

The CITY LINK



SUMMER 2019



OFFICIAL NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF BILLINGS

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Visit us online at www.billingsmt.gov

THE CITY OF BILLINGS ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS

The City is nearing completion of its annual budget process. This is a lengthy process beginning in January every year, and culminates when the budget is adopted by the City Council in June. The State of Montana requires that every city adopt a formal budget each year. Formulating and adopting a budget serves many purposes. These purposes include funding the programs and projects which the City Council determines should be funded, forming the basis for which property taxes will be assessed, establishing legal spending limits for the City, and assisting in preventing a financial crisis.

Because the City of Billings provides a wide variety of services, the budget process can be very complex. The process begins by estimating expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year. This includes

projecting future cost increases related to employment contracts and other service contracts, and meeting with departments to discuss goals and ideas for the upcoming year. The next step is estimating revenues. Each department does this based on their type of revenue stream (water usage, tax levies, building permit fees, etc.). Once revenue and expenses are estimated, the budget must be balanced. A balanced budget is one that uses estimated revenues, along with unbudgeted reserves from prior years, to cover estimated expenses. If the budget is not balanced, then expenses will need to be cut or revenues will need to be increased. At this point, staff presents a balanced preliminary budget to the City Council. Each department presents their budget to City Council over the course of 5-7

meetings. During this time, City Council and public input is given to determine if changes should be made to the preliminary budget document. Finally, the City Council votes to establish the budget for each fund within the City of Billings.

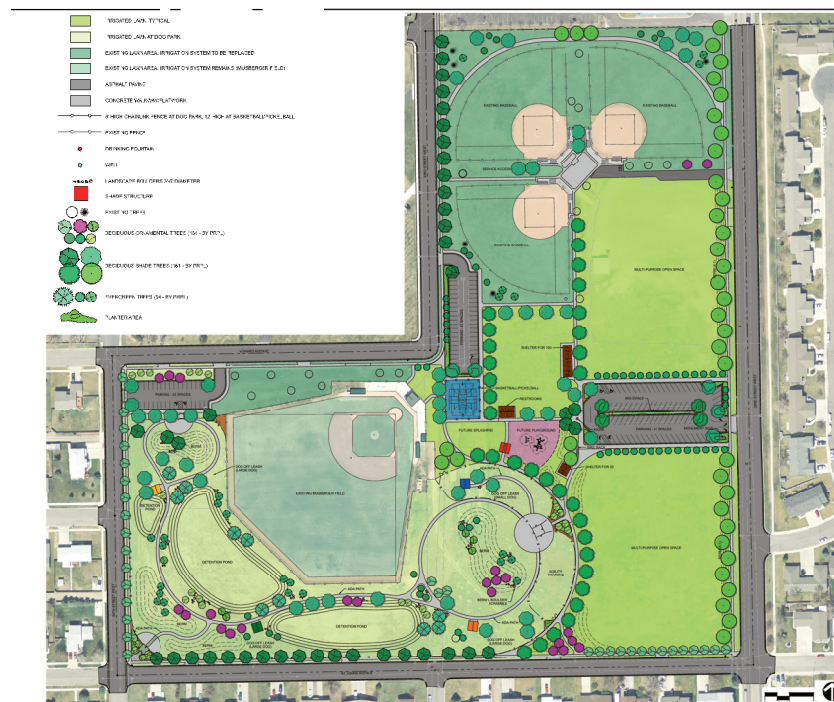
To view the City's current budget, you can visit the City of Billings website, billingsmt.gov, or visit the Finance Department at 210 N. 27th Street. Copies of the budget are also available for viewing at the City Clerk's office and the Library. If you would like any further explanation about the budget process, please feel free to contact the Finance Department at oggerj@billingsmt.gov.

CENTENNIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

The Billings Parks and Recreation Department is excited to begin construction to develop Centennial Park this Summer. This will be the first "Community Park" developed since 1982 when the department developed Castle Rock Park in the Heights. A "Community Park" is larger than a neighborhood park and generally range from 10+ to 100 acres depending on the community. Community Parks serve a larger area, a radius of one to three miles, and contain more recreation amenities than a Neighborhood Park. City Council has approved spending of 2.46 million dollars to complete the first phase of development of Centennial Park, which is around 23 acres. Phase 1 will include the completing grading of the site, installation of interior sidewalks, installation an automated irrigation system, and hydro seeding the open spaces. The project includes finishing construction of the parking lot on east side of the park (accessible from 32nd street) and installation of a restroom facility. The Friends of Billings Dog Parks Inc. has pledged to donate \$80,000 to the project for the completion of the fencing surrounding an off leash dog park area and two doggie

water fountains. The Department is also planning to use the development of Centennial Park as an opportunity to create an Arboretum, a place where a variety of less commonly used trees are cultivated for scientific, educational, and ornamental purposes. The completion of this proj-

ect will provide two large multi-purpose open space areas that can be used for sports, community gatherings and other family activities. For more information about the Centennial Park project, please contact Mark Jarvis, Park Planner, at jarvism@billingsmt.gov.



REFRESH THE RIMS

The sixth annual Refresh the Rims will be held on Saturday, October 19, 2019. Come join Billings Parks in an effort to improve one of our defining landmarks. This is the largest organized cleanup on the rims! Volunteer Check-in starts at 9:00a at the Billings Community/Senior Center (360 N 23rd St). At check-in, there will be coffee, donuts, hot chocolate and muffins. After check-in, volunteers will be introduced to their team leader. The event begins at 9:30a with teams of volunteers fanning out throughout Swords Rimrock Park to clean up, remove graffiti and cleanup glass from the trails. Cleanup will conclude on or before 11:30a. To get involved, fill out the volunteer application on BillingsParks.org. Volunteers will receive a free event t-shirt. Quantities are limited, so early registration is encouraged.

For more information, contact the Parks & Recreation Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, Paul Reinhardt, at reinhardtp@billingsmt.gov or 657-8308. You can also visit: <http://www.billingsparks.org/refresh-rims/>



THE EAGLE HAS LANDED!

July 20 marks the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing. During this historic event, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed the Apollo Lunar Module Eagle on the lone celestial body orbiting Earth. Six hours later, Armstrong became the first person to step foot onto the lunar surface; Aldrin joined Armstrong 19 minutes later. The men spent approximately two and a quarter hours on the surface of the Moon collecting lunar material to bring back to Earth.

The Billings Public Library is excited to celebrate this monumental anniversary on July 20 from 11:00 to 2:00 with our The Eagle has Landed program. Explore the universe through hands-on STEM activities, and answer questions such as: Do you know how much you would weigh on Jupiter? Are the rings around Saturn solid? What size is Earth compared to the other 7 planets? Participants can pick up a Moon Landing Passport and participate in activities to earn extra points for Summer Reading. (Summer Reading participants who finish the Walking to the Moon challenge will enjoy a special moon snack.) There will be space-themed snacks (Tang, anyone?), and you can place yourself on the moon by taking a picture with the green screen.

Participants can also explore the science behind outer space with the NASA Kit this summer. Through a partnership with NASA@MyLibrary, the NASA Kit lets you explore the size of our solar system with a scaled model, marvel at the effects of UV radiation using UV beads, and wonder at the science behind solar eclipses. Including sunoculars designed for identifying solar flares and sunspots, the NASA Kit is designed to

foster engagement in STEM/STEAM based activities with a particular focus on connections between the Sun, Earth, and Moon. Activities from this kit will be used throughout summer programming at the Library.

Visitors to the library can also blast off into outer space with the Star Lab! This mobile planetarium will take you beyond the typical classroom experience by submerging you deep into the depths of our universe. The Star Lab explores topics such as: Greek Mythology, Native American Constellations, Deep Sky Objects, Local Constellations, the Milky Way Galaxy, and lessons on plate tectonics, weather systems, and so much more! Watch day turn to night right before your eyes, and let the universe become your learning playground. Check out our website (<https://billingslibrary.org/Featured>) for more information on when to have access to this incredible learning experience.

Educators can also explore the Astronomy Science Crate to be utilized in their classroom. Through a generous donation by Phillips 66 and the Billings Public Library Foundation, this crate allows educators to use a reflector telescope, night vision flashlight, curriculum for all ages, and so much more for further exploration and education of the night sky.

Fifty years ago Commander Neil Armstrong proclaimed—while walking on the surface of the Moon—that this historic event was “one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” Join us as we continue to celebrate this accomplishment of human ingenuity, and share with us what this legacy of engineering and science means for all!

USS BILLINGS

The City of Billings is preparing for a really big deal. We will soon have a United States Navy ship named after our city. It will be a Freedom class littoral combat ship, LCS-15, USS Billings. Displacing 3,500 metric tons, measuring 378 feet long and more than 10 stories high, it is big and fast – cruising the world's oceans at 45 knots (52mph). Once the ship is commissioned on August 3rd, and for many decades thereafter, thousands of Navy sailors will call the ship “home”, creating a lifetime bond between our city and these young men and women who faithfully serve our country around the world. The commissioning ceremony is a significant milestone in the life of the ship and crew as it marks her acceptance as a unit of the United States Navy.

The USS Billings is a Freedom-class littoral combat ship in the United States Navy. She is named after the largest city in Montana and is the first ship in service named after Billings. With only 14 Freedom class littoral combat ships planned, the choice of Billings, Montana as the namesake is an incredible honor for the city of Billings and the state of Montana.

The USS Billings must be commissioned before she can begin protecting our nation. The commissioning process, a tradition in the United States Navy since December 1775, takes approximately four days and includes numerous events, the cost of which, by long standing tradition, is borne primarily by the namesake city. Several thousand people from all over the world will attend this commissioning:

Navy and government dignitaries, donors, and the general public will attend. In addition to hosting many of these events, the namesake city is also expected to provide additional support in the form of a “Legacy Fund” that will provide awards and assistance to crew members.

As we look forward to the commissioning August 3rd in Key West, Florida, we begin preparations to honor the USS Billings and her crew. While the men and women assigned to the USS Billings take pride in her name, we ask our community to share in that pride and honor the warship named after our great city.

For more information about the ship, the commissioning, or to purchase USS Billings gear, visit ussbillingslcs15.org.



LOG ON
Register to access your data

GET NOTIFIED
Sign up for alerts

SAVE
Money saving actions

The City of Billings Public Works Department is pleased to announce our new customer web portal and online payment services. Your online account will provide you with the tools you need to manage your water utility account. Features include bill pay, usage monitoring and special alerts such as leak detection, a mobile app and more.

These services put it all at your fingertips!

COMING SOON



City of Billings Public Works Department

Utilities Service Center
2251 Belknap Avenue
Billings, MT. 59101

**You can now
easily pay your
bill online**

Log on and see!



KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE, HAPPY & HEALTHY

The Animal Control Division responded to 5646 calls for service in 2018. Our 5 Animal Control Officers traveled 70,205 miles on City streets enforcing animal control ordinances. We are here to help keep our pets and community safe. The Animal Control Division can be reached during regular business hours at 657-8226 or 657-8200 after hours. Here are some suggestions for a happy healthy pet:

Please don't litter – Spay or Neuter your pet today!

Please have your pet spayed or neutered to help reduce the pet population. Assistance with the cost of having your pet spayed or neutered may be available, contact Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter for upcoming event at 406-294-7387.

It's a life-time commitment – please be sure you are ready!

Please consider all the responsibilities you will be assuming before you get a new pet. The pet you chose will be counting on you for all



of their needs, including veterinary care, food, water, shelter, grooming, training, and love. The amount of time and care you are willing to give will be rewarded with companionship and unconditional love. State cruelty laws require adequate food, water, shelter and veterinary care. If you bring pets into your care, please don't deprive them of a long, happy and healthy life. If you are serious about a new pet, visit the Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter. There you can learn about a variety of suitable pets waiting for loving and caring homes.

A vehicle may be a pet's death-trap during warmer days.

Warmer weather is coming and it may be best to leave your pet at home. The temperature inside of your vehicle on a warm and sunny day can climb to well above 100 degrees in a few minutes. An animal left in these conditions for even a short time can develop brain damage or dehydration, and may even die. Each year Billings Animal Control is called to respond to complaints of animals left in vehicles. Officers will remove animals from vehicles and issue citations for cruelty to animals.

Be a responsible pet owner!

Your pet is exactly that – your pet.

