

Edward Dong

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March 8, 2021

Ross Town Council
31 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
Ross, California 94957
towncouncil@townofross.org

Re: Ross Town Council March 11, 2021 Agenda Item 11
Ross Fire Station and Town Facilities

Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

The critical matters of (i) retaining the Ross fire station and (ii) the responsible development of town facilities are intertwined, and decisions on both of these need to represent the best interests of the residents of Ross. A nexus exists between the optimum fire response delivered to the town and the cost effective and smart development of the town services campus. Fire life safety and fiscal decisions for the town need to be made by the residents of the town based on current, accurate, legal and leading professional strategies lest Town Council's ("TC") apparent rush to make a decision results in unintended dire results for the town. This letter presents a private sector approach to both matters of retaining the Ross fire station and facilities development.

Fire response is critical to the preservation of life and property, and keeping Ross fire station in the town center will save the crucial 2 additional minutes of emergency response time if the fire station is moved elsewhere. Two minutes of conflagration could mean the loss of lives, homes and property of Ross residents. The town's responsible solution for fire response to its residents is to consider only development options that retain our Ross fire station legacy within our town.

The Ross fire apparatus hall and police station buildings are historically significant and have represented the Town of Ross persona and community character since 1927 displaying the traditional Spanish Colonial Revival architecture of renowned architect John White, associate designer of early California architect Bernard Maybeck. The McGrath budget report Option 1 plan includes demolishing these buildings which defies CEQA and decries our historical town context. Rather, the development plan should maintain the historically significant façade and portions of the buildings as a testament to the town's fore fathers and mothers, and a sustainable nod to our future generations of residents.

Several Ross residents including real estate developers and construction professionals have determined that the McGrath budgets for facilities development options appear to be incorrect by a factor nearing 2X, and we urge TC not to make incorrect decisions of facilities development based on inaccurate information.

In support of this determination, a group of Ross residents met with and sought advice from experienced fire station and public services development consultants and contractors. We met at the Ross public services site with Carlo Campos and Greg Barton, principal and manager, respectively, of LCA Architects that has designed and delivered over 50 fire stations in Northern California, including many in Marin.

We also met with Bob Alten, principal of Alten Construction that has constructed and delivered over 30 fire stations in the Bay Area. Independently, LCA and Alten did not support the considerably high Option 1 construction delivery budget in the McGrath report of \$1,537/SF for all-in hard costs. Specifically, LCA and Alten each indicated that an all-in hard cost delivery budget would be in the \$450/SF to \$750/SF range to include buildings, site improvements, off site work, construction management and fees. My budget based on 45 years in the development and construction business is \$900/SF all-in hard costs.

Recent all-in construction hard costs of fire station developments were presented by LCA and Alten as examples of how the Ross public services facilities can be delivered at a budget considerably lower, estimated at about one half of the McGrath report.

Particularly, LCA Architects confirmed pricing for the delivery of the following:

Alamo Fire Station No. 32

LCA recently delivered fire station no. 32 at \$450/SF including all hard costs, site improvements, off sites, contingencies, fees and construction management for a single-story facility with 3 apparatus bays similar to Ross proposed new fire station. This Alamo fire station is most comparable in scope to Ross fire station at approx. 8,000 SF, 3 bays, single story. The original project started out at an unsupportable budget of \$950/SF and LCA was brought on board replacing the original architect to value engineer and redesign building components to deliver the completed fire house project including all site costs at \$450/SF.



San Pablo Fire Station No. 70

LCA is currently completing fire station no. 70 comprising two-story facilities, training center and fire tower at \$750/SF all-in development hard costs. This delivery cost includes the fire station, site improvements, off site work, contingencies, fees and construction management. This fire station scope is far more than the proposed Ross fire station and understandably delivered at a higher cost per



square foot. This LCA project had a historical preservation component as well.

Separately, Alten Construction confirmed pricing for the delivery of the following:

San Rafael Fire Station No. 52. Alten Construction recently delivered fire station no. 52 comprising a two-story facility, training center, fire tower and a historical building component at \$683/SF including all site improvements, off sites, fees and management. The scope of this fire station is considerably more than the Ross fire station.



