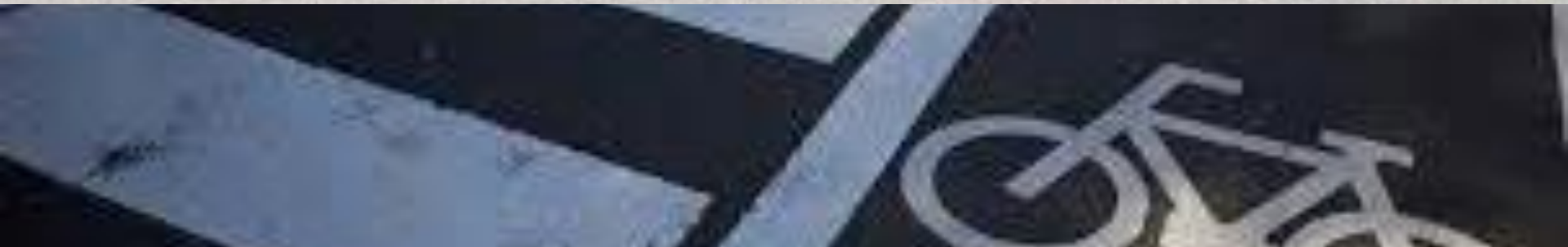




BPAC

**BILLINGS AREA
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



WHO WE ARE

- Chair: Nikki Zimmer (County)
- Vice Chair: Dave Coppock (Planning Board)
- Joan Schey (County)
- Kristi Drake (City)
- Jason Wood (County)
- Anna O'Donnell (City)
- Stephanie Donovan (City)



OUR FOCUS

Ensuring that our community's infrastructure enables people to walk, bike or use a wheelchair safely.



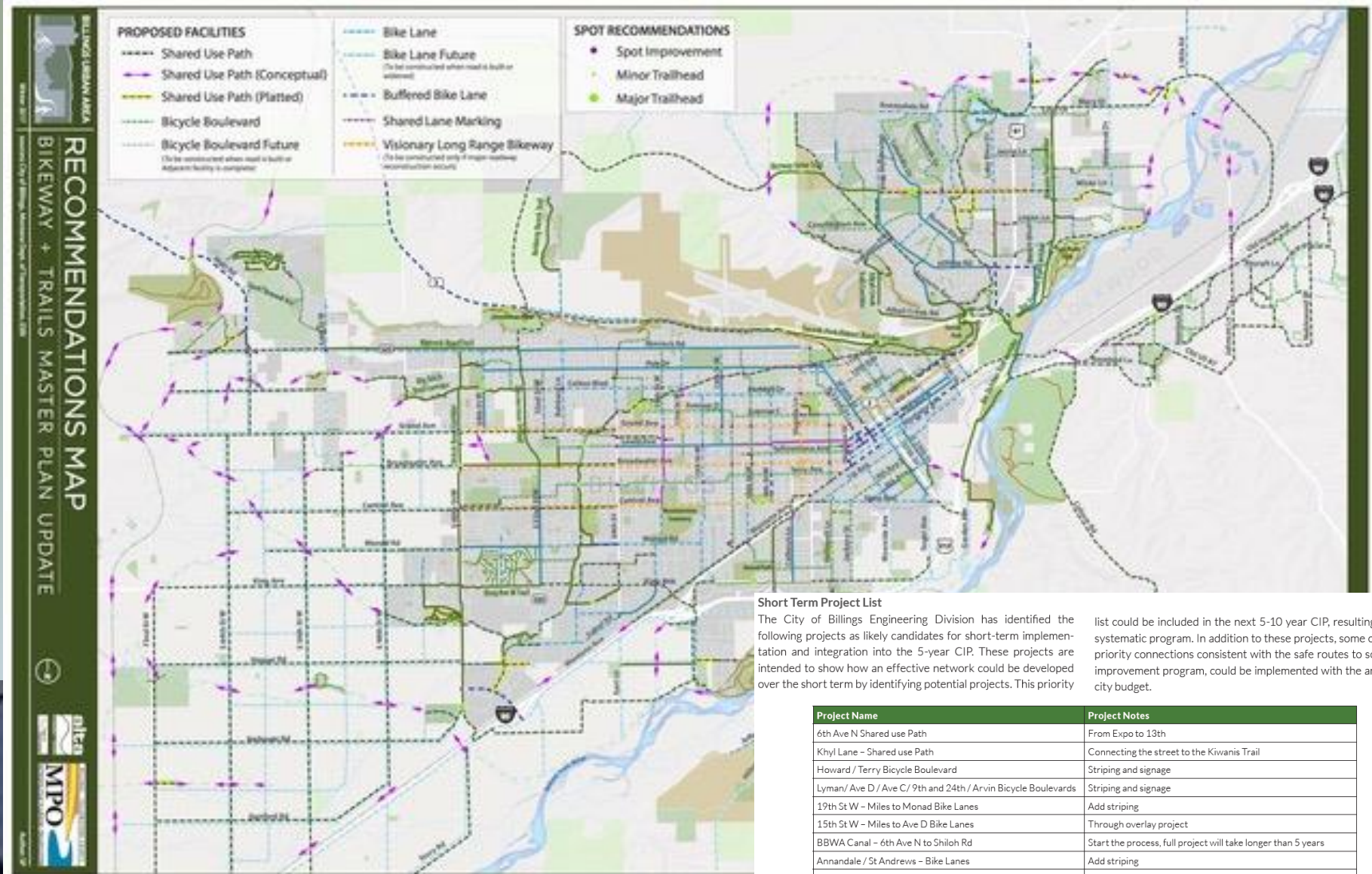
WHAT WE DO



- Advise city and county in regards to nonmotorized transportation issues
- Ensure advice is rooted in community need by soliciting and compiling public comment trends
- Maintain relationships with elected officials and planning board
- Use the Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan as guidance



BILLINGS AREA BIKEWAY AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN- BEING UPDATED IN 2024!



Short Term Project List

The City of Billings Engineering Division has identified the following projects as likely candidates for short-term implementation and integration into the 5-year CIP. These projects are intended to show how an effective network could be developed over the short term by identifying potential projects. This priority

list could be included in the next 5-10 year CIP, resulting in a systematic program. In addition to these projects, some of the priority connections consistent with the safe routes to school improvement program, could be implemented with the annual city budget.

Project Name	Project Notes
6th Ave N Shared use Path	From Expo to 13th
Khyll Lane - Shared use Path	Connecting the street to the Kiwanis Trail
Howard / Terry Bicycle Boulevard	Striping and signage
Lyman/ Ave D / Ave C/ 9th and 24th / Arvin Bicycle Boulevards	Striping and signage
19th St W - Miles to Monad Bike Lanes	Add striping
15th St W - Miles to Ave D Bike Lanes	Through overlay project
BBWA Canal - 6th Ave N to Shiloh Rd	Start the process, full project will take longer than 5 years
Annandale / St Andrews - Bike Lanes	Add striping
Wicks Lane - Gleneagles to Kiwanis - Shared use Path	Add shared use path to south side of the street
Central Ave - 32nd to Shiloh - Shared use Path	With road project
Monad Rd - 32nd to 29th - Bike Lanes	Through overlay project

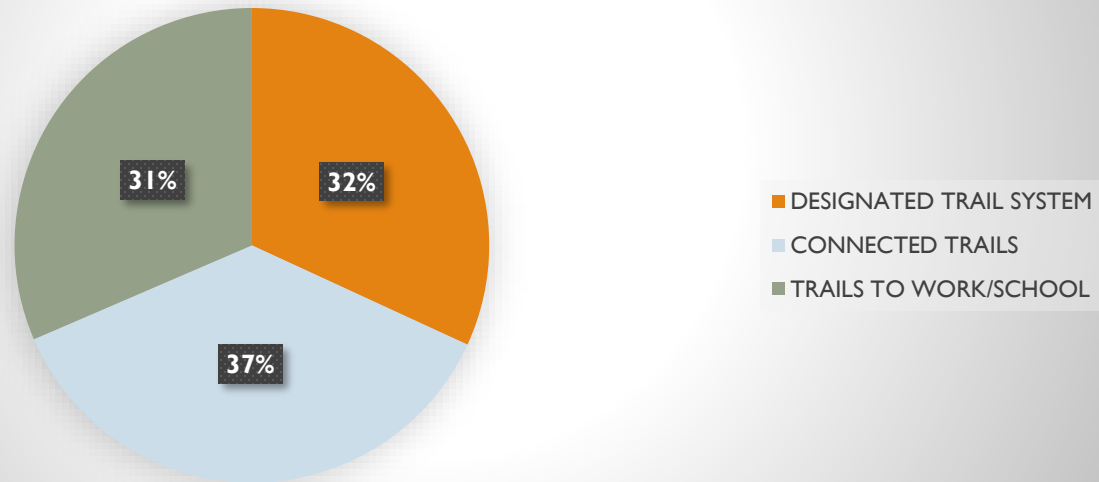
WE REVIEW AND ACCEPT PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

1. Public comment at monthly meetings
2. Online comments report from City County Planning
3. 2023 survey to get input from the public on issues facing Billings and Yellowstone County residents regarding biking and walking
 - Collection method: City of Billings Facebook page
 - We received 120 responses
 - Use the survey data to prioritize the top issues to inform our elected officials



SURVEY FINDINGS

**What matters most to you about access to safe bicycling, walking, and/or wheelchair facilities?
Check all that apply**



48% of respondents selected all three



CONNECTIONS OFTEN MENTIONED IN OUR SURVEY

1. Valley to rims (Stagecoach Trail)

- “Build the Zimmerman Trail Connector so we can get to the heights from the west end on Bike”
- “Need connection from west side up to the rims. Also need better connectivity to the river and to downtown”

2. Connection to downtown

- “We need much better (especially safer) connectivity between downtown and the Heights, downtown and the Yellowstone River, and between the Valley and the Rims. We also need to design the downtown streets so that they are more friendly to bicyclists. Walkers can use the sidewalks, but there are currently very few protected bike lanes downtown.”
- “Safely navigating downtown for bicyclists of all ages and abilities (not just those able to ride at the speed of traffic). Connecting downtown to surround neighborhoods. Division St. is a barrier. Getting between the Heights and downtown.”



CONNECTIONS OFTEN MENTIONED IN OUR SURVEY

- “Medical corridor and downtown. I work at a hospital and live in tree streets. I don't feel safe commuting to work with regard to traffic and crime activity.”
- “Trying to get to downtown on a bike is a terrifying ordeal.”

3. More trails

- “The trails that we have for biking are few and often short or they don't connect. Makes it hard to go for long walks, bike rides or other outdoor activities. It does not help to attract companies to Billings.”
- “Would be good to have more bike paths that do not parallel major roads; the one along the big ditch is a nice example, and up at the rims”

4. Signage

- “The current trail system could use much better directional and informational signage.”



MOST COMMON AREAS OF CONCERN WITH ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

1. Crosswalks

2. Speed



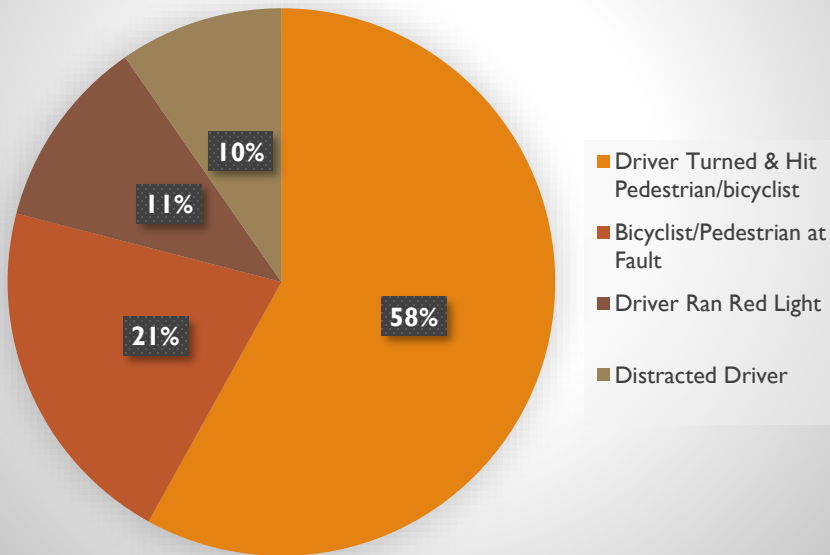
WHAT RESIDENTS ARE SAYING

- **Law Enforcement** (Enforce violations: Speeding, crosswalks, traffic signals, inattentive drivers, code enforcement)
- **Infrastructure** (trail connectivity, maintenance, access, ADA compliance, bike/car separation)
- **Public Safety** (Crime, transients, trail safety, trash, graffiti)



OTHER DATA TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

Causes of the 79 Reported Vehicle-Vulnerable Road User Crashes in 14 months



Oct 2022- Dec 2023

We review bike/ped crash police reports

We document areas crashes occur to show areas of need for possible signage or other infrastructure:

- 2 fatalities occurred during this period
- 58% of crashes were due to a driver turning and hitting a bicyclist or pedestrian- often in a crosswalk
- 21% of all crashes involved hit and run



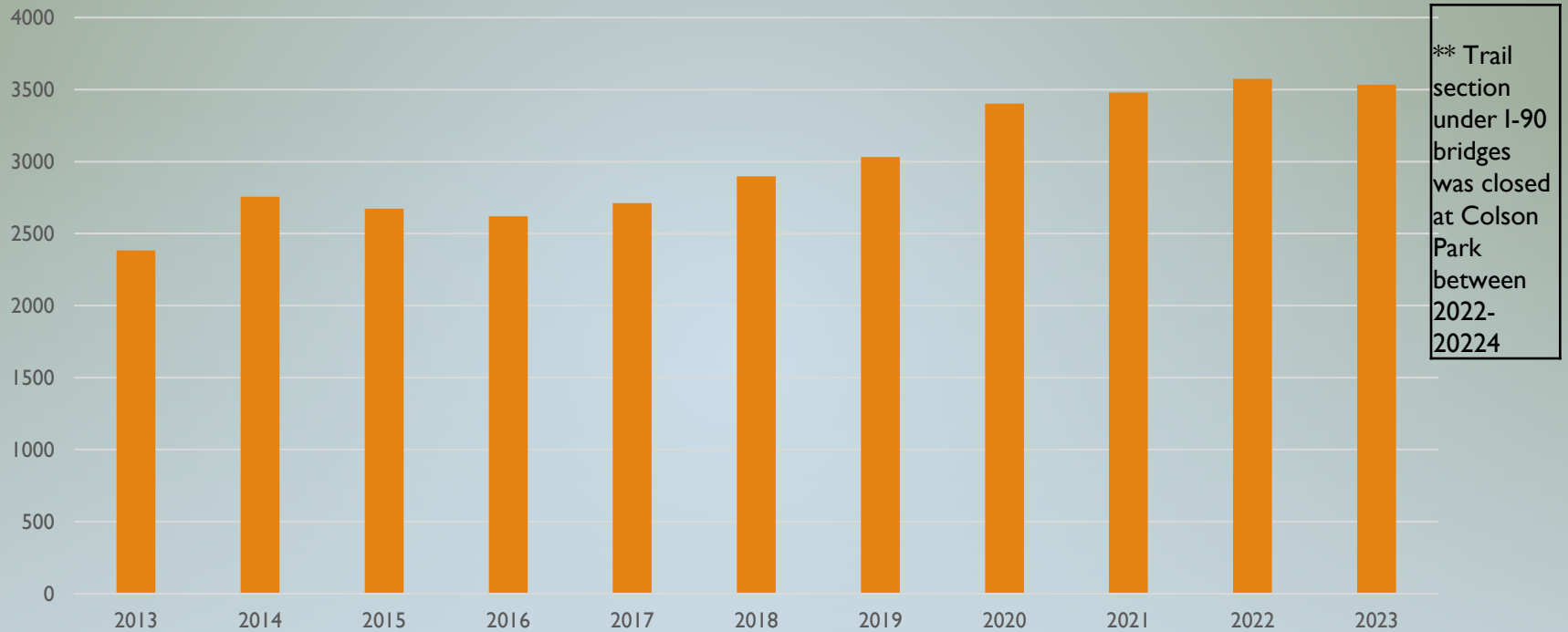
BPAC'S RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS CRASH DATA

- **Change behaviors**
 - We recommend the City of Billings create a media campaign involving social media + PSAs on TV and radio, to educate both drivers and pedestrians
- **Change infrastructure**
 - Add marked crosswalks in select high traffic areas

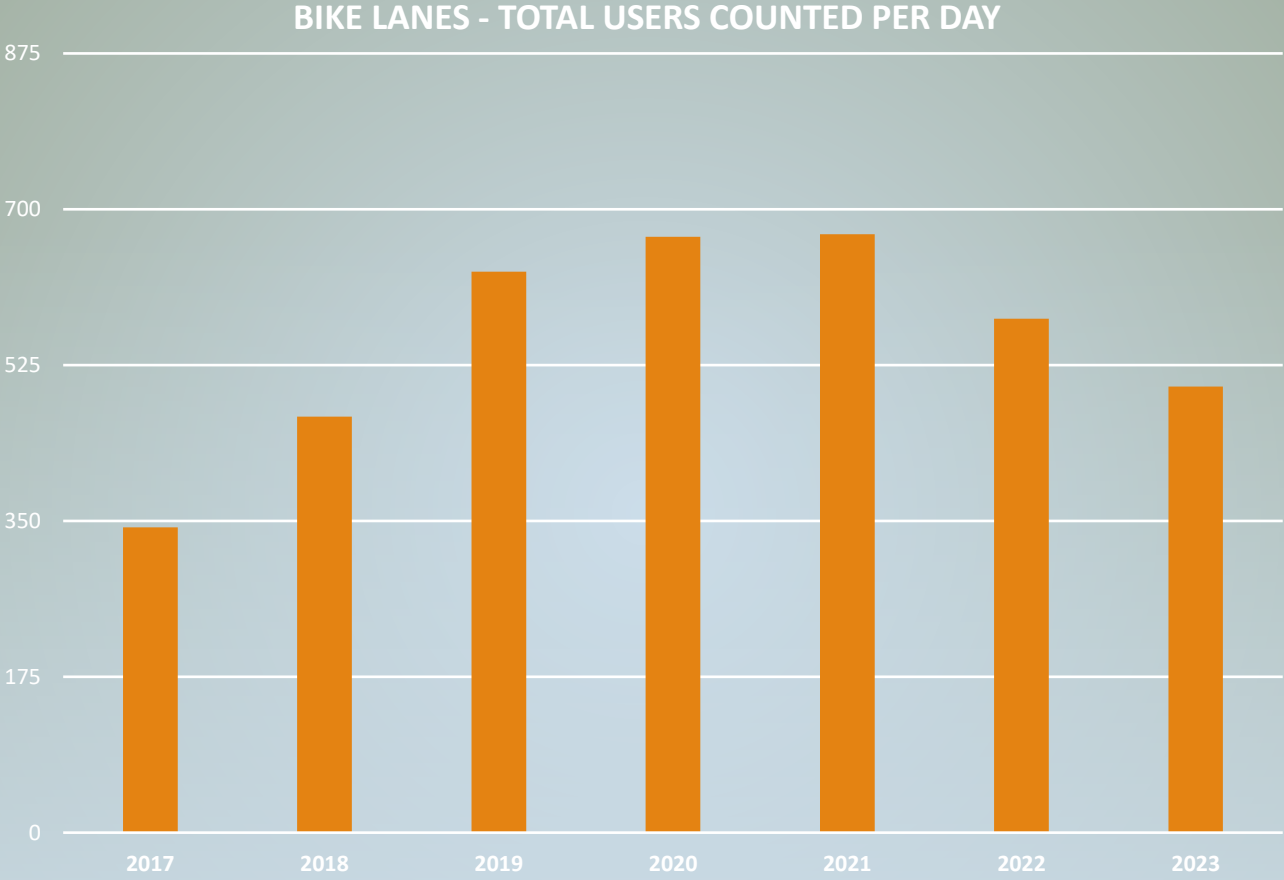


10-YEAR TRAIL USER COUNTS

Daily trail use



BIKE LANE USAGE IN BILLINGS



WE APPLAUD THE CITY, COUNTY AND STATE FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN THE PAST YEAR:

- Active transportation continues to rise
- Planning Department conducted their second Safe Routes to School study
- Key trail and bikeway connections built in 2023:
 - Billings Bypass bridge is being completed with a separated path
 - Skyline Trail was completed.
 - Bike lanes on both sides of Hilltop from Bench Boulevard to Bazaar Exchange. Bike lanes existed from Bazaar Exchange to around Shamrock, so now there is connectivity to Main from both directions.
 - Bike lanes on Rehberg from Rimrock to Grand Ave.
 - Multiuse trail along Mallowney Lane that completes the link to the trail along Elysian Road and the trail along Midland Road (part of Marathon Loop).



HELP US HELP YOU BE SUCCESSFUL

1. Recognize that there is broad support for trails and bikeways from:
 - general public
 - health community
 - business community
2. Recognize and support active transportation improvements happening in Billings and Yellowstone County including non-motorized improvements
3. Increase collaboration with other governmental entities, like MDT, creating a shared vision for a vibrant Billings and Yellowstone County



HELP US HELP YOU BE SUCCESSFUL

4. Review the data we provide to analyze and identify where improvements are necessary
5. Increase traffic enforcement for red light violators, distracted drivers and impaired drivers
