



## MUNICIPALITY OF **West Elgin**

### Staff Report

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**Report To:** Council Meeting  
**From:** Magda Badura, CAO/Treasurer  
**Date:** 2020-11-26  
**Subject:** Municipal Building Renovations

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#### **Recommendation:**

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from M. Badura, CAO/Treasurer regarding the Municipal building renovations; and

That West Elgin Council hereby direct staff to bring forward revised concept drawings for the Municipal Building renovations along with the cost estimates to the next Regular Council Meeting

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to propose a change of direction that was approved by Council during 2020 Budget deliberations and seek council's approval for Municipal Office renovations and tentative timeline of the project.

#### **Background:**

More than eight months have passed since the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a pandemic. Hundreds of millions of people have lived through lockdowns. Many have made the abrupt shift to working from home; millions have lost jobs. The future looks uncertain. We don't know when, or if, our society might return to normal – or what kind of scars the pandemic will leave. It is the time to rethink of how our working arrangements will look like 2 years from now and focus on sustainable new normal.

#### **1. Municipal Office Renovations/Addition**

On June 25, 2020 Municipal office expansion concept plans have been presented to Council with an estimated cost of \$700,000. At that time both council and staff have agreed that this is the only option we have and decided to proceed with the plan. Unfortunately, pandemic redirected staff to focus on the most critical matters, such as health, safety and well-being of our employees and residents. Just recently we started discussion with a few architects and engineers in the area, with a goal of obtaining quotes for architectural and engineering drawings. Based on our rough estimate office addition/renovation if proceeded today will cost our Municipality over \$800,000 this estimated cost is driven by an increase in engineering/design costs and cost of material.

The Municipal office desperately needs renovations due to the following facts:

a. *Compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* requires businesses and organizations in Ontario to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility. To reach this goal, we have to focus on key areas of daily life such as:

- *customer service* – provide wheelchair accessible customer service desks, handicap accessible doors and washrooms.
  - *information and communications* - provide accessible formats and communication supports to people with disabilities. For instance, accessible formats include Html or Microsoft Word, Braille, Large print, Audio, Described video, Text transcripts of visual or audio information, Reading aloud.
  - *employment* - the Employment Standard requires that employers must make their workplace and employment practices accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities and that, accessibility must be a normal part of the recruitment and hiring process.
- b. **Municipal Office** - aging Municipal building initially designed as a Farm Equipment dealership requires immediate repair to the roof, improvements to HVAC, electrical & plumbing, external/internal wall insulation and replacement of windows & flooring. The entire office area is in a very poor condition, leaky roof is causing further damages to the external and interior structure of the building. Office staff are working in tight and poor ventilated areas. The size and the entire layout of the office cannot accommodate part-time office staff and management.
- c. **Council chambers** – since April 9, 2020 Council meetings have been arranged through electronic participation and/or off-site meetings at the West Elgin Recreation Center. Covid-19 is putting restrictions on the level of participation. The size of the existing Council chambers cannot accommodate Council meetings. Based on the concept design, the addition to the Municipal Building would provide slightly bigger council chambers but we would still be unable to host Council meetings during pandemic and follow strict social distancing restrictions.
2. **Affordable solution** – the only realistic and affordable option for this Municipality is to:
- a) not proceed with building addition due to financial constraints
  - b) convert Council chambers to additional office space.
  - c) hold Council meetings off site until permanent location is established, and
  - d) proceed with the office renovations.

### **Financial Implications:**

Based on the above facts, the Municipal Office Addition is not advisable due to the lack of funding. Our current Building reserves consist of \$509,000. In addition, staff is in process of applying for the Resilience grant funding due on December 21, 2020.

### **Policies/Legislation:**

OADA O. Reg. 191/11  
OH&S Act & Regulations 2020

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Municipal Building Renovations - 2020-23-Administration Finance.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Nov 23, 2020

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

Jana Nethercott