



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Yellowstone Art Museum Faces County Funding Cuts: Changes deprive school kids and hamper economic growth.**

Yellowstone County, 06/06/2024 — The Yellowstone Art Museum (YAM) faces cuts of crucial county funding. In an unexpected turn of events, the Yellowstone County Commissioners have announced a cut of approximately \$100,000 in funding to the YAM, jeopardizing essential programs and services integral to the community's cultural and educational programs.

This abrupt decision, communicated with only a 30-day notice, brings uncertainty to popular educational programs, admissions, jobs, and museum accessibility. The YAM has been the leading art institution in Yellowstone County for over 60 years, actively leading and shaping art educational programs and economic growth. The cut in county funding undermines the YAM's mission and disregards its impact on economic development and substantial tax revenue generation.

The YAM's education programs have been a cornerstone of its outreach efforts, providing enriching experiences for thousands of learners across Yellowstone County. From immersive classroom activities to inspiring gallery exhibitions, the YAM has played an instrumental role in shaping our youth's artistic and intellectual development. With over 7,000 students in the past year alone, the YAM's educational initiatives have been vital in filling the void left by diminishing arts education resources in our schools.

The American Alliance of Museums\* estimates that for every dollar a local government invests in art museums, five dollars in tax income is earned. According to this figure, taking \$100,000 from the county's most popular art institution could result in a \$500,000 drop in tax income. We cannot afford flimsy financial oversight at a time when county citizens are feeling the strain of inflation and raised property taxes.

The YAM expects over 25,000 visitors to the museum this year, and the county needs the average \$31.47 each museum-goer spends locally per visit. These visitors, who comprise a sizable percentage of tourists outside the county, add to Yellowstone County's cultural and economic life.



We urge the Yellowstone County Commissioners to reconsider their decision and reverse their decision to cut funding to the Yellowstone Art Museum. We encourage everyone to voice their opposition to cutting county funding.

All are welcome to attend the public hearing on Wednesday, June 26, at 9:00 AM at the Stillwater Building, 316 N. 26th Street, BOCC Board Room, and make your voice heard.

You can also contact the County Commissioners at (406) 256-2701 and ask NOT to cut funding to the YAM.

For more information, visit <https://www.artmuseum.org/act-now/>

[Press Images](#)

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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#### References

<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-museums/museum-facts-data/>