City Hall's exterior infrastructure, known as the building's envelope, is failing around the entire foundation.

Council Evaluating Replacement of City Hall

Recent Facility Report Lays Out Condition of Existing Building

Columbia Heights City Hall has reached the end of its useful life. That's the conclusion reached in a facility condition report presented to the City Council in January.

Necessary renovations to keep the existing building functional would cost at least $6.6 million, according to an analysis by the Leo A Daly architecture firm.

"It is safe to say the cost of renovating this building will exceed the cost of building a new City Hall," said Kevin Hansen, public works director.

On top of that, he added, renovations wouldn't correct the primary concerns of exterior wall deficiencies, space inefficiency, and unresolvable accessibility problems.

The original building was built in 1942, and has had three major renovations and several add-ons since then. After the Police Department moved to a new building in 2010, half of City Hall's space has gone unused. But those empty spaces still cost money to heat, cool, and keep up-to-code.

Other major concerns include: • presence of asbestos in building • water infiltration in multiple areas and water damage prolific throughout • inadequate power capacity and wire integrity • incomplete removal of antiquated systems • lack of fire barriers in ceilings and inadequacy of fire escapes • inadequate ADA accessibility throughout building • exterior wall failure • failing technology systems • faulty elevator • roof fire hazards and inadequacy

The full report, with photos, can be found online at columbiaheightsmn.gov. Click on "City Hall Report" under the Government tab.

City Hall Options Under Review

City Council and staff are considering options and possible locations for a new City Hall that would be less than half the size of the current City Hall. Keep an eye on the City's website at Columbiaheightsmn.gov for updates on City Hall public feedback events.

Water damage from roof and wall leakage is prolific throughout the building, in some cases leading to visible mold growth.

Water intrusion has permanently damaged most building windows.

Power, cable, and phone cords hang from the ceiling in the Information Services Department.

Vegetation grows in standing water on the roof.

A pipe wrapped in asbestos drains into an employee bathroom sink.