

## Billings City Administration Weekly Report

May 17, 2019

### 1) **Remaining Budget Schedule**

- a. Monday May 20 – Aviation & Transit, Information Technology, Planning,
- b. Wednesday May 29 – Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID), Downtown Business Improvement District (BID), Public Works, Parks Budget & Capital Improvement Plan
- c. Monday June 3 – Parking, Facilities, Tax Increment Financing districts (Downtown, BIRD and SBURA) and Budget Wrap-up
- d. Monday June 24 – Budget adoption

- 2) **Budget** – Most of the week's mental capacity was spent thinking about our budget challenges. Each director, whose budget is impacted by property taxes, is working together with Andy, Kevin and I to bring forward a strategy that best serves our community for the foreseeable future.
- 3) **City/County** – We had our monthly breakfast with Commissioner Pitman. We continued our dialogue on opportunities to collaborate on the challenges that face both of our local governments. Dennis shared his perspective on the city's budget from his 8 years on the Council.
- 4) **Landfill Meeting** – On Monday, Brent Brooks and I met with the Buchanan's and Joel Guthals. They continue to have concerns regarding the landfill. They appreciate the improvements that are underway but still see way too much trash (mostly plastic bags) blowing off of our landfill. Particularly after a windstorm, plastic bags are strewn along the fence lines and across neighboring fields. There is also trash littering the roads leading to the landfill. They would like to see the landfill not expand until after we can prove that we can manage the landfill operation utilizing all of the industry's best practices for cleanliness and profitability. In the upcoming weeks the landfill will be instituting fines to haulers who don't have their loads covered. The modest fine will be accompanied with a tarp. This is a program other landfills in MT and across the country have used effectively.
- 5) **City of Hardin & Lodge Grass** – Wednesday Deputy Mayor Yakawich and I met Hardin's Mayor Purcell, Public Works Director Rock and Clerk Dyckman to introduce ourselves, begin building relationships and discuss their landfill. One of the critical issues related to the potential redevelopment of the Corette site is whether to cap the fly ash that is on the site or have it removed. The City of Hardin operates a landfill that was apparently designed to accept fly ash from the coal fire power plant in their area. Provided the fly ash is appropriately documented and meets regulatory standards for disposal, Hardin is interested in working with the City of Billings to dispose of it at a reasonable tipping fee rate.

After spending about an hour in Crow Agency meeting a few residents and a business owner, we had dinner with Lodge Grass Mayor Quincy Dabney and ½ dozen individuals who are working on community and business development on the Crow. Our interest is to build sustainable relationships that improve both of our communities to the betterment of our citizens.

6) **City wins summary judgment in the Ronald Bray v. City of Billings case** – See attached summary.

7) **Meetings/Task Forces/Presentations etc.**

- a. Pioneer Park Task Force – Tuesday at 7:00 pm McKinley School.
- b. West End Task Force –Tuesday at 7:00 pm Faith E -145 Sweet Water Dr., Room 130/131.
- c. Southwest Corridor Task Force – Thursday at 7:00 pm Moose Lodge- 121 Calhoun Lane.

8) **Monthly Reports** – Attached are the monthly reports from Community Development, Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Public Works.

Have a great weekend!

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2  
3 MONTANA THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT, YELLOWSTONE  
4 COUNTY

5 RONALD BRAY, ) Cause No. DV 14-0321  
6 )  
7 Plaintiff, ) Judge Gregory R. Todd  
8 )  
9 vs. ) **ORDER GRANTING**  
10 CITY OF BILLINGS, ) **DEFENDANT'S MOTION FOR**  
11 ) **SUMMARY JUDGMENT**  
12 Defendant. )  
13 \_\_\_\_\_ )

14 **INTRODUCTION**

15 This matter comes before the Court from Defendant City of Billings  
16 (hereinafter "City") motion for summary judgment. On March 29, 2019, the City filed  
17 its motion for summary judgment. On April 22, 2019, Plaintiff Ronald Bray  
18 (hereinafter "Bray") responded to the City's motion. On May 3, 2019, the City  
19 replied. The matter is now fully briefed and ripe for decision.

20 **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

21 Bray owns properties at 417 Miles Avenue and 423 Miles Avenue in Billings. In  
22 January 2012, the City issued Bray a citation for debris on the properties. The Billings  
23 Municipal Court held a hearing on the citation. The Municipal Court ordered the  
24 debris removed. In 2012, Bray appealed the Municipal Court's order to this Court in  
25 the Thirteenth District of Montana. On appeal, Bray argued a violation of his

1 constitutional right to privacy due to Code Enforcement Officer Don Vegge coming  
2 onto his property to take photographs of the debris.  
3

4 This Court found that Bray did not file a motion to suppress the photos during  
5 any proceeding at the Municipal Court level and ruled that Bray could not contest the  
6 admissibility of the photographs of his property the City introduced at trial because he  
7 failed to file a motion to suppress at the proper time and therefore waived his right to  
8 contest the admission. This Court also held in 2012 that any procedural deficiencies  
9 regarding service upon Bray were cured and the Municipal Court did not act in a  
10 biased manner such that he was deprived of due process.  
11

12 Bray was offered fourteen months to abate the specific items the Municipal  
13 Court ordered him to remove. Bray was also offered an additional two months to abate  
14 these specific items after date of this Court entered Judgment. Bray neglected to fully  
15 comply. In April 2013, the City removed the debris. The City requested the  
16 Yellowstone County place the cost to remove the debris on Bray's property tax  
17 statements. The Yellowstone County placed the assessment on Bray's 2013 tax  
18 statements. Bray paid the assessments in two payments. Yellowstone County received  
19 the payments from Bray and forwarded the payments to the City.  
20

21 On February 27, 2014, Bray filed a complaint against the City and Yellowstone  
22 County. In his complaint, Bray asked for declaratory judgment against Yellowstone  
23 County for the assessment placed on Bray's 2013 tax statements. Bray argued that the  
24 City under 42 U.S.C. §1983 deprived him of his constitutional right to not be deprived  
25 of property without due process of law. Bray argued the City violated his due process

1 right under Sections 10 and 11 of Article II of the Constitution of Montana (to be secure  
2 from unreasonable seizures and to require legal process prior to the taking of personal  
3 property). And Bray argued that the City breached its duty of care to him by seizing  
4 and destroying personal property the Municipal Court did specify in its abatement  
5 order, thereby negligently enforcing the Billings Municipal City Code.  
6

7 On August 25, 2017, Yellowstone County filed a motion for summary  
8 judgment. On August 25, 2017, Bray filed a motion to dismiss Yellowstone County as  
9 a party to the suit. Bray argued that he had discerned Yellowstone County to be a  
10 passive party to what is placed on a property tax statement, and that it retains none  
11 of the taxes of the entity that requested the certain taxes. Bray requested the Court  
12 dismiss Yellowstone County as a party based on that representation and basis. On  
13 October 3, 2017, the Court dismissed Yellowstone County as a party. Bray motioned,  
14 and the Court permitted him, to file an amended complaint. Bray now seeks relief  
15 from only the City.  
16

### 17 SUMMARY JUDGMENT STANDARD

18 Summary judgment should be rendered when the pleadings, the discovery  
19 and disclosure materials on file, and any affidavits show that there is no genuine  
20 issue of material fact and that the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of  
21 law. Mont. R. Civ. P. 56(c). Summary judgment is intended to encourage judicial  
22 economy by eliminating unnecessary trials in which no genuine issue of fact is  
23 present. *Belcher v. Department of State Lands*, 228 Mont. 252, 355, 742 P.2d 475  
24 (1987) (citation omitted). The moving party bears the burden of establishing both an  
25

1 absence of any genuine issue of material fact and its entitlement to judgment as a  
2 matter of law. *Clover Leaf Dairy v. State*, 285 Mont. 380, 385, 948 P.2d 1164, 1168  
3 (1997). Once the moving party meets its burden, the opposing party must present  
4 substantial evidence raising a genuine issue of material fact. *Corporate Air v.*  
5 *Edwards Jet Ctr. Mont. Inc.*, 2008 MT 283, ¶ 25, 345 Mont. 336, 190 P.3d 1111  
6 (citations omitted); *Steinback v. Bankers Life & Cas. Co.*, 2000 MT 316, ¶ 11, 302  
7 Mont. 483, 15 P.3d 872 (citations omitted). The opposing party must then prove by  
8 more than mere denial and speculation that there is a genuine issue for trial. *Bruner*  
9 *v. Yellowstone County*, 272 Mont. 261, 264, 900 P.2d 901, 903 (1995). All reasonable  
10 inferences that can be drawn from the offered proof must be drawn in favor of the  
11 opposing party. *Stanley L. & Carolyn M. Watkins Trust v. Lacosta*, 2004 MT 144, ¶  
12 16, 321 Mont. 432, 92 P.3d 620. The Montana Supreme Court has repeatedly held  
13 that "summary judgment is an extreme remedy and should never be substituted for a  
14 trial if a factual controversy exists." *Williams v. Plum Creek Timber Co.*, 2011 MT  
15 271, ¶ 41, 362 Mont. 368, 264 P.3d 1090 (citing *Spinler v. Allen*, 1999 MT 160, ¶ 16,  
16 295 Mont. 139, 983 P.2d 348).

## 20 DISCUSSION

### 21 I. Bray's State Law Claims

22 The City argued in its motion for summary judgment that Bray's state law  
23 claims must fail as a matter of law under Mont. Code Ann. §2-9-112(1) ("Immunity  
24 from suit for judicial acts and omission"). Section 2-9-112(1) states:  
25

1  
2 (1) The State and other governmental units are immune from suit for acts or  
admissions of the judiciary.

3 (2) A member, officer, or agent of the judiciary is immune from suit for  
4 damages arising from the lawful discharge of an official duty associated with  
judicial actions of the court.

5 (3) The judiciary includes those courts established in accordance with Article  
VII of the Constitution of Montana.

6 Bray argued in his response that the City took property that was specified in  
7 the Municipal Court's Orders to Abate. Bray argued that by taking the property not  
8 specified, the City did not obey the Municipal Court's orders, and that the City's  
9 failure to only abate the specified items were not judicial acts that are protected  
10 under § 2-9-112(1). The City argued that it is protected under the doctrine of quasi-  
11 judicial immunity. Quasi-judicial immunity is the same as absolute immunity from  
12 suits as judicial immunity. *Steele v. McGregor*, 1999 MT 85, ¶¶25-26, 30, 288 Mont.  
13 238, 246, 956 P.2d 1364, 1368-69. Quasi-judicial immunity is not a mere defense to  
14 liability. *Id.* Quasi-judicial immunity protects participants in the judicial process. *Id.*  
15 Quasi-judicial immunity is "absolute" and shields those exercising discretion in  
16 performing quasi-judicial functions from any liability, regardless of negligence or  
17 wrongful performance of the quasi-judicial function. *Id.* at ¶30.

18  
19  
20 The Montana Supreme Court dealt with a similar matter in *City of Great Falls*  
21 *v. Alice Price*, 775 P.2d 1260, 238 Mont. 99 (Mont. 1999). In *Price*, the City of Great  
22 Falls cited Alice Price for violating Great Falls City Ordinance 8.48.080, for  
23 knowingly and purposely allowing waste paper, clothing, boxes, discarded furniture,  
24 appliances, and other rubbish to accumulate on her property. Zoning Technician  
25 Richard D. Stevens for the City of Great Falls issued Alice a notice to appear and

1 complaint. *Id.* A nonjury trial was held in Great Falls City Court. *Id.* Alice was found  
2 guilty. *Id.* The Great Falls City Court ordered Alice to abate the nuisance within  
3 seven days. *Id.* Alice did not follow the City Court's Order, and Richard Stevens and  
4 Great Falls hired an independent crew to clean up Alice's property. *Id.* Alice appealed  
5 the Great Falls City Court's decision and sought compensatory damages for the  
6 personal property she alleged was wrongfully removed. *Id.* at 1261. Great Falls filed a  
7 motion to dismiss and the District Court for the Eighth Judicial District, Cascade  
8 County, dismissed the case pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. §2-9-112(1). *Id.* Alice  
9 appealed. *Id.* The Supreme Court upheld the District Court's decision. *Id.* The  
10 Supreme Court cited to *Knutson v. State*, 211 Mont. 126, 683 P.2d 488, to find that  
11 the immunity under §2-9-112(1), MCA, applies to protect the state and governmental  
12 agencies whenever the judicial power of the state is put to use in a judicial action. *Id.*

15         Bray argued that *Price* is not on point with the current case before the Court,  
16 because he is not contesting the Municipal Court's sentence. Instead, Bray argued  
17 that he is contesting the City officers' actions in failing to carry out the Municipal  
18 Court's expressed provisions in its sentence. Bray argued that by taking items not  
19 designated in the abatement orders, the City officers took his property without due  
20 process. Bray relied on the City's definition of junk: a worn-out article ready for  
21 destruction, and salvage being a worn-out article stored for conversion to some other  
22 use or for reduction into components. BMCC § 27-201. Bray argued that under the  
23 City's definition, certain items that were taken by the City officers were not junk.  
24  
25



1           The Court agrees that the City is protected under §2-9-112(1), because the City  
2 officers abated Bray's properties under the Municipal Court's orders of abatement.  
3 The items on Bray's property that were seized were within the parameters of the  
4 areas the Municipal Court ordered its officers to abate. The Municipal Court's  
5 abatement orders gave the City discretion and explicit authority to discard or destroy  
6 anything having no or negligible apparent value. The City officers acted reasonably  
7 under the direction of the Municipal Court's orders. The Court finds that the City  
8 officers acted under the judicial power provided by the Billings Municipal Court's  
9 orders of abatement and that the City is protected by the quasi-judicial immunity set  
10 forth from § 2-9-112(1). *Id.*

## 11           **II.       Bray's 42 U.S.C. §1983 Claim**

12           The City argued that it is immune from Bray's §1983 claim under the doctrine  
13 of quasi-judicial immunity. Bray argued that he was deprived of his constitutional  
14 right to not be deprived of property without due process. Bray argued that his § 1983  
15 claim should not be dismissed because the City officers and employees took his  
16 property not specified in the Municipal Court's Orders to Abate, thereby depriving  
17 him of property without due process. The City argued that it is protected from Bray's  
18 §1983 claim under quasi-judicial immunity. The City also argued that Bray has not  
19 met the *Monell* standard for proving an established policy or custom that the City  
20 enforced was in violation of his established constitutional right. *Monell v.*  
21 *Department of Social Services of City of New York*, 436 U.S. 658, 690, 98 S. Ct.  
22 2018, 2036 (1978). A municipality's policy or custom cannot be inferred because the  
23  
24  
25

1 *Monell* requirement was intended to prevent the imposition of municipal liability  
2 under circumstances where no wrong could be ascribed to municipal decision-  
3 makers. *City of Oklahoma City v. Tuttle*, 471 U.S. 808, 821, 105 S. Ct. 2427 (1985).  
4

