

Date: June 21, 2022

Report to: Board of Directors
CityHousing Hamilton Corporation

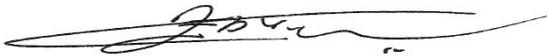
Submitted by: Ed VanderWindt, **Prepared by:** Sean Botham
(Acting) Chief Executive Officer/Secretary
Manager, Development

Subject: **55 Queenston – City Motor Hotel Sign Request (Report #22012(b))**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Directors:

- (i) Receive for information the updated Report with analysis of the sign request;
- (ii) Provide direction on whether to:
 - a) Exempt staff from following the approved CityHousing Hamilton Branding Guidelines and established site signage conventions;
 - b) Procure either a Replica Scale (22') or Monument Scale (9') sign that incorporates the CityHousing Hamilton name into the City Motor Hotel brand;
 - c) Locate the given sign at the proposed Queenston Rd location; and
 - d) Use other available City funding or CHH project funding for any overages beyond the proposed \$150k allocation from the Ward 4 Capital Discretionary Account.



Ed VanderWindt
(Acting) Chief Executive Officer/Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

CityHousing Hamilton (CHH) is currently developing 55 Queenston Road as a two-phase project which will contribute to neighbourhood renewal through an integrated mixed-income and mixed-use development. The first phase of the development will be a 40-unit mid-rise residential apartment building with 25 1-bed and 15 3-bed units which is targeting completion for November 2023.

In February, 2022 a motion was brought to Council by the Ward 4 Councillor (Appendix A) for an allocation of up to \$150,000 to be made for the refurbishment and rebranding of the Old City Motor Hotel sign with the intent that it be incorporated into the new CHH development at 55 Queenston Rd.

The project team for 55 Queenston commissioned an assessment on sign redesign and conducted a review of the location options for sign placement, reporting these to the Board in May, 2022. A further enhanced review has now been conducted, adding to the analysis and narrowing down the location for a potential replica or monument sign.

BACKGROUND:

On December 6, 2017 a motion to Council was brought forward by the Ward 4 Councillor calling for the Real Estate Section of the Planning and Economic Development Department of the City of Hamilton (City) to be authorized and directed to initiate discussions with CHH for the sale of 55 Queenston Road at fair market value. Following an assessment, the site was purchased by CHH in February 2018.

In March 2018 the CHH Board approved a development plan for five projects including the first phase of 55 Queenston Rd (Report #17021(b)).

The 55 Queenston project then saw the following milestones, the initiation of: environmental studies in 2018, building design in April 2021, Site Plan Approval (SPA) in June 2021, and funding applications and remediation in January 2022.

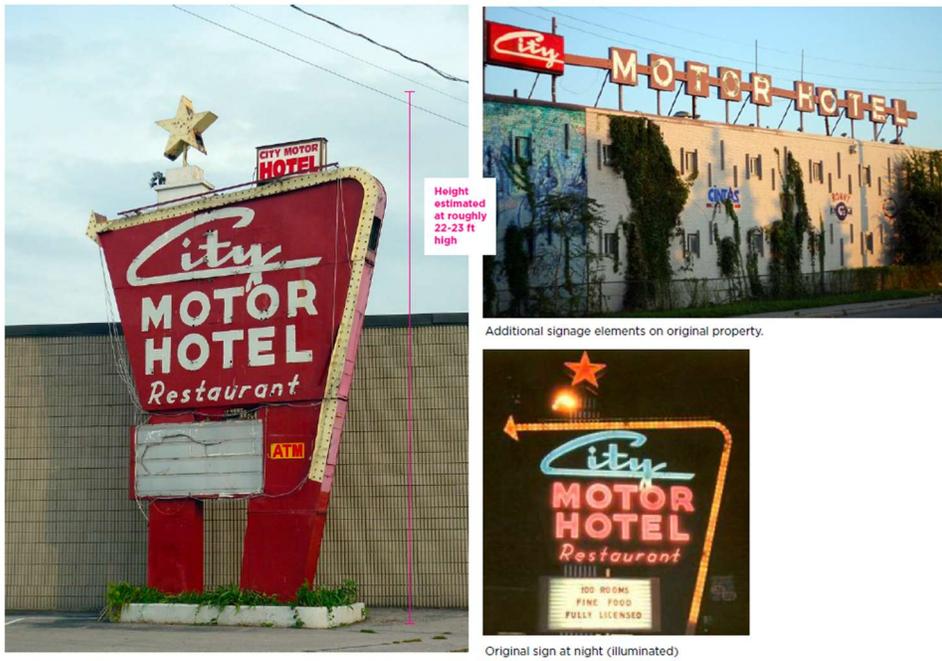
As part of the design process, the project team envisioned and commissioned a set of murals reflecting the history of the site, which is to be incorporated into community spaces within the new building.

In February 2022 a motion to Council was brought forward by the Ward 4 Councillor calling for the City and CHH to explore the suitability of incorporating a refurbished and newly branded City Motor Hotel sign into the site development at 55 Queenston Rd. Subsequently assessments of the opportunity for incorporation were made by the project team in May 2022, which were further updated in June 2022 (see Appendix B for Signage Options).

DISCUSSION:

Celebrating a piece of the 55 Queenston site’s history would hold nostalgic value for those who remember the 1960’s hotel in its heyday. Visually the historic sign had vibrant branding characteristic of mid-century venues. See Figure 1 for visuals of the original sign while still intact.

Figure 1

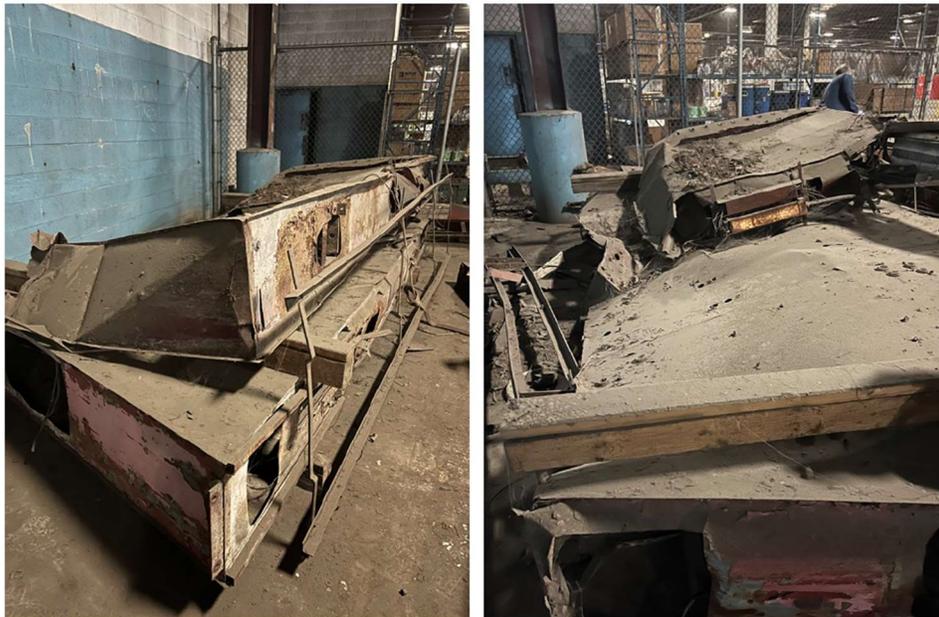


The following outlines a number of considerations for the rebuild of the City Motor Hotel sign, the joint branding of CHH and the hotel, the placement of the sign, the options for re-creation, and the context of other tribute elements.

Refurbishment

An assessment by consulting firm The Laundry Design Works has determined that the City Motor Hotel sign was irreparably damaged while in storage and therefore refurbishment would not be possible. See Figure 2 for the current state of the original City Motor Hotel sign in storage at a City waste management facility.

Figure 2



The feasibility study and re-creation of the sign to the original 22' height was estimated to cost between \$86-128k, depending on precise design features –plus additional fees for design, structural elements, approvals, contract administration, and ongoing operations and maintenance.

Branding

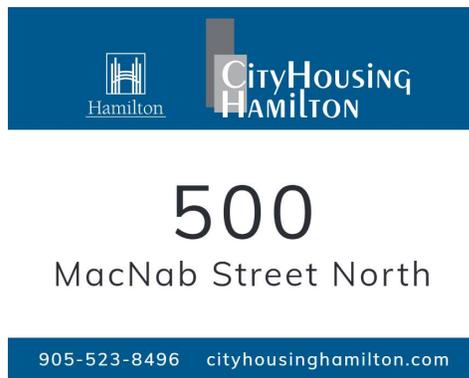
The February 2022 motion on signage calls for a rebranding of the City Motor Hotel sign, with incorporation of the CHH name.



CHH recently rebranded, and with the assistance of the City, then established new Branding Guidelines (see Appendix C). The goal of the rebrand was to develop a cohesive and unified visual brand that communicates the core business of CHH, reflects passion for housing and wellness, and highlights the ambitious efforts to build a more sustainable future for both the organization and the communities served.

In addition, working with City Communications, one application of the Branding Guidelines was the establishment of standardized site signage for all CHH properties (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Example standardized site signage



As a result of the rebranding exercise, and with the Branding Guidelines and site sign standard, CHH now has clear and concise materials that profile the new brand/look and help CHH better position itself for key stakeholders, government partners, funding partners and the community.

In addition, the 55 Queenston Rd project consultant team has noted that the merged branding of the hotel and housing organization may have unintended implications:

- The sign typology reflects a hotel and restaurant, which may create confusion (as some may attempt to enter the building assuming it still houses those functions)
- Once a popular, celebrated destination, the City Motor Hotel site experienced a marked decline in more recent years, and reinstalling the sign may bring up less positive memories for some residents of the area

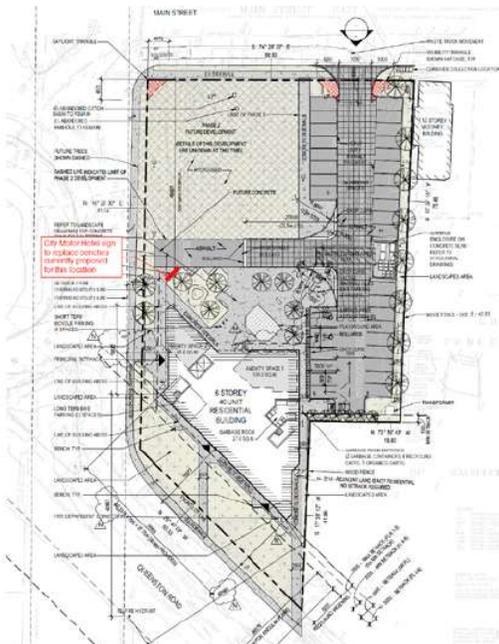
The CHH Board can however, provide direction to exempt Staff from the Brand Guidelines and site signage convention to allow for instances of non-standard branding in certain circumstances, for instance, in relation to public art installations.

Location

The 55 Queenston Rd project team have conducted a further review of the variance implications regarding the exterior signage options, based on applicable Hamilton Sign By-Law 10-197 (Appendix D). Permitting is required for all exterior signage options (as per 5.2.2.(a) and 5.3.2.(a)). Based on the definitions in the By-Law, both the Replica and Monument Options would be considered each a “Ground Sign.”

Through a comprehensive technical evaluation, it was determined that the most suitable location for a large ground sign would be along Queenston Rd, set back from the perimeter of the site, and at a North-West angle, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 – Full Site Plan with Proposed Sign Location



Key technical considerations from the Sign By-Law include:

- 5.2.2.(e) –The frontage along Queenston Circle is approximately 81.7 metres, suggesting a maximum sign area of 24.51 square metres; a maximum total sign area of 18m² is permitted for a single-faced Ground Sign and 36m² for a double or multi-faced Ground Sign. Based on the estimated measurements, the proposed sign does not exceed this maximum area. [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(f) – Based on the estimated measurements, the proposed sign does not exceed 7.5 metres in height [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(g)(i) – The blended CMH-CHH logo option displays the municipal address at the bottom of the sign in numerals over 15.0 cm tall [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(g)(ii) – The blended CMH-CHH logo option identifies the building as belonging to CityHousing Hamilton [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(g)(iii) – If an electronic display is desired instead of a flexible letter marquee, the space allocated would be less than 50% of the sign face [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(h) – The proposed location is not within 15.0 metres of a traffic signal or traffic control device [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(i) – The proposed location is not within a distance equal to 75% of the height of the Ground Sign of any property line [no variance required]
- 5.2.2.(j) – The proposed location is along the same frontage used to calculate the maximum sign area (the property line adjacent to Queenston Circle) [no variance required]

In review of the above, the scale and location of the proposed sign do not require any sign variance(s) from Hamilton Sign By-Law 10-197.

