

Long Range Transportation Plan - 2018 Update

## APPENDIX A: Public Comments

ID	Date	Comment
01	<b>February 1, 2018</b> Steffen Janikula	As Trails Coordinator with the City of Great Falls-Park & Recreation Department I would like to stress the need for safe bike travel within the City as well as connectors to the River's Edge Trail(RET). The RET is a main corridor for bike/walk travel. Any on-street upgrades would be appreciated and fill a need voiced by residents in a Master Plan Survey conducted in 2016 that found that walking and biking trails are the "Highest priority for facilities, based on the Priority Investment Rating."
02	February 1, 2018 Anders Blewett	<ul> <li>Dear Long Range Planners,</li> <li>I have the following suggestions to share with you regarding the non-motorized portion of the long range transportation plan for Great Falls. I would rank them in the following order.</li> <li>1. I would encourage you to add a bike route along the following route. This will further extend the existing 9th Ave. Southwest Bike Route and connect to some good road biking on 10th Ave SW onto Central Ave. West.</li> <li>2. I would suggest exploring the possibility of adding a shared use path near the airport on the west side of I-15. Given that Andrew Finch is involved, I assume this is something you have already looked at but I just wanted to make sure this issue is addressed. This would be in addition to the shared use path on the East Side of I-15 that you are proposing which is very necessary. I agree that creating the shared use path on the East side will probably be easier. I have pointed out several possible routes below.</li> <li>3. I would suggest exploring the possibility of adding a bike lane in the downtown area on 1st Ave. North where it is three lanes (between Park Ave and 9th Street)? I assume this would require eliminating one lane of traffic but this would prevent it from feeling like such a freeway. I also doubt this road really needs three lanes given the amount of traffic on it.</li> <li>Thank you for your attention. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.</li> <li>Sincerely yours,</li> <li>Anders Blewett</li> </ul>
03	February 8, 2018 Charles Nardinger	I live south of the hospital in G Falls and I would like to comment on Tenth Ave South here in G Falls. Every time I leave my condo to go anywhere in G Falls I get stalled in the traffic on Tenth Ave South. We need a bypass South of G Falls beginning at the Stockett turn off and the top of Gore Hill. This should have been done 30 years ago and it just keeps getting worse. It is now so costly that I don't know if it can be done, but it is only going to get worse. Thanks for giving me an opportunity to comment.  Chuck Nardinger
04	<b>February 19, 2018</b> Chis Ward	Map comment feature is kind of clunky. I didn't see how to add comments in a location where there isn't already a project shown, and can't add comments on non motorized map. River Drive North should have separated sidepaths in the plan. Especially on the south side, and especially from 19th St to 25th St. North side path would be nice but more recreational in purpose than the south side which would serve a transportation need. Due to the elevation difference and lack of street connections rivers edge trail is not an alternative to River Drive for most bike trips. Bike lanes don't make sense on river drive due to higher volumes and speeds. This needs to be a separated bike facility. Bike lanes on 38th are not necessary. The sidepath is in place from 10th Ave N. to River Drive. Extend the separated sidepath from where it ends now to Fairway Drive. This is especially needed to prevent vehicles from parking on the path and also facilitate snow removal. Plan for a good path crossing at 10th Ave N. for future 10 <sup>th</sup> ave N sidepath. From Fairway to 10th Ave S, 36th St is a preferable bike route to 38th. 36th should be enhanced as a bicycle boulevard with features to discourage motor vehicle traffic other than local access. Improve geometry of path crossing at signal at 38th and River Drive N. It is too narrow which makes snow removal a problem. Reconstruct to provide separation buffer between curb and path on north side. Wider cross walk, wider curb ramps, and add leading pedestrian interval to signal. Recent development east of 46th St S has been required to dedicate right of way for a future extension of Central Avenue. Consider this Central Avenue extension as part of the street network, and where north south connection at 50th/52nd street should be. Reconstruct sidepath on west side of River Drive across from

		Milwaukee Depot to provide a landscape buffer (get rid of curb walk) and build a gradual loop ramp from northbound rivers edge trail up to Weissman bridge. Nonmotorized separated path connection to Marketplace should be the top priority (BNRR tunnel) to connect 18th Ave SW to Marketplace. Restore adequate storage length for both northbound lanes on Fox Farm road at 10th Ave S signal. The little island interferes with queuing at the signal and the overhead lane signs don't make sense with the island there. Clara Park path is a good idea to establish a nonmotorized corridor to new east end retail development. Buffered bikeway conversion doesn't make sense on north south couplets. Adjacent north south streets are fine bike routes. Show 12th Ave N from 15th St to the caboose trailhead as a bike lane route. River Drive should eventually have a tunnel to trail at caboose trailhead. Get rid of the sidepath project from 15th St. down to the trail (15th St N Connector Trail). The 15th and River Drive intersection is already bad and not the right place to encourage more pedestrian use. There is heavy pedestrian and bike use of 12th ave N to access the trail. Needs to be formalized. Do some bike ped traffic counts on 12th Ave N and on 15th St between 8th ave N and 12th ave N. This is probably the most utilized nonmotorized corridor in the street system. This is a key access point to the trail system. Need a bi directional separated green cycle track and separate sidewalk between 9th Alley N and 12th Ave N. It is not reasonable to expect southbound bikes and peds to cross over to 14th St. if their destinations are on 15th or to the east. Make better use of the wide street right of way.
05	March 3, 2018 Chis Ward	The separated shared use path on 38th needs to be extended to Fairway Drive, replacing the couple hundred foot stretch that is on the shoulder of the road and then a 5' curbwalk, with a 10' separated sidepath as exists the rest of the way to NE Bypass. A full width path for this short distance would allow the plow to continue to Fairway and leave space for snow storage. This is a vital year round connection to the residential areas via 36th and 38th streets both of which are on the nonmotorized network. Here are a couple photos showing the perfectly cleared sidepath to the north and impassible sidewalk with a snow berm blocking it.
06	March 19, 2018 Shyla Patera	My name is Shyla Patera. I am submitting comments on behalf of North Central Independent Living Services, Inc. and as a resident of the City on the minor update to the Long Range Transportation Plan. As a person with a disability and a resident of Great Falls, Montana, I ask you to incorporate the City of Great Falls' Americans with Disabilities Act public right of way and transition plan into the minor update of the Long Range Transportation Plan update. This ADA public right away is ambitious and incorporates many aspects of accessibility in design and public funding.  As a non-motorized user and a public transportation advocate, rider and user of services, I particularly ask that the City of Great Falls focus on ADA curb cuts and ramps, accessible alleyways, as well as making our sidewalks contiguous. We need to ensure that all traffic signals and mobility devices meet and exceed timing standards so that individuals and pedestrians can make it through cross walks. I also believe that we need to acknowledge that many pedestrians and wheelchair users must walk or ride along the streets in many residential areas of Great Falls. Often times in our neighborhood streets, there are not wide shoulders or safe areas along many streets to accommodate wheelchair traffic safely. I understand that urban road systems and connectors often have a bike path and wider shoulders on their streets, but even this can be a problem if vehicles are parked in the parking spot and a mobile wheelchair user has to go around a parked vehicle.  For those who drive vehicles, we need more community enforcement of our ADA disability parking standards and fines. This is just a suggestion for employment and volunteer opportunities for many Great Falls residents with disabilities, maybe, we can train citizen volunteers with disabilities on community enforcement of standards just as GFPD has done. Our community needs to ensure that access aisles for parking are wide enough to accommodate cars, vans, chairs, both power and manual, and that they a

community really need sidewalk pavement preservation and a check of our ordinances for homeowners and where property lines truly begin and end on the public right of way. Finally, as a public transit user, I thank the City of Great Falls for its support of Great Falls Transit. The support that the MPO has given GFT has played a vital role in keeping our transit system running and operating in Great Falls.

Thank you for allowing me to submit comments regarding the non-motorized

portion of the Long Range Transportation Plan minor update.

Shyla Patera

Category	Initial Comment	Comment	Comment Date Net Like Like Dislike	
				200 80
				101 Ave N
		I Agree but extend the study to include 38th street to 3rd ave		0
		So. Present traffic is 13000 cars per day with a peak 1000 cars per hour. an estimated 130 students are picked up and		Cant
	SR-1: Intersection should be	unloaded from school principally on 38th street. The street needs to be widened for parking. The school was built when		(TA) a. I
Recommended for Funding		38th-st dead ended at Central Ave. So the entrance to the school faces 38th St. which is the most convent place to	0/5/00404040	THE ANY S
Points	occur around the community.	pickuo and discharge students.	2/5/2018 16:16 2 2 0	200 8
		Yes but please check travel time impacts vs. 36th street. Already too much through traffic on 36th as a way to avoid		THE WALL I
		school congestion and signals. 36th should be reconfigured as a neighborhood greenway. Consider a diagonal diverter at		NOT THE REST OF TH
		5th Ave S and 36th for example, other measures to reduce through traffic that should be using 38th. Consider prohibiting		East S
	SR-1: Intersection should be	parking on 38th (not much anyway) and restriping with a center turn lane. Bike lanes on 38th are not necessary as		(A)
Recommended for Funding				and Ase a
Points	occur around the community.	Elementary to reduce congestion on 38th.	2/19/2018 16:00 2 2 0	
				10 km s
				10 Au 1
Illustrative	7: Reconstruct to collector street	Park and 8th Ave N intersection is confusing. Roundabout		31 Max
Projects	standards.	would be good.	2/19/2018 15:41	The bis N
				1
				L. Company
	17: Construct 44th Avenue NE. New	This is a great opportunity. Places amphasize this confident		1 1
Illustrative		This is a great opportunity. Please emphasize this corridor in planning. Needs to be a real divided arterial with limited street connections into the neighborhood. Plan to extend it to I-15		11
Projects	control.	and build a full interchange to replace Emerson Junction.	2/19/2018 15:45	199 Acids Statemen (1 f
				j
	47. Construct 44th Access NE N			1 10
Illustrativo	17: Construct 44th Avenue NE. New route should be constructed to a minor arterial standard with limited access			
Illustrative Projects	control.	I Agree	2/19/2018 15:52	The sales of the s
				TE BURE
				tunist 7
				To the same of the
		Start early property acquisition between 19th St and 25th		Mark The Art To
	MSN-1: Reconstruct facility along its	street. Shift the road away from the cliff. Road needs more room in here and private access and parking in public right of		I I many Till many 11
Recommended for Funding	existing alignment to a minimum three- lane principal arterial standard.	way needs to be controlled. 3 lane might work for now but set aside space so lanes can be added in future.	2/19/2018 15:26	Internal Control
				The state of the s
				oh.
	SR-4: It is recommended that this corridor and corresponding	1st Ave N railroad underpass only needs to be one track. Remove and rebuild as one track wide. Replace the vertical		
Recommended for Funding	intersections undergo re-striping and intersection modifications.	walls with slopes. Need a safer more welcoming sidewalk connection.	2/19/2018 15:39	1
				DE AND NO. OF SERVICE
				7
		Look at a better north end for 26th St. At a minimum eliminate parking on s side of 8th Ave n for better visibility at stop sign.		
	SR-6: Payament preservation activities	parking on s side of 8th Ave n for better visibility at stop sign.  Or make 26th one way southbound from 8th to 7th Ave n, and make 7th Ave N one way westbound from 26th to 25th, with		No see a
Recommended for Funding			2/19/2018 15:30	307.50
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ID	Date	Comment
01	April 11, 2018	April 11, 2018
	Susan Hillstrom	Comments at Neighborhood Council #2 Meeting Susan Hillstrom 607 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave SW
		There continues to be increasing traffic speed by increasing numbers of drivers who violate speed limits on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, which is resulting in the degradation of quality of life in west side residential neighborhoods, and for other drivers who use this route.
		It is a safety hazard for pedestrians crossing 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, as speeding vehicles make it more difficult to cross all four lanes of traffic, because most drivers don't slow down for pedestrians in crosswalks.
		It is a safety hazard for pedestrians using the sidewalk or waiting for a bus, because the sidewalk is at the curb and is also fairly narrow.
		It has resulted in an increase in noise pollution from vehicles that are speeding or racing south from Central toward the railroad underpass.
		Large trucks are now using engine compression brakes on Central Avenue and on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.
		There is ongoing development along 3 <sup>rd</sup> St NW, River Drive, Bay Drive, and at 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Fox Farm Road. Increased development equals increasing traffic. If the city continues to ignore what's happening on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, an opportunity to improve the city, the quality of life for its residents, and the value of the unique characteristics of the west side historic neighborhoods will be lost.
		I feel strongly that the city has abandoned the west side neighborhoods. Visible traffic and neighborhood patrols have disappeared.
		We live in close proximity to the Missouri River corridor and historic downtown area. West side residents could benefit greatly from the amenities the river corridor and downtown have to offer, if only it was safe and also enjoyable to walk or ride a bicycle to nearby attractions like the River's Edge Trail, Water Park, Farmer's Market, Gibson Park and band shell for concerts, Civic Center, Library, or downtown shops.
		Potential Solutions:  1) Reference the attached map: increased speed limit signage is needed; it's lacking in several places.  2) Increase enforcement.  3) Install speed monitoring signs.  4) Paint crosswalks.
		<ul> <li>5) Add "Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalks" signs.</li> <li>6) Decrease the speed limit from 40 to 35 mph going south past American Avenue and going north from the Sun River to the railroad underpass. (It's only 0.7 mile).</li> </ul>
		Since I've been visiting with my neighbors about this issue, other ideas have been mentioned. Please see the attached page with their names and addresses.
02	May 9, 2018 Susan Hillstrom	May 9, 2018 Susan Hillstrom, 607 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave SW Comments at Neighborhood Council #2 Meeting
		I visited with some of my neighbors and shared my written comments from April 11 on traffic conditions on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street SW. I have collected six signatures of my neighbors who agree that there is a problem:
		Our quality of life, safety, health, and transportation alternatives are impacted by the bad driving behavior of drivers of all types of vehicles who regularly disregard the 30

mph speed limit and exceed it by 10 mph or more, knowing that the speed limit is 40 mph on the other side of the railroad overpass and also by north bound drivers still going 40 mph toward Central Avenue W. There is also a growing segment of south bound drivers who wantonly ignore the 30 mph speed limit and derive satisfaction from the challenge and rapid acceleration approaching speeds of upwards of 50 to 60 mph (some of my neighbors claim to witness speeds of 80 mph) by the time they reach the railroad overpass. We all hear them from inside our homes, at various times during the day. I would estimate that this occurs three or four times each day, and is worse on the weekend beginning Friday through Sunday night.

There are several plans that articulate transportation policies, visions, goals, and objectives to improve the quality of life of citizens and the livability of our community. These plans include: Great Falls Growth Policy, the Missouri River Urban Corridor Plan, the Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape Plan, the Downtown Master Plan and the Great Falls Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Each of these plans contain goals and objectives to improve, encourage, promote, "increase mobility and access of citizens to transportation alternatives throughout the city, support efforts and programs that seek to improve school crossings, pedestrian access and the safety of those enroute to and from schools, enhance pubic access to community services and programs such as the library, Mansfield Center, and other civic facilities and events, create a built environment that promotes easy access to safe walking, biking and other opportunities for physical activity" (Growth Policy 2013).

Yes, 6th Street SW is an arterial route, but it is a residential area between Central and 4th Avenue S, and the bad driving behavior needs to be improved for the safety and health of our citizens and livability of our community. My comments from April 11 include some solutions and my neighbors mentioned other ideas as well, such as painting the speed limit on the pavement where drivers are focused (the only 30 mph speed limit sign south of Central at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave is missing the "S"). Why not route Airport traffic on Central Avenue west to I-15. instead of south on 6th Street to 10th Avenue south, an intersection already experiencing a failing level of service because of the volume of traffic? A radar monitoring sign would pay for itself with the money the city would make if enforcement of the speed limit took place. My neighbor with four young children drives his son to and from West Elementary School because it's not safe for him to walk or ride a bicycle; they load their bicycles in their vehicle to go ride where it's safe (the River's Edge Trail is a quarter mile away, but across 6th Street SW).

The Long Range Transportation Plan describes traffic calming measures and "methods used to reduce vehicle speeds, improve safety, and enhance the quality of life", many that I and my neighbors have mentioned. I feel that I must begin the process to implement a "traffic calming program" as outlined in the LRTP: Phase I, Step 1: Problem Identification and Investigation, by requesting an Investigation Request Form to be completed and sent to the Public Works Department. I'm willing to help.

