

Council Business Meeting

October 17, 2017

Title: City Hall Options Information
From: John Karns Interim City Administrator
karnsj@ashland.or.us

Summary:

Along with the report from the City Hall Ad Hoc Committee that the Council received at the [October 3rd](#) business meeting, this is additional information that Council can use in identifying the best alternative for rebuilding/relocating City Hall.

Actions, Options, or Potential Motions:

This is for additional information only.

Staff Recommendation:

N/A

Resource Requirements:

N/A

Policies, Plans and Goals Supported:

City Council Goal 4.4: Examine city hall replacement and other facility needed.

Background and Additional Information:

In 2015, Council directed to staff to complete a new seismic study on City Hall and to move forward with a comprehensive examination of options for replacing or rebuilding City Hall. The City contracted with Miller Engineering to complete the seismic study and with ORW Architecture to evaluate and develop options for replacing or rebuilding City Hall. In January 2017, the Council reviewed the ORW feasibility study for the replacement of City Hall and in April of 2017 appointed an ad hoc City Hall Advisory Committee to review feasible alternatives for the replacement of City Hall and to recommend an amount for a GO Bond for a future election date and include \$1 million to complete Phase II construction of the Police Department and Emergency Operations Center facility. As noted in the Committee's final report, the eleven-person committee met ten times over the past four months. 74% of the 2016 Citizen Survey respondents indicated support of making City Hall earthquake resilient.

Attachments:

Memo from the Interim City Administrator
Memo from Public Works on RFQ options

Memo

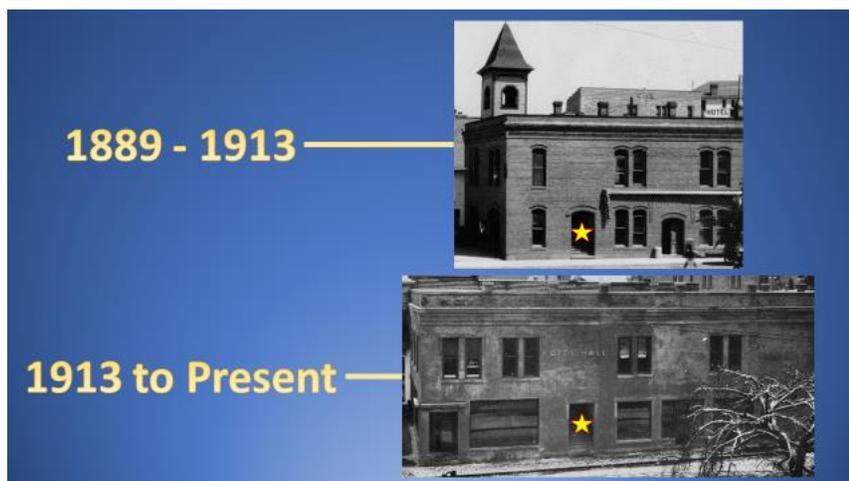
DATE: October 10, 2017
TO: City Council
FROM: John Karns
RE: City Hall Options

At the business meeting on October 3 Council received the report from the City Hall ad hoc committee with the three options the committee recommended for further consideration. This is a complex issue with many variables. This memo is simply to provide you more information going forward and offer some potential “road maps” on how to achieve them.

The impetus behind the renovation/replacement project for City Hall is primarily to provide a reasonably safe environment for those working in the structure. The obvious life safety issue notwithstanding, one of the most important functions of a city post tremor or other disaster is community recovery, which can be measured in months and often years. The functions, records, and processes that occur in City Hall are critical to that phase of an event. The exposure of the Pacific Northwest to a seismic event on the Cascadia Subduction range is well documented. Over the last 10,000 years, that zone has experienced a major subduction every 341 years as an average. The last event was January 26, 1700.

The City Hall structure is a combination of two buildings, one built in 1889 and one built in 1913. It is of an unreinforced masonry (URM) design meaning there is no steel reinforcement within the walls as is required today. The building has seen many uses over the years and has been modified numerous times in an attempt to meet the needs of those uses. The building is also unsupported on three sides. While URM buildings are always vulnerable during earthquakes, a URM building with three sides unsupported is particularly susceptible to failure. During a significant tremor the facility will likely experience substantial failure of its wall, floor, and roof systems.

The 1913 remodel included the addition of what is currently the City Administrator and Mayor’s office. Also the area where Utility Billing is in now was enclosed to be used for parking of Fire apparatus. The stucco was applied over the brick but other than that, nearly everything pictured in the top picture is still there. That exterior wall you can see in the picture is still the exterior wall today, just with stucco over the brick.



The City Hall Ad Hoc Committee did an admirable job of analyzing a great deal of information and interpreting the various options presented. The Committee created a process to “value” the criteria of the various options that ultimately produced the three options have already presented to you. I utilized the same criteria the committee used and presented it to both the employee groups of the City Hall and Community Development buildings as well as the customers who patronize those facilities. While clearly this process was not as formal or controlled as the Committee’s, it is still an important perspective of those who utilize the facilities potentially affected by the decision to renovate or relocate City Hall. The information for those two surveys are at the end of this memo.

The following are the three alternatives that the committee recommended:

Rebuild and Expand City Hall on Existing Site

As noted in the ad hoc Committee report, this alternative keeps the existing City Hall site and rebuilds the structure in its current location. The recommendation would be to add one floor and a basement. There was some concern that the stucco façade should be retained for historic value though it should be noted that the original façade was brick, not stucco. This original brick look could be realized during the rebuilding of the structure by utilizing a brick veneer, in keeping with the downtown look.

The funding mechanism would likely be a general obligation bond ideally in May. A May election does not require 50% voter turnout because of the passage of Measure 56 in November 2008. Language for the ballot measure would need to be complete and approved by the end of the preceding February.

PROS

- This alternative keeps the functions of City Hall downtown
- This alternative would address the failing building systems that are currently a challenge
- The City owns the site and no additional property would need to be purchased.
- Potentially the least expensive option

CONS

- The employee and customer parking shortages would not be addressed.
- Key operations remain in the inundation zone of Hosler Dam
- Construction may have substantial impact on commerce, tourism, and vehicle circulation, downtown parking, and pedestrian traffic
- Does not provide centralized services
- City Hall staff would need to be relocated during construction

New City Hall at Civic Center/Retain ComDev Downtown

The original alternative places City Hall at the civic center complex adjacent to the Police Station and keeps ComDev in place. Staff recommends that Council consider moving both the City Hall and ComDev operations if this alternative is considered. The existing court/Council Chambers would be demolished, and those meeting spaces and offices would be incorporated into a new structure built on that site and extending onto the current open area behind the existing building. The existing parking area may be expanded as needed.

The funding mechanism would likely be a general obligation bond ideally in May. A May election does not require 50% voter turnout because of the passage of Measure 56 in November 2008. Language for the ballot measure would need to be complete and approved by the end of the preceding February. If the operations of City Hall and ComDev were combined and the existing ComDev building sold, those funds could be directed to the project reducing the overall cost.

PROS

- The operations of City Hall and ComDev could be consolidated
- Places Public Works administration close to Public Works operations
- Near the geographic center of the community
- The City owns this property and no additional property would need to be purchased.

- The employee and customer parking shortages would be addressed.
- City Hall staff would not need to be relocated during construction
- City Hall and ComDev operations would be adjacent to the EOC
- Construction would have nominal impact on commerce, tourism, vehicle circulation, downtown parking, and pedestrian traffic

CONS

- The functions of City Hall would no longer be downtown

Briscoe School – Relocate City Hall and ComDev to Briscoe

This alternative calls for the City to acquire the Briscoe school property from the Ashland School District and move the operations of both City Hall and ComDev to that location. The ComDev facility would be sold and those funds used to rebuild the school facility.

This alternative would require acquiring the Briscoe School property from the Ashland School District. Whether the purchase is through cash or deferral of future development costs, this would need to be calculated into the overall project expenses. The construction costs would likely be a general obligation bond ideally in May. A May election does not require 50% voter turnout because of the passage of Measure 56 in November 2008. Language for the ballot measure would need to be complete and approved by the end of the preceding February.

PROS

- City operations still retains a near “downtown” location.
- City Hall and ComDev operations are consolidated.
- The employee and customer parking shortages would be addressed
- Potential use of playground/field by Ashland Parks
- City Hall staff would not need to be relocated during construction.

CONS

- The City would need to acquire the property either through outright purchase or a deferral of future development costs for ASD projects (unknown at this time). It is important to realize that in deferral of costs, the City still realizes a “payment” through reduced revenues and staff time commitment.
- Some additional parking would be needed, not a significant hurdle however
- Structure has a great deal of deferred maintenance issues, including the need for complete seismic retrofit and would require a number of building system upgrades and tenant improvements. There is an on-site underground fuel storage tank that will need to be decommissioned or removed.
- Probably the most expensive option
- Property zoned residential

All alternatives would provide for the desired “safe working environment” that is the focus of the project.

For the second and third alternative, the City would need to decide whether to divest itself of the current City Hall property or retain it for some other civic use. The City Attorney has already stated that the deed covenant should not influence the decision as to which alternative is best for the community. If the City Hall is retained, it would need to be seismically stabilized and some of the building systems repaired or replaced. We do not recommend performing seismic stabilization without addressing the building’s aging systems. A potential use of the rehabilitated structure would be to utilize it for community meeting rooms, move Ashland Police Department’s contact station to that location, and possibly rent some of the space to a third party, potentially the Chamber of Commerce.

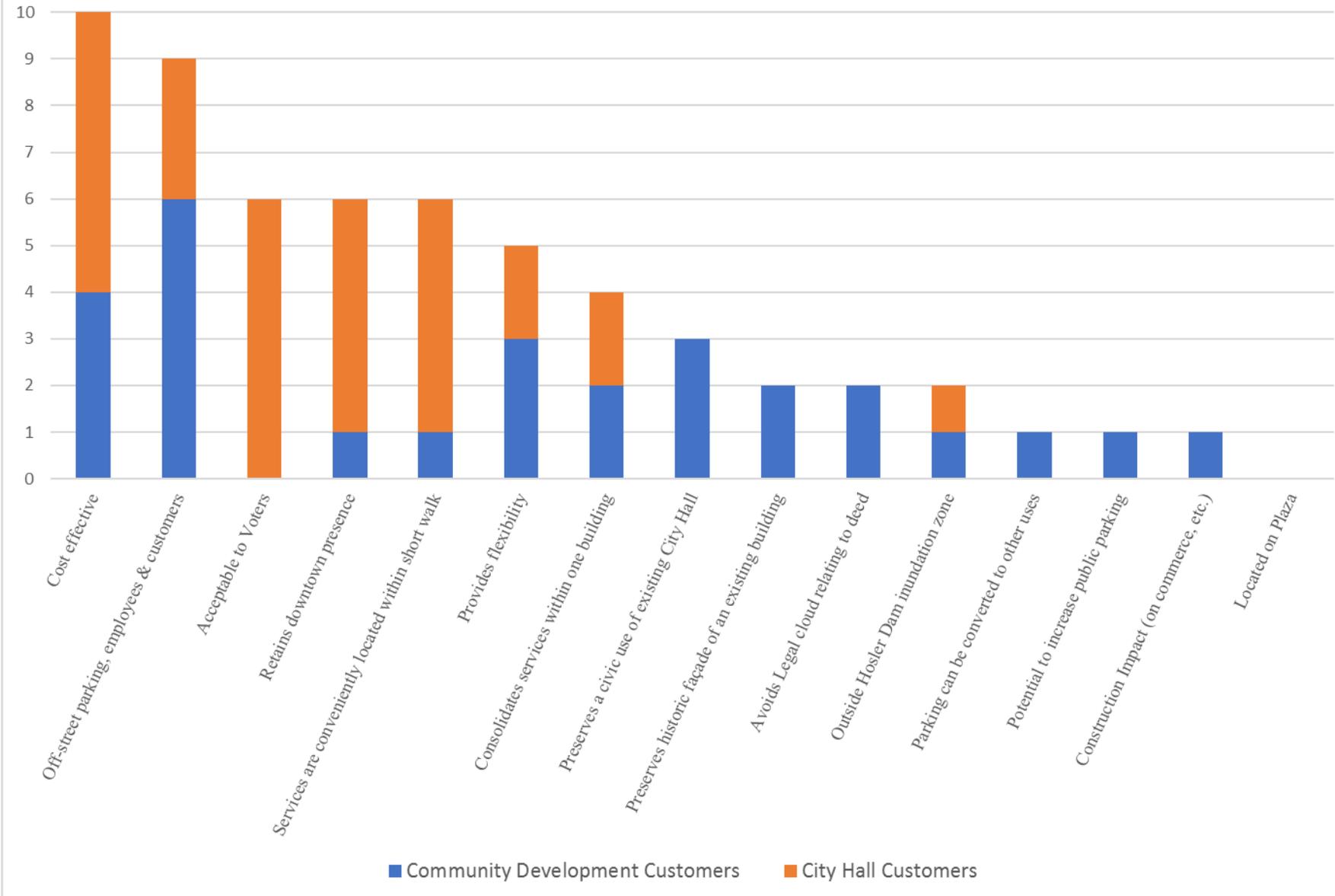
Since the goal of this project is to provide a reasonably safe working environment for City employees working in City Hall, I recommend that the Council give the process three years to be implemented. If a decision on the best alternative hasn’t been made and/or a funding source hasn’t been identified within

three years, the staff of City Hall should be relocated to a facility offering seismic stability until such time the rebuilding or relocating of City Hall is complete.

Moving forward the next step is to acquire the costing and design information for the three alternatives. Clearly this would be necessary before making the decision. In concurrence with the Ad Hoc committee's recommendation, I recommend that we proceed with acquiring the design and costing information for the three alternatives, unless Council feels strongly either for or against one or more of the three options and wishes to limit the design and costing to fewer site. I would also recommend that with the second alternative, we strongly consider moving the ComDev operation to the civic center location along with City Hall operations. While providing the desirable consolidation of services, it would allow the City to sell the exiting ComDev building and help fund the project.

The funds for this type of study are typically funded from the facilities budget and there is \$100K budgeted in this biennium for facilities related studies. Staff believe that this sum will cover the costs to acquire the necessary design and costing information for all three alternative (or any mix of alternatives Council would prefer).

Customer Preferences for a New City Hall



	Community Development Customers	City Hall Customers	Total
Cost effective	4	6	10
Provides flexibility	3	2	5
Acceptable to Voters		6	6
Preserves a civic use of existing City Hall	3		3
Retains downtown presence	1	5	6
Provides Off-street Parking to employees & customers	6	3	9
Provides parking that can be converted to other uses	1		1
Services are conveniently located (within a short walk)	1	5	6
Provides consolidates services (within the same building)	2	2	4
Potential to increase public parking	1		1
Located on Plaza			
Preserves historic façade of an existing building	2		2
Avoids Legal cloud relating to deed	2		2
Outside Hosler Dam inundation zone	1	1	2
Construction Impact (on commerce, etc.)	1		1

Employee Preferences for City Hall

In order of highest to lowest, here are the employee rankings by City Hall employees.

- 1) Provides consolidated services (within the same building)
- 2) Provides off-street parking for employees and customers
- 3) Services are conveniently located (within a short walk)
- 4) Cost effective (wise use of public money)
- 5) Outside Hosler Dam inundation zone
- 6) Retains downtown presence, Preserves historic façade of an existing building.

The remaining criteria did not receive any dots from City Hall employees:

- Site (location of new building) provides flexibility
- Preserves historic use of existing City Hall (not necessarily current administrative functions)
- Provides parking that can be converted to other uses
- Potential to increase public parking (may accommodate a surface lot or parking structure)
- Located on the Plaza
- Avoids legal cloud relating to current deed
- Construction Impact (on traffic, parking, pedestrians, businesses, residences)

Here are the employee rankings, highest to lowest, by Community Development/Public Works employees.

- 1) Provides off-street parking for employees and customers
- 2) Retains downtown presence
- 3) Site location provides flexibility, Services are conveniently located (within a short walk), Outside Hosler Dam inundation zone (each received the same number of dots)
- 4) Preserves historic use of City Hall, Provides consolidated services (within same building), Potential to increase public parking (may accommodate a surface lot or parking structure) (each received the same number of dots)
- 5) Acceptable to voters, Preserves historic façade (each received the same number of dots)
- 6) Cost effective (wise use of public money)

The remaining criteria did not receive any dots from Community Development/Public Works employees::

- Located on Plaza
- Avoids legal cloud relating to current deed
- Construction impact (on traffic, parking, pedestrians, businesses, residence)

Memo



Date: October 11, 2017

From: Paula C. Brown, PE, Public Works Director

To: John Karns

Re: CITY HALL OPTIONS REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS IDEAS AND PROCESS

Background:

At the business meeting on October 3 Council received the report from the City Hall ad hoc committee with the three options that the committee recommends for further consideration. Realizing the complexity of this issue, the Council was left with many variables and several options to consider.

Next Steps:

As Council continues to refine options, it is suggested that Council consider a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) proposal for this multi-step project. In this concept, staff would select a firm with appropriate qualifications; architectural, engineering, site design and planning, to develop a step by step approach to selecting a preferred solution.

A RFQ allows the city to specify the type of work, phases, the qualifications desired of the consultant team, a review of comparable completed jobs, and recommendations of the consultant team.

The RFQ outlines the stages of the project; for instance

- Phase 1: conceptual design and conceptual costs for each of the selected alternatives to include risks associated with each alternative and a relative time line
- Phase 2: develop a process to select an alternative to include cost, timing, City functions performed at the site(s) and moves, City property options (purchase, sale, re-functioning, etc.), public input
- Phase 3: develop full engineering design and plans for the selected alternative and final cost analysis (typically completed as 70% draft then final)
- Phase 4: construction management services to assist with any site changes and quality control

Each phase is separately negotiated for cost, scope and time, and a separate contract is completed for each phase. A clause in the RFQ and initial phase could indicate the intention to continue with subsequent phases but allow the City to stop at any time and renegotiate each phase independently through a separate RFP process. The selected consultant would be provided all previous studies and seismic reports. All contracts and scopes of work would go to council for approval.

