



Pro Football picks



Gazette on Facebook



Login Register **Subscribe:** Print Digital

Web Search powered by **YAHOO! SEARCH**

Advanced Search Privacy About Our Ads

Home News **Opinion** Sports Entertainment Lifestyles

Marketplace Homes Cars Jobs

GAZETTE OPINION GUEST OPINION COLUMNISTS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR **SUBMIT A LETTER** BLOGS CITY LIGHTS

HOT TOPICS: 90S FORECAST WRONG-WAY CRASH CAMPAIGN MONEY WOLVES VS ELK STREET PLAN HOSS FIRE TODDLER DEATH SD2 BUDGET LAUREL FIRE

Home / News / Opinion / Editorial / Gazette Opinion

Gazette opinion: Let's plan streets for complete community



91° F



10 Day Forecast | Webcams | River Levels | Gas Prices

Follow The Billings Gazette

Story **Discussion**

Font Size: - +

Posted: Monday, August 22, 2011 12:10 am | (3) Comments

Tweet 0 Recommend Sign Up to see what your friends recommend.

Related Links

[Proposed city of Billings Complete Streets policy](#)

If you've ever walked down a Billings street with no sidewalks and noticed how close you were to elbowing vehicle traffic, consider what that would be like for children. Imagine walking along the edge of that street with a stroller or while using a wheelchair.

If you can see a problem in those scenarios, you can appreciate why a diverse group of local individuals and organizations is supporting a city "complete streets" policy.

The concept of complete streets is that sidewalks, curb cuts, crosswalks, bike paths, bike lanes and other pedestrian/bike-friendly features should be part of our streets when there's new construction or reconstruction.

Unfortunately, not all of our public transportation policymakers see the value of routine planning for bikes and pedestrians.

However, the council previously has supported planning for pedestrian and bike use in street projects. We ask them to affirm that support Monday when another document, a proposed "complete streets" policy, is presented for council approval.

As noted in a previous Gazette opinion, proponents of complete streets planning for our city include the Big Sky Economic Development Authority, Billings Chamber of Commerce, Billings Traffic Control Board, RiverStone Board of Health and the city-county Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

In a letter to the council, Dennis Cook, president of the Yellowstone County Board of Planning wrote: "The Yellowstone County Board of Planning supports the creation of an environment in which the community can easily utilize different modes of transportation and supports the City Council's adoption of a Complete Streets Policy to accomplish this goal dependent upon funding."

The policy being presented to the council is the product of a local committee that includes health care professionals as well as local businesses and bicyclists. They are united in efforts to promote health and safety — two keys to maintaining and improving the quality of life that draws families, employers, visitors and customers to our community.

When Gazette reporter Ed Kemmick asked a Montana Department of Transportation administrator why the department opposed complete streets, the reply was concern about "inflexible and predetermined design goals."

We invite MDOT and all interested citizens to read the proposed Billings city Complete Streets Policy for themselves and judge whether it is "inflexible" or "predetermined."

"A complete street can vary considerably in context from rural to urban applications and the needs of users," the proposal says.

The last section of the 3½-page document is "exceptions," which says, "Exceptions to this policy may be considered."

This is a locally generated proposal for a guiding policy that would be consistent with what the council has set as goals. In 2009, the Billings Urban Area Long-Range Transportation Plan stated that "the city will

Like 11400 likes. Sign Up to see what your friend:

Follow @billingsgazette · 1,708 followers

iPhone Android Email Text RSS

join the cause

Do your part and start collecting lids. Every lid closer to the cure.

get involved

For every pink lid received by December 31, 2010, Yoplait® will donate 10 cents to Susan G. Komen for the Cure®, up to \$1.8 million, with a guaranteed \$500,000 minimum donation.

Have something to say?

Submit a letter to the editor online, by email, postal mail, or fax.

Submit Letter to the Editor

Most Popular

Most Read Most Commented Facebook **NEW**

- Sheriff's office, FBI investigating death of 3-year-old in hot car
- Child pornography charge filed against child psychiatrist
- 2 dead in Rosebud County plane crash
- Sheriff denies charges in bar fight; commissioner calls for resignation
- Arrest made in relation to toddler death in Hardin

Featured Businesses

Web2PDF

converted by Web2PDFConvert.com

develop a complete streets policy which will design and operate to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities to safely move along and across a complete street."

In 2010, one of the council's strategic priorities called for "development of a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system" with "complete streets" as a priority.

The strategic advantage of planning for multiple transportation modes is evident in recent projects:

- On Shiloh Road, runners and bicyclists can now cruise on trails running from Rimrock Road to Zoo Drive while motorists travel a four-lane arterial.
- Along the Aronson Avenue extension, a trail connects cyclists and walkers to Alkali Creek. But that connection won't be complete until the city finishes the last 500 yards (scheduled for completion this fall) of the Alkali Creek trail so nonmotorized travelers no longer have to brave the driving lane.

Complete streets is an inclusive policy that makes sense for our growing city of 100,000.

Copyright 2011 The Billings Gazette. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Posted in [Gazette-opinion](#) on *Monday, August 22, 2011 12:10 am* **Updated: 8:20 pm** | Tags: [Complete Streets](#), [Walking](#), [City Council](#), [Dennis Cook](#), [Montana Department Of Transportation](#), [Transportation Planning](#), [Riverstone Board Of Health](#)

[Print](#) [Email](#) [ShareThis](#)

From the Billings Gazette

- Baby sitter charged after infant's skull fractured
- Forsyth teen who died in Monday crash identified
- 1 dead in suspected wrong-way driving crash on I-90
- City Council to consider 'complete streets' policy
- Battlefield expert names favorite Civil War books

Sponsored Links

[Paid Surveys "Exposed"](#)

Please Read This Page Before Joining Any Paid Survey Site.
www.homenetpro.com/paidsurveys.html

[\\$79 /HR Job - 446 Openings](#)

Make \$79/hr Working From Home. Requirements: Computer. As Seen On MSN.
www.onlinejobmaker.com/jobs

[Paid Online Surveys](#)

Get Paid To Take Surveys - \$25 - \$100 per Hour!
 Start Immediately!
www.SurveysPaid.com

Ads by Yahoo!

More From Our Partners

[Unthinkable Poised to Happen on Wall Street. See Disturbing Charts.](#) (Newsmax.com)






[Woman With 200-Pound Legs Has Amputation Surgery](#) (FoxNews.com)

[Mount Hood National Forest](#) (Away.com)

[Top Ten Most-Isolated National Parks](#) (Away.com)

[Texas, Connecticut tax holidays](#) (BankRate.com)

[what's this]

-  [Auto Brokers of Montana](#) [Learn More](#)
-  [Bobcat of Big Sky](#) [Learn More](#)
-  [Pella Windows](#) [Learn More](#)
-  [Aqua Systems of Montana](#) [Learn More](#)
-  [Comerstone Financial Associates, LLC](#) [Learn More](#)

I'm looking for:

Located near:

Powered by [Local.com](#)

Deals, Offers & Events



Need a place to store extra stuff?

[Huntley Mini Storage](#)

[Add Comments](#)



People get their air ducts cleaned for a variety of reasons, including the following:

[Mr. C's Chimney & Air Duct Cleaning](#)

[Add Comments](#)

[View All](#)

Classifieds

Jobs **Cars** **Outdoor Motors** **Homes**

- Food Service Workers, Food Prep/ Asst Cooks
- NOC Caregiver/ CNA
- Manager Training Program
- Executive Director
- Auto Body Painter
- Mners, Electricians, Mechanics, Laborers (underground mining)
- Senior Process Engineer
- Process Engineer

[View All](#)



Flyerboard

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH
Ryan Burke
 Football, Basketball, Softball & Golf

MONEY
 HOME EQUITY LINE OF CREDIT
 ...\$300,000

VIEW ALL



Local advertising by PaperG

CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE  **billingsgazette.com**
THE BEST LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE 24/7

<p>Sections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homepage • News • Sports • Enjoy • Obituaries • Classified • Jobs • Cars • Homes 	<p>Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find Billings Jobs • Find Billings Businesses • Subscriber services • RSS • Digital Delivery • Advertise on Our Site • Make us your Homepage • Contact Us • About Us 	<p>Other Websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell It MT • Today's Deal • Thrifty Nickel • Magic City magazine • Billings Business • ReDiscover Montana • Welcome Home • Montana Land Magazine • Special Sections 	<p>Search</p> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Go"/> <p> LEE ENTERPRISES</p> <p>First. Best. in up-to-the-minute local news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Lee Enterprises subsidiary • Other Lee Websites <p></p>
---	---	--	---