



REPORT TO

CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

FORMER ST. VERONICA C.S. WARD 10 CITY OF TORONTO SHELTER FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:37

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First Tabling

September 13, 2018

Review

[Click here to enter a date.](#)

B. Leporati, Sr. Manager, Planning and Admissions
M. Loberto, Superintendent of Planning and Development

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision:

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.



Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

D. Koenig
Associate Director
of Academic Affairs

T. Robins
Acting Associate Director
of Planning and Facilities

L. Noronha
Executive Superintendent
of Business Services and
Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The shelters operated by the City of Toronto Real Estate Services division across the city are full and unable to accommodate additional refugee families and asylum seekers. The City, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services reached out to GTA school boards for assistance in identifying vacant schools that could serve as temporary shelters for asylum seekers.

Arising out of discussions with both the Ministry of Education and City of Toronto Real Estate Services in June 2018, the TCDSB identified vacant schools which could be made available for use as temporary shelters for asylum seekers.

The former St. Veronica Catholic School, a vacant school facility located at 30 Bank Street, was identified as a suitable location to satisfy the needs of the City and both Ministries.

As a result, the Toronto Catholic District School Board and the City of Toronto have agreed on the terms of a license agreement for the use of the former St. Veronica to accommodate asylum seekers, with an effective date to be determined.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 10 hours.

B. BACKGROUND

1. Shelters across the City of Toronto are at capacity, and unable to accommodate asylum seeking families. According to City staff, as many as 200 families are arriving weekly.
2. These families are being temporarily accommodated at the Radisson Hotel East, located at the corner of Victoria Park Avenue and Highway 401. Many of these families will be relocated to permanent residences, but there is no clear understanding on timing of the moves.

3. Arising out of discussions with both the Ministry of Education and City of Toronto Real Estate Services in June 2018, the TCDSB identified vacant schools which could be made available to serve as temporary shelters.
4. After reviewing potential options, the former St. Veronica, a vacant TCDSB facility located at 30 Bank Street, was identified as an ideal location to temporarily accommodate asylum seekers.
5. The TCDSB and City of Toronto have agreed on the terms of a License Agreement for the use of the former St. Veronica as a shelter to accommodate asylum seekers.
6. The City will be responsible for all costs associated with the establishment, maintenance, and operations of the facility, and the term of the agreement is 1 year and 23 days.
7. The finalization of the agreement is conditional on the City of Toronto holding a community consultation meeting and delivering notices to the local neighbourhood regarding the intention to open the facility as a shelter.
8. As of September 4, 2018, the City of Toronto has not indicated the date that they will carry out the community consultation and the effective date of the License Agreement.
9. The use of a TCDSB facility for this endeavour is consistent with Catholic values and teachings.

‘We have a duty toward our brothers and sisters who, for various reasons, have been forced to leave their homeland: a duty of justice, civility and of solidarity.’

Pope Francis.

Pope Francis has challenged all Catholics to offer shelter and hospitality to the weary traveler in light of the current refugee humanitarian crisis around the world. This has been a foundational element of the rich history of the TCDSB and the City of Toronto.

10. In addition, Hospitality is the TCDSB virtue of the month for September, and this agreement symbolizes the Board’s ongoing commitment to living its

Catholic values. Since its founding in 1842, Catholic Board school communities have always responded generously to assisting successive waves of newcomers and refugees by contributing resources food, shelter and clothing resources.

C. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.