



VISION STATEMENT:
"The Magic City: A diverse, welcoming community where people prosper and business succeeds."

WORK SESSION SUMMARY
October 2, 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
220 N. 27th St.

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Cole

Present: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I
Councilmember Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Neese, Ward II
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III
Councilmember Danny Choriki, Ward III (Via Zoom)
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV
Councilmember Pam Purinton, Ward IV
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V
Mayor William Cole

Absent/
Excused:

Staff
Present: Gina Dahl, City Attorney
Debi Meling, Public Works Director
Tyler Westrope, Engineer
Derick Miller, Street-Traffic Superintendent

Ms. Dahl informed Council that Chris and Kevin were at the ICMA conference and Parks, Recreation and Trails mill levy informational sessions coming up this week.

Public Comment:

- None

1. YesterYears Site Update.

Katy Easton, Executive Director, Downtown Billings Alliance, provided history of the building that was acquired by Downtown Billings Partnership in 2016 during discussions of the One Big Sky District. Initially a short-term loan was obtained through Big Sky Economic Development and later was paid off with a Council-approved TIF allocation. An RFP went out and Urban Frontier responded with a transformative project. Council will be updated along the way as progress is made on the project.

Public Comment:

- None

2. TDS Fiber Update.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, explained that engineering was doing a much better job of reviewing permits and that this was the largest scope of work she had ever been involved in. Jared Swiger with TDS appeared via Zoom and introduced various other members of his team that were available to answer Council's questions.

Ryan Devries, CEC contractor for TDS, shared a map of Billings indicating where fiber lines were installed and where future lines were anticipated. All fiber was expected to be installed by mid-summer 2025. Council discussed concerns with workmanship, pedestal vs. hand hold infrastructure, conflicts with homeowners, notifications to homeowners and tracking of customer complaints. Todd Naylor, TDS, encouraged that if there were complaints that customers be encouraged to call 1-800-737-4172 for tracking and resolution. Council discussed work in the alleyways. Mr. Devries stated that TDS would utilize above ground poles that were already in place, rather than running line below the ground in the alleys.

Public Comment:

- None

3. Stormwater Program Update.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, introduced people involved in the project.

Tyler Westrope, Staff Engineer, provided a PowerPoint presentation. He explained the problems the City was having with stormwater removal, especially in certain areas where there was very old infrastructure. He spoke about how street sweeping helped the overall stormwater removal as it kept debris and silt from clogging drains. He explained the program would not address record events as experienced in recent years, but creating a comprehensive maintenance program would help in any event. Mr. Westrope reviewed with Council the Public Works Board recommendation for increases and that of the Council's Budget and Finance Committee.

Council discussed the benefits of fixing the issues before problems occurred. They asked for clarifications on flooding, and Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) rates. Mr. Westrope addressed Council questions regarding: storm infrastructure on unimproved streets, storm water issues, and ERU's.

Jennifer Duray, Assistant Public Works Deputy Director, spoke of deferred maintenance and funding allocations.

Mr. Westrope spoke about how various products affected stormwater.

Councilmember Purinton questioned infill versus development. Ms. Duray stated they looked at each project individually to determine how much of the project would be for growth.

Council discussed emergencies that could wipe out capital. Mr. Westrop indicated services were based on rates and staff was working on addressing reaction events.

Council discussed insurance companies giving breaks based on City plans. Ms. Meling indicated she could follow up with that topic.

Council questioned the Planning Department's involvement for stormwater. Mr. Westrope indicated staff worked closely with the Planning department for new development.

Public Comment:

- **Rick Leuthold, Sanderson Stewart**, indicated staff had done a great job. He spoke of stormwater development, ERU's and developer costs.

There were no further comments.

Recess at 7:40 PM. Reconvene at 7:47 PM.

4. Resolution Modifying Special Improvement District.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, gave an overview of the resolution being modified. Currently only those properties that are physically addressed were assessed and the modification would allow all residential to be assessed off addressed side and commercial industrial would pay for both sides. She reviewed design and assessment standards between the existing resolution and the new proposed resolution.

Council discussed the difference between SID's and the missing sidewalks program. They spoke of a middle ground type of improvements for people that wanted to improve their gravel streets but could not afford the new standards. Ms. Meling spoke of the City standards and how street improvements could be adjusted by Council.

Public Comment:

- None

5. Sale, Exchange or Donation of City Real Property.

Gina Dahl, City Attorney, reviewed the changes proposed based on feedback Council had given at an earlier meeting. She indicated acquisition of property would be addressed later. She reviewed the Billings Montana City Code sections with proposed changes,

Council discussed the changes, how Council would be involved in disposition of property, public notice concerns, and direct negotiated sales. Council indicated they wanted terminology to include requiring physical signage indicating the parcel was going up for sale. They discussed the process and timing of the notices. The consensus was to have a sign placed on the property at the time the item was placed on an agenda.

Ms. Dahl explained the process of notifying the public of property disposition and the bid process.

Public Comment:

- None

5. Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest.

Ms. Dahl reviewed the upcoming Regular Council agenda topics. She reminded Council of the upcoming Closed Executive Session at 4:30 pm.

Public Comment:

- None

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

- Councilmember Purinton indicated there seemed to be advocacy from outside sources at the Parks and Recreation Center meetings.
- Councilmember Neese asked if City Administrator evaluations were presented as individual results or a summary. Mayor Cole indicated evaluations could remain anonymous. Ms. Dahl stated that Karla Stanton, HR Director, indicated they were presented as a summary. Councilmember Boyett indicated he could provide clarification within the next few days.

PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-AGENDA ITEMS". Speaker Sign-in required. *(Restricted to ONLY items not on this printed agenda. Comments are limited to 3 minutes or as set by the Mayor. Please sign the roster at the cart located at the back of the Council chambers or at the podium.)*

- None

ADJOURN: 9:01 P.M.