

From: [Sonia Davis](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Community Impact Study
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 6:38:31 PM



Dear Council,

Here is the link to the report I referenced during public comment at the Monday meeting. There is good data and solutions proposed. Since we have spent the money in research and travel to reach these recommendations, I think it's a good place to start.

https://downtownbillings.com/wp-content/uploads/Official_Community_Imp._Study.pdf

Thank you,
Sonia Davis

Gratitude is more than a word, it is a way of living



Dear Friends of Gratitude in Action,

Happy New Year! As we step into a new season, we wanted to pause and say thank you—and share what's been happening, what you made possible in December, and what's coming next.



December: A Month of Lives Changed

December reminded us why this work matters.

Because of your support, homes were full, tables were set, and hope was visible everywhere. Across our sober living homes, residents experienced stability during what is often the hardest month of the year. For many, it was the first holiday season in years spent sober, housed, and surrounded by community.

One resident shared:

“This was the first Christmas I wasn’t alone, high, or ashamed. I had a bed, a meal, and people who cared. I finally believe my life can be different.”

Another told us simply:

“Gratitude in Action gave me a place to breathe again. I didn’t just survive December—I grew.”

We watched lives shift in real time:

- Residents completing another month of sobriety and accountability
- Families reconnecting
- Men and women showing up for work, house meetings, and each other—even on Christmas morning

Outside our homes, the impact was just as powerful:

- Over 140 people shared Christmas dinner at First Presbyterian Church
- 100 neighbors celebrated at a holiday party hosted at Saint Andrew’s
- In partnership with Faith Chapel and Harvest Church, stockings and gift certificates were delivered to Rimrock treatment clients
- Stockings were hand-delivered to our unhoused neighbors on Christmas morning
- More than 600 children shopped at Kids Shop for Free Day, supported by volunteers who wrapped gifts, offered kindness, and reminded every child they matter.

These moments weren’t programs—they were love in action.

What’s New in 2025

As we begin the year, we’re excited to share a few big things:

New Gratitude in Action License Plates

Our new license plates are rolling out and becoming a visible reminder that recovery lives here. Every plate on the road helps fund sober living, recovery support, and second chances—while spreading awareness across Montana.

The Gratitude in Action Gala – March 14

Mark your calendar for our 80's Prom Gala on March 14. This night is about celebrating recovery, honoring Alumni of the Year, and raising the resources needed to ensure no one is ever denied recovery housing because of money. Expect great food, music, stories of transformation, live and silent auctions, and an after-party celebration.

Looking Ahead to 2026

We are actively preparing for significant expansion in 2026—new homes, deeper recovery supports, and broader community impact. The need continues to grow, and so does our commitment to meeting it with integrity, accountability, and compassion.

Why This Matters

Every dollar given, every volunteer hour, every prayer offered becomes:

- A bed instead of a bench
- Accountability instead of chaos
- Community instead of isolation

Recovery works—but it works best together.

As we step into this new year, we ask you to continue walking alongside us:

- Pray for the men, women, and families we serve
- Join us at the Gala on March 14
- Share our mission, our stories, and our license plates
- Partner with us as we grow into what's next

Thank you for believing in second chances. Thank you for helping build a community where recovery is possible.

With deep gratitude,

Richard and Terri

Gratitude in Action

“Because recovery works—and no one should walk it alone.”

Why Slapping a Gratitude in Action Plate on Your Ride Makes Montana Cooler

Let's be real.

Your car was already doing the bare minimum: driving, parking, occasionally judging other drivers.

Add a Gratitude in Action license plate and suddenly your vehicle is:

- Supporting recovery
- Funding second chances
- Quietly telling the world, “Yeah, I believe people can change.”

It's like your car joined a nonprofit... and started doing good without asking for snacks.

Every mile you drive helps turn rock bottoms into rebuilds, mistakes into momentum, and “I never thought I could” into “look at me now.”

Plus, it's peak Montana energy:

- ✓ Helping your neighbors
- ✓ Mindin' your business
- ✓ Making the state better anyway

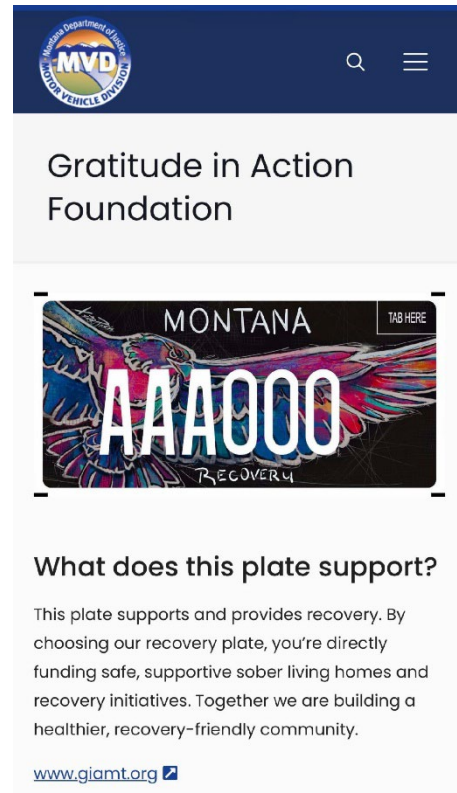
So go ahead—cruise proudly.

Make sure you check out all the hidden gems in the eagles wings!

Please share picture with us when you get your new plates.

Because when recovery rolls, Montana soars.

And honestly? Your car looks better with purpose. 🦅 ✨



Thrift Store Wins, Big Hearts & What's Happening This Week!

When you shop at the Gratitude in Action Thrift Store, your dollars don't just buy great finds—they build recovery, stability, and second chances right here in our community.

Where Your Dollars Go:

Every purchase helps provide:

- Safe, sober housing
- Accountability and peer support
- Job readiness and life skills
- A community where people can rebuild with dignity

And this week, we're celebrating YOU:

RED TAGS ARE FREE — ALL WEEK!

Yes, FREE. Grab those red-tag treasures and know your “score” is doing real good.

Tryan's Online Auction Starts Wednesday Evening!

Bid on unique items and experiences—every bid directly supports recovery housing and the lives being changed through Gratitude in Action.


Questions about the auction?

Stop by the store and just ask Ty—He is the auction expert!

A little love for our team:

- If you're admiring how beautiful the front displays look, be sure to tell Heather—she puts her heart into every detail.
- Dropping off donations? Say hi to Chris and Sage—they'll take great care of you and your gifts.

We truly are one big family with a big heart for our community, and every time you shop, donate, or say hello—you're part of it.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for making recovery possible. 



GRATITUDE IN ACTION GALA

BACK to 80's Prom



MARCH 14, 2026
NORTHERN HOTEL

19 North Broadway
Billings Montana

6:00 PM - 9:30 PM

WWW.GIAMT.ORG



**Recovery housing isn't
charity - it's
infrastructure.**

Your sponsorship supports ethical, inspected,
accountable sober living that saves public dollars,
strengthens families, and builds safer communities.

PROMOTING

**RECOVERY &
Sober Living**




[Join us and click here to get Gala Tickets and Information](#)

Get Your Tickets & Get Ready to Prom!


Dust off the neon. Tease the hair. Practice your best 80's dance moves.

The Gratitude in Action Gala: 80's Prom is happening March 14th, and you don't want to miss this one.


This is more than a night out—it's a night that changes lives. Your ticket helps provide safe recovery housing, accountability, and second chances for people rebuilding their lives right here in our community.

 Buy your tickets now

 Grab a date, fill a table (or come solo—we love that energy)

 Get ready to celebrate recovery, honor Alumni of the Year, bid in live and silent auctions, and support recovery.

When the night wraps up, head to the after party at Club Lux where we'll crown the Prom Queen and King and keep the celebration going. Every Prom needs a good dance party.

 **Get your tickets today and be part of the comeback story.**


Because every prom deserves a dance floor—and every comeback deserves a crowd.

Volunteers Needed — There's a Place for You Here!

Do you have a love of books and reading?

 We need you.

Does hanging clothes reset your brain or feed your soul?

 You might've just found your happy place.

Do you enjoy setting out merchandise and making things look just right?

 Your eye matters.

Are you someone who likes to fix bikes, tinker with small motors, or test electronics?

🚲🔧⚡ We LOVE a good fixer.

Do you have a heart for refinishing furniture and bringing beauty back to life?

🪑💡 Same. Very much same.

And...

🎉 Do you want to help with the Gala?

We need hands and hearts for:

- Creating décor
- Putting together auction baskets
- Setting up the space
- Helping with all the things that make the magic happen

At Gratitude in Action, volunteers don't just help run a store or an event — they help fund recovery and second chances.

👉 **How to Sign Up**

Stop by the Gratitude in Action Thrift Store, message us on social media, or email giagives@gmail.com and tell us what you'd love to help with.

We'll take it from there. 🧡

[Would you like to Donate? Click Here](#)

Making a difference in our community



Gratitude in Action

Funding Recovery

**THRIFT SHOP
OPEN**

10-5:00 Weekdays

10-4 Saturdays

**Come See
What YOU Can
Find!**

10 south 30th on the corner of Minnesota and South 30th

www.giamt.org

Shop with us!

