

## Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

August 12, 2023

1. **Yellowstone International Air Show** – We anticipate 30,000 visitors to the City's airport this weekend. This Saturday and Sunday, gates will open at 9 AM for the Air Show. The show will begin at 11 AM and end at 4 PM; the Blue Angels begin performing at 3 PM. Highway 3 will be closed to through traffic. For more information on the show please guide people to the following link <https://www.yellowstoneairshow.com/> so that our visitors have a great experience in Billings. An incredible amount of work has gone into hosting this extraordinary event – Thank you to all the volunteers and sponsors!
2. **Semi-Annual and Annual Reports** – BIRD, Council Initiatives, Fire, Health Insurance, Police and Public Works Semi-Annual and Annual reports are attached.
3. **2023 Certified Values** - The City of Billings received certified value from the Department of Revenue (DOR) this week. There are still changes that will occur to our values as the DOR finalizes any protests, but they are usually immaterial at this point. Our total taxable value increased 22% from tax year 2022 (FY2023). In 2022 the value of one mill was \$221,060 and in 2023 the value of a mill will be \$269,766. We are still waiting for a more detailed breakdown from the DOR, but they have provided some general commentary already. Overall, we saw large increases in residential values, which is what we expected. However, centrally assessed properties across the State saw an overall reduction in value. This likely caused a shift that increased the portion of our tax base that is residential property while we saw a reduction in other tax classes. We do not know yet how commercial properties changed, but when we receive more information from the DOR, we will be able to provide more insight. Overall, this means we will be able to generate tax revenue consistent with our budget. Additionally, because of the significant value shift from other tax classes to residential, it means that residential property will bear the larger burden of the increase.

We also saw growth within all three (3) of our tax increment districts. This doesn't necessarily equate to an equivalent increase in TIF revenue, as the other major component of revenue within the districts are the total number of mills levied by all government entities. In FY2023 the total mills that were levied by all governments was approximately 700. We expect that number to drop due to the valuation increases, but we will not know the total mills until October. Below is a table showing the value changes from tax years 2022 to 2023 for both the City of Billings as well as our individual tax increment districts:

City of Billings				
	2022	2023	Change	% Change
Total Market Value	14,257,070,989	18,009,985,939	3,752,914,950	26.3%
Total Taxable Value	231,424,659	282,681,719	51,257,060	22.1%
Taxable Value less Increment	221,060,060	269,766,883	48,706,823	22.0%

### Billings Tax Increment Districts

	2022 Incremental Tax Value	2023 Incremental Tax Value	Incremental Value Change	% Change
North 27th District	3,668,286	4,155,426	487,140	13.3%
East Billings	1,098,253	1,653,654	555,401	50.6%
South Billings	5,598,060	7,105,756	1,507,696	26.9%
Total	10,364,599	12,914,836	2,550,237	24.6%

4. **Legislative Committee Meeting** – on Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> the Legislative Committee held a “State Legislative Round Table to identify needed changes in state law that meet the needs of Billings”. (Please see the attached agenda for the topics discussed.)
5. **Park & Recreation News** - With school starting in less than two (2) weeks, the Recreation Division is beginning to wrap up another very successful summer of programs and activities in our community. Over the course of the 11-week summer season, 45 different summer day camps were offered with enrollments averaging 97% of maximum capacity. These camps include the Adventure Series, Pioneer Playhouse Series, Magic City Series, Girls Ninja Warrior, Rock Band, AquaNutz, Babysitter Training, Lifesaver, Rocket, Aviation, and Character Design. (See the Parks Project Progress Report attached.)



Our last day of Rec 2U at Highlands and Hawthorne Parks is Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>. Throughout the course of the summer, staff estimates over 400 children have attended this program offering free activities, games, and healthy snacks. Plans have already begun to look at expanding the program to include more parks in the future.

Swimming pools are beginning to see a decrease in staffing due to high school fall sports beginning and college-aged staff heading back to school. Our last day for swimming at South Pool will be Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> at Rose Pool. The wading pools at Hawthorne and

Pioneer Parks will also be open through Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. The annual “Dog Day of Summer” closes out the aquatic season on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> from 12-3pm at Rose Pool.

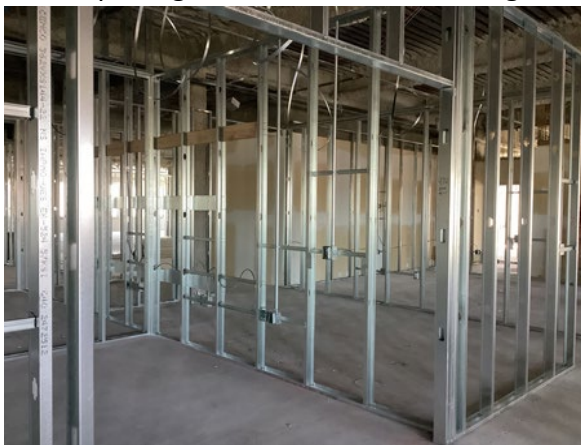
The Rec Staff is already preparing for the quick transition to fall programming with the Miracle League of Billings starting Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at Landon’s Miracle Field, youth game starting at 9:00 am and the adult game at 10:15 am. Our NFL Flag Football program begins practices at Optimist, Veteran’s, Castle Rock, and Country Manor Parks on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

6. **Heights Water District (HWD)** – City staff and HWD met on Tuesday continuing our dialogue regarding utility rates, future capital investments and private development.
7. **New City Hall Update** - This week's progress at the city hall project includes the completion of wall framing on the 4th floor, as well as the initiation of wall framing on the 2nd floor. We also continued work on backing and furred out walls on both the 4th and 5th floors. Hydronic plumbing line work is still ongoing on the 5th floor, and the installation of Variable Air Volume (VAV) systems began on the same floor after their arrival this week.

On the 4th floor, the rough-in process for duct work is currently underway, while the fire sprinkler rough-in that was completed on the 5th floor has now progressed to the 4th floor. Progress was made in obtaining and installing some of the hollow metal door frames for both the 4th and 5th floors, with installation initiated on the 5th floor.

Electrical rough-in work is continuing on the 5th floor, and the start of electrical wall rough-in on the 4th floor is now in progress. Furthermore, the approval of the wall framing inspection for the 5th floor was signed off on today.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Opening for Staircase and framing







## 8. Next Week's Meetings/Task Forces

- a. Local Affairs Committee, Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup> 4:30 pm, City Hall Conference Room.
- b. West End Task Force, Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm, Connections Church, 56<sup>th</sup> Street West and Grand.
- c. Budget & Finance Committee, Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> 9:00 am, City Hall Conference Room.
- d. Southside Task Force, Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm, Hope Center, 425 S. 28<sup>th</sup>.
- e. Central Terry Task Force, Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm, Topline Hari, 1331 Central Avenue.

## 9. From the PIO Desk:

*Important Air Show information*

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2511>

*How to be air show ready & "What was that noise?!?"*

<https://www.facebook.com/100064944751677/posts/pfbid0pkfDj2ZPeejFPPeZXRXCtLLGyfeDEBL12axpUUGAJCvTTSFD88NnVTJDHbuETFUpl/?mibextid=cr9u03>

## City of Billings in the news

### Air Show

*Traffic updates for the Yellowstone International Air Show*

[https://www.kulr8.com/news/traffic-updates-for-the-yellowstone-international-air-show/article\\_74535154-3716-11ee-97c6-2bf87ad6ff5b.html](https://www.kulr8.com/news/traffic-updates-for-the-yellowstone-international-air-show/article_74535154-3716-11ee-97c6-2bf87ad6ff5b.html)

*A benefit to Billings: Local businesses working to bring visitors to air show*

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/a-benefit-to-billings-local-businesses-working-to-bring-visitors-to-air-show>

### MontanaFair

*Added security will Greet fair goers at MontanaFair*

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/added-security-will-greet-fair-goers-at-montanafair>

*The Billings Police Department will assist Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office with security at MontanaFair*



[https://www.kulr8.com/news/the-billings-police-department-will-assist-yellowstone-county-sheriffs-office-with-security-at-montanafair/article\\_ddd6382c-3256-11ee-b15e-abdbe222d8dd.html](https://www.kulr8.com/news/the-billings-police-department-will-assist-yellowstone-county-sheriffs-office-with-security-at-montanafair/article_ddd6382c-3256-11ee-b15e-abdbe222d8dd.html)

*Expect increased law enforcement presence at MontanaFair this year*

<https://realnewsmontana.com/ixp/628/p/more-cops-montanafair/>

### **Mobilize the MAGIC City**

*Magic City calling on artists for indigenous identity themed public art*

[https://www.kulr8.com/news/magic-city-calling-on-artists-for-indigenous-identity-themed-public-art-opportunity/article\\_5344d39c-3708-11ee-81a3-d35196266900.html](https://www.kulr8.com/news/magic-city-calling-on-artists-for-indigenous-identity-themed-public-art-opportunity/article_5344d39c-3708-11ee-81a3-d35196266900.html)

### **PD**

*Suspects turned away from Billings Jail amidst over crowding and Understaffing*

[https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/crime-courts/ycdf-ycso-bpd-overcrowding-arrests-yellowstone-county/article\\_5dd3d2b4-32fc-11ee-8b08-af5ea1e7f90b.html](https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/crime-courts/ycdf-ycso-bpd-overcrowding-arrests-yellowstone-county/article_5dd3d2b4-32fc-11ee-8b08-af5ea1e7f90b.html)

### **Softball game**

*Guns and Hoses charity softball game raises money for special Olympics Montana*

[https://www.kulr8.com/news/guns-hoses-charity-softball-game-raises-money-for-special-olympics-montana/article\\_4c142b98-33d6-11ee-b875-27e8e0a495fc.html](https://www.kulr8.com/news/guns-hoses-charity-softball-game-raises-money-for-special-olympics-montana/article_4c142b98-33d6-11ee-b875-27e8e0a495fc.html)

### **PW**

*Changes are coming to the Billings residential garbage services*

[https://www.kulr8.com/news/changes-are-coming-to-the-billings-residential-garbage-services/article\\_f80f755c-3317-11ee-8b8c-b72e52b12199.html](https://www.kulr8.com/news/changes-are-coming-to-the-billings-residential-garbage-services/article_f80f755c-3317-11ee-8b8c-b72e52b12199.html)

### **Briarwood**

*'Not malicious but negligent': New documents, lawsuit emerge in Briarwood deck collapse*

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/lawsuit-filed-alleging-negligence-against-briarwood-for-deck-collapse>

### **In other news...**

*'Human dignity kind of thing': Downtown Billings installs first public restroom*

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/human-dignity-kind-of-thing-downtown-billings-to-open-first-standalone-public-restroom>

## Bi-Annual Report January 2023– June 2023

The BIRD has had a productive year so far in 2023. 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:**

- We installed the delineators in North Park to help with traffic calming.
- We have touched up half of the Asphalt Art installation from the Bloomberg grant and are doing the other side in a few weeks.
- Project Green Light still available, and we've had some people take advantage of the program.
- New and more lights have been installed in North Park.
- More events are being planned to activate North Park and the EBURD.

### **Urban Renewal Goals:**

- Rimrock sold their facility- closes the second week of August.
- Toucan Gallery and Tailwind Management are moving into the EBURD.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor project to connect the BIRD with the downtown core has been approved to the 80% design phase.
- I have joined the Big Sky Economic Development Brownfield's committee for the EBURD.
- Continuing work with partners to discover connections for an Innovation District in the BIRD, we have made a RFP.
- We have had one community pick up day and have another one scheduled for August.
- We have been promoting the BIRD and EBURD to get more interest in the neighborhood.
- Started to develop a North Park mini-master plan.
- Started to develop the idea of a Mural Fest for the EBURD for next year with a group of people.

### **TIF Projects:**

- Stir, LLC TIF fencing Project completed construction in December at their 304-19th street property.
- Yellowstone Ice and Water plant has completed their project and disbursements have begun.
- North 20<sup>th</sup> Property Meeting with planning to discuss streetscape engineering for project. This and one more housing project being discussed.
- We have also might have a brewery, distillery and an infrastructure project coming down the pipeline.

**COUNCIL INITIATIVES  
APPROVED SINCE AUGUST 2023**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Sponsor/Initiative</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>
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. Code Enforcement is working with Legal on changes to improve its enforcement and court processes. 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 <sup>th</sup> , 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. A second Work Session to be held 8/15/2022. This is scheduled for the 8/21/2023 Work Session.	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. No status updates from the committee.	In Progress	Kevin Iffland



Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
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.	SB 94 signed into Law May 19, 2023. City Staff are reviewing the new law to determine local jurisdiction authority and involvement with DPHHS and DOC.	In Progress	Chris Kukulski Rich St. John Wyeth Friday Gina Dahl
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.	The Council passed this Housing Strategy Initiative and tasked HomeFront (Housing Authority) to lead the effort to develop a Strategy for Billings. The work has included a grant-funded Workshop Solutions Workshop with national experts, formation of a local Housing Strategy Committee, and a community forum to develop Housing Strategy elements.	In Progress	Patti Webster HomeFront Wyeth Friday Chris Kukulski
5/09/22	COUNCILMEMBER RUP SIS: 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.	First responses to the RFP to sell four (4) city properties are under review with counteroffers being developed. There is no staff availability to move forward with the remaining properties until the first batch of property’s disposition is determined.	In Progress	Kevin Iffland
1/23/2023	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Moved to allocate \$10,000 from a fund to be recommended by staff and later approved by City Council to create a Traffic Safety Oversight Committee to include staff members and community members. APPROVED>	The Committee has met three times since March and discussions have included developing an informative website to keep residents informed and promoting supporting partners, exploring the Office of Public Instruction and the State MDT Traffic Safety Section for information and	Completed/Ongoing	Wyeth Friday Lora Mattox Rich St. John Pepper Valdez

Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
		supportive programs, and joining multiple community events, including a Safety event during the month of September which is Fire Prevention Month. The Committee had a presence at the Strawberry Festival in July and will participate in the Guns and Hoses Softball Game in August.		
2/13/2023	COUNCILMEMBER OWEN: Moved to direct staff to Contract with National Center for State Courts or similar third-party entity to conduct a review of municipal court operations, including prosecution, and make recommendations to support the transition to a second Municipal Judge and a new Courthouse facility in planning for Municipal Court Expansion. APPROVED.	CGL has been selected to conduct the assessment – their first site visit is planned for August 21-23, 2023	In Progress	Liz Kampa
5/8/2023	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Moved to request that staff allocate \$15,000 from the PSML Prevention Fund for the current FY to the BAFVTF as a donation for immediate operational needs and as sponsorship for the 2023 McGurie Conference. Seconded by Councilmember Joy. Substitute Motion COUNCILMEMBER JOY: Move to prioritize printing the resource guide and incentivize matching fundraising between the City and BAFVTF. Seconded by Councilmember Tidswell. APPROVED.		Completed	
6/26/2023	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Moved to place on a Work Session agenda a presentation of the Community Provider Programs and Review City of Funding Proposal presented by Amanda Stonerock during a meeting on 6/19/2023. APPROVED.	The presentation will take place during the 09/05/2023 Work Session	In Progress	Chris Kukulski
6/26/2023	COUNCILMEMBER JOY: Moved to authorize the City Administrator to disburse \$10,000 from the Council Contingency Fund to “Mobilize the MAGIC City” from either the FY23 or FY24 as determined by staff.	Councilmember Joy notified Council of this item at the June 19 <sup>th</sup> Work Session; presented it at the Regular Meeting on June 26 <sup>th</sup> and Council ultimately took action at the July 10 <sup>th</sup> meeting. The Council voted to allocate \$10,000 of FY24 Contingency.	Completed	Wyeth Friday



# Semi - Annual Report 2023







**We are...** The City of Billings organized the first Billings Fire Department in 1883. Billings Fire has 177 personnel, including firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, administrative staff, and fire prevention staff.

**We proudly serve...** All residents, businesses, and organizations within our response area including the Billings Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA).

### Missions Statement

The Billings Fire Department is dedicated to utilizing the latest education, methods, and technology in providing outstanding emergency services.

### Vision Statement

The Billings Fire Department aspires to be the finest provider of emergency services.



Total Calls  
for Service

10,253



EMS/Rescues

5,379



Fires/Service  
/Other

4,874



BFD & 9-1-1  
Employees

177



Apparatus  
& Vehicles

39



Billings  
Population

119,960



Service Area  
ISO Rating

3/10



Response Area -  
91.47 sq miles

45.72 sq miles (city)  
44.44 sq miles (BUFSA)  
1.31 sq miles (Landfill)



# EMS

The EMS division is currently working on the completion of the CPSM recommendations. We are finishing the development of Mobile Response Teams. These teams have taken many medical calls off the first due Engine Companies: saving fuel and decreasing maintenance issues from wear and tear. The Mobile Response Teams leave them available for other priority calls. This model supports the need for ISO coverage and a possible change to the rating.

The Crisis Response Unit will be implemented with a soft opening on Labor Day. One EMT has been hired for our portion of fulfilling the contract, and another should be hired soon. We hope to work out all the kinks of developing a public-private partnership and the challenges that may arise with implementation and development. Substance Abuse Connect and Rimrock Foundation have been excellent to work with.

We are also anticipating the community's needs, getting ready for an aging population, and the impacts on the fire department and pre-hospital system. This is driving the need for more Paramedics in the Fire Service. We have partnered with MSU City College and have procured funding to support education. The MSU Board of Regents fully supports and understands this critical need. We currently have a new Medical Control Physician. Dr. Whitney Gum has already begun to insert herself into learning our system and has already completed a ride-along with Engine 3. She is a hands-on physician who represents Med Flight and Lockwood Fire Department. Currently, the Billings Fire Department has 37 Paramedics, of which 30 are credentialed, and 5 paramedics are currently in the precepting process. Additionally, 5 Billings firefighters are supported by the MSU Board of Regents to attend the Sprint Paramedic program through MSU City College mentioned above. This would give the Billings Fire Department a total of 40 credentialed Paramedics. The Billings Fire Department is now included in accreditation areas of hospital programs that are directly impacted by pre-hospital care.





# Mobile Response Teams

The new MRT program has proven wildly successful since its inception. The program is geared toward taking pressure off our engine and truck companies to keep them at a higher state of readiness, more efficient multi-company training and reduce wear and tear and fuel consumption.

The squads comprise one captain and one paramedic for a two-person team that runs 24 hours per day and 365 days per year. All personnel meeting these qualifications are assigned to the squads on a rotating basis to reduce “burnout.” The squad’s primary mission is to capture high-acuity EMS calls with our private partner, American Medical Response. AMR responds to low-acuity calls without the help of BFD. In addition, all personnel are considered dual roles, meaning they are suppression ready and equipped to help with all other calls from fires to rescues to HAZMAT, provided they are not tied to a medical call.

In terms of call volume, Squad One has responded to approximately 1,600 calls since December 1, 2022, with an anticipated 2,500 to 3,000 total responses for the calendar year. Squad Two began service on July 10th and will service the west end as it is assigned to fire station five. We anticipate Squad Two responding to just as many as Squad One, if not more. Also, before the program's implementation, Engines One and Two responded to Engine Six’s area approximately 10% of their time in any calendar year. With Squad One assigned to the east end of town, that number has been dramatically reduced to less than 1%, keeping all east-end units in their response areas significantly more often. We anticipate Squad Two providing the same benefits for the west end. On another note, it has taken until the end of June to receive our intended vehicle for this program, the smaller, more agile Ford Interceptor. The smaller SUV should produce the desired results in fuel consumption rated at 20 miles/gal. Until recently, we have been using the original 2012 Ford F550, which has a gas mileage of 6 miles/gal. compared to a large fire engine rated at 5 miles/gal.

Lastly, the crews' morale has increased considerably as they have witnessed firsthand the benefits of our new program. Overall, we are ecstatic about the results for our community and look forward to continued success.

## MRT Stats

Call count Squad 1: 1,383

Call Count Squad 2: 182

Average Response Time: 6:18







# Training

## Highlights:

- 10 Person recruit academy (12 if you include Lockwood)
- 6 Person Officer Development Program (ODP)
- 6-Person Engineer Development Program (EDP)
- Drone Pilots

## ISO Numbers:

Facility Training (individual employee hours):  
3882.5 Total hours-161.77 days  
Company Training (individual employee hours):  
5106.11 Total Hours- 212.75 days

## Special Programs:

ODP- 6 Members completed, 140 hours, 840 hours.  
EDP- 6 members enrolled, 5 completed 80 hours,  
480 total hours.

Drone Pilot BPD and BFD: 32 hours, 4 BFD pilots  
for a total of 128 hours.

Development Program (individual employee) totals:  
1,448 Hours

## Recruit class:

10 members enrolled, 10 Completed. 480 hours per member,  
4,800 total hours  
Recruit Program total: 4,800 hours

## Wildland training:

Wildland Refresher: 195 hours  
Pack test (3 miles, 45lbs pack under 45 minutes): 96 personnel



# Hazmat

In June, The Montana Regional Hazmat Teams, of which the Billings Fire Department is a member, completed a nearly five-year-long project to supply each of the six state hazmat teams with a state-of-the-art remote Unmanned Aerial System, otherwise known as a drone. On behalf of the six regional hazmat teams, a \$300,000 Homeland Security Grant was secured by the Billings Fire Department to license and train FAA-



certified drone pilots and purchase six DJI Matrice 300 drones equipped with a high-quality optical camera, a thermal imager, and an optional hazardous materials monitor. The drone aircraft and pilots are positioned in Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, and Missoula.

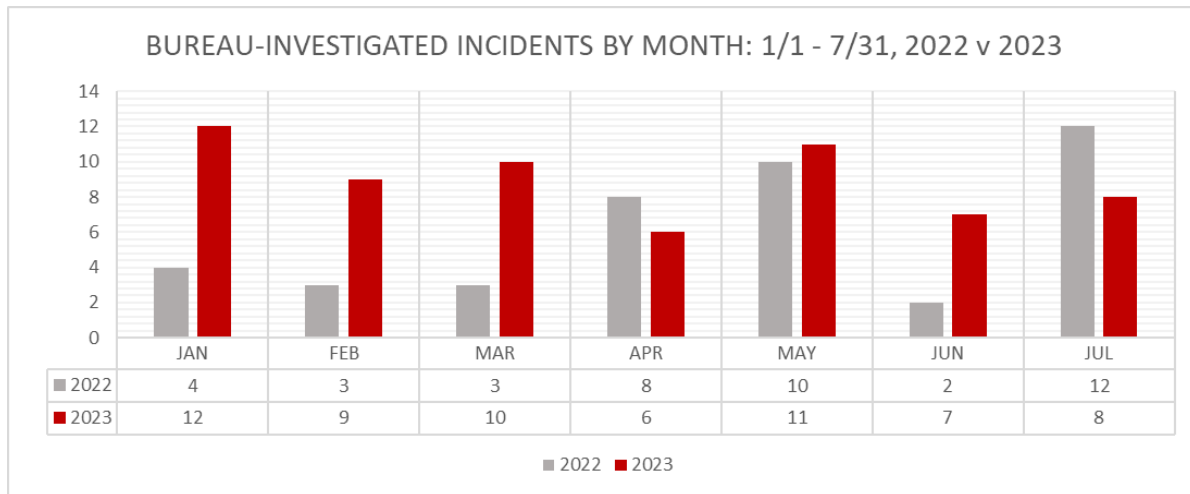
The purpose of this program is to have the ability to rapidly access potential hazmat scenes, such as the recent railroad derailment near Billings, and assess those scenes for hazards such as fire, trapped victims, and hazardous materials. Additionally, the UAS aircraft has been used to search for stranded boaters on the Yellowstone River and guide first responders to the victims in the dark. Also, the Billings Fire Department's drones and pilots have assisted the Billings Police Department, mapped changes in the condition of the BBWA water canal, and searched for a missing mountain biker lost in the uneven terrain surrounding the rims on Billings' West End. The drone will likely also see service sizing up wildfires, doing damage surveys on buildings, and providing additional safety and situational awareness at structure fires.

In order for the Billings Fire Department to obtain grant funding and start this statewide program, Engineer Mark Solberg had to author a Civil Rights/Civil Liberty Plan for the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that citizens' civil rights would not be violated through the use of grant funds. Additionally, significant amounts of research went into selecting an aircraft that could meet the flight time and payload requirements of these missions. This process was significantly slowed by the outbreak of COVID-19 however, Engineer Solberg was finally able to obtain the necessary clearances and paperwork with DHS and secure a vendor willing to travel to each regional hazmat team and train their personnel. The UAS program is one more example where the Billings Fire Department utilizes the latest technology to deliver outstanding customer services to the citizens of Billings and those who visit here. For more information on the Billings Fire Department's drone program, please visit our web link at: <https://www.billingsmt.gov/2986/UAS>





# Fire Prevention Bureau



The Fire Prevention Bureau has investigated 63 incidents so far this year compared to 42 incidents last year at this time.



To date for 2023, The Fire Prevention Bureau has conducted 543 inspections.



The Fire Prevention Bureau has processed 42 fire protection plans in total. 21 Fire Alarm plans. 20 Fire Sprinkler plans. 1 Clean Agent plan.







# 9-1-1 Center

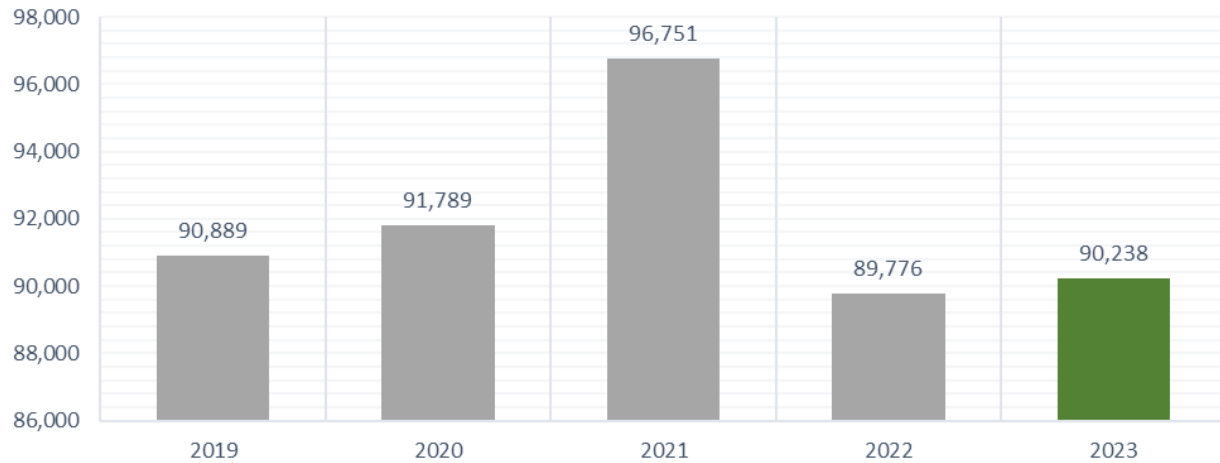
- We continue to hire new personnel at a steady rate. We are finding great success using the NEOGOV program but continue to struggle with applications showing up for interviews and demonstrating competency in pre-employment testing. To date, we are at 70% staffing. We hope to achieve 100% staffing, reenergize full capacity call taking and dispatching, and then proceed to over-hiring to accommodate anticipated retirements and resignations.
- Supervisors have assumed a much-modified tasking and including scheduling that brings us closer to a 24/7/365 model of applied supervision.
- Implementation of the new city radio system is ongoing and on-schedule with a timeline of full implementation and use in January of 24.
- We continue to prioritize medical calls using existing protocols and continue to work towards the refinement of that process.
- We have purchased and over the next 12-18 months will implement advanced FIRE and POLICE priority dispatch protocols (similar to those medical calls already prioritized). This will benefit the training of new employees (using one standard program for all call-taking and priority dispatch activities instead of 4) and is anticipated to cut our initial onboarding and training time in half. In addition, this will include a substantial revision to FIRE and POLICE dispatch procedures that also offer expanded prioritization options for what amounts to more demand for resources than what resources are actually present and available.
- 911 Phone handling system is coming up on expiration and will be required to be updated in the next FY or so. We are exploring this system and working with the vendor to establish a timeline and compatibility issues with some of our existing systems.
- Our top 3 challenges include an increasing volume of phone calls and requests for emergency services and adjusting our staffing to try and meet this demand efficiently, refining and expanding the matrix of prioritization for the daily and moment by moment prioritization of fire and medical and law enforcement calls to limited (and sometime no) available resources, and continually training new staff on evolving protocol requirements that are present in such a dynamic and complicated environment.



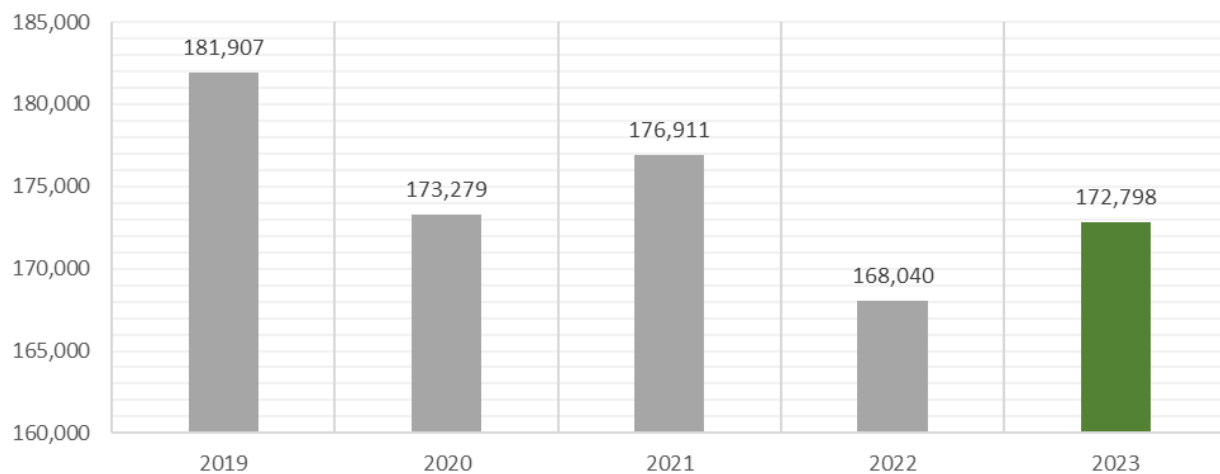


# 9-1-1 Center

**CALL FOR SERVICE TOTALS: 1/1 - 7/31, 2019-2023**



**911 CENTER PHONE TOTALS: 1/1 - 7/31, 2019-2023**





# Therapy Dog Program

Deputy Fire Marshal Becky Biggins is the handler for Winston. Winston is currently in training and will be a fully operational Therapy Dog soon. Winston will be the first K-9 in Billings Fire Department. He will be serving the 1st responders of Billings Fire Department to aid in mental health and also serving the public to help teach fire safety.

A study out of UCLA Health on therapy animals showed the following benefits of adding a therapy dog program:

- **Physical benefits:** Lowered blood pressure, breathing slows in those who are anxious, release of hormones like phenylethylamine that regulates overall mood and can help with depression.
- **Mental benefits:** Helps people relax and decompress, provides comfort, and is a happy distraction. Petting animals also promoted the release of serotonin, prolactin, and oxytocin. These hormones all play a part in elevating mood.





# Semi - Annual Report 2023

2305 8TH AVENUE N .  
BILLINGS, MT . 59101  
(406) 657-8423  
[www.billingsmt.gov/fire](http://www.billingsmt.gov/fire)

*sbm*

**CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA**  
**City Health Insurance Fund**  
**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**January 1 Thru June 30, 2023**

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Beginning available cash balance, as of January 1, 2023	\$ 10,274,774	\$ 9,339,705	\$10,664,977
Revenue			
Employer contributions	\$ 4,792,590		
Employee contributions	1,043,412		
Interest	233,024		
Claim overpayment	82,624		
Stop loss-insurance revenue	113,215		
RX rebates	518,888		
Wellness - Other	-		
Revenue from health insurance activities	<u>6,783,753</u>	<u>5,966,225</u>	<u>5,880,907</u>
Expenses			
Self-funded medical	3,881,771		
Self-funded RX	1,395,952		
Occu. Health - Nurse Visit	33,010		
Annual Wellness Exam Program Incentive	21,500		
Healthy IS Wellness Program & Incentive	103,640		
Fiduciary Liability Insurance	-		
Employee Assistance Program	16,275		
Third Party Admin - ACA Admin	12,107		
Stop loss-insurance premium	306,219		
Claims administration	161,870		
Third Party Admin. - PPO Fees	-		
Consulting Fee	35,300		
Wellness - Other	-		
All other	<u>94,617</u>		
Expenses from health insurance activities	<u>6,062,261</u>	<u>5,393,902</u>	<u>5,782,043</u>
Net cash provided (used) from health insurance activities:	721,492	572,323	98,864
Cash flow from other activities:			
Revenue			
Flex	\$ 198,930		
Dental	434,960		
Life Insurance	<u>5,633</u>		
Revenue from other activities	<u>639,523</u>	<u>619,847</u>	<u>601,264</u>
Expenses			
Flex claims-medical	167,677		
Flex claims-child care	31,212		
Flex admin	4,060		
HSA admin	6,293		
Dental claims	392,831		
(VSP)-Vision Admin Fee	4,258		
Life insurance premiums	<u>6,495</u>		
Expenses from other activities	<u>612,826</u>	<u>606,593</u>	<u>604,131</u>
Net cash provided (used) from other activities:	26,697	13,254	(2,867)
Ending available cash balance, as of June 30, 2023	<u>\$ 11,022,963</u>	<u>\$ 9,925,282</u>	<u>\$10,760,974</u>

Report is on a calendar year basis and not a fiscal year basis.

# BILLINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

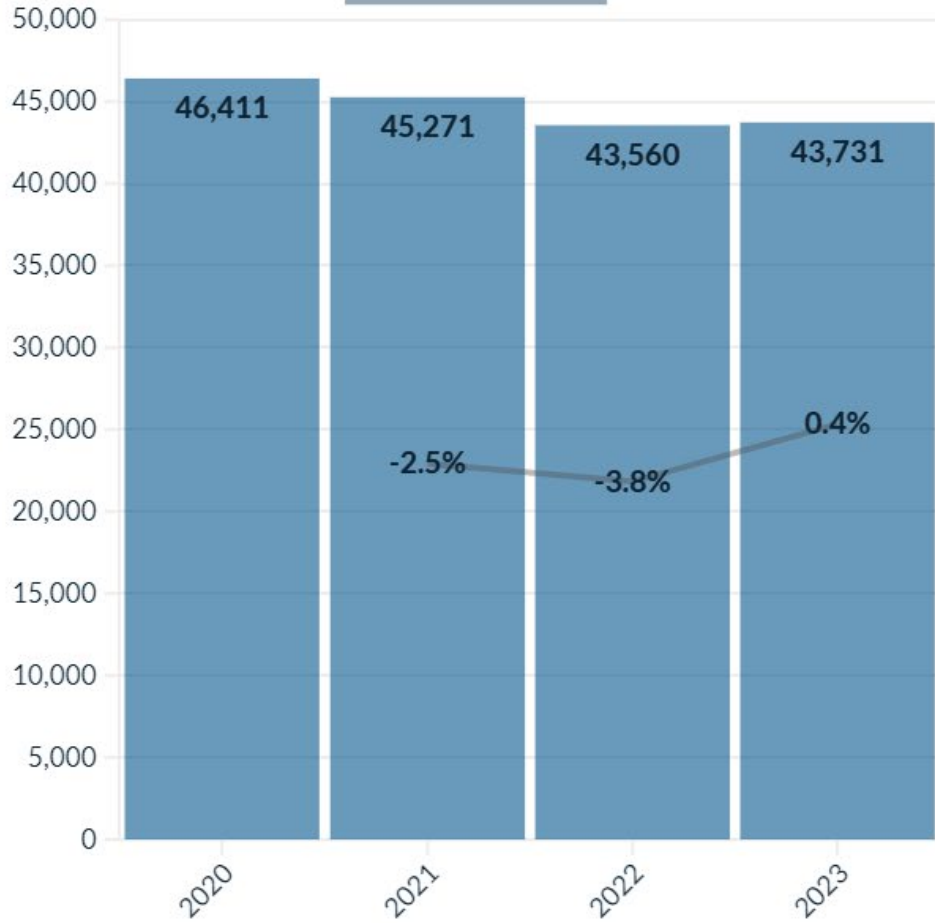
Rich St. John  
Chief of Police



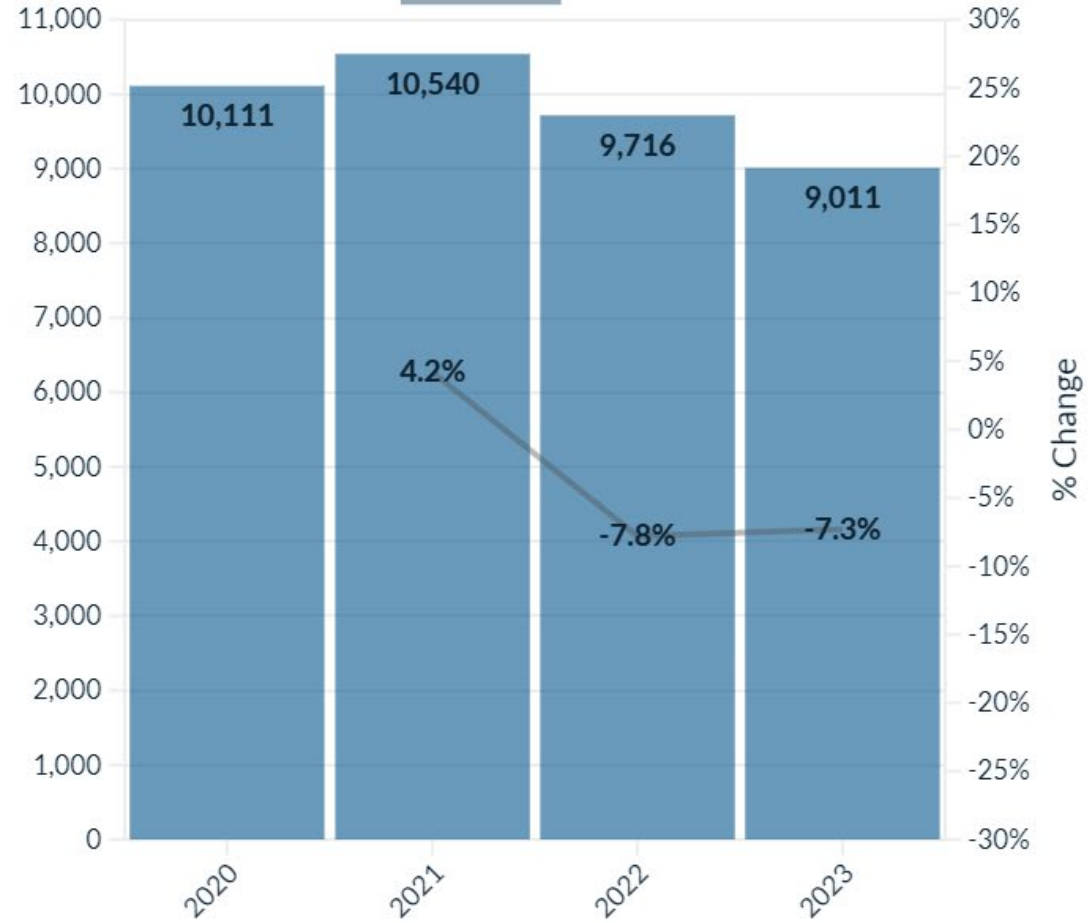


■ CHANGE ■ VALUE

### INCIDENTS

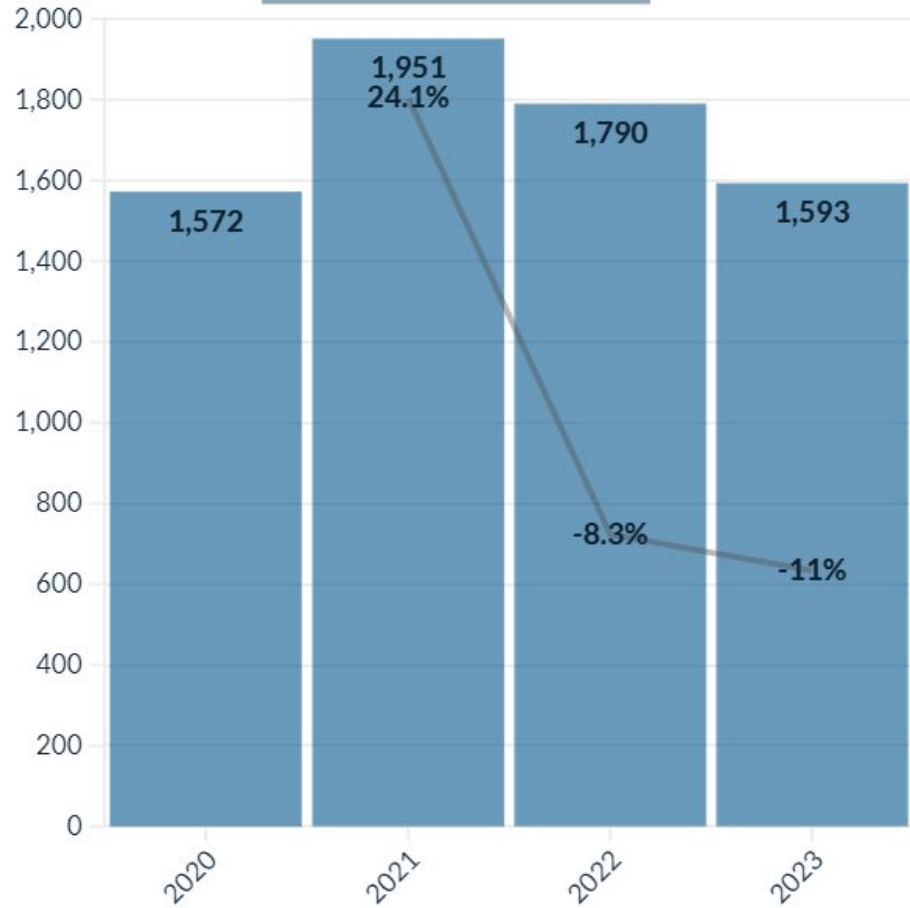


### CASES

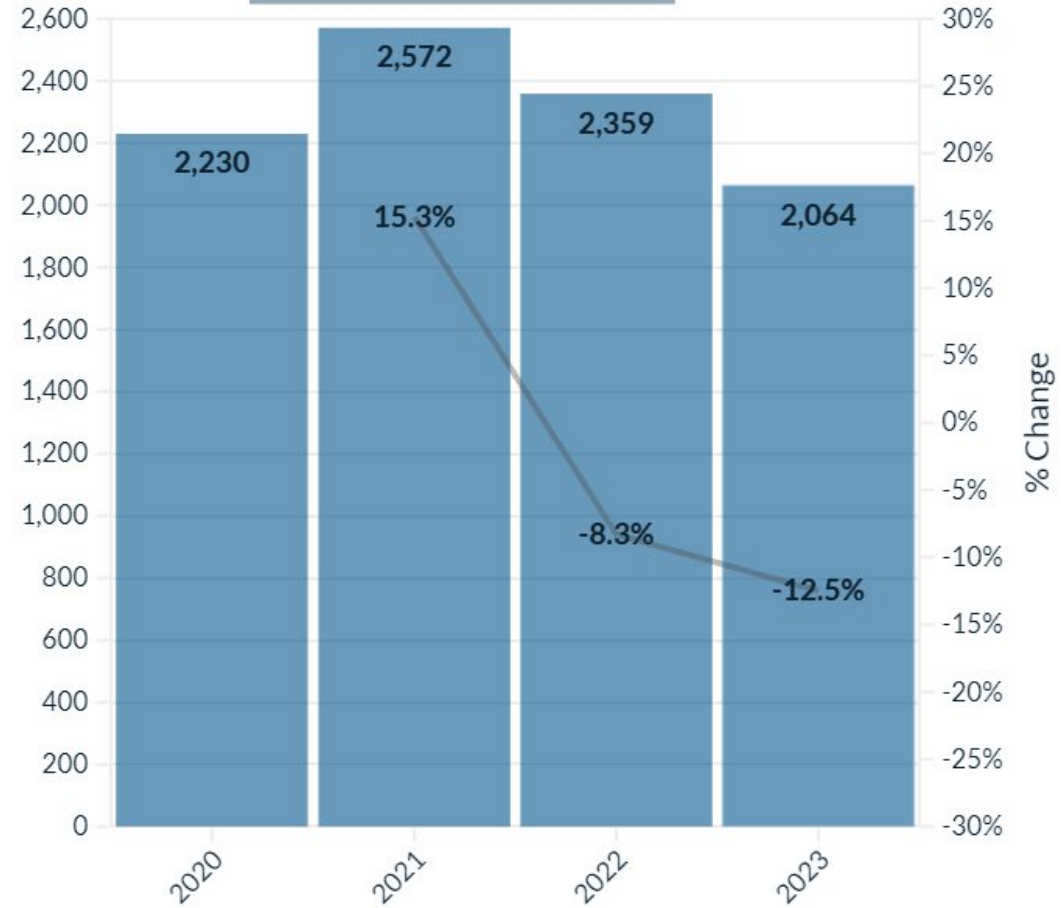


**CALLS FOR SERVICE/CASES**  
JAN 1 – JUNE 30 DATA FOR EACH YEAR

### VIOLENT CRIMES

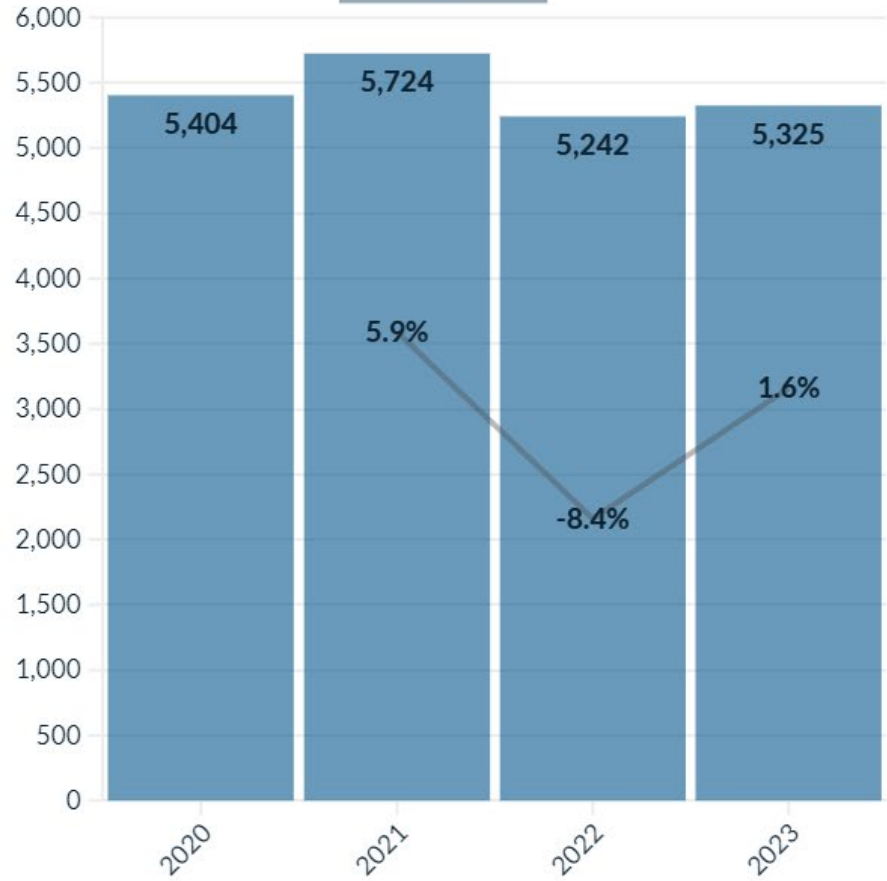


### PROPERTY CRIMES

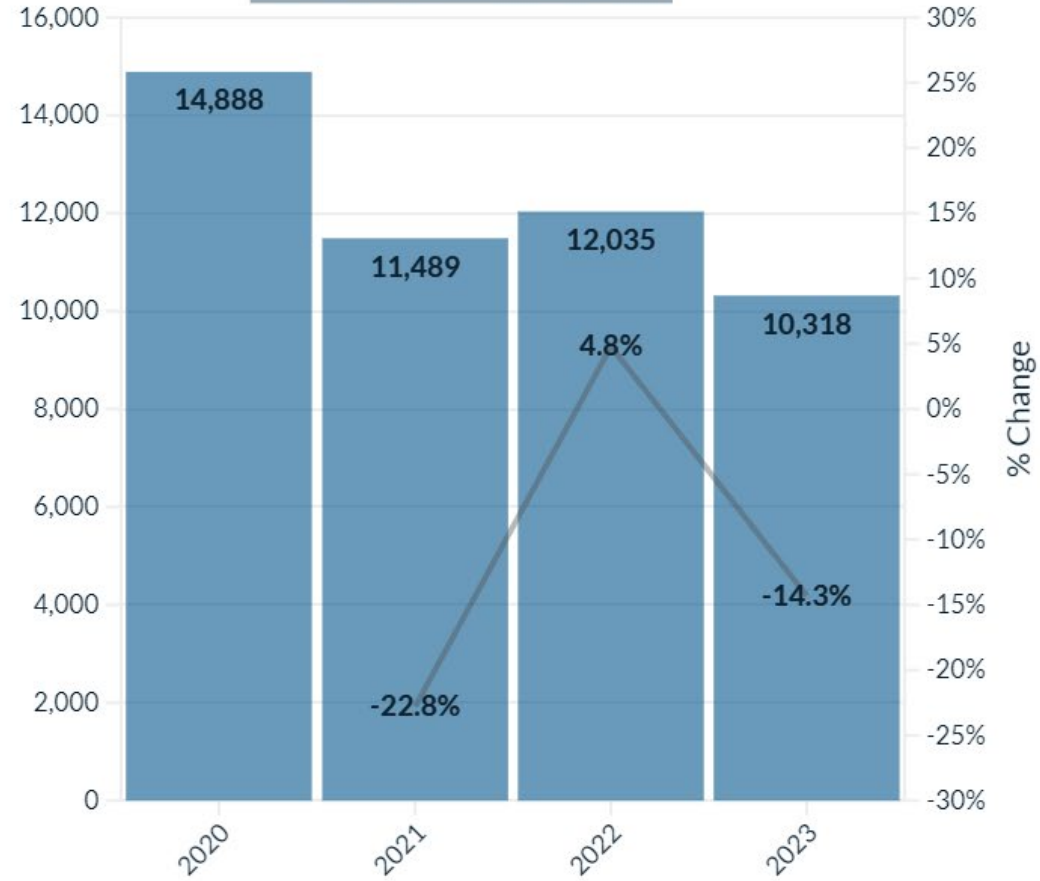


**VIOLENT/PROPERTY CRIMES**  
JAN 1 – JUNE 30 DATA FOR EACH YEAR

### ARRESTS



### CITES & WARNINGS



# ARRESTS/CITES

JULY 1 – DEC 31 DATA FOR EACH YEAR

# Warrant Information

## *Notifications (3W) and Remand Rejections (1R)*

**3W designation: When officers are out with a person who has one or more warrants, but the warrants could not be served.**

**1H 2023: 877**

**1H 2022: 805**

**1R designation: When officers arrest a person on a warrant but upon arrival at the jail were not able to remand so person is given a notice to appear in court for a later date.**

**1H 2023: 155 (established 9/21/22)**

# Adult

- ▶ 1H Warrants issued that remain active: 1,876
  - ▶ Misdemeanor: 1,045
  - ▶ Traffic: 576
  - ▶ Felony: 225
  - ▶ Summons: 10
  - ▶ Other: 20
- ▶ 1H adult arrests on warrants: 2,985
  - ▶ Municipal, misdemeanor: 1,406
  - ▶ Municipal, traffic: 416
  - ▶ Contempt of court, felony: 369
  - ▶ Revocation of suspended/deferred sentence: 337
  - ▶ Violations of conditions of release: 125
  - ▶ Warrant, other jurisdiction: 198
  - ▶ Probation violation, felony: 122
  - ▶ Warrant, failure to appear: 11
  - ▶ Parole violation, felony: 1
- ▶ Total 1H adult arrests: 6,116 (2,477 NTA)

# Juvenile

- ▶ Total 1H juvenile arrests: 554
- ▶ Juvenile warrant arrests: 9
  - Municipal traffic, 1, other jurisdiction, 2,
  - Municipal misdemeanor, 6.