## May 18, 2018 03 Susan Hillstrom

May 18, 2018 Susan Hillstrom 607 3rd Ave SW, Great Falls, MT 59404

To: Scott Randall

Re: Great Falls Area Long Range Transportation Plan - 2018 Update

Thank you for your effort and excellent work on the Great Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). It holds a great vision for the Great Falls area. I am particularly impressed with the depth of the LRTP when it comes to addressing all modes of transportation including non-motorized alternatives. It's very encouraging that my community values are actually expressed and addressed in many sections of this plan as articulated in many other plans for Great Falls (Growth Policy. Downtown Master Plan, etc.)

My west-side neighborhood is adjacent to the "secondary impact zone" identified in the Missouri River Urban Corridor Plan, within walking distance of downtown, but the 6th Street SW arterial between Central Ave W and 4th Ave SW has sliced this historic neighborhood down the middle and created a raceway for disrespectful drivers. Our connectivity to the river corridor and downtown has been lost, our neighborhood has become separated from community facilities. We suffer from noise pollution, and decreased property values. My Neighborhood Council #2 tells me that they have tried to get the city to do something about the traffic conditions here for years. I have collected signatures from neighbors who agree that traffic conditions on 6th Street SW need to be improved.

I attended the open house meeting on May 10. Thank you for the markings that you made on the map to indicate the areas with issues and for listening to my concerns:

- increasing speeding on 6th Street SW between Central Ave W and American Wav.
- lack of speed limit signing between Central and 4th Ave SW.
- lack of safe crossings for pedestrians and other non-motorized users (failure of drivers to yield),
- routing airport traffic from Central Ave W to south on 6th Street SW to an already dysfunctional intersection at 10th Ave SW.

I documented locations of current 30 mph Speed Limit signs and identified that in the area of concern there is only one sign at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW on the west side of the street, none on the east side of the street.

New development is increasing along 3rd Street NW and in the 6th Street SW corridor; a PUD (Planned Unit Development) is underway near the golf course on American Way: 3 – 12 unit, 2 bedroom, 2 bath, apartment buildings, that's the equivalent of 36 homes!

Please consider the following comments for addition to the LRTP:

- The LRTP details the "Traffic Calming Program for Existing Streets", but this process is for local residential streets only; 6th Street SW is a principal arterial between Central Ave W and 5th Ave SW, but this is also a residential / mixed use area, and the speed limit is 30 mph. It would be helpful if the LRTP would include the process for residents to follow when it becomes necessary for citizens to address traffic conditions on arterial routes.
- Appendix F: Facility Recommendations 4.2 Annual Programs, P-4 Traffic Mitigation, p. 4: Please consider a pedestrian/bicycle project on 6<sup>th</sup> Street SW between Central Ave W and 4th Ave SW to improve safety, livability, and connectivity to river corridor and downtown amenities. Appendix F: Facility Recommendations – 4.4 Illustrative (Unfunded) Projects, p. 16: I-10 Speed Studies – Please add 6th Street SW from Central Ave W to American Way.
- 3. Appendix F: Facility Recommendations 5.4 Spot Improvements, p. 52: Please add 6th Street SW spot crossing improvements at 2nd Ave SW and at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW which would allow pedestrians and other non-motorized users (people on bicycles, in wheelchairs and strollers) to cross the street in a predictable and designated place. This would include highly visible marked crosswalks that glow in headlights with pedestrian crossing signs.

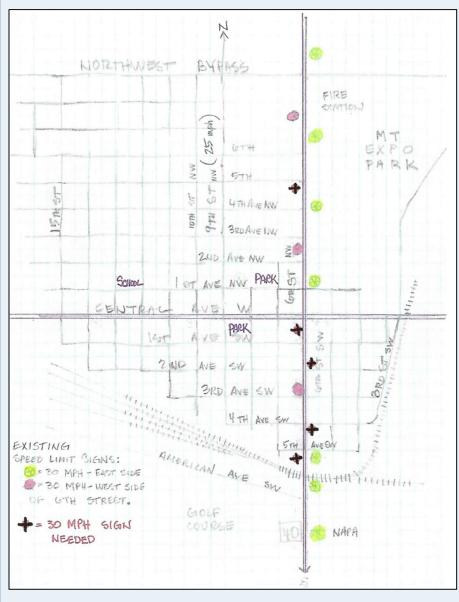
I feel that improving non-motorized transportation facilities would be a positive step in educating drivers in basic Montana traffic laws regarding sharing the road and yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks, and in increasing their awareness of other modes of transportation, which could help to improve their attitudes and perceptions towards non-motorized transportation users. Installation of marked crosswalks, pedestrian crossing markings/signs, and speed limit signs would be a start to reestablishing better driver behavior in this four block residential area on 6th Street SW.

I have attached comments that I submitted at my neighborhood council meeting on

Thank you for this visionary plan, and I sincerely hope that my neighborhood street will be included.

Sincerely,

Susan Hillstrom



04 June 10, 2018 Chris Ward

- I don't understand how reconstructing River Drive to a 3 lane section between 25th and 38th will be an improvement. There are literally no driveways or street intersections in that segment.
  - A two lane should have virtually the same capacity as a three lane. Fig. 18 seems to suggest that there are expected to be

		capacity problems in this segment but the three lane proposal doesn't seem like it would be effective.  It seems like the v/c issue identified is based on the theoretical capacity of a two lane but in the absence of any turning vehicles the capacity may be a lot higher.  Various projects are described as constructing to arterial or collector standards. What these sections consist of is not defined in the document or in the references as far as I can tell.  Particularly with project I12 on 38th St N, the lack of clarity resulted in part of the road recently being apparently constructed to normal residential street width when the Montana Egg project was built.  It would be desirable to have 38th built to a higher standard but it isn't clear what the document is calling for.  Pedestrian project SPOT-10 notes don't apply to that location.  I believe there was some discussion about removing the shared use path project that arcs from 6th St SW over towards 14th St SW. SPOT-22 is still highly necessary as is a path connection from 18th Ave SW into Marketplace so that portion of the shared use path needs to remain in the document.  Figure 22 transit routes may need to be updated to reflect the recent route changes terminating at East Side Walmart instead of the Noon's convenience store.  12th Ave N from 15th St N to River Drive should be a bike lane facility instead of shared use markings.  The plan should emphasize the bike route from 15th to the River's Edge Trail via 12th Ave N rather than through the congested 15th and River Drive Intersection.  SPOT-23 is relatively unnecessary with a good connection at SPOT-22.  The recommendations for SPOT-21 are incomprehensible in light of the terrain there and should be reviewed and probably dropped.  SPOT-22 will be an adequate connection from 25th St once bike/ped facilities are in place on River Drive.  It is not clear why widening 10th Ave S to 6 lanes east of 26th St (project I-31) would be necessary based on the v/c ratios shown in Fig 18. If the capacity is marginal co
05	June 14, 2018 Chris Ward	<ul> <li>What is the expected life span of the 15th Street Bridge? Will it need to be rehabbed or replaced in the time period covered by the plan? The bridge is a major gap in the nonmotorized network and if it will be rehabbed pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be added if feasible structurally. The bridge should be indicated as a bike lane on the "visionary" nonmotorized network. <ul> <li>If it is likely to be replaced in the study period then the Smelter Ave should be changed back to an at grade intersection, as the railroad bridge is no longer needed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>N River Road should be changed to an underpass with no connection to 15th.</li> <li>Wire Mill could be changed to a one-way southbound ramp. This would have many advantages including eliminating low clearance restrictions, eliminating maintenance of two bridges and retaining walls, improving southbound visibility of the signal at the bottom of the grade, reducing a dangerous grade, and restoring the street environment and connectivity in Black Eagle.</li> </ul>
		Public Comments Received During Comment Period

- A new river crossing from NW Bypass to River Drive N at about 8th Ave N should be evaluated. In conjunction with a full interchange at Emerson Junction, this would turn NE Bypass/NW Bypass in to a very convenient cross-town route and the reduction in travel time would probably take a considerable amount of traffic (including through truck traffic) off 10th Ave
- The River Drive projects should consider what volumes might need to be handled if this connection were in place. If this connection could reduce demand on 10th maybe some of the funds that are directed towards widening 10th could be reallocated to the NE/NW Bypass corridor.
- The furthest east viable pedestrian crossing of the Missouri is the 9th/10th bridge. Until 1908 there was a pedestrian suspension bridge downstream of Black Eagle dam. This connection should be reestablished. It should be added as a shared use path link on the nonmotorized visionary network map. This would connect the north and south shore trails and provide bike/ped connectivity for Black Eagle.
  - If plans go ahead for a recreational site on the former ACM Smelter site as part of the EPA project then there would be additional need for a trail crossing at Black Eagle Falls.