



2023 State of Minnesota
Sales and Use Tax Request

Request

Jackson County is requesting legislative approval to implement a one percent (1%) local sales and use tax as authorized under Minnesota Statute 297A.99. The proceeds of the tax would be used to make a bond payment to finance the construction of a new \$39,000,000 law enforcement center and government center. Upon Legislative approval and passage of a special law authorizing the tax, Jackson County would put a question on the 2024 general election ballot for voter approval of the tax. The amount of the local sales and use tax revenue utilized for this capital project would not exceed \$39,000,000, or up to 30 years, whichever comes first.

Background

Jackson County's Law Enforcement Center (LEC) and Jail were built in 1976 and are now one of the oldest in Minnesota. Jails and LECs built in the 1970s were expected to last 30 years. The Jackson County LEC and Jail are now 47 years old. Due to changes in law enforcement, emergency dispatching, incarceration practices, building codes and inmate mental health needs, it is not practical or economically feasible to remodel the current facility to meet today's public safety needs. Jackson County is trying to be proactive in addressing our needs before the Minnesota Department of Corrections condemns our facility for not meeting correctional codes.

Jackson County is also in need of additional space for county departments that provide election administration, veteran service benefits, drivers licensing and testing, emergency management, land records and other important services. These services are currently located in very old buildings that are not easily accessible and are not designed for modern day service delivery.

The Project

The proposed project would be built on land already owned by Jackson County. A LEC, jail, emergency operations center and government center would be constructed. The building would have shared spaces and be constructed as a single structure and capital project.

The jail and LEC facility would be connected to the County's health and human services building which will allow better opportunities for inmates to receive mental health services. The new law enforcement center would also provide additional space for expanded mental health services. A modern 911 emergency dispatch center would be built to provide public safety to County residents. The project would also create an emergency operations center that would be used to manage and provide services during emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently Jackson County does not have an emergency operations center.

The government center would provide better handicapped accessibility and enhanced customer service for citizens in need of veteran service benefits, drivers licensing and testing, land records and other important services. The new government center would also provide better security and adequate space for the administration of elections in the County.

Project Benefits

- Provides modern law enforcement and jail facilities that allows for improved public safety and inmate care.
- Expanded inmate education, recreation, mental health and medical care spaces that our current facility lacks.
- Eliminates handicapped accessibility issues we have with current facilities.
- Redevelops two properties in the City of Jackson by demolishing two old structures (1976 LEC/Jail; 1962 County Resource Center/old school building) and constructing new buildings in those locations.
- Demolishes two buildings that are not energy efficient.
- All new HVAC equipment would be installed creating new, energy efficient facilities.
- Solar panels may be incorporated into the design to allow for the use of renewable energy.
- Provides new technology capabilities for law enforcement, emergency management and overall public safety.
- Provides improved security for administering elections in the County.
- Provides enhanced and more accessible space for veteran services benefits.
- Improved customer service.
- Improved facilities that will help attract and retain law enforcement, correctional and public safety staff.

Regional Significance and Economic Impact

Minnesota Statute 297A.99 states:

Subd. 1a.Requirements. Local sales taxes are to be used instead of traditional local revenues only for construction and rehabilitation of capital projects when a clear regional benefit beyond the taxing jurisdiction can be demonstrated.

(3) documentation of the regional significance of each project, including the share of the economic benefit to or use of each project by persons residing, or businesses located, outside of the jurisdiction.

Law Enforcement Center Regional Impact

The new law enforcement would be used by many other jurisdictions. The current law enforcement center is used by area city police departments, Minnesota State Patrol, Minnesota Department of Corrections, BCA agents, the multi-jurisdictional/multi-state High Risk Entry and Arrest Team (HEAT) and many counties in southern Minnesota. The new facility would be available to all of these entities and others after it is constructed.

The following table shows how our jail facility has been used by other counties and the Minnesota Department of Corrections the past 4.5 years to house both male and female inmates. The new law enforcement center, with its additional capacity, would continue to provide this service to these and other jurisdictions in the future.

**Number of Days Inmates
Held In the Jackson County
Jail for Other Jurisdictions**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total Days
Cottonwood County	0	561	2	37	11	611 days
Martin County	103	379	70	10	1168	1,730 days
MN DOC	23	104	42	0	14	183 days
Nobles County	0	0	1	16	5	22 days
Pipestone County	0	0	0	0	27	<u>27 days</u>
						2,573 days

*2018 stats only include 4 months: from August of 2018 to December 2018.

Report is on total number of days inmates were held in our jail, not the number of inmates

Just as the current facility does, the new law enforcement center would house both male and female inmates. The current jail only has space for four female inmates. The new jail would have beds for up to 12 females which other counties would be able to utilize.

Currently Jackson County has no beds dedicated to mental health needs. The new jail will have four medical beds and a medical room to much better accommodate inmates with mental health needs. These spaces and services would also be available to other jurisdictions.

Government Center Regional Impact

The new government center would provide new office space for veterans needing assistance with benefits. This space would be more accessible than the current office and would offer new telehealth services for veterans. Veterans can use any county veteran services office they want in Minnesota. We currently have veterans from other counties using the Jackson County Veteran Services Office and, with the enhanced space and services the new government center would offer, we anticipate more veterans from other counties using our facility.

The new government center would also provide enhanced drivers licensing and testing services. As with veteran services, people from outside the County use our drivers licensing and testing services now and we anticipate that will increase with a new facility.

The new government center would house Jackson County’s agricultural drainage ditch administration services. Jackson County has 17 jointly administered drainage ditches with Nobles, Cottonwood and Martin Counties. Expanded space for these services in the government center would provided better customer service and administration of drainage ditches for the region.

Jackson County’s passport services would be located in the new government center. Residents from any jurisdiction would be able to get a passport in the new facility.

The government center would also be the location for all of the land records, vital statistics and tax information for the County. Many people living outside the County request this formation on a daily basis.

Regional Economic Impact

It's estimated the construction of this facility would employ more than 150 construction workers over a two-year period. Many of the contractors and workers hired would be from all parts of Minnesota.

Jackson County's facilities maintenance budgets are used to purchase services from facility vendors located throughout southern Minnesota. With the construction of additional facility space, more services from facility vendors located around the region will need to be purchased.

Many of our law enforcement center and jail staff live outside of the County. If Jackson County was forced by the Minnesota Department of Corrections to close its law enforcement center and jail, many jobs would be eliminated causing a negative economic impact to the region.