City of Billings  
2020 Strategic Planning Priorities

Following are the rank-order priorities as voted on by 9 council members. The top 40 are highlighted which will be the ones that will be considered during strategic planning. Each council member will have the opportunity to select one item from the list (#41 to #79) to add to the list of 40 for final consideration during the planning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Priority Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Mill Levy (2019 High priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Facility Space Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Impact Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Transients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Safe Routes to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Public Works - West End Reservoir/Treatment Plant (2019 high Priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Mental Health and Addiction Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Court/Legal Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>City Hall - New Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Parks - Park’s Development Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Communication - Public Information Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Communication - Grant Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Supplementary Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Traffic Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Domestic Violence/Aggravated Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Clean/Safe City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Parks - South Billings Recreation Center (2019 Medium priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Communication - City Website (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Parks - Coulson (2019 Medium priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Code enforcement Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Public Works - Heights Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Collaboration - Intergovernmental Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Traffic Calming Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Inner Belt Loop (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Parks - Castle Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Cost of Services Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Revenue Sources - Alternative Sources of Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Parks - Poly Vista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Airport - Expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Yellowstone County Jail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Process Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Lead Pipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Public Safety - Public Safety District/Levy/Staffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Public Works - Creation of a Storm Water Utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Downtown Revitalization - One Big Sky District (2019 High Priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Trails - Marathon Loop (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Downtown Revitalization - Transportation (Downtown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Park Usage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Downtown Revitalization - Legislative Tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Public Safety - Animal Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Parks - South Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Downtown Revitalization - Downtown Redevelopment â€“ TIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Public Works - Arterial Light District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Public Works - Facilities Master Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Revenue Sources - Water/Sewer/Solid Waste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. TEDD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Public Works - Safe Neighborhood Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Contract Negotiations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Revenue Sources - Increase Park Taxes/Fees (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Communication - Calendar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Property Tax Relief - State Legislators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Downtown Revitalization - Downtown Redevelopment â€“ Small Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Public Works - Fire Station Condition Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Walkability - Crosswalks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Revenue Sources - Property Tax Transparency on Bills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Trails - Trails</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Budget Process - Budget Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Housing - Study Affordable Housing in General</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>62. Council Attorney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. City Government Academy - Citizen Classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Roads - Molt Road/Highway 3 Connector (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Parks &amp; Trails - Parks &amp; Trails</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Roads - Billings Bypass Interchange (2019 Medium Priority)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. Roads - Repair/Paving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. City Services - Use of City Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. West Billings Master Plan - Revitalize Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. City Land Trust - Affordable Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Grand Avenue Redevelopment - Grand Ave TIF District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Strategic Planning - Strategic Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Roads - 3rd way off connecting Rims to Valley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75. General Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76. Code Violation Solutions - Community Solutions for Residential &amp; Commercial Code issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. Roads - Heights Connectivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. Housing - Study Affordable Housing; Renters Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Council Policy - City Documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2020 Billings City Council Priority Goals

PUBLIC SAFETY


Council Comments

Cole Define scope of needed public safety resources and cost, pass resolution authorizing mill levy election and educate public to assure passage.

Yakawich Form "Blue Ribbon Committee as soon as possible and get their input"

Boyett What should be in it

Neese Focus on accurate relevant data that reflects the current needs and wants of the residents (survey). Simplify for short term sunset plan while working on data/needs over next two years for permanent mill levy or charter change.

Ronning Move forward with a mill levy funding BPD, BFD, Fire Station 8, Mental Health/Substance Abuse Addiction Prevention/Education, and space for Municipal Court and City Legal – NOT an entire City Hall.

Brown Identify how to develop and or find public safety advertising/marketing

Shaw Narrow and finalize mill levy details ASAP to ensure time for public education. Continue educating the public with safety presentations to increase odds of levy passing. Discuss further PR strategies.

Purinton Purchase of facility, e.g. city hall via bond; look forward to Lean 6 evaluation before proceeding with mill levy (which needs to be measurable); present relevant data; evaluate immediate needs; decide how to proceed

Joy Work to calculate the needed funding to achieve the goals identified in surveys and public forums. Achieve a vision of safety for the Downtown and the City that is consistent with Downtown Master Plan, City Planning Higher Density Zoning and West End Master Plans.

Mental Health and Addiction Services: Cole, Ronning, Yakawich, Shaw, Boyett, Purinton

Council Comments

Cole Work with community partners to define best prevention and treatment options, including possible sobering center, and city's role in funding and administration.

Ronning Continue to work with community partners on systemic causes to find true prevention and assistance solutions. Research success other communities are experiencing with sober centers. Work with BPD on mobile crisis units. Invest in prevention and education.

Yakawich Seeking ways to support those working on this. Work with legislators (work with city lobbyists to help bring city council and legislators together), nonprofits, local businesses. This is impacting downtown as well as the entire city.

Transients: Boyett, Yakawich, Brown, Shaw, Purinton

Council Comments

Boyett Suggestions: (1) More foot/bike patrols by uniformed police officers; (2) Increase funding for social services to provide places for transients to spend their time; (3) Review/consider city ordinances regarding loitering, panhandling, etc. (4) Investigate solutions used in other cities.
Transients – continued
Yakawich  Seeking ways to support those working on this. Work with legislators (work with city lobbyists to help bring city council and legislators together), nonprofits, local businesses. This is impacting downtown as well as the entire city.
Brown  Dust off efforts started by city and downtown to address transient issue in Billings (primarily downtown)
Shaw  Work with our downtown partners (substance abuse connect, continuum of care, DBA, etc.) to improve service accessibility in the city core and provide new non-police intervention for transience. [Examples: social worker at the library, mobile crisis unit, drop-in centers]
Purinton  How best to address Native issue impact on policing as well as Bozeman’s “Greyhound” policy. Collaborate with county, non-profits and established programs dealing with homelessness and mental health/addictions.

Safe Routes to School: Neese, Ewalt, Shaw, Purinton, Choriki

Council Comments
Neese  Medicine Crow - Provide a complete Safe Route to Medicine Crow School for our kids. Install traffic calming on roads where sidewalks are not present such as slow mph, stop signs, flashing lights, speed humps or other until sidewalks/paths are complete.
Ewalt  Sidewalks for students at Medicine Crow
Shaw  As road projects arise, advocate for public works to build multi-use trails and enhanced crosswalks on school routes.
Purinton  Barrett Road and Medicine Crow (others?)
Choriki  Come up with a list of problem areas and find the solutions and funding.

Impact Fees: Cole, Ronning, Choriki

Council Comments
Cole  Study procedure for enacting impact fee for future fire and police capital expenses; issue RFP for capital cost study; pass resolution authorizing impact fee.
Ronning  Move forward on impact fees to help pay for public safety needs
Choriki  Standardize developer contribution to growth. Ensure that all annexations are covering their additional costs to city. Incentives for infill.

Fire: Neese, Boyett, Choriki

Council Comments
Neese  Work on location and bonding/building of new FS in the Heights
Boyett  Purchase of land for a future Fire Station
Choriki  Find the funding to build FS 8.

Facility Space Needs: Cole, Ronning, Choriki, Boyett

Council Comments
Cole  Continue negotiations to acquire and consolidate office space for police, city attorney, municipal court and other safety-related personnel.
Ronning  Identify space in downtown for consolidation of public safety related personnel (BPD, Municipal Court, City Legal)
Choriki  Fund the Court system
**Supplementary Funding**: Cole, Purinton  
**Council Comments**  
Cole If justified after appropriate study, increase or enact, as applicable, BUFSA fees, fines, reimbursements for services, and penalties.

**Traffic Patrol**: Boyett  
**Council Comments**  
Boyett Establish a true traffic division

**Court/Legal Staff**: Boyett  
**Council Comments**  
Boyett Increase both

**Code Enforcement Director**: Yakawich  
**Council Comments**  
Yakawich Now, Nicole Cromwell coordinates both code enforcement and planning. We need one Director for each department.

**Clean/Safe City**: Neese  
**Council Comments**  
Neese Step up Graffiti removal to prevent it from ruining the appearance of the city and letting the criminals think they control the city.

**Traffic Calming Technology**: Choriki, Boyett  
**Council Comments**  
Choriki Implement cameras and citations, radar signs, and other technologies to calm traffic

**Domestic Violence/Aggravated Assault**: Choriki  
**Council Comments**  
Choriki Fund domestic violence education or other programs aimed at increasing coping skills

**Process Issues**: Choriki  
**Council Comments**  
Choriki Fund a study of our state/county/city process to find bottle necks and areas to focus on for improvements

**Yellowstone County Jail**: Choriki, Boyett  
**Council Comments**  
Choriki Find innovative ways to decrease pressure on the YC Jail, use of ankle bracelets? Funding treatment centers?

**Public Safety District/Levy/Staffing**: Choriki  
**Council Comments**  
Choriki How to fund city services through PSD, tax levy, staffing levels for a growing city.
PARKS

Park’s Development Fund: Cole, Brown, Ronning, Shaw, Neese, Joy, Boyett, Purinton

Council Comments

Cole  Incentivize private donations by increasing Park District 1 assessment to establish 1:1 matching program.

Brown  Develop a means of funding parks development. Specifically, those that have private funding efforts that have resulted in funds raised already.

Ronning  Work with the Parks Board to create a Parks Development Fund

Shaw  Establish a park development fund. Create incentives for private groups who raise money (matching funds, etc.). Increase transparency in parks department and develop a standardized system for seeking public input on new projects.

Neese  Prioritized development funds for Castlerock Park, Coulson Park and Centennial Park.

Coulson: Cole, Ronning, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments

Cole  Complete master plan and fund match to secure $250,000 Exxon grant.

Ronning  Complete Master Plan and move forward with each phase

South Billings Recreation Center: Cole, Ronning, Shaw, Joy, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments

Cole  Continue design and planning process and commence negotiations with local partners to determine commitments for private funding.

Ronning  Stay on pace with timeline; begin private fundraising strategy

Shaw  Support South Side Aquatic Center and explore opportunities for private funding to move this project along faster.

Joy  To form a strong partnership with the SBURA to realize the goal of a regionally Billings located facility for all ages. The wellness benefits for the city and the surrounding community integration of all socioeconomic classes. To support efforts to capture the essential private investment necessary to build this facility.

Centennial: Cole, Purinton, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments

Cole  Complete Phase 1 construction

Castle Rock: Purinton

Council Comments

Purinton  Finish those who have been waiting for years (Castlerock, example); spending should match the priority of maintenance and building; looks at fees; grants and matching community donations.

Poly Vista: Ronning

Council Comments

Ronning  Stay on course with timeline for design; work with Landon’s Legacy Foundation on in-kind donations established through the Foundation
CITY HALL

New Facility: Yakawich, Ewalt, Purinton, Neese, Boyett

Council Comments
- Yakawich: Move forward with the committee to do more research and negotiations.
- Ewalt: The need for more and consolidated space to improve public safety.
- Purinton: Purchase of facility, e.g., city hall via bond.
- Neese: Acquire City Hall Building/Space (negotiation of Stillwater Building space) that provide adequate working space which will bring efficiency of operations for existing and the expanding public safety needs.
- Boyett: Purchase of Stillwater Building.

COMMUNICATION

Public Information Officer: Cole, Ronning, Shaw, Joy, Staff Leadership Team

Council Comments
- Cole: Create public information officer position with additional responsibilities for fundraising and donor development (donor liaison, grant writing, etc.).
- Ronning: Need for PIO with grant writing expertise.
- Shaw: Establish a public information officer. Explore whether this position could also serve as a grant writer for the city.
- Joy: The need to have a consistent voice and available staff to field media demands for information and interviews. To coordinate efforts and consistency with social media. Setting a broader reach for Billings in the digital age.
- Choriki: Add part time press officer, Review public information process. Fix the calendar. Refresh the website.
- Staff: Hiring a Public Information Officer (PIO) – The leadership team fully supports the need for a PIO in the 2021 fiscal year budget. A consistently implemented communication strategy will benefit all aspects of the City. A PIO will improve the work being done by each individual department to be both proactive and responsive to community requests as well as deal with unexpected situations (rock slides, MLB’s proposal to eliminate the Billings Mustangs, etc.). The complexity of the City’s challenges, along with the public’s expectations for clear, consistent and accurate information at all times, is reasonable and critical to building trust throughout our City.

Grant Writing: Cole, Ronning, Brown, Shaw, Choriki, Boyett, Purinton

Council Comments
- Cole: Create public information officer position with additional responsibilities for fundraising and donor development (donor liaison, grant writing, etc.).
- Ronning: Need for PIO with grant writing expertise.
- Brown: Develop a means for city departments to identify and apply for grants and other means of funding projects.
- Shaw: Establish a public information officer. Explore whether this position could also serve as a grant writer for the city.
- Choriki: Create consulting budget or a position for grant writer.

City Website: Cole, Ronning, Shaw, Purinton, Choriki, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments
- Cole: Continue revamp of city website.
Ronning       Create a user-friendly city website with clear communication and regular updates
Shaw          Re-do city website
Purinton      Improve public perception; user-friendly website
Choriki       Refresh the website.

**PROJECT RE:CODE**

*Project Re:Code: Cole, Ronning, Boyett, Neese, Purinton, Joy, Choriki (2019 High Priority)*

**Council Comments**

- **Cole**: Continue public comment and review process.
- **Ronning**: Complete review, public comment, and adopt new code.
- **Boyett**: Complete in 2020.
- **Neese**: Extend the time frame to review and adoption/denial of the Recode sections over the next 1-2 years.
- **Purinton**: Approve in phases; look at grandfather clause in each section; special review; comparison to old codes with examples; public input.
- **Joy**: To implement the goals and objectives set in updated zoning code. Continue to dedicate staff time and resources to have smooth effective transition into the new zoning.
- **Choriki**: Develop reporting schedule for committees and educational plan for Council, develop quarterly feedback schedule. Educate Public. Pass changes. Process for future changes.

**INNER BELT LOOP**

*Inner Belt Loop: Neese, Boyett, Ewalt, Purinton, (2019 Medium Priority)*

**Council Comments**

- **Boyett**: Continue the work
- **Ewalt**: Start with available money and build north from round-about

**Inner Belt Loop – continued**

- **Neese**: Continue existing plan on using "new gas tax" funds to move the IBL forward and add Arterial fee funds to make up reduction from expect gas tax. Purchase the right-of-way in FY2021. Evaluate Hwy3 North development plan with existing funds for FY 2022.
- **Purinton**: Complete another phase.

**PUBLIC WORKS**

*West End Reservoir/Treatment Plant: Cole, Ronning, Ewalt, Choriki, Purinton, (2019 High Priority)*

**Council Comments**

- **Cole**: Continue design process with goal of completing construction in 2023; initiate public education plan explaining need for reservoir and future treatment plant, recreational benefits, and rate increases.
- **Ronning**: Stay on course with timeline and design.
- **Ewalt**: Don’t slow down (present still only 8-12 hours)
- **Choriki**: Keep project moving forward as fast as possible.
**Heights Water:** Ewalt, Purinton

**Council Comments**

Ewalt  A new contract needs to be signed with more city specific agenda

**Creation of a Storm Water Utility:** City Leadership Team

**City Comments**

The City currently does not have a storm water utility that is similar to our water and sanitary sewer utilities. The City does have a storm water fee that is assessed to all properties in the City, so there has been funding for the storm water system. By not having a formal utility, the storm water system has not been addressed adequately for many years in terms of deferred maintenance, capital improvements and planning for the future. By creating a storm water utility, the following benefits can be realized: formalized rules and regulations, a rate structure that is more equitable than the existing fee system, proactive management of the infrastructure, and concentrated city resources to support a critical function.

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**

**One Big Sky District:** Cole, Ronning, Shaw, *(2019 High Priority)*

**Council Comments**

Cole  Continue cooperation with downtown partners (including local developers, BSED, DBA, Chamber, etc.) to identify downtown redevelopment project(s) generally consistent with principles of adopted One Big Sky District Plan and develop strategy for enacting legislative tools as needed.

Ronning  Move forward with OBSD

Shaw  Review One Big Sky Development plan and identify council priorities for projects. Begin reaching out to local developers

**Transportation (Downtown):** Yakawich, Shaw, Choriki, Purinton

**Council Comments**

Yakawich  Keep working on ideas for one-way streets turning back to two way.

Shaw  Converting streets back to two-ways

Choriki  Implement asap; railroad crossing; pedestrian friendly 27th

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION**

**Intergovernmental Meetings:** Ronning, Neese, Purinton

**Council Comments**

Ronning  Create quarterly meetings hosted by the City for State Legislators. Each quarter the City sets the agenda and invites Legislators to be present to learn. Goal is to build relationships and working Yellowstone County Caucus power in Helena before, during, and after each legislative session. SD2 already holds City/County/SD2 meetings each quarter and SD2 has been encouraged to include State Legislators to those meetings. Having quarterly meetings for City and State Legislators alone is what makes sense since the City is a stand-alone budget while the County and SD2 are both branches of the State’s budget.

Neese  Schedule quarterly work session meetings to work with our State Legislators, County Commissioners, and School Boards.
CITY OF BILLINGS 2020 STRATEGIC PLANNING – PAGE 8

Purinton City/County/State Improve so as to collaborate better; set up conversations

COST OF SERVICES

Cost of Services Study: Cole, Ronning, Joy, City Leadership Team

Council Comments

Cole Draft plan for completion of study, develop timeline, issue RFP for consulting services if needed, and initiate study.

Ronning Support Planning and other departments on moving forward on next steps

Cost of Services Study – continued

Joy The city’s ability to deliver services is dependent on rational decisions about the use of limited resources. To make those decisions based on better understanding of the challenges of service delivery, reinvigorate the plans for a cost of service model.

City Staff See City Priorities Memo for further information.

REVENUE SOURCES

Alternative Sources of Revenue: Boyett, Neese, Purinton, Choriki

Council Comments

Boyett Can other areas be found

Neese Implement the several options the city can do to start generating revenue while progressing on the Six Sigma plan for cost cutting/efficiency. Work with State legislator to implement state law changes for longer term revenue generation options.

Purinton Assessment districts; PD1; businesses; grants; nonprofits

Yakawich For Fire and Police and other departments. Ways to get reimbursements for our services. Keep working on this.

Choriki Franchise fees: Determine policy/appropriate use

TRAILS

Marathon Loop: Cole, Shaw, Joy, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments

Cole Develop funding mechanism for highest-priority Marathon Loop Trail segments (Skyline Trail, Coulson Park, and Clark's Crossing), including new BUILD grant application and utility bill check-off.

Shaw Continue the push to complete the marathon loop. Re-apply for the BUILD grant or other federal funding options. As road projects arise, advocate for public works to build multi-use trails and enhanced crosswalks on school routes.

AIRPORT

Airport Expansion: Cole, Ronning, (2019 Medium Priority)

Council Comments

Cole Continue airport expansion project and actively investigate additional funding sources.

Ronning Continue all phases of airport expansion; secure additional routes with existing airlines and continue to seek additional airline service.

City of Billings 2020 Strategic Planning – Page 8
LEAD PIPES
Lead Pipes: Yakawich

Council Comments
Yakawich  Continue great work in removal of all lead pipes in Billings.