Billings Animal Control responds to thousands of complaints each year because pet owners allow their pets to become a problem to their neighbors. Making noise, running off-leash, leaving waste, and acting aggressively are common animal behaviors that can be not just annoying but even dangerous. It is your responsibility to see that your pet is not causing problems for your neighbors. Training your pets, keeping them at home or with you, and picking up after them are your responsibilities.

Please love, license and leash your pet!

Each year thousands of lost/stray pets are unclaimed by their owners. Many of these animals are put to death because the owner cannot be found or a new home is not available. Please provide your pets with identification should they become lost. Pet licenses and Rabies vaccinations are required for all dogs and cats within the city limits of Billings. This license and rabies tag, along with any identification tags, if worn by your pets, will help in identification of lost animals. For more information, visit our web site at billingsmt.gov/1786/Animal-Control. Microchips are also available at your local veterinarian to assist in identifying your pets should they lose their collars.

PROJECT RE:CODE

Project Re:Code is the first chance for Billings in nearly a half-century to adopt modern zoning regulations that meet the communities' stated goals and aspirations. From Downtown to the rims and from the Yellowstone River to the small farms and ranches surrounding Billings, life is moving and changing. The City, County and Lockwood have worked hard over the last few years to update the goals and objectives of their Growth Policies. Now it's time to give those new aspirations the right tools to achieve success. Project Re:Code is a community-led zoning code rewrite guided by an ad hoc steering committee of both City and County representatives. The steering committee expects the process to take 2 years (concluding in early 2020) and they are

meeting regularly to review drafts, listen to public comment, and finalize sections of the new zoning codes. The final documents will be sent to the City Council and County Commissioners for approval.

PROJECT RE:CODE WEBSITE RELEASE

WWW.PROJECT-RECODE.COM

Project Re:Code | A comprehensive update to the Billings and Yellowstone County Zoning Codes

INTERACTIVE MAP TO SEE ZONING DISTRICTS

Type in your address to see a side-by-side map of your old zoning district and the proposed district.

LEAVE A COMMENT

After checking the map out and reading the draft codes be sure to leave us a comment and let us know what you think.

FIND UPCOMING MEETINGS

Interested in participating at a public meeting? Check out the timeline on the website's home page to learn more about upcoming events and meetings.

This new interactive and very informative website we will be used for the remainder of our Project Re: Code process for much of our communication and outreach. It provides information on draft code sections to date, upcoming public meetings, and an interactive map to see current and proposed zoning across the City and County. The City-County Planning Division support this community effort. Contact us at 247-8676 at www.ci.billings.mt.us/184/Planning or find us on Facebook at Billings Planning and Community Services Department.

NEW LANDFILL UNSECURED LOAD FEES

At the June 10 Council Meeting, the Council passed a measure that will institute a fee to drivers of vehicles that arrive at the landfill with an unsecured load. The new fee will become effective July 1, 2019 and is just \$10.00 for Billings residents, which includes a tarp for future use. While the fee is minimal, it is designed to benefit the community by creating the responsible habit of covering and securing loads for transportation. For additional information about fees for out of town landfill users, please visit us online at <https://billingsmt.gov/66/Public-Works> or 'City of Billings Public Works' on Facebook. A covered and secured load will help prevent accidental litter during the transportation of debris to the landfill. This littered debris poses a hazard on the roadway for traffic and workers who must clean

it up. Not to mention, the environmental impact of having materials that are not disposed of properly building up along our roadways.

Here are some tips for best practices when covering and securing your load:

- Use a tarp large enough so that it fully covers the load.
- Tightly secure the tarp with ropes, bungee cords, netting or straps.
- Put light items at the bottom when loading debris for transportation.
- Secure larger items properly, as they may otherwise shift during transit.

- Be sure that the truck or trailer used for transport is in good repair, free of holes or cracks where debris can escape.
- Do not overload, be sure materials are level with the sides of the truck bed or trailer, and that your load does not exceed the manufacturer recommended weight limits of the vehicle or trailer.
- Before leaving the landfill, remove any remaining loose debris from your truck bed or trailer.

Be sure you are ready to follow the new guidelines by the end of June to avoid being assessed the fee. If you have any questions or concerns you may call the Solid Waste Division at 406-657-8260.

