



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

WORK SESSION SUMMARY

Council Chambers
316 N. 26th St., 5th Floor

June 16, 2025

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Deputy Mayor Boyett

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION (4:30 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.)

Present: Councilmember Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Neese, Ward II
Councilmember Rogers, Ward III
Councilmember Kennedy, Ward III
Councilmember Tidswell, Ward IV
Councilmember Aspenlieder, Ward IV
Councilmember Boyett, Ward V (Serving as Deputy Mayor)
Councilmember Rupsis, Ward V

**Absent/
Excused:** Mayor William Cole
Councilmember Shaw, Ward I

Staff: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner
Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator
Rusty Logan, Transit Manager

Public Comment:

- Kris Glen, 209 Yellowstone Avenue, Billings, MT – spoke against the NorthWestern Energy rate hike.
- Katie Harrison, South Side, Billings, MT - spoke against the NorthWestern Energy rate hike.

1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner, introduced the following members of BPAC:

Dave Coppock and Kristi Halderman - gave an overview of BPAC's focus, community concerns, crash data and bike lane counts and locations.

General Council questions and discussion:

Bike crash data? – BPAC tracks all type of crashes
Sharrows? – not most effective for busy streets but beneficial for certain areas
Separated bike lane maintenance and stormwater issues

-Public Comment

- Mark Nicholson, 27 Clark Avenue, Billings, MT – accidents most likely on wide, fast roads. Need bike lanes.
- Kris Glen, 209 Yellowstone Avenue, Billings, MT – spoke of the ease of bike travel during a recent visit to another town. Need more bike trails.

2. FY26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator, gave an overview of the UPWP development timeline, work elements and funding percentages, operating and project lists, proposed transportation planning projects. She reviewed recent Council action and additional projects for discussion.

Rusty Logan, Transit Manager, gave an overview of the UPWP for Transit, funding sources, comparison and activities.

General Council questions and discussion:

Costs for upcoming Safe Routes to School projects – no construction cost ideas yet
5th Avenue Corridor – western portion in good shape, east side to Metra more difficult - BNSF won't allow connection due to railroad right of way.

-Public Comment

- Kris Glen, 209 Yellowstone Avenue, Billings, MT – like intelligent railroad crossing idea to come up with alternate routes.

Councilmember Rupsis - narrow down Colton and intersection improvements on 24th St. King Ave. study not in this year's plan and find ways to carpool to Amend Park.

Councilmember Gulick – agree with Rupsis

Council consensus – Move forward with St. Francis and Medicine Crow and 3 projects MPO recommending plus Annandale, Aronson and household survey.

3. NorthWestern Energy (NWE) Rate Increase.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, indicated Council had requested this topic be placed on the agenda.

General Council questions and discussion:

What is the increase being used for?

CM Aspenlieder – placed on PSC docket before Legislative tax shift, will be another one to address Legislative tax changes. This increase will add generation capacity to recover costs for Yellowstone Generation Facility in Laurel. City should talk about sending letter of opposition.

MT League of City and Towns stand? stay out of it in case Legislators came after the City policy and rates.

-Public Comment

- **Tony O'Donnell, 3958 S. Tanager Lane, Billings, MT** - former PSC member – property taxes are passed through per State Law. Need more info before the City takes stance.
- **Kris Glen, 209 Yellowstone Avenue, Billings, MT** – NWE choosing option that makes them the most money. Need to see facts for justification on raise.

Council consensus – CM Aspenlieder will draft a letter for PSC and send to Budget and Finance Committee for review.

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

None

ADJOURN: 7:07 P.M.