

Billings City Zoning Commission-

I am writing to ask for your consideration AGAINST the rezoning of the lots proposed by the Yellowstone Country Club (YCC) and surveyed by Performance Engineering from parks and open space to residential. The land in question is the last remaining open space under the lower rims in Billings city limits.

I attended the zoning meeting at the YCC on Wednesday January 21st and the majority of the sentiment from the YCC HOA was to leave the zoning as park and open space. The trails on this land connect the upper rims to the lower rims and is a corridor for wildlife and a loved trail by much of the neighborhood.

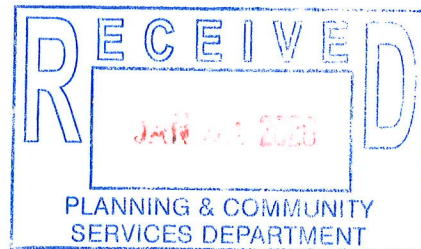
The #4 goal of the City Council is "To activate parks and public spaces, maximize useful life of parks, recreation, trail assets, and neighborhood plans. To increase trail network and recreation participation." Leaving this land zoned as Park and open space is congruent with this goal. It improves the city and the neighborhood.

West end growth is unstoppable. I understand this as I grew up on the west end, and now live in the YCC as a mom of three young boys. There is a 72 house subdivision being built just down the road on 54th and Rimrock. Many of these new neighborhoods put in the mandatory small "pocket park" and call it sufficient open space. This steady growth of houses and subdivisions is why it is so important to preserve what little natural space we have. Lets make Billings a more desirable place to live, lets give kids a place to run in nature, and lets as a community have the foresight to give future generations this gift.

Yes this is privately owned land, and perhaps the YCC can still sell this land, but for what it is currently zoned as. Maybe someday the city or the county will have the opportunity to permanently make this area a natural park.

I appreciate your consideration for a better future for Billings,

Hanah Hesper  
5635 Billy Casper  
Billings, MT 59106



Dear Zoning/Planning division,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed request by Yellowstone Country Club to rezone three areas currently designated as P1 park/open space to suburban zoning for housing development within the Yellowstone Country Club neighborhood.

While these parcels are privately owned, they are intentionally zoned as P1 park/open space and function as important open space and recreational resources for the surrounding community. Two of the three areas contain well-established trail systems that have been in continuous use for over 30 years. These trails are very popular and frequently used, providing valued walking and recreational opportunities and serving as an integral part of the neighborhood's character and livability.

I have attached photos of the middle lot to clearly show the area in question and the existing trail conditions. The images demonstrate how established and actively used this corridor is.

Approving a rezoning of P1 open space for residential development would conflict with the City of Billings' adopted City Council strategies and priorities, which include a stated mission to increase parks, trails, recreation, and cultural investments. Reducing existing open space and established trail access runs counter to these goals and weakens long-term planning efforts intended to protect and enhance community recreation assets.