PROGRAMS PRESERVE & IMPROVE EXISTING HOUSING

The Community Development Division manages home repair programs designed to preserve and improve existing housing and eliminate health and safety issues. Many previous home repair clients have been elderly, disabled, from single-headed households, and/or living on fixed incomes and unable to make repairs without assistance. Typical repairs or improvements include roofs, electrical updates, new systems (furnaces, water heaters, etc.), windows/doors, structural corrections, and accessibility features. Home repair programs allow eligible low-income homeowners to make repairs/improvements through one of the following:

- **Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program*** provides up to a \$25,000 loan to homeowners in homes 25+ years old, located within the Billings city limits, and meet other eligibility requirements.
- **Manufactured Home Repair Loan Program*** provides up to a \$10,000 loan for owners of mobile/manufactured homes that are 20 years old or less (year listed on title), located within the Billings city limits, and meet other eligibility requirements.

No payments are due during the deferment period and no interest is assessed at any time. The loan is due in full if the property is sold or there is a title transfer, under certain refinance conditions, if the property is rented, or the property is no longer owner-occupied.

Program information and applications available from:

Community Development Division

2825 3rd Ave North, 6th Floor
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 657-8284

www.CityofBillings.net/homerepair

* Funding is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Funding has been made available by the federal Community Development Block Grant program. The City's home repair programs are open to all eligible persons, regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, familial status, sex, religion, creed, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity.



Before Rehab Project



After Rehab Project

New accessibility ramp, exterior painting, electrical repairs, crawl space supports and vapor barrier, etc.

DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Billings has a Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program designed to preserve and improve existing housing and to eliminate health and safety issues.

If you are a homeowner with limited income, you may be eligible for a zero interest, deferred payment loan to make needed improvements to your home including: electrical, plumbing, roofing, heating, structural, weatherization, addressing handicapped accessibility issues, and/or other eligible activities.

Funding is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Funding for this programs has been made available by the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

Do you qualify?

- Property must be within the Billings city limits,
- Home must be at least 25 years old,
- Property taxes, assessments, and mortgage payments must be current and the property must be free of delinquent liens and/or encumbrances,
- Applicant's gross annual household income must not exceed 80% of the Billings area median income (see chart at right),
- Applicant must have owned and occupied the property for at least one (1) year,
- Applicant cannot have liquid assets in excess of \$15,000, and
- Other eligibility requirements and restrictions may also apply.

Applications are available from: Community Development Division

2825 3rd Ave North, 6th Floor • Billings, MT 59101
(406) 657-8284 • Montana Relay 711

www.CityofBillings.net/homerepair



Annual household income limits*

Household Size	Household Income Limit	Household Size	Household Income Limit
1	\$43,900	5	\$67,700
2	\$50,150	6	\$72,750
3	\$56,400	7	\$77,700
4	\$62,650	8	\$82,700

The City's Community Development Division programs are open to all eligible persons, regardless of Race, Color, National Origin, Disability, Familial Status, Sex, Religion, Creed, Marital Status, Age, Sexual Orientation, or Gender Identity

CITY OF BILLINGS PROMOTES EMPLOYEE HEALTH

Why is it so difficult to change the behaviors we all know are so important to improving our health for the long-term? We know the general list of things we should be doing for our health even if there is debate on the specifics....reducing stress, eating nutrient-dense and whole-food items, moving and exercising more, sleeping better, practicing gratitude and doing things daily that make us happy.... but why is it so hard to turn any short-term changes into a long-term lifestyle?

According to science the top two barriers to changes in health behaviors are: time and cost. You could put these together and just call it what it really is: convenience! Combine that with the fact that the rewards for changing health behaviors sometimes take some delayed time to reap the benefits, and you can see why it may be so difficult to keep up with changes in health.

But since science also tells us that performance, creativity, quality of life, quantity of life, and all around success in any domain are directly tied to our health, then you also see why it is so important to keep up with health behaviors, and trying to improve them for our employees and our community.

The City of Billings is amongst a growing group of employers in this region who are fully committed to investing in the proactive health and wellness of their employees and their employees' families to make Billings a healthier, more productive community. Since December of this past year, the City of Billings has been working with Healthy Is, LLC, a corporate wellness program founded by Billings native Dr. Nich Pertuit.

Healthy Is' mission is "to empower the employees we work with to take control of their health and, therefore, to take control of their lives." Dr. Pertuit studies Health and Human Performance, and works to create a roadmap to optimal health by navigating the main reasons people



aren't changing their health: the barriers of convenience, time, and cost. Consequently, he created a company of wellness completely focused on bringing cutting edge technology and a team of health coaches to the City of Billings employees, with convenience of use and convenience of lifestyle changes as the focus of his program.

Across eight days and eleven sites, Healthy Is health coaches bring the InBody 770 machine, a world class, medical grade body composition machine, to City of Billings locations, allowing all of the employees to participate in the Healthy Is program without the hassle and headache of going off site. They eliminate the inconvenience of travel and time requirements

outside of work by coming to the work site of employees once a month. That regular schedule provides an ongoing and convenient way to get the frequent feedback the employees appreciate and need for lasting changes.

Using the details from the InBody 770 scan, the Healthy Is health coaches then help interpret objective information for employees. This includes things like the body composition analysis, muscle/fat analysis, segmental lean analysis and more. Combining this with the subjective information that the City employees provide (how they feel/what is motivating/what is getting in their way), the health coaches then tailor a unique roadmap to health for each participating employee.

Not only is the physical assessment that Healthy Is uses as easy as standing on a machine for 60 seconds, the monthly challenges that Dr. Pertuit and his team of health coaches present are easy to accomplish. They don't require additional money or time, and they are based on sound scientific principles proven to deliver health benefits. The coaches take the time to talk with each employee about their own health goals, informed by the objective and subjective details obtained through the monthly visits. This frequent subjective feedback (the coaching sessions) combined with frequent objective feedback (the body composition data) has led to thousands of scans, hundreds of pounds of muscle being gained, and over a thousand pounds of fat being lost by City Employees over the last six months.

Since "healthy" is what you do, not what you are, this program is intended to help each person with achieving their optimal health during the ever changing contexts of life. Healthy is a verb, and Healthy Is is working with City Employees to break down barriers to health and empower every single one of them to be in complete control of that verb.



HOLIDAY TRASH COLLECTION SCHEDULE:

Holiday	Date	Trash Collection	Landfill
Independence Day	Thursday, July 4	Delayed one day	Closed
Labor Day	Monday, September 2	Delayed one day	Closed
Columbus Day	Monday, October 14	On Schedule	Open
Veteran's Day	Monday, November 11	On Schedule	Open
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 28	Delayed one day	Closed
Christmas	Wednesday, December 25	Delayed one day	Closed

Yard waste pickup starts the first full week of April and ends the last full week of November.

SUMMER ROAD & LANE CLOSURES

Road and lane closures are not fun for anyone traveling throughout the City of Billings. One of the busiest areas affected is North 27th Street, where the City just finished replacing the water and sewer lines before Montana Department of Transportation begins overlaying the entire road from I-90 to the Airport. The construction of the water line began in April and was completed in mid-June (pictured on left). Another downtown project with a lane and sidewalk closure on 3rd Ave North is the Alberta Bair Theater remodel. The project may require full closure of 3rd 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

will be completed this fall. Also, Northwestern Energy is replacing a substation on the southwest corner of King Ave West and South 24th Street West. The lane closure will be intermittent throughout the summer and last into November.

Some other areas where there may be traffic delays are on Monad Road and Daniel Street where a traffic signal will be installed. There will be a three week closure for the signal project starting in August. On the west end, work recently began on the installation of water and sewer lines near 60th St. W. There will be water and sewer lines also being replaced on 1st Ave N and in the alleys between Montana Ave and 1st Ave N. These replacement projects will require intermittent lane closures and some brief full road closures. The triangle area west of S. 27th Street,

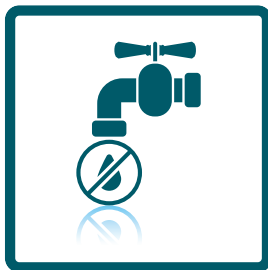
south of 1st Ave S will be getting new water lines this summer as well. The other project that may cause some traffic disruption is the overlay program. The overlay is a relatively short project compared to the duration of a full restoration of a street, but it will take several weeks. The locations of this year's overlay are Zimmerman Trail from Grand Avenue to Monad; 20th St. W. from Monad to King Avenue; and King Avenue from the canal to 31st Street W.

