

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 21, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: 2002-2004 Capital Submission
ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Mike Brown, Bob Clark, Robert Craig, Seth Crook, Beatrice Denboer, Michael Ediger, Brian Fedor, Faye Parker, Deanne Patsula, Cindy Skolski

RECOMMENDATION

That the district's 2002-2004 Capital Submission (Appendix I), for forwarding to Alberta Infrastructure, be approved

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This report contains the recommended 2002-2004 Capital Submission to Alberta Infrastructure. Projects that were proposed in the district's 2000-2003 submission that were not approved by the province have been reconfirmed and are included in the 2002-2004 submission. The submission also proposes additional projects for 2004.

A number of provincial and local factors were considered by the administration in identifying and prioritizing the list of proposed school capital projects:

- Two years ago, the province unveiled its "New Century Plan" as a long term guideline for addressing school jurisdiction capital planning needs.
- Last year, Alberta Infrastructure allocated approximately \$1 billion for capital projects throughout the province. For the province's 2002 fiscal year, there will only be \$18 million available province-wide for new construction and modernization projects. This significant reduction in funds is expected to result in very few capital projects receiving approval for 2002. Regardless of the minimal funding available this year, it is recommended that the board continue to put forward its prioritized list of capital projects so that, when funds become available, the district is well positioned to address its capital needs.
- Unlike the past two years, this year there is no block modernization fund available to school districts. This means that, along with requests for new school construction, all of the district's modernization needs must be included in the capital submission. In each of 2000 and 2001, block modernization funds of about \$5 million gave the district some flexibility to address locally identified needs.
- The province's school facility audit that was completed in 1999 resulted in a relative condition rating for every school building in the province. Alberta Infrastructure staff

have indicated that the audit ratings are based on building condition and do not reflect programming factors. However, they do represent relative condition and there is an expectation that districts will use the results in establishing capital priorities.

- Based on the district's recent experience of modernizing schools, and the fact that the audit is now three years old, project costs are expected to be considerably higher than those specified in the audit estimates. As a result, cost estimates for the majority of proposed modernizations have been revised to reflect an amount that is approximately 75 per cent of the cost of new construction - the maximum that the province will provide for modernizations.
- The School Buildings Board's role has changed from being a capital project decision-making body to being an advisory body to the Ministers of Learning and Infrastructure, who approve school capital projects.
- The district's sector model (Appendix III) has been approved by the province as a basis on which to review new school construction proposals, instead of considering a district-wide utilization rate. This is of benefit to the district because several of our sectors are close to the 85 per cent utilization threshold.

The balance of this report outlines the rationale for capital project proposals for the years 2002, 2003, and 2004. Specific project proposals are attached in Appendix I. Appendix II contains the 2000-2003 capital submission, with an indication of the status of the various projects (previously approved, not approved, and the year in which they are proposed as part of the 2002-2004 capital submission).

School Modernization Projects

The province's facility audit scores were used to establish the priority order for proposed school modernization projects. Outstanding projects proposed in the district's last submission have been reconfirmed. In addition, proposed school modernizations for some of the schools that were included in the four concept development studies that took place over the last year have been inserted into the capital submission. They have been placed into the priority listing based on each school's audit score.

In determining approvals for modernization projects, the province considers the utilization and long term viability of school buildings. Officials from Alberta Infrastructure have indicated on a number of occasions that modernization funding would not be forthcoming for buildings that are underutilized or in geographic areas where several buildings have low utilization. In response to this requirement, a combination of demolition and modernization is proposed at four of the schools that were examined in the concept development studies. This will address on-site utilization of space and represents a commitment on the part of the district to use these school facilities to accommodate students over the long term.

Not all of the schools included in the concept development studies are proposed for modernization at this time. However, based on the extensive work done with school communities through the study process, a variety of needs and wishes have been identified in the other buildings as well. The administration will ensure that these facilities continue to be maintained at an acceptable standard over time through the district's annual Major Maintenance Plans. If other capital funding sources are announced or developed in the future, the administration will present proposals to board that address more of these schools' physical needs.

For 2004, several additional school modernizations are proposed, based on the audit scores.

