

# Ad Hoc Building Committee Report

Submitted to the  
Mayor and City Council  
of  
Spanish Fork

# The Assignment

The Mayor appointed a citizen committee to:

- Become familiar with current and future city needs,
- Review existing city facilities,
- Make recommendations for new facilities, sites, funding, etc. as needed, and
- Suggest priorities for new buildings, if needed.

# The Committee

- Duane Hutchings, Chairman
- Leonard Ellis
- Rick Evans
- Sterling (Red) Leifson
- David A. Lewis

# Spanish Fork City Information

## ESTIMATED GROWTH

- The committee was provided with a projected population growth to 65,000 by year 2030 and informed that the next phase of sewer plant expansion would provide for population of 55,000 and an additional phase could provide for up to 65,000. We were informed that it may be twenty years before a proposed regional sewer system becomes a reality. It is deterred by local city disputes over connecting costs. However, the regional plant situation could change because of EPA criteria for lower phosphorus discharge levels into Utah Lake.
- Census estimates show projected population by year 2030 at 44,480. Impact fee planning studies show projected population at 36,000 by year 2010; 50,000 by year 2015; 65,000 by year 2020; and 92,000 by year 2030.
- We asked for and received from each city department, estimated staffing requirements to accommodate staged growth and provide necessary services over the next 25 years to 65,000 people.

# Existing City Facilities Reviewed

- Police Station
- Senior Center
- Recreation Department
- City Administration Building

# Existing Facilities

## Police Station

- This facility is essentially full, with little or no room for additional personnel. Furthermore, it seems the facility is inadequate for the existing personnel, as it does not have the types of spaces necessary for police work. Storage is lacking and the evidence room is much too small. Security is a major concern and there are serious ADA issues. Because of inadequate storage, records are at risk.

# Existing Facilities

## Senior Center

- The facility adequately handles the various programs for the seniors with the exception of once a month when a large lunch is served. Fairly recent expansion and equipment additions provide adequate facilities for the senior program with the exception of the once a month meal when both capacity and parking are usually exceeded. Mountainland Association of Governments and other outside governmental participation and requirements need to be assessed.

# Existing Facilities

## Recreation Department

- Though the team is spread out at various locations, this does not seem to pose serious problems. In the cramped work space at the community school location, there is no room to grow. Because of a reciprocal arrangement with Nebo School District, the department chairman recommends that the department stay in its existing location at the high school for the short haul. They could really use the classroom next to them if the school board could accommodate that. The chairman said it doesn't matter where his personal office is located because he is supervising multiple areas anyway.

# Existing Facilities

## City Administration Building

- This building seems to be in generally good shape, though there is virtually no room to grow and storage is woefully lacking. Records are stored in every nook and cranny available, including many that are quite susceptible to various forms of damage. The building is constructed in a quadrant format which makes it virtually impossible to expand into a large, functional work area. Even though the building is inadequate for current administrative operations, it has a lot of public historical sentiment. Relocation of the court would open some temporary space, but it would still be inadequate in overall space and functionality. A major concern is the lack of protected record storage.

# Other City Site Visits

- American Fork – Combination Police & Court Building
- Orem – Public Safety Facility
- South Jordan – Combination Administration, Police, and Court Facility
- Draper – Administrative building with temporary space for police and court

# Other City Site Visits:

## American Fork

- This building is a combination police and court building and is very well designed. Many of the special needs of these two departments have been considered: i.e. security, work flow arrangement, confidential interrogation areas, sally port (an enclosed, secure area for unloading prisoners), secure judge access, prisoner holding areas, evidence storage rooms, secure and protected records storage.
- Their staff expressed the downside being not enough parking, evidence room much too small, uncovered judges parking area (security issue), not enough public seating in the court room. They are a district court as is Spanish Fork and therefore the court space is leased to, designed by, and under the control of the State Court Administrators Office.
- As we were leaving, we observed the parking as being very inadequate. The facility has been constructed in the center of town where space for parking is limited and expansion will be very expensive.
- It is the opinion of the committee that this building is well designed and a good model for our needs but should be larger and located on a much larger site. Their cost = \$9.2 million.

# Other City Site Visits: Orem

- This building is a well designed public safety facility which houses police, fire, and ambulance. It provides good correlation between all public safety divisions. The staff indicated that their functions are enough different that separate locations would not be a problem. They also indicated that there is never enough storage. Parking has just been enlarged substantially to accommodate their needs and that of the court facility next door. Because of the population size of Orem, their staffing requirements are much greater than Spanish Fork's will be for many years to come. Their building was constructed three years ago at a cost of \$1.5 million and is already too small.

# Other City Site Visits: South Jordan

- They have taken the approach of a combined administration, police, and court facility with the police and court utilizing future administration growth space. The staff told us the city had spent about 1 ¼ million dollars remodeling the space to meet the needs of the police and court. This is because the building was designed as an administration building rather than a specialized police and court facility. Even with the remodeling it is still inadequate. We were told that within three to five years, they plan to construct a new police and court facility and it will cost another million plus dollars to return the remodeled space to a condition usable by administration.
- This building is beautiful and very functional for the administrative and other non-specialized divisions. Cost \$5.7 million.
- Chief Dan Pierson conducted our tour at South Jordan. He was a captain at Midvale and was the project manager for the building that Midvale built in 2000 for the police only. He seemed very knowledgeable and offered a lot of insight into the special needs of a police department. We didn't get to tour the Midvale facility but it is 17,500 sq. ft. and was constructed on 2 acres of land at a building cost of \$2 million plus the land cost of \$175,000 per acre. It was built for a projected population of 38,000 with 65 full time officers which they anticipated would be reached by 2015. Chief Pierson would be an excellent consultant to work with our police department on our project.

# Other City Site Visits: Draper

- This is a beautiful building with many good design features for administrative functions and temporary space for police and court. This temporary space lacks many of the necessities for the police and court. The lack of adequate security causes some very serious concerns about the safety of those in the entire building. Cost \$5 million.

# Other City Site Visits: Additional Information

From our visits to the four other community locations, two main points became quite clear:

1. A police/court building should be a separate building from the city administration building, as the design requirements are radically different. Whereas a city building tends to be much like a traditional business building, a public safety building has many functional requirements that are special in design.

There were significant shortcomings in each of the facilities we visited where public safety was integrated into an administration building. These shortcomings resulted in significant expense for retrofit and are still inadequate.

2. It is essential to hire planners/architects who specialize in public safety buildings or we will likely make critical mistakes. There are many unique requirements for these buildings that are outside the scope of design considerations of other types of buildings. Design professionals that are specialized in public safety facilities may be more expensive, but will likely save a good deal of expense in the long run.

In addition to hiring design professionals with appropriate experience, the city should consult with the practicing public safety professionals, not only in Spanish Fork, but in other municipalities, to define best practices with respect to facilities. The tours highlighted several very good features that could easily be overlooked, as well as illustrating the types of mistakes that can easily be made without the proper people involved in the process.

Adequate property for parking and expansion is a must.

# Recommendations

## Site

- After looking at all land parcels presently owned by the city, we found they are too small to accommodate needed buildings with adequate parking and landscape.
- Most possible vacant sites are on the city boundaries and are questionable for good public access. Possible downtown sites would be very expensive because of housing saturation or other cleanup issues.
- Acquire enough land in one location (at least 10 acres) to provide space for a city campus. There are few sites available without going to the outside periphery of the city. It is probable that expansion will continue eastward and if a regional sewer development occurs, the city could double in size to the westward.
- Our preferred site has been recommended to the Mayor, City Council, and key city staff. Until certain decisions have been made, this recommendation should remain confidential.
- Estimated Cost - \$50,000 to \$60,000 per acre Total = \$750,000

# Recommendations

## Storage

- Find a secure offsite storage facility immediately to provide adequate protection for all city records. This could be eliminated later, if desired, when adequate storage space is provided in newly constructed facilities. Records are really at risk at present.
- We realize that records need to be available to those using them. We know the city is looking at ways to get electronic versions through document imaging, etc. This would allow the staff to be more efficient and largely overcome the disadvantages of offsite storage. In our opinion, the present risk is of greater concern than the inconvenience of offsite storage.
- Estimated Cost – Needs more research

# Recommendations

## Police/Court

- We feel a new police and court facility is the highest building priority and should be addressed immediately. We considered options of expanding the present police station as well as the possibility of locating a new building in the vicinity of the Utah County facility at the north end of town.
- It will be difficult and extremely expensive to get enough property at the present location to provide for even current needs without considering future growth. The design of the present building doesn't lend itself to an adequately designed facility which will best meet the needs of the department now and in the future. This building could be sold as soon as the new building is occupied. It is an excellent building and should have good resale value for commercial purposes.

In considering a location adjacent to the county facility, we found the following:

- The county is in the process of adding a 400 bed addition which will max out the county land site. The city would have to acquire adjacent land.
- The security/justice function would seem compatible but, the police location may be inconvenient for the citizens of Spanish Fork. The justice center serves south Utah County but a very small percentage of court appearances from the county facility appear in the circuit court in Spanish Fork. Most occur in the federal and other courts elsewhere. This could change with an expanded facility.
- Police response time may be slowed by the frequent traffic jams on Main Street going under I-15. A new on/off ramp by Smith Auto would help solve that issue, but may not be realized for years.
- City police, on occasion, need jail cells to hold suspects for questioning during an investigation. The cells are also used when dealing with those who just need to sober-up for a few hours and cannot be booked into the county jail. At present the county jail is often full and cannot accommodate short-term holding.

# Recommendations

## Police/Court (cont'd)

- Our recommendation is that a new building be built in a city campus location. It should be designed by an architectural and design firm with specific expertise in public safety buildings. It should be built to house the police, court, and prosecutor's office with the court portion designed under the direction of and leased to the state. Representatives of the state have indicated they want to have two regular courtrooms plus a juvenile courtroom at our location.
- We like the general design of the American Fork building. There would need to be some improvements and increased size. We feel the police department staff and the city attorney should have strong input into the design and should be involved in weekly meetings with the contractor, architect, and city administrators during the construction process.
- It was an eye opener for the committee to see the multitude of special requirements and needs of the police department and court. There are too many to list here but are well known by the department and often overlooked by the designers. We feel that any citizen taking the time for an in-depth look at these special needs will understand and agree that a separate specialized building is mandatory and security issues are most urgent.
- The fire and ambulance departments should remain at their present location since their growth pattern will probably in the form of substations. There is adequate space at the present site for the immediate future with some room to grow.
- Estimated Cost – Police portion only - \$3-4 million  
Court - \$3-6 million (leased to state)

# Recommendations

## Senior Center

- We do not see expansion of the senior facility as a high priority. A once-per-month meal does not seem to justify the probable cost of enlarging the building or providing realistic parking options. If additional space must be obtained, then perhaps extra effort could be made to acquire the property south west of the center for additional parking. Because of the long dimensions of the building, future expansion would require additions to the East or moving the new kitchen. Moving the sub station on the East would not be an easy task. We recommend that the program be carefully looked at to determine if the large meal could be split into two or three groups on the same or different days to accommodate the crowd and still stay within occupancy limits, etc. We realize this creates some problems for staff and volunteers but still feel this is the most practical approach for the immediate future.

# Recommendations

## Recreation Department

- We suggest that the city administration negotiate with the Nebo School District to secure an adjoining class room in the high school. This will provide adequate space for the community school and recreation department for the time being. We understand that the city is using internet, mail, and phone registration to relieve the traffic load somewhat.

# Recommendations

## Administration Building

- We feel the need for an administrative building is great enough that planning should begin immediately and construction started as soon as plans can be finalized and financing arranged. The upper floor space occupied by the court will become available when the court moves to another building. This will help stop gap the urgent needs of the departments housed in City Hall, but will still not allow various department staff to be housed together for efficient management and work flow.
- Even though an administration building does not have the same specialized needs as a police building, the design is still very critical. In order to accommodate the variety of administrative and individual department needs, in-depth planning is essential. We strongly recommend a team of department heads and administrators work with the architectural and design firms to accomplish this. They should be given enough authority to move the project ahead without delay.
- Estimated Cost - \$5 million
- The existing administration building should be retained as a community center and pioneer museum. It could house the Chamber of Commerce, Daughters of the Pioneers, Arts Council, other community organizations, and provide always needed group meeting facilities.

