



Report to County Council

From: Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Date: March 11, 2025

Subject: Community Consultation Process for Relocation of Aylmer Library Branch

Recommendation(s):

THAT Elgin County Library staff be authorized to lead a community consultation process regarding future accommodation of the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library at the East Elgin Community Complex before the end of May 2025 as outlined in the March 11, 2025 report titled “Community Consultation Process for Relocation of Aylmer Library Branch” from the Director of Community and Cultural Services and in response to the resolution on this matter approved by Township of Malahide Council; and,

THAT a summary of the outcome of this consultation process be provided to County Council and Councils of the Township of Malahide and Town of Aylmer as soon as feasible; and,

THAT recommendations received from Aylmer Town Council as contained in Town of Aylmer CAO Report 09-25 as attached be received and filed; and,

THAT copies of this report be circulated to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Township of Malahide.

Introduction:

At the January 28, 2025 meeting, Elgin County Council endorsed relocation of the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library to the East Elgin Community Complex (EECC). County Council also requested endorsement of this proposed relocation by Aylmer Town Council. This report updates County Council on this request and also provides a framework for a consultation process that will inform next steps in the process to relocate to the complex.

Background and Discussion:

Aylmer Town Council considered County Council's request for an endorsement in principle to relocate the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library to the East Elgin Community Complex at their February 5, 2025 meeting. This discussion and ensuing outcome can be viewed [here](#). Town Council did not formally consider the matter of endorsement, rather passing a motion that County Council "establish a committee to undertake public engagement from residents of Malahide and Aylmer on the library and their proposal to move the library to the East Elgin Community Complex".

The historical overview previously shared with both Elgin County Council and Aylmer Town Council outlined the efforts of past Town-led committees to explore options on expanding the branch, either at the current location or other locations (including the complex as recently as 2017). These previous committees have not been able to achieve tangible action on the matter and, in fact, have only revealed considerable division on how best to proceed. Despite Town Council's current request, there are no signs that such a committee if formed once again would achieve a different result even if led by the County. In any case, County Council has provided staff with direction to explore relocation to EECC as the primary solution.

It is recommended that Elgin County Library staff lead a community consultation process focused on the opportunities and challenges associated with relocation to the complex. Proposals for alternate locations and/or expansion to the current Old Town Hall location could be received as part of this consultation process but the focus would be on moving ahead with County Council's current direction on this matter. The following is a proposed framework for this consultation process:

- A public survey through Engage Elgin that will seek public feedback on the proposed relocation and the types of services that County residents would like to see delivered by the Aylmer branch in the future.
- A public meeting led by Elgin County Library staff sometime in late April or early May hosted at EECC. This would include a presentation led by the Director of Community and Cultural Services and library staff on challenges being experienced due to the size of the current location, space and service needs relative to library planning guidelines, how these space and service needs can be addressed through relocation to the complex, the County's leasing framework with local municipal partners and how library expansion projects are generally financed and funded.
- A suggestion box at the Aylmer branch, other library branches and at the complex that would be available for a period of up to three weeks.

Financial Implications:

No additional funds are required to proceed with the proposed consultation process as outlined.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

| Serving Elgin | Growing Elgin | Investing in Elgin |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. | <input type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place. | |

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

Township of Malahide Council approved a motion at their meeting held February 20, 2025 as attached supporting a consultation process through an open, public forum with a focus on relocation to the complex. This motion, discussion of which can be viewed [here](#), further supports the recommended approach being proposed to County Council on this matter. A summary report from the public consultation process will be compiled for presentation to County Council and Councils of the Township of Malahide and Town of Aylmer as EECC stakeholders. The results would also be made public through this process, after which County Council will have an opportunity to deliberate on the feedback received.

Communication Requirements:

The community consultation process will be widely advertised through local media, the County's social media accounts and within library branches.

Conclusion:

Staff are recommending that a community consultation process take place based on County Council's direction in principle to relocate the Aymer branch of the Elgin County Library to EECC. The results of this process will then be communicated back to County Council, Councils of both Aylmer and Malahide and the public before the end of May of 2025 which will then inform next steps in the process to relocate the branch.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Brian Masschaele
Director of Community and
Cultural Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk