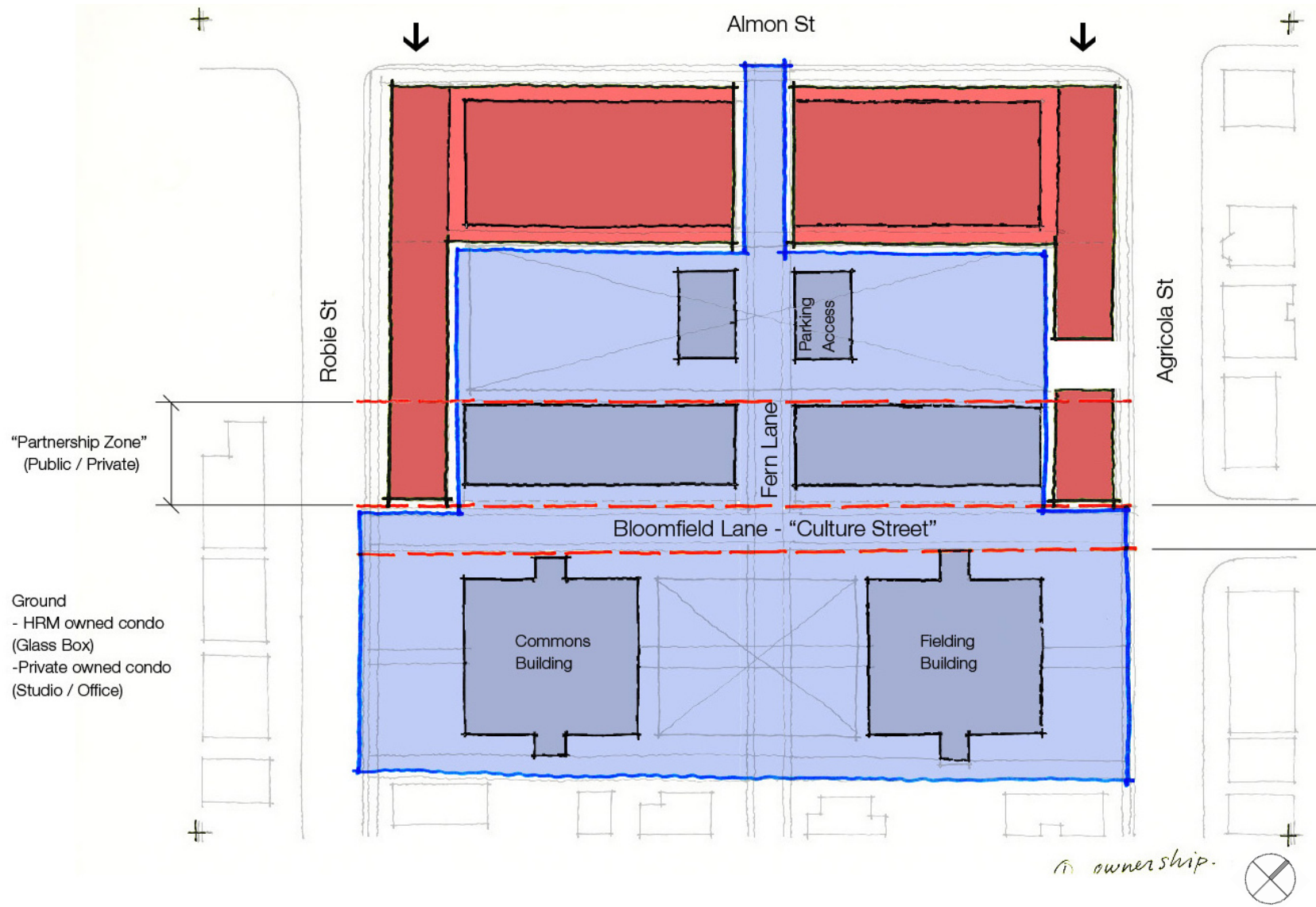


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### 5.1 Introduction

It is clear that community needs, HRM commitment and political will intersect at the present moment for a new and revitalized Bloomfield. The time for action is now. One clear conclusion of the Master Plan study is that true public space and community amenities are inextricably linked to robust market development and strong public/private partnership.

What this means for implementation is clear: the regulatory framework must be in place; the multiple community and HRM initiatives must be aligned; the appropriate development teams must be selected; and the next phase must begin immediately, as the process moving forward is a lengthy one. The following recommendations are made in support of these goals.

Diagram illustrating potential Bloomfield Site Ownership - HRM-Owned areas are shown in BLUE and developer-owned areas are shown in RED

## 5.2 Planning Recommendations

The current zoning on the site does not allow for the type of mixed-use development proposed for the Bloomfield site. The form-based approach selected for the Bloomfield Master Plan is in fact antithetical to the current land-use-based zoning. Careful consideration must be given to the present regulatory realities and how they affect the proposed Master Plan.

Development agreements can be useful in promoting good design and respond well to particular site conditions, as they are judged on their merits. However, they can be perceived as risky by the development community.

The Planning Recommendations are as follows:

*5.2.1 That a recommendation be made to Regional Council, directing staff to initiate a planning process to: (a.) amend the Municipal Planning Strategy to adopt the key recommendations in the Master Plan with regard to the physical development of the site and its land uses and (b.) to enable such development to be considered by development agreement and to allow for additional public input*

*5.2.2 That the Bloomfield Master Plan Report be used as the guide for developing future planning policy and development conditions for the site*

*5.2.3 That the inclusion of affordable housing (including development of live/work housing and private-community sector partnerships) be addressed through the real estate contract and community partnerships in recognition of the limited powers under planning policy*

## 5.3 Site and Facility Programming and Development

A successful site and facility development strategy to implement the Master Plan will be key. This includes a successful partner-engagement process, and identifying priority actions that ensure the development maintains forward momentum.

Most project stakeholders recognize that alignment of public/private initiatives and complementary HRM and community programming is critical to success.

The Master Plan advocates a model in which HRM owns the facilities and the community operates the buildings and delivers programming. The exception is the opportunity for community ownership and programming of the Commons building. The guiding principle is one of entering into partnerships with community groups, arts and culture and private-sector partners to build and operate the Bloomfield site according

to several of HRM's policy objectives and strategic priorities, such as the Cultural Plan and the Regional Plan. HRM will, however, have some presence in the proposed Community Arts & Culture Centre by facilitating and managing successful operating partners and tenancy plans. HRM's role in delivering recreational or cultural programming from the facility will be minimal and will be determined through the future partnership and community management agreement. Arts and culture sector partners will be fostered for the program design and delivery for the proposed new facilities in alignment with the vision for the Bloomfield site.

The market portion of the development, which may be either long-term leased to, or outright-owned by, developers, shall be managed by them within the framework initiated by the Master Plan and built upon by the recommendations below. (See diagram on

facing page).

The Master Plan proposes a robust, flexible scheme, with a high-level program designed to satisfy known spatial requirements and ensure economic viability.

As parallel planning and site/facility programming initiatives are developed, a finer-grained programming exercise should be undertaken.

The Master Plan does not recommend a specific management model for the Bloomfield development with the exception of a Bloomfield Community Arts & Culture Centre that is HRM-owned and community operated. Whereas the proposed new arts and culture facilities will be HRM-owned, their operation model to be determined through future engagements with potential partners. A range of innovative and successful

partnership models has been identified for further study and consideration by various community groups and by the Design Team.

A successful mix of HRM-owned and market-driven development will ultimately result in a vibrant, mixed-use development and support for both community programs and quality green space.

It is therefore recommended:

*5.3.1 That an interdepartmental HRM team be established to lead the redevelopment process and ensure that Real Estate, Planning and Community Development mandates are coordinated throughout the implementation phases.*

*5.3.2 That HRM engage with potential community partners to further define the program and facility elements for the site and*

*to secure partners for the development and operation of facilities*

*5.3.3 That an updated condition assessment and capital-cost estimate be completed for the renovation of the Fielding and Commons buildings to reflect adaptive re-use opportunities and potential for green renovation.*

*5.3.4 That a detailed economic assessment and feasibility analysis be conducted following further engagement with community and arts and culture partners to update the cost-benefit assessment prior to development.*

*5.3.5 That an EOI process be initiated as a priority to establish Arts and culture space needs and priorities and to determine partner capacity among the arts and culture sector for facility development.*

*5.3.6 That a transition plan be developed to address closure of the Bloomfield gymnasium, considering existing and potential inventory to accommodate current and future gymnasium usage on the Peninsula, and in alignment with the HRM Community Facility Master Plan.*

*5.3.7 That, as a priority, HRM further research and investigation of community facility development and management models to explore best practices around multi-use-multi-tenant facilities, creative space development and affordable housing.*

*5.3.8 That the following list of management models be studied for their potential applicability to the proposed Bloomfield Master Plan scheme:*

- 1. Co-operative*
- 2. Not-for-profit facility ownership & management (Commons Building)*

- 3. Private sector – community sector development partnerships
- 4. Innovative affordable housing models
- 5. Co-housing

5.3.9 That a detailed cultural-spaces inventory and gap analysis for the Peninsula North area be completed as an implementation priority to assist in the evaluation of facility development proposals and selection of partners.

