



City of Ketchum

News Release
February 9, 2016

Council To Decide Tuesday, Feb. 16, Whether to Put Essential Services Facilities Bond on Ballot

KETCHUM, Idaho -- Ketchum City Council will decide Tuesday, Feb 16 whether to place a bond issue for new police, fire and city administrative offices on the May 17 ballot.

The current building housing the police and fire departments and city administration is located in a remodeled auto dealership that was built more than 40 years ago. It is substandard and no longer complies with current building codes or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“The longer we wait, the greater the risk becomes that parts of the building will be deemed uninhabitable, which would create the need to make hasty, emergency executive decisions without time to fully engage the public,” said Mayor Nina Jonas.

ZGA Architects, which conducted a space study of city needs, found the most cost effective approach to date is to tear down the current building and construct a new police station and city administrative offices on the same site. The fire department would move to city-owned property on Lewis Street.

Cost estimates are \$10.1 million for a new police station and city administrative offices and \$6.5 million for a new fire station. Additional costs, including architectural and engineering fees, demolishing the existing building and moving expenses, would bring the total to \$23.1 million.

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

- **Working areas in the police department are the worst in the building.** The police department has been housed in cramped, deteriorating, windowless areas of the current building since 1979. Nine male and three female police officers share a small locker room and bathroom. The current records, evidence and weapons storage space is substandard, as are the interview and work areas. The lack of room for current operations and compromising health environment are unacceptable working conditions and impact daily operations and recruitment and retention of staff.
- **Fire department facilities are substandard.** Obsolete facilities impact basic readiness and response time. In addition, 37 male and 12 female firefighters and volunteers share outdated living quarters. During a four-person shift, one firefighter must sleep on a Murphy bed in the middle of a small, multi-purpose office/kitchen/living room area.
- **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 existing building houses the most important functions of the city yet the building is likely to sustain major unreparable damage in the event of a storm, earthquake or other disaster.

- **The building is inaccessible to people with mobility issues.** Key city functions (planning and building, fire, city administration 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 and restrooms also fails to meet the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **The building lacks technology infrastructure.** This limits the efficiency of staff and increases costs to taxpayers. The network lines serving the police department are inadequate, increasing the probability of computer failure. Providing adequate public access to stored documents is difficult, given the technology limitations.

Public tours of the building will be offered Wednesday, Feb. 10, at noon and Thursday, Feb. 11, at 4 p.m. If Council approves the ballot measure, additional tours will be offered beginning Feb. 17. For a reservation, email participate@ketchumidaho.org or call 726-7803.

Three readings are required to approve the ordinance placing the bond issue on the ballot. The deadline for approving the ballot measure is March 7, at the regular City Council meeting.

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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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