

HELENA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HTAC)

July 15, 2014 Monthly Meeting

Rocky Mountain Development Center, Senior Center Dining Room (*map*)

200 South Cruse Avenue

2:30 PM till 4:00 PM

Agenda

- 1. Introductions (5 min.)**
- 2. Approval of Minutes for May (3 min.)**
- 3. Executive Committee Report (2 min.)**
- 4. Lead Agency Update/Discussion (HATS) (10 min.)**
- 5. Transit Riders' Council Formation Discussion (70 min.)**
 - a. Welcome (3 min.)**
 - b. Review Agenda (2 min.)**
 - c. Why We Need a Riders' Council (20 min.)**
 - d. Discussion #1: Riders' Council Composition/Leadership (15 min.)**
 - e. Discussion #2: Riders' Council Outreach strategies (15 min.)**
 - f. Discussion #3: Utilizing Existing Structures (10 min.)**
 - g. Closing Comments (5 min.)**
- 6. Public Comment**
 - a. George McCauley-Letter regarding sidewalk snow removal (3-5 min.)**
- 7. HTAC August 19 Meeting Announcement-1-4 PM Service Improvement Planning Charrette with Scott Chapman, Nelson Nygaard.**
- 8. Adjourn**

HTAC meetings are the 3rd Tuesday in each month and will begin promptly at 2:30 pm.

As outlined by the Montana Department of Transportation, a TAC is an advisory council that cooperatively assists the lead transit agency manager in assessing and prioritizing local needs, as well as discusses and make recommendations on various transit related issues.

<http://www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats/helena-transportation-advisory-council.html>

Materials

HELENA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HTAC)

June 17, 2014 Monthly Meeting Minutes

City County Building, 316 North Park Room #426

2:30 PM till 4:00 PM

Attendance: Cindy Baril (County Citizen), Steve Larson (HATS), Allison Batch (SAVE), Elizabeth Andrews, (HCC District #2/Chair), Les Clark (MILP), Carole Solomon (YWCA), Jaymie Sheldahl (RMDC-Head Start/Secretary), M.C. Beeby (Youth Connections), Vivian Crabtree (MAB Capital City Chapter), Mike Hruska (Capital Taxi), Patrick Sanders (DPHHS), John McCrea (Senor Rep.), Bobb Allen (At Large), Jennie Ekwortzel (Senior Corps), Walter Hanley (RMDC), James Schell (City of East Helena Mayor), Bob Morgan (Helena Citizens Council), Karen Lane (L & C County Health Dpt.), Jerry Hutch, David Kack (WTI/MSU), Jeanette Blize (M & R), Sandra Lowry (Area IV Agency on Aging), Jessi Sheava (L&C County Child Hunger Team), Andy Hunthausen (BOCC), Matt Elsaesser (City), Linda Bahr (No Kids Hungry/Sudexo Carroll College), Amy Tenney (Boyd Andrew Comm. Svcs.), Deborah Swingley (MT Council DD/Co-Chair), Bob Moffit (MILP), and Rachel Peura (ADA Advisory Committee).

Conference Phone: Judy Smith

Introductions: Role of the HTAC was reviewed. Meeting started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet.

Approval of Minutes: Cindy Baril made motion and Bob Allen seconded to approve May 20, 2014 minutes with corrections. Corrections reflect Vivian Crabtree's represents MAB Capital City Chapter, Karen Lane was added to attendance and the incomplete sentence "Having the HTAC monthly meetings on the 3rd Tuesday from 2:30 to 4:00 will work for the majority of the TAC" was corrected. Minutes approved.

Executive Committee Update: Update given by Deborah Swingley.

HTAC Bi-laws Revision project: Included in meeting packet is a copy of the draft revised bi-laws. Please review and come back to next TAC meeting with input. Brian Johnson is taking the lead on rewriting the bi-laws brian.johnson@unitedwaylca.org After feedback is received more final version will be drafted by next meeting. Revised request for membership to be able to track how people can help out and a conflict of interest form. It is all on the web-site as well.

Action plan: a strategic planning work session was held to determine how TAC will implement work plan. It is drafted and near complete waiting for finalization of city budget and integrating final activities into work plan. Will be out for review before next meeting.

Ride along: good project for grant action area 4-Transit Rider's Council. A good kick off for the Transit Rider's Council...rider's organizing the ride along.

CTAA National Conference: Elizabeth went to conference. Day long training on communications and marketing and attended a mobility management workshop as well as a workshop on the opportunity some agencies are taking using non-emergency medical transport to make money. Would like group to consider sending Steve Larson and another HTAC member to conference next year. MDT funds available to pay for training.

Sub-committee Updates:

Coordination Committee met to further discuss the East Valley Route. A memo to the Commissions and East Helena Council Re: FY 2015 Budget and Service Changes was drafted, sent out to the HTAC for feedback, and delivered. Transportation inventory is in progress. Looking at assets in community. Private and public, comprehensive list of transportation assets in our community.

Policy and Funding Jeanette Blize reported the focus currently is on 15-20 interviews with new stake holders where policy and funding sources are possible, businesses, major employers, anyone who can help bring ideas and solutions to diversify funding sources. These interviews are focused on those who were not interviewed in previous planning opportunities. Subcommittee members and others are encouraged to join these 1-3 person interviews. Contact Jblize@mrss.com if you want to help in this way. Work session scheduled August 5th anyone interested in forming the coalition.

HATS Communication and Marketing conference call with Selena walked us through the web-site, bringing in businesses, and getting ready to meet with groups. Selena specializes in small rural transit systems. www.transitmarketing.com

She will be here in September and will spend 4 days in the community talking with HATS staff and key community partners as well as using the service and talking with riders and bus drivers.

Rider's Council Formation (formally referred to as Consumer Council): Jeanette Blize gave update – not much to report getting ready to convene the HTAC subcommittee to get initial ideas and plan the July HTAC meeting. During July HTAC meeting we will have broader discussion of what the council should like, activities and how it will communicate with the HTAC, to help guide 1 year plan. Please each of you bring a rider committed to this level of involvement to that meeting to that meeting. We want to form a council that has an ongoing presence in our community and advises the HTAC. We want actual riders representing a number of constituencies on the Transit Rider's Council. Please contact Jeanette at jblize@mrss.com if you want to be on the HTAC Rider's Council Subcommittee.

Any other updates: Bob Maffit gave update on the voucher taxi pilot program. 50% of rides have been given during HATS hours of operation, 12 evenings, and 34 on week-ends. Bob Maffit sent a letter to the Public Service Commissioner to engage them in conversation related to taxis and the issues that come up when they are providing rides for rider's who have a disability. Also having a discussion with the Insurance Commission Office to ask for a rate review. Insurance for the taxi company was \$5200 before partnering with MILP for the project then \$25,000 after partnering with MILP and getting adaptive equipment to provide rides for people with a disability. Working on systems stuff. Mike Hruska commented that riders are excited about the project. It has been a rewarding project. Served 115 -125 so far and there is a couple weeks left in project which ends June 30. Allison Batch update: Met with St. Pete's to discuss representation on the HTAC, mapping where staff lives and getting info about HATS to patients. Allison Batch savepolicy@gmail.com is working on a one pager on the value of public transit and wants feedback please e-mail her at the above address. Les Clark is developing sample MOU and making contacts in community about needs and developing contacts and a list of where we've been with contacts and where we want to go in the future.

Coordination Training/Discussion: Bringing a More Accessible Reliable, Affordable and Sustainable Transportation System to the Helena Area Through Coordination: David Kack, Western Transportation Institute provided training. Training was videotaped and available for viewing. Discussion included John McCrea posing the question, how do you shift the paradigm to an inclusive coordinated transit plan from our current way of operating with "turfism"? Commissioner Elsaesser inquired about HATS selling advertising? Selling advertising does not reduce federal funding. If you are consistently giving more rides the federal gov. will give more money. The balance between losing HATS own marketing with too much advertising on bus was discussed. Patrick Sanders stated that Billings wrapped the back of the bus so their bus is still being marketed on the sides.

Lead Agency Update/Discussion: See attached for monthly update memo and ridership

Steve Larson approached HTAC for input on the dissolution of the IGTC. There has been a resolution to dissolve IGTC formally which would leave HTAC the only advisory council working on transit issues. Commissioner Elsaesser has no concern on dissolving the IGTC.

Rachel Peura moved that HTAC supports the HATS recommendation to dissolve the IGTC and HTAC extends a formal invitation to each elected official to become members of the HTAC. Seconded by Cindy Baril and passed by HTAC.

New business: **City of Helena Commission Meeting** June 23, 2014 at 6:00 pm is the City of Helena Commission Meeting at which the entire budget for the city is finalized. It is important to go for public comment time. **Service Improvement Planning charrette**-Scott Chapman with

Nelson Nygaard out of Portland OR is the final outstanding grant contract. It is s being fully executed in the next week. Service improvement planning charrette is scheduled for August HTAC meeting which will be held from 1:00-4:00. Engineer will be here for site visit and to continue to guide us through process of developing and costing outl service improvement. Nelson Nygaard is also putting together a pre-charrette survey for HTAC members and other key partners to vet 4 key service improvements recommended in 5 Year Transportation Development Plan.

Public comment: Cindy Baril rode HATS bus full fixed route in Helena last week. Commended HATS staff. The bus was on time, $\frac{3}{4}$ full and riders happy. Cindy encouraged HTAC members to ride fixed route. She is going to ride the East Helena route in the near future. Commissioner Elsaesser commented on city budget, how much money is in there is set, it is how it is shifted around that is going to be finalized at June 23 meeting. Commissioner said Steve Larson submitted a good report. Steve Larson thanked Cindy Baril for riding the HATS fixed route. He stated he wants to know the frustrations of where you can and cannot get to by riding the fixed route.

