



Exemption from P076, Community Planning and Partnerships, to Allow a Capital Improvement to the Former Vaughan Road Academy Building at 529 Vaughan Road

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 3 November, 2020

Report No.: 11-20-3974

Strategic Directions

- 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:

- a) An exemption be made under clause 6.6 of policy P076, Community Planning and Partnerships, to allow two classrooms in the former Vaughan Road Academy building located at 529 Vaughan Road to be leased to the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization for five years without a six-month termination notice;
- b) The Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization be allowed to facilitate the use of the leased rooms with other community groups provided the community groups go through the vetting process described in clause 6.4 of policy P076, Community Planning and Partnerships, to ensure compatibility with students and school operations; and,
- c) Recommendations a) and b) be contingent on the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization securing an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant and paying the full cost for the installation of a disability lift and any additional costs required to fit up the space.

Context

Background of the Former Vaughan Road Academy Building

The Vaughan Road Academy building is located at 529 Vaughan Road in Ward 8 (Trustee Laskin).

On December 7, 2016, the Board of Trustees approved that the secondary school, Vaughan Road Academy, close at the end of the 2016-17 school year due to significantly declining enrolment.

On February 8, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved that the building be retained by the TDSB for operating purposes to provide accommodation options for the future and to address pressures in nearby areas.

On October 18, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved that the building be used as a holding site for Davisville Junior Public School and Spectrum Alternative Senior School during the construction of their replacement building. The two schools have been in the former Vaughan Road Academy building since 2018 and will return to their replacement building in 2021.

At this time, staff do not have another use planned for the former Vaughan Road Academy building after Davisville Jr PS and Spectrum Alternative depart but its future use will be considered as staff develop accommodation options and plan new capital projects.

Besides being used as a holding site for Davisville Jr PS and Spectrum Alternative, the former Vaughan Road Academy building accommodates a child care centre (Vaughan Road Infant and Toddler Centre) and the administrative offices of the Caring and Safe Schools Department. Both of these groups will remain in the building after Davisville Jr PS and Spectrum Alternative depart.

Unused Rooms Available for Lease through the Community Planning and Partnerships Program

Over the past couple of years, local residents and community organizations have expressed interest in using the former Vaughan Road Academy building as a hub to provide community services to the Oakwood Vaughan neighbourhood.

In response, staff identified two unused classrooms on the third floor of the building and made them available for lease through the Community Planning and Partnerships

program. The two classrooms are located in an area that is separated from the rest of the building by crash doors and has its own washroom, stairwell and exterior entrance.

The building is served by an elevator; however, the elevator requires upgrades to meet current accessibility standards. The elevator is located at a distance down the corridor from the two classrooms. This may be a security concern if the third floor is also used by students. Additional security measures may be required (such as access control doors) and/or the two community use rooms may need to be relocated closer to the existing elevator.

As per the Community Planning and Partnerships program, the two rooms are posted on the TDSB's public website as available for lease. Community groups may complete an application form on the website to express interest and start the vetting process to ensure they are compatible with students and do not interfere with school operations. The Community Planning and Partnerships policy (P076) specifies that unused rooms are available for lease for a short to medium term with six months' termination notice. All partnerships shall be on a cost-recovery basis and will include operating and capital expenses. Additional costs to adapt the space for the needs of the partner to ensure student safety will be the responsibility of the partner.

Request for an Exemption to the Community Planning and Partnerships Policy P076

The Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization (OVCO) is a non-profit, registered charity incorporated on October 20, 2017 (#1976377). This organization is interested in leasing the two rooms on the third floor; however, it is concerned that the rooms are inaccessible to its program participants because the building does not have a disability lift. OVCO would like to apply for a capital grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to install a disability lift in the location of the current elevator. To consider this application, the Ontario Trillium Foundation requires a five-year lease agreement with no termination prior to the expiration date.

OVCO has asked to start the lease upon completion of the disability lift, if it receives the funding.

On October 14, 2020, Trustees Laskin and Donaldson presented a notice of motion to the Finance Budget and Enrolment Committee proposing that an exemption be made to the Community Planning and Partnerships policy to allow the two rooms to be leased to OVCO for five years without the six-months' termination notice in order for OVCO to secure a capital grant and install the disability lift. The notice of motion is attached as Appendix A.

Staff has reviewed the notice of motion and has the following comments:

- Staff is supportive of the proposed exemption to the Community Planning and Partnerships policy and leasing the two rooms to OVCO on the condition that the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant is secured and OVCO pays the full cost for the installation of the disability lift and any additional costs required to fit up the space.
- Staff is supportive of allowing OVCO to facilitate the use of the leased rooms with other community groups provided the community groups go through the vetting process described in the Community Planning and Partnerships policy to ensure compatibility with students and school operations.
- It is not necessary for the Director to write to the Minister of Education to request an exemption from the Fund Raising Guidelines for OVCO to pay for the installation of the disability lift. The Ministry's Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline that the TDSB's policy is based on states that capital improvements required to accommodate a partner must be paid for by the partner: "On a cost-recovery basis, the fees charged to partners should cover the operations and capital cost, including administrative costs and property taxes (if applicable), to the board of the space occupied by the partner. Additional costs to perform minor renovations to protect student safety, provide appropriate washrooms, and otherwise make the space suitable for use by facility partners should be borne by the partners."

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

If the Board of Trustees approves the recommendation, TDSB staff will notify OVCO. Once OVCO secures the funds to install the disability lift, Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) staff will enter into a lease.

Resource Implications

The installation of the disability lift will occur at no cost to the TDSB. The lease will recover all operating costs.

Communications Considerations

Not applicable.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Community Planning and Partnerships Policy, P076
Community Planning and Partnerships Procedure, PR713.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Written Notice of Motion for Consideration (Trustees Laskin and Donaldson) - Improvement to the Former Vaughan Road Academy School Building at 529 Vaughan Road – October 14, 2020

From

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