

**AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF LIBBY**  
**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN**

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PREPARED BY:

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## INTRODUCTION

A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) was prepared for the City in 2011. The plan evaluated the needs within the infrastructure serving Libby, Montana. Detailed review was provided for the water system and needed improvements. The waste water system received evaluation at a lesser level of detail. Fire and police needs were discussed. Other infrastructure components such as street, parks and parks received passing comment. Storm drainage and transportation were not evaluated. There have been no revisions or updates since completion.

A CIP should be reviewed annually as a part of the City's budget process and updated as conditions change. The updates provide the City a road map for allocating the limited funding available. The CIP is used as guide in concert with the City's Growth Policy and other planning documents to identify and prioritize infrastructure needs.

This amendment will only address sidewalks as pedestrian access within the urban area of Libby.

The City should budget time and finances to complete a comprehensive CIP.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

The 2011 CIP assessed the condition of sidewalks in the core area of the city as shown on the attachment labeled FIG 5-1. Based on the large percentage of "fair" to "needs replaced" sidewalks, the City encouraged owners to use the City 50/50 ordinance to replace sidewalk. The 50/50 ordinance established the policy and procedures for an owner to replace sidewalk and have the City reimburse 50% of the cost. Over 2000 lineal feet or 10,000 square feet have been replaced since 2011. In 2012 an application was submitted to the Community Transportation Enhancement Plan (CTEP) administered by Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT). With these funds the City will replace over 12,000 square feet of sidewalk on Louisiana and Lincoln Boulevard.

Sidewalks in the core area provide pedestrian access from urban density residential development to the medical center, shopping, entertainment and parks. Areas outside the core area do not have similar access. The 2011 CIP does not provide a plan for pedestrian access in the other area of the City with urban densities. Exhibit 1 shows the area of the City considered urban densities. Generally the area north of Ninth Street, Highway 2 has a connected network of sidewalks which provides access. Generally, areas south of Highway 2 do not have sidewalks nor is there a plan to prioritize construction of new sidewalks. This Amendment will through a collaborative process of a Planning Board meeting, public input and a City Council Public Hearing establish a priority network of sidewalks to provide pedestrian access to services; education, medical, shopping, entertainment and parks.

## SIDEWALK PLANNING

Other than education services and parks, all other services, such as shopping, medical, entertainment and governmental are located along or north of Highway 2. Currently only two schools serve the student population in Libby, the High School on Education Way and



Elementary School on West Balsam Street. Pioneer Park, at the corner of Balsam and Main is a 10 acre multi-use park. There is no sidewalk access to either of these facilities. A sidewalk network is needed to provide access to the schools and Pioneer Park. Most of the surrounding area is without sidewalks and a plan which suggests placing sidewalk in all locations without prioritizing needs would be overwhelming to implement. Sidewalk placement should be based on the following priorities.

- Safety for the youngest students to and from school.
- Walking access to shopping, recreation, entertainment and government.
- Safe access between schools.
- Connect to existing sidewalk network.
- Accessibility to residents.

On the attached Exhibit 2 is a proposed sidewalk network which meets the about priorities. Listed below are the improvements as recommended by the Planning Board on August 12, 2013.

1. West Balsam from Main to the drop off area at the Elementary School. Sidewalk on north side with cross walks for park and Flower Creek Drive.
2. Main Street from Cedar to Highway 2 (Ninth Street). Sidewalk both sides of the street.
3. Cedar Street from Main to Highway 2 (Minnesota Avenue). Sidewalk both sides of the street.
4. Louisiana replacement from Highway 2 to Poplar and new construction from Poplar to Cedar Street. Sidewalk both sides of the street.
5. Education Way from the Elementary School to the High School. Path on one side of the street.
6. Tenth Street from Nevada to Dakota. Sidewalk on both sides of the street as an alternative to using narrow walk adjoining the traffic on Highway 2.

Completion of these improvements will provide a sidewalk within two or three blocks of residences south of Highway 2 which will provide a walking route to all the needed services. Included with the sidewalk construction would be intersection stripping for pedestrian safety.

#### COST ESTIMATES

Included in Appendix 1 are cost estimates for design, construction administration, construction and project management for each project. Costs are based on an average of the bid prices for a 2013 CTEP project in the City. Summarized below are the costs for each project. Cost estimates are based on 2013 construction costs. Prior to project implementation cost estimates should be updated using current construction costs.

#### PROJECT

#### COST ESTIMATE

1. West Balsam
2. Main Street
3. Cedar Street
4. Louisiana replacement and new construction

5. Education Way
6. Tenth Street

## IMPLEMENTATION

The City has a program which cost shares sidewalk replacement or new construction, with property owners on a 50:50 basis. Replacement frequency has increased in the last few years, possibly due to the improvements generating more interest and activity among neighbors. This program is effective for small sections but would be complex to administer for a large project.

Special Improvement Districts (SID) can be used to construct new sidewalks. Bonds are sold to generate the construction funds. An assessment is placed on the benefitting properties to collect from principal and interest for bond repayment. This is a possible method to build all or portions of the recommended sidewalks. The city's cost sharing could also be included to lower the SID amount on the properties.

MDOT has a grant program which funds sidewalks, Transportation Alternatives. The State has approximately \$3.6 million for each of the next two years, FY 2013 and 2014. Libby should submit an application for the priority projects in each year.

As other funding opportunities occur the City should submit applications.