

Put Metro Hall on the market: Ainslie

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Toronto City Councillor Paul Ainslie has suggested putting Metro Hall up for sale or lease. (Toronto Sun files)

TORONTO - Councillor Paul Ainslie wants to look at selling or leasing Metro Hall.

Ainslie argued the city should look at its options for the 27-storey John St. building given Toronto's hot real estate market.

"We need to be looking at our assets," Ainslie said Monday.

He wants councillors on the government management committee next week to direct city real estate officials to conduct a study on unloading the civic building.

Right now, Metro Hall is the home of several city departments.

Ainslie said he wants the city to look at putting those operations in rented offices or to buy smaller buildings along the subway line to house them.

Ainslie added the city should also consider disposing of 277 Victoria St. — just off Yonge-Dundas Square.

Former mayor Mel Lastman looked at the idea of selling Metro Hall despite opposition from left-leaning councillors.

At that time, city staff estimated the building could fetch up to \$170-million — or about \$15 million more if it came with tenants. Council eventually rejected the idea.

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