

Report to Council

Report Title:	Walkerton Business Improvement Area Potential Office Relocation		
Prepared By:	Fiona Hamilton, Clerk and Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services		
Department:	Clerk's		
Date:	September 22, 2020		
Report Number:	CLK2020-3X	File Number:	C11CL
Attachments:	N/A		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number CLK2020- Walkerton Business Improvement Area Potential Office Relocation, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Clerk and Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services for information purposes and approves in principle relocation the Walkerton Business Improvement Office to the lower level of the Walkerton Public Library Property pending further approval from the Walkerton Business Improvement Area Board of Directors.

Report:

Background:

At the meeting on September 8, 2020, Council received Report Number CLK2020-31 which outlined recommendations made by the Walkerton Business Improvement Area ("BIA") Board of Directors at the strategic planning meeting. Council directed staff to bring forward a report about the feasibility of relocating the BIA office to the lower level of the Walkerton Public Library (the "Library") as requested by the BIA Board of Directors.

Analysis:

Fiona Hamilton, Clerk, Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services, Lindsay Hill, BIA Manager and Tracey Knapp, Walkerton Library Branch Supervisor visited the lower level of the Library to determine whether it could be repurposes to suit the BIA office. The Library is currently in a highly visible downtown location. There is already a Walkerton Visitor Information Sign at that street corner. Although the space would be in the lower level, there is an elevator and push button doors making the space fully accessible. There are also public restrooms available adjacent to the space.

There are currently two main rooms in the lower level, the Seniors Hall which is regularly used for card games, etc. (a total of 211 times from 2019 until March of 2020) and the secondary room that is used for other purposes (a total of 107 bookings for 019 to March 2020). Community Living uses the secondary room for

meetings and there are also groups that use the space for gentle yoga (Monday evenings) preschool program and speciality programs operated by the library (March break etc. – 42 bookings) and about 12 other Brockton meeting (such as job interviews). The secondary space is used as the Santa Stop for the Santa Claus Parade and Shopper’s Night in the Spring and Fall – both events for which the BIA would already be involved. The secondary space is also used exclusively for the juried art show from May 3-June 19 annually.

It appears that the secondary room where the juried art show is held had at one time been framed to accommodate a room divider and there are two doors entering the space (as well as a fire exit). The proposal at this time would be to install a quality room divider with acoustical panels for a cost of approximately \$10,000.00 to \$13,500.00 to allow community groups to continue using the back part of this space where a pull down screen is located. The BIA Board could also use this space for its meetings as well. There is currently a number of large and heavy wood tables used in this space. Along with the room divider, the proposal would include purchasing new tables and furniture that could be easily moved and accommodate a number of uses of that space to better reflect the needs of those user groups. These costs would be researched and included in the 2021 Budget.

The front part of the room is still well lit and large enough to accommodate two large sized workstations. The walls and hallway entering the space could have shelving installed to accommodate the pamphlets and information booklets used by the BIA or as Brockton’s Visitor Information Centre. As there is also staff working at the library, this proposed location is much less isolated which would improve safety for BIA staff as well.

Although the annual juried art show may require some changes, the relocation of the BIA could still accommodate this use of the space as art could still be displayed in the other areas. There is also the potential that this even could receive greater attention and participation with a partnership with the BIA (promotion of come for dinner and stay for the art show, etc.).

The only drawback of lower level of the Walkerton Public Library is that the current space includes significant storage in the basement. Lindsay Hill, Manager of the BIA, suggested that many of the decorations and items stored in that space may not be necessary. Otherwise, these decorations could potentially be stored in the Greenock Works Shop or a separate storage unit could be rented as these items are largely seasonal and not used on a regular basis.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

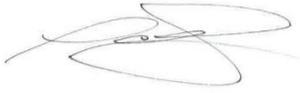
- Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? Yes

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

There is currently \$12,100.00 included in the 2020 BIA budget associated with rent and building maintenance. The expected costs to refurbish the Walkerton Public Library would be approximately \$10,000.00 - \$13,000.00 for the room divide, which would improve a municipal facility and improve service for businesses and residents. The yearly cost for the BIA would be approximately \$4200.00 as cost recovery to Brockton's Recreation Department for additional cleaning, etc.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Fiona Hamilton, Clerk



Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer