



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indianola takes steps toward consolidated city hall/library, new public safety facility

Projects respond to community growth, undersized and deteriorating facilities

INDIANOLA, IA – Following years of assessments and planning, the City of Indianola is considering next steps toward a solution to ongoing facility needs for its fire station, police station, city hall, and library.

At a council work session on Monday, Interim City Manager Charlie Dissell, Interim Police Chief Brian Sher, Fire Chief Greg Chia, and Library Director Michele Patrick presented conceptual plans as well as the planning process to date.

With an understanding that the existing municipal building – where city hall, fire, and police are all co-located – is undersized for current needs, the city hired Formation Group to conduct preliminary building studies and planning with city staff in 2018. Those studies explored multiple scenarios, finally determining that the best solution would be to relocate city hall to accommodate the fire and police departments, which are both currently using multiple off-site buildings to store vehicles and other equipment, affecting emergency response times.

Following council approval, in December 2020, OPN Architects was hired to further explore potential concepts for a new combined fire and police station as well as relocating city hall to the existing library site. After extensive staff and community engagement – including virtual and in person open houses and building tours and digital surveys – the final solution, which was presented on Monday outlines plans for a new larger public safety facility for both fire and police departments and a new consolidated city hall and library building on the site of the current library.

The estimated cost for both projects is \$46 million in 2023 dollars. Forecasting ahead and planning for inflation, if the projects were to be constructed in 2028, it is estimated the projects would cost \$57.5 million. More detailed cost information will be discussed at the next council meeting on May 2.

A new combined city hall and library building will allow city hall functions to move out of the municipal building while also keeping city operations centrally located and simultaneously addressing long-standing space and facilities needs at the existing library. The new 42,000-square-foot combined two-story building will be located to the south of the existing library. City hall and community spaces will be located on the first floor, with library collection and operations on the second floor.

“The proposed library and city hall creates a natural community hub near the center of town,” said Indianola Library Director Michele Patrick. “Not only will the building provide much-needed space for the library’s collections and programs, but it includes meeting rooms available to community clubs and groups.”

The new public safety facility will be located on the southeast corner of the existing site of the municipal building. The 48,000-square-foot combined two-story facility for police and fire will include seven pull-through bays with space for 14-plus vehicles for the fire department and three bays for police vehicles. The building also includes administrative spaces for both departments, shared training spaces, and living spaces for fire fighters.



“A new public safety facility has been discussed for decades in Indianola. This project would provide a workplace environment that is professional, efficient, and accommodating to the public safety needs,” said Indianola Fire Chief Greg Chia and Interim Police Chief Brian Sher. “It would allow current employees to prosper and becomes an attraction for future employees, demonstrating that the community cares about its public safety organization.” Our officers are excited and look forward to the possibility of having functional workspaces that better serve the citizens of Indianola.”

Following the April 18 work session, city council will consider next steps, which could include calling a special election asking voters to approve a referendum to pay for new facilities. The special election would be held on September 13, 2022.

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About the City of Indianola

Indianola is a city in Warren County, Iowa, located 14 miles south of Des Moines. The City of Indianola is home to Simpson College and serves more than 15,800 residents and numerous visitors who come to explore Indianola’s vibrant downtown, restaurants, shops, parks, cultural attractions—such as the Des Moines Metropolitan Opera—and events, including the National Balloon Classic and the Warren County Fair. To learn more about the City of Indianola, [click here](#).

