Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 9, 2024

REPORTS

Item No. 4 Memorial Options for Hope Alley

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and received the report as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Browaty,

That Rule 51(1.1) of the Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be suspended to allow a submission made by Councillor Santos received after 12:00 noon on the business day prior to the meeting, to be included in the minutes.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in.

Carried

His Worship Mayor Gillingham was absent from the vote on the above motion.

The following persons submitted communications in support of the matter:

- Al Wiebe, Director of Housing, Advocate Peer and Community engagement trainer and Community organizer, on behalf of Leah Gazan, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg Centre
- Councillor Santos, Point Douglas Ward

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 18, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee further laid the matter over to its meeting on July 9, 2024.

On May 22, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee laid the matter over for 30 days.

Alden Wiebe submitted a communication in support of the matter.

On February 13, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and granted an extension of up to 90 days to report back on the costs associated with all the different placemaking features discussed at the November 6, 2023 community consultation.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On November 23, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Public Service be directed to continue to collaborate with stakeholders and report back to the Human Rights Committee of Council with an update after:

    A. A project manager has been identified by stakeholders; and

    B. A funding source has been secured.

2. That the Public Service be directed to report back to the Executive Policy Committee in 90 days on the costs associated with all the different placemaking features discussed at the November 6, 2023 community consultation.

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

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Memorial Options for Hope Alley

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Patman, P.Eng.	J. Berezowsky	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2023, the Public Service was directed by Council to report back on the costs associated with placemaking features for Main Street at Henry Avenue near Thunderbird House. The report was to detail total costs for the slate of features discussed at the November 6, 2023, community consultation on what is now called Hope Alley.

Ideas included benches, shade shelters, and a mural. The Public Service has since explored preliminary costs for some of the items; further investigation is needed for final estimates. The Public Service believes it would be better to phase in the elements rather than installing them all at once. Shelter canopies and a mural are the highest priorities.

Note that, should this project proceed, resources would need to be identified through the budgetary process, the project would need to be assigned/allocated to a Department within the Public Service, and a project manager would need to be engaged to lead this project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On November 23, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

2. That the Public Service be directed to report back to the Executive Policy Committee in 90 days on the costs associated with all the different placemaking features discussed at the November 6, 2023 community consultation.

An extension of 90 days was granted on February 13, 2024.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

As this report is for information only, there are no implications at this time. The project would require resources and a project manager should it proceed in the future.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Background

Hope Alley is the honourary name given to the area of land at Main Street and Henry Avenue adjacent to Thunderbird House.

In early 2023, area stakeholders identified a variety of potential elements to improve the feel of the area. On November 6, 2023, the area Councillor held a consultation to determine the types of placemaking features community members and stakeholders envision at the location.

On November 14, 2023, the Public Service presented a summary of early feedback to the Executive Policy Committee (EPC). Council subsequently directed the Public Service to report back on the costs associated with all the different placemaking features identified through the consultation.

The list of amenities proposed by the community and City stakeholders includes the following:

- Benches;
- A commemorative mural serving as a monument feature;
- An overhead archway feature over the street;
- Potential modifications to the pedestrian crosswalk at Main and Henry;
- Landscaping;
- Shade protection canopies; and
- An emergency callbox beacon.

See Appendix A: Potential Hope Alley Design Elements and Details for more details.

To respond to the request for more information regarding the budget, the Public Service informally enlisted the assistance of two local landscape architecture firms. The Public Service provided the firms a list of improvements under consideration for Hope Alley, noting the list had not yet been finalized. They provided feedback to the Public Service regarding the costing of a number of the elements listed.

Depending on the features in the final concept, which has yet to be designed, the cost of the project could vary significantly.

Certain elements, such as the mural and canopy were identified as the highest priority and could be started soon after additional budget was identified. Potentially these elements could be prioritized if the total budget had to be spread out over a number of years.

The next priority would be the upgrades to the crosswalk and, lastly, the archway. Community stakeholders acknowledge these two items would be the costliest elements and could be phased in at a later date subject to funding availability.

Due to the lack of project definition, the Public Service is unable to provide detailed costing at this juncture. Table 1 below provides indicative costing information based on discussion with two local architecture firms. This information has been provided for discussion purposes. Additional analysis would be required before being able to provide a budget for this project.

Element	Cost (low estimate)	Cost (high estimate)
Mural	$25-$35 / square foot	$60-$80 / square foot
Shade/Weatherproof Canopies	$240,000	$300,000
Landscaping	$200,000	$350,000
Archway Feature	$195,000	$750,000
Changes to crosswalk	TBD by Public Works	

Table 1: Preliminary Estimates for Various New Elements for Hope Alley

Further discussion could also lead to additional features being added, or some elements being taken off this list. This would impact the total cost. Note this should not be considered a Class 5 estimate but rather a starting point for considering how to fund the project. Further work would be needed, including considering community fundraising, grants, and innovative sources of funding.

Note that should this project proceed, resources would need to be identified through the budgetary process, the project would need to be assigned/allocated to a Department within the Public Service, and a project manager would need to be engaged to lead this project. For clarity, no additional resources are currently identified.

While there is enthusiasm from both community stakeholders and representatives from the Public Service, a dedicated project manager utilizing project management best practices would be required to ensure this project is successfully completed on time, on budget and on scope, while working closely with the stakeholders already involved. The Public Service recommends that the project manager have expertise in working on multidisciplinary projects of this type, and experience in working both with city staff and external community stakeholders and representatives. The project is a nuanced one requiring compassion and careful attention to detail. For clarity, there is no full time equivalent or salary budget for a project manager at this time.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: February 21, 2024

Project Name:

Memorial Options for Hope Alley

COMMENTS:

As this report is for information purposes, there are no financial impacts.

Due to a lack of project definition, the Public Service is unable to determine a reasonable cost estimate at this juncture.

Currently, there is no budget (position or dollars) in place for a project manager nor is there budget in place for construction. The project will not proceed without an identified budget/funding source.

J. Ruby, 2024-02-28
J. Ruby CPA, CA
Manager of Finance & Administration

CONSULTATION

Following principles outlined in the Poverty Action Strategy, as part of this report, the City engaged stakeholders from poverty reduction-related community-based organizations and those with lived experience of poverty and homelessness, including content from these discussions in this document.

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal: City Building

6.41 Inclusive Public Places - Practice and enforce a high standard of urban design, that supports a sustainable quality of life and sense of place through the development of a safe, resilient, high quality, high-functioning and active transportation and transit-oriented urban environment.

6.42 Inclusive Public Places - Leverage investment in public amenities in partnership with private investors, to create a safe, vibrant, and active and transit-oriented urban environment in areas prioritized for mixed-use development.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP is not applicable to this specific report.

However, note that the proposed shade canopies and heaters would allow for a more comfortable outdoor experience in a city like Winnipeg facing more extreme climate highs and lows.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

This project contributes towards one of the shared wisdom points relating to Goal 1, Equity and a Culture of Caring are Demonstrated through Strategy Implementation and Systems Change: Improving the lives of the most at-risk residents makes the city better for everyone.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Transportation
Prepared by: D. Patman, Manager – Transportation, Public Works Department
Date: February 29, 2024

Attachments: Appendix A - Potential Hope Alley Design Elements and Details

Appendix A: Potential Hope Alley Design Elements and Details

The following is a list of elements for consideration within the upgrades to the Hope Alley area. A number of the listed items include details and considerations from discussion with stakeholders.

1. Shade Canopies with Heat Sources and Lighting

Canopies over benches (combined with the provision of light and heat) would alleviate weather-related issues of rain and snow.

These canopies would need to be attached to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) Parking Garage and Bell Hotel walls; there is support from both organizations.

One suggestion to investigate regarding the canopies would be to use shade sails or shade cloth. These are decorative in nature and certain colours could be chosen to brighten up the space. While potentially lower-cost, long-term wear and tear would occur and would most likely need replacement after a few years. The cost/benefit of lower up-front cost materials would need to be considered.

Including heat sources (warming features) and lighting was also requested. The type of heating (e.g. propane heaters or infrared electric heating) would need to be explored, including how this would be connected to existing buildings and how it would be maintained/monitored, and if this equipment would be linked to sensors so as to only activate at certain temperature thresholds.

2. Mural

A mural would serve as the monument feature that was requested by and the direction of the Human Rights Committee of Council in 2023.

It is confirmed that WRHA would be supportive of installing a permanent mural artwork on the parking garage building.

Participation from the surrounding community to assist and help imagine the mural would be an important consideration. Building relationship capacity with the community would be key to the mural's success. The facilitator and organization who will produce the mural would have to conduct a stakeholder engagement inside the Thunderbird House and garner feedback and advice from the surrounding community; building that relationship with the community will ensure the mural's success.

Some suggested organizations to produce the mural include Synonym Art Consultation and Red Road Lodge as they offer mentorship and connectivity to new and emerging artists with a strong focus on Indigenous culture and teachings.

Further discussion would need to take place to plan for, properly resource, and complete this element of the project.

3. Modifications to the pedestrian corridor at Henry and Main

Potential changes to the existing lighted pedestrian crosswalk has been a part of discussion in the area. It was noted that providing extra warning to motorists would be beneficial.

While some of the participants in the ongoing group discussion suggested replacement of the existing infrastructure (i.e., rectangular flashing beacons) the Public Service already has a plan in place to add low-mounted flashing beacons to this location to improve the visibility of the crosswalk.

The Public Service's engineers need to follow standards and the low-mounted beacons in addition to the lighted pedestrian crossing are the standard treatment for this location based on engineering analysis of the road geometry, traffic flow, etc.

The group discussion also has proposed adding a speed table or raised pedestrian crossing at this location. Such features are not typically included on higher volume corridors like Main Street. It was discussed that speed is a concern on Main Street, and adding a feature like a raised crosswalk would slow down traffic. This needs to be considered in more detail by the Public Service, which is in the process of reviewing speed limits in specific parts of Winnipeg, including this area as part of a review of speed limits near the downtown.

4. Wayfinding Arch Feature

Group discussion included the idea of installing a wayfinding/placemaking archway across Main Street at or near the pedestrian crossing. The archway would symbolize a welcoming aspect onto Main Street and Higgins Avenue as you enter or exit downtown, signifying to the community that everyone is welcomed.

- It was proposed that the archway could include the name "Hope Alley" in Indigenous syllabics.
- It was also proposed that the design incorporate the design element of seven eagle feathers which represents the seven sacred laws or teachings: Love, Respect, Honesty, Humility, Truth, Wisdom and Courage.
- It was also discussed and confirmed that because a name is being added to the streetscape, the Welcoming Winnipeg process must be applied for. At this time, the group was unsure who would apply for this, however, it was noted that the timeline would need to include approximately six to eight months to complete the review.

The Transit Master Plan was also commented on, as future rapid transit is proposed through this area. The community has indicated any stations in the area should be away from Thunderbird House and this area. The area Councillor suggested potentially that funding for future transit improvements could be leveraged to help with the installation of the archway.

5. Shared Street Design

There was discussion about redesigning the sidewalk and public right of way to make it all one level – at grade level – or shared street. The idea of installing thermal heating underneath the public right of way was discussed; it would warm up the space, together with the heated canopy.

6. Landscaping/Streetscape Design

The landscaping around the nearby Amowigamig (Public Washroom) was also discussed. It is the intent that the star blanket design that is inside the Thunderbird House is to continue outside to surround Amowigamig. The holistic approach and the teaching from an Indigenous Elder are to continue the star blanket design across the Main Street pedestrian crosswalk (or raised crosswalk) and across into Hope Alley. If the public right of way was to be redeveloped at grade level – it was discussed that we do not want to miss the opportunity to add the star blanket design into the upgraded streetscape / landscape of Hope Alley.

In addition to the above list of elements, additional features and considerations have also been proposed for consideration/inclusion in the project. While not detailed to the same level at this time, they are no less important.

Benches
Benches for the public, without "hostile architecture" features, are viewed as an important element of the upgrades to the Hope Alley location.

Emergency Callbox/Beacon
This is a pillar-type communications tool with lighting, similar to the type used on university campuses for use by members of the public when an emergency is taking place (e.g., in the case that Naloxone needs to be provided). Usually these have a two-way intercom feature and connect the public to assistance services, such as 911. In this location, potentially other services could be accessible (e.g., Bear Clan). Further discussion would need to take place to plan for, properly resource, and complete this element of the project.

Programming the space
Programming of the Hope Alley space would be a necessary ongoing part of the project, post-construction.

Ongoing Maintenance
It would be important to ensure the features were maintained and kept in an appropriate state of repair post-installation. Potentially area resources could "adopt" the features here and conduct some of the regular maintenance.