



## Council report

<b>Meeting date:</b>	February 16, 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Health and Safety Report Fire Station, 179 George Street West, Durham
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Phil Schwartz, Fire Chief
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Laura Johnston, Chief Administrative Officer

### Recommendation

That council receives report Health & Safety Report: Fire Station #2, 179 George Street West, Durham for information

### Executive summary

This report outlines actions taken to correct deficiencies at Fire Station #2, at 179 George Street in Durham, as well as identify present and future needs for the fire service. In general, this station will meet the needs of West Grey Fire Service, however, immediate and ongoing maintenance will be required.

### Background and discussion

The current fire station in Durham, built and opened in 1974, housed both the Durham police and fire departments. The fire office and classroom were in the rear of the building. At that time, there was one office for the fire chief with no storage room, and one washroom and one shower for the 18 members. The police station was in the front of the building with one office for the police chief and one desk for three officers, one cell and one washroom. In approximately 2000, when Durham Hydro was sold to Ontario Hydro, the PUC building on the same site became the new location for West Grey Police.

Space in the fire station has always been a challenge over the years and a mezzanine was erected at the rear of the apparatus bay, which created parking for two trucks below and space above for radio, fire prevention office and storage. Fire took over the former police office area in 2000 with the fire chief's office and radio room moved to the front, and a larger classroom in the back. The mezzanine was used for storage until the fall of 2020 when it was removed to



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give more space for a new ladder truck that was much higher than the previous truck.

Recently, First General was brought in as part of a mold inspection. Mold was found and subsequently the area was scrubbed and repainted, which has remediated the mold.

Another important improvement was in the hose tower, specifically to a pit that caught the water that drained from the hoses. That pit was a trip hazard so in January 2021, the drain was raised and the pit filled with concrete, which eliminated that hazard and created a few more square meters of usable floor space.

Other improvements and upgrades:

- New ramp front of hall to decrease the angle of departure (2006)
- New siding and insulation (2012)
- New furnace in the office area (2013)
- New roof over the entire building including the police building (2013)
- New washroom fixtures (2019)
- New LED lighting (2019)
- In the 2021 budget, there is a project to replace the 25-year-old tube heaters in the truck bay with a new furnace. These heaters are detrimental to the life of the aerial ladder because the high temperature causes the ladder to expand and contract which can cause undue fatigue on welded joint and members of the ladder.

Other items that require addressing (and options to address, should fire assume the entire building):

- Climate controlled storage for turnout gear and equipment, and dressing room
  - Required to facilitate proper drying and mold-free storage for turnout gear between calls. Proper storage for turnout gear when not in use should be in a separate area off the apparatus floor. A short-term, immediate solution will be to convert the present front office area into a gear room.
  - Required to remove gear storage from current location. While exhaust fumes are common in any building that houses vehicles inside, we need to create a proper cloak/gear room with appropriate distance from exhaust fumes. Under Section 21, Guidance Notes on Firefighter Health and Safety, regarding diesel fumes, we are meeting the minimum recommendation for natural ventilation.
- More storage area for inventoried and seasonal equipment and surplus equipment.
  - There would be space in the police area for storage.
- More administration and office area.



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- Police office area could be used for this purpose with office space for the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief / Fire Prevention, Public Education office. As well, a permanent Emergency Operations Center could be established in the police boardroom.
- Female washroom with shower facility required.
- More truck bay space for offsite stored equipment.
  - The two bays acquired from the police bays would work for this.

## Legal and legislated requirements

Sec. 21, Guidance Notes on Firefighter Health and Safety, which is part of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

## Financial and resource implications

There would be costs associated with taking over the vacant space when West Grey Police move, including renovations and additional furniture and fixtures.

Operationally, there would be additional costs of higher utilities and building maintenance. However, converting this building to a Durham fire campus is much more cost-effective than building a new fire station. Given the current challenges for space, this is a viable, fiscally responsible solution.

## Staffing implications

There are no staffing implication. Given the nature of fire service, which is primarily a volunteer service, there are many benefits to the staff. With more room for training, for proper gear storage, for administrative duties, and equipment and vehicle space, the service would be able to function well at this site.

## Consultation

Laura Johnston, CAO  
Genevieve Scharback, West Grey

## Alignment to strategic vision plan

Pillar:	Build a better future
Goal:	Vibrant community
Strategy:	Maintain and invest in our infrastructure; be responsible stewards of the tax dollars



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## Attachments

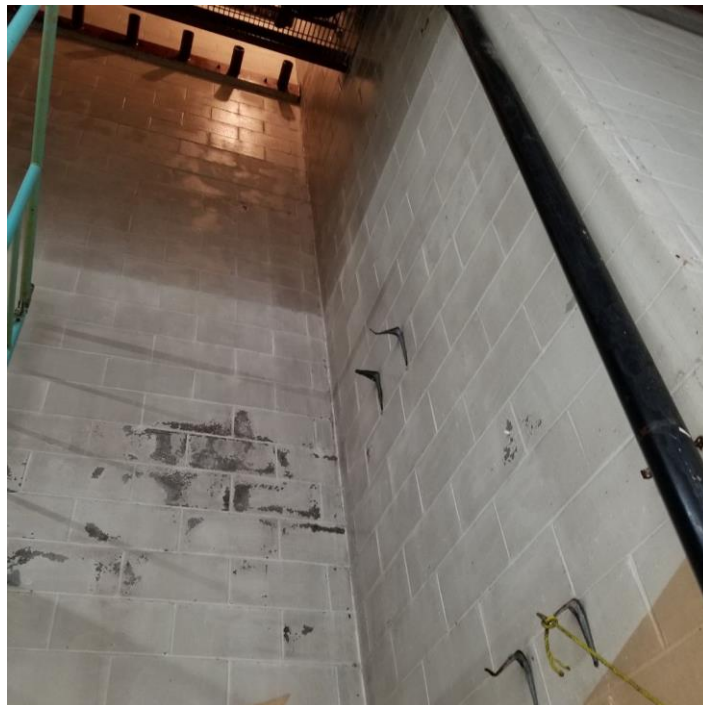
Photos attached of mold remediation and cramped workspaces.

## Next steps

The mold issue in the fire station has been successfully remediated. The options outlined in this report are to address fire's need for space, proper storage, and efficiency. The Fire Chief recommends that budget be allocated in 2022 and 2023 to create and provide suitable and workable space for the Durham platoon.

Respectfully submitted:

Phil Schwartz, Fire Chief



Mold area, mitigated by First General.



Same area today, after clean-up and painting.



Lower tower area after painting by staff. Notice the filled in drain pit area that eliminated previous trip hazard.



Turnout gear present storage.





Cramp work area rear bay



Cramped office space.