

Forward-thinking cities support public safety

Forward-thinking cities understand that public safety must be our priority for quality of life and job creation.

There are many places in our country that have adversarial relationships with their police department and I, for one, am glad that Salem is not one of those cities. The men and women who serve and protect us under Chief Jerry Moore's leadership are the pinnacle of their profession, but they're operating out of a dingy basement at City Hall.

Salem is beginning to thrive, but we cannot become complacent. Now is the time to invest in our effective Salem Police Department.

Many years have been spent planning for the kind of facility our officers and citizens deserve. Bond rates are favorable, a functional facility has been professionally planned, construction costs are in alignment with other recent construction of public safety facilities and sufficient property is available in a central city of Salem location.

The Salem Area Chamber of Commerce urges you to support Measure 24-399 on the grounds that:

- The current police facility is unsafe in the event of an earthquake. The new proposed police facility would meet all seismic standards and allow all public safety functions to remain operational in the event of an earthquake or other natural disaster.
- Due to size constraints, our current police facility and 911 call center do not meet current safety standards for our police officers, our staff and crime victims. The new proposed police facility would incorporate up-to-date safety features to keep our officers and staff safe at work and keep crime

victims safe and separated from accused criminals.

- The new police facility authorized by Measure 24-399 will meet Salem's public safety needs for the next 40 years. Anything less than the current proposal in Measure 24-399 would be a band-aid solution that would require voters to approve yet another bond.

- We need to build a police facility that can consolidate key public safety functions into one seismically safe building that will make Salem's police operations more efficient. Moving all police operations into the new facility will save the city over a half million dollars per year in leasing and operating costs.

Due to expiring bond debt, the levy will cost Salem taxpayers far less than advertised. Although the measure authorizes a tax rate of 36 cents per thousand, expiring bond debt will reduce the net tax impact to around 24 cents per thousand, or roughly \$4 per month on a home with an assessed value of \$200,000 after the year 2023.

Opponents to this measure have no Plan B if this measure fails. Their misstated cost analysis doesn't make sense to architects or engineers.

This community has wisely supported measures for streets and bridges, our public schools, Chemeketa Community College, OSU Extension Service and several other needed public improvements and services. Let's invest in positive outcomes and keep Salem safe. We urge that you vote "yes" on Ballot Measure 24-399.

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