



Investment & Innovation

Impact Committee – Minutes

Location: Virtual
Friday, March 12, 2021
Time: 11:00 a.m.

Present:

Mayor McCallum – Chair
Councillor Guerra
Councillor Nagra
Councillor Patton

Guests:

J. Gosal, Surrey Board of Trade
E. Model, Downtown BIA

Regrets:

Staff Present:

K. Grewal, General Manager, Finance
D. Jones, General Manager, Investment &
Intergovernmental Relations
V. Lalonde, City Manager
S. Neuman, General Manager, Engineering
S. Simpson, Director, IT
S. Wu, Manager, Economic Development
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by Councillor Guerra
Seconded by Mayor McCallum
That the minutes of the Investment &
Innovation Impact Committee meeting of February 5, 2021, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Sean Elbe, Regional Director, British Columbia & The North, Invest in Canada

Sean Elbe, Regional Director, British Columbia & The North, and Megan Henwood, Investor Services Advisor-Pacific, Invest in Canada, provided a presentation on Invest in Canada and the potential for Surrey.

A PowerPoint presentation, giving an overview of how Invest in Canada work to support the foreign direct investment (FDI) landscape in Canada, was provided.

The following was highlighted:

- Invest in Canada's mandate is to:
 - Promote foreign direct investment in Canada and attract and facilitate that investment; and
 - Coordinate the efforts of the government, the private sector and other stakeholders with respect to FDI in Canada.
- Functions of Invest in Canada:
 - Develop a national strategy to attract FDI;
 - Create and maintain partnerships with any Canadian stakeholder with an interest in FDI;
 - Implement activities, events, conferences and programs to promote Canada as an investment destination;

- Collect, prepare and disseminate information to support the decisions of foreign investors; and
- Provide services in a coordinated manner to foreign investors with respect to their actual or potential investments in Canada.
- Invest in Canada offer a full range of investment and facilitation of services; also focusing on reinvestment – expansion is where the greatest opportunities lie. Most of the investments are from companies already in Canada.
- Sectors of focus are anything relevant to Canada; target strategic investments and be prepared for what happens next. Private and public sectors are split fairly even, with the same balance of time between outbound and inbound.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the presentation and overview of Invest in Canada, and provided the following comments:

- It's exciting to hear what Invest in Canada is saying and doing, it fits with the City's DNA now – moving forward and moving quickly.
- The partnership with universities is impressive.
- The Agritech information is interesting. It would be beneficial to have the Manager, Economic Development attend the City's Agriculture, Environment and Investment Advisory Committee.
- Surrey is unique in that it is the 12th largest city in Canada and the only one that has a third of its land base agricultural. It is often thought that Surrey has not promoted that one-third agricultural land base and other agencies have been too slow to catch the world market. For example, SFU would like to start an agricultural program with funding from the Province, etc., but even though there hasn't been any information, the City is ready.
- Additionally, it is not well known that Surrey is one of the largest blueberry growers in Canada. There are huge opportunities for blueberries in Canada (e.g., develop a blueberry juice providing potential for antioxidant abilities).
- Another example, blueberry farmers are working day and night to find technology anywhere in the world that could ease the process of picking blueberries. Blueberry farmers themselves are starting to develop machinery that can pick for them; an example of agritech extremely important in the world, where Surrey could be a leader in that sector.
- Food security is a huge component of 2021. Some of the work Surrey is doing is already being recognized around the country. Excited to dive further into research and development, alternative proteins to make plant-based product, produced in Surrey.

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

D. NEW BUSINESS**1. Innovative Revenue Generation Update
Langley Gravel Site**

Scott Neuman, General Manager, Engineering, provided a brief PowerPoint presentation of potential options for the City owned property at 20575 – o Avenue, in the Township of Langley (Township).

The following was reported:

- The 14.2 hectares (35 acres) of land, zoned RU-1 with a northern portion of the lot within the ALR, was acquired by the City in 1960 for \$30,000, with the intent of gravel extraction. In 2016, the City approached the Township regarding gravel extraction and in 2019, the Township inquired about purchasing the heavily forested property for park use.
- There are three assessed options for consideration:
 1. Gravel extraction (1 million tonnes) - enough gravel for the Engineering capital program for 7 - 10 years, net \$5 - \$12 million revenue potential, permit required with Provincial, First nations and Township approvals.
 2. (a) Subdivide (Township approval) - 7 lots (min. 4.2 acre), net \$10-11 million.
(b) Rezoning and Subdivide –13 to 14 (2 acre) lots, requires FSA extension, OCP amendment and servicing, net \$12 – 15 million.
 3. Land exchange/sell to Township – current market value \$8.5 million.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- As an overview, in favour of option 2(b) - highest revenue potential (taxes to Township, not Surrey), or option 3 - land exchange could provide more leverage for the City.
- Options are not mutually exclusive, the common denominator in all three is the Township. If they are seeking to purchase the land for park, they will not be in favour of a rezone.
- The third option is good, although not a Surrey park, the land would still be protected as park land. Would like to have every tree counted that would be saved.
- The idea of exchanging the property for somewhere that can generate revenue, while preserving the property as park and securing an alternate location for gravel, would be ideal. The other options require Township approval and, more importantly, any gravel extraction would be hindered with the local traffic as well as gravel trucks coming and going in the area.
- It is a good idea to have staff look at these areas and find some kind of combination or work towards a combination of factors. If the City is essentially trading the property for another site in Langley that has gravel and isn't so open to the public or heavily treed, that is a good place to start.

