

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Greater Victoria School District Seeks Input on Victoria High Amenities

VICTORIA, BC – The Greater Victoria School District is launching a survey to prioritize potential amenities and enhancements to include in the seismic plans for Victoria High School. As the District starts planning for the \$79.7 million seismic upgrade, it is looking for input on prioritizing enhancements to best serve the school and community.

“Given this is one of the most complex seismic upgrades in the province’s history, we want to ensure that we are moving in step with the community to build a school that reflects its needs and desires,” said Board Chair Jordan Watters. “Victoria High has always been a community hub, and the Board of Education believes this is an opportunity to develop a stronger connection between the school and neighbourhood. Listening to staff, students, alumni, and the community is a critical step in building a school and neighbourhood learning centre that all of us can feel proud of. It is important we get this right as we expect Victoria High will stand for another 100 years.”

In June 2019, the Ministry approved \$77.1 million in funding to support the ‘Seismic Plus Enhancements (1000) Plus NLC’ option put forward by the Board of Education. This seismic option includes:

- Retaining the heritage of the historic landmark;
- Adding additional space for increasing enrolment;
- Modernizing the school to meet current and future learning needs;
- Creating a Neighbourhood Learning Centre (NLC); and
- Renovating S.J. Willis Education Centre where students will be relocated during this seismic project and in the future for other seismic projects.

Planning and design work is now beginning for the project. This work covers structural engineering and upgrades such as wiring, mechanical, plumbing and heating. Some spaces within the school will also be reconfigured to create optimal learning environments and safety improvements for students and staff. Interior features, including the marble and art glass in the main entrance and lobby, and the painted wood panels and art glass in the auditorium/balcony, will also be preserved. Exterior elements, such as terracotta, granite and brick masonry, will also be restored.

In addition to these important elements in the design work, the District is looking to include additional amenities and/or enhancements to the school; all of which are made possible by a recently approved land exchange and lease with government partners. The lease with the Capital Regional Housing Corporation will generate an additional \$1.5-\$1.9 million for the District to put towards potential amenities and enhancements.

For more information on the land disposal and lease: www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/media-releases/title/greater-victoria-school-district-approves-land-disposal/

“The District is looking forward to having a safer school to serve the students, staff and community,” said Superintendent Shelley Green. “Construction on the upgrades and expansion is expected to begin in August 2020. Students will be re-located to a renovated S.J. Willis while the project is underway to minimize disruption to students and staff by contractors. Our goal is to have students and staff returning to a safer and enhanced school as soon as possible. We want to thank our families in advance as we facilitate this complex transition.”

The work on Victoria High is scheduled to be completed by September 2022.

To participate in the survey, please follow the link below.

SURVEY: www.surveymonkey.com/r/VicHigh_Amenities

Please note this survey will close on January 10, 2020 at 4 p.m.

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For more information, please contact:

Lisa McPhail

Communications & Community Engagement

Greater Victoria School District

Office: 250.475.4103

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools

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