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Town of Aurora
Committee of the Whole Report
No. CMS26-002

Subject: Victoria Hall Refurbishment Funding Increase

Prepared by: Kyle Stitt- Manager, Facilities Management

Department: Community Services

Date: February 10, 2026

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS26-002 be received; and
2. That capital project number AM0259 - Victoria Hall Refurbishment budget authority be increased by \$1,682,000 to a total of \$2,182,000; and
3. That this project's total revised budget authority of \$2,182,000 be funded by \$500,000 and \$1,682,000 from the Facility Asset Management and Growth & New reserves, respectively; and
4. That Council delegate authority to the Department Head, in accordance with the Procurement By-law, to approve a Non-Standard Procurement for consulting services greater than \$250,000, if required.

Executive Summary

Following concept design, it was determined the current budget authority of \$500,000 is insufficient to meet the Town's objectives to refurbish Victoria Hall. New information and unforeseen conditions have invalidated both original estimates and early feasibility studies, thus impacting staff's ability to complete the project under its existing budget authority. Additional funding is required to meet the Town's objectives to construct a suitable space for public or tenanted use.

- Council approved a refurbishment project through the 2025 budget process.
- Additional structural, electrical, and mechanical studies were required since project inception.

- With the newly understood project complexity, additional consulting services are required.
- Staff commissioned a Class D estimate following initial design.

Background

Council approved a refurbishment project through the 2025 budget process

As part of the 2025 budget, capital budget authority of \$500,000 was approved to begin work on the refurbishment of 27 Mosley, Victoria Hall. Project objectives were to complete repairs to Victoria Hall and render a multi-functional facility complying with current energy codes, as well as *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005* and accessibility requirements.

Analysis

Additional structural, electrical, and mechanical studies were required since project inception

In 2024, the Town contracted an Engineering/Architectural firm to conduct a feasibility study of the Victoria Hall building. The scope included visual assessments of building components, a review of the Historic Designation Status, and a review of previous condition assessment reports. Although this initial study assessed a majority of the facility's infrastructure, a comprehensive review of the flooring structure was not conducted due to the inaccessibility of the sub floor components.

As part of concept design in 2025, expansive engineering reviews were conducted on the building structure, electrical, and mechanical systems. These reviews identified that the flooring systems within the facility had badly deteriorated from dry rot and were not able to support the loads required by the Ontario Building Code for future use.

Additionally, the existing addition on the south end of the property is sub-standard and constricts the ability to construct an *AODA* compliant ramp. Furthermore, the current south addition does not harmonize with the existing heritage building, nor the newly developed Aurora Town Square. To achieve a useable facility that is conducive to supporting long term use, demolition and construction of a new slab on grade flooring structure as well as a new addition compliant with *AODA* requirements is needed.

Attachment 1 provides a proposed rendering of the south addition that staff will use as the basis for continued design packages.

The 2024 feasibility study deemed the existing electrical and mechanical service adequate to support early concept scope; however, given the expansion of the required renovations, including a completely new interior construction, reliance on the current service and infrastructure would not be conducive to supporting the future needs of the facility. The complete demolition and reconstruction of interior components, except designated heritage items, will mean that significant electrical and mechanical infrastructure replacements are required for any future envisioned use.

With the newly understood project complexity, additional consulting services are required

Due to the newly understood project complexity, consulting services to assist with detailed design and contract administration may account for ~20 per cent of construction costs. In 2025, staff contracted an architectural firm to conduct additional reviews and initial concept design under a low value procurement. Given the expanded scope and complex coordination related to the project, a contract amendment is required to continue with design and construction administration services. Anticipated consulting costs are expected to near \$250,000 and may exceed if additional design work is required throughout the project. This threshold exceeds staff's authority and may pose a risk to the project's schedule if staff are not able to approve unforeseen work. Additional time, costs, and staff resources could be required to cease progress and seek Council approval during detailed design or construction, potentially causing a significant inconvenience for the Town. Staff have worked closely with the project's current prime consultant to ensure the project will be overseen by the required multi-disciplinary sub-consultants. This includes the retention of all required civil engineering disciplines as well as a heritage subconsultant to advise the Town during detailed design, committee review, and permit application. Therefore, staff are seeking authority to approve potential future cumulative contract amendments over \$250,000.

Staff commissioned a Class D estimate following initial design

Following the completion of additional studies and initial design, staff commissioned a Class D estimate using the preliminary concept drawings. These estimates are used in early concept design and provide a high-level cost estimate using limited design information, historical data, and broad assumptions. Although staff have endeavoured to provide an objective estimate of the anticipated project costs, reliance on a Class D estimate throughout the project cycle is risky due to the high level of uncertainty and limited reliability of the underlying assumptions. Staff will refine project estimates

throughout the remaining design phase and may require additional Council reports for budget authority variances outside staff's authority.

Advisory Committee Review

The Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Heritage Advisory Committee will be consulted at future meetings to obtain their input into the detailed design phase of the project.

Legal Considerations

The Town's Procurement By-law requires that non-standard procurement awards over \$250,000 be approved by Council. The Procurement By-law allows Council to delegate authority to the Department. Staff is requesting this delegated authority in order to minimize any delays.

If Council does not approve the funding, existing contracts include clauses that permit the Town to not move forward with projects. The Town will be required to compensate vendors for completed work.

Financial Implications

The Class D total estimated cost for the proposed Victoria Hall Refurbishment is \$2,182,000.

Should Council decide to proceed with the proposed refurbishment as presented, based upon its Class D estimate it would need to increase the capital budget authority for project AM0259 - Victoria Hall Refurbishment by a total of \$1,682,000 from its current amount of \$500,000 to \$2,182,000.

Staff would recommend that if approved the total revised capital budget authority of \$2,182,000 for this project be funded by \$500,000 from the Facility Asset Management and \$1,682,000 from the Growth & New reserves. The \$500,000 contribution from the Facility Asset Management reserve has already been planned for as part of the Town's current ten-year capital and reserve management plan. If required, staff believe the unplanned \$1,682,000 draw from the Growth & New reserve can be accommodated by this reserve due to the delay of other planned growth project work because of insufficient development charge revenue. Many growth projects are funded by a

combination of development charge revenue and a draw from the Growth & New reserve in consideration of the benefit to existing taxpayers of a project.

Communications Considerations

This report will be posted on the Town's website.

Climate Change Considerations

The renovations of Victoria Hall enable the efficient use of an under-utilized property. The proposed investment will also support the overall long-term sustainability of the building.

Link to Strategic Plan

The refurbishment of Victoria Hall supports the Strategic Plan goal of **Enabling a diverse, creative and resilient economy** through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objective within this goal statement:

Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business. The re-imagining of Victoria Hall will revitalize and possibly promote entrepreneurship within the downtown core.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council may provide alternate direction.

Conclusions

Additional studies have identified poor structural components, sub-standard building conditions related to the addition on the south of the property, and inadequate utility infrastructure. These newly identified constraints, along with insufficient initial estimates prohibit this project from continuing past the design and tendering phase. Delegated authority to approve a high-value non-standard procurement may be required to continue progress on the project or risk additional time, costs, and staff resources.

Attachments

Attachment 1- Proposed South Addition Rendering

Previous Reports

None

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on January 22, 2026

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer