



Update: Use of Shipping Containers at Lawrence Heights

Item 9E

May 4, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-39

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Acting Chief Operating Officer

Date: May 4, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation of a pilot program involving the use of shipping containers to meet community space needs in Lawrence Heights.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the TSC receive this report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

At its January 25, 2021 meeting, TSC requested that Management report back on the potential to provide shipping containers as a temporary measure to meet community space needs at Lawrence Heights.

BACKGROUND:

At Lawrence Heights, flexible program spaces have historically been provided by non-TCHC groups including the City (e.g. Lawrence Heights Community Centre), TDSB (e.g. Flemington Public School, Lawrence Heights Middle School, John Polanyi Collegiate Institute) and through local community groups. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these spaces are no longer available and programming is not permitted or is only permitted in limited capacity.

Although new permanent TCHC and City community spaces are anticipated to be introduced through the Phase 2 and 3 revitalization process, this report outlines the pilot program that aims to provide dedicated and flexible community spaces prior to the completion of the next phases of construction.

Community Priorities

As part of the Lawrence Heights Phase 2 and 3 planning process, the community is currently being consulted to confirm their priorities for revitalization. Based on tenant and community group outreach to date, preliminary use of space priorities for Lawrence Heights include:

1. Food security;
2. Community safety; and
3. Youth Programming.

Types of Space

A variety of spaces have been requested in Lawrence Heights, which include requests from tenants, partners, and City Council. Attachment 1 summarizes previously requested spaces and evaluates each space with respect to its appropriateness to accommodate a shipping container to meet space needs.

Site Options

Upon review of site options at Lawrence Heights, there are limited locations that can accommodate temporary structures due to the following criteria:

1. Site must be in proximity to an existing public washroom;
2. Site should be located in proximity to existing active public areas;
3. Site should have easy access to electrical services;
4. Site should have potential for hard surfaced outdoor space; and
5. Site should be close to TCHC Operations offices.

Based on the criteria above, two (2) preliminary sites have been identified:

1. Areas surrounding the new Hub space at the corner of Replin Road and Flemington Road; and
2. Areas surrounding the existing Lawrence Heights Community Centre.

Container Options & Costs

The temporary shipping container that has been selected for the pilot program provides small offices and program spaces up to 480 sq. ft. In addition, the cost impact of the six (6) month pilot program is estimated to be \$250,000. This is inclusive of costs associated with container acquisition, consultant fees, staffing costs, and operational expenses.

NEXT STEPS:

TCHC will proceed to implement a six (6) month pilot program that involves the provision of shipping containers to meet community space needs in Lawrence Heights. As a next step, the following actions will be taken:

1. Prepare a request for applications that engages community services providers to submit their interests to participate in the pilot project; and
2. Engage a consultant team to confirm the preferred site location and design, prepare submission materials, and secure permits.

SIGNATURES:

“John P. Angkaw”

John P. Angkaw
Acting Chief Operating Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Overview of Potential Spaces
2. Overview of Shipping Container Options and Costs

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Attachment 1: Overview of Potential Spaces

Types of space	Functional Uses	Existing spaces in community	Findings
Large scale multi-use spaces for programming	Larger spaces Storage Access outdoor space for overflow Access to washrooms, fully accessible and safe	Public Schools (closed during COVID) Lawrence Heights Community Centre (closed during COVID) 10 Old Meadow Community Space (closed due COVID/ Hub renovation)	Not ideal for shipping container use due to a limited to a maximum size of 320 sq.ft. (20’x40’) Existing multi-use spaces are available in the community Program sizes would need to be calibrated to meet maximum sizes
Dedicated single-use programming	Larger space Dedicated use Storage Access to washrooms, fully accessible and safe	Currently not available at Lawrence Heights (without cost)	Not ideal for shipping container use due to a limited to a maximum size of 320 sq.ft. (20’x40’). Existing multi-use spaces are available in the community Program sizes would need to be calibrated to meet maximum sizes.
Bookable meeting spaces and dedicated admin spaces	Spaces for small private meetings and /or private offices Access to washrooms, fully accessible and safe	Currently not available at Lawrence Heights (without cost)	Appropriate for shipping container uses.

Attachment 2: Overview of Shipping Container Options and Costs

TABLE 2.1 OVERVIEW OF SHIPPING CONTAINER OPTIONS

Shipping Containers Options	Timing / Availability	Quality of Space	Tenure	Cost
Option 1 Mobile Office	Immediate pending permits	Functional office space. Typically used for construction trailers etc. Utilitarian character	TCHC to Rent / own	Least expensive Rent - \$600 per month Own - \$20,000-\$37,000
Option 2 Office or Event Space (Unfinished or partial finished)	6-8 weeks pending permits	Moderate quality spaces with more natural light and an enhanced exterior treatment	TCHC owned	Moderately Expensive \$100-\$200 per sq.ft. Staff to pursue if rental option is available
Option 3 Container Building – Fully Fitted	Similar delivery timelines to new building construction	Highest quality space – similar style and cost to new construction	TCHC to own	Most Expensive \$200-\$300 per sq.ft Similar cost to typical new construction

For an understanding of comparative costs, the follow chart outlines a base cost estimate that includes providing three 8'x20' shipping containers for 6 months. All options include the cost of the space (rental or ownership), consulting costs (estimated at \$50,000), operational costs (estimated at \$58,300), and site works (estimated at \$25,000). The actually scale and ultimate cost for the pilot will vary to meet space and site requirements.

Detailed costs are recommended to be prepared by the consulting team once the site, program and scale is determined.

TABLE 2.2 COMPARATIVE COST OF CONTAINER OPTIONS

Shipping Containers Options	Building Costs + Site works and Consulting Fees	Staffing + Equipment	Total Estimated Costs* (N.I.C. contingency and insurance)	Assumptions and exclusions
Option 1 - Mobile Office	\$85,800	\$52,200	\$138,000	TCHC to rent containers****
Option 2 - Office or Event Space (Unfinished or partially finished)	\$174,000***	\$52,200	\$226,200**	TCHC to own containers****
Option 3 Container Building – Fully Fitted	\$219,000	\$52,200	\$271,200**	TCHC to own containers****

Notes

*Costs are provided for comparative purposes only.

**Where no rental options has been determined the purchase cost is used.

***Additional fit-out costs may be incurred.

**** Delivery and installation is not included.