

TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

June 28, 2017

APPROVED AS AMENDED

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry Dunning, Pierre Jomini, Todd Cormier, Gene Wade, Capt. Harper, Ron Alles

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sondra Baker

STAFF SUPPORT: Erin Claunch, Aaron Lebsack, Dakota Martonen, Lora Mattox

GUESTS: None

BUSINESS MEETING:

Call to order: Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

Minutes: Motion by Jerry Dunning for approval of the April 2017 minutes as amended. Seconded by Ron Alles. Motion carried on a voice vote.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: None

STAFF REPORTS:

- **Construction Updates:** Erin provided a handout showing updates for the 2017 construction with major street impacts. The information is current as of June 27, 2017. Schedules are subject to change. See attached for details. Staff informed the Board that the contractor will be installing traffic control on Colton Boulevard related to the new Catholic Middle School and Elementary School.
- **Zimmerman Trail & Grand Avenue Signal Timings:** Erin reported that the shoulder plan coordination at Grand Avenue & Zimmerman Trail has been removed (6:30 – 8 pm). The PM coordination currently runs until 6:30. He also stated that the minimum and maximum green time for Grand Avenue and Zimmerman Trail were equal in response to traffic during the non-peak hour times. Erin also stated that the new GridSmart cameras used at new intersections, including this signal, are capable of detecting traffic in all directions and travel lanes.

BOARD REPORTS:

- **Household Travel Survey:** Lora stated that the Household Travel Survey is close to being completed. This survey will help develop a traffic demand model which will take a closer look at alternative modes of transportation. Due to the joint effort of the Montana Department of Transportation, the survey was able to reach around the entire Yellowstone County. 1,035 of the targeted 1,100 completed surveys were completed.
- **Downtown Area Traffic Circulation and Safety Study:** Lora informed the board on a study that will focus on different ideas of traffic circulation in the downtown area. Topics such as converting one-

way streets to two-way streets will be covered, bicycle & pedestrian facilities, and a parking masterplan. The boundaries of the study are from 6th Ave N – 1st Ave S and Division St – Exposition Dr. The project steering committee will include, City-County Planning, City Engineering, the Downtown Billings Association, and MDT.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Five non-signalized intersections with most injury/fatal accidents for 2014-2016:** Erin and Dakota gave a presentation detailing the most injury/fatal accidents at non-signalized intersections and uncontrolled intersections. They are as listed with the number of accidents associated.

Non-Signalized Intersections:

- N 27th St & Rimrock Rd (11)
- ◆ Lewis Ave & 6th St W (7)
- King Ave W & 27th St W/Lowes (6)
- 24th St W & Grant Rd (6)
- Grand Ave & 6th St W (6)
- Grand Ave & 32nd St W (6)
- 24th St W & El Dorado Dr (6)
- Central Ave & Plainview St (6)
- ◆ 5th St W & St. Johns Ave (6)
- Central Ave & 25th St W (6)

Uncontrolled Intersections:

- Custer Ave & 10th St W (3)
- 3rd Ave S & S 39th St (3)
- Rosebud Dr & 30th St W (2)
- 11th St W & Terry Ave (2)
- Miles Ave & 10th St W (2)
- Decathlon Pkwy & Stillwater Dr (2)
- Terry Ave & 9th St W (2)
- Ave C & 3rd St W (2)
- 12th St W & Ave F (2)
- 10th St W & Cook Ave (2)
- ◆ In the mid-1990's, Lewis Avenue & 6th Street West was nominated by the State for a safety improvement project due to a high crash rate. "No Parking" areas were increased on the south side of the street in an effort to improve sight distance. There was already parking restrictions on the north side due to the width of the street section. "Stop Ahead" and oversized "Stop" signs were installed on 6th Street West. The intersection was reanalyzed by the City around 2014 due to more citizen complaints and was determined that the crash rate was still significant. Flags were added to the "Stop Ahead" signs in an effort to draw attention from the drivers. Crash rates the following year showed no significant change, so the intersection was reanalyzed by the City. Recently, the "Stop" signs were moved from the boulevard and placed into the street with surrounding pin down curbs. Flashing red LED lights were added to the boarder of the "Stop" sign to further draw driver's attention to the signage.
- ◆ 5th Street West carries high volumes of traffic primarily due to the direct access from Laurel Road. 5th Street West and 6th Street West may be used as a couplet for drivers heading from neighborhoods north of Grand Ave that are trying to access the interstate via Laurel Road. Conversely, traffic coming off the Laurel Road overpass may use 5th Street West because it is the first available street to be able to turn left onto. The intersection of 5th Street West and St. Johns Avenue could potentially have sight distance issues in regards to trucks that park on 5th Street West by Albertsons waiting to use the loading dock. Erin noted that a bicycle boulevard concept has been discussed for the area. This could lead to alternating "Stop"

signs from block to block. This treatment has shown to be effective in other parts of the country to minimize cut-through traffic.

- **Status of Access to State Traffic Crash Data Base:** Erin stated the City does have access to the State crash data base. However, the City's functionality of the SIMS accident database is limited. The analysis performed in the previous items of this meeting detailed the process that the City uses during crash history analyses.

Inquiries from the Board:

- Pierre inquired why the resolution, commending Terry Smith for his service to the City of Billings, passed unanimously by the Board in March 2017, was not forwarded to the City Council. Todd reported that he would write a letter of transmittal.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.

2017 Construction Projects with major street impacts

This information is current as of June 27, 2017. Schedules are subject to change.

Grand Ave—48th to 58th Streets West

- Street widening completed between 54th & 58th Streets West
- Currently closed at 54th Street West
- Constructing intersection widening, utilities to development, and signal wiring
- Estimated completion date of Aug. 4th

6th Avenue North—N. 27th to Division

- Water & Sewer replacement
- Currently in the intersection of Grand/32nd/6th
- PAY ATTENTION TO SIGNAGE
- Estimated completion date of mid-September

South 24th Street West—Central to Monad

- Waterline replacement
- Moved away from Central Avenue intersection (turn lane now open)
- Primarily night work for actual construction
- Some day time work for paving
- Estimated completion date of mid-September

North 32nd St – 9th Ave North to 12th Ave North

- Waterline replacement
- Starting mid-August
- Commuter impact at Parkhill/N. 32nd/11th Ave. North intersection – watch for detours
- Estimated completion by end of October

Rose Park area—

- Sewer replacement
- Work primarily in alleys & local streets, except for ties in and crossings of major streets
- 17th Street West will be open this week?
- May be closed during next alley work
- Other work in 24th Streets West will maintain two way traffic
- Estimated completion by end of October

Central Ave. from Montana Ave. to 24th Street West

- Mill and overlay project
- Estimated Start: July 10th
- Estimated Completion: mid-August
- Will work under traffic closing two lanes at a time

4th Ave. N.-Division St-Lewis Ave intersection

- Signal turn-on yesterday
- Finalizing: curb/gutter/sidewalk
- Yet to finish: landscaping/signing/stripping
- Estimated completion: July 7th?

Downtown Signals

- MDT administered project
- Includes new traffic signals, poles, & controllers, plus updating ADA ramps at all corners
- Includes 13 intersections along 1st Ave N, Montana Ave, and 1st Ave South (signals on 27th Street will be done under a different contract).
- Substantially completed intersections:
 - 1st Ave S & S 28th Street
 - 1st Ave S & S 29th Street
 - Montana Ave & N 28th Street
 - Montana Ave & N 29th Street
 - Montana Ave & N 30th Street
- Actively working at:
 - 1st Ave N & N 25th Street
 - 1st Ave N & N 26th Street
 - 1st Ave N & N 29th Street
- Yet to start:
 - 1st Ave N & N Broadway
 - 1st Ave N & N 30th Street
 - 1st Ave N & N 31st Street
 - 1st Ave N & N 32nd Street
 - 1st Ave N & Broadwater/Division