



# CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA 2009

## Report of Open-ended Questions

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## **SURVEY BACKGROUND**

### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™**

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Billings staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Billings staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

## UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

### ABOUT CLOSED-ENDED AND OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Questions can either be asked in a closed-ended or open-ended manner. A closed-ended question is one where a set of response options is listed on the survey. Those taking the survey respond to each option listed. Open-ended questions have no answer choices from which respondents select their response. Instead, respondents must “create” their own answers and state them in their own words. The verbatim responses are categorized by topic area using codes. An “other” category is used for responses falling outside the coded categories. In general, a code is assigned when at least 5-10% of responses will fit the code.

Advantages of an open-ended question include:

- Responses are not prompted, allowing respondents to provide answers that are not anticipated or well known.
- This type of question tends to capture response options that come to mind most quickly.
- The final result can be richer, since verbatim responses are included in an appendix, giving you and others a chance to “hear” the voice of respondents in their own words.
- There is a smaller risk of missing important dimensions.

### VERBATIMS

Respondents were asked to record their opinions about Billings in the following question:

- What is the most pressing issue for our city government to address at this time?

The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the following table with the percent of responses given in each category. Because some comments from residents covered more than a single topic, each topic mentioned by a resident was categorized and counted for the table below. Those verbatim responses are grouped by the first topic listed in each comment whenever a respondent mentioned more than a single topic. Verbatim comments that contain more than one topic nevertheless appear only once (in the category of the first topic listed), however the analysis in the table below counts each of the topic areas given by all respondents regardless where those topics appeared in the comment.

Results from the open-ended question are best understood by reviewing the table of frequencies that summarize responses as well as the actual verbatim responses themselves.

Question 18e: Open Ended Question	
What is the most pressing issue for our city government to address at this time?	Percent of respondents
Governance: public trust, city lawsuits community relations (police department included)	18%
Economic Sustainability: development, employment, affordability (affordable housing, cost of living)	15%
Finance: taxation, budget issues, maintaining levels of service	12%
Transportation: traffic enforcement, traffic lights/signage, public transit, traffic flow, pedestrian options	12%
Public Safety: crime, gangs, increase police presence, safety services	11%
Infrastructure: street maintenance, lighting, utilities, snow removal, etc.	6%
Social Services: services to youth, seniors, low income, homeless, healthcare	6%
Education: funding, quality, opportunity	5%
Don't Know/No Comment	3%
Other	11%
Total	100%

## VERBATIM RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The following pages contain the respondents' verbatim responses as written on the survey and have not been edited for spelling or grammar. Responses have been organized by coded topic areas.

### WHAT IS THE MOST PRESSING ISSUE FOR OUR CITY GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS AT THIS TIME?

#### Governance

- 1. Elimination of law suits from departments - knowing contracts 2. Why are taxes being handed out as increased to city staff when everyone knows the current economy or has had their own wages frozen or reduced.
- 1. Lawsuits w/police & firemen. 2. Job growth
- All the squabbling & suits with the police and fire dept over back pay is bad PR.
- Avoid expensive lawsuits.
- Avoid lawsuits such as firefighters & police dept. Their contracts seemed to be unclear after changes made to a lawsuit resulted in both cases!
- Avoid suits by current and former employees
- Be more fair with people in city hall in judicial business
- Better coverage of police around town especially evenings downtown & in sore residential areas all night!
- City counsel needs to be held responsible for the decisions they make. They & the City administrator need to stop doing things behind closed doors. Also Billings fire needs to give up the idea of providing ALS services in Billings, we have a co. That cost 0\$ to tax payers.
- Corruption & dishonesty in the police dept
- Corruption in city hall; depts need to work together, not against each other. Each gov't body has to improve in my view since I've had bad experiences with all four, but I've also seen good things happen in each one. All is not totally lost.
- Efficiency and accuracy in personal related issued. For example, payroll and contracts with employees. Get rid of unions, avoid frivolous lawsuits!
- Eliminate lawsuits -
- Eliminate unnecessary law suits against the City (police & fireman)
- Ethics in city gov. & city council
- Excessive authority exercised by the police department.
- Failure to comply with wage & personnel matters with employees
- Get a handle on dept. Lawsuits (i.e. police & fire) - this has become ridiculous. Revise fire work schedules & pay. Improve parks! Crack down on gang activity immediately.
- Get better legal advice to avoid future lawsuits & expenses from city service folks - fire, police, etc. The history of this is insane!
- Get city officials to relinquish any & all interest in the operations & collections of adult probation facilities including silent partnerships
- get competent people in leadership roles - the number of lawsuits by city employees against the City is inexcusable. \*reduce property taxes - property owners continue to carry the tax burden and government always wants more money. Sales tax is needed to equalize the tax burden, if offset by property tax relief.
- Get real in negotiating to avoid huge suits later. Be smart not cheap! The City administrator is not smart - she's stubborn & won't use common sense!
- Get rid of the pending lawsuits -
- Get the police dept. Under control, this is out of hand.

- Getting past the Nimby's who fight good projects cutting down of the amount of lawsuits against city
- getting rid of "good old boy" network getting competent legal representation open government up to public's right to know"
- Good leaders - accountable
- Honor contracts with employees & curb running red lights. Stop growth of casinos.
- How many more lawsuits are the City of Billings going to lose and make the tax payer pay for?
- I think our city gov. Is top heavy in adm. Our parks used to be nice, they are nothing but weed patches, water will be spurting out of sprinkler heads, I've called & 2-3 days later it still hadn't been handled. The most pressing issue for city gov. Is listening to the tax payers!
- I think you have to get to know the people of Billings I was here 15 years before I knew anyone in office & to see if people will help one another where I came from we knew & helped each other and since I moved here 22 years ago no one helps anyone.
- Incompetent city leaders
- Keep local council members away from lawyers. City suits by lawyers hurts everyone. Try prevention of legal suits.
- Lack of direction of the city government.
- Law suits - Feuerstein, firefighters, city police etc loss of taxpayer money due to city error. 0 turn around - don't like it
- Law suits recreation opportunities remove off Mike Witaker as parks director amount of money spent on our parks
- Lawsuits against the City
- Lawsuits! Seems to be a lot of money paid out to people/workers suing the city!
- Lots of lawsuits due to what seems legal issues city attorneys should have had knowledge wasn't legal to start with. No accountability in any of these decisions
- Need of a strong mayor with direct control over city dept heads -
- Need to figure out why the City (taxpayers) are continually being sued by city employees - and end up making big pay-outs. That is
- Pay city employees according to the contracts thus eliminating expensive lawsuits.
- Police dept.!
- Police force
- Reactiveness of the city council vs. Proactive city. City council does not work in a cohesive environment - lacks vision. Interesting that specific questions were not asked about their effectiveness.
- Settle all human resource/pay issues with city employees.
- Stop being racist treat everyone the same stop having cops treat people like trash
- Stop getting into law suit against labor/they seem to always win & the City has to pay the costs!
- Stop law suits - stay away from lawyers.
- Stop letting people get by with law suits against the city (police dept, etc.) Over what most of us taxpayers consider self-serving & greedy.
- Stop the lawsuits, eliminate the powers in place (city administrator, mayor) to eliminate the problems! Decrease taxes!
- Stop the senseless law suits
- Stronger and more effective supervision of department heads. The City of Billings spends too much time and money defending lawsuits.
- Take care of & prevent more lawsuits. Get Tussing out of town. Reputation
- The City government should support the citizens instead of selling them out to support big businesses they use any means to get what they want and do not have the citizens welfare in mind.
- The City gov't is crooked. The police don't follow the law & take extreme measures to cover it up. Citizens should have open access to documents.

- The City needs to address the re-occurring litigation with its firemen, & especially its police. The in-fighting and politics is extremely detrimental to the image of the City.
- The City should quit focusing on cutting services and instead figure out how to get by with fewer office bureaucrats. The City has added more office space in the last 20 years. While not developing any parks, pools, or adding street lights anywhere. Stop wasting our money on poor and illegal management practices.
- The City to think twice about their decisions to prevent lawsuits. -stop with all the consulting firms-wasting our tax dollars -promote more development in the heights - more than Walmart & Target - develop recreation in the heights for children like pools & parks -do not like the narrower streets that promote growth hard to get around in winter when the side streets are not take care of. Plow the roads when they need to be plowed. There are times we can't get our car out because the snow was too deep streets not plowed. Did not make since that the City plowed my street only once this year & it was after a very small amount of snow and there was a lot of bear street showing. This makes total economical since. I believe they plowed the street just to say they did it. Seems like resources could be better spent
- The continuing lawsuits for current and former employees. The City should have fees to pay for upkeep and repair/replacement put a charge on ballpark tickets, pool admissions, park shelter rentals.
- the lack of leadership. It appears that they "manage by crisis" without ever focusing on an effective, cohesive, and real vision."
- The police department needs to be held in line so as not to abuse power and to act fairly for citizens. I do not trust the police department to act on my behalf.
- The problem with the mayor causing huge taxpayer expenses due to litigation from police & firefighters. He's responsible for it, but we're paying for it.
- There has been news coverage related to city and county government officials reviewing personnel policies. It is essential to attempt to decrease/prevent law suits! An exhorbitant amount of money (insurance/tax payer funding) paid out in settlements, legal fee or loss of law suits. Very disheartening!!
- To learn to resolve issues w/o incurring sub. Legal fees and paying large settlements
- Too many law suits! Why should the tax payers be responsible when someone is insulted? (discrimination.)
- Wasting money on those lawsuits

### **Economic Development**

- (1) affordable family apartments on the west end. (2) long-term economic planning-accounting for all details. (3) pay city employees correctly the first time to avoid lawsuits.
- 1. Bringing people from out-of-state to fill jobs that we have plenty of qualified people for. 2. Put the ambulance service back with the fire dept. And get rid of Amer Med Response.
- Affordable housing
- Better job training for Native Americans.
- Bringing more job opportunities to the city. Make use of the vacant buildings throughout Billings and Billings heights.
- Bringing new business to Billings that creates more than retail sales jobs.
- Concentrate on keeping jobs available to people
- Continued planned growth
- Control urban development - increase public transit cut back on city services that are not necessary (such as leaf pickup)
- Cost of living
- Downtown development
- Economic development

- Economic stability
- Economy
- Economy
- Economy
- Economy & jobs!
- Economy also gang control
- Employment & child care also nursing homes
- Employment and taxes
- Employment opportunities that provide adequate income for non-professional jobs. Wages are out of line with cost of living expenses.
- Getting business in with good paying jobs. And to improve the schools in Billings. Put education over entertainment (ie) the new baseball park which I refuse to step my foot in until something is done about the overcrowded high schools.
- Growth & high quality jobs
- Growth planning - schools and parks on the west end
- I would like to see Billings continue to grow (population, retail, etc.). I don't know if that's the direction the city wants to go, but I would like it. I would also like to see more racial, ethnic diversity as well.
- I would like to see more growth in the heights - shopping & eating establishments. It is very inconvenient & expensive to drive to the west end. Also need more recreation facilities - swimming pool!
- in order for Billings to continue on the path of good growth is to encourage more industry (making of goods/products) type businesses to come to Billings. We need higher paying jobs. Billings is the town where everyone comes to "get a good deal" this does not necessarily translate into creating quality jobs."
- Increase investment in Billings. The voters will support an increase in taxes if they are informed of it's need and trust that it will be used as advertized.
- Job market and wages!
- Jobs!
- Jobs!
- Keeping jobs here
- Lack of economic development that is visible; seems to be somewhat invisible to minorities and low income groups.
- Need to encourage growth of new business need to improve traffic flow - traffic lights in order to save fuel
- Pay scale way below most states
- Price's keep going up!! But wages keep staying the same for skilled trade's men, and general workers. While city and government keep going up. Let's have some equality also Billings is ugly. Let's fix her up
- Promote creation of white collar jobs for our young people to return to.
- Public housing & low income public housing
- Renovating buildings, storefronts to be more attractive to new businesses Grand Ave - traffic, no turn lane
- Scattered development
- The economy
- The job market! For all trades! Making sure people are happy!
- We need to get more jobs here. There are too many low-paying service sector jobs already - we need some kind of work where we can make a decent living without having to hold down more than one job.
- Work to help improve economics & keep Billings strong

