
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 7, 2008
File No.: 6530-12
To: City Manager
From: Manager, Policy/Research/Strategic Planning
Subject: Resources Required for Exploration of Densities and Building Heights within the C7 Area

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council receive the May 7, 2008 report from the Planning and Development Services Department for information.

AND THAT Council direct staff to engage consultant resources to allow for further exploration of densities and building heights within the Downtown area covered by C7 zoning.

BACKGROUND:

At the May 5, 2008 Council meeting, Council directed staff to "identify costs and resources to allow for further exploration of densities and building heights within the Downtown area covered by C7 zoning in light of other initiatives, priorities and resources."

EXISTING POLICY:

The City's current "Kelowna Downtown Plan" was endorsed in October 1999. A consultant reviewed that Downtown Plan in 2007 and recommended that it be updated.

The Downtown Centre Strategy Task Force endorsed updating the Downtown Plan and this was communicated to Council.

FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

Further exploring densities and building heights within the Downtown area covered by C7 zoning would require hiring consultants who can, after soliciting stakeholder input, advise the City on an 'ideal urban form' (location of height and density) for the downtown C7 area and provide recommendations regarding specific changes that would be required to the C7 zone to facilitate achievement of that urban form. Recommended changes would need to be based on economic realities. In other words, recommended Zoning Bylaw changes should not inhibit development

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or redevelopment. It is expected that the work would need to be undertaken by a consultant team including both land economist(s) and urban designer(s).

Based on recent experience with other projects, it is estimated that this work would cost approximately \$50,000 and would take up to nine months to complete. The exact timeline will be dependent on the nature and extent of stakeholder consultation. Up to \$50,000 for a review of height and density in the downtown C7 area can be funded from existing Policy, Research and Strategic Planning budget allocations.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:

The review of height and density in the downtown C7 area will require staff resources primarily from the Planning and Development Services Department. Project direction would be the responsibility of the Policy/Research/Strategic Planning section, with significant support to be provided by the Current Planning section. Works and Utilities and Community Development and Real Estate input would also be required. It is estimated that in total, approximately 50 days of staff time would be involved.

Project and file reassignments within the Planning Department, combined with the recent recruitment of two new Current Planners should allow existing development application processing timelines to be at least maintained, provided that the Downtown Plan update does not commence until mid-June, when the new planners will have arrived. The City's Urban Design Planner can be assigned to the Downtown Plan update if there is a willingness to delay completion of the Ellis Street Streetscape project by approximately two months. The necessary involvement of other Policy/Research/Strategic Planning staff could delay completion of the Official Community Plan by up to two months.

EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The City has received a number of letters urging the City to immediately proceed with an update of the Downtown Plan. The City has also received a petition with 649 names asking that Council discontinue pursuing the current Downtown Revitalization Initiative until an updated Downtown Plan is in place.

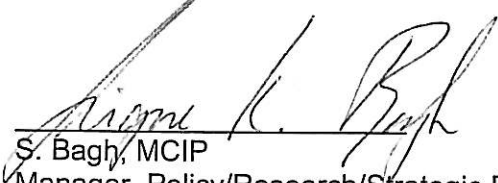
INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:

Current Planning Supervisor
Community Development and Real Estate Manager
Director, Works and Utilities / Acting Director, Corporate Services

CONSIDERATIONS THAT WERE NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS REPORT:

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY
LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS
COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

Submitted by:


S. Bagh, MCIP
Manager, Policy/Research/Strategic Planning

Approved for Inclusion:

Paul Macklem 
Director, Planning and Development Services (Acting)