



The CityLink

Official News and Information
from the City of Billings



Spring 2016

Mayor & City Council — City of Billings

Mayor Tom Hanel: hanelt@ci.billings.mt.us - (406) 657-8296

WARD 1

Brent Cromley:
cromleyb@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 252-3512

Mike Yakawich:
yakawichm@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 254-2445

WARD 2

Larry Brewster:
brewsterl@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 670-0929

Angela Cimmino:
cimmino@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 698-9763

WARD 3

Chris Friedel:
friedelc@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 272-2245

Rich McFadden:
mcfaddenr@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 545-9481

WARD 4

Ryan Sullivan:
sullivanr@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 850-5788

Al Swanson:
swanson@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 671-5917

WARD 5

Richard (Dick) Clark:
clarkr@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 656-1086

Shaun Brown:
browns@ci.billings.mt.us
(406) 698-2328

Mailing Address:

City of Billings
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103

Street Address:

City Hall
210 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Fax: (406) 657-8390

The City of Billings Annual Budget Process

The City is beginning its annual budget process, a lengthy process which begins in January every year and culminates when the budget is adopted by the City Council at the first regular meeting in June.

The State of Montana requires that every city adopt a formal budget each year. Formulating and adopting a budget serves many purposes. These include funding the programs and projects which the City Council determines should be funded, forming the basis for which property taxes will be assessed, establishing legal spending limits for the City and assisting in preventing a financial crisis.

Because the City of Billings provides a wide variety of services, the budget process can be very complex. The process begins by estimating expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year. Estimating expenditures includes projecting future cost increases related to employment contracts and other service contracts, and meeting with departments to discuss goals and ideas for the upcoming year.

The next step is estimating revenues. Each department does this based on their type of revenue stream (water usage, tax levies, building permit fees, etc.). Once revenue

and expenses are estimated, the budget must be balanced.

A balanced budget is one that uses estimated revenues, along with unbudgeted reserves from prior years, to cover estimated expenses. If the budget is not balanced, then expenses will need to be cut or revenues will need to be increased. At this point, staff presents a balanced preliminary budget to the City Council.

Each department presents its budget to the Council over the course of three to six meetings. During this time, input is given by both the public and City Council to determine if changes should be made to the preliminary budget. Finally, the City Council votes to establish the budget for each fund within the City.

To view the City's current budget, you can visit the City's website at <http://ci.billings.mt.us/index.aspx?nid=475>, or visit the Finance Department at City Hall (210 N. 27th St.).

Copies of the budget are also available for viewing at the City Clerk's office and at the Library. If you would like any further explanation about the budget process, please contact the Finance Department at (406) 657-8207 or oggerj@ci.billings.mt.us.

Inside this issue:

Boards and Commissions 2
Seasonal Employment 2

Parks, Recreation and Public Lands	3, 4	Police Department Mourns Loss of Sergeant..	7
We Want to Hear From You	4	Did You Know?	7
From Our Readers	5	City of Billings Service Directory	7
Billings Public Library News.....	6		

Boards and Commissions

For most Americans, voting is a right and a responsibility. It is an opportunity for citizens to voice their opinions and to influence decisions made by those who are elected to public office.

But there are other ways in which adult citizens can participate in the decision-making process and unique ways to put your interests, knowledge or experience to work to help build a better Billings. Become a member of one of the 32 Boards and Commissions that act in advisory roles to City staff and, ultimately, to the City Council.

Members of these Boards and Commissions are volunteers who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. They are only advisory in nature. The openings are announced each January.

Each Board and Commission has specific responsibilities and requires a commitment of time on the part of its members. Members serve as volunteers and, as such, are unpaid.

These bodies encourage private citizens, 18 years or older that reside in the City limits of Billings, to participate in City government. They also offer an opportunity to learn how the City operates on a first-hand basis.

Join a Board or Commission

Citizen members of these boards and commissions are appointed twice each year in January or July. If you are interested in applying for membership on a board or commission, you can download an application from the City of Billings website www.ci.billings.mt.us, or obtain an application at City Hall.

The following is a list of all City Boards and Commissions:

- Aviation and Transit Board
- Animal Control Board
- Board of Appeals
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Billings BID
- Board of Ethics
- Board of Health
- City Board of Adjustment
- City Zoning Commission
- Community Development Board
- County Water District of Billings Heights
- Development Process Advisory Review Board
- Emergency Medical Services Board
- Energy and Conservation Commission
- Exchange City Golf Cooperation Board
- Housing Authority
- Human Relations Board
- Library Board
- Mayor's Committee on Homelessness
- Parking Advisory Board
- Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Board
- Police Board
- Policy Coordinating Committee
- Public Works Board
- Tourism BID Board
- Traffic Control Board
- Transportation Advisory Committee

- Yellowstone County Board a Board of Adjustment
- Yellowstone County Planning Board
- Yellowstone County Soil Conservation District
- Yellowstone County Zoning Commission
- Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board

Some Boards and Commissions, such as the Police Board, require a background check and list of references. Most have specific residency requirements.

The responsibilities of each Board and Commission, along with meeting times and dates, are outlined on their websites which can be accessed through the City's website.

There is also a need for volunteers who assist without actually serving on a Board or Commission.

For example, volunteers at the Library can assist patrons with computer usage and technology, assist with children's activities or adult programs, offer tours of the Library, and prepare new materials for the shelves. Applications to help as a volunteer are available at the Library and on the Library's website.

Another opportunity for volunteerism is with the City Parks and Recreation Department in such areas as Park Rangers, Bike Patrol, cleaning parks and trails, graffiti removal and planting trees. Applications are available on the Department's website.

Billings is a large city and its needs are growing. Volunteering is an opportunity where ordinary – or extra-ordinary – citizens can play an important role in helping meet its present needs and guide it toward a better future.

Summer 2016 Temporary/Short-Term Employment

The City of Billings is gearing up to fill seasonal positions and expects to employ about 200 additional people for the summer season. Some positions begin as early as March, and most will end in late summer or early fall.

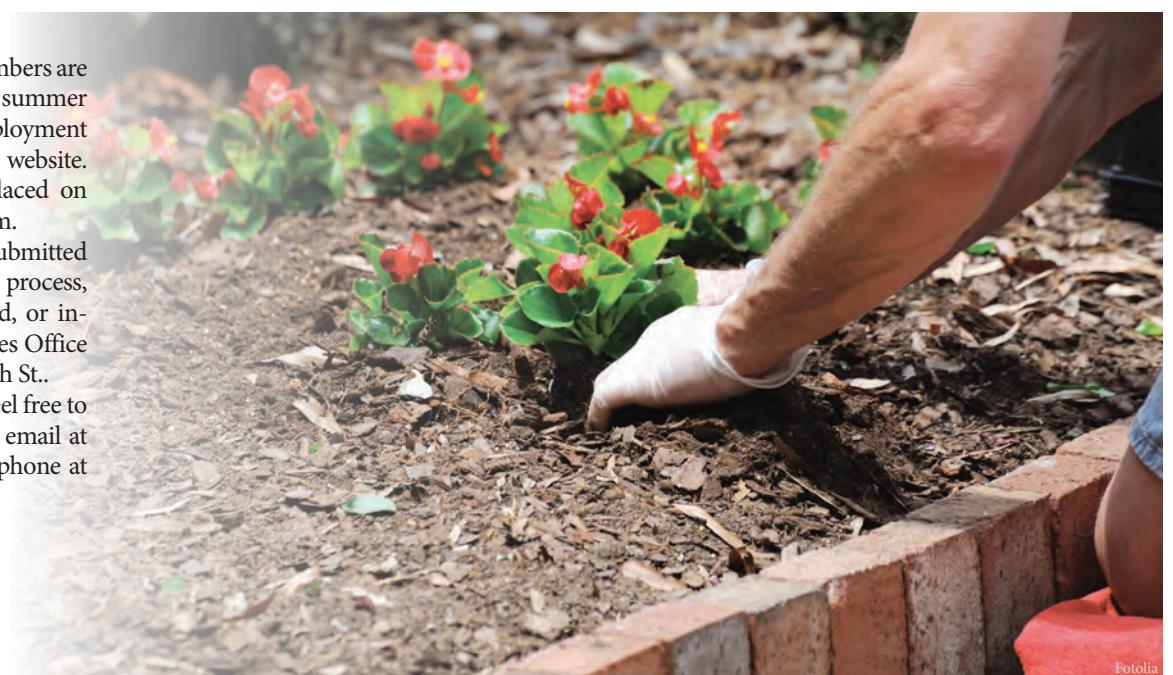
Positions will be available in the following divisions/departments: Airport, Cemetery, Engineering, Library, Parks, Recreation, Solid Waste, Streets, Water, and Wastewater. View current employment opportunities and submit an online application by visiting the City's website at <http://www.ci.billings.mt.us/index.aspx?nid=411>.

Please note: If you are applying for more than one position, a separate application is required for each seasonal position.

Human Resources staff members are in the process of posting the summer temporary/short-term employment opportunities to the City's website. New job opportunities are placed on the website each Friday at 5 p.m.

Applications can be submitted through the online application process, which is the preferred method, or in person at the Human Resources Office located at City Hall, 210 N. 27th St..

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Human Resources via email at hr@ci.billings.mt.us or by telephone at (406) 237-6210.



News from the Parks, Recreation & Public Lands Department



Recreation Activities

Jump into spring this March with some of the program activities offered by the Recreation Division. There is a little bit of something for everyone, with programs ranging from youth activities to adults. Below is a sampling of the different opportunities available. For more information, or to register for any of the programs, call the Parks and Recreation Office at (406) 657-8371 or visit www.BillingsParks.org.

Girls 4th, 5th, & 6th Grade Volleyball

Billings Parks & Recreation's Girls Volleyball program begins on March 30 at Poly Drive and March 31 at Big Sky and Sandstone Elementary schools. This program is designed to develop skills, build self-confidence, emphasize teamwork, and minimize anxiety of competition. 4th grade practice will be held at 6 p.m., while the 6th grade practice will be held at 7 p.m. 5th graders will have the option of choosing to play at either time slot based on skill and experience level. All games will be played on Saturdays for five weeks at a neutral site.

- Registration cost is \$65 for Billings' residents.

Adult Soccer

Get outside this spring by playing in the Adult Soccer League. Men's, Women's, and CoEd Leagues will start April 3. Deadline to register your team is Friday, March 25. Registration is \$350 per team. This team fee includes seven regular season games. Games are played Sundays at Amend Park. A pre-season Captains meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 31, at 6 p.m. at the Parks & Recreation Office at 390 N. 23rd St.



Health & Fitness Coaching

Looking to get back into shape this winter without the expensive gym membership? This program provides one-on-one time with an ACSM Certified Personal Trainer who will help you meet your health and fitness goals. Sessions are available early-morning through the afternoon. Pick the time that works best for you. The program provides 5 or 10, one-hour personal sessions. Session refill packages are also available.

This opportunity is open until May 30 and is held at the North Park Community Center (6th Ave N. and N. 19th St.) Monday through Friday.

- The cost is \$99 for five sessions and \$199 for 10 Sessions.

Short-Court 2v2 Volleyball Tournament

Billings Parks and Recreation is hosting its first ever 2v2 short-court Volleyball Tournament. Games will be played on a smaller court with similar rules to beach volleyball. Grab a partner and don't miss out on some high speed volleyball action. An Adult CoEd Tournament and a High School Girls Tournament will both take place. Spiking, diving, and high-fiving are encouraged! The Adult CoEd Tournament is scheduled for April 16 with the High School Girls Tournament held on April 22.

- The cost is \$20 for a High School Team and \$30 for an Adult Team.

American Red Cross Babysitter Training

This class teaches current and future babysitters (ages 11-15) how to make smart decisions and stay safe in any babysitting situation. The course curriculum consists of a wide-variety of hands-on activities, exciting videos, role-plays, and lively discussions. Don't be caught in a babysitting situation unprepared. The program will be held on March 25 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Zimmerman Center, 1801 Virginia Lane.

- Cost is \$65 for Billings' residents.

Kids in the Kitchen

This creative class encourages participants to learn the importance of safety in the kitchen, while at the same time teaching proper skills in preparing tasty dishes. Young chefs will gain experience with knives, frying, griddles, electric mixers, and other kitchen utensils.

- Cost is \$55 for Billings' residents.

Back Packing 101

This class will teach participants how to plan, pack, and successfully complete short day or long overnight backpacking adventures. Discover what gear is necessary, which clothing is recommended, how to pack your supplies and how to select your ideal trail. Cost is \$15 for Billings' residents. Course will be held on Tuesday, April 19 at the Billings Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street.



Continued on page 4

Spring 2016

Parks and Recreation Dept

continued from page 3

Desert Mountain Medicine Wilderness First Aid

This is a great course for those who want to be introduced to wilderness medicine and basic life support skills. It is perfect for the outdoor enthusiast who wants more than an urban first-aid course experience. The emphasis of the class is on recognizing and treating life-threatening traumatic and medical emergencies, common wilderness injuries, bandaging and splinting, and environmental injuries. American Heart Association CPR is included in the curriculum.

