

Efforts to Protect and Preserve the McDougall United Church

Recommendation:

That the February 23, 2016, Sustainable Development report CR_2232, be received for information.

Report Summary

This report provides an update on Administration's work with the McDougall United Church Council and Friends of McDougall in the effort to restore and protect the church.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 24, 2015, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration:

- continue to work with McDougall United Church and the Presbytery of United Church of Canada to support efforts to protect and preserve the church by facilitating the establishment of a community-based committee, comprised of members with appropriate skill sets, to continue this work through out 2015
 - work with the congregation to prepare historical designation documents, pending the outcome of further work with the community and the province
- and report back to Committee.

Report

In February 2015, Administration began coordinating meetings that included representatives from the McDougall United Church Council, the Presbytery of United Church of Canada, Friends of McDougall, and the Government of Alberta. These sessions provided a venue for discussion, problem solving, visioning and planning.

In May 2015, the City of Edmonton committed \$500,000 towards the restoration and preservation of the building if McDougall United Church successfully obtained designation as a Municipal Historic Resource. At the same time, a \$750,000 grant was announced by the Government of Alberta. The church was designated as a Provincial Historic Resource on June 22, 2015. Municipal Historic Designation and the municipal and provincial funds committed will help stabilize and restore the historic 1910 portion of the McDougall United Church building.

Based on these funding commitments, the congregation unanimously agreed to proceed with application for Municipal Historic Designation. In August 2015, Church

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Council submitted the application requirements to have McDougall United Church designated as a Municipal Historic Resource.

On November 17, 2015, the Notice of Intention to Designate the McDougall United Church as a Municipal Historic Resource was approved by City Council. The Notice included exemption from City Policy C450B - Policy to Encourage the Designation and Rehabilitation of Municipal Historic Resources in Edmonton - by allowing lump sum payment of the funding upon registration of the designation bylaw instead of in stages in response to completed work.

A bylaw to designate the McDougall United Church as a Municipal Historic Resource is expected to be brought to City Council for consideration on March 1, 2016.

Restoration and Preservation Work

McDougall United Church Council and Friends of McDougall formed a Governance Committee that is empowered to make decisions related to repair and restoration work on behalf of the Church Council and congregation. Representatives from both the City of Edmonton and Government of Alberta also attend these meetings.

An architectural firm was selected in December 2015 and is currently preparing plans to begin restoration work on the church in spring 2016.

Urgent repairs to the church, including the bell tower, is underway using provincial funds. The church annex, which was added in 1955, is not included in the proposed Municipal or Provincial Historic Designation. Repairs to the roof and other areas of the annex will be completed using congregation funds.

Friends of McDougall

Friends of McDougall is a community-based group formed in February 2015, in response to concerns that the church would be torn down. The Friends aim to preserve the building and protect its role as a performance and community space by raising awareness, garnering support, and raising funds to restore and preserve the church. This group is integral to the long term success and viability of McDougall United Church.

In November 2015, the McDougall Church Council and Friends of McDougall joined in a task force to continue long-term planning in conjunction with fundraising.

Policy

City Policy C450B - Policy to Encourage the Designation and Rehabilitation of Municipal Historic Resources in Edmonton.

Budget/Financial Implications

The total estimated cost of the restoration and rehabilitation of the project is \$11,304,000 to \$15,590,000 in the immediate to short term. The initial funding is the minimum funding required to help stabilize and restore the historic 1910 portion of the

church. Beyond the \$500,000 grant from the Heritage Reserve Fund and \$750,000 grant from Alberta Culture and Tourism, the owner is responsible for all costs of the restoration portion of the project. Administration anticipates that the Friends of McDougall will help with raising funds to support the owner in this endeavour.

Attachment

1. Summary of Recent Efforts to Preserve the McDougall United Church

Others Reviewing this Report

- T. Burge, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer