



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am
1st Floor Conference Room of 2825 3rd Ave. N

DRAFT

- Call to order:** Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.
- Members present:** Jason Wood, County; Kristi Drake; City, Margy Bonner, City; Dave Coppock, Planning Board.
- 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 –

Margy Bonner, BPAC member, wanted to add a short discussion on Ped/Bike Master Plan Update to the agenda.

Kristi Drake, BPAC member, requested an update on the SRTS project. Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, will share the information when available. It is currently going through edits.

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

Elyse received two emails from Steve Shandera. He noted the broken concrete trail pieces near Rimrock West Park. He also requested a route over the Sugar Ave. bridge. Elyse said he could request this be added to the ped/bike master plan via the outreach efforts that will be occurring soon. He also asked that the bike lane markings on S. 28th St and the sharrows on Lewis are faded and asked that these be repainted. Elyse passed these along to Public Works. Public Works will repaint the bike lanes and are hoping to get to the sharrows, dependent on staffing and materials.

Elyse also received an inquiry from an office manager whose office faces the trail south of Goodwill asking if the trail could be cleaned up. Elyse sent this on to the Parks Department. Dave Coppock, BPAC member, noted that the Rim runners will clean up on October 6th.

Highland Elementary School's crossing guard quit, and they are concerned about safety on Parkhill. Elyse mentioned that the Safe Routes to School Plan that is currently under development will likely have a recommendation for curb extensions at 8th and Parkhill which should help safety there.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of March 28, 2022: Kristi moved to accept the minutes. Margy seconded. All voted in favor.

Old Business:

Sidewalk funding research

BPAC discussed doing some of this research during the meeting and dividing up cities in Montana to research.

Review and mapping of PD crash data

BPAC members mapped the crashes from July and August

BPAC members discussed having signage downtown that says people can bike on the road.

BPAC discussed how drivers are likely not expecting someone traveling as fast as a bicycle is able on the sidewalk and some crashes happen in cross walks because of that.

New Business:

Crosswalk enforcement

Margy reached out to Stacy Tenny in the City Attorney's office. Stacy gave Margy a lot of information. Margy handed out papers with definitions and laws from City and State.

Crosswalk means:

“that part of a roadway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of curbs, from the edges of the traversable roadway; or

any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated for pedestrians crossing by lines or other markings on the surface.” Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 61-8-102(f) (i) and (ii)

MCA 61-8-502 says:

“Pedestrians' right-of-way in crosswalk -- school children. (1) (a) Except as provided in subsection (1)(b), when traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation, the operator of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way, slowing down or stopping if necessary, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, but a pedestrian may not suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close that it is impossible for the operator to yield. This provision does not apply under the conditions provided in 61-8-503(2).

(b) When a vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or at an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, the operator of a vehicle may make a right-hand turn if the pedestrian is in the opposite half of the roadway and is not in danger.

(2) When a vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or at an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway, the operator of any other vehicle approaching from the rear may not overtake and pass the stopped vehicle.

(3) A person may not operate a vehicle through a column of school children crossing a roadway or past a school crossing guard while the crossing guard is directing the movement of children across a roadway and while the crossing guard is holding an official sign in the stop position.

Margy will talk with the attorney that works with the PD about how this is enforced.

There are lots of roads that don't line up which means there are no unmarked crosswalks.

Stacy Tenny told Margy that the City Manager is the one who decides where crosswalks go, he works at direction of the Council so Stacy said that BPAC should bring these to City Council to get them approved.

The City Code has a ban on jay walking.

The City Code has a prohibition on riding on a sidewalk in a business district, but it refers to outdated districts as the zoning code was recently updated. Elyse will reach out to city attorney about updating the zoning districts in the city code. The prohibition in the CBD is still intact as this zoning district has not changed.

Stacy Tenny also requested additional crossings on Broadwater Ave.

Margy suggested relaying to Stacy that she should let BPAC know if there are contracts that will close trails. Elyse noted that the construction that closed the Colson Park trail was an MDT contract that Stacy would not have reviewed.

E-bikes and trail etiquette

Kristi shared complaints about e-bikes including one person in particular who is rude. Dave shared that other communities have speed limit signs that cap speed at 15 mph. PSAs or volunteers in this area could help.

Margy will ask about this when she speaks with the attorney that works with the PD.

Class 2 e-bike will go out at 20.5 miles per hour, and a Class 3 e-bike goes up to 26 or 27 mph. However, it is possible to deregulate the bike and make them go faster.

BPAC members suggested putting out a speed limit sign. Kristi emailed Mike Pigg to ask if there is a speed limit on trails. BPAC members want etiquette signs up there. PD used to have trail stewards.

Jason Wood, BPAC member, suggested placing concrete bollards about 8 feet apart so people have to slow down as going into the tunnel at Shiloh and Colton as a demonstration project. Jason will look into this.

Kristi wants to suggest to crime prevention that they implement trail patrol. She wants to put this on agenda for future discussion.

Concrete trail/sidewalk repair requests

Via email, Anna suggested compiling a list of needed repairs. Kristi will call Debi and ask for these repairs. The group discussed issues on Phylis Lane near Stewart Park, the Big Ditch trail, and the Kiwanis trail. Jason or Margy will ride Kiwanis trail to see if anything there needs to be fixed.

Other Business:

Margy wants to see an extension of the neighborhood bikeway to the west. Want to see extensions from Rose Park onto Woody and go to the west. Margy will send Elyse a map with this. Elyse mentioned Margy could also add this to the public outreach map when it is available.

Elyse mentioned BPAC will need to discuss the date of the combined November/December meeting. Typically, these meetings are combined because of their proximity to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Elyse also mentioned the volunteer appreciation dinner that BPAC members were invited to on October 26.

Future agenda items:

Sidewalk funding – the group divided up some cities in Montana to see what the differences are in how people pay for sidewalks.

No ramp near Landon's Legacy field – Kristi will ask about this to Debi Meling

Dave motioned to adjourn; Jason seconded. All voted in favor.