



# City of Helena

CITY OF HELENA

City Commission Meeting

November 24, 2025 - 5:00 PM

Online Meeting Only: Zoom Events: <https://zoom.helenamt.gov/c/36053471/publicmeetings>

City Commission Special Meeting - City Manager Semi-Finalist Deliberation

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Communication/Proposals from Commissioners**
4. **Open Session**
  - A. City Manager Semi-Finalist Deliberation Process & Next Steps
  - B. CMS Town Hall Presentation Topic
5. **CMS Report & Recruitment Update**
6. **Closed Session**
  - A. The City Commission may close all or portions of agenda item #5 to the public pursuant to Sect. 2-3-203(3), MCA, if the Mayor determines the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and the Mayor determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure.
7. **Open Session**
  - A. Commission Deliberation Summary
8. **Public Communications**
9. **Adjournment**

It is the policy of the City Commission to take public comment on any action item. For further information on any of the items mentioned above, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 447-8410 or [dmclayborn@helenamt.gov](mailto:dmclayborn@helenamt.gov).

To read packet information while attending a City Commission Meeting please use the City/County wireless network COMM\_MEET during the meeting.

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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.**

***City of Helena, Montana***

**November 21, 2025**

**To:** The Helena City Commission

**From:** Dannai Clayborn, Clerk of the Commission

**Subject:** *City Manager Selection Process: Next Steps and Semi-Finalist Deliberation*

**Present Situation:** City Staff and CMS present an update on the first round of interviews for the City Manager position. Further direction is needed for the next phase of the process which will include the Finalist in person interviews and engagements. Commission members will need to discuss and deliberate on the Semi-Finalist interviews and determine which candidates they would like to proceed to the Finalist interview process.

**Background Information:** The City Commission has held discussions at the following public meetings regarding the City Manager Selection Process:

- Special Commission meeting on October 6, 2025
- Special Commission meeting on October 14, 2025
- Regular Meeting on October 20, 2025
- Administrative meeting on October 29, 2025
- Regular Meeting on November 3, 2025
- Special Commission meeting on November 10, 2025

The Commission conducted Semi-Finalist Interviews on the following dates which were facilitated as public meetings with a quorum of the Commission including both open and closed sessions.

- Special Commission meeting on November 19, 2025
- Special Commission meeting on November 20, 2025
- Special Commission meeting on November 21, 2025

The Commission is expected to deliberate on the current pool of candidates and determine which candidates they would like to proceed as Finalists in the interview process.

Proposals from Staff and CMS should be discussed and consensus should be provided to continue logistical and process planning. This direction included additional opportunities for public outreach prior to the initial applicant review.

- Dates for in-person proceedings December 8 – 10 or 15 – 17.
- Community Tours
- Town Hall Presentation Format

**Proposal/Objective:** City Staff and CMS request the Commission review and discuss the provided materials and consideration of the updated work product to provide clarity to the consultant, Staff and the public.

The Commission will need to deliberate on the current applicant pool and give direction to CMS and Staff regarding the preferred next steps.

The City Commission may close all or portions of agenda item #6 to the public pursuant to Sect. 2-3-203(3), MCA, if the Mayor determines the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and the Mayor

determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure.

**Notice of Public Hearing:**

N/A

**Staff Recommendation/  
Recommended Motion:**

Discuss and provide direction on the Finalist interview process and deliberate on the current candidate pool and determine which the candidates will proceed to the City Manager Finalist interview process.

## Helena City Manager Town Hall Presentation Topic and Rating Criteria

*Note: We are not asking candidates to assess the validity of community input or to commit to addressing any of the specific issues, but rather, how they will consider and integrate this type of input into the City's strategic planning structure.*

### **Proposed presentation topic: Strategic Plan and Community Priorities**

The City Commission is committed to selecting a City Manager who can lead with transparency, community partnership, and strong implementation skills. This presentation allows candidates to demonstrate how they evaluate strategic priorities, how they partner with community stakeholders, and how they plan to guide the City's long-term direction.

Please use visual materials if helpful. Presentations should be approximately 20 minutes, followed by questions from participants.

In 2024, the City of Helena adopted a Strategic Plan that outlines the community's values, goals, and long-term strategies.

The plan can be reviewed at the following link:

<https://www.helenamt.gov/Government/Strategic-Planning>

For this presentation, we are asking candidates to:

#### 1. Review the City's Strategic Plan

Please assess the City of Helena's Strategic Plan as a prospective City Manager. **In your presentation:**

- **Identify key strengths of the current plan.**
- **Identify specific areas where the plan could be improved, updated, or clarified.**

We are looking for thoughtful, constructive feedback that demonstrates your understanding of strategic planning, performance management, and organizational alignment.

#### 2. Consider Community Partner Priorities

In addition to the Strategic Plan, community partners have identified priority issues for Helena. **Each group is providing 3–5 priority areas they believe the next City Manager should address below:**

- Helena Citizens Council
- Young Professionals
- Helena Area Chamber of Commerce

**In your presentation, please explain:**

- **How you will consider and integrate input from these kinds of community partners.**
- **How you would balance community input with Commission direction, staff capacity, and available resources.**

#### 3. Describe Your Approach to Plan Implementation

**Please outline your approach for:**

- **Updating the Strategic Plan based on Commission direction and community input.**

- **Monitoring, measuring, and reporting progress on the plan (e.g., dashboards, KPIs, regular updates to the Commission).**
- **Ensuring alignment between the Strategic Plan, department work plans, the budget, and organizational performance.**

We are seeking to understand your leadership style, your experience with strategic planning, and how you ensure accountability and follow-through.

#### **Proposed Evaluation Criteria:**

We will provide rating forms and/or a QR code link to a rating survey to collect input from participants (Morisha, could you lead this, I like the QR code idea and we should probably have a few hardcopies on hand for folks that aren't tied to their phones like I am).

### **City Manager Finalist Town Hall – Public Input Rubric (SurveyMonkey-Ready)**

#### **Instructions for Participants**

Please share your impressions of each finalist. Your input will be provided to the City Commission as part of their overall evaluation. This form is not a vote; it is an opportunity to share your perspective based on the presentation and Q&A.

For each question, please select the response that best reflects your impression.

#### **Survey Items (SurveyMonkey)**

##### **1. Clarity of Communication**

**How clearly did the candidate communicate their ideas?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

**Optional comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **2. Understanding of Helena's Needs**

**How well did the candidate seem to understand the community's challenges and opportunities?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

**Optional comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **3. Approachability and Public Engagement**

**How approachable and open to public engagement did the candidate appear?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

**Optional comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **4. Vision and Leadership**

**Based on the presentation, how would you rate the candidate's ability to provide effective leadership for Helena?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

**Optional comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **5. Professionalism**

**How well did the candidate demonstrate professionalism during the presentation and Q&A?**

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

**Optional comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Optional Open-Ended Question**

You may answer this question if you like:

**Do you have any additional comments or feedback about this candidate?**

(Text box)

**Name: (required?)**