

JAIL REPLACEMENT FACT SHEET



HOW MUCH WILL IT COST & WHO WILL PAY FOR IT?



The new Beltrami County Jail will cost \$80 million. The County received Legislative approval to pursue a Local Sales Tax (LST). The LST would be 5/8 of a penny or 0.625% which equates to 50 cents for every \$80 of eligible sales. The tax would not apply to clothing, groceries, cars and general services/labor costs. A LST would reduce resident costs by 50% because 50% of the revenue would come from visitors living outside the County. The LST will be on the November ballot for voters to decide in a referendum vote. If voters choose not to approve the LST, the project will continue but the project costs will have to come from property taxes, possibly increasing the levy over 20% for the next 30 years.

WHY A NEW LOCATION?

The question frequently comes up why the jail can't just be remodeled. Simply put, the footprint of the existing facility is far too small. The new jail will be a one level structure, enhancing line of sight and making for a safer environment for inmates and staff. Adding more levels to the jail is not cost effective. Additional floors would require significantly more staff than a single level structure. The new jail is required to be built within the Bemidji City Limits which has posed challenges. In addition to needing accessibility to arterial highways, utilities and emergency services, the County is taking into consideration neighborhood impacts and is looking at non-residentially zoned properties in the City of Bemidji.



PROGRAMMING NEEDS & SAFER ENVIRONMENT...



Beltrami County offers several programs for inmates within the jail to provide support during their time in custody and assist them in planning for when they are released. These programs include the Jail Reset Program and the Beltrami County/Sanford EMBER (Embrace, Motivate, Belief, Execute and Remedy) Program. These programs focus on connecting inmates to resources to reduce recidivism and provide mental health care, peer support and other resources while in custody. Additional space is needed to conduct successful programming as well as expand chaplaincy access, cultural ceremonies and studies.

WHY A NEW FACILITY?

The current Beltrami County Jail opened in 1989 with a capacity to house 81 inmates. In 2001 the capacity was increased to 106 by double bunking inmates. After a remodel in 2004, capacity was increased again, allowing another 60 minimum security inmates. Due to significant changes in Department of Corrections regulations, an increase in violent offenders and staff challenges, the capacity of the jail was decreased to a maximum of only 80 inmates in 2023. Beltrami County is estimated to spend \$1.3 million housing inmates in other jails. A new jail is needed for inmate and staff safety and wellbeing as well as reducing our out of county housing of inmates.

THE NOVEMBER BALLOT QUESTION...

This is what Beltrami County voters will see on the November 7th, 2023 ballot:



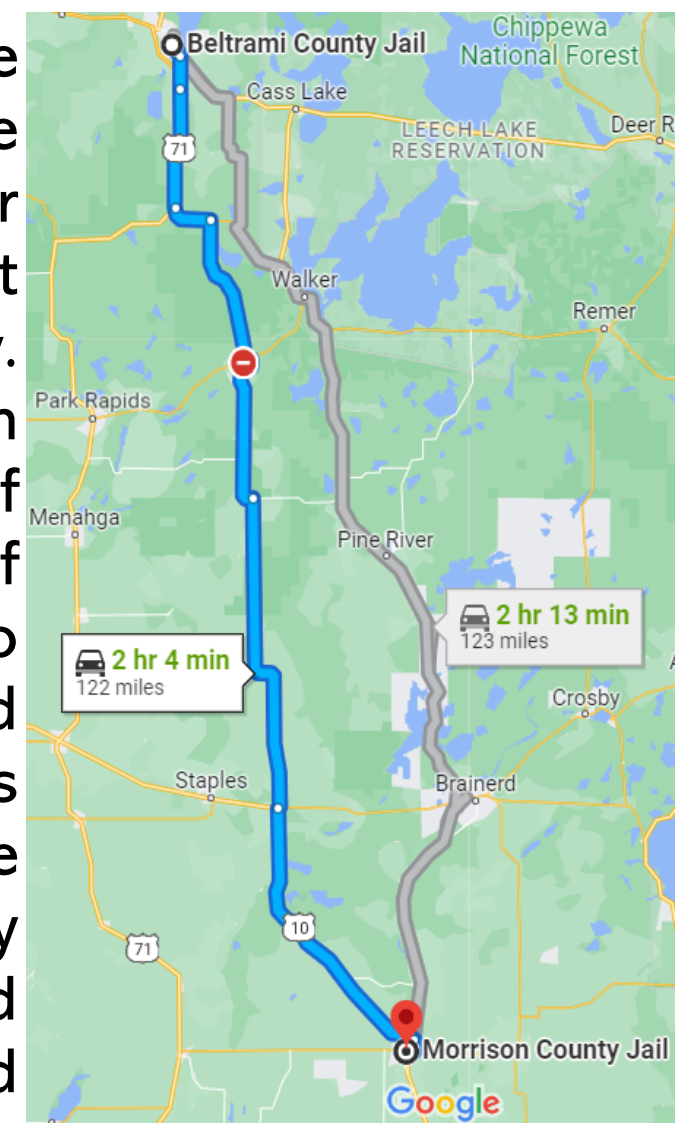
“The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners has voted to construct a new County Jail at an estimated cost of \$80 million. Taxpayers have a choice as to how to fund the project. Shall Beltrami County establish a five-eighths of one percent (.625%) sales and use tax to pay for constructing and financing the new jail?”

-A YES vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through the sales tax which would remain in effect for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.

-A NO vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through increased property taxes for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.”

OUT OF COUNTY HOUSING...

Due to the current status of the Beltrami County Jail, inmates are needing to be housed in other counties. This is a tremendous cost to the taxpayers in Beltrami County. In 2015 Beltrami County began paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to house inmates out of county, in 2023 we are on track to spend over \$1.3 million. Not included in that amount are the expenses related to staff time, gas and vehicle wear. This also keeps inmates away from their family, home resources and beneficial services from our award winning initiatives in our jail.



INMATE POPULATION...

The number varies, but on average 40% of the population in the Beltrami County Jail are not residents of Beltrami County. They have committed a crime in Beltrami County and spend their pretrial or sentence in our jail. If the Local Sales Tax (LST) option to fund the jail is approved, everyone who visits Beltrami County and makes a taxable purchase will contribute to funding the new jail. If the LST is not approved, funding would then move to the property tax and would solely fall on the property taxpayers in Beltrami County.