



Agenda # 6  
Commission Meeting Date: July 2, 2013  
**CITY OF GREAT FALLS**  
**COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

---

**Item:** 2013 Community Transportation Enhancement Program Projects

**From:** Andrew Finch, Senior Transportation Planner, Planning and Community Development

**Initiated By:** Planning and Community Development Department

**Presented By:** Craig Raymond, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development

**Action Requested:** Approve list of Community Transportation Enhancement Program projects

---

**Suggested Motion:**

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (approve/deny) the attached list of Community Transportation Enhancement Program projects.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, public comment, and calls the vote.

---

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends the City Commission approve the attached list of projects (Exhibit 1) to forward to the Montana Department of Transportation for approval and use of Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funds.

**Background:** In 2012, the City Commission adopted Resolution 9954, outlining the process by which the City would consider and approve projects for use of Community Transportation Enhancement Program funds. The funds are Federal transportation dollars, made available through the Montana Department of Transportation for expenditure on certain eligible activities that enhance our local transportation network.

Resolution 9954 directed the Planning & Community Development Department to identify and recommend CTEP projects for approval by the City Commission. The resolution further directed staff to recommend projects that would implement the City Commission’s adopted plans and leverage scarce local dollars.

The Montana Department of Transportation is eliminating its CTEP program, but will allow local governments to expend their remaining allocations. However, MDT has identified some “use or lose” amounts that the City of Great Falls must commit by the end of July. Approving the recommended projects will ensure the City will not lose approximately \$220,000 in funding.

**Staff Project Identification Process:** To identify and forward projects to the City Commission, staff used a number of criteria:

- 1) Availability of matching funds. One of the key factors in project identification was to secure a commitment for matching dollars. Because Planning staff has no dedicated funding source for CTEP projects, staff worked with other departments and organizations outside the City to identify funding sources. City sources of matching dollars are scarce, so staff actively sought project partners from community organizations.
- 2) Inclusion in City plans. The City's adopted plans provide recommended projects or improvements to support community goals and objectives. Staff reviewed current plans to identify possible projects, as a way to fund identified community needs where there may be no other likely funding source.
- 3) Community growth areas. Staff looked at areas of the community that are growing or changing. Expenditure of CTEP dollars can often be used to supplement, augment, or encourage private development. Beyond the immediate area of the improvement.
- 4) Partnerships. Projects that have support beyond City Departments show community interest in the improvement.
- 5) Infrastructure deficiencies. Staff looked at committed improvements to public infrastructure, and gave preference to areas that were deficient, had no recent or pending improvements, or had incomplete infrastructure. For example, the streetscape project extends the existing streetscape in the Downtown Core, and the other three projects fill important gaps in the sidewalk or bicycle network.

## **Project Overviews:**

### Project 1: University District Sidewalks

*Scope:* The proposed project would construct sidewalks, bus pads, and curb ramps with truncated domes on 23<sup>rd</sup> St. S. and around the northeast corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. S./20<sup>th</sup> St. S., near and adjacent to the University of Great Falls and Great Falls College-MSU (see attached Project Map).

<i>Cost:</i>	Total estimated project cost:	\$303,730
	Total CTEP amount (86.58%)	\$262,970
	Total Match amount (13.42%)	\$ 40,760

The 13.42% match dollars would approximately be provided as follows:

- \$20,034 match committed by Great Falls College - MSU
- \$14,450 match committed by Public Works Street Fund
- \$ 5,156 match committed by University of Great Falls
- \$ 1,120 match committed by Great Falls Transit

*Compliance with City's Adopted Plans:* The Transportation Plan recommends sidewalk projects that "fill the gaps" in the sidewalk system and install curb ramps - to encourage walking, reduce dependence upon private automobiles, facilitate travel for those with mobility limitations, and improve pedestrian safety.

