



# University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE- PROVOST, SPACE AND FACILITIES PLANNING

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

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AGENDA ITEM: 5

## **ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Project Planning Committee Report for the Multi-faith Centre for Study and Spiritual Practice

## **JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under the Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects, the Planning & Budget Committee reviews Project Planning Reports prepared for a capital project and recommends to the Academic Board approval in principle of the project.

## **PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

While the Multi-faith Centre for Study and Spiritual Practice has been discussed for a considerable period of time, this is the first occasion that the Project Planning Report has been tabled for consideration by the Planning and Budget Committee. 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. This required the re-location, as the major secondary effect, of the Administrative Management Systems [AMS] & Human Resources [HR] training facility for the project to proceed. A further important secondary effect was to relocate the Faculty of Pharmacy from the third floor of the Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management. With the pending completion of the Leslie L. Dan Pharmacy Building in December 2005, the preferred cost effective solution was to delay the project until such time as the Faculty of Pharmacy could relocate directly to their new facilities. The AMS and HR training facility will be re-established in expanded facilities at 256 McCaul Street.

The building will no longer be named the Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management, though it will continue to carry the Koffler name. Discussions<sup>1</sup> are underway with Murray Koffler to that end, in accordance with the University's policy on naming.

The facility 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 [OSM], 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.

## **BACKGROUND:**

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. In fact Hart House has welcomed Muslim students for Juma'ah prayers for over 25 years. Quiet rooms in the International Student Centre are currently being used for meditation and prayer. Another quiet meditation room also exists at OISE/UT, and a small room in the Bahen Centre for Information Technology is currently providing space for daily prayers for Muslim students. New College opened a temporary multi-faith room equipped with an ablutions facility in 1999 that was used by a number of different groups for a few years; unfortunately this space has had to be redirected to other College uses.

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.

It is important to note that the membership of the Project Planning Report for the Multi-faith Centre has had active representation from the following religious groups on campus: the Hindu Students' Association, the University of Toronto Buddhist Community, the Sikh Students' Association and the Muslim Students' Association. In addition town-hall meetings have been held which conveyed keen support from all sectors of the community. The Project Planning Committee membership, which also includes the Campus Chaplains, is included in the Planning Report.

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

The Multi-faith Centre 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-

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<sup>1</sup>Office of the Vice-President & Chief Advancement Officer to recommend on the precise naming; at present there exists i) the Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management at 569 Spadina Avenue, ii) the Koffler Centre at 214 College Street and iii) the Koffler Scientific Reserve at Jokers Hill.

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 plan.

Under the Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects, the Project Planning Committee will continue through the implementation phase. The Working Executive of the Project Implementation Committee will comprise the lead User, a Planner and Implementer all of whom have been closely associated with the project planning and definition since its inception; this membership is:

**User:** Susan Addario  
**Planner:** Elizabeth Sisam/ William Yasui  
**Implementer:** Julian Binks

This Working Executive will be expanded to include a Project Manager to be appointed by the Chief Capital Projects Officer. It is also recommended that the process, consistent with policy, to appoint the consultants be initiated immediately following approval of the project by the Planning and Budget Committee. Proceeding in this manner will allow the consultants to be formally hired immediately upon approval by Governing Council in late June, 2005 and as a result accelerate the project towards completion. Student user representatives will also be invited to serve on the Architect Selection Committee, to select the consultants.

#### **FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

All projects that are advanced for consideration by the Planning & Budget Committee are evaluated against a stringent set of academic criteria. These criteria are detailed in the Capital Plan tabled at the Planning & Budget Committee, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004<sup>2</sup>. The Stepping-Up initiative targets the need to improve the student experience for all students on campus. The Centre will serve as an exciting new node of activity on the campus. It has the enthusiastic support of all spiritual /religious groups on campus that will use this facility and have actively participated in the design of the proposed facility. The cost of the project will be supported entirely by the University; external funding for the project to date has been minimal.

**Borrowing capacity for the Capital Plan:** The maximum borrowing capacity available to the University, as outlined in the Capital Plan presented to Planning & Budget on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 was approximately \$112 million<sup>3</sup>. At present the borrowing capacity as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2005 has been reduced to \$89 million. The Multi-faith Centre is identified in the Capital Plan with a projected borrowing contribution of \$3million. The revised 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.

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<sup>2</sup> The nine criteria by which all capital projects are assessed are:

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| 1. Mission Objectives of the University, | 2. Policy Objectives & Legislative Requirements, |
| 3. Provincial Space Standards,           | 4. Strengthening Scholarship,                    |
| 5. Providing Academic Leadership,        | 6. Student Experience,                           |
| 7. Economic Consistency,                 | 8. Resources,                                    |
| 9. Deferred Maintenance.                 |  |

<sup>3</sup> The Capital Plan data is based on all capital project approvals up to, but not including the Business Board approvals on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

**Operating Costs:** The estimated annual costs for the operation of the Koffler Building are \$ 120 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.

**Schedule for Completion of the Project.** The anticipated schedule for the completed project is tabled below.

- Renovation of the ground floor at 256 McCaul Street to establish the timing for this. This could be completed by March, 2006 at which time the training facilities will be relocated from 569 Spadina Avenue.
- The Faculty of Pharmacy will relocate no later than March 2006, vacating the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.
- In April, 2006 work on the Multi-faith Centre will commence with completion anticipated in late summer of 2006. Work on the Multi-faith Centre cannot commence sooner than April, 2006 as the large classroom on the ground floor at 569 Spadina Avenue will be well used for lectures until the end of term.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended to the Academic Board:

1. THAT the Project Planning Report for the Multi-faith Centre for Study and Spiritual Practice be approved in principle. The Centre is to be located on the second and third floors of the existing Koffler Institute for Pharmacy Management at 569 Spadina Avenue and includes the renovation of 615 net assignable square metres of planned program space.
2. THAT the space program to accommodate expanded training facilities in support of the Administrative and Management Systems [AMS] and the Human Resources [HR] activities that is to be relocated to the ground floor at 256 McCaul Street be approved in principle;
3. THAT the funding for the project be approved at an estimated total project cost of \$3,389,400. The full cost of this project, in the amount of \$3,389,400, to be acquired from a mortgage, amortized over twenty-five years, to be repaid from the operating budget of the University of Toronto.