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## 2010 November Bond Election Taxpayer Association Recommendations

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Provo City and Eagle Mountain will be asking voters in November to bond for expensive recreation projects in their communities. Provo City Council is proposing a \$39 million bond to construct an elaborate rec center. Eagle Mountain is proposing a \$7 million bond to build an outdoor aquatic center and lap pool. The Utah Taxpayers Association is opposing both bond proposals.

Each year your Utah Taxpayers Association reviews dozens of bond proposals throughout Utah. With over 240 cities and towns, 41 school districts, 29 counties and hundreds of special districts, bond proposals come in all shapes and sizes. However, the criteria for evaluating the proposals remains the same. Your Taxpayers Association weighs the cost to taxpayers against the actual benefits provided by the proposed projects. In the case of Provo and Eagle Mountain, the costs clearly outweigh the benefit to taxpayers.

The Taxpayers Association also reviewed the Kaysville Police Bond and West Valley City Parks and Trails Bond and remains neutral on them.

### **Provo City Recreation Bond**

The Provo City Council is proposing a \$39 million general obligation recreation bond to replace three existing, functional recreation facilities. Provo City has taken this November election as an opportunity to extend their recreation bond far beyond the needs of the facilities and construct an excessive recreation 'Taj Mahal.' The proposed 150,000 square foot facility would include three pools, a waterslide, party and game rooms, a kitchen, spa, lounge and state-of-the-art office, classroom and storage space.

After touring the current Provo recreation facilities and meeting with Provo Mayor John Curtis, your Taxpayers Association strongly encouraged the city council to reconsider the scale of their bond proposal. Provo's bond addresses necessary structural and aquatic repairs to its recreation facilities, but goes far beyond those needs.

The \$39 million bond would be repaid over 20 years, with interest totaling approximately \$17 million. The tax increase on an average home valued at \$195,000 would be \$76 annually. The tax increase on an average business valued at \$195,000 would be \$139 annually.

Your Taxpayers Association opposes the Provo Recreation Bond and the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for wants.

### **Eagle Mountain Aquatic Bond**

Eagle Mountain is proposing a \$7 million general obligation bond to build an outdoor aquatic center and lap pool. Eagle Mountain does not currently have an aquatic facility, but has access to other community aquatic programs within minutes. The facility is an unnecessary function of government and incredibly excessive. The outdoor pool would only be open a fraction of the year and the intended services of the facility are readily available throughout the community. The \$7 million bond is scheduled to be repaid over 20 years. The tax increase on an average home valued at \$196,000 is \$77 annually. The tax increase on an average business valued at \$196,000 is \$140 annually.

Your Taxpayers Association appreciates the efforts of Eagle Mountain to move their bond election from June to November to improve voter turnout. However, the Association still strongly opposes the unnecessary Eagle Mountain Aquatic Bond.

### **Kaysville Police Bond**

Kaysville City Council is proposing a \$4.5 million general obligation bond to pay for a new police station. The current police facility lacks adequate training space, modern safety features and the seismic integrity to withstand a significant earthquake. The \$4.5 million bond would rebuild the police station, expanding the size, increasing functionality and creating a critical emergency operations center.

The bond is scheduled to be repaid over 20 years, with interest totaling approximately \$2 million. The tax increase on

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an average home valued at \$258,000 would be \$32 annually. The tax increase on an average business valued at \$258,000 would be \$59 annually.

Your Taxpayers Association has toured the existing Kaysville police facility and recognizes the need for an improved police station. However, the proposed 20 year bond repayment plan will result in excessive interest payments. A \$4.5 million bond could easily be repaid in much less than 20 years and save taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest. As a result, your Taxpayers Association remains neutral on the Kaysville Police Bond.

### **West Valley City Park and Trails Bond**

West Valley City is proposing a \$25 million general obligation parks and trails bond. The bond would be used to create a four to seven acre “village green” to replace Granger Park as a gathering place and regional amenity. In addition to the green space, the bond would create or enhance seventeen neighborhood parks, including a dog and skate park. Numerous biking and walking trails throughout the region would be completed and tie into existing trails.

The bond is scheduled to be repaid over 20 years. The tax increase on an average home valued at \$177,000 would be \$25 annually. The tax increase on an average business valued at \$177,000 would be \$46 annually.

Your Taxpayers Association often opposes recreation bonds, however parks and trails creation and maintenance is a reasonable function of government. There is no private alternative to meet the outdoor recreation needs of residents. West Valley City’s bond is economical in design. However, your Taxpayers Association opposes tax increases during a recession. As a result, the Taxpayers Association remains neutral on the bond.