

DRAFT City of Billings Strategic Plan for 2024 - 2026

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

Vision – The Magic City: A diverse welcoming community where people prosper, and businesses succeed.

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.

Strategic Goals

- 1) **Improve the health and safety of Billings for all citizens.**
- 2) **Sustain and upgrade critical infrastructure.**
- 3) **Foster economic vibrancy through quality designed neighborhoods and business districts.**
- 4) **Offer outstanding library, parks, recreation, trails, and cultural amenities.**
- 5) **Cultivate a high-performance organization principled in our core values of integrity, service, stewardship and collaboration.**

Strategic Goal #1- Improve the health and safety of Billings for all citizens.

Objective 1 – Reduce family violence by 10%.

Objective 2 – Reduce violent crime rates by 10%.

Objective 3 – Improve downtown safety through quality design, education, and enforcement.

Objective 4 – Enhance traffic safety by increasing traffic law compliance resulting in a reduction of accidents by 10%.

Objective 5 – Reduce property crime by 10%.

Objective 6 – Reduce emergency response times by 10%.

Objective 7 – Improve quality and resilience of medical response services.

Objective 8 – Maintain a high code enforcement compliance rate of 90% or better.

Objective 9 – Invest crime prevention dollars to catalyze evidence-based programs to improve opportunities for our children.

Objective 10 – Implement 2024 CPSM recommendations

Objective 11 – Implement 2024 CGL recommendations

1. Reduce family violence by 10%

Actions:

- Open a Family Justice Center (Phase 1)
- Establish a family violence investigation unit in the police department.
- Become a trauma informed city.

- Create opportunities to overcome the effects of ACEs, review CDC's mitigation ACE's resiliency list.
- Create an Indigenous Grand Parents Council.

Measurements:

- Increase domestic violence court filed cases by 25%

2. Reduce Violent Crime rates by 10%.

Actions:

- Continue to use enhanced data-based policing to disrupt, deter violent crime.
- Deploy targeted patrol (Hot spot).
- Conduct warrant roundups quarterly.
- Continue commitment to Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN).
- Establish a cross jurisdiction multi-discipline gang unit.

Measurements:

- 10% reduction in overall crime.
- 10% reduction in violent crime.
- 10% reduction in property crime.
- 20% reduction in gang membership

3. Improve downtown safety through quality design, education, and enforcement.

Actions:

- Enhance officer presence through officer deployment, foot patrol, and bike patrol by 5%.
- Targeted (Hot spot) policing.
- Improve community and business engagement.
- Support Downtown CPTED efforts.

Measurements:

- 10% reduction in calls for service (CFS) in the downtown area.
- Customer satisfaction survey.
- Monitor CPTED compliant businesses.
- Provide 6 CPTED trainings.

4. Enhance traffic safety by reducing traffic violations and accidents by 10%.

Actions:

- Tactical enforcement at problem areas.
- Targeted (Hot spot) policing.
- Increase public education to attain voluntary compliance with traffic regulations through PSA's and informational presentations.
- Analyze technology options to improve compliance and enforcement.

Measurements:

- 5% reduction of injury accidents.
- 5% reduction in non-injury accidents.
- Customer satisfaction survey.

5. Reduce property crime by 10%.

Actions:

- Hot spot policing.

- Targeted operations.
- Establish partnership with Montana Division of Criminal Investigations to deal with organized retail crime.

Measurements:

- 10% reduction a year for two years of all property crime. (Define)

6. Reduce emergency response times by 10%.

Actions:

- Conduct a system development charge analysis for fire services.
- Complete station 8 renovations.
- Sign an automatic aid agreement with Lockwood.
- Implementation of priority, proximity, and protocols for 911 dispatch
- Upgrade station alerting system reducing dispatch and response times.
- Improve documentation of all training activities.
- Update 2020 CPSM analysis.

7. Improve the quality and resilience of medical response services.

Actions:

- Educate the stakeholders on the impacts of the current EMS service system.
- Update the EMS ordinance to ensure a high level of care for our community.
- Determine the number of MRT's to maximize service efficiency and lower response times for all calls for service.
- Determine the number of CRU's to maximize service efficiency and lower response times for all calls for service.
- Design and implement a mobile integrated health and community paramedicine program.

8. Maintain a high code enforcement compliance rate of 90% or better.

Actions:

- Continue to implement and improve proactive nuisance property abatement procedures to efficiently increase neighborhood safety and stability.
- Continue progression of the multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional nuisance property team to improve neighborhoods.
- Implement graffiti reduction program.
- Propose ordinance amendments to increase the efficiency of enforcement efforts to improve accountability.
- Conduct 10 or more community outreach programs increasing community awareness of city codes.
- Increase web, social media-based, neighborhood task force presence and information sharing on CE activities and seasonal concerns to improve compliance.
- Achieve division and individual staff development/training through AACE accreditations.

