

COUNCIL REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: August 18, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Shawn Olson, Engineering and Environment, Director

PREPARED BY: Kyle van Steenoven, Engineering and Environment, Manager; Shawn Olson, Engineering and Environment, Director

REPORT TITLE: High School Site Servicing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St. Thomas Aquinas Roman (STAR) Catholic Separate School Division has requested a letter indicating the City of Leduc will have a high school site serviced in 2026. The City has already accelerated the predesign and site readiness from 2026 to 2025. For Administration to commit to the site, funding to service the site needs to be accelerated from 2029 to the approved 2026 capital plan via a capital budget adjustment. A commitment letter and completed site readiness checklist will then be submitted to the STAR Catholic School Division in August 2025 to support their funding application.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve a capital budget adjustment to advance \$3.5M within the 10-year capital plan from 2029 into the approved 2026 capital budget to be financed by a debenture and that the annual debenture payments will be included in the operating budget starting in 2027.

That Council authorize the City Manager to issue a letter to the St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Separate School Division confirming the City's commitment to delivering a shovel-ready high school site at Lede Park in 2026.

COUNCIL HISTORY

On June 3, 2025, Administration received a letter from STAR Catholic (attached as *STAR Catholic Letter – Lede Park School*). This correspondence was presented to Council during the 2026–2028 Pre-Budget Session in Committee-of-the-Whole on June 9, 2025, and prompted a discussion regarding the budget implications and requirements needed to address the requests outlined in the letter. During the discussion, Council indicated support for the request and Administration committed to bringing back a capital budget amendment.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE

Discussions between the STAR Catholic School Division and City of Leduc Administration regarding the location of a new high school began in 2024, and focused on Lede Park, adjacent to the Leduc Recreation Center. This site leverages existing recreation amenities, reducing cost and site footprints.

The City's 2025 budget deliberations led to the inclusion of a site servicing predesign budget in 2026 and a construction budget in 2029.

In early 2025, City Administration met with STAR Catholic, and at that time, the School Division confirmed its intention to submit a funding request for a new high school in 2026. To support the School Division, Administration advanced the predesign work originally planned for 2026 to 2025. Design and site readiness activities, including geotechnical and environmental assessments, are now underway.

COUNCIL REQUEST FOR DECISION

On June 3, 2025, the City received a formal letter from STAR Catholic (attached as *STAR Catholic Letter – Lede Park School*) requesting the City's commitment to completing all site readiness work and confirming that a shovel-ready site will be available in 2026. This request was presented to Council on June 9, 2025, during the 2025 pre-budget presentation. During the presentation Administration shared the proposed site layout and realignment of the dog park, and made a recommendation to accelerate the construction servicing budget from 2029 to 2026 as part of the 2026 budget process, all of which Council indicated support for subject to a formal report and motion being brought forward.

As a next step, a letter of commitment from the City of Leduc must be submitted to STAR Catholic, along with a completed site readiness checklist in August 2025, prior to the 2026 budget proceedings. Administration is requesting a Council motion to advance the funding to service the site in 2026 and to authorize the City Manager to sign and send the attached *Lede Park School Site Commitment Letter*.

STRATEGIC / RELEVANT PLANS ALIGNMENT

A high school in this location, with potentially shared sports fields aligns with the Corporate Strategic Plan Goal 4 - To be a collaborative community builder.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

ADMINISTRATION:

In addition to geotechnical work and design, Administration will need to imminently engage in joint use agreements with the STAR Catholic School Division to confirm the land required for the school site.

RISK ANALYSIS: FINANCIAL / LEGAL:

While Administration is proposing to commit to servicing the site in 2026, it is unknown if Alberta Infrastructure will announce a school at a location that is not fully serviced at the time of the announcement. As this is the site that can be most expediently made ready for a new high school, Administration recommends pursuing site servicing in 2026 even if it's for a future high school announcement.

The \$3.5M site servicing will be financed by a debenture which has an operating impact of approximately \$260K based on current Alberta Government loan rates and a 20-year term. The actual loan rate and payment will be determined when the debenture is taken. Payments will start in 2027 and will have an approximate tax impact of 0.4%.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATIONS:

ALTERNATIVES:

That Council direct Administration to remain committed to servicing a high school site in 2029.

ATTACHMENTS

- Star Catholic Letter
- Lede Park School Site Commitment Letter