- The City Manager acknowledged the Committee's direction and advised that staff will start discussions with the Township.

2. Drone Clip

As requested at the February 5, 2021 Committee Meeting, Sean Simpson, Director, Information Technology, provided a short video presentation of drone technology, exploring the 'art of the possible', connecting different ideas and opportunities through the use of drones.

Discussion ensued with respect to the current use of drones in Surrey, noting that geographically, it makes sense to expand on the use of drones efficiently for such a large and varying landscape.

As an example, it was reported that in Alberta it was projected that people will buy homes where there is a big lake or pond nearby that ties into a healthy living future (paddleboarding, etc.). Drones are used to collect and review images of potential sites in advance of development which provides the opportunity to build larger communities more effectively. E.g., building their master communities by first scouting an area with a drone in order to identify a location to create a lake/waterway, then development is planned around that.

The Chair requested the City's drone fly over Latimer Lake, in Campbell Heights, to give some perspective for making it a focus in the area. It was further suggested that a subdepartment for the development of a drone area within the City's structure be considered.

3. Economic Development Update

Stephen Wu, Manager, Economic Development, provided a brief presentation and update on economic development activity, in terms of economic recovery and support since the last meeting of the Committee.

Comments were as follows:

- Staff just received news that, with a record number of submissions, the City was selected as the winner of the 2021 BCEDA Economic Resilience and Recovery Award.
- A new City in-house economic data framework and analytics is about to be launched, providing sub-branding for economic data:
 - Data driven insights for site selection
 - Supporting business cases for infrastructure funding
 - Assessing short and long-term economic impact
 - Novel data collection and analytics capabilities

Outcomes:

- Intelligence generation
- Competitor benchmarking

- Surrey insights and reporting
 - Dashboarding opportunities available for public use
- The first product is the Investment Prospectus, a living document, providing an in-depth assessment on transformative investment opportunities for Surrey. This document will be finalized in the next few months.
- Currently identifying 23 investment opportunities, three commercial areas and four industrial areas to pursue, including:
 - **Craft Breweries:** With only three breweries in Surrey, the city's underserved population presents a market for over 15 additional breweries. While there are opportunities in all town centres, key opportunity areas are located near growing populations with above average incomes in City Centre, Newton, Cloverdale and South Surrey.
 - **Restaurants and Dining:** With a population over 580,000 and growing, and one of the highest median household incomes in the region, Surrey has a hungry population ready for more dining opportunities. Categorizing the various food options available and population of each town centre will simultaneously identify significant market opportunities.
 - **Semi-Conductor and Chip Manufacturing:** There is huge demand – need to provide the data first.
 - **Natural Health Products and High Value Food Processing:** There are currently 50 food processors in Surrey. Eight companies in Surrey are Health Canada accredited for NHP manufacturing. Looking at how Surrey can leverage (alternative) crops grown within BC to produce high value products, e.g. plant based.
- It all begins with data to help partners understand the possibilities. There have been 26 leads YTD 2021, and currently there are about 12 Surrey businesses looking for investment expansion and looking at augmenting this with data; more information will be available to them within the next month or two.
- Current initiatives:
 - See below for our current initiatives:
 - Economic Recovery Action Plan
 - Investment Prospectus
 - Surrey EconomiQ & Data Framework
 - Surrey Makes PPE
 - Build Pattullo Campaign
 - Emergency Operations Centre
 - COVID Resource Centre & Business Communications
 - SparkBIZ Program - Business Engagement
 - Investment Attraction Outreach

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the presentation and the dedication to creating such a unique product. Additional comments were as follows:

- Data driven technology makes for an easy sell to attract businesses to Surrey.
- With the drone and video technology concepts discussed earlier, these could be added features to add to the City's business attraction marketing efforts

and/or an area provided on the City's website for companies to view (e.g. mini video clips). It can always be evolving and organized depending on what is being featured.

- This is an impressive marketing tool as this type of collective data is not available anywhere; it is brand new and will definitely be well received by the business and development community.
- A good example (coming out of the pandemic) is the use of drone technology. People want to be outside and are they're outside in huge numbers. A drone could fly over an area such as Crescent Beach on a busy weekend to identify areas of congestion. It would a tool for Bylaws and Engineers could use the imagery for review of backed up roads and intersections.

E. INFORMATION ITEMS**F. OTHER BUSINESS****G. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Investment & Innovation Impact Committee will be at the call of the Chair.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Councillor Guerra
Seconded by Councillor Patton
That the Investment & Innovation Impact

Committee adjourn.

Carried

The Investment & Innovation Impact Committee adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Jennifer Ficocelli, City Clerk

Mayor McCallum, Chair
Investment & Innovation Impact Committee