

NO: R049

COUNCIL DATE: March 7, 2016

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **March 2, 2016**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering** FILE: **0930-20/084**
General Manager, Planning & Development

SUBJECT: **Renewal of Lease of 10677 Whalley Boulevard for a 2016/2017 Winter Shelter**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department and Planning & Development Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Authorize the execution by the appropriate City officials of a lease renewal agreement between Apolla Developments Ltd. (the “Landlord”) and the City, for the continuation of a lease by the City of the land and building space located at 10677 Whalley Boulevard (the “Premises”), as generally illustrated in Appendix “I” attached to this report, to allow it to continue to operate as a winter shelter for a 5-month period from December 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017;
3. Request that the Mayor forward a letter to the Minister of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing requesting that additional operating funding be provided to enable the Surrey Winter Shelter to remain open from May 1, 2016 through November 2016; and
4. Instruct the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and related Council resolution to BC Housing.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an update to Council on the 2015/2016 winter shelter operations; and
- Obtain approval for staff to exercise the City’s first option to extend the lease of the Premises for a further period of one year from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017 to allow its continued use as a winter shelter.

BACKGROUND

In September 2015, Council approved the lease of the Premises to allow it to operate as a winter shelter. The lease term is for an eight month period commencing October 1, 2015 and ending May 31, 2016. The lease provides an option in favour of the City to extend the agreement for two additional one-year periods. The City must provide notice to the Landlord prior to March 31, 2016 of its intent to exercise the renewal option for the upcoming year.

Premises

The shelter is located on the west side of Whalley Boulevard at the edge of a single family neighbourhood in transition. To the west of the Premises is a large vacant property that is part of the same legal title as the Premises. To the southwest is the Dell Shopping Centre, and the Canada Post depot is to the northwest.

The Premises are a 25,000 ft.² portion of the 2.35 acre property that includes the old Dell Hotel site (demolished) and the old Dell Beer & Wine store. The 6,740 ft.² single level stand-alone building located on the Premises is of sufficient size to accommodate a winter shelter. The building has undergone all of the renovations necessary for it to be a fully functioning shelter and no additional capital expenditures are required for its continued operation.

DISCUSSION

As with previous winter shelter operations, BC Housing has agreed to cover the operating costs (with the exception of rent and utilities) of the proposed 2016/2017 winter shelter, on the condition that the City of Surrey provide the space.

Since its opening on December 1, 2015, the winter shelter (named the “Boulevard Shelter”) has proved to be successful in providing safe and supportive shelter for chronically homeless people.

Update on the 2015-2016 Winter Shelter

The 40-bed Boulevard Shelter has been operating at full capacity since it opened at the beginning of December 2015. As of February 11, 2016, a total of 91 people have stayed at the shelter. Lookout Society staff report that 96% of shelter residents have a health issue, 74% have addictions issues and 42% have mental health issues.

A variety of services and supports are being offered to the Boulevard Shelter residents. These include:

- Fraser Health staff have been working on-site at the shelter to connect residents with health services, including mental health and substance use services;
- Housing outreach workers are working to transition people into housing; to date, 15 residents have been moved into housing;
- BC Housing has provided funds for stipends (gift cards) for a Street Sweepers Program that is engaging the shelter residents in cleaning up the area around the shelter;
- A Surrey Libraries’ outreach librarian is providing library services on-site; and

- Community members are being invited to volunteer at the shelter. For example, hairdressers provided free haircuts and a local senior is teaching knitting.

Overall, Lookout Society staff are very pleased with the Premises. The size and lay-out of the space is proving to be conducive to helping the vulnerable residents.

Community Advisory Committee (“CAC”)

Similar to the 2012/2013 winter shelter operation, a CAC has been established for the 2015/2016 shelter period. The CAC includes representatives from Lookout, the Downtown Surrey BIA, local businesses, local residents, Fraser Health Authority, BC Housing, RCMP and City staff. The CAC meets monthly. Four meetings have been held as of the date of this report.

There have been no complaints received from the CAC members that are directly related to the shelter or its operation. In fact, the winter shelter is seen to have had a positive impact on the neighbourhood. It is anticipated that a CAC will be formed for the proposed 2016/2017 winter shelter operational period.

The 2015/2016 winter shelter is scheduled to close at the end of April. At their February 11, 2016 meeting, the CAC discussed concerns about the impact that the closure of the winter shelter will have on increasing street homelessness in the City Centre and the possibility of the shelter staying open year-round. Also, given the high number of people using Extreme Weather Response mats, as discussed below, the CAC discussed the possibility of having additional winter shelter beds in 2016/2017. The CAC has requested that the BC Housing representative on the CAC speak to these two issues at the March CAC meeting.

Extreme Weather Response (“EWR”) Use

The EWR Program provides shelter spaces (on mats) during periods when the temperature or weather conditions threaten the health and safety of homeless people. The EWR Program operates from November 1 to March 31.

For the 2015/2016 winter, the Surrey/White Rock EWR Plan identified a total of 40 mats to be made available in two community agencies in the City Centre during EWR alerts. Due to the fact that the 40 mats could not accommodate all the people needing to come inside during the EWR alerts in December 2015 and January 2016, an additional 15 mats were added in February 2016.

Use of Premises from May 1 to November 30, 2016

The City Centre continues to have a significant homeless population. The 40-bed Gateway Shelter (located at 10667 – 135A Street) generally operates at full capacity on a year-round basis. The high occupancy levels at the 2015/2016 winter shelter (40 people) and during EWR alerts (with another 40+ people using mats in facilities in City Centre) demonstrates the need to keep the winter shelter open in May through November 2016. This would require BC Housing providing the Lookout Society with funds to operate the shelter over this period. Prior to the opening of the winter shelter in December 2015, there were on-going issues with people camping out in the City Centre area. Keeping the winter shelter open would help to minimize this from happening over the summer months.

