



IN CAMERA

Report Date: May 11, 2017  
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Meeting Date: May 16, 2017

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Community Services in Consultation with the General Manager of Real Estate and Facilities Management

SUBJECT: Proposed New Premises for Qmunity with Redevelopment at 1190 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street

#### IN CAMERA RATIONALE

This report is recommended for consideration by Council on the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*: (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council authorize staff to commence negotiations with QMUNITY BC's Queer Resource Centre Society ("Qmunity") to secure a portion of the commercial space within a mixed-use development site at 1190 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street, legally described as:

Parcel Identifier: 015-484-211; Lot A (See 428984L) of Lots 17 to 19 Block 90 District Lot 541 Plan 210;

Parcel Identifier: 015-484-203; Lot 16 Block 90 District Lot 541 Plan 210;

Parcel Identifier: 015-484-181; The South ½ of Lot 15 Block 90 District Lot 541 Plan 210;

Parcel Identifier: 015-484-238; Lot B (Reference Plan 1606) of Lots 17 to 19 Block 90 District Lot 541 Plan 210; and

Parcel Identifier: 015-484-220 Lot C (See 428984L) of Lots 17 to 19 Block 90  
District Lot 541 Plan 210.

(collectively, the “Property”)

- B. THAT Council authorize the Managing Director of Social Policy and Projects to execute, on behalf of the City, a non-binding Letter of Intent with Qmunity which will set out agreed lease terms and specifications for the new premises to allow Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (“VAHA”) to issue a Request for Proposals for the redevelopment of the Property.
- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations shall be created and none shall arise until the lease document for the new premises is fully executed by both parties.

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report directs staff to commence negotiations with Qmunity for a portion of the future commercial component to be built on the Property on a larger residential/commercial redevelopment. These negotiations will work towards settling the principles, along with the parties’ roles, responsibilities, and expectations, for Qmunity leasing a portion of the commercial space at 1190 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street if and when it is constructed. These negotiations will further define the relationship between the City and Qmunity as the parties work towards planning a new facility for Qmunity within a proposed mixed-use project co-located with affordable rental housing on the Property.

Qmunity is a valued nonprofit organization, offering programs and services to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirited plus (LGBTQ2S+) community since 1979. The City has a well-established relationship with this nonprofit: for over a number of years, the City has supported Qmunity through annual programming and services grants, along with over ten years of assisting Qmunity towards a new facility.

Since 1985, Qmunity has been leasing space at Davie Street and Bute Street—a site that has become increasingly deficient given their growing membership. Qmunity has been identified in the West End Community Plan (2013) as urgently requiring a new and expanded facility to replace their current inadequate one.

Rezoning in 2013 from two donor sites provided a \$7 million cash community amenity contribution, allocated for the construction of a new facility for Qmunity. The City subsequently acquired properties at Burrard Street and Davie Street, upon which a portion of that commercial space has been identified as a potential future home for Qmunity.

### **COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- Healthy City Strategy (2015);
- Final 2015-2018 Capital Plan and Plebiscite Questions (2014);

- CD-1 rezonings for 1262-1290 Burrard Street and 1229-1281 Hornby Street (RTS 10255) (2013);
- West End Community Plan (2013);
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2012-2021) and the 3-Year Action Plan (2012-2014);
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2011);
- Financing Growth policy (Community Amenity Contributions) (January 1990; amended February 12, 2004);
- Downtown Official Development Plan (1975).

### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of Recommendation A, B, and C to begin formal negotiations with Qmunity towards a new facility to better support LBGTO2S+ community members.

### ***REPORT***

#### ***Background/Context***

##### **1. Qmunity and City Support for Nonprofit Organizations**

Vancouver is home to Western Canada's largest LBGTO2S+ community, along with the valuable non-profits that support them, contributing to a place with unique identity, vibrancy, and diversity. Still, the LBGTO2S+ continue to struggle with a number of challenges that require social supports. For instance, the LGBTQ community have higher rates of mental health challenges that are related to heightened and long-term exposure to societal and institutional prejudice and discrimination<sup>1</sup>, along with a disproportionate number of LGBTQ youth at a higher risk of homelessness or harassment<sup>2</sup>.

Since 1979, Qmunity has offered important programs and services for people who face discrimination, marginalization, and isolation based on their sexual orientation. Their reach covers all of Vancouver and also extends province-wide, demonstrating a demand and need for services that continues to grow. Qmunity provides resources for the LBGTO2S+ community, including programs for more vulnerable groups such as youth, adults, seniors, and culturally diverse individuals. The organization relies heavily on a very engaged staff, Board of Directors, and over 200 volunteers to provide community development, counselling, education, peer, and advocacy supports.

The City plays a key role in supporting nonprofit organizations by investing in social infrastructure and programming grants to foster safe and inclusive communities. The City funds hundreds of non-profit organizations every year, including almost \$80,000 in

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<sup>1</sup> Zwiers, A. 2010. "LGBT People and Mental Health: Healing the Wounds of Prejudice." <http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/lgbt-vol6/lgbt-people-and-mental-health>. Vol. 6 No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ray, N. 2006. "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth: An Epidemic of Homelessness". Washington DC: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

2017 for Qmunity in the form of programming grants. The goals and policy directions in the Healthy City Strategy (2015) and West End Community Plan (2013) reinforce the City's role by prioritizing access to healthy human services and support for a new and upgraded facility for Qmunity.

## 2. Donor Sites for Funding and Proposed Location for Qmunity

In 2014, a \$7 million cash community amenity contribution from rezonings at two donor sites (at 1262-1290 Burrard Street and 1229-1281 Hornby Street) was allocated towards the construction of a new future facility for Qmunity.

And Subsequently, Council authorized the acquisition of the five sites at 1188-1192 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street (RTS #1147) (see Map 1).

Map 1:



Subject to rezoning, this purchase is intended for a mixed-use development with a potential yield of approximately 116 affordable housing units and 20,000 square feet of commercial space. Following consultation with Qmunity, it was determined that a portion of this future commercial space could potentially provide a new, sufficiently sized, purpose-built, and accessible new home for Qmunity.

## 3. Space Planning Grant for a New and Expanded Centre for Qmunity

Staff recognized that since Qmunity would be moving to a much larger City-owned or leased space, the organization would require support in undertaking planning processes to ensure the best possible outcome for a future site. In 2015, Council approved a \$200,000 capital grant for Qmunity to ensure that the organization could retain experts through the design and planning stages of securing an enhanced, purpose-built facility.

## **Strategic Analysis**

This report directs staff to begin negotiations with Qmunity, towards an allocation of space within the future building to be redeveloped on the Property and securing a future lease agreement, subject to Council approval, for this site.

### **1. Qmunity's Programs and Existing Space**

Qmunity is BC's queer resource centre, reaching 43,000 individuals each year to deliver community programs, training, and advocacy, with the mission of improving lives. Qmunity provides social services and programs for the LGBTQ2S+ community by providing:

- a) *Services*: Offering drop-in groups, peer support, counselling, and information referrals.
- b) *Leadership*: Supporting families, businesses, schools, and service providers towards LGBTQ2S+ inclusive spaces along with queer competency training;
- c) *Spaces for Connection*: Facilitating opportunities for connection amongst queer communities, through events, free/low-cost space, and volunteer opportunities.

Since 1985, Qmunity has operated from an undersized, aging, and inaccessible 4,650 square foot space on the second floor of 1170 Bute Street. Qmunity has also secured an additional 450 square feet of programming space at 1033 Davie Street. Both spaces are inadequate, making it difficult to ensure that optimal programs can be delivered to the community. Challenges of their main space include:

- An undersized facility that is less than half their ideal size;
- An aging facility;
- An inaccessible facility that lacks an elevator or ramp, limiting people with mobility challenges from accessing the centre;
- Poorly and inefficiently designed space which constrains programming and community gathering opportunities (eg, lacks a large multipurpose space);
- Lacks basic amenities, including a kitchenette, staff lounge, and sufficient meeting space;
- Lacks visibility and presence given that it is hidden on the second floor off a small street.

The City and Qmunity have been working closely for a number of years to build capacity amongst their staff and Board towards a new site, to identify possible relocation opportunities, and to secure funding sources for a new centre.

### **2. Opportunity for Space at a City Site to be Redeveloped through Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA) Request for Proposal Process**

The City acquired properties at 1188-1192 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street for a future mixed-use project consisting of commercial space co-located with affordable rental housing. This location is well served by transit, only one block away from the Davie Village in the West End (the heart of the LGBTQ2S+ community), and within

close proximity to clients and volunteers. This is an optimal opportunity for Qmunity to relocate to a new, larger, and purpose-built community facility.

The need for compatibility between both the social non-profit operator and the housing operator is important to ensure a well-run facility. This synergy is important, especially given that Qmunity prioritizes a safe, secure, and inclusive space for the individuals they serve. VAHA will make best efforts in the selection of a housing operator that has experience working with vulnerable groups, particularly with the LGBTQ2S+ community. Where possible, staff will consult with Qmunity for assistance with the housing operator selection criteria described in the upcoming Request for Proposal at this site.

### **3. Space Planning Grant for Qmunity**

In best positioning Qmunity to prepare for a future site, City Council approved a \$200,000 capital grant for Qmunity in 2015. This funding was earmarked for Qmunity to engage architects, planners, community engagement specialists, and others, to undertake strategic planning, space planning, and business planning for a new space. These experts would guide the organization through these planning processes in order to produce a final deliverable—a functional program.

A functional program is a facilities planning document that provides details of space needs based on an organization's program demands, all to inform the City about space requirements when constructing a new facility. The functional program and business plan will be complete in 2017 and will better define the space needs and provide projections of Qmunity's organizational and financial capacity of relocating to a City facility.

### **4. Commencing Negotiations Towards a Future Lease Agreement**

Negotiations between the City, Qmunity and, as necessary, VAHA will initially result in the parties entering into a Letter of Intent (LOI) which will set forth basic terms and conditions upon which the City and Qmunity intend to proceed with discussions and negotiations for the delivery, use, responsibilities, and operations of the proposed facility. This will confirm the parties' intent to work together in a cooperative and collaborative manner to negotiate and finalize, with all reasonable diligence and timeliness, the arrangements, transactions, and agreements that were decided upon. Once more is known about the redevelopment of the Property following VAHA's Request for Proposal process, the intent is that the agreed upon terms of the lease will be formalized in an Offer to Lease which will inform the future lease agreement, all of which will be subject to further Council approval.

### **5. Draft Principles within a Future Lease Agreement**

The following draft principles, subject to a more detailed LOI, will guide the creation of a new facility. These principles will ensure that best efforts are taken for a new facility to be:

- a) Accessible, welcoming, inclusive, and inviting for people of all ages, abilities, orientation, identity, and cultural backgrounds;

- b) Appropriately-sized for Qmunity's current and future programming and space needs;
- c) Designed to accommodate a range of community uses, including multi-purpose and community gathering space, plus dedicated office/administrative space;
- d) Includes basic amenities, including kitchen facilities and storage space; and
- e) Provides universal, all-genders, single-stall washrooms with function-based signage for privacy and safety.

### *Financial*

City funding for construction and associated costs will be reported back at a later date as part of the 2018 Capital Budget. Any additional support that is needed will be considered by Council in future, as part of a Business Plan prepared by Qmunity, including fundraising.

### *CONCLUSION*

Staff are seeking Council approval to commence negotiations with Qmunity in order to proceed with securing a commercial space for Qmunity, co-located with affordable housing at 1190 Burrard Street and 937 Davie Street. Council direction would formalize this partnership to ensure that the City and Qmunity can proceed to lease arrangements to allow Qmunity to operate from a new and expanded facility. This future space will better enable to the organization to provide social programs and services to the community, thereby advancing the Healthy City Strategy and West End Community Plan.

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