

NEWS RELEASE
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Bountiful City Council to Cancel City Hall Project

Bountiful Mayor and Council hope change of course will promote harmony.

Bountiful, Utah - On Tuesday, February 28, 2017 the Bountiful City Council plans to cancel the contracts for the proposed new City Hall. The building project has been a source of contention and misunderstanding with some in the community for several months and resulted in a petition for referendum by upset residents. The Mayor and Council maintain that the project would help bolster downtown and provide for economic development, but prefer to promote community harmony over the new building.

We, the members of the Bountiful City Council voted unanimously to relocate City Hall and develop a plaza in the heart of historic downtown to address the following critical needs:

- Replace aging buildings in a manner and location that boosts the City's economy;
- Spend one-time funds to encourage development that will provide ongoing funding for other necessary infrastructure and needs; and
- Create a dynamic community core that highlights Bountiful's historic heart.

Our decision to relocate City Hall was motivated only by a sincere desire to do what we, as a Council, felt was best for Bountiful. Our vision was decided upon after many months of careful vetting and study. The City has been fiscally diligent in saving money so we can complete these kinds of projects without raising taxes or going into debt. Each of us has a genuine love for this community and its people. Unfortunately, the amount of anger over a misunderstood project has reached a level that has prompted us to take a new direction. We may disagree with some of our detractors about the benefits of the project, but we *have* listened, and in the interest of community harmony, we choose to promote peace and cooperation over bricks and mortar.

On Tuesday, February 28th we plan to terminate the contracts for design and construction of the proposed municipal center (City Hall). It's our hope that doing this demonstrates that Bountiful's sense of community is more important than a project, no matter how well-intentioned.

Bountiful, as a community, doesn't need to follow the national trend of blame and anger. We challenge the notion that angry public discourse, digging in one's heels, and winning at all costs is "just the way it is now." Bountiful deserves better than this. As your City leaders, we have a duty to nurture respectful conversation. In that regard, we can all do better.

- In the coming months we will focus our efforts on creating better two-way communication with you, our residents.
- We will work collaboratively with you to build the Downtown Plaza (without a new city hall) to bring needed focus to our beautiful historic Main Street.
- We will better communicate the efforts we have already taken to maintain our infrastructure and address concerns we've heard from residents.
- With last year's passage of Proposition 1, which provides additional funding for road maintenance, we will undertake an independent study on how to best use that funding to improve our streets and sidewalks.

We pledge to listen and communicate more effectively and with more understanding. We invite all of Bountiful to do the same.

"No project is worth lasting disharmony and mistrust. There is so much to be proud of in Bountiful," said Mayor Randy Lewis. "Bountiful is a city of good will and pleasant disposition and will not embrace negativity. For our part, we plan to cancel the building that has become a lightning rod," said Mayor Lewis.

The City expects that there will be some who will be upset that the building has been cancelled, but the Mayor and Council believe that they can't in good conscience go forward with building a new city hall at the expense of community trust.

With the contracts for the new building cancelled, Bountiful City will look to update the current City Hall building located at 790 South 100 East. The Downtown Plaza will also remain a priority, and will require a new contract to complete. City Council members realize that no decision will satisfy everyone, yet share a hope cancelling the City Hall project will invite residents to look toward working together for the benefit of Bountiful.

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