*Need:* The need for better student access and Transit loading sites was identified as far back as 2005. Conversations with both the Great Falls Transit District and the University of Great Falls ADA coordinator have identified this as a high-priority deficiency for access by the disabled or mobility impaired, as well as students, to destinations at post-secondary schools in the area. The high-density

housing east of 23<sup>rd</sup> St. S. also houses elderly and mobility-limited individuals, who need safe routes to nearby shopping destinations such as Albertson's and Target.

*Continuity:* The CTEP Program partnered with the McLaughlin Research Institute to install sidewalks near its facility on the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> St. S. and 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. A similar partnership with UGF also installed sidewalks on a portion of 20<sup>th</sup> St. S. This project will complete the sidewalk and accessibility gaps in the immediate vicinity of the schools of higher education in the University District.

*Concurrence:* The project is supported by the Great Falls College-MSU; University of Great Falls; the City of Great Falls Public Works Department; and, the Great Falls Transit District.

### Project 2: Charles Russell Park Bike Path

*Scope:* The proposed project would construct a 10 foot bike/pedestrian path through Charles Russell Park, connecting to the new trail through the Grandview senior living development. This new trail would provide a non-motorized connection between 29<sup>th</sup> St. S./Medical District and the Park and neighborhoods to the east. The Grandview development will pay for and construct the trail segment between 29<sup>th</sup> St. S. and Charles Russell Park, and already has a portion of the trail in place.

<i>Cost:</i>	Total estimated project cost:	\$44,000
	Total CTEP amount (86.58%)	\$38,095
	Total Match amount (13.42%)	\$ 5,905

The 13.42% match dollars would be provided by Benefis Health Care.

*Compliance with City's Adopted Plans:* A recommended bicycle/pedestrian connection between 33<sup>rd</sup> St. S. and 29<sup>th</sup> St. S. through Charles Russell Park is shown in the Medical District Master Plan (Exhibit F: Framework Master Plan, pg 61).

*Need:* No east-west transportation connections exist between the Mountain View and Charles Russell Addition residential neighborhood and the Medical District, south of 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. With the southward expansion of the Medical District, the construction of Central Catholic High School, and anticipated future development south of the Medical District, additional east-west connections are needed. Immediate benefits would include access by the residents of Grandview to the public park amenities in Charles Russell Park; safe, non-motorized access for students between the neighborhoods to the east and Central High School; and, safe access by the neighborhoods to medical services.

*Concurrence:* The project is supported by the Neighborhood Council 5; City Park & Recreation Department; and, Benefis Health Care.

### Project 3: Downtown Streetscape

*Scope:* The proposed project would supplement an existing, approved CTEP grant with an additional allocation, bringing the total project amount to \$500,000. It would implement streetscape improvements in priority areas, as identified in the recent Downtown Access Circulation and Streetscape Study.

<i>Cost:</i>	Total additional project cost:	\$250,000
--------------	--------------------------------	-----------

Total CTEP amount (86.58%)	\$216,450
Total Match amount (13.42%)	\$ 33,550

The 13.42% match dollars would be provided by the Business Improvement District.

*Compliance with City's Adopted Plans:* Streetscape upgrades and extension of the current sidewalk amenities is recommended in both the Downtown Master Plan (pg. 54, Objective 5) and the follow-up Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Plan (an implementation element of the Downtown Master Plan – pages 63-100). Additionally, the 2005 Growth Policy recommends upgrades (pg. 23, Transportation Element).

*Need:* The Downtown Streetscape is incomplete. Central Avenue has amenities that extend ½ block to the south on the side streets. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. and the streets between Central and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. have amenities, as does portions of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N. However, the south side of the Downtown Core does not have amenities. To foster downtown re-development and private investment, an expanded streetscape will repair deteriorated sidewalks, install shade trees and pedestrian scale lighting – which will build a more attractive visitor and shopper experience, as well as a more inviting place for downtown workers, residents and employers.

*Concurrence:* The project is supported by the Business Improvement District.

#### Project 4: Additional Funding for 25<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian Bridge Project

*Scope:* This project is an approved project, but has been delayed due to protracted negotiations with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad for an easement across its line at 25<sup>th</sup> St. N. near Centene Stadium. Now that an easement has been acquired, the project estimates have been updated, and the estimated cost of a pedestrian bridge across the tracks has increased. To fully fund the project, an additional \$96,000 is being requested.

*Current Deficiencies:* Destinations north of the railroad tracks have no safe non-motorized route. The vehicular bridge has no sidewalk, and there are no sidewalks leading to the bridge.

*Benefits:* The project will provide a safe, non-motorized connection between the neighborhood and destinations north of the railroad – Centene Stadium, the Veteran's Memorial, Eagle Falls Golf Course, and employment centers such as Pasta Montana.

<i>Cost:</i>	Total additional funds request	\$96,000
	Total CTEP amount (86.58%)	\$83,117
	Total Match amount (13.42%)	\$12,883

The 13.42% match dollars will be provided by the City of Great Falls – half will be paid from the Park & Recreation Trust Fund, with the other half from the Public Works Street Fund.

*Compliance with City's Adopted Plans:* The project will fill a pedestrian and sidewalk gap identified in the Transportation Plan, and fulfills a project identified by the City Commission and the Great Falls Baseball Club.

*Concurrence:* The project is supported by the Great Falls Baseball Club; Public Works Department; and, the Park & Recreation Department.

**Fiscal Impact:** Approval of the recommended projects would allow the City of Great Falls to maximize the use of its Federal CTEP dollars on projects that are targeted toward stated City goals and priorities, and to construct needed projects that might not otherwise be built due to scarcity of funds. The City would provide matching dollars for some projects, but staff has recommended projects with public/private partnerships whenever possible, with the matching dollars being provided from non-city sources. Specific City commitments are shown in the project descriptions above.

**Alternatives:** The City Commission could approve only selected projects, or none of the projects. However, this would likely result in the loss of up to \$220,000 in CTEP funds that must be committed by July 30, 2013.

**Attachments:**

- A. Exhibit 1 - 2013 recommended projects
- B. Resolution 9954
- C. December 8, 2011 Memorandum
- D. Project Map

**EXHIBIT 1**

<b>2013 RECOMENDED LIST OF CTEP PROJECTS - CITY OF GREAT FALLS</b>			<b>\$948,500.00 for allocation</b>
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PROJECT \$</b>	<b>MATCH \$</b>	<b>CTEP \$</b>
<b>UNIVERSITY DISTRICT SIDEWALKS</b> Install sidewalks, bus pads, and curb ramps on 23rd St S and around NE corner of 16th Ave S & 20th St S.	\$303,730	\$40,760	\$262,970
<b>CHARLES RUSSELL PARK BIKE PATH</b> 10-foot bike/pedestrian path through Charles Russell Park, connecting to the Grandview senior living development.	\$44,000	\$5,905	\$38,095
<b>DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE</b> Implement streetscape improvements in priority areas, as identified in the Downtown Study.	\$250,000	\$33,550	\$216,450
<b>ADDITIONAL FUNDING - 25TH STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE</b> Pedestrian bridge across the railroad tracks.	\$96,000	\$12,883	\$83,117
<b>TOTALS:</b>			\$600,632
<b>REMAINING FUNDS TO BE ALLOCATED:</b>			\$347,868

RESOLUTION 9954

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA, TO REDEFINE THE  
COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT  
PROGRAM PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

\* \* \* \* \*

WHEREAS, the City of Great Falls receives an annual allocation of Federal Transportation funds through the Montana Department of Transportation's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) for expenditure on eligible projects; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution 8535, passed by the City Commission on March 16, 1993, authorized the Great Falls City-County Planning Board to serve as the Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee to the City Commission, to solicit and recommend eligible projects for use of CTEP allocations; and,

WHEREAS, the City-County Planning Board was dissolved in 2005, and certain duties were assumed by the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board; and,

WHEREAS, the Great Falls Planning & Community Development Department has recently reviewed the current CTEP project selection process for effectiveness, and concluded a modified selection process would be beneficial to the City of Great Falls; and,

WHEREAS, a more focused, targeted and expedited project selection process will allow the City of Great Falls to select projects that implement the City Commission's adopted plans and leverage scarce local dollars; and,

WHEREAS, this Resolution supersedes Resolution 8535.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA,

That the Great Falls Planning & Community Development Department shall identify and recommend CTEP projects for approval by the City Commission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana, on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2012.

---

Michael J. Winters, Mayor

ATTEST:

---

Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

APPROVED FOR LEGAL CONTENT:

---

James W. Santoro, City Attorney



# Memorandum



**TO:** Mayor & City Commissioners

**FROM:** Mike Haynes, AICP Planning and Community Development Department Director

**DATE:** December 8, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Proposed CTEP Administration Changes

The Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) is a federal-aid program administered by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). Currently, 10% of MDT's federal surface transportation funds are devoted to the CTEP program with MDT allocating CTEP funds to Montana cities and counties on a per capita basis. The CTEP program is designed to fund "a variety of (eligible) non-traditional projects" that are "designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects" of Montana's transportation system.

CTEP funds have been used here over the years for many different community projects including construction of trails, sidewalks and handicap ramps, and the installation of streetscape, lighting and landscaping projects. CTEP funds will pay for 86.58% of a project with a 13.42% match required from the public/private partner making the application. Past projects have been matched by groups such as Recreational Trails Inc., the Downtown BID, the Park Trust Fund and the Public Works Department.

The State CTEP program allows local governments to establish their own procedures for project selection, requiring only that there be a public involvement component. Since 1993 the City of Great Falls has employed a process where any eligible agencies, groups or units of government submit applications for projects proposed to use CTEP funds to the Planning Division. The Planning Advisory Board then reviews, ranks and makes recommendations to the City Commission on use of those funds and the City Commission takes final action on funding decisions. Planning staff then implements and administers CTEP-funded projects including soliciting bids, project management, budgeting, accounting, and ensuring adherence to federal, state and local regulations.

We have reviewed CTEP procedures in the light of the city's renewed commitment to creating and updating community plans (Missouri River Corridor Plan, Downtown Master Plan, Transportation Plan, Growth Policy, etc.) and the reality of lower revenues flowing to the city from federal and state sources. Based on that review we recommend making procedural changes to the selection process (while the process for implementation would remain unchanged).

We propose a more focused, targeted and expedited CTEP process where Planning staff reviews community plans for projects eligible for CTEP funding, prioritizes projects based on community goals, and identifies and coordinates with potential partners. Planning staff would then bring forward those recommendations to the City Commission, providing opportunity for public comment.

As an example, this new process would allow the city together with downtown stakeholders to establish a logical, strategic and cost-effective plan for expanding the downtown streetscape using CTEP funds, and work over time towards that shared vision. This is in contrast to funding an uncoordinated and inefficient expansion of streetscape driven by individual property owners or groups seeking funding for streetscape improvements one block at a time.

We believe the benefits of this revised process are many and include:

- Accelerating the CTEP project selection process;
- Implementing projects that the community has identified as key through local planning efforts in a strategic way;
- Focusing on projects that have greatest benefit to the city;
- Spurring redevelopment and private investment; and
- Leveraging scarce local dollars with federal funds.

Also, with so much uncertainty about federal and state funding we want to ensure that we never give up current or future funding because we have not allocated existing funds in a timely manner.

Planning staff recommends the City Commission consider a Resolution to modify the CTEP process to direct funding to projects that more closely aligned to adopted community plans. We invite your comments or questions before we bring forward such a Resolution for your consideration.

# RECOMMENDED CTEP PROJECTS - 2013

