



VILLE DE - TOWN OF GRAVELBOURG

Finance and Administration

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Economic Development Office
Date: April 25th, 2018
Subject: Gravelbourg Convent Project Update

Options:

n/a

Background:

Since 2012, the Friends of the Gravelbourg Convent have been hard at work finding a suitable reuse for the Convent, but when the Town of Gravelbourg acquired the building from Prairie South School Division in 2016, the project was finally able to move forward at a faster pace.

FGC would like to reiterate the support from Town Council regarding the Convent, without their financial support to proceed with the feasibility studies, in addition with the upkeep of the building (heating, small repairs, daily walk-through), the building would have probably fallen into disrepair, leaving the Town with the only costly option of demolishing the building, a cost that can easily go up to \$4 million, in addition to the loss of an important heritage asset for our community.

Discussion:

The option selected by FGC is to refurbish the convent in an assisted-living housing facility where seniors can age-in-place and adjust the level of service they want according to their needs (i.e. laundry, housekeeping). The housing units would include a mix of bachelor studios, 1- and 2-bedroom suites. There would be a large amount of common spaces to the residents and space accessible to the community as well.

We received from our consultant the cost estimate and the financial modeling. The building structure is sound, but the building would require a lot of updates to be up to code and turned into a housing facility. After going over the financial modeling exhaustively with our consultant, FGC feels confident that the project has the potential to move forward, and we are doing so by proceeding with the preparation of the business plan.

The cost for Adaptive Re-Use of the Building is less the cost of a greenfield construction of a similar sized new building.

Financial Implications:

n/a

Attachments:

n/a

Conclusion:

The Re-use of the Convent is a large-scale project that requires support from the Town of Gravelbourg to raise awareness to the inaction costs. Some costs are easier to explain, like de demolition costs, but some it is harder to put a price tag on heritage value. The re-purposing of the building is also a great opportunity to increase economic activity with the Town, with a greater demand for goods and services from local businesses in addition to jobs created for the administration and up-keep of the building. Perhaps, an important cost to consider is the cost of losing this building is the opportunity cost.

Respectfully submitted,



Isabelle Blanchard, Economic Development Officer