July 15 Meeting: will focus on the formation of the Transit Rider's Council, formally referred to as the Consumer Council. **Please bring a rider interested in being involved at this formative level to the July meeting.** Meeting will be held in a bigger room as to accommodate the increased attendance. Details will follow. HTAC planning charrette will be from 1:00-4:00 pm in lieu of our regular 2:30-4:00 pm August 18 HTAC meeting. The Marketing and Communications Consultant will be here for our September 16 HTAC meeting.

Memorandum

To: Helena Transportation Advisory Council
CC: PW Director Camp, Asst. Director Phil Hauck
From: HATS Supervisor Steve Larson
Date: 7/3/14
Re: HATS monthly update for the HTAC, July, 2014

Listed below are the current topics HATS staff is working on.

1. Route Match Software Program
 - a. Timeline schedule has been developed-
 - i. Dispatcher training is scheduled for July 7th thru 11th.
 - ii. Hardware and tablets will be installation complete.
 - iii. Go live is scheduled for July 21.
2. MILP Mobility Manager Demonstration Project – Project Closed July 1, 2014
 - a. A complete review of this demonstration project will be presented when the data has been gathered, reviewed and report process has been completed.
3. East Valley bus service (EVB):
 - a. EVB will remain a deviated fixed route (current service) till the Inclusive Transportation grant has completed the transportation service provider list reviewed. At that time the city would like to review the transportation provider list and see what options may exist to provide service to the east valley area.
 - b. Service for the EVB operation has been upgraded to operate at **40** hours per week. HATS will operate the EVB Monday through Friday 7-11 and 1-5 PM. This schedule will remain in effect for the foreseeable future.
4. ADA Para transit curb to curb program -
 - a. ADA Para transit application period is underway
 - b. All applicants are deemed temporary eligible till the review and appeals process is complete for each individual

- c. Application must be received by June 20th, 2014 to have uninterrupted service
- d. As of this date HATS has received approximately 130 applications for the ADA Para Transit service. 110 have been approved for ADA Para Transit Service.

End or report.

George McCauley
926 5th Ave.
Helena, MT 59601
406-449-3087

May 24, 2014

City of Helena
316 N. Park
Helena, MT 59623

To Whom It May Concern,

We would like to share with you our concerns with Helena's snow removal process. From our understanding the current process has a nine day turnaround from complaint to citation. Anyone desiring to use the sidewalks, attendant ramps, curb cuts, etc. is faced with a patchwork of shoveled areas, making it difficult to impossible to traverse. At the April 17, 2014 ADA meeting, city staff informed us that they cannot enforce the current ordinance let alone a stepped up one. We are discouraged by this statement and believe that a solution can be found.

Other cities in Montana and across the country have been very successful in addressing sidewalk snow removal through their ordinances. Given the success of other cities we believe our community can also have a functional enforceable Snow Removal Policy. One idea is to notify the community that the City of Helena will be issuing warnings for the months of November and December for violations, however, starting January 1st all violations will be met with a fine until the individual or entity is in full compliance with the City's snow removal ordinance.

Most municipalities require adjacent property owners or tenants to clear the snow and ice on sidewalks within a designated amount of time, in accordance with their ordinance. Some communities have found that a review and reorganization of current maintenance policies and departmental procedures has resulted in improved snow removal on sidewalks with existing resources. For example, snow removal hotlines—generally staffed by public works and transportation department employees—can take reports of un-shoveled sidewalks, issue warnings and citations, and provide referral information for people who are unable to clear their sidewalks on their own. Public employees who are already on the streets (e.g., police and parking enforcement officers and the HPD Volunteer Group) can also assist with snow removal enforcement.

Through our research we have discovered that Helena's Snow Shoveling Policy is covered under Section 35.133 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II Regulations, as amended by the Final Rule published on September 15, 2010. As stated in this Section, there can be no discrimination and no limited access. Additionally, Section 35.133 requires that public entities (e.g., state and local governments) shall maintain in operable working condition those features of facilities and equipment that are required to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. Sidewalks and pathways, especially those leading to transportation options, are included as public facilities. This

section does not prohibit isolated or temporary interruptions in service or access due to maintenance or repairs. Section 35.133 falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division. Sometimes the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Civil Rights will also help with clarification on right-of-way cases. However, it is the DOJ that has enforcement authority in facilities maintenance.

From our research with the ADA Regulations, we are pleased to see that the policy is in fact covered under Section 35.133 thereby making enforcement compulsory. We would like to see fewer warnings distributed and more enforcement.

We strongly believe that the current policy is in need of change for the safety and benefit of all our citizens. We would like to work with the City to develop and implement a new policy that can be enforced, making the sidewalks in our community accessible throughout the winter.

Thank you for your time and for any attention you can provide to this matter.

Sincerely,

George McCauley