

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

August 4, 2022

- 1. Street Maintenance District** – Please see the Street Maintenance District attachments for the Council Meeting on Monday night. (Public Works Street Maintenance District Assessments presentation, Supplementary Information for the Street Maintenance District Assessments and Ordinance Amending BMCC, Article 22-500, Street Maintenance District First Reading.)
- 2. BRIC Grant** – Public Works was notified this week that the City did not receive the \$50M Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant for the west end plant and reservoir project. The project was delayed until the grant awards were announced, and staff will now proceed with the project. Staff will be following up with FEMA to get details on why the City was not successful for the second consecutive year.
- 3. Certified Value** – The City of Billings received its certified taxable value for FY2023. The taxable value of the City, used to generate tax revenue for our General, Public Safety, Transit and Library funds increased 1.46% to \$221,060,060. The FY23 budget was built based upon an assumed growth of 1%. The additional increase (.46%) should generate the following estimated additional amounts beyond what was anticipated in the budget:
 - \$3,776 – General Fund
 - \$5,817 – Public Safety Fund
 - \$255 – Library Fund
 - \$510 – Transit Fund

Our TIF districts experience varied results with the following changes in increment values:

District	Change in Increment Value	% Change	Estimate change in tax revenue from FY22
Downtown	(412,153)	-10.10%	(280,000)
East	(27,531)	-2.45%	(19,000)
South	43,432	0.78%	30,000

At this time, we are aware that some of the reduction is a result of legislative action that reduced the value of personal property that is taxable. The legislature did offset some of the reduced taxable value by increasing the State Entitlement Share amount that is given to each district. The estimated increase in entitlement share that will offset property tax reduction is the following:

District	Increase in Entitlement Share
Downtown	\$47,000
East	\$24,000
South	\$31,000

Within the Downtown district, the larger reductions in property values result from the City's purchase of the Stillwater Building, the County's purchase of the Miller Building, and a reduction in

value for Verizon and Northwestern Energy.

4. **South Pool Main Circulation Pump Failure** – We have a main circulation pump failure at South Pool that will force us to close the pool for the rest of the summer. The timeframe to get the pump repaired is at least two weeks and will not allow us to reopen before the end of the summer season. The spray ground at South Park, however, will remain open through Labor Day weekend and is open daily from 10 am – 8 pm. All season passes for South Pool will be accepted at Rose Pool through August 20th when the season ends. This will free up some additional lifeguards that will allow us to keep the wading pools at Pioneer and Hawthorne Parks open through August 17th.
5. **Active Shooter Training** – Officers Keightley and Doll will be conducting Active Shooter Training to the Mayor and City Councilmembers on August 15th at 4:00 PM in the Council Chambers. HR, administration, and the clerk's office went through the training Tuesday.
6. **Semi-Annual Reports** – Please find attached the semi-annual reports for the Public Works Department and the Planning & Community Services Department. The remaining semi-annual reports will be included in the next Weekly report,
7. **From the PIO Desk:**

Deployed National Guard troops arrive at Billings airport, welcomed with a water cannon salute

<https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2362>

Have you ever wondered....(a new feature thanks to Brenda in IT!)

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=430888412419314&set=a.245649930943164>

Billings Fire Department's Lori Johnson gets Hi-C qualified

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofBillings/posts/pfbid0tg9u6wfjMAZfPDem6pCYJED2YEjCoQ379sVsJCvMbv7RfHpNQpo6NL1nuVABBa2pl>

Billings Fire Department rescues stranded boaters from Yellowstone River Thursday morning

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofBillings/posts/pfbid0X3mSD6nN6VrsGFjKnaBF7Nw4XWWT6R2YHhXsfcox1FBcGsaUhvfhMjZZ4Wtya74l>

Charity softball game check presentation to BFD & BPD

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofBillings/posts/pfbid032Xn3G1tDEgNvbWVXBbiRcUhaH3MGR8QcPPztvwWEwYjm3fn91ko7DFngu3LNjw51l>

Billings in the news –

Billings looks at refining its building code appeal process

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/billings-looks-at-refining-its-building-code-appeal-process/article_93503f9e-11ed-11ed-bb42-933102751ba2.html#tncms-source=login

Billings Police Officer honored for saving toddler's life

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-police-officer-who-saved-toddlers-life-among-3-honored-by-city-council>

Think your neighbor's abusing their dog? Here's what Billings officials say you should do

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/think-your-neighbors-abusing-their-dog-heres-what-billings-officials-say-you-should-do>

National Night Out celebrated in Billings

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/national-night-out-celebrated-in-billings>

Welcome home! National Guard lands in Billings

<https://newstalk955.com/welcome-home-national-guard-lands-in-billings/>

Fun events happening at Billings Public Library

<https://www.yourbigsky.com/local-news-2/fun-events-happening-at-billings-public-library/>

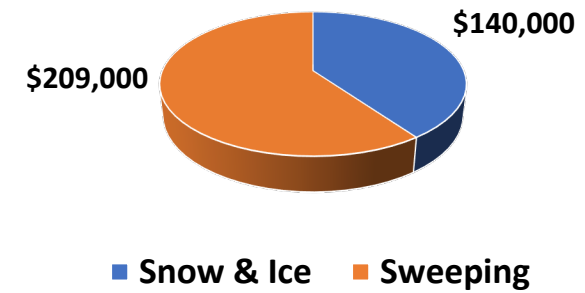


Public Works Street Maintenance District Assessments

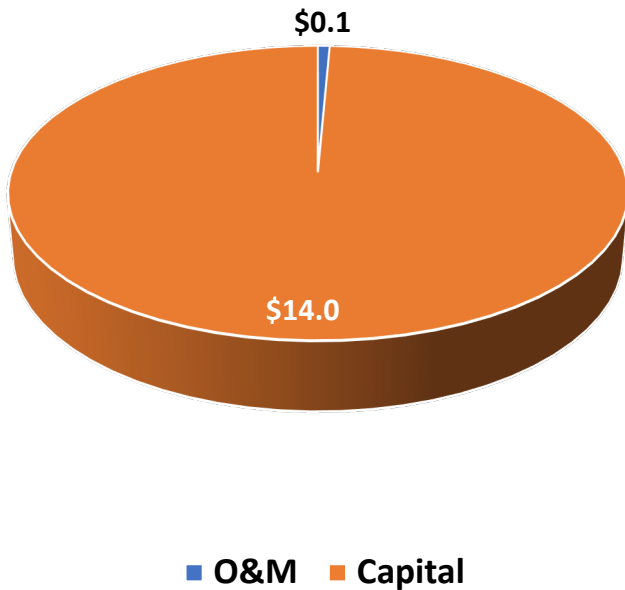


FY23 Road Budgets

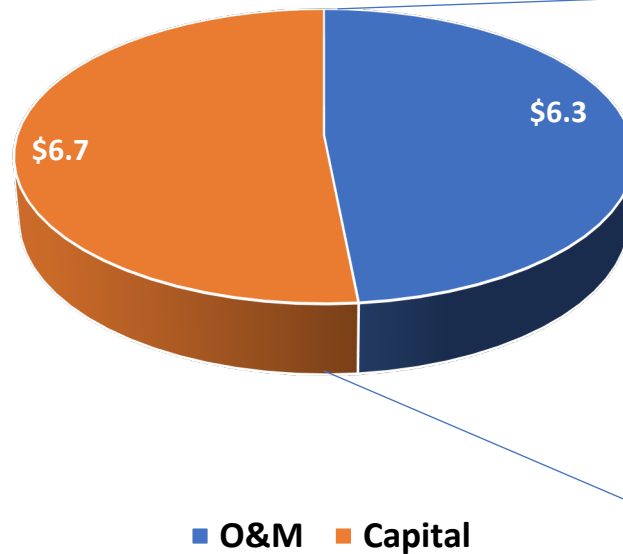
SMD 1 Expenses



FY 23 Arterial Expenses (in millions)



FY23 SMD 2 Expenses (in millions)



O&M Category	\$
Gravel Roads & Alleys	\$680,000
Landscaping	\$500,000
Painting	\$660,000
Street Repair	\$925,000
Signs	\$370,000
Snow & Ice	\$1,515,000
Sweeping	\$950,000
Traffic Signals	\$700,000

Combined SMD 2 & Arterial Assessments



SMD 2	FY22
FY22 Arterial Fees	\$4,616,000
6% Arterial Increase	\$277,000
FY22 SMD 2 Fees	\$9,050,000
5.9% SMD 2 Increase	\$537,000
Reduce SMDs to Increase PD1	(\$336,000)
Target Combined Arterial/SMD Revenue FY23	\$14,144,000

Increase in Total Road Funding	\$478,000; 3.5%
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Arterial Fees		SMDs
Methodology	Zoning and SF	Assessable area
Rate Structure	Different rates per zone; low vacant rate	Same rate per SF for all properties
Caps	Residential – 9600 SF Vacant \$1260	Residential – none Vacant - \$1545
9691 SF Annual Residential Fee	\$53.76	\$129.83



Council Discussion at 7/18/22 Work Session

**Council generally liked Scenario 2
(with some fine-tuning)**

Methodology

- Assessable area

Rate Structure

- Commercial rate 50% > residential
- Vacant residential 50% of residential

Caps

- Residential vacant capped at 7,000 SF
- Commercial vacant capped at 30,000 SF

Property Type	Council Direction (consensus)
Vacant Properties	Increase amount collected from vacants to be approximately equal to the amount currently collected.
Revenue Distribution	Keep revenue distribution similar to what it is currently (FY22).
Methodology	Use assessable area (square footage of the parcel) for all properties.
Rate Structure	Charge a lower rate for residential than commercial, but do not increase commercial properties a lot because multi-family properties are classified as commercial.
Caps (max charges)	Some Council members indicated that they did not like caps and would like to see the affects of not having caps.



Further Analysis and Trying to Avoid Unintended Consequences

Properties Affected	Issue	Solution
Developed Public (Governmental) Properties	These properties were previously zoned public and would receive large increases in fees. (School District 2 – approximately \$250,000 increase)	Create governmental class with rate the same as residential.
Large Residential Properties	Billings has some very large properties with a single family residence on it. The fees were very large (up to \$58k). There is not a nexus of this fee to the benefit to support this rationale.	Set cap to 30,000 square feet.
Large Vacant Properties	Council wanted to see what it would look like if we did not cap properties. Large vacant properties were going to see huge increase in fees, creating inequities.	Implement a similar cap as we have currently. This was set at 115,000 square feet.

Council Discussion at 7/18/22 Work Session

Scenario 2A

Methodology

- Assessable area

Rate Structure

- Commercial rate approximately 40% > residential
- Vacant 10% < residential

Caps

- Residential capped at 30,000 SF
- Residential vacant capped at 30,000 SF
- Commercial vacant capped at 115,000 SF
- Governmental capped at 1.1M SF

Scenario N

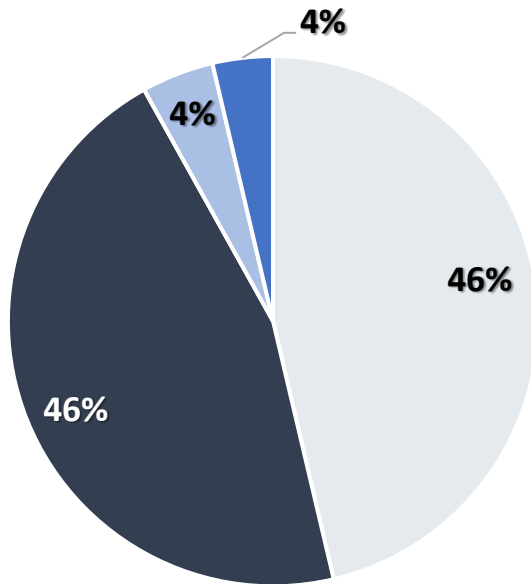
- Kept everything the same as Scenario 2A except:
 - Set residential base fee to \$150
 - Set residential square footage fee to \$.01142 for SF > 7500.
 - Eliminated 30,000 SF residential cap
- Generates same amount for residential as Scenario 2A



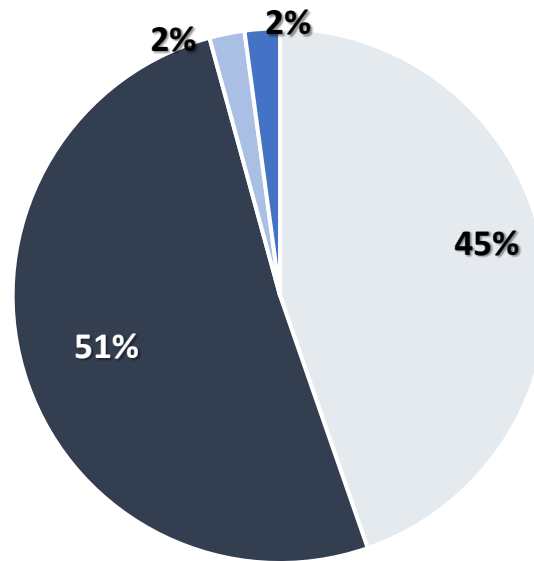
Breakdown of Revenues for Scenarios

Current Revenues Generated	\$13,666,000
Scenarios 2, 2A, and N Revenues Generated	\$14,144,000
Increase	\$478,000; 3.5%

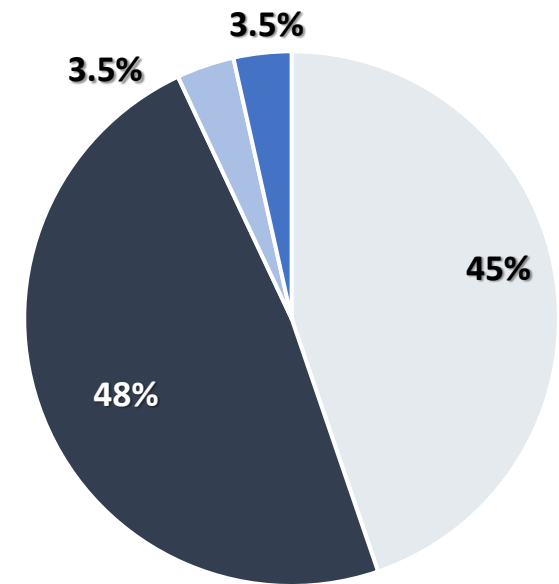
Current FY22



Scenario 2



Scenario 2A and N



Residential

Commercial

Vacant Residential

Vacant Commercial

Scenario 2A

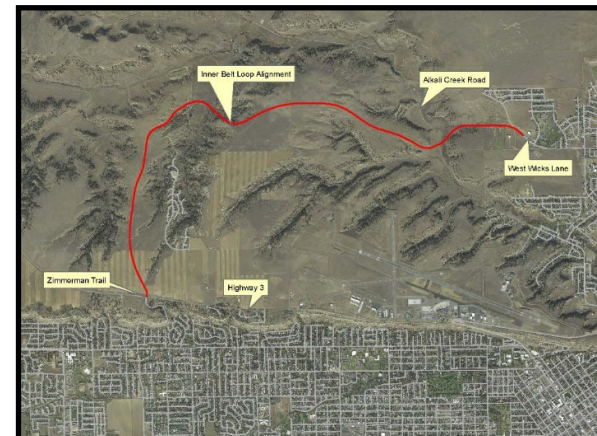
Property Type	Parcel Square Footage	Zoning	Combined FY22 Arterial & SMD 2 Fees	FY23 SMD 2 Fee	\$ Increase	% Increase
SFR – 1327 SF Home	7,000	N1	\$132.98	\$137.17	\$4.19	3%
SFR – 3216 SF Home	10,000	N3	\$187.74	\$195.96	\$8.22	4%
SFR – 1196 SF Home	18,000	N2	\$294.92	\$352.73	\$57.81	20%
SFR – 11,888 SF Home	105,721	N3	\$1,470.10	\$587.88	\$(882.88)	-60%
Vacant Residential	10,000	N3	\$152.22	\$168.00	\$15.78	10%
Vacant Residential	9,372,849	N3	\$1563.24	\$529.08	\$(1,034.16)	-66%
Multi-Family (4 plex)	7,000	NX1	\$169.88	\$192.04	\$22.16	13%
Multi-Family (26 units)	218,585	NX3	\$5,398.40	\$5,996.66	\$598.26	11%
Commercial (Day Care)	20,477	NX2	\$501.24	\$561.77	\$60.53	12%
Commercial (Bank)	100,766	CM1	\$2,691.16	\$2,764.41	\$73.25	3%
Vacant Commercial	101,625	CX	\$1,554.58	\$1,707.30	\$152.72	10%
Governmental (School)	1,537,848	P2	\$25,539.06	\$21,555.60	\$3,983.46	-16%
Governmental (City Park)	1,268,229	P1	\$1,545.00	\$529.08	\$(1015.92)	-66%

