

DRAFT Journal of Proceedings

Missoula City Council

April 21, 2025, 6:00 pm

Council Chambers (in person) or TEAMS (virtually)

Attend in person: City Council Chambers, 140 W Pine, Missoula MT

Members Present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Bob Campbell, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Eric Melson, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka

Administration Present: Mayor Andrea Davis, Ryan Sudbury, City Attorney, Claire Trimble

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Missoula City Council was called to order by Mayor Andrea Davis at 6:00 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

2.1 Minutes from April 14, 2025

The minutes were approved as submitted.

3. ANNOUNCE CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDAS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP APPROVALS

3.1 Committee Schedule for April 23, 2025

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

4.1 Neighborhood Council Updates

4.2 Proclamation - Volunteer Month

4.3 Proclamation - Earth Day

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

5.1 Annexation of 2100 Flynn Lane

Dave DeGrandpre, Planning Supervisor, gave the staff reports for 5.1 and 5.2. Discussion and minutes will be noted together under 5.2.

Moved by: Alderperson Nugent

Adopt/Deny a resolution to annex and incorporate within the boundaries of the City of Missoula Tract 1 of Certificate of Survey No. 5023 located in Section 18, Township 13 North, Range 19 West, Missoula County, Montana, P.M.M., as shown on Exhibit A, and zone the property B2-1 Community Business, subject to the conditions of annexation approval, based on the findings of fact in the staff report.

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Campbell, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Farmer, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Melson, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, and Alderperson Vasecka

Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)

5.2 Amended and Restated Development Agreement for Flynn Lane

Planning Supervisor Dave DeGrandpre presented a proposed annexation of 2100 Flynn Lane and a related amended development agreement. The property in question is a one-acre parcel entirely surrounded by Missoula city limits and falls within the city's designated annexation priority area (Annexation Area A). DeGrandpre emphasized that annexing such "islands" of county property is a strategic priority per Missoula's annexation policy. The annexation would assign a zoning of B2-1 Community Business, which aligns with the city's 2045 Land Use Plan and allows higher density (up to 43 units/acre) while maintaining land use types similar to the existing county zoning. Two annexation conditions were proposed: street improvements along Flynn Lane (including curb, gutter, sidewalk, and trees), and the dedication of a 9.25-foot right-of-way easement.

The second part of the presentation addressed a restated development agreement originally covering 57.7 acres, to now include the newly annexed parcel. The project area, known as the Affinity Project, will include a 170-unit, age-restricted (55+) apartment complex with amenities such as a pool, dog park, and community spaces. This project will increase density in part of the site and create a future commercial parcel. In exchange for the increased density, the developer agreed to a cash-in-lieu contribution of \$178,500 to Missoula's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This fee was calculated using a formula developed by city staff in 2023, based on a price index per added unit. The developer, John Fisher of The Inland Group, emphasized that this will be an active adult community with lower costs and no medical services, designed for downsizing seniors.

Council Questions and Comments

- Councilor Farmer asked is the public Greenway open to all, and who maintains it? Yes, it is a public trail and will be maintained by the developer.
- Councilor Becerra asked what is the basis for the \$178,500 fee? Webb explained that it's based on a price index tied to the density bonus granted. A unit count is multiplied by a set fee per unit. Will the donation be made as a lump sum or incrementally? DeGrandpre confirmed it will be paid in full prior to occupancy of the new building.
- Councillor Nugent Why did this project qualify for a housing trust fund contribution when others don't? Webb explained it was voluntary. The city offered density bonuses through an incentive program, and the developer opted to contribute in lieu of including affordable units onsite.
- Councilor Campbell expressed support, appreciating the clarification on age-restricted housing and sharing a personal anecdote about 55+ communities.
- Councilor Nugent noted the project meets the needs of an aging population and could help create movement in the housing market.
- Councilor Anderson appreciated the zoning comparison slide and echoed support for age-diverse housing options.
- Councilor Becerra expressed gratitude for the collaboration between staff and developers and highlighted the need for more housing variety.

