



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

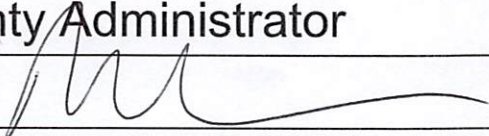
### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: York County  
Program Title: Re-Purpose and Re-Use of Former Youth Home as a Fire Station  
Program Category: Criminal Justice & Public Safety

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Neil A. Morgan  
Title: County Administrator  
Signature: 

**2023 VACO Achievement Award Program  
Nomination Summary  
York County, Virginia**

**Program Title: Re-Purpose and Re-Use of Former Youth Home as a Fire Station**

**Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety**

**Summary/Program Overview:**

To meet a long established need of an additional fire station in an area of the County that had increased service demands and excessive response times, a new fire station was able to be constructed at a fraction of the cost (which otherwise would not have been possible) through the re-purposing of a recently closed residential youth home. This allowed the County to meet a long term need that would not have been possible in the near term, should a completely new fire station had to have been built.

**The Challenge:**

For over 15 years, York County, Virginia had identified a need for a fire station in its Lightfoot area of the community (in the vicinity of Mooretown Road and Bypass Road). This need had been established because of longer than acceptable response times into this area with high occupancy hotels, commercial occupancies, the increase of multi-family complexes and overall continued growth. The establishment of a fire station through the re-purpose of an existing facility would immediately address this long-standing need.

**The Solution:**

For many years, a regional entity known as the Colonial Group Home Commission (involving York County, James City County, Gloucester County and the

## **Re-Purpose and Re-Use of Former Youth Home as a Fire Station York County, Virginia**

City of Williamsburg) operated a residential youth home for troubled youth, known as the Crossroads Community Youth Home. The facility was located in York County, but on waterworks land owned by the City of Williamsburg. In 2020, the Commission closed the facility. The Commission agreement called for the facility to revert to Williamsburg if it ceased to operate as a Youth Home. At the time of its closure, the eventual use was unknown. Realizing that York County had long identified a need for a fire station in proximity to the youth home, but had been unable to fund it, leadership of York County and its Department of Fire and Life Safety evaluated the possibility of re-purposing and re-using the facility as a fire station. This was especially appetizing since the facility had all of the typical amenities required for a fire station (bunk space, kitchen area, offices, training area, etc.) with the exception of apparatus (vehicle) bay (garage) space. Ultimately, it was decided that this facility could easily be re-purposed for a new use as a fire station, through minimal interior modifications and the addition of bay space, thus avoiding significant costs as compared to a completely newly built fire station. It was further recognized that this new fire station and its location would not only benefit York County, but also the two immediately surrounding localities of James City County and Williamsburg.

Through a concerted effort, the County decided upon a design/build arrangement that ultimately engaged a contractor to manage the design build process and partnered with the architectural and engineering firm that designed the original building. The groundbreaking occurred in April of 2022 and the facility is substantially completed with it being fully operational in April 2023.

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Additionally, because of the rapid process of taking advantage of the building's availability, it was necessary to re-allocate existing resources from other fire stations, which resulted in the initial operation of a ladder truck that will serve a dual purpose as an engine company, along with the re-location of a heavy rescue truck. Further, the County has provided additional firefighter/EMS personnel and has an advanced life support medic unit on order to eventually place that capability in service at the fire station. In the interim, however, the ladder/rescue crews will respond with the capability of providing not only firefighting and rescue services, but also advanced EMS (paramedic) care. This initiative has ultimately allowed the County to save millions of dollars that otherwise would have been necessary to meet the critical need for a fully constructed fire station. It will provide quicker response resources to a wide variety of occupancy types (including high life hazard occupancies). It will provide improved back-up and support response resources to not only the adjacent York County fire station response districts, but also to the surrounding localities of James City County and the City of Williamsburg.

In all cases, this is a "win-win" situation in a number of ways including significant cost savings, improved response times and ultimately better strategically placed response resources, all of which ultimately benefit the citizens, businesses and visitors of the entire upper York County and the greater Williamsburg area.

### **Financing:**

While the overall project design and construction costs were approximately \$3.6 million, other expenditures of much less were necessary for equipage of the facility,

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communications and security. Additional firefighters/EMS personnel were hired to staff this additional station.

### **Results:**

Ultimately, at a time when it would not have been possible to build a completely new fire station, the County was able to acquire an existing closed government building, and through the addition of apparatus/vehicle bay (garage) space, along with some minor interior living quarters renovations, millions of dollars have been saved. However, more importantly is the fact that this fire station addition will help overcome increased service demands on other existing fire stations, while reducing emergency response times to a significant portion of York County, as well as portions of surrounding James City County and the City of Williamsburg.

This innovative re-purposing of an existing facility (former residential youth home) that had the majority of the same amenities as a fire station, saved the County millions of dollars in property acquisition and construction costs. And finally, this initiative provides a significant improvement in emergency response times among three localities, while addressing increased service demands. It's an ultimate "win-win" situation with regards to fiscal responsibility and efficiency, while improving emergency fire and rescue services, not only for York County, but for surrounding James City County and the City of Williamsburg.

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