



# City of Helena

## ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

June 11, 2025 - 4:00 PM

City - County Building Room 326 / Zoom Online Meeting; <https://zoom.helenamt.gov/c/36053471/publicmeetings>

## AGENDA

1. **Call to Work Session, introductions**
  - a. Meeting Rules of Procedure
2. **Recommendations from the Helena Citizens Council**
  - a. HCC Budget Recommendation Presentation
  - b. Updated LeGrande Cannon Right-of-Way
3. **City Manager's Report**
4. **Commission comments, questions**
5. **Department Reports**
  - a. Transportation Systems - Benton Avenue Pedestrian Improvements and Turn Lane
  - b. Transportation Systems - Mini-Malfunction Update
  - c. Transportation Systems - Infrastructure Update
  - d. Authorization of issuance and calling for the public sale of general obligation bonds for a new fire station in Helena, MT.
  - e. Authorizing the use of the \$50,000 Northwestern Energy Grant
6. **Public Comment**
7. **Commission discussion and direction to the City Manager**
8. **Adjourn**

**The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The City will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities.**

**Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the City's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Ellie Ray, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following:**

**Phone: (406) 447- 8490**

**TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711**

**Email: [citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov)**

**Mailing Address & Physical Location: 316 North Park Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623.**

## **Rules of Procedure:**

Good evening and welcome to the City of Helena City Commission Meeting. We appreciate your attendance and participation. To ensure our meetings are productive and respectful, we ask everyone to adhere to the following guidelines:

### **Decorum and Expectations:**

- Please maintain respect towards the Commission, presenters, and other participants. All participants are expected to avoid using profanity or hostile language. Inappropriate behavior or continued disruptions may result in action by the Commission.

### **Zoom Participation Decorum:**

- Please keep your microphone muted unless you are speaking to minimize background noise.
- Use the “Raise Hand” feature if you wish to speak and wait to be recognized by the chair.
- If available to you, please ensure your video is on if you are speaking, to maintain transparency and engagement.
- Participants joining by telephone may raise their hand by pressing \*9 and mute/unmute themselves using \*6.

### **Public Comment:**

- Public comments will be recognized only during designated periods by the presiding officer.
- State your name for the record when recognized to speak.
- **Each speaker will be given two minutes to make their comments. At two minutes, you will be asked to begin wrapping up. Please keep comments respectful, concise, and non-repetitive.**
- Individuals may speak once per agenda item and during the general comment period at the end of the meeting.
- **Comments will first be taken from people present in the room, followed by online participants.**
- Online participants may also use the Q&A feature to submit written comments.
- **If you ask a question during public comment, it will be recorded but you likely will not receive an answer. The purpose of public comment is for you to share your thoughts on a topic, not ask questions to City staff.**
- Members of the Commission may ask clarifying questions during the comment period.
- **All comments will be recorded in the permanent record. Formal statements can be submitted via the General Public Comment form on the City’s website. Comments on public engagement pages and media are public records under MCA 2-6-1003.**

### **Montana’s Right to Participate and Right to Know Laws:**

- In accordance with Montana’s right to participate law (MCA 2-3-103), the public is encouraged to engage in the decision-making process.
- The right to know law (MCA Article II Section 10) ensures that all meetings are open to the public and that records are accessible. We strive to maintain transparency and accountability in all our proceedings.

### **Public Meetings and Recordings:**

- **Please be aware that all public meetings and recordings are considered public records. These records are accessible to the public at any time.**
- **By participating in this meeting, you acknowledge that your comments and participation will be part of the public record.**

Thank you for your cooperation and for contributing to a respectful and effective meeting.



Prepared by the HCC Treasurer  
Lori FitzGerald and HCC members  
of the Budget Committee

May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025



Helena Citizens' Council  
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May 28th, 2025

TO: Helena City Commission  
FROM: Helena Citizens' Council  
RE: Helena Citizens' Council Review and Recommendations Regarding the Fiscal  
Year 2026 Preliminary City Budget

### **Summary of Review and Recommendations**

Per our mandated responsibility outlined in Article IV of the Helena City Charter, the Helena Citizens' Council (HCC) is providing the Helena City Commission our review and recommendations regarding the fiscal year 2026 preliminary budget for the City of Helena. The Charter reads:

There shall be seven (7) Neighborhood Councils, collectively comprising a Helena Citizens' Council. Operating independently from the city commission or city officials, the Helena Citizens' Council shall review and recommend actions relating to the annual budget, and make recommendations relating to future development of the city.

The review and recommendations that follow were approved by a vote of the HCC on May 28th, 2025.

The HCC's recommendations for funding specific department requests and capital fund projects reflect the philosophical priorities for the Council. The budget philosophy that the HCC would recommend is that the City Commission identify alternative sources of money in a time when federal grants are not guaranteed, to ensure that funding for emergency services (fire/police) and city infrastructure are prioritized in a constrained budget. Overall, funding requests and capital improvement requests from City departments are supported by the Helena Citizens Council.

## Clerk of Commission

The HCC recommends reconsideration of the Clerk's restructuring of the HCC Coordinator Position, which reduces HCC support from the current 20 hours per week to now 8 hours per week. The HCC Coordinator position not only develops agendas and keeps minutes for HCC, but also prepares, manages and facilitates meetings, archives files, addresses correspondence from the public daily, maintains the HCC website and Facebook page, participates in community outreach activities, provides support for budget oversight, and plans/completes two open house events annually.

Open communication and timely responsiveness of government officials are enormously important for the HCC and for members of the public. Public engagement in the affairs of city government is critical to sound decision-making.

The HCC is composed of a diverse collection of individuals who are elected volunteers. Many of us work for state or federal government; many are new to working with local government. All volunteer their time to the business of the Council, some devoting inordinate hours to the project. The Coordinator has served as the central communication hub for the HCC and had been very responsive to all inquires. In addition to keeping the HCC's public engagement at a high level and facilitating all meetings, the assistant has timely organized and made materials available for art walks, block parties, special events.

As an independent, elected body of neighborhood representatives that works to promote public participation in the affairs of local government, the HCC has greatly benefited from a dedicated employee working 20 hours per week on the business of the Council. We fear that our organization will diminish in cohesiveness if the hours of the Coordinator are significantly reduced as presently proposed.

HCC strongly requests in an effort to continue to be a viable and efficient recommending body for the Commission, to maintain the support of the HCC at 20 hours per week in a dedicated position.

## Helena Citizen's Council (HCC)

The HCC requests the following adjustments to the presented budget as follows: Anticipated expenses for FY26

Two open houses	\$250
Updated brochures	\$390
Neighborhood outreach (\$50x7 districts)	\$350
Water bill inserts	\$550
Yard signs for members (\$42x10 members)	\$420
Block party permit	\$100
Office supplies and Incidentals	\$300
 TOTAL	 \$2360
(approved per HCC March 2025 meeting)	

# General Fund

## Recommendations

- The HCC supports a 2.5% increase in salaries of the Mayor and City Commissioners (\$375 annually for the Mayor and \$275 annually for the Commissioners)
- The HCC supports the funding of continued Sustainability Projects through General Fund cash reserves (solar and sidewalk improvement) and recommends increasing the funding amount by \$120,000 for the Residential Energy Efficiency Renewable Loan Program and increase the Sidewalk Improvement Program to the amount of \$350,000 (to address the lingering wait list and increased cost of ADA corners).
- The HCC also supports the contribution of \$1000 to the annual Sun Run, which raises funds and awareness for solar panels benefiting local schools (Bryant, Central, etc.) and Food Share.
- HCC strongly supports a \$1 million General Fund Capital contribution to support the full completion of the Civic Center HVAC improvements, which will provide greater programming opportunities, ensure more year-round usage of the facility and enhance its financial sustainability.
- The HCC supports the proposed Commission Allocation Reserves of \$100,000 for Homeless, \$250,000 for Family Promise, and \$134,600 for Good Samaritan
- The HCC supports the funding of the downtown Art Walk four times yearly in the amount of \$2000 (\$500 per Art Walk)

## Building Department

### Recommendation:

- The Building Division should explore ways to create efficiencies in permitting building projects to speed up the development of new housing projects and reduce permitting costs associated with creating new housing.

