

July, 2025

RESOLUTION

City of Cranbrook Council approves submission of this resolution request to the Regional District of East Kootenays by Mayor Price and Councillor Blissett as the City's RDEK Board members.

WHEREAS

The City of Cranbrook will take possession of a property through tax sale in September of 2025 as no public bids were received for this property, leaving the City as the deemed purchaser and will take possession/responsibility unless property is sold or taxes paid before September 2025:

Property Address: 22 Briar Avenue NW, Cranbrook
Legal Description: Lot 2, Plan NEP11850, District Lot 29
PID: 006-173-462

Commonly referred to as the "Knights Hall" or "Tudor House", old hospital site in Cranbrook.

AND WHEREAS

The site contains a massive volume of debris from the demolition of the partially burnt down nurses residence on the site (Knights Hall), and accumulated other debris, with an estimated cost of \$900,000 to clean up, much of the cost being the tipping fees required to be paid to the RDEK landfill, the cost of which will become a cost burden on the taxpayers of Cranbrook

AND WHEREAS

There are no Provincial, Federal or other grant funding sources available for site clean up costs and tipping fees, which are the largest cost of the cleanup required

AND WHEREAS

The cost for tipping fees is set by bylaw by the board at the RDEK, the bylaw tipping fees can also be changed by amending bylaw by the board at the RDEK

AND WHEREAS

An immediate threat to public health exists from the known hazardous materials located within debris piles through "friable" (becoming airborne) asbestos containing materials, and an order requiring the prevention of asbestos particles from becoming airborne was addressed to the City of Cranbrook dated July 30, 2024, and a separate Order was addressed to the property owner on August 2, 2024 by an Environmental Health Officer, Health Protection at Interior Health.

AND WHEREAS

There is an elementary school nearby, where SD5 issued a letter to the City of concern about the condition of property and its impact on student health and safety (attached)

AND WHEREAS

The City could clean up the property and allow its use for low-income or supportive housing, available to anyone in the region, as many of the low-income residents coming to Cranbrook for services and remaining in the Cranbrook area to access services with no home and in need of housing are from the many smaller communities in the East Kootenay region.

THEREFORE, Council approves a request to the Regional District of East Kootenay, of which Cranbrook is a member municipality, to consider amending the Central Solid Waste Fee Bylaw to implement a zero or reduced tipping fee for the clean up of City owned properties for low-income housing.



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

S O U T H E A S T K O O T E N A Y

June 25, 2024

Mayor Wayne Price & City Council
40 – 10th Avenue South
Cranbrook, BC V1C 2M8

Dear Mayor Price & City Council,

RE: Concerns Surrounding Knights Hall on King Street

At the School District 5 (SD5), Southeast Kootenay public Board Meeting of June 11th, 2024, the Board carried the following motion:

THAT a letter be written by the Board of Education to the City of Cranbrook outlining the concerns surrounding the Knights Hall property on King Street.

The SD5 Board understands that the sale of the Knights Hall property “fell through” some time ago, making clear the question of ownership. As such, the Board would like to reiterate the concerns laid out re: the Knights Hall property in our letter of May 31, 2023 and to once again ask that the City assert their authority to clean up the property.

This property continues to attract individuals with mental illnesses and/or impaired judgement and remains a collection-site for used drug paraphernalia and other dangerous refuse. The lack of bathroom facilities in the area adds additional sanitary contamination to the sharps issue, all of which may come in contact with curious students playing in the area. The piled building materials from the demolition effort could also pose a further fire issue to surrounding buildings and inhabitants.

The unkempt hedges and buildings also provide seclusion for anyone wishing to do harm to students or other citizens. The park area between the old hospital and the ICBC office, under its current condition, poses the same safety concern. As a District, we work to maintain clean sight lines around schools for this reason. The Pinewood area is a current exception and a continued safety concern.

Many of our young, kindergarten to grade six students walk by this property on their way to and from Pinewood Elementary School *over 340 times per year*. Aside from being unsightly, this property is a huge safety hazard. Derelict structures like the fire-damaged

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Knights Hall, burned out Winnebago and overgrown vegetation are play-magnets for young children who are unaware of the dangers playing on this property poses.

As this site has become more run-down, concerns among the SD5 Board, administrators, staff and parents continues to grow. Once again this year, we have had new parents whose children will be entering kindergarten in the fall ask to go out of catchment *specifically* because of the Knights Hall site and surrounding area.

It is obvious, given the time that has passed since sale of the property fell through, that the current owner has no intention to clean up the property on their own initiative. The City has the authority to issue a *Remedial Action Order* to require the owner of the property to remove the debris, under the *Unsightly Premises Bylaw 3390, 2000*.

Specifically, 5.01 of the bylaw states that *"No owner or occupier of real property within the city shall permit or allow their property to become, or remain, untidy or unsightly."*

Additionally, 5.02 (i) states that *"Every owner or occupier of real property, or their agents, shall remove therefrom any accumulations of filth, discarded materials, rubbish, brush or other growth cuttings of any kind."*

This bylaw enables the City—if it so chooses—to schedule a contractor to clean up this dangerous and unsightly property at the expense of the property owner, with expenses billed to the owner and added to their tax bill.

Once cleared of debris and overgrowth the potential of this property for housing, daycare or business development would greatly assist in revitalizing the surrounding neighbourhood by providing purpose to the land and eliminating its current attraction as a site for vagrancy, vandalism and illicit drug use.

We look forward to your timely response to our request, and to our continued collaborative relationship with the City on this and other areas of mutual interest.

Sincerely,



Doug McPhee, Board Chair
School District 5, Southeast Kootenay

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