

Comprehensive Plan Recommendations Update

Administration:

- 1. Establish formal agreements for all partners:** Agreements have been completed with Par 3, BALBB, APDC, Little League, Community Gardens, and the agreements with the Mustangs and BSA continue. Staff will continue to update the agreements as needed, and look for other user groups that require a formal agreement.
- 2. Seek to expand facilities according to prioritized needs and to meet service level standards for projected 2032 population:** Staff has presented numerous proposals over the last year outlining potential facility expansions. Currently working on the Amend Park Campus and the Amend Recreation Center utilizing South Billings Urban Renewal funding. Also working on expanding SBURA boundary to encompass South Park pool for reconstruction which potentially would also include a small Community Center.
Staff continues to work with School District II to provide recreational opportunities after school like girls volley ball and girls/boys basketball, in their facilities.
- 3. Diversify department funding sources:** Staff is always looking for grant funding sources, and work closely with Partners for Parks, and other organizations to assist in funding improvements like Landon's Legacy. The Department has utilized the Land Water Conservation Fund grant program to enhance numerous projects. Currently using the IRA grant to plant and maintain boulevard trees within the grant boundary. The Department has also worked with Community Development to obtain CBDG funding to make improvements at Pioneer, Comanche and North Park. CPTED funding was available in fy24 budget which was used to install solar lights at North Park.
- 4. Utilize budget resources to complete identified critical capital improvements:** Ongoing guided by CIP. Completed projects include: Arrowhead Park playground, Central Park tennis court rebuild, Comanche Park playground, Hawthorne Park shade structures, Lillis Park playground replacement, North Park irrigation system update, Poly Vista Park irrigation system update, Ponderosa Park playground replacement, Riverfront Park road improvements, Rose Park playground replacement, Terry Park playground replacement, Pioneer Park tennis courts, Castle Rock parking lot and restrooms, North Park playground, restrooms and picnic shelter, Sacajawea Park playground, the list grows every year.
- 5. Implement sustainable capital improvements as budget allows.** Staff time has not allowed implementing a Sustainable Program. Staff continues to update the inventory and determine useful life and what improvements are necessary to properly maintain the inventory.

- 6. Pursue visionary capital improvements over the long-term. The bond proposal, which included many capital improvements including a Multi-Generational Recreation Facility, was rejected by a community vote** When funding through SBURA became available the Department began working on the Amend Park Campus and Recreation Center. The Campus is a unique opportunity to partner with private organizations to enhance the recreational offerings. The Community Center will be the first City managed recreational facility.

Divest of parkland that can't / won't be developed: Ongoing, staff continues to identify potential parkland that won't be developed. Staff has presented proposals to City Council to divest unutilized parkland, waiting on clear direction on how to proceed. Staff has met with numerous groups interested in pursuing parkland for development. Currently working with MET bus to use parkland for a new bus terminal, which could also provide a location for a satellite maintenance facility in the Heights.

- 7. Implement changes to subdivision regulations to allow for "growth to pay for itself":** Staff has met with Planning to outline Comp plan recommendation proposing changes to subdivision regulations. A final version has been presented to City Council which contains numerous changes proposed by the Parks and Recreation Department. The changes include size of parkland that is acceptable, utilizing parkland for stormwater containment, and street frontage requirements. City Council has since adopted the subdivision regulations.
- 8. Implement or update key department policies:** Reviewing all Departmental policies for necessary update.
- 9. Use Adopt-a-Trail, Adopt-a-Park, and Operational Partnership programs to reduce park maintenance costs:** Active volunteer program to assist in maintenance and providing maintenance support. Including trail program, park cleanups, and working closely with the Partners for Parks Foundation, Great American Cleanup and Refresh the Rims. The Department started Adopt a Park and Adopt a Trail programs in 2024. Eight groups have joined the program, and staff continues to look for other groups willing to adopt. Staff also started a "Challenge" Program where one group will do a cleanup and then challenge another organization.

Maintenance:

- 1. Establish clear lines of role and responsibility between Parks and Public Works for trail maintenance:** An agreement has been reached with Public Works clearly defining roles and responsibilities for trail maintenance and identifying areas where we can cooperate in maintenance activities. The GIS Division of IT has redrawn the City map to reflect AOR's for both Departments.
- 2. Implement a work order management system to track lifecycle maintenance requirements tied to weekly and monthly work orders:** Implementation of City Works within the Parks has begun. Delay in implementation has been the lack of staff time to do an accurate asset

inventory. Staff training continues on the proper use of City Works, and staff has begun to track maintenance activities.

- 3. Use the work order management system to track unit activity costs and then analyze internal cost vs the cost of using a third-party vendor:** Implementation of City Works within the Parks has begun. Delay in implementation has been the lack of staff time to do an accurate asset inventory. Third-Party vendors are utilized when staff can't provide the service.
- 4. Reduce windshield time by constructing basic satellite maintenance yards in the Heights and the West End:** The Dept. has proposed additional maintenance facilities in the CIP and continue to look to partner with other Departments as they expand their facilities Staff has implemented several practices that lower windshield time like: Transporting mowers on trailers, Centralized Irrigation control system, remote pumpstation monitoring, AVL vehicle tracking system in vehicles, Plot Box cemetery software, proper weed control and fertilization. The centralized irrigation controllers have made a dramatic impact on windshield time. Staff no longer have to go to each irrigation controller to reset run times or rain delay the system. All of this can be accomplished anywhere on their phone. The same is true with pump station monitoring. Staff can tell the status of a pump station and adjust settings by looking at their phone instead of traveling to each station.
- 5. Increase parks maintenance budget and staff to meet best practice cost per acre standards:** The Dept. continues to propose staff changes to meet best practice. An outline has been proposed to increase spending over 5 years to reach Best Practices.
- 6. Customize maintenance best practice standards to meet the values of the Billings community, and ensure standards are met whether work is performed internally or by a third-party vendor:** The Department works closely with all user groups to meet standards required. An example would be the maintenance services provided to the Amend Park Development Council to provide high quality soccer pitches. The increased need for maintenance in our parks has exceeded our budget so in order to increase maintenance in one area another service must be sacrificed.
- 7. Use the strategic implementation matrix to develop and prioritize work plans:** Strategic implementation matrix has yet to be developed.
- 8. Measure cost of service for the Urban Forestry Division:** Dependent on Work Order Management System? Forestry Division has been able to meet National standards for tree care (trees inspected every seven years), the Division has a very proactive maintenance and pruning schedule saving on cleanup after major storms.

Maintenance Continued:

- 9. Measure cost of service for the Cemetery Division:** Dependent on Work Order Management System. Changes have been made over the last year to help recover a larger portion of the cost to maintain the Cemetery including increasing fees and selling vaults. The Cemetery also works closely with volunteer groups on projects. A good example is the Saluting Branches program that was started in 2023. Staff proposed a spreading garden in FY25 budget which could have increased revenue, but budget reductions required it be cut.

- 10. Consider improvements at Mountview Cemetery including developing unused areas, paving all roads and trails, and identifying exercise and historical trails:** Currently implementing PlotBox to accurately map location of each grave with pertinent data. A new VFD pump station has been installed which will lower utility costs and save on labor. Cemetery staff have taken on the development of area 15 in-house, working on making improvements during slower times. Staff work closely with the Heritage Center to highlight the historical value in the cemetery.

Recreation

- 1. Refine recreation program offerings to reduce low enrollment or cancelled programs due to no enrollment:** Recreation Staff continues to develop and offer new programs based on community interest and national trends. Enrollment continues to increase and the limiting factor for growth is space. The Bond plan increases locations for programming recreational activities which will allow the Department to experiment with even more options.
- 2. Expand programming in areas of prioritized need:** Recreation Staff continues to develop and offer new programs based on community interest and national trends. Started REC2U program in June of 2023 and expanding the program to 8 parks in 2024. Staff are creating a Youth Park Board to help us identify opportunities to offer more recreational opportunities to that age group. Staff is piloting a program to offer E-Sports this year. Space continues to be the limiting factor to growing all recreational programs, but staff are looking at creative ways to expand including using Faith Based facilities when available. The Recreation Division continues to have a strong relationship with SD2 and continues to utilize their facilities to offer both Youth and Adult programs.
- 3. Classify all programs and services as Essential, Important, or Value-Added and establish a pricing policy to meet the cost recovery goals for each class:** Recreation Staff annually evaluates program success based on user experience and enrollment. Pricing policy has yet to be established, however programs currently cover all direct costs.