



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

## STAFF REPORT

**To:** Council  
**From:** Director of Development Services  
**Subject:** City Hall Clock Project Update

**File No.:** 6800-20-City Clock  
**Date:** November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

### PURPOSE:

This report provides an update on the refurbishment and installation of the heritage clocks as requested by Council at the regular Council meeting held on October 11, 2023. Council adopted the following motion:

“WHEREAS the City of Courtenay Heritage Commission has requested clarity regarding the refurbishment of historic clocks;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT a staff report be prepared to address this request.”

### BACKGROUND:

Council was first introduced to the Heritage Clocks Refurbishment project in 2018. At the November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Council meeting a staff report was presented on the opportunity to restore and refurbish two heritage clocks as identified by the Heritage Advisory Commission (HAC): The Old City Hall Clock and the Old Theatre Clock. It was the vision of the HAC at the time that both clocks be placed on the original buildings they represented.

In 2019 and 2020 (prior to the pandemic), the design of the clock was finalized in consultation with the HAC (Figure No. 1) and restoration expertise was secured in accordance with procurement practices.



Figure No. 1: The Clock shown on the Old City Hall Building and a design selected to restore the original clock.

In April 2021 the HAC advised on the location of the clock after reviewing a number of options (Figure 2) including:

- A. Placing it on the City Hall front façade;
- B. Placing it on the north side of the building adjacent to the steel stairwell:
  - By either bolting the clock directly to the north building wall; or
  - Hanging the clock from the original two chains by a custom-made structural bracket to be secured to the roof.

- C. Placing it on the façade of the steel stairwell with a custom-made structural bracket secured to the building roof.

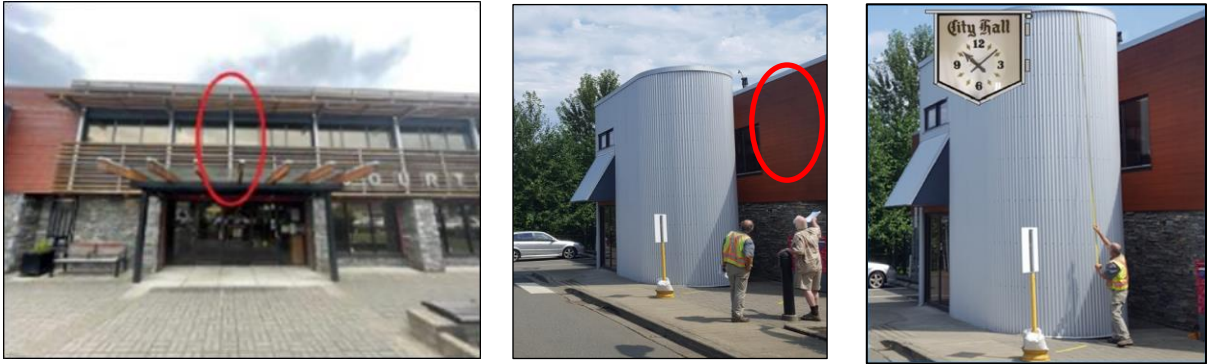


Figure No. 2: Options for locating the City Hall Clock, 2021, A through C (left to right).

The HAC advised the front façade noting that the clock would be visible from both sides for persons travelling along Cliffe Avenue. It was further recommended that the bottom of the clock be placed twelve (12) feet from the ground and be hung with chains similar to the Old City Clock.

The HAC did not consider the installation of the clock on any other civic buildings or properties in the City other than the City Hall building given that the clock is labeled “City Hall”.

At the regular Council Meeting held on November 21, 2022, the following two motions passed:

“THAT Council pre-approve for 2023 \$14,826 to the heritage commission operating budget;  
 THAT staff allocate \$14,826 from gaming grant funds to fund this initiative; and  
 THAT Council direct staff to work towards installing the old city hall clock before Heritage Week 2023 which falls on the third week of February.”  
 CARRIED

The clock project experienced delays due to the pandemic. In late 2022 the HAC and staff resumed the implementation phase of the clock installation which included:

- Refurbishment completed.
- Structural Engineering designs to place the clock on the front of the City Hall building.
- Quotes were solicited and obtained for a contractor to install the clock due to the presence of asbestos containing material (ACM) and associated hazard level which exceeded the safety threshold for City staff to complete the work.

The clock was not able to be installed for Heritage Week in February 2023 due to reconsiderations in the location. The HAC 2023 regular meeting minutes show a consistent desire to continue the installation of the City Hall clock.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Staff have reviewed the location of the refurbished City Hall Clock at the Development Application Review Team (DART) and a number of concerns have been raised about installing the refurbished clock on the existing City Hall. Staff propose that Council consider other locations for the refurbished clock and seek

direction from Council on the location. Cost estimates will be required and should the \$14,826 not cover the installation costs Staff will return with a request for a budget adjustment.

### **Alternative Locations**

Given that Old City Hall Clock includes the words “City Hall”, staff continue to recommend that installation of the refurbished clock should be on the City Hall property.

Considerations for installation on City Hall building versus on the property are:

- The clock does not match the exterior colors/design of the City Hall building. Changing the clock colours to match City Hall would alter the refurbished heritage design.
- A stand-alone option (where the clock is not directly affixed to any City Hall building wall, roof or stairwell) may be more appropriate, especially if it is paired with interpretative signage. Stand-alone options include:
  - locating the clock in close proximity to the entrance of City Hall where the flag poles were formerly located;
  - locating the clock in the landscaped area on the southwest portion of the property adjacent to Cliffe Avenue;
  - Affixing the clock to an existing lamppost on City Hall property by chains and/or a structural bracket.
- Any departures from the City Hall front façade option will require additional cost estimate to be determined.
- The HAC has not yet been formally consulted on alternative ideas to respond to Council’s 2022 motion and will be consulted at the direction of Council.
- The clock requires an electrical power source. The clock is over 300 lbs and any installation require a structural design. Placing the clock on a building requires a building permit.
- Asbestos is contained in the walls of the existing city hall which requires specialized hazmat installation that has not been considered and requires a cost estimate. Staff would prefer to avoid disturbance of the wall structure.

### **Staff recommendation**

Staff recommend that the stand-alone option in the location of where the old City Hall was, and that interpretive signage to tell the story of the original City Hall location and the clock’s linkages to Courtenay’s past. Staff would bring this concept to the HAC for their comments once the location and costs have been finalized.

### **POLICY ANALYSIS:**

Official Community Plan No. 3070 encourages “Heritage” to be showcased throughout the City and contains policies that support the recognition of local culture and heritage assets as foundational to Courtenay’s community identity. The OCP supports investments in, and creation of, cultural resources and activities, and cultural and artistic expression in the public realm.

The Commission advises Council on matters referred to it by the Council and undertakes and provides supports heritage activities directed by Council. The Commission also:

1. develops and implements educational and public awareness programs related to heritage conservation in the City;

2. raises funds for local heritage conservation projects; and
3. makes recommendations on heritage policy and advise Council on policy issues relating to heritage property and neighbourhoods.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The original budget of \$25,000 to refurbish two heritage clocks (Theatre and City Hall) was approved in 2018 from gaming funds. In 2022, \$14,826 remained in the budget after refurbishment of one City Hall clock. The \$14,826 was carried forward to the 2023 budget to install one City Hall clock.

Should Council wish to proceed with the front façade of City Hall installation option, a new quote will be obtained to ensure that the budgeted amount remains sufficient due to inflation, hazmat, and structural requirements to meet Building Code.

The information presented on the budget above is only for the City Hall clock and does not include funds for the Theatre Clock which remains without refurbishments and uninstalled.

**OPTIONS:**

1. THAT Council support a stand-alone option for the City Hall Clock at the location of the old City Hall or Flag Pole location and include interpretative signage ;  
AND THAT staff report back to Council on the location recommendation for the stand-alone option, along with costs ;  
AND THAT staff bring the report to the Heritage Advisory Commission to receive comments.
2. THAT Council support locating the City Hall Clock on the front façade of the “City Hall Building” as recommended by the City’s Heritage Advisory Commission.
3. THAT Council provide alternative direction to City on the location of the City Hall Clock.
4. THAT Council not proceed with the City Hall Clock project

**Staff recommend option 1.****ATTACHMENTS:**

None

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