

Agenda Items



BILLINGS AREA BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Annual Report

WHO WE ARE

- ▶ **Chair: Ed Gulick** (Planning Board)
 - ▶ **Vice Chair: Kristi Drake** (City)
 - ▶ **DJ Clark** (County)
 - ▶ **Zach Hassler** (County)
 - ▶ **Amber Sundsted** (City)
 - ▶ **Liana Susott** (County)
 - ▶ **Jane Van Dyk** (City)
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MAIN TASK

- ▶ Identify barriers to safely walking or bicycling throughout Billings and portion of Yellowstone County in the MPO area
 - ▶ Recommend solutions to City and County planning and public works staff and governing bodies based on public input and transportation industry standards.
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BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ENSURE:

1) Health

- ▶ Physical activity – “Active Transportation”
- ▶ 25 minutes per day/6 days per week moderate-intensity aerobic activity (i.e. brisk walking) recommended every week
Center for Disease Control
- ▶ Low levels of physical activity have contributed to obesity—
66% of adults are obese or overweight in Yellowstone County
2016-2017 Yellowstone County Community Health Needs Assessment

2) Safety

- ▶ Billings residents won't engage in Active Transportation if they don't feel safe
- ▶ Predictable environment where bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers know what to expect from each other (turning, stopping)

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ENSURE:

3) Quality of Life

- ▶ Children – can they safely walk or ride to school and to after-school activities? Or do parents need to drive them?
- ▶ Aging population increasingly wants to live in walkable, bikeable, interactive neighborhoods so they can age in place
- ▶ Millennial Generation in particular attracted to places that foster a healthy lifestyle and connection to place
- ▶ Connect neighborhoods to Rims and river—unique assets

4) Economic Vitality

- ▶ Quality of life is key economic driver
 - ▶ Need access to trails from downtown hotels
 - ▶ Encourage visitors to stay longer, recreate here
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ECONOMIC VITALITY

“When we recruit physicians and health professionals to Billings Clinic, one of the most commonly asked questions is: ‘Are there trails for biking and running in the city?’”

Chief Medical Officer Randall Gibb, MD
Billings Clinic

“It is clear, then, for Billings and Yellowstone County to continue to grow and prosper, the quality and availability of talent is a top priority.”

2015 State of the Workforce Report,
Big Sky Economic Development



Link Magazine, March-May 2016

“In an era when employers face stiff competition for hiring the best and brightest, a community’s quality of life becomes a hot button.”

When it comes to urban amenities, Montana’s Trailhead is chockfull of notable draws – especially our fast-growing system of trails.

Freshley, thousands of men, women and kids walk, run, bike and even commute to work using the Billings Heritage Trail system. Covering more than 40 miles of terrain, the trails circle the city, loop over the Rims, run adjacent to the Yellowstone River, bisect our urban center and continue out to Billings Heights.

But that wasn’t always the case.

Just a few years earlier, the city had no bike and pedestrian plan, and little momentum to build trails. Yet having a robust trail system is a key ingredient in measuring a community’s quality of life. Trails also have a positive economic impact on a community – and Billings was losing ground.

The Billings Chamber of Commerce understood what was at stake. What began as a community conversation nearly 10 years ago became a priority project for the Billings Chamber. Knowing the critical role trails play in enhancing the quality of a community, President/CEO John Riewer organized the Chamber Trails Committee to respond to the issue. Chaired by Karen Sanford Gail and Bill Cole, this committee

and its cadre of volunteer members have worked tirelessly for more than 9 years to advocate for new trails and connectors.

“This committee has made tremendous progress on our goal of completing all links in the trail, but particularly the 36-mile-long ‘Marathon Loop,’” Riewer said. “It’s a credit to the Chamber Trails Committee, TrailNet and the City that the number of trail miles in Billings has doubled in the past decade.”

Quality communities attract talented people. And in Montana, one of the key benchmarks is a commitment to nature.

BUILD AND THEY WILL COME

The allure of western lifestyle and connection to the great outdoors was what attracted Jared LeFevre to Billings. A native of Idaho, LeFevre grew up surrounded by opportunities for outdoor recreation. After graduating in 2001 from law school at the University, LeFevre knew he wanted those same kinds of opportunities for his growing family.

“Billings was the perfect size city for us – not huge, but substantial enough to offer a variety of amenities,” LeFevre said.

An attorney and partner with Crowley Fleck, LeFevre is also an ardent runner and cyclist. He enjoys taking his five kids – ranging in age from nine to 16 – running or hiking along the many segments of the city’s Heritage Trail system. For the LeFevre family, trails are more than an amenity.



Jared LeFevre

“Enjoying the outdoors together is a way of life,” he said.

EMPOWERING QUALITY OF LIFE

In an era when employers face stiff competition for hiring the best and brightest, a community’s quality of life becomes a hot button.

LeFevre experienced this firsthand.

“We compete for talent with firms in Bozeman and Missoula. Recruits see those places as mountain towns with sophisticated trail systems that connect to the outdoors,” LeFevre said.

But not having a mountain backdrop doesn’t mean Billings isn’t scenic, either.

“We’re the center of business, industry and



HERITAGE TRAIL AT RINGBROOK PARK
PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAIL BLAZERS

SUMMARY OF BIKING & WALKING ISSUES THAT BPAC SEES

1. There is broad support for trails and bikeways for recreation and active transportation from the general public, health community, and business community.
 2. There are significant opportunities for world-class trails as well as better biking connections within the city and county.
 3. Federal transportation funding dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure has decreased significantly in the past 4 years.
 4. If our community wants to continue progress in trails and bikeways, it will need to either reprioritize some existing transportation funding and/or create new sources of funding.
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1. SURVEY OF BILLINGS RESIDENTS INDICATES VERY HIGH SUPPORT FOR TRAILS FOR RECREATION AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION.

MOST IMPORTANT FACILITIES

BASED ON RESIDENTS' TOP FOUR CHOICES

From the Community Interest/Opinion Survey

WALKING & BIKING TRAILS

54%

SMALL PARKS

50%

LARGE PARKS 23%

SOURCE: 2016 City of Billings Community Interest and Opinion Survey (a statistically valid survey)

1. THE LOCAL HEALTH AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY SUPPORTS WALKING AND BIKING.

- **The Healthy by Design Coalition is committed to making the healthy choice the easy choice.**
 - RiverStone Health
 - St. Vincent Healthcare
 - Billings Clinic

In support of its strategic priorities to:

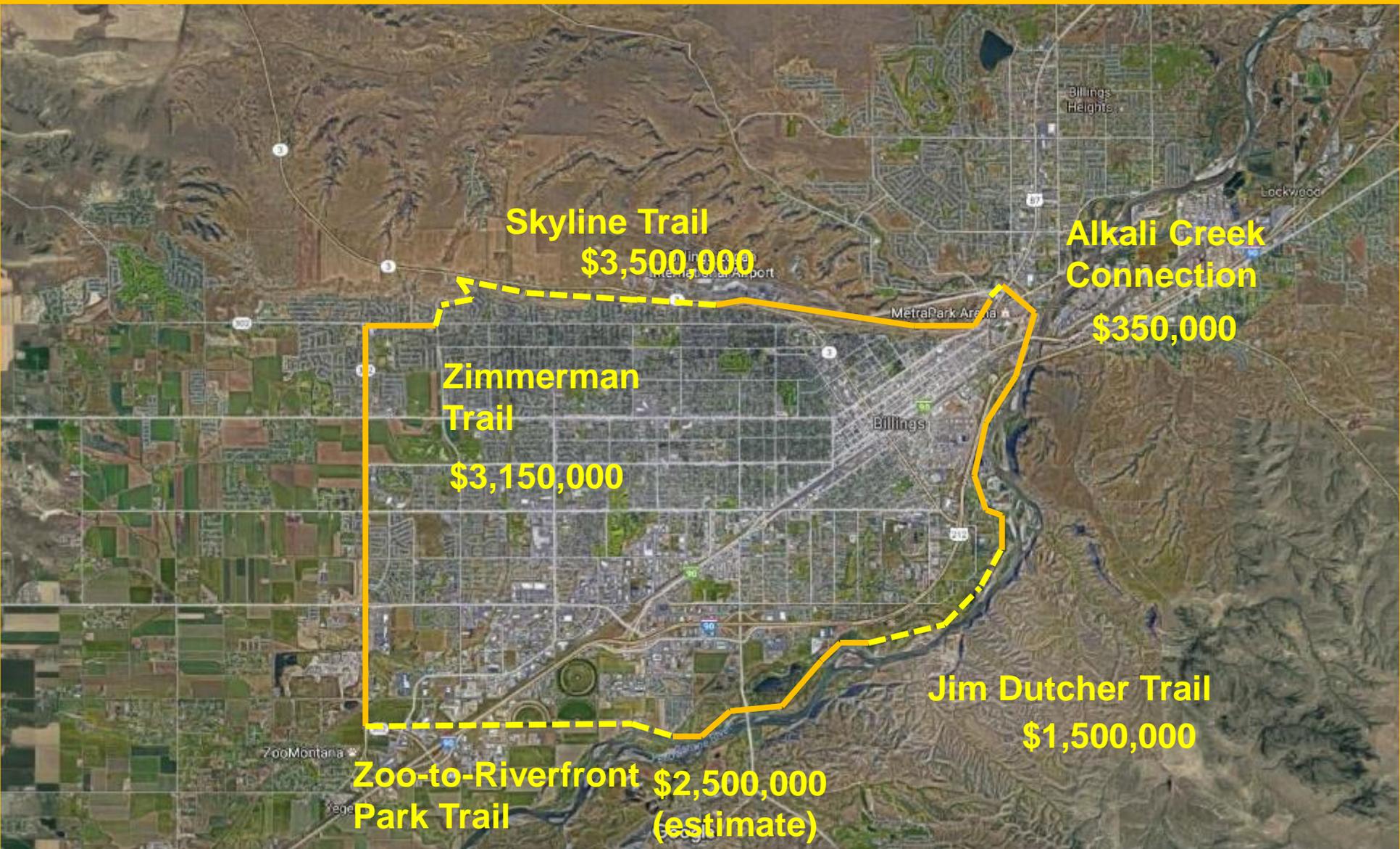
- Grow and Recruit Trained Talent
- Lead Visitor Growth



The Chamber has a Trail Initiative:

1. Connect the Marathon Loop
2. Support the maintenance of existing trails.
3. Provide interpretative signage and amenities for the trail system