# Facilities

## Recommendations

- Create a Firewise Demo area for residents, to educate the public about planting native drought and fire-resistant landscaping (ideally, at the Fire Station near the Civic Center or other prominent location such as the new Fire Station).
- HCC supports the provision of \$13,000 to the Helena Public Arts Commission and create a downtown walking mall mural, welcome signs, and decorated recycle bins

## Fire/Police

### **Fund 013 - Fire Department**

The Helena Citizens Council supports the Helena Fire Department (HFD) budget request as presented.

The current pause on some federal grants complicates FY2026 planning as reimbursement is not guaranteed. The grants and partnerships HFD currently relies on include the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response funded by FEMA, and HAZMAT grants funded by Homeland Security.

In anticipation of budget shortfalls from impending tariffs and the pause in some federal grants, HFD is working with the City Manager and the Finance Department to explore available grants or other cost recovery options.

### **Fund 012 - Police & Court**

The Helena Citizens Council supports the Helena Police Department (HPD) budget request as presented.

The current pause on some federal grants complicates FY2026 planning as reimbursement is not guaranteed. The grants and partnerships HPD currently relies on include: The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) which pays salaries, the grant for the majority of the salary for an officer on the Missouri River Drug Task Force, the Violence Against Women Act officer, and the Montana Analysis and Technical Information Center grant from Homeland Security.

In anticipation of budget shortfalls from impending tariffs and the pause in some federal grants, HPD is working with the City Manager and the Finance Department to explore available grants or other cost recovery options.

# Community Development Fund 100-1401

## HCC Supports:

- Completing the final stages of the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA), and continuing community engagement regarding the Helena Land Use Plan.

## Downtown BID and Tourism BID

### Recommendations

- The HCC supports funding \$12,000 to the Downtown BID for commissioning and creation of 3-5 murals that document Helena's rich history
- The HCC supports funding that will assist the Tourism BID to work with local partners to educate Helena but also Montana and beyond regarding the new Montana Heritage Center. This could include wayfinding and signage, as well as photo and video assets to tell the story, while focusing on Montana's overall rich history (not just the museum's)

## Transportation

### Recommendations:

- Support an appointment of at least one HCC representative to the newly created MPO technical advisory committee to help with engaging the public in preparation of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
- Consider the creation of a "repair" and/or "replace" program for appropriate sidewalks that are non-compliant with City ordinance.
- Increase the zero interest loans for sidewalk replacement to cover all of the individuals on the waiting list and all of the ADA corners required. HCC also recommends that those individuals on the list for any given year move to the top of the list for the following year
- Safe Routes to School: Prioritize building out the sidewalk network, starting at and near schools. Repaint crosswalks near schools. Work with HCC to engage PTA, Parent Councils to encourage safer driving in school zones. Reduce speed limit to 15mph by all elementary and middle schools.
- HCC recommends continued annual support of \$75,000 for regular and systematic application of dust abatement on appropriate unpaved streets.
- Work with HCC to engage the public for all major road maintenance project proposals, to determine what street features need to be included, where ADA curbs should be, and where foot/bike lanes could be placed to prioritize non-vehicular modes of transport.



## Public Works Department (PWD)

**Recommendation:** To continue to fund and implement the energy and cost saving measures detailed in the Sustainability Audit (March 2024) with projected annual savings of \$115, 650 and 400MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. This is enough emissions savings to power 52 homes for a year or drive over 1,000,000 miles. Continue to work with other city departments to identify ongoing sustainability issues and opportunities for efficiency.

### Fund #521 (Water) and #531 (Wastewater)

HCC supports the ongoing efforts of the Water Division to optimize its operations through energy, chemical and other efficiencies as well as the investigation into groundwater supply wells to help build increased resilience into Helena's water systems.

- Continued promotion of water conservation
- Establishment of water wise best practices
- Collaboration with the Lewis & Clark County Water Quality Protection District.
- HCC supports the PWD efforts to optimize its wastewater operations and look for energy efficiencies. e.g. invest in a new Turbo blower
- HCC supports the PWD's efforts to reduce stormwater contamination.

### Recommendations:

- HCC supports an increase in Water rates of 2.25%, and also increasing block rate for water use, increasing rates step wise for those who choose to use more water
- HCC recommends the water rates be held steady for the lowest tier
- Allocate funding for a Water Conservation Specialist position within the city.
- The City should provide funding to assist residents in reducing their nutrient pollution through outreach, education and incentives. This will help meet water quality standards.

### Fund #541 ( Public Works Department – Solid Waste- Residential)

The HCC supports the City's efforts to divert waste and offer recycling services and applauds its efforts to expand its composting program.

### Recommendations:

- The City will continue to implement its strategic plan for waste reduction and achieve its goal of 35% waste reduction by 2030 and 50% by 2040.
- HCC continues to recommend that the city reduce the maximum amount of waste (3000 pounds) city residents can dispose of directly at the Transfer Station with no additional charge and use the revenue from the additional tipping fees to offset operational costs.
- HCC supports the purchase of a glass crusher for \$80,000 to alleviate the need to ship glass recycling to SLC. This will likely pay for itself within 5 years.

- The HCC supports continued expansion of recycling drop off locations.
- The HCC recommends the city recognize the operational and cost saving benefits of diverting waste from the Landfill.
- The HCC recommends the City publicize its efforts to divert waste (e.g. chicken grants, Farmers Market tabling etc.)

## Helena Citizens Conservation Board

### **Recommendation: Adopt and implement this year's Helena Citizens Conservation Board (CCB) recommendations.**

Background: The Helena Citizens Conservation Board was established by the City Commission to advise the Commission on sustainability and climate change. The City Commission established sustainability goals around clean electricity (100% clean electricity by 2030; 80% by 2025), waste reduction (50% reduction by 2040; 35% by 2030), and has recognized the need for water conservation (e.g., City implemented irrigation restrictions in 2022 and participation in the national Mayors' Water Challenge). Adoption and implementation of the CCB's recommendations will help the City achieve these goals.

#### **Recommendation:**

- Adopt a new Climate Action and Resiliency Plan
  - Allow the 2009 document guide the 2025 decisions
  - 19% population growth since 2009. Plan should focus on both city actions and residential resiliency effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
  - The 2026 budget should include funding for this plan with details to meet the City's sustainability goals for electricity, waste reduction and water conservation.
- Support residential energy Efficiency and renewable Energy Loan Program
  - Funds were too quickly dispersed, the HCC recommends and requests that an additional \$120,000 be added to the Revolving Loan Program FY 2026.
- Invest in Green Transportation
  - Increase EV charging stations – budget for pilot program of city multi-department use of electric vehicles.
- Invest in Solid Waste Diversion
  - Budget for a glass crusher to allow local glass crushing, saving the cost of transporting to Utah(for recycling) labor and city machinery.
- Promote Water Conservation
  - Helena is nearing the 2009 Climate Action plan goal of 100 gallons per capita for 2/3 of the year.
  - Residential irrigation remains 2-3x higher from May thru September
  - Complete the Law and Justice Center building xeriscape to educate the public on drought tolerant native plant species and link those resources to the public.

The HCC builds upon the CCB's recommendation by tying it to the 2009 Climate Action Plan adopted by the City to create a resolution adopting the "Lush and Lean" Landscaping practices providing outreach and education to Helena residents, helping them reduce their water use during the summer irrigation season.

***City of Helena, Montana***

**04/28/2025**

**To:** Tim Burton, Mayor and Commissioners

**From:** Helena Citizens Council

**Subject:** Updated LeGrande Cannon Right-of-Way

**Present Situation:** The LGT (LeGrande Cannon Trail) alignment is still a road Right-of-Way (ROW) and as such remains vulnerable to any attempt to re-open for vehicles. Development of the adjacent subdivisions poses a temptation to maintain the road ROW and keeps open the potential to reopen the road for several reasons to support the developments (Figure 2).

**Background Information:** The LeGrande Cannon Trail (LGT) is located on Helena's Upper West Side (Figure 1) and is a popular and important part of Helena's wonderful trail system. The LGT provides an easy to access wide and low gradient trail for families and users of all abilities. The Mount Helena and South Hills trail provide many challenging trails but limited opportunities for easy beginner trails in the forested areas south of Helena.

**Proposal/Objective:** The ROW must be removed or modified to limit uses and permanently protect LGT forever as a much-appreciated local trail. Removal of the ROW is also needed to prevent development impacts to the adjacent public lands in a manner inconsistent with the intent of so many who worked to protect the adjacent lands as public open space. When the land was transferred to the City, it was understood that the city planned to remove the ROW in accordance with the wishes of the land donors and the public. Removal of the ROW is a straightforward legal process and can be done quickly, without the need to wait for annexation or other processes, and the City can abandon or otherwise modify the ROW to permanently prevent any future potential use as a road.

**Advantage:** Development of the adjacent subdivisions poses a temptation to maintain the road ROW and keeps open the potential to reopen the road for several reasons to support the developments (Figure 2). The ROW must be removed or modified to limit uses and permanently protect LGT forever as a much-appreciated local trail.

**Notable Energy Impact:** None

**Disadvantage:** None

**Quasi-Judicial Item:** False

**Notice of Public Hearing:** False

**Staff Recommendation/  
Recommended Motion:** Recommended by HCC



Helena Citizens' Council  
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**Date: April 23, 2025**

**To: Helena Mayor, City Commissioners, and City Manager Burton**

**From: Ben Kuiper, Chair, Helena Citizens Council**

**Subject: UPDATED Recommendation re: Le Grande Cannon Right-of-Way**

Greetings Mayor Collins, Helena City Commissioners Dean, Logan, Reed, and Shirliff and City Manager Burton:

Let it be known that the Helena Citizens' Council, at its regular full board meeting on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, reviewed its February 26, 2025, Recommendation and voted and passed the following updated recommendation for your consideration:

#### **RECOMMENDATION**


The Helena Citizen's Council (HCC) and the City recognize the importance and historic nature of Le Grande Cannon Trail and the value it holds for Helena residents. HCC asks that the City act to permanently protect Le Grande Cannon Trail by vacating its public road rights-of-way (or through other, permanent means) along Le Grande Cannon and protect this trail and land parcel as part of Helena's incredible network of open space for outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat.

This recommendation was moved and approved by the Helena Citizens' Council based upon the findings presented in this document submitted by HCC District #1 Representative Diana Hammer in collaboration with Joel Gerhart of the Helena Trails Alliance. The referenced document is attached to supplement your consideration of the Helena Citizen's Council recommendation.

The HCC recommends the City Commission act in 2025 to vacate this right-of-way (or other means) to permanently protect Le Grande Cannon Trail.

We appreciate your consideration of this recommendation,

Helena Citizens' Council Members



Ben Kuiper, HCC Chair

## Background:

The LeGrande Cannon Trail (LGT) is located on Helena's Upper West Side (Figure 1) and is a popular and important part of Helena's wonderful trail system. The LGT provides an easy to access wide and low gradient trail for families and users of all abilities. The Mount Helena and South Hills trail provide many challenging trails but limited opportunities for easy beginner trails in the forested areas south of Helena. The LGT alignment is still a road Right-of-Way (ROW) and as such remains vulnerable to any attempt to re-open for vehicles. Development of the adjacent subdivisions poses a temptation to maintain the road ROW and keeps open the potential to reopen the road for several reasons to support the developments (Figure 2).

The ROW must be removed or modified to limit uses and permanently protect LGT forever as a much-appreciated local trail. Removal of the ROW is also needed to prevent development impacts to the adjacent public lands in a manner inconsistent with the intent of so many who worked to protect the adjacent lands as public open space. When the land was transferred to the City, it was understood that the city planned to remove the ROW in accordance with the wishes of the land donors and the public.

Removal of the ROW is a straightforward legal process and can be done quickly, without the need to wait for annexation or other processes, and the City can abandon or otherwise modify the ROW to permanently prevent any future potential use as a road.



*Figure 1 - LeGrande Cannon Trail Location*



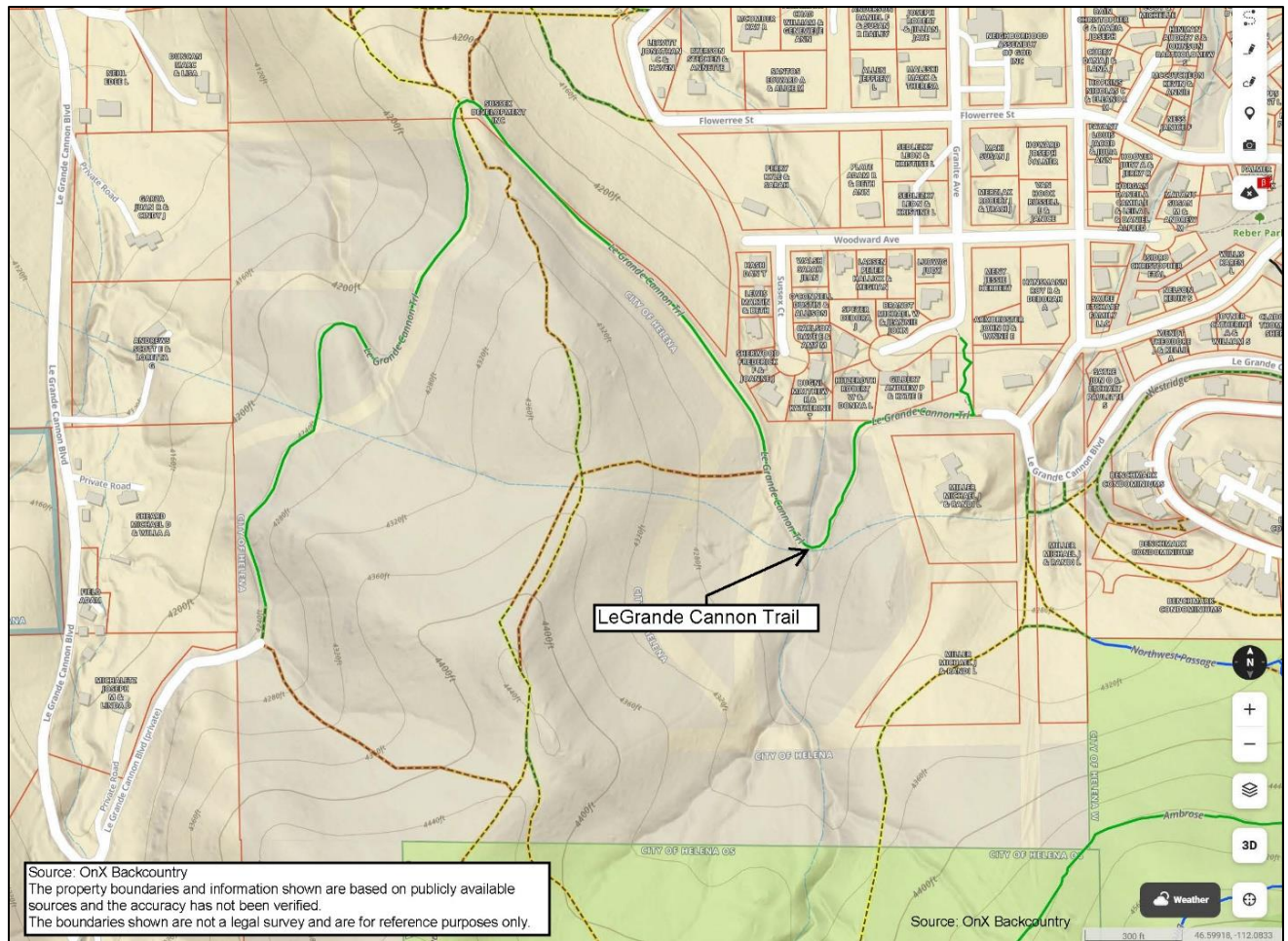


Figure 2 - LeGrande Cannon Trail Detail

**City of Helena, Montana**

**11 June 2025**

**To:** Tim Burton, City Manager

**From:** David Knoepke, Transportation Systems Director  
Mark Young, Transportation Engineer

**Subject:** Transportation Systems - Benton Avenue Pedestrian Improvements and Turn Lanes

**Present Situation:** The City advertised the Benton Avenue Turn Lanes project in May 2024. There was only one proposal received. Although the Transportation Systems Department hoped to include more alternates, current pricing would only allow the base bid and additive alternate #1 to be completed with the funds budgeted.

On June 17, 2024 the City Commission tabled this item for additional discussion at a future administrative meeting pending some project plan adjustments. After the additional meeting it was requested the project focus on pedestrian improvements at the intersections and bring back to a future meeting.

**Background Information:** Over the past many years northbound vehicles have driven around left-turning vehicles while they wait for a gap in the southbound traffic. This creates a hazardous situation for both drivers and pedestrians at intersections. The proposed project would provide curbing at the three intersections and a turn-lane striping to mitigate the situation at Oakwood and Meadow.

The curbing will also provide a deterrent to keep errant vehicles from heading toward the new shared-use path next to the golf course.

**Proposal/Objective:** The current drawings have incorporated the pedestrian improvements that were discussed. These improvements include a new ADA ramp and curbing on the south side of Oakwood Lane. A bulbout has been added on Meadow to decrease pedestrian crossing distance and increase visibility.

A turn lane was included on Benton at both intersections to mitigate the identified unsafe passing practices. These improvements on Benton were kept within the existing asphalt width while adding curb and gutter to either side for vehicle channelization.

The improvements at Elmwood Lane are similar to Oakwood. ADA ramps will be upgraded, curbing is added to either side of the intersection along Benton and some minor asphalt work will be included. All work will be in compliance with PROWAG.

**Advantage:** Constructing the project will increase safety for pedestrians and help keep vehicle movements restricted to the travel way. Improvements have been incorporated within the existing roadway footprint.

**Notable Energy Impact:** N/A

**Disadvantage:** None noted

**Notice of Public Hearing:** False

**Staff Recommendation/** Informational meeting

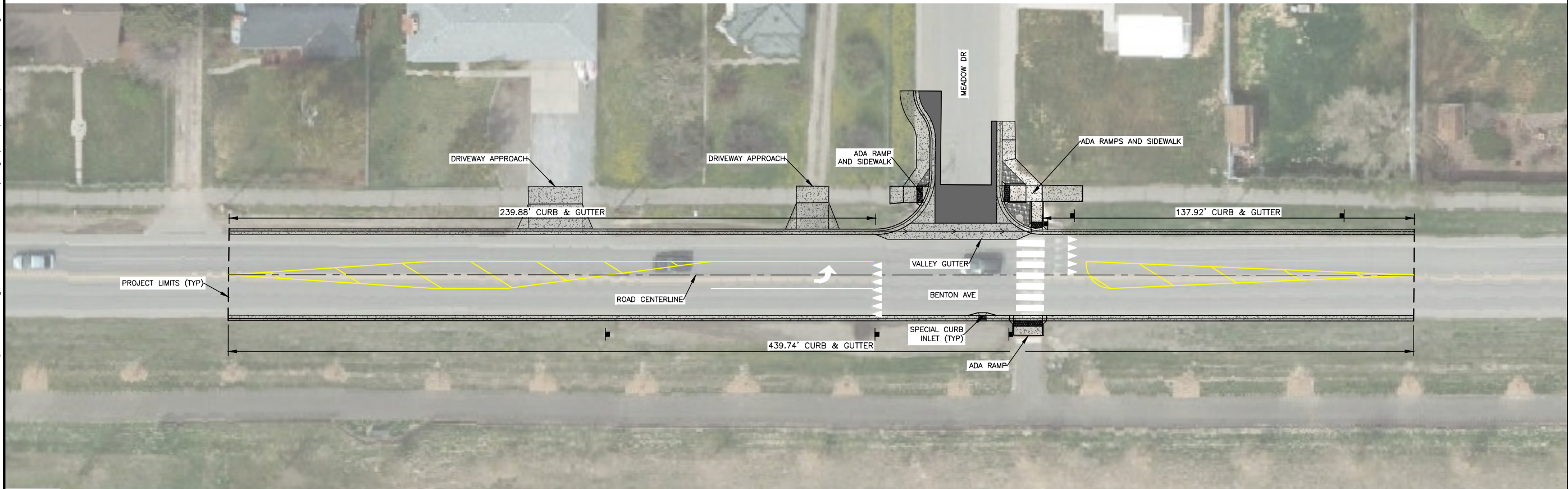




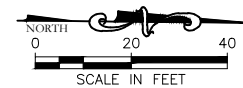
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**OAKWOOD LANE PLAN VIEW**



**MEADOW DRIVE PLAN VIEW**



REVISION DESCRIPTION		BY	DATE
NO.			
PROJECT: 18-65A	DESIGNED:		
	DRAWN:		
	CHECKED:		
	APPROVED:		
	DATE: MAY 2025		

CITY OF HELENA

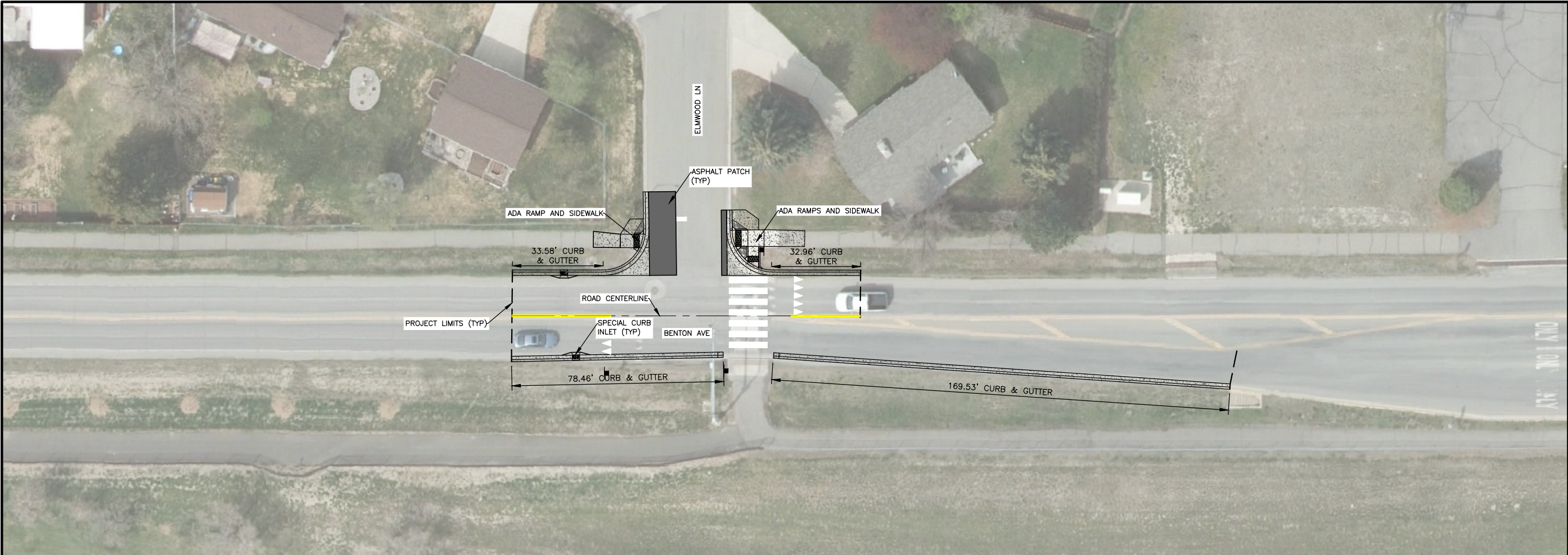
BENOTN AVENUE INTERSECTIONS 2025

OAKWOOD LANE AND MEADOW DRIVE SITE LAYOUT

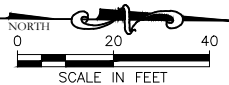
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**ELMWOOD LANE PLAN VIEW**



PROJECT: 18-65A DESIGNED: DRAWN: CHECKED: APPROVED: DATE: MAY 2025	NO.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
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CITY OF HELENA				
BENOTN AVENUE INTERSECTIONS 2025				
ELMWOOD LANE SITE LAYOUT				
SHEET NO.				
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***City of Helena, Montana***

**11 June 2025**

**To:** Tim Burton, City Manager

**From:** David Knoepke, Transportation Systems Director  
Mark Young, Transportation Engineer

**Subject:** Transportation Systems – 5-Point Roundabout Update

**Present Situation:** The project is currently under design and approximately 50% complete and will soon receive a plan set for first review and comments.

**Background Information:** Over the past many years, improvements to the 5-point intersection affectionately referred to as Mini-Malfunction Junction has been considered through a number of plans and studies. Below is a summary timeline.

- Helena Gateway Intersection Concept Study (2012)
- Greater Helena Area Long Range Transportation Plan – 2014 Update (Adopted June 29, 2015)
- City of Helena ADA Transition Plan (2017)
- Downtown Helena Master Plan (October 17, 2016)
- Five-Point Intersection & Corridor Connections (Adopted February 26, 2021)
- Downtown Helena – Multimodal and Infrastructure Plan (Adopted September 11, 2023)
- Catastrophic failure of the traffic signal (July 15, 2024)
- Last Chance Gulch 5-Points Intersection Pre-Design Report (September 2024)
- All Way Stop Control Intersection Memo to City and MDT (September 17, 2024)
- Administrative Meeting Mini-Malfunction Update (October 16, 2024)

The Five-Point Intersections & Corridor Connections Study: included approximately 6 public outreach events from August – October of 2020.

The catastrophic signal failure in July of 2024 the Transportation Systems Department worked with a design firm to quickly finalize the intersection pre-design report that included a intersection control evaluation to evaluate which alternatives were recommended. The report concluded that a roundabout alternative would provide the best level of service for vehicle traffic. Pedestrian traffic will also have shorter crossings, median refuge spaces and other safety features.

**Proposal/Objective:** Update the Commission on where the project is at and provide some additional information on public comments we have been hearing. Specifically, pedestrian safety and safety overall for all users.

**Advantage:** This presentation will bring the Commission up to date on the project and discuss next steps.

Constructing the project will increase safety for pedestrians while improving vehicle traffic flow into and around the downtown. Improvements will be incorporated within the existing right-of-way footprint.

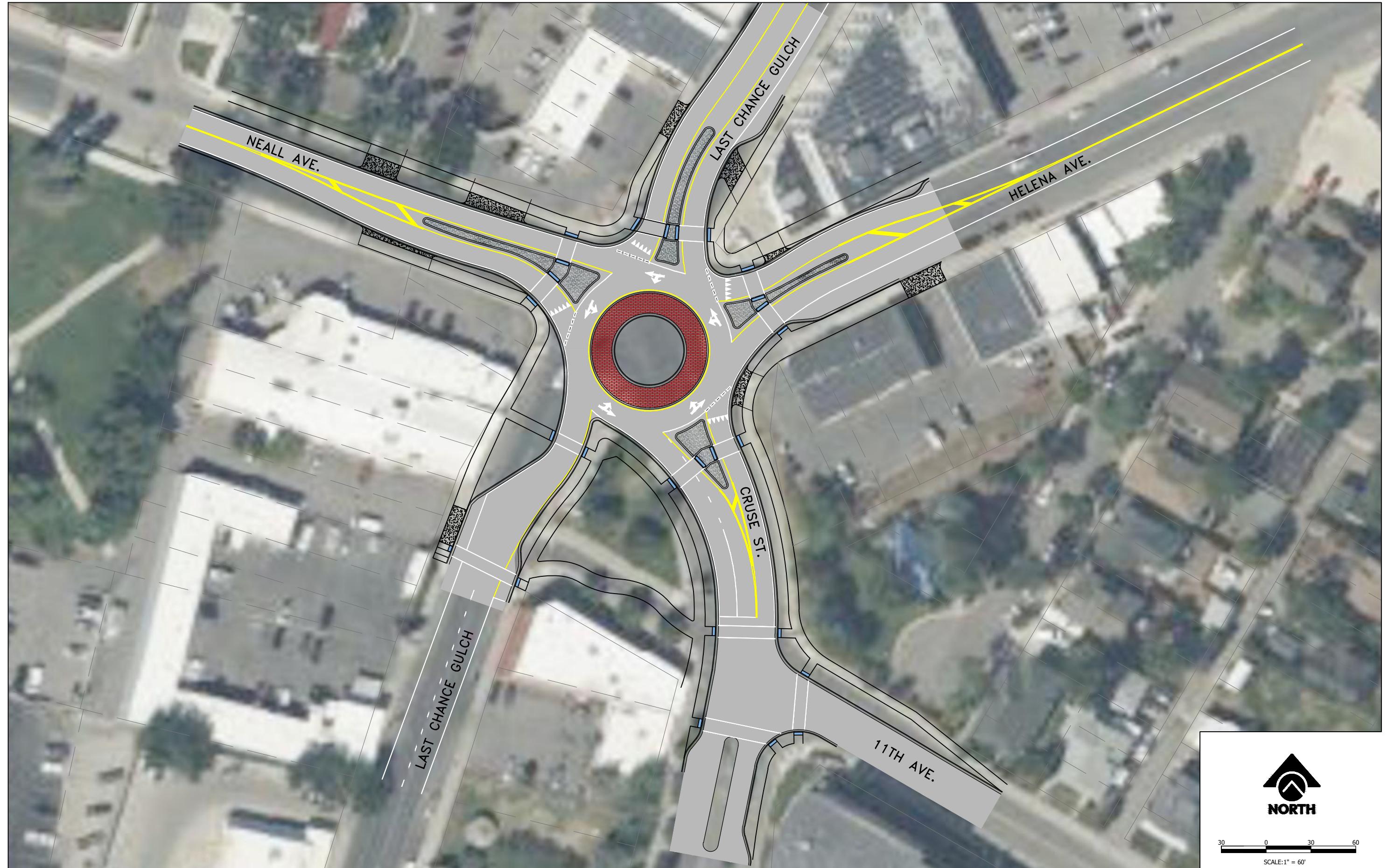
<b><u>Notable Energy Impact:</u></b>	N/A
<b><u>Disadvantage:</u></b>	None noted
<b><u>Notice of Public Hearing:</u></b>	False
<b><u>Staff Recommendation/ Recommended Motion:</u></b>	Informational Discussion



# EXHIBIT A

HELENA 5-POINT ROUNDABOUT

MAY 28, 2025  
HELENA, MONTANA



SCALE: 1" = 60'

***City of Helena, Montana***

**06/04/2025**

**To:**

Tim Burton, City Manager

**From:**

David Knoepke, Transportation Systems Director

**Subject:**

Transportation Systems - Infrastructure Update

**Present Situation:**

Areas of the City are in need of improvements to the roadway and its associated features. These improvements can be funded by a Special Improvement District.

**Background Information:**

Under Montana Code Annotated 7-12-4102 the City has the authority to create a special improvement district. Creation of a district (7-12-4102.2c) for ...the whole or a portion, either in length or width, of one or more of the streets, avenues, alleys, or places or public ways of the city...(iii) paved or repaved:...(d)create special improvement districts and order the acquisition, construction, or reconstruction with the districts of: (i) sidewalks, crosswalks, culverts, bridges, gutters, curbs, steps, parkings (including the planting of grassplots and setting out of trees);...(g) create special improvement districts and order work to be done that is considered necessary to improve the whole or portion of the streets, avenues, sidewalks, alleys, places, or public ways, property, or right-of-way of the city;...(k) maintain, preserve, and care for any of the improvements authorized in this section.

**Proposal/Objective:**

Inform the City Commission of the general process of a Special Improvement District creation and implementation.

**Advantage:**

Able to install requested infrasture and spread those cost over a number of years.

**Notable Energy Impact:**

N/A

**Disadvantage:**

Cost of infrastructure to adjacent property owners.

**Quasi-Judicial Item:**

False

**Notice of Public Hearing:**

False

**Staff Recommendation/  
Recommended Motion:**

Informational Only

**City of Helena, Montana**  
**Commission Administrative Meeting**

**June 11, 2025**

**To:** Mayor Collins and the Helena City Commission

**From:** Sheila Danielson, Finance Director

**Subject:** Authorization of issuance and calling for the public sale of general obligation bonds for a new fire station in Helena, MT.

**Present Situation:**

City staff are requesting the City Commission consider authorizing the sale of General Obligation Bonds for the Costs of acquiring a site and the design, construction, furnishing and equipping of a new fire station, to include a training facility and the cost associated with the sale and issuance of the Bonds.

The General Obligation Bonds will be approximately \$7,000,000 plus or minus any premiums/discounts and the term will be 20 years. The Series 2025 Bonds shall be offered and sold at a public competitive sale pursuant to certain Terms and Conditions of Sale.

An application will be made to S&P Global ratings (S&P) for a rating on the Bonds. The City's general obligation debt is currently rated "AA" by S&P.

The Financing Team includes Steven Scharff, Senior Manager for Baker Tilly as Municipal Advisor and Dan Semmens of Dorsey Whitney LLP as bond counsel, who provide the legal opinion and draft all legal documents related to the bond.

A Resolution related to the authorization and sale of the general obligation bonds, setting the parameters and designating a pricing committee to award the bonds will be brought to the Commission at a public meeting on June 16, 2025.

A Rating conference will be conducted the week of June 23, 2025.

Competitive bids to be received by July 14, 2025

Pricing Committee will consider the award of the bond on July 14, 2025 following the opening of the bids.

The City Commission will consider the Bond Resolution on July 21, 2025

Expected receipt of proceeds and settlement of the Bonds is August 14, 2025.

A Pre-issuance report is included in the packet.

**Background Information:**

Pursuant to Section 7-7-4221, Montana Code Annotated ("MCA"), the City is authorized, upon approval of the electorate of the City, to issue general obligation bonds secured by the full faith and credit and taxing power of the City for any purpose authorized by law, provided that such indebtedness will not cause the total indebtedness of the City to exceed 2.5% of the total assessed value of the taxable property of the City,



determined as provided in Section 15-8-111, MCA, ascertained by the last assessment for state and county taxes.

The electors of the City at an election duly called, noticed and held on June 4, 2024, authorized this Commission to sell and issue general obligation bonds of the City in the aggregate principal amount of up to \$7,000,000 for the purpose of paying costs of acquiring a site, (if necessary,) and designing, constructing, furnishing, and equipping thereon a new fire station, to include a training facility, and related improvements and costs (the "Improvements"); and costs associated with the sale and issuance of the bonds.

The City has determined at this time to sell and issue general obligation bonds of the City (the "Series 2025 Bonds") to finance or reimburse the City for costs of the Improvements and to pay costs of issuing the Series 2025 Bonds.

The total assessed value of the taxable property of the City, ascertained by the last assessment for state and county taxes, was equal to \$6,147,438,252 (2.5% equals \$153,685,956.30). The issuance of the Series 2025 Bonds in the principal amount of \$7,000,000 will not cause the total indebtedness of the City to exceed the limitation set forth in Section 7-7- 4201, MCA.

**Proposal/Objective:**

Consider the authorization of bringing to the Commission a Resolution authorizing the sale of general obligations bonds for a new fire stations and training facility.

**Advantage:**

Acceptance of the request to bring a Resolution to the Commission authorizing the sale of general obligation bonds will enable staff to proceed with the acquisition of the site, design and construction of a new fire station as approved by the voters of Helena.

**Notable Energy Impact:**

N/A

**Disadvantage:**

N/A.

**Notice of Public Hearing:**

No

**Staff Recommendation/  
Recommended Motion:**

No Action. Information Only.





June 3, 2025



Pre-issuance report for

# City of Helena, Montana

**\$7,000,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2025 (the “Bonds”)**

## PRE-ISSUANCE REPORT

**PREPARED BY**  
Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC  
Anaconda, MT

**ADVISOR**  
Steve Scharff | Director  
406-692-7966  
[steve.scharff@bakertilly.com](mailto:steve.scharff@bakertilly.com)

# Issue Summary

## PROPOSED ISSUE

The City Commission has under consideration the issuance of the Bonds to finance (i) the costs of acquiring a site and designing, constructing, furnishing, and equipping thereon a new fire station, to include a training facility, and (ii) the costs associated with the sale and issuance of the Bonds. This document provides information relative to the proposed issuance (the "Purpose").

## AUTHORITY

**Statutory Authority:** The Bonds are being issued in accordance with the provisions of Title 7, Chapter 7, Part 42, Montana Code Annotated, a duly held special election granting authorization to sell and issue general obligation bonds of the City in one or more series for this Purpose, and pursuant to a resolution adopted by the City Commission on June 16, 2025. The election on the question of issuing the Bonds was held on June 4, 2024. A total of 10,219 votes were cast of which, 5,154 (50.44%) voted in favor and 5,065 (49.56%) voted against the issuance of general obligation bonds.

**Parameters Resolution:** Pursuant to the Resolution adopted on June 16, 2025, the authority to award the sale of the Bonds has been delegated to a pricing committee subject to the following parameters:

- i. the aggregate principal amount of the Bonds shall not exceed \$7,000,000 (exclusive of original issue premium or discount);
- ii. the purchase price of the Bonds shall not be less than 97% of the principal amount thereof;
- iii. the true interest cost of the Bonds shall not exceed 5.25%;
- iv. the term of the Bonds shall not exceed twenty (20) years.

**Pricing Committee:** The authority to award the sale of the Bonds to the winning underwriter shall be delegated to the "Pricing Committee", which is comprised of the City Manager and City Finance Director. This authority is only provided within the above conditions established by the Resolution.

## SECURITY / SOURCE OF PAYMENT

The Bonds are a general obligation of the City payable from the proceeds of an ad valorem tax, which the City will covenant to levy annually on all taxable property within the City, without limitation as to rate or amount. The full faith and credit and taxing power of the City will be pledged to the payment of the Bonds.

The City will make its first levy for the payment of the Bonds in the fall of calendar year 2025. The first half of taxes will be due November of 2025 with second half tax collections due May of 2026. Each first half of collections will be used to pay the January 1 interest payment as it becomes due. Each second half collection of taxes along with surplus first half collections will be used to make the July 1 principal and interest payment on the Bonds.

## METHOD OF SALE

The Bonds shall be offered and sold at a public competitive sale pursuant to certain Terms and Conditions of Sale as prescribed in the Resolution.

## FINANCING STRUCTURE

In consultation with City staff, the Bonds have been structured with a twenty-year term with approximately level annual payments of principal and interest. The attached structure is an example of pricing whereas the Bonds would be reoffered at par. This structure was developed for purposes of presenting an available project proceeds with a par amount of \$7,000,000.

Any premium received by the City above the par amount of the Bonds, net of paying costs of issuance and underwriter's discount, will be deposited into the project fund and will be available for use for this Purpose.

On the day of sale, the maturity amounts for the Bonds will be adjusted to accommodate the desired structure of the Bonds.

# Issue Terms

## BANK QUALIFICATION

The City does not expect to issue more than \$10 million in tax-exempt obligations that count against the \$10 million limit for this calendar year; therefore, the Bonds are designated as bank qualified.

## VARIABILITY OF ISSUE SIZE

A specific provision in the sale terms permits modifications to the issue size and/or maturity structure to customize the issue once the price and interest rates are set on the day of sale.

## RISKS / SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The outcome of this financing will rely on the market conditions at the time of the sale. Schedules included are for illustrative purposes based on current market conditions and do not represent the final pricing for the Bonds.

As noted above, the Bonds have been structured to result in additional proceeds generated from a par bid. There is no guaranty that the winning bidder will price the Bonds with a premium in the amount estimated, which could result in less or more additional proceeds than what is currently shown in the attached schedules.

## OPTIONAL REDEMPTION

Bonds maturing on or after July 1, 2036, may be prepaid at a price of par plus accrued interest on or after July 1, 2035.

# Rating

An application will be made to S&P Global Ratings (S&P) for a rating on the Bonds. The City's general obligation debt is currently rated "AA" by S&P.

# Issuance Timeline

EVENT	DATE
City Commission considers resolution authorizing the issuance of the Bonds and calling for the sale thereof, setting certain parameters and designating a pricing committee to award the Bonds (6:00 pm)	June 16, 2025
Rating conference is conducted	Week of June 23, 2025
<b>Competitive bids are received</b>	<b>July 14, 2025</b>
<b>Pricing Committee considers award of the Bonds</b>	<b>July 14, 2025 (Following the opening of bids)</b>
<b>City Commission considers Bond Resolution (6:00 pm)</b>	<b>July 21, 2025</b>
Receipt of proceeds and settlement of the Bonds	August 14, 2025

## Post Issuance

### ARBITRAGE/REBATE

The issuance of the Bonds will result in post-issuance compliance responsibilities. The responsibilities are in two primary areas: (i) compliance with federal arbitrage requirements for the Bonds and (ii) compliance with secondary disclosure requirements.

Federal arbitrage requirements include a wide range of implications that have been taken into account as this issue has been structured. Post-issuance compliance responsibilities for this tax-exempt issue include both rebate and yield restriction provisions of the IRS Code. In general terms the arbitrage requirements control the earnings on unexpended bond proceeds, including investment earnings, moneys held for debt service payments (which are considered to be proceeds under the IRS regulations), and/or reserves.

Under certain circumstances any “excess earnings” will need to be paid to the IRS to maintain the tax-exempt status of the Bonds. Any interest earnings on gross bond proceeds or debt service funds should not be spent until it has been determined based on actual facts that they are not “excess earnings” as defined by the IRS Code.

The arbitrage rules provide for spend-down exceptions for proceeds that are spent within either a 6-month, 18-month or, for certain construction issues, a 24-month period each in accordance with certain spending criteria. Proceeds that qualify for an exception will be exempt from rebate. These exceptions are based on actual expenditures and not based on reasonable expectations, and expenditures, including any investment proceeds, will have to meet the spending criteria to qualify for the exclusion. The City expects to meet the 24-month spending exception for the Bonds.

Regardless of whether the issue qualifies for an exemption from the rebate provisions, yield restriction provisions will apply to Bond proceeds (including interest earnings) unspent after three years and the debt service fund throughout the term of the Bonds. These moneys should be monitored until the Bonds are retired.

## CONTINUING DISCLOSURE

Secondary disclosure requirements result from an SEC requirement that underwriters provide ongoing disclosure information to investors. To meet this requirement, any prospective underwriter will require the City to commit to providing the information needed to comply under a continuing disclosure agreement. The City currently provides its own secondary disclosure.

We understand that arbitrage rebate responsibilities are being monitored through other third-party providers of that service.

## Finance Team

The issuance of the Bonds will require the work of various other public finance professionals. Fees for these professionals shall be paid by proceeds of this issuance unless directed otherwise by the City. The following professionals and their roles have been identified below:

**Bond Counsel:** Dorsey & Whitney LLP

**Municipal Advisor:** Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC

## Attachments

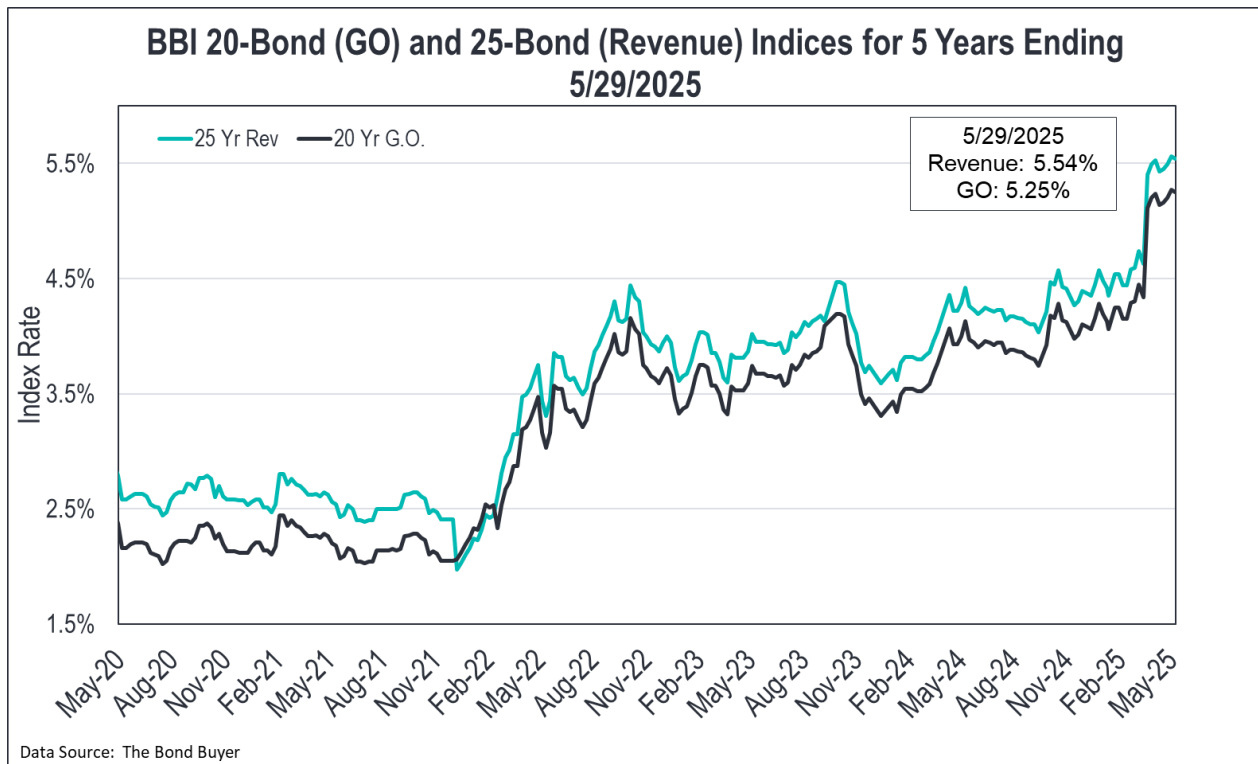
Schedules attached for the Bonds include:

- I. Bond Buyer Index
- II. Estimated Sources and Uses
- III. Estimated Annual Debt Service
- IV. Estimated Semi-Annual Debt Service

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## I. Bond Buyer Index

Performance of the tax-exempt market is often measured by the Bond Buyer's Index ("BBI") which measures the yield of high grade municipal bonds in the 20th year for general obligation bonds rated Aa2 by Moody's or AA by S&P (the BBI 20-Bond GO Index) and the 30th year for revenue bonds rated A1 by Moody's or A+ by S&P (the BBI 25-Bond Revenue Index). The following chart illustrates these two indices over the past five years:





## II. Estimated Sources and Uses

### Sources of Funds

Par Amount of Bonds	\$7,000,000.00
Est. Reoffering Premium	35,741.95

<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$7,035,741.95</b>
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### Uses of Funds

Est. Deposit to Project Construction Fund	6,870,091.95
Est. Costs of Issuance	95,650.00
Est. Total Underwriter's Discount (1.000%)	70,000.00

<b>Total Uses</b>	<b>\$7,035,741.95</b>
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### III. Estimated Annual Debt Service

