

Date: August 15, 2017

Report To: Mayor & Council

From: Tyson Dennis, Chief Building Official/Municipal Planner

Re: **Residential Property Review and Future Residential Development Planning**

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As the members of Council will recall, on June 22, 2017 a report was given to Council providing information from other executive committees, Planning and Development Department as well as recommendations from Administration to move forward with Erin Crescent as the Town of Fort Frances's next residential subdivision.

Four recommendations were given to Council to consider at that time:

1. Erin Crescent will be the location of the next residential development
2. When developing Erin Crescent, consideration be given to having multi-residential lots being developed
3. Have the Planning and Development department schedule a public information meeting to determine the demand for residential lots starting at \$60 000.00, gain public reviews and suggestions on the project
4. At this time, defer the project to the 2018 capital budget process unless the outcome of a planned public information meeting shows interest in residential development prior to 2018 budget process.

A public information session was held at the Town Civic Centre Thursday July 27, 2017. The motive for this information session was to continue having information available to the public about residential development, have the public give the Administration their wants, needs and concerns, determine if Erin Crescent is the best place for the Town to move forward with a development and to keep the delivery of information transparent with the community.

The public information session brought out 11 Fort Frances resident to the Civic Centre for information. Of the 11 residents, all agreed Erin Crescent would very marketable and able to sell. 6 residents signed up showing interest, and wanting to be updated when the lots become available. The Administration also received emails and phone calls from individuals supporting the Erin Crescent subdivision, but were unable to make the public information session on July 27, 2017.

At the information session, the discussion of zoning the new subdivision R2 (multi-residential) was discussed. The option of allowing single family dwellings, duplexes, townhouses etc. was not accepted by the attendees. The want of keeping the area R1

(single family dwellings) was made clear to Administration. Residents asked if the Town would allow the purchase of Erin Crescent lots which would become deemed as one with adjacent properties allowing larger area for garages and back yards. Administration discussed the reasoning for Erin Crescent development, is to allow for more residential lots being available for purchase, increasing the tax base in Fort Frances and having an opportunity for future growth of Fort Frances.

The conversation of existing residents using the land known as Erin Crescent as a park concerned some residents as to where their children will play, and if the Town is going to put more greenspace in for parks/playlands. Administration will examine that concern once a decision is made on whether Erin Crescent is developed.

Overall, the public information session was a success! Administration gathered some great public input, determined some positive information as well as potential concerns which will be addressed during the development of Erin Crescent. It allowed the public to see The Town of Fort Frances is moving forward with new ideas, infrastructure and into the future rather, than staying in the past. The Town must move forward and plan opportunities for people to see Fort Frances as a first choice to make family roots and settle for the long term.

When the Town partnered with the Condominium project in 2003, the development was very controversial. An initial investment of \$387 768.40 was given towards the project. In approximately 5.5 years, the investment was returned and since 2009, the Town has been collecting taxes, water and sewer revenue to assist with operations and maintenance needs of the Town. The tax revenue in 2017 was Municipal tax \$122 555.91 and \$31 745.28 for water and sewer. The Town of Fort Frances collects a total of \$154 601.19 annually with assessment increasing yearly.

The Huffman Court Subdivision was another step toward long term financial gains but controversial issues surfaced with some opposition stating, "The Town should not be developing property." This would be true if private developers were coming to the area and building subdivisions, but we have not seen any private developments since the mid 1990's. The Town needs areas to develop, and with developed areas come options and opportunities for growth. The Town has an investment of \$271 334.91 in Huffman Court Subdivision. Based on the 16 lots, each having an assessment of \$300 000.00, the return of the investment is 3.35 years based on taxation. The Town of Fort Frances will collect an annual total of \$80 970.53 in taxes and \$14 912.64 for a total of \$95 883.17 annually with assessments increasing over the next four years.

To put this in perspective, 48 developed properties that the Town of Fort Frances has invested in, has a total return of \$250 434.36 annually.

If Erin Crescent is developed, the prospective return on 27 lots with an assessed value of each property at \$300 000.00, will be \$136 637.82 in taxes and \$25 165.08 for sewer and water. Total annual collection of taxes and services \$161 802.90.

With the information gathered since April of 2017 on the next residential subdivision in Fort Frances, the previous investments in the Condominium and Huffman Court projects, the Town should move forward with the next Residential Development of Erin Crescent.

At the regular Planning and Development Executive Committee and the Administrative and Finance Executive Committee meeting on August 8, 2017, the following recommendation was determined:

- 1 Tender the Erin Crescent Subdivision. Place the sewer and water in the ground fall of 2017, site services to be installed 2018 construction season and completion of curbing and paving the fall of 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed By

Tyson Dennis  
Chief Building Official/Municipal Planner

**Council approval of this report will:** will allow the tendering of the Erin Crescent Subdivision. Place the sewer and water in the ground fall of 2017, site services to be installed 2018 construction season and completion of curbing and paving the fall of 2018.