2. MARATHON LOOP

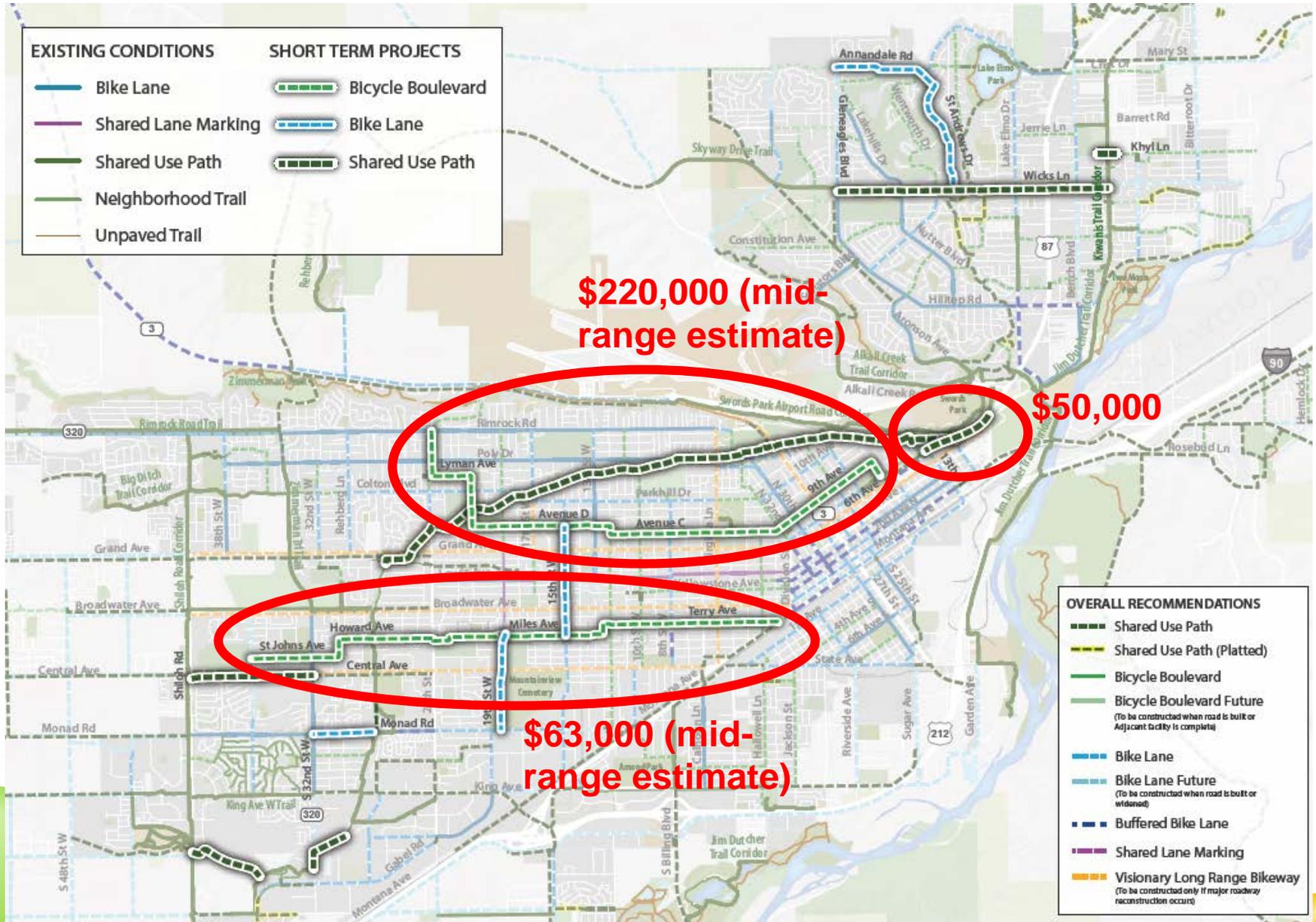


2. BICYCLE BOULEVARDS

- Leverage neighborhood streets that already have low speeds and volumes
- Wayfinding signage, pavement markings, intersection treatments
- Inexpensive to designate routes, then system can be incrementally improved
- Will have some on-going maintenance obligations
- Included in 2018 C.I.P.

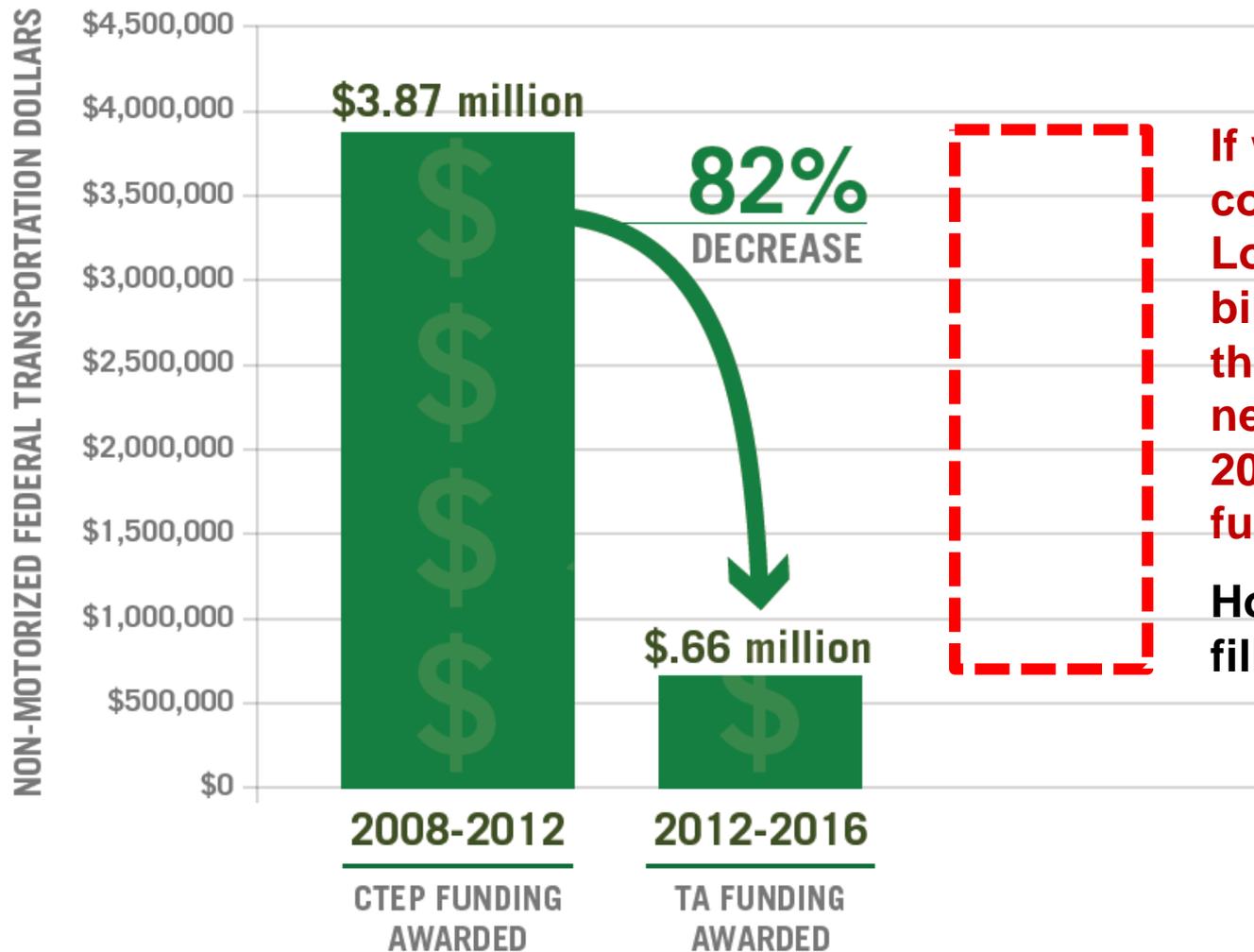


2. BICYCLE BOULEVARDS



3. FEDERAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING HAS DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS



If we want to complete Marathon Loop and connecting bikeways and trails in the next 10 years, we need to maintain the 2008-2012 level of funding.

How are we going to fill gap in funding?

4. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

- Estimate that approximately \$1 million / year is needed to fill federal funding gap**
 - New trails cost approx. \$350,000/mile to build**
 - Additionally, funding is needed to maintain infrastructure already in place**
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4. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Opportunities to allocate existing transportation funding streams:

- **15% of CMAQ funding = \$225,000 / year**
 - CMAQ = Congestion Mitigation – Air Quality
 - Goal: reduce exhaust from auto congestion
 - Great Falls uses CMAQ for bus system; Missoula for trails and bikeways; Billings uses 100% for expanding roadway infrastructure
 - **We recommend a more equitable distribution of CMAQ funds, including for bike and pedestrian infrastructure**
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4. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Opportunities to allocate existing transportation funding streams:

- **% of Billings MPO's share of recent gas tax could be allocated for reducing road congestion (eg. ½ cent of 4½ cent increase)**
 - At ½ cent / gallon, approx. \$150,000-\$200,000 toward \$1,000,000 goal each year.

4. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Opportunities for new funding streams:

- **GO Bond (General Obligation Bond)**
 - In 1990's, Billings passed \$599K GO Bond that lasted 10 years when leveraged with other sources
 - More dedicated local sources of funding = easier to get matching funds from federal and private grants and donations
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4. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO FIND NEW WAYS TO FUND TRAIL AND BIKEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

Opportunities for new funding streams:

- **Small contribution on monthly city utility bill** (along with water, sewer, and garbage pickup)
 - **Trails District**
 - Acknowledges that trails are the #1 priority for our parks system
 - Similar to Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District, a mill levy (10 mils) that raises about \$240,000 / year
 - Lockwood district was then able to leverage a \$333,000 Transportation Alternatives federal grant
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2017-2018 BPAC ACTIVITIES

- ▶ **Bike parking**
- ▶ Many downtown businesses want bike parking
- ▶ Improper, unsanctioned bike racks appear in R.O.W.



2017-2018 BPAC ACTIVITIES

▶ Bike parking

- ▶ BPAC spearheaded getting \$4,500 in seed money for 50 new bike racks from the following:
 - ▶ Billings Association of Realtors
 - ▶ Billings TrailNet
 - ▶ Billings Parks and Recreation
 - ▶ CTA Architects and Engineers
 - ▶ Downtown Billings Alliance
 - ▶ Sanderson Stewart





QUESTIONS?

Other Items



CITY COUNCIL FRIDAY PACKET ITEM
CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA
Friday, June 29, 2018

TITLE: City Council Tax Increment Finance Policy
DEPARTMENT: City Administration
PRESENTED BY: Wyeth Friday, AICP, PCSD Director

PURPOSE

The City Council passed a Council Initiative in October 2016 to have staff provide information to Council regarding Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and to give recommendations to the Council on developing policies and criteria for use of TIF funds. Staff made presentations on the initiative at Council Work Sessions in February, June and November of 2017. At the Work Session in November 2017, Council directed staff to draft a TIF Policy the Council could adopt through a resolution. Staff presented a draft policy at the Council's April 9, 2018 Regular Business Meeting and Council decided to delay action on the Policy at that meeting and form an ad hoc City Council Committee (The TIF Policy Working Group) to rework the Policy and bring it back for Council action at its July 9 meeting. The Working Group met three times from late April through late May and is presenting the attached TIF Policy for Council consideration when it meets on July 9. The Committee is including the draft Policy in this Friday Packet in advance of the July meeting so that City Council members may ask questions or provide input to Committee Chair Council Member Brewster prior to the meeting. This will assist the Committee in preparing its presentation for the July 9 meeting.

BACKGROUND

The City Council manages all decisions regarding the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds in the three Urban Renewal Districts (URDs) in Billings. The Council has considered many funding applications and programs over the years that these URDs have been in place. There have been infrastructure projects to improve streets, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, lighting and storm water control. There have been building improvement projects to facilitate redevelopment of buildings and property. There have been programs to make building façade improvements, provide revolving loans, and partner to provide a medical clinic in an elementary school. The City Council wants to be consistent and in line with the state laws directing formation, expansion, management and use of TIF funding in its URDs. The adoption of a Policy like the one attached will help further this Council goal and continue to serve the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 18 -

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS FORMING A POLICY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF URBAN RENEWAL AREAS OR DISTRICTS (URD) IN THE CITY.

