

# OMAHA TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

## Executive Officers Members

Jason Sheridan, Chairman  
Leander Merrick, Vice-Chairman  
Alan Harlan, Treasurer  
Cheyenne Robinson, Secretary



## Members

Jerome Hamilton  
Galen Aldrich Sr.  
Dustin Lovejoy

## RESOLUTION NO. 25-128

### OF THE

## OMAHA TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

### RE: SUPPORT FOR THE JUSTICE CENTER PROJECT AND SELECTING THE OLD BINGO HALL AS THE PROJECT LOCATION

**WHEREAS:** The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska is a federally recognized Indian tribe, organized under a constitution and bylaws approved by the Secretary of Interior on April 30, 1936, pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934; and

**WHEREAS:** pursuant to Article III, Sec.1 of the constitution of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, the governing body of the Omaha Tribe shall also be known as Tribal Council; and

**WHEREAS:** Article IV, Section 1 (j) of the Constitution of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska provides the Omaha Tribal Council with the power to safeguard and promote the economy and general welfare of the Omaha Tribe; and

**WHEREAS,** the Tribal Council recognizes the critical need for improved justice infrastructure to support the operations of tribal law enforcement, judicial services, and community safety programs; and

**WHEREAS,** the Tribe seeks to move forward with the Justice Center Project, which is intended to provide modern and culturally appropriate facilities to support public safety and justice-related services; and

**WHEREAS,** after careful consideration and consultation with community members and relevant stakeholders, the Tribal Council has determined that the Old Bingo Hall property is the most appropriate and beneficial site for the Justice Center due to its location, accessibility, and alignment with the Tribe's long-term development goals;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Tribal Council hereby formally supports the development of the Justice Center Project; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the Tribal Council hereby designates the Old Bingo Hall property as the preferred and approved location for the Justice Center Project; and


**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED,** that the Tribal Council directs the appropriate tribal departments and entities to take all necessary actions to initiate planning, funding, and development efforts for the Justice Center at the designated location.

### CERTIFICATION


This is to certify that the foregoing resolution was considered at a duly called meeting of the Omaha Tribal Council on the 13 day of May, 2025, and was adopted by a vote of: 4 for; 0 against; 1 abstaining; with the Chairman not voting. A quorum of 5 was present.

MEMBERS VOTE:	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Jason Sheridan			Abstain
Jerome Hamilton	X		
Dustin Lovejoy	X		
Alan Harlan	X		
Leander Merrick			Absent
Galen Aldrich Sr	X		
Cheyenne Robinson			Absent

Submitted by:

 for Cheyenne. 5-13-25  
Cheyenne Robinson, MBA, MLS Date  
Omaha Tribal Council Secretary

Attest:

 5/13/25  
Jason Sheridan, Chairman Date  
Omaha Tribal Council

# Omaha Tribe of Nebraska: Justice Center Briefing

## Background & Current Challenges

The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska urgently needs to modernize its detention center infrastructure. The Tribe's current adult detention facility in Macy, NE, is an **outdated Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) building**—unsafe, deteriorating, and unable to meet current public safety and health demands.

### Facility Conditions and Impacts:

- **Failing infrastructure**, including an air conditioning system left unrepaired for over 10 years
- In 2024, inmates were transferred to distant jails due to unsafe conditions:
  - Rosebud Sioux Tribe Adult Correctional Facility – 275 miles
  - Lower Brule Correctional Facility – 285 miles
  - Thurston County Correctional Facility – 22 miles
- The facility cannot adequately serve those with **substance use disorders, mental health needs**, and rising **fentanyl-related arrests**

### 2024 Arrest Data for January and February:

- Total: 1,061 arrests
  - Adult males: 604
  - Adult females: 457

## Juvenile Justice Crisis

The Tribe lacks a local juvenile detention facility. Juveniles must be placed in remote facilities in Iowa, which causes hardship for families, courts, and Tribal service providers:

- Sioux City – 31 miles
- Cherokee – 60 miles
- Eldora – 180 miles

### Juvenile Arrest Data:

- 2024: 175 juvenile males, 62 juvenile females

- Jan–Feb 2025: 35 juvenile males, 10 juvenile females

## **Proposed Solution: Omaha Nation Justice Center**

The Omaha Tribe proposes creation of a **comprehensive Omaha Nation Justice Center**, a central hub for modern, culturally responsive justice services. The proposed facility will include:

- Tribal Courts
- Adult Detention Facility
- Juvenile Detention Facility
- Probation Services
- Tribal Police Department
- Dispatch and Emergency Response Services

This facility will restore local control of justice operations, reduce reliance on external systems, and embed culturally appropriate rehabilitative services.

## **Federal Partnership Through the 105(l) Lease Program**

The Tribe is seeking partnership through the **105(l) Lease Program**, administered by the **BIA** under the **Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA)**. This is a **statutory mandate**—not a grant—and requires the BIA to fund facility leases once eligibility is met.

### ***Statutory Authority:***

- **25 U.S.C. § 5324(l)** (formerly 25 U.S.C. § 450j(l))

The OTN submitted a complete application for the Justice Center 105 (l) lease program and is awaiting approval.

### ***Key Benefits:***

- Federally funded lease reimbursements for facilities delivering contracted Tribal justice services
- Long-term operational support for detention, court, and police programs

## **Project Financing: USDA Rural Development Loan**

To finance construction, the Tribe will use the **USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Direct Loan Program**, a critical tool for essential infrastructure development in rural areas.

### **Statutory Authority:**

- **7 U.S.C. § 1926(a)(1)** – *Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act*

“The Secretary is authorized to make or insure loans to associations, local governmental and nonprofit organizations for the development of essential community facilities in rural areas.”

- **Buffalo Tail Consulting LLC strategy to support the RD Facilities Loan program** is:
  - to write letters of support for the program to our congressional delegation in alignment with Nebraska’s support for USDA programs.
  - To promote the program and intersection with the BIA 105 (l) lease program through self-governance as an administrative and Tribal priority.
  - Share Talking Points with Interior Secretaries Tribal Advisory Council (STAC) and USDA Secretaries Tribal Advisory Council (STAC).

### **Alignment with Federal Priorities**

This project **aligns directly with the priorities of the current Administration**, which has emphasized:

- **Strengthening Tribal self-governance**
- **Reducing administrative burden** on Tribes by streamlining access to federal programs and empowering local solutions

The Omaha Nation Justice Center embodies these principles by:

- Reclaiming Tribal control of justice services
- Reducing dependency on fragmented federal systems
- Delivering services grounded in Omaha values, language, and healing traditions

## **Conclusion**

The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska is taking a forward-looking, sovereign approach to address critical justice system needs. With support from:

- The **statutorily mandated 105(l) Lease Program**
- The **USDA Rural Development Facilities Loan Program**
- And the **policy direction of this Administration toward Tribal self-governance**

...the Tribe is prepared to construct a modern, integrated Justice Center that protects its citizens, promotes healing, and strengthens public safety.

**Federal partnership is essential to realize this vision.**

Internally, OTN and BTC are having weekly huddles to discuss the progress of the project and bi-monthly meetings with USDA federal partners.