



City of Burlington
Department of Public Works

645 Pine Street, Suite A
Burlington, VT 05402
802.863.9094 P
802.863.0466 F

Chapin Spencer
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Martha Q. Keenan
Capital Improvement Program Manager

Date: September 17, 2015
To: Mayor, Miro Weinberger
City Council
From: Martha Keenan, CPM
Capital Improvement Program Manager
Department of Public Works

Subject: Memorial Auditorium

This memo is an update on the 10 Year Capital Plan as it relates Memorial Auditorium. It does not request Council action, but seeks to highlight for Councilors the nature of the challenges posed by the facility. The fiscal year (FY)17 & FY18 capital plan has significant funding shortfalls that the Capital Planning Committee is working to address and will be providing recommendations to the City Council by December 2015. Memorial Auditorium constitutes \$17.5 million of that capital need over the next two fiscal years.

A little history:

Memorial Auditorium is a historical structure that has had extensive deferred maintenance over the last 25 years. Joseph Zachowski Architect performed an inspection and a priority list for rehabilitation in 1991 which includes the same roof, flashing and masonry issues discussed in both the following facilities assessments. Stantec Engineering performed a facilities assessment in 2008 that itemized significant needs at that time. There were some masonry repairs and some ADA improvements completed at that time leaving a multitude of items deferred. In 2014, the City of Burlington contracted with an outside firm, EMG, to do facilities assessments of all the municipal buildings (including Memorial Auditorium). This report verified the needs identified by Stantec in 2008, as well as additional items resulting from the extended deferring of items found in the original assessment.

The FY16 budget includes \$260,000 in anticipation of addressing the most urgent maintenance needs this year while working toward the larger needed redevelopment in FY17/FY18. The contract with A.C. Hathorne for the replacement work on the roof of Memorial Auditorium coming before the Board of Finance and the City Council on September 21 is an example of that anticipated maintenance need. Further, as part of effort to move forward with this work in late spring of 2015, an employee noticed and provided photos of cracking occurring in structural beams on the ceiling of the auditorium. This led to the discovery of extensive roof leaks and masonry cracking now easily visible within the building, which the City is continuing to investigate. At a minimum the following work must be completed to avoid more significant deterioration to the building:

- 1) Roof replacement, sealing the building from leaks into the building or along the masonry walls.
- 2) Masonry repair to address the damage done to it and the steel beam structure due to the extensive leaking of the roof.
- 3) Structural testing of steel pylons and beams, inspection and recommendations for deteriorating masonry perimeter wall.
- 4) Sistering of the wooden roof beams to stabilize the cracking that has occurred over the last short time period. The majority of cracks have occurred at knots on the bottom of the beam.
- 5) Asbestos abatement of the tiles on the ceiling of the auditorium where they touch the wooden beams being repaired.
- 6) Short term solutions to the heating plant should the existing boilers fail within the coming year.

The total cost of these necessary repairs is likely to exceed the budgeted \$260,000. We anticipate using funds from the FY15 surplus or deferring other items to address this issue, and will return to the Council in October with additional clarity on those proposed next steps.

In the meantime, the City is also taking steps to determine what the best long term opportunities might be for the facility. The Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) is formulating a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the adaptive reuse of the building that will be posted this fall. Evaluating the RFP response and having the public discussion necessary to determine the best path forward for the facility, the City, and the broader community could take many months, and the City will likely need to make investments in the short-term needs of the building to avoid further deterioration while allowing the longer-term discussion to unfold. It must be acknowledged that once work is begun, further structural issues could be identified that require additional investments and necessitate decisions about how to evaluate the immediate needs of Memorial Auditorium and the appropriate level of additional resource investment in the building.

Again, this is a preliminary communication, and we will return to the City Council with a proposed path forward.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at mkeenan@burlingtonvt.gov or 802-540-0701.

Martha Keenan