



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of December 5, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** November 19, 2019
From: Kerri Moore, Head of Business & Community Relations
Subject: 709/711 Douglas Street (previously CityStudio Victoria)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorizes the use of 709/711 Douglas Street, previously known as 'CityStudio Victoria', operate as a pilot for 2020 as the 'NeighbourHub' to be managed by the Neighbourhood Team and be available to all neighbourhood associations, all community organizations that directly impact or are connected to neighbourhood associations, City of Victoria Youth Council, City's Local Champions Program, and City staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As outlined in the Council report from June 8, 2019, the location of 709/711 Douglas Street was being used as a learning hub in partnership with the three post-secondary institutions called CityStudio Victoria. The CityStudio Victoria partnership dissolved in 2019 and Royal Roads University has now assumed the CityStudio model.

During the time CityStudio Victoria was operated by the City, staff did permit other user groups to book the space when CityStudio was available. As a result of allowing other user groups to book the space, usage increased considerably with much of the site management activities spent on logistics supporting approximately 25-30 other user groups.

On June 8, 2019 Council directed staff to report back on options for maintaining 709/711 Douglas Street as a community use space using existing resources or alternate model of delivery.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

Before moving forward with continued community use of the space there should be direction provided on the community organizations that are eligible to book the space, as previous user groups varied greatly. Staff suggest the following community organizations and user groups as a priority for the 2020 pilot year; all neighbourhood associations, all community organizations that directly impact or are connected to neighbourhood associations, City of Victoria Youth Council, City's Local Champions Program, and City staff. Other community non-profit groups can book the space based on availability. During the 2020 pilot year other user groups may be identified.

The Neighbourhood Team will utilize the Perfect Mind booking platform provided by the Recreation division, which will include 709/711 Douglas St as a venue option and provide the necessary

regulations along with required insurance. This will provide a seamless booking management process. Staff suggest the operating hours be 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday. Evening hours and weekends would require additional security or staff to ensure the space remains safe and secure. The Neighbourhood team would review and approve all bookings and monitor usage.

The anticipated operating costs associated with the space include:

ITEM	SUPPLIER	ANNUAL COSTS
Building - Security, Garbage, Hydro, etc.	City - VCC	6,145.00
Weekly Cleaning x 2	City - Facilities	3,515.00
Wi-Fi	Shaw	1,800.00
TOTAL		\$11,460.00

Note: In addition to the above operating costs, foregone Property Taxes of \$7,000.00.

As referenced in the Council report from June 8, 2019, if City staff are to continue managing the space, we anticipate that time to equate to a 0.5 FTE, but this time would be shared amongst the three Neighbourhood Liaisons based on reduced hours of operation.

A potential new brand of 'NeighbourHub' would be required to identify 709/711 Douglas Street and replace existing branding.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Option 1 – Direct the Neighbourhood Team to continue managing 709/711 Douglas Street and approve the initial list of user groups; all neighbourhood associations, all community organizations that directly impact or are connected to neighbourhood associations, City of Victoria Youth Council, City’s Local Champions Program, and City staff. (Recommended)

Staff are recommending this option to continue to provide free community space with staff ability to manage and operate the space.

Option 2 – Direct staff to include 709/711 Douglas Street as a bookable venue option in Perfect Mind and follow all the same procedures as other bookable venue options under the management of the Recreation division.

This option would continue to provide free community space, bookable through the City’s Perfect Mind platform, with moderate impact to Recreation division staff to oversee the bookings but does not provide any staff onsite to manage and oversee the operation.

Accessibility Considerations

There is no impact on accessibility from the recommendations.

2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan

Strategic Objective #8: Strong Liveable Neighbourhoods – explore partnerships to create meeting space and a home base for the Downtown Residents Association

Strategic Objective #1: Good Governance and Civic Engagement – Continue to implement Youth Strategy. Action – pilot a Youth Hub

Impacts to Financial Plan

Option 1 - will impact annual operating costs by \$11,460 and an additional one time cost of \$5,000 would be required to change the exterior signage, window decaling, and replace some of the hard goods (desks & chairs). This will impact Business & Community Relations staff time to manage during the one year pilot based on a Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 7:30pm operation.

Option 2 - will impact internal operating costs by \$11,460 and an additional one time cost of \$5,000 would be required to change the exterior signage, window decaling, and replace some of the hard goods (desks & chairs). This will impact Recreation division staff time to monitor the bookings through the Perfect Mind booking platform during the one year pilot based on a Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 7:30pm operation.

For both options above, ongoing funding would be new tax revenue from new development and one time funding from surplus.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The recommendations are consistent with the zoning in the OCP.

CONCLUSIONS

CityStudio Victoria was a partnership with three post-secondary institutions from the Greater Victoria Region. This was a deliverable outlined in the City's previous economic action plan called *Making Victoria – Unleashing Potential*. However, the unintended outcome of providing space to a variety of other user groups has impacted staff time to manage and operate as it was never meant to be an event space.

As a one-year pilot, by creating a new 'NeighbourHub' managed and operated by the Neighbourhood Team we can continue to provide free meeting space to all neighbourhood associations, all community organizations that directly impact or are connected to neighbourhood associations, City of Victoria Youth Council, City's Local Champions Program, and City staff.

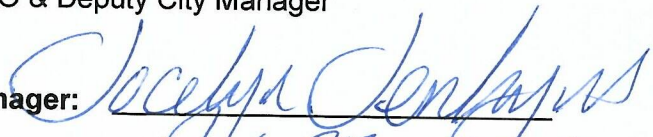
Staff will provide a report to Council outlining the pilot project outcomes in alignment with the 2021 Financial Planning process.

Respectfully submitted,


Kerri Moore
Head of Business & Community Relations


Susanne Thompson
CFO & Deputy City Manager

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:


Date: Nov 27, 2019

List of Attachments

- Appendix A: COTW Report on June 6
- Appendix B: CityStudio Victoria – List of previous User Groups