

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: March 8, 2021

TO: Finance and Audit Committee

FROM: Carl Isaak, Director, Planning and Development Services

SUBJECT: City Owned Land for Potential Affordable Housing

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Finance and Audit Committee receive the March 8, 2021, corporate report from the Director of Planning and Development Services, titled “City Owned Land for Potential Affordable Housing” for discussion in proposing options for Council’s consideration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 22, 2021, the Finance and Audit Committee requested a report outlining the properties owned by the City, for the purpose of considering where affordable housing project could be built or the land could be transferred or disposed to allow for an affordable housing project on another property.

This corporate report provides a list and map of property where the City has an ownership or leasehold interest. It is noted that the land owned by the City is predominantly used for parks or natural area purposes, including use by local sports associations, and the remainder are generally used for City operations. Any use of these properties for affordable housing would result in the displacement of an existing use or activity. Further, per section 27 of the *Community Charter*, the disposition (sale/lease) of park land would require obtaining the assent of the electors through a referendum (or counter-petition) process. While there is potential that some existing City operations could be consolidated to make an existing property surplus and available for development or disposition, it is recommended that this determination be considered as part of a Facilities Master Plan that reviews the overall needs in order to provide services to the community.

At a conceptual level, potential sites which could have existing operations consolidated on-site or relocated and redeveloped are:

1. City Hall and the Civic Precinct (Annex) at 15322 Buena Vista Avenue.
2. The White Rock Water Yard at 14811 Buena Vista Avenue.
3. 1510 Johnston Road (currently used as parking lot and the intended location of a future Civic Plaza / Town Square in the Town Centre). Given the prior use of this site as a gas station, there may be requirements for soil remediation prior to redevelopment.

A Facilities Master Plan is currently in the draft 2021-2025 Financial Plan for 2021-2025 (General Capital Plan).

This report is provided for the Committee's information.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2020-153 March 30, 2020	THAT Council receives for information the corporate report dated March 30, 2020 from the Director of Planning and Development Services titled "Metro Vancouver Housing's Expression of Interest for the Development of Affordable Rental Housing."
2019-039 January 28, 2019	That Council receives for information this corporate report dated January 28, 2019 from the Director of Corporate Administration, titled "City Property Inventory 2019."

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

This corporate report provides a list and map of properties where the City has an ownership or leasehold interest, as requested by the Finance and Audit Committee, to consider potential locations where affordable housing may be located or the property may be transferred to achieve affordable housing on another site. It is noted that the majority of land owned by the City is used for parks or natural area purposes, including use by local sports associations, and the remainder are generally used for City operations.

The list of City owned and leased properties was last provided to Council on January 28, 2019, and there are no additional parcels that have been acquired since that time. The property at 15463 Buena Vista Avenue, which was noted as a rental home in 2019, has since been converted to park land. The report from January 28, 2019 is attached as Appendix A.

A table including the City owned properties and their present zoning as well as their approximate size, and a link to their BC Assessment information (where available) is attached as Appendix B.

The City's parks and recreational parcels include lands used by community groups for sporting activities such as tennis and lawn bowling and community gardens. Per section 27 of the *Community Charter*, the disposition (sale/lease) of park land would require obtaining the assent of the electors through a referendum (or counter-petition) process. Other City owned parcels include walkways and ravine lands that would be unsuitable for building on, or City facilities used to provide services to the community.

While there is potential that some existing City operations could be consolidated to make an existing property surplus and available for development or disposition, it is recommended that this form part of a Facilities Master Plan that reviews the overall needs in order to provide services to the community. If a property is considered to be surplus but not suitable for affordable housing, and it is considered appropriate for a transfer/disposition to another party, it may be appropriate to consider zoning the property to its highest and best use in order to realize the inherent value of the site.

At a conceptual level, potential sites which could have existing operations consolidated on-site or to another location and redeveloped are:

1. City Hall and the Civic Precinct (Annex) at 15322 Buena Vista Avenue and 1174 Fir Street.
2. The White Rock Water Yard at 14811 Buena Vista Avenue.

3. 1510 Johnston Road (currently used as parking lot and the intended location of a future Civic Plaza / Town Square in the Town Centre). Given the prior use of this site as a gas station, there may be requirements for soil remediation prior to redevelopment.

A Facilities Master Plan is currently in the draft 2021-2025 Financial Plan for 2021-2025 (General Capital Plan).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If Council directs the disposal of City land either through lease, swap, or sale, it would restrict the use of that asset to provide alternative City services. A future corporate report would be required to provide details around the implications if Council directs further investigation of a specific property.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

“The acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality” is one of the subject matters that may be closed to the public, per section 90(1)(e) of the *Community Charter*.

The conversion of City land from current purposes to affordable housing or another disposition would involve specific legal considerations based on the type of land (e.g. park land reserve compensation, managing existing leases, etc.). The disposition of park land, for example, would require the assent of the electors (a referendum or counter-petition process) per section 27 of the *Community Charter*.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable. A future corporate report would be required to provide details around the implications if Council directs further investigation of a specific property.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The Corporate Administration Department provided information for this report.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The ongoing preparation of a “Housing Needs Report” is part of the “guide land use decisions of Council to reflect the vision of the community” objective in the “Our Community” theme of Council’s Strategic Priorities.

Also, in the “Our Community” theme, bringing forward and adopting an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Bylaw was one of the tasks completed under the objective of selecting and completing the CAC projects to maximize the benefit to the community. Sale proceeds resulting from the sale of surplus City property.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Direct staff to include consideration of a future affordable housing site(s) on City-owned land as part of the forthcoming Facilities Master Plan; or
2. Provide specific direction to staff regarding City owned property. Without the benefit of a current overall Facilities Master Plan it is possible that future needs would not be fully considered by a near term decision. This direction may be done in a closed meeting of Council if disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality.

CONCLUSION

This corporate report provides a list and map of properties where the City has an ownership or leasehold interest. It is noted that the majority of land owned by the City is used for parks or natural area purposes, including use by local sports associations, and the remainder are generally used for City operations. Any use of these properties for affordable housing would result in the displacement of an existing use or activity. While there is potential that some existing City operations could be consolidated to make an existing property surplus and available for development or disposition, it is recommended that this determination form part of a Facilities Master Plan that reviews the overall needs in order to provide services to the community. A Facilities Master Plan is currently in the draft 2021-2025 Financial Plan for 2021-2025 (General Capital Plan).

Respectfully submitted,



Carl Isaak, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Development Services

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

This corporate report is provided for information purposes.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Corporate report dated January 28, 2019 titled "City Property Inventory 2019"
Appendix B: Table of City Owned Properties with Zoning and Approximate Property Size