

# **ARGUMENT FOR THE BOND**

The citizens of Pleasant Grove overwhelmingly recognize the need for new public safety facilities. A citizen committee has spent the last year and half studying the issue and vetting options. The committee has proposed solutions to the problem including a recommendation to bond for a specific amount to pay a portion of the costs of the new public safety facilities. Through this process it has become evident that the current buildings have reached a point that additions or repairs can no longer be justified as fiscally responsible. City Council unanimously approved a resolution asking voters to authorize issuance of General Obligation Bonds to finance the construction of new public safety facilities which will house fire, police, dispatch, and a justice court.

Our fire station was built in 1949 as an addition to the old public high school. It was converted to a fire station in 1989 when the population of the City was 11,000 and we had a volunteer fire department. We now have a full-time fire and EMS department servicing over 38,500 people. There are serious concerns with the current building as it does not meet seismic safety standards. This 75 year old structure is inadequate for day to day operations and could be destroyed in a seismic event, leaving the citizens without emergency services.

Our police station has outlived its usefulness and functionality as a police facility. It is not in compliance with current regulations for police departments that require heightened security and separation from public access. Prisoner processing and transport facilities are not secure; there is inadequate evidence storage space – evidence is being stored under stairways, in hallways and in an elevator shaft; interrogation rooms are undersized, lack ventilation and windows; the booking area is open to dispatch and puts the safety of civilian employees at risk.

Our justice court facility is drastically undersized and functionally inadequate. It seats approximately 30 people but 50 -70 defendants are scheduled to be seen on any given day. People are forced to stand in the lobby until it's their turn. The public's safety is compromised since there is no secure way to transport prisoners, they must be walked through the foyer among the general public. There are no conference rooms. Attorneys confer with their clients and private information must be discussed in the middle of the lobby. There is insufficient storage space for court records. There is no jury deliberation room.

The need is clear. The citizens have been heard. The amount of actual debt has been reduced through extensive cost cutting review and substantial donation commitments from private citizens and local business intended to ease the burden on taxpayers. The bond will not exceed \$9.5 million dollars and will increase the average property owner's tax \$5.02 per month. The project fulfills needs in four areas that are currently in operational failure and assures functionality both for our present needs and future growth.

## **Mayor and City Council**

Mayor Michael W. Daniels  
Councilmember Dianna Andersen  
Councilmember Eric Jensen  
Councilmember Cyd LeMone  
Councilmember Lynn Walker

## Rebuttal

The city's advocacy piece addresses the need for new public safety facilities. However, it lacks building specifics and, just as an investor requests plan specifics before writing a check, we are requesting plan specifics from the Council before voting in November. Citizens would like answers and assurances before being asked for yet another tax increase and entrusting \$9,500,000 to the Council.

- Lindon is currently building at \$175/sq ft, our City proposes building at \$245/sq ft
- Why won't we consider a new \$3,000,000 fire station and a \$2,000,000 remodel of police/courts?
- What percentage property tax increase is this bond proposal? 40%?
- Why can other cities trim budgets and meet their needs at average construction prices?
- Why will the council not commit to work hard to reduce the cost of this proposal per committee recommendation? What is the location?
- Over triple the space for our police and courts?

With these and other unanswered questions, the lack of trust created by prior bond proposals, and a looming new tax to raise roads money, citizens are not ready to move ahead without necessary information. Pleasant Grove is highly indebted and already has one of the highest tax burdens in the county.

We are a modest city with modest needs. It is our right and duty to ask questions about the plan for spending our money. Why overspend? Vote noon this bond and let's work together for a modest solution to our modest needs.

Blaine Thatcher/Citizens Against Overspending

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