



REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Additional Information on City Hall Council Chamber Modernization Options

Date: November 27, 2019

To: General Government and Licensing Committee

From: Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and City Clerk

Wards: All

SUMMARY

In response to a request from the General Government and Licensing Committee, this report provides further information about 1) the accessibility and security issues related to the modernization of the City Hall Council Chamber, and 2) the scope of work that would be included in the proposed feasibility study.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with the adoption of this report.

Funding for the feasibility study is available in the 2019 Council Approved Capital Budget and 2020-2028 Capital Plan for Facilities, Real Estate, Environment and Energy (FREEE) under capital project (CCA246-02) "Feasibility Study on Special Projects". The estimated cost of the feasibility study is \$400,000.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on November 18, 2019, the General Government and Licensing Committee deferred consideration on GL19.13 "City Hall Council Chamber Modernization Options" and requested the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and City Clerk to report back to the December 2, 2019 meeting of the General Government and Licensing Committee with additional information about 1) the accessibility and security issues related to the modernization of the City Hall Council Chamber, and 2) the scope of work that would be included in the proposed feasibility study.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.GL9.13>

At its October 7, 2019 meeting, the General Government and Licensing Committee requested staff to report on 1) an update on modernization options for the Council Chamber at Toronto City Hall and 2) the current challenges for the Council Chamber at Toronto City Hall.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.GL8.21>

COMMENTS

Accessibility and security issues related to the modernization of the City Hall Council Chamber

Ensuring the accessibility of the City Hall Council Chamber is a critical part of building an accessible City and an inclusive society. The scope of work required for the Chamber to meet *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (the Act) requirements is intrinsically tied to the overall program of the Council Chamber as a public space. Meeting the goals of the Act will provide an accessible environment to the public, Members of Council, as well as City staff.

It is likely that a significant portion of the Council Chamber will require updates to meet accessibility needs. An accessibility study was conducted for the Chamber, which recommended work that can improve accessibility, including updates to the stairs, doors and entrances, ramps and handrails, and seating areas. Staff will need to explore alterations to the layout of furniture, fixtures, and equipment, as well as technology to ensure they do not present barriers, but facilitate accessibility. There is likely to be considerable overlap between the work requirements to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act standards, and the work requirements of a full Council Chamber update without accessibility considerations.

A modular desk and workspace design that can be easily disassembled and reassembled will allow for flexibility in the number of seats on the Council Chamber floor, and to accommodate any changes in the size of Council. An easily reconfigured floor layout will also support a variety of uses of the Council Chamber.

Security enhancements such as adding public washroom access in the secure area, and providing additional emergency egress may similarly be addressed through work requirements to meet accessibility standards. However, certain components of security needs may be met independently, depending on the design solutions provided.

The scope of work and cost of a feasibility study

The modernization of a space such as the City Hall Council Chamber, with expansive architectural features, critical heritage status, and a mandate to meet the highest accessibility requirements where possible, can present a heightened degree of complexity and must be considered holistically when designing, planning, and carrying out work.

A feasibility study is the first step in the design process and will produce a variety of concept design options that address the complexities and interdependencies within the Council Chamber. The designs produced through the feasibility assessment will be required to properly scope and tender the project if the City decides to proceed with the work.

The study is expected to encompass evaluations and design input by a multiple of consultants. For example, consultants can determine whether a physical component of the space can be altered to meet accessibility needs without compromising structural integrity of the building or the Council Chamber's heritage value. Environmental consultants must also determine whether such alterations will disturb designated substances, and how to safely address necessary disturbances. The feasibility study must also consider and address mechanical, electrical, acoustic, technology and cellular connectivity considerations associated with physical alterations to a space. Ultimately, the study would provide a number of holistic concept design options and the viability of each option that would address the needs of Members of Council, visitors, and staff, and improve accessibility, security, and technology.

Budgetary estimates are difficult to provide without a feasibility study, including the cost of the feasibility study itself. In these instances, an upset limit estimate is provided, which sets a value that the proposed scope of work is unlikely to exceed based on past project experience and industry knowledge. The \$400,000 upset estimate will likely include work in the following categories:

- Architectural consultant
- Structural engineer
- Mechanical and electrical engineer
- Technology consultant (including telecommunications and audio and visual consultants)
- Environmental consultant
- Heritage consultant
- Acoustic consultant
- Security consultant
- Cost consultant
- Standard contingency allocation (approximately 20 percent of total estimate)

While past projects are not directly comparable to the scope of the work proposed for the City Hall Council Chamber, they can provide some contextual understanding of the cost of feasibility studies. Recent feasibility assessments for other projects, including state-of-good repair, accessibility, and energy upgrades at Metro Hall; design concepts for Mel Lastman Square and Albert Campbell Square; and the investigation of site conditions and design options for 330 Progress Avenue have ranged in cost between \$170,000 and \$377,000. Given the complexity of the Council Chamber, the range of expertise required, and past experience, staff believe the cost estimate for the feasibility assessment is reasonable.

Conclusion

The requirement to meet *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* standards by January 1, 2025 is an opportunity to consider a holistic update to the City Hall Council Chamber. A feasibility study will provide a better understanding of how to address the needs of the Members of Council, staff, and visitors to the Council Chamber.

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SIGNATURE

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