2015 EXPANSION OF THE BILLINGS, MONTANA EAST BILLINGS URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT, WITH TAX INCREMENT, AND AMENDMENT TO THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

FOR CITY OF BILLINGS AND PLANNING REVIEW
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Prepared by

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

On November 16, 2006, the City Council adopted Ordinance #06-5395 that (a) created the East Billings Urban Renewal District (EBURD) and (b) adopted an urban renewal plan for the district. For reasons discussed in this Amendment to the East Billings Urban Renewal District Plan ("Plan"), it has been determined that the EBURD should be expanded to include other contiguous blighted properties in need of redevelopment. Further, it has been determined that this area has been and is in need of expanded public parking, enhanced pedestrian connections and experiences, improved public safety, and infrastructure improvements to public and private properties that will alleviate flooding issues and lead to increased taxable values. The existing urban renewal plan may be modified by ordinance in accordance with the procedure described in M.C.A. § 7-15-4221. The Urban Renewal Plan of the EBURD approved by the City Council on November 16, 2006, is included by reference as part of this amended Plan and shall remain applicable except to the extent the original plan is explicitly or impliedly amended by this Plan. It is recognized as part of this Plan that the basic vision of the document known as EBURD Master Plan, adopted by the Billings City Council on September 14, 2009 (Resolution #09-18878) and by the Yellowstone County Commissioners on September 29, 2009 (Resolution #09-66), remains valid and should be considered a part. In addition, it is recognized that as part of this amended Plan, the basic vision of the document known as the Exposition Gateway Plan, approved by the Yellowstone County Commissioners on May 28, 2013, and adopted by the Billings City Council on June 24, 2013 (Resolution #13-19289) also remains valid and should be considered a part. The terms defined in "Part A.III – DEFINITIONS" of the EBURD Urban Renewal Plan shall have the same meanings in this Plan unless a contrary meaning is expressed. The expanded district proposed in this Plan is hereafter referred to as the 2015 Expanded EBURD.

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND

The original East Billings Urban Renewal District, a tax increment finance district, was created on November 16, 2006, by a resolution which stated that it was desirable for the City to consider an urban renewal project within the District, and found that the area contains structures and property in states of substantial deterioration, properties that are obsolete or defective, posing unsanitary or unsafe conditions, are vacant and unused, and have inappropriate uses, and that the present condition of the area substantially impairs the sound functioning of the area and its environs. The Council found that the area is a blighted area within the meaning of MCA 7-15-4210, and stated that "rehabilitation, redevelopment, or a combination thereof is necessary in the interest of public health, safety and welfare of the residents." The

Council found that undertaking measures to eradicate or diminish the blight will help to foster a more dynamic, livable, and vibrant neighborhood.

Progress has occurred within the District, as evidenced by: 1) increase in taxable value: base year value of $1,800,794, increased to a 2014 value of $2,502,968 *(Montana Department of Revenue Form AB-72T, 8-4-2014*); 2) successful approval of both the EBURD Master Plan and the Exposition Gateway Plan; 3) successful implementation of the recommended Parking Overlay District; 4) accomplishment of the recommended two-way streets conversion; 5) completion of EPA Brownfields Program environmental assessments on 23 parcels; 6) successful adoption of the EBURD Zoning Code; 7) completion of a Hospitality Corridor Study; and 8) approval of a project to address flooding, storm water management, and infrastructure improvements in the eastern-most portion of the District. However, many of the undesirable conditions continue to exist, and several out-of-City properties adjacent to the District have now petitioned and been approved for annexation into the City (City Council meeting, 1-26-2015). Therefore, it would be in the best interest of the City to expand the District to encompass adjacent properties, construct needed public infrastructure improvements, increase growth of the tax base, increase the parking inventory, increase the inventory of residential property, stimulate mixed-use development, and further implement the visions of the EBURD Master Plan and the Exposition Gateway Plan, both of which are consistent with the adopted City-County Growth Policy.

Although there has been improvement in the valuation of property in much of the District, the area defined by this proposed expanded tax increment district still has pockets of neglect and blight. The 2015 Expanded EBURD creates an opportunity to continue redevelopment in the center of Billings with a mixture of public and private investment.

The 2015 expansion of the EBURD is essential to planned development along Exposition Drive/Main Street, across from the MetraPark facilities. Public infrastructure construction within this expanded District will spur private investment consistent with the EBURD Master Plan, and especially pertinent to the vision of the Exposition Gateway Plan. It is expected that the expanded District may help fund the following projects:

I. Business Programs and Projects

a. Business Retention and Recruitment
    i. Targeted assistance to existing and potential businesses
    ii. Development of "The EBURD Advantage" marketing materials

iii. Collaboration with and referral to Big Sky Economic Development and its business assistance programs

II. Parking and Transportation

a. Facilitate public transit and bicycle/pedestrian-friendly growth and development
b. Collaborate with City regarding parking management practices and programs consistent with the Parking Overlay District
c. Plan for future needs regarding parking lots and/or structures

III. Management, Implementation and Maintenance

a. Billings Industrial Revitalization District, Inc. or its successor, management agreement
   i. Project development
   ii. Public awareness
   iii. Advocacy and liaison between public and private sectors
b. Potential future development of Business Improvement District
   i. Development and promotion of a MetraPark-to-Downtown Corridor through the EBURD
   ii. Crime prevention and public safety:
   Cooperative Security and/or Business Watch Program

IV. Infrastructure Improvements

a. Public
   i. Public parking
   ii. Landscaping and park development
   iii. Street construction/improvements
   iv. Streetscapes and traffic calming plans
   v. Sidewalks, curbs and gutter improvements
   vi. Storm water management
   vii. Water and waste-water line construction/improvements
   viii. Relocation of public and private utility lines

In order to make it possible to move forward with the much-needed infrastructure improvement projects referenced above, the Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners transferred any interest it had in the public right of way on several streets within the Exposition Gateway area to the City of Billings, with Resolution 15-23, passed on March 10, 2015.

b. Public infrastructure improvements will support investments in:
   i. Workforce housing development
   ii. Parking facilities
   iii. Lodging facilities
   iv. Conference facilities
   v. Entertainment venues
   vi. Retail and restaurant enterprises

V. Housing Improvements

a. Increase in workforce housing and live-work mixed-use projects

b. Revitalization and redevelopment of sub-standard residential housing stock

SECTION 3-SUMMARY OF BLIGHT FINDINGS

The area in the proposed 2015 expansion of the EBURD contains blight, particularly those parcels directly west of the MetraPark facilities which host events that attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Within the district there is structural deterioration, under-utilized structures and vacant lots, and a railroad spur line that is little used. A major issue that rises to the forefront in every planning discussion is that of inadequate storm water management. Without curb and gutter to direct its flow, water pools in low spots and floods buildings. Several of the commercial buildings in the district are deteriorated and/or vacant and need demolition or renovation. Sidewalks are cracked or non-existent; alleys are deteriorated, and, in general, much of the area is below accepted standards. In contrast to the above, there are certain properties within the district in good repair but included in the district to allow for a contiguous block of land within the district and because pockets of revitalization cannot be sustained if areas of neglect and blight surround them. Over time, without ongoing managed urban renewal, even these success stories could once again decline in taxable value.

SECTION 4- DESCRIPTION OF BLIGHTED AREA

The 2015 expanded urban renewal area described for this amended Plan incorporates most of the Exposition Gateway area, including those properties annexed in January 2015. Major flooding problems occur with rainstorms, as the infrastructure is inadequate for storm water flow and drainage. The subject properties have been used as car sales lots, truck and truck parts sales, vacant lots partially used for equipment storage, as well as some active business enterprises. Many of these structures are unsuited to their current uses because of age obsolescence and physical deterioration.

Montana‘s Urban Renewal Law (Montana Code Annotated Title 7, Chapter 15, Parts 42 and 43) provides the authority to declare the existence of blighted areas and to target them for improvements. “Blighted area” is defined in Section 7-15-4206(2), M.C.A., as follows:

> *[A]n area that is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime; substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the city or its environs; retards the provision of housing accommodations; or constitutes an economic or social liability or is detrimental or constitutes a menace to the public health, safety, welfare, and morals in its present condition and use, by reason of:*

(a) the substantial physical dilapidation; deterioration; defective construction, material, and arrangement; or age obsolescence of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential;
(b) inadequate provision for ventilation, light, proper sanitary facilities, or open spaces as determined by competent appraisers on the basis of an examination of the building standards of the municipality;
(c) inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings;
(d) high density of population and overcrowding;
(e) defective or inadequate street layout;
(f) faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
(g) excessive land coverage;
(h) unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
(i) deterioration of site;
(j) diversity of ownership;
(k) tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
(l) defective or unusual conditions of title;
(m) improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
(n) the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes; or
(o) any combination of the factors listed in this subsection (2).

The land being added to the Plan area in 2015 includes 14 property tax codes, as listed in Exhibit A, with total assessed value of $4,871,639. As noted in the 2006 approved Urban Renewal Plan, there are specific "target areas" that should be immediately considered for redevelopment. The properties on Exposition Drive represent an immediate opportunity to capitalize on the traffic generated by MetraPark events.

