

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Proposed Municipal Complex Project

### 1. Why is a new building being explored?

City Hall was built in 1965. There are several concerns and challenges posed by the current building.



#### Failing Infrastructure

- Roof- An infrared scan was completed and found moisture throughout the roof system with the wet insulation percentage exceeding 50%.
- Plumbing- Studies have identified the need to replace significant portions of the water distribution system. Piping in the facility is galvanized which is corroding. Many fixtures are not code compliant.
- Sanitary Sewer System- There is deterioration to the sanitary sewer system where pipes are corroding.
- HVAC- The HVAC system needs a complete upgrade after a review done by an HVAC contractor. The air handling equipment is past the end of its useful life, the boiler needs replacement, and the controls system no longer meets the requirements for current operations.
- Electrical- The existing electrical breakers and much of the infrastructure needs to be replaced and has been exposed to water damage. Much of the electrical distribution system throughout the building is deemed non-code compliant and needs to be replaced and relocated.
- Exterior Concrete- The exterior concrete on the building is deteriorating causing safety concerns, water infiltration, and potential for interior mold.

#### Safety and Security Concerns

- There are no controls related to visitor access which means people can move freely throughout the building without knowledge of who is where and when.
- There is asbestos throughout the building. While the exposed areas have been abated, it remains present on plumbing, walls, etc. and is a hindrance and added expense to repairs.
- The City's Information Technology (IT) network serves the City offices, Waukesha County, the School District of Waukesha, the Department of Transportation, and the University of Wisconsin- Waukesha. However, the IT infrastructure is currently located in the basement which is at a high risk of flooding.
- There is no fire protection or suppression system from a sprinkler system or other fire safety methods.
- There is no security system (burglar alarm or security camera) to keep both City officials and the public safe.



### Functionally Obsolete

- Residents currently have to seek services from multiple different offices and building locations around the City as the current building cannot house all staff.
- There is no central area from which to guide or direct residents and visitors so it is difficult for guests to locate meetings rooms and offices in City Hall.
- Current Council Chamber configuration is not conducive for public meetings as Council/Committee members are forced to have their backs to the residents they serve.
- The only space for Municipal Court is the Council Chamber which lacks the requirements and set-up for a fully functional Court.
- The Council Chambers are the only area large enough to house election operations. This causes a conflict with Court and other meetings in the Chambers.
- City Departments that work together regularly are not near each other and often are in different buildings leading to time inefficiencies.



### Lack of Accessibility and Code Compliance

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance- While the bottom floor of City Hall has an ADA accessible entrance and restroom, the facilities in the remainder of the City Hall building are not ADA compliant.
- Electrical Code Compliance- Life safety and non-life safety loads are fed by a generator. A separation is required by current building code.
- The current fire alarm system does not meet code.

### Cost

- Deferred maintenance costs (City Hall and City Hall Annex) for roofs, windows, doors, bathrooms, Americans with Disabilities act needs, plumbing, heating and air conditioning, electrical, asbestos abatement, etc. are approximately \$5.8 - \$6.8 million.
- Ongoing operational costs with inefficient building systems increase operating costs.



## 2. Why not just repair the existing building?

There is certainly an option to renovate the current building. There are advantages and disadvantages to taking this approach.

### Cost

There are different options and discussions around renovation which will lead to varying costs. If the renovation involves a complete interior remodel while leaving the outer structure intact, the architects estimate a cost around \$12.5-\$14.5 million dollars. If the building is renovated with additions to the outer structure, the cost is around \$19-\$21 million.

### Advantages to remodeling the current building

- The City owns the land.
- City Hall has been in the same location for years so many residents are familiar with the site and location.
- A renovation of the existing building, with no modifications to the structure is the lowest, short term cost option.

### Disadvantages to remodeling the current building

Even with a complete remodel, there are still obstacles that cannot be overcome.

- City Hall staff would need to be temporarily relocated and there is a cost to this that is not included in the estimated costs above. The expected rent of temporary facility would be roughly \$27 per square foot which would lead to a cost of over \$1,000,000 per year for the temporary office space. In addition, a quote of \$130,000 was received for moving the office items to the temporary location and then from the temporary location into the new City Hall.
- With no fundamental restructuring of the facility layout or addition to the building, City functions remain separated across buildings. This is a challenge for residents trying to utilize city services and for City staff that need to work together on projects.
- The City Hall is not currently a prominent public building and the site lacks visibility and access to downtown.
- The cost to renovate the current building with no additions is the lowest cost option, but not significantly lower than a new building cost, especially if you factor in the cost of temporarily relocating staff to other buildings in the city.



### 3. What would be accomplished with a new facility?

Any proposal brought forward for a new facility would include a plan to offer the following:

**Customer Service-** A central receiving location for guests is a priority consideration. There will be a location where guests can receive direction, ask questions and get the information they need from one location. No longer would residents need to walk to multiple offices, down a hallway, across streets, or to multiple facilities.

**Safety and Security-** All building systems would be replaced to provide for safety alarms and security. In addition, through a central receiving point, all visitors in the facility would be known. The information technology infrastructure would be secured in a safe location.

**Functionality-** All City Departments that work together regularly, for instance Planning and Engineering, would be placed near each other in environments that are conducive to collaborative work. This would be a municipal complex that would incorporate many aspects of City services such as Engineering, Building, Planning, Community Development, Municipal Court, Clerk's office, Mayor's office, and Treasurer's office.

**Reduced Operating and Maintenance Costs-** As most of the building systems in the current building are out of date and do not meet code, the cost to maintain and keep them running has increased. A new facility would have a focus on efficiency and reduced operating costs.

**Spur New Development-** Any project related to City Hall whether on the current site or other sites will have a focus on how the development can best be a catalysis for other development in the area.

**Public Meeting Spaces-** With any new construction, the goal would be to create spaces that are versatile and can be used by many. This would include being used for meetings by those in the community.



## 4. What is the Cost to the Taxpayer?

The proposed price of a new municipal complex is \$18-\$22 million. The price varies slightly based on the location chosen for the complex.

### No Free Option

While building a new facility comes with a price tag, unfortunately, there will be costs to the City either way as the current building is past its useful life. There is no free option. Even, if the City stays in the current buildings (City Hall and City Hall Annex), there will be costs associated with mechanicals, repairs and both deferred and future maintenance. Deferred maintenance costs on the facility are approximately \$5.8 - \$6.8 million. Ongoing operational costs with inefficient building systems increase operating costs each year. A remodel of the interior of the space requires approximately \$12.5-\$14.5 million which covers asbestos abatement, relocation of the IT and Fiber network out of the basement, and a new emergency generator. These significant costs raise the question of should the City spend money completing fixes on the current buildings, or invest in a new facility?

### Additional Tax Revenue

Depending on which option is chosen for the future of City Hall, there are possibilities of adding additional tax revenue for the City. If for instance the City and Engineering Department vacate their current properties and that area is developed there could be additional tax revenue for the City. The same could be true of a riverfront area if the municipal complex is created with development sites around it for other private uses.



**Cost to Tax Payers for a new Municipal Complex**

If the City were to borrow the funds for the new municipal complex, the cost to the average tax payer would be roughly \$4 per month or roughly \$48 per year over the next 15 years. This is only the increase for the new municipal complex and does not include any other proposed projects.



**Stay in Current Building**

As mentioned previously, there is no free option. Even if the City stays in the current City Hall building and simply remodels the interior of the space, the average tax payer will be paying approximately \$36 over the next 15 years for these repairs.



### 5. What are possible sites for City Hall?

The City has been looking at options for a new municipal complex since 2011. Through that process there have been several sites evaluated throughout the City. Sites evaluated include: Freeman Building, Waukesha County Museum, parcel across from City Hall on Delafield St., City parking garage, river front locations, and the current City Hall site.

Every site was evaluated in terms of size, location and feasibility. The three options currently shown below as the current City Hall site, parking garage and river location are the sites that met the criteria of having enough space for the complex and being centrally located. The continuing research on a new City Hall will focus on these three sites, however, the committee is certainly open to researching other potential sites that have not already been explored.

