

Information Technology Department Restructuring Proposal

Presented to the Board of County Commissioners
Yellowstone County, Montana

Executive Summary

The Yellowstone County Information Technology Department currently operates with 12 filled positions and one open position, totaling 13 roles across a generalized structure. While the team has served the County well, the evolving demands of modern government IT — from cybersecurity threats to increasingly complex infrastructure — require a more deliberate and specialized organizational design.

This proposal presents a two-stage restructuring of the IT Department designed to achieve four core objectives:

- Deliver higher-quality, more specialized technical services to County departments and constituents.
- Strengthen the County's cybersecurity posture through proactive, dedicated security management.
- Invest in County employees through a structured technical training program that builds skills and promotes longevity.
- Align roles and responsibilities with the individual strengths of IT team members, creating defined career development pathways that support retention and professional growth.

Current Structure

The current IT organization is structured in three functional branches reporting to the IT Director: a Web and Development branch, a Network and Infrastructure branch, and a Support branch. The department's 13 positions (12 filled, 1 open) are distributed across these branches as follows:

Web & Development Branch

- WEB/DEV Administrator
- Database Engineer

- Development Specialist

Network & Infrastructure Branch

- Network Administrator
- IT Engineer
- Network Specialist

Support Branch

- Senior Support (×3)
- Support Specialist (×2)

Leadership

- IT Director
- Assistant IT Director (vacant but budgeted)

While this structure has provided a functional foundation, the generalized nature of the support tier limits the department's ability to develop deep expertise, respond proactively to emerging threats, and offer employees a clear path for career advancement.

Proposed Structure

The proposed Stage Two structure preserves the existing Web & Development and Network & Infrastructure branches while significantly evolving the Support branch. A new Support & Training Coordinator role is introduced to lead the support team, and Senior Support roles are redefined with specialized focus areas. The open position will be utilized to complete this restructuring without requiring new headcount.

New & Redefined Roles

Support & Training Coordinator

The Support & Training Coordinator serves as the operational lead of the IT Support team, bridging day-to-day technical support with strategic service management. This role collaborates directly with the IT Director to define the metrics, processes, and procedures that guide the support team, while monitoring service trends to identify recurring issues or emerging training needs. The Coordinator manages workload distribution, leads the lifecycle management of laptop and desktop inventory, and

serves as the primary incident commander during critical IT events — ensuring timely resolution and clear communication with stakeholders. Additionally, this role works cross-functionally with systems administrators, network engineers, and developers to resolve complex issues, and acts as a working backup during high-volume or understaffed periods.

Senior Support: Domain & Systems Specialist

The Senior Support Domain & Systems Specialist focuses on the County's workstation environment and domain infrastructure. This role provides advanced technical support for hardware, software, and operating environments; installs, configures, and maintains workstations, peripherals, and network equipment; and enforces County policies on system access, data integrity, and security. The Specialist also deploys client applications, troubleshoots complex hardware and software failures including data recovery, and serves as a backup and resource to other support team members.

Senior Support: Cyber Security Specialist

The Senior Support Cyber Security Specialist is a dedicated role focused on the protection of County systems, data, and users. Responsibilities include monitoring security dashboards, alerts, and logs to identify and investigate potential threats; supporting vulnerability management through scanning, tracking, and coordinating remediation; and maintaining endpoint protection, email security, and identity and access controls. This role also leads cybersecurity awareness efforts including training materials and phishing simulations, maintains compliance and incident records, and collaborates with infrastructure and support teams to ensure consistent enforcement of security controls across the organization.

Senior Support: Application Specialist

The Senior Support Application Specialist provides focused technical support for the County's line-of-business and standard software applications. This role installs, configures, and maintains application environments; diagnoses and resolves software-related issues for end users; and enforces County policies on system access and data integrity. The Specialist also designs and tests client application deployments, researches peripheral compatibility, and serves as a resource and backup to other members of the support team.

Senior Support: Communications Specialist

The Senior Support Communications Specialist focuses on the County's communications infrastructure and user-facing technology. This role supports end users with hardware, software, and communications platform issues; installs and maintains

related equipment and configurations according to department standards; and enforces County data access and security policies. The Specialist also assists in diagnosing and resolving cross-platform connectivity issues and serves as a backup to other Senior Support team members.

Senior Support: Generalist

The Senior Support Generalist is a developmental role designed to bridge the gap between the Support Specialist and the specialized Senior Support tracks. This position is intended for high-performing Support Specialists who demonstrate the skills and qualifications for advancement but have not yet been assigned a primary specialization. The Generalist role allows the IT Director to assess and develop an individual's strengths before placement into a focused specialty, ensuring the right people are in the right roles while providing a clear and attainable path for career growth within the department.

Benefits of the Proposed Restructuring

The Stage Two restructuring represents a meaningful investment in the long-term effectiveness of Yellowstone County's IT Department and the employees who serve it. By introducing specialized roles within the support tier, the County gains a team capable of delivering deeper expertise across critical domains — including cybersecurity, systems administration, application support, and communications — rather than relying on generalists to address an ever-widening range of technical demands.

The creation of a dedicated Cyber Security Specialist role is particularly significant. As cyber threats to local government continue to grow in frequency and sophistication, having a team member whose primary focus is threat monitoring, vulnerability management, and security awareness positions the County to respond proactively rather than reactively — reducing risk, supporting compliance requirements, and protecting constituent data.

The introduction of the Support & Training Coordinator formalizes service management within the department, bringing structure to workload distribution, incident response, and end-user training. This improves service quality for all County departments while freeing the IT Director to focus on strategic initiatives.

Perhaps most importantly, this restructuring establishes a transparent career development pathway for IT staff. The progression from Support Specialist to Senior Support Generalist to Senior Support Specialist gives employees a defined trajectory for growth within the County — an investment that pays dividends in staff retention, institutional knowledge, and morale. In an era when skilled IT professionals are in high

demand, building a department where talented employees can envision a long-term career is one of the most cost-effective strategies available to local government.

This proposal does not require new headcount beyond the County's existing 13-position structure. It is a thoughtful reallocation of roles and responsibilities designed to maximize the impact of the team already in place.

Budget Reapportioning

This restructuring does not require a new budget appropriation. Instead, it proposes a strategic reapportioning of existing personnel budget — eliminating the vacant Assistant IT Director position and redistributing those funds to compensate employees for expanded responsibilities, promote from within, and add a frontline Support Specialist.

The following table summarizes the estimated annual salary impact of the proposed changes, using midpoint figures for each classification range:

Position Change	Class	Est. Annual Impact
Eliminate Assistant IT Director (vacant)	J	-\$98,384
Support & Training Coordinator — promotion + 5%	H	+\$5,670
3× Senior Support Specialist — 5% for added duties	G	+\$11,942
New Support Specialist — fill open position	E	+\$56,178
Net Annual Change		-\$24,594

The elimination of the Assistant IT Director vacancy — a Class J position with an estimated midpoint salary of \$98,384 — generates sufficient savings to fund the Support & Training Coordinator promotion, compensate three Senior Support Specialists for their expanded and specialized duties, and hire an additional Support Specialist, while still yielding an estimated net annual savings of \$24,594.

All figures above represent midpoint salary estimates based on current Yellowstone County classification ranges and are provided for planning purposes only. Final compensation determinations for any reclassified or newly created positions will be subject to review and approval by the Hay Committee.

Submitted for consideration by the Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners.