

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

October 27, 2023

- 1. Board & Commission Annual Report** – Please see the attached Board & Commission Annual Report for Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board.
- 2. Billings PCE Update** - Billings PCE Community Meeting on November 1st at 6:00 pm, Broadwater Elementary School, 415 Broadwater Ave. Representatives from EPA, MDEQ, and DPHHS will be in attendance and will be giving an update on the status of the PCE project.
- 3. Strategy Partners Meeting** – City, Chamber, BSED and Downtown Partnership discussed the need to bring our boards together as we all update our strategic goals for 2024 and 2025. We did this in the fall of 2021, and it was helpful to understand the direction our community is heading. Similarly, we are planning an event to take place within the next few months.
- 4. Adopted 2022/23 City Council Strategies and Priorities** – Once the new council is seated, we need to review and update our adopted strategies and priorities. I also want us to discuss refining our efforts to better reflect a strategic plan. To be specific, we should confirm each of our five strategic goals and refine our priorities into clear objectives, action plans and performance measures. To head in this direction, our leadership team is taking our adopted strategies and priorities document along with any adopted Council initiatives and refining it to follow the Strategic Goals, Objectives, Action Plans and Performance Measurements hierarchy. Early decisions include: Do you agree with making this shift? How far do we want to take this effort? I recommend our next step is to evolve what we have in a retreat with a facilitator working with the city council and staff. At some point in the future, we may want to do an extensive community engagement effort. To do the community effort well, we need a reasonable budget and timeline to be guided by professionals who specialize in community wide strategic planning processes. (See attached council adopted strategies and priorities 2022/23.)
- 5. Chamber Board Meeting** – The Chamber Board voted to support the “get to yes” campaign for the 2024 local government study review for both the county and city. David Goodrich is spearheading this effort.
- 6. City/County Breakfast** – During our monthly meeting we continued discussions to sell the 3rd floor of the new city hall to the county as a condo. From the beginning, the city hoped to share the building with Yellowstone County. One key component that has been agreed to is, the purchase price will be determined by its appraised value and the city will have the first option to purchase it back, at appraised value, if the county ever decides to sell.
- 7. Thorn Run** – Every other month, we have a scheduled briefing for our department directors, grants coordinator and Greg and Jim from Thorn Run Partners to exchange information on federal grant applications and opportunities. We are actively working on grants affecting safe routes to schools, transportation, 25th street pedestrian bridge and the reservoir/water plant. This is in addition to ongoing conversations we have with Greg and Jim.

8. **Patriot Run** - Don't forget the Patriot Run at Mountview Cemetery on November 5th. Go to the link for signup information. <https://runsignup.com/Race/MT/Billings/MountviewPatriotRun>



9. **Castlerock Playground Updates** - Good news concerning the playground, the slide has shipped, and the installer is still in town. Once the slide is delivered the installation should proceed without further delays. The Bill of Lading is attached.

There were some questions about the playground earlier this week. This playground was selected after receiving input from community leaders, the Heights Task Force and councilmembers all supporting the design and type of play equipment. The structures are made from wood, but there are the same expectations concerning durability and life span, as if it were made of metal or composite. The wood cracks naturally and is expected to as it dries and ages. The cracks don't affect the integrity of the structure, nor does it impact the warranty. The Maintenance Manual is attached.

Earthscapes, the manufacturer, is scheduling technicians from the factory to come and reinstall the swings. When they arrive, they will perform a complete safety inspection of all structures.

The Zip-Line was removed from service after the seat connector was damaged. A warranty claim has been filed and a new part has been ordered. The installer will repair once the part arrives.



[BillOfLading.pdf](#)



[Earthscape
Maintenance Manual](#)

10. **Recreation News** – Girl's basketball games start Saturday morning, October 28th, at Orchard Elementary. T.I.E. (Tennis Is Elementary) began with sessions at Meadowlark and Eagle Cliffs on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our Grant application for our new Therapeutic Rec Program was approved. The Adult volleyball regular season ends this week with playoffs to follow. Boy's basketball preliminary schedules were sent to middle school principals and the main activity office for approval. All admin, website, and app updates will be constructed and completed and ready for November 1st registrations for Winter programs.



11. Park Project Progress – Please see the attached Park Project Progress Report.

12. PRPL Community and Senior Center Update - The Billings Community and Senior Center continues to grow its programs and services for adults 55 and older. Currently programming for Seniors is being held at 3 locations. These locations are the Billings Community and Senior Center, 360 North 23rd Street, Adult Resource Alliances, two locations, one at 935 Lake Elmo Drive in the Heights and the other at 1505 Avenue D. The partnership with the Adult Resource Alliance has allowed us to continue to advance our ability to provide quality Recreation and Wellness for our Senior population. It has been shown that “Montana is the oldest (“greyest”) state west of the Mississippi.

