



Ross is safer with a Firehouse

Plan to Fully Restore Public Safety Services to Ross

Town Council Presentation

January 8, 2026

Friends of Ross Firehouse | Who We Are

We are 400+ Ross residents who want to see essential public safety services restored to Ross

Friends of Ross Firehouse

- Leadership: Bob Herbst (President), Stephanie DiMarco (Vice President), Ed Dong (Treasurer), Laura Conrow (Secretary)
- 400+ Ross supporters
- 300+ Ross ballot petition signers
- \$125k raised

Friends Supporters Include Members From



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Expert Engaged Consultants



Legal

- 40+ years of experience
- 435 ballot measures
- Ross Measure F: Increased Enrollment at Branson School



Fire Safety Consulting

- Global safety consultant
- 100+ offices, 100+ countries, 100,000 global projects, 1,900 employees
- 280 licensed fire protection engineers
- Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Fire Marshal (FM), Fire and Emergency Services Analyst (FESA) Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE)



Architect

- Industry-recognized leader in EMS and fire station design
- 375+ fire stations designed
- 100+ fire station awards received



Construction

- Founded in 1995, well-respected general contractor in the Bay Area
- \$75 million in annual revenue, 100 employees, 2M+ square feet built
- 24 Bay Area Fire and Essential Services projects built including: San Rafael #51, #52, #57 and Corte Madera #13
- Currently building COM performing arts center

Presentation Overview

Over the past nine months, Friends of Ross Firehouse has prepared a comprehensive plan to fully restore public safety services to Ross

- 1. How Did We Get Here?** Why can't Ross afford a fire station but every other community in Marin can?
- 2. Ross Needs A Fire Station.** People move to Ross in large part due to its excellent public services: school, police and fire coverage, and emergency services- residents expect rapid emergency responses.
- 3. The Public Safety Building Can Be Rehabilitated.** The current building is structurally sound and can be rehabilitated- saving time and money.
- 4. Ross Can Afford a Fire Station.** If San Anselmo, Fairfax, and Sleepy Hollow can afford fire stations in their towns, why can't Ross?
- 5. The Town's Plan Does Not Add Up.** The Town Facilities Master plan is too expensive and will never garner the 2/3 Ross voter support it needs.
- 6. Conclusion.** Response Times are not statistics- they represent human lives.





Ross is safer with a Firehouse

1. How Did We Get Here?

**Why can't Ross afford a fire station
but every other community in Marin
can?**

Ross Joined Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD) in 2012 Under Unfair Terms

Ross has been subsidizing Fairfax, San Anselmo, & Sleepy Hollow millions of dollars for 13 years

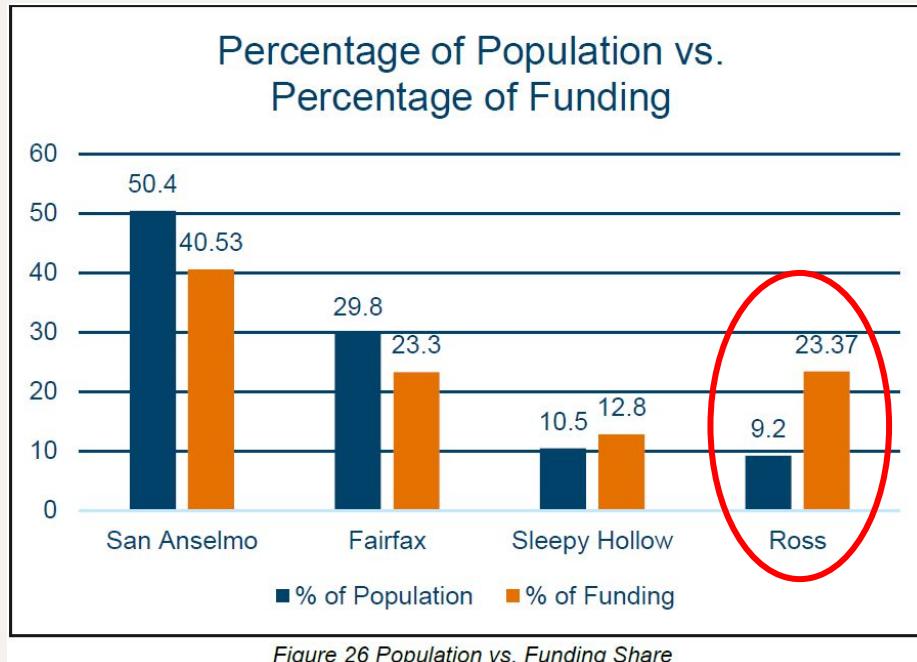


Figure 26 Population vs. Funding Share

Source: Jensen Hughes

- Ross is the smallest town in the department but pays the second highest costs- we have been and continue to subsidize the other towns to our own detriment
- Ross' 2024-25 contribution of \$2.7M is more than double what it should be based on population
- Ross could have saved \$20M+ over the years had we been paying our fair share- we could have used these funds to rebuild our fire station
- Ross' lopsided contributions continue even after we closed our station; we are still paying 21% of the department's budget despite having no fire station or firefighters in town



Jensen Hughes (Expert Fire Safety Consultant)

Put quite simply, the contribution amount that is required of the Town of Ross by the existing JPA is troubling.

At a time when the Town of Ross had an operating fire station with full-time staffing and a fire engine, accounting for over twenty-three percent (23%) of the budget, despite larger communities paying disproportionate amounts, this should have been viewed as unacceptable. **Now, having lost its fire apparatus and firefighters, the taxpayers of Ross should be questioning why they are being unfairly charged in comparison to the other members in the JPA.**



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Council voted to close the fire station under flawed assumptions

In 2021, the Town Council falsely concluded it could not afford to rebuild the fire station based on the following:

2020 Town Flyer

What are the choices?

We are considering two options to address our fire engine and paramedic ambulance facilities, assuming the community wants to keep police and administrative facilities in Town:

- ▶ For about **\$28.4 million**, we can **rebuild the fire station**, along with police, paramedic quarters, and administrative space; or
- ▶ For about **\$14.6 million**, we can **relocate our fire staff to a neighboring station**, and rebuild police, paramedic quarters, and administrative space.

In essence, to keep our fire engine in Ross and maintain current response times would cost residents an additional \$14 million.

The decision is more complicated given the potential wildfire danger experienced in other parts of the State, while recognizing how few structural fires we have had recently.

When construction begins in a couple of years, the Town will have saved approximately \$7 million to contribute to fund these facilities. The remainder would need to come from residents after a 2/3 voter approval, paid over 30 years via our property tax bills.

If we were to finance this project through a general obligation bond, the annual tax per \$2.6 million of property assessed value (average property value) would be approximately \$490 per year for the lower cost option and \$1,350 per year for the option with the fire station.



Source: Town of Ross

- Due to the lopsided 2012 RVFD agreement, Ross did not have the funds available to rebuild its public safety building in 2021
- The Council engaged consultants to evaluate how best to modernize the public safety building; concluding it must be demolished completely
- Rehabilitating the building was never seriously considered
- The \$28.4M cost estimate to rebuild the public safety building (with a fire station) was grossly inflated at \$1,900 per square foot



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Council voted to close the fire station under flawed assumptions

In 2020, residents were promised emergency response times would not increase for 85% of emergencies

2020 Town Flyer

**In that same time period,
the Ross station responded to
627 calls for service with
292 of the dispatches requiring
lights and sirens.**



**Relocating fire services would increase response time
for fires and non-medical calls by approximately
2 minutes**

Keeping an ambulance in the Ross Station would maintain the same response times for 85% of medical calls and for the other 15% of calls, when the ambulance is committed on other incidents, response times would increase by approximately 2 minutes. Average response times are currently 7 minutes, 55 seconds. The increase to 9 minutes, 55 seconds would be similar to outer suburban averages. Currently, dispatch is already coordinated between San Anselmo, Ross and Kentfield.

- 3 fires**
- 259 for medical issues**
- 30 other call types**
such as service calls and public assistance.

- The vast majority of emergency calls in Ross are for medical emergencies
- Firefighters are trained paramedics and are typically the first to respond to medical calls**
- The Town told residents that medical emergency response times would not change for 85% of the calls since there is an ambulance stationed in Ross
- The Town relied on an informal survey of residents to gauge public opinion; people were misled about the costs and the emergency response times

Source: Town of Ross

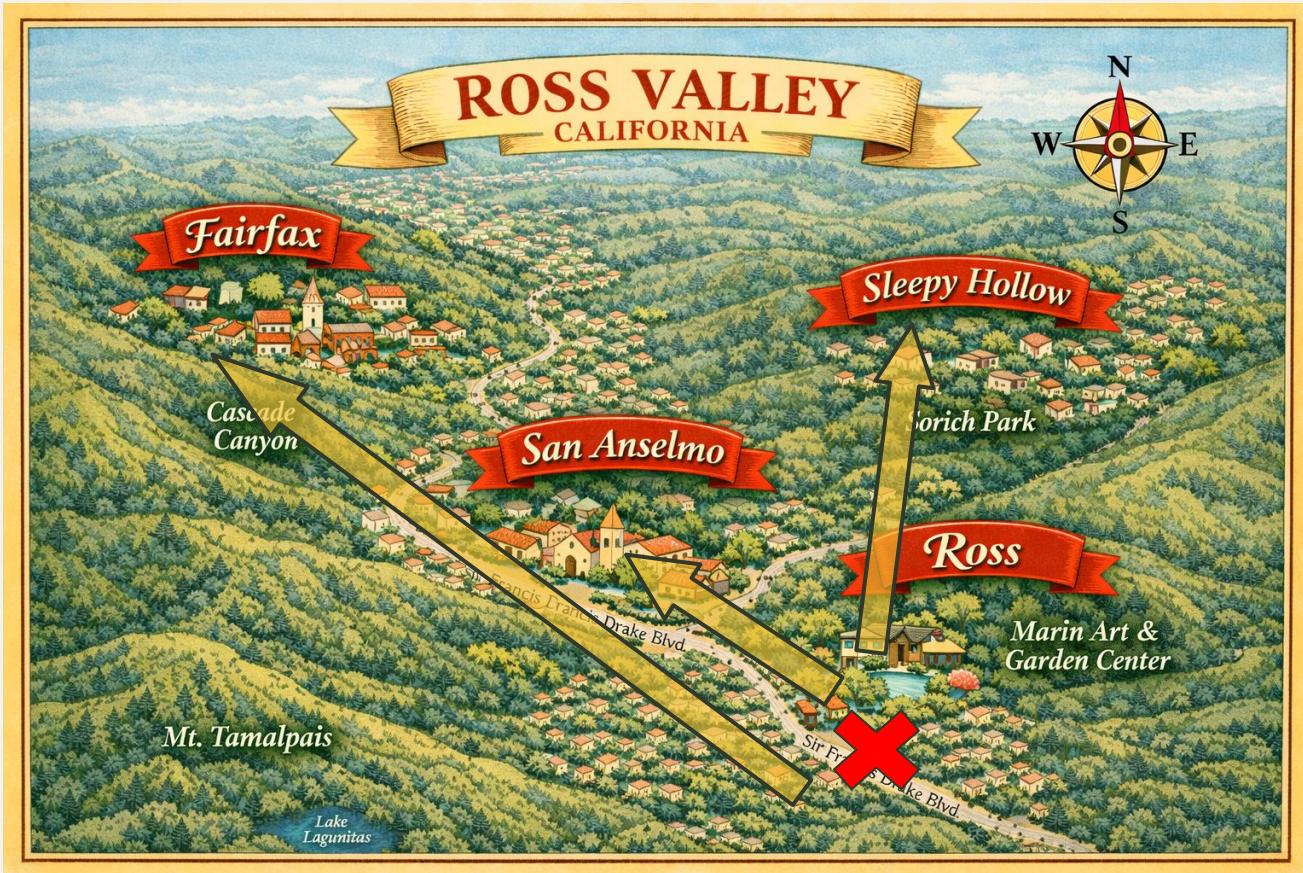


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The Ross Fire Station Closed in 2025

Following the Town Council decision in 2021, the station was finally closed in July 2025



- Despite overwhelming public attendance and outcry at a March 2025 Council meeting, a 3-2 split Town Council refused to explore alternatives to closing the fire station:
 - Salter & Robbins supported exploring alternatives
 - **McMillan, Dowling, & Kircher voted against**
- Ross firefighters were reassigned to the other three RVFD stations in San Anselmo, Sleepy Hollow, and Fairfax
- The Ross fire engine was sold
- Station #19 (San Anselmo) became Ross' primary fire engine
- The other three engines in the department must pick up the slack now that the Ross engine is gone
- **In October, Friends submitted 329 petition signatures in support of a ballot initiative to restore local fire engine service in Ross**



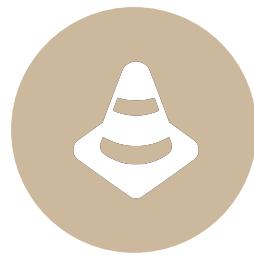
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Since voting to close the Firehouse, the Town has consistently maintained that:



Ross does not need
a firehouse



The current historic
Firehouse building
cannot be saved



Ross cannot afford
a fire station





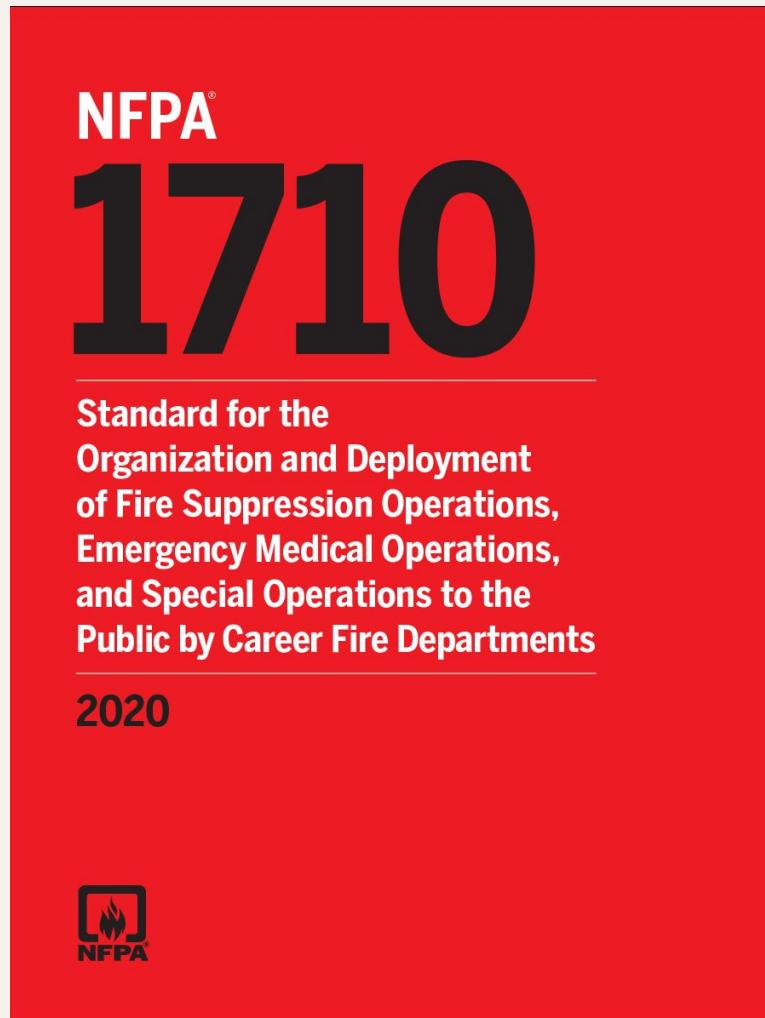
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2. Ross Needs A Fire Station

People move to Ross in large part due to its excellent public services: school, police and fire coverage, and emergency services- residents expect rapid emergency responses

NFPA 1710 Sets the National Benchmark for Fire Service

NFPA and the Town's consultant Citygate recommend a best practice response time between 7-8 minutes



- National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 1710 establishes the benchmark for staffing, deployment, and response times in career fire departments
- **The standard specifies that firefighters should arrive on scene within eight (8) minutes, ninety percent (90%) of the time, for a typical single-family dwelling fire, assuming a full-alarm assignment**
- The requirements are based on studies of fire growth rates, **occupant survivability**, and task analysis to determine the minimum resources needed to stabilize the incident before flashover or structural collapse occurs



Citygate Associates (Town's own Consultant)

The brain can only survive 4-6 minutes without oxygen. Cardiac arrest and other events can cause oxygen deprivation to the brain. Thus, from the time of 911 receiving the call, an effective deployment system is **beginning to manage the problem within a 7-minute total response time**. This is right at the point that **brain death is becoming irreversible** and the fire has grown to the point of **leaving the room and becoming very serious**.



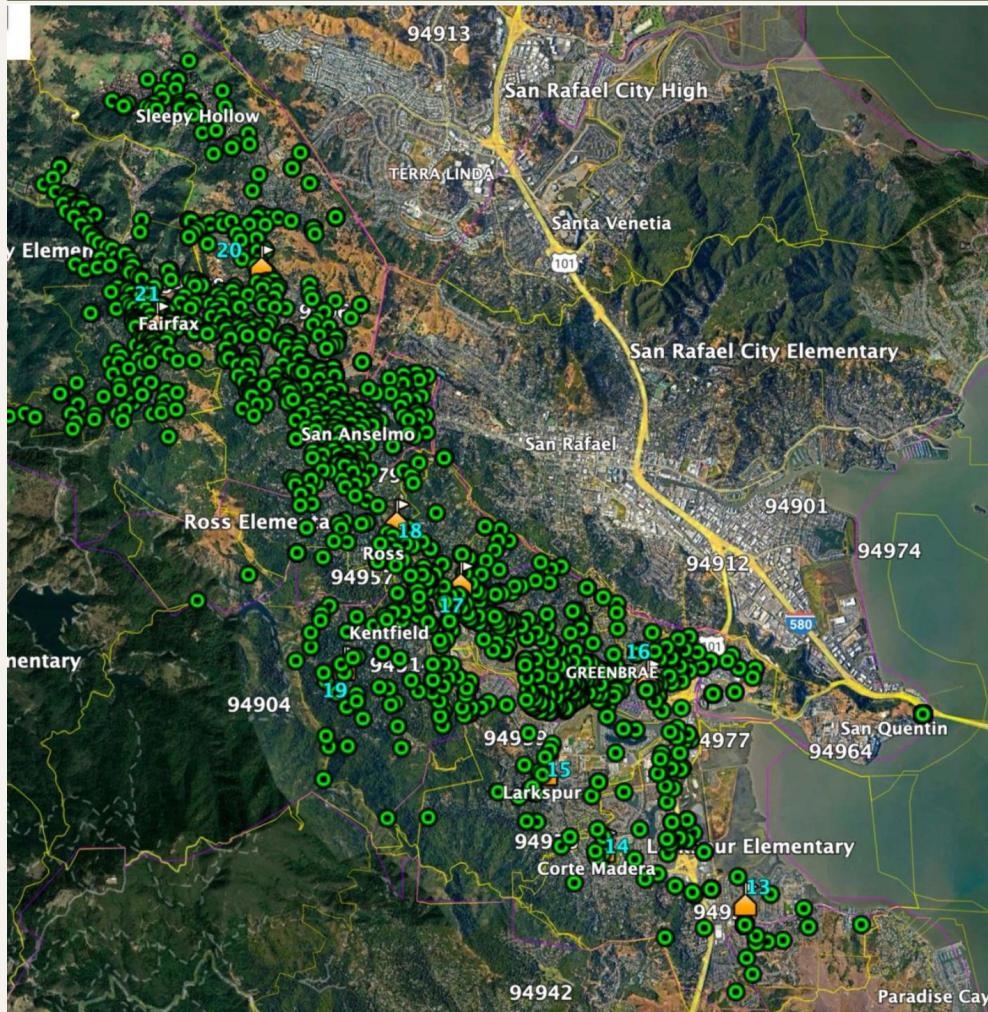
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Ross Ambulance is too busy to replace the lost fire engine

The entire Ross Valley is covered by only two ambulances and they are stretched thin

Ross Ambulance Call Locations (2023)



Source: Citygate



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- In November 2024, Citygate issued a report on the RVPA ambulance response times recommending the department **“immediately field a third ambulance”**
- The two RVPA ambulances (Ross & Corte Madera) are over utilized and stretched thin and there are no current plans to add a third ambulance
- **The response times for the ambulance to Ross calls was 9:52 minutes; far exceeding the Town’s original claims**
- The data shows that Ross **must now rely on other towns’ fire engines** to respond to **both medical and fire emergencies**

