



## REPORT FOR ACTION WITH CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT

### St Lawrence Centre Redevelopment - Options Review

**Date:** November 7, 2019

**To:** The Board of Directors of TO Live

**From:** President & CEO

#### **REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

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A plan to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the Board of Directors of TO Live.

#### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Directors of TO Live with an update on the options considered for the redevelopment of the St Lawrence Centre for the Arts and recommends a full redevelopment and seeks instructions on the process and next steps.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The President and Chief Executive Officer, TO Live recommends that the Board of Directors of TO Live:

1. Choose one of the following options:

- a. Option 1: business as usual, as described in Option 1 in Confidential Attachment 1; or
- b. Option 2: Endorse the redevelopment concept for the St. Lawrence Centre as described in Option 2 in Confidential Attachment 1 and request the President and Chief Executive Officer, TO Live to report back to the Board on next steps.

2. Subject to the Board choosing Option 2 above, request City Council to support the redevelopment concept for the St. Lawrence Centre as described in Option 2 in Confidential Attachment 1.

3. Subject to the Board choosing Option 2 above, and subject to Council supporting the redevelopment concept, direct the President and Chief Executive Officer, TO Live to work with the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer to create a budget and to allocate funding for the project as outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.
4. Establish a St. Lawrence Centre Redevelopment Committee, including the terms of reference for the Committee and request the Chair to send a letter to the next meeting with the terms of reference.
5. Pursuant to the establishment of a St. Lawrence Centre Redevelopment Committee, direct the President and Chief Executive Officer, TO Live to work with all relevant parties including the City's divisions and agencies, to develop a plan for advancing the redevelopment concept including considerations regarding governance, finance, legal, procurement and planning, and recommend the plan to the Board for approval. Further to this, a project budget for the planning and design period will be developed and brought forward to the Board for approval at the next scheduled Board meeting.
6. Direct that Confidential Attachment 1 remain confidential in its entirety as it pertains to a plan to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the Board of Directors of TO Live.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There is no financial impact other than what is outlined in the report and Confidential Attachment 1.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its September 26, 2019 meeting, the Board supported moving forward with non-binding confidential conversations with any potential partners on a redevelopment of the St. Lawrence Centre and directed the President and Chief Executive Officer, TO Live to report to the next meeting of the Board.

2019.CT6.5 - Future Use of St. Lawrence Centre Site

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.CT6.5>

## **COMMENTS**

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As experts in performing arts and culture centres, it is incumbent on TO Live to outline opportunities for the City to consider towards the reimagining of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts ("StLC"). TO Live has conceptualized not just a new building, but a transformational, world class, state-of-the-art civic space that will be a vibrant nexus for the city's future.

TO Live is one of the largest, multi-arts institutions in the ever-evolving Canadian arts ecosystem. TO Live offers vital programs and services which collectively support the work of Canadian creators while providing an enduring and timeless platform for their stories. A majority of these services are offered through partner relationships with local theatre, music and dance companies. With two hubs of creativity and content creation in both downtown and uptown Toronto, TO Live has a unique place and perspective.

In 1962, the StLC was initially proposed to give the city a cultural hub, with centralized performance venues, rehearsal halls, schools and gallery spaces. The original proposal sought to foster meaningful civic involvement through participation in the arts, political debate, and social engagement. Through the remarkable tenacity, energy and vision of Mavor Moore, the StLC became a transformative landmark recognizing the need for the “Place of the Artist” as part of the evolution in Canadian culture. Throughout its history, the StLC has launched thousands of careers of Canada’s finest directors, choreographers, actors, designers and production staff.

Since that time, the city that the StLC was built to serve has grown tremendously and become one of the most diverse cities in the world. It has also become one of the world’s most forward-looking cities in terms of both democratic values and technological savvy. More than half a century later, the StLC sits at the very epicenter of the city, surrounded by a thriving residential neighbourhood, connected to every transportation system, nestled in the heart of the country’s investment community, and overlooking one of the city’s most treasured public spaces - Berczy Park.

Despite its remarkable history and its outstanding location, the StLC has some very real major issues. While some past renovations have been a temporary fix in trying to keep the building in a state of good repair, major and expensive fixing and updating to current building code is needed. Its performance spaces are outdated and inflexible. Further, the public spaces are extremely limited, and the building has not kept current with industry wide standards for performing arts companies- accessible facilities which are flexible, adaptable and configurable.

In the past decade, there have been multiple attempts to develop a new arts centre on the StLC site, some led by key tenants or, in response to partner proposals, as well as by former management. All have stalled due to the lack of resources and being able to find agreement amongst the proposer(s), City, tenants and neighbourhood.

The time has come to imagine a renewed arts and civic centre that will do all that its founders dreamed of and so much more. TO Live and *potential Partners* have joined together to conceptualize not just a new building, but a transformative civic space that will be a nexus for the future. This opportunity will create a place for meeting and the exchange of ideas; a place for the city and the country to look to the future of creative industries; a place to present leading national cultural products: and a place to reach, teach, inspire and learn from new, diverse audiences.

TO Live's civic mandate includes a wildly diverse array of events that reflect Toronto's vibrant multicultural landscape and its relationship to the rest of the world. The redevelopment of the StLC must be inclusive, financially sustainable and creatively resilient. The new space will be both a testament to the community-building intentions of the past, and a promise for creative space to shape a dynamic, diverse and limitless future.

Confidential Attachment 1 documents the initial review of options for the building and site at the StLC, recently undertaken by staff with outside consulting assistance. This is not a detailed project plan delving fully into all the key components but an initial review to provide the Board with enough background information to decide if the more detailed work is warranted.

As outlined in the document, the main strategic goals for investment in the St. Lawrence Centre are to ensure it is:

- a resource for cultural audiences;
- a resource for the St. Lawrence neighborhood and Toronto community;
- in support of contemporary Canadian artistic productions;
- in support of the TO Live artistic mission to 'reflect the City on the stage';
- an opportunity to enhance financial sustainability of the TO Live organization;
- a notable cultural asset for Toronto and Ontario, attracting tourism and prestige.

The document goes on to assess the current situation and identifies two fundamental alternatives: fix the building as best can be done, 'Enhance' or rebuild on the site a new facility, 'Redevelop'. The latter scenario is divided into two funding and governance options: the first is to renovate and wholly manage the new facility independently and the second is to do it with capital and operating partners.

Staff have assessed the two main alternatives and recommend that the Board endorse the Redevelop approach and evaluate whether either the independent option or the partner option are feasible, and to recommend next steps if either is determined to be reasonably possible.

## **CONTACT**

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**SIGNATURE**

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Clyde Wagner  
President & CEO

**ATTACHMENTS**

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Confidential Attachment 1 - StLC Redevelopment Options Review