

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

February 17, 2022

1. **Council Member Committees** – There are several committees which require the presence of a city councilmember. Several positions are open due to councilmembers who are no longer here. Open committee spots open include Big Sky EDA Board, Policy Coordinating Committee (alternate), Beartooth RC & D, Bright & Beautiful, DBP Board (non-voting) and Babcock Theater. (Please see attached with the meeting times and dates.) Once the council decides who is interested in the BSED board, the recommendation will be sent to the County Commissioners for their approval.
2. **Annual & Semi-Annual Reports** – Attached please find the Aviation & Transit Department Annual Report and the Billings Bird Semi Annual Report.
3. **Council Orientation Schedule**
 - a. Friday, February 18 – 9:00 – 10:30 Library, go to Circulation Help Desk to check in, HR (Library)
 - b. Friday, February 25 – 9:00 – 11:00 Fire, Conference Room, 2305 8th Avenue N. Fire Station #1
 - c. Friday, March 4 - 9:00 – 11:00 Parks, Rec. & Public Lands, 390 N. 23rd Street
 - d. Friday, March 18 – 9:00 – 11:00 Public Works, Billings Operation Center, 4848 Midland Road
 - e. Friday March 25 – 9:00 – 11:00 Fleet and Facilities, BOC Conference Room, 4848 Midland Road, Information Technology, City Hall Conference Room, 210 N. 27th Street
4. **Questions and Answers Section** – This new section of the Weekly is to compile the questions our staff receives from council members. City staff is including responses to emails received this week, so other city council members have the information.

Question 1 (CM Purinton):

A constituent contacted me my name is Don Bergeron and my wife Evelyn live at 2729 Bridger Drive in Billings, we recently received a notice from the Planning Department that our neighbor has filed for a variance that would allow development on his lot adjacent to the north of ours. Because of the location of our home on our lot we would essentially be looking at the back of a 25-foot wall from our back door if this variance is approved. We have lived here 35 years and cannot imagine losing the peaceful enjoyment and view from our home. Can neighbors object, what is the process?

Question 1 Response:

There is City Variance #1342 at 2622 Rimrock Road that is scheduled to go the City Board of Adjustment on March 2. The variance request is to reduce the required lot width from 65 feet for each dwelling unit to allow 84.5 feet in lot width for two dwelling units on Lot 11, Block 4 of Bridger Square Subdivision 7th Filing, in a Suburban Neighborhood (N3) zone district on a 12,607 square foot parcel of land. The variance would allow the demolition of an existing garage and construction of a new garage space and a second dwelling unit. (See the attached Surrounding Property Owner letter for the full information on the variance – this is the letter Mr. Bergeron received from our office)

I also attached the proposed site plan that shows the existing garage and the plans to demolition it and build a new structure. The existing garage is a small two-car single story structure 5 feet from the rear property line. The proposed structure is for a 2-story structure with more garage space, and a living space on the ground floor and on the second floor. It is shown on the site plan to be setback 12 feet from the rear property line.

Nicole spoke to Mr. Bergeron on Monday and explained the process and how he can be most effective in advocating for his property regarding the variance application. There is no protest provision for variances for surrounding neighbors, but residents may submit written testimony to the BOA, attend the BOA in person, or watch the BOA meeting via Facebook live that we stream through our PCSD Facebook page and then call in on our public comment phone line to comment during the public hearing.

The BOA makes quasi-judicial decisions in its capacity, so variances only are heard and decided by the BOA and do not go to the City Council for action. However, as I mentioned to Council Member Purinton yesterday, staff would strongly recommend City Council Members not attend the BOA meeting and speak on variance applications given that while the BOA is the decision-making body, the BOA members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council. Council members could certainly watch the meeting on Facebook live to hear the discussion and deliberations. (Proposed Site Plan and February 11, 2022 letter attached.)

Question 2 (Email from Mr. Myers - Ward 2 - CM Owen):

Project #PZX 22 0001 City Zone Change 1007 – this is the only email address given in the above announcement; no time for this meeting was included in the above notice. We object to the requested zoning change for Emma Jean Heights Subdivision for the following reasons: #9 new zoning will NOT conserve the value of affected building, our home is at 1302 Jean Avenue. #8 new zoning does NOT consider the character of this development. Homebuyers bought lots and built homes believing the existing zoning was in place and would NOT be changed at the whim of any zoning updates or amendments.

What you purport to change is to avoid the look of “tract” housing, yet that is exactly what you propose to build with this change to zoning. Existing homes in the development are varied in design and within a range of pricing. What you propose is cheaper housing, dragging down the value of existing homes throughout the development.

Question 2 Response:

A resident questioned a recent property owner notification letter for the City Zoning Commission Meeting that was held on February 1, 2022, at the Library Community Room. The email from the resident was forwarded to the Planning and Community Services Department staff for a response. The PCSD staff is focusing on the issue of the notification letter content and the meeting place change. Here is the staff response to this inquiry.

Mr. Myers communicated his concerns about Zone Change 1007 to the Zoning Commission prior to the meeting on February 1 through an email he sent to the Planning Division staff. Mr. Meyers also noted in his email that the Surrounding Property Owner letter that was sent out per our zoning application process had all the information regarding the zoning application and meeting expect for the time of the meeting – which is 4 pm. While staff regrets the error of leaving the meeting time off the property owner notice in this one instance, not having the time on the notice is not a fatal flaw in the application review and public hearing process. And it was encouraging that Mr. Myers utilized the contact information contained in the property owner letter as it is intended to contact our staff to share his comments.

Mr. Myers also was frustrated that the meeting location was changed from the 1st Floor Conference Room at the PCSD offices at 2825 3rd Avenue North to the Community Room at the Library. As described below, the venue was moved when staff realized it very likely that a significant amount of public attending the meeting would not make it possible to run the meeting in the usual meeting space. We have made this change

before, about 2 times a year, when large audiences are anticipated, and we have always followed extra posting procedures when this has taken place.

To clarify the notification process, the Zoning Code notification procedures allows the following and has a savings clause:

27-1608 – Public Notice Requirements

B. Content. Notices, when required by this section or a specific application type, shall, whether by publication or written, meet the general requirements of notice provided by the city and provide the following information:

- 1. Address or location of the property subject to the application and the name, address, email, and telephone number of the applicant or the applicant's agent;*
- 2. Date, time, and place of the public hearing;*
- 3. Description of the nature, scope, and purpose of the application or proposal including a description of the development plan and, where appropriate, the classification or change sought;*
- 4. Notification about where the public may view the application;*
- 5. State that the public may appear at the public hearing;*
- 6. All meetings are held in buildings and locations that comply with accessibility standards according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A TTY number for the hearing impaired, 406-657-3079, is available upon request;*
- 7. Special arrangements for participation in the public hearings by individuals with hearing, speech, or vision impairment may be made upon request at least three (3) calendar days prior to the hearing. Please notify the planning clerk at 406-247-8610.*

Here is the savings clause:

C. Types of notice.

6. Constructive notice.

(a) Minor defects in any notice shall not impair the notice or invalidate proceedings pursuant to the notice if a bona fide attempt has been made to comply with applicable notice requirements. Minor defects in notice may include, but are not limited to errors in legal descriptions, typographical or grammatical errors, or errors of actual acreage that do not impede communication of the notice to the affected parties.

(b) Failure of one or more individual parties to receive written notice shall not invalidate subsequent action.

(c) If questions arise at a review hearing regarding the adequacy of notice, the decision-making authority shall direct the zoning coordinator to make a formal finding as to whether there was substantial compliance with the notice requirements of this zoning code, and such finding shall be made available to the decision-making authority prior to final action on the request.

(d) When city records document the publication, mailing, or posting of notices as required by this section, it shall be presumed that notice of a public hearing was given as required by this section.

As noted above, a change in venue was required due to the unforeseen demand by the public to attend the hearings – there were four scheduled hearings at the February 1 Zoning Commission Meeting, two of which generated a great deal of public concern and inquiry after the mailing of the public notices and posting of the property. We published the change of venue on-line and posted the exterior doors and the meeting room doors at our offices with the change of venue notice. And fortunately, the change of venue was less than a block from the original venue.

The lack of noting the meeting time in the notice does not invalidate the hearing, the hearing result, or require the application to be noticed and reviewed again by the Zoning Commission. Also as stated above, the Zoning Commission received Mr. Myers email at the public hearing on February 1st. Mr. Myers provided comment then and he has also now provided similar comments to the City Council.

Question 3 (CM Purinton):

Mr. Robert Deese is a customer of MetTransit. He called today to relate his difficulty, as a visually impaired customer, with the use of Double Map. The software differences of the use of his I-Phone's Screen Reader vs DM's graphic label/symbol. The graphics do not correlate to text labeling, so Mr. Deese is unable to "see" where the bus is located along the route. Is there any way to adjust the software to provide text labeling? It does tell the minutes along the route (I believe) but doesn't provide start/leave times. Case in point, the bus stop at Shiloh and Corbin was due at 8:53 am but did not arrive until 9:10 am. For a person with or without a disability, that is a long wait in the blowing, freezing snow. Mr. Deese's son, who is a sighted person, can easily use the Double Map app with success.

Another issue that Mr. Deese mentioned but not confirmed is whether the bus stops will be redesigned from street corners to middle of the street?

How are the new busses handling the Montana winters/road conditions?

I noticed on the website the ADA Met Plus services and was pleased to see the accommodations that can be made yet the price of \$3.50/each way is high for a person with disabilities who probably has limited income vs the \$12/month unlimited ride.

I continue to advocate for those with disabilities and realize the costs associated with making special accommodations. Are there federal dollars to assist with those increased costs?

Question 3 Response:

Regarding the difficulty with DoubleMAP, MET has spoken with the vendor regarding this specific issue and has been informed that DoubleMAP/TransLoc staff do test for ADA compliance between the app itself and available phone system readers, whether it is on the Apple or Android systems. As the app is the same app that is used for many transit agencies across the nation, we don't directly have control over whether the app can be modified to appropriately read information with all available screen readers. We are, however, working with our vendors and internally at MET to find an improved tracking solution to better serve all our customers; as that process develops, MET will have further information to provide. Regarding the delay on today's routes, several of our routes were running behind due to the inclement weather. Announcements regarding delays are posted in the DoubleMAP app, and again, we are working with the vendor to find a solution for push notifications vs the public being required to actively seek out the notices in the application; the intent is to improve communication of route delays or detours. On that same note, the buses are handling the bad weather quite well and have been sure footed while navigating the icy and snowy streets; delays encountered have typically occurred due to slower moving traffic or other vehicle accidents holding up traffic in general.

As for future improvements to the Transit system and whether bus stops will be relocated, the City recently contracted with SRF Consulting to assist in creating a 5-year development plan for MET Transit. This plan will encompass many aspects of service that MET currently provides, including assessing potential changes to bus stop practices and locations. As information regarding the progress on this study is available, it will be posted to our study specific webpage (located here at <https://www.ci.billings.mt.us/3032/Transit-Development-Plan-TDP-Project-202>). The study will have multiple opportunities for public input with public meetings and a presence from consultant and transit staff at various community events.

Regarding the MET-Plus fare structure, federal regulations do limit the amount an agency can charge for paratransit rides to twice the single ride fare on the fixed-route system; MET does not currently charge double the standard fare, which would be \$4.00. While \$3.50 may be a steep price in comparison to the fixed-route cost, the service is direct connection between origin and destination for the passenger (much like a taxi or Uber ride) and does cost MET significantly more than a fixed-route ride to provide (more than double the cost). In comparison, many of the rides, if accomplished via Uber or a rideshare service would cost the individual between \$13.00 (West End to West End) and \$30.00 (Heights to West End); however, many of these rideshare services do not have ADA accessible vehicles, severely limiting their usability for many members of the community. MET staff are advocates for the disability community and we work directly with area human services agencies and senior services agencies to coordinate and ensure transportation is not a barrier; we transport individuals daily to ensure access to daily activities, health care services, jobs, and so forth. The unfortunate truth of the matter is that MET does depend upon its fares to ensure daily operations continue; with annual fare revenues historically between \$400k - \$500k, fares constitute around 7% of our annual revenue. While 7% may appear inconsequential, a decrease in available funds of \$400k equals a loss of approximately 5 employees, meaning the public would have less opportunity for service due to less vehicles being operated. MET does receive approximately 45-50% of its operating revenue from federal sources; our current local sources of revenue to support the system include the 10-mill property tax approved in 1978 as well as state funds and our locally generated revenue from fares and advertising; these local sources are also utilized to provide required local match on our capital projects, such as the recently purchased buses. Due to the limited options for local funding, collection of fares will continue to become more essential to providing continued service, especially as operating costs continue to increase (i.e., fuel costs).

Question 4 (CM Gulick):

I got a call from a constituent who may benefit from increased traffic enforcement and/or traffic calming enhancements on Aronson. Stephanie Stark lives at 752 Aronson, which is at the apex of a curve in the street and just south of the intersection with Sahara. Since 2016, she has had four vehicles nearly collide with her house: one hit a tree next to the house, one hit the streetlight pole in December, and there have been tracks on her yard in two other cases.

At least with the tree and pole collisions, the driver had been approaching from the south, which means the vehicle crossed the oncoming lane, a bike lane, and a parking zone before colliding on the property. I would suspect driving under the influence or distracted driving being factors in addition to speeding. Two incidents occurred at night, two during the day. Given the number of near misses with her house, she is hoping for some sort of guardrail with reflectors. I'm not sure if that is the appropriate response; I will leave it in your capable hands.

Question 4 Response:

Engineering staff reviewed the available crash reports from the past 20 years in the site vicinity. The crash report data do not indicate that speeding was a primary contributing factor to the crashes at 752 Aronson Avenue. Based on the reports, there is nothing to suggest the infrastructure had anything to do these previous crashes or that they will continue to occur. The crashes in the vicinity of 752 Aronson appear to be associated with human elements that traffic control devices would not necessarily prevent – they are summarized below:

- 02/06/21 Obstructed windshield due to frost contributed to crash
- 12/10/21 Vehicle swerved to avoid hitting deer in roadway causing loss of control
- 10/31/15 Driver fell asleep

In addition, staff reviewed the crash reports in the general area near the intersection of Aronson Avenue/Sahara Drive where speed may have been a factor –summarized below:

- 12/20/15 Icy road – too fast for conditions
- 07/15/14 Contributing factor not identified as vehicle fled scene – however, there was a Significant amount of vehicle debris spread on roadway
- 05/02/11 Alcohol involved – too fast for conditions
- 03/08/02 Icy road – too fast for conditions

The speed related crashes in the area do not provide enough evidence alone to justify additional traffic control – especially when considering a 20-year period and only one of the four crashes occurred under “normal” conditions.

Have a good weekend.

Council Member Committees		
Big Sky EDA Board		Second Thursday of the month in the Yellowstone Room @ 222 N. 32nd Street First floor @ 7:30 AM
Community Development Board	Denise Joy	First Tuesday of the month in the Miller Building, 2825 3rd Avenue North, 6th floor @ 3:00 PM
Policy Coordinating Committee	Mayor Cole	Third Tuesday of the month in the Yellowstone County Commissioners Board Room, 316 N. 26th Street, Room 3101 @ 12:00 Noon
Montana League of Cities & Towns	Mayor Cole	Late June in Helena*; October annual conference
*Travel covered for Helena meeting		
Beartooth RC & D		Third Thursday of odd numbered months various locations; winter meetings 1:30 PM, summer meetings 5:30 PM
Bright & Beautiful		Third Wednesday of month @ Perkins on 27th Street @ 12:00 Noon
DBP Board	(non-voting)	Fourth Friday of the month in GW Bldg, 2722 3rd Avenue North 1st Floor Conference Room @ 7:30 AM
Babcock Theater		

AVIATION & TRANSIT *DEPARTMENT*

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



TRAVEL WITH US



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Thank you

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Like a lot of industries, the last two years for the Aviation and Transit Department have seen some of the most dramatic swings in business in recent memory. This past year could be considered the recovery year, although not a record breaker, it was still progress in the right direction. At MET Transit, ridership steadily improved and so did the passenger numbers at the Billings Logan International Airport. The amount of freight being unloaded and loaded at the Airport continued to surpass pre-pandemic levels, providing critical supplies and products for the community and region. But some challenges remain, especially with regard to the comfort level that many of our neighbors and friends are experiencing getting on a bus or airplane with a bunch of strangers, while whatever variant of COVID continues to sicken folks.

Shortages have and will, for a while longer, plague the economy in ways few ever imagined. For the Aviation and Transit Department, hiring quality employees has been a difficult task as the private sector continues to bid higher wages for talent. Bus drivers have been fairly difficult to hire and keep, while in the aviation area, the pilot shortage is significant across all airlines, resulting in fewer flights or no flights at many of America's smaller airports and Billings has not been immune to this downsizing. For the first time in my long career at the Airport, the airlines will not be bringing in many, if any, additional flights for Spring Break and it looks like it won't be until June before the Airport has enough airline seats to accommodate the demand that is building for travel. Subsequently, airline ticket prices for this Spring and Summer's travel could be higher than in the past and that could result in a change of consumer habits, with travelers either staying closer to home or just driving, further slowing the recovery to pre-pandemic levels of service.

A few items that happened during the past year that we were very excited about, include the MET receiving 17 new buses for its fleet, saving on both fuel and parts/repair budgets. Additionally, the Airport is about to open up the new, spacious Concourse A, and Great Room for the public to use to get on airplanes. While this space will be open to the public, some construction will continue, as many of the items required for the final finishes slowly arrive. The Great Room area will host new concessionaires for the Restaurant, Bar, and Gift Shop which should all be open this summer. While these concession spaces are being finished, accommodations are being made to provide temporary services so no one goes away hungry or thirsty. Finally, Federal funding for the Airport and MET Transit has been extremely helpful over the past year, which ensured that MET had the funds to buy the new buses, and the Airport had the financial support to construct the new Concourse Expansion areas.

Looking forward into the New Year of 2022, it is an open book for the Aviation and Transit Department and we intend to write a story this year that produces a great outcome for the Billings community and surrounding region. Transportation is the lynch pin of an economy, and we intend to do everything we can to enhance the public's ability to travel, whether it's around town on MET, or around the world via the Billings Logan International Airport. We wish everyone safe travels this year and we hope those looking to travel will utilize the great City assets operated by the Aviation and Transit Department.

—Kevin Ploehn, Aviation & Transit Department Director

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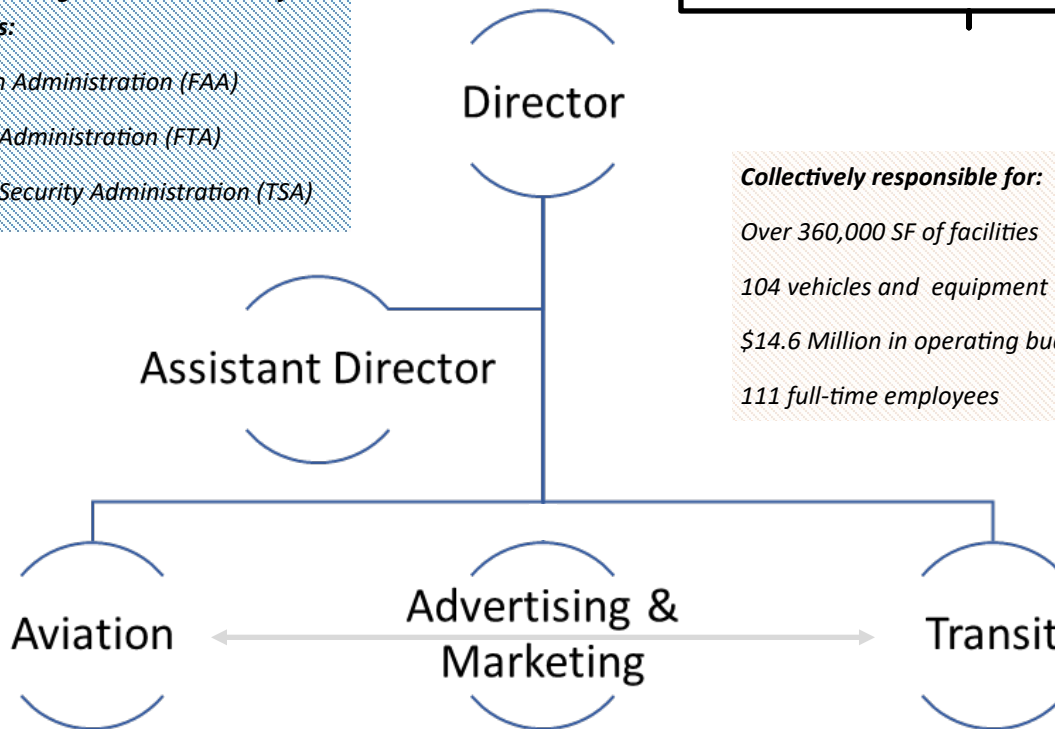
ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Subject to Federal regulations under the following agencies:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)



Collectively responsible for:

Over 360,000 SF of facilities

104 vehicles and equipment

\$14.6 Million in operating budget

111 full-time employees

The Aviation Division areas of operations:

Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) & Airfield Maintenance

- *Emergency response*
- *Grounds maintenance*

Airport Police

- *Incident/ LEO response*
- *Security training and certification*

Business Office

- *Financial Services*
- *Grant Management*
- *Property Management*

Facilities Maintenance

- *Building maintenance and repair*
- *Janitorial service*

- *Advertising amenity program for both divisions*
- *Marketing and outreach activities for both divisions*

The Department also works with a citizen's advisory board who provides support by reviewing existing and proposed policy, and making recommendations as needed to the City Council.

