

# **BRIEFING REPORT TO LOCAL ROTARY/ROTORACT CLUBS – ‘ROTARY COMMONS’ PROJECT**

**December, 2015**

## **1. Purpose of this Briefing Report**

- **To bring Clubs/Directors up to date on this major fundraising and community project**
- **To report on actions taken to date**
- **To chart a path forward as this project continues through various phases of development**

## **2. Background**

- Several years ago, the Community Waterfront Friends (CWF) approached each of our Clubs to be part of their original vision with both Rotary Clubs electing to spearhead various elements of that vision, namely a splash pad and a children's safety village.
- Once the overall CWF vision was shut down due to lack of a sustainable business plan, both Rotary Clubs got together to focus on funding a Splash Pad. Subsequent meetings with both City officials, Heritage North, CWF & Heritage Gardeners.
- These meetings convinced the Joint Committee that Rotary needed to change their focus and act as a catalyst for more encompassing vision that, if successful, could ensure a Rotary ‘legacy’ for our community.
- The area of focus for our Clubs was originally to be located on portions of the former Railway lands, one parcel located along the extension of Wyld St. and a second located west of the pedestrian walkway between the former CPR Station and the CPR mainline **(see Figure 1)**.

- At the time, both Rotary Clubs made an initial commitment of approximately \$125,000 each for their respective ‘pieces’ to this project.

### **3. Actions Taken by the Joint Committee to Date**

- Regular meetings of the Committee itself
- Regular meetings with City staff and other officials
- Initial discussions with representatives from Shark Communications with respect to partnering on a potential Splash Pad project
- Initial ‘blue sky’ design session with other 16 other potential stakeholders (July, 2015)
- Formal request to be included as participant in City of North Bay urban design study for the Waterfront/Rail Lands/Downtown (October, 2015) and inclusion in the RFP to be awarded by the City (November, 2015)

### **4. What Appears to Have Changed Since Project Inception**

- Scope of project in the minds of the broader community (i.e., including Waterfront as well as former Railway lands, and how both will integrate with the adjacent Downtown area)
- Possible shift in site location for Rotary Clubs
- Possible shift in scale (from a ‘local elements’ to a possible ‘large scale signature/legacy development’ on the Waterfront/Railway lands with Rotary Clubs as catalyst – something along the lines of a ‘Rotary Commons’ with elements contributed by others)
- Will allow us to get the Rotary ‘brand’ attached to a high-profile community project again (similar to North Bay Aquatic Centre, Children’s treatment Centre, Hospital, etc.) and well-known Rotary landmarks (such as the Rotary Waterfront Kiosk, Totem Pole at former Tourist Information site).

### **5. A Preliminary Overall Vision for the ‘Rotary Commons’**

- The following are some visual illustrations of what elements we could try to include from other locations both near and far:
- Entry features to the ‘Commons’ (**see Figures 2 and 3**);
- Adoption of ‘Universal Design’ principles to ensure greatest possible usage (**see Figure 4**);

- Use of water features throughout the site, whether for ornamental use (fountains) or 4-season use (sinuous pool/skating oval) (**see Figures 5 and 6**);
- Wayfinding and signage which will allow for incorporation of the 'Rotary Commons' 'brand' (**see Figure 7**);
- Active Recreation facilities for children (**Figures 8 and 9**) or adults (**Figure 10**);
- Visual art, sculpture and other creative spaces (**see Figure 11**);
- Other permanent or temporary places and spaces that can be used for multiple purposes (including commercial rentals of space/shelters/buildings);
- Places and spaces which celebrate our collective histories and cultures.

## **5. The Joint Committee's Recommendations about the Way Ahead on this Project**

- Stay the course (this project is taking longer than originally thought and the RFP will take another 10 months);
- Earliest possible date to get 'shovels in the ground' for a possible Rotary project: Q4, 2017;
- We ask that both Clubs maintain the funds allocated for these projects and be prepared to consider an even larger financial commitment when the City-sponsored Study is completed;
- The next Briefing Report from the Joint Planning Committee will be given upon completion of the Urban Design Study (scheduled for October, 2016).

Submitted by,

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## **Appendix – Index to Figures/Illustrations**

Figure 1 – illustration of CWF Master Plan (circa 2006)

Figures 2 & 3 – Typical Entry Features (Goderich, ON and Chicago, USA)

Figure 4 – Universal Design concept (Chicago)

Figures 5 & 6 - Water Features (Dongting Lake Park, CHINA)

Figure 7 – Wayfinding/Signage (Chicago)

Figures 8 & 9 – Children’s Trail, Children’s Splash Pad (Chicago)

Figure 10 – Climbing Wall (Chicago)

Figure 11 - Sculpture (Chicago)



**Figure 1 - CWF Plan**





**Figure 2 - Rotary Park, Goderich, Ontario**



**Figure 3 - Chicago Park Entry Feature**





**Figure 4 - Chicago Design Principles**





**Figure 5 - Water Features, Dongting Lake Park, China**



**Figure 6 - Water Features, Dongting Lake Park, China**

Briefing Report – Rotary Commons Joint Planning Committee (December, 2015)



**Figure 7 - Wayfinding/Signage, Chicago**





**Figure 8 - Children's Trail, Chicago**





**Figure 9 - Children's Splash Pad, Chicago**



**Figure 10 - Climbing Wall, Chicago**





**Figure 11 - Sculpture, Chicago**