

Proposal to Convert the City-Owned Property on Austin Street to the Bandera Marshal's Office

Overview

The city currently owns a 650 square foot cinder block building on less than 1 acre of land on Austin Street. This property has been used to date for storage of city and court files.

The Marshal proposes repurposing this city-owned facility to house the Marshal's Office. This will allow for several beneficial changes:

- The Mayor's office and the Specialist can be relocated to the current Marshal's Office space.
- The Administrator's office can be restored to its prior dimensions by removing the shared interior wall between the Marshal's Office and Patrol Office.
- The need for a new door for the Court Security mandate is eliminated, saving the city \$4,900 in construction costs.
- The existing alcove used by Earl can be maintained for the deputies and bailiff operations, as well as a walk-in lobby reports.

Benefits of the Conversion

1. Cost Savings:

- The city already owns this property so there will be no regular leasing costs. The current lease for City Hall and the Marshal's Office will be expiring in a few short years.
- Eliminating the need for the new Court Security door will save \$4,900 in construction costs.

2. Improved Efficiency:

- Creating a separate space for the Marshal's Office at a new location will free up much needed space for City Hall employees.
- Restoring the Administrator's office to its original size will restore the ingress/egress that was lost when the interior wall was added to create an additional office for the Specialist.

Implementation Plan

1. **Facility Assessment:** Conduct a full evaluation of the VFW building to determine the scope of renovations needed.
2. **Renovations:**
 - Install a split HVAC unit (\$2,500)

- Parking Pad (\$2,000)
- Driveway (\$500)
- Exterior Lighting (\$600)
- Security Cameras (\$600)
- Router for network access (\$200)
- Interior Paint (\$200)
- Reinforce the four windows for security (\$700)
- Reframe back door (\$500)
- Flooring (\$1,500)
- Street Signage (\$1,700 estimate)
- Storage Container Relocation (unknown)
- Relocation of City Records: (unknown)
- **Total – Approximately \$11,000+**

3. **Relocation:**

- Transition the Marshal's Office and Patrol Office operations into the new facility, while retaining Earl's workspace at City Hall.
- Relocate the Mayor's office and restore the Administrator's office.

4. **Ongoing Maintenance:**

- Allocate funding in the city's budget for the maintenance and upkeep of the new facility.

Future Enhancements

1. **Fleet Vehicle Storage:** Construct a metal carport to store the city's fleet vehicles on-site.
2. **Impound Lot:** Install security fencing around the perimeter to allow for an impound lot, generating revenue through storage fees and vehicle sales.

Challenges

1. **Storage of City Records:** The amount of state mandated records to be kept for the Municipal Court, the City Secretary, and the City Treasurer is substantial. They must be kept in a dry and accessible location with proper lighting and safety for staff as they will need to access these records often. A location needs to be mutually agreed upon before this possible upgrade can happen. The man hours and logistics of properly moving these records cannot be understated.
2. **Zoning:** Currently, the city-owned property is zoned as Residential. A rezoning request will be needed.
3. **Noise & Lights (Law Enforcement Vehicles):** Concern about siren noise and vehicle lights in a residential area. This can be resolved by an internal policy that restricts sirens & lights from being activated until after reaching SH 16.

4. **Street Signage:** An investment in proper signage for the public on SH 16 and at the intersection of Austin/Montague will be needed for the public to be able to find this new location.
5. **Viability for Public Access:** A substantial education and communication plan will need to be undertaken to inform the public of when and how to access this new location versus the current location. The new location cannot be manned every hour as call volume will dictate marshals will be out of the office with the building locked and inaccessible.
6. **Storage Container Removal:** There are three large metal storage containers on the property. They are owned by the EDC and the BBA. These will need to be relocated. Possibly at a considerable cost.
7. **Deputy Marshals' Personal Vehicle Safety:** The safety for personal vehicles of marshals working the night shift working alone at this isolated location. For those that prefer to continue to park their vehicles at the City Hall location adds another logistic hurdle prior to and after many night shifts.
8. **Neighboring Property:** The property to the left has several vehicles encroaching that would need to be moved back onto the neighboring property eventually.

Conclusion

Repurposing this city-owned property to house the Marshal's Office and Patrol Office presents a compelling opportunity to achieve cost savings, improve operational efficiency, and provide much needed space at City Hall.

However, there are considerable costs and challenges to overcome. Addressing these challenges includes input and cooperation from staff from other departments, other entities (EDC & BBA), the public, and the deputy marshals.