



## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County  
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 23, 2023 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room of 2825 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:** Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at about 11:30 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:** Scott Walker, Transportation Planning Coordinator and Chris Hertz, Staff Engineer

### Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**  
A BPAC member mentioned the desire to expand the Heritage Trail to the west.
- b. **Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –**  
None

**Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of April 25, 2023:** Margy Bonner, BPAC member, moved to accept the minutes, Dave Coppock, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor.

### New Business:

#### Sidewalk Funding

Chris Hertz, a staff engineer with Public Works, spoke with BPAC about sidewalk funding. He mentioned that the priority is funding school sidewalks. Chris mentioned that the limiting factor is the availability of contractors to do concrete projects.

Anna O'Donnell, BPAC Chair, asked if there was a way to not put the burden on the property owner for the sidewalk. Chris said that the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) used to be a source of funding. That funding is no longer available. Scott mentioned that Transportation Alternatives might be a source of funding for sidewalks in the future.

Chris mentioned that it is a trade off because current property owners have paid for their sidewalks and might not support subsidizing other homeowner's sidewalks.

Right now sidewalk costs about \$12/sq. foot. Two years ago it was about \$8/sq. The average cost is over \$10,000/property owner. The amount can be paid over 12 years.

There are 6 sidewalk projects being done this year-Virginia Ln., Alkali Creek Rd., 12<sup>th</sup> St. W between Lewis and Grand, 21<sup>st</sup> St. W between Grand and Ave. D, Ave. C between 22<sup>nd</sup> St. W and 24<sup>th</sup> St. W, and Parkview across the street from Lillis Park.

There are three different programs related to sidewalks. The first is the tripper program where they identify trippers that are over a half an inch. The small concrete program fixes small issues like a few broken squares. Then there is the missing sidewalk program. For the small concrete program, Public Works (PW) sends the property owner a letter and if the property owner doesn't do the work, PW does the work and then charges the property owner. If the bill is over \$500, it is spread over 5 years. In the past two years, bid prices came in so high that PW decided not to do the work. Now the City has its own concrete crew to try to keep costs down.

Chris said that he could mention to Parks that the tripper program contractor will be in town and that company could help out with the Big Ditch trail.

The City has an ADA program but that bid came in too high so the City rejected the bid.

Kristi Drake, BPAC member, asked if BPAC should research how other cities pay for sidewalks to help. Chris said that was fine, but guessed other cities run into the same challenges with high prices and contractor availability. The missing sidewalk project is not a big money maker for most contractors.

Typically, projects are bid in November, the district is created in January, and work would start as soon as the weather is ok. This year, the projects were divided up so different contractors could construct different sidewalks.

Projects next year include Plain Jumper, Lyman Ave., and fill in gaps between 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> and Broadwater near Target, and Santiago by Briarwood.

Chris suggested talking to Tim Miller in the County about County sidewalks.

### **Etiquette Campaign**

BPAC discussed the different etiquette issues-trails, dogs, right of way at driveways, etc. Kristi wants to determine what the rules are and how to give that information to the public. She thinks on the trail is the best way. She also suggested radio, newspaper, tv, etc. Anna suggested educating cyclists about etiquette.

From the BPAC survey, people complained about bicyclists not announcing themselves to pedestrians and about pedestrians with earbuds in who don't hear the warning. A message about slower traffic staying on the right would be helpful. Cyclists need to announce their presence. The second would be for pedestrians to be aware of their surroundings. Third thing would be any animals you have are under control. Speed is another issue, especially with e-bikes. Anna suggested the campaign target people who are new to biking.

Kristi suggested that the key points be vetted with the City.

BPAC suggested that there be a speed limit in trails. Jason suggested looking at rules in Florida.

BPAC suggested partnering with bike shops, the trail maps (printed and app), and other organizational websites, via signs, PSAs, etc. to get the word out.

Kristi will wordsmith the messages and then bring the language back to the next BPAC meeting. Jason Wood, BPAC member, will help.

**Old Business:**

**Follow up on Public Survey Action Items**

Kristi passed around the press release. BPAC members approved the press release.

**Crash report from the PD**

BPAC mapped out crash data from the PD on the printed map.

**Other Business:**

None

**Future agenda items:**

Etiquette campaign

Extending Heritage Trail

**Joan motioned to adjourn; Jason seconded. All voted in favor.**