





COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	September 12, 2024
SUBJECT:	Common House Cafe at City Hall (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Norm Schleeahn Director, Economic Development Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	
SUBMITTED BY:	Indra Maharjan Director, Corporate Facilities and Energy Management Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this Communication Update is to advise Council that a new tenant will be occupying the current lunchroom on the first floor of City Hall effective October 2024.

Following March 2020 and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the previous tenant at City Hall vacated the space following the expiration of their lease. Led by Corporate Facilities and Corporate Real Estate, an extensive search ensued to secure a new tenant to no avail. Limitations on hours of operation and no cooking on-site, posed challenges for the extensive list of vendors touring the location. Paralleling the Economic Development Action Plan, to foster and grow small business initiatives the Hamilton Business Centre worked with Corporate Facilities and Corporate Real Estate to put forth a winning program model.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

In the spring of 2024, Corporate Facilities put forward two options to fill this vacant space before Senior Leadership Team. One option was an external tenant, the other the Hamilton Business Centre Common House Café/ program. With both applications providing similar investment, the Hamilton Business Centre Common House Cafe was unanimously selected as the preferred model by Senior Leadership Team. Capital investment was comparable; however, the Hamilton Business Centre program leveraged a unique opportunity through partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade to expand programming within the food sector and expand community partnerships. This innovative space will provide a vibrant, inclusive, and community focused program, while advancing economic development needs and supports for Hamilton small business sector. Partnerships with local not-for-profit agencies will also see this model providing value hands-on training experience for those seeking employment.

The Common House Cafe will serve as a hub for nurturing entrepreneurial talent by offering workshops, mentorship programs, and expanding employment opportunities for those interested in the food service industry. The Café will feature training sessions focused on essential skills for running a successful enterprise and create a valuable resource for both new and seasoned entrepreneurs. It will support Hamilton's new and expanding food businesses with dynamic programming, mentorship, food sales, and commercialization opportunities. The model will also provide licenced food entrepreneurs a space to start-up or grow an existing business, while also providing Monday-to-Friday food service to City Hall and surrounding buildings.

Corporate Facilities will continue to manage the space with the support of Planning and Economic Development to manage business development services for all vendors and community partners for a three-year term.

To support inspections and tenant occupancy there will be a temporary closure of the current lunchroom. Once operational, staff will be permitted to bring prepared lunches into the space, however, there will be no faculties for staff to store or heat items.

If you require any further information on the above matter, please contact Kristin Huigenbos, Coordinator Small Business Enterprise Centre by e-mail at Kristin.Huigenbos@Hamilton.ca or at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4110.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.