

December 8, 2021

BY EMAIL

Mr. Stephen Willis
General Manager
Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Development Department
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Dear Mr. Willis,

RE: RED PINE PLANTATION – HUNT CLUB ROAD

Thank you for your letter dated December 1, 2021 concerning the Ottawa International Airport Authority's offer to the City of Ottawa to lease the red pine plantation on Hunt Club Road.

We appreciate the position concerning the preservation of the plantation for community use; however, given that the City of Ottawa is not willing to take it on, we have no choice but to move forward with development. It is unfortunate that nearby community residents feel that they have ownership of the land. In fact, the Authority has attempted to secure this tree plantation in the interest of public safety as well as the security of onsite water quality testing equipment over the years. Despite these efforts, locks have been repeatedly cut, no trespassing signage has been vandalized or removed, and our water monitoring equipment damaged and covered in graffiti. The list of similar infractions is long, not the least of which is continued trespassing on private property, including, of serious concern, evidence of a fire pit.

You may be aware that the land served as a residential landfill prior to tree planting. Red pines grow well and quickly in shallow, sandy soil conditions which is what took place onsite. They also require regular and scheduled thinning and maintenance prior to harvesting. This attention to the plantation was not completed over the years, and according to our independent arborist, has resulted in a high degree of taper (extreme height with limited diameter) and interdependence at the crown level. For this reason, the trees are already prone to stem failure under extreme weather conditions such as high winds or heavy snow and ice.

These two important realities aside, the Authority simply cannot afford to not develop the land. The Pines parcel represents \$500K+ in potential annual revenue. After the ravages of the pandemic on our finances, every available dollar of non-aeronautical revenue will help the airport keep the fees it charges airlines and passengers as low as possible as we work our way to financial sustainability and our position as a significant economic generator for Canada's Capital Region.

Additionally, the land is zoned for development, and as you mentioned, included in our approved 2038 Master Plan. In the community consultation events held over the years in the development of our Master Plan, no members of the public expressed concern with the Authority's noted land development plans for this area. And, while I appreciate your recommendation to revisit the type of development currently planned, we must consider the business needs of our current lessors and we will not discriminate based on business type or function. If a use is permissible by law, it should have an equal opportunity for development on this land.

As we move forward with development, I can assure you that we have discussed the forest to the south of the plantation with its owner, the Department of National Defence, via Public Service Procurement Canada. They acknowledge that this area has multiple walking paths designed for enjoyment of use, and that there are no plans to develop this area, nor to restrict access to base residents/personnel only. We will maintain access from our land to this lush, natural forest that is open and available for the community's use, and which offers a much safer environment for everyone's benefit.

Having lost potential commercial development opportunities, the Authority therefore intends to harvest the trees shortly, as we prepare the land for its intended use in accordance with the City's approved zoning.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Regards,



Mark Laroche
President & Chief Executive Officer

c.c.: Steve Kanellakos, City Manager, City of Ottawa