



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of November 9, 2017

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** October 24, 2017
From: Peter Rantucci, Head of Strategic Real Estate
Subject: 1240 Yates Street – Lease Agreement

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a lease agreement, in a form satisfactory to the City Clerk, for premises at 1240 Yates Street with the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation for a period of up to 6 months commencing no earlier than November 1, 2017 and ending April 30, 2018, subject to the publication of the statutory notices required by the Community Charter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Provincial Rental Housing Corporation ("BC Housing") is seeking to lease 1240 Yates Street to provide transitional 24/7 sheltering for up to 40 residents similar to the operations carried out last year under the My Place Transitional Home. The previous non-profit operator, Our Place, would, if approved, again be the operator of the premises on behalf of BC Housing.

The operating plan and staffing will be the same as My Place, offering a 24/7 temporary facility to transition homeless people into more permanent housing. 24 hour security will also be in place. Costs for operating the facility will be paid for by BC Housing.

School District 61 and the My Place Neighbourhood Group have been consulted on the proposed use and do not oppose the use of the property for this purpose. They have requested an information session be held by Our Place and BC Housing with the neighbouring community to provide information and respond to questions. Invitations have been sent out to neighbouring addresses advertising the information meeting that will be held on November 8th at 6:30 p.m. at 1280 Fort Street.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council consideration to allow BC Housing to lease the premises at 1240 Yates Street for the period no earlier than November 1, 2017 until April 30, 2018.

BACKGROUND

BC Housing would like to operate a winter transitional housing program for up to 40 homeless residents over the winter months. The proposed lease would continue to facilitate the transition of homeless residents to more permanent housing opportunities.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The My Place Transitional Home opened January 1, 2016. During the term of the that lease, the non-profit society Our Place operated the premises on behalf of BC Housing as a temporary shelter to transition 40 homeless people into more permanent housing. Our Place's 24/7 operating model developed with BC Housing, operated with minimal impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood and included regular neighbourhood meetings to address any issues which arose.

Regarding the new proposed lease, Our Place would operate under the same model and staffing as before with Our Place operations staff on site 24 hours a day to manage the 30 to 40 residents who would live on site. Additionally, 24 hour security staff would be on site. BC Housing has funding approved through to March 31, 2017 for the operational costs including utilities, security, waste disposal and telecommunication costs as well as funding minor lighting and monitoring upgrades that would be made. BC Housing has confirmed individual assessments will be made on residents to determine their longer term housing needs to support their transition to more permanent housing after this site closes in the spring.

School District 61 and the My Place Neighbourhood Group have been consulted regarding the proposed use of the property by BC Housing for the winter, and do not oppose the use of the property for this purpose. They have requested an information session be held by Our Place and BC Housing, with the neighbouring community to provide information and respond to questions. Our Place has provided their invitation notice, a copy of which is Attachment A, advertising their information meeting that has been sent to addresses within a 200m radius of 1240 Yates Street. .

OPTIONS AND IMPACTS

Option 1 – Offer Lease up to April 30, 2018 (Recommended)

Providing the lease will permit transitional shelter housing during the winter months for 30 to 40 homeless residents of Victoria by continuing the successful 24/7 operations model that has been developed by BC Housing and Our Place. The City will add some additional operational requirements to the lease regarding use of the site by Our Place. The lease will also support BC Housing's efforts to help homeless residents with transitioning from the street into more permanent residency.

Option 2 – Decline the Request

If this request is declined, the homeless residents that would have been housed may not be housed and may continue to shelter on the street during winter months or overnighting in City parks. Without housing these homeless residents in a more stable environment, it is also less likely they would seek the help needed to find more permanent shelter or participate in other programs which may help them to find alternatives to their current homelessness.

Alignment With City Objectives

Accessibility Considerations

There is no impact on accessibility from the recommendations.

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

The proposal supports Objective 6 of the Strategic Plan: Make Victoria More Affordable, specific to an action to work with the public and private sectors on housing solutions and to pilot new ideas.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The 2018-2022 Financial Plans does not include any revenue earned from 1240 Yates Street. All operating and utility costs would be funded by BC Housing under the proposed lease.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The building at 1240 Yates Street is contained within its own PB zone – Public Buildings District. Government Services (at all levels of government) is a permitted use in that zone.

CONCLUSIONS

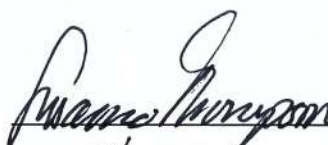
Leasing the site for up to six months during the winter will not impact the City's use of the site, BC Housing is covering operating costs and the premises will only be used as a temporary facility. While providing short term housing to 30 to 40 homeless residents and supporting them transitioning to more permanent housing solutions, there are also benefits to the larger downtown community due to a reduction in overnight sheltering within public areas like City parks.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Rantucci
Head of Strategic Real Estate

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:


Date: Nov. 1, 2017

Attachments:

A – Copy of Information Meeting Invitation