

CITY OF MINNETRISTA



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

Subject: Public Safety Vacant Space Discussion/Advanced Training System

Prepared By: Jasper Kruggel, City Administrator
Craig Squires, Deputy Police Chief

Meeting Date: March 17, 2025

Issue: Public Safety staff have developed a detailed plan to repurpose the unoccupied space in the Public Safety Building and would like to discuss this proposal with the City Council for their input and direction.

Overview: The staff's proposal involves repurposing the vacant space for two primary purposes. First, the majority of the area would house an advanced firearms training system developed by MILO. This system uses simulated weapon fire within a theater-like environment, offering a wide range of interactive scenarios to train officers in realistic situations. The MILO system is a cutting-edge tool designed to improve decision-making, situational awareness, and firearms proficiency in a controlled, safe setting. Deputy Police Chief Craig Squires will attend the meeting to present a detailed overview of the MILO system, including its specific benefits to the Minnetrista Police Department, such as enhanced training outcomes and reduced risk compared to live-fire exercises.

Second, the remaining portion of the vacant space would be converted into additional storage for the Police Department. The recent addition of a fitness area in the Public Safety Building has significantly reduced available storage space, making it difficult to accommodate equipment, records, and other essential items. This shortage has reached a point where a solution is urgently needed. By incorporating storage into this plan, the proposal addresses both training and logistical needs efficiently. Attached below, you will find a diagram illustrating the proposed layout of this currently vacant space if the City Council approves the plan.

For additional information on the MILO advanced training system, please refer to the following link: [MILO System](#)

Costs and Funding:

In 2023, the City of Minnetrista received one-time Public Safety Funding from the state, which was divided into two allocations for the Police Department. One portion was used to support operational costs, including salaries and benefits, while the other was set aside for capital purchases. The current balance of the capital purchase allocation, referred to as the Public Safety Funding reserve, stands at \$116,000. After consulting with two commercial contractors, staff estimate that the facility updates required to prepare the

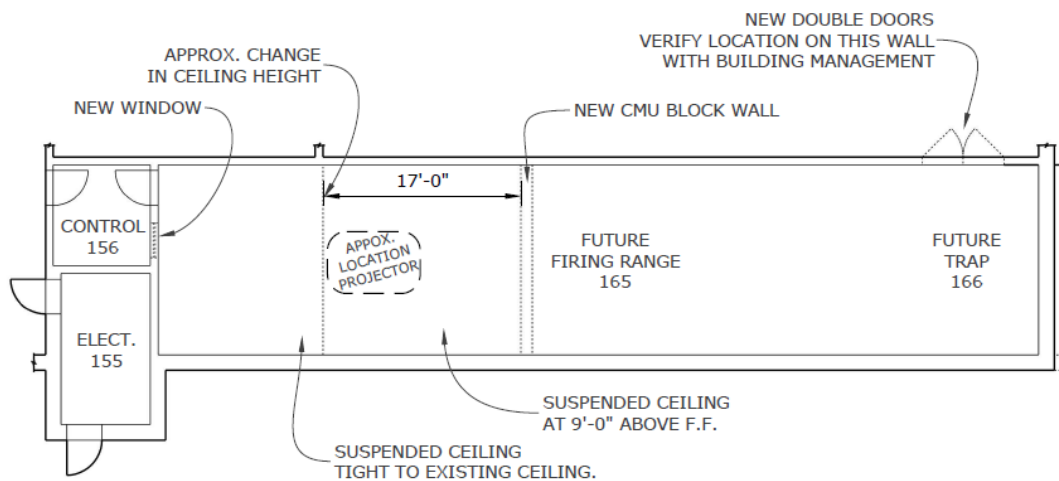
Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

vacant space—such as electrical work, partitioning, and other modifications—will cost up to \$139,000. Separately, the MILO Advanced Training System has been quoted at \$100,000 by the vendor. When combined with the cost of storage racks and other necessary items, the total budget for this project is estimated at \$250,000.

This total cost is notably lower than the alternative of constructing a live-fire gun range, which was previously discussed and estimated at over \$500,000, not including ongoing maintenance expenses. Staff strongly believe that this proposed solution, featuring the MILO system and storage, is far more practical and cost-effective for the Police Department. The MILO system offers advanced training capabilities at less than half the cost of a gun range, and its maintenance requirements are minimal compared to the substantial upkeep a live-fire facility would demand over time.

To fund this project, staff propose a two-phase approach. First, the remaining \$116,000 in Public Safety Funding designated for capital expenditures would be applied to the construction and facility update portion of the project, covering most of that cost. Second, the purchase of the MILO system and remaining expenses would be included in the City's 2026 budget. This strategy provides a clear financial pathway to meet the Police Department's training and storage needs without requiring immediate full funding. Additionally, it's worth noting that the MILO system could be made available to other police agencies in the region for a nominal fee, creating a small revenue stream to offset costs over time.



Recommended City Council Action: Staff respectfully request that the City Council engage with Public Safety personnel to review and discuss the proposed utilization of the currently vacant space in the Public Safety Building. This discussion will allow staff to address any questions, clarify details, and receive guidance on whether to proceed with the plan as outlined or adjust it based on Council feedback.

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