The EBURD area is part of Census Tract 2, with a population of 3,751. Within the tract, 28.98 percent of residents live below the Federal Poverty Line, with an estimated 2014 median family income of $30,263. By comparison, in the greater Billings population of 109,059, only 13.1 percent live below the Federal Poverty Line. (*www.ffiec.gov/geocode/CensusDemo 07-01-2014 & http://quickfacts.census.gov.)*

There are 1,995 housing units in Tract 2, with 61.7 percent of the units (1,231) built prior to 1960 (55 years ago or more). Of those 1,231 older units, 546 were built in 1939 or earlier. Of the 446 owner-occupied housing units in the tract, 96 percent (428) are valued at less than $200,000. In fact, 85 of the 446 units (19.1 percent) are valued at less than $100,000. Indeed, there are a few occupied housing units (16) that lack complete plumbing and/or kitchen facilities. The tract holds 1,243 units where occupants are paying rent. The majority of renters (52.4 percent) pay between $500 and $749 per month. However, 29.2 percent (363 renters) pay between $200 and $499 per month. There are even a number of renters (23) living in units at less than $200 per month. Census Tract 2 has a somewhat transient population. Of the 1,689 households, 83.9 percent, or 1,418 householders, moved into the current unit in 2000 or more recently.

Only 16 percent, or 271 householders, have resided in the current unit since 1999 or prior years. (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Table DP04 10-22-14.*)

Public transit, walking and bicycling facilities are important for the area, as 21.6 percent of households (365) do not have a vehicle available. Moreover, the tract houses 406 students in kindergarten through eighth-grade, along with 25 high school attendees and 248 college students. In commuting to work, although the majority of those age 16 and over drove or carpooled to work (72.6 percent), a significant number - 14.9 percent (285 people) - walked to work, and 11.1 percent (212 people) used public transportation or other means of getting to work. (U.S.CensusBureau,2008-2012AmericanCommunity *Survey 5-year Estimates, Tables DP03 & S1401 10-22-14.)*

The EBURD census tract, along with the nearby Heights-Main Street area, is designated by the Billings Police Department as "Beat 3," or the "East" patrol beat. The East Beat has experienced, over the past three years, increasing numbers of calls for service. In the year 2011, the East Beat had 7,756 calls. Number of calls increased to 9,804 in 2012, and jumped to 10,507 (third highest beat of the nine in the City) for 2013. *(Billings Police Department 2013 Annual Report, www.ci.billings.mt.us.)* Unfortunately, there have recently been two murder incidents in the area as well. Parks personnel, during the October conference on addressing homeless/transient issues, mentioned that homeless individuals are congregating under the Rims in the EBURD, as well as in North Park.

Brownfields, defined as areas with actual or perceived environmental contamination issues, can contribute to unsafe and dangerous conditions, as well as discourage redevelopment efforts. Big Sky Economic Development, in a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, has secured funding for environmental assessments of properties in the EBURD. With its first round of funding, Big Sky Economic Development contracted with an environmental engineering firm to assess 23 parcels of land in the EBURD to determine "Phase I" conditions (looking at the historical uses of the property and assessing any observed potential contamination issues). In addition, nine parcels were examined with more in-depth "Phase II" assessments, where soil and water testing took place. While none of the completed Phase II assessments pointed to remediation requirements, there are still a number of sites that are advised for Phase II assessment, and many parcels that have not received any environmental assessment to date. Big Sky Economic Development has secured additional EPA Brownfields Program funding with which to accomplish additional environmental assessments in the EBURD beginning in spring 2015, at no cost to property owners who volunteer for the program.

SECTION 5 - DETERMINATION OF BLIGHT

The proposed EBURD Expansion area contains a number of underdeveloped properties and substandard facilities. The Council previously determined that the property included in the EBURD was "blighted" within the meaning of the Act in its adoption of Ordinance #06-5395 that (a) created the East Billings Urban Renewal District (EBURD) and (b) adopted an urban renewal plan for the district (November 16, 2006). Deficiencies in public and private properties located in the district lead to a determination of blight, as defined by state statute. As cited in the original Urban Renewal Plan, the area still meets several definitions of blight:

Deficient Structures in Area (*the substantial physical dilapidation; deterioration; defective construction, material, and arrangement; or age obsolescence of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential; deterioration of site)*

There are several buildings and residential structures that are over 50 years in age and do not qualify as being historically significant. Many are in poor repair and may contain potentially hazardous asbestos and lead paint.

While streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks in some of the area are in satisfactory repair, there are areas without such improvements. Sewer and water utilities in the area are aging and/or inadequate. Flooding occurs within public right-of-way as well as on private property during heavy rain events. Several parking lots generally do not meet code requirements for paving, striping and landscaping. Many of them are cracked and crumbling. Demand for parking will continue and District managers will collaborate with the City to accommodate commercial growth in alignment with the adopted Parking Overlay District.

Deficient Land Use (*inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings; defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness)*

In general, the 2015 expansion area is under-utilized due to the significant amount of surface used as storage or left vacant. Most structures are single-story. There are vacant lots, storage lots, and auto sales lots directly across the street from Montana's largest indoor entertainment complex and trade-show facilities. The taxable value of this district must be stabilized and encouraged to grow.

