

**To: HM Commercial Group, City Staff, and City Councilors**

**From: Kelowna Legacy Group**

**Re: Civic Property at 350 Doyle Ave (former RCMP site), Kelowna, BC**

A group of concerned citizens are requesting that City Council not lease, or sell, the portion of civic land at 350 Doyle Ave. until a more extensive and current consultation can be carried out to develop a comprehensive plan for the entire area.

The existing Civic Precinct Plan did not include review of the two civic properties within the Kelowna Trust area (Simpson Covenant) and it is short-sighted to not look holistically at all four of these properties synergistically when planning future community space in this prime area. The subject property at 350 Doyle Ave. could be utilized, along with other city owned sites, to develop a world class performing arts centre, much needed community meeting space and required residential space, if future use of all of these properties is planned for comprehensively.

We urge that the decision on any of the proposals arising from your RFP for the former RCMP site be delayed for at least one year to allow the opportunity to review the use of these four civic areas (old police station site, existing community theatre, city hall parking lot and memorial arena site) with multiple stakeholder groups and with consideration of changing market conditions, the original principles of the precinct plan itself and the best use of these spaces to create world class community facilities for our community and its citizens.

The subject property at 350 Doyle Ave. is in the heart of our city and one of the few remaining civic properties near our waterfront. As illustrated in the attached video, which is conceptual in nature, all four civic properties could be developed, over time, to create an interconnected and well-designed community space that includes a performing arts centre, much needed meeting and community practice and recreation space and residential housing. A Public-Private Partnership (P3) arrangement similar to that used in the development of Prospera Place and the Okanagan Innovation Ctr. should be considered before this property is leased to a developer for 80 years and lost to the community.

We recognize the city had conducted public consultations, back in 2015/16 with respect to formulating the Civic Precinct Plan, but it was limited by the nature of excluding consideration for possible incorporation of the Community Trust lands, into an overarching vision for these legacy properties. With a grander vision, the Trust covenants could possibly be reconsidered, given the potential benefits to accrue to the community. Early discussions with the Simpson family indicate a willingness to consider a vision for a legacy project on these four properties including the two properties currently in the covenant area.

While we agree with the "Vision and Principles" embodied on page 6 of the Civic Precinct Plan, we feel these properties, as a whole, represent such an important legacy for the wider community, and that this one parcel should not be sold short of its full, "highest and best" civic use potential.

It is our opinion that this Civic Precinct Plan is now dated and that the assumptions and findings therein need to be reviewed in current light of changing economic and social conditions, such as the softening real estate market and the implementation of the BC Speculation Tax.

Furthermore, extensive residential condo development that has positively shifted the vacancy rates upwards, thus tempering demand for new developments.

Considering the numerous residential condo towers springing up in the downtown core, a projected demand/absorption study should be conducted as to potential saturation of the marketplace. Unfortunately, this data is not readily available to us, given the timelines imposed by the RFP process. This study should also look at additional services and infrastructure required for greater core density, ie; schools, grocery stores, etc.

The list price of the subject property, at \$6.5 million dollars, is not substantial, given the opportunity cost of losing usage of this legacy site. In addition, the proposed 6000 sq. feet of 'community space' proposed in the RFP is not substantial and in our opinion would not even serve the current needs, let alone the future needs, of our community.

In summary, we all wish our city to continue to evolve into a comfortable, affordable, and livable community; which would encompass a vibrant and inclusive arts, entertainment and cultural district. With a desire to formulate a more comprehensive vision for these legacy properties, we respectfully request that the 'Proposal for Sale' period for 350 Doyle Ave. be extended, for up to a year. This will allow for a wider public consultation process and an opportunity for conceptual development alternatives.

We regret we may not have submitted this request in a format that the City, or its agents specified, but due to timing and the fact that we are not making an offer on the site, we are hopeful your office will give it due consideration, as is. Please see our video highlighting our vision for this area at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/i0b5kojvvn5lpwd/Kelowna%20Legacy%20Concept%20-%202019.m p4?dl=0>

Respectfully submitted,

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