

Missoula City Council Public Works Committee Minutes

**March 2, 2022, 10:40 am
ZOOM Webinar**

Members present: Mirtha Becerra (chair), Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Heidi West

Members absent: Stacie Anderson, Gwen Jones

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.1 Roll Call

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted.

1.2.1 PW Committee Minutes from February 23, 2022

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Referral – Sidewalk Program Informational Presentation

Jeremy Keene, Director, and Monte Sipe, Projects Manager presenting,

Sidewalks provide many benefits but only if they connect to something. The City has about 220 miles of missing sidewalks on both sides of the street. The challenge in thinking of sidewalks is that the gaps need to be filled in. New sidewalks are required for new development, but many older neighborhoods were built without sidewalks.

The strategy to fill in the 220 miles is going to take time, typically building two to four miles a year. The City has a Master Sidewalk Plan that helps them identify the major corridors. The plan focuses on addressing the complete streets and safety.

The City Council can order sidewalks to be constructed in front of any lot. The owner can hire a licensed and bonded contractor to construct themselves, or the City can construct it and then assess the costs. This is defined in the MMC 12.10.

Currently, the City has three sidewalk programs. The Right-of-Way Special Improvements Assessment Program, The Hazardous Sidewalk Program, and the Annual Miscellaneous Assessment Parcels Program.

Property owners were assessed for 100 percent of required curb and sidewalk improvements prior to 2011. In 2012 the City established an assistance program of up to \$11,500 where the City would help contribute to sidewalk costs. This program has

increased the cap throughout the years. Then in 2020, the City established the current program that includes a split funding program up to \$9,000. There are loans available at different term lengths. Mr. Carlino asked to clarify the payment deferral. Mr. Sipe explained that a low-income deferral only applies to owner-occupied one and two-family dwellings.

The goals of the Right-of-Way Program are to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, increase neighborhood connectivity and improve access for all users. This program installs sidewalks and replaces broken and hazardous sidewalks. The City has an extensive public outreach process consisting of six separate mailings to property owners throughout the project, neighborhood meetings, project websites, and notices through the City Council.

The second program is the Hazardous Sidewalk Program. This program is initiated by citizen complaints. The property owner pays 100 percent of costs, and city financing and deferred loans are available.

The third sidewalk program is the Annual Miscellaneous Assessment Parcels Program. This program is for properties that improve sidewalks outside of the City capital improvement projects (CIP). These include private development, repair orders for hazardous sidewalks, and installation of the property owner. These can all use City financing and deferred loans.

City Council sets the budget for these projects through the (CIP) budget. The projects are prioritized and recommended by staff based on plan conformity, connectivity, access, safety, equity, leverage, and readiness. The funding for the sidewalk programs comes through the Road District, Bridge and Road Safety and Accountability Act (BaRSAA), Transportation Impact Fees, Tax Increment Financing, and Property Assessments. Assessments only make up ten percent of the total costs.

No Recommended Motion—Informational Only

4. ADJOURNMENT