

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

PH-7

**Standing Committee  
on Procedure  
and House Affairs**

Legislative precinct

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament

Tuesday 29 November 2022

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

PH-7

**Comité permanent  
de la procédure  
et des affaires de la Chambre**

Enceinte parlementaire

1<sup>re</sup> session  
43<sup>e</sup> législature

Mardi 29 novembre 2022

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Chair: Jennifer K. French  
Clerk: Christopher Tyrell

Présidente : Jennifer K. French  
Greffier : Christopher Tyrell

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# CONTENTS

Tuesday 29 November 2022

Legislative precinct .....	PH-19
The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day)	
Ms. Jelena Bajcetic	



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON PROCEDURE  
AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT  
DE LA PROCÉDURE  
ET DES AFFAIRES DE LA CHAMBRE**

Tuesday 29 November 2022

Mardi 29 novembre 2022

*The committee met at 0903 in committee room 1.*

**LEGISLATIVE PRECINCT**

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Good morning, members. The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs will now come to order.

We are joined this morning by Trevor Day, Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and Jelena Bajcetic, director of the precinct properties branch. Per the sub-committee report adopted last week, they have been invited to brief the committee and take questions on the current state of the building, and discuss the need for restoration or rehabilitation of building systems and/or the building as a whole.

We look forward to your presentation, after which there will be time for questions from committee members. Please feel free to begin whenever you are ready.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Okay. First off, I would like to thank the committee for having us here today. It's an important topic that we at the assembly feel strongly about. I have very brief prepared remarks, and then I'm going to turn it over to the brains of the operation, who can walk you through all things "building." We'll start there.

My name is Trevor Day. I'm the Deputy Clerk. With me is Jelena Bajcetic, the director of the precinct properties branch. Over the last few decades, there have been many initiatives to upgrade the legislative building. Many projects have been undertaken to address upgrades and required repairs, but never to the extent of a full rehabilitation. Today, we are challenged with staying ahead of the maintenance curve as many of the building's aging and deficient systems continue to progress to their end of service life.

Mechanical, electrical, and life and fire safety systems are the systems that present the most challenging of issues. They are inadequate in meeting today's standards, and are both inefficient and, dare I say, hazardous. With the passing of time, the aging systems will only continue to degrade and present increased risk, cost and time in maintaining them.

We would offer that undertaking a rehabilitation of the legislative building and grounds will allow for those much-needed upgrades to meet modern safety, security, environmental and accessibility standards and to make the building once again functional for generations to come.

This is a beautiful building. You need only walk up to it when the sun is hitting it just right in the morning to feel in awe. But under the surface, there's a lot of work that needs to be done so that you as members can continue to do the work you do with appropriate—I'm going to be superficial: the WiFi, the wiring. Under the hood, there's a lot of work that needs to be done here.

Jelena and her team have been holding it together for years and doing a fantastic job, but, for those of you who have offices in this building, you've seen behind the curtain. You know those wire things that are in the corner, that no one does anything, and you just—and so this is an opportunity, hopefully—I understand this committee is going to be having a bit of a tour—for this group, this assembly, to perhaps start us down a road that will benefit Parliaments to come. This is something that we're asking you to do not so much for yourselves—something of this undertaking isn't going to be of immediate benefit; it's going to be for the Parliaments of the future. What we're asking you to build here is something that—no offence to the Conservatives—may transcend governments and move forward so that this is a benefit for everybody in the future.

With that, I'm going to turn it over to Jelena, but I really appreciate you taking this on as a consideration, whatever the outcome may be. Thank you very much.

I'll turn it over to Jelena.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** I just wanted to thank everyone again for the opportunity to speak to you today. I'll give a little foundational information, some background on the building and some background on the previous few decades of what the building has gone through and where we sit with things today.

The building first opened on April 4, 1893, and—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Sorry, Jelena. Could you move closer to the microphone, please?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes, sorry. Is that better?

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you.

Are all members ready for the presentation?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Is that better? Okay.

Again, the building first opened on April 4, 1893, and the building's approximate square footage is just under half a million square feet. It was a common sentiment at that time, once they saw the building constructed and saw the sheer scale of the building, that they wouldn't be able to fill the space for about 100 years. Within the first 30

years, the building was completely at capacity, and they required additional space.

From that point on, we saw the west wing fire in 1909. The reconstruction of the west wing included additional office space, and shortly after that, we saw the addition of the entire north wing space. Additional functional requirements necessitated further changes around the same time, which included some pretty invasive restorations in the chamber itself. Over the following decades since then, the building has endured many ongoing changes and consistent changes of use, and this was due to the introduction of modern technology and the evolving requirements to meet present-day codes.

In the late 1980s, it was recognized that the building required a holistic upgrade to address many of the deficiencies that had developed over the life of the building's operation. A committee was struck at the time, and I'd like to read an excerpt from this committee, as some of the information still holds true today from what their determinations were then. This was the Special Committee on the Parliamentary Precinct, from June 1991:

"Over the years, as the needs of the Legislature and government evolved and expanded, the Parliament building has been greatly altered to accommodate new uses and the increased demand for space. Problems have also developed with time. Life and fire safety systems and accessibility conditions are inadequate to meet today's standards, the roof leaks and the mechanical and electrical systems are both inefficient and hazardous. Clearly the building is showing its age.... Everywhere one looks, the original richness of the Parliament building's design and crafting have been obscured by time and a long history of necessary but often haphazard and intensive changes.

"It became clear that repairs and renovations would be very costly and that improvement options were potentially damaging to the building's historical architecture. It was also evident that the involvement of the members of the Legislative Assembly would be critical to successful planning and that an expert heritage adviser would be required."

#### 0910

Subsequent to that report, the committee did engage an architect to develop the master plan for the building. To meet future and evolving needs, the committee established priorities at that time for the renovations. The number one priority they determined would be undertaking the improvement of accessibility changes for the building. With those improvements, each stage of improvement would have an upgrade to life and fire safety and building systems to today's standards; would continue the repair of dangerous conditions such as the roof, masonry and windows; and would undertake various restoration projects described in the master plan.

The committee determined that the focus would be on accessibility. At the time, that was where the building was lacking most for the public, and at the time the building was seeing approximately 250,000 visitors per year.

Various options were reviewed for implementation, and it was determined that the best option was to shut down

various areas of the building but keep the remainder of the building operational. This approach would only see upgrades done to certain program areas to meet the priorities established. However, throughout the planning and development of the projects, it was discovered that the existing building infrastructure didn't allow for the specific scopes of work to happen, due to the interconnected nature of the systems.

As a result of that master plan in the 1990s, a significant amount of upgrades were completed, and they continued throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s. Some of those upgrades included a full roof replacement, exterior masonry repair and restoration, window repair and conservation, upgrades to various mechanical systems, new ramps at principal entrances and minor accessibility upgrades throughout the building, fire protection sprinklers in the attics and new exit stairs, and the reclaiming of the fifth-floor attic space for office space.

Subsequent to that work that happened in the 1990s, the required maintenance and upgrades continued to improve building conditions. In the last 10 years, some of the most significant projects included the full excavation of the perimeter of the building to upgrade the foundation drainage, additional elevator upgrades, various life and fire safety upgrades, washroom upgrades related to accessibility, a five-year masonry and window maintenance program, and the addition of the screening facility.

As the needed upgrades continued, a historic structures report was undertaken. This historic structures report is an intensive review of the existing conditions, from both a heritage perspective and a technical perspective, of the building. It was only started in its infant stages, and the focus shifted to look at more technical requirements of the building and the deficient and problematic infrastructure.

The study documented various elements, including life and fire safety systems, plumbing systems, mechanical systems and electrical systems. The purpose of the study was really to determine the interconnected nature of the systems and the condition of each single system, to see what would be required in an upgrade. Some of the deficiencies that the report concluded were that:

- there was a lack of sprinkler coverage throughout the building, inadequate for today's standards;

- the steam-supplied radiators are both difficult to control and inefficient;

- there are vast amounts of original piping, original to the building's construction, that are still operational today, and they're encased in masonry and insulated with asbestos;

- there is limited and/or insufficient power supply to various areas of the building and equipment;

- there is a vast amount of redundant and old hazardous cabling, many with existing pathways congested, which gives an inability for us to remove old cabling and install new cabling;

- inadequate supply, consistency and organization of emergency power for the building; and

- lack of smoke management systems for interconnected floor areas.

The technical review found that a significant rehabilitation in the near term would be required, as many of the major systems are nearing or have passed end of service life. One example is that the steam heating distribution has deteriorated to a point where recurring pipe leaks and breaks are a high probability. Decades of haphazard electrical upgrades with limited cable management infrastructure pose both risk and no flexibility in building changes, and life and fire safety systems are in need of upgrades to meet today's standards.

The conclusion of the report identified that a full replacement of all major systems would be required, including fire protection for all floors, electrical and IT distribution throughout the building, full plumbing and domestic water distributions, and full HVAC, heating and cooling with controls throughout the entire building.

Upgrades of this scale and complexity are further complicated by designated substances, which are present throughout the building, including asbestos, lead and PCBs. The overall determination of the studies also concluded that the best option, from a technical, budgetary and timing perspective, was that a full decommissioning should take place.

These issues present significant challenges for us in staying ahead of the maintenance curve. The undertaking of required upgrades and regular day-to-day maintenance continues to result in increasingly high costs and complexity, while at times still being ineffective and deficient in meeting today's standards.

As we continue to maintain the systems, it doesn't change the fact that the infrastructure as a whole is both hazardous and severely deficient. The replacement of the outdated infrastructure gives us the opportunity to couple this with upgrading the functional programming of the building, so it can meet the needs of today's Parliament and the significant heritage status of the building. So it's really those three components that really give us the opportunity. We have to look at the technical requirements of the building, but now we have the opportunity to bring the functional programming of the building and the heritage status of the building to the present day.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you for your presentation. We'll open up the floor to any questions from committee members. Rock, paper, scissors. MPP Harris?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Thank you both very much for being here. Obviously, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Legislative Affairs, I'm getting to know this building quite well. Thank you both for what you do here and, obviously, keeping things running and on track. I know it's a bit of a challenging job, dare I say, on a daily basis.

But there are a couple of things that I was hoping maybe you could expand a little bit more on, and I'll throw it out to whoever wants to answer best. The lead pipes in the building and the steam system: I was hoping maybe you could just elaborate a little bit more on what has happened with that over the last little while, how dire it is and how badly it needs to be replaced.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** We'll start with the steam. We have high-pressure steam service to the building. That means a steam line runs throughout the length of the basement of the building and branches off throughout the entire building, and that is what supplies a low-pressure steam to the radiators throughout the building. Most of you probably experience in your offices the lack of control over those radiators. A lot of the rooms get too hot, or in shoulder seasons it's very difficult for us to control the temperatures. We really do have lack of control of temperatures before the steam is initiated for the fall, for example.

Steam is also inefficient for today's standards. It uses a lot of energy and, with difficulty in controls, we'd be looking for upgrading that whole system. There are various valves and controls throughout the building buried in certain areas, very difficult to access, so they fail on a frequent basis as well. So it's an ongoing maintenance program in keeping that system going.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** How difficult is it to find parts for a system that was designed 100-plus years ago?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** We'll need a time machine.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Yes.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes, it's very difficult. When we do find supplies, we ensure that we have enough going forward. But yes, there are challenges in finding supplies. There are very, very few companies left out there that service or can do repairs or restorations to radiators, so it's very difficult to find that.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** What would happen if, let's just say—zone valves or different things like that, or even the little controls that are right on the radiator itself—if you couldn't get those parts anymore? What would that mean?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** We'd be making custom parts or having a company do custom parts for us. But right now there is an ability for us to obtain those control valves. We actually just found a new supplier for that. So while there are opportunities in singular things to keep the building going and to make sure that we can keep the steam radiator going, it just becomes increasingly more costly and time-consuming to do so.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Hogarth?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Once again, I would just like to echo what MPP Harris said. I want to thank you all for the work you do here every day. I always admire the work that you do, both of you, every single day to make sure that our work can continue.

I guess my question is around—you know, you see Parliament Hill, which has gone through a restoration, and there are a couple of other provincial legislatures that have gone under renovations. What's the timeline if it was a complete overhaul? Because you certainly want to save—we have so much beauty in this building, and that is our history. That's our future, and we certainly want to make sure that all those artifacts are saved and preserved. That obviously adds an extra expense. Do you know a timeline for something like this project?

0920

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** In our technical studies that were done when they looked at the infrastructure, we did look at what options there were and whether it would be a decommissioning or—when they did those studies, they looked at a timeline of approximately eight years.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Eight years? Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further questions? MPP Hsu, you had had your hand up.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** Yes, I just had a question. Apparently, this matters: Who owns the building and the land? Is it the government of Ontario or the Ontario Legislature?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** That's a tough one. The Speaker is responsible for the precinct, the building itself and the first three floors of the Legislature. We get our money from the Board of Internal Economy. Our funding comes from government funds. We're a public body. So the actual ownership of the building, I think, originally started with U of T and was transferred over. I would have to check the exact technical—our lawyers will correct me on this: I believe we are owned by the government. There has never been any—the Speaker runs it; the Speaker has been in charge of it, that type of thing. But in terms of who actually owns the building, I think there's some debate over that, and I would default to the government.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Gallagher Murphy.

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you again for being here and all you're doing. One thing that I found concerning—you've mentioned it several times—was about asbestos. Could you tell me a little bit more? Is it to the point of the longer you're in this building, the more hazardous it can be for us? I don't even know if you're in a position to respond to that. But, automatically, when I hear "asbestos," I get very nervous. So I'm very nervous right now. Please, if you could comment.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Sure, absolutely. The asbestos is predominantly found around insulation of mechanical piping in the building. So it's concealed in walls. It's not something that you're readily exposed to at all. We do have an environmental management program, so any time that we have any—even if it's a minor leak or even if we're painting an office, we do have that environmental program look at the room. We do testing and everything, and if there is any—let's say, if there is asbestos in the ceiling, the plaster, you're not exposed to that; it's a painted ceiling. But if we are doing work to repaint your suite, we make sure it's done under the appropriate requirements for asbestos management.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Just to that point, because of its existence, everything—painting an office—requires us to go in and check. It's no longer just a quick, "Let's paint this because it needs a coat." It takes on the added expense and the added time of doing that for pretty much everything we do when we touch this building.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Questions? MPP McGregor.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Thank you for your testimony today. A question about—in your testimony, you talked about a lack of sprinklers. Can you expand? Presumably, that's for fire prevention. Can you explain a little bit about how equipped our building is in terms of automatic fire suppression? How equipped are we or aren't we?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Basically, all the areas that are accessible are protected by sprinklers. The entire basement of the building is protected by sprinklers, both in the main building and in the north wing. All of the attic spaces are sprinkler-protected, and some of the committees and groups of rooms where people gather, like this room, are sprinklered.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** And then the other question was just around parking. I'm a suburban member. I think there are a few of us here. One of the things that has always puzzled me about the building: It's in the heart of downtown Toronto. Many places around here have underground parking. They go underground in order to have more spaces to make it more accessible for people who drive cars. We don't do that at Queen's Park. Could you just explain, just give me a bit of a methodology of if that has ever been considered, why we have done it, why we haven't done it, what the challenges are there?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Jelena can expand, but there's a subway under us. That's the first part of it.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Oh, that makes sense.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** It's not that it hasn't been considered.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** I took the GO train today. I did, I did. I did park there once.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Looking at underground infrastructure both for space and parking has been looked at in the past. It's one of those things that, like every competing interest in the building, you start to look at the studies for parking or you start to look at the studies for accessibility but then you get caught on, "Well, wait a minute, the electrical is in way worse condition and we need to address that first." But then when you look at addressing the electrical, you're going, "Well, I can't address the electrical without addressing fire protection," and all of a sudden it's grown into a full project again.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Got it. Okay, thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Oosterhoff.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Yes, I think what you just touched upon was very important because it's the interconnectedness of all of these things. You can't really do an upgrade of one system without impacting all the other systems. I'm doing some home renovations myself, and you open up one wall and, all of a sudden, the beam's gone—anyway, one thing after the other. But it sounds like you've been doing a lot of work with duct tape and WD-40, so thank you very much.

I'm always curious about interjurisdictional scans. Are there any other Legislatures that are in as rough shape in Canada? And if you could talk a little bit about that, or you



know, eastern United States or anything like that, from a similar time frame. Or is everyone kind of coming to the recognition and they're doing upgrades at the same time?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** From a similar time frame, we're very comparable to the West Block in Ottawa, very comparable to the conditions of the Centre Block in Ottawa and very comparable to Westminster. All of them now are undertaking similar projects. But buildings built from the same period all have the same issues, all have aging infrastructure that is very difficult to access, so it's very similar to those that are happening now.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Let me put it this way: Are there any early 20th-century Legislatures that are not doing this? Are you pretty much the only one?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** We can't speak for everybody—

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Here in North America.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):**—but it appears to be that these Legislatures are hitting this point. Depending on the amount of upgrade that has been taking place, they're all hitting the same thing. This is something that Parliaments around the world are looking at. To be honest, it is not a sexy project. The fact is, it costs a lot of money, and there are a lot of things out there that people would argue require money. So we understand where we sit in terms of a priority list, but if we don't, at some point we're just not going to be able to keep it together ongoing.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** One last question, and then I'm done, I promise. My question is on the cost, not of just the capital but the ongoing costs that we're incurring currently that I'm assuming are escalating with time. What do those escalations look like? What is the current operational cost of maintaining the building, and how do you foresee that increasing without a capital rehabilitation?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** We have an ongoing maintenance budget on the maintenance side. I don't have the numbers off the top my head; I don't want to give you an incorrect number. But we have been sustaining at those numbers for a number of years. What happens is we do what we can out of all of the maintenance and that, and then when a project comes up or when a replacement is required, we write a report and go to the Board of Internal Economy for one-time funding on those projects. So we have our ongoing maintenance budget, and then that is supplemented with the one-time funding each year.

What we have seen in the last, I would say, three to five years is there are far more infrastructure issues that we're running into. When there is a change requested in the building, whether it be space renovations or—basically, space renovations. When it comes to that, the costs we're seeing now are upwards of double to triple what we would have seen even five to 10 years ago.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** It's not a one-off, that, "Oh, something broke, and we have to get back to it now." It's almost an ongoing—we're going back to the board and saying, "There's this." And because that happens on a regular basis, the usual maintenance gets pushed down a little bit. So it's starting to add on to itself.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Harris and then MPP Hsu.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Just quickly, for the committee: My office has done a jurisdictional scan. I believe we completed it last year. It was mostly North America, but there are some European Parliaments that are, again, around that same age and time frame. I'd be happy to circulate it to the committee. If anybody is interested, you could just let me know, or I can send it out, maybe, to the Clerk and then it can get distributed accordingly, if that pleases everyone.

0930

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you. MPP Hsu?

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** Thank you. Just to belabour a point a little bit, from what I've heard, for some of the smaller repairs you just go to the Board of Internal Economy, but this is potentially a very, very big ask. And so my question is, when we go to fund this, is it just done through the Board of Internal Economy, or is this a government of Canada thing that the Legislature has to approve because it's such a large amount? And I have a second question.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** That part is fine. Usually—I won't say with smaller projects—the way the funding for the assembly works, to assert our independence from the government, is that we request funds from the Board of Internal Economy. The board is currently made up of one member from each recognized party; it's a balanced board. The Speaker is a non-voting member. Decisions that are made generally have to be by consensus, agreed upon. We go to them for our money, and once that money is approved it comes out of the public purse. It does not go to cabinet or any of those.

This is a major project and we are going to need the government's assistance on this. It is, I think, too big for us to undertake on our own. There is a Ministry of Legislative Affairs now. In the public interest, I think there will be people who want to know—the people of Ontario—that they're getting value for money. Our information, the assembly's, is not FOI-able currently. It is my understanding—and it is yet to be determined—that this is something, if it goes forward, that is going to have to be in conjunction with the government, most likely the Ministry of Legislative Affairs, so that that type of transparency in the dollars spent will exist, which it doesn't currently for the Legislature as it does its day-to-day.

Something of this size and magnitude, I believe, will be something where there will be interest, scrutiny, oversight and, hopefully, legislative input to make sure we're on track. Again, these are all very big ifs. We're trying to get through the first hurdle of, "Say you'll let us do it," and we'll go from there.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** As a follow-up—

*Interjections.*

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Everybody, hold on. We've got time.

If you wanted to finish that thought, go ahead.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** I had a second question.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** You can do that too.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** Thank you very much, Chair.

And thank you for that answer; it was a good one. My other question is a very open question. From what I understand about the renovation of Centre Block up in Ottawa, a very difficult question to resolve was the balance between security and public access, and that affects design and cost a lot. I'm just wondering if you have any early thoughts about that.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** That's a balance that, quite frankly—I am the executive director of legislative services, and one of my branches is parliamentary protocol and public relations. They do the tours. They get people in here. I'm responsible for the chamber. I spend most of my time trying to get people in this building.

Jackie Gordon is the Sergeant-at-Arms. She is responsible for keeping each one of you safe. I won't say she tries to keep people out, but we do have this talk. Parliaments around the world are faced with the balance between the right for people to see how their Legislature works and the very real reality that the world is changing and is becoming, unfortunately, a more dangerous place. So yes, there is some consideration there that we want to be as open as possible, and I think Jackie would agree. We want the security measures that we have to be unobtrusive, to be behind the scenes; to be effective, but not right there in the front.

We are on an island in the middle of downtown Toronto. We have our own spot. We don't want to fortify it in any way, shape or form. The idea is that we're happy when people are on the front lawn—that means the place is working—but we do realize that measures have to be put in place to ensure that the system continues and continues unobstructed, and that all members here are safe and feel safe in the jobs that they do. Regardless of what's to come, that is always a consideration that we—I won't say “struggle with,” but that we consider as we move forward as a Legislature.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP West?

**MPP Jamie West:** I'm just wondering if, financially, we have any sort of cost comparisons to look at, like the value of maintaining the building versus just doing these capital projects. If we know that we're losing rads or the boiler is going to expire within the next number of years, is there a forecast showing how much it's costing for the maintenance work versus if we were to just bite the bullet and take on a larger capital project?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** The maintenance numbers right now—like I said, we have been fixed in those numbers for a few years, with the exception of the larger capital projects of replacements that have to happen. Basically, as things are approaching end of life, we are replacing them to keep things going.

We would be able to do a forecast for the next few years, but again, with the building, it's very unknown. We never know what can happen in the building—if there's a change of use of space, if there are additional changes that

need to happen. Everything is not on a fixed scale of escalation right now, but looking at our technical reports, we'd probably be looking at a five-to-10-year cycle of when we would need to start looking at complete replacement.

**MPP Jamie West:** Okay. I think you mentioned it, but I might have missed it while I was making notes: Do we have plans and proposals about how to tackle this already, or do you need our approval to look for those plans and proposals?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** What we have right now is a lot of technical studies. We have the 1990s master plan, which saw some of the ideas implemented through the 1990s, and we have a lot of technical studies. What the Board of Internal Economy approved this year is for us to continue the historic structures report. That was a report started in 2012. What that report will do is to update all of the information for the building and look at the technical review. It will basically give a supporting document to a design team to go ahead and start designing what those upgrades would look like.

**MPP Jamie West:** Okay. Then, in those plans for the future, should we be looking at future expansions? I was thinking about this. I used to work for Bell, like, 25 years ago. It was lots of work to get phone lines into everyone's room when it used to just be the kitchen. Then, within five years, nobody wanted phone lines; everyone wanted Cat 5. Five years later, nobody wanted Cat 5. So I'm wondering, should we be ripping up—looking at the lighting fixture, I don't know if it's tube and clamp or whatever. But should we be ripping through the walls, replacing all the wiring, replacing all the stuff and then sealing it back up, or should we be shaving off a couple of feet of the wall and just having an area that we can maintain easier in the future?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** I would say—

**MPP Jamie West:** Am I too far into the weeds?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** No, no.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** No, but I would say that as far as electrical goes, when we're talking about—so let's say we want to upgrade, you know, Cat 5, or put fibre in. We have no ability—it's half a million square feet. There are many, many kilometres of just that type of cabling that goes through the building. We can't access it, or it's in congested areas where there are a hundred other cables around them, so what happens is any time an upgrade is required, those cables have to get added somehow. It's cost-prohibitive to do. Even if we do one small suite that is three rooms, we could be upwards of \$30,000 or \$35,000 once we're looking at designated substances and dealing with all the other issues just to add one cable. We're not at a point where we would be able to upgrade one full system of infrastructure in the building without impacting everything else.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** I think to your point, just to be frank, taking this place down to the studs and putting up conduits, things where, regardless of what the cable is, we could easily get to it and replace it—we just add here. We just add and add and add. There are cables that do nothing. They're there.

I don't know if you want to—

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes. I think one of the main things is that when electricity became more prevalent and when all of these new technologies started coming in, there was no cable management system that was installed in the building. The building doesn't have the structure to be able to take all of that, so it was really added at the time something became prevalent—"Oh, okay, we'll add this in. We'll add that in"—and then cable TV. So one by one, all of these things were added, but there was no real plan.

In a future plan of rehabilitation, that would be one of the main goals to achieve: to have cable pathways throughout the building that are very easily accessible and easily upgradeable—all of those things that have become standards in newer-built buildings today.

0940

**MPP Jamie West:** Less easy to access than the trunk of cables that run along my office?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Oh, yes.

**MPP Jamie West:** Can I keep going, or do you want to switch—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I'm going to come back to you, if that's okay.

MPP Sarrazin.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** Thank you for the presentation. I have a few questions. This master plan from the, I guess, 1990s would be obsolete. Today we would have to do another master plan because of all the changes, probably?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes. It would be used as a foundational document. It does document some of the history and importance of the building, some of the areas that are of high heritage significance. Those areas, those things, don't change. So it would be used as a foundational document. It will just be built upon to bring it to what today's needs of the Parliament are.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** And from what I can understand, there was also the 2012 structural report?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes. That was just an early-on start, and what we'd want to do now is build upon that and complete that review.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** And then there was that study to determine interconnection?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes, a technical review on just the building's systems and infrastructure.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** So when was that? Around the same time?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** I believe the historic structures report was around 2012, for a couple of years. That was just started to start documenting the historical areas, chronology, things like that for the building. The technical review followed that, and I believe was around 2014. That was a two-to-three-year project looking at in-depth detail of every specific system throughout the building, and then that was pulled together to look at what the options were going forward.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** With all these discussions, at one point we were talking about decommissioning. Were there any options brought to the table?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes. They're documented in the technical reports, what options could look like. It's whether those options are feasible options. They looked at shutting down the building by block, but again, there's a lot of interconnected infrastructure. Is it possible? Anything is possible if you want to pay that kind of money. But it came down to, from a timing, technical and cost perspective, what was the best solution, and the decommissioning was their determination.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** I pass in front of the federal Parliament on a regular basis, and I think, as far as I remember, it's always been in renovation, for 40 years.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** To sum: If we do this, there may very well be members who never get to step foot in this building. If we go somewhere else, depending on how long it is—Jelena is talking about eight years. I think everyone starts with that sort of conservative type—but that's two terms. So it is very possible.

What we'd like to do is not have it as an ongoing thing. Whatever the building is, in whatever form, it's always going to need maintenance. That's just a thing. It's getting to a point where it is not just holding it together. It's the regular maintenance, the maintenance you do around your house, the maintenance we have here, just the regular stuff, and not that we're trying to keep the lights on.

**Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin:** Thanks.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Harris?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Just to clarify, from the standpoint of what you're recommending, it would be essentially a full decamping of the Legislature and a complete restoration and rehabilitation to really bring the building up to the standards that I think that we deserve not only as members, but there are also about 400 or 500 staff who are in and around the building at any given time. I think that's maybe a forgotten part of the conversation as well. It's not just about us; it's about everybody here.

A full decamping, down to the studs, upgrading and really modernizing all of the mechanical systems, plumbing, heating, HVAC, everything—we've got cabling running through ductwork, if I'm not mistaken. That's what we're using as some of the conduit.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** If that gets found, it gets removed or cut.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Maybe just clarify a little bit more about what you see and envision over the next few years and what some of the paths forward are as far as that goes.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** I think over the next years there's a lot of planning that's going to need to happen, on the technical side, yes, but also on the side of space planning and what the future needs of the building are. In thinking about what the members need today, what the members may need 20 years down the road—do we have enough committee rooms? Do we have sufficient space for all the services and events that happen in the building? So there's a lot of thought and planning that needs to go into what all of those ideas are and how those ideas could be implemented in the building.

There's only so much square footage. Can that increase? Can underground options be available? Programming for visitors in the building—we don't have a

reception area for visitors in the building. There are so many things that would need to happen in the planning and in discussion that would take quite a bit of time to pull together, along with the technicals.

There's the discussion, as well, with heritage: the preservation of the building, conservation, rehabilitation. All of those things need to be considered. Some of the planning in Ottawa for West Block—I was fortunate enough to be able to go there when they first started construction there. That was, I think—too long ago. Maybe eight years ago; I don't remember. They started the planning in the 1990s. It did break for a certain period of time. But there needs to be, I think, a strong plan going forward.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Would it be safe to say that we really, really, really need to get this planning started and done now, and get moving on things so that when the time does come, we're not left with a building that we, quite frankly, can't use?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Right.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Yes.

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Mike Harris:** That's all I needed. Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Bell.

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** These are very high-level questions: Do we have an estimate on cost, if we decant? Do we have an idea of where we would go and what these options are? And do we have a time frame for when this eight-year period would be, when we leave and come back—the eight-year range?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Eight-year range; let's be clear on that one. At this point, no, to a lot of it. The cost is going to depend on where we're going, and where we're going depends on what the place we're going to looks like now. That's got to be factored in.

At this point, very much what we are asking you to do is to say, "Take the next step." Everything we do, as the assembly, goes before the Board of Internal Economy; it's a thing. This step was, "Keep on that historic restructuring report. Find out where we are and what we need. Get that ready to give us an idea." It's going to cost a lot of money; there's no easy way of saying that. And it's going to take a considerable amount of time. We need only look to Ottawa to see that's what it is.

The importance of this for us is to have member buy-in, to say that this is something—again, regardless of who's in government and how far down the road we are, we can't start this in a direction and then change our mind later. So we need everybody on board and we need it to be bigger than the current government. It's going to take a while for this to take place. It's going to cost a lot of money. There very well may be times when the public is not happy with how that money is being spent.

I see a benefit to it for the people of Ontario, but it's not tangible. You are going to take flak. It's money being spent on you. What we're hoping for is to get everyone's buy-in around the table. We want to prove to you that it's needed and we want to prove to you that it's worth the

money, again, for Parliaments to come—maybe not even you. But this is what we're hoping to get with this committee and with the board and, again, with the partnership with the government. We're going to need their money to do it.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I'm actually going to go back to MPP West and then MPP Harris, because I threatened I'd go back to you. Go ahead.

**MPP Jamie West:** When you were talking about asbestos and designated substances, does the Legislative Assembly—I don't know what it's called, but do we have a registry so we know where all these things are?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes, we have a management program and we have both a consultant that we work with and contractors that do remediation for us. We keep all of the records on all testing that has been done and that we presently do in the building so that when something comes up in a space, we have those records to refer to, and if we don't have that information then we initiate the testing.

**MPP Jamie West:** Okay. While we're wrapping our head around this and looking for bids, are there any priority projects that we know—like, the roof was leaking before, or talking about the boiler. I don't know how old the boiler is, but if it's coming to end of life—is there anything that has to be pushed ahead of the larger schedule because you're concerned about end of life or impacts?

**0950**

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** A specific piece of equipment right now?

**MPP Jamie West:** I'm just saying if the mortar were spalling off the building and was going to hit people as they're entering the building. Is there anything that, really, we should be looking at moving ahead of the rest of the project?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Moving ahead of the rest of the project? We completed recently a five-year exterior masonry maintenance program. Right now, we've completed a masonry maintenance program on the north wing. As far as anything major upcoming, it becomes very reactive because it can be very cost-prohibitive to do, so right now we're maintaining those systems. But if something—

**MPP Jamie West:** There's already something in place to monitor that?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes.

**MPP Jamie West:** Okay.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** I would say that the one thing on that, though, is accessibility, specifically accessibility in the chamber. I will be reaching out to the House leaders. We have an upcoming by-election, and it has come to our attention that one of the candidates has mobility issues. As an institution, it is our responsibility to make sure that everybody who comes here is able to move around freely. This is something that we had planned for the summer and that we are going to have to move on sooner rather than later, regardless of the outcome of that election.

So there are things that need to be done in the short term, full well knowing that we are hoping that you'll grant us longer-term plans. There are things where it's just that money has got to be spent, even though we know—we hope that we'll be fixing these things in the long term, but that is a thing.

**MPP Jamie West:** And just a final question: Were you recommending that we move to Sudbury in the interim?

*Laughter.*

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** That's exactly it. That's exactly where we're going.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** I second that.

**MPP Jamie West:** Right? Subcommittee meeting.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I know that when we talked about this on Thursday in our meeting—because of flooding, we will have to figure out where we meet. I'm just thinking about things happening in the now, in real time.

MPP Harris.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** I don't know if this is a possibility, but would we be able to get, as the committee, a copy of that report that was done in the 1990s, just to kind of compare and see how—

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** The master plan?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Yes.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Just to see what has changed and what is still the same old status quo. We'd be very interested in it if it's possible. I don't know if it's—

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** I don't see why not. One of the things there, too, is that that master plan wanted to see the upgrade of the infrastructure. Throughout the planning in the 1990s, that's when they came to the determination that it's too hard to shut down a whole wing and isolate that from the rest of the building while everything's fully—

**Mr. Mike Harris:** We'll blame my father for that. Everyone else does.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** You said it. Now it's in Hansard.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Oosterhoff?

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Very quickly, to build off of MPP Hsu's point with regard to, essentially, the capacity to do something like this: You have an amazing team. You're doing amazing work. I'm assuming you're not going to be managing all of this. There would be a firm and everything else. So would that be through Infrastructure Ontario, then, probably, how that process would work out?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** I think at this point that is still to be determined. It seems like a "likely," I'll be honest, but again, it would be one of those things that, through our board, we would sit down and determine what is the best way forward.

What we do know is that we will need government assistance on this. Much like your renovations at home, sometimes you've got to bring in someone who has the capacity to do these things.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** I can do stuff.

*Laughter.*

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Yes, okay—but yes, that very well may be one of the groups that we look to. But these are the things that have to be sort of rolled out and worked out in the coming days and months.

The board has been great. They've given us the okay to finish up that report and bring that here. We are very pleased that this committee is taking an interest in this, and we very much welcome the fact that there will be oversight for these types of things. We want members' involvement. What we are hoping to do is for you and for future yous, so we'll see how that goes.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Cool.