The Transit Division areas of operations:

Facilities & Fleet Maintenance

- *Facility and grounds maintenance and repair*
- *Fleet equipment maintenance and repair*

Field Operations

- *Dispatch*
- *Fixed route and MET-Plus service*

Business Office

- *Financial Services*
- *Grant Management*

Safety and Compliance

- *Operator training*
- *Program administration*

TRAVEL WITH US

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

The BIL has an amazing track record of keeping runways safe and ready to use in the often inclement weather experienced in Montana. Accomplishing this takes carefully orchestrated operations, teamwork, and more than a little know-how.

The first step is preparedness, the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting/ Airfield Maintenance crews are staged and ready 24/7/365—for *anything*. When winter weather is expected, additional staff are ready to come in if needed, and conditions are monitored in person and with a pavement temperature monitoring system in place, similar to that used on highway systems. The decision to deploy equipment and which techniques to use are based on the situation and could include measures to address ice and or snow removal.

Ice can be mitigated in a number of ways, including placement of sand or deice fluid on the runway surface. The preferred tactic is the less-expensive sanding option (roughly \$30 per ton) for taxiways and ramp areas. Runway sand is a specialized product that meets FAA requirements to avoid damage to aircraft engines, and must be kept at a balmy 80 degrees for proper application. For the best results, this approach is used on a wet surface just prior to freezing, but can't be used in wind conditions exceeding 20 mph, or in heavy precipitation where it is buried quickly. When sand will not work, staff will engage more aggressive tactics such as anti-ice and deice liquid application that is mostly used on the runways. If conditions are wet, and the temperatures are dropping, then deice liquid is applied right before the pavement reaches freezing temperatures. The magic temperature seems to be around 32.5 degrees. This process is an anti-ice application and uses roughly 500-600 gallons of material. If the pavement surface has already reached freezing or there is freezing rain, then a deice application takes place that uses roughly 900 to 1000 gallons of material. At a cost of \$5.00/gallon, it is an expensive process and is only used when other options are not going to maintain an open runway.

Airfield snow management is a serious business, and equipment is placed on the airfield the moment that snowfall begins to accumulate. The goal is to keep the pavement clear, or as near possible for safe aircraft operations. With aircraft coming in to land at 300 mph, the less accumulated snow the better. Equipment used snow removal include large plows and brooms. The brooms are the first pieces of equipment to leave the building and most times the last pieces to return to the shop. The Airport has three front mount brooms, two broom plow combination vehicles, two plow trucks (one of which has a sander mounted on it), two high speed rotary snow blowers, and the deice truck at our disposal to mitigate snow storms. The brooms are used to sweep the snow to bare pavement and are capable of clearing up to 4" of snow. The plows are used to move the heavier amounts at the ramp areas. The brooms cleanup after the plows are done to obtain a bare and dry surface. To avoid any wingtip or other hazards to aircraft, all the snow that is swept and plowed to the pavement edges is then blown out into the grass areas along the runway and taxiway systems with a large snow blower. Once the runway and taxiways are completed the focus is turned to removing the snow piles. The Airport has four dump trucks and two front end loaders that are used to load and haul the snow to areas at the Airport where the snow can melt and not cause any aircraft hazards.

The Airport also provides the snow removal on all Airport roads and most parking lots. A road grader is the primary piece of machinery that is used for this process. The Airport also has a street sander and street liquid deice truck for keeping the roads and parking lots ready for use.

—Mick McCarthy, Airport Operations



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TERMINAL EXPANSION PROJECT *construction update*

The ground work was laid to support the Terminal Expansion Project back in 2019, quite literally, with the ground-breaking ceremony and the start of construction on the new aircraft parking ramps.

Work has progressed well throughout 2021 despite the widespread supply shortages felt across the nation. Concourse 'A' was brought to life, and is truly going to impress our guests with stylish interior finishes, beautiful views, and lots of natural light.



Design concept rendering of concourse Great Room featuring a lounge, fireplace, and bar

Find construction updates on our website, www.flybillings.com, and social media outlets @flybillings



The Great Room under construction

The new Concourse A is expected to be open to travelers in **April 2022**, and we can't wait to see you there!

TRAVEL WITH US

When traveling through a TSA security checkpoint it is important to know what to expect before you go, and how to properly prepare sensitive items for your journey. Use the following guide to help avoid any issues.

⇒ **A firearm, replica firearms, or firearm parts (including barrels, frames and other internal components) must be:**

- Unloaded (TSA considers a firearm loaded if a loaded magazine is in the magazine well),
- In a locked, hard sided case. (must be constructed of such material that it cannot be pried open to the point where any of the contents can be accessed,
- Transported as CHECKED BAGGAGE ONLY,
- Declared at the airline ticket counter during the check-in process. The airline must acknowledge declaration of the firearm (parts, etc.) by placing a placard in the bag for TSA to view should the bag be entered.

⇒ **Ammunition, ammunition components (magazines, pouches, powder, bullets, primers, etc.) must be:**

- In a container designed to carry ammunition (such as the manufacturer's packaging, or an aftermarket ammunition carrier - NO sacks, bags, or cardboard boxes),
- Inside a locked, hard sided case. (must be constructed of such material that it cannot be pried open to the point where any of the contents can be accessed),
- Transported as CHECKED BAGGAGE ONLY,
- Declared at the airline ticket counter during the check-in process (the airline must acknowledge declaration of the ammunition by placing a placard in the bag for TSA to view should the bag be entered).