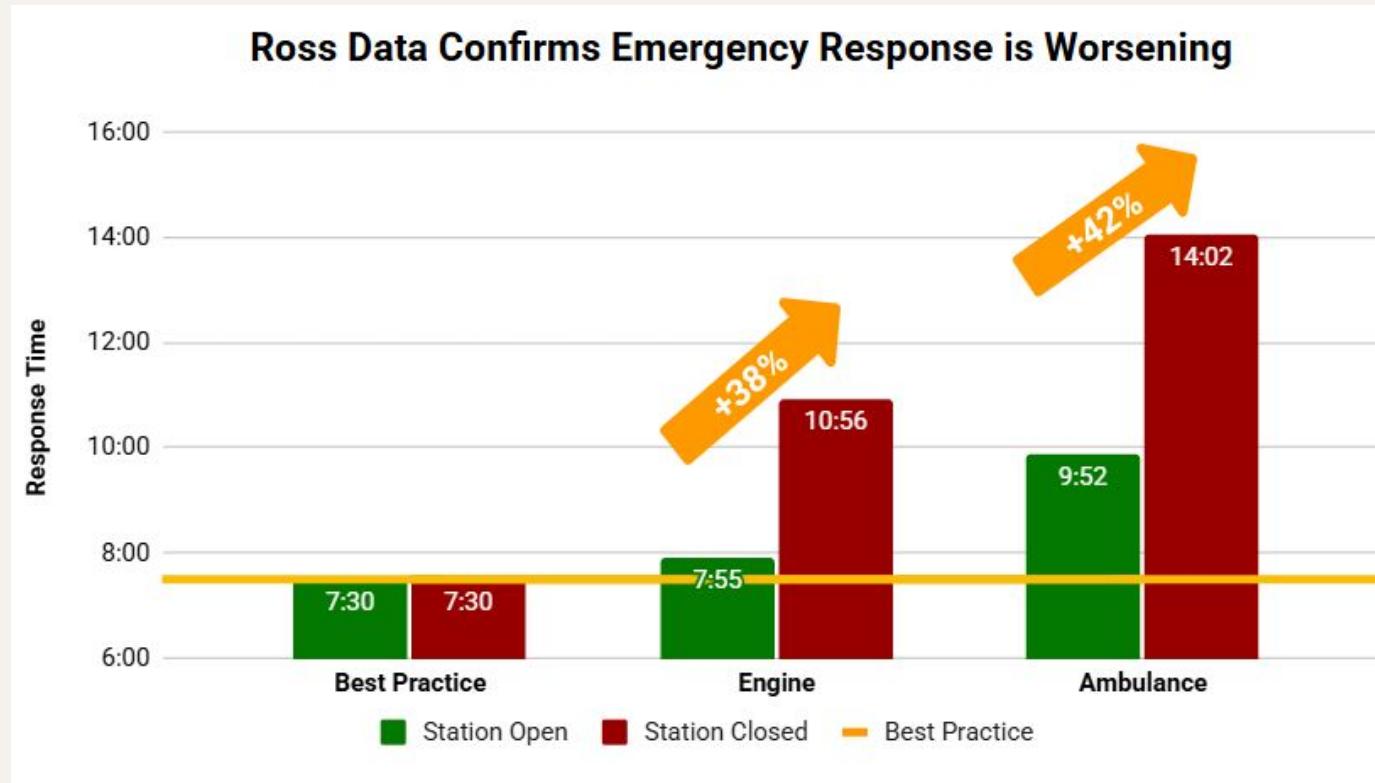


Citygate Associates (Town’s own Consultant)

As the travel time and simultaneous data indicated, the two ambulances are **very busy at peak hours of the day and are not always available for call in their primary response area.**

Emergency Response Has Increased to Dangerous Levels

Since the station closed (Jul-Oct), response times have increased ~40%, far exceeding best practice times



- Before its closure, the Ross fire engine had a 7:55 minute response time
- Fire Engine response time is up 38% to 10:56 minutes, 3.5 minutes longer than best practice
- Ambulance response time is up 42% to 14:02 minutes, 6.5 minutes longer than best practice; **this completely undermines the argument that the ambulance can provide adequate emergency services to Ross**
- **We are paying the highest price per call in the department for no local fire station and the slowest service**

No one can Predict when an Emergency will Strike

We need a local fire station when the unpredictable becomes our reality



Stay Informed, Stay Safe

The following is a Notification from AlertMarin

UPDATE: There is a 9-1-1 service outage in Marin County. 9-1-1 is intermittent within the county at this time. IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY,

GO TO YOUR NEAREST FIRE STATION. Updates:

Emergency.MarinCounty.gov ACTUALIZACION: Existe una interrupción del servicio del 9-1-1 en el condado de Marin. El 9-1-1 está disponible de forma intermitente en el condado en este momento. EN CASO DE EMERGENCIA, DIRÍJASE A LA ESTACIÓN DE BOMBEROS MÁS CERCANA. Actualizaciones: Emergency.MarinCounty.gov

- Just this Sunday night (January 4th), **AT&T** had a major telecommunications outage across Marin County
- **9-1-1 services were completely knocked out**
- Local Ross police cell phone service was also down since they use AT&T
- Alert Marin advised residents with emergencies to **“GO TO YOUR NEAREST FIRE STATION”**
 - Does everyone know where the nearest fire station even is?
- This is another reason why we need our fire station restored

Other Important Considerations

There are other negative consequences from closing our station worth considering

NOTICE OF NONRENEWAL OF INSURANCE

Named Insured & Mailing Address:

PO BOX 904
ROSS CA 94957

Producer: 0017833-99999

HUB INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE SERVICES INC
P O BOX 4047
CONCORD CA 94524

Policy No.: 1369991001
Type of Policy: PRIMARY LIABILITY
Date of Expiration: 02/04/2026; 12:01 A.M. Local Time at the mailing address of the Named Insured.

We will not renew this policy when it expires. Your insurance will cease on the Expiration Date shown above.

The reason for nonrenewal is

Location 15 NORWOOD AVENUE, ROSS, CA is being non-renewed based on the nonrenewal of coverage insuring dwelling located at 81 GLENWOOD AVENUE, ROSS, CA, which is being nonrenewed for the following reason:

Location: 81 GLENWOOD AVENUE, ROSS, CA, 94957

Policy is being non-renewed based on the increased hazard of loss from wildfire. Because of the increased frequency of catastrophic wildfires in California, we have revised our homeowner guidelines and eligibility requirements. Your home no longer qualifies for coverage because it is located in an area designated as increased risk of damage or destruction from a wildfire. After careful review, there are no reasonable steps that can be taken to improve the risk to an acceptable level under our revised guidelines. Please contact your agent for assistance in securing other coverage. You may also contact the California FAIR plan for assistance at 800-339-4099.

- **Fire Insurance:** there is a greater likelihood of insurance **policies being canceled** or premiums going up significantly
- **Property Values:** local real estate agents warn that Ross will not command the same property premiums as in the past due to diminished fire response; **buyers will look elsewhere especially if fire insurance becomes more difficult to attain**
- **Housing Element:** the State mandated housing plans call for significant increases to the housing stock in the Ross Valley: **+1,400 units (+100 Ross, +800 San Anselmo, +500 Fairfax); who is going to service these additional emergency calls?**





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3. The Public Safety Building Can Be Rehabilitated

The current building is structurally sound and can be rehabilitated- saving time and money

The Public Safety Building is a Historic Resource

The Ross Firehouse is a protected resource that should not be demolished

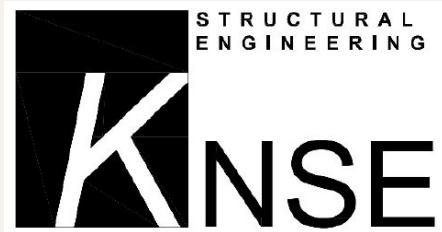
In 1927, the Town of Ross hired John White, a prominent San Francisco architect, to design the new Ross Civic Center

- White, Bernard Maybeck's brother-in-law, also designed the Lagunitas Club and Meadowood Clubhouses.
- The Ross Public Safety Building is individually listed in the California Register, meaning it is considered to be a "historical resource" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- **Any attempt to demolish the building will require an extensive environmental review, which will take at least a year and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in consultant fees**



The Public Safety Building is Structurally Sound

The building does not need to be demolished and can be rehabilitated



- KNSE engineering team conducted a site visit and structural observation on October 17, 2025, accompanied by representatives from BRW Architects, Thompson Builders, Alten Construction, the Town of Ross Public Works Department, and Friends of Ross Firehouse



KNSE Structural Engineering

Despite the public safety building's reported 1927 construction vintage, the existing foundation system and framing appear to be in generally sound condition, with no evidence of distress such as cracking, displacement, settlement, or structural failure.

In our professional opinion, the building is a good candidate for rehabilitation, and the existing foundations, framing system, exterior stucco, and roof assembly can be effectively reused with reasonable structural upgrades to meet current seismic and building code requirements.

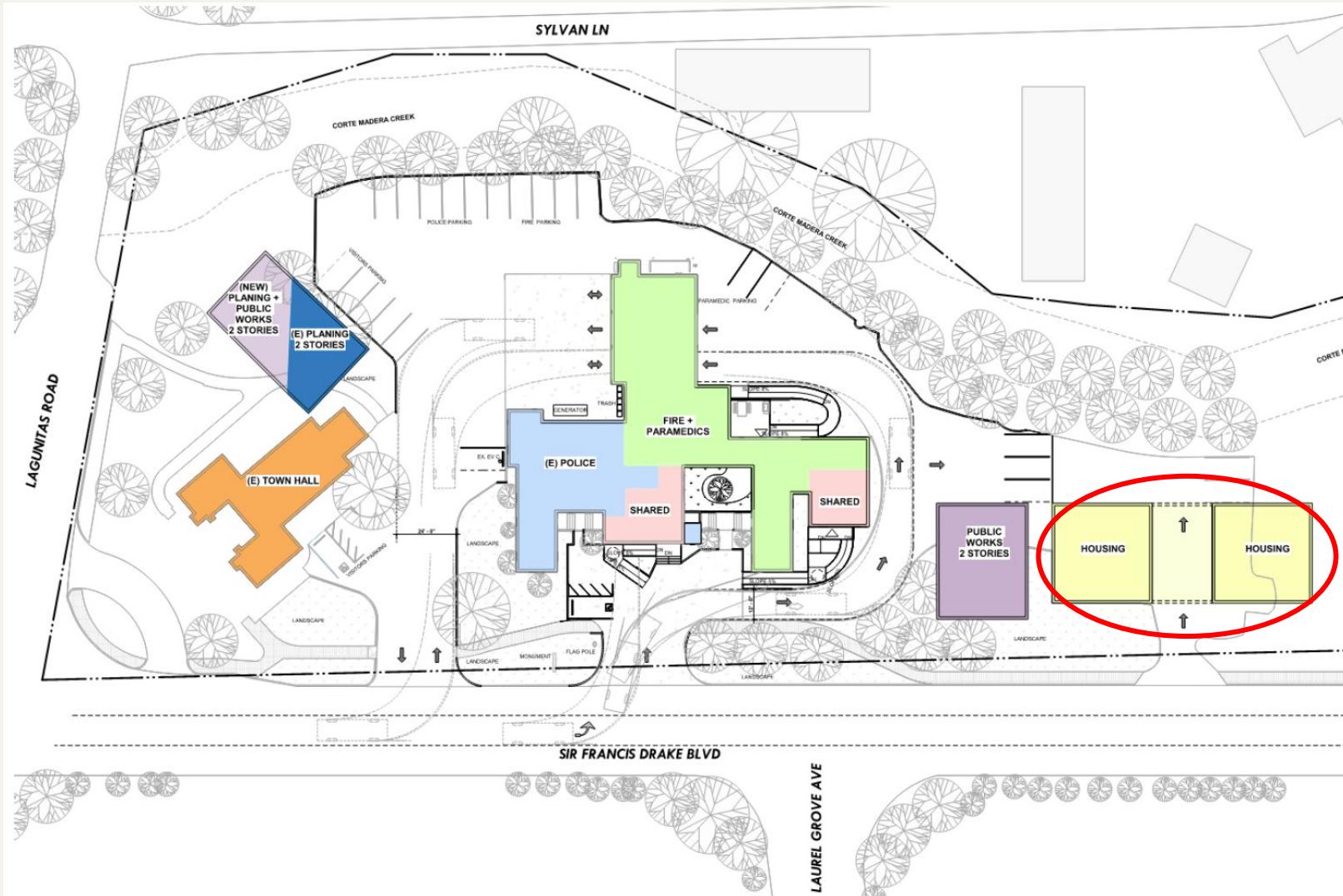


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Friends' Proposal | Site Plan

Our site plan includes all of the same elements as the Town's plan



- Our 13,500 sf plan incorporates the same elements as the Town's plan **including Affordable Housing**
- Our plan meets the conditions in the new lease with the Paramedic Authority
- We preserve the historic public safety building and maintain our firehouse
- The site circulation is improved
- Our plan qualifies for a CEQA exemption
- **Our limited site impact means we can start and finish the project quickly**



Friends' Proposal | Preservation

Our plan preserves and enhances the existing historical elements of the building

CURRENT



PROPOSED



- Our proposal maintains the look and feel of John White's original design while maintaining the building's facade
- The new construction space is seamlessly integrated into the existing building envelope



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Friends' Proposal | Exterior

Our plan will elevate the main building above the floodplain

Proposed Building And Trees



- Our plan builds within the existing building envelope, and preserves the apparatus bays built in 1995 that are still in excellent condition
- **The main building will be level across the first floor, raising it above the floodplain**
- We have three strategies to mitigate flood risk for the apparatus bays



Friends' Proposal | Flood Mitigation Measures

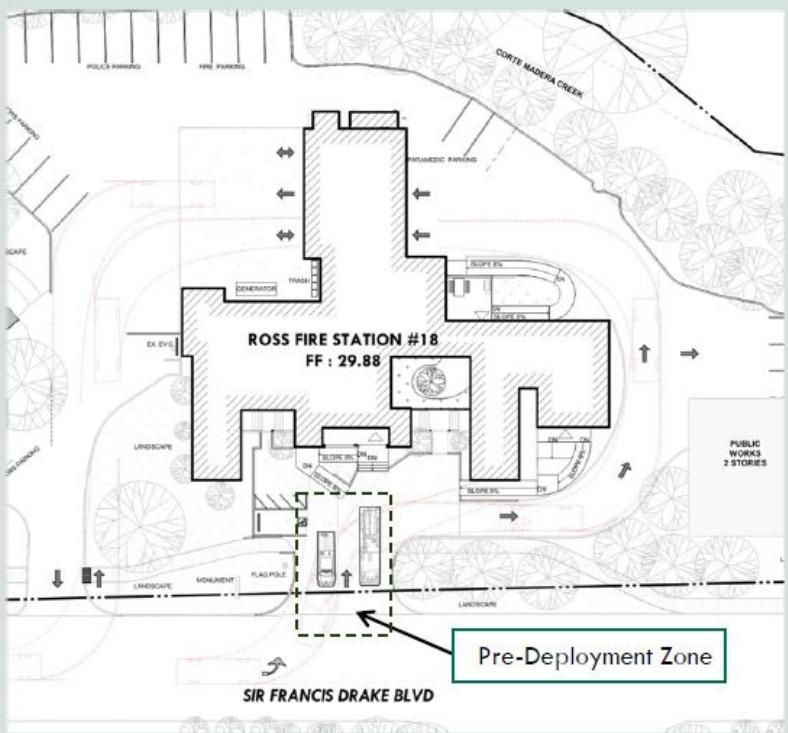
Strategies to mitigate a 100 year flood event

Public Safety Center

100 Year Flood Mitigation Measures

STRATEGY 1

The apparatus can be **PRE-DEPLOYED** above the flood zone while still adjacent to the fire station.



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STRATEGY 2

LOCATE ALL supporting functions such as communications, PPE, administration and living quarters above the flood zone.



Fairfax Fire Station 11



FEMA FLOOD CONTROL STRATEGY 3

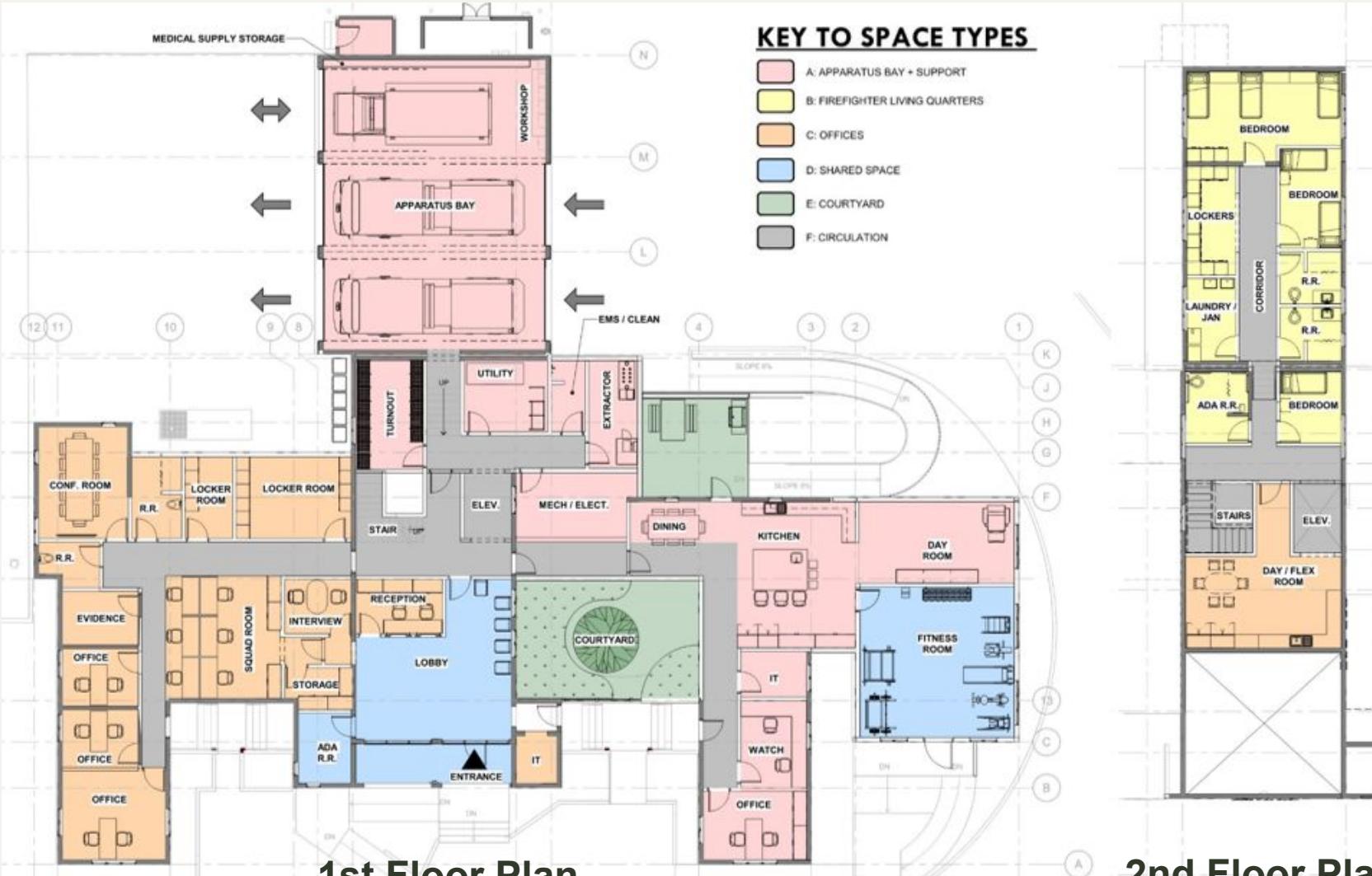
PROTECT areas in the flood zone with a barrier system to allow immediate re-occupation after the flood event has cleared.



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Friends' Proposal | Floor Plan

Our floor plan includes all of the same elements as the Town's plan while maintaining our firehouse



- Our 7,540 sf plan incorporates the same elements as the Town's plan for police, paramedics, but accommodates a fire station
- The upstairs bedrooms can sleep six people
- **The building will meet all current building codes, seismic, Americans with Disability Act (ADA), and Essential Services Act (ESA) requirements**

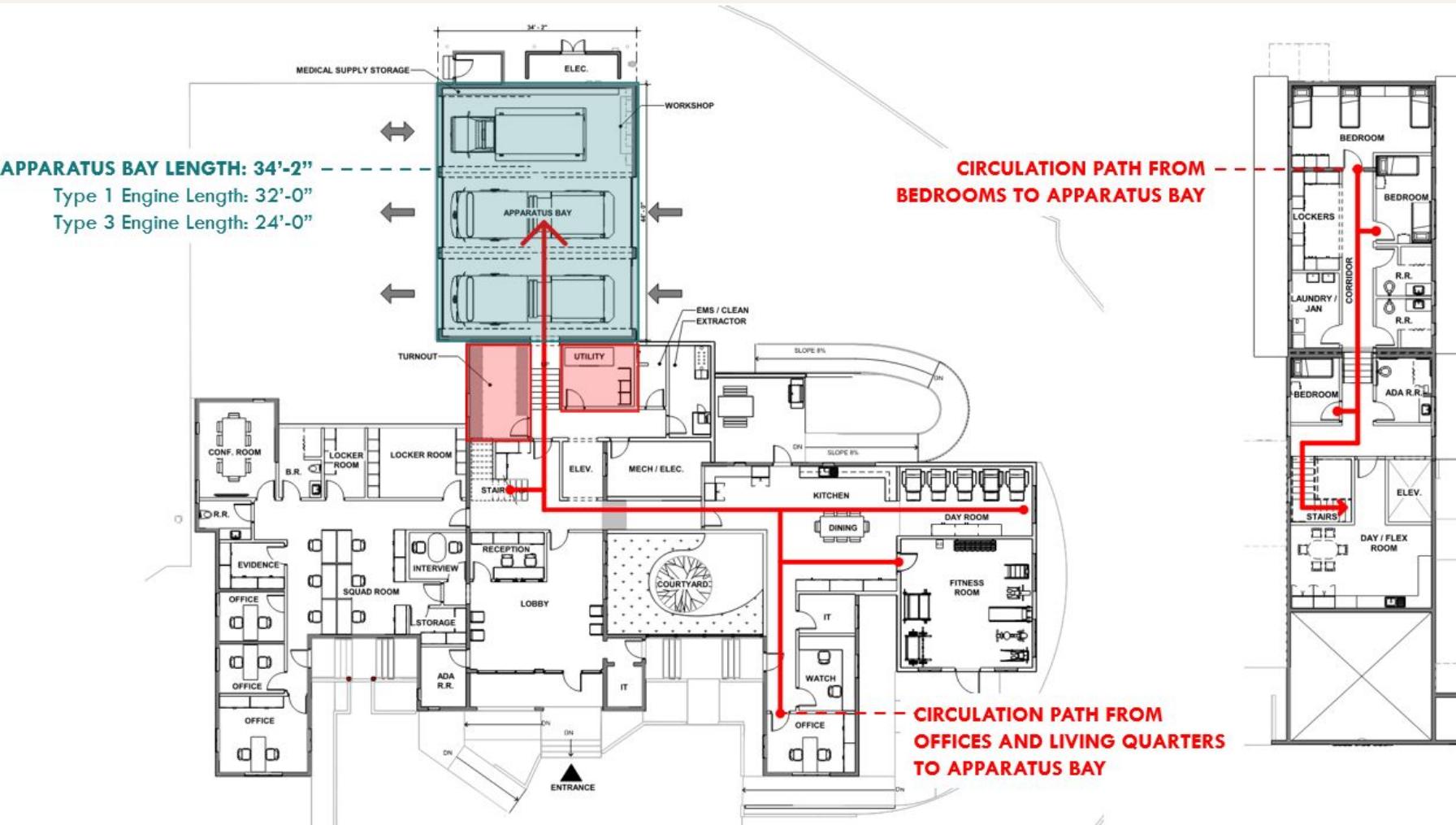


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Friends' Proposal | Floor Plan Circulation

The plan allows seamless internal circulation for fast turnout response times

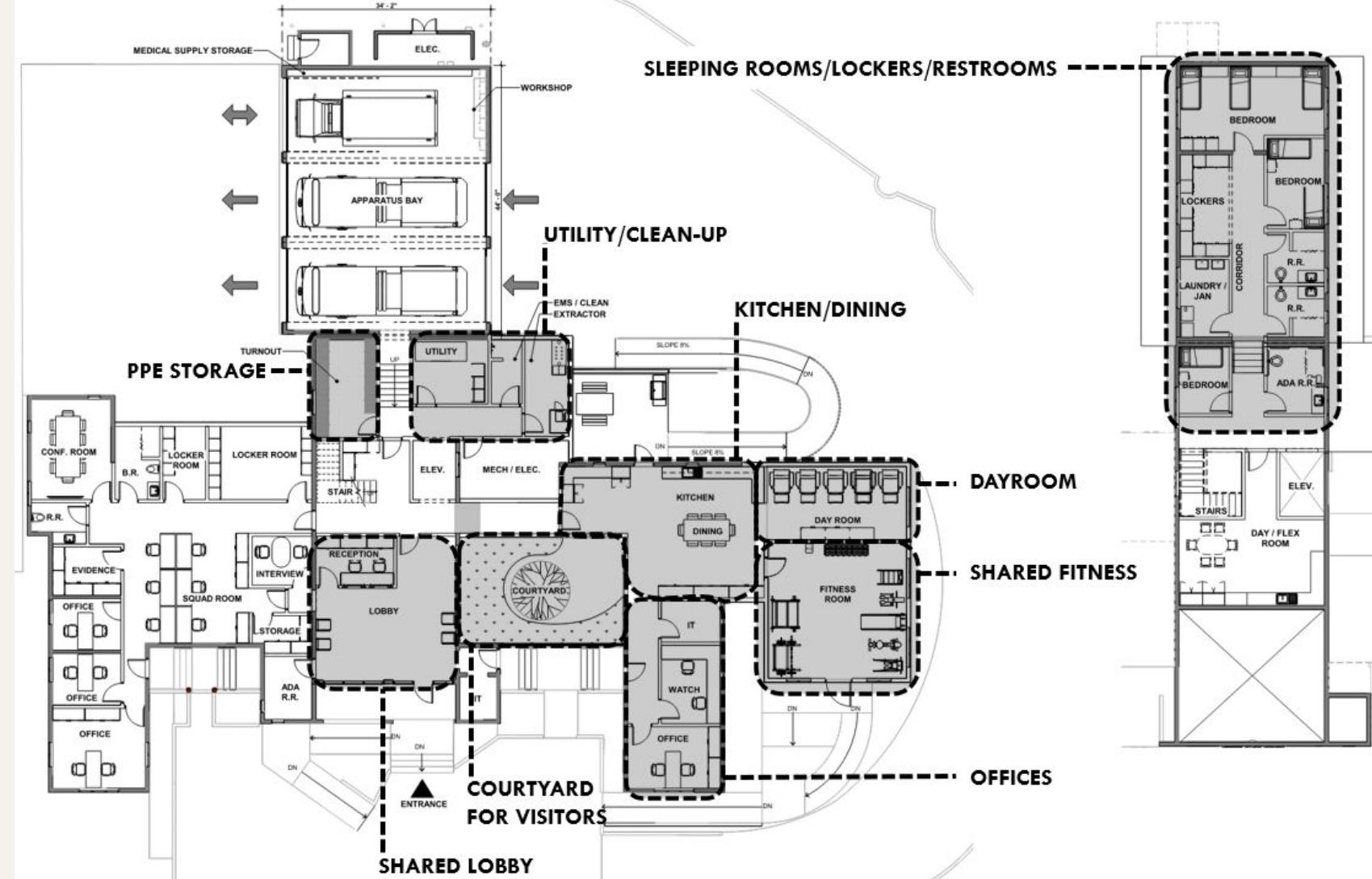


- The station is designed to allow for quick access to the turnout room, located directly adjacent to the apparatus bays



Friends' Proposal | Fire Station Space Components

The fire station design contains space to meet modern fire fighting needs



- The Friends plan accommodates best practices and regulations for firefighter life-safety, protective gear-separation, turnout time, clean-up and decontamination, gender privacy, and fitness/training needs





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4. Ross Can Afford a Fire Station

If San Anselmo, Fairfax, and Sleepy Hollow can afford fire stations in their towns, why can't Ross?

San Anselmo & Fairfax are Rehabbing Their Stations Now

Fellow members of RVFD are currently upgrading their stations in the floodplain, so can Ross

San Anselmo #20



- **Cost: \$3.2M; \$744/sf**
- The building is nearly 65 years old and desperately needs repair to all the exterior materials. New interior space planning is required to accommodate additional personnel
- Scope: Floodproofing living quarters 1 foot above base flood elevation, Expanding and raising living quarters, Interior reconfiguration and redecoration for accessibility and quality purposes, Removal and replacement of exterior materials, Personal Protective Equipment room addition

Fairfax #21



- **Cost: \$1.6M; \$631/sf**
- The station has served Fairfax since 1974. The project will improve firefighter living and working conditions, update critical infrastructure, and ensure the station remains safe, functional, and compliant with today's building and fire codes.
- Scope: New sleeping room to accommodate a full three-person crew, Additional bathroom and updated facilities, Modernized kitchen, Improved fire/life safety systems, required by code, including a rescue window and fire separation between the engine bay and living areas, Updated HVAC, electrical, plumbing, roof, and sprinkler systems, ADA improvements



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Ross can rebuild its Firehouse for \$11.2M

The Town has saved \$12M for its project- we can use those funds to rebuild the entire public safety building

A. PUBLIC SAFETY REHABILITATION	Friend's Plan	Notes:
	SF	
Fire Station	3,170	\$ 8,678,477 FIREHOUSE, POLICE, PARAMEDICS designed
Police Department	2,594	INCLUDED \$ 1,201,382 General Conditions
Paramedics	1,779	INCLUDED \$ 180,000 Power upgrade \$ 494,340 Demo/Abatement \$ 1,277,610 Seismic Retrofit \$ 2,924,358 Remodel \$ 2,600,787 Addition
		\$ 8,678,477 Total Public Safety Bldg
Site & Parking Improvements		ALTEN BID GRADING, SITE UTILITIES
Accessories & Signage		ALTEN BID, included in PSB rehabilitation budget
Demolition & Alignment		ADD DEMO PW FACILITY, from KPA budget p78
Subtotal Hard Costs	\$ 9,756,959	
Design Contingency	\$ 913,000	BRW contract proposal Arch, Str, Mech, EL, PI
Design Oversight	\$ 187,200	BRW contract proposal Design Oversight, CA
Construction Management	\$ 350,000	Use market CM fee (18 mos)
SUB TOTAL- PUBLIC SAFETY BLDG	7,543	\$11,207,159
		\$1,486 /SF

Source: BRW, Alten Construction

- We have a completed design and received a bona fide bid from Alten Construction to **rebuild the public safety building for \$8.7M**
- Including design contingency, oversight, and construction management, the total comes to \$11.2M
- \$1,486 per square foot cost is a massive savings from the Town's plan
- **The project can start immediately using the \$12M in funds the Town already has available**



Ross & RVFD can afford to operate a Ross station

Just like the Town voted to close its station, it can vote to reopen its station under fairer terms with RVFD

RVFD cost-sharing	Ross	San Anselmo	Sleepy Hollow	Fairfax	Total
RVFD Budget					
2024-25 Town base contributions	\$2,738	\$4,749	\$1,500	\$2,730	\$11,717
Additional Ross staffing					2,436
Supplies, equipment	5%				122
Total Ross operations					\$2,558
Total Budget with Ross Station					
Current cost-sharing	23.4%	40.5%	12.8%	23.3%	100.0%
Population share	9.3%	50.4%	10.5%	29.8%	100.0%
Proposed Fair cost-sharing	15.0%	45.0%	12.0%	28.0%	100.0%
Fair Share budget	\$2,141	\$6,424	\$1,713	\$3,997	\$14,275
Current budget	\$2,738	\$4,749	\$1,500	\$2,730	\$11,717
Change	-\$597	\$1,675	\$213	\$1,267	\$2,558
Change %	-22%	35%	14%	46%	22%

Source: Jensen Hughes

Ross is already paying RVFD more than the cost to staff and operate its own fire station

- Ross is currently paying \$2.7M, or 23.4% of the RVFD budget even though it represents only 9.3% of the population
- **The total cost to staff and supply a new Ross station is \$2.6M- less than Ross is paying to the department today**
- If RVFD will not renegotiate with Ross or reopen our station, Ross can explore establishing its own department or look to join Kentfield, Central Marin Fire, or Marin County fire departments instead
- As a point of reference, **Central Marin Fire budget costs \$3.2M per fire station** (4 stations in Corte Madera and Larkspur)
- But if needed, Ross's current tax revenue could be used to supplement staffing costs: **revenue has exceeded expenses by nearly \$1M per year over the past decade**

