



SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 24-001

16 January 2024

Education Development Charges – Existing By-law Policy Review

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PURPOSE:

1. To provide information to support a legislatively required meeting in order to review the policies contained within the District’s existing Education Development Charges (EDC) By-law.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. Responsible resource use is one of the Board’s four key value statements within the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. Education Development Charges play a role in student accommodation and the effective management of enrolment pressures. Managing these issues properly contributes to student success and staff well-being.

CONTEXT:

3. On 26 March 2019, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) adopted By-law 01-2019. This by-law served to implement the collection of EDCs across the District on 1 April 2019. The by-law was amended by By-law 02-2019 on 24 June 2019. The amended by-law is currently in force, but is scheduled to expire on 31 March 2024.

The District is currently in the process of considering the adoption of a successor EDC By-law. The implementation of a new EDC By-law would enable the collection of education development charges in the future.

Under the Ministry’s education funding formula, the collection of EDCs is the main source of funding for education land costs. These are costs incurred by the District to acquire land and/or prepare sites as a result of the need to build new pupil places to house students in areas of new development.

The District's existing by-law has funded the purchase of seven elementary school sites and two secondary school sites. It has also funded the preparation of land for a number of new school buildings.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. As part of the successor EDC By-law adoption process, the District is required to conduct a review of its existing education development charges policies. In completing its review, the District is required to hold a public meeting in order to ensure that adequate information is made available and representation is possible.

In support of the above requirement, Appendix C of the Board's recently completed Education Development Charges Background Study is dedicated to a review of the policies contained in the existing by-law. A copy of the study is available for download from the District's website by clicking on 'Education Development Charges' under the Board of Trustees/Consultations review tab.

Some of the key elements of the Board's in-force 2019 EDC By-law include:

- the collection of education development charges across the entire District (in place since adoption of the 2004 EDC By-law);
- the imposition of EDCs based on recovering 80% of education land costs from residential sector development and 20% from non-residential;
- the application of a uniform residential rate rather than one which differentiates by unit type;
- the decision not to apply surplus operating reserves, if any, to reduce the quantum of the charge; and
- the inclusion of non-statutory exemptions which are consistent with those approved with the Board's previous EDC By-law in 2014.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5. The collection of EDCs is the main source of funding for costs incurred by the District to acquire land or prepare sites as a result of the need to build new pupil places due to growth.

Without the implementation of education development charges the above costs would have to be funded from an alternative source.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

6. In order to consider the adoption and implementation of a new EDC By-law the Board is required to follow a legislatively governed consultative process. This process includes the holding of a minimum of two public meetings and the provision of formal notice for each.

An advertisement was published in the Ottawa Citizen on 15 December 2023 which provided public meeting notice regarding the holding of tonight's special Committee of the Whole meeting.

This notice also indicated that a policy review document would be made available to the public on or before 22 December 2023. A copy of the EDC Background Study containing the policy review document was posted on the Board's website on 20 December 2023 and hard copies were made available to members of the public upon request.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

7. The following questions are provided to support discussion of this item by Committee:
- Does the Board wish to continue to use EDCs as the primary funding source for the purchase of future school sites?
 - Have the policies contained in the existing EDC By-law served the Board well?

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