



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 19-204**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff: Not applicable
Date of Meeting: July 9, 2019
Subject: St. Lawrence College Downtown Campus Partnership

Executive Summary:

In 2017, Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Kingston and St. Lawrence College (SLC) to strengthen the relationship and advance collaboration efforts to realize shared objectives that support economic growth and prosperity of the Kingston community. Both organizations have been working closely to advance a number of partnerships including the attraction and retention of SLC graduates for local employment, development of Kingston as an economic leader in Eastern Ontario and the contribution of infrastructure support and systems to enhance business incubation, acceleration and innovation.

The previous Kingston strategic plan (2015-2018) included a priority for the development of a post-secondary downtown campus in partnership with SLC. In 2018, Council supported a joint opportunities office to work toward the establishing a downtown campus of the College, with a focus being tourism, hospitality and the culinary arts.

Through its strategic planning process in February 2019, Council reaffirmed its commitment to its partnership with SLC to enable the development of a downtown campus. [Exhibit A](#), as amended, to Report 19-133 endorsed by Council on May 7th describes a model focused on hospitality, culinary arts & tourism programming in collaboration with Tourism Kingston, Kingston Accommodation Partners and other stakeholders.

[Report 19-133](#) also included a number of recommendations to reduce future financial impacts on tax payers and future debt issuance including the option to leverage a City property/asset as a contribution to the potential development of a downtown campus. Considering the number of Council priorities, their financial implications, as well as Council's desire to reduce taxes and implement tighter controls on future debt issuance, it is important for the City to assess all non-

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monetary means to support various strategic initiatives. The City owns some downtown properties which could be leveraged as a contribution to this specific strategic priority.

Downtown municipally owned properties are currently utilized as parkland, municipal offices or parking lots. There are some parking lots that were developed with the intent of being utilized as long term parking options (i.e. Hanson Memorial Garage and Chown Memorial Garage) while others were created or used as interim surface parking lots with the intention to explore future land use options (i.e. Frontenac Lot and Ontario Brock Lot).

Staff reviewed information for both properties (Frontenac Lot and Ontario Brock Lot) and it was clear that considerable planning work had been completed for the Frontenac Lot as part of the North Block Study and Design. Multiple studies, reviews, guidelines and reports were completed for Block 4 of the North Block District in the last ten (10) years. In 2014, Council endorsed guidelines for the redevelopment of Block 4 which were to be incorporated in a Request for Information (RFI) and an Request for Proposal (RFP) but were deferred by Council in 2015 when two (2) of the surface parking lots in the North Block had been sold to a local developer. The intent was to develop a parking strategy in the interim to ensure that lost parking through redevelopment could be replaced or accommodated differently.

Although Block 4 has been utilized as a surface parking lot for a number of years, it has always been the intent of the City to maximize the potential development of the property to a more appropriate land use. In 2013, Council endorsed some key development principles for Block 4 including the following options:

1. Development proposals with uses from the current zoning for the property that include a mix of residential type uses, hotel with associated conference space, and ground floor commercial uses;
2. Development proposals to be built to a maximum height between 6 and 18 storeys subject to the planning approvals required for the site including an urban design study and Heritage Impact Statements to provide the rationale;
3. Development proposals include developer ownership and restoration of the heritage buildings at 19-23 Queen Street.

In subsequent reports, Council also identified the interest to secure public parking as well as to incorporate a concept for the Walk of Fame along with a Public Art installation to honour The Tragically Hip into the redevelopment of the North Block.

City staff believes that these key development principles align with the potential development of a downtown campus that could provide an experiential learning and work environment focused on hospitality, culinary and tourism programming.

Therefore, it is recommended that Council authorize City staff to initiate discussions and negotiations with SLC on the potential establishment of the downtown campus through the redevelopment of Block 4, North Block District, based on key development principles previously

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endorsed by Council and other approved Council priorities and strategies. These negotiations would include disposing of Block 4 to SLC for a nominal fee in order to support this potential partnership.

Any successful discussions and negotiations with SLC would still require a complete planning application as per the Planning Act. Staff will report back on progress when appropriate.

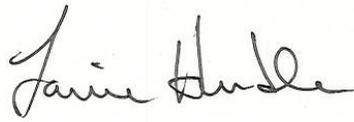
Recommendation:

That Council authorize City staff to initiate discussions and negotiations with St. Lawrence College on the potential establishment of the downtown campus through the redevelopment of Block 4, North Block District, based on key development principles previously endorsed by Council and other approved Council priorities and strategies.

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Authorizing Signatures:



**Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Peter Huigenbos, Acting Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works	Not required
Deanne Roberge, Acting Commissioner, Corporate Enterprise Services	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

Over the past several years, the partnership between the City and St. Lawrence College (SLC) has supported the advancement of Kingston as an innovative community. The 2017 Council approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two partners has resulted in a number of joint initiatives including community-based learning experiences, the Mayor's Innovation Challenge, workforce development and in-migration strategy implementation and support for innovative community development.

Most recently, in 2018, both parties agreed to work together to establish a joint opportunities office to support the development of a downtown campus with a focus on tourism, hospitality and the culinary arts. The joint office was established at City Hall in 2018 and the City committed a total of \$250,000 which is being matched by SLC to advance the post-secondary downtown campus. SLC retained a Manager, City-College Opportunities Office who has been working closely with partners including Tourism Kingston (TK), Kingston Accommodation Partners (KAP) and Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) to obtain a better understanding of the tourism sector. This has resulted in some short-term, concrete initiatives such as the Ambassadors' program for summer employees and development of a funding application to support culinary tourism while long-term work on the development of a robust and innovative tourism, hospitality and the culinary arts program for a downtown campus continues. Based on preliminary discussions, it is City staff's understanding that SLC is hoping to be able to develop a program that would enable hands-on learning in a live, learn and work environment which would include a number of private sector partners.

The establishment of such a post-secondary campus located downtown was a priority of the previous Council term (2015-2018) and has been reconfirmed as a priority of the current Council (2019-2022). Although a very important priority of Council, staff recognizes that there are a number of other competing priorities that will also require some form of City contribution. Therefore, staff have reviewed non-monetary options to enable Council's strategic priorities, including leveraging City assets such as properties (as per [Exhibit A](#), as amended, to [Report 19-133](#)).

In the case of the downtown campus, staff reviewed City owned properties that are not parkland, municipal administrative offices or parking garages/lots that were built to meet longer term downtown parking needs. There were two (2) properties that staff reviewed more closely, Frontenac Lot/Block 4 of North Block District and Ontario Brock Lot. These two (2) properties currently have surface parking lots with the intent to explore more appropriate land use for future use. The City acquired the Ontario Brock Lot in 2018 but has not yet developed a plan for potential future use. On the other hand, the North Block District, including Block 4, has been the subject of a number of studies, guidelines and development scenarios since 2009.

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North Block District – Block 4

In 2009, Council endorsed a number of recommendations to establish a sustainable redevelopment of the North Block District and Guiding Principles for the Redevelopment of City owned properties. These recommendations looked at the entire district and provided guidance on land uses, density, height, parking, public spaces, community benefits, etc.

The North Block District is an area that provides potential opportunities for significant development/redevelopment that will assist in maintaining and enhancing the viability of the Downtown and achieving a number of goals and objectives under the City's Official Plan. Proceeding with the redevelopment of the City-owned Block 4 was viewed as a potential catalyst for further redevelopment of other lands in the North Block District.

In 2013, through Report 13-150, Council endorsed a number of key development principles for Block 4 with the assumption that the property would be disposed of and that a private owner would proceed with the redevelopment. The intent was for the City to issue a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposal (RFP) to enable the disposal and private development.

The key development principles provided direction on land use which included a mix of residential type uses, hotel with associated conference space and ground floor commercial uses. The development height was approved between 6 and 18 storeys subject to an urban design study and Heritage Impact Statement as well as all appropriate planning approvals. The key guiding principles also contemplated the development proposal to include developer ownership and restoration of the heritage buildings at 19-23 Queen Street.

In 2015, staff also identified a number of motions previously approved by Council that should be reconsidered in the redevelopment of Block 4. These motions identified an interest in incorporating a concept for the Walk of Fame along with a Public Art installation to honour The Tragically Hip into the redevelopment of the North Block.

The overall development principles approved in 2013 included expectations for parking. Staff recognize that expectations related to both private development parking and public parking access has changed since 2013. The private development parking requirements will be reviewed based on the proposed redevelopment and it is likely that the City would be requiring a lower ratio than applied in 2013. As for the publicly accessible parking, it is recommended that a minimum of 200 parking stalls be made available to replace the number of parking stalls currently available in the Frontenac Lot.

In 2015, Council decided to defer the RFI and RFP for Block 4 due to the fact that Block 3 and Block 5 had been sold to a private developer and the City wanted to assess the impact on parking needs and supply due to the anticipated redevelopment of those two (2) properties. The development applications for both Block 3 and Block 5 were appealed at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) with a hearing that took place last January. Although the two (2) properties have not yet been redeveloped, the surface parking lots have been impacted as the private property owner had to proceed with soil remediation prior to redevelopment.

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Block 4, as city-owned property, is an ideal location in the heart of downtown surrounded by many tourism assets. Block 4 has been underutilized as a surface parking lot for a number of years. Its potential land and building uses align with the concept of a downtown campus focused on Tourism, Hospitality and the Culinary Arts.

City staff are recommending that the City initiates negotiations with SLC to discuss how the property could be leverage in order to enable a development on Block 4 that would accommodate the downtown campus and associated retail uses as well as a number some other public benefits and amenities.

Staff would report back to Council once it has advanced negotiations.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

Not applicable

Notice Provisions:

Not applicable

Accessibility Considerations:

Not applicable

Financial Considerations:

Not applicable

Contacts:

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services

Craig Desjardins, Senior Manager, Innovation & Institutional Partnerships

Exhibits Attached:

Not applicable