One more? Just on—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Yes, you are welcome to continue.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** With regard to the Mowat Block redevelopment, which I believe was built in the 1950s and 1960s, if my memory's correct—around then?

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** The Macdonald Block?

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Yes—Macdonald, Mowat and all of those ones.

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** The Macdonald Block was 1971.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Okay, so it's pretty new, actually.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Yes, it is.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** So that's my question, right? Is this building in far worse or comparable shape to that building? I mean, that building is now almost done its renovations after only 50 years and we're 100 years and we haven't even started. So I'm just wondering about the comparators between—

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** We're not bragging or anything, but—

**Ms. Jelena Bajcetic:** Yes, I mean, I wasn't familiar with the reasons for the reconstruction of Macdonald Block. I know it's a far newer building on that. What I do know is this building, and we are past end of service on piping that we're still using in the building that was from the original construction in 1893.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** MPP Harris.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** I've had an opportunity to tour through Centre Block fairly recently. It's quite the undertaking in what they're doing there. Also, speaking with the federal Speaker, Speaker Rota, and some of the Deputy Clerks at the House of Commons, one of the really important things that they brought up—and this is for all of us, and you've alluded to it a little bit—is member buy-in and really having everybody. They've made it very clear that it's not a partisan project and they've had everybody involved. They have their procedure and House affairs committee, very similar to ours, which has been a bit of, I guess you could say, a liaison between the general assembly of members, the folks doing construction, the Clerk's Office etc.

Do you see something like that working out here, where you feel this committee can maybe take on some of that responsibility and be that conduit between members and yourselves and your offices?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Yes, 100%. The fact is that it is big. It's bigger than any one group and it's going to need input. And, quite honestly, we want you all responsible, too, if anything goes wrong. I'll be honest. We want to be able to spread the responsibility—

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Sure, sure, sure. I know how this works.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Right? We want to be able to point the finger.

No, in all seriousness, it is a big project. It is bigger than one thing and it's going to need member buy-in. It's going to need members to be at the table and making some decisions. The fact is that you are one of the people who use this building day in and day out, and there's stuff that we just don't know from your perspective. So having a committee that we can bring things to, we can talk them out, we can get different perspectives, I think is going to be important.

What I would hazard against: There are going to be partisan issues of the day down the road. We would ask that they don't bleed over into our project.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Absolutely.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** However everything feels in the House and different things—and it's easy to do; we sit there every day—that this issue be one of those things that truly does transcend partisan politics would be our ask.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay, are there any other questions?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Just a comment? I just want to say, thank you, Trevor—oh, am I allowed say Trevor? Clerk?

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Yes.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** —for that statement. I think that's important. You don't want this to be a political football, right?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** Not at all.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** This is actually not even about us; it's about the future.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** We pride ourselves at the assembly for being non-partisan, being outside of this. I'll be honest, it makes us extremely uncomfortable when anything we do becomes partisan.

There are going to be costs involved in this. There's going to be accountability. There's going to be responsibility. We are here to answer the tough questions and that should be the case. But what we ask is that, at all times, it be about the project and the needs, and not anything else that's transpiring here at the assembly.

Side note, Madam Chair, if I may?

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Yes, you may.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day):** I believe this committee was meant to speak to the incoming Sergeant-at-Arms. I have handed a letter to the Clerk, which the Chair has, and you know what? I believe he prepared a statement, so I'm going to leave it at that.

With your indulgence, I do have another meeting I have to attend, and so, if you are done with me, I would ask that I be allowed to leave.

**1000**

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Well, I also have a prepared statement. I want to thank both the Deputy Clerk—that's you—and the director of the precinct properties branch for appearing before our committee and sharing your knowledge with us and taking all the questions. You can now leave if you would like to, Mr. Day.

I would like to inform the committee that this morning our committee Clerk received a letter indicating that Mike Civil, director of the Legislative Protective Service, has declined the Sergeant-at-Arms position. As this afternoon's meeting was intended to be a discussion with the new Sergeant-at-Arms about his credentials and vision for the legislative precinct, there is no need for the committee to reconvene this afternoon.

Also, committee members would have received a revised notice this morning indicating that the Thursday meeting of committee has been cancelled. Please note that the tour is not cancelled. The tour of the parliamentary precinct will still be happening on Thursday afternoon, but it will not be prefaced by a committee meeting.

I had mentioned the flood earlier. Instead of meeting in committee room 151 as originally planned, I've asked that we all meet on the first floor of the building, next to the grand staircase, at 1 p.m., to begin the tour.

I've also asked if I could bring the gavel. That's still to be determined.

I would encourage members to wear comfortable shoes, please, as the tour will consist of a lot of standing and walking in areas of the building not commonly accessed.

So if there is no further business—we're clear on that? It's 1 o'clock on Thursday afternoon beside the grand staircase in appropriate footwear.

Yes, MPP McGregor?

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Thanks, Chair. I just want to clarify that, obviously, in light of this information, this afternoon's meeting will be cancelled.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Yes, you can clear your schedules for this afternoon.

Okay. If there is no further business, this committee is now adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 1002.*



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