

Davenport considers \$387K police shooting range project

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When it opened in 2007, Davenport's police station had plenty of environmentally friendly features, but not an indoor shooting range where officers could practice.

The Davenport City Council will vote Wednesday on a \$387,400 project to fit out a shooting range in the police station's basement. The feature was part of the building's original design, but was omitted when the price tag began getting too big.

"We had to engineer those components out of the building with an eye toward finishing them in the future," said Lt. Mike Venema, who is overseeing the shooting-range project.

Among the \$20.3 million building's environmental amenities are a green roof, geothermal heating and cooling, energy-efficient windows and low-flow toilets.

The department last had an indoor shooting range when it was housed in City Hall and has an outdoor range near the Davenport Municipal Airport.

Bush Construction Co. of Davenport submitted the low bid for the shooting range, which includes sound-proofing and a special air filtration system to remove lead particles from the air. There also would be an office for the range safety officer, with a window with bulletproof glass.

"The equipment is ready to be installed," Venema said. "We have a lot of work to be done first."

Chief Frank Donchez said the indoor shooting range offers more convenience. Officers will be able to practice before or after their shifts without having to drive to the airport. Weather won't be an issue, and night shooting practice is as easy as flipping a light switch.

"It will certainly allow officers to practice more often," he said.

Future plans for the building's basement include a training area that would include a tiered classroom. That is not included in the current project.

The future of the outdoor shooting range hasn't been determined, but it could have some economic development possibilities, considering its proximity to the Davenport Municipal Airport, City Administrator Craig Malin said. The airport owns the property where the range is located and leases it to the police department.