

West Kelowna Fire Rescue Facilities Update March 2022



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Introduction



West Kelowna Fire Rescue (WKFR) provides emergency response, fire prevention and rescue services for the West Kelowna and Westbank First Nation area. As a growing region, WKFR and City staff continue to address public safety and ongoing operations and administrative needs within its current facilities to protect local communities and its natural assets.

The purpose of this update will provide an overview of WKFR facilities and their condition and address measures to centralize administrative functions within existing facilities to reduce immediate pressures on operations.

WKFR fire stations range in age from 18 to 46 years. Several of these facilities require a wide range of repairs,

renovations or replacement to ensure safety, accommodate ongoing operations and support future growth in the City. As a young municipality, West Kelowna must continue to address the absent and/or aging infrastructure across the City for all of its facilities.

Fire Halls identified in this update noted in ‘fair’ or ‘good’ condition will not be the focus of this update, but remain important to help provide context of protection services geographically and to address aging WKFR assets for administrative and operational functions for Council’s decision-making.








Centralizing WKFR Administration

On Feb. 1, 2022, the City acquired a residential dwelling at 2406 Drought Road, which is slated to be the future home of Fire House #30. This move to centralize WKFR administration from Fire Hall #32 and other satellite locations to Fire House #30 will help prepare for the eventual replacement of Fire Hall #32, while keeping operations functional.

Although the Fire House #30 administration facility will help alleviate some space pressures, the overdue replacement of Fire Hall #32 operations remains a priority for this service.

THE PURPOSES OF FIRE HOUSE #30 ARE TO:

-  PROVIDE ONE CENTRAL LOCATION FOR WKFR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF THAT WILL RESULT IN INCREASED EFFICIENCIES;
-  ELIMINATE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF WORKING AT VARIOUS SATELLITE LOCATIONS AS WE KEEP UP WITH THE GROWING NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY;
-  CENTRALIZE STAFF MORE RAPIDLY AS OTHER FIRE HALL FACILITIES ARE BUILT AND/OR RENOVATED IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS AHEAD;
-  REDUCE THE COST TO REPLACE FIRE HALL #32; AND
-  ALLOW COUNCIL TO DETERMINE WHAT OTHER USES ARE MORE SUITABLE FOR THE HARMON ROAD SITE BASED ON THE OUTCOME OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.

WKFR administration staff will serve the public in obtaining burning permits and the delivery of public education programs. Minor renovations are required and once complete this summer, Fire House #30 will provide workspaces for 12 WKFR staff and serve the public from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. The administrative offices for WKFR will not have any heavy apparatus located at Fire House #30.



West Kelowna Fire Rescue Facilities

February 2022 (DRAFT in progress)

Station #34 - 3399 Gates Road, Glenrosa



- ▶ Constructed in 1989
- ▶ 25 paid on-call firefighters assigned to this location

Good condition

Fire house 30 - 2406 Drought Road, Westbank Centre



- ▶ Constructed in 1940
- ▶ Administrative building
- ▶ Up to 12 administrative staff working at this location

Good condition



Smith Creek

Glenrosa

Station #33 - 1805 Westlake Road, Rose Valley



- Built in the late 1970s
- 25 paid on-call firefighters assigned to this location

Fair condition

Station #31 - 3651 Old Okanagan Hwy, Westbank Centre



- Built in 1975 as a volunteer hall
- Addition completed in 2009
- 4 full-time firefighters, staffed 24/7

Fair condition

Station #32 - 2708 Olalla Road, Lakeview Heights



- Built in 1971 as a volunteer hall
- 10 administrative staff, 4 full-time firefighters, staffed 24/7

Poor condition

Fire Hall #32 Replacement Update

The existing Fire Hall #32 was built in 1971 and is no longer adequate to serve the operational needs of WKFR. The long overdue replacement is essential to accommodate additional firefighting apparatus and training of crews.

Currently, Fire Hall #32 acts as both an administration building and manned operational fire station with four firefighters on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As WKFR and Lakeview Heights community has grown over the past 40+ years, so have the demands on Fire Hall #32. Centralizing and relocating fire rescue administration into Fire House #30 better enables Council to move forward with a more cost effective replacement of Fire Hall #32.

Fast fact: The pre-engineered lean-to-style steel building was constructed in 1971, with a small addition in 1976. The station was constructed to serve as a vehicle garage for two fire apparatus with small office space and common area for volunteer firefighters at that time.



Fire Hall Study Recommends Replacement

The 2012 Fire Hall Study formed a list of recommendations; but, rather than investing capital dollars into this facility, the Facilities Master Plan recommended that it be replaced due to its poor condition and costly upgrades to any kind of vertical expansion.

Challenges have increased, prompting operational issues to be addressed:

- Emergency response vehicles are stored in temporary tents on the property.
- The facility is not accessible for employees or visitors with disabilities.
- There is insufficient space for training, which is necessary to meet legislative requirements of staff working at this station.
- There is insufficient space for administrative and fire rescue staff, equipment and apparatus.
- Among other base-building deficiencies, it has heating and cooling issues; and, in the winter, to minimize drafts, the windows are heat-sealed with plastic. The roof also leaks.
- The existing structure does not comply with the BC Building Code's post-disaster requirements or WorkSafe BC requirements related to the health and safety of the firefighters. There is no provision in place for emergency backup power.
- A temporary portable building has been added to the site to accommodate staff, resulting in an increased operating cost.



New Fire Hall Location Assessment

In 2020, staff completed a Space Needs Assessment for the new Fire Hall #32 and evaluated existing and future land options. The new Fire Hall #32 needs to be built close to the existing location to accommodate fire response times, fire underwriter/insurance requirements and other factors that constrict land options. Further, land options in the area are limited due to ALR land and covenants that will not allow a fire hall to be built in adjacent areas.

Now that the WKFR administrative function will be centralized across the City, the Harmon Road site, previously identified for a future fire hall administration/operational facility has now become unsuitable for the function of a strictly operational Fire Hall #32. As the City is undertaking its Official Community Plan (OCP) update, the future land use as an outcome of the OCP update may guide Council as to a more suitable use for land at that location.



Replacement Plan Underway

The concept design for the new Fire Hall #32 is underway. The outcome of that design will guide the financial model; and, the next update for Council, with the budget and concept design, is anticipated for late spring. Future updates will also include a look-ahead for public engagement on site design and local area use and function to ensure the City considers input through stakeholder meetings and with the public. Once staff considers Council and community input, detailed drawings will be completed in preparation for Council to initiate this project when ready.



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