San Francisco Fire Station No. 5. Alten Construction recently delivered the largest fire station (no. 5) in San Francisco at 21,193 Sf comprising a three-story structural steel facility, hazmat remediation, a massive glass rain screen public art installation, four apparatus bays, training center, living quarters at \$766/SF including all site improvements, offsites, contingencies, fees and management. The scope of this fire station is considerably more than the Ross fire station.



Similarly, the soft cost budgets in the McGrath report are high, and should be reviewed by development professionals. Particularly, McGrath's Design and Other Related Fees budget of \$3.8MM seems more than 2X the market supported design fees for this scope of public services development. Also, the report's budget for Construction Management of \$950K is 3X the expected CM fee for similar projects. The budget of \$1.2MM for Administrative, Bidding and Fees is high and should also be reviewed in detail, as many cities waive development fees.

The Ross residents recommend a private enterprise approach to developing a plan for town facilities that will result in appropriate public decisions towards a more accurate, cost effective and expeditious design and construction delivery. The attached budget spreadsheet compares McGrath's budget and a private enterprise budget for Option 1's comprehensive plan for new fire and police facilities and housing, town hall expansion and a new administrative building – the private sector approach could deliver the Option 1 plan for estimated \$16MM (\$1,056/SF) or \$12MM less than the McGrath budget of \$28MM (\$1,867/SF) for the total development.

The private sector development approach to advise TC would entail:

1. Private task force of Ross residents experienced in real estate development, design, engineering and construction management to present accurate proposals for design,

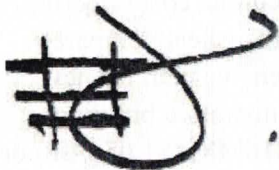
budget, historic preservation, seismic, bidding, contracting and management of the facilities development.

2. Work with contractors experienced with every aspect of site improvements, construction, historic preservation and delivery of town services campus.
3. Present and select various consultants, engineers and designers to document plans for constructability and plan check for permits.
4. Work with historic conservation consultant(s) and preservation contractor(s) to develop a plan to incorporate the fire and police building façade and other portions into the new and re developed buildings.
5. Define scope of facilities development plan reviewing options that retain the Ross fire station and historic building facades, and that may range from repairing the extensive deferred maintenance of existing buildings to a comprehensive new construction plan.
6. Review constructability, bid pricing and contractor recommendation for preferred facilities development plans and present to TC.
7. Assess budget conscious development approaches including (i) Design Build to a budget, (ii) Design and Value Engineered approach, (iii) Re development and repair buildings

Town Council cannot rush to make these impactful decisions based on possible flawed facilities development scope and inaccurate budgetary options as presented in the McGrath report. Appropriate CEQA protocols need to be followed regarding the historically significant buildings. We recommend that TC work with the town of Ross private development task force to conclude best solutions and approaches for retaining the Ross fire station, preserving the historic elements of the fire apparatus building, and developing the town facilities campus with accurate budgets, appropriate site improvements and visionary building designs to best serve your constituent residents.

I respectfully urge Town Council not to rush to decide this important item based on incorrect budgetary considerations. The Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF) and its task force will be available to meet with Town Council and staff to further discuss the important next steps towards a public facilities redevelopment solution for the Town of Ross.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ed Dong', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ed Dong
Ross Resident
Task Force Member
Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF)

TOWN OF ROSS
TOWN FACILITIES RE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ed Dong
3/8/21

JOINT-USE FIRE, POLICE, ADMINSTRATIVE (OPTION 1)		TOWN OF ROSS BUDGET (MCGRATH)				PRIVATE ENTERPRISE BUDGET		
		Description	Quantity	Unit	\$/Unit	Total	\$/Unit	Total
A. CONSTRUCTION HARD COSTS								
Five person fire station without lobby or utility spaces	Fire station, no training center/tower	10,120	SF	\$	800	\$ 8,096,000	\$ 650	\$ 6,578,000
Retain historic façade - back frame, brace, scaffold	Need preservation consultant plan						\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
Police department with lobby and utility spaces	Share spaces incl vertical circulation, Tis	2,570	SF	\$	800	\$ 2,056,000	\$ 350	\$ 899,500
Addition to Town Hall for Administration	Single story to replace trailer, Tis	2,510	SF	\$	700	\$ 1,757,000	\$ 300	\$ 753,000
On site Improvements	Utility, grading, drainage, paving, fences, LS	48,353	SF	\$	50	\$ 2,417,650	\$ 30	\$ 1,450,590
Site Import (Fill Area)	Fill soils to raise pad above FEMA flood plain	1,240	CY	\$	20	\$ 24,800	\$ 150	\$ 186,000
Haz Mat Demo/ Building Demo	Demo existing fire, police station	7,100	SF	\$	20	\$ 142,000	\$ 20	\$ 142,000
Off site Improvements	Allowance	1	LS	\$	250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
Temporary Facilities	Allowance	1	LS	\$	1,250,000	\$ 1,250,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Specialty Equipment	Data room, generator, elevator 2 stop	1	LS	\$	500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000
Construction Subtotal						\$ 16,493,450		\$ 11,759,090
Project design unknowns	Allowance	15%				\$ 2,474,018	5%	\$ 587,955
Construction with design unknowns Subtotal						\$ 18,967,468		\$ 12,347,045
Construction Contingency		10%				\$ 1,896,747	7%	\$ 864,293
Construction with CO Contingency Subtotal						\$ 20,864,214		\$ 13,211,338
Project Escalation (5% per annum, compounded yearly)	Pricing will be a current market labor, mat'ls	12%				\$ 2,503,706	3.5%	\$ 462,397
CONSTRUCTION HARD COST (FIRE STN, POLICE, ADMIN, TOWN HALL ADD, SITE WORK, FEES)						\$ 23,367,920		\$ 13,673,734
CONSTRUCTION HARD COST / SF OF BUILDINGS						\$ 1,537		\$ 900
B. DESIGN AND OTHER RELATED FEES								
Design Fees (A, C, L, S, MEP) - Basic on site	A/E fees including entitlements	10%		\$	18,967,468	\$ 1,896,747	7.0%	\$ 864,293
Off site / Street Improvement Drawings	Design for off site improvements	15%		\$	250,000	\$ 37,500	15%	\$ 22,500
Cost Estimating	Allowance	1	LS	\$	75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Boundary & Topographic Surveys	Supplemental	1	LS	\$	25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Erosion Control	Per Bldg Dept requirements	1	LS	\$	7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500
Waterproofing Consultant	Allowance	1	LS	\$	12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
Lighting Designer	Allowance	1	LS	\$	12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
Head in Data, Phone, Response, Security, AV Consultant	Consultant to City or Arch	1	LS	\$	75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
LEED Documentation	Energy modelling, LEED submittal, tracking	1	LS	\$	100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Construction Management (5% of construction value)	Day to day Management during construction	5%		\$	18,967,468	\$ 948,373	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
Geotechnical Investigation	Incl geohazard report	1	LS	\$	45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Haz Mat Study (Ground and buildings)	Study only	1	LS	\$	15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Environmental (CEQA) Documentation	Assume Neg Decl	1	LS	\$	50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Commissioning	As required by Cal Green	1	LS	\$	50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
Inspection & Testing - Construction Phase	Allowance	1	LS	\$	75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Subtotal Design Fees						\$ 3,425,120		\$ 1,524,293
Fee Contingency (5% of total fees)	Allowance	5%		\$	3,425,120	\$ 171,256	5%	\$ 76,215
Reimbursibles (5% of total fees)	Allowance	5%		\$	3,425,120	\$ 171,256	2%	\$ 30,486
Total Design and Other Related Fees						\$ 3,767,632		\$ 1,630,994
C. ADMINISTRATIVE, PERMIT AND BIDDING COSTS								
Town to waive permit fees to self						\$ 1,238,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET						\$ 28,373,552		\$ 16,054,728
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET / SF OF BUILDINGS						\$ 1,867		\$ 1,056