Sign Re-creation Options

Both a replica scale sign, at 22 feet in height, and a monument scale sign at 9 feet, could be re-created and situated at the proposed location. See Figure 5 for examples of each sign type placed against the rendering of an elevation.

Figure 5 – Replica Scale (22') vs Monument Scale (9') Sign Re-creation

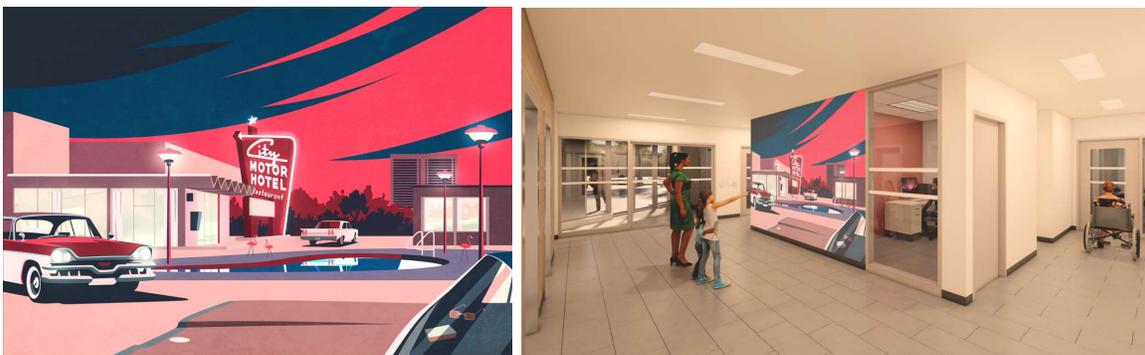


Planned Modern Adaptations of Historic Elements

For context, there are two modern adaptations of historic elements currently planned to pay homage to the former iconic City Motor Hotel building.

The first is the City Motor Hotel-themed graphic art proposed to be installed across from the elevators at ground level. Douglas Peterson-Hui of The Architects Garage has been given the commission to generate this art. This is part of a collection of three murals relating to the site and area that will feature in the common areas. The initial draft of the image, as well as a rendering of the image installed in situ (in the building's lobby) is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – First draft image and rendering of the City Motor Hotel mural



The murals are meant to support a sense of place and history, while evoking the best of the period in a way that complements the building and site. The image generation, production and installation of the vinyl City Motor Hotel-themed piece is estimated to cost approximately \$4k.

The second planned adaptation of a historic City Motor Hotel element is the street numbering. Each CHH new build will have stylistic variants in the street numbering that align with each unique building concept. Under consideration as part of design development for 55 Queenston are font styles which could subtly offer a nod to the time period and site history. One example is illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7 – Street numbering



CONCLUSION:

The in-development affordable housing project at 55 Queenston Road will provide crucial housing for those requiring deep affordability in Hamilton and will soon commence construction.

The former City Motor Hotel which previously existed on site represented both the glory and failings of the mid-century architectural and social legacy. A number of key considerations are present in the discussion around suitability of location and tribute type to pay homage to the former hotel. The current social context, as well as corporate alignment and communications, along with technical elements of location, sign type, and contextual initiatives already contemplated, all form part of the discussion.

The recommendation is for the Board to receive the report for information and for to provide direction to Staff regarding branding, signage, location, and funding.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report implements:

Built Environment and Social Infrastructure

CityHousing Hamilton is committed to finding new ways to be innovative that will contribute to a dynamic City characterized by unique infrastructure, buildings, and public spaces. The maintenance, renewal and new development of our housing stock will ensure that the quality of life, well-being and enjoyment of our residents', influences the design and planning of our homes.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A - 11.2 - Refurbishment of the City Motor Hotel Sign (Ward 4)**
- Appendix B - Signage Options**
- Appendix C - CityHousing Branding Guidelines**
- Appendix D - Sign By-Law**

EV/sb

Mission: We provide affordable housing that is safe, well maintained and cost effective and that supports the diverse needs of our many communities.