

# Fire / Police Station / City Hall Public Safety Facilities Discussion

Council Work Session – January 13, 2026  
Project Status & Decision Timeline (Draft)

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## Purpose of Tonight's Discussion

- Provide a status update on evaluation of a remodel of existing downtown public safety facilities
  - Confirm the timeline and decision points required for a potential **May 19, 2026 election**
  - Ensure Council alignment on next steps (**no final approval requested tonight**)
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## Current Direction (Working Assumptions)

- Staff is actively evaluating a remodel of existing downtown facilities, including:
    - Fire Station
    - City Hall / Police Department
    - New Public Works facility (non-essential seismic standard)
  - Architects and engineers are developing program concepts and **preliminary planning-level cost ranges**
  - Information shared tonight is **planning-level** and subject to refinement
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## Preliminary Planning Cost

**Remodel – Existing Downtown Facilities**

**Approximate Total Project Cost: \$10.0 million** (planning estimate)

**Included Elements (High-Level):**

- New Public Works Facility (3,777 sf): **\$2.0M**

- Fire Station seismic improvements (per KPFF / RLB): **\$0.9M**
- Fire Station remodel allowance: **\$1.0M**
- City Hall / Police remodel allowance: **\$0.5M**
- Sitework (excluding soil/foundation improvements): **\$0.8M**

#### **Cost Summary:**

- Net Hard Costs: **\$5.2M**
- Margins & Adjustments: **\$2.4M**
- Escalation to Q2 2027: **\$0.9M**
- Soft Costs: **\$1.5M**

#### **Not Included:**

- Owner contingency
- Additional year of escalation
- Essential-facility foundation or DSM soil improvements

*Estimate assumes low-to-moderate voluntary seismic upgrades.*

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### **Key Election & Filing Deadlines**

#### **May 19, 2026 Election**

- **February 27, 2026**  
Last day for the City/District governing body to file the ballot title with elections officials
- **March 19, 2026**  
County elections filing deadline

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### **Alternative Election Timing (If May 19 Is Not Used)**

#### **August 2026 Election**

- Requires Council action and ballot preparation later in spring

- Typically lower voter turnout
- Estimated cost to the City: ~\$10,000

### **November 2026 General Election**

- Highest voter turnout
- Delays potential project start
- Increases exposure to inflation and escalation

### **Summary:**

- **May 19** remains the earliest election option and requires Council direction by **early February**
  - **August and November** remain viable alternatives if Council determines additional time is needed
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## **Critical Council Decision Path**

### **February 4, 2026 – City Council Meeting**

- Potential consideration of a resolution to place a Public Safety Facilities bond measure on the ballot
- Direction on ballot amount and project scope

### **February 27, 2026**

- Ballot title and amount must be finalized and submitted

*February 4 is the key meeting to keep the May election viable while allowing limited time afterward to finalize technical details.*

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## **What Staff Is Asking From Council Tonight**

- Acknowledge the current direction and timeline
- Confirm comfort with:

- Continuing refinement of the remodel option
  - Returning February 4 with a recommended path forward
- **No action or vote requested tonight**

# City Attorney Services Discussion

Council Work Session – January 13, 2026

Council Work Session – Discussion Framework

## Purpose of the Discussion

- Discuss whether the City should **initiate a formal recruitment process** (RFP/RFQ) for city attorney services **now**, or
- **Continue the current interim arrangement** while awaiting confirmation of long-term capacity from current counsel
- Clarify **what the City values most** in a city attorney so future recruitment is better defined and aligned with Gearhart's needs

*This is a discussion only — no action is required tonight.*

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## Current Situation

- The City is currently working under a **temporary / interim legal services arrangement**
- Current counsel has:
  - Provided **high-quality service**
  - Expressed interest in continuing long-term
  - Indicated that **staffing capacity is still being evaluated**
- Timing and certainty around long-term availability are **not yet known**

This leaves the City with a practical question:

**Do we wait for clarity, or do we move forward with a formal process in parallel?**

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## Option 1: Continue Interim Arrangement (Status Quo – Short Term)

## **Pros**

- Maintains continuity during active projects
- Avoids duplicative onboarding
- Respects the strong working relationship that's already been established
- Allows time for current counsel to confirm capacity

## **Considerations / Risks**

- Uncertainty around long-term availability
  - Interim arrangements are not ideal as a permanent solution
  - Delays if capacity ultimately cannot be confirmed
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## **Option 2: Initiate an RFP/RFQ Process Now**

### **Pros**

- Provides structure, transparency, and optionality
- Allows the City to clearly define what it needs in legal services
- Keeps the City from being reactive if interim capacity falls through
- Does **not** preclude continuing with current counsel if they remain the best fit

### **Considerations**

- Time and staff effort
  - Potential overlap if current counsel ultimately stays on
  - Council would need to agree on selection criteria up front
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## **Key Discussion Question #1**

**Is Council comfortable continuing with a temporary arrangement while awaiting clarity, or would Council prefer to proceed with a formal recruitment to ensure long-term stability?**

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## **Defining What Gearhart Needs in a City Attorney**

Regardless of timing, staff believes it is valuable to clearly articulate **what the City is actually looking for**, so future recruitment is intentional and well-aligned.

### **Core Priorities Identified by Staff**

- **Oregon-specific municipal experience**
  - Familiarity with Oregon statutes, case law, and regulatory agencies
  - Ability to operate confidently within Oregon's legal and political environment
- **Strong land use expertise**
  - Planning, zoning, variances, appeals, development review
  - Understanding of coastal and small-city land use dynamics
- **Election law experience**
  - Ballot measures, referrals, timelines, and compliance
- **Broad general municipal law**
  - Public meetings and public records
  - Contracts and procurement
  - Personnel and labor issues
  - Risk management and governance support
- **Established Oregon legal network**
  - Ability to draw on specialized expertise when needed

- Familiarity with best practices across Oregon cities
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### **Additional Attributes for Council to Discuss**

- Responsiveness and availability
  - Ability to work collaboratively with Council and staff
  - Practical, solution-oriented legal advice
  - Understanding of Gearhart's scale, culture, and community expectations
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### **Key Discussion Question #2**

**Are these priorities the right fit for Gearhart, and are there additional attributes Council would like clearly stated before any future recruitment?**

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### **Closing the Discussion**

- Staff will take direction based on Council's comfort level:
  - Proceed with an RFP/RFQ
  - Continue interim services for a defined period
  - Or return with a refined proposal and timeline
- No action is required tonight unless Council wishes to give clear direction