



CITY OF VANCOUVER

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 18, 2005
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TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of Social Planning
SUBJECT: Capital Grant for St. Michael's Daycare

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a Capital Grant of up to \$10,000 to St. Michael's Anglican Church Daycare towards the \$35,000 required for a playground upgrade subject to the conditions outlined in this report; source of funds to be the Unallocated 2003-2005 Capital Grants account.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing recommendation.

COUNCIL POLICY

The 2003-2005 Capital Plan includes provision for a Capital Grant program for social service and cultural projects in facilities which are not owned by the City.

In 1987, City Council adopted "Criteria and Guidelines for Capital Grants". Included in these, was the stipulation that the City Grant for a project is not to exceed one-third of the total project cost.

Approval of Grants requires eight affirmative votes.

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council's approval of a recommendation to allocate a Capital Grant to enable the completion of a playground upgrade for St. Michael's Anglican Church Daycare located at 409 East Broadway.

BACKGROUND

St. Michael's Anglican Church Daycare has been in operation as a licensed child care program for over 35 years. They provide a 25-space licensed group child care program for 3 to 5 year olds in the basement of church building owned by St. Michael's Parish. The child care service is extended to all families and does not exclude anyone based on religion, ethnicity or other factors. St. Michael's Daycare delivers an inclusive program that assists many low-income, new immigrant families who are settling in Vancouver.

The Church has upgraded the interior of their child care space at their expense but is now seeking City assistance to improve the outdoor play space. They have worked with Community Care Facilities Licensing staff from the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to determine what improvements are needed to address traffic noise, create a safe outdoor space, and to add more play features for the children. With support from Health's Childcare Licensing Officers, the Church has been successful in obtaining a Provincial Child Care Capital Grant of \$25,000. They have consulted professional landscapers with expertise in children's outdoor play spaces, and have determined they require a budget of \$35,000 to complete the necessary upgrades. In order to move forward with this project, St. Michael's has approached the City for a contribution of up to \$10,000 to the project budget. They are hoping to commence the upgrades in December, 2005. This request represents less than one-third of the project budget and is in keeping with the City's capital grant funding criteria.

DISCUSSION

The upgrade of St. Michael's outdoor play area has been the subject of discussion with Social Planning staff for the past two years. This year, Health's Child Care Licensing and Environmental Health Officers have required that improvements be made to the playground to address high levels of traffic noise and to provide shade and rain protection. Acoustical tests were undertaken to determine the best and most cost effective method of noise reduction to ensure improvements were in compliance with the City of Vancouver's Building Code. The proposed project will include repositioning an existing fence, adding resilient tile under a climber, a covered deck play area, a sandbox with shade arbour, an asphalt bike loop, a wooden bridge, seating areas and new plants. The total cost for construction to meet Canadian Standards Association guidelines and Licensing's requirements is \$35,000.

The project was unable to proceed until funding could be secured. In March, 2004, the Province announced a new capital grant called the Safe Play Space Program. These capital grants of up to \$25,000 were offered to licensed non-profit child care providers for the purpose of upgrading their outdoor play areas to meet Canadian Standards Association guidelines. St. Michael's Daycare was approved for a full grant in 2005 but funds must be used before March 31, 2006. Due to this requirement the Church cannot wait for the next City Capital grant process which occurs in May 2006.

PROJECT FUNDING

The project funding is as follows:

Provincial Child Care Capital Grant	\$25,000
City Capital Grant	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$35,000

CONDITIONS

In order to access the proposed City Capital grant the following general conditions would apply:

- Confirmation of funding to be in place prior to release of 50% City funding;
- Remaining 50% released on receipt of invoices and, where applicable, Occupancy Permits;
- Written approval of landlord, where applicable, to make renovations;
- All renovations to meet applicable City By-laws, permit requirements and guidelines.

There are also some specific additional conditions related to child care Capital grants:

- All designs and renovations must be approved by Community Care Facilities Licensing and meet applicable City Childcare Design Guidelines;
- Receipt of three quotations for work as set out in renovation design/details.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are sufficient financial resources in the Unallocated 2003-2005 Capital grants account. The current balance in this account is \$21,168 and an allocation of \$10,000 can be accommodated to St. Michael's Daycare. Should Council approve this grant, the balance remaining in the account will be \$11,168.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Improvement to the St. Michael's Daycare outdoor play space will be a benefit to the children and families who access this licensed child care program. Many of the children who attend St. Michael's Daycare live in apartments and have little access to green space. A quality outdoor play experience is important to their physical development and daily experience during the hours they are in care.

CONCLUSION

Staff are recommending approval of a Capital grant of \$10,000 to assist with completing the outdoor playground upgrade for St. Michael's Daycare.