“Nearly, one out of three Montanans over the age 65 fall every year. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older adults. Falls are costly-in dollars and in quality of life. Most common injuries sustained from a fall are hip fractures, broken bones, and head injuries. In Montana, unintentional falls are the third most common cause of injury-related deaths. Falling is not a normal part of aging and most falls can be prevented by making lifestyle modifications.” – dphhs.mt.gov

Our current programming runs classes that are offered 1 to 3 days a week depending on the class. We total about 100 -125 seniors each day participating in social, wellness and recreation programs among all our sites. At the BCC location we have 357 visits to our classes every week. Our programs at the Adult Resource Alliance in the Heights there are 100 visits per week and ARA at 1505 Ave D has about 15 each week. Currently we have 12 sessions and a total of 17 Recreation and Wellness classes at the BCC location, 5 sessions with 8 classes at the Heights ARA and 2 classes at the ARA at 1505 Ave D. The heights classes have continued to reach capacity. Due to the space limitations at the ARA locations, class caps are 15-20 depending on the type of class. There is a huge need for more programming in both the heights and west end but due to limited space to program in these locations there are some limitations to getting programming to seniors who live in those areas.

Our program is inclusive and provides programs for any level from ones out of chair to standing strength and cardio training. We will be working on adding more programming at our other park buildings we currently have. With our partnership with the Adult Resource Alliance, we are working on expanding into more areas on the west end and partnering with other Senior Center locations. Our goal is to get programs into as many areas in Billings as possible. This will allow easier access, especially in the months we have increment weather.

In the spring of 2024, we will have two Doctorate Occupational Students who will be helping create two new programs for our seniors. One will be putting together technology resources for caregivers of those helping seniors with dementia and the other will be helping us create a fall prevention program that we will have our nursing students each semester help run.

We currently have a partnership with MSU Bozeman nursing program to provide practicum hours for nursing students in their Health Promotion class. They are working on projects to help provide health education materials that address the unique needs of our senior population. In the future we will be having them to help facilitate fall prevention classes. We will continue to find creative ways to provide quality, safe and fun programs for our seniors.



13. Parks, Recreation and Trails Bond Presentations – Educational presentations on the PRT Bond were given to the Kawanis Club, Heights Task Force, Downtown Billings Alliance, and Downtown Billings Partnership.

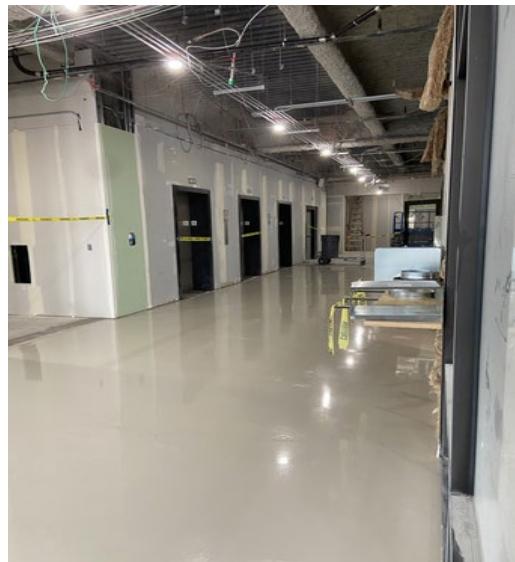
14. Next Week's Meetings/Task Forces

- a. North Park Task Force, Wednesday, November 1st 7:00 PM North Park Community Center.

15. New City Hall Update – This week at the new City Hall project, electrical lighting control work on the 5th floor continued. Hollow metal frames were taped off and covered so that wall primer could be sprayed. Tapers went back and performed wall touch-ups after the primer was sprayed. Wall paint began at the end of this week. Ceiling grid installation started in some offices on the south end of the 5th floor, and the first load of ceiling tile was delivered and stocked on the 5th floor. Work on the new heat exchanger in the 5th floor fan room commenced this week. The soffit framing system around the council chambers also started. Fire-treated plywood was installed in the new electrical and AV rooms on the north end of the 5th floor.

Progress continued on the 4th floor hydronic piping to VAVs. Taping of wall joints and corner bead continued throughout the 4th floor. 4th-floor overhead conduit and home run work are ongoing, and lighting control is getting started. Floor prep and leveling in the elevator lobby on the 4th floor were completed this week. HVAC overhead work on the 4th floor is nearing completion. Half of the hollow metal frames for the 2nd floor were delivered and installed. The box walk electrical rough-in work on the 2nd floor made good progress this week. Plumbing overhead and wall rough-in continued this week, as well as the continued installation of the new 6" rain leaders through the 2nd floor. Core drilling for 2nd-floor restrooms started. One side top-out sheetrock on the 2nd floor

is in progress. The demo of the existing sheetrock and metal studs on the exterior wall of the 2nd floor is moving right along.



16. From the PIO Desk –

Mountview Cemetery hosts 5K to raise funds for veteran burials

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2537>

How do I register to vote?

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2538>

From DBA: Opening of LightBike Trail scheduled for Nov. 3

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2539>

Billings Fire teams with DEA for drug take back day

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2540>

Mayor & Council

Billings City Council to look at more investigators for domestic violence

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-city-council-to-look-at-more-investigators-for-domestic-violence>

Election articles

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/shaw-versus-mayott-billings-city-council-ward-1/article_dde65558-56a1-11ee-be49-73ba17e9efcc.html

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/neese-versus-hanson-billings-city-council-ward-2/article_3bd3dece-6ea8-11ee-8a75-1783b761e227.html

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/ward-4-candidates-weigh-in-on-whether-city-should-pay-for-transient-housing-and-services/video_596e2d20-5e4c-5dc8-8535-df553904b14c.html

<https://www.ypradio.org/regional-news/2023-10-25/billings-residents-have-been-asked-to-vote-on-upcoming-parks-and-trail-bond>

PRPL

5K Patriot Run in Billings to support burial costs for veterans

<https://realnewsmontana.com/ixp/124/p/5k-patriot-run-in-billings-to-support-burial-costs-for-veterans/>

BPD

Billings Police Department receives domestic violence prevention grant

https://www.kulr8.com/news/billings-police-department-receives-domestic-violence-prevention-grant/article_d3ac57d8-7292-11ee-9465-4f81ac4af013.html

BFD

DEA prescription drug take back day set for Oct. 28

https://www.kulr8.com/news/dea-s-prescription-drug-take-back-day-set-for-october-28-2023-site-located-in/article_85c03122-736c-11ee-bf15-87b96b5c2544.html

PW

Leaf collection sites in Billings fill up over weekend; new locations added this year

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/leaf-collection-sites-in-billings-fill-up-over-weekend-new-locations-added-this-year>

Billings Street-Traffic Division holds informational event at Billings Public Library

https://www.nonstoplocal.com/billings/news/billings-street-traffic-division-holds-informational-event-at-public-library/article_b3e62bba-486a-5eb2-9449-3fac2d55750d.html

Billings residents receive false messages about water leaks because of old meters

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-residents-receive-false-messages-about-water-leaks-because-of-old-meters>

Unhoused population

Homeless shelters in Billings prepping for first big cold blast of season

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/homeless-shelters-in-billings-prepping-for-first-big-cold-blast-of-season>

MRM prepared for winter months

https://www.nonstoplocal.com/billings/news/m-r-m-prepared-for-winter-months/article_309f64c7-d1bb-5f0f-96f0-6d01851fe8f9.html

Transitional housing tiny home village in Billings plans new rollout

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/transitional-housing-tiny-home-village-plans-new-roll-out-gets-boost-from-rotary>

Emergency shelter in Billings not reopening for cold weather

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/emergency-shelter-in-billings-not-reopening-for-cold-weather>

In other news...

Short term rentals are on the chopping block in some Montana cities

<https://dailymontanan.com/2023/10/26/short-term-rentals-are-on-the-chopping-block-in-some-montana-cities/>

Community members call for change at Billings Food Bank

https://www.kulr8.com/community-members-call-for-change-at-billings-food-bank/video_06f007ea-7467-11ee-af49-63d8cd39bf96.html

Montana will hire a sex assault cold case investigator, a first of its kind for the state

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/montana-will-hire-a-sex-assault-cold-case-investigator-a-first-of-its-kind-for-the-state>

Montana PSC approves NorthWestern Energy rate increases

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/montana-psc-approves-northwestern-energy-rate-increases>

Airshow gets nominated as best, invited to advise

<http://bigskybusinessjournal.com/2023/10/23/airshow-gets-nominated-as-best-invited-to-advise/>

3 tribes get \$3.2 million for public safety

https://billingsgazette.com/news/state-regional/montana-tribes-public-safety-funds/article_6ea20997-fedb-5cce-9b7b-fe6f6bafb160.html

Work will continue on I-90 between Billings and Laurel into November

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/i-90-road-construction-resurface-project-billings-laurel/article_09e5e000-7435-11ee-8e32-b7458af48b26.html

Board & Commission Annual Report to City Council

Purpose: The annual report is to make a written report of a board or commission activity to the mayor and city council as authorized by majority vote of the entire membership of the board or commission.

Name of Board or Commission: Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board

Name of Presiding Officer: Thom MacLean

Name of Person or Persons filling out report: Thom MacLean

Meeting schedule: Second Wednesday of each month

Major Board or Commission accomplishments of the preceding year:

This Board offers citizen input to our Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Department. Over the past year, the parks division has continued to do an outstanding job maintaining and improving our existing parks, including replacement of the Central Park tennis courts and numerous playgrounds in parks throughout our community. The recreation division always offers a comprehensive list of recreational and educational programs throughout the year that are well-attended and well-run. This year, they introduced a REC2U program to share these recreational programs in various areas of the city. The cemetery division does a fantastic job caring for these areas and has suggested creative measures to bring more attention to our cemeteries.

In addition, the staff and Board have the following accomplishments to note:

- Parks and Trails Funding – This has been an overriding issue the entire year. Many board members have devoted additional time and resources to provide input and outreach in the development of a ballot measure that, if passed by the voters, will make transformational changes to the quality of life in Billings and the parks and recreation assets in our community. The Board will continue to provide input and advocacy on this important issue.
- Landon's Legacy Miracle Field – Summer 2022 saw the completion of Landon's Legacy Miracle Field at Poly Vista Park with the dedication of the field followed by the first Miracle League season. This was an important achievement for the department and for Landon's Legacy, which was instrumental in the development, planning, and financing of the project.
- CDBG – COVID projects – partnership with the City of Billings Community Development department brought some additional funding for parks improvements through CDBG funds targeted to COVID recovery. Those funds were used to repave the trail through Pioneer Park and for improvements in several other parks, including Comanche and North Park.
- Matching Grant Program – Billings City Council appropriated \$100,000 to a matching grant program to encourage community input on parks improvements and leverage private funds. That program helped support three great projects:
 - Bike/Ped trail through Rose Park
 - A shade structure at High Sierra dog park
 - Amenities along the Skyline Trail
- Cottonwood Park Master Plan – Board members participated in the community outreach efforts to provide input for the development of a master plan for the proposed westend park.

- New Board Members – the board welcomed two new members over the past year – Melissa Henderson replaced long-time member Lew Morris and Marc Sulser replaced Mark Wahl as the School District representative.

Major Board or Commission challenges of the preceding year:

The loss of several key people – including Director Michael Whitaker, Planner Mark Jarvis, Paul Reinhardt, and Brad Knutson – posed a significant challenge over the past year. The City and Park's staff did a great job of covering those roles while vacant and filling the vacancies with high-quality candidates.

Major Board or Commission goals for the upcoming year:

This board, collectively and individually, will actively assist in efforts related to the parks, recreation, and trails initiative that will be on the November ballot. If that measure passes, we will focus our efforts on providing the citizen input, guidance, and support for implementation of the assets that bond will fund.

Requests for staff or city council:

We simply ask that the staff continues to keep this board informed in a thorough and timely manner to allow us to provide informed citizen input on parks, recreation, and cemetery issues.

Changes to city ordinance or state law affecting the board or commission that should be considered:

None

Anything else that board, commission or presiding officer want to comment on:

None

Adopted 2022/2023 City Council Strategies and Priorities

May 9, 2022

Vision: The Magic City - A diverse welcoming community where people prosper, and business succeeds.

Core Values:

- ❖ Collaboration: We commit to provide opportunities to achieve common goals through positive communications and interaction with individuals, and with public and private organizations.
- ❖ Integrity: Through accessibility and transparency, we earn the trust of the community to which we are responsible.
- ❖ Service: We deliver services with courtesy and respect while meeting our customers' needs.
- ❖ Stewardship: We plan and manage resources effectively, responsibly, and efficiently.

Mission: To deliver cost effective public services that enhance our community's quality of life.

Improve the safety of Billings.

- Complete implementation of the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) police and fire operations analysis recommendations. 2022.
- Implement code enforcement, legal, municipal court, mental health and substance abuse strategies as described during the 2021 public safety levy. 2022/2023.
- Report data measuring the effectiveness of the 2021 public safety mill levy and the criminal justice system at the city, county, and state levels. 2022/2023
- Collect data and pursue legislation and local regulations to limit the number, and improve the effectiveness of, sober living housing and their impacts on neighborhoods. (Green - council approved initiatives) 2022/2023
- Collect data and pursue legislation and work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) to limit the number of probationers, parolees released into Billings and the number of inmates held in the jail. 2022/2023

Invest in core infrastructure.