6. Educate bicyclists and pedestrians to be consistent with signaling their intentions



CITY COUNCIL ASKED US LAST YEAR TO LOOK INTO SIDEWALK FUNDING IN OTHER AREAS

City	Funding mechanism	Options for residents	Problems	Considerations
Helena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent property owner is responsible for the sidewalk, curb & gutter • Streets budget to upgrade ADA corner ramps with any mill/fill projects since those upgrades are required by federal law 	10 year no interest sidewalk program loan but it is only funded to \$150K/yr	pay up front when project is complete	possibility of a Sidewalk Maintenance district(s), similar to our Street Maintenance District assessment
Great Falls				looking at the same issue and trying to find funding source other than property owners
Missoula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portion assessed to the property owner only includes the sidewalk and associated work. \$0 - \$1,000 – City pays; \$1,000 - \$8,000 – 50/50 split with property owner; \$8,000 - \$22,000 – City pays • Gutter, asphalt patch back, boulevard and trees, etc are all covered by the city. This ensures that the most a property owner will pay is \$3,500 (that 50/50 split for costs between \$1,000 and \$8,000). 			
Bozeman	Funding falls on the adjacent property owner. City funds ADA ramps & corners + major boulevards			
Reno	Street repair program (small) small assessment for small area. Old area- new sidewalks: with street repair. One time- did sidewalk replacement 50% paid by homeowners.	Community Development Block Grant for spot improvements. Indexed gas tax. Set asides.		
Bend	100% responsibility of the property owner			maybe some low income



QUESTIONS?

