



# Haines Borough Public Safety Building Project

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. Why is the new building option two stories instead of single-story?

Our initial thought was to make the building one story: the single story saves 1,000 square feet of space between the stairs and elevator, and eliminates the need for expensive elevator maintenance. The single-story option also improves response time for fire department staff, as they don't have to run down stairs.

After this question was raised at the May 5 Town Hall, we circled back to compare the two options more closely. With our volunteer fire force, response time in exiting the station is not as critical as a fully staffed station, so running down stairs is less of a concern. A two-story structure would also be more cost-effective (even with the elevator and stairs) given this specific project's high cost of foundation and site work. The two-story option is 30% smaller in terms of the building foundation/footprint area, and 30% smaller in roof area; the building volume, however, is approximately the same for both options. Ultimately it was determined that a two-story structure is the most cost-effective option and best long-term solution for Haines.

### 2. How did the 2013 "Haines 2015 Facility Planning Report" prepared by McCool Carlson and Green and the work of the Haines Borough's Facilities Master Plan Steering Committee factor into this project?

McCool Carlson and Green compiled and analyzed data regarding the physical conditions of seven Haines Borough buildings, including the Public Safety Building. MCG worked with the Steering Committee, and a proposal emerged to combine the fire department, police, dispatch, administration, assembly chambers, and possibly the visitor center. Previous assemblies expressed there was no interest in moving forward with this project.

Also, code and construction requirements for public safety facilities differ greatly from offices or meeting rooms. The former is much more expensive than the latter. When designing public safety structures, we try to remove every function that we can that exists in a standard business occupancy building, because adding functions like file storage just increases the already high cost of the building.

### 3. If we construct a new building, what will happen to the existing building?

There are several options, including selling it, using it for another purpose, and demolishing it. It will take about \$300,000 to abate and demolish the existing building, which is not included in the new building cost estimate.

#### **4. What level of energy efficiency is included in the estimated cost of a new building?**

This estimate includes designing to energy standards we have used on similar recent structures in Southeast; however, we did not get into the details yet with these cost models. Part of our work ahead involves a full independent cost estimate, which will allow us to get more detailed on energy saving methods and returns on investment (ROIs) for different options. Ideas that have been floated with the Haines Borough Public Facilities Director include bio-mass boilers, air source heat pumps, and other alternative energy sources.

#### **5. The existing building is in the tsunami inundation zone. How is this information being factored into site selection?**

The existing building falls just within the tsunami inundation zone. Due to site conditions, the existing building cannot be effectively raised out of this zone. A new facility located on the south site (across Ed Shirley Drive) would fall outside of the zone.

#### **6. Were other locations considered for construction of a new facility?**

We did discuss other locations; however, users and community members felt the general existing spot is centrally located, convenient, and easily accessible (especially with regard to the Haines Highway). Taking into consideration property that the Haines Borough already owns, the undeveloped lot across from Ed Shirley Drive seemed to be the best option.

#### **7. How did you arrive at the minimum space of 20,640 square feet for a new facility?**

We spoke extensively with building users (the Haines Volunteer Fire Department, Haines Police, Dispatch, Public Facilities staff) about what is working in the current facility and what isn't, and used that information to develop a programming list with square footage. We also integrated federal and state code requirements, and applied our experience from the prior 20 public safety facilities we have designed. To really cut the fat, we have gone through the programming list as a group and eliminated items.

#### **8. Why not split police and fire services between two structures? For example, the existing building and remodeling another facility?**

This option would put the dispatch and EOC locations in question: which facility do they operate out of when they serve both? By keeping these services together, you increase efficiency by preserving shared spaces instead of duplicating them (meeting rooms, bathrooms, mechanical rooms, etc.)

#### **9. What is the ideal development process for an upgraded public safety operation?**

The most logical way to ensure the 24/7 emergency needs of the community continue uninterrupted, is to build a new modern facility and then move quickly from the old to the new facility. By doing so, the response systems can be modernized without further impacting the current operations. Attempting to accomplish a major upgrade of the 24/7 facility has significant impacts on the emergency functions, which reduces effective delivery of these services to the community.