



REPORT TO

CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

CAP 2021 009 SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS TEMPORARY STAFFING

*"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13 (nrsvce)*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
November 19, 2021	December 8, 2021	Click here to enter a date.

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RECOMMENDATION REPORT

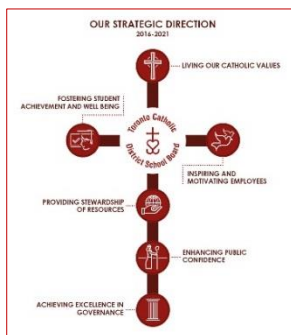
Vision:

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.



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the November 11, 2021 Corporate Services Committee Meeting, Trustees passed an addendum to the Outdoor Environments Improvement Program update requesting staff prepare a report on hiring short-term contract employees and provide the associated costs to complete the Playground Reserve projects approved in 2019/20.

Staff is pursuing the hiring of a student intern from the University of Guelph for the winter semester to assist the Sustainable Outdoor Environments team, however, given the limited experience of any potential applicant, this will not significantly expedite the completion of the Playground Reserve projects. However, the assistance will allow other staff to focus on the execution of these projects through 2022.

Following the review of multiple options, staff recommends that the most expedient way to provide the necessary staffing resources required to complete the 2019/20 Playground Reserve projects is as follows:

- temporarily withdrawal, to the end of 2022, the provision that the design of playground projects under \$100,000 be completed by in-house staff and have the design be completed by an external landscape consultant;
- the extension of the current temporary landscape supervisor's contract to the end of 2022; and
- the hiring of a senior landscape internship student.

The cost of these recommendations would be funded by the Playground Reserve funding and Renewal funding.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 14 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. This report has been prepared at the Trustees' request to investigate the hiring of short-term contract employees to complete the Playground Reserve projects approved in 2019/2020.

C. BACKGROUND

1. ***Prior to a November 14, 2019 motion to the Playground Improvement update, external landscape consultants completed the design and construction drawings, along with the associated consultation, for landscape projects greater than \$25K.*** In addition, the Board previously had an agreement with Evergreen, whereby the Board hired an Evergreen consultant to complete the consultation with schools, as well as the design development of projects under \$100K. That agreement has since ceased due to changes in Evergreen's delivery model. As a result of the motion, TCDSB staff are required to carry out all school consultations, site investigation, design, tender documentation and construction management for all Playground Reserve projects.
2. ***In June 2020, 59 outdoor projects were awarded to successful applicants for the 2019/2020 Ward Priorities Playground Reserve Fund.*** In April 2021, an additional four projects were awarded in Ward 1 with carried over funding. School consultation meetings were initiated in September 2020, however, due to the re-deployment of staff resources to COVID-19 priority projects and the CVRIS funding application, work on the Playground Reserve projects was put on hold in Fall 2020. Due to the original December 31, 2021 mandated substantial completion date for the CVRIS program, the development of some projects that remained funded by the Playground Reserve was delayed through the spring and summer of 2021.
3. ***Until February 2021, the Board had one Sustainable Outdoor Environments Supervisor who was tasked with completing the Playground Reserve Projects, the project management of renewal-funded site improvement projects and the implementation of system-wide COVID-19 initiatives, such as the installation of bike rack and wood stools.*** This totalled over 300 individual projects. A new Officer position was created to assist the Project Supervisor, but this was not filled until February 2021.
4. ***In February 2021, 33 playground reserve projects that were transferred and 65 additional playground improvement projects were awarded through the Federal CVRIS funding.*** In April 2021, a second Project Supervisor was hired on a one-year contract to assist with the CVRIS projects. This temporary

position is funded from the original COVID-19 Emergency Funding for projects, as these staffing costs were not an eligible for CVRIS funding.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. ***There are two university accredited landscape architect programs in Ontario. Neither of these programs offers a coop program, however, the University of Guelph does offer an option of taking an internship in second semester of the third year of the program.*** The internship requires 260 hours (20 hours/ week over 13 weeks). The internship would begin in mid- January 2022 and continue to the end of the semester in May 2022. This is a paid internship at minimum wage. In the past the TCDSB has made use of Government grants to hire students. Depending on the candidate, the intern may be available to work addition hours during the school year and be hired beyond the internship through the summer of 2022 to assist with the intense construction season anticipated next summer.

The intern will have the education and experience to conduct site investigations and complete playground inventories, but not to lead consultation, complete tender documentation or management construction contracts and would not be able to significantly expedite the completion the Playground Reserve projects. However, by re-assigning site investigations and inventories to an intern, the Officer will be available to provide additional support to the Project Supervisors with the completion of the projects.

2. ***A short-term contract for 6 to 9 months to the end of August 2022 would require a salary allocation of approximately \$40,000.*** Per the Board's Human Resource policy, a public posting of the position and interviewing of potential candidates would be required. The timing from posting to start of employment is typically 2-3 months, given that most candidates will be required to give notice to their current employer. Further it is expected that a new employee would require a training period of at least 1.5-2 months before becoming effective in the role. Currently there are over 40 full-time comparable positions advertised on the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects website indicating that there may be very few qualified applicants interested in a short-term contract position.
3. ***The feasibility of a secondment of a qualified landscape architect from a consulting firm was also explored.*** Inquiries have been made to our current consulting firms, but due to their current workloads, none would be able to

second a full-time employee to the TCDSB at the present time. Further inquiries are being made to larger firms, but it is noted that none of these firms currently work with the TCDSB and their lack of familiarity with the schools and project standards would limit effectiveness.

4. ***The TCDSB has a list of 6-8 prequalified landscape architecture firms that are typically hired to complete design and tender documentation for site renewal projects including playground upgrades.*** Procurement and award to one of these firms can be completed in 4-6 weeks.
5. ***The approved Playground Reserve Criteria and Selection Process provides for a 5% allocation of Playground Reserve funding for the internal landscape consultant.*** Given the scale of the Playground Reserve projects to be completed, an external landscape consultant's fees would reasonably be expected to be in the range of 5% of the project costs.

E. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. A job description for the posting of an internship in the Sustainable Built Environments department has been submitted for review to Human Resources along with a proposal for funding of a salary for the position. Following approval, the position will be posted with the University of Guelph landscape architecture program.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That the current Sustainable Outdoor Environments Supervisor one-year contract be extended until December 31, 2022 and funded through Renewal.
2. That a student intern from the University of Guelph be hired to support the Sustainable Outdoor Environments team for the semester from January to May 2022 and be retained, if possible, as a summer student through to September 2022.
3. That the Playground Reserve operating procedure stipulating that design consultants cannot be retained on playground improvements less than

\$100,000 be lifted for the 2019/2020 Playground Reserve projects to the end of 2022, to allow for the hiring of outside consultants to expedite preparation of design and tender documentation. External consultant fees are to be allocated from the 5% allowance for the cost of the internal landscape consultant approved in the Playground Reserve Criteria and Selection Process.