

July 7, 2016

Potential property purchase, public hearing for zoning amendment for social care facilities

The City of Campbell River has made a conditional offer to purchase a property to support a sobering assessment centre, and a public hearing will be held July 25 on a proposed zoning amendment to permit social care facilities near downtown Campbell River.

“In response to inquiries from organizations interested in bidding on the Island Health contract to run a local sobering assessment centre, Council wants to confirm an area that would be most suitable for social care facilities in Campbell River. Careful consideration and consultation with service providers suggests that, in future, social care facilities would be most effective if they are focused in an area immediately adjacent to and within walking distance of downtown and other related services,” says city manager Deborah Sargent.

“Confirming the best location for facilities that will provide local services to alleviate homelessness and establish a sobering assessment centre benefits the entire community and reflects the caring nature of Campbell River,” Sargent adds. *“This potential property purchase and proposed zoning amendment is another example of the City’s ongoing efforts to meet local needs to alleviate long-term homelessness by working with local community organizations as well as seeking support and additional resources from Island Health and BC Housing.”*

At the June 27 Council meeting, Council gave first and second reading to a zoning bylaw amendment, which, if adopted, will clearly differentiate between “community care facility” and “social care facility” and to clearly identify where social care facilities are permitted in downtown zones.

The proposed bylaw amendment would explicitly permit social care facilities in an area bordered by Dogwood, Ironwood and 10th Ave. (see map next page). The proposed bylaw amendment would also prohibit social care facilities in all C-1 (commercial) zones outside the area illustrated on the map.

A public hearing will be held at City Hall at 6:30 p.m. on July 25 to provide the community with the opportunity to share any suggestions or concerns with Council regarding the location of future social care facilities.

The potential property purchase would provide a building with approximately 2,650 square feet of operating space, which the City would lease at a market rate of \$10.50 per square foot, or \$27,720 annually, to the successful proponent. The tenant would be responsible for all additional costs associated with the facility including property taxes, utilities and required modifications (valued at approximately \$60,000) to install showering and laundry facilities as well as a sprinkler system for fire protection.

“The City anticipates that between the market purchase price and the market lease rate, the investment would pay for itself in approximately 15 years,” says Sargent. *“One of the benefits of having the City own a property for this purpose is the ability to influence the operation of the facility. For example, we would require good neighbour guidelines to be followed for noise limits and pedestrian access routes.”*

Island Health will extend a request for proposals to run a sobering assessment centre in Campbell River until July 26 to allow all proponents to incorporate this information into their proposals.

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