



Request for Action

Board of Commissioners - July 09, 2024

Agenda Item:

Discuss Marketing Plan for Stearns County Justice Center Discussion on Marketing Plan for Stearns County Justice Center

Department: Administration

Submitted by: Michael Williams, County Administrator

Presenter/s: Kevin Korneck, Stephen Hammes, Janet Midas
Kaela Bailey - HDR, Sarah Vanpetten - KA

Recommended Board Action:

Discuss Marketing Plan for Stearns County Justice Center

Summary/Background:

In anticipation of the Sales Tax Referendum this November, County staff with the assistance of a marketing team from our Architect Klein McCarthy and Construction Manager Kraus Anderson have developed a communication plan to build awareness and educate the public on the project and the upcoming referendum. Focus on reviewing feedback from marketing consultants' recommendations, outlining in-development marketing strategies, and creating a 3-month marketing calendar highlighting key initiatives, events, and campaigns to boost awareness of and engagement with the justice center project.

Attachments:

[July 9 Commissions Meeting Justice Center](#)



Justice Center Project

Communications and Outreach Plan

July 9, 2024

Today's Update

- Website
- Internal Communications
- Community Information Meetings
- Facility Tours

Information Webpages are LIVE

- Stearnscountymn.gov/justicecenter
 - Background
 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Cost
 - Engage with the Project
 - Voting Information



STEARNS COUNTY
MINNESOTA

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Justice Center Project

The State of Minnesota has determined that Stearns County requires new justice facilities to meet the current public safety needs of the community. After years of patchwork repairs to keep things functional, the current jail does not meet state standards and it has become too expensive and outdated to maintain. This means we need to build a new jail. To support the new jail, we need an up-to-date law enforcement center so our officers will have the resources necessary to serve the public and we need a larger courthouse to accommodate the number of judges the County needs.

To address these needs, the County will construct a new justice center to house:

- A jail to allow us to safely house individuals in the Sheriff Department's custody and provide space for rehabilitation programs.
- A law enforcement center will help recruit and retain the highest quality officers to help keep us safe.
- A courthouse will allow us to increase the number of judges serving Stearns County and help reduce the number of people in the jail awaiting trial.
- County attorney's office and probation

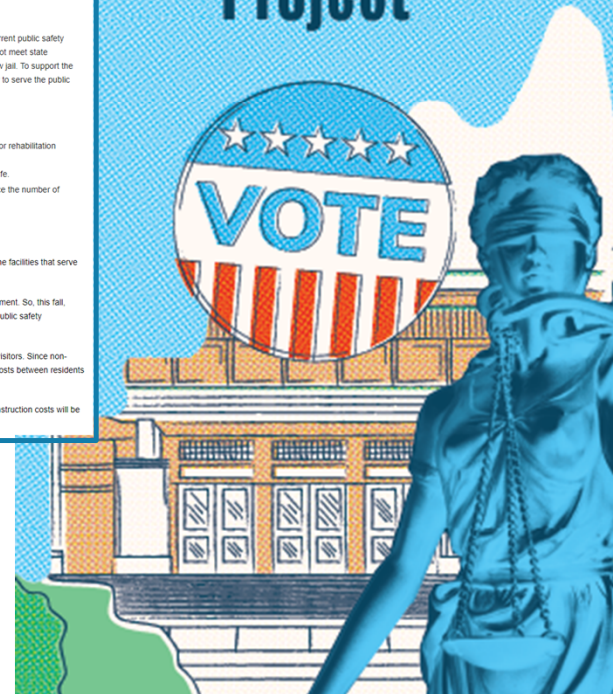
Your vote on November 5 decides how we pay for it.
Constructing new justice facilities is a big undertaking and will require substantial funding but improving the facilities that serve our justice system is an important part of providing enhanced public safety to our community.

While the County has worked to be debt free in preparation for this project, it will still require public investment. So, this fall, voters will be asked to vote yes or no on a proposed 3/8 cent sales tax to support construction costs for public safety infrastructure.

If the proposed sales tax passes, construction costs will be distributed between County residents and visitors. Since non-residents account for nearly 55% of county sales tax spending, a yes vote effectively splits construction costs between residents and non-residents.

If the sales tax does not pass, the County will raise the funds through increased property taxes and construction costs will be solely funded by county residents.

VOTE
November 5
TO DECIDE HOW
TO FUND THE
**Justice Center
Project**



Communications and Outreach Timeline

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KEY DATES

July 31 – August 4	Stearns County Fair
September 23 – October 24	Community meeting series
September 1	First round postcards mailed
September 17	First fall public facility tour
September 20 – November 4	Early voting
Mid-September	Newsletter distributed
October 22	Second round postcards mailed
October 29	Second fall public facility tour
November 4	Publish board op-ed
November 5	Election Day

JULY/AUGUST

- Materials production - July
- Internal communications begins
- Information display at County buildings - July
- Social Media kick-off - July
- Editorial on decision - July
- Pop-up events - Ongoing
- Speaker bureau events - Ongoing

SEPTEMBER

- Continue ongoing activities
- First postcards
- First facility tour
- Community meetings start
- County newsletter

OCTOBER

- Continue ongoing activities
- Second postcards
- Second facility tour
- Community meetings end
- Board/leadership media tour

IMMEDIATE ACTION

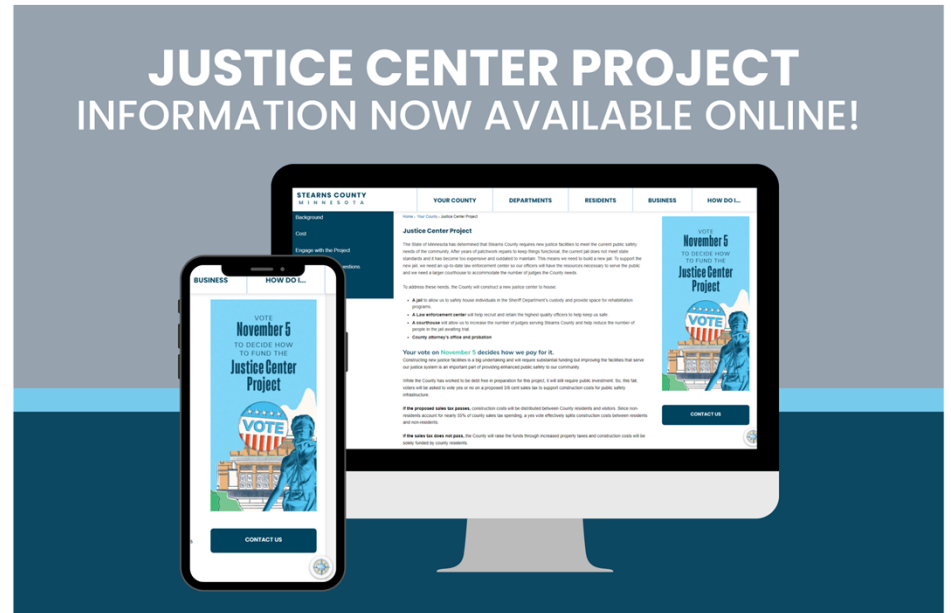
- Community pop-up events
- Speaker bureau events
- Board constituent events

Key Outreach Tactics

- **Social media:** Utilizing various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X and YouTube will broaden reach across diverse demographics, fostering greater project awareness. The social tone should be clear and concise, directly informing audiences of the project need, the project parameters and the funding options.
- **Community informational meeting series:** This series of public meetings will allow the project team and/or county leadership to directly engage with county residents to have in-person conversations about the project, answer questions and distribute project education materials.
- **Postcard distribution:** Postcards sent directly to county residents will generate project awareness and ensure every voter in the county is aware of the sales tax referendum.
- **Editorial and op-ed publication:** As indicated in the community analysis, many county residents rely less on social media as their primary news source or have limited broadband access. Publishing newspaper op-eds will expand the reach of the project message through trusted mediums and will give the county board or other county leadership opportunities to provide deeper context into the project.
- **Facility tours:** Facility tours for the public, stakeholder groups and members of the media will allow voters to see first-hand the conditions of the current facility and the need to undertake the justice center project.
- **Speaker bureau events:** A speaker's bureau presentation will be developed to further educate community groups and stakeholders at their regularly scheduled meetings. These presentations will allow for greater community reach and the opportunity to share information about the project and the sales tax referendum outside of a traditional public meeting environment.
- **Poster distribution:** Information posters strategically placed at community gathering spots and high-traffic areas can be an effective grassroots tool for distributing project information and educating voters.

July: Internal Communications

- Social media campaign will kick off sharing the project website.
- Project leaders will "push in" to regularly scheduled department meetings for a 10-15 minute discussion to answer questions and provide informational handouts.
- Project display boards will be present in administration lobbies for foot traffic awareness.



July: Community Pop-Up Events (examples)

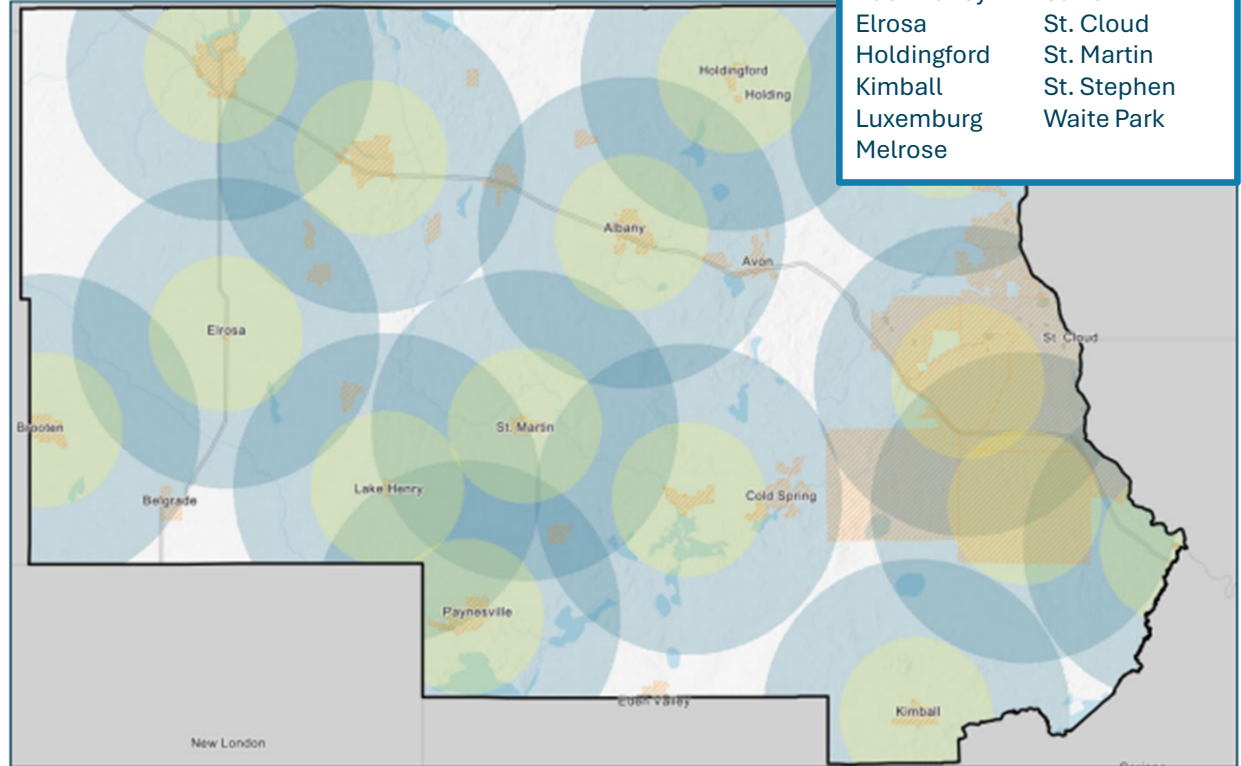
EVENT	DATE
Youth Safety Camp with Stearns Sheriff	July 2nd
Sauk Centre Concert in Sinclair Lewis Park	July 3rd
Farm to Market	July 7th
Richmond Music & Art in the Park	July 9th
Holdingford Daze	July 12-13
Bonanza Valley Days	July 12-14
Rockville Music in the Park	July 14th
St Cloud Story Strolls in the park	July 15th
Sauk Centre Concert in Sinclair Lewis Park	July 17th
Sinclair Lewis Days	July 17-21
Rock the River- Cold Spring	July 18th
Richmond River Lake Days	July 19-20
Annual Book Sale Paynesville Library	July 20th
Cold Spring Friends of Library Book Sale	July 22-27th
Richmond Music & Art in the Park	July 23rd
Koronis Cruise-In Nights Paynesville	July 25th
Cold Spring Hometown Pride Days	July 26-27
Cold Spring Fire Fest	July 27th
Rockville Music in the Park	July 28th
Sauk Centre Concert in Sinclair Lewis Park	July 31st

Aug-Sept: Community Meetings

- A series of public meetings will take place throughout the county between **August 20 and September 20**.
- To provide maximum coverage throughout the county and provide convenient options for county residents, **17 proposed meeting locations** have been identified. Collectively, these meeting locations cover 99% of the county and put a meeting no more than 10 miles away from most residents.
- Informational slide deck is currently under development.

MEETING LOCATIONS

Albany	Paynesville
Brooten	Richmond
Clearwater	Sauk Centre
Eden Valley	Sartell
Elrosa	St. Cloud
Holdingford	St. Martin
Kimball	St. Stephen
Luxemburg	Waite Park
Melrose	



The above map shows the total coverage area of the proposed meeting locations. Green circles indicate a 5-mile radius from the center of the township location, blue circles indicate a 10-mile radius.

Aug-Sept: Community Meetings

- Community Meeting Plan
 - Format: Presentation with Q&A
 - Time: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
 - Participants: Teams of four that include the following
 - 2 County Representatives
 - 1 Sheriff's Department Representative
 - County Board Representative
 - When possible, there would be additional benefit to having a township representative participate as well.

MEETING SCHEDULE						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
18	19 Meeting 1	20 Meeting 2	21	22 Meeting 3	23	24
25	26 Meeting 4	27 Meeting 5	28	29 Meeting 6	30	31
1	2 Meeting 7	3 Meeting 8	4	5 Meeting 9	6	7
8	9 Meeting 10	10 Meeting 11	11	12 Meeting 12	13	14
15	16 Meeting 13	17 Meeting 14	18	19 Meeting 15	20 Early voting starts	21

September/October: Facility Tours

- **Facility tours** for the public, stakeholder groups and members of the media will allow voters to see first-hand the conditions of the current facility and the need to undertake the justice center project.
- **A media tour** allows designated members of county leadership to participate in one-on-one interviews with key media outlets and publications.
 - Working on a media "toolkit" with usable photos and videos.



Consistent and repeatable core messaging!

- Website serves as a hub of information that will continually get updated throughout the campaign.
- Palm card with core messaging in development.
- Anyone with questions can go to the project webpage as well as email:
Justicecenter@stearnscountymn.org



Questions?

July 9, 2024