

Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force February 2024 Update



2024 Meetings

Wednesdays, 7pm, Mayflower Church (Rehberg & Poly)

February 21* ~ March 20 ~ May 15 ~ July 17 ~ September 18 ~ November 20

**January meeting moved to February due to the All City Task Force Meeting which occurred Jan 23.*

Put these dates on your calendar! ~~ We will email reminders, post on Facebook and Next Door.

AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 21 MEETING:

1. Welcome and introductions - Howard Evans, RNTF Board
2. Previous Meeting Minutes - Leslie Cooke, RNTF Board
3. Law Enforcement Update - Sergeant Stovall, Billings Police Department
4. Vote on proposed bylaw changes - Howard Evans, RNTF Board
5. Board nominations, possible election to fill open position- Howard Evans
6. Help A Neighbor - neighborhood initiative - Kevin Moser, RNTF Board
7. "Drawing" - We'll explain in person! - Kevin Moser, RNTF Board
8. Storm Water Issues (Billing, Upgrades, etc) with Q&A - Jennifer Duray, City
9. Open discussion of membership concerns



"Hey Neighbor"

Bring a Neighbor!

Do you have a neighbor or friend who is concerned about city and neighborhood issues?

Why not bring them along to the February meeting!

There's always room for more folks

From the Desk of Howard Evans

RNTF Vice Chair & Acting Chair

We, the RNTF Board, need your help.

As a starter, we have a vacancy on the Board which should be filled at the soonest opportunity.

The Board has proposed a change to the by-laws which would provide automatic succession to the Chair position by the Vice Chair, should the Chair position become vacant before the term is completed. Should the change pass, we will be opening nominations for Vice Chair during the February meeting. If it doesn't pass we will be opening nominations for Chair. We need a volunteer to fulfill either position. Please consider serving your neighbors by joining the RNTF Board.

An **All City Task Force meeting** was held January 23 which opened my eyes to the need to be better informed on issues which are community based, and not specific to the Rimrock Neighborhoods. As residents, we need to be aware and involved as much as possible. Trustworthy and unbiased communication is needed.

To fill this communication need, I would welcome members who have interest, or would like to learn more about community issues, to volunteer to provide RNTF membership factual information regarding those issues. All facts will be supported by documentation or public record. Issues such as West End Development will impact our neighborhoods and should be understood. Public Safety issues are the concern of all residents. Domestic violence, drugs, gangs, jail, mental health, human trafficking, land use, road development/improvement, etc. are just some of the opportunities to help RNTF members understand the issues from an independent source. Communication resources of the RNTF will be made available for reporting.

Leslie Cooke, our Secretary, has done an outstanding job of using communications channels to keep our membership informed and in touch with the community. Our challenge now is to keep the network key to understanding our neighborhood and community concerns.

If you are interested in volunteering, have neighborhood concerns, or have ideas for future newsletters, please contact us at: RimrockTaskforce@gmail.com

Sincerely,

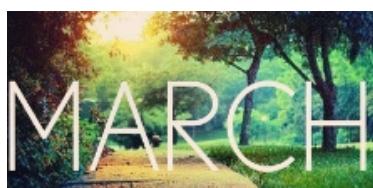
Howard Evans

Help a Neighbor



Kevin Moser will be covering this topic at our February meeting. Be thinking about Rimrock neighbors who may need a little one-time help
(weed removal, graffiti removal, snow shoveling, etc)

You can contact Kevin Moser with any ideas, or if you'd like to help.
Just text or call Kevin @ 406-690-1718, or email moser.construction@yahoo.com



Coming up - March 20th meeting:

- During our March 20th meeting we'll be focusing on safety. This includes **personal safety** in our neighborhoods and the home, as well as **cyber-security**.
- There is an enormous amount of information on the City website. But it can be overwhelming, and often it's hard to find what you're looking for. If you've got a particular topic or two that you've had trouble locating on the site, please send an email to rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com Tom Yampradit, RNTF Board, will give us a walk through on navigating the site.

[City of Billings, MT - Official Website | Official Website \(billingsmt.gov\)](http://www.billingsmt.gov)



TWO NEW SAFETY FEATURES IN OUR NEWSLETTER:



- 1. Cyber Security Tips** - Each month we'll bring you information you can use to protect yourself from online threats.
- 2. Drug Corner** - We will bring you information about illicit drugs - what to watch out for to keep kids and families safe and healthy.



CYBER SECURITY

TIP OF THE MONTH:

**Tips brought to you by Anastasia Edwards with Big Sky Quantum SHIELD,
a local Cybersecurity Awareness Initiative**

NAVIGATING CYBER THREATS:

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPAM AND PHISHING

We're diving into a crucial topic – distinguishing between SPAM and PHISHING. Both are common cyber threats, but understanding their differences is key in safeguarding our digital identities. Let's break it down!

✉ SPAM: The Digital Junk Mail ✉

- What Is It?** SPAM is unsolicited digital messages, often sent in bulk. It's like the junk mail in your physical mailbox, but in your email inbox.
- Purpose?** Mostly, SPAM is annoying yet harmless. It's often trying to sell you something, like those endless promotional emails.
- Risk Level?** Generally low, but it can be a nuisance & sometimes a gateway to malicious content.

PHISHING: The Deceptive Hook

- **What Is It?** PHISHING is a sinister cousin of SPAM. These are deceptive messages pretending to be from legitimate sources, aiming to trick you into revealing personal info like passwords or credit cards
- **Purpose?** Phishing is a direct attempt to steal your sensitive info or infect your system with malware
- **Risk Level?** High. Falling for a phishing attack can lead to identity theft, financial loss, or unauthorized access to your personal or professional data

SHIELD's Tips for Protection

- **Stay Alert:** Always be cautious with unexpected emails, especially those asking for personal info
- **Verify Sources:** Before clicking any links or downloading attachments, verify the sender's legitimacy.
- **Use Security Tools:** Employ spam filters and regularly update your antivirus software.

Do you have a Cybersecurity question or concern? You can join Big Sky Cybersecurity Awareness Initiative on Next Door [Nextdoor](#)

And you can email rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com with cyber topics you'd like covered.

Remember, in the quantum era of cybersecurity, staying informed and vigilant is our first line of defense. By understanding the nature of these threats, we can better protect our digital selves.

DRUG CORNER:

Knowledge is power

What is Fentanyl?



Fentanyl: A Powerful and Dangerous Opioid

- A synthetic opioid pain reliever, similar to morphine but 50-100 times more potent.
- It comes in two pill forms:
 - Pharmaceutical fentanyl: prescribed by doctors for severe pain management.
 - Illicitly manufactured fentanyl: illegally produced and sold, often mixed with other drugs without the user's knowledge.
- Cost varies in the \$20-\$30 range, but Washington State has seen costs as low as \$.50 /pill

Dangers:

- Highly addictive: Creates intense euphoria, leading to dependence and cravings.
- Overdose risk: Even small amounts can be deadly due to potency, causing respiratory depression and death.
- Unintentional exposure: Often mixed with other drugs like heroin, cocaine, or counterfeit pills, making users unaware of its presence.
- Widespread: A major contributor to overdose deaths in the U.S., with over 150 fatalities daily

If you suspect a substance is fentanyl:

1. Do not handle or use the substance. Leave it untouched and undisturbed. Even small amounts of fentanyl can be dangerous if absorbed through the skin or inhaled.
2. Call emergency services immediately. Remember: Fentanyl is extremely dangerous. If you or someone you know is struggling with opioid addiction, please seek help. There is hope for recovery.



CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Tina Hoeger - our City Code Enforcement Manager - has added a new "CODE ENFORCEMENT CORNER" blog on the City website where she'll post helpful reminders.



While the new blog page is not fully operational yet, you can send Tina an email from the new page <https://billingsmt.gov/blog.aspx>

Or reach out directly to Tina and her team with questions or to report problems.

We don't want to see any of our neighbors have to deal with Code Enforcement citations!

Email: hoegert@billingsmt.gov

Phone: (406) 869-3926

Code Enforcement Corner

Jan
25

Welcome to the Code Enforcement Corner

Posted on January 25, 2024 at 11:37 AM by Brenda Berger Frisbie

Welcome to the launch of the Code Enforcement Corner blog. We are happy to announce that this blog is designed to provide information, hints, tips, and share updates to keep our citizens well informed about city codes and various projects around the city.

Although this blog is not interactive currently, code enforcement welcomes input and questions from our community. Please send any correspondence based on our blog posts to Code Enforcement Division Manager, Tina Hoeger at Email.

We are very excited to provide this educational piece to the community and continue to make Billings a safer and healthier place to live. Stay tuned for our next post.





City Council Corner -

Our Task Force area includes parts of both Ward 4 & Ward 1. From time to time we will be including updates from our council members. And we will always share their contact info should you need to reach out to them.

General City Council Contact Information:

Council@billingsmt.gov

210 N. 27th St. ~ Billings, MT 59101 ~ P.O. Box 1178 ~ Billings, MT 59103

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Update on City Council business - from Ward 4 Member Scott Aspenlieder:

(note: Mr. Aspenlieder prepared this update prior to the Monday 2/5 council meeting)

1 – County’s Jail Expansion – Commissioners have moved out a proposal, expanded from the original request/proposal from the City last fall, to build a 72-hour hold & arraignment expansion of the YCDF. Their proposal would include a 2-floor expansion with a total of 96 additional beds. Proposed cost of this project is roughly \$6mil. The Commission is confident it could be built & operational within 15-18 months. When Council put forward its proposal the thought was we needed something temporary that could be put up fast, creating an opportunity for detention to interrupt criminal cycles ensuring criminals get in front of a judge before release. The County has moved that from a temporary to a permanent facility expansion noting that it’s a good idea & should be done quickly to assist law enforcement. The County has requested the City pay half the expense, with the City already having set aside \$500k in the FY24 budget.