- Cost is \$200 for Billings' residents.
- This is a two-day course, April 23 and 24.

Opportunities Expanded with New Greenhouse and Raised Beds at Community Garden

Thanks to a partnership with Bright n' Beautiful, the Parks Department's community garden at Amend Park has a new greenhouse that was funded by a KAB/Lowes Community Improvement Grant. This greenhouse will be available for community garden participants. The greenhouse was constructed in November 2015 and will be ready for the 2016 season. In addition to the new greenhouse, the garden now has four raised beds thanks to an Eagle Scout Project organized by a local scout, Benjamin Roberts. The raised beds are at a height that will assist gardeners who find it challenging to bend down and manage their plot.

The garden started in 2014 with two AmeriCorps VISTA members helping get the program up and running and has continued to expand and flourish with VISTA volunteer support. It marked a transformation from an empty lot to a lush little acre of greens. Com-

munity members are invited to be a part of this great opportunity. Plots will be available on a first come first serve basis to new participants starting March 1. They range in sizes from 10'x10' to 20'x20'. The garden features a variety of workshops and mentoring experiences to help those who are new to gardening, or just want some additional tips. Plot prices start at \$20 for the season with a \$15 refundable cleaning deposit. Water is included in the plot fee. If your green thumb is a little rusty, you are invited to join in the fun at the Amend Park Community Garden. For more information, visit www.billingsparks.org, or call (406) 657-8308.



We Want to Hear From You

Please provide us with input for our next newsletter.

What did you like most about the newsletter?

What would you like to see in upcoming newsletters?

Mail or e-mail your comments to:

The City Link
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103

OR

citylink@ci.billings.mt.us

From Our Readers

Comments from Roger Johnston of Billings:

Why do we have manhole covers in the street all over Billings? Pot holes? You put in nice, new streets and then a few days later jack hammer around them and make a pot hole. The blacktop sinks around the cover and you have a man-made pot hole?? Even on the old streets, they are worse. When you try to avoid them, you are becoming a traffic hazard driving back and forth!! When you make these man-made pot holes, you jar your whole car and your body! It does not make sense to me!! Can your engineers build a better road? Even the water holes are bad!

Answer:

Manhole covers and water valve covers are located in line with where the City has underground facilities like water mains and sanitary and storm sewer lines. The best way to address this issue is to make sure the covers are not in the "wheel path" of the vehicles. This works well on roads that are completely new and all of the underground infrastructure is installed at the same time because the location can be planned. However, on reconstruction projects, which comprise most of the street work, the underground infrastructure is already in place and is not being replaced with the project. Underground infrastructure is intended to last 80 to 100 years, while surface improvements only have a 15 to 20 year life span on average. So, during reconstructions, an attempt is made to stripe the street in such a way to avoid most of the covers, but it is rarely successful due to the fact that lanes are 12 to 15 feet wide and underground lines usually are separated by 10 feet. When the covers cannot be placed outside of the wheel path, there are several methods that are used

to "finish" the asphalt around them – unfortunately, they involve hand work instead of using large equipment. Compaction is difficult in those situations and the quality of the result can vary greatly.

City staff has been working to develop a standard to use for these covers to try to raise the quality and consistency of the surface around them. Staff has reviewed techniques used by other cities and has developed a couple of different solutions. The most successful design to-date is on Calhoun Lane. Staff is still evaluating the result because it has only been installed for a few months, but the initial result is encouraging. This year's projects will include the new design and similar, positive results are expected.

A work order will be done to either repair or replace the barrel, and is typically completed within one week. You may still use the barrel in the meantime.

Questions from an anonymous Billings reader:

Who do we call about driving obstructions such as bushes, trees and shrubs? Who is responsible for trimming trees by traffic lights? The lights at 17th and Rimrock are so overgrown and nobody does anything about it. Who do we call to report this?

Answer:

According to City code, the property owner is responsible for maintaining all trees and vegetation, whether it is on their property or in the right-of-way (i.e. alleys, boulevards, etc.). Property owners should be aware of vegetation that may block City signage or traffic control signals that are in the areas surrounding any property they own. The code does allow the City the discretion to prune and/or remove trees and other vegetation for public safety, as well as the discretion to assess property owners for the work, if necessary.

Please contact Code Enforcement at (406) 237-6146 or via the on-line complaint forms through the City webpage <http://ci.billings.mt.us/index.aspx?nid=109>, to report your concerns or for more information.

*Thanks for reading the CityLink
and for sending in your great questions,
suggestions and comments!*

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www.billingsfcu.org



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The New Billings Public Library is Turning 2 and Services are Growing!

"Billings Public Library is where our community connects and grows together, discovering the love of reading, the joy of learning, and the sharing of creative expression."

Communities connect in many ways – in person and online. Library services are delivered in a variety of ways, too. The Library welcomes over 350,000 visitors each year to check out books, movies or music, enjoy story time, learn new technologies or attend a meeting or event. The Library's two outreach vehicles make nearly 1,000 stops per year at schools, senior centers and in neighborhoods in Billings and Yellowstone County. Many patrons use services online by connecting from home to the website and then to a growing selection of quality resources on the website at www.ci.billings.mt.us/library.

The Library's online services are free and open 24/7. One of the most popular is Freegal, a music download service through which patrons may download up to five songs per week and keep them – no need to return items; and, therefore, no overdue fines. Also, this spring an exciting new streaming service will be offered through Freegal. Each card holder will be able to use the Library's Freegal service to stream music for up to three hours per day. Users can stream individual songs and/or albums, create and save playlists, or use an existing playlist on the homepage. Watch the Library website for the start date.

Are you preparing for a career or educational test? Do you have a teen who is preparing for a college entrance exam? Try the Gale Testing Educational and Reference Center to prepare for aptitude tests, create a résumé or investigate career options. Practice tests in secondary, post-secondary and graduate level are included. Visit the Library website (under "Online Library") or one of the librarians, for more information.

Genealogy resources at the Library are plentiful! While visiting the Library, research your family history using

Ancestry Library Edition. Through Ancestry Library Edition, the Library provides full access to the complete Ancestry.com website. If you cannot make it to the Library, use remote access to Heritage Quest Online to look for family history. Heritage Quest includes books, census records, local histories, Revolutionary War records and more. Check the Library's website too (under "Research"), for a valuable list of over 80 online genealogy reference links.

Library staff is looking toward the future with a growing number of S.T.E.A.M. activities. S.T.E.A.M. stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. After receiving a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Library staff opened a S.T.E.A.M. lab for teens in June 2014. The Teen Education and Creation Hub (TECH Lab) is a place for teens to explore, design, and create fascinating projects using digital media and technology equipment. The Teen Services Librarian, Cody Allen, along with four college-age mentors, guide teen activities. Some workshops are led by local professionals who generously volunteer their time to teach young people 21st century skills.

The Children's Department provides S.T.E.A.M. activities every week for children and tweens. Technology classes for adults take place each week during "Tech Tuesday" and feature a diverse selection of topics. The Billings Public Library was chosen to participate in a small national collaboration to improve library services in S.T.E.A.M. labs and maker spaces. As a result, during 2016, staff development efforts will focus on S.T.E.A.M. literacy. As the year progresses, look for a growing variety of S.T.E.A.M. classes for all age groups.

Programming for adults, children, and seniors is booming this spring at the Library. Looking to brush up on the latest technology? Every Tuesday at 4 p.m., adults

can take advantage of one of the many Tech classes.

Looking for a good book to read and share with other individuals? There are several book clubs that regularly meet each month at the Library. The Library also partners with community groups, such as the Yellowstone County Master Gardeners, to bring in expert gardening advice.

Other popular programs starting up again in the spring include the Artful Women of Montana discussion. The Library has programs that cover a wide variety of interests and appeal to almost any age.

Interested in early literacy or preparing your child for those preschool or early elementary years? Join the other 1,400 people a month attending children's programs. There are story times to intrigue any child, from babies up to 6 years of age. The tween years (6-12) are also very important in the development of a child. Library staff has recently expanded the tween programing to include a focus on S.T.E.A.M. activities. What better way to get a child interested in engineering or mathematics than by bringing them to a program that is both fun and a learning experience. Library staff is always looking at new ways to help promote early literacy and early childhood education.

Don't forget about adults 55 and older. In addition to the regularly scheduled adult programs, the Senior Outreach librarian holds programs on many Fridays geared towards older adults.

Are you eager to learn about Facebook or eReaders? There are classes for you! Some of the more recent topics included programs covering volunteering or becoming a foster grandparent. These programs are in addition to the hundreds of stops the Senior Van makes every year to senior centers and homebound patrons who are unable to make it to the Library.

Library staff is very proud to be supporters of lifelong learning for all ages.

Police Department Mourns Loss of Sergeant

On January 12, 2016, we at the Billings Police Department learned that we had lost one of our own, a victim of suicide. Sergeant Shawn Finnegan, just short of his 43rd birthday, had served with honor and distinction for 18 years.

He was the consummate professional, whose dedication and great love for this community drove him to work tirelessly to eradicate crime.

This tragedy is a stark reminder that no matter one's walk in life—be it a family member, friend, coworker, teacher, or classmate—nobody is immune to the effects of suicide. As a community, we need to redouble our efforts to those in despair and help them realize that they are unique and have a gift to share with others; and if they are gone, the world will not be as bright as it was meant to be.

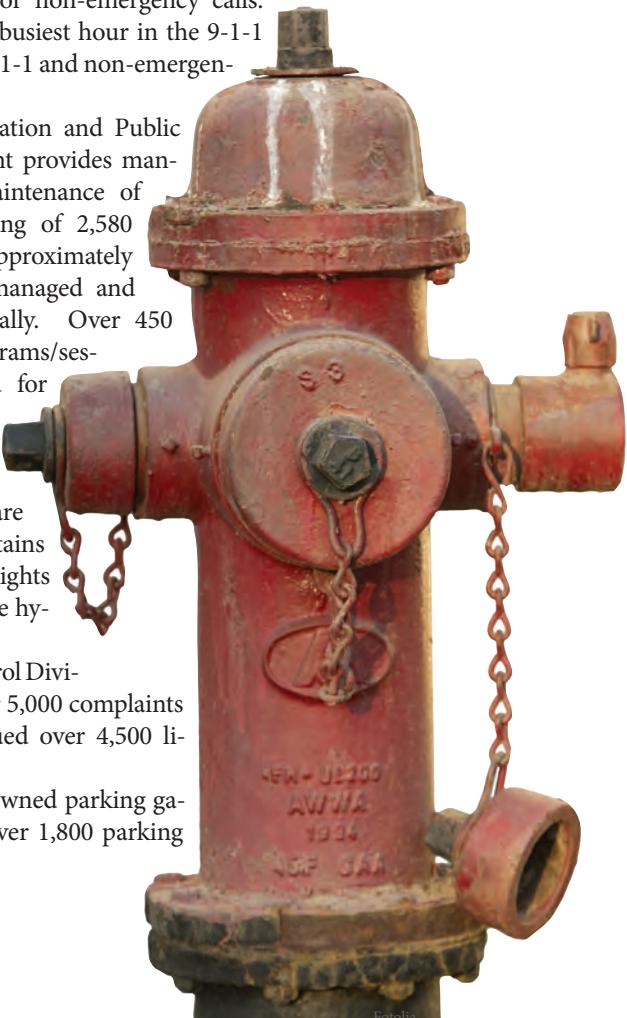
The outpouring of support for the department and Finnegan family has been humbling and very much appreciated.

Rich St. John
Chief of Police



DID YOU KNOW?

- The Billings Logan International Airport has three runways for five commercial airlines serving Airport passengers and three cargo air carriers serving the community. The primary runway is 10,518 feet long and 150 feet wide. There are 1,250 runway and taxiway lights on the property.
- In 2015, the total number of in-coming calls (9-1-1 and non-emergency) was 207,488. The 9-1-1 Center received 60,039 9-1-1 calls. That's an average of 164 calls coming in on emergency lines each day. The highest number of 9-1-1 calls were received in June (6,058) and the lowest number were received in January (3,958). More 9-1-1 calls are received on Saturday than any other day of the week. Friday is the busiest day for non-emergency calls.
- 5 - 6 p.m. is the busiest hour in the 9-1-1 Center for both 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls.
- The Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Department provides management and maintenance of parkland consisting of 2,580 acres of land. Approximately 8,600 trees are managed and maintained annually. Over 450 recreation programs/sessions are offered for people of all ages.
- The City of Billings encompasses about 42 square miles and contains over 8,000 street lights and over 4,000 fire hydrants.
- The Animal Control Division received over 5,000 complaints last year and issued over 4,500 licenses.
- In the four City-owned parking garages, there are over 1,800 parking spaces.



