

Some important things to consider about the St. Patrick's–Alexandra School issue

1 The not-for-profit groups, which council has thus far failed to support, have been **providing services quietly and efficiently to an “at risk” community** for many years.

2 The not-for-profit groups all own land and buildings now which they manage and maintain. They all need more space for additional programming to meet community needs, which a part of the St. Patrick's–Alexandra site would provide. They have agreed to work together in the interests of providing this improved level of service for the benefit of their community. **They have the expertise to run the facility.**

3 The objectives of the not-for-profit groups were and are to provide improved and expanded services to their communities in a community centre based on successful models in other North American cities. By denying them the resource to do so, **council is in effect failing to support “at risk” communities.**

4 The communities to which the not-for-profits wish to provide more and enhanced supports have higher levels of unemployment, early school drop-out rates, and drug-related safety issues. **To neglect this area encourages the proliferation of these problems.** Council's failure to provide use of the St. Patrick's building to the not-for-profits that are attempting to address these social ills is a failure to its citizens.

5 The not-for-profit groups are **not asking for any money from the city.** They are asking for the right to use one building of a two-building community school that was built and paid for 40 years ago. Although the school component has been closed, the community component is still seriously needed.

6 This could be a **win/win situation.** The not-for-profit service organizations are working to consolidate their activities into one of the two school buildings, which would free-up half of this parcel of land for sale by the city. The city would receive some cash for sale of some of the property now with the balance of the property to be returned to the city when no longer required.

7 The figure of \$7 million being quoted as required to rehabilitate the buildings applies to two buildings. The community groups would consolidate their programs into the newer building for which a **rehabilitation figure of \$1.7 million** has been received. **This level of investment can be managed by the groups.**

8 The newer of the two buildings contains a large and excellent gymnasium. It is situated within 80 yards of the Community YMCA gymnasium, which is booked solidly from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm six days of the week. **Both gyms are necessary resources** to the community. Supervised recreation programs are proven crime deterrents.

9 This is not a question of the city investing money in the community; the investment was made 40 years ago. It is a question of the city **leaving some of that investment in the community** rather than pulling out all of the money at this time. The not-for-profits are asking that the city leave half of the investment to be available for community support.

10 Council is proposing to vote to remove the policy that would require it to consult with the community before selling school property. **The implications of such a move are serious in terms of democratic citizen engagement and participation in community development.** We consider this to be harmful both in principle and in practical application.

11 The call for proposals does not require completion of the project by any particular date. The recommended developer, Jono, already has one major project with a planned 2016 completion date and another major piece of land awaiting project commencement. The St. Patrick's–Alexandra property could conceivably **remain undeveloped for well over five years,** — quite the opposite of what the area needs.