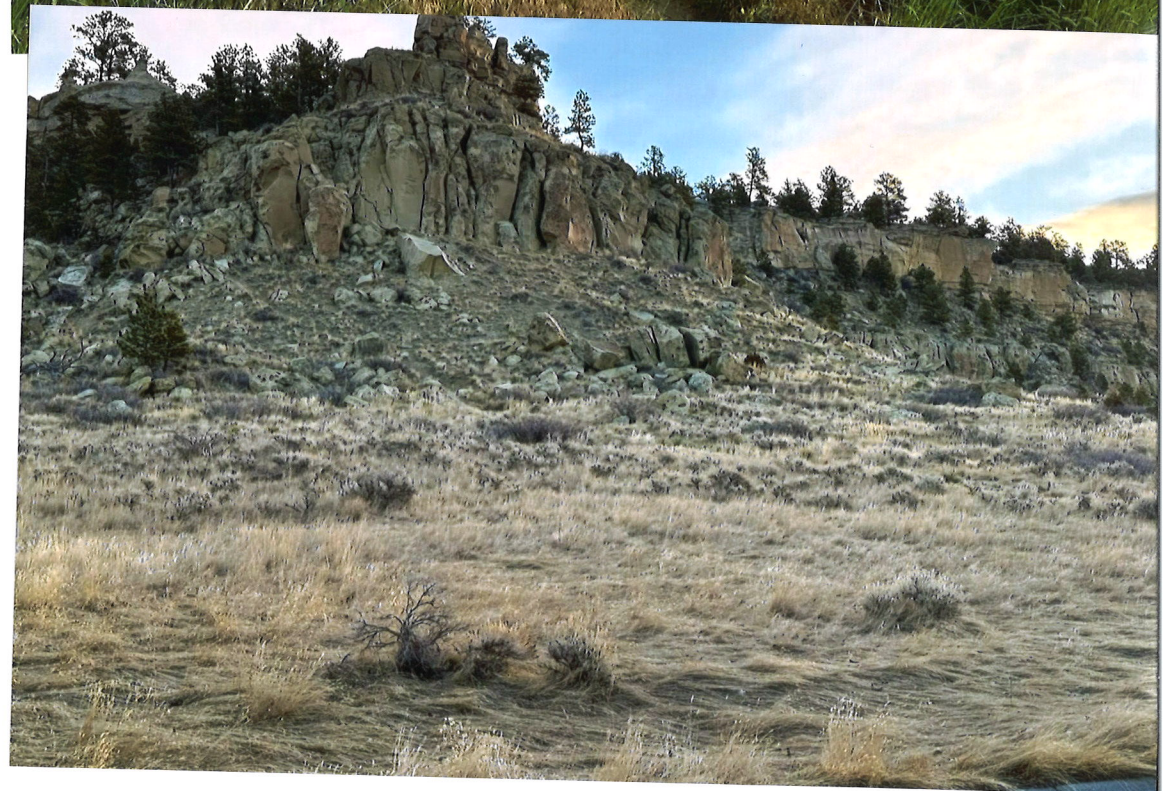
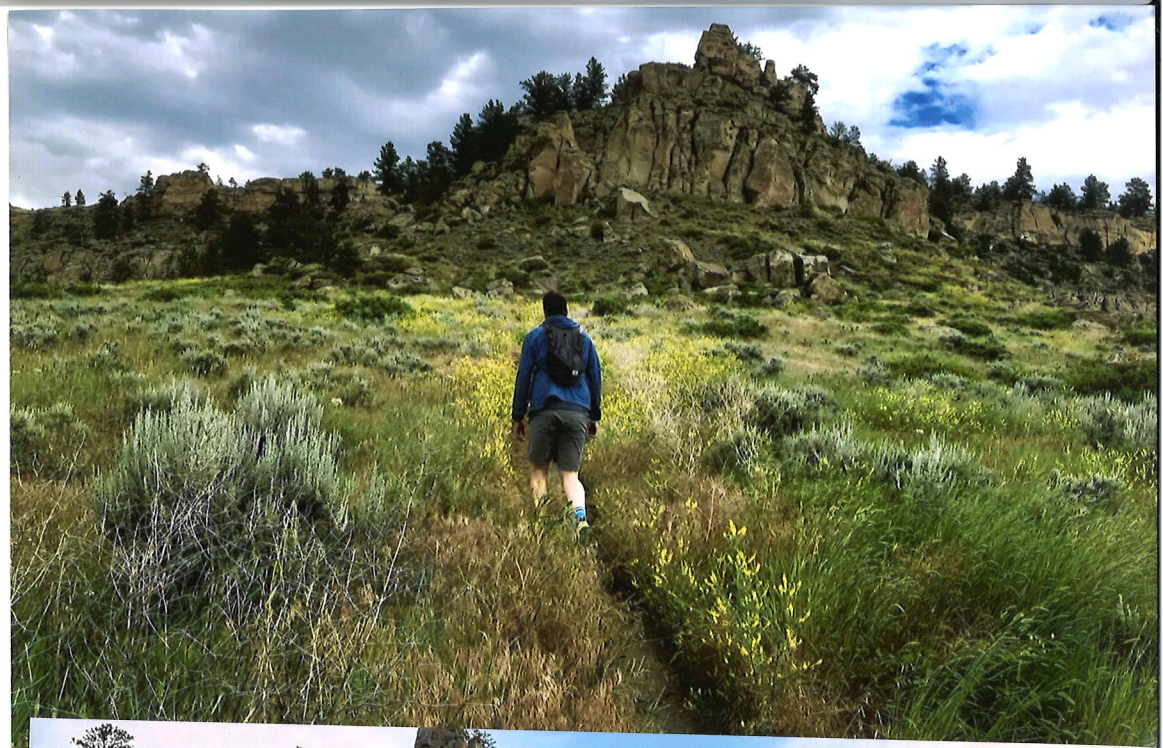
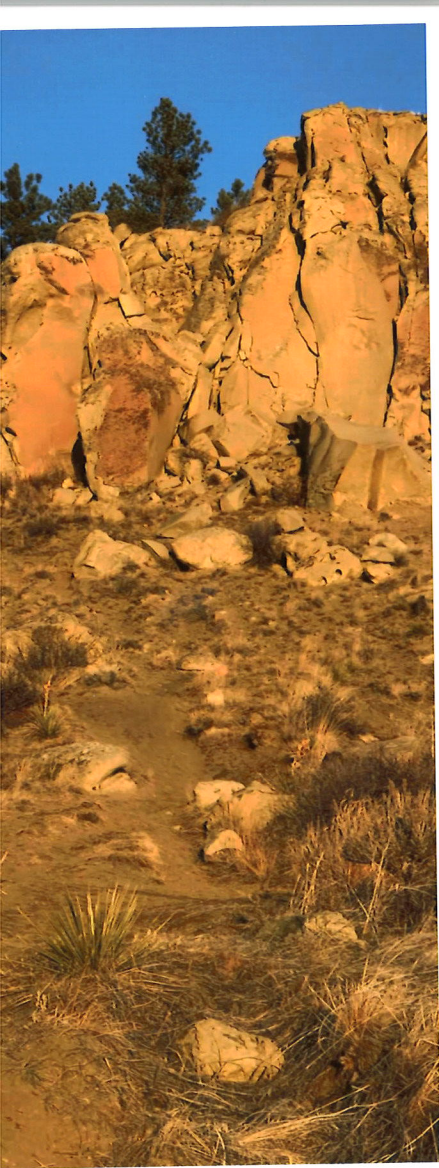
As Billings continues to grow, preserving designated open space and trail corridors is critical to maintaining quality of life and honoring the City's planning commitments. Once P1-zoned land is converted to suburban development, the opportunity for open space and trail connectivity in this area is permanently lost.

I respectfully urge you to oppose this rezoning request and to uphold the intent of the P1 park/open space designation in accordance with the City's adopted strategies and priorities.

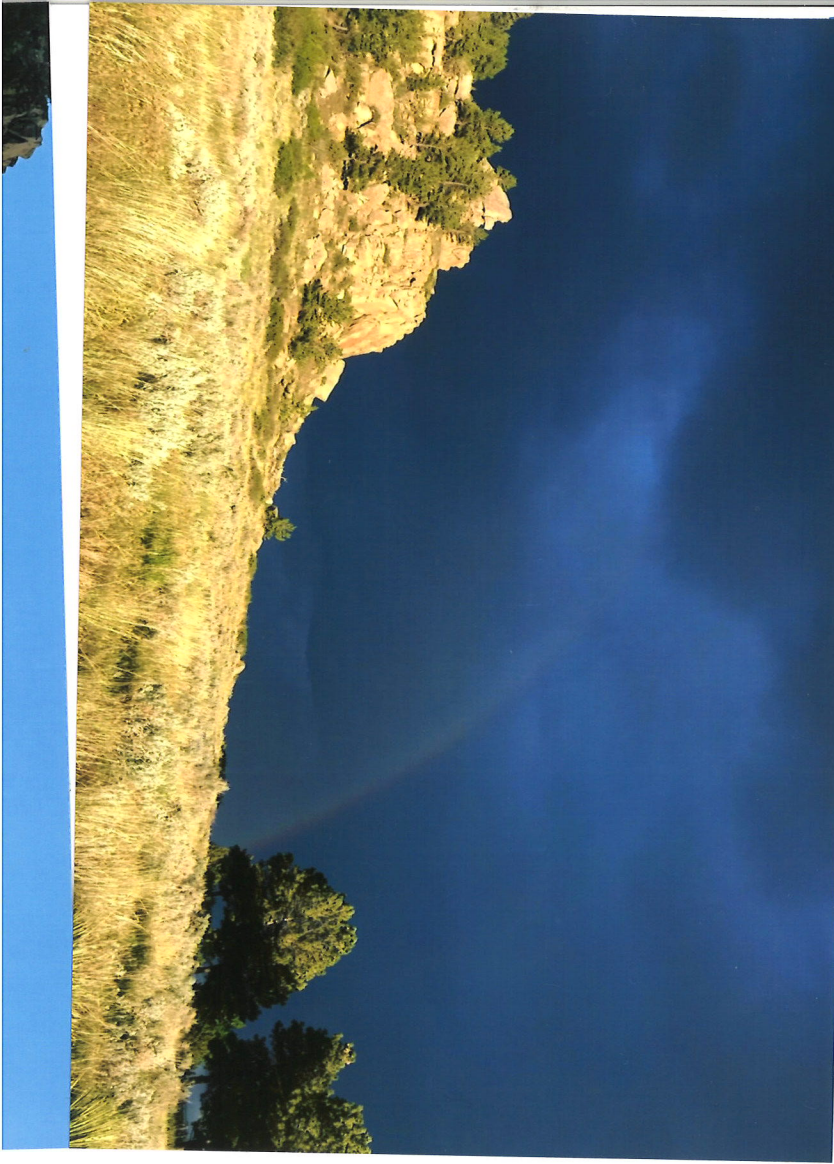
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Mahowald  
Billings, Montana









