



Design Consultant Contract Award – Mass Timber Replacement School at Poplar Road Junior Public School

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 1 June, 2023

Report No.: 06-23-4551

Strategic Directions

- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Consultant Contract to the joint venture comprised of *Diamond Schmitt* and *Moffet & Duncan Architects* for a fixed fee of \$1,387,300 for the design of the Poplar Road Junior Public School replacement school, including a 5-room Childcare, in Ward 19 be approved.

Context

The existing Poplar Road Jr. PS is a Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 6 school with a capacity of 293 pupil places. This project was part of the 2022-2023 Business Case to support the closure of existing Jack Miner Sr. PS, and conversion of Poplar Road Jr. PS and Elizabeth Simcoe Jr. PS to a JK-8 school model. The scope of this project will allow consolidation of the student population and an increased enrollment.

Located near the intersection of Poplar Road and Dearham Wood, the school building occupies a 6.87-acre site. The proposed replacement school will have a capacity of 341 pupil places from JK to Grade 8 and a 5-room childcare. The replacement school will be constructed behind the existing school, while the existing school remains operational. The new building will be of mass timber construction and contain low carbon mechanical systems.

In April 2022, the Ministry of Education (EDU) approved \$13,440,170 in funding, including Capital Priorities and Child Care Capital funding, for a new replacement school at Poplar Road JPS. In December 2022, the EDU approved the Facility Space Template to allow the TDSB to begin the design phase.

A feasibility study was conducted by Studio VMA to investigate the benefits of mass timber construction and a low carbon mechanical system based on a concept design for the new Poplar Road JPS. The feasibility study also included life cycle cost analysis to review long term operational cost benefits.

Mass timber is a modular structural system that consists of multiple solid wood panels nailed, glued, or dowelled together providing strength and stability for a building structure. The many benefits of mass timber include increased productivity and well-being due to the use of wood in the interior, enhanced thermal performance, reduced carbon emissions, increased construction speed, less construction vehicle traffic, and reduced noise and dust.

Based on the findings of the study, and the significant benefits of mass timber for a faster and safer construction process, the TDSB will pursue a low carbon mass timber replacement school, and ensured that the successful consultant team has been evaluated based on their experience and technical knowledge of these design strategies.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

The scope and details of the proposed replacement school were communicated through a Request for Proposal (RFP). 8 firms responded to the RFP posted by Purchasing on the Bids & Tenders platform. The evaluation committee consisted of the Manager of Capital Project Development and Community Consultation, Manager of Capital Project Delivery, and the Design Coordinator. The evaluation process consisted of 5 criteria: firm experience and quality, technical and design abilities, relevant project experience, fees, and the interview. Experience in similar projects and the fees are the highest weighted criteria. The highest scored proponent was invited to an interview evaluated by the evaluation committee and observed by Purchasing and the school Principal. The Trustee and the Superintendent of Education were also invited to attend as observers in the interview.

It is recommended that the joint venture of *Diamond Schmitt and Moffet & Duncan Architects*, as the highest scoring proponent, be awarded this project based on the submitted bid of \$1,387,300.

The intended occupancy date for the new school is September 2027. The project will proceed through the stages of the capital projects delivery plan which includes the Site Plan Approval process of the City of Toronto, which may affect the overall timeline. The

Trustee and school community will participate in multiple design meetings throughout the early design phase starting in the fall.

Resource Implications

The project is funded through the approved 2022/2023 Capital Priorities Grant program.

EDU Capital Priorities funding – Replacement School:	\$10,115,229
EDU Child Care Capital funding – 5-Room Addition:	\$ 3,324,941
Total Identified Capital Funding Available (Total Project Funding):	\$13,440,170

The approved funding does not include provisions for any interior renovations of the existing school beyond reasonable measures to tie the classroom addition to the existing mechanical, electrical, communication, and life safety systems. It is anticipated that other improvements to either the building or site will be funded through School Condition Improvement (SCI) initiatives.

Communications Considerations

Staff will present the school redevelopment concept at community meetings.

A community update on the current project status will be included on the Capital Projects website and updated as the project progresses through design and the approvals process.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Not applicable.

Appendices

Not applicable.

From

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