

CENTRAL MOUNTAIN ACCOMODATION REVIEW OPTION 33

Executive Summary

Summary of Proposal

The scope of work suggested under Central Mountain Accommodation Review Option 33 includes the following:

- Complete renovation, modernization and right-sizing of JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Close JK-6 Eastmount Park School and transfer those students to the newly renovated JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Close JK-5 Linden Park School and transfer students east of Upper Wellington to JK-8 Franklin Road and students west of Upper Wellington to JK-6 Queensdale.
- 6-8 Cardinal Heights, JK-5 Pauline Johnson and JK-5 Ridgemount stay as they are.
- JK-6 Queensdale would feed Grade 6 graduates to JK-8 GL Armstrong.
- JK-5 Ridgemount and JK-5 Pauline Johnson would feed Grade 5 graduates to 6-8 Cardinal Heights.

Benefits

- Lowest cost option.
- Minimal school closures.
- 96.5% Average Enrollment in 2022.
- Optimized balance between preferred JK to 8 400-600 student schools and feeder junior elementary schools.
- No dependence on Ministry funding approvals.
- Preservation and revitalization of a valuable historic school.
- Provision for future enrollment demands and demographic shifts.
- Optimizes geographic separation between school locations across the wider Hamilton Mountain including schools not part of the Central Mountain ARC.

Drawbacks

- Eliminates option to partnership with the City of Hamilton at the Hill Park Recreation Centre.
- Minor increase in bussing.

CENTRAL MOUNTAIN ACCOMODATION REVIEW OPTION 33

Please accept this Accommodation Review Option for the Central Mountain group of schools currently under review.

The scope of work recommended under this Accommodation Review Option includes the complete renovation, modernizing and right-sizing of GL Armstrong School, the closure of Eastmount School and transferring students to the newly right-sized GL Armstrong School, the closure of Linden Park School and transferring students to both Franklin Road and Queensdale.

Cardinal Heights, Pauline Johnson and Ridgemount would stay as they are.

1.0 Recommended Timeline

The Central Mountain ARC is currently scheduled to conclude in the spring of 2014 with final recommendations to be confirmed by the HWDSB Trustees for implementation before the start of the school year in the fall of 2014.

However, due to the complexity of the accommodation review options currently under consideration, the lead time required for the design and tendering of renovations and new construction and staffing and student transitions, it is not feasible to consider that *any* accommodation review options could be implemented as soon as the fall of 2014.

Further, appeals filed by affected communities would have the power to delay the final conclusion of the Central Mountain ARC past the start of the 2014 school year in September of 2014.

Therefore, we propose utilizing 2014 to complete the detailed planning process, with the proposed student accommodation revisions scheduled to begin by the start of the 2015 school year.

The scope of work recommended for the architectural design, tendering and contract award for the complete renovation, modernization and right-sizing of GL Armstrong School will require a minimum of one year lead time.

We estimate that the recommended right-sizing renovation construction work could be completed within a year. However, in order to avoid possible student disruptions, we believe that it would be prudent to allow for two years to complete the proposed work at GL Armstrong School.

2014

- Complete detailed architectural design for the rehabilitation of right-sized JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Complete high and urgent needs at 6-8 Cardinal Heights, JK-5 Pauline Johnson, JK-8 Franklin Road, JK-6 Queensdale and JK-5 Ridgemount.
- Implement full day kindergarten at JK-6 Queensdale, JK-6 Eastmount Park and JK-5 Linden Park (This is mandated by the Ministry for all schools that will be in operation in 2014 and funds have previously been made available).
- Tender and award renovation contract for right-sized JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Install two or three temporary portables at JK-6 Eastmount School.
- Prepare and implement student transition plans.
- Prepare and implement staffing plans.

2015

- Close JK-5 Linden Park School.
- Transfer approximately 157 current JK-5 Linden Park students to JK-8 Franklin Road with options for students to also attend either JK-6 Queensdale or JK-6 Eastmount Park.
- JK-8 Franklin Road would operate between 100% and 110% capacity until 2017.
- Transfer approximately 115 JK-8 GL Armstrong students to Queensdale.
- Queensdale would operate at JK-8 and between 100% and 110% capacity until 2017.
- Transfer approximately 225 JK-8 GL Armstrong students to Eastmount Park.
- Eastmount Park would operate at JK-8 and at approximately 130% capacity with two or three temporary portables until 2017.
- Begin renovations at right-sized JK-8 GL Armstrong.

