

### SIERRA VISTA COURT FEASIBILITY STUDY

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

NOVEMBER 12, 2024

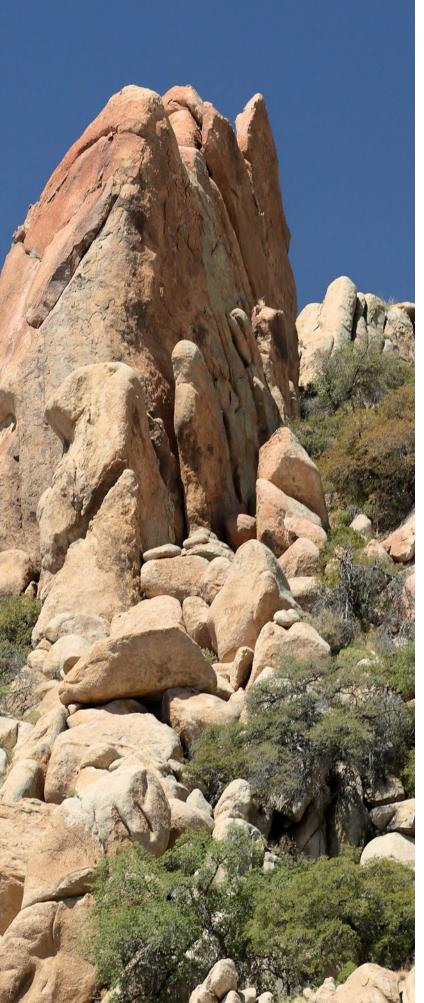
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#### INTRODUCTION

Rounds Consulting Group is a leading economic and public policy consulting firm specializing in feasibility studies, economic impact analysis, research, and forecasting .

- Support public, private and nonprofit
   organizations throughout Arizona and the Southwest.
- Provide data -driven insights that help guide strategic decision-making and help optimize project outcomes.



### INTRODUCTION



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#### BACKGROUND

- Sierra Vista currently shares municipal court services with Cochise County (Justice-of-the-Peace Court, Precinct 5)
- The shared model results in Sierra Vista paying an annual fee based on its share of court costs.

The purpose of the study: Assess the feasibility of establishing a standalone municipal court.



#### STUDY METHODOLOGY

- **Document** Review: Collected and analyzed relevant data, including historical court studies, current operational costs, and comparable municipal court structures.
- Needs Assessment: Evaluated Sierra Vista's current and future court requirements based on population growth, caseload trends, and facility needs.
- Revenue and Expenditure Analysis: Analyzed potential revenues (fines, fees) and projected operating costs for a standalone municipal court using data from Sierra Vista and comparable Arizona cities.
- Financial Feasibility Evaluation : Compared the costs and benefits of a standalone court vs. the existing co-location model.



#### KEY FINDINGS

- Space Needs: A minimum of 4,900 square feet is required for a new courthouse.
- Staffing Needs: A minimum of 9 full -time equivalent (FTE) positions, including a judge, court clerks, bailiffs, and administrative staff.
- Construction Costs: The total construction cost for the 4,900 square foot courthouse is projected between \$2.3M and \$2.9M.



#### FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

- Annual Savings: The city would save approximately \$280,700 annually in co-location court fees by establishing a standalone court.
- Revenue Comparison: Sierra Vista generates around \$174,700 in annual court -related revenue, significantly lower than similar cities (62% less).
- Operational Costs: A standalone court would require an estimated \$1.4M annually for staffing, maintenance, and operations .



Standalone Municipal Court Key Findings Summary  Municipal Court Requirements	
Court FTE Employees Requirements	9
Average FTE Wage	\$51,900
One-Time Costs and Savings	
Annual Co-Location Court Fee Savings	\$280,700
One-Time Construction Expenditures	(\$2,597,000)
One-Time Construction Taxes	\$46,700
Projected Annual Operating Expenditures and Revenues	
Annual Operating Expenditures	(\$1,364,200)
Employee Salaries & Benefits	(\$467,500)
Prosecution & Defense Costs	(\$289,600)
Operations & Maintenance	(\$607,200)
Annual Operating Revenue	\$179,400
Fines, Fees, and Other Related Fees	\$174,700
Recurring Tax Revenues	\$4,700
Annual Net Operating Surplus or (Deficit)	(\$1,184,800)

Note: May not sum to totals due to rounding.

Source: Rounds Consulting Group, Inc.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- Maintaining the current co-located court model is more cost-effective for Sierra Vista.
- The projected costs of a standalone court far exceeds the financial benefits.
- The annual increase in costs of a standalone court vs. the current co-located court is estimated at about \$1M annually.



# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation: Continue utilizing the co-location model with Cochise County to optimize resources and avoid increased financial burden.



## THANK YOU!