

Clarifications to Items in 8/16/16 Westneat Column regarding New North Precinct

Statement/Item	What is it really?	Context	Could it be removed? / Cost savings
How did a Seattle police station bloat up to what is believed to be a U.S. record price tag of \$149 million?	On the basis of total project cost, the San Francisco Public Safety Building far exceeds the cost of the new North Precinct project. When the size of the building is considered, the San Francisco project and NYPD Bronx 40 th Police Precinct both exceed the cost of the new North Precinct project. When escalation is considered, the new North Precinct cost is similar to Seattle’s Southwest Precinct.	It is difficult to compare building costs across the country due to various regional construction cost climates. Most projects include functions beyond just a precinct. The new North Precinct project also includes a training center and a basement training facility that includes a firing range. Size must also be considered when comparing the cost of facilities.	
...price tag zoomed from \$89 million to \$149 million...	The project budget was adopted at \$160 million. It has now been reduced to \$149 million.	The first documentation of a budget for a new North Precinct was in a 2010 memo that identified unmet public safety facility needs. North Precinct topped the list at a cost of \$115 million - \$130 million (\$144 million - \$162 million in 2017 dollars). The number was based on a description of a new building’s functions performed in 2007. Later that year, the number identified for the project had increased by \$22 million. In 2012, the \$89 million figure was used by City Council as a placeholder in the City’s 2013 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which also accelerated the expectation for completing the building to 2016. A new description of the building’s functions was performed with funding appropriated in the 2014 CIP; and that work produced the \$160 million budget approved in the 2016 CIP.	

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An amphitheater for outdoor movies and concerts.	The flat visitor parking lot can be used for community events such as farmer’s markets, SPD’s annual community picnic or outdoor movies, with the adjacent garage exterior wall used to project movies on.		No. Visitor parking is a customary amenity for a neighborhood public building.
Rain gardens.	This is a detention pond used to slowly release stormwater into the City’s system during heavy rain.	The Seattle Stormwater Code requires stormwater management in the overtaxed drainage basin leading to Green Lake.	The alternative would require a larger concrete detention vault, which would be more costly.
A yoga/community meeting room.	A community room capable of accommodating 125 seated people per regulations under the Seattle Fire Code. Potential users include more than 30 north-end community and business groups; 12 neighborhood groups that are developing micro-policing projects with SPD; community trainings for business owners and neighborhood residents, volunteers for needle pick-ups and emergency preparedness; and the North Precinct Advisory Council.	Room is designed for multiple uses. All Seattle precincts were designed with a community meeting room.	Yes. However, savings will be offset with significant redesign costs, and costs associated with delay.
An interactive boulder playground (to be frolicked upon by people in shorts and sun dresses, according to the drawings.)	Rocks are used in lieu of bollards to deflect vehicles from striking the front of the building, such as those in front of Seattle City Hall.	Vehicular deterrents are industry standard for all public safety facilities post 9/11.	No. Required standard. (Rocks and bollards with significant footings are equal in cost.)

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A “headwaters feature”- basically a pool with a splash stream designed to “celebrate storm water.”	Stormwater management element that daylight rainwater from the roof and drains to a detention vault.	The Seattle Stormwater Code requires stormwater management.	It cannot be removed, but the water could be piped underground which will not yield any savings.
A skatepark.	Skateable pedestrian elements that deflect vehicles from striking the side of the building.	This feature was included as a way to enhance and activate public area/pedestrian environment.	Yes. Item was removed from program and will be added back if bids allow. (\$200,000)
Swirling concrete pathways inlaid with curvilinear metal that riff off a famed a Danish park.	Plaza concrete is textured to create a pattern. (Metal was removed earlier in the project due to value engineering.)	Creating a texture in the concrete is a simple and inexpensive way to enhance visual appeal.	Yes. Texture could be removed but will not yield any savings.
Uplit terraced gardens.	Landscape will be lit to provide security.	Visibility of areas adjacent to precinct is required due to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.	No.
A rooftop running track.	This is not part of the current design.	A rooftop running track was considered early in the design process, but was removed long ago due to value engineering.	Already removed.
A light glow will project from the building façade while the soffit underneath the building canopy will include a lighting feature that emulates a ‘starry night’.	Reflective metal will be used for the soffit underneath the entry overhang.	Metal will reflect the required light from landscaping and other off-site light sources.	Yes and no. Non-reflective metal could be used but will not yield any savings. The lighting is still required.

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The building comes with a geothermal heating system, featuring 152 heat-capture tubes drilled 300 feet deep into the earth.	There are 120 geothermal wells as part of a conventional heating and cooling system commonly used to reduce ongoing energy costs. Depth may vary depending on location of the well. This type of system was successfully installed in Seattle’s Fire Station 20, and has been commonly implemented in many Seattle Public Schools.	The strategy is employed to meet LEED and Seattle Energy Code requirements. The system’s low energy use will prolong the precinct’s operability after a major disaster when utilities become unavailable.	Yes. However, it would require a redesign of the entire mechanical system. Other lower cost heating and cooling systems are available but typically require more maintenance and consume more energy.
There are plans for 48,000 square feet of solar panels.	Solar panels are located on the roof of the training center.	This strategy is employed to meet LEED and Seattle Energy Code requirements, and prolong the precinct’s operability after a major disaster when utilities become unavailable.	Yes. This item was removed from the program and will be added back if bids allow. (\$2.2 million)
There’s also a skylighted, landscaped green roof.	There was a landscaped green roof in early designs that was already removed due to value engineering. The number and size of skylights were also previously reduced due to value engineering.	This strategy is employed to meet LEED and Seattle Energy Code requirements. Daylighting strategies help reduce energy use and prolong the precinct’s operability after a major disaster when utilities become unavailable.	Yes and no. The green roof was already removed. The skylights could be removed. However, ongoing energy costs will increase and impacts to LEED will need to be assessed.