

I2 Walk Audit at Centennial Trail Connection at National/Argyle

September 7, 2023, 12:30pm-2:00pm

Attendees: Charles Alvarez (Ability Montana), Lucas Wallace (NMTAC member), Greg Wirth (NMTAC member), James Szerwo (NMTAC member), Darren Ramos (City of Helena Transportation), Sarah Sandau (Lewis and Clark Public Health and walk audit facilitator), Laura Erickson (Stahly Engineering), Anne Hausrath (Community Member), Kaia Brulc (City of Helena Engineering).

The Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council to the Helena City Commission (NMTAC) requested that Lewis and Clark Public Health assist in coordinating an Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk Audit (I2 Walk Audit) at the end of Centennial Trail at National Street.

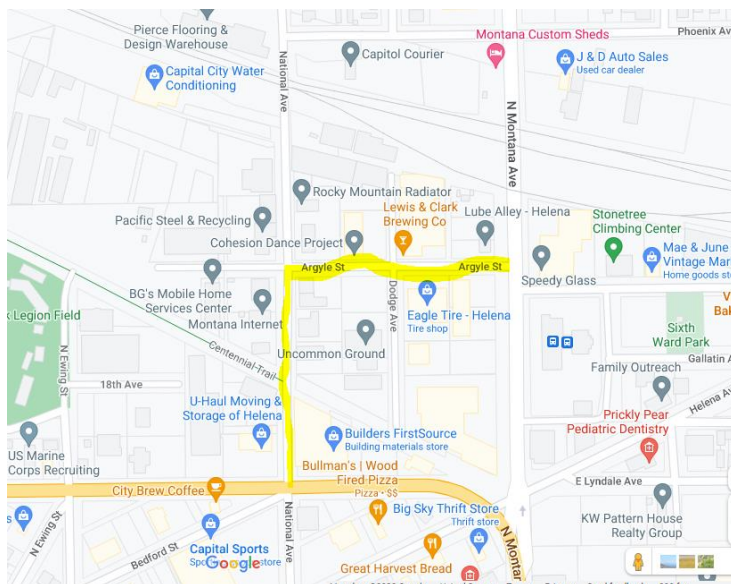
In that area of town, there are numerous housing options, businesses, stores, and the Real Food Store (grocery store). This intersection is a mix of Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), City of Helena, and some private property.

The team scored each stop with a rating of 1-10. 1 being awful, scary, and unsafe. 10 being a perfect city design.

Route:

The Walk Audit started at the Lyndale and National intersection. The group made their way north to the intersection of National/Argyle. Then, they went East till Argyle intersected Montana Ave.

The map of the route:



Observations, questions, and ideas from the I2 Walk Audit are as follows:

Stop #1: Lyndale and National Intersection. At the first stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 3. Comments on the first leg of the walk are as follows:

Background: The City has applied for two TA opportunities but haven't received either. There will eventually be a protected crossing as decided by the 5-point intersection study.

Positive aspects: Sidewalks, curb cuts, businesses

Needs Improvement: loud and busy intersection, 4 lanes of traffic make crossing unsafe, not desirable (no trees, signs and billboards make it unappealing), long crossings on all sides, confusing layout

Recommendations: protected crossing of Lyndale that includes refuge, make Bedford a dead end, shorter crossing, better curb cuts

Stop #2: National to Centennial Trail. At the second stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 1. Comments on the second leg of the walk are as follows:

Positive aspects: ½ street has new pavement, low traffic, corridor for safe routes to school and active transportation.

Needs Improvement: no sidewalks, no trail connection, no trees, no signage for where centennial trail should go, hard visual with where the cars are parked.

Recommendations: Sidewalk, trail connection, trees

Stop #3: Centennial Trail. At the third stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 8. Comments on the third leg of the walk are as follows:

Positive aspects: trail is a refuge, greenery, safe, paved, lit, less noise, very utilized.

Needs Improvement: no sidewalks, no trail connection, no trees, no signage for where centennial trail should go, hard visual with where the cars are parked.

Recommendations: bulb out for where centennial trail meets National.

Stop #4: National to Centennial Trail. At the fourth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 1. Comments on the fourth leg of the walk are as follows:

Positive aspects: ½ street has new pavement, low traffic, corridor for safe routes to school and active transportation.

Needs Improvement: no sidewalks, no trail connection, no trees, no signage for where centennial trail should go, hard visual with where the cars are parked.

Recommendations: Sidewalk, trail connection, trees

Stop #5: National to Argyle. At the fifth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 1. Comments on the fifth leg of the walk are as follows:

Positive aspects: ½ street has new pavement, low traffic, corridor for safe routes to school and active transportation, businesses, sleeping giant view

Needs Improvement: no sidewalks, no trail connection, no trees, no signage for where centennial trail should go.

Recommendations: Sidewalk, trail connection, trees

Stop #6: Argyle to Montana Ave. At the sixth stop the team assessed the area as an average score of 1. Comments on the sixth leg of the walk are as follows:

Positive aspects: portion of sidewalk, mural, businesses.

Needs Improvement: sidewalks, signs blocking sidewalks, curb cuts.

Recommendations: Sidewalk, trail connection, trees, move the signs.

Summary suggestions:

1. Create a protected multi-use path that would connect where centennial ends to the future crossing at Montana. This would be on the east side of National, connect to the south side of Argyle, then safely crosses Montana.
 - a. Look into the potential of using the redo of the pavement as the match for TIF funds.
2. Bulb out on Centennial trail on the west side of National with marked crosswalk to the multi use path.
3. Sidewalks
4. Curb Cuts
5. Trees

Next Steps:

This summary account will be provided to all participants in addition to NMTAC. This will be discussed at the October NMTAC meeting on Tuesday, October 10th.

Community members can always make requests to the City of Helena on their own through the My Helena App.

Community members can always make requests to the MDT on their own through their online portal at <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/contact/comment-form.aspx>

Accessibility information regarding MDT owned and operated routes can be found on the ADA Transition Plan Update link:

<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/ada/>