



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: June 12, 2024
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
Pete Sabo, Executive Director Planning & Operations
Brian Hackwood, Assistant Director Planning & Operations
SUBJECT: School Project Planning

Background:

On April 24, 2024, the Board of Education passed the following motion:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) direct staff to provide a report outlining the process for requesting and obtaining approval for planting trees and other landscaping on school grounds including the selection of plant species, funding of materials and labour, ongoing maintenance, and any implications with respect to the Environmental Stewardship Action Plan to the next appropriate Business Committee meeting.

This information sheet provides an overview of the process for school project planning.

Discussion:

In June 2019, Facilities together with the Department of Learning Services (DLS) launched a pilot program of formalizing School Project requests. This program combined a various way to request processes (including AFG) into one platform for facilities related requests. This program continues to operate and be improved to this day. Improvements consider ease of school use, expansion to include all facilities (non-school), communication, and streamline of processing and project deliver by district staff.

Prior to this program, a Donated Equipment Request form was used by the schools to request School Funded works at any time of the school year. Little or no planning ahead was involved, scheduling was a challenge and often funding had been raised with no communications with Facilities or DLS.

Often, Facilities was unable to meet the expectations of the school request generally due to scheduling and timelines.

The School Project Program:

- Early May each year, requests are emailed from Facilities to each Principal to consider and fill in an attached document listing the upcoming school year projects.
- Project requests are entered into a database and then considered by Facilities together with DLS for “Approval in Principle”.
- Facilities Planners are assigned to each “Approved in Principle” project to develop into a Scope of Works that is circulated for Approval.
 - Generally, requests are funded via AFG are considered for the following year April 1 – March 31)
 - School funded requests are considered for the upcoming school year (July 1 – June 30) and are variously considered for approval.
 - Capital alignment projects can be referred to other budget processes (LC, AFG, SEP, PEP etc.) are dependant on the approval process for that budget.
 - Not all requests are approved for a variety of reasons, including lack of funding, conflict with other policies/procedures, unsupportable, etc.
- Once approved, Projects are assigned to Maintenance or Capital Implementation to schedule construction.
- Note that Emergent School Projects can be considered outside of this process by contacting the appropriate Assistant Superintendent together with the Executive Director of Planning and Operations (or designate).

In the summer of 2022, The Board of Trustees adopted the Environmental Stewardship Action Plan (ESAP) that in part spoke specifically to “Responsibility to the Land” that operationally included:

- Develop Land Use Guidelines that consider Indigenous knowledge, prioritizes the use of native plants, the regeneration of natural green spaces, and the inclusion of trees on school grounds and play spaces

To date this work has not been completed and in the absence of a Land Use Guideline, some landscape approvals have been delayed while taking into account the spirit of the Land Use Guidelines.

Staff continue to work to develop land use guidelines and have advised the environment committee on staff beginning their work. In the interim, staff continue to make efforts to minimize delays on requests, consulting where appropriate on the environmental impacts of proposed projects.

Reference

Principal Presentation on Project Planning
Portion of Environmental Stewardship Action Plan (ESAP)
Garden Project example