

**Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI):
Architectural Services for Site Planning and Design of the new Highlands Community Centre**

*Posted by the Highlands Community League, Edmonton, AB
April 2017*

The Highlands Community League (HCL) Board of Directors (the 'Board') has tasked the Highlands Facilities Renewal Committee (the 'HFRC') to Request Expressions of Interest (RFEI) for architectural services regarding the site planning, design and construction-services of a new community centre to replace the existing facility located at 6112 113 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB. *This RFEI is NOT a request for a proposal.* The intent of the RFEI is to select approximately three interested firms from the respondents to this RFEI, to submit proposals for architectural services related to the replacement of the Highlands Community Centre and siting of the same. The existing community centre and the associated community league uses are shown on the map of licensed land and structures contained in Appendix 1.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) stage marks the second stage in the process and is expected to be posted summer 2017. This RFEI contains several documents included as Appendices, which provide additional background for firms interested in this project.

About the Highlands Community League and the Highlands Community

Development in the area began during the 1911 land boom. With the exception of commercial and apartment development along 118 Avenue and in a few scattered locations, most homes are single-detached residences constructed during the years immediately following WWII. Over the years these homes, often built by returning veterans, have retained their simple and functional charm with current residents implementing their own creative flourishes and landscaping.

While it is considered a mature and established community, residential architectural styles vary from early 1900s to contemporary. The community is defined by several features: boulevards lined with mature trees, proximity to the river valley and a short commute from central Edmonton. An additional community pride is 'downtown Highlands' – a small business district along 112th Avenue that includes independent businesses and the historic La Boheme Bed and Breakfast.

The neighbourhood celebrates its residential gardens and many significant heritage resources. The Highlands Historical Society was established in 1988 to increase awareness about, and the preservation of, heritage resources within the neighbourhood, and many historic plaques are mounted on private residences as well as commercial buildings. Highlands endures as a close-knit place where people know their neighbours, watch out for each other and take pride in their history.

The Highlands Community League (HCL) is a non-profit society that operates within the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. Neighbourhood boundaries include: the south side of 118th Avenue, north of the N. Saskatchewan River, from the east side of 67th Street to the west side of 50th Street.

The league formed in 1921 and strives to provide for the recreation of its members and to promote opportunity for friendly, social, active and educational interactions of residents of all ages who live within the Highlands district boundaries. In 2021, HCL will celebrate its centennial, and this benchmark will factor prominently in community profiling and fundraising efforts.

According to the 2016 municipal census, more than 2,545 people call Highlands home. Residents of the adjacent communities of Montrose and Bellevue also use our programs and purchase memberships so HCL community programming can serve a combined population of over 3,500. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 contain additional population and demographic information.

HCL provides free or subsidized space for groups, clubs, programs and activities that appeal to all Highlands community members including year-round and seasonal activities. Some examples of current and historic activities and clubs include: children's playgroup, soccer, crafts and scrapbooking, yoga, monthly potlucks and pub nights, winter ice rink, canine obedience; lawn bowling, garden, bridge and music clubs. The league also sponsors its own events to encourage communal activities, such as a K-Day's Pancake Breakfast, Highlandia music festival, city-wide Community League Day event, and a Christmas potluck.

Highlands Park is a central gathering spot in the community. Located north of 112 Avenue at 62 Street, the park was revitalized in 2012 to mark the community's centennial. The park is adjacent to the HCL hall and serves as a venue for many of the above-noted events with attendance reaching upwards of 300+ on occasion. A new community centre will complement the park and serve as a dynamic and versatile central gathering place.

Project Background: The Existing Community Hall and the Commitment to Leave a Legacy

HCL facilities are situated on land leased from the City of Edmonton via a Tri-Partite Agreement held between HCL, the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. The existing community hall was built in the 1950s and has been used as the primary community hall since 2007, when the former hall was demolished. The site is bordered by Highlands Park to the south and Highlands Junior High School to the north. The property currently contains the hall, established lawn bowling greens and storage shed, storage garage, parking lot, defined rink area, non-functioning tennis courts, as well as a popular community garden (situated on the former site of the original building that was demolished in 2007).

The building that has been used as a community hall since 2007 has become increasingly difficult to maintain and no longer meets the accessibility and functional needs of the community. HCL is unable to offer a variety of recreational or programming opportunities to its membership and the community at large due to the restricted capacity of the existing building. Additionally, in December of 2009 and as mandated by the City of Edmonton, Williams Engineering Canada Inc. completed an assessment of the building. Their report concluded that the building would require extensive renovations in order to meet current facility health and safety standards, and to meet the program and accessibility needs of community users. The 2009 engineering report on the existing building is contained in Appendix 5. A 2014 report on hazardous materials contained within the building is found in Appendix 6. In response to both reports, the HCL Board of Directors accepted the recommendation of the HFRC to demolish and build new.

This building project may be a new and significant undertaking for the Highlands community, but it is not a new dream. Since the 1980s, community members have talked and worked on various building committees to move it one step closer to reality. Unfortunately though, progress has been stalled by a variety of challenges. Credit must be given to the many volunteer residents who have embraced this vision in previous years for they compiled the information that serves as the foundation for a new team of volunteers. In fact, in 2007 the previous group proceeded to the stage of demolishing the old (original) building due to safety and environmental concerns and even drafted preliminary drawings.

However, we are a reinvigorated community and our demographics continue to shift over time. The project was reinitiated by the HCL board in 2013 with the creation of the Highlands Facilities Renewal Committee (HFRC), an energized and committed team.

Mission Statement: The purpose of the Highlands Facilities Renewal Committee (HFRC) is to facilitate the design and construction of new community league facilities that will meet the ongoing needs of the Highlands community.

Vision Statement: To develop an inspiring community centre that is accessible, welcoming, engaging and sustainable for the entire Highlands community.

HFRC members have reviewed the successes and challenges encountered by previous boards and committees, and have also consulted with several other leagues that have undertaken building projects and share similar neighbourhood demographics. Despite having its own unique needs, HCL must still adhere to the City's procedural steps that will include neighbourhood surveys and consultations to evaluate and anticipate the community's current and future needs.

Incorporating Highlands' Community Values and Needs into the Project

The people who live in Highlands are a mixture of residents who have lived in the neighbourhood nearly all of their lives and new residents, often with young children, who are looking to live in a mature neighbourhood. It is a dynamic community that proudly boasts several multi-generational family residences.

Recent surveys confirm that the current community hall does not address the values of Highlands residents. Additional information on community attitudes was gleaned from participants in a project commissioning workshop who drafted a preliminary 'Owners Project Requirements' document. Specifically, the OPR identified energy efficiency, environmental and sustainability goals, multifunctional use, aesthetics, and adaptability for future changes or expansions. Key community concerns and other areas of focus include:

Accessibility: Many residents have chosen to age-in-place and some (especially seniors) are finding it challenging to climb the stairs to the second floor of the current hall to partake in activities.

Inclusivity & History: Creating a public space that can provide programming for a variety of user groups is important, as is an awareness and sensitivity to the neighbourhood's historic and eclectic architectural styles.

Sustainability: The new hall will be an investment over the long-term and spatial planning for the new hall should not create future limitations for use. The new building should consider the cost of future maintenance and utility costs in its design.

Environmental Stewardship: Highlanders are looking for an opportunity to implement thoughtful green building practices into the design of their new facilities and in the landscaping.

Neighbourliness: The new hall must provide a focal point for the entire neighbourhood.

Ideally, the project will also align with City's The Way Ahead strategic vision that includes The Way We Live, Move, Green, Grow, Prosper and Finance.

Project Description

The objective of the project is to demolish the building that has been used as the community hall since 2007 and build a new facility. The HCL Board motion to demolish the existing hall, based on HRFC's recommendations, permits the consideration of other potential locations for the new building within the larger one hectare site, should an alternate location prove to better meet the design, needs and functionality of the space. The siting of the building must be co-ordinated with the other uses on the same site and must be sensitive to the immediate environment including the adjacent park (located immediately south) and the school (located to the north) and surrounding residential streets.

The successful architectural firm will need to first reimagine the entirety of the community league's licensed land, including the new community hall, and then design the new community hall according to information collected by the HFRC and HCL and with meaningful engagement and input from the community and stakeholders throughout the process. Both the HRFC and HCL Board will provide ongoing guidance to the successful architectural firm.

The project is intended to meet the needs and values of the current community and provide the foundation for the growth and sustainability of the HCL for the next 100+ years. A renewal of the Highlands facilities will increase rental revenue and options for existing groups and clubs, making the site suitable for mixed uses, including social gatherings, meetings, and both indoor and outdoor recreational activities. This project is not only a replacement of the current building but is intended to be a centrepiece of the community.

Description of Work

Broadly, the overall project will require the following services:

- Initial Planning and Visioning discussions
- Needs assessment and public consultation
- Working directly with the HFRC and consultants and project managers hired by that committee
- Developing a Site masterplan, including the location of the new community hall
- Planning and design of the new community hall
- Community and stakeholder consultations
- Co-ordination with the City of Edmonton
- Application for permits
- Assistance with funding applications
- Demolition of the existing structure and associated ancillary uses
- New construction on the site
- Operational Commissioning and occupancy

Scope of Project

The building site is approximately one hectare and includes a lawn bowling green, rink (used for children's soccer in the summer), community garden and parking area. There is also an unusable tennis court area that is not expected to be replaced but is subject to community consultation including other ideas such as a

skateboard park or fenced dog park. Siting for the new facility is fluid and dependent on the preferred masterplan for the overall site, integrating the site with the surrounding area and other information that will be collected in the course of the work, including geotechnical tests.

The building's total size is approx. 3,600 square feet (338 m²); approx. 900 square feet (84 m²) on the 2nd storey is stripped to bare studs and used for storage only. The most frequently used space is the 2nd floor lounge, which has a capacity of 60 people. Community preference has been shown to favour a facility that has a marginal increase in size with a capacity of 100-150 in its main area, perhaps approximating 500m² on one or two levels (but no larger than 600m²).

Recent work has been conducted within the community to define the priorities of a new community hall. The results indicated that Highlands Community residents are looking for a new community hall that includes the following amenities:

- Kitchen
- Storage for groups that use the hall
- Outdoor covered area
- Flexible/transformable space for 60 persons to 120 persons
- Space for a variety of programming: exercise/sport, social gathering and education/craft
- Accessible for members with physical challenges, easy to maintain, incorporating sustainable/high efficiency design and construction
- Fitting into and appropriate to the neighbourhood of Highlands and the immediate setting of the residential area

More information on the documented needs of the community can be found in Appendices 7, 8 and 9.

Working with the Highlands Community League Board and the HFRC

The successful architect will have a direct contractual relationship with the HCL Board of Directors. To assist with this project, the Board will also be contracting separately with a project manager. Although not under a direct contractual relationship, the project manager and architect will be expected to collaborate effectively on the 'project'.

A key element of the project will be community consultation and engagement, an ability to work closely with the Board, the HFRC and City of Edmonton. The Board and HFRC consist of community volunteers and, as such, will need to be sensitively guided through the process of planning, constructing and commissioning a community building.

Additionally, the successful architect must provide guidance on how to successfully translate the community values and needs outlined above into a functional community space, meaningfully sited on the one hectare site.

Likely Key Dates for the Project include:

2017

April/May: Public call for RFEI

Early June: Present feedback and architect proposals at HCL AGM (June 06); Board to secure from its membership a clear Motion to proceed with the project; then RFP will be formally issued to pre-selected architectural firms

June/July: Hire the Architect (after RFP competition)
August/Sept: Community Workshop on the 'Project'
October/November: Community Engagement Session: Choosing the preferred plan
November/December: Board Approval of the Preferred Plan
2018 -- April: Application for Development and Building Permits
Winter 2019/20: Target construction of the new Community Hall

Potential Funding Streams:

CLIP Grant – municipal (applying for the maximum)
CFEP Grant – provincial (applying for the maximum)

Other funding sources:

- Current savings of approximately \$220,000 from HCL resources
- Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation
- Federal Accessibility (+ other) grants
- Green Building/Sustainability grants/partnerships
- Regularly anticipated Casino funds
- community fundraising (private and business)
- corporate sponsorship
- volunteer hours
- In-kind donations

Submission Details for an Expression of Interest

The main body of the Expression of Interest is to be no longer than eight (8) pages, with resumes and more detailed project information contained in Appendices. The main body of the submission must include the following information:

- 1) Introduction including Corporate Information: include the size and description of the firm, location of the office(s), familiarity with the area.
- 2) Project Team: the team members who would be included in a proposal, should the firm be shortlisted to receive a request for proposal.
- 3) Relevant Experience: Include summaries of projects that are similar. Include reference contact information for at least two projects.

In addition to the above noted: Submissions must be accompanied by an introductory letter, not counted as part of the main body of the submission.

Note: The introductory letter needs to include a range of cost estimation for both the building portion of the project and the re-development of the site.

The HCL Board recognizes that estimates can vary widely depending on amenities prioritized in subsequent community consultations. However, the Board wants to provide its members with a broad estimate at its June AGM to ensure it has the unconditional support of its membership in order to proceed with issuing an RFP and commence a targeted fundraising campaign as construction cannot begin until all funds are in place.

The selection of up to three architects at the end of this RFEI process will not be dependent on the range of possible costs provided in the introductory letter.

Evaluation of Submissions

The HFRC members will review the submissions and recommend a shortlist of architectural firms to the HCL board. Those firms will then be selected to respond to a Request For Proposal (RFP) and interview process. The submissions in response to the RFEI will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Project Understanding (Alignment of objectives with community and city needs and values)	30%
Project Team (Qualifications of key staff, including sub consultants)	30%
Relevant Experience (Similar size and type of project, previous experience working with community groups)	40%

Minimum Requirements

All architectural firms submitting expressions of interest must be registered with the Alberta Association of Architects and carry professional liability insurance. Any sub consultants included in the study team must have professional affiliations and licenses, as applicable. Proof of these requirements must be submitted with the expressions of interest.

The submissions are due **on or before Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 5:00pm.** All submissions must be emailed in PDF format to:

Susan Petrina, Chair, HFRC – susanwpetrina@gmail.com
Cell: 587-987-3728

Any questions regarding this RFEI must be addressed to Susan Petrina at susanwpetrina@gmail.com and copied to both:

- Ann Coffin at ann.coffin@yahoo.ca
- Audrey Hayward at ahayward2@shaw.ca

SITE TOUR

A site tour and walk-through will take place **Friday, April 28, 2017 from 1:00-2:00 pm.**

Contact Susan Petrina for more information.

APPENDICES

- 1) HCL map of licensed land and adjacent structures
- 2) City of Edmonton: Civic Census 2016 (Highlands)
- 3) City of Edmonton (visit this link for more info):
https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/neighbourhoods/highlands.aspx
- 4) City of Edmonton: Highlands Neighbourhood Profile (2010-11)
- 5) Williams Engineering Report (2009)
- 6) RH Services Hazardous Materials Assessment (2014)
- 7) HCL topographical and utility map
- 8) HCL Needs Assessment Survey (2014)
- 9) Highlands Assets – Lists from 2013, 2016
- 10) HCL OPR – Owners’ Project Requirements-Draft Guide, April 2017
- 11) Functional Program Workbook-draft 2017