WHEREAS, MCA, Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42, Section 51 declares: General powers of municipalities in connection with urban renewal. Every municipality shall have all the power necessary or convenient:

- (1) To carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part and part 43;
- (2) To undertake and carry out urban renewal projects within the municipality, to make and execute contracts and other instruments necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers under this part and part 43, and to disseminate blight clearance and urban renewal information;
- (3) To organize, coordinate, and direct, within the municipality, the administration of the provisions of this part and part 43 as they apply to such municipality in order that the objective of remedying blighted areas and preventing the causes thereof within such municipality may be most effectively promoted and achieved and to establish such new office or offices of the municipality or to reorganize existing offices in order to carry out such purpose most effectively;
- (4) To exercise all or any part or combination of powers granted in this part or part 43; and

WHEREAS, the City of Billings reviews and adopts Urban Renewal Plans for each of its Urban Renewal Districts, and those Plans specify goals for each Urban Renewal District; and

WHEREAS, the City of Billings may establish local policies that guide the establishment, operations, funding and governance of urban renewal districts; and

WHEREAS, development of TIF Policies would be in the best interest of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA:

That the City Council now makes and adopts the following TIF Policy:

CITY OF BILLINGS TAX INCREMENT FINANCE POLICY

1. PERMITTED USES OF TIF FUNDS. TIF funds may be used for costs outlined in MCA, Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42, Section 88. Urban Renewal Plans adopted by the City may

limit what TIF funds may be spent on in any one of the Urban Renewal District. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Land acquisition and assemblage, demolition and removal of structures, relocation of occupants, analysis to determine needs of an urban renewal area, administrative cost for redevelopment activities.
 - b. Public infrastructure, including, but not limited to: streets, storm drains, parking, public buildings, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, utility connections.
 - c. Private infrastructure with public benefit, including, but not limited to, building façades, windows, doors, fire suppression or alarm systems, storm drainage, environmental remediation, parking, and ADA access.
2. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH TIF. All financial assistance must be approved by the City Council prior to any activity receiving funding. Financial assistance should be requested prior to beginning construction. All activity (design and construction) must be completed prior to issuance of TIF funds from the City Finance Department. Financial thresholds and assistance tools are as follows:
- a. A minimum return of \geq \$5 of private investment for every \$1 of public investment is the preferred threshold to be met for each TIF application. The City Council reserves the right to approve any application that does not meet this minimum. The City Council also may make exceptions for projects of less than \$100,000, and for publicly owned projects, properties or facilities.
 - b. Grants may be made for uses listed in Part 1 above to any government owned land or buildings, for profit and non-profit businesses .
 - c. Bonding may be available at the discretion of the City Council.
 - d. All TIF grants will be formalized by a development agreement that must be signed by the grantee before the City will reimburse eligible expenses.
3. URD MANAGEMENT. Each URD in the City of Billings will be managed as follows:
- a. Each URD should maintain a non-profit advisory board to make recommendations to the City Council regarding TIF expenditures. Unless specifically authorized by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) referenced in 3(b) below, board members must own or lease property within the district, or must represent such owner or lessee, and may include representation from residential or commercial property owners or lessees. Advisory Boards must carry insurance for their members and provide proof of insurance to the City.
 - b. A MOU must be executed between the advisory board and the City Council that defines the board's roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes, including for hiring and maintaining board support staff. The MOU must contain language addressing conflict of interest situations for board members whose property may directly benefit from a TIF expenditure and for board support staff. The MOU also must include language that if there is the appearance of a conflict of interest the issue will be reviewed by City legal staff before moving forward.
 - c. Training for all URD advisory boards will be conducted biannually in coordination with City staff and URD support staff. The training must include, but is not limited to:

- review of URD and TIF laws, Administrative Rules, ethics, conflicts of interest, meeting management, and maintenance of minutes and records.
- d. URD financial reporting will be consistent across all URDs and be set by coordination between the City Finance Director and the Planning and Community Services Director, and URD support staff.
 - e. TIF application review and City Council staff report preparation will be conducted by the Planning and Community Services Department Director, in coordination with the Assistant City Administrator, Finance Director, and URD support staff.

PASSED by the City Council and APPROVED this 9th day of July, 2018.

THE CITY OF BILLINGS:

BY: _____

William A. Cole, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BY: _____

Denise R. Bohlman, CITY CLERK