

JOURNAL OF COMMISSION WORK SESSION

May 7, 2013

City Commission Work Session

Mayor Winters presiding

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.





ROLL CALL: City Commissioners present: Michael J. Winters, Bill Bronson, Fred Burow, Bob Jones, and Bob Kelly.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager; Deputy City Manager; Director of Public Works; Interim Planning and Community Development Director; Police Chief; City Engineer; City Communications Manager; City Senior Transportation Planner; City Planner; Fiscal Services Administrative Assistant/Budget Technician; and the Deputy City Clerk.

1. 911 CENTER

Mayor Winters approved moving agenda item #2 to item #1 to allow Communications/Emergency Manager Bill Hunter to return to work.

Police Chief Dave Bowen provided a PowerPoint presentation on the future of the 911 Center/Emergency Operations Center.

<p>The future of 911</p> 	<p>Why move?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Current 911 center/EOC are outgrowing the space provided.▪ Increasing need for consoles: started with 3, required 4, currently 5, plan for 6.▪ Provides a safe place away from hazards.▪ The Police Department is out of room – free up much needed space.▪ The City currently owns the answer. FSS Bldg.
<p>Where do we move to?</p> 	<p>FSS quick facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 8,000 sq. ft. vs. current 2,500 sq. ft.▪ EOC large enough to handle all operations (3x the current space).▪ Supports a type 3 all hazards incident management team.▪ \$1.1 million dollar facility completely paid for. <div data-bbox="1166 1560 1382 1703"><p>Dispatch</p></div> <div data-bbox="1166 1717 1382 1860"><p>EOC</p></div>

How much will it cost?



Move in Cost

- Total estimated move in cost \$366,110
- Pending grant request will cover cost of the upgrade to the dispatch consoles and new phone system \$870,465.20

Approved!

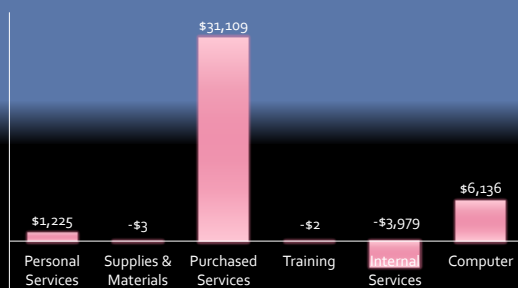
Funding for the move

- Safety Services Fund Balance \$255,000
 - 911 Special Revenue (Quarters) \$111,110
- \$366,110

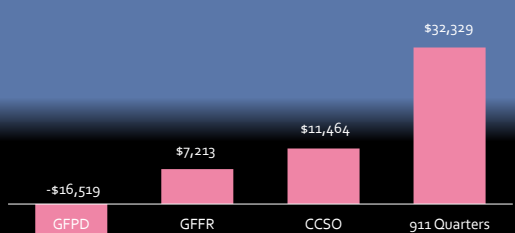
Operational Cost

- Current operational cost \$1,662,505
- Future operational cost \$1,696,991
- Increased operational cost \$34,486

Areas of Increase



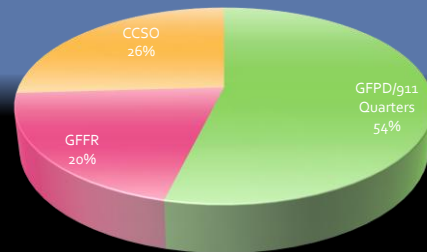
Agency Cost



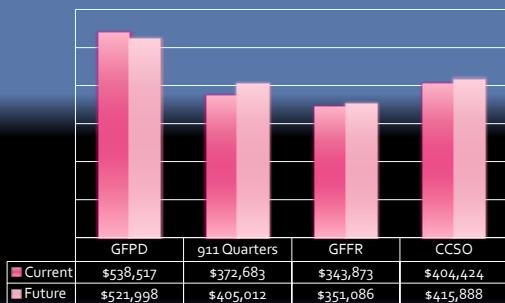
Cost Explanation

- GFPD – IT charges reduced/billed differently, equal distribution of internal/purchased services.
- GFFR – Paying equal share of the cost in purchased services (utilities, janitorial).
- CCSO – Paying equal share of the cost in purchased/internal services (utilities, janitorial, employee ins., training).

Agency cost



Agency Cost



911 Center

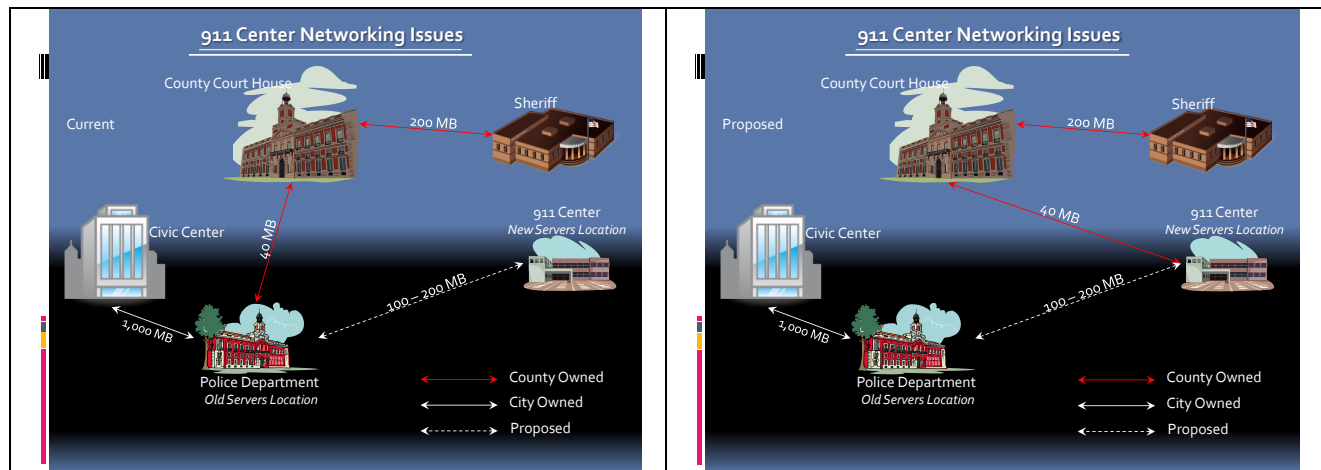
- Value of the FSS building \$1,100,000
- Value of the grant \$870,465.20
- Value of existing dollars \$366,110
- Total projected cost \$2,336,575.20

Now is the time

- The need for a new center is evident
- We have the existing building
- We have the designated funds for the move
- We have the opportunity to utilize grant funds to improve the center
- Increased operational costs are minimal

Action Steps

- Commission approval to place the grant on the upcoming agenda for acceptance.
- Commission approval to pursue the goal of moving by October of this year.
 - If yes, need to present to the county commissioners.



Chief Bowen referenced information provided to the Commission in advance for their review of the proposed move to the vacant Flight Service Station located at 3015 Airport Lane (across from the Air National Guard).

Chief Bowen reported the grant request of \$870,465.20 to cover the cost of the upgrade to the dispatch consoles and new phone system was approved this date. He added the Department of Homeland Security grant is for non-matching funds.

Chief Bowen thanked former Commissioner Jones and former Chief Corky Grove for their wisdom in managing the Safety Services and 911 Special Revenue accounts that will provide funding for the move.

Commissioner Jones questioned concerns by the Cascade County Commission regarding the fiber optics contract that was recently signed.

Chief Bowen responded the three-year agreement with CenturyLink was outside the State contract. However, he believes a workable solution with CenturyLink is being worked out.

Commission Kelly questioned the planned use of the vacated space in the Police Department building. Chief Bowen responded the space will be used for records, support services, and volunteers.

City Manager Greg Doyon noted the move will allow the City to use an existing asset that has not sold. The building is a perfect fit because it is uniquely designed for IT related purposes.

Mr. Doyon added the City's ambulance agreement communications expense will need to be evaluated.


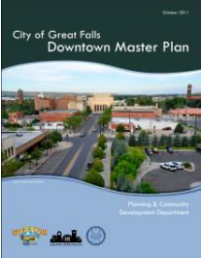
Commissioner Kelly questioned what would happen to the grant if the Commission does not give approval to proceed.

Chief Bowen responded the consoles would be upgraded, but a portion of the funds would be returned because some of the funds are designed for the 6th console.

The consensus of the Commission was to place the grant on the upcoming agenda and to pursue the goal to move the 911 Center/Emergency Operations Center to the Flight Service Station.

2. DOWNTOWN ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND STREETSCAPE STUDY

Senior Transportation Planner Andrew Finch introduced Design Workshop Consultant Michael Tunte. Mr. Tunte provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Downtown Access, Circulation and Streetscape study, and a plan booklet.

<p>THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS COMPREHENSIVE DOWNTOWN ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND STREETSCAPE PLAN</p> 	<p><i>City of Great Falls</i> and Stakeholders</p> <p>LEAD CONSULTANT/URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING / PUBLIC OUTREACH</p> <p>Design Workshop</p> <p>Principal-in-Charge: Kurt Calverton, FASLA, AICP, RLA Project Manager: Michael Tunte, RLA, LEED GA</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>TRANSPORTATION & CIVIL ENGINEERING Stelling Engineers Kathy Harris, PE, PTOE</td> <td>TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ESC Transportation Consultants, Inc. Candice Shaw, PE</td> <td>PARKING CONSULTATION Walker Parking Consultants Jennrich Simpson</td> <td>PUBLIC OUTREACH Lynda Friesz Public Relations, Inc. Lynda Friesz, President</td> </tr> </table>	TRANSPORTATION & CIVIL ENGINEERING Stelling Engineers Kathy Harris, PE, PTOE	TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ESC Transportation Consultants, Inc. Candice Shaw, PE	PARKING CONSULTATION Walker Parking Consultants Jennrich Simpson	PUBLIC OUTREACH Lynda Friesz Public Relations, Inc. Lynda Friesz, President
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<p>DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN</p> <p>Great Falls Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected Downtown • Flourishing Downtown • Downtown Destination • Downtown Living • Downtown Aesthetics <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pedestrian connectivity and safety downtown • Develop a comprehensive downtown bicycle network to connect into a city wide system • Reduce or eliminate downtown one ways • Improve connectivity for pedestrian and bicycles • Develop a comprehensive downtown wayfinding system • Optimize parking for all stakeholders • Improve public realm to provide a safe, attractive and welcoming environment 	<p>PROJECT PROCESS</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>TASK 1: Project Startup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick off meeting • Vision/goals/critical success factors • Research and analysis <p>TASK 2: Public Outreach and Opinion Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder focus group meetings • Parking Survey • Charrette <p>TASK 3: Parking Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of service and occupancy • Survey • Findings </td> <td> <p>TASK 4: Street Conversion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion alternates • Feedback • Cost estimate • Conversion recommendations • Existing and proposed routes <p>TASK 5: Streetscape Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street classification • Design elements • Streetscape improvements • Implementation • Signage and wayfinding • Materials quality </td> </tr> </table>	<p>TASK 1: Project Startup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick off meeting • Vision/goals/critical success factors • Research and analysis <p>TASK 2: Public Outreach and Opinion Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder focus group meetings • Parking Survey • Charrette <p>TASK 3: Parking Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of service and occupancy • Survey • Findings 	<p>TASK 4: Street Conversion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion alternates • Feedback • Cost estimate • Conversion recommendations • Existing and proposed routes <p>TASK 5: Streetscape Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street classification • Design elements • Streetscape improvements • Implementation • Signage and wayfinding • Materials quality 		
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Mr. Tunte reported results of the parking study showed the City has adequate parking when considering the industry standard. He believes there is room for improvement for public parking lot signage.

Mr. Doyon questioned the affect on a community that pulled parking meters.

Mr. Tunte responded his experience has shown mixed results. Business owners want the turn-around, and a time limit results in the two-hour shuffle. He believes downtown parking is a good idea for a robust community.

Parking study recommendations include (1) continue to fund regular maintenance for the two public parking garages along with necessary repair projects to extend the usable life of these

assets and ensure safety; (2) replace some of the parking meter zones within the downtown with time limited zones or no restrictions to allow for greater flexibility for employee parking, as the core area is the most critical zone to maintain metered parking, and areas beyond this zone should be evaluated on a case by case basis; (3) replace cash-only meters with newer electronic meters that accept credit card payments and increase meter fees slightly as necessary to cover credit card transaction costs; (4) re-evaluate and increase parking garage maximum rates to be in line with peer cities; and (5) increase maximum parking fees so that parking citations are more expensive than the cost of a permit space, and consider graduated fines for repeat parking offenders with more lenient warnings for downtown visitors on their first or second violations.

Commissioner Burow expressed concern for the life expectancy of electronic meters verses the mechanical meters. He also believes the repair costs will be substantial.

Mr. Tunte responded the upfront cost of electronic meters is a fair consideration, and the parking program must be structured for maintenance and replacement costs.

Mr. Tunte discussed options for converting one-way streets to two-way streets. Based on feedback from the Project Steering Committee, two options were considered: (1) two-way conversion, two lanes plus bike lanes in both directions, and (2) maintain one-way traffic plus a bike lane. He recommended maintaining one-way traffic plus a bike lane because the added cost of the two-way conversion plus bike lanes in both directions would not result in a significant benefit to the community.

He noted that preliminary findings indicate that many of the traffic signals in downtown are not warranted and could be replaced with stop signs.

Mr. Tunte discussed recommended streetscape improvements including improving ADA compliance; maintaining pedestrian priority; paving and marking crosswalks; curb extensions; expanded planting areas; buffering parking areas; enhanced water management; bicycle accommodations; site furnishings; outdoor dining, flex zones; and signage and wayfinding.

Mr. Tunte recommended a community purchase the highest level of materials that can be afforded due to durability, aesthetics, and longevity factors. He also recommends dollars be prioritized for elements which gain the most benefit.

Deputy City Manager Jenn Reichelt questioned if modeling to two-way conversions showed a significant change in traffic counts.

Mr. Tunte responded the numbers were not significant. He noted the models showed the traffic volume does not warrant three lanes.

Mr. Doyon questioned how the recommendations would be incorporated into the Great Falls Area Long Range Transportation Plan that is on the City Commission agenda tonight.

Mr. Finch responded the Long Range Transportation Plan will go through the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC), which Commissioner Burow serves on behalf of the

Commission, and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The recommendations from this study can be used to make policy decisions.

Mr. Doyon noted that a transportation plan is a long journey of planning and obtaining dollars. He asked Commissioner Burow to continue to seek support from the Commission to respond to opportunities that may assist in revitalizing the downtown.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Mayor Winters adjourned the informal work session of May 7, 2013, at 6:40 p.m.