



## Policy Development and Strategic Direction Committee Report

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**To:** To the Chair and Members of the Policy Development and Strategic Direction Committee

**From:** Cindy Stevenson, General Manager of Community & Protective Services  
Rob Walton, General Manager of Operations  
Darren Watson, Acting Fire Chief

**Date:** September 13, 2022

**Report #:** RPT-0272-22

**Subject:** North Paris Fire Station

**Purpose:** For Approval

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### Recommendation

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Whereas the Fire Master Plan, 2021, recommended that the County of Brant add a fire station in the northern Paris area, to manage increasing and anticipated growth in call volume in the Paris area, and improve response times to calls in the northern Paris area;

And whereas Council approved a decision package in the 2022 budget for a new north Paris fire station;

That a new north Paris Fire Station be constructed on the County of Brant Gilbert property on Scott Ave. in Paris, identified as Part Lot 29, Concession 2, geographic Township of South Dumfries;

And that staff be directed to proceed with an RFP for architectural services for a new North Paris Fire Station.

### Executive Summary

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The Fire Master Plan, 2021, identified increasing call volume and growth in the Paris area, and recommended the County position a new fire station in the northern Paris area. Following Council's approval of the 2022 budget decision package for a new north Paris fire station, staff have been investigating available and appropriate locations for the new station. Staff are recommending that the new station be located on municipally owned property, on Scott Ave. in Paris, known as the Gilbert property. This is an excellent location for the station, to provide emergency response and improved response times in this area. The location is a wellhead protection area, which staff have reviewed with Cambium. A risk management plan will be developed, as is required for other neighbouring properties, noting the operation of a fire station is not a risk with appropriate design and management. With Council's approval of the site, staff will proceed with tendering for a project architect, complete design, tender for construction, and expect the station will be fully completed by the end of 2024. Staff will work closely with Operations on the timing of project construction, to mitigate impact of the construction of the roundabout at Grand River Street North and Scott Ave. Once in service, the station will

alleviate call growth pressures on the existing Paris station, as well as improve response times in the northern Paris area.

## **Strategic Plan Priority**

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Strategic Priority 5 - Healthy, Safe, and Engaged Citizens

## **Impacts and Mitigation**

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### Social Impacts

Development of emergency assets and operations to meet the needs and changes related to growth in the community will improve the protection of residents and business' life and property through improved emergency response times.

### Environmental Impacts

The proposed site for the new north Paris Fire station is in a wellhead protection area. A risk management plan for the facility is required to ensure proper procedures, chemicals and uses are adhered to, under the Part IV of the Clean Water Act.

### Economic Impacts

Funding for the north Paris fire station was approved in the 2022 budget. Funds for station construction was budgeted at \$3,070,000. Additional funding for apparatus and equipment was budgeted at \$1,330,000. A portion of the funding (\$2,705,000) is funded by debt to be repaid by development charges, with the remainder (\$1,375,000) is funded by debt to be repaid by the tax levy.

Given escalating price increases experienced over the last year due to inflation, it is anticipated supplemental funds will be added to the capital budget through the 2023 budget process for station construction and equipment.

Construction of a fire station on municipally owned property has significant financial advantages, as a one acre parcel of land in the north Paris area is currently estimated between \$800,000 and \$1 million dollars.

## **Report**

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### Background

The Fire Master Plan (FMP), adopted by Council in 2021, considered current facilities and fire station locations. As noted in the FMP, fire stations should be situated to offer the most efficient and effective response to the community they serve. Centering them within a determined response zone simply based on "timed" responses is not always the best option to implement. Fire station location depends on factors such as key risks within the response zone, future growth of the community, and the geographical layout of the community that can include natural barriers or divides, such as water, that makes it necessary to have some stations located within proximity of each other. Public Fire Safety Guideline – PFSG 04-08-13 on Fire Station Location notes fire stations should be positioned to achieve the most effective and safe emergency responses.

The current Paris area station is built on the east side of the Grand River while much of the growth in Paris has been on the north side of the community. Further, responding to calls in

much of the community requires the crossing of a bridge and travelling through the downtown core which is often congested.

Adding a second station in the northern part of the community dramatically increases the ability to respond to the newly developing areas of the community.

In addition to reducing the response times to the north end of Paris and the County, this station would reduce the call demand on Station 1 for single apparatus responses.

### Analysis

The FMP proposed a purpose-built facility or a lease as part of a commercial property for the new north Paris station. In staff's view, leasing an existing commercial property presents substantial challenges, primarily sourcing a facility in the area with an appropriate footprint that is adequate to house a fleet of large apparatus, proper equipment and bunker gear storage in accordance with safe practices, and adequate common areas including offices and training areas. Noting these challenges, staff have been looking for an appropriate property in the area to construct a purpose-built facility.

### Proposed Site

The proposed site for a new station is just east of the corner of Grand River Street North and Scott Ave., which are County of Brant lands adjacent to the Gilbert Water system, shown in Appendix A. This parcel of land is identified as Part Lot 29, Concession 2, geographic Township of South Dumfries, and is 14.013 acres in size. Approximately one acre of land will be required for the new fire station. The site provides good access with limited traffic in the immediate area. The site is in the ideal area identified by the FMP that will provide dramatically improved response coverage west of the Grand River and north of the downtown.

A lease for this land parcel was in place with a local farmer for use for agricultural purposes. This lease expired in 2020. The farmer has continued to farm this area, and further discussion will be held with him to determine his interest to continue to farm this parcel in 2023 while the design work is underway for the new station. The ability to lease part of the parcel beyond 2023 will be re-evaluated prior to the 2024 growing season, when construction of the new station is expected to begin.

Staff have undertaken due diligence in assessing potential impacts and requirements of the station being located in a wellhead protection area. Staff have met with Cambium to review source water protection considerations. No concerns were identified by Cambium regarding the products and materials currently in use by Fire Services. The design and operation of the new station will take into consideration run off from potential contaminants on trucks following a fire suppression call to ensure there is no compromise of source water.

With respect to servicing, there are municipal water and wastewater services available for this site. Due to the low topography relative to Grand River Street North, it is anticipated that a sewage pump may be required for this property. Storm water design will have to be completed with wellhead protection in mind and salt usage on the site will have to be monitored to ensure that excess amounts do not make their way into the water supply. These challenges are achievable. Scott Street will require some improvement at the site entrance and the gates to the Gilbert Wellfield will need to be moved. The proposed roundabout at Scott and Grand River St North (GRSN) will provide excellent access for fire response in all directions. The timing of the Fire Hall construction and eventual operations and the projects to upgrade GRSN will require careful coordination. The roundabout at GRSN and Scott is being considered for the first phase of this multi season project to provide good access for the proposed Fire Hall.

### Next Steps

Following Council's approval of the station site, staff will proceed with an RFP for architectural services for design, tender preparation and construction project management. The design is anticipated to include 3 truck bays, a training room, small kitchenette, office space, change rooms, bunker gear room, and storage space. The design process will include consultation with the officers of the existing Paris station, as well as learnings from the recent builds in Scotland, Onondaga and Cainsville. Consideration will be given for potential future expansion of the facility to accommodate full-time firefighters.

The design process is planned to be completed and request Council's approval in 2023, following which staff will tender for a contractor to construct the new station. Construction is targeted to start in the spring of 2024, with a completion date by the end of that year.

Staff in Operations and Community and Protective Services are working together to mitigate the impact of construction of the new roundabout planned for the intersection of Grand River Street North and Scott Ave., on the construction and operation of the new north end fire station. It is desirable to have the roundabout at this intersection completed with minimal overlap on the fire station construction, and prior to the operation of the new station.

### Summary and Recommendations

Construction of the new north Paris station is necessary to address the growth in the Paris area and support the fire service in managing response times. The second station will also alleviate increasing pressure on existing Paris area personnel to respond to calls. A station on the municipally owned Gilbert lands is in an ideal area for the new station, with opportunity for expansion in the future. Upon approval of this report, staff will proceed to an RFP for architectural services.

### **Attachments**

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1. Aerial image with the approximate location of a new North Paris Fire Station

### **Reviewed By**

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1. Michael Bradley, CAO

### **Copied To**

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1. SMT

### **By-law and/or Agreement**

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By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No