



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: School District No. 35 – 2024 Eligible School Sites Proposal

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Doc #:

From: Roy M. Beddow, RPP, MCIP
Deputy Director of Development Services

Date: July 2, 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council accept the School District No. 35 Eligible School Sites Proposal adopted by Langley Board of Education at its meeting on June 18, 2024.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the report is to review the 2024 Eligible School Sites proposal from School District No. 35.

POLICY:

Division 20 of the Local Government Act provides for the establishment of School Site Acquisition Charges “to assist boards of education to pay the capital costs of meeting eligible school site requirements”. Eligible school site requirements are determined in consultation with applicable local governments based on projected growth in accordance with Section 574 of the Act. School Site Acquisition Charges (SSAC’s) are set using a formula in Section 575 of the Act while development categories and maximum fees are defined in the “School Site Acquisition Charge Regulation”. SSAC’s are payable to local governments at the same time as development cost charges: prior to building permit issuance or subdivision approval.

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

1. Background

The Langley Board of Education adopted a resolution to approve a new Eligible School Sites proposal at the June 18, 2024 Board meeting. The resolution is a required step in the SSAC approval process and triggers a 60-day referral period for formal consideration by the affected local governments (i.e. City and Township of Langley). Under Section 574(6) of the Act, a local government council must pass a resolution accepting or not accepting (and stating the objections and reasons therefore) the proposed Eligible School Sites. Although the School District adopted an Eligible School Sites resolution and new School Site Acquisition Charges based on ten years of projected growth as recently as 2021, the Ministry of Education now requires school districts to repeat the process each year.

2. 2024 Eligible School Sites Proposal

The basis for the 2024 Eligible School Sites proposal is an updated set of growth projections for the City and Township of Langley developed in consultation with municipal planning staff. The 2024 growth projections are significantly higher than the 2021 projections in both municipalities in response to higher regional growth trends and greater housing development activity observed in the Langley's.

SD35 10-Year Growth Projections

Township of Langley	Units	Students
Single Detached	2,000	1,760
Townhouse	4,750	2,630
Rowhouse	500	300
<u>Apartment</u>	<u>10,500</u>	<u>1,100</u>
Subtotal	17,750	5,790
City of Langley	Units	Students
Single Detached	133	113
Townhouse	423	236
Rowhouse	69	35
<u>Apartment</u>	<u>4,829</u>	<u>507</u>
Subtotal	5,454	891
Total	23,204	6,681

The City's housing unit projection for the ten-year period has more than doubled reflecting the large number of apartment units currently under construction or in the building permit/development approval process.

Based on the growth projections which foresee the addition of 23,204 new dwelling units and 6,681 new students, four new school sites will be required in the District for two new elementary and two new middle schools.

SD35 10-Year Growth Required School Sites¹

School Site	Area	Estimated Cost
Brookwood/Fernridge Middle	14.9 acres (6.030 ha) ²	\$60,000,000
Willoughby Slope Middle	14.9 acres (6.030 ha) ²	\$92,380,000
Williams Elementary	5 acres (2.023 ha)	\$30,000,000
Smith Elementary	5 acres (2.023 ha)	\$31,000,000
Total	39.8 acres (16.113 ha)	\$213,380,000

¹Does not include eligible sites already approved for acquisition

²7.5 acres if a joint site

All the required new school sites are located in the Willoughby or Brookwood/Fernridge areas of the Township of Langley. The District has determined that the 891 new students resulting from the City of Langley’s projected growth can be accommodated without the addition of any new school sites in the City although additions to existing school buildings may be required.

3. School Site Acquisition Charges

Unlike previous Eligible School Site proposals referred to the City, the 2024 proposal does not include any increase to School Site Acquisition Charges (SSAC’s). The Charges were increased in 2021 to the maximum amounts permitted by the “School Site Acquisition Charge Regulation” and the rates remain as shown below.

Proposed School Site Acquisition Charges (Unchanged)

Development Type	SSAC
Low Density (<21 units/ha)	\$ 1,000
Medium Low Density (21-50 units/ha)	\$ 900
Medium Density (51-125 units/ha)	\$ 800
Medium High Density (126-200 units/ha)	\$ 700
High Density (>200 units/ha)	\$ 600

4. City of Langley Consideration

Previous requests for a separate determination of Eligible School Sites and SSAC’s for the City of Langley exclusive of the Township were rejected by the Ministry of Education. In 2021, Langley City Council accepted the Eligible School Sites Proposal and its increased SSAC’s but requested “...that the School Site Acquisition Charges collected in the City of Langley be utilized to fund capital improvements of school facilities in the City of Langley”. Section 101(3) of the School Act, however, provides that SSAC’s may only be used:

- (a) for the acquisition of land to meet the board's eligible school site requirements, as defined in section 571, of that Act,
- (b) to pay administration fees and disbursements authorized by a regulation made under section 581 (h) of that Act, and
- (c) to pay any disbursements related to the sale, transfer or subdivision of land received under Division 20 of Part 14 of that Act.

Recognizing the constraints of the legislation, the City must either object to the specific school sites proposed by the District or accept the Eligible School Sites proposal. Since there are no new school sites identified in the City's Official Community Plan and there is no basis for objecting to the four Township sites identified in the proposal, it is recommended that the City accept the 2024 Eligible School Sites proposal.

With regard to future facilities planning and dialog with the District, the City is guided by Policy 3.34 of the Official Community Plan:

Collaborate with School District No. 35 in supporting, upgrading, and expanding City schools to meet the needs of City residents as educational facilities and centres of civic activity in neighbourhoods.

To that end, the City has regularly advocated for expansion of the City's schools, and City staff regularly share information and communicate with District staff on growth projections, planning and development activity to support this advocacy and ensure the District is fully aware of development activity levels.

Planned Nicomekl Elementary School Expansion

Lastly, in June 2024 the Ministry of Education and Child Care announced an eight classroom, \$12 million expansion of Nicomekl Elementary School, which is located in the fastest growing neighbourhood in the City. According to the Ministry, this expansion is scheduled to be completed by Fall 2025. This expansion is welcomed as evidence of the Province's recognition of rapid residential growth in the City and the need to provide the necessary new classroom space to meet increased student generation. The City will continue to advocate for school space expansion in the coming years as population growth is expected to accelerate with the expected arrival of SkyTrain in 2029.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

N.A.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do not respond to School District No. 35's 2024 Eligible School Sites proposal (City will be deemed to have accepted the proposal under Section 574(7) of the Local Government Act);
2. Object to one or more of the proposed school sites in School District No. 35's 2024 Eligible School Sites proposal, stating the reasons therefore.

Respectfully Submitted,



Roy M. Beddow, RPP, MCIP
Deputy Director of Development Services

Concurrence:



Carl Johannsen, RPP, MCIP
Director of Development Services

Attachment(s):

1. School District No. 35 Letter to City – June 24, 2024

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

I support the recommendation.



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer