



Corporate Report

NO: R265

COUNCIL DATE: November 28,

2005

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: November 23,
2005

FROM: General Manager,
Planning and Development FILE: 0510-01

SUBJECT: Eligible School Sites Proposal 2006 – 2015

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council about the Surrey School District's Eligible School Sites Proposal 2006 – 2015 and to advise Council about a probable increase to the School Site Acquisition Charges ("SSAC") for residential development in Surrey.

BACKGROUND

Each year, all School Districts in B.C. are required to submit a five-year capital plan, including an estimate of the number, location and cost of proposed new school sites, to the Provincial Ministry of Education. This is known as the Eligible School Sites Proposal. The Ministry reviews and approves the capital plan, including the Eligible School Sites Proposal, as the basis for funding new schools in each District. The *Education Statutes Amendment Act, 2004*, requires that, prior to forwarding the Eligible School Sites Proposal to the Ministry, the School District advise the City and request City Council to either:

- pass a resolution to accept the School Board's resolution, regarding the Eligible School Site Proposal; or
- respond in writing to the School District indicating that it does not accept the Eligible School Site Proposal, documenting the reasons for the objection.

In preparing the School District capital plan, the School District utilizes the City's residential growth projections to calculate the number, size and location of new schools that will be required in the City over the next 10 years. The School District then estimates the costs for land acquisition, development and other capital requirements for each new school.

On October 13, 2005, the Board of School Trustees of the School District approved a resolution to incorporate the 2006 - 2015 Eligible School Sites Proposal into the School District's submission to the Ministry of Education (see Appendix "A").

In a letter dated November 2, 2005, the School District notified the City of the School Board resolution and requested that Council consider the 2006 - 2015 Eligible School Site Proposal. Pursuant to Section 937.4(6) of the *Education Statute Amendment Act*, the City must consider the School Board's resolution at a regular council meeting and, within 60 days of receiving the request:

937.4(6) (a) pass a resolution accepting the school board's resolution of proposed eligible school site requirements for the school district, or

(b) *respond in writing to the school board indicating that it does not accept the school board's proposed school site requirements for the school district and indicating*

(i) *each proposed eligible school site requirement to which it objects, and*

(ii) *the reasons for the objection.*

According to legislation, if the City fails to respond within 60 days of receiving such a request, it is deemed to have agreed to the proposed eligible school site requirements for the School District as set out in the School Board's resolution.

DISCUSSION

School Board Resolution - Eligible School Sites Proposal

The School District's Eligible School Sites Proposal 2006 - 2015 documents the projected growth in the number of school-aged children that will occur over the next 10 years in the City, the number of new schools that will be needed to accommodate this growth, the general location and area of land required for each new school and the acquisition costs for the school sites, including servicing the sites. The School District utilizes the City's residential growth projections as the basis for projecting the growth in student population and the allocation of this growth geographically across the City to establish where and when additional school capacity will be required.

The Eligible School Sites Proposal 2006 - 2015 has been based on the following:

- New residential development estimated at 39,933 housing units across the City over the next 10 years;
- An increase of 14,972 in the population of school-aged children in Surrey School District 36 over the next 10 years;
- That the new student population will require six new school sites and two school expansions over the next 10 years;
- That the new/expanded school sites will require the acquisition of 22 hectares (54 acres) of land; and
- That the new school sites will be purchased within five years and, at current land prices, will cost approximately \$27.5 million to acquire.

Land acquisition and site servicing cost estimates were reviewed and updated by the School District in June 2005.

It is important to note that a portion of future enrolment growth will be accommodated on sites previously purchased by the School District and by utilizing capacity available at existing facilities.

City staff has determined that the School District's calculations for growth in student population and the related demand for new schools/sites are generally consistent with City of Surrey's residential growth estimates for the 10-year period from 2006 to 2015. On this basis the School District's Eligible School Sites Proposal is considered to be reasonable.

School Site Acquisition Charges

The SSAC regulation is established through the authority of the Sections 937.2 and 937.91 of the *Local Government Act*. The regulation came into effect January 28, 2000. The *Local Government Act* empowers School Districts to adopt a by-law establishing SSAC that are to be paid by each new dwelling unit in new residential development within the particular jurisdiction. The rates are calculated to provide revenues to cover 35% of the acquisition and servicing costs for new school sites required within that jurisdiction over a 10-year period. The City of Surrey collects the SSACs on behalf of the School District and remits these charges to the School District each year. The current rates per dwelling unit for each of the different densities of residential development are documented in the following table.

Residential Development Density Category	Current SSAC (per dwelling unit)

Low (< 21 units per hectare)	\$647
Medium Low (21 - 50 units per hectare)	\$582
Medium (51 - 125 units per hectare)	\$518
Medium High (126 - 200 units per hectare)	\$453
High Density (> 200 units per hectare)	\$388

The School District, through consultants, has undertaken a review and updating of the acquisition and servicing costs of school sites that have been acquired since the inception of the SSAC legislation and has estimated that the SSACs will need to increase by about 20% across all of the above-referenced density categories (e.g., the SSAC rate for the Medium density category would increase from \$518 per dwelling unit to \$620 per dwelling unit) to ensure that sufficient funding is available through the SSAC to fund the necessary proportion (35%) of the acquisition and servicing of the needed school sites. The SSAC will not increase until the Ministry of Education has approved the capital plan for the School District, which is anticipated in the spring of 2006 and the School District undertakes an appropriate amendment to its by-laws thereafter. School District staff has indicated that they are willing to meet with City staff and representatives of the residential development industry, prior to the increases, to further explain the basis of the anticipated SSAC rate increases.

Council Position on SSACs

City Council has voiced concerns with the introduction of the SSAC legislation for a variety of reasons and has also voiced concerns that the SSAC legislation is not applied equitably across all School Districts in the Province. City Council has also requested that the Minister of Education take action to ensure that the SSACs are calculated and applied in a uniform manner across the Province. Due to these concerns, in considering Eligible School Site Proposals from the School District in previous years, Council has simply received the Proposal without passing a resolution to accept the Proposal. By taking such action, Council has not implied, through an acceptance of an Eligible School Site Proposal, that it was endorsing the concept of SSACs.

Council is not required to provide a resolution back to the School District on the Eligible School Sites Proposal. However, according to legislation, if the City fails to respond within 60 days of receiving the School Board resolution, regarding the Proposal, the City is deemed to have agreed to the Eligible School Sites Proposal, as set out in the School Board's resolution.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, even though the Eligible School Sites Proposal 2006 – 2015 is consistent with established methods for planning for school enrolment and related school sites and with the City of Surrey's residential growth projections, it is recommended that City Council receive this report as information and not provide a response to the School District regarding the Eligible School Sites Proposal.

Murray Dinwoodie
General Manager,
Planning and Development

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Attachment:

Appendix "A" – Eligible School Sites Proposal

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Appendix "A"













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