City staff are currently investigating other possible uses of the Premises during the period May 1, 2016 to November 30, 2016 if the Premises is not required for shelter purposes.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The continued operation of a winter shelter in Surrey will assist in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly:

- SC5: Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council approve the execution by the appropriate City officials of a lease renewal agreement as generally described in this report between Apolla Development Ltd. and the City, for the continuation of the lease by the City of the Premises located at 10677 Whalley Boulevard to operate as a winter shelter for a 5-month period from December 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017. It is also recommended that the Mayor forward a letter to the Minister of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing requesting operating funding be provided to enable the winter shelter to remain open from May 1, 2016 through November 2016.

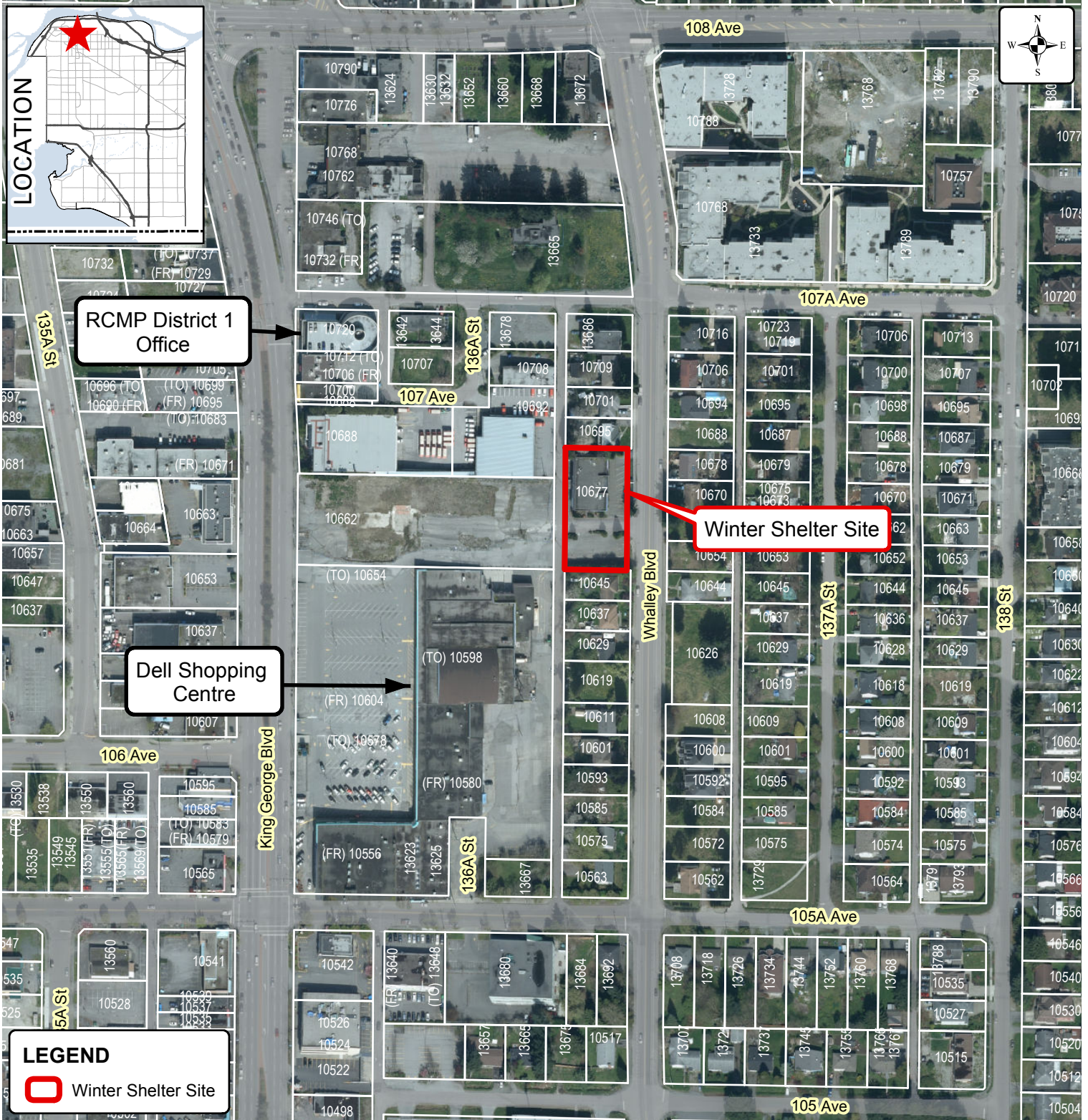
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General Manager,
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General Manager,
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KSW/amg/clr

Appendix "I" - Aerial Photograph of Site (10677 Whalley Boulevard)

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SITE



Produced by GIS Section: 10-Feb-2016, JJR

Date of Aerial Photo: April 1st, 2015 Scale: 1:3,000 0 30 M



SUBJECT PROPERTY
Winter Shelter:
10677 - Whalley Boulevard

ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT

The data provided is compiled from various sources and IS NOT warranted as to its accuracy or sufficiency by the City of Surrey.
 This information is provided for information and convenience purposes only.
 Lot sizes, Legal descriptions and encumbrances must be confirmed at the Land Title Office.