Minute No. 249
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development - February 12, 2007

Item No. 1 University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan
File EP-1.2.4

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development and adopted the following:

1. That the City of Winnipeg endorses the University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan in principle.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On February 14, 2007, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On February 12, 2007, the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development concurred in the administrative recommendation and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

On January 29, 2007, the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development moved the following motion, as follows:

1. That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the Administration for review and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development.

2. That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development for information.

Further on January 29, 2007, the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development received a PowerPoint Presentation from Jennifer Rattray, Director of Strategic Initiatives, The University of Winnipeg, dated January 2007, with respect to the University of Winnipeg's Campus and Community Plan.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On April 27, 2005, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development and adopted the following:

1. That the City of Winnipeg endorses the University of Winnipeg Spence Street "Transit Friendly" Pedestrian Mall in principle.

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COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

2. That the Administration be authorized to work with the University of Winnipeg to develop By-Law amendments and agreements required to establish Spence Street between Ellice Avenue and Portage Avenue as a "Transit Friendly" Pedestrian Mall with enhanced street level amenities.

RE: University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan

FOR SUBMISSION TO: Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED BY: Director, Planning Property and Development Department

REPORT DATE: February 8, 2007

RECOMMENDATION: That the City of Winnipeg endorse the University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan in principle

Report Summary

Key Issues:

- The U of W has recently completed a Canada - Manitoba Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) application indicating that the University is prepared to spend $ 1.5 M on their Campus Redevelopment implementation in order to leverage an additional $ 915,000 in MRIF funding (of which 50% is Provincial / 50% is Federal).
- Although no City funds are required to support the MRIF Application, the University of Winnipeg has requested a Resolution of Council endorsing their Plan and MRIF application; this is reflected in a parallel report dated February 2, 2007 to Executive Policy Committee.
- For this MRIF Application, the University is seeking to implement two Components as follows:

  Component 1
  a) Further transforming the existing Spence Street into a public transit only pedestrian mall and bike path animated by street level retail and high use public recreational space (including basketball courts, street hockey, and ice skating), which will involve linking Young Street into the transit mall concept;
  b) Beginning a green space link to University initiatives to the west of the University, which include mixed student and community housing, a community garden, and the University's environmental outreach programming designed for community children and youth, further linking the University and the local community.

  Component 2 is for the redevelopment and expansion of the Duckworth Centre.
- This report identifies the results of the Administration’s preliminary due diligence with regard to a review of the University of Winnipeg’s (U of W) new Campus Redevelopment Plan.

- The Administration has, and will continue to work in close cooperation with the University of Winnipeg in order to address development issues and implement their Campus Redevelopment Plan.

Implications of the Recommendation(s):

General Implications

( ) None

( ) For the organization overall and/or for other departments

(x) For the community and/or organizations external to the City

( ) Involves a multi-year contract

Comment(s): The University of Winnipeg is requesting that their redevelopment plan be endorsed

Policy Implications

(x) No

( ) Yes

Comment(s):

Regulatory Implications

(x) None

( ) Eliminates or reduces regulatory impact

( ) Proposes regulatory impact

Comment(s):

Environmental Implications

(x) No

( ) Yes

Comment(s):

Human Resources Implications

(x) No

( ) Yes

Comment(s):

Financial Implications

(x) Within approved current and/or capital budget

( ) Current and/or capital budget adjustment required

Comment(s): No City funding has been requested for this project at this time

Report

REASON FOR THE REPORT:
On January 29, 2007, the University of Winnipeg appeared as a delegation at the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development. The SPC on DD directed as follows:

- That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the Administration for review and report back to the SPC on DD.
- That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the SPC on P and D for information (as the U of W Campus and Community Plan spans both Committees' mandated areas).

HISTORY:
On April 27, 2005, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development and adopted the following:

1. That the City of Winnipeg endorse the University of Winnipeg Spence Street "Transit Friendly" Pedestrian Mall in principle.
2. That the Administration be authorized to work with the University of Winnipeg to develop by-law amendments and agreements required to establish Spence Street between Ellice Avenue and Portage Avenue as a "Transit Friendly" Pedestrian Mall with enhanced street level amenities.
3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

On November 27, 2006, the University of Winnipeg requested that the City of Winnipeg provide a Resolution of Council supporting their Application under the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund. The U of W had just completed an MRIF application indicating that the University was prepared to spend $ 1.5 M in order to leverage $ 915,000 in MRIF funding (50% Provincial / 50% Federal).

On January 23, 2007, the University of Winnipeg provided a Briefing to City Council on their proposed Campus Redevelopment project as well as their MRIF Application request.

On January 29, 2007, the University of Winnipeg appeared as a delegation at the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development. The SPC on DD directed as follows:

1. That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the Administration for review and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development.

2. That the University of Winnipeg Campus and Community Plan be referred to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development for information (as the U of W Campus and Community Plan spans both Committees' mandated areas).

DISCUSSION:
Since 2005, the City has worked closely with the U of W to begin to implement their original concept. Much of the framework for the original concept is already in place including:

- A Transit Friendly Pedestrian Plaza for the south portion of Spence Street
- A new street connection between Spence Street and Young Street has been developed in order to allow for access / egress from the Duckworth Centre.
- A bike path lane has been developed on Spence Street.
- New concrete medians have been developed to safely and aesthetically direct traffic.
- The Planning, Property and Development Department (Real Estate Division) has negotiated an Encroachment Agreement with the U of W to facilitate their development within the Public right-of-way.
- The Administration has participated directly in the continued and extensive consultation undertaken through the U of W Campus Redevelopment Planning and Community Consultation process.

For this Application, the University is seeking to implement two new Components as follows:

Component 1

a) Further transforming the existing Spence Street into a public transit only pedestrian mall and bike path animated by street level retail and high use public recreational space (including basketball courts, street hockey, and ice skating)
b) Beginning a green space link to University initiatives to the west of the University, which include mixed student and community housing, a community garden, and the University's environmental outreach programming designed for community children and youth, further linking the University and the local community.

Component 2 is for the redevelopment and expansion of the Duckworth Centre.

Bearing in mind that the U of W's new Campus Redevelopment Plan remains as a concept, there are however significant issues with the Plan specifically with regard to the current design and the feasibility and cost of the realignment of Spence Street over to Young Street.

The Administration has just recently considered the new Campus Redevelopment Plan and has identified the nature of the significant issues both to the U of W and their consultant. While all Departments were generally supportive of the U of W's redevelopment initiatives, Winnipeg Transit, Planning, Property, and Development, Community Services, and the Public Works Department identified several issues.

Winnipeg Transit had concerns regarding the particular details on the re-configured Spence / Young Street related to the routing of transit services. There are issues related to the direction of bus travel, the location of the proposed transit terminal, the location of the Handi-Transit loading area, and the impact on transit passengers as existing bus stops and routes would need to be relocated. The current design requires further analysis in order to properly address Transit operational and logistical issues.

The Public Works Department has identified that a proposed traffic control signal at Young Street and Portage Avenue to allow for the movement of buses is undesirable on the basis of anticipated significant negative impacts to traffic operations along Portage Avenue. Another issue requiring review is the accommodation of cyclists between Portage Avenue and Ellice Avenue, especially with respect to southbound traffic crossing Portage Avenue. To facilitate development and maintenance, the Public Works Department would also prefer that the southern most section of Spence Street be closed as public right-of-way and turned over to the U of W, maintaining easements for existing utilities.

The Community Services Department has noted that the expansion west of the University will continue to impact on residential parking. There is concern the development of the Science Centre on Langside will exacerbate the parking problem for participants of Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre. There has been an acknowledgement that the University is genuinely committed to engaging the residents and community stakeholders. An indicator of this is the representation of community residents on the Campus Development Plan Steering Committee and Design Advisory Committee.

The Water and Waste Department has identified potential conflicts with respect to the proposed Duckworth Centre designs cantilevering over underground infrastructure within the public right-of-way.

All departments agree that other options for realignment of Spence and Young Street could be developed which may address some of the competing concerns of Public Works and Transit while still meeting the intent of the U of W's original concept. These options would deal with the preferred direction of Transit vehicles through the campus, traffic impacts to the adjacent street system (regional and non-regional streets), transit passenger implications, bicycle routing in/out of the U of W campus, as well as on-street parking issues. It is therefore recommended that the U of W undertake a detailed

Transportation Study to address the transit, traffic operations, and parking issues and that Public Works and Transit be consulted with respect to the terms of reference for the study. The U of W agrees with this recommendation however they cannot access any funding to undertake the detailed Transportation Study without the MRIF funding in place.

In addition to the U of W's commitment to undertake a transportation study there are significant safeguards and approval processes in place that will allow further opportunities for the Administration to work with the U of W in the development of detailed final plans prior to implementation. These include applications for building permits, review by the Urban Design Advisory Committee, Encroachment Agreements, Development Agreements and Standards, and perhaps public right-of-way opening and closure By-Laws if applicable.

The Administration is satisfied that there remain future significant safeguards to ensure that the above-noted issues will be addressed and recommend that the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development endorse the U of W Campus redevelopment plan in principle.

Financial Impact Statement Date: February 8, 2007

Project Name:

University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan

COMMENTS:

The recommendation contained in this report is that the City of Winnipeg endorse the University of Winnipeg Campus Redevelopment Plan in principle.

There are no financial implications associated with this recommendation.

"Original Signed By"
Mike McGinn, CA
Manager of Finance

IN PREPARING THIS REPORT THERE WAS:

Internal Consultation With and Concurrence By:
Public Works, Winnipeg Transit, Community Services, Legal Services

External Consultation With:

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Department: Planning, Property, and Development
Division Planning and Land Use / Office of the Director
Prepared by: Dianne Himbeault / Jim Paterson
PPD File No.

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