



DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES/PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES

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**INFORMATION REPORT
DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES – PLANNING & BUILDING
SERVICES REPORT 2016-06**

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
SLT/OLT

SUBJECT: Community Centre Lands Update

ORIGIN: Community Centre Lands Task Force Chair

In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

COMMENTS

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide an update on the Community Centre Lands (CCL), including upcoming work and next steps leading to a development strategy for this property.

The CCL Task Force has been meeting regularly to discuss options, required actions, and timeframes that will ultimately lead to the redevelopment of the CCL. These discussions have focussed around matters such as land use, infrastructure, parking considerations, and facility requirements (accommodation review).

As a first step, the research and analysis has shown that the existing Town-owned sanitary sewer that generally bisects parking lot P3 and the tennis courts (refer to the attached drawing) is due for replacement. The current location of the sewer would likely pose significant development restrictions on the site and, as such, the Task Force has commissioned a design and construction program that will see the sewer replaced and relocated in a manner that will optimize development opportunities free of infrastructure encumbrances. Two options are currently under consideration, being a relocation of the sanitary sewer further west on the property, and a relocation to the east generally adjacent to the rail line. The design and costing phase is expected to be completed in 2016, with construction expected to begin in 2017. Until such time as the design is completed the full impact of the work, including method of construction and disruption to parking areas, cannot be determined definitively.

The CCL Task Force is also reviewing options as it relates to the future development of the land and the extent to which the Town may wish to direct the built form, height, massing, use, etc. In this regard, options such as pre-zoning the land (either with a traditional zoning or a more flexible approach such as a Development Permit System or Form-Based Zoning), partnerships, design competitions, etc., are all being discussed.

Staff has also reached out to post-secondary institutions in urban planning to discuss the possibility of inviting teams of graduate students in urban planning to study the Community Centre Lands site and rationalize development concepts. Such projects are common in graduate planning programs and involve students engaging with Town staff, elected representatives, community members, and local residents to identify the opportunities and challenges of a site and create innovative concepts for the use of the land. This could benefit the Town by allowing for the generation of new ideas and possibilities for the site, could benefit residents through the use of alternative public engagement opportunities and the consideration of all possible concepts for future development of the site, and would benefit the students by giving them hands-on experience engaging with a practical planning challenge of urban development. Should the Town proceed with this initiative, it could also complement future processes of public engagement, concept evaluation, and eventual potential rezoning and development of other Town-owned lands.

Staff is currently in the exploratory stages of this idea, and any formal recommendations to proceed with this approach will come to Council for a decision through the CCL Task Force.

Timing

Under a “straight sale” option, the Town could declare the land surplus and offer the property for sale in 2016, and assuming a development application is then filed in 2017, the earliest that development could commence would be in 2018 considering that the planning process associated with a development application of this nature typically takes between 9 months to 1 year.

A similar timeframe is possible should the Town wish to pre-zone the land and hold a design competition, etc. Under this option, the Town could pre-zone the land in 2016/17, hold a design competition and/or enter into a partnership with a graduate planning school as noted above, and then sell the land based on the design concept. Assuming the design meets all zoning standards, only a site plan application may then be required.

OTHER

At the same time, a Parking Sub-committee within the Task Force has been established to focus on near-term improvements (e.g., additional parking opportunities in areas of greatest need, wayfinding enhancements to parking areas, etc.) and the mid and long-term parking needs in the downtown area. The results of this work will have implications on the ultimate development of the CCL lands in terms of the amount of Town-owned parking that may need to be replaced as a result of the development of the CCL, either incorporated within a new development or accommodated elsewhere, through partnerships with other landowners, or some combination of the above. The sub-committee will report back regularly to the CCL Task Force.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

The recommendations of this report support the following branches of the Town's Strategic Plan:

Well-balanced: encouraging a sense of community through an appropriate mix of land uses and amenities.

Well-equipped and managed: implementing policy and processes that reflect sound and accountable governance.

Well-planned and connected: long-term strategy matched with a short-term action plan.

CONSULTATION

No consultation was required or carried out in the preparation of this report.

HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable to this report.

BUDGET IMPACT

Engineering Services is preparing the design of the sewer relocation, which will be funded from the 2016 capital budget for engineering design. Once the design is complete and estimates can be prepared a budget for physical works will be requested as part of the 2017 Budget process.

CONTACT

For more information on this report, contact J. Unger, Assistant Director of Planning at 905 953-5300 or at junger@newmarket.ca.



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