

Leon Street Fire Hall Renovations

Presented To:	Finance and Administration Committee
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Type:	Managers' Reports
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Recommended by:	General Manager of Corporate Services

Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding funding for the Leon Street Station #3 changeroom renovations project.

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the Leon Street Fire Hall #3 changeroom renovations funding request of \$280,000 from the Capital General Holding Account Reserve, as outlined in the report entitled “Leon Street Fire Hall Renovations”, from the General Manager of Corporate Services, presented at the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on August 9, 2022.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan with respect to the goal: Asset Management and Service Excellence, as it aligns with the “Maximize value of investments in physical infrastructure and initiatives that enable reliable service delivery and promote economic competitiveness” strategy.

Financial Implications

If approved, the funding of \$280,000 required based on current estimates to complete the renovation work shall be funded through the Capital General Holding Account Reserve.

Background

The New Sudbury Station (Fire Hall #3) is a single-story building located at 1190 Leon Avenue, Sudbury, Ontario. The building was originally constructed in 1974 and renovated in 2004, with a total gross floor area of approximately 5,000 square feet.

Greater Sudbury's Fire Stations were generally constructed at a time when the profession of suppression firefighters was a male dominated workforce, and therefore only single gender locker room, washroom, and shower facilities were provided in the buildings.

Three out of five stations (New Sudbury #3, Minnow Lake Station #2, and Long Lake Stations #4) have one single gender-neutral shared locker room, washroom, and shower space. These three career stations operate 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year and are each staffed with up to 4 suppression firefighters with a combination of both male and female staff. These stations respond to 4000 emergency incidents in the City of Greater Sudbury annually. Fire Hall #3 is the second busiest fire station in Greater Sudbury and provides fire suppression and hazardous materials response throughout the community.

Since 2007 in the Province of Ontario, firefighters have been identified as a work group exposed to harmful carcinogens while performing their assigned duties and protected under Ontario Regulation 253/07 which outlines 15 prescribed occupational diseases. To mitigate these risks and to better protect the workers, Fire Services must provide appropriate decontamination facilities in the fire stations. As part of the required decontamination process post fire, it is recommended that each firefighter exposed to the products of combustion (soot or contaminants) change their clothes and shower, as soon as possible.

The lack of appropriate gender specific facilities results in suppression firefighters rotating access to the single locker room in each station which can delay the decontamination process. Delays in decontamination, allows for the products of combustion to remain on the skin for longer periods of time and which could increase the risks for occupational diseases.

Over the past five years, Fire Services has received Health and Safety concerns related to the lack of appropriate locker room, washroom, and shower facilities in the career stations, specifically related to female staff.

Fire Services in Greater Sudbury has endeavored to strengthen, diversify, and modernize its staff with more female firefighters in both the full time and volunteer stations. Urban fire services are seeing increased interest by females in firefighting, here in Sudbury we have been successful in recruiting two additional females since 2020, In addition a female Training Officer has recently moved back to a suppression firefighting role. Our current female compliment now sits at four suppression firefighters. Recently, our female firefighters have asked the city to commence addressing the need for dedicated shower facilities.

It should be noted that while Fire Station #2 (Minnow Lake) and Fire Station #4 (Long Lake) have similar concerns, it was our intent to complete this renovation earlier this year. However, when the projected costs came in higher than expected, it exceeded staff's spending authority requiring Council approval. Staff continue to finalize a report that will provide an analysis of emergency services station rationalization. Although this report is not yet completed, the Leon Fire Station will continue to serve New Sudbury under potential future scenarios. This means that the recommended renovations will be required now or at some point in the short term as recommendations from that report are actioned.

Project Scope

Currently there are two showers without privacy dividers in a common space that is shared between men and women. The purpose of this project is to create a second shower and washroom facility area, so the men and women have separate shower spaces and privacy. This project will benefit Fire Services by reducing the potential for future disputes, accommodating employees in gender specific facilities, and increasing safety as employees will be able to decontaminate more expeditiously after a fire call.

The scope of work involves renovating an existing 530 square feet space and providing two new showers, lockers, ventilation unit, ventilation distribution, new plumbing fixtures (two new toilets and sinks) and associated vanities, lighting, flooring, shelving and remedial works. To accommodate this program request,

the new change room will impede on the footprint of the existing utility room and the existing kitchen. As a result, the scope of the project also includes renovations to portions of the utility room and kitchen to accommodate the new change room expansion. The total construction estimate provided by Bélanger Salach Architecture is \$253,000 + HST, not including Architect and Engineering fees for a total budget of \$280,000.

The construction cost estimate by Bélanger Salach Architecture has identified and has accounted for several risks related to the current construction environment. The cost estimate is consistent with recent pricing that has been experienced on other facility construction projects. The pricing considers increased costs resulting from labour shortages that may cause reduced productivity, supply chain disruptions and Covid-19 related premiums.

This renovation will provide for equality in the size and amenities between the women's and men's washrooms, provide capacity for increased employment levels of females in the profession and will reduce delays in decontamination. This renovation further supports the long-term operational sustainability of the fire station.

Conclusion

As Fire Services has endeavored to strengthen, diversify, and modernize its staff with more female firefighters in both the full time and volunteer stations, a more urgent need has arisen to provide adequate gender specific facilities to accommodate all employees. Fire Hall #3 is the second busiest fire station in Greater Sudbury and provides fire suppression and hazardous materials response throughout the community. The facility has only one locker room, washroom, and shower space for firefighters. The proposed project will create a second gender neutral shower and washroom facility area, providing for separate shower spaces and privacy.

Immediate benefits of this project will include accommodating employees in gender neutral facilities and increasing safety as employees will be able to decontaminate more expeditiously and in a reasonable period of time after a fire call.