



City of Mankato at your service

City of Mankato Public Safety Center

710 South Front Street, Mankato, MN

About the project

Mankato's Public Safety Center has been remodeled for the future and is the most significant investment in a city of Mankato public safety facility within the last 40 years. The building has been converted to bring police and fire staff together for the first time ever in one facility. The city is better positioned for optimal response times, particularly to West Mankato, hilltop and neighborhoods to the west, south and north of the university. Building updates have been made to last well into the future.

History

Police and fire staff maintained separate locations since transitioning to the Department of Public Safety. Fire staff's main location has been at Fire Station 1 on Madison Avenue since 1960. Mankato's police department has been at the Law Enforcement Center since 1972.

When Blue Earth County's Justice Center opened, city staff and officials saw the opportunity to reuse, update and remodel the existing Law Enforcement Center so fire and police staff could be brought together at one downtown location. Options considered: leasing space at the Justice Center; locating at the city's central garage site; remodeling the Law Enforcement Center and Fire Station 1 (including a station addition); and reusing the Law Enforcement Center as a public safety campus, adding a third fire station in the northeast part of the city and keeping Fire Station 1 as a neighborhood station.

The public safety campus option was selected because it's the most economical way to co-locate police and fire staff and provides the best return on investment. The campus provides adequate space for public safety staff; allows drive-through capabilities for fire vehicles, which is safe and efficient; is well-placed in a downtown location and repurposes an existing building.

Building updates cost about \$11.85 million. There was no increase to the property tax levy. About \$3 million was made available when Mankato's police retirement fund combined with the Public Employees Retirement Association. Another \$1 million came from a tax increment financing loan. The balance was funded internally using the city's equipment replacement fund and funding for county dispatch services (which are no longer used).

Benefits

- ♦ By having a combined police and fire department, there are substantial resources to deploy to keep the community safe. There are 152 public safety employees. Police staff includes 50 sworn officers, eight part-time sworn officers, 16 police reserves and 16 civilians (non-sworn) staff. Fire staff includes 18 sworn firefighters and 44 volunteers.
- ♦ Co-locating saves money, enhances services and provides the best use of public dollars.
- ♦ Updating and reusing existing buildings is an example of recycling at its best and is one way the city of Mankato can be efficient, economical and environmental-friendly.





Mankato's Public Safety Center, 710 South Front Street

Fast facts

About the building

- ◆ The Public Safety Center has 52,077 square feet.
- ◆ Building updates cost about \$11.85 million:
 - ◇ Repurpose the Law Enforcement Center into a “green” facility to house police and fire staff at one downtown location and purchase specialized public safety equipment so staff can efficiently serve the public, such as fire hose washers and dryers, fuming and drying chambers, a training tower, an air tank refill room, a medical decontamination room and an emergency operations center: \$10.81 million
 - ◇ Add a tower so public safety staff can conduct on-site training: \$384,000
 - ◇ Building furniture, fixtures and work equipment: \$650,000
- ◆ Since the Public Safety Center is staffed 24-hours a day, building materials were selected locally and regionally for longevity, high usage and best possible and longest return on investment.
- ◆ The building was built in 1972. In 1985, the public safety department was created and brought police and fire together in one department, although they were never co-located in the same building.
- ◆ Monitors in public areas of the Public Safety Center broadcast public information messages, such as city news and weather.
- ◆ The Public Safety Center has its own on-site emergency generator. If the community loses power, public safety remains operational. In emergencies, such as tornadoes or floods, it's important the emergency operations center has power so staff can continue to work in these types of situations.
- ◆ There have been upgrades to the heating and ventilation system, asbestos removal and layout adjustments to fit workflow.
- ◆ The “green” building will earn silver certification by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).
- ◆ Cell bars from the former jail have been repurposed and integrated into the hand rail design.

- ◆ “Resurgence,” the public art piece located at the Public Safety Center was donated by architects, contractors and Vetter Stone.
- ◆ Kasota stone, native to the Mankato area, was used in the landscaping rock outside the building.
- ◆ The rock wall around the building is called a Gabion wall. This sustainable, efficient and affordable structure uses local limestone and galvanized iron to serve as a retaining wall and for aesthetic appearances. The structure allows water to pass through, which minimizes water discharge. In addition, freeze and frost has less impact on the structure, which increases its lifetime. This natural wall helps meet LEED standards.
- ◆ Meeting rooms offer privacy to individuals who want to make a report.

