



History by Horsman: City Hall

This transposed photo imagines what the old Sandusky City Hall on West Market Street would look like today in that very spot. Photo illustration and Provided photo/TOM HORSMAN and SANDUSKY LIBRARY FOLLETT HOUSE MUSEUM

In the summer of 2019, the city of Sandusky cut the ribbon on a brand new City Hall that was part of a mixed-use project rehabilitating three formerly vacant historic buildings in downtown Sandusky: the Commercial Banking and Trust, Kingsbury and Whitworth buildings.

The location of Sandusky's City Hall has moved around quite a bit throughout its history, with its most recent past location being in the City Building on Meigs Street from 1958 to 2019.

Before moving to Meigs Street in the late 1950s, City Hall was located on West Market Street, just around the block from its current location.

This building on West Market Street was originally constructed in the 1880s as the central fire station, and it also housed the police department. The fire department eventually outgrew the building and constructed a new fire station further down Market Street.

In 1914, the city's administrative offices were temporarily located in the Kingsbury Building — ironically, the same building where they are today — and there was a debate whether to move City Hall to the old fire station on Market Street; or to tear the old station down, sell the land and build a new City Hall elsewhere. The decision was made to renovate the building, and the old fire station on West Market became City Hall.

Over the ensuing 40 years, the city grew in population, and the size of the city government grew significantly as well. By the 1950s, the City Hall staff had outgrown the old building, and it was found to be structurally unsound.

The city began the process of building a new City Hall. On May 4, 1958, the new City Building on Meigs Street was officially dedicated.

After city offices vacated the building, demolition of the old City Hall began in August of 1958. As demolition progressed, it was discovered that the removal of the building's western wall would expose the interior of the adjoining building — the building at 202 W. Market St. that today houses the Glass N More Store.

That is why, if you look at the side of 202 W. Market St. today, you can still see the limestone wall of the old City Hall building. And if you look in the ditch next to the county garage, you can clearly see what was likely part of the foundation of the old City Hall. Next time you are on West Market Street, take a look to see if you can find these remnants of our city's history.

Editor's note: Tom Horsman works for the city of Sandusky's department of community development as serves on the board of trustees for the Erie County Historical Society.