

Billings City Administration Weekly Report

August 23, 2019

- 1) **See the enclosed City Council Memo for Monday's city council discussion regarding the anticipated 2020 Public Safety Levy (last page).**
- 2) **Wells Fargo Downtown Drive Through** – I met with Wells Fargo leadership to resolve issues related to their downtown drive through location near City Hall. In January 2019, we both signed a lease, significantly reducing their lease rate and drive through lanes from eight to one (it is my understanding that Wells initiated the discussions). In addition to reducing their costs, the change helped the City by adding additional parking spaces available for lease. They now would prefer to retain two drive isles in addition to the ATM. A new layout is being created to determine how many parking spaces the City we will lose under the new plan and we will renegotiate the lease rate. Wells is a critical tenant in our downtown. We will work hard to make sure their needs are met and we receive a fair return for our asset.
- 3) **Lean Six Sigma Proposals** – Yesterday, a team of directors and I reviewed eight responses to our Lean Six Sigma Request for Proposals. After reviewing the proposals, we reduced the group to four and will meet again next week to determine which entities we want to interview. Please let me know if you are interested in joining us for the interview stage of the process. I would like one or two council members to help us make this critical decision.
- 4) **Lockwood TEDD meeting** – Based on the discussions during this week's Lockwood TEDD meeting, I expect the City Council will be receiving a letter from the TEDD board asking the Council to allow the Lockwood utility district to expand its boundaries without any conditions related to annexation. Under our current policy, utility extensions are allowed to properties who agree to annex into the City (along with other conditions). While I strongly support this policy, I agree that this unique situation and opportunity (the properties location and the creation of the TEDD) support the City making an exception to the rule. However, this exception needs to require property owners who connect to the utility, sign a waiver of right to protest annexation as a condition of connection. This will allow the development to be annexed after the TEDD sunsets (likely in 40 years). The board disagrees with my approach. They will be sending letters to the City Council and County Commissioners asking you to resolve the disagreement. We are scheduled to discuss this item during a work session in September. Both sides agreed to postpone the previously scheduled City Council work session earlier this summer.
- 5) **Addiction and Mental Illness** – this week I met with - Tina Volek, Lisa Harman and Nell Ebby to gain their insight on the challenges facing our community related to addiction and mental illness. I also had the opportunity to tour the Community Crisis Center and The HUB.

- 6) **Athletic Facilities Meeting** – SD2 hosted a meeting to discuss the state of SD2's athletic facilities and potential collaboration between SD2, County, City, MSUB and RMC. I believe this is an excellent opportunity for all of us to work together to benefit Billings. This was the first of several discussions between the parties. All entities were represented at the highest levels and spoke favorably to working together. This may also help deal with the noise and overcrowding issues that have developed around Billings Senior and Daylis Field.
- 7) **Next Week's Meetings/Task Forces/Presentations etc.**
 - a. Franchise fee litigation meeting. Monday, August 26.
 - b. Heights Task Force, Tuesday, August 27, at the Oasis conference room, 7:00 pm - 543 Aronson Avenue.

Have a great weekend!

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Council Memorandum

REPORT TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Administrator

SUBJECT: 2020 Public Safety Levy (PSL)

MEETING DATE: August 26, 2019

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Work Session Discussion

RECOMMENDATION: As a discussion item, the staff is looking for confirmation that we are moving in the right direction. Are there additional areas the Council wants the staff to research or stop considering? Based on discussions during the annual budget adoption, we are working towards a public safety mill levy, for voter consideration, within the next 10 months in order to improve the safety of our community.

BACKGROUND: On March 11, 2019, the City Council unanimously adopted the 2019/2020 Priorities. The first item listed under High Priority was "To improve the safety of Billings. At this early stage in the discussion, we have three specific questions for consideration regarding a public safety mill levy in 2020: What is the objective of the public safety levy? How far into the future should the public safety levy address and what divisions should be included? How should a community working group of citizen leaders be created to help guide communications with the public?

- I) **What is the objective of the public safety levy (PSL)?** To improve the safety of Billings, our staff is focused on the following service areas.
 1. Reduce Violent Crime - compare data between peer cities
 2. Reduce Property Crime - compare data between peer cities
 - i. Theft
 - ii. Shoplifting
 - iii. Vandalism
 3. Save lives and reduce property damage
 - i. Increase the Fire Department's capacity
 - ii. Increasing demands and diversity of emergency calls has increased response times to unacceptable levels.
 4. Improve our quality of life – improve the capabilities of the City's criminal justice system and fire/emergency response systems.
 - i. Police officers' and firefighters' ability to serve our community is significantly impacted by addiction, mental illness, transients and homelessness, daily. We need to continue working closely with our community partners to reduce recidivism and help heal our community.

- ii. Code enforcement - Additional resources will be strategically deployed to enforce City codes. The demand for services varies significantly between neighborhoods, however all neighborhoods are negatively impacted by not aggressively addressing code compliance issues.
- iii. Vandalism and graffiti are too prevalent.

5. Reduce traffic violations

- i. Save lives
- ii. Reduce property damage

II) How far into the future should the public safety levy address and what divisions should be included?

- 1. Our staff analysis is focused on providing options and recommendations tied to:
 - i. Immediate needs
 - ii. Anticipated needs over five years
 - iii. Anticipated needs over ten years.
- 2. We are including law enforcement, municipal courts, legal, 911, fire department, and code enforcement.
- 3. Impacts on facilities and equipment investments are also being included.

Our staff started with a 20-year approach, but after several discussions, determined that there are too many changing variables, especially in the criminal justice system, that significantly affect the City's service delivery, once you get beyond a decade.

III) How should a community-working group of citizen leaders be created to help guide communications with the public?

- 1. State law prohibits public resources from being used to advocate for or against election issues.
- 2. City staff can educate the community but cannot advocate.

Lean Six Sigma – In addition to the issues referenced above, the city is working to implement the efficiency principals of Lean Six Sigma. These principals are designed to improve performance, empowering employees at all levels, to deliver city services efficiently. I anticipate starting our Lean Six Sigma efforts in the departments included in the public safety levy to maximize the quality and effectiveness of our public safety services. Though this initiative is not directly tied to the public safety levy, I wanted to reference it because it will help in our efforts to improve the safety of Billings. The city received eight proposals this month in response to our request for proposals.

FISCAL EFFECTS: As we refine the scope of the project, it will have a significant impact on the fiscal effects of the PSL.

Report compiled on: August 23, 2019