



Title:	Guideline: Secondary Ward Offices for Councillors		
Document	COH-P-020-003	Document	Level I
Issue #:	1	Issue date	April 2023

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define a standardized procedure for City Councillors to request and secure space for Secondary Ward Offices within their respective wards, in addition to their primary offices at City Hall, 71 Main Street West. A secondary office located within the respective ward will allow constituents easier access to the Councillor.

The introduction of a standard procedure allows the City of Hamilton to ensure consistent and efficient delivery of processes that adhere to best practices.

2 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Secondary Ward Office	An office located within the Councillor's Ward that is in addition to their primary office at Hamilton City Hall is referred to as Ward Office / Satellite Office.
Accommodation Agreements	Accommodation Agreements define the terms and conditions of the space used for City business, including the total square footage (footprint) of space, cost per square foot, duration of term, eligible activities, restrictions on use of space, etc.

3 SCOPE

This procedure applies to Members of City Council (City Councillors) seeking to secure Ward office space outside of City Hall. This document is in place to define the responsibilities of the involved parties and provide guidelines and parameters to select the Secondary Ward Office locations. This is specifically for City Councillors looking for exclusive space for Ward Offices and does not apply to spaces available to be reserved through the Facilities Service Centre.

City Councillors who wish to have secondary offices within their respective wards must submit a request for space to Corporate Facilities & Energy Management (CFEM) and obtain the approval of Council for the Secondary Ward Office. This includes City Councillors who have pre-existing space at existing City facilities outside of City Hall. Each City Councillor must submit their request to CFEM.

CFEM will review the details of the request and available space within the respective wards to determine location options (if available) and associated costs. This information will be provided to the requesting City Councillor for their agreement and confirmation of funding source, following which CFEM staff will assist the Councillor's office in preparing a motion for Council / Standing Committee meeting for approval.

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Upon receipt of Council approval, CFEM will either prepare an Accommodation Agreement or secure a lease for the approved space and proceed with the work required for fit-ups to meet the Councillor's needs.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Members of City Council

4.1.1 City Councillors

- Identify need / business case for a Secondary Ward Office, including budget and funding source.
- Complete and submit the Secondary Ward Office request to CFEM (via email to facdesign@hamilton.ca or the Changes to Space (New and Existing) request form on eNet), including the following information at a minimum:
 - Ward number;
 - Preferred location(s) – Note: Where applicable due to potential conflict situations, City Councillors are required to check-in with the Integrity Commissioner to confirm there is no Conflict of Interest with respect to location selection;
 - Preference – independent office or shared space within a public building;
 - Hours of operation;
 - Minimum requirements: size, number of staff (shared or separate offices), separate meeting room, etc.;
 - Funding source(s).
- Select preferred option and confirm funding source for associated costs (annual operating costs, capital costs for renovation / fit-up and staff cost recovery).
- Prepare and present motion to Council/Standing Committee for approval.
- Collaborate with CFEM staff.

4.1.2 City Council / Standing Committee Members

Review the motion when received and provide approval for Councillor to proceed with the requested Secondary Ward Office.

4.2 Public Works Department

4.2.1 Corporate Facilities and Energy Management Division

- Review the details of the request and ensure it is appropriately addressed.
- Act as communications and engagement liaison with the Councillor's office.

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- Investigate available space within the respective ward to determine location options (if available) and estimated associated costs.
- Provide the space options and costs to the requesting City Councillor for their agreement and confirmation of available funding source.
- Provide cost information to Financial Planning, Administration and Policy to determine a funding source.
- Assist the Councillor's office in preparing a motion or report for Council / Standing Committee meeting for approval.
- Upon receipt of Council approval, prepare an Accommodation Agreement for the approved space and proceed with the work required for fit-ups to meet the Councillor's needs.
- Make recommendations for revisions to this procedure where necessary.

5 GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are recommended for best practices when investigating Ward Office location option(s).

5.1 General Principles

- City Councillors can only request one Secondary Ward Office location.
- City Councillors can choose not to operate a Secondary Ward Office.
- The Ward Office must be used for City business only.
- The Ward Office must not be used for electoral purposes. No election material may be displayed in or on a Ward Office.
- The use of Ward Offices located within the City will be restricted to regular operating hours for the building as well as regular operating season for applicable community buildings.
- An office located within the Councillor's home is not considered a Ward Office.
- All furniture and equipment within Ward Offices must meet City furniture guidelines and be ergonomic, including any personal furniture supplied by the City Councillors themselves.
- All exterior signage is limited to identifying the space as a City of Hamilton facility and / or Ward Office and cannot advertise or brand the space using the Councillor's name.
- CFEM staff will take the lead on the negotiations and administration of the Accommodation Agreements, in consultation with staff in the Corporate Real Estate Office in the Planning and Economic Development Department.
- Annual operating costs for the Primary Councillors' offices are included in the Legislative General Operating Budget.
- Annual operating costs for the Secondary Ward Offices will be included in the Legislative General Operating Budget upon Council approval or in the Ward Councillor's Budget, as per Section 5.4.2.

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5.2 Location Parameters

Accessibility

- The Ward Office must be reasonably accessible by public transit.
- The Ward Office must be in full compliance with all legislative requirements, including the Building Code, the Fire Code and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)*.
- The Ward Office location / building should be well maintained and not require any major lifecycle upgrades impacting operations required in the next two years.

Fiscal Prudence

- CFEM shall provide the most cost-effective option(s) for Ward Office locations.
- The Ward Office size must be limited to a typical City office with an additional desk for administrative support / reception and should not include any dedicated meeting rooms, etc.
- Ward Office location option(s) within preferred City-owned Civic buildings should be exhausted prior to investigation potential use of community facilities. Investigating option(s) for third-party leasing in the private sector should be the last option.

Operating Impacts on Community Facilities

- Ward Offices must not result in displacement of staff that use existing spaces within Community facilities to conduct their job responsibilities.
- Ward Offices must not disrupt or negatively modify existing community use spaces in buildings to accommodate corporate needs not directly tied to the intended operation of the space.

5.3 Accommodation Agreements

CFEM will develop Accommodation Agreements to deliver these assignments and advise Finance and Administration to assign the associated costs to the approved budget accounts.

Where City-owned space is not available, third-party leasing options may be considered subject to Council approval.

The terms of an Accommodation Agreement within a City facility or third-party leased space must be limited to the term of Council only.



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5.4 Associated Costs, Budgets and Funding

5.4.1 Associated Costs

The associated costs for Ward Offices include the following:

- Annual operating costs (operating cost allocation):
 - Where the space allocated is City owned, the ongoing monthly operating cost allocation represents the actual cost to operate the building.
 - Where a third-party lease is entered to for the space, the monthly cost will equate to the full amount payable in accordance with the terms of the Lease, as well as, any additional operating costs incurred as a result of the leased space (e.g. security, insurance, cleaning).
- Capital costs for renovation / fit-up: One-time cost to complete all required renovations at the selected location, including supply and delivery of furniture.
- Staff cost recovery: CFEM project management and accommodations design staff are cost recoverable and actual staff time spent on projects / assignments is charged back to the clients for the work being delivered.

5.4.2 Budget / Funding

- Accommodations within existing City facilities: The budget for the annual operating costs will be transferred to the Legislative General Operating Budget. Actual costs will be recorded in Legislative General. Ward budgets will not be charged.
- Accommodations for private leases: Actual costs will be charged to the Ward Councillor's Operating budget including all applicable City real estate and legal fees, etc. The Councillor is to accommodate the extra cost within the existing budget unless a budget increase, through the Council motion or report, is approved.
- Staff cost recovery: Project management staff costs will be charged to the Ward Councillor's Operating Budget.
- Capital costs for renovation / fit-up: Facilities Project Manager will provide cost information to Financial Planning, Administration and Policy to determine a funding source, which will be submitted for approval through the Council motion or report.

5.5 Exceptions / Notice of Deviation

If a specific scenario requires deviation from the procedures listed in this document, it must be presented at a Council / Standing Committee meeting and approved by a resolution.

Some considerations to be aware of when evaluating exceptions to Ward Office locations include but are not limited to pre-consultation with the following relevant bodies:

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- Portfolio Management Committee to review use of City spaces
- Corporate Real Estate Office (impact to Portfolio plans and strategies)
- Integrity Commissioner (to assist in avoiding conflicts of interest)
- City Clerks
- Risk Management (i.e., liability insurance)
- Legal Services
- Human Resources (i.e., confidentiality, accessibility, etc.)
- CFEM (i.e., accessibility, ergonomics, Building Condition Assessments, etc.)
- Building department (i.e., Zoning, Fire Code, etc.)
- Program Divisions (impacts to programming and operations, Asset Management Plans, etc.)
- Previous Council decisions and precedents

Recognizing that some members of City Council already operate Secondary Ward Offices independent of the guidelines defined in this procedure, they will be awarded a transition period in order to plan their budgets to align with this procedure by the following calendar year.

6 RELATED POLICIES

The following are related policies to this procedure:

- By-law 16-290: Code of Conduct for Members of Council
- Policy and Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials: Budget for the Office of the Mayor, Legislative Budget and Councillor Ward Office Budget, Appendix "B" to Report FCS18083(a)
- Meeting room reservations: [eNet Facilities Meeting Room Management](#)

7 APPROVAL

Approved By	Date of Approval
General Manager, Public Works	
General Manager, Corporate Services	
General Manager, Planning & Economic Development	

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