

Part of the responsibility and privilege of the Laramie Police Advisory Board is to hear and review topics of concern for the Laramie Police Department and, by extension, the City of Laramie. Some of the issues we discuss deserve broader community awareness- as was the case with the presentation we heard at a recent session regarding the potential need for a new Public Safety Building.

The Public Safety Building would include both the Laramie Police Department (LPD) and the Laramie Fire Department (LFD), specifically Station 1 that is currently located in the 200 Block of S. 4th Street. The original study included the Albany County Sheriff's Office, but they opted out of the proposal.

As this article is focused on the Laramie Police Department, the following descriptions are primarily based on the LPD facilities. The current LPD building was designed as a professional office building and was later converted to house the LPD. The study identified numerous key issues with the existing LPD facility as follows: Existing layout is not designed for police department operational needs, rooms are not efficiently located and sized, it is undersized for the projected police department growth, there is a lack of daylight, inadequate departmental storage necessary for operational needs, inadequate staff support spaces such as the fitness room, community areas are not located in adequate zones, and there is a lack of decontamination zones.

Along with the aforementioned issues, the study also revealed that the current LPD site is not planned efficiently to accommodate the Animal Shelter, Dispatch and Records (currently located in the Albany County Detention Center building and should be relocated within the police department), the apparatus building is undersized and does not have workshop space and the list continues.

The 3 recommendations presented as to how to move forward were as follows:

- Renovation and Reuse of Existing Facilities- Upgrading and repurposing the existing buildings to maintain cost efficiency.

- New Construction and Collocation of New Facilities- Building new, purpose-built facilities to enhance operational efficiency, improve coordination between agencies and support existing needs with future growth.

- Hybrid Approaches- Combining reuse and repurposing of existing buildings with smaller new construction expansions to cost with operation space needs.

The study expressed a recommendation of new construction and co-location of purpose-built facilities for the LFD and the LPD and further explained “While renovation and hybrid approaches may offer short-term relief, they fall short of addressing the deep-rooted spatial, operational, and technological limitations inherent in the existing, aging and fragmented facility infrastructure.” The recommendation for new construction is the highest initial cost but the study states that it would deliver the greatest long-term value to the City of Laramie.

To attend or review Police Advisory Board meetings, please visit the City of Laramie’s Boards and Commissions page at <https://www.cityoflaramie.org/873/Boards-Commissions> .