March 1 2026

To: Billings City Zoning Commission  
From: Dan and Kristy Catlin  
Re: City Zone Change 1077 Yellowstone Club Estates

We are writing this letter in regards to the zoning change proposal in the Yellowstone Club Estates from "Parks and Open Space to Neighborhood Residential". The lots being submitted for change are used by Billings residents quite extensively. We see people hiking up to access the trails that run along the base of the rims everyday. They take professional family photos, wedding pictures and senior pictures in these spaces all year long. They park along the street where lots 10, 11, and 12 are proposed and use the trails leading to the rims. We see adults guiding camp youths in the summer utilizing that same trail and parking area along the street.. Cross Country groups of runners and mountain bikers use this area also. It is an awesome place to walk dogs and hike with your children.

We were told when we bought this house that the country club could expand the golf course to these lots - but never that it would be sold for residential development. This is very disappointing to all the residents who have lived in the neighborhood for years.

To change the zoning just to help bail out Yellowstone Country Club due to their own mismanagement of their funds would be detrimental to the residents who live here in the neighborhood and the people who come here to enjoy the outdoors and beauty of the rims. We don't believe that it would amount to enough money to fix YCC's financial situation anyway.

If they want to subdivide, they should use the large open property across from the clubhouse off of Sam Snead. It is flat and easily accessible, and hardly used.

Once the few lots are developed under the rims and access is limited, it cannot be changed and would be a shame for the generations coming up to not have this natural beauty to enjoy.

There will also be prescriptive easement issues leading to the rims on these trails that have been used by so many people for so many years.

We strongly oppose any zoning changes to the land proposed in this request.

Sincerely

Dan and Kristy Catlin  
3729 Ben Hogan Lane  
Billings MT 59106  
406-671-7715

## Letter in Opposition to Proposed Zoning Change

This letter is delivered to the Billings City/County Planning Division in opposition to the proposed zoning change 1077 – Yellowstone Club Estates near Tommy Armor Circle – P1 to N3.

As required by statute and noted by the Planning Staff, any zoning change must comply with the established Growth Policy. In making a recommendation to approve the zoning change, the Planning Staff purports to consider ten elements of the Growth Plan (addressed below).

In its executive summary, the Planning Staff correctly notes that “**P1 zoning designation is intended to preserve land for parks and open space uses.**” However, without referencing any to the Growth Policy which would warrant a zoning change, the Planning Staff baselessly notes that the subject property’s zoning “no longer reflects the intended residential development or the surrounding land use pattern.” This statement is conclusory and not based in any finding adopted by the Planning Staff. Rather, it reflects a parroted narrative expressed by the landowner that dismisses the statutory reasoning and statutory power of the Growth Policy. The Growth Policy is a reflection of Billings’ (and its citizens’) desires for growth of the city and uses of land therein. The whims of the landowner to use property differently is not a consideration set forth in statute or the Growth Policy. In fact, it is the very nature of zoning restrictions to preserve the interests of the community and preclude landowners from using their property in a manner contrary to the established Growth Policy (which was adopted in 2016 and is effective for a period of 20 years). It is worth expressly stating that the landowner’s desired uses and/or the troubled financial condition of the landowner do not supersede the Growth Policy, which does not contemplate the use of this land for any purpose other than parkland.

