



**AGENDA  
CITY OF LAUREL  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2026  
6:30 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**WELCOME . . .** By your presence in the City Council Chambers, you are participating in the process of representative government. To encourage that participation, the City Council has specified times for citizen comments on its agenda -- once following the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council concerning any brief community announcement not to exceed one minute in duration for any speaker; and again following Items Removed from the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council on any matter of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. Citizens may also comment on any item removed from the consent agenda prior to council action, with each speaker limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. If a citizen would like to comment on an agenda item, we ask that you wait until the agenda item is presented to the Council by the Mayor and the public is asked to comment by the Mayor.

Any person who has any question concerning any agenda item may call the City Clerk-Treasurer's office to make an inquiry concerning the nature of the item described on the agenda. Your City government welcomes your interest and hopes you will attend the Laurel City Council meetings often.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call of the Council**

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Approval of Minutes of February 10, 2026.

**Correspondence**

2. Police Monthly Report - March 31, 2026
3. Public Comments Received by April 10, 2026.

**Council Disclosure of Ex Parte Communications**

**Public Hearing**

4. Public Hearing on a variance Requested By Drew Nordman To Allow Side-Corner Minimum Setback For An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) In The Approximate Location Of The Existing Non-Conforming Garage.

**Consent Items**

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

*The Consent Calendar adopting the printed Recommended Council Action will be enacted with one vote. **The Mayor will first ask the Council members if any Council member wishes to remove any item from the Consent Calendar for discussion and consideration.** The matters removed from the Consent Calendar will be considered individually at the end of this Agenda under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar." (See Section 12.) The entire Consent Calendar, with the exception of items removed to be discussed under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar," is then voted upon by roll call under one motion.*

5. Claims entered through April 10, 2026.
6. Clerk/Treasurer Financial Statements March 2026.
7. Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 3/29/2026 totaling \$294,818.45.

**Ceremonial Calendar**

**Reports of Boards and Commissions**

8. Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of March 24, 2026.
9. City/County Planning Board Minutes of March 18, 2026.

- [10.](#) Emergency Services Committee Minutes of March 23, 2026.
- [11.](#) Laurel Airport Authority Minutes of December 16, 2025.
- [12.](#) Laurel Urban Renewal Agency Minutes of March 23, 2026.
- [13.](#) Tree/Park Board Minutes of April 2, 2026.

### **Audience Participation (Three-Minute Limit)**

*Citizens may address the Council regarding any item of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Comments regarding tonight's agenda items will be accepted under Scheduled Matters. The duration for an individual speaking under Audience Participation is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

### **Scheduled Matters**

- [14.](#) Appointment of Amy Mullaney to the Public Works Committee.
- [15.](#) Resolution No. R26-08: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Approve A Change Order With Earth Mover's Excavation For The Project Known As The Bernhardt Ditch Improvements Project.
- [16.](#) Resolution No. R26-09: A Resolution Of The City Council Approving The Variance Requested By Drew Nordman To Allow Side-Corner Minimum Setback For An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) In The Approximate Location Of The Existing Non-Conforming Garage.
- [17.](#) Resolution No. R26-10: A Resolution Of The City Of Laurel City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute All Necessary Agreements For Services Performed By Emergency Networking Related To Electronic Management Systems For Laurel Fire Rescue
- [18.](#) Resolution No. R26-11: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Sign An Agreement With CivicPlus For Services Relating To Upgrading The City's Website, Agenda And Meeting Management, Media, AudioEye, And DocAccess.

### **Items Removed From the Consent Agenda**

### **Community Announcements (One-Minute Limit)**

*This portion of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Council regarding community announcements. The duration for an individual speaking under Community Announcements is limited to one minute. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

### **Council Discussion**

*Council members may give the City Council a brief report regarding committees or groups in which they are involved.*

### **Mayor Updates**

### **Unscheduled Matters**

- [19.](#) NWE FERC Letter of Support Discussion

### **Adjournment**

*The City makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in this meeting. Persons needing accommodation must notify the City Clerk's Office to make needed arrangements. To make your request known, please call 406-628-7431, Ext. 2, or write to City Clerk, PO Box 10, Laurel, MT 59044, or present your request at City Hall, 115 West First Street, Laurel, Montana.*

**File Attachments for Item:**

1. Approval of Minutes of February 10, 2026.

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# MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL

February 10, 2026

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, was held in the Council Chambers and called to order by Council President Tom Canape at 6:30 p.m. on February 10, 2026.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:	Thomas Canape	Sara Naylor
	Brent Edgmond	Jessica Banks
	Casey Wheeler	Irv Wilke
	Richard Klose	Jodi Mackay

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHER STAFF PRESENT:	Michele, Braukmann, Civil City Attorney
	Brittney Harakal, Administrative Assistant
	Kelly Strecker, Clerk/Treasurer
	Kurt Markegard, CAO

Council President Canape led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

### MINUTES:

Council noted an error in the minutes that indicated that past Council Members were present.

Motion by Council Member Banks to table the minutes of the regular meeting of January 27, 2026, to be revised and presented at the next Council Meeting, seconded by Council Member Mackay. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion. All eight Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

- Hurd Letter of Resignation from Cemetery Commission.
- County Correspondence Appointing Mike Waters to the Laurel City County Planning.
- Police Monthly Report - January 2026
- Fire Monthly Report - December 2025.
- FY27 CDS Application Correspondence

### COUNCIL DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:

City Attorney Braukmann read the attached public comments into the record.

Council Member Mackay disclosed the attached communications.

Council Member Banks stated she received a phone call from a constituent expressing their concern and asking when the Council would be voting on the annexation. She stated that she responded that she did not know, as annexation had not yet been requested. She did let them know that the zoning was still residential.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** None.

### CONSENT ITEMS:

- **Claims entered through February 6, 2026.**  
A complete listing of the claims and their amounts is on file in the Clerk/Treasurer's Office.
- **Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 2/1/2026 totaling \$274,962.29.**

The Council President asked if there was any separation of consent items. There was none.

Motion by Council Member Klose to approve the consent items as presented, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All eight Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

**CEREMONIAL CALENDAR:** None.

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

- Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of January 13, 2026.
- Library Board Minutes of September 9, 2025.
- Library Board Minutes of October 14, 2025.
- Library Board Minutes of November 11, 2025.
- Laurel Airport Authority Minutes of January 20, 2026.
- Emergency Services Committee Minutes of January 26, 2026.
- Laurel Urban Renewal Agency Minutes of December 22, 2025.
- Laurel Urban Renewal Agency Minutes of January 12, 2026.
- Laurel Urban Renewal Agency Minutes of January 26, 2026.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (THREE-MINUTE LIMIT):**

Juanita Bear, 1113 West 4th Street, Laurel, Montana. I invite each of you here to understand that we appreciate the hard work you are doing. I invite each one of you here to build trust with the community members that you serve. I invite you to oppose the mental health forensic prison, and I do oppose that moving forward. Every culture through history has had a code of treating others how you want to be treated. You have the amazing responsibility as public servants, and we thank you for your service. You have the amazing responsibility as public servants to either fulfill your responsibility of serving those who elected you or breaking trust with those who elected you. I have worked in the mental and behavioral health field with children at Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch, and I would be willing to obtain special training to be part of the prison ministry if the prison were located in a different position. Can you really move this forward? When those you serve are opposed to it. So I thank you, Sara Naylor. I thank you, Jessica Banks. I thank you, Irving Wilkie. I thank you, Jodi MacKay. And I'm sorry my eyesight is not good; I thank you, Tom Canapy, and the attorney, and Kelly, and Kurt Markegard, and Brittney, and Richard, and Casey and Brent, I thank you for your service as public servants. I invite you to build trust with the community members who elected you. I oppose the forensic mental health prison. And again, I'm just repeating myself for emphasis, every culture has had the code of treat others how you want to be treated. When you have the entire community or the majority community against this? How can you move it forward? Again, working in the mental health field as I have, I want to do what is right, and I would be willing to get special training to be part of a prison ministry, not where it's located. The community is against it. As public servants, will you really be serving our community by moving this forward? So I know it's a hard, hard situation that you are in. However, I believe that you guys have the character to do the right thing for the community, which is opposing this facility. Thank you.

Julie Jones, 1201 West 4th Street. Mayor Waggoner, who's not here, and the members of the Laurel City Council, thank you for your service. I understand completely what you're going through. I've actually served on the town council and school board in Fromberg years ago, and I was on county planning in Carbon County. So I am, and I actually years ago, work for the Laurel City as a consultant for housing in this one Chuck Rogers was Mayor that was decades ago anyway I'm here because the residents of Laurel are watching the development of the proposed forensic mental health facility with deep concern I'm not here to talk about safety or location I'm here to talk to you you took to sit on this board. When you took your seat, you solemnly swore to faithfully execute the duties of your office. In the context of this facility, a project coordinated by the Mayor, the planning director, and the Board of Investments, the word faithfully is under a microscope. We are asking you today to remember that your authority doesn't come from the State Board; it comes from the people of this City and the surrounding community. We ask you to look at this project, the lens of that oath, and ask yourselves, is this truly a faithful representation of the people of Laurel? Finally, I want to address the procedural crossroads currently before you. You are being asked to amend the City's growth policy and potentially approve the annexation of the land. These are not mere administrative box-checking exercises. They are the most powerful tools you have to shape the future of Laurel. I urge you to take a clear public stance on the suitability of this facility now before you move forward with these changes. Once you rewrite the City's roadmap and expand the borders to accommodate this project, the momentum of the machine often becomes unstoppable. Your oath to preserve and protect applies to the City's boundaries in the long-term vision. Do not change the laws to fit a project that has not yet earned the trust of the community. Use your authority today to ensure that the growth policy reflects

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the people's will, not the board of the investments agenda. Don't wait until the ink is dry to decide if this is right for Laurel. Thank you again for your service, and please say no to this project.

Brittney Hunter 2604 Willowwood. I'm coming to you as one of your school board trustees, so I also took that oath, and it was a good from Julie, and I will remind you, but I want to put this in the record. On January 27th of 2026, the Laurel Public School Board of Trustees and Superintendent Matt Torricks formally announced their unified opposition to the state of Montana's proposed development of a forensic detention facility within the Laurel Public School District. The board's opposition is basically primarily on the safety and well-being of the students in public schools. The planned state facilities proposed property would be within 500 yards of the Laurel Elementary School. I don't care who tells you where the property boundary goes; it's still within the vicinity of 500 yards. Where our youngest and most vulnerable students are educated, when they are outside playing, and somebody tells you that there is somebody who's escaped, and nobody can tell you it can't because and our children are out, and they are the most vulnerable. How are we gonna get them in? Think of that. The safety of our students is our highest priority from our Superintendent Mr. Torix. The building of the forensic detention facility is in such closely proximity to our elementary school, and it's not supported by the board on the grounds of safety for the students we serve. The board of trustees discussion regarding this proposed state facility during the regular Meeting on January 26th of 2026. Following this discussion, the board confirmed that no state officials have contacted the district regarding how this facility would impact the student body of Laurel Schools. Laurel Public Schools serves the Laurel School community and is dedicated to providing a safe and high-quality educational environment for all students. The Laurel Board of Trustees does not feel the development of the forensic detention facility within such close proximity to our schools meets this obligation. This is also signed by Chris LaRache, our board chair, and Matt Torix, our superintendent. I also want to give some history. When we were trying to attempt to build our intermediate school, we had one individual trying to consistently stop us, because we were in the as well, and we wanted to annex into the City to be part of the community with that new facility. And we were constantly being roadblocked by one individual in this room, and he now has a new title. And he also took an oath. So we want to push away a school, but then we're going to vote for a forensic facility. Thank you.

Shawna Hopper, 504 Roundhouse. Each council member has been given a couple of letters as well as verified time. This is work that we have done for the City on behalf of all residents. February 10th, Laurel City Councilor, Mayor Dave Wagner, CAO Kurt Markeygard, City Attorney Brockman, Clerk-Treasurer Kelly Strecker, and Administrative Assistant Brittney Harakal. I was going to send this by email. However, after last week's workshop, I wanted to be able to look each and every one of you in the eye as I read this. The pure disappointment, disgust, embarrassment, and astonishment I felt witnessing the conduct of Mayor Wagner and CAO Markeygard through the last six months and last week's workshop is unacceptable and should not be allowed. Our current leadership is in, our current leadership is in complete disarray and reflects poorly on our entire community. It is quite apparent these two have purposefully left City Council and the City Attorney out of many discussions and opportunities to learn about the Montana State Forensic Facility or prison, as well as many other decisions, discussions, and pertinent to the well-being of our town. Last week, CAO Markeygard stated that he didn't know what type of facility it was. He was late to the tour, didn't have the QR code, and he did not allow our City Council to be there and represent us. He also fails to respond to emails from both city employees and community members about many different issues. Communication is essential in any job, especially in city government. Last week, he also stated he had to take two days off the previous week and then informed everybody that he was taking another two days off. I also know of a specific incident last year where a resident was needing responses from him about the building, and he was gone for approximately three weeks. On November 28th, via text message to Cheryl Hill and myself, and we questioned the Mayor about the forensic hospital when we saw it on City, on Q2. His response was, I just got out of the hospital. I have prostate cancer. They removed part of my prostate. The news just called me, and I had no idea. I just heard about it an hour ago. It is all on the state. Last I heard, it was from in Mile City. They mentioned looking into the woods property, going through the annexation process. However, through the provided timeline, you will see that on August 22nd, 2025, the CAO sent on behalf of the Mayor. The Mayor and CAO are out of office, don't respond, and have no idea what anything.

Maggie Hanson, 1000 Longview Road, gave her three minutes to Ms. Hopper.

Ms. Hopper continued, No idea what anything, and they are leaving the city council, city attorney, and citizens of Laurel out of everything. So who exactly is running our City? With the recent actions of the Mayor towards city attorney Brockman, we are adding a public records request for all public records with any past or pertinent complaints from all city staff, city council members, all contract personnel, former and existing city court judges against the Mayor for his treatment. As of today, the

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only public records released have been emails between Kurt and a BOI, Dan Villa, and the Department of Montana Department of Health Human Services, Charlie Barreton, with only one CC to the city attorney and one response from the Mayor. There are still many missing requests. So again, I present public records requests for all emails, phone logs, text messages, social media posts regarding any and all discussions regarding the Montana Forensic Prison, water lines, zoning between any of the following. Kurt Markeygard, Dave Wagner, BOI, Department of Health, and Dick Anderson Construction, Project Manager, Norm Miller, Loves Gas Station, Project Manager from 5-1 to present. Be advised that As of this request and many before this, deletion or editing of comments and messages would be spoliation of the communications protected by MCA-2-2-1003. I do understand that this is a process, and it may take time. However, the continued lack of transparency and communication is unacceptable. It is my, Thank you very much.

Elizabeth Gilg, 1200 Cedar Crest Dr, Great to be back this week. The Laurel-Cared Committee has composed a letter of request pertaining to an investigation of the conduct of Kurt and the Mayor. Shawna Hopper is going to read a letter on our behalf.

Shawna Hopper, read the attached letter into the record.

Steve Krum, 249 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue W, I guess first I'd like to say I hope and believe you deserve a public apology right here as well. And I think most of us do that, so I think you get it. Second, I disagree with Councilperson Mackay on the Senator from Big Timber because he led off his article with something that said something like our anxiety and fears were not real because he knows better that this thing is safe. He's done all this stuff about traveling the state, going through all these facilities, but in my experience, and all the years that I've been working different jobs. Anytime the guy that comes around with the paycheck or the guy that comes around and can hire or fire you, you polish up your facility. You see the best of it, not the worst of it. I would trust more on the newspapers around there. The people that actually work there, not just not solely the management, as to how safe and that the fact is, these facilities do fail sometimes, and things happen. That you don't want. So I disagree that he would be the guy to listen to for your real strong decision on whether or not that belongs here. And then secondly, when you look at your growth policy, that is supposed to be your growth direction. It is probably your most reasonable financial direction to grow as far as residential. Everything that way is either trailer court, and you hit the rims, everything. That way, the county's already expanded. You can't hardly go over the top right now because Kurt says it's too expensive to go up to the water. So that's the way to go. And if you put that facility over there, that's gone. Then the City's got nothing. You got the railroad, the refinery, you got a truck stop. Rumor is there's another residential area going to go over there, but that's down the road. But you've really blocked yourself on growth. So you really should think about it and then look hard at your growth policy. Because that's where it should be going, not this facility. And then the other thing this gentleman said was that these facilities were so great, they wouldn't impact your growth or anything like that. But look at the county jail. Look at all the jails elsewhere, with some of the other ones. But nobody's building around those facilities. Nobody's building new residential areas there. And they're not going to do it here either. Nobody's going to want to build or lived there, so you really hurt yourself when you allow that to happen. And then the last thing, as far as jobs, two years ago, three years ago, when I was in here before, the City had trouble getting a police officer. And you take a look now, the hospitals, all those places, they are having trouble keeping nurses, stuff like that. As your help turns over and over, over and over. Do you keep getting the best people each time? Probably not. So thank you.

Jennifer Lorenz. I live at 916 Avenue in Laurel, Montana, obviously. I am mainly because I just want you to know I'm a small business owner. I also own a nonprofit, and more importantly, I'm a veteran, and I'm a stickler for rules and regulations. And through this whole disaster that's happening right now, I really feel that a lot of this could have been completely and totally avoided if certain individuals would have paid attention to what the Charter says—the City of Laurel charter. And starting like, because all of this, I mean, people are getting threatened, people are feeling safe because the choices you and the men the Mayor made on how to handle this situation and I hope you feel the full responsibility of the safety of these guys in front of you because they're in trouble and they're dealing with crap outside of this thing because of your actions and that hurts my heart that we have people in the community that would threaten you and and talk down to you and everything else like that when what I see is not a Your fault. Anyways, I just wanted to remind everybody that the mayor and everything like if you look at section and 3.04 duties, the Mayor shall administrator or administer affairs of the local government shall carry out policies established by the council item seven or eight or nine anyways shall execute contracts, et cetera, approval of the Council there everything in there a point or points to the fact that you guys have the power over the Mayor and over the CAO and over their actions and what they do and what they represent and I just want to encourage you to take that power back it has been unfairly taken from you and you guys are getting the brunt of it I think it is

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completely and totally unfair and you are owed a huge but also I wanted to point out that maybe some of you don't know but the City Council can also recall the Mayor on their own without us even having to submit a petition with at section you look at the Charter it says the Mayor may be removed by a City Council vote of six to eight has he respected you has he treated you with dignity has he treated our city employees with dignity calling out ice on the poor guy that does nothing but serve our community and is here as a legal Canadian immigrant is that the guy that you guys want representing us like to me it's an embarrassment you deserve better ma'am but anyways and also I want you to know that the CAO position There may be a CAO. There doesn't have to be. Thank you.

Brian Lubinski, 320 7th Avenue. You know, there's a couple of things last time I said I'm going to talk to you like I talk to my kids because they're still learning. You obviously are not. Had any of us done what you did in our normal day-to-day jobs, we would have been fired, put on leave, reprimanded, demoted, or something to that extent. So I don't see why it's any different, why you shouldn't be demoted, reprimanded, or removed from the position. I kindly ask that you just step and save everybody the time. Your constant lies have obviously put a lot of people in danger. There's no getting around it. You're not a child anymore. There's consequences for actions, and your actions have shown that there is no trust whatsoever in both the Mayor and yourself. So I would kindly ask that you save everybody here the time and just resign.

Jeremy Loyal, 1035 9th Avenue. I've lived here for years, grew up in Park City. So, you know, this is home area for me. I have never come to a city council Meeting before. I watched the complete boring one last week. It was just mind-numbing. But it forces me to come here because I don't want this in my community. I don't know if you as council members can put out a statement to the state saying we as the Council and the City don't want it I don't know if you can do that or not but if you can you should because from what I've heard there's been one positive from somebody in Big Timber and one other from somebody in the community possibly but everything else I've heard personally talked to there's no positive viewings of this facility from anybody I don't know you from Adam but I've talked to people in the community that have been here for years and there's question about your capabilities. Sorry, but that's just what it is out there. Um, I don't like saying that, but that's just, I asked cause I don't know you, never dealt with you. And so I talked to people around here, and there's concern. Um, my wife works at the school. My child goes to the school over on Laurel Elementary. I don't want it around them. They say it's 500 plus to where they'd build the facility, but then you're going to build back. What else is going to go there? Because 114 acres, they're not just going to stop at 32 beds. It'll get bigger and bigger and bigger. And once they get annexation, if you let them have that, it's just going to grow uncontrolled. I guess I'd like to know where you guys stand as council members on this. I don't know if you can say that right now or not, but I would like to. I mean, that's kind of where are you standing? What's your position? What's your thoughts? It's great that you can hear from us, but we'd like to know what you guys are thinking. I would like to know what you're thinking. So that was kind of my thoughts off the top of my head. Thank you very much.

Wayne Fjare, I live at 1008 Duval. I work for the school district, and although I accept and follow what they believe in this, I'm serious speaking for myself. I've been here for six and a half years. When I moved here, I went to, and I've become somewhat a locomotive. I'm proud, very proud to be part of this City. And I look at all these people here, and I'm proud of them. And it makes me feel good that I have their support because I do not support the location of this facility. This facility I have a home here. I don't want the cost of it to go down. I'm worried about the safety of our kids. I get to play with those kids every day, walk down the hallway when our kids are there. And I want the safety for them. And that should be the responsibility of you. It's taken on the responsibility of all these people, and I'm very, very proud to be a member of this community.

Gary Waddell, I live at 1241 Elkhorn Drive, a country subdivision just east of Laurel. And I'm a proud father of a daughter. That has taken a lot of time out of her career, being a grandmother and a mother, to bring this to light. I just want to add a couple of comments. Last week, Mr. Markeygard, you said you've never been to the facilities in Warm Springs and Galen. Is that correct? I think that's correct. If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. But I haven't been there either. Because when you go by it, you can see it on the interstate. There's nothing there but those hospitals. Has anybody in here talked to any of the medical people, professionals that have worked in that hospital, either one of them? I bet you none of them. I have. There are traveling nurses and doctors. We have them in Billings at both hospitals. They have told me it's the worst-run facility they've ever worked in. And now we're trying to bring one here. Let them fix what we have up there. And from Big Timber, I did a lot, a lot of spot inspections when I was working. You notify people. The only time you see what it really is is when you stop in unexpected. So with that, I hope everybody in this room will do their due diligence. Look on the Montana website. Those two facilities lost federal government funding. Now we want to bring it here. No, thank you.

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Amber Zahn. I live at 1224 4th Street. I, for a second week in a row, am deviating from what I had planned to say. I want to bring to you the emotional side of it. And I'm actually very proud and thankful for everything that's been said tonight. I come from Billings. I'm a firm believer in mental health. I myself seek mental health, and it is incredibly beneficial. Everybody should do it. It's a thing. Do it. My opposition to this location, though, is because of what it actually is. There's so many soft words around it. It's a hardened facility. It's XYZ. Busy, call it what it is. I came from Billings, though. I fostered for two years. I took all the Keep Kids Safe courses and everything. We, as parents as caregivers, we keep our kids safe. We keep them healthy. We want them to be comfortable. We want them to live big, beautiful lives. This is quite literally my backyard, so yes, I have a lot of skin in the game, and I apologize for always bringing that up; I have two children, who they are what I'm doing. They are my life. Their life is my biggest thing. And they do not need to grow up next to this. Their school doesn't need to grow up next to this. These other kids do not need to grow up next to this. This is so recklessly thought out. And I pray every day that we do have better thought processes going forward in it. You guys hear a lot, and I'm thankful for you. Please, I hope we make the right decision for our community.

**SCHEDULED MATTERS:**

- **Resolution No. R26-05: A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Laurel, Montana Amending Resolution No. 25-75 And Affirming Continuation Of Services Under The Managed Service Agreement For Renamed Systems Technology Consultants.**

Motion by Council Member Mackay to approve Resolution No. R26-05, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All eight Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

- **Resolution No. R26-06: A Resolution Of The City Council Approving A Transportation Coordination Plan For The City Of Laurel Transit.**

Motion by Council Member Wheeler to approve Resolution No. R26-06, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All eight Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

**ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA:** None.

**COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (ONE-MINUTE LIMIT):** None.

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION:** None.

**MAYOR UPDATES:**

Council was asked if they would like to attend training from the Local Government Center at the Billings offering or schedule their own. Council noted that they would like their own scheduled. Council Members who had attended previous trainings found these sessions very valuable.

**UNSCHEDULED MATTERS:**

Council Member Mackay asked if there had been any more communications on the Mayor's request for Attorney Braukmann to resign and if she intends to do so.

Attorney Braukmann clarified that she had not had any further communications from the Mayor on his request for her resignation, and it is not her intention to do so.

Council questioned if they would be going into a Closed Executive Session now to discuss the litigation issues. Council President Canape stated he felt it was appropriate to wait until the Mayor returned.

Council Member Naylor asked what direction, if any, did the Mayor personally give staff regarding pursuing Laurel as a site and when? Including specific dates and actions. How many public records requests has the City received relating to the mental health facility to date, and how many have been completed? Is there an administrative plan to proactively post frequently released documents so the public can access information without submitting individual records requests?

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It was clarified that the released documents are located on the City's website.

It was further questioned if all the documents were located on the website. It was further clarified that any documents that had been given to the Council Administrative Assistant had been placed on the website.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Council Member Edgmond to adjourn the Council meeting, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All eight Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.



Brittney Harakal, Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Council President and passed by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Waggoner, Council President

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Strecker, Clerk/Treasurer

Print Name	Address
Shen Phillips	1043 Montana Ave. Lr-1
Laura Kirschenmann	939 W. 4th St. Lr1
Christy Fend	1009 2nd Ave
Breanna Nordella	815 7th Ave
Faythlen Linger	415 Fairway 2nd Dr.
Drene Warrick	311 2nd Ave
Elizabeth Gilg	1200 Cedar Crest
Shmbar Fahn	1224 W 4th St
Bryan Letcher	1224 W 4th St

Print Name	Address
Nona Rae Adickes	102 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave #B
Bonnie Stos	133 <sup>rd</sup> E - Newland Laurel
Garry Stroman	1120 12 <sup>th</sup> Ave
Marty Tibb's Mother	419 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave
Sean Mark	311 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave
Jacob Schreiner	201 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave
Maggie Thompson	1000 Longview Rd Laurel mt 59044
Brian Lesinski	320 7 <sup>th</sup> Ave

Print Name	Address
Danielle Kopp	318 W. 13th St. Laurel
Neta Bare	1113 W. 9th St. Laurel
MARUE FJARE	1008 BUVALS LAUREL
Kalli Wescott	1835 Coyote Ridge Rd. S Laurel
Binhani Hunter	2604 W. 11th St. Laurel
Mitch Waddell	1301 W. Maryland
Cheng Hill	<del>8</del> 109 W. 1st Street

Print Name	Address
Julia Jones	1201 West 4th St, Laurel
Gary Tim Shael Doodell	1211 Elkhead Dr Laurel /
Justin KeAP	318 W 13th St Laurel /
Shelley White	512 Wagoning Ave Laurel MD
Randi Bays	1113 W 4th Street Laurel
Daby Gerontale	31633 Meadows Dr Laurel
Christina Lorenz	916 5th Ave Laurel
Shannon Hopper	564 Roundhouse

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Ward 4A  
**Sent:** Monday, February 9, 2026 6:36 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** Michele Braukmann  
**Subject:** FW: Memo concerning questions about the forensic health facility  
**Attachments:** Good evening Council members.docx

**From:** John Esp <johnespforSenate@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 8, 2026 10:08 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; john esp <johnesp2001@yahoo.com>  
**Subject:** Memo concerning questions about the forensic health facility

Hello all, Attached is a Memo that may shed some light to some of the questions you are being asked. I hope you will find it constructive. If you can't open the Word Document, I would be happy to paste it in the body of an email. Thank you for your consideration. John Esp

**Memo:**

**2/7/2026**

**From: John Esp, Box 1024, Big Timber, Montana  
To: The Mayor and City Council of Laurel Montana.**

**Mr. Mayor and City Council members, Quick background information on me; I have worked to address the shortcomings in the Mental health treatment systems before I first came to the legislature in 2001. I tell you this to frame my perspective on an issue I have dealt with, sometimes personally, for the last 40 years. What I have written in bold print throughout this memo is my informed opinion, albeit my opinion only. It's my attempt to answer to some of the questions your constituents and some nearby county residents are asking you. I do this based on my experience of trying to build new beds, and upgrade the State's inadequate and undersized infrastructure during my legislative tenure. We have never had enough money to meet all the needs. That shouldn't keep us from trying.**

The BOI and the state itself are not being transparent.

**To be clear, the Legislature and Executive branch has given the task of building this facility to the BOI. The Department still has some responsibility to provide advice to the BOI on the actual building design, and the requirements for the safety of people, both inside and outside of the facility. The land will be owned and managed by the BOI for the benefit of State taxpayers.**

**Some of you, as community leaders, have been part of preliminary plat reviews, and other actions reviewing subdivisions, and/or variance requests from your citizens. Maybe some of you haven't yet. Those that have dealt with applications or requests already know that until you see an actual request or recommendation from a planning board or variance board, it is not prudent to speculate on the contents thereof. As the BOI develops a plan, they may have underlying priorities that dictate the direction in which they would like to proceed, but until they complete an application and submit it to the appropriate local government entity, speculation and premature information on their part is also not wise. Your citizens will have an opportunity at the time an application is formally made to comment on that proposal at a noticed recorded public meeting of a local government entity.**

How much did the land sell for?

**In my experience, it is not permissible to disclose terms of a buy-sell agreement. Especially if contains contingencies. Even the final sales terms as reported to the Department of Revenue are kept confidential by the Department of Revenue, and used only for property tax appraisal purposes. The final sales price of a transaction brokered by a realtor becomes proprietary information to the multiple listing service (MLS) they belong to.**

Why do you need 114 acres for 32 beds?

**My guess is that though we may not have needed it, it will benefit Laurel in that it provides a buffer to the community and the school, and... it could have been the preference of the landowner to sell all it or none of it.**

Will it be used for future expansion of prisons for the "criminally insane", or for "the worst of the worst", or for "murderers and rapists"?

**Those choices of words are certainly unfortunate and in my view, inaccurate hyperbole. Mental illness can affect any one of us, or any one family at any given time. There but for the Grace of God go you or I. Most of the clients of the facility are there to be evaluated to see if they have the capacity to stand trial in answer to the charges against them. If they do not have capacity, the staff works with them to recover from their illness to the point they can participate in their own defense. The vast majority of those held in this proposed facility have not been convicted of anything yet. And nearly all will be discharged back to the jail that they were brought to the facility from. Nearly every state in the US is building capacity into their forensic health system, so yes if current trends continue, at some point in the future, Montana will need more forensic beds. It's hard to predict where that demand will be, or where those beds may be located.**

Will the state will pay for expanded water infrastructure.

**If the lot and/or lots are annexed into the city, as per city regulations and planning requirements, the Board of Investments will pay the appropriate fees appurtenant to their lots and the infrastructure thereon. They will pay all the ongoing fees and assessments that the city normally charges to their customers.**

Will Warm Springs close and move to Laurel?

**Given the fact that you, the State taxpayers just spent tens of millions of dollars upgrading the main hospital, and by the way, it is a beautiful, and now a much safer facility, no. We are currently in the process of spending another 20 million to repurpose another building for patient care on that campus. As hard as it was to get the money to rehab those buildings at the Springs, it would be impossible to conceive of a scenario in which the legislature appropriates another half a billion dollars-plus to move the operation here to Laurel. It simply isn't going to happen. Western Montana legislators, local leaders, and County law enforcement in western Montana, appreciate the proximity of nearby mental health services. They also appreciate the economic impacts that the high paying union jobs have on their communities.**

Does proximity to homes and schools pose safety risk? A Laurel school board member said perception is reality.

**Not true. Perception is not reality. Reality, in my mind, is reflected in the community of Billings and it would suggest that the proposed facility near Laurel does not pose an unreasonable safety risk. The Yellowstone County detention Center and the site of the proposed new Yellowstone County Detention Center are across the street from several homes. There are schools and perhaps hundreds of homes within a several block radius of the facility. Those schools are a similar distance from the Yellowstone County facility as is likely to occur from the West Elementary School to the new facility in Laurel. Yellowstone County and the Montana Women's Prison know how to keep the people safely incarcerated that we put in their care. The state has a good record for holding people securely also.**

This facility is 450 yards away from a public elementary school.

**Mr. Mayor and Council members, this is a fallacy. The State is not going to build a forensic hospital in the North East corner of the 114 acres. To my knowledge, there isn't even a road/street to that part of the lot, nor is there water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure evident on that end of the property. The State is going to build where they have the closest direct access to the Interstate highway. The State is going to build directly adjacent to Highway 10, where public access, and all those utilities are already available. The site near Highway 10 is roughly 1100 yards from the school. By contrast, the two schools in Billings**

**with the closest proximity to the Yellowstone County Detention Center are 1100 and 1140 yards respectively from that facility's property line. Incidentally, there are 600 to 700 inmates incarcerated there at the current time. This number is in a facility that was originally designed for a capacity of 434 inmates. A significant number of those inmates are waiting for a bed to open up in a forensic facility so they can get their mental health treatment, and a pathway to their day in Court.**

Will inmates be driven in the path of elementary school students?

**No. The inmates in custody of law enforcement and being transported to this facility will taken directly off the interstate ramp to Highway 10 and then about another block to the Forensic Facility. Once on facility grounds they will be driven into a secure attached garage (sally port), and the garage doors will be closed. They will then be escorted by law enforcement from the sally port through a walkthrough door into the secure part of the facility. They will be allowed nowhere near school children on a path.**

This has been specifically asked of me so I will answer it publically: You talk a lot about other prisons being in residential neighborhoods, but would you be ok with this facility in your backyard?

**I have the advantage over most of you in that I have toured all the States major institutions multiple times. A month or so ago I was in both the Montana State Prison and the Montana State Hospital. I have spent several hours in the Galen Forensic Facility, and in most major and some smaller County Detention facilities. At no time did I feel unsafe. A little over a month ago, we walked through the High Security Side at MSP in Deer Lodge. I would not have concerns having a forensic mental health facility near me. Keep in mind, most of the folks being treated at Warm Springs will eventually be released to community providers, and the vast majority of those serving time at Deer Lodge will eventually be released to pre-release facilities, probation and parole, and community providers in our cities and towns.**

**I travelled the state in 2023-2025 time-frame looking in depth at the needs that local governments face when it comes to behavior health issues. We heard from hundreds of citizens, providers, emergency responders, law enforcement**

**officers, jail commanders, county attorneys, and families whose loved ones struggle with incarceration and behavior health issues.**

**We can solve the need to serve one problem population with the construction of this facility, but there is much more to do in supporting and caring for your neighbors and friends that deal with behavior health issues, sometimes on a daily basis.**

**Mr. Mayor, and Council members, I am happy to dialogue further on this issue when appropriate. You, and of course, your neighbors will get an opportunity to weigh in, likely at a public Planning Board meeting, when the final proposal is rolled out there in its entirety for all to see. At that time, none of us will need to speculate about distances, layouts, building design, landscaping, parking lot design, or any other unknowns. The questions you are hearing now will be answered, perhaps not as quickly as you and your constituents would like, but over time they will be answered.**

**Until then I remain willing to help your constituents find accurate responses to address their questions.**

**Senator John Esp**

**Brittney Harakal**



**Attachments:**

City Mayor  
Monday, February 2, 2026 1:18 PM  
Brittney Harakal  
FW: Letter of Gratitude from NAMI Montana  
Matt Kuntz Letter to Laurel City Council 30JAN26.pdf

*Dave Waggoner*  
Mayor  
City of Laurel, Montana  
(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

**From:** Matt Kuntz <matt@namimt.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 30, 2026 12:37 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Letter of Gratitude from NAMI Montana

Dear Laurel City Council,  
Please accept the attached letter of appreciation from NAMI Montana for your support for the new forensic mental health facility. Hopefully, it provides some helpful information about the genesis of this effort at the Legislature and how some of the challenges of Yellowstone County were tied to it from the beginning.

NAMI Montana has also been involved with the creation of the Galen facility in 2015. Hopefully some of the things that we've learned over the last ten years with that facility will be helpful as well.

Thank you,  
Matt

--  
Matt Kuntz JD, MHA  
Executive Director  
NAMI Montana

NAMI Montana has a resource guide on our website for every county in Montana. Please let us know if anything needs to be updated for your county. <https://namimt.org/montana-county-mental-health-resource-guides/>

# **NAMI** | Montana

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Laurel City Council  
115 West 1st Street  
Laurel, MT 59044

January 30, 2026

**Subject: New Forensic Mental Health Facility**

Dear Laurel City Council,

NAMI Montana works to improve the lives of Montanans with mental health conditions and their families through support, education, and advocacy. On behalf of NAMI Montana, I want to thank you for your support in building a forensic facility in your community.

As part of our work for Montana families, NAMI Montana tries to improve the interface between mental health conditions and the criminal justice system. It is hard, slow work with progress measured over the course of years.

In 2015, we supported building the forensic facility in Galen. This was in response to the state locking offenders with severe mental health conditions in solitary confinement in Montana State Prison because they couldn't manage their medication needs and the behaviors related to their untreated mental health conditions. It was horrible for everyone involved. There was also a massive lawsuit with the ACLU and Disability Rights Montana. The forensic facility at Galen that came out of that nightmare has been a success for the State of Montana, people served by Galen, and the community that supports it.

NAMI Montana and our allies in the Legislature worked to improve the laws around mental health and the criminal justice system in the last decade. I think we have made some slow progress in that, but Montana's population of people needing forensic mental health services continues to grow. Ten years ago, the issue of a dangerous lack of forensic capacity showed up in the Montana State Prison. This time the issue is starkest in county jails across Montana.

The reality of the dangerous lack of forensic capacity in Montana came to a head for us and members of the Montana Legislature during the hearing on Representative James Reavis's bill to make it possible for mental health evaluations to be offered in jails and prisons. This bill was well thought out, but desperate move to try to do something to address the massive backlog of people in jail in need of psychological evaluations. The testimony from

NAMI Montana  
P.O. Box 1021  
Helena, MT 59624

jail staff, law enforcement, and county attorneys was incredibly powerful. The message was that Montana's county jails were overwhelmed with people with complex mental health needs who are waiting for some kind of forensic services.

The testimony was excruciating. Jail staff desperately trying to serve prisoners that were well outside their facility's ability to safely serve. County Attorney searching for answers to move cases forward that were bogged down with either evaluations or treatment requirements to ensure they met their burden for "Fitness to Proceed." Everyone knowing that it is just a matter of time before the state and the counties are hit with a massive lawsuit.

No testimony was more powerful than those given by people in the legal system in Yellowstone County. Based upon the magnitude of the issue in Yellowstone County alone, it was clear that the State of Montana needed a new forensic facility. It was also clear that it needed to be able to easily serve Yellowstone County and the counties in Eastern Montana.

While there were a few turns or two in the hallways of the Capital, that was the genesis of the bill that passed the Legislature. NAMI Montana is grateful to the City of Laurel for hosting this facility that is critical to Montana and specifically Yellowstone County.

While I understand that there are always concerns about the placement of public health and justice facilities, NAMI Montana expects that this facility will operate similarly to the successful forensic unit at Galen. The 32-bed patient population will be a relatively small facility, in a well-designed building, with good staffing ratios. Most of the patient stays will be a relatively short duration - for either psychological evaluations or restoration of competency. Patients in need of long-term stays will eventually be transitioned to the group homes on the Montana State Hospital campus in Warm Springs.

As described by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, most of the jobs in this facility will be for nursing staff and psychiatric assistants. These positions will offer great opportunities for the citizens of Laurel and also help bring in additional healthcare practitioners to Laurel who begin by working at the facility and then later transition to healthcare roles in the community.

NAMI Montana  
P.O. Box 1021  
Helena, MT 59624

Thank you for supporting this facility that is so essential for Montana families that have been impacted by mental health conditions and the criminal justice system. We really appreciate any help you can provide in moving it forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Kuntz". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Matthew Kuntz JD, MHA  
Executive Director

NAMI Montana  
[matt@namimt.org](mailto:matt@namimt.org)  
(406) 443-7871

NAMI Montana  
P.O. Box 1021  
Helena, MT 59624

**Brittney Harakal**

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City Mayor  
Monday, February 9, 2026 10:03 AM  
Brittney Harakal  
FW: Propose site for Montana Mental Health Prison

*Dave Waggoner*  
Mayor  
City of Laurel, Montana  
(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

**From:** Russ Bray <montanarustynail@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 7, 2026 12:56 PM  
**To:** Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Cc:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; vince.ricci@mtleg.gov  
**Subject:** Propose site for Montana Mental Health Prison

Dear Mr. Markegard,

As a rural resident and former member of the Laurel City/County planning board I am officially announcing my vote against the proposed site for the Montana State Mental Prison. I firmly feel it is a poor location for the safety and comfort of the local residents of Laurel and surrounding community. I understand the convenience for city hookups for the State, but that is an irresponsible consideration for the community under the circumstances.

The State of Montana has land North of town. The City of Laurel and community should NOT have to bare the burden of city hookups for the State.

Therefore, I recommend the proposed sight for the State Mental Prison be scrapped.

Sincerely,

Russell Bray

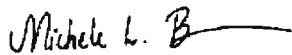
Laurel, MT. 59044

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Civil Attorney  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 12:12 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard; City Mayor; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: Mental heath facility

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann  
Civil City Attorney  
City of Laurel  
Cell Phone: 406.671.4333  
[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 6:13 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Cc:** Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Mental heath facility



Sara B. Naylor

Council Member - City of Laurel - Ward 1

✦ 406 598 9499  
✦ [ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)

**From:** Christine Jones <[chrisvjones17@gmail.com](mailto:chrisvjones17@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 5:31 PM  
**To:** Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Mental heath facility

Dear Sara Naylor,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed construction of a mental health facility in the city of Laurel.

I am concerned that this facility will block the future growth of our community and place an undue strain on local services. Additionally, there is no tax benefit from the state to offset the many hidden costs that will fall upon local taxpayers. Beyond the financial impact, I believe this facility poses a public safety risk and will negatively affect property values in the area.

I respectfully ask that you do not allow this project to move forward in Laurel. Thank you for your time and for considering the concerns of our community.

Sincerely,

Christine Willis  
760 Discus Cir  
Billings Mt 59102

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Ward 4B  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 9:49 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: Noise Ordinance  
**Attachments:** Common Features of Small City Noise Ordinances.docx

**From:** Monna Rae Adickes <monnarae@cbthebrokers.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 8:08 AM  
**To:** Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Noise Ordinance

Hello All,

After the 2.3.2026 Council Meeting, I came home to a neighborhood disturbance.

I call the non-emergency number and an officer went to check on the source of the noise.

I live to the north of the Town & Country building on 8<sup>th</sup> Ave.

The noise was Town & County hired someone to wash down their concrete in the areas of their gas pumps.

The noise went on past midnight. Today I will be calling the manager Wes Burlingson and let him know that I was not impressed with his neighborly shenanigans.

I have lived in Laurel for over 20 years, and it is time for a noise ordinance.

I have attached a copy of an example, it does not need to be detailed just something that allows the residence of this area to be able to sleep.

I will watch for this to be added to the workshop and council agenda. Please forward a copy of this letter to our city attorney.

Thank you

Monna Rae Adickes – 102 8<sup>th</sup> Ave Unit B



**MONNA RAE ADICKES**

*Real Estate Broker*

☎ 406-860-4284

✉ monnarae@cbthebrokers.com

📍 3135 Meadow View Drive

Billings, MT 59102

🌐 [www.mra406.com](http://www.mra406.com)

 **COLDWELL BANKER THE BROKERS**

### **Common Features of Small City Noise Ordinances**

- **Quiet Hours:** Typically, ordinances prohibit loud noises between 10 p.m. or 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. or 8 a.m.
- **Prohibited Noises:** Common nuisances include loud music, barking dogs, loud partying, and operating heavy equipment or power tools (mowers, blowers) during night hours.
- **Enforcement:** These are often enforced by local police, with violations sometimes treated as civil infractions, misdemeanors, or public nuisances.
- **Exemptions:** Typical exemptions include emergency vehicles, public service construction, and sometimes permitted special events or festivals.
- **Measurement:** While smaller towns may rely on officer discretion ("plainly audible" standard), others may use decibel meters (e.g., 55 dB(A) for residential at night).

### **Specific Examples of Smaller Local Ordinances**

- **Residential Noise:** Loud noises that disturb the peace of a reasonable person, such as amplified music or lawnmowers in residential areas, are prohibited during nighttime hours.
- **Vehicle Idling:** Engines on vehicles weighing over 10,000 pounds are restricted from idling for more than 15 minutes near residential areas.
- **Construction/Repairs:** Construction projects are often subject to specific, louder decibel limits but may be allowed to operate within reasonable, permitted hours.

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## **Brittney Harakal**

---

**From:** Ward 4B  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 9:59 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: proposed State Mental Hospital

**From:** Robert AI7FF <robert.dupuis.affinity@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2026 2:22 PM  
**To:** Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: proposed State Mental Hospital

In my opinion, this is a very bad idea to locate this facility in our little town of Laurel. My wife and I have been homeowners here since 2017. Laurel isn't perfect, but bringing all the problem people from all over the state here is not the kind of population growth that is beneficial to our community. Surely, there are other options available.....like expanding the existing facility at Warm Springs. Let's not ruin Laurel for the sake of whoever is benefitting from this decision.

Sincerely,  
Robert Dupuis

## **Brittney Harakal**

---

**From:** Ward 4B  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 9:59 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: proposed State Mental Health Facility

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Robert AI7FF <robert.dupuis.affinity@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2026 2:06 PM  
**To:** Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Cc:** Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: proposed State Mental Health Facility

Regarding the initiative to make Laurel MT the home for this Facility is

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Ward 1B  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 3:39 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kelly Strecker; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** Fw: Mental Prison

---

**From:** Monna Rae Adickes <monnarae@cbthebrokers.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 12:05 PM  
**To:** Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Mental Prison

Dear City Council,

I agree a mental prison is needed on the east side of Montana. BUT not in Laurel at the 114-acre site that has been selected. This site is surrounded by homes, a school and a pristine golf course. This site is less than 500 yards from West / Laurel Elementary, and even closer to the softball fields used by the youth of Laurel.

This mental prison should be located near our two hospitals in Billings or in an industrial park, far away from any homes and especially children. The State-owned land off Buffalo Trail is more suitable than the current selected site.

I sell real estate; our property values will drop!! Look at Warm Springs, no one wants to live there...why?? The staff of this facility will commute from Billings and surrounding communities.

What value does this bring to Laurel, **NONE!**  
Our roads, water and sewer are already failing.

Kurt Markegard and Mayor Dave Wagonner want you to vote yes for this annexation but have told my client that because he is currently leasing to a pot shop, his 5 acres will not be considered for annexation.

You as a councilman/woman are our only hope to stop this prison from being built in Laurel. Please **VOTE NO** to the annexation of this 114-acre parcel owned by Miller Trois LLC

Monna Rae Adickes – 102 8<sup>th</sup> Ave Unit B Laurel MT



**MONNA RAE ADICKES**  
*Real Estate Broker*

☎ 406-860-4284  
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Billings, MT 59102  
🌐 www.mra406.com

 **COLDWELL BANKER** THE BROKERS

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Ward 4B  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 5:43 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: Laurel's Future

**From:** Alley M <ameyerhoff96@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 2:56 AM  
**To:** Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Laurel's Future

Richard Klose,

To the Laurel Leadership Team & Laurel Representatives:

I have been a dedicated resident of Laurel since 2019 and owned multiple properties within the community. I also put intentional effort to give back to the community, local business, local community events. I am formally expressing my opposition to the proposed State Mental Forensic Facility Project. I am deeply concerned for its future. The current division caused by the proposed facility project is clear, Laurel Residents say NO. It is evident that the overwhelming majority of residents—I estimate nearly 90%—are opposed to both the location of this facility and the manner in which leadership has handled the process.

My opposition is informed by my professional background in both Healthcare and Public Safety/Security. Viewed through the lens of risk management and community welfare, this project introduces significant liabilities with no tangible benefit to our city or occupants. Placing it near our schools and children poses its own safety risks. 459 Yards from the elementary school. Our utilities/resources will continue to strain with this project and Laurel currently lacks an Emergency Room, and the addition of this facility would place an unsustainable strain on our existing Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue, and Medical Response teams. We are being asked to absorb substantial risk while gaining nothing in return.

Unfortunately, regarding this project's progression I remain unmoved. In fact I'm disheartened. Previously, I placed implicit trust in our leadership; I trusted the process and I trusted the chain of command. However, this experience has made me realize that such trust was misplaced for some time now. It's more concerning that we have a credibility gap in our leadership that should have never been there. The

inconsistencies between written statements and live meetings have been glaring. To be frank, the contradictory narratives presented to the community feel fundamentally disrespectful to the residents who elected you. The faith we placed in the Leadership Team has been lost. We should have been offered a choice, a vote, or at the very least, a transparent conversation. Instead, we have been shut out of the process.

We do not want this facility at the currently set location, nor do we want it connected to our utilities. I urge you to recognize that this location is fundamentally wrong for Laurel and our utilities, resources, and our residents. Please respect the will of the community you represent and reconsider your support for this project. We want accountability. We want transparency. I ask that you advocate for us. Advocate **Laurel's voice in halting the project. Laurel Residents SAY NO**

Respectfully,

Alley M.  
Resident of Laurel

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Ward 4B  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 5:44 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to Proposed State Mental Health Prison in Laurel Area

**From:** Maggie Lowell <mtlowell81@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 10:18 AM  
**To:** Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; ward2@laurel.mt.gov;  
ward3@laurel.mt.gov; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Proposed State Mental Health Prison in Laurel Area

Dear Members of the Laurel City Council,

I am writing as a county resident to formally express my opposition to the State of Montana's proposal to construct a mental health prison in or near Laurel.

I want to be clear that my concerns are not rooted in opposition to mental health treatment or services. Montana absolutely needs improved, humane, and effective mental health care. My concerns relate specifically to the siting and scale of a secure, correctional-style facility and the long-term impacts such a placement would have on our local community.

Facilities of this nature carry significant implications for land use compatibility, infrastructure demand, emergency response capacity, and community planning. These impacts fall disproportionately on local residents and local government, while decision-making authority and operational control remain at the state level.

Of particular concern is the proposed site's proximity to established residential areas and an elementary school my child attends. Regardless of the population served or the operational safeguards proposed, locating a secure state institution adjacent to a school raises legitimate planning and zoning questions. Schools are community anchors, and their surrounding areas are generally expected to support low-impact, family-oriented uses. This concern is about appropriate land use and community design, not fear.

Similarly, the location's proximity to my brother and sister-in-law's property, where they are raising very young children, highlights the broader issue of placing a large institutional facility within close range of family neighborhoods. Families deserve clarity, predictability, and stability in their living environments, especially when decisions are made that will shape the area for decades.

Laurel and the surrounding county already face challenges related to growth, limited healthcare capacity, and strained public services. Introducing a large, state-run mental health prison without firm commitments for long-term funding, staffing, and infrastructure support places additional responsibility on local systems that are already under pressure.

I am also concerned about the precedent this sets. Our community should not be selected primarily for convenience or availability. Projects of this magnitude require robust local engagement, transparent impact analysis, and serious consideration of alternative locations or treatment models that better align with community planning principles.

I respectfully urge the City Council to oppose this proposal and to advocate for comprehensive impact studies, meaningful public input, and alternatives that do not place a disproportionate burden on Laurel and county residents.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our community. I appreciate your consideration and your commitment to thoughtful, long-term decision-making on behalf of local families.

Sincerely,

***Maggie Lowell***

2025 Driftwood River Dr.  
Laurel MT 59044

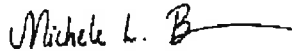
County Resident  
Laurel, Montana

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Civil Attorney  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 8, 2026 9:38 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** Fw:

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann  
Civil City Attorney  
**City of Laurel**  
Cell Phone: 406.671.4333  
[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Reenie Lane <reeniegoodwin15@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 8, 2026 6:41:13 AM  
**To:** Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:**

I am writing as a nearby property owner to formally express my concerns regarding the proposed placement of a state mental health institution on property that directly borders my land.

I support the need for adequate and humane mental health services. My concern is not with the purpose of the facility, but with the appropriateness of this specific location.

The land the State has purchased directly touches and borders my property. In addition, my eight-year-old granddaughter lives with her father in a home located less than a football field (approximately 300 feet) from the proposed site. Placing a large state institutional facility in such immediate proximity to residential property—and to a young child's home—raises serious and legitimate concerns regarding safety, security, supervision, land-use compatibility, and long-term quality of life.

This site is outside city limits yet appears to rely on the city for access, infrastructure, and services. As a result, nearby residents bear the impacts of the facility without the protections typically provided through city zoning, buffering requirements, and comprehensive planning standards.

Once constructed, the impacts of this facility will be permanent. Effects on surrounding properties—including loss of use and enjoyment, safety considerations, neighborhood character, and property values—cannot be reversed. Montana has a long tradition of respecting private property rights and ensuring that major land-use decisions are made thoughtfully and fairly, especially when families and children are directly affected.

I respectfully urge the City Council to oppose this specific location and to advocate for alternative sites that are properly zoned, adequately buffered from residential homes, and better suited for an institutional facility of this nature.

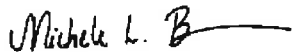
Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our community. I appreciate your attention to the concerns of residents who will be most directly affected by this decision. Respectfully John & Coreen Tomek

**Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Civil Attorney  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 8, 2026 9:38 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** Fw: Annexation concerns

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann  
Civil City Attorney  
**City of Laurel**  
Cell Phone: 406.671.4333  
civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov

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**From:** Dennis And Sandy Conway <scdcconway@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 7, 2026 7:20:21 AM  
**To:** Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Annexation concerns

Good Morning, We live outside the city of Laurel but in the area of the proposed location for the forensic mental health prison. I would like it of record that we are opposed to this location or our community for this type of a facility. Our concerns are safety and how a facility such as this would effect land/home values. If the 114 acres was annexed into the city of Laurel, what control would you have for their future plans for the remains 104 acres? What else would be brought into our community? It has been stated they would only require a 10 acre parcel. Thank you for placing our wish for your council member to vote no on the annexation.

Dennis and Sandy Conway  
Sent from my iPad

**Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Ward 1A  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 10:41 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Forensic Prison in Laurel



**Sara B. Naylor**

Council Member - City of Laurel - Ward 1

+ 406 598 9499  
+ [Ward1@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:Ward1@laurel.mt.gov)

**From:** Janis Taylor <[janistaylor11@gmail.com](mailto:janistaylor11@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 9:20 AM  
**To:** Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Cc:** Ward 1B <[ward1b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2A <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2B <[ward2b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3A <[ward3a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3B <[ward3b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 4A <[ward4a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Proposed Forensic Prison in Laurel

Dear City Council,

I am writing as a concerned Laurel resident to formally express my strong opposition to the proposed construction of a facility for the criminally insane within our community, particularly at its current planned location.

The proposed site is located approximately 500 feet from an elementary school and within an established residential neighborhood. This proximity raises serious concerns regarding public safety, child welfare, and responsible land-use planning. Schools and residential areas should remain protected spaces, and the placement of a high-security mental health correctional facility so close to children is both alarming and inappropriate.

In addition to safety concerns, this project directly conflicts with the intent of existing zoning laws. Residential zoning is designed to preserve quality of life, promote stability, and encourage thoughtful community growth. Introducing a facility of this nature into a residential area undermines those principles and sets a troubling precedent for future land-use decisions.

The long-term economic consequences are also significant. The presence of a prison for the criminally insane in close proximity to homes and schools will inevitably lead to decreased property values, making it more difficult for current residents to sell their homes and discouraging new families from moving to our town. This will deter residential development, private investment, and business growth. In turn this could cause stagnation to the city's future and reduce its tax base.

Furthermore, the strain this facility would place on already limited local resources cannot be ignored. Emergency medical services, fire departments, and law enforcement agencies are not currently equipped to absorb the increased demands such a facility would generate. Diverting these critical services to support the prison would reduce response for local residents and place unnecessary risk on the Laurel community.

Additional concerns include infrastructure stress, staffing logistics, and long-term operational impacts—many of which would disproportionately affect the local community while offering little benefit in return.

While I recognize the importance of secure and appropriate facilities for individuals requiring mental health treatment, such facilities must be placed in locations that prioritize public safety, adhere to zoning standards, and respect the wellbeing of surrounding communities. This proposed location fails to meet any of those expectations.

I respectfully urge you to oppose this project as currently planned and to advocate for alternative locations that do not place children, families, property values, and residential neighborhoods at unnecessary risk. Our community deserves thoughtful planning, transparency, and a meaningful voice in decisions that will permanently shape our future.

Thank you for your time, service, and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Janis Taylor  
Laurel, Montana resident

February 6, 2026

Letter of Opposition to the Laurel City Council

To the Members of the Laurel City Council,

I am writing to you today as a concerned Laurel Citizen in regards to the Forensic Mental Jail Facility that is proposed to be built just outside of our town of Laurel. I have lived in Laurel for 14 years now, I came to help raise my grandchildren who attended West Elementary. I have friends and relatives here that will be affected by this. I have friends that live right across the road and have lived there for many years, raised families and run local businesses. What will they be looking out their front window at? It could be anything even 10 to 12 foot high fences with barb wire or razor ribbon along the top to discourage anyone from climbing over?? No one knows really what it will look like to passers by and people living right there next to it. So many families live right by there that purchased their homes there because it was a safe place to raise their families. Can their children still play in their backyards without fear?? BIGGEST concern, It is dangerous for the children and most importantly they need to be protected. West Elementary less than 450 yards away. With the way society has changed how our children already live, in a sort of lock down at the Schools for their safety. NOW THIS RIGHT BY THERE NO!!! that is so wrong. Yes they will have some kind of security there but it only takes one mistake, JUST ONE, to change a child and family's life FOREVER!! ONE!! Whose will it be? Someone you know or someone that you love? I have friends that own small businesses here that depend on that income to support their families. Will this affect their businesses to the point they have to close the doors? Putting this in our little town will change it forever and not in a good way. These people that will be coming there aren't there for traffic tickets. These people have committed serious crimes like murder and rape and that is why they have to be there. Whether they are insane or not doesn't make a difference because they are dangerous to the public and should not be put within close proximity of innocent children and citizens. Transportation of these people from one place to another poses another threat to the general public and to our citizens.

We all are so proud of our schools that have been newly built and updated. We are so proud of the football, baseball, track and new soccer fields being built and our children that play all those healthy school sport activities, good for body and mind. I love the way this town comes alive with pride to support our children when the games are on. THAT IS LAUREL!! IT IS ALIVE!! not dying because of this jail to be possibly put here. So many towns come here to participate in those sports. ARE they still going to want to come to our town for games now? Will we lose families that live here that will take their children elsewhere, somewhere they consider safe to raise a family? If we lose families what will happen here? WE are all proud of Laurel and for good reason it is a safe, friendly place to live.

What about the firemen, emergency responders and police? What kind of unnecessary danger and stress are you putting on them. Our firefighters are volunteers and not paid. We already can't respond

to our ambulance needs and this can only add to that problem. There is a fundraiser being done by a caring 8th grader, Claire Anderson, raising funds for our much needed ambulance! Because we can't fund it thru our city funds..... What about our police that protect our community , what extra danger are being put on them with just the Love Truck Stop let alone a Forensic Mental Facility. Truck stops are known to be hot spots for crime. They are high-risk areas for crimes including drugs, vandalism, robbery and prostitution. This has been annexed into the town of Laurel so I assume our police will be responsible for responding to anything that happens there.

IT is so wrong that they have been in touch with the state about property here in Laurel, namely the site on Old Hiway 10 for this Forensic Mental Jail with no thought for the citizens of Laurel. The state was actually steered away from the site north of town by Kurt Markegard because he said it would be too costly for the state to run the sewer and water lines to the city. Who does this Mayor Waggoner and Kurt Markegard work for? THEY work for the City of Laurel and that is where their loyalty should be not with anyone else! It appears the site north of town would have been within a little over a mile of a residential area where I believe Kurt Markegard's own a home so very close to where he lives. Is it just coincidence that he suggested the site on Old Hiway 10 to them instead because he was worried about the cost to them? Neither piece of land is really what the City of Laurel residents want anyway. The one outside of town still too close to innocent families and a straight shot to our High School where families children are at.

To many things are pointing to the Mayor Waggoner and Kurt Markegard being involved in selling out our city of Laurel without even a second thought about what the people that live here would want or how they would be affected. How many times did Kurt Markegard say he had no IDEA what this was too be. However in different News articles back in September 30, 2025 Q2 Montana News Leader article written by David Jay said Mayor Waggoner had met with the State Board Of Investments about a piece of property for the State Forensic Mental Hospital on Old Hiway 10 on west Main Street. How is it that the reporter knew what kind of facility this was but the Mayor Waggoner and Kurt Markegard had no clue. No truth in that at all. Mayor Waggoner stated he liked the idea of bringing the Mental Facility here and you can bet he knew just as well as anyone what kind, it was A FORENSIC MENTAL JAIL FACILITY FOR CRIMINALS. Laurel Planning Director Kurt Markegard declined a on camera interview to give more details. IS THAT SURPRISING!!!!!!!! NO it isn't, it was being done behind all of our backs.

US NEWS by Associated Press December 5, 2025 Markegard hinted at a location just outside of city limits with adjacent waer and sewer lines under installation and other criteria "that would make building the facility remarkable successful". WOW thank you Kurt Markegard! . Laurel City Planning Department did not respond to a Monday request from MTFP for a list of the parcels the state was considering. Still under cover things happening with our city officials!

THEN there is still the email from Kurt Markegard way back on August 22, 2025 Kurt Markegard ON BEHALF OF LAURELS MAYOR WAGGONER, basically outlining the the state how this could be accomplished right down to changing the zoning to Public so they could be annexed in. WHO is in charge of the planning Committee??? I heard it is Kurt Markegard. WELL isn't that convenient for this

whole thing going on? It is just hard to believe that the people that are voted in to protect our city and our citizens are really not doing that at all. The land in question should be left for new residential homes that will help build our City of Laurel. That was the intention wasn't it? To make our City grow and prosper. They would be paying taxes into the City to help with needed improvements, unlike the State that will not.

ONE more thing there is a article in the Daily Montanan dated Novmber 10, 2025 that is speaking of the need for a new Womens Prison. Not alot of details except overcrowded facilities and they need 400 more beds. They have 250 million to construct it. But if the state has 114 acres here just outside of town what else can be built there without any say from the citizens once they have been annexed into the City Of Laurel. I think they might be able to do anything they want at that point.

There was mention of jobs it would bring to our city. Well the jobs will be limited mostly to qualified mental health workers such as Forensic psychologists, Forensic Psychiatrists, Psyciatric Nurse Practitioners, Licensed Clinical workers and licensed professional counselors and Mental Health intake Specialists. They will likely commute from other areas. The licensed employees probably have no desire to live this close to it either. The jobs for the general public will likely be housekeeping, kitchen and maybe grounds care. These jobs will probably not pay enough in regards to the danger the people will be in working there.

THE Mayor and CAO have not been representing the citizens of Laurel in a transparent way and protecting their best interests. The Mayor has not conducted himself in a professional manner on several occasions. They both refuse to answer questions asked of them at all or truthfully. The Attorney was asked for her resignation by Mayor Waggoner at the last meeting on February 3 because she did not choose to lie the council members and attending citizens. That kind of conduct is not acceptable and they should consider stepping down for not telling us all the truth and informing us all of what was happening in regards to our City Of Laurel.

SO, finally I just am asking you the City Council to NOT approve this Forensic Mental Jail Hospital to come to our City of Laurel. This is your town too and you cannot believe it is good or beneficial to Laurel more than any of the rest of us do. IF the our citizens already here don't want to live by this Forensic Mental Jail then WHAT new famiies will? PLEASE PROTECT the city you love and live in raising your families also. PLEASE JUST SAY NO! NO FORENSIC MENTAL JAIL FACILITY FOR LAUREL! It is not for us it can be put somewhere else where it won't be such a danger to the pubic, to our famiies. BIG SKY MONTANA has plenty of land elsewhere in Eastern Montana.

Thank you,

Sandi Whitman

806 Wyoming Avenue

Laurel, Montana

**From:** Kellie Martin  
**To:** Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** Proposed Mental Health Prison objection.  
**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 5:39:22 PM

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Dear Members of the Laurel City Council,

I am writing as a concerned homeowner and resident of Laurel to formally oppose the proposed placement of a mental health prison facility approximately 400 to 500 yards from my home and in close proximity to an established residential neighborhood and West Elementary School.

While I fully recognize the importance of accessible mental health services and appropriate facilities for those in need, I strongly believe that this specific location is unsuitable and poses serious concerns for nearby residents, families, and children.

First, the placement of a correctional-style mental health facility in such close proximity to homes will inevitably and negatively impact surrounding property values. Many residents, including myself, have made significant financial investments in our homes with the reasonable expectation that zoning and land-use decisions would protect the stability and integrity of our neighborhood. A facility of this nature undermines that expectation and places an unfair financial burden on homeowners who had no voice in the original planning.

Second, there are legitimate safety concerns associated with situating a secure mental health detention facility near family neighborhoods and an elementary school. West Elementary School serves young children who deserve a safe, secure environment free from unnecessary risk. Regardless of security measures, the perception and potential for incidents — including escapes, disturbances, or increased law enforcement activity — creates anxiety for parents, residents, and school staff alike.

Finally, residential neighborhoods are not the appropriate setting for facilities that require heightened security, monitoring, and emergency response. There are more suitable locations within the city or surrounding areas that are better zoned, less densely populated, and more appropriate for this type of facility without placing undue impact on families and homeowners.

I respectfully urge the City Council to reconsider this location and to engage directly with affected residents before moving forward. Responsible planning requires balancing the needs of the broader community with the rights, safety, and financial well-being of those who live nearby.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to the City of Laurel.

Sincerely,

Kellie Martin  
205 Foundation Ave, Laurel, MT 59044

**From:** [Ward 1A](#)  
**To:** [Brittney Haraka](#)  
**Cc:** [Civil Attorney](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Vote NO on Annexation - Forensic Mental Health Facility  
**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 8:10:12 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: Lisa Stutterheim <[stutterheim4@gmail.com](mailto:stutterheim4@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 10:56 PM  
To: Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>  
Subject: Vote NO on Annexation - Forensic Mental Health Facility

Dear Sara Naylor,

I am a resident of Laurel at 5 Beartooth Court Laurel MT 59044, and I am writing to urge you to vote NO on the proposed annexation for the forensic mental health facility.

This 32-bed facility would house justice-system involved individuals just 459 yards from West Elementary School. Our community deserves transparency about how this location was selected and what security measures will protect our children and neighborhoods.

**Key concerns:**

- No tax revenue to Laurel despite increased burden on emergency services
- Proximity to schools and residential areas
- Lack of public input in the decision-making process
- Inadequate information about security and safety protocols

The state cannot proceed without City Council approval of annexation. I urge you to vote NO and demand full transparency from city leadership about this process.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Stutterheim  
5 Beartooth Court Laurel MT 59044

**From:** Kathleen Ward  
**To:** Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** Concerns Regarding Proposed Mental Health Facility Location  
**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 1:28:39 PM

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Dear Members of the City Council,

My name is Kathleen Ward, and I am a resident of this community. I am writing to formally express my opposition to the proposed mental health facility at its currently planned location and our small community.

While I support access to mental health care and recognize its importance, I have serious concerns about placing this facility so close to schools and established residential neighborhoods. The proximity raises valid questions regarding student safety, neighborhood impact, traffic, and overall quality of life for nearby families.

Additionally, our city is already experiencing strain on essential services such as police, fire, emergency medical response. At this time, there does not appear to be sufficient infrastructure or staffing capacity to adequately support the increased demands that this type of facility would require. Without a clear and well-funded plan to expand these services, the burden will fall on a system that is already stretched thin.

I respectfully urge the City Council to reconsider the proposed location and to vote **NO**. The state can look for other areas that allow for appropriate space, security, accessibility, and service support without negatively impacting schools and residential communities.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our city. I ask that you prioritize thoughtful planning, public safety, and transparency as you move forward with this decision.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen Ward  
Concerned Resident

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Ward 4A  
**Sent:** Monday, February 9, 2026 5:40 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Metal Hospital in Laurel MT

**From:** Reneeiverson821 <reneeiverson821@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 9, 2026 4:55 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Proposed Metal Hospital in Laurel MT

To whom this may concern,

I am writing as a property owner whose land borders the proposed site for the new mental health facility. While it may be unusual, I wish to express my full support for this project. I recently purchased my property in August 2026 with the intention of living outside city limits, allowing us to keep animals and operate our business on-site. Additionally, we homeschool our two children and plan to establish a large garden this summer. Our children are active members of 4H.

My primary reason for supporting this facility is that it will prevent the area below my property from being developed into a subdivision. I have no concerns regarding potential decreases in property values, and I am aware that incidents of escapes from such facilities are statistically minimal.

Thank you for your time and service. I am willing to give my name and address, but I would like my information to remain anonymous due to how this community seems to be treating people who support this facility, and I do not want my business damaged. We also have a neighbor who complains to the county about everything, and she has made it clear that she will sue over anything.

Thank you

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Ward 1A  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 7:59 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** FW: Mental Health Prison



### Sara B. Naylor

Council Member - City of Laurel - Ward 1

✦ 406 598 8499  
✦ [Ward1a@laurelmt.gov](mailto:Ward1a@laurelmt.gov)

**From:** Tyler Hansen <[thansen573@icloud.com](mailto:thansen573@icloud.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 9, 2026 8:13 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <[citymayor@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:citymayor@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1B <[ward1b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1b@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Mental Health Prison

Mayor Waggoner and Mr. Markegard,

I am writing to formally express my deep disappointment and concern regarding the actions and conduct of the Mayor of Laurel, Dave Waggoner, and the Chief Administrative Officer, Kurt Markegard.

You have been dishonest with our community. Despite repeated requests, you have failed to provide receipts or documentation to substantiate the claims you have made regarding the proposed mental health facility. Transparency is not optional in public service. When facts are withheld or misrepresented, trust is broken — and once broken, it is rarely restored.

In addition to the lack of honesty, your behavior has been profoundly disrespectful. The manner in which our City Attorney was treated during the meeting on February 3, 2026,

was disgraceful and unprofessional. She was fulfilling her duty to the City of Laurel and its residents, and the treatment she received warrants a sincere and public apology. Not only to her, but also to the City Council and to the community who witnessed it.

The emails on record and Mr. Markegard's extended filibuster during that same meeting further demonstrate a troubling pattern: an attempt to push through a facility without full disclosure, while dismissing legitimate concerns raised by council members and residents alike. This facility is being proposed to house criminal populations, in close proximity to an elementary school. That is not only concerning — it is irresponsible. You cannot reasonably expect this community to accept such risk without clear, complete, and honest information.

Let me be clear: I fully support mental health services and believe they are critically important. However, that is not truly what is being presented here. If this facility is intended to house criminal offenders, then say so plainly. What is Phase 2? What is Phase 3? What additional populations are planned? The refusal to answer these questions directly only fuels public distrust.

You are facing a community that is angry, frustrated, and demanding accountability — and understandably so. I recognize that you are under pressure. I recognize that you are tired and have personal lives beyond City Hall. But so does every resident of Laurel. Public service is not an excuse-driven role. It is a responsibility-driven one.

No more deflection. No more excuses. It is time for clear, direct, and truthful answers.

Thank you,

Tyler Hansen

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Mike Nardella  
**To:** Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** Proposed mental hospital  
**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 2:38:50 PM

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To whom it may concern:

Though I am not a city resident of Laurel, I do own a business that is located on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the west end of town. My office building would be roughly 840 yards from the proposed mental hospital. **I am 100% opposed to this being shoved down our throats.** Those in the Laurel government have not been forthcoming with us about the dealings with the state on this matter.

The hospital in Warm Springs has had documented large staff turn overs and is notoriously understaffed. Warm Springs lost their CMS certification a few years back! There is not proper governance with that facility. How can we expect any different with this proposed hospital? Anything could happen with a person that is not of right mind (and criminally insane), of which this facility will house. We do not need that potential risk this close to residential areas or close to our kids' and grandkids' West Elementary School! Has the City of Laurel evaluated the demand on our law enforcement and ambulatory services? There have been numerous documented cases of Laurel citizens that did not have access to an ambulance. If our city's ambulances are having to be dispatched to the hospital, they won't be able to assist citizens. It is also my understanding that local jails are required to house inmates coming and going from the hospital. All of our local jails are beyond their holding capacities.

With this hospital, further growth in neighborhood subdivisions to the west of Laurel will cease, and property values will plummet. And, as it has been repeated over and over, the city of Laurel nor Yellowstone County will no longer receive real estate taxes that are currently being paid by the current private owner, or any future private owner (such as a residential housing developer). That lost revenue will then have to be absorbed by the taxpayers of Laurel. I hope the City Council has also reviewed the light pollution this facility will create. The security lights required of a facility like this will undoubtedly flood the neighborhood. Light pollution has always reduced surrounding property values.

Any new job recipients of the hospital will need housing. Those coming in for these jobs will most likely look for a rental house or apartment (some may purchase). But, there is already a shortage of affordable rentals in Laurel. I see young families looking for affordable housing all the time. This will only make that ability to find housing that much worse.

Lastly, just look back a short few years ago. Laurel has been plagued by water supply issues by the fluctuations of the Yellowstone River. There is no doubt in my mind that this proposed facility's water demands will stress our fragile water treatment center's ability to address the city's water needs.

I urge you to consult with the Laurel City Council to come to their senses and stop this. This is NOT what Laurel needs or wants.

Sincerely,

*Mike Nardella*

Mike Nardella  
Nardella & Associates CPA's  
15 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Laurel MT 59044

**From:** [Ward 1B](#)  
**To:** [Civil Attorney](#)  
**Cc:** [Kelly Strecker](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Laurel Response about the Mental Health Jail/Prison facility  
**Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026 9:58:01 AM  
**Attachments:** [Screenshot 2026-02-04 131807.png](#)  
[Community Responses Document Mental Prison.pdf](#)  
[Screenshot 2026-02-04 131807.png](#)

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**From:** The Front Porch <thefrontporchmt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026 2:40 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Laurel City Planner <cityplanner@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>; Vince.Ricci@legmt.gov <Vince.Ricci@legmt.gov>; Deming, Lee <Lee.Deming@legmt.gov>; governor@mt.gov <governor@mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; magnum234@msn.com <magnum234@msn.com>; mtbare@bresnan.net <mtbare@bresnan.net>; dantrost@mt.gov <dantrost@mt.gov>; johnmilanovich@gmail.com <johnmilanovich@gmail.com>; tkober@mtech.edu <tkober@mtech.edu>; ceyounkin@yahoo.com <ceyounkin@yahoo.com>; BOI.ED@mt.gov <BOI.ED@mt.gov>; BOI.Loans@mt.gov <BOI.Loans@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Laurel Response about the Mental Health Jail/Prison facility

Hello and thank you for your time,

We as a community put together a questionnaire that would allow Laurel residents to provide their feedback about the proposed State Mental Health facility and Prison in Laurel Montana.

As you will see reading through these responses, it is obvious that our Laurel community has reservations and concerns about this facility being here, but mostly the LOCATION the state has chosen to put a buy/sell on.

It was state by our Governor "*you would not put this into a community that didn't want it*" Reference Link: [https://youtu.be/f2VTantBwFk?si=9wml\\_-98B5wUIQdw](https://youtu.be/f2VTantBwFk?si=9wml_-98B5wUIQdw)  
**On site selection:** "We're not going to go someplace where it's not wanted," Gianforte said in an interview regarding the search for a location in the Laurel/Billings area.

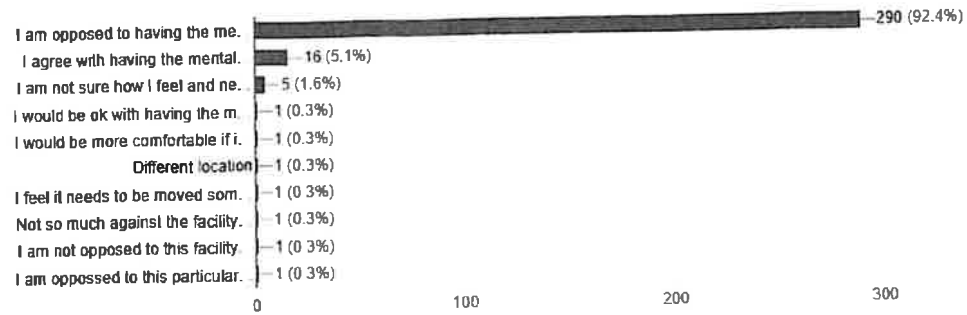
This is an accumulation of responses that were received from a community questionnaire... You will find 314 individual responses.

I have also included a screen shot diagram graph of the responses

Please Choose one

 Copy chart

314 responses



Cheryl Hill  
Concerned Laurel Community Resident and Business Owner

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** Ward 1B  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 2:57 PM  
**To:** Civil Attorney  
**Cc:** Brittney Harakal; Kelly Strecker; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** Fw: Mental Health Facility

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**From:** Trish Little <me\_is\_t1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 2:49 PM  
**To:** Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Mental Health Facility

Hello Mr. Canape: My name is Trish Little. I am a citizen of Laurel.

I wish to express my concern with regard to the possibility of having a mental health detention facility (I may be using the incorrect term for it, so please forgive me) located in our town. I am not in favor of it. I am deeply concerned with the location, which is in close proximity to one of our elementary schools. I am also very concerned about the potential for increased taxes, and the strain this facility will place on our town's infrastructure. Our per capita tax burden is already substantial for such a small town. We do not need or wish to shoulder additional costs that will only continue to increase over time.

I also find it deeply concerning that the entire process has been so "back room", for lack of a better term. Why was it initiated without any input from the citizens of this town? It casts a very ugly shadow on our city government, deserved or not. The whole thing reeks of dishonesty and fraud. Given the current climate in which we find ourselves as a nation, with rampant fraud being uncovered at every turn, I find it not only disheartening, but shocking, that our city employees (both elected and hired) would engage in something like this. Americans are tired of being treated like this. We are tired of being financially brutalized by our government officials. We are very very tired of being taken advantage of.

I encourage you to stand up for the citizens of this town, and fight to deny the placement of this facility in Laurel. I appreciate your taking time to read my message. Trish Little

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

Ex Parte Communications

CM Mackay

**From:** Katlyn Gotschall <katlyngotschall@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2026 9:50 PM

**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>

**Cc:** Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>

**Subject:** Community Impact and Professional Concern Regarding Proposed Forensic Mental Health Facility

Dear Mayor and Members of the Laurel City Council,

My name is Katlyn Gotschall, and I am a resident of Laurel, Montana.

I am writing this letter following the City Council meeting held this evening (1-27-2026) to formally share my concerns, perspective, and professional opinion regarding the proposed annexation of a forensic mental health facility into the City of Laurel.

When I met my husband, I knew Laurel would become our forever home. We have built our life here with intention and commitment, purchasing our home, raising our child, establishing our careers, and investing deeply in this community and its people.

I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. While this facility is sometimes framed as an opportunity for mental health employment, the reality is that forensic state facilities primarily employ psychiatrists, psychologists, correctional staff, and nursing professionals. Roles for counselors are limited and highly custodial in nature, and they are rarely filled by local outpatient clinicians. This facility would not meaningfully strengthen Laurel's mental health workforce, increase access to care, or support community based therapy services.

My clinical work centers around trauma, safety, and trust. What I have observed through this process is that the City has unintentionally activated a collective trauma response within the community. Fight, flight, freeze, and fawn are predictable reactions when people feel unsafe or excluded from decision making. Laurel is responding with fight.

When questions are asked with urgency and emotion, it is not hostility. It is fear. Fear emerges when trust has been disrupted. Many residents feel blindsided and unheard. Rather than prioritizing sustainable growth such as affordable housing for healthcare professionals, investment in local services, and workforce retention, the City is considering annexing a state run forensic facility that offers little direct benefit to Laurel while introducing long term risk.

Once annexed, the City of Laurel would assume ongoing responsibility for municipal services tied to this facility. This includes emergency response, fire protection, medical coordination, infrastructure support, and mutual aid response. These responsibilities carry staffing, training, liability, and financial implications that

remain even if state priorities or funding structures change.

Community members are not passive observers or social media acquaintances. We are residents who have entrusted our elected officials with transparency, accountability, and honest communication. When information is shared unevenly or appears selectively endorsed through informal platforms, it further erodes trust and deepens community concern.

As the spouse of a volunteer firefighter, my concerns deepen further. My home is structured around other people's worst days. I fear that our already stretched first responders may be expected to manage incidents involving a forensic population without specialized, ongoing, and fully funded training. Forensic psychiatric response differs significantly from standard crisis intervention. Without guaranteed preparation and resources, local responders are placed at risk alongside the community they serve.

I also feel anxiety knowing my husband may be asked to give more time, energy, and emotional labor to support a decision that does not clearly support him or his fellow responders in return. I feel shock that those entrusted with safeguarding this community would consider introducing a high acuity facility without a clearly defined and publicly presented plan for emergency readiness, responder protection, and long term sustainability.

Montana already faces critical shortages in healthcare and emergency personnel. Adding a high demand facility without parallel investment in workforce retention increases burnout risk, turnover, and strain on systems that are already operating at capacity.

As a mother, I am left asking how we teach our children to trust leadership when transparency feels absent. The individuals housed in a forensic mental health prison are not there voluntarily, nor are they stabilized for community integration. As a parent, I cannot support a decision that compromises my child's sense of safety.

For clarity:

A forensic mental health hospital is a secure psychiatric facility that evaluates and treats individuals involved in the criminal justice system, often those deemed incompetent to stand trial or not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect. These facilities operate with correctional level security and house individuals who have committed serious offenses.

Trust is built through consistency, transparency, and mutual respect.

Safety is the reasonable assurance that individuals and communities are protected from harm and that adequate systems are in place to respond effectively when risk arises.

Communication is the clear, timely, and honest exchange of information that allows informed decision making.

To date, there has been no publicly presented community benefit agreement outlining guaranteed funding, staffing ratios, emergency response support, infrastructure investment, or long term oversight mechanisms that would directly benefit Laurel residents.

You have already heard concerns regarding the lack of economic benefit, tax revenue, or expanded services this facility would bring. Other communities have expressed willingness to accept this facility where infrastructure and resources may better support it. This proposal is not comparable to the Billings Clinic Psychiatric Center, which stabilizes individuals in crisis. It is not Warm Springs. It is not Passages. This is a prison for mentally ill offenders.

Opposition to this annexation is not opposition to mental health treatment. It is opposition to placing a secure forensic facility in a community without demonstrated benefit, adequate preparation, or transparent collaboration.

Tonight, you have heard from many voices. This letter adds the perspective of a mental health professional, a first responder's spouse, a mother, and a committed community member.

I respectfully urge you not to annex this facility into Laurel.

Sincerely,  
Katlyn Gotschall, MS, LCPC  
Resident of Laurel, Montana

406-697-9487

RESPONSE 1/28/2026

Ms. Gotschall,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this matter. I appreciate your unique perspective as a MH professional.

Sincerely,

CM Jodi Mackay

Ward 4a

Thursday, 1/29/26

While at the gym, a Laurel citizen and fellow gym-goer asked what I thought about the State MH Hospital. I told him I couldn't say a lot but that it's been an interesting process. I asked what he thought as a citizen of Laurel. He wanted to know when we'd know more about the process. I told him much would likely come out should the State file for annexation of the property regarding use of infrastructure, traffic and emergency services' needs. He asked how many people the hospital would serve. I told him from the plans and docs I'd seen and heard, it was slated to be 32 beds initially with a plan of 64 in a separate phase. He expressed concerns with it being so close to the school.

Dear Jodi Mackay,

I am a resident of Laurel at 1200 Cedar Crest Circle, and I am writing to urge you to vote NO on the proposed annexation for the forensic mental health facility.

This 32-bed facility would house justice-system involved individuals just 459 yards from West Elementary School. Our community deserves transparency about how this location was selected and what security measures will protect our children and neighborhoods.

Key concerns:

- No tax revenue to Laurel despite increased burden on emergency services
- Proximity to schools and residential areas
- Lack of public input in the decision-making process
- Inadequate information about security and safety protocols

The state cannot proceed without City Council approval of annexation. I urge you to vote NO and demand full transparency from city leadership about this process.

Sincerely,  
Matt Gilg  
1200 Cedar Crest Circle

--

**Matt Gilg**

[mattgilg.dev](mailto:mattgilg.dev)

Cell: 860.771.3511

RESPONSE

Tuesday 2/3/26

Mr. Gilg,

Thank you for taking the time to reach out and share your concerns with me. I appreciate it.

Sincerely,

CM Jodi Mackay

Ward 4

**From:** John Esp <johnespforenate@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, February 8, 2026 10:08 PM

**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward

2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; john esp <johnesp2001@yahoo.com>

**Subject:** Memo concerning questions about the forensic health facility

Hello all, Attached is a Memo that may shed some light to some of the questions you are being asked. I hope you will find it constructive. If you can't open the Word Document, I would be happy to paste it in the body of an email. Thank you for your consideration. John Esp

**Memo:**

**2/7/2026**

**From:** John Esp, Box 1024, Big Timber, Montana

**To:** The Mayor and City Council of Laurel Montana.

**Mr. Mayor and City Council members, Quick background information on me; I have worked to address the shortcomings in the Mental health treatment systems before I first came to the legislature in 2001. I tell you this to frame my perspective on an issue I have dealt with, sometimes personally, for the last 40 years. What I have written in bold print throughout this memo is my informed opinion, albeit my opinion only. It's my attempt to answer to some of the questions your constituents and some nearby county residents are asking you. I do this based on my experience of trying to build new beds, and upgrade the State's inadequate and undersized infrastructure during my legislative tenure. We have never had enough money to meet all the needs. That shouldn't keep us from trying.**

The BOI and the state itself are not being transparent.

**To be clear, the Legislature and Executive branch has given the task of building this facility to the BOI. The Department still has some responsibility to provide advice to the BOI on the actual building design, and the requirements for the safety of people, both inside and outside of the facility. The land will be owned and managed by the BOI for the benefit of State taxpayers.**

**Some of you, as community leaders, have been part of preliminary plat reviews, and other actions reviewing subdivisions, and/or variance requests from your citizens. Maybe some of you haven't yet. Those that have dealt with applications or requests already know that until you see an actual request or recommendation from a planning board or variance board, it is not prudent to speculate on the contents thereof. As the BOI develops a plan, they may have underlying priorities that dictate the direction in which they would like to proceed, but until they complete an application and submit it to the appropriate local government entity, speculation and premature information on their part is also not wise. Your citizens will have an opportunity at the time an application is formally made to comment on that proposal at a noticed recorded public meeting of a local government entity.**

How much did the land sell for?

**In my experience, it is not permissible to disclose terms of a buy-sell agreement. Especially if contains contingencies. Even the final sales terms as reported to the Department of Revenue are kept confidential by the Department of Revenue, and used only for property tax appraisal purposes. The final sales price of a transaction brokered by a realtor becomes proprietary information to the multiple listing service (MLS) they belong to.**

Why do you need 114 acres for 32 beds?

**My guess is that though we may not have needed it, it will benefit Laurel in that it provides a buffer to the community and the school, and... it could have been the preference of the landowner to sell all it or none of it.**

Will it be used for future expansion of prisons for the “criminally insane”, or for “the worst of the worst”, or for “murderers and rapists”?

**Those choices of words are certainly unfortunate and in my view, inaccurate hyperbole. Mental illness can affect any one of us, or any one family at any given time. There but for the Grace of God go you or I. Most of the clients of the facility are there to be evaluated to see if they have the capacity to stand trial in answer to the charges against them. If they do not have capacity, the staff works with them to recover from their illness to the point they can participate in their own defense. The vast majority of those held in this proposed facility have not been convicted of anything yet. And nearly all will be discharged back to the jail that they were brought to the facility from. Nearly every state in the US is building capacity into their forensic health system, so yes if current trends continue, at some point in the future, Montana will need more forensic beds. It's hard to predict where that demand will be, or where those beds may be located.**

Will the state will pay for expanded water infrastructure.

**If the lot and/or lots are annexed into the city, as per city regulations and planning requirements, the Board of Investments will pay the appropriate fees appurtenant to their lots and the infrastructure thereon. They will pay all the ongoing fees and assessments that the city normally charges to their customers.**

Will Warm Springs close and move to Laurel?

**Given the fact that you, the State taxpayers just spent tens of millions of dollars upgrading the main hospital, and by the way, it is a beautiful, and now a much safer facility, no. We are currently in the process of spending another 20 million to repurpose another building for patient care on that campus. As hard as it was to get the money to rehab those buildings at the Springs, it would be impossible to conceive of a scenario in which the legislature appropriates another half a billion dollars-plus to move the operation here to Laurel. It simply isn't going to happen. Western Montana legislators, local leaders, and County law enforcement in western Montana, appreciate the proximity of nearby mental health services. They also appreciate the economic impacts that the high paying union jobs have on their communities.**

Does proximity to homes and schools pose safety risk? A Laurel school board member said perception is reality.

**Not true. Perception is not reality. Reality, in my mind, is reflected in the community of Billings and it would suggest that the proposed facility near Laurel does not pose an unreasonable safety risk. The Yellowstone County detention Center and the site of the proposed new Yellowstone County Detention Center are across the street from several homes. There are schools and perhaps hundreds of homes within a several block radius of the facility. Those schools are a similar distance from the Yellowstone County facility as is likely to occur from the West Elementary School to the new facility in Laurel. Yellowstone County and the Montana Women's Prison know how to keep the people safely incarcerated that we put in their care. The state has a good record for holding people securely also.**

This facility is 450 yards away from a public elementary school.

**Mr. Mayor and Council members, this is a fallacy. The State is not going to build a forensic hospital in the North East corner of the 114 acres. To my knowledge, there isn't even a road/street to that part of the lot, nor is there water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure evident on that end of the property. The State is going to build where they have the closest direct access to the Interstate highway. The State is going to build directly adjacent to Highway 10, where public access, and all those utilities are already available. The site near Highway 10 is roughly 1100 yards from the school. By contrast, the two schools in Billings with the closest proximity to the Yellowstone County Detention Center are 1100 and 1140 yards respectively from that facility's property line. Incidentally, there are 600 to 700 inmates incarcerated there at the current time. This number is in a facility that was originally designed for a capacity of 434 inmates. A significant number of those inmates are waiting for a bed to open up in a forensic facility so they can get their mental health treatment, and a pathway to their day in Court.**

Will inmates be driven in the path of elementary school students?

**No. The inmates in custody of law enforcement and being transported to this facility will taken directly off the interstate ramp to Highway 10 and then about another block to the Forensic Facility. Once on facility grounds they will be driven into a secure attached garage (sally port), and the garage doors will be closed. They will then be escorted by law enforcement from the sally port through a walkthrough door into the secure part of the facility. They will be allowed nowhere near school children on a path.**

This has been specifically asked of me so I will answer it publically: You talk a lot about other prisons being in residential neighborhoods, but would you be ok with this facility in your backyard?

**I have the advantage over most of you in that I have toured all the States major institutions multiple times. A month or so ago I was in both the Montana State Prison and the Montana State Hospital. I have spent several hours in the Galen Forensic Facility, and in most major and some smaller County Detention facilities. At no time did I feel unsafe. A little over a month ago, we walked through the High Security Side at MSP in Deer Lodge. I would not have concerns having a forensic mental health facility near me. Keep in mind, most of the folks being treated at Warm Springs will eventually be released to community providers, and the vast majority of those serving time at Deer Lodge will eventually be released to pre-release facilities, probation and parole, and community providers in our cities and towns.**

**I travelled the state in 2023-2025 time-frame looking in depth at the needs that local governments face when it comes to behavior health issues. We heard from hundreds of citizens, providers, emergency responders, law enforcement officers, jail commanders, county attorneys, and families whose loved ones struggle with incarceration and behavior health issues.**

**We can solve the need to serve one problem population with the construction of this facility, but there is much more to do in supporting and caring for your neighbors and friends that deal with behavior health issues, sometimes on a daily basis.**

**Mr. Mayor, and Council members, I am happy to dialogue further on this issue when appropriate. You, and of course, your neighbors will get an opportunity to weigh in, likely at a public Planning Board meeting, when the final proposal is rolled out there in its entirety for all to see. At that time, none of us will need to speculate about distances, layouts, building design, landscaping, parking lot design, or any other unknowns. The questions you are hearing now will be answered, perhaps not as quickly as you and your constituents would like, but over time they will be answered.**

**Until then I remain willing to help your constituents find accurate responses to address their questions.**

**Senator John Esp**

RESPONSE

2/9/26

Senator Esp,

Thank you for this information. I hope it will be disseminated to the community.

Sincerely,

CM Jodi Mackay

Ward 4

**From:** Trish Little <[me\\_is\\_t1@yahoo.com](mailto:me_is_t1@yahoo.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2026 2:55 PM

**To:** Ward 4A <[ward4a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4a@laurel.mt.gov)>

**Subject:** Mental Health Facility

Hello Ms. Mackay: My name is Trish Little. I am a citizen of Laurel.

I wish to express my concern with regard to the possibility of having a mental health detention facility (I may be using the incorrect term for it, so please forgive me) located in our town. I am not in favor of it. I am deeply concerned with the location, which is in close proximity to one of our elementary schools. I am also very concerned about the potential for increased taxes, and the strain this facility will place on our town's infrastructure. Our per capita tax burden is already substantial for such a small town. We do not need or wish to shoulder additional costs that will only continue to increase over time.

I also find it deeply concerning that the entire process has been so "back room", for lack of a better term. Why was it initiated without any input from the citizens of this town? It casts a very ugly shadow on our city government, deserved or not. The whole thing reeks of dishonesty and fraud. Given the current climate in which we find ourselves as a nation, with rampant fraud being uncovered at every turn, I find it not only disheartening, but shocking, that our city employees (both elected and hired) would engage in something like this. Americans are tired of being treated like this. We are tired of being financially brutalized by our government officials. We are very very tired of being taken advantage of.

I encourage you to stand up for the citizens of this town, and fight to deny the placement of this facility in Laurel. I appreciate your taking time to read my message. Trish Little

RESPONSE

2/9/26

Ms. Little,

Thank you for reaching out. I appreciate you sharing your thoughts with me.

Sincerely,

CM Jodi Mackay

Ward 4a

February 10, 2026

Laurel City Council, Mayor Dave Waggoner, CAO Kurt Markegard, Laurel City Attorney Michelle Braukman, Clerk/Treasure Kelly Streck and Administrative Assistant Brittany Harkel,

I was going to send this via email, however after last week's City Workshop I want to be able to look each and every one of you in the eyes while I make my statement

The pure disappointment, disgust, embarrassment and astonishment I felt witnessing the conduct of Mayor Waggoner and CAO Markegard throughout the last 6 months and last week's workshop is unacceptable and should NOT be allowed. Our current leadership is in complete disarray and reflects poorly on our entire community. It is quite apparent that these two have purposely left CC and the City Attorney out of many discussions and opportunities to learn about the MSF "Prison" as well as many other decisions and discussions pertinent to the well-being of our town.

Last week CAO Markegard stated that "he didn't know what the facility was", "he was late to the tour", "didn't have the QR code", and he did NOT allow our city council to be there. He also fails to respond to emails from both city employees and community members about many different issues, communication is essential in any job, especially city government. Last week he also stated he had to take two days off the previous week and then informed everyone last week he was taking another two days off. I also know of a specific incident last year where a resident was needing responses from him about building and he was gone for approximately 3 weeks.

On, November 28, 2025 via text message to Cheryl Hill and myself, "I just got out of the hospital. I have prostate cancer and they removed part of my prostate. The news just called me I had NO idea", "I just heard about it an hour ago. It is all on the state. Last I heard it was Miles City. They mentioned looking at the Woods property and going through the annexation process". However, thru the provided timeline you will see that August 22, 2025 the email CAO Markegard sent "on behalf of of Mayor".

The mayor and CAO are out of the office, don't respond and have "no idea" what anything is and they are leaving the CC, City Attorney, citizens of Laurel out of everything so WHO IS RUNNING THE CITY OF LAUREL?

With the recent actions of the mayor towards the City Attorney Braukman we are adding public records request for all public records with any past or present complaints from ALL City Staff, City Council Members, All Contract personnel, Former and existing City Court Judges against the mayor for his treatment of them.

As of today, the only public records released have been emails between Kurt and the BOI (Dan Villa) and MT DPHHS (Charlie Bereton), with only one cc to the city attorney and one response from the mayor there are still many missing requests. So again, I present the Public Records requests for all emails, phone logs, text messages and social media post regarding any and all discussions regarding the MT Forensic Prison/Water Lines/Zoning/ between any of the following.

Kurt Markegard, Dave Waggoner, BOI (Dan Villa), MT DPHHS (Charlie Bereton), Dick Anderson Construction Project Manager AJ, Norman Miller of Miller Trois, LLC, Love's Gas Station Project Manager from 5/1/2025 to present

Be advised that as of this request and many before this, deletion or editing of comments and messages would be spoilation of communication protected by MCA 2-2-1003.

I do understand that this process may take time, however the continued lack of transparency and communication is unacceptable.

It is my request to have both Mayor Waggoner and CAO Markegard put on administrative leave immediately pending full investigation of public records requests and misconduct.

Sincerely,

**Formal Request for Independent Investigation\*\***

**\*\*TO:\*\*** Laurel City Council

**\*\*FROM:\*\*** Laurel CARED

**\*\*DATE:\*\*** 2.10.2026

**\*\*RE:\*\*** Request for Independent Investigation into City Leadership Conduct

Dear Honorable Members of the Laurel City Council,

We, the undersigned citizens of Laurel, respectfully request that the City Council immediately authorize an independent investigation into the conduct of Mayor Dave Waggoner and Chief Administrative Officer Kurt Markegard regarding the proposed state forensic mental health facility, and take any and all administrative actions the Council deems appropriate to ensure the integrity of this investigation.

**\*\*BASIS FOR THIS REQUEST:\*\***

Recent document releases reveal a troubling pattern:

1. **\*\*Unauthorized Communications:\*\*** On August 22, 2025—two months before Council's "informational only" briefing—CAO Markegard sent detailed proposals to state officials stating he was acting "on behalf of the City of Laurel's Mayor." Mayor Waggoner was CC'd, indicating his approval. This occurred without City Council authorization or knowledge.
2. **\*\*Exclusion of Elected Representatives:\*\*** BOI Director Dan Villa's July 10, 2025 invitation explicitly requested Kurt invite "your respective councils" to facility site tours. Billings brought multiple council members and their Mayor. No evidence suggests Laurel City Council members were invited or informed.
3. **\*\*Contradictory Statements:\*\*** September 30: Mayor Waggoner told media any decision "requires resident and city council approval." October 21: CAO Markegard told Council the state "probably doesn't have to comply with local zoning laws," discouraging involvement.
4. **\*\*Unexplained Property Selection:\*\*** City officials stated Laurel submitted no formal proposal, yet CAO Markegard promoted a specific private property (Miller Trois LLC) to state officials. The selection process has not been explained.
5. **\*\*Oath of Office Questions:\*\*** Montana law requires mayors to represent constituents and

promote citizen participation (MCA 7-3-203, 7-4-4303, 7-5-4102). The exclusion of Council and citizens raises serious questions about compliance.

**\*\*REQUESTED ACTIONS:\*\***

1. Authorize immediate retention of an independent investigator with expertise in municipal governance
2. Direct preservation of all communications and records related to the facility
3. Take any and all administrative actions deemed appropriate to ensure investigation integrity, including but not limited to administrative leave
4. Establish a 60-90 day timeline for completion
5. Commit to public disclosure of findings

**\*\*CONCLUSION:\*\***

This request is made in the spirit of protecting the integrity of Laurel's governance and restoring public trust. Administrative leave is a standard practice when serious questions arise about official conduct—it is not a finding of wrongdoing, but rather a prudent measure to allow for fair, thorough investigation without the appearance of interference.

The citizens of Laurel deserve transparency, accountability, and leadership that places community interests above all else. We respectfully urge the City Council to act swiftly on this request.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Cheryl Shipper  
Amber R Zahn  
Maggie Hanson  
Kelli Westcott  
Jeff Cebal

[← Back to Home](#)

# Timeline & Verified Facts

What we know about the proposed forensic mental health facility

## Timeline of Events

May 2,  
2025

### Legislature Approves \$124M Behavioral Health Overhaul

Montana Legislature concludes session, approving approximately \$124 million in state spending plus up to \$40 million in federal funds for behavioral health improvements. This includes \$26.5 million for a new mental health facility in eastern Montana with forensic beds.

*The funding addresses longstanding waitlists, facility shortages, and backlogs of criminal defendants awaiting psychiatric evaluations—some experiencing jail holds exceeding one year.*

[Read full article →](#)

Jun 27,  
2025

### DPHHS Director Identifies Billings Region as Likely Site

NAMI Montana releases statement celebrating DPHHS Director Charlie Brereton's announcement that Billings (Yellowstone County region) has been identified as the likely location for the new facility.

#### Charlie Brereton (DPHHS Director):

*"Right now we are focused on identifying a site for the facility and it looks more and more like the Billings region will be the location."*

#### Purpose:

The facility will serve criminal defendants who require intensive psychiatric treatment in a secure setting.

*NAMI Montana leadership expressed enthusiasm for the development, stating it would improve access to critical mental health services for those involved in the criminal justice system.*

[Read full article →](#)

Jul 10, 2025

**COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY**

## Villa Emails Kurt & Billings CAO - Invites to July Site Tours

BOI Executive Director Dan Villa emails both Kurt Markegard (Laurel CAO) and Chris Kukulski (Billings CAO) inviting them, their staff, and their respective councils to site tours in Yellowstone County.

### Villa's Email (July 10, 2025):

*"In an effort to gain more understanding from your communities, I'd like to invite you, your pertinent staff and your respective councils to site tours in Yellowstone County for areas that are being considered for the new Behavioral Health Facility authorized in HB5 (2025)."*

*"We will meet at 1PM at the Rimrock Road MSU B Parking Lot and carpool/caravan from there."*

***"Input from local officials is not only necessary to a success siting process, but also sincerely appreciated."***

### Villa's Invitation Instructions:

Villa explicitly asks recipients to "invite you, **your pertinent staff and your respective councils** to site tours in Yellowstone County."

**Question:** Did Kurt extend this invitation to Laurel City Council members or city staff? No evidence suggests he did.

**Significance:** Villa invites both Laurel and Billings leadership to tours of Yellowstone County sites. This establishes that Kurt was engaged by the state early in the process - but whether he involved Laurel's elected officials remains unclear.

Jul 14, 2025

• COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY

### Villa Schedules "Boi/Laurel Intro Call" - Kurt Misses Meeting, Villa Reveals "Potential Laurel Options"

BOI Executive Director Dan Villa schedules a Microsoft Teams meeting titled "Boi/Laurel Intro Call" with Kurt Markegard to discuss a site north of Laurel (near airport/Veterans Cemetery area). Kurt doesn't receive the invite notification and misses the meeting.

• Email Exchange (July 15):

**Kurt:** "I missed the meeting. I hadn't received the invite, so I thought it was canceled."

**Villa:** "Give me a ring whenever you have a sec and we can chat through **potential Laurel options.**"

Jul 24-28, 2025

### State Tours Yellowstone County Sites - Kurt Attends & Mentions "For Sale Sign"

DPHHS advances plans for new state behavioral health facility. Legislators and state officials tour potential sites in Yellowstone County on July 24. CAO Kurt Markegard attends tour and points state representatives toward property west of Laurel.

🔔 Kurt's "For Sale Sign" Story (As Told at October 21 Council Meeting):

Kurt claims that while walking down a hill during the tour at the Skyway Drive site, he casually mentioned to state representatives:

*"Well, how many acres are you looking for? They said, 'Well, we need at least 10.' I said, 'Oh, I think there's a site west of Laurel that probably would fit that. **I happen to drive by and there's a for sale sign.**"*

Kurt says state representatives looked it up on their phone app, confirmed it was 10 acres, then "had to catch an airplane and they left and that's the last they heard of."

#### Updated Facility Details:

- **32-bed forensic facility** for criminally committed individuals

- Approximately **90-100 staff expected** for 24/7/365 operations
- To address waitlist at Montana State Hospital

### Sites Toured During July 24 Visit:

- Farmland in Lockwood's Targeted Economic Development District (near Sugar Factory)
- Wilson Park on Billings' South Side
- Land near Laurel Municipal Airport (north of Veterans Cemetery)
- Property along Skyway Road (Billings Heights)

*Tour attendees included Senator Vince Ricci, Commissioner Morris, Billings council members, Billings Mayor, and BOI representatives.*

### Laurel Council Excluded:

**Billings brought:** Multiple council members and their Mayor

**Laurel brought:** No council members documented as attending

Villa's July 10 invitation explicitly asked Kurt to "invite you, your pertinent staff and your respective councils." Despite this instruction, there is no evidence Kurt invited any Laurel City Council members or staff to participate in this tour - even though one of the sites visited was near Laurel.

### Local Officials' Response to Tour:

#### County Commissioner Mark Morse:

*"There's a lot of, what are we trying to do here? There's just a lot of unanswered questions."*

#### Billings City Council Member Jennifer Owen:

*"I can't stress enough how frustrated people are in Billings with the state dumping its problems on us."*

*Owen also noted officials "received little information about what the facility would look like or even the potential number of beds."*

 [Read Billings Gazette Article](#) →

Aug 20,  
2025

## Gianforte Pauses BOI Leadership - Site Selection on Hold

Governor Greg Gianforte pauses State Board of Investment's leadership role in planning the facility. BOI asked to step down as lead agency. Previously

reviewed sites, including Skyway Drive location, no longer viable given local concerns and infrastructure considerations.

**Yellowstone County Commissioner Mark Morse:**

*"Extremely grateful...that the governor listened to the community and that they were unhappy and he hit the pause button."*

**BOI Executive Director Dan Villa:**

*Board received direction requiring a "pause" due to differing interpretations between executive and legislative branches regarding BOI's construction authority.*

**Villa's Statement Includes Two Key Commitments:**

**1. On Previously Reviewed Sites:**

*"If due diligence resumes upon receipt of written guidance, no previously reviewed sites—including those on Skyway Drive—are viable, **given local feedback**, infrastructure costs, local zoning regulations, impacts on targeted economic development districts, and state land leasing processes."*

**2. On Moving Forward:**

*"If BOI is to engage further, our future work must begin with **clarity on services and siting from our partners...**"*

*Villa also specifically thanks "Laurel City Administrator **Kurt Markegard**" for "candid input."*

**Billings City Council Member Jennifer Owen:**

*"Slowing the assessment down, getting a lot more community and stakeholder input is a really smart way to go."*

**Key Issue:** Local officials raised concerns about insufficient information. Questions remained unanswered about facility specifications, operational scope, staffing models, and implementation details.

**No timeline provided** for resuming the project.

- ☰ **Read BOI Statement (Dan Villa)** →
- ☰ **Read Q2 Article (Billings Leaders)** →
- ☰ **Read Q2 Article (Gianforte Pause)** →

Aug 22,  
2025

**Markegard Emails State Officials Pitching Specific Site - "On Behalf of the Mayor"**

CAO Kurt Markegard sends email to DPHHS Director Charlie Brereton, BOI Executive Director Dan Villa, and Ryan Osmundson, explicitly stating he is acting "on behalf of the City of Laurel's Mayor." Email includes detailed site maps, zoning information, and infrastructure details. CC'd to City Mayor.

### Key Revelations from Email:

- **"On behalf of the City of Laurel's Mayor, I am emailing you to let you know about a potential site for the new State of Montana mental health facility."**
- Property "just west of the Laurel city limits" with Love's Truck Plaza infrastructure
- Love's investing \$2.4 million in new water and sewer lines
- Markegard touts his building inspector credentials: "I know what the state will need"
- Details about old interstate interchange deeded to city, potential for access road or facility expansion
- Discusses zoning changes needed: "Public" designation would allow facility
- **"The property is currently on the market to be sold"**
- **"The Mayor of Laurel would like to invite you all to a teams meeting to further discuss"**

### Dan Villa's Reply (3:11 PM same day):

*"Thank you, Kurt. Appreciate it. We will be in touch once we have more guidance. Have a good weekend. Best to the Mayor."*

**Timeline Significance:** This email was sent on August 22, 2025 - two months BEFORE the October 21 "informational only" council workshop, and nearly three months before the November 14 proposal deadline. Markegard and Mayor Waggoner were actively pitching a specific site to state officials without informing City Council or the public.

 [Read Full Email with Maps \(PDF\) →](#)

 [Read Billings Gazette Article \(Jan 27, 2026\) →](#)

Sep 10,  
2025

## Gianforte Orders Restart - Emphasis on Public Participation

After three-week pause, Governor Gianforte directs state agencies to resume planning for the facility. BOI remains lead agency, working with DPHHS to determine facility type and location.

### Governor Gianforte's Letter (Sept 10, 2025):

*"I share the goals of the Legislature to complete this project quickly while also **ensuring transparency, fairness, and public involvement.**"*

*"In proceeding with this project, public participation should play a critical role as it moves forward. Engaging the public and stakeholders will ensure that these decisions are made in the open, allowing Montanans to have a voice in how their hard-earned tax dollars are spent."*

**What Changed:**

After local officials expressed feeling "blindsided" by the state's process, restart now emphasizes public participation and transparency.

**BOI Director Dan Villa:**

*Received instructions to "move forward with the proposed mental health facility, just to be more public about it."*

**Communities Already Requesting Consideration:**

- Billings (city officials express interest)
- Laurel
- Stillwater County
- Big Horn County

**Notable:** Article states Laurel, Stillwater County, and Big Horn County "have already requested consideration" - though Laurel officials previously stated they did not submit formal proposal.

☰ [Read Governor's Letter to BOI \(PDF\) →](#)

☰ [Read Q2 Article →](#)

Sep 30,  
2025

**Mayor Waggoner Publicly Promotes Laurel Site - Claims Council Approval Required**

Mayor Dave Waggoner confirms to Q2 News that a 10-acre vacant property on Old Highway 10 (outside city limits) is being considered for the facility. He promotes the economic benefits while claiming any decision requires resident and city council approval.

**Mayor Waggoner's Public Statements:**

"It would be great for Laurel, bringing jobs and adding to the economy."

*Emphasized "any decision requires resident and city council approval"*

### Property Details:

- 10-acre vacant property on Old Highway 10
- Outside city limits
- Has water and sewer infrastructure
- Could accommodate 32-bed facility with expansion potential to 64 beds

### Critical Contradiction:

**September 30:** Mayor publicly says decision "requires resident and city council approval"

**October 21:** Just 3 weeks later, Kurt tells Council state "probably doesn't have to comply with local zoning laws" and land decisions "are not covered by our insurance carrier" at "informational only" workshop

 [Read Q2 Article](#) →

Oct 1, 2025

## Legislative Legal Memo: Facility "Most Likely" a Profit-Making Investment Security

Montana Legislative Services Division Staff Attorney Julie Johnson issues memo to Speaker Ler concluding the behavioral health facility directed to BOI under HB 5 would "most likely constitute a security" under state and federal law.

### The Howey Test Analysis:

- **Investment of money?** Yes - \$26.5 million appropriated for construction
- **Common enterprise?** Most likely yes - Legislature directed BOI (which manages "unified investment program for public funds") to construct it, implying inclusion in common investment pool
- **Expectation of profits?** Most likely yes - BOI charges rent on its real estate portfolio to yield returns and produce profits for investors

### Key Conclusion:

*"It is reasonable to infer that the Legislature intended the board to charge whoever occupies the behavioral health facility a rent that yields a rate of return."*

### Supporting Evidence:

- BOI's workforce housing project (HB 819, 2023) is included in BOI's real estate investment portfolio
- Had Legislature not intended facility to be a security, they would have directed Department of Administration (not BOI) to construct it
- BOI has duty under §17-6-201, MCA to "maximize its rate of return and produce profits for its investors"

**Implications:** If the facility is a security, BOI will charge rent to DPHHS (the operator), which could complicate federal Medicaid reimbursement and means the facility is intended to generate investment returns for the state's unified investment program, not just provide healthcare services.

**Context:** This memo was prepared at the request of the Legislative Finance Committee to clarify the legal nature of the project and BOI's authority under HB 5.

☰ [Read Legislative Legal Services Memo \(PDF\) →](#)

Oct 6, 2025

## DPHHS Opens Site Selection Process to All Eastern Montana Communities

DPHHS Director Charlie Brereton sends formal letter to BOI Executive Director Dan Villa specifying a 32-bed forensic facility and authorizing a formal Due Diligence Questionnaire process for Eastern Montana communities.

### Key Quote - Open Process:

*"While DPHHS remains interested in site opportunities in Yellowstone County, it is important that **all Eastern Montana communities** equipped with adequate infrastructure and a potential workforce are afforded the opportunity to submit proposals for hosting our new facility."*

*"Working together, I am confident that both of our agencies will **facilitate robust engagement with local stakeholders when appropriate and prior to final site selection.**"*

### 🚧 Timeline Context - Process Still Open:

- **October 6:** DPHHS opens process to "all Eastern Montana communities"
- **October 21:** Only 15 days later, Kurt tells Council about zoning exemptions and insurance issues at "informational only" workshop - treating Laurel as already selected

**Critical Detail:** Letter authorizes BOI to proceed with Due Diligence Questionnaire process "on our behalf" - establishing formal process for community proposals.

 [Read Full DPHHS Letter & 14-Page Analysis \(PDF\) →](#)

Oct 8, 2025

 **COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY**

## **Kurt Emails Commissioner Morse & Lee Deming - Spins "For Sale Sign" Narrative**

Kurt sends email to Commissioner Mark Morse (copied to Lee Deming and others) responding to October 6 DPHHS announcement, spinning his involvement as casual observation of a "for sale sign."

### **Kurt's Email (October 8, 2025):**

"The only thing I passed along to the state was that there was land listed for sale at the tour that you and I was on in and around Billings. **Vince Ricci was standing right beside me when I told the state representative about a 'for sale sign' that I had seen on my way to the family farm.**"

*"The state followed up a few weeks later with the mayor and all the Mayor and I wanted was more information to make informed decisions."*

*"This is the first response we have received from the state."*

### **Timeline Contradicts Kurt's Narrative:**

- **July 10:** Villa emails Kurt inviting him to tours
- **July 14:** Villa schedules "Boi/Laurel Intro Call" with Kurt
- **July 24-28:** Tour happens - Kurt claims casual "for sale sign" mention
- **August 22:** Kurt emails Villa pitching specific Laurel site "on behalf of the Mayor"
- **October 8:** Kurt now claims this was all casual and "the first response we have received"

**Significance:** Kurt's email creates a narrative of casual, innocent involvement - but the July 14 "Boi/Laurel Intro Call" and August 22 email show active, intentional engagement with the state about Laurel as a site.

Oct 21,  
2025

## Laurel City Council Workshop - Kurt & Mayor Push Council to View Facility as Positive

CAO Kurt Markegard hosts Senator Vince Ricci and Representative Lee Deming at council workshop for "purely informational" discussion, presenting facility as beneficial for Laurel. Kurt and Mayor Waggoner frame proposal positively while City Attorney Michelle Braukmann expresses concern about the informal presentation process.

### ⚠ Kurt's Problematic Statements to Council:

- **On State Zoning Exemption:** "The state probably doesn't have to comply with local zoning laws if they own land on it. They can exempt it out like the school did with the public hearing."
- **On Annexation Requirement:** Kurt confirms state MUST request annexation to access city water and sewer - City Council approval required.
- **On Insurance Coverage:** "Land decisions are not covered by our insurance carrier. If we make the wrong one and we are challenged on it, we would then have some liability out there."

*Kurt frames these as reasons Council should be cautious, but simultaneously advocates for considering the facility as job creation opportunity.*

### City Attorney Michelle Braukmann's Response:

*"There is not a formal agenda item in front of you. This is a workshop to discuss issues and you should absolutely discuss these issues. But I invite council to consider very carefully the things that are said on the record..."*

*"I didn't know this would be a big topic area tonight. I had not educated myself for that. Kurt and I have had several discussions about this issue. **I wasn't aware that it was quite right for city council discussion...**"*

*"We all know that it's not good to approach these things informally."*

Michelle repeatedly warns Council about creating a legal record and suggests formal agenda item and public hearing process would be more appropriate.

### Mayor Waggoner's Statement:

*"I will say when we were approached both Kurt and I immediately said it's not our decision... But I will tell you as mayor, **I feel it was my job to entertain the thought** because I was voted in to help build Laurel... And if it were to happen, we don't have the land, but you know, that would help that land owner if he sold that property. It would help our restaurants. It would help our motel..."*

### Key Documents Provided to Council:

- Senator Esp's memo to Yellowstone County Commissioners, Billings City Council, and Laurel City Council
- Dan Villa's August 20, 2025 statement
- Governor Gianforte's September 10, 2025 letter
- DPHHS Director Brereton's October 6, 2025 letter and 14-page analysis
- HB 5 bill text and legal analysis
- Timeline calendar showing November 14, 2025 deadline

**Critical Context:** Workshop held less than one month before November 14 proposal deadline. Kurt characterizes meeting as "informational only" but admits he was contacted by state "about two months ago" and encouraged them to consider Laurel location. City Attorney clearly uncomfortable with informal process and lack of proper legal framework for discussion.

 [Read Full Meeting Minutes with All Documents \(PDF\) →](#)

 [Watch Council Workshop Video →](#)

Oct 31,  
2025

### State Releases Official FAQ Document

DPHHS and BOI release "Montana's New Behavioral Health Facility: Frequently Asked Questions" document providing official details about the facility, staffing, security measures, and discharge protocols.

#### Key Details Released:

- 32-bed forensic facility confirmed
- 90-100 staff required for 24/7/365 operations
- Average stay: 3-6 months for evaluation and restoration
- Security features: Sally port doors, double-layer fences, 24/7 video monitoring
- All patients court-ordered or sentenced to DPHHS - cannot voluntarily leave
- Discharge planning coordinated with courts, law enforcement, and Probation & Parole

#### Official Purpose:

"Provide secure, therapeutic care for individuals with serious mental illness who are in the criminal justice system" including those awaiting trial evaluation, found Unfit to Proceed (UTP), or Guilty but Mentally Ill (GBMI).

### **Timeline Question - When Did This Information Exist?**

During the **July 24-28 tour**, state officials shared facility details (50 beds, ~1,000 employees). Kurt attended that tour.

**October 21:** Kurt holds "informational only" workshop with Laurel Council - 10 days before this FAQ is publicly released.

**October 31:** State finally releases detailed operational information publicly via this FAQ - 3 months after Kurt heard it during the July tour.

 [Read Full FAQ Document \(PDF\) →](#)

Nov 14,  
2025

## **Two Counties Submit Comprehensive Proposals - Laurel Does Not**

State deadline for facility site proposals. Big Horn County (Hardin) and Custer County (Miles City) submit comprehensive proposals meeting all 7 due diligence requirements. Billings declines. Laurel does not submit proposal.

### **Required Proposal Components (7 Categories):**

- Infrastructure Access & Connection Cost
- Acreage Available (minimum 10 acres, site plans)
- Local Government Ownership/Control
- Zoning & Permitting
- Site Suitability & Environmental Conditions
- **Community Support (Pass/Fail: 30% of evaluation)**
- Workforce Assessment

### **Big Horn County (Hardin) Proposal:**

- **Community Support:** 5 letters of support (County Commissioners, Crow Tribe, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, City of Hardin, Town of Lodge Grass)
- 1,000+ acres identified in Industrial Park
- Educational partnerships with Little Big Horn College & Chief Dull Knife College
- Complete due diligence questionnaire submitted

### **Custer County (Miles City) Proposal:**

- **Community Support:** Public survey (433 responses, 68.82% in favor) + Resolution 2026-13 + 8 letters of support from surrounding counties

- 17.52 acres on state land
- Complete infrastructure and workforce assessments
- Complete due diligence questionnaire submitted

**⚠️ Laurel's Non-Submission:**

**Kurt Markegard:** "From my understanding, they wanted an invitation from the community. And as a municipality, from the city of Laurel, we had no land that would have been able to meet it."

**Contradiction:** Kurt's November 17 letter (3 days later) reveals he and Mayor Waggoner gave state officials a summer tour of a specific site just outside city limits and had been coordinating with the state since July.

- 📄 **Read Big Horn County (Hardin) Proposal (PDF)** →
- 📄 **Read Custer County (Miles City) Proposal (PDF)** →
- 📄 **Read Montana Free Press Article** →

Nov 17,  
2025

🗨️ **COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY**

**Kurt Emails Mayor Draft Letter - "Looks great Kurt"**

Kurt emails Mayor Waggoner asking him to review draft letter to Dan Villa about Laurel's interest in the facility. Mayor responds "Looks great Kurt" at 8:57 AM. This becomes Laurel's official submission.

**Email Exchange (November 17, 2025 - Morning):**

**Kurt (8:54 AM):** "Mayor, Can you read this and see if you want any changes? Kurt"  
**Mayor Waggoner (8:57 AM):** "Looks great Kurt"

**Kurt's Follow-Up Email to Villa (9:16 AM):**

After getting Mayor's approval, Kurt sends letter to Villa with additional message:  
*"My schedule is open this Friday if anyone from the State would like to meet in person."*  
*"I also have some thoughts on zoning laws I would like to discuss. I believe state law has some exemptions for certain types of government facilities."*

 **Working for the State on City Salary:**

Kurt is proactively offering to help the state identify zoning exemptions that would allow them to bypass local regulations. Instead of protecting Laurel's regulatory authority, he's strategizing with the state about how to circumvent it.

This directly contradicts his role as City Administrator, which is to serve Laurel's interests - not help outside entities avoid local oversight.

**Letter signed by:**

- Mayor Dave Waggoner
- Kurt Markegard, City Administrator

**Significance:** This official letter, approved by the Mayor in 3 minutes, explains why Laurel didn't submit a formal proposal by November 14 deadline but reveals behind-the-scenes dealings. Kurt's offer to discuss zoning exemptions shows he was working to advance the state's interests rather than protecting the city's authority.

Nov 17,  
2025

**Markegard's Letter to BOI - NOT a Proposal**

Three days after the November 14 deadline, CAO Kurt Markegard writes to Dan Villa explaining why Laurel didn't submit a formal proposal - but crucially reveals private dealings with the state that occurred without public knowledge or input.

 **Not a Proposal - Yet Listed as One:**

Kurt's letter contains NONE of the 7 required proposal components that Hardin and Miles City submitted:

- No infrastructure cost analysis
- No site plans or acreage documentation
- No ownership/control details
- No zoning or permitting timeline
- No environmental assessments
- **No community support documentation (required 30% of evaluation)**
- No workforce assessment

**Yet the state website (hb5.mt.gov) lists:**

- "Big Horn County Site Proposal"
- "Custer County Site Proposal"
- "Letter from Laurel" ← Submitted after deadline, missing all requirements

This presentation misleadingly suggests equivalence between comprehensive proposals with documented community support and Kurt's post-deadline explanation letter.

**Key Revelations from Letter:**

- **"Laurel's Mayor David Waggoner and I have described to you a location just outside Laurel's city limits"**
- References a **"summer tour"** where Markegard showed state officials a specific site
- Describes site infrastructure in detail: water/sewer lines "currently being installed," natural gas, electrical, cable, fire hydrants, fiber optic
- States this location would "lower the initial cost to construct" versus other sites
- Explains Laurel couldn't formally apply because site is outside city limits and requires annexation
- References MCA 7-2-44 process for annexation of "contiguous government land"

**Critical Quote:**

*"I applaud the efforts to get community involvement in choosing the location for the facility, but I believe the process did not allow the location I pointed out to you during the summer tour to be nominated."*

**Timeline Contradiction:** This letter confirms Markegard and Mayor Waggoner were privately showing the state a specific site during summer 2025 - months before the September 2 "informational" council workshop and the November 14 proposal deadline. The public and City Council were not informed of these dealings.

**Legal Justification:** Markegard cites City Resolution R08-22 and MCA requirements for annexation, claiming Laurel must follow public participation and hearing requirements. However, this doesn't explain why he was privately touring the site with state officials without public knowledge.

 [Read Full Letter from CAO Markegard \(PDF\) →](#)

Nov 21,  
2025

**State Officials Tour Miles City & Hardin**

DPHHS and BOI representatives spend full day touring sites in Miles City and Hardin - the two communities that submitted formal proposals.

**State Sen. Gregg Hunter (Glasgow):**

*"If you're going to put it in some place where the community doesn't want it, you're going to be fighting those battles forever. So, I think this is a step ahead of a lot of other places and sites that they've looked at."*

**BOI Director Dan Villa:**

*"This is generational, so how does that scale over the next 50 years?"*

**Lawrence Killsback (Big Horn County Economic Development):**

*Said Hardin meeting went well, believes state officials giving them good chance*

**State officials planned to decide by Wednesday (Nov 26)**

Article notes: "Even though DPHHS and BOI did not travel to Laurel Friday, the city is still in the running for the state forensic mental health facility as well."

 [Read Q2 Article](#) →

Nov 26,  
2025

## DPHHS & BOI Submit Official Proposal to State Budget Director - Laurel Selected

DPHHS Director Charles Brereton and BOI Executive Director Dan Villa submit formal proposal to State Budget Director Ryan Osmundson for a 32-bed forensic mental health facility in Laurel, Montana.

 **Critical Statement on Local Approvals:**

*"BOI and its contractors will obtain all required permits, annexations, zoning, and other local approvals in full compliance with applicable ordinances and resolutions."*

**Key Details:**

- **Facility:** 32-bed forensic mental health facility with scalability
- **Funding:** \$26.5M from HB 5, plus additional BHSFG funds if needed (\$41.97M available)
- **Lease Term:** DPHHS will lease from BOI for minimum 20 years
- **Rationale for Laurel:** "Access to critical health care workforce," geographic location for central/eastern Montana

 **FAQ on Community Involvement (Attached to Proposal):**

**Question 14:** "How will the selected community be involved in the planning process for the facility?"

**Answer:** "Once a site and location for the facility are formally selected, a series of local meetings will explain the process for designing, building, and operating the facility and gather feedback from community members and leaders."

Community involvement planned AFTER selection, not before - contradicting Governor's September 10 promise about public participation "as it moves forward" and decisions being "made in the open."

 [Read Full Proposal \(PDF\) →](#)

Nov 28,  
2025

## State Officially Announces Laurel Selection

Day after Thanksgiving - Montana DPHHS announces Laurel chosen for 32-bed facility. Location not specified.

### Charlie Brereton (DPHHS Director):

*"Laurel provides access to a critical health care workforce and infrastructure necessary to ensure the facility's success. Laurel's geographic location is ideally situated for improving access and transportation logistics."*

### State Sen. Vince Ricci's account:

*"I got a call from the state warning me that, 'Laurel's been selected, we just want to let you know before it hits the press.'"*

Local lawmakers and Laurel City Council learn from press, not through official consultation

**Fact:** Laurel did NOT submit formal proposal (unlike Hardin and Miles City who did). Decision followed approval from Office of Budget and Program Planning based on collaborative plan from DPHHS and BOI.

 [Read Official DPHHS Announcement →](#)

 [Read Q2 Article →](#)

Dec 1, 2025

## Other Counties Surprised by Selection

Counties that submitted formal proposals express disappointment and confusion.

### Custer County Commissioner Jason Strouf:

*"To have a decision made that site was selected that was not one of the two proposals submitted seems a little disingenuous in regards to the process that the state chose to put forward."*

### **Big Horn County Economic Developer Lawrence Killsback:**

*"I think the state overlooked us and saw what it could have did for us generationally. The impact would have been great."*

### **Yellowstone County Commissioner Mike Waters:**

*"I was surprised. And I think my colleagues were surprised."*

Counties had hoped facility would provide economic boost to rural eastern Montana

☰ **Read Q2 Article** →

Dec 2, 2025

## **Laurel City Council Workshop - Council Questions State Announcement**

Council members question the recent state announcement. This is the first documented City Council discussion of the facility after the November 28 announcement.

### **CAO Markegard's Statement:**

*"It is the State's decision to choose the facility's location. As I had previously briefed Council, the City cannot be considered under their process because we do not have property within our jurisdiction to propose. At this time, the City has not received a request for annexation."*

### **City Attorney Michele Braukmann's Instructions:**

- City must preserve all feedback received on this matter
- "There is nothing before the Council at the moment"
- Council members' verbal comments from public must be stated during public meeting
- Text messages and voicemails are "discoverable and need to be preserved"

### **Public Reminded:**

*"The State is a separate governmental entity. The City does not control what the State does. Just because the Council may not respond does not mean it lacks care. All information on the project can be found at <https://hb5.mt.gov/>."*

**Legal Positioning:** Attorney Braukmann's guidance suggests the city is preparing for potential legal proceedings by instructing preservation of all communications and limiting

Council responses.

 [Read Full Meeting Minutes \(PDF\) →](#)

 [Watch Council Meeting Video →](#)

Dec 4, 2025

## Gianforte Claims Facility Won't Go Where "Not Wanted" - Markegard Says City Learned from Press

Laurel officials react to selection. Governor Gianforte makes contradictory claims about community support. CAO Markegard confirms city learned of decision from press, not from state.

### Governor Greg Gianforte's Full Statement:

*"We're not going to go someplace where it's not wanted. It's certainly needed in all of Eastern Montana, and there was a site visit with the city council, and they were very encouraging."*

**Context:** This statement was made on December 4, 2025, after selecting Laurel - a city that did not submit a formal proposal and whose Mayor formally opted out of the application process in November. The "site visit with the city council" refers to a September 2 informational workshop with state legislators (not state officials), which was described as "purely informational and in response to recent rumors via news articles."

### CAO Kurt Markegard's Response:

*"The state did not send me information on it. I had to go seek it once it went to the press."*

### City Attorney Michele Braukmann:

*"That project has not been presented to the city nor has gone through any of the uniform channels that are required to go through here."*

### Contradictions:

- Gianforte claims "we're not going to go someplace where it's not wanted" while selecting a city that didn't apply
- Claims "there was a site visit with the city council, and they were very encouraging" - but the September 2 workshop was "informational only" with state legislators, not a site visit with state officials
- Laurel formally opted out of application process in November, yet was selected anyway
- City learned from press, not through official consultation

 [Read Q2 Article →](#)

Dec 4, 2025

## State Admits \$27M Won't Cover Construction Costs

Officials acknowledge the \$27 million (\$26.5M + \$700K increase) approved by Legislature will not cover actual construction costs. No timeline for final cost estimate.

### Funding Situation:

- Original appropriation: \$26.5M from \$300M behavioral health fund
- Increased to \$27.2M - still insufficient
- \$42M balance remains in behavioral health capital fund
- Must pull additional funds pending budget office approval

### Dan Villa (BOI Executive Director):

*"We will know more once we've worked through design, site identification..." - cost estimate timeline remains uncertain.*

### Sen. John Esp (R-Big Timber):

*Acknowledged the \$27M figure was estimated based on similar past projects, noting forensic facilities cost more than originally envisioned.*

### Matt Kuntz (NAMI Montana):

*"Our state desperately needs a forensic facility...and it's going to cost what a forensic facility is going to cost."*

**Context:** Existing Galen facility houses 54 people with waitlists exceeding 100 patients. State faces potential federal intervention if crisis continues.

**Note:** Article mentions facility will require additional operational costs beyond construction, though health department states they "would not have proceeded independently without consulting the Legislature."

 [Read MSU Exponent / Missoulian Article](#) →

Dec 8, 2025

### COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY

## Villa Requests Zoom Link for Council Meeting

Villa emails Kurt requesting Zoom link for "tomorrow's Council meeting" (December 9). Villa and Director Brereton want to provide public comment to Council and staff.

**Villa's Email (December 8, 2025 - 7:42 AM):**

*"Good morning, Kurt. Is there a Zoom link for tomorrow's Council meeting? Director Brereton and I would like to provide public comment to Council and staff."*

**Significance:** Villa coordinating directly with Kurt about council access rather than going through official channels. This sets up the December 9 public meeting where Villa makes transparency commitments.

Dec 9, 2025

**Villa Makes Public Transparency Commitments to City Council**

BOI Executive Director Dan Villa and DPHHS Director Charlie Brereton address Laurel City Council during public comment period. Villa makes explicit promises about transparency and following local processes.

**Villa's Key Commitments:**

**1. Council Will Hear First:**

*"When and if BOI enters into a contingent buy-sell agreement with the property owner, **the city council will hear about it first**. You will hear about it during the public comment period of a city commission meeting. **You will not read about it in a press release. You will not see it covered by news media before you have been informed directly by me.**"*

**2. Will Follow Local Processes:**

*"BOI will follow every existing city resolution, ordinance, and process that governs land use in Laurel. **If annexation is required, and it likely will be, we will file an annexation request through the proper channels.** BOI does not intend to circumvent city governance. We intend to work within it."*

**3. Current Status:**

*"**No land has been purchased. No offers to purchase land have been made to any property owner.** We are conducting preliminary discussions regarding potential sites, nothing more."*

 **Promises Immediately Broken:**

**December 30:** Villa privately emails Kurt requesting meeting to discuss "annexation process, zoning regs, basically all of the city requirements" - no public notice

**January 6-7:** Villa schedules and holds secret meeting with entire city leadership at private construction company offices in Billings

**January 19:** Press reports state advancing plans - Mayor Waggoner says "haven't heard from state since Dec 9 meeting" and they're learning from media (breaking Villa's "hear about it first" promise)

**Significance:** Villa's public transparency commitments on December 9 establish a clear standard that his subsequent private coordination with Kurt and city leadership directly violates. These promises were made to Council and public, then immediately broken.

 **Watch Council Meeting Video** →

Dec 19,  
2025

## Attorney General Issues Letter of Advice on Securities Classification

Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen responds to Speaker Ler's formal opinion request about whether the behavioral health facility constitutes a "security" under state and federal law.

### **Critical Limitation - Not a Formal Opinion:**

AG provides a "letter of advice" rather than formal Attorney General Opinion because **"the specific financial instrument(s) evidencing BOI's investment has not been provided for consideration."**

*"This response shall be construed as a letter of advice and shall not be cited and/or presented as controlling authority nor carrying the force of law."*

### AG's Partial Analysis:

- **Investment of money?** Yes - BOI's use of transferred funds to develop real estate is considered an investment under GAAP
- **Common enterprise?** Likely yes - Past practice (HB 219 in 2023) indicates building will likely be included in common investment pool
- **Expectation of profits & managerial efforts?** Cannot determine - "BOI currently charges rent to tenants of buildings in its real estate portfolio. These agreements can comply with the Howey test, but **in absence of a specific agreement, I cannot offer an opinion** or advice as to whether the project in HB 5 will comply."

### Key Context from October 1 Legal Memo:

*"If the building rent is reimbursed with federal funds, it is not clear how the Board of Investments can maximize profits while adhering to strict policies for federal reimbursement."*

**Significance:** The AG's inability to provide a definitive opinion leaves uncertainty about the facility's securities classification and its implications for federal reimbursement and BOI's profit requirements.

Dec 30,  
2025

• COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY

### Villa Requests Private Meeting to Discuss City Requirements

BOI Executive Director Dan Villa emails Kurt requesting a meeting to discuss Laurel's annexation process, zoning regulations, and city requirements. Villa asks about meeting at a private construction company's offices in Billings.

**Villa's Email (December 30, 2025):**

*"Would you and any members of your team you'd like to add be available to meet team on January 7 at 6PM at Dick Anderson Construction's offices in Billings? **We want to get a good understanding of the annexation process, zoning regs, basically all of the city requirements.**"*

Jan 6, 2026

• COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY

### Villa Confirms Meeting with City Leadership at Private Construction Office

Villa sends meeting confirmation for January 7 at 6PM at Dick Anderson Construction's offices in Billings. Attendees include Kurt and Mayor Waggoner.

 **Private Meeting Location:**

Meeting scheduled at **Dick Anderson Construction's offices** - a private construction company in Billings, not at Laurel City Hall or any public building.

**Attendees:** Kurt Markegard, Mayor Dave Waggoner, and state officials

Jan 7, 2026

## Secret Meeting: City Leadership Helps State Navigate Local Requirements

Kurt and Mayor Waggoner meet with state officials at Dick Anderson Construction's offices in Billings to discuss annexation process, zoning regulations, and "basically all of the city requirements."

### Timeline:

- **October 21:** Kurt tells Council state "probably doesn't have to comply with local zoning laws"
- **November 17:** Kurt offers to help state identify zoning exemptions
- **January 7:** Entire city leadership travels to Billings to help state understand how to navigate Laurel's requirements

Jan 8, 2026

### COMMUNICATIONS DISCOVERY

## Villa Thanks Kurt for "Very Helpful" Meeting - Requests Annexation and Zoning Forms

Morning after the private meeting, Villa emails Kurt thanking him for the "very helpful and informative" session and requests the official forms needed to submit annexation and zoning change requests to the city.

### Villa's Email (January 8, 2026 - 8:55 AM):

"Good morning Kurt,"

*"Thanks for the time yesterday. Very helpful and informative."*

*"Can you please direct me to the forms we will need to submit to the city to **request annexation and a zoning change?**"*

### 🚧 State Formally Pursuing Local Approvals:

Villa is now requesting the official forms to formally apply for:

- **Annexation** - bringing property into city limits
- **Zoning change** - modifying land use designation

Jan 19,  
2026

## State Advances Plans Without Local Feedback

Charlie Brereton presents draft plans to legislators in Helena on Dec 17. Laurel and Yellowstone County officials learn about plans from Q2 News.

### Mark Morse (Yellowstone County Commissioner):

*"The first I was aware of them was when Q2 made me aware of them this morning. So that's not open, honest or transparent."*

### Mayor Dave Waggoner (Laurel):

*Haven't heard from state since Dec 9 meeting - "very interesting that they want to be here, without saying anything."*

### Cost Update:

Brereton estimates \$30M-\$50M needed (original appropriation: \$26.5M)

**Broken Promise:** Dan Villa previously told City Council they'd hear about buy-sell agreement first, not from press. BOI now nearing agreement - city officials learned from media.

☰ [Read Q2 Article](#) →

Jan 20,  
2026

## BOI Announces Buy-Sell Agreement to Council

During a city council workshop, Dan Villa of the Montana Board of Investments (BOI) formally notifies the council that a buy-sell agreement has been executed for a 114-acre property west of Laurel. He states that with the agreement in place, the BOI will now begin the formal process of requesting annexation and zoning from the city.

### Dan Villa (BOI) to Council:

*"The Montana Board of Investments has executed a buy-sell agreement to purchase approximately 114 acres located west of Laurel along Highway 10. With this*

*agreement in place, BOI will now begin the formal process of requesting annexation and assignment of zoning from the city of Laurel."*

 [Watch Council Workshop Video →](#)

Jan 21,  
2026

## State Identifies Specific 114-Acre Site

Following the announcement to city council the previous night, news breaks publicly that the state has a buy-sell agreement for a 114-acre plot along Old Highway 10. For the first time, the specific location and property owner are publicly confirmed.

### Location Details:

- Between Foundation Avenue and Golf Course Road
- Across from Wood's Softball Complex
- Near main road to Laurel Golf Course
- **Visible from West Elementary School**
- Outside city limits (requires annexation)

### Property Owner Confirmed:

Miller Trois LLC (per Montana Cadastral property database)

### Mark Morse (Yellowstone County Commissioner):

*"People should not mince words. People who go there, their freedoms, their liberties have been taken away. They're not free to leave. And that means you're in a correctional facility."*

**Updated Cost:** \$27.2 million (increased from \$26.5M appropriation)

State will request annexation into city and zoning assignment. 32-bed facility confirmed.

 [Read Q2 Article →](#)

Jan 23

## BOI Public Meeting Announced

Laurel Chamber of Commerce announces meeting with Montana Board of Investments for Friday, January 30th.

Public invited to bring questions about proposed facility to BOI representatives.

Jan 26,  
2026

## School Board Holds Meeting - Discusses Opposition to Facility

Board of Trustees holds discussion regarding the proposed state facility during their regular meeting. Board confirms no state officials have contacted the district regarding how the facility would impact students.

### Key Points from Discussion:

- Facility would be within 500 yards of West Elementary School
- Proximity raises significant concerns about student safety and well-being
- Board concerned about security and potential impact on educational environment
- **No state officials have contacted the district** about facility impact

### Superintendent Matthew Torix:

*"The safety of our students is our highest priority. The building of this Forensic Detention Facility in such close proximity to our elementary school is not supported by the Board on the grounds of safety for the students we serve."*

**Context:** This meeting occurred one day before the Board's formal written opposition announcement on January 27, 2026.

Jan 26,  
2026

## Laurel C.A.R.E.D. Forms - Community Organizing Intensifies

Laurel C.A.R.E.D. (Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development) Facebook page published, marking the formal organization of community resistance to demand transparency and accountability.

- Document requests filed with city
- Recall petition preparations begin
- Media coverage increases (KULR 8, Montana Free Press)
- Workshop meetings scheduled for public questions

 [Join Laurel C.A.R.E.D. Facebook Group](#) →

Jan 26,  
2026

## **BOI Cancels Meeting - Venue "Not Agreed Upon"**

Montana Board of Investments cancels scheduled January 30th public meeting.

### **Chamber announcement:**

*"The Montana Board of Investments is unable to participate in the previously scheduled meeting under the proposed format."*

Context: Meeting venue had been moved to local high school due to overwhelming community response. BOI originally agreed to smaller town hall format.

Jan 27,  
2026

## **School Board Formally Opposes Facility in Writing**

Laurel School Board and Superintendent Matthew Torix issue written statement officially opposing "the proposed state forensic detention facility."

### **Key Concerns:**

- Legality of building so close to school
- **Distance: 459 yards** from eastern edge of West Elementary property to western edge of facility property
- Board member asked about filing injunction to stop the state

### **Chris Lorash (School Board member):**

*"What I find interesting is that there are two other communities that did put in a proposal to host it, but Laurel was not one of those... it's not like they don't have other places to put the facility."*

Article confirms: Hardin and Miles City submitted proposals, but state chose Laurel even though city never put in formal proposal

Laurel C.A.R.E.D. meeting scheduled at Front Porch before City Council meeting at 6:30 PM

 [Read Q2 Article](#) →

Jan 29

## BOI Refuses All Public Meetings

### Chamber final statement:

*"At this time, the Laurel Chamber of Commerce will not be hosting any public or private meetings with the Montana Board of Investments. This was the decision of the Montana Board of Investments."*

**BOI's position:** Will only attend required City Council meeting after submitting zoning documentation

No date known for required meeting at this time

Jan 27,  
2026

## Packed City Council Meeting - Residents Speak Out

Two dozen residents pack public meeting room for nearly two hours of public comment. Council members sit in silence per city attorney's instructions.

### Key Concerns Raised:

- Facility 500 yards from elementary school
- Tax burden on limited Laurel tax base
- "Backdoor deals" without community consultation
- Markegard's Nov 17 letter as evidence of obscure dealmaking

### Chris Lorash (School Board Chair):

*"Safety is more than just access to the building. It's the students and the teachers state of mind."*

### Samantha Mayes (resident):

*"Backdoor deals have been made without consulting the Laurel community. We deserve answers."*

### Markegard's response:

*"I want open and transparent government. That's what I want. That's what I want from the council members. That's what I want from the mayor and I want that from the public."*

Markegard states Gianforte administration approached him and mayor in July along with Billings and Yellowstone County officials

 **Watch Council Meeting Video** →

 **Read Montana Free Press Article** →

Read Billings Gazette Interview (Markegard) →

Read Q2 Article →

Feb 3, 2026

## Tense Council Workshop: Planner Explains Process, CAO Defends Actions

In a tense city council workshop, new contract planner Forest Sanderson explains the lengthy three-step public process required for the facility project (Growth Policy Amendment, Annexation, and Zoning), confirming no application is yet pending. The meeting is dominated by fallout from the proposed facility, with the City Attorney reading nearly an hour of public correspondence overwhelmingly opposing the project.

### Key Moments from the Meeting:

- Under questioning from Council Member McKay, **Mayor Waggoner admits he instructed CAO Kurt Markegard** to send the controversial letters to the state in August and November.
- A tense exchange occurs over the city's failure to fulfill public records requests. When the City Attorney clarifies the requests have not been answered, the Mayor calls for her resignation on the record. A resident later states during public comment they overheard the Mayor say to the attorney, "You're not helping us."
- When asked by Council Member Naylor what specific steps he will take to be more transparent and correct issues, the **Mayor refuses to answer**, stating, "I won't do anything until we get an annexation request."
- CAO Kurt Markegard gives a nearly hour-long, emotional speech defending his actions and communications with the state, claiming his November 17th letter was a "letter of rejection" of the state's process, not a letter of interest.

### Analysis: Contradictions in CAO & Mayor's Accounts

During the workshop, both CAO Kurt Markegard and Mayor Dave Waggoner stated they were surprised by the state's selection of Laurel. The Mayor claimed, "We were surprised as you were when they announced it," while the CAO portrayed his early involvement as minimal, stating he was "really naive" and "had no idea" what the state was doing. These claims are contradicted by previously documented events.

### Key claims from the CAO's speech vs. the timeline record:

- **Claim:** His involvement began with casually mentioning a "for sale" sign during the July 24th tour.

**Contradiction:** Records show state officials scheduled a "Boi/Laurel Intro Call" specifically with Kurt on **July 14** to discuss "potential Laurel options," ten days before the tour.

- **Claim:** The August 22nd letter was merely an attempt to get information from the state at the Mayor's request.

**Contradiction:** The **August 22** email shows the CAO, "on behalf of the Mayor," actively pitching a specific site with maps and infrastructure details, and inviting state officials to a meeting to "further discuss" it.

- **Claim:** The November 17th letter was a "letter of rejection" intended to correct the state's flawed public process.

**Contradiction:** The letter itself highlights the financial benefits of the proposed site. Furthermore, in an accompanying email on **November 17**, the CAO offered to meet with state officials to share his "thoughts on zoning laws," suggesting collaboration rather than rejection.

### Analysis: A Contradictory Stance on Zoning Regulations

During the workshop, both the CAO and the new planner heavily emphasized the required public processes for a Growth Policy amendment and zoning change, presenting them as a crucial safeguard for the community. The CAO highlighted his efforts to provide maps to the public as an act of transparency, noting he even tried to have larger maps printed.

**Contradiction:** This narrative, presenting local zoning law as a protective shield for Laurel, directly contradicts the CAO's own advice to the City Council on **October 21, 2025**. In that meeting, while framing the facility as a positive opportunity, he specifically told the council that the state "probably doesn't have to comply with local zoning laws" and could "exempt it out."

 **Watch Council Meeting Video** →

## These Facts Demand Action

The lack of transparency is intentional. The silence is strategic. Your voice is needed.

**File Attachments for Item:**

2. Police Monthly Report - March 31, 2026



# Laurel Police Department

215 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street Laurel, Mt. 59044 ▪ Phone 406-628-8737 ▪ Fax 406-628-4641

Total Calls City Council

Printed on April 1, 2026

[CFS Date/Time] is between '2026-03-01 00:00:00' and '2026-03-31 23:59:59' and

[Primary Incident Code->Code : Description] All

---

<b>Code : Description</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
10-15 : With Prisoner	0	0
: Abandoned Vehicle	17	17
: Agency Assist	85	85
: Alarm - Burglary	15	15
: Alarm - Fire	1	1
AMB : Ambulance	103	103
: Animal Complaint	1	1
: Area Check	4	4
: Assault	7	7
: Bad Checks	0	0
: Barking Dog	6	6
: Bomb Threat	0	0
: Burglary	0	0
: Child Abuse/Neglect	2	2
: Civil Complaint	14	14
: Code Enforcment Violation	1	1
: Community Integrated Health	0	0

<b>Code : Description</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
: Counterfeiting	0	0
: Criminal Mischief	4	4
: Criminal Trespass	10	10
: Cruelty to Animals	0	0
: Curfew Violation	4	4
: Discharge Firearm	2	2
: Disorderly Conduct	5	5
: Dog at Large	31	31
: Dog Bite	4	4
DUI : DUI Driver	2	2
: Duplicate Call	3	3
: Escape	0	0
: Family Disturbance	12	12
: Fight	2	2
FIRE : Fire or Smoke	18	18
: Fireworks	1	1
: Forgery	0	0
: Found Property	8	8
: Fraud	9	9
: Harassment	3	3
: Hit & Run	2	2

<b>Code : Description</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
: ICAC	0	0
: Identity Theft	1	1
: Indecent Exposure	1	1
: Insecure Premises	6	6
: Intoxicated Pedestrian	1	1
: Kidnapping	0	0
: Littering	0	0
: Loitering	1	1
: Lost or Stray Animal	9	9
: Lost Property	4	4
: Mental Health	6	6
: Missing Person	3	3
: Noise Complaint	4	4
: Open Container	0	0
: Order of Protection Violation	1	1
: Parking Complaint	28	28
: Possession of Alcohol	0	0
: Possession of Drugs	2	2
: Possession of Tobacco	1	1
: Privacy in Communications	2	2
: Prowler	0	0

<b>Code : Description</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
: Public Assist	51	51
: Public Safety Complaint	18	18
: Public Works Call	7	7
: Report Not Needed	5	5
: Robbery	0	0
: Runaway Juvenile	9	9
: Sexual Assault	3	3
: Suicide	0	0
: Suicide - Attempt	1	1
: Suicide - Threat	3	3
: Suspicious Activity	65	65
: Suspicious Person	7	7
: Theft	14	14
: Threats	5	5
: Tow Call	1	1
: Traffic Accident	19	19
: Traffic Hazard	6	6
: Traffic Incident	16	16
: TRO Violation	0	0
: Truancy	1	1
T/S : Traffic Stop	150	150

<b>Code : Description</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
: Unattended Death	0	0
: Unknown - Converted	0	0
: Unlawful Transactions w/Minors	0	0
: Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle	0	0
: Vicious Dog	0	0
: Warrant	8	8
: Welfare Check	19	19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>854</b>

**File Attachments for Item:**

3. Public Comments Received by April 10, 2026.

March 31, 2026

Dear Members of Laurel's City Council

I am writing in support of the forensic hospital the state is proposing to build in our fair city. I think this addition will bring many well-paying jobs, the tax base will increase, and most of the merchants in town will profit through the increase in well paid members of our community.

I understand some community members are upset about the way this project got off the ground. But I don't think that is a reason to oppose the hospital.

So count me as a supporter of the hospital.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Fuglevand', written over the printed name.

Les Fuglevand

28 Vista Lane

Laurel, Mt.

## Brittney Harakal

---

**From:** Matt <gilgm12@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 28, 2026 10:02 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal; elizabeth@laurelcares.com  
**Cc:** Civil Attorney; Ward 4B; Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; Kelly Strecker; City Mayor; Kurt Markegard; Michael Skinner; naturecalls406@gmail.com; montanahomesolutions@gmail.com; thefrontporchmt@gmail.com; shawna@carltondepot.com  
**Subject:** Re: Hello Attorney and Council  
**Attachments:** image001.gif

Michele and City of Laurel -

Thank you for the fee schedule and for continuing to respond while traveling. I have three issues to raise.

### 1. The city's FOIA fee schedule violates state law.

The schedule charges \$50/hour for city staff research, \$150-\$250/hour for contracted staff, and \$250/hour for city attorney review. MCA 2-6-1006(5) caps all public records search fees at \$25/hour and requires the most cost-efficient method. Under subsection (5)(c), the first hour of service is free after a \$5 filing fee. The city's rates are 2x to 10x the statutory maximum. State law preempts this schedule.

I do not consent to a "quote from IT" for the four email searches I submitted on March 26. These are narrow searches - two parties, 55 days each - that any city employee with email access can perform in minutes. Under the statute, this falls well within the first free hour. I expect production, not a bill.

### 2. The city's IT vendor has a direct conflict of interest in this matter.

John Roberts, a Senior Network Technician at Morrison-Maierle - the company operating as "Systems Technology Consultants" under the city's contract - has been publicly and actively antagonizing community members on social media regarding the facility. Screenshots are attached showing:

- His Facebook profile listing his employer as Morrison-Maierle (Attachment 1)
- His comment dismissing community concerns: "these people never actually do any research before posting this shit lol" (Attachment 2)
- His comment calling a community member "honey" and telling them to "go play in your sandbox" (Attachment 3)
- His comment: "You people need something productive to do your time, Jesus Christ" - to which **Mayor Waggoner personally replied: "I like John's humor"** (Attachment 4)
- A thread showing Roberts deleting his own comments when community members began screenshotting them, and Mayor Waggoner's engagement with Roberts being called out by constituents (Attachment 5)

This is the person - or this person's company - that is handling public records production, quoting fees to the city for FOIA compliance, and determining what documents are "responsive." The mayor who signed this vendor's contract renewal on February 10 is publicly endorsing this employee's mockery of the

citizens requesting those records.

I am formally requesting that the city confirm in writing: what search terms were used for the consolidated FOIA pull, the full document count by custodian, and that no records have been altered, withheld, or deleted during vendor processing.

### 3. Kelly and Brittney have not answered a yes-or-no question.

I understand your explanation that they were uncomfortable responding due to the legal issues raised, and that your office has addressed the legal questions. I appreciate that. But the question I asked Kelly and Brittney is not a legal question — it is a factual one: \*Have you been asked or directed by Waggoner or Markegard to delay, limit, or withhold production of any records?\*

That is a yes or no. It does not require legal analysis. Your answer on their behalf - however thorough - is not a substitute for their individual, personal responses. If the answer is no, it should take five seconds to say so. The continued silence on this specific question is noted.

Respectfully,  
Matt Gilg

#### Attachments:

1. John Roberts Morrison-Maierle.png
2. John Roberts - These People.jpeg
3. John Roberts - Honey.jpeg
4. John Roberts - Waggoner.jpg
5. John Roberts - Waggoner Like.png
6. John Roberts Prison Position.jpeg



**John Roberts**

Digital creator · 464 followers

@john.roberts.590186

Senior Network Technician at Morrison-Maierle

Add friend



**John Roberts** Top contributor

**Matt Ryan** let 'em! I'm excited for new job opportunities and growth in the community. I don't care if they put it across the fence from me. I'm not scared of it because I actually know what the facility is.



**John Roberts** Top contributor

**Jessica Sawyer** these people never actually do any research before posting this shit lol

8m Like Reply



**Matt Ryan** Author

**John Roberts** and you've researched the economic impacts of prisons?

Dumbass.

1m Like Reply



**John Roberts** Top contributor

**Matt Ryan** let 'em! I'm excited for new job opportunities and growth in the community. I don't care if they put it across the fence from me. I'm not scared of it because I actually know what the facility is.

2m Haha Reply



**Matt Ryan** Author

**John Roberts** maybe if you'd ask them more often, they wouldn't be dropping a prison in your backyard.

5m Like Reply



**John Roberts** Top contributor

**Matt Ryan** look honey, I'm not here to argue opinions with you all day. You go play in your sandbox and I'll play in mine.

9m Like Reply

Sandi Whitman replied · 1 Reply



**John Roberts**

You people need something productive to do your time, Jesus Christ.

9w Like Reply

4



**Coreen Tomek**

**John Roberts** How ironic that you say this when I've seen you post more than anyone on this issue. Maybe YOU need something better to do! I know you seem to thrive on goading people online so I will not respond to your posts again. I do believe you more than likely will not live literally right next door like I will. So, I think you should get a life.

9w Like Reply Edited

5

Sandi Whitman replied · 1 Reply

The comment Hilary Anderson is replying to has been deleted.



**Hilary Anderson**

**Dave Waggoner** A lot of your constituents are voicing serious concerns and not laughing.

9w Like Reply

5



**John Roberts**

**Hilary Anderson** why are you screenshotting comments? Nothing better to do?

9w Like Reply



**Hilary Anderson**

Why are you deleting comments now?



9w Like Reply 2



Reply to Hilary Anderson



**Hilary Anderson**

**Dave Waggoner** since you liked this comment why don't you speak up on what's going on here?

9w Like Reply

8

< Anonymous member's post ...



**John Roberts**

4h · ★ Rising contributor

**You people need something productive to do your time, Jesus Christ.**

Reply 3 [thumbs up] [reply]



**Dave Waggoner**

8m · ♀ Top contributor

**Hilary Anderson I like John's humor**

Reply [thumbs up] [reply]



**Hilary Anderson**

1m · ♦ Admin

**Dave Waggoner A lot of your constituents are voicing serious concerns and not laughing.**

Reply [thumbs up] [reply]



Wri...



Matt Gilg

[mattgilg.dev](http://mattgilg.dev)

Cell: 860.771.3511

On Fri, Mar 27, 2026, 4:14 PM Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)> wrote:

Schedule of Fees Link:

<https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/clerk-treasurer/page/schedule-fees>

R26-05 Link:

<https://laserfiche.cityoflaurelmontana.com/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=294361&dbid=0&repo=CityofLaurelMT>

*Brittney Harakal*

*Council Administrative Assistant*

*City of Laurel*

*P.O. Box 10*

*Laurel, MT 59044*

*406-628-7431 ext. 5503*

*406-628-2289 fax*

**From:** Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 3:39 PM

**To:** Matt <[gilgm12@gmail.com](mailto:gilgm12@gmail.com)>

**Cc:** Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1B <[ward1b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2A <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2B <[ward2b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3A <[ward3a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3B <[ward3b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 4A <[ward4a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Kelly Strecker <[kstrecker@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:kstrecker@laurel.mt.gov)>; City Mayor <[citymayor@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:citymayor@laurel.mt.gov)>; Kurt Markegard <[kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Hello Attorney and Council

Mr. Gilg:

City Staff requested of me, which I had no objection to, that I respond to your emails, due to the legal issues raised therein. They are not attorneys, and rightfully so, when any communications received by City Staff raise legal issues, the response is best addressed by my office.

With regard to the retention of IT services, the City works with an outside IT vendor that has been retained by the City for a number of years (the same company during my tenure of 5 years or so). They have changed their name several times, I believe, based upon Resolutions that I have prepared, and I don't want to misspeak here. I believe it was previously GET Systems Technology. *By way of this email, I ask that Brittney provide you a copy of the Resolution passing fees/charges, as well as outlining services, provided by the City's IT Vendor.* I don't have a copy of the executed Agreements in this regard, with easy access right now, especially since I'm traveling back to Billings today.

I hope that the information that I provided clarified the timing involved. I will have a link to all of the downloaded documents before City Staff leaves for the weekend, and my intention is to spend whatever time is necessary this weekend to finalizing the production. That will **not** include the additional 50k of documents pulled related to zoning,

annexations, etc ... as there is no conceivable way that I can get through 60k pages of documents this weekend to finalize production. However, that will be an ongoing effort, and I am hopeful that we can have that information to you as soon as I'm able to review it all.

With regard to CM Wheeler's vote several weeks ago, I want to clarify some things, from my perspective, as Legal Counsel for the City of Laurel:

1. I have never had any concerns about any "conflict of interest" by CM Wheeler. I have no reason to believe that CM Wheeler discusses City matters with PW Director Wheeler. I also have no reason to believe that CM Wheeler is/was/will ever be motivated to vote – one way or the other – based upon PW Director Wheeler's position within the City. There are no financial or pecuniary interests that I have knowledge of, related to these two individuals, and most specifically, related to the land use decisions in front of CC.
2. I must respectfully disagree with your characterization that CM Wheeler was the "deciding vote" on the proposed Emergency Moratorium Ordinance. There were three CC Members that voted against the Ordinance, and all three equally voted as they did. Not one vote, or another, was the "deciding vote."

I will continue doing my best to provide you information, as it is sought.

I hope that you have a good weekend.

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann

Civil City Attorney

**City of Laurel**

Cell Phone: 406.671.4333

[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Matt <[gilgm12@gmail.com](mailto:gilgm12@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 2:24 PM  
**To:** Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Cc:** Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1B <[ward1b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2A <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2B <[ward2b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3A <[ward3a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3B <[ward3b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 4A <[ward4a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Kelly Strecker <[kstrecker@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:kstrecker@laurel.mt.gov)>; City Mayor <[citymayor@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:citymayor@laurel.mt.gov)>; Kurt Markegard <[kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Hello Attorney and Council

Thanks for the clarifications Michele.

No answers yet from the Clerk, the inhouse IT staff, or anybody else at the city on this topic.

I will again ask the name of the contracted external IT company, because at this point I'm running out of faith in their ability and capacity to do the job in a competent manner without overcharging the city. Did they bid for that contract?

I'm also disheartened that nobody else from the city seems to feel the need or obligation to provide answers to my other simple questions.

--

**Matt Gilg**

[mattgilg.dev](mailto:mattgilg.dev)

Cell: 860.771.3511

On Fri, Mar 27, 2026, 2:16 PM Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)> wrote:

Mr. Gilg:

I apologize that I did not address the legal questions asked in your earlier emails. I am traveling back from Tennessee today after the unexpected death of a close friend.

The City does not have a “written notice of denial,” pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 2-6-1009, as the City is directly working with its outside IT vendor to produce responsive documents. It has taken longer than anticipated, as I have been informed that there are thousands of documents that were pulled with the relevant search terms. As noted in my earlier email, I am hopeful that a large bulk of documents will be available for production to you directly by earlier next week.

With regard to the questions about CM Wheeler’s vote on the Emergency Moratorium Ordinance, I am not aware of any conflict of interest by CM Wheeler. If there is something in particular you are referring to, from a legal standpoint, please advise, and I will do my best to respond.

Thank you.

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann

Civil City Attorney

**City of Laurel**

Cell Phone: 406.671.4333

[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Civil Attorney

**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 2:05 PM

**To:** 'Matt' <gilgm12@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Brittney Harakal <bharakal@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Kelly Strecker <kstrecker@laurel.mt.gov>

**Subject:** RE: Hello Attorney and Council

Mr. Gilg:

As Clerk-Treasurer, Kelly has provided the Consolidated PRR to the City's outside IT vendor. As I understand it, the City's IT vendor provided potentially-responsive documents to the City this week, which Staff has been reviewing to ensure appropriate responsiveness. I appreciate your other email confirming that the City can continue to produce responsive documents that include the over 50k documents that were pulled for the Part 3 request.

I believe that the City will have Part 1 and Part 2 documents to the C.A.R.E.D. Committee by early next week. Staff has been working diligently on pulling out "any junk mail" and non-responsive documents, and a full set of documents should be produced after my review, which I intend to get done this weekend.

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann

Civil City Attorney

**City of Laurel**

Cell Phone: 406.671.4333

[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Matt <[gilgm12@gmail.com](mailto:gilgm12@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 26, 2026 6:53 AM

**To:** Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)>

**Cc:** Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1A <[ward1a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 1B <[ward1b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward1b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2A <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 2B <[ward2b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3A <[ward3a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3a@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 3B <[ward3b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward3b@laurel.mt.gov)>; Ward 4A <[ward4a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4a@laurel.mt.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Hello Attorney and Council

No response from anyone yet.

Michelle, can you speak to Kelly's role in ensuring the legal accuracy and completeness of delivered FOIA records?

Thanks,

## **Brittney Harakal**

---

**From:** Elizabeth Wilson <elizabethanngilg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 12:17 PM  
**To:** Ward 1B; Ward 1A; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; Ward 4B; City Mayor; Brittney Harakal; Civil Attorney; City Clerk; Laurel City Planner  
**Subject:** A personal response to Jodi's clarification

You get to choose if the following offends you. If it does - then it's directed at you.

Clearly an effective process has not been established for records requests, otherwise Kelly would have known what she was supposed to be searching for. What does anyone even do over there? For nearly 100k per year our city clerk isn't capable of reading the records request or reviewing the motion? We really have to provide clarification on this the day after a deadline is not met? This is embarrassing, and unacceptable.

Can anyone shed any light on why no records from part B of our request have been released? Those aren't even records that you would have to search for. None of part B would be privileged - and at this point we have little reason to believe that anyone in city hall is doing what they say they are. I don't care if there are a lot of records. I don't care if this is difficult for city employees. These are things that WE, THE COMMUNITY, are having to do because nobody who is getting paid or has been elected seems to be able to competently do their jobs.

You all are paid. Some are elected. The community should not have to babysit you to make sure you are making decisions that are in the best interest of Laurel. Do you really not know right from wrong? Shame on all of you. What are you so afraid of? It's not hard at all to stand up for what is right - TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT. Complacency, laziness, self-centeredness, and ego has no business in public service. WHY DO WE EVEN HAVE TO ASK CITY COUNCIL TO PUT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN CHECK?! Ask for the records yourself. Demand them. Do your job. If you voted something through or approved something while you were asleep at the wheel, OWN IT. MAKE IT RIGHT.

Are none of you aware that the Mayor runs around calling women "bitches" and "cunts"? There's no way you aren't aware - It's not like he is shy about it. Why do we have to make a fuss to get such a heap of shit removed from leading our city?

Let me be clear - IF YOU DO NOT CALL OUT DAVE FOR THE THINGS HE SAYS AND DOES, you are as guilty as he is - you are as disgusting as he is - and you should be ashamed of yourselves. If you are not capable of caring for this city more than you care for Kurt, or Dave - you should remove yourself as a representative of Laurel.

- Elizabeth Gilg



City Mayor  
Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:11 PM  
Brittney Harakal  
FW: Concerns Regarding Proposed State Mental Health Prison

*Dave Waggoner*  
Mayor  
City of Laurel, Montana  
(406) 628-8456 extension 5501

**From:** Steve Rodgers <mrswrodgers@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:10 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Cc:** Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Concerns Regarding Proposed State Mental Health Prison

**To the Mayor and Members of the Laurel City Council**

**Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed State Mental Health Prison**

Mayor and Council Members,

I am a resident of Laurel who cares deeply about the long term health, stability, and prosperity of our community. I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinion.

I support mental health treatment and the need for expanded services in Montana. However, the location, financial impact, and long term obligations associated with this proposal raise significant concerns that must be fully considered.

**1. Permanent Loss of Tax Revenue**

Because the state does not pay property taxes, annexing this land for a state run facility would permanently eliminate:

- Future residential tax revenue
  - Future commercial tax revenue
  - Long term development potential on one of Laurel’s most valuable remaining growth areas
- This represents **millions of dollars in lost future revenue**—funds that would otherwise support streets, sidewalks, parks, police, and essential city services.

**2. The Location Benefits the State, Not Laurel**

It is clear why the state selected this site:

- Easy extension of sewer and water
- Immediate access to I 90

- Proximity to Billings for staffing

These factors make the project convenient for the state, **but convenience for Helena does not equal prosperity for Laurel. The city should not sacrifice its best growth corridor simply because it is the easiest option for the state.** The citizens of Laurel have clearly voiced concerns as to the proximity of this Mental Prison to Laurel Elementary school.

---

### 3. Laurel's Growth and Identity Are at Stake

I think of Laurel as a bedroom community. Our economic health depends on:

- New housing
- New families
- New businesses
- A growing tax base

Giving up this land for a non taxable state facility **blocks Laurel's most logical direction for future expansion.** Meanwhile, our streets and sidewalks are already deteriorating (by the way, throwing a shovel of asphalt into a hole and patting it down with a shovel is not fixing our streets). **Without new tax revenue, Laurel will struggle to maintain basic infrastructure,** and the appearance of our town will continue to decline. **The condition of our community directly affects the families and businesses we attract.**

---

### 4. The Jobs Argument Does Not Hold Up

The mayor has stated that he had interest in the project because of potential job creation. However:

- Laurel does not have enough housing for 90–100 new employees and their families
- We are giving up the very land that could have supported that housing
- Most workers will live in Billings or between Laurel and Billings

**Laurel would carry the burden while other communities receive the economic benefit.**

---

### 5. Aging Infrastructure and Long Term Liability

Laurel's water, sewer, and road systems are already aging and strained. If the city annexes this land to a non-tax paying entity:

- Laurel becomes responsible for providing services to the facility
- When infrastructure fails, **the state will not pay to repair or upgrade it**
- **Laurel taxpayers will bear the cost**

This is a long term financial liability that the city must not take on without full understanding and safeguards.

---

### 6. The City Should Negotiate Compensation

If the state insists on this location, insists on annexation and shoves this facility down our throats (there is a chance that could happen), then City of Laurel should negotiate a one time **Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) of at least \$5 – 10 million to offset:**

- Permanent loss of taxable land
- Increased demand on city services
- Long term infrastructure costs

PILOT agreements are common nationwide and provide fair compensation when governments remove land from the tax base.

---

### 7. Need for Transparency and Public Involvement

This proposal has advanced with limited public communication and zero input from the citizens of Laurel. A decision of this magnitude requires:

- **A full public impact study**
- **Additional open forums**
- Clear disclosure of funding, ownership, and operational plans

The residents of Laurel deserve transparency and a complete understanding of the long term consequences.

---

### **Conclusion**

I respectfully urge the Council to gather complete information, prioritize the long term interests of Laurel residents, and slow this process down or stop it all together. I am not opposed to mental health services. I am opposed to annexation and **long term financial burdens being placed on our city without transparency, planning, or compensation.** Help Laurel grow the right way; this Mental Health Prison will turn Laurel into a trash town.

**Make Laurel Great Again!**

Thank you for your time and for your service to our community.

Kind Regards,

Steve Rodgers  
626 W 13th St.  
Laurel MT. 59044

## **Brittney Harakal**

---

**From:** Laura Kirschenmann <laurakirschenmann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 8:41 AM  
**To:** Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; Ward 4B  
**Cc:** City Mayor; Brittney Harakal; Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** Fwd: Emergency Ordinance

Hello,

I wanted to forward my email as public comment to all of you ahead of tonight's meeting and vote on the emergency ordinance. Thank you all.

Laura Kirschenmann

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Laura Kirschenmann** <laurakirschenmann@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 17, 2026 at 10:50 AM  
**Subject:** Emergency Ordinance  
**To:** <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>, <[ward2b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov)>

Hello,

I am writing to you as my assigned elected ward officials to urge you to vote in favor of the emergency ordinance that will be discussed tonight and brought before you to vote on this week. I trust that as you, Brent and Jessica, along with the remaining council members review this ordinance, you will find it will serve you well to ensure this protects our city and provides ample time to review our city's current infrastructure state and demands along with all the other concerns that have arised recently. Passing this ordinance is imperative to ensure the state of Montana and BOI cannot attempt to move forward with annexation. It is extremely frustrating that we have gotten to this point without you all first having the chance to go through a thorough review process and public input. We now have a chance to at least put a layer of protection in so that proper procedure and investigations can take place.

I thank you both kindly for your time and commitment to this matter and for serving your constituents.

Sincerely,

Laura Kirschenmann  
939 W 4th St.  
Laurel, MT 59044

## **Brittney Harakal**

---

**From:** Amber Zahn <zahn.amber@myyahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 10:12 AM  
**To:** City Mayor; Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; Ward 4B; Kurt Markegard; Civil Attorney; Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** Cheryl Front Porch Hill; Shawna Hopper  
**Subject:** City Authority and Statutory Obligations Regarding Annexation

City Council Members,

I am writing to address the City's role and legal authority regarding the proposed annexation associated with the forensic mental health facility.

There appears to be a growing perception that this decision is outside of the City's control. Montana law makes clear that it is not.

Under Montana Code Annotated 76-2-203, zoning and land use decisions are required to be made:

"with reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the jurisdiction."

The statute further requires that decisions promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and support compatible development.

These are not discretionary guidelines. They are statutory obligations.

A secure, 24-hour forensic mental health facility serving court-ordered individuals connected to criminal proceedings is a fundamentally different use than residential housing. That difference directly implicates the City's duty to evaluate compatibility, district character, and the welfare of the existing community.

In addition, Montana law requires that zoning and annexation decisions be made in accordance with the City's adopted growth policy. Growth policies are intended to guide where higher-intensity or institutional uses are appropriate and to protect the character of established residential areas.

Under Montana Code Annotated 7-2-4601, the City has the authority to approve or deny annexation. Annexation is not automatic, and it is not required simply because it is requested. It is a discretionary decision that must be exercised in a manner consistent with the law and the long-term interests of the community.

This places a clear responsibility on the City.

If a proposed use is not compatible with the surrounding residential area, if it conflicts with the character of the district, or if it does not support the general welfare of the existing community, the City has both the authority and the obligation to act accordingly.

This annexation decision is one of the few points where the City has the ability to determine whether this placement is appropriate.

The community is looking to you to exercise that authority consistent with Montana law and the City's own planning framework.

If this annexation is approved, it will be understood by the public as a determination that this use is compatible with the surrounding residential area and consistent with the character of the district.

If that is the City's position, it should be clearly stated and supported on the record.

Respectfully,  
Amber Zahn

Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

## Brittney Harakal

---

**From:** Ward 4A  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2026 7:15 AM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** FW: Acting on time sensitive matters to keep our community whole and intact

**From:** Kris Vogele <threepeat43@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 29, 2026 3:45 PM  
**To:** Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Acting on time sensitive matters to keep our community whole and intact

Dear City Council,

Inaction turns to complicity when matters are not dealt with appropriately and in due time.

There may not be a city council meeting scheduled this week but it might be a necessary time to hold a special meeting and possibly go into executive session before making crucial decisions or taking immediate action.

I understand matters have been difficult and timing is not always convenient, however isn't it time to address the multitude of issues caused by the executive branch of our city?

Timing, scope, and immediacy would suggest you secure secondary counsel to discuss litigation and pending legal matters with. Not that our current counsel isn't fit, but that she may be too close to some issues and an outside counsel can provide you with confirmation of counsel you hear from the city attorney and also provide you with guidance on serious impending legal matters.

Given the lack of a moratorium on planning matters, there are going to be strict timelines you will need to be cognizant of as well as two or three potential lawsuits entering in the next few weeks.

The time to take a week off (although probably needed) is not now given the enormous amount of issues on your plate right now.

In addition, there seems to be a growing leadership gap at the city that is going to complicate things even more as time and matters progress. The community remains behind you and we want to be certain that our community survives this period of confusion and dissension and comes out stronger and together.

We know your role is not easy, but we ask that you act before the time to act passes which would place many in a difficult situation where they (or you) become compromised to the point of being a part of the problem.

City ordinance says it only takes two agreeing council members to add items to an upcoming agenda. I would sincerely hope that information you have received raises enough concern to call a special meeting.

Thank you for being a leader and protector of our city.

Sincerely a citizen who cares for our town,

Kris Vogeles

## Brittney Harakal

---

**From:** Ward 1B  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 26, 2026 8:34 AM  
**To:** Civil Attorney; Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** Kelly Strecker  
**Subject:** Fw: Prison  
**Attachments:** Canape - organizational chart.docx

---

**From:** Monna Rae Adickes <monnarae@cbthebrokers.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 12:00 PM  
**To:** Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Prison

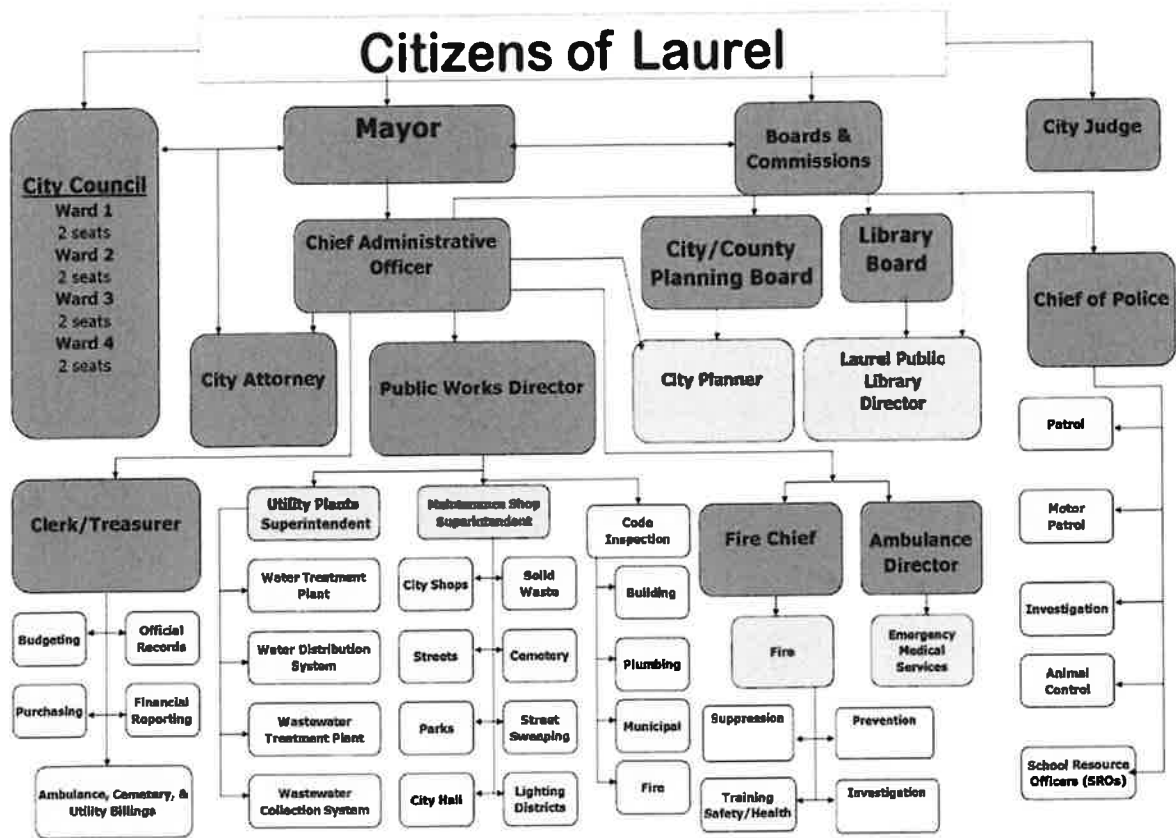
See attached



**MONNA RAE ADICKES**  
*Real Estate Broker*

📞 406-860-4284  
✉ monnarae@cbthebrokers.com  
📍 3135 Meadow View Drive  
Billings, MT 59102  
🌐 www.mra406.com

 **COLDWELL BANKER** THE BROKERS



Tom Canape,

You fail to realize that you work for the citizens of Laurel. As a councilperson it is your duty to protect us, both fiscally and physically. Instead, you have thrown our fiscal (home equity) out the window and have opened our backyards to felons.

Please do us all a favor and step down. It is clear you are either a party to the good ole boys club or not a clue as to how city government works, as you are clearly unaware of your duties as a council person.

Monna Rae Adickes  
102 8<sup>th</sup> Ave #B

## Brittney Harakal

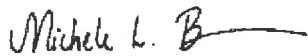
---

**From:** Civil Attorney  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 6:57 PM  
**To:** Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3A; Ward 4A; Ward 4B  
**Cc:** City Mayor; Kurt Markegard; Kelly Strecker; Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** FW: Prison  
**Attachments:** Klose - organizational chart.docx

All:

Please see the attached. It will be included in the next week's packet.

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann  
Civil City Attorney  
**City of Laurel**  
Cell Phone: 406.671.4333  
[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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**From:** Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 6:30 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal <[bharakal@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:bharakal@laurel.mt.gov)>; Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Prison

---

**From:** Monna Rae Adickes <[monnarae@cbthebrokers.com](mailto:monnarae@cbthebrokers.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 12:01 PM  
**To:** Ward 4B <[ward4b@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward4b@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** Prison

See attached



*Monna Rae  
Adickes*

## MONNA RAE ADICKES

*Real Estate Broker*

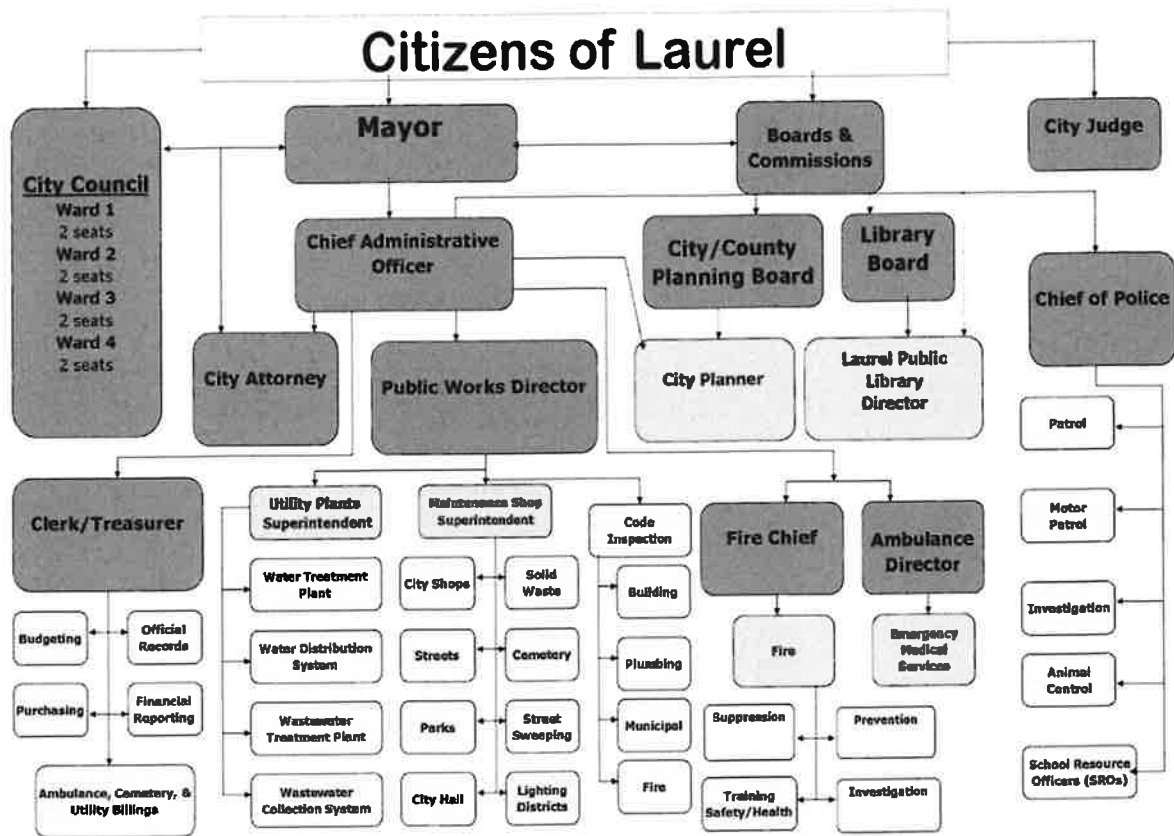
📞 406-860-4284

✉️ monnaae@cbthebrokers.com

📍 3135 Meadow View Drive  
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 **COLDWELL BANKER THE BROKERS**



Richard Klose,

You fail to realize that you work for the citizens of Laurel. As a councilperson it is your duty to protect us, both fiscally and physically. Instead, you have thrown our fiscal (home equity) out the window and have opened our backyards to felons.

Please do us all a favor and step down. It is time to retire, as you are clearly unaware of your duties as a council person.

Monna Rae Adickes  
102 8<sup>th</sup> Ave #B

## Brittney Harakal

---

**From:** Ward 2A  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 8:29 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Cc:** City Mayor; Civil Attorney  
**Subject:** FW: State forensic hospital laurel



### Jessica Banks

*Ward 2A City Council Member*  
**Mobile:** 406-690-7181  
**Email:** [ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)  
P.O. Box 10  
Laurel, MT 59044  
[Home Page | Laurel MT \(cityoflaurelmontana.com\)](http://www.cityoflaurelmontana.com)



**From:** Deb Pulse <[gidgetrabbitt03@yahoo.com](mailto:gidgetrabbitt03@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 1:40 PM  
**To:** Ward 2A <[ward2a@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:ward2a@laurel.mt.gov)>  
**Subject:** State forensic hospital laurel

I am writing as a concerned Laurel resident to formally express my strong opposition to the proposed construction of a facility for the criminally insane within our community, particularly at its currently planned location.

The proposed site is located approximately 500 yards from an elementary school and within an established residential neighborhood. This proximity raises serious concerns regarding public safety, child welfare, and responsible land-use planning. Schools and residential areas should remain protected spaces, and the placement of a high-security mental health correctional facility so close to children is both alarming and inappropriate.

In addition to safety concerns, this project directly conflicts with the intent of existing zoning laws. Residential zoning is designed to preserve quality of life, promote stability, and encourage thoughtful community growth. Introducing a facility of this nature into a residential area undermines those principles and sets a troubling precedent for future land-use decisions.

The long-term economic consequences are also significant. The presence of a prison for the criminally insane in close proximity to homes and schools will inevitably lead to decreased property values, making it more difficult for current residents to sell their homes and discouraging new families from moving to our town. This will deter residential development, private investment, and business growth. In turn, this will cause stagnation to the city's future and could potentially reduce its tax base.

Furthermore, the strain this facility would place on already limited local resources cannot be ignored. Emergency medical services, fire departments, and law enforcement agencies are not currently equipped to absorb the increased demands such a facility would generate. Diverting these critical services to support the prison would reduce response for local residents and place unnecessary risk on the Laurel community.

Additional concerns include infrastructure stress, staffing logistics, and long-term operational impacts—many of which could disproportionately affect the local community while offering little benefit in return.

While I recognize the importance of secure and appropriate facilities for individuals requiring mental health treatment, such facilities must be placed in locations that prioritize public safety, adhere to zoning standards, and respect the wellbeing of surrounding communities. This proposed location fails to meet those expectations.

I respectfully urge you to oppose this project as currently planned and to advocate for alternative locations that do not place children, families, property values, and residential neighborhoods at unnecessary risk. Our community deserves thoughtful planning, transparency, and a meaningful voice in decisions that will permanently shape our future.

Thank you for your time, service, and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Debra and Tj Pulse  
911 10th Ave Laurel  
406-855-3147/406-951-0388

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** City Mayor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 4:29 PM  
**To:** Brittney Harakal  
**Subject:** Fw: Forensic Mental Prison

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

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**From:** Nathan <bsdcmillion1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026 4:27:03 PM  
**To:** City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Forensic Mental Prison

Sent from my iPhone

Why is the Forensic Mental Prison being shoved down the town of Laurel Montana's throats???????? This is a disgrace what the state and Dan Villa who is a plain an simple snake oil salesmen and you our Mayor. Not even going to mention Kurt Markegaard he is irrelevant all he is good for is doing your dirty work 🤢 What are trying to do to our small town???? You all should be ashamed of your actions. Disregard who put you in the positions that you hold. We will remember come election. Disgusting is what you all are doing. Why are we not able to view the recorded City Council session??? How convenient for technical difficulties. Do better or resign!

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Laurel CARED <connect@laurelcared.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 26, 2026 10:06 AM  
**To:** Civil Attorney  
**Cc:** Kris Vogele; Elizabeth Wilson; Shawna; Samantha Mayes; The Front Porch; Brittney Harakal; Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; City Mayor; Kelly Strecker; Kurt Markegard  
**Subject:** Re: Consolidated Records Request

The request for part 2 shouldn't require a search of any kind. We want the emails and any other type of communications between all city staff/officials discussing what to send to IT and copies of the correspondence between city staff/officials and IT. Timestamped. And we want the name and contact info for who the city has been using for IT.

We will compare it to statements made by city staff/officials. If they have lied about what they have done and when - we will address that and share with the community and press - obviously.

Part 3 was never a immediate concern. We made it clear that we would be requesting that information down the road in an organized manner.

On staff comms. The most cost effective way for the city to execute this request would be to produce phone logs and text logs for all city staff/officials phone numbers - both personal and city issued - as well as calls that have come in and been routed through the city switchboard. From May 2025 to current. None of this information would be privileged - including call logs to and from the city attorney. With this information, CARED would be able to narrow down and provide specific dates and times of text logs that we would like produced - DIRECTLY FROM THE PROVIDERS. This can be done. It will not cost much. We don't want Dave and Kurt providing their own records. That is not at all appropriate. In fact, it's not appropriate that they be involved in this process at all.

We do not expect this to be a single step production. We never have.

On the past 5 years of land use matters and all decisions made by the City of Laurel, Dave, and/or Kurt - when we get to it, I will take it all. I will comb through every record. I will hire help if I need to.

I want to be very clear on this last message. It's a personal one - from myself and my family.

Dave. Kurt. City of Laurel.

We will continue to request waiver of fees when warranted, but to believe that we will be deterred or slowed down by financial barriers would be a mistake.

I don't recommend underestimating our means. If you force us into wasting money that could otherwise be put to positive use - I will only be come more of a thorn. Waste your money on an attorney, Dave - I dare you. You know exactly what you have done and the things you have said - and so do I 🙏

Elizabeth Gilg  
Laurel C.A.R.E.D

On Wed, Mar 25, 2026, 5:18 PM Civil Attorney <[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)> wrote:

Dear C.A.R.E.D. Community:

The City is working diligently on the public records requests. An initial search term with IT returned about 5-6k in records. I assume most of those are irrelevant, although I have not reviewed them.

The secondary search, related to Part 3, that included all zoning, annexation, and land use issues resulted in 60k communications. I'm not sure that this is what you are seeking?

I'm trying to be proactive here and help you in what you are looking for. But, when you ask for the broad based categories that you, in Parts 2 and 3, these things are very broad.

I am concerned, because while I completely appreciate that you believe these issues are "one off," they simply are not. When we receive 60k search term emails from IT to produce, how possibly do you expect City Staff to cull through these documents?

I guess, at this point, I want to ask you – blanket, straight up. What is that you want? If you want all communications between Kurt and the Mayor and State officials, we can produce those. I think they have been, other than what the Mayor is providing, which is his choice. But, if you are on a "fishing expedition" for all zoning, annexation, and other issues, then we can produce this information, but I can assure you, as I represent, it will be over 50k in volume of documents, none of which I can imagine have to do with your immediate issue. And, the City will have to charge for this. L

If you want phone records, please identify what phone numbers you want records from. And, even if the City produces all phone records showing communications between the Mayor and Kurt, what does this tell you? The Mayor and CAO talk regularly by phone. None of which has to do with this facility.

I admire your work and your courage and dedication to accountability. But, you are putting a burden upon the City that we cannot meet, and not only can we not meet it, it is legally defensible not to meet. The City has no obligation to produce the information that you are requesting, in its broad based manner.

I ask very specific things from you:

1. Narrow your PRR to what you are trying to gain as far as information. Please provide identifying information and search terms.
2. Don't go on a fishing-expedition for any land use issue the last five years. If you want to do that, I can assure you, we can produce this information, but it will involve fees.

I ask this community to "take a step back." I said this last night at CC. I know emotions are heightened. Things are hard right now. Trust is not existent, and I understand the reasons why. But, if we are all going to serve our community well, we will all lessen the emotional issues involved, we will all step back and think about how to address things rationally, and we will not burn our City Staff to the ground in the process. I know that the C.A.R.E.D. group has impassioned positions. I see that, and I respect that.

But, right now, I'm dealing with City Staff that are at desperate spaces. We can all criticize them. Believe me, I'm not "loving the look going on right now." But, I have a CAO and City Staff so scared about how to act, it's a complete impediment.

I ask for some basic things from this community, moving forward:

1. Moving forward, communicate with me on matters. I will help to address issues, and I will dispel things, as they need to be dispelled. I will respond, and I think I always have.
2. I cannot make "magic" here. That's not possible. But, I will take a leadership position and help to work through these things.
3. Please communicate your issues to the Mayor directly. I cannot speak for the Mayor, nor would I purport to. I separate out my responsibility to City Staff separate from the Mayor. If and to what extent the Mayor responds, that is on him. It has nothing to do with me, our City Staff, etc. The Mayor is an elected official, and he needs to show up as such.

Please feel free to provide information. I'm broken about where our City is right now. I can assure you, better days are ahead. I know that. I'm doing my best, and I know our City Staff is.

I welcome any feedback.

Best Regards,



Michele L. Braukmann

Civil City Attorney

**City of Laurel**

Cell Phone: 406.671.4333

[civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov](mailto:civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov)

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## **Brittney Harakal**

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**From:** John Esp <johnespforSenate@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 6, 2026 8:27 AM  
**To:** Ward 4A; To: governor@mt.gov; Dan; BOI.ED@mt.gov; Charlie; Cc: contactdoj@mt.gov; John; Vince; Lee; Ward 1A; Ward 2B; Ward 1B; Ward 3B; Ward 2A; Ward 3A; Ward 4B; City Mayor; Kurt Markegard; Civil Attorney; Michele Braukmann; Brittney Harakal; cwhite@yellowstonecountymt.gov; mwaters@yellowstonecountymt.gov; mmorse@yellowstonecountymt.gov; dehrlick@dailyMontanan.com; amitchell@billingsgazette.com; info@yellowstonecountynews.com; Jaci Webb; news@kulr.com; msilvers@montanafreepress.org; jonathon.ambarian@kxlh.com; shawna\_1975@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Re: The rest of the story  
**Attachments:** The Key Points from St. Louis 2.docx

Hi all, See the attached document for your consideration, Thanks, John Esp

On Sun, Mar 15, 2026 at 10:54 PM John Esp <johnespforSenate@gmail.com> wrote:  
Hi all, See the attached Word document, John Esp

## Key Points for Yellowstone County Leaders to consider from the following timeline.

From the following data and local decisions made in this South St. Louis neighborhood, it appears that people and their varied activities are compatible with a Forensic Hospital in the adjacent neighborhood. As you can see from the timeline below, many children centric uses have been initiated and then expanded very near or adjacent to this 180 bed Forensic Facility since it started caring for the mentally ill in 1997.

### **Timeline of development within a few hundred feet of the Forensic Treatment Center**

- **1994:** A historic 4 story wing of the **St. Louis State Hospital** was torn down and construction began on a modern (for its time) 4 pod psychiatric hospital and cottages. The Yellowstone County Facility will have the added advantage of 30 years of advancement in security techniques, and electronic technology.
- **1997:** Patients were relocated from other historic wings to the newly constructed **St. Louis Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center** on the Hospital campus.
- **1998-2001:** The **South City Family YMCA** was constructed on the site of the demolished 1912 west wing of the St. Louis State Hospital. It opened to the public in **December 2001**.
- **2000:** The **Premier Charter School** opened its doors on the site of the former Hawthorne State Hospital to **524 students k - 6<sup>th</sup> grade**. A major \$2 million renovation in 2018 added to the capacity. **Current enrollment approx. 1000, pre-K – grade 8.**
- **2012-2013:** **Gateway Science Academy** renovated a shuttered school building (\$3 million “full gut rehab”) and opened down the street for the 2013-14 school year. **Enrollment: approx. 811 gr. 6-12**
- **2020:** Officially renamed the **Forensic Treatment Center – South** to reflect its specialized role in forensic inpatient psychiatric care. The Center treats court ordered patients only, similar in nature to those anticipated in the proposed Yellowstone County Forensic Facility.

### **Further observations of the neighborhoods within a one-mile radius of the FTC-South. Data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2024 5-year estimates.**

The median income in the census tracts within a one-mile radius of FTC-S are roughly 1.5 times higher than the median income for the City of St. Louis as a whole.

Fifty one percent of the residents in the radius over 25 years old have a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) School and District Navigator Tool notes 7 public schools within a one-mile radius of FTC-S, including the two that were opened within a few hundred feet of the Forensic Facility **after** it was completed and occupied by forensic patients as detailed in the timeline above. There may be private schools in the area, but data for them is not readily available.

There are at least 3 City Parks within the one-mile radius of FTC-S, one of which, the 289-acre Tower Grove Park is designated a National Historic Landmark attracting over 2 million visitors per year.

Real Estate data per the **Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI)** over time since January of 2015, with the exception of a few recent years, shows comparable growth in values in the zip code containing the FTC-S (63139) and the growth in values for St. Louis as a whole.

## Brittney Harakal

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**From:** Ward 4A  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026 7:01 AM  
**To:** Dan; Charlie  
**Cc:** Brittney Harakal; Civil Attorney; City Mayor; Laurel CARED; Deming, Lee; Vince  
**Subject:** FW: Laurel

Good Morning,  
I wanted to share an email that I sent to the Governor yesterday.  
Thank you,  
Council Member Jodi Mackay

**From:** Ward 4A  
**Sent:** Monday, April 6, 2026 11:52 AM  
**To:** To: governor@mt.gov <governor@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Laurel

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am a member of Laurel's City Council. I will keep this correspondence short so as to not waste either of our time.

The 8 members of Laurel's City Council sent you, Mr. Villa and Mr. Brereton an email on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. To date, we have not received a response.

In a recent email to Senator Ricci and Representative Deming, you stated, "BOI has presented three times to the Laurel City Council." To be clear, **Mr. Villa has not "presented" anything to Laurel City Council.** He has used the "public comment" portion of our City Council meetings to drop tidbits of information on a massive, controversial project. Public Comment is a time for citizens to address the council. It does not allow for questions or discussion. "Presented" implies he took the appropriate steps to be placed on the meeting's agenda to meaningfully communicate with the Council and the community. His cowardly use of "Public Comment" is completely inappropriate and disrespectful to our City Council and our citizens. As Governor of this great state, you should be appalled by the disrespect shown to your constituents.

This volatile situation in Laurel is causing lasting, potentially irreparable, damage. Despite many opportunities to do things right the primary parties have doubled down and continue to make things worse.

Please do not continue this pattern of disrespecting, discounting and disregarding Laurel's citizens. Engage. Listen. Communicate. Do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Council Member Jodi Mackay

**File Attachments for Item:**

8. Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of March 24, 2026.

**Minutes of City of Laurel  
Budget/Finance Committee  
Tuesday, March 24, 2026**

**Members' Present:** Jessica Banks, Tom Canape, Richard Klose,

**Others Present:** Kelly Strecker, Kelly Gauslow, David Waggoner, Troy Charbonneau

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair at 5:30 pm.

**Public Input:** There was no public comment.

**General Items –**

1. Review and approve March 10, 2026, Budget and Finance Committee meeting minutes. Tom Canape moved to approve the minutes of March 10, 2026. Jessica Banks seconded the motion. With no objection, the minutes of March 10, 2026, were approved. There was no public comment or committee discussion.
2. Review and approve purchase requisitions. Troy Charbonneau presented a purchase requisition for new crew lockers as Lyndy could not be present. It is for new lockers for the ambulance crew quarters. The current lockers that they have are not functional for their uniform needs as they are too small. Troy stated that the department has received two generous donations to cover the cost and assembly of the lockers. The cost of the lockers with assembly is \$8,289.99. Jessica Banks moved to approve the purchase requisition for new lockers at the ambulance department. Tom Canape seconded the motion. With no objection, the purchase requisition was approved.
3. Review and recommend approval to Council; claims entered through March 20, 2026. Tom Canape moved to approve the claims and check register for claims entered through March 20, 2026. Jessica Banks seconded the motion. With no objection, the claims and check register of March 20, 2026, were approved. There was no public comment.
4. Review and approve Payroll Register for the pay period ending March 15, 2026, totaling \$261,578.90. Tom Canape motioned to approve the payroll register for the pay period ending March 15, 2026, totaling \$261,578.90. Richard Klose seconded the motion. With no objection, the payroll register was approved. There was no public comment.
5. Review and approve February 2025 Monthly Financial Statement. Jessica Banks moved to approve February 2025 Monthly Financial Statement. Richard Klose seconded the motion. With no objection, the February Monthly Financial Statement was approved. There was no public comment.

**New Business** -Kelly noticed the claim review schedule had incorrect dates on it. A new schedule was provided; Jessica and Casey are switching days due to conflict. Jessica will review on April 14th, and Casey will review claims on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business** – Tom Canape had a suggestion about creating a punch card for payment at the container site. He stated that sometimes people do not have cash to pay their dump fees and that if we had a punch card that they could purchase might help with this. Kelly shared a draft of the punch card. The committee decided to wait on the punch cards until the new schedule of fees is updated.

**Other Items –**

1. Review Comp/OT reports for the pay period ending March 15, 2026.
2. Mayor Update – The mayor did not have any updates.

3. Clerk/Treasurer Financial Update-Kelly stated that Allies on Aging has terminated the MOU with the city regarding the bus transit service. They presented a new reduced idea to the city. There will be future discussions regarding the transit service at a later date.

**Announcements –**

1. The next Budget and Finance Committee meeting will be held on April 14, 2026, at 5:30 pm.
2. Jessica Banks is scheduled to review the claims for the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Strecker

**NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.**

**File Attachments for Item:**

9. City/County Planning Board Minutes of March 18, 2026.

**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAUREL  
CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026**

A City/County Planning board meeting was held in Council Chambers and called to order by County chair Richard Klose at 6:00 pm on March 18, 2026.

**Board Members Present:**

<u> X </u> Tom Canape	<u> X </u> Richard Herr	<u> X </u> Paul Thomaе
<u> X </u> Ron Benner	<u> X </u> Richard Klose	<u> X </u> Mike Waters
<u> X </u> Judy Goldsby	<u> X </u> Jonathan Klasna	

**Others Present:**

Amber Hatton – Deputy Clerk Treasurer  
Forrest Sanderson – Contract Planner  
Brittney Harakal – Administrative Assistant  
Drew Nordman

**Public Input:** *Citizens may address the committee regarding any item of business that is not on the agenda. The duration for an individual speaking under Public Input is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the committee will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

**Disclosure of Ex Parte Communication - None**

**Public Hearing**

**Variance of Side Yard Set back in R-6000 at 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Chair Richard Klose opened the public hearing and Forret Sanderson, Contract Planner, presented the item provided by property owner Drew Nordman.

Forrest Sanderson, Contracted Planner, presents Variance Report VAR-26-01. Please see attached report.

Chair Klose opened the floor for public comment. Chair asked the public three (3) times if there was any public comment. There were none.

Chair Klose asked Drew Nordman if he wanted to make a comment. Drew provided a written statement which will be attached. He did mention there was a correction. He

has lot 19 and 20, it's not a 9600 square foot lot, but a 8400 square foot lot. He is hoping to start construction in April.

Chair Klose asked two (2) times if there were any public comments, in which there were none.

Chair Klose closed the Public Hearing.

### **General Items**

**1. Minutes from February 18, 2026 –**

Motion made by Judy Goldsby to approve February 18, 2026, minutes, seconded by Jon Klasna. There was no public comment. Motion passed 8-0.

### **New Business**

**2. Variance of Side Yard Set Back in R-6000 at 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Board asked Mr. Nordman if he had a discussion with his neighbors and if the AUD would obstruct their views. Mr. Nordman said that he did speak to several neighbors and they did not express any issues regarding views.

The board asked the width and length of the lot. Mr. Nordman described the lot as 2 lots, lot 19 and 20. They are 30 ft wide, 60 ft in depth, and 140 ft in length. The actual size of the building will be 27 ft by 30 ft.

The board asked with the 2 lots on one property, if someone down the road wanted to separate the 2 lots, could they separate the lot if they were to pass the variance. Forrest explained that lots require a minimum of 6000 sq ft, so the lot is not divisible. So, for clarification, down the road, if he wanted to divide lot and put in a duplex it was not allowed.

Board asked if the entrance into the garage is from the street or the alley. Entrance will be from the street.

The board asked if we need to satisfy all 7 points to grant the variance. Forrest explained that most communities in their ordinance specify either a preponderance of the evidence or all the criteria must be addressed. The City of Laurel did not do that. So, at that point it is assumed the City Council looked at the preponderance of the evidence and that it has swayed their decision.

Chair Klose asked if there was any other discussion.

Judy Goldsy made a motion to approve and present to the Council the findings of the fact, presented by Mr. Nordman for the Variance of Side Yard Set Back in R-6000 at 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and that its non-conforming would be protected by variance.

Ron Benner seconded the motion.

A roll call was requested to approve the Variance of Side Yard Set Back in R-6000 at 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Ron Benner, Paul Thomae, Judy Goldsby, Mike Waters, Tom Canape, Richard Klose, Jon Klasna, and Richard Klose all voted AYE. Motion passes 8-0.

## Old Business

### 3. Sidewalk Discussion

Forrest explained to the board that he had to go against the board's recommendation regarding the timing of construction of the sidewalks on the Solberg Laurel Industrial Park, second filing. The condition was passed by the planning board that said that all the sidewalks would be built at construction of the first lot. This violates our subdivision regulations. The way it was written, the burden of cost would fall on the buyer of the first lot. If we want to pursue the construction up front, we need to impose that on the developer of the subdivision and have those costs then borne by the developer and not the purchaser of the lot.

### 4. Laurel-Yellowstone City-County Board By-Laws

Ron Benner made a few changes to the Laurel-Yellowstone City-County Board By-Laws. A new jurisdiction map was also provided to the Board.

A motion was made by Tom Canape to approve the Laurel-Yellowstone City-County Board By-Laws with the current jurisdiction map as presented. Second Judy Goldsby. There was no public comment. Motion passed 8-0.

## Other Items

5. Tom brought up that Park and Tree Board started to look at different parks and make sure everyone knew where our Parks were and if they had water.
  
6. Board asked if there was any information on the bridge of phase four of Cherry Hills Subdivision. Forrest explained when the fourth filing was presented, the condition of approval is the extension of what he would call West Maryland all the way to Golf Course Road. That requires the installation of some kind of bridging structure that would cross the big ditch. That bridging structure benefits more than just the fourth filing subdivision and is required to be installed. It requires that the city create a special improvement district to pay for that bridge. He has spoken with the developer. They are in the process of determining the properties that will benefit by the installation of that structure. It will be presented to the city council as part of their final plat filings, the SID boundaries, a draft assessment methodology, as well as an engineer's opinion of probable costs to construct and that would be assigned to the benefited properties. They're also gearing up towards filing the final plat for the fourth filing. All those documents will be coming in. West Maryland will connect to Gulf

Course Road, the desired future condition to have another east-west connection in the city of Laurel probably within the next 18 months.

7. Board asked where we sit with the State Facility being accepted in. Forrest explained at this time, we do not have an application from the State of Montana to consider. Until we receive an application, there is nothing to address.

**Announcements**

8. Date for next meeting will be April 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Judy Goldsby will not be present for this meeting.
9. Forrest informed the board that we have issued an RFP for a Montana LUPA (Montana Land Use Planning Act) compliance consultant to bring the city of Laurel in compliance with Montana's Land Use Planning Act of all very well-qualified firms. I know of those firms either by reputation or by reputation and having worked their professional staff off and on over the last, in the longest example, 20 years. You have some difficult tasks ahead of you. It's not just a LUPA-compliant growth policy. It's LUPA-compliant subdivision regulations. It's LUPA-compliant zoning regulations.

We have 6 well-qualified firms that have submitted for the Montana LUPA compliance consultant contract, and we are asking for 2 city volunteers from the board to help review and rank those proposals. Tom Canape and Richard Klose volunteered to help in the review and rank the applicants for the LUPA Compliance consultant. Montana code title 76 chapter 25.

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Ron Benner to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Judy Goldsby. There was no public comment. Motion passed 8-0.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.



Amber Hatton  
Deputy Clerk Treasurer

not 9600 sq ft  
its 8400 sq ft

~~I will start within a couple n~~  
I hope to start in April.

## Public hearing statement:

Good evening members of the Board. My name is **Drew Nordman**, and I am the property owner at **201 5th Ave**. Thank you for the opportunity to speak about my variance request.

I am proposing to replace my aging, non-conforming detached garage with a new garage and an Additional Dwelling Unit above it. I am requesting to maintain the existing **16-foot setback** along W. 2nd Street, rather than shifting the new structure to meet the current 20-foot requirement.

There are several reasons why this variance is necessary and appropriate.

First, this property has **unique physical conditions**. As a corner lot, it is subject to two street-facing setbacks, which significantly reduces the usable building area. The existing house and garage were built long before current setback standards, and their placement limits where a replacement structure can reasonably go. W. 2nd Street is also classified as a residential local access or collector street, which typically corresponds to a smaller setback than 20 feet.

Second, these conditions were **not created by me**. They are inherent to the property and the city's street classifications.

Third, applying the 20-foot setback strictly would create an **unreasonable hardship**. Moving the structure further north would push it into the limited remaining yard space and create conflicts with the existing home. It would also make it difficult to design a safe, functional, and code-compliant garage and ADU.

Fourth, the variance is **necessary for reasonable use**. The new structure will be wider than the existing garage, but placing it in the same general location is essential for the design to work. Without maintaining the current setback, constructing a practical garage and ADU becomes extremely difficult.

Fifth, this is the **minimum variance** needed. I am not asking for anything beyond the long-standing 16-foot setback that has existed for decades.

Sixth, the variance will **not be injurious** to the neighborhood. The new structure will meet all current building and fire codes, and it will not interfere with the clear-vision triangle. Maintaining the existing setback preserves the visual rhythm of the street. In fact, after surveying 31 nearby corner lots, more than three-quarters do not meet the current 20-foot standard, so this request is consistent with the neighborhood.

Finally, the variance is **consistent with the intent of the ordinance**. It does not change the allowed uses of the property. It supports orderly development, maintains neighborhood character, and allows the addition of an ADU, which aligns with state housing policy under MCA 76-2-323.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I respectfully ask for your approval of this variance.

From Drew Nordman - owner

CITY HALL  
115 W. 1<sup>ST</sup> ST.  
PLANNING: 628-4796  
WATER OFC.: 628-7431  
COURT: 628-1964  
FAX 628-2241

# City Of Laurel

P.O. Box 10  
Laurel, Montana 59044



Office of the City Planner

**VARIANCE REPORT VAR-26-01**  
**Drew Nordman**  
**Side -Corner Minimum Setback**  
**February 27, 2026**

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Laurel has had zoning since the early 1970's as authorized by §76-2-301 et. seq MCA. These regulations set minimum and maximum standards for all lands located with the jurisdiction of the City of Laurel. These regulations establish standards for the height, bulk, and location of structures.

The property owner is requesting to construct an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in the approximate location of the existing non-conforming garage. The subject property address is 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and may be described as Lots 19 and 20 Block12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana.

The subject property is zoned R-6000, and is adjacent to two public rights-of-way (5<sup>th</sup> Ave and W 2<sup>nd</sup> Street). The subject property is developed with a non-conforming residence and a non-conforming garage. The non-conformity at issue in this request is related to the Side Corner Setback Requirements of the Laurel Zoning Regulations. Both the front and side corner setbacks are 20 feet from the public right-of-way.

Both existing structures are protected as 'Legally Existing Non-Conforming Uses'. The non-conforming use section of the Laurel Municipal Code is included in this report. The applicant was aware of this standard at the time of requesting a building permit from the city and has requested a variance as outlined in their application.

The application materials address several other points that outline the anticipated benefits of the project. The application materials are incorporated into this report by reference.

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**

Lots 19 and 20 Block12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana.

**APPLICANT(S):**

Drew Nordman  
201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Laurel MT 59044

AGENT:

NONE

EXISTING CONDITION:

The subject property is a platted subdivision within the City of Laurel. The property is developed and is served by public water, sewer, streets, and solid waste collection. The property is 8,400 square feet in size.

PROCESS:

- The application for a Variance was submitted on February 2, 2026, and is scheduled for a public hearing on March 18, 2026 by the Laurel Zoning Commission.
- The Zoning Commission following the Public Hearing must adopt findings of fact and issue a formal recommendation to the City Council on the requested variance. The Zoning Commission may propose conditions or modifications to the request so long as the findings of fact support the condition(s).
- Those findings of fact and conclusions as well as the record minutes of the public hearing will be submitted to the City Council for consideration, hearing and final decision.
- The City Council will conduct a duly noticed Public Hearing on the Zoning Commission recommendation, findings of fact, and any conditions mitigating the impacts associated with the request. This hearing will occur later in April.

ZONES INVOLVED: Existing and Proposed

- R-6000 – Residential 6000.
  - The required setbacks for structures are:
    - Front 20feet
    - Side 5 feet
    - Side Corner 20 feet per Text of Regulations
    - Side Corner 10 feet per Dimensional Graphics R-6000
    - Rear 5 feet
    - Text and Graphics R-6000 Attached.
- Rule of Construction of the Laurel Municipal Code and Zoning Regulations.
  - The most restrictive standard is the governing regulation.
    - As such, the 20 foot side yard setback is required to be applied.

➤ Laurel Municipal Code.

✓ Chapter 17.56 - NONCONFORMING USES

✓ 17.56.010 - Nonconforming use designated.

Any lawful use of the land or buildings existing at the date of passage of the ordinance codified in this chapter, and located in a district in which it would not be permitted as a new use under the regulations of this chapter, is declared to be a nonconforming use, and not in violation of this title at the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter; provided, however, a nonconforming use shall be subject to, and the owner shall comply with the regulations set out in Sections 17.56.020 through 17.56.070.

(Prior code § 17.64.010 (part))

✓ 17.56.020 - Extension of.

The nonconforming use of a building may be extended throughout any part of a building clearly designated for such use but not so used at the date of the adoption of this chapter. No nonconforming use may be extended to occupy any land outside the building nor any additional building not used for such nonconforming use at the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter. The nonconforming use of land shall not be extended to any additional land not so used at the date of adoption of the ordinances codified in this title.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(A))

✓ 17.56.030 - Additions, repairs and alteration allowed when.

A. No building used for a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed, or structurally altered, unless the use is changed to one which complies with the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, permits may be issued for the reconstruction of an existing building to be continued as a nonconforming use if the following conditions are complied with:

1. If a single- or two-family dwelling is presently a nonconforming use, and is located in a residential area, and is destroyed, the dwelling may be rebuilt. However, qualifying dwelling units located on arterial streets or roads must conform to the applicable setback standard;
2. New use would decrease the automobile parking congestion in the area;
3. New use would not increase the cubical contents of the structure, floor area ratio, if such would violate provisions of this chapter;
4. Such reconstruction would be one in accordance with the city building, plumbing, electrical codes and fire prevention code;
5. The issuance of such permit would not violate the provisions of Section 17.56.040 of this chapter.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(B)(part))

(Ord. No. O08-05, 6-17-08)

✓ 17.56.040 - Applicability when building damaged or destroyed.

A. If any building in which there is a nonconforming use is damaged by fire, flood, explosion, wind, war or other catastrophe, in an amount equal to or greater than fifty percent of its assessed valuation, it shall not be again used or reconstructed to be used for any use except one complying with the provisions of this title in which it is located. This

subsection specifically does not apply to nonconforming, one and two-family dwelling units.

B. In addition, repairs and maintenance work may be carried out each year in an amount not to exceed twenty-five percent of the assessed value of the building for that year. Such repairs and maintenance work shall not increase the cubical content of the building, nor the floor area devoted to the nonconforming use. Nor shall it increase the number of dwelling units provided in a building.

C. Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to prevent the strengthening nor repair of a building which may be necessary to restore the building to a safe condition or to improve the sanitary conditions of the building; provided, that such strengthening and repair may not be used to restore a building to the provisions of Section 17.56.040 of this chapter.

(Ord. 06-12 (part), 2006; Ord. 06-06 (part), 2006; prior code § 17.64.010(B) (part), (C))

✓ 17.56.050 - Restrictions on moving building.

Any building in which there is a nonconforming use shall not be moved unless it is moved to a district in which the use for which the building was designed is permitted by this title. If any building in which there is a nonconforming use is moved any distance whatsoever, the building shall thereafter be used only in compliance with the provisions of this title for the district in which it is located.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(D))

✓ 17.56.060 - Continuance and change.

A nonconforming use may be continued in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, but it shall not be changed to any other use except the one which would be permitted as a new use in the district in which the building is located.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(E))

✓ 17.56.070 - Discontinuance.

If for any reason a nonconforming use ceases for a period of six months any new use must conform to the provisions of this title for the district in which the use occurs, and the nonconforming use no longer allowed.

(Ord. 04-5 (part), 2004; prior code § 17.64.010(F))

#### RATIONAL BASIS FOR VARIANCE:

**“Variance” means an adjustment in the application of the specific regulations of this title to a particular piece of property which property, because of special circumstances applicable to it, is deprived of privileges commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same vicinity or zone.**

Findings of Fact: Standard of Review

A recommendation for Approval or Conditional Approval of a Variance shall require the Board of Adjustment making each of the following Findings of Fact:

1. Special Conditions

There are special circumstances or conditions that are peculiar to the land or building for which the Variance is sought that do not apply generally to land or buildings in the neighborhood; and

2. Not Result of Applicant

The special circumstances or conditions have not resulted from an act of the applicant or been established to circumvent this Ordinance; and

3. Strict Application Unreasonable

Due to the special circumstances or conditions, the strict application of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the land or building or create an undue hardship on the landowner; and

4. Necessary to Provide Reasonable Use

Granting the Variance is necessary to provide a reasonable use of the land or building; and

5. Minimum Variance

The Variance is the minimum variance necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land or building; and

6. Not Injurious

Granting the Variance will not be injurious to the neighborhood or detrimental to the public welfare; and

7. Consistent with Ordinance

Granting the Variance is consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance. A variance to the Allowed Uses of a zoning district is prohibited.

## CONDITIONS

Conditions or restrictions may be placed on the approval of a Variance.

## EXPIRATION

A Variance shall expire one (1) year from the date of approval if the next logical step in the development process is not commenced. The next step in the development process includes but is not limited to applying for a building permit, commencing the use, or applying for a Development Permit.

## DISCUSSION:

There are four (4) main issues at play in this request:

1. There is in fact a non-conforming structure in the approximate location for the new proposed non-conforming use. As provided in the LMC the voluntary demolition of the non-conforming use terminates the nonconformity, and all new construction must comply with the prevailing zoning regulations.

2. There is an error between the text and graphics associated with the R-6000 with respect to the required side corner setbacks. The rules of construction of the Zoning Regulations require the administrator to apply the most stringent standard.
3. There appears to be a lack of hardship. Clearly, there is adequate room on the lot to move the proposed ADU to the north and meet the required setbacks of the R-6000. The existence of a service gas line that will most likely need to be excavated to connect the new structure does not rise to the level of hardship as set out in the zoning regulations.
4. State Law mandates that an ADU be allowed in all Residential Zoning Districts. The R-6000 allows an ADU as a permitted use provided all development standards are met. State Law does not mandate a reduction of locally adopted setback standards to accommodate an ADU.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Zoning Commission Apply the adopted STANDARD OF REVIEW established by the City Council as part of the updated Zoning Regulations for a Variance as well as the long existing language of the Non-Conforming Use Section of the Laurel Municipal Code. Staff Recommends that the Zoning Commission consider each of the seven (7) criteria individually adopt findings related to each criterion and then based on the findings issue a recommendation to the City Council for final action.

**File Attachments for Item:**

10. Emergency Services Committee Minutes of March 23, 2026.



**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAUREL  
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026**

The Emergency Services Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on Monday, March 23, 2026, by Chair Jodi Mackay

**Members Present:** Jodi Mackay - Chair, Irv Wilke – Vice Chair, Brent Edgmond, Sara Naylor, Shane Lacasse

**Others Present:** Ambulance Chief Lyndy Gurchiek, Police Chief Jarred Anglin, Fire Chief JW Hopper

**Public Input: NONE**

**General Items:**

1. Approval of the Minutes from February 23, 2026. Irv made motion to approve, Shane seconded. Motion carried 5-0

2. Update from Emergency Departments – reports attached  
Fire Department

613 calls in reporting period

Continue with training – 436 hours ytd

Currently at 29 members with 4 applications waiting for September review

Preparing for wildland fire season – concerned it will be busy fire season

Met with NWE – have not heard back regarding establishing partnerships

Have applied for multiple grants – Firehouse Subs, Tourism and Lowe’s

Hoping Lowe’s grant will assist with FAP bay doors

Emergency Networking system – working through tech issues – company responsive

Successful meeting with school re: 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Have a plan. Waiting on City approval.

Moving event toward little league fields and shelter

Police Department

777 calls in reporting period (2149 ytd compared to 2032 last year)

100 crimes reported with 5 arrests and 63 charges filed

Working with Redtail Communications to upgrade PD’s radio system and equipment

Total quote is \$233497 – Cpt. Brew working on grant for project

Still waiting to hear about Dept of Homeland Security grant for Toughbooks

Recently purchased 40 mm launcher that shoots bean bags to have a nonlethal option

Patrol shift working AM and PM on Southside to monitor CHS turnaround

Ambulance Department

97 requests for service

No staffing changes

Continue to complete recertifications

New ambulance is in service – great addition

Submitted application for appropriations from Downing

Working on grants

**New Business:**

## Old Business:

Noise Ordinance Discussion cont.

Chief Anglin provided data from 2025 – out of 6226 calls 27 were noise complaints

Committee sees larger issues facing department, particularly with cumbersome requirements to institute a noise ordinance (decibel readers, calibrating readers, baseline neighborhood data, etc.). Department will continue to respond to noise complaints and deal with them on a case by case basis.

Traffic Patter Discussion cont.

Chief Anglin reached out to the State regarding a request to discuss a turn arrow to go South under the underpass on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. The MDT responded that they will review it this summer when they are working on that intersection.

## Other Items:

Chair initiated a high level conversation about City growth and concerns and issues from departments

FD: Currently seeing decline in firefighters – volunteer numbers dropping fast

60% of calls occur during the day - hardest to staff given most responders have other jobs

Call volume increasing / Equipment costs increasing / Mutual aid requests increasing

FF Gear cost est. \$43000 / ff

Rural Urban Interface – fires more likely

Would like to see 6 full time firefighters to provide 100% response rate – could fund by looking at districts, new partnerships with NWE

PD: Currently down officers – best practice is 3 officers / 1000 people = 21 officers for Laurel – reality is currently at 14 officers

Equipment costs increasing / need new vehicles

Busy with calls and unable to monitor traffic consistently

Concerns about impact of potential State MH Fac – would want 5 new officers. Anaconda PD reports consistent response to Galen

FAP Building concerns

AD: Increased calls every year – would need more staff to meet increased demand

Equipment wear and tear increasing / Equipment costs increasing

FAP Building concerns

All departments continue to work to find grants to fund necessities. Often find Laurel is too close to Billings municipality to be eligible. Departments would like to see City grant writer on staff.

Committee will discuss in further detail in next month's meeting.

**Announcements:**

3. Next meeting will be Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:00pm in Council Chambers

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.



# LAUREL FIRE DEPARTMENT

215 West 1st Street • Laurel, Mt •59044•Office 406.628.4911 • Fax 406.628.2185

## *Emergency Services Meeting 2/23/2026 – 3/23/2026*

### Calls (2/23/2026 – 3/23/2026)

- Responded to 47 Total Calls

### Total Hours on Call - 613



- Training Hours – 436 HRS YTD

### Training

- Wildland Training
- Vehicle Extrication
- Officer Training
- Apparatus Maintenance

### Rookie School Training

- MVA (Motor Vehicle Acc dents)
- Car Fires
- MVA/Car Fires Practical Test
- Wildland

### Department News

- Current Numbers
  - 29 Members
    - 3 firefighters in rookie school
    - 1 firefighter resigned due to moving and new job.
  - 1 Fire Fighter Resigned due to not having enough time.
  - 4 applications so far for next interviews in September.

- DNRC Staffing
  - Training
    - Wildland Refresher
    - Pack Test
    - Engine Boss, Chainsaw and Wildland Urban Interface
  
- Misc.-
  - Early Wildland Season
  - Meeting with Northwest Energy/Cat at the Gas generated Power Plant.
  - Applying for Fire House Subs Grant.
  - Applied for a tourism grant.
  - Applied for Lowes Grant Fire Station Repairs
  - Emergency Networking
    - Working through some technical issues.
  - Meetings with School about 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
    - Flew the park with a drone.
    - Securing permits and permissions.

	Stations	ACTIVE FIREFIGHTERS				% OF TOTAL		
		Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call	Total	Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call
Montana	436	825	5449	387	6661	12%	82%	6%
USA	52571	372314	562010	133765	1068089	35%	53%	13%

# HOW MUCH DOES FIREFIGHTER GEAR COST?

Helmet: \$350

Hood: \$120

Bunker Coat: \$1,902

Flashlight: \$220

Halligan & Axe: \$640

Bailout Kit: \$600

## ADDITIONAL GEAR

Wildland Gear: \$2,710  
 Tech Rescue Gear: \$1,400  
 Bullet Proof Vest: \$700  
 2nd Set of Gear: \$3,579

Radio: \$7,500

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus: \$11,900

Gloves: \$170

Bunker Pant: \$1,387

Boots: \$598

**TOTAL: \$33,776.00**

	Stations	ACTIVE FIREFIGHTERS				% OF TOTAL		
		Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call	Total	Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call
Montana	436	825	5449	387	6661	12%	82%	6%
USA	52571	372314	562010	133765	1068089	35%	53%	13%

## 2025

- 545 calls
- 765 call hours
- Avg hours/call – 1.40
- 7220 man hours – approximately 9.4 firefighters per call (includes standby personnel)
- - Approximately 13.25 man hours/call
  - 44% City calls
  - 56% calls came from our protection area, which includes 7.5% calls that were mutual aid (county/other FDS)

# Future Challenges

- Call volumes have steadily increased at least 4% p.a., thereby taxing both equipment/apparatus, AND personnel (time, money, opportunity costs)
  - Passed the “threshold” of 500 calls
  - Expected to continue growth in calls
  - 60%+ calls are daytime (business hours) calls
  - Increased number of calls that require specialized intervention (extrications, rescues, wildland)
  - Aging population – increase in traffic incidents and lift assist calls
  - More irresponsible behaviors on roads that are getting busier both due to increased traffic and increased distractions – more accidents, more EMS calls
  - A busier EMS dept also means demands on the fire dept increase to make driver(s) available to help the EMS dept
- **Ensuring firefighter availability, especially during busy hours**
  - Almost all firefighters have career jobs outside of the department
  - No incentive for a firefighter to quit her/his job and show up for a fire call during business hours
  - Negative impact on community

## Future Challenges, cont'd....

- The department is not equipped personnel-wise to respond in time and effectively to a fire call during the day, unless someone is off from work or is unemployed
  - Dependence on firefighter availability worked when we had less calls
- Second pages are becoming more common
- Mutual aid demands are increasing, especially from areas that either have a fully volunteer fire dept or have no fire dept
- Due to increasing population, the WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface) is increasing, and getting closer to higher human populations
  - Higher risk of wildfires
  - Increased risk to life & property

## Proposed Solution(s)

- 6 career firefighters to staff the station from 6 am to 8 pm Mon-Fri
  - Ensure 100% response
  - Ensure quick response (2-3 minutes) – save lives and property
- Allow the dept to start earning more revenue for itself and also for the city
  - Wildland contracts
  - Increase billing
  - Negotiate better contract terms with customers
- Purchase of a Tactical Tender truck to go on wildland calls and earn revenue

## Expected Outlay

- Firefighters - \$80K/year (incl. benefits) - \$480K
- Fire Dept. to renegotiate fire protection contracts with LUFSA and Fire Districts as applicable
  - Current contracts are for \$361K – increase them to \$500K
- Increase billing and collection efforts – currently, we are bringing in around \$60K a year
- City’s financial contribution to the dept budget needs a review
- Sign contract with Northwestern Energy for fire protection – plant run by Caterpillar, not Northwestern Energy
  - Minimum ask \$20K
- Dept “operating” budget (not including payroll expenses or debt servicing) to remain at or around \$280K

**Laurel Emergency Services Report created 3/23/26:**

<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
1238 requests for service	1300 requests for service	1363 requests for service	1492 requests for service
177 times LEMS was unavailable	171 times LEMS was unavailable	73 times LEMS was unavailable	44 times LEMS was unavailable
48 times AMR was unavailable	23 times AMR was unavailable	14 times AMR was unavailable	12 times AMR was unavailable
351 responses in Ward 5=29% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	351 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	373 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	404 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel

**Recent Month Summary:**

**February 2026:**

Requests	97
Missed Calls	3 = 3%
Shortest Delay	24 minutes
Longest Delay	45 minutes
Average Delay	37 minutes
Fire Driver Available	0 times
City Driver Available	0 times
QRU Response With 1 Provider	1 time **
On A Previous Call	3 times
2 Units On A Call	0 times
No Crew / Provider Available	0 times
AMR Transported or Responded	0 times*
Red Lodge Transported	0 times
HELP Flight Transported	0 times
HELP Amb Transported or Responded	0 time
Columbus Transported or Responded	1 time
Joliet Transported	0 times
Park City Transported	2 times
PD Assisted Pt or Transported	0 times
FD Assisted Pt no transport	0 times
POV Transport	0 times
Refusal or no transport	0 times
YCSO Transported	0 times
MHP Transported	0 times



\*\*1 time the QRU responded to begin patient care. 0 times the QRU responded and the patient refused / no transport to hospital or no patient found.  
 29 responses in Ward 5 = 30% of calls outside of the city of Laurel  
 0 LEMS response for mutual aid. None of these responses resulted in LEMS not being available for another call.

2026 Running Totals

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total 2026
Requests	113	97											210
Missed Calls	5	3											8
Shortest Delay (minutes)	30	24											24
Longest Delay (minutes)	42	45											45
Average Delay (minutes)	35	37											36
Fire Driver Available	1	0											1
City Driver Available	1	0											1
QRU Response w 1 Provider	2	1											3
On A Previous Call	5	3											8
2 Units On A Call	4	0											4
No Crew / Provider Available	0	0											0
AMR Transported or Responded	3	0											3
Columbus Transported or Responded	0	1											1
Joliet Transported	0	0											0
Park City Transported	2	2											4
Red Lodge Transported	0	0											0
HELP Flight Transported	0	0											0
HELP Amb Transported or Responded	0	0											0
POV Transport	0	0											0
PD Assisted Pt or transported	0	0											0
FD Assisted Pt no transport	0	0											0
YCSO Transported	0	0											0
MHP Transported	0	0											0
QRU/AMR, Refusal or No Patient	0	0											0
Responses in Ward 5	34	29											63
LEMS response for mutual aid	2	0											2

\*correction made after report given

Other Reporting Information

-Staffing – no changes this report.

-Recertification for our individual EMS licenses is due March 31<sup>st</sup>, everyone should be done this week.

-The new ambulance is up and running as first out. It is great!

-After our meeting with Congressman Troy Downing he suggested that we apply for some of the appropriation money for equipment. We did complete and submit the application. We also put in for the Lowes Hometown Grant requesting moneys for some station improvements. Will keep you posted on both.

-We are paged for 911 calls via the dispatch CAD system to our cell phones via a text message. Unfortunately the cell phone carriers are changing this technology and anyone other than Verizon no longer works and we are told that will stop in the near future. LVFD uses the Yellowstone County provided system called I Am Responding. I have met with the YC DES Director and he stated that we should be able to be put into that system as well. It should be fairly seamless with Dispatch as LVFD uses it and it should not cost us anything to utilize.

**File Attachments for Item:**

11. Laurel Airport Authority Minutes of December 16, 2025.



## LAA Board Meeting Minutes

**December 16, 2025 (6 pm)**

**Roll Call:** Joe Mutchler, Jim Wise, Randy Hand, Doug Myers present. Gary Blain was out of town.

**Members of public present:** Fred Lee, Justin Zindell (KLJ), Jim Schaak, Brad Sinclair, Ed Taylor, John Roberts

**Approval of Minutes** from previous meeting: 11/12/2025 by unanimous consent (Gary absent).

### Financial Update

- (Not yet available ... YTD financial summary provided by Beartooth accounting and current Western security bank summary provided.)
- November Bills Approved and previously paid (Signed by Jim / Doug)
  - YVEC for \$46
  - MacKenzie Disposal for \$119.22
  - Cotters for \$60.00
  - City of Laurel for \$3,310.34
  - Century Link for \$104.72

### Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:

- Fred Lee – needed emergency access to RW's and TW's but snow was too deep and no plowing had yet taken place.
- Justin Zindell – grant money may possibly be available for addt'l snow removal equipment

### Public Comment on Agenda Items: Public comments welcomed as agenda items discussed

- KLJ – can draft “on call” service agreements for all new construction Cory lots.
- EEC has submitted lot survey work for Cory lots and it needs to be signed off and approved by KLJ. This will save lot owner's cost. Approved by unanimous vote (Joe / Randy).

### KLJ Engineering:

## Airport Project Status Report

December 16, 2025  
Laurel Municipal Airport

### CLIENT CONTACT PERSON AND ADDRESS

Joe Mutchler, 406-702-6658  
PO Box 242  
Laurel, MT 59044  
[joseph.t.mutchler@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.t.mutchler@gmail.com)

### WORK IN PROGRESS

#### Laurel Airport Master Plan Update

**KLJ # 2105-00217      AIP 3-30-0047-024-2022**

KLJ has completed the Airport Master Plan (AMP) and Airport Layout Plan (ALP) updates, and the ALP has received FAA approval. KLJ will now proceed into the project closeout phase to finalize all activities associated with the grant.

#### Laurel Pavement Maintenance

**KLJ #2305-01826      AIG #3-30-0047-025-2024**

American Road Maintenance of Tucson, Arizona, served as the contractor for the project. The project has achieved full completion, and final acceptance has been executed by all parties. KLJ has prepared the project closeout report and submitted a draft to the Helena ADO for review. In addition, the grant amendment letter, signed by the Airport Board Chair, was submitted in early October for approval and has since been approved. Pay Estimate No. 3 will serve as the final payment, thereby satisfying all remaining financial obligations to the contractor. KLJ will proceed with finalizing the final pay estimate, completing the closeout process, and compiling the final project closeout report.

#### Laurel Access Road - Design and Construction

**KLJ #2405-01024      AIG #3-30-0047-0026-2025**

The project is currently in the design phase, with construction anticipated for the summer of 2026 under a separate grant. The design is approximately 90 percent complete. A final survey is planned to obtain additional data on the existing access road to support completion of the final design. Upon receipt of this data, the plans will be finalized and prepared for final review and the engineer's stamp.

At this time, work is ongoing on the Final Design, Bidding, Construction Administration and Observation, and Closeout scopes of services. Once the solicitation for asphalt testing is issued, the scope of work can be fully completed, and it will be determined whether this phase will require an Independent Fee Estimate (IFE). Staff will continue advancing the design and FAA Grant Applications in order to be prepared for bidding in late winter or early spring.

### OTHER ITEMS

- KLJ #2405-01024 Access Road Final Design & CACO for 2026. MDT Aero Draft grant application has been completed and submitted to the MDT Aeronautics Board.
- Cory Hangar – Miscellaneous Professional Services Agreement – Draft Agreement has been completed for boards review. Still needs final review with Contract Specialist before signature.
- DeFrance Hanger for Ed Taylor - Miscellaneous Professional Services Agreement – Draft Agreement has been completed for boards review. Still needs final review with Contract Specialist before signature.

1

ENGINEERING, REIMAGINED

## **KLJ Engineering:**

### **ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY CITY/AIRPORT**

- Completion of SF271 for RFR 3 (Design Grant – Access Road)
- Delphi Access Authorization Signature for Sheila
- KLJ Invoices

### **ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY MT Aeronautics**

- None

### **ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FAA**

- None.

Reported by: Justin Zindell  
KLJ Engineering LLC  
406-294-5500  
[Justin.Zindell@kljeng.com](mailto:Justin.Zindell@kljeng.com)

## **Maintenance Report:**

- Jim Wise has purchased (to be reimbursed) a new electrically operated fuel pump to be used with the diesel fuel trailer stored inside the SRE building.
- Murl has requested that Jim (as he has time) help him adjust tension on the door opening springs for the small garage doors at the SRE building. However, we voted to approve the purchase and installation of “Jackscrew” style electric openers (@ \$515 ea.) for each SRE building door (Joe / Randy).
- We need to advocate for the removal of the ramp queen aircraft that never fly (maybe by next season?) to accommodate the snow plowing volunteers (Primarily Murl and Jim Wise) who have to maneuver around those AC every year. We discussed charging \$60 per month (to match FBO charges) for flying aircraft (fee to be waved with purchase of 10 gallons min. of fuel) or charging \$250 per month for non-flying aircraft that are essentially abandoned on the ramp.

## **New Business:**

1. AWOS system reliability issues were discussed:
  - CenturyLink appears to have a dead line as phone calls to the AWOS system play only busy signals.
  - John Roberts has upgraded our power pack to a newer style as the old one was taken out by a power outage. We need to determine what the cost would be to push our Wx info to the FAA for METAR creation.
  - We need to get AWI to send a technician out to fix and troubleshoot our system but to also train our LAA board members on how to better use and troubleshoot the system.
2. Randy will contact Brock in an effort to get our webpages transferred to the City of Laurel (new URL). We can then more easily update our own website with hangar waiting list info, hangar

availability to rent info etc. We could also facilitate aircraft owner updates of AC for our database records submission to the FAA.

3. Discuss the request of a **balloon operator**, Mark Boulet, to rent space for his equipment trailer and to launch from 6S8:
  - MT Aeronautics has stated that there are balloon ops in MT but none launching from airports.
  - We need to determine if this would be a commercial or non-commercial operation. If commercial, the operators would need to operate out of a commercial hangar at the airport.
  - Joe Mutchler (as Chairman) would like to discuss further with the operators.
  - The board is unanimous with concerns regarding the safety of balloon flight from 6S8. We are becoming very busy with both fixed wing and helicopter flight and slow moving, large, hovering balloons would pose a serious risk for potential mid-air collisions as pilots maneuver around them in attempts to land or take off.
  - For the record, no current Laurel airport users (who've we've asked for opinions from) are in favor of balloons operating out of our airport.

**Doug Myers**

**LAA Board Secretary**

**406-633-5299 Cell**

Laurel Airport Authority  
P.O. Box 242 Laurel, MT 59044  
406-628-0172

**File Attachments for Item:**

12. Laurel Urban Renewal Agency Minutes of March 23, 2026.



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF LAUREL**  
**LAUREL URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 23RD, 2026**  
**11:00 AM**  
**CITY BOARDROOM**

A LAUREL URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY meeting was held in City Boardroom and called to order by Cami Story at 11:00 a.m. on March 23rd, 2026

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

x	Judy Goldsby	x	Dean Rankin
x	Cami Story		Daniel Klein
x	Cheryl Hill	x	Peggy Pollock
x	Cris White		

**OTHERS PRESENT**

x	Diane Lehm		Gaurav Thakur
x	Forrest Sanderson		Triple Tree Brad, Doug & Bruce
	Doug Whitney		Steve Solberg
	Kurt Markegard	x	Tom Canape

KEY CODE: x-present  -absent L-late

**General Items:** Roll Call

Approval of Minutes -- All minutes were approved Judy 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Peggy-- all in favor

**New Business:**

**Signs for Projects** - Cheryl presented a design and the committee liked it with one addition for TIFF district to be added. We are still waiting on Matt with Dynamic designs to give us a price of the signs.

**Project Updates:**

**Ditch Covering Task #5** – Construction is set to be complete by April 1<sup>st</sup> – There was a change order to accommodate fiberoptic lines that were discovered. Another addition to the project was to add edging on the back side of the rock. Judy made a motion to approve that expense, Cheryl 2<sup>nd</sup> and all was in favor.

**Lighting on SE 4<sup>th</sup> St. Task Order #6** – Open house went well and we have received several more land owners who have approved the lighting district designs, easement and yearly cost for electrical. We have reached a majority for the project; however we are waiting for a couple more landowners to send in their votes.

**Project 1**-We are waiting for a permit from DEQ to approve a change and it will then go back to MDT to do a final approval. Bids should be going out now in the Month of March. We are looking at starting construction after July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration.

Doug from Triple Tree had asked Cami and Cheryl to come up with a design for the area where they will replace the trees that need to come out. A design was presented and the committee liked the design. Forrest will forward that over to Doug at Triple Tree.

**Landscaping project by underpass** – Park board has approved and liked the idea. Cheryl made a motion to allow Forrest to do a task order for landscaping and bring it to council. Peggy 2<sup>nd</sup> and all was in Favor.

**Budget** – Forrest has not gotten any updates from the city on the budget.

**Old Business:**

**Budget: Start preparing for upcoming fiscal year:** Forrest got the budget and we went over the numbers. It was suggested to move a few of the line items over to the project line. The committee also had concerns about the \$36,000 line item for City Assistance. It was suggested we reduce that and move the remaining to the project line.

**Other updates:**

**Big Sky EDA & Beartooth RC&D** –

Thurs there will be an event at Big Sky EDA office from 3-5pm for tech and Bio Science

**Announcements:** Next meeting will be April 13, 2026

**Adjourn Meeting:** Cheryl made a motion to adjourn the meeting Peggy 2<sup>nd</sup> at 12:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hill - LURA Secretary

*The city makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in this meeting. Persons needing accommodation must notify the City Clerk's Office to make needed arrangements. To make your request known, please call 406-628-7431, Ext. 2, or write to City Clerk, PO Box 10, Laurel, MT 59044, or present your request at City Hall, 115 West First Street, Laurel, Montana.*

**File Attachments for Item:**

13. Tree/Park Board Minutes of April 2, 2026.

## **Laurel Park-Tree Board Minutes for April 2, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by Tom Canape in Council Chambers.

In attendance were Irv Wilke, Brent Edgmond, Renee Studiner, Paul Kober, Tom Canape, Richard Klose, Joe Holzwarth, and Jon Rutt.

Guests – Floating Island Group and Laura Kirschenmann

**Public input** – None

### **General Items**

1. LPB Minutes for March 5, 2026 – Irv Wilke moved to approve and Brent Edgmond 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Approved

### **New Business**

2. Floating Island Presentation for South Pond – Bruce Kania presented. Floating Islands will improve the quality of South Pond by creating a vibrant aerobic pond to break down the unwanted growth. Fish grow better and bigger. This reduces the methane production from anerobic growth on the bottom. Possibly a future way towards carbon credits. There is a group that will fund monitoring. Cost is \$19,500 for a system. See attached

### **Old Business**

3. Riverside Park Campground – Jeff the manager will start April 6, training the new Parks Maintenance Leader.
4. Billie Riddle Splash Park Toilets – Tabled until new engineer hired.
5. Other Parks – Develop new park on West 12th Street. Matt will check on a sprinkler. Nutting is sprinkled. TIF District has hired an engineer to clean up both sides of the underpass on the North side. Irv Wilke moved to approve the project on the Underpass, Joe Holzwarth 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion approved.
6. American Legion Building at Riverside Park – Nothing new
7. Riverside Hall/Lions Club – Building Renovations are done and a ribbon cutting is scheduled for April 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. City is paying \$10,000 to Lions for ½ the cost of the project.
8. Laurel Rod and Gun Club Building – Rod and Gun Club is considering championing this building for their use. They have had an investment in the building for a long time.
9. Tree Board Business – Grant was approved on March 31, 2026. \$800 is granted.

### **Other Items.**

Paul brought information on a concrete chess board and concrete stools for the library. See attached material.

Next month's meeting will be on May 7, 2026.

Adjourn 6:49

Submitted Jon Rutt

## Application Status Information

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From Arbor Day Foundation <treecity@arborday.org>

Date Tue 3/31/2026 6:27 AM

To Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>



Laurel

Tree City USA

Submission Date: 12/31/2025

Status: Application Approved

03/31/2026

**Congratulations! Your Tree City USA application has been officially approved by the Arbor Day Foundation.**

The 2025 recognition season marks 50 years of the Tree City USA program and we couldn't be prouder to recognize your community forestry efforts. Take a moment to celebrate all the work you've accomplished. Your commitment to creating a greener, healthier community is a significant achievement, and we're proud to have you as part of the Tree City USA program.



Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.  
 298 Quarry Road  
 Roseburg OR 97470  
 United States

**Invoicing Address:**  
 Rotary International, Paul Kober  
 United States  
 ☎ (406) 855-1331

Rotary International, Paul Kober  
 115 West 1st Street  
 Laurel MT 59044  
 United States

**Shipping Address:**  
 Rotary International, Paul Kober  
 115 West 1st Street  
 Laurel MT 59044  
 United States

## Quotation # S/02160

**Quotation Date:**  
 03/06/2026

**Expiration:**  
 04/05/2026


**Salesperson:**  
 Lem James

Description	Image for Quote	Quantity	Unit Price	Taxes	Amount
<b>Games</b>					
					<b>Subtotal \$ 0.00</b>
<b>Games</b>					
Uptown Model (Natural Grey, None) Concrete table tennis table with grey concrete legs. All hardware is included. Includes a custom net design or our standard black checkerboard net. Be sure to read the installation instructions, a forklift or tractor with forks is required for Offloading and Installation.		1.00	6,855.00		\$ 6,855.00
Units					
<b>10 YEAR WARRANTY</b>					
[GREY-CHESS-FREE] Genius Chess Table Freestanding (Natural Grey) Concrete and marble chess table, polished to a smooth finish for easy play. Free Standing base. Finished with a quality concrete sealant. Includes steel powder-coated "L" brackets to bolt down to existing concrete or asphalt.		1.00	3,106.00		\$ 3,106.00
Units					

541-671-6318


Page 1 of 1

Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.  
 298 Quarry Road  
 Roseburg OR 97470  
 United States


[GREY-STOOL] Set of Stools (Natural Grey)  1.00 576.00 \$ 576.00  
 Concrete Chess stools. Includes a quality concrete sealant and steel "L" brackets to bolt down to concrete or asphalt. (Pricing is per pair of 2 stools)

**Subtotal** \$ 10,537.00

**Accessories**

Paddles  1.00 115.00 \$ 115.00  
 Quality outdoor Ping Pong Paddles. Includes a carrying case . 4 Paddles w/6 balls.

Ping Pong Balls  1.00 40.00 \$ 40.00  
 Ping Pong Balls, "3-Star" White. 50 balls per package!

Chess Pieces  1.00 45.00 \$ 45.00  
 Master Series Chess Set, weighted plastic in classic, universally recognized Staunton design. Green felt pads on bottom. Spare queen. Black and Ivory. Comes with a set of plastic red and black checkers.

**Subtotal** \$ 200.00

**Shipping**

LTL Shipping  1.00 1,277.00 \$ 1,277.00

**Subtotal** \$ 1,277.00

---

Total \$ 12,014.00

*This quote does not include offloading, setup, or taxes.*

Quote valid for 30 days

Payment due upon order

Currency is U.S. Dollars

Visa, Mastercard, and American Express accepted

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541-671-6318

**STONE AGE**



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Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.  
298 Quarry Road  
Roseburg OR 97470  
United States

Current lead time for this order is approximately 6-8 weeks

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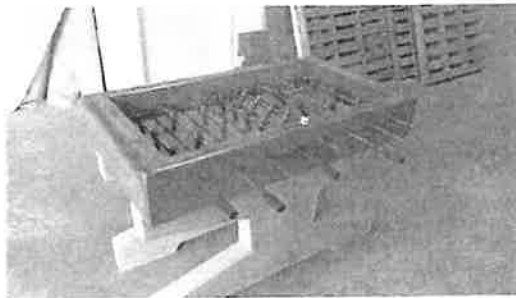
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# STONE AGE



CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS  
BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

## Permanent Concrete Game Tables



Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.. 541-671-6318

# STONE AGE







## CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS

BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

4

### Pricing

	<p><b>Uptown Model</b> Concrete Table Tennis Custom steel net, grey legs, table tennis lines.</p> <p>Natural Grey with black lines \$6,855.00</p> <p>Black acid wash, black, red, or brown Integral \$7,097.00</p> <p>Blue, Green, or White Integral \$7,632.00</p>
	<p><b>Cantilever Model</b> Concrete Table Tennis Black legs, custom steel net, table tennis lines.</p> <p>Natural Grey with black lines \$7,632.00</p> <p>Black acid wash, black, red, or brown Integral \$8,023.00</p> <p>Blue, Green, or White Integral \$8,440.00</p>
	<p><b>Trapezoid Model</b> Concrete Table Tennis with 2 Grey legs, custom steel net, table tennis lines.</p> <p>Natural Grey with black lines \$8,148.00</p> <p>Black acid wash, black, red, or brown Integral \$8,408.00</p> <p>Blue, Green, or White Integral \$8,925.00</p>
	<p><b>Round 4 Way Table Tennis (New Product 2020)</b> Round Four Way Table Tennis makes an excellent complement to locations with regular Table Tennis Tables. Round Four Way Table Tennis allows for 2-4 players (4 is standard).</p> <p>Black acid wash, Grey, brown, brick red Table \$9,820.00</p> <p>Multi Color (Blue, Red, Green, Black) \$10,680.00</p>

Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.. 541-671-6318

# STONE AGE



## CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS

BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

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**Dining Table Models** Concrete Table Homeowners and entertainment venues like the flexibility of our dining table leg designs that facilitate seating for 10-12. Available with removable net upon request.

Black acid wash, black, red, or brown Integral \$7,632.00

Blue, Green, or White Integral \$8,440.00



**Concrete Foosball Table** Solid concrete top, drain holes in goals, stainless steel rods. Replaceable plastic men, rubber bumpers and handles.

Black acid wash, black, red, or brown Integral \$7,199.00

Blue, Green, or White Integral \$7,845.00



### Concrete Fooosball Table

All the features of our regular Foosball table, but with twice the fun! Two times the rods and men makes this a great 4-8 person game.

Black, red, grey or brown Integral Color \$13,110.00



### Concrete Cornhole Boards

One piece concrete Cornhole Boards. Custom colors and logo pricing by request.

Natural Grey \$1,995.00

Black, red, or brown Integral Color \$2,037.00

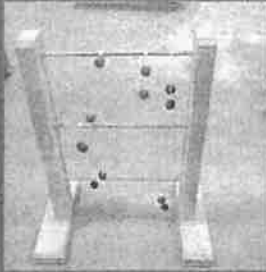
Blue, Green, or pure white \$2,416

# STONE AGE



**CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS**  
BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

6



## Concrete Ladder Ball

Concrete Ladder ball posts with stainless steel bars.

Natural Grey, black, brown or brick red \$2,037.00

Blue, green, or white \$2,416.00



## Genius Chess Table Freestanding

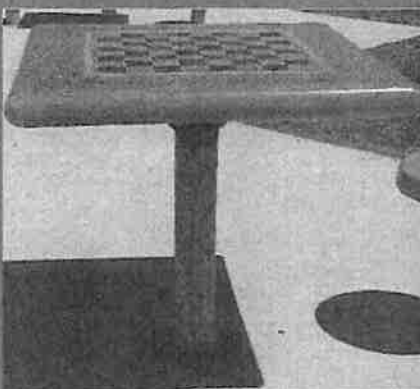
Available in Freestanding or Direct Burial Post. Features marble inlay chess board, stone accent pieces, bolt down brackets and available with recycled glass content.

Grey \$3,106.00

Back, brown, or brick red \$3,305.00

Green or white \$3,705.00

Recycled Glass Content \$298.00



## Genius Chess Table Direct Burial

Available in Freestanding or Direct Burial Post. Features marble inlay chess board, stone accent pieces, bolt down brackets and available with recycled glass content

Grey \$2,623.00

Back, brown, or brick red \$3,002.00

Green or white \$3,452.00

Recycled Glass Content \$298.00

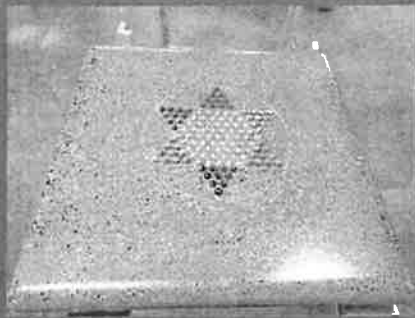
# STONE AGE



## CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS

BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

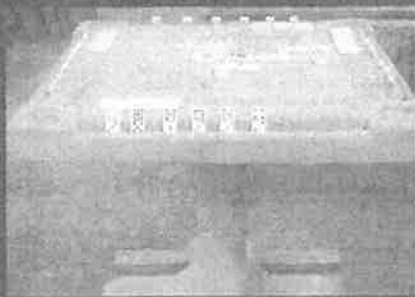
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### Chinese Checkers Table

Available in Freestanding or Direct Burial Post. Features cast in board for marbles, stone accent pieces, bolt down brackets and available with recycled glass content.

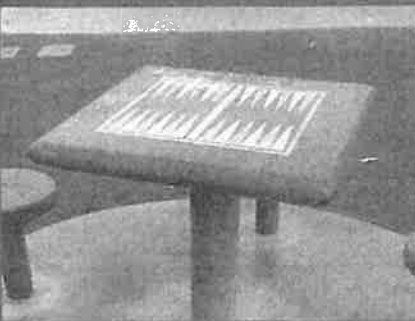
Freestanding grey or black \$3,106.00  
Integral brown, or brick red \$3,305.00  
Integral white or green \$3,705.00



### Domino Table

Available in Freestanding or Direct Burial Post. Features cast in piece holders, beverage holders, bolt down brackets and available with recycled glass content.

Freestanding grey or black \$3,995.00  
Integral brown, or brick red \$4,222.00  
Integral white or green \$4,445.00



### Backgammon Table

Available in Freestanding or Direct Burial Post. Features marble inlay Backgammon board, stone accent pieces, bolt down brackets and available with recycled glass content.

Freestanding grey \$3,429.00  
Integral black, brown, or brick red \$3,618.00  
Integral white or green \$3,829.00



### Knight Chess Table

One Piece Knight base chess table. Marble inlay chess board, stone accent pieces, available with recycled glass content for color and beauty.

Black \$4,418.00  
White \$4,818.00

Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.. 541-671-6318

# STONE AGE



## CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS

BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

8



### Chess Stools (per pair)

Chess stools with bolt down brackets. Custom colors available on request. (Freestanding or Direct Burial to match your table)

Set of Stools Grey \$576.00

Black, brown, or brick red \$676.00

White or Green \$726.00



### Concrete Shuffleboard

First in the world concrete shuffleboard tables. Our monolith tops are the result of 8 years of playful precision concrete design.

Grey Concrete with Brown Sliding Surface and Board Stain Pattern.

12' \$16,399.00 16' \$19,898.00 22' \$28,990.00



### Concrete Poker Table

Solid Concrete Octagon Poker table with cast chip trays and cup holders. Custom colors and logos by request.

Black Integral Color \$9,819.00

# STONE AGE



CONCRETE TABLE TENNIS  
BRAVADO OUTDOOR | EVERYONE PLAYS

3

## WHO WE ARE

Bravado Outdoor Products specializes in unique, permanent concrete recreational equipment for parks, schools, entertainment venues and home use. Bravado Promotes healthy physical and social activity for all ages and physical activity levels.

Everybody plays! Our strong background in Government and construction contract sales makes us the only choice for permanent concrete games in North America. Our focus on beauty and craftsmanship makes us the inspired choice for entertainment venues and fine homes.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

We are the essence of post industrialism. Industrial quality is only a starting point. The ending point is to inspire joy through craftsmanship and to change places into a spontaneous combustion of activity, fun and innovative spirit.

## QUALITY

Our finished products are satin smooth. Ball bounce and play meet ITTF standards except for the durable steel nets. Our nets are 3/8" steel with powder coating. Our nets are ALWAYS custom designed for each unique project! Underneath all that beauty, the engineering is oversized for long term durability. All Bravado tables are produced using our proprietary triple reinforced concrete. We finish the tables using quality anti-graffiti coating for long term beauty even in the roughest public venues.



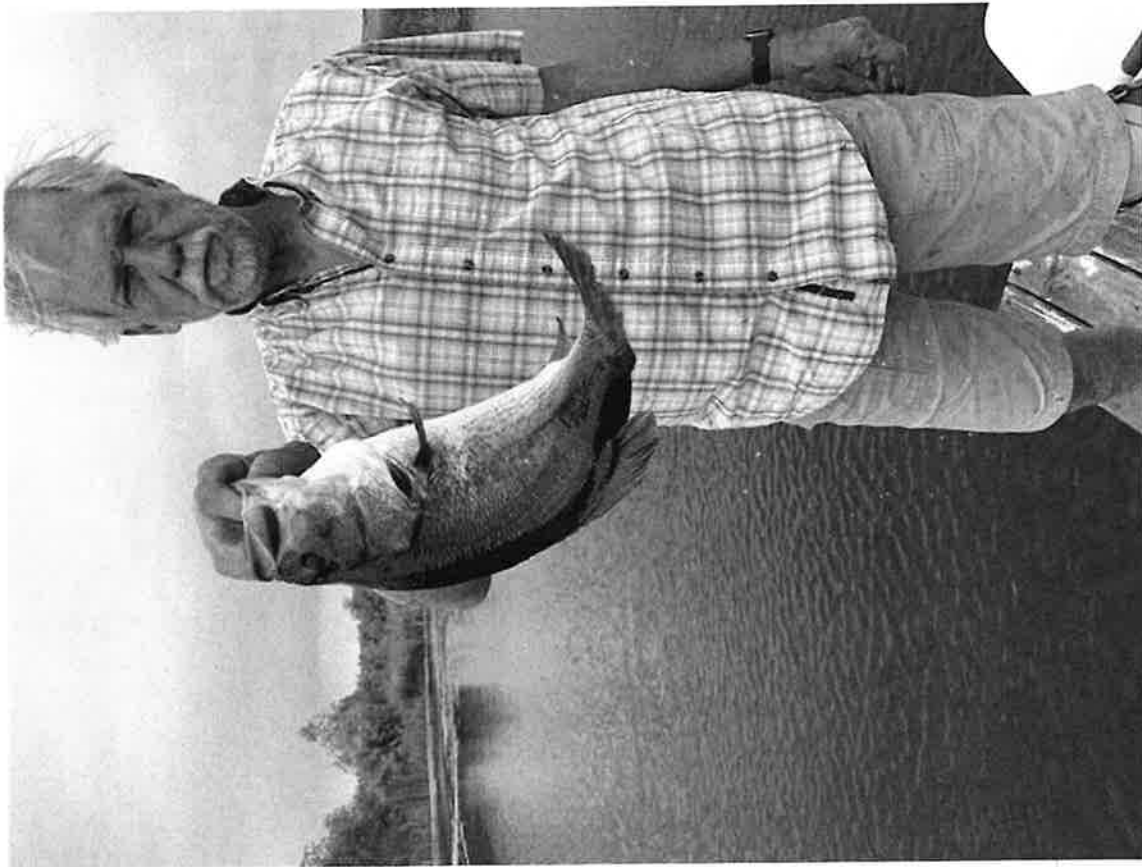
Stone Age Concrete Games Inc.. 541-671-6318

# STONE AGE



## The Bravado Advantage

- 🦁 Bravado produces the highest quality concrete game tables worldwide.
- 🦁 Bravado Manufactures our own products in our own facility. Unlike the competition who completely outsources their product. Made by hand to our stringent specifications by Bravado concrete artisans in our cutting-edge facility.
- 🦁 Every piece has been professionally engineered for public use and to last for decades in any environment.
- 🦁 Concrete game tables are ALL we do at Bravado. We are the leader in outdoor concrete games products so 100% of our research, engineering, design and production goes into making the highest quality game tables possible.
- 🦁 Bravado has sold concrete game tables around the world to resorts, schools, cities, military, home owners and even Olympic Committees as far away as Doha, Qatar. We have the experience to get it right and delivered safely to any location.
- 🦁 Bravado offers customization options concrete colors, custom designed plasma cut nets and powder coat colors so every table is one of a kind for your project.
- 🦁 There is no sales tax in Oregon so buying from Bravado can potentially save you hundreds if not thousands of dollars on your projects.
- 🦁 Bravado is comprised of individuals who love Table Tennis and our chosen games. We take pride in playing our games, promoting the sport and making our products true to the regulations and specifications of the ITTF. While ensuring our products last for generations.
- 🦁 Bravado Tables are Triple reinforced with steel and two kinds of fiber reinforcement using our proprietary process to ensure the highest quality of concrete finish and best longevity in the concrete industry.