Scenario 2N

Property Type	Parcel Square Footage	Zoning	Combined FY22 Arterial & SMD 2 Fees	FY23 SMD 2 Fee	\$ Increase	% Increase
SFR - 1024 SF Home	2,500	N1	\$47.50	\$150.00	\$102.50	216%
SFR – 1184 SF Condo	3,500	N1	\$66.50	\$150.00	\$83.50	126%
SFR – 1000 SF Home	5,000	N2	\$95.00	\$150.00	\$55.00	58%
SFR – 1327 SF Home	7,000	N1	\$132.98	\$150.00	\$17.02	13%
SFR – 3216 SF Home	10,000	N3	\$187.74	\$178.55	\$(9.19)	-5%
SFR – 2310 SF Home	15,000	N2	\$254.72	\$235.65	\$(19.07)	-5%
SFR – 1196 SF Home	18,000	N2	\$294.92	\$269.91	\$(25.01)	-8%
SFR – 628 SF Home	35,937	N3	\$535.22	\$474.75	\$(60.47)	-11%
SFR – 2668 SF Home	75,807	N3	\$1,069.36	\$930.07	\$(139.29)	-13%
SFR – 11,888 SF Home	105,721	N3	\$1,470.10	\$1,271.68	\$(198.42)	-13%
SFR – 30,843 SF Home	3,181,365	N3	\$42,674.52	\$36,395.54	\$(6,278.98)	-15%

Residential Scenario Comparison

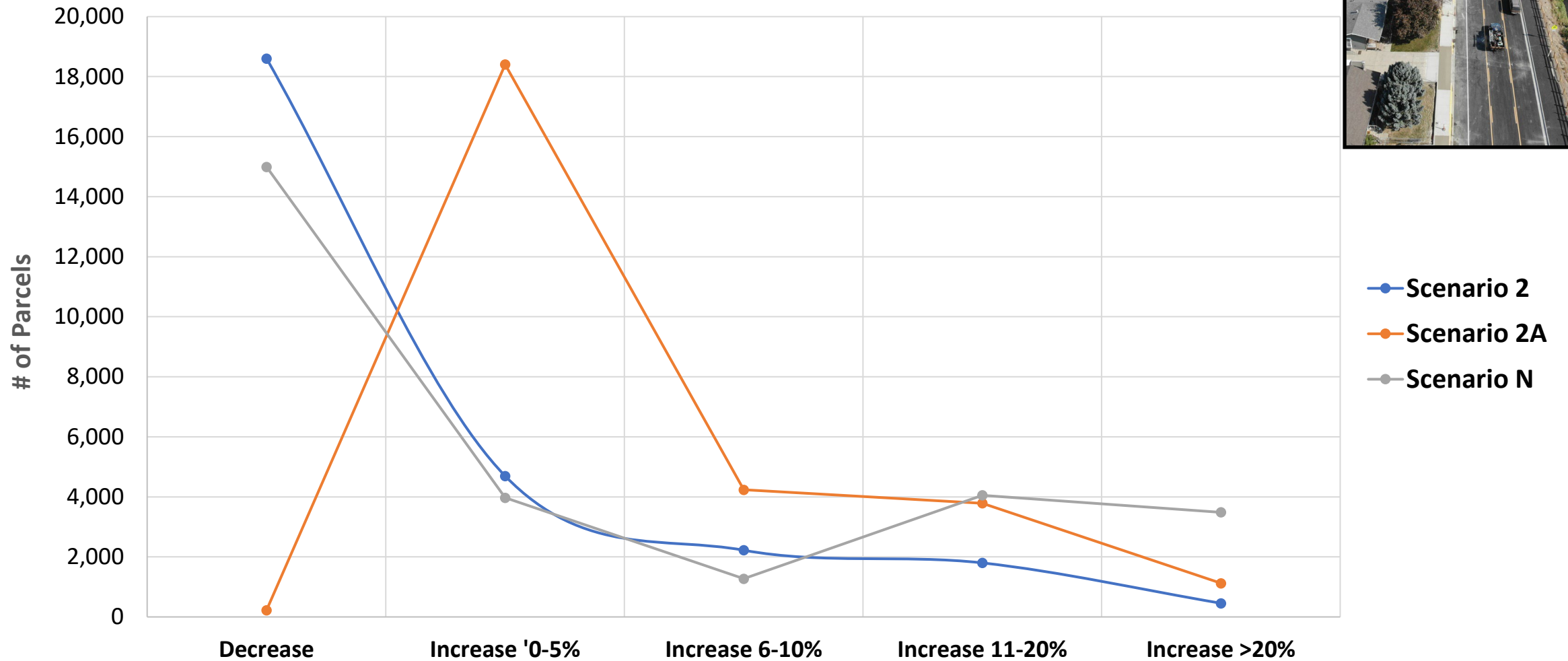
Property Type	Parcel Square Footage	Current	Scenario 2A	Scenario N
SFR -1024 SF Home	2,500	\$47.50	\$48.99	\$150.00
SFR – 1184 SF Home	3,500	\$66.50	\$68.59	\$150.00
SFR – 1000 SF Home	5,000	\$95.00	\$97.98	\$150.00
SFR – 1327 SF Home	7,000	\$132.98	\$137.17	\$150.00
SFR – 3216 SF Home	10,000	\$187.74	\$195.96	\$178.55
SFR – 2310 SF Home	15,000	\$254.72	\$293.94	\$235.65
SFR – 1196 SF Home	18,000	\$294.92	\$352.73	\$269.91
SFR – 628 SF Home	35,937	\$535.22	\$587.88	\$474.75
SFR – 2668 SF Home	75,807	\$1,069.36	\$587.88	\$930.07
SFR – 11,888 SF Home	105,721	\$1,470.10	\$587.88	\$1,271.68
SFR – 30,843 SF Home	3,181,365	\$42,674.52	\$587.88	\$35,395.54



Residential Analysis



Effect on Residential Properties Zoned as N1, N2, N3



Scenario 2A – Zoning Effects

Property Type	Parcel Square Footage	Zoning	Combined FY22 Arterial & SMD 2 Fees	FY23 SMD 2 Fee	\$ Increase	% Increase
Residential	7,000	CBD	\$229.52	\$137.17	(\$92.35)	-40%
Residential	7,000	NX1	\$169.88	\$137.17	(\$32.71)	-19%
Residential	7,000	N1	\$132.98	\$137.17	\$4.19	3%
Commercial (Tax Business)	7,000	NO	\$166.94	\$192.04	\$25.10	15%
Commercial (Loan Business)	7,000	N1	\$132.98	\$192.04	\$59.06	44%
Commercial (Church)	80,325	P2	\$1,333.96	\$2,203.64	\$869.68	65%
Commercial (Goodwill)	80,656	CM2	\$2,182.32	\$2,212.72	\$30.40	1%

Requirements

Public Hearing

Resolution must be passed no later than the second Monday in August to be in compliance with state law.



Supplementary Information to Council Memo for Street Maintenance District Assessments

This supplementary information is to answer the questions asked by CM Neese in the email below and at the 8/1/22 Council Work Session.

From: Neese, Roy <neeser@billingsmt.gov>

Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:25 PM

To: Duray, Jennifer <DurayJ@billingsmt.gov>; Meling, Debi <melingd@billingsmt.gov>

Subject: Follow up on SMD2 presentation and coming Ordinance proposal.

Jennifer/Debi,

I've run several models of residential property scenarios through the options and scenario 2 and 4 (both have no caps). I see that most residential property will drop significantly until a certain level mainly due to the percentage of the rate shift from commercial to residential. Instead of a 50% in S2 or 75% in S4, was something in between considered to bring help bring the transition a little more less impactful to some of the residential?

Under scenario 2 (S2) most residential property will drop significantly until a certain level mainly due to the percentage of the rate shift from commercial over residential. I estimated that property with a square foot of 10650 and below will see reduction. Property between 10650sf and 13450sf will see and increase up to 6%. Properties over that will see very large increases. For example a 36,000sf property will see a 23.8% increase (Some of these finding may change now since the rate appears to be a little higher and I think the new proposal now has a cap at 30,00sf that I did not think was in S2 presentation).

Caps were considered in some scenarios and for vacant land, but what about minimums (or combination of both)? Can Minimums be used? Presently a standard city lot at 7500sf pays \$142.48. A 6% increase that is being sought would increase that to \$151.03. Using similar base unit as minimum or fee for residential plus a rate over 7500sf may more evenly spread the increase over property owners.

Do you have any thought on this or using minimums with scenario 2 for a more seamless way to transition from two separate methods of assessing?

Based on the examples presented I had calculated the S2 rate as \$0.018441/sf. Was that correct? I now see that the ordinance has \$0.019596/sf. What was the rate that was used in scenario 2 for SMD2 that was presented to council?

I also see the ordinance has a cap now of \$30,000 of residential? I don't recall seeing that before. Was this added and why at 30,000 sf and not 9600 sf like before, 12,000 sf or 15,000 sf like other cities in some of the presented examples?

Could the cap be calculated to keep the increase at 6%?

Thank for for taking a look at this.

Roy Neese | Billings City Councilman Ward 2 |

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First, there is not a shift in the percentage from commercial to residential. Apologetically, there is an error in the Council memo and the proposed FY23 revenue distributions for residential and commercial were reversed. The revenue distributions should have been listed as follows:

Property Type	Current FY22	Proposed FY23
Residential	46%	45%
Commercial	46%	48%
Vacant	8%	7%

I have attached the presentation for Monday night which hopefully answers a lot of the questions. The general direction that staff heard at the 7/18/22 Council Work Session is listed on page 4 of the presentation and this direction is what we used as the basis for developing a scenario to bring back to Council. The majority of Council indicated that they generally liked Scenario 2 with the following caveats:

- Increase amount to be collected from vacant parcels to be similar to the current percentage that is collected from vacant parcels;
- Keep the remaining revenue distribution similar to what we have currently;
- Charge a higher rate for commercial than residential, but Council indicated that they did not want to see a big shift to commercial because multi-family is included in the commercial class.
- Analyze the effect of not using any caps.

Staff used this direction and then did additional due diligence analyses to look for inequities and unintended consequences. Due to some issues that we found in the analyses, we made further adjustments to the scenario which are listed on page 5 of the presentation. The original Scenario 2 did not include any caps for developed residential properties. The 30,000 SF cap for residential is staff's recommendation to mitigate inequities for large residential properties but still honor Council's direction to use Scenario 2 as the basis for the proposed rates. I initially ran the scenario with lower caps, but that increased overall fees on smaller parcels and decreased fees on larger parcels which was contrary to Councils' direction.

CM Neese is correct that the rate for residential for scenario 2 was \$0.018441/SF. The reason this rate increased to \$0.019596 in the final recommendation which is in the Council memo and proposed resolution is due to the proposed cap of 30,000 SF on residential parcels. Various rate impacts for the recommended rates (Scenario 2A in the presentation) are as follows:

Developed Residential Properties	Zone	Sq Ft of		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
		Parcel					
2043 SF Single Family Residence	SCBD	7,000	\$	229.52	\$ 137.17	\$ (92.35)	-40%
1625 SF Single Family Residence	SNX1	7,000	\$	169.88	\$ 137.17	\$ (32.71)	-19%
1327 SF Single Family Residence	SN1	7,000	\$	132.98	\$ 137.17	\$ 4.19	3%
1712 SF Single Family Residence	SN2	7,000	\$	132.98	\$ 137.17	\$ 4.19	3%
1872 SF Single Family Residence	SCM1	10,000	\$	267.08	\$ 195.96	\$ (71.12)	-27%
3216 SF Single Family Residence	SN3	10,000	\$	187.74	\$ 195.96	\$ 8.22	4%
2310 SF Single Family Residence	SN2	15,000	\$	254.72	\$ 293.94	\$ 39.22	15%
1448 SF Single Family Residence	SNX3	18,000	\$	444.56	\$ 352.73	\$ (91.83)	-21%
1196 SF Single Family Residence	SN2	18,000	\$	294.92	\$ 352.73	\$ 57.81	20%
2813 SF Single Family Residence	SNX1	35,719	\$	532.30	\$ 587.88	\$ 55.58	10%
628 SF Single Family Residence	SN3	35,937	\$	535.22	\$ 587.88	\$ 52.66	10%
2668 SF Single Family Residence	SN3	75,807	\$	1,069.36	\$ 587.88	\$ (481.48)	-45%
11,888 SF Single Family Residence	SN3	105,721	\$	1,470.10	\$ 587.88	\$ (882.22)	-60%
30,843 Single Family Residence	SN3	3,181,365	\$	42,674.52	\$ 587.88	\$ (42,086.64)	-99%
Vacant Residentials	Zone	Sq Ft		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Vacant Residential Lot	SN3	10,000	\$	152.22	\$ 168.00	\$ 15.78	10%
Rehberg Ranch Open Space (Ironwo SPD		95,392	\$	1,296.22	\$ 529.08	\$ (767.14)	-59%
Vacant Residential Lot (Ironwood)	SNO	517,407	\$	2,528.08	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,999.00)	-79%
Vacant Residential Lot (Briarwood)	SN3	9,372,849	\$	1,563.24	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,034.16)	-66%
Developed Commercial Properties	Zone	Sq Ft		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Multi-Family (4 Units)	SNX1	7,000	\$	169.88	\$ 192.04	\$ 22.16	13%
Tax Business	SNO	7,000	\$	166.94	\$ 192.04	\$ 25.10	15%
Loan Business	SN1	7,000	\$	132.98	\$ 192.04	\$ 59.06	44%
Mulit-Family (4 Units)	SNX1	14,000	\$	339.74	\$ 384.08	\$ 44.34	13%
Day Care Center	SNX2	20,477	\$	501.24	\$ 561.77	\$ 60.53	12%
Church	SP2	25,851	\$	429.32	\$ 709.20	\$ 279.88	65%
Motel	SCBD	35,000	\$	1,147.56	\$ 960.19	\$ (187.37)	-16%
Self Storage Units	SCM2	49,812	\$	1,347.78	\$ 1,366.54	\$ 18.76	1%
Multi-Family (24 Units)	SNX2	59,169	\$	1,448.30	\$ 1,623.24	\$ 174.94	12%
Church	SP2	80,325	\$	1,333.96	\$ 2,203.64	\$ 869.68	65%
Goodwill	SCM2	80,656	\$	2,182.32	\$ 2,212.72	\$ 30.40	1%
Bank	SCM1	100,766	\$	2,691.16	\$ 2,764.41	\$ 73.25	3%
Apartments (26 Units)	SNX3	218,585	\$	5,398.40	\$ 5,996.66	\$ 598.26	11%
Mobile Home Park (417 Units)	SRMH	2,829,091	\$	58,299.10	\$ 77,613.28	\$ 19,314.18	33%
Montana Rail Link	SI1	7,866,117	\$	105,382.38	\$ 215,799.05	\$ 110,416.67	105%
Vacant Commercial Properties	Zone	Sq Ft		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Commercial Lot	SCX	14,250	\$	218.00	\$ 239.40	\$ 21.40	10%
Commercial Lot	SCX	101,625	\$	1,554.58	\$ 1,707.30	\$ 152.72	10%
Golf Course	SP1	8,621,395	\$	2,805.00	\$ 2,028.14	\$ (776.86)	-28%
Developed Governmental Properties	Zone	Sq Ft		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
School District 2	SP2	90,000	\$	1,494.64	\$ 1,763.64	\$ 269.00	18%
School District 2	SP2	1,537,848	\$	25,539.06	\$ 21,555.60	\$ (3,983.46)	-16%
Vacant Governmental Properties	Zone	Sq Ft		Current	Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
City Park	SP1	158,191	\$	1,545.00	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,015.92)	-66%
State Lands	SN3	257,359	\$	1,563.24	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,034.16)	-66%
City Park	SP1	435,600	\$	1,545.00	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,015.92)	-66%
City Park	SP1	1,268,229	\$	1,545.00	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,015.92)	-66%
City Park	SP1	1,876,652	\$	1,545.00	\$ 529.08	\$ (1,015.92)	-66%
State Lands	SVAC	9,728,037	\$	2,805.00	\$ 529.08	\$ (2,275.92)	-81%

The "minimums concept," or utilizing a base rate for all residential properties and then implementing another rate based on square footage, was discussed briefly at Council. It definitely has merit so I ran an additional "Scenario N" and added it to the presentation. In running this scenario, I left all other variables (commercial, governmental, vacants, etc.) the same as they are in Scenario 2A. Only developed residential parcels were modified by setting a minimum fee of \$150 per parcel and making up the rest of the revenues needed from residential by charging per square footage for square footage in excess of 7500 SF. The outcome for various residential properties under Scenario N is shown in the presentation. We have 14,340 residential parcels in Billings that are less than 7500 SF and using a minimum charge has somewhat dramatic effects on very small parcels. However, it is worth having the discussion regarding which method is more equitable. Keep in mind that no method will ever create the perfect nexus from the fee to the benefits derived, but there must be a reasonable nexus.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Duray

Jennifer Duray, CPA
Deputy Public Works Director



Ordinance Amending BMCC, Article 22-500, Street Maintenance District First Reading

Purpose and Need for Amendment

- **Eliminating the Arterial Construction Fee by combining it with SMD 2 Fee requires the use of SMDs for improvements**
- **Using SMD improvements are allowed under State Law but not included in current City Code**
- **Amendment brings City Code in line with State Law and allows for improvements within SMDs**





Billings

PUBLIC WORKS

Excellence
Innovation
Integrity

Department Report

...from the heart of Billings

8.1.2022



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Other Exciting Project Updates

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Shiloh Conservation Area Walking Tour

Water Week Open House

Water Conservation Presentation

Your Public Works Team is dedicated to improving Billings quality of life by providing outstanding customer service. Thank you for supporting our work!



a letter from the director



What a year so far - and it's only July!

We have had low river levels, extremely high river levels, wind, hail, rain, snow, and fire. We've seen unbelievable inflation in materials and labor. We've had job vacancies every week.

In Public Works, we always say that a good day is one when no one even knows we exist – we have had some not so good days this year by that measure. On a year like this though, we can't measure our success by that metric. The fact that we've been able to provide essential services day after day, week after week, despite all the challenges, shows the incredible resilience of the staff and facilities.

We are looking forward to some big groundbreakings this year – Skyway Drive, Skyline Trail and the West End Water Project are a few of them. See pages 7 and 8 for more upcoming projects.

Thank you for your support these last several months. They've been challenging but when we look back at what has been accomplished, we are proud of our staff and know that we are moving in the right direction.

Debi Meling

Public Works Director



June 2021

Photo courtesy of Visit Billings



June 2022

Billings Public Works

What We Learned from that 500-Year Flood

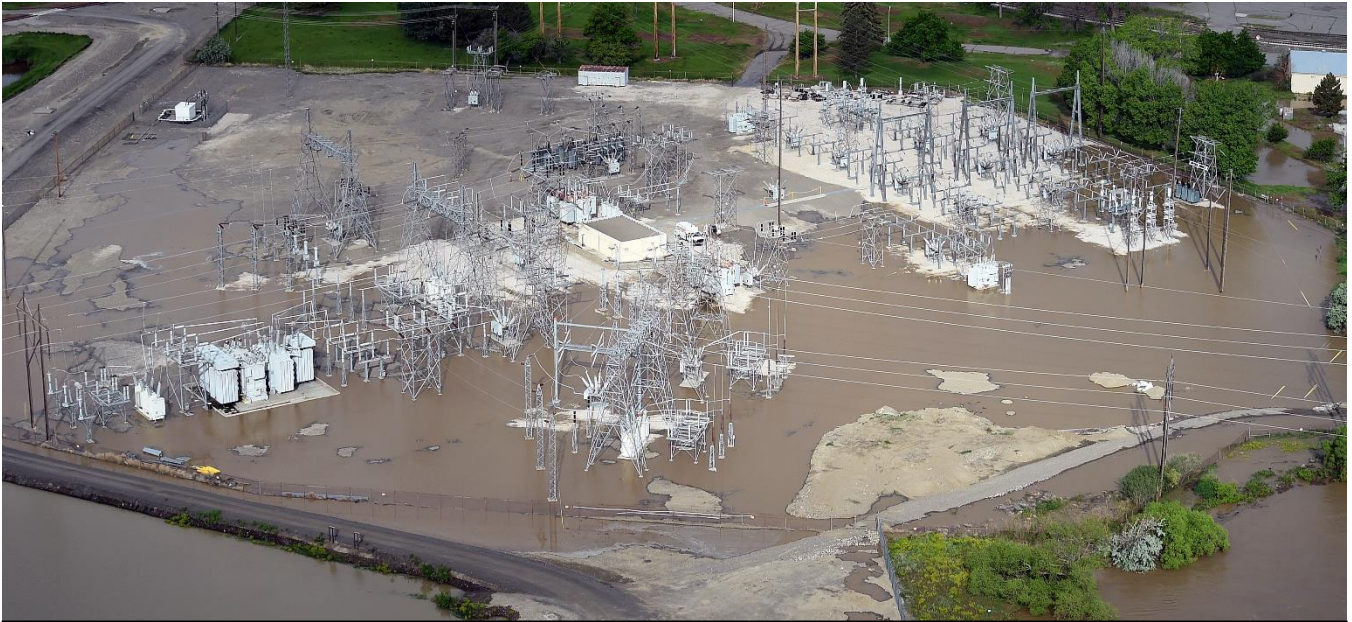
From severe drought in 2021 to major flood in 2022, the same unrestrained Yellowstone River does not shy away from testing what our infrastructure, our team, and our community could withstand. The result? Our talented and dedicated team was able to think on their feet and come up with creative solutions to continue providing quality water to the City. At the same time, our water plant was able to maintain operation at approximately half capacity to meet the City's water needs due to our citizens' compliance to the water conservation request.



Sed Pond #1 Failing



River level kept rising and was bypassing the preliminary treatment process. Our team worked tirelessly to adapt to the constantly changing situation and was able to maintain operation and meet our customer's water demand.



Shout out to Philips 66 for offering their equipment to pump water out of the substation so we could return to our main source of power. (Switchyard Flooding)



Billings is incredibly lucky to have our talented and dedicated team

Why was it called a 500-year flood?

The "500 year" term is a risk assessment tool used for flood insurance. It does not mean that the event happens only once every 500 years, but instead that there is a one in 500 chance that this amount of flooding will occur in a single year. The "500-year flood" corresponds to an AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) of 0.2-percent, which means a flood of that size or greater has a 0.2-percent chance (or 1 in 500 chance) of occurring each year. (usgs.gov)

Shortly after the Flood...

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell and U.S. Senator Jon Tester paid a timely visit to the Water Treatment Plant to see the flood's impact firsthand. Our plant staff and all Public Works staff received well deserved recognition for their talent, dedication, and hard work through challenging times. The dire need for the West End Water Reservoirs which would significantly extend Billings water supply was a major part of the discussion as well.



The new West End Water system will give the City the ability to isolate from the Yellowstone River and withstand natural and man-made disasters like drought, flooding, chemical spills, oil pipeline breaks, and ice jams. With a water surface area of 160 acres and a volume of 3,020 acre-ft, the reservoirs will be able to provide 40 days' worth of drinking water for the city should a disaster occur. Improvements to our current water plant are also in the works based on lessons learned from this historic flood event.



West End Water Reservoirs & Other Exciting Project Updates



West End Water Reservoirs

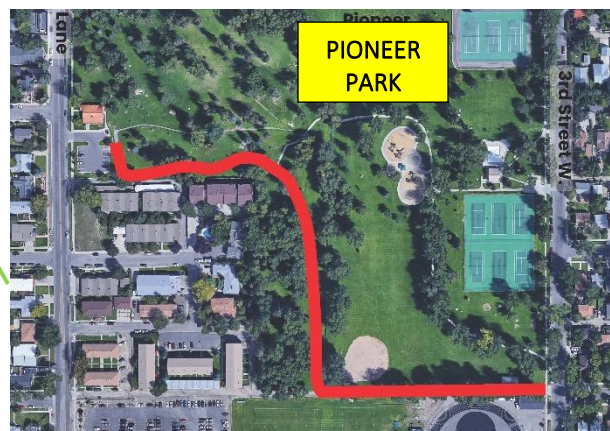
The design of the intake pump station is nearing completion and the City will solicit bids July 29, 2022. Work on the pipeline design continues with some early construction anticipated to begin late this year. Design continues on the water plant and water reservoir—stay tuned.

The **BBWA Canal Trail** was completed and is open! The Trail runs between 21st Street West and Woody Drive on the north side of the BBWA Canal and provides an important trail connection to Rose Park. This project was a joint effort between the Public Works Department who helped with design and dirt moving, The Planning Department who obtained grant funding, and Knife River who graveled and paved the trail.



The **Riverfront Park Trail** extension has completed design and will bid August 2 and be completed before June 1, 2023. This trail provides an important connection from Riverfront Park to the south Frontage Road and is as part of the Marathon Loop. A bridge is planned over the City County Drain as part of the project.

The **Pioneer Park Trail Replacement** will be reconstructed by late summer or early fall 2022.



More Updates on Street Projects



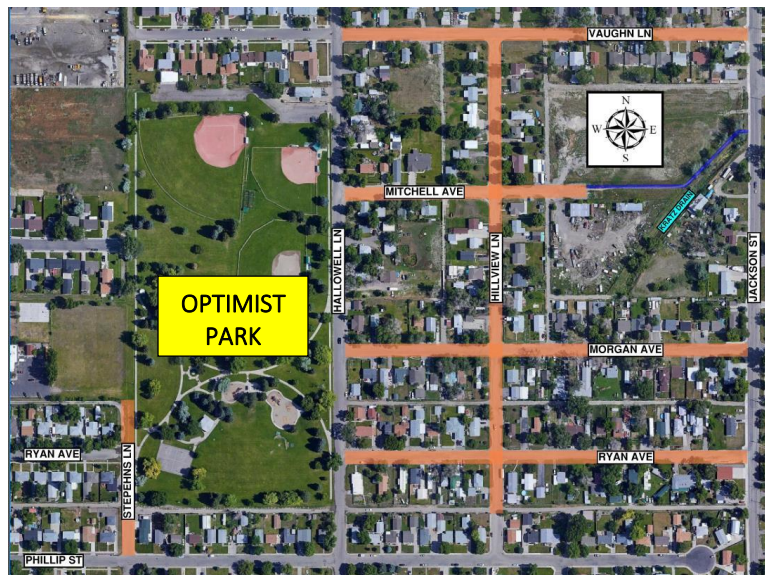
Muldowney Lane from **Midland Road** to **Elysian Road** is nearly designed and will bid this fall for early Spring 2023 construction.