2016

- Complete renovations at right-sized GL JK-8 Armstrong School.

2017

- Close Eastmount Park School.
- Transfer Eastmount Park students and former GL Armstrong students out of Eastmount Park and into the newly renovated JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Transfer former GL Armstrong students out of Queensdale and into the newly renovated JK-8 GL Armstrong School.
- Transfer former Linden Park students that live west of Upper Wellington out of Franklin Road School and into Queensdale.

2018 to 2022

- Complete outstanding non-urgent repairs at Cardinal Heights, Franklin Road, Pauline Johnson, Ridgemount and Queensdale.

No other changes to Cardinal Heights, Pauline Johnson and Ridgemount unless provisional measures due to enrollment fluctuations are required.

2.0 Right-Sizing and Rehabilitation of GL Armstrong School

GL Armstrong is a historical and architecturally significant structure, originally built in 1936.

Armstrong was expanded in the mid 1980's with the addition of the east wing and new gymnasium space.

In addition to the needs identified in the HWDSB's Facility Condition Index (FCI), as it stands today GL Armstrong School is:

- not fully accessible,
- not specialized for deaf and hard of hearing students,
- contains a significant amount of asbestos,
- has a systemic leaking roof likely leading to extensive mould and mildew problems,
- has an outdated and deteriorating heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) system,
- is not optimized for wifi and other modern educational applications,
- is not air conditioned,
- has no safe pick up and drop off area.

Therefore, we conclude that extensive rehabilitation and renovation work would be required at GL Armstrong School before it is considered for use with *any* Accommodation Review Option.

The current on the ground capacity of GL Armstrong School is 633 students.

We proposed right-sizing GL Armstrong by demolishing the 1980s era additions and restoring the structure to its original 1936 configuration.

The area currently occupied by the 1980s additions would be converted to green space.

The right-sized capacity of JK-8 GL Armstrong School would be in the order of 450 to 500 students.

We propose leaving the footings of the 1980's era additions in place below grade. These footings currently have a residual life span of 25 to 50 years. In the event that additional future enrollment capacity is required at GL Armstrong School, a modular expansion of the school could be undertaken as required by building on the existing footings left in place.

The proposed rehabilitation work to be completed on the original 1936 portions of GL Armstrong School would include:

- complete removal of all modern building materials down to the original superstructure,
- restoration of all historic components of the original architecture,
- complete asbestos abatement,
- complete mould and mildew abatement,
- complete accessibility access - including an elevator to all floors and wheelchair ramps to bypass all stairs and steps,
- new flooring, window coverings and sound dampening installations suitable for accommodation of deaf and hard of hearing students,
- complete removal and replacement of the existing HVAC systems,
- removal of all windows and doors and replacement with modern energy efficient windows and doors,
- weatherproofing and insulation of all exterior walls to a modern energy efficient building science envelope,
- installation of modern wifi and computer educational systems,
- installation of new flooring, wall coverings and architectural components.

We also propose building a dedicated school bus pick up and drop off area that would be isolated from the busy traffic on Concession Street.

We estimate that the total construction cost for the proposed work would be in the order of 6 to 9 million dollars (\$6,000,000 to \$9,000,000).

3.0 Summary of 2022 Utilization and Enrollment Projections

Upon completion of the work recommended to be completed between 2014 and 2017 under Accommodation Review Option 33 and based on the HWDSB's long term enrollment projections, the following is a summary of the anticipated 2022 utilization rates and enrollment projections per school:

6-8 Cardinal Heights:	98%	Capacity=308	Enrollment=302
Eastmount Park:	Closed		
JK-8 Franklin Road:	90%	Capacity=463	Enrollment=417
JK-8 Armstrong:	99%	Capacity=450	Enrollment=444
Linden Park:	Closed		
JK-5 Pauline Johnson:	103%	Capacity=314	Enrollment=323
JK-6 Queensdale:	85%	Capacity=279	Enrollment=236
JK-5 Ridgemount:	104%	Capacity=250	Enrollment=259

The total average utilization projection for 2022 is **96.5%**.

5.0 Provision for Future Enrollment Fluctuations

By maintaining the existing 1980's era footings below grade, the proposed renovation work at GL Armstrong will include provision for future modular expansion in the event of future enrollment fluctuations.

Further, depending on the actual growth of the City of Hamilton south of the Linc, it would be possible for the HWDSB to close Ridgemount and build a new JK-8 school south of the Linc.

Pauline Johnson and Cardinal Heights could also be consolidated with the portion of Ridgemount students living north of the Linc into a new school on the Pauline Johnson / Cardinal Heights.

Finally, we *strongly* recommend that the HWDSB retain a parcel of land at Linden Park or Hill Park that would be suitable for a future JK-8 school in the event that the future enrollments at Queensdale, GL Armstrong and Franklin Road are higher than anticipated.

6.0 Conclusion

Thank you for your consideration of this Pupil Accommodation Review Option.

If there are any questions regarding the scope of work, timeframes, staging, enrollment projections or construction cost estimate, I would be happy to present this option to the ARC Committee in person.

January 17th, 2014

To the attention of the Central Mountain ARC,

While there have been many questions asked about the validity of the enrolment projections we have been provided I am wondering how many have taken the time to really examine them.

Four of the seven schools with a JK program have consistent enrolment from 2013 - 2022, two show slight declines and one has a varied number. If we begin with the assumption that JK enrolment is close to consistent how then do the totals of the eight schools show a such a large drop in total enrolment over the ten year timeframe? Where do the students that enrol in JK end up? Yes, there is turnover of enrolment as some students move or transfer to other schools but there are also new students that move in.

Has anyone checked the accuracy of the 2012 numbers? Understandably the 2013 - 2022 numbers are projections but surely the 2012 are actual enrolment for the 2102/2013 school year. Would it surprise you to learn that the numbers for each school vary from the actual enrolment stats of March 2013, for some schools by as much as 6 students? Or that we somehow lost 29 students between kindergarden and grade 7 from March 2013 to September 2013 according to the ARC charts?

How about a quick check to see if all the rows and columns actually add up correctly?

These are the numbers being used to calculate the utilization rates of our schools. With all of these obvious inconsistencies Perhaps you should not aim for too high a number because instead of under utilized schools in twenty years we could be faced with portables.

The impacts of the decisions you are making will be felt by the students of the Central Mountain for years to come. I wish we could be sure you are basing those decisions on the right data, ask yourself the question, if there are errors here what others haven't we found yet.

I think these numbers require extra explanation and scrutiny and it is an item that should be added to your agenda.

Respectfully,
Stefanie Sheils

January 17, 2014

To the Central Hamilton ARC Members:

I would like to start by expressing my thanks for the time you have all put into the Pupil Accommodation Review process for our Central Mountain communities. This has been no small task!

As you move toward finalizing an option for the ARC report, I respectfully request that a review of the ARC Terms of Reference be added to the agenda for the next meeting (Tuesday, January 21st) before the options are discussed further.

In reviewing the chart provided to the committee by an ARC member last week, I discovered a number of key issues with the evaluation of options to date:

1. There is no mention of the Long-Term Facilities Master Plan in the Terms of Reference. This document has been used to direct the ARC to criteria like JK-8 and schools of 500-600 capacity. While these criteria are important for long-term planning, and in particular new builds, it is not actually the mandate of your ARC to make the Hamilton Central Mountain fit these criteria. According to the Vice Chair of the Board, the mandate of the ARC is to reduce empty pupil spaces and “maximize the use of Board owned facilities over the long-term.” This suggests that adding new facilities is not the primary mandate of the ARC.
2. Portables are not desirable, and are not a current issue with our schools; however, they may be “a good short-term solution” and so should be considered to create flexibility in student accommodation during renovations.
3. Program offerings must be considered based on what is currently offered at each school location. Program offerings does not refer to school size or the K-8 model.
4. Quality teaching and learning environments should not be assumed. Technically the school ratings (Average, Fair, Poor) characterize the current status of schools (although some of these ratings have been questioned). The ARC can address deficiencies in their option by added renovations to improve low ratings.
5. Equity includes considering accessibility of schools – physical accessibility (ramps, washrooms, elevators) along with other items.
6. Perhaps most important – TOR 4.2 states “The Accommodation Review Committee may add additional reference criteria”. This is an opportunity to ensure our ARC aligns with our community. I believe this was discussed following the first public meeting, but I haven’t been able to find an indication that any criteria have been added. I encourage the committee to ensure items brought forward by the public and by your committee are fully represented in your terms of reference.

Thank you once again for your commitment to our broad community. I appreciate all you are doing, and look forward to further meaningful dialogue in your next working meeting.

Sincerely,

R. Kinninburgh

Hamilton Community Parent