



## **ACTIVITIES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### ***BWAM'S FIRST YEAR***

***November 2008***

#### **BIKE/WALK ALLIANCE *for* MISSOULA**

As a new organization, BWAM has done an enormous amount in our first active year. Thanks to our members and other supporters for making so much happen in such a short time.

#### **PROJECTS**

- Helped turn out many Missoulians for major planning meetings on long-range transportation investment and the future of downtown. The results? *Lots* of support for biking and walking improvements. The Long-Range Transportation Plan was revised to provide more funding for “multi-modal” (transit along with biking and walking) transportation. The downtown plan calls for more bike facilities, including parking racks, bike lanes and possibly separated cycletracks.
- Helped lead the opposition to the state’s proposed removal of bike lanes and lengthening of crosswalks (making it harder to cross) at the intersection of Reserve and Mullan streets. The *Missoula Independent* reported that BWAM was a leader in preserving the bike lanes.
- Worked with business owners to make South Higgins (the “Hip Strip”) safer and more enjoyable for walkers, bicyclists and motorists. We developed a report on business owner attitudes toward improving bike/walk safety that has been used as part of a new downtown planning process. Now under discussion is converting Higgins into a three-lane road with bike facilities – and possibly a two-lane Higgins Street Bridge, with much more room for pedestrians!
- Developed a team of members who have worked with the city to maintain streets, trails and sidewalks for biking and walking. We have developed a positive working relationship with the Public Works Department to get better clearance of bike lanes and sidewalks.
- Pushed for the more rapid placement of “sharrows” on S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street – to boost cycling’s visibility and safety - and working with the city’s Bike/Pedestrian Board to get more sharrows on other major Missoula bike routes. We still need to get the city and state to use better and more long-lasting paint and to move faster on laying down sharrows.
- Advocated for bike lanes on Wyoming Street in the Old Sawmill redevelopment (near the Ospreys’ baseball park) and now worked with city and state agencies to get better bike lanes on Orange Street between the bridge and Stephens Street. For the first time, there is now delineated space for cyclists on Orange Street, but we need to make these wider.
- Still working to ensure a positive redevelopment of Russell Street, with excellent bike/walk facilities, roundabouts at key intersections, and reduced impact on existing neighborhoods. Provided funding and leadership on developing “3-Plus for Russell” alternative.
- Continuing to work on a campaign to get the City and County of Missoula and the State of Montana to adopt “complete streets” ordinances, requiring that all new streets and all retrofits of existing streets in municipal areas include facilities for all users of our roads and public spaces, including cyclists, walkers, motorists and folks who are disabled. Also working with neighborhood advocates to identify funding resources to complete Missoula’s network of sidewalks, curbs and gutters.
- Working with the City and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to secure \$50 million in federal funding for bike and walk improvements. Organized news conference in October 2008 to promote this effort.

*(over)*

## **OUTREACH and FUN**

- Took the lead with other groups and businesses to create the new PEDal Festival during Labor Day weekend to celebrate biking and walking in the Missoula area. Attracted thousands of people to Caras Park for a terrific party that replaced the beloved Fat Tire Festival, which had been cancelled by New Belgium Brewery.
- Organized BWAM's first big dinner party at the MCT Center for the Performing Arts, with more than 100 attendees and hosted our first annual members' dinner and meeting in January 2008.
- Initiated Waving Wednesdays -- a free, fun, entirely voluntary event encouraging cyclists and walkers to wave to each other every Wednesday in every part of Missoula.
- Launched a new website hosted by Modwest – [www.bikewalkmissoula.org](http://www.bikewalkmissoula.org) – a useful portal to bike/walk activities and advocacy work throughout Missoula, and started a bimonthly e-newsletter called Spoke 'n' Step.
- Creating a first-of-its-kind digital map of current bike/walk facilities – and potential new facilities --in the Missoula area and linking to a Google Earth maps that allows Missoulians to post their favorite bike routes online.
- Printed literature on walking and biking in Missoula, with the help of designers at Salt Studio and Nancy Seiler.
- Began securing the support of local businesses – like The Bike Doctor, Open Road Bicycles and Nordic, Big Dipper Ice Cream, Missoula Bicycle Works, Runner's Edge, and The Trailhead -- for a membership incentive program and general support of BWAM's activities.
- Organized and coordinated fun events like a Spring Cycling Kick-off on April 3<sup>rd</sup> (at Missoula Bike Works), a bike/walk commuter party on April 25<sup>th</sup> (at Missoula Free Cycles), Travelon Gamelon on April 19<sup>th</sup>, a bike ride and gamelon concert at Bonner Park (with the Missoula Art Museum and Bernice's Bakery), a Ride for Silence (May 21st), in honor of cyclists who have been killed in the last year, and participation in the UM Homecoming Parade.
- Held a special bike ride around Missoula with Mayor John Engen to highlight problems and issues with the city's cycling infrastructure. Working with the Mayor to establish a short-term "action team" to improve local cycling conditions.

## **ORGANIZATION**

- Incorporated Bike/Walk Alliance for Missoula with the help of North Missoula Community Development Corporation and early funding support from REI. (BWAM was started as a result of an October 2006 bike/walk summit sponsored by Missoula Advocates for Sustainable Transportation.)
- Grew the organization for a few members in the middle of 2007 to more than 150 in November 2008.
- Organized three volunteer committees to handle BWAM's workload: the Board of Directors; the 3P (policy, projects, program) Team; and the Communications Team (which also works on events).
- Developed easy ways for people to join BWAM, including secure online giving through the website via JustGive.org.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- Contact Bob Wachtel, BWAM's Treasurer and membership guy, for information on how to join or get involved with BWAM teams and activities.
- Go to [www.bikewalkmissoula.org](http://www.bikewalkmissoula.org) for an up-to-date calendar of activities and more information about BWAM.