

New police precinct due on ballot

By ROSS ANDERSON

Seattle voters will decide at the polls next month whether the city should build a new Central Area police precinct.

The City Council yesterday voted 7-to-2 to include a proposed East-Central precinct along with proposed new or remodeled North and South End precincts on a \$5.8 million bond issue, to be on the September ballot.

City officials generally agree that new North and South precincts are badly needed, but the need for an East-Central precinct has been questioned.

If the bond issue is approved by voters, the precincts will cost an estimated \$2 million each, to be financed by selling municipal bonds.

If voters reject the proposal for three precincts, the Council is prepared to drop the East-Central facility, and place a \$4 million bond issue for the North and South End precincts on the November ballot.

There now are precincts in the Georgetown and Wallingford areas. The new North precinct would be north of North 80th Street; the South precinct would remain in the same area.

Council President Sam Smith

advocated an East-Central precinct, which probably would be near 23rd Avenue South and South Jackson Street.

Councilman Randy Revelle said Central Area support for the concept and the possibility of relieving crowded conditions at the downtown headquarters convinced him that the "benefits outweigh the costs" of a new building.

It is a close issue, which the voters should decide, Revelle said.

Councilman Tim Hill argued that the estimated \$140,000 in increased operating costs cannot be justified. He said studies show that precincts neither deter crime

nor improve services in a neighborhood.

Paul Kraabel and Hill, the only Council members not involved in re-election campaigns, cast the only votes against spending money to build an East-Central precinct.

The Council already has approved a \$19 million bond issue for Seattle Center improvements and a \$4.5 million levy to renovate the Public Safety Building, both of which will be on the September ballot.

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