



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

WORK SESSION SUMMARY

Council Chambers
220 N. 27th St.

November 4, 2024

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Cole

Present:

Councilmember Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III
Councilmember Bill Kennedy, Ward III
Councilmember Scott Aspenlieder, Ward IV
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV (Via Zoom)
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V
Mayor William Cole

Absent/

Excused: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I
Councilmember Neese, Ward II

Staff

Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator
Andy Zoeller, Finance Director
Debi Meling, Public Works Director
Sarah Plath, Staff Engineer

Chris Kukulski informed Council of an agreement with SL Serco to perform Public Works utility billing audit.

Public Comment:

- Mike Schaer, 1109 N. 32nd St., Billings, MT, spoke against back in parking.
- Kristi Drake, TrailNet, Billings, MT, spoke in favor of keeping the bicycle sharrows and structures regardless what Council decided on back in parking.

1. Historic Tax Credit Structure Review.

Andy Zoeller, Finance Director, indicated Erin McCrady, Dorsey and Whitney, and Adam Markwood, Wishneff and Associates, were available on Zoom. He gave an overview of the process and timeline of financing for new City Hall. He reviewed the lease financials, tax credit structure, and lease terms.

General Council questions and discussion.

Erin McCrady, Dorsey and Whitney, spoke of the extensive time and number of law firms that had worked on the historic tax credit structure to ensure a positive outcome.

Public Comment

None

2. Downtown Angle Parking Discussion.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, introduced Sarah Plath, Staff Engineer. Sarah gave an overview of WO 23-11 project map, a history of back in angle parking, benefits of back in parking, consistency benefits, and bicycle safety. She indicated the feedback staff had received from existing back in parking spaces on North 29th St. and North 30th St. had been mostly negative. EBURD and McKinley had not been negative. She discussed parking meter issues and plans to set meters back 3 feet. She indicated staff was still recommending back in angle parking for the project. She reviewed 3 alternatives: Alternative 1 – all back in angle parking; Alternate 2 – all pull in angle parking; Alternate 3 – back in angle parking on streets with shared bicycle lanes; Alternate 4 – pull in angle parking on streets within proposed project. (N. 29th St. and N. 30th St. remain back in)

Sarah spoke of multi-modal communities, crash rate data and community safety findings.

General Council questions and discussion.

Public Comment

- Adam Kern, 1019 N. 31st St., Billings, MT, spoke of the benefits of pull in parking.
- Stephanie Donovan, 824 Parkhill, Billings, MT, spoke about how pull in parking conversion would negatively affect the bike facilities.
- Mike Schaer, 1109 N. 32nd St., Billings, MT, spoke in favor of pull in parking.

Ms. Meling indicated MDT was adamant about back in parking for all State-owned streets, so Montana Avenue would become back in parking.

Mehmet Casey, Downtown Billings Partnership, before back in parking there was a majority of neutral opinions. Afterwards most people just wanted consistency. 3 years into it – adamantly stating “get rid of back in parking”.

Motion: direct staff to move forward using Alternative 4

Moved by CM Aspenlieder

Seconded by CM Owen

Councilmembers Rupsis, Kennedy, Boyett spoke in favor of Alternative 2.

Substitute Motion: move forward with Alternative 2

Moved by CM Rupsis

Seconded by CM Boyett

APPROVED 5-4, Owen, Aspenlieder, Tidswell and Mayor Cole opposed

HIGHLIGHT UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS OF COUNCIL INTEREST.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

None

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 theroster at the cart located at the back of the Council chambers or at the podium.*)

- Brian Jones, 3108 Saddleback Trail, Billings, MT, Collaborative Design, donated time (\$80,000) to design Amend Recreation Campus (ARC) and assist City in finding tenant for 1st pad site for ice. City did not choose Collaborative Design for design contract.

ADJOURN: 7:31 P.M.