

**From:** [Cole, Bill](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Chris Kukulski](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Laurel, MT Selected for New Forensic Behavioral Health Facility  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2025 1:45:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-xmek01h4.png](#)  
[Outlook-fee2f1ve.png](#)

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Dear Council Members:

This news broke yesterday afternoon and was included in a brief KTVQ story, which I believe will be supplemented later today.

Like Billings, Laurel did not submit a proposal to the state. However, it did send a letter saying that although there is no suitable property currently within the city limits, there is some privately-owned property located adjacent to the city limits that theoretically could be annexed if it were obtained by the state. As far as I know, the state has not yet acquired that property, and, if it does not already have an option locked up, I imagine the asking price just increased substantially.

Obviously, if the facility is eventually located in or near Laurel there will be costs and benefits for Billings that would be similar to if the facility were located within our city limits.

Bill

**Bill Cole, Mayor**  
**City of Billings, Montana**  
**[coleb@billingsmt.gov](mailto:coleb@billingsmt.gov)**  
**406-294-5700**

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**From:** Jon Forte <[jon.for@riverstonehealth.org](mailto:jon.for@riverstonehealth.org)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 28, 2025 3:05 PM  
**To:** Terri Todd <[giagives@gmail.com](mailto:giagives@gmail.com)>; Michael Yakawich <[yak.mike@gmail.com](mailto:yak.mike@gmail.com)>; Mike <[mike.yakawich@legmt.gov](mailto:mike.yakawich@legmt.gov)>; Dennis <[dennis.lenz@legmt.gov](mailto:dennis.lenz@legmt.gov)>; Vince Ricci <[ricthriftway@montana.com](mailto:ricthriftway@montana.com)>; Larry2 <[larry05@bresnan.net](mailto:larry05@bresnan.net)>; nelly.nicol@legmt.gov <[nelly.nicol@legmt.gov](mailto:nelly.nicol@legmt.gov)>; Jennifer <[jcarmody@billingsclinic.org](mailto:jcarmody@billingsclinic.org)>; Adam Schafer <[adam.schafer@imail.org](mailto:adam.schafer@imail.org)>; Ed Buttrey <[ed.buttrey@mtha.org](mailto:ed.buttrey@mtha.org)>; Heather O'Hara <[heather.ohara@mtha.org](mailto:heather.ohara@mtha.org)>; Duane Preshinger <[duane@mtha.org](mailto:duane@mtha.org)>; Luke Kobold <[lkobold@billingsclinic.org](mailto:lkobold@billingsclinic.org)>; Uriah Tuttle <[assistantadmin@billingslf.org](mailto:assistantadmin@billingslf.org)>; Gina Poor <[gpoor@altinc.net](mailto:gpoor@altinc.net)>; darmstrong@altinc.net <[darmstrong@altinc.net](mailto:darmstrong@altinc.net)>; Casey Page <[Casey.Pag@riverstonehealth.org](mailto:Casey.Pag@riverstonehealth.org)>; Melanie Schwarz <[melanie@leadupstream.com](mailto:melanie@leadupstream.com)>; Stacey Anderson <[sanderson@mtpca.org](mailto:sanderson@mtpca.org)>; Ed.Buttrey@legmt.gov <[Ed.Buttrey@legmt.gov](mailto:Ed.Buttrey@legmt.gov)>; Matt Kuntz <[matt@namimt.org](mailto:matt@namimt.org)>; John <[John.Esp@legmt.gov](mailto:John.Esp@legmt.gov)>; Jeffrey Keller <[jkeller@rimrock.org](mailto:jkeller@rimrock.org)>; Mike Chavers <[mchavers@ybgr.org](mailto:mchavers@ybgr.org)>; Jean Branscum <[jean@mmaoffice.org](mailto:jean@mmaoffice.org)>; Leonard Smith <[lsmith@nadc-nabn.org](mailto:lsmith@nadc-nabn.org)>; jodee.etchart@legmt.gov <[jodee.etchart@legmt.gov](mailto:jodee.etchart@legmt.gov)>; vince.ricci@legmt.gov <[vince.ricci@legmt.gov](mailto:vince.ricci@legmt.gov)>; Rod Ostermiller <[rostermiller@scmrmhc.org](mailto:rostermiller@scmrmhc.org)>; mmorse@yellowstonecountymt.gov <[mmorse@yellowstonecountymt.gov](mailto:mmorse@yellowstonecountymt.gov)>; Kaleb Perdew <[kaleb@cldibillings.org](mailto:kaleb@cldibillings.org)>; jpenwell@newdayranch.com <[jpenwell@newdayranch.com](mailto:jpenwell@newdayranch.com)>;

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**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Laurel, MT Selected for New Forensic Behavioral Health Facility



Colleagues - I hope you all had an enjoyable Thanksgiving with your families.

As expected, a Thanksgiving surprise occurred and Laurel, Montana was selected as the location for the new Eastern Montana Forensic Behavioral Health Center.

[Director's Office Letter](#)

[Letter from Laurel.pdf](#)

**Jonathan P. Forte, MHA, FACHE**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Yellowstone City-County Health Officer**

**RiverStone Health**  
**123 South 27th St. Billings, MT 59101**  
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*Our Mission is to Improve Life, Health, and Safety*

Wellbeing note: Did you receive this email outside of your normal working hours? RiverStone Health prioritizes work-life balance. I've sent this message at a time that works for me. Please respond at a time that works best for you.



[Book time to meet with me](#)

**From:** [Rupsis, Tom](#)  
**To:** [Greg Cook](#)  
**Cc:** [Council; "chris Kukulski"](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Still trying to find out why streets are closed on Division Street  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2025 5:59:24 AM

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Mr Cook -

Your last email was on Nov 10 and Public Works Director Debi Meling replied on the same date. The following is the information she sent about the closing of N 34th St to Division.

2) *How long will streets be blocked on Division?*

*With the two-way conversion, the skewed intersections along Division have been improved for safety---primarily by promoting full access including left turns at signalized intersections. Specifically, the only intersection that is closed to Division is North 34<sup>th</sup>. That intersection is about a hundred feet from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North intersection and safety was improved by eliminating turning movements onto and off of Division---access is still provided to adjacent business via North 34th. There is now a traffic signal at 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave North and Division that provides signalized access onto and off of Division that did not previously exist. Right-turn access with Division is provided at North 33<sup>rd</sup> and the short section of North 35<sup>th</sup> is provided right-turn access onto 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave North.*

Tom

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Tom Rupsis  
City Council - Ward 5  
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406-545-0701

On Nov 28, 2025 10:47 PM, Greg Cook <[grcook@bresnan.net](mailto:grcook@bresnan.net)> wrote:



Hello! I asked a question a few weeks ago about when the streets that are blocked off on Division will be reopened or if they are permanently closed. Chris A. Kukulski said he was going to find out and let me know but I didn't hear back from him. I haven't seen any public notice about why the streets are blocked off. Chris said it had to do with the striping. I didn't know that striping took 2 months. I've never seen this occur before in Billings. The streets have been blocked off for about 2 months and the striping can't be done while it's snowing. I use those streets. Will someone please let me know what is going on with this and when/if the streets will be reopened or are permanently closed. I'm asking you because I hope you can give me some guidance about this.

Thank you