



Councillor Michael Ford

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CD.18.9



Date: March 1st, 2017

To: Community Development and Recreation Committee Members

From: Councillor Michael Ford

Re: Community Service Opportunities at the Don Bosco Secondary School Site

Background:

Don Bosco Secondary School is located in Etobicoke North, on Islington Avenue between Highway 401 and Dixon Road. From 1971 through to 1983, the school operated as Keiller MacKay Collegiate Institute, under the Etobicoke Board of Education. In 1983, the school was sold to the Metropolitan Separate School Board, which is now the TCDSB, and has operated since then as Don Bosco Secondary School. For almost 50 years, this school has served the community and residents of Etobicoke North, being a safe space for students and teachers in their learning environment. Furthermore, the school has been a space where not-for-profits have run youth camps, where agencies have come together to hold job fairs, and where youth have gathered after school hours for sports camps. With enrollment of the school currently under 100 students, the TCDSB will be closing the school at the end of this 2016/2017 school year.

This school is located in the Kingsview Village - The Westway Neighbourhood Improvement Area. Without a Community Centre in the area and given the overwhelming demand from service providers, agencies, community partners and residents for affordable community space, it is crucial to have a plan in place when it comes to this very important community facility. With a provincial mandate focussing on the creation of Community Hubs, and the City of Toronto strongly encouraging school boards to retain core holdings and repurpose them for community uses, there is reason to have the City take a leadership role in working with the Toronto Catholic District School Board to develop plans specific to Don Bosco Secondary School.

Recommendations:

City Council direct the Executive Director of Social Development, Finance, and Administration, the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and the Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning to identify appropriate community service programming opportunities and community service tenants for the Don Bosco Secondary School site and report back in the third quarter of 2017 on options and on the feasibility of establishing the site as a community hub.

Sincerely,

Michael Ford
Councillor, Ward 2