

**Traffic Control Board**  
**Minutes**  
**July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**Members Present:** James Knox, Sondra Baker, Walt Willett, Steve Zeier, Capt Bedford , Brent Krueger

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Support:** Terry Smith, Erin Claunch, John Gibson, Lora Mattox

**Guests:** None

**BUISNESS MEETING**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 12:15 pm by Steve Zeier.

**Minutes:** Motion for approval of the June minutes by Walt Willett, seconded by James Knox. Minutes approved on a voice vote.

**Open Public Comment:** None

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Erin Claunch reported on the following projects:

1. Shiloh Road should be fully completed by October, 2010. Shiloh Road and Central Avenue will be closed for approximately 21 days for construction of the roundabout at the intersection. Captain Bedford asked about the wall being constructed near Monad. Erin indicated it is a sound wall, similar to the one constructed along the east side of Shiloh north of Avenue C.  
  
Walt Willett asked about the number of traffic lanes on Shiloh south of Rimrock Road. He said it is only a single lane, although it appears there is enough width for two lanes. Erin indicated that he thought work on Shiloh between Grand & Rimrock was essentially complete and he was unaware of any plans to change the striping near Rimrock.
2. Grand Avenue is closed at 58<sup>th</sup> St West for installation of water & sewer mains serving a new subdivision. It is scheduled to open July 30<sup>th</sup>.
3. Broadwater Avenue at 24<sup>th</sup> is still under construction. Water and sewer mains are being replaced west of 24<sup>th</sup> to approximately the BBWA canal.
4. Lake Elmo Road is now open south of Hansen Lane, but construction will continue through the construction season.
5. Parkhill Dr. and 13<sup>th</sup> St West is closed for full reconstruction of the intersection to realign the east and west approaches. It is a Montana Department of Transportation Safety Project. The intersection is scheduled to be reopened August 19<sup>th</sup>.
6. The construction of an eastbound right turn lane on Grand Avenue at 24<sup>th</sup> West was awarded to Knife River of Billings. Construction is expected to begin August 23<sup>rd</sup>.
7. Construction for the bike-pedestrian tunnel under Main Street adjacent to Alkali Creek is in progress. Capt Bedford asked if the City had considered impacts on the sewage treatment plant from passing more water under Main Street in large storms such as the

recent Father's Day storm. Terry and Erin were unsure if impacts on the treatment plant had been specifically considered.

8. A traffic signal is currently under design for Wicks Lane and St. Andrews. Installation of the new signal may be complete late this fall.

Captain Bedford said he had observed the traffic signal at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North-Division-North 32<sup>nd</sup> in flash in the early mornings recently. Terry and Erin indicated there had been no planned changes in operation of the intersection and they would check with the Street-Traffic Division to see if there had been problems there recently.

James Knox asked about the status of the Inner Belt Loop. Terry indicated that design work was proceeding and he thought the City had started right-of-way appraisals and acquisition.

Steve Zeier reported that the environmental review for the proposed North Bypass is underway.

**BOARD REPORTS:** Lora indicated that Alta Planning & Design from Bozeman has been selected to do the *Heritage Trail Plan* update. She noted project nominations for CTEP funding were due the end of the month. The County will be nominating a project for new sidewalks at METRA.

**COUNCIL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION:** Terry noted that the proposed ordinance on distracted driving had passed on first reading at the Council meeting last night (July 26). This ordinance is intended to prohibit use of cell phones while driving, unless a hands free device is used. The ordinance will regulate use of other electronic devices while driving as well, but includes exemptions for emergency services personnel and other work related two-way radio usage. If approved on subsequent readings, the ordinance will take effect October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MDT Main Street Speed Study.** Terry presented the results of a Montana Department of Transportation speed zone study on Main Street between Wicks Lane and the Roundup turn-off. MDT initiated the study at the request of the Heights council members because residents, businesses and the Heights Task Force have expressed concerns about the existing 45 MPH speed limit.

There is a mix of commercial and industrial uses along this segment of Main Street. The roadway is six lanes wide plus left turn bays with a raised median, and carries an average daily traffic volume of 16,100 vehicles. There are traffic signals at Wicks Lane and at Pemberton Lane.

During the 12 month period from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009 there were 32 crashes reported on Main Street between the intersection with Wicks Lane and the intersection with US 87. A majority of these crashes (20 crashes) occurred at the intersection of Wicks & Main. The crash rate of 5.01 crashes per million vehicle miles of travel compares closely with the remainder of Main Street and is slightly less than the 27<sup>th</sup> Street corridor in Billings. It is less than half the crash rate for 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Great Falls.

Vehicular travel speeds were collected with a hand held radar gun at four locations along the study area. Over 100 spot speed samples were collected in each direction at all locations.

<b>Location</b>	<b>85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speeds</b>	<b>10 mph Pace &amp; Percentage</b>
North of Wicks Ln at the 35 mph – 45 mph Transition	46 mph Northbound	(36 mph – 46 mph) 70%
	45 mph Southbound	(36 mph – 46 mph) 70%
Intersection with Key City Dr 45 mph Zone	49 mph Northbound	(39 mph – 49 mph) 70%
	47 mph Southbound	(39 mph – 46 mph) 73%
Intersection with Sharron Ln 45 mph Zone	47 mph Northbound	(39 mph – 49 mph) 80 %
	48 mph Southbound	(39 mph – 49 mph) 75 %
250' South of Bench Blvd & US 87 – 45 mph Zone	47 mph Northbound	(39 mph – 49 mph) 64 %
	47 mph Southbound	(39 mph – 49 mph) 71%

Both the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds and the upper limit of the pace speeds are slightly above the 45 mph speed limit throughout the study area, therefore MDT does not recommend a reduction in the posted speed limit. Erin and Terry concur in this recommendation.

**Poly Drive & 38<sup>th</sup> Street West.** Terry reported that as a result of the recent (July 20<sup>th</sup>) traffic accident where a driver ran off the end of Poly Drive and crashed into a fence at the softball fields west of 38<sup>th</sup> Street West, a field review of the intersection was made. Approximately one year ago another car ran off the end of Poly and crashed into Arrowhead school. Both crashes are similar in that they occurred in the early morning hours (2 am +/-) and involved impaired (DUI) drivers. There are only two other reported crashes between Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 and Dec. 31, 2009—both single vehicles hitting a fixed object, both nighttime and both alcohol involved. The intersection is a “T” intersection, with stop control for westbound traffic on Poly. There is a driveway exiting the school parking lot on the west side of 38<sup>th</sup>, directly opposite Poly. There is no street lighting. The existing stop sign, and two DO NOT ENTER signs are clearly visible both day and night. There is a “STOP AHEAD” sign posted on Poly. The driveway directly opposite Poly prevents the posting of a large double arrow sign which is often used at “T” intersections when there is a history of cars running straight off the stem of the “T.” Staff will explore the posting of some diamond shaped “end of road” reflective panels on school property to try to draw additional attention to the fact the roadway ends. Because there is a significant change in grade on Poly just before 38<sup>th</sup>, these might have to be mounted higher than normal so they are visible to drivers on Poly approaching the intersection.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 1:18 PM