



Hamilton Area Transportation Plan 2009 Update

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Notes August 10, 2009 – Meeting Number 3

Introduction

The third Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting for the Hamilton Area Transportation Plan (2009 Update) project was held on Monday, August 10, 2009, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm at City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to continue TAC involvement on the project, and to more specifically discuss non-motorized planning issues and ideas within the context of the Transportation plan development. The following TAC members were present for this third meeting:

- Keith Smith (City of Hamilton)
- John Lavey (Ravalli County)
- Dave Ohnstad (Ravalli County)
- Sheila Ludlow (Montana Department of Transportation – Helena)
- Shane Stack (Montana Department of Transportation – Missoula)
- Ron Uemura (RAM Engineering)

In addition, Carlotta Grandstaff, Ravalli County Commissioner, was in attendance. The meeting was facilitated by CDM's project manager, Jeff Key.

Discussion Items

The majority of the meeting was spent discussing non-motorized planning issues and problem areas. All in attendance stated that non-motorized planning should be an integral part of the overall transportation plan, however caution must be exercised such that the non-motorized planning effort does not become the primary focus of the transportation plan. Jeff reiterated that non-motorized planning is an important part of a truly multi-modal transportation plan, however it must be balanced with analysis of other travel modes and in itself does not trump other needs for transportation identified in the planning effort. Jeff then gave a powerpoint presentation about non-motorized transportation issues and treatments used throughout the State and the Pacific Northwest. The results of the discussions arising at this meeting are presented below:

- US 93 has considerable bicycle touring through town, especially in the summer months. These are “ride- thru’s” that generally don’t live or stay in Hamilton.
- Golf Course Road is beginning to see some bicycle usage and should be thought about for future facilities.
- Fairgrounds Road will eventually get bicycle lanes and sidewalks with a SID project. This is an important east-west connection between the high school, the fairgrounds, and points west of US 93.
- Linkage to town across US 93 is important. Identify two or three solid routes to connect the west side of US 93 to the east side of US 93.
- Throughout the urban area there exists discontinuous infrastructure in some locations, such as sidewalks and paved surfaces. This should be recognized as a hurdle.
- Concern expressed over traffic crossing over bicycle lanes and routes, especially at intersections where vehicles are making right-hand turns. Discussion about education of motorists and also providing adequate facilities in compliance with MUTCD guidelines for bicycle infrastructure.
- Could see the benefit of separated paths at certain locations – perhaps along the river – recognizing that this would be long-term and that private landownership issues would have to be worked out.
- Would like to see a few parallel routes to US 93 to get bicyclists off the sidewalks and avoid the multiple driveway approaches.
- Discussion about the existing Montana Rail Link easement through town. In most cases the easement is already there and is 50 feet each side of centerline. Can bicycle facilities be placed in this area and are they compatible with this existing spur line?
- If the Montana Rail Link easement is an option, can it be used for bicycle traffic in both directions? This would require a “cross-over” of US 93 from the north to get bicyclists to the Rail Link easement.
- Is there room to use 2nd Street, on the west side of US 93, as a parallel corridor to US 93?
- There is an existing loop in a basic sense that some area cyclists use that traverses by the Health Club, along Tammany Lane, along Golf Course Road, and back to US 93.
- Some thoughts are that motorist and bicycle user groups both need to be educated about their roles and responsibilities within the public right-of-way. There are definitely different user groups amongst bicyclists - including tourists and local bicycle traffic.
- One idea may be the formation of a non-motorized advisory board as the community grows.

Conclusion & Action Items

The meeting concluded with a brief discussion of logistics and scheduling of the next meeting. **The next meeting of the TAC (meeting number 4) is scheduled for Monday, September 21st, 2009 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm.** The location is City Hall.

