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Town of Aurora

General Committee Report

No. CMS22-013

Subject: Aurora Town Square Status Update – Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy

Prepared by: Phillip Rose, Manager of Aurora Town Square

Department: Community Services

Date: March 1, 2022

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS22-013 be received; and
2. That the principles of the Aurora Town Square Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy be approved.

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the Aurora Town Square (ATS) Space Usage and Permitting Policy.

- Staff have developed the ATS Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy based on the principle of transparency and to provide structure for user groups pertaining to the fair allotment and use of space at ATS.

Background

In June 2020, Council approved the Not-for-Profit/Municipal Hybrid Model as the governance model for the future operation of ATS (formerly Library Square). Since then, staff have undertaken various initiatives to apply this model and have provided Council with implementation status updates on November 3, 2020, June 15, 2021, and September 21, 2021.

Below is a summary of Council resolutions related to the development of the Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy.

June 16, 2020 - "That the Director of Community Services form a Space Allocation Working Group comprised of Town staff and key stakeholders that will provide recommendations regarding rental and booking responsibilities for Library Square, including all spaces at 22 Church St. School, the New Addition, Outdoor Square, Bridge and Aurora Public Library."

June 16, 2020 – "That the Director of Community Services form a Collaborative Programming Working Group comprised of Town staff and key stakeholders that will provide recommendations regarding program delivery strategies and create a programming and performance schedule for Year 1 and Year 2 of Library Square operations."

June 15, 2021 – "That staff assume responsibility for all facility bookings across the entire Library Square complex, including the meeting spaces adjoining the Aurora Public Library, but not the remainder of the Library."

Analysis

Staff have developed the ATS Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy based on the principle of transparency and to provide structure for user groups pertaining to the fair allotment and use of space at ATS.

The ATS Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy (the Policy) would apply to all individuals and user groups granted use of ATS. The Policy is consistent with other Town policies related to Town-owned indoor and outdoor facilities, such as meeting rooms, sports fields, and parks.

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- Ensure consistency in the programming and ongoing use of space at ATS.
- Ensure that the highest quality facility is maintained and available for all user groups.
- Provide a framework and consistent approach to the use of space at ATS in a fair and equitable manner.
- Ensure that the Town's investment in ATS is managed in the best interest of all users and the citizens of Aurora.
- Establish clear guidelines and communication between applicable Town divisions, stakeholders, and user groups.
- Clearly define the rules of use and the departmental procedures in maintaining compliance.

The Policy identifies which Town staff are responsible for administering, monitoring, and ensuring compliance, and describes the procedures related to permit requests and space allocation for the following groups and program types:

- Town-run programs
- Aurora Cultural Centre
- Aurora Public Library
- Cultural Partners and other local cultural groups
- External user groups

Moreover, the Policy specifies submission deadlines, grandfathering rights, cancellation requirements, and facility use regulations pertaining to ATS. Finally, the Policy establishes a ranking that prioritizes the allocation of space and how to address conflicting requests when they arise. The priority order is as follows:

- Town of Aurora (including Aurora Museum & Archives)
- Aurora Cultural Centre and Aurora Public Library. In the event of conflicting requests, first priority will be given to the ACC for space at 22 Church Street, including the addition to the heritage schoolhouse, and first priority will be given to the APL for space adjacent to the Library.
- Cultural Partners as defined in this Policy, and other local cultural groups
- Aurora-based non-for-profit groups
- District School Boards
- Aurora-based commercial groups
- Other groups and individuals

Staff are seeking Council's approval of the principles of the Policy, which has been developed to guide space usage and allocation within the ATS.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable.

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial Implications

All revenues generated from the ATS' usage and room permitting will be directed in support of the ATS' ongoing operations.

Communications Considerations

Corporate Communications will support the key developments of the ATS project by creating any needed media products or providing support in reviewing marketing materials.

Climate Change Considerations

The recommendations from this report do not impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation.

Link to Strategic Plan

Aurora Town Square supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives:

Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Invest in sustainable infrastructure
- Celebrating and promoting our culture
- Encourage an active and healthy lifestyle
- Strengthening the fabric of our community

Enabling a diverse, creative, and resilient economy in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council may provide further direction.

Conclusions

This report provides a status update regarding ATS governance and recommends the approval of the principles of the ATS Space Usage and Room Permitting Policy. Staff will continue to provide Council with regular progress updates regarding the ongoing implementation of the Hybrid Governance Model.

Attachments

None.

Previous Reports

CMS20-008, Library Square – Governance Review, March 3, 2020

CMS20-012, Library Square – Governance Review, June 16, 2020

CMS20-026, Library Square – Governance Review, November 3, 2020

CMS21-022, Library Square Governance Update, June 15, 2021

CMS21-029, Aurora Town Square Governance Update, September 21, 2021

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review week of February 14, 2022

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services Department

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer