



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Update on the development of a community service hub in the Jamestown/Rexdale priority neighbourhood and negotiations with the Toronto Catholic District School Board for the reuse of a surplus school.

Date:	January 22, 2009
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Chief Corporate Officer and Executive Director, Social Development Finance and Administration
Wards:	Ward 1 – North Etobicoke
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the development of a multi-service community hub in the Jamestown/Rexdale priority neighbourhood.

Through the Jamestown/Rexdale Neighbourhood Action Partnership, the City of Toronto is working with community service providers, Albion Neighbourhood Services and Rexdale Community Health Centre, and other funding partners, United Way of Greater Toronto and the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, to develop a service hub facility inclusive of a health centre satellite and multiple community and City services.

The priority actions at this time are to formalize the City’s intent with respect to the use of the former Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School and to fully develop a community management model to manage the multi-service community hub.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Corporate Officer and Executive Director of the Social Development, Finance and Administration Division recommend that:

1. Staff be authorized to enter into negotiations with the Toronto Catholic District School Board regarding terms for a long term lease of the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School site and report back to Council with respect to the results of those negotiations.
2. The Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration be directed to report to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the recommended community-based board of management governance model, in consultation with local residents and tenant agencies.

Implementation Points

City staff are beginning the process of formally advising the Toronto Catholic District School Board of its conditional interest in the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School. Following the completion of a building condition assessment and an environmental assessment, staff are working with community partners to determine the capital costs associated with the renovations required to make the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School suitable for use as a multi-service community centre, inclusive of a satellite community health centre. Design, Construction and Asset Preservation is analyzing the results and working with Real Estate Services and the community agencies to determine rental rates, prior to the City making a conditional offer for the lease of the school site.

A project team made up of the relevant City staff (Social Development Finance and Administration, Facilities and Real Estate, Planning, Strategic and Corporate Policy, Toronto Legal, and other as needed), United Way of Greater Toronto, the Youth Challenge Fund and community agency representatives will continue to meet to develop the local Board of Management model and refine the business case.

A report detailing the establishment of a Board of Management will be submitted to the Community Development and Recreation Committee upon successful conclusion of lease negotiations with TCDSB.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts as a result of approval of this report. The Chief Corporate Officer will report back to Council with the results of negotiations. The report will include the capital costs to develop the community service hub as well as the annual lease and operating costs for the building.

It is anticipated that there will be no operating cost to the City. Toronto City Council allocated \$1 million in capital funding for the Rexdale multi-service community hub through the Partnership Opportunities Legacy Fund in the 2008 Capital Budget for this purpose. The lease and operating costs will be shared by the tenant groups.

It should be noted that while the City is not identified as a contributor to covering operating costs, the risk to the City is that should one of the service delivery agencies who hold tenancy in the hub default or leave, the City would be required to cover the associated operating costs until a replacement tenant is secured. City divisions are aware of this risk and are working together to resolve or manage it.

The Acting Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agree with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At the December 13, 2007 meeting of Toronto City Council, staff were directed to prioritize discussions with the Toronto Catholic District School Board about securing the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School for a community health centre/community hub as part of larger interest based discussions with the Board to review and assess possible property partnerships. Staff were also directed to report back to the Community Development and Recreation Committee and the Executive Committee, if appropriate, on progress of these discussions.

In the 2008 Capital Budget process, Toronto City Council designated \$1 million in capital funding for the creation of a multi-service community hub in Rexdale through the Partnership Opportunities Legacy Fund.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Through the Community Safety Plan (2004) and the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy (2005), the City identified Jamestown/Rexdale as one of thirteen (13) priority neighbourhood areas with a relative lack of community infrastructure. These City policy frameworks equate strong, safe neighbourhoods with solid service infrastructure investment to meet community needs. They call for the City to be a leader in supporting new opportunities for building, renovating and administering service infrastructure, and to leverage City resources in funding partnerships with other orders of government. The

Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MHLTC) and the United Way of Greater Toronto have allocated capital and operating funds for the development of a satellite community health centre and service hub in the Jamestown/Rexdale neighbourhood.

The TCDSB has just opened a new building for Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School at Finch and Martin Grove Road and in December 2008 declared the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School site at 21 Panorama Court as surplus to its needs. This old school building is the ideal site for the development of a multi-service community hub.

The potential reuse of the former Father Henry Carr School is a strong example of an investment partnership between the City of Toronto, the Province, United Way of Greater Toronto and community agencies to create a significant new multi-service centre in Jamestown/Rexdale managed by a City Board of Management.

COMMENTS

The need for additional community service infrastructure in the Jamestown/Rexdale neighbourhood has been identified by the City, United Way of Greater Toronto and MHLTC. Community needs assessments and consultations conducted previously by the Neighbourhood Action Partnership, and then in 2007 by Rexdale Community Health Centre and Albion Neighbourhood Services to develop the satellite health centre and community hub, indicate a need for community space for a range of health, learning, and resident engagement services, youth programs, child and parenting supports, recreational activities, and employment skill development. At the provincial level, two significant recent reports – the Roots of Youth Violence (2008) and the Anti-Poverty Report (2008) – both speak to the need and potential for school as community hubs to better provide the range of programs, services and engagement opportunities required by communities.

The City established an interdivisional project team to work with local service providers and the United Way on the development of a proposal for the use of the former Father Henry Carr Catholic School as a multi-service community hub.

In 2007, the project team explored a number of options to create space to meet these community needs, including a possible expansion of the Elmbank Community Centre. However, the 65,000 sq. ft facility at 21 Panorama Court appears to be the most cost effective option with the capacity to resolve the identified space needs in this priority neighbourhood. As such, it is an ideal site for co-located community services and programs.

TCDSB Property Disposal Process

The process by which school boards dispose of surplus properties is regulated by the Province - Ontario Regulation 444/98 under the Education Act. On December 4, 2008,

and as required by Reg. 444/98, the TCDSB delivered notice to the City of its intention to dispose of the former Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School building by way of long term lease or sale. Council authority is requested in this report to begin negotiations with the Board for a long term lease of this site.

The project team is working with a group of potential community agencies, identified through an expression of interest process, to finalize space requirements and determine rental rates.

Business Plan

MHLTC, through its delivery agency Rexdale Community Health Centre, has allocated capital and operating funding for the development of a satellite community health centre. The United Way, working through Albion Neighbourhood Services, has allocated \$1 million in capital and \$150,000 in annual operating funding for the establishment of a community hub. Through the Partnership Operating Legacy Fund, the City of Toronto designated \$1 million in capital funding to support the development of this multi-service community hub. The Youth Challenge Fund is in discussion with the project team about potentially contributing additional capital and operating funding to a NIA, a potential youth arts component to the hub.

Rexdale Community Health Centre, Albion Neighbourhood Services, and additional community-based agency partners, through their tenancy, will contribute to the annual operating costs of the facility.

Creating this multi-service community hub at a school site is a complex process. It involves multiple funding and community partnerships, two provincial ministries – health and education – and multiple approval processes. Consequently, this process contains a certain amount of risk.

Capital Development

A Building Condition Assessment was prepared by Hilditch Architect and Construction Control Inc. for United Way and the City of Toronto in 2008. This report indicates that 21 Panorama Court is in good condition but would require capital repairs totaling approximately \$2M in order to upgrade the facility to a state of good repair. An Environmental Assessment was also conducted by the City's Design, Construction and Asset Preservation section in 2008. The facility is environmentally sound, requiring asbestos removal at a cost \$70,000.

The City will manage the state of good repair renovations with funding from United Way and other capital partners. Tenant agencies will undertake their own lease-hold improvements with City oversight in the facility.

The business plan allows for additional tenancy of community delivery agencies which would result in low operating costs for all co-located community-based agencies. Through an Expression of Interest process, the project team has identified 46 potential community agency partners and are working with them to confirm accompanying revenue.

The refinement of the business case will be dependant on the outcome of the assessment of renovation requirements and the building and environmental condition assessments. Should either process identify significant building deficiencies requiring funding beyond that identified, the project will not proceed. While the City is not identified as a contributor to covering operating costs, the risk to the City is that should one of the tenants default or leave, it would be required to cover the associated operating costs until a replacement tenant is secured.

Community Governance Model

Several community discussions have been held to engage local residents as well as service agencies in determining how a satellite health centre/multi-service hub should be governed. Residents and community service agencies have identified a need for the City to assume accountability for the management of the facility and that residents and community service agencies should have an active role in the management of the satellite health centre/service hub.

An option available to the City which provides for both active resident/agency involvement in the management of a neighbourhood facility and Council oversight is to create a local board of management. The Board of Management model has the additional advantages of not requiring additional land use approvals and being exempt from property tax as of right. Staff are working with the tenant agencies, the ward Councillor and residents to develop a board of management and will report to Council with a recommended structure should the lease negotiations with TCDSB be successful.

The Jamestown/Rexdale multi-service community hub development is a potential partnership opportunity for the Province, United Way of Greater Toronto, community agencies and the City to provide a much needed expansion of a broad range of community services. This report seeks authority to enter into a lease with TCDSB, and to finalise the development of a tenancy model and a board of management structure for Council consideration.

CONTACT

Denise Andrea Campbell
Acting Director, Community Resources
Phone: 392-0103, Fax: 392-8492
Dcampb6@toronto.ca

Raymond Kessler
Manager, Real Estate Services
Phone: 392-8155, Fax: 392-1880
rkessle@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Chris Brillinger,
Acting Executive Director,
Social Development, Finance and Administration

Bruce Bowes
Chief Corporate Officer