

# Yellowstone County



## COMMISSIONERS

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April 29, 2025

Billings Industrial Revitalization District

319 N 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Billings, MT 59101

To Whom It May Concern,

We, the undersigned Yellowstone County Commissioners, are proud to wholeheartedly recommend Jake Penwell for the position of Executive Director of the Billings Industrial Revitalization District (BIRD). As community leaders, we have witnessed Jake's exceptional leadership, strategic vision, and unwavering commitment to advancing the economic and social vitality of Yellowstone County. His proven track record in driving transformative initiatives makes him the ideal candidate to lead BIRD's mission of industrial revitalization and economic growth.

Jake's leadership as Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Yellowstone International Airshow exemplifies his ability to execute high-impact projects that elevate our region. By securing over \$1 million in sponsorships and attracting over 25,000 attendees, he delivered a world-class event that catalyzed economic activity and strengthened community pride. His skillful coordination of diverse stakeholders—government entities, businesses, and volunteers—demonstrates the collaborative approach necessary to manage BIRD's complex TIF-funded projects.

As Founder of Vista Growth Solutions, he has guided organizations toward sustainable growth, leveraging his expertise in financial oversight and partnership development. We have heard from Jake on several occasions advocating for organizations including New Day Inc. and the Yellowstone International Airshow, and we deeply value his insightful and strategic perspective. His successful advocacy for Montana's Scholarship Tax Credit legislation during his tenure as President of ACE Scholarships further showcases his ability to shape policy for community benefit, a critical skill for BIRD's Executive Director.

Jake's integrity, work ethic, and deep-rooted connection to Billings shine through in all he does. A U.S. Navy veteran, he brings discipline and dedication to his work, consistently building trust and inspiring those around him. We are confident that Jake will lead BIRD with innovation, accountability, and a relentless focus on creating jobs, improving infrastructure, and driving prosperity for our county.

We unequivocally endorse Jake Penwell for this role and are available to discuss his qualifications further.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Morse, Chair

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