



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

TCDSB-VILLA CHARITIES INC. INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY HUB SUMMATIVE REPORT

*But the stars that marked our starting fall away, we must go deeper into greater pain,
for it is not permitted that we stay.* Dante Alighieri, Inferno

| Created, Draft | First Tabling | Review |
|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| February 13, 2018 | February 22, 2018 | Click here to enter a date. |

M. Loberto, Sr. Coordinator, Development Services

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

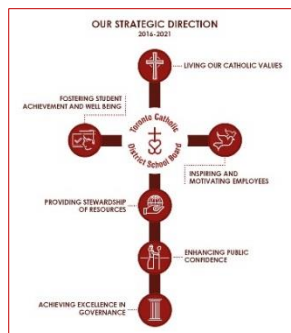
Vision:

*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.*



Rory McGuckin
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Executive Superintendent
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Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides both a history and assessment of the level of support for the Toronto Catholic District School Board and Villa Charities Inc. intergenerational community hub project. The joint venture educational and cultural arts facility on Lawrence Avenue West was intended to house a 1,300 pupil place replacement secondary school for Dante Alighieri Academy and a new Columbus Centre.

Based on the recently completed Maximum City/Dillon consultation process, as well as other opportunities for public input, including public meetings, Board deputations, Italian media coverage, and provincial government involvement, the level of support for the intergenerational community hub project does not achieve the *overwhelming support* threshold reference in the Board motion of November 16, 2017.

On February 14, 2018, the Board received a communication from the Minister of Education stating that due to the significant concerns regarding the potential demolition of the Columbus Centre and the ongoing divisions which still exist over the project, the Ministry of Education will not support a school project that allows for the demolition of the Columbus Centre.

Prior to receipt of the letter from the Minister of Education on February 14, 2018, staff were prepared to recommend a continued partnership with Villa Charities Inc. for the purpose of developing an intergenerational community hub through a new, participatory design process as recommended in the Maximum City/Dillon Report. This would mean starting the entire process over again.

Given the position of the Ministry of Education as of February 14, 2018, this report recommends that the Toronto Catholic District School Board proceed with a standalone secondary school on TCDSB property and discontinue the concept of a joint facility with Villa Charities Inc.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 90 hours.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is outlined below:

1. To respond to the two recent Trustee Motions with respect to the TCDSB/VCI Intergenerational Community Hub

i. Regular Board - November 16, 2017, which resolved that:

- *...upon completion of the public consultation by January 31, 2018, a report shall be delivered to a full meeting of the Board, within 30 days from that date, with a final recommendation that includes the framework for construction and anticipated timelines; and*
- *...should the outcome of the public consultation not document overwhelming support for the redevelopment of the Villa Charities site, the TCDSB will no longer pursue the partnership with Villa Charities Inc. and instead proceed with the building of Dante Alighieri Academy Catholic Secondary School on the property presently owned by the Board.*

ii. Regular Board – January 25, 2018 - At this meeting, the Board adopted the following resolution:

In order to fulfil the motion of the Board passed on November 16, 2017 which committed the Board to consider the consultants' report on the public consultation and report back to the Board within 30 days;

The consultants' report was received on January 25, 2018 and the Board resolves that the Director deliver a report to the Board on February 22, 2018 on his assessment of the consultation report; and

The Board resolves that the Director of Education be authorized to enter into an amending agreement with Villa Charities Inc. extend the due diligence date in the Agreement of Purchase and Sale between the two parties to March 6, 2018.

2. In order to determine the level of support for the project, an assessment of the following will be provided:

- i. Dillon/Maximum City Consultation process and report
- ii. Research Etc. quantitative telephone survey
- iii. Other public meetings, sessions, media coverage

3. Present benefits of the Intergenerational Community Hub.
4. Assess a future pathways for this project.

C. BACKGROUND

1. Historical Context of Dante Alighieri Academy

The following context is necessary to fully understand the chronology of actions leading to the pursuit of a new school facility for Dante Alighieri Academy:

- a. Dante Alighieri Academy was built in 1973 on Playfair Avenue.
 - b. The school building was originally designed to Senior Elementary school standards, and does not possess the required specialty classrooms and support spaces typically associated with secondary schools.
 - c. The school has long been oversubscribed, resulting in 20 portables on site during the 1990s.
 - d. As enrolment continued to climb, it was necessary for TCDSB to lease a TDSB vacant site, Bathurst Heights Secondary School, to accommodate the grade 9 students of Dante Alighieri from 2008 until June 2011.
 - e. In September 2011, the grade 9 students were relocated to another TDSB school, Sir Sanford Fleming Academy, and remained there until June 2017.
 - f. An accommodation solution for Dante Alighieri Academy was identified as the Board's top urgent Capital Priority Needs project for 2010-2011, and was submitted to the Ministry of Education for funding.
 - g. Beginning in September 2017, the grade 9 students returned to the Playfair campus, reuniting with the grade 10-12 students.
2. **September 1, 2011** - Toronto Catholic District School Board received capital priorities funding in the amount of approximately \$32.8 million from the Ministry of Education to proceed to construct a 1,300 pupil place replacement facility for Dante Alighieri Academy.
 3. The TCDSB and Villa Charities Inc. (VCI) have a long-standing program partnership. Both parties expressed an interest in exploring opportunities for a joint development, multi-use educational/recreational/cultural facility on the southwest quadrant of Dufferin Street and Lawrence Avenue West.

4. **November 16, 2011** - the Board and Villa Charities agreed to proceed with a Joint Feasibility Study (JFS) for the redevelopment of their combined land holdings. The firms of Global Architect Inc. and Pillon Architect Inc. were jointly retained by both parties to undertake the JFS. The purpose of the study was to assess redevelopment opportunities for replacement facilities for Dante Alighieri Academy and the Columbus Centre in the southwest quadrant of Dufferin Street and Lawrence Avenue West. The feasibility study evaluated the benefits of a joint-use complex consisting of a new secondary school and cultural recreational centre in comparison to stand-alone facilities for each party.
5. **November 20, 2012** - the Board approved the construction of a replacement facility for Dante Alighieri Academy as part of a joint venture intergenerational community hub with VCI. The joint venture educational and cultural arts facility would house the new secondary school and a new Columbus Centre. The facility was originally contemplated to be located on Dufferin Street, however due to the inability to secure property for the project, VCI and the Board decided to pursue an alternative option for the joint building.
6. **January 6, 2014** - the TCDSB received approval from the Ministry of Education to proceed with the joint venture with VCI as required under Section 196 of the *Education Act*.
7. **February 13, 2014** – at the Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning, and Property Committee, the Board approved, subject to the completion of the required land purchases to accommodate the construction of the new facility, the appointment of the architecture firm CS&P Architects Inc. with Pillon Architect and Global Architect for the intergenerational community hub project.
8. **March 12, 2015** – at the Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning, and Property Committee, the Board approved the construction of the joint venture facility with VCI on Lawrence Avenue West, which requires the demolition of the current Columbus Centre.
9. **May 14, 2015** – at the Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning, and Property Committee, the Board approved the acquisition of the 3.15 acre Sisters of the

Good Shepherd property, located at 25 Good Shepherd Court. The acquisition of this property was funded from Education Development Charges.

10. **June 8, 2015** – at the Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning, and Property Committee, the Board approved the acquisition of a 3.467 acre portion of 950 Lawrence Avenue West from VCI to accommodate the construction of a replacement facility for Dante Alighieri as part of a joint venture redevelopment with Villa Charities. The purchase price is entirely funded from Education Development Charges.
11. The two parties have jointly retained consultants to move forward with building the intergenerational community hub.
12. **December 2016** - a Site Plan application for the joint facility was submitted to the City of Toronto, and in January 2017, applications for a zoning bylaw amendment and Plan of Subdivision were also submitted to seek development approvals for the project
13. **April 18, 2017** - at the Open House held by the two parties, concerns regarding the project as submitted in the application were raised by members of the community.
14. **May 11, 2017** – at the City Community Consultation meeting held at Yorkdale Secondary School, concerns regarding the project as submitted in the application were raised by members of the community.
15. **June 13, 2017** - in response to concerns raised, North York Community Council directed the applicant to conduct extensive community consultation, including the formation of a working group composed of representatives from the Italian community, Columbus Centre and Health Club members, and parents from both Dante Alighieri Academy and Regina Mundi C.S. This direction was approved by City Council on July 4, 2017.
16. **August 1, 2017** - Villa Charities and the TCDSB released a joint project update stating that, in response to the feedback received, the two parties would re-examine the current proposal in order to develop additional options for the new facility.

