

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

August 12, 2022

- 1. Steady Grinding Coffee House** - Riverstone's health inspector performed a site visit to Steady Grinding Coffee House at 2376 Main Street on July 26th, 2022. At time of the site visit, no FDA food code violations were noted. Currently, neither city code nor state law prevent the kiosk from operating.

City code allows sexually oriented businesses in certain zoning districts within the city. However, this business would not be considered a sexually oriented business under the current definition in city code. See BMCC 27-1803. Therefore, it could not be required to be zoned similarly to those types of businesses. In any event, Steady Grinding Coffee House is currently located in a Heavy Commercial zone district, which is one of the districts in which sexually oriented businesses are permitted.

Council may consider regulating businesses to require a minimum dress code. This type of ordinance has been challenged in other jurisdictions, for example in Everett, Washington. That case began in 2017 and has not yet resolved. An appeals court remanded the case on procedural grounds to the district court to proceed on the merits of the case. The challenge was initially based on First Amendment right to freedom of speech/expression but following the appeals Court ruling, it now appears focused on Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection and Due Process claims. There are summary judgment motions pending and the Court has not yet ruled. Our research indicates the ordinance which requires a minimum dress code is still in effect in Everett, however it appears there are several bikini baristas in that city which are operating pending the outcome of the case. This case will provide helpful guidance once it has made its way through the system.

If a majority of Council wants to pursue regulating this type of business, Legal will need to research the issue more in-depth. Staff will require specific direction about what aspects Council would like to regulate, e.g., business license regulations, zoning, or any other areas as well as the specific requirements Council would like placed on this type of business so Legal staff can research and gather data to determine the city's authority to do so under Montana law.

- 2. 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.
- 3. Legislative Safety Forum** – Hopefully you have RSVP'd for Tuesday's legislative lunch being held from noon to 1:30 at the Northern. County Attorney Twito, Chief St John, City Attorney Dahl and PCSD Director Friday will make brief introductions of topics related to public safety. Most of the more in-depth conversation will likely happen at the breakout tables where the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Act, prosecution, code enforcement and other areas of interface will be discussed in preparation for the 2023 legislative session.

4. **Semi-Annual Reports** – Please find attached the semi-annual reports for the Parks & Recreation, Fire, BIRD, Downtown Billings Partnership, SBURA, Health Insurance and Initiatives.

5. **From the PIO Desk:**

Honoring Crow culture and community: New Heritage Garden welcomes patrons of Billings Public Library <https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2364>

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...parking

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=435985178576304&set=a.245649930943164>

Billings in the news

Solid Waste picks up 100,000 pounds of debris in Billings in one day after storm

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/solid-waste-picks-up-100-000-pounds-of-debris-in-billings-in-one-day-after-storm>

PHOTOS: Back to school Shop With a Cop on Sunday morning

https://billingsgazette.com/photos-back-to-school-shop-with-a-cop-on-sunday-morning/article_610dbb44-1673-11ed-999b-670526ce8d28.html#tracking-source=home-top-story

Billings kids stock up on school supplies with help from Billings Police Department

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-kids-stock-up-on-school-supplies-with-help-from-billings-police-department>

CodeRED warning system growing in Yellowstone County

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/codered-warning-system-growing-in-yellowstone-county>

Pump failure forces early closure of South Park pool in Billings

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/pump-failure-forces-early-closure-of-south-park-pool-in-billings>

Heritage Garden dedicated in front of Billings Public Library

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/heritage-garden-dedicated-in-front-of-billings-public-library>

Billings Library unveils new Heritage Garden

https://www.kulr8.com/news/billings-library-unveils-new-heritage-garden/article_a235701a-17ec-11ed-91ca-0307d7a19800.html

https://www.kulr8.com/news/new-heritage-garden-at-billings-public-library/article_bccb1b42-17e1-11ed-b6c1-6f5b12dc2b85.html



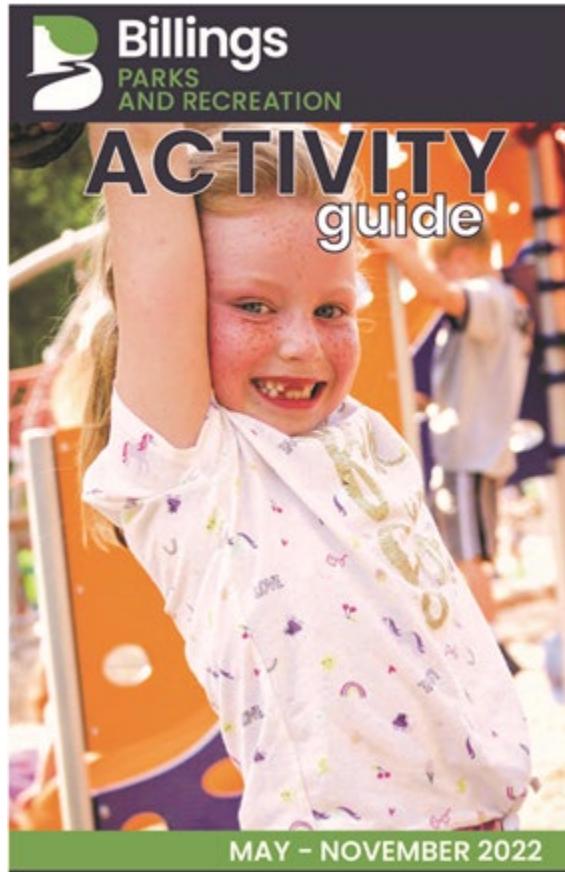
2022 Parks and Recreation Semi-Annual Report

Recreation Division

Summer Registration

Distribution of the 80-page 2022 Summer Activity Guide included direct mail to over 9,000 households who have recently utilized the services provided by the Department. In addition to the direct mail, the guide was inserted in the April issue of Simply Local Magazine. This magazine, which focuses on all things local, delivers over 13,000 copies to local business and organizations. Furthermore, staff delivered the Guide to all elementary schools in the Billings area.

The new Activity Guide features recreation programs offered during the months of May through November. Parents were able to register online beginning April 1st for all summer activities including our popular Adventure Camp Series, Pioneer Playhouse, Magic City Summer Camp, our Sports Camp Series, Tennis Instruction, Learn to Swim Instruction, Aquatic Day Camps, and many Special Interest programs. With the momentum we achieve through our summer activities, this summer Guide also includes popular programming for the fall including NFL Flag Football, Adult Coed Volleyball, Girls 4-8th Grade Basketball and Adult Tennis Under the Lights, just to name a few. Summer program registration for the month of April increased 17% compared to last year, which had been our most successful year to date. For comparison to pre-pandemic registration, April's 2022 total registration increased by 110% from 2019. By the middle of May, all of our summer day camps had reached their maximum enrollment.



Aquatic Operations

All of our Aquatic facilities opened for the summer on time. Rose and South pools opened on June 8th. The wading pools at Pioneer and Hawthorne Parks opened on June 13th. Our lifeguarding staff

completed over 20 hours of training, which includes certification and re-certification classes and our in-service training June 5th through the 7th. During our in-service training, lifeguard staff performed many refresher scenarios and skills including CPR, back boarding, and deep-water retrieval.

Currently we have 42 lifeguards hired to supervise both the community and wading pools. Our goal each year is to hire at least 50 lifeguards. Being short 8 guards, we are seeing some additional overtime hours to provide the level of safety required to operate the pools. Our Department provided 4 Lifeguard Certification courses during the months of May and June to provide multiple opportunities to certify more guards.

Pool attendance for June was down 30% compared to last year. The main reason for this was the cool and wet weather we had during that month. Last year, the pools closed only once due to weather, this year we were closed five days during the month of June. Last year was one of the hottest and driest summer on record and as a result, we saw record-breaking attendance last year with over 53,000 visits to Rose and South Pools.



Winter/Spring Youth Sports

Recreation has had a great start in 2022. Enrollment is up, staffing is up, and positive impact on the community is up. The following is a brief recap of the first six months of the year. Youth Sports for the winter and spring months included Boys Basketball and Girls Volleyball. Boys Basketball utilized 5 different middle school sites with game days at Orchard Elementary. The boys were divided into 4th/5th grade and 6th graders and a total of 22 teams were created. All 161 kids participated in games and developed their skills at bi-weekly practices. We had 16 great coaches this year and a game day supervisor working hard to give the kids a great experience. The same setup was used for Girls Volleyball. We used 3 sites, with 168 players divided up into 22 teams. We used 12 excellent coaches for this league who did an incredible job passing on their knowledge to these young players.

Boys Basketball

- 22 teams with 161 total players.
- 16 Coaches
- 8 weeks of practice and 5 weeks of games

Girls Volleyball

- 22 teams with 168 total players
- 12 coaches
- 8 weeks of practice and 5 weeks of games

Adult Sports

Adult Sports for the start of the year include Men's and Women's City League Basketball, and Co-Ed Volleyball. Both offerings run from the beginning of January to the first week in April. City League basketball is hugely popular with 58 teams signing up. The league was split up with 48 men's teams and 10 women's teams. A total of close to 600 players participate in the league, with games being held at all 6 Middle School gymnasiums in Billings. Each team plays 1 game per week for the 9-week regular season, and plays at least 2 games in the double elimination tournament at the end of the season. We hire on 14 referees to handle all 375 games that are played and 18 scorekeepers and site coordinators help facilitate everything else needed on site. Co-Ed Volleyball follows a similar setup with Games being played every Sunday at Castle Rock Middle School. Twenty-four teams and close to 200 players competed in 9 regular season games and a double elimination tournament at the conclusion of the season. Only 3 staff members are needed to facilitate this league on Sundays.

City League Basketball

- 58 teams with close to 600 total players
- 14 referees on staff
- 18 site coordinators and scorekeepers handle the games
- 9 weeks of regular season games
- Double elimination tournament
- 13-week season in total

Adult Volleyball

- 24 teams with close to 200 total players
- 3 Staff members overseeing game days
- 9 weeks of regular season games
- Double elimination tournament
- 12-week season in total

Summer Camp Staffing

While the Recreation Division saw many staffing challenges in 2021, this year we have recovered to full staffing for summer camps. Pay raises, extended training, and promoting a team atmosphere seem to have caused the recovery. Enrollment in all Summer Recreation Camps, like last year, has been exceptional. We have consistently maxed out enrollment in all major camps, as well as all supplemental camps that we offer. With upgraded staffing we are able to keep excellent ratios of campers to counselors. This keeps our camps safe and our staff energized to do the best job they can do.

- 35 Camp Counselors working 30-40 hours per week
- Average of 5 camps per week with roughly 150 kids attending per week
- Dozens of parks and small business visited throughout the summer
- 4 Bus Drivers on staff
- 21 sport, special interest and outdoor recreation weekly camps
- 3 main camps that run for 11 weeks

Tennis and Pickleball Programs

Through the winter and spring of 2022, Billings Parks and Recreation provided tennis programming both indoors and outdoors. In April and May of 2022 Billings Parks and Recreation was able to expand its Junior Varsity (JV) Tennis program in Partnership with School District II. This year, we offered twice a week instruction to all players not currently practicing on a varsity team. This allowed coaches to have more players participate in their programs and begin to build their programs from an introductory level instead of making cuts as in years past. In addition to the practices, we also provided 3 JV tennis meets where these players were introduced to competition in an educational and instructional setting. This program has been a very big success in growing tennis in areas we have not been able to reach. Many of these players have continued into our summer high school programs.

- Winter Tennis Is Elementary: 73 Participants | Ages K-5 | Eagle Cliffs and Meadowlark Elementary Schools
- Future Stars Super Saturday: 10 Participants | 1 Day Entry Level Competition Event
- Ten and Under Tennis at North Park Center: 10 Participants | Saturday Lesson Program Held at North Park Center
- Junior Varsity Tennis
- Program in Partnership with School District II: 25 Participants



Future Stars Super Saturday

Our flagship summer tennis program, the City of Billings Tennis Academy, finished its first session at the end of June. The City of Billings Tennis Academy provides lessons and clinics for all ages and abilities and is available at three parks throughout the city.

- Hot Shots Ages 4-8: 36 Participants | Pioneer A.M & P.M, Rose and Castle Rock Park
- Rallies (10 & Under): 37 Participants | Pioneer, Rose, and Castle Rock Park
- Futures (11 + Beginner): 38 Participants | Pioneer A.M. & P.M., Rose and Castle Rock Park
- Challengers (11 + Intermediate): 16 Participants | Pioneer, Rose and Castle Rock Park
- Future Stars (Advanced Elem. & Middle School): 7 Participants | Elks Tennis Center
- All Stars (Advanced High School): 12 Participants | Pioneer Park



All Stars (High School High Performance)

- Adult Beginner: 15 Participants | Pioneer Park P.M.
- Adult Intermediate: 15 Participants | Pioneer Park P.M.
- Adult Live Ball Under the Lights: 5 Participants | Pioneer Park P.M

City of Billings Tennis Academy First Session: 178 Total Participants

Sharing our Tennis Success

In May of this year, Brad Knutson, Recreation Specialist for Billings Parks and Recreation, and Andrea Johnson, USTA Montana Executive Director, presented at the Montana Trails Recreation and Parks Association (MTRPA) annual convention in Great Falls. The two presented on behalf of USTA and municipality partnerships and described how Billings Parks and Recreation has seen ever growing success in their racquet sport programs through the past 5 years. Billings is the only city in Montana to offer introductory (grassroots) tennis programming year round. Its partnership with USTA Montana has made this possible through providing grants, equipment, and educational training workshops for instructors.



Brad Knutson and Andrea Johnson, MTRPA Conference 2022

Pickleball

Throughout the spring, Billings Parks and Recreation has offered multiple Pickleball Boot Camps as well as a tournament in the middle of May. These programs have proven to be extremely popular as Pickleball community continues to grow in Billings. Pickleball programs are hosted at the Lillis Park Pickleball Complex.

In March, we introduced an online court reservation system for the Lillis Park Pickleball courts to help alleviate some of the demand from the ever growing Pickleball community. This online court reservation system is included with our membership to the USTA and provides an easy-to-use program to manage the complex. Users can scan any of the QR codes around the complex, on our website, the Billings Parks and Recreation app, or our semi-annual activity guide and are directed to the courts available to be reserved anytime during park hours. This online

Lillis Park Pickleball Court Reservation				View as Administrator
Saturday 9th July				
Pickleball Court 1 Lillis Park	Pickleball Court 2 Lillis Park	Pickleball Court 4 Lillis Park	Pickleball Court 3 Lillis Park	
06:00 am				06:00 am
07:00 am				07:00 am
08:00 am	08:00 am - 09:00 am Diane reichenberg			08:00 am
09:00 am				09:00 am
10:00 am				10:00 am
11:00 am		Book at 11:00 am - 12:00 pm		11:00 am
12:00 pm	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Grace Peters			12:00 pm
1:00				1:00

Pickleball Court Reservation System

reservation system has proven successful in the spring and summertime months providing all an equal opportunity to enjoy the complex.

Music Programming

Billings Parks and Recreation has continued to provide music based camps and classes through the spring and summer of this year. Through the spring, we offered Adult Piano Lessons at the Rose Park Pool activity room. This class is provided in partnership with the Billings Music Teachers Association and filled both beginner and intermediate sessions.

In June, we hosted our 5th Annual Rock Band Camp. This week-long camp allows middle school aged students to spend a week learning, rehearsing, and performing as a real live rock group. This camp, hosted at Ben Steele middle school, put on a live concert at Veterans Park at the end of the week.



Kids from our other summer camps watch Rock Band Camp perform at Veterans Park

Billings Community and Senior Center

Billings Community and Senior Center is a place where seniors have the opportunity to age with grace and in place through participation in our recreation and wellness programming. Since the beginning of 2022, the Billings Community and Senior Center has increased offerings for seniors to participate in programs. We have continued to increase programming that is inclusive and allows seniors to participate no matter what their fitness level. This has continued to expand programming that allow seniors to gain strength and mobility, increasing their quality of life.

Senior wellness programs such as cards and games continues to give seniors the opportunity to socialize and meet with their peers. Participation continues to increase as more seniors want to get out of their homes. Senior programming has increased by 25% with the addition of 6 new recreation and wellness programs ranging from Zumba Gold, chair strength training, cardio walking, drumming for health, cardio strength and senior kettlebell classes. The most popular new program has been Chair Strength Training. We started this program in May at the Adult Resource Alliance and has continued to grow in popularity.

As our programs, grow, so does the need to bring on more qualified Fitness and Wellness Instructors. Similar to other departments and businesses, we struggle with finding qualified instructors and staff. With the retirement of our Administrative Support I, we adjusted the position into a Recreation and Wellness Support II, which allowed us to fill the position with an individual who could also be trained as an Instructor. This allows for another permanent staff to be available to step in as a sub when instructors are out. She is also trained in Senior Yoga which helps with subbing for classes we struggle to get substitute instructors for. Currently our Rec & Wellness Specialist teaches 9 to 12 classes a week and our Rec & Wellness Support teaches 2 to 6 classes a week. While not ideal, it is helps us continue to provide quality programming for our seniors.

Community Outreach and Engagement

Inclusive Design Doctoral Capstone Project

In January of 2022, Devin Wilkey, an Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student began his project with the Parks and Recreation Department to assess our Parks and Park facilities for inclusive design. Occupational Therapy students receive a unique blend of education and experience working with populations across the lifespan, a variety of conditions, and a focus on performance and participation in the activities of daily life. Because of this background, Occupational Therapists are well-suited to serve as consultants for inclusive park design in partnership with other key players such as landscape architects, park planners, people with disabilities, and community members. The resources created for this doctoral project were intended to guide future development and decision-making concerning park and playground design, and equip the department with additional knowledge to assist in planning inclusive parks where people of all abilities can play together.

With this information, the city will be better equipped to plan inclusive parks where people of all abilities can play together.

The doctoral capstone project included many components. A needs assessment survey was sent to Billings residents who have a disability, or care for someone with a disability. Education activities were completed concerning the city parks and people with a disability, and extensive research was conducted on inclusive park design. The student worked with several professionals in the field including Ingrid Kanics, OTR/L, playground inspector, and inclusive design consultant. Selected parks were evaluated and reports were prepared for the parks and recreation department. Additional resources were also provided for the Parks and Recreation department. Paul Reinhardt, Billings Parks and Recreation Department Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, advised and supervised the project. The Parks evaluated were Castle Rock, Centennial, Central, Hawthorne, North, Optimist, Pioneer, Rose, and South. The selected parks receive high visitation and represent key offerings for the community. However, the parks evaluated do not necessarily represent all the inclusive features available. Playgrounds were emphasized, but general evaluation of park features and amenities was also completed as it is impossible to evaluate inclusive design without considering the broader context of the park. The resulting document provided the department with recommendations, standards, checklists, and evaluation tools to ensure future park projects provide opportunities to be more inclusive to individuals with disabilities.

Volunteer Projects & Events

Arbor Day

The Parks and Recreation Department hosted the Annual Arbor Day Celebration at Castle Rock Park on May 5th! Our parks are home to over 10,000 trees and we understand the many benefits that trees provide to our park users and community as a whole. From providing shade to storm water management, urban temperature regulation to increasing property values, trees have a larger impact on our everyday lives than we often recognize.

After a couple of years of this event being disrupted by COVID, we were able to get back into the swing of things and hold a full event. This year's event included volunteers planting 25 trees at the park, 24 educational booths, and 450 fourth grade students rotating through those booths learning about trees, nature, and our natural environment. All together there were over 100 volunteers at the event! The event concluded with the official Arbor Day Ceremony, and the ceremonial planting of the Arbor Day Tree, this year named "potato" by the students.



Kids learn about noxious weeds at the Yellowstone County Weed District booth



Students from across SD2 listen to Councilmember Owen speak at the Arbor Day Ceremony

Earth Day

In celebration of Earth Day this year, we hosted a Tree Planting volunteer opportunity at Mountview Cemetery to continue our commitment to enhancing the natural beauty of the cemetery. As we look to expand into unused sections of the cemetery, we planted 19 trees on this day to beautify these sections. Burial locations near trees are one of the most requested settings when individuals select graves to purchase. Mountview Cemetery is committed to providing the community an attractive, peaceful sanctuary to celebrate and commemorate the lives of our loved ones. Mountview Cemetery is the largest and oldest continually operated cemetery in the region and the cemetery is used daily by walkers, joggers, and people wishing to view birds and wildlife. The oldest part of the cemetery was opened over 135 years ago in the year 1881, and we are still growing with the total future size of about 65 acres.



Volunteers Plant Trees at Mountview

Downtown Rotary Club Projects

The Downtown Rotary Club volunteered with two projects this summer. One was a rims cleanup at Swords Park, which has become an annual event for the club. The second was a painting project to repaint the picnic shelter located near the western edge of the park near the Rocky Mountain College Soccer Field. The fresh coat of paint was badly needed as the shelter was beginning to peel to bear wood and would have continued to deteriorate if not for the work of the group.



Rotary Club members painting the shelter at Veterans Park

Mountview Cemetery Headstone Project



Volunteers replace a headstone after leveling and bringing the headstone back to grade

In March, a group of Occupational Students from University of Mary helped with a headstone raising project at Mountview Cemetery. Many of the headstones located in the older areas of the cemetery have begun to sink and become overgrown by the turf. Many of the members buried here may no longer have family in the area and so these students helped with bringing the headstones back to ground level and help those buried at Mountview from becoming lost and forgotten. University of Mary students have made volunteering with the department an annual tradition and this year they helped raise 36 headstones at the cemetery.

Social Media Intern

This year, the Parks and Recreation Department hired a social media intern to help oversee and create content for the departments social media platforms. This position, overseen by the Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, has helped highlight programs and projects for the department to help raise community awareness of the departments activities and improve engagement with community members. Thanks to the efforts of this position, the department Facebook page reach (number of people who saw our content) during the month of June was 30,446 individuals, and our Instagram reach was 5,003 individuals. Our Facebook page visits also increased with over 4,000 visits in the month of June. We increased our Facebook page followers by 241 individuals and our Instagram page by 92 individuals in June. In today's technology driven world, we have utilized social media as an important tool to keep the community informed of projects, programs, and services the department provides to the community.

Landon's Miracle Field Grand Opening

The Landon's Legacy Foundation was born after Landon Smith's passing in order to keep his amazing spirit alive in our community. In 2013, Marcie Smith approached the City of Billings with the idea of building a Miracle Field at Poly Vista Park. After years of planning, collaboration, and fundraising, the Landon's Legacy Foundation and Billings Parks and Recreation are proud to announce the Grand Opening of Landon's Miracle Field, Billings' first Miracle League Baseball Field! This special needs baseball field is built with custom designed rubberized turf field that accommodates wheelchairs and other adaptive equipment. This phase of development has also provided important park infrastructure improvements, laying the groundwork for future fully accessible park features. Most notably, it has created the opportunity to provide programming to serve children and adults who suffer from any physical or mental disabilities which excludes them from other baseball leagues.

The impacts this project to the Billings Community and surrounding area cannot be understated and we believe that an occasion as momentous as this deserves a proper celebration! The Poly Vista Miracle Field Grand Opening represents the culmination of 9 years of hard work and perseverance, and is the realization of a dream come to reality. The Grand Opening will take place on **Wednesday, August 17th at 5:00pm**. We expect this event to have a large showing of public support. As the Grand Opening Committee works towards finalizing plans for this event, we will look to provide fun activities for the whole family, including a live band, free ice cream, food, a dunk tank, photo booth, mascots, and more! We look forward to opening this remarkable facility to the community with a celebration that embodies the passion that made this vision become a reality.



Amend Park Community Garden

The Amend Park Community garden is in full swing of our 9th gardening season. Parks and Recreation staff works closely with the volunteer Garden Leadership Team to coordinate community garden projects and workdays to improve and maintain the garden. The orientation for the garden took place on Saturday, May 14th after which, the gardeners helped in the first garden workday to prepare the garden and communal spaces. In the 2021 growing season, Amend Garden grew over 5,000lbs of produce.

Community Development Block Grant Projects

North Park Restroom

Projects at North Park include replacing the restroom that is located in the center of the park with upgraded facilities that include touch-less restroom fixtures. We have selected a restroom from the

manufacturer and are working to select an engineering firm to do geotechnical report and design the pad that the restroom will sit on top of and utility connections to the facility.

[North Park Adult Exercise Equipment & Shade Structure](#)

We have received product information from Greenfields Outdoor Fitness for the Outdoor Exercise Equipment that will be installed at North Park adjacent to the splash pad and playground. There will need to be some site modifications and we are working with a Landscape Architect to design these changes. We will contact manufacturer with final site dimensions once design is finished. Once this is complete, we will order the adult exercise equipment and shade structure.

[Comanche Park Playground and ADA route](#)

Comanche Park will see a new playground equipment and ADA accessibility upgrades. The existing playground is very outdated and many parts have been removed, reducing the play value. The new playground will also include an ADA Accessible walkway to the equipment. We have selected the new playground equipment through an online voting contest and have ordered the playground equipment. We are working to find a landscape architect to do some site modifications to expand the play pod area and design the ADA routes to the playground.



[Pioneer Park Heritage Trail and Pioneer Park Restroom](#)

This route is now part of the City's first neighborhood bike way, a 4+ mile route connecting residents living in housing of all income levels to everyday needs such as schools, health care, healthy foods, jobs, etc. The route runs from the North Park area to a little north of Rose Park connecting 3 community parks. The section of trail running through Pioneer Park was identified as the weak link due to its condition, reducing the effectiveness of the route for more cautious users such as seniors, families, and people with disabilities. This project has been designed and bid, and the contractor is scheduled to begin replacing the trail in late August or early September. The restrooms near the tennis courts at Pioneer will also receive upgrades to improve the condition of the facility.

[North Park Center and Zimmerman Center ADA Accessibility and Touchless Features](#)

The North Park Center and the Zimmerman Center at Pioneer Park will receive upgrades that will improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities, as well as install touch-less features to restrooms and kitchen areas. Since these facilities host our summer camp programs and is in use 6-7 days per week, we will begin making progress on these projects after the summer programs are complete.

Parks Division

In early 2022, we saw a return to a more normal weather pattern for Billings, cold and snow with a couple large snow events with large accumulations. Staff was busy clearing trails and walkways. When not clearing snow, staff worked on pump stations and intake screens. Also, all small equipment is inspected and serviced during the winter.

There was a large changeover in staff over the winter. Six new equipment operators were hired, and the Park's mechanic retired, making a total of seven new fulltime staff hired over the winter. All the new faces required hours of training in everything from chemical applications to irrigation programing. Just getting the new-hires familiar with where all the parks are located takes time. This training carries over into the spring and the addition of 35 seasonal positions.

This spring was very challenging because the night time temperatures remained well below freezing. Irrigation systems and restroom facilities can't be opened because the water services come above ground and are vulnerable to freezing. Once the temperatures allowed staff to activate systems, we were well into April, almost a month later than normal. The change in schedule set the Department back with a number of projects including park cleanup and seasonal hires.

Park Projects

Montana Avenue Tree Replacement

The environment for growing trees along Montana Avenue is challenging at best, very hot and dry in the summer and the above ground beds are more susceptible to temperature extremes. Adding to that is the trees are planted in a restrictive container making for shallow rooting. The trees are starting to show signs of stress. The Parks Division has started the process of removing the trees that are most affected and replanting with hardier varieties. Removal of the old trees took place in the winter, and trees were replanted in the spring. This is a multi-year project scheduled to be completed in 2025.



Playground Maintenance

Park staff took advantage of the winter to improve the safety of the playgrounds around town. New engineered wood fiber (EWF) was installed to enhance the existing fall protection. This work is done in the winter for a number of reasons; first the ground is frozen so less damage to the grass areas and second the playgrounds are not very busy. Inspections are also done during the winter year to ensure the playgrounds start the season ready for summer.

[Ice Rink at Veterans Park](#)

In order to provide year-round activity options, staff flooded the ice rink at Veterans this winter. The last couple of winters the weather hasn't cooperated and the Department didn't try to produce a rink. This winter saw temperatures cold enough and a rink was open for use from December through February. This is always a very popular free activity the Parks and Recreation Department tries to facilitate yearly.



[New Equipment](#)

Through the Equipment Replacement Program (ERP) the Parks Division was able to replace a 2008 John Deere zero-turn mower. Also, a trailer that was damaged in a collision was replaced. A Bob Cat mini-excavator is on order but with shipping and delivery delays, the excavator hasn't arrived yet.

[Lillis and Terry Park Playgrounds](#)

From demolition of the old equipment, taking delivery and storage of the new equipment, to installation of the fall protection surfacing, Park's staff was involved in the replacement of the playground at Lillis and Terry Parks. By using Park staff, considerable savings can be added back to the playground to provide even more equipment. Projects like this allow staff to be more involved in what is happening at the parks and provides a nice change of pace.



[Terry Park Shelter](#)

Park staff completed the shelter project at Terry Park. New irrigation was installed around the shelter and along the new accessible route. Sod was installed in the disturbed areas instead of seeding to shorten the time to opening and eliminate some of the mud issues associated with seeded areas.

Vandalism

Over the last six months there has been some very destructive activities in the parks. Here are a few examples of the more costly damages.



Left to Right: A spray feature is vandalized and removed from splash pad; the lights in the Shiloh tunnel were pulled down; the tennis court fence at Pioneer Park is hit by vehicle.

Accessible Fishing Pier

The new accessible fishing pier at Lake Josephine was finally installed this spring. Shortly after the pier was completed and was being utilized by the public, the flood floated the pier off the tie down points. Once staff is able to float the dock back into the lake this is going to be a great place to try your hand at fishing and a great added amenity to the park.



Flood

The June flood caused considerable damage at Riverfront Park, and caused the park to close for a couple weeks. The new pump station (replaced in 2020) went under water, the vault toilets filled with



Flooding at Riverfront covered the entire eastern portion of the park reaching into the recently paved roads and parking lot on the western side of Lake Josephine.

flood water, the newly resurfaced roads were damaged and 6 large cottonwood trees fell one on top of a concrete picnic table destroying it. Staff spent over 80 hours cleaning up debris and mud. Most everything has been repaired and the park is safe to reenter. As the flood waters receded the mosquitoes made a resurgence though.



A large Cottonwood uprooted at Riverfront Park

Forestry

This spring, the Forestry Division planted 145 trees around the City. Twenty-five trees were planted during the Arbor Day Celebration, held this year in Castle Rock Park. A special planting at Mountview Cemetery accounted for another twenty-seven trees planted in anticipation of opening a new Cemetery section. Ten Memorial Trees have been planted so far in 2022 at various locations throughout the City. The remaining 94 trees were planted at Parks across Billings. A number of different varieties were planted this year ranging from Rocky Mountain Juniper, Ponderosa Pine and even a Shagbark Hickory tree.

The strategic planting plan was started in 2022 to focus efforts on the West End parks. The Midtown Section will begin in 2023, and the Heights thereafter. Newly planted trees require a lot of care and maintenance, for example, weeding, mulching and watering, and we are more efficiently able to provide that if new trees are concentrated in regions.

In general, we try to bring trees first to parks that are relatively tree-poor, rather than add to large parks' collections. An exception to this is that in parks heavily dominated by Green Ash, trees will be planted that can serve as replacement trees for ash should the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) arrive here and decimate Green Ash trees. The EAB was recently found in Portland, Oregon, marking the first time it has been found on the west coast. Many experts believe it is a matter of "when" not "if" the EAB will get to Billings so planning to minimize the effect it will have is one of our top concerns.

Month	Pruned-Large	Pruned-Small	Planted	Removed	Inventory/Inspected
January	52	70		13	
February	83				
March	46	33		2	643
April	33		94	1	
May	98		46	25	
June	177		5	4	
Totals	489	103	145	45	643

Another exception to our strategic planting plan is Centennial Park where we have scores of spots to fill and are adapting the arboretum we are planting there to hold trees capable of withstanding the relatively harsh growing conditions of this new park (jumbled, clayey soils and a surface exposed to wind and cold). Centennial will be a showcase of hardy trees that survive well in the face of everything

Montana weather can throw at them and we will add continually to this park as time and resources allow and trees are available until it also becomes both beautiful and the education provided there about trees and arboreta is world class.

Riverfront Buckthorn Removal

Riverfront Park is a crown jewel of the Billings Natural Area Parks system with nearly two miles of access to the Yellowstone River, a stately over story riparian forest with understory shrubs and native grasslands. It is officially listed as a “birding hotspot” and some birdwatchers call it one of the best birding spots in Montana because of the diversity of habitats present: ponds, wetlands, forest, shrub-covered savannahs, grasslands, river side-channel sloughs and riverine habitat among others. Beyond birders, it is also an excellent place for picnics, photography, kayaking and canoeing, fishing, swimming, cross-country skiing and hiking.

Riverfront Park is plagued, however, by a massive invasion of Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus Cathartica*) which covered most of the eastern two-thirds of Riverfront Park. The Parks and Recreation Department started trying to control buckthorn in 2019 and experimented with techniques commonly used in other areas, most effective of which was to have crews go in and cut buckthorn with saws, loppers or pruners and then treat the stump with an herbicide. This approach was seasonally limited, slow, labor-intensive and left massive piles of above-ground slash to be treated. So, another approach was needed.



The Parks Division was contacted by a local contractor that had acquired equipment used mainly to thin overly dense forests created by decades of fire-exclusion from forested landscapes that once burned every few years. This equipment was readily adapted to cutting through dense buckthorn, working around and leaving intact, trees and shrubs that will form the basis for a new forest comprised of native vegetation that we will nurture into being over the next several years.



The total treatment area was 30 acres. Buckthorn seeds remain viable in the soil for several years, so buckthorn re-sprouting from stumps and thousands and thousands of buckthorn seedlings will emerge. Limited trials have shown buckthorn to be susceptible to commonly used herbicides so we are confident in our ability to control buckthorn through chemical and mechanical means. We look forward to the challenge of reintroducing native shrubs, forbs and herbs back into this unique riparian system and rebuilding a trail system through the area.

Fireflies in Billings Natural Area Parks

For years there have been anecdotal reports of firefly sightings in Montana, however, scientific documentation of these populations was lacking so this phenomenon was left in the same category as bigfoot, leprechauns and unicorns – strong opinions but no real evidence for or against.

Feeling a need for more certainty, an intrepid group of local entomologists, citizen scientists and city parks employees, bolstered by a recent surge in interest in fireflies by scientific groups like the Xerces Society and the Western Firefly Project, decided to follow up on third-hand intel and check out a local legend of an inside-the-city-limits firefly population and determine if it was myth or fact.

Heading out to a local City of Billings Natural Area Park wetland on a hot and mosquitoey evening in the summer of 2021, this group found and documented a large population of yellow-green flashing fireflies!! It turns out these fireflies are in the genus *Photuris*, family *Lampyridae*, and that this population has likely been here for some time. We presume that due to their short window of activity as adults (and due to the fact that smart human observers are home in bed when fireflies are out and about), these fireflies have gone unreported and unstudied all this time. Now that we've had a chance to look at them more closely and have collected samples from a second season, summer 2022, we realize that there is a chance these fireflies may even represent an entirely new species! The intrepid firefly finder group, in partnership with the Billings Parks and Recreation Department, are continuing to monitor and study this population with more exciting discoveries sure to come.

We are also realizing that this is likely just one of many firefly populations occurring within city limits. Billings has (depending on how you count them) at least 30 intriguing and beautiful Natural Area parks representing most of the highly diverse habitats that occur in this area. We encourage folks to explore these beautiful areas, especially wetland areas (those with cattails, high grass, and/or marshy soils) in June and July just after sunset for a chance to experience the magic of being surrounded by ten thousand tinker bells floating all around you. Please, be sure to report any firefly sightings to the Billings Parks & Recreation Department. Wishing you many happy sparkling magic evenings! Don't forget mosquito repellent.

Here is an excellent resource for those interested in learning more about fireflies generally, and fireflies in the western United States specifically: https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/19-049_01_Firefly%20guidelines_web_1.pdf

Cemetery

Mountview Cemetery is going through a number of changes this year. The Parks/Cemetery Supervisor took a position in Oregon, leaving an open position to fill. Earlier this year, one of the two Equipment Operators took a position with the Parks Division and a new Equipment Operator was



hired. Once the Supervisor position is filled the staff at the Cemetery there will be a 50% change in staff creating challenges, as well as opportunities to grow.

This year has seen an increase in burials of about 20% over last year at this time, and full-size services make up a large portion of that increase. Over the last few years, the trend has been toward cremation services.

2022	Burial Totals by Month
January	10
February	8
March	10
April	11
May	10
June	18
6 Month Total Burials	67

Planning has begun for section 15 which is seven acres of undeveloped land within the cemetery. At current levels of service this area will become necessary in 5 to 7 years. The irrigation design which was done 10 years ago will need to be refreshed using current equipment specifications. The existing pump station is not capable of supplying enough water to the existing developed sections and section 15. The new irrigation design will include an update to the pump station. Planning and design has begun so by the time plots are sold the area will have mature trees and turf.

[Ground Penetrating Radar](#)

At Mountview Cemetery there are a variety of areas in the Old Billings Cemetery where burials have happened but the records of where the graves are located or even who is buried there are incomplete or sometimes never recorded. Using ground penetrating radar, aerial survey techniques, and the expertise from Montana State University Billings History Professor, Thomas Rust, a map is being created of these areas. The map won't tell who is buried where, but will provide locations of the unrecorded graves. Providing even more interesting history at the Cemetery.



Park Planning and Development

[Coulson Park Development Phase 1](#)

The first phase of development at Coulson Park which includes the location of an ADA-accessible modular concrete restroom structure, a boat ramp, parking, and a picnic area, has been put on hold due to construction of the I-90 bridges over the Yellowstone River and the need to use the north end of Coulson Park for construction staging. The contractor will provide \$70,000 of in-kind work on the boat launch as their compensation for temporary use of the park. They are scheduled to be completed in 2024.



Budgeted Amount: \$110,000

Payments To-Date: \$3,550.55

[Coulson Park Development Phase 2](#)

The second phase of Coulson Park is proceeding. This work includes ADA upgrades to the parking lot, ADA access to the existing trail, picnic shelter, soft surface trails to a designated "Artist Point" and "River Access" next to the Yellowstone River. Design work will begin in August 2022 with anticipated bidding and construction winter and spring of 2022/23 dependent upon receiving permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Budgeted Amount: \$250,000

[Central Park Tennis Court Replacement](#)

Plans and specifications to replace the aging tennis court facility at Central Park have been prepared and are going out for bids in August. The goal is to begin construction this fall and have the new facility ready for play the summer of 2023. This project will also provide ADA accessibility to the tennis courts along with striping and nets to convert one of the courts to 4 pickleball courts. The City has been awarded a total of \$231,244.95 in LWCF grants from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks for this project.

Budgeted Amount: \$731,244.95

Payments To-Date: \$7,000

Terry Park Playground Replacement and Picnic Shelter

Improvement to Terry Park were completed early this spring. These upgrades included a picnic shelter, new playground equipment and fall protection and an ADA accessible sidewalk that connects the perimeter park sidewalk to the shelter, playground and public restrooms located at the nearby fire station. Along with the existing splash pad, this park has become a popular destination for families to enjoy many summer activities.



Playground Budgeted Amount: \$300,000

Playground Payments To-Date: \$281,219



Picnic Shelter Budgeted Amount: \$50,000

Picnic Shelter Payments To-Date: \$49,894

Castle Rock Park Playground Replacement

The Heights Task Force assisted the Parks and Recreation Department in the selection of new playground equipment for Castle Rock Park. The site work construction to develop the play pod to house the new equipment is scheduled to begin the middle of August. Given the lead time for delivery of the play equipment, it is anticipated installation of the equipment will take place late this fall.

Budgeted Amount: \$596,499.96

Payments To-Date: \$14,700

Lillis Park Playground Replacement

Also recently completed is the new playground at Lillis Park. A feature of the new play equipment is an extra wide slide where children can enjoy racing their friends side by side to the bottom. This improvement has dramatically increased the play value and popularity of the playground.



Before



After

Playground Budgeted Amount: \$300,000

Payments To-Date: \$278,714

Ponderosa Park Irrigation Replacement

The irrigation system at Ponderosa Park is an antiquated manual system and needs to be replaced. Plans and specification have been developed and the project is out for bid. It is anticipated construction will begin this fall and finished by May of 2023.

Budgeted Amount: \$215,000

Payments To-Date: \$8,325

Arrowhead Park Playground Replacement

The playground at Arrowhead Park is in need of replacement. Along with replacing the playground equipment, an ADA accessible route to the playground and concrete curbing around the playground will be constructed. Currently construction documents are being developed with the goal of construction in the Spring/Summer 2023.

Playground Budgeted Amount: \$200,00

North Park Playground Replacement

Play equipment at North Park is obsolete and is in need of replacement. Staff is working on playground layouts that will be voted on by Billings residents to select the most preferred concept to install. The new equipment is currently scheduled to be installed Spring/Summer 2023.

Playground Budgeted Amount: \$400,000

Optimist Park Picnic Shelter

Work is underway on the construction of a new picnic shelter at Optimist Park. The South Billings Urban Renewal Association (SBURA) is partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department to fund this project. This project is scheduled to be completed this fall.

Budgeted Amount: \$304,978

Payments To-Date: \$145,754



Poly Vista Park Phase 1 Development

The Parks and Recreation Department is partnering with the Landon's Legacy Foundation to Develop the first phase of Poly Vista Park, which will include several amenities including a Miracle League Baseball Field, a restroom facility, mass grading, parking and sidewalks, and replacement of the irrigation system at the existing four-play baseball fields. Construction is nearly finished and a grand opening is scheduled for August 17th. The Miracle League Field will give children with disabilities the opportunity to play the game of baseball.



Budgeted Amount: \$1,000,000 (city funds) \$1,000,000 (private contract)

Payments To-Date: \$885,716 (city funds)



2022 BFD Semi-Annual Report

1st and 2nd Quarters (01 Jan – 30 June) Response Data:

Total Incidents: 8,648

Average incident responses per day: 47.82

Dispatched apparatus count: 10,937

Incident Type	Call Amount
100 - 199 Fire	134
200 - 299 Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat - No fire	5
300 - 399 Rescue AND Emergency Medical Service incidents	4,700
400 - 499 Hazardous Conditions (No Fire)	127
500 - 599 Service Call	740
600 - 699 Good Intent Call	2,429
700 - 799 False Alarm AND False Call	511
800 - 899 Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0
900 - 999 Special Incident Type/Citizen Complaints	2

COVID-19 Related EMS Calls	48
Firefighter Ambulance Ride-ins	197

Total Call Average Response time	00:08:03
Total Call 90th Percentile time	00:13:28

Total Estimated loss from fires:	\$ 2,087,123
----------------------------------	--------------

Administrative Training

Tyler Technologies 2022 Connect conference took place May 15-18 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Since last year's conference was digital through webinars, this year's format focused heavily on discussions with Tyler Tech staff through classes and one-on-one meetings. Administrative Support, Patrick Landry, attended the conference. Learning included updates to New World Fire and CAD, Data analysis enhancements in the DSS database, and ethics in public sector data. Patrick was also able to meet with peers who also use the database searches and gain insight on how other departments filter and share data.

Communications Center

The 911 Center continues to have staffing issues but with the recent increase in entry-level pay, there has been more interest in the empty positions. Also, the radio replacement contract was signed and the plan is to have it up and fully operational within 18 months. Priority dispatch is doing what was intended



2022 BFD Semi-Annual Report

as we project a total call volume decrease of 11%. This will continue to be a work in progress to hone in on our communities needs and how to deploy the proper resources.

Prevention Bureau

The Prevention division continues to train on our new and latest software, MobileEyes. This software will allow our engine companies to record all business inspections digitally which will create preplans for fire attack and mitigation much faster than our old system. Once our investigators are signed off for training, they will begin training our crews in operations.



Billings Industrial Revitalization District

Bi-Annual Report

January 2022 – June 2022

The BIRD has had a productive year in 2022. 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. Graffiti removal projects throughout the district
- B. Receipt of \$25,000 grant from the Bloomberg Foundation for their Asphalt Art Program. Installation of 30,000 square feet of artwork around North Park to increase positive events and environment for that area.

Urban Renewal Goals:

- A. Provided a training with new city council members on how TIFs can work towards meeting the URD plans for each district.
- B. Assisted realtors and/or with buyers for over 7 acres of new land purchases in the district.
- C. Continued discussion and pursuit of the 5th Avenue Corridor project to connect the BIRD with the downtown core.
- D. Participated with Big Sky Economic Development in pursuit of additional resources for the Brownfields program for the EBURD. Resulted in additional \$500,000 for grants focused on the district.
- E. Continuing work with partners to discover connections for an Innovation District in the BIRD.
- F. Worked with three neighborhood partners on housing projects that are in the planning phases for multi-family units.
- G. Reviewed and are proposing considerations for the Sustainable Development Requirements that are part of the EBURD Code.
- H. Per our by-laws had a successful election of new board members, hosted an annual meeting for over 100 people, had a board strategy retreat, reviewed and corrected our by-laws.



