

NO: R039

COUNCIL DATE: February 20, 2017

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: February 15, 2017**

FROM: General Manager, Engineering **FILE: 0930-20/084**
General Manager, Planning & Development

SUBJECT: Renewal of Lease of 10677 Whalley Boulevard for the Continuation of the Temporary "Boulevard" Homeless Shelter

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department and Planning & Development Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Authorize the execution by the appropriate City officials of a lease renewal agreement between Apolla Developments Ltd. (the "Landlord") and the City for the continuation of a lease by the City of the land and building space located at 10677 Whalley Boulevard (the "Premises"), as generally illustrated in Appendix "I" attached to this report, to allow it to continue to operate as a temporary shelter for a one year period from June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018, subject to BC Housing approval for operational funding for the same period of time; and
3. Instruct the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and related Council Resolution to BC Housing.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an update to Council on the Surrey shelter operations; and
- Obtain approval for staff to exercise the City's second option to extend the lease of the Premises for a further period of one year from June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018 to allow its continued use as a temporary shelter.

BACKGROUND

In September 2015, Council approved the lease of the Premises to allow it to operate as a winter shelter for the period December 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016. The original lease term was for an eight month period commencing October 1, 2015 and ending May 31, 2016. The lease provides an option in favour of the City to extend the agreement for two additional one-year periods. In March of 2016, Council approved the first one-year extension of the lease term until May 31, 2017. The City must provide notice to the Landlord prior to March 31, 2017 of its intent to exercise the second renewal option for the upcoming year.

Premises

The Premises are located on the west side of Whalley Boulevard at the edge of a single-family neighbourhood in transition. To the west of the Premises is a large vacant property that is part of the same legal title as the Premises. To the southwest is the Dell Shopping Centre, and the Canada Post depot is to the northwest.

The Premises is a 25,000 ft.² portion of the 2.35 acre property that includes the old Dell Hotel site (demolished) and the old Dell Beer and Wine store. The 6,740 ft.² single level stand-alone building located on the Premises has successfully served as a temporary homeless shelter since its opening in December 2015. The building has undergone all of the renovations necessary for it to function as a shelter, and no additional capital expenditures are required for its continued operation.

DISCUSSION

In 2016, BC Housing agreed to convert the operation of the Premises from a “winter shelter”, which is open for a 5 month period during the winter - spring months, to a year round temporary shelter operation. This commitment from BC Housing ends April 31, 2017. BC Housing pays for the operation of the Premises, with the exception of rent and utilities. BC Housing has indicated that they would be amenable to extending the agreement if the lease is extended; however, they would need to obtain approval from their executive committee once the City has confirmed the lease extension.

Community Advisory Committee (“CAC”)

In 2015, a CAC was established for the Boulevard Shelter operation. The CAC includes representatives from the Lookout Society (“Lookout”), the Downtown Surrey BIA, local businesses, local residents, Fraser Health Authority, BC Housing, RCMP and City staff. Initially, the Boulevard CAC met monthly; however, due to lack of concerns regarding the shelter’s operation, the CAC moved its meetings to bi-monthly in May 2016. A total of 10 meetings have been held as of the date of this report.

There have been no complaints received from the CAC members that are directly related to the Premises or its operation. In fact, the Premises is seen to have had a positive impact on the neighbourhood. The Boulevard CAC will continue to meet during the proposed lease extension period.

Update on the 2016 Surrey Homeless Shelter Operations

Boulevard Shelter 10677 Whalley Boulevard

Since its opening on December 1, 2015, the Boulevard Shelter has proved to be successful in providing safe and supportive shelter for chronically homeless people. The 40-bed shelter has been operating at full capacity since it opened at the beginning of December 2015. As of February 1, 2017, a total of 375 people have stayed at the shelter. Lookout staff report that 60% of shelter residents have a health issue, 54% have addiction issues and 46% have mental health issues. As of February 1, 2017, 135 people have been successfully transitioned from this shelter to other forms of housing.

The Boulevard Shelter CAC continues to meet bi-monthly, and to date, no concerns have been raised regarding its operation, with the exception of a few refuse complaints that are coming from the King George Boulevard area and have been deemed to be general in nature and not specific to the Premises.