Moved by: Alderperson Nugent

Adopt/Deny a motion to approve the proposed Amended and Restated Development Agreement between HEH, LLC, Mullan Land Holding, LLC, Missoula Mary Jane II, LLC, The Snowfarm Project Property Owner, LLC, and the City of Missoula, and to accept a cash-in-lieu payment of \$178,500.00 to the City of Missoula's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, subject to one condition of approval, based on the findings of fact in the staff report.

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Campbell, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Farmer, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Melson, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, and Alderperson Vasecka

Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Confirm Austin Ray and Scott Ostrander as Firefighters

Stacie Anderson gave the staff report. These firefighters have passed their year of probation and are seeking confirmation to become firefighters for the City of Missoula.

Councilor Campbell noted that he would like for new firefighters and police officers be present for the council members to meet them during the confirmation process.

Moved by: Alderperson Anderson

Confirm Austin Ray and Scott Ostrander as firefighters for the City of Missoula.

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Campbell, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Farmer, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Melson, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, and Alderperson Vasecka

Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

8. CONSENT AGENDA

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Campbell, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Farmer, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Melson, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, and Alderperson Vasecka

Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)

8.1 Accounts Payable (claims) for checks dated April 22, 2025

Approve accounts payable (claims) for checks dated April 22, 2025, in the amount of \$1,904,420.13.

Vote result: Approved

8.2 Resolution Relating to up to \$6,801,000 Water System Revenue Bonds

Approve a resolution Relating to up to \$6,801,000 Water System Revenue Bonds (DNRC Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Program) (SRF Bonds), Consisting of \$466,000 Series 2025A Bond, \$904,000 Series 2025B Bond, \$1,024,000 Series 2025C Bond,

\$1,400,000 Series 2025D Bond, \$1,503,000 Series 2025E Bond, and \$1,504,000 Series 2025F Bond; Authorizing the Issuance and Fixing the Terms and Conditions Thereof.

Vote result: Approved

8.3 Bid Award to Dig It Excavating for the Bitterroot Outfall project

Award the Bitterroot Outfall project bid to Dig It Excavating at a cost not to exceed \$364,925.00 and authorize the return of bid bonds.

Vote result: Approved

8.4 Flynn Lane & Mullan Road Path TA Project – Professional Services Agreement with DJ&A

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Professional Services Agreement with DJ&A for engineering consulting services on the Flynn Mullan Path TA Project at a cost not to exceed \$347,601.94.

Vote result: Approved

8.5 West Broadway Toole California Project Professional Services Agreement with WGM Group

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a Professional Services Agreement with WGM Group for Intersection Control Evaluation and Alternative Concept Development Services for the W. Broadway Toole California Project at a cost not to exceed \$83,546.

Vote result: Approved

8.6 Funding Recommendations for the Unified Application Program Year 2025

Set a public hearing on Monday, May 5, 2025, to consider a Resolution granting approval of the City of Missoula Unified Application Round Year 2025, awarding Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to certain organizations, directing staff to negotiate contracts and agreements, and authorizing the Mayor to sign the contracts and agreements with said organizations.

Vote result: Approved

9. REGULAR BUSINESS

9.1 Committee Reports

9.1.1 Budget and Finance (BF) committee report

9.1.1.1 Minutes from April 16, 2025

9.1.2 Climate, Conservation and Parks (CCP) committee report

9.1.3 Committee of the Whole (COW) committee report

9.1.4 Housing, Redevelopment, and Community Programs (HRCP) committee report

9.1.4.1 Minutes from April 16, 2025

9.1.5 Land Use and Planning (LUP) committee report

9.1.5.1 Minutes from April 16, 2025

9.1.6 Public Safety, Health and Operations (PSHO) committee report

9.1.7 Public Works and Mobility (PWM) committee report

9.1.7.1 Minutes from April 16, 2025

9.2 Informational Reports

9.2.1 Administratively Approved Report

10. STATE LEGISLATURE UPDATE

Jessica Miller from Central Services provided the final Monday night legislative update of the session due to the upcoming council break and the anticipated end of the Montana legislative session by May 5. She noted the legislature was on Easter break but would resume the following day on legislative day 79. Although May 5 remains the official final day, there's speculation lawmakers may adjourn early. A comprehensive report will be presented to the Committee of the Whole in May or June, once bill outcomes and gubernatorial actions are finalized.

Miller highlighted the chaotic pace of the session, with last-minute bill amendments and significant reliance on lobbyists for real-time information. Several legislative developments were noted:

SB 90, intended to allocate tourism dollars toward property tax relief, failed despite three blast attempts. Some of its concepts were incorporated into HB 924, a broad spending bill.

SB 2, concerning urban renewal districts, is headed to conference committee.

HB 231, Governor Gianforte's flagship property tax bill, was defeated, then reconsidered and added to SB 542, which has ballooned from 2.5 to 45 pages due to multiple insertions. Miller emphasized this flurry of activity as typical for this late stage in the session.

Council Comments

- Councilor Anderson praised Miller's dedication, particularly her spreadsheet tracking numerous bills, calling the session "level 5 insanity." She lamented the lack of meaningful property tax reform and the missed opportunity to leverage the state's surplus for affordability. She specifically supported SB 90, saying it would have directly benefited homeowners and criticized the application-based relief mechanisms in other bills as inequitable for seniors and low-income residents.
- Councilor Becerra echoed appreciation for Miller's updates and found her spreadsheet a helpful resource to share with constituents.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Karl Spitzmacher commented on his treatment at the Poverello Center.
- Chris K. raised a hand but was unable to unmute.

12. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Gave an update on the State of the Community event held at the library, themed "*Local Action, Local Impact*".
- Reiterated city priorities: responsive local government, better public service, cost of living, economic strength, and housing affordability.

- Highlighted examples of responsiveness, like pivoting after the Roseburg plant closure and addressing housing through land use/code reform.
- Encouraged viewing the recorded event via Missoula Community Access Channel.
- Celebrated the International Wildlife Film Festival, her participation in the Wild Walk parade, and promoted Earth Day events.
- Thanked community members for peaceful protesting and emphasized safety and civic engagement.

13. GENERAL COMMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Councilor Nugent expressed concern about proposed federal cuts to Medicaid. Emphasized Medicaid's role in supporting a large percentage of Americans, especially in rural states like Montana. Urged residents to call federal representatives, noting staff have welcomed continued outreach.
- Councilor Farmer reminded the public about the upcoming special election for school board trustees and encouraged voter participation. Noted the ballot deadline of May 6.
- Councilor Anderson echoed Medicaid concerns, highlighting that state-level reauthorization includes federal funding triggers. Criticized the framing of Medicaid reauthorization as generosity when it's based on fiscal logic. Warned of growing pressures on local government, especially without state-level investment. Encouraged respectful communication with federal legislative staff, who often field constituent calls.
- Councilor Jordan reflected on recent political events, including a City Club meeting and rally with Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Praised the shared messages across local and national leaders promoting government accountability, equity, and a strong social safety net. Called for continued public engagement, echoing "power to the people."
- Councilor Jones reported that during the City Club event, ~90% of audience questions were about federal funding cuts. Shared specific impacts of those cuts: University of Montana job losses, county staff positions at risk, and general grant uncertainty. Criticized the short-sightedness of budget cuts without assessing their long-term impact.
- Councilor Campbell visited the West Broadway cleanup site and described the area as an ecological and public safety disaster due to camping-related debris. Praised city staff's work on the difficult terrain and heavy labor involved. Requested a detailed cost report on the cleanup, including equipment rental, staffing, and disposal costs. Urged the city to find more sustainable solutions to address urban camping and reduce recurring cleanups.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.