

# CENTRALIZED OFFICE AND WORK FROM HOME MODEL

From the **City of Brantford**

## Panelists:

- Brian Hutchings, Chief Administrative Officer
- Lise Sordo, Director of Facilities Management & Security

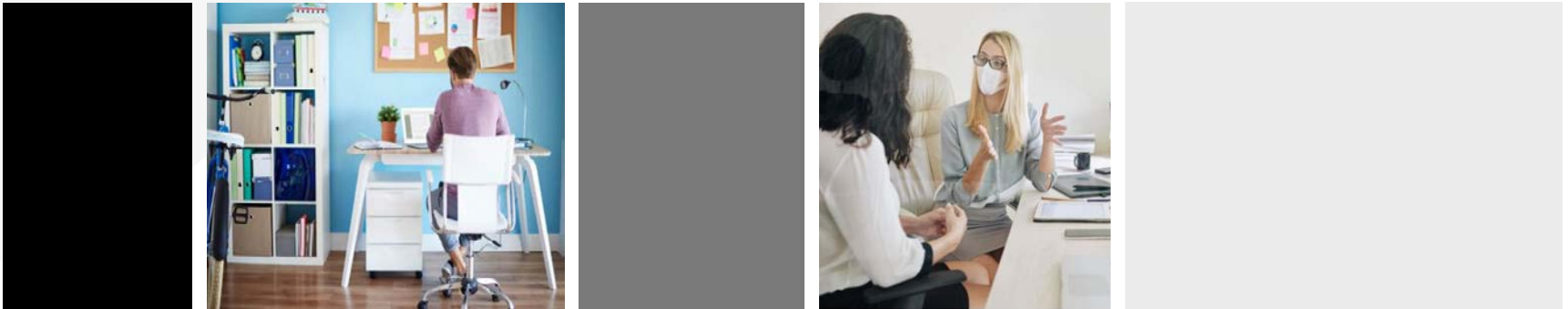
# HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

**March 2020** – City Staff who could were sent home to work due to COVID-19 Pandemic

**June 2020** – With Council members expressing interest, and following an all staff survey we began exploring a new work from home model and how it might save space and costs.

**September 2020** - Council official direction - Review accommodation plans looking at a new work from home model (Post COVID-19)

**October 2020** – Council Approval of a revised Overall Accommodations and Yard Facility Plan Including the new City Hall as the Centralized Office and a New Work From Home Model



## **Savings:**

***\$21.57 million in 10 year Capital needs and \$1.12 million in annual operating savings for administrative accommodations alone – divesting of another major facility and decreasing leased space.***

***134 T of CO2 eq. annually in GHG emission reductions by reducing space needs and commuting***

# CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

Middle of constructing a new City Hall

Middle of COVID-19 Pandemic

Work from home is maintained and going well during reopening, services are maintained both online and in person

Not all employees are equipped to sustain it for the long term and not suitable for all positions

Quick action was required to make any changes during construction.

Productivity was reportedly up, but additional/new supports were required to maintain.

Many large private organizations were already implementing or looking to implement.

**"In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks."  
Mark Zuckerberg**

# OBJECTIVES

To be opportunistic, save capital and operating costs, maintain or improve customer service delivery and maintain or improve employee retention.

Review the design required to accommodate any future pandemics and future work models

Determine if a permanent work from home model is feasible and what will it cost

Establish the Workplace and Work from Home Model that is best suited for the City of Brantford

## Actions:

- ✓ Follow up survey regarding work from home and if staff would like this option
- ✓ Development of a Work from Home Policy
- ✓ Development of Space Standards and the Work from Home Model
- ✓ Engagement with Management and Staff on feasibility
- ✓ Determine needs:
  - Technologies
  - Changes to floor plans/furniture
  - Change Management

# WORKING FROM HOME NOT SUITABLE FOR ALL POSITIONS:

- perform in-person customer services
- in field inspections/maintenance and other tasks that negate the ability to work from home
- may require close supervision
- challenges that may prevent an employee to successfully work from home including reliable internet connectivity, a potential for reduced engagement and informal discussions, and limited access to a dedicated, distraction free workspace.

## Initial Survey - May, 2020:

- Establish Baseline on how staff was coping during pandemic
- 469 City employees responded; 192 identified they were working from home
  - 72% of those working from home felt they were able to work effectively
  - 86% felt they could comfortably maintain it for the long term
  - Challenges include: social isolation, communication with co-workers and anxiety about the virus

## Follow-up Survey - August, 2020:

- Informed staff that a new Centralized Office and Work from Home Model being considered and targeted staff working from home
- 166 responses (previously 192 responded working from home)
  - 71% Satisfied with current arrangements
  - 95% felt equally or more productive
  - 79% felt they could permanently maintain their current work from home arrangement
  - Top benefits reported: No commute, less money spent, ability to sleep longer with no commute; less exposure to COVID19 and Better work/life balance

# THE NEW WORKPLACE MODEL

## *New City Hall - the Centralized Office and Meeting Place for Staff*

Employees who can effectively work remotely can

Employees can come in the office as needed and/or as scheduled by their manager

Employees who must be in the office will be assigned dedicated workspaces in the office only

Employees who come to the office at least two days a week will have a dedicated-shared workspace; and employees attending less than two days will use touchdown stations

Employees approved to work from home must establish their own dedicated workspaces in their home

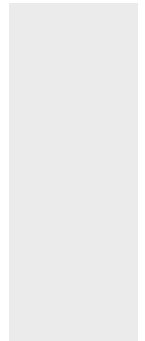
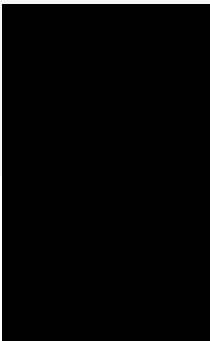
Increased cleaning protocols in place

# KEY BENEFITS

**Employee - Work life balance, less commuting and decreased illness**

**Employer - Sustainability for growth or changes, decreased expenses, improved productivity, attracting and retaining talent**

**Residents – Lowers tax impacts, reduces GHG emissions and improves accessibility to services**



# WORK FROM HOME POLICY & PROCEDURE

- **Outlines eligibility requirements and steps required for a WFH Agreement**
- **Meet the requirements of job responsibilities and performance**
- **Remote work area and expenses**
- **Management Responsibilities**

***Ability for reassessment or modifications from time to time.***

***Management shall encourage employees to work from home wherever possible.***

***Training for how to connect and work effectively from home.***

FAQ provides additional information on:

- Flexible working hours
- Workplace Set-up
- Technology
- Connecting with others
- Workplace/WFH Culture
- Healthy workplace and ergonomics



# NEW CITY HALL CENTRALIZED OFFICE

Reduced space by an average of ~ 33%

Ability to accommodate all administrative departments at a single location (100,000 sq.ft.) delivering all services from centralized counter

Floor Plans accommodate up to 291 staff at once (of 400)

56% of administrative employees will no longer require traditional dedicated workspace



- Standard size workstations able to accommodate social distancing [Size: 6x7 with 54" high partitions]
- Director level and up have private offices
- Approx. 30 unassigned workstations with technology
- 38 private meeting rooms (with technology) – various sizes
- 3 training rooms – flexible wall systems
- 7 open collaboration spaces, including a working lunchroom “Clock Tower Café”
- Universal docking and Mobile Technologies for home and office

# DECENTRALIZED SOCIAL SERVICES

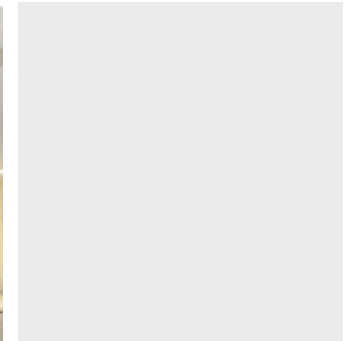
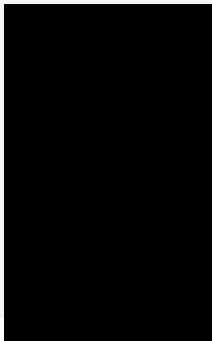
Also working productively from home, maintaining services

Services now available by telephone = 20% increase in client attendance to appointments

Focusing on digital services for the future

Original plan: renovate the old City Hall at 50,000 sq.ft. for Social Services. Taking the WFH model into account reduces space significantly, and decentralizing eliminates need for the old City Hall.

New Plan: Smaller Central Hub with Decentralized Client Services to multiple locations throughout community – mix of City facilities and leasing (if required)



- \$21.5 Million in Capital savings (Renovation and Renewal)
- 20 administrative and management staff accommodated at new City Hall, 70 Dalhousie St.
- Decentralized client services to multiple locations throughout community– 105 staff accommodation mixed with work from home
- 5,000-8,000 sq.ft. Main Service Centre (within downtown)
- Conducting location analysis and selection, and concept design

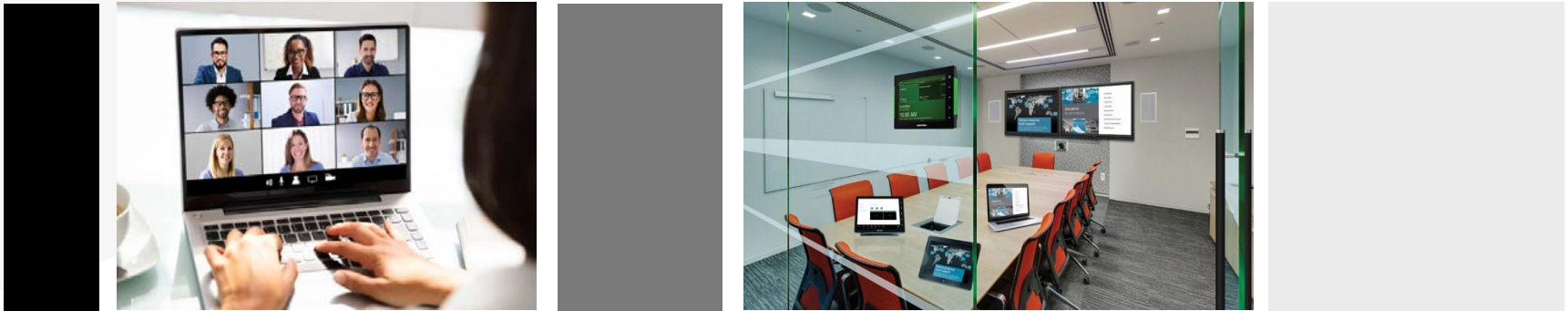
# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

**Unified Communications Technology** – soft phones, messenger app and video collaboration

**Home, Dedicated and Shared/Flex Workspaces**

**Network and Security** – enhanced antivirus, full disc encryption, authentication protection

**Additional resources to deploy and increased operating costs due to additional licensing**



- Home: Laptop, docking station, external monitors, external keyboard, mouse, headset
- Dedicated office: status quo
- Shared and Flex Workspaces: universal docking station, external monitors, with individual external keyboard, mouse, headset
- Existing monitors, keyboards, mice and docking stations repurposed where possible

# CHANGE MANAGEMENT

**Create new work and customer service flow processes (was already underway)**

**Communication Plan and Actions**

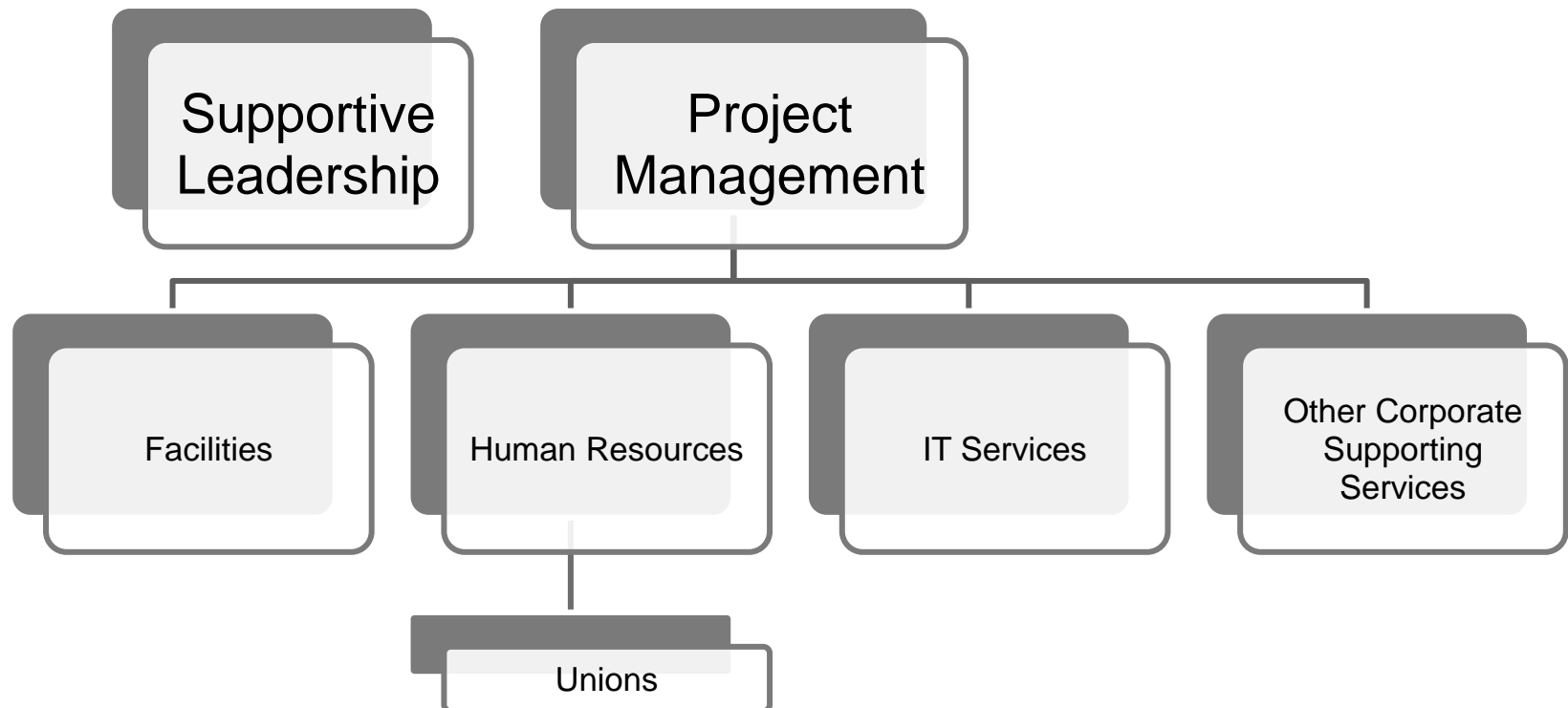
**Staff Engagement**

**Training**

**Evaluation and Monitoring**

# KEY PERSONNEL

*The right culture, people and values along with supportive leadership*



# BUDGET

**Reallocated already approved funds for the design or construction of facilities now able to be divested.**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Floor Plan Changes	\$250,000
Technology	\$1,417,425
Change Management	\$50,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$1,717,425</b>

# PROJECT TIMETABLE

**Future accommodation projects will also be looked at for opportunities to reduce space and design for sustainability**

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>
<b>Phase 1</b>	New City Hall Central Office & WFH	August 2021
<b>Phase 2</b>	Decentralized Social Services	August 2023

QUESTIONS?