- Complete airport terminal reconstruction project, building Montana's greatest airport. 2023
- Complete City Hall/Law and Justice Center project to include a COVID 19 memorial. 2023
- Break ground and complete construction of inner-belt loop and Skyline trail projects. 2022/2023
- Break ground on water treatment plant and reservoir projects and determine funding for the park components of the reservoir. 2022/2024
- Analyze and determine land use and infrastructure policies to serve the inner beltloop and new interchange areas. 2022 (funding does not exist beyond the corridor studies ~\$100k)
- Determine 21st Street underpass upgrades to improve downtown transportation system. 2023

Increase parks, trails, recreation, and cultural investments.

- Determine level of capital investment to be proposed to voters in 2023 for the multi-generational recreation center and a corresponding strategy for executing on those capital investments.
- Determine level of capital investment to be proposed to voters in 2023 for additional park and trail development and a corresponding strategy for executing on those capital investments.
- Determine level of maintenance and operation expenses for parks, trails, and recreation facilities to be proposed to voters in 2023 to meet the needs of our community long term.

 **Improve the built environment through quality design.**

- Develop strategies to stimulate infill and redevelopment throughout the city's business and residential districts. 2022/2023
- Implement the downtown transportation plan/one way street conversions and road diets. 2022/2023
- Develop a housing strategy in partnership with HomeFront and facilitate 1,000 housing units being added to the city's core. 2022/2023
- Complete a review of the 2016 growth policy. 2022
- Update 1 neighborhood plan annually updating all 8 plans over the next decade.
- Update subdivision regulations. 2022/2023

 **Build a high-performance organization (HPO) principled in our core values.**

- Complete organizational review of the city's vision, mission, and core values. 2022
- Complete staff analysis of how to determine the scope and cost to conduct cost of services studies to better understand cost of delivering police, fire, parks, recreation, trails, storm water, water, wastewater and transportation services and infrastructure to make more informed decisions. 2022
- Adopt legislative priorities for the 2023 session focused on improving the safety and economic stability of Billings.
- Create Council sub-committees to focus attention on state legislation and improve collaboration with Yellowstone County. 2022
- Improve the effectiveness of council work sessions, policy implementation and communications. 2022
- Digitize all essential records for proper storage and access by citizens and staff. 2022/2023
- Improve public engagement.
- Systematize a regular review of all ordinances by each department, on a schedule to be determined by administration. 2023
- Establish a City Charter Review Committee. 2022

October 27, 2023 progress report

Park	Progress	Project	Status	*updated information for this week
	Started	Completed		
*Arrowhead playground replacement	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>			*Play equipment installed and fall protection installation in progress
*Castle Rock playground addition	<div style="width: 75%;"></div>			*Zip line out of service, ordering replacement parts
Castle Rock parking lot & restroom	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>			Design work with consultant underway
Central tennis courts replacement	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>			Submitting LWCF paperwork for project reimbursement
Comanche playground replacement	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>			Playground complete and open to the public
*Cottonwood Park masterplan	<div style="width: 75%;"></div>			*Updates in progress from public comment at the October 18th Park Board meeting
Coulson Park South Improvements	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>			Received approval from US Army Corps of Engineers, proceeding with design
Gorham irrigation automation	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>			Installation by contractor ongoing
Grandview irrigation automation	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>			Advertised twice, no bids both times, rebid at a later date
Highland playground replacement	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>			Playground equipment was delivered, installer under contract for Fall completion
Millice irrigation automation	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>			Sealed bids opened, project over budget, rebid at a later date
*North Park adult exercise & shelter	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>			*Shelter delivered to Parks, to be installed by contractor
North Park playground replacement	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>			New play equipment ordered and in production
*North Park restroom replacement	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>			*New water and sewer lines being installed, new restroom waiting to be delivered
*Pioneer Park tennis courts replacement	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>			*Received proposals from consultants, reviewing candidates for recommendation
Poly Vista inclusive playground and parking lot	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>			Landscape Architect hired for design of inclusive playground and complete parking lot for phase II
Ponderosa irrigation automation	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>			Final walkthrough complete, system fully operational
Rose Park pool spray equipment replacement	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>			New spray equipment ordered and scheduled for September delivery, contractor to install in Fall
*Skypoint sail replacement	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>			*Structural Engineer's report completed, proceeding with recommended repairs prior to painting