

Friday, November 8, 2019

## Greater Victoria School District Seeks Input on Potential Land Disposition near Victoria High

**VICTORIA, BC** – The Greater Victoria School District is inviting the public to share their thoughts about a possible disposition of district property in order to support the seismic upgrading and enhancement of Victoria High. An open house is being held this upcoming Tuesday at the school in the Roper Gymnasium. The District welcomes members of the public to drop-in for coffee and cookies between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

The open house will inform the community about the school's seismic project and a proposal to exchange and lease unused excess land at Victoria High to help cover costs to seismically upgrade the school and retain heritage values. It will be a drop-in format with staff on hand to answer questions. People are encouraged to leave their feedback.

Victoria High currently has an H-1 seismic ranking, the highest level of priority. In early 2018, the District went through an extensive consultation process with the community on potential options for the future of the school. Upon hearing from the community, the Board of Education decided to move forward with a 'Seismic Plus Enhancements (1000) Plus NLC' option and submitted its application to the Ministry.

This seismic option is estimated to cost \$79.7 million. It includes upgrading the 1914 building to meet current seismic safety standards while retaining the exterior of the current building, building a two-storey addition on the east side of the school for increasing enrolment, and a community Neighbourhood Learning Centre (NLC). It will also cover the cost to renovate S.J. Willis School to provide temporary accommodation for Victoria High students and other school populations displaced by future seismic upgrade projects.

In June 2019, the Ministry of Education announced it would contribute \$77.1 million to seismically upgrade the school, increase capacity by 200 seats, include a Neighbourhood Learning Centre, and preserve heritage elements. The Greater Victoria School District now needs to contribute an additional \$2.6 million for the completion of the project. School Districts are expected to help partially fund capital projects.

To find additional capital for the project, the District is considering a land agreement between the City of Victoria, Capital Regional Housing Corporation (CRHC) and BC Housing that would see the City transfer two vacant city lots and two road closures, and BC Housing transfer one lot to the School District. The School District would consolidate the land into a parcel and then lease the parcel to CRHC for 60 years.

Please see a map attached of the proposed exchange/lease. For more information about the project, please visit: [www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/community/vic-high-planning-for-the-future/](http://www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/community/vic-high-planning-for-the-future/)

In June 2019, the District hosted an initial open house to receive preliminary input on a land exchange with the City of Victoria and BC Housing, and a lease with CRHC. It is now seeking additional and final input related to the potential land exchange and lease before making a final decision.

**Open House:**

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Victoria High

Roper Gymnasium

-30-

**For more information, please contact:**

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# Victoria High School: *Planning* for the Future

## Current & Proposed