17. **September 7, 2017** - at the Student Achievement and Well-Being, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee, the Board approved the following recommendations:
- *That the Director of Education be authorized to enter into an Amending Agreement with Villa Charities Inc. to extend the due diligence date in the Agreement of Purchase and Sale between the two parties to January 31, 2018;*
 - *That the TCDSB and VCI engage in a meaningful and transparent community consultation process.*
18. **October 24, 2017** –TCDSB and VCI jointly retained Maximum City/Dillon Consulting Limited as independent facilitators to develop and facilitate the community consultation process.
19. **October 27, 2017 to January 25, 2018** – the consultation process was initiated, facilitated and completed, engaging over 700 participants, and over 1000 total participants through a variety of methods.
20. **November 16, 2017** – the Board approved a Motion regarding the Community Hub Partnership with Villa Charities, which resolved that:
- *...upon completion of the public consultation by January 31, 2018, a report shall be delivered to a full meeting of the Board, within 30 days from that date, with a final recommendation that includes the framework for construction and anticipated timelines; and*
 - *...should the outcome of the public consultation not document overwhelming support for the redevelopment of the Villa Charities site, the TCDSB will no longer pursue the partnership with Villa Charities Inc. and instead proceed with the building of Dante Alighieri Academy Catholic Secondary School on the property presently owned by the Board.*
21. **January 15, 2018** – at Sala Caboto, representatives from Maximum City/Dillon Limited and Research Etc. reviewed the methodologies used for the qualitative and quantitative analysis, and presented their respective draft reports at an open meeting attended by community members. Feedback provided during the session was intended to inform the final report.

22. **January 25, 2018** – at the Regular Board meeting, Maximum City/Dillon and Research Etc. presented the findings of the consultation process and telephone survey. All Trustees received copies of both reports. At this meeting, the Board adopted the following resolution:

In order to fulfil the motion of the Board passed on November 16, 2017 which committed the Board to consider the consultants' report on the public consultation and report back to the Board within 30 days;

The consultants' report was received on January 25, 2018 and the Board resolves that the Director deliver a report to the Board on February 22, 2018 on his assessment of the consultation report; and

The Board resolves that the Director of Education be authorized to enter into an amending agreement with Villa Charities Inc. extend the due diligence date

23. **February 14, 2018** – The TCDSB received a communication from the Minister of Education stating that due to the significant concerns regarding the potential demolition of the Columbus Centre and the ongoing divisions which still exist over the project, the Ministry of Education will not support a school project than allows for the demolition of the Columbus Centre. The letter is attached as *Appendix 'A'* to this report.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

Assessment of the support for the project:

In order to fully assess the level of support for the TCDSB-VCI Intergenerational Hub, a number of perspectives must be considered.

Maximum City/Dillon Consultation process and report:

1. The qualitative community consultation program was launched in early November 2017, and was completed on January 25, 2018, when the results of the process and final report were presented and delivered to the Board.

