

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

## **Greater Victoria School District approves sale of 1.28 acres to Victoria Hospice Society**

**VICTORIA, BC** – The Greater Victoria School Board has approved the sale of 1.28 acres of land south of Lansdowne Middle School to the Victoria Hospice Society for \$2.5 million. At Monday night’s Board meeting, the Board approved the third reading of the Disposal Bylaw for the triangular-shaped property adjacent to the south campus of Lansdowne Middle School, formerly Richmond Elementary School.

Pending the Minister’s approval, the proceeds from the sale of the surplus lands will provide funding to renovate and replace existing Greater Victoria schools, including advancing the District’s climate action initiatives.

“Through our public engagement process, we have heard strong advocacy from those in support and those against the sale of the land with concern over the health of Bowker Creek watershed. It was a challenging decision for our Board to make but we have found a partner who is truly committed to rehabilitating the creek and making site improvements that will benefit the community,” said Board Chair Ryan Painter. “In addition, the monies from this sale will provide opportunities to help advance the Board’s climate action plan. We are currently looking to design a net-zero ready replacement school for Cedar Hill Middle—proceeds from this sale will help the District construct a sustainable building that will offset greenhouse emissions.”

Victoria Hospice Society plans to use 1.28 acres of the property to develop a new home for Victoria Hospice, while the remaining lands will be used to expand and make improvements to Bowker Creek.

Victoria Hospice’s goal is to offer a full campus of care with a mix of inpatient beds and programs and services such as grief support, community education, and practical programs for people on their end-of-life journey.

Improvements to Bowker Creek include widening the creek by four metres, sloping the bank sides with stormwater management features to treat and reduce potential flooding, while removing invasive species and planting native species. A public access greenway will also be included, with an outdoor classroom for the school community.

For more information on the site proposal, please visit: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/news/title/victoria-hospice-society-to-purchase-property-from-greater-victoria-school-district/>

“Following approval from the Ministry of Education, part of our due diligence for the sale involves in-depth feasibility work to be conducted over a 90-day period,” said Victoria Hospice CEO Kevin Harter. “It’s still a long road ahead but we are cautiously optimistic about this ideal site for a new home for Victoria Hospice.”

For over 40 years, Victoria Hospice has provided quality end-of-life care for people in Greater Victoria. Victoria Hospice Society will now commence the land-use approval and corresponding public engagement processes required by the District of Saanich to advance its plans for the property.

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