

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 13, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Victoria School Re-development

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Bob Clark, Brian Fedor, Ingrid Neitsch, Faye Parker

INFORMATION

The approval of the Victoria School re-development project arose from a demonstrated need for renewal of the building. Recent audits and building evaluations have confirmed that the building complex is "tired and worn out". The original approval of the project allocated a budget of \$63 million. The government fiscal announcements of October 18, 2001 have deferred \$62 million from the current budget year.

A budget of one million dollars remains in place and is intended to allow completion of program and preliminary design. The administration, school staff and consultants are proceeding with the program and design process and will continue to do so in anticipation of continued financial support in the next government fiscal year.

Prior to the project receiving approval, an extensive evaluation process was carried out which was designed to identify alternatives for the redevelopment, along with corresponding budget estimates. This process involved district staff, Alberta Infrastructure, consultants and other experts. The government approval then allocated a budget for the project and provided for the district to carry out further evaluation of preferred solutions.

As a result of the original evaluation process and subsequent evaluation by the district, the district is pursuing what has become known as the "Greenfield Option". This involves development of a replacement facility on the space currently occupied by the football field and running track to the west of the Centre for Education. The district's evaluation subsequent to project approval identified the following advantages to the "Greenfield Option":

- reduced impact on school operations - by developing a replacement structure on the adjacent site, the school students and staff will not have to contend with an extended period of construction disruption within an occupied building. The logistics of modernizing the existing complex would also result in the need to relocate students to a variety of satellite locations during the construction and demolition phases.

- improved safety – by not carrying out extensive modifications on the existing complex for an extended period of time, students and staff will not be exposed to the safety hazards associated with the process.
- reduced impact on enrollment – consideration has been given to the potential for students to refrain from attending the school during the construction phase.
- logistical impact – by developing a replacement facility on the adjacent site, the school operations can continue relatively unhindered until it is time to relocate to the “new” complex. This will reduce the move logistics to a predetermined time, which can be carried out in one continuous exercise. The demolition of the vacated complex can then be undertaken more safely and economically.
- economic and design impact – by designing and developing a replacement facility, the design team will not be encumbered with existing structures and the inherent unforeseens. This will enable the design to be more accommodating of school and program needs as opposed to structural limiting factors in the existing building and on site. It is felt that the final result will be more effective, practical and economical.

While there are numerous other benefits, a key benefit remains that the students and staff will not have to be distracted and or directly affected by a major project in an occupied building.

The property proposed for the replacement facility is made up of parcels owned by the district and the city. Discussions are underway with the city to acquire the city-owned interests through a land transfer. One of the options being explored is an exchange of the current city owned property for the land to be made available from the demolition of the existing structure.

BF:kk

APPENDIX I: Proposed project schedule