Bruce Lane was recently paved adjacent to **Hallowell** (as shown).



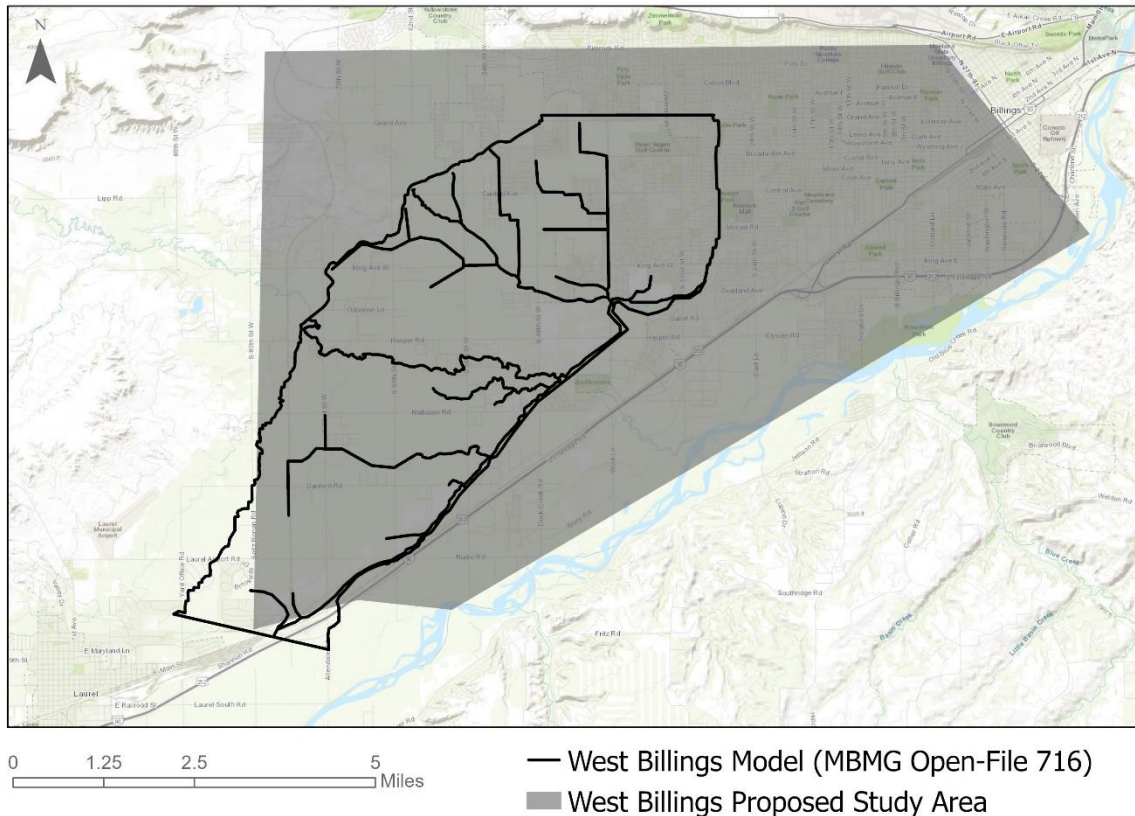
Vaughn, Hillview, and Mitchell Avenue include water main replacements, new sidewalk, and new curb and gutter. These streets are expected to be paved by late fall 2022.



The Northwest Billings Connector and **Skyline Trail** is anticipated to bid this fall with construction starting thereafter, pending federal grant approval. Right-of-way acquisition for this important connector is complete.

West End Groundwater Investigation Project

In response to the impacts of development and land use changes on the local aquifer, Billings and the local Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) office applied for a **2021 Ground Water Investigation Program Grant**. The City of Billings project competed against eight other projects and was successfully awarded a grant.



This figure shows the proposed GWIP study area compared to the groundwater model developed by previous MBMG work (Chandler and Reiten, 2019).

Project area size	62 mi ²
Project area Population change (2000-2019)	15.3%
County population Change (2000-2019)	22.9%
Long-term monitoring wells	5
Previous inventoried wells (GWIC)	173
Previous groundwater chemistry sites (GWIC)	60
Aquifer test analysis in GWIC	24
Pending Water Rights	3

With the award, the MBMG will be committing resources, manpower, and monies for at least the next three years to evaluate the effects of current and future residential and commercial growth on groundwater availability and quality (specifically nutrients). Another partner in this project will be the Department of Natural Resources Council who has already initiated a surface water monitoring investigation. MBMG is currently developing a work plan for the project and has already been gathering groundwater levels from existing wells.

The study area is approximately 62 square miles extending **east from 27th Street to 80th Street West** and from **Rimrock Road south to the Yellowstone River**. The initial focus of the investigation will likely be **west of Shiloh Road** focused on new developments who are relying on wells and septic systems. According to the MBMG, over 500 recorded wells have been drilled in the last 10 years. Also, there are more than 27 small public water systems operating outside the city limits between Billings and Laurel.

This project will be challenging and complicated, but the potential benefits will provide the tools for the city and county officials and developers to make more informed development decisions. One of the tools that will be provided by this project will be an updated comprehensive groundwater mapping program. The City is looking forward to partnering with the MBMG on this project.



Photo from Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology website - Measuring groundwater levels in the Flathead Valley provides information on aquifer response and groundwater flow directions.

More details, mbmg.mtech.edu/WaterEnvironment/GWIP/main.asp

Billings Residential Recycling Success 101

Contrary to popular belief, there ARE ways to recycle in Billings. As we continue to work toward providing more convenient and affordable recycling options, please consider participating in your Public Works Yard Waste Collection program, taking advantage of your Billings Regional Landfill Recycling Drop-off Site, or utilizing some private recycling companies. We hope this article could inspire a few small changes that suit your lifestyle and set you up for long lasting residential recycling success in our Billings community!



Drop it Off at the Billings Regional Landfill

GARAGE	OUTDOORS	HOUSEHOLD	E-WASTE
Antifreeze, Motor Oil, Oil Filters, Brake Fluid, Grease, Batteries, Fluorescent Lamps and Tubes, Mercury-containing Items, Paint, Solvents, Wood Preservatives, Paint Remover, Photographic Chemicals	Insect Spray, Pesticides, Fertilizers, Weed Killers, Herbicides, Pool Chemicals, Bait/Poison for Rodents	Ammonia-based Cleaners, Aerosol Cans, Drain Cleaners, Fluorescent Lamps/Tubes, CFLs (twisty lights), Deodorizers, Oven Cleaners, Spot Removers, Moth Balls	Cell Phones, Computers, Cables & Cords, Cameras, Ink & Toner, Hard Drivers, Game Consoles, Flatscreen Monitors, Fax Machines, iPods, iPads, Hard Drives, Speakers, Paper Shredders, PC Parts, Power Strips, Microwave Ovens, etc.
Clean Earth Environmental Solutions collects, recycles, and properly disposes of HHW products and materials from the landfill.			Yellowstone E-Waste Solutions

Drop it Off at the Trash for Trees Parks

Newspapers and aluminum cans are accepted at Stewart Park (26th St W), Castel Rock Park (Wicks Ln), and Veterans Park (13th St W) which will be collected by Public Works Solid Waste and delivered to Earth First Aid. Since the inception of this program in 1980, 3.9 million pounds of newspapers and 68 tons of aluminum cans have been collected. \$112,060.00 has been earned to purchase and plant 2,152 trees.

Curbside Recycling with Earth First Aid

Earth First Aid is currently the only curbside recycling resource in Billings for Paper, Plastic, and Aluminum/Steel Cans. Convenient weekly services come with a monthly fee.

Plastics, Cardboard, Newspaper, Aluminum Cans, Magazines (No glass, please!) can also be dropped off at their drop-off sites:

Albertson's located at 3137 Grand Avenue, the Elks Lodge parking lot on 934 Lewis Avenue, 1747 Poly Drive, and their shop on 458 Charles Street.



Data Driven All Season Road Safety for Zimmerman Trail

A **Remote Weather Information Station (RWIS)** is currently being installed for **Zimmerman Trail** capturing condition information at the first shaded corner as well as the roundabout on top. Once activated, these cameras will help keep you and loved ones safe by giving you a preview of road conditions before heading out. They will also help our team maintain the roads better by giving us information about **air temperature, road temperature, wind speed, relative humidity, and precipitation.**



Our Street-Traffic team closely monitors **Zimmerman Trail** condition all year round, especially from late fall to early spring to ensure that it is travel ready for your journeys to and from the Heights. This has been done by physically making trips to the trail in all weather conditions which is not always easy or timely.

Accessing critical data through these cameras will allow our Street-Traffic crews to monitor varying road conditions throughout the seasons with a simple touch of a button. Tackling winter storms, therefore, becomes more efficient and effective for Billings.

Other locations for RWIS installations are being considered in the planning as well.

Please follow us on [Facebook](#) for updates.

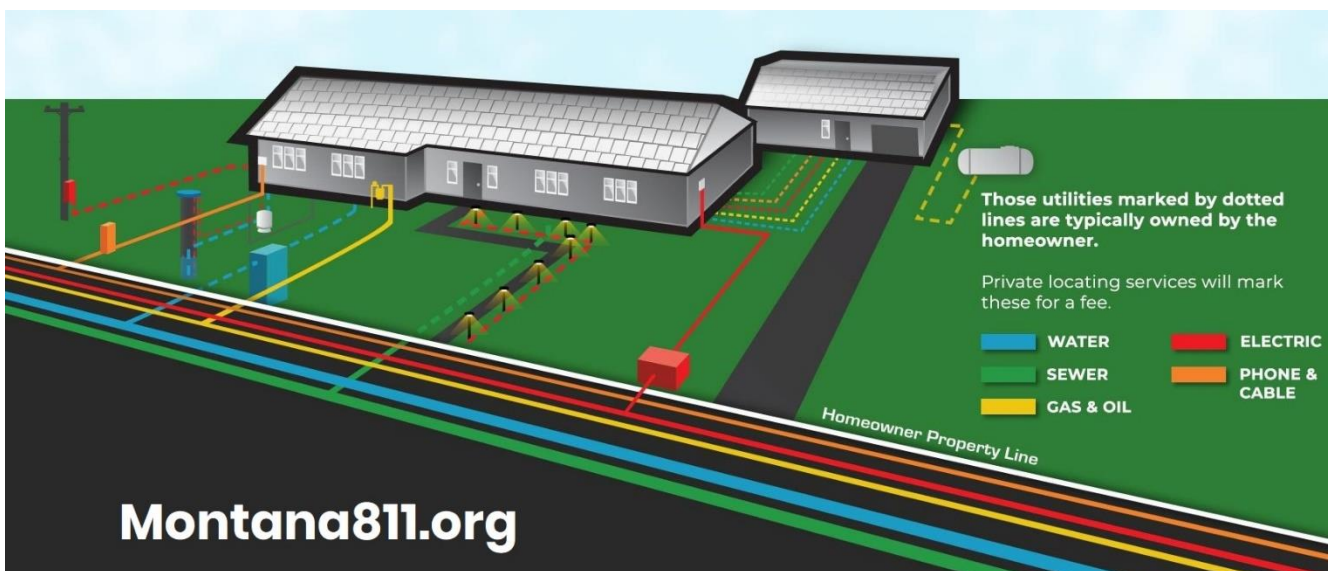
Expedited Utility Locating Made Possible with Better Technology

Under the big sky, we are always racing against the fleeing summer days to get our projects done! It is no exception this season. Many projects that involve digging are underway in Billings according to the colorful paints and flags popping up all over town. In June alone, our Distribution & Collection locators completed 1,294 Water and Sewer locates. As of the first three weeks in July, 1,115 locate requests came in already. Getting all this done with our limited staff can be challenging. That's when technology comes in for us.

When 811 is dialed, our Distribution & Collection locators will soon move to a newly improved 3-Step process.

1. Locator receives 811 tickets from supervisor via an APP on an iPad in the field
2. When a locate is completed, locator signs off and submits it for supervisor review
3. The 811 requesters are instantly notified when the supervisor closes out the ticket

This technology improvement replaces a paper process that has been in place. Both our crews and the contractors and homeowners who made the requests are able to save some time and save some trees. Truly it's a win-win all around!



Since we are on the subject...

1. Call 811 before you DIG! No matter how minor the DIG seems to be, even poles of a tent or a small gardening shovel may cause damage to utility lines below the surface.
2. Please leave the flags in the ground. Call your utilities provider for any questions about flags on your property.

With 500 miles of water lines (blue flags/paint) and 500 miles of sewer lines (green flags/paint) in Billings, our crews fulfill hundreds of 811 locate requests weekly to ensure projects big and small are safe to start. Thank you for being a good neighbor and doing your part!

City Receives GIS Mapping Award for Public Works & IT Collaboration

When it comes to data driven decision making, live and accurate data collection is crucial. To get there, Public Works teamed up with the IT team to develop a powerful Geographic Information System – GIS for not just Public Works but all departments in the City of Billings. The GIS Team worked closely with Public Works for more than 20 years, building base maps and hundreds of asset management layers.

Most recently, user friendly mobile apps were deployed where instant updates of any work being done on City maintained infrastructure is now a reality. With a few clicks of a mouse, our Street-Traffic supervisors can easily access information such as Stormwater Main Conditioning in a selected neighborhood (as the example shown). As crews in the field perform maintenance work, live updates are made to the conditioning information with the touch of a sync button. With the mobile app, crews also have the ability to work offline even if network is not available in certain areas of town. Any information associated with a piece of the Stormwater Main such as age, material, size, previous maintenance records can be pulled up onsite to help crews get their job done more efficiently.



“The excellent working relationship between Public Works and the GIS team is leveraging a solid GIS foundation that will help set the City up for long term success by increasing efficiencies and fostering collaboration among work groups.”

- *Jennifer Duray*
Deputy Director of
Billings Public Works

The maps created by the City of Billings GIS team have a broad range of applications such as data management, planning and analysis, field mobility, operational awareness, constituent engagement and more. From Trail maps to City Council election wards, to city limits boundary, to Billings crime mapping, many maps are available to our community. Please visit BillingsMT.gov and click on “maps” in the orange banner at the top of the home page anytime for more info. The City received the **Significant Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award** at the Esri GIS national convention in 2022 which puts Billings on the map. Pun intended!

Photo Evidence of Fun and Engagement from the Billings Community



Water Conservation Talk @ the Library

Letting the community know about what we do and how we do it through outreach and engagement is important to us at Billings Public Works!

From inviting you to the annual **Water Week Open House** and touring the water plant, to giving presentations on **how to save money and water in your own yard**, to bringing you on a **guided walking tour of the Shiloh Conservation Area** and more, we hope to have many future opportunities to share, learn, and grow together. Please follow us on [Facebook](#) for future events!



Learning about D&C equipment @ Water Week



Stormwater demo @ Water Week Open House



Walking Tour @ Shiloh Conservation Area



Backwash demo @ Water Week Open House



Sunset @ Shiloh Conservation Area

CONTACT US

Administration	406-657-8230
Engineering Services	406-657-8231
Environmental Affairs	406-247-8663
Solid Waste Services	406-657-8285
Street-Traffic Maintenance	406-657-8250
Utilities Customer Service	406-657-8315
After Hours Utility Emergency	406-657-8353

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Billings Heights Water District	406-252-0539
Montana-Dakota Utilities	406-896-4250
Northwestern Energy	888-467-2669



Billings
PUBLIC
WORKS

BillingsMTPublicWorks.gov



AT A GLANCE



**NEIGHBORHOOD TASK
FORCE LEADERSHIP
MEETING 8/25, CALL 247-
8676 FOR INFO**



**CDBG AND CDBG-CV PARK
IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
MOVING FORWARD**
WWW.BILLINGSMT.GOV/CDBGCV



**CODE ENFORCEMENT
BRINGS BACK
COMMERCIAL CODE
OFFICER**



**CITY OF BILLINGS APPLIES
FOR CDBG GRANT
FUNDING FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

Planning Division: Trail Connection Projects Move Ahead



Photo featuring BBWA canal Trail with recently completed pavement.

Whether it be by bike, foot, wheelchair, skateboard, or another mode of motorless transportation, the Planning Division, in partnership with the Billings Public Works Department, Billings Parks and Recreation Department, and non-profit Billings Trailnet, is making it easier for you to get from point A to point B, one trail at a time.

The most recent addition – the BBWA Canal Connection trail north of Rose Park. This new trail connects 21st Street West to Woody Drive. The trail is north of the ditch and south of Saint Francis School.

“It’s a short connection there, but it’s going to help people more easily get to Rose Park,” said Active Transportation Planner Elyse Monat with the City of Billings Planning & Community Services Department. Monat noted there are senior living facilities and affordable housing located northwest of Rose Park.

“It’s a really good connection because it will help those residents get to Rose Park, as well as walk around and enjoy the community,” she said.