⇒ **Penalties (Note: Currently it is not a crime in Montana, however in some states it is a felony offense to bring a firearm, or firearm parts into a TSA checkpoint) include:**

- TSA assesses civil penalties (fines) for violations of:
 1. Firearms in the checkpoint (loaded or unloaded),
 2. Firearm frames, receivers, silencers, or mufflers,
 3. Undeclared, or improperly packaged firearm at a TSA checked baggage inspection point,
 4. Violators will be disqualified from participation or enrollment in TSA Precheck for a minimum of three years for the first offense.

17 firearms were confiscated at BIL in 2021!

⇒ **Passengers are encouraged to:**

- Consult their air carrier to determine quantity limitations and whether the ammunition must be packed separately from the firearm,
- Double-check all baggage, even when not traveling with a firearm. This is particularly important if bags also serve as range bags, or are used to transport firearms and/or ammunition at other times. Inadvertently leaving a firearm or ammunition in a carry-on bag will result in serious delays at security check points and potential civil, or even criminal penalties,
- Check regulations related to possession and carry of firearms at travel destinations, as laws may vary by destinations.

Additional information is available at: www.tsa.gov/traveleer-information/firearms-and-ammunition.

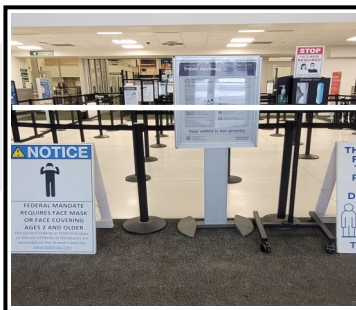
⇒ **Friendly Reminders:**

- All checked baggage is subject to inspection by TSA. If during the inspection process it is necessary to open the container, the air carrier is required to locate the passenger, as they must unlock the container for further inspection,
- The firearm may not be transported if the passenger cannot be located to unlock the container,
- If traveling with a firearm, pay close attention to airport pages and announcements, and provide the cooperation necessary to inspect the firearm,
- If traveling with a firearm it is recommended to come early and remain with your firearm until TSA has cleared it through to the airline.

⇒ **Airport Police Protocol:**

All prohibited items brought into the TSA Checkpoint, or at a TSA checked baggage inspection point are security violations. Airport Police respond, and investigate all security violations at these locations. Firearms are seized, and retained by Airport Police. The firearm may be released to the owner upon receiving proof the owner has satisfied TSA penalties. All other prohibited items are destroyed.

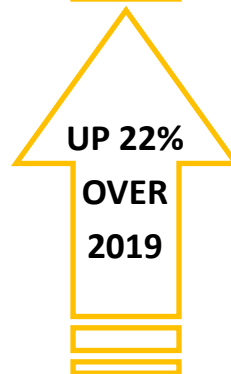
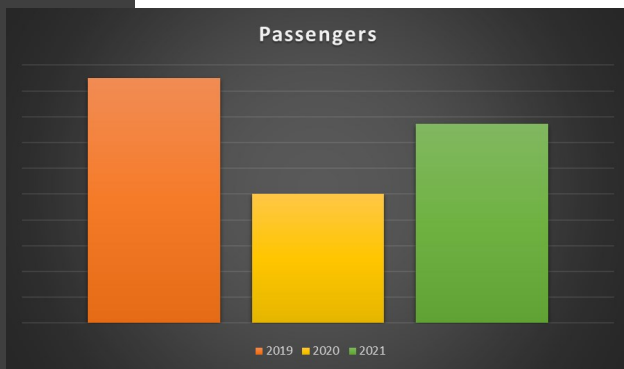
— Scott Forshee, Airport Police Supervisor



CHECKPOINT

**A How To Guide for
traveling with firearms
and accessories.**

TRAVEL WITH US



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WHAT'S NEW

Follow us online to get important news and alerts about our services!

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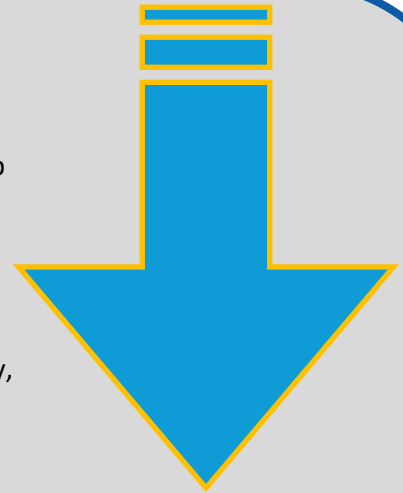
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We're doing our part...

It is our goal to provide the cleanest and safest facilities possible for our guests. This includes regular sanitization throughout service hours and 'deep cleaning' during off-hours. Our staff is here to help, and we appreciate the understanding and cooperation of everyone who enjoys our services.

Thank you for doing your part...

We understand that sometimes you may forget to bring a mask. Don't worry, we've got you covered! You will find masks available in our facilities at numerous and convenient locations.



Mask Up



U.S. Department of Transportation

MASKS REQUIRED

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The federal mask mandate has been extended through March 18, 2022 for all Transportation Hubs.

This mandate applies to all persons over the age of two , even those who are fully vaccinated.

THANK YOU



TRAVEL WITH US



The MET training program has received an overhaul, increasing efficiency and safety in the field, as well as providing additional program capacity – like CDL training for new hires!

We are so proud of the team for coming together to make this happen!

SAFETY & PASSENGER ASSISTANCE TRAINING (PASS)

■ COMPLETE ■ IN PROGRESS



ON THE GO WITH MET TRANSIT

New Fleet Cost Savings!

MET was excited to introduce seventeen new buses into service, which make up a large part of the twenty-five strong fleet. Planning to replace the remaining vehicles with newer, more efficient equipment is in the works.

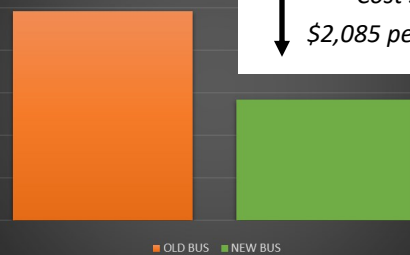
Services include fixed route and MET-Plus (ADA) with availability Monday through Saturday. Specialized transportation services are crucial to many members of the community, and provide access to life-saving service that would otherwise be out of reach. This includes regular visits to dialysis and surgery centers, as well as general life activities.

MET wants to continue to provide much needed service to the community, and is looking to improve how the needs of our customers can be met. To accomplish this goal, a Transportation Development Plan will be taking shape over the coming year. Public Meeting information will be shared through our website, www.mettransit.com, and social media outlets @METtransit.

In addition, we will be adding new advertising amenities, which allow the public to leverage our presence in the community to share their business brand and services.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you, and look forward to another year of getting you where you need to go.

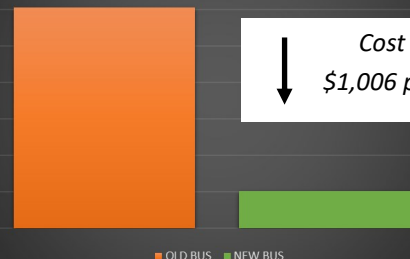
Fuel Cost per 10k Miles



Cost savings of
\$2,085 per vehicle*

*at \$2.21 per gallon

Maintenance Cost per Month



Cost savings of
\$1,006 per vehicle

- ⇒ Over 284,000 fixed route passengers
- ⇒ Over 20,000 MET-Plus passengers
- ⇒ 780,000 combined bus miles traveled
- ⇒ Ridership by passenger type
 - Standard 40%
 - Student 34%
 - ADA 17%
 - Senior 9%

TRAVEL WITH US

ON THE GO WITH MET TRANSIT



Part of the **MET mission** is commitment to our community, this includes education, outreach and agency coordination.

Education

One of our staff's favorite activities is rider training events. The opportunity to share their passion for our services makes this a fun day for all involved. We provided four of these events in the last quarter of 2021 and are looking forward to more chances to empower more individuals with the knowledge of how to ride safely.

Outreach

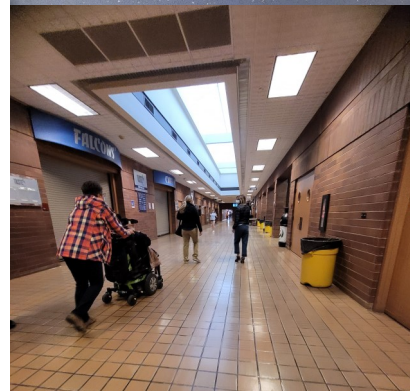
We don't just serve the local community, we are part of it, and as such we enjoy being able to get out, volunteer and share in events with our neighbors! In 2021 our staff joined the DBA Holiday Parade. We are already busy planning ways to connect and engage with the public during the upcoming year.

Coordination

A key part of the MET operations is our agency coordination program. We support efforts to ensure safe and accessible transportation for the most vulnerable members of our community. Our efforts to enhance focus in these areas has brought significant positive change and will continue to add additional benefit for many as we continue to grow.

Expanded service with the Adult Resource Alliance for seniors has increased service from 350 rides per month in 2019 to more than 500 per month today.

Work with the local Health and Human Services Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) provides rides for group home and day programs, supporting deserving individuals and their families.



Rider training at
Skyview Highschool



Downtown Billings Alliance
36th Annual Holiday Parade (2021)

Theme: Cartoon Celebrations

Best Costumes

CITY OF BILLINGS
MET TRANSIT

downtown
Billings



TRAVEL WITH US

Staffing continues to be an issue with some positions being open for as long as two years.

The Department is addressing their needs through cooperation of existing staff. However, the trend is concerning and implementing additional measures to attract and retain talent is a priority.



Grant funding is an important part of the financial resources available to both the Airport and MET Transit.

They have been a key part of making improvements and preparing for future needs.

Applying for competitive grants and managing awarded funds is a critical function performed by our staff.

Federal Funds Received by the Airport

<u>FY</u>	<u>COVID Relief</u>	<u>Other Capital</u>	<u>Terminal Project</u>
2018		\$ 254,108	\$ 3,891,864
2019		\$ 3,360,169	\$ 3,196,561
2020	\$ 4,750,796	\$ 1,093,163	\$ 7,117,433
2021	\$ 9,686,626	\$ 1,325,105	\$ 15,791,881
2022		\$ 50,880	\$ 7,000,000*
TOTALS	\$ 14,437,422	\$ 6,083,425	\$ 36,997,739

*estimated

FTA Funds Received by MET Transit

FY21

<u>Source</u>	<u>Eligible Uses</u>	<u>Funding Ratio</u>	<u>Federal</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Total</u>
5303	Transit Planning Activities	80/20	\$ 233,926.00	\$ 58,481.00	\$ 292,407.00
5307	Transit Operations	50/50	\$ 1,853,029.00	\$ 1,853,029.00	\$ 3,706,058.00
5307 ARP	Transit Operations or Related Capital	100	\$ 1,346,725.00	\$ -	\$ 1,346,725.00
5339A	Buses, Facilities, and Related Capital	80/20	\$ 513,967.00	\$ 128,492.00	\$ 642,459.00
TOTALS			\$ 3,947,647.00	\$ 2,040,002.00	\$ 5,987,649.00

