

City Clerk Staff

From: Debbie Erbacher <debbie@missoulachamber.com>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 10:45 AM
Subject: Formal Statement Beartracks Bridge Reduction - Missoula Chamber of Commerce
Attachments: MISSOULA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Formal Statement.docx

Attached, please find a formal statement from the Missoula Chamber of Commerce regarding the Beartracks Bridge Reduction.

Thank you,

Kim Latrielle

CEO | Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce

825 E. Front St. | P.O. Box 7577 | Missoula, MT 59802

406.543.6623

Direct 406.303.8759

kim@missoulachamber.com



City Clerk Staff

From: Mirtha Becerra
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 8:23 AM
To: Deborah Postma
Cc: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: Re: Updated 2023 RAISE Resolution for Monday's consent agenda

Thanks Deborah!
Mirtha

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 24, 2023, at 8:15 AM, Deborah Postma <PostmaD@ci.missoula.mt.us> wrote:

City Council:

For Monday's (2/27) consent agenda, attached is the updated Resolution for the City's RAISE grant submittal, Missoula Downtown Safety and Mobility. The match commitment dollar amount is updated.

Please reach out to me or Aaron Wilson if you have any questions.

Thanks!

Deborah

Deborah Postma | she/her/hers | Transportation Planner
Department of Public Works & Mobility
Planning & Engineering Division | Transportation
(406) 552-6366 | postmad@ci.missoula.mt.us

<RAISE 2023 CC Resolution.pdf>

City Clerk Staff

From: Deborah Postma
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 8:16 AM
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: Updated 2023 RAISE Resolution for Monday's consent agenda
Attachments: RAISE 2023 CC Resolution.pdf

City Council:

For Monday's (2/27) consent agenda, attached is the updated Resolution for the City's RAISE grant submittal, Missoula Downtown Safety and Mobility. The match commitment dollar amount is updated.

Please reach out to me or Aaron Wilson if you have any questions.

Thanks!

Deborah

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Department of Public Works & Mobility
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(406) 552-6366 | postmad@ci.missoula.mt.us

City Clerk Staff

From: lokelley@bresnan.net
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 4:51 AM
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: RE: Higgins Ave Corridor Plan

Dear City Council Members,

This article from The Missoulian on January 24th in 2006 written by Ginny Merriam is a perfect example of how once a poor decision is made it is not easy to correct. This change did not even involve the construction of raised bicycle lanes making it an easier fix than Higgins Ave will be if it's decided in the future that it should be returned to two lanes of traffic in each direction. As I'm sure you're aware, we're still living with The Broadway Road Diet seventeen years after Mayor Engen pledged to correct it.

[Loosen your belts: The West Broadway "road diet" is coming to an end.](#)

[It's not working on any front, Mayor John Engen said Tuesday night, and Missoula needs to try something different.](#)

[Beginning right away, city and state traffic specialists will work on ways to restore the road to four lanes - maybe five. At Engen's request, state transportation officials will consider a timed traffic signal at the intersection of California Street, Broadway and Toole Avenue; at Burton and Broadway; or in the middle of the block.](#)

["I'm prepared to abandon the three-lane system for a system that better serves Missoula's needs," Engen told about 60 people gathered in a meeting room at St. Patrick Hospital.](#)

["We're going to try to figure this out," he said.](#)

[Engen asked for and received last week a pledge of \\$20,000 in federal transportation money that comes to the city to put on a community charrette in which all are welcome to participate in a plan for West Broadway and its environs. The city will put out a request for a proposal to run the charrette as soon as possible. Engen hopes the charrette will take place in March.](#)

Here's a link to the actual article from The Missoulian archives for your reference:

https://missoulian.com/news/local/broadway-diet-comes-to-abrupt-end/article_b547689a-c615-5d14-835d-b16fa6b697b2.html

Sincerely,

Owen Kelley



February 23, 2023

To: Malcolm Long, Director Montana Department of Transportation mlong@mt.gov
Mayor Hess, City of Missoula HessJ@ci.missoula.mt.us
City Council of Missoula council@ci.missoula.mt.us

From: Kim Latrielle, President/CEO Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce
kim@missoulachamber.com

RE: The Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce requests to officially go on record stating that our organization and membership **were not included in the process and did not receive adequate outreach from the City of Missoula** regarding the Beartracks Bridge Reduction.

As the largest business organization in Missoula and a viable partner in the past with the City/County in obtaining grants, we were astonished when we learned of this proposed reduction plan. With less than 24 hours' notification of the hearing, the lack of knowledge or inclusion in the process, we did not have adequate time to inform nor to engage our Chamber membership.

This letter and statement are a formal follow up to our survey results process. On 2.14.2023 the Missoula Chamber sent to MDT and the City of Missoula, the final Chamber membership survey results. These results demonstrates that our membership was not included or aware of the process - see Q1. **Q1: As a business owner in and around Downtown Missoula, do you feel you have been included in the conversations about the Higgins Street Road-Diet? 76.85% voted No** out of 169 businesses responding.

Additionally, the City's leadership including the mayor and staff directly involved, admitted in statements to the Chamber's Chair of the Board and Chamber CEO - *"we apologize, we dropped the ball by not including Chamber!"* This is especially difficult for our organization to understand since we worked collaboratively with the City and County and won a successful Build Grant for \$13 Million in 2021. The results of our survey process show that as a continued partner the Chamber can reach a large number of Business Leaders in a noticeably short amount of time. While we support the city and other partners who had done previous surveys and outreach to the downtown business area, the information we have received shows that most of the local business's **do not** support the Beartracks reduction and the Chamber is always willing to collaborate to distribute the correct information out to our members.

The Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce at this point is hesitant to take a position of support or opposition due to not being part of the public process on the Beartracks Bridge Reduction. We would request, due to lack of adequate outreach and involvement from the city, that a pause be considered for the Beartracks Bridge portion of the grant funding. During Jeremy's opening remarks at the committee meeting, he stated that the city could remove this portion from the RAISE grant request and reapply the following year, when the process could be vetted further. This would allow more time for our organization's membership, Missoula residents, and the local business community and specifically, all the downtown business's that could potentially be impacted if this moves forward. If there were to be a pause and collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, we can as a group distribute the information to our members allowing them the opportunity to get educated on the reduction plan and feel like they are part of the process. Thank you for your time and consideration.