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## State and Local Emergency Operations Center: Co-Location Is The Best Option

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With the passage of Salt Lake City's \$125 million public safety bond in November of 2009, a new police headquarters, fire headquarters and emergency operations center will replace Salt Lake City's current public safety building.

In supporting Salt Lake City's public safety bond last year, your Taxpayers Association vowed to closely monitor the development of the public safety center and advocate for the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars. Salt Lake City has recently proposed a partnership with the State of Utah to co-locate the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the new Salt Lake City EOC. The Utah Taxpayers Association supports this push for co-location, as it would drastically increase efficiency and reduce overall costs.

Co-locating the two facilities would create a 10% reduction in necessary square footage. Similar services could overlap, thereby reducing the need for additional space. Informal estimates suggest that the cost per square foot of each emergency center would be comparable and a 10% reduction in overall square footage would be a true cost-saver.

Another unnecessary redundancy is the duplication of "soft costs," which include architect fees, moving expenses and administrative costs. Should the emergency centers be built independently, both facilities would require separate "soft costs." This duplication would be a waste of taxpayer dollars.

In addition to these wasteful expenditures, separate facilities would put Utah at a significant disadvantage in acquiring federal funding. The proposed location for Utah's EOC currently suffers from high levels of soil liquefaction, which are a disqualifying factor in receiving FEMA certification and up to \$3 million in FEMA building grants. However, Salt Lake City's proposed EOC location has lower soil liquefaction levels and is a far more likely candidate for FEMA certification and funding. Failing to co-locate could result in a loss of federal funding for Utah's EOC.

Finally, Salt Lake City has agreed to purchase land for an EOC and thereby absorb the \$2.8 million land cost for a joint facility. Utah would save millions in not needing to purchase their own land for their EOC.

Your Taxpayers Association supports co-location as the most efficient and fiscally responsible emergency operation center solution for Utah.