



Will Bountiful Build a New City Hall?

Bountiful is usually a quiet, peaceful little town. It has sleepy city council meetings with a handful of scouts and not too many more in attendance. But if you want to create a political tempest in Bountiful, there is one surefire way to do it -- make plans to build a new city hall.

The mayor and city council have proposed demolishing Stoker School and rebuilding a new city hall and plaza on that site. The final decision to proceed has been put off a couple of times now, and currently there is an open house scheduled at City Hall on Thursday, Oct 6th from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. A vote as to whether to proceed with the project is scheduled for the City Council Meeting on Tuesday, Oct 25th.



One suggested layout of city hall and plaza in the place of Stoker School.

I do think this is the biggest decision that has faced Bountiful in some time (probably since the decision to rebuild the rec center) because it costs quite a bit of money and affects both our current civic center and our downtown. If you have an opinion about it, this month is your chance to contact the city council to let them know how you hope it turns out.

If you haven't already formed a strong opinion (and I know that many of you already have) -- here is a little background information in Q-A format.

Q: What are the benefits the city is hoping for by moving the City Hall downtown?

A: They are hoping that having more traffic of people downtown for both

the city hall and the plaza will make it easier for downtown businesses to thrive and will make downtown more of a nice place to be. They are also hoping that several of the events that are already hosted downtown (such as the Farmers' Market, the Tour of Utah finish, the International Summer Festival, and the Coats for Kids Car Show) would be able to grow and expand if we had a beautiful, welcoming, larger space for them to be in, and that having a better gathering space might make other events possible as well.

[Here is a link to the city site explaining why they think the project will benefit our city.](#)

Q: What are the main reasons that people oppose the move?

A: Those who oppose the move say it is an expensive cost for no benefit. The current city hall is functioning fine. It needs some repairs and upgrades, but those would be much cheaper than rebuilding from scratch. They do not want to lose the Historic Stoker School building and do not think that having city hall downtown will help business there. They do not like the idea of breaking up our current civic center where we have city hall, the police station, the library and the senior center all close together. [Here is a link to the No New City Hall site from the group opposing the plan explaining why they think it will not benefit our city.](#)

Q: Where will the money come from to pay for this and how much will it cost?

A: It will cost about \$18 Million dollars. There will not be any tax increase to pay for it. It would be paid for with money that Bountiful City has saved from previous years (about \$13 million) and from RDA money (about \$5 million). But even though it isn't any tax increase, it is still your tax money, so if you think this is a good way for your money to be spent, you should let them know that, and if you think it is a bad way for it to be spent, you should let them know that as well.

Q: What the heck is RDA money?

A: Bountiful city has an RDA (ReDevelopment Agency) agreement whereby the city council gets to take some of the property tax money (that would otherwise be going to schools and the county) to use for economic development in parts of town that are run down. The intention is that by encouraging business development, the city tax base gets better so that in the end, the schools and county end up with more property tax revenue than they would have had otherwise. This RDA money can only be used for certain kinds of things and will be a total of about \$18-20 million dollars that comes into the city, a little at a time, over the next 20 years.

So this project would plan to use about \$5 million (or about 25%) of their RDA total.

Q: What do I think you should do?

A: I think you should go take a walk around Stoker School and the Bountiful Tabernacle and see what you think it would be like if there were a new City Hall and Plaza there. (I hear it is a very good place to catch Pokemon.) And I think that you should go to both the city and the opposition web sites and see what they have to say, and then send a polite email to the city council and mayor to tell them what you think.

For myself, I like the idea of a bigger, more welcoming gathering place downtown. I do think that would make Bountiful a nicer place to live and is worth spending some of our tax money on. However-- I have not yet seen an actual design that I think works. The design above (which was just one suggestion), has the plaza on the south end so that it is separated from the grassy area already available in front of the tabernacle. I am not yet convinced -- so I will be at the city open house on Oct 6th. Hope to see you there.

Meet the Candidates Night Oct 4th.

The PTA and the League of Women Voters are sponsoring a "Meet the Candidates Night" coming up Tuesday, October 4th at Bountiful City Hall at 6:30 P.M.

This is your chance to personally meet Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, Gary Johnson, Jill Stein and Evan McMullin, who have all agreed to be there.

Just Kidding.

This is your chance to personally meet the people who will be representing you locally -- the people who will actually make a difference in how your school district and state and county function. The offices that will have candidates there are:

County Commissioner: Randy Elliott, Larry Livingston
Davis County School Board:

District 1: Rick Call, Liz Mumford

District 2: Larry Smith, John Robison

Utah State Senate: Steve Hartwick, Todd Weiler

Utah House of Representatives

District 18: Tim Hawkes (un-opposed)

District 19: Ray Ward, Kurt Weiland

District 20: Becky Edwards, Jon Marsh



Yard Sign Season is Coming Up!

The first yard signs of the fall season are starting to bloom and they will soon be a colorful profusion sprouting up all around town. I have a nice garage full of them and I would love to come plant one in your yard. Just reply to this email and let me know if you would be willing to have one. Sometime this next week, my Campaign Chief of Staff (Beverly) or I will bring you one by.

Thanks.



Contact: **Ray Ward Representative House District 19**

email: rayward@le.utah.gov

cell phone: 801-440-8765