## Finance

- "ensure that funding goes to appropriate "sore spots" to improve overall image of the City. Streets division is lacking. Poor road maintenance."
- "stop the waste!! Get rid of, ("if we don't spend it we lose it") save money!!!"
- #1 ending alternate funding for services - not just property taxes & increased all the time - better coordination with other taxing & governing entities ie. School district, county, state, etc. Managing increased population growth & annexations
- \*we need to implement a sales tax to pay for more law enforcement, & fire prevention. \*we need a commercial building code. - central, & grand look poorly planned & leave a bad impression. \*streets need to be straightened & need central turning lanes - grand!
- 1. Stop giving property tax waivers to business. 2. Stop spending money on 'brands". 3. Stay within the budget as is"
- Agressively pursue local option tax authority from the state legislature. Billings needs to receive revenue from tourists, renters, and everyone who works in and enjoys the services provided by Billings, yet live outside of the city limits.
- Control expenditures.
- Cost to tax payer
- Cut expenses
- Do away with spending money on downtown
- Do not raise taxes in this economy! Snow removal is a must at all the high schools! Enforce snow removal of sidewalks). Enforce not shoveling snow out into the streets!! 4 wheel drive vehicles can go through it but not cars!!
- Don't raise taxes - keep expenses under control! Develop volunteer programs to save labor costs. Don't try to do too much.
- Get budget in order - to best suit the entire needs of the taxpayers of the City - be honest & real about where all of the taxpayers money is going.
- High property taxes - need to look at local option tax; lack of recycling
- I strongly oppose the increase of the city administer salary when are short of money for public services!
- I think lower taxes on businesses that are looking to start in Montana and, especially, Billings would help.
- Increasing city operating revenue
- Keeping the taxes low.
- Lower property taxes. I'm being taxed to death!
- Lower taxes keep dogs out of parks
- Lowering property taxes. I'm retired and am being taxed out of my home
- Maintain current services during this economic slowdown.
- Maintaining a level of services without adding w/burden to existing taxes & furthering lack of purchasing power which continues the local economy.
- Maintaining level of service with growth
- Manage the City's finances, resources, and employees better. We must stop all the lawsuits and quit wasting the taxpayers money!
- Need to lower taxes for the elderly.
- Our taxes
- Poor money management
- Property tax relief
- Property taxes!!
- Revenue - possible sales tax
- Rduce taxes rduce size of gov.
- Sales tax

- Services vs. Property taxes
- Stop spending money! Stop spending money on survey's
- Stop the drain of the tax increment districts on the general fund etc. Consider charging non profits for service calls/fire inspections/false alarms etc. Hospitals/churches/
- Tax reform, animal control, code enforcement
- Taxation of commercial building, way too high.
- Taxes
- The budget needs to be adjusted downward to absorb the economic meltdown going on.
- The City needs to find alternate method of financing projects instead of taxing property owners
- The City needs to stop spending money on unneeded things downtown like sky point, they also need to spend a larger portion of the taxes on residential maintenance & also stop spending money on needless things like bike trails that are better than our streets. Most of these trails & etc are getting so much attention & funding mainly because the trail program is led by the mayors wife. - this is not a correct use of tax money
- The economy in the United States is getting real bad. The City government need watch their money! Tax payers are getting laid off and money is getting hard to spend.
- Tightening all areas of the budget
- Too large of a fire dept. & far too expensive. I think we should provatize fire dept. & street maintenance.
- Using all \$ efficiently - no waste keeping citizens safe - increase & improve value of human life (crime)

## Transportation

- "traffic out of and into the "heights"
- \*signs (big, too many) \*downtown growth-a good thing \*cleanliness of City/appearance \*gangs
- A traffic light/signal needs to be installed at Hilltop/Nutter - it is impossible to make a left turn on Nutter turning into Hilltop!
- Blgs heights traffic - roads into City Airport Road
- -City busses running evening hours -better parks & walking trails
- City light keeps going on and off every half minute I must tell them to fix it. Keeps me awake thru my bedroom window at nites.
- Enforcement of currect traffic laws on speeding and aggressive driving
- Finish Alkali Creek Bike path to connect to Aronson bike path. Complete the Zimmerman Road project in to the heights.
- Fix the lights at the intersection of Monad, Moore Lane & Laurel Road. It is ridiculous and cars just run through red lights. It is 100 times worse than what it was before everything the City did this past fall. I wish it never had been changed.
- I believe that public transportation should definitely be improved to help those who increasingly cannot afford to drive their own cars.
- Integration of bike lanes onto more streets along with more bike safety education for bikers as well as drivers. Change bus system so that it is more convenient to us such as covered bus stops, higher bus frequency, etc. And development of programs to encourage the use of public & alternative transportation.
- Met transit. You can get there by bus slogan is inaccurate. You can't get there by bys for several areas. You can get close but still require lots of walking the times are crazy. 4 hours to do round trip. Also price of bus prices went up \$4 to \$5 for everyone but disabled & elderly. Their passes doubled. Makes it harder for them to afford it & there the only ones who doubled in price.
- Need turn signal's on traffic lights in downtown area & focus on homeless situation & transits more to make downtown area safer.
- Peak hour traffic

- Poor traffic flow out of Heights - Bench Blvd connector and the Wick's Lane to Zimmerman trail connectors should both be fast tracked & completed
- Right now our streets engineer is creating some major bottlenecks with all these round-a-bouts he's planning to put in on major streets, not to mention a greater potential for car accidents. This is what I'm talking about, a person like the traffic engineer or small group like City council making decisions about high cost items like street projects or new parks without letting the taxpayers have an input.
- Speed limit's - around high schools
- Teaching our police department to direct traffic properly - usually in emergency situations.
- The growth of city traffic take a look at how bad Bozeman MT is
- The stop light at 29th and king, getting on king from 29th takes forever!
- The traffic situation in the heights.
- Traffic
- Traffic - parking
- Traffic - speeding & running red lights
- Traffic congestion gang-related crimes
- Traffic control
- Traffic control - height's access deplorable. Conjested Main Street Airport Road, Arononson & Alkali Creek. Look at completeing the Wicks Bipass to connect to Zimmerman Trail. Increase citizen participation in the process.
- Traffic control - timing of lites bad in some areas street repair
- Traffic control & street light timing-look into a city wide recycling program
- Traffic flow - making all parts of the City available for commerce, jobs, and bus availability
- Traffic flow & street repair
- Traffic flow on major city streets
- Traffic flow thru out the City, also, we need another way to get out of the heights
- Traffic in and out and around the heights truck by pass is needed
- Traffic light timing is atrocious!! There is no reason to sit at Airport Rd & main at 11:00 pm with no traffic either way for the amount of time it is programmed for. Or Mound & 24th, Hilltop & Main - Milton & Main!! Are the people on main that much more important than those on side streets??
- Traffic movement, street repair, snow removal, traffic control, police control traffic, very slow in street repair, terrible streets, local gov. Waste.
- Traffic planning
- Traffic problems
- Traffic, stop lights (too fast and uncoordinated)
- Traffic, turn signals on 24th & Moovad law suits are out of hand with city etc
- Transportation thru out the City as far as personal cars go it appears that changes to entrance or exits are slanted in favor of a few & not the whole city.
- Try to finish the bus terminal 3rd Ave is a mess
- Walking/biking paths & trails' meth problem; crime prevention; downtown revitalization seems to be lagging...; emphasize community-wide involvement.

## Public Safety

- (1) growing gang problem. (2) proliferation of graffiti and slow removal of same.
- City crime, gangs, vandalizm.
- Clean up south Billings & gangs
- Crime and taxes
- Crime gang & graffiti. I feel that this is the one thing that are police need more training. We are a small town. I am from OKC I tell you Billings needs training before it get out of hand.
- Crime, jobs
- Cut drugs in schools

- Dealing with gangs & drug trafficking - really really scares me.
- Drinking & driving
- Drugs and robberies
- Drugs, gangs, lack of options for our most valuable asset - our children.
- Drunk drivers
- Gang control - better control of high school drivers & drug control
- Gang violence, crime
- Gangs
- Gangs
- Gangs
- Gangs & drugs - crack down on them
- Gangs and their activities!!
- Gangs, abandoned buildings
- Getting rid of gang activity
- Graffiti in neighborhood & in a lot of the town/gangs/drugs/panhandlers
- I would have to say crime prevention. A lady I know had to change her car color because a gang member tried to chase her down and he got arrested, so I guess they are trying to protect her, but there is no reason that punk kids should have this much power over law enforcement.
- Improve feeling w/community neighborhood & safety of residents any activities or change taking place that makes the area feel unsafe.
- Improve service and protection of existing community - to enhance productive growth.
- Increase the police force and try to get a grip on the drug useage by our teenagers. Make it harder for the kids to hide their illegal activities.
- Influx of gangs and hate groups.
- Intoxicated Indians & drug concern - south side
- limiting the gang activity -developing an alternative route from "heights" to i-90"
- Maintain sufficient police/fire protection to keep up with growth, also sufficient clean water to keep up with growth
- Making the downtown area more safe to the general public. \*need to strongly consider moveing the hub to the south - perhaps beyond 1st Ave so.
- More police officers - the current force has a lot of area to cover. More officers would help.
- More support for police and firemen. More and better low income houseing for low income familys
- Providing good police and fire protection. Not having suits filed against the City for back pay. Getting better qualified elected people to commmissioners and mayor.
- Public safety. Police & fire
- Rise in crime & gang activity!
- Safety - keeping our fire & police departments going strong! No additional taxes! Retired people cannot afford any more taxes!
- Safety & racism
- Safety of Main St reets/street signs/more lighting - snow removal during snow times - not afterwards. Homeless eyesore & increase min-wage/income
- Stricter rules for drunk drivers, get off too easy. Ex (7 times) still driving? A rule for drivers with cell phones. There are a manace.
- The gang problem.
- The gangs in Billings - it's getting out of hand.
- The prosecution of criminals - it is time for those that break the law to have consequences for their actions - we need to stop protecting the law breakers and start protecting and defending the law abiding citizens of our town.
- Violence, gangs, jobs, living wage

- When a crime or potential crime (drugs) is reported how many potential victims are harmed because the police are too lazy to do something - I had called 6-7 times and nothing and it still continues on & on!

## Infrastructure

- Better streets & maintenance
- Building new streets 4 lane rather than 2 - as in 32nd/zimmer. There's too much traffic for 2 lanes & it will be costly & waste of current dollars to expand in the future. Too much tunnel vision - not far sighted!!!
- Clean up the streets after it snows! Remove the ice, so we don't have as many wrecks.
- Condition of roads and buildings - jail, library etc
- Energy, education for all even collage affordable healthcare
- Finish road construction
- Fix streets
- Fixing streets better lighting on city streets
- Fixing the side streets that are getting run down.
- Infrastructure - continue road repair/upgrades due to increased traffic volume & to improve traffic flow
- Maintain basic water, sewer, sanitation quality and maintain fire and law enforcement.
- Pave gravel road that have been that way for many years
- Public streets, city parks, recycling resources
- Replacement of over/worn residential streets
- Road maintenance and new roads
- Roads & growth
- Snow plowing have bus run on weekends and longer in evening.
- Snow removal
- Snow removal, street lights
- Street lights.
- street maintenance - "underpass - 5th & coming onto int. Very rough - man hole covers so far down always bump on them"
- Street maintenance & ice control. Recycling
- Street maintenance in some areas
- Streets (removal of snow), streets (with no street lights) - chuck holes on streets.
- The sanitation dept. We have to walk looking for a dumpster & to put our garbage because the neighbor who shares our dumpster fills it and then piles it around the dumpster and it ends up in our yard. I am tired of cleaning it up! I called the garbage people but said it couldn't do anything.

