

Library Square on track for completion in August 2022

A final name for Library Square could be determined this Spring, but that uncertainty is not stopping progress on the \$52 million downtown revitalization project.

According to updated timelines presented to Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillors Harold Kim and Michael Thompson at last week's meeting of Aurora's Finance Advisory Committee, Library Square and its associated amenities, including the addition to the historic Church Street School building and a bridge connecting it to the Aurora Public Library, is expected to be complete for occupancy in August 2022 with final completion slated for the following November.

The project is generally on track, said Lianne Jalali of the Town's Project Management Office, in her report to the Committee (FAC). The west entrance tower to the Library has now been completely removed, excluding the foundations. Interior demolition continues on the first and second floor of the Library. Temporary ductwork and HVAC units are being installed at the east and west elevations of the Library. This will provide interim heating during the disconnect and relocation of the existing rooftop units. Excavation of the future elevator pit, located within the first floor Magna meeting room is underway.

Work also continues at the Church Street School, with the north stairs of the building and elevator shaft demolished as excavation and underpinning is related to the building's original rubble foundation.

The project budget has been baselined for \$51,939,700 (including HST). Chandos's (contractor) contract price excluding cash allowance amount of \$1,615,250 will be tracked separately as the various areas of scope are implemented throughout the construction project, said Ms. Jalali. Currently there are over 27 contemplated change notices (CCNs) and four request for change orders issued by Chandos. Any potential costs for these will be drawn from the construction contingency.

In addition to a status update on Library Square, the FAC also were brought up to speed on other large capital projects, including the new fire hall presently under construction on Earl Stewart Drive, just south of St. John's Sideroad.

The project update on the fire hall bills the progress of the build as satisfactory with a delay in the scheduled completion date.

The installation of foundations and all footings are complete, said Ms. Jalali. Structural steel is complete. The installation of steel decking and core floor slabs commenced on February 17, 2021. The installation of underground plumbing is at 90 per cent completion. Coordination of servicing to the site for hydro and gas are ongoing; however, dates for installation have not been confirmed yet.

The delay in the project delivery date is a result of soil conditions and installation of the helical piles.

The station is now expected to be ready for occupancy by March 7, 2022 with total completion set for June 1 of the same year.

The total project cost is now expected to be \$13.655 million.

While Council members had little question about the timelines as they relate to Library Square, Councillor Harold Kim raised questions on the status of the fire hall, particularly with the project's contingency budget to account for the unexpected.

In terms of the fire hall costs, it seems that 75 per cent of the contingency is already taken up and we still have more than a year left until completion, he said. Based on our expectations, do we still have some room in the contingencies or should we be a little concerned?

Fielding this question was Rachel Wainwright-van Kessel, who said the biggest risks surrounding the fire hall are now behind them.

?At this point in time, because we have now gotten to the point where we have the structure starting to take shape and also because of the additional work we did with our contractor and with our architect working together quite closely in the redesign of the fire hall to [be] within budget, there were a lot of synergies that were gained there and [they were] actually able to look at things in more detail,? she said. ?He was fairly confident that for the contingency we should be okay because we're above ground. The biggest risk was what we would find in the ground.?

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Reporter