

Ohio

Community Facilities | Community Facilities Direct Loan

SW Ohio City Breaks Ground on New Fire Station



Community leaders and local representatives gathered in Loveland, Ohio, to celebrate groundbreaking for its new, state-of-the-art fire station. USDA Photo.

The City of Loveland, Ohio, gathered on a sun-drenched autumn morning to celebrate the groundbreaking for its new fire station.

Local leaders and community partners, led by Loveland Mayor Kathy Bailey, donned helmets of Fire Station 63 and took ceremonial shovels in hand to signal that construction of a new, state-of-the-art fire station was ready to begin.

Loveland's current fire station was built in 1972 for a volunteer fire department at a time when the city was smaller, needs for personnel and equipment were different, firefighters did not live at

the station, and the location ensured they could respond to calls quickly and safely.

Today, the city has grown, the fire department has full-time, career firefighters, equipment is larger, and the station sits at the intersection of State Route 48 where emergency vehicles must contend with a higher volume of local traffic when responding to and returning from calls.

"It's very difficult because you can't come in one way and go out the other and it's at the corner of a busy intersection so it's difficult to get in and out," said Mayor Bailey. "Sometimes there are cars at that intersection and makes it less safe."

So, in 2020 the city recognized need for a change and created a focus group to evaluate potential sites for a new downtown fire station. The focus group identified two locations, conducted an evaluation and then presented its findings and recommendation to the city council. Once the council accepted the recommendation, it was time to take the next steps of design and funding.

"We have one of the most top-notch fire departments in this country. They are winning awards all the time, and they deserve a home fitting of that stature," said Mayor Bailey. "And our residents deserve a fire department that better fits and better serves their needs."

To fund the project, Loveland worked with Ohio's USDA Rural Development team to secure a [Community Facilities Direct Loan](#), which provides affordable funding for essential community facilities in rural areas. It's expected the loan will pay for the entire project, so the community won't have to use a special levy.

"We appreciate USDA helping us because it's an expensive project, and getting the loan helps us do it in a way that keeps the costs down for our taxpayers, so we are extremely grateful for that," said Mayor Bailey.



The stage is set in Loveland, Ohio, to break ground on its new, state-of-the-art fire station. USDA Photo.

The new station design includes three large drive-thru bays with added ventilation to minimize hazards from vehicle exhaust. It's also in a less-congested area so crews can respond to calls safely while avoiding the city's busy downtown intersection.

"I think the [new] building is of sufficient size that we can provide service to this area as it grows for the next 50 years without having to add another fire station," said Loveland Fire Chief Otto Huber. "This facility allows us to be much more efficient in how we operate."

Inside, firefighters will have modernized common areas and sleeping quarters. The building will also feature new administrative and office spaces, updated backup power systems, additional storage space for equipment, and a tornado shelter.

"It's important for us that we have a fire station that is safe for the firefighters who are going to operate in it," said Chief Huber. "But also, that it's built in a location that continues with our standard of care to ensure that we have the appropriate response times and can provide the service throughout the community."

Construction is expected to begin in November 2024 with a completion date sometime in early 2026.

Obligation amount: \$6,464,000 loan

Obligation date: July 17, 2024

Congressional: U.S. Rep. Brad Wenstrup (OH-02); U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and J.D. Vance

Impact: Improve emergency services and response times for residents of Loveland.