## Social and Health Services

- Affordable health insurance
- Affordable senior housing - need more like sage towers instead of apts with all the exercise rooms, etc.
- Doing more to deal with the multiple issues of those who are extremely poor - homeless, hungry, dealing with addictions, poor health, etc.

## Education

- Education - funding
- Education \*economy
- Education funding gang activity recycling
- Getting more money for the schools
- Health care

- Health care
- Health insurance for low-income kids
- Healthcare
- Healthcare
- Homeless folks!
- Homeless people health insurance issues
- I am not sure what the city's part is but pressing feel that issues w/Billings are school funding & bike paths - sidewalks.
- I'm not sure if this is a city issue - I would like to see more support from the community in supporting our schools & a city aqua facility - like Missoula Helena.
- Lack of computer lab for elementary schools in the city limits.
- Low income families & support, bums on the streets begging, graffiti in parks & rec's, gang violence, police brutality
- More help for low income children health care
- Passing levies for schools.
- Public education/funding & the tax structure. The majority of taxes are on the homeowners & this needs to be shared - like a small sales tax. Why aren't the funds from gambling revenue being used?
- School system - do away with middle management
- Schools
- Support for mental health systems, hospitals and other caring programs, affordable, healthcare increase jobs & \$\$\$ (improving etc. Economy
- Supporting programs for homeless & poor! Tough on gangs continued growth in spiritual areas!
- Taking care of senior citizens
- The lack of educational choices. The colleges are painfully short on degrees offered which forces individuals to move elsewhere to obtain a degree with any value or money-making potential.
- The quality of our public schools and we need greater access to our library.
- To keep homeless people off city streets.
- Two major issues - change the school system! Crazy how much is spent on athletics when students use books that are falling apart. Change the way it is managed and you will get support for funding. \*stop letting people hold signs for money - it makes ar great city very unwelcoming.

### **Don't know/No Comment**

- ?
- ?
- ? I have only been in Billings almost 5 months so I don't believe this will give you much help.
- ???
- Dont know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know at this time.
- Don't know.
- I can't think of anything that hasn't already been addressed.
- I don't follow any type of government issues, sorry.
- I don't get involved, I just do my own thing. Don't really care what the City does because I am usually not affected.
- No comment

## Other

- "someone stated that Billings was changing from "the magic City" to "trails end" if this is so, I feel sorry for Billings and their residents. That would be a disaster - it would be "the end!" "the magic City" isn't working because you don't have it any where! Where are the signs? = "welcome to the magic City"
- Abolishing stupid hip hop music. Billings should be metal!
- Air quality
- Although this is not the most pressing issue; leave the development of city/county park alone - & ask homeowners if they want additional parks & where. Listen to the owners in the area as to their wants!!!
- Better park maintenance, better park development of vacant parks, better method of developing parks in new subdivisions (ala Las Vegas)
- Billings is aggressively expanding to the north and the west. Most middle to lower middle income families prefer and can afford to live closer to the center of town. Street lighting, walkways, road improvements - should all be made on the innerparts of town before more money is placed on the edges. We are on our way to developing an un-cared for residential downtown within income range. Look at Moore lane!
- community involvement/activities & "going green"
- Consistent zoning & traffic flow
- Control sprawling growth
- Controlled growth which ties into annexation issues.
- Culture diversity
- Don't compare Billings to Denver on every day standard. We are not Denver nor do we want to have the crime rate larger towns have.
- Eliminating sidewalks on sidewalks. Where I live there are some sidewalks and some empty spots a uniform system should be in place. I had to put in a sidewalk where as 3 blocks up the street they had an option! That's not fair!
- Enforce subdivision restrictions. I formerly lived at 420 Bay. Hill Blvd. After I sold residence they allowed someone to make my former residence into a rooming house for Univ B students now you can hardly drive up the street because of parked cars.
- Fair wages, health ins.
- Get better recycling better traffic flow eg. 32nd St
- Get rid of the panhandlers - bars - sucking booze on downtown city sidewalks - selling beer at gas stations - damn smoking 2 feet from public doorways get rid of damn smoking -
- go "green" let's be a role model for other cities - start with an effective recycling service - involve the community"
- Growth is coming. Let's be proactive about how we accommodate that growth.
- Hopeless people
- How to improve the look of the City beside all the ugly casinos on every corner there is no style to ?? New commercial building. Maybe use Bozeman as a benchmark to go off of.
- I oppose allowing more casinos and bars. Casinos are a blight on our nice city.
- I would like to see them hire more retired people that specialize in areas around the City. For instance, hiring retirees from retired police, fire & other city areas where they had specialized.
- Keep and amply reward our present city employees
- Lack of compensation for City employees, number of vacant buildings.
- Limiting trashy casinos and businesses and doing more to promote parks, education, bike paths. Billings is not at all visually appealing, especially with tacky neon signs & pawn shops.
- Look into housing authority's look into older apt. Managing & upkeep. More restaurant inspections
- Loose dogs, traffic slow down
- Managing the growth & give us a good infrastructure at same time.

- More efficiency in all departments
- More recreation opportunities for children such as pools, playing fields, parks, & newer library ?
- Need swimming pool in heights no pool in heights
- Nor trails, Reugamier is right—the fans should pay to keep up the ballfield
- Not oppressing. Would like to have property owners clean up vacant lots often. On my walks I see quite a lot of trash in bushes and on vacant lots.
- Offer more family friendly recreational/cultural programming ie. Concert in the park series - weekly in summertime daytime & evening sessions
- Providing access to new people in the community, not much info out there for new citizens, listen to the people
- Recycling
- Recycling - citizens should be able to receive free recycling programs @ homes; more availability to have dogs in parks; revitalizing downtown; public education system
- Recycling for all city houses & businesses
- Recycling park improvement & growth more green areas
- Recycling, poor police service in briarwood fire union & police union are out of control! (salaries)
- Replacing Tana Volek
- Shilo Road - less casinos & less bar cleanliness of city parks/need more family places - more police to patrol the Lillis Park after 10pm
- Speed of the youth - mostly girls - plus cell phones - use only for emergency - not to visit -
- Sprawl
- The City of Billings has considerable community involvement. To us this is an issue to encourage & promote, for much can get done w/such input. I contend that this is the case because of our smf. Businessmen (ie. The ball park etc) so we need to promote an atmosphere of support & affirmation for those who contribute & strategize for our City. W/o community, life of its residents is quite lacking.
- The employees are great and programs excellent! Keep up good work - some people will never find good in anything
- The legalization of marijuana!
- The rapid growth
- This may concern the county - the Metra must be run or operated to satisfy the Metra goers - how about a questionnaire to the users in regards to what we want to see and also the beverage & food concessions inside!!!
- To focus on all parts of Billings - not just west end when new retailers come to town promote heights for landscaping, clean lots, etc
- Trash and abandoned vehicles on the streets.
- Turn down those blasted car stereos! That thumpity-thump crap isn't music anyways! We, who are over 50 & never played rock-n-roll that loud, don't want to hear it anymore!!
- Urban sprawl - too much development on the west end not enough development or reclamation of currently existing buildings and housing that already exists.
- We need an aquatic center in the heights
- We need to focus on improving our parks and recreation to give Billings that fun appeal. Continued road maintenance & more bike paths.
- Zoning of homes, rentals, trailers, multi living complex, right now, one can put anything - anywhere - gang activity!!