

BALLOT QUESTION NUM. 3

City of Boulder City

Should the City of Boulder City spend up to Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) from the Capital Improvement Fund for improvements to public safety facilities including, without limitation, construction of a new police station and the construction of a training facility at the fire station?

Yes

No

EXPLANATION & DIGEST

Section 142 of the Boulder City Charter directs a percentage of the proceeds from real estate transactions, such as solar energy leases, into the Capital Improvement Fund. Section 143 of the Boulder City Charter governs expenditures from Boulder City's Capital Improvement Fund, and requires all expenditures to be approved by a simple majority of the votes cast by the registered voters of the City on a proposition placed before them in a general or special election. This ballot question seeks to allow up to Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) to be spent from the Capital Improvement Fund for improvements to public safety facilities including, without limitation, construction of a new police station and the construction of a training facility at the fire station. The measure would allow Boulder City to expend Boulder City public funds. This measure does not propose to add to, change or repeal existing law, and will not increase taxes or fees.

A "YES" vote would allow the City to expend not more than Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) from the Capital Improvement Fund, if the funds are available, for improvements to public safety facilities including, without limitation, construction of a new police station and the construction of a training facility at the fire station.

A "NO" vote would not allow the City to spend additional money from the Capital Improvement Fund other than what has been previously authorized by the voters.

ARGUMENT FOR PASSAGE

The passage of this ballot question would be immensely beneficial if the funds are investment in our police and fire departments. The potential training facility, of which currently there is none, for the fire department would provide the following benefits:

1. A training facility in city limits would allow required annual training to be conducted on the job, rather than paying thousands of dollars in overtime to send firefighters to be trained in Henderson.
2. A training facility in city limits would help to increase the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) rating, which would potentially lower commercial and residential insurance rates.
3. A training facility would allow consistent experience and training with fighting fires, which increases safety for firefighters, the public and decreases loss of property.
4. As a smaller town with fewer fires, it is even more important that firefighters are consistently trained to maintain skills.

5. The training facility would be built adjacent to the existing fire station, on City owned land.
6. The training facility could also be used to train certain functions of the police department.

The current police station is housed in a structure originally built in 1932. It is a structure that does not allow many of the vital functions of the police department to be carried out effectively. Specifically:

1. The concrete walls used to build in the 1930s make it very difficult to add the wiring and needed infrastructure for the technology needed in today's police world, specifically with dispatch.
2. The power and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system frequently fail and, again, the concrete walls used make it difficult to provide fully functioning HVAC and power.
3. There is no secure parking for police vehicles.
4. The building does not facilitate the necessary functions for the police department including a place to interview victims, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, or enough locker room areas and facilities for the police department as a whole.
5. Due to the age, certain portions of the building do not follow current federal safety regulations and are unusable for police work.
6. The police department has increased in size and complexity and has outgrown the current facility.

In sum, the Capital Improvement Fund is intended to improve Boulder City. If invested in the police station and fire training facility, the passage of this ballot question would certainly provide that improvement.

(Submitted by Ballot Question Committee as provided for in NRS 295.217)

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT FOR PASSAGE

This argument is misleading in many respects. First, our firefighters do complete their annual training in Henderson, approximately 16 minutes away, generally once per year. The cost of building a training facility in city limits far outweighs the cost of overtime pay for an annual training. Additionally, overtime pay for our firefighters increases their overall income. The argument points out that we live in a smaller town with fewer fires. Another valid reason why we do not need a large expenditure on a training facility. The training firefighters receive will be annual regardless of the location of the training facility, and firefighter safety is already a top priority for our fire department.

The second portion of this argument contains issues as well. Although the building was constructed in 1932, there have been several renovations to bring the space to more modern standards. The failing of heat, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems can be related to a defect in the HVAC system itself, or an electrical issue within the system. A concrete wall does not necessarily cause an HVAC system to fail. These two items are unrelated.

(Submitted by Ballot Question Committee as provided for in NRS 295.217)

ARGUMENT AGAINST PASSAGE

This question is intended to use Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) from the Capital Improvement Fund toward construction of a new police station and a training facility at the fire station.

There are several issues with this ballot question, and residents should vote “NO”. As much as residents value and support our police force, the building they are currently occupying has been used for several years and crime rates are hardly impacted by the age, size, or use of that building. Significant renovations have been made in the past for the current building to be brought up to modern standards.

Additionally, if the City constructs a new police station, there is no mention in this question of what will become of the prior building. The building would be vacant immediately after the police department vacated. Vacant buildings do not maintain the same value as those that are being utilized.

The second portion of this question is a training facility for the fire department. The argument here is the same. The fire department and our firefighters are well trained individuals that are invaluable to our community. Again, these men and women are already trained, they have done extremely well in serving our community. They also receive ongoing training outside the city and this training has not diminished the ability of the department to fight fires. There has not been a significant change in firefighting, prevention, or risk based on a training facility located within city limits.

The effectiveness of the police department and fire department is not reduced based on the building. Both departments have served our community well with the current buildings. There are many other potential projects that would be of greater benefit to the community that these funds could be used for.

One large benefactor of this question would be the construction company and contractors that would build these buildings for a profit. Vote “NO” on ballot Question Num. 3

(Submitted by Ballot Question Committee as provided for in NRS 295.217)

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PASSAGE

The answer to the ballot question to invest Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) into public safety, and our fire department and police department is a resounding, “YES”. Yes, the practices of the police and fire departments have changed since 1932. Yes, a newly updated police department and a training facility for the fire department is essential. Simply updating the current 1930s police station or going without a training facility for the fire department, is not meeting the simple requirements of technology, training, safety standards, and security that is a fact of today’s world. Yes, we can all agree the world has changed significantly since 1932 and can understand the need for public safety structures that address those changes. And, yes, the historical building that the police department is currently housed in will be preserved and used for a more appropriate purpose in the future. Support this ballot question on public safety and the safety and training of fire and police department personnel and vote, “YES”.

(Submitted by Ballot Question Committee as provided for in NRS 295.217)

FISCAL IMPACT

This will impact the Capital Improvement Fund in the amount of not more than Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00), and then only if funds are available within the Capital Improvement Fund. This question does not require an expense that will require the levy or imposition of a new tax or fee or the increase of an existing tax or fee.