



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Planning Committee

From: Ken Hetherington, Manager, Planning Division

Meeting Date: February 10, 2014

Subject: Report PLPD14-012
Urban Park At Louis Street Conceptual Design

Purpose

A report to recommend the conceptual design for the Urban Park at Louis Street.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report PLPD14-012 dated February 10, 2014, of the Manager, Planning Division, as follows:

- a) That the staff presentation and the final report for the Downtown Urban Park Urban Design Study, dated January 2014 be received,
- b) That the conceptual design for Option A of the Urban Park be approved as depicted in the Downtown Urban Park Urban Design Study, dated January, 2014, submitted by EDA Collaborative Inc., and
- c) That staff be authorized to commence the integrated detailed design of Charlotte Street Renewal Project and the Urban Park at Louis Street.

Budget And Financial Implications

With the approval of the conceptual design for the Urban Park at Louis Street, staff will issue the Request for Proposals (RFP) to complete the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for the Charlotte Street Renewal Project. Upon its completion, staff will begin the process to hire a consultant for the detailed design, specifications and tender documents for the phased construction of Charlotte Street and the first phase of the construction of the Urban Park. The Capital Budget has a total of \$350,000 allocated in 2014 for Urban Park design purposes (Project 7-1.08) and a further \$350,000 in 2014 for detailed engineering design of the Charlotte Street Renewal (Project 7-1.03).

The 2014 Capital Budget (Project 7-1.03) outlines a multi-year capital forecast for the integrated Louis Street Urban Park and the Charlotte Street Renewal Projects, all contingent upon annual budget approvals by Council. The combined value of the integrated project over the 6-year forecast is \$8.5 Million.

The completed Urban Park will carry ongoing annual operating costs for maintenance, programming of the space and replacement costs. The operating requirement will be more precisely known as the design is refined.

Background

Report PLPD12-052, dated August 27, 2012, recommended the establishment of an Urban Park or a Public Commons at the Louis Street Municipal Parking Lot and on Louis Street, north of the driveway entrance to Rivulet Apartments. Council formally recognized the site as the preferred site to compliment the planned reconstruction of Charlotte Street, and to stimulate the renewal of the Downtown Commercial Core and the Charlotte Street West Business District, in this planning horizon.

Another resolution of Council arising from Report PLPD12-052 was to reserve the term and priority functions of a “Downtown Public Square” for a location of greater size and prominence than the Louis Street site, and that the future redevelopment of the Waterfront Commercial Area in the general vicinity of the Little Lake Marina be considered the preferred location for a future Downtown Public Square – beyond the current planning horizon.

The creation of a Downtown Urban Park is one of the key strategies of the Central Area Master Plan (CAMP). The strategy seeks to create a permanent Public Open Space in the Downtown for the benefit of the entire community. The CAMP recognizes that the City of Peterborough does not have a large, four-season, multi-purpose outdoor venue for gatherings and community celebrations.

On May 25, 2009 Council adopted OPA No. 140 and as a result the 21 strategies of the Central Area Master Plan form part of the Official Plan.

Consultation

The following stakeholders were consulted for feedback with respect to the proposed plan:

City Staff:

The Planning Division, Utility Services Department including Public Works, Community Services Department including Arenas Management and Operations, Recreation and Arts Culture and Heritage Staff,

Committees:

Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Peterborough Architectural Advisory Committee, Arts Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee,

Community Organizations:

Peterborough Rotary Club, Kawartha Rotary Club, Bridgenorth-Ennismore-Lakefield Rotary Club, The Peterborough Chapter of the Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping, The Downtown Business Improvement Area, The Downtown Action Committee, The Downtown Farmers Market

Constituent Representation:

The Mayor's Office and City Councillors,

Other meetings included the City County Health Unit, and two open invitations to the public meetings at the Public Library, and

Individual meetings and telephone conversations with all area property owners.

Schedule

With Council's approval of the conceptual design for the Urban Park, staff can proceed with the Municipal Class EA and the design of Charlotte Street. The Charlotte Street EA is scheduled to conclude in the late fall of 2014, followed by the detailed design of Charlotte Street in the winter of 2014/2015. The first phase of Charlotte Street is scheduled to begin construction in the late spring of 2015, pending budget approval. In 2016, the Charlotte Street renewal from Aylmer to George Street is scheduled along with its interface with the Urban Park. Currently, the completion of the full build-out of the Urban Park is scheduled in 2018 and 2019.

