

Memorandum to the Council of Corporation of the Municipality of Temagami

Subject: Train Station Rental Arrangements

Memo No: 2025-M-016

Date: January 9, 2025

Attachment: None

Prepared By: John Shymko - Economic Development Officer

Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Memo 2025-M-016, as presented;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approves relocating the Temagami Chamber of Commerce to the north side and designates the south side of the Historic Train Station for Living Temagami Arts and Culture;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council directs staff to monitor and report on the arrangement's effectiveness within one year.

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Executive Summary

The Historic Train Station houses Living Temagami Arts and Culture on the north side and the Chamber of Commerce on the south side, where the Information Centre operates. Following Council Resolution 24-418, discussions revealed that the Chamber provides consistent public access, while Living Temagami's volunteer-based model limits reliability. To balance operational needs and support both organizations, it is recommended to relocate the Chamber to the north side and Living Temagami to the south side, with Council approving the reallocation and monitoring its effectiveness over the next year.

Background

The Municipality leases the Historic Train Station to two key organizations: Living Temagami Arts and Culture occupies the north side, and the Chamber of Commerce operates the south side, which houses the Information Centre. Ensuring reliable public access to the Information Centre is a municipal priority.

Following Council's Resolution Number: 24-418, which directed staff to address issues raised by the Chamber's request to relocate, the Economic Development Officer was tasked with facilitating discussions due to their extensive experience working with both groups. Despite these efforts, the two organizations were unable to reach an agreement.

Consultation Process

To resolve the challenges of space allocation and accessibility, municipal staff facilitated a series of discussions and meetings between Living Temagami and the Chamber of Commerce. These efforts aimed to identify workable solutions while addressing the priorities of both organizations. The key milestones in this process are outlined below:

- **Initial Proposals:** The Chamber proposed relocating to the north side to enhance accessibility and operational efficiency (November 18, 2024). Living Temagami responded on December 9, 2024, committing to maintaining accessibility but relying on volunteer staffing.

- **Facilitated Meetings:** Facilitated discussions on November 21 and November 23, 2024, revealed shared goals but unresolved operational concerns. On December 8, 2024, Living Temagami’s Board reviewed their position.
- **Final Correspondence:** The Chamber reiterated their concerns on December 13, 2024, citing Living Temagami’s limited staffing reliability. Living Temagami declined further discussions and withheld requested Board contact information (December 17, 2024).
- **Final Meeting:** Staff met with Living Temagami on December 23, 2024, to review their plans and operational capabilities.

Findings and Analysis

The consultations revealed critical insights into operational and community considerations. The findings highlight the challenges and opportunities associated with space allocation at the Train Station:

- **Accessibility:** Living Temagami’s volunteer-based model limits consistent public access to the Information Centre, while the Chamber can ensure reliable access and regular hours.
- **Operational Viability:** The Chamber’s stable staffing aligns with municipal priorities for public service reliability. Living Temagami’s reliance on volunteers presents a risk to consistent operations.
- **Community Benefit:** Relocating the Chamber to the north side improves accessibility and enhances the Information Centre’s role in tourism and community engagement. Living Temagami can continue their arts and cultural programming from the south side.

Considerations for Council

Council is asked to consider the following recommendations regarding the allocation of space within the Historic Train Station:

- Approve the relocation of the Temagami Chamber of Commerce to the north side of the Train Station to ensure consistent public access to the Information Centre and enhance operational efficiency.
- Designate the south side of the Train Station for use by Living Temagami Arts and Culture to support their arts and cultural programming.
- Direct municipal staff to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement and present a follow-up report within one year to evaluate its alignment with community needs and organizational objectives.

Conclusion

The proposed reallocation of space ensures consistent public access to the Information Centre while supporting Living Temagami's cultural programming. This balanced solution addresses operational challenges, enhances community benefits, and aligns with municipal priorities. Monitoring the arrangement over the next year will ensure it continues to meet community needs.