

PLANNING DIVISION

Planning and Community Services Department

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April 2012 Report

To: Board of County Commissioners, City Administrator, Mayor and City Council, Planning Board, Zoning Boards and Commissions, Planning and Community Services Department Director

From: Wyeth Friday, AICP, Planning Division Manager

Date: May 10, 2012

Below is a list of items that the Planning Division has been working on for the past month.

Meeting Management and Support

Planning staff supported the regular meetings of the following Boards and Commissions in April 2012. Each entity met once unless otherwise noted:

- Yellowstone County Board of Planning (2)
- City Zoning Commission
- City Board of Adjustment
- County Zoning Commission
- Historic Preservation Board
- City Annexation Committee

Long-Range Planning Projects:

East Billings Master Plan Implementation – A final public meeting to review and discuss the draft of the Form Based Code (FBC) for the EBURD was held on April 18. About 55 people attended the meeting and provided input and asked questions. The Steering Committee and members of staff are making some changes based on some of the input before moving the draft into review process for the City Zoning Commission and on to City Council for action.

An Exposition Gateway Master Plan and a Hospitality Corridor Study are also being coordinated with the City, County, Chamber, and BSEDA. BSEDA has posted an RFP for the Exposition Gateway Master Plan. Proposals from consulting firms for the RFP process were received on April 16 and BSEDA staff is coordinating a review committee to select a firm for the project. This is expected to be completed in late May. Planning staff is working on a draft RFP for the Hospitality Corridor Study to be released in late May. Planning staff has included partial funding of these projects in its 2012 Unified Planning Work Program based on the availability

of other funding and staff resources. All of these projects are expected to be well underway in 2012. Please visit www.eburd.com for a description of this and other EBURD projects.

South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District Master Plan – The City Council adopted the South Billings Master Plan in February. AECOM Technical Services was the lead consultant on a multi-disciplinary team to develop the master plan for the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District (SBBURD) area. The Board of County Commissioners will take final action on the plan in May since it is adopted as part of the Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2008 Growth Policy. This master plan was funded through the SBBURD tax increment funds. The South Billings Urban Renewal Association is now in the process of identifying projects for implementation from the Master Plan. Please visit www.southbillings.com/ for more information.

Infill Policy Development – The City Council approved an Infill Development Policy in December. Staff is now evaluating the best approach to move forward with implementing the strategies in the new Policy. Staff plans to begin implementation of the Policy this summer.

Sustainable Communities Challenge Planning Grant – The EBURD Project Steering Committee met on April 19 and is continuing to pursue funding sources and project ideas as the group represents more than 20 community partners working to implement the EBURD Master Plan and support projects in the EBURD. More information on the efforts of this group is available on the EBURD website at www.eburd.com

Grant Funded Projects

- FEMA Grant for West End Flood Mitigation/County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan Update (PDM Plan) – Staff completed closeout of the FEMA grant for this project and is in the process of closing out a DNRC Renewable Resource Grant in conjunction with FEMA grant for this project.
- Division staff continues to administer the \$1 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant on behalf of the other City Department grant recipients. The activities funded by the grant are complete with the exception of the hybrid bookmobile. The hybrid bookmobile contract was awarded in December, 2011 and delivery is expected this fall. The grant will be closed out before October 1, 2012.

Community Events/Training

The Division hosted one webinar for staff and the public in April. The webinars are advertised via email and on the Division's website and anyone is welcome to attend. The webinar topic in April was: Opportunities in Complete Streets & Green Infrastructure.

Special Projects/Assignments

- The US EPA announced Billings receiving the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance award on April 3 at an event held at Highland Elementary School. US EPA Regional Administrator James Martin spoke at the event along with Jack Cops, SD2 Superintendent, Taylor Lonsdale, MT Safe Routes to School Coordinator and Kathy Aragon, SD2 Trustee. Communications from both Montana Senators and single Congressman were also presented. The project is for technical assistance to develop a collaborative planning model for the City and School District 2. The model will come in handy as the City wrestles with growth issues and the School Districts plans for new or remodeled facilities.
- LSC Transportation Consultants are under contract to conduct a feasibility study for a downtown circulator bus. Staff is working with MET Transit, MSU-Billings, the Downtown Partnership, Billings Clinic and St. Vincent Healthcare and other stakeholders to determine the feasibility of a downtown transit circulator bus system to move people from MSU-Billings through the medical corridor to downtown and back. Results of a survey conducted earlier this year of potential users were presented to the steering committee on April 18. LSC is working on a final draft of the feasibility study to be

provided in May. The first technical memo for this project is also available. Please contact Candi Beaudry for a copy.

- Staff continues to work internally with City IT staff to prepare for initial conversion of the Planning Division's permits into the new Innoprise project management software system. Problems with the current H T E system in March and April led to weeks of system problems and the Division operating in an older mode of the software. IT eventually was able to fix the problems and get it up and running. However, there were some project delays and processing challenges during the downtime. The permit conversion process is expected to take place before the end of 2012.
- Based on the 2009 Legislative changes and changes in the 2011 Legislature in relation to land use regulations, staff has drafted proposed changes to the City and County zoning regulations. Initiation of these amendments by the City and County zoning commissions and moving the amendments through the public hearing process started in February and is expected to be completed by May 2012.
- Serving on Healthy by Design Advisory Committee through Riverstone Health to participate in various grant programs to review implementation of the healthy community strategies in the 2008 Growth Policy, and serving on the Billings Area Food Policy Council with the other community stakeholders on issues relating to healthy food policy and access in the community.
- Serving on Traffic Control Board
- Serving on Billings Preservation Society
- Serving on Billings Depot, Inc. Board
- Serving on Steering Committee for East Billings Environmental Assessment Program
- Attended Monthly Homebuilders Association Meeting with City staff
- Facilitated South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District Association monthly meeting
- Facilitated Billings Industrial Revitalization District monthly meeting, including the April 18 public meeting to review the Form Based Code (FBC) for the EBURD.

See Staff Project Priorities and Application Review Activity in FY2012 Below

Planning Division Staff Project Priorities 2012 - 2013

Project	Priority	Completion Date
City/School Collaborative Planning - SGIA Grant	1	12/31/12
Adjacent Neighborhood Meeting Facilitation	1	Ongoing
EBURD FBC Adoption**	1	8/1/12
Boarded Up Structure Ordinance	1	7/1/12
FEMA/DNRC PDM West End Flood Grants* **	1	4/1/12
SBBURD Master Plan Adoption*	1	4/1/12
Community Outreach**	1	Ongoing
Hospitality Corridor Study (Hwy 87 River Bridge - Airport Rd.)*	1	1/1/13
Zoning Text Amendments*	1	7/1/12
Historic Pres. Ordinance Update*	1	4/13/12
Downtown Circulator Pilot Project	1	6/1/12
Subdivision Regulation Amendments for SLR (AG Opinion)	1	7/1/12
Data Imaging System for Transportation Traffic Counts, other*	1	6/1/12
Business License Ordinance**	2	3/1/13
ECEBG Administration	2	10/1/12
EBURD Mini-Master Plan -Exposition Gateway	2	6/1/13
Update Records Retention/Review Process**	2	10/1/12
Highway 3/Airport Road Corridor Study* **	2	2/1/13
Scan County Historical Zoning Maps	2	9/1/12
City and County Web Page Update**	2	5/1/12
MPO Urban Area Boundary Amendment*	2	10/1/12
Complete Streets Checklist**	2	10/1/12
South Billings Master Plan Implementation (District Rezoning?)**	2	2/1/13
PCSD Move	2	2/1/2013
2012 Western Planner Conference	2	9/1/2013
Innoprise/ HTE2 Conversion Preparation*	3	2/1/13
Priority Based Budgeting**	3	2/1/13
Residential Zoning District Consolidation**	3	2/1/13
Infill Policy Implementation**	3	2/1/13
Whitewater Park (Coulson Park Area)	3	2/1/13
Newman Lane Improvements**	3	2/1/13

Worked on in April

Completed

* Aligns with 2012 Planning Work Plan

** Aligns with Council/Administration/BOCC Initiatives

Priority Index

1 = Next 3 Months

2 = Next 6 Months

3 = Next 12 Months

SUBDIVISIONS		July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	YTD Totals
Pre-Application Meetings														
	City	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	6	2	1	0	0	14
	County	1	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	10
	Total	1	4	2	3	1	1	1	7	3	1	0	0	24
Preliminary Plats														
	City	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	9
	County	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	6
	Total	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	2	5	0	0	0	15
Final Plats														
	City	1	2	0	1	3	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	11
	County	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	5
	Total	1	2	0	2	3	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	16
Exempt Plats														
	City	2	0	0	4	0	1	1	2	5	0	0	0	15
	County	0	0	4	6	0	4	3	4	0	1	0	0	22
	Total	2	0	4	10	0	5	4	6	5	1	0	0	37
ZONING														
Neighborhood Meetings														
	City	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4
	County	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Zone Changes														
	City	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	8	3	5	0	0	22
	County	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	4	0	0	10
	Total	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	12	5	9	0	0	32
Special Reviews														
	City	2	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	10
	County	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2

	Total	2	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	12
Variances														
	City	2	3	3	2	1	4	0	1	4	2	0	0	22
	County	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	2	3	3	2	1	4	0	1	5	2	0	0	23
Medical Corridor		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zoning Clarifications														
	City	6	8	6	9	2	5	5	9	2	8	0	0	60
	County	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Total	6	8	6	9	2	6	5	9	2	8	0	0	61
Zoning Compliance Permits (YC)		0	2	6	2	1	4	2	0	3	0			20
Fence Permits														
	City	15	15	17	5	5	0	2	1	8	28	0	0	96
	County	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Total	15	16	17	5	5	0	2	1	8	28	0	0	97
Sign Permits														
	City	10	24	15	22	21	15	14	14	8	23	0	0	166
	County	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
	Total	12	24	16	22	21	17	14	14	8	24	0	0	172
Temp. Sign Permits														
	City	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	8
	County	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Total	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	10
Temp. Use Permits														
	City	0	4	1	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	11
	County	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	0	4	1	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	11
Building Permit Reviews		55	60	58	63	52	29	36	62	87	77	0	0	579