A variety of services and supports are being offered to the Boulevard Shelter residents. These include:

- Fraser Health staff have been working on-site at the shelter to connect residents with health services, including mental health and substance use services;
- Housing outreach workers are working to transition people into housing; to date, 135 residents have been moved into housing or other health care facilities;
- Weekly group sessions for anxiety and depression;
- BC Housing has provided funds for stipends (gift cards) for a Street Sweepers Program that is engaging the shelter residents in cleaning up the area around the shelter;
- A Surrey Libraries outreach librarian is providing library services on-site;
- Community members are being invited to volunteer at the shelter; for example, hairdressers are providing free haircuts; and
- Various life skills workshops.

Overall, Lookout staff are very pleased with the Premises. The size and lay-out of the space is proving to be conducive to helping the vulnerable residents.

Guildford Shelter 14716 – 104 Avenue

In October 2016, Council approved the use of the City-owned building at 14716 – 104 Avenue as a 40-bed temporary shelter. Renovations to the building have been completed, and the shelter opened for operations in early February 2017. Unlike other shelter operations, which provide separate areas for men and women, this shelter offers six rooms designated for couples. This is a new approach and was introduced in response to the aversion of couples to enter shelters for fear of being separated from their partner.

A Guildford Shelter CAC was established in November 2016. The Guildford CAC includes representatives from Lookout, Hjorth Road Elementary School (Principal), Superstore, local residents, Fraser Health Authority, BC Housing, RCMP and City staff. The Guildford CAC meets monthly. Three meetings have been held as of the date of this report. As this shelter recently opened, there have yet to be any negative concerns related to its operation.

It is anticipated that the same services and support offered at the Boulevard Shelter will be available to those at the Guildford Shelter.

Gateway Extreme Weather Response Shelter (“EWRS”) 10660 City Parkway

In October 2016, Council approved the fit-up and use of a portion of the City-owned building located at 10660 City Parkway for its use as a EWRS. The EWRS opened for use on December 1, 2016. Due to the extreme weather conditions experienced in December, Fraser Health provided funding for this facility to remain open during daytime hours.

On January 30, 2017, Council endorsed the continued operation of the Parkway Shelter (104 – 10660 City Parkway) with funding from BC Housing for four months, at which time staff will report back to Council. BC Housing indicated a willingness to provide further extensions as required until March 31, 2018 to alleviate the current situation while a Housing Plan is developed with BC Housing and other partners specific to the target population for the City Centre Response Plan. This proposed extension provides 40 additional temporary shelter spaces.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The continuation of the Boulevard Shelter operation supports the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter. In particular, the continued operation of the Boulevard Shelter relates to the Sustainability Charter themes of Inclusion, Public Safety, and Health and Wellness. Specifically, these projects support the following Desired Outcomes:

- Diversity and Accessibility DO2: Surrey is a caring and compassionate city that supports its residents of all backgrounds, demographics and life experiences;
- Social Infrastructure and Innovation DO24: Surrey has a strong social infrastructure that supports the needs of its diverse and growing population;
- Social Infrastructure and Innovation DO25: Surrey has a culture of collaboration and innovation to solve complex social issues; and
- Community Safety and Emergency Services DO1: Residents are safe and have a strong sense of security in all neighbourhoods and throughout the City.

The continued operation of the Boulevard Shelter also supports the following Strategic Directions:

- Housing SD9: Facilitate the development of shelter facilities and supportive housing as outlined in the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey;
- Health Services and Programs SD1: Connect, facilitate and support people and organizations in innovative alliances for delivery of social, health and wellness programs; and
- Health Services and Programs SD2: Increase the understanding of, and support for, harm reduction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council approve the execution by the appropriate City officials of a lease renewal agreement, as generally described in this report, between Apolla Development Ltd. and the City for the continuation of the lease by the City of the Premises located at 10677 Whalley Boulevard to operate as a temporary shelter from June 1, 2017 until May 31, 2018, subject to BC Housing approval, for operational funding for the same period of time.

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Appendix "I" - Aerial Photograph of Site (10677 Whalley Boulevard)

