

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

August 28, 2019– 4:00 p.m.
Room 326, City-County Building
316 N. Park Avenue

1. **Call to order, introductions, opening comments** – Mayor Collins called the meeting to order. Commissioners Haladay, Noonan, O’Loughlin and Wicks were present.

Staff present: City Manager Ana Cortez; Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Opitz; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Interim Police Chief Hagen; Interim Fire Chief Ken Wood; Interim Public Works Director Ryan Leland; Transportation Systems Director David Knoepke; Public Information Officer Rebecca Connors; Parks & Recreation Director Kristi Ponzozzo; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Interim HR Director Sheri Hall; and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance: IR Reporter Thomas Plank.

2. **August 21, 2019 Summary** – The August 21, 2019 administrative summary was approved as submitted.

3. **Commission comments, questions** - No comments.

4. **City Manager’s Report** – No items to report on.

5. **Department Requests** – No items to report on.

6. **Department Presentations --**

Public Works – Engineering’s Monthly Capital Improvements Project Update – Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Leland presented the Capital Improvement Projects Update; the list of projects and corresponding map will grow as new needs arise.

This is an on-going monthly update on the projects; two handouts were given to the commission, which listed the projects, and funding associated with them. A project priority map was also handed out. Engineer Leland explained the handouts and where the individual projects were in the process: completed, under construction, in design and waiting to be designed.

Engineer Leland also handed out a list of private development infrastructure projects that staff is reviewing and offering comments on.

Engineer Leland stated Neill Avenue will be closed next week to install the manhole and will be closed for a couple of months.

Commissioner Wicks thanked Engineer Leland for the information and asked that it be made available to the public. Engineer Leland stated he would add the information to the website; however, the list will be updated on a regular basis.

Commissioner Wicks asked if there is any plans to open the street between the mall and Jorgenson’s. Engineer Leland stated there are preliminary talks to open Sanders Street; however, the area between the mall property and Jorgenson’s, known as Oakes Street, is private property and there is no proposal to open it up.

Commissioner Noonan asked if the parcel was part of the sale of the mall property. Engineer Leland stated yes.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked at some point will opening Sanders Street be added to the list. Engineer Leland stated at this time, it is not on the developer's list; however, staff will add it when requested from the developer. There will be no cost to the city to open Sanders Street.

Commissioner Noonan asked if there is any update on Caird Engineering property. Engineer Leland stated the property owner is waiting to see what is going to happen with the five-point intersection. Manager Cortez noted the Railroad TIF District is in need of projects and the Caird property is an ideal location; she will be reaching out to potential private partners to see what interest there may be.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the funding on Front Street is a stormwater project or a street project. Engineer Leland stated it started as a utility project and will be on the list as that; however, funding from other enterprise funds will be used.

Commissioner O'Loughlin referred to the West Main project and noted there has been great feedback on the project; one remaining issue is traffic speeds in the area. She asked if this is something the city is in conversation with MDT. Engineer Leland stated yes, staff is in conversation with MDT talking about what the speeds should be. He referenced the downtown modal plan, which will include speed studies that will address the traffic speed. Staff is looking at lowering the speed limits and/or adding traffic calming.

Commissioner Haladay referred to the Knight Street project and asked if the \$150,000 is for the design of the project. Engineer Leland stated yes.

Commissioner Haladay referred to the Benton Trail and asked if the \$175,000 is the city's match for the grant. Engineer Leland stated yes. Commissioner Haladay noted there are no plans for lighting of the trail. Engineer Leland stated there would be lighting at the railroad crossing. Commissioner Haladay asked what the costs would be to install solar lights, similar to what is adjacent to Centennial Trail. Engineer Leland stated the solar lights would be approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Commissioner Haladay referenced the downtown modal study and asked if this is being done in house. Engineer Leland stated this is a new project and a budget will have to be developed and he has been in discussion with consulting firm.

Commissioner Haladay if the modal plan is just for laying out lanes, looking at the walking mall or will it include design changes on the walking mall. Engineer Leland stated the study is looking at all options; bikes on the walking mall; configuration of walking mall; bike lanes and connectivity from Centennial Park to West Main.

Commissioner Noonan referenced the Beattie Street Trailhead project and asked after the public meetings, will the final design be brought back to the commission. Parks, Recreation and Open Lands Director Ponozzo gave an update from the open house and on the comments that were received at the meeting. Staff is developing a responsiveness document and then will hold another meeting in September to talk about the next step. Manager Cortez stated the commission has requested an update at 30, 60 and 90 percent of the design. She noted there is a narrative going around asking when this project was approved.

Manager Cortez spoke on the CCIP and the importance of this document. The entire CCIP document will include the coordination of the projects and will have specific staff responsible for the projects/funding. Again, the City Engineer is overseeing the CCIP projects; the Chief Financial Officer will oversee the funding of the projects.

Projects are approved when the CCIP is adopted. The same level of examination is given to the CCIP as the budget, which requires attention and examination.

Commissioner Noonan stated the commission specifically voted on the Beattie Street Trailhead project.

Commissioner Haladay stated the consultant will provide the design and cost estimate and staff can bring that information forward. Commissioner Haladay asked if the proposal is to pave or gravel the parking lot. Engineer Leland stated the parking lot is gravel and the proposal is to pave Beattie Street with curb, gutter and bulb-outs. Commissioner Haladay referenced the stormwater issues at the trailhead, if we pave that this will create additional run-off. Engineer Leland stated the project would include paving with curb, gutter, and additional stormwater mains.

Commissioner Wicks asked if the Henderson Street Bridge is on the project list. Engineer Leland stated it is not on the list and explained a new easement will need to be obtained from MRL and the location of the trail will need to be moved. The easement will be for the entire length of Centennial Trail. Commissioner Haladay asked what the timeline is to acquire the new easement. Engineer Leland stated MRL has indicated they would approve the easement in a timely manner, within a few months.

Manager Cortez stated a new structure is the creation of work groups on high priority projects/issues, i.e. quiet zone and housing, and asked if the Henderson Bridge is a priority that should be assigned a work group. Commissioner Haladay spoke of the many partners that worked on Centennial Trail and once the easement is obtained, we should continue the collaboration with the partners. Manager Cortez stated she wants to make sure to take steps that are responsible to accountability to reach the milestones.

Commissioner Haladay gave the history of CTEP funding for Centennial Trail, there was a last minute decision made to try to delay things to see if we could use the money for the bridge. At the last minutes, the easement did not work and street funding could not be used for the bridge. Commissioner Haladay stated it would not hurt to at least look at the cost of a bridge to determine what funding is needed and what funding is available.

Engineer Leland state Bike Walk Montana has informed the city that they have the funds to redo the Centennial Trail plan and the bridge over Henderson could be included in the update. Commissioner Haladay stated that information would be helpful to determine priorities.

Commissioner Noonan stated to get pedestrians across Henderson is important but a difficult and expensive project.

Commissioner Haladay asked if the Benton Trail would connect with Centennial Trail. Engineer Leland stated the trails would connect; however, the city does not have an easement from MRL for Benton Avenue railroad crossing. Director Knoepke noted MRL is willing to work with the city to get an easement completed.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked staff to continue to update the commission on the five-point intersection study and Rodney Street project.

Engineer Leland stated there have been two open house meetings on Rodney Street and staff will be hiring a consultant for the design work and additional meetings will be scheduled one the design is available.

Manager Cortez asked the commission to let her know what projects they would like to have regular updates on and noted both the five-point intersection and Rodney Street will be on the next project report.

Commissioner Haladay referred to Custer Avenue and asked have we seen a street mock-up of any kind. Transportation Systems Director Knoepke stated an update would be given at the October TCC meeting. He has requested the update on whether the Yellowstone Pipeline

will need to be relocated, an updated budget; what a typical section will look like, and what can be built for the original ask in funding. Custer Avenue is on the September 3 joint work session.

Commissioner Haladay referenced the Front Street project and asked where the raised intersection comes in. Engineer Leland stated staff is bringing forward a change order on the September 9 to include the raised intersection.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated in context of all these projects, what can the commission do policy wise with efforts with MDT to help build relationships to assure we continue to get what we need. She recognized there are other partnerships and projects that staff could queue up. Engineer Leland stated staff is doing the safe routes to school, safe harbor and safe passage for pedestrians.

Manager Cortez stated the city now has the tools to explain to the residents what these projects mean and will provide a framework on all the work the city is doing.

Commissioner Wicks recognized the great job that is being done on social media and asked if we have a budget to boost some of the posts; this would reach more of the residents. Public Information Officer Connors noted with the Hazardous Waste event we used a boosted post and staff is compiling the data on that. Staff will continue to use social media and all media sources. Engineer Leland noted that advertising has been included in the project budgets.

Commissioner Haladay stated he received a hand-delivered notice regarding the Rodney Street project public meeting.

7. Committee discussions

Helena Citizens Council – No report given.

8. Review of agenda for September 9, 2019 Commission meeting – No discussion.

9. Public comment – No public comment.

10. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager - Manager Cortez summarized the following:

- Amanda Opitz and she will work on assuring additional information makes it to the web page;
- Engineer Leland will get additional information on the Henderson Bridge and his next report will focus on Rodney Street and the five-point intersection.

11. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.