



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Subject: Sun Parlor Home Strategic Initiatives Update

Report #: 2025-0507-CAO-R04-SZ

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Essex County Council (also acting as the Committee of Management) with updates on a number of strategic initiatives both underway and proposed at the Sun Parlor Home.

Background

The Sun Parlor Home is currently under the interim leadership of Administrators Mary Benson Albers and Claudia denBoer while the recruitment for a permanent Director of Health and Community Services / Administrator is completed.

As required under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*, County Council serves as the Committee of Management for the home and is responsible for ensuring the home complies with legislation, regulations and policies and prioritizes resident care and quality of life.

Administration is responsible for executing the strategic vision established by Council and for providing information to the Committee of Management to support the fulfilment of their oversight responsibilities.

The leadership of SPH wishes to be seen as an innovative partner of government in the Long-Term Care sector and believes the foundational work proposed in this report will help to inform and demonstrate that commitment.

Discussion

Detailed below are a number of strategic initiatives for County Council/the Committee of Management to be aware of:

Facility Feasibility Study

As part of the Asset Management Plan update in 2024, a condition assessment was completed for the Sun Parlor Home. During the 2025 budget deliberations County Council approved up to \$50,000 for a comprehensive feasibility study for Sun Parlor Home to further examine the state of the facility for the purpose of identifying viable redevelopment options to upgrade the Home to current ministry standards. The competitive procurement process did not result in any bids. With the assistance of the Procurement Department, and in compliance with our Procurement Policy, a qualified consultant (Bessant Pelech Associates Inc.) was identified and contacted directly to establish a revised scope of work. The proposed project cost exceeds the budget (\$107,000 plus tax and incidentals) and Administration requires County Council approval to proceed with the award (see Financial Implication Section).

A new or redeveloped Sun Parlor Home will be a multimillion-dollar project that will require support and approval from not only County Council but also the Ministry of Long-Term Care. An independent feasibility study will provide the detailed analysis of construction options to support informed decision making and is considered a critical step in the capital project process.

Service Delivery Review (SDR)

In 2018, the Sun Parlor Home underwent an Operational Review that focused on:

- Providing an opinion on the operational, financial and regulatory health of SPH;
- Providing comprehensive recommendations for improvements and changes, implementation plans and financial implications; and
- Providing other findings and observations.

While informative, the Operational Review did not analyze or assess the appropriateness and clarity of roles and responsibilities for all positions within the Home. Discussions with the Interim Administrators, SPH leadership and front-line team members supports the need to conduct a Service Delivery Review to undertake this detailed role analysis.

Administration recommends leveraging the synergies and efficiencies of the consultant proposed to commence the Feasibility Study (Bessant Pelech Associates Inc.) to also perform the Service Delivery Review. This approach allows for a holistic review that includes governance, staffing, and strategic planning considerations, ensuring the recommendations from both studies align and complement each other. No budget currently exists for this work.

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$60,000. The Financial Implication section of this report identifies the impact and Administration's recommendations for funding.

Commencing the SDR as soon as possible is recommended to maintain strategic momentum at SPH and support a planned transition of leadership of this project to the new Director/Administrator upon their hiring. The new Director/Administrator would have the opportunity to be part of the process, see it to its conclusion and champion its recommendations.

The scope of work for the Service Delivery Review (SDR) would focus on:

- **Roles and Responsibilities:** A detailed review of all job classes to assess alignment with current needs, best practices in long-term care delivery and consideration of the standards of care requirements in legislation associated with required positions.
- **Governance Structure:** An analysis of the operational oversight within Sun Parlor Home and its relationship to the legislated Committee of Management.
- **Succession Planning:** An evaluation of current leadership development and succession strategies to ensure business continuity and future readiness.

Financial Implications

County Council previously approved a budget of \$50,000 on June 19, 2024 (or November 28, 2024) for the completion of a Comprehensive Analysis and Feasibility Study for Sun Parlor Home.

The proposed Feasibility Study requires additional funding of \$80,000 and the Service Delivery Review is estimated to require funding of \$60,000. It is recommended that the additional funds (up to \$140,000) be drawn from the Rate Stabilization Reserve should departmental net surpluses at year end be insufficient to cover these unbudgeted expenses.

The consultant will not proceed with the studies until Council approval is received.

Consultations

The revised scope and budget for the feasibility study, including the addition of a Service Delivery Review, were developed in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Interim Administrators. All are supportive of the revised approach and believe it aligns with operational priorities and sector best practices.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing "Team Essex County" for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County's Fair Share	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council approve report number 2025-0507-CAO-R04-SZ, SPH Strategic Initiatives Update as information; and

That County Council authorize Administration to proceed with an expanded scope of work for the Sun Parlor Home Comprehensive Analysis and Feasibility Study to include a Service Delivery Review to be performed by Bessant Pelech Associates Inc.; and

That the additional funding of up to \$140,000 be approved, with funding from the Rate Stabilization Reserve, if necessary.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
N/A	N/A