

Rattlesnake Neighborhood Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

7 pm – 8:30 pm

Break Espresso

Introductions: Bob Giordano (Co-Chair), Emily Jensen (Co-Chair), Tom Carlson (Secretary), Joe Baker, Bill Ruediger, Fred Rice, Kirk Henderson, Doug Grimm, Judy Stack, Trish Petrilli, Cynthia Erler, Marsha Hoem, Cynthia Smith

Bob reviewed the mission of the Rattlesnake Transportation Committee which is to promote safe, efficient, and accessible transportation options for residents and visitors in the Rattlesnake Valley. The Committee is part of both the Upper and Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Councils and members are volunteers who live in the neighborhood. Everyone is welcome to participate, and the meetings are open to the public.

The committee can be contacted at: rattlesnaketransportationplan@gmail.com

The 2021 Rattlesnake Transportation Plan Update can be found at:

<https://rattlesnaketransportation.org/>

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes: Approved with no changes.

Draft Agenda Review: OK as proposed.

Public Comments on Non-agenda Topics:

Traffic management for trains – A proposal was made to install flashing lights near the intersections of Lolo Street and Rattlesnake Drive and Lolo Street and Duncan Drive/Greenough Drive to inform drivers headed south that a train is crossing the tracks at the Greenough Drive/Spruce Street intersection so that they could choose an alternative route. A similar system may be in place at the fire station on Madison. A funding source for this project was not identified.

Borrow Pit Trail – The need for this project has been identified for many years and recently it was again highlighted at the January 2023 Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council general meeting. A petition has been circulating and getting favorable response. The existing trail is in the road right-of-way which makes this a project for Missoula Public Works. An engineering report has been done. This project is identified in the transportation plan and Bill is looking for volunteers to help move the process forward.

Duncan Drive area trails – Marsha stated that the Upper Duncan Drive Neighborhood Association is interested in any proposals for trails. The transportation plan includes opportunities such as a route from Pineview Park to the north end of Duncan Drive, a Duncan Drive Trail, and a Sunlight Trail (from the north Water Works Hills Trailhead).

Speed limits – Lower speed limits with enforcement were suggested for Lolo Street and Duncan drive.

Old Business (from previous meeting minutes):

Transportation Plan and the Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood General Meeting - Dan Doyle presented for the committee at the January 29, meeting. He identified the committee and its purpose, highlighted the transportation plan (previously endorsed by the Upper Leadership Council) and provided a link to access it, and handed out a Rattlesnake Transportation Resources and Information list that identifies how to contact the appropriate city or county government office and other organizations regarding transportation issues.

Emergency Route Planning in the Rattlesnake – The committee reviewed the origin of the Creek Crossing evacuation route as proposed by a neighborhood resident at the January meeting. This project is not currently included in the transportation plan but the potential need for emergency escape as well as potential detrimental effects to the neighborhood were discussed. Other possible routes over the Mt. Jumbo Saddle and Water Works Hills were also briefly discussed.

The committee identified a need for additional information such as existing city/county emergency evacuation plans and possible projects to address risks from fire, chemical spill, etc. Joe will contact the Missoula County Office of Emergency Management to identify what already exists and determine if there is a process for that office to consider potential evacuation routes. This topic will be discussed further at the March meeting.

Lolo Street bridge rehabilitation project (Missoula County Scope of Work) – This is a Missoula County project, and it is featured on the Missoula County website (County Voice). Public input is being accepted on-line at: <https://missoulacountyvoice.com/lolo-street-bridge-rehabilitation> and surveying is in progress. Shane Stack, Missoula County Public Works Director, has been invited to attend the April 11, meeting along with Ben Weiss, Missoula City Senior Transportation Planner.

Mountain Line bus stop locations and maintenance – Dan contacted Mountain Line about bus stop snow clearing issues. They do have a plow and crew but depend on citizen reporting of issues at 406-721-3333. Mountain Line also plans to address bus stop location issues in the spring of 2023.

Greenough Park trail bridge repair – The existing hole in the bridge deck has been repaired.

Meeting scheduling and location update – Tom identified and contacted potential meeting space locations to determine availability and costs and worked with Kelly Elam (City Missoula Neighborhoods) to determine feasibility.

- Old library - This is currently used by Missoula Parks and Rec. and staff at the new library say that it is not available for public meetings.
- Messiah Lutheran Church - Someone on the committee must be a member of the church in order for us to use the room.
- Break Espresso - Usually available but it is very marginal due to noise and the chances of getting a large table.
- The Press Box - No initial response but Tom will follow-up.
- Rattlesnake Market - Not available for a meeting because the restaurant space is in use during our meeting time, and they need to keep the market space open for their customers.
- The former Missoula International School – closed.
- Rattlesnake Elementary School - MCPS has an application form and process that could be used to reserve a room, but they won't determine if a fee is required until the application is approved.

Available spaces that require a fee:

- Good Works Place (129 W. Alder) - Available but requires a \$25 cleaning fee.
- First United Methodist Church (300 East Main) - Available (assuming approval of our application) but requires a \$15 fee.
- New Library - The conference rooms must be vacated by 7:45 pm and are very busy, often booked weeks ahead. After hours use is available, but it requires a \$40 fee.

The committee identified other possible options:

- Missoula Community Theatre – Tom will check.
- 10 Spoon Winery – Fred will check
- Old Post wine tasting room
- Senior Center

Kelly stated that the Missoula Neighborhoods could ask the Upper and Lower Neighborhood Council Leadership Teams to donate funds to cover the cost of meeting space for the committee. Bill, who recently stepped down from the Upper Leadership Council, said that they typically have funds available.

New business

Striping on Lolo Street – Eliminating center stripes and bike lanes east and west of the bridge last summer may have slowed traffic and improved safety for bicyclists. If possible, eliminating stripes across the bridge may have the same beneficial effect. The left turn lane on east bound Lolo Street at Rattlesnake Drive should be examined for need and safety. Mirrors could be an option for eastbound Lolo Street drivers to better see northbound traffic on Rattlesnake Drive.

Striping on Greenough Drive – The summer 2022 change of the striping to add and widen the northbound bike lane at the top of the hill and eliminate about 200 yards of

the southbound lane across Cherry Gulch may not have improved safety for bicyclists. Anecdotal observation indicates that far more bikers likely use Greenough Drive southbound than northbound because of alternate routes that avoid the steep uphill.

Greenough Park to the river trail connection – There are possible routes on public land through this area and east of the existing east side sidewalk under the bridge. Bob, Joe, Kirk, and Bill will meet and walk the potential routes. Better options for crossing Broadway should also be identified. Both projects are in the transportation plan.

Urgent priority projects from the transportation plan update – This topic was deferred to the March meeting.

Co-Chair vacancy – Joe volunteered to be the new Co-Chair and was approved by motion and voice vote.

Next Meeting - March 14, **6:15 – 7:45 pm**, at the new Library, Ellingson Conference Room 316.

Agenda items:

- Emergency Evacuation Route Planning.
- Flashing lights to identify trains on tracks at Lolo Street and rattlesnake Drive and Lolo Street and Greenough/Duncan Drive.
- I-90 westbound entrance ramp – need for flashing light at pedestrian crossing.
- Urgent priority projects from the transportation plan update.
- Planning for future meeting time and location.

Note – Meeting Agendas and Minutes can be found at:

<https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/1801/Agendas-Minutes> then either the Lower or Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council link.

Missoula Neighborhoods contact: Kelly Elam, elamk@ci.missoula.mt.us, 406-552-6084.