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From: Bike Walk Montana <bruce@bikewalkmontana.org>
Sent: Friday, October 21, 2022 9:45 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bike Walk eNews

Spring 2022



Thank you for being part of the Bike Walk Montana Mission to improve safety and accessibility for people who walk, roll, and ride bikes in Montana!

Ravalli County,

It's hard to believe summer's over and fall is here! I hope everyone was able to take advantage of the comfortable weather to get outside to bike, hike, or use some other form of active transportation. If you have been out in your community, you know accessible and safe access for bicycling, walking, and rolling can be a challenge.



So, right off the bat let's talk about how you can help improve bicycling, walking, and rolling in Montana! Two words sum it up pretty well: **get involved!**

Our efforts at Bike Walk Montana remain a three pronged approach:

1. work with state legislators to pass legislation that improves safety and accessibility for active transportation;
2. collaborate with local and state health and education organizations to raise awareness of the benefits of active transportation and;
3. coordinate with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to advocate for more, and well maintained, shared use paths, bike lanes and traffic calming measures.

Where do you come in? **Get involved!** [We need your help on a steady basis.](#) Think of the ocean, not always raging or calm, but relentless. Here are some thoughts:

- Know who your local legislators are. Let them know who you are and of your interest in safe and accessible active transportation. Remember, elections are

coming up in November, and the next legislative session is less than three months away.

- With all the growth going on in the state, city/county commissioners could really use community input in their decision making process. **Get involved!** A quick Internet search of your city/county commissioners agenda or calendar will get you started!
- MDT actively seeks community involvement in their projects. Use their web site and the opportunity for comment early. MDT begins planning projects years in advance and once a project is planned and funded, it's pretty much too late to make changes. Here are two MDT web sites that are great starting points:
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/manuals/pubinvhb.pdf>
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/>

The ocean is relentless, we need to be as well! Waves are always breaking and currents flow day and night. We need to have a similar persistent attitude in order to improve active transportation connections between cities, communities, and neighborhoods.

Happy Trails!

Chris Fox, Board President

Words from the Legislative Committee

Our Legislative Committee has developed an Active Transportation Working Group of legislators interested in bicycling and walking issues. We hold regular meetings to develop and stay abreast of legislation impacting bicycling and walking. The Group included both Representatives and Senators from both parties, officials who genuinely care about Active Transportation related issues.



We have been working on three bills to introduce in the upcoming legislative session:

1. A **bicycle safety bill** makes several improvements to Montana Law. The two most important items are that bicyclists would be required to make themselves more visible when riding in the dark, and that motorists would be required to maintain a minimum of 5 feet of separation when passing a bicyclist. This bill will be sponsored by Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick.
2. The second would better define an electric bicycle (ebike) in Montana Law. It would adopt the commonly used 3 class system and help clarify processes for allowing and disallowing ebikes on trails. Rep. Steve Gunderson will be sponsoring this bill.
3. The third is a work in progress that would require the State to identify and prioritize possible future Shared Use Paths around the state. Part of the reason Bike Walk Montana is promoting this bill is to help fill gaps in the [Great American Rail Trail](#).

Bike Walk Montana will also be on the lookout for legislation that could negatively impact the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Well meaning folks who are genuinely concerned with the safety of all road users sometimes don't understand the challenges that non-motorized users face on our Montana roadways. We hope to steer those kinds of efforts to meet the highest levels of appropriate safety standards.

Make a Donation towards making our roads safer for everyone

Divide Scramble Awareness and Fundraising Event 2022



Thank you to all who joined Bike Walk Montana for the 2nd Divide Scramble Awareness and Fundraising bike tour or walking tour in Butte, Montana. The event, held on June 18 was a great success and gave participants the opportunity to walk, bike or roll in support of Bike Walk Montana. Riders experienced a short section of the [Great Divide Mountain Bike Route](#) (GDMBR) and cycled from Butte to Lowland or Champion Pass. Alternately, walkers were given a personalized walking tour of the Anselmo mine with the oldest living person to have worked there before its closure in 1959! Participants were pleased with the “beautiful but challenging route,” the “unique landscape/scenery” and the deeply “personal feel of the walk with Cam and Mike.”



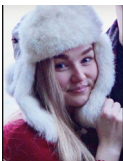
Events like these help us to raise awareness of our organization, build membership and promote shared values in safety for biking, walking and rolling. When asked about the ride/walk and what participants liked best, we heard so many positive comments, including “the people, the route, the scenery, the weather, and the phone call when I didn’t check in at the finish!”

[More photos of the bike ride](#)

[More photos of the walking tour](#)

**Thank you for joining us to celebrate the work of
Bike Walk Montana!**

Meet the new Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator: Shelby Clark.



Shelby comes to MDT with a degree in geography from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Originally from Alaska, she understands the challenges rural states face when it comes to walking and bicycling. Safety for all roadway users is a top priority for her, and she wants to remind everyone October is National Pedestrian Safety Month. Please contact Shelby if your school is hosting a “Walk (or Roll) to School Day” and needs safety education materials for the event. With that, and school back in session, she wants to remind motorists to please be extra vigilant for pedestrians and bicyclists during morning and evening commutes.

If you would like to reach out to Shelby, her email is shclark@mt.gov

Your membership with Bike Walk Montana makes the roads you travel safer. It also provides more opportunities for you, your friends, and your family members to bike and walk. Join others across Montana by becoming a member of Bike Walk Montana today!

Visit our Website

Become a Member

Bicycling and walking in Montana is improving because of you!

Bike Walk Montana | PO Box 584, Helena, MT 59624 | (406) 449-2787 |

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