

## Missoula City Council Public Works Committee Minutes

March 24, 2021, 10:30 am  
ZOOM Webinar

**Members present:** Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra (chair), Heather Harp, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt, Jesse Ramos, Amber Sherrill, Heidi West

**Members absent:** John P. Contos, Sandra Vasecka, Bryan von Lossberg

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

#### 1.1 Roll Call

#### 1.2 Approval of the Minutes

##### 1.2.1 3/10/21 PW Committee Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

### 3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

#### 3.1 Update to the Long Range Transportation Plan

Jennifer Wieland- Project Manager from Nelson\Nygaard and Aaron Wilson  
Transportation Planning Manager presenting

The Long Range Transportation Plan looks at different transportation scenarios. The first step was collecting information on projects that people would like to see done, then screening and scoring them with how well they work with the Missoula Connect Goals. The Missoula Connect goals are improving safety and promoting health, advancing sustainability and community resilience, expanding mobility choices, connecting communities to create a more equitable region, and investing strategically to boost economic vitality. The information was then ranked and developed into three scenarios.

Mr. Wilson explained there are two ways to look at growth outcomes and how they affect transportation. Business as Usual, where growth occurs where there is the capacity to absorb it, and Strategic Growth, where development is targeted in specific areas. The three transportation scenarios are New Connections, Enhanced Connections, and Regional Equality. They all have projects for all transportation modes and the same budget. These projects are in more detail on our project website [www.missoulampo.com](http://www.missoulampo.com). They are all multi-modal improvements and address the growth needs but do it in slightly different ways.

New connections focus on larger infrastructure projects that create new connections and expand the roadway network with complete streets, including new trails and bridges.

Enhanced Connections Scenarios focuses on improving existing facilities such as neighborhood greenways, closing trail gaps, and completing streets.

Regional Equality focuses on high-ranking projects in equity weighting and projects to Invest Health neighborhoods, connecting people to affordable transportation options and enhancing the urban to rural connections.

The community input showed a preference for the Enhanced Connections and Regional Equity scenarios. The public also showed strong support for completing streets and active transportation projects. The consultants and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) used this input to develop a recommended scenario.

The Recommended Scenario started by looking at all projects in both the Enhanced and Regional Scenarios, then looked at projects flagged as critically important from all three groups. An interactive map of the Recommended Scenario projects can be found at [www.missoulampo.com](http://www.missoulampo.com).

This project is estimated to cost about \$1.35 billion over the next thirty years, and that is for all the different transportation funding sources available. Federal funding will cover approximately 50%; some are programmed by the MPO to be locally controlled. This also includes funding that the State Department of Transportation manages. The other 50% would come from local sources such as mill levies, gas taxes, and other road maintenance funds. Capital Improvements would cover about 41%, transit funds 32%, and other programs funds 1%. Most of the discretionary funding will be local funds such as city gas tax, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), and Surface Transportation Program (STP).

Ms. Harp commented that the State legislature is looking at discontinuing the city-level gas tax, impacting these projects that our community needs. Ms. Wieland added that gas tax revenues have been declining nationally, as vehicles become more energy-efficient and as people move toward different modes of transportation. Mr. Hess said it's important to generate funds locally and that we can't entirely rely on Federal Funds to meet the city's needs.

The programs and policies are also essential pieces of this plan. They help improve the transportation system, enhance access and safety, and encourage people to travel differently. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program updates, street typology, and design standards, safe routes to transit are some program examples.

Grand Rapids, Michigan, has a good example of street typology and design standards. They have identified different modes of transportation for all arterials and collectors. An example is that certain routes would be used by freight. This approach is something Missoula could consider in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Eugene, Oregon, has a great Transportation Demand Management Plan. They have created an action plan that builds on transportation, safety, and mode share goals. They offer a menu of options of what the city would like to see for developers.

The MPO will host two more virtual open houses and has online surveys on the website for community involvement. The next step would be to move towards City Council adoption in June or early July. Committee members commented on the importance of

having a good transportation plan and communication with community members and businesses.

No Recommended Motion – Information Only

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

11:33