



Missoula Consolidated Planning Board Minutes

December 1, 2020, 6:00 PM

ZOOM Webinar

Voting members present: Andy Mefford (County Appt), Dave Loomis (County Appt), Sean McCoy (County Appt), Caroline Lauer (City Appt), Josh Schroeder (Conservation Dist Appt), Neva Hassanein (Mayor appointee), Tung Pham (Mayor Appt), Vince Caristo (City Appt), Shane Morrissey (City Alt)

1. Call to Order

Mr. Caristo called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. McCammon called the roll.

3. Approval of Minutes from October 20, 2020 and October 27, 2020

Ms. Hassanein moved; and Mr. Schroeder seconded the approval of the October 20, 2020 and October 27, 2020 Missoula Consolidated Planning Board (MCPB) minutes as submitted. With a voice vote the minutes were approved. Mr. Pham and Mr. Mefford abstained.

4. Public Comment

No public comment(s) on items not on the agenda.

5. Staff Announcements

5.1 Welcome to New Planning Board Member Mr. Tung Pham

5.2 Resignation of Mr. Peter Bensen

5.3 Mr. Dave Loomis change of status from alternate member to regular member

5.4 December 15, 2020 meeting cancelled. Next scheduled meeting is January 5, 2021.

6. Public Hearings

No public hearings.

7. Communications and Special Presentations

7.1 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Growth Scenarios. Aaron Wilson, Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKkBWz4f1Pw>

Aaron Wilson, City of Missoula, Infrastructure and Mobility Transportation Planning Manager, Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) along with Jennifer Wieland, of Nelson Nygaard presented an overview of the 2050 Long-Range

Transportation Plan (LRTP). This plan is updated every four years and was last adopted in 2016.

Background on public engagement to date was presented, from the project kickoff in March 2020 to the present. Board members and the public were urged to view scenarios and provide input at the website: <https://www.missoulampo.com/long-range-transportation-plan>.

Goals from community engagement:

1. Improve safety and promote health
2. Advance sustainability and community resilience
3. Expand mobility choices
4. Connect communities to create a more equitable region
5. Invest strategically to boost economic vitality

The steps of the evaluation framework were detailed:

- Collect projects and programs
- Screen projects and programs
- Score projects
- Develop and rank scenarios.
- Prioritized recommended projects

Mr. Wilson stated that scenario planning helps evaluate plans and potential outcomes. They wanted to explore the relationship between land use and transportation, from the perspective of how and where the community is growing, and the impacts that has on transportation. How transportation connects people to services is key to how growth happens. Scenario planning helps illustrate tradeoffs associated with goals and targets. Growth has been a steady 1-2% in Missoula over the last 10 to 20 years. There is uncertainty in the future, but this tool helps to predict where and when the growth will likely occur. Mr. Wilson stated that Missoula has a progressive land use and growth policy. There are two different approaches to direct growth: 1) Business as usual; growth occurs where there is capacity to absorb it, or 2) Strategic growth, where growth is targeted in specific areas. Strategic growth assumes that more growth is focused within the urban core, areas like downtown, the Mullan Area Master Plan, the area along Brooks Street, and other areas where they know there is capacity for infill and growth.

Ms. Hassanein ask how the anticipated Mullan Area Master Plan traffic flow factors into the LRTP. Mr. Wilson stated that they have been utilizing a traffic demand model, which analyses households and employment. The different scenarios are structured with the assumption that the jobs follow the households, based on existing distribution.

Mr. Caristo asked about connectivity to the city and county growth policies. Mr. Wilson stated that the Mullan Area Master Plan has not yet been officially adopted, and it is the one area where they went above and beyond what the current land use and growth policies would allow; everywhere else they examined existing land uses, zoning, capacities, existing development, and ensured they did not put more households in an area than the capacity would allow. Capacities are not set at 100% of the maximum

allowable, which allows for streets and areas not reaching the maximum allowable housing units.

Ms. Wieland provided information on transportation scenarios. She emphasized that they do not make the decisions regarding how growth is directed; therefore, it was important for the team to work with the city's and county's adopted policies. Missoula has a strong multi-modal network, and they built on that in each of the three scenarios. The scoring process reduced the number of focused projects from 200 down to approximately 125 projects. There are financial constraints, and they were conservative about the initial revenue estimates used. Ms. Wieland stated that in all three of the scenarios there are a group of projects that are referred to as "committed projects", which will cost ~\$110M. Committed projects are funded and moving forward and are in the city's capital improvement program. Beyond those committed projects, ~\$178M will be needed for each of these three scenarios.

Ms. Wieland stated that all the maps, detailed project lists, and analysis are available on the on website <https://www.missoulampo.com/long-range-transportation-plan>.

She introduced the three transportation scenarios.

1. New connections: a) expands the roadway network with complete streets, b) creates new trails and bridges, and c) includes Russell St. to I-90 and non-motorized bridge from McCormick Park to Riverfront Triangle
2. Enhanced connections: a) maintains and improves the existing networks to support growth, b) closes gaps and completes investments, and c) includes Reserve Street protected bike lanes and River Road complete street
3. Regional equity: a) focuses on high-ranking projects in equity weighting and projects in Invest Health neighborhoods, b) connects people to affordable transportation options, and c) includes Howard Raser Drive connection and Hwy 200 complete street

Scenario performance analysis and metrics were detailed; presentation data can be found at <https://www.missoulampo.com/lrtp-scenarios>. Each scenario was evaluated for the number of affordable housing locations served:

- New connections - 77 affordable housing locations served
- Enhanced connections - 112 affordable housing locations served
- Regional equity - 128 affordable housing locations served

Support for growth to serve high-density housing areas was studied. The enhanced connections and regional equity scenarios provide better coverage and more support for growth. The equity analysis demonstrated that enhanced connections and regional equity both reduced auto trips by more than 5% in equity zones; regional equity increased walking trips the most, and enhanced connections increased biking trips the most. Ms. Wieland asked the board for their overall impressions of the scenarios, their preferences, the types of projects they felt were the most important, and if they felt any critical projects were missing.

Mr. Caristo thanked Mr. Wilson and Ms. Wieland for the comprehensive presentation. He asked about the details of a project on US Highway 93, north of the Wye, that was shown

in one of the scenarios. Mr. Wilson stated that this was an MDT project currently in the MPO which is receiving federal funds in the transportation improvement program. This is for widening, resurfacing, and adding a center turn lane through that section of Highway 93. Mr. Caristo asked if the VMT (Vehicle Miles of Travel) was reduced in real terms over time in all scenarios. Ms. Wieland stated that it is normalized for population because they are comparing it against the 2050 base; it assumes growth to 2050 levels and then adds the transportation network scenarios. Future growth is accounted for and is a decrease from what that future 2050 would look like with no action. Mr. Caristo asked about Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ) with estimated future densities of over five dwelling units per acre and was surprised to not see more of the Mullan Area on the associated map. Mr. Wilson that the strategic growth scenario considered full build-out potential of the Mullan Area Master Plan. The overall density of the area will exceed five dwelling units per acre in certain areas. The TAZ may be for a larger area, so the densities could be met in locations, but will not be seen over a larger area. Ms. Wieland agreed, but will double check.

Ms. Lauer asked if there was a way to see projects that were included in multiple scenarios on the website, as opposed to toggling back and forth between the scenario maps. Ms. Wieland stated that by clicking on a project on the map, details would appear and indicate which scenarios it is included in. Ms. Lauer asked for contextualization of the mode split goals. Ms. Wieland stated that the Missoula region has aggressive mode-split goals that were set in the last LRTP and they did not change those goals through this plan. All three of the transportation scenarios move the community toward the mode split goals, but none of them get us there due to the limited investment. An unconstrained scenario may accomplish the goal, but infrastructure investments alone will not accomplish this. Policy and programmatic action are needed to incentive behaviors.

