

POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2026

NOTICE

Public comments will be made only during the Public Comment periods as indicated on the agenda. Comments may be sent to Planning Staff via email before 10:00 AM on the meeting date. All e-mails received prior to this time will be entered into the record for the public hearing.

Members: Chair John Staley, President City County Planning Board; Commissioner Mark Morse, Board of County Commissioners; Mike Taylor, Department of Transportation

Staff Participants: Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator; Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner; Mike Hayes, Multi-modal Planner; Brenda Berns, Planning Clerk, Wyeth Friday, PCSD Director; Anna Vicker, Planning Division Manager

Virtual Attendees: Kenn Winegar, MDT; Samantha Wood, MDT

Call to Order: 12:03 PM

Chair Staley called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

1. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Public Comment Period

- a. Comments on items not on the agenda and requests to add items to future agendas. There were no comments.
- b. Comments on items on the Non-public and Public Agenda Items. There were no comments.

3. Motion. Approval of the Minutes of July 22, 2025

Motion by Commissioner Morse to approve the July 22, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted, second by Mike Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

4 Old Business

There was no old business.

5. New Business

- a. **2023 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment & MPO Planning Boundary Update - Final Action**
Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator

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The primary agenda item was final action on the amendment to the 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Staff explained the amendment was necessary to address findings from the 2024 MPO review and to incorporate updated 2020 Census urbanized area data that had not been available during adoption of the original plan.

Key updates included:

- Expansion and refinement of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning boundary to include newly urbanized areas.
- Removal of areas not expected to urbanize within the next 20 years due to topography or infrastructure limitations.
- Corrections and clarifications to the LRTP project list, including funding sources, timing, and duplicate entries.
- Updates to the financial plan to demonstrate long-term fiscal constraint and compliance with federal requirements.

Ms. Mattox also highlighted improvements to the interactive online project list, allowing users to sort projects by category, funding source, cost, and anticipated construction timing.

Recommendation

The Planning Board, City Council, and Board of County Commissioners have recommended that PCC approval the 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment.

Motion

Motion by Commissioner Morse to approve the 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment & MPO Planning Boundary Update, second by Mike Taylor.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Other Business

a. Update on MPO Redesignation Process – Lorra Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator

Ms. Mattox provided an update on the MPO re-designation process resulting from the upcoming separation of the City-County Planning Board into separate city and county entities.

Discussion included:

- Development of a Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) body to oversee MPO functions.
- Continued use of the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) for project review and recommendations.

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- Increased public outreach and coordination with city and county elected officials.
 - Ongoing discussions regarding future membership composition.
- A proposed addition to the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee membership would include aviation and transit representation due to expanded transit funding responsibilities and evolving transportation services. MPO staff will continue discussion on membership with both the City and County officials.

7. Future Agenda Items

a. 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 3

Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator

Ms. Mattox announced that a TIP amendment will be presented in May. Anticipated updates include:

- Adjustments to project costs and funding.
- Addition of new transportation alternative projects.
- MDT project cost updates.
- Inclusion of Transportation Alternative projects such as the City of Billings Safe Routes to School improvements and Yellowstone County Johnson Lane sidewalks in Lockwood

b. 21st Street Underpass Study – Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator

Ms. Mattox reported that the draft 21st Street underpass study is expected within the next few weeks, May or June. The study will outline potential project alternatives, estimated costs, and railroad coordination considerations.

Questions

Committee discussion acknowledged the long-standing interest in the underpass project. Staff clarified that the study itself would not recommend a preferred alternative but would instead provide options and supporting information for future policy decisions by local governing bodies.

Members discussed how transportation planning decisions would move through the new governance structure once city and county planning operations separate. Staff explained that projects would continue to originate through the MPO or federal funding programs, move through Transportation Technical Advisory Committee review, and then advance to the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee with ongoing outreach to local elected officials throughout the process.

ADJOURNMENT: 12:17 PM

Brenda J Berns, Planning Clerk