

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Regional Council  
Finance and Administration  
December 15, 2022

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services

## **Memorandum of Understanding 4902 Aurora Road, 29 and 31 Ballyview Court Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Council authorize the Commissioner of Corporate Services to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the Region and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville for the purpose of developing a joint-use York Region Paramedic Response Station and Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Station.
2. The Commissioner of Corporate Services be authorized to execute the Memorandum of Understanding and all necessary documents to complete the agreement.

### **2. Summary**

This report seeks Council approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (the Town) regarding lands to be acquired by the Town for the development of a joint-use Paramedic Response Station and Fire Station. The lands are identified as Properties No. 1, 2 and 3 in Attachment 1 and are referred to jointly as the subject property in this report. The location of the subject property is shown on the map in Attachment 2.

Private Attachment 1 to this report will be considered in private session pursuant to section 239(2)(c) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as it relates to the Region's financial contribution to the acquisition of land by the Town.

#### Key Points:

- Ballantrae is currently serviced by one paramedic staff equipped with an SUV (a Rapid Response Unit) operating out of the local fire station, with no ambulances kept on site
- The Region's Paramedic Services Master Plan 2021-2031 states that to optimize resources, future paramedic stations should consider co-location opportunities
- The proposed location is well suited to meet response time targets and optimize resources by co-locating with the Town

- The MOU will facilitate the Region's financial contribution and other obligations regarding the proposed joint-use facility

### **3. Background**

#### **The 2021 – 2031 Paramedic Services Master Plan identifies optimal Paramedic Response Station locations**

In [June 2022](#), Council approved the updated Paramedic Services Master Plan, 2021 to 2031 (the Master Plan) which replaced the original Master Plan approved by Council in [September 2012](#). The Region created the Master Plan in response to increasing demand for paramedic services. It allocated personnel, vehicles, and stations for the Region to maintain service levels and meet performance time standards.

The original Master Plan completed in 2012 identified Ballantrae as a location for a new growth-related Paramedic Response Station to service the community of Ballantrae and the surrounding rural area in Whitchurch-Stouffville. The suitability of this location was confirmed in the 2021-2031 update.

#### **The Master Plan identified the need for a Paramedic Response Station to service the community of Ballantrae and the surrounding rural area in Whitchurch-Stouffville**

The Master Plan identified an area in the vicinity of Aurora Road and Highway 48, extending south to Vandorf Sideroad and north to Ballantrae Road, as the preferred location for a new growth-related Paramedic Response Station.

Ballantrae is primarily a residential community with a mix of estate homes and a large condominium development of freestanding homes. There are some local commercial uses along Aurora Road and Highway 48.

Development of a new station in this area is required to meet legislated and Council-approved response time targets.

#### **The existing facility no longer meets the needs of fire and paramedic services**

The Region leases space in the Town-owned fire station at 15400 Highway 48 in Ballantrae. The leased space facilitates one paramedic staff and a vehicle to service the area. No ambulances are kept on site, and the paramedic space in the existing building is insufficient to support the required ambulance services needed for the area.

The existing facility is an older building that requires significant capital investment to continue operating.

The Town's Fire and Emergency Services has determined that the optimal location for a new facility is to the south and west of the existing facility, and the Region has been searching for

a location along Highway 48 in the vicinity for a site large enough to facilitate a two-bay paramedic services development.

Given that both the Region and Town are interested in relocating, the parties considered the joint development of a paramedic/fire station as a relocation option.

### **The property search considered sites in the vicinity of Aurora Road**

The Region and Town agreed to address a need to find a location that satisfies the requirements of both parties as defined in the respective Master Plans. Prospective locations were identified in the vicinity of Aurora Road west of Highway 48 to McCowan Road. The developable lands in this area are substantially built out with small acreage residential dwellings and urban residential subdivisions. There are few suitable vacant sites available for sale in the area.

