

**Ross Town Council Memorandum**  
***Police & Fire Facilities Summary***

To: Ross **Town Council**

Date: 07.07.25

Re: **Fire and Police Facilities**  
Architectural and Engineering Assessment

Dear Town Council:

I am writing this letter in response to the potential renovation of the existing Ross Fire and Police station, firehouse, and related facilities.

As you may know I led the team from Gensler Architects as a pro bono project in evaluating those facilities over twenty years ago in 2000. At that time, we interviewed the Police and Fire Chiefs to develop a program and provided preliminary plans and layouts to determine whether the building was suitable for their needs.

We also conducted an architectural evaluation and, with the help of a structural engineer, an engineering assessment to determine the condition of the building and the extent of renovation which would be required. This included opening several exterior and interior walls to observe the condition of the substructure as well as getting access below the structure into the crawl space to observe the existing structural condition of the foundation and framing.

In addition to the architectural evaluation, we utilized the services of a general cost estimator to provide a rough estimate of the cost of renovation.

Our conclusions regarding the survey and preliminary design studies at that time were as follows:

- The building was too small to meet the programmatic requirement for the two departments, including office and support facilities, accommodation for the fire station staff, and emergency personnel and vehicles.
- The building did not meet any of the current codes and regulations, including those required of an essential facility as well as ADA regulations, and would require a complete gut of the existing building.
- Structural framing was completely inadequate to meet seismic codes, extensive structural modifications were necessary, and foundation work was required.
- Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and the technology infrastructure required complete replacement.
- The cost of renovation exceeded the cost of a complete rebuild.

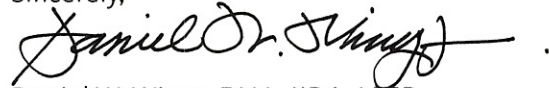
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As an architect I have always taken a position it is desirable to renovate any building that is historic in nature, has design integrity, and contributes to the history and fabric of our Town. In this situation I do not feel that the buildings that currently support police operations and the abandoned building adjacent to the fire station are of any historic value. I do feel that the front portion of the old station, which once housed the original fire truck, could potentially be utilized in an adaptive reuse situation.

Aside from the question of whether the Town can, or should support, a fire department, I feel that the potential renovation of the existing facilities will result in a project whose costs will be significantly higher than building a new facility. My recent visit to the building indicates that it has continued to deteriorate over the last two decades and is in much worse shape.

If there is any consideration for a potential reuse of the existing structure there needs to be a full structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering assessment based upon current codes and regulations. However, based upon my recent survey of the building, experience in adaptive reuse and historic renovation, I strongly recommend that the Town Council avoid the risk and costs associated with complete renovation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel W. Winey", followed by a horizontal line and a period.

Daniel W. Winey, FAIA, IIDA, LEED  
Chairman Emeritus  
Gensler Architects