The Design Program

In keeping with the Central Area Master Plan strategy, the main characteristic of the design is to create a large multi-purpose outdoor venue for gatherings and community celebrations within the Downtown.

Through the stakeholder and community engagement process, a number of key program opportunities were identified to create a year-round place for public gatherings and celebrations. As a result the space needed to be designed to be flexible in order to accommodate a wide variety of potential uses. These uses or program elements can include:

Warm Weather Season

- The Downtown Farmer's Market
- Temporary Art Installations
- Seating / Moveable Furniture
- Mixed-Use / Market Building
- Performance Venue (stage)
- Community BBQ (eg, Rib-fest)
- Interactive Water Feature(s)
- Children's Summer Camp
- Children's Library Program / Art Lessons

Cold Weather Season

- Ice Skating
- Large Public Gatherings (eg, New Years Eve Celebration)
- Ice / Snow Sculpture
- Sno-fest / Winter Lights Festival

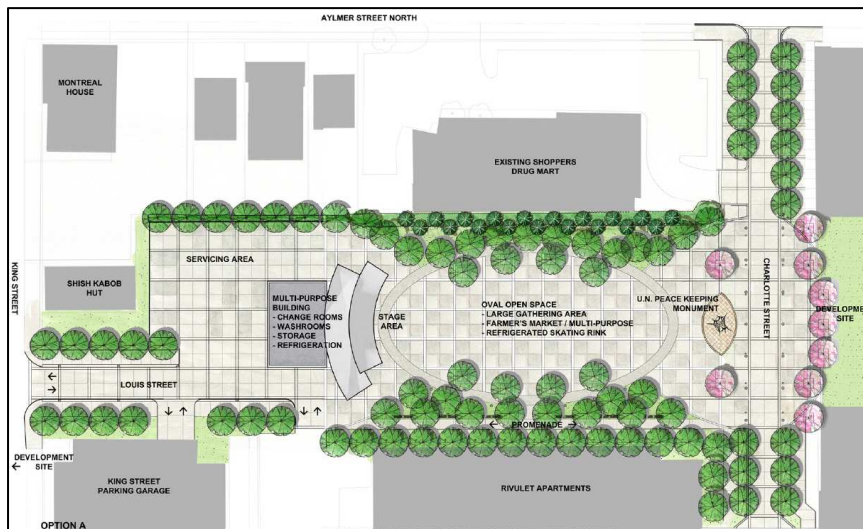
Conceptual Design Options:

Different options were explored for the development of the Urban Park. Exhibit "A" attached to this report shows its development utilizing existing publicly owned space: Most of the Louis Street road allowance and the existing municipal surface parking lot.

The total estimated cost to develop the recommended design as depicted in Exhibit "A", exclusive of taxes, is \$3,304,070. The estimated cost of all the items associated with its development appears in Section 5.3 of the Urban Design Study.

Exhibits "B", "C" and "D" show potential designs with the incorporation of the property at 225 Charlotte Street, which is the existing Shopper's Drug Mart property at the corner of Charlotte Street and Aylmer Street.

Option A: The Louis Street Site



The design of the Urban Park is organized around a large oval shaped space, which can be used for multiple purposes especially during the warm weather season. This is the prime area for the Downtown Farmer's Market, which currently operates on Wednesdays at the Louis Street parking lot. During other occasions this space can be

programmed for children's events, or be used as the Park's main gathering area, from which to view performances on a small stage at the oval's south end.

Connected to the stage, a multi-use building is proposed for washrooms, change rooms and for equipment / storage in support of the components of the plan and activities that can take place there. The building and small stage area anchor the south end of the Park, with vehicle marshalling and some surface parking behind it.

The open oval area can be programmed for multiple uses. It can be the public gathering hub for festivals such as rib-fest and special events such as "A Taste of the Downtown". When not in use for special events or for the Downtown Farmer's Market, it is proposed to incorporate an area for ground geysers. This component promotes interactive play, helps damper external noise to the Park and can provide relief for area children and others on hot summer days.

Approximately from mid November to mid March, the oval area doubles as an ice rink. The quality of the ice and its continued availability for public use is guaranteed as it is proposed to be refrigerated and maintained with the use of a small zamboni. Refrigerated outdoor skating rinks in the central areas of cities has proven to be a successful and highly used component of urban parks world-wide.

The interface of the Park with Charlotte Street is reserved for a prominent piece of public art. The piece may commemorate a significant historical event, identify a group for their public service, or simply be a cultural expression of Downtown Peterborough. The building with its stage area, the large oval shaped open space and the public art piece are all prime candidates for sponsorship.

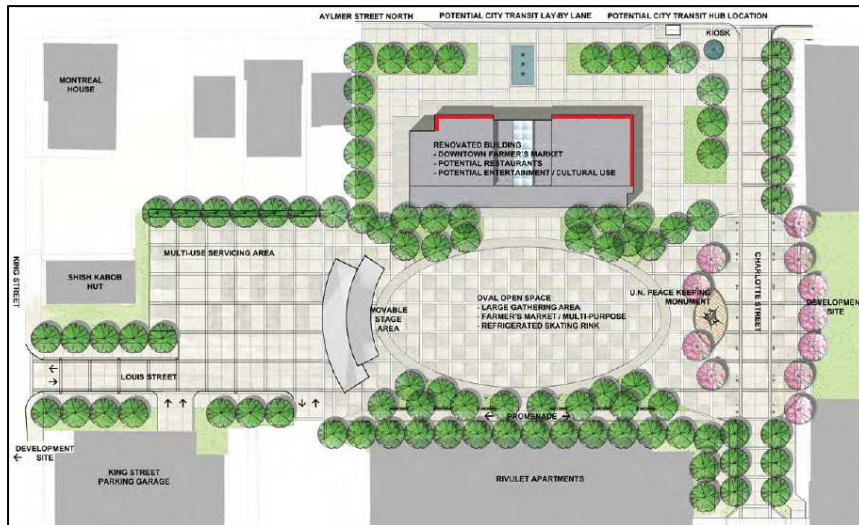
A promenade is provided along the Park's east side linking King Street to Charlotte Street. Tables, chairs and large tree installations are organized off this feature spanning from Charlotte Street to the Rivulet Apartments driveway entrance. The promenade is a quieter area for sitting and relaxation but will assist in moving pedestrian traffic through the park when there are large numbers of people there or during the months when the skating rink is operating. The density of large tree installations will also provide some buffering for the residents of the Rivulet Apartments.

Lighting is a key component of the plan. It contributes significantly to the creation of "sense of place". A unique design is proposed that would provide enough light intensity for occasions when there must be regard for public safety, but can be dimmed for occasions when a certain mood or ambience is desired for an event in the Park.

A seamless flow of paving treatments and furnishings is intended between the Urban Park at Louis Street and the planned renewal of Charlotte Street. Between Aylmer Street and George Street, the idea is to blend Charlotte Street with the Park. For some events, Charlotte Street can be closed to vehicular traffic between Aylmer and George and the spaces can function together to accommodate large gatherings of people.

The amount of space available in Option A has been analyzed for its ability to accommodate the planned functions of the Park. It has been determined that there is adequate space to accommodate all the functions and programmed events. However, there has been considerable opinion expressed regarding the benefits of incorporating the corner property at 225 Charlotte Street (the current Shopper's Drug Mart property) in the plan. As a result, the next three options examine scenarios for including the corner property in the plan.

Option B: Incorporation of the Existing Shopper's Drug Mart Building



This option examines the possibility of incorporating the existing Shopper's Drug Mart property at the south-east corner of Aylmer Street and Charlotte Street. In this option, the building is retained, modified and re-purposed to accommodate a potential range of uses. These uses include a Downtown Farmer's Market and restaurants with outdoor

cafes. Instead of constructing a new building in the Park for public washrooms, change rooms and equipment, the existing building can be renovated to provide these components as well.

Currently, the back wall of the building does not have any windows or doors and faces the Urban Park site. Large, attractive, see-through overhead doors could be installed to provide access into and out of the building from the Park. It is centred on the Park's oval open space area and has excellent proximity to it. A confectionary, skate rental area, change area and public washrooms could all be accommodated in the building with an excellent relationship to the oval. From the south-east corner of the building, the zamboni, refrigeration equipment and control equipment for the Park's water features can be accommodated.

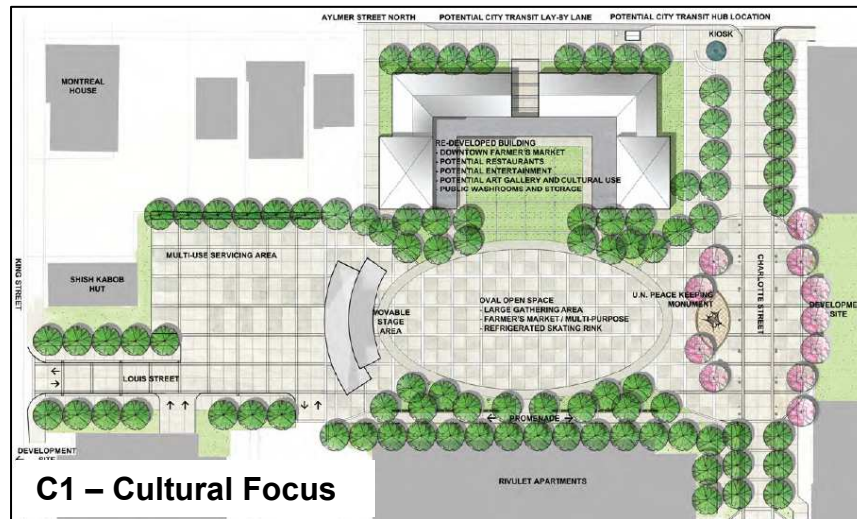
The exterior of the existing Shopper's Drug Mart building can also be renovated to enhance its presence on Charlotte and Aylmer Streets. A building entrance could be centrally located on the building's west side to line up with a new, high-profile transit stop off of Aylmer Street. During warm weather, the doors could be kept open for people to flow through and shop as they make their way. The existing asphalt areas around the building could be converted to outdoor cafes serviced from restaurants facing the streets.

Option B has the same components in the Urban Park plan, except there is no longer a need for a new building. As a result, the stage area can be designed to be portable and stored away, opening the site to enhance its flexibility and accommodate larger numbers of people.

The incorporation of the existing Shopper's site also has the effect of encouraging improvements to abutting properties. By opening up the southern sector of the Louis Street site (just north of Shish-Kabob Hut restaurant at 220 King Street), there is a stronger likelihood of investment in properties in that area to take advantage of the enhanced public open space. Where quality public open space is offered to abutting privately owned commercial properties, investment typically follows.

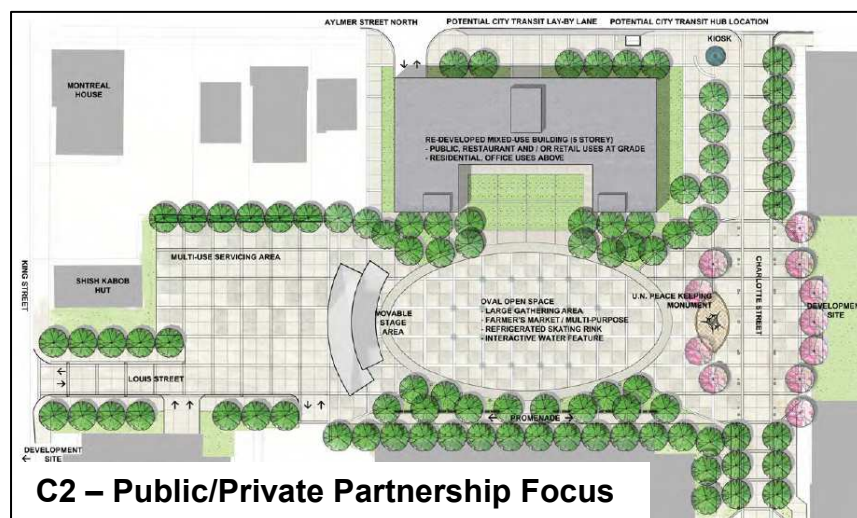
Option C:

The Re-Development of the Existing Shopper's Drug Mart Property



The south-east corner of Aylmer and Charlotte Street is positioned well relative to the improvements planned for Charlotte Street and the eventual development of the Urban Park at Louis Street. Option C conceptualizes an aggressive redevelopment of the property, where the existing building is

removed and a more substantial building is constructed. A public private partnership could result in the delivery of support features for the Urban Park, the development of a Downtown Core municipal cultural facility as envisioned by the Central Area Master Plan and/or the realization of some significant residential density in the City's designated Urban Growth Area.

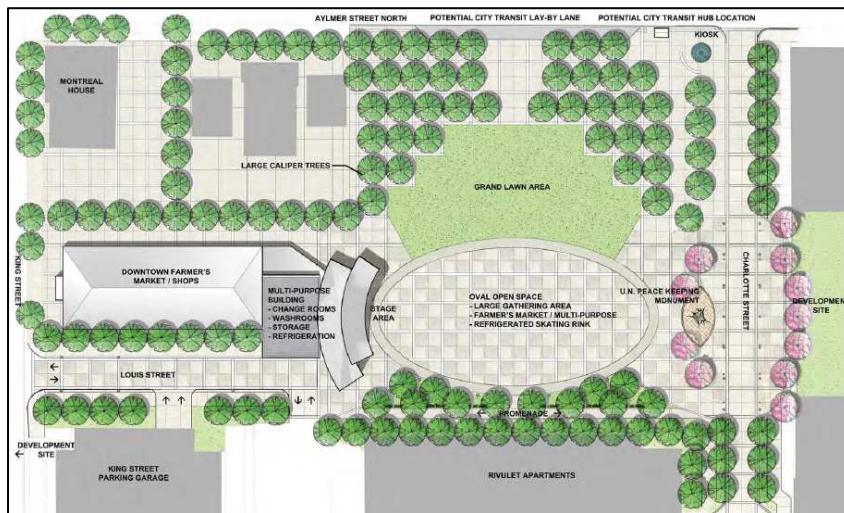


The building area (footprint) of a new building could be approximately double that of the existing Shopper's Drug Mart building. It could be built closer to or up to the Aylmer Street and Charlotte Street property lines to be in keeping with urban design principles for the Downtown Core and to provide direct access off City sidewalks.

Or the configuration of the building could offer public open space that blends with and becomes part of the Urban Park open space.

If City Council determines that there is merit in re-locating a municipal cultural facility, such as an expanded Art Gallery to the Downtown Core, the development of the existing Shopper's site should be considered for that purpose. Being a corner property on a Downtown Core main street, this location offers high profile and exposure. A municipal cultural use would be complimentary to the Urban Park. In essence, both are cultural facilities. As well, the Public Library is a complimentary cultural facility, which has excellent proximity to the corner site and the Urban Park at Louis Street.

Option D: Expanding the Urban Park to the Corner of Aylmer Street and Charlotte Street



Another Urban Park development scenario examines the possibility of removing the existing Shopper's Drug Mart building and expanding the area for the park out to the corner.

Overall, the City has an excellent inventory of parks and open space. However, it is lacking in the Downtown Core near

residential districts. There is a high density residential district directly across the road on Aylmer Street, the Rivulet Apartments flank the east side of the park site, and there is potential for additional high density residential development on the site's north and south sides. By expanding the park to include the corner there could be an open lawn area and more trees resulting in a greater number of opportunities for passive park uses. The Urban park would be "greener", which is always attractive in conjunction with residential land-use.

Summary

In this report, four options for the development of the Urban Park at Louis Street were explored:

- 1.) The development of the park on existing City owned land (Option A): The Louis Street Parking Lot together with the north portion of the Louis Street road allowance. This option relates well to Charlotte Street, the King Street Parkade and is large enough to accommodate all the park's planned functions,
- 2.) The incorporation of the property at the south-east corner of Aylmer and Charlotte Street, where the existing Shoppers Drug Mart building is converted to accommodate park functions and other uses are introduced, such as restaurants with outdoor cafes. In this development scenario, a new building would no longer be required in the park and the stage could be portable, creating a wider expanse of open space,
- 3.) The incorporation of the corner property with the existing building removed and a substantial building constructed, possibly for a medium to high density residential development and/or the new home of a new municipal cultural facility as envisioned by the Central Area Master Plan,
- 4.) The incorporation of the corner property to expand the public open space out to Aylmer and Charlotte Street, creating a "greener" park capable of accommodating more passive uses for residents and visitors to the area.

The acquisition of the property at the south-east corner of Aylmer and Charlotte Street presents some interesting opportunities. Its acquisition would enhance the park and the area, but the successful design of the Urban Park at Louis Street does not hinge on it. There is adequate space to accommodate all its intended uses and the design is flexible enough to be able to include the corner.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:

Exhibit A - Option A: The Louis Street Site

Exhibit B - Option B: Incorporation of the Existing Shopper's Drug Mart Building

Exhibit C - Option C1: The Re-Development of the Existing Shopper's Drug Mart Property – Cultural Focus

Exhibit C - Option C2: The Re-Development of the Existing Shopper's Drug Mart Property – Public/Private Partnership Focus

Exhibit D - Option D: Expanding the Urban Park to the Corner of Aylmer Street and Charlotte Street

Exhibit E - Final Report, City of Peterborough's Urban Park, EDA Collaborative Inc.