

Fire Station 31 Schematic Design Virtual Presentation

Slide 1 – Welcome

Hello, and welcome to the project status update for the Fire Station 31 Replacement project. This is a follow up to the first open house event the City hosted in March of 2020. While originally planned as an in-person event, due to ongoing concerns surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and the emergence of the Omicron variant, this project status update will be done in a virtual format only. This video presentation will provide an overview of the project process and timeline, as well as a summary of the design development to date. The project website has materials available for download as well as instructions for providing feedback to the project team. Thank you for joining us, and we look forward to receiving your questions and comments. And, as stated on our project web page, if you would like to see any of this information in a different language, please follow the translated instructions on the site.

Slide 2 – Introduction and Project Timeline

In October 2019, the Seattle Fire Department, together with the Seattle Department of Finance and Administrative Services and the Mayor's Office, determined that the existing Fire Station 31 building at 1319 N Northgate Way no longer met the Fire Department's operational needs. Following an extensive search process that included community input and considerations for technical criteria, the City identified and approved a new location for the permanent station at 11302 Meridian Avenue N in April of 2020. After completing a Request For Proposal process in October of 2020, the City selected a team led by The Miller Hull Partnership to be the designers for the all new Fire Station 31 facility.

Working together with the City, the design team completed a Predesign study in June of 2021. The purpose of a Predesign is to validate the overall size and space needs of the facility, ensure that a functional floor plan can be developed for the site and building, and establish a preliminary working budget range. After completion of the Predesign, work began on the Schematic Design phase in October of 2021. Floor plans and the site plan have been developed in further detail, engineering work on systems has begun, and a proposed look and feel for the building is taking shape. At this time, we are still in the early stages of design, approximately 30% of the way through the overall design process. It is a perfect time to connect with you all to hear your feedback, and we will have another open house at about 60% design completion. Design and permitting will continue through the end of 2022, with bidding and construction to begin in 2023.

Slide 3 – Fire Response Area Graphic

Northgate is a rapidly growing area, and successful completion of the new Fire Station 31 project will allow the Fire Department to continue to provide a high level of service to the community for many years to come. The response area for this station includes the busiest parts of Northgate, as well as portions of the Greenwood, Bitter Lake, and Haller Lake neighborhoods. The proposed facility will be three stories tall and approximately 22,500 square feet in total area. Four apparatus bays will house a variety of active and reserve emergency

vehicles and living and working accommodations will be provided for approximately 14 regular crew members. Additionally, the station will house a Mobile Integrated Health Unit, which is a relatively new and highly successful program that provides non-emergency care to the community.

Slide 4 – Neighborhood and Context

Those of you who live in Northgate know that it is a bustling community with a great diversity of residential and commercial uses. There are large institutions in the neighborhood including Northwest Hospital and North Seattle Community College. Northgate mall is a major shopping destination. The site for the new Fire Station 31 is located west of I-5 at the intersection of Meridian Ave North and North 113th Street, relatively nearby the site of the old station on North Northgate Way.

Slide 5 – Vicinity Map

The site is surrounded by a large cemetery to the west, single family houses to the north, and townhomes and multistory apartment buildings to the south and east. The site is also just a couple blocks away from the busy retail and office corridor along North Northgate Way.

Slide 6 – Context Photos

As you can see from the context photos, there is a wide variety of building types in the neighborhood, with no single style being particularly prominent.

Slide 7 – Site Plan and Design Goals

When designing fire stations, every aspect of the site and building planning always starts with the twin goals of minimizing call response time and maximizing firefighter health and safety. Additionally, the City, Fire Department and Design Team have identified environmental sustainability and social equity as two further key design drivers for the new Fire Station 31. Let's look at how the design of the site and building are currently being developed to support these goals.

Site Design

Some fire stations provide doors on only one side of the apparatus bays, requiring emergency vehicles to always back into position when returning from calls. However, it is much safer for firefighters, drivers, and pedestrians when the design of the station allows large fire engines and ladder trucks to avoid backing in and instead access the bays from a separate return drive path in the rear. To maximize safety, the new Fire Station 31 is planned to allow its two largest rigs, Engine 31 and Ladder 5, to maneuver in this type of drive-through manner. This key initial decision shaped the rest of the design of the site and building. With the site being long and narrow and having significant slopes, maneuvering clearances and for these large rigs necessitate that they must travel through the middle of the site. This sets the position of the apparatus bays and shapes the wings of the occupied portion of the building.

In addition to providing safe functioning for Fire Department operations, the design of the site will also greatly enhance the neighborhood and public streetscape. North 113th Street is

currently in poor condition and does not have a curb, sidewalk, or well-defined road edge. This street will be regraded and repaved, and a new curb, planting strip, street trees, and sidewalk will be provided. A planted bioswale that cleans stormwater captured from the site will also be provided along the south edge of the building.

Along Meridian Ave North, a new sidewalk and curb cut will be provided. At the corner of North 113th St and Meridian Ave North, new striped crosswalks and curb ramps will enhance safety and accessibility. Seating surfaces will be provided at the top of planter walls to provide a welcoming feel at the corner and a place for community members to sit and watch the fire trucks and connect with firefighters.

A gently sloping, accessible path will be provided from the street corner up to the main building entrance on North 113th Street. Other important features of the site include landscaped buffers along the north and east edge, an emergency generator that is setback significantly from the property line, and an employee parking lot.

Building Design

Most of the building is proposed to be a three-story volume, but there is a small portion to the north that is only a single-story. This portion of the building houses spaces for gear storage and maintenance that are critical for Fire Department operations and will extend up to the north property line. This single-story portion of the building will be partially buried into the grade as shown on the following slides.

Slide 8 – North-South Section

As can be seen in this section cut through the building and North 113th Street, the main volume of the proposed new Fire Station 31 will be three stories high which fits into the existing context and is within the prescribed height limits in this zone. Across the street, there is a 4 story apartment building that has already been permitted and will start construction soon. To the north, there are mostly two-story single family homes with sloped roof forms that extend up to a similar height as the proposed new fire station. As mentioned previously, the single-story portion of the facility that extends to the north property line is largely buried in the hillside such that it's apparent height is similar to the existing fences at the rear yard of the neighboring homes.

Slide 9 – East-West Section

This section is cut in the other direction, through the building and Meridian Ave N. This drawing provides a good sense of how much the site slopes down to the east, and shows how the open spaces of parking and landscaped areas meets up with the neighboring townhomes.

Slide 10 – Material Palette

For the exterior of the building, the design team is currently proposing a palette of warm, natural materials that are appropriate for a civic building yet fit into a residential neighborhood. Some examples of these materials used in other projects are high-quality fiber cement panel

and darker charred wood. The main building entry and apparatus doors will primarily be glass to provide a welcoming, transparent feel to the street.

Slide 11 – 3D Sketches

While we are still early in the design process, these sketches are included to convey the overall volume and feel of the project while suggesting how some of the material ideas can be applied.

In accordance with current City of Seattle policies for major capital projects, the facility is required to meet very high sustainability targets and will achieve a Gold rating under the LEED v4 rating system. Additionally, the building will be completely free of fossil fuels, with all systems and appliances powered by electricity. Notable green building features include a significant size photovoltaic array, or ‘solar panels’, vegetated roof areas, a system for capturing rainwater for use in flushing fixtures, energy efficient mechanical systems, and well insulated exterior walls.

Inside the building, the layout has been optimized for both speed and firefighter health and safety. The design will incorporate the latest planning methodology of clearly delineating dirty zones, transition zones, and clean zones to minimize firefighter exposure to carcinogens. Additionally, interior materials will be chosen to be free of toxins and chemicals of concern to serve as a model of how to build safer buildings. More details about these elements will be provided at the 60% open house when design has progressed further.

As mentioned, social equity is also an important design driver for this project. In addition to community open houses and outreach efforts like this one, the project team is also maintaining regular contact with representatives from alliance groups for both Black and Women firefighters. Our goal is to ensure the design of the project promotes an inclusive workplace and provides a welcoming feel that supports community needs to the maximum extent possible.

Public Art

SLIDE 12 – ARTIST BIO

Part of the early design process includes commissioning a public artist to create a permanent artwork for the Fire Station 31 Replacement project through the City’s 1% for Art program. We would like to introduce you to the selected artist, Damon Brown.

Damon is Seattle based artist who has been working in the arts from a young age. He drew inspiration from comic books and spent countless hours exploring different images and heroic storylines which opened his eyes to artistic creation.

SLIDE 13 – ARTIST WORK

A few images of his previous work can be seen today, additional examples can be found on his website creativelou.com.

SLIDE 14 – PUBLIC ART QUESTIONS

Damon is in the research stage of his design development for the Fire Station 31 Replacement project. He is asking for your help to guide his initial research through four questions:

1. What do the Fire Fighters and Fire Department mean to your community?
2. What would you like to see reflected in a public art piece?
3. What type of public art piece would you like to see?
4. What makes your community unique?

Please send answers to FS31@seattle.gov.

Slide 15 – Conclusion and Feedback

Thank you again for joining us for the project status update today. We look forward to receiving your comments and questions to help guide our work as we design this important facility. Together, we will create beautiful and function new Fire Station 31 that is a source of pride for both its crews and the community it serves.