



Administration and Operations Committee Report

To: To the Chair and Members of the Administration and Operations Committee
From: Kathy Ballantyne, Director of Facilities and Special Projects
Date: July 16, 2024
Report #: RPT - 0375 - 24
Subject: Oakland Community Centre – Potential Tenant
Purpose: For Information and Direction

Recommendation

That staff be authorized to continue discussions and enter into negotiations with the proponent to lease a portion of the Oakland Community Centre for the purposes of opening a childcare centre;

And that staff hire a consultant to prepare a renovation floor plan acceptable to the Oakland Community Centre Volunteer Management Committee, the proponent and all authorities having jurisdiction.

And that staff prepare a draft lease agreement for Council approval upon the finalization of negotiations if successful.

Strategic Plan Priority

Strategic Priority 5 - Healthy, Safe, and Engaged Citizens

Impacts and Mitigation

Social Impacts

Qualified early childcare educators are trained to support social and cognitive development of children and offer fun and engaging experiences.

As per the Brantford/Brant Child Care and Early Years 10-Year Plan;

- Reduces gender-based income and employment inequality.
- Fosters to a sense of belonging and well-being.
- For newcomer families, finding childcare is often their first step to securing employment, improving English, or upgrading qualifications.
- Helps families build social networks.
- Provides families with tools and resources and connects with other community services.

Environmental Impacts

N/A

Economic Impacts

Access to affordable, high-quality care allows individuals to enter the labor force, reduce absenteeism at work, and retain more income.

As per the Brantford/Brant Child Care and Early Years 10-Year Plan;

- Allows more people, particularly women, to participate in the workforce or go to school.
- Creates jobs.
- Boosts the economy through increased tax revenue.
- For every dollar spent on early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.
- Increases household income.

Report

In 2023, an unsolicited inquiry from a local resident in Oakland was received by Community Services staff regarding the potential to lease space at the Oakland Community Centre for the purpose of opening a licensed childcare centre.

Following the conclusion of the lease with the OPP, staff renewed discussions with the proponent and asked that a business plan be prepared to review the potential use more fulsomely.

The business plan reviewed by staff outlines the potential use of the former Oakland Municipal Office for a licensed childcare centre that provides childcare services for 26 children. Some renovations would be required to make the space compliant with the Child Care and Early Years Act. Although renovations will be required to the community centre, the main hall will remain available for community rentals and programs. Staff would work through negotiations with the proponent to minimize any major impact to the community hall operation.

The proponent was invited to present the business plan at the Oakland Community Centre Volunteer Management Committee on June 17. Committee members and staff received a verbal presentation and were able to ask questions related to the plan at the meeting. Although the Volunteer Management Committee was receptive to providing childcare services at the Oakland Community Centre, there were concerns about ensuring all community centre functions/ events would work within the renovated space. Staff propose hiring a consultant to prepare a renovation floor plan acceptable to the Oakland Community Centre Volunteer Management Committee, the proponent and all authorities having jurisdiction.

The proponent intends to become an authorized provider under the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (City of Brantford) who is responsible and accountable for managing a coordinated childcare system. This provision would ensure the childcare spaces could be offered through OneList Brantford Brant.

The Building Our Community from the Kids Up Child Care and Early Years 10 Year Plan 2022 to 2032, 2024 Status Report / Update outlines the following Key Action;

Support the Ministry funded growth of CWELCC full day childcare spaces by 985 by 2026, resulting in 32% of children aged 0-4 having access to CWELCC funding childcare (based on 2021 Census population data).

As the proposal aligns with the Key Action statement and will reduce the waiting list by providing much needed childcare spaces, staff are seeking approval to proceed with discussions with the proponent and enter into negotiations with the proponent with the goal of returning to council with a draft lease agreement.

It is anticipated this process will take several months. If a mutually satisfactory agreement is reached, new childcare spaces may be available within 6-8 months.

Attachments

None

Reviewed By

Phil Mete, General Manager Community Services

Copied To

Stacey Ellins, Director of Parks, and Recreation
BJ Foster, Parks, and Facilities Supervisor

By-law and/or Agreement

By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No