Lobby (first floor)

- ◆ The lobby was designed to allow a lot of natural light.
- ◆ Colors were chosen to be inviting and calming.
- ◆ The blue design in the wall art is symbolic of the river.
- ◆ Display cases showcase historical public safety items from the city of Mankato's and Blue Earth County Historical Society's collections.
- ◆ A drug drop box is available 24-hours a day to the public for anonymous and safe disposal of prescription and non-prescription medications.
- ◆ A LEED display case highlights the “green” environmental LEED elements of the Public Safety Center.



The blue design in the wall art is symbolic of the river.

Patrol (first floor)

- ◆ Police patrol includes patrol commanders, police officers, community service officers and part-time and reserve officers.
- ◆ All patrol vehicles have a computer connected to the city network to help police officers manage tasks without having to go back to an office.
- ◆ In addition to technology in police vehicles, patrol staff needs a place to complete reports, which is provided in the office area.

Gun cleaning room (first floor)

- ◆ A specialized room provides a safe place for public safety staff to clean issued guns.
- ◆ The room features a bullet trap so guns can be safely unloaded. Repaired and inspected weapons can also be test fired here.

Fire staff offices (first floor)

- ◆ Fire staff includes lieutenants, a commander and full-time and volunteer firefighters.
- ◆ The offices for lieutenants, commanders and firefighters are located in the same area so staff can efficiently work together.

Observation room (first floor)

- ◆ An observation room has been added to provide a safe place for people to be held until they can be brought to another facility.
- ◆ A video camera helps staff monitor those in the room.
- ◆ The room has been designed so maintenance is simple. Staff can easily wash away any bodily fluids and waste so the room is clean for its next use.

Video viewing room (first floor)

- ◆ Videos are an important crime-solving tool. The ability to monitor live video gives public safety staff the opportunity to respond to a crime while it's occurring.
- ◆ The video room houses six monitors that split into two. Each is connected to the city of Mankato's camera system, which has more than 130 cameras.
- ◆ Part-time and reserve officers regularly monitor live videos to watch for criminal activities.

Garage

- ◆ A sally-port garage space provides a secure area to bring those in custody into the Public Safety Center safely.
- ◆ The garage also provides a secure and lockable space to store a vehicle taken as evidence while waiting for processing.

Records (first floor)

- ◆ Staff processes reports written by fire and police personnel. Reports are used to create calls for service listings and to map calls online at www.ci.mankato.mn.us.
- ◆ Public safety police and fire staff write more than 10,000 reports annually.
- ◆ Most reports are public. Reports not public typically involve information about juveniles. A parent/legal guardian can ask for a report about their child(ren), but not for other children.
- ◆ Staff processes background checks for gun permits, liquor licenses and gambling permits.
- ◆ Staff manages problem-solving conferences when there are complaints for rental properties in the city of Mankato.

Detectives (second floor)

- ◆ Detectives handle child abuse and vulnerable adult investigations, computer forensics (technology crimes), major crimes and incidents where a person has passed away. Individual offices ensure privacy of sensitive ongoing investigations.
- ◆ An area with removable walls provides a place for detectives to work as a team if the case requires it.
- ◆ Three interview rooms are in this area. One of them is made especially for children because it is designed to help them feel comfortable.

Fire living quarters (second floor)

- ◆ Living quarters serve an important purpose. Since public safety staff provide 24-hour service, living quarters provide a home away from home and keep the team together.
- ◆ Seven dorms consist of four rooms for full-time staff and three for volunteers.
- ◆ A fire pole was moved from the Madison Avenue station and placed near the living quarters so staff could quickly get to fire vehicles.

Administration (third floor)

- ◆ Administration oversees the public safety department's operations: offices of the public safety director, deputy directors of police, fire and emergency management and administrative commanders are located on this floor.

Emergency operations center (third floor)

- ◆ An emergency operations center gives public safety staff a place to work as a team with other organizations to best serve the community in emergency situations, such as tornadoes and floods.
- ◆ The room seats 125.
- ◆ It also serves as a classroom for ongoing training.

Evidence room (basement)

- ◆ Evidence is processed here. Since evidence is important to court cases, items are packed and labeled properly and audited on a regular basis.
- ◆ Only three people have access to items in the evidence room. Evidence goes through a strict chain of custody to ensure the item's integrity. Staff need to ensure when items are taken out they are returned exactly the way they left the room.
- ◆ A sealed drying chamber features High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters. The chamber is used to dry wet items, such as clothing stained with bodily fluids. HEPA filters help prevent the transfer of blood-borne pathogens.
- ◆ A fuming chamber helps public safety staff find fingerprints by using super glue.
- ◆ The evidence room holds more than 10,000 pieces of evidence at one time, including items such as guns, televisions, bicycles, drugs and money.
- ◆ An average of 4,800 pieces of property are taken into property and evidence each year.
- ◆ The average number of property returned, sold, or destroyed is 2,800 per year. Items typically destroyed include drugs and drug paraphernalia, damaged items that have no value or can't be repaired and certain weapons (such as knives, that shouldn't be back in circulation).
- ◆ Found property is kept in the evidence room. If an item's owner is unknown, the item is kept for 30 days. Unclaimed items are eventually sold online or on auction and funds are placed in the city's general fund.
- ◆ Forfeited or seized items are also sold with dollars funding alcohol education and enforcement.
- ◆ A room is available for attorneys to privately review evidence.

Fitness center (basement)

- ◆ A shared fitness center helps police and fire staff stay in shape, which is a benefit in their jobs.

Utility rooms (fire bay area)

- ◆ Three utility rooms are located near the fire bays: fire hose cleaning and storage, an air tank refill room and a medical decontamination room.
- ◆ Fire hose cleaning and storage in the bay area helps staff be efficient because staff can simply take hoses off the truck, clean them and store until needed. Hoses are tested each year for performance.
- ◆ Hose washer and dryers are used after a fire to preserve fire hoses.
- ◆ An air tank refill room provides a place for firefighters to refill their air tanks. For hearing safety, the space ensures noise levels are kept to a minimum.
- ◆ The medical decontamination room provides a place for staff to clean-up and wash any bodily fluids they may have on them after responding to an emergency. This helps ensure nothing gets transferred to the rest of the Public Safety Center.

Fire bays

- ◆ There are six bays in the Public Safety Center that house fire trucks and other fire vehicles including:
 - ◇ *Rescue truck*—used for water, ice, rope and confined space rescue incidents.
 - ◇ *Hazardous materials truck and trailer*—purchased by State of Minnesota for regional use as a chemical spill response team.
 - ◇ *Grass rig*—carries a small pump and 250 gallons of water. Provides accessibility to remote areas and rough terrains.
 - ◇ *Ladder truck*—purchased in 2005 and has a 2,000 gallon per minute (GPM) pump and 300 gallons of water. The ladder helps firefighters reach high areas for firefighting and rescues.
 - ◇ *Pumper 908*—primary fire pumper for the Public Safety Center. Purchased in 2009 and has a 1,250 GPM pump and 500 gallons of water. It is large enough to hold some vehicle extrication tools to provide a quick and efficient response to vehicle crashes.
 - ◇ *Pumper 909*—back up pumper for the entire city. Purchased in 1993 and has a 1,750 GPM pump and 600 gallons of water. It is used when one of the primary pumps is out of service for maintenance or repair, or at emergencies requiring an additional pumper.
 - ◇ *Emergency Medical Services (EMS) rescue pickup truck*—used in rescue situations and to respond to medical emergencies.
 - ◇ *Air unit vehicle*—holds firefighter air packs.
 - ◇ *Command vehicle*—used as the incident command vehicle.
- ◆ Drive-through bays provide room to house fire vehicles and serve an important safety purpose. Vehicles can efficiently and safely drive through.



Mankato's Public Safety Center is remodeled for the future.

- ◆ The red doors are 14-feet tall and 14-feet wide. They open in four seconds.
- ◆ Additional room in the fire bays provides space so basic vehicle mechanical work can be done on-site.
- ◆ A high ceiling allows for a full fire truck inspection.
- ◆ A washer and dryer located in the area are designed to specifically clean firefighter turnout gear to remove smoke and carcinogens they encounter when fighting fires.

Training tower (fire bay area)

- ◆ A 50-foot tower provides on-site training capabilities for firefighters.
- ◆ Firefighters use the outside of the tower to practice rappelling down buildings.
- ◆ The inside of the tower is used to practice stair rescues and firefighting tactics.



The training tower and fire doors. The doors are 14-feet tall by 14-feet wide and open in four seconds.

