

City of Independence - Strategic Planning Project Information Sheet

Please complete one sheet for each proposed project.

Project Title: Fire Station Addition / Fire Truck Replacement

Department: Fire Department

Contact Person: Blake Hayward – Fire Chief

1. Estimated Total Cost: 10-12 million

(Please provide your best estimate. Formal quotes are not required at this stage.)

2. Project Timeline: 1-3 Years

(What is the estimated start and completion date? Can this project be phased?)

3. Project Description: Independence Fire Department is in desperate need of a Station addition due to growing equipment sizes, growing community needs, increased call volumes, and added staffing. Our current station can not house the needed equipment we need and in turn is pushing our truck replacement program behind and delaying future truck replacements.

Our Rescue truck has been on the board for replacement since 2014. We haven't been able to replace it with what we feel like our needs are due to size restrictions in our current station. With this truck continually getting pushed back, we have now found ourselves at a bottleneck of truck replacements. With Ladder 1 turning 20 years old next year, we are now falling behind in the replacement program due to waiting to replace Rescue 1. Additionally, Fire trucks continue to rise in cost each year as well as increased build times. Roughly 5% increase in total cost each year, when we push a fire truck back 11 years like we have, we can see an overall price increase of 55% compared to if we would've been able to purchase in 2014 when the truck was scheduled. In dollars that is \$715,000 increase on a 1.3 million dollar truck.

We have also been told that Independence is right on the line of seeing the need to add a 3rd Engine per ISO. With our Community continuing to grow as well as our increased call volume, we feel this is probably true, but due to lack of space or funding, we can't spend time looking at this option as we have a station addition and 2 truck builds to concentrate on at the current time.

(Provide a clear and concise summary of the project. What are the key goals and objectives?)

4. Project Justification / Community Benefit: Much needed space for equipment and apparatus. Increased call volume and higher demand in the fire service has caused us to quickly outgrow our 30 year addition. Also looking at the future, we feel there is going

to be a bigger need to add even more equipment and apparatus moving forward as smaller towns are struggling to meet the demands in the fire service. By added on, this will allow our department to grow into a larger space, while also continuing to add much needed space, tools, equipment, and staffing for future growth.

(Why is this project necessary? What problem does it solve? How will it benefit the residents and businesses of Independence? Please describe the alignment with the city's overall goals, if applicable.)

5. Key Dependencies or Potential Roadblocks: Funding. I feel we have done our homework with the Administration and Architects, and having a future local was a big step. Designing and Funding will be our biggest roadblocks for sure. Hopefully we have community support, but we will also face challenges with upcoming bond votes as well. My feeling is, if we announce, promote, and campaign over the next year, we can add it to the ballot for 2026 in hopes that it will pass the 1st time. If it doesn't pass, we will need to reevaluate and try again in 2027. If we wait until we have no other bond votes on the ballot, we are years down the road, and will continue to fall behind while increases overall costs.

I agree with looking at land in a different location to provide addition space, room for training, future 2nd station, community space, and large training capacity to host larger fire department events, and trainings. We would like to start bringing in more state, and national training and hosting larger events such as the DLE programs and bring in instructors and firefighters from across the county, state, and county, but not having the available space to do that or room to train, makes it almost impossible. Bringing in larger training events can help supplement our budget, bring in Hotel/Motel Tax dollars, and even some LOST funding for the City as well.

We feel that currently we have limited venues that can house 200-800 people if we can make a multipurpose building/space that can benefit not only the fire department but other city departments as well this could open us up for more community sponsored events or rent the space out to provide addition much needed funding for the City.

In public safety, we don't generate much revenue, so any options or ideas, that can help spark (pun intended) a revenue stream while also helping Independence Grow is a great opportunity for us all. We have to keep thinking forward and growing with our community. Take it from the Movie Field of Dreams 'If you build it, they will come'. This has most recently been proven by the Parks & Rec Department as well as the investment into the Complex area. If we could somehow convince restaurants to build in our area, Independence would take off like a wildfire as other communities continue to decrease in sizes.

Independence Fire Department covers a population of over 14,000 residents, roughly 20,000 vehicles per day on our major highways, and has 2/3 of Buchanan County residents leaving in our district. Independence Fire Department can not only look at just the City of Independence but has to factor in the entire fire district as well when planning for the future as well as surrounding communities and what is happening in those towns as well.

(Are there any other projects, resources, or decisions that need to be in place for this project to succeed? Are there any foreseeable challenges?)