

GREATER BOZEMAN AREA TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2007 UPDATE)

Public Informational Meeting Number 2

November 28, 2007

Meeting Summary



The second public open house informational meeting for the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan (2007 Update) was held on Wednesday, November 28, 2007 in the Bozeman High School Cafeteria at 205 North 11th Avenue. The meeting took place between 6:30 and 9:00 p.m. and included a *PowerPoint* presentation beginning at approximately 6:40 p.m.

The meeting was attended by the following agency and Consultant Team members:

Debbie Arkell	City of Bozeman
J.P. Pomnichowski	Bozeman Transportation Coordinating Committee
Chris Scott	Gallatin County
Rob Bukvich	MDT Bozeman
Carol Strizich	MDT Helena
Al Vander Wey	MDT Helena
Jeff Key	Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA - Helena)
Scott Randall	Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA - Helena)

An estimated 70 people attended the meeting. Forty-six (46) people signed the attendance sheets for the meeting, although others joined the meeting as it progressed. Copies of the sign-in sheets from the meeting are on file with RPA.

Meeting Purposes

The purposes of the public meeting were to:

- Review the project status and schedule for the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan (2007 Update).
- Review the transportation system “existing conditions”.
- Review the non-motorized survey highlights.
- Review land use forecasting and socioeconomics.
- Have a general discussion about the project with those in attendance.

Meeting Presentation

Jeff Key of RPA began the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Mr. Key used a *PowerPoint* presentation to present project information. The presentation began with a review of the project status and schedule. A graphic of the project schedule was shown and discussed. A review of the transportation system “existing conditions” followed with separate discussions for the motorized and non-motorized portions. Graphics from the existing conditions memo were presented and discussed. Graphics for

motorized transportation were shown for traffic volumes, corridor size, intersection operation and crash statistics. The non-motorized system was discussed with graphics shown for the bicycle network, bicycle collisions, pedestrian facilities, and pedestrian crashes. A very brief review of the non-motorized survey was given, including a discussion about the results of the survey and specific comments stemming from the survey. Finally, a review of the land use forecasting and socioeconomics results and processes were discussed. The presentation lasted about 45 minutes.

Public Comments/Questions

Following the *PowerPoint* presentation, Mr. Key opened up the meeting for general comments and questions from the audience. The following comments and/or questions were heard during this part of the meeting:

- **Does this plan consider the use of impact fees and how they affect where future businesses locate?** Jeff Key explained that it is difficult to analyze how impact fees will affect business locations because we don't have the tools necessary to directly assess this issue via the transportation plan. It was also mentioned that impact fee studies look at the transportation plan for guidance on future transportation system needs, and as such the plan serves as the basis/justification for the impact fee assessments.
- **Does the transportation plan guide development?** Mr. Key stated that the plan should provide the blueprint for transportation in the area, but that it is not a land use plan. It was explained that the plan should be in general compliance with accepted documents, including adopted plans such as Growth Policies, Neighborhood Plans, and zoning densities.
- **Does the study address unnecessary trips or distances due to the lack of development diversity and options?** Mr. Key explained that while mixed land uses are desirable, it is difficult to analyze the "cause and effect" relationship of providing complementary land uses through a regional transportation plan. He also explained that some of the newer and future developments on the horizon are trying to accomplish the mixed land use development goal.
- **Does the plan use tools to discourage traffic on certain routes?** Mr. Key explained that there is traffic calming guidance in the plan which can be used to help deter or provide safer travel on roadways. He also explained that roadways can be designed to discourage traffic if there is a safe alternative elsewhere.
- **What is the objective of the plan and how is it used?** Mr. Key explained that the transportation plan is intended to be used on a daily basis by city staff, planners, elected officials, development community and the public at large. He mentioned that the plan shows where needed work should happen and when to implement certain actions contained in the plan in accordance with land use changes. The future roadway classifications and typical sections defined in the transportation plan are also important. It was also mentioned that conflicts within the plan should be limited to help ensure a quick adoption process and to encourage use.

- **Does the plan address site specific or broad recommendations for non-motorized improvements?** Mr. Key explained that Alta Planning and Design will be making both policy and specific recommendations for the area under study. He also mentioned that guidance on how to implement and fund the recommendations will also be within the plan.
- **What can you do to help city and county cooperate?** Mr. Key explained that RPA's role with regards to the transportation plan is to develop the plan under guidance of the TCC and public and to make the plan easy to implement for city and county officials.
- **Does the plan address interaction concerns between various planning agencies during construction phases? Simultaneous construction projects can cause additional traffic congestion during construction.** Mr. Key stated that during the development of the plan, RPA works with the TCC which encourages coordination of projects and provides opportunities for coordination during the development of the plan. He also explained that due to the nature of construction in the Bozeman area (i.e. high growth, short construction season) it is often times difficult to limit the affect that construction has on traffic. He also said that other communities will be looked at to see if there is a better way to coordinate construction projects amongst the various jurisdictions and will try to implement guidance into the plan.
- **Does the plan address non-motorized funding issues?** Mr. Key talked about how the funding source discussion is the last part of the plan, but that funding historically has always fallen short. He mentioned that Alta brings a national perspective on non-motorized funding to the project and may have ideas with regards to innovative funding sources.
- **How does the plan address maintenance issues on bike lanes?** Mr. Key explained that Alta is addressing this concern and that the standard maintenance guidelines/solutions can be addressed in the plan.
- **Is there a list of current planned projects for the Bozeman area?** Mr. Key explained that a preliminary list was provided by the City, County and the MDT, but that changes need to be made to that list. The revised list may be available at the next TCC meeting.
- **What is the website for information on the transportation plan?** Mr. Key gave www.rpa-hln.com as the main website for information. It was also mentioned that links from the city and county websites exist for the project website.
- **A comment was made with regards to how street sweeping causes unsafe conditions along bike lanes, especially at choke points, and that the county and city don't have a good communication on priority for maintaining bike lanes.**
- **Will the new plan make new recommendation for typical sections or will there be carried over from the previous plan?** Mr. Key stated that the city and county would like RPA to have fewer typical sections in this plan, and that they need to be revisited. He said that this issue has not been addressed yet, but it will be visited over the coming months.

- **There is a state law that says local areas can enact a 2 cent gas tax that has not been used; could the law be changed so that this could be applied to help with the non-motorized network?** Mr. Key stated that while it is feasible, it would require an advocate to push a bill through the state.
- **Are there any alternatives to chip sealing with regards to the unsafe conditions it causes on bike lanes?** Mr. Key said that he would research this issue through Alta, and that he knows that in Wyoming only the driving lanes are chip sealed (i.e. not the shoulders).
- **Will overhead lighting recommendation be part of this plan?** Mr. Key stated that lighting on NHS routes must be done in accordance with the national standard set in place. He also stated that urban areas can have lower impact type lighting and that the city just passed a “dark skies” ordinance to help reduce lighting in the city, but that the county does not have guidance. He mentioned that more research needs to be done to help address this concern, but that the city development ordinance has requirements within the city area.
- **Has the study area in this plan grown since the last plan?** Mr. Key state that the study area boundary has changed and the current study area boundary is located on the website.
- **How can more comments be made to RPA?** Mr. Key said that the website provided has a 1-800 number, as well as a link to his e-mail and the city’s e-mail. He also said that questions concerning bicycles, pedestrians, and transit can be sent to Alta.
- **Does the plan include more information for motorists about cyclists?** Mr. Key stated that the existing conditions memo that Alta provided does address this, and has suggestions for additional signage. He also mentioned that the safe routes to schools program addresses this concern.
- **Will Alta address the number of people using non-motorized facilities for tax purposes?** Mr. Key said that if Alta has good ideas about how to implement taxes to pay for non-motorized facilities, that it will be put into the plan. He said that funding sources will be addressed in the plan.
- **A comment was made that as a bicyclist, he would be happy to pay a license for his bike, and that bike licensing is not a new idea and was previously implemented in the 60’s.**
- **Is there a value to having fewer cars on the road?** Mr. Key stated that reductions in vehicle miles of travel due to recommended network improvement is looked at and is a criterion for identifying network improvements. He also mentioned that different changes to the system are tested to see how they affect the system and overall vehicle miles of travel.
- **A citizen comment was made about how encouraged he was on how much energy has been put into non-motorized transportation to help reduce vehicle traffic.** Mr. Key stated that while it is important to look at non-motorized transportation, there are still traffic issues that need to be addressed and that will still exist. He also mentioned that it was

a requirement set forth by the city, county and MDT to have an expert on board with this project to assist with the non-motorized aspects of the transportation system.

- **How does mass transit figure into the transportation plan?** Mr. Key said that he has spoken with the board of directors for Stream Line Transit, and that they do a yearly coordination plan for the transit system. He said that RPA has a good handle on the routes and timing of the transit system and that the route system will not be revisited. Stream Line contracts with an engineer with specialty in transit systems (Current Transportation Solutions) and that dialogue with that entity has been occurring on this transportation plan development.
- **A comment was made about needing a coordination plan for Streamline for people who have equipment like bikes, and/or ski equipment.** Mr. Key stated that Bridger Bowl does have a shuttle service that accommodates people going skiing or working at Bridger Bowl and that it coordinates with employees hours, vacation times for kids, and with Streamline.
- **A comment was made about how if people are afraid to bike, and bike sales are increasing (which indicates more people want to bike), then the plan isn't working.** Mr. Key said that people not biking isn't only about being scared, but that it is about safety, timing, distance, and other factors. He also mentioned that Missoula is often looked at as having a great bike/ped system, but that the "being scared" comment is still heard there as well.
- **A comment was made by Jeff Key that the third public meeting will include Alta Planning and Design, and will include workstations to promote continued interaction between the public and the Consultant team.**

The meeting concluded at about 9:00 p.m.

Other Comments Made After the Meeting

- Gooch Hill Road / US 191: This is a "tee" intersection. There are grade issues on Gooch Hill Road as it ties into US 191. Also, a southbound left-turn is needed, but it may create issues with the northbound lane.
- There should be some language in the plan that discusses the health benefits of non-motorized travel, and the dire conditions of our nations youths regarding obesity and inactivity. Maybe tie it into the Safe Routes to School (SRST) work that ALTA is doing?
- The Gallatin Gateway community has brainstormed on very modest, though realistic traffic concerns and needs as part of their community planning forum. They will summarize and mail to Jeff and/or Warren Vaughn.

- The downtown “one-ways” are not needed. This is a golden opportunity to revitalize the downtown with aggressive land use visioning and changes. This can start with the roadways. Why not remove one of the lanes on the two-lane one-way and install a protected diagonal parking area. There is more than enough capacity with one single one-way lane. Then, redevelopment can occur with friendlier streetscape, good parking, and appropriate scale to the downtown.

Meeting summary prepared by Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

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