



News Release
March 29, 2021

Town Council Accepts Offer to Purchase One Acre of Surplus Land

Acceptance of Purchase Offer is Conditional on Completion of Sale and Construction Agreement

(March 29, 2021 – Ponoka, Alberta) – Ponoka Town Council passed a motion at its regular meeting last week on March 23 confirming its intent to sell one acre of surplus land located just south of the Ponoka Drop-In Centre (Block 1, Plan 862 1472 – 5015 46 Avenue). In accordance with the Town’s Land Disposition Policy, Council conditionally accepted an offer for the one-acre parcel of land in the amount of \$100,000 from 2313895 Alberta Ltd., with the purchaser required to cover the costs associated with moving the cenotaph located on that land.

The sale of the one-acre parcel of land is conditional on the execution of a sale and construction agreement between the Town and 2313895 Alberta Ltd. That agreement will outline a process and requirements that the purchaser must fulfill before the sale can be completed. The agreement, which is being prepared by the Town’s solicitor, will be reviewed by the Town and the purchaser, and then brought back to Council for endorsement.

The Town received formal interest in purchasing the property in July 2020. In accordance with the Town’s Land Disposition Policy and the Municipal Government Act (MGA), the process followed by the Town to date has included:

- Declaring a 1.5 acre, southerly portion of Block 1, Plan 862 1472 to be surplus land in September 2020;
- Establishing a sale price of \$225,000 for 1.5 acres (which is equal to \$150,000 for one acre) based on an appraisal by a qualified appraiser;
- Receiving an offer in February 2021 to purchase one acre of the surplus land which included the following two options to purchase:
 - a. \$100,000 for one acre and the developer covers the costs associated with moving the cenotaph;
 - or
 - b. \$150,000 for one acre and the Town covers the costs associated with moving the cenotaph;
- Advertising the sale of the property, including the proposed motion that was considered by Council last week, for at least two weeks prior to the Council meeting at which the motion would be considered. An ad was run in the Ponoka News on March 3, 10 and 17, 2021.

A Tough Decision

After listening and giving careful consideration to written and spoken statements from local citizens, both in favour and opposed to the proposed land sale, Council voted in favour of the resolution to conditionally accept the offer. “This was a tough decision for Council,” said Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett. “Council voted in favour of it because our community needs new development that will bring in new tax dollars and increase our assessment base to help cover the ongoing cost of infrastructure maintenance and replacement. The latest provincial budget showed us that the government is shouldering an \$18 billion deficit, and our provincial grant funding is being cut by 25 per cent. That’s likely just the beginning of the tough times that lay ahead,” he said.



Ponoka Continues to Expand Parks and Trails

The conditional land sale is for one acre of the 1.5 acres that Council had declared surplus, leaving remaining land that can continue to be used as park space going forward, said Mayor Bonnett. The 1.5 acres is zoned for Institutional and Public Uses (IPU). “Growth and development is what makes towns thrive and become better able to create new quality of life improvements for their citizens,” said Mayor Bonnett. He noted the Town continues to expand and enhance its parks and trails system. As examples, he pointed to the enhancements being made to the Tractor Park in downtown Ponoka, the newly redesigned Central Park near the downtown, and the new one-acre Old Hospital Rotary Park near the Ponoka Civic Centre.

“The Town is also in the early stages of developing a new design for Ponoka’s skateboard park that would see it potentially expand into the space where the former recycling depot is located downtown. The Town is also in the early stages of designing a new civic square on the old Town Hall site which would incorporate empty lots adjacent to that site,” said Mayor Bonnett.

Electors May Petition

Pursuant to Section 231 of the MGA, electors may submit a petition with respect to Council’s resolution on the sale of the one-acre portion of Block 1, Plan 862 1472 – 5015 46 Avenue. If a sufficient petition is received, Council must either resolve not to proceed with the proposed resolution, or submit it to a vote of electors within 90 days after the Chief Administrative Officer determines the petition to be sufficient. If a sufficient petition is received, Council’s motion to sell the land will be rescinded. If a sufficient petition is not received, Council can proceed with the conditional land sale.

Detailed instructions on how to complete a valid petition are available at <https://www.alberta.ca/petition-information-for-electors.aspx> or contact the Town Office for a copy of ‘Petition to Council: Information for Albertans, Elected Officials and Municipal Officers’. Petitions may be received until 1 p.m. on May 18, 2021 at the Town Office: 200, 5604-50 Street, Ponoka, Alberta, T4J 1G5.

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