

COUNCIL MEETING
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FACILITIES DIVISION

REPORT CS-2025-14
April 22, 2025

SUBJECT: Dain City School and Community Space Partnership

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APPROVING: Jessica Ruddell – Director of Community Services

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND approve entering into negotiations for a partnership agreement with the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) for a community space at the new Dain City School; and further

THAT Welland City Council authorize staff to apply for funding through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) for this new community space.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This recommendation is aligned to Council's strategic priority of ensuring "**Health and Wellbeing**" to promote personal health and well-being by offering an abundance of activities that meet the diverse needs and interests all while, advocating for improved health care throughout the city, and supporting the need for safety and security.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for staff to continue negotiation with the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) for a partnership to develop a community centre as part of the construction of a new elementary school in Dain City. Additionally, staff are seeking approval to apply for available funding through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund. As previously identified in-camera on September 3, 2024, such a partnership would support shared use of facilities, enhance community access to recreational and cultural programming, and improve service delivery while maximizing the use of public land and resources. Once the partnership agreement is drafted, it will be brought to Council for final review and approval.

BACKGROUND:

The DSBN recently received approval from the province to construct a new elementary school at the intersection of Varsity Drive and Eastbridge Avenue in Dain City. This new school will accommodate projected population growth and improve access to education within the community. Concurrently, the City identified an opportunity to partner with the DSBN to increase the community infrastructure and recreational amenities in Dain City by including a city-operated community space within the school. This concept is in alignment with recommendation #6 of the City's approved Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan which identifies the proactive pursuit of partnerships, including educational institutions as well as the City's strategic plan.

Joint-use facility models have been successfully implemented across various municipalities in Ontario and beyond, offering shared gymnasiums, meeting rooms, libraries, and outdoor amenities that serve both student and community needs. These collaborative projects demonstrate the value of partnerships in enhancing community well-being and efficient capital investment.

The privately owned Carrie Lynn Pinard Centre in Dain City has been an important community hub since the City of Welland began leasing it in 1994. The centre, while having challenges with parking and accessibility, hosts a variety of events, including birthday parties, celebrations of life, and organizational meetings. Rental revenue from the Carrie Lynn Pinard Centre has grown considerably over the last couple of years, hitting a high of \$16,871 in 2024.

DISCUSSION:

A joint-use facility offers several advantages, including:

- **Shared Spaces:** Gymnasium, hallways, performance spaces, and parking lots
- **Cost-Efficiency:** Shared capital and operational costs reduce the financial burden on both the City of Welland and DSBN
- **Maximized Land Use:** Co-locating services reduce the need for separate land acquisitions and enhance accessibility
- **Community Access:** Residents benefit from increased programming opportunities and improved access to facilities, particularly in growing or underserved neighbourhoods
- **Youth and Family Engagement:** Offers integrated service delivery to students and their families before, during, and after school hours

The proposed dedicated space is an estimated 2,700 square feet and will include the following areas for City of Welland use:

- One Community Room (approximately 1200 square feet)
- A dedicated community space kitchen with a stove and fridge
- Two dedicated, universal washrooms with access from the Community Room (approximately 64 square feet each)

- A 200-square-foot storage area with outdoor access and access from the gymnasium
- A dedicated, fully accessible entrance to the community space on the ground floor
- Two offices for City staff (approximately 200 square feet each)
- One dedicated, fully accessible staff washroom (approximately 64 square feet).
- Shared and scheduled use of the school's gymnasium.

Potential operating terms are being explored and discussed between City of Welland staff and the DSBN, and an agreement, detailing operations and responsibilities, both shared and individual, will be brought back to Council for final approval. A summary of the co-build opportunity terms and basic operating principles are included in Appendix 2.

FINANCIAL:

Initial estimates for the construction of the City's dedicated community space are approximately \$450/square foot or \$1,215,000.

$$2,700\text{sf} \times \$450/\text{sf} = \$1,215,000$$

Staff request approval to apply to the Province of Ontario's Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) which, if successful, will fund up to 50% of the construction costs, leaving 50% to be funded by the City of Welland.

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| Estimated Total Cost | \$1,215,000 |
| 50% Potential Funding through CSRIF | \$607,500 |
| 50% Balance Funded by City of Welland | \$607,500 |

Staff have also reached out and scheduled a meeting with Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) Sam Oosterhoff to discuss this partnership with the DSBN and further funding options.

Should Council approve staff to continue negotiations with the DSBN for this project, the specifics of the formal partnership agreement with the DSBN will be drafted and brought to Council for approval.

Budget requirements will be brought to Council for consideration during the 2026 budget process.

ATTACHMENT:

Appendix 1 – DSBN Draft map of school layout

Appendix 2 – Dain City School, City of Welland Co-build exploration summary