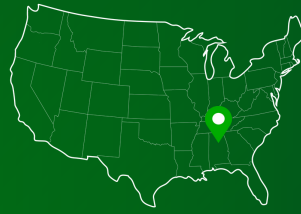


PROJECT PROFILE

Mountain Brook Fire Station No. 2 Mountain Brook, Alabama



THE
**BEAUTY
OF BLOCK**



Photo Credit: Art Meripol



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The construction of a new fire station called for a state-of-the-art structure that balances practicality with aesthetics and function with comfort. CMU provided a building material that stands up to the rigors of fire department activities, helping builders achieve a facility that answers the project's highest goals: safety and durability. Additionally, block provided the flexibility required for the station's many features — and inherent cost-effectiveness that helped keep expenses low.

WHAT MAKES THIS PROJECT UNIQUE?

At Mountain Brook, training, durability, and neighborhood scale guided the design from the outset. Training elements are integrated directly into circulation and daily operations, and concrete masonry is used throughout high-impact spaces as both structure and finish. Together, these choices support the demands of a working firehouse while allowing the building to sit comfortably within its residential context.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

Intensive training, daily operations, and strict safety zoning had to coexist within a compact fire station footprint. Concrete masonry provided a durable, fire-resistant solution for high-impact spaces within code and budget parameters.

CMU'S CONTRIBUTION TO PERFORMANCE & DESIGN

- The design flexibility of concrete masonry helped builders deliver on the fire chief's request for a station that struck a balance between practicality and comfort. Additionally, CMU ensured a cost-efficient build while delivering on the project's biggest goal: durability.

PROJECT INFO

- **Location** - Mountain Brook, AL
- **Completion Date** - 2025
- **Project Type** - Institutional & Civic
- **CMU Scope** - Structural & Architectural

TEAM INFO

- **Producer** - Oldcastle
- **Architect/Designer** - Barrett Kent Studio
- **Consultants** - Dewberry, Tucker Jones
Engineers Associated, Caprine Engineering
- **General Contractor** - Stone Building Company

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

*Start with the hardest-working spaces
and work your way out from there.*

>> Top Block Award — Alabama Concrete Association 2025
Merit Award — Birmingham Chapter of the American
Institute of Architects



Photo Credit: Art Meripol

Mountain Brook Fire Station No. 2

Mountain Brook, Alabama

Barrett Kent Studio's design for the City of Mountain Brook's new Fire Station No. 2 reimagines what a municipal building can be — resilient, efficient and community-conscious. The project earned a 2025 Merit Award from the Birmingham Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Alabama Concrete Association's Top Block Award, recognizing both design excellence and exemplary use of concrete masonry.

Replacing a 1960s-era station that had long exceeded its capacity, the team began with a 2020 feasibility study before identifying a nearby two-acre site for the new facility. "This new location not only meets current operational needs but also allows for future municipal expansion," said Adam Kent, Principal, Barrett Kent Studio.

After a brief pandemic pause, design resumed in 2022, with groundbreaking in 2024 and completion in 2025. "The chief requested a balance between comfort and function," Kent explained. "The new facility delivers on that through a thoughtful blend of practicality and comfort."

Distinctive features include a circulation tower that doubles as a stair and training structure, a slide in place

of the traditional fire pole, and a window rescue simulator — all allowing firefighters to train without leaving the firehouse. The plan organizes spaces into hot, cool, and cold zones to reduce contamination and streamline decontamination workflows.

Durability drove every decision, and concrete masonry units (CMU) were central to that goal. "We used block in the training stairs, workrooms, apparatus bay, decontamination rooms and workout rooms," Kent noted. "These spaces need to stand up to the rigorous routine of a fire station." Finished with epoxy paint, the CMU serves as both structure and surface — fire-resistant, low-maintenance and cost-efficient. "Block offered the most flexibility for the overall budget of the project," Kent added. "It provided a dual use that was a key performance element while keeping costs to a minimum."

While function and safety define the interior, the station's exterior ensures it fits seamlessly into its surroundings. "My favorite part is how it scales with the neighborhood," Kent said. "It blends in beautifully, as if it's always been part of the community."