Between a grant from the Recreation Trails Program, contributions from the Public Works Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, and Billings TrailNet, the project has come to fruition.

Another project located just east of Riverfront Park will provide a short connection between two trails a northern trail for transportation and a southern trail for recreation. The northern and southern trails will be built later by different funding sources. The connector between these two trails is funded by the Recreational Trails Program grant. The Parks Department will also be building a trailhead near the connector with funds they received through an oil spill settlement.

Planning Division Update

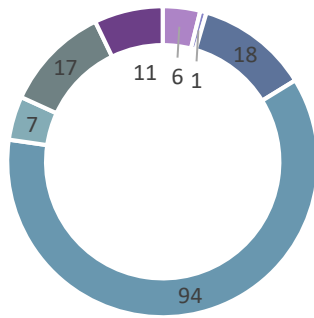
The first half of 2022 has proven to be a busy year and we are feeling it in the Planning Division. There have been several published articles as of late that focus on the attractiveness of Billings for new residents. These articles can be found in notable sources like the Wall Street Journal and Time Magazine. It seems many people are discovering what many of us already know, Billings is a community with a lot to offer! We continue to see housing market pressures based on many of our land use applications including, annexations, zone changes, and subdivisions and site plan reviews.

In addition to current planning like described above, the Planning Division is working on notable projects which include Subdivision Regulation amendments in both the City and the County, preparing Zoning Code Amendments for a handful of items that have been monitored over the past year, and preparing our annual Unified Planning Work Program for transportation planning



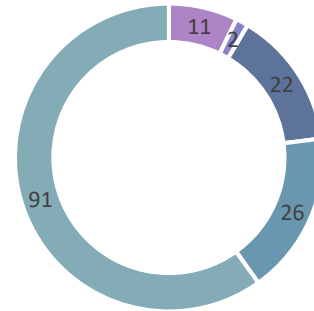
PLANNING

Subdivision Submittals of 2022



- Annexation
- BLR
- Master Site Plan
- Exempt Plat
- Expedited Subdivision
- Minor Subdivision
- Major Subdivision

Zoning Submittals of 2022



- Variance
- Zone Change
- Zoning Clarification
- Special Review
- Zoning Compliance



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CDBG-CV Funded Activities

The CD Board recommended a fast-tracked public service application process for awards up to \$15,000 per organization to expand social services to meet the needs of low-income residents impacted by the coronavirus. The City Council approved up to \$150,000 for fast-track grants. CD staff developed an application process and the following applications were approved and the projects are in progress:

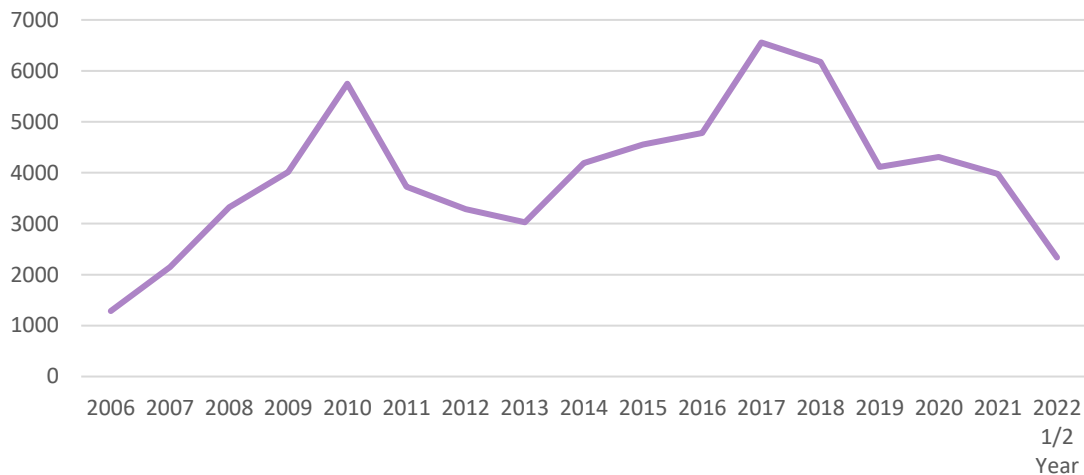
- Chinook Horses (\$15,000) for mental health equestrian therapy for low-income residents of Billings impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Head Start Explorers Academy (\$15,000) for information technology software and support to facilitate distance learning for children in Billings impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Education Foundation (\$12,000) for childhood literacy programming and backpack meals for children in Billings impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Family Promise (\$15,000) for emergency diaper assistance for families experiencing homelessness and impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Gratitude in Action (\$10,000) for housing subsistence payments for low-income individuals impacted by the pandemic to live in a sober living home and to provide Wi-Fi access to facilitate employment services for low-income families impacted by the pandemic.
- Alternatives, Inc. (\$15,000) for improved access to mental health services through information technology development for low-income residents of Billings impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.



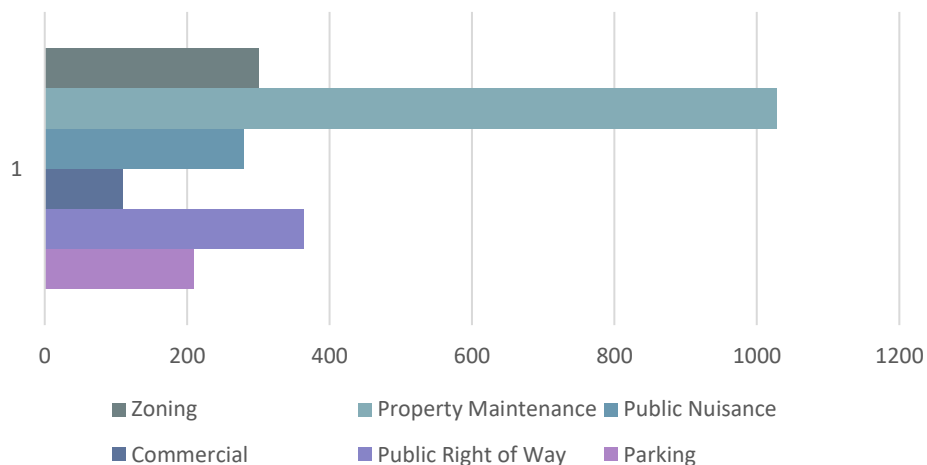
Code Enforcement Improving Neighborhoods

Through a solutions-oriented approach, code enforcement has partnered with programs throughout the city to improve neighborhoods. The CE Division, along with volunteers from Billings Adult Treatment Court conducted two voluntary abatements of residential properties in desperate need. The CE Division is also working with a veteran-based nonprofit to help a veteran in our city bring his property into compliance and remove it from our Dirty Dozen list. Problem solving is a priority for code enforcement, and we will continue to find ways to improve the health and safety of our citizens.

CE Cases Year to Year



1st Half 2022 - Types of Cases



An Update from the Planning & Community Services Director

Urban Renewal District TIF Funds Support Major Residential and Commercial Investment Across Billings

The City in April awarded a maximum reimbursement of \$1,000,000 of funds from the SBBURD to TPA Group, LLC for right-of-way and site improvements, utility extensions and demolition of existing structures to build two buildings with a combined total space of approximately 295,000 square feet. The approximately \$38 million project, to be known as the Billings Logistics Center, is located off the South Frontage Road between 3508 and 3218 South Frontage Road. It will consist of two state-of-the-art Class A concrete tilt-wall warehouse/distribution centers. TPA Group, LLC is an Atlanta-based corporation that specializes in developing large scale distribution and logistical facilities



TPA Group, LLC, Warehousing and Logistical Services Project



*Griffin Development, 36 Unit, Mixed Use Apartment Building
(Old Town Flats)*

The City in February awarded a maximum reimbursement of \$1,693,050 from the Downtown District to Griffin Development for development of its mixed-use project at 2316 1st Avenue North. The property would be the first phase of a development that would ultimately include two mixed use buildings on the half block property between North 23rd Street and North 24th Street. The approximately \$11.3 million project will bring additional housing choices to Downtown Billings as well as activate additional frontage on 1st Avenue North with pedestrian and business activity.

The City in July awarded a maximum of \$622,195 from the EBURD to J&S Properties (Yellowstone Ice and Water) for redevelopment of property to house a new Yellowstone Ice and Water manufacturing plant at 1523 Montana Avenue. This is the second phase for relocation and expansion for Yellowstone Ice and Water. The overall plan is for it to relocate its retail operations and then relocate its manufacturing facilities to the southern half of the property off of Montana Avenue. This TIF award supports demolition, street improvements, sidewalk construction, utility work, landscaping and fencing, reclaimed ice water irrigation system, and architectural design and permitting work for the approximately \$8 million project.



Yellowstone Ice and Water, New Manufacturing Plant