

How to reduce the cost of the \$82 million police facility proposal

The City of Salem's current proposal is for a 148,000 sq. ft. facility, including a 25,000 sq. ft. 911 Center that can remain in current leased space for ten more years. Eliminating the 911 Center reduces the size to 123,000 sq. ft., which is still more than is needed.

Presently the Police Department occupies 38,000 sq. ft. (a frequently cited 48,000 sq. ft. total includes 10,000 sq. ft. for the off-site leased 911 Center space).

In 2015 the City's Citizen Police Facility Task Force recommended building a police facility "in the range of 75,000 - 106,000 square feet to allow for expansion of operations and for a minimum 40 year life-of-building." A new 911 Center of unknown size was to be included in this square footage.

Thus a 75,000 sq. ft. police facility **without** a new 911 Center **doubles** the size of the current 38,000 sq. ft. Police Department (28,000 sq. ft. at City Hall, 10,000 sq. ft. at other locations).

When the current Civic Center opened in 1972, the Police Department had 108 officers. In 1977, the Department had 139 officers. Now, in 2016, it has 189 officers. The average rate of growth during the past 39 years (1977-2016) has been 1.3 officers added per year. Projecting this rate of growth to 2045, the police facility planning horizon being used by the City, the Police Department then would have 227 officers — 38 more officers, a **20% increase**, while the size of the Department doubles, a **100% increase**, to 75,000 sq. ft.

This seems completely adequate for the Police Department alone. After all, the Police Facility Task Force recommended a building from 75,000 to 106,000 sq. ft. that included a 911 Center which likely would be between 10,000 and 25,000 sq. ft. in size.

The DLR Group has said that a 75,000 sq. ft. police facility would cost \$45 million. However, this cost reflects the DLR Group's excessively high \$348 per sq. ft. construction cost estimate.

Construction of the actual police facility accounts for **63%** of the current \$82 million, 148,000 sq. ft. proposal. Applying this percentage to the \$45 million, 75,000 sq. ft. proposal results in \$28 million in construction costs, and \$17 million in other costs such as design fees, furnishings, site acquisition, and allowance for contingencies.

If the construction cost is reduced to between \$150 and \$250 per sq. ft. (a State Police facility recently was constructed in Salem for \$150 per sq.ft., and Task Force consultants cited \$250 per sq. ft. as a reasonable cost), this lowers the cost to construct a 75,000 sq. ft. facility to between \$11 and \$19 million. Add in the \$17 million in other costs. Total now is between **\$28 million and \$36 million**.

City staff have estimated that the cost of making seismic upgrades to the Library and City Hall is about **\$27 million** in 2016 dollars. So the grand total for building a new 75,000 sq. ft. police facility without a 911 Center *and* making the Civic Center earthquake-safe is between **\$55 million and \$63 million**.

So about \$60 million, or less, buys Salem a perfectly adequate police facility AND seismic upgrades to the Library and City Hall that will save lives when the Big One earthquake hits—rather than spending \$82 million just for an over-priced and over-sized police facility.

Yes, SALEM CAN DO BETTER.