## WARRANT INFORMATION





# Billings

## PUBLIC WORKS



Excellence  
Innovation  
Integrity



## Department Report

...from the heart of Billings

8.1.2023





# Contents



- 3 Director's Message
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Solid Waste Improvements
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Drinking Water



- 13 Future Ready - School Dist Collab
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- 17 Making Waves with Asset Management
- 18 How we solved F.O.G.
- 19 Public Works in the Community

# a letter from the director



Every time I sit down to write one of these messages, my mind immediately goes to the many amazing things the Public Works staff accomplishes daily – many of which most people will never know about. We update the City Council and community through this report, but it focuses on the projects and programs. What is important to know is that behind every one of these projects or programs that are highlighted, one if not several staff members probably hatched the idea and made it come to fruition. And that is why we do what we do. While life in Public Works will never be considered glamorous, we get to make lives better day in and day out. That is our purpose and hopefully you can see that in the following pages. We thank the City Council and the citizens of Billings for entrusting us with the resources to do what we do.

*Debi Meling*

Public Works Director

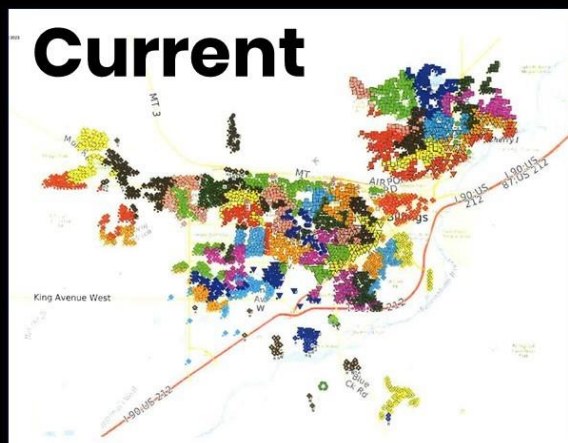


# Solid Waste Improvements

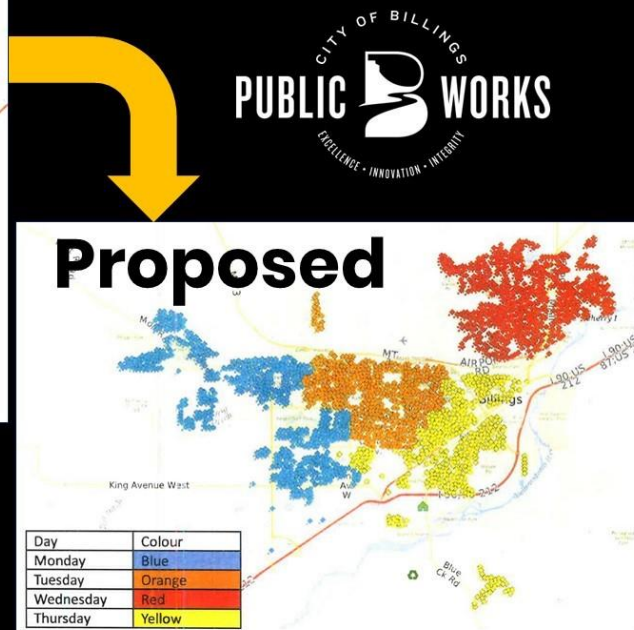
The City of Billings is thrilled to unveil a series of solid waste improvements aimed at enhancing efficiency, maintaining affordability, and ultimately extending the life of the landfill. Scheduled for implementation the week of Monday, September 11th, 2023, these changes are set to elevate the city's cleanliness and sustainability to new heights. We understand that change can be daunting, but rest assured, these updates are designed to make our city shine brighter than ever before. Here's what you can expect:

## 1. Improved Efficiency – A new garbage day

As our city continues to grow, the residential garbage collection routes became a rather colorful mosaic art piece as shown on the current route map. Instead of collecting in various areas of Billings every day of the week, we'll move to a collection system optimized by zone as shown in the proposed route map. It makes sense, right? This means 85% of Billings residents will get a new garbage day. Residents will be notified of their new garbage day through mail, phone messaging, email, and an informational sticker placed on their garbage carts prior to the official change. To avoid any confusion, the weekly yard waste collection and monthly cardboard recycling collection will also be scheduled on the same day of the week. The new route map will be readily available on our website and social media platforms, allowing residents to conveniently search for their service day by typing in their address. This transition enhances operational efficiency, reduces delays, and ensures long-term affordability for our residents. To make sure you receive important notifications about service changes, please **update your contact information with us online**.



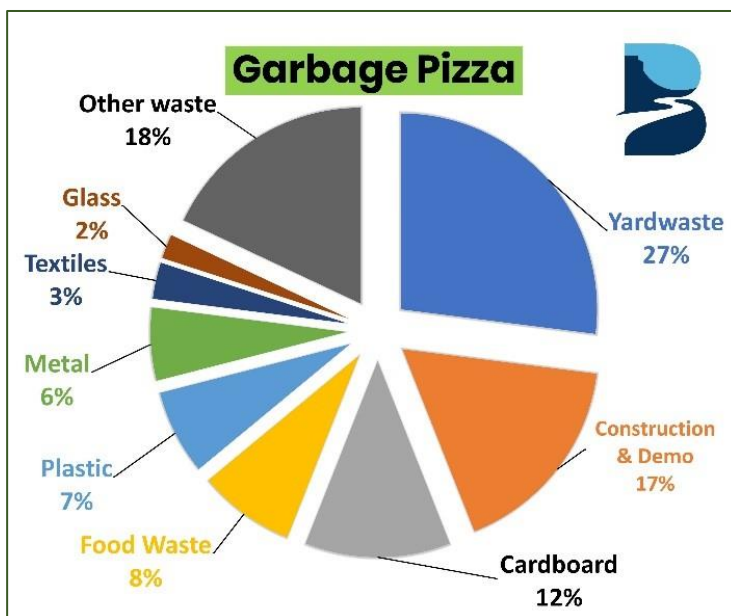
## Route Optimization



## 2. One Step Toward Recycling – Cardboard will be collected and recycled monthly with no additional charge

On average, Billings area residents generate 6.32 lbs. of garbage per person per day, surpassing the EPA national average of 4.9 lbs. Shockingly, over half of the materials ending up in our landfill are compostable or recyclable, including 12% cardboard and 27% yard waste. To extend the lifespan of our landfill and delay costly expansions, we are introducing a cardboard collection program. Starting the week of Monday, September 11th, residents can place a stack of clean cardboard next to their garbage cans on their designated garbage day for monthly collection. This service incurs no

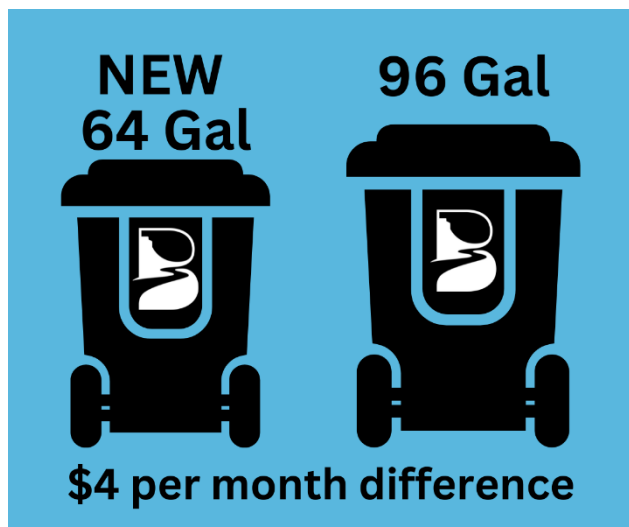
additional charge. The collected cardboard will be either composted at the landfill or recycled. To assist residents in understanding the program, we will provide visual aids such as pictures of model cardboard stacks, a color-coded calendar indicating the assigned cardboard collection day of the month, and informative video clips demonstrating proper cardboard stacking techniques and what items should not be included (e.g., greasy pizza boxes).



### Monthly Cardboard Collection Calendar

Remember...	Put Cardboard Out by 7:00 AM	
If Monday is your regular collection day...	Cardboard will be picked up the 1st Monday of each month	<b>1st</b> MONDAY
If Tuesday is your regular collection day...	Cardboard will be picked up the 2nd Tuesday of each month	<b>2nd</b> TUESDAY
If Wednesday is your regular collection day...	Cardboard will be picked up the 3rd Wednesday of each month	<b>3rd</b> WEDNESDAY
If Thursday is your regular collection day...	Cardboard will be picked up the 4th Thursday of each month	<b>4th</b> THURSDAY
 Cardboard must be dry and free of food, oil stains, packing peanuts, plastic bags, and bubble wrap. Boxes shall be flattened or cut up. One large box may be used as a container to smaller flattened cardboard boxes. Please DO NOT set out cardboard during rainy weather. More details at <a href="http://BillingsmtPublicWorks.gov">BillingsmtPublicWorks.gov</a>		

### 3. Tailored Service Options - Introducing the 64-gallon garbage container



Starting July 24, 2023, Billings residents will have the opportunity to request a 64-gallon garbage container, offering a monthly savings of \$4 when compared to the standard 96-gallon container. This empowering initiative allows residents to choose the service level that best suits their needs. Orders can be placed by filling out an [online form](#) or by contacting our friendly Account Service team members at 406.657.8315 (option 3).

### 4. Extra garbage collection will move to call in only

Did you know that approximately 50% of the extra garbage collected through the current extras program is cardboard? With the introduction of curbside cardboard collection, residents will have additional space in their garbage cans, which will eliminate or reduce extras for property owners. If there's extra garbage on occasion, residents can request collection by filling out an online request form or by contacting our friendly Account Service team members at 406.657.8315 (option #3). The charge for extra garbage collection is \$5 per item. An item must be less than 75 lbs. One item is equivalent to a 32-gallon container or approximately 2 feet by 2 feet. For example, up to three typical 13-gallon tall kitchen garbage bags filled with household waste is considered one item. The bulky collection program is also still available for larger items. For households frequently generating extra garbage, we encourage considering the addition of a second 96-gallon garbage container for a monthly fee of \$4.50 which would be collected weekly.



### 5. A Cleaner City – Solid waste must be bagged and tied

All garbage in the black solid waste containers must be bagged and tied. This helps prevent garbage from blowing out of our garbage collection trucks and out of containers on windy days, resulting in a cleaner city. Remember that yard waste placed in the green containers must not be bagged so it is compostable.





These solid waste improvements signify a major step forward for the City of Billings by embracing efficiency and environmental stewardship while maintaining affordability. We appreciate your support during this transition and will be happy to answer any questions in addition to the Q&As below.

**Q1. When can I order a 64-gallon garbage can?**

Starting July 24, 2023, orders can be placed by filling out an [online form](#) or by contacting our friendly Account Service team members at 406.657.8315 (option 3).

**Q2. When will my 64-gallon garbage container be delivered?**

Mid to late August.

**Q3. When can I start paying for less if I get a 64-gallon garbage can?**

The new rate will go into effect the week of Monday, September 11th, 2023, and will be reflected on the October bill.

**Q4. Can I have an additional 64-gallon garbage container?**

No. Residents can have up to two 96-gallon containers, but no additional 64-gallon or 96-gallon containers will be provided to residents that have a 64-gallon container.

**Q5. How will the cardboard be recycled?**

A portion of the cardboard will be composted right at the Billings Regional Landfill. The rest will be recycled through a local partner and shipped to other vetted partners.

**Q6. What if my neighbors put their garbage in my container?**

Step one is to talk to them. If that doesn't work, please contact us at 406.657.8285.

**Q7. What if I have extra garbage that doesn't fit into my garbage can?**

If there's extra garbage on occasion, residents can request collection by filling out an online request form or by contacting our friendly Account Service team members at 406.657.8315 (option 3). The charge for extra garbage collection is \$5 per item. An item must be less than 75 lbs. and can consist of up to three typical 13-gallon tall kitchen garbage bags filled with household waste only or in a container less than 2 ft x 2 ft (32-gallon equivalent). If residents have larger items, the Account Service team can be contacted for a bulky item pickup. The fee for bulky items is \$55 for 1-5 items, \$110 for 6-10 items, and \$165 for more than 10 items. For households frequently generating extra garbage, we encourage considering the addition of a second 96-gallon garbage container for a monthly fee of \$4.50.



**Q8. Would there still be fall leaves and post storm clean up events?**

Yes, we'll continue those clean up events.

**Q9. What if the wind blows my cardboard stack away?**

A good practice is to keep a rock handy for weighing things down. Or use one large box to contain all of the smaller, broken-down boxes.

**Q10. What about the elderly and disabled?**

If you are elderly or disabled, you may qualify for assistance moving your solid waste carts to and from your collection area as provided for in the Billings Montana City Code (BMCC). Please apply for carry out service at no additional charge by submitting a [Medical Necessity Form](#) completed by a Health Care Professional.

**Q11. Will there still be green barrel collection?**

Yes, yard waste will still be collected weekly between April and the end of November. Each residence is allowed up to two green containers for no additional charge.

**Q12. Can I set out all paper and cardboard for collection?**

No. Only brown cardboard, thin brown box board (soda box, clean pizza box, etc.), moving/mailling boxes, and cardboard egg cartons are accepted.

# Solid Waste Service Improvements





64 Gal



96 Gal



Cardboard Collection

Great things are happening with your garbage services

Join us Wednesday 8/23 @ noon  
Library Community Room



# THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT RESIDENTIAL GARBAGE SERVICE CHANGES STARTING 9/11/2023



**Billings**  
PUBLIC  
WORKS

## BASIC SERVICES



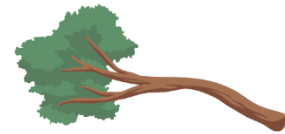
Weekly garbage collection service  
1 x 64 Gal = \$9.90/Month (maximum 1 per household)  
1 x 96 gal = \$13.90/month (maximum 2 per household)  
1 additional 96 gal = \$4.50/month (cannot be added to 64 gal)  
Please make sure household waste is bagged and tied.



Weekly yard waste collection is included  
Season runs from first full week of April until the last full week of November  
Maximum 2 green bins per household  
Yard waste must not be bagged to be compostable.



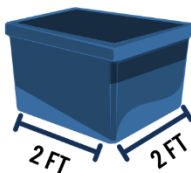
Monthly Cardboard collection is included. Only brown cardboard, thin brown box board (soda box, clean pizza box, etc.), moving/mailling boxes, and cardboard egg cartons are accepted.



Citywide cleanups, fall leaf containers, post storm cleanups, and Christmas tree recycling programs

**Remember... Municipal solid waste is accepted at the landfill for FREE for Billings residents**

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES



Extra garbage is call in only for \$5 per item  
an item is household and yard waste only, must be less than 75 lbs & can consist of up to 3 typical 13-gal tall kitchen garbage bags or fit in a container less than 2ft x 2 ft (32-gal equivalent). A Bundle of large branches that is securely tied, less than 75 lbs, less than 4 ft long, and less than 2 ft in diameter can be collected as a call-in extra item as well.



Bulky items pick up is call in only  
\$55.00 for 1-5 items  
\$110.00 for 6-10 items  
\$165.00 for >10 items

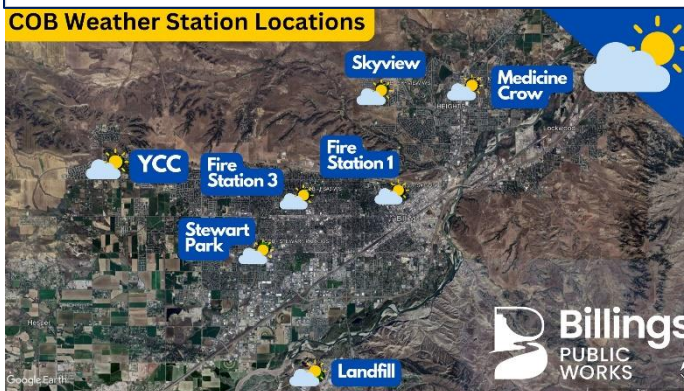
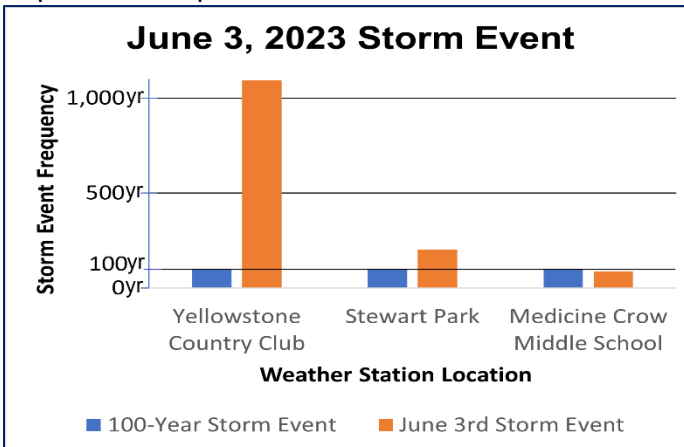
For questions about your services reach us at 406.657.8315 (option 3)  
Please find detailed FAQs at [www.billingsmtpublicworks.gov](http://www.billingsmtpublicworks.gov)



## Wow, this year's been quite the rainmaker!

We've experienced some serious torrential downpours, with certain areas getting soaked by over 5.5 inches of rain during the storm in June.

Kudos to our incredible Public Works staff who ensured essential services were not interrupted in poor conditions, put in tireless efforts to clean up after the rainstorms, then meticulously worked through the stormwater system to make essential repairs and improvements.



Round-a-bout at Shiloh & Shiloh Crossing Blvd

**rain  
rain  
rain**



We're immensely grateful for the amazing community support too. Thanks to all those who pitched in to clear out clogged inlets when they could. With over 10,000 inlets in Billings, it could have been a never-ending task without your help.

Interestingly, due to the wet weather, water demands have been down this June, especially when it comes to irrigation. We were operating at 22 million gallons per day (MGD) on June 23rd, a stark difference from the 50 MGD we produced during the same time last year. In the meantime, Water Reclamation Facility broke a new peak flow record by treating 52 million gallons per day. This put the process to the test, but staff and equipment properly treated every drop.

We owe part of our success to some top-notch weather stations recently installed. These pro-grade stations provided real-time data during weather events, enabling the City to fine-tune and validate our storm drainage infrastructure and policy decisions. It's been a game-changer in ensuring we're well-prepared for whatever Mother Nature throws our way and keep Billings thriving, rain or shine!



The total cost of repairs due to damages sustained during the storm is about \$1M. While the City has issued a disaster declaration, the federal government has not yet which means we will likely not get financial assistance for this work.



Hogan's Slough - On Gabel across from Shipton's Big R



Mullowney Lane



Arnold Drain – Broadwater & 30th St W



Shiloh Conservation Area before & after with the pavilion and a bridge crossing in the background



# Leading the Way in protecting Yellowstone County's Drinking Water with River Modeling Technology

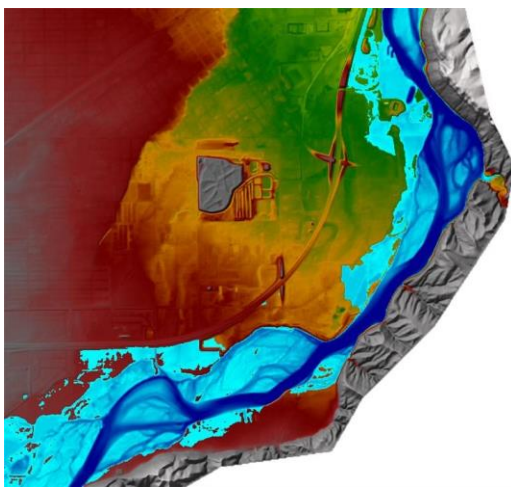


Photo credit to Stillwater County Disaster & Emergency

The Yellowstone River was recently impacted by a train derailment when a bridge spanning the river collapsed near Reed Point. The collapse of a bridge led to 10 train cars, filled with molten sulfur and asphalt, plunging into the river, causing these hazardous materials to leak into the water.

Fortunately, the asphalt and molten sulfur solidified upon hitting the cold water. But Billings Public Works staff were taking no chances. Using river modeling technology from the recent flood study, staff was able to determine the exact travel time from the spill location (near Reed Point) until it would reach the City of Billings water intakes. In total the travel time was about 14 hours. The water treatment staff was then able fill the water reservoirs prior to any potentially contaminated water arriving and shut down the plant for 12 hours when the potentially contaminated water was expected to flow past Billings. This data was also shared with the City of Laurel and Lockwood Water to ensure that all the Yellowstone County drinking water systems were safe.

Additionally, extra sampling for hydrocarbons was completed by the drinking water lab which detected no contamination. The staff did an excellent job of managing around the emergency resulting in safe drinking water for all in Billings.



Shades of blue on the left map represent water depths. The river modeling (right map credit to MT State Library) on each of the different reaches coupled with the amount of flow in the river allows us to determine when water will arrive at the Water Treatment Plant intakes in the event of contamination.

Employers haven't been having a great time given the low unemployment rates, and the City is no exception. This spring, however, we had a fantastic opportunity to participate in the #FutureReady program with Billings Public Schools, where we got to hang out with high school seniors in the community.

Our superintendents had the chance to share their own career stories and showcase the exciting career opportunities with the Billings Public Works Department and the City of Billings.

The results of the program have been very positive, and we've successfully recruited some talented individuals who are currently undergoing training to become certified Equipment Operators. This would not have been possible without the incredible support from the Career Coach team with Billings Public Schools, who connected us with the next generation of the workforce who will take care of this amazing city where we live, work, and play.



Say hi to Nick! He is now well on his way to achieve his CDL and become an Equipment Operator with our Distribution & Collection team that maintains 500+ miles and water mains and 500+ miles of sewer mains for Billings.



**FUTURE  
READY**





# Construction Season Update



## Non-Maintainable and Gravel Streets Program

- Brewington Drive and Adjacent Cul-de-sacs—project is paved, sidewalks are complete, and miscellaneous landscape restoration is on-going.
- Charles Street—water main replacement has begun along with road construction from Monad Road to Industrial Avenue. Project will be finished by late Fall 2023.



Brewington Drive Before & After

## Pavement Preservation Projects

- Rehberg Lane from Grand Avenue to Rimrock Road has been chip and fog sealed. Striping and signage will be complete in the next few weeks. Bike Lanes are being added to the street.
- King Avenue East has been chip and fog sealed. Striping and signage will be complete in the next few weeks.
- Hilltop Lane is beginning milling operations and will be paved in a couple of weeks. Bike Lanes are being added to the street from Bazaar Exchange to Bench Boulevard.
- Central Avenue Milling and Paving Overlay will begin from 32<sup>nd</sup> Street West to the BBWA Canal and be complete by September.
- South Billings Triangle—pavement preservation repairs will begin late summer and be complete this fall, followed by chip seal in 2024.



Virginia Lane Sidewalk is complete

## Missing Sidewalk Program

- Virginia Lane sidewalk is complete.
- Alkali Creek sidewalk from is beginning construction and will be complete by end of September 2023.
- 12<sup>th</sup> Street West, 21<sup>st</sup> Street West Parkview, Avenue C, area sidewalks will be completed by year-end.



Inner Belt Loop



Building Retaining Wall @ Skyline Trail

### Inner Belt Loop

This 5-mile long road project is well under way and making good progress. Half-of the earthwork is complete and gravel hauling should begin by September 2023. The paving and multi-use path will be complete and the road open before June 2024.

### Skyline Trail

The trail on top of the Rims runs from the airport west to Zimmerman Park and is about 60% complete. The three parking lots and truck turnout lot have been paved and work remains on the west half of the trail with retaining walls, guard rail, fencing, shade structures and benches to be installed. Assuming retaining wall block supply is on time, this project will be complete and open by the end of 2023.

### Mullowney Lane

This important street project from Midland Road to Elysian Road will be complete by early fall 2023. Water mains, sewer mains, and storm drains are complete and road construction remains. A new traffic signal is planned at the Mullowney Lane/Elysian Road intersection.

### Bitterroot Storm Drain

This project adds an important storm drain to reduce flooding in Billings Heights along Bitterroot Drive and Wicks Lane east of Bitterroot Drive and will begin construction in September 2023, complete by June 2024.



Mullowney Lane Under Construction

### South Billings Urban Renewal Projects

- Stephens Lane along the West Side of Optimist Park—street improvements, parking, and parking lighting. Start early August complete before end of year.
- Ryan Avenue—start on water replacement fall 2023 and complete street and sidewalk improvements in Spring 2024.
- Morgan Avenue—Water Replacement, new sidewalk, and street improvements starting Spring 2024.



### **Water Replacement Projects**

- Work is ongoing on Parkway Lane and King Avenue East west of Parkway Lane—complete by early Fall.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (with sewer) is currently under construction and will be complete by late Fall.
- Avenue F is complete.
- Beverly Hill Boulevard is under construction, with 21<sup>st</sup> Street West and Parkhill Drive to be completed by late Fall.

### **Sewer Replacement Projects**

- Sewer replacement is continuing in several residential streets to reduce water infiltration and root intrusion to prevent sewer backups.
- Sewer rehabilitation will be occurring in the alley between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North and Montana Avenue east of 27<sup>th</sup> Street West and will be complete by September 2023.

### **Traffic Signals**

- 32<sup>nd</sup> and Grand Signal improvement are complete and operational.
- 48<sup>th</sup> and Grand- signal project has been bid and equipment ordered. This project will improve traffic flow on 48<sup>th</sup> Street West and Grand Avenue with a new signal and minor intersection improvements. Completion by late fall 2023.
- 24<sup>th</sup> Street West corridor is being analyzed to update the signal timing to improve traffic flow—complete by the end of 2023.

### **Solid Waste**

- Landfill Slope Stability Improvements: The slope stability project along Jellison road will begin in early September and be finished by early Spring 2024.
- Landfill Scale Addition: Construction will begin on the additional scale to improve traffic and operational efficiency in mid-August and be complete by the end of 2023.
- Landfill Compost Facility: Initial construction of the site is complete and after delivery of the mixer and conveyor, the system will be operational by April 2024.



Compost Site @ Billings Regional Landfill



*The City of Billings Public Works Department (PWD) strives to achieve our vision of being a leader in managing assets and delivering service focused on **excellence, innovation, and integrity**.*

## Making Waves – Asset Management

The asset management program has provided a roadmap over several years that includes thirty initiatives. Over the past year, data improvements have been made to the GIS information including our water, sewer, storms, roads, signals, signs, and street lights. This work will enable upgrades to the Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) and processes. Benefits include increased productivity for operations and maintenance staff, consistent and predictable collection of standardized data for analysis, and centralized storage of the data records. This will result in greater efficiency and enhanced data-driven decision-making regarding lifecycle management of water and sewer assets and overall needs assessment to support our community.

### Water Utility

#### Water Main

- Distribution
- Transmission

### Sewer Utility

#### Sewer Gravity Main

- ➔ Interior Mains 12" and Less
- ➔ Local Mains >12" and < 36"

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 to build base maps and hundreds of asset management layers.

The above screenshot is an example of the Water & Sewer Utility layers.



## How We Solved F.O.G.



There are two types of grease in the food services world yellow and brown grease. Yellow grease is typically generated from fryers and is recycled into various consumer products including biofuels. Unlike the yellow grease, brown grease is a mix of water, soaps, cleaning chemicals, and solids which have limited and expensive recycling opportunities, therefore, the brown grease is what gets hauled to the landfill.



### Why is discharging of F.O.G. a challenge for Billings?

The discharge of Fats, Oils, and Grease typically referred to as F.O.G. has been an ongoing challenge for the City of Billings' collection system and wastewater treatment plant operations. F.O.G. can build up in the sewer mains and laterals causing blockages and sometimes sanitary sewer overflows (SSO), where the wastewater discharges onto the street. When a blockage occurs, a quick response from the Billings Public Works Distribution and Collection Division is required to minimize potential property damage. To unclog a pipeline, our crews use a sewer jet and vac truck as well as a significant number of manhours.

### How is the City solving the F.O.G. problem?

In 2022, the Montana DEQ Solid Waste Program approved a request from the City of Billings to dispose F.O.G. at the landfill. Since August local pumpers have been hauling F.O.G., primarily collected from restaurant grease traps and interceptors, to earth lined evaporation ponds at the landfill. Within a month, the operators at the water reclamation facility (wastewater plant) noticed improvements with the wastewater quality and reduction of energy demand. Local pumpers can now discharge F.O.G. five days a week with no volume restrictions, and the landfill had already received over 650 tons of F.O.G. as of January 1, 2023. Prior to August of 2022, discharge of F.O.G. at the wastewater plant required advance notice and the plant had to limit F.O.G. to 3 days per week at 6,000 gallons per day.

### What's improved since the new approach to F.O.G.?

The City is now stepping up inspections and compliance with the food services industry. With help from Riverstone Health, the City began sending electronic surveys to businesses this year. Billings and surrounding area have over 500 food service establishments from restaurants, schools, and nursing/assisted living businesses.



# Photo Evidence of Fun and Engagement from the Community



**Groundbreaking @ Skyline Trail**



**Water Reclamation Open House**



**Landfill Open House**



**Future Ready – School to Employment**

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 ribbon cuttings of major community projects, to bringing you on a guided neighborhood bike tour in promoting active transportation, to teaching kids about our storm water system at the Saturday Live event and more, we hope to have many future opportunities to share, learn, and grow together. Please follow us on social media for future events!



**City Showcase @ Strawberry Festival**



**Environmental Affairs @ STEM Yellowstone**





## 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



AGENDA FOR AUGUST 9, 2023

BOC LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE/YC LEGISLATORS

STATE LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE TO IDENTIFY NEEDED CHANGES IN STATE LAW

THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF BILLINGS

Chair Roy Neese will call to order 11 a.m.

Moderator Pam Purinton

- I. Public Safety
  - A. Theft Laws
  - B. Pretrial Diversion
  - C. Bail reform
  - D. Office of Public Defender
  - E. Family Justice Center Alliance for Hope
  - F. Comprehensive judicial reform
  - G. Mental Health/Addiction Issues (state funding on a local level)
  - H. Local LE needs
- II. Economic Tools
  - A. TIF Districts to combat blight vs economic development
  - B. How can we get more of our “entitlement share”
  - C. Tax Diversification: what else is at our disposal?
  - D. Tax Abatements, Tax Credits
- III. Land Use/Housing
  - A. MT Association of Planning working on improvement of clarification/procedures for SB 382
  - B. Condo restrictions
  - C. Quick Review of City’s Reference Sheet on Land Use Bills
- IV. Public Comment

August 11, 2023 progress report

Park	Progress	Project	Status	*updated information for this week
	Started ----->	Completed		
Arrowhead playground replacement	<div></div>		Play equipment was delivered and ready to be installed by contractor	
Castle Rock playground addition	<div></div>		Playground open, waiting on delivery of final pieces to complete	
Castle Rock parking lot & restroom	<div></div>		Design work with consultant underway	
*Central tennis courts replacement	<div></div>		*Courts open to the public, substantial completion awarded to contractor, final punch list in progress	
*Comanche playground replacement	<div></div>		*Finishing Engineered Wood Fiber fall protection, playground audit/inspection scheduled for week of 8/14	
Cottonwood Park masterplan	<div></div>		Second public comment and review scheduled with landscape architect on August 10th	
*Gorham irrigation automation	<div></div>		*Pre-construction meeting scheduled for Wednesday 8/23 with contractor	
Grandview irrigation automation	<div></div>		Advertised twice, no bids both times, rebid at a later date	
Highland playground replacement	<div></div>		Playground equipment was delivered, installer under contract for Fall completion	
Millice irrigation automation	<div></div>		Sealed bids opened, project over budget, rebid at a later date	
North Park adult exercise & shelter	<div></div>		Adult exercise equipment delivered, shelter in production, installer under contract for later Summer completion	
North Park playground replacement	<div></div>		Contract with GameTime for play equipment and installation on Council's consent agenda 8/14	
North Park restroom replacement	<div></div>		CXT pre-fabbed concrete restroom in production, late Summer delivery date, under contract for site work	
*Ponderosa irrigation automation	<div></div>		*New pump station and irrigation system operational, final punch list by contractor	
Skypoint sail replacement	<div></div>		Contract signed for sail replacement, request for quotes to paint structure sent out	