Staff Report

Presented By: Jay Pausner, Manager, Planning and Development

Meeting Date: October 14, 2025

Subject: Bluewater Lands Proponent Selection

Attachment(s): February 26, 2024 Council Report

Recommendation

That Council approve Tim Welch Consulting Inc. as the selected proponent to design and construct the Town-owned Bluewater lands, located at 374 Bruce Street, Port Elgin.

Report Summary

The Town's Affordable Housing on Town-owned Lands Policy affords Saugeen Shores the ability to clearly and uniformly evaluate proposals for affordable housing on lands deemed appropriate by the Town. Following the adoption of the Policy, the Bluewater Lands were identified in 2024 to advance using the Policy. It is recommended that the consortium lead by Tim Welch Consulting Inc. be selected to undertake the housing and park development on the Town-owned lands located on Bruce Street, Port Elgin.

Background/Analysis

At the February 26, 2024 meeting, Council adopted the Affordable Housing on Town-owned Lands Policy (see attached Report which includes a sample flow chart for the process).

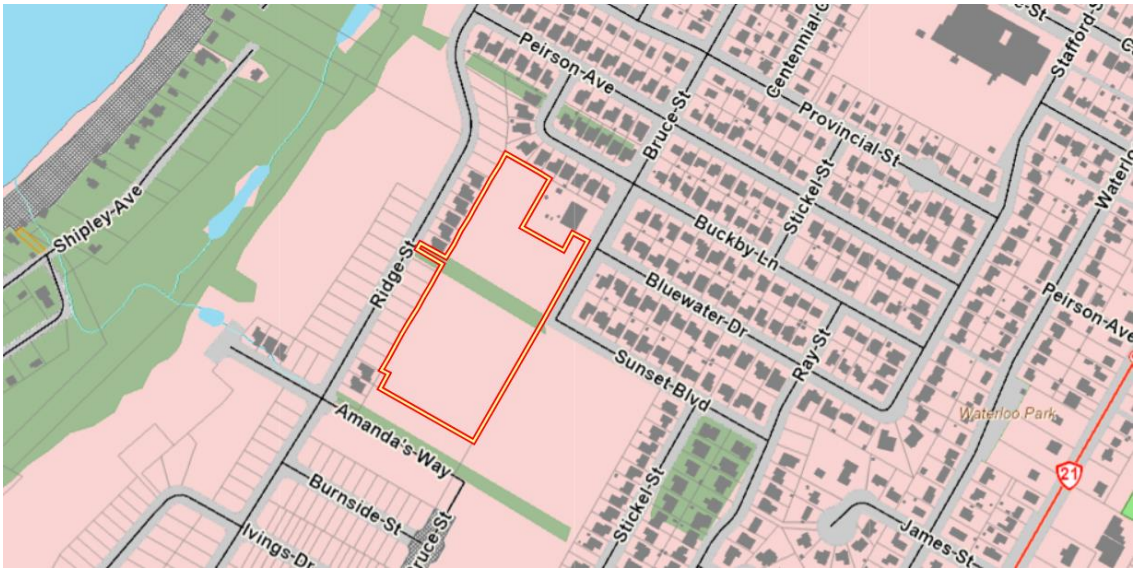
It was affirmed at the same meeting that the Bluewater Lands, located on Bruce Street in Port Elgin would be proffered as a site available for an affordable housing development using the Policy (see Subject Lands map below). These decisions allow the Town to be an active and direct participant in the advancement of tangible affordable housing construction in Saugeen Shores. Using Town-owned lands, the Town is able to create attractive, affordable housing opportunities for moderate- and low-income households, which are not adequately provided by the market alone.

Affordable housing for low-income households are households making less than 50% of the median household income in Saugeen Shores and where no more than 30% of household income is spent on housing (households making less than $88,000). Affordable housing for moderate-income households are households making at or less than the 60th percentile for household incomes in Saugeen Shores and are spending no more than 30% of household

income on housing (no data for Saugeen Shores but Bruce County households making less than $94,800). This data is from the 2021 census and will be updated as this process unfolds and supported by other contemporary measurements for affordability.

In June 2025, using the Policy as a guide, the Town issued a two-stage Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek competitive bids from qualified proponents interested and willing to work with the Town in building affordable housing along with a municipal park on these lands. The subject lands are 3.59 Ha (8.53 acres) in area and are adjacent to the YMCA Child Care at 374 Bruce Street, Port Elgin. The RFP recommended that the proposal consider approximately 0.81 hectares (2 acres) in size for a municipal park as part of the development and 2.64 hectares (6.53 acres) for the affordable housing along with the connection of Bruce Street from Sunset Boulevard to Amanda's Way.

Subject Lands



Current Site Conditions (looking southwest from YMCA Day Care lands)



Proposal Process
Following the Council approved process (attached). This report represents the second decision point for Council in the Process.

Proposals were evaluated using the Town Policy and the following criteria:

- Optimization of Land Use Planning Objectives.
- Percentage of proposed Housing Units which meet Affordability Parameters.
- Type of Affordability (low-income or moderate-income).
- Provision of Special Needs Housing.
- Urban Design Considerations.
- Costs to Town.
- Term of Commitment for Affordability.
- Competency of Proponent.
- Partnerships with Local Service Providers.
- Anticipated Timelines to Turn-key.

Proponents were also required to describe high quality park amenities and how parkland would be integrated.

Respondents were given one month to submit and there were 20 RFP takers. Proposals were submitted by Tim Welch Consulting and ConceptDash Inc. Both submissions met the criteria to be invited to the second stage of review which includes a preliminary Functional Servicing Brief to determine servicing viability and requirements. Tim Welch Consulting provided a submission for the second round while Concept Dash chose not to submit.

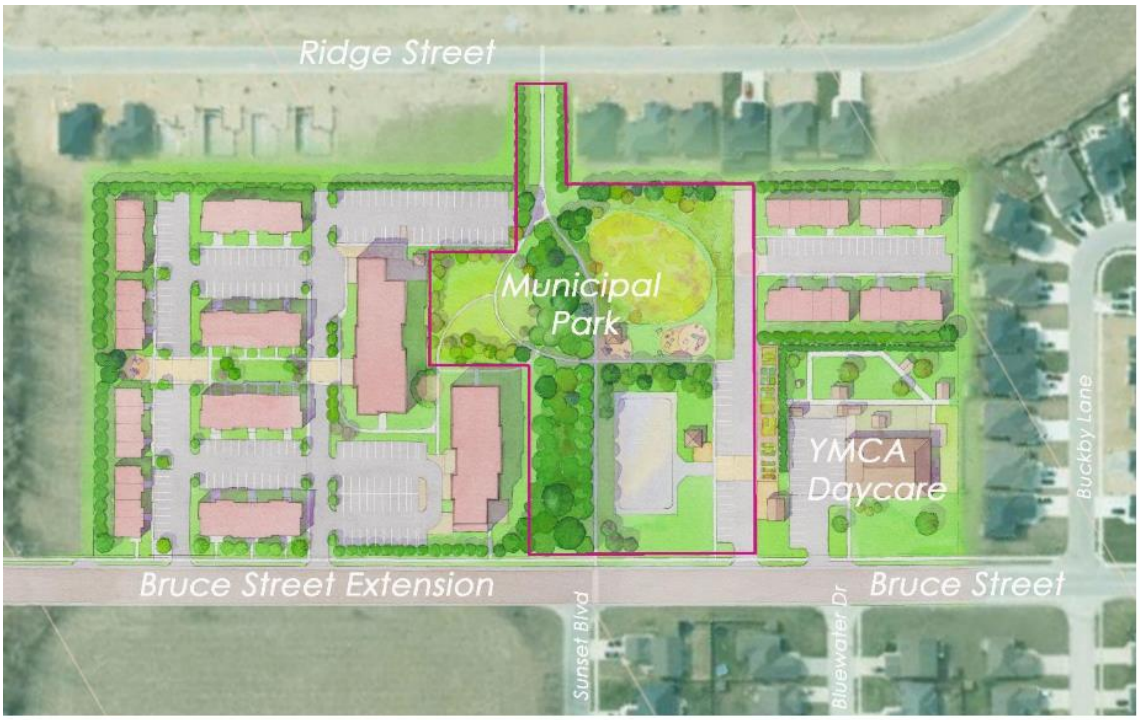
Based on the criteria, the Tim Welch Consulting submission scored 126 out of a possible 160 points.

Proposal Content
Details of the project elements include:

- A 0.8 hectare municipal park with the following suggested amenities: butterfly meadow, playground, outdoor ice pad, food forest, community garden, retention of existing treed windbreak and parking (subject to change through consultation).
- An affordable housing development with 140 or more housing units of various types in a medium density setting offering optimal integration with existing built form. Buildings include low-rise apartments and townhouses.
- All units qualifying for affordability parameters for moderate- and low-income households for at least 50 years, as noted above. The proponent is proposing one-bedroom unit rents below $1,400 with about 20% of units being below $1,000. For two-bedroom units, the proponent is proposing rents ranging between $1,300 and $1,895. These rents are well below the thresholds of the Town's Policy.
- Proposed design also offers 10 additional needs housing and it is intended that engagement with Community Living, Bruce County Housing and entities like Habitat for Humanity will occur.
- Preparation and implementation of a Community Consultation Plan requiring participation from the neighbourhood, community partners, First Nations and others.
- Town retains ownership of the land.

- Request for additional commitment by the Town of $450,000 to support design, consultation, studies, approvals processes, and a portion of site servicing.
- Occupancy in late 2027, early 2028.
- Functional Servicing Brief to demonstrate how the development would connect to water and sewer services and utilities as well as the needs for on-site stormwater management.

Proposed Development Concept (to be refined through further consultation)



Examples of low-rise apartment building and townhouses provided in the submission:









Next Steps

If the recommended proponent is approved by Council, the following will be the next steps (Town and Proponent roles are noted in brackets):

- Declare the residential portion of the land to be surplus and delineate the park (Town).
- Enter into Long-term Lease with Proponent (Town).
- Consult community on preliminary designs, including the park (Proponent).
- Prepare and finalize preliminary and conceptual designs for subject lands (Proponent).
- Complete Planning Process for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval (Proponent).
- Zoning By-law Considerations / Site Plan Review (Town)
- Finalize any off-site works and submit building permit application (Proponent).
- Commence Construction (Proponent).
- Occupancy (Proponent).

The attached February 2024 Report includes a sample process flow showing how Council remains engaged in this process. More specifically, decisions to declare the lands surplus, enter into development and lease agreements, and amend the Zoning By-law will be made by Council. Council will see this development three times before it is finalized.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Development Services Major Initiative

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

$450,000 associated with this project will be included in the 2026 Business Plan and $250,000 was pre-budget approved. Funding source Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF).

Prepared By: Jay Pausner, Manager, Planning and Development

Reviewed By: Mark Paoli, Director, Development Services

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer