

To: Bloomington Common Council
From: Councilmember Sydney Zulich
Regarding: Resolution 2026-07 County Jail Location
Date: April 21, 2026

This resolution is meant to indicate support for the Monroe County Council and its opposition to purchasing the Northpark property to build a new jail.

While ultimately the jail is under the jurisdiction of Monroe County, this decision will impact city residents for generations to come. There is no amount of legalese or combination of words that will mitigate the effects of constructing a criminal justice facility in a space far from social services and public transit routes. We have the choice to find a solution that does not further strip access to criminal justice from those without access to private transportation; people that are often members of some of our most vulnerable populations.

A lawsuit, though intimidating, is not the end of this conversation. The notion that it presents a false choice and boxes us into a decision that will harm our community. When we look towards the future of criminal justice in our community, our goal should not be to maximize space. The space will be filled if it is created. How will we invest in resources that reduce crimes instead of building bigger spaces to confine those that commit them? Incarceration is not nearly as effective as prevention.

With this resolution, the Bloomington Common Council will indicate our intention to work with county counterparts to identify a location within city limits and close proximity to social services.

Thank you all for your consideration.

**BLOOMINGTON COMMON COUNCIL RESOLUTION NUMBER 2026-07
A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTERPARTS'
EFFORTS TO KEEP THE COUNTY'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDINGS WITHIN
CITY LIMITS AND CLOSE PROXIMITY TO SOCIAL SERVICES**

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, the Monroe County government has been operating under a settlement agreement with the ACLU pertaining to unconstitutional conditions in the Monroe County jail, in the Charlotte Zietlow Justice Center, since 2009; and

WHEREAS, the current plans for a jail at the North Park property would remove the current jail, and eventually the courts, and affiliated offices from the downtown area and out of city limits with no guarantee of transportation access for residents without reliable private transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council unanimously approved a letter to the Monroe County Council and the Monroe County Board of Commissioners requesting "County officials not continue with the purchase of the north park [sic] site as the location for a new justice center" on October 22, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Council unanimously voted against authorizing the \$11.375 million purchase of the North Park site for the new Monroe County Jail on October 28, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2026 the Monroe County Commissioners unanimously passed Resolution 2026-09, confirming that:

1. The Commissioners will continue to consider the North Park Site for the justice project.
2. The Commissioners will unilaterally reject any property that:
 - a. Will not allow for future co-location and expansion; and,
 - b. Will cause an unreasonable delay in the project; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council maintains its position that a jail or justice center at the North Park location will disproportionately impact low-income residents.

Be It Resolved by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, that:

SECTION 1: The Common Council stands with its County Council colleagues and their decision not to fund the purchase of the property at North Park.

SECTION 2: The Common Council will work with the County Council and the County Commissioners to support an expedited zoning and permitting process for the construction of a new jail within city limits.

Signature of Bloomington Common Council President:

Isak Nti Asare
President, Bloomington Common Council

Attestation of Bloomington City Clerk:

Nicole Bolden
Clerk, City of Bloomington

Presentation by Bloomington City Clerk:

Presented by me to the Mayor of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this day of _____, 2026:

Nicole Bolden
Clerk, City of Bloomington

Approval by Mayor:

Signed and approved by me upon this upon the day of , 2026:

Kerry Thomson
Mayor, City of Bloomington

Synopsis

This Resolution 2026-07, co-sponsored by Councilmembers Zulich, Daily, and Piedmont-Smith, supports the Monroe County Council's decision not to fund the acquisition of the North Park site for a new criminal justice center and reaffirms the Bloomington Common Council's position that such facilities should remain within city limits and near social services. This Resolution expresses concern about impacts on low-income residents if relocated outside the city and commits to working with County officials to support an expedited permitting and zoning process for a jail located within city limits.