

In 1983, the Durango Fire Department (then a department of the City of Durango) moved to the River City Hall site as a temporary location to house the Fire Department. At that time, there was only one fire station for the Durango Fire Department, and the department handled fire and rescue services, but did not provide the ambulance service. On a normal day, 3 responders would have served the community from that station.

Today, our requests for service have grown considerably. Annually, the downtown station now responds to approximately 1900 calls per year, and there are at least 8 response personnel working from that location on a daily basis. Durango Fire Protection District now operates Fire, Rescue, Advanced Life Support Ambulance services, and the Downtown station is our busiest firehouse.

In working to find a location for the new downtown station, our staff and consultants actually considered 32 individual properties, and evaluated them based on location, size, accessibility, availability, and physical and environmental appropriateness. Of those, only a few met enough of the criteria to be a potential for the new station, and after vetting availability with property owners, none met all of the criteria we were looking for – at any cost.

Durango Fire Rescue, at the request of the City of Durango, has entered into an MOU to investigate the feasibility of utilizing the River City Hall site as a target for the new station. River City Hall currently houses the Fire Station and the Community Development Department of the City. The Project would create an Emergency Service Center, becoming the new location for both the Downtown Fire Station and the Durango Police Department. This plan provides similarity of need and service while affording economy of scale for both agencies, as our security needs, diverse workforce populations, and community service missions align very well. By partnering on the site, male and female locker rooms, gymnasium facilities, meeting rooms and large briefing areas, and other amenities needed by both agencies would not need to be duplicated in two independent facilities. Access to the downtown area would be quick, and our community could benefit from the easy access to their Fire and Police departments.

While a great deal of work still needs to be completed, we are optimistic that our plan will serve our community well for years to come, assuring that Fire, EMS, and Police services are truly just around the corner.