Protecting Public Health & Safety (*unsanitary or unsafe conditions; the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes)*

The conditions of blight, crime, vagrancy and potential brownfields, as described above, reduce "social capital" and community connectedness. Flooding promotes mold growth and related health problems.

SECTION 6- THE SITE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITY

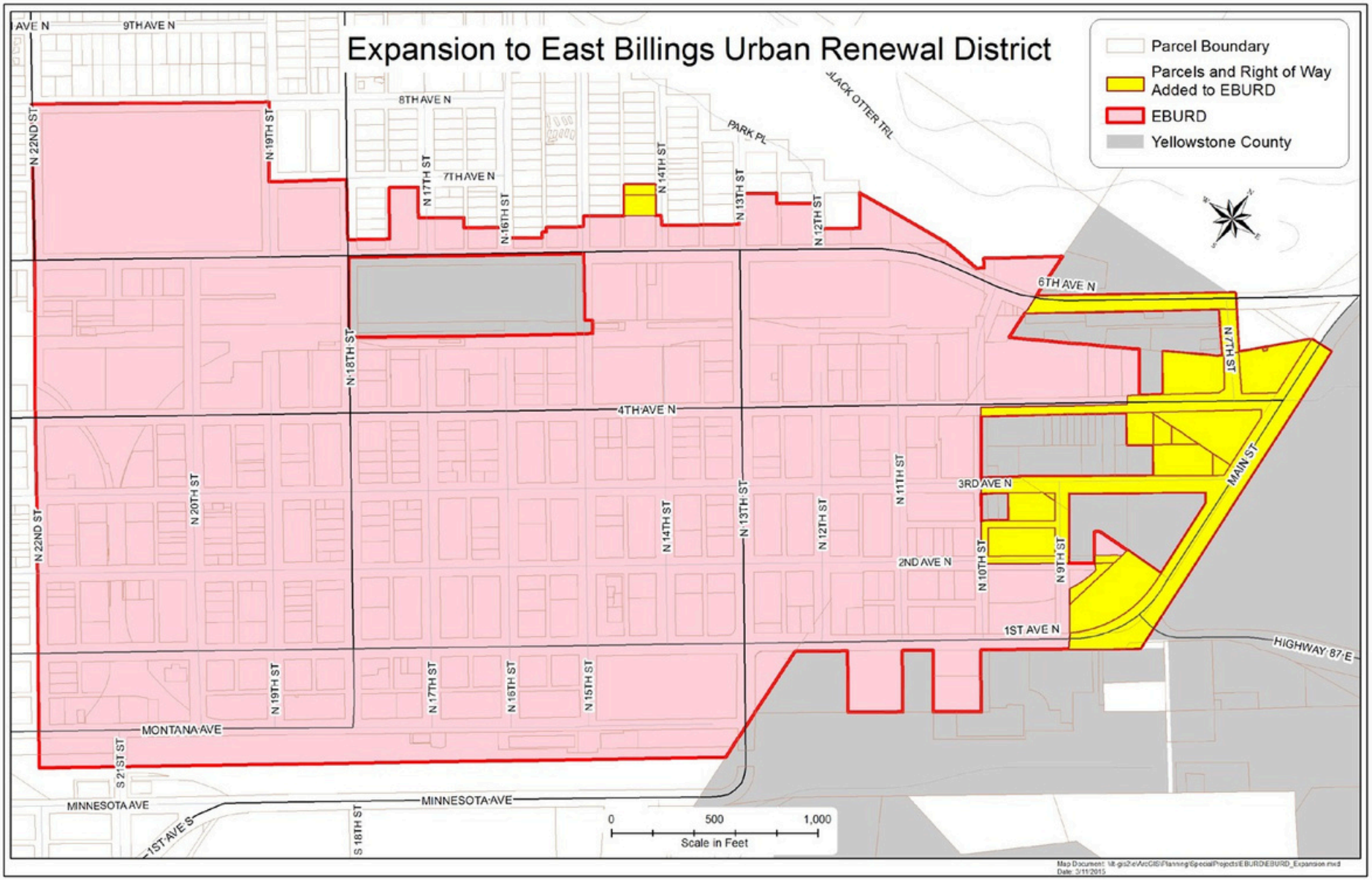
The Expanded EBURD occupies the center of the City of Billings, adjacent to the Downtown Central Business District and the medical corridor to the west; connecting to the Billings Heights area via Main Street to the northeast; welcoming visitors from Lockwood and beyond via 1st Avenue North to the southeast; and meeting up with the Rimrocks to the north.

SECTION 7- LEGAL DESCRIPTION

The legal description of the proposed 2015 Expanded East Billings Urban Renewal District is as follows: Beginning at a point at the centerlines of the intersection of 1st Avenue North and North 10th Street and proceeding east to the centerline of Exposition Drive/Main Street, and proceeding north from the intersection of 1st Avenue North and Exposition Drive/Main Street to the intersection of 6th Avenue North and Exposition Drive/Main Street, and from the intersection of 6th Avenue North and Exposition Drive/Main Street, proceeding west to the intersection of 6th Avenue North and North 10th Street, and proceeding south from the intersection of 6th Avenue North and Exposition Drive/Main Street to the intersection of 1st Avenue North and North 10th Street, encompassing all parcels and tax codes therein.

Pleasesee map on following page.

In addition, we propose to add property designated as Tax Code A12053 (North Park Subd., S33, T01N, R 26E, Block 2, Lot 11-12) and property designated as Tax Code A12052 (North Park Subd., S33, T01 N, R26E, Block 2, Lot 7-10).. These lots, are slated for expansion of the Billings Carpet Cleaning activities.


Expansion to East Billings Urban Renewal District
Parcel Boundary
Parcels and Right of Way Added to EBURD
EBURD
Yellowstone County
9TH AVE N
8TH AVE N
7TH AVE N
6TH AVE N
4TH AVE N
3RD AVE N
2ND AVE N
1ST AVE N
MONTANA AVE
MINNESOTA AVE
1ST AVE S
HIGHWAY 87 E
MAIN ST
PARK PL
JACK OTTER TRL
N 22ND ST
N 19TH ST
N 18TH ST
N 17TH ST
N 16TH ST
N 15TH ST
N 14TH ST
N 13TH ST
N 12TH ST
N 11TH ST
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N 7TH ST
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500
1,000
Scale in Feet

SECTION 8- PROPERTY DEVELOPERS

New development and revitalization inthe proposed 2015 expanded urban renewal district will be accomplished with private investmentand public-private partnerships, through the implementation of the EBURD Master Plan and the ExpositionGateway Plan. As outlined in Section 2 above, improvements in infrastructure will spur investments in workforce housing development, parking facilities, lodging facilities, conference facilities, entertainment venues, as well as retail and restaurant enterprises.

SECTION 9-PROJECT RELATIONSHIP TO THE EBURD MASTER PLAN & EXPOSITION GATEWAY PLAN

The proposed urban renewal area and expanded tax increment district is located generally in the center of the City and encompasses several "districts" as defined by the EBURD Master Plan and the EBURD Code. The EBURD Master Plan contemplated eventual annexation of County properties adjacent to the original urban renewal district, and this Amended Urban Renewal Plan seeks to accomplish that end.

One goal of the EBURD Plan was to develop a zoning code unique to the vision of the EBURD. The new code was established and adopted in October 2012, following several months of committee work and public meetings, with consultation from a professional firm known for, literally, writing the book on form-based code options. Form-based code considers the look of the facility and its surrounding landscape, rather than basing zoning purely on the use of the facility. The new code allows for increased flexibility in uses, which was desired by landowners and developers in the area.

Generally, the EBURD Master Plan stressed the area's ability to make a positive impact on the entire city. The Plan also recommended a private non-profit organization to assist the City of Billings with the management of the Tax Increment District through an annual work plan and contract. This expanded EBURD may be managed in a similar manner and could make use of the redevelopment and facilitation established through that management entity, the Billings Industrial Revitalization District, Inc.

The Plan names housing as an important priority, and recommends that the City continue to work with builders and developers to encourage downtown housing through various methods. Specifically, the plan encourages housing in the Rail Spur Village. However, live-work space is allowed in several EBURD districts, as outlined in the adopted EBURD Code. The formation of an expanded tax increment district will

increase funding for construction or rehabilitation of public infrastructure necessary to attract, retain, and improve housing in the area.

The guiding principles developed through the EBURD Master Plan were built upon the goals of the original Urban Renewal Plan, and continue to guide today's efforts: 1) Foster economic growth; 2) Foster distinct mixed-use, industrial, and hospitality centers; 3) Create affordable housing opportunities and choices; 4) Ensure existing industrial uses can continue to operate as desired; 5) Improve the natural beauty of the District by reintroducing trees and other features; 6) Extend pedestrian and bike trail connections to downtown, Heights, MetraPark and the Yellowstone River; 7) Integrate edges of the District with North Park neighborhood, medical corridor, and downtown; 8) Provide a variety of transportation choices and connections; 9) Complete sewer and storm water infrastructure; and 10) Understand and reduce environmental risks.

Guided by the above principles, several critical action plan steps have already been accomplished: successful approval of both the EBURD Master Plan and the Exposition Gateway Plan; successful implementation of the recommended Parking Overlay District; accomplishment of the recommended two-way streets conversion; completion of EPA Brownfields Program environmental assessments on 23 parcels, with more to take place beginning in 2015; successful adoption of the EBURD Zoning Code; completion of a transportation corridor study; and development of a plan to address flooding, storm water management, and infrastructure improvements in the eastern-most portion of the District. This amendment to the Plan and the urban renewal projects that it contemplates will continue to act upon the Plan's guiding principles.

SECTION 10- CONFORMANCE TO THE GROWTH POLICY

One of the requirements of Montana's Urban Renewal Law (Title 7, Chapter 15, Parts 42 and 43) is that the urban renewal plan must conform to the community's growth policy. The Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2008 Growth Policy ("Growth Policy") aligns with EBURD redevelopment in a variety of ways. This amendment to the East Billings Urban Renewal Plan is consistent with the current Growth Policy. Specifically, the expanded EBURD revitalization efforts meet several Community Goals and Objectives outlined on pages 6-16 of the 2008 Growth Policy:

A. Revitalization in the EBURD meets the goal of contiguous development and of the City's Infill Policy. Revitalization also helps to address the issue stated in the Growth Policy that urban sprawl threatens the rural character of land surrounding Billings, increases the cost of providing public services and threatens the vitality of the city core and downtown area.

B. Development in the EBURD, especially in the Rail Spur Village area, works toward the goal of affordable housing for all income levels dispersed throughout the City and County. Development of housing helps to address the Growth Policy issue which stated that there is a serious lack of affordable housing for low to moderate income households.

C. Adoption of the more-flexible EBURD Code and continued development efforts in the expanded area help achieve the goal of more housing and business choices within each neighborhood. Moreover, continued development in accordance with the new code assists in addressing the stated issue that there is a desire for more mixed-use neighborhoods.

D. Addition of the Exposition Gateway area to the existing TIF District helps achieve goals to encourage economic development in the neighborhood, encourage new businesses to locate in a prime gateway area, and sets the stage for enhancement of both the functionality and the visual appeal of the entrance to Billings from Lockwood (1st Avenue North & Exposition Drive/Main Street). As noted in the Growth Policy, entryways to our communities should be attractive and not present physical barriers discouraging economic development.

E. The EBURD is adjacent to downtown Billings, and revitalization of the area, as it continues to develop, will contribute toward the vitality and increased safety for visitors and shoppers.As stated in the Growth Policy, safety is an important element.

F. Expansion of the EBURD TIF District assists in meeting the goal of more visually appealing communities, improving the image of the area across the street from the Metra Park facilities and instilling pride in this area of town.Enhancing visual appeal helps to address the Growth Policy's stated issue that there are areas in the City and County that are unattractive and present a poor image of the community.

G. Improvements to the area as envisioned in the Exposition Gateway Plan can lead to a visually appealing design that incorporates the needs not only of vehicular traffic entering the area from Lockwood and from Main Street, but also improves pedestrian access between the Metra Park facilities and new development in the Expo Gateway.Improvements in the proposed expansion area will aid in addressing the Growth Policy's issue that the design of roads, streets, and pedestrian facilities can be more attractive and functional.

H. Expansion of the EBURD TIF District will contribute toward the goal of a well-maintained network of safe and interconnected sidewalks by addressing the critical need for sidewalks, curb and gutter in theExpo Gateway area. As noted in the Growth Policy, the sidewalk system in the City needs upgrading; many sidewalks are cracked and broken,s everal critical sections are missing, and important sidewalk routes are not adequately maintained.

I. Expansion of the District to include the Expo Gateway area assists the City toward its goal of sanitary and safe properties, with an improved community image and an increase in property values. Advancing toward this goal helps to address the stated issue that there are dilapidated and unsafe properties in neighborhoods.

J. Expansion of the District allows access to TIF District funding for a long-neglected infrastructure upgrade, moving the City toward its goal of equitable collection and distribution of funding for public services and facilities. Moreover, the expansion assists the City in achieving its objective to ensure that facilities and services are maintained in existing neighborhoods as new neighborhoods are added. The Growth Policy notes that funding for community facilities and infrastructure is very limited; prudent use of TIF District funds assists in solving the limited funding issue.

K. Expansion of the TIF District to include the Expo Gateway area aligns with the City's goal of adaptive reuse of vacant structures, conserving resources, preserving landmarks, preserving neighborhood integrity, and taking advantage of economic development opportunities. Adaptive reuse helps to address the stated issue that there are vacant structures around Billings and in the County that could be reused.

L. Expansion of the EBURD TIF District, leading to development of live-work enterprises and additional workforce housing options, helps move toward the goal of adequate affordable housing and more options for housing, potentially in an area very near to work opportunities. Achievement of these goals assists in solving the stated Growth Policy issue that poor housing and lack of living wage jobs puts the health of residents at risk.

The Growth Policy lists Urban Renewal Districts as an implementation strategy to revitalize neighborhoods, and expansion of the EBURD aligns well with that revitalization strategy.

