

## Fraser Mills will require new school

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New housing on the former Fraser Mills site will require a new elementary school, school trustees heard Tuesday.

Frank Giampa, School District 43's acting facilities director, presented the board with an amended 2008-2009 capital plan Tuesday night, which includes a new Fraser Mills-area elementary school.

The \$8.8-million school is slated for Year 4 of the capital plan, which means the project could start as early as 2011. It is 19th on the priority list for District 43 capital projects.

"The site is isolated from a geographic standpoint," Giampa said. "There's been an identified need for a school."

The City of Coquitlam approved the project last March. It consists of 3,700 units of housing along the Fraser River -- 2,800 of which could yield children to fill a new school.

Development projections for the three cities illustrate a shift away from single-family homes to more low-rise and highrise apartments.

Finance director Bob Janzen said it is an important trend, as fewer students come from townhouses and condominiums according to yield projections.

While District 43 increased the theoretical student yield from Port Moody development -- as per the request of the city -- Janzen said, development overall won't mean an upswing in enrolment.

Trustee Gerri Wallis asked where the data came from, and was told that student yield is a regional figure used to determine how many students will enrol in schools.

"At least I feel a bit better about our decisions and what we've done," trustee Gerri Wallis said, referring to the five schools closed last year due to declining enrolment and projections of low student yield.

Trustee Keith Watkins cautioned that projections could be wrong.

"I would put to you that the yield factors in downtown Yaletown were the same as ours. The buildings went in and the kids showed up," Watkins said. "The yield factors were wrong in Yaletown, and it will probably be wrong again in Port Moody."

Janzen also presented the eligible school sites proposal for 2008 Tuesday.

The Ministry of Education requires school districts, through the proposal, to update the province on local development projects, student yield estimates, as well as the general location, number and cost of schools required.

Those figures determine how much the land for such schools would cost, and how much municipalities must collect from each developer to make up a portion of the costs.

The six schools listed in the capital plan to be built in new development areas total \$62.5 million, and 35 per cent of that must come from developers -- or \$21.87 million.

Assuming 21,975 units will be built, the school site acquisition charge would range between \$600 for a high-density unit and \$1,000 for one unit of low-density housing.

Janzen said rising real estate prices have forced the charge to increase, and it has reached the maximum that can be charged back to developers.

"The potential site at Fraser Mills, the costs of acquiring that land, has gone up \$3 million in one year," he said. "This will bring us up to the maximum eligible."