

Yellowstone County



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January 23, 2025

Honorable Senator Steve Daines
Honorable Senator Tim Sheehy
Honorable Congressman Ryan Zinke
Honorable Congressman Troy Downing

Senator Daines,

The Yellowstone County Commissioners support President Trump's emergency declaration regarding the crisis at the Southern Border and his labeling of the drug cartels as terrorist organizations. The open border issue has directly impacted Montana and Yellowstone County with violence, illegal drug distribution, and human trafficking operations. Unfortunately, the Yellowstone County Detention Facility, a regional facility for South Central Montana, is currently overcapacity impacting its ability to detain more than a few criminal immigrants that might result from President Trump's actions. Likewise, most regional detention facilities in Montana are at or over capacity.


Yellowstone County owns and operates MetraPark. MetraPark is a 189-acre facility which includes a separate arena, an expo center, and a pavilion. The expo center is approximately 77,400 square feet. The pavilion is 28,800 square feet. The arena holds a large commercial kitchen. Both the expo center and pavilion have bathrooms. There is no comparable facility to the Metra Park within a 400+ range.

Over the last several years, Yellowstone County has spent millions of dollars to upgrade utilities, facilities, security, lighting, connectivity, and hardtop at MetraPark. ARPA funds were used for many of these upgrades and improvements, as MetraPark was considered a large event center to be used in cases of natural disasters as an emergency shelter and gathering place. MetraPark is 10 minutes from Billings Logan International Airport and approximately 220 miles from Malmstrom Air Force Base.

I would respectfully ask that if federal government agencies need space to detain criminal illegal immigrants within Yellowstone County or this region and want to consider the use of MetraPark facilities, that the government's request be presented to the Yellowstone County Commissioners for consideration. We want to help.

Thanks to all of you for your commitment to serving America.

Sincerely,



Mark Morse
Yellowstone County Commissioner, Chair