Date	Principal	Coupon	Interest	Total P+I
07/01/2026	255,000.00	5.000%	282,201.55	537,201.55
07/01/2027	225,000.00	5.000%	307,731.26	532,731.26
07/01/2028	240,000.00	5.000%	296,481.26	536,481.26
07/01/2029	250,000.00	5.000%	284,481.26	534,481.26
07/01/2030	265,000.00	5.000%	271,981.26	536,981.26
07/01/2031	275,000.00	5.000%	258,731.26	533,731.26
07/01/2032	290,000.00	5.000%	244,981.26	534,981.26
07/01/2033	305,000.00	5.000%	230,481.26	535,481.26
07/01/2034	320,000.00	4.125%	215,231.26	535,231.26
07/01/2035	335,000.00	4.250%	202,031.26	537,031.26
07/01/2036	345,000.00	4.250%	187,793.76	532,793.76
07/01/2037	360,000.00	4.250%	173,131.26	533,131.26
07/01/2038	380,000.00	4.250%	157,831.26	537,831.26
07/01/2039	395,000.00	4.375%	141,681.26	536,681.26
07/01/2040	410,000.00	4.375%	124,400.00	534,400.00
07/01/2041	430,000.00	4.375%	106,462.50	536,462.50
07/01/2042	450,000.00	4.500%	87,650.00	537,650.00
07/01/2043	470,000.00	4.500%	67,400.00	537,400.00
07/01/2044	490,000.00	4.625%	46,250.00	536,250.00
07/01/2045	510,000.00	4.625%	23,587.50	533,587.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,000,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,710,520.43</b>	<b>\$10,710,520.43</b>

#### Yield Statistics

Bond Year Dollars	\$82,498.89
Average Life	11.786 Years
Average Coupon	4.4976611%
DV01	6,040.70
Net Interest Cost (NIC)	4.5391866%
True Interest Cost (TIC)	4.5597217%
Bond Yield for Arbitrage Purposes	4.4437480%
All Inclusive Cost (AIC)	4.7210011%

#### IRS Form 8038

Net Interest Cost	4.4716098%
Weighted Average Maturity	11.680 Years



## IV. Estimated Semi-Annual Debt Service

Date	Principal	Coupon	Interest	Total P+I	Fiscal Total
08/14/2025	-	-	-	-	-
01/01/2026	-	-	121,960.92	121,960.92	-
07/01/2026	255,000.00	5.000%	160,240.63	415,240.63	537,201.55
01/01/2027	-	-	153,865.63	153,865.63	-
07/01/2027	225,000.00	5.000%	153,865.63	378,865.63	532,731.26
01/01/2028	-	-	148,240.63	148,240.63	-
07/01/2028	240,000.00	5.000%	148,240.63	388,240.63	536,481.26
01/01/2029	-	-	142,240.63	142,240.63	-
07/01/2029	250,000.00	5.000%	142,240.63	392,240.63	534,481.26
01/01/2030	-	-	135,990.63	135,990.63	-
07/01/2030	265,000.00	5.000%	135,990.63	400,990.63	536,981.26
01/01/2031	-	-	129,365.63	129,365.63	-
07/01/2031	275,000.00	5.000%	129,365.63	404,365.63	533,731.26
01/01/2032	-	-	122,490.63	122,490.63	-
07/01/2032	290,000.00	5.000%	122,490.63	412,490.63	534,981.26
01/01/2033	-	-	115,240.63	115,240.63	-
07/01/2033	305,000.00	5.000%	115,240.63	420,240.63	535,481.26
01/01/2034	-	-	107,615.63	107,615.63	-
07/01/2034	320,000.00	4.125%	107,615.63	427,615.63	535,231.26
01/01/2035	-	-	101,015.63	101,015.63	-
07/01/2035	335,000.00	4.250%	101,015.63	436,015.63	537,031.26
01/01/2036	-	-	93,896.88	93,896.88	-
07/01/2036	345,000.00	4.250%	93,896.88	438,896.88	532,793.76
01/01/2037	-	-	86,565.63	86,565.63	-
07/01/2037	360,000.00	4.250%	86,565.63	446,565.63	533,131.26
01/01/2038	-	-	78,915.63	78,915.63	-
07/01/2038	380,000.00	4.250%	78,915.63	458,915.63	537,831.26
01/01/2039	-	-	70,840.63	70,840.63	-
07/01/2039	395,000.00	4.375%	70,840.63	465,840.63	536,681.26
01/01/2040	-	-	62,200.00	62,200.00	-
07/01/2040	410,000.00	4.375%	62,200.00	472,200.00	534,400.00
01/01/2041	-	-	53,231.25	53,231.25	-
07/01/2041	430,000.00	4.375%	53,231.25	483,231.25	536,462.50
01/01/2042	-	-	43,825.00	43,825.00	-
07/01/2042	450,000.00	4.500%	43,825.00	493,825.00	537,650.00
01/01/2043	-	-	33,700.00	33,700.00	-
07/01/2043	470,000.00	4.500%	33,700.00	503,700.00	537,400.00
01/01/2044	-	-	23,125.00	23,125.00	-
07/01/2044	490,000.00	4.625%	23,125.00	513,125.00	536,250.00
01/01/2045	-	-	11,793.75	11,793.75	-
07/01/2045	510,000.00	4.625%	11,793.75	521,793.75	533,587.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,000,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,710,520.43</b>	<b>\$10,710,520.43</b>	<b>-</b>

### Yield Statistics

Bond Year Dollars	\$82,498.89
Average Life	11.786 Years
Average Coupon	4.4976611%
DV01	6,040.70

Net Interest Cost (NIC)	4.5391866%
True Interest Cost (TIC)	4.5597217%
Bond Yield for Arbitrage Purposes	4.4437480%
All Inclusive Cost (AIC)	4.7210011%

### IRS Form 8038

Net Interest Cost	4.4716098%
Weighted Average Maturity	11.680 Years

***City of Helena, Montana***

**06/04/2025**

**To:**

Tim Burton, City Manager

**From:**

Ryan Leland, Public Works Director  
Ed Coleman, Deputy Public Works Director

**Subject:**

Authorizing the use of the \$50,000 Northwestern Energy Grant

**Present Situation:**

Consider authorizing the use of the \$50,000 received from a NorthWestern Energy incentive for the Solar Project at the City Shop for the Golf Course Solar Project

**Background Information:**

The City Commission awarded the Golf Course Solar Project at the September 23, 2024, Commission Meeting. At that meeting staff indicated that the project may need the use of the \$50,000 Northwest Energy Grant to complete the project. That grant was received from NorthWestern Energy for the City Shop Solar Project and is earmarked for future sustainability projects.

The Golf Course Solar the project was broken into 2 separate parts during the bidding process. One part is the solar array that is currently under construction and the underground electrical. NorthWestern Energy is requiring an additional transformer as part of their approval of the project, which will increase the total cost of the project to \$290,000 with contingency. The existing project budget is \$240,000.

The City has applied for a Universal System Benefit Grant from NorthWestern Energy for each of the solar projects (Transportation Shop and the Bill Roberts Golf Course). Each of the projects is also eligible for a program established through the Inflation Reduction Act called Direct Pay that gives the opportunity for municipalities to apply for similar tax rebates that residential and commercial entities are entitled to. Below is a breakdown of each of the projects based on the total cost of the project while factoring in the grants and direct pay eligibility for each.

**Transportation Shop Solar Project**

Total Cost: \$140,000

Received a \$50,000 Universal System Benefit (USB) grant from NorthWestern Energy and is eligible for Direct Pay program from the Inflation Reduction Act at 30% of the total project cost:  
\$42,000 (\$140,000 x 30%)

Total cost of the project after USB Grant and Direct Pay: \$48,000  
Estimated ROI: 6 years

**Bill Roberts Solar Project**

Total Cost: \$290,000

Approved to receive a \$57,000 Universal System Benefit (USB) grant from NorthWestern Energy and is eligible for Direct Pay program from the Inflation Reduction Act at 30% of the total project cost: \$87,000 (\$290,000 x 30%)

Total cost of the project after USB Grant and Direct Pay: \$146,000

Estimated ROI: 18 years

**Proposal/Objective:**

Consider authorizing the use of the \$50,000 Universal System Benefit (USB) grant from NorthWestern Energy for the Golf Course Solar Project

**Advantage:**

This project will bring the City of Helena closer to meeting the goals of Resolution 20592.

**Notable Energy Impact:**

The solar project will allow the Bill Robert's Pro Shop and Muni Restaurant to be powered almost 100% from solar energy. The energy saving will amount to approximately \$10,349 per year.

**Disadvantage:**

n/a

**Quasi-Judicial Item:**

False

**Notice of Public Hearing:**

False

**Staff Recommendation/  
Recommended Motion:**

n/a