### **A suitable location has been identified**

After an extensive search, as well as researching and analyzing existing Region-owned properties in the area, the subject lands were determined to be the most suitable available for the Region's paramedic response and the Town's fire station needs. Based on appraisals commissioned by the Region, the Town proceeded with negotiating the acquisition of the lands.

Town staff successfully negotiated the purchase price with the property owner, and an Agreement of Purchase and Sale between the two parties has been executed.

## **4. Analysis**

### **The subject land has frontage and access to Aurora Road**

The subject land is composed of three adjoining parcels totalling 3.46 acres, located on the north side of Aurora Road west of Highway 48. The land has direct access to Aurora Road, is approximately one kilometre west of Highway 48 and approximately 1.5 kilometres southwest of the existing fire station.

The Town owns an undeveloped portion of the cul-de-sac that terminates on Ballyview Court. As part of the development process, this portion of land is intended to be incorporated into the subject site. This will make the site rectangular in shape and will increase the total site area to 3.8 acres.

### **A Memorandum of Understanding was developed to be executed by the Region and the Town**

To facilitate the proposed joint-use development, the Town and the Region have agreed to enter into an MOU that addresses the respective responsibilities and financial commitments of the parties.

The key terms of the MOU are as follows:

- The Town will acquire the land and remain as the registered owner
- The Region will contribute its proportionate share of land acquisition and building construction costs
- The Region will forward 25 percent of the purchase price, plus land transfer tax, to the Town prior to the acquisition of the lands as the Region's contribution to the purchase price for the lands
- The Region's contribution to the purchase price of the land will be adjusted upon confirmation of its proportionate share of the facility, which is expected to be determined at the 30 percent design stage
- The Town will manage the development and construction process for the project, with the Region providing input into the design and development
- The parties will enter into a Lease Agreement for 49 years with an annual rent of \$2.00, to facilitate the Region's occupancy of its share of the premises
- At the end of the lease, or if at any time during the lease the Town proposes to sell the property, the Region will have a right to acquire it at a price reduced to reflect its initial investment, or to receive its proportionate share of the market value upon disposition

Since the Region will fund its proportionate share of the Town's property acquisition, two independent appraisals were completed to determine compensation in accordance with the Region's Corporate Land Acquisition Policy. The acquisition by the Town is expected to close in early 2023.

### **Environmental due diligence is being completed**

In accordance with the conditions of the Agreement of Purchase and Sale for the land, an environmental site investigation is being undertaken by the Town. The investigation is taking place within a 60-day due diligence period. Once completed, the study will outline any potential environmental issues identified with the land. In the event environmental impacts are identified, Staff will take the necessary steps to minimize the Region's exposure to environmental risk and liability and may report to Council with recommendations depending on the nature and extent of the impacts.

## **5. Financial**

The funding for the Region's portion of the land acquisition is included in the approved Paramedic Services 2022 Capital Budget.

## 6. Local Impact

Construction of a Paramedic Response Station on this site will enable Paramedic Services to better meet the increasing needs for service in the Ballantrae area and help ensure optimal response time. In addition, the joint-use facility provides an opportunity for both the Region and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to collaboratively facilitate its first responder needs from a single location.

## 7. Conclusion

After an extensive search, the Region and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville identified a suitable parcel of land, and the Town negotiated an Agreement of Purchase and Sale for three contiguous properties on which a joint fire and paramedic services facility is planned. The properties are located on Aurora Road, approximately one kilometer west of Highway 48 in the community of Ballantrae, which meets station location requirements as stipulated in the 2022 - 2031 Paramedic Services Master Plan. The Region and the Town have negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding that will, among other things, define the Region's financial contribution towards the shared facility, as well as a long-term lease of the Region's portion of the facility.

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For more information on this report, please contact Michael Shatil, Director, Property Services at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71684. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



**Dino Basso**

Commissioner of Corporate Services

Approved for Submission:



**Bruce Macgregor**

Chief Administrative Officer

December 2, 2022

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Attachment 1 – Property Schedule

Attachment 2 – Map

Private Attachment 1