2016 Service Directory

AIRPORT-BILLINGS LOGAN INTERNATIONAL

Airport Information	247-8609
Airport Administration	657-8495
Airport Police	657-8498
Airport Operations	657-8496
Edwards Jet Center	252-0508
Parking – SP Plus	259-8545
Gateway Restaurant & Lounge ..	256-8446
TSA-24/7 Customer Service.....	877-846-5737

ANIMAL CONTROL.....657-8226

ANIMAL LICENSING.....657-8226

ANIMAL SHELTER

Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter.....	294-7387
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: Noon – 7 pm	
Saturdays: Noon – 6 pm	
Sundays: Noon – 6 pm	
Lost Pet Hotline	294-1138

BUILDING DIVISION

Building Permits	657-8270
Building & Plumbing Inspections	657-8277
Plan Review	657-8271
Business Licenses	657-8364

CEMETERY DIVISION.....657-8299

CITY ADMINISTRATOR.....657-8430

Assistant City Administrator	657-8222
City Clerk	657-8210

CITY ATTORNEY

.....657-8205	
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CITY COUNCIL INFORMATION.....657-8433

CODE ENFORCEMENT – ZONING & WEED COMPLAINTS.....247-8647

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.....657-8281

Community Development Manager	657-8286
Home Repair Program	657-8284
First Time Homebuyer Program.....	657-3045

COMMUNITY & SENIOR CENTER.....657-3050

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT.....237-6294

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Accounts Payable	657-8224
Business Tax Information	657-8364
City Tax Information – SID's	657-8223
Municipal Bonds.....	657-8363
Purchasing	657-8216
Other Finance Services	657-8207

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Emergencies Only.....	911
Non-Emergency	
8 am to 5 pm weekdays:	
Fire Department	
Administration.....	657-8423
Fire Prevention Bureau	657-8423

FLEET SERVICES.....657-8407

GARBAGE (SOLID WASTE)

657-8260

GIS SERVICES.....247-8512

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

123 S. 27th

HUMAN RESOURCES

237-6210

JAIL

256-6881

LANDFILL

657-8260

LIBRARY (BILLINGS PUBLIC)

Information Services	657-8258
Children's Services	657-8256
Bookmobile	657-3091
Senior-Homebound	657-8255
Hours	657-8259

Website: www.billings.lib.mt.us

MAYOR

657-8296

MET TRANSIT

Information & Schedules	657-8218
MET Special Transit Reservation	248-8805

MOUNTVIEW CEMETERY

657-8299

MUNICIPAL COURT

(City Hall Second Floor)	
Bond & Traffic Citation Info.....	657-8490
Juror Information (24 Hrs)	247-8653

PARKING DIVISION

Enforcement, Parking Tickets & Meter Repair	657-8412
Park One Garage	657-8212
Park Two Garage	657-8279
Park Three Garage	657-8212
Empire Garage.....	657-8412

PARKS-RECREATION & PUBLIC LANDS

Administration	657-8371
Community & Senior Center.....	657-3050
Forester/Natural Resources	237-6227
Mountview Cemetery	657-8299
Parks Division.....	657-8372
Recreation Division	657-8371
Fax	247-8641
Website	www.BillingsParks.org

PLANNING & ZONING

247-8676

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Emergencies Only.....	911
Non-Emergencies	657-8200
PD Records	657-8460
(Open 8am-6pm weekdays & 10 am - Noon Saturday)	
Detective Division	657-8473

Crime Prevention Center	247-8590
(Open 9 am to 4 pm weekdays)	
Fingerprinting	
- Call Crime Prevention Center	

Montana Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)	839-9070
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PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Works Administration	657-8230
Engineering Division	657-8231
Right-of-Way Permits & Inspections.....	657-8307
Traffic Engineer	657-8231
Environmental Affairs	247-8517
Meter Shop	657-8331
Solid Waste Division & Landfill	657-8260
Street/Traffic Division	657-8250
Storm Drain & Street Light Maintenance	657-8250
Traffic Signals	657-8250
Water Bills - On/Off Orders – Payments (Open 8 am to 5 pm weekdays)	657-8315
Water Emergencies (8 am to 5 pm weekdays)	657-8305
Water Emergencies (After 5 pm, weekends & holidays)	657-8353
Wastewater Treatment Plant	657-8356
Water Treatment Plant	657-8353

PURCHASING DIVISION

657-8216

TAXES

City Taxes

ZONING

657-8246