SECTION 11- CERTAIN PLAN FEATURES ADN FINANCIAL MATTERS

Section 7-15-4217, M.C.A., of the Act requires cities to make certain findings when they adopt an urban renewal plan and approve Urban Renewal Projects. These are addressed below:

1. The existing EBURD contains 133 housing units that are home to 305 people (*U.S. Census 2010, per Leslie Zolman, GISP, Montana Dept. of Commerce Census and Information Center, 5-7-2014)*. For the entire Census Tract, including the North Park neighborhood, there are 1,995 housing units, of which 1,689 are occupied and 306 are vacant (*U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Table DP04, 10-22-14).* Planned projects would not displace any persons from housing. Accordingly, there is no need to have a workable and feasible plan for substitute housing until and unless such a project is developed in the future.

2. This amended East Billings Urban Renewal Plan conforms to the Growth Policy for the City as a whole, and also to the EBURD Master Plan and the Exposition Gateway Plan.

3. This Modified Plan affords maximum opportunity, consistent with the needs of the City as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the Expanded EBURD by private enterprise. It is unreasonable to expect that the district will be stabilized and/or redeveloped without substantial public support. Some properties within the area are dilapidated. As presently constituted, property in the district is not conducive to any sort of uniform or integrated development and, as presently existing, cannot compete with other areas of the City for substantial developments, particularly areas at the outskirts of the City. This amended Plan is intended to facilitate the identification and construction of significant Urban Renewal Projects, which would not be possible without this Plan.

4. A sound and adequate financial program exists for financing projects, which include the sale and issuance by the City of tax increment finance bonds. Subsequent approved development projects will require commitments of substantial private financing that will provide the primary means for funding construction of the improvements and revitalization efforts.

5. This 2015 Expanded EBURD may be modified at any time by the City Council as necessary to eliminate and prevent the development or spread of blighted areas, and encourage urban rehabilitation. The process for plan modification shall follow the procedures set forth in 7-15-4212 through 7-15-4219 MCA, with respect to initial adoption of this plan. For purposes of urban renewal district boundary changes only, the notice of public hearing, as described in 7-15-4215 MCA, may be mailed only to those owners whose properties are situated within the area of expansion of the Urban Renewal District boundaries. Notice will be mailed to those property owners whose properties are within the area of expansion.

SECTION 12- TAX INCREMENT

Tax increment financing is necessary to encourage private reinvestment within the District, which will further encourage economic growth in the District and the City, create substantial employment opportunities, and increase the tax base of the City and other taxing jurisdictions. The 2015 Expanded EBURD is hereby established as a tax increment financing urban renewal area within the meaning of the

Act, and, in particular, Section 7-15-4282 through 7-15-4293 of the Act. This Section constitutes a tax increment provision within the meaning of the Act. In connection with the expansion:

1. For the purpose of calculating the incremental taxable value each year for the life of the district, the base taxable value shall be calculated as base taxable value of the original district as of [January 1, 2006] plus the base taxable value of all real and personal property added to the district by this amended plan and as shown in Exhibit A as of January 1, 2015.

2. The City is hereby authorized to segregate the tax increment derived in the district and use and deposit such increment into the tax increment fund of the district for use as authorized by the Act and as authorized herein from time to time, including, without limitation, pledging the tax increment to repayment of Bonds.

3. The tax increment received from the district may be used to pay directly costs of an approved Development Project as may from time to time be approved by the Council. The Council also hereby authorizes the use of tax increment in the district to pay debt service on bonds issued to finance a portion of the costs of these development projects, and costs associated with the sale and security of such bonds (including any necessary reserve funds) in compliance with the Act, subject to any limitations imposed by the Montana Constitution and federal law.

4. The tax increment provision of the district will terminate upon the latter of:
   a. The fifteenth (15th) year following the original creation of the district; or
   b. The payment or provision for payment in full or discharge of all bonds, and the payment of interest thereon, for which the tax increment has been pledged.

After termination of the tax increment provision, all taxes shall continue to be levied upon the actual taxable value of the taxable property in the district, but shall be paid into funds of the taxing bodies levying taxes within the district.

SECTION 13- CONCLUSIONS

The creation of this expanded East Billings Urban Renewal District will have a positive impact on central Billings, and is an essential first step in completing what may be a number of urban renewal projects.

Estimates calculated by ECO-Northwest in preparation of the Exposition Gateway Plan indicate that development in the Expo Gateway has a potential new value of nearly $65 million, with potential TIFD revenues of slightly more than $1 million *(Financial Analysis, ECO-Northwest, April 8, 2013)*. The figures are preliminary estimates; actual values and tax revenue will vary based on type, size and timing of development. Expansion of the district, in addition to further stabilizing the tax base, eliminating blight and providing renaissance to the EBURD, will also bring new employees and residents to the area.