Trustees received copies of the reports at the Board meeting of January 25, 2018. The report is available online, and can be downloaded using the following link:

2. The consultation process consisted of engaging over 700 independent participants and over 1000 total participants through a variety of methods including:
 - Community workshops
 - Youth and senior outreach
 - Website and online survey
 - Telephone survey conducted by Research Etc.
 - Neighbourhood walks and site visits
 - Focus groups and facilitated discussions with various stakeholder groups
 - Observations and listening sessions, and a public report-back meeting.
3. **The findings of this qualitative process highlight six key themes:**
 - i. The green, pedestrian, and open spaces of the Columbus Centre site play an important and varied role for a wide range of people, and are seen as a shared community asset which could be improved or expanded, but with no net natural loss.
 - ii. There is place-based attachment to the current Columbus Centre, particularly to individuals of Italian heritage or association. There is a desire to honour, preserve, and celebrate the history and role of the Columbus Centre in the community and the role of the community in the Columbus Centre.
 - iii. With respect to sharing spaces and partnerships, there is some confusion and concern as to how the new facility would be shared between Dante Alighieri students and Columbus Centre members, as well as desire to keep the two groups separate by not pursuing a joint facility. However, many comments expressed a desire for new and renewed partnerships between the two organizations, and a modern educational facility to serve future generations.
 - iv. Many of the comments expressing frustration and opposition for the joint TCDSB/VCI project stem from concern over a lack of community involvement and voice in the proposed project from the beginning, as well as concerns over poor and incomplete communication. This has led to feelings of distrust, questions, and confusion over the project. There is also

opposition to the partnership between the TCDSB and VCI, as well as a fear of future redevelopment on the site.

- v. These comments also indicate a lack of understanding, trust, or clear information about the project, and concern that people are supporting, not supporting, or not participating in the project based on intimidation or inaccurate/incomplete information.
 - vi. Many comments point to a built-up frustration and resentment regarding the project, and a desire to start over with better communication, transparency, community involvement/consultation, and clarity.
4. The recommendations in the Maximum City/Dillon report speak to the potential of the project moving forward productively in some way or form, while acknowledging that there is some opposition to this action within the community. The key recommendations are outlined below:
- Rebuild trust with the community, which begins with an acknowledgement that there has been a breakage of trust, then seek out a process to regain accountability and trust with the community.
 - Establish a working group that is broadly representative of the community, and whose main role is to provide input on the project and liaise with the community.
 - Involve the community meaningfully and directly in the full cycle of the design process. This involves establishing feedback loops to share what is open to influence, inform the community how they will be consulted, and demonstrate how their input has been incorporated or considered.
 - Provide adequate time, space, and review periods for community consultation. Consultation and review should inform design and decisions, which should happen during and after the consultation, not before or separately.

Research Etc. Quantitative Telephone Survey:

5. As part of the consultation process, Maximum City/Dillon retained Research Etc. to conduct a quantitative telephone survey to gauge awareness and opinions within the general public and local community for TCDSB/VCI

Intergenerational Community Hub, as well as to explore the opinions of users and non-users of the Columbus Centre.

The Research Etc. findings were included in the Maximum City/Dillon report distributed to Trustees at the January 25 Board meeting, and can be found in the same report referenced in comment #1 above.

6. The sample size of the survey was 400 participants from the general public living within five (5) kilometres of the Centre. Random digital dialling was used to select participants. 60% of the participants were 55 years of age or older; 23% of the participants were between the ages of 45 and 54; while 17% of the participants were under the age of 44.

The key findings of the telephone survey are summarized below:

- i. General Public Opinion: of the survey respondents, 55% support the proposed plan and 31% were neutral with respect to the project. Overall opposition is in the minority with 14%. Supporters appreciated the potential for classes, multi-generational experiences, new facilities for all, potential cost savings, and generally feel that it will be good for the community.
- ii. More Immediate Community: Response is more polarized among recent users of the Columbus Centre and among those living in closer to the facility. With respect to users of the Columbus Centre in the past 6 months, 49% support the plan, while 33% oppose it. Greater concern was expressed about how the redevelopment will take shape (what exactly is being built, how the shared facilities will work), as well as objections to the current Centre being torn down (sentiments of cultural significance and community attachment).
- iii. Questions and concerns were raised by survey respondents, regardless if they support the initiative or not, about the need for facility, issues with the current facilities, and how the facilities will be shared between students/seniors/broader community.

