

Geneva Street property on the market for affordable-housing development

Dec. 10, 2020 — The former home of the City’s Community, Recreation and Culture Services department, will be the future home of residents seeking an affordable place to live.

After being declared surplus by the City, the property at 320 Geneva St. was listed for sale this week. The 3.9-acre property is currently occupied by a 9,358-square-foot building that until recently housed Community, Recreation and Culture Services (CRCS) administrative offices and vehicle bays. With CRCS administration moving downtown, and the recent consolidation of parks and horticulture operations into Municipal Works at the Lake Street Service Centre the land was able to be declared surplus by City Council, providing the opportunity to sell the property.

As part of the sale the City has attached one important caveat; that any sale includes a stipulation that the property be sold at fair market value, provided a prospective developer commit to affordable housing for the site.

Specifically, any buyer will be required to develop the medium-density residential property with an even three-way split of housing, consisting of:

- one third affordable housing that is rented / sold at 80 per cent of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation average market rates;
- one third social housing that allows for government subsidies to provide lower cost rental units to households with low-to-moderate incomes; and
- one third market rate housing.

“St. Catharines is facing an unprecedented increase in the cost of housing that is dramatically impacting the affordability for our residents,” said Mayor Walter Sendzik, adding, “as a City, we have shown real leadership in addressing issues around housing affordability, and the Geneva Street property will be another significant contribution towards our collective efforts in building an inclusive and livable city for everyone.”

The property is listed for sale at roughly \$2 million. To handle the sale the City has retained CBRE Limited.

The sale of the property is not the only City effort to drive affordable housing development. Recent site-specific, zoning by-law amendments, have allowed affordable housing developments, such as that at 268 Oakdale Ave., to move forward. Additionally, the newly introduced 2020 Community Improvement Plan will further incentivize affordable housing developments across the City.

-30-

Contact:

Walter Sendzik
Mayor
mayor@stcatharines.ca

David Oakes
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
doakes@stcatharines.ca