

December 12, 2022

City announces purchase of Buffalo Hotel, Club Café properties for redevelopment

The City announced today it closed the purchase two parcels of land at 5021 and 5023 Ross (50) Street, with the intent of demolition and redevelopment. Included among these two parcels are the Buffalo Hotel and Club Café.

1. Why is The City purchasing these properties?

The City is purchasing the properties on Ross Street as part of plans to address derelict properties and support revitalization in the downtown. These properties are in a prominent location and provide great opportunity for redevelopment and new use in the downtown.

2. Are Buffalo Hotel or Club Café designated historic sites?

No. While both properties are historically significant, neither have been designated as a historic site.

3. These are historical buildings – why is The City demolishing them?

Unfortunately, these properties are in poor state of disrepair and assessments found it would be cost-prohibitive to restore the buildings. A decision was made to demolish the buildings and make new use for these primary spaces in our downtown.

4. What will The City do to preserve the memory of the Buffalo Hotel and Club Café?

The Buffalo Hotel and Club Café are both important parts of Red Deer's history, and they will not be forgotten. While not a designated heritage site, the Buffalo Hotel has been a fixture in Red Deer for many years.

We are working to understand what pieces we may be able to preserve. As evaluations are completed as part of conditions of sale, we will learn how iconic elements such as the Club Café and Buffalo Hotel signs can be preserved.

The City is also organizing opportunities for the community to say farewell and share fond memories of these sites. Details will be shared at a later date.

5. What will happen to these lots once the buildings are demolished?

The ultimate goal is for redevelopment of the lots, which offer opportunities for a prominent space in the downtown.

Recognizing that redevelopment will take some time, we are working on plans for how we might activate the space in the meantime. We have allocated some budget for activation and will work with key stakeholders to identify the best way to make use of this space in the short term.

6. How much did this cost?

The City has allocated budget for the project, including the purchase and demolition of properties, as well as activation of the space.

- 7. The Buffalo Hotel offered low-income housing. Where will those people go?**
Low-income housing was available at the Buffalo Hotel for some time, however tenants were relocated in 2020 due to the state of the building, safety issues, and has been derelict since that time.
- 8. Is this the future site being recommended for a future permanent shelter in Red Deer?**
No, this is not the future site that was recommended to the Province of Alberta for a permanent shelter site. At this time, The City of Red Deer is unable to share the location of the recommended site because land negotiations must still occur.