

**CANDIDATE RESPONSES to THREE QUESTIONS:
About bicycling, walking, and taking the bus in Helena, Montana**
October, 2017. Bike Walk Helena, <http://bikewalkhelena.org>

In September, 2016, Bike Walk Helena emailed or text messaged each of Helena's eight mayoral and commission candidates a three-question survey. We wanted to provide candidates with an opportunity to share, with Helena voters, their thoughts about bicycling, walking, and public transit.

Q1: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

Q2: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

Q3: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

All eight candidates responded to our short survey by email, and their answers are reproduced below exactly as they were sent and in their entirety. Mayoral candidates' responses are listed first, followed by city commission candidates' answers. Candidates are arranged alphabetically (by their last name).

Bike Walk Helena does not endorse candidates. We encourage Helena's citizens to vote, and we hope candidates' generous responses to our short survey constructively serve the electoral process. Finally, we thank each candidate for their thoughtful response and their willingness to serve Helena.

"BWH" = "Bike Walk Helena". Candidates' initials appear before their answers to each of the three questions.

Bike Walk Helena is a volunteer organization, working to make bicycling and walking in Helena healthier and more convenient.

For more information, contact BWH Chair M.C. Beeby at mc@mcbeeby.com

MAYORAL CANDIDATE RESPONSES

Wilmot Collins, Candidate for Mayor

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

WC: Yes, in the last six months my spouse and I have walked and rode our bikes. We do not consider the use of our bikes or walks recreational because we do them as part of our military trainings, we power walk and run in combination. My spouse is a member of the U.S. Army Reserves and I am a member of the U.S. Navy Reserves. We tend to use the back streets (we walk up Granite and turn on Hauser), we ride and walk because we've come to realize that the streets in Helena are not bike-walk friendly. Most weekends we walk to the farmers market and VANS Thriftway to purchase groceries. We bike and walk not because it all fun but also trainings for us. This is also a clean means of transportation, and also very healthy.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

WC: Yes, In July my spouse and I moved to Overlook Blvd adjacent the Kessler Elementary School, my spouse decided to explore new areas for us to walk, run or ride; she came home excited she had found a new trail across HWY 12 next to FWP. That week end in July was my first time on that trail and it is really beautiful. We enjoyed the trail and have continued to use it. I later found out it was the Centennial trail. I consider the Centennial trail as one of the best within the Helena area.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

WC: Resolution No. 19799 is a great resolution if is fully implemented; it's a clean form of transportation and the city should make this a priority. An effect of the resolution is that the resolution is on the city's radar, even though this is a start there are still many streets in Helena without sidewalks or bike lanes. We must create a safe environment for pedestrians and bikers. I believe the city has disengaged or work has come to a complete halt. We need to re-engage, through promotion and education of the use of non-motorized transportation within our city. When educating the community we must stress and incorporate the message of how healthy it is to use non-motorized transportation. In order for the City of Helena to create a safe, healthy & clean environment for pedestrians and bikers this resolution must be fully implemented.

Jim Smith, Candidate for Mayor

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

JS: I must be slowing down in my old age, and from a couple injuries over the years. I have not hiked, or biked much during the last six months. I've done some walking around my own neighborhood. That's about it. Nor have I taken a ride on the Capital Transit. For many years I roamed the trails of Helena on a daily basis. Mostly with my dog (RIP), and mostly in the Davis Gulch-Rodney Ridge area. Helena has a great trail system.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

JS: I have not used Centennial Trail in the last six months. However, my daughter and her family live in Sunhaven. They use the Centennial Trail regularly. They'll bike it into downtown for the Farmer's Market, or a visit to the Carousel in the Great Northern. They frequently walk the Centennial Trail to a Carroll game. Or take it on a hike out to Spring Meadow Lake. The Trail was a complex, and expensive undertaking. It required work with Lewis and Clark county, Montana Rail Link, private property owners along the way. It required a major commitment of the city's CTEP (Community Transportation Enhancement Program) funding.

A person recently purchased a parcel of land adjacent to the Centennial Trail, near the Montana Wild Foundation. His plan is to have camping and amenities for mountain bikers available on the property. He is going to call it 'Mountain Bike City.' Given Helena's growing reputation as a mountain biking destination city, I think he has a successful business in the making. And, the Centennial Trail is an ingredient in the business plan. It's non-motorized infrastructure that contributes to Helena's quality of life and its economic development.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

JS: The Complete Streets Resolution is working very well in the new subdivisions approved by the City Commission. Also, the Commission worked on a rewrite of the subdivision regulations and the engineering standards. This paved the way (so to speak) for the Complete Streets Resolution. For the new developments there are standards for sidewalks, boulevards, curbs and gutters, bike lanes in some cases, and other design features aimed at facilitating access and use of the city streets by everyone, not just folks in automobiles.

The Resolution also serves the city well in our discussions and negotiations with the Montana Department of Transportation, which was part of its original intent.

It is more difficult to apply the Resolution when repairing or rebuilding streets in existing neighborhoods. Clarke Street from Benton uphill to the base of Mount Helena is an example of a difficult street to make 'complete' during a rebuild. There are trees, brick sidewalks, slopes and angles to contend with on both sides of the street in every block along the way.

As we look at rebuilding Clarke and other 'failing streets' in the center of town, we will execute the Complete Streets Resolution as best we can, working with the neighbors and property owners, and considering the real life, on-the-ground situations on each of the streets slated for reconstruction in the next few years.

CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATES

Justin Ailport, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

JA: I have not used Capital Transit or biked in the last six months, but I have walked plenty. I walk to work quite often and because I work near downtown I often will walk to many of my meetings for work. I enjoy walking around Helena and appreciate the added health benefit of being able to do so. I believe a more livable city is crucial to the health and happiness of our community.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

JA: Yes, I use the Centennial Trail for recreation. If I want to take a nice relaxing walk I will walk from the Great Northern after a meeting or dinner and get on the Centennial Trail and go for a nice long walk do relieve from stress and get some fresh air. I think it is a wonderful asset to our community.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

JA: My interpretation of the Complete Streets Resolution is a comprehensive plan to really make our community for livable. By looking at how we can provide adequate services for pedestrians, bicyclist, and drivers makes our community better. The effects of this resolution should result in a far more livable city, where the entire city is safe for bicyclists, where there are proper sidewalks throughout the city and added measures to make it safer for pedestrians. It has the potential to create a Helena that is easier on the environment, that is quieter, safer, and healthier. I also thinks it is a step in the right direction to create a more connected community.

Mark A. Burzynski, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

MB: No, my family has not. They are not practical for our work and school schedules.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

MB: No, my family has not. We are involved in a myriad of activities that require motorized transportation (e.g., baseball practice, basketball practice, piano lessons, and traveling for work from BCBSMT, which is near East Helena, in the same night).

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

MB: Resolution 19799 has increased awareness of non motorized transportation, such as bicycle use. You certainly see more bike lanes on streets as they are redone. Centennial Trail has definitely grown in length and visibility. I certainly support the spirit of Resolution 19799.

Above and beyond the questions posed, more importantly, I would like to be helpful in your efforts as the organization moves forward. Hence, I would be remiss if I did not point out that the the resolution is a bit vague on several key aspects:

How does the city or developer know that the definition of a complete street has been satisfied? For example, does it make sense to have bus stops on all streets?

What is a "narrow vehicle lane?"

To which streets does the resolution apply? Clark Street is scheduled to be redone. How could Clark ever accommodate a bike lane?

Does every street have to be paved?

It might be useful to consider the 2 distinct population levels for Helena: During business and school days and afterward. I believe the population of Helena increases by over 50% during the "workday." What is the practical application of the resolution to resolving the transportation issues raised in the resolution for the parents whose children attend Jim Darcy, Kessler, Warren, and Rossiter, for example, and need to get to work after dropping their children at school? There are 6 - 7 homes started in the County for each one in the City, which illustrates that this is a multifaceted, complex issue.

The resolution creates a great image and vision, but it is going to require more operational and tactical planning to achieve what is intended. The resolution creates a base or a foundation, now we need to determine how we best satisfy the intent practically.

Thank you.

Andres Haladay, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

AH: I commute to work, either on foot or by bicycle, almost every day. My bicycle is my primary means of transportation for getting around town or running errands. When I take my son to school, we try to use our tandem, or bike side-by-side, as much as possible.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

AH: Centennial Trail tends to be our primary East-West connector when biking. As a family, we use it to get to Spring Meadow Lake State Park or other West Side destinations. My son and I use it to get to Baseball and Softball games. My son goes to school at Central-Linc and has attended camp in the Sixth Ward. We use the trail as an easy and safe access for him to bike to those destinations. It is far safer than having him bike next to me on city streets.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

AH: Helena's Complete Streets Resolution is non-binding. However, it has had impacts on City-staff's design and work on transportation infrastructure. In my time in Helena, the City's preferred design has been to build roads, with little to no interest in non-motorized infrastructure. Regardless the non-binding nature, the Resolution has forced the City to incorporate non-motorized infrastructure into street projects. It has also forced the City to be more flexible in the design process. For example, the West Main project could have thrown out non-motorized infrastructure (sidewalks and the southbound bike lane) in the interest of making full use of the limited right of way. However, in consideration of the complete streets resolution, the City has proposed and designed something of a middle ground. It's a good demonstration of creative solutions to make sure we include all transportation options on street re-designs.

Admittedly, the Complete Streets Resolution has been used by the City as a bit of a straw-man, to blame increased costs or design issues on the inclusion of non-motorized infrastructure, boulevards, etc. News reports and public statements by the City have implied, misleadingly, that the Complete Streets Resolution is mandatory. Thankfully, we've had Commissioners who have pushed back on that narrative.

Sean Logan, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event."

SL: My youngest daughter and I routinely walk to school as we live in close proximity to both Kessler and C.R. Anderson.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

SL: My family and I during spring, summer and fall use Centennial Trail for recreation and exercise. We live close to the west end of the trail and it is a very easy cycling trail for us to use.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

SL: The basis is to incorporate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists into transportation system. The benefits are numerous, including better health for users, decreasing vehicular traffic and parking difficulties, helping to combat climate change by encouraging alternatives to motorized transportation and conservation within our community. The resolution has a goal of "complete streets" which would "coordinate all modes of transportation, both motorized and non-motorized, and people of all ages and abilities" in a safe and effective way in the development of this infrastructure. The resolution directs staff to implement design standards to ensure all of the elements of a complete street (sidewalks, bicycle lanes, motor vehicle lanes, shared-use lanes and paths, etc.) when transportation infrastructure is developed.

Heather K. O'Loughlin, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

HOL: My husband and I walk our daughter to and from school almost every day. We feel very fortunate to live nearby and have the opportunity to walk. It has also given me a greater understanding of the need to ensure we have safe walkable streets in town.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

HOL: We often go to Centennial Trail to allow our daughter to bike. It is a tremendous trail system and a great place for my daughter to learn to ride.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

HOL: While the city commission has taken recent steps to provide some resources toward infrastructure needs for non-motorized transportation, the city can continue to improve access to safe streets for walkers and bikers. In thinking about how we continue these investments, we should prioritize commuting routes to schools and other major community centers.

Gary L. Spaeth, Candidate for City Commission

BWH: In the last six months, for non-recreational purposes within the City of Helena city limits, have you, or someone from your immediate family, walked, bicycled, or used Capital Transit? 'Non-recreational' uses include but are not limited to: commuting to work or school, to shop, or to attend worship or a public event.

GS: I feel that walking is an extremely healthy form of activity. About four years ago the doctors were not even sure I was going to live much less walk. With the help of physical therapist, I was able to get out of my wheel chair and use a walker. I then fggta fit bit and made a goal of 10,000 step a day which I still work to hit. My dogs and iput of 6,000 of that. I am shooting for getting my mtn bike out of the garage when my balance gets better but until then I will have to settle for walking but I am sure it will happen.

BWH: In the last six months, have you or someone from your family used Helena's Centennial Trail for commuting or recreation? Please briefly describe your use of the Centennial Trail.

GS: I have not used it with in the last six month but feel the system is one of the advantages of living in Helena. Our trails distinguish Helena as a Healthy place to live and you can appreciate the beauty that is around us.

BWH: Please describe the effects of Helena's Complete Streets Resolution (Resolution No. 19799) on Helena's transportation infrastructure.

GS: The resolution helps stabling a poli9cing policy that the streets are not just for vehicles but are for bike and walkers. Wjhat we need is more sidewalks especially on routes going to schools. I realize that costly but it is also dangerous and if we and accomplish it, we should/ I truly believe a city that us user friendly is more livable.