

Summary of Public Meetings on a Potential New Public Safety Building

February 2025

The City held two public meetings with residents to present information about the concept of possibly building a new Red Wing Public Safety Building and to gather feedback from residents. Below is a summary of those meetings.

Meeting #1: Tuesday, February 11; 9:30 a.m. at the Ignite Building – 419 Bush Street

Attendance: 17 community members, 4 Council members (Janie, Ron, Don, Mayor Iocco), and 4 staff members (Nick Sather, Brian Mettling, Marshall Hallock, and Michelle Leise)

Highlights: Chief Sather gave a slide presentation and described the issues, concerns, budget implications, possible location, and timeline for a potential new building. (Those slides are attached to this report). Afterward, Michelle Leise facilitated a feedback discussion for roughly 20 minutes.

Here is a summary of thoughts shared by those in attendance. The discussion was divided the discussion into three parts: (a) Concerns; (b) Information you want the City to know; and (c) Information you want to know more about from the City.

CONCERNS:

- Privacy. Some people firmly agree that the Red Wing Police Department section of the building needs more privacy for victims and for the children who are there to talk to officers. Whatever happens, more space for this is necessary.
- Want to make sure that this project will not get too close to the Prairie Island Indian Community's Area of Concern as shown on the map.

FEEDBACK TO THE CITY

- The City and the County should get together to discuss things more and come up with a solution that is better for everyone.
- The location now seems to be the best. What will a location change mean for residents? Will officers be able to get to the areas they need to in a short amount of time?
- The Chamber of Commerce voiced that they would be supportive and help in any way toward getting grants for a new building.
- Some people appreciated the idea of planning for the future.
- Multiple people voiced that they value officers' physical and mental health and want to ensure Red Wing officers have resources in the future.

WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT

- Why are we talking about a new station when Red Wing's population isn't growing?
- What will be the Return on Investment (ROI) for the community?
- If Goodhue County has to pay more money in utilities when and if Red Wing leaves the current county building, how will that affect taxpayers?
- What are Red Wing's chances of receiving state and federal grants?
- How will time affect the current building and the potential new building? How long would a new building last? Will we be having this discussion in 20 years again?
- Please provide more details on why police staff is growing, even though our population isn't growing.
- How long before our Public Works Department needs more room?

Meeting #2: Thursday, February 13, 6:30 p.m. at Fire Station 2

Attendance: 28 residents/business owners, 3 Council members (Ron, Don, Mayor Iocco), and 3 staff members (Nick Sather, Brian Mettling, and Michelle Leise)

Highlights: Chief Sather gave a slide presentation and described the issues, concerns, budget implications, possible location, and timeline for a potential new building. (Those slides are attached to this report). Afterward, Michelle Leise facilitated a feedback discussion for roughly 20 minutes.

Here is a summary of thoughts shared by those in attendance. The facilitator divided the discussion into three parts: (a) Concerns; (b) Information you want the City to know; and (c) Information you want to know more about.

CONCERNS:

- The operational costs of running a building like this would be too high annually.
- The initial building plans are too elaborate for what we need as a city.

WHAT YOU WANT THE CITY TO KNOW

- The City and Goodhue County should get together and figure something out that works for both sides and is less costly to taxpayers.
- Goodhue County Commission Chair Todd Greseth attended and said the county wants to work together but they need to finish the county's space study first to learn what is fully needed. (Commissioners Linda Flanders and Susan Betcher were also in attendance.)
- The issue of Red Wing having a local identity does not seem very important.
- The issue of Red Wing having a local identity is definitely important.

WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT

- Explain more about what efficiencies are happening between the City and County now that make it somewhat worthwhile to have a space together.
- How are the working relationships between the City of Red Wing Police Department and the Goodhue County Sheriff's Department, including the leadership from both?
- What are the City Council and the County Commissioners doing to help find a solution to the issues?
- Explain more about the true cost of building a new Public Safety Building, knowing that the debt service will be decreasing in Red Wing in future years.
- Please provide the lease and more history on the old police station building that is now demolished.
- Is the Red Wing Police Department overstaffed? Can we learn more about the staffing of other departments around the state and what is deemed appropriate and not?
- If the Police Department changes its location, what are the different ways that will affect how officers do their jobs, respond to calls, and their interactions with the public?

Next Steps:

- The City Council will discuss this issue during its annual workshop on Friday, February 21, and again in future City Council meetings.
- The City and Goodhue County will meet soon to discuss options, budgeting, and community feedback.
- A designated website page will be on the City's website (redwingmn.gov) to provide background on this issue, a Q&A article, and upcoming meeting information for residents who want to follow this topic and give input.
- Details will continue to be shared with the public through multiple modes of communication – newspaper, radio, City Beat, and the City's social media.