

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

April 29, 2021

- 1. Community Leadership/Joint Planning Meeting** – The Downtown Billings Alliance Boards of Directors will be meeting with the leadership from Billings Chamber of Commerce, City of Billings, Yellowstone County and Big Sky Economic Development to share our respective strategies and priorities for the development and economic growth of our community.

Many of you may recall this collaborative meeting in the past, called Community Leadership-Joint Planning Meeting - “Sharing our priorities, challenges and vision” and that title still fits as sharing our vision, strategic priorities and challenges is now more important than ever. This collaborative event will include opening six-minute (just the highlights) summary presentation from each organization and then tabletop dialogue to draw out opportunities for collaboration and understanding. Your input, experience and insight are so incredibly valuable to the work we do for this community, please join us for this important meeting – May 20th at 7:15 AM (continental breakfast provided). Katy will be sending invitations out soon.

- 2. Spring Arbor Day, May 12th** – Arbor Day is a day for celebrating trees! In Nebraska in 1872, J Sterling Morton proposed the idea of a day to plant trees, “Arbor Day”. On that day prizes were offered for the county that could plant the most trees properly. One million trees were said to have been planted on that first Arbor Day. By 1882 states across the country were celebrating Arbor Day.

Our parks are home to over 10,000 trees! The Parks and Recreation Department understands the many benefits that trees provide to our park users and community as a whole. From providing shade to storm water management, urban temperature regulation to increasing property values, trees have a larger impact on our everyday lives than we often recognize. The Parks and Recreation Department has a long history of celebrating Arbor Day and was recognized in 2014 as having one of the best Arbor Day Celebrations in the country. This year, we will continue our rich history by celebrating Arbor Day at North Park. Due to COVID-19 and SD2 travel restrictions, we will be holding two Arbor Day Celebrations. Our Spring Arbor Day is scheduled for May 12th and will consist of tree planting, volunteer projects, and park beautification projects. Our Fall Arbor Day celebration will be held on September 23rd and consist of Educational Booths for SD2 fourth graders, the official Arbor Day Ceremony, and planting of the Arbor Day Tree. There is still time to volunteer! Go to Billingsparks.org/arbor-day/ to reserve your spot. Volunteers will be given a free Arbor Day T-shirt in appreciation of their efforts.

- 3. MMIA Award** – Billings has received MMIA’s Award for Loss Control Achievement for First Class Cities for the 2019/2020 fiscal year in the Workers’ Compensation Program. This award was issued to Billings as our organization had the lowest incurred dollars in the Workers’ Compensation Program for the past five years when compared to other First Class Cities’ results.

4. **Human Trafficking** – Billings Police Department (BPD) responded to a complaint of prostitution and human trafficking and were able to rescue a 16-year-old from Nevada and identify her handler. The case was started by a patrol officer, turned over to Street Crimes and ultimately referred to the FBI. Location was at a local motel. BPD investigators assisted state agents with serving two search warrants on local spa businesses in Billings. Both cases highlight complaint driven enforcement and partnerships with sister agencies.

Have a wonderful weekend!