

What is the plan to Build a Better Fairfield?

The plan to Build a Better Fairfield is to issue \$6 million in Certificates of Obligation (CO) for street reconstruction and a new city hall. At least \$3 million will be spent on street reconstruction and no more than \$3 million will be spent on City Hall construction.

What streets need to be rebuilt?

The streets the city is considering for rebuilding are: Adam, Dejay, Ronnie, and Kelly Streets, South Bateman, South Cotton, Williford, East and West Main streets, Oak, Davis, Eagle Crossing, and Walnut Creek Drive.

What about my taxes?

We are proposing a replacement of the current debt that ends in 2022. The estimated debt rate if we take on the \$6 million for street reconstruction and city hall will be around \$0.17155 of assessed valuation for the 20-year life of the CO. That is an additional \$3.90 a month for new roads across the city and a new City Hall.

If we act now, we can keep any increased tax burden for the city hall low. If we wait, that tax burden could be higher. Currently, the debt ratio per capita is \$193, which is very low, and we plan to keep it that way.

Streetman did not go into debt to build their city hall. Why do we have to?

First, they are a smaller city, and both cities have unique needs. We have 10 times the people. Second, Streetman's Property Tax Rate is \$0.478939, which all goes to Maintenance and Operations (M&O). In contrast, Fairfield's tax rate is \$0.460137, which \$0.336561 goes to M&O. The rest, \$0.123576, goes to debt payments.

Third, ratings agencies like cities that take on debt and can pay that debt. It is much like one's credit rating. Cities without tax-supported debt, like Streetman and Teague, will have significant rises in tax rates should they have to take on debt. Each city is different, and we need to quit comparing apples to oranges.

Have other options been discussed instead of building a new city hall?

Yes. There have been other options such as purchasing modular buildings or purchasing other real estate and renovating those buildings. Those options were not recommended by the City Hall Committee.

The economy is going bad. Inflation is rising prices everywhere.

Yes, inflation is rising, which means the time is now to lock in a lower interest rate before they rise in 2022 as a means of combatting inflation. The longer we wait means the less we can build.

I don't want to see a Taj Mahal at City Hall

Neither do we, but is it in the everyone's best interests to have a pole barn as a city hall? Is it in everyone's interests to have what we have right now? Is this the message we want to send to our residents and those who may want to live, work, or invest in this city? Do we not care enough to provide a front door? We have worked, and will continue to work with, the City Hall committee to ensure design and scope does not exceed \$3 million.

The bond is for 20 years. The streets will not last those 20 years. Why are we fixing streets?

We are not fixing streets because we can do that now. What we are doing is reconstructing streets that need rebuilding. For one reason or another, there are streets where the base underneath it has failed, and we must rebuild the street. Unfortunately, we have many streets in this condition, and we cannot afford to get further behind and cost more in the long run.

What about the Fire Department building?

The fire department building is currently not in the preliminary plans for City Hall. We will work with a designer and the City Hall Committee to find a way for future building of the Fire Department.

You can't use a CO to build City Hall. The legislature outlawed that.

The legislature did pass HB 1869, which narrows the scope of what cities can use Certificate of Obligation funding for. In it, public safety structures are allowed to be built with COs (Certificate of Obligation) and any structures that are physically attached to the facilities. We have planned to build one building all along that will house police and city services in the building.

You can only use COs in emergencies. The law says so.

That is half correct and often used as a half-truth. You can use COs in emergencies, but you can also use them for other reasons, such as the building of public safety structures.

The city is broke. We cannot take on more if we do not have money.

The city is not broke. The fallacy that the city is broke was created by people with a political agenda. We invite you to look at our audits, budgets, and any and every council agenda.

If you are so sure of this, why not go to a regular bond vote?

We are prepared to go to a vote should there be a petition, much like they did in 2019. However, by using the CO, we have a better opportunity to secure a lower interest rate and get to building quicker. Any petition and election would delay the projects even further, much like the Hospital election in 2019.

The city is simply fine where it is.

Is it? Working in space where there is no space? Space where boxes are stacked in the halls? We have no place to meet as a staff, nor the council. The PD (Police Department) is not compliant for juvenile interviews, nor has a room for any interviews. The building is also not ADA compliant. Are the roads fine?

The school is considering a bond election. Won't that raise my taxes?

We don't have any control over what the school does. What we are proposing is a replacement of current debt with a small increase in overall debt tax rate of approximately \$3.90 a month for an average homeowner.

Why are some people against this?

We don't know. But, when you ask, ask for reasons and evidence to back up their claims. Also, ask for their solutions.

Where can I get more information?

Everything about the street reconstruction and city hall projects can be found online at fairfieldtexas.com