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Date: March 22, 2022

To: Mayor Davis and Members of Council

From: Inderjit Hans, P.Eng., PMP
General Manager, Public Works Commission

Re: Response to COW-PA – 2022-80 Acquisition of 159 Dufferin Avenue

At the March 8, 2022 Committee of the Whole – Planning and Administration meeting during the review of Report 2022-80 – Acquisition of 159 Dufferin Avenue, follow-up clarifications were requested.

Staff support to continue with the acquisition of this site however recommends reporting back with the future use of the site. This will allow staff the time required to contact community groups, associations and understand the full costing of the project. Staff will continue with Dufferin Park development and this site, if approved for acquisition, will be a capital project in the future pending Council approval for the use. Further detail is provided below on options for the site and potential costs.

1.0 Potential Re-Use Opportunities for Existing Building

The buildings on the site appear to be in a state of disrepair and would require extensive repair or even demolition. Records indicate that the structure has not been designated as a heritage building and is not listed on the non-designated site on the City's Heritage Register. The zoning is shown as Residential Type 1B Zone (R1B) which permits single detached dwellings. Building Department records are inconclusive as to whether this property was legally constructed/converted to be a two (2) unit building. MPAC has this site assessed as a "semi-detached".

1.1 Housing & Homelessness

As part of the Brantford-Brant Municipal Housing Master Plan and the Mayors' Housing Partnership Taskforce work, multiple potential affordable

housing residential development sites were identified and prioritized. Notwithstanding, new potential development sites are continuously collected and evaluated for consideration.

In this instance, the site was identified in relation to a potential pedestrian entry point into Dufferin Park. This is a smaller site, and could be considered for a modest affordable housing development project; however it would require at minimum, either the demolition of the existing structure or extensive renovations to bring the structure up to minimum applicable zoning, building code and accessibility standards. Furthermore, given the existing zoning for the property, land use planning applications may be necessary in order to permit higher density uses on the site. There is not a full understanding of the buildings internal condition, it would be difficult to estimate the cost of repair, but in comparison to recent site developments with the average cost of approximately \$250,000 per unit including land costs, based on this and on the limited infill density development opportunity, this site does not appear to be a cost effective choice for future affordable housing re-development. Given some additional time for further assessment and consideration of types of infill development, additional options could be analyzed.

1.2 Parks & Facilities Services

This site and existing building could be made available to sport organizations looking for administrative space. This includes those that currently use Dufferin Park and also any organization that may be in need of space due to administration growth or other needs. Discussions with these organizations have not yet been initiated due to the turnaround time for this memo. The partnership agreements can potentially be structured so that any required building renovations could be at the cost of the sport organizations.

The building and property would require renovations to accommodate sport groups and the associated parking but the site plan could retain pedestrian connectivity through the property from the main park to Dufferin Avenue. The change in use and the potential traffic generated by it may pose a problem for the neighbourhood. Applicable zoning, building code and AODA standards would have to be met in order for this potential use to proceed. Managing the facility and potential tenants is within the capacity and mandate of the Parks & Facilities Services Department and

any operating costs could be incorporated into the annual Dufferin Park budget.

1.3 Community Organizations

Staff are in consultation with community partners to determine if there is interest in the property for use by non-profits or community serving organizations.

2.0 Additional Costing

In addition to the acquisition amount of \$650,000.00 identified within Report 2022-80, if approved, further costs will be incurred. The determination of the costs will be dependent on the successful direction to be taken. Some approximate fees that can be quantified include:

- Environmental Reporting (Including Designated Substance Reporting) - \$30,000.00
- Demolition – \$50,000.00
- Water/Sanitary Service Removal/Disconnect - \$5,000.00
- Trail Construction (2m wide park trail) – \$20,000.00
- Landscaping - \$20,000.00
- Safety & Security Lighting - \$5,000.00
- Park Entry Signage - \$5,000.00
- Annual Trail and Landscape Maintenance Fees – Minimal and will be incorporated into the operating costs associated with Dufferin Park

Fees that cannot be quantified at this time include:

- Designated Substance Abatement;
- Change of Use Upgrades to Existing Building, if required for housing or other uses noted in Section 1; and
- Accessibility Upgrades to Existing Building if required for housing or other uses noted in Section 1.

It is the understanding that a public trail crossing private school property is not presently permitted. It is not recommended to promote access onto private school property until alternatives are provided. A meeting with the appropriate school board staff will be arranged to discuss the potential for a legal access to the park adjacent to the school property along with any agreements that may be required.

Staff support moving forward with the property acquisition, and Public Works staff will return, at a later date, with a Council Report detailing the potential re-use and additional cost related to re-use and/or demolition. Within this report the Dufferin Park Secondary Trail Connection capital project will be detailed for approval by Council.

3.0 Clubhouse Facility

During discussions it was noted that the City was ultimately removing the existing clubhouse and not replacing it. For clarity, the existing building is being removed due to the high costs associated with bringing the clubhouse into conformance with accessibility standards. The City is constructing a new Multi-Use Park Building during the Dufferin Park Redevelopment project. This building will include:

- Small rentable meeting room with food preparation area (counter, sink, refrigerator);
- Secure storage room;
- One (1) Barrier Free, Gender Neutral Washroom - accessible from the interior of the building; and
- Two (2) Accessible, Gender Neutral Washrooms – one (1) accessible from the interior of the building and one (1) accessible from the exterior of the building.

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