

Today is a momentous day for Tooele City and for our fire department—a day 15 years in the making. We gather not just to cut a ribbon or push in a truck but to honor the past, celebrate the present, and prepare for the future.

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to the residents of Tooele City. This station and our new fire engine exist because of your support and the sacrifices you have made. Your investment in this department—through your trust, your advocacy, and yes, through your tax dollars—has ensured that we have the resources needed to honor, serve, and protect our growing community.

As firefighters, we do not take our responsibility to the citizens of Tooele City lightly. We are committed to earning your trust every day by responding with courage, professionalism, and dedication to duty. You have given us the tools to serve, and we will work tirelessly to make you proud of this department, and of the sacrifices made to build and equip this station.

I want to extend my gratitude to Mayor Winn and the Tooele City Council for their vision, courage, and steadfast support of public safety. It takes foresight to recognize the needs of a growing city, and even greater resolve to make the tough decisions necessary to meet those needs. Raising taxes is never an easy choice, but you did what was right to ensure our firefighters have the tools, training, and facilities required to keep our community safe. For that, we are deeply grateful.

I'd also like to recognize the outstanding collaboration between city departments, especially Paul Hansen and Shannon Wimmer. Their guidance, expertise, and oversight were essential in bringing this project from concept to completion, all within budget. They didn't just help build a fire station; They have contributed to our legacy.

To Big-D Construction, PGA&W architects, and all the contractors who put their hands and hearts into this project—thank you. You've built more than just a structure. You've created a station that will serve and sustain this department for the next 100 years and beyond. Your craftsmanship ensures

this station will stand strong in the face of whatever challenges come our way.

But let us remember: it is not the walls, the roof, or the equipment that make a fire department successful. It is the people—the men and women who answer the call to serve. A firehouse is more than a building. It is a refuge after long, difficult calls. It is a gathering place where camaraderie is built and where firefighters train to sharpen their skills. It is a second home—where friendships are forged, stories are shared, and traditions are passed down from one generation to the next.

It is also important to remember that the Tooele City Fire Department has remained a volunteer department for over a century. While that term may sound simple, the reality is far from it. These men and women save the city millions of dollars each year. They sacrifice their time, their energy, and valuable family moments to ensure that when emergencies happen, someone is there to respond. They do this not for money, but out of love and respect for their community.

Our department has always had a rich tradition of service. Many of our firefighters follow in the footsteps of family members who came before them—parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents. In fact, I recently learned that my own great-grandparent, Toby Shields, was Fire Chief when Station 1 was dedicated. To stand here today, dedicating Station 3, is a powerful reminder that we are all part of something much bigger than ourselves.

Just as we honor those who came before us, we also welcome those beginning their journey in the fire service. The new generation of firefighters stepping up today will carry this department forward—creating their own traditions while continuing our mission of service.

As you walk through this station, you'll see it's filled with personal touches that will unite generations of firefighters. I'd like to share just a few of those special details with you:

- One of the most meaningful features is the training tower, now named **Bronder Tower**, in honor of Firefighter Greg Bronder, who tragically lost his life while he was a member of this department. His legacy—and the legacy of so many who have come before—will live on within these walls.
- At the top of Bronder Tower is a custom-designed gate, built by Firefighter TJ Winn. Not only did he fabricate the gate, but it was his idea to create a lasting tribute to Greg—a reminder that no firefighter is ever forgotten.
- Firefighter Troy Myer added custom confined-space lids to the tower floors, professionally powder-coated thanks to Tooele Valley Powder Coating. Their contribution adds both functionality and pride to our training environment.
- The “thin red line” flag hanging in the apparatus bay was handcrafted by Firefighter Braden Borders and his wife Shelby, using retired fire hose. It serves as a powerful symbol of our commitment and service to the community.
- Senior Firefighter Jack Cochrane donated the beautifully crafted fire hydrant table you’ll find in the training room and a lamp made from an SCBA bottle you’ll find in my office—both are unique personal and lasting contributions.
- And while he wishes to remain anonymous, we must acknowledge the generosity of our City Engineer, who arranged for and donated the custom Station 3 sign that proudly hangs on the back of the building. His quiet support adds yet another meaningful touch to our home.
- A special thank-you goes to the Mayor Winn and her staff for locating and preserving historic photos of the fire department, now displayed throughout the station. These images connect us to our past and

honor the firefighters whose sacrifices laid the foundation for our future.

These contributions—each one distinct and sincere—are what bring this station to life. Over time, every corner will hold a story, a memory, a symbol of service and sacrifice. To everyone who played a role, large or small: thank you. You've helped create a station this community can be proud of.

But today is not just about a new station. It's also about introducing our newest apparatus: **Engine 26**, a Quantum Pumper that has been four years in the making. It will be housed here alongside Ladder 24 and Brush 25 and will play a vital role in protecting Tooele City. Engine 26 represents our ongoing commitment to providing our firefighters with the best tools available to do their jobs safely and effectively.

And while this station and this engine are critical milestones, they are not the final chapter. Tooele City is growing rapidly, and with that growth comes increased demand for emergency services. Today's investment is just one step toward meeting the challenges of tomorrow.

We will continue to train. We will continue to serve. And as Tooele City grows, we will be here—ready to respond, ready to protect.

To all of you—whether you are a veteran firefighter, a new recruit, a city leader, or a community member—thank you for being here today. May this station always be a place of courage, commitment, and community. And may all who serve here be forever guided by the mission that has defined this department for generations:

To honor, serve, and protect.