



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: **School District No. 35 – 2025 Eligible School Sites Proposal**

File #: 6620.00

Doc #:

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

Date: July 10, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council accept the School District No. 35 Eligible School Sites Proposal adopted by Langley Board of Education at its meeting on June 17, 2025.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the report is to review the 2025 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 its meeting on June 17, 2025. 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. If no resolution is received within the referral period, the local government is deemed to have accepted the proposal. Although the School District adopted an Eligible School Sites resolution based on ten years of projected growth as recently as 2024, the Ministry of Education & Child Care now requires school districts to repeat the process each year.

2. 2025 Eligible School Sites Proposal

The basis for the 2025 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 2025 growth projections are somewhat higher than the 2024 projections in both municipalities in response to higher regional growth trends and greater housing development activity observed (new units under construction or proposed) in the Langley’s.

Township of Langley	Units	Students
Single Detached	2,080	1,897
Townhouse	5,365	3,244
Rowhouse	438	250
<u>Apartment</u>	<u>9,636</u>	<u>980</u>
Subtotal	17,520	6,371*
City of Langley	Units	Students
Single Detached	136	123
Townhouse	464	283
Rowhouse	0	0
<u>Apartment</u>	<u>5,541</u>	<u>562</u>
Subtotal	6,141	968
Total	23,661	7,339*

*2024 Subtotals: Township – 5,790 students, City – 891 students

Based on the growth projections which foresee the addition of 23,661 new dwelling units and 7,339 new students over the next ten years, two new elementary school sites, two new middle school sites and two new sports field and play space sites will be required in the District as listed in the table below.

SD35 10-Year Growth Required School Sites¹

School Site	Area	Estimated Cost
South West Latimer Sport field/Playspace	5 ac (2.0 ha)	32,500,000
North East Gordon (Jericho) Sport field/Play space	5 ac (2.0 ha)	32,500,000
Willoughby Elementary #3	10 ac (4.0 ha)	65,000,000
Willoughby Elementary #4	10 ac (4.0 ha)	65,000,000
Willoughby Slope Middle (4.6 Ha joint site)	15 ac (6.1 ha)	97,500,000
Brookwood Fernridge Middle (4.6 Ha joint site)	15 ac (6.1 ha)	97,500,000
Total	60 ac (24.3 ha)	\$390,000,000

¹Does not include eligible sites already approved for acquisition

All of 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 968 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 building, such as the Nicomekl Elementary School expansion currently underway, may be required.

3. School Site Acquisition Charges

Although the estimated cost of the new school sites in the 2025 proposal have significantly increased (\$176,620,000 higher) from the 2024 Eligible School Sites, the School Site Acquisition Charges (SSAC’s) are unchanged. 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 staff are aware of for objecting to the six Township sites identified in the proposal, it is recommended that the City accept the 2025 Eligible School Sites proposal.

5. Future Planning and Nicomekl Elementary Expansion

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.

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. The City issued a building permit for the expansion in February 2025 and construction of the pre-fabricated modular addition has proceeded rapidly with completion projected for mid-August 2025. The

expansion will increase the capacity of Nicomekl Elementary by approximately 200 students.

The City will continue to advocate for school space expansion in the coming years as population growth is expected to accelerate with the arrival of SkyTrain in 2029. In addition, long range planning for new transit-oriented development in the Study Areas identified in the OCP along Fraser Highway, 200 Street and Langley Bypass, as well as the Logan Avenue corridor, will consider the need for new school sites to serve the north/north-west sector of the City. The City will consult with the School District on any potential amendments to the Official Community Plan and potential school expansion or new school site needs.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

N.A.


SUMMARY:

School District No. 35 has updated its proposal for Eligible School Sites to provide for projected student population growth over the next ten years. All of the required new school sites identified are located in the Township of Langley. The updated Eligible School Sites proposal will not result in any changes to the existing School Site Acquisition Charges. It is recommended that Council accept the 2025 Eligible School Sites proposal.

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 2025 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:

1. June 18, 2025 Letter to CAO from SD35 Secretary-Treasurer.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

I support the recommendation.



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer