

Civic Centre Foyer Works

Why is there construction work in the City's Civic Centre foyer?

The front foyer and counter area are being modified and expanded to incorporate a modern Customer Contact Centre. The existing counter and single operator switchboard space is no longer fit for purpose due to changes in technology and customer expectations.

Why is change needed?

Extensive community consultation indicated that a streamlined customer service process and greater use of technology (credit card, phone & online payments, web-chat etc.) was needed and could be addressed by establishing a centralised contact/call centre. The Centre will facilitate single transaction completion of service (first call resolution). It has been calculated that phone interactions with the City are approximately half the cost of a face to face (front counter) interaction (\$3.75 v \$1.95).

Why can't the current existing space be utilised?

Current limited working space in the original Customer Service area is cramped, inadequate and proving inefficient with a number of difficulties being encountered:

- Officers are answering phone calls at the front counter (this has led to customer confusion, frustration and complaints).
- Privacy issues associated with the above (i.e. other customers overhearing commercial/personal sensitive information).
- Several employee ergonomic, OSH and security issues are being experienced.

How will these changes benefit customers and rate payers?

- Ultimately, the new Centre will make interacting with the City easier and more efficient for both the community member and the staff serving them.
- With more than 3,000 people on average contacting the City every week either in person, by telephone, mail and email, the new refurbishment will allow for technological advancements and more streamlined processes.



- Providing semi private partitioned meeting areas, where planning, building or issues requiring a higher than normal degree of privacy can be discussed confidentially and securely.

How much does the refurbishment cost and what are the savings the improvements will make?

The cost of the refurbishment project is \$135,000, which has been funded from the 2017-18 Budget. The new space combined with improving on-line services will facilitate more transactions occurring securely over the phone saving the customer and the city time and money. Phone interactions with customers are approximately half the cost of a face-to-face interaction (\$3.75 versus \$1.95).

Why is the refurbishment happening now, when rates have just been issued?

Works on the new Centre will begin on 19 July and are set to be completed early August.

A redesign of the customer service space was first raised mid-2016 and was initially included in the 2017/2018 budget. Although the project was finally approved by Council in May 2018 the City is required to follow a thorough procurement process and allow a suitable lead in time for the builder to prepare. The earliest date available for commencement was in July

While it is acknowledged that timing for the project is not perfect due to rate notices being distributed July/August, it will be business as usual for customers who can still come into the Civic Centre to access services as usual during business hours. There may be some disruptions with noise as the works occur and the City would like to apologise for any inconvenience and thank customers for their patience during this period.