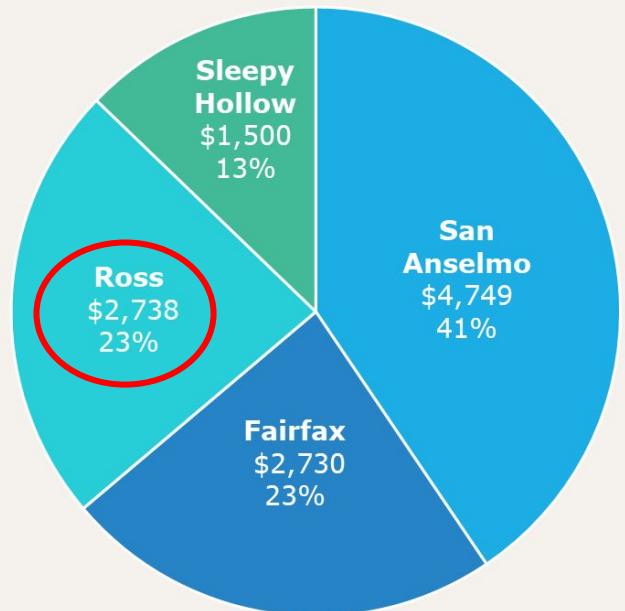


Ross can afford to operate a Ross station

Ross is already paying the equivalent cost to operate its own station

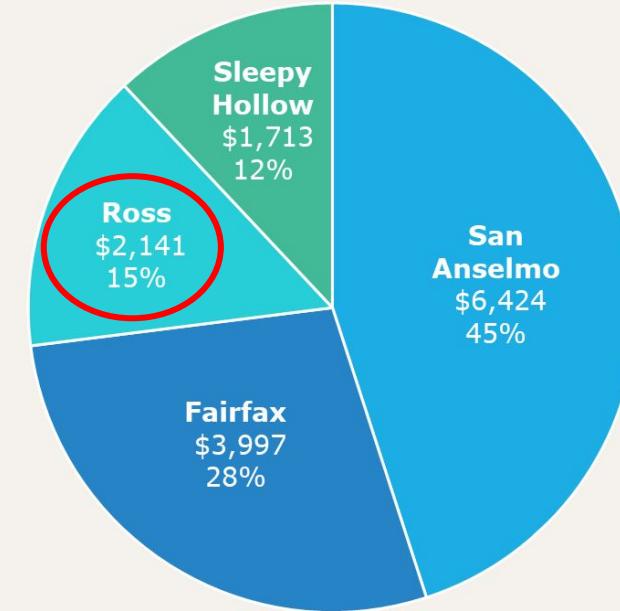
RVFD 2024-25 Budget

Total: \$11.7M
No Ross Station



Proforma Fair Share Budget

Total: \$14.3M
With Ross Station



**Everyone Pays
Their Fair Share**

- The department can and should absorb the costs to reopen the Ross station- the entire valley is safer with four stations
- **With a fairer cost sharing budget, Ross would actually pay less to the department than it does today**



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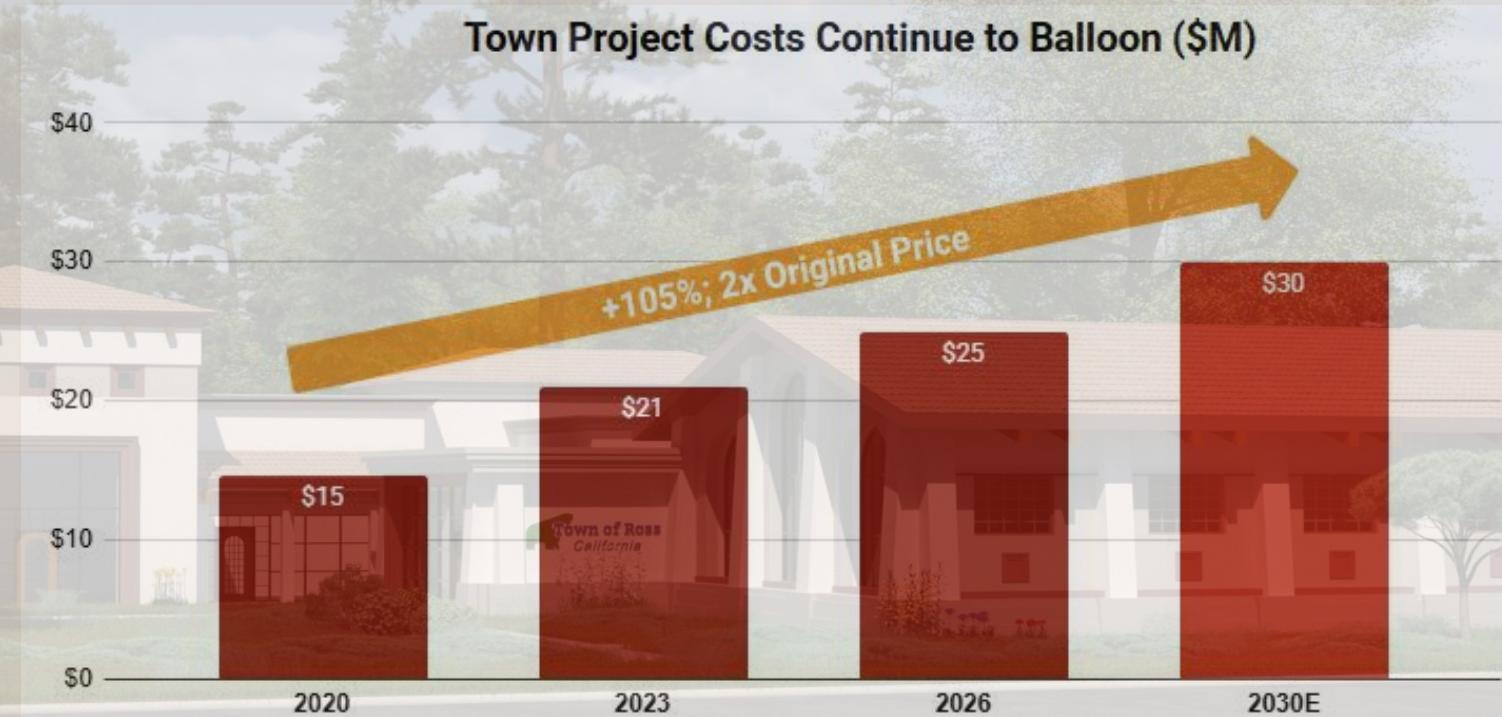
5. The Town's Plan Does Not Add Up

The Town Facilities Master plan is too expensive and will never garner the 2/3 Ross voter support it needs

The Town Facilities Master Plan is Too Expensive

Project costs will likely double before completed

- The Facilities Master Plan price tag continues to climb with no end in sight; the base project may cost Ross taxpayers \$30M when finally completed
- What was sold as a \$14.6M “cost saving” plan has morphed into a complete demolition of the site with very little public safety benefit to show for it- **the base project costs will likely more than double when finally completed**



Source: Town of Ross
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The Town Facilities Master Plan is Too Expensive

The \$25M+ plan is a waste of taxpayer money and will take years to complete

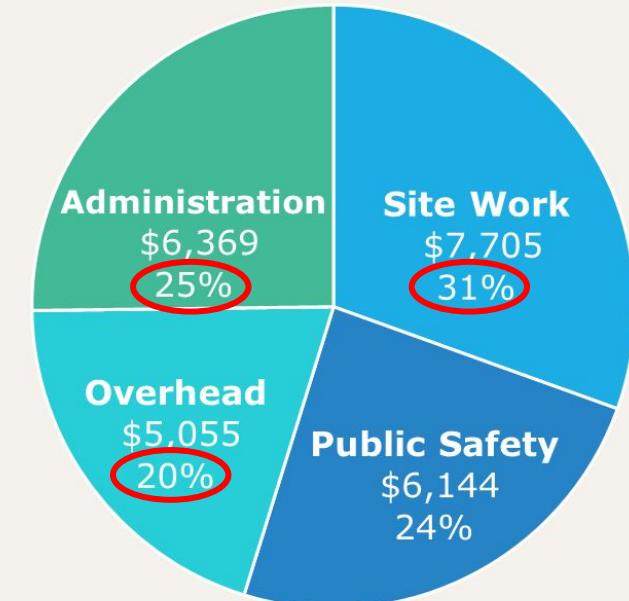
- The Town Plan calls for a complete demolition and rebuild of the site without rebuilding our fire station
- The plan is costly, wasteful, and does not prioritize public safety; **76% of the budget is for Site Work, Overhead, and Administrative buildings**

CONCEPT B COST ESTIMATE							
Updated November 2025	Description & Breakdown	QTY	Unit	Unit Price	Cost	2023 - 4%	2024 - 4%
TOWN HALL MODERNIZATION				\$ 500,000	\$ 520,000	\$ 540,800	\$ 573,248
POLICE DEPARTMENT				\$ 3,430,000	\$ 3,567,200	\$ 3,709,888	\$ 3,932,481
ADMINISTRATION				\$ 1,292,600	\$ 1,344,304	\$ 1,398,076	\$ 1,481,961
PUBLIC WORKS				\$ 2,178,000	\$ 2,265,120	\$ 2,355,725	\$ 2,497,068
PARAMEDICS				\$ 1,673,900	\$ 1,740,856	\$ 1,810,490	\$ 1,919,120
COUNCIL CHAMBERS & SUPPORT SPACES				\$ 1,320,000	\$ 1,372,800	\$ 1,427,712	\$ 1,513,375
SITE & PARKING IMPROVEMENTS				\$ 5,590,000	\$ 5,813,600	\$ 6,046,144	\$ 6,408,913
ACCESSORIES and SIGNAGE				\$ 140,000	\$ 145,600	\$ 151,424	\$ 160,509
DEMOLITION & ALIGNMENT				\$ 670,000	\$ 696,800	\$ 724,672	\$ 768,152
SUBTOTAL COST - CONCEPT B				\$ 16,794,500	\$ 17,466,280	\$ 18,164,931	\$ 19,254,827
DESIGN CONTINGENCY (10%)				\$ 1,679,450	\$ 1,746,628	\$ 1,816,493	\$ 1,925,483
DESIGN OVERSIGHT - CA (5%)				\$ 839,725	\$ 873,314	\$ 908,247	\$ 962,741
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT (10%)				\$ 1,679,450	\$ 1,746,628	\$ 1,816,493	\$ 1,925,483
GRAND TOTAL COST - CONCEPT B				\$ 20,993,125	\$ 21,832,850	\$ 22,706,164	\$ 24,068,534
							\$ 25,271,961

Source: Town of Ross

Town Cost Breakdown

Total: \$25.3M

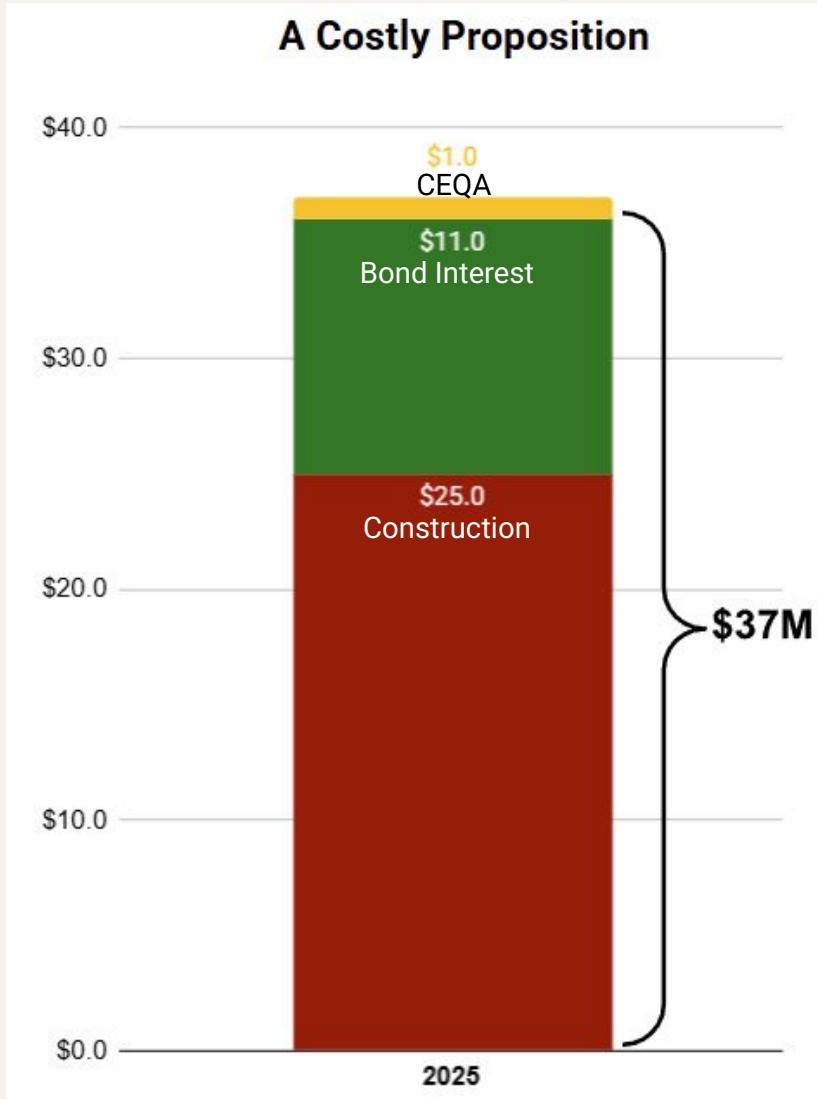


Ross is safer with a Firehouse

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The Town Facilities Master Plan is Too Expensive

The Town plan will require a costly public bond to finance construction and expensive CEQA environmental studies



- The Facilities Master Plan will require at least a \$15M public bond to finance construction:
 - **The total taxpayer cost of the bond over 30 years would be \$26M including \$11M of interest cost**
 - **Annual property taxes will increase by ~\$1,000 to pay for the bond**
- Demolishing the site will require a **lengthy and costly CEQA process** that could take years and cost up to ~\$1M in consultant fees
 - Because the public safety building is identified as a “historical resource” **interested parties may raise a Court challenge, potentially delaying the project for years**
- The total cost of the project could easily reach ~\$40M; or **\$50,000 per Ross household**

The public bond will require 2/3 Ross voter support- if it fails the Town has no alternative plan



The Town Plan Just Doesn't Compare to the Friends' Plan

The Friends' plan costs far less while preserving our fire station

A. PUBLIC SAFETY REHABILITATION

	SF	Town's Plan	SF	Friend's Plan	Notes:
Fire Station	N/A	NOT INCLUDED	3,170	\$ 8,678,477	FIREHOUSE, POLICE, PARAMEDICS designed
Police Department	3,500	\$ 4,129,105	2,594	INCLUDED	\$ 1,201,382 General Conditions
Paramedics	2,150	\$ 2,015,076	1,779	INCLUDED	\$ 180,000 Power upgrade
					\$ 494,340 Demo/Abatement
					\$ 1,277,610 Seismic Retrofit
					\$ 2,924,358 Remodel
					\$ 2,600,787 Addition
					\$ 8,678,477 Total Public Safety Bldg
Site & Parking Improvements		\$ 6,729,358		\$ 918,482	ALLEN BID GRADING, SITE UTILITIES
Accessories & Signage		\$ 168,535		INCLUDED	ALLEN BID, included in PSB rehabilitation budget
Demolition & Alignment		\$ 806,560		\$ 160,000	ADD DEMO PW FACILITY, from KPA budget p78
Subtotal Hard Costs		\$13,848,634		\$ 9,756,959	
Design Contingency	10.0%	\$ 2,021,757		\$ 913,000	BRW contract proposal Arch, Str, Mech, EL, PI
Design Oversight	5.0%	\$ 1,010,878		\$ 187,200	BRW contract proposal Design Oversight, CA
Construction Management	10.0%	\$ 2,021,757		\$ 350,000	Use market CM fee (18 mos)
SUB TOTAL- PUBLIC SAFETY BLDG	5,650	\$18,903,026	7,543	\$11,207,159	
		\$3,346 /SF		\$1,486 /SF	
B. OTHER MASTERPLAN BUILDINGS					
Town Hall Modernization		\$ 601,910		\$ 601,910	Use Town est., (not yet designed or bid priced)
Administration, Finance, HR, Planning	1,430	\$ 1,556,059	1,430	\$ 1,556,059	Use Town est., (not yet designed or bid priced)
Public Works	2,550	\$ 2,621,922	2,550	\$ 2,621,922	Use Town est., (not yet designed or bid priced)
Council Chambers & Support Spaces	1,970	\$ 1,589,043	1,970	\$ 1,589,043	Use Town est., (not yet designed or bid priced)
Sub Total other Masterplan buildings	5,950	\$ 6,368,934	5,950	\$ 6,368,934	
TOTAL CAMPUS	11,600	\$25,271,960	13,493	\$17,576,093	FORF INCL FIRE STATION
		\$2,179 /SF		\$1,303 /SF	

Source: Town of Ross (KPA), BRW, Alten Construction

- The Town's plan costs \$7.7M more than the Friends' plan without a fire station
- The Friends' plan saves \$5.8M in site improvements since it does not demolish the buildings and start over
- The Friends' plan preserves the historic building and the large Redwood trees



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The Town Plan Just Doesn't Compare to the Friends' Plan

The Friends' plan costs far less, maintains fire safety, and preserves the historic building and Redwood trees

	Town Plan	Friends Proposal
Total Project cost (Phase I & II)	\$25M	\$17M
<u>Phase I</u> : Public Safety Building	N/A	\$11M
Financing Tax per household	>\$1,000 per year	\$0
Site & Parking costs	\$6.7M	\$1M
Emergency response time	11-14 minutes	8 minutes
Affordable Housing		
Police & Paramedics		
Fire Station		
Preserve character		
CEQA exempt		
Cost-effective		

Friends' plan saves the historic building and Redwood trees



37-Year Ross Fire Captain Testimonial

Response Times are not statistics- they represent human lives

“

I pray that this group is successful in getting a fire engine staffed and housed in Ross.

In my heart I feel the safety of the residents and the properties in Ross have been severely compromised with the removal of an engine stationed in the Town of Ross. **The safety of residents is certainly compromised for medical aid** with the additional response times. The response times for fires is well documented for being an issue with industry standards. In my experiences, there is significant dangers with not having an engine in Town during floods. During multiple floods while I was working for the town, the town became isolated because of high water.

Lives are in jeopardy with the closure of the station, and I believe the Ross Valley Fire Department (and Ross Town Council) will massage the facts to downplay any calls to favor the closure of the station.

These opinions of mine are based on 37 years of experience working for the Ross Fire Department and over fifty years of experience living in Ross.

Bruce Selfridge

Retired Fire Captain
Ross Fire Department



Ross is safer with a Firehouse





Ross is safer with a Firehouse

6. Conclusion

**Response Times are not statistics-
they represent human lives**

Ross Resident Testimonials

Response Times are not statistics- they represent human lives

“

As a board certified emergency room physician, I am concerned now that the Firefighters who are also EMTs and paramedics are gone. **They were our first responders. In the case of cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, major trauma and structural fires minutes matter.**

Debra Maltenfort Hilleboe, MD

“

I am a 3rd generation Ross Resident. I have seen the heroic actions of the RVFD perform life saving events on family members and putting out fires at the Lagunitas Club and Marin Art and Garden. **I am not comfortable with the delay in response times now that the firehouse has closed.** We need to be responsible and step up to find a solution.

Elizabeth Brown

“

After what we have experienced in California in the past 5 years, **it seems irresponsible to shut down a local fire station.**

Annie Kadavy

“

A two minute delay could be deadly.

Nancy McCarthy



Ross Resident Testimonials

Response Times are not statistics- they represent human lives

“

My four year old son had a horrible accident. The firemen were to the scene in a few minutes. **In a town with so many young children and elderly adults, it scares me that we no longer have our Ross firemen as first responders.** Waiting even an extra minute in a life threatening situation is just too long.

Erica Bell

“

A fully operational **fire station is essential** to ensuring the safety and security of our community.

Linda Coates

“

The most important function of a Town government is to keep its citizens safe. Our elected officials have let us down by closing the Fire department.

Kris Kelley

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The Town Consultants Are Wrong About Our Plan

The consultants made numerous false assumptions about our plan

	Consultant Assumption	Actual Friends Plan
1	Seismic upgrades would require near-total structural replacement rather than retrofit	BRW design incorporates seismic upgrades; KNSE structural engineer confirms rehab can be done
2	Apparatus bays are located in the flood zone of the Corte Madera Creek and must be elevated	BRW suggests several strategies to mitigate flood risk; the project may be exempt from the Ross ordinance
3	Contemporary fire engines require deeper and wider apparatus bays than those in the existing Public Safety Building	We successfully operated a fire station with no issue up until July 2025; apparatus bays have worked fine since rebuilt in 1995
4	Site circulation is inadequate for modern fire operations, including poor apparatus egress and driveway design	BRW design incorporates new site circulation
5	The existing site and building footprint cannot accommodate current best practices and regulations for firefighter life-safety, protective gear-separation, turnout time, clean-up and decontamination, gender privacy, and fitness/training needs	BRW has designed 375+ fire stations, including the Ross design, which accommodates best practices for firefighters
6	Upgrading major building systems would trigger ADA, ESA, and building code upgrades, which cannot be accommodated within the existing building envelope	BRW design meets all ADA, ESA, and current building codes
7	One-time costs between \$25.6-\$37.5M	Friends plan costs \$17M substantiated by a bona fide construction bid
8	Ongoing annual operating costs are estimated to be between \$3.4-\$5.0M, plus \$2.7M to RVPA	Incremental staffing cost of \$2.6M can be spread among RVPA members; Central Marin Fire pays \$3.2M per station (4 stations), a reasonable comp
9	LAFCO approval is required to move to a new JPA fire partnership	A legal analysis is required but generally LAFCO approval is only required in a situation where 25%+ of a service area is affected



Conclusion



With a practical, and historically respectful approach,

Friends of Ross Firehouse offers a compelling alternative to restore local fire and medical services, protect the historic structure, and use cost-effective rehabilitation rather than costly demolition.

If you can rehabilitate the historic structure at a lower cost than the Town plan **and** return best practice emergency response - why wouldn't you?

Most importantly, this plan reflects **what the community wants**. Hundreds of residents have spoken up and want to see local emergency services returned to Ross.



If a fire station isn't built now, then Ross will NEVER have space for a fire engine and will always be DEPENDENT on other towns for emergency services, with very little input into how those services are delivered





Ross is safer with a Firehouse

Appendix

The Paramedic Lease is another Bad Deal for Ross

The terms heavily favor the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority (RVPA)

- Ross Town Council recently approved (4-1 vote) a new 8-year lease with RVPA commencing when the new paramedic facility is completed or 1/1/29, whichever is sooner
- The Town wanted to keep the RVPA ambulance in Ross, so it agreed to a lease with a number of terms unfavorable to Ross
 - Building a new facility that “substantially complies” with the Facilities Master Plan will cost Ross taxpayers ~\$3.5M; with expected net annual rent of \$60k **the return on investment (ROI) would only be 1.7% per year**
 - RVPA can terminate the lease (and remove its ambulance from Ross) without cause after just 6 years, and for any of a number of reasons before then, including if any member leaves RVPA or if any jurisdiction fails to pass its parcel tax
- The data presented at the December Town Council meeting calls into question the benefit of keeping an ambulance in Ross: **the data show that the ambulance provides almost no safety benefit for residents:**
 - The ambulance response time since closure of the Ross fire station is 14:02 minutes, **far longer than the promised 7:55 for 85% of calls**
- The Friends' plan, which meets the Town's contractual obligations with RVPA, is far less expensive and also includes a fire station



Ross Needs a Firehouse

according to RVFD's own consultant CityGate

Excerpts from the 2019 and 2024 Citygate reports



"Closing Station 18 will add about 2 minus MINIMUM of travel time into that area."



"The brain can only survive 4-6 minutes without oxygen. Cardiac arrest and other events can cause oxygen deprivation to the brain. Thus, from the time of 911 receiving the call, an effective deployment system is beginning to manage the problem within a 7-minute total response time. **This is right at the point brain death is becoming irreversible and the fire has grown to the point of leaving the room and becoming very serious.**"



"Small fires will become larger and Critical EMS patients may not receive lifesaving care."



"Covering the Town of Ross from either station 19 or 17 (or Kentfield) depends on essentially one road being open and not congested with traffic. Any one accident or natural emergency could close the road, **effectively making the Town of Ross a cul-de-sac.**"



"Station 18 has the best travel time of any of the 4 station areas – adding 2 minutes travel, plus dispatch and turnout time of at least 3 minutes, moves a Town of Ross total response time from 7:40 to 9:40 which would be more like an **edge suburban** or rural area."



The Town says residents don't need the firefighters, who are also paramedics because the ambulance is already based in Town. A 2024 Citygate study makes it clear the ambulance is strained because it covers a large service area and cannot be relied on as a first responder.



Tracy McLaughlin | Ross Property Values are at Risk

32 Year Ross real estate veteran warns property values will suffer from the station closure



July 29, 2025

Dear Friends of Ross Firehouse,

I am writing this letter in ardent support of the continuation of the Ross Fire Services in their current location. My family moved to Ross in 1978. My parents still live in Ross (Sylvan Lane). I raised my three children in Ross. I have been selling the lion's share of homes there for 32 years, so I can speak to specifics of the gravity of this issue.

Ross leads Marin County in appreciation of its real estate for many reasons, including the strength of the K-8th-grade school, safety, weather, and small-town feeling. During my career, so many buyers to Ross have asked me what is so special about living in Ross other than the stated obvious. They always ask: "is it worth it to spend that much more to live here?" Something I always stress is the community having its own fire and police services. Immediate medical care and police protection for unanticipated emergencies is, in my professional opinion, a key factor in contributing to what makes the town so special. Having fire protective services is also an integral part of insurability. The insurance issues in Marin for hillside homes have made the business of selling homes in Ross even more challenging. Other homes in the community have been challenged by the failure to have their insurance renewed. If we remove the proximity of fire response, it heightens the issue of uninsured homes in the community.

If the community wants to continue to see the appreciation of homes it has always experienced, I believe that keeping police and fire protective services in the community is essential. It will continue to contribute to home values and, most importantly, the unique and distinctive feeling of "safety" that we have all experienced here for so many decades. I am available for any questions.

Warmly,

Tracy

THEAGENCY

A Global Marketing and Sales Organization

Tracy McLaughlin
MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA | ASPEN, COLORADO

“

If the community wants to continue to see **the appreciation of homes it has always experienced, I believe that keeping police and fire protective services in the community is essential**. It will continue to contribute to home values and, most importantly, the unique and distinctive feeling of "safety" that we have all experienced here for so many decades.

Tracy McLaughlin

Jensen Hughes | Michael Stanley

Founded in 1980, JH is the global leader in engineering, consulting, and technology services, dedicated to protecting what matters most through technical excellence



Michael Stanley, MED, CFO, FM, FESA

Project Role: Sr. Fire and Emergency Services Consultant

- MEd, Education & Human Resource Studies, Colorado State University
- BS, Organizational Leadership for Emergency Services, Charter Oak St. College
- AS, Emergency Medical Services, Community College of Aurora
- AAS, Fire Science Technology, Red Rocks Community College

Experience:

33+ years

Credentials

Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Fire Marshal (FM), Fire and Emergency Services Analyst (FESA)
Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE)

With over three decades of progressive leadership in emergency services, Mike is a seasoned professional with in-depth expertise in fire and EMS operations, system evaluation, and strategic planning. Currently serving as a Senior Fire and Emergency Services Consultant with Jensen Hughes, Mike leads complex projects involving system assessments, operational reviews, and performance-based improvement plans for public agencies. Before this role, Mike served as Fire Chief and Emergency Manager for the City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, overseeing fire protection, emergency medical services, and emergency management for a population of over 90,000. In that role, he led the department through the global pandemic, developed strategic initiatives to enhance service delivery, and managed a \$16 million operating budget alongside a multi-million-dollar capital improvement plan.

Mike also brings extensive hands-on experience from a 22-year tenure with the Aurora (CO) Fire Department, where he served as Medical Branch Commander and helped develop the Prehospital Care Consortium to enhance community EMS outcomes. As Past President of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association, he championed legislation that advanced funding and firefighter mental health. A committed educator and advocate, Mike has served as an instructor at the National Fire Academy and multiple higher education institutions, and holds numerous credentials, including recognition as a Chief Fire Officer, Fire Marshal, and Fire and Emergency Services Analyst. Recognized nationally for leadership and valor, Mike Stanley combines operational expertise with strategic insight to deliver solutions that are efficient, equitable, and community-focused.



Fire + Emergency Services Consulting

Our Fire + Emergency Services team delivers the expertise needed to develop solutions because of our collective backgrounds in the following areas:

- Strategic Response Planning
- Fire Apparatus Design Specifications
- Private Fire Brigades
- Staffing and Deployment Modeling
- Fire Department Consolidation Studies
- Community Risk Assessments/Reduction
- Standards of Cover Development
- Policy and Procedure Development
- Budgeting and Financial Management
- GIS Response Time Modeling and Analysis
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
- Airport Planning and ARFF Response
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Fire Station Design and Distribution
- Community Master Planning
- Crisis Communications
- Fire Investigations
- Community Outreach and Education
- Disaster Planning
- Training Tower Design and Evaluation
- Emergency Management and Planning
- FD Concurrency Evaluations
- Fire Hazard and Risk Assessments
- Post Incident Analysis / After Action
- Emergency Response Capabilities Analysis
- Alternative Delivery Models

Jensen Hughes | Vernon Champlin

Founded in 1980, JH is the global leader in engineering, consulting, and technology services, dedicated to protecting what matters most through technical excellence



Education

MPA, Master of Public Administration, Columbia Southern University, 2017

EFO, Executive Fire Officer, National Fire Academy, 2009

BS, Fire Protection and Safety Engineering, Oklahoma State University, 2002

Certifications

Fire Marshal (FM), and former Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Center for Public Safety Excellence

Member Grade (MIFireE), Institute of Fire Engineers

Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Associations

Member, International Association of Fire Chiefs

Liaison, National Association of State Fire Marshals

Member, NFPA 1710 Technical Committee

Member, NFPA 1140 Technical Committee

Contact

+1 719 257 2728

vchamplin@jensenhughes.com

VERNON CHAMPLIN MPA, EFO, FM, MIFireE, CFPS, CET
SR. FIRE + EMERGENCY SERVICES CONSULTANT / ADVANCED FIRE TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL FACILITATOR
Experience – 28+ years | Joined Jensen Hughes – 2019

Bio

Vernon (Vern) Champlin is a senior consultant and technical expert with more than twenty years of experience spanning operational response, fire prevention, wildland-urban interface risk, and post-incident recovery. His career progression from firefighter to chief officer and fire marshal provides a seasoned foundation that now informs his work supporting complex fire and emergency services programs across the United States and internationally. He holds a Bachelor's in Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology, a Master of Public Administration, and is a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program.

Vern specializes in translating fire service operational needs into defensible, data-driven, and implementable solutions for municipalities, industrial clients, and mega-scale international developments. His portfolio includes the development of fire service strategic plans, staffing and deployment studies, response time and coverage analyses, and apparatus specifications. He played a key role in creating a comprehensive fire station design guide for a major international development project. His work consistently integrates fire protection engineering principles, performance-based design methodologies, and mission-critical emergency response strategies.

A recognized voice in the fire and emergency services community, Vern contributes extensively to national standards, industry leadership, and professional knowledge-sharing. He serves on NFPA Technical Committees 1710 (career fire department deployment) and 1140 (wildland fire protection) and maintains active involvement with the International Association of Fire Chiefs and the National Association of State Fire Marshals. Vern has presented internationally on fire protection, emergency services deployment, and wildfire resilience, and was a contributing author to the 2022 *Handbook of Cognitive and Autonomous Systems for Fire Resilient Infrastructures*. His work reflects a sustained commitment to advancing fire service capability, enhancing community resilience, and supporting safe, smart, and operationally sound development worldwide.



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- +
- Emergency Response Capabilities Analysis
- +
- Alternative Delivery Models

BRW Architects | Chris Ford



F. CHRISTOPHER FORD

AIA

Principal-in-charge
BRW Architects

40 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE | WITH FIRM SINCE 2010

Mr. Ford's experience has included all phases of professional services in architecture, specializing in municipal buildings, fire stations, public safety facilities, office structures, and universities. Mr. Ford's project management specialties include programming, cost estimation, construction contract administration, and field inspection.



FOCUS ON PUBLIC SAFETY

In addition to the recently completed project list, Mr. Ford's 40 years of service in the public safety design and project management sector includes more than sixty municipalities and over one hundred twenty public safety projects, including facility assessments, feasibility studies, bond campaigns, design guidelines, and peer review.

EDUCATION & REGISTRATIONS

State of California Registered Architect: C17552

California Polytechnic State University, Bachelor of Architecture

RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS

New Public Safety Facilities

- Marin County Fire Department Throckmorton Ridge Fire Station (Mill Valley, CA)
- Pajaro Valley Fire District Headquarters (Santa Cruz County, CA)
- Patterson Fire Station 2 and Training Facility (Patterson, CA)
- Sacramento Fire Station 14 (Sacramento, CA)
- Salida Fire Protection District Station 2 (Salida, CA)
- Alameda Fire Station 3 (Alameda, CA)
- Alameda Emergency Operations Center (Alameda, CA)
- Ceres Fire Station 4 (Ceres, CA)
- Scotts Valley Fire Station 2 (Scotts Valley, CA)

Fire Station Renovations

- Calistoga Fire Station 1 (Calistoga, CA)
- Marin County Point Reyes Fire Station 4 (Point Reyes Station, CA)
- Southern Marin Fire District Fire Station 9 (Mill Valley, CA)
- Southern Marin Fire District Fire Station 4 (Mill Valley, CA)



Ross is safer with a Firehouse

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