The Planning Staff further notes that “there is open space and parkland in the area that will remain even after these areas are zoned to N3.” This statement – flippant and dismissive of implications of the zoning change at issue, further contradicts the previous statements that the Planning Staff used to make its case that the zoning change should be approved. Specifically, Planning Staff noted the subject property is “adjacent to predominantly N3 zoned residential areas and the requested zoning will allow development that is compatible with the surrounding single-family neighborhoods.” This completely minimizes the change to the 6 acres at issue and ignores the fact that the access to the 30+ acres of surrounding parkland is through the subject property for which a zone change is proposed. These statements are inconsistent and dismissive of the erosion of parkland in conflict with the stated goals of the Growth Policy.

With respect to specific elements of Growth Policy consistency, the Planning Staff seemingly adopts the applicant's position without a modicum of critical thought or independent inquiry.

(1) The zoning change is **not** consistent with the Growth Policy. The Infill and Adjacent Parcels map, West Public Preferred, West Low Density Scenario, each designate the subject property as parkland (each incorporated in Chapter 5 of the Growth Policy). At no point did the Growth Policy (or the residents of Billings) contemplate the change of zoning proposed by the applicant and recklessly endorsed by the Planning Staff;

(2) The applicant and Planning Staff note that fire and other dangers will be addressed during design of a subdivision. This is not a statement that the zoning has addressed those concerns – only that they plan to in the future. These risks can – at this point – neither be said to be consistent nor inconsistent with the Growth Policy.

(3) [reserved].

(4) The applicant notes that parkland *will* be dedicated in the subdivision process. This has not yet occurred and the applicant did not express any mention of which area, how much, access thereto. This statement cannot be interpreted as consistent with the Growth Policy.

(5) The applicant admits the impact to light and air. The Planning Staff disregards this and does not address any negative impacts.

(6) The applicant – without a traffic study or other evidence – concludes that there will be no increased traffic. The Planning Staff notes that traffic will be impacted only when the property is developed. Again, without adequately considering the impacts, the Planning Staff ignores the lack of information currently available and recommends approval regardless.

(7) The applicant and Planning Staff both note that the zoning will promote urban compatible growth, once again completely ignoring the Growth Policy and stated purposes of preserving open space, parkland, view shed, established walkways, and the growth planning scenario maps set forth in the Growth Policy.

(8) The applicant notes an *intent* to maintain access but has committed to nothing. Further, the applicant ignores the significance of the 6+ acres being redeveloped and the potential precedent for future landowners (or even this landowner) to rely on for future development and degradation of parkland. The Planning Staff simply takes the landowner at their word and does not condition the approval on any dedication of parkland, access thereto, or future potential arguments for erosion of parkland. The applicant further ignores potential (and imminent should a zoning change be permitted) lawsuits establishing prescriptive

easement rights over portions of the subject property for members of the public who have long used the subject properties for various purposes.

(9) The applicant recognizes the impact on surrounding properties but fails to base their statement that values will increase on anything more than their own belief. The Planning Staff ignores impact to surrounding properties. This needs further inquiry to determine consistency with the Growth Plan.

(10) The applicant and Planning Staff each conclude the new zoning will encourage the most appropriate land use of the property – willfully ignoring the plain language of the Growth Policy, which I urge you to consider diligently and thoughtfully.

It is specifically troubling that the Planning Staff does not take note of any objections or inconsistencies with the Growth Policy. It may have very well weighed all circumstances and concluded compliance with the Growth Policy exists. However, the lack of critical thought expressed in the report and recommendation suggests that Planning Staff has not taken a fair, objective, and/or diligent approach to its review of this zoning change.

I urge the opposition and denial of this zoning change request and Planning Staff recommendation.

Sincerely,

Tyler P. Mallowney, Esq.