

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: October 19, 2020

To: Supervisor Jason Hass, Chairperson, Committee on Finance & Audit

From: Stuart Carron, Director of Facilities Management Division, Department of Administrative Services

Subject: County-wide Obsolete Facilities

Issue

The Committee on Finance & Audit, at its October 15, 2020 meeting, requested information regarding the number of obsolete facilities currently owned by the County.

Status

With over 900 buildings and 12.7MM square feet of space owned by Milwaukee County, managing the inventory and condition of this portfolio is a full-time task. Our Facilities Condition Assessment Program provides a comprehensive review of all County buildings over 3,000 SF in size on a rotating 5-year basis. That program tracks whether buildings are ‘in use’ or ‘not in use’, but not if a building is ‘obsolete’. A team of Facilities Management Division (FMD) personnel started a project last year to determine facility obsolescence and found the term to be somewhat subjective. A closed, vacant, mothballed facility slated for disposal is clearly obsolete, while an occupied, partially utilized building may be either under-utilized or functionally or partially obsolete. Nonetheless, here are some facility portfolio facts which may partially answer the question:

- The land transaction completed on the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus in 2020 included the disposal of several County buildings which were clearly obsolete (vacant & mothballed), such as the CATC building and Day Hospital (approximately 324,000 SF of space in total).
- An additional property transaction planned by the County Economic Development Division in 2021 will dispose of the obsolete D-18 (formerly Food Service) building on Watertown Plank Rd.
- Closure of the BHD building on the MRMC campus should occur in 2023 when its operations and personnel move elsewhere.
- As reported in previous legislation, the current Medical Examiners Office is considered functionally obsolete in that it does not meet current standards or fully support the intended operations.

- Also reported in previous legislation, the Safety Building has large areas which are vacant and functionally obsolete (not currently in use and too expensive to repurpose). While a majority of the building remains operational, the Courtrooms and adjoining areas do not meet current State Supreme Court standards and may be considered functionally compromised, if not functionally obsolete.
- The Milwaukee Regional Business Park has nine buildings which are not currently in use, and have no planned County use, but may offer revenue-generating leases to outside parties.
- Airport has a strategic plan to eliminate Concourse E and fold international travel into a modified conjoined concourse – Concourse E could be considered obsolete.
- Milwaukee County Transit System last year vacated the Fiebrantz transit complex, leaving nearly 100,000 SF of buildings not in use.
- A number of small buildings within Parks may be considered obsolete in that they are not in use and may or may not be maintained.

‘Not in use’ and ‘obsolete’ may or may not be the same thing, depending on the owner departments’ outlook and strategic plan. In 2021 FMD plans to continue to develop a working definition of facility obsolescence such that greater transparency can help build plans for improved operational efficiencies.

Recommendation

This report is provided for informational purposes only. No action is required.