

Salem candidates favor police facility



[Next Slide](#)

12 Photos

Salem City Council and mayoral candidates meet for forum

Candidates for Salem City Council and [mayor](#) expressed support Monday for building a new police station, although they were concerned about the [\\$81 million price tag](#).

[Five council candidates](#) and the [two mayoral candidates](#) were at the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce's Forum Speaker Series and talked about why they're running for office before answering members' questions.

Brent DeHart, president of the chamber's board of directors, asked the candidates if they favor building a new facility and how comfortable they are with the price.

The candidates didn't question the police department's need for more space.

After touring the current facility at the Vern Miller Civic Center, Jan Kailuweit, candidate for Ward 1, said, "I realized I have more showers at my house."

Kailuweit has three showers in his home. The station has two showers for its male employees, he said.

Police have needed more space since 1980, said Chuck Bennett, mayoral candidate and current Ward 1 councilor.

"This is nothing new," he said. "You all knew this."

He said the council would look to the engineers and the police to help identify what they need for a facility to last the community the next 50 years.

Carole Smith, a longtime city activist running for mayor, said it's shameful to cram all the officers into the space they currently have. She's not comfortable with the high price tag and worries that voters will vote down a bond measure, she said.

"I'd like to consider a couple precincts back where the crime is," she said.

Matt Ausec, candidate for Ward 5, said he likes the idea of renting space for substations throughout the city. It would allow for growth in a more modern way, he said.

"We could bring police more directly to the people," he said.

Tiffany Partridge, Ward 5 candidate, said people need to remember that the facility isn't just where officers are based, it's also where the crime lab and administration are housed.

Partridge said she's a frugal person but the police need more space.

Warren Bednarz, city councilor for Ward 7 who is up for reelection, said he's a little uncomfortable with the price tag, but he needs to listen to the experts on this.

"Although I'm uncomfortable, I think it's something we're going to have to educate the public on," he said.

Brad Nanke, city councilor for Ward 3 who is running unopposed, said the bonding is deceiving to people. They hear that it'll cost more on their property taxes, but if the bonds are bought and paid for strategically, it should keep people's property taxes relatively stable, he said.

Email khessel@statesmanjournal.com, call 503-399-6743 or follow on Twitter @KaellenHessel

What's next?

Salem City Club is hosting a forum with the Salem City Council candidates April 28. The event will run from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Salem Public Library's Anderson Room, at 585 Liberty St. SE. The event is free and open to the public.