City Council will be discussing the request at the Feb 5th Working Meeting & then would potentially take action Feb 12th to keep the Commission moving forward one way or the other. My position will be that Public Safety is the #1 priority in our community & this is certainly something we need to participate in to make sure it gets across the line. To be clear this would be done with both City &

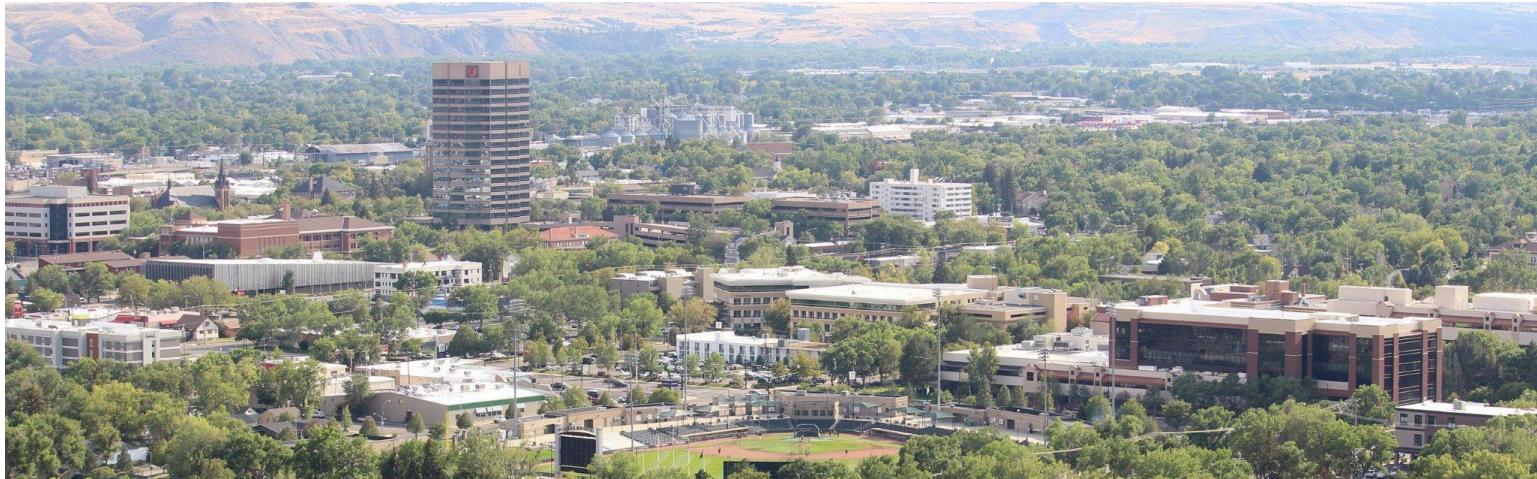
County using their existing authorities and not requiring either entity to go out for bond. It would be paid for with one time only money and then operation of the facility would be rolled into the YCDF. The City anticipates needing 20-24 beds for its misdemeanor criminals which is about 25% of facility capacity. There will be discussion about the appropriateness of the City participating in building a facility that is clearly the County's responsibility. My position is again that this is a need for our officers & for a system to interrupt criminals & assure that they get in front of a judge at least once before release. Regardless of whose responsibility it is, it is and will be funded by taxpayers who happen to be the same for both County & City in large part & it's a critical quick step to improving our system. I'll be supporting partnership with the County to get the facility built & hope to work with my counterparts to come together for improving our community's safety.

2 – Family Violence Unit Development (FVU) – Councilwoman Owen pushed forward an initiative to look at formation of a formal FVU within BPD. The basis of that was that over 50% of violent crime in Billings is tied to domestic or family violence. Chief St John will be presenting his thoughts & options for consideration to Council Feb 5th at the Working Meeting. As one would expect there are things that can be done to improve our existing DV investigators & process without additional officers, however those items are limited & mostly around efficiencies. Chief's memo to counsel outlines the potential to add 6 officers to establish a formal FVU supplementing the two officers already operating in that space within BPD. The projected cost is estimated at roughly \$747k to fully outfit & get those individuals in place. That'll be a discussion we'll have as part of budgeting for FY25 in March & April. At this point I'll be supporting that initiative with hopes of expansion & adding additional resources to BPD. We're in crisis mode for public safety right now & adding appropriate resources is imperative to starting to turn the corner. The rise in DV cases in our community justifies the need & proposed formation of a FVU with BPD. I look forward to that discussion & expansion of resources our BPD needs to effectively protect our community.

Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force does not politically endorse any current office holder or candidate.

We extend an open invitation for attendance and participation in our task force meetings to all elected officials and candidates such as City Council, County Commission, and State Legislators.

We appreciate all those who attend and help escalate neighborhood issues.



In addition to Task Force meetings, you can connect with Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force through email and social media:



- Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/BillingsRNTF>
- Follow ***Rimrock Taskforce*** on Next Door app
- EMAIL to the task force board: RimrockTaskforce@gmail.com
Be sure to include your phone # when you email the board in case we need to call you!
- City website: <https://www.billingsmt.gov/1730/Rimrock-Neighborhoods-Task-Force>

NOTE: we are working on a "clean-up" of the information on the City website!

Links should be click-able, but if your browser doesn't support a direct link, just highlight, copy and paste into your search bar.

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