



## MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

**TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FROM: ADDISON CANINO, CAPITAL PROJECT SENIOR MANAGER**  
**RE: OLD TOWN HALL – PROJECT UPDATE**  
**DATE: JUNE 13, 2023**

### **Summary and Background:**

The Town of Frisco's 125-year-old, Old Town Hall at 300 East Main Street, currently housing the Visitor Information Center and Main Street public bathrooms, has played a unique role in Frisco's history; always being utilized, and tailored to the needs of the community. In its many functions for Frisco, it has served as the meeting space for our Town government, a general meeting and gathering space for community events, served childcare needs and in its most current version, providing a vital role supporting our tourism economy. It is a prime example of the building style and architecture of its time, is one of very few historic Town government or public structures left in Frisco and it is iconic in the way it supports our historic Main Street vitality.

It is important and strategic to preserve and reuse Frisco's historical assets so that they can continue to provide value to our community for the decades and generations to come. The Old Town Hall is a prime and highly visible example of how the Town is living our historical and cultural values, while proposing to do so in the most modern and demonstrative way.

To better understand the facility, it is best to understand its origins. Rose Gorrell, Museum Manager, explains the history of the facility best by saying:

*Volunteers hoped to complete the first Town Hall by July 4, 1899, but it fell behind schedule. The Ladies Whist Club of Frisco raised funds to complete the project with a calico ball held in the half-finished building in early December. On Christmas 1899, the townspeople finished the last repairs to the building during the Christmas party and "danced until the wee hours of the night." Frisco residents used Town Hall for community gatherings, square dances, non-profit parties, potluck dinners, religious services, weddings, funerals, and government functions for eighty-two years. When the time came for a new Town Hall in 1981, the Board of Trustees and the community decided to keep the building in its original location and look for a new site for Town Hall. The building continued to serve the community as the Summit County Preschool until 2001, when the Town of Frisco renovated the property to host restrooms and provide space for non-profit offices. During construction, crews found the remains of a stable behind the building with petrified straw and horse droppings- evidence of an early parking lot.*



This quick deep dive into the history of the facility shows that it has always been a center point of the community, whether it drew people in, or provided services that were needed. The facility is listed on the Frisco Historic Resources Survey from 2019 but is not eligible for state or national register due to additions that have been made to it in the past. This does not diminish the facility's historical value to the Frisco community.

Now, in 2023, there is a need for the facility to be recapitalized again to continue to support the Frisco community by providing needed services to residents, visitors and especially our vital business community on Main Street. This recapitalization will enhance its current uses and is being proposed in a way that will allow any Town function, program or alternative use to occupy the space for the next several decades. The project will also achieve net zero energy use and provide a demonstrative project by the town on how to reuse historic structures in a way that also follows our sustainable values and enhances the structure to better follow our inclusivity goals.

### **Analysis:**

Between 2022 and 2023, Town staff and Wember Owner's Representatives, have been working with Stais Architecture and Interiors and MW Golden Constructors to solidify a remodel and expansion plan that will not only recapitalize a Town asset but suit the needs of Frisco for the several decades to come. In the plan that has been produced consists of the following:

- Remodel of the facility to open the main entrance space to allow better circulation and interaction between staff and visitors. This open concept also prepares the facility to be utilized as a flexible space in the future to fit the needs of the Town or the community. The open concept will also connect the main entrance and the entrance to the restrooms, providing a clear and distinct travel path that can easily be accessed by all user groups, without having to backtrack to Main Street and around the facility.

- The expanded footprint of the restroom allows for higher usage and meets the increased demand that the current restrooms are seeing. This will greatly increase the assistance to Main Street businesses, many of whom only have small or no public restrooms. The additional restrooms will also accommodate increased numbers during events in the Town's core area. The expansion also includes a gender-neutral restroom, thereby following the Town's strategic value of inclusivity and fulfilling the specific request from the Frisco Town Council during the initial planning phases of the project.
- The park scope of the project embraces the building expansion and utilizes the now smaller space in an open manner that provides a much-needed area for people to enjoy a cup of coffee, lunch, conversation, or the quiet that makes Frisco unique. This will still allow for a local and visitor gathering space, with seating and a natural feeling right in the heart of Main Street. While not in the park directly, there will be a park facing art wall that will enhance the aesthetics of the park as well.

A major component to the project is its adherence to the sustainability goals that have been set forth by the Frisco Town Council. Whether reinvesting in existing facilities or building new ones, sustainability is one of the top priorities in achieving the goal of net-zero emissions.

#### **Financial Impact:**

The remodel and expansion of Old Town Hall is budgeted in the 2023 capital fund for \$1.6M. Staff has been working closely with MW Golden Constructors for months on pricing and the most cost-effective means of construction. MW Golden understands the need to create a 20-to-30-year solution that is being envisioned with this plan. With the 100% construction drawings that have been produced for the Old Town Hall facility and restrooms, the cost estimate totals \$2,325,739.00.

Town staff has also been working with Michael Baker, the Town's grant consultant, to explore funding opportunities for the sustainability options that are currently incorporated into the building's design. The conversations have been promising and Town staff will continue to work towards capturing some of the funding opportunities that exist for the removal of the gas service and the installation of heat pumps for the HVAC system. Staff is optimistic that we could enter into an agreement with the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for an anticipated 80/20 cost sharing for the HVAC costs.

Staff also anticipates adding solar energy generation to the building in the future and when grant funds are available. The granting agencies have informed us that it is much easier to secure grants for these types of facility additions when they are separate projects.

#### **Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

The Old Town Hall and Old Town Hall Park projects touch on all aspects of the Frisco Town Council's Strategic Plan:

- Inclusive Community
  - The addition of a gender-neutral restroom ensures that everyone can be provided with the basic services everyone deserves, without having to make a choice on a certain restroom to use. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant ramp

on the Main Street entrance to the facility, with the ADA routing through the interior, will provide a direct pathway to the restrooms, creating the same level of service for anyone accessing the facility from Main Street. This pathway can also lead directly to the park if someone wanted to sit down and relax after being in the information center. It also creates a much more open and inviting space for anyone to relax for as long or as short as they would like.

- Thriving Economy
  - One of the draws to Main Street is its uniqueness in character and that it is a major hub for local businesses. With Old Town Hall being on Main Street as well, it helps generate more business for the community by keeping people on Main Street longer and realizing what is there to visit. The availability of comfortable, modern, and clean public restrooms is an economic necessity for Main Street. The positive experience that is longed for in the strategic plan is initiated in this building and the interaction that people have with Town staff. Recognizing this facility as an asset and preserving it to ensure that it can help sustain the local businesses that depend on a thriving Main Street. It has also been shown, through studies conducted by the Colorado Tourism Office, that visitation to a welcome/information center increases spending and business for the surrounding area(s). In Frisco's case, with the information center being at the heart of Main Street, people can easily access local businesses and contribute to the local economy and local small business owners.
- Sustainable Environment
  - The renovation and expansion of this facility will also bring about sustainable improvements to the facility. The gas service is going to be removed, as well as the gas fired boiler. With that removal, the electrical service for the facility will be bolstered and an electric boiler will be installed. Coupled with the heat pump that will be used for the HVAC system, there will be a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. For the restrooms, low water fixtures will be utilized, and hand dryers will be used in lieu of paper towel dispensers. In addition, water bottle refilling stations will be available for public use and support Frisco's desire to see less use of single use plastic containers. For the park, low water plantings and almost no irrigation will be used. All these improvements will show that the Town wants to always take a sustainable approach when reinvesting in its assets.
- Vibrant Culture, Arts and Recreation
  - The fact that we would be reinvesting in a 125-year-old Town government asset in order to conserve its public usefulness for many more decades is the biggest cultural reason that this project supports the Town strategic goals. In addition, the exterior of the restroom, facing Old Town Hall Park, will be an art wall incorporated into the design. This will let visitors and locals see that art assets are part of the core values in Frisco and add to art installations in public spaces. The park will revamp the space and create a small gathering space for people to stop and enjoy the location and the views.
- Quality Core Services
  - As mentioned previously, reinvesting in Town facilities ensures that the needs of tomorrow can be met, and can be done in a way that the community can be proud of. We cannot tell the Council in 2023 whether the future use of the building will be a visitor information center, but this investment in the facility will ensure that the building will reduce its future impact on climate change and that it can serve any appropriate function that Frisco needs.

**Environmental Sustainability:**

As it was mentioned in the alignment with the strategic plan, all gas service to the facility will be eliminated, the gas boiler will be replaced with an electric boiler, and the HVAC system will utilize a heating pump system. These improvements show a dedication to the environment, and that Frisco wants to ensure future generations will be having to make the same decisions that are being made today; what is the future of Town facilities going to look like? The park scope of the project is going to use low water plantings and next to no irrigation to ensure that it is in alignment with the sustainability goal of the project.

In addition, the building will be ready to accept solar once we receive a grant to do this project in a future capital plan year.

**Staff Recommendation:**

This project is budgeted for \$1.6M in the 2023 Frisco capital plan. The current design, factors related to the underground and utility infrastructure of the site and the need to make the building 100% electric to support our important climate change goals are driving the estimates of this project over the budgeted amount. It is staff's recommendation that we do the project as designed, but that it not be completed in the current budget year. Instead, staff recommends that the project be revisited as part of the 2024 capital plan budget. Doing so would help Town Council make this decision to do or not to do this project at the larger budget amount in the context of the overall capital funds available in 2024 and with the other capital projects in the plan.

**Reviews and Approvals:**

Tom Fisher, Town Manager  
Diane McBride, Assistant Town Manager  
Leslie Edwards, Finance Director

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – 100% Construction Drawings Old Town Hall  
Attachment 2 – 80% Drawings Old Town Hall Park