5 Under a §1983 claim, the Court must determine if Bray's harm was caused by  
6 a constitutional violation and if the City was responsible for the violation. *Miller v.*  
7 *City of Red Lodge*, 2003 MT 44, FN1, 314 Mont. 278, 286, 65 P.3d 562, 568. Bray  
8 argued that his §1983 claim arose from the City's negligent action of taking property  
9 not specified on the Municipal Court's abatement orders, thereby depriving him of  
10 his property without due process. "Due process generally requires notice of a  
11 proposed action which could result in depriving a person of property interest and the  
12 opportunity to be heard regarding that action." *Geil v. Missoula Irr. Dist.*, 2002 MT  
13 269, ¶153, 312 Mont. 320, 59 P.3d 398. Where a party had notice and an opportunity  
14 to be heard, due process is met. *In re Crow Water Compact*, 2015 MT 353, 382  
15 Mont. 46, 364 P.3d 584.  
16

17 The City argued that Bray had six official Notices of Violations of the BMC, as  
18 well as four evidentiary hearings on the BMC citations before the Municipal Court  
19 issued its Orders to Abate & Warrants of Entry. The City further stated that these  
20 notices and hearings met the due process requirements. The City also argued that  
21 Bray's §1983 claim fails because he cannot point to an established custom, practice,  
22 or written policy that the City has established for abatement of nuisances. Section  
23 1983 compels that "Congress did not intend municipalities to be held liable unless  
24  
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1 action pursuant to official municipal policy of some nature caused a constitutional  
2 tort.” *Monell*, 436 U.S. 690 (1978).  
3

4 As above, the Court views the City officers’ actions as falling under the  
5 purview of the Municipal Court’s orders of abatement. Bray was provided every  
6 opportunity to rectify the nuisances complained of. When the City officers had to  
7 finally step in to abate his properties, they acted under the direction of the Municipal  
8 Court to abate strewn about junk and salvage. The Municipal Court’s orders did not  
9 tell the City officers to sift through the junk and salvage to determine what should be  
10 abated and what should not be abated. The City officers acted under the orders of  
11 abatement. Because the City officers were carrying out the orders of the Municipal  
12 Court, they were participating in the judicial process. The Court finds that the City’s  
13 argument of quasi-judicial immunity is valid.  
14

### 15 **III. Bray’s Negligent Claim**

16 Bray argued that the City negligently enforced the Billings city code. The City  
17 argued that the Montana Supreme Court has not recognized a claim for negligent  
18 enforcement of a city code, and that, even if negligent enforcement were a cognizable  
19 claim, it would be prohibited by the doctrine of quasi-immunity. Since the Court  
20 found above that the City’s actions were taken through the Municipal Court’s orders,  
21 the doctrine of quasi-judicial immunity applies, and the City is immune to the  
22 negligent claim made by Bray.  
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1  
2 **IV. Bray's Declaratory Judgment Act Claim**

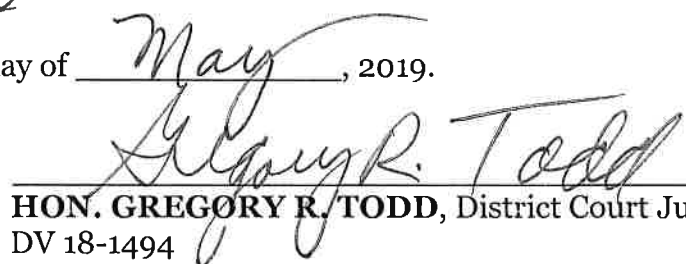
3 Section 15-1-402(1)(b)(i-iii) of the Montana Code Annotated requires that an  
4 individual who is protesting an imposed property tax fee must make the protested  
5 payment to the officer designated and authorized to collect it, specify the grounds of  
6 protest, and to not exceed the difference between the payment for the immediately  
7 preceding tax year and the amount owing in the tax year protested. The Court  
8 recognizes that Bray filed a protest when he paid the taxes imposed upon him by  
9 Yellowstone County per the City's request. However, Bray's protest documentation  
10 does not meet the specifications mentioned in § 15-1-402(b)(ii). The Court does not  
11 find Bray's statements to meet the specificity requirement set forth.  
12

13 **CONCLUSION AND ORDER**

14 The Court finds that the City's motion for summary judgment is valid. The  
15 City is protected by the doctrine of quasi-judicial immunity from Bray's State law  
16 claims and his §1983 claim. Bray's declaratory judgment act claim fails as well,  
17 because Bray did not specify the grounds of protest of the tax, thereby failing to  
18 comply with Mont. Code Ann. §15-1-402.  
19

20 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that the Motion for Summary Judgment is  
21 **DENIED.**

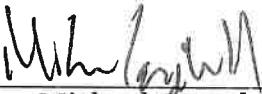
22 **DATED** this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019.

23  
24   
25 **HON. GREGORY R. TODD**, District Court Judge  
DV 18-1494

1  
2 cc: ~~Harlan B. Krogh~~ & Elizabeth M. Varela, Attorneys for the Defendant  
3 Elizabeth J. Honaker, Attorney for the Plaintiff

4 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

5 This is to certify that the foregoing was  
6 Caused to be served upon the parties or their  
7 Attorneys of record at their last-known  
8 Address and via fax on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019

9 By   
10 Michael Campbell  
11 Law Clerk to HON. GREGORY R. TODD  
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**CITY CODE ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT**  
**Month of April 2019**

Violation	Received				Resolved			
	Central & West End	Heights & Southside	Commercial Areas	Total	Central & West End	Heights & Southside	Commercial Areas	Total
Building Code	1			1	2			2
Clear Vision	5			5	6			6
Commercial	3		3	6	4		5	9
General Zoning	3	5	3	11		2	1	3
Graffiti			5	5	1		5	6
Junk Vehicles	11	11		22	13	5		18
Miscellaneous			6	6			6	6
Nuisance	3	3		6	4	3		7
Obstruction of Public ROW	39	60	4	103	48	53	4	105
Open Storage of Junk & Salvage	18	18	1	37	17	10	1	28
Parking on Lawn	9	11		20	12	6		18
RV & Trailers	35	19		54	42	15		57
Signs		1	1	2			1	1
Snow & Ice on Sidewalks				0	2	5		7
Solid Waste	2	1	1	4			1	1
Trees/Shrubs Blocking ROW	1			1	2			2
Weeds				0				0
<b>Total for Month</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>276</b>
Commercial Plan Reviews and Final Inspections			18	18				
Business License Reviews			74	74				
Parking Tickets	59	60		119	<b>Total Ticket Revenue \$2,220</b>			
<b>Active Cases As of May 1, 2019</b>				<b>230</b>				
<b>Misdemeanor or Municipal Infraction Citations Issued</b>				<b>4</b>				
<b>No Code Violations or Unable to Locate</b>				<b>12</b>				

Violation	Year To Date				Previous 2 years	
	Central & West End	Heights & Southside	Commercial Areas	Total	Jan-April 2018	Jan-April 2017
Building Code	4	2		6	4	8
Clear Vision	5	1	1	7	16	22
Commercial	8	2	15	25	26	13
General Zoning	4	6	4	14	27	22
Graffiti	1	1	12	14	72	35
Junk Vehicles	22	22	1	45	62	66
Miscellaneous			20	20	12	15
Nuisance	9	15		24	19	27
Obstruction of Public ROW	106	140	15	261	196	280
Open Storage of Junk & Salvage	44	44	3	91	109	144
Parking on Lawn	22	15		37	36	55
RV & Trailers	92	60	3	155	152	248
Signs		1	3	4	14	21
Snow & Ice on Sidewalks	143	105	53	301	748	380
Solid Waste	8	8	3	19	16	7
Trees/Shrubs Blocking ROW	6	2		8	11	31
Weeds				0	0	0
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1031</b>	<b>1520</b>	<b>1374</b>
Commercial Plan Reviews and Final Inspections			44	44	78	78
Business License Reviews			280	280	312	223
Parking Tickets	119	102		221	199	373
				<b>Total Ticket Revenue \$6,015</b>	<b>\$4,650</b>	<b>\$6,740</b>





## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

### Monthly Report – April 2019

2825 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101

Phone: 406.657.8281

[www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev](http://www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev)

#### CORE PROGRAMS

##### *First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB)*

The FTHB program has fully committed all funding until funds that had been repaid can be entered and made available in the program accounts. The last four households that had funding committed to them will close in May.



The Central/Terry neighborhood property pictured to the left was purchased by a FTHB client in April.

##### *Home Repair Programs*

**Housing Rehabilitation:** During April, one approved applicant sought bids, four projects were under construction, one project was completed and the file closed, and two new rehab loans were processed.

Two Housing Rehab Program ads were placed in ***Tidbits*** to spread the word about the program.



This housing rehab project home received new windows, new rear door, new concrete, and damaged siding was replaced, etc.

**Manufactured Home Repair:** No new applications were during April. Two homeowners continue to seek bids.

##### *Affordable Housing Development Program*

The Riverfront Point project is near completion and they have now started to show the units to interested first time homebuyers. They have not yet received a purchase offer on either of the units, but are diligently working with the listing agent to get them sold as quickly as possible. NeighborWorks has been very happy with the contractor and architect throughout this project.



### **Foreclosure, Acquisition / Rehabilitation Program**

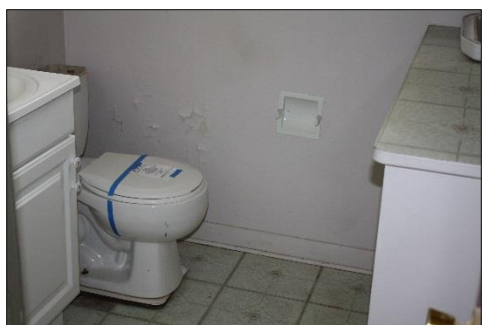
**30 S. Plainview:** The property closed on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The property sold for \$192,000 to a low-income family.



Pictured are the buyers of the Plainview property with their real estate agent, lender, closing title officer and city staff.

**19<sup>th</sup> Street West:** The post-rehab inspection identified additional work that was needed. Staff processed a change order and the work is underway. The post-rehab appraisal came in at \$245,000. As soon as the work has been completed, the property will be marketed for sale to approved FTHB applicants for \$245,000 (sales price is the lesser of the appraised value OR acquisition + rehabilitation costs).

**930 Steffanich Drive:** The post purchase appraisal came in at \$125,000 (purchase price was \$109,350). Staff has so far received a partial home inspection report, ballpark electrical evaluation, and structural engineering report. These documents are being reviewing to determine feasibility of, and/or options for, the project. These pictures below illustrate a few challenges to be addressed with this project site.



### **Billings Metro VISTA Project (MVP)**

**July / August 2019-2020 Available Positions**

#### **City of Billings - Community Development Division**

##### Billings Metro VISTA Project - Leader

Assist the City of Billings Community Development Division and 20+ VISTA members in impacting poverty and developing your skills as a VISTA Leader in Big Sky country! **Leaders must have completed one year of national service, preferably an AmeriCorps VISTA term.** They receive a higher living allowance and are provided with an additional \$300 per month housing allowance.





### Community-Wide Opioid & Methamphetamine Response Initiative

Work to reduce opioid / methamphetamine abuse and expand access to healthcare education, prevention, and intervention strategies to deal with the drug epidemic in Yellowstone County. The City of Billings is spearheading an opioid / methamphetamine response initiative to assess, coordinate and mobilize community resources. This will require a community assessment, the creation of materials, strategic planning and outreach activities.

### Food Security

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#### **Family Service, Inc.**

##### Expand Food Security

Work to increase food security through capacity building activities designed to increase the distribution of healthy, nutritious food to low-income individuals and families in Yellowstone County. Beneficiaries include those living in food deserts, elderly shut-ins, people lacking transportation to secure food, and/or who have to choose between other living expenses and food. The project requires volunteer resource development, program development and delivery, and outreach activities.

### **City of Billings - Community Development Division**

#### Urban Food Security & Economic Prosperity

Develop food security initiatives with the City of Billings Community Development Division by building community capacity with low-income individuals, community groups, and agencies. Work to increase access to food security and ensure economic prosperity through the promotion of container and community gardening, farmers markets, cost-saving urban agriculture design, and heirloom seed banking.

### Health & Crisis Services

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#### **Dog Tag Buddies**

##### Veteran Health Services

Dog Tag Buddies assists veterans in their recovery from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries through the training and provision of support, service, and / or psychiatric service dogs. The VISTA member will help build the capacity of this new nonprofit to increase the organization's ability to work with animal rescues and shelters to match dogs with veterans so they can fully recover and lead healthy, engaging lives.



#### **Chinook Horses**

##### Increasing Health Services via Equine Therapy

The overall goal of this project is to increase the number of individuals with improved access to health / mental health and addiction treatment services via equine therapy. This will require: fundraising and grant writing activities; developing and implementing community awareness and engagement activities; conducting outreach efforts designed to engage new clients in therapy; and evaluating and enhancing technology and performance measurement systems.

#### **Family Tree Center**

##### Increasing Access to Child Abuse Prevention Services

The overall goal of this project is to increase access to health / mental health services and resources, and to improve academic performance and engagement for low income families and individuals through statewide child abuse prevention and intervention programs. This will require: the creation of a new Board of Directors; recruitment of affiliate organizations; development of an asset map and statewide health / mental health services; fundraising and grant writing activities; and the development and implementation of awareness activities.

## **HAVEN in Bozeman, MT**

### Addiction Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence

The overall goal of this project is to improve access to opioid and methamphetamine addiction recovery programs for survivors of domestic violence, stalking, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The VISTA member will identify the leading organization in Gallatin County working on the issue of opioid and methamphetamine recovery and create an outreach program at HAVEN's shelter to provide shelter guests with no-barrier access to receiving addiction recovery support. To support these efforts, the VISTA will help facilitate trainings for staff and volunteers on the subject of addiction symptoms and best practices to support recovery.

## **Native American Development Corporation**

### Increasing Healthcare Access for Native Americans

The project is designed to increase access to healthcare for Native Americans by supporting the Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center in fostering community wellbeing and increasing access to healthcare for low-income Native Americans. This will require a healthcare needs assessment, a Resource Development Plan, a Communication Plan to expand community knowledge of the center's services, and marketing materials for client education and outreach.



## **City of Billings - Community Development Division**

### Community-Wide Opioid & Methamphetamine Response Initiative

Work to reduce opioid / methamphetamine abuse and expand access to healthcare education, prevention, and intervention strategies to deal with the drug epidemic in Yellowstone County. The City of Billings is spearheading a response initiative to assess, coordinate and mobilize community resources. This will require a community assessment, the creation of materials, strategic planning and outreach activities. This project will help alleviate poverty by connecting low-income, addicted persons to programs that provide substance abuse treatment, life-skills, education, and employment services so they may achieve success in acquiring health and the opportunity to move out of poverty.

Housing, Employment, & Financial Literacy

## **Dress for Success**

### Expand Employment & Training Opportunities for Women

If you have a passion for social justice and women's issues, this position is for you! Help this amazing organization diversify available funding to increase access to job training and employment for economically disadvantaged women. The project will expand service delivery to local American Indian women and includes volunteer development, marketing, and fund development.

## **Red Lodge Area Community Foundation**

### Workforce Housing in Red Lodge, MT

This project is designed to improve affordable housing options for the low-income workforce in the Red Lodge area and to ensure permanent affordable housing through services, programs, training and education. The VISTA member will garner community support and participation through outreach and awareness efforts, conduct fundraising activities, and assist in developing training programs. This project will help alleviate poverty by helping increase permanent affordable housing stock, providing financial management, budgeting, and renter education, and connecting people to programs and services available to ensure long-term success.

## **City of Great Falls**

### Access to Affordable and Fair Housing

This position is stationed in Great Falls, Montana and the VISTA member will be working with other members and government officials across the state to further affordable / fair housing and equal opportunity. The overall goal of this project is to develop and implement a plan to overcome barriers to housing choice and promote inclusivity

through research and development of data-informed best practices. The capacity built through this project will result in improved access to quality housing, education, healthcare and employment opportunities to ensure long-term success.

#### Child Education & Mentoring

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##### **Head Start - Explorer's Academy**

###### Family Engagement

This project is designed to help children to achieve success in a school-readiness education program by improving outreach to low income areas and increasing parental engagement in children's learning at Explorers Academy. The VISTA member will create a new parent volunteer recruitment plan to support classroom and at-home learning, develop an outreach plan to increase parent communication, and develop outreach materials for program staff to educate parents on the importance of supporting learning at home.

##### **Billings Community Foundation**

###### Increasing Academic Engagement through Mentoring!

The goal of this project is to increase academic engagement and retention rates for first generation students through mentoring and community impact participation with Billings Community Foundation. The VISTA member will create a database of community partners, write a marketing plan, update a website, and support the Foundation's education initiative. The mentoring relationships built through this project will give first generation, low income, college freshman the opportunity to have consistent, positive role models who will reinforce the knowledge that these students can be vital, contributing community members.

##### **CASA of Yellowstone County**

###### Mentoring Initiative & Cultural Competency for Native American Students

Every child has the right to a safe, permanent home. CASA of Yellowstone County facilitates volunteer mentor efforts to support abused and neglected children who have been placed in court system to obtain basic services, including protection from bodily harm and neglect, health / mental health services, education, and food security. Native American children are disproportionately represented in child protection cases (approximately 33 percent) while the overall Native American population in Billings is approximately four percent. Increasing the number of Native American mentors will provide children with cultural stability and the potential to maintain relationships with extended families and Tribal connectivity.

##### **Wise Wonders Children's Museum**

###### Full STEAM Ahead - Expand Education

This project is designed to improve academic performance among low-income students by implementing STEAM After School Programming and also to support a capital campaign for to expand education programs in a new downtown Billings location! Another component is to assist Wise Wonders with development of a STEAM educational outreach program in collaboration with local colleges, schools, and other independent school districts to provide STEAM programming in alignment with Montana Education Standards.



City of Billings  
Parks and  
Recreation  
Department

Michael Whitaker  
Director

390 North 23rd Street  
Billings, MT 59101

Phone: 406-657-8371  
Fax: 406-247-8641  
BillingsParks.org

# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**CC:** Chris Kukulski, City Administrator  
**From:** Michael Whitaker, Director  
**Date:** May 1, 2019  
**Re:** May Monthly Report

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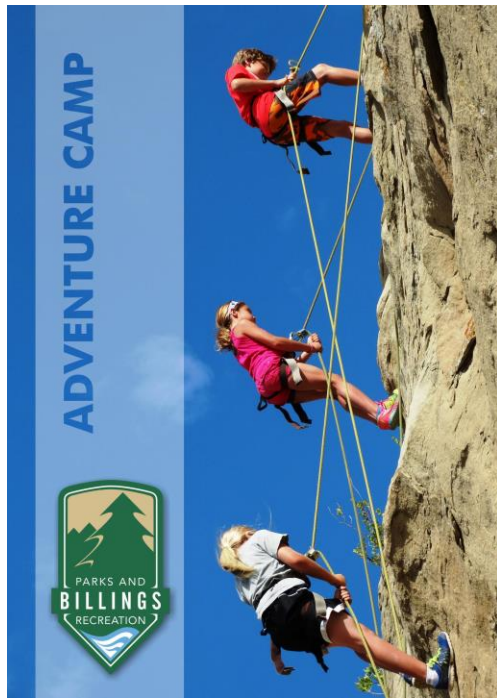
## Recreation



**Swimming Pool Operations:** Recreation staff will be concentrating during the month of May on getting our swimming pools ready for the upcoming summer. Our American Red Cross lifeguard certification and recertification class is scheduled to begin on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup> and run through Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at Rose Park Pool. We currently have 12 new lifeguards registered to go through the training and 9 returning lifeguards who will be recertified. American Red Cross lifeguarding standards include a two-year certification, thus the need to continually provide an option for guards to get recertified to continue their summer employment with the Department.

***“We create community through people, parks, and programs”***





**Summer Program Registration:** Activity registration started on April 1<sup>st</sup> for summer programs. As of April 24<sup>th</sup>, we had surpassed the \$100,000 mark in revenue. This is down slightly from last year's record April but is still dramatically ahead of 2016 when our grand total for the month of April was \$96,000. We expect a steady flow of registration for all of our day camps, sports camps, tennis instruction, swim instruction, and special interest programs. Most of our day camps are nearing the 50% full status. To help continue our solid registration numbers, during the month of May

**Summer Hiring:** Through the end of April, nearly 50% of our summer employees have been hired. We currently have 30 lifeguards ready to start when the pools open on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The Recreation staff has visited our local High Schools and job fairs to distribute job applications and recruit potential employees.



**StrikeZone Batting Cages:** Due to the cool and wet start of April, our batting cage usage has been quite sporadic. We have had a couple of very nice days where the cages saw a steady stream of customers utilizing our facility to jump-start their little league and adult softball seasons. Unfortunately, due to the cold or wet conditions, we have been closed a total of 10 days through the month of April. Hopefully, once spring arrives and provides us with some sunny days in the '70s, we will see a busy facility with customers taking advantage of the new netting that was replaced last fall and enjoying the new paint job on the building which our staff completed this spring before opening the facility. Also beginning on May 1<sup>st</sup>, we hope to have our new point-of-sale system fully implemented and running at the cages. This new POS software ties directly to the City's network and fully integrates into our RecTrac registration software. The new hardware includes touch-screen monitors for quick transactions and wireless credit card readers for efficient customer service. This is the same POS system that we will have in place at Rose Park pool when we open the pools for the season on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

# Volunteer and Community Outreach

**April Volunteer Project Report:** In April, we had 73 volunteers totaling 183 hours. Major volunteer projects included 2 cleanups on the rims, setting alternate pins for the disc golf course at Pioneer Park and an Eagle Scout Project to build a picnic table shade structure at the Amend Park Community Garden.

**Community Garden Report:** Plots at Amend Park Community Garden is filling up. We currently have 22 of the 37 plots filled. We are continuing to advertise for new Gardeners into May and are scheduled to have our beginning of the year orientation and garden cleanup on May 11th. Songbird Community Garden is accepting registrations and preparing for the beginning of year orientation. We are in the process of finalizing an agreement with the Songbird Community Garden non-profit organization.

## **Partnerships and Other Programs:**

- ***Veterans Park Eagle Scout Project:*** We had one Eagle Scout Project completed at Veterans Park. The project included picking up trash around the baseball field, painting the bleachers, replacing and painting 3 sections of the bench in the dugouts, backfilling a low section with soil along a portion of the fence, sanding and painting the scoreboard behind home plate, and repainting the trim on the concession stand.
- ***Amend Park Eagle Scout Project*** was completed at the Amend Park Community Garden, which included building an 8ft by 16ft shade structure at the garden. The shelter will act as a gathering place for gardeners at the entrance of the garden.
- ***Upcoming Eagle Scout Projects-*** Two Eagle Scout projects are in the works to complete the construction and place bluebird nesting boxes in two separate park locations, one on the west end at the base of the rims, and the second at High Sierra Park.



- ***Arbor Day-*** Arbor Day will take place on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at Central Park. We have secured 24 educational booths conducted by local organizations who will lead short educational sessions related to trees and environmental issues. 450 fourth grade children are expected to attend the booth presentations. In addition to volunteer booth presenters, 110 volunteers will complete various projects to beautify the park. Volunteer Projects include the planting of 20

additional trees in the park, restoring the horseshoe pits, painting bleachers around the baseball fields, edging the sod on the large baseball field, removing pitching bullpen fencing and material storage bins, repairing the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout floor on the large field, adding fall protection to the playground, and mulching around the trees in the park.



- **Impact Day**- We took part in Impact Day at Lucky's Market, a day in which the store donates 10% of their sales of the day to a local organization, raising \$3,478.95 for the Billings Parks Foundation. The money will be used to purchase unique and rare trees for the upcoming arboretum project at Centennial Park.
- **Upcoming Projects**- May volunteer projects will include a large Graffiti removal at the Skate Park and replenishing sand at the Rose Park Volleyball Courts.

## Planning and Development



**Optimist Park Playground Replacement:** This project is complete. A ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for May 23<sup>rd</sup> at noon.

**Annafeld Parks First Phase:** Bids were received and opened April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Bid acceptance goes before Council on May 13<sup>th</sup>. We anticipate beginning construction around June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Centennial Park Development:** Bids were due April 30<sup>th</sup> and Council approval of the bid will be May 13<sup>th</sup>. The goal is to begin construction the latter part of May.



**Coulson Park Master Plan:** We held a steering committee and stakeholder interviews on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The project website ([www.coulsonpark.com](http://www.coulsonpark.com)) is up and running. You will be able to follow the project and give input there. The consultant is busy gathering information and planning for future meetings to be announced soon.

**Primrose Park Playground Replacement:** We are waiting on the weather to improve to get started with the site improvements. The playground equipment is nearly all here and as soon as the site improvements are completed we will schedule the equipment installation. We hope to have the playground completed by the end of May.

**Hawthorne Park Shade Structures:** We are in the process of getting a contractor to install 4 shade structures around the playground at Hawthorne Park. This project will provide much-needed shade for park and playground users. We anticipate this work to be completed by the end of May.

## Parks

**Seasonal Staff:** Seasonal staff started to return on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Parks hires 50 seasonal positions for Park Attendants, Restroom Openers and Closers, various mowing positions, and Plant Protectant Applicators. This year 37 of last year's seasonal employees are returning taking some of the burden off hiring new.



**Spring Park Cleanup:** In April, staff started sweeping turf areas, cleaning up debris that accumulated over the winter. As the snow melts a winter's worth of trash is revealed. Also as sidewalks and trails are cleared of snow debris collects and has to be removed from the turf. Cleanup will continue into May.

**Other Pumps and Controllers:** Intake structures were cleaned and repaired, screens were installed all before the 15<sup>th</sup> when the ditch water typically begins to flow. Servicing and repairs to park irrigation pumps and controllers were completed in preparation for startup. The pump for Riverfront Park was not able to be rebuilt because parts were unavailable.



**Park Irrigation Systems:** Staff started most of the park irrigation systems during the month of April, but didn't start operating the systems because there was plenty of moisture. The process of getting all systems operational typically takes three to four weeks, with over 900 acres of irrigated parkland and more than 100 irrigation systems throughout the city, activation requires considerable staff time.

**Restrooms:** Staff started opening restrooms April 10<sup>th</sup> and will have all facilities open by the end of the month.



**Weed Management:** This spring, we are again spraying Little League Baseball fields and Stewart Park softball fields. The Little Leagues will pay for this service. Weed management spraying will continue through May until the proper timing for the herbicide applications ends.

**Park Shelters:** Park shelter rentals are slower than normal due to the cold and wet weather, but typically increase as graduations approach. All park shelters were repaired cleaned and made ready for the season before the end of April. Park staff inspects and cleans each shelter before every rental.

**Park Mowing:** Most parks were mowed twice during the month. The turf is slow growing due to the cooler weather.

**Playgrounds:** Staff removed the playground equipment at Primrose Park in preparation for the new equipment being installed. More site work needs to be completed before installation can be scheduled but most of the new equipment is at the BOC maintenance building awaiting the installers.

## Urban Forestry



**Tree Removals:** Staff removed trees at a number of locations.

- *Spring Creek Park*- Two white poplars.
- *Amend Community Garden*- A tree fell into the Suburban ditch.
- *Poly bike trail*- A cottonwood had fallen in the natural area.
- *Francis Park*

**Tree Removals:** Parks contracted to have trees removed at two locations:

- *Central Park*- Ash trees along 8<sup>th</sup> street were removed by NorthWestern Energy (NWE). These trees were always in the power lines requiring pruning to keep them off the lines. NWE did the work and gave the City \$250 per tree for replacements. Replacement trees will be planted as part of Arbor Day.
- *Primrose Park*- Two cottonwoods were removed as part of the playground replacement project.

**Tree Planting:** Staff planted 13 trees in Grandview, Ponderosa, Southgate, Broadway, and on Montana Ave. Staff also prepared a tree planting plan for Olympic Park, Arbor Day at Central, and Broadway and Montana Ave PMD's.

**Tree Assessments:** Staff conducted Level 1 assessments on all large cottonwood trees within the parks. Over 50 trees were assessed.

**Tree Shipment:** Forestry staff prepared for tree shipment by cleaning the gravel beds for bare root stock. The bare root trees are held in the gravel over the summer then planted in the fall. We also received a shipment of balled and burlap trees.

# Cemetery



April ended up being the busiest month of the year so far for services at Mountview. A full list of statistics is provided below, but some highlights include 3 full burials and 3 cremation burials. Amidst the services, cemetery staff began preparing for spring and summer by performing maintenance on equipment and transitioning it from snow removal attachments to mower decks. Staff cleaned the head gate and energized the irrigation system, although it was not put to use due to the April

rains. The cemetery welcomed a new full-time staff member which represents the first time the cemetery has been fully staffed since July of 2018. The cemetery is currently taking applications for seasonal employment. Preparations are also underway for Memorial Day services.

Below are the cemetery statistics for the month of April:

	Monthly Total	FY Totals	Calendar Year Totals
New Graves	3	47	11
Full Burials	3	29	10
Cremation Burials	3	49	9
Infant Burial	0	1	0
Total Burials	6	79	19
Veterans Grave	0	1	0
Immediate Use Sales	3	17	3
Future Use Sales	4	33	11
Contract for Deed	0	1	1
Disinterment Full	0	1	0
Disinterment Infant	0	2	0
Other (Cremation Disentombment)	1	1	1



# CITY – COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION

Monthly Activity Report, April 2019



To: Board of County Commissioners, City Administrator, Mayor and City Council, Planning Board, Zoning Boards and Commissions, Planning and Community Services Department Director

From: Monica Plecker, AICP, Planning Division Manager

Date: May 15, 2019

## MEETING MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT

Planning staff supports the regular meetings of the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- Yellowstone County Board of Planning
- City & County Board of Adjustment
- County & City Zoning Commission
- Historic Preservation Board
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Policy Coordinating Committee

## UPDATE – PROJECT Re:CODE



**FACT SHEET NO. 2, COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS – TO SEE FULL FACT SHEET WITH NEW DISTRICT LINEUP VISIT PROJECT RE:CODE WEBSITE**

### WHAT'S NEW

#### *Promoting Prosperity*

Commercial districts =

Mixed Use districts

Corridors and Neighborhoods will have the fine grain detail needed for commerce to work well and maintain compatibility.

### WHAT'S CHANGING

#### *Say it with Graphics*

Our new code will include **more graphics** so we can say “a thousand words” easily. Developers and builders

will better understand the zone district rules.

#### *Flexibility with Certainty*

**“Form”** districts so new development fits established walkable environment

**“Manners”** so neighbors know new uses will fit in

**“Heavy Commercial”** districts near transportation hubs

## 2019 A BUSY YEAR FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

### TRANSPORTATION TEAM GEARS UP FOR BUILD GRANT AND WAYFINDING

The Planning Division is partnering with SRF Consultants based out of Minneapolis, Minnesota to develop a Build Grant feasibility study. The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. The areas of focus for the feasibility study and potential grant application include completion of the marathon loop and construction of the Inner Belt Loop.

Presently, the Planning Division is accepting proposals for the development of a Wayfinding Signage Plan. This plan will establish universal and cohesive design standards for wayfinding and locational signage reflective of the City's identity.

## PLANNING DIVISION PROJECT PRIORITIES AND GOALS 2018-2019

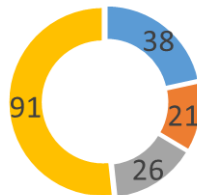
Priority	Project/Goal	Completion Date
1	<b>County Growth Policy Revision* **</b>	<b>1/1/2019</b>
1	Complete Streets Progress Report* **	Completed
1	<b>Zoning Code Revitalization - Begin Review**</b>	11/1/2019
2	<b>Development of Billings Traffic Model</b>	10/1/2018
2	EBURD and DBA Workforce Housing Needs Assessment	Completed
2	2018 Transportation Plan and PPP Updated	Completed
2	Revamp Monthly Planning Report (PCSD Interface)	Completed
2	Downtown Traffic Circulation Study	12/1/2018
3	<b>Online Permitting and Application Delivery (PCSD Interface)</b>	Ongoing
3	<b>Kids in Motion</b>	Ongoing
3	<b>Innoprise/Data Imaging System for Archiving (PCSD Interface)</b>	Ongoing
3	Board and Commission Training	Completed
4	Permanent Funding Sources - (Grants, Levy, Bond) - Bike/Ped Facilities	Ongoing
5	<b>Records Retention/Review/Storage Process (PCSD Interface)</b>	Ongoing
5	<b>Bike Parking Facilities* **</b>	Ongoing
5	<b>Healthy PLACES Working Group</b>	Ongoing
5	<b>Annexation Policy and Map Review</b>	Ongoing
5	Active Transportation Web Page Development**	Ongoing
5	<b>Neighborhood Task Force/Adjacent Neighborhood Support</b>	Ongoing
5	<b>TIFD Administrative Application/Support</b>	Ongoing
5	Infill Policy Implementation**	Ongoing

\* Aligns with 2018 Planning Work Plan, \*\* Aligns with 2014 Council Strategic Plan and Initiatives and BOCC

**Priority Index:** 1 = Next 3 Months, 2 = Next 6 Months, 3 = Next 12 Months, 4 = 2017-2018, 5 = Ongoing

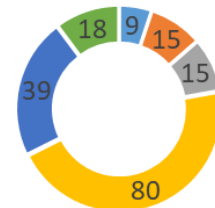
Subdivision Applications 5/2018-4/2019

- Pre-Applications
- Preliminary Plats
- Final Plats
- Exempt Plats

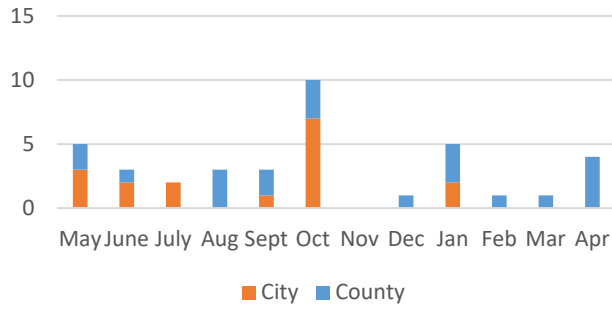


Zoning Application Submittals 5/2018-4/2019

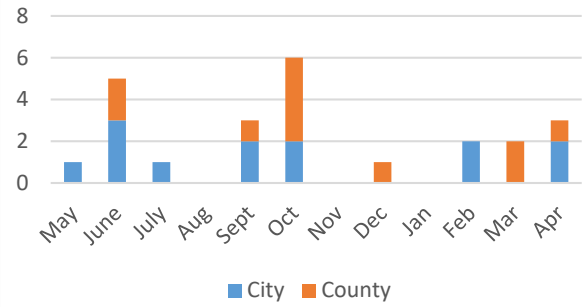
- Neighborhood Meetings
- Zone Changes
- Special Reviews
- Zoning Clarifications
- Zoning Compliance Permits (YC)



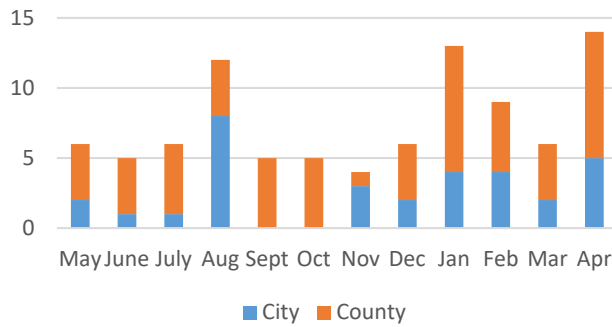
### Pre-Application Meetings



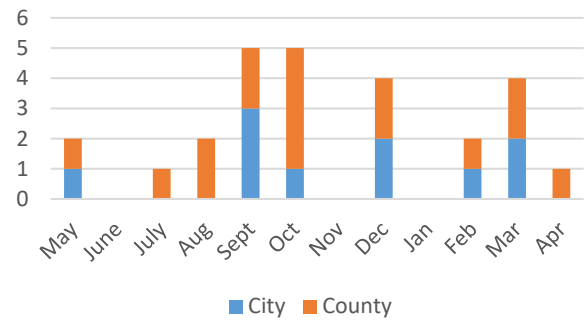
### Preliminary Plats



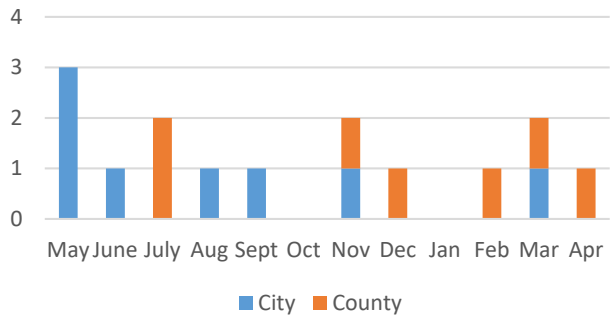
### Exempt Plats



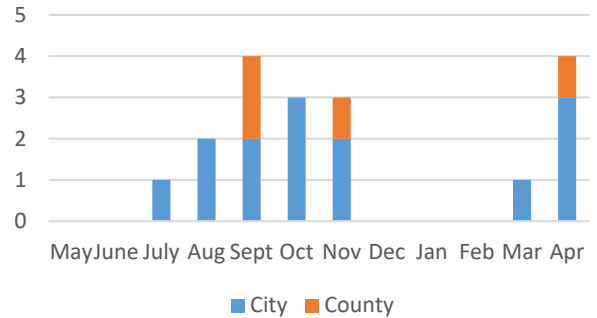
### Final Plats



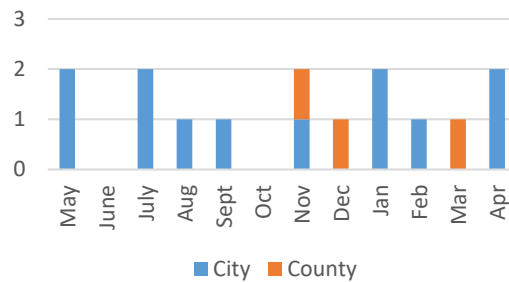
### Zone Changes



### Variances



### Special Reviews



# City of Billings, Montana

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

# The Newsletter

MAY 2019



## Letter from the Director

**Dave Mumford**

It is budget time again. This is the time of year we all prioritize our daily workloads and evaluate what all the Public Works' divisions do. Are we still providing quality service to our customers? Recognizing our mission is to provide quality services in water, wastewater, solid waste, engineering, street/storm maintenance, and environmental affairs, what resources does Public Works have to provide these services?

