

DATE: June 21, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Infrastructure Committee: Trustee Ip, Trustee Kusiek (chair), Trustee Sumar

SUBJECT: Infrastructure Committee 2021-2022 Work Plan Summary

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Roland Labbe, Kathy Muhlethaler, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: [Trustees' Handbook](#), Section 6.1.2 – Board Committees, Infrastructure Committee

ISSUE

The Infrastructure Committee is responsible for developing and presenting to the Board of Trustees an annual work plan. This report summarizes the committee's accomplishments over this school year.

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees approved the formation of a Trustee Infrastructure Committee on April 10, 2014, to assist Trustees in further understanding the issues, impacts and next steps related to infrastructure over the course of their term. A Terms of Reference was developed and actions are informed through the development of an annual work plan. The Infrastructure Committee 2021-2022 work plan was approved at the December 14, 2021, Board meeting.

CURRENT SITUATION

As this was the first year of the current Board's term, the committee activity was a mix of gaining a deeper understanding of the Division's infrastructure portfolio and working to ensure high quality learning and working environments for the Division's staff and students. Over the course of the year, the committee completed all four goals set out in their work plan.

By providing input into the Three-Year Capital Plan and Ten-Year Facilities plan, the committee continued advocacy for funding for high-quality, adequate learning environments that keep pace for growing student enrolment, including sustainable, predictable infrastructure funding. The plans highlight the need for both new spaces and modernizations. The committee also reviewed the concept of block funding and saw how it could be a mechanism for providing adequate, sustainable support for the Division's infrastructure needs. The committee asked that staff update the report, based on current information, for presentation to Trustees in fall 2022. The committee also further explored the concept of schools as community hubs in two conversations with City Councillors.

Following a review by the committee, the Division Real Estate Strategy was approved by the Board on February 15, 2022. The Strategy highlights the overarching values the Board feels are important when addressing the Division's closed schools and vacant reserve sites. It also confirms the Board's goal to be

good neighbours and see public lands used for the public good, and its belief that community voice is important in real estate decisions and that public land should not be used for private or charter schools.

A presentation by Infrastructure staff on the Division's environmental initiatives was hosted by the Infrastructure Committee and open to all Trustees. Staff provided updates on work as part of the Corporate Climate Leaders program and the Division's solar strategy. The committee and Division staff met with Ever Active Schools to explore active transportation opportunities in the Division. On April 21, the Infrastructure Committee hosted an online Transportation Forum, inviting Ever Active Schools and a City Councillor to be presenters. The forum was well received by participating constituents and served to create awareness of Division transportation challenges, as well as a better understanding of transportation options.

Through discussions with staff, the committee learned more about playground funding, and the development and renewal processes. They also reviewed and provided feedback on a [playground planning guide](#), which is now available on the Division's website.

The Infrastructure Committee offers the following items for consideration by next year's committee:

- Continue the information sharing sessions with City Council and explore information sharing with the Catholic and Francophone school boards; there is great potential for more collaboration between our organizations
- Work on how Trustees can promote the Division's environmental initiatives
- Continued advocacy for new schools and modernization, with discussion of the positive environmental impacts of school consolidation
- Update the block funding white paper and explore potentials for support of this concept by other partners
- Continue to see what can be done at the committee level to enhance and improve processes for playground development, and advocacy for playground funding
- Participate in the review of EA.BP Infrastructure Planning Principles, with an environmental and active transportation lens

KEY POINTS

The Infrastructure Committee:

- gained a deeper understanding of the Division's infrastructure portfolio and advanced the work to ensure high quality learning and working environments for staff and students
- completed all four goals set out in their work plan
- offered considerations for next year's Infrastructure Committee

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment I Infrastructure Committee Terms of Reference
Attachment II Infrastructure Committee 2021-2022 Work Plan

JK:km

Infrastructure Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

- Understand the impacts of infrastructure to students, families, communities, and the Division, both positive and negative.
- To assist Trustees in further understanding the issues, impacts and next steps related to infrastructure, over the course of their term.
- Recommend governance direction in matters related to the implementation of the Managing Space for our Students Infrastructure Strategy.
- Advise and provide feedback on strategic infrastructure initiatives, such as the Managing Space for our Students report.
- Consider alternative funding approaches for school infrastructure and outline the feasibility of these approaches.
- Advocate for infrastructure support through multiple interests such as the City of Edmonton, Province of Alberta and other school jurisdictions.

Terms of Reference

The Infrastructure Committee will assist Trustees in further understanding the issues, impacts and next steps related to infrastructure, over the course of their term.

Parameters

- All recommendations arising from the committee will be presented as a recommendation to the Board of Trustees at a public Board meeting.

Outcomes

- Implementation of an advocacy model to support the outcomes of the Infrastructure Strategy
- Increased level of public trust/confidence in the Board
- Increased awareness of current pressures and realities and a focus on issues related to infrastructure
- Broader community interest and involvement in the infrastructure development process

Process/Plan

- Develop Terms of Reference
- Examine the issues around infrastructure
- Develop recommendations for the Board
- Communicate the work of the committee with the public and increase awareness of our Division realities
- Develop/implement advocacy strategy
- Conduct regular progress/effectiveness reviews

Infrastructure Committee 2021-2022 Work Plan

ACTIVITIES

- Continue advocacy for funding for high-quality, adequate learning environments that keep pace for growing student enrolment, including sustainable, predictable infrastructure funding
 - Highlight the need for both new spaces and modernizations
 - Contribute to the development of the Three-Year Capital Plan and 10-Year Facilities Plan submissions
 - Work in partnership with external organizations and government around the idea of schools as community hubs
- Finalize the Division Real Estate Strategy
 - Review the work of the previous Board, in the context of the current funding model and space requirements
 - Finalize positions on closed and surplus school sites
- Explore advocacy opportunities and supportive governance direction for environment-related infrastructure developments
 - Assist with generating targets for the Division, as required by the Corporate Climate Leaders program
 - Review and consider updates to the Division’s solar strategy
 - Work in collaboration with the City of Edmonton and other partners to improve active transportation options for students and staff to Division buildings
- Champion improvements to the playground construction and renewal process
 - Work with the partners including parent groups, the City of Edmonton, Province of Alberta and advice of Division staff to streamline processes and overcome challenges to the current playground construction and renewal process

SUPPORTING ACTIONS/INFORMATION REQUESTED FROM ADMINISTRATION

- Three-Year Capital Plan
- Transportation reports
- Technology status reports
- Playground infrastructure reports

REQUESTED RESOURCES

- Continued support of the Infrastructure unit and Director Board and Superintendent Relations
- No funding needs are anticipated at this time.