# Recommendations

## Financing

- Because of excellent management over many years, Spanish Fork City is in excellent financial condition. This does not mean that the city can pay cash for 10 acres of land at a cost of \$40,000 to \$60,000 per acre, a new police/court building at a cost of 5 to 10 million dollars with parking and landscape, and a new administration building at a cost of 5 million with parking and landscape. It does mean there are several options available to finance these facilities.
  - a. General Fund Cash – to the extent available without depleting reserves
  - b. General Obligation Bonds – requires public vote
  - c. Sales Tax Revenue Bond – a popular method for city projects
  - d. Building Authority – does not require public vote
  
- Regardless of how the money is raised, a reasonable and secure revenue stream must be available for repayment.
  - a. Land – acquired with general fund revenue
  - b. Police/Court Building – Even though this building will be constructed and owned by the city, one half to two thirds will be leased to the state for the circuit court. This remainder will be paid from general fund revenue.
  - c. Administration Building – A portion of this building will be occupied by the enterprise fund divisions. Utility and other enterprise fund revenues can partially provide the revenue stream for this building. The balance will be paid from general fund and sales tax revenue.

# Recommendations

## Financing (cont'd)

- The \$1 ½ million dollar GO bond on the fire station will be paid in February, 2006. This should free some property tax money which could be utilized for new projects.
- Spanish Fork City has the lowest property tax of any city in Utah County. It is 20% lower than the next lowest city and 120% lower than the highest city. Even though a property tax increase is not popular, we feel the need is urgent enough that if an increase is necessary, it is another alternative for guaranteeing revenue to get the job done. We recommend that the city finance department and city manager develop a proposed repayment plan for approval by the city council.
- The building authority approach is our first recommendation. It uses the same revenue stream as a general obligation bond but does not have the delays that result with a public vote. **WE ARE NOT SUGGESTING THAT THE PUBLIC BE KEPT IN THE DARK.** It is absolutely essential that citizens be informed as to what is happening in the city. A public awareness campaign and town meetings can go a long way toward demonstrating the needs and overcoming concerns about being forced into unwanted projects. Our elected officials were elected to represent us and they, along with our excellent city staff, are very qualified to make these decisions in our behalf and avoid the costly delays that can happen with too much public involvement.
- A sales tax revenue bond is our second choice; however, if the City Council decides that a public vote is absolutely necessary, then we will support the GO Bond approach which is our last choice.
- We are not suggesting that the city exceed its reasonable ability to service the necessary debt; however, the urgent need is now and it will only get worse if delayed. Planning for both buildings should move ahead immediately and construction should follow as quickly as responsible funding can be obtained and necessary debt service provided.

# Summary

## Recommendations:

- Land – immediate need to acquire land for city campus.
- Records – provide for secure temporary storage until new facilities can be built
- Police/Court – new facility extremely urgent
- Senior Center – program review and adjustment needed to accommodate large lunch served once per month.  
Long-term – new facility on city campus.
- Recreation Department – negotiate for one added room in high school to meet immediate needs until new administration facility is completed.
- Administration – new facility urgent

## Estimated Costs:

- |                           |                      |                 |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| • Land                    |                      | \$750,000       |
| • Police/Court Building   | City Portion         | \$3 – 4 million |
|                           | State Leased Portion | \$3 – 6 million |
| • Administration Building |                      | \$5 million     |

## Financing Alternatives:

- Cash Funds – to the extent available without depleting reserves
- Building Authority – no public vote required – public education campaign vital  
(This is the committee’s preferred choice)
- Sales Tax Revenue Bond – no public vote required – a popular choice for city projects.
- General Obligation Bond – public vote required – often causes serious delays – committee supports this method if council feels a public vote is absolutely required.

# Summary (cont'd)

## Additional Comments:

- Separate buildings are necessary to meet the special needs of police/court and administrative functions. We should not consider a combination building for both needs under any circumstance.
- In-depth planning using city staff and administration along with architectural and design firms with specific expertise for each type of building is critical. Appropriate department heads should be included in weekly meetings during the planning and construction process.
- Current police building should be sold for commercial purposes when it becomes vacant.
- Current administration building should not be sold but utilized as a city historical center.
- The revenue stream needs to be adequate for the repayment of the debt. Timing of the construction process should depend on projected revenues.

# Thank you

- In behalf of the committee, I express my appreciation to an excellent administration and city staff for their assistance in providing information and arranging tours. They have been cooperative and accessible during the course of our project. We are grateful to have qualified people representing us and providing necessary services for our community.