Woodside Lease

In 1999, the district was successful in securing a 10-year lease for a facility to accommodate the Woodside program at Woodside Central. The province supported the concept and committed capital to cover the lease payments through its own three-year capital planning process. To date, lease payments have been committed to the end of 2002. Requests for lease payments for the 2003 and 2004 capital years are included in the proposed submission.

New School Construction Proposals

Two new elementary schools will be opening in the fall of 2002: George P. Nicholson School in Twin Brooks and Jackson Heights School in the Jackson Heights neighbourhood of Mill Woods. The capital submission proposes reconfirmation of the existing outstanding request for a new elementary school in the Lake District. This project was previously submitted for 2001 as a joint project with Edmonton Catholic Schools. Subsequent to this, Edmonton Catholic Schools received approval for a stand-alone school in the area. It is now proposed that this request be included as a project for 2003.

The administration has completed a study of junior high enrolment in the Burnewood/Meadows area, an approved concept study from the previous capital submission. The study included an examination of residential development activity in suburban locations across the city. Appendix IV contains a map that highlights key residential growth areas over an 18-month period. As a result of the study, it has been determined that a new 640-capacity junior high school can be rationalized for the Burnewood/Meadows area as a year 2004 capital project. A map showing the possible attendance area for the school as well as enrolment projections for the area are provided in Appendix V. There are two vacant junior high sites and two vacant elementary sites in the four neighbourhoods, any of which could potentially be used for the new school. Further study and analysis of development patterns will be required to determine which site should be selected.

A second enrolment study completed by the administration is the West End Junior High Study. Enrolment at the junior high and elementary levels, west of 199 street in The Grange and Lewis Farms plan areas (Appendix VI) is projected to increase significantly by 2004. The neighbourhood of Glastonbury was the fastest growing neighbourhood in Edmonton last year. Construction is scheduled to start in the Hamptons neighbourhood this summer. A K-9 school, with a 500 core capacity, would relieve junior high enrolment pressure on west end junior high schools and address the anticipated future demand for additional elementary space. There are two possible locations for the proposed school, both located in The Grange. Further study and analysis of development patterns will be required to determine which site should be selected.

In 1991, the board approved a motion to acquire school sites in new area structure plans on the basis of a two-tier system of grade organization, which meant the provision of two school building envelopes rather than three for a variety of K-12 configurations. This approach was seen as a way to increase flexibility and efficiency in facility utilization as well as reduce

construction costs and land requirements as compared to the traditional three-tier (K-6, 7-9, 10-12) system. Although the board at that time did not specify the grade levels that would be accommodated in each of the two tiers, sites have been identified in contemplation of an eventual K-8 and 9-12 grade organization.

Since the senior high component of the second tier is not forecast to be required within the three-year capital plan period, it is suggested that the proposed facility accommodate a kindergarten to grade 9 program. When the senior high component is needed, the option of moving grade 9 into that facility will be considered.

Free-Standing Portables

The previous capital submission proposed a plan for the district to replace some of its obsolete free-standing portables each year. However, no replacement portables were approved. With anticipated increases in enrolment in the outlying neighbourhoods, there will be a greater reliance on free-standing portables at a number of schools. It is therefore proposed that this plan be reconfirmed by requesting 10 replacement portables in each year of the submission.

Portable relocations for 2002 and 2003 have already been approved by the province, and 12 additional relocations are requested for 2004.

Other Initiatives

In December 2001, the Minister of Infrastructure sponsored a school facilities symposium dealing with the topic of public-private and public-public partnerships in the provision of school facilities. The government has demonstrated some obvious interest in exploring such partnerships in Alberta. However, there are currently significant legislative and other obstacles to such ventures. The administration will be prepared to participate in further initiatives that may come from the province in this regard once the provincial government has taken the necessary steps to remove the existing roadblocks. The administration will also continue to work with the City of Edmonton through their future school sites study initiative.

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- APPENDIX I - Proposed Edmonton Public Schools' Capital Project Priorities for 2002, 2003, and 2004
- APPENDIX II - Status of 2000-2003 Capital Submission Projects
- APPENDIX III - EPS Sector Model 2001-2002
- APPENDIX IV - Suburban Residential Development Activity
- APPENDIX V - Burnewood/Meadows Potential Junior High Attendance Area
- APPENDIX VI - Areas West of 199 Street