Donations accepted 10-2 Monday - Saturday

From: [Justin Hutchinson](#)
To: [Council](#); [Chris Kukulski](#); [Nelson, Mike](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: YVAS moving to a stable, longer-term location off Jellison Road ending months of operating in fragmented, temporary spaces.
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 5:11:31 PM
Attachments: [Jellison PR \(2\).docx](#)
[COMING SOON \(1\).png](#)



Hello!

I've attached information about Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter's new temporary home. This move is not intended to be permanent, but it allows YVAS to bring its full team back under one roof for the first time since September marking a significant step forward in restoring effective animal care and organizational unity.

Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Justin Hutchinson

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Making Tracks: Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter (YVAS) will move to a more stable, longer-term location off Jellison Road ending months of operating in fragmented, temporary spaces.

Billings, MT — January 2 — After four months operating in cramped temporary spaces, Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter (YVAS) is excited to announce its move to a much larger and more stable, longer-term location off Jellison Road. The displacement lasted just four months, but it felt far longer for the staff, volunteers, and community who supported the shelter through constant change. This move is not intended to be permanent, but it allows YVAS to bring its full team back under one roof for the first time since September marking a significant step forward in restoring effective animal care and organizational unity.

Housing animals, medical staff, and specialized support teams together allows for faster decision-making, better communication, and more responsive care while significantly reducing stress for animals.

“This move fundamentally changes how we are able to care for animals,” said Triniti Halverson, Executive Director. “Having our medical team and support staff working alongside the animals means we can identify needs sooner and provide care without unnecessary delays or stressful transport. This is not our final home, but it is the right step forward for animals right now.”

The move follows the September incinerator incident, after which YVAS made the decision not to return to its former Monad location. Despite decontamination efforts, returning to a building previously exposed to drugs did not align with YVAS’s safety standards or mission. During displacement, operating across multiple locations and in a warehouse environment created significant challenges, particularly for timely medical care, and was not sustainable long term.

At the Jellison Road location, animals now have immediate access to on-site medical care, eliminating frequent transport and improving outcomes for sick, injured and vulnerable animals. Specialized staff - including foster, volunteer, training, and outreach teams - are once again able to interact with animals daily, improving placement decisions and overall well-being.

YVAS is very grateful to Lionheart Cannabis for generously donating temporary space during this uncertain time. With the move to Jellison Road, YVAS has resumed core shelter services and public access in a way that prioritizes collaboration, efficiency, and animal welfare.

Looking Ahead: Building a Permanent Home

While the Jellison Road location provides much needed stability, it is not the final solution. YVAS’s capital campaign to fund and build a new permanent shelter is well underway, with the goal of opening the doors to a YVAS-owned facility within the next two years. Community members can support this new effort by donating, volunteering or spreading the word.

Community Move Day:

Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter invites the community to roll up their sleeves and help with the final transition on **Saturday, January 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**, by assisting with the move of supplies from the former Lionheart location to the new Jellison Road site.

Community support during this final push will help ensure animals and staff are fully settled and ready to operate under one roof. Volunteers should meet at 6400 Frontage Road.

Following January 10, all YVAS operations and public services will be located at the 5056 Jellison Road, Billings, MT 59101. The shelter will no longer operate out of the Lionheart location, and community members are encouraged to visit, volunteer, foster, adopt, or seek services at the new site moving forward.

Media Contact:

Izzy Zalenski, Community Engagement Coordinator

Phone: (406) 294-7387

Email: izzy.zalenski@yvas.org

Website: www.yvas.org

COMING SOON



Yellowstone Valley
ANIMAL SHELTER

5056 Tellison Rd



OPENING JANUARY 10TH



Animal Care
& Adoptions



Medical
Services




Lost/Found
Services

From: [Bohlman, Denise](#)
To: [Aguirre, Amy](#); [Nelson, Mike](#); [Kennedy, Bill](#); [Keehner, Toni](#); [.MayorAndCouncil](#); [Lindley, Andrew](#); [Pitman, Denis](#); [Nicholson, Mark](#)
Subject: RE: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 11:42:55 AM

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. The clerks didn't realize they were using an old template. It has been corrected for all agendas going forward.

With appreciation,

	Denise R. Bohlman City Clerk, CMC bohlmand@billingsmt.gov
billingsmt.gov	316 N. 26 th Street, 5 th Floor P.O. Box 1178 • Billings, MT 59103 P 406.657.8210 F 406.657.8390

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From: Aguirre, Amy <AguirreA@billingsmt.gov>
Sent: Saturday, January 3, 2026 6:16 PM
To: Nelson, Mike <NelsonM@billingsmt.gov>; 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>; Nicholson, Mark <NicholsonM@billingsmt.gov>
Subject: Re: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet

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>

Subject: Re: 1/5/26 Work Session Packet

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

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