



INTERIM PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, July 3, 2025 at 4:30pm

Commission Members	Position															
							05/29/2025	06/05/2025	07/03/2025	08/07/2025	09/04/2025	10/02/2025	09/04/2025	10/02/2025	11/06/2025	12/04/2025
Dennie Stephenson	Chair					1		1								
Kimberly Welzenbach	Vice Chair					1		1								
Daniel Brooks	Commission Member					1		1								
Roger Gravgaard	Commission Member					1		1								
David Nordel	Commission Member					1										
Amber Parish	Commission Member					1		1								
Josh Sayer	Commission Member					1		1								
John Staley	Commission Member					1										
Jim Ronquillo	Commission Member					1		1								
Wyeth Friday	PCSD Director					1		1								
Anna Vickers	Planning Div Manager					1		1								

Please note: "A" stands for excused absence, "1" stands for present, "V" stands for Zoom participation, "C" stands for cancelled

Call the Meeting to Order:

Wyeth Friday, Planning Division & Community Services Director called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

Introduction of Planning Board Members and Planning Department Staff

Wyeth Friday called for introductions of the members of the Interim Planning Commission and Planning staff.

Attending Staff: Wyeth Friday, Planning & Community Services Director; Anna Vickers, Planning Division Manager; Brenda Berns, Planning Clerk

1. Others in Attendance: Allison Mouch and Johanna Tuthill, Orion Planning & Design

2. Approval of Agenda. Due to time constraints of the consultants, the Commission was asked to amend the agenda by placing new business before old business.

Motion

Motion made by commission member Welzenbach to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by commission member Brooks. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes.

Motion

Motion made by commission member Gravgaard to approve May 29, 2025 meeting minutes, seconded by commission member Ronquillo. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment. No members of the public were in attendance.

5. Disclosure of Outside (Ex-Parte) Communication. There were no ex-parte communications.

6. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest. There were no conflicts of interest.

7. Old Business - There was no old business.

8. New Business

- a. Population Data Sources – SB Friedman/Orion Planning & Design

Allison Mouch, Managing Partner at Orion Planning & Design (OPD) provided an overview of Orion’s role and responsibilities in the project. She noted that work commenced in early May 2025, with a primary focus on data collection.

Coordination efforts are also underway with the Transportation division. Additionally, Ms. Mouch presented the project’s branding, including the official logo and visual identity. The project website has been launched to provide information on how the public can get involved and to share upcoming survey links aimed at gathering community feedback. Work is currently underway on the initial placetype mapping. The term "placetype mapping" is used to better reflect the broader context of land use—moving beyond traditional classifications to incorporate a wider range of factors that influence how land is used and experienced. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of land use patterns and their impacts.

Johanna Tuthill, OPD explained that the initial placotyping effort is in its earliest stages. As part of this process, a temporary land use map will be developed, taking into consideration factors such as existing zoning, lot sizes, and environmental constraints. These elements will help inform the development of the future land use map. Engagement with the broader community and targeted stakeholder groups will be essential in gathering relevant input. Given the size and complexity of Billings, this effort will run concurrently with demographic projections. By analyzing current growth patterns and development trends, the team will be able to identify areas where future growth is most feasible. These projections will then be used to refine and adjust the land use map accordingly.

Johanna shared the demographic projections:

Growth Scenario Methodology

Historical Analysis

Examine past growth patterns and development trends over the last 20 years

Demographic Projections

Forecast population and employment growth through 2045

Spatial Analysis

Identify development constraints and opportunities using GIS mapping

Scenario Development

Create likely growth scenarios for evaluation and community input

Johanna shared the data and resources utilized:

Census & ACS Data

Population demographics, housing characteristics, and economic indicators

GIS Mapping Resources

City and county-provided data on land use, zoning, environmental constraints, service districts, and infrastructure

Economic Development Data

Employment trends, industry sectors, and market analysis

Allison shared that the evaluation phase will continue through August, culminating with an on-site visit to Billings. During this visit, the team plans to:

- Engage directly with City staff, Planning Board members, and elected officials
- Conduct meetings with key stakeholders
- Tour the city to gain a deeper understanding of its existing conditions, character, and context

The on-site visit will also provide an opportunity to review and learn from recent development projects, both successful and challenging—as part of their broader assessment.

Next Steps

August 4-6, 2025 – Team trip and initial stakeholder engagement

July – September 2025 – Plan audit and existing conditions analysis

October – November 2025 – Growth scenario evaluation and community feedback

December 2025 – May 2026 – Draft plan development

More information available at:

Project website: www.billings2045.com

Email: billings2045@billingsmt.gov

Questions

A request was made for project information to be added to the City’s website. In response, it was noted that the project website went live earlier in the day, although some features are still being finalized. Planning staff will also host a table at the upcoming Strawberry Festival, where attendees may submit their email addresses to receive updates on the comprehensive Billings 2045 plan. Additional outreach strategies include securing billboard space, partnering with local nonprofits, and employing targeted, intentional outreach methods deemed critical to the success of the campaign. A finalized schedule is forthcoming, and a bus tour has been arranged in coordination with the Orion consultant team, with participation opportunities available to Commission members. The importance of engaging all key stakeholder groups was emphasized, and suggestions were made to include homebuilders, realtors, and the Billings Architectural Group in the outreach process. Staff will also distribute printed cards featuring a QR code linked to the project website and will assist with their delivery.

In response to an inquiry regarding appropriate communication channels, it was confirmed that all Commission-related correspondence will be directed through the dedicated email address: billings2045@billingsmt.gov.

8. Old Business

- a. Amending Interim Planning Commission Bylaws to add Proxy Voting.

Ms. Vickers reported that, following a discussion with the City Legal Department, it was confirmed that proxy voting is not permitted for the Commission due to existing City regulations. However, remote participation through Zoom is allowable and will remain an option for members.

9. Other Business –

The discussion focused on ongoing and upcoming planning efforts. Staff shared that preparatory work is underway for scheduled meetings and that public involvement will occur in the future. Current efforts include coordination with consultants on existing plans, such as the Heights Plan. It was confirmed that both consultants and staff are involved in other planning efforts, with additional updates expected in the coming months. The Commission was reminded that the next Interim Planning Commission meeting will be held on August 7, where further information on neighborhood plans and stakeholder meetings will be provided.

10. Future Agenda Items

Adjournment: 5:50 pm

Brenda J Berns, Planning Clerk