

Request for Decision



To: Regular Meeting

From: **Development, Engineering & Planning**

Date: June 15, 2020

Subject: Proposed Lease - Amenity Space for Raven Place on Lot's B and C on 70th Avenue (File: LS2002)

Recommendation: **THAT Council authorize staff to enter into a three (3) year lease agreement, with the option to renew at the discretion of the City, with Boundary Family Services Society/BC Housing respecting the use of Lot's B and C on 70th Avenue as amenity space for the residents of Raven Place and FURTHER, to provide public notice of this intention in accordance with Section 94 of the Community Charter.**

Background

At the April 6, 2020 in-camera meeting, Council considered a request from the Boundary Family Services Society (BFSS) to use the four City-owned lots on 70th Avenue for additional amenity/green space for the residents of Raven Place (see letter in Appendix 1). Council directed City staff to contact the neighbours to obtain feedback on this request.

On April 30, 2020, a letter was sent to ten neighbouring property owners requesting their comments on this proposal. The City received comments from six neighbouring property owners (see Appendix 2).



BFSS is proposing to construct a gazebo, raised gardens and a small play area for the residents of Raven Place (6895 19th Street). They indicated that relocating and expanding several Raven Place amenities to the 70th Avenue lots would alleviate some of

the concerns expressed by adjacent property owners as well as provide more livable common spaces for the residents.

These lots are designated for single family residential in the Official Community Plan and are zoned R1 - Single Family Residential. Each of the lots is 0.07 ha (0.172 ac) in size for a total of 0.28 ha (0.69 ac). The lots were purchased by the City on March 25, 2019 for the purpose of West End strategic development opportunities, such as potential alternative access to the adjacent housing project, and/or to generally accommodate land uses or partnership opportunities that would be of benefit to the residents of the City. The lots are not serviced with developed roads or utilities.

It is noted that the City is presently undertaking a real estate strategy for City-owned lands, a comprehensive development plan for the West End and a review of the Official Community Plan, all of which may have implications for the future use of these lands.

Neighbourhood Feedback

City staff received comments about this proposal from six neighbouring residents. Four out of the six are generally in favour of this proposal (some conditional) with two responses indicating the amenity area should be open to the public. The full responses received are in Appendix 2. The table below provides an overview.

Response	Position	Comments
Response #1	Opposed	Other multi-family developments have received preferential treatment. There are ample public spaces in the area.
Response #2	In favour	This will address neighbours concerns about noise and smoking along the fence.
Response #3	In favour	This amenity space should be open to the public.
Response #4	In favour	Questions about funding and development.
Response #5	Opposed	Ample green space exists in the area. The lots should be used for access to Raven Place.
Response #6	In favour	This amenity space should be open to the public.

Recommended Option

Based on the feedback received from the community and to optimize the use of these lands for public purposes, staff is proposing that Council consider negotiating a lease with BFSS/BC Housing for the use of the two middle lots only as amenity space (Lots B and C). Lots A and D would remain vacant. The benefits associated with this option are:

- The space (1,390 sq m/15,000 sq ft) would be developed and maintained by Raven Place but public access to the site would be allowed.

- Lots A and D would remain vacant and act as buffers between the amenity space and the neighbouring residents on both sides.
- Lots A and D would remain available for future housing if and when the lands are serviced with water, sewer and roads.
- The upcoming Real Estate Strategy, West End and Official Community Plan reviews would examine options for the ultimate future use of these lands.
- Cost to the City is minimal, involving the preparation of the lease agreement.

It is also recommended that a plan be put in place regarding the improvements to be done to the space and that conditions be imposed to ensure that the space functions with limited impact on the neighbourhood. Some of these conditions would be:

- The western area of Raven Place between the apartment building and adjacent properties on Brycen Place should be declared a no smoking area.
- Social gathering areas should be located away from adjacent residents.
- The new amenity space on Lots B and C must be fenced on the east and west sides to provide a visual/sound buffer.
- The space should be maintained in connection with other outdoor spaces in Raven Place.
- BFSS/BC Housing must carry appropriate liability insurance in accordance with City policy.
- All conditions and requirements would be incorporated into the Lease agreement and the agreement will be vetted by legal counsel.

Staff spoke with a BFSS representative regarding the proposed lease. The BFSS representative concurred that this proposal would work with their plans to ensure that the designated smoking area for Raven Place would be moved away from the western property line and relocated to the lots. Other options were also discussed in the conversation including:

- a. Possible fencing on the north side; however, install a gate for access for the general public
- b. Potential expansion of the lease area to include part of Lot A & D if required while still maintaining a buffer zone

Public Notification

As per the Community Charter, Council's intention to temporarily dispose of City-owned lands to a non-profit organization must be advertised twice in the local paper. This notice will also be posted on the City website and Facebook page.

Benefits or Impacts

General

The recommended option addresses the concerns of both Raven Place and the neighbouring residents. Impacts from a new amenity space would be minimized due to open space buffers surrounding the area. The general public will benefit from having access to additional amenity space in the City.

Strategic Impact

Community Engagement

- Letters were sent to the neighbouring property owners asking them to comment on BFSS's request to use the lots. Council's intention to enter into a lease will be advertised twice in the local paper.

Community Livability

- Additional amenity space and relocating the smoking areas will benefit the entire project and its neighbours.

Fiscal Responsibility

- The recommended option will have minimal financial impact on the City (cost of preparing the agreement only).

Policy/Legislation

Local Government Act and the Community Charter.

Attachments

Appendix 1 - Request from Boundary Family Services Society

Appendix 2 - Responses received from neighbouring property owners

Recommendation

THAT Council authorize staff to enter into a three (3) year lease agreement, with the option to renew at the discretion of the City, with Boundary Family Services Society/BC Housing respecting the use of Lot's B and C on 70th Avenue as amenity space for the residents of Raven Place and FURTHER, to provide public notice of this intention in accordance with Section 94 of the Community Charter.

Options

1. THAT Council accepts the report.
2. THAT Council does not accept the report.
3. Possible options:
 - a. allow for fencing on North side of property with gate access for the public
 - b. allow for lease of portions of Lot A & D if Lots B & C are deemed not large enough

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	20200615 RFD RMC LS2002 70th Ave Lots B and C for BFSS Raven Place.docx
Attachments:	- 20200615 Appendix 1 Letter from BFSS 70th Ave Lots.pdf - 20200615 Appendix 2 Responses_Redacted.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 9, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Daniel Drexler - Jun 5, 2020 - 2:24 PM

No Signature - Task assigned to Duncan Redfearn was completed by assistant Daniel Drexler

Duncan Redfearn - Jun 9, 2020 - 4:48 PM