

# Legislators to take up funding request for new Keizer station



- [LES ZAITZ - KEIZERTIMES](#)
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Legislators this week will consider providing initial funding for a new public safety building in the Keizer area that would serve several agencies.

State Rep. Kevin Mannix, a Republican who represents Keizer, has requested \$778,000 to buy land and start design of the new facility. The Keizer Fire District and Marion County Fire District 1 are behind the effort for a project estimated to cost \$17 million.

The Keizer City Council got behind what is being called the Joint Public Safety and Resilience Station, voting unanimously on Monday, Feb. 2, to support the state funding request.

A hearing before a subcommittee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee at the Legislature was expected to consider the request on Friday, Feb. 13.

Organizations representing both paid and volunteer firefighters at the Keizer Fire District wrote of their support.

The union of Keizer firefighters noted that the fire station is “our home two out of every six days.”

“No matter where you work or what you do, your home life impacts your performance at work. Nowhere is this reality more pronounced than at a fire station,” said the union letter to legislators. “Overcrowding affects our conditioning, our sense of well-being and our mental health.”

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce also urged legislators to approve initial funding, noting the proposed location in north Keizer.

“This makes sense,” according to a letter from Jeremy Turner, chamber president. “This is where our community is growing. This is where we expect population growth to be the most prominent. This is a forward-thinking proposal.”

Ryan Russell, the Keizer fire chief, and Kyle McMann, the Marion County District 1 chief, explained the broad outlines in an appearance before councilors.

They are proposing a new building along River Road somewhere between the area of Emerald Pointe Senior Living Community on Northeast McGee Court and the Hitchin’ Post at Clear Lake Road. The building would serve the two fire agencies and provide training space for local police agencies.

“We’re pretty early in the conceptual phase of this project,” Russell told councilors. “Our drive is to be as creative as we can.”

He said the fire agencies are seeking grant money and funding from state and federal sources instead of turning to local taxpayers.

McMann explained how the two agencies are sharing the Clear Lake station but that it wasn’t built to house on-duty personnel. He said three to six people are stationed at Clear Lake.

He said the station would be sold or converted into storage if a new public safety building becomes a reality.

A new station anticipates continued growth in Keizer and a possible expansion of the urban growth boundary.

Such an expansion would allow housing where now only farming is allowed.

“We’re mindful of the economics of the local and state area,” he said. “This will be a multi-year phased approach.”

Councilor Lore Christopher was enthused by the concept.

“I can’t tell you how long we’ve waited to hear this,” noting past tension between the two fire services.

“There have been kingdom builders. There has not always been fabulous relationships,” she said. “It’s game changing.”