**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

*City Clerk’s Division*

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<td>Audit &amp; Administration Committee</td>
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**SUBJECT/REPORT NO:**

Corporate Records Storage – Feasibility (FCS10036) (City Wide)

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Jane Lee

*Acting General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services Department*

**PREPARED BY:**

Lisa Barroso Ext. 2743

**RECOMMENDATION**

(a) That the City’s Corporate Records Storage Facility currently located at 700 Woodward Avenue be relocated to the former City Hall Garage located at 71 Main Street West;

(b) That funding estimated in the amount of $538,000 be allocated from the Records and Information Management Program, project id 3520457100.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to outline the issues relating to the City’s current records storage facility and to provide a possible solution for the continued and proper operation of this vital corporate function.

The City’s Records Storage Facility has been located in a portion of the Woodward Avenue Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant, 700 Woodward Avenue, since the late 1970’s. The Water and Wastewater Division has advised the City Clerk’s Office that the current space occupied for records storage is required by the Water & Wastewater
Division by March of 2011 as part of their restoration project of the Woodward Avenue Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant.

For the past several years, the Corporate Facilities Management and Real Estate Divisions have attempted to locate an alternate Records Storage location to address some of the Corporate storage issues outlined in this report. The City’s former garage space located behind the municipal office at 71 Main Street West is being recommended as a viable Corporate Records Storage solution.

*Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 5.*

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS** (for Recommendation(s) only)

**Financial:** Over a period of 4 years, from 2004 to 2008, a total of $600,000 in Capital Funding has been allocated by Council towards one of the following Records Storage solutions:

1) To make improvements to the existing storage location at 700 Woodward Avenue to meet Records Storage Facility standards; or

2) To consider alternate off-site storage locations.

Since we have been requested to vacate our current storage location, an alternate location, the former City Hall Garage, is being recommended as a viable Corporate Records Storage solution. The cost of renovating this space to meet Records Storage Facility Standards has been estimated to be $538,000. This cost also provides for the removal of boxes and shelves from our existing facility to the proposed space.

The operating costs in relation to the portion of the City Hall Garage to be occupied for the purpose of Corporate Records Storage will continue to be budgeted and funded through the City Hall Dept ID 791501.

**Staffing:** Currently employ 1 FTE to operate the City’s off-site storage services. No change to staff complement required as a result of the location change.

**Legal:** Requirement under the *Municipal Act* that a municipality retain and preserve the records of the municipality in a secure and accessible manner and that these records be made available to the public upon request.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

The City’s Corporate Records are stored in an 8,000 square foot storage space located at the Woodward Avenue Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant. The space was allocated for records storage by the Region back in the late 1970’s, early 1980’s, after the chemical storage and treatment process located in that building was abandoned.

Since amalgamation, the City has continued to utilize this space with holdings of approximately 21,000 storage boxes, which exceeds its current capacity.

In addition to this space, the City Clerk’s Office maintains approximately 3,500 square feet of space in a few locations throughout the City: 2000 square feet at 125 Barton Street (currently at maximum capacity); and 4 additional City owned spaces located in the communities of Flamborough, Dundas and Ancaster.

In an effort to consolidate these spaces, the Capital funding was requested and approved over a period of 4 years at $150,000 per year to either improve upon or relocate and consolidate the City’s corporate records holdings. Some funds have already been allocated towards shelving and inventory costs leaving approximately $560,000 unallocated funds.

Approximately 13,500 square feet of space is required to consolidate all of our current storage spaces and provide additional shelving for boxes currently being stored on skids at 700 Woodward Avenue. On an annual basis, we purge roughly 1200–1700 boxes but we accept 1500-2000 new boxes each year. We have continued to grow in our paper holdings even in this electronic age.

Our storage requirements may diminish, over time, as we move forward with the implementation of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS). It is important to note that a decline in paper storage may not be visible for at least 7 to 10 years from now, once our current paper holdings begin to expire.

Staff, across the corporation, are faced with maintaining paper files in office areas where file storage space is minimal and, as a result, the off-site storage facility provides a secure, yet accessible solution, to their storage space issues. The following provides a breakdown of the use of the City’s off-site storage space:

City Clerk – 14%
Finance – 14%
Human Resources – 10%
Legal Services – 15%
Planning – 13%
Public Health – 12%
Public Works (Waste, Roads, Transportation) – 17%
In addition, a total of 5% from Members of Council, City Manager, Risk Management and Community Services.

The City’s off-site storage program provides an organized, efficient, cost-effective service to staff across the corporation.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Sections 253 and 254 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, states that a municipality shall retain and preserve the records of the municipality in a secure and accessible manner and that any person may, at all reasonable times, inspect any of the records under the control of the City Clerk.

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The City Clerk’s Office has been working with staff from the Corporate Facilities Management and Real Estate Divisions since 2003 to locate an alternate suitable records storage space but each option proved to be either too costly to renovate or was unsuitable space for Corporate Records Storage. In the Fall of 2009, the former City Hall Garage was identified as a possible suitable storage location.

Corporate Services Department, Financial Planning & Policy Division has also been consulted and has confirmed the capital budget allocation.

**ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Upon identifying the City Hall Garage, as a possible Corporate Records Storage facility, Corporate Facilities Management staff suggested a Feasibility Study be conducted on the use of the garage as a viable storage facility. McCallum Sather Architects undertook to prepare the Study.

The industry standards for appropriate Records Storage are as follows:

- Fire detection system
- Fire Rated Structure - Minimum standards are provided for interior walls (i.e. minimum 1 hour fire rated barrier walls)
- Appropriate ceiling venting
Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.
Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork

- Facility Standards – constructed with non-combustible materials; load bearing floors; water and electrical standards; fluorescent lighting is recommended
- Environmental monitoring and control – climate and humidity controlled environment; clean and dust-free
- Storage Shelving Standards
- Security - limited access

Of the above-noted standards, our current storage location at 700 Woodward Avenue does not have a Fire detection system but because the facility is a complete cement block structure, it provides for an excellent fire rating with one hour fire rated barrier walls. The building is also in need of some structural repairs as it has aged.

Additional issues regarding our current facility all relate to space. There is a Corporate-wide issue with lack of storage space in office areas; there is a need for additional storage space in our current facility; and there is a need to consolidate our storage spaces to have all Corporate Records in one location.

Through the Feasibility Study, McCallum Sather report an estimated budget of $538,000 to meet these storage standards for the use of the former City Hall Garage as a viable Records Storage Facility. The proposed space provides approximately 15,000 square feet of space which meets our current requirements of 13,500 square feet. The estimate of $538,000 includes all construction and moving costs and a 5% contingency fee for any possible unforeseen costs. There is approximately $560,000 of allocated capital funding available for this project. Operating costs are anticipated to stay in line with the existing facility at 700 Woodward Avenue.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**
(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

There are two alternatives for consideration:

**Option 1** – Use a third party storage vendor as the corporate off-site storage solution.

A high level review of this alternative, reveals that it would cost the City an additional $35,000 annually to provide the same off-site storage service as is currently being provided in-house. Using a third party vendor would also significantly diminish our control and access to our records and is not a recommended alternative.
Option 2 – Rent/Lease storage space.

This alternative is also more expensive than the recommended alternative. Industrial storage space costs between $22-$25 per square foot which far exceeds our annual in-house costs.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)


Financial Sustainability

- Delivery of municipal services and management capital assets/liabilities in a sustainable, innovative and cost effective manner

Growing Our Economy

- An improved customer service

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

N/A.