5.3.10 That further research be conducted to determine the market needs for affordable housing and the capacity of the non-profit sector to develop and deliver affordable housing on the site.

5.3.11 That multi-sector financing strategies and private-community sector partnerships be encouraged for development of community facilities and affordable housing

on the site.

5.3.12 That a community partner and developer selection process be carried out, including:

Stage 1: An expression-of-interest process to seek potential developer and community partners and capacity for the development and operation of the site

Stage 2: An Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select development and community partners, including detailed design and building of the site, residential and commercial space, renovation of the existing Fielding and Commons buildings, development of new arts and culture facilities, outdoor public space and amenity space, and programming and operation of community space.

5.3.13 That a programming strategy and business plan be developed in partnership with a community partner for the Bloomfield Community Arts & Culture Center (the Fielding Building), with the following development objectives:

1. An HRM-owned, community-operated model will be used for the operation and management of the facility including a tenancy plan for community operating partners and leased spaces.

2. An effective cost-recovery model for the long-term sustainable operation of community facilities and infrastructure

3. A minimal amount of HRM direct-delivery programming may operate from the facility and shall be in accordance with the community partnership and leasing agreement.

4. A designated amount of administrative space will be provided for community organizations that are aligned with the business plan and programming strategy, including any existing Bloomfield Centre tenants who have an agreement with the municipality for longer-term leasing.

## 5.4 Urban Design

A form-based approach to urban design was used to develop the proposed scheme; however, such an approach is antithetical to the current land-use standards applicable to the Bloomfield site. A comprehensive planning review is therefore recommended to occur in parallel.

We recommend:

*5.4.1 That mixed-use buildings be constructed with minimal setbacks along the entire perimeter of the site and along the two proposed new pedestrian streets.*

*5.4.2 That the allowable site density be modified to support the density required for generation of sufficient revenue to ensure the project's viability, support on-site amenities and create a large, public open space at the center of the Bloomfield site.*

*5.4.3 That the townhouses proposed for the Robie and Agricola edges are in keeping with the scale of the neighbourhood and provide for an accessible retail ground floor.*

*5.4.4 That the height of the buildings rise from south to north to allow maximum daylight penetration to the center of the site.*

*5.4.5 That streetscapes contribute to a lively, safe public realm, and support ongoing complementary HRM initiatives*

## 5.5 Project Phasing

Project phasing is ultimately contingent upon the final decision regarding site ownership (i.e., HRM-owned property versus privately owned or long-term leased property) and selection of the appropriate management model(s).

Assuming that quality public and community-use space is enabled by an appropriate amount of market development (an assumption borne out by the economic analysis and in line with community understanding and expectations), then private developers should build market-rate retail/office/housing and community-programming space simultaneously.

Remediation of the Fielding building should be part of the proposal for development services.

From a construction perspective, knowing that a single-level, below-grade parking

structure over most of the site is needed to address the proposed density's parking requirements, it makes sense to proceed with construction of the entire project at the same time. This requires demolition of the existing Bloomfield School, site preparation, construction of the parking garage, and construction of the residential/retail component to produce profits that will help fund community development and construction of community buildings. Heritage building remediation can be done in parallel and should begin at the outset to avoid further deterioration of the buildings. Therefore, the capacity and viability of the non-profit sector to assume the renovation and adaptive reuse of the Commons building should be determined early in the implementation process.

Alternatively, depending on the local labour force's capacity to construct about 300,000

square feet of new development, the project could occur in two main phases. As the Master Plan is symmetrical for all intents and purposes, the “Robie Half” of the development and the “Agricola Half” of the development could happen separately. Each half would contain the necessary mix of market and not-for-profit spaces to sustain the project upon completion.

Should there be a deficit of community programming space after construction of Phase I, short-term leasing arrangements could be made for some of the proposed retail and office spaces until Phase II is complete.

