

Plan calls for new fire hall and downtown Public Safety Building

(Penticton, BC – May 17, 2024) – To best meet the demand of enhanced community safety, staff are recommending moving forward with the construction of a new fire hall, development of a downtown Community Safety Building with housing and a satellite fire hall on Nanaimo.

“The necessity for improved space to house all of our protective services was clearly identified in the Civic Place and Spaces Project as the top priority by the public and staff have determined locating on one site was not going to meet the practical needs of the emergency services for a variety of reasons,” says Kelsey Johnson, the director of community services. “The preferred option allows us to meet the expectation of the public and ensure that the community policing, bylaw and fire services all have the tools they need to continue delivering exceptional service.”

The preferred option being recommended to Council on May 21 is:

- Fire Hall Headquarters located at Fire Hall #2 (Dawson Avenue)
 - Includes 4-Bay Hall with administrative offices, training rooms, living quarters and potential for the City’s Emergency Operations Centre.
- Satellite Fire Hall located at Fire Hall #1 (Nanaimo Avenue)
 - Includes 2-Bay Hall with training rooms and living quarters;
 - Potential social housing located in airspace above.
- Community Safety Building located at 450 Martin Street
 - Includes Bylaw, RCMP (Community Policing) and potential for the City’s Emergency Operations Centre.

As directed, staff examined the feasibility of one building to house all and five options were developed, but the report to council notes “that none of these sites were deemed suitable for a new 4-Bay Headquarters Firehall, given the space needs and inefficiencies resulting from trying to locate a facility of this size on these downtown parcels of land.”

“The option being proposed sees a new fire hall on City-owned land to serve a large portion of the community, a revitalized fire hall downtown and an innovative public-private partnership that will amalgamate the Bylaw Services Department and Community policing into one public facing space,” says Johnson. “This option also would see the development of much-needed housing that will add to the vibrancy of the city core.”

If Council approves moving forward, staff will proceed to the next design stage and public engagement may take place after more detailed design and financial costs are confirmed.

The full report can be found at www.Penticton.ca/agendas

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