Mr. Pham asked if there was any variability with neighborhoods in different geographic areas in terms of their adoption of public transportation. He asked if the MPO took parking into account, and how does this come into play? Mr. Wilson stated that the LRTP and modeling does not factor in parking and how that might affect travel patterns. He stated that they know that one of the biggest factors on whether a person chooses to drive or not is the availability of parking. Parking availability affects housing affordability, density, and the urban landscape and although parking is essential and critical, it is not necessarily a part of infrastructure investments, modeling, and evaluation. However, parking is a key piece in reaching the mode-split goals. Ms. Wieland that the propensity for people to use transit, and the behavior aspect of transportation is not well represented in the regional travel demand model, which is why they did a lot of off-model analysis. The regional travel demand model follows the traditional four-step process which focuses on destinations that will generate trips, the assignment of those trips to the routes that are available and does not reflect choice. The equity analysis and investment health neighborhoods have demographic and socio-economic characteristics used to factor groups that may be more likely to use transit. Mr. Wilson provided an example of Mountain Line ridership nearly doubling in three years when they moved to 15-minute and zero fare service.

Mr. Caristo asked if there was a comparative analysis of the two growth scenarios. Ms. Wieland stated that those results were not shared on a presentation slide as it is a lot of information. She provided information on the color coding of meeting the transportation

goals and moving toward "strategic growth" as opposed to "business as usual" amplifies those benefits.

Mr. Morrissey asked if amplification changed the results. Ms. Wieland answered that it was very linear, and, in some cases, the numeric differences shifted insignificantly and were not statistically significant. Mr. Wilson stated that this made sense when more people are in closer proximity to jobs, services, and existing infrastructure. Mr. Morrissey stated that reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is one of his top priorities. He asked about transportation improvements for the Grant Creek neighborhood area. Ms. Wieland stated that all three scenarios reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The regional equity scenario offers the greatest reduction in greenhouse gas emissions due to reductions in vehicle miles travelled but this is also due to reduction in delay in key area. Mr. Wilson stated that there are tradeoffs involved in how and where investments are made.

Mr. Schroeder asked if the model considered any advancements in travel technology that may occur before 2050, how does the MPO see each of the scenarios impacting how and where the community grows and does the LRTP consider predictions and/or impacts on real estate values. Ms. Wieland stated that it does not consider future real estate value predictions, yet it is an important consideration as they move from three scenarios into one recommended scenario. The challenges of affordability in the region include enhancing affordability by increasing connectivity; but they also understand that with increased connectivity and access comes gentrification in many cases. Increasing home prices and rents come with that. The regional travel demand model does not account for advancements in travel technology. They did build in conservative assumptions about an increase in the percent of electric vehicles. Mr. Wilson stated that all three scenarios support growth, but possibly in different ways. An increase in density without adequate multi-modal facilities will likely result in more traffic. Providing good, well connected, well-defined multi-modal networks in the core will help facilitate infill by providing people with more options.

Mr. Caristo will continue to evaluate his preference of the three scenarios. Mr. Morrissey voiced that his preference was the enhanced connections scenario.

Mr. Wilson thanked the Planning Board members for their attention, consideration, and comments. Community meetings are scheduled for December 8, 10, 15, 16, and 17. A short survey is available at www.missoulampo.com and the interactive map is at <https://rb.gy/lvckun>.

7.2 Affordable Housing Special Presentation. Montana James (City), Melissa Gordon and Karen Hughes (County)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKkBWz4f1Pw> Time: 1:44:29

Karen Hughes, Assistant Director, Missoula County Community and Planning Services introduced other members of the presentation team: Melissa Gordon, Program Manager of Grants and Community Programs, Missoula County Community and Planning Services, and Montana James, MPA, Community Development Manager, City of Missoula. They team will be providing an overview of efforts by the city and county to address housing affordability.

Ms. James stated that the city's housing policy, "A Place to Call Home: Meeting Missoula's Housing Needs", was passed in 2019 and contains over two dozen policy

recommendations improve housing affordability in Missoula. The four strategy areas were reviewed:

1. Track and analyze progress for continuous improvement
2. Align and leverage existing funding resources to support housing
3. Reduce barriers to new supply and promote access to affordable homes
4. Partner to create and preserve dedicated affordable homes

The housing policy has a 3-5-year implementation timeline. The website at <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2128/Citywide-Housing-Policy> contains implementation updates, activities affecting funding and the affordable housing trust fund. To date, implementation has been focused on funding and code recommendations, as both are first steps to get to the programmatic pieces. Ms. James stated that in June 2020 the Affordable Housing Trust Fund ordinance was adopted. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) code recommendations were adopted in Title 20 updates in October 2020. The city recently completed a review of Townhome Exemption Development (TED) and subdivision regulation to reduce barriers to new supply and promote access to affordable homes. They continue to engage with the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Mullan Area Master Plan to look holistically at the housing policy recommendations in concert with other planning efforts.

A public-private housing finance work group was convened January 2020; the group met four times and was making good progress when COVID-19 forced them to re-examine priorities and partnerships. The group was "paused" in May 2020, and they hope to resume in 2021. Support of specific projects and piloting programs to meet the housing policy goals were outlined:

- Fourth Street condo project
- Trinity Housing Development Project
- Villagio Housing Development Project
- Clark Fork Commons
- HRC Homeowner Rehabilitation Project

Ms. James stated that as they head into 2020, the second half of their fiscal year, they will continue to build necessary infrastructure to get the trust fund operational. Emily Harris-Shears is the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Administrator. Administrative policy and procedures will guide the fund. A housing assessment report will be commissioned. An annual allocation plan will be developed, and they will pilot the awards cycle for the housing trust fund, which will be synced to the community development block grant cycle in January 2022 with a unified application. The team is eager to proceed with next steps from the subdivision and TED regulations review report recommendations. That report recommends pursuing a unified development code, among other things, and Ms. James feels that through those processes a lot of their code related recommendations for the housing policy can be implemented.

Ms. Gordon provided an update on recent and current efforts affordable housing from Missoula County's Grants and Community Programs. She stated that Grants and Community Programs focuses on creating housing opportunities for persons of low to moderate incomes. This is defined as 80% of the area median income or less. This is

because most of the funding comes from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) either through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the HOME program, Continuum of Care Program, or the Brownfields program. The presented a list of current grants the county was awarded to support affordable housing efforts in the county:

- The Meadowlark. \$450,000 CDBG grant to support construction of the new YWCA family housing and shelter facility on Third Street
- Housing Rehabilitation. \$200,000 CDBG grant to support housing rehabilitation projects for eligible low to moderate (LMI) households. The county partners with the Human Resource Council (HRC) for this program.
- Trinity Housing Project: 1) County donation of land for project site; and 2) Up to \$100,000 in County & Tribal Matching Grant funds for the construction of the Navigation Center
- HUD Continuum of Care. \$312,918 grant to support the YWCA's objective to rapidly re-house homeless domestic violence survivors and their families
- Brownfields Assessment Program. \$300,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to complete assessments on contaminated properties that can be remediated and redeveloped for housing and other uses
- County Fund Management. More than \$512,195 allocated for the support of shelter and/or housing programs. Funding is primarily through the Community Assistance Fund and Financial Administration Fund.
- COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Fund. \$50,000 to provide 95 households with \$500 in rental assistance
- COVID-19 Relief Fund. \$34,500 in support for programs to house or keep people housed during the pandemic
- Buena Vista wastewater improvement project. \$465,000 in grant funding to support development of a replacement sewer system which enabled over 35 homeowners to remain in affordable housing units
- Missoula County affordable Homeownership Program. New partnership with Trust Montana to provide low to moderate income (LMI) homebuyers with down payment assistance for the purchase of homes in a community land trust model
- Community Needs Assessment. Annual assessment of housing and community development needs and identification of projects to assist LMI residents and neighborhoods.

Ms. Hughes stated that Missoula County also supports opportunities for the development of housing through land use planning and policies. Recent and/or current efforts include:

- Missoula Area Land Use Element and land use map adopted in 2019, growth policy update for urban area. Ms. Hughes stated that 80% of county growth happens within this area, which made it a priority.
- Mullan BUILD grant to fund backbone infrastructure to support development in anticipated growth area

- Mullan Area Master Plan shapes a significant amount of residential growth that includes a mix of housing types
- County zoning code update: identifies housing and affordability as key issues to address

Ms. Gordon stated that the next steps for Grants and Community Programs is to continue to acquire grants that support housing and homeless programs. They will also continue to manage grants and funds that enable the county to support affordable housing development, housing rehab, homeless projects and programs, and public infrastructure development projects to enable housing development. Collaboration will continue with community groups and coalitions so that they remain aware of changing housing needs.

Ms. Hughes identified next steps for land use planning and policy:

- Implementation of the Missoula Area Land Use Element/Growth Policy
 - Adopt and implement Mullan area master plan
 - Adopt new county zoning regulations
 - Plan and prioritize infrastructure investment and development
- Growth Policy review and revision
 - Identify key development trends, including those related to housing
 - Finish the land use strategy to manage growth consistent with community values
 - Additional elements to be determined

Ms. Gordon stated that a request for proposals (RFP) was released on November 17, 2020 for the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy. Proposals are due December 18, 2020 and the selected consultant will begin work in March 2021. The scope of work is to develop a comprehensive, strategic approach to address affordable housing issues in Missoula county; provide a report detailing findings, recommendations, and action steps. Missoula County will be advertising for a Housing Specialist, which is a new position, and they hope to have this person hired and in place by March 2021. This person will take the plan developed by the consultant and turn it into housing program and policies with a focus on providing housing for working families and vulnerable populations within Missoula County. Ms. Hughes provided contact information for each of the presenters and called for questions from the board.

Mr. Schroeder asked about housing cooperatives. Ms. Hughes said stated that Bill Carey, a former County Commissioner, was interested in the concept. Riverside Crossing, a 55+ retirement community in Hamilton, MT is Montana's first, and possibly only, housing cooperative. Ms. James felt that this is one of the reasons the City Housing Trust Fund is important to their strategy. Although the city is not in the position to create a housing cooperative, flexible local funding is able to spur the innovation.

Mr. Caristo stated that rezoning requests that come before the Planning Board contribute to the efforts to address the supply issue of affordable housing. The challenges arise when rezoning results in the demolition of existing affordable housing and displacement of persons not owning the property. Ms. James agreed that there are nuances to each situation and property and displacement is a piece of the city's housing policy. Many

times, it is not a situation where the city can prohibit property owner choices, but they can support and provide resources to those facing displacement.

Mr. Morrissey asked Ms. James to what extent the trust fund could provide micro-investments with small property owners to incentivize Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to be used as long-term affordable housing and not vacation rentals. Ms. James stated that the housing policy discusses creating incentives to encourage construction of ADUs to rent to voucher holders and maintain affordability. It has not been defined at this time as the trust fund is not yet up and operational.

Mr. Caristo thanked Ms. James, Ms. Gordon, and Ms. Hughes for the presentation.

8. Committee Reports

No committee reports.

9. Old Business

No old business.

10. New Business and Referrals

10.1 Missoula Conservation District re-appointed of Mr. Josh Schroeder to the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board. MCPB board members to vote approval of Mr. Schroeder's re-appointment.

Mr. Loomis moved; Mr. Morrissey seconded the motion to approve the Conservation District's re-appointment of Mr. Schroeder to the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board. Mr. Schroeder was approved unanimously by a voice vote of all members present.

10.2 Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee Appointment for the remainder of 2020 through 2021.

Mr. Caristo and Mr. Wilson provided information on the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC). Both Mr. Morrissey and Ms. Lauer voiced interest in appointment to the committee. With a voice vote of ayes of all present board members, Mr. Morrissey was approved to serve as the Planning Board's appointee to TPCC for the remainder of 2020.

Appointment to the TPCC for the 2021 calendar year will be voted on at the next Planning Board meeting.

11. Comments from MCPB Members

Mr. Loomis stated the *High County News* recently featured an article on co-op small scale agriculture in the Spokane area.

<https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.11/north-food-northwest-co-op-builds-for-a-local-food-future-beyond-big-ag>

12. Adjournment

Mr. Caristo adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.