Downtown Billings Partnership, Inc.
Part of the Downtown Billings Alliance

Main Office Hours: M-R 9am to 4 pm

Semi-Annual Report to Billings City Council

January 1 - June 30, 2022

Monday, July 25, 2022

- Status of the N27th/Downtown Tax Increment Fund for FY 22 - see attached spreadsheet with fund line items
- DBP Highlights and other work in the N27th Street Urban Renewal District
 - Meet new businesses in the downtown area
 - Provide education on TIF and RLF (phone calls, in person, presentations to groups)
 - Process CPTED grants
 - Process Signage grants
 - Process large TIF grants
 - Communicate regularly with City Government and news outlets
 - Meet with new property owners
 - Meet with new investors and developers
 - Collaborate with City Parking as needed
 - Continue promotion/marketing of downtown
 - Tour vacancies with prospective tenants
 - Explore properties for future developments
 - New Businesses
 - Made For Home at 14 N 29th Street, Suite 101
 - Black Salt Salon at 14 N 29th Street, Suite 102
 - Valcana Elupt/B.Haven Wellness at 212 N 29th Street
 - B-Town Vapes & Glass at 2818 3rd Ave N
 - Soup N Such/Velvet Cravings expansion into 2720 3rd Ave N
 - Kennedy's Stained Glass relocation to 2904 2nd Ave N
 - Rebel River Creative expansion into 2926 2nd Ave N
 - Diamond Automotive Center at 20 N 30th Street
 - Craft Local relocation into 2501 Montana Ave
 - This House of Prayer expansion into 2704 2nd Ave N

- General Alliance Work
 - Remove Holiday decorations/lights
 - Successful sold out 2nd Annual Mug Crawl
 - Successful return of the St. Patrick's Parade & Celtic Fair
 - Gather photography of downtown scenery, architecture, and activities
 - Host the 13th Annual Montana Downtown Conference with keynote speakers Jeff Speck & Charles Marhon
 - Host the 11th Purple 5K Run/Walk
 - Install a Parklet for the Sassy Biscuit/Jook Restaurant
 - Host the 2nd Spotlight Social
 - Hold an All Alliance Strategic Planning meeting
 - Continue installation of light bikes and murals
 - Execute a full season of Alive After 5 concert series
 - Install summer flower baskets
 - Host a sold out Summer Sounds concert
 - Host a record breaking 31st Strawberry Festival
 - Facilitate dialogue on a new tool (C-PACE)
 - Order the Portland Loo
 - Commission a timelapse photoshoot of opening Skypoint
- Development Project Incentives (TIF grant projects)
 - Completed
 - Craft Local Sign
 - In Progress
 - Downtown Properties, LLC/Stone Building - Reimbursement deadline is extended
 - R&K Designs LLC/Kibler & Kirch - Near completion
 - Halsten Holdings, LLC/Burger Dive - Processing Phase II of Historic Tax Credits
 - Alberta Bair Theater - Ongoing reimbursements throughout FY24
 - Montana Rescue Mission - DA is being reviewed to be executed
 - The Monte - Scheduling tour and collecting proof of payment
 - Billings Community Foundation - Scheduling reimbursement
 - Sturm & Drake - Documenting proof of payment
 - Old Town Flats - DA being reviewed to be executed
 - Art House Cinema/Phase II construction
 - On Deck
 - Lincoln Apartments - Scheduled to go before Council July 11th
 - TIF inquiries
 - 36 new TIF inquiries (large developments, facade improvements, signage, CPTED, energy efficiency, streetscaping and landscaping, change of use, housing)

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

Date: July 31, 2022
To: Billings City Council
From: Jim Tevlin
Subject: SBURA report for the period January 1, 2022, to June 30, 2022

The following is a report from the South Billings Urban Renewal Association (SBURA) related to activities in the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District ("the District") for the period January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2021.

Administrative

Debby Keller's term as a SBURA board member ended on January 31, 2022. SBURA interview six candidates and selected Kephen Tokar as a new Homeowner Director.

Tax Increment Assistance – TPA Group LLC

On April 5, 2022, the SBURA board approved \$1,000,000 of tax increment assistance to TPA Group LLC. TPA Group, located in Atlanta, GA, purchased land located on the South Frontage Road between land owned by KSKC Rentals LLC and Torgerson LLC for purposes of building a multi-facility logistics center. TPA Group LLC's tax increment assistance is for the installation of driveway aprons, utility extensions, a turn lane and soil stabilization measures. On April 25, 2022, the City Council approved TPA Group's application for tax increment assistance.

Tax Increment Assistance – School District #2

On May 3, 2022, the SBURA board approved \$100,000 of tax increment assistance to Billings School District #2 (SD2) to help fund a portion of SD2's \$1.3 million project at Riverside Middle School's schoolgrounds. SD2 purchased land immediately south of Riverside Middle School for purposes of constructing a softball field and other schoolyard amenities that would put Riverside Middle School on par with other SD2 middle schools. On June 27, 2022, the City Council approved SD2's application for tax increment assistance.

Tax Increment Assistance – Wendbill LLC

On May 3, 2022, the SBURA board approved \$154,801 of tax increment assistance to Wendbill LLC. Wendbill LLC operates 16 Wendy's restaurants in Montana. Wendbill LLC's tax increment assistance is for the installation of curb, gutters, sidewalk and landscaping at their location in Miller Crossing Subdivision. On June 27, 2022, the City Council approved Wendbill's application for tax increment assistance.

Current Projects

Optimist Park – \$304,986 of TIF funding is included in the Parks & Recreation FY21 budget for the installation of a picnic shelter, picnic tables, park benches and lighting. Parks & Recreation awarded a contract to Hanna Construction for \$255,840 to build a picnic shelter. Construction is expected to be completed in by August 2022.

The Billings City Council, at their April 25, 2022, Regular Meeting voted to reject the bids to construct parking lots on the central and southwestern borders of Optimist Park. Alternatively,

the Council directed staff to seek bids to extend Stephens Lane northward to Mitchell Ave with parking slots on both sides of the street.

The total estimated cost for the Stephens northward extension is approximately \$600k. Note that SBURA's \$500k appropriation for Optimist Park parking lots would be redirected toward this plan. The additional \$100k to complete the project would come from tax increment funds.

South Billings Recreation Center – At the May 23, 2022, City Council Regular Meeting, Dusty Eaton with A&E Design presented an update on the Recreation Center Core and Executive committee's efforts related to the construction of a multi-generational recreation center in the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District.

Council discussed:

- Enlarging the competition pool to 50-meters.
- Adding another sheet of ice for a total of two sheets.
- Eliminating competition with private fitness centers.
- Positioning of the facility on the site.
- Verifying valid statistical data and collection methods
- Fees structures for resident / non-resident users and tournament attendees.
- City/County partnerships.
- Financial support that does not use taxpayer dollars.
- Concession space.
- Connection to the Marathon Loop.

The Core and Executive committees met on June 15 to finalize their efforts and recommendations to the city council. The Core committee recommended the construction of a "full build" facility including courts, two sheets of ice, and a full aquatic center with a 50M pool. The Executive Team agreed that increasing the facility to accommodate more program opportunities would expand the offerings both for local residents and sports tourism dollars.

The primary discussion points for both the Core and Executive Teams centered around the idea of whether this facility should include a second sheet of ice. The design consultants studied the site and floor plan layout with a second sheet of ice and the 50M pool. Adding a second sheet of ice is possible, but it forces the facility to extend beyond the site boundaries and impact the soccer fields to the north. While this can be addressed, it's considerably more difficult because the Amend Park land has restrictions on it that does not allow a building to be built (must be outdoor play/activity/sports space). Dick Zier proposed that we explore the option of purchasing the Sportsplex building and reconfiguring it as an ice facility. The building is currently vacant and has been on the market for several years. This option would result in approximately \$10 million less in total construction costs. It also has the added benefit of utilizing an existing building and forestalling blight in the SBURD.

After consideration of project costs, goals, and community needs, the Executive Team, given the issues with a second sheet discussed above plus a measure of concern with the total estimated cost of the facility (over \$100 million), unanimously decided to move forward with the facility that includes a single sheet of ice, 50M pool, courts, and other amenities previously presented. Additionally, the Team encouraged the SBURA group to further explore the Sportsplex as a second sheet of ice. The funding mechanisms and operations for that facility as a separate building will require further discussions with City and SBURA officials.

Dick Zier, Jeff Muri, and I met with the owner of the Sportsplex, Mike Parnell. He agreed to sell the facility for \$3.7 million. Included in the purchase price are the dasher boards and other on-site furniture and fixtures. Dick also met with the owners of vacant property adjacent to the Sportsplex that could be used for additional parking. They agreed to sell the property for \$200,000. Dusty Eaton has provided SBURA with a proposal (\$16,850) to estimate the cost of reconfiguring the facility to accommodate ice activities. Representatives from the Billings Amateur Hockey League, owners of Centennial Ice Arena, have expressed interest in drafting a contract with the City to operate the Sportsplex. They also offered to fund a business plan that will include pro forma operating statements for the facility.

At present, City officials are not contemplating a public referendum on funding the facility until mid-2023. Such a delay in a public vote for funding would likely defer the opening of the facility until 2025 and may impact the amount of TIF bonds available.

Hallowell Lane/Bruce Ave – Note the following:

- Public Works anticipates the work to upgrade Bruce Ave, Mitchell Ave, Vaughn Lane, and Hillview Lane to be complete in early September 2022.
- The next phase of road improvements includes Morgan Ave, Ryan Ave, and Stephens Lane. Public Works believes that grouping these three streets as a single project will promote better pricing from potential bidders.

CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA
City Health Insurance Fund
Statement of Cash Flows
January 1 Thru June 30, 2022

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Beginning available cash balance, as of January 1, 2022	\$ 9,339,705	\$ 10,664,977	\$ 9,812,589
Revenue			
Employer contributions	\$ 4,645,426		
Employee contributions	963,055		
Interest	(128,612)		
Claim overpayment	25,049		
Stop loss-insurance revenue	37,580		
RX rebates	423,659		
Wellness committee	68		
Revenue from health insurance activities	<u>5,966,225</u>	<u>5,880,907</u>	<u>6,534,863</u>
Expenses			
Self-funded medical	3,278,093		
Self-funded RX	1,383,400		
Occu. Health - Nurse Visit	24,165		
Preventive Confirmation Program Incentive	37,000		
Healthy IS Program & Incentive	54,600		
Fiduciary Liability Insurance	-		
Employee Assistance Program	16,275		
Third Party Admin - ACA Admin	6,372		
Stop loss-insurance premium	302,581		
Claims administration	142,082		
Third Party Admin. - PPO Fees	4,838		
Consulting Fee	32,250		
Wellness committee	-		
All other	<u>112,246</u>		
Expenses from health insurance activities	<u>5,393,902</u>	<u>5,782,043</u>	<u>6,526,493</u>
Net cash provided (used) from health insurance activities:	<u>572,323</u>	<u>98,864</u>	<u>8,370</u>
Cash flow from other activities:			
Revenue			
Flex	\$ 210,847		
Dental	403,291		
Life Insurance	<u>5,709</u>		
Revenue from other activities	<u>619,847</u>	<u>601,264</u>	<u>597,001</u>
Expenses			
Flex claims-medical	171,833		
Flex claims-child care	39,014		
Flex admin	5,430		
HSA admin	6,217		
Dental claims	374,166		
(VSP)-Vision Admin Fee	3,488		
Life insurance premiums	<u>6,445</u>		
Expenses from other activities	<u>606,593</u>	<u>604,131</u>	<u>578,911</u>
Net cash provided (used) from other activities:	<u>13,254</u>	<u>(2,867)</u>	<u>18,090</u>
Ending available cash balance, as of June 30, 2022	<u>\$ 9,925,282</u>	<u>\$ 10,760,974</u>	<u>\$ 9,839,049</u>

Report is on a calendar year basis and not a fiscal year basis.
DEC '21-\$850,500 one time rebate was paid to employees, retirees and City Department's health benefit.

COUNCIL INITIATIVES
APPROVED SINCE FEBRUARY 2022

Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
02/08/16	COUNCILMEMBER SULLIVAN: Made a motion to review all ordinances over four years with the opportunity to fast track any ordinances to match citizen/council needs, seconded by Councilmember McFadden. APPROVED.	Departments are reviewing Municode comments, questions and recommendations and adding those of their own. Zoning Code was amended on 1/25/2021 by Ord. 21-5748. More work to be done on other sections of the Code.	In Progress	Gina Dahl Denise Bohlman
12/21/20	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Moved to direct staff to put the flowing issues on future work sessions. Staff will inform the council of any existing work on the issue and for the council to "brainstorm" possible solutions to these issues: 1) Staff and the Parks Board provide an informational presentation to council at their earliest convenience on their work identifying possible funding for the operations and maintenance of parks, including new capital projects, seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED 2) Discussion of a policy and a funding source for completing the sidewalks and trails, including safe routes to schools; and 3) Staff provide a detailed cost of services report by March 15 th , seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED.	1) City Administration and Parks presented funding options at the 3/15/21 City Council Work Session. 2) Presentation on Trail Funding was presented at the 4/19/21 Work Session. 3) This item has been pulled out and had separate discussion to determine next steps by the FY23 budget cycle.	1) Completed 2) Completed	
10/11/21	COUNCILMEMBER RONNING: Moved to direct staff to put establishing a City Charter Review Committee on a work session and invite Dan Clark, Local Government Center, to advise council of the process of reviewing the City Charter, seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED.	Work Session held in March 2022.	In Progress	Chris Kukulski
11/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER YAKAWICH: Moved to direct staff and the future council to design, implement and install a standalone COVID19 memorial within the first year the new law and justice center/city hall is used in honor of those whose lives were lost due to COVID in Yellowstone, seconded by Councilmember Choriki. APPROVED.	Mike Yakawich and Mayor Bill Cole have convened a committee to explore ideas.	In Progress	Kevin Iffland
11/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER YAKAWICH: Moved to direct staff to implement regulations for recovery residences also known as sober living housing to reduce the amount of disturbances and building and code enforcement issues, seconded by Councilmember Choriki. APPROVED.	Work Session held in June 2022.	In Progress	Chris Kukulski Rich St. John Wyeth Friday Gina Dahl
12/20/21	COUNCILMEMBER EWALT: Directed the City Administrator to work with Public Works staff for a resolution that would charge 20% out-of-city limits customers to be set aside in a landfill fund to pay for future capital improvements at the landfill. The 20% charge would	Resolution 22-11042 set at the June 13, 2022 Council Meeting.	Completed	Debi Meling

Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
	start in FY23 and continue until changed by future councils, seconded by Councilmember Yakawich. APPROVED.			
1/24/22	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Directed staff to add “Housing Needs” to a future Work Session as a topic for discussion, seconded by Councilmember Joy. APPROVED.			
1/24/22	COUNCILMEMBER GULICK: Requested council allow him 15 minutes at a future Work Session to make a presentation regarding “High Performance Cities”, seconded by Councilmember Rupsis. APPROVED.	Work Session of March 7, 2022.	Completed	Ed Gulick
4/11/22	COUNCILMEMBER SHAW: Requested to add establishing Legislative and County relations Council subcommittees to a future Work Session, seconded by Councilmember Boyett. APPROVED.	Potential July 18 th Work Session	In Progress	Chris Kukulski
5/09/22	COUNCILMEMBER RUPSIS: Directed staff, within the next 90 days, to compile a list of City-owned properties; put together a process to encourage development proposals; and identify costs involved, seconded by Councilmember Owen. APPROVED.	Potential August Work Session	In Progress	
5/09/22	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Directed staff to add to a future agenda, discussion to allow a budget amendment of \$200,000 in recreational marijuana excise taxes for YWCA to complete construction of the Gateway Horizons Domestic Violence Shelter, seconded by Councilmember Owen. APPROVED	Budget amendment made at the June 13, 2022 Council Meeting	Completed	Zoeller
5/23/22	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Directed staff to place on a future agenda the approval to contribute \$1,000 Council Contingency Funds toward the Yellowstone Art Museum’s COVID Memorial Student Project in FY23, seconded by Councilmember Tidswell. APPROVED	Resolution 22-11039 approved at the June 13, 2022 Council Meeting	Completed	