I would like to share what our customer's fees support in Public Works. Currently Public Works has 252 full time employees located in 35 facilities.

Unlike other Departments, personnel costs are only 16% of the annual budget. We have the honor and responsibility for the operations and maintenance of over \$6 billion dollars in public assets. Solid Waste collects 330,000 tons of waste, composts 19,000 tons of yard waste, and collects/disposes of 68,000 pounds of hazardous waste annually.

We treat and deliver 365 days/year 8.2 billion gallons of drinking water and treat 6 billion gallons of wastewater annually. Within our City, there are 113 signalized intersections, 495 painted crosswalks, and our street crews plow 1,160 miles of streets, maintain

*(Continued on page 2)*

### PAGE 2

**Letter from the Director-**  
*Continued from page 1*

**Drinking Water Week**

### PAGE 3

**Don't Flush That!**

### PAGE 4

**Summer Road & Lane Closures**

### PAGE 5

**Water Conservation-**  
*Being Water Wise During Hot Summer Months*

### PAGE 6

**Contact Information**



# Letter from the Director... *Continued from page 1*

266 miles of storm drains and clean 1,931 catch basins. The Engineering Division designs and manages \$65 million of capital projects annually. The cost to provide these services to our community is \$141 million annually.

The men and women working in the Public Works Department take their responsibilities very seriously. We have been entrusted with the privilege of providing quality services for the City, such as delivering safe drinking water, wastewater treatment, roadway maintenance, and solid waste services. We all appreciate the support and confidence placed in us by our elected officials and the community.

## Drinking Water Week

The week of May 5th—11th, 2019 was declared Drinking Water Week by Mayoral Proclamation in the City of Billings.

Drinking Water Week is observed every year in the month of May to recognize the importance of drinking water in our daily lives. This year's theme, "Protect the Source" provided the Public Works Department a perfect opportunity to help educate the public about our water source, all of the stages of water processing and delivery. Part of this event included our second annual employee appreciation picnic and public open house events at the Water Treatment Plant.

The employee picnic boasted over 100 participants this year. Congratulations to the three door prize drawing winners:

- Ron Hull— WTP
- Derick Miller— D&C
- Kent Miller— Airport

The open house event gives the public a first-hand experience with the internal workings of the Water Treatment Plant. Staff hosted displays including the effects of stormwater run-off, lab testing, back-wash cycle filtration, pipe tapping and heavy equipment. Staff also provided facility tours and answered questions. Additionally, refreshments and door prize drawings were enjoyed by those who attended.

Thank you to everyone who participated and made this year's event a success. We look forward to sharing our passion with even more members of the community next year.







Public Works Department  
Service Center  
2251 Ballknap Avenue  
Billings, MT. 59101  
Phone: 406-657-8315  
utilities@ci.billings.mt.us

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

"Working for you"

# Don't Flush That!

You can reach us  
for after hours  
emergency service at  
(406) 657-8353

***Did you know that the only product designed to properly break-down when flushed is toilet paper?***

***Even products labeled as 'flushable' will potentially cause a clogged toilet or drain, along with the headache and cost of repairs that come with it.***

***Avoid flushing ANY type of wipe, paper towels, personal hygiene items (such as cotton swabs or sanitary products), medications, food, pet litter, diapers, facial tissue, hair, band aids, gum, contact lenses, product wrappers, cigarettes... etc.***

***If you are a City of Billings wastewater services customer and experience a sewer back-up, you may contact our offices for assistance. We will be able to determine if the clog is in the City owned main line or if it is located in the property owned line.***



### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Please do not flush  
any other product  
apart from toilet  
tissue down the toilet

*thank you*

Did you know that 1  
cubic foot of water =  
7.48 gallons?



Water is billed in CCF units which are  
equal to 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons.

Make sure you know how to turn  
your water off in an emergency—  
the interior shut-off valve should be  
located just below the meter!

***Still have questions or concerns?***

Phone: 406-657-8315

Email: [utilities@ci.billings.mt.us](mailto:utilities@ci.billings.mt.us)

<https://ci.billings.mt.us/publicworks>

City of Billings Public Works

# Summer Road & Lane Closures

Road and lane closures are not fun for anyone traveling throughout the City of Billings. As a heads up, there are a few streets and areas that are already under construction. One of the busiest areas affected is North 27<sup>th</sup> Street. Here the City is replacing the water and sewer lines before the Montana Department of Transportation begins overlaying the entire road. The street will remain open with single lanes only heading north and south. As you can see from the photos below, the construction is a huge undertaking.



*Construction on North  
27th Street*



Another downtown project with a lane and sidewalk closure located on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave North is the Alberta Bair Theater remodel. The project may require full closure of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave North and North Broadway for utility connections further into the summer. The alley will also be closed through June. On Sugar Ave, underground pipeline is being installed, so there will be flaggers and some delays. This project is scheduled for completion this fall. Also, Northwestern Energy is replacing a substation on the southwest corner of King Ave West and South 24<sup>th</sup> Street West. The lane closure will be intermittent throughout the summer and may last into November.

Some other areas where there may be traffic delays are on Grand Ave and Virginia Lane where a traffic signal will be replaced. On Monad Road and Daniel Street, there will be a three week closure for a signal project starting in August. On the west end at 54<sup>th</sup> Street West and Rimrock Road, there will be a new storm drain installed with work set to begin in early June.

Remember, there may be a water main break or another incident that may cause an unexpected road closure or traffic delay. The best road closure information can be found on the Public Works Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/City-of-Billings-Public-Works-119989194700871/> or the City of Billings website at <https://ci.billings.mt.us/2462/StreetLane-Closure-Map>



# Water Conservation

## *Being Water Wise During Hot Summer Months*

Benjamin Franklin famously said, “When the well is dry, we know the worth of water” which is as true today (if not more true) as it was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Water is a fundamental ingredient to any great city around the world and Billings is no different. We see drastic effects to cities around the world when the water supply is limited. That’s why the City of Billings Public Works Department is a member of the Alliance for Water Efficiency dedicated to the efficient and sustainable use of water.

One of the most important things we can do for the water system is conserve. The drinking water that comes to our homes and businesses can take hundreds of miles of pipe, thousands of watts of electricity, and hundreds of hours of manpower to safely provide, which is why it’s so important to make the most efficient use of every drop. Conserving water not only helps you save money on your water bill, but your city as well. On a given summer day in Billings, about 2/3 of all the water we use is for landscape irrigation (about 30 million gallons every day!). So, being water-wise about irrigation can make a big difference.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about water-wise landscape irrigation:

### How often should I water?

It depends! Keep in mind the factors that influence the water needs of your landscape such as soil type and depth, sun exposure, and plant selection. Thorough but infrequent watering will help grass and shrubs develop deep roots. It is especially important to start this during the spring when root growth is at its peak. Over-watered turf will have a short root system and will not be drought tolerant. By slowly adjusting to successively longer periods between watering’s, the turf can grow deeper roots and become more drought tolerant.

### What days of the week and time of day should I water?

Many automated sprinkler systems are set to Mon/Wed/Fri on installation and never changed. As you might expect, the water use on those days is higher. We recommend that everyone who reads this newsletter switch to Tues/Thurs/Sat so the demand on the water system is spread more evenly throughout the week. As far as time of day is concerned, early in the morning is best. Otherwise, the water can evaporate between the sprinkler and grass before reaching the ground and even from the soil after the water soaks in.

### How can I conserve soil moisture?

Use lots of mulch. It will make your shrubs, trees, and flower beds more tolerant to hot Billings’ summers. In addition, mulch helps to reduce runoff, moderate soil temperatures, aid in root development, slow weed growth, and make your landscape beautiful.





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