

**Agenda Item #17.1**

Notice of Motion: Councillor P. Banks - Office Infrastructure, Public Consultation, and Staff Support

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Moved By: Councillor Dunfield

Seconded By: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS Rideau Lakes Township must resolve the long-standing issue of inadequate and failing municipal office infrastructure within a **ten-year financial plan** to ensure efficient, accessible, and sustainable service delivery to residents and staff, while remaining fiscally responsible to taxpayers and transparent about the long-term costs and benefits of either (1) expanding the current municipal office or (2) constructing a new facility elsewhere and (3) repurpose the Chantry location as a public works garage and include space for public archive, all in alignment with the Township's Asset Management Plan;

AND WHEREAS the current Chantry office continues to deteriorate and no longer meets the functional, accessibility, or operational needs of the Township, representing an escalating risk and cost burden if left unsupported;

AND WHEREAS the Chantry building, a Township-owned asset previously valued at \$2 million by the former Treasurer, its remote location and an estimated \$500,000 in required upgrades, which severely reduces its market value and limits divestment options;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

**PART 1 – Public Consultation**

1. Council directs staff to organize a public Town Hall at Portland Hall to present and discuss the Township's municipal office infrastructure needs and options within the context of a ten-year financial plan, including:
  - The escalating deterioration of the Chantry office and its operational and accessibility shortcomings by considering the following options;
  - Two primary options:
    1. Renovating and expanding Chantry (noting \$138,000 already invested in design work, with tendering needed to confirm construction costs);
    2. Retrofitting Chantry as a garage and public archive, while building a new municipal office at another site (**noting additional design costs are required**);
  - The financial, operational, and community impacts of each option once we have actual costs.
2. Staff shall provide all public meeting materials to Council in advance for review, ensuring accuracy, completeness, and shared understanding.

3. Staff shall conduct a peer comparison with Beckwith Township's recent municipal office project, including:
  - Size and scope of both old and new facilities;
  - Expected vs. actual costs;
  - Funding strategies (grants, loans, reserves);
  - Sustainability and resilience features;
  - Disposal of their previous office.This analysis will support informed decision-making and alignment with the Township's Asset Management Plan.
4. A second public Town Hall shall be held following the return of tenders, to present costed options in full and allow for meaningful public feedback prior to Council's final decision. This meeting shall be widely advertised and focused on transparency, not advocacy.
5. Council affirms its legal and moral responsibility to provide staff with a safe, accessible, and functional workspace, and that public engagement will be considered in full, but not dictated by special interest groups or low event turnout.

## **PART 2 – Costing and Comparative Analysis**

1. Council directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to treat this file as a top corporate priority, and to:
2. Issue an RFP or to immediately to retain a qualified firm to:
  - Complete 90% design and costing drawings for a new municipal office and to retrofit Chantry back into a garage with space for a public archive;
  - Collaborate directly with Council at the beginning and regularly to ensure transparency and shared ownership of outcomes.
  - Advance both options (Chantry renovation and expansion, and a new build plus Chantry retrofit) to the 90% design stage;
  - Collaborate with Council through weekly, MSC, council and special meetings to build consensus;
  - Hire a contract project manager or other experts as the CAO sees fit, to meet the project timeline, with a tender deadline target of December 31, 2025.
3. Proceed with simultaneous tendering of both infrastructure options to produce a clear, accurate side-by-side comparison of total costs, including capital, retrofit, and lifecycle expenses.

AND FURTHER that the final staff report to Council and the public shall include:

- A complete side-by-side analysis of both options, including cost breakdowns, timelines, and service implications.