

Downtown safety discussion leads to another possibility

By **Dan Gray** - July 1, 2021



During a robust conversation around downtown safety, an interesting development came to light with regards to our police services.

Councillor Matt Shoemaker asked for some clarification on if we were considering the move of our police headquarters to the downtown core.



Mayor Christian Provenzano answered the question as he sits on the Police Services Board.

"I can confirm that there seems to me to be a desire on the service part to move in that direction. And I think that there's support, certainly at the board level, to consider what has to be done," said Provenzano. "I think the first part of the assessment is [considering] whether the current building can be retrofitted to suit the needs. And if it can be retrofitted to suit the needs, what those costs are."

The original building, which sits on Second Line, was built in 1968 and the addition was constructed in 1991, according to Sault Police Services.



Mayor Provenzano noted that Sudbury and Thunder Bay are slightly ahead of us in the process of planning a police services building.

We were able to confirm that Sudbury hasn't made a final decision on a new station. It was acknowledged that the Greater Sudbury Police Services is in "dire need" of a new building, according to local news reports. Further, it was noted that, Thunder Bay, earlier this month received an estimated \$56 million to build a new station.

The official discussion, in our city, of a location has yet to occur, as the process has yet to officially commence, according to Provenzano. He did, however, give his personal perspective on a future location during the meeting.

"I think that there would be, obviously, some significant interest on the police services part to make sure that the building was located in a in a really strategic location that could get access across the city, effectively," said Provenzano. "I can tell you that from my personal perspective. I would like to see, if a new building is built for the police services, I would like to see that building built in the downtown. I'd like to see all those employees brought into the downtown core and I think it would make a lot of sense to locate the building in the downtown."

Shoemaker agreed after hearing the Mayor out on the matter.

"I think that there certainly seems to be the perception that a majority of the calls that police services respond to are from the downtown area. So, locating it in an area near where a majority of the calls are, I think, would make some sense. And just secondly, from a location perspective, I think that identifying the downtown as the location, if there is to be a future build, is something that needs to happen early on in the process so that there is not scouting locations outside of the downtown parameters." stated Shoemaker.

Do you think the police services building should be built downtown? Would money for a new building be better spent on policing rather than capital expenditures?

Let us know in the comments below and/or responding to the [Community Poll!](#)

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Dan Gray

A native of Centre Wellington, Ontario, I have worked as a freelance journalist all over the province of Ontario. Most recently I ran a local news page in my hometown of Fergus, Ontario. I look forward to bringing my experience covering breaking news, municipal matters and general interest stories to the team at Superior Media and communities we serve.

