

CITY OF BILLINGS

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION SUMMARY

January 20, 2026 – 5:30 P.M.

Council Chambers – City Hall, 316 N. 26th St., Billings, Montana

Council Present:

Councilmember Nicholson
Councilmember Shaw
Councilmember Neese
Councilmember Pitman
Councilmember Aguirre
Councilmember Aspenlieder
Councilmember Lindley
Councilmember Boyett
Councilmember O'Donnell
Mayor Nelson

Councilmembers absent/excused:

Councilmember Kennedy

Staff Present:

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator; Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator; Gina Dahl, City Attorney; Louis Engels, Water Quality Superintendent; Wyeth Friday, Planning and Community Services Director; Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator; Anna Vickers, Planning Manager; Mac Fogelson, Engineer

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Mike Nelson called the Work Session to order and explained the purpose of a work session as an informal discussion meeting where no final decisions are expected.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda and Non-Agenda Items)

Tucker Colvin – spoke against ICE.

Marc Stewart – spoke against ICE.

Kieran Fearey – spoke against ICE.

Paul Clark – spoke against ICE.

Katie Harrison – spoke against ICE.

Zachary Allen – spoke against ICE.

Name unclear – spoke against ICE.

Nikki Hanto – spoke against ICE.

Megan Fitz – spoke against ICE.

Bob Struckman – spoke against ICE.

Neil Kiner – thanked the Mayor and Council for their service.

Jennifer Strong – supported following Federal laws and the importance of a safe community.

Christina Stanley - spoke about the need to grow the community and asked for ways to reach out to Council.

Bailey (last name unclear) – spoke against ICE.

Public comment closed.

AGENDA ITEM #1 Energy and Conservation Commission Final Recommendations

Glen Foy, Energy and Conservation Commission Chair provided a final report on the Commission's work since its formation in 2019. The presentation included:

- An overview of the ECC's mission, structure, and completed energy and resource inventory.
- Documentation of operational savings achieved through energy efficiency and conservation initiatives, including reduced utility and water costs.
- Review of the City's achievement of LEED for Cities Gold Certification.
- A summary of trends related to electricity, water use, solid waste, and landfill gas recovery.
- Ten final recommendations addressing conservation, efficiency, waste monetization, self-generation of energy, and public education.

Louis Engels, Water Quality Superintendent, reviewed the recommendations.

Council discussion focused on:

- The need for cost-benefit analyses and feasibility studies before implementation.
- Recognition that many conservation practices are already underway within City departments.
- The role of the ECC in coordinating efforts, increasing visibility, and providing third-party validation.
- Whether and how the ECC should continue beyond its expiration date.

Public comment:

Kris Glenn – continue LEED certification and keep ECC.

Adela Awner – thanked the ECC for efforts and encouraged support.

Tucker Colvin – encouraged support.

Jack Hanson – encouraged support.

Karen Stears, ECC member – encouraged support.

Randy Hafer, ECC member – encouraged support and communication.

Council Direction:

- Consensus to forward the ECC's ten recommendations to department heads for further review, feasibility evaluation, and potential implementation.

Motion: direct staff to return with a proposed resolution outlining the goals, scope and how Commission could continue going forward.

Moved by CM Shaw

Seconded by CM (Audio unclear)

APPROVED 6-4, Pitman, Neese, Boyett and Aspenlieder opposed, Kennedy absent

AGENDA ITEM #2 MT3 Corridor Study and Access Management Plan

Wyeth Friday, Planning Director; Sarah Patterson and Lisa Olmstead (DOWL); and Kurtis Schneiber (MDT)

Staff and consultants presented findings from the Montana Highway 3 Corridor Study, including:

- Corridor limits, study purpose, and schedule.
- Safety and traffic operations data, including crash history and projected growth.
- Recommended improvement options such as turn lanes, roundabouts, pedestrian facilities, and access management strategies.
- Overview of the access management plan and public outreach conducted.

Council discussion addressed:

- Comparisons to other Billings arterials.
- Timing, funding challenges, and MDT project prioritization.
- Speed limits, pedestrian safety, and development impacts.

Public comment:

None

AGENDA ITEM #3 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator explained amendments required following a federal review of MPO processes, including:

- Updates to the Metropolitan Planning Area boundary based on the 2020 Census.
- Demonstration of fiscal constraint within the long-range plan.
- Clarification of project listings, funding sources, and performance measures.
- Introduction of a new public data dashboard for transportation projects.

No action was requested.

Public comment:

Kris Glenn - emphasized the importance of planning, infrastructure costs, and completing a cost-of-services study.

AGENDA ITEM #4 Timing of Traffic Impact Study Submittals

Council discussed proposed changes to the timing and process for traffic impact study submissions and the broader concept of transportation and public safety impact fees. Anna Vickers, Planning Manager, outlined an interim procedural approach and noted future code updates.

Council Direction:

- Consensus to direct staff to develop scope, cost estimates, and timelines for evaluating traffic impact fees and potential public safety impact fees, with a report back targeted for early April 2026.

Public comment:

None

HIGHLIGHT UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS OF COUNCIL INTEREST

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Council agreed to return work sessions to the dais seating arrangement for efficiency.

Councilmember Lindley spoke of creating a technology board.

PUBLIC COMMENT – “NON-AGENDA ITEMS”

Jennifer Strong raised concerns regarding national political movements, public safety, and requested consideration of ordinances addressing single-sex spaces.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Nelson adjourned the meeting at 8:31 P.M.