



City of Sidney, MT
Public Works Committee Meeting
August 19, 2026 5:30 PM
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

1. Call to Order

The Public Works Committee met in regular session on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

City Officials/ Staff Present:

Committee Present: DiFonzo, Larson, Buxbaum (for Christensen) and Harris

City Officials/Staff Present: Mayor Norby, Interim CAO Chamberlin, PWD Hintz, Clerk/Treasurer Lange, PW Operations Manager Meissel, Parks Superintendent Ridl

4. Correction or Approval of Minutes

a. July 15th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Alderman DiFonzo stated there was a correction to the minutes. Under #9 it references Chair Larson instead of Alderwoman. Interim CAO Chamberlin stated the correction will be made.

Motion was made by Alderwoman Larson and seconded by Alderwoman Buxbaum to approve the minutes from the July 15th, 2026 meeting with the stated correction. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment/ Visitors

Your opportunity for the public to address the Council on items not included on the agenda, no action will be taken during this time.

There was no public comment.

6. Monthly Reports

a. July 2026 Public Works Report

PWD Hintz reported that Public Works operations remain on schedule. Crews completed several paving projects and were preparing for chip sealing. The asphalt paver experienced mechanical issues during the Sunflower project, and the hydraulic pump is planned for rebuilding this winter. Water operations remain stable with continued employee cross-training, while wastewater staff is addressing electronic module issues associated with the UV treatment system. Seasonal mowing and remaining construction projects also continue.

PWD Hintz reported that approximately 508 tons of garbage were collected in July, the highest July tonnage since 2019, although August was trending closer to historical levels. The Committee discussed increased residential waste, particularly cardboard and packaging associated with online shopping, increased requests for additional garbage containers, recycling limitations, and unauthorized dumping as possible contributors.

Interim CAO Chamberlin presented an Increased Garbage Services Plan focused on documenting abnormal loads and illegal dumping, analyzing route and operational costs, increasing public education regarding garbage and recycling options, and reviewing signage and enforcement where necessary. The Committee agreed additional data should be gathered before considering service or rate changes.

- b. PW Superintendent Rotation: Steph Ridl, Parks Superintendent
Parks Superintendent Ridl provided an update on summer operations and identified ADA accessibility and aging irrigation infrastructure as the department's primary long-term needs. Many park irrigation systems are several decades old, largely manual, inefficient, and lack accurate underground mapping. These needs will be incorporated into the proposed Parks Master Plan to provide a coordinated approach to future improvements. At Moose Park, staff is awaiting updated design and pricing from Musco for replacement ballfield lighting and additional parking-area security lighting. Phased replacement and grant opportunities are being explored. The Lions Club has also expressed interest in pursuing grant funding for accessible sidewalk improvements at Quillings Park. Work toward the Veterans Park irrigation replacement continues, with major contracted construction anticipated in a future season. The new fitness court trail near the swimming pool has been completed, with a ribbon-cutting scheduled for September 3, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Additional discussion included playground surfacing and the outdoor ice rink. The Committee agreed these and other recreational improvements are best evaluated

comprehensively through the Parks Master Plan.

7. New Business

a. CivicPlus Meetings Training

Interim CAO Chamberlin provided a brief overview of the City's new CivicPlus meeting management system. The system provides public access to agendas, attachments, meeting information, and minutes, while Committee members have access to a Board Portal that includes meeting packets and private annotation tools.

b. Storm Sewer Improvements:

1. Gem City
2. 100 Block of East Main Alley
3. Rail Road

PWD Hintz presented three significant infrastructure priorities requiring near- and long-term planning.

Gem City Alley Sewer: Inspection following a recent manhole replacement identified deteriorated and partially collapsing Orangeburg sewer pipe with sediment accumulation and inadequate access for maintenance. PWD Hintz recommended prioritizing replacement of approximately 300–400 feet of sewer main and installation of an additional manhole over the previously budgeted Mitchellette and M3 Meats alley projects. The estimated cost is up to \$150,000, with construction proposed for fall 2026.

East Main/Cadillac Alley Sewer: The sanitary sewer serving the 100 block of East Main has experienced repeated backups and is more than 100 years old. Because the line has settled and contains significant low areas, full replacement is necessary rather than lining. Preliminary construction costs are approximately \$465,000, excluding engineering and resurfacing, with the total project potentially approaching \$600,000. The Committee supported beginning engineering and funding evaluation for future construction rather than undertaking the project during the current fiscal year.

Railroad Right-of-Way Stormwater: PWD Hintz identified the railroad right-of-way on the southeast side of Sidney as the next major stormwater priority. The area carries substantial drainage and contains vegetation and deadfall that restrict maintenance and create fire concerns. The anticipated project could cost approximately \$4–5 million and will require engineering, grant development, and long-term planning.

Stormwater Utility

The Committee discussed establishing a separate Stormwater Utility Fund before

committing substantial additional sanitary sewer resources to stormwater projects. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that separating sanitary sewer and stormwater expenses will provide a clearer understanding of the financial condition of each utility and assist with future rate decisions, financing, and grant applications.

Staff has completed much of the preliminary work for establishing the utility, with remaining decisions involving the fee structure, allocation of personnel and operating costs, and the appropriate level of capital funding. The Committee supported continuing development of the separate utility as part of the City's long-term stormwater strategy.

FY2026-2027 Sewer Budget Recommendation

The Committee agreed to postpone the previously budgeted Mitchelletto and M3 Meats alley projects and prioritize the Gem City sewer replacement.

Motion was made by Alderwoman Buxbaum and seconded by Alderwoman Larson to recommend approval of the prioritizing Gem City sewer project at a cost of up to \$150,000 and to include engineering costs for the East Main/Cadillac Alley sanitary sewer and railroad right-of-way stormwater projects in the FY2026-2027 budget once final estimates are obtained. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Unfinished Business

a. Increased Garbage Services Plan 2026

The Committee briefly revisited garbage and litter concerns at apartment complexes and other high-use locations. Staff will document recurring problems as part of the Increased Garbage Services Plan and work with property owners where appropriate.

Interim CAO Chamberlin also reported that staff will consult with City Attorney Kalil regarding emerging property-maintenance issues not clearly addressed by existing code, including clover and wildflower landscaping, boulevard gardens, and application of current mowing requirements.

9. Comments and Questions from the Committee

No further discussion was held.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]