



## **Capital Revitalization Strategy: Framework and Guiding Principles**

**To:** Planning and Priorities Committee

**Date:** 25 October, 2023

**Report No.:** 10-23-4613

### **Strategic Directions**

- Transform Student Learning
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the framework for the Capital Revitalization Strategy outlined in this report be received for discussion and feedback.

### **Context**

The Toronto District School Board has an aging inventory of school buildings that requires renewal:

- The average age of the school buildings is over 60 years.
- The backlog in major maintenance for the buildings is over \$4.2B. Although health and safety needs are addressed as a priority and approximately \$310M is being spent annually to replace building components, the renewal backlog continues to grow.
- Many of the buildings were designed to standards from decades ago. These buildings require upgrades to bring them up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards for program-related spaces, barrier-free access, and energy efficiency.
- Years of underfunding for school boards school repairs, especially from the 1990s to the mid-2000s, saw the renewal backlog rise rapidly at the TDSB. In

the last five years, we have seen a considerable increase in the annual provincial allocation to the TDSB, an average of \$290 million per year.

The purpose of this report is to outline the steps that will be taken to build a Capital Revitalization Strategy, a program to revitalize TDSB school buildings to bring them up to a good state of repair with contemporary spaces.

The strategy is based in the following statements from different departments in TDSB and applying them to the physical school spaces:

- to ensure all students have equitable access to programs and opportunities – as close to home as possible (Secondary Program Review).
- to make all students and staff feel welcome and accepted in their school so they can be successful and reach their full potential, regardless of their background or personal circumstances (Equity and Inclusive Education).
- to use technology in classrooms to engage, enhance and support learning (TDSB Technology).
- to create school learning environments that are caring, safe, peaceful, nurturing, positive, respectful and that enable all students to reach their full potential (Caring & Safe Schools).

At this time, staff is requesting feedback on the guiding principles with the intention of bringing them back to the November 22, 2023 PPC meeting for approval.

## **Capital Revitalization Strategy**

### ***Goal***

The long-term goal of the Capital Revitalization Strategy is for TDSB to not have any school buildings classified as requiring extensive improvement by 2035.

The mid-term goal is to reduce the number of school buildings classified as requiring extensive improvement by 25% by 2028.

The goal, specifically the timing, will be reviewed regularly to determine how external factors may be impacting the plan.

### ***Guiding Principles***

Guiding principles are required in order to achieve the multi-year goal and assist staff in determining the timing of projects. TDSB is committed to the creation of learning and working spaces that foster safety and belonging for all students and staff, including those who identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized, having disabilities, members of various faith groups and members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

Aligned with the TDSB's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS) and the Toronto Lands Corporation's Modernization Strategy, the Capital Revitalization Strategy will undertake building upgrades and renewal work based on the following guiding principles:

- Provide a consistent range and quality of program spaces for all elementary and secondary schools;
- Make the buildings and sites barrier-free accessible;
- Ensure buildings are safe and healthy;
- Refresh interior and exterior finishes to create safe, welcoming environments for students, staff and community-use;
- Consider modernization of building components and systems to improve energy-efficiency, reduce greenhouse gases and make the site climate resilient;
- The following will be considered when determining the timing of the projects:
  - the classification of the building
  - the Learning Opportunities Index of the school
  - the LTPAS (for example, schools identified to be investigated in a Pupil Accommodation Review should be considered for improvement after a Board decision has been made on the outcome of the review);
  - the funding sources (for example, those that are time sensitive);and
- Minimize disruption to students, families, and staff.

## **Scope of Work**

The Capital Revitalization Strategy will address the following elements of school buildings:

- Facility Condition – Improve overall building condition by renewing components and systems as identified in the Facility Condition Index (FCI) including improving ventilation and replacing Siporex roof decks.
- Program Spaces – Be inclusive by design to meet the needs of diverse students and support diverse abilities. This means advancing equitable access to programs at neighbourhood schools which includes upgrading outdated science labs; upgrading outdated technological programming spaces (e.g., shops); right-sizing gyms; improving learning commons; renovating open concept instructional spaces into separated and enclosed spaces and improving sports fields.
- Sustainability - ensure each building to supports climate control and modernization of facilities to reduce carbon footprint and operating costs
- Accessibility – Address barrier-free accessibility such as entrances, pathways, elevators, washrooms, and parking.
- Equity – Address equity needs such as prayer spaces, availability of gender neutral washrooms, and nutrition spaces.

- Public Perception – Improve the way students, families and staff perceive the condition of our schools by refreshing the interior finishes including hallways, washrooms, and entry ways.

All of the elements will assist the Board in reducing the renewal backlog while creating the desired learning environment for TDSB students.

## **Development of the Capital Revitalization Strategy**

The following steps will be undertaken to develop the Capital Revitalization Strategy:

### **Step 1 – Identify standards for the elements in the scope of work**

In order to ensure that TDSB has strong neighbourhood schools that provide rich programming and increased access to courses that support all pathways, staff will use existing standards such as those contained in the TDSB Elementary School Design Guideline (refresh standards if necessary). For areas where a TDSB standard does not exist, consult with the appropriate academic staff and other experts to develop standards.

### **Step 2 – Assess and classify all school buildings**

It is necessary to create an assessment tool that measure the components of the strategy and classify each of our school buildings. Staff will create a composite index for the school buildings that lists the elements and provides a scoring for each element by applying the standards to the existing elements of the school buildings in a systematic way.

