



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 15-182**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Cynthia Beach, Commissioner, Corporate & Strategic Initiatives
Resource Staff: George Wallace, Senior Special Projects Manager
Date of Meeting: March 3, 2015
Subject: Block 4, North Block District – Status Update / Further Deferral of Issuance of RFI and RFP for Block 4

Executive Summary:

This report has been prepared to provide a status update respecting Council's direction to staff on December 17, 2013 to defer the issuance of a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of Block 4 in the North Block District until after the election of the new Council. Council's motion also directed staff to finalize the necessary reports respecting such matters as the Design Guidelines for the redevelopment of Block 4. The Block 4 Design Guidelines were accepted by Council in August, 2014 (Council Report 14-231) and are to be used to inform any future RFI and RFP to be issued by the City. Issuance of the RFI was anticipated for early 2015.

The North Block District is recognized as 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, the Kingston Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and the four pillars of the Sustainable Kingston 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.

Recently, privately owned lands in Block 3 (north side of Queen Street between King and Wellington Streets) and Block 5 (south side of Queen Street between King and Ontario Streets) were sold to a local developer. It is anticipated that the required planning applications to facilitate redevelopment of these lands will be submitted in the next couple of months. These lands are currently used for public off-street parking. City Staff is in the process of investigating various options to ensure an adequate supply of public parking in the North Block District and surrounding area during and after the redevelopment of these lands.

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Staff recommends a further deferral of the issuance of an RFI and RFP for the redevelopment of Block 4. This will ensure the retention of the existing surface parking on Block 4 in close proximity to the K-Rock Centre and will also allow time for staff to develop and implement a parking strategy to replace the parking spaces that will be lost as a result of the redevelopment of the private lands, and ultimately, the City-owned lands in the North Block District. It will also afford an opportunity to monitor the redevelopment plans for the privately-owned lands which may help to inform the determination of the highest and best use for the City-owned Block 4.

This report also serves to update Council regarding direction that was provided on February 21, 2012 regarding a concept for a Walk of Fame to Recognize Great Kingstonians and development of Public Art to Honour The Tragically Hip. If Council approves the motion, staff would return to a future council meeting to provide criteria and a work plan for redevelopment of Block 4 after a parking strategy is in place and the redevelopment plans for other properties are approved and constructed.

Recommendation:

That Council direct staff to defer issuing a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of Block 4 in the North Block District until directed otherwise by Council.

Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Cynthia Beach, Commissioner,
Corporate & Strategic Initiatives**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Lanie Hurdle, Community Services	Not required
Denis Leger, Transportation, Facilities & Emergency Services	
Jim Keech, President and CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desiree Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion:**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to:

- provide a status update regarding Council's direction to staff on December 17, 2013 to defer the issuance of a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of Block 4 in the North Block District until after the election of the new Council and to finalize the necessary reports respecting such matters as the Design Guidelines for the redevelopment of Block 4; and
- request a further deferral of the issuance of an RFI and RFP for Block 4; and
- provide a status update to Council regarding direction that was provided on February 21, 2012 regarding a concept for a Walk of Fame to Recognize Great Kingstonians and development of Public Art to Honour The Tragically Hip.

Background

Over the past few years, the City has undertaken a number of studies/initiatives in preparation for issuing a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the City-owned Block 4 in the North Block District in downtown Kingston.

On April 3, 2013, Council received **Report 13-150** which presented several possible development scenarios for Block 4 together with the results of the public consultation respecting the development scenarios. Council passed a number of motions that provided staff with direction and guidance to assist with the preparation of Design Guidelines for redevelopment proposals and also provided a better understanding of any requirements or constraints to assist prospective proponents when responding to the City's RFI and RFP.

On December 17, 2013 Council received **Report 14-011** which presented the Feasibility Study on the potential for a conference centre as a component of redevelopment proposals for Block 4, provided an update on the status of the redevelopment of Block 4 and outlined the next steps respecting the issuance of a RFI and RFP. Council passed a number of motions including the following:

"THAT Council defer the issuance of the Request for Information (RFI) and the Request for Proposals (RFP) respecting the sale and development of Block 4 in the North Block District until after the election of the new Council in 2014: and"

"THAT Council direct staff to finalize the necessary reports respecting the conference centre component, the design guidelines for the development of Block 4 and the evaluation criteria for Proposals, together with an Updated Work Plan and Schedule, for submission to Council in January/February 2015 following a decision by the new Council respecting the conference centre component."

On August 14, 2014 Council received **Report 14-231** which included the Design Guidelines that provided a clear, concise outline of the desired design elements that are of the greatest

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importance to the City respecting the redevelopment of Block 4. Council passed the following motions:

That the North Block District, Block 4 Design Guidelines dated August, 2014, prepared for the City of Kingston by CIMA and NORR, be accepted in fulfillment of the component of RFP F31-SGG-CO-2012-004 respecting the provision of consulting services to assist the City with the preparation of Design Guidelines for redevelopment proposals on Block 4; and

That the Block 4 Design Guidelines be used to inform the future Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued by the City in order to provide guidance to development proponents in their design of submissions for the redevelopment of Block 4.”

Discussion

Much work has been completed to date to prepare Block 4 for sale and to ensure that the City's goals and objectives for the property would be known to potential developers. As discussed in previous reports, the intent was to have further information before Council early in 2015 to enable the issuance of a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposals (RFP) to request submissions for the redevelopment of Block 4. 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.

The North Block District is recognized as 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 Kingston Strategic Plan 2011-2014 (Enabling Economic Development) and the four pillars of the Sustainable Kingston Plan. The City's Official Plan recognizes the special status of the North Block District and includes policies intended to guide the redevelopment and intensification of the District.

Recently, privately owned lands in Block 3 (north side of Queen Street between King and Wellington Streets) and Block 5 (south side of Queen Street between King and Ontario Streets) were sold to a local developer. It is anticipated that the required planning applications to facilitate redevelopment of these lands will be submitted in the next couple of months. These parcels of land are subject to existing agreements with the City to accommodate their use for public off-street parking until such time as the lands are redeveloped. City Staff is in the process of investigating various options to ensure an adequate supply of public parking continues to be available in the North Block District and surrounding area during and after the redevelopment of these lands and other lands in the North Block District.

Given the pending submission of planning applications for privately-owned lands in the North Block District, it may be prudent to further delay issuing an RFI and RFP for Block 4. The majority of Block 4 is also utilized for public off-street parking. Delaying the issuance of an RFI and RFP would ensure the retention of the existing surface parking on Block 4 in close proximity to the K-Rock Centre while the privately-owned lands are being redeveloped. It would also allow time for staff to develop and implement a parking strategy for the replacement of the

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parking spaces that will be lost as a result of the redevelopment of the private lands, and ultimately, the redevelopment of the City-owned lands in the North Block District.

Delaying the issuance of the RFI and RFP for Block 4 will also afford an opportunity to monitor the progress of the redevelopment plans for the privately-owned lands. All of the lands in the North Block District are subject to the same policies and regulations and the same permitted uses which include a range of commercial uses, public open space, public parking, mixed residential/commercial uses, and hospitality uses, including a conference centre and hotel. Knowing which uses are being proposed on the privately owned lands may help to inform the determination of the highest and best use for the City-owned Block 4.

Staff recommend a further deferral of the issuance of an RFI and RFP for the redevelopment of Block 4.

There are a number of related initiatives that have appeared in council priorities related to the redevelopment plans. The Kingston Culture Plan approved in 2010 recommends the inclusion of a new civic exhibition space for the arts and affordable live/work space for artists along with high end residential development and elements, all contributing to the creation of an artful public realm in the proposal call for redevelopment of the North Block area. The design criteria for the property included the ability to incorporate these uses into a redevelopment plan. The initiative to include the civic exhibition space and affordable live/work for Block 4 would be delayed until Council approved the new timeline for redevelopment.

On February 12, 2012 Council received **Report 12-089** and approved a number of motions in connection with the renaming of a portion of Barrack Street to The Tragically Hip Way. The following motions still require action from staff:

Approval of a Cultural Interpretive Program of the Original Barrack Street in keeping with the City of Kingston Remembers Program

THAT the Cultural Heritage Interpretive Program, including signage, to recognize the historical significance of the original Barrack Street name be developed and implemented in keeping with the City of Kingston Remembers Program.

Concept for a Walk of Fame to Recognize Great Kingstonians

THAT City staff be requested to work with City stakeholders to bring forward a concept for the Walk of Fame that recognizes great Kingstonians.

Framework and Budget for the Development of Public Art to Honour The Tragically Hip

THAT City staff provide a framework and budget for the development of a piece of public art (monument, sculpture, mural, montage) to honour The Tragically Hip.

Staff had planned to incorporate a concept for the Walk of Fame along with a Public Art installation to honour The Tragically Hip into the criteria for evaluation of the request for proposals for development of the North Block. Work on these initiatives could resume once the

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property is listed for sale with the RFP criteria including criteria for these components to be included in a redevelopment proposal. If council identified that these items should be prioritized prior to that time, staff would have to re-evaluate options and consult with community stakeholders to identify other opportunities.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

See Council Report 13-150.

Notice Provisions:

No notice provisions are required.

Accessibility Considerations:

No additional requirements have been identified at this time. Copies of this Report are available in alternate formats if requested.

Financial Considerations:

None

Contacts:

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Sheila Kidd, Director, Transportation Services, 613-546-4291, ext. 2221

Exhibits Attached:

None