

Resolution from the PAC on the Renewal of General Gordon Elementary:

Motion passed 48-0 at the PAC meeting 25 February 2008

We commend the Trustees of the Vancouver School Board for their efforts to work with the General Gordon parents and community to improve the Seismic Mitigation Program, as evidenced by their letter to Minister of Education Shirley Bond of February 20, 2008. We want to be a partner with the VSB in their effort.

We propose that General Gordon serve as a pilot case of a new, revitalized effort that builds on the seismic upgrading process to achieve citywide school renewal. To achieve this, we ask the VSB to direct staff to

1. **Move quickly** to re-work the existing feasibility study to provide true options that address the concerns of both the VSB Trustees and the Gordon community as detailed in the VSB July 20 letter and the PAC Gordon Building Renewal Committee Report, dated Feb 25th. Of particular concern are multipurpose spaces suitable for childcare and a lunchroom. At least three options should be developed: new school, renovation plus new gym, and preservation of the original 1911 wing plus new facility.
2. **Implement an Integrated Design Process** to determine the best option. The Study team should meet with all stake-holders, including parents, staff, teachers, and the community, to identify their requirements *before* developing evaluation and costing criteria, not after.
3. **Explore other potential funding sources** such as Annual Facilities Grants, Child Care Facilities Expansion Grants, the Innovative Clean Energy Fund, utility financing programs, and sources at the City level including partnerships on joint use amenity facilities and a community-based heritage bank.

Key elements of the process ahead:

- Any proposed school option would provide the full capacities of the current facility, including child care meeting current & projected needs, support for music instruction, and space for our dual-language collection library.
- Each option would be configured to minimize disruption during construction and after completion; the renovation option should use enough temporary classrooms or develop other strategies such that classes don't have to be held in the middle of a construction zone raising concerns about noise and asbestos exposure.
- The renovation option should upgrade the major systems of the building as required. If new wiring or relocated washrooms are essential to making a renovation option acceptable to teachers, those should be there. If Facilities is worried about maintenance headaches, they should be addressed.
- 'Replacement' and Renovation/Upgrade options should be evaluated for environmental impact based on actual energy use of the current school, predicted energy use after renovation, and compared with actual energy use of recently constructed new schools. Estimate the carbon footprint of proposed construction weighed against retention of the existing.
- All options should meet minimum environmental goals: Adequate daylight to every student's desk throughout the school day, non-toxic materials throughout, fresh air and room temperature under teacher control, energy use at least 20% better than the average Vancouver school.
- The design life cycle should be a minimum of 50 years.
- Once options have been explored, and before committing to a particular path, public meetings would be held to which the community would be invited via direct mailing to all residents in the school's catchment. Additionally all relevant documents would be online for public review.

We realize and accept that in the end, no one will get 100% of what they want. But if we work together we can produce something we can all be proud of for decades to come.