

Frequently Asked Questions:

What's the problem?

In 2005 the provincial government announced that Vancouver's oldest school - Strathcona Elementary - was one of three most at-risk schools in the province, yet the government is delaying our seismic upgrades while approving, funding and completing other schools.

How long have you waited?

We've been waiting 9 years to begin upgrades on our school, ever since the province placed Strathcona on the list to be upgraded in 2004. We've been waiting 4 years since submitting our Project Definition Report. We are waiting on a signed project agreement, which would allow us to start the design phase of the process, and begin construction in a year after that.

What's the hold up?

The Ministry of Finance is balking at the cost of upgrading the school, as the renovation of a heritage school is much more expensive than building a new school. Restoration of heritage buildings require more than seismic upgrades as there are many structural issues that need to be addressed to meet construction and development code. As requested by the government, the original budget for this project was cut so that it did not exceed \$30 million, but the Ministry of Finance is still questioning the \$29m pricetag and requesting additional cost analyses. Their previous value analysis reported that there is nothing left to cut.

Why can't you just build a new school?

Strathcona is comprised of 5 buildings, 4 of which are on the heritage registry. This means that those 4 buildings couldn't be torn down without a major community process and agreement as well as discussion with Vancouver's Heritage Committee and other heritage organisations. It may be possible to reassign those buildings to other purposes and build a new school elsewhere on the property but that would mean putting the school back at the beginning of the seismic upgrade process, which has taken us 9 years to date.

What can we do?

See strathconaseismic.com/parents for ways you can help!