

Public purpose.

Public purpose. In the law of taxation, eminent domain, etc., this is a term of classification to distinguish the objects for which, according to settled usage, the government is to provide, from those which, by the like usage, are left to private interest, inclination, or liberality. The constitutional requirement that the purpose of any tax, police regulation, or particular exertion of the power of eminent domain shall be the convenience, safety, or welfare of the entire community and not the welfare of a specific individual or class of persons.

The term is synonymous with governmental purpose. As employed to denote the objects for which taxes may be levied, it has no relation to the urgency of the public need or to the extent of the public benefit which is to follow; the essential requisite being that a public service or use shall affect the inhabitants as a community, and not merely as individuals. A public purpose or public business has for its objective the promotion of the public health, safety, morals, general welfare, security, prosperity, and contentment of all the inhabitants or residents within a given political division, as, for example, a state, the sovereign powers of which are exercised to promote such public purpose or public business.

BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY

FIFTH EDITION

ST. PAUL MINN.
WEST PUBLISHING CO.
1979