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 City of Billings Public Works Facebook page or the City of Billings website at <https://billingsmt.gov/2462/StreetLane-Closure-Map>.

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 18th 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.



DITCHES AND DRAINS

Who owns and maintains the ditches within the City limits? Do these ditches have names? Can I use ditch water to irrigate my property? Who do I contact concerning issues with the ditches? What are drains?

City staff has fielded these questions and others from the public. We hope this article will help you to understand the function, benefits, and history of the ditches and drains. It is important to realize that several of the ditches and all the drains eventually discharge to the Yellowstone River. Dumping of yard wastes, chemicals, trash, or debris can potentially cause flooding within the ditches and drains, backups in the City's stormwater collection system, as well as pollute the Yellowstone River. A number of the ditches and drains in the west end of the valley, such as the High, Big, Cove, Snow ditches and, Bannister, Arnold drains terminate into the City's Stormwater collection system before discharging to the river. The City and the County are under a State General Permit for "Stormwater Discharge Associated with Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)" to regulate stormwater discharge and pollution prevention.

There are 22 ditches that traverse across Yellowstone County. Chances are you live near one of them or have walked a trail located along a ditch. Most of the ditches within the county were constructed in the early 1900's to provide water for agricultural crops. When agricultural crop land is annexed and converted to residential, commercial and industrial developments, many of the ditches remain in service through these developments, providing water for agricultural users adjacent to or downstream of a development. While many of the ditches are open waterways, there are several miles of culverts and pipes that carry ditch water beneath the city.

The two longest irrigation ditches within the city limits are the Billings Bench Water Association (BBWA) Canal at 7.5 miles long and the Hi-Line Ditch at 4.5 miles long. The BBWA is the largest active ditch and has an irrigation water right to flow 600 cubic feet per second (cfs). As a comparison, the city's water treatment plant treats approximately 80 cubic feet per second (cfs) during a hot summer day. Other ditches are the Canyon Creek and Cove Ditch (west Billings), Grey Eagle Ditch (south Billings), Big Ditch (northwest Billings), and Suburban Ditch (southeast Billings).

Ditches within the county are controlled and maintained by private ditch companies

and not the City of Billings. Permission is required from the ditch companies to divert or alter the course of the ditches, construct ditch crossings, discharge stormwater into ditches, and to use irrigation water. In addition to the main ditches maintained by the ditch companies, there are also ditch laterals located across many city and county properties. These small water canals branch off from the main ditch and are designed to direct water to irrigate agricultural properties. Typically when agricultural land is developed these laterals are vacated if there are no other irrigation users. If there are other water users the lateral remains in service. Maintenance of these laterals is the responsibility of the private property owners - not the ditch companies or the City.

The City of Billings Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands Department maintains water shares on several of the ditches within the city, with the majority of the shares from the Billings Bench Water Association (BBWA) ditch. Ditch water is used to provide most of the irrigation for several of the major parks in the city, including Pioneer Park, Rose Park, Stewart Park, North Park, Castle Rock Park, and Amend Park. Locations of these parks can be found on the City's website at <https://www.billingsparks.org/parks/>.

If you see activities that can potentially damage or pollute the ditches, please contact the local ditch company listed on the following website at: <https://ci.billings.mt.us/1491/Ditches-and-Drains>. If you are unsure of the name of the ditch, you can contact the City Public Works Department at 657-8230 or 247-8517 for information and contact numbers.

There are also a series of open canals designed to carry excess water away from the city during storm events as well as irrigation field runoff. The list of drains and the area of the City they serve are as follows:

- City/County & Yegen Drains (central Billings)
- Bannister and Arnold Drain (west Billings)
- Kratz Drain (south Billings)
- Holling Drain (the Heights).

Ditches and drains are a valuable amenity to the city including neighborhoods by providing natural water features, controlling stormwater runoff, and use as trail corridors. One of the most significant benefits is the recharge of the groundwater aquifer in the valley. Many of our bike and walking paths in the City of Billings Heritage Trail Plan are located along these ditches and drains. It takes a community effort to protect these valuable amenities and keep them clean.

2019 SERVICE DIRECTORY

AIRPORT-BILLINGS LOGAN INTERNATIONAL

Airport Information..... 247-8609
Airport Administration..... 657-8495
Airport Police 657-8498
Airport Operations 657-8496
Edwards Jet Center 252-0508
Parking – SP Plus 259-8545
Gateway Restaurant
& Lounge 256-8446
TSA–24/7 Customer Service..... 877-846-5737

ANIMAL CONTROL..... 657-8226

ANIMAL SHELTER & LICENSING

Yellowstone Valley
Animal Shelter 294-7387
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,
Friday: Noon – 7 pm
Saturdays: Noon – 6 pm
Sundays: Noon – 6 pm
Lost Pet Hotline..... 294-1138

BUILDING DIVISION

Building Permits..... 657-8270
Building & Plumbing
Inspections..... 657-8277
Plan Review 657-8271
Business Licenses..... 657-8364

CITY

ADMINISTRATOR 657-8222
Assistant City Admin. 657-8478
City Clerk 657-8210

CITY ATTORNEY 657-8205

CITY COUNCIL INFORMATION..... 657-8433

CODE ENFORCEMENT – ZONING & WEED COMPLAINTS 237-6146

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT..... 657-8281

Community Development
Manager 657-8286
Home Repair Program 657-8284
First Time Homebuyer
Program 657-3045

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT 237-6294

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Accounts Payable 657-8224
Business Tax Information 657-8364
City Tax Information–SID's. 657-8223
Municipal Bonds 657-8363
Purchasing 657-8216
Other Finance Services 657-8207

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Emergencies Only 911
Non-Emergency
8 am to 5 pm weekdays:
Fire Department
Administration 657-8423
Fire Prevention Bureau 657-8423

FLEET SERVICES 657-8407

GIS SERVICES 247-8512

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

123 S. 27th 247-3200

HUMAN RESOURCES..... 237-6210

JAIL 256-6881

LIBRARY (BILLINGS PUBLIC)

Information Services..... 657-8258
Children's Services..... 657-8256
Bookmobile 657-3091
Senior-Homebound 657-8255
Hours..... 657-8259
Website: www.billingslibrary.org

MAYOR 657-8296

MET TRANSIT

Information & Schedules..657-8218
MET Special Transit
Reservation..... 248-8805

MUNICIPAL COURT

(City Hall Second Floor)
Bond & Traffic Citation
Info 657-8490
Juror Information (24 Hrs) 247-8653

PARKING DIVISION

Enforcement, Parking Tickets
& Meter Repair 657-8412
Park One Garage..... 657-8212

PARKING DIVISION (cont'd)

Park Two Garage..... 657-8279
Park Three Garage 657-8212
Empire Garage 657-8412

PARKS-RECREATION & PUBLIC LANDS

Administration 657-8371
Community & Senior
Center 657-3050
Cemetery Division..... 657-8299
Forester/Natural
Resources 237-6227
Fax 247-8641
Website..... www.BillingsParks.org

PLANNING 247-8676

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Emergencies Only 911
Non-Emergencies..... 657-8200
PD Records..... 657-8460
(Open 8am-6pm weekdays &
10 am - Noon Saturday)
Detective Division 657-8473
Public Relations..... 657-8464
Crime Prevention Center. 247-8590
(Open 9 am to 4 pm weekdays)
Fingerprinting
- Call Crime Prevention Center
Montana Internet Crimes Against
Children (ICAC) 839-9070

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Works
Administration 657-8230
Engineering Division..... 657-8231
Right-of-Way Permits &
Inspections... 657-8307
Environmental Affairs 247-8517
Meter Shop..... 657-8331
Solid Waste Division & Landfill
657-8260
Street/Traffic Division..... 657-8250

Water Bills - On/Off Orders –
Payments
(Open 8am-5pm weekdays)..... 657-8315
Water Emergencies
(Open 8am-5pm weekdays)..... 657-8305
Water Emergencies
(After 5pm, weekends & holidays) 657-8353
Wastewater Reclamation
Facility 657-8356
Water Treatment Plant.... 657-8353

ZONING 657-8246

We Want to Hear From You

*Please provide us with input
for our next newsletter.*



**What did you like most
about the newsletter?**



**What would you like to see
in upcoming newsletters?**

Mail or e-mail your comments to us at:

citylink@billingsmt.gov

The City Link

P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59101