

NO: **R237**

COUNCIL DATE: **November 5, 2012**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **October 25, 2012**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture** FILE: **0510-20/P**
Xc: 1850-01

SUBJECT: **Support for School District #36 Application for a School Community Connections Grant**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommend that Council:

1. resolve to support an application by the Surrey School District #36 to the School Community Connections (SCC) Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres Program for a grant in the amount of \$17,500 to fund the renovation of an unused space at the Port Kells Elementary School to render it safe and suitable for a private preschool and out-of-school care operation; and
2. authorize the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to the Surrey Board of Education for its use in making the subject application.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to receive Council endorsement for a grant application by Surrey School District #36 to the School Community Connections (SCC) Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres Program for funding to support renovations to unused space at the Port Kells Elementary School to create a preschool and out-of-school care program that will assist in meeting the childcare needs of this growing community.

BACKGROUND

The *School Community Connections* (SCC) Program was launched in 2005 through a one-time \$10 million grant from the provincial Ministry of Education. The program is jointly managed by the Union of BC Municipalities and the BC School Trustees Association and is intended to promote sustainable and innovative collaboration between Boards of Education and local governments.

The SCC Program encourages greater community use of school facilities and supports co-location of services. The program has evolved from an early emphasis on determining common needs and planning how these needs could be met to more recent programs that emphasize implementation activities such as minor capital improvements.

In 2010, the *Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres* program was launched through SCC. Boards of Education and local governments were invited to apply for grants of up to \$30,000 per school district, under two rounds of funding. The 2010 program is nearing completion with over 160 projects having been approved for funding.

The final round of funding under the SCC program is now being offered in support of renovation projects within school districts in the spirit of the Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres program. This final program is intended to enhance access to learning services in partnership with local governments and other community agencies.

Surrey School District #36 is applying to the SCC Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centre program for a \$17,500 grant to fund renovations to unused space at the Port Kells Elementary School to provide efficient space for preschool and out of school care programming. This renovation will meet a growing demand for such services in this community.

The grant application requires both a signed Board of Trustees motion and a municipal Council or regional district board resolution, indicating local government's support for the project. Grants of up to \$17,500 per school district are available to support neighbourhood learning centres by:

- encouraging the co-location of services for students, their families and the community at large within school facilities;
- making greater utilization of available or new school facilities; and
- encouraging collaborative, long term facilities planning that takes into account the needs of the community as a whole.

The Surrey Board of Education adopted the following motion;

“THAT the Board support the submission of a funding proposal in the amount of \$17,500 to the SCC Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres Program to support the renovation of an unused space at the Port Kells Elementary School to render it safe and suitable for a preschool and out of school care operation.”

The Board has requested the City's support for the project in the form of a resolution.

DISCUSSION

The City of Surrey has a high demand for preschool and out-of-school care services based on the information that is contained in the Surrey Child Care Gap Assessment Report completed in October 2011 and in the 2012 IBM Smarter Cities Report. Investment in childcare infrastructure and services will have both short and long term benefits to the children, youth and families of Surrey. Staff is supportive of the space conversion as proposed by the School District and of the additional services that are proposed to be provided to the community.

SUSTAINABILITY

Surrey's Sustainability Charter states: *(Under the Municipal Jurisdiction Sphere, Scope Action SC6: Accessible and Appropriately Located Services within the City) The City will support the equitable distribution of services and amenities for Surrey residents by: continuing to work with the Surrey School District and other community partners to support and develop the initiatives such as the Community Schools Partnership Initiative so that social and health services, as well as recreational,*

cultural, educational and library services can be provided at the neighbourhood level through the use of school facilities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- resolve to support an application by the Surrey School District #36 to the School Community Connections (SCC) Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres Program for a grant in the amount of \$17,500 to fund the renovation of an unused space at the Port Kells Elementary School to render it safe and suitable for a private preschool and out-of-school care operation; and
- authorize the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to the Surrey Board of Education for its use in making the subject application.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager,
Parks, Recreation and Culture