



Haldimand County Central Administration Building Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document

Will my taxes be affected?

The County takes a long-term planned approach to providing services to the community. The new Administration building will not alter the County's long-range, multi-year planned impact on annual property taxes which has to-date maintained County property taxes below the Provincial average.

Can the County afford this new building?

Yes. A comprehensive cost comparison of maintaining the status quo versus building a new administration center showed significant cost savings in the long-run. The County's main administrative building in Cayuga is 50 years old next year and at the end of its useful life, requiring significant capital work. Further, the building does not meet current accessibility standards nor does it adequately support the Provincial Offences court proceedings and today's work requirements.

Over the initial 20 years, the new administration building costs are approximately \$10.4 million more than maintaining the existing buildings including all borrowing costs. However, over the next 30 years, based on a rental rate of \$16 per sq/ft, the new building is in the area of \$15.5 million cheaper than it would have been maintaining the existing four administration centres. Of course, today's \$16 rental rate will be much higher 30 years from now, so that anticipated value will only be heightened. This does not take into account the expected operational savings over the entire 50 year period.

Will the increase in interest rates affect the financing of the building?

No. County staff had forecasted the trend in higher interest rates and made all financial calculations based on those higher forecasted rates.

Aside from long-term building value and associated savings, what other cost efficiencies will be achieved by the Central Administration Building?

There will be savings from reduced staff mileage (no more travel time between buildings), and boosted productivity/collaboration due to staff being co-located. Due to the efficiencies of staff being located in one facility, it is expected that there will be cost savings over time through attrition.

Will the construction of a new administration building prevent the County from addressing other priorities within the community?

No. The investment in a new Central Administration Building will not affect County investments in other major infrastructure priorities. The County's financial health has improved over the past 2 terms of Council as documented by Standard and Poor's four credit rating upgrades over the past 7 years to our current AA-Stable. By consolidating to a single building, the County is actually building a more efficient foundation to administratively support the provision of day-to-day public services and long-term Council priorities.

Why a new Administration building now?

Currently, the County maintains 4 Administration buildings. The Caledonia building, which is leased, costs taxpayers over \$240,000 annually in rent, while the other buildings are nearing the end of their useful life and require significant capital improvements.

By consolidating these 4 Administration buildings, the County will achieve significant cost savings and work efficiencies while providing residents with one-stop, full service. No longer will residents have to visit more than one building to obtain building and planning permits, licenses and information that may require support from multiple divisions.

Why was the Cayuga Arena site selected as the location?

The Cayuga location is under the ownership of the County and central to the majority of the County for clients that desire or require municipal services in person – within 15 to 20 minutes of the majority of County residents. It is also familiar and consistent with the historical context of Cayuga as the County seat. A Cayuga location was the strongest preference indicated by community stakeholders. Further, this site takes advantage of the existing parking lot and storm water management pond.

Were public consultations held to gain resident input and gauge support of the new building?

Yes. Council established the review of administration centres as part of their Term of Council Priorities in 2014. Work formally began on this project in 2015, with surveys, public open houses, stakeholder focus groups and meetings with Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Associations. The majority of survey respondents and the feedback collected during public consultation sessions clearly indicated the majority supported the consolidation of administration functions into one building.