



City of Ketchum

News Release
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City to Consider Replacing Obsolete City Facilities *Consultants Recommend New Essential Services Facilities*

KETCHUM, Idaho — Ketchum should demolish the current City Hall and construct new facilities for police, fire and city administrative operations according to a space study prepared by ZGA Architects and Planners. Police and city administrative offices would remain on the current site and a new fire station would be built at 215-219 Lewis Street.

The recommendations from the firm of ZGA Architects and Planners, based in Boise, will go before City Council at its meeting Monday, Jan. 25, at 5:30 p.m. in City Council chambers.

The need for new police, fire and city hall facilities is not new to Ketchum. Previous efforts to address the problems and identify solutions were undertaken in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005. The existing building was built in 1974 as a car dealership. The city of Ketchum entered into a lease in 1979 and converted the building to the police, fire and city hall facility.

The 2001 and subsequent studies all concluded the existing 1974 building does not meet the operational and functional needs for the police, fire and city administrative functions. Since 2001, the conditions have worsened and construction costs have risen. The facilities are substandard for current modern-day operations, the building is not accessible to the disabled and the building is structurally unsound.

Among the major issues with the current building are the following:

- Police and fire facilities are substandard for current modern day operations. Obsolete functionality of the police and fire departments impacts basic readiness and response time. Many spaces are unsafe and substandard, such as the firefighter living quarters.
- Safety and structural problems: The police department, fire department and city functions are essential and must be able to operate during a major emergency or catastrophic event. The building housing the most important functions of the city is inadequate and likely to sustain major unreparable damage in the event of a major seismic, flood or significant natural disaster.
- The building has no accessibility for the disabled. The mayor's office, planning and building, fire and other departments are on the second floor and can be reached only by an outside, metal staircase that can be covered with snow during winter storms. Ground floor access to City Council chambers also fails to meet federal standards for access by the disabled.
- The building lacks technology infrastructure, which limits the efficiency of staff, expanding the use of taxpayer dollars. Storage and sharing of documents to maintain full transparency with the public is restricted.

The cost of construction, according to the conceptual plan, is estimated at \$23.1 million.

The first step is for Council to determine whether to ask the voters to pass a general obligation bond for new Essential Services Facilities in May, City Administrator Suzanne Frick said. If a bond passes, the next steps would be to hire a design architect, seek bids on the project and then hire a contractor.

It would take an estimated three years to design, demolish the current building and construct new facilities. During that period, the city is considering establishing temporary facilities at the city-owned parking lot north of the YMCA on Saddle Road.

The study recommends keeping City Hall at its current location for a variety of reasons. Key issues are the cost of buying land, compliance with the city Comprehensive Plan that says civic uses should be in the downtown, and the economic stimulus city facilities add to the community core, both because the city is a major employer and because citizens frequently visit the location.

The new City Hall would be a focal point of the downtown and become a community gathering place, open to a variety of events and activities, as the current site offers tremendous prominence and visibility.

The new building would provide police and city administrative offices, Council Chambers and a flexible community gathering space/visitor information, serving as the entry to the new building, offering an area for significant public interaction, being located central to the downtown area.

The building would also be a state of the art sustainable design. The goal would be to have a “net zero” building in terms of energy usage. This means the total amount of energy used by the building on an annual basis is roughly equal to the amount of renewable energy created on the site.

Neither public parking or housing would be included on the site. This is because City Hall is an essential services facility, and would serve as the emergency operations center in the event of a significant emergency. For security reasons, public parking cannot be located under an essential services facility. In addition, the identity and screening of building tenants must also be controlled.

The need for a new City Hall was first proposed in 2001. “Ketchum City Hall does not meet the expectations of the community for quality and accessible services or the needs of 21st century city operations. Current conditions are unacceptable and place city employees and the entire community at risk,” Frick said.

The fire department would be located on a property already owned by the city, 215-219 Lewis Street. This lot is currently used to store sand for street department use during the winter.

The new fire station would be a modern facility to meet current operational needs.

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About the City of Ketchum

The city of Ketchum is located in the Wood River Valley in south central Idaho. Founded in 1880 during the mining boom, Ketchum is now regarded as one of the most popular destinations for winter and summer visitors due to its world-class skiing, mountain biking, fishing, hiking, restaurants, art galleries and shopping. The city of Ketchum hosts the famous annual Wagon Days Parade, held on Labor Day weekend, and numerous other year-round attractions. Ketchum is home to more than 10,000 full- and part-time residents. For more information about the city of Ketchum, visit www.ketchumidaho.org.

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