ECO-Northwest states that the Expo Gateway District offers desirable locational attributes:

> The Gateway District has several important locational advantages relative to other areas in Billings that make it a prime area for development in the hospitality and retail sectors.
>
> - Proximity to downtown. It is centrally located near employment and commercial uses in the Central Business District, the medical campuses, and the University (directly to the west).
> - Proximity to MetraPark. The county-owned multi-function facility has an indoor arena, rodeo grounds, a horse track, open space and other facilities. MetraPark has a long history of successful operation (850,000 to 1 million visitors per year, with 30% coming from over 100 miles away, per Sandra Hawke, MetraPark, February 2009), and provides opportunities for complementary meeting space and catering facilities.
> - Proximity to the airport. It is closer to Billings Logan Airport (3 miles) than many areas in the Central Business District as well as areas in south and east Billings.
> - Proximity to amenities and commercial areas. It is in close proximity to commercial areas downtown and in Billings Heights, which is a commercial and residential hub to the north.
> - Proximity to regional highways. The District lies at the intersection of 212, I-90 and I-94.
>
> The key comparative advantage for the area is its central location *between* downtown and MetraPark (and between the West End and the Heights) on flat land with urban services. It is a good location for urban development. *(ECO-Northwest, Existing Market Conditions Assessment, May 22, 2013)*

As stated in the Exposition Gateway Plan and as stated herein, the Exposition Gateway area requires repair and improvement to streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks and the water and sewer utilities are inadequate. The City hereby approves, as an urban renewal project for the District, the reconstruction of the streets from Main Street to North 11th Street and between 1st Avenue North to 4th Avenue North in accordance with the Exposition Gateway Concept Plan. The streets included in the construction limits are North 9th Street, North 10th Street, 2nd Avenue North, and 3rd Avenue North. Construction includes full street construction, sidewalk, bulb-outs at the corners, on-street parking, new sanitary sewer, new water mains, and storm drain upgrades. In order to make it possible to move forward with this much-needed infrastructure improvement project, the Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners transferred any interest it had in the public right of way on streets within the Exposition Gateway area to the City of Billings, with Resolution 15-23, passed on March 10, 2015.

The Council through adoption of the modified East Billings Urban Renewal District hereby approves financing of the improvement project described above with proceeds of tax increment bonds payable from tax increment generated by the District. Such bonds will be issued in a principal amount such that the debt service thereon can be paid from tax increment generated by the District over a period of 25 years. The City hereby finds that there is a feasible and workable plan for financing the improvements.

Expansion of the East Billings Urban Renewal District to include the property described in this amended Plan will have a positive effect on the area and on the City. Improvements to infrastructure will surely be the catalyst in attracting the desired types of development, and will spur further achievement in reaching the goals of the overall EBURD Master Plan.

Please see Exhibit A on next page.

EXHIBIT A 2015 EBURD Expansion

TAXID	ASSESSED VALUE	TAXID	MARKET VALUE	TAXABLE VALUE	TAXID	LOT SIZE (Approx. Sq. Ft.)
1002286 Total	$1,720.00	**1002286 Total**	$912.00	$23.00	1002286	0
A09340 Total	$792,286.00	**A09340 Total**	$621,944.00	$15,362.00	A09340	44344.08
A09343 Total	$688,400.00	**A09343 Total**	$540,394.00	$13,347.00	A09343	29403
A09355 Total	$265,451.00	**A09355 Total**	$208,379.00	$5,147.00	A09355	42383.88
A09355B Total	$45,930.00	**A09355B Total**	$36,055.00	$891.00	A09355B	6403.32
A09373 Total	$498,600.00	**A09373 Total**	$391,401.00	$9,667.00	A09373	19035.72
A09374 Total	$71,910.00	**A09374 Total**	$56,449.00	$1,394.00	A09374	10628.64
A09375 Total	$43,862.00	**A09375 Total**	$34,432.00	$850.00	A09375	6054.84
D05887 Total	$358,428.00	**D05887 Total**	$281,366.00	$6,949.00	D05887	56628
D05888 Total	$444,941.00	**D05888 Total**	$349,279.00	$8,628.00	D05888	69260.4
D05893 Total	$593,800.00	**D05893 Total**	$466,133.00	$11,513.00	D05893	56628
D05897 Total	$14,973.00	**D05897 Total**	$11,754.00	$290.00	D05897	1306.8
D05898 Total	$917,363.00	**D05898 Total**	$720,129.00	$17,787.00	D05898	91911.6
I01092A Total	$19,200.00	**I01092A Total**	$15,072.00	$372.00	I01092A	0
Total	$4,756,864.00	**Total**	$3,733,699.00	$92,220.00		

A12052	$92,800.00	A12052	$49,184.00	$1,215.00	$ A12052	15000
A12053	$21,975.00	A12053	$11,647.00	201.00	A12053	7500
Grand Total				$93,636.00		
	$4,871,639.00		$3,794,530.00			

Exhibit A figures provided by Yellowstone County GIS