

Potential for Adaptive Reuse of Buildings on Exhibition Lands

Recommendation

1. That the April 26, 2021, Financial and Corporate Services report FCS00191, be received for information.
2. That Attachment 1 of the April 26, 2021, Financial and Corporate Services report FCS00191, remain private pursuant to sections 24 (advice from officials), 25 (disclosure harmful to economic and other interests of a public body) and 27 (privileged information) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the November 3/5, 2020, City Council Public Hearing, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare:

2. A report to Committee with respect to the potential for adaptive re-use of all buildings on the site outlining the past actions taken by the City.

Executive Summary

The Financial and Corporate Services report CR_8382, Exhibition Lands Implementation Strategy, also on the April 26, 2021 Executive Committee meeting agenda, outlines the proposed path for the redevelopment of the Edmonton Exhibition Lands. The strategy focuses on updated land uses and improved infrastructure on site, as detailed by the Edmonton Exhibition Lands Planning Framework. Administration will ensure that stewardship and management of lands and structures is prioritized over the course of the extended redevelopment timeline. This includes reviewing all avenues of potential adaptive re-uses, closures and demolitions for all buildings, while taking into account previous City action. The Exhibition Lands Implementation Strategy considers the potential for adaptive re-use of buildings at the Edmonton Exhibition Lands.

Legal advice on the agreement between the City and Edmonton Arena Corp and Oilers Entertainment Group (OEG), was supplied to City Council as a private memo in November 2020 and the legal advice is set out in the private Attachment 1.

Report

On March 15, 2021, following the third reading of Charter Bylaw 19267, City Council passed the Adoption of the Edmonton Exhibition Lands Planning Framework. The Exhibition Lands Implementation Strategy (outlined in CR_8382, Exhibition Lands Implementation Strategy also on the April 26, 2021 Executive Committee meeting agenda) outlines the key factors, crucial actions and administrative processes required in order to deliver on the vision and goals outlined by the Planning Framework. The Implementation Strategy details Administration's proposed program for redevelopment of the Edmonton Exhibition Lands over the course of the next 30 years. Included in the program is the requirement for Administration to review all structures on site to assess their potential for continued use, adaptive re-use, leasing opportunities, decommissioning or demolition at all points throughout the redevelopment timeline.

Aside from the Expo Centre and Coliseum, there are over 30 buildings on site, totalling over 50,000 square metres in area, that require stewardship and property management. Administration is developing a property management plan for these buildings that aligns with redevelopment plans including work to assess building conditions and energy performance, risks and operating costs. The property management plan will be completed by Q4 2021 and will direct which buildings should be decommissioned or demolished to reduce risk or costs, and confirm which buildings have acceptable risks and remaining operational life. Those facilities deemed acceptable for adaptive reuse will also be expected to conform with Sustainable Building Policy C532 where applicable. These properties will continually be reviewed for the potential for adaptive re-use over the course of the development timeline, ensuring that any activation plans align with both the Edmonton Exhibition Lands Planning Framework and the redevelopment timeline as the project progresses.

The Exhibition Lands site will be managed to prioritize public safety while simultaneously continuing to activate the grounds through public and private events. In instances where buildings are deemed suitable for adaptive re-use, Administration may establish and maintain lease agreements with interim user groups for select buildings that can still be safely occupied. Buildings that cannot be leased will be operated with limited access, reduced utility use, and prioritized building safety/structural integrity until such time that demolition is deemed appropriate from a financial or development perspective.

Administration will take these diverse matters into account when reviewing the potential uses and connect appropriately with Committee or Council, as appropriate, on matters which are outside of Administration's delegated authority. Site activation is highlighted as a key to the successful redevelopment of the Exhibition Lands.

Administration has tried to ensure that the Exhibition Lands Plan Area, and those buildings located within, have remained activated where possible. Buildings that have

been previously vacated have been consistently reviewed for their ability for adaptive reuse driven by City requirements. In Fall 2020, the Control Office (Jockey Dorms) at the southwest corner of the site was repurposed for bridge housing in cooperation with Homeward Trust Edmonton. Edmonton Northlands continues to operate and lease areas at Exhibition Lands to support the delivery of K-Days and Farmfair International, while also maintaining operations of the Northlands Urban Farm.

In February 2021, Borden Park was the principal location for the Arts on the Ave Deep Freeze festival. Other previous site activation events have included pop-up street hockey and basketball programs, outdoor culinary gatherings and numerous other events organized by Explore Edmonton and the Expo Centre. Administration also continues to evaluate opportunities to activate the racetrack site and surrounding parking areas for festivals and events in the short and medium term, including as part of the City’s bid to host matches as part of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The Coliseum, itself, has been assessed for adaptive reuse on a regular basis by Administration. Most notably the due diligence performed around exploring the potential of repurposing the Coliseum into a multiplex arena, which included discussions with Hockey Canada (May 30, 2017, Citizen Services report CR_4729). While these exploratory efforts ultimately led to the termination of the Sponsorship Agreement and recommendation to close the Coliseum in 2018, the building and site have been utilized since that time. The Coliseum served as an important storage for some of the region’s Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) inventory and City surplus stock. Emergency Services have also used the facility for training opportunities and ETS has been able to train new operators in the parking areas to alleviate capacity issues.

Finally, certain buildings and structures on site that may be considered historically significant are being assessed for their ability to be incorporated into the redevelopment strategy.

Legal Implications

See Attachment 1.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton has a resilient financial position			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City has the capacity to sustain services in economic downturns by maintaining stable revenue sources.	# of internal reviews of buildings and structures on site for adaptive reuse	TBD	All buildings and structures reviewed on an annual basis

Attachment

1. Arena Agreements Summary & Legal Advice (Private)

Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor