

# Memorandum

**TO:** Economic Development Authority  
**FROM:** Tom Simonson , Assistant City Manager and Community Development Director  
**DATE:** October 6, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Future repurposing of city-owned Fire Station 140  
**ITEM NUMBER:** 5.b  
**SECTION:** GENERAL BUSINESS

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## **REQUESTED MOTION**

Discussion only, no formal action is required.

## **INTRODUCTION**

With the new headquarters fire station under construction in Arden Hills for the Lake Johanna Fire Department, the Shoreview-owned Station 140 located at 3615 Victoria Street North will be vacated by next summer. This provides the city with a unique and exciting opportunity to repurpose the property. Staff would like to discuss with the EDA and City Council the status of the property and process being recommended to explore potential reuses of the building.

## **DISCUSSION**

Here is some background information on the fire station property:

- The city acquired the 1-acre parcel within Island Lake Park from the Ramsey County back in January, 1988 for the purpose of building a new fire station to cover the south end of the service area
- Station 140 was opened later in 1988, and has undergone expansion and renovations in 2005 and 2012
- As part of the transaction to take a portion of the county park, the deed included a restriction that the land be "for public purposes only"
- The city approached the county to about either releasing this deed restriction or amend it to allow possible "non public" uses
- We were recently notified by the county that the quit claim deed may not have been recorded property back in 1988, and regardless has expired, releasing the "for public purposes only" restriction (we have requested the county confirm this in writing)
- The new headquarters fire station under construction in Arden Hills will be completed next year and Station 140 is expected to be vacated by the fire department by July, 2026

Over the past year, there has been some interest expressed by the Ramsey County Parks Department to use the building for a suburban maintenance facility, and by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department to use the property for storage. Staff has also received some general inquiries from the private sector with interest in office space. However, we believe this site could be better reused for something that would be of greater benefit and an attraction to the community. The city has a special opportunity to explore exciting and creative uses that takes advantage of the location adjacent to the beautiful lake and county park, the Seven Lakes

project becoming a major job center that will have upwards of a 1,000 employees, and the hundreds of apartments with plans to double in size over the next decade or so. Additionally, the site is easily accessible from all areas including the interstate, and is situated away from the Lexington Avenue corridor in an area not served by commercial retail.

City staff held a recent "brainstorming" group meeting to generate ideas on the potential re-use of the city-owned property. Suggestions included:

- restaurant that could include outdoor seating (similar to dining establishments at Como Pavilion and Minnehaha Park - perhaps in partnership with Ramsey County)
- brew pub and/or distillery
- arts and cultural center
- recreation center
- incubator/maker spaces

Staff believes the next step would be to engage a real estate/marketing consultant specializing in the commercial and retail sectors. The consultant would be able to work with us on engaging potential uses and users that the city may consider. This approach would be more appropriate than going out seeking proposals, as it would really focus on finding a specific use(s) that meet our desired goals for the property. The city will also need to determine if we should continue to own the property and lease to a user, or sell the land and building. Obviously, a lease arrangement provides the city with greater control of the property long term. It would also be recommended that an assessment of the structure be undertaken to determine if there are any design or code issues that could potentially impact and limit the re-use of the building.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the EDA board and City Council provide staff with your ideas, questions/concerns, and direction to move forward with the process outlined above.

### **ATTACHMENTS**