

TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

July 25, 2018

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry Dunning, Todd Cormier, Sondra Baker, Capt. R.D. Harper, Capt. Brian Korell, Dan Brooks

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pierre Jomini, Ron Alles

STAFF SUPPORT: Dakota Martonen, Erin Claunch, Lora Mattox

GUESTS: None

BUSINESS MEETING:

Call to order: Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

Minutes: Motion by Jerry Dunning for approval of the March 2018 minutes. Seconded by Dan Brooks. Motion carried on a voice vote.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: None

STAFF REPORTS:

- Erin gave a quick status update on the current construction projects. Specifically, Zimmerman Trail, Central Avenue, Rimrock & 54th, and Division & 6th Avenue North were discussed. All projects are currently on budget and on schedule for completion this year.
- Erin then introduced the Downtown Traffic Study. The project has just started with preliminary data collection. The study will be ongoing this summer. The Traffic Control Board will have representation on the Project Advisory Committee, and be asked for input on alternatives.

BOARD REPORTS:

- Lora reported that the Long Range Transportation Plan is still in progress. Drafts of the chapters are being submitted/reviewed, and a final completion date is scheduled for November. Projects are being identified and determined for fiscal constraint. The LRTP is to be completed in November. A local Travel Demand Model and Public Participation Plan are being created in conjunction with LRTP, and is following the same timeline.

RESPONSES TO BOARD INQUIRES:

- Pierre Jomini previously asked about the speed limit signing along 13th Street West, particularly north of Grand Avenue. City staff reviewed this request and found a discrepancy with where the change from 25 to 35 mph is located. Currently, the speed limit changes between Avenues C and D. Erin will work with City crews to have the speed limit sign relocated closer to Grand Avenue.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **King Avenue West & 20th Street West right turn lane:** *(nothing to report at this time)*
- **King Avenue West & 24th Street West overhead signing:** *(nothing to report at this time)*

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **School Zone Policies:** Erin detailed the City's current School Zone policies, which is centered primarily around elementary school zones. However, recent construction of new middle schools (Ben Steele Middle School, Medicine Crow Middle School, and other parochial schools) along principal arterials has caused City staff to re-evaluation the existing policies. The new schools along high volume/speed arterials may require school zones in front of middle schools. More information can be found in the attachments to these minutes.
 - a. Dan asked if accident histories can be tallied in/around the school zones and how they are related to school pick-up/drop-off. Capts. Harper and Korell mentioned that the data is there, but it is not necessarily identified as "school related". There is time/date information, but some of the accidents may be occurring around the school that have nothing to do with school operations.
 - b. Dan also asked if there are other ways to incentivize the students to exercise proper pedestrian activity while not needing to alter the middle school signing. Erin mentioned it is a good opportunity to research other Cities (particularly in Montana) on their policies of how middle schools are handled.
 - c. Jerry mentioned that a blanket policy does not make sense. Each school should have the opportunity be analyzed individually without the constraints of a policy either for, or against, proposed enhancements. Erin stated that the current middle school zone policy is that no school speed zones are allowed. Criteria can be determined in the future to help identify when school speed zones can be utilized for middle schools.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 pm.

School Zones for Middle Schools

Traffic Control Board
July 25, 2018

Background

- Elementary school zone changes (2016-17)
 - MCA/Fines
 - MUTCD Compliance
 - Uniformity
- Past middle school zone practice
 - No school speed zones for MS
 - Kids are older, better trained
 - But more distracted?
 - And reluctant to listen?
- Is this still acceptable/applicable?

Should middle schools be treated the same as elementary schools??


Overview

- Purpose
- Recent sign requests at middle schools
- Speed zones at ALL middle schools?
- Future Practice/Next Steps



Middle Schools

- Existing Conditions
 - Ben Steele & Medicine Crow
 - Paid for by schools (flashers)
 - Road classification/speeds
 - Grace Montessori (Ages 3-14) & Billings Christian School (PreK-12th Grade)
 - Paid for by schools (flashers at Grace Montessori)
 - Road classification/speeds
 - Others
 - Castle Rock
 - Lewis & Clark
 - Riverside
 - Will James




Future Practice/Next Steps

- Propose criteria?
- Board Recommendation
- Policy changes update (opportunity to change current practice)
- High Schools, parochial, magnet, Montessori, pre-K, Explorers Academy, etc.??

Research <https://www.safekids.org/research-report/school-zone-research-report>

