



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From: Michelle Willson
Position: Chief Administrative Officer
Title / Subject: Wilfrid Hall Divestiture
Date of Report: February 5, 2025
Date of Meeting: February 10, 2025
Report No: 2025-CO-001

1.0 Issue / Origin

Divestiture of Wilfrid Town Hall.

2.0 Background

During the 2024 budget process, Council and staff were looking for ways to reduce the tax levy pressure. At that time, Council directed staff to review the Township's user fees and rental revenue and make recommendations that would help reduce operating deficits. Throughout 2024, staff made recommendations to Council including camp fees, berthing slips, advertising, reviewing leases, all in an effort to alleviate the tax burden on residents.

Staff were also directed to review Township facilities and make recommendations on divestiture where appropriate. The Core Services Review as well as the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan recommended the Wilfrid Town Hall be sold because the property is not properly serviced and is underused. The Core Services Review also noted that providing this service/asset is entirely discretionary and only benefits a limited number of residents and that it is a significant unfunded asset management liability that has not been accounted for in Brock's long term capital planning.

The Wilfrid Town Hall generates a minimal amount of rental revenue due to location, lack of parking and proximity to Port Bolster Community Hall, which is less than 4 kilometers away, similar in size, has more parking and is accessible. Wilfrid Hall runs an operating deficit and has limited reserves for capital repairs or upgrades.

3.0 Analysis

On October 8, 2024, staff met with the Wilfrid Town Hall Community Association to discuss the future of the town hall and possible options for selling the property. Unfortunately, the

Association is not in a position to purchase the Town Hall and run it privately. The Association was very clear that they do not support selling Wilfrid Hall; however, if Council decides to sell the property, they requested it be done quickly.

On December 18, 2024, a Special Council meeting was held to provide interested parties the opportunity to make comments on the proposed sale of the Wilfrid Hall. It was noted by several residents that the Wilfrid Hall was built by the community, holds cultural value, has historical significance and has hosted many events and fundraising events over the years. Members of the Association commented that control of the hall should be returned to the Association so it can build a relationship with renters and allow for last minute rentals on weekends.

A resident commented that the Community Association should apply for specific grants from the government to help with expenses. The Township’s experience is that these grants are very competitive and often require matching funds.

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

Public Notice Policy

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

The following table shows the Hall’s operating deficit and reserves for the past three years. These amounts do not take into account any staff time or winter maintenance costs. On an annual basis the operating deficits are not large, but over the last five years amount to over \$60,000 that the Township funds through tax levy.

	2022	2023	2024
Rental Revenue	\$845.84	\$2,391.50	\$3,468.00
Expenses			
Repairs	\$9,490.92	\$4,120.43	\$3,395.85
Appliances	\$1,067.46	\$0	\$0
Utilities – heat/hydro	\$3,710.51	\$4,491.06	\$3,721.10
Water testing	\$4,459.71	\$4,458.32	\$5,359.42
Pest control	\$47.32	\$80.44	\$475.77
Custodial	\$0	\$1,221.12	\$3,541.25
Total Expenses	\$18,775.92	\$14,371.37	\$16,493.39
Operating Deficit	(\$17,930.08)	(\$11,979.87)	(\$13,025.39)
Reserves	\$7,388.83	\$8,184.68	\$9,742.65

5.1 Asset Management

Included in the Township’s asset management plan is almost \$2 million for the replacement of Wilfrid Hall. In the next seven years the electrical, windows and doors, and the exterior cladding will have reached its useful life and should be replaced. The building also contains asbestos and some of the work would likely require asbestos abatement which needs to be done by professionals and can be expensive. The cost for all this work is estimated at over \$200,000 and currently there is less than \$10,000 in the Wilfrid Hall reserve. Council would need to set aside

close to \$30,000 a year just for Wilfrid Hall over the next seven years to cover these costs otherwise these expenses would need to come from another reserve and put pressure on the tax levy.

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

N/A

7.0 Communications

Staff will issue a Notice of Intention if Council approves the divestiture of Wilfrid Hall. The Wilfrid Hall Community Association will be included in the notification.

8.0 Conclusion

Wilfrid Hall has an operating deficit and limited reserves. Any large repair to the Town Hall would put pressure on the tax levy. Selling Wilfrid Hall would reduce the amount Council would need to dedicate to asset management, reduce annual operating expenses and levy pressure. Staff recommend that the Wilfrid Town Hall be put up for sale as soon as possible and the proceeds of the sale be put towards asset management of the Township's existing facilities. Staff also recommend any operating deficit incurred in 2025 also be covered by sale proceeds.

9.0 Recommendation

Whereas the Township of Brock has legislated responsibilities with respect to Capital Asset Management Planning; and

Whereas the Township of Brock received and adopted the Core Services Review (2023) and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan (2023), where both documents recommended the divestiture of assets; and

Whereas Wilfrid Town Hall generates a minimal amount of rental revenue, runs an operating deficit and has limited reserves for capital repairs or upgrades; now, therefore

Be it resolved that Report 2025-CO-001, Wilfrid Hall be received; and

That Council approves the sale of Wilfrid Hall and declares the land and building (Wilfrid Hall) as surplus; and

That Council authorizes that Mayor and Clerk to execute all required documents necessary to complete the transactions in selling Wilfrid Hall.