Other Indications of Support for the Joint Venture

7. In addition to the formal consultation project and research conducted, there have been other opportunities to gauge support for the project outside of the recently completed consultation process, including:
- i. **Open House - April 18, 2017:** The Open House held at the Columbus Centre provided the opportunity for the public to learn more about the project, and review the proposed plans for the new facility. Generally, the reaction was positive, however concerns were raised regarding the absence of the swimming pool and running track in the design of the new Columbus Centre. In response to these comments, the building design was revised to include these amenities.
 - ii. **City of Toronto Public Consultation Meeting - May 11, 2017:** This public meeting was held at Yorkdale Secondary School and was hosted by the City of Toronto's Planning Department. A large crowd attended the session in order to express their opposition to the project.
 - iii. **Delegations at TCDSB Board and Committee Meetings:** Delegations with respect to the project have been heard at several Board meetings. Essentially all the delegations expressed views in opposition to the proposed intergenerational hub.
 - iv. **Meetings with Dante Alighieri/Regina Mundi Students, Staff, and Parents:** Over the past several years, TCDSB staff have met with both school communities with respect to the project. Both Catholic School Parent Councils support the project. Further, those students who participated in consultation activities expressed excitement with respect to the initiative, while also demonstrating respect and empathy for other stakeholders, as well as open-mindedness towards compromise, change, and inclusivity.
 - v. **Coverage in the Italian Media:** The TCDSB/VCI project has received significant coverage in the Italian media. Virtually all of the coverage has highlighted the community and elected representatives' opposition to the proposed intergenerational community hub.
 - vi. **Provincial Government Involvement:** On June 15, 2017, in response to community concerns and opposition, MP Mike Colle sent a letter to

- Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter, requesting that the Minister intervene to have the current joint venture plans withdrawn immediately. On June 16, 2017, the Minister sent a communication to the Chair of the TCDSB requesting a pause in the project, and a meeting to discuss the concerns raised by the community and local politicians.
- vii. The Chair of the Board, the local Trustee and a VCI representative met with the Minister of Education in late June 2017 to discuss the community concerns with the current plan for the joint project. Arising from this discussion, the Minister requested that the two parties develop additional options in order to address these issues. It is important to note that while the TCDSB has received Section 196 approval for the joint project, it still requires Ministry approval to proceed with building the facility, which typically occurs after municipal approvals and tendering.
 - viii. On February 14, 2018, the Board received a communication from the Ministry of Education stating that due to the significant concerns regarding the potential demolition of the Columbus Centre and the ongoing divisions which still exist over the project, the Ministry of Education will not support a school project that allows for the demolition of the Columbus Centre.

Assessment of Support

- 8. The November 16, 2017 Board motion referenced *overwhelming support*. Based on the findings of the Maximum City/Dillon report, the Research Etc. report, and other opportunities outlined in comment #7 above, and staff's understanding of the term, **the level of support for the intergenerational community hub does not achieve that threshold.**

Benefits of the Intergenerational Community Hub

- 9. Many Dante Alighieri students spend numerous hours volunteering in the senior residences on the VCI campus. The community hub will create an enhanced intergenerational learning environment benefitting both students and older adults.
- 10. The Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for the Aging identifies some of the key benefits of intergenerational programs. Benefits for students in intergenerational settings include:

- Gaining knowledge of the aging process and developing positive attitudes towards aging and older adults;
- Developing social skills and learning to cooperate with others;
- Gaining tolerance, patience and sensitivity as well as learning about empathy and how to respect others; and
- Experiencing emotional growth including becoming more self-confident and building self-esteem through learning new skills.

11. Intergenerational programming also has recognized benefits for senior citizens including, but not limited to:

- Reduced levels of loneliness, depression anxiety and agitation;
- Developing strong, meaningful relationships with youth, leading to an increased understanding and respect for youth;
- Developing a heightened sense of purpose and meaning; and
- Experiencing an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as a renewed sense of youthfulness.

12. Other benefits of the intergenerational community hub project include:

- Construction cost savings as a result of maximizing the amount of shared space, reducing the number of instructional spaces required;
- Avoidance of temporary relocation costs during the construction of the facility; and
- Student access to specialty instructional spaces and facilities not available in traditional secondary schools including a professional theatre, dance studios, fitness facility, and culinary arts space.

Impacts on Learning Environment for Regina Mundi Students

13. A critical component of the intergenerational community hub project involved the relocation of Regina Mundi students to the current Dante Alighieri facility upon completion of the new secondary school facility. It is also important to note other significant issues with the facility:

- The enrolment at Regina Mundi significantly exceeds the OTG capacity of 323 pupil places.
- Based on the most recent assessment of the facility, the estimated Facility Condition Index (FCI) of the facility by 2021 is approximately 65%. The FCI rating is the ratio of a facility's renewal needs to its replacement cost, expressed as percentage.

- An FCI rating of 65% or greater indicates critical needs, and was previously defined by the Ministry of Education as prohibitive to repair. This means that renewal was not financially feasible, as the cost of repairs and renovations was too high in comparison to its replacement value.
- As such, the Board only completed minor renovations at Regina Mundi to accommodate the full day kindergarten program.
- Given the anticipated solution to move Regina Mundi CS into Dante Alighieri the TCDSB deliberately did not advocate for inclusion of Regina Mundi for Capital Priorities submission to the Ministry of Education for a new school facility.
- Had the intergenerational community hub not been conceptualized, then TCDSB would have made submissions to the Ministry of Education to secure funds for a new elementary school on Playfair Avenue.

14. The TCDSB has also received funding from the Ministry of Education to construct a new childcare in the proposed future Regina Mundi. The child care centre, which would be operated by VCI, is to be based on the Reggio Emilia model.

E. ACTION PLAN

The following Options/Scenarios are outlined below:

| OPTION | | TIMELINE | RATIONALE |
|--------|---|-----------|---|
| 1. | Proceed with current version of the Joint Facility with minor changes to the design | 2-3 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course of action is no longer a viable option as result of the February 14, 2018 communication from the Minister of Education. • TCDSB would not be able to access capital priority funds (\$32.8M) if it continued with the existing plan. |
| 2. | Develop a standalone secondary school on TCDSB property with the Board discontinuing the concept of a joint | 4-5 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option essentially restarts the TCDSB process to deliver a new secondary school for Dante Alighieri. • A feasibility study to identify potential options for a standalone secondary |

| OPTION | | TIMELINE | RATIONALE |
|--------|--|----------|--|
| | facility with Villa Charities Inc. | | <p>school would be required, as well as undertaking consultation with the school community on the potential options, and retaining consultants to prepare materials for new applications to the City of Toronto.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TCDSB needs to find a facility solution for Regina Mundi CS in addition to Dante Alighieri. •In the construction of a stand-alone school, temporary accommodation for either Dante Alighieri or Regina Mundi students during construction, and there are currently no obvious available options to meet this requirement. |
| 3. | Maintain Joint Intergenerational Hub Concept on a new site and proceed with a new participatory design process | 5 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This option is consistent with both the feedback received during the consultation and the recommendations of the consultants' report. •The design of the building would include a participatory process with public input throughout, and necessitate abandoning the current municipal approvals process. •It would also allow the potential of integration of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd property into the design. •Pursuing this option on a different site than the original proposal necessitates new agreements with VCI. |

Preferred Option Prior to receipt of Letter from Minister of Education

Prior to receipt of the letter from the Minister of Education on February 14, 2018, staff were prepared to recommend a continued partnership with Villa Charities Inc. for the purpose of developing an intergenerational community hub through a new, participatory design process as recommended in the

Maximum City/Dillon Report. This would mean starting the entire process over again.

Given the present reality of the Minister's message, staff cannot recommend this course of action.

F. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. Staff will provide a brief overview of the salient features of the implementation plan once a course of action has been determined.

G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Board adopt Option #2, and develop a stand-alone secondary school on existing TCDSB property.