



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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January 18, 2024

Honourable Rachna Singh
Minister of Education and Child Care
PO Box 9045 Stn. Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Via Email: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh:

Re: Langley City School Expansion

On behalf of Langley City Council, I want to extend our appreciation for meeting with us at the 2023 UBCM Convention with respect to overcrowding and portables in Langley City schools. I am writing to continue our conversation on the need for school expansion in Langley City and to provide you with new population projections for 2024 to 2033 resulting from the Provincial Government's introduction of Bills 44 and 47 in 2023.

As discussed, there are six elementary schools and one middle school, most built in the 1970s, within Langley City's municipal boundaries. Our new Official Community Plan focuses on creating a diverse housing stock with affordable options for all segments of the population, especially families with children. Additionally, SkyTrain is arriving in our community by 2028, which will drive increased population growth in the City over the long term. These factors have led to school enrolment increasing beyond current capacity, with even greater future demand anticipated.

Langley City supports the legislation and policy under Bills 44 and 47 and our City Council wants to be part of the solution to address the affordability and housing crisis. In early 2024, we prepared a new 10-year projection for units and students, under a high and a low development rate scenario, as shown in the table below:

	High	Low	School District's 10-Year Projection (dated June 15, 2021)
Unit Projection	6,000 units	5,000 units	2,482 units
Student Projection	700 students	650 students	490 students

Increasing rates of growth are already occurring, and it is likely that this trend will continue over the next five years and beyond when SkyTrain comes into operation in 2028. The following table shows Development Permit applications received for multifamily residential projects over the last three years:

Year	# Applications Received	# Units Applied For
2020	8	664
2021	12	1,056
2022	8	870
2023	12	1,012

For context, in the most recent (2021) census, Langley City had 13,271 housing units. Accordingly, the number of housing units applied for as shown in the table above represents the addition of 5-8% of the existing housing stock every year.

The Nicomekl neighbourhood, relative to the City's five other neighbourhoods, is experiencing the highest growth in the City, absorbing approximately 80% of the City's net population growth. Another important statistic to consider is that most of the new growth in the Nicomekl neighbourhood occurred in the 35-39 and 60-69 age groups; it is reasonable to assume that some of the 35-39 age group are in lone parent and two parent family households, which in turn generates more elementary school-aged children.

The table below illustrates the number of dwelling units that were recently completed and currently under construction and Development Permits issued in the Nicomekl neighbourhood at 2023 year end:

	Completed in 2023	Under Construction	Development Permits Issued	Total
Townhouse Units	33	4	122	159
Apartment Units	410	995	833	2,238
Total Units	443	999	955	2,397

The 4-year projections for units and students, under high and low development rate scenarios within the Nicomekl Neighbourhood are shown in the table below:

	High	Low
Unit Projection	1,633 units	1,477 units
Student Projection	165 students	156 students

As there are no school sites planned within Langley City, we have advocated to the Provincial Government over the years to establish separate School Site Acquisition Charges (SSACs) for Langley City and Langley Township so that SSACs collected within Langley City would be applied to school site acquisition, school reconstruction, expansion, or renovation for schools within Langley City. Today, Langley City's developments continue to contribute toward school site acquisitions in Langley Township with no significant benefits to students or reconstruction/expansion/renovation to existing schools while facing current and future growth pressure in Langley City.

While the proposed budget request for an eight-classroom expansion of Nicomekl Elementary School is a positive step in 2025/26, the estimated cost of \$28,030,139 is not insignificant and we are concerned that this may not be approved by the Ministry in the face of competing projects and rising construction costs. Therefore, we are seeking commitment from the Province to approve the budget for the Nicomekl Elementary School expansion project and/or advance the funding for this project to 2024/25.

We would also note that other neighbourhoods in Langley City will be facing growth as well and this will necessitate further capital investment in other schools in Langley City to ensure they can reasonably accommodate student growth through adding new classrooms or expanding/renovating existing school buildings and sites.

On behalf of Langley City Council, we welcome the opportunity to work with the Ministry of Education and the School District 35 Board and/or Administration to ensure that the necessary funds are allocated accordingly for the construction, expansion, or renovation of Langley City schools to meet current and future needs.

I look forward to your response.

Yours truly,
CITY OF LANGLEY



Nathan Pachal
Mayor

cc: Andrew Mercier, MLA – Langley
Langley City Council
Candy Ashdown, Chair, Langley School Board of Trustees
Francis Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer