

From: [katie harrison](#)
To: commission@yellowstonecountymt.gov
Cc: [.MayorAndCouncil](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bond proposal
Date: Saturday, January 3, 2026 6:42:39 AM



Dear Yellowstone County Commissioners,

You decided to end 2025 by voting to put a jail expansion on the 2026 ballot. From the reporting, it seems this is a very well worked through proposal:

“The proposed expansion would more than double the current jail capacity by adding 512 beds, with options in the future. The cost is estimated at \$227 million for more jail space. The proposal would also include an additional \$15 million levy for operations.... though exact costs for homeowners are still being determined.”

If public safety is truly your main concern, I’m wondering if you have considered prevention, and if you have thoroughly analyzed the reasons many “beds” are continuously full at our jail? Our jail is a revolving door for many of the same individuals there, and for very minor crimes (ie. public intoxication, pulling trash out of the trash can, etc. These are actual crimes people are being arrested for and held for and tried for and convicted for, over and over and over. What a waste of our money!!!)

If we don’t start working on prevention, there will never be enough beds in our jail. Billings is only growing. And our problems are only getting worse - unhoused people aren’t getting less unhoused, mental health problems aren’t getting better, addiction is not going away, and gangs are still recruiting.

If you got your team and resources together to focus on even just one of the above issues, I would bet my own life that those 512 beds would not only not be needed, but it would instead be 512 more citizens contributing to and bettering our community.

I as a homeowner do NOT vote for my hard earned money to go towards more incarceration which does NOTHING to prevent crime from happening in the first place.

Katie Harrison (She / Her)

Founder, SustainaBillings

Founder, Billings Stronger Together

Owner, Billings ReFill Shoppe

*May 2026 be the year we end single-use plastics!!!

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/style/plastic-free-living.html>

*Residing on the traditional lands of the Salish, Kootenai, Kalispel, Apsáalooke (Crow), and Cheyenne peoples, among many others who share this land. I recognize that we are settlers to this land and dedicate myself to honoring this history and these peoples, listening and learning, and working to repair the harms of colonization by teaching a new generation of civic leaders and supporting the work of our Native partners.

From: [Keith Dodds](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Safety Concern: Medical and Privacy Breach at YCDF
Date: Saturday, January 3, 2026 1:07:18 AM



Dear Mayor Cole and Members of the City Council,
I am a resident of Billings and was recently released from the Yellowstone County Detention Facility (YCDF). I am writing to inform you of a serious incident that raises concerns about the safety and management of the facility that the City of Billings utilizes for detaining local citizens.

Upon my release on January 2nd, I was handed another inmate's prescription medications and private medical records by mistake. Furthermore, during my stay, I was denied access to my own diagnosed mental health medications.

I have already reported this to the County Commissioners and federal authorities. However, as the City Council oversees the budget and contracts that utilize this facility, I believe it is critical for you to know that the current medical and property protocols at the jail are failing. This negligence creates a significant liability for the community and endangers the privacy of Billings residents.

I ask that the City Council look into the safety standards of the facility's medical provider to ensure that these types of dangerous errors do not continue.

Sincerely,
Keith leon dodds jr
4065917995

From: [Nelson, Mike](#)
To: [Kennedy, Bill](#); [Keehner, Toni](#); [.MayorAndCouncil](#); [Lindley, Andrew](#); [Pitman, Denis](#); [Aguirre, Amy](#); [Nicholson, Mark](#)
Subject: Re: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet
Date: Saturday, January 3, 2026 11:33:09 AM

Already on it. Thanks for the suggestion.

Mike

From: Kennedy, Bill <KennedyB@billingsmt.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 2, 2026 6:42 PM
To: Keehner, Toni <KeehnerT@billingsmt.gov>; .MayorAndCouncil <Mayor&Council@billingsmt.gov>; Nelson, Mike <NelsonM@billingsmt.gov>; Lindley, Andrew <LindleyA@billingsmt.gov>; Pitman, Denis <PitmanD@billingsmt.gov>; Aguirre, Amy <AguirreA@billingsmt.gov>; Nicholson, Mark <NicholsonM@billingsmt.gov>
Subject: Re: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet

With Scott not being at the work session on Monday we should remove item 3 on the agenda.

Bill Kennedy

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S24+, an AT&T 5G smartphone
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From: Keehner, Toni <KeehnerT@billingsmt.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 2, 2026 9:33:28 AM
To: .MayorAndCouncil <Mayor&Council@billingsmt.gov>; Nelson, Mike <NelsonM@billingsmt.gov>; Lindley, Andrew <LindleyA@billingsmt.gov>; Pitman, Denis <PitmanD@billingsmt.gov>; Aguirre, Amy <AguirreA@billingsmt.gov>; Nicholson, Mark <NicholsonM@billingsmt.gov>
Subject: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet

Good morning,

The City Council Agenda Packet for the upcoming Work Session has been published and posted to the City's website at the link below.

[January 5, 2026 Work Session Agenda Packet](#)

Thank you,



Toni Keehner
Deputy City Clerk
keehnert@billingsmt.gov

billingsmt.gov

316 North 26th Street
P.O. Box 1178 • Billings, MT 59103
P 406.247.8605 F 406.657.8390

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From: [Aguirre, Amy](#)
To: [Nelson, Mike](#); [Kennedy, Bill](#); [Keehner, Toni](#); [.MayorAndCouncil](#); [Lindley, Andrew](#); [Pitman, Denis](#); [Nicholson, Mark](#)
Subject: Re: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet
Date: Saturday, January 3, 2026 6:16:01 PM

Not to nitpick, but the disclaimer at the top is pretty dated.

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From: Nelson, Mike <NelsonM@billingsmt.gov>
Sent: Saturday, January 3, 2026 11:33:03 AM
To: Kennedy, Bill <KennedyB@billingsmt.gov>; Keehner, Toni <KeehnerT@billingsmt.gov>; .MayorAndCouncil <Mayor&Council@billingsmt.gov>; Lindley, Andrew <LindleyA@billingsmt.gov>; Pitman, Denis <PitmanD@billingsmt.gov>; Aguirre, Amy <AguirreA@billingsmt.gov>; Nicholson, Mark <NicholsonM@billingsmt.gov>
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billingsmt.gov

Toni Keehner
Deputy City Clerk
keehnert@billingsmt.gov

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