

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: February 12, 2024
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Guillermo Ferrero, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Community Hub Financial Analysis Options

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct award the proposal, from Urban Systems' Land Economics Group, attached as Appendix A, to perform a Financial Analysis and development options for the Community Hub Development to be funded from the Community Hub Capital Reserve.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban Systems' Land Economics Group (USL) is set to undertake a comprehensive financial analysis and development options for the White Rock Community Hub at a cost of \$72,360. This project aims to integrate administration offices with public and/or commercial uses. This may include amenities such as: affordable/seniors housing, a library, commercial-retail spaces and other community amenities. The components that ultimately make up the Community Hub will be defined following public consultation. The focus is on utilizing city-owned properties to finance the Community Hub, minimizing the financial burden on White Rock's taxpayers. Following thorough review and revisions by the Community Hub Internal Steering Committee, the proposal was unanimously recommended for a direct award to USL, to be funded from the Community Hub Capital Reserve.

The work to be undertaken aims to provide Council certainty to the following questions:

- How could the Community Hub be funded?
- Where would it be located?

It is crucial to note that specific components of the Community Hub are yet to be determined. Extensive public consultation is essential to identify the community's desire and needs for the Community Hub's components. This initial stage aims to gather ample financial information to enable the Council to make informed decisions regarding the Community Hub's location.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2023-428	THAT Council: 1. Establishes a "Community Hub Steering Committee;"

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Approves the Community Hub Steering Committee Terms of Reference, Policy 175, as circulated; 3. Support the Chief Administrative Officer for the required time to complete the committee mandate; and 4. Direct staff to post and hire a Community Hub Project Manager funded from Capital Reserves.
2023-366	<p>THAT Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the asset repair and maintenance strategies outlined in the Facilities Master Plan for consideration as part of the 2024 Financial Plan process; 2. Endorse the financial and conceptual work necessary to develop Council Strategic Priorities of Community and Housing & Land Use by moving forward with options for a Community Hub to replace the Evergreen Daycare, Library and City Hall and that this development work include investigation into the feasibility of incorporating civic services, with a seniors’ centre, affordable housing units, daycare space, an arts centre and market commercial-retail space as options; and 3. Endorse an investigation into the sale of the Waterworks Yard on Buena Vista, housing the Waterworks Operation in expanded facilities at the Keil Street Works Yard, and using the net proceeds as a contribution towards a Community Hub.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Council’s strategic emphasis on developing a new Community Hub, potentially incorporating affordable housing and various community services, aligns with the Council’s Strategic Plan. The Community Hub concept emerged from discussions about the aging, space-constrained City Hall building, which also requires seismic upgrading, does not meet accessibility standards and no longer meets the community’s needs. This initiative seeks to address both current and future community requirements, possibly integrating cultural spaces, active spaces, commercial retail units, and the inclusion of affordable housing into the Community Hub.

Key objectives for the Community Hub include consolidating City departments for improved access and operational efficiency, providing universal, accessible and safe access to City services, and creating a vibrant public realm through cultural and active spaces, complemented by commercial activities.

On November 6, 2023, Council established the Community Hub Steering Committee, setting its terms, appointing members, supporting the CAO’s office to fulfill the mandate, and authorizing the hiring of a Community Hub Project Manager.

The Committee has convened twice, receiving updates from staff on the project’s progression. This report aims to seek direction from Council to conduct a financial analysis of various scenarios as outlined in Appendix A. USL, with prior experience in similar delivering projects, is recommended for direct award due to the project’s tight timeline, aiming for approval and readiness by 2025/2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By the end of the 2027 financial year, the City plans to allocate \$8.9M for an affordable housing project and \$5M for the new Community Hub construction. If a viable project emerges that integrates affordable housing within the Community Hub, these funds could be combined, totaling \$13.9M available for the project by 2027's end.

The proposed work will require \$72,360, funded from reserves.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Community Hub project will necessitate broad community engagement, forming a core part of the project plan. The successful development of the concept will include heavily relying on input from both the community and Council.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

This significant project demands collaboration across all city departments, reflected in the diverse composition of the Community Hub Steering Committee, which includes key department directors.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

The Community Hub will be constructed considering various standards to ensure the project meets climate action targets wherever possible.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The recommendations in this report align with Council's Strategic Priorities that are identified as high priorities:

1. Community - We foster a livable city with connected residents enjoying distinctive places and activities – **Objective - Develop New Community Hub.**
2. Housing and Land Use – We advocate for diversity in housing and practice balanced land-use planning – **Objective - Increase at and below market rental housing inventory.**
3. Infrastructure - We plan, build, and maintain infrastructure to enhance quality of life and civic service delivery, while mitigating and adapting to environmental impacts – **Objective - Ensure future infrastructure resiliency by making decisions through a long-term lens.**

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The report seeks approval based on previous Council directions to advance the strategic priority of developing a new Community Hub. The Council may choose to:

1. Instruct staff to initiate a competitive process for this work, potentially delaying the project by several months and impacting the incremental timelines.
2. Provide alternative direction or feedback on scenarios not included in the proposal.

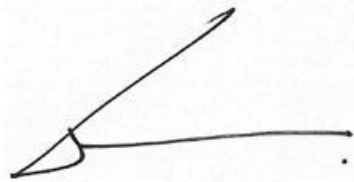
CONCLUSION

Staff recommend that Council proceed with a direct award to Urban Systems for a comprehensive financial analysis of the White Rock Community Hub development options. This analysis, costing \$72,360 and funded from the Community Hub Capital Reserve, is a critical step in realizing the vision of integrating essential services and amenities, such as affordable senior

housing, a library, and community spaces, within a vibrant, sustainable, and financially viable Community Hub.

The proposal, backed by the Community Hub Internal Steering Committee and aligned with the Council's strategic priorities, seeks to leverage City-owned properties, thereby minimizing the financial impact on taxpayers. It also lays the groundwork for informed decision-making on the hub's funding and location, pending extensive public consultation to tailor the hub to the community's needs.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot at the end.

Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Urban Systems' City of White Rock Work Plan for the White Rock Community
Hub Development Options dated January 12, 2024