The elements described above will be weighted to create a single score:

- Facility condition – use the Ministry 5-year FCI;
- Program spaces – conduct an assessment of the program spaces in each building using a standardized tool;
- Accessibility – use the TDSB Accessibility Profile;
- Sustainability - conduct an assessment of the components that are needed in each building to support climate control using a standardized tool; modernization of facilities to reduce carbon footprint and operating costs.
- Equity – conduct an assessment of the equity needs of each building using a standardized tool; and
- Public perception – conduct a survey of students and parents of each school on the cleanliness, condition, and conduciveness to learning of the building.

Classify the buildings based on the composite score:

- Schools Requiring Minimal Improvements – score of 66% to 100% – building is highly suited for program delivery; infrastructure is appropriate and readily available to support program and use; limited and manageable infrastructure and equipment failure may occur;
- Schools Requiring Moderate Improvements – score of 45% to 65% – space may be suitable for program delivery but may require modifications to the infrastructure to improve access and delivery; facilities may look worn with apparent and increasing maintenance needs identified; frequent infrastructure and equipment failure may occur; occasional building shut down may occur; and
- Schools Requiring Extensive Improvements – score of 0% to 44% – the space may hinder program delivery; facilities look worn with obvious deterioration; equipment failure in critical items may be more frequent; occasional building shut down could occur; management risk is high.

Step 3 – Create inventory of projects with cost estimates

Based on the assessment of the buildings, staff will identify the projects to be completed to bring the building up to standard and estimate the costs for each project.

Step 4 – Create a multi-year budget

Identify the annual budget for the strategy based on the funding sources identified in the resources section below.

Step 5 – Prioritize projects

Identify the projects to be completed each year using the composite index, the estimated costs, the budget, and the guiding principles.

Step 6 - Implement Strategy

Implement the strategy based on the projects identified.

Step 7 – Measure and Report

Measure the success of the strategy against the goal and report back.

## **Types of Projects**

Depending on the amount of work that needs to be done, revitalization of buildings could occur through the following means:

- Light retrofit – for buildings that are in good or fair condition; renewal work can occur during the school year and during the breaks in the school year;

- Deep retrofit – for buildings that are in fair or poor condition; the building should be gutted; will require the school to be vacated for the work to occur; will require the use of a holding school;
- Replacement –
  - Modernization – for buildings that have the potential to be rebuilt through a joint venture with a partner by leveraging the value of the land; will require the school to be vacated for the work to occur; will require the use of a holding school; and
  - Capital priority – for buildings experiencing accommodation pressures that are candidates to receive funding from the Ministry of Education for new pupil places; could be additions, deep retrofits, replacement schools or new schools.

In addition, new buildings and buildings that have undergone revitalization will be maintained through ongoing regular maintenance. This maintenance is funded through the operating budget and is mostly scheduled.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

Approval of Guiding Principles: November 2023

Dedicate staff to the Capital Revitalization Strategy: December 2023

Develop the standards, complete the building assessment and classify the buildings (Steps 1 and 2): June 2024

Identify the projects, estimate costs, establish budget, and prioritize the projects (Steps 3 to 6): December 2024

Implement the first year of projects: starting in January 2025. In the meantime, there are other strategies that have been previously approved by the Board that will continue and be incorporated into the overall capital revitalization strategy. Examples include “Revitalizing School Interiors” and “Revitalizing School Grounds and Building Exteriors”.

## **Resource Implications**

### ***Financial Resources***

The following funding sources will be available to support the strategy:

### **School Renewal Allocation (SRA)**

- allows school boards to revitalize and renew aged building systems and components. This includes roof replacement and replacing of aged HVAC systems.
- SRA funding also allows school boards to undertake capital improvements (e.g., add new ventilation systems to increase fresh air intake, address program related needs and invest in accessibility-related enhancements such as ramps, elevators, electronic door opening systems).
- In addition, SRA also allows school boards to address maintenance requirements such as painting, roof patching and pavement/parking repairs.
- Approximately \$40 million annually available for Capital Revitalization.

### **School Condition Improvement (SCI)**

- allows school boards to revitalize and renew aged building components that have exceeded or will exceed their useful life cycle. Items eligible for SCI funding are identified through the ministry's School Facility Condition Assessment Program. Projects must support the overall objective of addressing facility renewal needs (either assessed needs or on a proactive basis).
- Approximately \$240 million annually available for Capital Revitalization

### **Proceeds of Disposition (POD)**

- Effective September 1, 2015, the Ministry revised the POD Policy (Ontario Regulation 193/10)
- The revised policy stated that:
  - POD must be used for the repair or replacement of components within a school
  - For components, boards must follow the expenditure requirements set out in the SCI policy.
- Approximately \$100 million annually available for Capital Revitalization

### **Other (including Capital Priorities Funding)**

- The Board will continue to access all opportunities available to build new schools.

It will be important to work with the Ministry to ensure that flexibility is provided in using certain funding. For example, it will be necessary to use Proceeds of Disposition to address accessibility needs.

### **Human Resources**

The Capital Revitalization Strategy is a major undertaking and will require a dedicated Senior Manager to lead the work.

The work will require the participation and collaboration of staff in the business and academic areas including: Design; Renewal; Capital; Sustainability; Planning; TLC; Instruction; and Equity.

A Steering Committee will be created with representatives from the areas identified above. The Committee will be chaired by the Associate Director of Modernization and Strategic Resource Alignment.

## **Communications Considerations**

Communication will be an important component of the implementation of the strategy. It will be important for the Board to:

- Highlight the work completed
- Communicate timelines and the implementation across the district
- Keep communities up to date on the work that is happening in their areas

In addition, updates will be provided to Trustees at appropriate times in the development of the Capital Revitalization Strategy.

## **Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)**

NA

## **Appendices**

NA

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