

REPORT

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

To: Mayor W. Wright and Members of Council in Committee of the Whole Date: October 6, 2008

From: Lisa Spitale, Director of Development Services File: 89361

Subject: Preliminary Concept Plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub

RECOMMENDATION

THAT City Council endorse in principle the preliminary concept plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek City Council endorsement of the preliminary concept plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub. This endorsement will provide the basis for further exploration of the concept, including the development of an architectural program and costing.

SUMMARY

This report makes the case for the development of an early childhood development (ECD) hub in Queensborough. Over the past four years, consultation and a number of studies have documented the need for such a hub. Given the proposed expansion of the Queensborough Community Centre, there is a real opportunity to develop such a hub. As presented in the preliminary concept plan, the hub could be about 9,000 square feet; could be located on two levels with all child care functions on the lower level; could include a mix of infant/toddler, three-to-five and out-of-school child care spaces; and could include multi-purpose spaces that could be used by seniors during the day and youth and other groups during the evening (see appendix 1).

BACKGROUND

At the Council in Committee of the Whole meeting on September 29, 2008, Renee Chadwick, Manager, Recreation Facilities, Queensborough Community Centre; David Norman, Principal, David Norman Architect; and John Stark, Senior Social Planner, City of New Westminster, made a presentation regarding a preliminary concept plan for a Queensborough Early Childhood Development (ECD) Hub.

This presentation discussed the benefits associated with hub development; provided a history of consultation in support of hub development in Queensborough; outlined child care and early childhood development needs in Queensborough; discussed the role of the ECD Public Partners Committee; and outlined the preliminary concept plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub.

Council expressed its verbal support for the preliminary concept plan and requested further information with regard to possible costs.

EXISTING POLICY/PRACTICE

The City of New Westminster, through Parks and Recreation and Social Planning, is represented on the ECD Public Partners Committee. The other partners include Fraser Health, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the School District and the United Way of the Lower Mainland. The purpose of this body is to work closely with the New Westminster ECD Committee and its Action Teams to achieve four ECD hubs in New Westminster.

The Public Partners have been meeting for about 18-months and they recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). While this MOU does not contain any funding obligations, it does commit the partners to: (1) advocating on behalf of hub development within their respective organizations; (2) coordinating planning among the member organizations; and (3) identifying and working to access funding and other resources in support of hub development.

ANALYSIS

Early childhood development (ECD) hubs support the healthy development of young children and their families; and include at least two early childhood development or family strengthening services; one of which is licensed child care.

ECD hubs act as focal points for their neighbourhoods and enable families to obtain information and seamlessly access a continuum of services related to their needs. They have proven to enhance child outcomes, including school readiness and success. They also facilitate inter-sectoral collaboration and partnership building.

ECD hub development is particularly relevant to Queensborough. As part of the Early Development Instrument Mapping Project, Queensborough was identified as having the highest proportion of ‘vulnerable children’ in New Westminster. It was also identified as having a number of gaps in services related to early childhood development.

As part of the Draft Child Care Needs Assessment, Queensborough had the smallest share of child care spaces (i.e., 4.9% of the total child care spaces in New Westminster) and the lowest proportion of group child care spaces per 100 children aged 0 to 12 years (i.e., 3.8 spaces per 100 children aged 0 to 12 years). Regarding the latter, the East End, Uptown and West End sub-areas all had in excess of 15.4 child care spaces per 100 children aged 0 to 12.

As such, an ECD hub would address many of the early childhood development needs, including child care, within Queensborough and would enhance child outcomes, including school readiness and success. It would also fit within the context of development which is occurring in Queensborough, which has a far larger share of ground-oriented housing, which is particularly appealing to families with young children.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

With regard to a Queensborough ECD Hub, each of the Public Partners has and will continue to make contributions. The Ministry of Children and Family Development has funded the community consultation process and preliminary concept plan in support of hub development; the United Way of the Lower Mainland is funding the ongoing work of both the New Westminster ECD Committee and Public Partners Committee; the School District has opened a StrongStart Centre and 20 out-of-school care spaces at Queen Elizabeth Elementary School (which could form part of the hub); and Fraser Health is willing to consider providing services targeting the needs of parents and young children in Queensborough.

The City of New Westminster, as part of the proposed expansion to the Queensborough Community Centre, would be asked to consider incorporating space in support of ECD hub development. Depending on the timing of an ECD hub, there may also be capital dollars available through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

OPTIONS

Two options for City Council's consideration; they are:

Option 1 – That City Council endorse in principle the preliminary concept plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub.

Option 2 – That staff be provided with additional direction.

Staff recommend Option 1.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Parks and Recreation and Development Services are both represented on the ECD Public Partners Committee and they are working closely together with regard to ECD hub development in New Westminster.

CONCLUSION

A Queensborough ECD Hub would address many of the early childhood development needs, including child care, within Queensborough and would enhance child outcomes, including school readiness and success. It would also fit within the context of development which is occurring in Queensborough, which has a far larger share of ground-oriented housing, which is particularly appealing to families with young children.

John Stark
Senior Social Planner

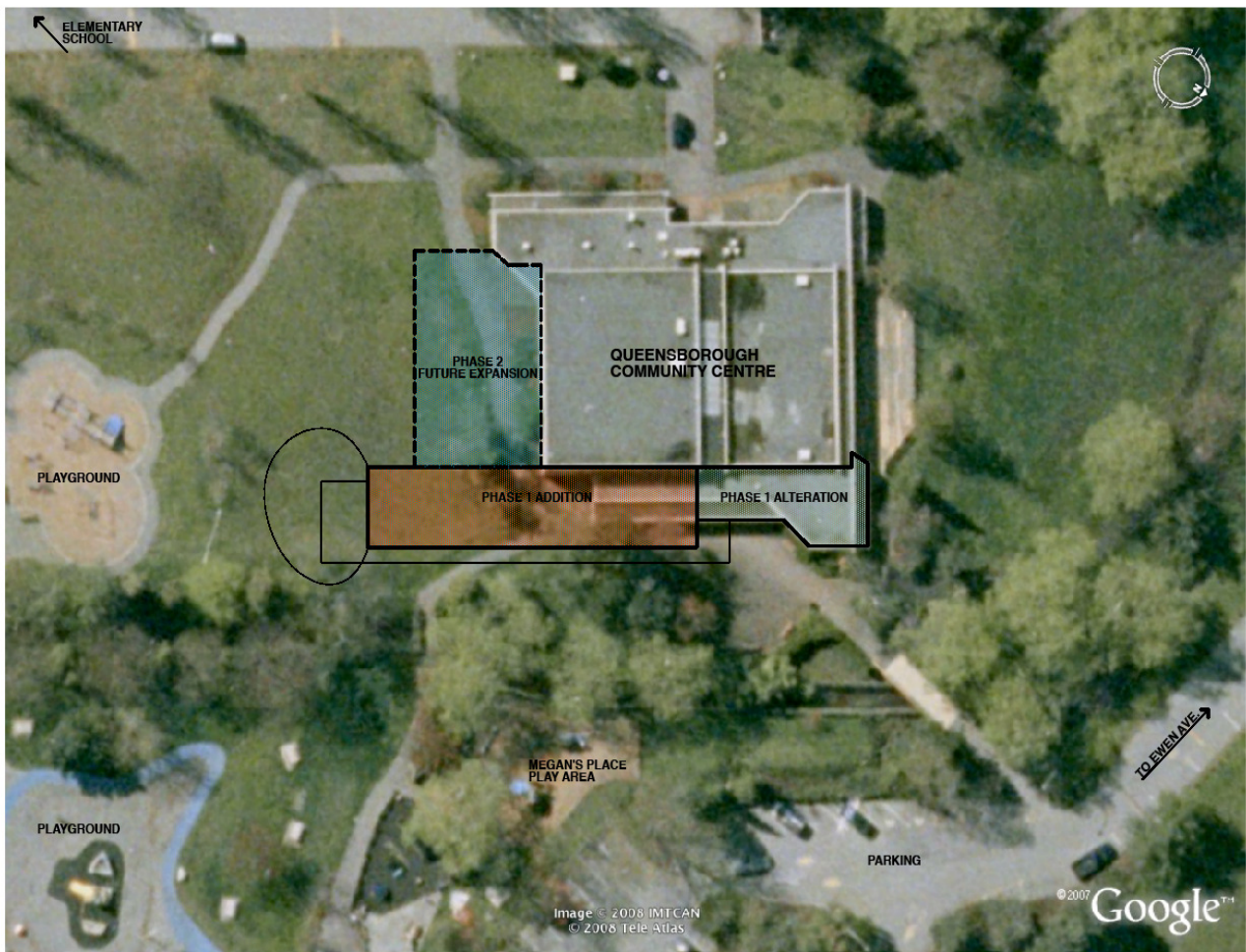
Approved for Presentation to Council

Lisa Spitale,
Director of Development Services

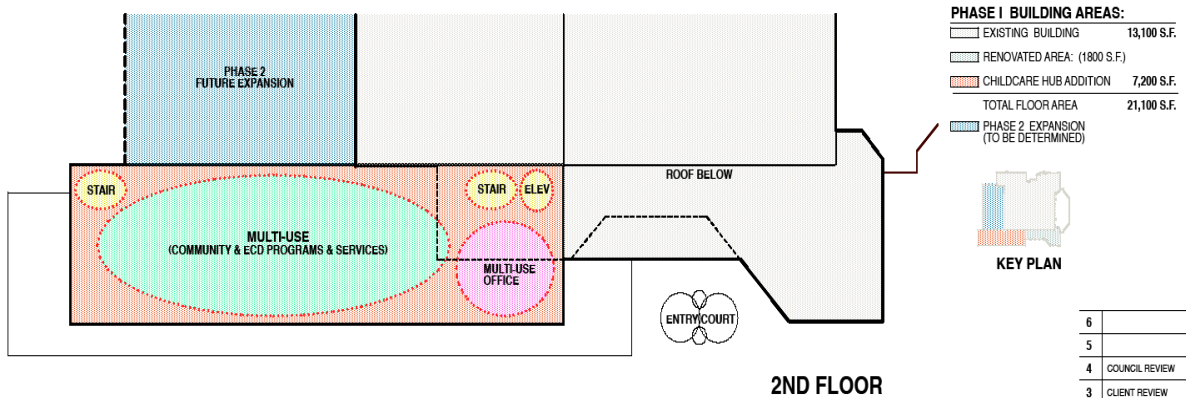
Paul Daminato,
City Administrator

Appendix 1:

Preliminary Concept Plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub: Aerial Context



Preliminary Concept Plan for a Queensborough ECD Hub: Schematic Plan



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5		
4	COUNCIL REVIEW	SEPT. 0/08
3	CLIENT REVIEW	JUNE 5/08
2	CLIENT REVIEW	MAY 30/08
1	PRELIMINARY	APR. 30/08

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PROJECT:
QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY CENTRE CHILDCARE HUB
 920 EWEN AVE.
 NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.

DRAWING:
SCHEMATIC PLAN

