



Corporate Report

NO: R044

COUNCIL DATE: MARCH 12, 2007

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE:** March 1, 2007
FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture **FILE:** 1855-01
SUBJECT School Community Connections Grant

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information.
2. Endorse a joint grant application with the Surrey School District for \$40,000 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for the Step 2 of the School Community Connections Program Grant, understanding that both parties are responsible for abiding by the Terms and Conditions of the School Community Connections Program (SCC).

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding the School Community Connections Grant and to seek Council's endorsement of a joint application with the School District for Phase 2 funding to enable further planning to determine one or two specific school projects that would further promote schools as community focal points for learning and activity and increase community utilization of school space.

BACKGROUND

In February 2006, the Surrey School District and the City of Surrey received funding of \$5,000 to explore the feasibility of embarking upon a joint initiative involving the use of school facilities for community activities that compliment and support the literacy and learning mandate of the Ministry of Education. The SCC Program is a funding program jointly managed by the UBCM and the BC School Trustees Association on behalf of the BC Ministry of Education. The program grant provides school boards with funding to work with their local government and community partners to make greater utilization of school facilities for broader community purposes.

The Community School Partnership Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from the Surrey School District, the City of Surrey, United Way, Fraser Health Authority and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). The Committee's intention is to apply for this grant to expand and enhance spaces within Surrey schools with minor renovations or equipment that will help create more preschool and community space for this initiative. The grant does not require the City to match funds; however, it does require the Mayor and Council to endorse the grant in principle. The grant funding potential is up to \$40,000 with a final application process potential reaching up to \$125,000. The partners for this grant application are the Community School Partnership Committee membership.

DISCUSSION

The SCC programs objectives are to encourage and facilitate the coordination of services for students and their families and the larger community within school facilities and to encourage collaborative long-term facilities planning that takes into account the needs of the community as a whole. The grant process is 3 fold: Step 1 involves connecting with key stakeholders to explore the viability of the concept; Step 2 supports the planning of one or two specific school projects; and Step 3 supports matching funding for the start-up and minor capital costs needed for the implementation of the designated projects.

The City of Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Surrey School District have now completed the Step 1 – Making the Connection. Initial contact has been made with key stakeholders including the Surrey Public Library, Planning, MCFD – Surrey, local Fraser Health Authority Public Health Managers, the United Way of the Lower Mainland, the RCMP, as well as numerous community agencies. There is considerable common interest in proceeding with projects that support community use of schools particularly in the inner-city schools in Newton, Whalley and Guildford.

Before proceeding to Step II – Developing the Connection – staff need the endorsement of City Council to work with School District staff to determine one or two suitable school sites, explore program opportunities, and identify cost estimates – both capital and operating. Preliminary work suggests that Strawberry Hill school, an inner-city school with the highest ESL percentage in the school district, should be one of the designated projects as there is suitable classroom space that could be easily and cost effectively converted for local community purposes and there is significant need to connect with and build closer relationships with the pre-dominantly South Asian families in this area.

The SCC program also requires that both Council and the Surrey School Board agree to the terms and conditions as outlined in Appendix 1, prior to receipt of the Phase II SCC funds. Locally the SCC planning process will be overseen by a committee co-chaired by representatives from the Superintendent's Office and City of Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. The School District has agreed to provide the financial and reporting support required by the SCC grant.

Once Phase 2 work has been completed, staff will report back to Council and the School District on the final projects selected, the cost estimates, and the suggested approach for matching funding. It is anticipated that a report will be brought forward in July 2007.

The terms of agreement in this grant application are noted as follows:

Type of Project

- (a) Renovating and/or allocating indoor classroom facilities for non-traditional school programming in selected inner City schools to support Surrey's new Community School Partnership initiative; and
- (b) Potentially expand and/or renovate kitchen, washroom and storage spaces in these selected inner City schools to support community use programs.

Stakeholders

1. Internal Stakeholders
 - Trustees
 - Leadership Team
 - Inner City Principals Committee
 - Planning Department
 - Facilities
 - Principals of selected schools
2. Public Partners
 - City of Surrey
 - Fraser Health Authority (Surrey)
 - Ministry of Children and Families Department (Surrey)
3. Community Partners
 - Make Children First Coalition
 - Middle Years Matter Committee
 - Surrey Child and Youth Committee
 - Community Schools Partnership Committee

Assessment of School Board Assets

The 12 inner City schools selected to be part of the Community Schools Partnership initiative in Newton, Whalley, and Guildford will be reviewed for potential eligible space as per the School Community Connections requirements.

Neighbourhood Input

Neighbourhood input regarding potential projects will be sought as part of the Community Schools Partnership initiative.

Planning Activities

This will be overseen by the Community Schools Partnership Committee including:

- a review of student projections at each of the 12 selected inner City schools to determine where surplus classroom space can be guaranteed for 3 to 5 years;
- identification of specific classrooms and ancillary space that may be appropriate for non-traditional use and is complimentary with the program criteria of the Community Schools Partnership initiative;
- consultation with school and community stakeholders regarding the type of non-traditional programming most needed that is compatible with the space available;
- identification and assessment of specific renovation requirements;
- development of project proposals including rationale, proposed partnerships, renovation description, renovation budget and confirmation of partnerships and operational funding
- review and selection of the final projects; and
- development of any legal and technical documents required.

Evaluations

All proposals will be reviewed by the Community Schools Partnership Committee for:

- compatibility with the educational mandate and anticipated positive impact on educational outcomes of existing or future students;
- strategic value of the proposal to the larger community and to the specific user;
- commitment of school staff, PAC and community partners;
- efficiency and value of proposed facility renovations;
- operational sustainability of the project; and
- overall contribution to the Community Schools Partnership goals.

Cost Estimates

Consultant time to assist with stakeholder consultation process, school based research and proposal development, facilitation of project selection and preparation of reports.....	\$15,000
Facility department costs for developing renovation plans and budgets	\$12,500
Preliminary assessment and feasibility studies	\$ 5,000
Legal costs associated with partnership agreements.....	\$ 5,000
Meeting expenses – steering group, consultation processes etc.	<u>\$ 2,500</u>
Total	<u>\$40,000</u>

CONCLUSION

Parks, Recreation and Culture Staff have been working with the School District as well as a number of other partners to establish a Community School Partnership Committee. The City and School District have played a leadership role in advancing several initiatives related to the development of a community school concept in Surrey. This report is requesting Council’s endorsement of a joint grant application to UBCM for \$40,000 to move into the second stage of the SCC Program. These resources will be utilized to enhance the ability of a number of schools to be better used for broader community programming by transforming them into neighbourhood places for community learning, and by encouraging and facilitating the co-location of services for children, youth, their families and the larger community within school facilities. This initiative is strongly supported by several plans currently endorsed by Council including Surrey’s Crime Prevention Strategy and the Social Well Being Plan.

The identification of spaces and projects within the schools will be completed by July 2007 and if the funding is received, the School Board will renovate classrooms in the inner City schools to begin in the Fall of 2007.

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