayor/Billings Ward IV	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x	x	x		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-		
Jon Thompson	Mayor/Billings Ward V	1	E	-	-	-	E	1	1	x	x	E	1	E	1	E	1	E	E	-	-	1		
Troy Boucher	YC District 1	1	1	-	-	-	E	A		x	x	A	A	E	1	E	E		1	-	-	A		
Dennis Cook	YC District 2	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	x	x	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	E		
Vacant	YC District 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacant	YC District 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woody Woods	YC District 5	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	x		1	1	1	1	1		1	-	-	1		
Vacant	YC District 6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jarett Hillius	YC District 7	1	E	-	-	-	1	1	1	x	x	1	1	1	E	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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2. Approval of Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes: September 27, 2022. Approval of the minutes will be moved to the November 22, Planning Board meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

4. Public Comment: President Cook asked if there was anyone wishing to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting. He stated any member of the public might be heard on any subject that is not on the agenda; the Planning Board will not take any action on these items at this time, but could choose to add an item to the next meeting agenda for discussion. There were no public comments.

5- 6. Disclosure of Outside (Ex Parte) Communication or Conflicts of Interest– Board Members and Planning Staff. There were no disclosures of outside communication or conflicts of interest. There was none.

7. OLD BUSINESS –There is no Old Business.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. Public Hearing. Staff Presentation. City of Billings MET Transit-5 Year Transit Development Program. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator, Rusty Logan, MET Transit Manager. Bill Troe, SRF Consulting

Rusty Logan introduced Bill Troe, SRF Consulting, and said they are considering aspects of the transit plan in comparison to other agencies in order to make recommendations. Bill Troe, SRF Consulting opened with a presentation.

Inputs to Decision Making:

- **Current system performance**–address unproductive redundancies
- **Public input engagement opportunities**–Several community meetings have been held and a community survey conducted
- **Funding available** (Federal, State, Local) There is an anticipated 30% increase in future budget increase via the Federal HI ways Transportation Bill. Anticipate LOCAL funding to match
- **Benefits**–costs of alternate ideas

Service Improvement Recommendations

- **Route Redesign Components** –considering current budget and reallocating revenues to better cover the primary denser areas of the community.
- **Service Expansion Components**–cleanup of the current operation schedule to fill in gaps to promote a more consistent route schedule. Extended hours added to the end of the service day.
- **Add Frequency to the Core Network**–30 minute service
- **Migration to a designated stop system** with some modifications for those that have mobility issues.

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Benefits of Improved Frequency

- 18,900 additional jobs have access to 30 minutes service; 38,400 people have access to 30 minute service

Limited Consideration for Service Area Expansion

- Focus is on Transit Supportive areas-3 households per acre, 4 employees per acre
- Frequency Focus areas considers current ridership
- Current Service Area Covers MOST of City limits-County Coordination/funding Lockwood Transit Service concepts-flex zone?
- Reduced Service Areas-Current ridership is lower

Implementing the Redesign

- Complete the plan approval process
- Develop detailed route time schedule: stops, transit centers
- Install/Relocate Signs/Benches/Shelters
- Expand Workforce/Prepare driver assignments: estimated 5 new driver positions.

Discussion

In response to question by Board member Thompson, Bill Troe gave further explanation of the designated stop concept. Board member Thompson asked if the Federal funding increases will provide funding for the foreseeable future. Bill Troe said it is his experience that subsequent Transportation Bills generally do not take funds away and he feels confident of the 3-4% increase. Board member Woods voiced concern with the designated stops and the expectation that a ¼ mile walk to a designated stop is acceptable, especially during the winter and inclement weather. He pointed out that although commercial businesses are fairly consistent with snow removal, residents often do not clear the snow on sidewalks. Residential snow on sidewalk. Rusty Logan said there is special designation for riders needing accommodations as they may be eligible for paratransit service upon request. Board member Woods commented on the future opening of the Billings Bypass and a transit loop route into the Heights may be a consideration. In response to a request by Director Friday, Rusty Logan reviewed the approval schedule with the Planning Board on November 22, followed by City Council, the Board of County Commissioners, and PCC adoption in December. He said they are optimistically looking towards July 2023 for implementation. They recently completed a training facility to train potential employees for CDL licensing to help fill open driver positions.

Public Hearing

Board member Woods opened the public hearing and asked if there is anyone wishing to speak in favor or against the City of Billings MET Transit-5 Year Transit Development Program. There was none. The public hearing is closed. The Planning Board will forward a motion and recommendation to PCC during the November 22, 2022 meeting.

9. OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Planning Board Nomination Committee: This year's committee members are Board member Roger Gravgaard, Board member Troy Boucher, and Board member Dennie Stephenson. Recommendations for officers will be made during the November 22, 2022 meeting.

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b. Scott Walker, Transportation Coordinator. New Transportation project. Grand Avenue to 62nd Street West. Scott Walker explained said there is CMAQ air quality funds and urban monies available for new projects to be considered within the Transportation Plan. The City and County Public Works Departments have discussed and coordinated together to present a City/County project for improvements to Grand Avenue from 41st Street West to 62nd Street West. This project meets the criterion for consideration due to safety issues, traffic congestion, three area schools, and the lack of bike and pedestrian facilities. A letter will be sent to MDT and FWHA asking for inclusion of parcels that are not “on system” to be included to promote connectivity. Potential improvements may include 3-lane sections, bike pedestrian facilities, sidewalks, and signalization. In response to question by Board member Woods, Scott Walker said right-of-way issues will be addressed in the design and engineering of this project. On another note, Board member Thompson asked if the Zoo Drive overpass will be widened as there is significant traffic stacking during rush hours and Scott Walker said widening was not included in the initial project design.

c. Wyeth Friday, Director, PCSD, City of Billings Capital Improvement Plan FY24-FY28. The CIP is a five-year program that identifies needs for construction of capital projects or improvements to the City’s infrastructure. Each update is created with input from the public and direction from the City Council. Director Friday directed the Planning Board to the City of Billings website: <https://www.billingsmt.gov/2662/Capital-Improvement-Plan-CIP#:~:text=The%20CIP%20is%20a%20five,direction%20from%20the%20City%20Council>.

Hyperlinks to the proposed FY24-FY28 CIP are available on this page along with the [FY24 CIP Project Map](#). Members are encouraged to try the map and forward comments to the City or Planning staff.

