



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 25, 2023 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.

APPROVED BY A MOTION ON MAY 23, 2023

- Call to order:** Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:31 am.
- Members present:** Dave Coppock, Planning Board; Jason Wood, County; Anna O'Donnell, City; Kristi Drake, City; Margy Bonner, City; Joan Schey, County.
- Others present:** Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, member of the public as seen on the attached sign-in sheet

Public Comment Period:

a. Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –

Kristi Drake, BPAC member, sent a message to BPAC about adding etiquette messaging to a future agenda. As she was reviewing comments from survey, there were several people who mentioned etiquette. Kristi wants to have a plan and execute it soon to implement an etiquette campaign. What are the universally accepted rules for etiquette?

Dave Coppock, BPAC member, had a request from the public – to have City Parks look at improving the trailhead at Meyers Trail at Country club. It will connect with the Skyline trail. Particularly, the requestor wants steps to go in there. Margy Bonner, BPAC member, suggested maybe the Rimrunners could do this as part of a volunteer day. Anna O'Donnell, BPAC member, suggested that BPAC go out and do a work day for something like this and take pictures to market on social media.

Sarah Keller, member of the public, came to BPAC to advocate for protected bike lanes for downtown roads, which she said are shown to not be that much more expensive but lots of benefits and wouldn't take away too many parking spaces. She said she feels the protected bike lanes need to be put on designs for two-way conversions before public hearings in order to make it happen. Margy moved that BPAC send a letter to Engineering with a copy to City Council indicating that BPAC's official position is that the design on the conversion should have protected bike lanes either as bollards, curbs, etc., beyond just striping with an actual physical barrier of some type. Kristi seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Margy will write the letter.

It was noted that there is also a meeting tomorrow about the effort to get protected bike lanes downtown.

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

A parent sent a request to Public Works for a sign that marks the crosswalk near Highland Elementary. Public Works is following up with the parent.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of March 28, 2023: Anna moved to accept the minutes, Jason Woods, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor.

Old Business:

Crash Data Review and Mapping

Crash report was not received yet for March. Elyse will send it along when she receives it and BPAC can map it next month.

Review of BPAC public input survey and categorization

BPAC members reviewed their categories that they created about the public input data.

Kristi:

Crosswalks

Connections

8 comments about motorist laws and enforcement

6 safety

3 crime

3 roundabout safety

3 conflict between pedestrians and bicyclists

3 lighting on the trail

1 traffic signal recognition of cyclists

1 painting and maintaining bike route markings

A lot about sidewalks

Dave:

Law enforcement

Maintenance

Public Safety

Infrastructure

Jason:

Laws

Traffic or pedestrian control devices

Other

Anna:

Safety

Lighting

Maintenance

Infrastructure

Nikki:

Policing

Maintenance
Lights on trails
Separation of vehicles and bikes

BPAC wants to make a public announcement thanking people for completing the survey and make survey results available online.

Margy looked at low hanging fruit.

Margy suggested writing a letter to the police department to say enforcement came up as a big issue, to note areas of concern in terms of personal safety (like bridge by water treatment plant), and also say that they appreciate the bicycle enforcement program.

Someone requested a lighted flash sign at Colton and Zimmerman and it has already been added.

Nikki will draft a letter to send out to people who completed the survey and Elyse can send it out via email.

Margy moved that BPAC issue a public service thank you through the City office for people who filled out the survey and announcing that the information is available online. Jason seconded.

BPAC discussed reopening the survey.

Margy amended motion to say moved that BPAC issue a public service announce working with Victoria Hill to go on the City website, the City Facebook Page and whatever appropriate and the County indicating that BPAC has completed the survey and compiled the results and that they are available at a particular link and that information be people can continue to access the survey and that the announcement also thank the members of the public for participating in the survey. And lastly that if individuals wish to, they can continue to fill out the survey. Margy would like the letter to include contact information so that people can make comments that way as well and the time and place of the meetings and to include action items. Jason seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

Margy moved that BPAC write a letter to the police department indicating that BPAC has completed the survey and that one of the major factors is traffic enforcement and BPAC would request that with the public safety mill levy that emphasis be given on traffic enforcement. And also thank them for the bicycle patrol and indicate that BPAC also received comments on the issues in parks and trails and maybe that BPAC could also point out safety issues with the tunnels. Anna seconded. She said she would write the letter. All voted in favor.

Kristi offered to write the public service announcement thanking people.

Nikki will check into Yellowstone County news to see how the information can get out.

New Business:

Transportation Alternatives Grant Applications

Lora Mattox, Transportation Planner, spoke with BPAC about the Transportation Alternatives process. The MPOs were granted transportation alternatives money. Billings has over \$6 million for the cycle. The cycle closed April 12. The one application came in from the County for a little over a mile of sidewalk on Old Hardin Rd and the other came from the City for the Stagecoach Trail. There is enough TA money to cover both of the applications. There will be a public hearing at the Planning board and the applications will run through the local project approval. The City can get lag certified for the Stagecoach trail so that the City can run the project which will save time, but the County is not lag certified so MDT will construct the sidewalk. Lora hopes that the projects will be approved at

the August Highway Commission meeting. They need to let MDT know that the City will meet ADA as much as possible, but might have to have some exceptions given the terrain.

The majority of the funding for the Stagecoach trail match is coming from the Park General Fund, and Billings TrailNet has committed \$100,000. Kristi is trying to raise \$50,000 for the project.

Margy brought up a concern on Skyline Trail near Sky Ranch – she and neighbors are concerned the rock wall will block visibility for cyclists and motorists. Margy asked about putting a stop sign there instead of yield. Lora suggested maybe putting in a sign as an early warning sign for this section.

Parks and Trails Mill Levy.

Kristi reported out what she knew about the Parks and Trails Mill levy. City Council met early in April with council retreat and discussed this issue. What Kristi heard today was that they are going to try to go for a bond/mill levy package. The bond would pay for certain parks and possibly the Stagecoach trail.

The statistically valid survey that the Chamber put out was not favorable to any of the funding packages suggested. Kristi mentioned that right now parks and trails are lumped into one funding pot and she would like for these to be separate and for the Planning Division to receive the trail funds.

Chris Kukulski is going to work on getting consensus on funding plan moving forward for Councilmembers that haven't been working on this issue.

Other Business:

Billings was recommended for funding for two Recreational Trails Program grants – one for Rose Park and one for the trail near Lillis Park.

Future agenda items:

Sidewalks

Etiquette campaign – Margy will do research on etiquette

The meeting adjourned.