



Report to Council

Department: Community Services
Division: Fire and Rescue Services
Date: April 7, 2025
Prepared by: Jason Pillon, Fire Chief
Report Number: Fire and Rescue Services – 2025-05
Subject: Essex Fire Station 3 – Proposed Land for New Station 3
Number of Pages: 10 Pages

Recommendation(s)

That Fire and Rescue services -2025-05 entitled Essex Fire Station 3 – Proposed Land for New Station 3 prepared by Jason Pillon dated April 7, 2025, be received, and

That Council approve the Harrow Soccer Complex as the site for the new Fire Station 3 in Harrow and approve moving forward with the architectural design for the location at 2215 Roseborough Road.

Purpose

To update Council on the progress of relocating and constructing the new Fire Station 3 in Ward 4 of the Town of Essex, with a recommendation to utilize land currently owned by the Town of Essex.

Background and Discussion

In November 2018, Essex Fire and Rescue Services carried out a Building Condition Assessment and a Feasibility Study to evaluate options for renovating, expanding, or constructing a new Fire

Station 3. This assessment was performed by Archon Architects Incorporated, in collaboration with consulting engineers Haddad Morgan and Associates. The inspections covered a comprehensive review of the building's architectural, civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

Their inspection revealed that most building systems were in poor to fair condition, primarily due to their age, which limits the potential for upgrades and reflects the original quality. Based on the findings of this Building Condition Assessment (BCA), along with conceptual designs and cost estimates, the final conclusions and recommendations suggest that it is in the Town's best interest to purchase a vacant property and construct a new building.

In 2022, Council Report 2022-07 provided an update on the search for a new location for Fire Station 3, identifying a potential site at 2215 Roseborough Road in Harrow, within the Harrow Soccer Complex. However, following the report's findings, Council recommended exploring additional potential locations to determine the best site for the new station. Additionally, with the Fire Master Plan on the horizon, it was advised to wait for its results to better inform the selection of the most suitable location.

The recent Master Fire Plan, completed by the Loomex Consulting Group, identified that Station 3 in Harrow does not meet the Department's current needs. Furthermore, all evidence reviewed during the development of the Master Fire Plan indicates that the station will be inadequate for the Department's anticipated future needs.

Given the issues with Station 3, The Loomex Consulting Group concurs with the 2018 building condition assessment. It is more practical for Council and the Essex Fire and Rescue Services to construct a new fire station at a different location rather than attempting to update the existing Station 3.

A key issue with Station 3 is its insufficient space. For instance, the current facility is unable to provide enough training rooms or adequate assembly space. The limited capacity in the

apparatus bay also limits the types of apparatus Essex Fire can house. Furthermore, the restricted space raises several legislative concerns, such as non-compliant washroom facilities.

Recognizing that staffing locations may change due to turnover, it was emphasized that the new fire station should be strategically planned and thoughtfully located. The discussion highlighted that the site must serve the community not only in the present but also for many years to come.

Replacing Station 3 with a new facility presents several benefits. The most significant advantage is that the Town of Essex can design a station specifically to meet the Department's current and future needs. Additionally, a new station in a different location is unlikely to affect the Department's average response times, as volunteer firefighters are stationed across various areas of Harrow. Additionally, a new fire station can be designed with a layout that adheres to relevant building codes and regulations, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

As outlined in the Master Fire Plan, if the Town of Essex proceeds with building a new fire station to replace Station 3, the town should consider the following factors:

- Will the proposed building design and location provide adequate parking now and in the future?
- What is the potential for future growth at the proposed site?
- What is the potential for future training space?
- Will the proposed design and location accommodate the Department's apparatus and vehicle deployment needs?
- Will the proposed design and location support a multi-use municipal facility?

While selecting a convenient location for the new fire station is important, it is even more critical for the Town of Essex to choose a site that is large enough to meet the community's long-term needs.

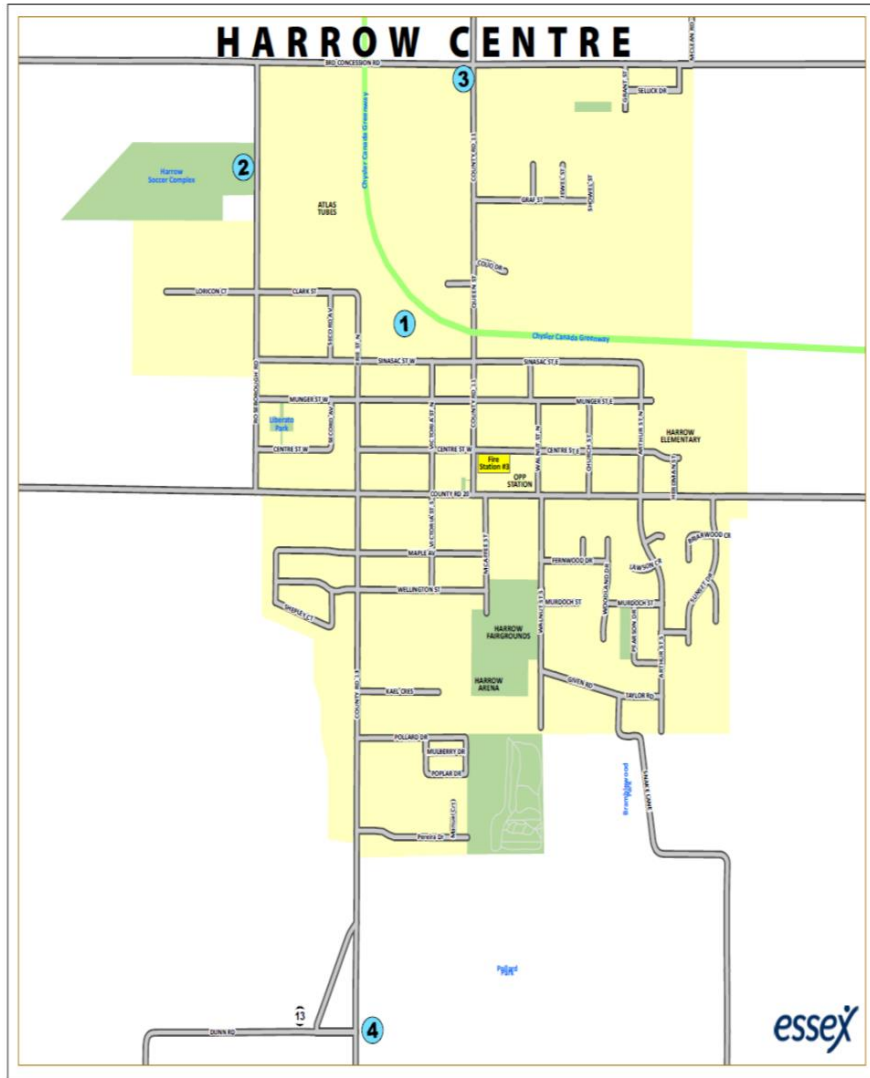
In 2024, Council approved Capital Project FD-24-0006, which involves hiring an architect for the design of the new Fire Station #3. The design will follow the layout of the newly constructed Fire Station #2, which is expected to reduce design costs. The approved budget for the architectural design is \$140,000. Furthermore, Essex Fire has been working in collaboration with Tomek Realty to assess potential locations and the associated costs of each site.

The 2024 Fire Master Plan, developed by Loomex Consulting, identified four potential sites for the replacement of Fire Station #3. These sites were selected based on data from fire call locations and the current staffing sites, which determine the response times for firefighters.

The four potential sites are as follows:

- The Essex Environmental Services Department Office
- The Harrow Sports Complex
- The serviced lot across from the Harrow EMS station
- The lot south of Harrow Centre (Intersection of Dunn Road and County Road 13)

The map provided illustrates Harrow Centre and highlights the proposed replacement site locations.



The next steps involved conducting thorough assessments of the four identified locations, which included a cost analysis for land acquisition and a detailed description of the findings for each site. The results from these evaluations will guide the final decision on the best location for Fire Station #3, ensuring the new facility meets the needs of both the Fire Department and the community.

Location 1:

Environmental Services Department Facility (120 Sinasac Street West)

The municipally owned Essex Environmental Services department site is not practical or suitable due to the limited size of the lot and access restrictions. Additionally, the location would require a building large enough to house both municipal departments, but the property is not adequately sized to meet these needs. The lot would provide limited access and egress for emergency routes and both services, which could hinder timely response in critical situations. The presence of existing structures on the site may restrict the necessary space for storing the Department's current and future apparatus. While modifying or demolishing these structures may help address this issue, it would still require significant investment. Although the lot could accommodate sufficient parking for the Department's firefighters, it may present challenges regarding access and egress for responders, potentially slowing down emergency response times.

Location 2: Harrow Soccer Complex (2215 Roseborough Road)

The municipally owned property offers convenient access to critical roads and routes for emergency response and is large enough to accommodate a fire station with a spacious outdoor training area. It provides ample space to meet the Department's current and future apparatus storage needs, with adequate parking available for both firefighters and visitors. The lot is sufficiently sized to support a facility following the layout of the newly constructed Fire Station #2, featuring expansive meeting spaces, a training room, PPE storage, mechanical rooms, and cleaning facilities. Furthermore, there will be no impact to existing soccer fields in the area, ensuring the preservation of these recreational spaces. Additionally, the property complies with all relevant building codes and AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) requirements, ensuring accessibility and safety for all.

Location 3: 3rd Concession Road and County Road 11

The current design of Station 2 could fit on this property, but after consulting with the architect, it appears to be a tight fit and would likely require access from both Queen Street and the 3rd Concession. While the location offers good access to roads for emergency responses, there would be limited space for training and no opportunity for future expansion. The lot's size would also result in restricted parking and may not provide enough room to meet the Department's current and future needs.

Location 4: Lot to the South of Harrow Centre (Intersection of Dunn Road and County Road 13).

The lot south of Harrow Centre, situated at the intersection of Dunn Road and County Road 13, is not ideal due to its distance from our staff's current location. Additionally, the intersection of King and County Road 13 could present challenges for apparatus returning to Harrow Centre. A lot in this area would provide limited access routes for emergency responders and would move the station away from the urban center of Harrow. Furthermore, acquiring this lot would likely require the purchase and/or severance of land.

Additional potential sites:

After reviewing the potential sites outlined in the Fire Master Plan and collaborating with Tomek Realty, we focused on identifying all possible locations in the Harrow area. This process led to the review and investigation of several additional sites, primarily around the Roseborough Road area within Harrow Center, along with their estimated purchase costs. Tomek Realty reached out to the owners of these properties, and the findings revealed that either the owners were not interested in selling, had future plans for their land, or the cost of acquisition would be significant.

The estimated projected cost to construct the new station is \$4,850,000.00, assuming it is built on municipally owned property. However, if Station 3 is not located on municipal land and land

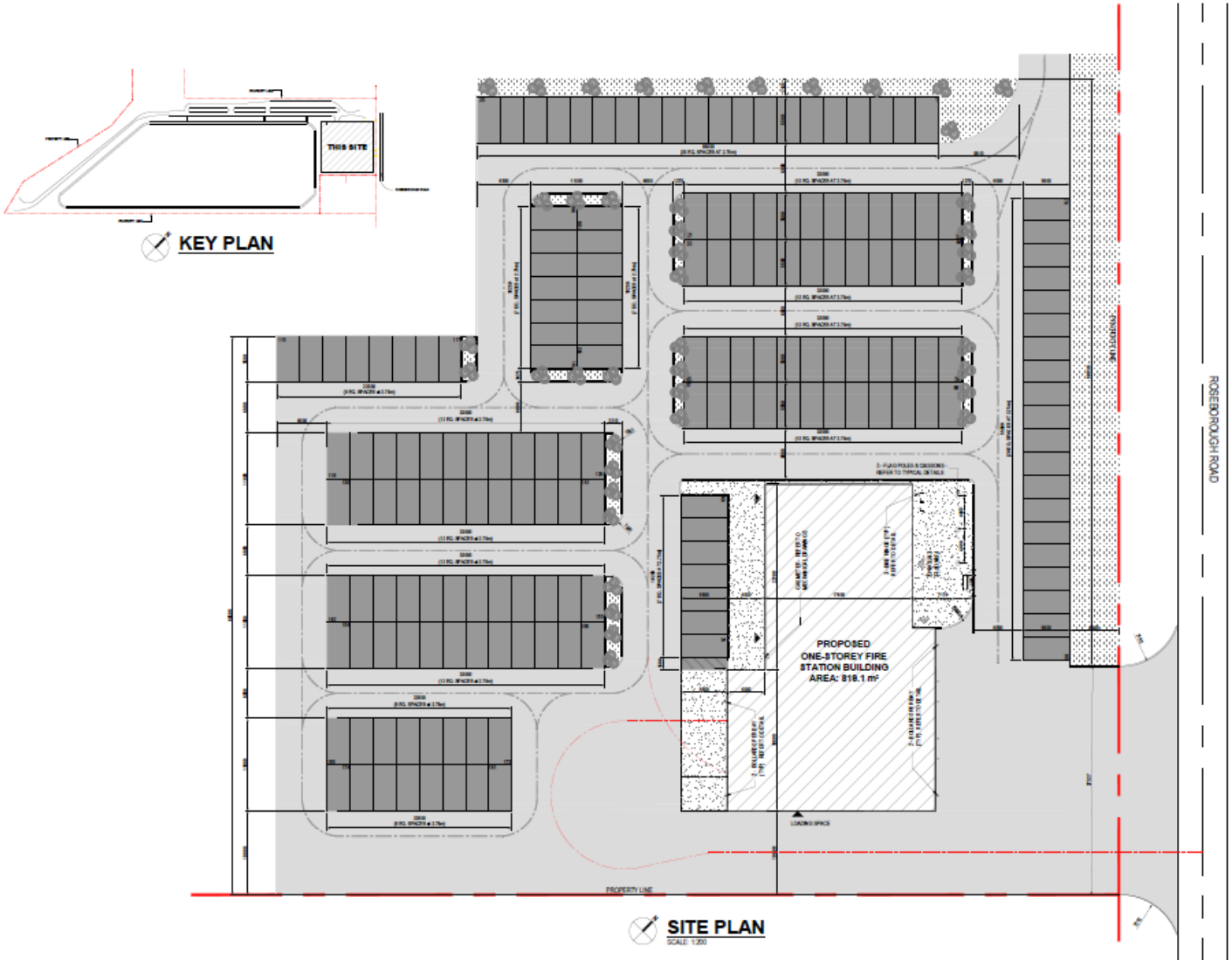
acquisition becomes necessary, additional costs for purchasing the property and any required infrastructure will be incurred.

Recommended Site

2215 Roseborough Road – Harrow Soccer Complex

The municipally owned property, recommended as a location in the Fire Master Plan, offers both current and future advantages. Currently, the property has approximately 150 parking spaces, and with a reconfiguration of the parking lot, it would provide 174 spaces, keeping the number of available spaces consistent with the current setup. The new station would be located at the southeast corner of the property, based on the same design as Fire Station 2. The parking lot would resemble the setup at Fire Station 1, featuring a shared lot with the public that is used daily, with designated firefighter parking and clear signage near the station's entrance. Access to the soccer complex parking lot would remain unchanged and be provided from the north end of the existing parking lot. This location would also provide ample room for firefighter training, as training is already conducted here throughout the year. The relatively quiet parking lot is ideal for driver training and pump operations, with a hydrant available for use. Additionally, the green space, walking path and open area at the back could be utilized for firefighter wellness and fitness.

The site plan offers an overview of the existing Station 2 building layout, located at the southeast corner of the parking lot at the Harrow Soccer Complex. It includes fire department road access at the front of the station. As previously discussed, the architect has revised the design to optimize parking, providing more spaces compared to the current layout.



Financial Impact

There is no cost for the acquisition of land as it is municipally owned. In 2024, Council approved Capital Project FD-24-0006 to hire an architect for the design of the new Fire Station 3. The design will be based on the layout of the newly constructed Fire Station 2 to help reduce design costs, with an approved budget of \$140,000 for architectural design. Additionally, the

estimated cost to construct the new station is \$4,850,000, with funding considered for the 2026 budget.

Consultations

Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer

Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services

Kate Giurissevich, Director, Corporate Services

Mike Tomek, Tomek Reality

Carmen Brunone, Architecttura Building Intelligence

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Essex Fire Station 3 - Proposed Land for New Station 3.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 27, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services - Mar 27, 2025 - 9:56 AM



Kate Giurissevich, Director, Corporate Services - Mar 27, 2025 - 2:14 PM



Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer - Mar 27, 2025 - 2:15 PM