



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024 MEETING TIME: 12:00 pm
Stillwater Building, 3rd Floor Room 3108 316 N. 26th Street, Billings MT 59101

DRAFT

- Call to order:** Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.
- Members present:** Kristi Drake, City; Dave Coppock, Planning Board; Anna O'Donnell, City; Stephanie Donovan, City; Jason Wood, County.
- Others present:** Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner; members of the public included Tony Chase and Kristy Halderman.

Public Comment Period:

- a. Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**
Kristi Drake, BPAC member, mentioned that one of City Council members mentioned at the Council meeting the night before that he wanted all Transportation Alternative (TA) funds to go to Safe Routes to School. She mentioned that Safe Routes to School was partially funded by the Safe Streets for All grant. The expected TA funding this round was \$1.8 million and is administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). She stated that TA can be used for any type of non-motorized transportation project. Billings TrailNet is funding a feasibility study for the Yellowjacket Trail which would connect the Rims to the Valley near N. 27th St. and could be funded by TA. The feasibility study will be done by February 15. Kristi thinks the cost of the Yellowjacket Trail will be at least \$1 million. Kristi mentioned other projects like the underpass under HWY 3 at Zimmerman Trail/Skyway Drive that could benefit from this funding. She said that one City Council member wants Billings TrailNet to fund all maintenance. Kristi asked if BPAC would consider writing a letter to City Council in support of using TA funds for trail projects. Stephanie made a motion to write a letter to support a comprehensive look at what safety projects should be prioritized for Billings using the TA funds. Jason Wood, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor. The group discussed that they don't want all the funds to go just to Safe Routes to School and that they would like other projects to be considered as some of these projects may not have any other funding source.
- b. Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –**
Stephanie Donovan, BPAC member, emailed Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner, to say that the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon at 13th and Ave. D was not working. That solar panel is often in the shadow of the building, which Stephanie thought might be part of the issue, so Elyse will pass this along.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of October 22, 2024: Kristi, moved to accept the minutes. Dave Coppock, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor.

Old Business

Crash Mapping

BPAC members reviewed and mapped crashes from October and November. Dave suggested that another consideration be what time of day the crashes happened as lighting could be an issue.

Transportation planner report

Elyse provided a report which included:

- The Engineering Division is working on possible changes to the Skyline Trail to address concerns brought up by BPAC and surrounding neighbors. Sanbell (formerly Sanderson Stewart) put together some suggestions which Engineering is reviewing and will hopefully be able to share out soon.
- For the Trail Stewardship and Recreational Trails Program Grant, the City will likely be applying for funds to fix the Riverfront Park trail.
- The Safe Streets for All grant Request for Proposals for design is currently under review at FHWA.
- Elyse is expecting a full draft of the Ped/Bike master plan will go out to the steering committee and the public this week. The consultant is making final edits after Elyse made some edits from internal stakeholders.
- Staff is expecting to have a printed updated map of the bikeway and trail map in the next month.
- Planning will be moving into the Stillwater Building on Monday! You will be able to find them on the 5th floor. As far as we know right now, the January BPAC meeting will still be in the Commissioners' room.
- Elyse recently took a new job as Transportation Planner. For now, she will continue as staff liaison to BPAC, but this may change in the future when her replacement is hired. The plan is to retool her previous position a little bit and make it a multi-modal planner. The multi-modal planner would work on active transportation as well as transit and vehicle planning. This would include redistributing the active transportation work, so Elyse does some too.

New Business:

- a. **Round about safety**
- b. Anna, BPAC member, said BPAC had previously discussed advanced warnings of people in crosswalks and Stephanie said a visitor had previously suggested having a red light. Kristi noted that in the crash data that BPAC has been mapping over the past few years, there was only one crash on Shiloh Rd. BPAC discussed that there may be more complaints about the roundabouts than crashes. Jason mentioned that another issue is that paint gets worn off road and that there are many different configurations of roundabouts. This can create confusion for drivers after the paint wears off. Elyse will send out a couple of guides about roundabouts to BPAC members so they can review and see if there is anything they think would be helpful.

E-bikes – Recently, Dave has had a lot of close calls with E-bikes, lots of people on the sidewalk with e-bikes and lots of kids on E-bikes on sidewalks. Dave was thinking that bike shops/sellers could give away information on how to safely use e-bikes. Anna suggested partnering with Victoria Hill, the City’s Public Information Officer, and Billings Parks and Recreation to post on their Facebook pages. Stephanie suggested researching e-bike safety and rules from other communities. Kristi offered that BPAC and Billings TrailNet can work together and that Kristy Halderman from Billings TrailNet can create the information cards. Jason said that the electronic devices are opening a segment of travel to the public that are never using it before.

End of year recognition – BPAC recognized Kristi for 12 years on BPAC.

Other Business:

Presentation to the governing bodies in February or March – put on agenda for next month. BPAC members want to formulate thoughts to council on specific topics. They want to start going two times a year to City Council.

Future agenda items:

Elections for chair and vice chair in January

Jason moved to adjourn; Anna seconded. All voted in favor.