

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2009

Contact: Helen Langan

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Mayor Becker asked that this letter to the City Council and the attached briefing paper be shared with you.

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Dear City Council Members:

I wanted to share the attached briefing paper with you. This should provide you with a thorough overview of the numerous options we have considered over the past year, in consultation with the Council, in order to determine a location for the Public Safety Complex. As you know, after analyzing these options, the determination was made that the best location for the Public Safety Building is somewhere along the 300 East Corridor, between 400 and 500 South. The 300 East Corridor meets all of the criteria detailed in the attached briefing paper. It also gives the City a great deal of flexibility for determining exactly where we should site the two buildings: the Public Safety Administration and Emergency Operations Center, which comprise the streamlined Public Safety Complex currently under consideration.

While the sensitive nature of real estate negotiations required us to have the initial real estate discussions in closed session with the Council, I am pleased by the fact that, at the earliest stage possible, we unveiled two options for public consideration, in order to begin an open, public process to inform a final decision on the positioning of the two buildings along the 300 East Corridor.

I have appreciated the Council's support and collaboration on our shared goal of achieving more open government in Salt Lake City. As I've stated on numerous occasions, at times open government can be messy and requires both government officials and the public we serve to take a leap of faith. For the public, they must be more patient when they are consulted early in a project, as in the case of the Public Safety Complex, because as might be expected, in the early stages of a project, all of the potential issues have not yet been fully explored and the final decision has not been made. In addition, as government officials, we must expect that by consulting the public early in a project, they will naturally have questions, criticisms and ideas which we should utilize to further our thinking on a project and incorporate into our decision making process.

As you know, I remain committed to an open public process to determine the best place to position our two much needed Public Safety facilities along the 300 East Corridor. I have been evaluating the feedback we have received from the public so far and am looking forward to the

upcoming public meetings because I know additional insights will come from those meetings which will help inform our joint decision making process. My hope is that we can incorporate the public feedback and reach a final decision on where the buildings should be located by the end of June.

As much as the public debate on this project has been a heated one, I am heartened by the fact that no one disputes the urgent need for a new Public Safety Administration building and Emergency Operations Center. We have also heard very positive feedback about the fact that the project has been dramatically streamlined from the 2007 proposal for \$192 million public safety bond which was rejected by 262 votes, to the significantly scaled back \$125 million public safety proposal currently being considered.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions regarding this briefing memo.

Best,

Ralph Becker

Briefing Paper

Public Safety Complex Location Considerations

Background

In November 2007, voters rejected the \$192 million public safety bond campaign by 262 votes. A significant reason for the failure was the lack of a specific site for the new facilities, which created ambiguity and uncertainty. Many also felt the proposal was too costly. Very few people questioned the need for new facilities. After reviewing the failed proposal, Mayor Becker directed City staff to develop a scaled-back and refined proposal that focused on immediate needs and explored ways the City could create a more cost-effective space by sharing facilities with other jurisdictions. City staff spent nearly a year revising a proposal that resulted in a scaled-back complex consisting of two buildings (the police, fire, and emergency management administration facility and the emergency operations center) and a range of potential sites.

Site location principles and criteria

Mayor Becker identified the following principles in making a site selection:

1. **Minimize auto use.** Minimize the need to drive to and from the complex (both for visitors and employees on-site), helping with City sustainability goals
2. **Add to vibrancy of downtown.** Maximize the opportunities for the complex users to add to the vibrancy of the downtown core
3. **Minimize cost, disruption and time.** Look for land acquisition opportunities that were cost-effective, minimally disruptive as possible to current occupants (i.e., preference for city-owned land), and possible in a quick timeline
4. **Be proximate to critical city functions.** Be near other government services (City Hall, the state, federal, and local courts) for integrated City governmental functions, particularly in the event of an emergency and for user public
5. **Be accessible.** Be accessible by a range of transportation choices, including TRAX and bus routes

Public safety considerations dictated certain preferences as well:

- 50'/75' setbacks from vehicular access (or more expensive structural protections in the walls of the buildings themselves)
- Secure parking and access to parking directly from the buildings
- Access to freeways and major arterials
- Certain massing requirements to facilitate constructive interaction and day-to-day functioning in the offices themselves

The Public Safety Administration building (PSB) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) dictated the need for close to 5 acres of ground that included two separate buildings because of the requirements and costs associated with different functions.

Additionally, surface fault-rupture and liquefaction potential limit the number of suitable sites within City boundaries.

Potential sites

With all of the above considerations in mind, and in the time frame given by the Mayor, the Mayor’s administrative team identified suitable sites. In order to minimize the need for condemnation and to avoid undue inflation of land prices, this analysis and discussion occurred confidentially in Executive Session with the City Council, consistent with the direction of the Utah Open Meetings law.

Sites initially identified based on the principles and criteria include the following:

- Chamber of Commerce parking lot
- Earl Holding parking lot (west of State Court building)
- Garff dealership (south of City Hall)
- Valley Health building block
- Youth City/Traffic Management block
- Barnes Bank block
- Burger King block (north of library block)
- 7-11 block (northeast of library block)
- State Office of Education block (south of library block)

Advantages and disadvantages for each site:

Location	Advantages	Disadvantages
Chamber of Commerce parking lot	- No relocation issues - One land owner	- Zoning issues in conflict with security regulations ¹ - Encumbrances restrict development options ² - Size of property available
Holding parking lot	- One landowner - No relocation issues	- Property owner an unwilling seller ³
Garff dealership	- Small number of landowners	- Cost prohibitive to purchase and relocate. - Potential lost sales tax revenue if dealership relocated outside city limits

¹ Federal requirements for future grant funding related to the EOC require specific setbacks from streets. These are in conflict with city setback standards for State and Main Streets, which require structures to front closely onto those streets.

² Current agreements with the property owner to the east require access to a parking structure onsite to be part of any development at this location

³ GSA’s failed efforts to condemn this site for the new federal courthouse

Youth City	-City owned land	- Insufficient site size without assembling considerably more - Possibly negative impact on area housing - More distant from other city functions
Burger King	- Some City-owned land	- TRAX infrastructure - Access problems - Large number of parcels for assembly - Significant relocation concerns for private and public enterprises
7-11		- Street access issues - Large number of parcels needed for assembly
Barnes Bank	- Adjacent to city-owned block, two of properties either vacant or underutilized	- Would require additional assemblage in order to make site suitable for intended development
Health Dept property	- City-owned property	- County interested in purchasing site for future development - Marginally close to City Hall
State Office of Education	Adjacent to city-owned block, large parcel of land	State unwilling to relocate offices or give up large-enough acreage

Third East Corridor

In analyzing the pros and cons of these sites, the area along 300 East between 400 and 500 South – known as the 3rd East Corridor – provided the best combination of advantages and best met the criteria established to evaluate potential properties. The Mayor and Council agreed to begin property acquisition immediately.

A significant advantage of this site is that it allows the City to continue to develop a Civic Campus. The civic campus is currently comprised of the Matheson Courthouse, Salt Lake City & County Building, Salt Lake City Courts Building, Main Library, the

Leonardo building and the Barnes Bank Building which is envisioned to become the City's One-Stop Shop for Planning and Building development services.

Simultaneously, the City engaged AECOM, an engineering and architecture firm, to begin preliminary site design and massing analysis for the area (please note that actual architectural design was not part of this analysis). The Mayor indicated that the following additional design principles, specific to this site, were crucial:

- Preserve the iconic nature of the City Library's architecture
- Maintain the views from the Library out to the City and to the mountains
- Ensure there will be no net loss of open space in the area
- Incentivize high-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development along 400 South by including additional open spaces and retail opportunities in the area
- Ensure the PSB is well-integrated into the urban fabric of the area as an inviting and accessible facility for the general public

AECOM's preliminary analysis indicated that optimal massing options⁴, costs for parking, and the option to phase in property acquisition if necessary⁵, led to an evaluation that using some land on the west side of the Corridor could be favorable.

Next steps

The City is currently engaged in an open public process in which the Mayor has asked the public to provide input to City leaders regarding the two options presented for siting the buildings along the 3rd East Corridor.

Once the public process has concluded by mid-June, the Mayor and City Council will work together to incorporate the public feedback and make a final determination concerning the best place to position the Public Safety Complex within the 300 East corridor.

⁴ Administrative space needs and preferences were analyzed by AECOM, who produced a needs assessment that guided the massing requirements.

⁵ A smaller piazza could be constructed initially by acquiring only the Marshall property; as funds were later appropriated, the First American Title and McCall properties could be acquired to expand the piazza and provide mixed use development opportunities.