FY22

<u>Source</u>	<u>Eligible Uses</u>	<u>Funding Ratio</u>	<u>Federal</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Total</u>
5303	Transit Planning Activities	80/20	\$ 204,804.00	\$ 51,201.00	\$ 256,005.00
5303	Transit Planning Activities (support TDP)	80/20	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 75,000.00
5307	Transit Operations	50/50	\$ 1,891,495.00	\$ 1,891,495.00	\$ 3,782,990.00
5307 CARES	Transit Operations or Related Capital	100	\$ 1,237,817.00	\$ -	\$ 1,237,817.00
5310	Transit ADA Vehicles and Related Capital	85/15	\$ 59,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 70,000.00
5339A	Buses, Facilities, and Related Capital	80/20	\$ 473,715.00	\$ 118,429.00	\$ 592,144.00
TOTALS			\$ 3,927,331.00	\$ 2,086,625.00	\$ 6,013,956.00

TRAVEL WITH US



Billings Industrial Revitalization District

Bi-Annual Report

July 2021-December 2021

The BIRD has had a productive year in 2021. We are actively working towards goals set through our Urban Renewal Plan and Master Plan. Below is a summary of activities that are examples of the success we have seen.

Crime Reduction:

- A. TIF support of Lazy KT Demolition (\$98,776). One of the main crime centers of the city was eliminated by a purchase coordinated by neighboring BIRD property owners
- B. Receipt of \$25,000 grant from the Bloomberg Foundation for their Asphalt Art Program. We will be installing artwork around North Park to increase positive events and environment for that area.
- C. Project Green Light – implementation of an advanced neighborhood watch program to support business owners in reduction of crime related behaviors on their property.

Approved TIF Projects:

- A. J&S Properties – Reimbursed \$63,065 for a revitalization of a retail space on 1st Ave. N
- B. Lazy KT Demolition – Reimbursed for \$98,776 for demolition of Lazy KT

Urban Renewal Goals:

- A. Working consistently with the two other URDs in Billings to develop a more seamless process with the City of Billings
- B. 15+ acres of property sold or leased in the second half of 2021. Meetings with new owners on redevelopment plans.
- C. Continued discussion and pursuit of the 5th Avenue Corridor project to connect the BIRD with the downtown core.
- D. Additional Brownfield's projects continue to support the cleanliness of the district.
- E. Audit process connected to the potential Innovation District for the BIRD.



City/County
Planning Division

Billings
Metropolitan
Planning
Organization

2825 3rd Ave. N
Billings, MT 59101
4th Floor
P 406.247.8676

February 11, 2022

City Variance 1342

Project Number: PZX-22-00031

Dear Property Owner:

This is to inform you of the following request recently submitted to the City/County Planning Department.

City Variance 1342 -2622 Rimrock Rd – Reduce lot width for a 2nd dwelling unit – A variance to reduce the required lot width from 65 feet for each dwelling unit to allow 84.5 feet in lot width for two dwelling units on Lot 11, Block 4 of Bridger Square Subdivision 7th Filing, in a Suburban Neighborhood (N3) zone district on a 12,607 square foot parcel of land. The variance would allow the demolition of an existing garage and construction of a second dwelling unit. Tax ID: A03197D

The City Board of Adjustment will hold its public hearing in the 1st Floor Conference Room at 2825 3rd Avenue North (Miller Building) on Wednesday March 2, 2022, beginning at 6:00 pm. All interested persons are invited to attend in person or view the meeting on-line on the Billings-Planning & Community Services Facebook Page here; <https://www.facebook.com/Billings-Planning-Community-Services-Department-1738982159659260/?ref=bookmarks> .

A public comment phone line is available for on-line viewers to provide testimony during the specific Public Comment periods announced by the Chairman during the hearings. The call-in **phone number is (406)237-6165**. All callers will be in a queued system and are asked to remain on hold and be patient. Calls will be taken in the order in which they are received. Callers will be restricted to 3 minutes of testimony as is customary. Written comments may also be sent to Board via **email before 1:00 PM on Wednesday March 2, 2022. All emails received prior to this time will become part of the record for the public hearings.**

Public hearings are accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. Special arrangements for participation in the public hearings by individuals with hearing, speech, or vision impairment may be made upon request at least three days prior to the hearing. Please notify Robbin Bartley, Administrative Assistant, at 247-8676 or e-mail to bartleyr@billingsmt.gov

Sincerely,
The Staff of the City/County Planning Division

Before granting a variance, the City Board of Adjustment shall consider all of the following: (BMCC 27-1627.D)

- 1) That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, the lot or something inherent in the land which causes the hardship, and which are not applicable to other lands in the same district;
- 2) That a literal interpretation of the provisions of this Zoning Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other tracts in the same district;
- 3) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Zoning Code to other land in the same district;
- 4) That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Zoning Code and with the growth policies;

Board of Adjustment Review and Decision Making (BMCC 27-1627.E)

- 1) Whenever the City Board of Adjustment grants an application for a variance, the minutes shall specifically state the criteria upon which the variance is granted.
- 2) In granting any variance, the BOA may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with this Zoning Code. Violation of such conditions and safeguards, when made a part of the terms upon which the variance is granted, shall be deemed a violation of this Zoning Code.
- 3) The BOA shall prescribe a time limit within which the action for which the variance is required shall be begun or completed, or both. Failure to begin or complete such action within the time limit set shall void the variance.
- 4) Under no circumstances shall the BOA grant a variance to allow a use not permissible under the terms of this chapter in the district involved. A variance shall not be a grant of special privilege inconsistent with limitations placed upon other property in the district.
variance