

****ATTENTION****

The City Council meeting will be held in a hybrid format that may include both in-person AND virtual attendance via Zoom. Unless they have cause to appear virtually, Councilmembers will attend the meeting in person in Council Chambers, fifth floor of City Hall, 316 N. 26th Street. In order to honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know in Article II, Sections 8 and 9, of the Montana Constitution, the City of Billings and City Council are making every effort to meet the requirements of the open meeting laws.

Citizens are invited to:

- . Review the Agenda Packet on the City's website at: www.billingsmt.gov and click on "Your Government," "City Council," and "Agendas & Minutes".
- . View the meeting:
 - . On Community 7 TV - Channel 7 or Channel 507 -- Spectrum Cable. *(On evenings when there is a conflict with School District No. 2 Board meetings, the City Council meeting will be broadcast on Channel 8 - Spectrum Cable.)* Channel 7 or Channel 978 - TDS Fiber.
 - . Online at www.comm7tv.com and click on the "Watch Live" icon. Community 7 also has links to their Facebook page and YouTube channel.
 - . On the City's website at www.billingsmt.gov and click on "Watch Meetings Online" on the homepage.
 - . In-Person.

Citizens may submit public comment via the following methods:

- . Mail: City Clerk, P.O. Box 1178, Billings, MT 59103
- . Email: Council@billingsmt.gov.
 - . Emails received after 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting, may be posted on the Council's webpage the following day for public viewing.
- . Attend the meeting in person

Please contact Denise Bohlman, City Clerk, at bohlmand@billingsmt.gov, or at 406.657.8210, with any questions.



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

WORK SESSION AGENDA

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MARCH 16, 2026

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Nelson

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ALL ITEMS. This is the time to comment on any matter (Agenda or Non-Agenda) falling within the scope of the Billings City Council. You may only speak once for each item during the meeting.

Please note, the City Council cannot take action on any item of significant interest to the public that does not appear on the agenda. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes during each public comment period or as set by the Mayor. **Speaker sign-in required.** Please sign the roster located at the back of the Council chambers or at the podium.

1. **Airport Authority Presentation.**
2. **Aggressive Driving Initiative.**
3. **Renewal of Citizen's Police Advisory Board.**
4. **Changes to Council Meetings Discussion (CM Pitman).**

HIGHLIGHT UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS OF COUNCIL INTEREST:

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

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.*)

ADJOURN:

Note:

- This meeting is an "informal" meeting of the City Council. The content of the Agenda is subject to change at the meeting.
- In the event there is a Closed Executive Session, the sole purpose is to discuss litigation strategy. The other parties to the case(s) discussed are not public bodies or associations as described in Section 2-3-203(1) and (2), MCA. The meeting is closed, as allowed by Section 2-3-203(4) (a), MCA, "to discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position" of the City of Billings.

City Council Work Session

1.

Meeting Date: 03/16/2026
TITLE: Airport Authority Presentation
PRESENTED BY: Jeff Roach
Department: Airport
Presentation: Yes
Legal Review: No
Project Number: N/A

RECOMMENDATION

For information only

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A presentation by Steven Baldwin Associates Aviation Consulting (SBA) to update City Council on the status of the airport governance study regarding Billings Logan International Airport (BIL) potentially forming an airport authority.

BACKGROUND (Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies, if applicable)

A presentation by Steven Baldwin Associates Aviation Consulting (SBA) to update City Council on the status of the airport governance study regarding Billings Logan International Airport (BIL) forming an airport authority. This update by Steven Baldwin Associates will review the background of the BIL governance analysis and transition plan project, the process of analysis, and where SBA is in data collection.

FISCAL EFFECTS

There is no fiscal impact for this presentation. However, the overall cost of retaining Consultant services with Steven Baldwin Associates to develop the necessary authorizing documents and carry out the required public involvement process has totaled \$622,000. This effort is funded through airport-generated revenue.

STAKEHOLDERS

ALTERNATIVES

No decision is needed at this time by City Council. A recommendation will be brought before the City Council in May 2026.

City Council Work Session

2.

Meeting Date: 03/16/2026
TITLE: Follow-up on Aggressive Driving Initiative
PRESENTED BY: Rich St. John, Police Chief
Department: Police
Presentation: No
Legal Review: Yes
Project Number: N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends passage of the proposed amendments to BMCC 24-351 et al., which modernize and clarify the city's ordinance regulating motor vehicle noise, strengthen enforceability, and promote public health, safety, and neighborhood livability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BMCC amendments to the motor vehicle noise regulations aim to clarify, modernize, and strengthen the City's ability to address excessive vehicle noise, while remaining consistent with state law and constitutional requirements.

The amendments confirm that high levels of motor vehicle noise pose a local public health, safety, and quality-of-life issue. They allow the City of Billing to enforce content-neutral time, place, and manner restrictions to control conduct that generates unnecessary or disruptive noise. The provisions explicitly add to, rather than contradict, existing Montana motor vehicle laws.

The revisions remove ambiguity and internal inconsistencies, establish a clear "plainly audible" standard, and expand coverage beyond amplified music to include other types of unreasonable vehicular noise, often encountered in enforcement.

Overall, the amendments give the public clear notice, provide consistent guidance to officers, and establish a legally defensible framework for civil enforcement that safeguards community peace while addressing lawful vehicle operations.

BACKGROUND (Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies, if applicable)

Continuation of Council discussion on 12/1/2025.

FISCAL EFFECTS

None

STAKEHOLDERS

Police Department, law enforcement partners, legal

ALTERNATIVES

Council may:
Approve, or
Not approve

Attachments

Noise Ordinance

ORDINANCE 26-_____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS,
PROVIDING THAT THE BILLINGS, MONTANA CITY
CODE (BMCC) BE AMENDED BY REVISING SECTIONS
24-351 through 24-359

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS THAT:

Section 1. That Section 24-351 through 24-359 of the Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC) is amended and renumbered so that such section shall read as follows:

~~DIVISION 4. - PROHIBITED OPERATION OF LOUD SOUND AMPLIFICATION SYSTEMS IN MOTOR VEHICLES~~ NOISE REGULATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Sec. 24-351. - ~~Definitions.~~ Legislative findings and intent.

In this division the following terms mean:

~~Motor vehicle means a vehicle propelled by its own power and designed primarily to transport persons or property upon the highways of Billings. The term includes any moped, power driven bicycle, motorcycle, motor scooter, automobile, truck or other vehicle propelled by a motor of any kind. It does not include a bicycle that does not have a motor.~~

~~Plainly audible means any sound produced by a sound amplification system from within a motor vehicle, which can be clearly heard at a distance of fifty (50) feet or more. Measurement standards shall be by the auditory senses, based upon direct line of sight. Words or phrases need not be discernable and bass reverberations are included.~~

~~Sound amplification system means any device, instrument or system, whether electrical, mechanical or otherwise, for amplifying sound or for producing or reproducing sound, including but not limited to any radio, stereo, musical instrument, phonograph, tape player, compact disc player, boom box, loud speaker or sound or musical recorder or player, or other electronic device used for the amplification of noise.~~

A. The City Council finds that excessive and unnecessary noise within the community endangers the health, safety, welfare, and peace of residents and visitors, and interferes with the quiet enjoyment of property, public rest, and business activity.

B. The City Council further finds that certain vehicle operations, equipment modifications, and patterns of driving produce noise that is avoidable, unreasonable, or disruptive to the public peace, particularly in residential areas and during nighttime hours.

C. The City Council recognizes that motor-vehicle noise is already subject to state regulation under Title 61, Chapter 9, Parts 4 and 5, Montana Code Annotated, and that this chapter is intended to supplement and not conflict with those provisions by providing local standards for the prevention of unnecessary or unreasonable noise within City limits.

D. This chapter is intended to:

1. Establish time, place, and manner restrictions that are content-neutral and reasonable under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article II, Section 7 of the Montana Constitution;
2. Provide clear notice to vehicle operators regarding conduct that may disturb the peace or create a public nuisance; and
3. Enable effective enforcement consistent with the City's police powers granted under § 7-1-4123, MCA.

E. It is the policy of the City that the generation of noise in a manner that unreasonably disturbs the public peace is a matter of local concern, and that this chapter be liberally construed to effectuate its remedial and protective purposes.

~~Sec. 24-352. - Loud sound amplification systems prohibited. Purpose and intent.~~

~~No driver or occupant of a motor vehicle on any public or private property shall operate or permit the operation of a sound amplification system from within a motor vehicle so that the sound is plainly audible at a distance of fifty (50) or more feet from the motor vehicle.~~

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the public peace, health, and welfare of the residents, public, and businesses in the City of Billings by preventing excessive and unnecessary noise from motor vehicles, while recognizing that certain noise is unavoidable.

This chapter is intended to be consistent with state law, including §§ 61-9-403, 61-9-418, and 61-9-435, Montana Code Annotated (MCA).

~~Sec. 24-353. - Exemptions. Authority.~~

- ~~(a) A system being operated to request assistance of an emergency nature or to warn of a hazardous situation;~~
- ~~(b) A system being operated on a vehicle of a gas, electric, communications or water utility company or governmental entity; or~~
- ~~(c) A system permitted by the Billings city council or the Billings police department; or~~

~~(d) An authorized emergency vehicle; or~~

~~(e) Audio alarm systems installed in vehicles.~~

This chapter is adopted under the authority granted to municipalities by § 7-1-4123, MCA, and other applicable provisions of Montana law, including § 61-12-101, MCA.

Sec. 24-354. - ~~Reserved.~~ Definitions.

A. *Motor vehicle.* Means a vehicle propelled by its own power and designed primarily to transport persons or property upon the highways of Billings. The term includes any moped, power driven bicycle, motorcycle, motor scooter, automobile, truck or other vehicle propelled by a motor of any kind. It does not include a bicycle that does not have a motor.

B. *Plainly audible.* Means any sound that can be clearly heard, including bass reverberation, by a person of ordinary hearing without the use of a sound-level meter.

C. *Unreasonable noise.*

Unreasonable noise means any sound produced by a motor vehicle that is plainly audible at a distance of fifty (50) feet or more from the vehicle, including but not limited to amplified music, exhaust noise, engine revving, or tire squealing, as determined by a law enforcement officer using unaided hearing.

Sec. 24-355. - ~~Penalties.~~ Unreasonable vehicle noise prohibited.

~~Violations of this article are designated as municipal infractions, and punishable by civil penalties as specified in section 18-1304.~~

A. It is unlawful for any person to operate, or cause to be operated, a motor vehicle that produces unreasonable noise as defined in this chapter.

B. It is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle:

1. With a muffler, exhaust, or noise-suppression device that violates §§ 61-9-403, 61-9-418, or 61-9-435, MCA; or
2. With any device, modification, or equipment designed or used to increase noise output beyond the vehicle's original manufacturer specifications, except as permitted by state law.

Sec. 24-356 Determining factors

In determining whether a vehicle is operated in a manner that produces unreasonable noise, the enforcing officer may consider, among other relevant circumstances:

- A. The time of day the vehicle is operated;
- B. The location of operation, including posted quiet zones, zoning classification, and proximity to dwellings, schools, hospitals, or places of assembly;
- C. The presence of pedestrians, bystanders, or other vehicles in the vicinity;
- D. The manner of operation, including unnecessary or rapid acceleration or deceleration, abrupt steering or turning, racing, revving the engine, or tire squealing;
- E. The condition or modification of equipment, including operation with a missing, defective, or modified exhaust or muffler, or any other equipment alteration that increases noise output; and
- F. Any other relevant factor that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the noise was excessive or unnecessary under the circumstances.

Sec. 24-357 Exemptions

This chapter shall not apply to:

- A. Authorized emergency vehicles operating with emergency equipment;
- B. A system being operated on a vehicle of a gas, electric, communications or water utility company or governmental entity;
- C. Vehicles participating in parades, authorized events, or public functions permitted by the City;
- D. A system permitted by the Billings City Council or the Billings Police Department; or
- E. Construction, maintenance, or agricultural equipment operating within lawful hours and in compliance with applicable law.

Sec. 24-358 Enforcement and penalty

- A. An officer may issue a citation based on personal observation or other admissible evidence that the vehicle produced unreasonable noise.
- B. When a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that a motor vehicle produced unreasonable noise in violation of this article and the operator of the vehicle cannot be identified at the time of the violation, the registered owner of the vehicle shall be presumed responsible for the violation and may be issued a citation. This presumption may be rebutted by evidence that the registered owner was not operating the vehicle at the time of the violation.

The registered owner shall not be held responsible if the owner provides credible evidence that the vehicle was stolen, leased, or otherwise lawfully operated by another person at the time of the violation.

B. C. Violations of this article are designated as municipal infractions, and punishable by civil penalties as specified in Section 18-1304.

Sec. 24-359 Severability

If any provision of this chapter is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall be effective thirty (30) days after second reading and final adoption as provided by law.

Section 3. REPEALER. All resolutions, ordinances, and sections of the City Code inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

Section 4. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions of this ordinance which may be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and, to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable.

PASSED by the City Council on first reading the ____ day of March, 2026.

PASSED, ADOPTED and APPROVED on second reading this ____ day of March, 2026.

CITY OF BILLINGS

BY: _____
Mike Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

BY: _____
Denise R. Bohlman, City Clerk

City Council Work Session

Meeting Date: 03/16/2026
TITLE: Renewal of Citizen Police Advisory Board
PRESENTED BY: Rich St. John, Police Chief
Department: Police
Presentation: No
Legal Review: Yes
Project Number: N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council direct staff to proceed with Citizen Police Advisory Board (CABP) appointments pursuant to resolution 25-11302, which was approved and adopted by a 9-1 vote on September 22, 2025.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the September 22, 2025, City Council meeting, staff presented a request to renew the Citizens' Police Advisory Board (CPAB) for another four (4) years. Following staff and public comment, the matter was put to a vote and passed 9-1 with one council member absent. On December 8, 2025, CM Kennedy moved to delay board appointments pending further discussion.

BACKGROUND (Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies, if applicable)

On September 22, 2025, the City Council considered a staff request to renew the Citizens' Police Advisory Board (CPAB) for an additional four-year term. After receiving both staff and public comments, the Council voted to approve the renewal by a 9--1 vote, with one council member absent. Subsequently, on December 8, 2025, Council Member Kennedy moved to delay appointments to the board, pending further discussion of board appointees 21--27 on the December 8, 2025, consent agenda, citing concerns about term limits. Action delayed until March 23, 2026.

FISCAL EFFECTS

None

STAKEHOLDERS

Police Department
CPAB members
City Council

ALTERNATIVES

City Council may:
Approve staff to place the Citizens' Police Advisory Board appointments at an upcoming business meeting or
Not approve Citizens' Police Advisory Board appointments and provide staff with further direction.
