

Alberta Thai Association

Thai Centre Update September 2016

Project Background:

To date, the partnership consisting of Alberta Thai Association (ATA), Prince Rupert Community League (PRCL) and Terra Centre have completed the first two of four phases of the Aurora Place project and 70% of the third phase.

The four phases are:

- 1 - Planning**
- 2 - Financing**
- 3 - Design**
- 4 - Construction of building**

Planning: Development of bylaws for the partnership (collectively known as the Tower Roads Connection Society), memorandum of understanding (MOU), community agreement, formation of governance agreement, business case for city approval, public consultations, preliminary designs, cash flow projections, and engineering plans have been completed.

Financing: The province and city have provided approximately \$2.9 million in grants to-date and another \$2.5 million in the process of being applied for (through the City of Edmonton). Terra is in the midst of fundraising \$3.8 million. Respectively, PRCL and ATA have \$600,000 and \$200,000 on hand. Partners have incurred nearly \$700,000 in costs so far and ATA for its part is committed to rolling out about \$30,000 to \$40,000 over the first three phases. The remainder of our commitment, \$170,000, is to be rolled out in Phase 4 – construction.

Design: The current design will have the ability to entertain up to 200 guests. The ATA will have a commercial kitchen and its own sizable office.

Construction: The construction documents, the partner business case, and the permits are currently in submission stage to the City. The construction is expected to start in the Fall of 2017 or Spring of 2018. Completion date is scheduled for September 2018. The official opening and occupancy will follow shortly thereafter.

Project Update

The partnership recently encountered an unanticipated and critical decision making point that impacts all of the partners.

PRCL and its community have brought forward concerns as well as voicing some opposition to moving ahead with the project. Their concerns are largely related to how the size of the building may impact their community green space, including their pre-existing playground, i.e., the footprint of the one-story building and the amount of space allocated to parking is of concern.

The partners have since re-grouped to address PRCL's concerns. As part of this endeavour, the project architects, Manasc Isaac (MIA), have been asked to revisit a two-story design (which would

shrink the footprint of the facility thereby alleviating PRCL's concerns regarding facility size). As well, the partners will be carrying out a well-organized "house to house" survey in September to see what its community folks are saying and why there is opposition to the project this far in to the process whereas an earlier consultation carried out by PRCL to the majority of the residents showed community support of this project.

The City of Edmonton has offered their full support to the partnership during this project pause; they have granted the project monies to allow the partnership to proceed in this direction thereby assuming the financial risk of MIA's design costs (approximately \$14,000). Additionally, we have City resources helping to guide this process, including the City of Edmonton project manager (who usually doesn't come on board these partnership projects until construction phase is reached) as well as the community recreation coordinator (CRC) who originally started this project with us and saw us through the planning stage.

On October 12th, the partners are holding an "Open House" to provide more detailed information on the partners and the project as well as to provide feedback from the door-to-door consultation and provide answers to questions heard from the residents. In early November, PRCL community at large will play a major role in determining the future of Aurora Place as they will vote on whether they want to stay in the partnership or not, or may present the partners with alternatives.

ATA's Position

The ATA has kept a low profile throughout these recent discussions. However, from our perspective, we the ATA, being an equal partner, are still committed to the realization of the project and are continuing to work with both our partners to facilitate PRCL's quick resolution of the issues within their community. The ATA requirements are incorporated in the current one-story design, however, should a revised design be brought forward at some point in the future, our functional requirements will remain firm.

Open House Invitation to Members of the Thai Community

PRCL, Terra, and ATA will be hosting an Open House on October 12th at the Central Lions Recreation Centre to provide more detailed information on the Partners and the project. Please consider attending to learn more about the future home of the Alberta Thai Association.

Refreshments will be provided!

When: Wednesday October 12, 2016 from 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Where: Room 12 at the Central Lions Recreation Centre 11113 113 St NW, Edmonton, AB T5G 0E9. Please access using the north doors off 113 Street. ■