



Subject: City Real Estate – Hydro Corridor Update

To: Council

From: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Report Number: 2022-225

Meeting Date: October 11, 2022

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office- Economic Development and Tourism Division Report 2022-225 be received for information; and

That Council declare the properties along the hydro corridor as shown in Appendix A as surplus.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the potential development opportunities along a hydro corridor and to seek Council approval to have vacant City-owned parcels declared surplus.

Background:

Staff have been actively working to identify City-owned parcels that could be declared surplus and marketed for sale as part of a multi-phased City Real Estate project.

There is a hydro corridor consisting of vacant City parcels of land that run east to west from approximately King Street to Steele Street. Council directed staff to review the development potential of these opportunities.

Discussion:

At the August 23, 2022, meeting, Council asked staff to investigate opportunities to move or bury the existing hydro lines underground to create more land to facilitate development opportunities for properties shown in Appendix A. Canadian Niagara

Power (CNP) has established specific setbacks that must be adhered to regarding the location and construction of any buildings. CNP provided staff with Ontario Building Code clearance requirements which stipulate a 2m setback for ground level or 1-storey usage, and a 5m setback for 2-storey usage or greater (see Appendix B). Staff spoke with CNP about the possibility of relocating or burying the lines. CNP stated that the hydro lines cannot be moved or buried underground given it is a primary high-power line that feeds power to many residential customers in the area.

Staff reviewed seven parcels along the hydro corridor (as shown in Appendix A) and provide the following comments:

Map 1 Catharine Street

- Approximately 45 ft frontage, meets City's minimum lot frontage of 40 ft
- However, there is a ditch/culvert running through the property which limits the development potential of the parcel
- Zoning: Second Density Residential (R2)

Map 1 King Street

- Approximately 47 ft frontage, meets City's minimum lot frontage
- Possible infill building lot
- Zoning: Second Density Residential (R2)

Map 2 Elm Street

- Approximately 47 ft frontage, meets the City's minimum lot frontage
- Possible infill building lot
- Zoning: Second Density Residential (R2)

Map 2 Catharine Street

- Approximately 45 ft frontage, meets the City's minimum lot frontage
- Possible infill building lot
- Zoning: Second Density Residential (R2)

Map 3 Fielden Avenue

- Approximately 51 ft frontage, meets the City's minimum lot frontage
- Possible infill building lot
- Another parcel with a frontage of approximately 31 ft which does not meet the City's minimum lot frontage
- Zoning: Fourth Density Residential (R4)

Map 4 Fielden Avenue

- Approximately 36 ft frontage which does not meet the City's minimum lot frontage
- Zoning: Institutional (I)

Map 5 Steele Street

- Approximately 46 ft frontage, but the rear yard begins to narrow and there is an encroachment that would limit the developable lot area
- Zoning: Institutional (I)

The parcels along the hydro corridor zoned R2 and R4 will permit various forms of residential development, depending on the lot size. For some of the parcels (i.e., those zoned I), a minor variance or zoning by-law amendment may be required if a new residential dwelling is proposed. For clarification, the permitted uses of R2, R4, and I are as follows:

Second Density Residential Zone (R2)

- a) Dwelling, Detached;
- b) Dwelling, Duplex;
- c) Dwelling, Semi-detached; and
- d) Uses, structures and buildings accessory thereto

Fourth Density Residential Zone (R4)

- a) Dwelling, Detached;
- b) Dwelling, Semi-Detached;
- c) Dwelling, Duplex;
- d) Dwelling, Triplex;
- e) Dwelling, Fourplex;
- f) Dwelling, Townhouse Block;
- g) Dwelling, Townhouse Street;
- h) Apartment Buildings;
- i) Apartment Buildings, Public;
- j) Boarding or Lodging House; and
- k) Uses, structures and buildings accessory thereto

Institutional Zone (I)

- a) Apartment Building, Public;
- b) Community Garden;
- c) Cultural Facility;
- d) Cemetery;
- e) Day Care;
- f) Dwelling, Accessory;
- g) Food Vehicle;
- h) Long Term Care Facility;
- i) Place of Assembly/Banquet Hall;
- j) Place of Worship;
- k) Public Uses;
- l) Social Service Facility; and

m) Uses, structures and buildings accessory thereto

Based on a review of the seven properties, and considering the hydro setbacks, three of the properties shown in Appendix A have potential as infill building lots, while four do not. These four City-owned parcels are not large enough to be considered as infill building lots, but they could be sold to an adjacent property owner if they are interested in acquiring additional land to extend their existing property. All parcels would require a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and Phase II ESA because there used to be a rail line that ran parallel with the hydro corridor. Additionally, each parcel will require an individual survey that outlines the precise property boundaries and hydro setback.

With these clearance requirements in place, Appendix A outlines mapped parcels throughout the hydro corridor. Next steps for the hydro corridor parcels would involve declaring them surplus, having surveys prepared to outline precise boundaries given setbacks, and obtaining an independent appraisal.

Staff are recommending that the parcels shown in Appendix A be declared surplus to assist staff in moving forward with these real estate opportunities.

Internal Consultations:

Staff from Economic Development & Tourism Services, Planning Services, and Public Works have reviewed these parcels and potential options.

Financial Implications:

There are no operating budget financial implications associated with this report. CHS Realty Advisors have been asked to complete an appraisal of the surplus City parcels.

Each parcel will require a Phase One ESA costing approximately \$3,000 and a Phase Two ESA with an estimated cost of \$20,000 - \$25,000. Each parcel will also require a survey that will cost between \$3,000 - \$5,000. These costs will be recovered from the sale of surplus property.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar of the strategic plan:

- Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
- Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making

Conclusion:

This report follows Council direction given on August 23, 2022, for staff to take a strategic analysis of the hydro corridor lands running east-west from King Street to Steele Street and potential opportunities to create infill developable parcels. CNP has advised staff that the hydro lines cannot be moved or buried underground as this is a critical high voltage power line. Lands can still be sold with the appropriate clearance requirements.

Staff will continue to monitor opportunities for selling land throughout the hydro corridor and recommend that Council declare all parcels shown in Appendix A as surplus. Specific parcels of surplus City land could be created and marketed as potential infill building lots while others could be conveyed to adjoining property owners provided that the setbacks are adhered to.

Appendices:

- a. Mapped Parcels through the hydro corridor
- b. Ontario Building Code clearance requirements

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.