

Meeting Date: April 4, 2023

Subject: Bolton Downtown Revitalization Plan Update - 18 Ann Street

Submitted By: Jason Schildroth, Manager, Community and Cultural Development,
Community Services

RECOMMENDATION

That as part of the Town's revitalization efforts for downtown Bolton, staff be directed to explore options for the future use of the property municipally known as 18 Ann Street including options for a public square, removal of the building and/or re-purposing of the property.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Bolton Downtown Revitalization Plan suggests the community supports the redesign the public realm to encourage more recreational and entertainment activities in the core, neighbouring public spaces, and along the Humber River
- The Town owned property at 18 Ann Street presents an opportunity to create a public space adjacent to the Humber River Centre
- The timing of the Humber River Centre project presents an opportunity to align this significant capital project to the repurposing of the adjacent property, in support of the deliverables noted in this report

DISCUSSION

Background

The Bolton Downtown Revitalization Plan (the plan) was adopted by the Town of Caledon in March of 2021, and the Bolton Downtown Revitalization Task Force (the task force) was convened to guide community projects, build partnerships, and direct staff in the implementation of the plan.

Through the plan's development, community, resident and business engagement identified key priorities of stakeholders. The feedback indicated the community supports the redesign the public realm to encourage more recreational and entertainment activities in the core, neighbouring public spaces, and along the Humber River. Urgent priorities identified by the community included the improvement of streetscapes (sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and benches), and that the community is interested in more trees and gardens in downtown Bolton.

Stakeholder feedback indicated urgency in the provision of more, or improvement of existing public gathering spaces that would allow for music/performance space, street performers and buskers. There was an expressed desire for a "piazza" or "town square" location with music, live attractions, theatre, and pop-ups. Feedback encouraged the Town to acquire more properties in the core which could be used for future opportunities.

At the time of the plan's development the Town of Caledon owned ten properties in downtown Bolton, including five at the river's edge, three used for parking, the old fire hall, and a small parcel on Dalton Street. Since then, the town has acquired an additional property on Ann Street, directly adjacent to the Humber River Center.

18 Ann Street Opportunity for Creating a Public Gathering Place in Downtown Bolton Adjacent to the Humber River Centre

The Humber River Centre is a key deliverable in the Bolton Downtown Revitalization Plan and will introduce important public space in the village core. The Centre is a Town owned resource centre that when completed will be an anchor property in Downtown Bolton for residents, businesses and community groups. The Centre itself will accommodate the farmer and vendor markets, coworking areas, a makers' space, public washrooms, and more.

The Bolton Revitalization Plan directs the expedition of other public realm improvements including prioritizing plans for public lands and event areas, rest areas and benches. Additionally, staff are directed to create pop-up entertainment areas that can be used by artists, musicians and other activations, and aggressively promoted in partnership with the Business Improvement Area.

Staff believe that the acquisition of the property on Ann Street directly adjacent to the Humber River Centre presents a unique opportunity that aligns with existing construction at the Humber River Centre, for the possible creation of additional open public gathering space. This possibility could create a public gathering space and an important venue for connecting the Bolton community in the heart of the village core, away from major streets, and connected directly to the adjacent Humber River Centre. See schedule A for an example of a public square option for consideration.

Possible benefits of the public square include:

- Safe and straightforward closing of Ann Street for community events and social gatherings and activations.
- Stronger social connections with residents and businesses through the provision of additional public gathering space directly adjacent to the Humber River Centre's planned outdoor gathering spaces.
- Improve walkability for both north and south hill residents, give residents a community destination.
- Allow for more destination friendly features such as public art, the renovated gazebo, clean-up of Bolton Mill Park, and additional seating introduced in the Bolton revitalization project.
- The development of the 18 Ann parcel can increase pedestrian movement and increase social activities associated with the Humber River Centre.

Heritage Conservation District Considerations

All contributing and non-contributing properties within the Bolton Heritage Conservation District (HCD) are subject to the provisions and policies of the Bolton HCD Plan. The property at 18 Ann is a contributing property within the HCD.

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, a Heritage Permit is required for all alterations to the exterior of all properties within the HCD. As an exception, public bodies are not required to obtain Heritage Permits but are expected to comply with the intent of the Bolton HCD Plan when carrying out various activities, including works on public property and infrastructure. Staff have initiated the process of securing a Heritage Impact Assessment for the subject property in compliance with the intentions of the HCD. Typical process to obtain a Heritage Permit for significant changes would require consultation with the municipal heritage committee and Council approval.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Subject matter is not relevant to the Council Workplan.

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: Example of public square option