

Cyndie Martel

From: Councilmember Mathew Salter <salter4ross@204777010.mailchimpapp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 9:21 AM
To: Town of Ross
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep Ross Safe: Save our Fire Station 🚒



Dear neighbor,

It has been nearly one year since I joined the Town Council and it has been an eventful year to say the least. I take the responsibility of serving as your representative very seriously, especially on issues regarding your health, safety, and security. The Council's 2021 decision not to rebuild the fire station never sat well with me, and as time passed, that decision looks more and more flawed as the devastating impacts of climate change become clear. **The fire station is scheduled to close on July 1st.** Thankfully, this decision is not set in stone, and will be on the agenda at the council meeting next **Thursday, March 13th at 6:00pm**. I hope you will join this important discussion in person or on [Zoom](#).

The issue of fire safety is deeply personal to me. On January 7th, my aunt and cousins fled their Pacific Palisades home with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The only keepsake my aunt grabbed were two cookie jars from her prized collection (recently profiled in the [New York Times](#)). My family lost everything from a house they lived in for over 30 years, raised seven kids in, and where we shared countless holidays and family celebrations. The stakes cannot be higher to me, and I fully support the decision to reverse course and rebuild our fire station.

After reviewing the materials that led to the 2021 decision, it has become clear the Council relied on false assumptions and flawed data. Please find links below to all of the supporting materials I reviewed, but in summary:

- With the Ross fire station open, our average emergency response time is 7:55 minutes, slightly longer than a best practice time of 7:30 minutes. The best practice time reflects the critical time to save a person suffering from cardiac arrest and the time to prevent a fire from becoming uncontrollable.
- The fire station closure will add at least two minutes of travel time for an engine coming from San Anselmo or Kentfield. This will push the total response time to 10:00

minutes– far exceeding the recommended threshold– greatly jeopardizing our health and safety.

- The ambulance in Ross has an even worse response time of 13:25, meaning **Ross residents will have to wait 10-13 minutes for any help to arrive when they call 911.**
- The cost estimate to rebuild the fire station was grossly exaggerated in 2021 at \$14.6M or nearly \$2,000 per square foot. San Anselmo is extensively remodeling a similar sized fire station for \$3.4M or \$800 per square foot. Fairfax is remodeling their fire station for \$1.5M. Both of these stations are members of our fire department– if they can rebuild so can we.

The Town has saved \$10M to rebuild the Civic Center complex. There is no doubt that we can afford to keep the fire station in these plans. It may require extra financing and potential donations from the community, but it is money well spent. We cannot afford to be penny-wise, pound-foolish regarding our health and safety. If we do, we will pay for it anyway– with lost lives, increased/lost fire insurance, and decreasing property values.

Please let the Town Council know where you stand on this important issue at towncouncil@townofrossca.gov and join the discussion next Thursday, March 13th. I hope to see you there!

Wishing you and your family all of the best,

Mathew

Supporting Documents:

[Fire Station Memo](#)

[Fire Consultant Report](#)

[Ambulance Consultant Report](#)

[San Anselmo Station Remodel Report](#); [Website](#)

[Fairfax Station Remodel Report](#)

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