

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 14, 1999

TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: E. Dossall, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: Year 2000, 2001 and 2002 Capital Submission
ORIGINATORS: A. McBeath, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Bob Clark, Robert Craig, Cindy Davis, Beatrice Denboer, Michael Ediger, Brian Fedor, Andrea Furness, Lesley Gadowski, June Klassen, Roland Labbe, Eric Lumley, Manfred Malzahn, Donna Racine, Leona Salo

RECOMMENDATION

That the capital projects identified in this report, forming the district's three year capital plan submission to Alberta Infrastructure, be approved.

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This report identifies capital project priorities for Edmonton Public Schools for the next three years from the year 2000 to 2002. A listing of proposed projects by capital submission year is attached in Appendix I. The report also contains an overview of the district's approach to developing a 10 year school facility plan in accordance with Alberta Infrastructure guidelines, which were received on November 22, 1999. The district's capital plan and 10 year school facility plan are required to be submitted to Alberta Infrastructure by December 31, 1999.

In correspondence dated October 28, 1999, Alberta Infrastructure issued interim guidelines to school jurisdictions for submitting capital plans. There are 3 capital project components to be addressed: New Construction, Innovation, and Modernization and Replacement. New construction plans including new schools, school additions, and portable classroom needs are to be identified for the next three years. Innovation projects are to be identified for the first year only. Unique approaches to address the capital needs of the district would fall under the innovation component. The province has further indicated that there is no need to submit details of school modernization projects since the school condition assessments currently being conducted by Alberta Infrastructure will do so.

The success of the innovative proposals that will be contained in the district's three year capital submission to the province, will in part be based on the province's ability to deal with them in an innovative way. For instance, the capital cost estimates presented will give a general indication of the extent of capital support required for each project. However, Alberta Infrastructure must acknowledge and accept the fact that the details of the capital costs will become clearer once School Buildings Board approval of these project concepts are given. After these approvals are received, the district would initiate planning and design phases for the projects. These phases

involve consultation with various stakeholders, and would likely affect the actual design and layout of each facility. As such, there are expected to be implications with respect to capital costs, which are not the case with the more traditional proposals of stand alone new school construction.

Year 2000 capital submission projects that are approved by the province will be approved “in full”. Years 2001 and 2002 capital submission projects that receive approval will be approved “in principle”. Districts will have the opportunity to reconfirm second and third years project priorities as part of the annual capital approval process.

10 Year School Facilities Plans

Prior to identifying capital priorities for the district for the next number of years, it is appropriate to present the underlying principles that guide the district in determining its priorities in this regard. The uniqueness of Edmonton Public Schools; its focus, what it provides, and how the district operates are considerations that must be reflected in the district’s capital planning efforts. Key guiding principles are elaborated on in Appendix II and form key messages that will be relayed to Alberta Infrastructure as part of the district’s 10 year facilities plan. Included are the following principles that relate to the use of space in district schools:

- Edmonton Public Schools is a district of choice.
- Edmonton Public Schools practices a “site-based management model” of decision-making.
- Edmonton Public Schools is a leader in innovation.
- Edmonton Public Schools seeks partnerships with other public service providers that enrich the school environment for students.
- Edmonton Public Schools believes in the concept of neighbourhood schools.
- Edmonton Public Schools acknowledges and demonstrates that school buildings are more than schools.
- Edmonton Public Schools recognizes that in an environment of scarce provincial resources for capital projects, capital funds need to be targeted to schools with high levels of space utilization.

As a district of choice, there is no other school jurisdiction that parallels Edmonton Public Schools internationally in terms of providing as broad a range of student programming. At the same time, for every resident student of the district there is a school that is designated to look after the student’s programming needs. Each basic principle has implications with respect to the use of district school space. These implications must be acknowledged and respected.

Three Year New Construction Needs

1. New School in Twin Brooks (Year 2000)

The district’s top priority for a new school is in the Twin Brooks neighbourhood. On three previous occasions the district requested capital funding from the province to support a new school facility in this neighbourhood. The chart provided in Appendix III outlines the chronology of events related to this project.

The plan for the Twin Brooks neighbourhood indicates a long term settled public elementary school enrolment of about 800 students and a public junior high enrolment of 400 students. At

this time, the Twin Brooks neighbourhood is about 90 per cent developed, with a population that generates an estimated 500 kindergarten to grade 6 students, of which 362 are Edmonton Public School students. Enrolment projections for the neighbourhood indicate that over the next three to five years an additional 150 public school elementary students will be residing in the neighbourhood reaching a total of over 500 by 2004. It is expected that if a K-6 school with a rated capacity for 500 students opened in the fall of 2001, it would fill. The project would be designed in a way so that the addition of a junior high component could be added to the project at a later date.

The administration is preparing to submit two requests for a new school in Twin Brooks as year 2000 projects. The first is a request to the province for a traditional stand alone elementary school (500 rated capacity) and the second is a multi-use facility with a 500 rated capacity school facility as one component in the project. Appendix IV elaborates on these proposals.

2. New School in Terwillegar Towne (Year 2000)

Carma Developments Limited has approached the district with an offer to build, own, and lease back to the school district a kindergarten to grade 8 school facility with a rated capacity for 550 students in the Terwillegar Towne neighbourhood. It is being designed in such a way that a grade 9 component may be added in future. A request for innovation funding for the year 2000 would be included in the district's submission. A summary of the project is contained in Appendix V.

The developer is interested in pursuing this partnership as soon as possible, as the neighbourhood is quickly developing. The Terwillegar Towne plan area is designed to accommodate two kindergarten to grade 8 public schools as part of the two tier K-8 and 9-12 schooling concept. This project would be the first K-8 school in the district, and would be designated to serve the western portion of the Terwillegar Towne plan area. This portion of the larger neighbourhood makes up about 60 per cent of the plan area. This means that the school would be designated to accommodate the long-term settled enrolment of about 750 K-8 students.

The preliminary figure to build the school that was provided by the developer is \$5.3 million not including furnishings and GST. The developer is targeting this as their budget amount and recognizes the need to maintain quality in the facility. Total project cost is estimated at \$5.9 million including furnishings and equipment (8.5 per cent of construction cost) and GST (2.24 per cent). These figures may vary once provincial approval is received, however it will be the intent to keep the costs down and quality up.

There are two other features about this proposal that make it innovative. Firstly, the developer is willing to make a financial contribution to the capital construction cost, of \$100,000 each year for the first 5 years on a 20 year lease arrangement with the district.

Secondly, the developer is working with Telus to secure a partnership in the creation of a technology component that would be a first in Edmonton. The facility would be designed to facilitate the use of computers and technology throughout the building, specifically focussed on student learning throughout the curriculum and on communicating with the home, businesses, and global community. The partnership is described in more detail in Appendix V.

Other New School Needs (Years 2001 and 2002)

The district's submission will present a position challenging the province on continuing to use the current province's utilization rate as rationale for refusing new construction requests by the district. The position statement is summarized in the draft 10 Year Facility Plan Strategy that is attached to this report. In general, it refers to a calculation that is no longer relevant and recommends that Alberta Infrastructure's not use it as a legitimate criterion until they complete their own scheduled revision of the formula. The district is willing to assist with this review.

As such, it is proposed that the district propose projects to access a share of the annual New School Construction Fund to be allocated by the province. Aside from innovation funding proposals, the next priority areas for new school facilities for the district that will be identified for the province are as follows. Supporting enrolment information on each of these projects is attached in Appendix VI:

Capital Submission Year 2001:

- a kindergarten to grade 6 school in Jackson Heights neighbourhood (300 core capacity)
- a kindergarten to grade 6 school in the Lake District (400 capacity)

Capita Submission Year 2002:

- a kindergarten to grade 6 school in Pilot Sound (300 core capacity)

Modernization/Replacement Program

Portable and Classroom Pod Replacement Needs (Years 2000, 2001, and 2002)

Edmonton Public Schools is actively involved in removing and disposing of aging free-standing portables that are no longer suitable for classroom purposes due to condition. In 1998 and 1999, thirty-one classroom spaces, including a pod and an annex were removed from the district's inventory. Remaining are 62 free-standing portables that were built in the 1950's and 1960's and that are reaching or surpassing their life expectancy.

It is the district's intent to continue with its portable disposal process. However, to do so will require replacement of the older portables with new stock. Over the past five years, the district's overall enrolment has increased by almost 5,000 students, during a time when no new school construction was approved for the district. Without having been able to access new construction funds, the district has continued to rely more heavily on free-standing portables for longer term accommodation of students. Portables were not designed for this purpose, but as temporary structures to accommodate peak enrolments at school locations for short time periods.

It is proposed that the province off-set the loss of a number of portable spaces through their Modernization/Replacement Program by providing funding for 20 replacements annually, some in the form of 4-classroom pods and others at various locations in the district as described in Appendix VI. In summary, the addition of 4-classroom pods are proposed at the following school locations:

- Meyonohk, and Velma Baker schools for the year 2000,
- Grandview Heights, Winterburn Campus at Winterburn/Westview Village, and George H. Luck schools in 2001, and
- Michael A. Kostek for the year 2002.

