

Agenda Items

BILLINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Paul A. Dextras
FIRE CHIEF



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CITY OF BILLINGS

January 9, 2013

TO: CITY OF BILLINGS, CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
TINE VOLEK, CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: PAUL DEXTRAS, FIRE CHIEF

SUBJECT: HAZARDOUS MATERIAL TOW VEHICLE

The Billings Fire Department is part of the State of Montana Regional Hazardous Material Response Teams. Through a Department of Homeland Security Grant, the department was initially awarded a grant in the amount of \$155,000.00 to purchase a tow vehicle that would be specifically used to pull the team's hazardous material trailer. This grant award has been approved by the City Council.

The low bid for this apparatus was \$195,395.00 which is significantly more than the original grant award. The State of Montana has increased the grant award to \$237,290 in order to fund the overall cost of this apparatus.

The City Council will be asked to accept and approve the increased funding associated with the Homeland Security Grant in order for the fire department to award the bid associated with this apparatus.

*To protect life and property
While recognizing our people as the key to our success*

Other Items



January 2013



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

27 28 29 30 31

21
Martin Luther King
Jr. March
6:25pm—6:50pm
Downtown

Special Event Calendar

***Approval Pending**

For questions or details:
wellbrooks@ci.billings.mt.us



February 2013



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 2

3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28

Special Event Calendar

***Approval Pending**

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March 2013



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 *Shamrock Run 11-30AM-1:45PM	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
3 1						

Special Event Calendar

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Opinion

Reform parking rules to cut costs, boost property values

BY RICK GELLER
Guest columnist

Enormous surface parking lots line segments of Colonial Drive, Semoran Boulevard, and Pine Hills Road. These vast lots, often more than half-empty, give an impression of blight and economic decline. Yet developers built them in strict compliance with local ordinances.

Local governments and some businesses perpetuate these dismal development patterns. CVS, for example, demands that each of its new stores have at least 75 parking spaces. Why? Has anyone seen 75 people at a CVS at one time?

In reaction to such dictates, developers pressure local governments for more parking in a never-ending cycle. We all pay for this waste in slightly higher priced goods and services when developers pass on the extra cost of land for empty asphalt.

Citizens deserve a better built environment. A task force appointed by Mayor Teresa Jacobs is recommending reform of Orange County's parking ordinance. The county should improve how parking orient to buildings and roads as well as determine the number of spaces actually needed.

Baldwin Park showcases where to locate parking while ensuring sufficient availability. On-street parallel parking next to buildings close to the streets creates a desirable urban environment. By hiding parking lots behind buildings and inside of blocks, Baldwin Park's aesthetics far surpass Orange County's suburban schlock. Baldwin Park has one of Central Florida's most successful Publix supermarkets, with a parking lot hidden behind buildings lining New Broad Street. Zillow's Home Value Index is up 11.9 percent for Baldwin Park this year compared to only 5.2 percent for Orange County as a whole.

Ordinances typically mandate a certain number of parking spaces based on a new building's square footage, but rarely predict parking demand accurately. The Home Depot conducted a study and determined that code compliance made its parking lots too large, justifying requests for sizable reductions to save development costs.

The original 4Rivers Smokehouse, in a tiny building on Fairbanks Avenue, overwhelmed the surrounding neighborhood



Geller

with overflow parking while the Burger King parking lot at Kirkman and Colonial, despite a much larger building, is mostly empty at dinner time. The dining experience, location and characteristics of each business do matter.

Ordinances usually require enough retail parking for demand expected the weekend before Christmas. This leaves parking lots half-empty the rest of the year. The mayor's task force wisely recommends allowing parking on grass or other such surfaces. This could accommodate Christmas shopping overflows while right-sizing the amount of asphalt needed year-round.

Shared parking is critical to reducing wasted spaces. Developers in the city of Winter Garden's Downtown Historic District pay into a shared parking pool, which will fund construction of a municipal parking garage serving numerous businesses.

Shared parking is logical for mixed-use development. For example, a church, with parking demand greatest on Sunday mornings, can share parking with a bank open during business hours. Einstein Bros Bagels, open for breakfast and lunch, can share parking with a Morton's Steakhouse, open for dinner. A new code should make these types of adjustments.

Parking ordinances are often based on studies conducted in suburban locations lacking mass transit, biking infrastructure, or a walkable environment. That's why local governments should relax parking requirements for affordable housing for transit-dependent populations on Lynx bus routes. Compact walkable areas, including transit-oriented developments that will feed riders onto SunRail, also need less mandated parking.

The mayor's task force would allow bike parking to reduce car parking, an appropriate step as the region's biking infrastructure connects and matures. A dozen cyclists can park their bikes in the same space as one car. On weekends, thanks to the West Orange Trail, Downtown Winter Garden's bicycle racks — and the adjacent businesses — are packed.

By reforming our parking ordinances, we can take a major step to reduce needless development costs and regulation, increase property values, and make Central Florida more beautiful.

Rick Geller, an attorney with Fishback Dominick, is an adjunct professor teaching land-use law in the Rollins College Master of Planning in Civic Urbanism program.