

Rattlesnake Neighborhood Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023

6:15 – 7:45 pm

Missoula Library, Ellingson Conference Room 316

Introductions: Bob Giordano (Co-Chair), Joe Baker (Co-Chair), Tom Carlson (Secretary), Emily Jensen, Dan Doyle, Fred Rice, Cynthia Erler, Karen Kaley

Minutes for February 7, 2023 were approved with no changes.

Agenda Review: Approved with no changes.

Public Comments on Non-agenda Topics:

- 1) Mountain lions have been seen in the Creek Crossing area. Abundant deer in the area may be an attractant. The cats are a safety issue for kids walking to school. The deer population is also an issue for drivers and bikers on the roads. Cynthia will contact both the Upper and Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Councils Leadership Teams to request that this topic be added to the agendas for the next general meetings.
- 2) Ice on sidewalks and in bike lanes continues to be a problem under the I-90 bridges for both Van Buren Ave. and Greenough Drive. Design, drainage, and snow removal are issues. City Parks and Recreation is responsible for snow removal on the sidewalks. The committee has previously sent letters to MDOT and the City of Missoula about these issues. Emily has pictures of recent conditions.
This item will be added to the agenda for the April meeting.

Old Business (from previous meeting minutes):

Transportation Plan approval process - Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council

Bob inquired about getting on the next leadership council meeting agenda but there was no time available. He will pursue adding it to a subsequent meeting agenda.

Emergency Evacuation Planning - Missoula County Office of Emergency Management

Tom used the committee listserv and the Nextdoor Neighborhood forum to send a notice about the opportunity to provide comment for the Missoula County Emergency Services plan update process.

Joe reviewed existing plans and policies and will prepare a synopsis for the committee.

Joe will invite someone from the Office of Emergency Management to either the May or June committee meeting.

Lolo Street bridge rehabilitation project

This is the primary topic for discussion at the April committee meeting with both Shane Stack (Missoula County) and Ben Weiss (City of Missoula) invited.

Tom used the committee listserv and the Nextdoor Neighborhood forum to inform others about the opportunity to comment. Joe mentioned that there were about 24 comments to date.

Topics for discussion at the April committee meeting include:

- Speed and volume of vehicle traffic with limited sight distance.
- Narrow existing vehicle lanes
- Wider proposed traffic lanes
- Lack of proposed bike lanes
- Current lack of sidewalk on north side as well as a maintained path to and from the bridge
- Proposed sidewalk on north side
- City Complete Streets plans for Lolo Street and possible sidewalk on north side of Lolo Street east and west of bridge

The committee will engage with Shane Stack and Ben Weiss at the April meeting and consider subsequent input to the project design.

Striping on Lolo Street and Greenough Drive

Lolo Street – The City purposely did not re-paint the yellow center stripes after chip sealing last summer and the time may be ripe for the committee to provide input on the effects of the current approach to Ben Weiss.

Bob will contact Ben to see if this can be included in the April meeting. Deleting the yellow stripes on Duncan Drive may also be discussed.

Greenough Drive – The City changed the striping after the chip seal project last summer to add a northbound bike lane and eliminate the southbound lane near Cherry Gulch, and widen the turn lane at Poggio Lane. This may be an opportune time for the committee to provide input on the effects of the current approach to Ben Weiss.

There may also be an opportunity to again suggest that the new sidewalk being built in conjunction with the Greenough Heights subdivision be extended south across Cherry Gulch to connect with the existing sidewalk on the east side of Greenough Drive.

I-90 westbound entrance ramp – need for improved safety at pedestrian crossing. (Note - This topic actually includes both the eastbound exit ramp and the westbound entrance ramp.)

Drivers exiting I-90 can't see kids and others on the sidewalks near where they cross the ramp because of poor sight distance and especially if they are driving a lower vehicle.

Cynthia will contact District Administrator Bob Vosen at MT DOT.

There are also continuing issues with use of the westbound I-90 entrance ramp. The ramp is short and steep, and the sound wall limits sight distance for merging onto I-90. Some drivers accelerate through the roundabout and across the pedestrian/bike crossing in order to gain speed for merging. MDOT has installed "Through Traffic Keep Left" signs for westbound I-90 but the problem continues.

The committee has previously discussed potential safety measures that include installing a button operated flashing light for pedestrians and bikers using the crosswalk and reducing the current 65mph speed limit on this section of I-90.

Urgent priority projects from the transportation plan update. – Not discussed.

Discuss need for possible advanced warning to identify when trains are on the tracks at the Greenough Crossing. – Not discussed.

New business – None identified.

Public Comment - None

Next Meeting:

Date, time, and location:

April 11, 2023, 6:15 to 7:45 pm, Rm 410, Missoula Public Library

Agenda items:

Focus on the Lolo Bridge reconstruction project,
with Shane Stack from Missoula County and Ben Weiss from the City of Missoula

Other agenda items may include:

- Lolo street and Greenough Drive striping
- Ice and snow on sidewalks and paths under the I-90 bridges for Van Buren Ave. and Greenough Drive.