The remainder of the annual replacements are for free standing portables to be located at various sites.

Request for Concept Development Funding at Victoria School (Year 2000)

An innovative approach to address the facility needs at Victoria School is proposed, in part due to the magnitude of the physical plant, but also due to the aging condition of portions of the plant, and in response to shifting demands on the facility relative to the delivery of student programming. A request for concept development funding to enable the district to design an arts program school facility for Victoria School is proposed. This would involve upgrading portions of the existing school plant and replacing others that are no longer viable due to condition and programming change requirements. Once a concept is drafted, it would form the basis on which to approach potential equity partners on the project. Involvement with the arts community and the city are likely. It is estimated that \$50,000 would be required to complete the concept development work.

This school facility is nearing the top of the district’s priority list for school upgrading. Rather than submit a request for modernization of the school plant, and then apply the entire annual modernization allocation to the district to complete an upgrade, it is proposed that a combination of a partial facility modernization and partial facility replacement be considered.

School Modernization Needs (2000, 2001, 2002)

It is proposed that through the province’s school modernization and replacement program, the district proceed to address the schools ranked on the district’s current prioritized list of schools requiring upgrading depending on the announced annual allocation to the district. It is recommended that schools on the list with low current utilization rates not be addressed at this time. This approach accounts for the fact that, of the large number of schools that require attention, those that are using more of their classroom spaces to house classes of students should have priority. Student accommodation issues that are likely to impact utilization rates have also been considered. These schools will remain on the list for reconsideration annually.

In accordance with the current ranking, the following schools are the next 10 priorities for modernization:

School Modernization	Provincial Utilization Rate (using existing provincial formula)	Provincial Utilization Rate (proposed by the district to be more reflective of real space use)
Terrace Heights (K-6) - Phase II	45 %	75%
Mount Royal (K-6)	53 %	73%
Ottewell (7-9)	85 %	100%
Victoria (K-12)	67 %	95%
Westminster (7-9)	56 %	70%
Strathcona (10-12)	117%	100%
Woodcroft (K-6)	67%	80%
Highlands (7-9)	56%	70%
Montrose (K-6)	51%	75%
Grandview Heights (K-9)	95%	100%

In many cases, the province's utilization rate was not considered representative of how space was used. Some special needs programming impacts were not accounted for in the province's calculations, nor was the calculation sensitive to the fact that there are large and small class sizes (varying from class sizes of 15 students to 30) in each rated classroom. As such, district staff conducted site visits to estimate more realistic utilization rates for each of these school facilities, prior to determining which school facilities would be proposed for modernization. The more realistic utilization rates according to the district are referenced in the above chart. The attached draft of the district's 10 Year Facility Plan Strategy elaborates on the concerns the district has regarding the province's current space utilization calculations and the need for a provincial review.

The district is completing Phase I of Terrace Heights Modernization in 1999 and has planned to address a number of the classroom spaces in the year 2000, under the assumption that the district was going to receive block-funding for modernizations. However, given the recent decision by Alberta Infrastructure not to block fund at this time, it is a project partially complete and is thus the first priority.

Ritchie and Griesbach schools are the only two school facilities that meet the utilization criteria, but for accommodation reasons are proposed to be bypassed as priorities for the year 2000. They would have been priorities 4 and 6 if they were left on the modernization list. Ritchie School will be considered as a year 2001 modernization project. The district does not own the Griesbach School facility. Currently the district is in the second year of a five year lease to operate the school. It is expected that the Department of National Defence will turn the property over to Canada Lands in August 2000.

Victoria School is included on this list, although it is intended that concept development work would take place for the school as a year 2000 capital project to be followed with a request for capital funding beginning the following capital year.

Alberta Infrastructure has indicated that the facility condition assessments they are currently conducting will determine the amount of funding the district will be allocated for modernization in the year 2000. Alberta Infrastructure staff have indicated their intent to develop a block-funding formula for school modernization projects beginning with the year 2001, once the condition of all school facilities in the province have been assessed.

The administration will provide the completed submission package to trustees once it is complete.

BD/

- Appendix I - District Capital Project Priorities for the years 2000, 2001, and 2002
- Appendix II - Edmonton Public Schools: A 10-Year Facility Strategy
- Appendix III - Twin Brooks Chronology of Funding Requests
- Appendix IV - The Twin Brooks Multi-Use Proposal
- Appendix V - Summary of Carma Developers Proposal for Terwillegar Towne
- Appendix VI - Rationale for New School Construction and Portable Replacement Proposals