Measurements:

- Utilize case activity levels and resolution of complaints to monitor and report improvement in neighborhood safety and stability twice per year.
- Utilize GIS to manage graffiti cases and activity with multi-disciplinary Nuisance Property Team from CE, BPD, Fire, Parks, Legal, PW – Show graffiti mitigation success through case resolution, convictions, and mural projects community-wide.

9. Invest in crime prevention dollars to catalyze evidence-based programs to improve opportunities for our children.

- Substance Abuse Connect
- Continuum of Care

10. Implement 2024 CPSM recommendations

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11. Objective 11 – Implement 2024 CGL recommendations

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Strategic Goal #2 - Sustain and Upgrade Critical Infrastructure.

Objective 1 – Expand the capacity and improve resiliency of the water system.

Objective 2 – Increase the number of airport passengers using BIL by 15%

Objective 3 - Increase BIL's air cargo nationwide position by two places (to 61).

Objective 4 – Optimize the efficiency of the transportation system to strengthen the economy and livability of neighborhoods and business districts.

Objective 5 – Maximize the capacity of our waste-water treatment plant.

Objective 6 – Build and upgrade an effective storm sewer system.

Objective 7 – Analyze and determine land use and infrastructure policies to serve the Skyway Drive and Billings bypass (Mary Lane and 5 mile).

Objective 8 – Complete new city hall and sell the current city hall by November 2024

1. Expand capacity and improve resiliency of the water system.

Actions:

- Break ground on water treatment plant.
- Break ground on west end reservoir project.
- Continue to increase funding to support industry standards replacement for pipe replacements water rehabilitation.

1. Increase the number of airport passengers using BIL by 15% by the end of CY 2025

Actions:

- Increase the number of cities with direct air service/flights to BIL by two
- Update the airport master plan and receive FAA approval of the airport layout plan

1. Increase BIL's air cargo nationwide position by two places (to 53).

- Add one new air carrier providing service to BIL

- Expand BIL air cargo infrastructure and operations to move BIL up ten places on the national airport rankings to 53.

1. Optimize the efficiency of the transportation system to strengthen the economy and livability of neighborhoods and business districts.

Actions:

- Complete construction of Skyway Drive.
- Phase 1 of Rimrock Road (54th to 62nd)
- Wicks Lane Hawthorn to Bitterroot (design)
- Monad Road Daniel and to Moore Lane including multi-model crossing of Laurel Road
- Broadwater Vermillion to Shiloh (design)
- Grand Ave from 43rd to 62nd
- Rim Rock 62nd round a bout (state)
- Implement safe routes to school, traffic calming and intersection capacity improvements and missing sidewalks and other misc CIP projects to improve the safety and quality of our transportation network.
- Increase MET Transit ridership by 10% by 2026

1. Maximize the capacity of our water reclamation plant and collection system.

- Continue to increase funding to support industry standards replacement for pipe replacements water rehabilitation.

1. Build and upgrade an effective storm sewer system.

- Develop a sustainable stormwater program to meet the desired service level for our community and create a rate structure that supports that program.

1. Analyze and determine land use and infrastructure policies to serve the Skyway Drive and Billings bypass (Mary Lane and 5 mile). Analyze and determine land use and infrastructure policies to serve the Skyway Drive and Billings bypass (Mary Lane and 5 Mile Road).

Actions:

- Launch IBL/Hwy 3 Area Plan to evaluate residential and commercial development demand, economic drivers, land use types, and estimated population in the area.
- Coordinate with Public Works on utility information and develop a feasibility cost for extension of utilities to serve the study area.
- Complete land use and urban development service analysis of North Billings Bypass Corridor area as part of Heights Neighborhood Plan.
- Work with County to establish a City/county agreement on annexations along the corridors.

Measurements:

- Complete IBL/Hwy 3 Area Plan in 2025.
- Complete North Billings Bypass Corridor area as part of Heights Neighborhood Plan in 2024
- Determine infrastructure, service requirements and costs per population and development estimates for IBL/Hwy 3 area and North Billings Bypass Corridor area.
- Develop long term budget and funding plan to extend City services to support development in IBL/Hwy 3 and North Billings Bypass Corridor study areas.

1. Complete new city hall and sell the current city hall by November 2024

Actions:

- Complete construction
- Move from current city hall
- Complete COVID 19 memorial.

Strategic Goal #3 - Foster economic vibrancy through quality designed neighborhoods and business districts.

Objective 1 - Stimulate infill and redevelopment throughout the city’s business and residential districts.

Objective 2 - Improve multi-model transportation system to foster investment and redevelopment (auto, transit, bike, pedestrian)

Objective 3 - Update subdivision regulations in 2024.

Objective 4 - Update 2016 growth policy to comply with the MT Land Use Planning Act.

Objective 5 - Develop housing strategies to strengthen and stabilize neighborhoods.

Objective 6 - Update neighborhood plans over the next decade.

Objective 7 – Complete cost of services study and determine its impact on regulations and fee structures.

1. Stimulate infill and redevelopment throughout the city’s business and residential districts.

Actions:

- Continue implementation of the new zoning code that provides flexibility and options for mixed use development and multiple residential district neighborhoods.
- Implement the 2023 Montana Land Use Planning Act
- Continue to implement Infill Policy and review policy strategies
- In partnership with architects, builders, developers and private and public utility providers host education opportunities to make redevelopment in the downtown core less intimidating and more understandable.

Measurements:

- Complete implementation of the Montana Land Use Planning Act
- Host education opportunities to make redevelopment in the downtown core less intimidating and more understandable in 2024.

2. Improve multi-model transportation system to foster investment and redevelopment.

Actions:

- Complete two-way conversion project downtown.
- Complete road diet on Montana Avenue.
- Complete multi-use path installation along 6th Avenue North to connect Heights and Downtown areas.
- Examine transportation system to make improvements to 4th Avenue North and 6th Avenue North to meet safety and redevelopment goals.
- Continue implementing Complete Streets Policy.
- Implement Safe Routes to Schools.
- Improving design process for transportation corridors across the city.

3. Update Subdivision Regulations.

4. Update 2016 growth policy to comply with the MT Land Use Planning Act.

Actions:

- Complete housing analysis to inform needs for zoning and infrastructure.
- Update zoning regulation consistent with the new plan.

5. Develop housing strategies to strengthen and stabilize neighborhoods.

Actions:

- Support HomeFront’s development of a housing strategy.
- Ensure housing strategy alignments with the housing outcomes of MT Land Use Planning Act.
- Determine city’s role in implementing the adopted housing strategy.
- Support resource and program expansion to leverage HUD programs to address housing needs and neighborhood stabilization.

Measurements:

- 1,000 housing units to be created in city’s core.

6. Update neighborhood plans over the next decade.

Actions:

- Complete West- Billings Neighborhood Plan Update.
- Complete Heights Neighborhood Plan update.
- Financially support goal to complete one neighborhood plan update per year.

7. Complete cost of services study and determine its impact on regulations and fee structures.

Actions:

- Apply Cost of Service Study findings to development processes that ensure the City can financially support extension and provision of services as the City grows.
- Use cost of services data to incentivize infill and redevelopment where infrastructure already exist.

Measurements:

- Complete Cost of Service Study and determine implementation strategy for the information provided in the study.

Strategic Goal #4 - Offer Outstanding Library, Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Cultural Amenities accessible to all residents.

Objective 1 – Activate parks and public spaces to improve a sense of community, improve health and reduce crime.

Objective 2 - Maximize the useful life of parks, recreation, and trails assets.

Objective 3 – Increase trail network through complete streets implementation and recreational trails construction.

Objective 4 - Increase rec participation by 10%.

Objective 5 – Create opportunities for dual purpose public spaces for parks and PW (storm water, reservoir etc.)

Objective 6 – Increase library services to meet the needs of the community.

1. Activate parks and public spaces to improve a sense of community, improve health and reduce crime.

Actions:

- Start Adopt a Park and Adopt a Trail program.
- Improve Park Maintenance working towards best practices.
- Adopt CPTED principles in all parks.

- Work with community groups to bring more events to parks.
- Increase volunteer opportunities.
- Using annual City CPTED budget allocation and other funding sources, continue phased implementation of CPTED principles in South Park, Skate Park, Pioneer Park, Dehler Park, and other parks
- Build new pool and community center in South Park in 2025.
- When should the community reconsider a portion of the 2023 PRT Bond?

2. Maximize the useful life of parks, recreation, and trails assets.

Actions:

- Use City Works/asset management system to manage and track maintenance of parks, recreation and trails assets.
- Determine and communicate the impacts of meeting “best practices” for ongoing maintenance standards.
- Work with partners to enhance maintenance of facilities managed by user groups.

3. Increase trail network through complete streets implementation and recreational trails construction.

Actions:

- Complete design and allocate City matching funds to break ground on the Stagecoach Trail.
- Secure property for future trails west of Zimmerman Park to Indian Cliffs.
- Rimrock Road 54th to 62nd.
- Pursue RAISE Grant to improve Monad Road from Daniel Street to Moore Lane, including multi-modal crossing of Railroad Tracks and Laurel Road, access to Amend Park and pedestrian facilities along the north side of Laurel Road connected to King Avenue West.
- Upgrade Grand Ave from 43rd to 62nd as urban road section for all travel modes.
- Broadwater Vermillion to Shiloh (design).
- Wicks lane (design).
- Complete Alkali Creek Trail Connection.
- Complete 25th Street Bridge pending grant award or other funding.
- Complete Downtown-Coulson Park Trail Connection.

4. Increase rec participation by 10%.

- Expand Rec2U program to 8 parks across the City. Include recreation programs for parents or care givers.
- Create a young adult Park Board to empower them in shaping new recreational opportunities.
- Find a partner for E-Gamming program.
- New teen recreation programs.
- 3-5 year recreational programs.
- Offer school break recreational opportunities.
- Partner with other groups to offer more recreational opportunities like Little League, YMCA, 4H, Tumbleweed.
- Offer family recreation programs.
- Offer more adult programs.

5. Create opportunities for dual purpose public spaces for parks and PW (storm water, reservoir etc.).

Actions:

- Identify partners and alternative funding opportunities to begin developing the west end reservoir project into a park.
- Propose amended regulations allowing certain storm water retention areas to serve the dual purpose of a park.

6. Increase library services to meet the needs of the community..

Actions:

- Innovate, expand, and implement phase 1 of Co+Lab.
- Maximize digital and physical services to patrons.
- Create five-year growth plan for construction of physical facilities.
- Promote environment stability through LEEDs recertification.
- Augment workforce and economic development opportunities, services, and resources.

Strategic Goal #5 - Cultivate a High-Performance Organization Principled in our Core Values of Integrity, Service, Stewardship & Collaboration.

Objective 1 - Refine the City’s vision, mission, and core values in 2024.

Objective 2 – Strengthen citizen trust through effective communication and transparency.

Objective 3 – Digitize all essential records for proper storage and access by citizens and staff.

Objective 4 - Adopt legislative priorities for the 2025 session focused on improving the safety and economic stability of Billings.

Objective 5 – Establish market based competitive compensation system to retain and recruit excellent workforce (pay and benefits).

Objective 6 - Increase City general fund reserves by approximately \$400,000 to 500,000/year.

1. Refine city’s vision, mission, and core values in 2024.

Actions

- Hold a series of community meetings to define a vision for our city that inspires our community and organization to exceed its “potential”.

2. Strengthen citizen trust through effective communication and transparency.

Actions:

- Develop a communication plan.
- Identify and implement successful public engagement methods.
- Educate the public through a mix of platforms.
- Generate opportunities for public feedback with department responsiveness.
- Make information easily accessible through public information hub.

Measurements:

- Number of input submissions.
- Number of project changes that resulted from public input.
- Citizen satisfaction survey results.

3. Digitize all essential records for proper storage and access by citizens and staff.

Actions:

- Create a scanning, loading, purging records digitization plan.

4. Adopt legislative priorities for the 2025 session focused on improving the safety and economic stability of Billings.

Actions:

Monitor interim subcommittee work to gauge what areas will be major topics of interest by legislature in 2025. More than likely property taxes will be a major area of focus, we will want to be in a leading position to ensure the Billings' interests are known and understood.

5. Establish market-based competitive compensation system to retain and recruit excellent workforce (pay and benefits).

Actions:

- You can update the Plan stating the market-based pay system was implemented July 22, 2024.
- Develop the City's future compensation strategy; what percentage of the market is the city willing and able to pay?
- Review the City's current compensation strategy.
- Conduct market studies to determine competitive pay.
 - Select a vendor to do a one-time market study; or
 - Select a compensation technology vendor that provides updated pay data continuously to the city.
- Set budget for compensation strategy implementation.
- Establish/negotiate pay grades, if needed.
- Communicate the City's compensation strategy to the public and employees.

Measurements:

- Determine employee turnover rate; has it improved?
- Exit interviews: Determine top 3 reasons employees left and address issues.

6. Increase City general fund reserves by approximately \$400,000 to 500,000/year.

Actions:

- Amend administrative order establishing reserve minimums.
- Limit dollars we reappropriate that were unspent in the prior year.