



City Council Work Session

July 20, 2026



Heights Neighborhood Plan updates and replaces the 2006 Plan

- Vision to guide growth and development through 2045
- Developed as part of MLUPA
- Responds to continued population growth, development patterns, evolving infrastructure needs
- Establishes goals, strategies, and a FLUM to guide:
 - Future land use
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Economic Development
 - Infrastructure, parks, community facilities, and public safety
- Developed through extensive public engagement, the Plan reflects community priorities

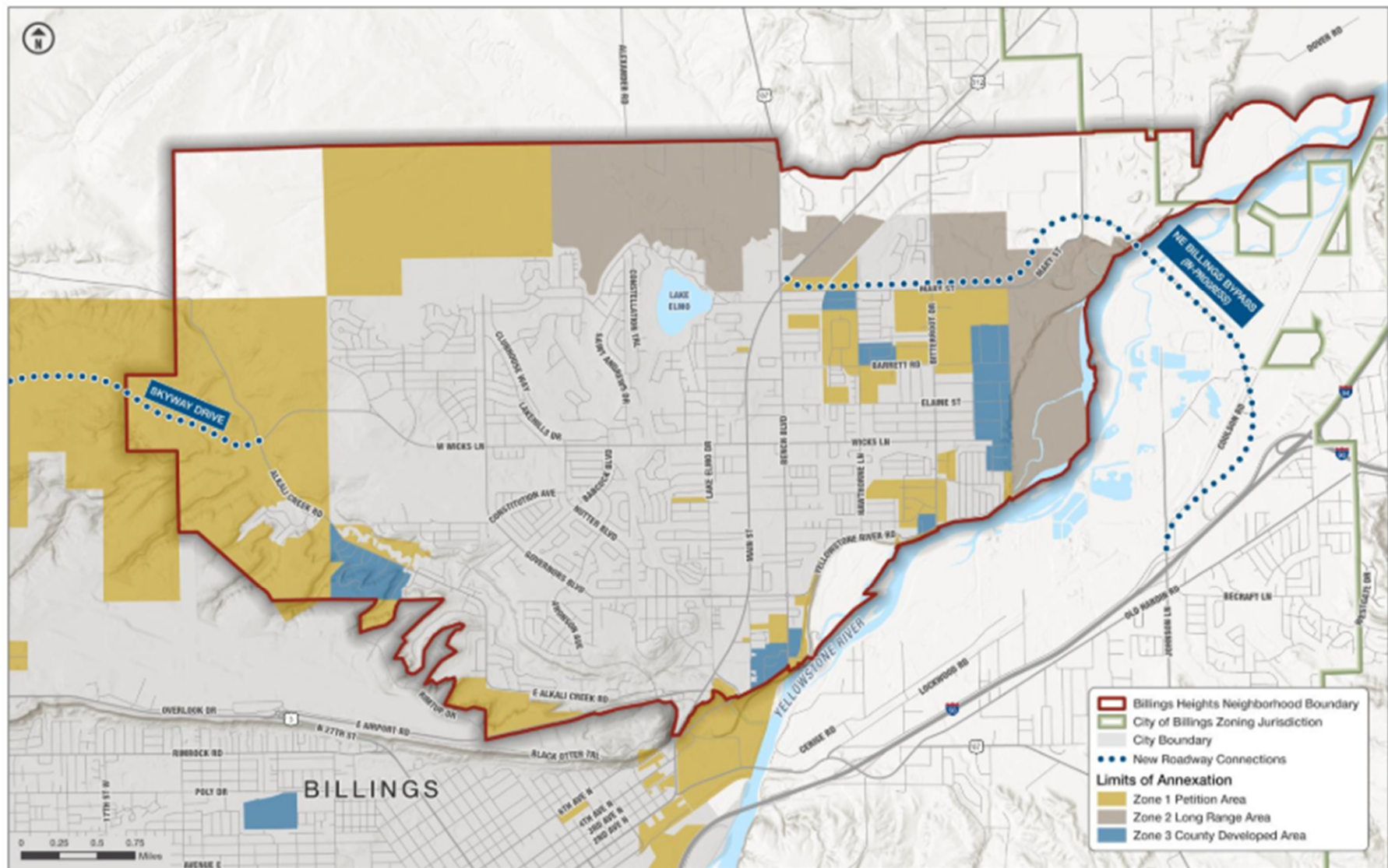


Table 2: Population Growth – Billings Heights

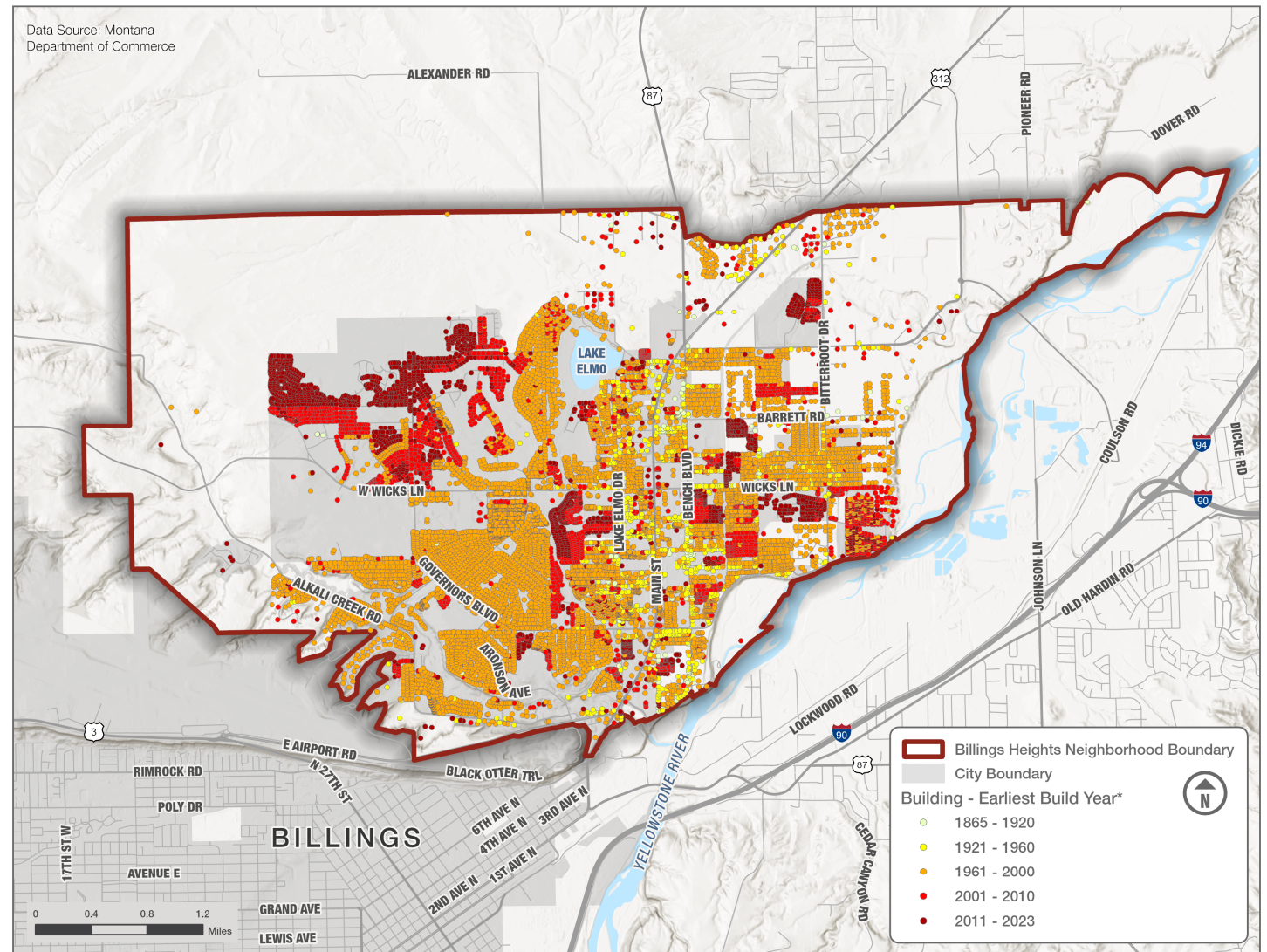
	Billings Heights		City of Billings		Yellowstone County	
	2000	2020	2000	2020	2000	2020
Population	19,713	29,567	89,847	117,116	129,097	164,731
Change		+50.0%		+30.3%		+27.6%
Portion of County Population	15.3%	18.0%	69.6%	71.1%		
Portion of City Population	21.9%	25.2%				

Table 6: Population Projection – Billings Heights

Year	Population Projection
2020	29,567 (Per U.S. Census Data by Block Groups)
2025	31,384 (Projected from 2020 Population)*
2030	33,313
2035	35,360
2040	37,533
2045	39,840

* At the time of plan preparation, ACS 5-year estimates for 2025 have not yet been released. The 2025 population figure is a projection based on the annual average growth rate of 1.2%, applied to actual 2020 census data.

Development Over Time



Housing

- Housing supply is not keeping pace with demand; vacancy rates in the Heights currently fall below healthy thresholds.
- The Heights survey indicates single-family homes as the most desired housing type.
- The average household size is decreasing in line with national trends and the neighborhood will need a greater mix of smaller unit types, including “missing middle” options – Duplex, Triplex, and Fourplex.
- A housing needs analysis determined that approximately 6,482 more units could be needed by 2045 (compared to units in 2020). This would require adding an average of 259 units per year. For reference, the Heights added an average of 205 units per year between 2000 and 2020, so the pace of housing development would need to increase to keep up with population growth.
- This plan outlines zoning changes through the new FLUM that would support compliance and working to meet the housing needs.

HEIGHTS PLAN NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH



Residents expressed a strong desire to maintain the neighborhood's family-friendly, small-town character, while also recognizing that more housing and services are needed to support residents.

Survey with 133 respondents

2 Community Meetings

9+ Stakeholder Meetings

Website with Interactive Map and
Online Survey

75 Idea Board Comments

Media interviews and social media
presence



Public Engagement and Response

The development of the plan included a variety of public engagement strategies, including surveys, stakeholder meetings, open houses, and online engagement.

This process revealed community priorities, including:

- Walkability, safety, and traffic management
- Access to parks, trails, and recreation
- Balanced, intentional growth and development
- More housing choices – especially single-family, townhomes, and small-scale multifamily
- More restaurants, local businesses, and entertainment options
- Improved infrastructure, particularly stormwater, lighting, and pedestrian connectivity
- More community facilities, especially youth services and indoor recreation

2026 Heights Plan Implementation Goals

Built on previous 2006 Plan elements and developed from community and stakeholder input

Housing

Goal 1: Facilitate the development of a variety of adequate housing to meet anticipated housing needs in the Heights.

Goal 2: Encourage strategic infill development while preserving character of the neighborhood

Goal 3: Facilitate development of affordable housing types

2026 Plan Implementation Goals

(Underline delineates IPC amendment)

Economic Development

Goal 1: Create an organized, collaborative network to promote business

Goal 2: Promote specific economic development activities in strategic locations

Goal 3: Attract and retain local and small/medium businesses in the Heights

Goal 4: Support safe and convenient physical access to businesses in the Heights

Goal 5: Improve the aesthetics of commercial areas (Main Street and elsewhere).

Goal 6: Explore ways to offset or reduce the County Water District of Billings Heights (CWDBH) water utility costs incurred by builders and developers.

- Streamlining CWDBH permitting processes
- Reducing applicable CWDBH regulatory fees
- Possible Tax Incentives

2026 Plan Implementation Goals

Utilities

Goal 1: Promote efficient use of existing and new/upgraded utility infrastructure via infill development

Goal 2: Improve stormwater drainage

Community Facilities

Goal 1: Maintain an open line of communication between the SD#2 and residents

Goal 2: Provide educational opportunities for children and people of all ages

Goal 3: Add and improve parks and recreation amenities for a variety of age groups

Goal 4: Maintain a safe and connected network of trails, parks, and other community facilities

2026 Plan Implementation Goals (Underline delineates IPC amendment)

Public Safety

- Goal 1: Improve pedestrian safety and traffic safety and enforcement in key areas
- Goal 2: Facilitate police, fire, and medical emergency response operations through public safety facilities, neighborhood design, and community awareness
- Goal 3: Design public spaces with adequate lighting and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Transportation

- Goal 1: Improve vehicular transportation in the Heights (improve complete street safety and reduce travel times, congestion, fuel consumption, and emissions)
- Goal 2: Improve public transportation in the Heights
- Goal 3: Improve non-motorized transportation in the Heights (including improvements to the extent and quality of facilities for walking and bicycling)

2026 Plan Implementation Goals

Future Land Use

Goal 1: Encourage the development of primary and secondary nodes of commercial and compact residential development.

Goal 2: Encourage infill housing development that can meet the evolving needs of the growing neighborhood

Goal 3: Prepare for future annexation and development of additional county lands

Goal 4: Encourage responsible development around existing and new major corridors

- Work Session July 20
- City Council Action July 27