



## **CENTRAL YORK FIRE SERVICES**

October 7, 2015

### **CENTRAL YORK FIRE SERVICES REPORT 2015-08**

To: Joint Council Committee  
Origin: Central York Fire Services - Fire Chief  
Subject: Fire Station 4-5 Considerations

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**THAT Central York Fire Services Report 2015-08 dated October 7, 2015, Fire Station 4-5 Considerations be received for information purposes;**

**AND THAT Joint Council Committee (JCC) give direction to staff concerning the location of the new fire station and training grounds;**

**AND THAT JCC direct staff to prepare a full report to be presented to both municipal councils outlining the complete plan for the location of the new fire station and the training grounds.**

#### **COMMENTS**

In 2014 Dillon Consulting completed the Fire Department Master Plan Update (FDMPU) for Central York Fire Services and made a number of recommendations related to fire prevention, public education, fire protection coverage, emergency response times and staffing.

The FDMPU has been approved by JCC, Aurora and Newmarket Councils as the guiding document for the future direction of CYFS and staff are working towards addressing the recommendations identified in the report. The document was presented in 2014 with approvals from both Councils received in 2015.

A key FDMPU recommendation outlined an additional fire station which consolidated Suppression, Training, Fire Prevention and Administration divisions into one facility. The FDMPU further recommended the sale of the Station 4-1 location on Gorham Street and build a smaller station on another property. As a replacement fire station the total project cost would be paid from reserves, minus recoveries from the sale of Station 4-1. CYFS staff considered this scenario and offered an alternative approach. It would be more economically viable to renovate Station 4-1, at a budgeted capital cost of \$550,000. and make efficient use of the station versus moving the Prevention staff to a new facility where the cost of the additional floor space is estimated at \$700,000. While this approach does not bring all divisions of CYFS into one location, it is a move towards maximizing our current facilities and exercising due diligence.

### **Station Options**

As recommended in the FDMPU the new fire station ideally would be located on a three to five acre parcel of land in order to accommodate all divisions of CYFS in one facility. Economies of scale and operating efficiencies are maximized using one location and will offer a lower operating cost throughout the life cycle of the building. Staff have been directed to explore a number of scenarios for the station on a smaller parcel of land and search for an additional site to meet the needs of the Training Division.

Several options are explored in this report to meet the JCC direction ranging from having two sites in the Newmarket/Aurora first response area to the training grounds located adjacent to the boundaries of either town or a partnership with another agency.

To conduct a wholesome review of the options available, this report also contains information related to the recommendations of the FDMPU of having one site for all components of CFYS. Each of the options outlined will have estimated costs associated with both Capital and Operating expenditures.

### **Option "A"**

Locating the new fire station in the central area of Aurora and Newmarket will help to meet the emergency response criteria outlined in the FDMPU. Having the station on a two acre parcel of land will allow Fire Suppression and Administration Divisions in the facility. Space to accommodate the Training staff offices and classrooms would be included, however, this option will not provide sufficient space to incorporate the outside training area required to conduct the curriculum of "Hands On Training" (HOT) requirements for the firefighters.

In order to provide sufficient space to accommodate the outside training requirements for required training activities, an additional location within the

municipal boundaries of Aurora/Newmarket will be required to supplement the new fire station. The HOT area will require an additional structure which would include a staff briefing area, washrooms, training aids and equipment storage. These are components that would have been incorporated into a Station 4-5 Headquarters style building on a larger parcel of land.

Option "A" will increase Capital costs associated with the project relative to property acquisition and facility construction. This choice will not be as operationally effective as having all divisions of the fire service in one location as identified in the FDMPU. Any plan to have two facilities in separate locations will almost certainly have a negative effect on staff efficiency and increase the capital and operating costs of the project.

### **Option "B"**

While Fire Station 4-5 will be located in the same area as Option "A" the difference with this scenario will be the Hands On Training (HOT) area would be located outside of the municipal boundaries of Aurora/Newmarket. In addition to the increased Capital costs as outlined in Option "A", this scenario requires significantly increased Operating costs to maintain minimum staffing levels as "on duty" resources would need to be supplemented with staff on overtime.

For several years CYFS has been utilizing the "burn tower" at the Richmond Hill Fire Services (RHFS) to conduct "live fire" training. Each of the four platoons have been sent to RHFS to ensure all staff are given this mandatory training opportunity. Fire ground training activities are regularly attended by multiple fire crews at one time in an effort to replicate working conditions at serious emergencies.

In order to ensure there are sufficient resources to provide the initial response to incidents in Aurora/Newmarket, CYFS "backfills" with "off duty" staff paid overtime rates to ensure the four apparatus remaining in town each have a crew of four firefighters. This will allow CYFS to meet the initial requirements of emergency response while two crews are training in Richmond Hill. When required, the two apparatus in Richmond Hill would terminate their training activities and respond back on an emergency basis. Based on actual absences in 2015, the estimate of routinely staffing all six apparatus would exceed \$600,000 annually in overtime costs.

Several years ago, the local media were contacted regarding the practice of sending two CYFS fire crews to the Richmond Hill Training Facility to conduct annual "live fire" training. There were some concerns related to emergency response capabilities and firefighter safety. The current practice of sending crews to another jurisdiction to conduct "live fire" training is a relatively short term program. This specific training runs three days per platoon (12 days annually)

and costs are based on the daily rental fee at RHFS. The annual rental cost for the facility is approximately \$25,000. for the 12 days of usage, plus overtime to ensure all six apparatus are staffed. Sending crews to another municipality on a more regular basis will likely rekindle the debate regarding the safety and the level of protection for Aurora and Newmarket.

Richmond Hill Fire has not been contacted regarding the availability or capacity of their training facility. Additional rental time, if available, would be in added to the charges listed above plus the cost of maintaining the staffing levels on the trucks remaining in Aurora/Newmarket. It is also worth noting that Richmond Hill Fire has recently rented the CYFS training facility to conduct training with their staff, as their facility does not have the necessary training props to carry out some mandatory firefighter training.

### **Option "C"**

A single location facility for Station 4-5 is the most cost effective and efficient solution for CYFS. Option "C" follows the general guidelines in the FDMPU with the exception of not including Fire Prevention staff at the new station. Although the Fire Prevention Division is not located in the same facility, there are a number of positive outcomes that have to be considered with this option. This scenario keeps all "on duty" CYFS resources immediately available to respond to emergency situations in our first response area (Aurora/Newmarket). The need to call additional staff on overtime is reduced which lessens the pressure on the Operating budget.

### **CONCLUSION**

As outlined in the FDMPU, the preferred option to address the needs of the community and the fire service is Option "C". Although this option does deviate slightly from the FDMPU, it is the most economical and operationally effective of the options presented in this report. Essentially, less travel time equals more training time. CYFS is constantly striving to achieve more effective coverage of our primary response area while controlling operational expenses. Staff are working to ensure the station location and the internal components included in the facility will meet the current and future needs of the communities and CYFS.

## **BUDGET IMPACT**

Preliminary estimates on the cost of the project are subject to the decisions made by JCC and the municipal Councils. The capital costs associated with the original one location concept were roughly \$10,000,000. Two locations will most likely have a significant impact on the operational costs of CYFS. Having the training facility outside of the first response area of Aurora/Newmarket will significantly increase operating costs and reduce operational effectiveness and could negatively affect the life safety of citizens and firefighters.

**See Appendix "A" for Capital and Operating cost estimates**

## **IMPACT ON THE MASTER FIRE PLAN**

The FDMPU outlines the future direction of CYFS and has been discussed and approved by JCC and both Municipal Councils. Building the new fire station to deliver services to the public in a more effective manner is a key component of the FDMPU.

## **CONTACT**

For further information or questions regarding this report, please contact;



Ian Laing, Fire Chief  
Central York Fire Services

Appendix "A"

## Appendix A

		Separate station and training		FMP modified
		Train in-town Option A	Train out-of-town Option B	(Re: Station 4-1) Option C
CAPITAL COSTS	Station 4-5			
	land	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 4,500,000
	building	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,500,000
	Additional training facility			
	land	1,750,000	-	-
	building	750,000	-	-
	Total:	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 7,500,000	\$ 10,000,000
OPERATING COSTS	Maintenance			
	Station 4-5	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 75,000
	Additional training facility	10,000	-	-
	Training			
	Facility Rental	-	325,000	-
	Additional overtime	-	600,000	-
	Total:	\$ 80,000	\$ 995,000	\$ 75,000

*For this comparative illustration, costs which would be the same for all options such as additional staff, have not been included.*