

**CITY OF ALBANY
SUMMARY MEMORANDUM
POLICE & FIRE TEMPORARY QUARTERS
MONROE STREET**

- 1) What were the overall goals for the relocation, particularly for Police and Fire?
The Police/Fire relocation was done to ensure continuous availability of public safety services during the move and during the relocation period. It was and is of utmost importance that operations not be compromised for both of these entities, and that response time for paramedics and police should not be significantly lengthened. Keeping Police/Fire located in Albany was therefore a high priority, as was keeping them functioning together as much as possible, in as similar a manner as was practical. It was these criteria that drove the site selection process.

Another criteria was to keep the Civic Center contract cost as low as possible by completely vacating the premises during the construction. A phased alternative was considered, in which portions of the project would be done while other parts would continue to be occupied. However, our cost estimator and various contractors we spoke with estimated that phasing would have added upwards of \$1 million more to the contract cost.

- 2) Why did the cost estimates change over the course of construction? The license agreement for the Monroe street site was only finalized in late November of 2007. It might be recalled that we began looking for sites in late fall of 2006, and that as potential sites were identified, time was spent with our space planner and relocation coordinator to see if they would work and to do some initial layout planning. Negotiations with the University were started originally over the abandoned College of Natural Resources Facilities on the Gill Tract. This fell through at the last minute due to the schedule problems with demolition, and the site was fortuitously able to switch to the old Section A housing Monroe Street site, after continued negotiations. However, this meant that plans had to be reconfigured, and office space found for the three departments. At that time however, the CC project itself was racing towards completion of plans and specifications in order get out to bid in early 2008 to achieve a more advantageous contract cost than bidding later in the year. Thus, the Monroe Street site had to be planned, designed and engineered, put out to bid, constructed, and moved – all within as short a time frame as possible.

The real planning for the site began in January of this year, bids were out in March, and the move will occur by the end of August. This is an incredibly short time frame to basically design and construct an entire public safety facility. The speed of the project development meant that cost estimates were constantly trying to keep pace with the reality of the design and construction. It might also be noted that the City lost its in-house project manager in March (Long Ly) and there

was no other choice but to have existing staff (Barry and Rich) step into the role, in addition to their regular workloads.

In mid April the cost estimate of \$2.4 for the total relocation was reported to Council, with an estimate of approximately \$1.9 for the Monroe Street site. (The admin/finance/CD costs have remained approximately the same as they were fixed amounts.) As the project moved quickly into construction, the volume and flow of activity proceeded at a rapid pace, and design/construction decisions were made in the field with the overall goal of moving out of the Civic Center as soon as possible.

- 3) How has the City tried to economize throughout the project?
 - a. Finding a used modular building for Police, instead of new modulares.
 - b. Having modular company do build out on site (instead of City hiring separate contractors).
 - c. No new project manager hired/no IT position hired.
 - d. Splitting up our phone system and re-using the old existing Nortel for Police/Fire.
 - e. Re-use of almost all furniture and equipment unless it was built-in.
 - f. Purchase of used items as much as possible (for instance, lockers for PD and Fire, also used phones for Admin/Finance, and existing system in Community Development)
 - g. When purchasing miscellaneous furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) trying to ensure that it will be part of the move-back
 - h. Having some FF&E paid out of departmental budgets for materials/supplies/equipment.

- 4) What were some of the main challenges we faced?
 - a. Quick turnaround drove the project; advance planning was not possible
 - b. The site was undeveloped, and site design was far more extensive than at first conceived. Drainage, grading, paving, parking, driveways, strength of the area underneath the fire vehicles, emergency power, etc., all had to be engineered. Site preparation was impacted by the specifications, and these costs were more significant than at first anticipated.
 - c. Apparatus Bay structure: We anticipated being able to use an existing temporary building from Foster City, but as we were negotiating, we learned from the vendor that the “used” structure could not be transferred to our site. [It might be noted that Foster City spent \$225,000 in 2002 for their temporary Apparatus Bay.] It took 1-2 months to resolve this issue in terms of what was cheapest and what would work. This meant that the original plans had to be scrapped and the interior layout and building is basically being designed and built in the field.
 - d. Complexity of telecommunications: We needed to hire an IT specialist to design the wiring and cabling, go out to bid, assess phone, radio and other communication systems, and oversee construction and implementation. We did not have anyone with the necessary skills on staff.

- e. Customization of the buildings for both Police and Fire was more extensive than thought at first. In general, it is harder for Police and Fire functions to “make do” than for a regular office function. The demands of their activities leave less room for flexibility in terms of where things are and operational changes are often not possible. Police and Fire activities also fall under far more regulatory restrictions. One example of this is the decontamination of turnout gear for Fire. OSHA requirements govern this activity, and the washing units must be relatively near the apparatus bay so that turnout gear can be removed and immediately placed in the washing area. This requires a separate sewer and water line in the apparatus bay, and a set-aside space for this activity. When the Foster City structure was no longer available, the entire Apparatus bay and accompanying functions (turnouts, supplies, decontamination, the vehicle shop, etc.,) had to be re-planned—this effects location of utilities and has required various changes in the field..

5) What challenges are still ahead of us?

- a. Returning telecommunications back to Civic Center
- b. Space and move planning to return to Civic Center
- c. Coordination of Civic Center project with relocated PD/Fire: How to ensure we re-use as much as possible.
- d. Finishing the Civic Center project in a timely manner so that we do not incur more lease related costs.

6) How we can take advantage of our investment in the Monroe Street site?

- a. We should take as much back with us as possible in terms of FF&E, and perhaps even in telecommunications. This should be assessed in terms of what is in the Civic Center project plans to make sure we do not buy things twice.
- b. There may be other areas (functions, telecommunications, etc.) that we find are useful to City operations
- c. If another entity could make use of the modulars on site, or as-is (such as another police department), it is possible we could save on “decustomization” costs, which are in the contract with the modular company. (about \$80,000).
- d. If another entity could use or buy the metal building that is the Apparatus Bay, that would provide some return to the City. We should make sure to market this structure.
- e. The infrastructure that is on the site will have value for a future tenant. We are not sure how this can be leveraged or used, but the possibility should be considered.

7) Where is the overall project in terms of cost? The Civic Center project remains under budget. The overall project cost was estimated at \$14,680,000 on April 7,

2008 when bids were brought to Council for approval. Including relocation costs, the project cost (including the \$1.44m contingency) is at \$13,900,000.

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August, 2008