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Town of Aurora

General Committee Report

No. CMS21-029

Subject: Aurora Town Square Governance Update

Prepared by: Phillip Rose, Manager of Aurora Town Square

Department: Community Services

Date: September 21, 2021

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS21-029 be received; and
2. That the Fees and Charges bylaw be updated to accommodate all Aurora Town Square services, activities, and use of property as necessary.

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on Aurora Town Square (formerly Library Square) space allocation and room permitting and summarizes next steps in the governance review process.

- Staff are developing a Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy that is based on the Town's Sports Field and Park Use Policy (updated 2020) and the Room/Hall Permitting Policy (updated 2018).
- The Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy will apply only to the Aurora Public Library's (APL) allocation and usage of the new spaces adjoining the Library, the remainder of Aurora Town Square, as well as the Magna and Lebovic rooms.
- Aurora Cultural Centre (ACC) space allocation and usage is governed by the Provision of Cultural Services Agreement and the Lease Agreement between the Town and the ACC, both of which are to be updated.
- A range of fees and charges for Aurora Town Square (ATS) are also being developed to be included in the updated Fees and Charges bylaw.

- Staff continue to develop various other governance documents, including an organizational chart, a staff recruitment plan, service level agreements, 2022 and 2023 operating budgets and more.

Background

On June 15, 2021, Council approved the recommendation that the Town assume responsibility for all facility bookings at ATS and oversee the development of an integrated IT network across the entire facility, including the APL.

Since June, staff have worked to implement Council's direction by developing a draft Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy and initiating the discovery phase of the IT implementation plan. This report provides a summary of these continuing efforts.

Analysis

Staff are developing a Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy that is based on the Town's Sports Field and Park Use Policy (revised 2020) and the Room/Hall Permitting Policy (revised 2018).

As each phase of construction is complete, and certain spaces become available for community use, the Town will assume responsibility for coordinating and administering all facility permits with the public, internal staff, and community groups for access to ATS space. Booking of facility spaces and supporting equipment shall be the responsibility of the Business Support Division.

To provide a framework for how space is allocated and used, staff are drafting a Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy (the Policy) that applies to the Church Street Schoolhouse, the Schoolhouse addition, bridge, outdoor square, new spaces adjoining the APL, as well as the Magna and Lebovic rooms.

To remain consistent with existing Town policy and procedures, the draft Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy (the Policy) is based on the Sports Fields and Park Use Policy and the Room/Hall Permitting Policy, which governs how space at the Town's other facilities and amenities are allocated to internal, external, not-for-profit, and commercial entities.

Existing programs and services currently provided by the Town, ACC, and APL will be prioritized from a space allocation perspective, but the Policy will also outline how other community groups, businesses, and individuals will receive a fair allotment of space in

the best interest of all users and the community. The draft Policy will be presented to Council for approval before the end of 2021.

The Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy will apply only to the Aurora Public Library's (APL) space allocation and usage of the new spaces adjoining the Library, the remainder of Aurora Town Square, as well as the Magna and Lebovic rooms.

Access and usage of any space that is part of ATS by the APL will be determined by the Policy that is currently under development, however the APL remains solely responsible for space allocation and usage of the Library proper and all spaces within their physical footprint.

Aurora Cultural Centre (ACC) space allocation and usage is governed by the Provision of Cultural Services Agreement and the Lease Agreement, both of which are to be updated.

Both agreements between the Town and the ACC need to be updated to account for the Hybrid Governance Model under which ATS will operate. The revised agreements will identify the new spaces available to the ACC for programs, performances, meetings, and other initiatives, and reflect changes to room permitting procedures at the Church Street Schoolhouse that were formerly administered by the ACC. Furthermore, the updated agreements will detail any service level changes provided by the Town, such as IT support and facility maintenance. Staff anticipate the revised agreements to be complete by early 2022.

A range of fees and charges for Aurora Town Square (ATS) are also being developed to be included in the updated Fees and Charges bylaw.

While the Policy governs how space is to be allocated, a fees and charges schedule will also be developed that includes a range of user fees for space and corresponding services provided at ATS such as room set up and take down, equipment rental, staff support, and more. In developing the ATS fees and charges schedule, staff are consulting a range of comparable schedules from other Town facilities, various cultural organizations, performing arts centres, and other analogous spaces.

The Town's Fees and Charges bylaw will be updated to accommodate ATS services, activities, and use of property as necessary.

Staff continue to develop various other governance documents, including an organizational chart, a staff recruitment plan, service level agreements, 2022 and 2023 operating budgets and more.

While the Town has made significant progress implementing the Hybrid Governance Model to date, efforts continue to ensure the systems and processes under which ATS will operate are in place before construction is complete.

The IT Division has initiated the discovery phase of the IT implementation plan beginning with in-depth discussions with the APL regarding architecture and systems design, timelines, service level continuity, risk mitigation, and more.

Progress on the 2023 collaborative programming schedule, organizational chart, staff recruitment plan, and operating budgets for 2022 and beyond also continues. Staff will bring these documents forward for review and approval around the end of 2021, beginning of 2022.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable

Legal Considerations

The Municipal Act permits a municipality to enact by-laws to impose fees or charges on persons for services or activities provided or done by or on behalf of it. Prior to passing any amendments to the by-law, notice must be given in accordance with the Town's policies.

Financial Implications

Since 2019, any surpluses arising from the ATS operating budget have been allocated to the Tax Rate Stabilization reserve. \$184,014 was allocated to the reserve in 2019 and \$150,544 in 2020. Staff anticipate a surplus this year as well.

Staff continue to assess the ATS' staffing and facility needs for 2022 but do not anticipate any budget shortfall. Should any budget pressures arise, the Town is able to offset any shortfalls through other operating budget surpluses or through a draw from the Tax Rate Stabilization reserve.

Communications Considerations

The Town will continue to communicate directly with project stakeholders to ensure that there is clarity regarding the ongoing governance review. There are no additional external communication considerations currently.

Link to Strategic Plan

Aurora Town Square supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives:

Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Invest in sustainable infrastructure
- Celebrating and promoting our culture
- Encourage an active and healthy lifestyle
- Strengthening the fabric of our community

Enabling a diverse, creative, and resilient economy in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council may provide further direction.

Conclusions

This report provides an update on ATS governance and identifies next steps in implementing the Hybrid Governance Model.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

CMS20-008, Library Square – Governance Review, March 3, 2020

CMS20-012, Library Square – Governance Review, June 16, 2020

CMS20-026, Library Square – Governance Review, November 3, 2020

CMS21-022, Library Square Governance Update, June 21, 2021

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on September 2, 2021

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services Department

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer