

The Corporation of the Town of Lakeshore

Report to Council

Engineering & Infrastructure Services

Public Works



To: Mayor & Members of Council

From: Nelson Cavacas, C.E.T.
Director, Engineering and Infrastructure Services

Date: February 24, 2020

Subject: Town Hall Office Space Mitigation Measures

Recommendations

1. The Director of Engineering & Infrastructure Services commence the plan to relocate Council Operations to the Libro Community Centre, so additional office space at Town Hall can be renovated to accommodate staff at an estimated cost of \$200,000;
2. Establish the Rourke Line Operational Centre as the interim Emergency Operating Centre upon project completion and addition of standby power; and
3. Council approve the additional \$157,000 amount to be funded from the Facilities lifecycle reserve account to implement the Town Hall renovations, as described in the report of the Director of Engineering & Infrastructure Services presented at the March 10, 2020 Council meeting.

Background

Administration has revisited the Strategic Facility Plan as well as investigated other potential options to provide an interim solution for additional office space to address current office space pressures at Town Hall which are discussed below.

Comments

After exploring further possibilities for an interim plan to provide additional office space at Town Hall, Administration has identified the last remaining option is to consider the relocation of Council Operations to another municipal facility which was identified in the Town's Strategic Facility Plan.

Council Operations Relocation

Administration has identified two potential municipal facilities that Council meetings could be held at. They are the Renaud Room at Atlas Tube Centre or the Meeting Room at the Libro Community Centre. The meeting rooms, at each of these two sites, would be arranged with portable tables and chairs similar to previous Council meetings that have been held at the ATC. In addition, a portable audio and video equipment would be purchased and set up for the Council meetings. This will provide the level of service currently provided of streaming over the internet the Council meetings. The cost of the audio and video equipment is estimated at \$20,000 which would be the same for either site.

In regards to implications of potential loss of revenue in scheduling the Council meetings for Tuesday evenings, there is a higher cost associated with respect to rental rates and frequency of rentals at the ATC, that would equate to approximately \$11,000 per year, as opposed to the Libro Centre which has been traditionally an underutilized facility with currently no programming scheduled for Tuesday evenings. This would suggest that the Libro Centre would be best suited to minimize financial and programming implications.

The plan to relocate the Council meetings would also involve renovating the existing Council Chambers space of approximately 1,400 square feet into offices, meeting rooms and workstations at an estimated cost of \$95,000. The additional renovated space could provide for up to 12 workstations. Lastly, considering that the Council Chambers is currently the designated Emergency Operating Centre, this approach would require establishing a new designated Emergency Operating Centre (EOC) with standby power as it currently is at Town Hall with a standby generator. Administration recommends that the Emergency Operating Centre should be established at the new Rourke Line Operations Centre temporarily in the Training Room which has the space needed for the EOC. While facility location and room size is ideal for the EOC, the Rourke Line Operations Centre project did not include provisions to install a standby generator. The cost is \$85,000 to add a sufficiently sized standby generator to the Rourke Line Operations Centre. This will provide backup hydro power to the facility during hydro outages.

The final implication with converting the current Council Chambers into staff office space is that the Town currently provides the service of wedding marriages which average 13 per year. If Council decides that it would like to continue offering this service of the Municipal Clerk office solemnizing marriages and providing marriage certificates, this service would be accommodated at alternate municipal facility and/or depending on ceremony size of attendees, smaller ceremonies could still be potentially provided at Town Hall.

The cost to implement the plan to relocate the operations of Council meetings and renovate the current Council Chambers into offices and workstations as described above is \$200,000.

Staff Relocations and Recruitments

With the current Rourke Line Operations Centre project renovations under way, there are 10 full time EIS staff positions that will be relocating from the Town Hall to the newly renovated facility which is anticipated to be completed by the end of June. Although the relocation of 10 EIS staff to Rourke Line Operations Centre will provide some temporary relief for space at Town Hall, there are a total of 12 new positions (7 full time and 5 student positions) that have been approved in the 2020 budget to be recruited this year that will require space at Town Hall.

The current pressure is timing and overlapping of availability of office space that has resulted in delays with the recruitment of the new staff positions. Furthermore, the Belle River BIA is currently using office space that could be used for two staff workstations. Typically, BIA's have their own independent office located in the downtown business district, which is supported by the existing BIA business memberships with available space in existing commercial buildings. This is another opportunity to be considered and revisited in the future considering the BIA is not municipal service department but instead a board of management. It is typically responsible for overseeing the administration, planning, budgeting, implementing and evaluating of BIA projects that are specific to the benefit of the defined commercial businesses and properties within the BIA limits.

In addition to the Town Hall pressures, there are as well, space pressures at Fire Station #3, where Fire Administration staff are located with no available space to accommodate any future staff positions. In light of these continued pressures, more space is needed for all departments as the community continues to grow and accordingly with increased level of services necessitating increasing staffing positions.

Conclusion

The recommended plan will provide immediate ability to start phasing the work plan in by establishing modular workstations initially for new staff while leaving room to maintain the Emergency Operating Centre until such time the Rourke Line Operational Centre is commissioned into operations. Subsequently, the renovations would start on Council Chambers to create the additional office space for staff.

Based on the foregoing discussion to address the Town Hall office space needs over the next 5 to 10 years, Administration recommends Council approve the following:

- 1) Plan to relocate Council Meetings to the Libro Community Centre and commence with first Council Meeting at new location on April 7, 2020.
- 2) Establish the Rourke Line Operations Centre as the Emergency Operating Centre.
- 3) Approve the additional \$157,000 funding amount needed to implement the plan from the Facilities lifecycle reserves.

Others Consulted

JP Thompson & Associates

Financial Impacts

Currently, the 2020 Budget included \$43,000 for provision of additional office space with respect to potential lease of office space and maintenance costs annually. There was also a \$200,000 cost to complete renovations proposed for additional office space that did not get approved in the 2020 Budget.

Subject to Council approval, the \$43,000 can be allocated towards the \$200,000 cost of implementing the recommended plan to relocate Council Meetings which leaves a balance of additional funding \$157,000 amount that is recommended to be funded from the Facilities lifecycle reserve account.

Attachment(s): none

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Town Hall Office Space Mitigation Measures.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 5, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Rosanna Pellerito

Kristen Newman

Truper McBride