

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

April 22, 2021

1. 2022 Proposed Budget – We finished the recommended budget this afternoon. You will see it tomorrow. Andy and I will provide a full overview Monday night. You will have several weeks to digest it before we start budget work sessions May 17.

2. CDBG-CV Funding Applications -

The City of Billings is accepting applications for CARES Act CDBG-CV funding exclusively for activities to prepare for, prevent, and respond to the coronavirus. This funding was awarded to the City in 2020 as part of the first wave of COVID-related local funding support. Activities must benefit low-income individuals and / or families and are limited to public services and small on-site facility improvements.

General information is available at CDBG-CV: Coronavirus Response Funding, which includes a section on the “Application Process” and a link to the CDBG-CV Grant Applications web page. Nonprofit organizations and public agencies are encouraged to review the Application Guidebook to become familiar with the process, details, and timelines.

CDBG-CV applications must be submitted online by **5:00pm MST on Friday, May 14, 2021**. Technical assistance on eligibility and the submission process is available until 5:00pm on Friday, May 7, 2021. Staff anticipates a significant response to this grant opportunity. While every effort will be made to respond to requests for technical assistance within 24 business hours, applicant patience is requested. Please plan accordingly and apply as early as possible.

3. BUILD Grant Update – The City of Billings was awarded a BUILD grant in September of 2020. To keep the City Council updated on activities and milestones, this update will be provided monthly. Information will be provided by the Public Works Engineering Division, Planning Division and City Administration.

- The draft agreement template was received by the city on March 26. Staff has started reviewing the agreement template. Note: The agreement cannot be submitted until the construction documents are ready. This means the city will need to complete the right-of-way purchase, environmental documents and final construction documents before the agreement is sent to Federal Highway (FHWA) for its review. Staff anticipates that the draft agreement could be sent this fall (more on the right-of-way and environmental process below). It is anticipated that the FHWA review and signing could take up to six months. This tentatively puts an executed agreement to April 2022. Once the city receives the executed agreement, the project can be bid. These tentative dates do not take in account the potential for some back and forth between the city and FHWA on the final agreement.
- There are two active Engineering items on the IBL. We anticipate receiving the six appraisals for right-of-way procurement from Mr. Repac this week, after he worked

through the various federal requirements. Additionally, we have been in contact with an environmental professional that has completed the NEPA environmental process for other recent TIGER and BUILD grants as required for federal funding. At this time, based on several discussions with the professional services firm, we anticipate the fee being less than \$50,000 such that the work can be contracted direct. We anticipate completing the environmental scoping and contracting this week and look to have the environmental (NEPA) work completed within about six months from contracting. The six months includes consultant work to prepare the field review and reports, submittals by the consultant to various agencies and review by agencies for approval.

- Planning continues to work on setting up the numerous progress reports that will be required FHWA to administer the grant.
- Working with the city's FHWA representative, we are developing a date for a public announcement and press release as official kick off of the project. Staff will be coordinating between FHWA, Congressional delegation and Mayor/Council for the event timing.

Next steps: Continue initial review of the agreement, continue right-of-way procurement and environmental work. Staff will continue with regular meetings and correspondence with our FHWA representative. Schedule public announcement and press event.

4. **MET Tour** – Thank you Lindsey Gran for the tour and good conversation at MET Transit yesterday. Their team is doing a great job through very challenging circumstances. Retaining and hiring quality drivers continues to be a significant challenge for the city.
5. **Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter Tour** – Executive Director, Trinity Chavez gave me a great tour of the animal shelter. It is amazing what Trinity and her team are doing since she moved over from running the city's senior programs. We are fortunate to have such caring professionals looking after our pets.

Have a wonderful weekend!