

Council Member Report For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 23, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole Date: May 16, 2019

From: Councillors Alto and Dubow

Subject: Application of Equity and Affordability Policies

BACKGROUND

In 2017 Council decided to explore replacing the aging Crystal Pool Facility.

Since then, staff created a project plan, schedule, budget, and risk management framework; refined concept designs for a new facility and nearby surroundings; facilitated public engagement; explored partnerships with funding agencies; and prepared updates for Council.

In fall 2018, residents from the North Park neighbourhood expressed concerns about a potential loss of green space with a facility sited within Central Park, and urged the city to explore other location options, including the parking lot at Save-on-Foods Memorial Arena and the parking lot west of Royal Athletic Park.

Council directed staff to explore those siting options for a new pool facility, and for potential complementary uses such as affordable housing, greenspace, childcare and/or parking.

Over the past months, staff have undertaken those explorations.

During that same time, Council created its 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan. A feature of that plan are commitments to equity and affordability throughout the provision of city services, its operations and decision-making, for example:

Victoria City Council 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan – Declaration of Principles and Values

In order to create a culture of deep respect, to build the relationships we need to do the work, and to aspire to be our highest selves even when it feels hard and when difficult decisions could stand to divide us, we are committed to:

2. Welcoming diversity and fostering a spirit of inclusion and equity in everything we do.

There are also 20 references to affordability in the Strategic Plan. One example among them:

Strategic Objective #3: Affordable Housing

Measurable Outcomes

Neighbourhoods are diverse, accessible and affordable across all ages, incomes and abilities

An entire section is dedicated to increasing health and well-being of residents:

Strategic Objective #5: Health, Well-Being and a Welcoming City

Among the eleven actions under this priority, of note is:

11(g) Diversity and inclusion training for staff and Council.

In addition, Strategic Objective #8: Strong, Liveable Neighbourhoods, identifies a suite of objectives that identify equity and affordability goals:

- Increase in number of opportunities for engagement with neighbourhoods
- People feel listened to and consulted about what makes a neighbourhood distinctive
- Increase in affordable housing in all neighbourhoods
- Increased access to social determinants of health in all neighbourhoods
- People feel that their neighbourhood is safe and walkable
- Increase number of people walking compared to other modes of getting around within neighbourhoods
- Increase in the amount of green space in neighbourhoods
- All neighbourhoods are thriving, distinctive, appealing, viable and have amenities

In light of these, and other related, commitments, some residents have proposed the application of equity and affordability analyses to siting, design, amenity selection, engagement, procurement, and evaluation of, and investment in, community, and to use such analyses to help inform an assessment of the total cost of ownership, siting, amenity selection, operating costs, and other costs to taxpayers and users.

Application of equity and affordability policy analyses to the exploration of a future Crystal pool facility provides an opportunity to test and evaluate such policies' utility.

Motion

- 1. That the staff report (*Project Update: Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement May 9, 2019 –* attached) be postponed to a future Committee of the Whole agenda, to be determined and directed by Council.
- That Council suspend its Rules of Procedure at the June 6 Committee of the Whole meeting to allow a presentation by representatives of North Park Neighbourhood Association.

- That, at the June 6 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council receive the following Motions, and refer consideration of them to the June 13 Committee of the Whole meeting:
 - a. That Victoria City Council direct staff to:
 - i. Not build facilities in existing green space.
 - ii. Apply an equity lens to siting, design, amenity selection, engagement, procurement, and evaluation, to inform decisions about and investment in community
 - iii. Apply an affordability lens to assess total cost of ownership, siting, amenity selection, operating costs, costs to taxpayers and users
 - iv. Invite potential partners and neighbourhood representatives to collaborate to align and help achieve these equity and affordability objectives
 - v. Embed distributional, procedural, structural and inter-generational equity into the City's corporate policies guiding hiring, staff training and professional development, procurement and civic engagement.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Alto

Councillor Dubow

List of Attachments

Attachment A: Project Update: Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement