

Rattlesnake Neighborhood Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday January 10, 2023
7 pm – 8:30 pm,
The Break Espresso

Introductions (present): Bob Giordano (Co-Chair), Emily Jensen (Co-Chair), Tom Carlson (Secretary), Dan Doyle, Ike Moody, Fred Rice, Joe Baker, Alex Gallego, Michael Nave, Kirk Henderson

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes: Approved without review or changes

Agenda Review: OK as proposed

Public Comments on Non-agenda Topics:

Emergency Escape Route –

Michael asked the committee to consider the opportunity to establish an emergency escape route to help address the risk of wildfire in the upper Rattlesnake neighborhood. The route would extend Creek Crossing across Rattlesnake Creek and west to Duncan Drive using an existing city right-of-way. The route avoids existing houses but does follow an existing gas pipeline. The roadway could be closed to vehicles (except in emergencies) and available for bicycle and pedestrian use.

Michael noted that this project is not identified in the 2021 Rattlesnake Transportation Plan Update and asked the committee to give it consideration. He believes that support from the committee and the neighborhood would be useful when working with the city for funding the project.

Transportation Plan –

Dan reported that the Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council Leadership Team met Jan. 4 and endorsed the plan. The team did not believe that the plan needed to be endorsed at the next general meeting, scheduled for Jan. 29 at the Rattlesnake School. City Council members have been invited to the general meeting and Dan will present the plan.

Bob will present the plan at the next Lower Rattlesnake general meeting when it is scheduled.

The plan should also be presented to the Ward 1 City Council reps. and then the city council for endorsement.

Co-Chair – Emily would like to step down as Co-Chair but remain active on the committee. Nominations for co-chair will be on the February meeting agenda.

Old Business:

Review Lolo Street bridge rehabilitation project (Missoula County Scope of Work) -

The Missoula County Scope of Work is a 30% design project with a completion date of June 2023. The County Commissioners have said that suggested design changes and public input are welcome during this process. The current proposal includes 2 – 12' vehicle travel lanes, 6' sidewalks on both sides, and a 38' total bridge deck width. The committee discussed the Scope of Work for replacing this bridge and shared issues and concerns:

Currently the overall situation presents risk for all modes of transportation due to the narrow width, curved approaches, vehicle speeds, lack of bike lanes, etc. The committee could identify specific concerns.

Wider lanes may increase speed. A stop sign on Lolo Street could slow traffic.

The current Scope of Work does not address bicycle travel.

Deleting the planned sidewalk on the north side (which would not connect with any currently existing sidewalks) could make space available for bike lanes.

A foot path on the north side east and west of the bridge may be feasible and desirable.

A separate pedestrian and bicycle bridge might be cheaper than expanding the existing bridge structure and could connect to existing sidewalks and the Missoula Ave. bike route.

The City's Complete Streets ordinance will apply to this project. The ordinance requires curbs, gutters and sidewalks on both sides of reconstructed streets.

Data on pedestrian and bicycle use was collected by Ike in 2021. The committee could consider a use monitoring project for this spring.

This location could be suggested for monitoring by Missoula in Motion during their spring traffic counts.

The City and County should coordinate on project design. Bob will invite both Shane Stack (Missoula County) and Ben Weiss (City of Missoula) to attend a committee meeting as soon as possible.

Discuss other project priorities for 2023:

Borrow Ditch Trail (along Upper Rattlesnake Drive): Bill Ruediger is moving this project forward and will make a presentation at the Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council general meeting. Dan will ask Bill what the committee can do to support the project.

Greenough Park lower foot bridge: The wooden bridge deck has deteriorated with at least one hole in a board. Tom will contact Morgan Valiant (City Parks and Recreation) to inquire about plans for reconstruction including the type of material and, if necessary, what type of wood preservative would be used.

Greenough Park to the river trail connection: Existing paths on the east side of the creek could be utilized to create a safe route. There is a safety issue when trains are stopped on the tracks and bicyclists and pedestrians cross under train cars. BNSF may have grant funds available.

Discuss a letter to Mountain Line about bus stop locations and maintenance: The committee has received complaints about winter bus stop accessibility. Mountain Line has responded that they are reviewing the issues and are formulating plans to address them in the spring. Dan recently looked at bus stop snow removal and plans to highlight bus stop accessibility issues at the Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council Meeting Jan. 29. He will also contact Mtn. Line and possibly the City of Missoula to determine who is responsible for snow removal before the committee considers moving forward with a letter.

Meeting scheduling and location update:

Tom looked into locations for committee meetings. The City Missoula Neighborhoods is unable to staff committee meetings which prevents use of the MRA Conference Room. Library conference rooms close at 7:45 and are booked up early. The Messiah Lutheran Church did not respond to two requests.

Tom will look into use and availability of meeting space at The Press Box, Goodworks Ventures, and Rattlesnake School as well as the Rattlesnake Market for scheduling the February meeting.

New business

Review URGENT priority projects from the transportation plan update: This topic was not addressed

Next Meeting:

Date, time, and location:

February 7, 7:00 – 8:30 pm at the Rattlesnake Market (unless Tom can find a more suitable location prior)

Agenda items:

- Lolo Street bridge replacement project
- Striping on Lolo Street and Greenough Drive
- Co-Chair vacancy
- Greenough Park to the river trail connection

- Urgent priority projects from the transportation plan update.