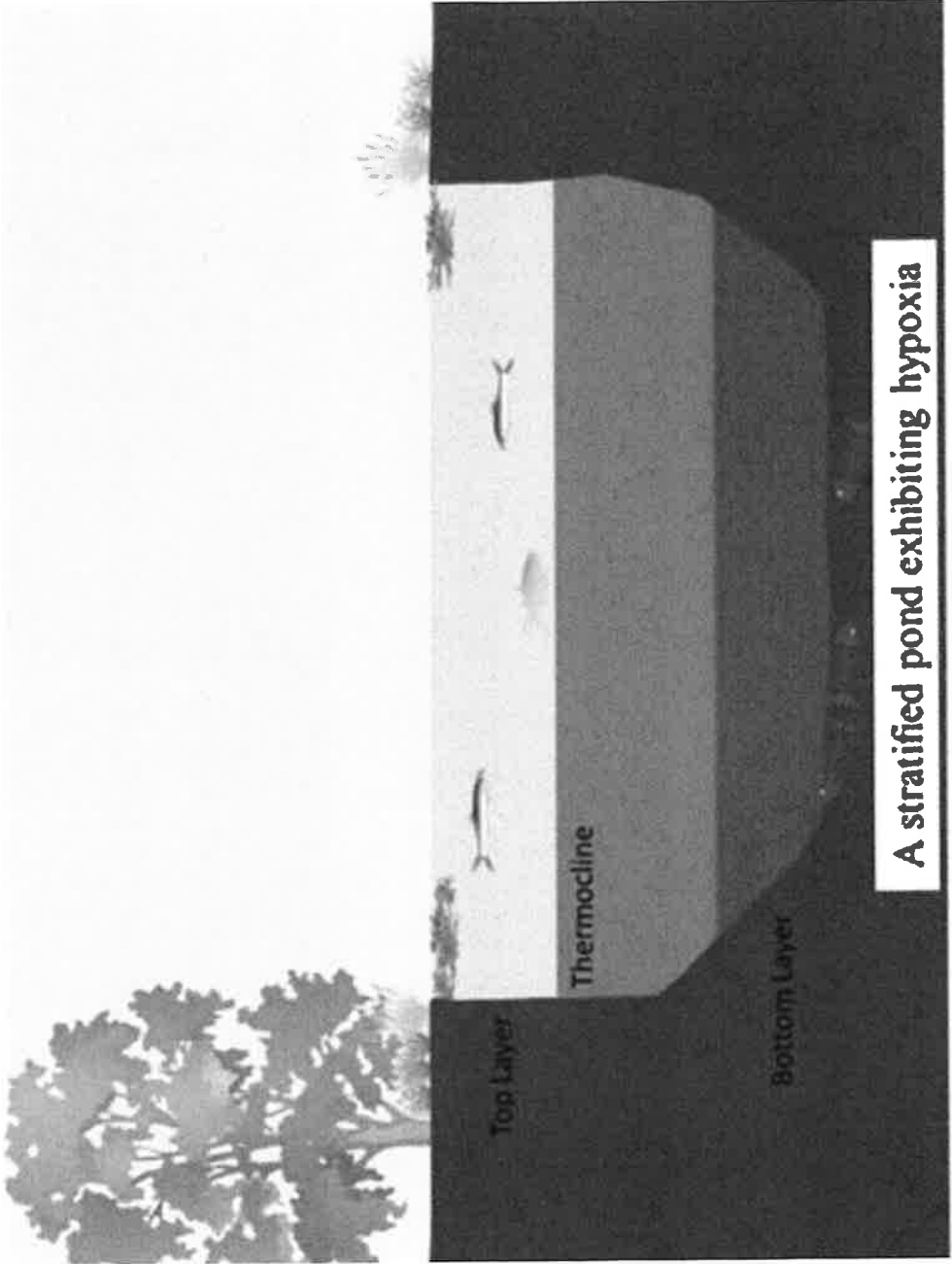


FLOATINGISLANDINTERNATIONAL®

# Fish Fry Lake Shepherd, MT

# A Floating Island Fish Factory







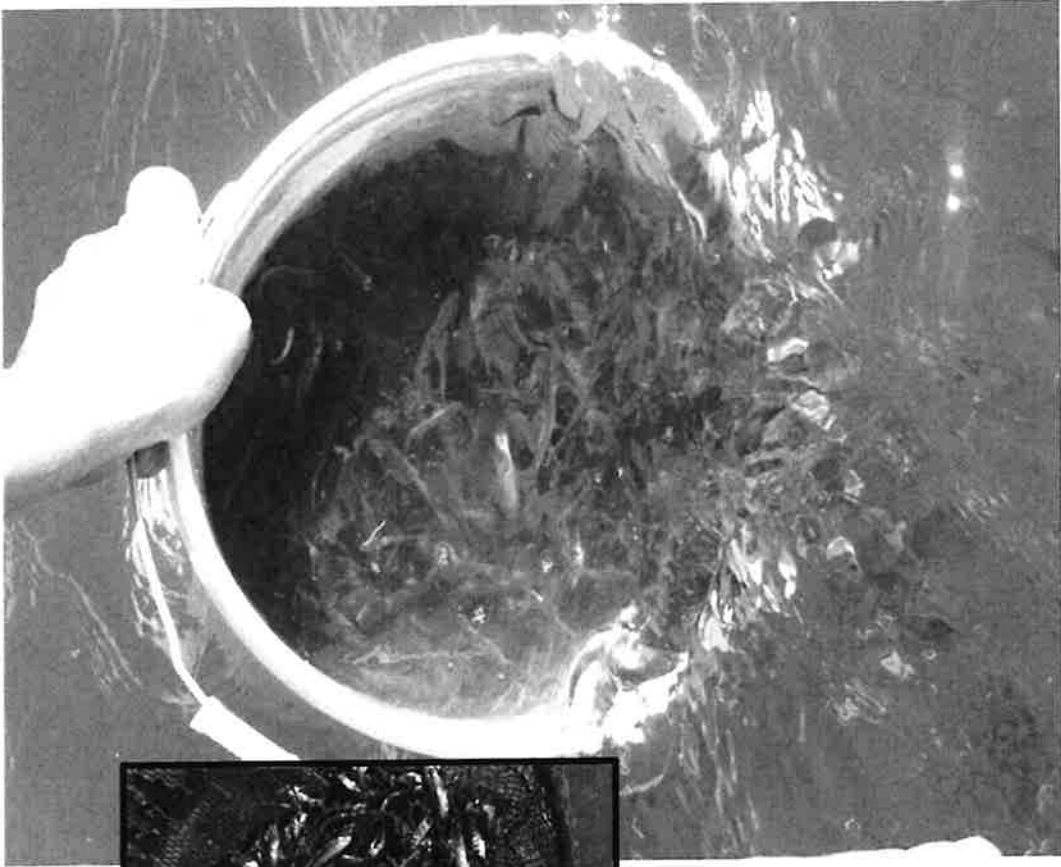
**Holly Pond Before & After**

**Remove Nutrients That Cause Algae**    **Grow masses of fathead minnows for mosquito control**

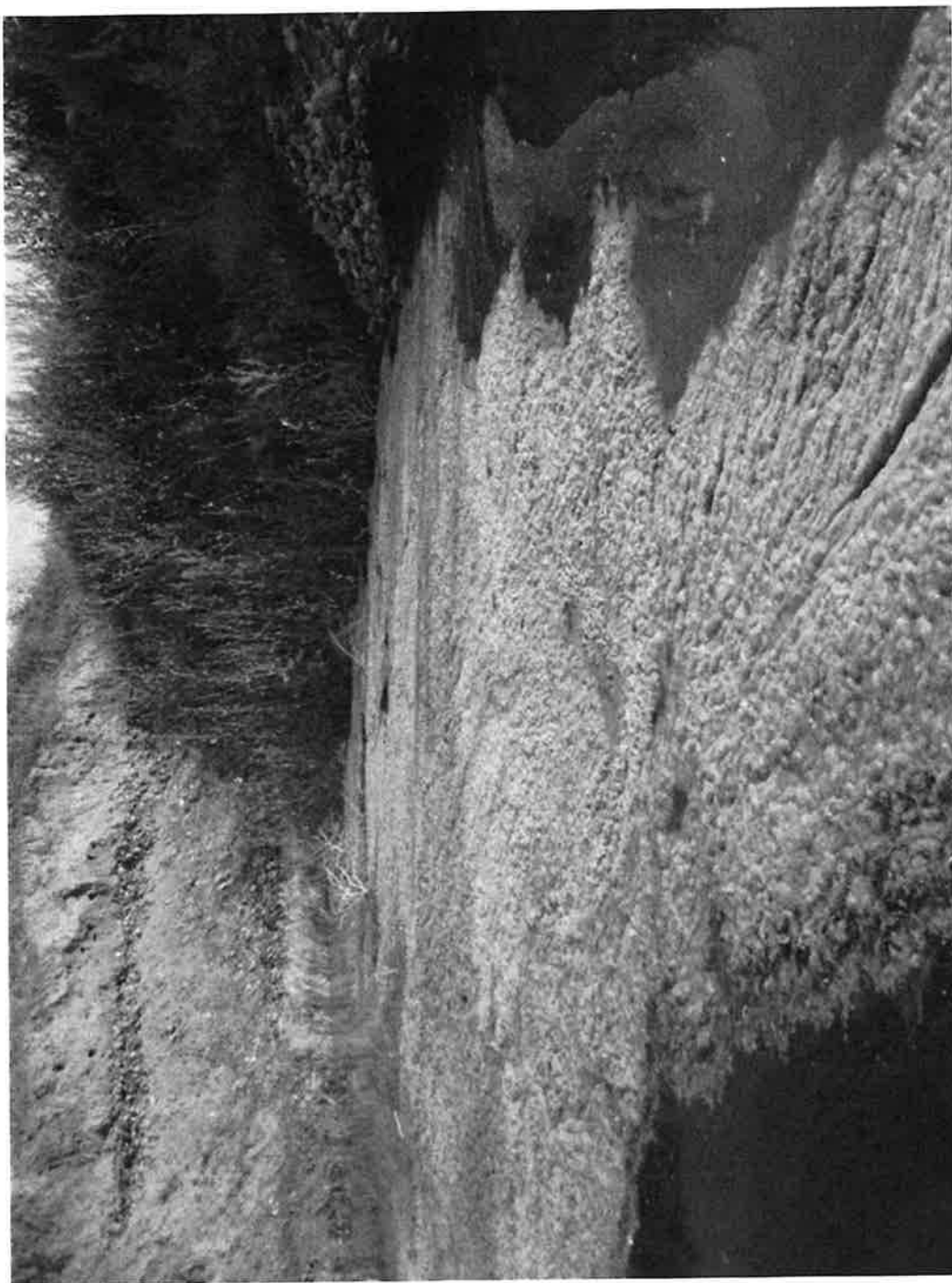
Eliminate the Breeding Ground for Mosquitoes

Inhibit Greenhouse gas emissions



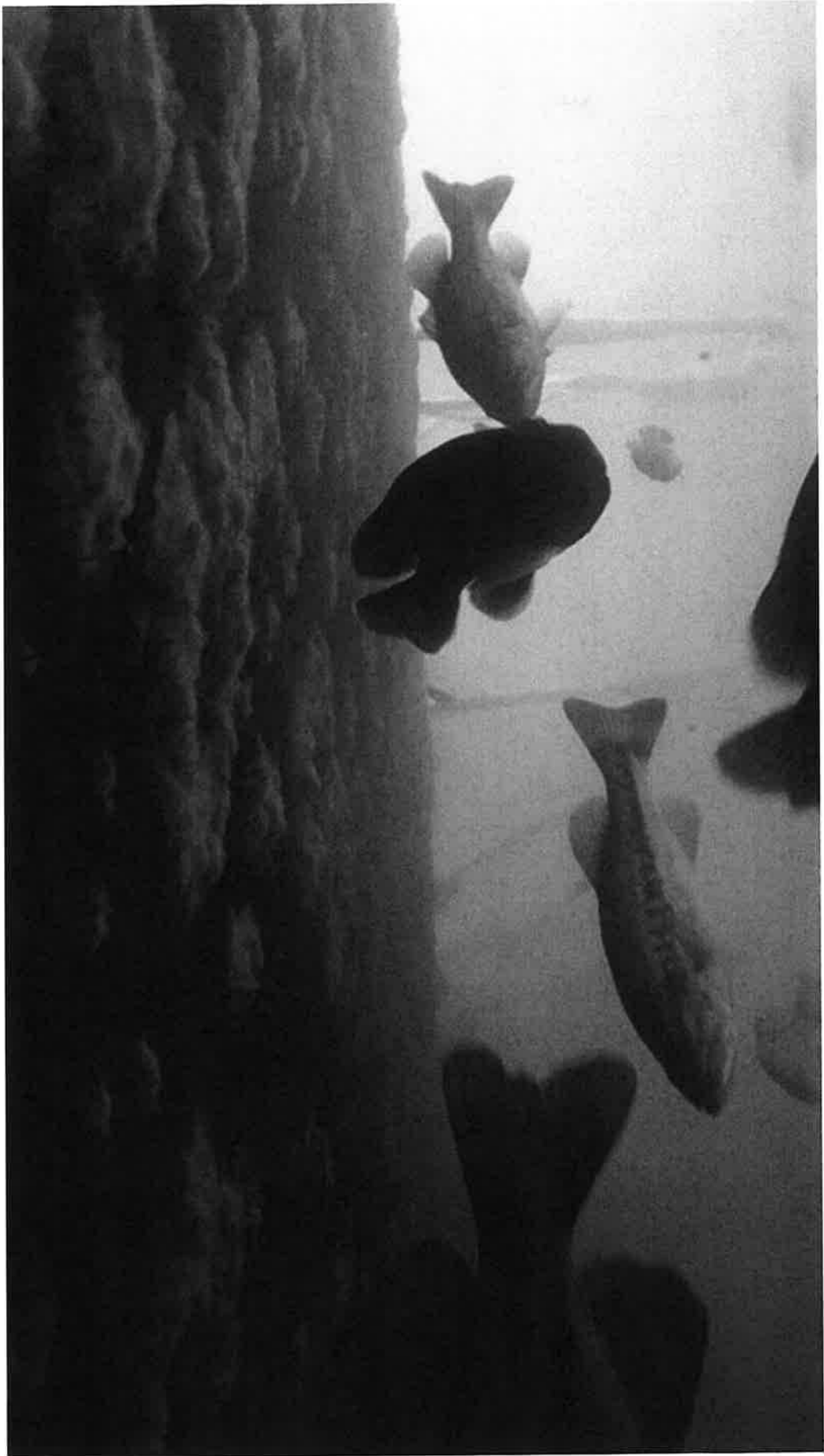


# Minnow Harvest



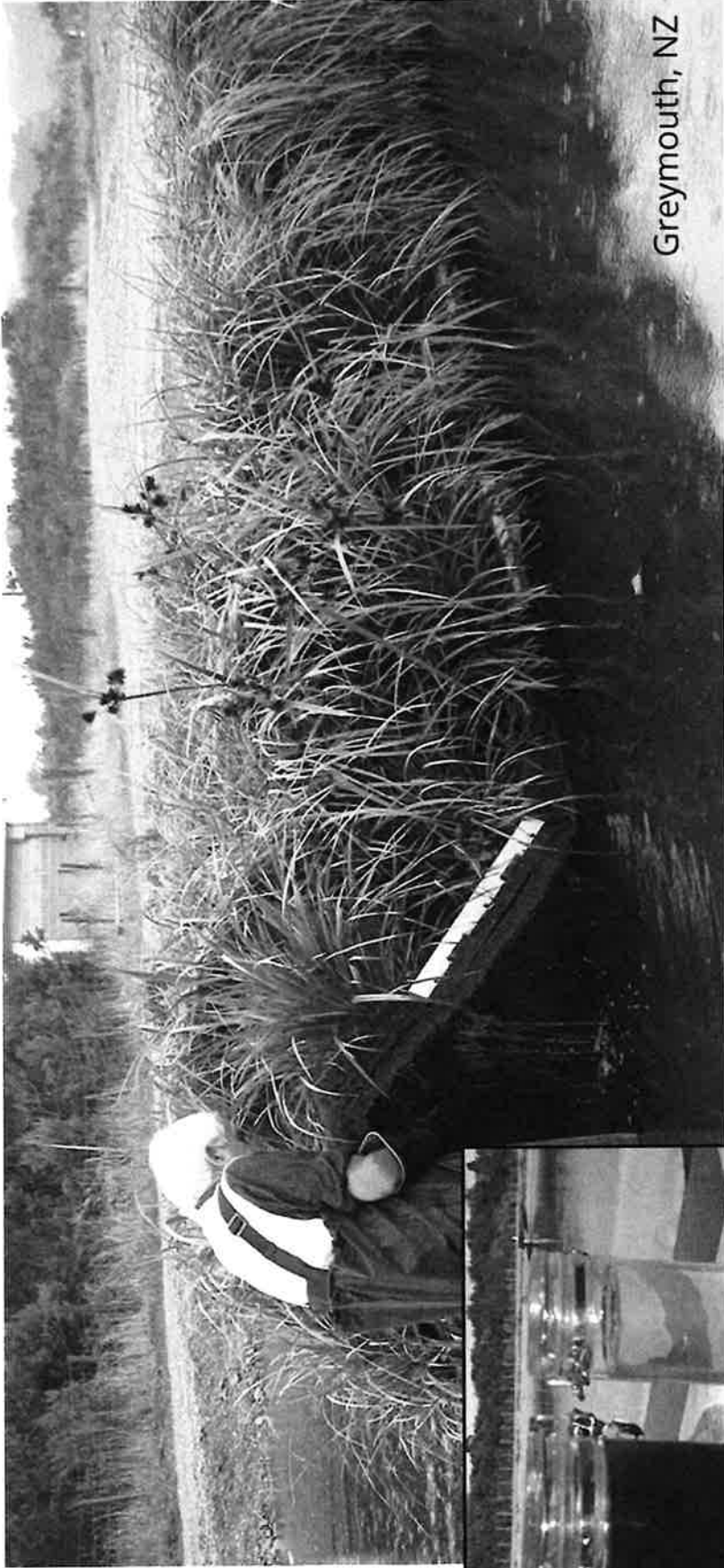
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6



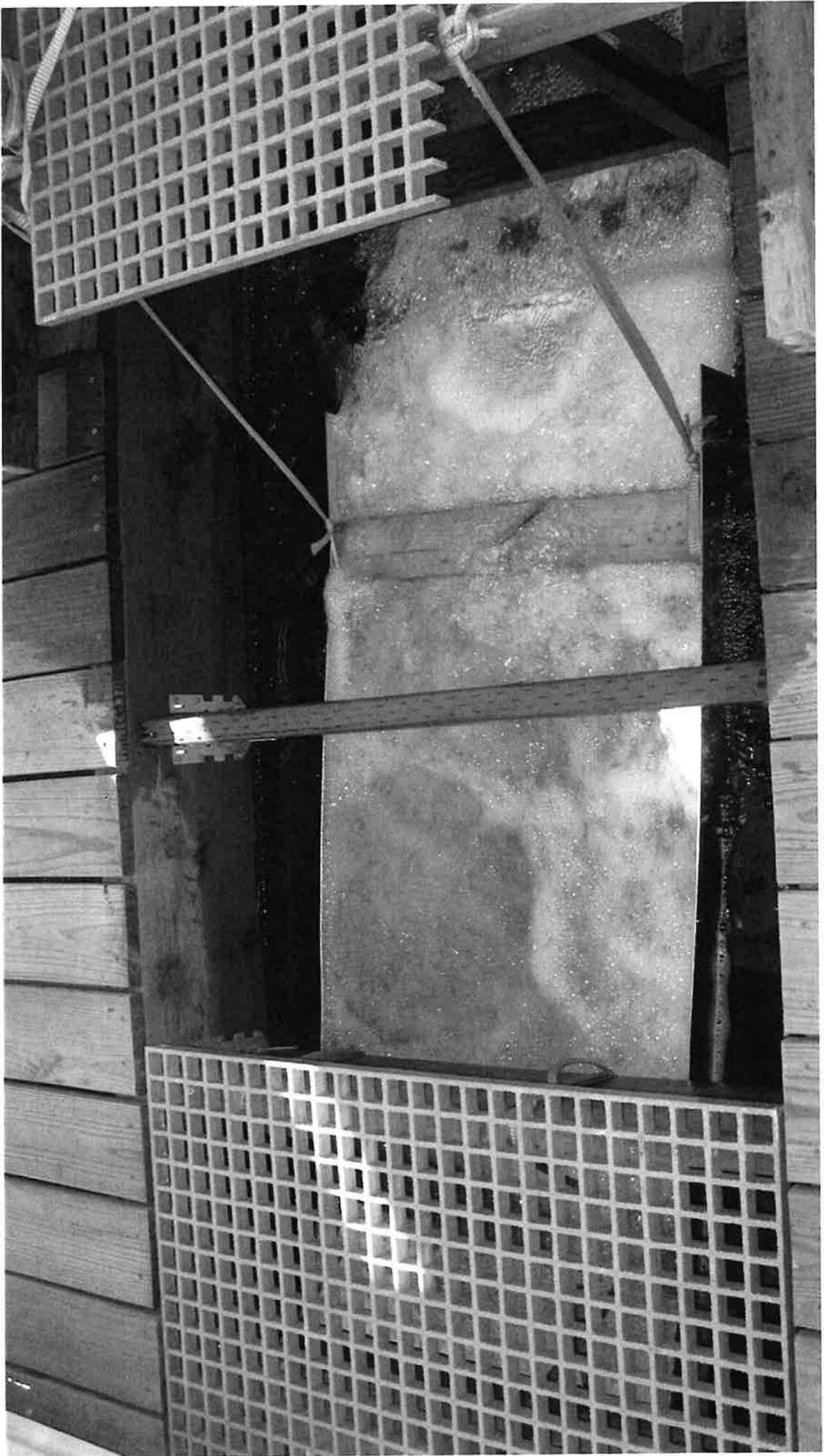
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7



Greymouth, NZ



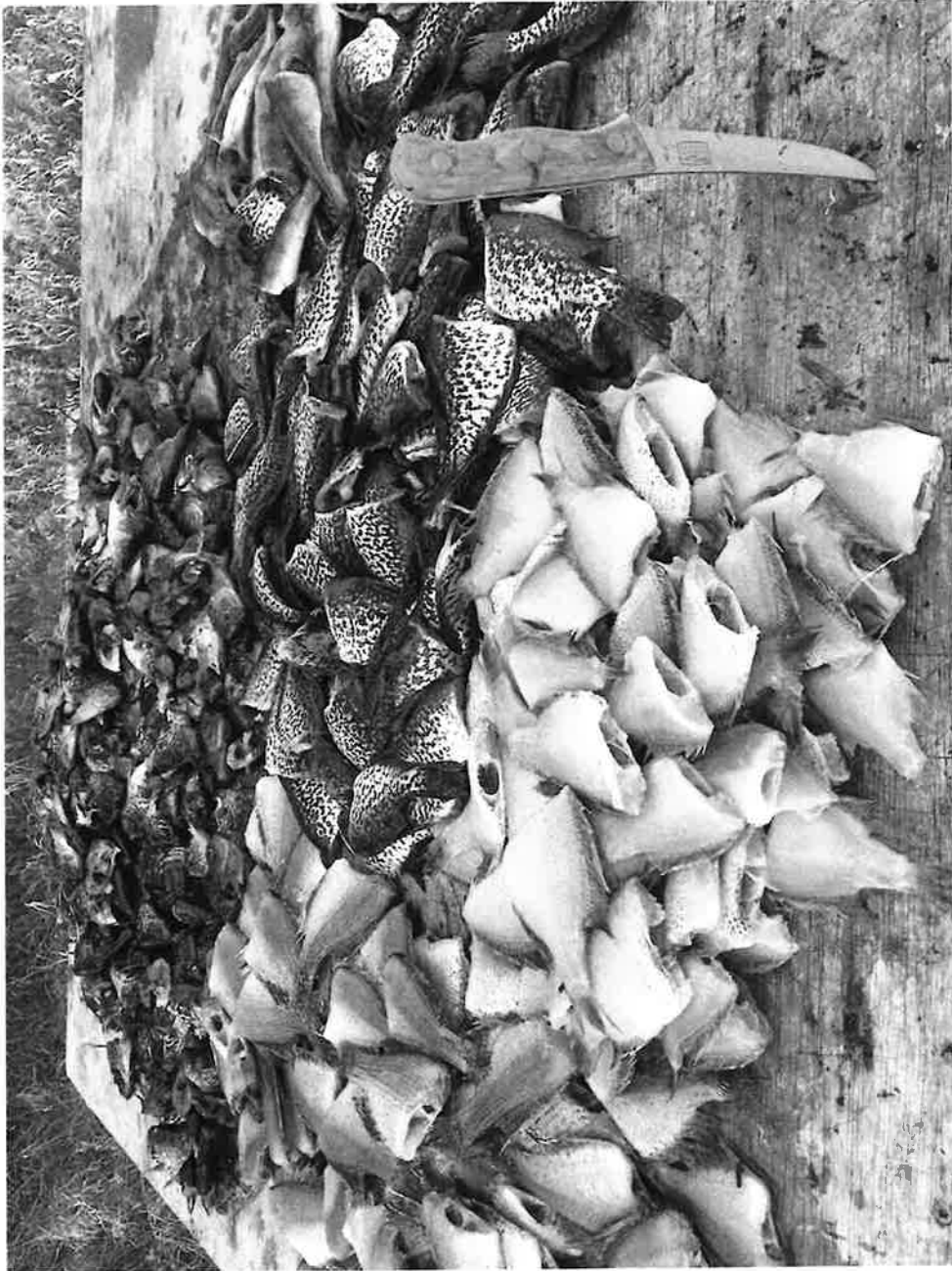




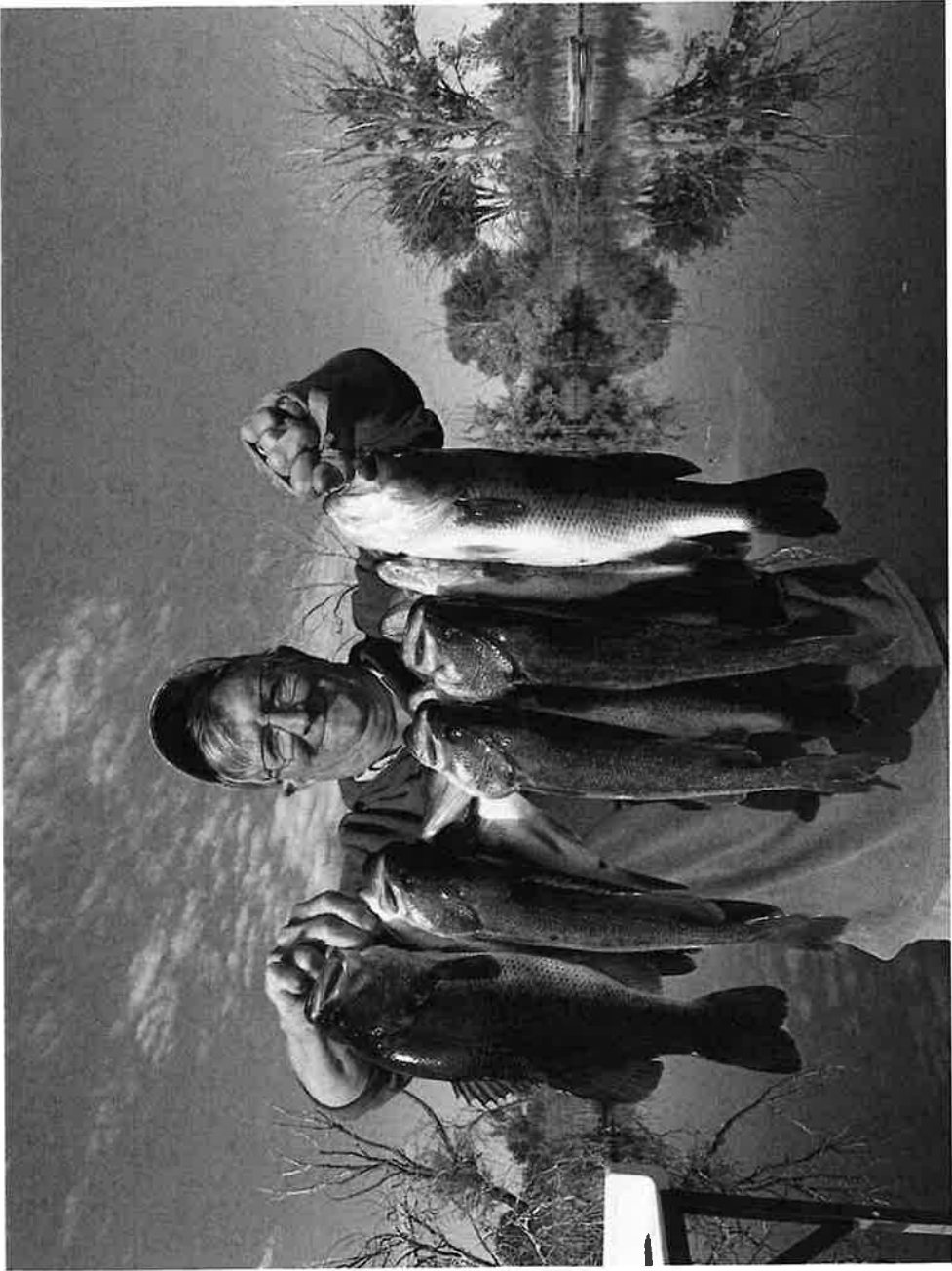








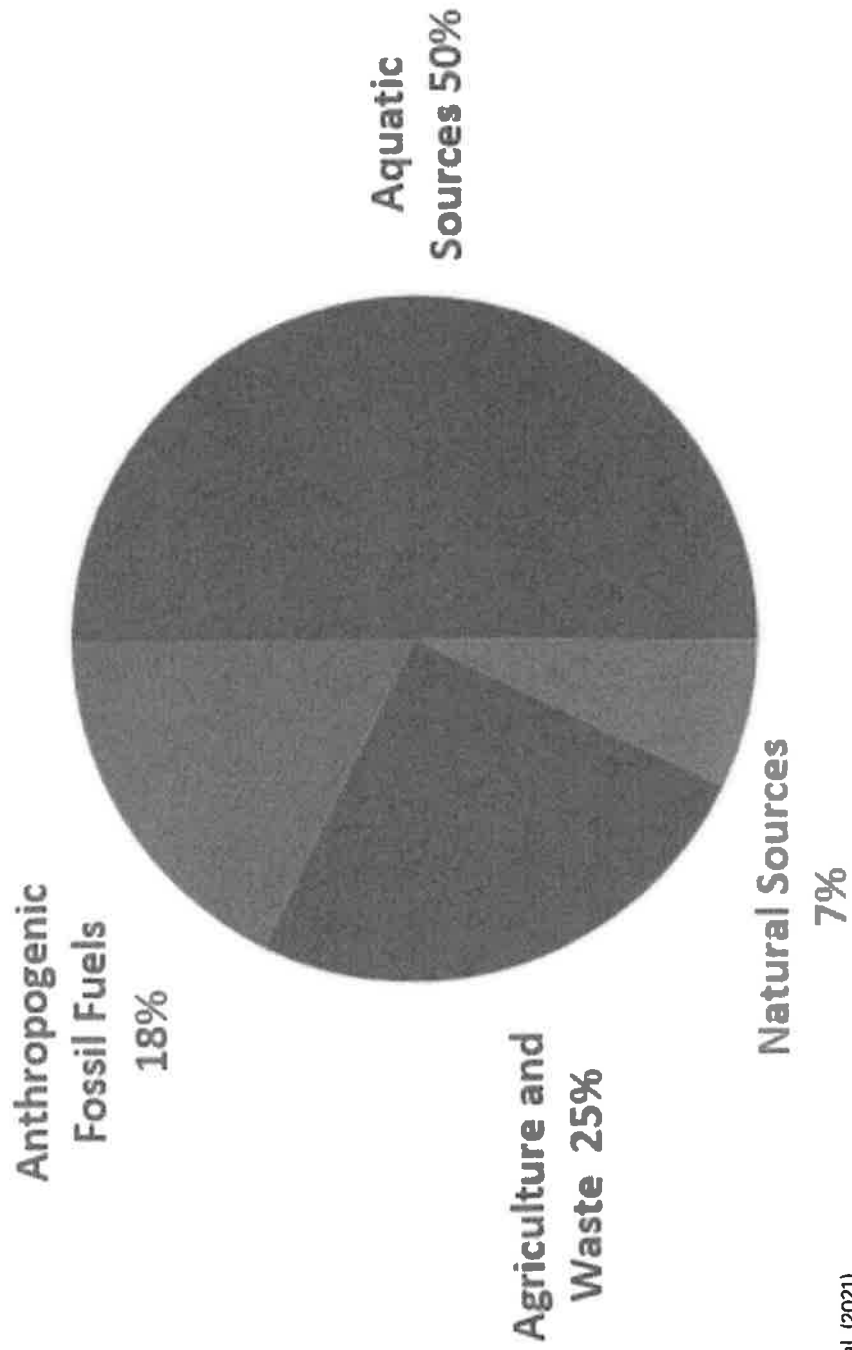




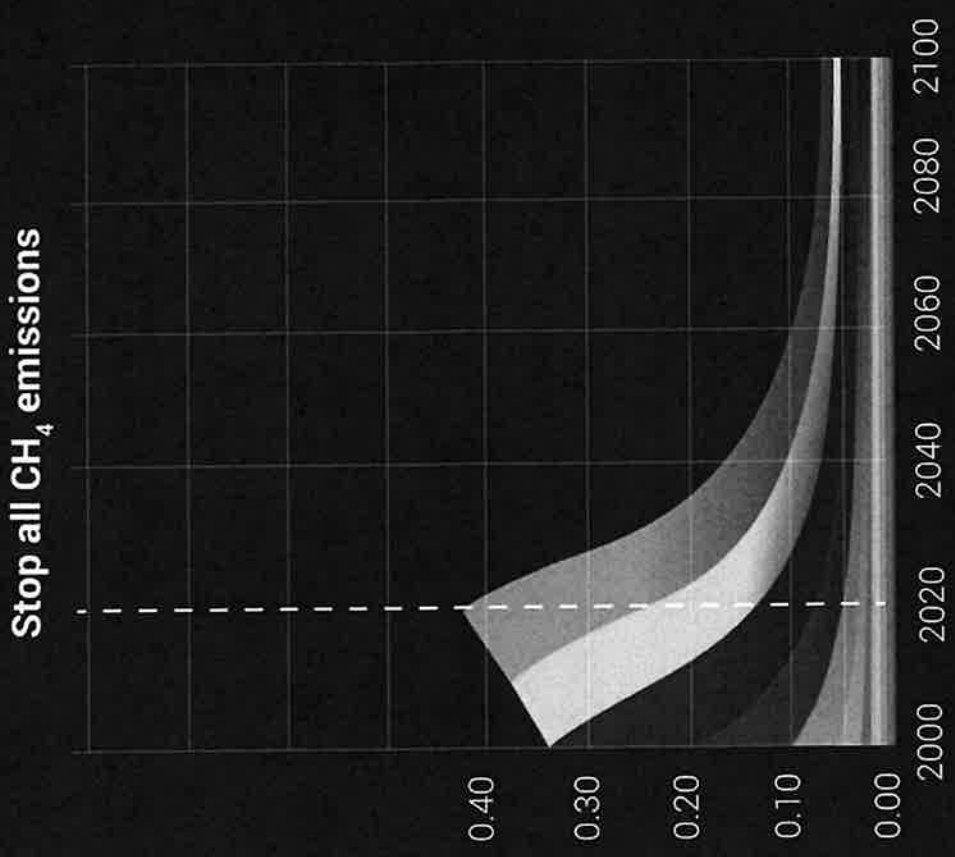
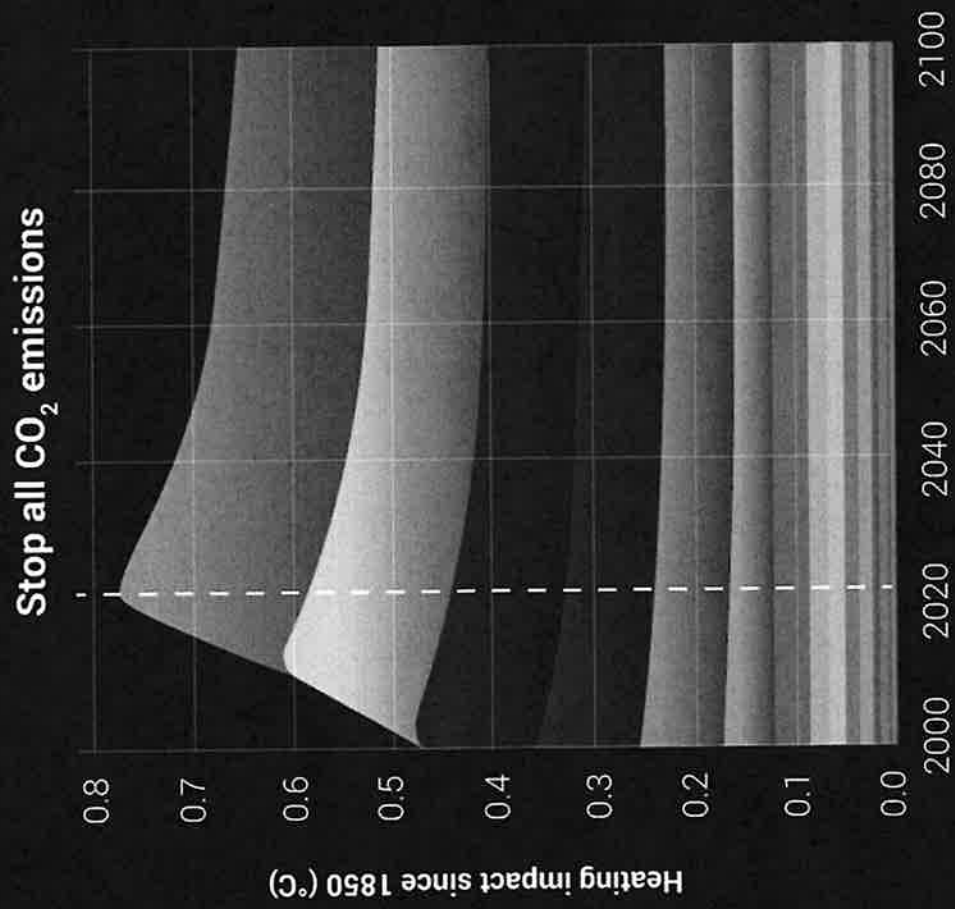




# GLOBAL METHANE SOURCES



Rosentreter, et al. (2021)





## Contact:

[info@floatingislandinternational.com](mailto:info@floatingislandinternational.com)

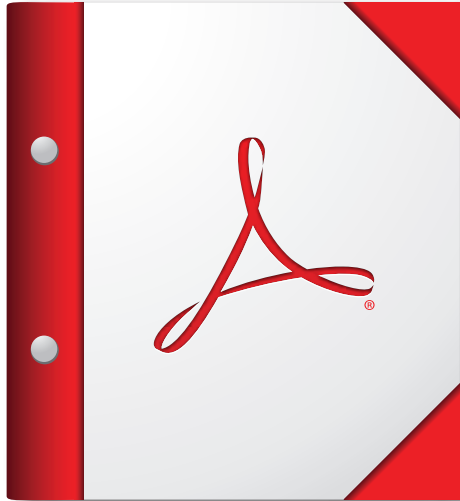
[www.floatingislandinternational.com](http://www.floatingislandinternational.com)



FLOATINGISLANDINTERNATIONAL®

**File Attachments for Item:**

14. Appointment of Amy Mullaney to the Public Works Committee.



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Acrobat X or Adobe Reader X, or later.**

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**File Attachments for Item:**

15. Resolution No. R26-08: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Approve A Change Order With Earth Mover's Excavation For The Project Known As The Bernhardt Ditch Improvements Project.

**RESOLUTION NO. R26-08**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPROVE A CHANGE ORDER WITH EARTH MOVER'S EXCAVATION FOR THE PROJECT KNOWN AS THE BERNHARDT DITCH IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT.**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana,

Section 1: Approval. The Change Order for the Project known as the Bernhardt Ditch Improvements Project, which Change Order is contained in the Triple Tree Engineering, Inc. Change Order No. 1, a copy attached hereto and incorporated herein (hereinafter "the Change Order"), is hereby approved. The Change Order authorizes additional charges for the increased costs of a revised side mount gate design to accommodate certain height restrictions, additional overflow pipe material and construction changes necessary to avoid telecommunication line, and landscape edging between proposed crushed limestone and backfill slope not originally included in the project design, all of which result in an increase to the original contract price in the amount of Nine Thousand Nine-Hundred Seventy-Seven Dollars and Fifty-Two Cents (\$9,977.52).

Section 2: Execution. The Mayor is hereby given authority to execute the Change Order (Triple Tree Engineering Change Order No. 1) on behalf of the City.

Introduced at a special meeting of the City Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2026, by Council Member \_\_\_\_\_.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2026.

APPROVED by the Mayor the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2026.

CITY OF LAUREL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Waggoner, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Strecker, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Michele Braukmann, City Attorney



March 31, 2026

City of Laurel  
115 W 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Laurel, MT 59044

**RE: Bernhardt Ditch Improvements  
Change Order No. 1**

To whom it may concern:

Please reference attached Change Order No. 1 for the Bernhardt Ditch Improvements Project. The change order addresses cost increases for changes the following changes in work:

1. Increase in proposed side mounted gate costs.
2. Additional fittings for proposed overflow pipe.
3. Installation of landscaping edging not originally in the plans.

Please see attached Change Order No. 1 Memo and documentation. The proposed change order amount is -\$9,977.52. The contract price **\$597,387.52** after incorporating this change order.

Please call me anytime at (406) 461-7856 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

**Triple Tree Engineering, Inc.**

Douglas C. Tamcke, P.E.

Encl: Change Order No. 1  
Change Order No. 1 Memo



### CHANGE ORDER 1 SCHEDULE

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	CONTRACT UNIT PRICE	CHANGE ORDER UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	NOTES
CO1-302	Side Mounted Slide Gate Increase	EA	1	\$ -	\$ 2,942.50	\$ 2,942.50	Changes in gate geometry lead to increased costs.
CO1-306	Overflow Pipe Design Change	EA	1	\$ -	\$ 4,843.12	\$ 4,843.12	Existing utility conflict. Pipe material and fittings update.
CO1-603	Landscaping Edging	EA	1	\$ -	\$ 2,191.90	\$ 2,191.90	Added landscaping edging to proposed rock.
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
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				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	



## Laurel Bernhardt Ditch Improvements Project Change Order #1 Breakdown March , 2026

The following changes have been made to the original contract documents for the Laurel Bernhardt Improvements Project.

### **Side Mount Gate Cost Increase:**

The originally designed project featured a Waterman side-mounted gate. The originally designed structure was laid out based on the restraints of the Waterman gate. During bidding, a Fresno gate was approved. The Fresno gate did not have the same height restrictions and allowed for a more efficient design. The updated structure and gate design led to a price increase of the gate lifter assembly of \$2,942.50. See correspondence in Appendix A.

### **Overflow Pipe Material and Construction Change:**

During installation of the proposed overflow piping, two existing telecommunication lines were encountered at 5.5' – 6'. The original design was modified to allow for a PVC SDR-35 pipe and 45-degree fitting to avoid the utility conflict. The additional 45-degree bend, pipe return fee, and new PVC pipe led to a price increase of \$4,843.12. See supplier invoices attached in Appendix B.

### **Landscaping Edging Bid Item:**

The original project design did not include landscaping edging between the proposed crushed limestone and the backfill slope. Installation of the proposed edging increased the project cost \$2,191.90. See vendor invoices attached in Appendix C.

The total project contract cost increase has been calculated to be \$9,977.52.

Sincerely,

**Triple Tree Engineering, Inc.**

Douglas C. Tamcke, P.E., Project Engineer

Encl:

Appendix A – Gate Supplier Correspondence

Appendix B – Overflow Pipe Cost Breakdown

Appendix C – Landscaping Edging Invoice



APPENDIX A

GATE SUPPLIER CORRESPONDENCE

## Doug Tamcke

---

**From:** Kris Kloeckner <kriskloeckner@emxmt.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 8, 2026 11:56 AM  
**To:** Doug Tamcke  
**Cc:** pmaccatherine  
**Subject:** Re: fresno gate price increase

Thanks, Paul once adjusted please send over to me and I'll get it kicked over to Doug.

Thanks

On Thu, Jan 8, 2026 at 11:54 Doug Tamcke <[dtamcke@tripletreemt.com](mailto:dtamcke@tripletreemt.com)> wrote:

Paul and Kris,

See attached final submittal for the updated gate size. Just some small comments.

Also Kris, make sure you submit me the gate directly now that we have one figured out.

Thank you,

*Douglas C. Tamcke, P.E.*

406.461.7856



# TRIPLE TREE

## ENGINEERING

[1145 Cap Road](#)

[Helena, MT 59602](#)

[www.tripletreemt.com](http://www.tripletreemt.com)

---

**From:** pmaccatherine <[pmaccatherine@northwestpipe.com](mailto:pmaccatherine@northwestpipe.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, January 5, 2026 2:25 PM

**To:** Doug Tamcke <[dtamcke@tripletreemt.com](mailto:dtamcke@tripletreemt.com)>

**Subject:** fresno gate price increase

See below reason.

Thanks

Paul

Paul,

Due to the gate height increase from 24” to 36” tall, this increased the lift load on the gate which now requires a geared lift in lieu of the hand wheel lift originally submitted.

Thanks,

Richard Korbe

Fresno Valves & Castings, Inc.

P: 559-834-2511 Ext. 163

[richjk@fresnovalves.com](mailto:richjk@fresnovalves.com)

---

**From:** pmaccatherine <[pmaccatherine@northwestpipe.com](mailto:pmaccatherine@northwestpipe.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, January 5, 2026 1:14 PM

**To:** Rich Korbe <[RichJK@fresnovalves.com](mailto:RichJK@fresnovalves.com)>

**Cc:** Matt Walter <[MattGW@fresnovalves.com](mailto:MattGW@fresnovalves.com)>

**Subject:** Re: F249734-4084 bernhardt ditch

Engineer is questioning why such a price increase on this revised gate? Let me know please.

Thanks

Paul

---

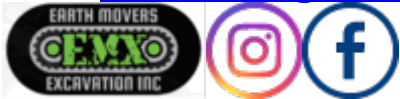
Kris Kloeckner

Project Manager

Earth Movers Excavation | 5844 Stearns Circle | Billings MT 59101

Office: 406-598-6007 | Cell: 406-506-8110

Email: [kriskloeckner@emxmt.com](mailto:kriskloeckner@emxmt.com)



# NORTHWEST PIPE FITTINGS, INC.

Service Montana and Wyoming Since 1957

Wholesale Plumbing, Heating, Water Works, Industrial Supplies, SERVICE with our own trucks



1725 MAJESTIC LANE  
P.O. BOX 1258  
BILLINGS, MT 59103  
PHONE (406) 252-0142  
FAX (406) 248-8072

1901 MEADOWLARK  
P.O. BOX 4163  
BUTTE, MT 59701  
PHONE (406) 494-2120  
FAX (406) 494-3767

404 17TH AVENUE N.E.  
GREAT FALLS, MT 59404  
PHONE (406) 727-9843  
FAX (406) 454-1743

1780 MT HWY 35 EAST  
KALISPELL, MT 59904  
PHONE (406) 752-6562  
FAX (406) 752-6553

360 FLOBS FLATS RD.  
BELGRADE, MT 59714  
PHONE (406) 388-2045  
FAX (406) 388-2095

34990 HWY 23  
SIDNEY, MT 59270  
PHONE (406) 630-5120  
FAX (406) 630-5125

5055 EXPRESSWAY  
MISSOULA, MT 59808  
PHONE (406) 519-0969

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PICK LIST / QUOTATION FORM

QUOTE NO. 489125

QUOTE TO

26963  
EARTH MOVERS EXCAVATION INC  
5844 STEARNS CIRCLE  
PO BOX 957  
LAUREL, MT 59044

QUOTE DATE	TO DATE	JOB REFERENCE	FOB	TERMS	PREPARED BY
10/27/25	11/27/25	BERNHARDT DITCH	LAUREL	NET 30	PAUL MACCATHERINE

**REMARKS**

1 14-16 WEEKS AFTER APPROVED  
1 SUBMITTALS FOR THE SLIDE GATES

**(300) DIVERSION STRUCTURE**

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
0173020	21	4" GALVANIZED IMPORT A53 T&C PIPE	FOOT	\$13.53	\$284.13
0231920	2	4" GALVANIZED 90 ELBOW	EA	\$135.07	\$270.14
0482188	1	4" X 4" GALVANIZED NIPPLE	EA	\$23.28	\$23.28
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$577.55</b>

**(302) 24X48 SIDE MOUNT GATE**

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
	1	FRESNO 48X24 304SS SLIDE GATE W/60" FRM CHANNEL MOUNT, 2-SIDED J-SEAL W/BEARING LIFT	EA	\$6,837.50	\$6,837.50 - 9780 <sup>00</sup> <i>New Gate price</i>
FREIGHT-IN	1	FREIGHT IN CHARGES - TO BE DETERMINED	EA	\$700.00	\$700.00
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$7,537.50</b>

**(303) PRECAST DIVERSION**

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
0173020	21	4" GALVANIZED IMPORT A53 T&C PIPE	FOOT	\$13.53	\$284.13
0231920	2	4" GALVANIZED 90 ELBOW	EA	\$135.07	\$270.14
0482188	1	4" X 4" GALVANIZED NIPPLE	EA	\$23.28	\$23.28
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$577.55</b>

**(307) 42X60 SLIDE GATE**

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
	1	FRESNO 60X42 304SS FAB SLIDE GATE, 80" FRAME, WALL MOUNT 3-SIDED J-SEAL W/ TH GEAR LIFT	TH	\$13,452.50	\$13,452.50
FREIGHT-IN	1	FREIGHT IN CHARGES - TO BE DETERMINED	EA	\$700.00	\$700.00
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$14,152.50</b>

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1725 MAJESTIC LANE  
P.O. BOX 1258  
BILLINGS, MT 59103  
PHONE (406) 252-0142  
FAX (406) 248-8072

1901 MEADOWLARK  
P.O. BOX 4163  
BUTTE, MT 59701  
PHONE (406) 494-2120  
FAX (406) 494-3787

404 17TH AVENUE N E  
GREAT FALLS, MT 59404  
PHONE (406) 727-8643  
FAX (406) 454-1743

1780 MT HWY 35 EAST  
KALISPELL, MT 59904  
PHONE (406) 752-6562  
FAX (406) 752-6553

360 FLOES FLATS RD.  
BELGRADE, MT 59714  
PHONE (406) 388-2045  
FAX (406) 388-2083

34850 HWY 23  
SIDNEY, MT 58270  
PHONE (406) 630-5120  
FAX (406) 630-5125

5055 EXPRESSEWAY  
MISSOULA, MT 59806  
PHONE (406) 519-0969

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QUOTE NO. 489125

QUOTE TO

26963  
EARTH MOVERS EXCAVATION INC  
5844 STEARNS CIRCLE  
PO BOX 957  
LAUREL, MT 59044

QUOTE DATE	TO DATE	JOB REFERENCE	FOB	TERMS	PREPARED BY
10/27/25	11/27/25	BERNHARDT DITCH	LAUREL	NET 30	PAUL MACCATHERINE

(308) 30X42 SLIDE GATE

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
	2	FRESNO 42X30 304SS SLIDE GATE, 75" FRAME WALL MOUNT, 3-SIDED J-SEAL W/GEAR L IFT	IFT	\$11,383.75	\$22,767.50
FREIGHT-IN	2	FREIGHT IN CHARGES -TO BE DETERMINED	EA	\$700.00	\$1,400.00
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$24,167.50</b>

(601) FABRIC

PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
5228112	5	600X ( 315ST ) 15' X 300' WOVEN FABRIC	ROLL	\$440.82	\$2,204.10
<b>Segment Total</b>					<b>\$2,204.10</b>

We are pleased to quote you on the above material  
All quotes are subject to Northwest Pipe Fittings "Terms of Sale"  
Quoted prices are subject to change after the "TO DATE" above.

<b>Segments Total</b>	\$49,216.70
<b>Tax Total</b>	\$0.00
<b>Quotation Total</b>	\$49,216.70



APPENDIX B

OVERFLOW PIPE COST BREAKDOWN

# CCO - 001



## Earth Movers Excavation, Inc.

PO Box 81367  
 Billings, MT 59108 US  
 Dana Babcock, Estimator  
[dana@emxmt.com](mailto:dana@emxmt.com)  
 (406) 970-0086

CUSTOMER NAME		JOB NAME		JOB NUMBER	
CITY OF LAUREL - Doug Tamcke		Bernhardt Ditch		25049	
STREET		JOB ADDRESS			
CITY		STATE		CITY	
Laurel		Mt			
PHONE		DATE		PHONE	

DESCRIPTION: Bid Item #306 due to fiber optic location the plan is to return the RCP and replace with SDR 35 Pipe to work around the fiber.

LABOR	OCCUPATION	HOURS	RATE	TOTAL
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00

SUBTOTAL **\$0.00**  
 15% % MARKUP **\$0.00**  
 TOTAL LABOR **\$0.00**

EQUIPMENT	TYPE	HOURS	RATE	TOTAL
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00

SUBTOTAL **\$0.00**  
 15% % MARKUP **\$0.00**  
 TOTAL EQUIPMENT **\$0.00**

MATERIAL/SUBCONTRACTOR	QTY	UN	AMOUNT	TOTAL
24" RCP return	1.00	LS	-712.22	-\$712.22
F & I 24" SDR 35	1.00	LS	5115.06	\$5,115.06
				\$0.00
				\$0.00

SUBTOTAL **\$4,402.84**  
 10% % MARKUP **\$440.28**  
 TOTAL MAT/SUBCONT **\$4,843.12**

TOTAL ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR WORK ABOVE \$4,843.12

Authorization \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Authorization \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# NORTHWEST PIPE FITTINGS, INC.

Service Montana and Wyoming Since 1957

Wholesale Plumbing, Heating, Water Works, Industrial Supplies, SERVICE with our own trucks



1725 MAJESTIC LANE P.O. BOX 1258 BILLINGS, MT 59103 PHONE (406) 252-0142 FAX (406) 248-8072	1901 MEADOWLARK P.O. BOX 4163 BUTTE, MT 59701 PHONE (406) 494-2120 FAX (406) 494-3767	404 17TH AVENUE N.E. GREAT FALLS, MT 59404 PHONE (406) 727-9843 FAX (406) 454-1743	1780 MT HWY 35 EAST KALISPELL, MT 59904 PHONE (406) 752-6562 FAX (406) 752-6553	360 FLOBS FLATS RD. BELGRADE, MT 59714 PHONE (406) 388-2045 FAX (406) 388-2093	34930 HWY 23 SIDNEY, MT 59270 PHONE (406) 630-5120 FAX (406) 630-5125	5055 EXPRESSWAY MISSOULA, MT 59808 PHONE (406) 519-0969
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**QUOTE NO. 500255**

QUOTE TO

26963  
EARTH MOVERS EXCAVATION INC  
5844 STEARNS CIRCLE  
PO BOX 957  
LAUREL, MT 59044

QUOTE DATE	TO DATE	JOB REFERENCE	FOB	TERMS	PREPARED BY
03/10/26	04/10/26	bernhardt	billings	NET 30	PAUL MACCATHERINE

(001) material

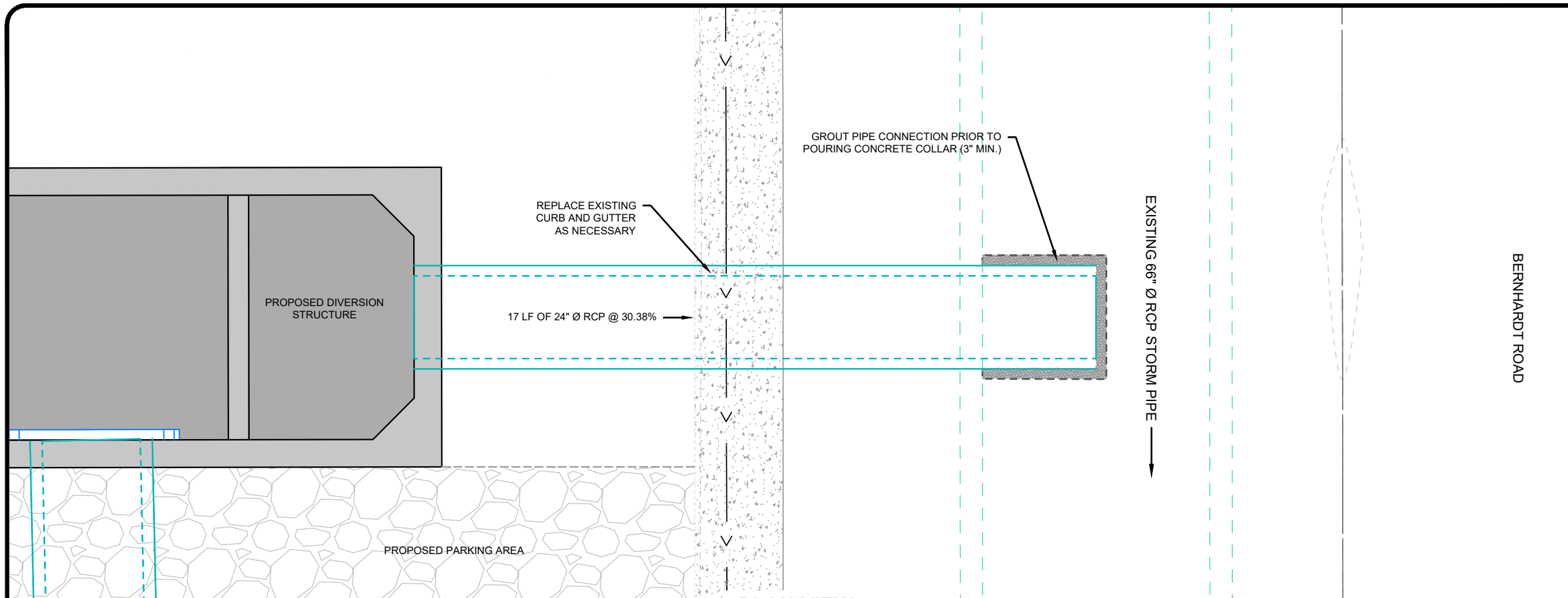
PART#	QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	PRICE	EXT. PRICE
0019980	1	**** INSTRUCTIONS **** about a week to get the pipe and fitting.	EA	\$0.00	\$0.00
1940205	28	24" X 14' F-679 PVC RINGTITE SEWER PIPE	FOOT	\$66.23	\$1,854.44
	1	24" SDR35 GXG 45 BEND	EA	\$3,260.62	\$3,260.62
	1	60" RCP X 24" SDR35 INSERTA TEE	EA	\$0.00	\$0.00

**Segment Total \$5,115.06**

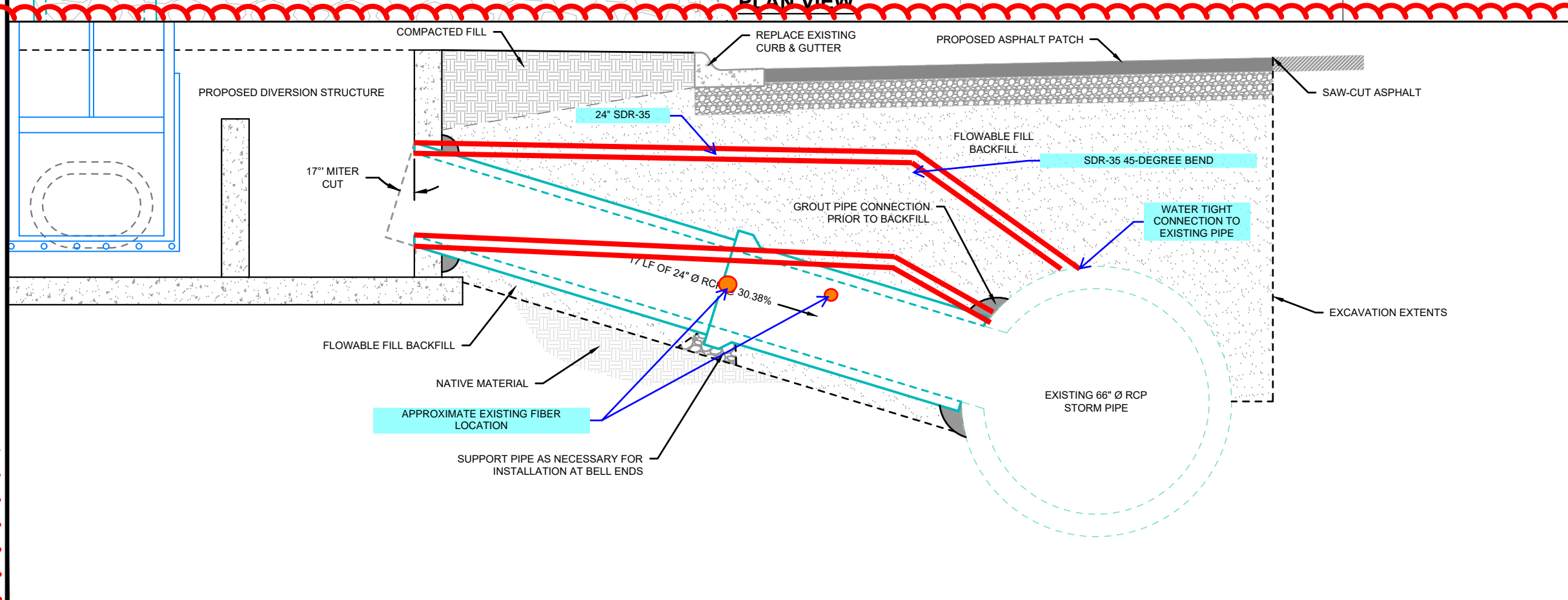
We are pleased to quote you on the above material  
All quotes are subject to Northwest Pipe Fittings "Terms of Sale"  
Quoted prices are subject to change after the "TO DATE" above.

<b>Segments Total</b>	\$5,115.06
<b>Tax Total</b>	\$0.00
<b>Quotation Total</b>	\$5,115.06

MARKED UP PLAN TO CONTRACTOR



PLAN VIEW



SECTION VIEW

NOTES

1. PROPOSED AND EXISTING ASPHALT NOT SHOWN FOR CLARITY.
2. FLOWABLE FILL ENTIRE TRENCH EXTENTS AS NECESSARY UP TO BACK OF EXISTING CURB.



REVISIONS	DESCRIPTION	DATE

**BERNHARDT DITCH IMPROVEMENTS**  
 LAUREL URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY  
 LAUREL, MT

PROJECT #	25-034
DRAFTED BY:	DCT
CHECKED BY:	BJK
DATE:	10/2025

SHEET  
**13**

Oct 19, 2025 - 10:42pm - P:\Laurel\25-034\_Laurel project #2 to - 5\Design\CADD\construction\drawings\plans\detail\25034\_OverflowDetail.dwg



APPENDIX C

LANDSCAPING EDGING INVOICE

**CCO - 002**



**Earth Movers Excavation, Inc.**

PO Box 957  
 Laurel, MT 59044  
 Kris Kloeckner  
[kriskloeckner@emxmt.com](mailto:kriskloeckner@emxmt.com)  
 (406) 506-8110

CUSTOMER NAME		JOB NAME		JOB NUMBER	
City of Laurel		Bernhardt Ditch		25049	
STREET		JOB ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	CITY	STATE		
PHONE	DATE	PHONE	DATE		

DESCRIPTION: Proposed Aluminum Landscape Edging to separate topsoil section from gravel section.

OCCUPATION	HOURS	RATE	TOTAL
LABOR-FOREMAN	2.00	\$60.00	\$120.00
LABOR-LABORER	2.00	\$35.00	\$70.00
	0.00		\$0.00
	0.00		\$0.00
	0.00		\$0.00
SUBTOTAL			\$190.00
15% % MARKUP			\$28.50
TOTAL LABOR			\$218.50

EQUIPMENT	TYPE	HOURS	RATE	TOTAL
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
		0.00		\$0.00
SUBTOTAL				\$0.00
15% % MARKUP				\$0.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT				\$0.00

MATERIAL/SUBCONTRACTOR	QTY	UN	AMOUNT	TOTAL
ALUMINUM EDGING 16FT/STICK	46.00	16	39	\$1,794.00
				\$0.00
				\$0.00
				\$0.00
SUBTOTAL				\$1,794.00
10% % MARKUP				\$179.40
TOTAL MAT/SUBCONT				\$1,973.40

**TOTAL ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR WORK ABOVE \$2,191.90**

Authorization Kris Kloeckner Signature Kris Kloeckner

Authorization \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**File Attachments for Item:**

16. Resolution No. R26-09: A Resolution Of The City Council Approving The Variance Requested By Drew Nordman To Allow Side-Corner Minimum Setback For An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) In The Approximate Location Of The Existing Non-Conforming Garage.

**RESOLUTION NO. R26-09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVING THE VARIANCE REQUESTED BY DREW NORDMAN TO ALLOW SIDE-CORNER MINIMUM SETBACK FOR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) IN THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE EXISTING NON-CONFORMING GARAGE.**

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel has adopted zoning regulations pursuant to §76-2-301 et seq., MCA, which establish standards for height, bulk, and location of structures including outdoor advertising signs;

WHEREAS, Drew Nordman, the Applicant, requested a variance from the minimum side-corner setback of 20 feet in the Laurel R-6000 zoning district;

WHEREAS, the subject property is located at Lots 19 and 20, Block 12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana;

WHEREAS, the request is to install an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) approximately 16 feet from the property line and requires a variance to the adopted R-6000 standards;

WHEREAS, the application was duly submitted by the Applicant on February 2, 2026, and the Laurel Zoning Commission held a public hearing on March 18, 2026, to consider the variance request;

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission reviewed the application, supporting documentation, and testimony presented at the public hearing;

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission, based upon its findings of fact, determined that the variance request met the applicable standards of review for approval of a variance under the City's zoning ordinance;

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2026, the Zoning Commission voted 8-0 to recommend approval of the variance request by Drew Nordman to the City Council;

WHEREAS, the City Council considered this matter on April 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.;  
and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the Zoning Commission's recommendation, findings of fact, and supporting documentation, and determined that the variance request meets the applicable standards of review for approval of a variance under the City's zoning ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, as follows:

1. The City Council hereby approves the variance request submitted by Drew Nordman to allow for the construction of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) approximately 16 feet from the property line.
2. The variance approval is granted based upon the findings of fact and recommendation of the Laurel Zoning Commission.
3. The variance shall expire one (1) year from the date of approval if the next logical step in the development process is not commenced, including but not limited to applying for a building permit, commencing the use, or applying for a Development Permit.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026 by Council Member \_\_\_\_\_.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

APPROVED by the Mayor on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

CITY OF LAUREL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Waggoner, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Strecker, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michele L. Braukmann, City Attorney

**Drew Nordman**  
**201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave Laurel MT 59044**  
**406-531-3914**  
**dnordman2024@hotmail.com**

**January 23, 2026**

**City of Laurel Board of Adjustment**  
**115 W. 1st St.**  
**Laurel, MT 59044**

**RE: Variance Request for 201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave Laurel MT 59044 – Setback Requirements**

Dear Members of the Board of Adjustment,

Please accept this letter as a formal statement of intent for a variance request regarding the property located at **201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave Laurel MT 59044**. I am proposing to demolish an existing non-conforming detached garage and replace it with a new structure that includes a garage on the ground floor and an Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) above. I am requesting a variance to maintain the existing garage's current setback of 16ft from the south property line, along W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., rather than moving the new structure to meet the updated minimum setback limit of 20ft.

R-6000 zoning establishes minimum setback limits on page 31 of the Laurel City Code Title 17. Due to the property being located on a corner lot the setback limit for “side adjacent to streets” asks for a minimum setback limit of 20ft along adjacent streets which is W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. This street, W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. should be classified as a “residential local access” or “residential collector 2 lane” according to the street type on Table 16.4.C.1 of the municipal code. The street type determines the right-of-way distance which establishes the appropriate minimum setback limits. Setback limits for “residential local access” require 67ft of right-of-way which would approximate to 12.5ft of minimum setback; while a “residential collector 2 lane” requires 70ft of right-a-way and approximate to 15ft of minimum setback. A minimum setback limit of 20ft would be more appropriate for a road that requires 80ft of right-of-way. Therefore, a minimum setback limit of 20ft would be excessive and undue for properties along W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.

Additionally, corner lots face setback limits for two streets rather than one street, which reduces the space of usable property. After examining and measuring 31 proximal corner lots within roughly one block radius of my address, over three quarters of them do not meet the aforementioned setback requirements.

This request for a variance would not be adding any additional buildings to the property. It is simply mirroring the setback limit that the current garage on the property has had for decades, removing one garage and replacing it with another. Maintaining the current setback will allow the visual profile and spacing between buildings to remain consistent with what the neighbors have grown accustomed to.

Per Montana Code Annotated § 76-2-323 and Laurel Municipal Code, I believe this request meets the necessary criteria for a variance due to the following factors:

1. **Unnecessary Hardship & Unique Physical Circumstances:** The existing house and garage were constructed prior to current setback regulations and are already situated outside today's limits. Strict application of the current setbacks would require shifting the new structure significantly into the usable yard space, which is restricted by the existing primary residences position. This creates a physical hardship in utilizing the property for a modern ADU while maintaining functional open space.
2. **Harmony with Neighborhood Character:** The proposed project seeks only to maintain the current setback of a structure that has existed for decades. By keeping the current setback, the visual profile and spacing between buildings that the neighbors have grown accustomed to will remain consistent.
3. **Public Health and Safety:** The variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare. The new structure will be built to current fire and building codes, improving the safety of the site compared to the aging structure it replaces. It will not interfere with the "Clear Vision Triangle" required at alleys or intersections.
4. **Support for Housing Diversity:** This project aligns with the state's intent to allow ADUs "by right" to provide more housing options. Maintaining the existing setback allows for a design that is more architecturally compatible with the site's historical layout.

I have attached a scaled site plan showing the existing non-conforming setbacks and the proposed new structure. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Drew Nordman

Laurel City Code Title 17, page 31, Dimensional Standards R-6000

<b>Dimensional Standards R-6000</b>	
<b>Minimum lot area per dwelling unit in square feet</b>	
One unit	6,000 <sup>1</sup>
Two unit	7,500
Three unit	8,500
Four unit	10,000
Five unit	N/A
Six units and more	N/A
<b>Minimum yard—setback requirements (expressed in feet) and measured from public right-of-way</b>	
Front	20
Side	5
<b>Side adjacent to streets</b>	<b>20</b>
Rear	5
Maximum height for all buildings	35
Maximum lot coverage (percentage)	30
Minimum district size (expressed in acres)	2.07

Municipal code: title 16; chapter 16.04; table 16.4.C.1

Table 16.4.C.1. Required Dedications and Street Improvements for Subdivisions:

Street Type	Right-of-Way	Road Width	Lane Width	Parking Width	Turn Lane Width	Median Width	Sidewalk Minimum Width
<b>Principal Arterial</b>							
6 lanes w/ center turn-lane	120'	92'*	12'/14'***	—	14'	—	5'
4 lanes w/ center turn-lane	120'	92'*	12'/14'***	—	14'	—	5'
<b>Minor Arterial</b>							
4 lanes w/ median	100'	68'*	12'	—	—	14'	5'
2 lanes w/ median	100'	52'*	12'	—	—	14'	5'
<b>Commercial Collector</b>							
2 lane	80'	44'*	14'	8'	—	—	5'
2 lanes w/ center turn lane	80'	42'*	14'	—	14'	—	5'
<b>Residential Collector</b>							
<b>2 lane</b>	<b>70'</b>	<b>40'*</b>	<b>12'</b>	<b>8'</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>5'</b>
2 lanes w/ center turn lane	80'	50'*	12'	8'	14'	—	5'
<b>Residential Local Access</b>	<b>67'</b>	<b>28'</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>n/s</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>5'</b>
Cul-de-Sac 100-600 feet	67'	28'	12	n/s	—	—	5'
Cul-de-Sac <100 feet	40'	24' min.	10	n/s	—	—	—



## Laurel Variance Request Application

This application covers appeals from decisions of the Planning Department (and sometimes other officials) and for requests for variances concerning setbacks, structures, heights, lot coverage, etc.

The undersigned owner or agent of the owner of the following described property requests a variance to the Zoning Ordinances of the City of Laurel as outlined by the laws of the State of Montana.

1. Name of property owner: Drew Nordman
2. Name of Applicant if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Phone number of Applicant: (406) 531-3914
4. Street address and general location: 201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave Laurel MT 59044
5. Legal description of the property: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Current Zoning: R-6000
7. Provide a copy of covenants or deed restrictions on property.

I understand that the filing fee accompanying this application is not refundable, that it pays part of the cost of process, and that the fee does not constitute a payment for a variance. I also understand I or my agent must appear at the hearing of this request before the Planning Board and all of the information presented by me is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant: 

Date of Submittal: 2/2/2026



CITY HALL  
115 W. 1<sup>ST</sup> ST.  
PLANNING: 628-4796  
WATER OFC.: 628-7431  
COURT: 628-1964  
FAX 628-2241

# City Of Laurel

P.O. Box 10  
Laurel, Montana 59044



Office of the City Planner

## VARIANCE REPORT VAR-26-01 Drew Nordman Side -Corner Minimum Setback March 23, 2026

### BACKGROUND:

The City of Laurel has had zoning since the early 1970's as authorized by §76-2-301 et. seq MCA. These regulations set minimum and maximum standards for all lands located with the jurisdiction of the City of Laurel. These regulations establish standards for the height, bulk, and location of structures.

The property owner is requesting to construct an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in the approximate location of the existing non-conforming garage. The subject property address is 201 N 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and may be described as Lots 19 and 20 Block12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana.

The subject property is zoned R-6000, and is adjacent to two public rights-of-way (5<sup>th</sup> Ave and W 2<sup>nd</sup> Street). The subject property is developed with a non-conforming residence and a non-conforming garage. The non-conformity at issue in this request is related to the Side Corner Setback Requirements of the Laurel Zoning Regulations. Both the front and side corner setbacks are 20 feet from the public right-of-way.

Both existing structures are protected as 'Legally Existing Non-Conforming Uses'. The non-conforming use section of the Laurel Municipal Code is included in this report. The applicant was aware of this standard at the time of requesting a building permit from the city and has requested a variance as outlined in their application.

The application materials address several other points that outline the anticipated benefits of the project. The application materials are incorporated into this report by reference.

### LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Lots 19 and 20 Block12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana.

### APPLICANT(S):

Drew Nordman  
201 5<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Laurel MT 59044

AGENT:

NONE

EXISTING CONDITION:

The subject property is a platted subdivision within the City of Laurel. The property is developed and is served by public water, sewer, streets, and solid waste collection. The property is 8,400 square feet in size.

PROCESS:

- The application for a Variance was submitted on February 2, 2026, and is scheduled for a public hearing on March 18, 2026 by the Laurel Zoning Commission.
- The Zoning Commission following the Public Hearing must adopt findings of fact and issue a formal recommendation to the City Council on the requested variance. The Zoning Commission may propose conditions or modifications to the request so long as the findings of fact support the condition(s).
- Those findings of fact and conclusions as well as the record minutes of the public hearing will be submitted to the City Council for consideration, hearing and final decision.
- The City Council will conduct a duly noticed Public Hearing on the Zoning Commission recommendation, findings of fact, and any conditions mitigating the impacts associated with the request. This hearing will occur on April 14, 2026.

ZONES INVOLVED: Existing and Proposed

- R-6000 – Residential 6000.
  - The required setbacks for structures are:
    - Front 20feet
    - Side 5 feet
    - Side Corner 20 feet per Text of Regulations
    - Side Corner 10 feet per Dimensional Graphics R-6000
    - Rear 5 feet
    - Text and Graphics R-6000 Attached.
- Rule of Construction of the Laurel Municipal Code and Zoning Regulations.
  - The most restrictive standard is the governing regulation.
    - As such, the 20 foot side yard setback is required to be applied.

➤ Laurel Municipal Code.

✓ Chapter 17.56 - NONCONFORMING USES

✓ 17.56.010 - Nonconforming use designated.

Any lawful use of the land or buildings existing at the date of passage of the ordinance codified in this chapter, and located in a district in which it would not be permitted as a new use under the regulations of this chapter, is declared to be a nonconforming use, and not in violation of this title at the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter; provided, however, a nonconforming use shall be subject to, and the owner shall comply with the regulations set out in Sections 17.56.020 through 17.56.070.

(Prior code § 17.64.010 (part))

✓ 17.56.020 - Extension of.

The nonconforming use of a building may be extended throughout any part of a building clearly designated for such use but not so used at the date of the adoption of this chapter. No nonconforming use may be extended to occupy any land outside the building nor any additional building not used for such nonconforming use at the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter. The nonconforming use of land shall not be extended to any additional land not so used at the date of adoption of the ordinances codified in this title.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(A))

✓ 17.56.030 - Additions, repairs and alteration allowed when.

A. No building used for a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed, or structurally altered, unless the use is changed to one which complies with the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, permits may be issued for the reconstruction of an existing building to be continued as a nonconforming use if the following conditions are complied with:

1. If a single- or two-family dwelling is presently a nonconforming use, and is located in a residential area, and is destroyed, the dwelling may be rebuilt. However, qualifying dwelling units located on arterial streets or roads must conform to the applicable setback standard;
2. New use would decrease the automobile parking congestion in the area;
3. New use would not increase the cubical contents of the structure, floor area ratio, if such would violate provisions of this chapter;
4. Such reconstruction would be one in accordance with the city building, plumbing, electrical codes and fire prevention code;
5. The issuance of such permit would not violate the provisions of Section 17.56.040 of this chapter.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(B)(part))

(Ord. No. 008-05, 6-17-08)

✓ 17.56.040 - Applicability when building damaged or destroyed.

A. If any building in which there is a nonconforming use is damaged by fire, flood, explosion, wind, war or other catastrophe, in an amount equal to or greater than fifty percent of its assessed valuation, it shall not be again used or reconstructed to be used for any use except one complying with the provisions of this title in which it is located. This

subsection specifically does not apply to nonconforming, one and two-family dwelling units.

- B. In addition, repairs and maintenance work may be carried out each year in an amount not to exceed twenty-five percent of the assessed value of the building for that year. Such repairs and maintenance work shall not increase the cubical content of the building, nor the floor area devoted to the nonconforming use. Nor shall it increase the number of dwelling units provided in a building.
- C. Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to prevent the strengthening nor repair of a building which may be necessary to restore the building to a safe condition or to improve the sanitary conditions of the building; provided, that such strengthening and repair may not be used to restore a building to the provisions of Section 17.56.040 of this chapter.

(Ord. 06-12 (part), 2006; Ord. 06-06 (part), 2006; prior code § 17.64.010(B) (part), (C))

- ✓ 17.56.050 - Restrictions on moving building.

Any building in which there is a nonconforming use shall not be moved unless it is moved to a district in which the use for which the building was designed is permitted by this title. If any building in which there is a nonconforming use is moved any distance whatsoever, the building shall thereafter be used only in compliance with the provisions of this title for the district in which it is located.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(D))

- ✓ 17.56.060 - Continuance and change.

A nonconforming use may be continued in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, but it shall not be changed to any other use except the one which would be permitted as a new use in the district in which the building is located.

(Prior code § 17.64.010(E))

- ✓ 17.56.070 - Discontinuance.

If for any reason a nonconforming use ceases for a period of six months any new use must conform to the provisions of this title for the district in which the use occurs, and the nonconforming use no longer allowed.

(Ord. 04-5 (part), 2004: prior code § 17.64.010(F))

#### RATIONAL BASIS FOR VARIANCE:

“Variance” **means an adjustment in the application of the specific regulations of this title to a particular piece of property which property, because of special circumstances applicable to it, is deprived of privileges commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same vicinity or zone.**

Findings of Fact: Standard of Review

A recommendation for Approval or Conditional Approval of a Variance shall require the Board of Adjustment making each of the following Findings of Fact:

## 1. Special Conditions

There are special circumstances or conditions that are peculiar to the land or building for which the Variance is sought that do not apply generally to land or buildings in the neighborhood; and

### ➤ Zoning Commission Finding:

- First, this property has unique physical conditions. As a corner lot, it is subject to two street-facing setbacks, which significantly reduces the usable building area. The existing house and garage were built long before current setback standards, and their placement limits where a replacement structure can reasonably go. W. 2nd Street is also classified as a residential local access or collector street, which typically corresponds to a smaller setback than 20 feet.

## 2. Not Result of Applicant

The special circumstances or conditions have not resulted from an act of the applicant or been established to circumvent this Ordinance; and

### ➤ Zoning Commission Finding:

- The Zoning Commission did not issue a favorable finding on this criterion.

## 3. Strict Application Unreasonable

Due to the special circumstances or conditions, the strict application of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the land or building or create an undue hardship on the landowner; and

### ➤ Zoning Commission Finding:

- Third, applying the 20-foot setback strictly would create an unreasonable hardship. Moving the structure further north would push it into the limited remaining yard space and create conflicts with the existing home. It would also make it difficult to design a safe, functional, and code-compliant garage and ADU.

## 4. Necessary to Provide Reasonable Use

Granting the Variance is necessary to provide a reasonable use of the land or building; and

### ➤ Zoning Commission Finding:

- Fourth, the variance is necessary for reasonable use. The new structure will be wider than the existing garage, but placing it in the same general location is essential for the design to work. Without maintaining the current setback, constructing a practical garage and ADU becomes extremely difficult.

5. Minimum Variance

The Variance is the minimum variance necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land or building; and

- Zoning Commission Finding:
  - Fifth, this is the minimum variance needed. I am not asking for anything beyond the long-standing 16-foot setback that has existed for decades.

6. Not Injurious

Granting the Variance will not be injurious to the neighborhood or detrimental to the public welfare; and

- Zoning Commission Finding:
  - Sixth, the variance will not be injurious to the neighborhood. The new structure will meet all current building and fire codes, and it will not interfere with the clear-vision triangle. Maintaining the existing setback preserves the visual rhythm of the street. In fact, after surveying 31 nearby corner lots, more than three-quarters do not meet the current 20-foot standard, so this request is consistent with the neighborhood.

7. Consistent with Ordinance

Granting the Variance is consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance. A variance to the Allowed Uses of a zoning district is prohibited.

- Zoning Commission Finding:
  - Finally, the variance is consistent with the intent of the ordinance. It does not change the allowed uses of the property. It supports orderly development, maintains neighborhood character, and allows the addition of an ADU, which aligns with state housing policy under MCA 76-2-323.

CONDITIONS

Conditions or restrictions may be placed on the approval of a Variance.

None were proposed by the Zoning Commission.

EXPIRATION

A Variance shall expire one (1) year from the date of approval if the next logical step in the development process is not commenced. The next step in the development process includes but is not limited to applying for a building permit, commencing the use, or applying for a Development Permit.

DISCUSSION:

While the Zoning Commission Did not find favorably on all 7-review criterion, they did find favorably on 6. It was the Commissions stated belief that the standard of review is the “Preponderance of the evidence”.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt their Findings of Fact and Grant the requested variance to the Side Corner setback on Lots 19 and 20 Block12, Laurel Original Townsite, located in Section 9, Township 02 South, Range 24 East, P.M.M., City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana, reducing the side corner setback from 20 feet to 16 feet..

**File Attachments for Item:**

17. Resolution No. R26-10: A Resolution Of The City Of Laurel City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute All Necessary Agreements For Services Performed By Emergency Networking Related To Electronic Management Systems For Laurel Fire Rescue

**RESOLUTION NO. R26-10**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAUREL CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY AGREEMENTS FOR SERVICES PERFORMED BY EMERGENCY NETWORKING RELATED TO ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR LAUREL FIRE RESCUE.**

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel (hereinafter “the City”) has identified the need to procure and/or update Laurel Fire Rescue emergency medical services and fire reporting software;

WHEREAS, Emergency Networking has proposed to provide the City with cloud-based, EMS and fire reporting and related modules known as “Aldrin”, allowing EMS and fire departments to input, collect, store, share, report and otherwise use data to enhance services at their customary fees; and

WHEREAS, the parties wish to memorialize their respective rights and obligations, pursuant to the Master Services Agreement by and between Emergency Networking and the City, as well as other respective agreements related to the performance of the services to be provided by Emergency Networking.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana:

Section 1: Approval. The Master Services Agreement by and between Emergency Networking and the City, as well as other respective agreements related to the performance of the services to be provided by Emergency Networking, copies attached hereto and incorporated herein, are hereby approved.

Section 2: Execution. The Mayor is hereby given authority to execute all necessary agreements for the provision of services by Emergency Networking, as reflected in the documents attached hereto and incorporated herein.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026 by Council Member \_\_\_\_.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

APPROVED by the Mayor on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

CITY OF LAUREL

---

Dave Waggoner, Mayor

ATTEST:

---

Kelly Strecker, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Michele L. Braukmann, City Attorney

# MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT (MSA)

Prepared for:  
JW Hopper  
Laurel Fire Rescue



## MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT (MSA)

This Service Agreement (this “**Agreement**”) is entered into as of this date by and between Emergency Networking, Inc., an Ohio limited liability company, located at:

Emergency Networking  
PO Box 20559  
Columbus, OH, 43220

and with,

Laurel Fire Rescue  
215 W 1st Street Laurel, MT 59044

This Agreement governs Customer’s use of the cloud-based, EMS and fire reporting and related modules as known as “**Aldrin**”, (the “**Service**”). The Service permits EMS and Fire Departments to input, collect, store, share, report and otherwise use data and the use of our Aldrin software platform entered by Customer or its representatives (all such data, “**Customer Data**”) and generate documentation and reports for compliance, tracking and reporting purposes. The Service is offered through an html-based Internet website (the “**Site**”) as well as a mobile application.

### 1. REGISTRATION AND ACCOUNT SECURITY

In order to use the Service, Customer must register an account with Emergency Networking. Customer represents that it has provided, and will provide, current, accurate and complete information (including information about Customer’s users) in all account-related registration materials. Customer agrees to maintain the security of all usernames, passwords and other log-in information relating to Customer’s access to the Service and Customer’s account. Customer agrees to promptly provide Emergency Networking with notice of any information necessary to keep Customer’s account information accurate, current, and complete. ANY PERSON WITH USERNAMES, PASSWORDS OR OTHER LOG-IN INFORMATION RELATING TO CUSTOMER’S ACCOUNT MAY BE ABLE TO ACCESS CUSTOMER DATA. CUSTOMER ASSUMES ALL RISKS OF UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS OF CUSTOMER’S ACCOUNT BASED ON SHARING OR LOSS OF

SUCH USERNAMES, PASSWORDS AND LOG-IN INFORMATION. Customer agrees to promptly provide notice to Emergency Networking if Customer discovers or suspects any security breaches relating to the unauthorized use or disclosure of Customer’s username(s), password(s) or log-in information.

## **2. PROPRIETARY RIGHTS AND LICENSES**

### **2.1 Reservation of Rights**

Subject to the limited rights expressly granted hereunder, Emergency Networking and its licensors reserve all of its/their respective right, title and interest in and to the following (collectively, the “Emergency Networking Property”): (a) the Service, the Site, all components of the mobile application functionality, all other software, hardware, technology, documentation and information provided by Emergency Networking in connection with the Service; (b) all ideas, know-how, and techniques that may be developed, conceived or invented by Emergency Networking during the performance of the Service under this Agreement; and (c) all worldwide patent, copyright, trade secret, trademark or other intellectual property rights in and to the property described in subsections 2.1(a) and (b) hereof. Subject to the rights granted to Emergency Networking in Section 2.2, Customer owns and retains all right, title and interest in and to the Customer Data and all intellectual property rights therein.

### **2.2 License to Use Service.**

Subject to the terms of this Agreement, Emergency Networking hereby grants to Customer a non-exclusive, non-transferrable, worldwide license during the Service Term (defined herein) to access and use the Service solely for Customer’s legitimate business purposes as contemplated by this Agreement.

### **2.3 License to Use Customer Data.**

Subject to the terms of this Agreement, Customer hereby grants to Emergency Networking and its Affiliates a non-exclusive, worldwide, limited license during the Service Term to host, copy, transmit, display and use all Customer Data as necessary to provide the Service in accordance with this Agreement. Neither Emergency Networking nor its Affiliates acquire any right, title or interest from Customer under this Agreement in or to any Customer Data. As used herein, the term “Affiliates” means one or more providers of necessary services used by Emergency Networking and made available to Customer for purposes of providing the Service. An example of an “Affiliate” for such purposes is the third-party data hosting provider used by Emergency Networking for cloud-based data storage pertaining to Customer Data submitted by Customer when Customer uses the Service

(currently, Amazon Web Services). Emergency Networking may, in its reasonable discretion, change Affiliate relationships during the Service Term.

#### **2.4 Data De-Identification:**

We may De-Identify your Information and use and disclose De-Identified Information for any purpose whatsoever. We may create limited data sets from your information and disclose them for any purpose for which you may disclose a limited data set; and you hereby authorize us to enter into data use agreements on your behalf for the use of limited data sets, in accordance with applicable law and regulation. In consideration of our provision of the Services, you hereby transfer and assign to us all right, title and interest in and to all De-Identified Information that we make from your Information. You agree that we may use, disclose, market, license and sell such De-Identified Information for any purpose without restriction, and that you have no interest in such information, or in the proceeds of any sale, license, or other commercialization thereof. You acknowledge that the rights conferred by this Section are the principal consideration for the provision of the Services, without which we would not enter into this Agreement.

#### **2.5 Restrictions.**

Except as expressly permitted in this Agreement, Customer shall not directly or indirectly: (a) access, use, sell, distribute, sublicense, broadcast or commercially exploit any of the Emergency Networking Property or any rights under this Agreement; (b) introduce any infringing, obscene, libelous, or otherwise unlawful data or material into the Service; (c) copy, modify or prepare derivative works based on Emergency Networking Property; (d) reverse engineer, decompile, disassemble or attempt to derive source code from any Emergency Networking Property; or (e) remove, obscure, or alter any intellectual property right or confidentiality notices appearing in or on any aspect of any Emergency Networking Property.

## 3. FEES.

### 3.1 Fees for Service.

As consideration for the license to use the Service granted hereunder, Customer will pay all fees specified during the account registration process, on a recurring or other basis as established at such time, all as set forth in Bid Proposal, attached hereto.

### 3.2 Invoicing and Payment.

Emergency Networking bills recurring fees on a monthly basis or annual basis, based the number of modules selected on flat annual monthly or annual fee. Invoiced charges are due net 30 days from invoice date. Customer is responsible for providing complete and accurate billing information to Emergency Networking and notifying Emergency Networking of any changes to such information.

### 3.3 Overdue Payments.

If Emergency Networking does not receive an invoiced amount by the due date, then, without limiting Emergency Networking's rights or remedies, (a) such overdue charges may accrue late interest at the rate of 1.5% of the outstanding balance per month, or the maximum rate permitted by law, whichever is lower, and/or (b) Emergency Networking may condition future subscription renewals on payment terms and methods shorter than those specified herein, including pre-payment or payment by credit card or electronic transfer.

### 3.4 Suspension of Service.

If any amount owed by Customer under this Agreement is 30 or more days overdue, Emergency Networking may, without limiting its rights and remedies, accelerate the entire unpaid fee obligations hereunder so that all of Customer's obligations become immediately due and payable, and suspend the Service to Customer until such amounts are paid in full. Emergency Networking shall provide Customer with at least 10 days prior notice that Customer's account is overdue before suspending the Service.

### 3.5 Taxes.

Emergency Networking's fees do not include taxes, levies, duties or similar governmental assessments of any nature (including for example, sales, use, ad-valorem, value-added or withholding taxes). Customer is responsible for paying all taxes associated with Customer's use of the Service. If Emergency Networking has a legal obligation to pay or collect taxes for which Customer is responsible under applicable law, Emergency Networking will include such taxes in its invoices, and Customer will pay such taxes in addition to the fees for the Service, unless Customer provides Emergency Networking with a valid exemption certificate authorized by the appropriate taxing authority.

## 4. TERM AND TERMINATION

### 4.1 Service Term.

The term of this Agreement (the “Service Term”) will commence when Customer registers for the account specified in Section 1 and will continue until terminated in accordance with this Agreement. The term of the subscription period for the Service will be for **12Months**. Service Term subscriptions will automatically renew for additional periods equal to the expiring subscription term, unless either party gives the other written notice of non-renewal at least 60 days before the end of the relevant subscription term. Fees during any annual automatic renewal term will not increase by more than **5%** from the immediately prior term. Any special terms (In Section 12) listed below that modify the term length & price increases will supersede the language in this section.

**Customer Initials (Agreeing to Service Term)**

*J.H.*

**4.2 Termination.**

A party may terminate this Agreement for cause (a) upon 30 days' notice to the other party of a material breach if such breach remains uncured at the expiration of such 30-day period; or (b) immediately if the other party becomes the subject of a petition in bankruptcy or other proceeding relating to insolvency, receivership, liquidation or assignment for the benefit of creditors

**4.3 Customer Data Portability and Deletion.**

Upon request made by Customer made within 60 days after the effective date of any termination of this Agreement or expiration of the Service Term, Emergency Networking and its Affiliates will make all Customer Data available to Customer for export or download. Customer will have the option to continue to access their data online in a read only mode for a monthly or annual fee. After such 60-day period, Emergency Networking will have no obligation to maintain or provide access to Customer Data, and Emergency Networking and its Affiliates will thereafter be permitted to delete or destroy all copies of Customer Data in its/their systems or otherwise in its/their possession or control as provided in the hosting service provider’s terms and conditions, unless prohibited by applicable law.

## **5. WARRANTIES AND LIMITATIONS**

**5.1 Representations.**

Each party hereby represents to the other that it has validly entered into this Agreement and has the legal power to do so, and that such party will comply with all applicable laws and regulations that may be in effect during the Service Term as they apply to such party’s obligations under this Agreement. In addition, Customer represents to Emergency Networking that the Customer Data, and the lawful use thereof by Emergency Networking, does not, and will not, infringe, or constitute an infringement or misappropriation of, any intellectual property rights, privacy rights or other proprietary rights of any third party or breach the terms of any agreement with a third party.

**5.2 Emergency Networking Warranties.**

Emergency Networking warrants that (a) this Agreement, any Affiliate(s)’ terms and conditions and any account sign-up materials accurately describe the safeguards for protection of the security, confidentiality and integrity of Customer Data, (b) Emergency Networking will not materially decrease

overall security of the Service during the Service Term, (c) the Service will perform materially in accordance with this Agreement and any documentation provided to Customer on the Site or otherwise in the account sign-up materials, and (d) other than as required by Affiliate(s)' terms and conditions, Emergency Networking will not materially decrease the functionality of the Service during the Service Term.

### **5.3 Disclaimers.**

EXCEPT AS EXPRESSLY PROVIDED HEREIN, NEITHER PARTY MAKES ANY WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, WHETHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, STATUTORY OR OTHERWISE, AND EACH PARTY SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIMS ALL IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR NON-INFRINGEMENT, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT PERMITTED BY APPLICABLE LAW

## 6. INDEMNIFICATION

### 6.1 By Emergency Networking

Emergency Networking will defend Customer from and against any and all loss, damage, liability, and expense arising from or relating to any claim brought against Customer by a third party alleging that the use of the Service in accordance with this Agreement infringes or misappropriates such third party's intellectual property rights.

## 7. LIMITATIONS ON LIABILITY

### 7.1 Limitations on Liability

If Emergency Networking fails to perform its duties and obligations under this Agreement, and Customer can establish that as a direct result thereof, Customer has incurred any damages, liabilities, losses, fees, costs or expenses, then Emergency Networking's liability to Customer for actual damages for any cause whatsoever, during the Service Term, whether in contract, tort (including negligence), strict liability or otherwise, shall not exceed in the aggregate the fees that Customer has paid for the Service during the Service Term. IN NO EVENT SHALL EMERGENCY NETWORKING OR ITS OFFICERS, MANAGERS, EMPLOYEES, AFFILIATES OR AGENTS BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOSS OF PROFIT OR ANY INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL, EXEMPLARY, MULTIPLE, PUNITIVE OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES SUSTAINED OR INCURRED BY CUSTOMER OR ANY THIRD PARTY IN CONNECTION WITH THE SERVICE, ANY ACTION ANY OF THEM TAKE OR FAIL TO TAKE AS A RESULT OF COMMUNICATIONS CUSTOMER SENDS TO EMERGENCY NETWORKING OR THE DELAY OR INABILITY TO USE ANY SERVICE, OR EMERGENCY NETWORKING'S OR ITS AFFILIATE(S) REMOVAL, MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION OR DELETION OF ANY PART OF THE SERVICE PURSUANT TO ITS RIGHTS UNDER THIS AGREEMENT, IN ALL CASES, REGARDLESS OF THE FORM OF THE ACTION AND WHETHER SUCH DAMAGES WERE FORESEEN OR UNFORESEEN AND EVEN IF EMERGENCY NETWORKING HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES. EXCEPT FOR AN ACTION FOR NON-PAYMENT BY EMERGENCY NETWORKING, NO ACTION, REGARDLESS OF FORM, ARISING OUT OF THIS AGREEMENT MAY BE BROUGHT BY EITHER PARTY MORE THAN ONE YEAR AFTER THE CAUSE OF ACTION HAS OCCURRED.

## 8. DATA

### 8.1 Security

Emergency Networking and its Affiliates will use reasonable efforts to establish and maintain safeguards to protect the security and integrity of the Service and protect against the accidental or unauthorized use, alteration or disclosure of Customer Data. Emergency Networking will arrange for provision of hosting services for Customer Data which provide confidentiality procedures which are consistent with the Privacy Rule set forth in the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Hosting services provided by Amazon Web are subject to the HIPAA Compliance Guidelines found at: Security. Emergency Networking and its Affiliates will use reasonable efforts to establish and maintain safeguards to protect the security and integrity of the Service and protect against the accidental or unauthorized use, alteration or disclosure of Customer

Data. Emergency Networking will arrange for provision of hosting services for Customer Data which provide confidentiality procedures which are consistent with the Privacy Rule set forth in the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Hosting services provided by Amazon Web are subject to the HIPAA Compliance Guidelines found at: <https://aws.amazon.com/compliance/hipaa-compliance/>.

## **8.2 Backups**

Emergency Networking and its Affiliates will use reasonable efforts to establish and maintain regularly scheduled backups with respect to all Customer Data.

## 9. MISCELLANEOUS

### 9.1 Assignment

Customer may not assign any of its rights or obligations under this Agreement, by operation of law or otherwise, without first obtaining Emergency Networking's written consent, except that Customer may assign this Agreement without Emergency Networking's consent (i) to an affiliate (controlled by or under common control with, Customer); or (ii) in connection with a merger, acquisition, corporate reorganization, or sale of all or substantially all of Customer's assets not involving a direct competitor of Emergency Networking; provided that Customer provides prompt written notice to Emergency Networking of such assignment. Any permitted assignment by Customer shall not modify the terms hereof, including without limitation, the specific geographic location applicable to the Service. Any attempt to assign Customer's rights or obligations under this Agreement in breach of this section shall be void and of no effect. Subject to the foregoing, this Agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of the parties and their respective successors and permitted assigns.

### 9.2 Notice

Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, any notice to Customer that is required or permitted by this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed effective upon transmission when mailed by first class, registered or certified mail, postage prepaid or when sent by overnight courier service, to the address provided by Customer in the account sign-up provided to Emergency Networking in connection with entering into this Agreement or to such other address as provided in writing by Customer to Emergency Networking for such purposes. Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, any notice to Emergency Networking that is required or permitted by this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed effective upon receipt, when mailed by first class, registered or certified mail, postage prepaid or when sent by overnight courier service, such as Federal Express or equivalent, to: Emergency Networking, Inc., P.O. Box 20559, Columbus, Ohio 43220, Attn: Legal Notice.

### 9.3 Force Majeure

Due performance of any duty or obligation hereunder by Emergency Networking hereunder shall be excused if prevented by acts of God, information providers or other service providers, public enemy, war, terrorism, any accident, explosion, fire, storm, earthquake, flood, strike, computer outage or virus, telecommunications failure, or any other circumstance beyond or event Emergency Networking's reasonable control.

### 9.4 Severability

If any one or more of the provisions of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable for any reason, then the validity, legally or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby. To the extent permitted by applicable law, the parties waive any provisions of law that render any provision of this Agreement invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect.

### 9.5 Waiver or Consent

Any failure by either of the Parties to comply with any obligation, covenant, condition, or agreement contained herein may be waived in writing by the party entitled to the benefits thereof, but such waiver or failure to insist on strict compliance with such obligation, covenant, condition or agreement

shall not operate as a waiver of or estoppel with respect to any subsequent or other failure. To be effective, any consent by Emergency Networking must be in writing and signed by an authorized representative of Emergency Networking.

## **9.6 Entire Agreement**

This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding of the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes and replaces all prior writings or oral negotiations or other understandings with respect thereto.

## **9.7 Independent Parties**

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as creating a partnership, joint venture, fiduciary, or agency relationship between the parties, or as authorizing either party to act as an agent for the other. The parties to this Agreement are independent parties.

## **9.8 Governing Law; Forum for Disputes**

This Agreement and all terms and conditions included or incorporated by reference herein shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio applicable to agreements made and wholly performed therein. Customer hereby consents to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal and state courts of competent jurisdiction located in Franklin County, Ohio for the adjudication of any disputes arising out of or relating to this Agreement or Customer's access to or use of the Services. Customer hereby waives any objection to venue or inconvenient forum laid therein.

# **10. MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT**

## **10.1. Maintenance**

The following items define what is included as part of maintenance:

10.1.1 Included maintenance is defined as updates to either remedy software defects or provide enhancements to all Emergency Networking modules core and customized software. Emergency Networking reserves the right to update software at any time, however, will make efforts to notify Customer in advance of any maintenance.

## **10.2. Support**

These following items define what is included as part of support:

10.2.1 Included support is defined as 24-hour email support; and phone support, Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 6 pm EST. Support requests will be logged via email, phone, and/or within the system and Customer will be notified as to the status of the support request within 12 hours of receipt. In good faith, Emergency Networking will make its best effort to resolve issues in a timely manner depending upon the nature of the request.

10.2.2 Unless otherwise agreed upon in Exhibit A, excluded support is defined as on-site support or support of hardware and software solutions with which Aldrin may require to run on and or integrate with.

## 11. ATTACHMENTS

11. Attachments. The following attachments are an integral component of this agreement:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have entered into this agreement effective as of the date first set forth above.

## 12. SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

*This space reserved for any contractual changes or special agreements.*

**None**

**\*\* Please Submit a Copy of Your Tax-Exempt Certificate with this order or "Tax" will be added to this order.**

Emergency Networking

Customer

*Sean Rawsey*

*JW Hopper*

2025-12-30

2026-04-30

# CERTIFICATE *of* SIGNATURE

REF. NUMBER  
IO2WC-BGQXR-4FCHG-F8BFD

DOCUMENT COMPLETED BY ALL PARTIES ON  
30 DEC 2025 13:13:52  
UTC

## SIGNER

## TIMESTAMP

## SIGNATURE

**JW HOPPER**

EMAIL  
JWHOPPER@LAUREL.MT.GOV

SHARED VIA  
LINK

SENT  
18 DEC 2025 01:45:04

VIEWED  
18 DEC 2025 02:25:31

SIGNED  
29 DEC 2025 22:42:16



IP ADDRESS  
72.175.80.66

LOCATION  
BILLINGS, UNITED STATES

**SEAN RAMSEY**

EMAIL  
SEAN.RAMSEY@EMERGENCYNETWORKING.COM

SENT  
18 DEC 2025 01:45:04

VIEWED  
30 DEC 2025 13:13:41

SIGNED  
30 DEC 2025 13:13:52



IP ADDRESS  
163.116.145.53

LOCATION  
ASHBURN, UNITED STATES

## RECIPIENT VERIFICATION

EMAIL VERIFIED  
30 DEC 2025 13:13:41



**File Attachments for Item:**

18. Resolution No. R26-11: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Sign An Agreement With CivicPlus For Services Relating To Upgrading The City's Website, Agenda And Meeting Management, Media, AudioEye, And DocAccess.

**RESOLUTION NO. R26-11**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH CIVICPLUS FOR SERVICES RELATING TO UPGRADING THE CITY'S WEBSITE, AGENDA AND MEETING MANAGEMENT, MEDIA, AUDIOEYE, AND DOCACCESS.**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana,

Section 1: Approval. The Agreements between the City of Laurel and CivicPlus, a copy of each agreement attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby approved.

Section 2: Execution. The Mayor and the City Clerk of the City of Laurel are hereby given authority to execute the Agreements on behalf of the City.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on April 14, 2026, by Council Member \_\_\_\_\_.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026.

CITY OF LAUREL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Waggoner, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Strecker, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Braukmann, City Attorney



**CivicPlus**

302 South 4th St. Suite 500  
 Manhattan, KS 66502  
 US

**Quote #:**  
**CivicPlus Pricing**  
**Approval Date:**  
**Expires On:**

Statement of Work  
 Q-97774-1  
 3/23/2026 6:54 PM  
 6/3/2025

**Client:**  
 City of Laurel, MT

**Bill To:**  
 LAUREL CITY, MONTANA

SALESPERSON	Phone	EMAIL	DELIVERY METHOD	PAYMENT METHOD
Rewen Reyes		rewen.reyes@civicplus.com		Net 30

One-time(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	Migration Standard Implementation	Includes Full Setup and Configuration of Website Design Selected From 1 of 5 Layout Options
1.00	Content Migration	All Publicly Available Non-time Sensitive Published Content Migrated While Maintaining Formatting. Spelling & Links Check Completed.
1.00	Group Training	3 Seats of Pre-scheduled Joint Training Sessions Up-to 3-Hours per Session
1.00	Meeting Migration	All Publicly Available Word / PDF Formatted Meetings and Agendas Migrated

Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	Municipal Websites Central: Starter Hosting and Security Annual Fee	Municipal Websites Central: Module Based Hosting and Security Annual Fee
1.00	Municipal Websites Central: Starter Standard Annual Fee	Municipal Websites Central : Starter Standard Annual Fee
1.00	SSL Management CivicPlus Provided	SSL Management CivicPlus Provided: <a href="https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/">https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/</a>

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	DNS and Domain Hosting Annual Fee	DNS and Domain Hosting Annual Fee: <a href="https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/">https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/</a>

Initial Term	Beginning at signing and ending 1/31/2028, Renewal Term 2/1 each calendar year
Initial Term Invoice Schedule	Year One Annual Total invoiced upon the signature date of this Agreement, subject to proration if the term begins at signing. Subsequent Annual Totals invoiced every 12 months starting at Renewal Term.

	Annual Subscription	One Time Fees	Annual Total
<b>Year One</b>	USD 0.00	USD 0.00	USD 0.00
<b>Year Two</b>	USD 4,525.25		USD 4,525.25
<b>Subtotal</b>			USD 4,525.25
<b>Annual Recurring Services Starting Year 3</b>			USD 4,751.51
Renewal Procedure	Automatic 1 year renewal term, unless 60 days notice provided prior to renewal date		
Annual Uplift	5% to be applied in year 3		

This Statement of Work ("SOW") shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the CivicPlus Master Services Agreement and the applicable Solution and Services terms and conditions located at <https://www.civicplus.help/hc/en-us/p/legal-stuff> (collectively, the "Binding Terms"). By signing this SOW, Client expressly agrees to the terms and conditions of the Binding Terms throughout the term of this SOW.

Please note that this document is a SOW and not an invoice. Upon signing and submitting this SOW, Client will receive the applicable invoice according to the terms of the invoicing schedule outlined herein.

Client may issue purchase orders for its internal, administrative use only, and not to impose any contractual terms. Any terms contained in any such purchase orders issued by the Client are considered null and will not alter the Binding Terms, the Agreement or this SOW.

Total Investment – Initial Term to be prorated based on signature date.

**Acceptance of Quote # Q-97774-1**

The undersigned acknowledges having read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the binding terms and conditions incorporated into this SOW. This SOW shall become effective as of the date of the last signature below ("Effective Date").

For CivicPlus Billing Information, please visit <https://www.civicplus.com/verify/>

Authorized Client Signature

CivicPlus

By (please sign):

By (please sign):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Organization Legal Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: (If different from above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
PO Number: (Info needed on Invoice (PO or Job#) if required)



**CivicPlus**

302 South 4th St. Suite 500  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
US

**Quote #:**  
**Date:**  
**Expires On:**

Statement of Work  
Q-118010-1  
2/23/2026 3:46 PM  
4/24/2026

**Client:**  
City of Laurel, MT

**Bill To:**  
LAUREL CITY, MONTANA

SALESPERSON	Phone	EMAIL	DELIVERY METHOD	PAYMENT METHOD
Rewen Reyes		rewen.reyes@civicplus.com		Net 30

One-time(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	AudioEye Managed Implementation	AudioEye Managed Implementation

Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	AudioEye Managed	AudioEye Managed: URL

Total Investment - Prorated Year 1	USD 3,700.00
Annual Recurring Services (Subject to Uplift)	USD 3,200.00

Total Days of Quote:365

Initial Term	12 Months Beginning at Signing
Initial Term Invoice Schedule	100% Invoiced upon Signature Date

The Annual Recurring Services subscription fee for the Products (as described above) included in this SOW are prorated and co-termed to align with the Client's current billing schedule and the Annual Recurring Services amount will subsequently be added to Client's Term and regularly scheduled annual invoices under the terms of the Agreement. This Statement of Work ("SOW") shall be subject to the terms and conditions of Master Services Agreement signed by and between the Parties and the applicable Solutions and Services Terms and Conditions located at: <https://www.civicplus.help/docs/civicplus-legal-stuff> (collective, the "Agreement"). By signing this SOW, Client expressly agrees to the terms and conditions of the Agreement, as though set forth herein.

Please note that this document is a SOW and not an invoice. Upon signing and submitting this SOW, Client will receive the applicable invoice according to the terms of the invoicing schedule outlined herein.

Client may issue purchase orders for its internal, administrative use only, and not to impose any contractual terms. Any terms contained in any such purchase orders issued by the Client are considered null and will not alter the Binding Terms, the Agreement or this SOW.

**Acceptance of Quote # Q-118010-1**

The undersigned acknowledges having read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the binding terms and conditions incorporated into this SOW. This SOW shall become effective as of the date of the last signature below ("Effective Date").

For CivicPlus Billing Information, please visit <https://www.civicplus.com/verify/>

Authorized Client Signature

CivicPlus

By (please sign):

By (please sign):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Organization Legal Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: (If different from above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
PO Number: (Info needed on Invoice (PO or Job#) if required)



**CivicPlus**

302 South 4th St. Suite 500  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
US

**Quote #:**  
**Date:**  
**Expires On:**

Statement of Work  
Q-118012-1  
2/23/2026 3:52 PM  
4/24/2026

**Client:**  
City of Laurel, MT

**Bill To:**  
LAUREL CITY, MONTANA

SALESPERSON	Phone	EMAIL	DELIVERY METHOD	PAYMENT METHOD
Rewen Reyes		rewen.reyes@civicplus.com		Net 30

Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	DocAccess	DocAccess is a document accessibility platform that scans, converts, and monitors PDF documents on websites to support ADA and Section 508 compliance efforts for users with disabilities.

Total Investment - Prorated Year 1	USD 4,438.60
Annual Recurring Services (Subject to Uplift)	USD 4,438.60

Total Days of Quote:365

Initial Term	12 Months Beginning at Signing
Initial Term Invoice Schedule	100% Invoiced upon Signature Date

The Annual Recurring Services subscription fee for the Products (as described above) included in this SOW are prorated and co-termed to align with the Client's current billing schedule and the Annual Recurring Services amount will subsequently be added to Client's Term and regularly scheduled annual invoices under the terms of the Agreement. This Statement of Work ("SOW") shall be subject to the terms and conditions of Master Services Agreement signed by and between the Parties and the applicable Solutions and Services Terms and Conditions located at: <https://www.civicplus.help/docs/civicplus-legal-stuff> (collective, the "Agreement"). By signing this SOW, Client expressly agrees to the terms and conditions of the Agreement, as though set forth herein.

Please note that this document is a SOW and not an invoice. Upon signing and submitting this SOW, Client will receive the applicable invoice according to the terms of the invoicing schedule outlined herein.

Client may issue purchase orders for its internal, administrative use only, and not to impose any contractual terms. Any terms contained in any such purchase orders issued by the Client are considered null and will not alter the Binding Terms, the Agreement or this SOW.

**Acceptance of Quote # Q-118012-1**

The undersigned acknowledges having read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the binding terms and conditions incorporated into this SOW. This SOW shall become effective as of the date of the last signature below ("Effective Date").

For CivicPlus Billing Information, please visit <https://www.civicplus.com/verify/>

Authorized Client Signature

CivicPlus

By (please sign):

By (please sign):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Organization Legal Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: (If different from above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
PO Number: (Info needed on Invoice (PO or Job#) if required)



**CivicPlus**

302 South 4th St. Suite 500  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
US

Statement of Work  
Q-120089-1

**Quote #:**  
**CivicPlus Pricing**  
**Approval Date:**  
**Expires On:**

5/18/2026

**Client:**  
City of Laurel, MT

**Bill To:**  
LAUREL CITY, MONTANA

SALESPERSON	Phone	EMAIL	DELIVERY METHOD	PAYMENT METHOD
Rewen Reyes		rewen.reyes@civicplus.com		Net 30

Added One-time(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	Conversion Pro Premium Implementation	Includes config. of up to 6 existing meeting types, up to 6 existing boards, 1 approval workflow per existing meeting type, 1 existing staff report, access to 4h of group training, 1h of consulting and recorded training resources
1.00	CivicPlus Media: Implementation Fee	CivicPlus Media: Implementation Fee

Added Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	AMM Select: Pro Annual Fee	AMM Select: Pro Annual Fee
1.00	AMM Select: AI Editing Assistant	AI Editing Assistant is an optional AMMS feature that enables authorized users to enhance agenda and meeting content using integrated AI tools to generate, summarize, rewrite, or polish text in fields like item descriptions, fiscal info, and minutes.
1.00	CivicPlus Media: Annual Fee	CivicPlus Media Annual Fee: Unlimited storage, unlimited users, up to 3 concurrent streams

Removed Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
0.00	Agenda & Meeting Management Essential Premium Annual Renewal	Municode Codification Meetings Premium Annual Renewal

List Price - Initial Term Total	USD 8,605.07
Total Investment - Initial Term	USD 5,813.89
Annual Recurring Services (Subject to Uplift)	USD 6,810.00

Initial Term	Beginning at signing and ending 11/30/2026, Renewal Term 12/1 each calendar year
Initial Term Invoice Schedule	100% invoiced at signing, to be prorated based on signature date.

Renewal Procedure	Automatic 1 year renewal term, unless 60 days notice provided prior to renewal date
Annual Uplift	0% to be applied in year 2

This Statement of Work ("SOW") shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the CivicPlus Master Services Agreement and the applicable Solution and Services terms and conditions located at <https://www.civicplus.help/hc/en-us/p/legal-stuff> (collectively, the "Binding Terms"). By signing this SOW, Client expressly agrees to the terms and conditions of the Binding Terms throughout the term of this SOW.

Please note that this document is a SOW and not an invoice. Upon signing and submitting this SOW, Client will receive the applicable invoice according to the terms of the invoicing schedule outlined herein.

Client may issue purchase orders for its internal, administrative use only, and not to impose any contractual terms. Any terms contained in any such purchase orders issued by the Client are considered null and will not alter the Binding Terms, the Agreement or this SOW.

Total Investment – Initial Term to be prorated based on signature date.

**Acceptance of Quote # Q-120089-1**

The undersigned acknowledges having read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the binding terms and conditions incorporated into this SOW. This SOW shall become effective as of the date of the last signature below ("Effective Date").

For CivicPlus Billing Information, please visit <https://www.civicplus.com/verify/>

Authorized Client Signature

CivicPlus

By (please sign):

By (please sign):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Organization Legal Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Billing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: (If different from above)






\_\_\_\_\_  
PO Number: (Info needed on Invoice (PO or Job#) if required)




## AudioEye

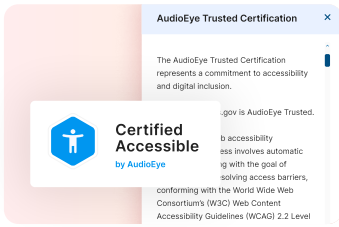
Improve compliance with hands-off web accessibility and remediation.

### AudioEye Benefits:

-  **Gain peace of mind** with trusted, certified website accessibility alignment to WCAG 2.2 standards
-  **Demonstrate and prove accessibility efforts** with simplified reporting
-  **Take the guesswork out of ADA compliance** with our unique approach that combines automated remediation, expert fixes, and continuous monitoring
-  **Reduce the costs of maintaining compliance** with hands-off remediation services
-  **Provide instant website accessibility and personalization for visitors with and without disabilities** with the Accessibility Help Desk tool

“Since implementing AudioEye, a huge burden has been lifted off my shoulders. I trust them to address accessibility issues, which has allowed me to focus on other priorities. It’s so important to have a tool that not only improves your position on accessibility but also alleviates the heavy workload that comes with maintaining compliance at a high level. AudioEye has truly been a breath of fresh air in this regard.”

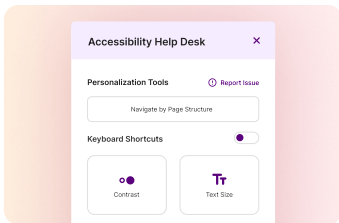
 **Chaquinta Fisher, IT Support Manager | McLennan Country**



## Hands-off Accessibility Remediation

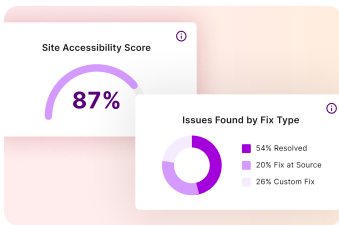
AudioEye automatically fixes most accessibility issues, while improving ongoing compliance with the latest standards. Our certified experts write custom fixes for accessibility issues on your website that automation alone can't fix.

AudioEye provides an Accessibility Trusted Certification that details and validates your organization's commitment to digital inclusion and conformance to WCAG and other ADA-related laws, mandates, and guidelines.



## Accessibility Help Desk Tool

Website visitors can personalize their experiences and improve accessibility by customizing things like contrast, text size, images, and more. Additionally, users can submit feedback through a 24/7 Help Desk if they encounter access barriers on a website.



## Compliance Reporting

Comprehensive reporting gives better visibility into flagged accessibility issues and enables you to effectively provide proof of compliance progress. Receive reporting for a period of time on items like site accessibility score, issue found by fix type, issues fixed by severity, top fixes applied to site, and more.



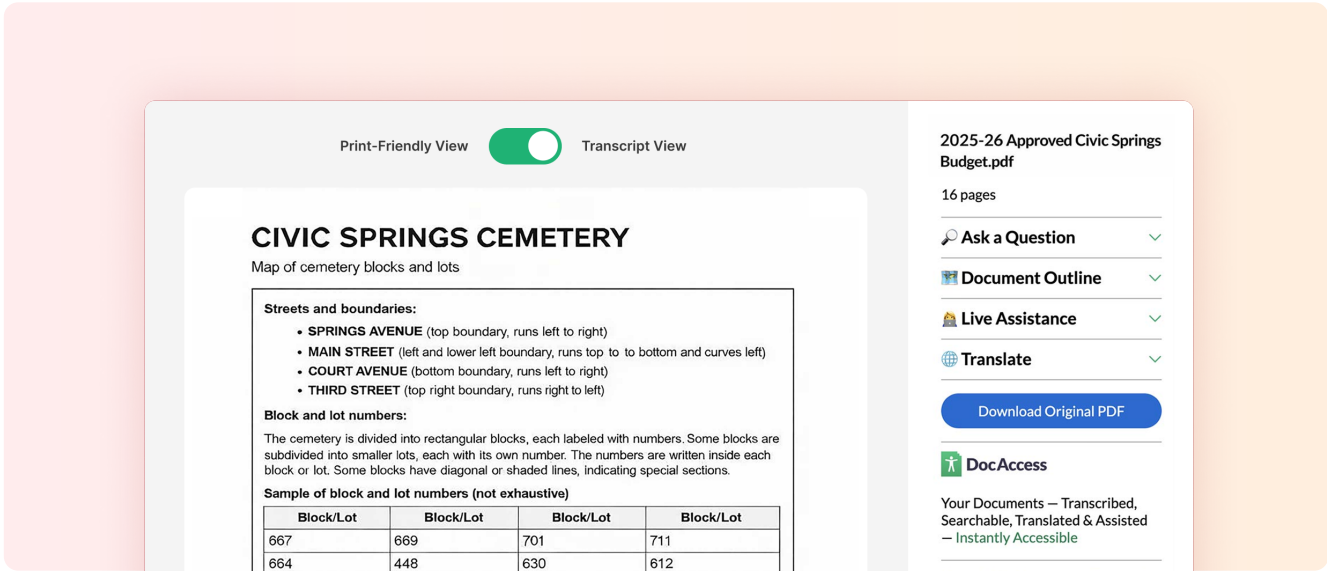
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**150+**

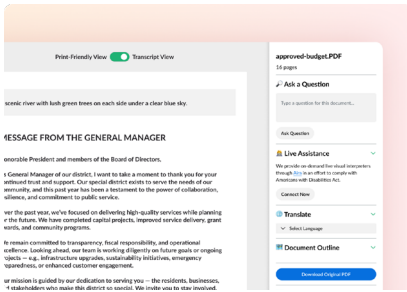
language translations provided

**1 Day**

to set up on your website

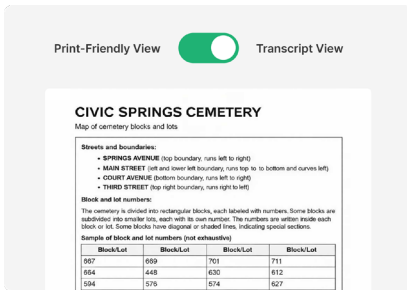
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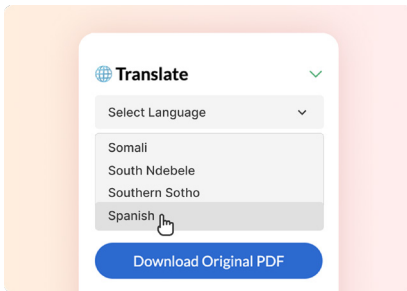
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**File Attachments for Item:**

19. NWE FERC Letter of Support Discussion

**Laurel FERC**

**YOUR HEADER**

**DATE**

**Sample letter**

The Honorable Laura V. Swett  
ER26-129-002  
Chairman  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First St NE  
Washington, DC 20426

Docket

Dear Charman Swett and Commissioners, Rosner, See, Chang and LaCerte,

The Laurel City Council represents a unique population, all of which are NorthWestern Energy customers. Many work at the Railroad Switch Yard and the Cenex Refinery (the largest refinery in Montana). For such a small community we consume a large amount of energy and produce a large amount of energy. Most of our residents work regular jobs and many are retired. Many of our businesses are small and struggling.

Our population growth is often people moving here to avoid the costs of living, or retiring in, bigger cities. Our energy consumption will continue to increase along with the rest of Montana. This with a backdrop of an ill-liquid energy market and stretched capacity of rate-based energy and transmission up grades. Because of this we are experiencing double-digit rate increases every few years.

With great concern we learned of NorthWestern Energy's move to change the 370 MW of generation received, at no cost, from Puget Sound and Energy from rate based to market based (Cost Based Tariff). Removing this resource from the control of the Montana Public Service Commission, and in service to all of NWE customers, to benefit just a few new customers, is counter intuitive. Especially since, as our "default supplier", NWE's only obligation is to serve their captive customers.

Commissioners, except for a few moderate days in late spring and early fall we are often energy deficit and must go to the market to balance our energy consumption and generation. Rate basing the 370MW mentioned would not only take us out of an illiquid energy market, thus providing relief to a stressed grid, but also provide a capacity for economic growth to all; not just a few or one data center. Yes, even the "new large load" customers would benefit from rate basing this resource as indicated in NWE's recent Large Load Tariff filing with the Mt. Public Service Commission. If the Mt. PSC approves NWE's new Large Load Tariff legacy ratepayers could be paying for \$2.1B in new generation used only by data centers. Of course the attending rate decreases, if the

afore mentioned 370 MW are rate based, would help all as property taxes would drop after a recent history of massive market value increases have driven property taxes beyond the capacity of many on fixed incomes to pay.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital issue. We ask that you reconsider not only your determination that NWE can avoid scrutiny by upholding their determination that the capacity to generate 370MW in an energy deficit circumstance is of \$0 value. We also ask that you recognize that the generation being used is for the greatest good when it serves all equally.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
ETC

Council Members in Support

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name  
Lawyer, What ever

Teacher,

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BEFORE THE  
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**Northwest Western Colstrip 370Pu LLC )**

**ER26-129-001**

**REQUEST FOR REHEARING ON BEHALF OF NORTHWESTERN ENERGY'S  
CAPTIVE MONTANA CUSTOMERS AS REPRESENTED BY MONTANA'S  
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**

Montana Commissioners Brad Molnar and Randall Pinocci (Montana's Independent Commissioners or ICs) respectfully request that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) grant rehearing of the February 27, 2026 Order Accepting Tariff Revisions (Order).<sup>1</sup> FERC relied on misleading information provided by Northwestern in response to a deficiency letter; information that led FERC to believe that the jurisdictional asset being sold had no market value and therefore Federal Power Act Section 203 approval was not required. The ICs recognize the political pressure that was brought to bear in an attempt to persuade FERC to reach this conclusion, but the fact remains that this asset has become very valuable. Had FERC directed Northwestern to provide a current market value assessment rather than rely on unsworn statements submitted by the very parties seeking to avoid FERC's Section 203 jurisdiction, it would have been obvious that Northwestern's preferred valuation was suspect. The asset is an operating and profitable steam generating plant with a current replacement cost of approximately \$600M to \$800M. The only thing that made it valueless to utilities on the west coast was its fuel source - - coal. That story has completely changed in the last year as even cursory research would demonstrate.

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<sup>1</sup> Order Accepting Tariff Revisions, *North Western Colstrip 370Pu LLC*, 194 FERC ¶ 61,251 (2026) (Order).

FERC’s decision rests entirely on its misapplication of the rebuttable presumption that “the market price is the transaction price.”<sup>2</sup> In light of the relaxation of environmental controls applicable to coal plants, the exponential increase in demand being driven by artificial intelligence and associated data center growth, and the need for reliable dispatchable generation to serve this growing load, concluding that sale of a fully functioning coal plant with projected earnings in excess of \$30 million per year (according to the record) are obvious grounds not to rely on that presumption. Is it any surprise to FERC, given the west coast’s irrational dislike of coal generation, Washinton State legislation, and WUTC rulings, that Puget Sound would be “willing” to give away its ownership share of the Colstrip assets?

FERC has an “affirmative duty to inquire into and consider all relevant facts.”<sup>3</sup> FERC must consider arguments regarding its jurisdiction, or else it acts arbitrarily.<sup>4</sup> Because FERC defaulted to the rebuttable presumption in light of record evidence and instead of conducting a common sense review of the change in conditions since last Puget Sound sought to sell its share of Colstrip, its decision is unjust and unreasonable.<sup>5</sup>

In lieu of rejecting the filing, FERC should have set the docket for hearing so that a record could have been created to establish market value.

The ICs respectfully request that FERC grant rehearing and reject the filing or set it for hearing to establish the market value of this asset to determine whether FPA Section 203 applies.

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<sup>2</sup> Order, P 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference v. FPC*, 354 F.2d 608, 620 (2d Cir. 1965) (citing *Mich. Consol. Gas Co. v. FPC*, 283 F.2d 204, 224, 226, 108 U.S. App. D.C. 409 (D.C. Cir. 1960)).

<sup>4</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A), (2)(C); *Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference*, 354 F.2d, 608, 620 (2d Cir. 1965) (citing *Mich. Consol. Gas Co. v. FPC*, 283 F.2d 204, 224, 226, 108 U.S. App. D.C. 409 (D.C. Cir 1960)).

<sup>5</sup> *Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference*, 354 F.2d, 608, 620 (2d Cir. 1965) (citing *Mich. Consol. Gas Co. v. FPC*, 283 F.2d 204, 224, 226, 108 U.S. App. D.C. 409 (D.C. Cir 1960)).

## Specification of Errors and Statement of Issues

In compliance with Commission Rule 713(c)(1)-(2), the ICs identify the following issues with the Order and explain that the Commission erred as follows:

1. Issue: Whether FERC erred by relying on a rebuttable presumption that the transaction price is the market price despite record evidence to the contrary.

Answer: Yes, FERC erred. Record evidence demonstrated that the coal strip asset is expected to produce at least \$30 million in revenue per year. The threshold for FERC jurisdiction under FPA Section 203 is \$10 million. Clearly an asset that produces that level of revenue is not worthless. Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), federal agency actions are held as unlawful and set aside when they are “arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law.”<sup>6</sup> FERC has an “affirmative duty to inquire into and consider all relevant facts.”<sup>7</sup> The Commission’s decision to ignore these facts was arbitrary and capricious.

## REASONS FOR GRANTING REHEARING

At the center of this determination is the market value of Colstrip Units 3 & 4 driven in part by their capacity to generate 370MW in a reliable manner. The plant was operational on the day of the transfer. Profitable contracts had been negotiated so we must assume that this acquisition is at a value greater than the \$0 value claimed by the applicants. This is especially true because the plant is totally equipped with very expensive pollution control devices that make it 100% compliant with federal and state air quality standards. And has received recent upgrades.

Reliance by FERC on a rebuttable presumption that the acquisition price is the market value ignored significant evidence that the asset is not valued at zero dollars. An appraisal of the value would have at the very least reflected the revenue projected to be earned, the salvage value, land value, and in this case contract value at a minimum. The only real question is whether the market value of the transferred generation assets is above or below \$10M.

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<sup>6</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A).

<sup>7</sup> *Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference v. FPC*, 354 F.2d 608, 620 (2d Cir. 1965) (citing *Mich. Consol. Gas Co. v. FPC*, 283 F.2d 204, 224, 226, 108 U.S. App. D.C. 409 (D.C. Cir. 1960)).

FERC’s Rule, 18 CFR 33.1 (a) (ii), states that establishing a value of over \$10M may be done by “any means whatsoever”. Fortunately, there are many accurate methods. These are simple, common, and accepted across the board in every segment of society.

## **Market Value**

The highest price in terms of money which a property will bring in a competitive and open market under all condition’s requisite to a fair sale, the buyer and seller, each acting prudently, knowledgeably and assuming the price is not affected by undue stimulus.

There are several ways to value a business. Here are several that are commonly used:

Establishing a business’s value—often called “valuation”—is a blend of financial science and market reality. In 2026, most professionals triangulate value using three primary approaches.

### **The Market Approach (Multiples)**

This is the most common method for small to mid-sized businesses. It values a company based on what similar businesses have recently sold for.

- \* Earnings Multiples: You multiply a specific profit figure (typically EBITDA—Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization) by an industry-standard “multiple.”

- \* Example: If your EBITDA is \$1M and your industry multiple is 5x, the enterprise value is \$5M.

- \* SDE: For very small “Main Street” businesses, owners often use Seller’s Discretionary Earnings (SDE), which adds back the owner’s salary and perks.

### **The Income Approach (Discounted Cash Flow)**

This method looks at the future rather than the past. It is the “gold standard” for companies with high growth or predictable recurring revenue.

- \* DCF Analysis: It projects the business’s future cash flows (usually 5 years) and “discounts” them back to their value in today’s dollars using a discount rate (to account for risk and the time value of money).

## The Asset-Based Approach

This calculates the “liquidation” or “book value” of a company.

\* Formula: Total Assets - Total Liabilities = Net Asset Value.

\* It is generally used for under performing companies or those with significant physical holdings (like real estate or heavy machinery).

Key Value Drivers in 2026

Modern buyers look beyond the balance sheet. Factors that increase your “multiple” include:

\* Data Maturity: Having clean, actionable customer data.

\* Recurring Revenue: Subscription models are valued significantly higher than one-time sales.

\* Owner Independence: A business that can run without the founder is worth more.

Sources:

\* Auxo Capital Advisors (2026): “How to Value a Business: Step-by-Step Guide”

\* PwC (2026): “Global M&A Industry Trends”

\* The Hartford: “Determining Your Business’s Market Value”

All that shows that there are many accepted ways to appraise a venture, but NWE chose none. In fact, the only number they show for value is \$0 and they do not substantiate that. Instead, they chose to live in the past and ask the Commission to ignore present day reality, future contracts, cash flows, and accept a self-serving narrative that market value is not achieved via an agreed to price between a willing buyer and a willing seller. But rather established by a politically mandated abandonment date and a bar to selling the asset for even \$1.

In Commissioner Molnar’s discussions with industrial appraisers none found the market value of \$0 anything but laughable. None wish to be quoted for fear of political retaliation but all said they would testify if subpoenaed.

The qualifier (first sentence after Market Value) in the examples above is virtually identical to Montana’s definition of Market Value in Montana Code Annotated 15-8-111 (**Exhibit A**). (2) (a) “Market value is the value at which property could change hands between *a willing buyer and a willing seller*, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts.” Plainly PSE was under compulsion to not sell but rather to

“abandon”. The State of Montana had to use a realistic, legal, example of “market value” and did so properly placing that value at well over \$100,000,000.

The relevant fact is that NorthWestern Energy was the last standing qualified entity capable of receiving the Puget shares of the Colstrip Generating Plant because it could not be sold per Washington State law as interpreted by the WUTC. And the Colstrip Owners Agreement granted veto power over a transfer. Therefore, an asset-based approach (see above) was necessary to get realistic market value. Which the Montana Department of Revenue did, and NorthWestern Energy and Puget Sound and Energy should have presented to the Commission. **(Exhibit B)**

MCA 15-8-111 (2) (b) Plainly states that “If the department uses the cost approach as one approximation of market *value* (emphasis added), the department shall fully consider reduction in value caused by depreciation, whether through physical depreciation, functional obsolesce, or economic obsolesce”. These are the same rationales given to FERC by the applicant, Puget Sound and Energy, and Governor Gianforte but the definition of “depreciation” is different. FERC erred when they accepted their story line instead of demanding facts based on an appraisal, with NorthWestern having to provide the facts, not the Intervenors. In our original filing we clearly demonstrated the inaccurate and self-serving nature of PSE’s historical rendition so shall not repeat here.

Now we plead the established market value of PSE’s Colstrip holdings the day they transferred to NWE from a factual and provable basis.

Montana Code Annotated 15-6-156 (2) (i) (a) **(Exhibit A)** in pertinent part shows that the coal fired generation in question (2)(i)(a) is Class Thirteen Property and (4) shows the multiplier to establish the tax bill to be determined at 6% of *market value* established by the Montana Department of Revenue. The Commission’s own rules call for the establishment of *market value*

with acquisition value to be a rebuttable presumption, not a replacement for *proven* market value. Zero value is not common nor even logical. An easy rebut to the presumption would be an appraisal based on “comparative sales”. This was never pursued though it would have established a legitimate market value based on a willing buyer and a willing seller acting without compulsion. No explanation as to “why not” is offered.

### STATE’S LEGAL PROCESS

An email from Jonathan Rosling (**Exhibit B**), a utility appraiser for the Montana Department of Revenue, indicates that the arguments shared with them, and eventually FERC, regarding declining value were considered, and determinations made, in response to their arguments. This was done during the assessments for Tax Year 2024. Assessments are made every two years, so the 2024 market value assessment was used for the 2024 and 2025 tax bills though the market for coal plants had increased per undisputed MEIC testimony, and the undisputed testimony of the Independent Commissioners during the 2024 – 2025 timeline up to the day of transfer and after.

The market value for PSE’s Colstrip holding established in 2024 including the plant and pollution control equipment was \$134,169,942 (**Exhibit B**). Because this is a two year cycle the value on the day the plant and some environmental control equipment transferred to NorthWestern Energy was \$134,169,942. Puget and NorthWestern were only \$134,169,942 off in their assertions to FERC. Montana’s DoR market value determination was never appealed by PSE.

New numbers for the next assessment period are due March 31, 2026, the day after this compressed deadline. We assume that NWE’s tax calculation for 2026 will not read Market Value x 6% = Tax value \$0 because the Colstrip Owners have veto power.

Because PSE negotiated their “declining value theory” with Mr. Rosling (Exhibit B) and twice paid their tax bill since then the rebuttable presumption is that they were aware of this fact,

decided to roll the dice, and withhold the facts from FERC to benefit NWE. NorthWestern Energy is also centrally assessed, so knows that each such plant is taxed on Market Value after negotiation with Mt. DoR. Crystal Lail, Chief Financial Officer of NWE, testified at a rate hearing mid 2025 that she had recently negotiated property tax determinations with the Mt. DoR. Facts do not supplant facts. As to why NWE and PSE chose this high risk tactic remains a mystery. Perhaps a fear of the WUTC motivated their actions. Perhaps not. But their motive is of zero value.

### **CREDIBILITY**

This is standard practice for NorthWestern Energy and being used on FERC. Not only the lack of transparency but using time compression as a weapon against a full investigation. In a recent rate case they uniquely rolled in four other rate cases all to be determined in a 9-month time frame (the average time frame for one is 14 months) so they could declare their own rate increase. That rate case also took 14 months.

NWE is in a merger application with Black Hills Energy. The last merger application went on for 14 months and was for less than \$3B. Adjusted for inflation it was still under \$4B. The combined stock value of NWE and BHE in the current merger request is over \$15B. The hearing date is set for 6 months at the request of NWE and Black Hills Energy. During this time there have been protests that NWE has refused to answer substantive questions and in other ways impeded the process to not allow full and robust discovery very similar to the requests to abbreviate the public comment period so questions on this docket could not be raised. We are all victims when this happens. See (**EXHIBIT C**)

This exhibit, filed by Attorney Monica Tranel, a utility attorney formerly employed by the Mt. PSC, is twenty one pages of alleged efforts by NWE and BHE to use time compression, refusal to answer questions, or to falsely answer questions, to sabotage efforts to build a robust evidentiary

base from which the Mt. Commission can raise questions during the hearing and then make an informed decision. This certainly mirrors the tactics of NWE in this docket. Two weeks ago Commissioner Molnar raised similar issues and Commissioner Pinocci voted with him to have a public work session on the proper response to these concerns.

The Commission of course could not have known about the possible nexus between the acquisition and the merger outlined in Tranel's filings because NWE withheld it from you. Now that these statements are public, I am sharing them with you. This goes straight to credibility.

When a quasi-judicial body receives unsworn testimony the first question is if the testimony is contrived or accurate. Please review commentator's statements made during this investigation.

With one exception, none of them, to our knowledge, ever filed anything with FERC. Yet all filed within two days of the deadline, in theory, nullifying any counter points from being offered. All mis-stated the effects of the transfer ie attributing the benefits of the transaction to residential customers when in fact the benefits all flow to NWE's investors, and new large customers. All asked FERC to shorten the period of comment for both intervenors and the public though it is doubtful they even knew of this possibility, or would have condoned it, if not coached to do so. All requested a January 1, 2026 retroactive acceptance date. Logic dictates the conclusion that the public commentators (all politicians) were coached to get a second, unchallenged, bite at the apple and skew the public comment record.

If indeed coached the commentators were all put at risk for any future campaigns having stood for having the low cost energy reserved for a data center and not for residential rate payers. The political blow back on this would haunt NWE for years yet is apparently considered worth it for a plant of zero value.

Property taxes have been a huge issue in Montana for the past decade. Rapidly appreciating market values being multiplied by the tax rate, have forced people to pay taxes on unrealized capital gains without corresponding increases in income. This has been the conversation around every pot-bellied stove and pickle barrel in Montana. Were these elected officials oblivious to the deception their letters caused? Or was this just harmless street theater laid on the Commission?

Governor Gianforte also attributed the benefits of selling this super low-cost electricity to data centers as somehow providing services to residential rate payers. To put a fine point on this he also states that the transfer of this “zero value” holding is “consistent with the assets fully depreciated value.

Governor Gianforte is a seasoned, pragmatic, successful, businessman and a renowned philanthropist.

While serving in Congress he was rumored to be the wealthiest congressman. But he might not know that the full depreciation was not a stranded cost because the plant had reached its depreciation schedule end, or that it was old and beyond repair. Rather the depreciation schedule had been bought down to avoid stranded costs to whoever acquired it through abandonment. The “buy down” was done by Washington ratepayers. The zero dollar valuation is in response to a political mandate, not a market variable.

Governor Gianforte realizes that if one of his companies buys a warehouse and his accountants put it on a twenty-year depreciation schedule, at the end of the schedule, it will be depreciated out. And the same accountant will advise to purchase another warehouse to enjoy the tax advantages.

If the properties around the warehouse have gone up in value, Governor Gianforte will sell the warehouse for more than he paid for it. But if the property around his warehouse has dropped in value and/or the building has fallen into disrepair the appraisal may cause him to sell for less than he paid for the building and land twenty years before. An appraisal will show him and the buyer the current market value. At no point in this example would Governor Gianforte claim the warehouse is fully depreciated so it must be abandoned and transferred to a new owner in a zero-dollar transaction.

Yet Governor Gianforte, perhaps with the best of intentions, and NorthWestern Energy, guided by avarice and greed, and Puget Sound Energy trying to keep former Governor Inslee and the Insleeites happy, have indeed misled the Commission.

Commissioners Molnar and Pinocci are both seasoned political veterans and recognize that political pressure is common, but often with low yield results for the governed. The political pressure brought in this case championed the dismissal of solid, normal, appraisal tactics. The Commission must reject the political comments and, rather, rule based on facts and law.

### **FURTHER ECONOMIC VALUATION CONSIDERATIONS**

The market value of the Colstrip plant, \$115,214,707, more than satisfies the need to fill out a 203 Form. And Mt. DoR included \$18,955,235 in pollution control equipment for a total value of \$134,169,942. Other value additions are unnecessary but highlight the purposeful undervaluation presented by NWE and PSE to FERC.

NWE's response to the deficiency letter shows receiving 25% of the water shares of Castle Rock Lake to cool the plant. Water is a key component in operating a steam plant. Montana does not tax water rights, so a market value was not obtained from DoR records.

A true industrial audit would have given the water shares a market value. In the high plains prairie eco system, where the Colstrip Plant is located, the value of water is very high. Twenty-five percent of this 150-acre lake is possibly more than the \$10M in question, every year.

Mt. DoR valued only \$18,955,235 in pollution control equipment. The tax burden on such equipment ranges from \$0 to 3% of the market value. Much of the equipment does not qualify for special tax consideration because the Dept of Environmental Quality has not certified it. Despite the bureaucratic morass, it has value. Though not included in the “first blush” answer the values total, not including the \$19M mentioned above, \$106,391,441, found on Page 4 of 8. **EXHIBIT B**

Also found on page 4 of 8 are two pipelines and supplies to accommodate the plant valued at \$4,910,730. And two small substations, valued at \$3,912,509. We do not know if the substations transferred because PSE did not willingly account for transferred items. They may have been used in the operation of the plant and the transmission system NWE leased. Plainly, listing the market value of the items transferred was not considered supportive of their story line resulting in \$0 in value.

In NWE’s response to the deficiency letter was a listing of real estate parcels located in Colstrip, Mt. The Rosebud County Forsyth Field Office reports 182 locations in Colstrip, Mt listing PSE as owner or co-owner of the properties along with other owner interests in the plant. Mt. DoR recommended we contact the Field Office to get the valuations, and the Field Office told us to Contact the Mt. DoR. They then both told us to contact the Montana Office of Public Records Request. All messages sent through the portal have gone unanswered as of this sending. With the abbreviated time available the Independent Commissioners cannot provide the market value. Though certainly a great market value exists. NWE and PSE had a year to do this. **Exhibit D**

The market value is clearly over \$10M. The total overage is not important but the lack of transparency and the failure to provide documentation is.

### **COAL EXECUTIVE ORDER**

In response to your deficiency letter NWE claims that putting the former PSE generation in their hands, with a CBRT, would help keep the plants open and generating. And NWE states that this outcome supports the EO supporting the continued use of coal generated electricity. Commissioners Molnar and Pinocci offer an alternative view point while supporting EO 14621.

First the generation in anyone's hands would keep it open in our energy-starved nation. Second, if NWE acted like an Independent Power Producer and sold the electricity to their residential customers for \$21 MWh they would keep the plant open and make better money than their short term sales will generate, by 25%. Why did they opt to not do this?

With the 370 MWh rate based, as originally intended, and blended with current supplies, Montanans would enjoy the lowest residential and commercial rates in the nation. This would give Montanan's, the Montana legislature, and the Montana Public Service Commission every incentive to protect the asset and keep it operational even in the face of renewed federal burdens. We proudly stand in support of President Trumps statement during the recent State of the Nation address that Data Centers should provide their own energy. Your ruling is the exact opposite of that national goal.

### **MORE ON CREDIBILITY**

Compare the above sentiments of NWE to the historical antics of NorthWestern Energy, with many of the current top corporate officers still seated at the table.

Shortly after claiming financial reserves capable of securing the needs of the people of Montana to become Montana's default provider for their service area they declared bankruptcy.

This was due in part to the multiple fraudulent activities they engaged in before becoming the default provider. The allegations were upheld by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

While Montanans strained under the cost of keeping NWE afloat during the bankruptcy court proceedings NorthWestern offered to sell the original Colstrip Unit 4 (CU4) to a private buyer for \$403M after having acquired it for \$185 two years before. They offered to rate base it for \$403M so Montanans would not have to risk being in the day-ahead market for 5-7 years while a new gas plant was built. Then rate-base that plant. We rate based. The prospective buyer went bankrupt the following year.

Under the recent FERC ruling NWE residential customers would remain paying \$70 MWh from Colstrip Unit Four and the cost-based customers will be paying 425% less, at \$16.30 per MWh, for generation from the same plant. The Commissions recent decision is not balanced.

In the midst of bankruptcy NWE offered to transfer our transmission lines to an Australian Equity firm (Babcock and Brown) so they could use them as collateral and Montanans would have to pay the never-ending interest. Application denied. Babcock and Brown filed Chapter 11 the following year. At about the same time NWE offered to sell off our hydro generation system (Montanans still strained under the costs of keeping NWE afloat in the bankruptcy proceedings). We rate based the hydro system under duress for an estimated \$200M over appraised value (there remains some dispute on the amount of the overage because so much information was contradictory) and a 5% “carbon tax”...ON HYDRO!

As pointed out in the Monica Tranel’s 350 filing the income of the 370 MW’s may simply be uploaded to the umbrella group if the merger is approved by the Montana PSC and your tariff is allowed to stand.

Montana's Independent Commissioners firmly re-state that the best chance to keep CU 3&4's generation online is for the Montana Public Service Commission to hold the generation as rate based so the people of Montana can enjoy the benefits and protect them instead from allowing the generation to become just another piece in the corporate chess game being played by NWE.

#### **ADDENDUM**

The comments of the Montana Public Service Commission were not withdrawn due "inaccuracies". No such blemish exists. We attest that the points made on the need to file an accurate Form 203 are solid and perhaps could have avoided this dust up overvaluation and tariff. To that end we attach the original PSC filing as our own. **Addendum Exhibit D**

We note that in an unpublished, closed door, meeting between PSC leadership and NWE Governmental Affairs officers staff present remember that part of the presentation by NWE asking the PSC to withdraw their comments was that in the last year the valuation of coal plants had moved upward and they were afraid that if the Jan 1, 2026 deadline was missed PSE might cancel the abandonment and take the plant back to capitalize on the new market. I remember the same facts presented by PSC leadership in our meeting on this subject. Of course it was not possible under Washington law and precedent on this subject.

#### **CROSS SUBSIDIZATION**

Definition: Cross-subsidization is a pricing strategy where a company uses profits from high-margin products or services to cover the costs or losses of another product, service, or customer segment. It allows firms to set lower prices in one market to gain competitive advantage or increase affordability while maintaining profitability overall.

Mentioned in the FERC order **II Filing (6)** is that NWE has a contract for regulation product for the sales of it's 370 megawatts from Colstrip 3 and 4. We are not aware of such a "contract".

Monica Tranell of 350 Law mentions in her Emergency Motions to Stay that in an investors meeting NWE stated that with the addition of the Yellowstone County Gas Station, and the 370 Puget megawatts, NWE would have enough energy to serve it's new large customers.

The Yellowstone gas plant is a rate-based, multi purpose, plant and provides regulation products for Montana rate payers. NWE has admitted that they only charge the FERC Rate for this service, even for wind energy exported from Montana to Seattle by Puget Sound and Energy. FERC Rate does not cover costs borne by rate payers to service the new plants construction costs. This is referenced on P6 (13) of FERCs rendition of MEIC's arguments. MEIC and the IC agree on this point. MEIC's definition of cross-subsidization was and is correct in this context.

Plainly this is an illegal cross subsidization of NWE's wind contracts. For NWE to say they will use this same rate-based plant, without authorization, to serve those receiving what should be low cost megawatts serving Montana's captive customers, and have those ratepayers provide the plant for the regulation product, without compensation, is impermissible cross subsidization and a back handed slap. This is in contradiction with Commission comments on P 16 (42).

If the Commission does not want to call this cross-subsidization perhaps we can settle on Forced Investment Without Dividends.

### **COMPETITIVENESS**

Allowing NWE to sell electricity below \$17 per MWh out of CU4 to new wholesale customers is a distinct disadvantage to those that would also want to sell electricity to the same customers. Those receiving the same power from the same plant and paying \$70MWh are not

competitive in selling their products to their customers as their competitor's would be in selling those products with an energy cost of \$16.30.

FERC's precedents set in Order 2222, rejecting requests to sell excess capacity in the PJM auction thus protecting rate payers long term, FERC Rule 1920, and many more recent FERC rulings/interactions supporting competitive markets to ensure positive outcomes by protecting competitive energy markets are laudable. The single outlier is your ruling on ER26-129-001 in which NWE is allowed self-dealing by totally ignoring the responsibility to provide a single factual market-based valuation based on precedent and law.

We repeat, market valuation is not \$0 because you won the asset in a poker game, received it in probate, arm wrestled for it, pistols at dawn, knives at night, or a Slap Jack Tournament. It is decided by determination of who would buy/sell for how much without interference. Any federal court will find the same.

### **RATE BASED**

The generation in question was rate based and paid for by the residential customers of Washington State. The buy down of the depreciated cost was done by the rate based customers of Washington State. It was rate based and assumed to be so by the Mt. PSC until the Commission took that away and gave a market based determination without a single fact being given.

Because this was a rate based generation, held by a regulated utility and transferred to another regulated utility it remained rate based until the recent determination. This should happen only after a full investigation. Even a cursory investigation did not happen.

### **RELIEF SOUGHT**

The Independent Commissioners of Montana appreciate this opportunity to find a legal and logical way forward without having to seek judicial review in the 9<sup>th</sup> District. While we share the

belief that such review would not smile on a claim of zero value supported by withheld documents, we prefer to keep this in the hands of professional regulators voting based on law and fact.

We ask that FERC acknowledge the transfer of the former PSE Colstrip holdings in recognition of the complexities (created by NWE's squandering of a year's time) in compliance and allow the transfer of the generation as rate based with clear authority for the PSC to review and act upon the contracts already penned.

Because the first ruling was affected by documents not offered to have a fact based outcome, we ask that the Commission invoke FERC Rules of Practice and Procedure Part 385 and sanction both NWE and PSE for failure to provide necessary documents and direct each to contribute \$5M to Montana's Energy Share not recoverable in rates.

In the alternative we ask that the transfer be deemed probationary while allowing NWE 30 days to file a factual Form 203 with the commission that establishes a defensible market valuation as of January 2, 2026. And we then ask that the generation be returned to rate based as it was originally transferred and intended.

While we appreciate the invitation of the FERC Commissioners for the Montana Commission to protect Montana ratepayers from the fallout of their decision, we prefer to grant said ratepayers the blessings of the lowest cost, reliable energy in America, and the economic opportunities it presents. And having that protected by the Montana Public Service Commission.

Finally, we ask that FERC mandate NWE to produce all documents concerning the discussion on why their current retail customers should not get the \$16.30 electricity but their new customers should.

Time spent in court to decide if the value of a generation plant that can produce the lowest cost electricity in the nation is zero dollars, is better spent working together pursuing our energy destiny according to law, fact and precedent.

### **JURISDICTION**

The Montana Commission is not aware that the Commission has any information as to who shall receive the 370 MW short term. But in NorthWestern's Integrated Resource Plan filed with the Montana Commission it appears that it will all go to a Data Center located in Broadview, Mt. in two years time. With this in mind we uphold FERC's authority rule on the transfer the PSE holdings to NWE as this is plainly an interstate issue. The rest seems to be, or soon shall be, intrastate, which is the purview of the Montana Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Brad Molnar* \_\_\_\_\_

Bob Molnar  
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Montana Public Service Commission  
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*Attorneys for Montana Public Service  
Commission*

Dated March 30, 2026

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have this day served the forgoing document upon each person designated on the official service list compelled by the Secretary in this proceeding in accordance with Rule 2010 of the Practice and Procedure, 18 C.F.R. 385.1010.

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Brad Molnar,  
Montana Public Service Commission, District 2

Dated at Helena, Montana on this 30th day of March 2026

Dated this 30<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

**EXHIBIT A**  
**MONTANA TAX LAW**

**EXHIBIT B**  
**EMAIL COMMUNICATION WITH THE MT DEPT OF REVENUE**  
**IN PERTINENT PART**

**EXHIBIT C**

**EMERGENCY MOTION TO STAY INVOLVING THE NWE MERGER AS  
COORDINATED WITH ER26-129-001**

**EXHIBIT D**  
**ADDENDIUM OF MT. PSC ORIGINAL FILING**

**EXHIBIT E**  
**REQUESTS TO THE MONTANA OFFICE OF PUBLIC RECORDS**  
**REQUEST**