



University of Toronto

CAPITAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT

TO: Business Board

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DATE: June 7, 2005 for June 23, 2005

AGENDA ITEM: 5(g)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Capital Project - Multi-Faith Centre for Study and Spiritual Practice

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Pursuant to Section 5.2. (b) of its Terms of Reference, the Business Board approves expenditures for, and the execution of, approved Capital Projects.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This is the first time this Project is being presented to the Business Board.

Other Board and Committee approvals to-date include:

- Planning and Budget - May 10, 2005
- Academic Board - June 2, 2005

HIGHLIGHTS:

In 2002 information was provided to governance that the Multi-Faith Centre was to be located on the two upper floors of the Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management Building. This required the re-location, as the major secondary effect, of the Administrative Management Systems & Human Resources Training Facility for the project to proceed. A further important secondary effect was to relocate the Leslie L. Dan Faculty of Pharmacy from the third floor of the Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management.

With the pending completion of the Leslie Dan Pharmacy Building in December 2005, the preferred cost effective solution was to delay the project until such time as the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy could relocate directly into their new facilities. The AMS and HR Training Facility will be re-established in expanded facilities at 256 McCaul Street.

The Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management will be renamed the Koffler Building and will house the Multi-Faith Centre on the two upper floors of this three storey building. The ground floor will continue to operate as is with the major lecture theatre, controlled by the Office of Space Management, but available to support those occasions when Multi-Faith activities might require the use of a large auditorium in close proximity to the Multi-Faith Centre.

While the University of Toronto is a secular institution, spiritual pluralism is more pronounced than ever among our diverse student population. In 1999-2000 there were 35 student clubs dedicated to religious and spiritual practice thriving within the University. This number had grown to 60 organizations just three years later. During the 1990's the University of Toronto took a number of steps to accommodate the growing spiritual needs of the community. Hart House, the University's central cultural facility, opened its chapel to all faith communities as an Interfaith Room and the Hart House debates room is now used by over 400 Muslims every Friday afternoon for Juma'ah prayers. Quiet rooms in the International Student Centre are currently being used for meditation and prayer. New College opened a temporary multi-faith room equipped with an ablutions facility in 1999 that was used by a number of different groups. A small room in the Bahen Centre for Information Technology is currently providing space for daily prayers for Muslim students. In 1999 a University Task Force on Student Space Activity recommended the establishment of a permanent multi-faith facility. That same year the Office of Student Affairs hosted a Multi-Faith Working Group that gathered information on other multi-faith centres as well as making site visits to various multi-faith and religious centres.

The Multi-Faith Centre within the Koffler Building will provide the facilities and related services needed to support the religious and spiritual practices represented within the University of Toronto community. There will be resources, counseling and guidance available to nurture spiritual development. Events will be held at the new Multi-Faith Centre in partnership with academic divisions aimed at exploring the role of faith in a number of academic disciplines. The Multi-Faith Centre will both represent and celebrate the diversity of the University of Toronto community. Students will be afforded the opportunity to develop multi-faith, multi-cultural competencies. Students will also be better able to increase their understanding of the role of religion and spirituality in global issues and thereby prepare themselves for community leadership. Most importantly, the interaction of different faiths within the new Multi Faith Centre will promote the sort of mutual respect and co-operation required to diffuse religious conflict.

The new Multi-Faith Centre will establish another significant node in support of student activity, fully consistent with the initiatives outlined within the Stepping-Up documentation.

The Multi-Faith Centre is identified in the Capital Plan with a projected borrowing contribution of \$3 million. The revised estimated project cost is now estimated at \$3,389,400, and includes the secondary effects of the relocation of the Training Facilities from the 569 Spadina Avenue site to 256 McCaul Street.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

Operating Costs: The estimated annual costs for the operation of the Koffler Building are \$100 per nasm comprising the caretaking services and utility costs, i.e. heat, hydro, water & gas. These numbers will be subsequently refined as the project is developed but no significant change is anticipated; the operating costs for the Koffler Building, which will include the Multi-Faith Centre, will remain a central cost.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Vice-President- Business Affairs be authorized:

- (i) to execute the project to accommodate the Multi-Faith Centre for Study and Spiritual Practice, to be located on the second and third floors on the existing Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management at 569 Spadina Avenue, and
- (ii) the secondary-effect project to move and expand the training facilities in support of Administrative Management systems and Human Resources activities, to be located on the ground floor at 256 McCaul Street,
- (iii) at a total project cost not to exceed \$3,389,400, with the total cost to be amortized over twenty-five years, and to be repaid from the operating budget of the University of Toronto.