



NEWSRelease

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ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD AND BLUEWATER HEALTH REACH AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON PARKING LOT EXPANSION

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board and Bluewater Health have reached an agreement that will result in an expansion of the parking lot on land owned by the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. The 62,000 sq. ft. expansion will meet both the needs of the hospital and St. Patrick's Catholic High School during the 2013-2014 transitional year, when St. Christopher and St. Patrick's students will be temporarily located at the East Street campus.

The agreement in principle has been given tacit approval, following presentations to both the Board of Trustees for St. Clair Catholic and the Bluewater Health Board; however, legal contracts have not yet been signed.

"This is a good agreement for our Board and for Bluewater Health," says Paul Wubben, Director of Education for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. "We have had a long-standing history of good relations with the hospital and through this important partnership we have reached an understanding that will alleviate parking congestion for our students and staff, hospital staff and visitors and the neighbourhood, during the transitional year."

"This agreement is a 'win-win-win' for the hospital, the school board and our neighbouring residents," says Mike Lapaine, Vice President, Operations and Chief Operating Officer, Bluewater Health. "The agreement will meet the needs of our respective organizations and concerns expressed by the City of Sarnia over increased traffic volume."

Under the agreement, a 62,000 sq. ft. green space located to the south of the existing parking lot will be converted to additional parking spaces, resulting in a total of 377 spaces, up from 228. This is in addition to the 50 parking spaces immediately adjacent to the St. Patrick's school building. The project will also include an expansion of the Norman Street parking lot entrance to accommodate two-way traffic. In addition, lighting fixtures and the existing gate system will be upgraded.

The hospital will pay for all costs related to the expansion, which will be incorporated into an existing lease agreement between the two organizations. On September 1, 2014, when staff and students move to the newly expanded St. Patrick's Catholic High School on The Rapids Parkway, Bluewater Health will assume control of all 377 parking spaces for hospital staff and visitors.

"We have an ambitious construction schedule; and look forward to swift approval when we submit our site plan to the City of Sarnia in early May," says Mr. Lapaine. "Our goal is to award a contract and begin construction in June with a completion date of mid to late August."

"I want to thank our Associate Director, Jim McKenzie and Mike Lapaine, Vice President, Operations and Chief Operating Officer for their great work on this important issue," says Mr. Wubben. "Through their cooperative efforts, we have arrived at a solution that will benefit each other and the community."

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