

3. REWI ALLEY CHINESE SCHOOL TRUST - FUNDING APPLICATION

General Manager responsible:	General Manager, Community Services
Officer responsible:	Community Support Unit Manager
Author:	Maryanne Lomax, Community Development Advisor, DDI 941-6730

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval for an application by the Rewi Alley Chinese School Trust for \$5,000 towards additional expenses related to their building extension project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Rewi Alley Chinese School/Education and Cultural Centre was established in February 1998. The purpose of the centre was to respond to the needs of the Asian Chinese community by providing education, cultural and social activities and language classes. The Centre has rapidly expanded to become a drop-in centre, offering a wide range of resources including catering to the needs of other ethnic groups and the wider Canterbury region.
3. The Rewi Alley Centre is based at Wharenui Primary School in Lower Riccarton. It began operating from a spare classroom as well as the school hall. In 2000, the Trust purchased a building from the Christchurch City Council (Fendalton Service Centre) in order to address the growing demands for their services and resources. The Centre continued to expand at a rapid rate and the Trust decided that there was a need for a major building extension. Building commenced in December 2005 and was completed in June 2006. The extensions provided an additional three classrooms (upstairs) as well as a hall that can be also divided into classrooms. However the costs associated with the extension have increased from the original amount the Trust was quoted and there is now a shortfall of \$32,153 related to the building project.
4. The Trust is seeking funding assistance from the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board, as their database indicates that a third of their clients live in the Fendalton/Waimairi Ward area. They are also seeking \$5,000 from the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

5. The original cost of the building was \$255,829.30 (including GST). The Trust applied to the Christchurch City Council for a loan towards this amount under the Metropolitan Loan Scheme. The Christchurch City Council granted the Trust \$200,000 from the Metropolitan Loan Scheme, which they are to pay back over ten years, with a 2% annual interest. The Trust agreed to make up the additional monies from funding raised by the Rewi Alley School (\$55,829).
6. Additional (unbudgeted) costs were identified in April 2006 (see **attachment**). These come to a total of \$72,152.71. The Trust sought funding support from Christchurch City Council Metropolitan Funds. However, no funds were currently available. The Trust applied to Canterbury Community Trust for emergency funds and recently received a grant (30 June) of \$40,000. This still left a shortfall of \$32,153.
7. The Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board last funded this organisation in 2003 with a \$5,000 grant towards administration expenses.
8. This group is considered a Metropolitan Group as clients come from all over the city. Council Metropolitan funding for 2005/06 was as follows:
 - \$30,000 Annual Grants for Centre salaries and overhead costs as last year of a three funding commitment.
 - \$14,000 Annual Grant (last payment) for paying off a 1999/2000 CCC Community Organisation Loan of \$65,000 for the Centre building.

- New \$200,000 Community Organisation Loan over ten years at 2% interest for Centre extensions and refurbishing costs.
 - \$10,000 Metropolitan community Discretionary Fund for the Centre's new Computers in the Community project.
9. In relation to this request the audited accounts for the year ended 30 March 2005 have been sighted. The Trust is still waiting to receive current audited accounts for the period up to March 2006.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Due to the significant level of funding this organisation currently receives through Metropolitan grants, it is recommended that this application be declined.

BACKGROUND ON REWI ALLEY CHINESE EDUCATION AND CULTURAL CENTRE

10. The Rewi Alley Chinese Educational and Cultural Centre has been operating from Wharenui Primary School since 1998. It was originally established in response to the needs of the Asian Chinese Community in Christchurch, for education, cultural and social activities as well as language classes. It has however, due to demand expanded to become a drop-in centre offering a wide range of resources. In addition to catering to the needs of Asians living in Christchurch, the Centre caters for other ethnic groups and the wider Canterbury region. There are five paid full time staff and 30 paid part-time staff at the Centre. In addition there are 50 volunteers who do at least 1000 volunteer hours per year. The Centre has contact with approximately 3,000 people/clients within a typical year.
11. There is a strong association with the school as Rewi Alley's father was the first principal and founder of Wharenui School. The Trust was originally housed in a spare classroom, as well as the school hall. However, these facilities were inadequate in meeting a growing demand for the Trust's services. In 2000 the Trust was able to secure a loan from the Christchurch City Council to acquire the old Fendalton Service Centre building which was then relocated to Wharenui Primary School grounds. These premises enabled the Trust to continue to grow its services to the Asian Chinese Community. However with the increasing population of new migrants the latter building became inadequate to meet the demand and there was an obvious need to extend the building so that more class rooms would be available as well as a hall for large meetings. The original cost for the new extension was quoted as \$255,829. However the Trust was then confronted with additional costs amounting to a total of \$72,151.71. The additional costs that the Trust is now faced with were not of their own making. Building materials and labour costs increased between the time of the contract being signed and the work being completed. The Trust was also informed, at the last minute that additional expenditure was required on fire alarms and security, before the extensions could be used by the community. The Trust had no option but to provide these particular safety measures. The Canterbury Community Trust has recently granted the Trust \$40,000 towards the shortfall leaving a total of \$32,151.71. The Trust is also applying to the Metropolitan Community Grant Scheme for assistance, the outcome of which will be decided on the 28 July 2006.
12. According to the Trust, the building extension will have the following social capital investment; increased participation, relationships developed, communities strengthened, partnerships developed, volunteerism promoted, increased empowerment of clients and the breakdown of social isolation.
13. The Trust provides a wide range of community education, community information and social support service. The following is a list of activities that are open to all ages and ethnic groups;
 - Chinese language classes
 - Maths
 - Homework Centre
 - Soccer and ball skills
 - Martial arts classes
 - Dance – Chinese and ballet
 - Fitness classes for girls and women
 - Cultural Events eg Dragon Dance
 - General information for migrants
 - Social get together
 - Film showings
 - Chinese culture and information resource centre
 - Workshops for new migrants
 - Intercultural exchanges
 - Youth and holiday programmes
 - Publication of Rewi Alley newsletter
 - Lending library facility
 - Translation and interpretation
 - Immigration help
 - Employment assistance
 - Computer training
 - Parental support
 - Chinese language resource centre
14. In 2002, the Trust received a 2002 Council Civic Award in recognition for its community services over the past five years. The Co-ordinator, Qiangfu Jin received a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 2004, and in 2005 the Trust attained NZQA registration.

OPTIONS

15. In relation to this application the Community Board could choose to:
 - a) grant the full amount requested to the Rewi Alley Chinese School Trust
 - b) grant a portion of the amount requested
 - c) decline the application