

Schedule 1 to the minutes of the
Regular Council meeting held on
Monday, June 24, 2013

Re: Major Capital Facilities Program Phase 1

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The Major Capital Facilities replacement of the Minoru Activity Centre, the Minoru Aquatic Centre, and Fire Hall #1 are overdue, and very much needed, but there are items of concern, and options that could improve the replacements.

Having been involved with the ANAF 284 housing project I can also confirm that 6 months ago was an excellent time to arrange long term financing for construction, at a rate as low or lower than projected in your staff report.

There are a number of options to consider:

- 1) City Centre Community is due for completion within 1.5 years. It is only 1 km from the Minoru Activity Centre and if delivered on schedule it could have accommodated older adult programs during daytime for a couple years while a new activity centre is built in Minoru Park. This would have saved funds that are proposed to be spent on the obsolete RCMP building for only a couple years use.

The new City Centre Community Centre has been top priority since 2007, announced during the the 2008 election, and promised in the 2011 election to be opened by 2014. The developer started late and is now being reported as at least 7 months behind schedule delaying resident use and making the CCCC temporary use by older adults impossible for at least two years, so the City should collect for the developers forfeited performance. The money collected will only partially cover the cost of retrofitting the obsolete RCMP building for temporary Older Adult use but it is due and needed.

- 2) The Richmond Oval had unused office space the last time I looked. Some of it was previously finished and occupied as offices. The Oval should be checked to see if any space is available for temporary use because Richmond taxpayers would benefit.
- 3) The former RCMP building is both structurally and functionally obsolete. City residents would be much better served if it were replaced by a modern office and housing partnership similar to that done by the ANAF in Steveston, or now underway by the Kiwanis nearby on Minoru Boulevard.

Only the absolute minimum necessary should be spent for this temporary use. As well, if this building is to be used temporarily for an Older Adults centre, and then for longer term for City staff space, a proper allocation of cost should attribute most of the cost to the City office administrative use.

- 4) The Richmond Tennis court cover is about the size needed to cover South Arm Pool so that location could be covered if a few slide sections at the pool edge were dismantled and removed. Money spent on upgrading winter usability of South Arm pool would benefit southeast Richmond residents long after the Minoru Aquatic Centre is replaced, and be available in 15 years when the Watermania lease ends.
- 5) Councillor Steves suggested permanently covering Steveston Pool (varying the proposal to temporarily cover Steveston Pool). This would allow its permanent year around use, and perhaps the solar heat recovery unit at Minoru Centennial Pool could be transferred to the new Steveston roof partially recovering its cost? East and west walls would have to be fire rated given proximity to adjacent buildings, but the north wall and south walls could have large windows, and the north side could include a fenced outdoor lawn which would greatly improve the current pool area.
- 6) Combination of a large Minoru Aquatics Centre and Minoru Activity Centre creates all sorts of synergies for parking, staff and offices, change facilities, and sharing with the other

facilities in the Minoru activity quadrant. This location is also close to 50,000 Richmond residents, great transit, and hotels and shopping to support competitions. Current planning anticipates 5,000 more people nearby annually. A modern facility could showcase Richmond meets.

- 7) There should be advance consideration now of eventual Minoru Arena and Library Cultural Centre renovation or replacement, to ensure that all these buildings integrate perfectly in future, and their eventual construction does not damage the new pools. The congregation space layout and a promenade from Minoru track to City Hall and parking reorganization should be considered too. A redesigned arena could save money by supplying waste ice heat to help heat the new pools, so this should be considered in the new Aquatic Centre and next arena designs.
- 8) Land in the Minoru neighbourhood is very expensive, so the pool roof and Older Adult Centre roofs should perhaps be considered for use for tennis or lawn bowling, or some other suitable use. If no better fit is found, a green roof and deck could be considered. The City must lead by example if it expects other developers to provide such uses in Richmond.
- 9) A seniors housing construction partnership Like the ANAF and Kiwanis ones could be a very good fit with this project because of its downtown location and seniors suitable facilities. It could help fund this project and also increase facility utilization during non peak hours. If there is no senior government interested in partnering now in this long period between election calls, the Aquatic and Older Adults building s building complex and adjacent parking areas should be designed so now, ready to go when such a program comes before an election.

However, I do have concerns:

- 1) Current financing is available at historically low rates for as long as a decade, but the U.S. economy is improving and rates will begin climbing. The projects should be completed and repaid within the 10 year loan amortization as the rates will likely be higher then.
- 2) These are very large projects that will rejuvenate the face of Richmond for generations, as well as binding taxpayers and the next three city councils. It is important that there be significant open public consultation on the facilities and the method of financing, concurrent with this building and loan planning.
- 3) A single Construction Management firm is a suitable way of administering the Aquatic, Older Adults Facility, and #1 Fire Hall, especially given their proximity, and potential cost savings of scale and opportunity to avoid adverse interactions. However, I'm concerned about the intermingling of the importance of Manager ability and continuity and cost on a \$100 million project, with a donation for the supposedly independent Richmond Oval and its Museum project as a criteria for manager selection. Couldn't such donation be repurposed to reduce the cost of this project?
- 4) The City currently rents two library locations and has central library expansion or some alternative as an approaching need. Sportstown has only a few years remaining on its lease. There are many other items on the City's 2007 facility needs list due within the next decade. Watermania and Minoru Ice Centre leases and renewals end in approximately 15 years and if not renewed other alternatives would require construction to commence years in advance. Richmond population growth will create many other needs. These three projects will be significant costs for the next 10 years, and there is significant risk that other important projects could be delayed if the City isn't proceeding with their design work as these complete.

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